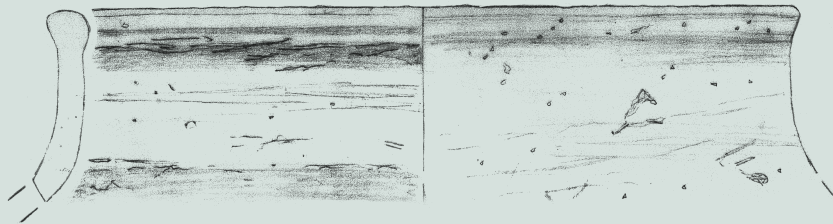


# WINCHESTER

## A CITY IN THE MAKING

Archaeological excavations between 2002 – 2007  
on the sites of Northgate House, Staple Gardens and the former Winchester Library, Jewry St



### Section 1.1

**The Prehistoric Pottery**  
by **Lisa Brown**



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### **The Prehistoric Pottery**

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A total of 105 sherds (1462 g) of later prehistoric pottery was recovered from the Northgate House (NH) and Discovery Centre (CC) sites. Of this total, 94 sherds (1293 g) came from NH and 10 sherds (131 g) from the CC site. The pottery dates from the early Iron Age (possibly as early as the 9th-8th century BC) to the late Iron Age.

#### **Methodology**

The assemblage was fully recorded on Access Database. Sherds were examined with a binocular microscope and hand lens at 10x and 20x magnification. The following attributes were recorded: context, form, fabric, number, weight, surface finish and condition. The form and fabric typologies devised for recording of the prehistoric pottery from Danebury and sites in the Danebury environs (Cunliffe 1984; Brown 2000) has been utilised in this report in order that correlations can be drawn between this small collection and the largest similar pottery collection in the region.

#### **Condition**

The condition of the assemblage was generally fair to poor, 25% recorded as heavily abraded, 68% as moderately abraded, with only one sherd in fresh condition. This is not uncommon for sherds recovered from surface or small feature contexts at Iron Age settlement sites as the pottery would have been subject to movement, weathering and redeposition, in contrast to complete vessels or large unabraded sherds often recovered from pit and ditch deposits. A number of sherds from deposits assigned to Phase 1.3 – a probable pre-Roman soil subject to cultivation in early Roman period – are unsurprisingly small and abraded.

Four shell-tempered body sherds from NH6198 are re-fired, producing a blistered effect. This phenomenon has been observed on late Bronze Age/early Iron Age sites in the region, including Houghton Down (Brown 2000, 76-7), Brighton Hill South (Coe and

Newman 1993) and Longbridge Deverill Cow Down (Hawkes 1994) where deliberate deposition of fire-damaged sherds (usually finewares) in structural features has been recorded. There is no clear stratigraphic evidence, absolute dating or other artefactual evidence of such early occupation on the site. These sherds are from a courseware vessel and may have been re-fired in any number of other circumstances. Nonetheless, their presence must be highlighted as possible evidence of an 8th-7th century BC origin for the earliest settlement of the site.

### **Fabric**

Six fabric groups incorporating 13 varieties were identified, all previously recorded at other sites in the vicinity.

*Fabric A: Sandy fabric with variety of coarse inclusions, flint, shell, chalk. (1 variety)*

*Fabric B: Predominantly flint temper (4 varieties)*

*Fabric C: Predominantly shell tempered (2 varieties)*

*Fabric D: Predominantly sand-tempered (3 varieties)*

*Fabric E: Smooth fine clay (2 varieties)*

*Fabric H: Limestone tempered (1 variety)*

<i>Fabric group</i>	<i>CC No.</i>	<i>CC Wt</i>	<i>NH No.</i>	<i>NH Wt</i>	<i>Total No.</i>	<i>Total Wt.</i>
A			1	12g	1	12g
B	10	131g	53	688g	63	819g
C			18	223g	18	223g
D			14	180g	14	142g
E			7	72g	7	72g
H			1	35	1	35g

***Table 1: Quantification of fabrics***

Fabrics A and B and one of the D varieties are likely to be of relatively local origin, manufactured using raw materials of the chalk downs. The shell-tempered fabrics are likely to have a Jurassic source, as has the oolitic fabric, H. One of the D fabrics (D15)

has been sourced to clay outcrops of the Nadder Valley near Salisbury (Williams and Wandibba 1984). Both varieties of fabric E, a brickearth, also have a Wiltshire source in the Salisbury area. A single sherd from context 1200, which may be early Iron Age, is in a relatively fine sandy fabric with inclusions of quartzite, rare chalk and shell.

Fabric B1 is a common and well-documented fabric utilised in the manufacture of middle Iron Age pottery of the 'St. Catharine's Hill - Worthy Down' type in Hampshire (Cunliffe 1991). B12 is a smooth, clay with rare flint inclusions, somewhat underfired and highly abraded. It corresponds to early Iron Age fabrics from other sites in the region. Fabric B4 has a notable mica content and is very hard fired, possibly a late Iron Age type.

### **Form**

Only nine sherds were classifiable by vessel form and none was decorated. Three (all from NH) are early Iron Age situlate jar forms in sandy wares – JB2, JB2/3 and JB3.1. A flattened pedestal base -BS3- in fine shell-tempered ware (also from NH) may belong to a variety of globular jar form with out-curving rim identified at Danebury as JD2 dated to the early or early middle Iron Age (Cunliffe 1984, 281 and fig. 4.46), but the latter tend to have a raised rather than flat pedestal base.

The remaining five vessels are middle Iron Age types. Two (one each from NH and CC) are ovoid jars with incipient bead-rims (JC2), both in flint-tempered ware B1. The others are straight-walled vessels commonly referred to as 'saucepan' pots, although the type was clearly not used exclusively for cooking or heating water, as this appellation implies. These are also in fabric B1 and finished with a high burnish.

It is possible that some of the earliest pottery belongs to a late Bronze Age/early Iron Age transitional period but, in the absence of diagnostic sherds of late Bronze Age type, this could not be proven.

<i>Form</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Cxt/phase</i>	<i>Ceramic Date</i>	<i>Vessels</i>	<i>Fabric</i>
JB2	Shouldered jar, upstanding rim	NH1613 PR1: structure 8508	EIA	1	D15/18
JB2/3	See JB2/JB3	NH4217 MED	EIA	1	D15/18
JB3.1	Large rounded jar, squared upstanding rim	6200 PR1: structure 8502	EIA	1	D0
JC2.3	Ovoid jar with proto bead-rim	NH6169 PR1: structure 8504	MIA	1	B1
BS3	Flat pedestal base	NH3186	E-MIA	1	C01
PB1.1	Straight-walled 'saucepan pot'	NH7607 PR2 : structure NH8506 NH6165 PR2 : Structure NH8505	MIA	3	B1
JC2	Ovoid jar with proto bead rim	CC1701	MIA	1	B1

**Table 2: Quantification of forms**

### Context

Almost half of the later prehistoric pottery was residual in later contexts. Nineteen percent came from Roman deposits and the same proportion from post-Roman contexts. One sherd was recovered from a modern feature and two from unphased deposits.

### Dating

The proportion of sherds that could be used to date their contexts with some confidence was 55% (58 sherds), but bearing in mind that contexts CC1701 and CC1864 were dated to the middle Iron Age only on the basis of three small flint-tempered sherds. The combined NH/CC assemblage, taken together with the material from Cunliffe's 1960s excavations in the vicinity, was sufficient, despite its small size, to demonstrate an early and a middle Iron Age phase of occupation because of the presence of several very distinctive sherds.

### **Affinities and regional significance**

The pottery from the site and from Cunliffe's (1964) excavations in the same area corresponds to larger and more well-preserved groups from the wider Hampshire region, including St. Catharine's Hill (Hawkes 1976), Winnall Down (Fasham 1985), Old Down Farm (Davies 1981) and Danebury and Environs (Cunliffe 1984; Cunliffe and Poole 1991).

### **Catalogue of Illustrated Sherds (Fig. 1)**

1. Jar with upright rim. Fabric D15. Posthole NH1615 (NH1613), Structure NH8508.
2. 'Saucepan pot'. Fabric B1, burnished. Gully NH6163 (NH6165), Structure NH8505.
3. Ovoid jar. Fabric B1, burnished. Posthole NH6168 (NH6169), possibly relating to Structure NH8504
4. Jar with lightly thumbbed, upstanding rim. Fabric D0. Posthole NH6199 (NH6200), Structure NH8502.
5. 'Saucepan pot'. Fabric B1, burnished. Pit NH7500 (NH7501). Residual in Property J pit, Phase 5.
6. 'Saucepan pot'. Fabric B1, burnished. Gully NH7610 (NH7607), Structure 8506.

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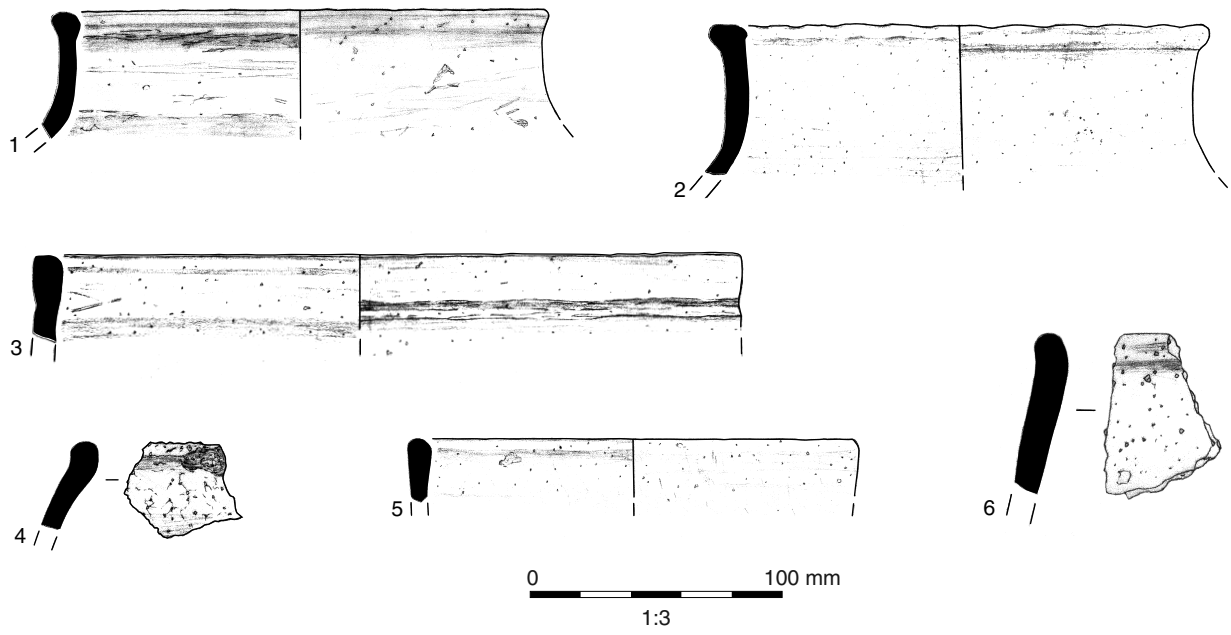
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Section 1.1 Figure 1: Prehistoric pottery



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