

Portkil Battery

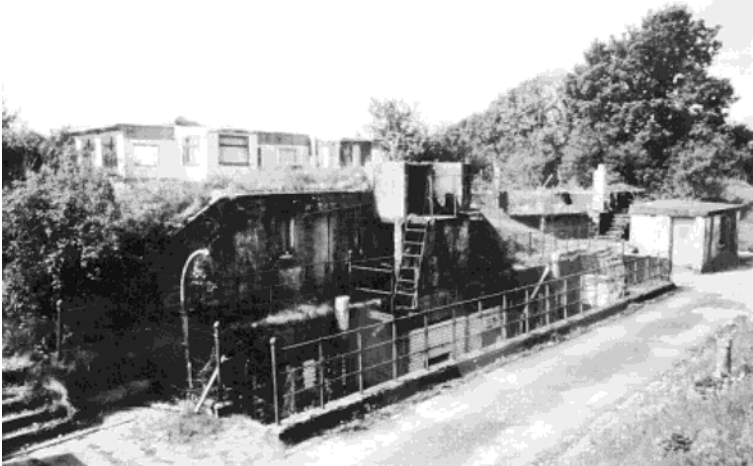
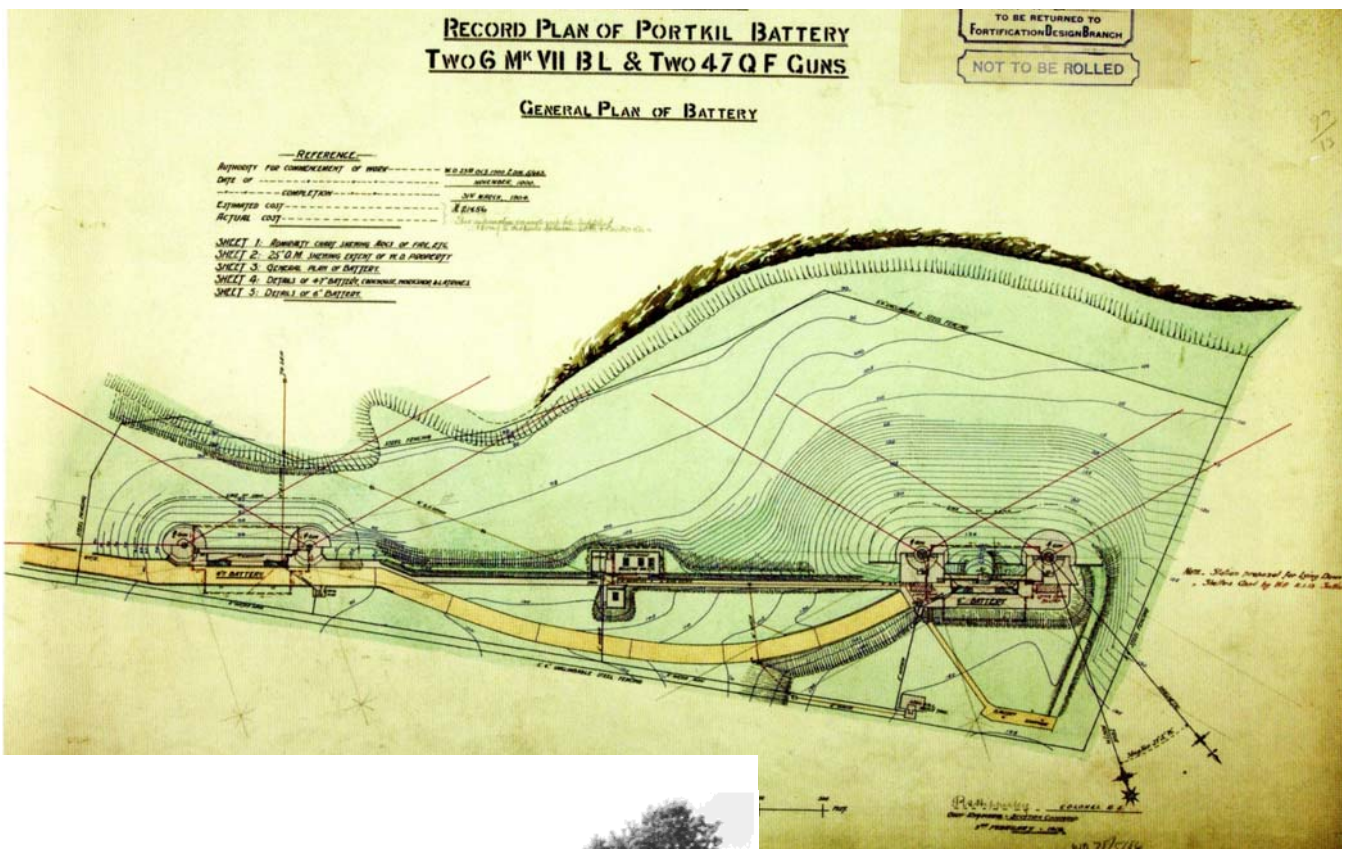
Commenced	November 1900	Armament	
Completed	31 March 1904		
Cost	£ c£23,000	1904-1916	2 x 6-inch MkVII BL
Map Reference	NS 25068 80469		2 x 4.7-inch QF
Position	Portkil Point Kilcreggen	1916-1928	2 x 4.7-inch QF
Type	Coast battery		
Ditch	None		
Guns	4		
Barrack Accom.	Caretaker's Quarters only		
Present use			
History	Coastal battery	Caponiers	None
Disposal	Into private ownership	Counterscarp galleries	None
Condition	Extant		
Access	Private property (with common access)	Haxo casemates	None
Sources	PRO WO33 and 78 CAB 3, 16 and 18	Moncrieff Pits	None

History and Description

From the middle years of the nineteenth century a battery was always planned for Portkil to cover the River Clyde in conjunction with Fort Matilda opposite Greenock. The proposed armament for the battery varied from 10-inch and 64pr. RMLs to 9.2-inch BL and 6pdr. QF guns. By 1898 the approved armament was a 9.2-inch gun, two 6-inch and two 4.7-inch QF guns, however the next year the 9.2-inch gun was dropped so that when the battery was built it was for two 6-inch and two 4.7-inch QF guns. During the First World War a boom was positioned between Dunoon and Cloch point which required a battery to cover it. The battery was built at Cloch Point with attendant searchlights, and the two 6-inch guns at Portkil were transferred to the new battery. As Fort Matilda had been disarmed and the defences of the Clyde had been concentrated in the Dunoon-Cloch Point area there was little point in maintaining Portkil Battery so it was disarmed in 1928/9. In the second World War a 4.7-inch QF battery returned to the Clyde defences. Toward Point Battery was built to cover the examination anchorage at Rothesay Sound.

Whereas the other batteries of the Clyde defences have been demolished or buried Portkil battery survives, the positions for the 6-inch and 4.7-inch guns are complete though the interiors of the underground stores and magazines are not accessible. The cookhouse and ablution block between the two sets of gun positions are extant though derelict. The caretaker's quarters and RA store have been converted into private homes; the most surprising thing about the site is that the unclimbable fence survives upright and virtually intact. The searchlight positions along the foreshore survive and have been converted into private homes. Sadly the site is also occupied by very tatty housing units, abandoned caravans and general detritus which detracts considerably from the surroundings.

Portkil Battery



Portkil
6-inch Battery
(Ian Stevenson)