

SWEET TRACK, SOMERSET : Archaeological
Examination of Pottery

Examination by thin section of six sherds of Neolithic ware allowed a division into two distinct groups :

Group One

Sherd SWRP. The fabric consists of an optically anisotropic clay matrix containing grog, crushed up fragments of pottery. Both the clay matrix and the grog contain small grains of subangular quartz, average size about 0.1mm.

Group Two

Sherds SWRL, SWRH, SWRG, SWRE, SWRS. The predominant temper is subangular grains of quartz, together with some quartzite, set in an optically anisotropic clay matrix. The quartz grains average 0.2-0.3mm. across, while the quartzite grains are about 1.0mm. in size, though larger (up to 3.4mm.) grains are sometimes present. A few scattered grains of flint are also included.

The grog tempered sherd is potentially the earliest example of the use of this method of filler so far recorded in this country. Little can usefully be said regarding the likely origins of the sand tempered sherds. similar tempered Neolithic wares have also been noted at Windmill Hill (Cornwall and Hodges, 1964, 31) and Hembury (Liddle, 1935, 162).

D. F. WILLIAMS, PH.D.

Cornwall, I.W. and Hodges, H.W.M. (1964) 'Thin sections of British Neolithic

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Liddle, D.M. (1935) 'Report on the excavations at Hembury Fort', Proc.

Devon Arch. Expl. Soc., 2 (1935), 135-175.