

Assessment of the Pottery from the Easington to Ganstead Pipeline, East Yorkshire. (EAG 06)

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Pottery collected from fieldwalking on the line of the Easington to Ganstead pipeline in East Yorkshire was assessed by the authors. The most significant finds were a single definite sherd of Roman date and a single collection of 13th/14th -century pottery. Most of the pottery was of late medieval to modern date and its appearance was consistent with it being dumped onto fields along with night soil or farm manure. A small number of late medieval and post-medieval imported sherds were present and are either evidence that the night soil originated in Hull, where such wares are common, or that imported vessels were being used in farmsteads in the Easington to Ganstead area.

Because of the overwhelmingly recent character of the pottery, most of the finds were recorded only by plot rather than individually. Vessels of late medieval or earlier date were recorded in the standard AVAC method, recording their ware, form, part of vessel and description. The group recorded sherds were recorded by sherd count only and the medieval and earlier material was recorded by sherd count and weight. All the data is present in the site archive in a digital form.

Description

Roman Pottery

A single sherd of Roman pottery was recovered, (Plot N77, 10162), the base of a greyware jar or beaker. The sherd should be shown to a specialist on the Roman pottery of East Yorkshire to see if a closer date can be determined. The sherd does not appear to be very abraded and may be evidence for activity on or near the site.

Anglo-Saxon

A single sherd of chaff-tempered pottery was recovered, (Plot N44, 10092). The fragment may be an early to mid Anglo-Saxon vessel fragment but the thickness and curvature suggests that it is actually a fragment of copper-alloy casting mould, from the production of bells or vessels such as cauldrons, skillets and ewers. Bronze-casting of this type was carried out by bellmakers from the 10th century onwards but became more common in the later 13th century, with the expansion of production from bells to domestic vessels. It is unlike that this activity would have taken place in the countryside around Hull and if this is a fragment of mould then it is most likely to have originated as waste from a city foundry.

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<http://www.postex.demon.co.uk/index.html>

A copy of this report is archived online at

<http://www.avac.uklinux.net/potcat/pdfs/avac2006116.pdf>

Medieval Pottery

Twenty-eight sherds of medieval pottery dating between c.1050 and c.1350 were recovered (Table 1). The earliest type was a very abraded sherd of Reduced Chalky ware from plot N44. The remaining types were either of Beverley Glazed ware (all of the fine fabric which was introduced in the later 12th century and continued in use into the 14th century) or Beverley-type ware, which may not have been made at Beverley but was made in a similar range of forms and fabrics. One example is from a vessel with stamped bosses, a type found in early/mid 14th-century deposits at Lurk Lane, Beverley (Watkins 1991). A possible source for these wares, if they were not made in Beverley, would be Hedon, where pottery production evidence has been claimed by Colin Hayfield (Hayfield and Slater 1984). However, most medieval pottery found in Hedon appears to have been Beverley glazed ware. These Beverley-type wares were concentrated on Plot N79, the only plot to produce what is likely to have been occupation evidence. This plot is the site of a deserted medieval village (SMR MHU3234). Most of the other finds occur on fields immediately bordering medieval villages

Table 1

Trench	Locality	BEVO	BEVO2B	BEVOB	BEVOT	REDC	Grand Total
N03	Easington				1		1
N14	Weston				1		1
N15	Weston				1		1
N40	?		1				1
N44	Great Newsome Farm, Frodingham					1	1
N54	Halsham	1					1
N63	?			1			1
N64	?					1	1
N78	DMV SMR MHU3234			1			1
N79	DMV SMR MHU3234					18	18
N81	DMV SMR MHU3234	1					1
Grand Total		2	1	5	19	1	28

Later medieval pottery, consisting of Humberware and a single sherd of Langewehe stoneware (a small jug of a type dated by Hurst to the 15th century, Hurst, Neal, and van Beuningen 1986, Fig 91, 275), is much more common, 73 sherds in total, and shows no concentrations. Neither does it appear to show any correlation with areas of medieval settlement (Table 2). Humberware was produced at a number of sites in the Humber basin (Hayfield 1992). Known kiln sites are all west of the Wolds, at West Cowick, York and Holme-upon-Spalding Moor, but production is likely around Barton-upon-Humber and in the East Yorkshire claylands, since samples of Humberware from Wawne, immediately southeast of

Beverley, show the same fabric characteristics to the earlier Beverley glazed ware (Alan Vince 2004). It is likely that the chaff-tempered sherd from Plot N44 is of similar date and that much of this material was spread on the fields alongside night soil from Hull.

Table 2

trench	HUM	LANG	Grand Total
N11	2		2
N17	4		4
N18	1		1
N22	4		4
N28	5		5
N3	2		2
N32	1		1
N37	2		2
N40	1		1
N41	2		2
N43	2		2
N44	1		1
N46A	1		1
N5	3	1	4
N50	1		1
N53	2		2
N54	2		2
N56	3		3
N63	2		2
N64	9		9
N7	5		5
N70	2		2
N79	1		1
N82	1		1
N89	4		4
N9	2		2
N91	4		4
N92	1		1
N93	2		2
Grand Total	72	1	73

Post-medieval Pottery

Four hundred and sixty-seven sherds of pottery were of types which came into use in the mid to late 16th century. Several, however, continued in use into the later 18th century and are therefore contemporary with the factory-made refined wares of the early modern period.

Fifty-eight sherds are of types which did not continue into use beyond c.1770. (Table 3). Like the late medieval pottery finds, these sherds are scattered fairly evenly along the line of the pipeline. They include several types made outside of the region, either on the continent (Frechen stoneware - FREC, North Holland Slipware - NHOLS, Weser ware – WESE, and Westerwald stoneware - WEST) or in the industrialised potteries of Staffordshire and/or West Yorkshire (Press-moulded slipware – STCO, Press-moulded Embossed slipware – STEM, Mottled ware – STMO, Yellow-glazed slipware – STSL and white saltglazed stoneware –

SWSG). The Weser ware vessel is precisely paralleled by a complete example in the Van Beuningen collection (Hurst, Neal, and van Beuningen 1986, Colour Plate XV, dated by Hurst to c.1590-c.1620). the Westerwald stoneware vessel is a chamber pot of mid 18th-century type. A single sherd of tin-glazed ware was present but was too small for close identification. It is likely either to have been a London or Low Countries product. The presence of sherds of imported wares of late 16th and 17th century date may be a reflection of the proximity of the port of Hull on the inhabitants of the east Yorkshire claylands or it may be evidence for the spreading of Hull night soil onto the fields.

Table 3

trench	CSTN	FREC	MY	NHOLS	STCO	STEM	STMO	STSL	SWSG	TGW	WESE	WEST	Grand Total
N11	1								1				2
N19	1				1			1			1		4
N22								1					1
N28	2				1			3	3			1	10
N3					1		1		1				3
N32					3				2				5
N34									1				1
N37							1						1
N40		1											1
N41	1						1						2
N43		1							1				2
N44	1												1
N5									1				1
N52				1			1		1	1			4
N53							1						1
N56		1							1				2
N68			1										1
N7					1		1						2
N70								1	1				2
N77												1	1
N78					1				1				2
N81					1	1			1				3
N83					1								1
N89		1					1		1				3
N9												1	1
N93									1				1
Grand Total	6	4	1	1	10	1	7	6	17	1	1	3	58

Early Modern Pottery

Six hundred and eighty one sherds of pottery types which were introduced in the later 18th century or later were found. To these can probably be added the majority of the four hundred plus sherds of post-medieval date mentioned above. A high proportion of this pottery is of miscellaneous refined whitewares, which superceded Pearlware during the 19th century. This indicates that manuring of the fields with farmyard manure or night soil continued into the second half of the 19th century if not later (Table 4). Unlike the earlier period, there are wide

variations in the quantity of pottery per plot, ranging from a single sherd to 88 sherds from Plot 28.

The finds include a number of fragments of figurines. These are “fairlings”, mass produced and given as prizes in travelling fairs. They also include a Chinese Export porcelain spoon handle. Such spoons are still current and it is not known whether this is a recent example or 18th/19th century in date. Another unusual find is a highly elaborate jug or cup handle in Pearlware, in which the centre of the handle is filled with an unglazed moulded face. Jane Young comments that it is probably of early 19th century date.

Table 4

Trench	BLUE	CREA	DERBS	NCBW	PEAR	SUND	TPW	WHITE	Grand Total
N003		4		1	4		8	2	19
N005		1							1
N009		2		2	1		3	4	12
N011					1				1
N013					1		3	2	6
N014					2				2
N017					1		1		2
N018					2		2	1	5
N019					2		2		4
N022		1			2		2		5
N026							1	1	2
N026A								1	1
N028	1	6		6	16	2	41	16	88
N029				1	1		2		4
N032						2		1	3
N034					1		2	1	4
N035					1				1
N036							1		1
N037		1		2	6	2	13	8	32
N038					1				1
N039					1		1	2	4
N040		1			1		3	1	6
N041		1							1
N043		1			5	1	3	3	13
N044		1			2	1	6	12	22
N046					1			2	3
N046A		1		1	3	3	3	5	16
N048					2		3	4	9
N049		1			1		1		3
N050		1					1		2
N052		1	1	1	9	4	24	4	44
N053				1	1		4	1	7
N054							2		2
N056		2		3	17	2	13	13	50
N058					1	2	3	1	7
N060					1		1		2
N063		1	1		8	2	23	9	44
N064		2	1	1	9	7	9	14	43
N064A					1			1	2

N068			1		1	1	5	1	9
N069					3		5		8
N070	1		3		3	2	14	2	25
N077							1	2	3
N078	3				11	4	22	12	52
N079							1		1
N081	3		2			1	3	10	19
N083			1			1	1	1	4
N084					1				1
N085					1				1
N088					3		4	5	12
N089	2				4	2	10	6	24
N091	1				4		2	1	8
N092	1	1			3	1	9	5	20
N093					2		1		3
N097				1					1
N102							2	1	3
N103					1		2		3
N111					3		4	3	10
Grand Total	1	39	6	25	145	40	267	158	681

Assessment

Interpretation

There appear to have been three distinct phases recognisable in the pottery found on the Easington to Ganstead pipeline. In the first phase, pottery seems to have been either present on the plots because of settlement in the immediate area (Plot N79) or because of manuring from settlements immediately adjacent to the plot. This situation seems to have been in existence during the later 12th to early 14th centuries, with only two sherds of pottery of earlier date being found. From the later 14th century until the mid 18th centuries, however, there appears to be a fairly even scatter of pottery on the plots (bearing in mind variations in the size of each plot). All of the pottery found during this period is of types which could have been found in Hull itself and either demonstrates the influence of Hull upon pottery use in the surrounding villages of Holderness or perhaps that night soil from Hull was spread onto these fields. In the later 18th century, however, this system was replaced by one in which some plots received little pottery whilst others received a much high quantity than in previous periods. This is probably a reflection of the enclosure of the previously open fields of the region and the ability of individual farmers to determine the manuring regime for individual fields.

Further work

It would be possible to determine whether the chaff-tempered sherd from Plot N44 was of Early to Mid Anglo-Saxon or late medieval date by looking for traces of copper in the fabric. However, this analysis would destroy much of the sherd and it might be better to retain the sherd intact pending future non-destructive analytical methods.

The North Holland slipware would repay thin section and chemical analysis which might allow its source to be determined.

Costing

One thin section and chemical analysis using Inductively-Coupled Plasma Spectroscopy = £48.00 plus VAT.

Retention

All of the late medieval and earlier pottery should be retained for future study since the fabrics are capable of characterisation. Similarly, the post-medieval imports should be retained. These sherds have been marked "RETAIN" in the accompanying database. The post-medieval local wares and all the early modern pottery could be discarded.

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