

**Site**      **Fort George**

**N.G.R**      NH 762 568

**Project Description**      Watching Brief during the excavation of a service trench

### **Report**

Over a period of 2½ eeks from February 24th - March 11th 1997, a watching brief was maintained during the excavation of cable trenches along the N and S roadways within the fort. The S works entailed machine excavation of a trench 350m in length (Trench 1) extending from the Fort Substation within Casemate 12 to the Pump-House just E of the Point Battery Casemates. This route ran close to the inner revetting wall of the South Rampart, running along the frontages of the casemates and the Powder Magazine compound wall.

The excavation of Trench 1 commenced at its central point near the Officers latrines, work running in both directions from this point. The cable was intended to link with the Fort Substation located in one of the Casemates near the Guardhouse, and hence the trench terminated at the doorway of Casemate no. 12. From here, the trench ran for 95m along the outer face of the Powder Magazine wall before curving to the N around the NE corner of a ramp joining the Courtyard to the S Rampart Terreplein. This part of the trench revealed the foundations of the Powder Magazine enclosure wall (109), at a depth of 25-28cm below the present ground level. The founds comprised roughly squared red sandstone blocks in a strip of unknown width. Sealing the foundations of the wall was a mix of pebbles and dirty sand (118/110).

The trench then turned westwards, around a large concrete slab (105), covering the cess pit of the Officers latrine. To the E of 105, an area of red sandstone slabs (107) was uncovered at a depth of 50cm, measuring 4m N-S, being roughly dressed and mortared. These represent the top covering slabs of a drain running E-W along the southern roadway in the fort, a drain which either flushed or emptied the cess pit, and an original 18th-century feature. To the N of slab 105 a 20th-century brick manhole cover was revealed.

16m to the W of 105, the remains of a possible cistern were revealed (104), comprising a small level concrete surface 6m in length E-W bounded at each end by a double thickness of brick walling. The whole was well rendered, indicating that the structure may have been intended to be watertight.

In the trench section leading from the base of the ramp (in the area of 104) to the Other Rank's latrines, two brick-built features were uncovered (113 & 114). These were interpreted as supports for the weighbridge known to have stood here in the past.

Along the last 57m of the length of trench 1, only 1 feature was noted, comprising an area of remnant flagstones (117) 17m W of the ramp, forming part of a buried surface 36cm below the modern level.

No finds were recovered from the entire length of Trench 1.

Trench 2 comprised a second cable trench along the front of the NE Casemates, again 80cm in depth and 60cm wide, running for c80m. The material removed from this trench proved to be highly disturbed levelling material of the courtyard, and yielded no finds.

### **Contexts**

No.	Description
101	Tarmac & Hardcore
102	Buried soil horizon
103	Broken brick, concrete and soil over 104
104	Remnant of cistern?
105	Concrete slab over cess pit
106	Concrete slab over other rank's cess pit
107	Drain covers
108	Brick manhole
109	Buried founds of Powder Magazine compound wall
110	Mixed gravel and sand
111	Wooden box & sandstone
112	Concrete drains (many)
113	Supports in brick for the former weighbridge
114	as 113
115	Oily clay waterproof seal for drain 116
116	Masonry drain cover as 107
117	Rough flagging near point casemates
118	Levelling layer in the courtyard - yellow sand and gravel