

Excavations in the Fort

By J. P. HALL, F.S.A.

EXCAVATION was commenced early in November, 1920, and stopped at the end of the first week in the new year: three labourers were employed. The work was carried out by (and at the expense of) the late Captain G. H. Higson, F.S.A., and myself. Mr. Willoughby Gardner, F.S.A., and Mr. A. G. K. Hayter, M.A., F.S.A., visited the site, and kindly gave the benefit of their experience. The Rev. T. Roberts, R.N., took charge of the work for several weeks, and Dr. Mortimer Wheeler kindly spent the last four days at the site, and checked the plans with me.

The main object of the excavations was to ascertain if a Military Fort existed, and if so, to determine its area, and the type of its fortifications. The investigation of the plan of the internal buildings has been left for a future occasion.

Further excavations were carried out by me during the February of 1922, Mr. Willoughby Gardner kindly assisting with the sectional drawings of the trenches which were cut through the North Rampart and the north-west corner. On June 7, 1922, a further trench was cut through the North Rampart, near the western end, showing a bed of stones on the outer side of each of the walls, the outer one being five stones high on the outside, the space between being filled with clay, the layers of which were clearly indicated by streaks of dark decayed vegetable matter, reaching up to the stones, showing that the outer wall had not been of the same width for the whole of its height. (*See Photo. Plate II and Sectional Drawing Plate II*).

The inner ditch was also partly exposed, showing that there were two ditches on this side, probably very similar in section to those on the eastern side. The filling of this ditch was of similar material to the present surface soil of the field.

The whole area, including the Fort and its Annexe, was pegged out into squares, set off from a northern and southern base-line; corresponding squares were laid down upon a working plan, which was made eight times the size of the 25in. Ordnance Map. The contents of each square were plotted on the working plan as the excavation proceeded.

Along the southern and eastern sides of the Fort area the land falls slightly, but in so defined a manner as to at once indicate the position of the Rampart.