

Crownhill Fort

Commenced	1862	Armament	
Completed	1869		Constructed for 32 guns
Cost	£ 76,409	1893	
Map Reference	SX 487/592		7 x 64pr. R.M.L.
Position	North Eastern Defences		11 x 7-inch R.B.L.
			14 x 32pr. S.B.B.L.
			movable - 6 x 25pr. R.M.L.
Type	Land front, polygonal		
Ditch	Dry		
Guns	32 on ramparts, 15 in caponiers		
Barrack Accom.	built for 300 men		
Present use	Landmark Trust, some areas rented out as work units - open to visitors. WW1 recruitment & transit depot, later HQ Plymouth Garrison R.E. 1985/6	Caponiers	1 double 5 single
History		Counterscarp galleries	None
Disposal		Haxo casemates	1 double 4 single
Condition	Good, parts still under restoration	Moncrieff Pits	2
Access	By arrangement with Landmark Trust		
Sources	<i>Crownhill Fort</i> D.Moore & P. Cobb		

History and Description

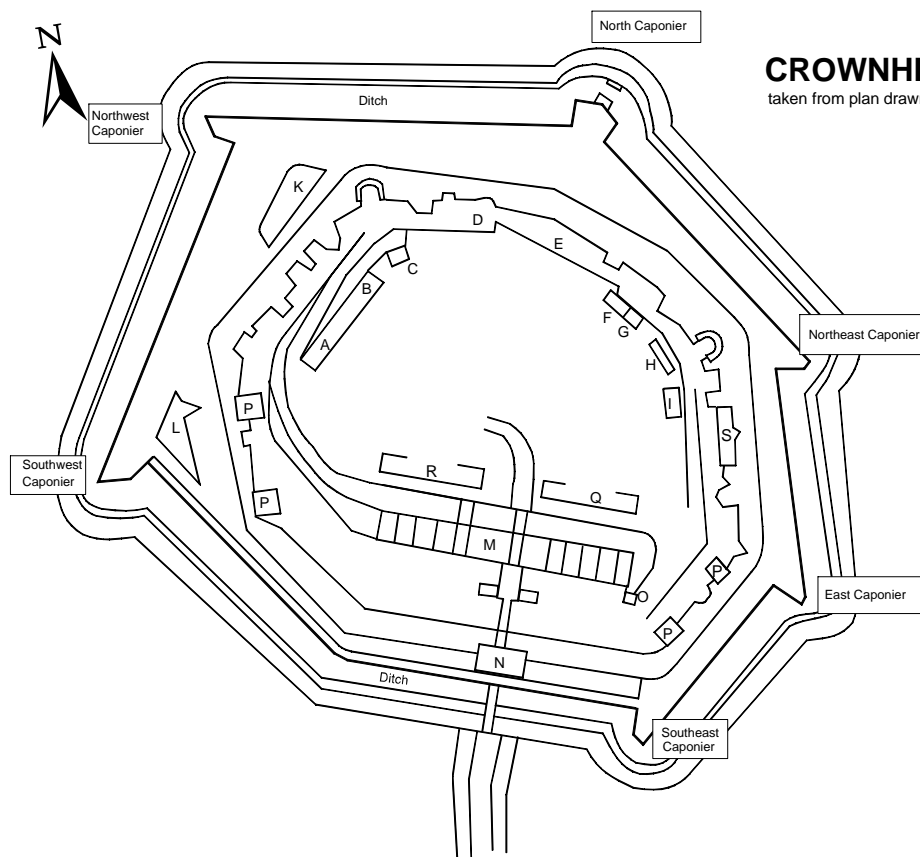
Crownhill Fort was constructed, as a result of the 1860 Royal Commission, to occupy the hill from which it got its name. It was the key of the North Eastern Defences and was designed for an armament of 32 guns on the ramparts, some in Haxo casemates, with 6 mortars in two mortar batteries built into the north and north west ramparts. It has the usual polygonal trace of the 1860s land forts with a deep dry ditch cut into the native rock and caponiers at the salients.

The armament of the fort was revised and updated in 1875-80 and in 1878-82 the south caponier was used to formulate the approved drill for the 32pr. S.B.B.L. guns. In 1881 the fort was chosen by the Lieut General of Artillery and Stores to be fully armed, with its peace armaments complete, as a typical land fort, together with Southwick Fort at Portsmouth.

The fort was used during WW1 as a recruitment and transit depot for troops en-route to their Turkish and African Fronts. Later during the inter-war years it was first a de-mobilisation depot, and after that a base for the (then) new Corps of Royal Signals, a barrack for the 2nd. battalion the Royal Devonshire Regiment, until WW2 when, after Dunkirk it was converted into a strong point in the 'Plymouth Outer Ring Defences'.

During the 1950s under 'Operation Rotor' it had a Gun Operations Room (G.O.R.), built for AA Command, on the parade ground which incorporated part of the Officers barrack. Latterly it was the H.Q. for Plymouth Garrison and the H.Q. of the Commando Support Squadron R.E. and despatched 647 troops and 1,897 tonnes of War material during the 1982 war. It was released 1985/6 and acquired by the Landmark Trust, who are actively conserving and restoring it.

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CROWNHILL FORT

taken from plan drawn 1903 corrected to March 1904 (WO78/3196)

ACCOMMODATION TABLE

5 Artillery Officers
 2 Sergeants in separate rooms
 170 NCOs & Privates

Water tank 25,260 gallons

KEY

- A. Coffee Bar
 Recreation Room
 Tailors Shop
- B. Lamp Room
 R.A. Store
- C. Carpenter's Shop
- D. Main Magazine
- E. Main Barrack Block
 132 men & 2 sergeants
- F. Telephone Room
 Store
 Bread & Meat Store
- G. Cookhouse & Ablution Room
- H. Latrines & Earth Closet
- I. Armourer's Shop (2 parts)
- J. Oil Store
- K. Northwest Mortar Battery
- L. West Mortar Battery
- M. Parados - Officers' Qtrs & men's Qtrs
- N. Gatehouse - Guard Room & Cells
- O. R.E. Store
- P. Haxo Casemate (single)
- Q. Gun Shed & Side Arm Store
- R. Stables & Saddle Room
- S. Haxo Casemate (double)

