

Assessment of the pottery from North Street, York(YNS'04)

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One hundred and forty-four sherds of pottery from an archaeological evaluation carried out by Field Archaeology Specialists Ltd at All Saints Church, North Street, York, were submitted for identification and assessment.

The pottery ranges in date from the Roman period to the 16th century but is mainly of later 12th century date and from a single rubbish pit, F3.

Description

The pottery wares were classified using the system employed by York Archaeological Trust (Table 1) and where the sherds were large enough they were assigned to forms using the Medieval Pottery Research Group classification (MPRG 1998, Table 2). The Roman pottery, being entirely residual, was only recorded as being Roman with no further details.

For the remainder, a digital catalogue was created and quantified by sherd count, maximum number of vessels and weight (Appendix 1).

Roman

Twenty-two definite sherds of Roman date and one possible sherd were recovered. All were residual in medieval or later deposits but the mean sherd size, 27 gm, is high and the sherds are not heavily abraded. It is therefore likely that they were disturbed from deeply stratified Roman deposits rather than a Roman to medieval soil horizon.

A few of the sherds are probably of 2nd to early 3rd-century date (two pieces of Samian ware and two fragments of Eboracum ware) but the majority are of 4th-century date. They include calcite-tempered ware, Crambeck greyware, Crambeck parchment ware, Nene Valley colour-coated ware and Black Burnished 1 ware (Monaghan 1997 1997, fabrics K, B12, P02, C01 and B01 respectively). In addition, two sherds of North African cylindrical amphora were found, including an oval-sectioned handle (Monaghan 1997, AP33-34).

The range of vessel forms present is wide and includes amphorae, jars used for cooking and/or storage, flanged bowls, mortaria and beakers. These indicate a fully Romanised lifestyle.

Anglo-Scandinavian

A single sherd from a possible York D jar was found (C1003). It probably dates to the late 9th to mid 10th centuries. It is abraded, unlike the Roman wares, suggesting that there was little deposition on the site during this period.

Medieval

One hundred and twenty-one sherds of medieval pottery were recovered, of which 119 are probably of mid/late 12th-century date (Table 3).

The most common ware was York Gritty ware, a type which ranges from the later 11th to the mid 13th centuries. However, in this particular case it is likely that the vessels have a more restricted date range. In addition to jars a possible bowl sherd was identified. Twelve jar rims were present, of which eight had a square profile and four a rounded square profile.

York Splashed ware was the next most common ware. This group includes several distinct fabrics and those from North Street have a fine-textured, oxidized fabric, similar to late medieval Humberware. All are likely to come from jugs, of which one rounded, externally-thickened rim was found.

York glazed ware was equally common (19 sherds) and consisted of 15 jug sherds and four from jars. The jug sherds include a tubular spout with traces of the bridge of clay linking the spout to the rim. These vessels are probably a short-lived, late 12th-century, fashion. York glazed ware is first found in late 12th-century deposits and continues in use into the mid 13th century, although it is difficult to make a sharp distinction between some York glazed ware and some Brandsby-type ware sherds.

Three sherds of possible York ware come from a jug which probably had a handle applied at the rim. This is a distinctive form, known only in the mid 12th century, and if the fabric is indeed York glazed ware then this vessel is potentially one of the earliest known. The fabric has a pink colour but appears to be underfired. Immature glaze covers the exterior of the vessel.

Other wares consists of two sherds of Northern Gritty ware jars (NGY) and single sherds of Staxton-type ware (STAX), a Stamford ware pitcher strap handle (STAM), a jar of unknown provenance with a ribbed body (MEDX) and a sherd of Lincolnshire Fine-Shelled ware jar (LFS).

This collection is typical of mid to late 12th-century assemblages from York, with the exception of the lack of Beverley glazed ware jugs and York Splashed ware vessels with a off-white gritty ware fabric.

Late Medieval/Transitional

Eight sherds of later 13th-century or later date were recovered. These include single sherds of a Brandsby-type jar and a Humberware jug from Pit 3. In both cases, it is possible that the sherds are atypical examples of earlier wares (York glazed ware and York Splashed ware) although in the case of the Humberware the sherd appears to be high-fired with an external brown slip which has partially vitrified, a late medieval/16th-century type.

The remaining sherds consist of four sherds Humberware jugs or jars and two sherds of Cistercian ware cups, from the soil overlying Pit 3 and the makeup for the late 18th or 19th-century brick structure above.

Assessment

The Roman pottery from the evaluation suggests that intact 4th-century strata exist on the site and were disturbed during the digging of pit 3. The single abraded sherd of York D ware comes from the overlying soil and may indicate the existence of an Anglo-Scandinavian ground surface over the Roman deposits. However, it is dangerous to infer too much from a single, residual sherd.

The five sherds recovered from borehole 5 are of the same types as those found in the excavation and date to the mid to late 12th centuries.

Pit 3 produced an assemblage of later 12th-century pottery, in which sherds of York glazed ware were recovered from all three fills. The two late sherds, of Brandsby-type and Humberware, were re-examined by the authors and we believe that they are indeed of later medieval date and therefore probably intrusive in contexts 1006 and 1007.

The assemblages from silt 1011 and soil 1012 include sherds from the same York? jug which is potentially of mid 12th-century date. The remainder of the assemblages is similar to that from Pit 3.

The overlying soil, and the make-up for the brick floor, contain similar pottery including sherds of late medieval/16th-century date.

Recommendations

The Roman pottery from the site, despite being residual, might be useful in reconstructing the later Roman settlement of York and should therefore be recorded using the Monaghan classification (Task 1). In addition, the possible York ware jug with the strap handle applied at the rim is important for the history of the potting industry supplying York. Samples should be taken for comparison with definite York glazed ware (Tasks 2 and 3) and a drawing of the vessel should be made (Task 4). A short note on this vessel and its archaeological context, should be prepared (Task 5). No further work is recommended at present, although the collection has potential for further study in the future and should therefore be retaining in its entirety.

Costings

Task No	Description	Unit Cost or hourly rate	Amount
1	Archive Record of Roman pottery	£ 25.00	£ 25.00
2	Thin section analysis	£ 22.50	£ 22.50
3	Chemical analysis (ICP-AES)	£ 23.50	£ 23.50
4	Illustration	£ 14.00	£ 14.00
5	Report preparation	£ 22.50	£ 22.50
Total		£ 107.50	£ 107.50
VAT		£ 18.81	£ 18.81
Grand Total			£ 126.31

Bibliography

Monaghan, Jason (1997) *Roman Pottery from York*. The Archaeology of York 16/8 York, Council for British Archaeology.

MPRG (1998) "A Guide to the Classification of Medieval Ceramic Forms." in MPRG, ed., *A Guide to the Classification of Medieval Ceramic Forms*, Medieval Pottery Research Group.

Table 1

cname	full name	period	earliest date	latest date	broad source	narrow source	source
BRANDSBY	Brandsby-type ware	med	1250	1350	England	Yorkshire	Brandsby
CSTN	Cistercian ware	pmed	1500	1650	England	Gloucestershire	
HUM	Humberware	lmed	1250	1500	England	Humber Estuary	various
LFS	Lincoln Fine Shelled ware	lsax-emed	950	1200	England	Lincolnshire	
MEDX	Non Local Medieval Fabrics	med	1150	1350	England	various	various
NYG	Northern Gritty ware	med	1100	1550	England	Yorkshire	Various
RPOT	unidentified Roman wares	rom	40	400	Various	na	na
RPOT?	unidentified Roman wares?	rom	40	400	Various		
ST	Stamford Ware	lsax	1000	1150	England	South Lincolnshire	Stamford
STAX	Staxton-type ware	med	1150	1500	England	Yorkshire	Staxton;Potter Brompton
YG	Yorkshire gritty ware	sn-emed	1050	1250	England	Yorkshire/North	
YORK	York glazed ware/York White ware	emed	1150	1300	England	Yorkshire	not known
YSP	York splashed ware	sn-emed	1050	1250	England	Yorkshire	VARIOUS

Table 2

Form	Sum of Nosh	Sum of NoV	Sum of Weight
	22	21	598
BOWL?	1	1	14
CUP	2	2	9
JAR	74	69	1486
JUG	39	29	953

JUG/JAR	5	5	90
PITCHER	1	1	13
Grand Total	144	128	3163

Table 3

cname	Form	Sum of Nosh	Sum of NoV	Sum of Weight
LFS	JAR	1	1	8
MEDX	JAR	1	1	21
NYG	JAR	2	2	42
ST	PITCHER	1	1	13
STAX	JAR	1	1	7
YG	BOWL?	1	1	14
	JAR	63	59	1243
YORK	JAR	4	3	80
	JUG	15	12	234
YORK?	JUG	5	2	116
YSP	JUG	18	14	595
	JUG/JAR	1	1	46
Grand Total		113	98	2419

Appendix 1

TSNO	Trench	REFNO	Context	Cname	Subfabric	Form	Part	Description	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Use	Condition	EVEs	Diam
		9	1002	CSTN		CUP	BS		1	1	2			0	0
		10	1003	YG		JAR	R	ROUNDED SQUARE RIM	1	1	18			9	180
		10	1003	YORKD		JAR	BS	HOOKED RIM	1	1	10		ABR	0	0
		10	1003	YORK		JUG	BS		1	1	10			0	0
		10	1003	CSTN		CUP	BS		1	1	7			0	0
		10	1003	YORK		JAR	BS		1	1	33	SOOTED EXT; BROWN DEPOSIT INT		0	0
		10	1003	RPOT			BS		1	1	4			0	0
		10	1003	HUM		JUG/JAR	BS		4	4	44			0	0
		10	1003	YORK		JUG	R	SQUARE RIM	1	1	8			8	140
		11	1005	YG		JAR	B		1	1	12	SOOTED EXT		11	100
		11	1005	YSP	FINE RED	JUG	R;H	ROUNDED AND THICKENED EXTERNALLY	1	1	71			12	140
		11	1005	YG		JAR	BS		2	2	56	SOOTED EXT		0	0
		11	1005	RPOT			R;BS		3	3	59			0	0
		14	1005	YG		JAR	B		1	1	22	SOOTED BOTTOM		5	160
		14	1005	YG		JAR	R	ROUNDED SQAURE RIM	1	1	7	SOOTED EXT AND ON RIM		10	120

TSNO	Trench	REFNO	Context	Cname	Subfabric	Form	Part	Description	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Use	Condition	EVEs	Diam
		14	1005	YG		BOWL?	R	SQAURE RIM	1	1	14	SOOTED EXT		6	200
		14	1005	YG		JAR	R	SQUARE UPLIFTED RIM	1	1	42			15	200
		14	1005	YG		JAR	R	SQUARE RIM WITH POSSIBLE LID SEATING	1	1	88			28	200
		14	1005	YG		JAR	B		1	1	15	SOOTED INT/EXT		17	80
		14	1005	YG		JAR	BS		8	8	115	SOOTED EXT		0	0
		11	1005	YG		JAR	BS		1	1	6			0	0
		14	1005	RPOT			R;H;BS		10	9	253			0	0
		14	1005	YG		JAR	BS		1	1	7	SOOTED INT/EXT		0	0
		14	1005	YG		JAR	BS		1	1	14	SOOTED EXT	ABRADED EXT	0	0
		14	1005	YSP	FINE RED	JUG	B		1	1	39			25	90
		14	1005	YSP	FINE RED	JUG	BS		1	1	10	SOOTED EXT		0	0
		14	1005	YSP	FINE RED	JUG	BS		2	2	43			0	0
		14	1005	ST		PITCHER	H		1	1	13			0	0
		14	1005	YORK		JAR	BS		1	1	18	SOOTED EXT		0	0
		14	1005	RPOT?		JAR	B		1	1	73			7	100
		14	1005	YG		JAR	BS		8	8	71			0	0
		12	1006	LFS		JAR	R	POSS EVERTED RIM; NOT ENOUGH FOR	1	1	8			0	0

TSNO	Trench	REFNO	Context	Cname	Subfabric	Form	Part	Description	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Use	Condition	EVEs	Diam
								EVES							
		12	1006	YORK		JUG	BS		1	1	6	WHITE DEPOSIT INT		0	0
		12	1006	YG		JAR	BS		2	2	13			0	0
		12	1006	MEDX		JAR	R	FLAT TOPPED EVERTED RIM	1	1	21	SOOTED EXT AND ON RIM		0	0
		12	1006	YSP	FINE RED	JUG/JAR	B		1	1	46		VERY ABRADED	17	150
		12	1006	HUM		JUG	BS		1	1	8		OVERFIRED	0	0
		12	1006	RPOT			BS		2	2	26			0	0
		12	1006	NYG		JAR	BS		1	1	25			0	0
		12	1006	YG		JAR	B		1	1	16	SOOTED EXT		12	140
		12	1006	YG		JAR	R	SQUARED RIM	1	1	22			7	240
		12	1006	YG		JAR	BS		2	2	7	SOOTED INT/EXT		0	0
		12	1006	YG		JAR	R	SQUARED RIM: NOT ENOUGH FOR EVES	1	1	11	SOOTED UNDER RIM		0	0
		12	1006	YG		JAR	R	ROUNDED SQUARE RIM	1	1	33			18	190
		12	1006	YORK		JUG	BS		3	3	29			0	0
		12	1006	YORK		JUG	H		1	1	66			0	0
		12	1006	YSP	FINE RED	JUG	BS		1	1	21			0	0
		12	1006	YG		JAR	BS		3	1	60	SOOTED EXT; WHITE		0	0

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TSNO	Trench	REFNO	Context	Cname	Subfabric	Form	Part	Description	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Use	Condition	EVEs	Diam
												DEOPSITS INT			
		12	1006	YG		JAR	BS		1	1	15	SOOTED EXT; BROWN DEPOSIT INT		0	0
		13	1007	NYG		JAR	R	EVERTED RIM WITH INTERNAL LEDGE FOR LID?	1	1	17			8	140
		13	1007	BRANDSBY		JAR	BS		1	1	12			0	0
		13	1007	YORK		JUG	BS		1	1	10			0	0
		13	1007	YORK		JUG	BS		1	1	15	SOOT INT	SOOT OVER BREAK	0	0
		13	1007	YORK		JUG	BS		1	1	5	WHITE DEPOSIT INT		0	0
		13	1007	YSP	FINE RED	JUG	BS		2	2	6			0	0
		13	1007	YORK		JUG	TUBULAR SPOUT		1	1	65			0	0
		15	1011	YG		JAR	B		1	1	45	SOOTED EXT	SOOT OVER BREAK	15	170
		15	1011	STAX		JAR	BS		1	1	7			0	0
		15	1011	YSP	FINE RED	JUG	B		5	1	316		VERY ABRADED	50	160
		15	1011	RPOT			BS		2	2	65			0	0
		15	1011	YG		JAR	R	ROUNDED SQUARE RIM	1	1	29			14	160
		15	1011	YG		JAR	R	SQUARE RIM	1	1	102	SOOT ON RIM; WHITE		16	200

TSNO	Trench	REFNO	Context	Cname	Subfabric	Form	Part	Description	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Use	Condition	EVEs	Diam
												DEPOSIT INT			
15		1011	YG			JAR	R	SQUARE RIM	1	1	30			13	200
15		1011	YG			JAR	B		1	1	18	SOOTED EXT		5	200
15		1011	YG			JAR	BS		9	7	190	SOOTED EXT		0	0
15		1011	YSP		FINE RED	JUG	BS		1	1	16	SOOTED EXT	SOOT OVER BREAK	6	160
15		1011	YG			JAR	BS		4	4	27			0	0
15		1011	YORK			JAR	R;BS	ROUNDED WITH TALL EXTERNAL BEAD	2	1	29	HEAVILY SOOTED EXT AND SOME INT		11	180
15		1011	YORK?			JUG	R;BS	FLARED RIM; TOO DAMAGED FOR EVES;SHL1012	2	1	30		ABRADED	0	0
15		1011	YSP		FINE RED	JUG	BS		2	2	47			0	0
16		1012	RPOT				R;BS		3	3	181			0	0
16		1012	YG			JAR	R	SQUARED RIM	1	1	63	SOOTED INT/EXT		24	170
16		1012	YG			JAR	B		1	1	47	SOOTED EXT		0	0
16		1012	YG			JAR	BS		2	2	35	SOOTED EXT		0	0
16		1012	YG			JAR	BS		1	1	7			0	0
16		1012	YORK?			JUG	R;BS	RIM FLARED OUT ROUNDED AND THICKENED	3	1	86		ABRADED	15	140

TSNO	Trench	REFNO	Context	Cname	Subfabric	Form	Part	Description	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Use	Condition	EVEs	Diam
		16	1012	YSP	FINE RED	JUG	BS	EXTERNALLY; SHL1011	1	1	19			0	0
		28	1044	YSP	FINE RED	JUG	BS		1	1	7			0	0
		27	1046	YORK		JUG	BS		4	1	20			0	0