

## Assessment of the Finds from Holy Trinity Church, Caister on Sea (8683 CBY)

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A small collection of finds (other than Roman pottery, assessed by M J Darling) were retrieved from archaeological work carried out by APS Ltd at Holy Trinity Church, Caister on Sea (Site Code 8683 CBY). In total, there are 107 fragments, although a large proportion of these are fragments of what is likely to be a single quern and small fragments of fired clay. At most, therefore, 56 different objects may be represented. They weigh in total 7.764 Kg (Table 1).

*Table 1*

Class	Fragments	Max objects	Weight (gm)
CBM	26	25	3577
CONCRETE	1	1	166
FCLAY	27	26	944
POTTERY	1	1	11
STONE	52	3	3066
Grand Total	107	56	7764

### Ceramic Building Material

#### **Roman**

Eleven fragments of Romano-British tile were recovered, from a variety of contexts (Table 2). The tiles were examined at x20 magnification and are all of a single fabric (Fabric 1). Two forms of tile were present: *tegulae* used alongside *imbrex* tiles on the roof, and bricks. The latter were used in walling, either in a totally brick wall or as decorative courses in a stone wall, or in hypocausts as *pilae*. From the measureable thicknesses, there is a distinct break in thickness between the tegulae, which range from 21 to 26mm thick, and the bricks, of which only two had measureable thicknesses, 34mm and 36mm.

*Table 2*

Context	Form	Sum of Nosh	Sum of NoV	Sum of Weight
10	TEG	2	2	687
11	TEG	2	2	664
24	BRICK	1	1	235
45	BRICK	1	1	68
51	BRICK	1	1	225
51	TEG	1	1	105

59	BRICK	3	2	146
Grand Total		11	10	2130

The fabric contains sparse rounded quartz grains, up to 0.5mm across, rare rounded flint up to 0.5mm across, rare rounded red sandstone up to 2.0mm across, moderate heat-altered calcareous inclusions up to 3.0mm across, and moderate rounded marl pellets, some merging into the groundmass, up to 4.0mm across. The groundmass consists of a calcareous clay with lenses of darker red, silty micaceous clay.

The fabric is visually similar to tiles made from calcareous Jurassic clays (e.g. the Kimmeridge and Oxford Clays), which do not outcrop in this part of Norfolk, nor are likely to be present in boulder clay. It is therefore possible that the tiles were imported to the site.

The tegulae have distinct flange profiles, cutouts made with a knife and 'signature marks' all of which could be recorded in detail.

### Medieval to post-medieval

Fifteen fragments of medieval to post-medieval brick and tile were recovered, from a variety of contexts (Table 3). Ten different fabrics were identified by eye (Table 4).

*Table 3*

Context:	BRICK	FLAT	FLAT?	FLOOR	PANT	PEG	Grand Total
1010	3	1				1	5
24	1						1
29		4					4
45		2			1		3
51			1	1			2
Grand Total	4	7	1	1	1	1	15

*Table 4*

SUBFABRIC:	BRICK	FLAT	FLAT?	FLOOR	PANT	PEG	Grand Total
F02			4				4
F03			1				1
F04			2				2
F05		2					2
F06		1					1
F07						1	1
F08		1					1
F09						1	1
F10				1			1

F11				1			1
Grand Total	4	7	1	1	1	1	15

Fabric 2 contains sparse rounded, iron-stained quartz and red clay pellets in a silty, micaceous matrix. The moulding sand consists of rounded, iron-stained quartz up to 0.5mm across.

Fabric 3 is similar to fabric 2, but the moulding sand is mainly finer, with a few larger, polished grains up to 2.0mm across.

Fabric 4 is similar to Fabric 3 and may be a slightly less high-fired version of this fabric.

Fabric 5 contains abundant rounded quartz up to 0.5mm across and sparse rounded white flint up to 2.0mm across in a groundmass of red-firing clay with lenses of lighter firing clay.

Fabric 6 contains angular and rounded fragments of yellow and red-firing marl in a groundmass of yellow-firing calcareous clay, with lenses of red-firing clay. This yellow brick fabric is often said to be imported from the low countries but is in fact produced at a number of centres in eastern England. In Cambridgeshire it is made from the Kimmeridge Clay.

Fabric 7 is very similar to fabrics 2, 3 and 4, differing only in its colour (as a result of differences in firing temperature?)

Fabric 8 contains sparse large rounded pebbles of quartz (Bunter (Sherwood Sandstone) type) and brown-stained flint up to 20mm long in a groundmass of abundant ill-sorted rounded quartz.

Fabric 9 is an untempered, silty, micaceous calcareous clay with a rounded quartz moulding sand (grains up to 0.3mm)

Fabric 10 contains rounded quartz, calcareous inclusions, and muscovite in a variegated groundmass of calcareous clay. The moulding sand is a mixed quartz/calcareous sand.

Fabric 11 contains few inclusions larger than 0.1mm across and has a variegated groundmass of calcareous clay. The single example is a floor tile with a quartz moulding sand on the base.

These fabrics can be grouped into wares which might represent the products of a single industry.

Fabrics 2, 3, 4 and 7 form a distinct group, source unknown, and the two floor tiles, Fabrics 10 and 11, are probably both Flemish imports of the late medieval/early post-medieval period. One of these tiles has a nail hole in the corner of the upper surface, a feature of low

countries floor tiles that is presumed to be related to a specific detail of the manufacturing process that differs from that used in England.

The source of the fabrics, with the exception of the Flemish floor tiles, is unknown. Fabric 8 is likely to be local and is similar in appearance to bricks and tiles made from boulder clay. Fabric 6 might be either from the Low Countries or Cambridgeshire.

The date of the medieval and post-medieval ceramic building material is equally unclear. The Flemish floor tiles are likely to be late medieval or early post-medieval in date (late 14<sup>th</sup> to early 16<sup>th</sup> century) whilst the pantile is probably of 17<sup>th</sup>-century or later date. Yellow bricks such as fabric 6 were used in the late medieval period but were popular in Cambridgeshire and surrounding counties in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, forming decorative bands in houses built of red-firing brick.

## Concrete

A single fragment of a modern concrete roof tile was found, and assigned a fabric number, F12. The concrete contains a coarse sand which includes fragments of flint, quartz, white finegrained sandstone and oolitic limestone and does not appear to be similar to that found in the medieval and post-medieval ceramic building material. It is probable that the tile was made elsewhere.

## Fired Clay

Fired clay was recovered from two contexts, 16 and 27. All of the material has a similar fabric, although it varies in firing conditions.

The fabric contains moderate quantities of:

- rounded quartz grains up to 1.0mm across, some of which are polished and in some cases have a red colour, indicating the presence of iron-rich veins in the quartz,
- organic inclusions up to 3.0mm long. Some of these survive solely as voids and impressions and others contain charred or ashy remnants. In some cases, the burning of the organic inclusions has given a black colour to the clay matrix
- rounded clay pellets up to 2.0mm across. These do not have sharp boundaries and are redder in colour than the clay matrix.

The clay matrix contains abundant quartz and muscovite silt up to 0.1mm across.

Three sources of silty, micaceous clay exist in eastern Norfolk: recent estuarine or marine silt; the lower Cretaceous Gault clay and boulder clay derived in whole or part from this clay.

The polished quartz grains were certainly ultimately derived from lower Cretaceous deposits, but might have been through several cycles of erosion since then, whilst the quantity of quartz and muscovite silt visually seems higher than that found in the Gault clay and more comparable with recent silts, and ceramics made from them, found in the Lincolnshire fenland. The organic content is probably the result of deliberate tempering, with grass, straw or animal dung, although some marine silts also have a high organic content.

The fired clay includes just one piece with a wattle impression and this is the only piece which is certainly daub. The remainder are of two or three different kinds of object. A single fragment with a convex surface is probably from a solid cylinder of clay, perhaps a stand. A few pieces have parallel, flat faces and in one case a rough circular edge, towards which the clay expands on both surfaces. It is possible that these fragments come from flat-bottomed trays but no fragments which could have formed the walls of such objects were found and it is more likely that they are near complete as they are. A few fragments have a single flat face and might be parts of similar discs or might be daub. Finally, there are some pieces whose thickness and absence of wattle impressions preclude their being daub.

Both contexts contained abundant pottery production waste and it is very likely that this fired clay derives from the kiln superstructure and furniture. If so, it is important to illustrate examples and to take samples for petrological and chemical analysis for comparison with the pottery waste.

## Pottery

### **Late Medieval/Transitional**

A single sherd from a Raeren stoneware drinking jug, or mug, was recovered, from context 29. These vessels were produced at Raeren, near Aachen, in the later 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries (Hurst & van Beuningen 1986 #11313) and exported to England in large quantities, especially during the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

A sherd from a thin-walled pancheon with an internal white slip and plain internal splash glaze was recovered from context 044. The vessel has an external dark red slip. The vessel was probably produced locally (classed as LMT) and probably dates to the later 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> century.

## Stone

Apart from one probably unworked fragment of ferruginous sandstone, of lower Cretaceous date, the site produced two stone artefacts, both querns.

### **Spilsby Sandstone**

A fragment forming about a third of the upper stone of a rotary quern made from a lower Cretaceous sandstone, with a coarse illsorted rounded quartz sand and a white, probably silicious cement. This is probably the Spilsby sandstone, which outcrops on the western side of the Lincolnshire Wolds, between Caister and Horncastle. The diameter and profile of the quern could be reconstructed and it is recommended that a line drawing is made.

Spilsby sandstone querns were produced in some quantities in the later Iron Age and Roman periods, although probably ceasing to be made by the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, as a result of a preference for Millstone Grit and Mayen lava querns, both of which are not so friable. The earliest Spilsby Sandstone querns were saddle querns, replaced later by beehive querns, a early form of rotary quern. The present quern is shorter than the classic beehive querns but is as narrow and may therefore be seen as a transitional form, made by the Lincolnshire quern makers once they had seen examples of the later form.

### **Mayen Lava**

A collection of featureless fragments of dark grey vesicular lava were recovered from context 16. It is likely that they come from a single rotary quern which has decayed through weathering after burial.

Such querns were produced in the Mayen/Mendig area of the Eiffel mountains from the Roman period through to the 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. The archaeological context indicates a Roman date for the object.

### **Assessment**

Where the finds come from stratified deposits and were collected in controlled excavation they should be retained.

The finds assessed here include fired clay which it is suggested was associated with pottery production and requires further work, as part of a study and publication of that material.

Other finds of Roman date include the two quern stones, also associated with the pottery waste, of which one could be illustrated, and the ceramic building material, none of which came from deposits associated with pottery waste and which a study of the fabric suggests were not locally made.

The medieval and later finds help provide dating for the deposits in which they were found (Table 5) but require no further study at present.

*Table 5*

Context	Earliest Deposition Date	Based on
10	Modern	Concrete tile
11	Roman	CBM
24	Medieval or Post-Medieval	CBM
29	Late Medieval	Pottery
45	Post Medieval	CBM
51	Late Medieval/Post Medieval	CBM
59	Roman	CBM
1010	Late Medieval/Post Medieval	CBM

Further Work

Task	Costing	Notes
Illustration of Spilsby Sandstone Quern	Not Costed	
Illustration of Fired Clay Objects	Not Costed	
Thin Section Analysis of Fired Clay	£90.00 plus VAT	Four samples
Chemical Analysis of Fired Clay	£141.00 plus VAT	Six samples

*Appendix 1*

Context	class	Cname	Subfabric	Form	Part	Description	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Use
10	CONCRETE	MOD	F12	TILE	BS	CONCRETE	1	1	166	
10	CBM	RTIL	F1	TEG	BS		1	1	32	
10	CBM	RTIL	F1	TEG	BS		1	1	655	
11	CBM	RTIL	F1	TEG	BS		1	1	235	
11	CBM	RTIL	F1	TEG	BS		1	1	429	
16	STONE	STONE	SPILSBY SST	ROTARY QUERN	PROF	OVAL/SUBRECTANGULAR SLOT FOR HANDLE	1	1	1142	
16	FCLAY	FCLAY	CHAFF;M RQ;S GSQ;REDDER CLAY PELLETS;SILTY MICACEOUS GROUNDMASS	FCLAY	BS	SLABS WITH TWO PARALLAL FLAT FACES	1	1	11	
16	STONE	STONE	MAYEN LAVA	QUERN	BS		50	1	1865	
16	STONE	STONE	LOWER CRETACEOUS FERRUGINOUS SST	GEO	BS		1	1	59	
16	FCLAY	FCLAY	CHAFF;M RQ;S GSQ;REDDER CLAY PELLETS;SILTY MICACEOUS GROUNDMASS	FCLAY	BS	FEATURELESS LUMPS	5	5	194	
24	CBM	MTIL	F5	BRICK	BS		1	1	287	
24	CBM	RTIL	F1	BRICK	BS		1	1	235	
27	FCLAY	FCLAY	CHAFF;M RQ;S GSQ;REDDER CLAY PELLETS;SILTY MICACEOUS GROUNDMASS	FCLAY	BS	SCRAPS	1	1	50	
27	FCLAY	FCLAY	CHAFF;M RQ;S GSQ;REDDER CLAY PELLETS;SILTY MICACEOUS GROUNDMASS	FCLAY	BS	SCRAPS WITH ONE FLAT FACE	9	9	101	
27	FCLAY	FCLAY	CHAFF;M RQ;S GSQ;REDDER CLAY PELLETS;SILTY MICACEOUS GROUNDMASS	FCLAY	BS	FRAGMENT OF CYLINDRICAL STAND	1	1	185	
27	FCLAY	FCLAY	CHAFF;M RQ;S GSQ;REDDER CLAY PELLETS;SILTY MICACEOUS GROUNDMASS	FCLAY	BS	SLABS WITH TWO PARALLAL FLAT FACES AND TRACES OF A WALL I.E. BASE OF TRAY?	2	1	169	
27	FCLAY	FCLAY	CHAFF;M RQ;S GSQ;REDDER CLAY PELLETS;SILTY MICACEOUS GROUNDMASS	FCLAY	BS	SLABS WITH TWO PARALLAL FLAT FACES	6	6	75	
27	FCLAY	FCLAY	CHAFF;M RQ;S GSQ;REDDER CLAY PELLETS;SILTY MICACEOUS GROUNDMASS	FCLAY	BS	TWO FLAT FACES AT OBTUSE ANGLE	1	1	148	



Context	class	Cname	Subfabric	Form	Part	Description	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Use
27	FCLAY	FCLAY	CHAFF;M RQ;S GSQ;REDDER CLAY PELLETS;SILTY MICACEOUS GROUNDMASS	DAUB	BS		1	1	11	
29	CBM	MTIL	F2	FLAT	BS		1	1	10	
29	CBM	MTIL	F2	FLAT	BS		1	1	30	MORTAR
29	CBM	MTIL	F3	FLAT	BS		1	1	70	
29	CBM	MTIL	F4	FLAT	BS		1	1	16	
29	POTTERY	RAER		DJ	BS		1	1	11	
44	POTTERY	LMT		PANC	BS		1	1	4	
45	CBM	MTIL	F2	FLAT	BS		2	2	88	
45	CBM	PMTIL	F9	PANT	BS		1	1	61	
45	CBM	RTIL	F1	BRICK	BS		1	1	68	
51	CBM	FLEM	F10	FLAT?	BS		1	1	95	
51	CBM	FLEM	F11	FLOOR	BS	DARK_GREEN_GLAZE;_UNWORN	1	1	40	
51	CBM	RTIL	F1	BRICK	BS		1	1	225	
51	CBM	RTIL	F1	TEG	BS		1	1	105	
59	CBM	RTIL	F1	BRICK	BS		3	2	146	
1010	CBM	MTIL	F4	FLAT	BS	FINGER_MARKS/PAW_MARK?	1	1	222	MORTAR
1010	CBM	MTIL	F5	BRICK	BS		1	1	43	
1010	CBM	MTIL	F7	PEG	BS	TWO_HOLES_35_APART;_7_ACROSS	1	1	58	MORTAR
1010	CBM	PMTIL	F6	BRICK	BS		1	1	65	
1010	CBM	PMTIL	F8	BRICK	BS		1	1	362	MORTAR