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**The later prehistoric pottery from West of Blind
Lane, Sevington, Kent (ARC BLN 98)**

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1 INTRODUCTION

A total of 37 sherds of later prehistoric pottery, weighing 257 g (Table 1), was recovered from detailed and strip, map and sample excavations at West of Blind Lane, Sevington, Kent (ARC BLN 98). The recovery of the material was carried out in accordance with the Fieldwork Event Aims, to determine the economic basis of the site.

The pottery is in poor condition with many sherds displaying abraded surfaces and post-depositional concretions. The mean sherd weight is 6.9 g. The material was retrieved by hand on site and derived from 10 contexts. These included the colluvium (context 2024), a natural hollow (context 2131), a possible natural feature or area of trample (context 2160), two finds references (contexts 1011 and 2248) and ditches 3005, 3006 and 3011. The pottery consisted of undiagnostic body sherds which have been phased on the basis of fabric type and associated sherd thickness. The material analysed had a wide date range encompassing most of the later prehistoric period and included a small number of earlier prehistoric and Roman sherds. As a group there is no emphasis on a particular ceramic phase. Many contexts produced material of more than one period, but ditches 3005, 3006 and 3011 contained material from the middle Bronze Age ceramic phase only.

The pottery was recorded using the methodology designed for the route-wide scheme, in accordance with the recommendations set out by the Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group (PCRG 1997).

Table 1: Quantification of later prehistoric pottery and summary of phase.

Context	Intervention	Feature	Count	Weight (g)	Ceramic phase
1011		Finds ref.	1	9	Late Bronze Age to Iron Age
2024		Colluvium	6	64	Later prehistoric
2053	2054	Ditch 3006	2	6	Middle Bronze Age
2060	2057	Ditch 3005	1	5	Middle Bronze Age
2105	2105	Gully	1	17	Iron Age
2131	2132	Hollow	3	18	Later prehistoric
2160	2161	Natural feature	20	98	Later prehistoric
2189	2198	Ditch 3006	1	1	Middle Bronze Age
2221	2220	Ditch 3011	1	10	Middle Bronze Age
2248	U/S	Finds ref.	1	29	Early Iron Age

2 FABRICS

The pottery fabrics contained a range of inclusions, and were classified using an alphanumeric system, designed to reflect the principal inclusions in the fabrics. The following abbreviations have been used: F (flint); G (grog); I (iron) and Q (quartz). The fabrics have been quantified in Table 2. The F99 fabric code was assigned to sherds containing flint temper but in very bad condition or those that had been refired. The Q100 code was allocated to a very small sherd of an unsourced, oxidised, sandy ware of Roman date. Fabric descriptions for these two fabric

codes have not been included here. The following grain size classifications have been used: coarse silt, <0.06 mm; very fine sand, >0.06-<0.13 mm; fine sand, >0.13-<0.25 mm; medium sand, >0.25-<0.5 mm; coarse sand, >0.5-<1 mm; very coarse sand, >1-<2 mm; granules, >2-<4 mm (after Adams *et al.*, 1984 in PCRG 1997, 51).

The site lies on the Atherfield Clay of the lower Greensand, immediately adjacent to, and overlain by, the Hythe Beds. Outcrops of the Sandgate Beds and Wealden Clay are also located in the vicinity of the site. Drift deposits of alluvium and 4th Terrace river gravels are also present in the immediate vicinity (Ordnance Survey, Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheets 305 and 306). The inclusions identified in the fabrics are all available in the local geology (defined as less than 7 km, cf Arnold 1985), suggesting local pottery production (Morris 1994a; 1994b).

Table 2: *Quantification of later prehistoric fabric types.*

Fabric	Ceramic phase	Count of sherds	% of count of sherds	Weight of sherds (g)	% of weight of sherds
F1	MBA	7	18.9	65	25.3
F2	LBA-IA	3	8.1	12	4.7
F3	LBA-EIA	1	2.7	2	0.8
F4	MBA-LMBA	1	2.7	7	2.7
F5	LMBA-LBA	1	2.7	11	4.3
F6	LBA-EIA	1	2.7	5	1.9
F99	LPR	4	10.8	26	10.1
FI1	LBA	1	2.7	3	1.2
G1	LIA	10	27	45	17.4
GF1	LNEBA-EBA	1	2.7	13	5.1
GI1	LNEBA-EBA	3	8.1	16	6.2
Q1	IA	1	2.7	17	6.6
Q2	EIA	1	2.7	29	11.3
Q99	LPR	1	2.7	4	1.6
Q100	RO	1	2.7	2	0.8

F1. A soft, rough fabric containing moderate to common (15-20%) angular calcined flint, ≤ 5 mm, mostly 2 mm, moderately to poorly sorted. The clay matrix is not sandy but appears to contain occasional silt sized grains of quartz which are not clearly visible at x30 power. The fabric also contains rare (1%) sub-rounded iron oxides, ≤ 1.5 mm. The fresh fracture is hackly. The fabric is diagnostic of the middle Bronze Age period.

F2. A sandy fabric containing sparse (5-7%) angular, calcined flint fragments, ≤ 3 mm, poorly sorted; rare to sparse (2-3%) sub-rounded iron oxides, ≤ 1 mm. Very fine to silt sized grains of quartz are present in the clay matrix, plus occasional coarse sized sub-rounded grains. The fresh fracture is conchoidal. The fabric has a date range of the late Bronze Age to Iron Age periods.

F3. A soft, sandy fabric containing sparse to moderate (7-10%) sub-angular to angular calcined flint, ≤ 2 mm, poorly sorted; many fragments are 0.5 mm. The clay matrix contains abundant silt sized to fine quartz grains, sub-angular to angular, and occasional more rounded larger coarse sized grains. The fabric could not be dated more closely than the earlier part of the first millennium BC.

F4. A hard, harsh fabric containing common (30%) well-processed angular flint, ≤ 1.5 mm, most inclusions are ≤ 0.5 mm, well sorted. The clay matrix is silty, but individual grains of

quartz are not clearly visible at x30 power. The single sherd in this fabric was very abraded, but a date range of the middle Bronze Age to the mid to late Bronze Age transitional period may be suggested.

F5. A soft, harsh fabric containing common to very common (20-25%) angular calcined flint, ≤ 3 mm, however most fragments are 0.5 mm, well sorted. The clay matrix is sandy and contains abundant silt sized grains of quartz with occasional sub-angular coarse sized grains. The fabric has a date range of the mid to late Bronze Age transitional period to the late Bronze Age.

F6. A sandy fabric containing sparse to moderate (7-10%) sub-angular to angular calcined flint, ≤ 3 mm, mostly around 2 mm, moderately sorted. The clay matrix is sandy and contains abundant fine sized grains of quartz with occasional larger quartz grains. The fabric could not be dated more closely than the earlier part of the first millennium BC.

FI1. A very sandy, mixed fabric containing moderate (10%) angular, calcined flint, ≤ 4 mm, but mostly ≤ 1 mm, moderately sorted; sparse to moderate (7-10%) rounded iron oxides, ≤ 1 mm, very well sorted; sparse (5-7%) sub-angular grog, ≤ 2.5 mm, moderately sorted. This fabric is assigned to the late Bronze Age ceramic phase.

G1. A soft, soapy fabric containing moderate (10-15%) sub-rounded to sub-angular grog, ≤ 3 mm, well processed, and sparse (3-5%) organic voids. This fabric can also include up to 2% sub-rounded iron oxides, ≤ 1 mm; 1% flint detritus, ≤ 2 mm and 1% sub-rounded quartz grains, ≤ 1 mm. The clay matrix is slightly sandy, but the quartz grains are barely visible at x30 magnification. This fabric is assigned to the late Iron Age ceramic phase.

GF1. A soft, soapy fabric containing sparse to moderate (7-10%) of sub-rounded grog, 1-2 mm, well sorted; sparse (5-7%) angular flint, ≤ 2.5 mm, mostly ≤ 1 mm; rare (2%) rounded iron oxides, ≤ 2 mm. This fabric represents the Beaker ceramic tradition.

GI1. A soft, soapy and sandy textured fabric containing common (20%) sub-rounded to sub-angular grog, ≤ 1.5 mm, well sorted; rare to sparse (3-5%) sub-rounded iron oxides, ≤ 4 mm; rare (1%) angular flint detritus, ≤ 4 mm. The clay matrix is sandy and contains silt sized quartz grains. This fabric represents the Beaker ceramic tradition.

Q1. A soft, sandy fabric containing abundant (40%) grains of well rounded glauconite, fine in size, very well sorted; rare to sparse (2-3%) flint, mostly angular and calcined, ≤ 3 mm, poorly sorted; rare (1%) sub-rounded to rounded iron oxides, ≤ 3 mm. This fabric could be dated no more closely than the Iron Age.

Q2. A soft, sandy fabric containing sparse (7%) coarse, sub-rounded quartz grains, ≤ 1 mm, within a clay matrix of much smaller fine or silt sized grains, not clearly visible at x30 power. Rare (1-2%) sub-angular to angular flint fragments, ≤ 3 mm, are also present. The fabric has been placed in the early to middle Iron Age ceramic phase.

3 FORM

The assemblage consisted almost entirely of plain body sherds. The one exception was a body sherd from a possible necked globular bowl (context 2024). Smoothing was noted on two sherds, however no other forms of surface treatment were present.

4 DISCUSSION

The later prehistoric pottery from West of Blind Lane was undiagnostic and has been tentatively assigned to phase on the basis of the inclusions present in the fabrics, and the general character of the sherds such as firing and wall thickness. The very coarse flint tempered fabric F1 was used for thick walled vessels (ranging from 8mm to 14mm) and is characteristic of the middle Bronze Age ceramic phase.

As a group the material ranges from the early prehistoric to the Roman periods. No clear focus on one particular period was evident, and the presence of 15 different fabric types emphasises the mixed nature of the collection. Discounting the range of material recovered from the natural features and layers, it may be observed that the field system ditches (3005, 3006 and 3011) contain material that has been dated solely to the middle Bronze Age phase. Whilst this tentatively suggests a date for the ditches, it is statistically unsound as ditch 3006 contained three sherds, and ditches 3005 and 3011 each contained only one. The PCRG suggest that any estimation of the phase of a feature should be based on a minimum of 25-30 sherds (PCRG 1997, 21).

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