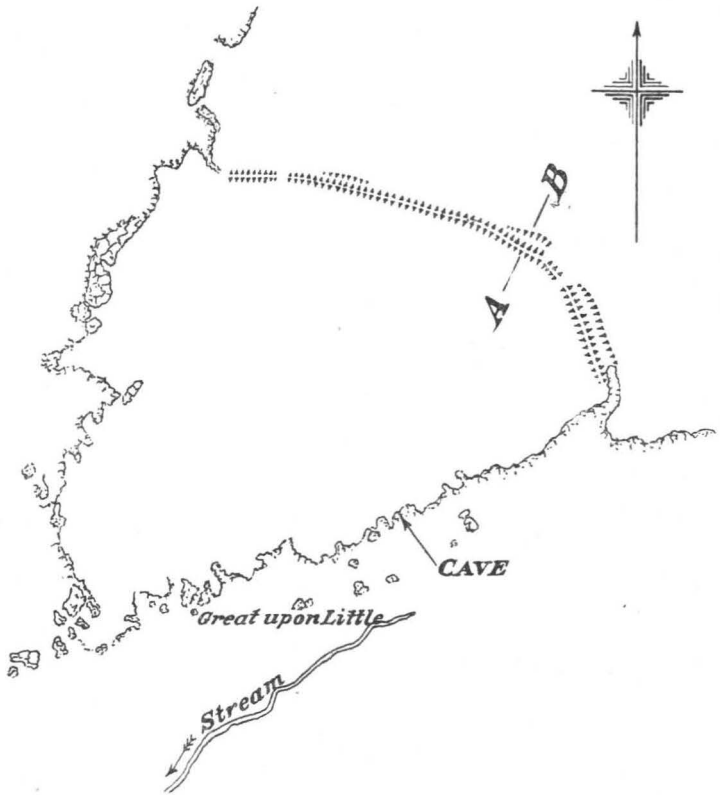
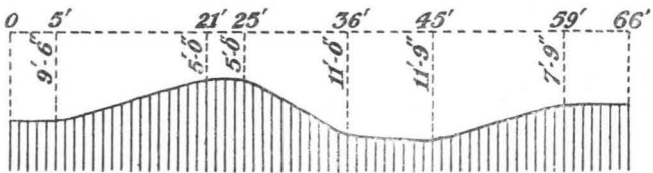


# PHILPOTS CAMP, WEST HOATHLY.



— SCALE OF FEET FOR PLAN. —



— SECTION A.B. —

H. G. 1924.

# TWO WEALDEN PROMONTORY FORTS

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AND

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## I.—PHILPOTS CAMP, WEST HOATHLY.

THROUGH the kindness of the Very Rev. the Dean of Chichester, and with the help of Col. Willett, we have been enabled to examine the promontory fort which has for some years been known to exist in the grounds of Philpots, West Hoathly,<sup>1</sup> but of which we are not aware of any published record or description.

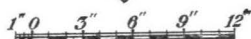
The fort (Plate) is roughly triangular, and includes about fifteen acres, occupying the nose of an out-cropping spur of sandstone. The south and north-west sides are formed by sheer cliffs of sandstone, 15 to 30 feet high. The north-east side is slightly convex, and is marked by a vallum with exterior fosse defending the neck of the promontory. Where best preserved the bank stands 6 feet 9 inches above the present bottom of the ditch, and the over-all measurement is 54 feet. There is no certainty as to the position of the original entrances. Mr. Ian Hannah tells us that the break in the bank, as shown in the plan, was made some years ago in order to connect the fields on either side of the vallum, and that his spade has proved the causeway across the fosse here to be a modern construction. No known ancient track passes anywhere near the camp. The Roman road from Portslade by Ardingly to Godstone

<sup>1</sup> In a part which was formerly part of the Rockhurst Estate; 6in. O.S., XV., N.E. The cliffs are marked on the O.S. map, but not the vallum, the position of which is, however, indicated by a belt of trees which grows on it. The positions of the three corners of the camp are fixed on the 6in. O.S. map by the following pairs of abscissae and ordinates; viz. (6.0"-3.6"); (5.8"-2.5") and (7.15"-3.0").

cuts the carriage drive of Wakehurst at right angles half-a-mile to the west and leaves the position of this camp well to one side.

A large part of the area of the camp has been under the plough in recent years, but has been allowed to revert to woodland. There is no record of any object having been found which would throw light on the date of the camp.

It may be well, for the benefit of future archæologists, to put on record two rock-carvings which are to be found on the west wall of a small cave locally known as Moraine Cavern, under the cliff on the south side of the camp (Fig.). The carvings represent inter-



laced patterns such as are sometimes found on early Christian crosses, and are quite well executed. We have submitted rubbings and photographs to Mr. W. G. Collingwood, F.S.A., who reports as follows:—

“I think the two carvings must be modern. Not only are they very fresh, but the kind of design is rather what a modern person would make, and not like an ancient pattern . . . All the same there are interlaced patterns on stones in Sussex, at—

Bexhill, its famous grave-cover;

Bishopstone, interlaced fragment (and Saxon dial);

Selsey, several carved interlacings.

What is highly unlikely is that Anglo-Saxon carvers should put such patterns on a rock in the open. The Bronze Age people did, and Picts in Scotland did; and moderns still do things of the

sort; but the carvers of interlaced designs on stones in England—not Celts, but Anglo-Saxons, 8th to 11th centuries—used them for grave monuments or architectural details. And when one finds, *e.g.* runes carved on a rock on the moor (as near Bewcastle), one doubts their antiquity, and finds that Mr. S—— did it to hoax Mr. M——. Of course these patterns are not pagan; they are modelled on 10th or 11th century ornaments.”

To this it may be added that the sandstone on which they are carved is so soft that it is doubtful if carvings would survive for any great length of time. The sharpness of the incised lines closely corresponds with that of the adjoining graffiti of modern trippers, and is much sharper than other weather-worn scratchings on the rocks which Mr. Ian Hannah believes to be undoubtedly of the 18th century.

## II.—HENFIELD

Running athwart the ridge of Lower Greensand which borders Henfield Common on the north, is all that remains of a vallum which was evidently designed to convert the eastern end of the ridge into a promontory fort. The area thus cut off is bounded on the north, east and south, by marshy land, and on the west—its only approach—by the vallum.<sup>2</sup> The eastern part of this area is now under cultivation; much of the western end is occupied by a large disused sand-pit in the edge of which we have found pygmy implements.

The middle portion of the vallum is situated in a hedge immediately to the west of the sand-pit. Here the bank is 4 feet high and 20 feet wide at the base, and there are traces of a ditch—nearly filled in—on its west side. Immediately to the east of this part of the rampart is a deeply sunk lane leading from the sand-pit in the direction of Furners Farm. At the northern end the bank seems to have been eroded and destroyed by the sunken lane, and the ditch to have been covered over with dump from the pit.

<sup>2</sup> Position of centre of vallum: 6in. O.S., XXXVIII., S.W., (11.0°-3.2°).

The southern part of the vallum is found in the garden of a house known as "Dykes";<sup>3</sup> it consists of a mound, 120 feet long, running in roughly the same line as the northern part. This bank stands 7 feet high and is 33 feet wide at the base. There is no appearance of a ditch, but a footpath passes along its western side. The mound ends abruptly in the garden. Fifty yards to the south, outside the garden and on the edge of the common, are signs of a ditch in the exact position in which one would have expected to find it if the vallum had been directly extended.

<sup>3</sup> This name was given the house by the present occupant, who informed us that it was named after another house, and has no reference to the neighbouring earthwork of the existence of which she was entirely unconconscious.