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## IRON AGE POTTERY, LITTLE WALTHAM

For Leo Biek, incorporating a previous rapora by D.P.S.P

Nany of the sherds submitted were examined in thin section under the petrological microscope. Fabric A (nos. 1 and 2) appears to be highly distinctive and it contains numerous rounded particles about 0.2-0.3mm. across which are translucent and sometimes appear to have a concentric structure. Identification is difficult but it is probably glauconite, altering to limonite with further complications from firing. Occasional grains of quartz of a similar size grade are also present and the inclusions are set in an optically anisotropic matrix with few clastic particles. This fabric is identical in this section to shords from Birchington, Holwood and Oldbury, Kent, and it compares in the hand specimen with sherds from Gun Hill and Mucking, Essex.

It is possible that the material was quarried in a number of different places as glauconite occurs in the Greensand, Thanet sands, the Reading Beds and parts of the London Clay. However, the close textural similarity of Little Waltham Fabric A and Kentish material is a strong argument for regarding it as emanating from a single source.

Fabric D (no.5) is mineralogically similar to Fabric A but it is finer-grained and contains more quartz. In thin section it closely resembles sherds from Holwood, Kent and Billcricay, Essex.

Fabrics B (no.3) and H (nos. 4,6,7,8,9,13,211 and 240) appear very similar under the petrological microscope, comprising abundant quartz in two sizes a) angular to subangular grains, 0.10mm. and below, and b) subangular to subrounded grains, average size 0.30-0.60mm.; together with a small amount of felspar, a fair scatter of fragments of flint, and some mica. Mineralogically, these fabrics compare favourably with a thin section taken from a sample of brickearth from the site, and a local source is possible.

The two Fabrics C (no.4) and J (no.10) have the same range of inclusions as Fabrics B and H, except that Fabric C has well-sorted equalsized quartz grains and Fabric J contains considerably more flint fragments.

Inclusions of grog, crushed up pettery fragments, were recognized in Fabric E (nos. 286 and 301), with little quartz, which accounts for the soapy feel of the sherds in this group. Grog tempering is not a common feature during the Iron Age; it has previously been noted in some globular beadrim jars from Hascombe Camp and Holmbury, Surrey.

• Fabric G (nos. 14 and 221) contains much quartz and quartzite together with occasional volcanic grains and some

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hornblende. These materials do not appear in the local drift deposits and this fabric could be imported from elsewhere. The drift of East Anglia is known to contain volcanic materials, but equally, this fabric could be imported from the other side of the North Sea.

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