

Assessment of the finds from 32 Brook Street, Ilkley (OSA03 WB36)

Barbara Precious and Alan Vince

A small collection of finds was recovered from an archaeological watching brief carried out by *On Site Archaeology* at Brook Street, Ilkley, West Yorkshire (Site Code OSA03 WB36).

The finds were submitted for identification and assessment. They include a group of Roman pottery and ceramic building material which indicate settlement, including Romanised buildings, in the early 2nd century. A single piece of medieval pottery dates between the late 11th and the early 13th centuries and the remaining finds are of post-medieval or early modern date, the earliest dating to the late 17th or early 18th century and the latest almost certainly 20th century.

Description

Ceramic building material

A small scrap of tile from context 1001 is possibly a Roman tile. However, the fragment is featureless and only weighs 1gm! It is therefore not a strong piece of evidence for the existence of Romanised buildings in the vicinity.

Composite metals

A button from context 1030 has a copper alloy moulded front and an iron back and loop. The front is moulded in relief with an anchor motif. Whether this is actually a button from a naval uniform or simply following the fashion for such uniforms in the civilian population is not known. Sailor suits, for example, were particularly common in the 1890s up to the Great War.

Fired clay

A fragment of daub, with a wattle impression, was recovered from context 1039 where it was found in association with Roman pottery. The fabric of the clay is variegated with a silty micaceous groundmass and contains sparse fragments of sandstone up to 0.5mm across.

Lead

A single strip of lead was recovered from context 1001. The strip was approximately 2mm thick and was an offcut from a molten spread of lead. Lead had a variety of uses in both the Roman and recent times and it is not possible to date this piece. However, the degree of weathering suggests it is more likely to be Roman than early modern and the associated finds are of Roman date.

Glass

Two pieces of dark green bottle glass were recovered. That from context 1015 has weathered surfaces and appears to have come from the neck and shoulder of a bottle of onion form, a type current between c.1680 and c.1730. That from context 1030 is from a tall bottle, a type which was current from the late 18th century onwards. It was not possible to tell if the latter piece had been blown into a mould or simply rolled on a flat marver.

A fragment of 3mm thick clear window glass from context 1015 appears to be of modern date, ie probably 20th century.

Pottery

Roman

Twenty nine sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the watching brief (Table 1). They came from eight contexts. Two of these contexts, 1030 and 1038, also produced later finds, although in the case of context 1038 there is some doubt about whether the early modern sherd belongs in the assemblage.

As a group, the pottery probably dates to the early to mid 2nd century. Individually, however, most of the types present appear in the later 1st century and therefore individual contexts could conceivably be earlier than c.100. Definite 2nd-century material was in fact limited to contexts 1001 and 1030.

The range of wares present (Table 1) is consistent with a community relying almost entirely upon the Roman state for supply. There are no so-called Native wares present and there are imported vessels, such as a Pompeian Red ware platter from context 1039 and Samian ware from south and central Gaul from contexts 1022, 1038 and 1039.

Table 1

Cname	Name	1001	1008	1010	1022	1030	1038	1039	1042	Total
BB2	Black Burnished ware	2	1	1						4
CC?	Colour Coated ware	1					1	2		4
DR20	Dressel 20 Amphora	1								1
EBOR	Eboracum ware	2	1	1						4
FINE?	Fineware	1								1
GREY	Greyware	6								6

	Yorkshire-made																
MOYO	Mortaria								1	1							
OXL									4	4							
PRW	Pompeian Redware								1	1							
	Central Gaulish Samian																
SAMCG?	ware?								1	1	2						
	South Gaulish Samian																
SAMSG	ware								1	1	1	3					
	South Gaulish Samian																
SAMSG?	ware?									1	1						
Grand Total									17	1	1	1	1	3	3	2	29

The range of forms represented (Table 2) is quite wide, given the small size of the assemblage, and this reflects both the early date of the collection and the degree of Romanisation of the users of the pottery. The forms include storage and transportation vessels (a Dr 20 amphora, probably once containing olive oil from southwest Spain), food preparation vessels (the mortarium and the cooking pot) and a range of vessels used in dining and drinking.

Table 2

Form	Name	BB2	CC?	DR20	EBOR	FINE?	GREY	MOYO	OXL	PRW	SAMCG?	SAMSG	SAMSG?	Total
	Unidentified		2			1					1			4
18	Bowl (Dr 18)												2	2
18?	Bowl (Dr 18?)												1	1
33	Bowl (Dr 33)										1			1
A	Amphora			1										1
BK	Beaker		2											2
BKEV	Everted rim beaker								1					1
CP	Cooking pot 1					2								3

D	Dish (Dr 15/17?)											1		1	
F	Flagon			1									1	2	
J	Jar			2				3						5	
JB	Jar/bowl												1	1	
JBK	Jar/beaker											1	1	2	
L	Lid			1										1	
M	Mortaria												1	1	
P	Platter												1	1	
Grand															
Total			1	4	1	4	1	6	1	4	1	2	3	1	29

Medieval

A single body sherd of Yorkshire Gritty ware was recovered from context 1031. This ware is dated at York from the late 11th century onwards, although it continued to be produced into the 13th century and there is no means at present of dating a featureless bodysherd more closely. The source of the Ilkley example is unknown, nor is it known whether it is from the same source as examples from other sites in Yorkshire or merely made using similar materials.

Early Modern and later

Ten sherds of pottery dating to the late 18th century or later were recovered. The earliest of these may date to the late 18th or early 19th century (Creamware – CREA, Pearl ware – PEAR, Staffordshire Coarseware – STCOAR, Nottingham Stoneware - NOTS and Transfer-printed Pearlware – TPW). Three transfer-printed sherds from two vessels from context 1003 are printed in black ink, and have a similar appearance. They may therefore belong to a set.

A small porcelain cup sherd from context 1038 is unmarked whereas Roman pottery from the same context is marked and this casts some doubt over its provenance. It is likely to date to the late 18th century or later.

Stone

A fragment of Coal Measures shale with numerous fossil plants was recovered from context 1015. there is no sign of burning and it may be that it was present in the natural subsoil on the site rather than being evidence for the burning of coal.

Assessment

The Roman finds are consistent with the Brook Street area being part of the *vicus* attached to the fort. They indicate occupation in the early 2nd century, possibly starting somewhat earlier but probably not continuing into the late 2nd century, at which point we might have expected to find Antonine Samian ware. The range of wares and forms found in the Roman pottery collection shows that the settlement was closely connected to the Roman state, in this case represented by the fort, and the absence of handmade “native” wares may be significant. However, in this part of Yorkshire it is quite possible that the rural, un-Romanised population were not using much pottery (unlike in the Vale or York or East Yorkshire) which might artificially heighten the contrast.

The earliest possible deposition date for the six contexts which produced post-Roman finds is shown in Table 3. This is calculated by taking the starting date for the production of the latest type in the context. Thus, although there is a fragment of late 17th/early 18th century bottle from context 1015 the deposit itself cannot be any earlier than the 20th century whilst context 1031, which produced the medieval potsherd cannot have been deposited until the late 18th century at the earliest. The post-Roman pottery finds are mainly of late 18th or early 19th century date and this may indicate activity on the site at that date but there are also later finds, such as the composite metal button from context 1030 and the window glass from context 1015.

None of the post-Roman finds is of intrinsic interest but the medieval potsherd should be retained for future study.

Table 3

Context	11.2	17.2	18.2	19.1	19.2	20.1	nd	ROM	TPQ
1001							3	1	Undated
1003				3					Early 19 th century
1015		1	2			1			20 th century
1030			1		1				Late 19 th century
1031	1		4						Late 18 th century
1038			1						Late 18 th century

Appendix One – Catalogue of finds

Context	class	Sub-Class	cname	subfabric	Form	Nosh	Weight	Part	Condition	Description
1001	CBM		RTIL?			1		1 BS		
1001	LEAD		LEAD		STRIP	2		7 BS		ONE LONG EDGE CUT THE OTHER ROUNDED AND IRREGULAR (IE. OFFCUT FROM MELTED POOL OF LEAD)
1001	POTTERY	STONE	CM SHALE		GEOL	1		1 BS		NUMEROUS FOSSILS
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	BB2		CP	1		6 BS	SOOTR	RIM; FINE SITLY FAB
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	CC?		BK	1		1 BS	VABR	BS TRACE CC
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	DR20		A	1		1 BS	ABR	FLAKE
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	EBOR		J	1		2 BS	SOOTEX	BS; REDSLIP?
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	EBOR		F	1		18 BS		HANDLE 3R
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	FINE?			1		2 BS	ABR	BS VHIGH FIRED
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	GREY		JBK	1		1 BS		BS; FINER THAN EBOR GREY
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	GREY		J	1		3 BS	BURNT	BS CF EBOR GREY
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	GREY		J	1		8 BS		BS CF EBOR GREY
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	GREY		J	1		14 BS		FTM; EBOR GREY
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	GREY		CP	1		37 BS		RIM SHLDR; CF EBOR
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	GREY		CP	1		3 BS		RIM POSS B3 YORK CODE
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	MOYO		M	1		5 BS	ABR	FLAKE; MORT-YORK; EBOR FAB; Q TG
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	OXL		JBK	1		3 BS		BS THINNER SHERD

Context	class	Sub-Class	cname	subfabric	Form	Nosh	Weight	Part	Condition	Description
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	OXL		JB	1	11	BS		BS
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	OXL		F	1	12	BS		BS HANDLE SCAR; MOST 0.2-0.4 SA Q
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	OXL		BKEV	1	2	BS	ABR	RIM SHLDR
1001	POTTERY	RPOT	ZDATE					BS		EM2C
1003	POTTERY		TPW		PLATE	1	43	R		BLACK INK
1003	POTTERY		TPW		CUP	2	8	H		BLACK INK
1008	POTTERY		RPOT			1	3	BS		
1008	POTTERY	RPOT	EBOR		J	1	2	BS		BS;RED SLIP
1008	POTTERY	RPOT	ZDATE					BS		L1-2C
1008	POTTERY	RPOT	ZZZ					BS		EBOR ONLY
1010	POTTERY		RPOT			1	8	BS		
1010	POTTERY	RPOT	EBOR		L	1	5	BS		RIM UPPER WALL
1010	POTTERY	RPOT	ZDATE					BS		L1-M2C
1010	POTTERY	RPOT	ZZZ					BS		EBOR ONLY
1015	PMGL		PMGL	CLEAR	WIND	1	3	BS		3.0MM THICK
1015	PMGL		PMGL		BOT	1	36	BS		WEATHERED ONION NECK AND SHOULDER
1015	POTTERY		NOTS		BOWL	1	3	BS		
1015	POTTERY		TPW		BOWL	1	11	R		
1022	POTTERY		RPOT			1	5	R		
1022	POTTERY	RPOT	SAMSG		18	1	3	BS		RIM UPPER WALL; FLAVIAN

Context	class	Sub-Class	cname	subfabric	Form	Nosh	Weight	Part	Condition	Description
1022	POTTERY	RPOT	ZDATE					BS		L1C
1022	POTTERY	RPOT	ZZZ					BS		SAMSG ONLY
1030	METAL		COMPOSITE COPP/FE		BUTTON	1	3	BS		MOULDED ANCHOR
1030	PMGL		PMGL	DKGR	BOT	1	38	BS		TALL
1030	POTTERY		RPOT			1	0	BS		
1030	POTTERY	RPOT	SAMCG?		33	1	6	BS	BURNT	RIM LWR WALL
1030	POTTERY	RPOT	ZDATE					BS		2C
1030	POTTERY	RPOT	ZZZ					BS		SAMCG? ONLY
1031	POTTERY		CREA		TANK	2	11	B		
1031	POTTERY		PEAR		PLATE	1	2	BS		
1031	POTTERY		STCOAR		JAR	1	8	BS		
1031	POTTERY		YG?		JAR	1	3	BS		
1038	POTTERY		ENGS		CUP	1	1	BS		NOT MARKED (ROMAN SHERDS _ARE_ MARKED)
1038	POTTERY	RPOT	CC?		BK	1	2	BS		BS EXTERNAL WASH/CC; WHITE MICACEOUS FAB
1038	POTTERY	RPOT	SAMCG?			1	1	BS	ABR	FLAKE
1038	POTTERY	RPOT	SAMSG		18	1	4	BS		RIM GIRTH
1038	POTTERY	RPOT	ZDATE					BS		L1-2C
1038	POTTERY	RPOT	ZZZ					BS		FRAG POSTMED
1039	FCLAY		FCLAY	VARIEGATED;SILTY MICACEOUS GROUNDMASS;S	DAUB	1	7	BS		

Context	class	Sub-Class	cname	subfabric	Form	Nosh	Weight	Part	Condition	Description
				SST >0.5MM						
1039	POTTERY	RPOT				1		2 BS		
1039	POTTERY	RPOT				1		4 BS		
1039	POTTERY	RPOT				1		3 BS		
1039	POTTERY	RPOT	PRW		P	1		3 BS		BASE ; PRW 6?
1039	POTTERY	RPOT	SAMSG		D	1		2 BS		RIM FRAG; POSS 15/17 RIM TYPE A
1039	POTTERY	RPOT	SAMSG?		18?	1		2 BS	ABR	BS
1039	POTTERY	RPOT	ZDATE					BS		L1-E2C
1039	POTTERY	RPOT	ZZZ					BS		FRAG GREY FCLAY?; POSS L1C
1042	POTTERY	RPOT	CC?			2		4 BS	SOOTEX	BSS RPOT? SANDY LTBN FAB
1042	POTTERY	RPOT	ZDATE					BS		RO?
1042	POTTERY	RPOT	ZZZ					BS		FRAG TILE

Key: Most of the ware and form codes are described in the text. BS – Body sherd, ZDATE – Date of Roman pottery, ZZZ – Comments on Roman pottery