

**Channel Tunnel Rail Link
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**The early prehistoric pottery from Little Stock Farm,
Mersham, Kent (ARC LSF99)**

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Figure 1: Little Stock Farm - Early prehistoric, P1

1 INTRODUCTION

A total of 18 fragments (49 g) of Fengate Style Peterborough Ware were recorded. The material was all broken and abraded. Although no refits were found it appeared to be the case that fresh breaks had occurred since the assessment of the material. The original sherd count is believed to be one from context 2504, three from 2506 and six from context 2213.

Table 1: Neolithic pottery by context

Feature	Context	Sherd count	Sherd weight (g)	Ware	Number of vessels	Illustrated vessels
	2213	10	26	PW/F	2	
	2506	6	21	PW/F	2	P1
	2504	2	2	PW		
Total		18	49		4	

2 FABRICS

The fabrics indicate the use of a fine, relatively clean clay containing varying small amounts of sand. This could have been acquired on site, especially from a contemporary water source. The flint is added and is not immediately local to the site. It is interesting to note that the flint temper appears in a variety of greys and whites and has not been selected according to colour as appears sometimes to be the case. None of the sherds appear to contain temper to a degree considered sufficient for any functional purpose and the choice to add flint to the clay may have been based on a symbolic or aesthetic understanding of temper.

Table 2: Description of fabrics

Fabric Name	Period	Fabric description
FA1	MN	Closed clay, with rare rounded sand grains and rare flint white, grey and black pieces (sharp). 1% sand and 1% flint, up to 5 mm.
FA2	MN	Closed clay with sparse 5% flints, and sparse fine sand 4-5%, up to 5 mm
A1	MN	Sparse fine rounded 3% sand, rare black glauconitic grains. 1% voids, leached material - 0.1 mm wide voids

3 FORMS/TYPES

Vessel P1, with a fine, triangular profile, black uniform firing colours and neat decoration, is of a type that often appears in pits containing Fengate Ware but is not recognised as a separate form type (see routewide discussion). The other thick walled and oxidised sherds are considered more characteristic of the stereotypical Fengate style vessel. It is important to note that this small assemblage shows such a degree of variability in pottery manufacture. It is possible that these differences were considered to be significant and that sherds were selected to reflect them in particular deposits.

Decoration from feature 2507 included tiny closely applied patterns of impressed fingernail and impressed diagonal lines. That on sherds from feature 2214 included tiny,

closely arranged finger nail impressions forming a lattice pattern on a collar and finger pits showing finger nail impressions. These sherds were not all from one vessel.

4 CHRONOLOGY AND PHASING

Three features contained the pottery from this assemblage. It has been noted that feature 2214 may not have been either a pit or posthole but it is tempting to suggest that these deposits comprise selected, stylistically opposite groups of pottery. Although this observation is based on a slight simplification, it is the case that vessel P1 appears in feature 2507 and the thicker, slightly oxidised sherds with finger nail and fingertip impressions come from pit or hollow 2214. The association of each feature with one flint tool may also relate to this selection.

5 GENERAL DISCUSSION

Exact parallels for Peterborough Ware vessels are unusual but the fine Fengate bowl has parallels at Sandway Road. It is a common but undefined type which always constitutes a small completely unoxidised vessel with smoothed (possibly burnished) exterior, little temper and small, closely applied patterns. Large decorative motifs, such as finger pitting, are never used. On the vessel from Sandway Road, the end of a small round implement has been used to create a tiny, deep, neat small-scale version of the pits found underneath collars on larger oxidised Fengate vessels.

It should also be noted that the association of this little vessel with a Petit Tranchet arrowhead is matched by a similar association at Pilgrims Way with a pair of pits containing refitting sherds from the whole profile of a Mortlake Bowl.

6 ILLUSTRATED VESSEL

Figure 1

P1. One rim of Fengate style Peterborough Ware, 1 sherd (11 g). Fabric: FA1. Form: Heavy Collar with triangular section. Firing: ext; BL, core; BL, int; BL. Decoration: ext; incised short diagonal lines and possible impressed twisted cord, bevel; incised short diagonal lines. ST: ext; SM, int; SM. The coil joins are very evident and the hole was created before the firing of the vessel. Th: 6 mm.