

Results

There was no superficial evidence of pre-colonial habitation on the site.

The site has three levels gradating towards the Cumakala River basin to the east. The upper level is bounded by Garden, Alfred and Kent Streets. To the east there is a straight raised mound of earth parallel to Garden Street. On the lower level below the mound the remains of a ditch can be seen. This level is narrower than the upper level. The lowest level is bounded in the east by Fort Street.

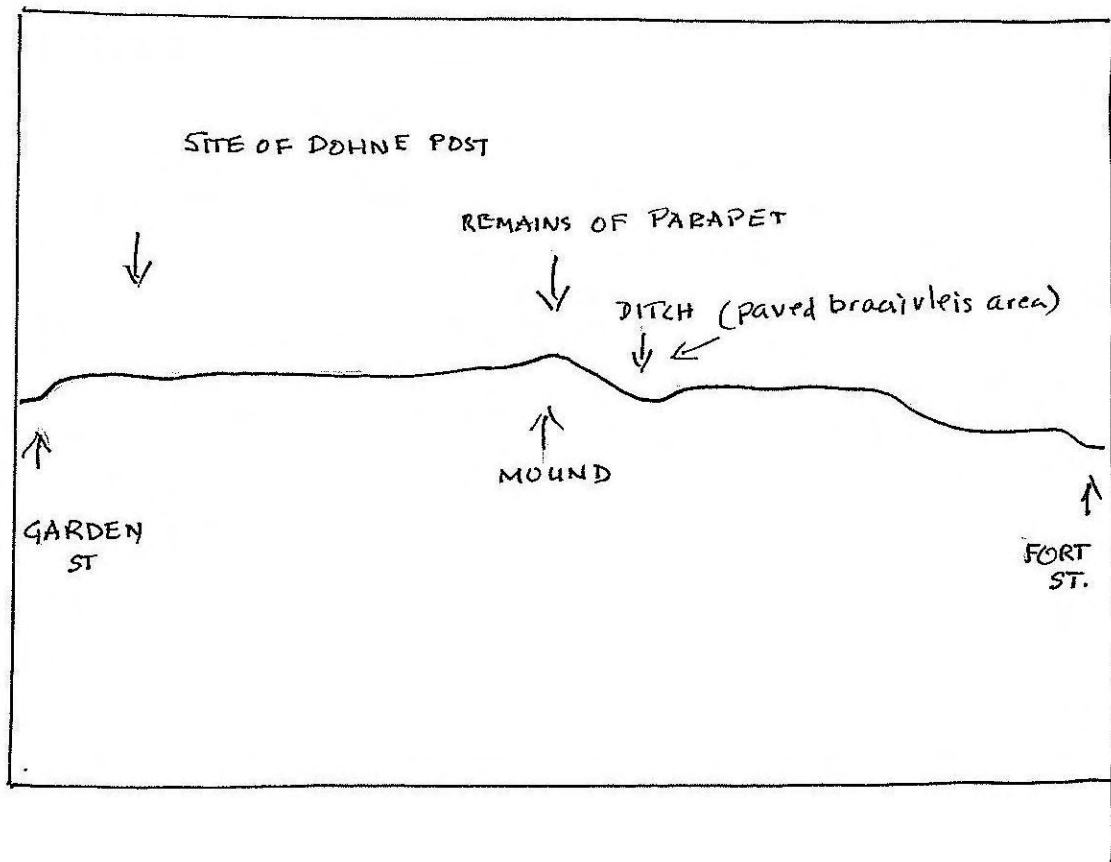


Figure 8

An east/west (hand drawn) profile of the site (Not to scale)

There are two structures on the site. One is the ablution block constructed for the park. The other is a small square building with an inset sloping corrugated iron roof. This is what Prof Rennie thought could have been a 'lock-up'. The walls are of baked brick with rough mortar, visible where the external plaster has broken away. There is one narrow ventilation slit on the east face and evidence where one has been bricked up. The low entrance has a wooden lintel and there is no door. The surround of the building is paved with flat stones. It was too unpleasant to enter the building as it has been used as a latrine.

Figure 6 shows the sloping roof of a small square building identified as the **powder magazine** when aligned with the plan of the post. The position, form and pitch of the roof clearly identified this structure as the original powder magazine.

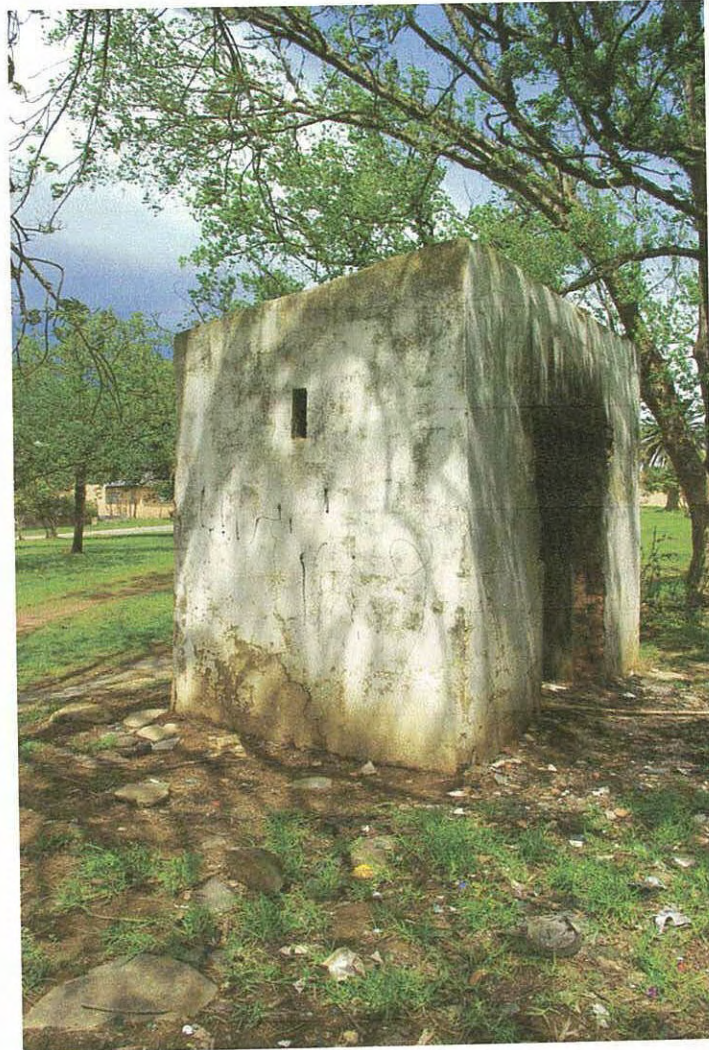
Figure 9 a



The original powder magazine

This small square building is of baked bricks and rough mortar.
The doorway has a wooden lintel.
The surround is paved with cut stone.

Figure 9 b



This view shows the narrow ventilation slit, the sloping roof and a paved area surrounding the old powder magazine.

It was noted that when the military settlers arrived in 1857 that the existing powder magazine was too small. A new one was constructed of stone and located outside the post.

A raised mound with a ditch below extended for about 40 metres in a north/south direction from the powder magazine. A 'braaivleis' area, presumably for the use of the campers, had been constructed of stone in the ditch, with the slope and surround paved with cut stone.

This would have been the original rampart and ditch on the east face of the post.

Figure 10



View along the line of the ditch and remains of the parapet extending from the powder magazine in a north/south direction.

A survey of the upper level showed that there was an almost imperceptible line marked by stones extending east/west from the powder magazine at a right angle from the mound and ditch.

Figure 11



A perceptible line extends east/west from the powder magazine.

It was known that the boundary of the redoubt of the original fort was about 40 metres in extent, so the line was paced to that distance and the point marked. Another line was paced to the same distance parallel to the mound. When aligned with the parapet line it was seen that the fourth line of the square would have joined the parapet wall where the mound ended. At that corner, diagonally opposite the brick building, brick and cut stones marked the foundations of other structures. This indicated that this would have been the site of the west bastion.

Figure 12

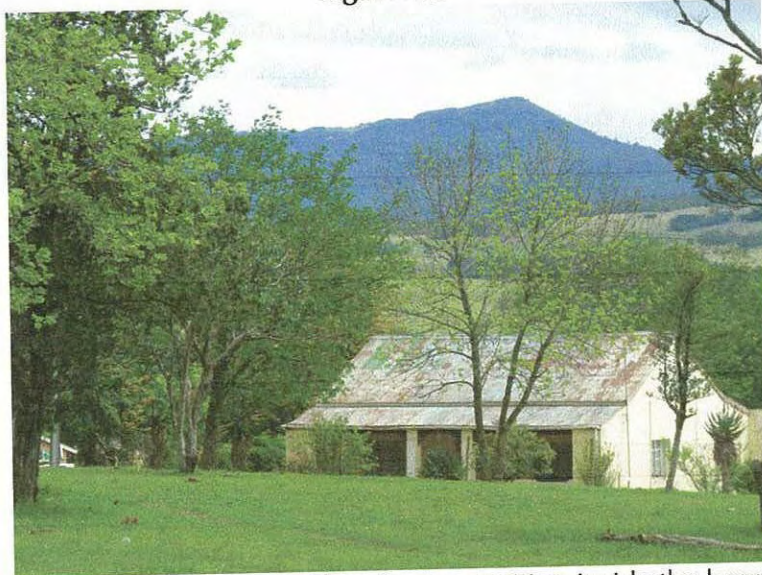


The west bastion would have been situated within the grove of trees where Denver is standing.

This established the actual site of the original fort and it was clear that the extant brick structure, the original powder magazine, would have been situated within the eastern bastion and the mound and ditch are the remains of the original parapet and ditch.

A further alignment of the old photographs showed that the situation of the old cook house and the position of some of the wattle-and-daub structures shown in Figures 4 and 5 could also be established.

Figure 13



View towards Dohne Peak taken from a position inside the boundary of the post which aligns with the view shown in Figure 4.

Figure 14



Cut stones found on the site would have been from the foundations and the original guard house.

Baron von Stutterheim's 'castle' would not have been constructed on the old caravan site. Research undertaken by Jack French in the 1970s showed that the building had been situated close to the weir on the Cumakala River, but was buried when the construction of Stuttgart took place.

The site of Brownlee's residence could not be traced, but it was most likely not within the grounds of the caravan park.

Effects of proposed work

The proposed project for a central Transport Administration and Commercial Node, includes the construction of a supermarket, line shops, hawker kiosks, offices, restaurants, ablution blocks, passenger shelters, basement and street level parking for buses, trucks and taxis and green space. This ambitious programme implies that the whole area will be utilised, which could leave little space for recognition of the heritage relics.

Recommendations

Some form of recognition should be given to Dohne Post within the framework of the proposed development.

- The outline of original fort should be demarcated, possibly by differential paving.
- The powder magazine and the surrounding paving should be retained and restored.
- The palisade fence of the east bastion, within which the powder magazine is situated, could be recreated according to the original specifications. It consisted of wooden stakes inserted in the ground very close together.
- The idea for having a green space could be incorporated within the parameters of the post.

Signage should include an indication of the site and the powder magazine. It would be of interest to include information on Dohne Post within the powder magazine which would form an Interpretation Centre.

Issues of access, authority and maintenance need to be addressed.

The military history of the Eastern Cape is significant in that the numerous fortifications constructed during the nine frontier wars, indicate the spirited resistance conducted by indigenous people against the encroachment of the Europeans into their land.

Apart from the importance of Dohne Post within the wider South African heritage landscape, it could become an important part of the tourism potential for the Amahlathi Municipality, with linkages to the Bethel Mission Church, the Old Mill, Sandile's grave and other historical sites.

Note: The powder magazine may not be touched without permission and guidance from the PHRA Permit Committee. The relevant application forms can be obtained from Fjord Jordaan, Chairman of the Permit Committee, telephone 043 – 721 0032.

It is essential that the developer has on site meetings with Denver Webb and members of the Permit Committee to show the extent of the fort and to discuss measures to restore the powder magazine.

Acknowledgements

The identification of the site was done with the invaluable assistance of Denver Webb and Carl Vernon. Denver Webb also supplied information on the history of the Post. Stephanie Victor, Curator of History, at the Amathole Museum made available information on the history of Stutterheim, Baron von Stutterheim and the German Settlers.

The reproductions of the photographs, plans and maps are by courtesy of the Amathole Museum and may not be used further without permission from the Director.

Photographs of the present site were taken by Carl Vernon and Denver Webb.

References

- Coetzee, C., *The Forts of the Eastern Cape*, (Alice, University of Fort Hare, 1995).
- French, Jack, "Bethel Mission Church", *The Coelacanth*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1976.
- _____ "The Origins of Dohne Post", *What's New*, (Stutterheim Newsletter), 1977.
- _____ "Dohne Post", *The Coelacanth*, Vol 15, No. 1, 1977.
- _____ "The Old Mill at Stutterheim", *The Coelacanth*, Vol. 18, No. 1, 1980.
- _____ Note on Baron Richard von Stutterheim's 'Castle, unpublished manuscript in the archives of the Amathole Museum.
- Schnell, E.L.G., *For Men Must Work*, (Cape Town, Maskew Miller, 1954).
- Schwar, J.F., and Jardine, R.W., *The Letters of Gustav Steinbart*, (Port Elizabeth, University of Port Elizabeth, 1975).
- _____ *The Journal of Gustav Steinbart*, (Port Elizabeth, University of Port Elizabeth, 1978).
- Webb, D.A, *A survey of fortifications in the Province of Queen Adelaide and British Kaffraria, 1835-1866*, *Annals of the Cape Provincial Museums (Human Sci.)*, Vol. I, Part 6, 1989.

Gillian Vernon
17 November 2010