



CLAIFE STATION, WINDERMERE

CUMBRIA

Finds Report



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SUMMARY

The National Trust submitted a large assemblage of unwashed and unsorted finds to Oxford Archaeology North for analysis, in June 2016, mainly ceramic and glass vessels. These had been recovered in the course of recent footpath improvement works at Claife Station, Cumbria (SD 3884 9547). They were found to be of relatively recent date, most probably deposited in the middle of the twentieth century, and formed an assemblage of largely utilitarian wares, and modest tablewares. It is possible that these may have been associated with the Station Cottage Tea Gardens, situated below the station, and certainly operational in the 1920s, or the nearby Ferry House Hotel.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The analysis was commissioned by Jamie Lund of the National Trust, and was undertaken by Christine Howard-Davis. Preliminary processing was undertaken by OA North staff. Editing and quality assurance was by Rachel Newman. It should be noted that the plates are illustrative of type only, and are not to scale.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 A relatively large group of pottery and glass, along with a few metallic items, was recovered from unscheduled excavations at Claife Station, near Windermere, Cumbria (NGR SD 3884 9547). This material was submitted to Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) for analysis, with the understanding that work would concentrate on the pottery and glass. In all, 2531 fragments of pottery, and 2607 of glass (weighing 11091g and 16672g respectively), were examined.

1.2 CERAMICS

1.2.1 The pottery was washed and sorted into broad fabric groups; these were quantified by fragment count and weight (Table 1). Where possible, fabrics were assigned a date-range, and maker's marks were identified, but, as the material was obviously recent, no more detailed analysis was undertaken. Evidence strongly suggests that the group was probably deposited, as a single event, about the middle of the twentieth century, perhaps from the clearing out of the former Station Cottage Tea Gardens, that were in operation in 1920 (OA North 2014, 67), or the nearby Ferry House Hotel (P Kear *pers comm*).

Pottery type	Fragment count	Fragment count %age assemblage	Weight (g)	Weight %age assemblage	Average sherd weight (g)
Plain white earthenware	1242	49	5375	48.46	4.3
Blue and white transfer-printed refined white earthenware	147	5.8	480	4.32	3.3
Blue and white industrial slipware	2	0.07	14	0.12	7
Red-printed white earthenware	7	0.27	55	0.49	7.8
White-slipped earthenware	29	1.14	302	2.72	10.4
Redwares and slipped redwares	69	2.7	1318	11.88	19.1
Dark green-glazed redwares	6	0.23	52	0.46	8.6
Dark blue-glazed redwares	5	0.19	20	0.18	4
Green-glazed earthenware	13	0.51	63	0.56	4.8
Plain white porcelain/china	767	30.3	1833	16.52	2.4
Patterned white porcelain/china	173	6.83	550	4.94	3.17
Porcelain/china (other)	5	0.19	12	0.1	2.4
Porcelain/china teapot	1	0.03	14	0.12	14
Porcelain/china green	4	0.15	11	0.09	2.75
Stonewares	61	2.4	992	8.94	16.3
Totals	2531		11091		4.4

Table 1: Ceramic quantification

1.2.2 The bulk of the ceramic vessels can be divided into two broad groups: plain refined white earthenwares and plain white china/porcelains. The majority of both groups are small and largely undiagnostic pieces, but there are enough fragments which indicate

vessel forms to suggest that the former are largely utilitarian kitchen/tablewares, the latter exclusively tablewares. The white earthenwares include teacups, saucers, and small-diameter side plates (all with plain rims), small jugs, and ridged vessels provisionally identified as jelly moulds. All are vessels that might be expected in the kitchens of poorer households and ‘below stairs’ in houses of higher social status. There is, in addition, a relatively small group of underglaze transfer-printed blue and white earthenwares, which are closely related to the plain white earthenwares, and could possibly be decorated fragments from vessels otherwise placed in the white earthenware group. The transfer-printed fragments indicate the presence of a limited range of more decorative earthenware cups and saucers, dishes and plates. With the exception of (probably) one serving vessel lid and one plate, both with poorly executed floral decoration, the remainder are all chinoiserie-type patterns, and most appear to be the well-known and effectively ubiquitous ‘Willow Pattern’ (Plate 1), in wide use by English potters from the end of the eighteenth century to the present day (Coysh and Henrywood 1982, 402). There are also a very few fragments of red and green transfer-printed earthenware, colours fashionable in the nineteenth century and more recently (Neale 2004).



Plate 1: Fragments from two plates, both with ‘Willow Pattern’ decoration (not to scale)

- 1.2.3 No potter’s stamps survive on the plain white earthenwares and, although there are eight fragmentary printed marks on the blue and white wares, three are too incomplete for identification. The fourth (Plate 2) reads EB & JEL, England, below the Royal Arms. This can be attributed to E Bourne and JE Leigh of Burslem, which was in production 1892-1941 (Birks 2004a).

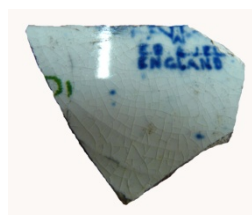


Plate 2: Printed maker’s mark attributable to Bourne and Leigh (Ltd) of Burslem (not to scale)

- 1.2.4 The base of a cup has a partial mark, read as E & [...]; BURSLEM, but the maker has not been identified. The remaining three all bear the royal arms, or parts thereof (Plate 3), but lack the maker’s name, meaning that their dating can only be placed within the late nineteenth, or more likely early twentieth, century, although two of them are similar enough that they could be parts of other JB & JEL stamps (as shown in Plate 2). The lack of an inner escutcheon on the most complete of them signifies that it was

produced after 1837 (Coysh and Henrywood 1982, 310). So many of the important makers used the royal arms, or a modified version of them, that these examples cannot easily be attributed to a dated producer. Several of the sherds are decorated with the smudgy blue printing known as 'Flow Blue', but the introduction of this style cannot be dated with any precision within the nineteenth century (*ibid*).

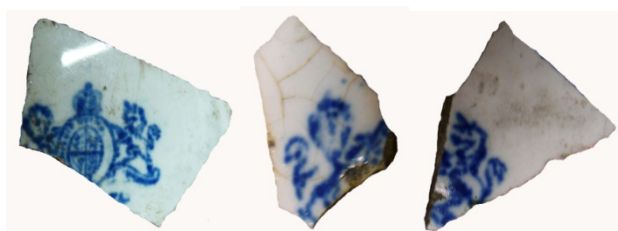


Plate 3: Marker's marks incorporating the royal coat of arms (not to scale)

- 1.2.5 Decorated porcelain or bone china vessels were also present within the assemblage. These are largely confined to teawares, mainly cups, saucers and side plates, but with a single fragment from a teapot. The designs are confined to two based on pink moss roses. A printed mark of the French producer, Gérard, Dufraissex, and Abbot (Plate 4), can be dated to the 40 years between 1901 and 1941. A second printed mark simply reads:] CHINA, probably originally BONE CHINA, a term not used before the twentieth century (Birks 2004b).

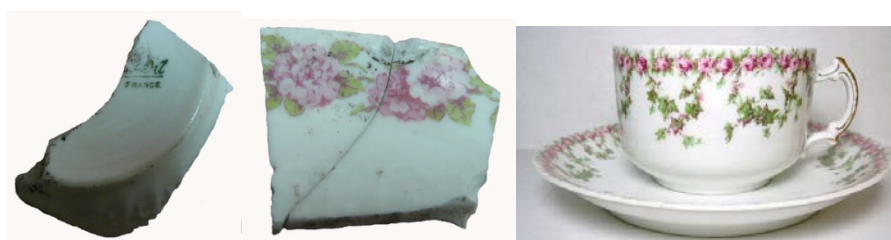


Plate 4: The marker's mark for Gérard, Dufraissex, and Abbot, a fragment in their moss rose design, and an example of a complete vessel (not to scale)

- 1.2.6 The second moss rose design is perhaps by the same producer or an associate (Plate 5), although it might be linked to the presence of an incomplete printed mark for ?Spencer Stephenson (Plate 6). The two designs demonstrate a marked preference for such designs, and might hint at them deriving from a collection of china tablewares from a single household.



Plate 5: The second moss rose design, and a modern example by Spencer Stephenson (not to scale)

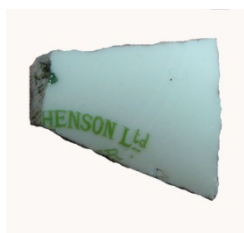


Plate 6: Printed mark, tentatively attributed to Spencer Stephenson (not to scale)

- 1.2.7 Two more marker's marks were noted, though one is too incomplete for a confident identification. It might, however, belong to the firm of Spencer Stephenson Ltd (Plate 6), which produced in Stoke from 1948 to 1960 (Birks 2004c); they also produced vessels decorated with moss roses (Plate 5). The other mark has not been identified.
- 1.2.8 Other small groups of porcelain/china included two moulded fragments, one clearly imitating a strawberry, the other probably a cabbage leaf. There were also green transfer-printed fragments from a small jug, and a few fragments of tableware (teacups) with different designs from the majority, included simple gilded lines, and a blue and red floral design (Plate 7). This probably used a technique of hand-painting over a transfer-printed design (clobbering; Coysh and Henrywood 1982, 87).



Plate 7: Clobbered designs on teacup rims (not to scale)

- 1.2.9 There were also very small groups of other decorative earthenwares, including fragments of white earthenware glazed green, and two small groups of dark green- and dark blue-glazed red earthenware. All three groups seem to represent single vessels, possibly kitchenwares. To these can be added fragments of a single traditional mixing bowl in beige earthenware with a white internal slip.
- 1.2.10 In addition, small amounts of stoneware vessels were identified, mainly the well-known bottle and jar types typical of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (see, for instance, Tyler 2005). Two fragments from marmalade jars bear printed dates of 1862 and 1873, clearly placing the deposition of the group in the last quarter of the nineteenth century at the earliest (Plate 8).



Plate 8: Printed marmalade jars (not to scale)

1.2.11 A group of relatively small fragments of coarse redwares, often with an internal white slip giving a yellow finish, are all from the coarse kitchenwares typical of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Their small showing in the group might reflect a deposition date well into the twentieth century, when such coarsewares seem to have fallen out of use.

1.3 GLASS VESSELS

1.3.1 There was a considerable amount of vessel glass from the site, although it is almost entirely from mass-produced, machine-blown vessels. It has been divided by metal colour, and quantified by weight and fragment count (Table 2). It is likely that all of it dates to the first half of the twentieth century, reflecting the date range suggested for the pottery (*Sections 1.2.10-11*).

Colour	Diagnostic frags	Undiagnostic frags	Total weight (g)
Green	50	832	7065
Colourless	92	706	2988
Greenish-colourless	80	605	5398
Brown	20	157	931
Emerald green	42	0	209
Dark blue	0	21	80
Opaque white	0	2	1
Totals	284	2323	16672
Average fragment weight	6.4g		

Table 2: Glass quantification

1.3.2 Dark ‘bottle’ green glass forms the largest group. Diagnostic fragments suggest that it comprises mainly, if not entirely, machine-blown, utilitarian bottles, all of them cylindrical and of narrow diameter. Semi-automatic blowing was developed in c 1887, with the first fully automatic machine patented in 1907 (British Glass Manufacturers' Confederation 2013). Most bases have a deep basal kick, suggesting them to be wine or beer bottles, and the few surviving neck/rim fragments indicate corked, crown corked, or screw-threaded closures. Crown cork closures were invented in 1892 (Crown Holdings Ltd 2016) and were the dominant closure type by the early twentieth century. Three base fragments from flat-based bottles retain partial embossed marks, one being ‘K’, one ‘C.S.’ (probably Cannington Shaw, *Section 1.3.4*), and one, clearly of foreign origin, and incomplete, reading ‘]RYADI[]ANOS in the centre and ‘]JEROUELLE’ and possibly FRERES. This has not proved traceable.

1.3.3 Colourless glass was the next largest group by fragment count, if not by weight. Again, it comprised overwhelmingly machine-blown vessels, but this time in a wider range of forms, ranging from small fish-paste jars, to screw-topped jars, small bottles, and at least one milk bottle with the proprietor’s telephone number screen-printed on the body. The lack of an area code points to a date before the late 1950s, when STD codes were introduced (Wikipedia 2016a). There is also a small, more decorative element amongst this group, with a single fragment of pressed glass, and three from a large vessel engraved with a simple geometric design. A large applied handle, clearly from a jug, might be from the same vessel. Finally, there are several narrow-diameter, flat-based vessels, which seem most likely to be spirit glasses of some kind. In the same vein, there are also no fewer than eight stemmed glasses, all with simple sub-

conical bowls. Their plain and utilitarian forms, like much of the pottery and porcelain, suggests an origin in a relatively modest household.

- 1.3.4 Natural greenish-colourless glass is almost equally well-represented. This was in wide use for the production of storage vessels, and notably mineral-water vessels, from the later nineteenth century and well into the twentieth. There are fragments of probably two Codd-type bottles (Munsey 2010), typically with a glass marble closure, and as seen in one of those from Claife, with a pointed base, intended to be stored on its side. Other bottles, represented by a range of necks and rims, include other possible mineral-water bottles, possibly with similar or related closures, or corks, as well as crown-corked and screw-threaded examples. Other vessels include a wide-necked milk bottle, small bottles for proprietary medicines, and wide-necked jars, which would have contained a range of preserves. Embossed base marks include one for C. S & Co, probably Cannington Shaw and Co Ltd, which used that mark from 1892 until 1913, and possibly later (Lockhart *et al* 2014).
- 1.3.5 All of the dark brown glass comprised fragments, largely undiagnostic to form or date, except to note that narrow-diameter bases are from cylindrical-bodied, machine-blown vessels. Dark brown glass was (and still is), widely used for beer bottles, and this seems the most likely origin. One base is embossed 'BL 1', but this has not been further identified.
- 1.3.6 The small group of emerald-green glass includes fragments from a mould-blown ridged, probably hexagonal, bottle of the type used for hazardous substances after *c* 1836, but not made compulsory for bottles destined for domestic use until 1935 (Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain 2016). The embossed maker's mark is illegible. A larger machine-blown vessel, with thick, outward-curving walls, is embossed 'Perrier' on the base, and thus can be identified as a mineral-water bottle of twentieth-century date, the spring producing it being renamed 'Source Perrier' in 1903 (von Wiesenberger 2014). There is also the foot of a stemmed drinking glass. None of the dark blue glass is particularly diagnostic to form or date, and neither are the two fragments of opaque white glass.

1.4 WINDOW GLASS

- 1.4.1 There are, in addition, 71 fragments (293g) of colourless plate glass. The manufacture of plate glass expanded immensely from the mid-1870s, and it was soon the most common form of window glass available, almost completely replacing blown sheet glass. It continued to dominate the market until the invention of the float process in 1952 (Pilkington Glass Ltd 2016). Not unsurprisingly, this allows the Claife Station finds to be placed with some confidence within the period 1870-1950.

1.5 OTHER CLASSES OF FINDS

- 1.5.1 There is, in addition, a single fragment of salt-glazed ceramic drain, which cannot be closely dated. These are now seldom used, however, with only one producer surviving in Britain (Wikipedia 2016b). There were also heavily corroded fragments of structural ironwork, including a small-diameter drain cover, and wedges or nails, and a twisted length of copper pipe. Along with these items are two bone knife handles, their form typical of late nineteenth- to twentieth-century cutlery (Moore 1995).

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