I. W. Bath[illegible]

Report 2195

FABRIC ANALYSIS OF IRON AGE AND POSSIBLE BRONZE AGE POTTERY FROM BECKFORD, WORCS.

Iron Age

F1. Medium thick, fairly hard fabric, black throughout. Burnished on the outside surface. Felspar and quartz are visible in fresh fracture. Optically anisotropic matrix containing large angular grains of altered plagioclase felspar. Also present are numerous grains of epidote, a few grains of hornblende and quartz, and a large fragment of quartz diorite. The sample falls into Peacock's Group 'A' (1968), with a likely origin in the Malvern Hills.

F2. 287805. Medium thick, hard fabric, black throughout. Burnished on the outside surfaces. Numerous fragments of white limestone are visible in fresh fracture. Optically anisotropic matrix containing numerous fragments of limestone, up to 1.20mm. across, together with a scatter of subangular quartz grains, average size 0.20-.30mm. Also present are a few grains of felspar and hornblende, and a fragment of quartz diorite. The limestone is shelly limestone or biosparite, containing fossil fragments set in a matrix of recrystallized calcite. The sample falls into Peacock's Group B1 (1968), 'Palaeozoic limestone', with a suggested origin in the Malvern Hills area, supported by the presence of fragments of Malvernian rocks and minerals.

F3. 289505. Medium thick, hard fabric, red (2.5YR 5/8) outside surfaces, grey core. Numerous inclusions of quartz grains protruding through the surfaces giving the sherd a 'pimply' effect. Optically anisotropic matrix containing numerous grains of subangular to subrounded quartz, some with a polycrystalline structure, average size 0.40-.70mm.

F5. 288903. Fairly thick, hard fabric, black throughout, Burnished on the outside surface. Numerous fragments of shell can be seen on the inner surface and core. Optically anisotropic matrix, the predominant inclusion is shell, and it is possible to see some recrystallization of calcite, suggesting that it is fossiliferous. Also present is a small amount of limestone and a scatter of subangular quartz grains, average size 0.10-.30m

F6. 294603. Medium thick, hard fabric, red (10R 4/8) outside surface, reddish-buff inner surface and grey core. Fragments of shell are visible in fresh fracture. In thin section this sample is similar to F5.

F7. 283512. Medium thick, hard micaceous fabric, red (10R 5/8) throughout. Optically anisotropic matrix containing iron-rich argillaceous matter, probably ironstone, abundant well-sorted subangular quartz grains, average size 0.10-.15mm., and flecks of mica.

F8. 383219. Medium thick, hard fabric, dark grey (5Y 4/1)

throughout. Ooliths can be seen in fresh fracture. Optically anisotropic matrix containing oolitic grains of limestone; it is possible to see some concentric structure within the limestone body. Also present is a scatter of subangular quartz grains, average size 0.10-.20mm. This sample possibly belongs to Peacock's Group B2 (1968), the limestone could be Jurassic.

F9. 276103. Medium thick, hard micaceous fabric, dark greyish-buff outside surface, reddish-yellow inner surface, brown core. Optically anisotropic matrix containing numerous well-sorted subangular grains of quartz, average size 0.10mm., together with small fragments of limestone and flecks of mica.

F10. 170705. Medium thick, hard micaceous fabric, yellowish-red (5YR 5/8) outside surfaces, grey core. Optically anisotropic matrix containing abundant well-sorted grains of quartz, average size 0.10-.15mm., together with flecks of mica.

With the exception of Fabrics 1 and 2, the predominant inclusions in the remaining samples could have been obtained in the general area of Beckford.

<u>? Bronze Age sherds</u>

171706. Medium thick, fairly hard fabric, light buff outside surface, black inner surface and core. Large blackish-green porphyritic crystals can be seen in fresh fracture.

Optically anisotropic matrix, the predominant inclusion is brownish-green hornblende, with some felspar, apatite and magnetite. The hornblende appears relatively fresh, with well defined cleavage. In contrast the felspars are very decomposed, so that it is difficult to determine them. The inclusions probably derive from a diorite rock. The Pre-Cambrian area of the Malvern Hills is a likely origin for the diorite (see Rutley, 1887).

262102. Medium thick, hard fabric, yellowish-red (5YR 5/6) surfaces, grey core. Large blackish-green porphyritic crystalls can be seen protruding through the surfaces. In thin section this sample is similar to 171706.

111951. Medium thick, fairly hard fabric, yellowish-red (5YR 4/6) outside surface, dark grey inner surface and reddish-grey core. Numerous inclusions of pale grey felspar protrude through the surfaces. Optically anisotropic matrix containing plagioclase felspar, epidote, quartz and hornblende, and is similar to Peacock's Group 'A' (1968).

This group of three sherds is potentially the most interesting of those sectioned from Beckford since, if they are indeed of Bronze Age date, they infer that there was possibly an important centre for pottery making in the Malvern Hills area in existence

before the advent of Iron Age potters in the region (see Peacock, 1968, 424).

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Peacock, D.P.S. (1968) 'A petrological study of certain Iron Age pottery from western England', PPS , 34 (1968),414-426.

Rutley, F, (1887) 'On the rocks of the Malvern Hills', Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc. London, 43 (1887),481-516.