

**Channel Tunnel Rail Link
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**The later prehistoric pottery from Chapel Mill,
Lenham, Kent (ARC CML99)**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	3
2	FABRICS.....	3
3	FORM.....	4
4	DISCUSSION.....	4
5	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	4

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Quantification of later prehistoric pottery and summary of phase.	3
Table 2: Quantification of later prehistoric fabric types.....	3

1 INTRODUCTION

A total of 12 sherds of later prehistoric pottery, weighing 37 g (Table 1), was recovered from a strip, map and sample excavation at Chapel Mill, Lenham, Kent (ARC CML 99). The recovery of the material was carried out in accordance with the Fieldwork Event Aims, to ascertain if the later prehistoric material was associated with contemporary features forming part of a settlement.

The mean sherd weight is very low, 3.1 g, and reflects the poor condition of the pottery. The material derived from four contexts: the subsoil, two ploughsoil layers and a cremation pit. It was retrieved by hand on site, with the exception of one sherd from sample 101 (cremation pit 205). The pottery consisted of undiagnostic body sherds which mostly dated to the earlier part of the first millennium BC, with one sherd of middle Bronze Age date.

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	Feature	Count	Weight (g)	Ceramic phase
201	Subsoil	6	9	Late Bronze Age to early Iron Age
204	205	1	2	Bronze Age to Iron Age
217	Ploughsoil	2	17	Middle Bronze Age – late Bronze Age to early Iron Age
223	Ploughsoil	3	9	Late Bronze Age to early Iron Age

2 FABRICS

The pottery fabrics contained flint or quartzite inclusions. They were classified using an alphanumeric system, designed to reflect the principal inclusions in the fabrics. In this case F is used to denote flint, and Z for quartzite. The fabrics have been quantified in Table 2.

The site lies on the Folkstone Beds of the lower Greensand, with deposits of Gault clay, chalk and clay-with-flints present in the immediate vicinity (Worssam 1963). 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.

Table 2: Quantification of later prehistoric fabric types.

Fabric	Ceramic phase	Count of sherds	Weight of sherds (g)
F1	LBA/EIA	7	10
F2	MBA	1	16
F3	LBA/EIA	3	9
Z1	BA - IA	1	2

F1 A soft, sandy intermediate fabric containing sparse (5-7%) amounts of angular calcined flint, <3 mm, moderately sorted; and sparse (3%) red iron oxides, ≤1 mm, rounded. The clay matrix contains common (20%) very well sorted, rounded, very fine grains of glauconite. The

sherds were mostly unoxidised and low fired. The fabric is undiagnostic and cannot be more closely dated than the earlier part of the first millennium.

F2 A soft, rough coarse ware fabric containing moderate to common (15-20%) angular flint fragments, mostly non-calcined and grey in colour, ≤ 5 mm, poorly sorted. The single sherd in this fabric was thick (14 mm), oxidised on the exterior and unoxidised throughout the core and on the interior surface. The coarseness of the inclusions, thickness of sherd and firing conditions suggest a date in the middle Bronze Age period for the fabric.

F3 A soft, sandy intermediate fabric containing sparse (7%) flint, ≤ 4 mm, poorly sorted, angular, in a micaceous clay matrix with very fine quartz. The sherds are slightly oxidised on the exterior, and unoxidised on the core and interior. The fabric is undiagnostic and cannot be more closely dated than the earlier part of the first millennium.

Z1 A sandy intermediate fabric containing sparse (5-7%) angular quartzite inclusions, ≤ 3 mm, poorly sorted, in a micaceous sandy clay matrix. The sherd has become very hard and is covered in post-depositional concretions. It is undiagnostic and may date from any phase of the Bronze Age and Iron Age periods.

3 FORM

No rim sherds were recovered from the site, but subsoil context 201 produced six sherds from a single vessel with a plain base. The remainder of the assemblage consisted of plain body sherds.

4 DISCUSSION

The later prehistoric pottery from Chapel Mill 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 thickness. For the most part the pottery could be dated no more closely than to the earlier part of the first millennium BC. The exception was a single large sherd from context 217 which appeared to be middle Bronze Age in date.

The material indicates activity during the middle Bronze Age and earlier part of the first millennium BC, however no features dating to this period were excavated at Chapel Mill. An isolated pit of probable late Bronze Age date was recorded during the previous evaluation at the site (URL 1997), and suggests that contemporary features may have been removed by ploughing or other forms of truncation.

5 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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