

Assessment of the Pottery from 2 Church Lane, Bardsey, West Yorkshire (ARC06005)

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A collection of pottery was recovered from the archaeological evaluation of a property at 2 Church Lane, Bardsey carried out by Archaeoscope. The finds mainly date between the later 11th and the early 13th centuries with a single sherd of post-medieval date (late 17th to mid 18th century).

Description

Medieval Pottery

One hundred and twenty-eight sherds of medieval pottery were recorded. Most of these are of unglazed, coarse whiteware of the type known in York as York Gritty ware (YG, Mainman 1990). The ware, also known as Pimply ware, was produced using Coal Measures clay tempered with a coarse sand derived almost entirely from weathered Carboniferous sandstones. Place name evidence suggests that pottery was being produced at Potterton, 8 miles to the south of Bardsey, in the mid/late 11th century and this parish includes outcrops of Coal Measure clays is the most likely site for the production of the Bardsey sherds.

Most of the sherds are from cylindrical jars with club rims. This form was in use during the construction of York Minster in the 1080s (Holdsworth 1995) but is found throughout the 12th and into the 13th centuries, apparently with no development of rim form (although Le Patourel suggested that the squared form of the collar rims becomes more rounded with time).

The only exceptional sherd is a roller-stamped body sherd. Such vessels are rare, but are known at Doncaster (Buckland and Hayfield 1989). Analysis of the fabric of samples of the Doncaster roller-stamped sherds (Vince forthcoming), which include jars and spouted pitchers, suggests that they may have been produced at Doncaster. However, it would seem unusual for vessels made at Doncaster to have been traded northwards past the Potterton centre.

Two sherds with a similar gritty fabric to the York Gritty ware have splashes of lead glaze (coded here as York Splashed ware – YSP, 1978; Mainman 1990; Mainman 1993). Fabric analysis of examples from York suggests that the York examples of this type may have been produced in the Hambleton Hills area which later in the 12th century became the supplier of most of York's glazed ware. However, vessels from this source rarely travelled westwards and again a more local source is more likely.

Four sherds with quartz sand temper were recorded (MEDLOC). Without detailed analysis of their fabric it is not possible to determine their origin, nor to correlate them with finds from

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other sites in the vicinity. A detailed study of the fabric of similar fine sandy wares from a site on the A1 north of Wetherby indicated that those fabrics mostly had a local origin (Vince 2005). The sherds all come from jars.

Two glazed sherds have a higher iron content than YG but do share the coarse grit temper, although possible with a wider variety of rock sources represented (NGR, the main type on the A1 site). Vessels of this sort were produced at a number of centres in West Yorkshire and at present cannot be sourced precisely (Vince 2005). They are probably of mid 12th to early 14th century date.

Post-medieval Pottery

A single sherd of post-medieval pottery was recorded. The sherd is from a tin-glazed bowl with a slight blue tinge to the glaze and blue painted decoration on the inside. This decoration and the general form of the vessel suggest a late 17th to mid 18th century date.

Stratigraphy

The pottery collection suggests that the site was occupied during the 12th century, although an earlier start to the occupation and a later finish are both possible. If the occupation was of short duration then all of the sherds are of types which could have been current in the mid 12th century.

The lack of sherds of York A ware, produced at Thorner (Cumberpatch and Roberts 1998-1999), immediately south of Bardsey, in the 10th century (Vince 2004) and of Humberware provide limits to the possible period of occupation. The source of Anglo-Scandinavian A ware and the consequent re-dating of the Thorner kiln was established as part of the analysis of pottery from mid Saxon Fishergate, York (Vince and Steane 2005).

Trench 1

Trench 1 produced 15 sherds of pottery with a total weight of 130gm. The mean sherd size is low (8 gm) and no sherds from the same vessel were present. The material therefore is likely to be secondary. Ten of the sherds were noted as being abraded.

The sherds from the topsoil (1000) and the fill of feature 1008, a pit or posthole, are of York Gritty ware and therefore only broadly datable.

The sherds from the fill of root disturbance 1020 include the late 17th to mid 18th-century tin-glazed sherd, which is fresh.

Trench 2

Trench 2 produced 114 sherds with a total weight of 771 gm. The mean sherd size is 10.67 gm.

The sherds come from topsoil (15 sherds) and the fills of ditch 2005 (36 sherds) and quarry pit or pond 2013 (63 sherds). Both of the features produced sherds of glazed ware (NGR and YSP) which date the fill of 2005 to the mid 12th century or later and quarry pit or pond 2013 to the early 12th century or later. Both features also produced sherds of unidentified medieval sandy ware (MEDLOC).

Retention

All of the sherds should be retained for future study.

Future Work

The diamond-rouletted jar sherd should be illustrated as a record and the fabric should be analysed for comparison with that of York Gritty wares from York and Doncaster.

Appendix 1

Context	class	cname	subfabric	Form	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Action	Description
1000	POTTERY	YG		JAR	3	3	11		
1000	POTTERY	YG		JAR	2	2	26		
1000	POTTERY	YG		JAR	1	1	11		
1000	POTTERY	YG		JAR	2	2	14		SOOT
1007	POTTERY	YG		JAR	1	1	5		
1019	POTTERY	TGW		BOWL	1	1	4		BLUE DEC
1019	POTTERY	YG		JAR	2	2	4		
1019	POTTERY	YG		JAR	3	3	55		
2000	POTTERY	YG		JAR	1	1	19		SOOT
2000	POTTERY	YG		JAR	1	1	3		SOOT
2000	POTTERY	YG		JAR	2	2	8		
2000	POTTERY	YG		JAR	6	6	51		
2000	POTTERY	YG		JAR	4	3	52		SOOT
2000	POTTERY	YG		JAR	1	1	2		SOOT
2004	POTTERY	MEDLOC		JAR	3	3	7		SOOT
2004	POTTERY	NGR		JUG	1	1	5		
2004	POTTERY	NGR		JUG	1	1	6		BLAC
2004	POTTERY	YG		JAR	5	5	14		
2004	POTTERY	YG		JAR	12	11	78		
2004	POTTERY	YG		JAR	1	1	2		
2004	POTTERY	YG		JAR	9	9	52		SOOT
2004	POTTERY	YG		JAR	1	1	10		SOOT
2004	POTTERY	YG		JAR	1	1	90		RIM
2004	POTTERY	YG		JAR	2	2	30		SOOT
2012	POTTERY	YG		JAR	1	1	31	DR	DIAMOND RST
2012	POTTERY	YSP	YG	JUG	1	1	10		
2012	POTTERY	YSP	YG	JUG	1	1	6		
2012	POTTERY	YG		JAR	16	16	44		
2012	POTTERY	YG		JAR	2	2	7		
2012	POTTERY	YG		JAR	3	3	33		SOOT
2012	POTTERY	YG		JAR	2	2	17		
2012	POTTERY	YG		JAR	14	14	70		
2012	POTTERY	YG		JAR	3	3	20		SOOT
2012	POTTERY	YG		JAR	1	1	22		
2014	POTTERY	MEDLOC		JAR	1	1	11		
2014	POTTERY	YG		JAR	1	1	2		SOOT
2014	POTTERY	YG		JAR	1	1	26		SOOT
2014	POTTERY	YG		JAR	2	2	4		
2014	POTTERY	YG		JAR	7	7	12		
2014	POTTERY	YG		JAR	4	4	12		
2014	POTTERY	YG		JAR	3	3	15		SOOT

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