

# LITTLE CHESTER, DERBY: CHANGING ROOM SERVICE TRENCH, OCTOBER 1980

By M. BRASSINGTON

An excavation was carried out during the winter of 1979-80, prior to the erection of new changing rooms on a site near the former Derwent House stables. The work was carried out by the Trent Valley Research Group directed by Miss Hazel Wheeler.

In the late summer and autumn of 1980 the changing rooms were built and in October of that year a service trench was cut mechanically across the car park driveway to Old Chester Road (Fig. 1). This cutting was thirteen feet deep and Mr R. G. Hughes, Principal Keeper of Derby Museum, was alerted only after operations had commenced. Two square-sectioned Roman wells were encountered, composed of mitred stone slabs standing on end and approximately three feet wide. The wells lay close to each other and the trench was diverted

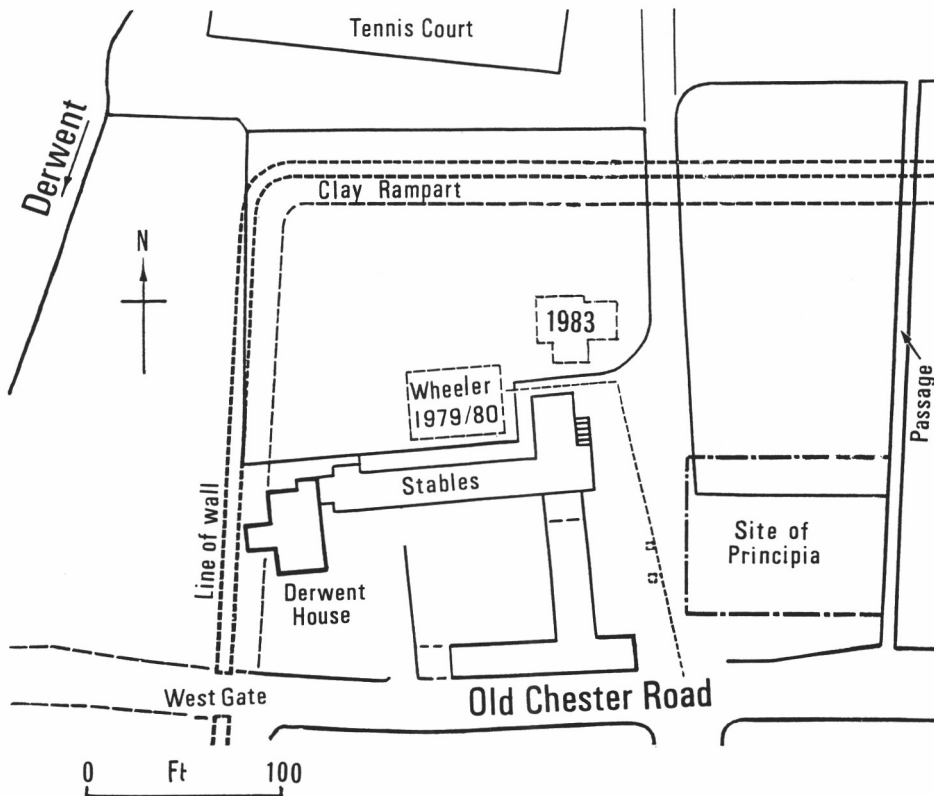


Fig. 1 Little Chester, Changing Room Service Trench: site plan.

to the east to avoid cutting across them, therefore their fillings remain intact. Their location suggests that they were sited on the western edge of the Roman road which ran between the *principia* and the *praetorium*, connecting the *via principalis* with the *via quintana*.

A quantity of pottery was collected, all unstratified, ranging in date from the second to the nineteenth century; no first century material was recovered. There was one rim sherd from a plain samian cup, form 33, and another of form 27; the dishes were mostly of form 18/31R. The decorated samian consisted of a body sherd from a form 37 bowl, carrying a free style animal decoration; an abraded fragment of east Gaulish manufacture; and, by far the most interesting, eleven fitting Central Gaulish sherds forming a half-section of a form 30 bowl by the potter X6 c. AD 125-50 (Fig. 2). 3rd-century colour-coated wares and straight-sided, flanged, 4th-century bowls were present, also Medieval green glazed sherds and 18th and 19th-century wares.

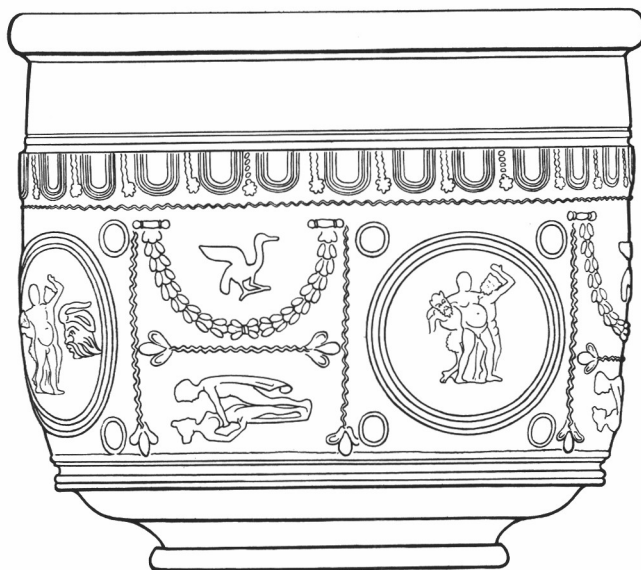


Fig. 2 Little Chester, Changing Room Service Trench: samian bowl by the potter X6. At scale 1:2.