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Chapman's Yard, Scarborough,

**An archaeological watching
brief 2003**

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit



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**Chapman's Yard, Scarborough,
An archaeological watching brief 2003**

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CHAPMAN'S YARD, SCARBOROUGH, AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF 2003

By John Halsted, Emma Hancox, Erica Macey and Stephanie Ratkai

Summary

A watching brief was undertaken at Chapman's Yard, Scarborough, North Yorkshire (NGR 504349/488779) by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit. The project was commissioned by Phoenix Consulting on behalf of Crest Nicholson Properties Ltd. Documentary evidence and previous field evaluation of the site suggested the presence of an early medieval settlement, a medieval church, a cemetery and hospital, together with an eighteenth century poorhouse and a nineteenth century workhouse (e.g. Richmond 2002). However, much of the Chapman's Yard area was truncated by nineteenth century cellars, reducing the potential for surviving earlier deposits.

The watching brief identified nineteenth century layer of black silt containing residual seventeenth to nineteenth century ceramics. The animal bone assemblage suggested butchery and tanning had formerly taken place at Chapman's Yard. A large stone built reservoir was identified on the site, which appears to have been contemporary with mid-nineteenth century buildings.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A watching brief was undertaken at Chapman's Yard, Scarborough (Figs.1 and 2), North Yorkshire (NGR 504349/488779) by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit. This was commissioned by Phoenix Consulting on behalf of Crest Nicholson Properties Ltd. The watching brief follows a written scheme of investigation drawn up by Phoenix Consulting Archaeology Ltd (Richmond 2002). A watching brief was recommended as suitable mitigation for any archaeology which may survive within the Chapman's Yard development, despite substantial disturbance by nineteenth century buildings and cellars.

Prior archaeological desk-based and field evaluation have covered the Chapman's Yard development and the associated St. Thomas Street site to the north. These assessments identified the prior existence of early medieval settlement, a twelfth century town boundary, and a medieval church and associated cemetery at the periphery of the current development area (Richmond 2002, 11-12). A medieval hospital, associated with the church, an eighteenth century poorhouse and a later nineteenth century workhouse are considered to potentially lie within the northern extent of the Chapman's Yard development area (ibid.13). The following report outlines the results of a watching brief programme designed to identify and record any archaeological features at Chapman's Yard during ongoing groundworks.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Machine excavated groundworks were monitored by members of Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit between October 2002 and January 2003. A photographic record together with plans and sections recording the location and

character of archaeological features were made where necessary. Archaeological artefacts were collected and recorded within identifiable contexts.

3.0 RESULTS

The excavation of an elevator pit (1) was monitored at the northern perimeter of the Chapman's Yard site (Fig.3). This pit measured approximately 5m x 5m and was approximately 2.5m deep. The natural orange-red clay was overlain by a layer of black clayey silt (2002), c. 0.60 – 0.70m in depth. This layer had an organic appearance and waterlogged leather was recovered from the south-east corner of the elevator pit. Post-medieval pottery together with animal bone was also recovered. This layer was overlain by a layer of modern hardcore c. 0.70m deep (2001).

In addition to the elevator pit, an area of unstable made-ground in the eastern corner of the site (Fig.3) was stripped in order to consolidate the area with hardcore. This strip revealed a black clayey silt (2000), similar in matrix to the silt (2002) recorded during the excavation of the elevator pit (1) to the north-west. Post-medieval pottery and clay pipe stems were recovered from this area.

A second elevator pit (2) was excavated in the south-west corner of the site (Fig.3). The footings for this construction cut the natural clay to a depth of 2m below the modern ground level. This was directly overlain by modern hardcore 0.70m deep. No archaeological features were noted and no finds recovered.

Groundworks revealed a large stone built reservoir (F101) towards the southern extent of the Chapman's Yard development area (Fig.3). Due to safety concerns it was not possible to examine structural elements from inside. This was, however, photographed, plotted and significant features recorded. The reservoir measured c.7m in diameter and was constructed using well-dressed sandstone blocks (1002; Plate 1) with clearly visible 'chevron' tooling marks (Fig.4). The structure contained large quantities of waterlogged materials (1003) which were excavated to a depth of over 5m by machine and transported away from the site (Plates 2-3). Fragments of wood and a leather shoe fragment were recovered. The shoe is considered to be relatively recent in date. Two stone inlet or outlet features were recorded in the southern wall of the feature (Plate 4; Figs.3 and 4). The upper outlet/ inlet was two courses of masonry below the surface, the second eight courses below the current surface of the reservoir. The surviving remnants of a slightly domed brick-built capping (1001) were visible above the sandstone masonry.

4.0 THE CERAMICS *by Stephanie Ratkai*

Context 2000

Seventeenth Century: stoneware

Nineteenth Century: tin-glazed Earthenwares, blue transfer printed Pearlwares and white salt glaze Stoneware, representing 1830s-1840s.

Context 2002

Eighteenth Century: Creamware 1780s

Nineteenth Century: Blue shell-edged plate fragments (c.1800), blue transfer printed Pearlware (1830's), Pearlware with under-glaze painted decoration (1820's-1830's), tin-glazed earthen wares and tortoiseshell Creamware.

5.0 THE POST-MEDIEVAL FINDS *by Erica Macey*

As well as pottery, a small amount of other finds were recovered from the site. These items included ceramic brick and tile, glass, clay pipe, shell and leather. The assemblage was quantified by count and weight and examined macroscopically for the purposes of assessment. The group was fragmentary, although individual pieces were largely unabraded.

Tile

A small group of twenty fragments of tile were recovered from the possible buried soil layer (2002). The same fabric was noted across all of the tile in the group; this was a well-levigated, hard-fired orange fabric, evenly-coloured throughout, with few visible inclusions. A uniform thickness of between 12 and 16mm was also noted. The size of individual fragments varied greatly, from 14 to 120mm in width, although no complete examples were recovered. Most of the fragments recovered were flat pieces of probable roof tile, although a few fragments were curved, suggesting that they may have been used as ridge tiles, however, no diagnostic features such as lips or tabs were noted.

The quality of the tile and its uniformity suggests an 18th – 19th century date. This is confirmed by the spot-dating of the pottery from the same layer (Rátkai, this report).

Recommendations for further work

Due to the small size of the assemblage, and the lack of diagnostic elements, no further work is recommended for this assemblage.

Brick

Two fragments of 18th century brick (Dr. Malcolm Hislop, pers. comm) were recovered from a scalloped wall in the eastern corner of the site. The brick fabrics are well-levigated and evenly-fired, with even red or orange colouring throughout. Both pieces are 2.5 inches thick, although as the bricks are incomplete, it was not possible to determine their original size.

Recommendations for Further Work

No further work is recommended for this assemblage.

Glass

A small amount of glass was also recovered from the site. Most of the assemblage was very fragmentary, with the exception of a near-complete bottle (2001). Most of the assemblage had also acquired the iridescent patina characteristic of aged glass.

The most complete glass item recovered from the site was a clear glass bottle, which was complete from the shoulder down, although the neck was missing. The bottle was 135mm high, and was marked with the name "J. W. Brackenbury, Plough Hotel,

Scarboro" in a circular pattern on one side. The words "Imperial 1 1/2 Pint" were also visible on the shoulder, and the base was marked with the initials "J. K. W." and "1581." A neck and partial shoulder of a thin-walled glass phial was also noted (2002).

The remainder of the assemblage consisted of three small dark-green wine bottle fragments (2002), three body sherds from clear glass bottles (2000 x 1, 2001 x 2) and two possible window glass fragments (2002).

Recommendations for Further Work

No further work is recommended for this assemblage.

Clay Pipe

The clay pipe assemblage consisted of twenty pipe stems (2000 x 6, 2002 x 14) and one stem with a partial bowl attached (2002). Most of the stems are plain and have no diagnostic features, although one stem (2002) is decorated with a curled branch motif and has a long, flat-bottomed pedestal spur which can be dated to c.1840 - 1860 (Ayto, 1999, 7). The stem with a partial bowl is also decorated with a pattern of foliage, this time with the addition of crosses, and has the same pedestal spur as the other decorated stem.

Recommendations for Further Work

No further research is recommended, although the decorated pipes may be worthy of photography.

Shell

An oyster shell (2000) and a shell from another species of marine mollusc (2000) were noted. No further work is recommended.

Leather

A partial upper of a leather shoe was recovered from the stone reservoir (1003, F101). This upper was very wide, possibly from a man's shoe. The upper was undecorated and was discoloured due to the waterlogged conditions within the reservoir. A series of small holes along the bottom edge represent the remains of where the upper was sewn to the sole. The toe end was rounded and the shoe appears to be relatively modern, probably having been dumped into the reservoir as it was backfilled.

Recommendations for Further Work

No further work is recommended for this item.

6.0 THE ANIMAL BONE by Emma Hancox

Table 1 Numbers of bones.

Context	Countable bones and teeth	Measurable bones and teeth	Ageble Mandibles	Comments
2000	1 (sheep/goat)			Cut marks and gnawing
2002	88 (cattle) 2 (sheep/goat)	20 (cattle) 2 (sheep/goat)	13 (cattle) 2 (sheep/goat)	Butchery- cut, chop and saw marks.

Factual Data

Four boxes of animal bone were recovered from the watching brief. Hand collected bone was recovered from two contexts, 2000 and 2002. No bulk samples were taken for sieving. The contexts were dated to the late eighteenth-early nineteenth century (Stephanie Ratkai *pers. comm.*)

The faunal assemblage was recorded on the standard BU Zooarchaeological Unit recording form which follows a modified version of a system used by Davis (Davis 1992: Albarella and Davis 1994). This involves considering certain elements as countable e.g. distal femur, whilst also noting the presence of 'non-countables' such as horncores, antlers, evidence of butchery or pathology and any unusual species. Measurable bones and teeth were noted. Only lower teeth of known position are considered measurable, bone measurements mostly follow Von den Driesch (1976). Mandibles are considered ageable when at least two teeth are present with recordable wear stages. No attempt was made to distinguish between sheep and goat at this stage. As it is such a small assemblage all the contexts were examined in detail.

The assemblage consisted almost entirely of cattle bones. The only other mammal present was sheep/goat, being represented by 1 tibia, 2 mandibles and 1 non-countable element. All other identifiable bones, including 'non-countables', were bovid.

A wide range of elements were noted, although there were no metapodials or phalanges. Butchery in the form of cut, chop and saw marks was noted. Lots of bones showed evidence of this, and in Context 2002 maybe as much as 40-50%. No evidence of pathology, gnawing or burning, however, was found in this context. Context 2000 produced a gnawed bone. The vast majority of the cattle bones came from very large animals. All the countable bones were from adults, with the exception of one juvenile calcaneum.

Discussion

Given the dominance of cattle and the lack of other species, this is not likely to be refuse from a domestic assemblage. The large proportion of bones showing signs of butchery could suggest that carcasses may have been brought here for butchering for use as meat and in small-scale industry. Remains from butchery sites do not usually contain very many high meat-yield bones and this assemblage does, the most common bone, apart from cranial elements, being the tibia. This could suggest that the prime reason for butchering these animals was for their skins and horncores.

The lack of feet bones could suggest that either the carcasses were arriving having already been skinned, as feet bone were often removed with the skins and discarded at the tanning site, or that skinning was taking place here and then the skin was being removed, with the feet bones, and sent elsewhere before the rest of the carcass was butchered. Cut marks consistent with skinning were noted on many bones. During the evaluation cattle skulls and horn cores were found elsewhere on the site, suggesting that there was a tannery in the vicinity (Richmond 2002, 10). This assemblage may represent the initial butchering of cattle for this industry.

The assemblage is probably from a modern breed of cow given the very large size of the bones.

Conclusions and Recommendations

As the assemblage is fairly small and relatively modern, it is felt that no further work is required. The assemblage appears to relate to the butchery of cattle for their skins, presumably an initial stage in the tanning process. The assemblage concurs with the findings of the evaluation, that there may have been a tannery in the vicinity.

7.0 GENERAL DISCUSSION

It is likely that black silt layers (2000 and 2002) recorded during the watching brief are comparable with deposits recorded during the evaluation (ibid.10). The black clayey silt (2000) in the area of unstable made-ground produced Stoneware and transfer printed Pearlwares dating to the 1830s and 1840s. These ceramics may be associated with the nineteenth century workhouse or contemporary buildings surrounding Chapman's Yard. A single sherd of late seventeenth century Stoneware (also from Context 2000) is likely to be residual, but nevertheless reflects activity here during the use of a hospital complex extant in the 1680s (Richmond 2002, 10). The presence of an eighteenth century scalloped wall in this area of the site may relate to garden features contemporary with the poorhouse.

A black silty layer (2002) recorded in the elevator pit (1) produced Creamware dating to the 1780s and a number of early nineteenth century sherds. Roof tile and clay pipe fragments were also of eighteenth and nineteenth century date. This material may relate to the eighteenth century poorhouse or the nineteenth century workhouse present to the north of Chapman's Yard, and may have been deposited in the grounds or gardens of these buildings. It has been suggested that dark soil horizons and associated ceramics elsewhere on the site represent gardens of a seventeenth century poorhouse (Richmond 2002, 10). It is possible that Layer 2002 represents a comparable context relating to activity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The animal bone assemblage from this context (2002) suggests butchery activity on or nearby to Chapman's Yard, prior to the use of animal skins for tanning elsewhere, perhaps in the northern area of the St. Thomas St. Development site.

A reservoir was constructed within the Chapman's yard area in 1827 (Richmond 2002, 13) and is visible on the first edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1853 (Fig. 5). The reservoir recorded in the recent watching brief, however, was located further south than the 1827 reservoir (Fig.3). It has been suggested that the 1827 reservoir was constructed to supply the nineteenth century workhouse (ibid. 12), whose

position has been recorded in the northern area of Chapman's Yard extending into the St. Thomas St. development to the north-west (ibid.13). The location of the reservoir recorded in the watching brief suggests an association with structures to the south of the development area (Fig.3) rather than the north and the former workhouse. This is further supported by the fact that the inlet/outlet features in the wall of the reservoir appear to be running southwards from the structure.

As the road name suggests, the reservoir could either pre-date or be contemporary with properties or activities on Waterhouse Lane. This theory is supported by the first edition 1853 OS map which appears to show the location of the reservoir recorded in this watching brief (Fig.5). The stone built reservoir is associated with a pump house and two other reservoirs to the west (Fig.5). These appear to be contemporary with the workhouse and a further reservoir to the north (Fig.5).

The brick capping on the reservoir may relate to the mid-nineteenth century and a safety feature with regard to newly constructed buildings surrounding Chapman's yard (ibid. 13). It seems probable however that the brickwork was an original feature of the structure.

The specific function of the sandstone reservoir and its relationship with properties or industrial activities on Waterhouse Lane is, however, unclear and further cartographic or documentary research is beyond the remit of this report. The location and features of the sandstone reservoir do suggest, however, that it was not a structure related to the workhouse to the north.

8.0 CONCLUSION

The watching brief at Chapman's Yard identified no archaeological features that warranted further sample excavation as required by the written scheme of investigation (ibid.17). Late seventeenth century pottery recovered from the black clayey silts is likely to be residual, reflecting seventeenth century activity, but not indicative of in-situ deposits. No structural remains associated with either the workhouse or earlier poorhouse and medieval hospital were recognised, and no features associated with the church of St. Thomas the Martyr or earlier medieval settlement activity were identified.

Artefacts relating to late eighteenth and nineteenth century were recovered from the black silts to within elevator pit 1 and the area of unstable ground. This probably reflects activity contemporary with either the poorhouse, workhouse or mid-nineteenth century buildings surrounding the site. While the bone assemblage suggests this deposit was not entirely of a domestic origin, it is not possible to confirm that butchery and tanning was associated with these buildings.

A stone built reservoir was not anticipated in the southern part of Chapman's Yard. The feature is preserved on the site and as such did not warrant more extensive recording. Cartographic information suggests that this reservoir was extant by the mid-nineteenth century, and the character of its construction would not be inconsistent with an early nineteenth century date. Further research could examine the relationship of this structure to the function of other buildings on Waterhouse Lane.

9.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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