

## Assessment of the Finds from Nostell Priory, West Yorkshire (OSA05 EV15)

### *Alan Vince*

A collection of finds, mainly ceramic building material and pottery, from an archaeological evaluation at Nostell Priory, carried out by On-Site Archaeology Ltd was submitted to the author for identification and assessment.

The finds range in date from the late medieval period to the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### Description

#### **Ceramic Building Material**

Sixty-two fragments of ceramic building material were recorded. They mostly consist of fragments of brick, usually with mortar adhering to them and therefore building debris, together with a few fragments of flat roof tile and pantile. The fragments were all examined at x20 magnification and assigned fabrics in the same series as that employed in 2004 (Vince 2004; Table 1).

*Table 1*

Fabric	Description
A	A high-fired fabric with sparse inclusions of iron-rich clay, quartz and sandstone. The groundmass is variegated and consists of poorly-mixed light-firing and red-firing clays.
B	This fabric is similar in firing to A but contains fewer lenses and streaks in the groundmass, being predominantly composed of red-firing clay.
C	This fabric is similar to B but with a lower firing temperature
D	This fabric is lower-fired and coarser in texture than A to C and also has a distinctive micaceous matrix. The iron-rich clay, quartz and sandstone inclusions are more prominent than in fabrics A to C. Like fabrics B and C it contains some streaks of white-firing clay.
E	This fabric has a low iron content and is variegated

The distinctive fabric, D, which was the only one found in the 2003 evaluation which is probably not locally produced, was not found. The remaining fabrics were probably made from mixed Coal Measure clays, quite likely being made in Nostell itself.

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**Table 2**

Context	Form	FAB A	FAB B	FAB C	FAB E	Grand Total
108	BRICK		5			5
302	BRICK	28				28
	PANT	1		4		5
303	BRICK		1			1
304	BRICK	4				4
310	BRICK	1				1
311	BRICK	2	2		1	5
	FLAT	2		1		3
313	BRICK	1				1
339	BRICK		1			1
919	BRICK	3				3
920	BRICK	4	1			5
Grand Total		46	10	5	1	62

Eleven of the bricks had at least one measureable dimension. They have a mean thickness of 62.7mm.

**Table 3**

Context	subfabric	Use	B	TH
304	FAB A	MORTARED		92
108	FAB B	MORTARED		64
108	FAB B	MORTARED	111	57
108	FAB B	MORTARED		66
108	FAB B	MORTARED	118	58
313	FAB A			49
108	FAB B	MORTARED		60
311	FAB B			55
311	FAB E			63
303	FAB B	MORTARED		66
920	FAB B	MORTARED		60

**Glass**

Thirty-eight fragments of window glass were recorded (Table 00).

The glass is of three types:

- a) Light green
- b) Dark Green

c) Light Blue

Light green glass is typical of late medieval and early post-medieval glass, probably being produced up to the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Dark green glass was produced from the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards and light blue glass was produced from the later 17<sup>th</sup> century to the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century.

**Table 4**

Context	Form	subfabric	Nosh	NoV	Weight	REFNO
118	ONION	DKGR	1	1	45	9
310	WIND	LTBL	2	2	7	10
301	WIND	LTGR	1	1	3	7
313	WIND	LTBL	1	1	7	12
302	WIND	LTBL	33	33	42	5

Most of the fragments come from window glass of varying thicknesses and colours. Several pieces have one original edge, which was invariably scored and snapped with a diamond cutter rather than being grozed (chipped with pliers). The small size of the fragments probably explains the lack of two- or more sided pieces.

The exception is the dark green fragment from context 118, which is from an onion bottle, a type of wine bottle used from the late 17<sup>th</sup> to the early 18<sup>th</sup> century (c.1680-1710).

**Iron**

Three nails were recorded, weighing 50gm in total. One of these nails, from context 121, is extremely corroded, so that the original metal is now a void surrounded by corrosion products. The other two nails are better preserved but still corroded.

A fragment of a possible iron tool, perhaps an axe head, was recorded from context 340.

**Lead**

Twelve fragments of lead, representing no more than 6 objects and weighing 154 gm in total were recorded.

Fragments of window came were present in contexts 301 and 302. The fragments appear to have been machine-made, but it is not clear if they were milled (there are no cog marks on the inside of the comes). Both groups have the same shape and size and probably come from the same window, or at least windows inserted/replaced at the same time. One junction was found but it is now unclear whether the panes were square or diamond-shaped, although the angle between the two sides is closer to 90 degrees than one would expect from a diamond pane.

Three fragments of lead strip were found. One appears to have been milled or otherwise machine-made and the other two were probably cast. In the latter cases the strips have been

roughly twisted, suggesting that perhaps they were plant tags, used to secure a plant to a cane. The milled strip might have had a similar function.

### **Pottery**

Twenty-four sherds of pottery were recorded, representing no more than 20 vessels and weighing 0.936 Kg.

*Table 5*

cname	Sum of Nosh	Sum of NoV	Sum of Weight
CHPO	1	1	3
LPMLOC	16	13	876
NGR	3	2	9
SLIP	2	2	38
WHITE	2	2	10
Grand Total	24	20	936

### **Medieval**

Three sherds of Northern Gritty ware were recovered. They come from two jugs whose features suggest a later medieval date (i.e. later 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries) although similar fabrics have been observed in West Yorkshire in late 12<sup>th</sup> to mid 14<sup>th</sup> century contexts. The sherds are small (9 gm in total).

### **Post-Medieval or later**

The remaining 21 sherds are of post-medieval or later date. The majority are from unglazed flower pots whose fabric suggests a local origin. The vessel form, with a thickened rim and central base hole, suggest a 19<sup>th</sup> century date. A sherd of Chinese Export Porcelain comes from a tea cup, probably of early 18<sup>th</sup> century date but, given the high status of the site it could be earlier (mid/late 17<sup>th</sup> century). Two sherds of slipware were made from mixed Coal Measure clays with sparse sandstone inclusions. Both have a slip on the interior under a plain lead glaze. However, the slip is only slightly lighter in colour than the body, a distinctive feature.

Two sherds appear to be refined Whiteware fired to a biscuit ware state. One of these comes from a moulded, fluted bowl. Without the glaze it is difficult to date these sherds but they are clearly of later 18<sup>th</sup> century or later date.

The majority of the sherds come from flower pots, and were probably used in a garden or greenhouse.

### **Stone**

Two fragments of micaceous sandstone, one trimmed to shape, were recorded. Both are probably roof tiles.

## Assessment

The only medieval finds are stratified in post-medieval deposits and are therefore residual. The post-medieval material is a mixture of domestic refuse, building debris and horticultural waste. The domestic waste includes two fragments of biscuit Whiteware which may either be seconds, used, for example, as flowerpot holders, or perhaps waste from pottery production nearby. There is too little domestic debris to characterise the activities which gave rise to it, or the social status of its users. The building debris, however, includes evidence for leaded windows, probably of later 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>-century date, and at least one fragment of earlier window glass. The horticultural waste consists of flowerpot fragments whose fabric is similar to that of the ceramic building material and which were probably made locally.

## Retention

An example of each fabric type and form should be retained from the ceramic building material whilst the remainder could be discarded. The iron is probably unstable and will not survive for long in storage. However, since it consists solely of nail fragments there is probably little to be gained from conservation except for the possible tool from context 340 which requires radiography and a conservation assessment. The lead finds probably include very recent finds, but should be retained and therefore should have a conservation assessment to establish their stability, the need for treatment and suitable packaging and storage conditions. All of the pottery and glass should be retained and both are probably stable enough for storage without further treatment.

## Further Work

No further work is recommended on the finds except for a conservation assessment of the iron and lead finds and an examination of the x-ray plate for the iron object.

## Bibliography

Alan Vince (2004) *Assessment of the finds from Nostell Priory, West Yorkshire (OSA03 WB37)*. AVAC Reports 2004/12 Lincoln, Alan Vince Archaeology Consultancy.

*Appendix 1*

Context	class	cname	Description	Form	subfabric	Nosh	NoV	Action	Part	Weight	Use	B	TH	Condition
108	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB B	1	1		BS	181	MORTARED		60	
108	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB B	1	1		BS	155	MORTARED		64	
108	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB B	1	1		BS	708	MORTARED	111	57	
108	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB B	1	1		BS	78	MORTARED		66	
108	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB B	1	1		BS	1111	MORTARED	118	58	
118	PMGL	PMGL		ONION	DKGR	1	1		BS	45				
121	IRON	IRON		NAIL		1	1		BS	8				V CORRODED
301	STONE	STONE	CHIPPED TO SHAPE	ROOFER	MICACEOUS SST	1	1		BS	491	MORTARED		11	
301	LEAD	LEAD	MACHINE MADE;ONE JUNCTION BUT ANGLE UNCERTAIN	CAME		4	1		BS	22		11		
301	PMGL	PMGL		WIND	LTGR	1	1		BS	3				
302	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB A	28	28		BS	528	MORTARED			
302	CBM	MTIL		PANT	FAB C	4	4		BS	608				
302	CBM	MTIL		PANT	FAB A	1	1		BS	366	MORTARED			
302	POTTERY	LPMLOC		FLP		1	1		BS	24				
302	POTTERY	LPMLOC		FLP		3	1		PROF	398				
302	LEAD	LEAD	MACHINE MADE;ONE CORNER PROBABLY MEANT TO BE 90 DEGREES;ONE SIDE AT LEAST 85MM	CAME		3	1		BS	27		11	5	
302	PMGL	PMGL		WIND	LTBL	33	33		BS	42				
302	LEAD	LEAD	TWO CAST STRIPS, ONE TWISTED AROUND THE OTHER;POSSIBLY A PLANT TAG	STRIP		2	1		BS	10		3	3	
302	LEAD	LEAD	MACHINE MADE	STRIP		1	1		BS	6		5		

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Context	class	cname	Description	Form	subfabric	Nosh	NoV	Action	Part	Weight	Use	B	TH	Condition
302	IRON	IRON		NAIL		2	1		BS	33				
303	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB B	1	1		BS	821	MORTARED		66	
303	LEAD	LEAD	TRIANGULAR-SECTIONED CAST STRIP ATTACHED IN CENTRE TO CIRCULAR BLOB WHICH IS EITHER A WINDOW CAME JUNCTION OR A RIVET (H-SECTIONED) AND THEN TWISTED TO WRAP AROUND CIRCULAR OBJECT	STRIP		1	1		BS	30		5	4	
304	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB A	4	4		BS	91	MORTARED		92	
304	POTTERY	LPMLOC		FLP		1	1		R	213				
304	POTTERY	LPMLOC		FLP		1	1		BS	36				
304	LEAD	LEAD	TRIANGULAR-SECTIONED CAST STRIP	STRIP		1	1		BS	9		6	3	
304	IRON	IRON		NAIL		1	1		BS	9				
310	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB A	1	1		BS	8				
310	POTTERY	SLIP	WHITE SLIPPED PLAIN GLAZED INT;RED SLIPPED EXT	BOWL	SPARSE SST;MIXED CMW/CMR	1	1		BS	4				
310	POTTERY	CHPO	BLUE DEC EXT	CUP		1	1		B	0	BURNT INT			
310	PMGL	PMGL		WIND	LTBL	2	2		BS	7				
311	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB E	1	1		BS	117			63	
311	CBM	MTIL		FLAT	FAB A	2	2		BS	134				
311	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB B	1	1		BS	233			233	
311	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB B	1	1		BS	192			55	
311	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB A	2	2		BS	33				
311	CBM	MTIL		FLAT	FAB C	1	1		BS	69				
311	STONE	STONE		ROOFER	MICACEOUS SST	2	2		BS	48				
313	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB A	1	1		BS	73			49	

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Context	class	cname	Description	Form	subfabric	Nosh	NoV	Action	Part	Weight	Use	B	TH	Condition
313	PMGL	PMGL		WIND	LTBL	1	1		BS	7				
338	POTTERY	LPMLOC		FLP	LENSES OF WHITE CLAY	2	1		R	38				
339	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB B	1	1		BS	36				
339	POTTERY	LPMLOC		FLP		1	1		R	18	OVERFIRED/BHURNT			
339	POTTERY	LPMLOC		FLP	LENSES OF WHITE CLAY	1	1		R	78				
339	POTTERY	SLIP	WHITE SLIPPED PLAIN GLAZED INT;RED SLIPPED EXT	BOWL	SPARSE SST;MIXED CMW/CMR	1	1		BS	34				
340	IRON	IRON	POSSIBLY FRAGMENT OF TOOL, SUCH AS AN AXE	OBJECT		1	1	XRAY	BS	120				
803	POTTERY	LPMLOC		FLP		3	3		BS	25				
803	POTTERY	WHITE	UNGLAZED;BISCUIT?			1	1		BS	3				
803	POTTERY	WHITE	UNGLAZED;BISCUIT?;FLUTED EXT	BOWL		1	1		BS	7				
803	POTTERY	LPMLOC		FLP		1	1		B	18				
803	POTTERY	LPMLOC		FLP		1	1		R	6				
919	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB A	3	3		BS	239	MORTARED			
920	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB B	1	1		BS	199	MORTARED		60	
920	CBM	MTIL		BRICK	FAB A	4	4		BS	91				
925	POTTERY	NGR		JUG	CMR;SST	2	1		BS	8				
925	POTTERY	NGR	EXT PLAIN GL;REDUCED BODY CF HUM	JUG		1	1		BS	1				
US	POTTERY	LPMLOC		FLP	CMW	1	1		BS	22				