

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

**The later prehistoric pottery from CTRL Zone 2,
(ARC 330 98, ARC SSR 99, Area 330 Zone 2)**

by Barbara Mcnee and Elaine Morris

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1 INTRODUCTION

The site is situated in between Dale Road and Hazells Farm to the south of the A2 at Gravesend, Kent (Area 330 Zone 2). This area is covered in the Whitehill Road Barrow Integrated Site Report (CTRL Area 330, Zones 1 and 2). Certain areas of the site were identified for follow up excavation and include ARC SSR 99. The majority of the assemblage was recovered from ditches and dates to the late Iron Age/early Roman period. A small assemblage of later prehistoric pottery was recovered from these features. Twenty-seven sherds (259 g) from ARC SSR 99 were subject to analysis (Table 1). Thirty-eight sherds were also recovered from ARC 330 98, thirteen of which are currently missing. The existing 25 sherds (173 g) were analysed. The condition of the assemblage is moderately good, and consequently surface treatments and usewear evidence are apparent on some sherds. The study of this pottery has the potential to contribute to fieldwork event aims and Landscape Zone aims (to determine the morphology and function of the settlement) by providing dating for the features.

2 METHODOLOGY

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). All sherds were assigned a fabric type after macroscopic examination and examination under a binocular microscope (x10 power). The assemblage was divided into different fabric groups on the basis of the dominant inclusion types, and into fabric types based on the variation within the group. Density charts (PCRG 1997, Appendix 3) were used to standardise assessment of the quantity of inclusion present within the pottery fabric. All sherds were counted and weighed to the nearest whole gramme, and given a unique pottery record number for ease of reference. Diagnostic sherds were additionally assigned to a form and decorative scheme, and other characteristics noted include individual sherd thickness, surface treatment and evidence of usewear. Featured sherds were recorded onto individual featured sherd record sheets. Parallel form types have been sought from within, and also outside the Kent area, using published and unpublished material. The computer programme Microsoft Excel has been used to analyse and summarise the data.

3 CHRONOLOGY

One of the key research aims was to establish a chronology for the site. On the basis of diagnostic fabric and form types, one ceramic phase has been identified from a single period.

- **Phase 1:** Plain Assemblage phase of the late Bronze Age (1050 – 850 BC)

- Six sherds from ARC SSR 99 may be slightly later in date, but could not be identified with any degree of certainty.

Table 1: Quantification of later Prehistoric Pottery

Event Code	Sherd Count	Sherd Weight
ARC 330 98	25	173 g
ARC SSR 99	27	259 g

3.1 Phase 1: Late Bronze Age

This is characterised by a late Bronze Age assemblage as defined by Barrett (1980). The diagnostic pottery includes two coarseware jars (Class I), a medium fineware jar (Class II), two fine bowls (Class IV) and a cup or small bowl (Class V), amongst an assemblage of eight possible vessels.

4 FABRIC DESCRIPTIONS

All fabric types from Zone 2 occur at Cobham Golf Course (ARC CGC 98), and consequently the fabric type series established for Cobham Golf Course has been used to describe fabrics from Zone 2. Six different fabric types were identified which can be placed in two groups on the basis of principal inclusion types. Five flint-tempered fabric types account for 92.3% of the assemblage, and one flint and quartz fabric type accounts for 7.7% of the overall assemblage. All flint types contain calcined flints.

F1. A coarse hard fabric. It contains common (20-30%), poorly sorted, subangular flint 0.25–3 mm in size. The clay matrix consists of coarse silt to clay.

F4. A coarse hard fabric. It contains very common to abundant (30–40%), moderately to well sorted, subangular flint, mostly 1–2 mm in size, although there are also some smaller pieces of flint, which are also moderately sorted. The clay matrix is coarse to silt clay, and can contain rare red/black iron ore. It is a similar fabric to F2, but appears slightly finer.

F6. A fairly coarse, hard fabric. It contains sparse (7%) to moderate (10–15%), poorly sorted subangular flint 1-4 mm and 5 mm in size. The clay matrix is a fine sandy clay, which can contain rare rounded red iron ore.

F7. A similar fabric to F4, but has less flint. It is a hard fabric, which contains common (20%), moderately sorted, subangular flint up to 2 mm in size. It can also contain occasional larger pieces of flint, 3 mm in size, and flint dust. The clay matrix is a very fine sandy clay.

F8. A quite fine fabric, which contains very common (30%), well-sorted subangular flint 0.5–1 mm in size, and occasional larger pieces 1.5 mm in size. The clay matrix is a very fine sandy clay, which can also contain rare red iron ore.

FQ1. A quite fine fabric, which contains common (20%), well sorted rounded very fine quartz sand, and moderate (15%), and moderately sorted, subangular flint 0.5–1 mm in size.

4.1 Clay and Temper Sources

The area surrounding Zone 2 consists of Upper Chalk, overlain by varying thicknesses of gravels, and sands of the Thanet Beds. This geology provides potential potting material, and the Zone 2 fabrics suggest that the pottery was made using locally obtained clay and temper. This conclusion is based on the Dean Arnold model of resource procurement, whereby the preferred territory of exploitation for both clay and temper is 1 km or less, and the common range of exploitation ranges from 7 km for clay, and 6-9 km for temper (Arnold 1985, 54-5; Morris 1994a; 1994b). The fabrics themselves are reasonably coarse, and there is no apparent correlation between vessel types, and choice of fabrics.

5 FORM TYPES, DECORATION AND USEWEAR

5.1 ARC SSR 99

Two form types have been identified as belonging to the late Bronze Age Plain Ware assemblages as defined by Barrett (1980). There are no surviving rims within the assemblage, and form types have been assessed on the basis of fabric, surface treatment and vessel wall thickness. Four sherds from a burnished bowl were recovered from context (48), and seventeen sherds belonging to a medium fine ware jar were recovered from context (31). The exterior condition of the jar is fairly good, however the interior is heavily abraded. Damage to vessel surfaces is likely to occur during processing such as stirring, scraping or pounding the contents, and performed repeatedly, these actions can scar the inner surface of the vessel (Rice 1987, 234). Alternately, the jar may have been used as a receptacle for some form of acidic contents. The remainder of the assemblage is fairly undiagnostic, and could not be identified to form with any certainty.

5.2 ARC 330 98

Four vessels were identified: one small bowl or cup; a fine burnished bowl and two coarse ware jars. One tiny thin-walled, slightly carinated vessel was recovered from context (1253). This may possibly be a cup (Class V), as defined by Barrett (1980), and similar to examples from Runnymede (Needham 1991, Figs. 83, P93 and 95, P349). A thick walled base sherd was also present within context (1253). The central disc zone was all that remained, and although very worn there was possible evidence of basal flints. This form of surface treatment is well recorded amongst late Bronze Age assemblages, indicating that the manufacture of the pot was carried out on a bed of crushed flint, possibly to prevent it from sticking. Examples of vessels with flint-gritted bases can be found at Monkton Court Farm, Kent (Macpherson-Grant 1992, Plates 1 and II), and Knapp Farm, Sussex (Hamilton 1997, Fig 8.10). Eighteen

body sherds were recovered from context (1251). These probably belong to two vessels; a coarse ware jar which had been roughly wiped, and a burnished bowl.

6 DISCUSSION

The later prehistoric pottery recovered from Zone 2 was mainly from the excavation areas ARC SSR 99 and ARC 330 98. The pottery recovered from ARC 330 98 derived from pit fills, and on the basis of form and fabric has been placed within the Plain Ware Phase of the late Bronze Age (1050–850 BC). The pottery from ARC SSR 99 was recovered from ditches, and is probably residual with later ceramic material of the late Iron Age/Roman period. This pottery has also been assigned to the Plain Ware Phase of the late Bronze Age, although the presence of a flint and quartz type fabric group may be indicative of a slightly later date, a transitional phase which continues through to the decorated phase of the late Bronze Age.

The character of the pottery is suggestive of a small settlement group producing pottery for local consumption, exploiting local clay resources. This small, but significant assemblage of forms and fabrics may contribute to a greater understanding of late Bronze Age pottery traditions within the Kent area.

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