

Assessment of the Pottery and Ceramic Building Material from Camp Hill, Nuneaton (CHN07)

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A small quantity of pottery and ceramic building material was recovered from an archaeological evaluation carried out at Camp Hill, Nuneaton by Foundations Archaeology. The finds are all probably of post-medieval or later date.

Description

The finds consist of ceramic building material, pottery and stone (Table 1). They were identified, recorded and quantified by the number of fragments (Nosh), the maximum number of objects represented (NoV), weight in grams and from these measurements the average sherd weight was calculated (ASW).

Table 1

class	Average of ASW	Sum of Nosh	Sum of NoV	Sum of Weight
CBM	57	7	6	463
POTTERY	29	31	14	1,360
STONE	24	2	2	47
Grand Total	37	40	22	1,870

Ceramic Building Material

Seven fragments of ceramic building material were recorded. They were examined at x20 magnification using a binocular microscope and four fabrics were identified:

Fabric A

At x20 magnification, this consists of poorly mixed lenses of white- and red-firing clays, quartz and sandstone fragments up to 3.0mm across and ironstone fragments up to 5.0mm across.

This fabric is probably made from a mixture of Coal Measures clays.

Fabric B

At x20 magnification, this consists of angular fragments of white, medium-grained sandstone in a silty groundmass.

The fabric is probably made from Triassic clay and the inclusions are probably Triassic sandstone.

Fabric C

At x20 magnification, this consists of a silty clay and abundant rounded quartz sand.

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The sand is probably derived from Triassic deposits.

Fabric D

At x20 magnification, this consists of a calcareous red clay with large subangular inclusions of marl and moderate rounded quartz sand.

The sand is probably derived from Triassic deposits and the groundmass and marl fragments probably come from a Triassic marl.

Pottery

Thirty-one sherds of pottery were recovered, representing no more than 14 vessels. These consist mainly of post-medieval wares with a single sherd of later date.

Post-medieval

Four post-medieval wares were present: a blackware (BL); Midlands Purple ware (MP); Staffordshire Press-moulded Slipware (STCO) and Staffordshire Coarseware (STCOAR). All four are types produced in the Staffordshire potteries although the first two were also made elsewhere (e.g. Ticknall, Derbyshire, {Spavold & Brown 2005 #45863}). All have a wide period of use but the STCO sherd comes from a dish decorated with wide slip-trailed lines with no combing, a type which is typical of the mid to late 18th century. The MP sherd is probably of 16th/17th century date.

The sherds include several unglazed flowerpots, varying in size, but are otherwise of common domestic types used for a range of functions in the home.

Early Modern

A single sherd of miscellaneous white ware (WHITE) was present. This type lacks the cobalt added to the glaze found in Pearl ware and transfer-printed Pearl ware and replaced Pearl ware during the mid 19th century.

Stone

Two fragments of siltstone were recovered. Neither shows any sign of use although they are of similar thickness to roof slates. However, the presence of iron-rich staining over joints and bedding planes indicates that these pieces are unworked.

Assessment

Trench 3

Finds were recovered from two contexts, both make-up layers (304 and 306). Context 306 produced the whiteware sherd and is therefore of mid 19th-century or later date. Context 304 produced a single fragment of post-medieval pottery, only datable between the mid 17th and the 19th centuries.

Trench 4

Two contexts in Trench 4 produced finds. Context 415 was a layer of crushed brick from which a fragment of flat roof tile was recovered. It was overlain by context 406, a make-up layer which produced the mid to late 18th century slipware dish.

Trench 8

A single deposit in Trench 8, the fill of a terrace, context 807, produced a group of finds. The pottery in this assemblage can probably be dated to the later 18th century, because of the form of the blackware jug (a small squat vessel with a wide mouth and pulled handle) and the presence of flowerpots.

Trench 18

A single fragment of brick was recovered from context 1804, a layer of subsoil/alluvium. This cannot be closely dated but in this area is probably of post-medieval date.

Interpretation

The finds from Trench 8 are probably derived from the occupation of the 18th century Camp Hill Hall but if so then this terrace must be secondary to the construction of the hall itself. The presence of flowerpots in an 18th century assemblage is consistent with a high status structure, although the lack of finewares suggests that this deposit includes refuse from outhouses rather than the kitchen tending to the owners of the hall.

The finds from Trench 4 are consistent with a later 19th century date and presumably therefore come from a Victorian addition to the hall.

The presence of four quite different ceramic building material fabrics suggests that it would be possible to phase the brick structures by examining bricks from them. However, no samples of brick from the excavated walls was submitted for study.

Further work

The ceramic building material shows the potential of this material for elucidation of the architectural development of the hall and therefore in any future work on the site brick samples should be retained from any excavated wall foundations or rubble associated with a particular structure.

The pottery from context 807 includes a complete profile of a pancheon and illustratable rims of two other vessels. These could be drawn to illustrate the type of pottery used in the 18th-century hall, but the group is probably too small to be representative and a larger sample is really required.

Retention

All the finds come from stratified deposits and should be retained for potential future study.

Appendix 1

trench	Context	class	period code	cname	subfabric	Form	Description	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	ASW	Condition
3	304	POTTERY	PMED	STCOAR		PANC	BROWN SLIP INT AND OUT; INT BLACK GL	BS	1	1	31	31.00	
3	306	POTTERY	EMOD	STCOAR		JAR/BOWL	INT AND EXT BLACK GL	BS	1	1	4	4.00	
3	306	POTTERY	EMOD	STCOAR		PANC	INT BLACK GL	BS	1	1	9	9.00	
3	306	POTTERY	EMOD	WHITE		-		BS	1	1	24	24.00	
3	306	CBM	EMOD	PMTIL	C	BRICK		BS	1	1	117	117.00	ABR
4	406	POTTERY	PMED	STCO		DISH	PARALLEL WHITE TRAILED BANDS ON A BLACK BACKGROUND;ML18TH?	BS	1	1	13	13.00	
4	406	POTTERY	PMED	MP		JAR/BOWL	INT BLACK GL	BS	1	1	3	3.00	
4	415	CBM	PMED	PMTIL	D	FLAT		BS	1	1	83	83.00	
8	807	POTTERY	PMED	STCOAR	SEMI STONEWARE	PANC	BROWN SLIP INT AND OUT; INT BLACK GL	BS	14	1	751	53.64	
8	807	CBM	PMED	PMTIL	A	BRICK		BS	1	1	11	11.00	
8	807	CBM	PMED	PMTIL	A	FLAT		BS	2	1	242	121.00	
8	807	CBM	PMED	PMTIL	B	FLAT		BS	1	1	8	8.00	
8	807	POTTERY	PMED	BL		JUG	PULLED SPOUT;GLAZE INT AND OUT	R	1	1	13	13.00	
8	807	POTTERY	PMED	BL		JUG	EXT BLACK GL AND INT DRIBBLES	BS	2	1	135	67.50	
8	807	POTTERY	PMED	STCOAR		FLP	BROWN SLIP INT AND OUT	R	1	1	17	17.00	
8	807	POTTERY	PMED	STCOAR		FLP	BROWN SLIP INT AND OUT	BS	1	1	2	2.00	
8	807	POTTERY	PMED	STCOAR		FLP	BROWN SLIP INT AND OUT	BS	3	1	153	51.00	
8	807	STONE	PMED	STONE	SILTSTONE	GEO		BS	2	2	47	23.50	
8	807	POTTERY	PMED	STCOAR		PANC	BROWN SLIP INT AND OUT; INT BLACK GL	BS	1	1	23	23.00	
8	807	POTTERY	PMED	STCOAR		PANC	BROWN SLIP INT AND OUT; INT BLACK GL	R	2	1	182	91.00	
18	1804	CBM	PMED	PMTIL	C	BRICK		BS	1	1	2	2.00	ABR

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