

Report on Prehistoric Pottery Sherd from Methley Primary School, West Yorkshire (OSA04 WB06)

By Carol Allen

1 Introduction

1.1 A single sherd of pottery weighing about 1 g was found in context 1165 on this site. The sherd is approximately 20 x 15 mm.

2 Description and Fabric

2.1 The sherd is quite abraded but both interior and exterior surfaces are apparent. The sherd is 7 mm thick and has an orange and oxidised exterior and black and unoxidised interior surface and core. The small amount of exterior surface that is apparent after careful brushing suggests slight burnishing. The sherd is tempered with a sparse quantity (3 to 9%) of angular pieces of quartz and sandstone of medium (0.25 to 1.00 mm) and coarse size (1.00 to 3.00 mm) and part of a pebble about 4 mm in length can also be seen. The tempering materials have been crushed and added and could have been found locally.

2.2 This pottery is handmade and bonfire fired and the fabric is unlikely to be uniform throughout the vessel. There is no decoration, but the sherd is small and abraded, so any decoration which may have been seen on the complete pot is not apparent.

3 Identification and Context

3.1 The colour, finish and wall thickness suggest that this sherd is very likely to be part of the body of an early Bronze Age Collared Urn. Such vessels are fragile and rare and were in use from about 2000 to 1500 cal BC, but are believed to have been most common around 1700 cal BC (Needham 1996).

3.2 These types of vessels are most commonly associated with cremation burials. The cremations and Collared Urns occurred within pits often in a ring ditch or round barrow mound. The abraded nature of this sherd suggests that a burial and pot has been disturbed and the sherd was moved from an early Bronze Age burial site in the vicinity to the context in which it was found. However, this indicates that there was a Bronze Age burial in the location in the past.

4 Reference

Needham S, 1996 Chronology and Periodisation in the British Bronze Age, *Acta Archaeologica* 67, 121-40

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