

Assessment of Finds from Fountains Abbey Flood Damage (OSA07 EX03)

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A collection of finds was made during clearing of material deposited by flooding in 2007 undertaken by On-Site Archaeology Ltd (Site Code: OSA07 EX03). Selected categories of finds were submitted for identification and assessment (Table 1). They were found to include a decorated floor tile of a design not previously recorded in northern England, a possible medieval Italian pottery vessel and a locally-made medieval pottery vessel of unusual form. The remaining finds consist of medieval pottery, floor tile and roof tile; post-medieval pottery; early modern pottery and copper alloy; copper alloy and stone of medieval or post-medieval date and undatable iron and lead objects. The date and character of these artefacts is consistent with the known history of the abbey site.

Table 1

class	Sum of Nosh	Sum of NoV	Sum of Weight
CBM	14	13	2722
COPP	2	2	4
IRON	30	30	235
LEAD	9	9	454
POTTERY	97	73	3096
STONE	1	1	82
Grand Total	153	128	6593

Description

Ceramic Building Material

Fourteen fragments of ceramic building material were submitted for assessment. In addition, a large quantity of unglazed flat roof tile was recovered and has been examined by D Pinnock.

Two fragments were unidentified and the remainder are of medieval date. These include one definite fragment of glazed ridge tile, with a solid knife-cut crest. Plain glazed fragments might be from similar ridge tiles or from glazed flat roof tiles. The thickness of these tiles, 17-24mm, suggests an early date (late 12th to 13th centuries).

Six floor tiles were recovered. Two were undiagnostic fragments and three were plain square bevelled tiles, with knife-cut shell scoops on the base. One was a small fragment of a tile with inlaid slip design. This might have been from a square tile or from an inlaid tile mosaic and no parallel for the design can be found in Stopford's corpus of floor tiles from Northern England (2005).

Copper Alloy

Two copper alloy artefacts were submitted. The first was a plain circular button with a soldered loop on the back. Buttons of this type date to the 19th century or later. The second was a chape from a lace. Such chapes were used in the medieval and post-medieval periods.

Iron

Thirty fragments of iron were submitted. Twenty of these were nails. Eight were from unknown objects, including possible nails, most of which are too heavily corroded for identification without x-ray. Two objects were strips, one great than 87mm long and the other greater than 47mm.

Lead

Nine fragments of lead were submitted. One of these appears to have been used to fix stonework into position and is therefore probably from a complex architectural feature in which lime mortar was not strong enough to secure the stone. One fragment is a runnel of metal and the remaining 7 fragments are offcuts of metal, perhaps used in the production of window lead.

Pottery

Medieval

Seventy fragments of medieval pottery were recovered. One of these is probably a sherd of York Gritty ware, perhaps produced in West Yorkshire (Potterton is one probable source). Forty-nine sherds are definitely or probably Winksley ware (WINK or WINK? Bellamy and Le Patourel 1970). These were probably made at Winksley itself (3-4 miles south of Fountains) or one of the surrounding villages (wasters have been found at Grantley, the neighbouring village to the south). They include seven vessels which can be broadly paralleled with material from the kiln site published by Bellamy and Le Patourel (e.g. Bellamy & Le Patourel nos 14-17, 20, 21, 35, and 38). This material is dated by Le Patourel to the later 13th or 14th centuries but several of the parallels used to provide this date have now proved to be somewhat earlier and the industry may well have started in the later 12th century and continued into the 14th centuries. Analysis of pottery from Winksley and Grantley has shown that their products can be distinguished from each other and from other local wares, such as those produced at Follifoot and Baildon (Vince 2004a).

Seven sherds of Northern Gritty ware (NGR) were present. This ware, defined by its inclusions of Millstone Grit and its moderately low-iron content, is common in West Yorkshire and produced at several centres. It too was probably produced from the later 12th to the mid 14th centuries.

A single example of Brandsby-type ware (BRAN) was present. This ware was produced in the Hambleton Hills area from the mid 13th to the 15th centuries (Jennings 1992).

Five sherds come from vessels dating to the later medieval period (later 14th to 15th centuries). Four of these were of Humberware jugs, which was produced at several centres in the Humber estuary and Vale of York, the closest known to Fountains Abbey being at York (Hayfield 1992; Jennings 1992; Vince 2004b). The fifth vessel is a jug or jar base which has a fine, micaceous brown fabric and traces of a tin glaze. The lower half of the body has been turned to produce a footring. A possible identification of this vessel would be as Archaic maiolica, produced in central Italy in the 14th and 15th centuries. Examples of this ware are rare on British sites and are concentrated on the sites of ports and high status inland sites (castles and abbeys). To confirm this identification thin section and chemical analysis would have to be undertaken.

Post-medieval

Seven sherds of blackware were recovered. This ware was produced at numerous centres in Yorkshire and surrounding counties from the later 16th to the 19th centuries (or even later).

Early Modern

Twenty sherds of types dating to the later 18th century or later were recovered. Only three of these are of types characteristics of the earlier part of this period (late 18th to early 19th century, a Creamware jug and two sherds of Pearlware, PEAR). The remainder are types characteristic of the mid 19th century and later, such as black basalt ware (BBAS); Nottingham stoneware (NOTS) and miscellaneous whiteware (WHITE). Flowerpots made in locally-produced redwares (LPMLOC) and transfer-printed wares (TPW) cannot be closely dated within this period without considerable further work.

Stone

A fragment of stone roof tile was submitted and could be of medieval or post-medieval date.

Assessment

Retention

Since this material is not stratified and cannot even be provenanced closely there is little purpose in retaining the post-medieval and early modern pottery, nor the stone, iron, lead or copper alloy button. However, the medieval pottery and the copper alloy chape should be retained as a teaching resource and for inclusion in any further study of the Winksley area production sites.

Further Work

One of the Winksley vessels is a very unusual form and should be illustrated as a record and to bring it to the attention of other pottery specialists. The identity of the possible archaic maiolica jug/jar base could be established by the use of thin section and chemical analysis and comparison with visually similar material from the city of London (unpublished AVAC data from the Millennium Footbridge site, MBC98). Finally, the small fragment of inlaid floor tile should be drawn and a copy of the drawing sent to Dr J Stopford to add to her records and to establish if any similar designs are known.

Costing

Table 2 lists the cost of providing the recommended further work at 2007-8 prices.

Task	Description	Cost
Thin Section of archaic maiolica	Thin section produced at the University of Manchester	£25.00 plus VAT
Chemical analysis of archaic maiolica	Inductively-coupled plasma spectroscopy, carried out at Royal Holloway College, London.	£25.00 plus VAT
Illustration of floor tile fragment	Illustrator, Charlotte Bentley	£20.00 plus VAT
Grand total		£70.00 plus VAT

Bibliography

- Bellamy, C. V. and Le Patourel, H. E. J. (1970) "Four Medieval Pottery Kilns on Woodhouse Farm, Winksley Near Ripon, W. Riding of Yorkshire." *Medieval Archaeol*, XIV, 104-119
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Jennings, Sarah (1992) *Medieval Pottery in the Yorkshire Museum*. York, The Yorkshire Museum

Stopford, J. (2005) *Medieval Floor Tiles of Northern England: Pattern and Purpose: production between the 13th and 16th centuries*, Oxbow Books, Oxford

Vince, Alan (2004a) *Characterisation of the Medieval Pottery from Winksley, West Yorkshire*. AVAC Reports 2004/175 Lincoln, Alan Vince Archaeology Consultancy

Vince, Alan (2004b) *Characterisation Studies of Medieval Glazed Wares from York*. AVAC Reports 2004/151 Lincoln, Alan Vince Archaeology Consultancy

Appendix 1

Action	Context	class	Cname	date	Description	Form	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition	Use
	100	IRON	IRON	nd		IRON STRIP	PART	1	1	8		
	100	POTTERY	WINK?	med	THUMBED BASE	JUG	BS	1	1	36		
	100	POTTERY	WINK?	med	CU GLAZE	JUG	BS	1	1	12		
	102	POTTERY	BRAN	med		BOWL	BS	1	1	67		
	102	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	WHOLE	1	1	18		
	102	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	WHOLE	1	1	1		
	102	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	PART	1	1	2		
	102	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	WHOLE	1	1	9		
	102	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	WHOLE	1	1	7		
	102	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	PART	1	1	3		
	102	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	PART	1	1	2		
	102	CBM	MTIL	med		FLOOR	BS	1	1	21		MORTAR ON BASE
	102	CBM	MTIL	med		GPNR	BS	3	3	93		
	102	CBM	MTIL	med		GPNR	BS	1	1	159		
	102	CBM	MTIL	med		GPNR	BS	1	1	34		
	102	POTTERY	NGR	med		JAR	R	1	1	5		
	102	POTTERY	PMLOC	emod		FLP	R;BS	3	3	88		
	102	POTTERY	WINK?	med		JUG/JAR	BS	2	2	20		
	102	POTTERY	WINK?	med		BOT/JUG	BS	1	1	36		
	102	POTTERY	YG	med		JAR	BS	1	1	13		
	103	COPP	COPP	emod	MODERN	BUTTON	WHOLE	1	1	3		
	103	COPP	COPP	med/pmed		CHAPE	PART?	1	1	1		

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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/avac2007107.pdf>

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Action	Context	class	Cname	date	Description	Form	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition	Use
	103	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	PART	1	1	13		
	103	IRON	IRON	nd		IRON STRIP	PART	1	1	24		
	103	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	PART	1	1	5		
	103	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	PART	1	1	9		
	103	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	PART	1	1	12		
	103	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	WHOLE	1	1	8		
	103	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	PART	1	1	9		
	103	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	PART	1	1	7		
	103	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	WHOLE	1	1	12		
	103	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	PART	1	1	15		
	103	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	WHOLE	1	1	6		
	103	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	PART	1	1	12		
	103	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	PART	1	1	15		
	103	IRON	IRON	nd		NAIL	PART	1	1	5		
	103	LEAD	LEAD	nd		RUNNEL	BS	1	1	56		
	103	LEAD	LEAD	nd	OFFCUTS FROM WINDOW GLAZING	OFFCUTS	WHOLE PIECES	7	7	68		
DR3	103	CBM	MTIL	med	FRAG OF INLAID TILE; 13TH/14TH IN CHARACTER; NO ID IN STOPFORD; POSS FOLIAGE TENDRIL	FLOOR	BS	1	1	12		UNWORN

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Action	Context	class	Cname	date	Description	Form	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition	Use
	103	CBM	MTIL	med	SUGGESTION OF A SHELL SCOOP UNDERNEATH	FLOOR	BS	1	1	111		VERY WORN
	103	CBM	MTIL	med	CENTRAL CREST RIDGE TILE; KNIFE TRIMMED EDGE, TOP AND UNDERNEATH; RIDGE 40 THICK TAPERING TO 25 BEFORE KNIFE TRIMMING; 93 FROM TOP TO UNDERNEATH	RIDGE	BS	1	1	757		
	103	POTTERY	NGR	med		JAR	BS	1	1	6		
	103	POTTERY	PMLOC	emod		FLP	R	1	1	99		
	103	POTTERY	PMLOC	emod		FLP	BS	1	1	5		
	103	POTTERY	WINK?	med		JUG	BS	1	1	1		
	103	POTTERY	WINK?	med		JUG/JAR	BS	1	1	11		
DR1;TS;ICPS	132	POTTERY	ARCH	lmed		JAR	B	1	1	97	ABRA	
	132	POTTERY	BBAS	emod		TPOT	R;H	1	1	54	ABRA; SOIL DEP; CRACKLED GLAZE	
	132	POTTERY	BL	pmed		PANC	B	1	1	313	ABRA; SOIL DEP; CRACKLED GLAZE	

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Action	Context	class	Cname	date	Description	Form	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition	Use
	132	POTTERY	BL	pmed	FLANGED	PANC	R	1	1	65	ABRA; CRACKLED GLAZE	
	132	POTTERY	BL	pmed		BOWL/PANC	BS	2	2	56	ABRA; SOIL DEP	
	132	POTTERY	BL	pmed		BOWL	BS	1	1	3	ABRA	
	132	POTTERY	BL	pmed		POSSET	B	1	1	32		
	132	POTTERY	BL	pmed		SMALL JUG	B	1	1	173		
	132	CBM	CBM	nd		CBM	FRAG	2	1	11		
	132	POTTERY	CREA	emod		JUG	H	1	1	10	ABRA; SOIL DEP; CRACKLED GLAZE	
	132	POTTERY	HUM	lmed		JUG	H	1	1	111	ABRA	
	132	POTTERY	HUM	lmed		JUG/JAR	BS	1	1	36	ABRA	
	132	POTTERY	HUM	lmed		JUG/JAR	BS	2	2	42	ABRA; SOIL DEP	
	132	IRON	IRON	nd	CORRODED FRAGMENTS	NAILS?/OBJECTS?	BS	8	8	33		
	132	LEAD	LEAD	nd	INSTEAD OF MORTAR A SECTION OF WALL HAS BEEN BONDED WITH LEAD; THERE ARE THE IMPRESSIONS OF FOUR STONES	WALL BONDING	PART?	1	1	330		

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Action	Context	class	Cname	date	Description	Form	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition	Use
	132	CBM	MTIL	med	WHOLE TILE WITH SHELL SCOOP IN BASE 45 DIA	FLOOR	BS	1	1	1108		WORN
	132	CBM	MTIL	med	WHOLE TILE WITH SHELL SCOOP IN BASE 55 DIA	FLOOR	BS	1	1	409	SOIL DEP	WORN
	132	CBM	MTIL	med	FRAG	FLOOR	FRAG	1	1	7		SOME WEAR
	132	POTTERY	NGR	med		JAR	BS	1	1	27		
	132	POTTERY	NGR	med	GLAZED INT/EXT	JUG	BS	1	1	51	ABRA	
	132	POTTERY	NGR	med	GLAZED EXT	JAR	R	1	1	29		
	132	POTTERY	NGR	med	GLAZED INT	JUG	B	1	1	12	ABRA	
	132	POTTERY	NGR	med	GLAZED INT/EXT	JUG	B	1	1	248	ABRA EXT	
	132	POTTERY	NOTS	emod		JAR	BS	1	1	17	ABRA	
	132	POTTERY	NOTS	emod	ROULETTED DEC EXT	BOWL	BS	1	1	13	ABRA	
	132	POTTERY	NOTS	emod		BOWL	BS	1	1	8	ABRA	
	132	POTTERY	PEAR	emod		PLATE	B	1	1	6	ABRA; SOIL DEP; CRACKLED GLAZE	
	132	POTTERY	PEAR	emod		BOWL	B	1	1	108	ABRA; SOIL DEP; CRACKLED GLAZE	
	132	POTTERY	PMLOC	emod		FLP	B	1	1	188	ABRA; SOIL DEP	
	132	POTTERY	PMLOC	emod		FLP	R	1	1	49	ABRA	
	132	STONE	STONE	med/pmed		ROOFER	FRAG	1	1	82		

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Action	Context	class	Cname	date	Description	Form	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition	Use
	132	POTTERY	TPW	emod		PLATE	BS	1	1	11	ABRA; SOIL DEP	
	132	POTTERY	TPW	emod	FLANGED	BOWL	R	1	1	28	ABRA; CRACKLED GLAZE	
	132	POTTERY	TPW	emod		BOWL	R	1	1	58	ABRA; SOIL DEP; CRACKLED GLAZE	
	132	POTTERY	TPW	emod		CUP	R	1	1	4		
	132	POTTERY	WHITE	emod		JAR	R	1	1	7	ABRA; SOIL DEP; CRACKLED GLAZE	
	132	POTTERY	WHITE	emod	MOULDED EXT DEC	CUP	R	1	1	17	SOIL DEP	
	132	POTTERY	WINK	med	BELLAMY AND LE PATOUREL 21	JUG	BS	1	1	21	ABRA	
	132	POTTERY	WINK	med	BELLAMY AND LE PATOUREL 38	JUG	BS	1	1	22	ABRA	
	132	POTTERY	WINK	med	BELLAMY AND LE PATOUREL 35	JUG	BS	1	1	37	ABRA	
	132	POTTERY	WINK	med	SCAR FROM PELLET; BELLAMY AND LE PATOUREL 35	JUG	BS	1	1	9		
	132	POTTERY	WINK	med	COMPLEX WEDGE ON SHOULDER; BELLAMY AND LE PATOUREL 14-17; 20	JUG	R	1	1	13	ABRA	

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Action	Context	class	Cname	date	Description	Form	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition	Use
	132	POTTERY	WINK	med	BELLAMY AND LE PATOUREL 38	JUG	BS	1	1	9		
	132	POTTERY	WINK	med	BELLAMY AND LE PATOUREL 35	JUG	BS	1	1	63		
	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med	PULLED SPOUT	JUG	R	1	1	28		
	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med		JUG/JAR	BS	1	1	19		
	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med	THUMBED BASE	JUG	B	1	1	69	ABRA	
	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med	TIGHT GROOVES INT/EXT	JUG	BS	4	1	24	FRESH BREAKS	
	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med	FRAGS FROM OTHER SHERDS	JUG/JAR	BS	13	0	14	FRESH BREAKS	
	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med	GLAZE INT/EXT	JUG	B	1	1	7		
	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med		JUG	B	4	1	64	FRESH BREAKS; ABRA; SOIL DEP	
	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med		JUG/JAR	BS	2	2	16		
	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med		JUG	BS	1	1	33		
	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med	HANDLE TO BODY JOIN	JUG	BS	1	1	7		
	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med	THUMBED BASE	JUG	B	1	1	11		
	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med	THUMBED BASE	JUG	B	1	1	57		
DR2	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med		VESSEL	R	1	1	86	ABRA EXT	
	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med	ROD HANDLE	JUG	H	1	1	57		

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Action	Context	class	Cname	date	Description	Form	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition	Use
	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med	TIGHT EXTERNAL GROOVES	JUG	BS	2	1	20		
	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med	THUMBED BASE	JUG	B	1	1	11		
	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med	GLAZE INT/EXT	JUG	B;BS	5	1	74	FRESH BREAKS	
	132	POTTERY	WINK?	med	THUMBED BASE	JUG	B	1	1	53	ABRA	