

## East Tilbury (Coalhouse) Battery

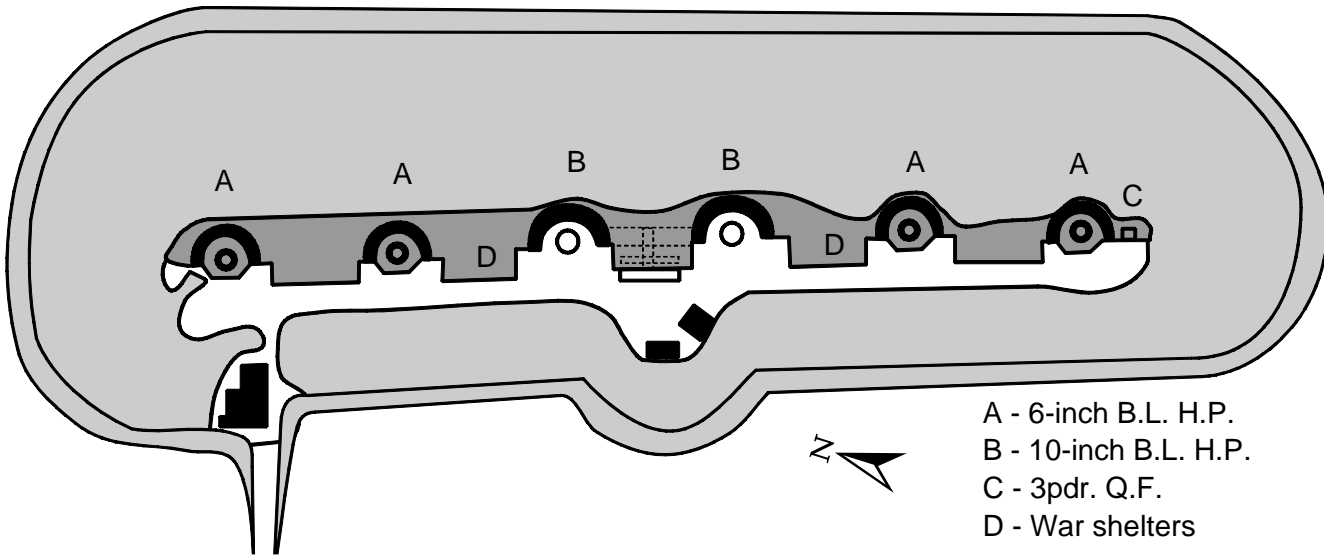
<b>Commenced</b>	1890	<b>Armament</b>	
<b>Completed</b>	1891	<b>1891</b>	2 x 10-inch B.L. H.P. Disappearing 4 x 6-inch B.L. H.P. Disappearing 1 x 3pdr. Q.F (??)
<b>Cost</b>	£	<b>1900</b>	2 x 10-inch B.L. H.P. Disappearing 4 x 6-inch B.L. CPII
<b>Map Reference</b>	TQ 687775	<b>1909</b>	Disarmed
<b>Position</b>	Thames South Bank	<b>Caponiers</b>	None
<b>Type</b>	Coast Defence Barbette Battery	<b>Counterscarp galleries</b>	None
<b>Ditch</b>	Dry (Twydall profile)	<b>Haxo casemates</b>	None
<b>Guns</b>	7	<b>Moncrieff Pits</b>	None
<b>Barrack Accom.</b>	War shelters only		
<b>Present use</b>	Overgrown and disused. Owned by local farmer.		
<b>History</b>	Coast defence		
<b>Disposal</b>	1930		
<b>Condition</b>	Reasonable but overgrown		
<b>Access</b>	The owner does not encourage trespassers!		
<b>Sources</b>	'Defending London's River' V.Smith		

### History and Description

East Tilbury battery, referred to as Coalhouse Battery in some armament returns, was built to defend the Thames as support for the nearby Coalhouse Fort. Although proposed in 1887 it was slow to start due to problems with land purchase but was complete by 1891. It consists of two large H.P. Mark 1 Emplacements for 10-inch B.L. Guns, with another two 6-inch B.L. Emplacements on either side, giving a total of six guns in a line, all on disappearing carriages. The 6-inch guns were removed and the emplacements changed to standard 6-inch BL CP mountings by 1900. On the extreme right end is a position for a 3pdr. Q.F. Gun, possible used for practice use or local defence to cover the ground between the battery and Coalhouse Fort 500 yards to the south. Another 'D' mount for Q.F. gun can be found at the extreme left of the gun line. The battery was built according to the Twydall profile, with a shallow ditch surrounding it defended by an unclimbable fence. Either side of the two central H.P. pits are sets of chambers appropriated as war shelters. These have lines of hammock hooks along the walls, each of the 6-inch pits also has a smaller single chamber for the same purpose. Many of the 6-inch cartridge and shell lifts are still in place but the magazines at the extreme right emplacement were flooded at the time of a visit in August 1997. Between the two H.P. pits is the central magazine for the 10-inch guns. This consists of two cartridge stores and lamp passages with one central shell store connecting to an ammunition lift at each end. The walls are lined with bitumen and cork to prevent problems of damp. The two ammunition lifts are still in place. The battery kept its 10-inch guns until they were declared obsolete and they were partially dismantled by 1903. By 1909 the 6-inch guns were declared superfluous and were partially dismantled. By 1913 there were no guns at the battery. On 17 June 1930 the battery was sold to a local farmer for £1200. It was used by the local population as an unofficial air raid shelter during the WWII.

To the rear of the battery were the support buildings consisting of a cookhouse, stores and offices. At the time of writing the battery was heavily overgrown but in very good condition with little signs of vandalism.

# East Tilbury (Coalhouse) Battery



10-inch B.L. H.P. Magazine East Tilbury Battery

