

Assessment of the Finds from Blenheim Street, Scarborough, North Yorkshire (OSA07 EX05)

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A small collection of finds from an archaeological excavation at Blenheim Street, Scarborough, undertaken by On-Site Archaeology Ltd, was submitted to the authors for identification and assessment.

The finds are mostly of medieval date but include 17th-century clay tobacco pipes.

Description

Ceramic Building Material

A single fragment of flat roof tile was recorded from context 1015.

Clay Tobacco Pipe

Four fragments of clay tobacco pipe representing two pipes were recorded from context 1015. In both cases the pipes were heeled but had fragmentary bowls. They could be dated to the 17th century by their stem bore diameters.

Copper Alloy

A roughly square sheet of copper alloy with seven nail holes was recorded from context 1015. It was probably used as a binding strip, for example on a composite wooden object.

Pottery

Twenty-nine sherds of pottery were recorded. All could be dated to the medieval period. The earliest types present were probably sherds of Staxton-type (STAX) ware jars and York Glazed ware (YORK) jars and a jug.

Scarborough ware (SCAR) was represented by eight jug sherds but a further seven sherds appeared to be of similar fabric but were unfamiliar either in texture, firing or form. These may be examples of Scarborough products not produced for export (SCAR?). The sherds include two jugs, four jars and a bowl.

Seven sherds of Brandsby-type ware (BRAN) and a sherd of Humberware (HUM), all jugs, were recorded. Both of these wares were current in the 14th and 15th centuries and probably date to this period here although the Brandsby industry was certainly in existence in the late 13th century, since this is the date of the kiln excavated by Jean Le Patourel.

Assessment

The dating of the medieval pottery industry in Scarborough has been disputed since the 1970s but it is highly likely that it actually dates in the main to the 13th and early 14th centuries. If this is correct, then the pottery at Blenheim Street ranges in date from the late 12th to 13th centuries through to the later 14th or 15th centuries, but with a concentration in the later 13th and 14th centuries. If so, then the earliest possible date for the deposition of contexts 1013 and 2006 would be the later 13th century. Context 1015 contains mostly medieval finds but with two clay tobacco pipes.

The flat roof tile and the copper alloy sheet are not closely datable and both come from the same context as the two 17th century clay tobacco pipes.

Further Work

No further work is recommended.

Retention

Since all the finds are stratified they should be retained for future re-examination.

Appendix 1

Context	class	Cname	Description	Form	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition	Use
1013	POTTERY	SCAR		JUG	BS	2	2	9		
1015	CBM	MTIL		FLAT	BS	1	1	48		
1015	COPP	COPP	ROUGH SQUARE OF SHEET COPPER WITH 7 NAIL HOLES	BINDING PIECE	BS	1	1	3		
1015	PIPECLAY	PIPECLAY	17TH CENTURY BORE	CLAYPIPE	STEM;HEEL;BOWL	3	1	8		
1015	PIPECLAY	PIPECLAY	17TH CENTURY BORE	CLAYPIPE	STEM;HEEL	1	1	4		
1015	POTTERY	SCAR?		JUG	BS	2	2	10		
1015	POTTERY	BRAN		JUG	BS	7	7	75		
1015	POTTERY	YORK		JAR	BS	1	1	2		
1015	POTTERY	YORK		JAR	BS	1	1	9		SOOTED EXT
1015	POTTERY	YORK	VERT THUMBED STRIP	JUG	BS	1	1	10		
1015	POTTERY	HUM	THUMBED RIM	JUG	R	1	1	14		
1015	POTTERY	SCAR	ROD HANDLE, SQUARED 13 ACROSS	JUG	H	1	1	6		
1015	POTTERY	SCAR?		JAR	BS	3	2	4		
1015	POTTERY	SCAR?		JAR	BS	1	1	7		WHITE DEP INT
1015	POTTERY	SCAR?		BOWL	BS	1	1	1		
1015	POTTERY	SCAR		JUG	BS	1	1	2		
2006	POTTERY	SCAR	IRON RICH VERT STRIP	JUG	BS	1	1	7		
2006	POTTERY	STAXT		JAR	BS	2	2	9		
2006	POTTERY	YORK		JAR	BS	1	1	5		
2006	POTTERY	SCAR		JUG	BS	2	1	2		
2006	POTTERY	SCAR	CORDON	JUG	BS	1	1	1		WHITE DEP INT

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