

At
[98/12]

An examination of samples from excavations at Duggleby Lodge, North Yorkshire, for plant and animal remains

by

John Carrott, Allan Hall and Harry Kenward

Three samples of sediment from two presumed pre-Roman ditches at Duggleby Lodge were submitted for analysis of plant and animal remains.

The samples were as follows:

1. [latest phase of ditches; from approx. 0.6 m depth in earliest fills; 1.4 kg] Light brown, crumbly (working plastic), silty clay with flints and chalk present in 2-60 mm range.
2. [earliest phase of ditches; from approx. 1.5 m depth in earliest fills; 1.7 kg] Light grey-brown (mottled reddish on 10 mm scale), crumbly (working plastic), very stony (with flints and chalk 2-20 mm) clay.
3. [from approx. 0.5 m depth, directly above a concentrated deposit of flint and chalk debris; 1.5 kg] Light brown, crumbly (working plastic) stony (flints and chalk 2-60 mm) clay with some modern roots.

The whole of each sample was sieved to 300 μ m and the residue dried (it was clear during disaggregation that there was no organic component and paraffin flotation and washover were not therefore employed). All three residues comprised angular flint with a little more or less rounded chalk in samples 2 and 3.

The lack of biological remains, even land snails, suggests that these deposits may have formed quickly at the earliest stage of infilling from slumping of the cut sides of the ditches. The sediments have the appearance of chalk 'head' which would form in a cold (periglacial) climate with few or no living things present in the area; it is such a deposit that the ditches are most likely to have been cut into.

Authors' address:

Environmental Archaeology Unit
University of York
Heslington
York YO1 5DD

Telephone: (0904) 433843-51

Prepared for:

Ian Lawton
2 Pear Tree Avenue
Upper Poppleton
York YO2 6HH

April 8, 1993