

ANCIENT CAMP, ALPHETON.

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Situated at a short distance from the north side of Alpheton Parish Church in an open field, there is a remarkable long trench. When I first saw it about two years ago, its appearance at once suggested it to have probably been an ancient fosse. It measured in length 280 yards, six feet in depth, and about twelve feet in breadth, and lay due east and west. The east end terminated in a modern ditch at right angles to the trench. The west end was most interesting. Here the trench took a rectangular bend for a few yards, and was then lost in cultivated ground. This curve was certainly the indication of an enclosure. Following its direction, and crossing a stream, I found at the distance of 120 yards a short portion of the fosse, curved and marking a second corner of the enclosure. The only other indications along the south boundary was the rising of shelving ground on the outer edge; this probably marked the escarpment of a former fosse. On the centre of this edging of higher ground stands Alpheton Church.

Though the east end and portion of the south side have lost all signs of the original fosse, still there are sufficient indications and depressions to show that an ancient enclosure of the Roman type existed here.

At the present time the centre is occupied by a large farm house, at the rear of which the stream flows, passing through two ponds; at the south-east end are farm buildings.

It is situated two miles from the ancient camp called the Shimpling Warbanks, and may have been used as an outpost; but, taking into consideration

the small size of the enclosure, 280 yards by 120 yards, and its construction in a depression, so as to surround a flowing stream, the probabilities are that it had been used as a Roman Cattle Camp. This was also the opinion of an experienced antiquary, Mr. A. L. Lewis, F.C.A., who visited the place with me last year.

[Earthworks of the kind described in the above paper are not uncommon. They are generally of a later though uncertain date. It will require more proof than is at present forthcoming that those at Alpheton are of Roman origin.—Ed.]

ENCLOSURE OR CAMP AS AT PRESENT

