
APPENDIX I ASSESSMENT OF CARBONISED GRAIN

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1.0 BACKGROUND

The three samples received all derive from the same pit (F40). This is located within an Iron Age enclosure with several phases of activity within it. The excavators have reason to believe that the enclosure may have a ritual function.

2.0 METHOD

Three fully processed samples, including both flots and retents, were received for assessment. All the samples were examined under a binocular microscope and any identifications made with reference to the modern comparative collection of *Headland Archaeology Ltd* (Table 1).

3.0 RESULTS

All three samples contained cereal grains with over 1 litre being recovered from context 1070. The samples from contexts 1069 and 1075 were dominated by hulled barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) with lesser quantities of wheat. That from 1070 contained a higher proportion of wheat, most of which was identified as spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta*).

There were few chaff or weed seed elements in any of the samples so they are likely to represent cleaned grain. An assemblage such as this would be consistent with destruction of a storage context, either commercial or domestic, by fire.

4.0 DISCUSSION

There are relatively few Iron Age sites from Yorkshire that have produced assemblages of charred cereals. However, the presence of hulled barley and spelt wheat is known from other Iron Age sites from northern England such as Thorpe Thewles and Stanwick (Huntley and Stallibrass 1995). Given that they represent potentially well-dated assemblages of plant remains, a more complete catalogue of their composition would be of some value regarding the agricultural development of the area. With respect to the interpretation of the contexts from which the samples came, there is no reason, from the composition of the plant remains alone, to suppose that these are anything other than domestic in nature.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the secure nature of the contexts from which the samples were recovered, it is recommended that a more detailed catalogue of the cereals and associated plant remains be undertaken with a brief comment on the relevance of the remains.

References

Huntley J and Stallibrass S 1995 *Plant and vertebrate remains from archaeological sites in Northern England*. Research Report No. 4. Durham: Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland.

Table 1 Composition of the samples

CNo	FNo.	Flot/ Retent	Vol	Cereal grains	Chaff	Seeds	Charcoal AMS		Comment
1069	40	Flot	<5ml	+			+		Barley +
1069	40	Retent	<5ml	++					Barley + cf Spelt/Wheat +
1070	40	Flot	<10ml	+++		++	+++		Barley ++ cf Spelt/Wheat ++ Oat +
1070	40	Retent	1 litre	++++	+		+	+	Barley ++ Spelt wheat ++ Wheat chaff + Burnt bone +
1075	40	Flot	<10ml	+					Barley +
1075	40	Retent	<50ml	+++		+			Barley +++ cf Spelt wheat ++ Burnt bone 1 snail