

Ernesettle Fort

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Commenced | 1863 (contractor failed 1866) | Armament | |
| Completed | by engineers 1868 | 1885 proposed | |
| Cost | £ 17,630 | 8 x 7-inch RBL | |
| Map Reference | SX448589 | 2 x 8-inch How. | |
| Position | North East Defences Left Flank | 1893 | |
| Type | Land Front, polygonal | 2 x 5-inch BL, | |
| Ditch | Dry | 3 x 64pr. RML | |
| Guns | 15 guns and 6 mortars | Disarmed shortly after | |
| Barrack Accom. | 60 | | |
| Present use | Empty, inside the perimeter of the RN armament depot. | | |
| History | | Caponiers | 3 galleries for musketry |
| Disposal | | Counterscarp galleries | None |
| Condition | Overgrown but mainly intact | Haxo casemates | None (3 mortar bays) |
| Access | None | Moncrieff Pits | None |
| Sources | 1868 report : Precis of Correspondence relating to the Defences of Plymouth 1893 | | |

History and Description

Ernesettle Fort, at the extreme western end of the North Eastern Defences, was constructed 210 feet above sea level. It was situated on a spur extending from the village of St. Budeaux towards the Tamar River. It contained a casemated barrack for 60 men under the S.E. corner of the terreplein. Its intended armament of 15 guns were to be placed in open batteries and 6 mortars were to be mounted under bombproof arches in the west flank three bays facing north west and three more west. (These three have been infilled) Two 5-inch BL guns on Siege Disappearing Mounts were allotted in 1893. The ditch was excavated from solid rock and was 25 feet wide at the bottom, with sides sloping at one-half to one, the base of the slope being half the height. The escarps are over 30ft. in height and the counterscarps varying from 15 to 30ft. The rear gorge wall is thirty feet high. The whole enceinte is covered by musketry galleries. The early magazine arrangements were considered to be insufficiently protected and this was to be remedied early on. The main magazine was then sited under a traverse towards the rear of the parade, where it still is. An artillery store was built just inside the main gate and a cookhouse and armoury were attached to the east end of the barracks.

The fort received some of its armament but was disarmed shortly after 1893. It was used in WWII as part of the General Line of Defence for Plymouth possibly as an anti-aircraft observation post and fire watching post. It was used after this as Royal Naval stores and now stand inside the perimeter of the RN armament depot. Some Nissen huts, now demolished, once stood on the parade. The casemates, expense magazines and tunnels to the caponiers are now sealed and the gun positions overgrown and in some cases destroyed. Two 5-inch BL position remain, together with two bricked-up expense magazines. The mortar battery is just accessible though overgrown.

Ernesettle Fort

