

Initial Comments on the 89, The Mount, York, finds (OSA06 EX01)

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The finds from the 2006 season of excavations at 89, The Mount, York, carried out by On-Site Archaeology, were submitted to the authors for a preliminary assessment and costing.

Spot-dating

The finds from each context were examined as if a self-contained assemblage and a terminus post quem was assigned. In a few cases, the difference in date between the latest type and the remainder of the group was so great that the majority tpq was given in brackets, in case the latest find present was intrusive. These dates are given as Appendix 1.

Late 1st Century

Several groups could only be dated to the late 1st century or later, because the only sherds present were of Ebor ware or local greyware, both of which were present from the onset of military occupation. However, a few groups contained types which could positively be identified as being of late first century date were seen, including the handle of a Dressel 1-4 amphora. The scale of late 1st century activity, and probably a closer date, could be established by a detailed recording of the Samian ware and mortaria.

A number of groups were give a late 1st century TPQ but were probably of early 2nd century date, since the only diagnostic feature was that they contained rusticated jars rather than BB1 or its copies, which came into use in York, as elsewhere, in the Hadrianic period (c.120AD). A closer assessment of the chronology and extent of late 1st to early 2nd century activity can only be made following full recording of the pottery and its study in association with the stratigraphy.

Table 1

Context	Description	Sum of Nosh	Sum of Weight
TP12; 53	L1+ MORT (PROF)	1	470
923	L1+	4	24
942	L1+	6	101
2024	L1+	6	67
2026	L1+	1	5
2121	L1/E2 (GOOD GROUP)	50	1957
2152	L1+	1	34
2163	L1+	1	2
2183	L1+	2	3
2206	L1+	1	12
2213	L1+	2	20

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2301	L1+	1	3
2303	L1+	4	553
2344	L1+	4	42
2350	L1 (BIFID HANDLE FOR DR2-4)	1	293
2410	L1+	1	108
2553	L1+	1	5
2704	L1+	1	5
2712	L1+	1	15
2714	L1+	2	4
3001	L1/19 (POSSIBLE FLOWERPOT	3	22
3006	L1+	2	12
3311	L1+/E12	2	7
3525	L1+	1	3
3605	L1+	1	6
3702	L1+	2	7
3707	L1+	1	3
3806	L1+	1	48
3808	L1 (GOOD GROUP)	47	910
6009	L1+	1	1
6013	L1+	2	11
6021	L1+	1	3
7003	L1+	1	5
7006	L1+	1	4
7008	L1+	1	10
7025	L1+	12	33
7033	L1+	1	1
7036	L1+	1	1
7042	L1+	1	16
7061	L1+	1	4
7063	L1+	5	40
7069	L1+	2	5
7076	L1(GOOD GROUP)	34	302
7083	L1+	1	12
7093	L1+	1	2
7095	L1(GOOD GROUP; NATIVE POT)	17	221
7097	L1+	7	20
7113	L1+	2	11
7114	L1+	7	160
7119	L1+/L9+	1	8
7127	L1+	4	116
7128	L1+	1	1
7134	L1+	1	4
7140	L1+(FIGURINE/LAMP)	1	4
7158	L1(GOOD GROUP)	15	84
7163	L1+	2	5
7165	L1+	13	47

Early 2nd Century

TPQs of early 2nd century or later were assigned where either BB1 or burnished lattice-decorated wheelthrown greywares were present in the assemblage, but without any later types (Table 2). Many of these assemblages are dominated by Eboracum ware and might be

of any date up to the early 3rd century, when the local pottery industry is thought to have collapsed. Again, a few groups of some size, and apparently consisting of freshly-broken pots, were present (e.g. 7077 and 7079). However, depending on the stratigraphy, there is no reason why some of the smaller groups might not be combined to form equally useful assemblages.

Table 2

Context	Description	Sum of Nosh	Sum of Weight
10001	E2+	1	49
2013	E2+	1	13
2036	E2+	2	131
2119	E2+	3	28
2155	E2+	1	5
2187	E2+	1	10
2192	E2+	2	6
2322	E2+	1	11
2331	E2+	2	26
2342	E2+	8	543
2347	E2+	1	13
2603	E2+	7	52
2654	E2+	13	841
6011	E2+	5	15
6019	E2+	2	5
7065	E2+	5	37
7077	E2(GOOD GROUP)	66	897
7078	E2+	5	336
7079	E2(GOOD GROUP)	50	315
7096	E2+	10	101
7150	E2+	1	4
7154	E2+	4	36
933	E2+	2	23
loose in box	E2+	3	50
stripping	E2+(GRAFITTI)	3	3097
U/S; 2B	E2+	1	504

Late 2nd Century

Assemblages containing Nene Valley colour-coated ware were assigned a late 2nd century TPQ (Table 3). However, this was became much more common in the mid 3rd century and most of these groups will probably have been deposited at that date or later. With this in mind, it is noteworthy that none of these groups is larger than 8 sherds.

Table 3

Context	Description	Sum of Nosh	Sum of Weight
2104	L2+	6	21
2106	L2+	1	6
2113	L2+	7	32
2168	L2+	8	125
2202	L2+	1	3

2327	L2+	2	9
2343	L2+	5	41
3320	L2+	1	1
3501	L2+	2	10
3704	L2+	4	16

Early 3rd century

No examples of Eboracum ware face pots or platters of North African type were noted and it is not thought likely that there was much activity on the site in the early 3rd century.

Mid 3rd century

Assemblages containing Dales-type shelly ware (Monaghan 1997 #113} Fabric K1) were assigned a mid 3rd century TPQ (Table 4). This ware, produced in north Lincolnshire, seems to have enjoyed a limited period of use in York but during that period is relatively common. Several of the assemblages are relatively large (e.g. 2220) and imply that there was activity on the site during that period. Few examples of assemblages containing both Dales-type shelly ware and calcite-gritted wares were noted, suggesting that there was a break between this activity and the subsequent occupation.

Table 4

Context	Description	Sum of Nosh	Sum of Weight
2017	M3+	18	261
2021	M3+ (E12)	11	279
2115	M3+	13	189
2138	M3+	5	118
2211	M3+	34	538
2220	M3 (INTERESTING PAINTED WARE)	129	2502
2338	M3+	68	798
3710	M3+	11	66
6005	M3+	6	17
7046	M3+	5	107

Late 3rd century

Assemblages containing Calcite-gritted wares or Nene Valley colour-coated indented, scale-decorated beakers were assigned a later 3rd century TPQ (Table 5). However, both of these types continued in use into the 4th century. Crambeck wares (greyware and parchment ware) were rare on the site, and usually noted as residual sherds in medieval groups. It is likely therefore that these assemblages do not date far into the 4th century. Some of the assemblages are of a reasonable size, but several contain obvious residual pottery. The only apparently contemporary group, context 2357, only contained 13 sherds. This suggests that there is a difference in character between this later 3rd century or later activity and previous activity.

Table 5

Context	Description	Sum of Nosh	Sum of Weight
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2108	L3+	2	14
2131	L3+	31	978
2136	L3+ (UNUSUAL RIM)	40	759
2154	L3+	89	1195
2158	L3+	19	248
2165	L3+	7	305
2169	L3+	11	356
2177	L3+	2	217
2223	L3+	11	309
2357	L3+(GOOD GROUP)	13	130
2653	L3+	6	139
3110	L3+	10	109
3209	L3 (L9)	21	347
3303	L3+	5	21
3412	L3+	3	5
3705	L3+ (L9)	12	89
3708	L3+	12	60
3713	L3+	3	13
6023	L3+	18	61
6025	L3+	12	231
6033	L3+	10	43

Individually interesting Roman pottery

A few sherds were noted during spot-dating as being worthy of further work. They include a possible Roman glazed cup or similar pedestal based vessel (from context 7031, dated to the mid 11th century or later, so perhaps actually a medieval vessel, but if so very unusual) the Dr 2-4 amphora handle and two sherds from an indented mica-dusted ware beaker (Monaghan Fabric D1). It is likely that further vessels which cannot be paralleled in Monaghan's corpus would be found during full recording but by and large the Roman pottery consists of examples of well-known types.

Hiatus

There is little pottery from the site which need date to the 4th century and none of later 4th century character or of early to mid Anglo-Saxon date. Presumably, the site was unoccupied during this long period.

Late 9th century

A small scatter of Anglo-Scandinavian sherds was present (Table 6). Three of these were the only post-Roman sherds in what were otherwise reasonable Roman assemblages and they have been listed above (contexts 3209, 3705, 7119). In one case, the identity of the sherd as Anglo-Scandinavian was unsure (context 2143) and in one case a sherd of early 12th-century or later date was present (context 2341).

It is difficult to interpret this small collection, but it is paralleled on other sites outside of Micklegate Bar and probably represents some sort of extra-mural settlement, perhaps farming or a market or perhaps suburban ribbon development. The eleven sherds concerned

have been listed (Table 7). They consist of York A ware, which is most common in late 9th to mid 10th-century assemblages (Mainman Coppergate) and Torksey ware, which is most common in later 10th to mid 11th-century assemblages. These two types are the most common in their respective periods of ascendancy and this suggests a low level of activity throughout the Anglo-Scandinavian period rather than, say, a brief but more intense activity at some point within the period. The contexts producing these sherds should be examined to see whether they might be interpreted as later deposits containing residual sherds, perhaps brought onto the site in the post-conquest period.

Table 6

Context	Description	Sum of Nosh	Sum of Weight
2143	L9TH+(OR ROMAN)	4	14
2186	L9+	16	328
2329	L9+	10	93
2341	L9+ (E12)	31	419
2356	L9+	2	54
3209	L3 (L9)	21	347
3705	L3+ (L9)	12	89
7119	L1+/L9+	1	8

Table 7

Context	class	Cname	Form	Part
2143	POTTERY	TORK	JAR	BS
2168	POTTERY	YORKA	JAR	BS
2329	POTTERY	YORKA	JAR	R
2329	POTTERY	YORKA	JAR	BS
2329	POTTERY	YORKA	JAR	BS
2341	POTTERY	TORK	JAR	BS
2356	POTTERY	TORK	JAR	BS
3106	POTTERY	YORKA	JAR	BS
3209	POTTERY	YORKA?	JAR	BS
3705	POTTERY	TORK	JAR	BS
7119	POTTERY	TORK?	JAR	BS

Mid 11th century

Assemblages containing sherds of York Gritty ware but no later types were assigned a mid 11th century TPQ (Table 8). In some cases, the medieval sherds were outnumbered by residual Roman pottery and no large groups were present. However, the sherds appear to be fairly fresh and were probably not present in a ploughsoil but come from occupation on the site. York Gritty ware had a long period of use and there is no reason why these sherds need not have been deposited in the 12th or even the early 13th century. The lack of Stamford ware from the site suggests that there is not any mid to late 11th century activity, since that ware

was particularly common in York during that period (as at Coppergate, Period 5c, {Mainman 1990 #20753}).

Table 8 (n.b. the pottery totals include residual Roman wares)

Context	Description	Sum of Nosh	Sum of Weight
2019	M11+	2	36
2117	M11+	18	301
2133	M11+	26	175
2307	M11+	5	70
2309	M11+ (MADDER STAINING)	3	41
2314	M11+	3	36
2317	M11+	1	25
2326	M11+	3	32
2340	M11+	1	69
3104	M11+	2	1
3106	M11+	26	319
3113	M11+	1	3
3508	M11+	2	8
3804	M11+	19	190
7005	M11+	1	5
7010	M11+	2	9
7031	M11+	12	103
7044	M11+	8	37
7048	M11+	2	7

Early 12th century

Assemblages which contained splash-glazed gritty ware were given an early 12th-century TPQ (Table 9). There were very few of these and all contained less than 13 sherds (including residual Roman). It is therefore likely that in many cases these assemblages actually date to the later 12th century but were too small to contain diagnostic later 12th century types.

Table 9

Context	Description	Sum of Nosh	Sum of Weight
2102	E12+	4	25
2150	E12+	1	4
2200	E12+	12	80
3205	E12+	1	1
3408	E12+	2	21
7020	E12+	9	61

Mid 12th century

Two assemblages were assigned a mid 12th century (Table 10) TPQ because they contained sherds of splash-glazed jugs with fabrics or features which could be dated to the mid 12th century or later. The assemblages are larger than those dated to the early 12th century or later, which is consistent with both groups being of similar date.

Table 10

Context	Description	Sum of Nosh	Sum of Weight
2111	M12+	87	1114

2148	M12+	42	500
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Later 12th century

Assemblages containing York Glazed ware or similarly-dated glazed wares were assigned a later 12th century TPQ (Table 11). There are a number of such groups and at least one is noted as having a fresh-looking assemblage. However, there are relatively few typological features which can be used to distinguish early to mid 13th-century assemblages and it could well be that these assemblages span a period of a century.

Table 11

Context	Description	Sum of Nosh	Sum of Weight
1018	L12+	5	38
1020	L12+	5	83
2005	L12+	26	427
2012	L12+	11	109
2153	L12+	35	244
2224	L12+	4	30
2228	L12+	3	17
2230	L12+	25	337
3004	L12+	1	1
3301	L12+	9	51
3302	L12+	6	112
3315	L12+	12	42
3406	L12+	42	230
3410	L12+	21	86
3418	L12+	1	1
6003	L12+	15	104
7014	L12+ (GOOD GROUP)	34	575
7023	L12+	11	154
7050	L12+	8	86
8006	L12+	7	95

Early 13th Century

A single context, 3404, was assigned an early 13th century TPQ, based on the character of the York glazed ware present in the group (12 sherds in total, 136 gm).

Late 13th Century

Six assemblages were assigned a late 13th century TPQ through the presence of Brandsby-type ware (Table 12). This ware was produced from the later 13th to the 15th centuries and these groups could date to any part of the bracket (or later). In each case, the date is supplied by a single sherd, indicating a high degree of residuality. Furthermore, the Brandsby-type ware sherds are all fairly small and might have been subjected to redeposition. These features suggest that by this time the site was not occupied but ploughed or gardened.

Table 12

Context	Description	Sum of Nosh	Sum of Weight
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1009	L13+	11	177
2204	L13+	6	30
2703	L13+	2	91
3207	L13+	1	7
3211	L13+	3	14
7027	L13+	14	101

Mid and late 14th century

Eight contexts were assigned a TPQ of mid- or late-14th century, based on the presence and character of Humberware or other late medieval wares (Table 13). Since Humberware and Brandsby-type ware were coeval for much of the later medieval period these groups might actually be contemporary with those assigned a late 13th century TPQ.

Table 13

Context	Description	Sum of Nosh	Sum of Weight
1004	L14+	27	389
1010	L14+	1	20
1017	M14+	1	3
2157	L14+ (E12+)	47	582
2210	L14+	37	848
2214	L14+	32	865
2218	L14+	5	15
3002	L14+	28	125

Post-Medieval

Three groups were assigned TPQs in the post-medieval period, based either on clay tobacco pipe stems (1001 and 7130) or the presence of Ryedale ware (3108).

Table 14

Context	Description	Sum of Nosh	Sum of Weight
1001	17+	1	11
3108	L15+	4	117
7130	E17+	1	2

Early Modern

Two contexts were assigned TPQs in the 19th century. In both cases, the date came from a sherd of a vessel probably used in a garden, a flowerpot in the case of "ploughsoil" and an unglazed, moulded fineware sherd in 3701.

Table 15

Context	Description	Sum of Nosh	Sum of Weight
3701	19+ (UNUSUAL- MOULDED LEAF)	1	14
ploughsoil	19 (FLOWERPOT); E17+ (PIPE)	27	160

Registered Finds

One hundred and fourteen finds of bone, stone or metal (iron or copper alloy) require specialist assessment. A request for a quotation has been made to Hilary Cool but will require submission of the assemblage and appropriate x-radiographs.

All the finds to be submitted to Dr Cool have been sent to the YAT conservation laboratory for a quotation for x-radiography, assessment of packaging requirements, and the presence of mineral preserved organics.

Coins

Craig Barclay has agreed to examine the five coins, four of which are Roman and one medieval. They have been sent to the YAT conservation laboratory for a quotation for x-radiography and removal of soil matrix.

Mortar

221 fragments of wall plaster were recovered from various contexts (Table 16). Some of these were painted but in most cases each fragment has a single colour. These have been recorded rather than assessed because of their friability and an estimate made of the cost of writing the description and further work. It seems from this recording that the plaster, with its mortar backing, comes from a single structure, or at least that no major differences exist in the composition of the mortar backing, skim thickness or decorative scheme. Associated pottery suggests an early 2nd century date, but this date is probably for the demolition of the structure rather than its construction, which seems likely therefore to have been in the later 1st to early 2nd century.

Table 16

Context	Sum of Nosh	Sum of NoV	Sum of Weight
2017	1	1	14
2131	33	13	215
2169	1	1	23
2192	6	1	4
2200	1	1	10
2202	21	2	1027
2338	1	1	6
3410	1	1	37
7008	5	1	56
7010	1	1	1
7023	47	3	184
7031	2	1	12
7042	13	3	194
7044	1	1	10
7067	4	1	8
7077	1	1	49
7078	27	6	400
7089	2	1	65
7128	14	2	339

7140	8	2	90
7154	1	1	9
7156	12	2	94
10001	13	3	194
10013	5	1	200

Preliminary Assessment

The site produced a sequence of Roman activity stretching from the later 1st to early 2nd century to at least the late 3rd century. Within this period several distinct phases of activity probably took place, giving the possibility of examining at least four chronological groups of pottery (and associated registered finds). To confirm that this is the case would require recording of all the stratified Roman pottery to standard archive level (Table 17. Task 1).

The medieval pottery seems to indicate a relatively short period of occupation in the mid 12th to early 13th century followed by a long period of less intensive use stretching from the late 13th to the 17th centuries. It is difficult to give an estimate of further work without knowing the stratigraphy and the proportion of residual Roman to medieval sherds. However, since the total quantity of pottery from contexts with mid 11th to late 12th century TPQs is 588 the figure is likely to be substantially less than three days work, perhaps a single day.

It is likely that a report based on study of these records together with the stratigraphy and illustration/analysis/further study of the various sherds identified during preliminary assessment would be sufficient for online publication without any further expenditure, should the client wish to go straight to publication stage (Table 17, Tasks 3 and 4).

The estimated costs of conservation assessment, assessment of the registered finds and the coins are being obtained (Tasks 5, 6 and 7).

Table 17

Task	Description	Rate	Costing
1	Recording of 1283 sherds of stratified Roman pottery	£206.00 plus VAT per day	£1442.00 plus VAT
2	Recording of stratified medieval pottery	£206.00 plus VAT per day	£206.00 plus VAT
3	Illustration, analysis and further study of vessels identified during preliminary assessment, with an allowance for those missed.	£206.00 plus VAT	£721.00 plus VAT
4	Production of report	£206.00 plus VAT	£412.00 plus VAT
5	Conservation assessment	TBA	

6	Registered Finds assessment	TBA	
7	Coin Identification	TBA (possibly gratis)	
8	Mortar recording, analysis and report	£206.00 plus VAT per day	£570.00 plus VAT
Total (excluding tasks 5, 6 and 7)			£3351.00 plus VAT