

THE ROMAN SITE AT LITTLE CHESTER,  
DERBY  
EXCAVATIONS IN 1966

By MALCOLM TODD

THE erection of a small block of flats immediately outside the eastern course of the Roman defences planned by William Stukeley<sup>1</sup> occasioned a short emergency excavation in the spring of 1966 (fig. 1). Work was carried on at week-ends from 12 March by the Archaeological Research Group of the Derbyshire Archaeological Society, directed by J. R. Marjoram, and from 4 to 11 April under the direction of the writer for the Ministry of Public Building and Works.<sup>2</sup>

Work carried out by the Archaeological Research Group on the Roman roads in the vicinity of Little Chester (on which subject our knowledge is regrettably scanty) and, in particular, recension of an unpublished excavation of 1926 (see p. 40), made it quite clear that the threatened site was a crucial one for our understanding of the topography of Roman Little Chester. No less than five, possibly six, routes lead out of Little Chester, and the precise relationship of none of these with the defences and gates of the Roman *enceinte* can be considered clear. The line of Rykniel Street to the north of Little Chester in particular is peculiar, and its approach to a gate has not hitherto been comprehensible. The excavations of 1926 laid bare a stretch of Rykniel Street approximately 1,000 ft. long running N.N.E.-S.S.W. to the N.E. of the Roman defences. The course of the road was traced to within about 20 yds. of the N.E. angle. South of this point, in the area threatened by building, the course of the road was uncertain, and its relationship with the defences could not be clearly visualized. Plainly it did not aim for a gate in the northern side; to the south its line would only be determined by excavation. The interest of the Research Group in roads and the need for an emergency excavation on the site in question coincided in timely fashion and a definite

<sup>1</sup> *Itinerarium Curiosum*, (1776), I, 85. See p. 39 for a general plan of Little Chester.

<sup>2</sup> The Society is indebted to the Ministry for a grant towards the cost of publishing this report. The writer's thanks are owing to volunteers from the Derbyshire Archaeological Society, Bemrose School, and Nottingham High School; to J. R. Marjoram for assistance in direction of the work; to M. Brassington for details of the unpublished excavation of 1926; to R. G. Hughes of Derby Museum for information on several subjects (notably the 18th-century kilns of Derby); to B. R. Hartley for his report on the samian ware; to A. MacCormick for reporting on the medieval pottery and for discussing its significance with me. Facilities for excavation were provided by the Borough Council, and the Parks Dept. generously found storage-space for finds and equipment.

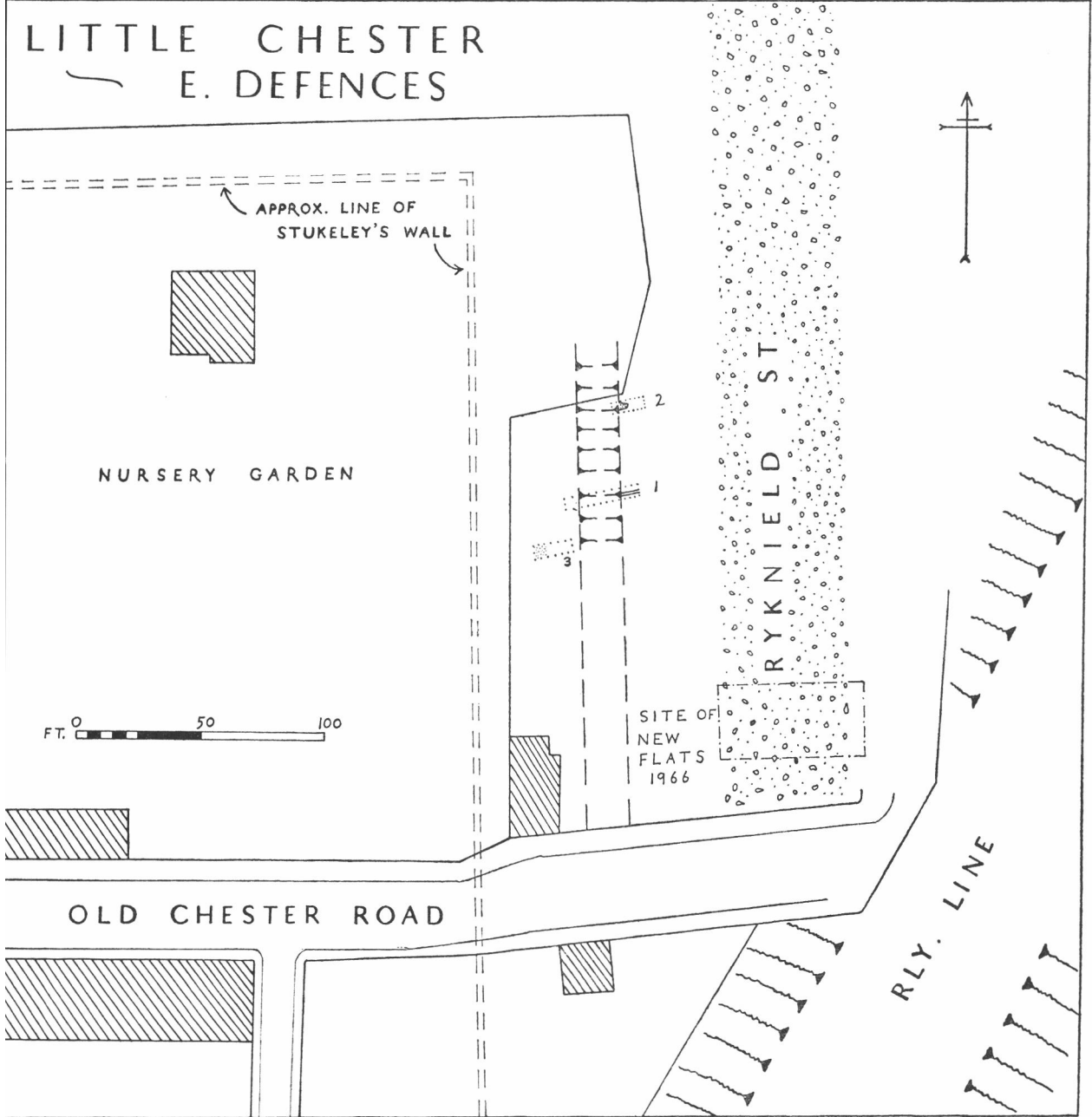


FIG. 1. Site plan showing trenches and excavated features.

result was achieved. Opportunity was also offered for the first time of sampling the defences on the eastern side.

The only published excavation at Little Chester before 1966 was that carried out by Dr. Graham Webster on the southern defences in 1960.<sup>3</sup> His results can be briefly summarized thus:

(i) The defences planned by Stukeley consisted of a stone wall on a foundation 8 ft. 9 in. in width, and a single shallow ditch. No clear traces of a rampart behind the stone wall were found in the single excavated section. There was little evidence of date for these defences. The pottery from the upper filling of the ditch was 4th century in date, and Webster cautiously inclined towards a similar date for the whole defensive scheme.

(ii) These defences overlay, on a different alignment, earlier building phases in timber which were of unquestionably military character. Five phases were identified, without any trace of associated defences being located. The pottery which went with these structures and pits was Flavian and 2nd century, mainly dating from about A.D. 160 to 200.

This small excavation, therefore, indicated the existence of a Flavian fort at Little Chester, the history of which remained to be defined, while the Antonine re-occupation of the Pennines appeared to have revived military use of the same site. Pre-Flavian employment of the commanding ground on the right bank of the Derwent, the area now covered by the Strutt's Park housing estate, seems certain,<sup>4</sup> and this employment was most probably dictated by the needs of the army.

## THE EXCAVATION

### *Ryknield Street*

The excavation of four square cuttings in the angle between the eastern defences and Old Chester Road, hurriedly carried through before the start of building operations, soon made it clear that Ryknield Street had run through this part of the site to a junction with the Roman predecessor of Old Chester Road, close to the likely position of the Roman east gate. A complete section was not to be obtained in the limited time available, but observation of trenches later dug by the builders enabled the dimensions of the road to be established. Some 30 ft. north of Old Chester Road it measured 40 ft. in width and the *agger* stood to at least 3 ft. 6 in. in height in the centre. It was composed of thick layers of coarse river gravel, with limited quantities of stone in its make-up. North of Old Chester Road, and some 215 ft. away from it, a section across the road was cut so that the history of its construction might be studied and the alignment determined. The detailed evidence provided by this trench, together with other information derived from recent study of the Roman routes leading out of Little Chester, will be presented elsewhere and that account need

<sup>3</sup> *D.A.J.*, LXXXI (1961), 85; referred to below as "Webster".

<sup>4</sup> Old finds of Claudian coins (*D.A.J.*, XLIX (1927), 355; LXXXII (1935), 74) have now been supplemented by pre-Flavian pottery, recovered by M. Forrest. See p. 162 for his preliminary report.

not be anticipated here. All that need now be observed is that Rykniel Street ran approximately parallel to the eastern defences, some 53 ft. outside the ditch, at least as far as Old Chester Road. A link-road from the main route leading to a gate in the northern defences would be a likely provision and search for such a link would be worthwhile.

### THE DEFENCES

Attention may now be given to the ditch on the eastern side of the defences planned by William Stukeley. Surface indications of a ditch on this side are very slight and the visible depression may represent no more than a natural slope of the ground to the east since the Roman ground surface was found to fall away on a similar gradient. The ditch was located in approximately the same position as Stukeley recorded it. A shorter trench to the north picked up its outer lip and enabled a check to be made on its line. In its dimensions this length of ditch differed somewhat from that examined on the southern side.<sup>5</sup> There a poor ditch, about 20 ft. wide and no more than 4 ft. deep, had been cut into a yielding natural gravel which was probably too loose to allow the cutting of any steeper profile. On the eastern side of the defences, the subsoil is a compact, coarse-grained sand, and here the ditch measured some 17 ft. in width and had originally been cut to a depth of at least 6 ft. As in 1960, the high water-table and incessant rain made complete excavation of the filling impossible, but enough was removed to make certain of the upper profile and to recover a limited amount of stratified pottery.

It seems, however, that this cutting was not long left in its original state. The most prominent component of the filling is a thick band of tough, clean, yellow clay, encountered on both sides of the ditch, but not beyond its lips (fig. 2). Although not fully excavated, this layer appears to have been of even thickness and showed virtually no sign of contamination from occupation material, containing only the occasional sherd and trace of carbonized wood. It can hardly represent a natural deposit and there is equally no doubt, since it does not occur outside the ditch, that it is to be explained with reference to that feature. The deposit slopes steeply down into the bottom of the ditch, echoing the gradient of the sides of the original cutting, and this correspondence of slope strongly suggests that the clay was intended to serve as a revetment of the mobile ditch-faces.<sup>6</sup> This revetment, however, was not added before a trickle of fine silt had been carried by rain-water into the ditch from the eastern lip (fig. 2). Above the band of clay there accumulated a thick deposit of loose, dark brown loam with a greenish tinge, this layer containing considerable quantities of Roman pottery. This accumulation of rubbish must represent the dumping of material over a long period of time into the ditch until its outline was obliterated. The date indicated by the

<sup>5</sup> Webster, 86 f.

<sup>6</sup> As for instance at South Shields; *J.R.S.*, LIII, 1963, 128.

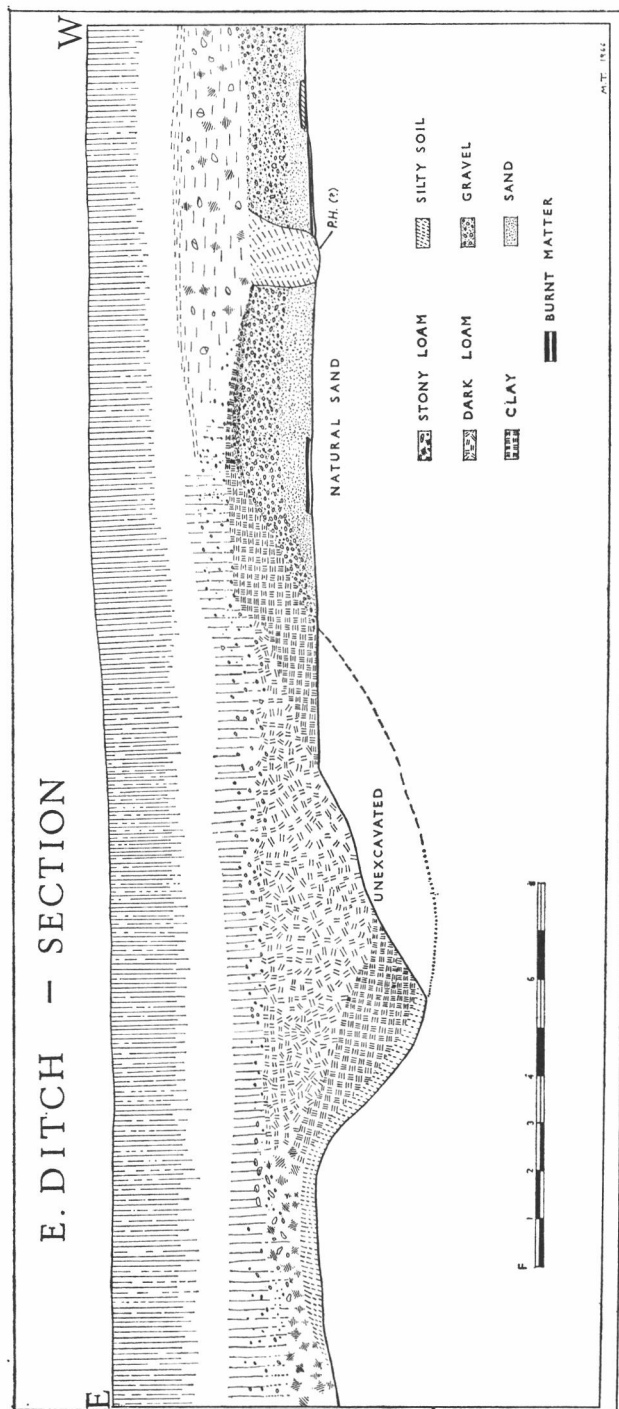


FIG. 2. Section across ditch in trench I.

associated pottery for the final stages of obliteration is the late 4th century A.D. No medieval pottery was found in, or immediately over, the filled ditch whereas close to the modern surface abundant quantities of medieval and post-medieval sherds occurred. The lower levels of the ditch-filling yielded a few sherds of considerably earlier date and, although their fewness prevents us from pressing the point, their presence, with the absence of any late Roman pottery low down in the ditch, probably indicates that the original cutting was made well before the 4th century. If, therefore, this ditch is part of the eastern member of the defences examined by Dr. Webster, an assumption which can be made with some degree of safety despite certain differences in its character noted above (p. 73), then we must view with reserve the tentative dating to the 4th century of Stukeley's defences, based on the evidence of the 1960 excavations.<sup>7</sup> One major difference between this defensive work and that located in 1960 has yet to be described. A trench carried some 20 ft. west of the inner lip of the ditch (cutting 3) revealed a metallated area on the berm but no trace of stone wall or robber trench, whereas on the south defences a berm of only 4 ft. had been left outside the wall. This notable difference makes one justly wonder whether the ditch is not to be associated with a defensive system earlier than that described by Webster, the latter lying further to the west. This is just possible, taking into account Stukeley's imperfect surveying and the point could well be borne in mind when opportunity for more extensive trenching in this quarter of the site is presented. The eastern side of the stone wall, therefore, could not be determined and excavation of the land at present available is unlikely to bring us closer to a result. Finally, there had been some disturbance of the profile of the ditch, where it was examined in cutting 2, in the form of a pit some 3 ft. 6 in. deep and 3 ft. in diameter, filled with black organic matter and stones. A small amount of Roman pottery was taken from this feature but its precise dating is uncertain.

#### OCCUPATION ANTEDATING STUKELEY'S DEFENCES

Immediately west of the inner lip of the ditch, a number of features, of differing dates, were located. No significant amount of pottery was found in sealed association with these, but the bulk of the finds from this area consisted of 1st- and 2nd-century samian. Three distinct phases were evident. In their chronological order these are:

(i) A patch of gravel set in greenish-yellow sand, appearing in the south-west corner of cutting 1. Perhaps contemporary with this is the puzzling double streak of carbonized material which curves away from it, ending in a small group of holes filled with a black organic substance showing distinctly against the pale natural sand into which they had penetrated for some two inches. No explanation of this feature can be offered in view of its partial nature (fig. 3).

<sup>7</sup> Webster, 109.

(ii) Dug into the natural sand and cutting across the line of the feature just described lay a shallow, straight-sided pit, some 5 in. deep, which had been filled with river gravel. This contained a little pottery of 2nd-century date (below, p. 80). The possibility that this is a post-pit must be entertained, since it did not lie entirely within the trench, but no trace of a post-hole was found.

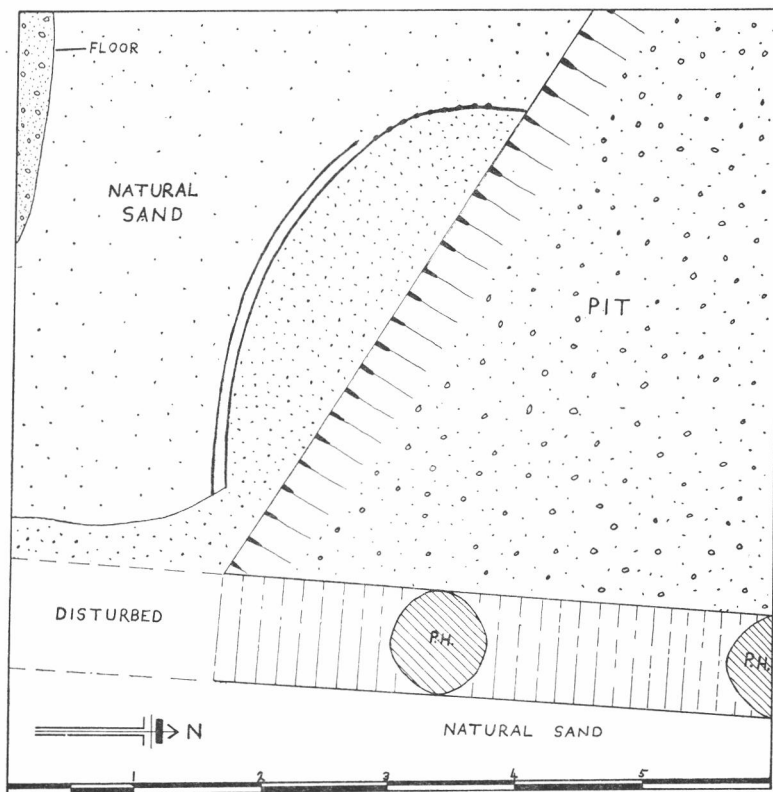


FIG. 3. Features at the west end of trench 1.

(iii) The final construction-phase is a foundation-trench for a timber building, in which two post-holes, each 8 in. in diameter, were visible (fig. 2). This trench had clearly been dug into the gravel-filled pit.

One further feature earlier than the defences remains to be noted. A shallow gully, of U-shaped section, about 1 ft. 3 in. wide and 9 in. deep, had been cut away at right-angles by the outer lip of the ditch (fig. 2. East end of cutting 1). No datable objects were recovered from its filling.

The gravel layer prominent in the section (fig. 2) appears to represent the final phase in the history of these earlier features. Although there is no conclusive evidence that the timber buildings were deliberately demol-

ished and the site carefully tidied up on its final abandonment by the army, this procedure was standard Roman military practice, and it is *a priori* likely that the disused military site at Little Chester was so treated. The gravel layer might therefore be the means by which the site was made level (as in the case of Rocester in the early 2nd century).<sup>8</sup> It cannot be upcast from the ditch, since the subsoil in this area is a coarse sand.

In the small area uncovered it was unlikely that much evidence for the absolute dating of the timber structures would be obtained. Their sequence, however, is clear and there can be little doubt that they represent another area of the military posts located in 1960, which have been dated on the evidence of the associated pottery to the periods A.D. 80-125 and 160-200, with Antonine occupation most firmly attested. Precise details of the dating of the samian pottery found in 1966 are given below by Mr. B. R. Hartley (p. 79). Future work in this part of the site will bring a most valuable addition to the plans of the Roman forts at Little Chester, and there is all the more reason to hope for that progress before more of the interior is damaged or sealed by modern building.

#### SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Excavation of the stone wall on the eastern defences and search for any trace of the rampart which proved elusive on the south side may not be possible for some considerable time. There is, however, space for several ditch-sections close to that of April 1966 and the need for these is obvious. In neither of the two trenches across Stukeley's ditch has it proved possible to obtain much material from the lowest filling. Nonetheless, the evidence of dating so far obtained, slight though it is, is consistent. Pottery no later than the 2nd century has been found below the upper layers filling the ditch, whereas the quantities of material from that upper filling are uniformly 4th century. On balance therefore, a 4th-century dating for Stukeley's defences seems less likely than a somewhat earlier period, but much more firm evidence is needed for a conclusion of this importance than pottery from the top-most ditch-filling.

As Stukeley's plan led us to suppose, the berm is considerably wider on the eastern side (at least 20 ft.) than on the south (4-6 ft.). The different dimensions and treatment of the ditch on these two sides, particularly the clay revetting on a section of the eastern course, and the implications (above, p. 73) are also worthy of note. The picture gradually being unfolded is one of defences of indifferent quality, for the upkeep of which little care was taken and parts of which, at least, might be deliberately filled by the deposit of rubbish.

The details of the junction of Ryknield Street with an east-west road leading into the east gate remain to be elucidated. Fortunately, there is enough open ground for this to be effected. The rather awkward approach of this major road to Little Chester from the north is a puzzle for which

<sup>8</sup> *North Staffs. Journal of Field Studies*, II (1962), 40.



no solution is yet apparent. At the time of writing there is no firm reason for supposing that a link with the main road led to a gate in the north defences. If then the main access to the site was by way of the road which has been shown to lie parallel to the eastern defences, may not a difference in date between Stukeley's defences and the road be invoked to explain the anomalous layout? The explanation which comes first to mind is that Rykniel Street owes its alignment to the position of the Flavian and Antonine forts, but the solution of this and other problems must be left for the moment to local archaeological enterprise for its unravelling.

## THE FINDS

### COINS

1. *As* of Nerva. *RIC* 64 or 86. A.D. 96-7.  
*Obv.* Laureate head right. Legend illegible.  
*Rev.* LIBERTAS PUBLICA.  
From gravel-filled pit west of main ditch.
2. *As* of Antoninus Pius. *RIC* 934. A.D. 155-6.  
*Obv.* Laureate head right. Legend illegible.  
*Rev.* Illegible but for upper part of mourning female figure, Britannia.  
On surface of Rykniel Street.
3. Small barbarous radiate coin, struck on roughly square flan. *RIC* V. 2, 116: Pl. XIV, 14. c. A.D. 280.  
*Obv.* Victorinus portrait (odd): legend damaged.  
*Rev.* Victorinus type PAX AVG; Pax with branch and sceptre.  
Over filling of main ditch.

### SMALL OBJECTS

1. Small piece of shale bracelet, with bevelled external surface. Unstratified.
2. Bone pin, with badly turned, roughly oval head. Shank broken off 4.7 cm. below head. In small pit with 4th-century pottery.
3. Roughly circular lead disc, approx. 3.3 to 3.5 cm. in diameter and 0.3 cm. thick. In relief on one surface of the disc, legend I · I. Style of these figures suggests 16th or 17th century. This probably is a weight, but if this is so the units of weight represented by the legend cannot be ascertained. The object weighs slightly under three ounces.
4. ? Harness mount (fig. 4). This consists of a domed mount with a dished top, at the centre of which there is a hole, approximately 0.5 cm. in diameter containing a nail (2 cm. long) which had originally held the mount to wood or leather. The mount and nail are both of bronze, but, in addition, there is a blue glass-like material inset into the nail-head and this could be enamel. The cavity containing the supposed enamel is approximately 0.7 cm. in diameter and is contained by a shoulder (0.2 cm. wide) which is possibly slightly undercut in order to grip the enamel. At the boundary between the inset and the shoulder there is a thin skin of dark, reddish-brown material which also occurs in patches on the nail-head, as well as on the shank. The remaining areas of the shank are covered with a decayed green patina. This material is possibly cuprous oxide, but at one stage of the examination the possibility was considered that it might be a decayed

enamel which provided a second colour to the nail-head. It should be pointed out that the presence of enamel in a nail-head would necessitate special care in driving the nail into position.

(The writer is indebted for this report to J. W. G. Musty, Chief Laboratory Officer in the Ancient Monuments Division of the Ministry of Public Building and Works.)

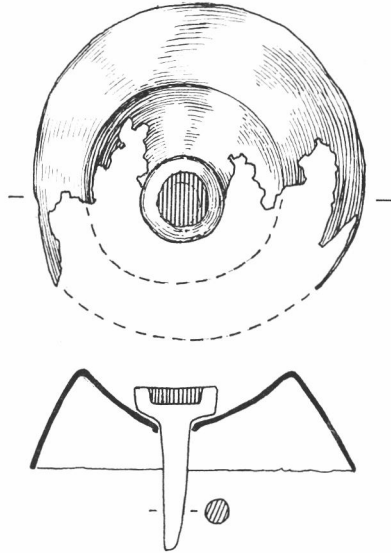


FIG. 4. ? Harness mount (1/1).

#### THE SAMIAN WARE (fig. 5)

Report by B. R. Hartley, University of Leeds

From a disturbed occupation layer west of, and earlier than, the main ditch.

1. Form 37. South Gaulish. Blurred fragment of zone. *c.* A.D. 90-110.
2. Form 37. South Gaulish. Freestyle ornament in the Germanus tradition. (?). *c.* A.D. 85-110.
3. Form 37. South Gaulish. Freestyle in Germanus manner. *c.* A.D. 75-100.
4. Form 15/17 (a ?). South Gaulish. Late version of the form. *c.* A.D. 80-100.
5. Form 30. Lezoux. Vessels in this style are assigned in *Central Gaulish Potters* to Avitus and Vegetus. The truth is probably more complicated, but the broad dating *c.* A.D. 120-145 is certain. The fabric of these sherds is particularly interesting, because it is one typical of the transition between the pre-export and export periods of *c.* A.D. 100-130.
6. Form 18/31. Les Martres-de-Veyre. This sherd is typical of potters like Dagomarus and Indercillus of the period *c.* A.D. 110-130.
7. Form 37. Lezoux. Another vessel in a "pre-export" fabric. See remarks under no. 5 above.
8. Form 37. Lezoux. Seated Apollo. Hadrianic or early Antonine.
9. Form 30. Lezoux. Two sherds of the same bowl, with an ovolo used by Cerialis, Paullus and in the early work of Cinnamus. It is extremely difficult to assign individual bowls to these potters, but it is becoming clearer that a general date of *c.* A.D. 140-170 applies.

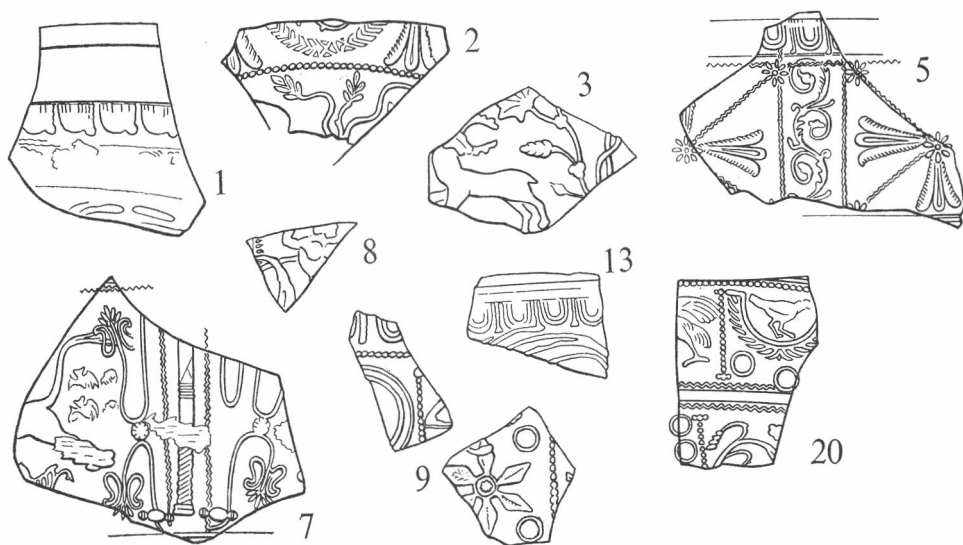


FIG. 5. Samian ware (½).

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10. Form 31. With stamp MATIIR[ . . . Late Antonine.  
In gravel-filled pit, west of main ditch.
11. Form 27. Lezoux. Like nos. 5 and 7, the fabric of this sherd is typical of the pre-export/export transition in the early 2nd century. *c.* A.D. 100-130.  
From yellow clay forming revetment of ditch.
12. Form 27 (?). Central Gaulish. Hadrianic (?).  
From lower filling of main ditch.
13. Form 37. South Gaulish. Ovolo of Germanus, but the coarse decoration suggests that it is likely to be by one of his successors. *c.* A.D. 80-110.
14. Form 27. Central Gaulish. Hadrianic or early Antonine.
15. Form 31. Central Gaulish. Probably Antonine, or just possibly Hadrianic.
16. Form 31. Central Gaulish. Mid to late Antonine.  
Lying on natural sand, not securely stratified.
17. Form ?. South Gaulish. Neronian or early Flavian. This is the earliest sherd in the assemblage and the only one which might be pre-Flavian.
18. Form 27. Central Gaulish (?). Probably Hadrianic.  
In post-Roman (?) hearth over filling of main ditch.
19. Form 18/31 or 31. Central Gaulish. Probably Hadrianic or early Antonine.
- Unstratified
20. Form 29. Lezoux. A rare example of this form from the Lezoux kilns. Hadrianic.

THE COARSE POTTERY (figs. 6, 7)

A small group of vessels from the upper filling of the ditch:

1. Straight-sided dish with flange, in distinctive medium grey fabric with tiny silaceous specks. Evenly burnished inside; outside, a number of narrow burnished bands with a broader zone below. This is a common type well known from excavations at the East Yorkshire kiln-sites of Crambeck and Throlam (P. Corder, *Ant. Jour.*, XVII, 1937, 400, fig. 2, 1).

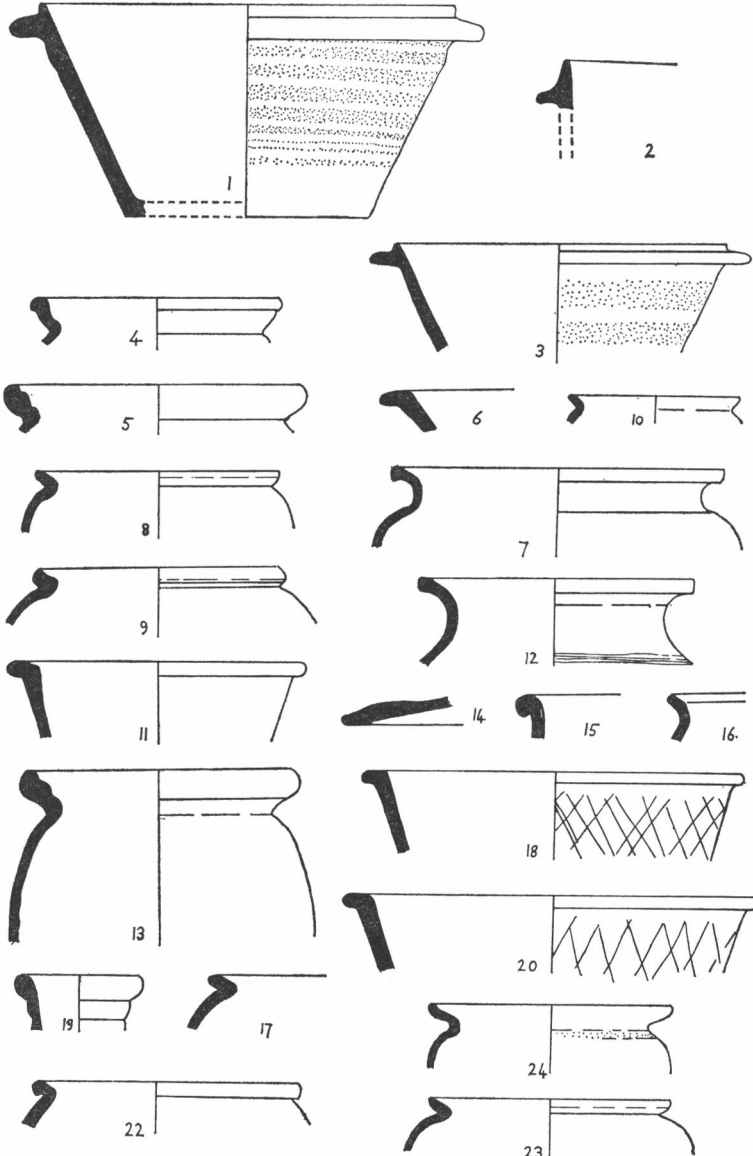


FIG. 6. Roman coarse pottery (‡).

2. Similar vessel, but with narrower, flatter flange. The fabric is brown with dark grey surface, but has the silica specks seen in no. 1.
3. Smaller version of the same type, with small beading. Burnished treatment of the surface is similar to no. 1 and the fabric is identical. Another common vessel in the Crambeck and Throlam tradition (Corder, *The Roman Pottery at Crambeck, Castle Howard* (1928), pl. I, 10).
4. Jar with rim internally hollowed and beaded: a small version of the bell-mouthed jar. Fabric as that of preceding three vessels. The type is difficult to place within the Roman period, occurring early (*Great Casterton*, III, fig. 15, nos. 25-6) and late (*G.C.*, III, fig. 16, no. 67).
5. Jar with distinctive reeded rim which slopes inwardly. Same fabric as nos. 1-4. An unusual vessel for which no local parallel can be cited. Identical to no. 13 below.
6. Straight-sided dish in fabric of nos. 1-5, but having a black, burnished surface. A very common form.
7. Cavetto-rim jar in granular, grey fabric with unusually heavy burnishing on outer side and rim. A long-lived form, difficult to date. The fabric is close to that of an unpublished vessel from Rocester, in Derby Museum.

Nos. 1-3 certainly belong to the later 4th century, nos. 5 and 7 probably so. None of the vessels in this small group need be earlier than A.D. 300.

From the central and lower filling of the ditch:

8. Jar with everted rim in smooth, light grey fabric. *Gillam*, 103. Flavian-Trajanic.
9. Jar with stubby, everted rim, hollowed internally, in gritty grey ware. Probably Flavian-early 2nd century.
10. Small jar with everted rim, in gritty grey-brown fabric. Probably Flavian or 2nd century.
11. Straight-sided dish in gritty orange-buff fabric.

There is unfortunately too little from these lower levels in the ditch for us to conclude that the difference in date between the material from the upper and lower filling is significant.

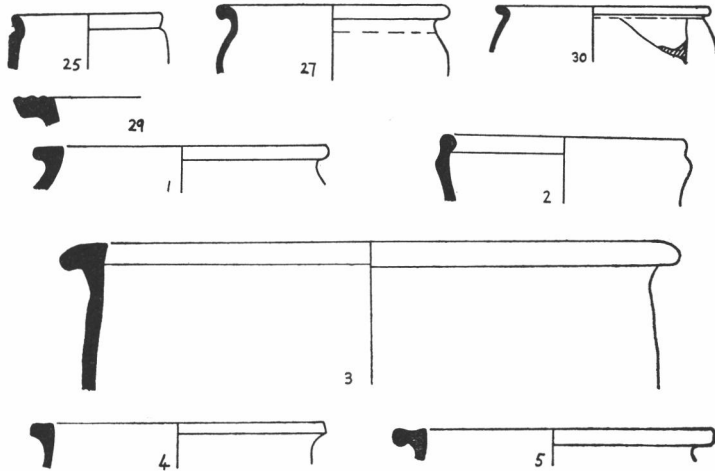


FIG. 7. Nos. 25-30 Roman coarse pottery; nos. 1-5 medieval pottery (†).

On the outer lip of the ditch, the following vessels, of mixed dates (nos. 8-11 in the fabric of nos. 1-6).

12. Jar with tall neck. Traces of fine rilling on shoulder. cf. a vessel from Norton Disney (*Ant. Jour.*, XVII, 1937, 173, fig. 7, 85). A late Roman form.
13. Jar with reeded rim, very close to no. 5.
14. Lid in grey ware.
15. Jar, or wide-mouthed bowl, in brown gritty fabric. Probably 4th century.
16. Small jar in smooth, light grey ware. Rim form is close to that on Dales ware (*Ant. Jour.*, XXXI, 1951, 154).
17. Jar with everted rim, in light grey ware, lightly burnished. Flavian or early 2nd century.
18. Black, burnished dish with cross-hatching decoration. Common vessel in the Antonine period and later.
19. Neck of flagon in creamy-buff fabric. Probably Antonine.

From the gravel levelling over the remains of timber buildings:

- 20-21. Two black, burnished dishes, with cross-hatching. Antonine or rather later.
22. Jar with everted rim, in hard grey fabric. Flavian or early 2nd century.
23. Similar vessel, in smooth grey fabric. Probably Flavian.
24. Another specimen, lightly burnished. Probably Flavian.
25. Small black, burnished jar with upright rim.
26. Black, burnished jar.
27. Small jar in hard-fired, purplish-brown fabric with dark purple surface. Lightly burnished bands on outside. This is Derbyshire ware, but a finer-grained variety than the common late Roman ware. The form and the fabric of this vessel are very close to the unpublished products of the Holbrook kiln, excavated in 1963, housed in Derby Museum. It is now clear that the range of Derbyshire ware types was wider than hitherto suspected, and manufacture earlier than the 3rd century is likely.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> *D.A.J.*, LXXXII (1962), 41.

On natural surface, close to foundation trench of timber building.

28. Body sherd from jar with rouletted decoration. Flavian.

Unstratified

29. Reeded rim bowl in hard grey ware.
30. Thin-walled beaker in micaceous, buff fabric.

### THE POST-ROMAN POTTERY

Report by A. MacCormick, Nottingham Castle Museum

Apart from the 18th-century wares, the post-Roman pottery comprises some 50 small sherds. The date-range is 11th and 12th centuries to 16th and 17th, the bulk falling within the centuries 13th to 15th.

*Stamford ware*: one body sherd with pale yellow glaze.

*Early medieval splashed war*: (See Hurst in *Trans. Thoroton Soc.*, 1965, 61-3). Base sherd; reddish, sandy surface, grey in break. Grey-green glaze spots inside, showing red at edges. This specimen is the most westerly recorded so far: most have come from Nottingham and Stoke Bardolph.

*Calcite-gritted wares.* Three small sherds.

- (i) Body sherd with brownish surface, grey in break. Pitted but two lines of square rouletted impression remain.
- (ii) & (iii) Rim and body sherds of fabric grey-black in break, red at surface . . . a fabric commoner in the south-east midlands than in the Trent valley.

*Sand-gritted wares.* Comprises the bulk of medieval pottery from the site.

Group I. Unglazed cooking-pot rims in grey, buff and cream fabric with quartz sand filling (rounded grains) (fig. 7, 1, 3 and 4).

Group II. Buff, reddish and grey-black wares, glazed and unglazed. Most of these are of Nottingham or Burley Hill type but are too small for full identification. Some seem too coarsely gritted for either group of kilns. Glazes are grey-green, olive green and tending to red-brown.

The only identifiable types are:

- (i) Unglazed flanged rim of bowl or jar (fig. 7, 5).
- (ii) Rim of Nottingham pitcher type with eroded glaze (fig. 7, 2).
- (iii) Sherd of knife-trimmed base: greenish-brown glaze inside.

*Late medieval and post-medieval coarse wares*

- (i) Rim in yellowish ware with purplish surface. Quartz sand filled, very hard.
- (ii) Body sherd in grey ware, partially vitrified: quartz-sand filled. Thin, purplish glaze outside.
- (iii) Rim of vertical-sided jar. Vitrified, purplish ware: splashes of dark purple glaze on yellowish-brown surface.

#### THE EIGHTEENTH- AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY POTTERY

In the layers overlying the Roman road there was found a large quantity of pottery which proved to be 18th and 19th century in date. All this material was kept and examined — a procedure which had its reward when it was realized that the mass of sherds represented, in part at least, a dump of debris from pottery kilns. The pottery and other material is analysed into its major classes below.

- (i) *Large pancheons* (4), glazed internally: 2 with dark brown glaze; 2 with yellow-brown.
- (ii) *Clay pipe bowls* (12), all unsigned and of 19th-century forms.
- (iii) *Miscellaneous 19th-century wares.*
- (iv) *Cream-coloured earthenware:* mainly tankards of cylindrical form (6) and dishes with everted rims (4).
- (v) *Salt-glazed stoneware.*
  - (a) Deep bowls (2), each with zone of stabbed decoration on body. One is a "second", the glaze being a discoloured purple. The other has a rich lustrous glaze similar to products of Nottingham kilns.
  - (b) Jars and tankards with footings. (5) Yellowish-brown mottled glaze. 4 are "seconds" or wasters as fragments of kiln-props adhere to their bases or sides. Ridged and rouletted decoration on body.
  - (c) Tankards with flat bases. (8) Mottled glaze, ranging from pale yellow to dark brown. Ridged decoration at base and on body. Most are "seconds".
  - (d) Lids (5). Mottled yellow-brown glaze. Rouletted circles in dark brown near edges.
  - (e) Large pot with handles: everted rim; stabbed decoration. Rich brown glaze.
  - (f) Glazed kiln-bricks and small nodular kiln-props.

The most interesting group is undoubtedly the large class of salt-glazed stoneware. The majority of the vessels in this group are wasters or "seconds". This is, I believe, the first time that a relatively large group of salt-glazed vessels has been unearthed — or at least preserved — in this part of the Derwent valley, and it forms a useful addition to the little known about the common pottery industry in the east midlands between about 1690 and 1820.

Detailed study of the group must await the attention of post-medieval ceramic experts, but it might be noted here that up till now it has not been possible to identify any salt-glazed stoneware which is undoubtedly of Derby manufacture. The documentary evidence for the history of pottery-making in Derby was fully and meticulously discussed in 1930,<sup>10</sup> and the author of that account concluded that of the wares reputedly produced there only an enamelled blue and white china and enamelled and plain cream wares could be identified. Stoneware found in and around Derby doubtless could not be distinguished from the well-known products of kilns at Nottingham and Crich. The Derby kilns appear to have been situated on Cockpit Hill and along Nottingham Road: there is no evidence for others and the kiln-debris deposited at Little Chester must be presumed to have come from that area of the town. The documents are decisive in their dating of 1776-1779 for the first phase of production.

<sup>10</sup> *D.A.J.*, LI (1930), 45.