

## **Assessment of the Pottery, Ceramic Building Material and Clay Tobacco Pipes from Yarburgh Grove, York (OSA06 WB04)**

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A small quantity of pottery and other finds from an archaeological watching brief at Yarburgh Grove, York, was submitted for identification and assessment. The finds include a single sherd of Roman pottery and a single sherd of Anglo-Scandinavian pottery. The remaining finds are either of medieval date (late 12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries) or are recent (probably mid 19<sup>th</sup> century or later). An unusual find, for a suburban/rural site, is a fragment of mould from the production of copper alloy vessels.

### **Description**

A total of 22 objects were submitted, weighing in total 196gm (Table 1).

*Table 1*

class	Sum of Nosh	Sum of NoV	Sum of Weight
CBM	3	3	30
CTP	5	5	40
FCLAY	1	1	7
POTTERY	13	13	119
Grand Total	22	22	196

### **Ceramic Building Material**

Three fragments of flat roof tile were recovered. All have a fine-grained, calcareous groundmass which suggests a source in the Humber wetlands, such as Cawood where documentary for the production of tile for supply to York exists, corroborated by finds of waste tile (Vince and Steane 2004).

### **Clay Tobacco Pipes**

Five fragments of clay tobacco pipe were recovered. Two of these are stem fragments, which cannot be precisely dated (bore diameters of 2.4mm and 2.8mm suggest a late 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>-century date). The three remaining fragments come from bowls. One of these is a plain rim fragment (unmilled, probably 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century). Another is a large, undecorated bowl, stamped with an L over a crown on the back of the bowl. The size and shape suggest a Low Countries origin (or at least inspiration) for this pipe and it would be worthwhile submitting the pipe to a specialist for a precise identification. The third fragment is from a decorated pipe with a faceted bowl and a band of floral decoration around the rim. Similar pipes have been dated to the mid/late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

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## **Fired Clay**

A single fragment of organic-tempered clay mould was recovered. The fragment has one original concave face suggesting that it comes from the cope of a bell or copper alloy vessel (such as a cauldron, ewer, or mortar). Bells were produced using this method from the pre-conquest period onwards but other vessels were produced mainly in the later medieval to early post-medieval period (later 13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> centuries).

## **Pottery**

Thirteen fragments of pottery were recovered ranging in date from the earlier part of the Roman period to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Roman**

A single abraded fragment of Eboracum ware (1997, Fabric E1) was recovered. The sherd comes from the base of a flagon or jar which has been turned after throwing. Eboracum ware was produced from the later 1<sup>st</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries.

### **Anglo-Scandinavian**

A sherd of York A ware jar was recovered. The sherd is small but not abraded, but this may reflect the relatively high firing temperature. Given the small size of the sherd and the lack of typological features this identification should be treated with caution.

### **Medieval**

Three sherds of medieval pottery were recovered. These consist of a York Glazed ware jug sherd (YORK); a Brandsby-type jug (BRAN) and a Humberware jug (HUM). The first two of these were produced in the Hambleton Hills area to the north of York whilst the Humberware might have been produced at York, at a rural production centre such as Holme upon Spalding Moor or West Cowick, or at an unknown centre.

### **Post-Medieval**

Three sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered. The earliest type is a Cistercian ware cup (CSTN), of later 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup>-century date. The other two sherds are of Tin-glazed ware (TGW) and Staffordshire Mottled ware (STMO) of very late 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup>-century date. The tin-glazed sherd comes from an open vessel with tin glaze on the interior and a plain lead glaze on the exterior. Such vessels were produced in the early to mid 17<sup>th</sup> century both at English sites (such as London) and in the Low Countries. The fabric of this sherd is unusual, containing abundant, well-sorted subangular quartz sand.

### **Early Modern**

Five sherds of pottery of late 18<sup>th</sup>-century or later date were recovered. The most common ware is miscellaneous whiteware (WHITE) of mid 19<sup>th</sup> century or later date. The three

vessels of this ware include one with sponged decoration and two with blue slip, a bowl with horizontal stripes of light blue and a closed mould-decorated vessel, with light blue slip on the interior. The latter is a distinctive type but was not recognised.

## Assessment

### Trench 1

Twenty objects were recovered from Trench 1 (Table 2). Context 1009 produced a single sherd of possible Anglo-Scandinavian date and context 1018 produced two fragments of medieval date (one flat roof tile and the sherd of Humberware). The remaining contexts produced finds of post-medieval and/or early modern date.

*Table 2*

Context	ascan	emod	med	pmed	Grand Total
1000			3	1	4
1001				1	1
1002		5		3	8
1006				2	2
1009	1				1
1016			1	1	2
1018			2		2
Grand Total	1	5	6	8	20

### Trench 2

Two unstratified sherds were recovered from Trench 2. One is the Roman jar/flagon base and the other the sherd of York Glazed ware.

## Assessment

Given the small quantity of pottery present, and the abraded nature of some of this pottery, it is difficult to interpret the archaeological context of the finds. The Roman, Anglo-Scandinavian, medieval and earlier post-medieval sherds are all of the small size and, in the main, abraded condition which might indicate that they came onto the site as a result of manure/night soil fertilisation in the medieval and post-medieval periods. This interpretation would explain the presence of the mould fragment. One of the exceptions, however, is the Anglo-Scandinavian York A ware sherd, which is small but unabraded and comes from one of the earliest features on the site (a boundary ditch). However, the excavator tentatively equates this ditch with one which produced the sherd of tin-glazed ware, which cannot therefore have been filled until the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The later post-medieval and early modern finds, on the other hand, are fresh and slightly larger and suggest occupation and rubbish disposal in the immediate area. In two cases they come from slots filled with ash and cinders which are interpreted as recent garden features.

### **Retention**

All of the finds either come from stratified deposits or are important to reflect the chronological range of finds. They should therefore all be retained.

### **Further Work**

It would be possible to test the identification of the Anglo-Scandinavian sherd using chemical analysis, since York A ware is distinguished by a high Barium content. However, this sampling would probably destroy the entire sherd and it would be better to leave the sherd until analytical techniques which are non-destructive become available. No further work is therefore recommended on the finds.

### **Bibliography**

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

Vince, Alan and Steane, Kate (2004) *Assessment of the finds from Cawood, North Yorkshire (OSA04EV07)*. AVAC Reports 2004/138 Lincoln, Alan Vince Archaeology Consultancy.

*Appendix 1*

Trench	Context	group	Cname	Form	class	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Description	Subfabric	Con
1	1000	med	MTIL	FLAT	CBM	BS	1	1	3		CALC GROUNDMASS	
1	1000	med	FCLAY	MOULD	FCLAY	BS	1	1	7	ONE CONCAVE FACE	ORGANIC TEMPERED	
1	1000	med	BRAN	JUG	POTTERY	BS	1	1	11			
1	1000	pmed	CSTN	CUP	POTTERY	BS	1	1	16			
1	1001	pmed	PIPECLAY	PIPE	CTP	BS	1	1	1	2.4MM BORE;L17TH/18TH C		
1	1002	pmed	PIPECLAY	PIPE	CTP	BOWL	1	1	8	FACETTED BOWL WITH FLORAL DEC AROUND RIM;MID/LATE 19TH C (1850-80)		
1	1002	pmed	PIPECLAY	PIPE	CTP	BOWL	1	1	25	2.7MM BORE;LARGE PLAIN BOWL WITH ROUND HEEL;MILLING AND "L" AND CROWN STAMPS ON BACK OF BOWL;DUTCH		
1	1002	pmed	PIPECLAY	PIPE	CTP	BOWL	1	1	3	FRAGMENT OF RIM;UNMILLED		
1	1002	emod	NOTS	JAR	POTTERY	BS	1	1	5			
1	1002	emod	WHITE	BOWL	POTTERY	BS	1	1	11	LTBL BANDS EXT		
1	1002	emod	WHITE	BOWL	POTTERY	BS	1	1	7	SPONGED DEC EXT		
1	1002	emod	WHITE	TPOT	POTTERY	BS	1	1	5	MOULDED DEC;LTBL INT SLIP		
1	1002	emod	GRE	BOWL	POTTERY	BS	1	1	14		SILTY MICACEOUS GROUNDMASS	
1	1006	pmed	PIPECLAY	PIPE	CTP	BS	1	1	3	2.8MM BORE;L17TH/18TH C		
1	1006	pmed	STMO	JAR	POTTERY	BS	1	1	11			
1	1009	ascan	YORKA	JAR	POTTERY	BS	1	1	1	SANDWICH FIRING;DK GREY EXT SURF		
1	1016	med	MTIL	FLAT	CBM	BS	1	1	26		CALC GROUNDMASS	
1	1016	pmed	TGW	OPEN	POTTERY	BS	1	1	3	LEAD-BACKED;INNER SURFACE ABSENT	A WELL-SORTED SAQ C.0.2MM	
1	1018	med	MTIL	FLAT	CBM	BS	1	1	1		CALC GROUNDMASS	

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1	1018	med	HUM	JUG	POTTERY	BS	1	1	6		
2	US	roman	YATE01	JAR	POTTERY	B	1	1	10	TURNED BASE	VAE
2	US	med	YORK	JUG	POTTERY	R	1	1	19	SQUARED RIM;THUMB IMPR ST R/H JOIN;CUGL	ABF