



ROMAN REMAINS FROM MANSFIELD ROAD, LITTLE CHESTER, DERBY

Jessika Sheppy

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Archaeological Research Services Ltd on land adjacent to the Coach and Horses Public House, Mansfield Road, Little Chester, Derby in October 2007. The excavation revealed in-situ Roman archaeological features representing up to four phases of domestic activity. Although no structural remains were uncovered a substantial assemblage of Roman pottery included coarsewares from local kilns, high-status Gaulish Samian Ware and fragments of more exotic ceramics including an amphora lid. An assemblage of faunal remains included evidence for butchery and processing of domestic cattle, pig and sheep or goat, alongside Plover and the skeletal remains of small lapdogs, a further indication of the possible high status of the settlement. A complete copper alloy bracelet was also recovered, similar in form to a previously-excavated example. Taken in context with the extensive previous investigation into the fort and vicus at Little Chester, this site provides a further window of detail into domestic activity around Derventio (see Brassington 1970; 1971; Dool and Wheeler 1985; Langley and Drage 2000).

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The site lies within an area of considerable archaeological interest, particularly in relation to the Roman period. The site is located close to what is thought to have been the junction of two Roman roads; Ryknield Street and the Little Chester to Sawley Road, and *Derventio*, the Roman fort of Little Chester which lies 120m to the west of the site. Previous excavations (Brassington 1970; 1971; Dool and Wheeler 1985; Langley and Drage 2000) to the north and west of *Derventio* revealed an extensive Romano-British civil settlement (*vicus*) and an Anglo-Saxon burial ground outside the boundaries of the earlier fort, attesting to the continued importance of the area after the Roman withdrawal. To the east of the site, on the former Derby Racecourse, Roman industrial activity has been documented in the form of pottery kilns, metalworking hearths and furnaces dating from the early second century (Dool and Wheeler 1985, 174).

STRATIGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION

The first horizon of in-situ archaeological deposits was encountered between 0.8m - 1m below the modern ground level, with the exposed area of archaeological interest measuring approximately 11m x 13m.

The visible archaeological features at this level comprised cut features including pits and a linear feature which are discussed below. These were cut into an earlier single spread deposit (13) extending across the trench which overlay the natural alluvium and consisted of a fine loamy silt. A single cut feature of earlier date was sealed by deposit (13).

Deposit (13) has been interpreted as a Roman waste layer spread across a wide area, which became a later (likely external) floor, as it was found to contain a large assemblage of coarseware pottery dating from the late first to the early third centuries and a smaller assemblage of Samian Ware which indicated a late first to mid-second century date. Analysis of the coarseware has suggested that the deposit could have accumulated over *c.*100 years or alternatively been made up of dumped material from elsewhere which included the ceramic material from different dates. The sherds had not been extensively weathered, as would be expected had they accumulated over a long period, suggesting that they are more likely to have been laid down as part of a single event. Seven features were noted cutting into deposit (13): three pit features of a Roman date along with four linear features, three of which can also be attributed to the Roman period.

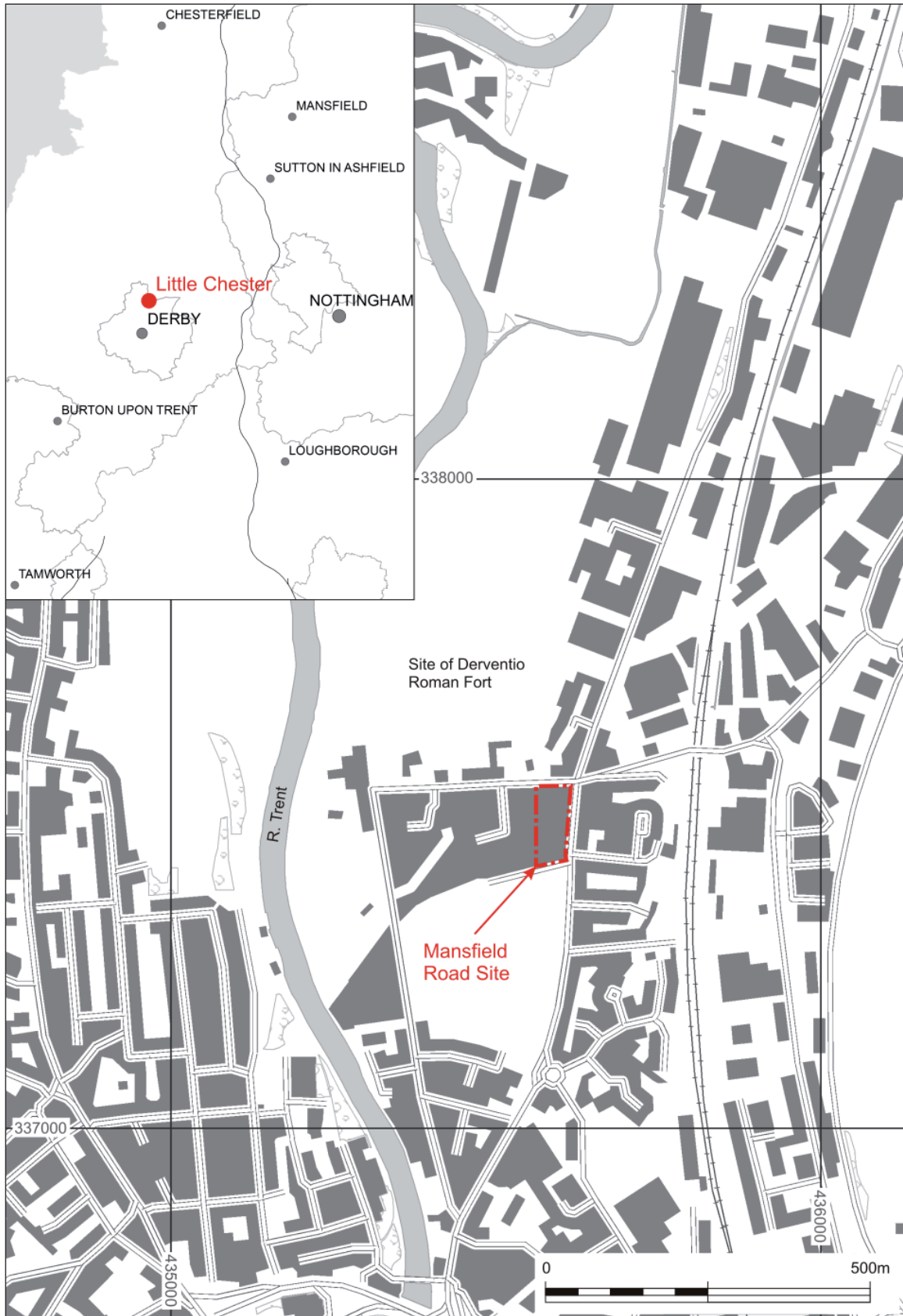


Figure 1 Location of excavation.

Hearths and Pits

A small shallow pit (38) containing a single homogenous fill was located close to a hearth feature (50). The pit cut both deposit (13) and the alluvium substrate (49) beneath. Small fragments of Derbyshire Ware were identified within the fill of (38) dating to around the Antonine period or later, though it is important to note that this pottery could have been disturbed from lower deposits. The pit probably represents the fourth and final phase of Roman activity identified on this site.

The hearth feature (50) located between the linear ditch (43) and the pit (38) contained a charcoal-rich deposit below which was a red clay. The feature was cut into deposit (13) and contained burnt animal bone and charcoal. A lack of industrial evidence suggests that the feature was a domestic hearth used for cooking activities. This explanation is strengthened given the abundance of coarseware cooking vessels found close to the hearth within the linear ditch (43).

A third pit (52) was cut into deposit (13) in the south of the trench. The pit had a flat base and a homogenous red clay fill. The pit potentially represents the first phase of activity after the accumulation or deposition of deposit (13) and may be contemporary with the linear (43) as similar types of pottery, dating from the mid-second to the early third century, were found within the fill. A Roman copper alloy bracelet was also recovered from the fill of this pit.

Linear Features

A small linear ditch or slot (32) on an east-west alignment was located to the south of the ditch (43). The fill of the feature was a dark brown silt which contained Roman pottery including a single sherd of Central Gaulish Samian Ware most likely from the period c. AD 100-125. The fill also contained animal bone and teeth indicative of domestic or industrial refuse.

A linear ditch or slot (34) ran on a north-south alignment along the west side of the stripped area. The fill of this feature was a clayey silt that was dark brown in colour and contained Roman pottery and animal bone. The pottery included 30 sherds of coarseware including early-mid second century Black Burnished Ware 1 and a sherd of Central Gaulish Samian Ware dating from c. AD 100-125. The lack of Derbyshire Ware within this feature, especially given its abundance elsewhere on site, suggests a date for this feature preceding or not long after the mid-second century. Despite this, it is also possible

that the linear feature has a much later date, and later disturbance has meant that pottery from the occupation layer (13) has become included within the fill of the truncated ditch (32).

A large oval spread of material (43), subsequently identified as a later phase of a truncated linear ditch (14), was located north of (34) on a north-south alignment. The feature contained a substantial quantity of animal bone, charcoal, Roman pottery and a nail. The pottery assemblage supports a mid/late second century to an early/mid third century date as it contained almost twice the amount of Black Burnished Ware 1 and Derbyshire Ware that was found within occupation layer (13). The spread also contained some fineware in the form of Nene Valley Coated Ware beaker with scroll decoration. Eight sherds of Samian Ware were recovered, one sherd having been produced in South Gaul between c. AD 60/70 -100, the rest being manufactured in Central Gaul between c. AD 120-150.

A linear ditch feature (14), sealed by the later occupation layer (13) and cut in to the alluvium substrate, represented the earliest phase of activity on site. The fill of the linear was a red clay and it contained four sherds of Samian Ware produced in Central Gaul at Lezoux during the second century. One of the sherds was decorated with a potter's stamp reading PATERNFE, which is a common stamp found at numerous sites across Britain. It is important to note that the sherds of Samian Ware recovered from this context were found high within the fill of the linear, and that the feature showed signs of truncation by later features, and therefore a direct association between the original date of the feature, and the 2nd century Samian Ware is not an interpretational certainty.

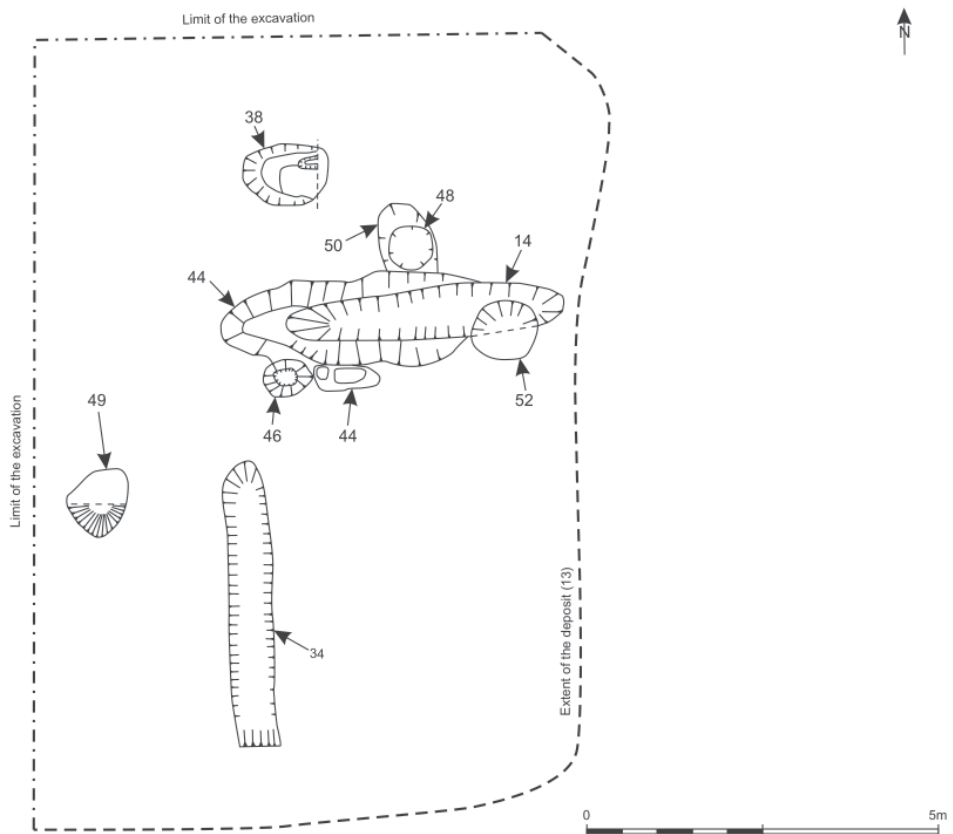
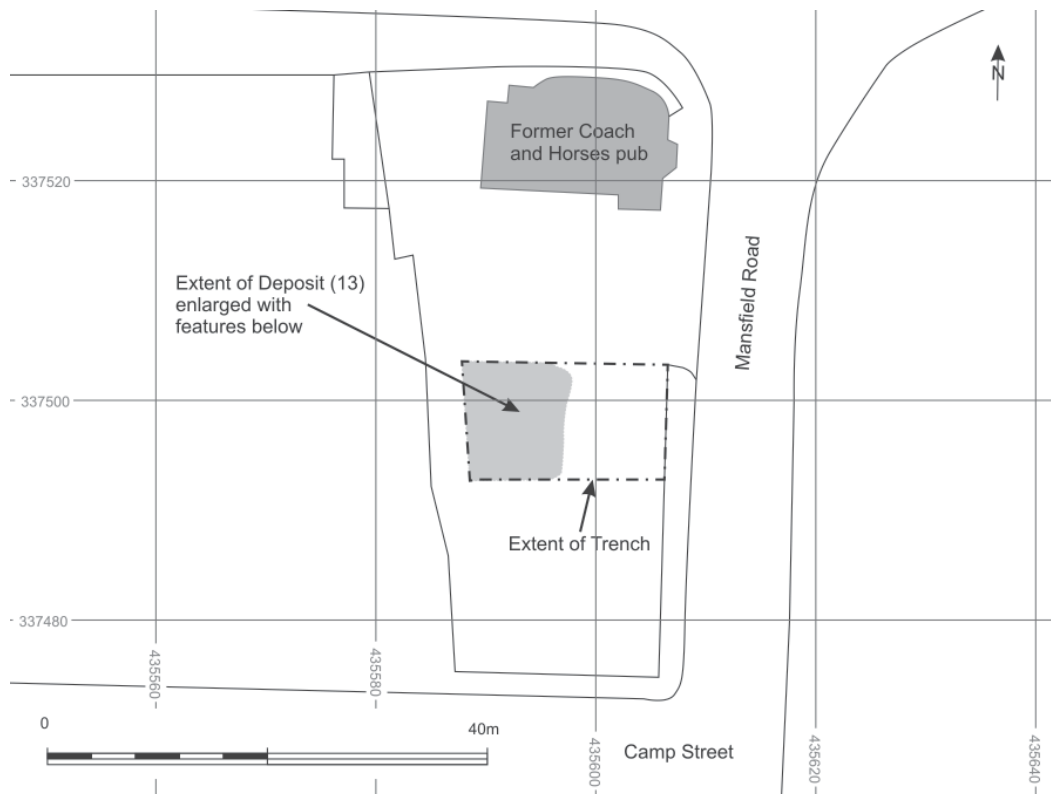


Figure 2 Location and extent of excavated features.

SPECIALIST ANALYSES

Roman Coarseware

Ruth Leary

A stratified assemblage of 485 sherds (8332g) of Romano-British coarseware pottery was identified from nine contexts, with the largest groups from contexts 13 and 43. Activity from the early second until the early third century is indicated by the pottery. Pottery was recorded detailing specific fabrics and forms, decorative treatment, condition, cross-joins/same vessel and was quantified by sherd count, weight and rim percentage values, giving estimated vessel equivalents. National fabric collection codes (Tomber and Dore 1998) are included where possible. This analysis represents an overview and discussion of the coarseware recovered during the excavation, with a full catalogue and listing within the archive report.

Context	Nos.	G	RE
013	265	4723.4	411
016	7	130.8	8
023	1	11	
031	1	1.2	
033	7	68.8	
035	23	324.4	39
037	5	27.6	
043	164	2833.2	315
051	12	211.9	18
Total	485	8332.3	791

Table 1 Quantification by feature

The most numerous vessel type was the medium-necked jar group with relatively small numbers of bowls and dishes. The jars were made up predominantly of Derbyshire Ware cupped- and hooked-rim jars (Gillam 1940; Jones and Webster 1970; Leary 2003) with smaller amounts of the grey and oxidised ware neckless everted-rim jars of the late first to mid-second century made in the Derby Racecourse kilns (Brassington 1971; 1980), including rusticated jars. Narrow-necked jars in local grey ware were present with lattice and linear burnish decorative zones. A small number of CTA1 rebated-rim jars and storage jars (Birss 1985, 90; Swan 1984, 125) were present and these are of a type made in Northamptonshire and are present at Chesterfield and *Margidunum* (Ellis 1989, 105, fabric 14; Oswald 1948, plate 8, nos 1-5).

Tablewares were uncommon apart from Samian (see below). Beakers included small versions of the grey and oxidised ware neckless jars, imported and locally made roughcast beakers, scroll beakers, indented beakers and an unusual waisted beaker with applied scrolls rather than scales. BB1 (Black Burnished Ware Type 1) bowls and dishes with flat rims, grooved rims and plain rims were present and small amounts of the locally made carinated bowls in grey and oxidised wares were also identified. The flange of one flanged, hemi-spherical OAA1 bowl was identified. Both white ware and white-slipped flagons were represented by body and handle fragments but no rim sherds were present. A sherd from an early sharply-carinated Castor box was found (Perrin 1999, 98).

Eight sherds of mortaria were identified and these included one basal sherd from a South Yorkshire orange, white slipped vessel, probably from Rossington Bridge, a flanged Mancetter-Hartshill vessel of the first half of the second century, a later flanged Mancetter-Hartshill vessel dating to c. AD160-230 and five other body sherds from vessels dating to after AD140.

All the amphora sherds were of Dressel 20 oil amphora type from Spain, except one amphora lid. This is an unusual find because, being so thin, these small discs with a central handle are often very fragmented. They were used in the neck of amphorae, perhaps with a wax seal. The fabric of this one is coarser than another found nearby at Strutt's Park for which a Gallic source was suggested, but finer than those associated with other Dressel 20 fabrics. Comparison with other fabrics used for Gauloise wine amphorae suggests a Gallic source.

Context 13

The latest pottery in the group gives a date in the early third century but vessels such as the rusticated jars, CTA1 rebated-rim jars, storage jar and everted-rim jars of late first to mid-second century type indicate that either this layer accumulated over c.100 years or was made up of dumped material from elsewhere which included ceramic material of different dates. Overall the pottery is in good condition, although broken up, and has not been exposed to extensive weathering and abrasion as would be the case if it had accumulated over a long period of time. It is more likely, therefore that this deposit is the result of levelling which incorporated earlier material into one homogenous spread. Indeed this may even represent a single action, taking place in the early third century, the *terminus post quem* provided by the latest pottery in

the assemblage.

The majority of the pottery in this group is locally produced either at the Racecourse kilns or the Derbyshire Ware kilns with just over 7% from the BB1 industry in Dorset and less than 2% from the Nene Valley industries and the Mancetter-Hartshill kilns near Coventry. A small amount of the pottery was imported, namely Dressel 20 oil amphorae, an amphora lid, probably of Gallic origin, a Trier beaker and roughcast beakers from the Argonne. One fine oxidised sherd compared well with Severn Valley Ware. The character of the group, with some 21% from the Derbyshire Ware kiln and more than 30% from the Racecourse kilns, compares well with other groups dated to the late second-early third century at Derby (Birss 1985, table 10; Martin 2000, table 5). The shell-gritted ware CTA1 is restricted to the Flavian-Trajanic levels at Little Chester apart from residual sherds (Birss 1985, table 10). Martin notes that the neckless, everted-rim jars, carinated bowls, of which a small number of rim and bodysherds were present, and flanged bowls in local wares were all numerous in his period 2 (AD120-140). The everted rim jars and carinated bowl declined after the mid-second century as Derbyshire Ware jars and BB1 types increased in number although the flanged, hemi-spherical bowls continued to be made at the Derbyshire Ware kilns in a rather coarser fabric. The majority of the group dates to the second century with some Flavian-Trajanic residual sherds.

Context 16

This small group of seven sherds included four Derbyshire Ware sherds. The BB1 was the most closely datable vessel and can be dated from *c.*AD140 giving the group a terminus post quem in the mid-second century

Context 35

A group of 23 sherds included early-mid second century BB1 and no Derbyshire Ware suggesting a date preceding or not long after the mid-second century. Bodysherds from a narrow-necked jar with zones of lattice burnish and vertical lines compare well with vessels from the Racecourse kilns (Brassington 1971, nos 151-2) and in groups with little or no Derbyshire Ware, given an Antonine date (Dool and Wheeler 1985, fig. 80 no. 124, fig. 82 no. 219).

Context 43

This large group contains twice as much BB1 and Derbyshire Ware as that from occupation layer

(13) through which it cuts, which accords with the evidence from Little Chester for the increase in these wares in the late second to early third century (Birss 1985; Martin 2000). The presence of more Nene Valley Colour-Coated Ware also indicates a later date and a sherd from a Castor box along with a grey ware bodysherd with obtuse lattice perhaps copying BB1 jars of the early third century (Holbrook and Bidwell 1991, 96) may indicate a date in the early third century.

The other features produced groups too small for reliable dating but (23), (37) and (51) can all be dated to the Antonine period or later on account of the Derbyshire Ware, while the presence of a BB1 sherd in 33 gives this feature a date after AD120. A single white ware sherd from (23) can only be dated to the mid-first to second century.

Discussion

Overall the group compares well with the other Derby sites in terms of the vessels in use. Most of the table ware is provided by the imported Samian Ware (see below) with small amounts locally produced. Local kilns provide most of the pottery and this assemblage provides further evidence for the demise of the Racecourse kilns in the mid-second century and the gradual increase in the contribution of Derbyshire Ware with additional vessels being obtained from the BB1 industry in Dorset. Rough-cast ware beakers and black slip beakers were imported from the Argonne region (Symonds 1990) and Trier (Symonds 1992) respectively and Dressel 20 oil amphora was imported from Spain. An amphora lid may also indicate the importation of Gallic wine amphora, certainly known at Derby. Most of the mortaria were from the large industry at Mancetter-Hartshill and this is a likely source for most of the white ware flagons although small scale flagon production in white and white-slipped ware is likely (Birss 1985, 91). Mortaria from South Yorkshire have not been previously noted in numbers but, given the close links between the potters at Derby and Doncaster, such exchange would not be unexpected although it may indicate people movement rather than trade. The CTA1 jars compare well both in fabric and form with Northamptonshire/Bedfordshire vessels and are present also at Chesterfield and *Margidunum*. A single sherd was tentatively identified as Severn Valley Ware and is unusual (Webster 1977) although this ware is present at Rocester (Leary forthcoming).

Samian Ware

Margaret Ward

The abbreviations SG, CG and EG denote vessels which were produced in South Gaulish, Central Gaulish and East Gaulish workshops. For terminology see Bulmer (1980) and Webster (1996).

Where date-ranges such as *c.*AD 70-110 or *c.* 120-200 are given, these should not be thought more precise than the use of epochs (e.g. Flavian-Trajanic or Hadrianic-Antonine). They are employed merely to facilitate the computerised analysis of the material.

Context 13

39 sherds represented a maximum of 38 vessels, of which 26% was produced in South Gaul in the Flavian-Trajanic period and 74% was produced in Central Gaul in the second century. The latest closely datable vessel was produced *c.*AD 150-170; none of the other vessels in this context need to have been manufactured later than *c.*160. Individual vessels of interest were:

- SF216. South Gaulish moulded bowl, form 37: the small ovolo is indistinct, but its narrow tongue was bent right before the egg. Below, panels with indistinct borders contained poorly moulded leaf-tips and a dog similar to, but not the same as, Oswald's type 2015, running left below a leaf-and-bud motif. Dating uncertain, but probably early Flavian. Weight 15g.
- SF 225. South Gaulish moulded bowl, form 37, displaying a badly blurred ovolo of which only a single border is visible; its trifold-tipped tongue is turned slightly right. Below stood the figure of a character from the Oresteian Trilogy, presumed to be Pylades (Oswald type 992). *c.*AD 80/85-100/110. Weight 4g.
- SF 217. Central Gaulish moulded bowl, form 37: the rather messy wavy-line borders lie horizontally above and below a freestyle animal scene that included a large lion (Oswald 1430 or similar). The blurred motifs included an indistinctly impressed cup on a stand (Rogers Q86 or similar; cf S & S, pl 72.33 by Paterclus) and what appears to be an *ad hoc* altar, above a basal wreath of 7-petalled dot-roses (C281). These motifs combine to suggest that this small, but heavy and rather orange bowl was the work of an apprentice of Quintilianus or an associate, most probably in the period *c.*AD 125-145. Weight 22g.

- SF 218. Central Gaulish moulded bowl, form 37: a winding scroll with a large leaf similar to, if not identical with, Rogers H11. This bowl does not look to have been produced much later than the early-Antonine period. Weight 10g.

- SF 218. Central Gaulish moulded bowl, form 37: its ovolo is Rogers B206, a type used by various potters from Quintilianus onwards, including Lactucissa, Censorinus and Paternus v. This bowl was produced most probably in the early- to mid-Antonine period. Weight 4g.

- SF 236. Central Gaulish moulded bowl, form 37: ovolo Roger B143 above beadrow A2 and a winding scroll. This is the standard style of Cinamus (cf S & S, pl 162.61). *c.*AD 150-170. Two sherds apparently from the same bowl, weight 6g.

- SF 231. Central Gaulish cup form 33. A fragment of stamp reads]PI[... and perhaps]PINIM If the latter, then by such a potter as Alpinus or Crispinus. At any rate, this small cup looks to have been an Antonine product, whose footring shows evidence of wear from use. Weight 5 g.

- SF 211. South Gaulish flanged bowl, form Curle 11. Produced in the period *c.*AD 80-110, the bowl has had its flange hacked off and the tool-marks remain. Weight 11g.

Contexts 13-15

Four sherds from four moulded bowls that were produced at Lezoux in Central Gaul during the second century. Only one was closely datable:

- SF 108. Central Gaulish moulded bowl, form 37: the poorly moulded decoration displayed a winding scroll with a large leaf (Rogers H2). Ovolo B106 lay above an indistinct horizontal border on which was superimposed a large advertisement stamp, reading PATERNFE retrograde. This is Die 7a of Paternus v, a common stamp that has been recorded previously at numerous sites in Britain, including York: see pl 107, 27 with the same leaf. *c.*AD 160-185. 31g.

Context 22

A single sherd:

- SF 117. Central Gaulish dish form 18/31 or 31, produced at Lezoux in the Hadrianic-Antonine period. The footring was slightly worn from use. Weight 19g.

Context 31

A single sherd:

- SF 428. Central Gaulish cup form 27. A small fragment of a vessel produced at Les Martres-de-Veyre, most likely in the period *c.*AD 100-125. Weight 1g.

Context 35

A single sherd:

- SF 407. Central Gaulish dish form 18/31R. A fragment of a vessel produced in the period *c.*AD 120-150. Weight 3g.

Context 43

Eight sherds, one scrap having been produced in South Gaul at some point in the wide range *c.*AD 60/70-100, the remainder being Central Gaulish products of the Hadrianic-Antonine and Antonine periods. They included one or two plain vessels produced after *c.*AD 160. There was also one vessel that had seen repairwork, successful or otherwise:

- SF 381 and 384. Central Gaulish bowl, probably the moulded form 37 rather than the plain, flanged bowl form 38 and produced at some point in the Hadrianic to mid-Antonine period. The vessel had broken through dove-tailed holes of the cleat

variety. Rim diameter 20cm; two sherds, weighing 5g and 1g.

Discussion

The total of 54 sherds represented a maximum of 52 vessels (0.76 EVES), weighing 444g. The group was in relatively good condition, with little fabric erosion. The average sherd weight was 8.4g.

Only 21% of the material originated in South Gaul in the Flavian or Flavian-Trajanic period. 79% was produced in Central Gaul, mostly at Lezoux, although seven vessels (13% of the total and 17% of the Central Gaulish vessels) probably came from the Trajanic-early Hadrianic workshops at Les Martres-de-Veyre. Many of the Lezoux products appear to have been made in workshops of the Hadrianic to early-Antonine period.

Seven pieces were of indeterminate form; they comprised only 13% of the total. Excluding those pieces, as much as 47% of the assemblage comprised moulded bowls, though only 14 sherds retained decoration. There were two potters' stamps, of which one was imprinted in moulded decoration by Paternus v in the period *c.*AD 160-185. All those decorated sherds that were attributable to specific potters or their groups have been listed above.

There were no East Gaulish products that might

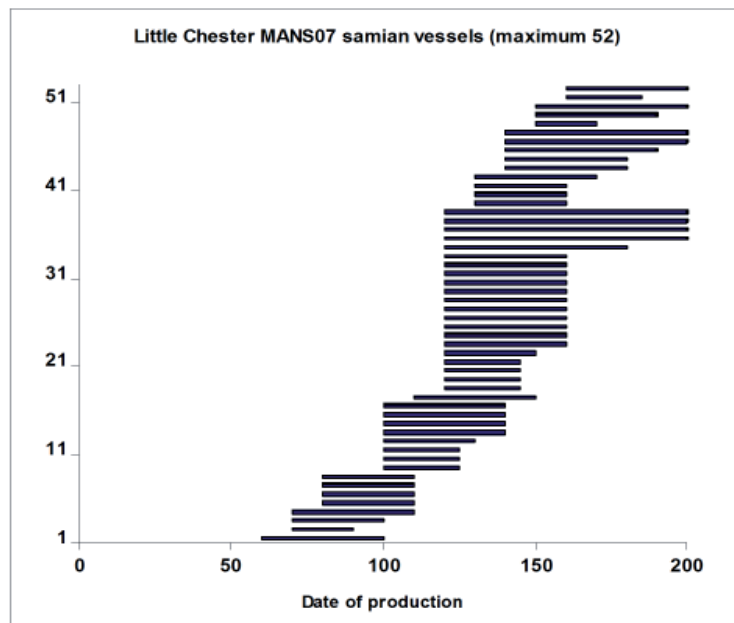


Figure 3 Floating bar diagram showing production date-ranges for all Samian vessels (maximum 52).

have supported occupation of the site in the late-2nd and 3rd centuries. However, this sample is small and it would be unwise to draw any firm conclusions from it.

As for evidence of repair and re-use, one vessel had seen repair work, successful or otherwise (Catalogue No 12) and one flanged bowl (No 7) had had its flange hacked off, probably after accidental breakage of the flange. Only 6% of the assemblage was burnt.

Form	SG	CG	EG	Total
18 or 18R	1			1
18/31	1			1
18/31 or 31		1		1
18/31R		7		7
18/31R or 31R		2		2
27	2	4		6
31		1		1
33		3		3
37	5	16		21
38		1		1
Curle 11	1			1
Ind	1	6		7

Table 2 All Samian vessels, by form and fabric.

Type	Nos of vessels
bowl, decorated	21
bowl, plain	2
Cup	9
Dish	14
Indeterminate	6

Table 3. Types of Samian vessel

Faunal Remains

Kim Vickers

Animal bone fragments were identified to taxon with reference to the collection at the Department of Archaeology, University of Sheffield. The recording method used in the analysis of bones follows a modified version of that outlined by Davis (1992) and Albarella and Davis (1994).

Preservation was generally good, but a large proportion of the assemblage was highly fragmented, and much of the material was not countable under the recording methodology employed. A relatively large number of breaks were new breaks and had probably occurred during excavation. Four fragments of burnt bone were present in the assemblage.

Gnawing by canids was relatively rare in the assemblage and rodent gnawing was not recorded. Canid gnawing was recorded on just nine fragments (6.3%). These all derived from the Roman occupation layer (13) (9.5% of context), and the undated linear ditch fill (33/35) (14% of context). The lack of scavenger gnawing on the assemblage, and its generally good preservation, suggests that the material was buried relatively quickly after deposition.

A total of 101 countable elements was recorded from the assemblage. The remainder of the assemblage was made up of non-countable long bone fragments (NISP: 103), non-countable rib (NISP: 81), skull (NISP: 30) and vertebrae fragments (NISP: 18), and non-countable horncore fragments (NISP: 5). The majority of the assemblage derives from the Roman contexts, and most of these bones come from contexts (13) and (43). The assemblage is dominated by domesticated livestock.

The Roman material is dominated by cattle (39% of countable elements). Sheep/goat represent 24% of the countable assemblage, and pig represents 13%. All of the elements for which the distinction between sheep and goat was attempted were sheep (*Ovis aries*), and it is likely that the majority of the bones recorded as sheep/goat were also sheep. In addition to livestock, dog (*Canis familiaris*) was well represented and forms 12% of the assemblage. The majority of the dog bones, however, derive from a single skeleton from context 043, although the presence of two very different sized ulnae from the Roman deposits suggest that at least two dogs are represented. One of the dog skeletons is very small, and represents a small, lap dog type breed, with bowed long bones. This animal had evidence of a healed fracture on one rib.

A range of wild species and birds was also present in small numbers. Hare (*Lepus*) was represented by an ulna and a humerus from context (43). This animal was probably hunted for food. Bird species present include the domestic chicken (*Gallus gallus*), crow/rook (*Corvus* sp.), and a plover (*Pluvialis* sp.)- probably a grey plover. The crow/rook bones are likely to represent scavengers around the site, which have become incorporated into rubbish deposits. The plover bone recovered is consistent with the grey plover, although a reference specimen was not available for certain identification.

Very few bones were recovered from other contexts at the site. Those that were include a few fragments of cattle, sheep, dog, and chicken bone. The only occurrence of horse (*Equus*) in the assemblage was a single 1st phalanx from the undated linear ditch fill (33/35).

The most frequent countable cattle elements from Roman contexts are loose teeth and mandibles. This is a reflection of both the high frequency of teeth in the skeleton compared to other bones, and their greater robustness and resistance to taphonomic attrition. The remainder of the cattle assemblage is represented by a range of elements, characteristic of both primary and secondary butchery waste, and there is no evidence for specialised butchery. The cattle remains from the non-Roman contexts are mainly from the lower limb extremities. This pattern is probably taphonomic as these bones are more robust than many other skeletal elements.

Very few countable sheep/goat bones were recovered. The assemblage is dominated by loose teeth and mandibles, which again reflects the relative frequency of teeth in the skeleton and their better preservation. Postcranial elements are sparse and no clear pattern of element distribution is present.

The countable pig assemblage is dominated by maxillary and mandibular fragments and loose teeth. This is again due to taphonomic factors. The very few postcranial elements recovered are mostly metapodials (which are robust elements) and this reflects the well known phenomenon of generally poorer preservation of pig remains compared with that of other species. Other species present (excluding the dog skeleton) are represented by single or very few bones, and no patterning in elemental representation can be determined.

Ageing data is limited due to a lack of ageable mandibles. Two cattle teeth and a cattle mandible from Roman contexts are well worn and represent a fully

mature animal/s. A sub adult animal/s is represented by a loose tooth and a mandible. The seven highly fragmented Roman sheep/goat mandibles all represent animals of over 6 months, one represents an animal of probably between 2-3 years, and one represents an animal of probably at least 3-4 years. The two pig mandibles from Roman contexts come from younger animals, one of which was immature and one sub-adult. A loose pig tooth and mandible from undated context 35 represent an immature/sub-adult animal/s.

Epiphysial fusion data is also too sparse to provide any meaningful information about the age structure of the animal population at the site. The data does however match the mandibular tooth wear data, with the majority of cattle bones being fully fused, and indicating mature animals. The sparse sheep/goat epiphysial fusion data indicates that at least one immature individual is present in the assemblage, and the majority of the pig bones are unfused, indicating that the animal/s represented were immature when slaughtered. A neonate sheep/goat metatarsal and two neonate pig metapodials (probably a pair) were recovered from context 35. The dog and the horse bones recovered were all fully fused.

The canine alveolus from a pig mandible from context 43 identified the specimen as female. No attempt was made to sex other species on morphological characteristics, and too few ungulate metapodial measurements were available for sex to be determined biometrically.

Evidence for butchery was not common in the assemblage with only ten fragments exhibiting butchery marks. The majority of the butchered bone was from context 13 and cut marks were more frequent than chop marks. Most of the butchered bones belong to cattle and most of the butchery marks are not associated with particular butchery practices, although cut marks on a cattle second phalanx is indicative of skinning. Cut marks on a cattle astragalus suggests dismemberment, while those shown by a cattle proximal radius suggests filleting. A cattle distal humerus from context 13 had been perforated by a perfectly circular hole- this may have been drilled. Perforated scapulae are commonly found in Roman deposits and the holes in them are often interpreted as hook marks for hanging joints during curing (Dobney 2001). It is possible that as a good meat-bearing element the perforated distal humerus recovered on site may have been butchered for a similar purpose.

The assemblage recovered from Roman contexts is

consistent with trends observed at other sites from the Roman period in Britain. While the predominance of countable cattle bones at the site may in part be a result of taphonomy, with the larger more robust cattle bones surviving better than those of smaller mammals, the predominance of cattle is common in many urban, military and rural assemblages from Roman Britain (King 1999) and it is likely that they also formed an important part of the economy at this site. This is in contrast to the pattern observed during the British Iron Age in which sheep/goat often dominate faunal assemblages (Grant 1989; Albarella 2007). Furthermore, the predominance of mature cattle that is hinted at by the current assemblage is commonly reported from Roman sites across Britain (Grant 1989; King 1999; Dobney 2001). Cattle can be used for meat, milk, manure and traction, and the increase in older animals at many British sites during the Roman period has been associated with an increase in arable agriculture (and a need for more traction animals) as well as cultural trends (King 1999). The sheep/goat recovered at the site is too sparse to interpret in terms of economy, although sheep can be kept for milk, meat, manure, and wool. The immaturity of the pigs at the current site is a common pattern in many archaeological assemblages and is due to the fact that pigs are primarily bred for meat, and there are few alternative reasons to keep animals past the age of optimum meat yield.

The chicken present may have produced eggs as well as meat. Although chicken bones have been found in Iron Age deposits in Britain, their occurrence is rare and the earliest evidence for the widespread and frequent rearing of this bird appears during the Roman period (Maltby 1997). Its appearance in these deposits represents part of this trend.

Small dogs, bred as pets appear for the first time in the Roman period (Harcourt 1974), and are frequently found at other Roman sites in Britain (e.g. Wroxeter, Shropshire) (Hammon 2005).

The Grey Plover has been found in other assemblages of the period (Parker 1988) and its waterside habitat and wading behaviour suggest that it had been hunted and brought to the site. Parker (1988) postulates that wading birds were probably trapped using waterside net arrays in the Roman period.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Phase One

During the excavation four distinct phases of domestic Roman activity were revealed. The earliest phase, represented by the truncated linear ditch(14), was cut into the natural clay substratum. Despite the feature producing second century pottery, the provenance is questionable and, given the sterile nature of the rest of the fill, it is uncertain whether these finds can definitely be attributed to this feature.

Phase Two

The second phase of activity relates to the waste deposit or occupation layer (13) present across the whole of the excavated area. The deposit contained 304 sherds of Roman pottery, 39 of which were high-quality Samian Ware. The majority of the coarse ware was locally produced either at the Racecourse kilns or the Derbyshire Ware kilns, with just over 7% comprising Dorset Black Burnished Ware 1. A small percentage came from the Nene Valley industries and eight sherds of mortaria were identified as being produced at the Mancetter-Hartshill kilns near Coventry. Imported items included a rare Gallic amphora lid, a Trier beaker and some sherds of roughcast beaker from the Argonne. Generally, the pottery assemblage compares well with other sites in Derby such as the Derby Racecourse, Strutt's Park, and *Derwentio* excavations. It is believed that the Derby Racecourse kilns declined about the mid-second century (Dool and Wheeler 1985). The work undertaken during this excavation provides further evidence for this decline in use and the subsequent slow increase in the distribution of Derbyshire Ware and vessels imported from the Black Burnished Ware industry in Dorset. Extensive faunal remains from this phase include a wide variety of domesticates, with cattle the most common, typical of Roman occupation sites and include signs of butchery and processing.

It is possible that this deposit could represent the gradual accumulation of domestic waste over a long period but the lack of weathering of the finds suggests, rather, that the deposit was gathered from one or more sources and redeposited in a single episode. This would go some way to explain the good preservation and the variety in pottery types, as well as the irregularity of their deposition.

Phase Three

A third phase of activity was represented by a trun-

cated linear ditch (43), hearth (50) and pit (52) cut into and through the earlier deposit (13). The hearth and pit features contained a substantial amount of Derbyshire Ware and Black Burnished Ware suggesting a second to early third century date. The linear spread (43) appeared to follow the shape of the earlier linear (14), suggesting the possible reuse of features over time.

In addition to livestock remains (bone fragments), the presence of hare and a grey plover were also recovered. The discovery of the grey plover, a wading bird, suggests localised hunting along the sides of the Derwent augmented the diet of domestic cattle, sheep/goat and pig. The remains of two small lap dogs suggest the presence of domestic pets, commonly appearing for the first time in the Roman period, possibly of a high-status household. A complete copper alloy bracelet or arm band was also found within the fill of pit (52). The bracelet, which was in a good state of preservation, had evident similarities to the half bracelet discovered during excavations at the Derby Racecourse (Dool and Wheeler 1985), incorporating a shaped snake head terminus, although the one found during this excavation is of a more simple design. As a whole, the features from this phase indicate a continued domestic use for the site presumably associated with the *vicus* (civilian settlement) of the fort.

Phase Four

Phase four is represented by a single feature (38) that was positioned above the deposit (13) and the clay spread from the hearth (50). Three small sherds of Derbyshire Ware were found within the fill dating to approximately the same period as phase three, and it is possible that phases three and four are chronologically close.

Conclusions

The excavation revealed a small area of domestic Roman activity indicating settlement over a number of phases, and possibly several centuries. Links to the industrial Derby Racecourse site are evident through comparison with the various pottery types and likewise with the excavations at the fort itself. Given the site's proximity to *Derwentio* it is probable that the remains represent a part of the *vicus* that traditionally developed close to, and because of, a nearby military garrison. The excavation supplements previous archaeological work undertaken in the area and enhances our knowledge and understanding of the sequence of Roman archaeology at Little Chester

and its surroundings.

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