

Non-vessel Glass Assessment

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

A small assemblage of non-vessel glass from excavation at Blue Bridge Lane and Fishergate House was submitted for identification and assessment. Six glass beads, one fragment of glass bangle, two gaming counters and three pieces of waste glass dating from the Roman to Anglian periods were identified.

2.0 CATALOGUE

2.1 ROMAN

Find No 4195 F402 C1583

Plano-convex counter of black glass. 10mm diameter.

Find No 4198 F458 C2057 (YBB)

A small fragment of glass bangle with a body of light blue glass decorated with a twisted glass cable of opaque yellow and opaque white glass. Kilbride-Jones Type 2, 1st to 2nd century.

Find No 4111 F43 C1163 (YBB)

A fragment of plano-convex opaque white gaming counter. Flat base, slightly pear-shape. Small depression of lost marvered inlaid glass of unknown colour, elsewhere body pitted with air bubbles. 15.5 x 5.5 x 5.0mm

2.2 ANGLIAN

Find No 4234 F427 C1922 (YBB)

Fragment of black glass rod. 4mm diameter, 3mm.

Find No 4148 F353 C1449 (YBB)

Large annular bead of wound blue glass with streaks and trails of slightly darker blue glass. Perforation slightly flattened on one side giving a D-shaped profile. 20.0 x 11.5mm.

Find No 4149 F353 C1449 (YBB)

Biconical polychrome bead of light blue glass with opaque yellow marvered trail at ends and applied opaque white zig-zag trail around the body. Body glass bubbly.

Find No 4165 F381 C1836 (YBB)

Fragment of large annular dark blue glass bead. 7.5 x 9.0mm

Find no 1389 F64 C1338 (YFH)

Fragment of small light-green barrel-shaped bead. 3.5 x 3.5mm.

Find No 4235 F458 C1973 (YBB)

Small pinkish-brown globular 'spacer' bead. 1.5 x 2.0mm

Find No 4232 F381 C1853 (YBB)

Spherical globule of light-green glass. 4mm diameter.

Find No 6077 F442 C1951 (YBB)

Malformed, wound possibly annular bead of light-green glass. Possible evidence for on-site working. One end of bead shows signs of removal from larger piece.

Find No 972 F129 C1317 (YFH)

Malformed, wound possibly cylindrical light-green glass with incomplete perforation, flared at one end. Possible evidence for on-site working.

3.0 ASSESSMENT

The black and white gaming counters and glass bangle clearly date to the Roman period; the former are common finds on Roman sites in the 1st and 2nd century and are both paralleled at nearby Catterick (Cool and Price 2002, 243); the latter is dateable to the 1st to 2nd century and its presence as far south of Hadrian's Wall as York might be considered noteworthy (Kilbride-Jones 1938, 391). The six glass beads all derive from contexts of Anglian date, but can be independently dated to the Middle-Saxon period by comparison with contemporary examples from settlement and cemetery sites; they also reflect the beads recovered from 46-54 Fishergate (Rogers 1993, 1379-1386). The apparently malformed beads and pieces of waste glass, while not particularly numerous, do appear to indicate glass-working on site. The rarity of such material from all excavations at Fishergate is easily explained by the careful recycling of this precious material and even contemporary sites known, from finds of glass waste and tools, to have been engaged in the craft produce tiny amounts of waste material. Indeed, the use of glass in contexts where precious stones are also used suggests the material may have been considered equal to more exotic materials (Bimson and Freestone 2000, 131). The full assemblage should be published alongside the site, and to that end the polychrome bead should be illustrated in colour and the remaining pieces conventionally illustrated, while complementary photographs could also be considered for web publication.