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**The later prehistoric pottery from Hurst Wood,
Charing, Kent (430 79+200-79+500 98)**

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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
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1 INTRODUCTION

A total of 8 sherds of later prehistoric pottery, weighing 16 g (Table 1), was recovered from a detailed excavation at Hurst Wood, Charing, Kent (ARC HWD 98).

The mean sherd weight was very low, 2 g, and reflects the poor condition of the pottery. The material derived from three features: pits 27 and 140 and tree-throw pit 49. It was retrieved by hand on site and also from environmental sample 14 (context 143) and sample 1 (context 28). The assemblage consisted of undiagnostic body sherds which could be placed in one of two wide ranging phases: the earlier part of the first millennium BC or the later prehistoric period.

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
28	27	5	9	Late Bronze Age to early Iron Age
52	49	2	6	Later prehistoric
143	140	1	1	Later prehistoric

2 FABRICS

The pottery fabrics contained flint, quartzite, quartz or iron inclusions. They were classified using an alphanumeric system, designed to reflect the principal inclusions in the fabrics. The following letters have been used to denote inclusions: F (flint), Z (quartzite), Q (quartz) and I (iron).

The site lies on the Sandgate Beds of the Lower Greensand, immediately adjacent to the Folkstone Beds and Hythe Beds, also of the lower Greensand, with deposits of clay-with-flints, alluvium and Fourth Terrace gravel of the River Stour 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.

FZ1. A soft, slightly harsh fabric containing moderate amounts (10%) of both calcined crushed flint and quartzite, < 2mm, moderately sorted, in a micaceous sandy clay matrix. The two sherds in this fabric were very small and abraded and could be dated no closer than to the later prehistoric period.

I1. A soft, slightly soapy fabric containing moderate (15%) red iron oxides, 0.5-2 mm, poorly sorted, sub-rounded to rounded. The fabric may include up to 1% of flint detrital material, \leq 2 mm. A single plain rim sherd was identified in this fabric, and could not be more closely dated than the earlier part of the first millennium.

Q1. A sandy fabric containing a common (20%) amount of medium to very coarse quartz inclusions, sub-rounded to rounded, moderately sorted, against a background of much finer

quartz grains present in the clay matrix; sparse (3%) red iron oxides, 1mm, sub-rounded. One abraded sherd was recorded in this fabric. It is of probable Iron Age date.

Z1. A soft, sandy fabric containing sparse to moderate (7-10%) angular quartzite, ≤ 4 mm, poorly sorted, including grey, white, pink and colourless fragments. The fabric may also contain 1% flint and 1% red iron oxides, ≤ 1 mm, sub-rounded. The clay matrix is sandy and slightly micaceous. The fabric is undiagnostic and cannot be more closely dated than the earlier part of the first millennium.

Z2. A soft, rough fabric containing common (20%) quartzite fragments, ≤ 1 mm, well sorted, angular; rare (1%) red iron oxides, ≤ 1 mm, sub-rounded to rounded. The single sherd in this fabric was extremely abraded and could only be dated to the later prehistoric period.

Z3. A hard, sandy fabric containing very common (30%) angular quartzite, < 4 mm, moderately sorted, most fragments are < 1 mm; rare (1%) iron oxides, ≤ 1 mm, sub-rounded to rounded. The single sherd in this fabric was abraded and could only be dated to the later prehistoric period.

3 FORM

A single rim sherd was recovered from the site. It was flat-topped with a slight internal bevel and appears to be undifferentiated from the body. Less than 5% of the vessel was represented and no estimate of size or capacity may be made. The form is chronologically undiagnostic and is seen throughout the earlier part of the first millennium BC, and into the middle Iron Age.

4 DISCUSSION

The later prehistoric pottery from Hurst Wood was undiagnostic. The sherds from context 28 suggested a date in the earlier part of the first millennium BC. Those from contexts 52 and 143 could only be placed in a general later prehistoric phase, but a sandy sherd from the former hints at an Iron Age date. The inclusions present in the pottery are characteristic for the region during the later prehistoric and were available in the immediate vicinity of the site.

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