

Phase VI: Alterations to the rampart

Phase VI consists of four separate elements: a partially excavated charcoal-rich deposit (E18); a partially excavated cut feature at the rear of the rampart (E20) and its fill (E16); a post-hole on the top of the rampart (E22); and layers that built up the rear of the rampart and levelled its top which will be referred to as a levelling deposit (E1, E2 and E29).

The charcoal-rich deposit butted up against one of the walls (E17) of the Phase V latrine and was overlain by the levelling deposit (E1 and E2) (fig. 23). It was only partially excavated and consisted of a charcoal rich detritus (thickness 0.10m) which probably represents a dumped deposit from a nearby oven rather than *in situ* burning. No datable artefacts were recovered from the deposit. No artefactual material was recovered from the reddish grey clay fill (E16) of the feature cut into the rear of the rampart (E20) either. The feature was only partially excavated and its function is uncertain; it is possible that it formed the lower part of the levelling deposit (E1, E2 and E29) described below. Stratigraphically, the feature is later than the undated Phase V latrine (E17 and E19) and its top is apparently filled with part of the levelling deposit (E1-E2) (fig. 7) suggesting that, if it is not part of the levelling deposit proper, then it only pre-dates it by a short period. The post-hole located on the top of the rampart (dimensions c. 60 x 70cm) (E22) cut through the Phase IV fills between the rampart and the Rebuild II wall, providing by extension a terminus post quem for the feature not earlier than the end of the second century. Its fill was similar to the levelling deposits (E1, E2 and E29) suggesting the two features may be contemporary. It was loosely packed with a number of small stones, some of which were set vertically, suggesting it is a post-setting which forms part of an otherwise unrecorded structure.

The levelling deposit itself consisted of a dark red clay with stone, brick and tile inclusions which was located over the back of the rampart and built up the top of the rampart into a wide level surface (E1, E2 and E29). It was only definitely recognised in Site E, although a partially excavated context adjacent to the corner turret (A7) may also be part of it. Datable material from E1 and E2 includes a belt plate of the late second or third century¹, a decorated samian sherd dated to c. A.D. 160-90, and Black-burnished ware bowls and dishes dated variously to the mid-second to early third century and the early to mid-third century². This evidence suggests a date for the levelling deposit from the early third century onwards. This is consistent with the date for the possibly analogous deposit excavated at the 'Roman Gates' site, which post-dated Building G whose demolition is placed between the mid-second century and the late third century (Evans and Metcalf 1992, 21).

1 See p. 78 no. 2.

2 See p. 50 no. 16 and p. 68 nos. 177-85