

Stack Rock Fort

Commenced	18 July 1859	(second fort)	Armament	
Completed	31 December 1871	"	1871 to 1895	16 x 10-inch RML 7 x 9-inch RML
Cost	£ 96,840	"	1895	5 x 10-inch RML 7 x 9-inch RML 2 x 6pdr QF
Map Reference	SM 864049		1904-1907	3 x 10-inch RML
Position	On Stack Rock 800yds from South Hook and 1,500 yards from Chapel Bay.		1902	4 x 12pdr QF
Type	Sea fort		1917-1929	2 x 12pdr QF
Ditch	The sea		1929	Disarmed
Guns	23		Caponiers	None
Barrack Accom.	5 officers 175 men		Counterscarp galleries	None
Present use	Empty & derelict		Haxo casemates	None
History	Two forts, casemated coast battery with RML guns then QF and Searchlights		Moncrieff Pits	None
Disposal	Sold for £60 in 1932			
Condition	Poor			
Access	By boat and with permission,			
Sources	1858 & 1868 Committee Reports and material in National Archives			

History and description

A work on Stack Rock went back to the initial proposals for the defence of the Haven made by Colonel Bryce in 1817. General Burgoyne reiterated the need for a work there and in the mid-eighteen fifties a three gun tower was built; it is not generally appreciated that this tower still remains, as it was enveloped by the casemated work that was built in the eighteen sixties. The tower had a basement for stores and the magazine, at ground floor level was the main gun battery. Above it was the first floor with accommodation for a garrison of an officer and thirty men; above the first floor was the roof which may have had an earthen bomb proof covering that was removed at a later date. After the casemated work had been built the tower was adapted for other uses though the first floor remained as accommodation for officers.

The second Fort was originally to be a circular casemated one for 45 guns, with two tiers of casemated guns and a third tier on the roof firing through embrasures men.; there was to be barrack accommodation for 250 men. The second fort completely enclosed the older gun tower. The ground floor had the entrance and the casemated battery covering the Haven where sixteen 10inch RML guns were mounted behind armoured shields. In the gorge at the rear at the entrance were three 9-inch RML guns; underneath the casemated battery were the magazines and stores. Above the gun casemates at first floor level were the casemated barracks for 5 officers and 175 men that faced inwards, again in the gorge was a casemated battery for four 9-inch RML's. There were to be, on the roof of the casemates, three turrets mounting two 25 ton guns in each, but like the Solent Forts at Portsmouth, these were never built.

With the improvement in range and accuracy of artillery by the eighteen eighties the Fort was considered weak and the magazines insecure; it was proposed to remove eleven of the 10-inch RMLs and all the 9inch RMLs so that the Fort could be strengthened. By 1895 only five 10-inch RMLs remained in the casemated battery although the 9-inch RMLs remained in the gorge; also by this date the fort had acquired two 6pdr QF guns to cover a nearby minefield. In the basement most of the old magazines were filled with concrete and those that were not were adapted for other uses. A number of the armoured shields were removed from unused casemates and sent to the casemated battery at Hubberstone Fort. Three 10-inch RML barrels remain on the fort but all are partially dismantled.

In 1902 positions for four 12pdr QF guns in two groups were built on the roof of the casemates with positions for four maxim guns. In the meantime all the 9-inch RML's had been withdrawn and two of the 10-inch RML's, these latter ones were replaced by two searchlights. The remaining three 10-inch guns were retained as 'run past' guns until 1907/8.

During the First World War two of the 12pdr QF were withdrawn; by 1929 the searchlights and the remaining two 12pdr QF were removed and the Fort was sold in 1932 for £60. In many ways the Fort is the most interesting of the Haven's defences though sadly the most inaccessible; The fort was put on the market in June 2005 for £150,000.

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