

**Channel Tunnel Rail Link  
London and Continental Railways  
Oxford Wessex Archaeology Joint Venture**

**The later prehistoric pottery from East of Newlands,  
Charing, Kent (ARC 430 99/80+000)**

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Figure 1: East of Newlands - Later prehistoric pottery, 1

## 1 INTRODUCTION

A total of 76 sherds of later prehistoric pottery, weighing 444 g, was recovered from a watching brief at East of Newlands, Charing, Kent (ARC 430 / 80 + 000 / 99). The mean sherd weight is quite low, 5.8 g, and the condition of the pottery was variable with a number of relatively large rim sherds, but very fragmentary body sherds. The material was recovered from environmental sample 1, which derived from context 2, the fill of truncated cremation pit 3. The pottery was from a single vessel which may be dated to the middle to late Bronze Age ceramic phase.

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).

## 2 FABRIC

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, 118). 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.

Z1. A soft coarse ware fabric containing sparse to moderate (7-10%) amounts of angular quartzite fragments,  $\leq 5$  mm, moderately to poorly sorted; and rare (1%) linear vesicles which once contained organic material. The clay matrix appears to contain silt sized quartz grains. The occasional large (9 mm) piece of unidentified, rounded, detrital material was also recorded. The clay had been quite poorly wedged, and appears quite laminated in the break.

## 3 FORM

The single vessel (Fig. 00.1) is a large coarse ware urn with a flat-topped undifferentiated rim and quite straight walls. The vessel has been irregularly formed with a variable rim curvature. This has created difficulties in ascertaining the correct rim diameter, however it is in the region of 340 mm, with an estimated vessel equivalent (EVE) of 0.47. The rim was also uneven on the interior with an overlap of the clay noticed on a number of sherds. The wall thickness was variable, ranging from 5-11 mm. On the whole the vessel gave the impression of being hurriedly constructed.

The vessel is similar in form to middle Bronze Age bucket urns, but the walls are thinner than typical Deverel-Rimbury pottery, and as such the vessel may represent a middle to late Bronze Age transitional phase, during the end of the second millennium BC.

#### **4 SURFACE TREATMENT AND USE-WEAR**

Both the external and internal surfaces of the vessel had been wiped. A number of very small and narrow linear or V-shaped indentations were visible on the surface, particularly on the rim, and appear to result from the wiping process. They may indicate that some form of textile was used to smooth over the surface. Furthermore, the surface appears to have been given something of a slurry finish.

Several small patches of soot were visible on the exterior and interior surfaces of the vessel. It is possible that these derive from burning associated with the cremation.

#### **5 ILLUSTRATED VESSEL**

*Figure 1*

1. Straight-sided urn with flat-topped rim. Wiped, irregular surfaces. Form: R1. Fabric: Z1. PRN 1000. Context 2, cremation pit 3.

#### **6 DISCUSSION**

This vessel was recovered from a pit which contained a small quantity (84 g) of human adult cremated remains. The pit had been disturbed and as a result it was not possible to ascertain if the vessel was used to contain or accompany the human remains (Boyle 2001). The vessel has been classified as an urn because of the funerary context of recovery. The profile of the vessel suggests a bucket urn form, but the thin vessel walls indicate a slightly later date than typical Deverel-Rimbury forms, and the pot may be dated to the middle to late Bronze Age transition.

The irregularity of the form suggests that the time available to form the vessel may have been limited. The wiping of the surfaces may therefore have been cosmetic, to create a more finished look.

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