

# **Death, burial and identity**

## **Hand-made pottery from contexts associated with human burials**

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### **Fabric**

The pottery fabrics were classified using the scheme devised for use with the assemblages from the Easington to Ganstead (EAG) gas pipeline (Cumberpatch 2016) and refined in other recent reports (Leary and Cumberpatch 2016, Cumberpatch, in press, Cumberpatch unpublished 1). This was itself based upon the scheme proposed by Didsbury (2004, 2009a, 2009b, unpublished, nd) which distinguishes between fabrics with calcareous inclusions (H1/H4), non-calcareous inclusions (H2) and mixed inclusions (H3). These groups being themselves heterogeneous, modifying terms have been introduced to refine the categories and these are based on the character of the inclusions, their type and their approximate size (measured along the longest visible axis). The basic scheme is outlined in Table 1. It should be emphasised that these are *fabric groups* and not *fabric types* as conventionally understood. Further refinement must await a broader research programme involving the analysis of material at a regional level.

Many contexts included small, shapeless fragments of fired clay which were not part of ceramic vessels. The majority of these were heavily abraded and, while some seemed to have surfaces, none could be positively identified as parts of specific artefacts or structures. They were recorded simply as 'fired clay' and described briefly in the 'Notes' column of the data tables.

### **Vessel types**

The majority of sherds from contexts associated with graves were body sherds, as outlined below in the relevant sections, but a small number of vessels were identifiable, mainly from rim fragments or from semi-complete vessel profiles. The typological scheme used to categorise these vessels was devised for use with the assemblages from the Easington to Ganstead gas pipeline (Cumberpatch 2016) and refined in subsequent reports (Leary and Cumberpatch 2014, Cumberpatch unpublished 1, 2, in press). The small size of some of the vessel fragments precluded a definite attribution to a specific form in all cases and these are denoted by the addition of the term

-type to the closest identifiable form (e.g. Everted-rim Jar type).

### *Everted-rim Jar and -type*

The category of Everted-rim Jars (ERJ) is a very broad one characterised by a large number of variations on the basic theme of pear-shaped, narrow-shouldered, round or globular bodied jars with everted rims of varying length and varying in the degree to which the rim was everted (from almost vertical to quite sharply everted), sometimes with pronounced necks (e.g. Leary and Cumberpatch 2016: Figure 21; 9) but sometimes without (e.g. Leary and Cumberpatch 2016: Figure 21; 10, 11, 12). The rim and wall retain more or less the same thickness from the body through the neck to the lip, with the latter varying from square to round in cross-section. The ERJ class is also distinguished from vessels with small 'beaded' rims, defined as having a small but thickened rim which, while everted in the strict sense, barely extends beyond the thickness of the vessel wall.

In general terms, parallels were noted for the type amongst Rigby's pear-shaped jar, chamfered jar, necked jar and necked storage jar forms and there may also be some overlap with her shapeless jar group (2004:38-41, Figures 6 and 7). Other assemblages also reflect the degree of variety in the type including High Wold, Bridlington (Didsbury 2009a: Figure 22;7, Figure 23;30, Figure 24;50), Atwick (Challis and Harding 1975: Figure 29;2, 4), South Cave (Challis and Harding 1975: Figure 36;7), Driffeld Aerodrome (Challis and Harding 1975: Figure 38;1), Faxfleet 'A' (Challis and Harding 1975: Figure 39;1, 2), Sewerby Cottage, Bridlington (Didsbury 2009b: Figure 176;2, 3, 14, Figure 177; 37, 38), Melton (Didsbury and Vince 2011: Figure 131;1, 2, Figure 132;6, Figure 135;1, 6, 14, 15, 16, 17), Wharram Percy (Didsbury 2004: Figure 102; 23, 43, Figure 103;50, Figure 104;92, 93, 100) and the A1 Dishforth to Barton road-widening scheme (Cumberpatch, unpublished 2: Figures 2, 6 and 10). The type was widespread on sites excavated as part of the Easington to Ganstead (EAG) gas pipeline including Old Ellerby, Burton Constable, Brandywell, Nuttles, Lelley, New York, Braemere Hill, Patrington, Bluegate Corner, Scarborough Hill and Gilcross (Cumberpatch 2016:110-1. The type was also common at Westernmost Rough where examples were noted in H2, H3 and H4 fabrics (Leary and Cumberpatch 2016: Figure 22; 14a, 14b 14c).

At Tophill Low examples in a range of fine H2 fabrics showed a typical range of variation in the form. One example (Field 58, context 1033) was associated with a C<sup>14</sup> date of between 57BC and AD68 (Cumberpatch unpublished 1).

On the East Coast pipeline the type was particularly common and a number of the contexts which contained ERJ rim sherds also contained wheel-thrown Romano-British pottery dating to between the mid/late 1<sup>st</sup> century AD and the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD or, in one case, the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD (Cumberpatch, unpublished 1).

The type was also common amongst the assemblages from the Spellowgate to Kilham (SPK) pipeline (Cumberpatch, unpublished 1), many of which were difficult to date. In cases where the form was associated with wheel-thrown pottery, the date range appeared to be wide, from the early Romano-British period to the late 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. Fabrics were also highly variable with examples of H1/H4, H2 and H3 all present in various forms.

Everted rim jars were also present on a number of the Humber Gateway sites (Cumberpatch, in press: Figures 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 with an ambiguous vessel shown in Figure 11) where the broad date range appeared to be similar to that suggested above.

The diversity within the ERJ category renders it difficult to use as a chronological marker

and while it is possible that a more rigorous, statistical approach to the typology might yield information pertaining to change over time it is far from clear that this will be the case given the minor variations in form which are inevitable with hand-made pottery. The cases noted above indicate no clear date range for the type which appears to span the later prehistoric and Roman periods generally.

Two Everted-rim Jars were identified in the assemblages considered here. Field 145, context 10010 contained a sherd of ERJ type in an H2 Coarse Rock fabric, although it was heavily abraded and too small for a definite identification. Field 265, context 31501 produced a larger sherd in a vesicular H4 fabric, burnished internally and externally.

#### *Vertical-rim Jar type*

The Vertical-rim Jar (VRJ) category is an extremely broad one and encompasses a range of more or less diverse groups of vessel types from large utilitarian forms to much smaller finely made and finished types, often with burnished surfaces, which might be said to constitute something approaching a 'fineware' category as described elsewhere (Cumberpatch 2016, unpublished 1).

The defining characteristic of the VRJ class as a whole is that the rim, while distinct from and narrower than the body, is barely everted even though the profile of the body may be similar to that of the ERJs and may vary from globular and wide-shouldered to elongated, pear-shaped or narrow-shouldered (e.g. Leary and Cumberpatch 2016: Figure 24; 47) while the rim, which may vary in length, stands almost vertically on the shoulder/neck. Lips may be rounded to a varying extent. The extent of variation within the class is considerable, hence the frequent use of the qualifying term '-type' in connection with this class of vessels.

Vertical-rim Jars barely appear in Rigby's review of pottery from the region and one possible close parallel, the deep-collared shouldered jar (Rigby 2004:39, 192, Figures 6 and 77;4) in an unusual shell tempered fabric is identified as unique. This would seem to be a matter of chance, given the apparent ubiquity of vertical rim forms on sites in eastern Yorkshire and the lack of any significant regional diversity in vessel forms seems to be borne out both by Evans' distribution map (1995: Figure 5.7, type Li) and by the evidence from more recently excavated sites (Cumberpatch 2016, unpublished 1, Leary and Cumberpatch 2016).

On the EAG sites the majority of the plain VRJ types were associated with ring ditches and late Iron Age and early Roman period features, although some also occurred in later contexts (Cumberpatch 2016:111-114). At Old Ellerby the type was commonest in the contexts associated with Iron Age ring ditches but was also present in the ditches and pits associated with 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century AD activity.

At Burton Constable VRJs were generally common but were most abundant in the features comprising the earlier phases of activity on the site while at Brandywell, Nuttles, Lelley, Burstwick, Patrington, Weeton, and Gilcross VRJs were commonest in contexts related to structures but were also present in early 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD field system features.

Vertical-rim Jars were rare at New York, Braemere Hill and Churchlands although, where present, they were found in features of late Iron Age or early Roman date. The type was also rare at Bluegate Corner although four examples in H4 fabrics from ditches and pits dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD.

The plain VRJs from Westermost Rough showed the expected degree of variation around the norm and tended, in contrast to similar vessels from the EAG sites, to have fine textured bodies and

smoothed external surfaces. All of the fabrics were of H2 type with some variation in texture although fine sandy fabrics were the commonest type. The vessels were associated particularly with Phase 1 (Iron Age) and Phase 3 contexts where they were found in association with wheel-thrown wares of late 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD date.

Vertical-rim Jars were amongst the commonest of identifiable vessel types at Tophill Low. The majority of examples were in quartz tempered fabrics but H3 and H4 fabrics were also represented (Cumberpatch unpublished 1). One example was associated with 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD Romano-British pottery, consistent with the evidence from Bluegate Corner and Old Ellerby.

The East Coast Pipeline assemblages produced a substantial group of Vertical-rim Jars totalling some twenty-eight vessels (ENV) and these vessels showed a wide range of variation in the fabrics with H1 Calcite, H4, H2 Fine Quartz and other H2 types all well represented. A C<sup>14</sup> date of 320-200BC (context 4099) indicated an Iron Age origin for the type, consistent with the evidence from elsewhere while associations with wheel-thrown pottery suggested that the form continued into the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.

Vertical-rim Jars of various types from the Spellowgate to Kilham pipeline assemblages showed the expected degree of variation within the type, not only in terms of the range of rim forms but also in the fabrics which included a number of H1 and H2 variants. While some of the sherds were not associated with datable wheel-thrown wares, those that were seemed generally to be rather late; late 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> century AD with smaller numbers associated with 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century types. This would seem to be consistent with the evidence from Bluegate Corner, Old Ellerby and Tophill Low.

In common with the sites considered above, examples of Vertical-rim Jars (plain VRJs and the sub-types considered below) were widespread on the Humber Gateway sites (Cumberpatch, in press; Figures 22 and 23).

Two VRJs were identified from the sites considered here. Field 145 produced one very heavily abraded example (context 10010) while a very small fragment was recovered from context 12348 in Field 163.

### *Open jar*

The Open Jar form is defined as a parallel sided vessel having no constricted neck and more or less parallel sides. Some vessels have a shallow horizontal groove below the rim or slightly everted upper walls but the overall profile is of open vessel with no significant constriction that could be called a neck (Leary and Cumberpatch 2016: Figure 23; 36). The fact that the upper body and rim are both vertical and contiguous means that there is room for confusion with some types of Vertical-rim Jar but the defining aspect is the fact that the sides of the Open Jars are parallel and not rounded or globular as is the case with the VRJs and there is no shoulder; this distinction is, however, of little help when small rim sherds are involved.

Parallels for the Open Jar form are widespread in both space and time. Examples include Danes Graves and Garton Slack (Challis and Harding 1975: Figures 31;2 and 33;11 respectively. While they seem to encompass Rigby's thick-walled, wide-mouthed shapeless jar category (2004:38) the proposed early date range (900BC to 600BC) for this form is not consistent with the evidence from others sites where the form occurs much more widely. Examples include Creyke Beck (Didsbury unpublished: Figure 26;150), High Wold, Bridlington (Didsbury 2009a: Figure 22;2) and Melton (Didsbury and Vince 2011: Figure 136;1). Open Jars, while never common, occurred regularly on the EAG sites, notably Old Ellerby, Burton Constable, Nuttles, New York,

Braemere Hill, Burstwick, Patrington, Bluegate Corner, Scarborough Hill, Hull Road and Dimlington. The evidence from these sites suggested that the Open Jars were common from at least the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC to the late Roman period, with a C<sup>14</sup> date from Hull Road suggesting a date range between *c.*410 and *c.*200BC (Cumberpatch 2016:114-5).

At Westermost Rough Open Jars occurred widely in all contexts with the latest examples associated with wheel-thrown pottery of 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD date, comparable with the examples from the EAG sites. The site also included examples with finger-impressed rims (Leary and Cumberpatch 2016: Figure 24; 37 & 38), both from late Iron Age contexts.

Open Jars were also common in the assemblages from the East Coast Pipeline with a maximum of forty-nine examples identified (ENV) in a variety of fabrics from fine H2 types to vesicular H4 types. Two of the vessels had rims defined by grooves below the rim but other decoration (apart from smoothed external surfaces) was not identified. The date range, as indicated by C<sup>14</sup> dates from two contexts and by association with wheel-thrown pottery, spanned the period between the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC and the late 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, broadly consistent with the evidence from elsewhere.

The Spellowgate to Kilham assemblages also produced a substantial number of open vessels. The date range, as indicated by the presence of wheel-thrown pottery, was wide, spanning the late 1<sup>st</sup> century to the late 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD and in one case possibly as late as the mid 4<sup>th</sup> century AD (Cumberpatch unpublished 1).

Only one example was identified amongst the material considered in this report. This was a very small sherd from Field 145, context 10081.

#### *Funnel-rim Jar and -type*

Funnel-rim jars (FRJ) are amongst the most distinctive type of hand-made vessel from eastern Yorkshire and are characterised by their long, everted rims, usually with flat or rounded, occasionally slightly bulged, lips. The profile of the rim is typically funnel-shaped and the shoulder/body can be rounded, wide or narrow shouldered. The most distinctive examples are large and of storage jar size (e.g. Leary and Cumberpatch 2016: Figure 22; 24, 25, Figure 23; 26, 27, 28) but smaller examples (both shorter rims and small vessels) are also common (e.g. Leary and Cumberpatch 2016: Figure 23; 29, 30). The shorter examples may merge into the VRJ category and this element of overlap means that classification at the margins can be difficult, especially where small rim fragments are involved. On the EAG sites two distinct sub-types were noted, particularly amongst vessels in H4 fabrics. One group had thinner rims with no thickening while the other was closer to vessels in the H2 fabric with (generally) shorter and thicker rims (Cumberpatch 2016:116).

Examples of the FRJ type are numerous across eastern and north-eastern Yorkshire and the form seems to have been both a popular and a long lived one, both factors which may account for the high degree of diversity in the rim shape and vessel size. Challis and Harding have published examples from Pale End (1975: Figure 46;1, 4), Levisham Moor A (1975: Figure 49; 2) and Levisham Moor D (1975: Figure 50; 11). The form resembles three of Rigby's types; the flared-rim shouldered jar (2004:39, Figure 6), the deep-flared shouldered jar (2004: Figure 7) and possibly the necked jar (2004: 40, Figure 7). Didsbury has published examples similar to the type defined here from High Wold, Bridlington (2009a: Figure 23;23 (with a distinctive internal flange on the lip) and Sewerby Cottage (2009b: Figure 177; 30 (H4) and 36 (H2)). At Shiptonthorpe the degree of variation was specifically noted (Evans 2006) while similar vessels are referred to from Hawling

Road, Market Weighton (Evans and Creighton 1999: Illus.7.17; G28-J01, Illus. 7.18; G60-J03). The references to Knapton type jars in both of these reports refers back to the vessels published by Corder and Kirk (1932; Figure 30; 1 to 9). The relationship between the production of Knapton type and related wares (all in calcite-tempered H1/H4 fabrics) and the production of the pottery used on Iron Age and Roman period 'native' sites requires further work but this is beyond the scope of the present report.

Funnel-rim jars were identified on many of the EAG sites (Old Ellerby, Burton Constable, Brandywell, Nuttles, Lelley, Burstwick, Bluegate Corner, Scarborough Hill, and Gilcross; (Cumberpatch 2016:116-7). The largest numbers came from Old Ellerby and Burton Constable where the type was identified in contexts which spanned the late Iron Age to the later Roman period.

The dating of the examples from Westermost Rough was wide but the type was much commoner in 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD and later contexts than it was in earlier phases of the site (Leary and Cumberpatch 2016). This is consistent with the evidence from both Shiptonthorpe and Hawling Road while the presence of the smaller quantities of earlier vessels reflects the long duration of most hand-made vessel forms in the area. Examples from Tophill Low included one which was associated with 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD Romano-British pottery (Cumberpatch unpublished 1).

As elsewhere, the FRJ form was relatively common in the East Coast pipeline assemblages and the date ranges, as indicated by the associated wheel-thrown pottery, included the late 1<sup>st</sup> to early 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD and the 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD, broadly consistent with the evidence from elsewhere. The FRJ type was also common on the Spellowgate to Kilham pipeline sites; while the date range was wide, examples were common in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century AD contexts, broadly consistent with the evidence from elsewhere. There appeared to be no obvious relationship between form and fabric with examples in calcite and quartz-tempered fabrics not only equally common but also occurring alongside each other (Cumberpatch unpublished 1).

Funnel-rim Jars were identified at two of the Humber Gateway sites (Welwick Drain and Easington; Cumberpatch in press; Figure 12) although numbers were in all cases low and the individual vessels were relatively small in comparison to examples from other sites.

Four examples of Funnel-rim Jars were identified amongst the material considered here; Field 163, contexts 12349 and 12587 (Figure \*\*); Field 220, context 11053 and Field 246 LAR, context 15523) although in all cases except the last the rims were shorter than typical for the form, hence the suffix -type. The vessel from Field 163, context 12349 (Grave 260), was associated with a C<sup>14</sup> date of AD135 – AD335 which is consistent with the dates from the sites discussed above.

### *Everted-rim Globular Jar type*

Everted rim globular jars (ERGJ) are a rare but distinctive form, closely related to the ERJ group and with a passing similarity to some of the smaller Vertical-rim Globular Jars, a form absent from the contexts discussed here. The distinctive feature of the type is the small everted rim on a wide-shouldered globular body.

Parallels for the ERGJ group were not numerous but included examples from the Reighton by-pass (Cumberpatch 2007; Figure 23; 61) and East Field (Rigby 2004: Figure 26;1) and two sites on the EAG pipeline, Lelley and Patrington. (Cumberpatch 2016:118).

Rigby dates the form to the period between c. 100BC and c.100AD and the dating of the examples from Lelley and Patrington do not wholly contradict this, although the example from

Patrington came from an ambiguous context containing late 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD pottery but a C14 date of 380 – 190 BC. At Westermost Rough examples of the type were identified in contexts assigned to Phases 1 and 3 with one example cross-cutting not only contexts but also Phases 1 and 2. The examples from Phase 3 were not closely dated (Romano-British and 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD) and the data are hardly definitive as regards the date range of the type.

Just one ERGJ was identified in the contexts discussed here; Field 246 LAR, context 15523, associated with the Funnel-rim Jar discussed above and which may suggest a narrower date range for the context than that implied by the presence of the latter vessel.

## **Chronology**

Traditionally it has been assumed that the hand-made pottery of eastern Yorkshire is of little assistance in creating chronological frameworks for the later prehistoric period and there are formidable difficulties associated with working with this type of pottery. As outlined above however, close attention to the associations with Romano-British pottery and an increasing number of C<sup>14</sup> dates seem to offer a way into the complexities of the situation. At present the chronological framework is skeletal at best but if the current pace of work continues then there is every possibility that closer resolution will be possible in the future.

## **Field 145**

The pottery assemblage from those contexts in Field 145 associated with human remains (primarily burnt bone) was the largest discussed in this report, consisting as it did of 414 sherds weighing 1345 grams and representing a maximum of 409 vessels, although the very low average sherd weight (3.3 grams) indicates the high degree of fragmentation within the assemblage. The majority of sherds (268 weighing 612 grams) were from one context, 10002, and possibly from the same vessel. The data are summarised in Table 2. The following account follows the sequence set out in the preliminary site report (Speed 2017).

Context 10015, part of a layer (10015/10029) overlying natural deposits in the central part of the excavated area (Speed 2017:4), contained seven small, heavily abraded sherds of hand-made pottery, all of them tempered with igneous rock fragments. With an average sherd weight of just 2.5 grams, it is difficult to see this material as a significant component of the feature. The same context also contained a very small piece of fired clay. To the west of the palisade trench (context 10082; discussed below) layer 10029 contained just one small, heavily abraded sherd in an H4 fabric. The layer was cut by two pits, one of which, 10127, was filled by context 10126 which contained a single small (3 gram) sherd of hand-made pottery.

The stony layer, 10048 (with 10085 and 10125), which overlay 10015/10029 contained eleven small sherds of hand-made pottery in a variety of fabrics, the majority of H2 types but with three small sherds in a vesicular H4 fabric. The sherds were abraded, some very heavily, and there were no rim sherds or other diagnostic fragments.

Four features cut through layer 10048 but only one of these, context 10107, contained a significant quantity of hand-made pottery, probably representing a single vessel. As in the case of the vessel from context 10002 (discussed below), the remains of the pot were highly fragmented and abraded. Both the rim and base were absent, leaving fifty-one body sherds weighing 360 grams. The sherds were divided into two groups, the smaller of which appeared to be slightly coarser than the latter. It is probable that the sherds came from one or, at the most, two vessels.

There is nothing in the nature of the pottery to contradict the suggestion (Speed 2017:6) that the vessel had once contained cremated remains but the absence of a rim precludes even the most general dating. Nor is it clear from the surviving fragments whether the vessel was one of the normal range of domestic types or whether it had once had features specific to funerary use.

A second pit, 10067, which also cut layer 10048, contained context 10066 which included a single sherd in an H2 type fabric which was effectively undatable.

To the south of context 10048, pit 10123 produced two small abraded sherds from the fill, context 10122.

Context 10002, the fill of pit 10003, was one of two features identified as cremation burials (Speed 2017:6). It contained the lower part of a badly fragmented pot of undetermined form in a coarse rock-tempered fabric. A total of 268 fragments of pottery weighed 612 grams giving an average sherd weight of just 2.3 grams. This was associated with 'a quantity of calcined bone and charcoal fragments' (Speed 2017:6), presumably once contained within the pot and placed in pit 10003. As with the vessel from context 10107 described above, there was nothing in the character of the fabric to set the vessel apart from domestic pottery and the absence of a rim precluded any attribution to an existing vessel type. As a result, no useful date range could be suggested for the vessel.

In contrast, a nearby pit, 10021, contained just a single sherd of pottery from the fill (context 10020) alongside a small deposit of calcined bone, suggested to be a 'token' deposit taken from a funeral pyre (Speed 2017:6). This raises the possibility that the sherd represented a complete vessel in the same sense that the cremated material may have represented the complete body, although such a suggestion is difficult to substantiate in the absence of cross-context joins or similar evidence. A direct comparison of the sherds from context 10002 and the sherd from context 10020 suggested that, while the fabrics were very similar, they probably came from different vessels. Given the degree of variability possible in such fabrics, however, some caution must be exercised in making such statements.

A second group of pits to the west of 10021 and 10017 showed a similar pattern of deposition. Pottery was noted in one of these, 10051, filled by context 10050 but was absent from others (10041, 10043, 10065). The sherd from context 10050 was small and abraded and, for all practical purposes, undatable. It was accompanied by charcoal, calcined bone and charred hazelnut shells.

It is notable that while the pits discussed above contained pottery alongside burnt bone, other pits containing probable pyre debris (including 10080, 10089 and 10017; Speed 2017:6) do not seem to have contained any pottery, suggesting that there was no necessary association between pottery and cremated remains. Whether there is any evidence of structure or system within the contexts containing human remains and/or other classes of material is beyond the scope of this report.

The ditch / palisade trench (10082/10033) produced a group of sherds from the upper fill, context 10081. This included a small rim sherd from an Open Jar (described above) amongst a group of sixteen sherds, all in H2 fabrics. Although two sherds exceeded 10 grams in weight, the majority were small and abraded and the average sherd weight was just 3.3 grams. Context 10103, the equivalent to 10081 in the eastern part of the feature, produced one very small (1 gram), heavily abraded, body sherd in a rock-tempered fabric and one small piece of fired clay.

The lower fill, context 10116, contained a group of body sherds and fragments which were



somewhat larger than those from the upper fill with an average sherd weight of 6.5 grams. The group also included a broken fragment of fired clay. There were no rims or other diagnostic sherds and but one of the fabrics were variants of the H2 type.

Context 10007, the fill of pit 10009, contained two body sherds and eight small fragments of pottery. All were featureless body sherds and the majority were heavily abraded. The variety of fabrics suggested that at least two or three vessels were represented by the sherds but there was no indication of the form of the vessel. Small quantities of calcined bone were associated with the pottery, as were carbonised plant remains and charcoal (Speed 2017:12).

Context 10011, the fill of a second pit, 10012, contained a flat base and seven small body sherds and fragments, again associated with a variety of burnt material. The small quantity of material precludes any very sophisticated analysis of the pottery and if there is any significance to the contents of these pits, then it is likely to be in the combinations of material deposited in them rather than in the presence of pottery alone.

Context 10010 overlay context 10081, the upper fill of the palisade trench (Speed 2017:11, Appendix A) which contained a wide range of material including pottery, flint, animal bone and calcined bone and, in the opinion of the excavator 'may have represented part of the earlier deposit dug out during emplacement of the palisade posts and then reused as trench back-fill around them'. The context contained nine sherds of pottery, including two small rim fragments (described above), with a total weight of 30 grams (average sherd weight; 3.3 grams) and four small fragments of fired clay. Although the layer contained animal bone, it was not clear that there was an association with human remains and, given the nature of the context, it is possible that any such association could have been a matter of chance.

Interpreting the assemblages from Field 145 presents something of a challenge, given the small size of the context groups and, indeed, the individual sherds themselves. Some of the vessels seem likely to have been associated with the cremation rite either as possible containers (notably the shattered vessels from contexts 10002 and 10107) or as fragments perhaps discarded or deposited alongside cremated bone and burnt botanical material, perhaps as part of a rite or ritual practice. Overall, however, the small size of the assemblages and the fragmentary and abraded nature of the sherds precludes any very sophisticated interpretations and it would be difficult, in the majority of cases, to argue against purely materialistic or functional arguments for the presence of these sherds in contexts containing human remains.

### **Field 163**

Twelve contexts in Field 163 produced a total of fifty-three sherds of pottery weighing 757 grams representing a maximum of sixteen vessels. The data are summarised in Table 3. The majority of contexts contained less than four sherds, generally small in size with no cross-context joins and just two incidences of intra-context joins (contexts 12587 and 12349).

Contexts 12984, 12814, 12587, 12448 were associated with inhumations and all contained small quantities of hand-made pottery. Contexts 12587, 12814 and 12984 constituted the back fill of three graves (12558, 12813 and 12983 respectively). The sherds from contexts 12814 and 12984 were both small in size and seem unlikely to have had any direct relevance to the graves. The three sherds from context 12587 joined to form part of the rim of a Funnel-rim Jar type vessel, as described above. It was unclear from the information available whether there was any direct association between the pot and the human remains from the context.

Context 12248, the fill of a possible grave (12447) was exceptional in that the sherd of pottery was a small chip of transfer-printed Whiteware dating to the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and as such should perhaps be considered as intrusive in an earlier context. Its very small size suggests that it could have moved as the result of bioturbation.

Contexts 12348 and 12349 were both associated with a cremation (cut 12347). The three sherds from context 12348, (the backfill of the cut) were all small and included the rim of a Vertical-rim Jar. It is possible that their presence in the fill was a matter of chance rather than of intention.

In contrast, context 12347 contained a hand-made Funnel-rim Jar type vessel (as described above) within a small pit which was cut into the side of a larger feature (12684, burial 259) with both overlying a partially preserved inhumation (SK12698). The feature containing the hand-made vessel (shown in Figure \*) was designated as Grave 260. It is unclear whether the use of a hand-made, as opposed to a wheel-thrown, vessel was of any significance in the burial rite. As discussed above, the date range, as indicated by the C<sup>14</sup> dates, is consistent with the appearance of Funnel-rim Jars on other sites.

The vessel, shown in Figure \*, had a fine, even pale grey fabric with a short funnel-shaped rim. As noted above, longer rims are typical to the type but variation around a basic shape is a consistent feature of hand-made pottery in north-eastern Yorkshire and while it is possible that the pot was made specifically for funerary use, its form is not one that would be unusual in a domestic context. It shares no significant similarities with the vessels associated with cremations identified in Field 145 and described above, other than being hand-made.

The remaining pottery came from a variety of contexts which formed the fills of a series of ditches:

- 4926 – Fill of ditch 4925
- 4947 – Lower fill of ditch 4944
- 4963 – Lower middle fill of ditch 4965
- 12372 – upper fill of ditch 12368
- 12444 – upper fill of ditch 12438

The sherds from these contexts were all small body sherds, lacking any definite association with specific burials.

Context number 12515 was used to denote finds recovered during cleaning operations over the upper fill of enclosure ditch 12286/12520. The sherds were somewhat larger than those from the ditch fills but were otherwise broadly similar to them.

## **Field 172**

The hand-made pottery assemblage from Field 172 was limited to thirteen small sherds (average sherd weight; 3.6 grams) from a single context; 6705. It is possible that the sherds came from a single vessel although neither the rim nor the base was present. Context 6705 constituted the fill of a pit, context 6705. The feature appeared to be an isolated one (Collison 2017) and the relationship to any burials in the same field is unclear but does not seem to be a close one.

### **Field 175**

The hand-made pottery assemblage from Field 175 (context 31882, Trench 2) was limited to a single small sherd in a vesicular H3 fabric (Table 5). The sherd was abraded and the angular vesicles were probably the result of the leaching of calcite grains.

The context number 31882 was allocated to the topsoil in four trenches located across a farm access track. In Trench 2 the topsoil overlay a ditch which may have formed part of the defences of the Roman town and this may have been the source of the sherd. If so, this might suggest that the sherd was of Roman period date. The connection with any burial in the same area is unclear (Collison, Ross, Ross and Falk 2017).

### **Field 176**

The hand-made pottery assemblage from Field 176 consisted of three sherds from a single context (1569) weighing 73 grams. The details are summarised in Table 6.

Context 1569 formed part of the primary fill of a drain, context 1502, which contained a substantial quantity of Roman finds (Ross 2015), suggesting that the sherds were either of Roman-period date or residual in a later context. The connection with a specific burial or burials is unclear.

### **Field 178**

The hand-made pottery assemblage from Field 178 was limited to a single sherd in a vesicular H3 fabric weighing 9 grams (Table 7) from context 20429, the upper fill of grave 20476. The sherd was abraded and the angular vesicles were probably the result of the leaching of calcite grains. It seems probable that the sherd was residual in a later context.

### **Field 220**

The pottery assemblage from Field 220 consisted of fifty-six sherds of pottery weighing 833 grams representing a maximum of forty-eight vessels. The pottery from context 10935 was accompanied by thirty fragments of fired clay weighing 58 grams. The context also produced nine sherds of a fine-grained stone which had been identified as pottery prior to their examination by the author.

All of the pottery came from two contexts; 10935 and 11053, both of which formed part of a sub-square feature defined by a gully (Fell 2017:12). The fired clay was limited to context 10935. Both contexts contained burnt bone and other finds and more hand-made pottery was recovered from an associated context, 11056, although discussion of this material was not included in the remit of the present report. Much of the pottery was abraded suggesting that it had been exposed to mechanical weathering processes prior to burial and there was no obvious relationship between the pottery and the burnt bone. Context 11053 included five joining sherds forming the rim of a Funnel-rim Jar, as discussed above. The same context contained the bulk of the pottery while context 10935 contained less pottery but all of the fired clay and the only diagnostic sherd from the field, part of the rim of a Funnel-necked jar.

### **Field 246 LAR**

The pottery assemblage from Field 246 LAR was an unusual one in that it consisted of two rim sherds (ninety-eight grams) from a single context (15523) and a small piece of fired clay from context 24929 (Table 9) but no body sherds. The rim sherds were from an Everted-rim Globular Jar

and a Funnel-Rim jar, perhaps indicating a date range between the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC and the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD although, as discussed above, using hand-made pottery as a dating medium is attended by numerous problems.

Context 15523 formed the fifth fill of a ditch which contained mixed animal and human bone fragments. This does not appear to have been a formal grave and it is possible that the relationship between the pottery sherds and the bone fragments was a chance one rather than one indicating a role for hand-made pottery in funerary or burial rites.

### **Field 265**

The pottery assemblage from Field 265 consisted of twelve sherds weighing 59 grams and was somewhat more diverse in character than other assemblages discussed in this report with sherds in H2, H3 and H4 fabrics. All the sherds were from the same context, 31501, and with the exception of a small piece from the rim of an Everted-rim Jar, all were abraded body sherds. As discussed above, Everted-rim Jars are amongst the commonest and most long-lived of forms, spanning the period between the early Iron Age and the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD.

According to the list of burials and related contexts, 31501 is a group number which identifies an area of subsoil which contained human bone. The precise relationship between the sherds of pottery and the two inhumations is consequently unclear.

### **Discussion**

The evidence discussed above does not seem to indicate that the deposition of hand-made pottery was a regular part of burial rites or practices. The majority of sherds were small, often abraded and occurred largely as residual elements in the backfill of graves or other contexts containing human bone. In only three cases did there seem to be a direct relationship between the hand-made pottery and the interment of either cremated or un-cremated remains. These were cases where substantial parts of individual vessels were closely associated with cremated bone and were limited to Fields 145 and 163, as described above. There was little to set the vessels apart from normal domestic pots and the numbers of hand-made pots seems low in comparison to the numbers of cremations, suggesting that there was no regular association between cremation and the use of hand-made pottery. Hand-made pots do not seem to have been associated with any of the inhumations.

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