

## **Assessment of the Pottery from Gale Farm Surgery, Acomb, North Yorkshire (OSA06 WB02)**

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A small quantity of pottery and other finds was recovered from an archaeological watching brief carried out at Gale Farm Surgery, Acomb, North Yorkshire, by On-Site Archaeology Ltd (Site Code OSA06 WB02).

The finds indicate activity on the site from at least the early 13<sup>th</sup> century, possibly earlier. These medieval finds are mainly unstratified but include a sherd of later 12<sup>th</sup> century or later date from the fill of a post-hole. Other finds date to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century or later.

### **Description**

The finds consist of ceramic building material (CBM), clay tobacco pipe (CTP) and pottery. The finds were identified using the classification employed by York Archaeological Trust (1978,1987) and quantified by fragment count, the maximum number of vessels in the context and weight in grams (Table 1).

***Table 1***

class	Sum of Nosh	Sum of NoV	Sum of Weight
CBM	5	5	137
CTP	1	1	9
POTTERY	16	16	300
Grand Total	22	22	446

### **Ceramic Building Material**

Five fragments of ceramic building material were recovered. All are fragments of brick and all have a similar fabric and appearance. The fabric is poorly mixed and contains lenses of inclusionless red-firing and light-firing clay in a groundmass of red-firing calcareous clay. The local quaternary clays of the York area are not calcareous and these bricks were probably made outside of the city, probably in the Humber basin or estuary.

### **Clay Tobacco Pipe**

Two fragments of clay tobacco pipe were recovered. Both are stem fragments and have the narrow bore diameters characteristic of clay pipes of late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>-century date.

### **Pottery**

#### **Medieval**

Fourteen sherds of medieval pottery were recovered (Table 2). The earliest type present was York Gritty ware. The type was first produced in the late 11<sup>th</sup> century but there is no obvious

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difference in the fabric or appearance of sherds of the ware throughout its long period of use. The latest examples in York appear to be at least mid 13<sup>th</sup> century date. The next earliest type is York glazed ware (YORK) and the single sherd of this type comes from a cylindrical jar, similar in shape to the York Gritty vessels. York glazed ware was first produced in the late 12<sup>th</sup> century but it too continued in use to at least the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century. A sherd from the base of a rounded jug with groups of thumb impressions around the base could be of either York glazed ware or Brandsby-type ware. The vessel appears to have been used for cooking since it has sooting on the exterior and a black internal deposit. The remaining sherds are of later medieval types: Brandsby-type ware (BRAN), and Humberware. The latter include a sherd from an oxidized, unglazed drinking jug or bottle. This type is very common in deposits in York of later 14<sup>th</sup> century date.

*Table 2*

Cname	Sum of Nosh	Sum of NoV	Sum of Weight
BRAN	1	1	6
HUM	7	7	90
HUM/LHUM	1	1	71
YG	3	3	15
YORK	1	1	17
YORK/BRAN	1	1	71
Grand Total	14	14	270

### Early Modern

A single sherd from an unglazed red earthenware flower pot probably dates to the later 18<sup>th</sup> century to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### Assessment

The only stratified medieval sherd is the York/Brandsby-type jug base. Grouped thumb impressions are common on medieval jugs in Yorkshire in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and later and seem to have become more common in the later 13<sup>th</sup> century (for example, see the numerous examples in 1992 where only one vessel, No.59, is of York glazed ware compared with several Brandsby-type ware jugs) and later at the expense of continuous thumbing. However, an earlier 13<sup>th</sup> century date cannot be ruled out.

The unstratified medieval sherds indicate that there was activity on the site in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and also in the later 14<sup>th</sup> century, after which there is a complete break until some time in the early modern period.

### Recommendations

No further work is recommended on these finds but the medieval pottery, at least, should be retained for future study.

## Bibliography

- Brooks, C M (1987) *Medieval and Later Pottery from Aldwark and Other Sites*. The Archaeology of York 16/3 London, York Archaeol Trust.
- Holdsworth, J (1978) *Selected pottery groups AD 650-1780*. Archaeology of York 16/1 London, Council British Archaeol.
- Jennings, Sarah (1992) *Medieval Pottery in the Yorkshire Museum*. York, The Yorkshire Museum.

*Appendix 1*

Context	class	Cname	Form	Description	Use	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight
1007	CBM	PMTIL	BRICK			BS	1	1	2
1017	POTTERY	YORK/BRAN	JAR	GLOBULAR BODY;SANGGING BASE;INTERMITTENT THUMBING	SOOTED EXT;BLACK DEPO INT	BS	1	1	71
1021	POTTERY	LPMLOC	FLP			BS	1	1	24
1025	POTTERY	HUM/LHUM	JUG	STRAP WITH 4-GROOVES DOWN BACK;PLAIN GL + WHSL		BS	1	1	71
1033	POTTERY	PIPECLAY	PIPE	L18TH/19TH C BORE DIAM		BS	1	1	6
1033	CBM	PMTIL	BRICK			BS	3	3	89
1041	CTP	PIPECLAY	PIPE	L18TH/19TH C BORE DIAM		BS	1	1	9
1041	CBM	PMTIL	BRICK			BS	1	1	46
US	POTTERY	BRANDSBY	JUG			BS	1	1	6
US	POTTERY	HUM	JUG			BS	5	5	65
US	POTTERY	HUM	JAR	PLAIN GL INT AND EXT		BS	1	1	20

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US	POTTERY	HUM	DJ	UNGLAZED OXIDISED		BS	1	1	5
US	POTTERY	YG	JAR			BS	3	3	15
US	POTTERY	YORK	JAR	GLAZED SPOTS;CYLINDRICAL BODY	SOOTED EXT	BS	1	1	17