

THE WESTERN HEIGHTS DOVER, KENT

ISSN 1478-7008

Report No 9: South Front Barracks
Later 19th and 20th-century barracks complex



SURVEY REPORT



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ENGLISH HERITAGE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION SERIES 30/2001





ENGLISH HERITAGE

**THE WESTERN HEIGHTS,
DOVER, KENT**

REPORT NO 9

SOUTH FRONT BARRACKS

19TH AND 20TH-CENTURY INFANTRY BARRACKS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION REPORT SERIES 30/2001

NMR No: 1349557

NGR: TR 3120 4040

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*The Casemated Barracks at South Front c 1958;
looking south-west along the south-east elevation,
within the ditch of the defensive Line (© Dover
Museum, ref D07880)*



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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT

AA	Anti-aircraft
ASC	Army Service Corps
MT	Motor Transport
NCO	Non-commissioned Officer
RGA	Royal Garrison Artillery
VC	Victoria Cross
WD	War Department
WC	Water closet



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GLOSSARY

Caponier

A sheltered passage across or projecting into a ditch; usually loopholed to provide flanking fire

Casemate

A bombproof vaulted chamber providing emplacements or loops for guns and/or troop accommodation

Counterscarp

The outer face or slope of a ditch

Exterior slope

The outer slope of a rampart, laid at a steeper angle than the superior slope, between 60° and 45°, so that enemy shot will bury itself on impact

Flanking fire

Fire, coming from a flank, which sweeps the length of the fortification

Glacis

An external slope beyond an outer ditch, usually carefully and gradually extended in a long slope towards the field or ground level

Gorge

Rear of a work; usually the neck of a bastion or a detached work

Gunroom

An enclosed chamber for an artillery piece or small arms; provided with embrasures or loops and often designed to fire along a ditch or flank

Scarp

The inner face or slope of a ditch, usually also the outer slope of a rampart

Slit trench

A small rectilinear trench, often with spoil along the forward edge, forming a temporary defensible position for infantry

Superior slope

The upper surface of a rampart or glacis which has a gradual slope to enable the defenders to see their enemy



1. INTRODUCTION

In September 1998 the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) carried out a reconnaissance and limited survey of the remains of the earthworks and buildings associated with the former South Front Barracks, an installation that formed part of the extensive defences on the Western Heights, in Dover. (Fig 1). The Western Heights Project was undertaken at the request of Kent County Council as part of an Interreg II programme relating to historic fortifications in Kent, Nord-Pas de Calais and West Flanders. The programme was co-ordinated for several partners in Kent by Kent County Council and funding for Western Heights was shared between the RCHME and the European Union. The field investigations were the responsibility of staff of the RCHME Field Office in Cambridge.

This report is no 9 in a series of ten to be produced on the Western Heights fortifications.

Figure 1
*Dover Western Heights,
location maps (pale
yellow = land below
50m OD; light grey =
land 50-150m OD; dark
grey = land over 150m
OD; pale brown =
urban areas)*

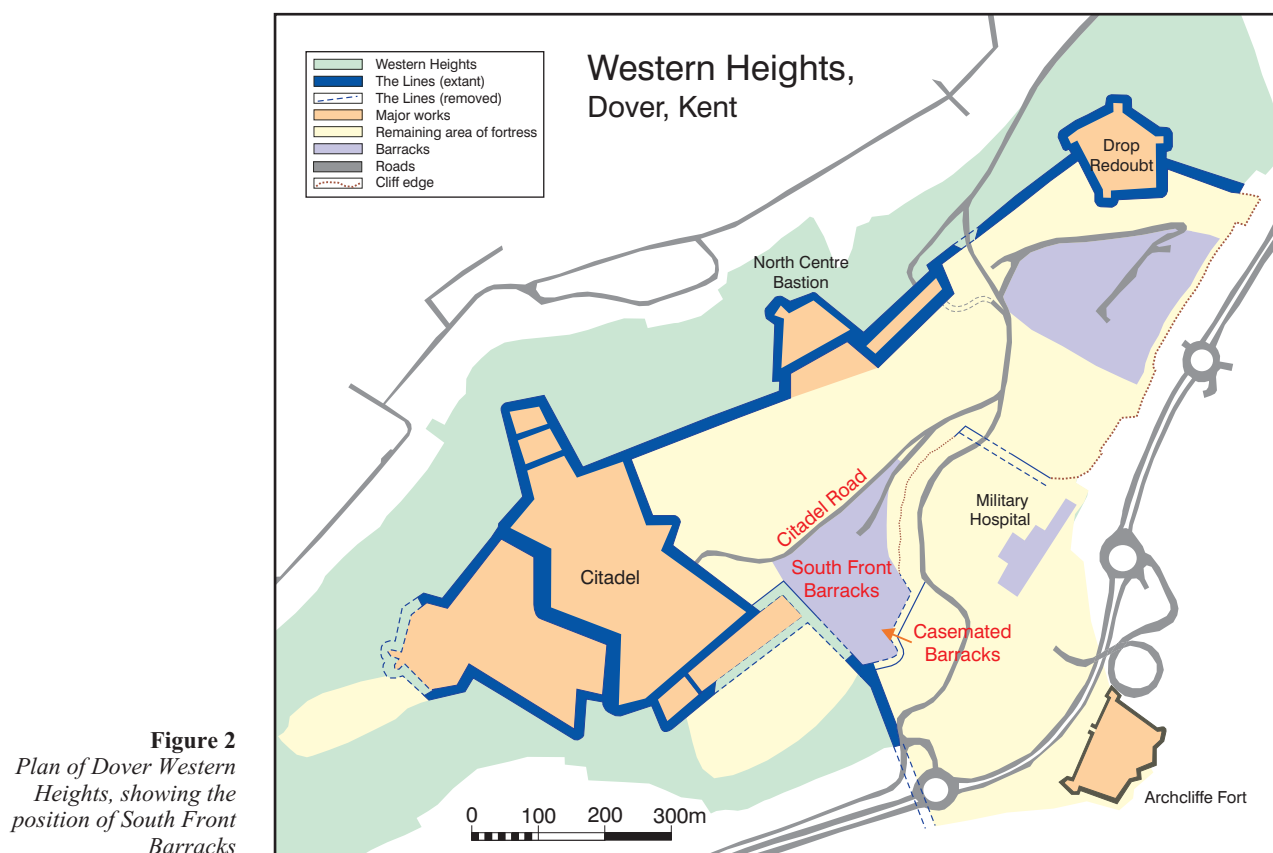




New work on the South Front of the Western Heights began around 1858 as part of a larger design and construction programme to upgrade all of the defences. This task was under the general supervision of William Drummond Jervois, Assistant Inspector General of Fortifications, delegated for Dover to an executive officer, Captain Edmund Frederick du Cane (see Pattison 2002). The work was accelerated following the report of the Royal Commission on the Defences of the United Kingdom in 1860, which endorsed the completion of the Western Heights defences.

It was in April 1860 that the Defence Committee considered the construction of casemated barracks in the South Lines, to provide bombproof accommodation for 400 men. This was to bring the Western Heights garrison up to the recommended strength of 91 officers and 2437 men (PRO: WO/33/2775). Work on the South Front as a whole began in 1860 and continued until mid-decade. More buildings were added gradually thereafter, to meet new or changing requirements.

The main building of South Front Barracks, referred to as the Casemated Barracks, stood on the moderate southern slope of the Western Heights, in a protected position provided



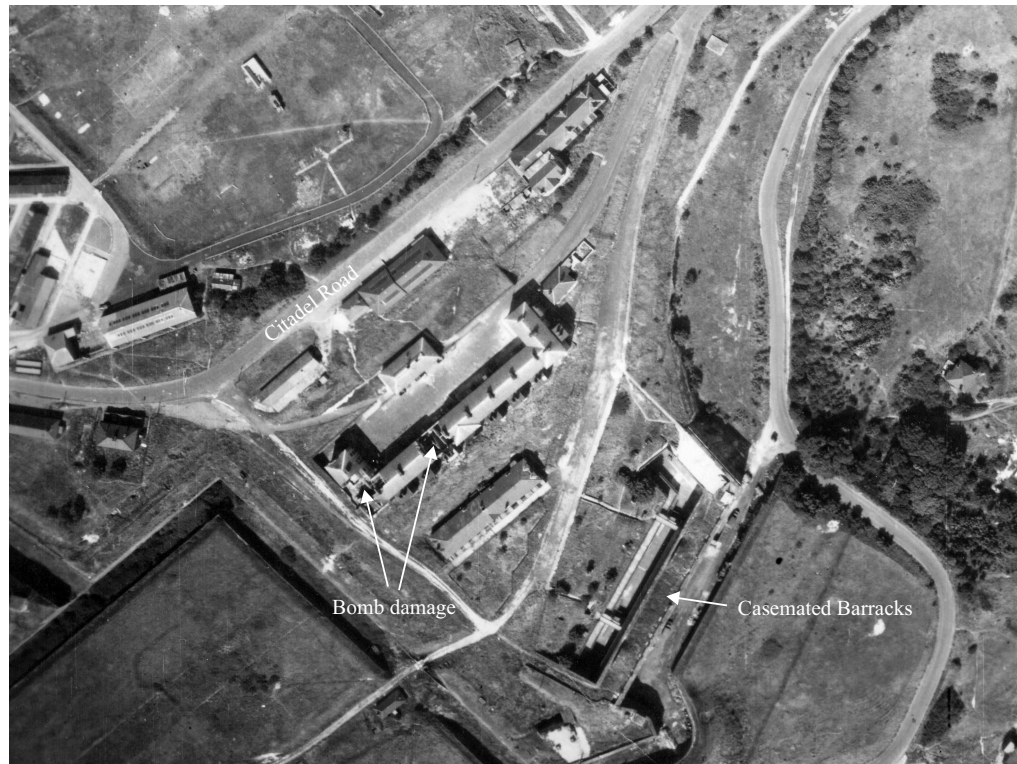


Figure 3
*South Front Barracks,
as seen from the air in
1945. Text in white is
added by the authors
(extract of NMR:
106G/UK/610/6362, by
kind permission of the
MOD)*

by a contemporary extension to the South Lines. The remainder of the complex, in 1871 comprising a Canteen and Recreational Establishment, Married Soldiers Quarters, Laundry, Stables and Bread and Meat Store, was built on rising ground between the Casemated Barracks and Citadel Road (Figs 2-3; PRO: WO/78/2755/9). Store buildings were added along Citadel Road before the end of the century (see below). By 1912, the Casemated Barracks ceased to function as accommodation, instead serving the Royal Garrison Artillery (RGA) for Records and Pay Offices. These were disused in 1927, though store buildings may have remained in use (PRO: WO/33/602; NMR: WD (1927)).

Some buildings were probably in use during the Second World War; aerial photographs taken in 1941 show bomb or shell damage in the area, including two direct hits on the Married Soldier's Quarters (NMR: HLA/549/6054-5). The damage had not been repaired in 1945 and 1950; by 1953 the site appears derelict (Fig 3; NMR: OS/53T79/66-7 541/508/4100-1). In 1959 the Casemated Barracks, Married Quarters, Laundry and most other structures were demolished but some buildings on Citadel Road were taken on by the Home Office (and remain in use). By the time aerial photographs were shot in 1966, domestic houses occupied the central part of the site (NMR: 58/7170/159-60). These remain, while the site of the Casemated Barracks is occupied by a haulage yard.



2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

An important element of the 1860s work involved re-designing the south-western approach to the Western Heights, including the provision of a new defensible entrance higher up the ridge than the original south entrance (See Brown and Williams 2001). A proposal plan of 1860 shows the new design (Fig 4). The approach would be closed by a new defensive line, running north-east, above the South Military Road, from the South Lines Casemates, then turning south-east to the cliff face above the harbour. The road would cross the last stretch on a drawbridge, through a gatehouse, into the fortress. The chalk face above the road would be cut back and surmounted by a new rampart, South Parapet, and spoil used to grade the ground to the south, so that it could be commanded by firing positions on the new line. Much of this proposal *was* carried out (Fig 5).

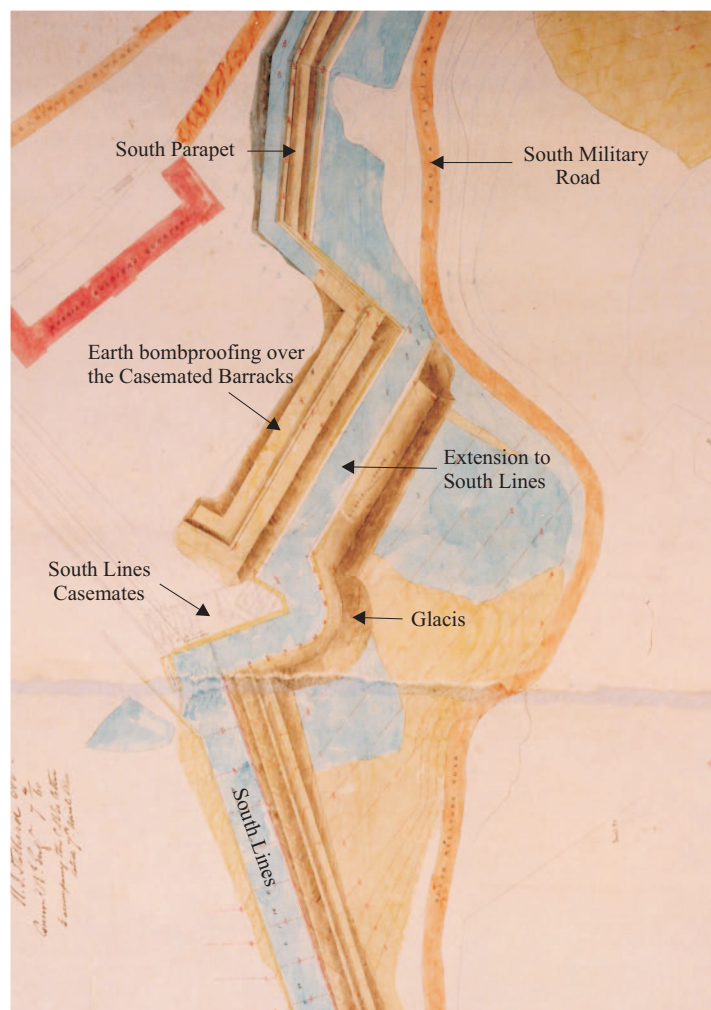


Figure 4
Plan showing initial proposals for a new South Front to the Western Heights, dated 1860. Blue and yellow represent cut and fill respectively. North is at the top of the drawing, while text in black is added by the authors (extract of PRO: MR/1/1300 © The Public Record Office)

In 1860, the Defence Committee was of the opinion that the vicinity of the South Lines was the best site for the new barracks, a choice which may have been intended to position a body of troops close to the Citadel at the western side of the Heights, as the majority were then quartered on the eastern side, at the Grand Shaft Barracks and the Drop Redoubt.

The construction of the barracks involved the modification of the pre-existing South Lines Casemates, the Napoleonic gun rooms

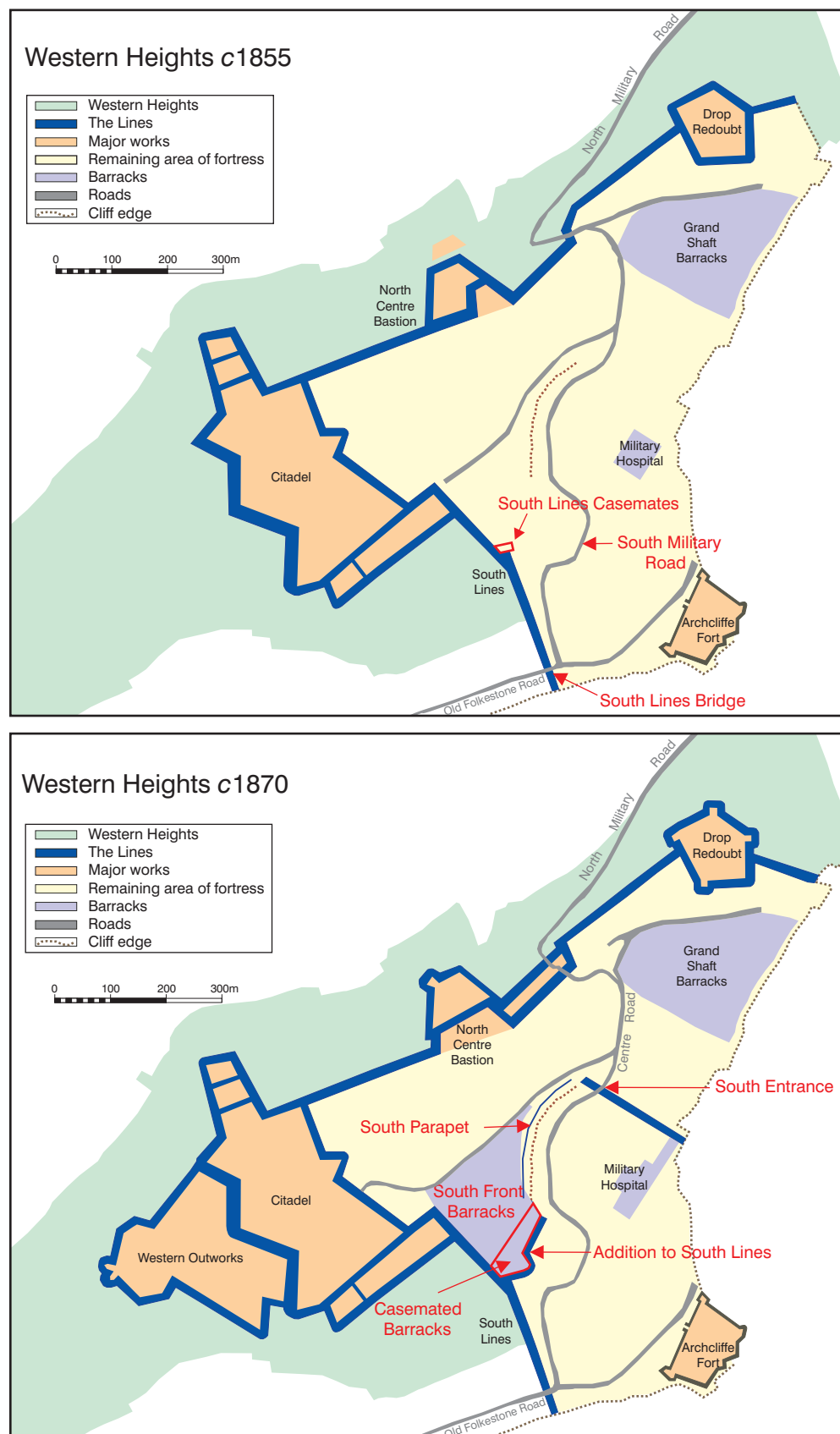


Figure 5
Plans of the Western Heights before (above) and after (below) completion of the new South Entrance and South Front Barracks, c 1855 and 1870 respectively



which are shown on a plan of 1810 (PRO: MR/1/1349). These three casemates covered the lower part of South Lines to the bridge where the Old Folkestone Road entered the fortress. They are depicted before alteration on plans of 1855, with segmental vaults, each room divided into two floors (NMR: WD/2325 and 2326). Two later sketch plans, *c* 1860, show their *proposed* eastward extension to provide a powerful *caponier* covering both the old South Lines and the new ditch running north-east to the South Military Road. Work began shortly afterwards, on new gunrooms built to a design similar to the sketches of 1860, forming the south end of the new Casemated Barracks (PRO: MR/1/1300/1-2).

In 1871, the other buildings of the complex stood on terraces north-west of the Casemated Barracks up to and along Citadel Road. These comprised a Canteen and Recreation building (1st terrace); Married Soldiers' Quarters (2nd terrace), a Laundry (3rd terrace) and Stables and a Bread and Meat Store (Citadel Road)(PRO: WO/28.2755/9). By 1897 a Warrant Officer's Quarters had been added on the 2nd terrace, while a Straw Store, Wood Store and Waggon Store had been added on Citadel Road (Fig 6). By 1903, changes on

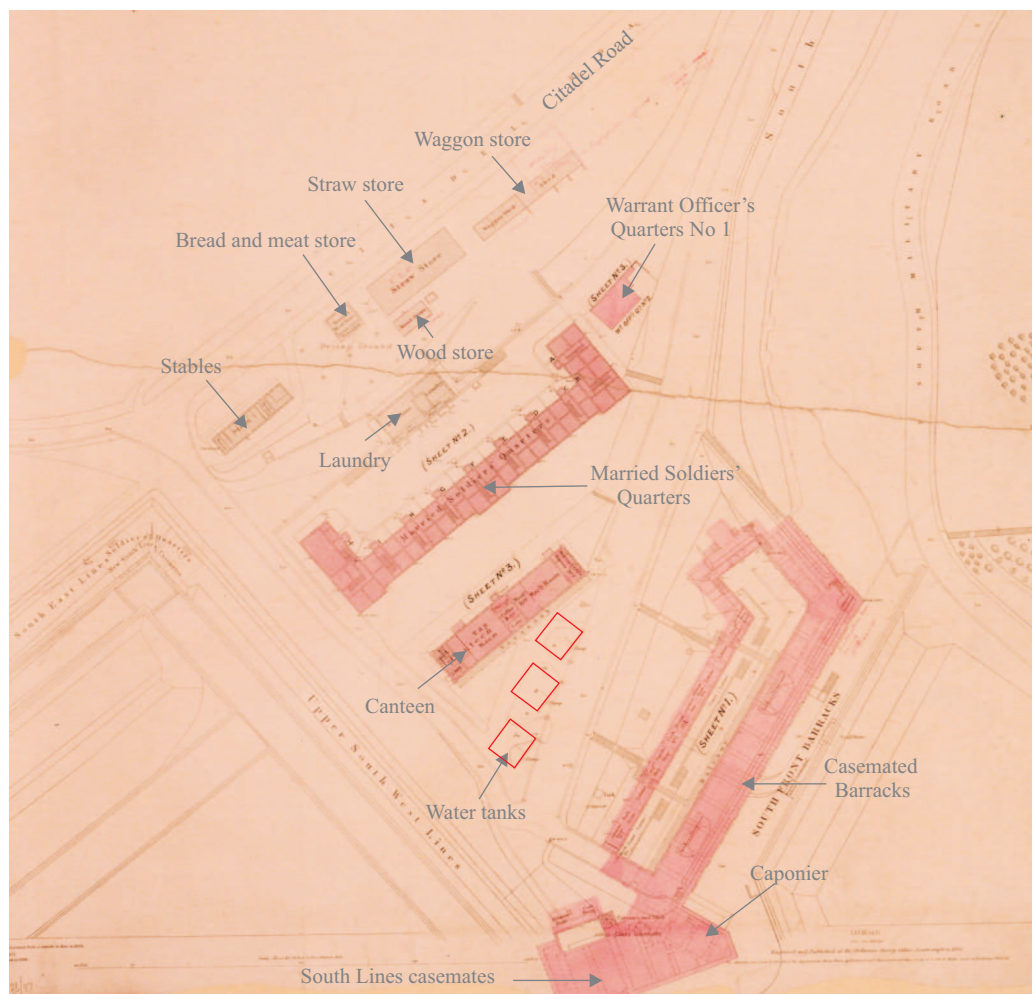


Figure 6
Plan of South Front Barracks, dated 1897.
Text in grey and the water tanks, emphasised in red, are added by the authors (extract of PRO: WO/78/2426/2 © The Public Record Office)



Citadel Road comprised the conversion/replacement of the Straw Store by a Troop Stable/Mobilisation Store, and of the Waggon Shed by a Modelling Shed/ASC Stores and the Victoria Hall Establishment (NMR: WD 231). The Mobilisation Store was to aid rapid deployment of troops and equipment in wartime: similar buildings were provided at the Grand Shaft Barracks and the Citadel (Pattison 2001; Pattison and Menuge 2002).

In 1896-7 the Casemated Barracks accommodated over 380 officers and men, with another 120 in the Married Quarters, making 500 in all (PRO: WO/78/2426/3-4). In 1909, this had been reduced to 400 and by 1912, there were no troops in residence (NMR: (1909; PRO: WO/33/602). In 1927, the Casemated Barracks were disused, having latterly been used by the RGA as offices (NMR: WD (1927)). Other buildings probably remained in use.

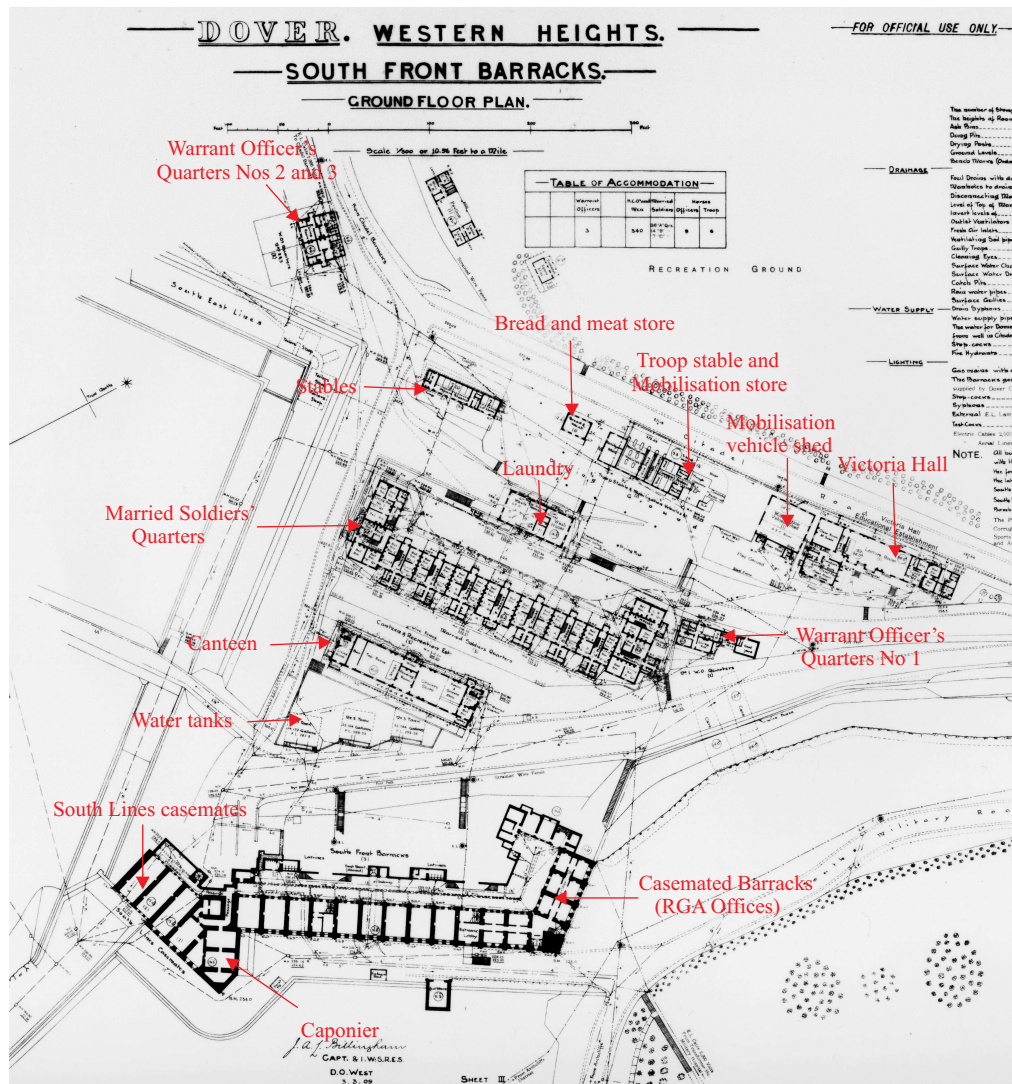


Figure 7
Plan of South Front Barracks in 1927. Text in red is added by the authors (extract of NMR: WD (1927a))



3. DESCRIPTION and INTERPRETATION

In the following description, for words and letters in **bold**, refer to figure 8.

The greater part of South Front Barracks have been demolished, the ground levelled and in some cases, redeveloped for houses and gardens. The South Lines Casemates survive in part but we were denied access for survey. This text outlines both what stood originally and what survives today.

THE DEFENCES

The Casemated Barracks were built inside the fortress against the new Line, with the south-east elevation also forming the revetment to the scarp of the ditch (Fig 9). A steep *glacis* beyond the counterscarp of the ditch provided protection for the *caponier* and barracks against bombardment from the south-east.

Although the ditch has been partially infilled, probably with rubble from the demolished barracks, its **counterscarp revetment** survives for almost the whole original length, from the South Military Road to the junction with South Lines Ditch. The south-western section curves to accommodate the 1860s *caponier*. The revetment has a slight batter and is carefully built in faced flintwork, with two string courses (of three courses each) and coping in red brick. There are small modern brick repairs towards the north-east end and on the corner of the curved section around the *caponier*. The north-east end is masked partially by a modern revetment of railway sleepers, before it is ramped down to the South Military Road at an angle of about 45°. Midway along the revetment, the top of a shallow segmental arch, now close to ground level, marks the entrances to the former Coal Store, a small rectangular casemate built under the counterscarp.

Beyond the counterscarp, the earthworks of the *glacis* are undamaged, comprising a gentle superior slope before the much steeper exterior slope, with a total vertical fall of around 5.70m (18ft 8in). There is an additional low bank on the crest of the *glacis* around the curving section of the counterscarp, into which is set a **slit trench** of 20th century date. At the north-east end, the *glacis* merges into the steep slope to the South Military Road; on the south-west it joins the rampart of the South Lines which runs down towards the sea.

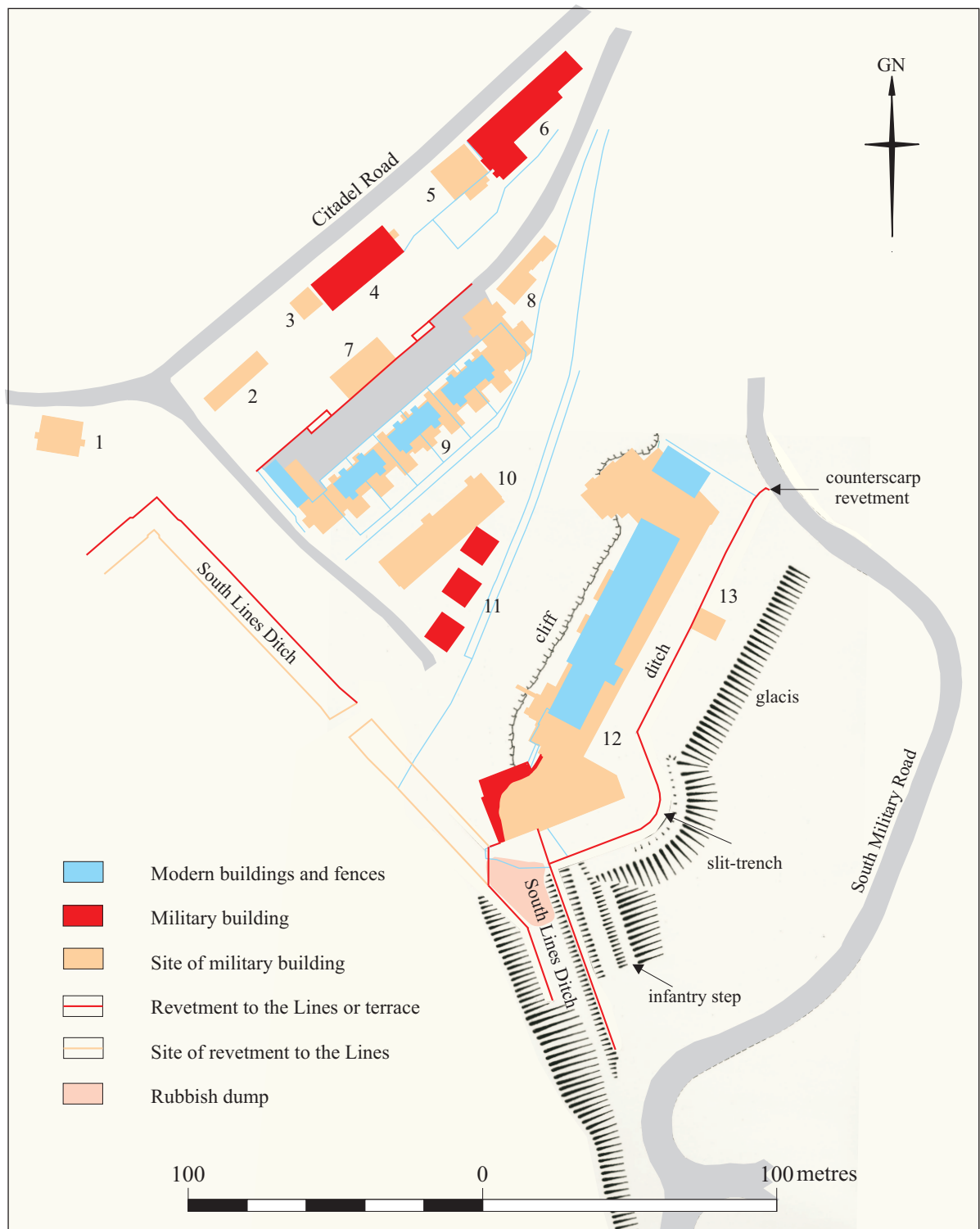


Figure 8

Plan showing surviving elements of South Front Barracks, with the location of demolished buildings from the plan of 1927

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1 Warrant Officers' Quarters nos 2 and 3 | 7 Laundry |
| 2 Stables | 8 Warrant Officer's Quarters no 1 |
| 3 Bread and Meat Store | 9 Married Soldiers' Quarters |
| 4 Motor Transport Shed, on the site of:
Troop Store and Mobilisation Store | 10 Canteen |
| 5 Mobilisation Vehicle Shed | 11 Water Tanks (underground) |
| 6 Victoria Hall | 12 Casemated Barracks |
| | 13 Coal Store (behind revetment) |



THE BARRACK BUILDINGS

The barracks were approached from the north, along a branch from Citadel Road, which had been built in the Napoleonic phase to serve three large water tanks. It was adapted for the barracks, entering between the Casemated Barracks and the Canteen. It survives as a track and is a public right of way.

The Casemated Barracks

This, the principal barrack, was a three-storey casemated range forming a truncated L-shape abutting the gun rooms of the extended South Lines Casemates. These gunrooms continued to cover the South Lines Ditch, while the extension formed a *caponier* which projected into the ditch of the new Line, thereby providing flanking fire along the barracks, whose south-east elevation formed the escarp of the ditch (Fig 9).

The barracks comprised three floors of casemated rooms around the sides and ends of a long rectangular gorge, in this case effectively a protected courtyard, created by cutting deeply into the chalk rock of the hillside. All of the rooms faced onto this courtyard. Communication between the casemated rooms of the south-east range and across the courtyard to the north-west range was made possible by elaborate steel companionways



Figure 9
The Casemated Barracks, a photo of the south-east elevation from the ditch, with the edge of the caponier at extreme left. Taken c1958 (© Dover Museum, ref D07879)



(cover; Fig 10). The casemates of the north-west range were built into the chalk bedrock which had been stepped so that terraces could be left for lateral communication, each terrace partially over the casemates of the floor below.

The north-west range had two working floors, the third being a terrace only. Ground floor rooms comprised the latrines and stores, the first floor had artisan shops, latrines,

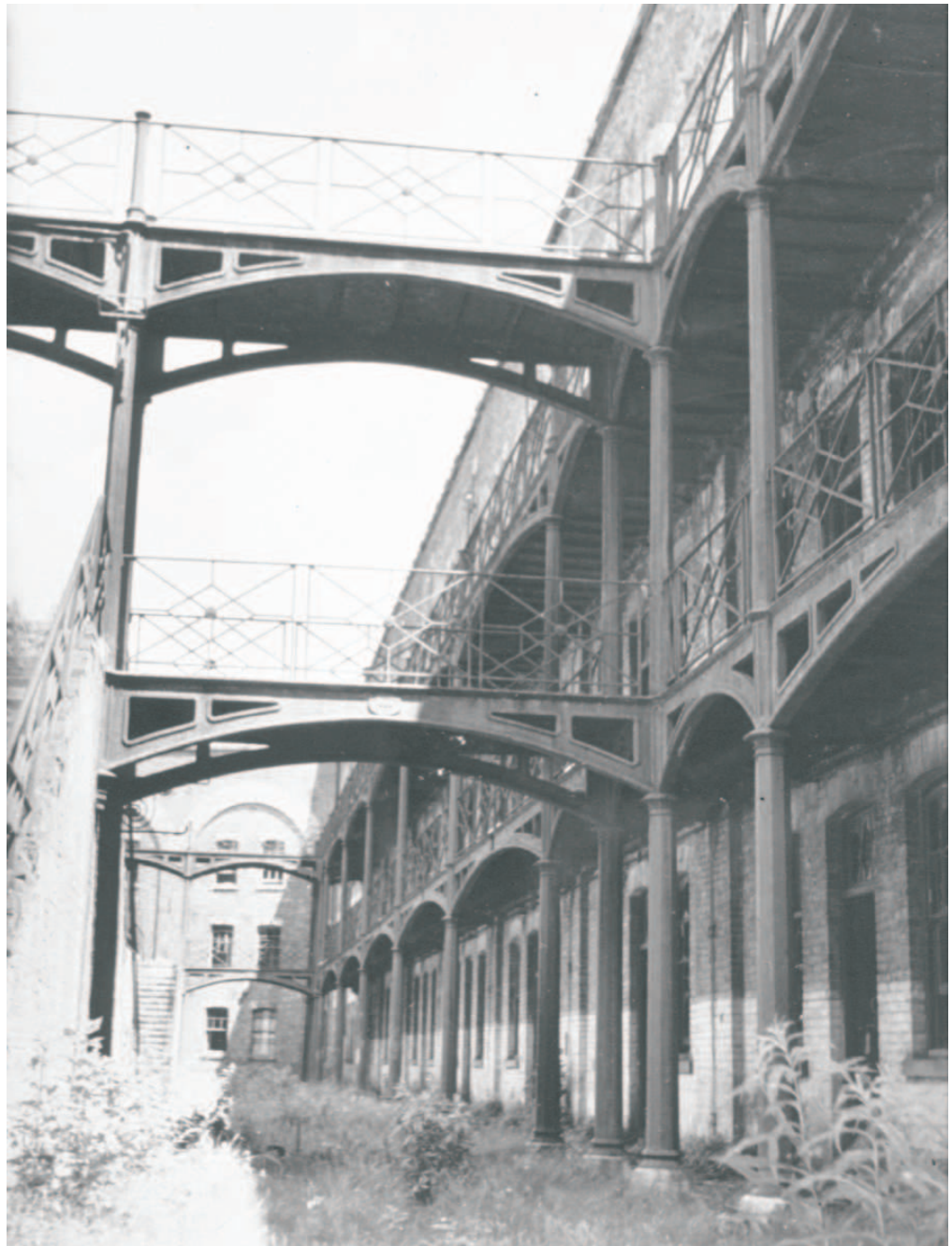


Figure 10
The Casemated Barracks, a photo of the gorge, looking north-east, showing the elaborate iron verandas and bridges allowing communications along and between the ranges. Taken c1958 (© Dover Museum, ref D07875)



Figure 11
The remains of the South Lines Casemates, at the south-western end of the former Casemated Barracks (NMR AA028134 © Crown Copyright 1998)

cookhouses, ablutions, stores and pantries. The south-east range was almost entirely for accommodation, mostly for soldiers and sergeants but with some rooms for officers at the north-western end. A short north-east range housed a guardroom at ground level. By the end of the 19th century the gunrooms of the *caponier* and South Lines Casemates had been converted to provide extra accommodation (PRO: WO/78/2426/3).

Only scant traces survive in the haulage yard, comprising parts of the rear wall of the north-west range against the cut-back chalk face of the hillside. These include tiled sections and fireplaces at various levels, possibly indicating latrines and washhouses.

BUILDINGS ON THE 1st TERRACE

The water tanks

Three water tanks date to the Napoleonic period and are shown on a plan of 1810 (PRO: MR/1/1349). However, they are two large a capacity for the casemates alone - almost 100,000 gallons (NMR: WD (1909)) - and may have been sited here to serve installations lower down the slope - Archcliffe Fort, the Military Hospital and other smaller posts. With the building of South Front Barracks, the tanks were probably adapted to serve them



also. The tanks are located underground in the hillside to the north-west of the Casemated Barracks. The site is now heavily overgrown and the tanks could not be seen.

Recreation Establishment/Canteen/Regimental Institute

This building has been demolished and the site is now heavily overgrown with scrub and young trees. It was built probably in compliance with recommendations contained in a report of 1861 by the Royal Commission on the Condition of Barracks and Hospitals (which became the statutory Army Sanitary Committee in 1862). This report resulted from the inspection of 162 barracks in the British Isles, many of which were found to be overcrowded and insanitary, with few facilities for the soldiers (Douet 1998, 140).

Although its precise date of construction is unknown, it is shown on a plan of 1871, the south-western half a Canteen and the north-eastern half a Reading Room (PRO: WO/78/2755/9). The establishment was intended to provide both basic provisions and 'respectable' off-duty entertainment for the troops. A detailed plan of 1896 shows that it faced south-east and was a single-storey hall fenestrated for seven bays, with an additional two-storey bay on each end providing married accommodation (one probably for the Canteen Serjeant) and a south-east-facing veranda. It was built of grey stock brick

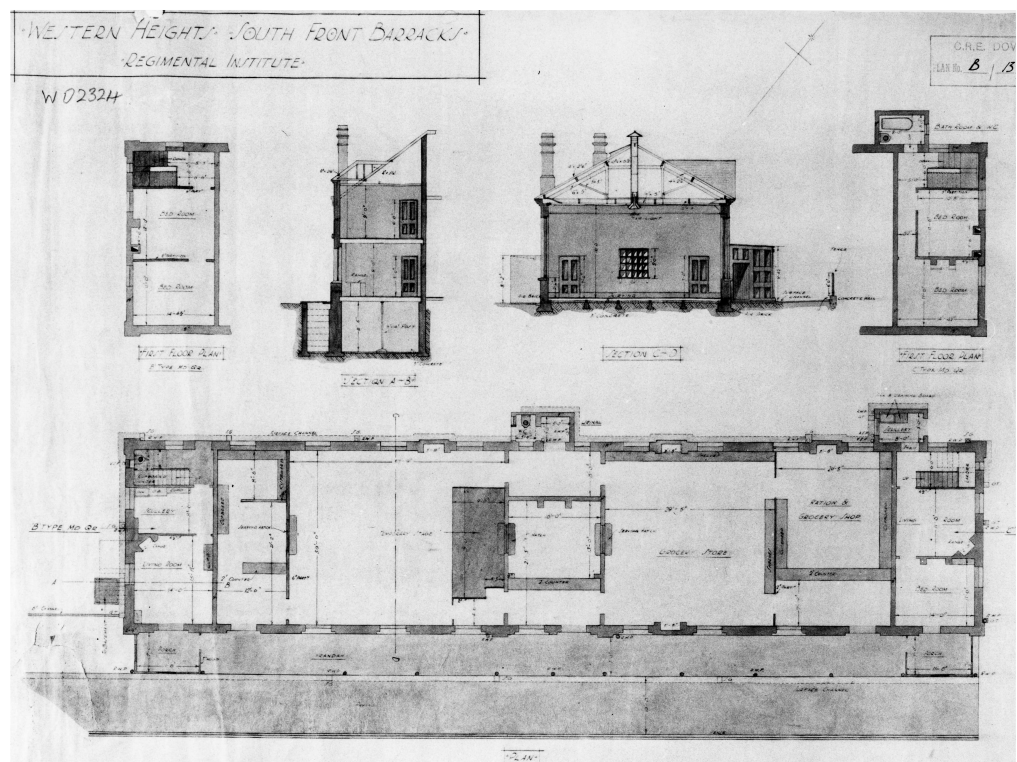


Figure 12
Record drawings of the
Regimental Institute, dated
1929 (extract of NMR:
WD/2324)



and faced in red brick (PRO: WO/78/2426/2 and 5). A later plan, of 1929, shows that it had a pitched slate roof incorporating gabled ends over the two-storey bays (Fig 12). The 1896 plan reveals that the south-western half of the hall still contained the Canteen, comprising a tap room with a stage, a bar and a coffee bar, while the other end contained both a Reading Room and a Recreation Room. By 1909, the north-eastern part had been converted to a Grocery Store and a Ration and Grocery Shop (NMR: WD (1909)). In 1927, the building is referred to as the Regimental Institute (NMR: WD (1927)).

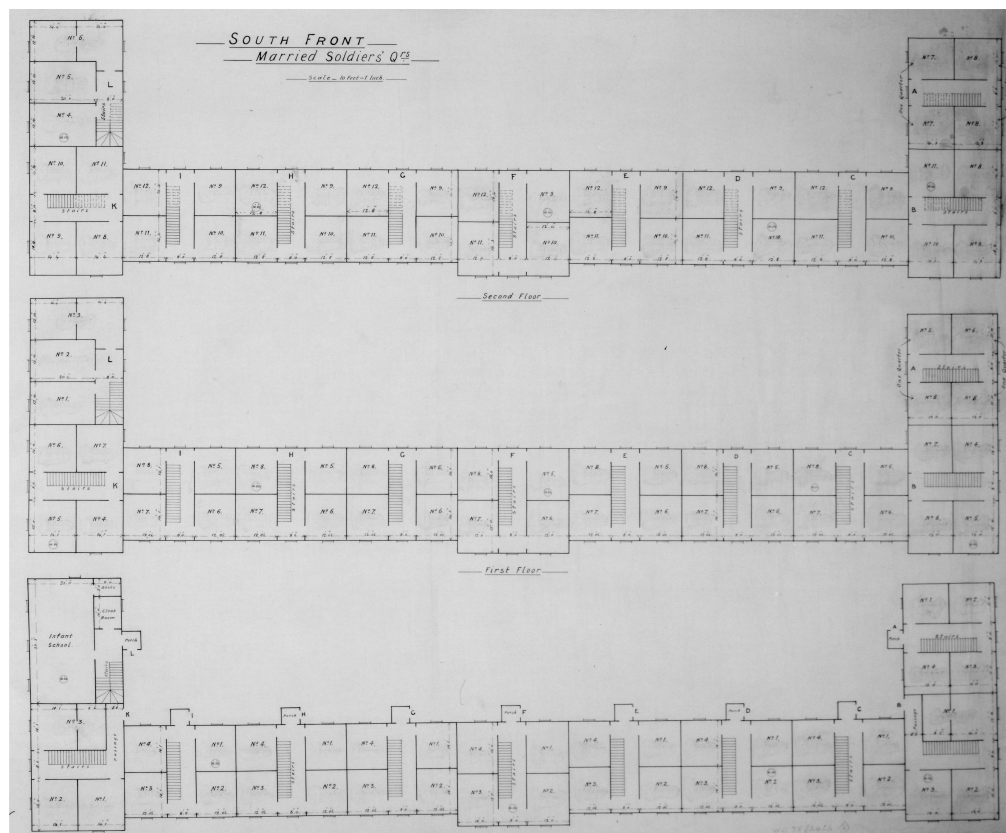
BUILDINGS ON THE 2nd TERRACE

Married Quarters

Although the Married Quarters have been demolished and the site is now occupied by 1960s housing, the revetment against the 3rd terrace survives; a high vertical brick wall laid to English-bond, the central section of which originally had latrines built under, for which two blocked doorways remain. The Laundry stood on the 3rd terrace and was reached from the Married Quarters by two flights of stone steps against the revetment. These steps are still *in situ*, and originally emerged near the ends of the Laundry.

A plan of the Married Quarters, dated 1896, shows a long three-storey range, with short wings projecting north-west from each end, entirely unheated. On the south-east face, both wings and the central three bays projected forward slightly from the main elevation (Fig 13). The central range comprised, on each floor, seven groups of four rooms, divided into pairs by central stairways accessed through porches in the ground floor of the north-west elevation. With no connecting doorways in the party walls between the room pairs, the range appears to have been entirely divided into single room units; 84 in total. The wings were organised in a similar fashion except that half of the south-west wing contained an Infant School on the ground floor, while four rooms on both the first and second floors of the north-east wing were grouped into pairs, probably for the more senior NCOs. Indeed a plan of 1895 reveals that Serjeants and Staff Sergeants occupied rooms in the wings and the central projecting part of the main range (NMR: WD/2374). Overall, the wings contained 32 individual rooms and four twin-room flats, giving a total of 36 units. This meant that in 1896 there was accommodation in the whole block for 120 married soldiers and their families (PRO: WO/78/2426/3).

In 1895, separate lavatories for men, women and children were situated north-west of the Married Quarters, under the revetment to the 3rd terrace (NMR: WD/2374).



This design and arrangement barely conforms to the model for married quarters developed in 1860 following the report of the Royal Commission on the Condition of Barracks and Hospitals. This model was first implemented at Hounslow and provided for one-room family accommodation, with fireplaces for heating and cooking, and lavatories in sanitary towers at each end of the block reached via a verandah (Douet 1998, 145). This seems to indicate that plans for married quarters at South Front Barracks had been made prior to the development of the model, because those built nearby at the Grand Shaft Barracks in 1869-70 conform closely (NMR: WD/2462; 2462; 2466). Although the position of the Married Soldiers' Quarters is shown on a plan for the proposed South Front, dated April 1860, it is unlikely that they had already been constructed, as another plan, pre-1862, is annotated 'Married Soldiers: New Barracks?' (PRO: MR/1300/3). It is likely, therefore, that they were completed by 1865 at the latest.

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bedroom connected by new doorways in the party walls, with a scullery and WC contained in new structures projecting from the south-east elevation (Fig 7). In the wings, there were similar groupings of rooms, including three- and four-room apartments for the NCOs, also with new sculleries and WCs (known as 'B' and 'C' type quarters). The old communal lavatories were disused and the school for infants was no longer here; a new school had been built near Grand Shaft Barracks. A table reveals that the overall accommodation in 1927 was for 57 men and their families, of which 21 were NCOs.

The Married Quarters were damaged during the Second World War (Fig 3).

No 1 Warrant Officer's Married Quarters

A detached house for a Warrant Officer formerly stood just to the north-east of the Married Quarters (Fig 7), having been built at some time between 1871 and 1897 (PRO: WO/78/2755/9; WO/78/2426/3). It was named No 2 in 1896 but re-designated no 1 by 1903, following the construction of quarters for two more warrant officers on Citadel Road shortly before 1900 (see below) (PRO: WO/78/2426/3; NMR: WD/2320; WD/231). As built, it was a bungalow with a central through passage incorporating a lobby. Three bedrooms were located on the south-west side of the passage, with a scullery, kitchen and living room on the other side. A yard with WC, ash tub and coal store adjoined on the north-east. Although the house has been demolished, subsidence of ground in the garden of a modern semi-detached house on the site has revealed what might be its foundations.

BUILDINGS ON THE 3rd TERRACE

The Laundry

The Laundry was probably built at the same time as the Married Soldiers' Quarters in the mid 1860s; it appears on the 1871 plan (PRO: WO/78/2755/9). It was a simple rectangular building, depicted in 1895 subdivided into a wash house, a laundry and a small drying room, with a drying ground outside to the north-west (NMR: WD/2374). In 1909 and 1927 it was divided into two wash houses with a drying room between (NMR WD (1909); (1927)).

Aerial photographs reveal that it had a gabled roof (Fig 3). Nothing now remains above ground although the site is not built over.

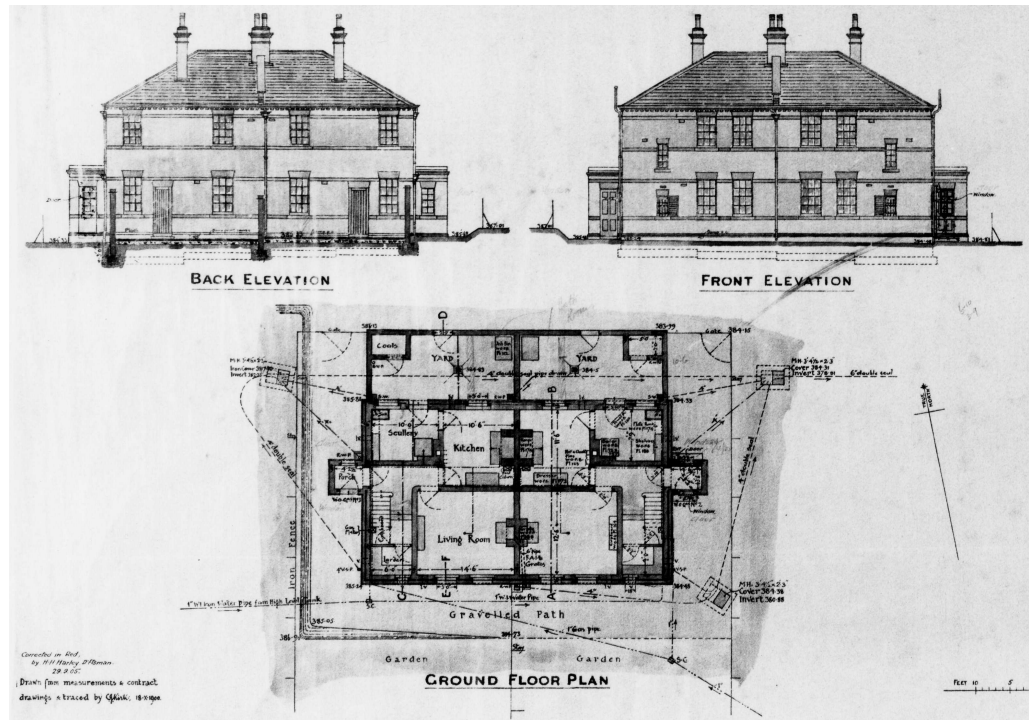


Figure 14
Record drawings of Nos
2 and 3 Warrant
Officers' Quarters,
dated 1900 (extract of
NMR: WD/2320)



Figure 15
Photo of the Warrant
Officers' Quarters Nos
2 and 3, south
elevation, in 1998
(NMR: AA028136 ©
Crown Copyright 1998)



BUILDINGS ON CITADEL ROAD

Nos 2 and 3 Warrant Officers' Married Quarters

These houses are the only surviving examples of the NCOs' Married Quarters on the Western Heights. Examples of this design were built also at Grand Shaft Barracks, probably as part of a policy during the late 19th-early 20th century to provide better accommodation for senior NCOs and their families. By this time, senior Warrant Officers (ie Sergeant Majors) had become the equivalent of master tradesman or senior foremen in civilian life and as such they expected to live in the same relative comfort as their civilian counterparts. The army also wished to encourage respectable living, hence the provision of housing with gardens and the other appointments of the artisan class living during this period.

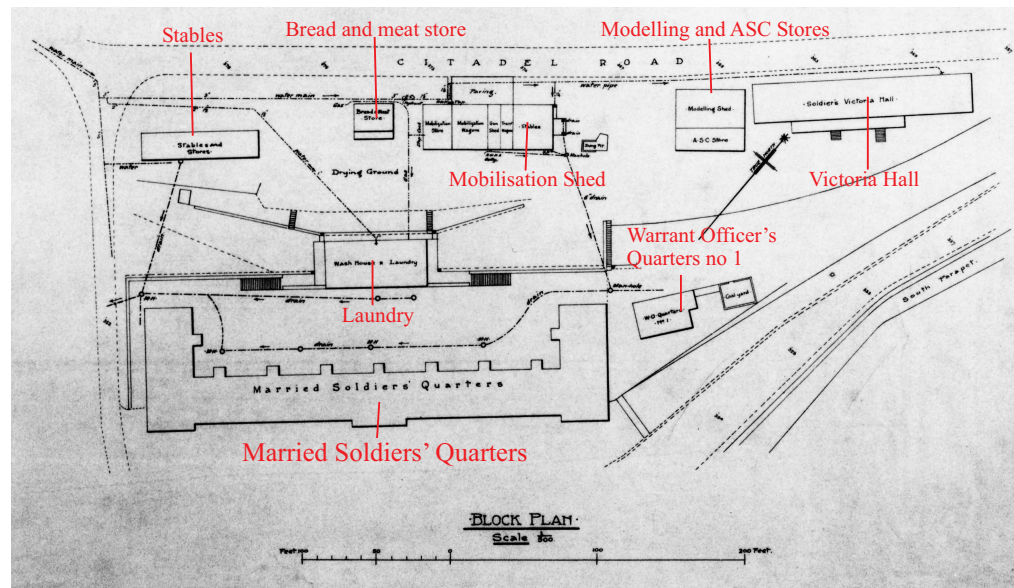
This building was constructed after 1897 (PRO: WO/78/2426/2) and before 1900, when a detailed record plan was made (Fig 14). The record plan shows that they were built as semi-detached houses for Warrant Officers, No 3 on the west and No 2 on the east. Both houses were well-appointed, comprising kitchen, scullery and living room on the ground floor, with flat-roofed porched entrances in the east and west walls respectively, and three heated bedrooms and WCs on the first floor. There were yards to the north, incorporating a coal store, and small enclosed gardens on the south.

These brick houses face north on a small area of level ground on the south side of Citadel Road just west of the South Lines. They are double-fronted, of two storeys and three-by-three narrow bays with a hipped slate roof and a centrally placed dividing wall carried clear of the roof as a fire break (Fig 15). White paint obscures the original grey brickwork with its red brick bands at plinth, ground-floor window head, first-floor window head and eaves level. The porches survive along with the large shared, central stack (smaller stacks probably for coppers in the sculleries and the grates in the rear bedrooms have been demolished).

Probably after ownership was transferred to the Home Office in the 1950s, these houses were converted to flats. This included the provision of single bay wings projecting from the front of each house and the replacement of the centrally-placed back doors with windows. The stair providing access to the first floor flat in No 3 is built over the original porch, while that to flat No 2 is built against the west wall of the projecting wing.



Figure 16
Record plan of
the buildings on Citadel
Road in 1903; text in
red is added by the
authors (extract of
NMR: WD/231
©English Heritage



The Stables

This was a long rectangular building housing horses both for the officers' and for draught purposes (Fig 16). It was constructed before 1871 and still (PRO: WO/78/2755/9). There had been no changes in its function in 1909 and 1927 (NMR: WD (1909); (1927)). Nothing remains above ground but the site is not built over.

Bread and Meat Store

Also built before 1871, the ground plan reveals that this building was similar to another (demolished) example at the Grand Shaft Barracks and to one still standing in Dover Castle (Fig 16; PRO: WO/78/2755/9; Pattison 2001). As such, it was probably a small rectangular brick building with a slate roof, well-ventilated and with a veranda for air and shade. It was still performing its original function in 1927 (NMR: WD (1927)). Nothing is extant above ground, though the site is not built over.

Straw Store and Wood Store

Built after 1871, only the rectangular outline of these two buildings is shown on the 1897 plan and their depiction suggest a wooden construction (PRO: WO/78/2755/9; Fig 6). By 1903 the Wood Store had been removed and the Straw Store replaced, or perhaps converted into a Troop Stable and Store for Mobilization Equipment and Vehicles (see below).



Motor Transport (MT) Building

The Motor Transport building is an eight by four bay building of pier and panel construction in stretcher bond with a hipped slate roof. Steel roof trusses along with the steel window frames and blue-brick sills and heads suggest that it was built around the time of the Second World War. The Citadel Road elevation is supported on steel posts showing that it had an open front to allow vehicles to be driven into the building. The space between the piers has subsequently been infilled with irregularly bonded brickwork panels in a darker brick, while the area in front of the building has been levelled with concrete as a forecourt or parking area.

Aerial photographs show that this building had skylights in both slopes of the roof - still identifiable by the darker slates used to fill them in - suggesting that it might have been used as a garage for the light repair of military vehicles (Fig 3).

Troop Stable and Store for Mobilization Equipment and Vehicles

This structure, replaced by the surviving Motor Transport Building after 1927, is shown on a record plan of 1903 as a seven bay, single storey building with a pitched slate roof incorporating a ridge ventilator (Figs 16 and 17; NMR: WD (1927)). The entire building stood on a concrete base with the posts of the timber-framed Mobilisation Store standing on concrete pads (WD 231). It seems likely that these survive in the western four bays of

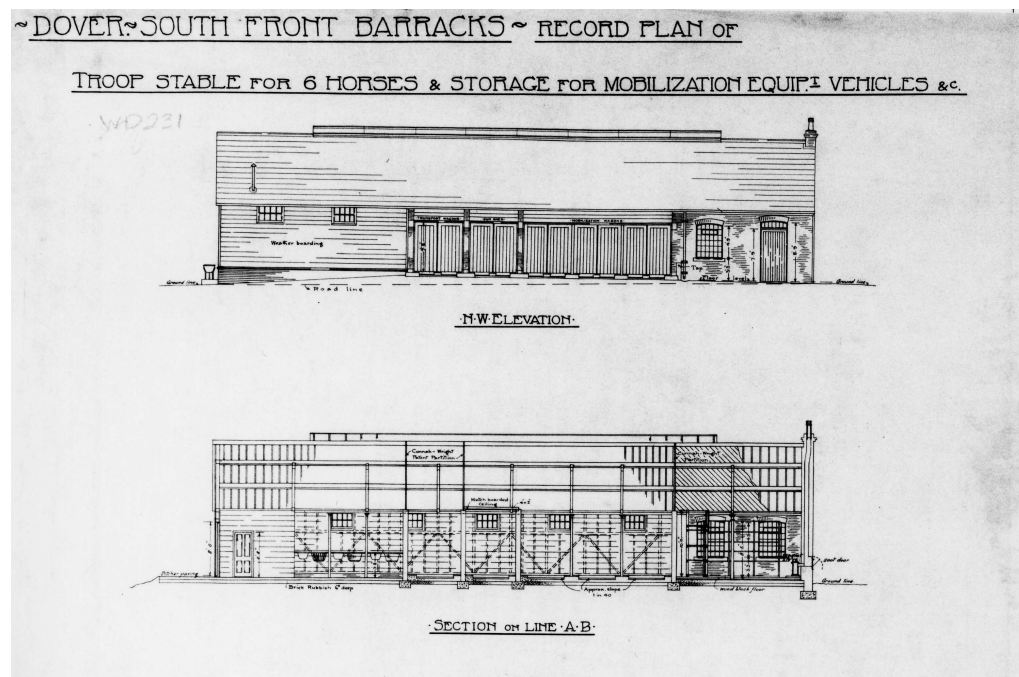


Figure 17
Record drawings of the
Troop Stable and Store
for Mobilization
Equipment and
Vehicles, dated 1903
(extract of NMR:
WD/231)



the MT building, where there are pads that do not coincide with the piers of the present structure.

The Mobilisation Store, which contained all the minor equipment required for war but not needed in peacetime, and a Gun Shed, were located in the five timber-framed, weather boarded bays forming the south-western two-thirds of the building. The brick stable for the transport horses occupied the remaining bays at the north-east end.

Modelling Store (later a Mobilisation Vehicle Shed) and ASC Store

The large square Modelling Store was present by 1903, adjacent to Victoria Hall (Fig 16). Between 1909 and 1927 it was converted for use as another Mobilisation Vehicle Shed (NMR: WD (1909); (1927)). The building has gone though the site is not built over.

Victoria Hall (Educational Establishment and Married Quarters)

Victoria Hall is located on the south side of Citadel Road, at the very top of the slope overlooking the site of the other buildings of South Front Barracks. It is currently in use as the Young Offenders' Institution Officers' Recreation Club and is in reasonable condition. There have been only a few alterations, comprising suspended ceilings and an additional door from the lobby to the hall, to an otherwise original fabric. It is the last standing example of the wide range of institutional buildings formerly provided for the garrison of the Western Heights (Fig 18).

A detailed plan survives, dated 1926, on which is a note reading: *'This building was erected in 1898 by the Church of England Soldiers and Sailors Institute as a Soldiers Home. It was extended in 1903. The War Department took over the structure in 1924 at a cost of £1300..... The cost of converting it was £674'* (NMR: WD/2323).

The precise function of a Soldiers' Home is not clear. However, the close association with the Church of England and the emphasis on Christian military heroes (see below) is suggestive of one of the various campaigns to bring temperance and moral living to a professional army, still seen - even in the 1890s - as loose-living. This building may have been provided as an alternative off-duty recreation to the Canteen and Regimental Institute - which resembles it in design but sold beer - and to the fleshpots of Dover. The Married Quarters were probably provided for a civilian caretaker.



Figure 18
*Photo of the Victoria
Hall Establishment,
from the east in 1998
(NMR: 028135 ©
Crown Copyright 1998)*

It is a brick-built, thirteen-by-three bay single-storey building of pier and panel construction in English bond, with an oversailing pitched roof. The 1903 extension consists of a two-storey three-by-four bay wing built at the south-west end, with a lean-to veranda along two-thirds of the south-east wall of the 1898 building. The south-east elevation has also been considerably altered probably after the completion of the veranda (Fig 19).

As built in 1898, Victoria Hall formed a long rectangular range comprising a central six-bay hall with a three-bay room at its south-west end and a four-bay Married Quarters at the north-east end. The difference in function between the sections of the building is emphasised by the fenestration; large tripartite casement windows originally lit the room and hall, four of which survive - two in the Citadel Road elevation and two in the south-west gable end; the Married Quarters are lit by smaller domestic size windows of the same pattern, with a single sash window in the north-easternmost bay. This was originally provided (according to the 1926 plan) for a bedroom.

The remaining entrance to the institutional part of the building is towards the south-west end of the elevation onto Citadel Road. It is formed by a porch underneath a single-order





semicircular arch with brick jambs and a stone head and imposts. The interior of the porch has an encaustic tiled floor and a close-boarded ceiling. The 1926 plan shows double doors leading to a lobby between the classroom and hall; a single door has replaced these doors although the fanlight may be original. It is probable that a similar porch was present in the south-east wall but if so this has been removed by the work for the 1903 extension. On the south-west side of the entrance is a dedication stone laid on December 8th 1898, by Lord Roberts of Kandahar VC. Lord Roberts was revered as a model of the Victorian Christian military hero and the placing of his dedication stone in such a prominent position may have been intended to remind the soldiers entering the Institute of the values its builders subscribed to. A similar stone, dedicated to another such hero, General Gordon of Khartoum, is situated further along the wall.

At the time of survey, access to the interior of the building was limited but the majority of the 1898 building *was* accessible. The three-bay room was locked but the 1926 plan shows that it with a large fireplace in the south-west gable; the position of this fireplace is shown on the outside of the building by a blind panel between the two tripartite windows. Presumably the original entrance to this room was from the lobby, then blocked during the 1903 extension. The hall, reached through a doorway from the lobby, is largely as shown on the 1926 plan; a large open space with two fireplaces in the north- west wall (again shown on the outside by blind panels) and one in the centre of the south-east wall. Although a modern suspended polystyrene ceiling largely obscured the view of the hall roof, the view permitted by a missing tile showed that it retained the arched-brace roof shown on the plan. The single visible brace was planed and varnished, indicating that it was always exposed to view, a fact confirmed by the close boarding of the ceiling and the provision of large square vents, with decorative circular covers, set in the ridge of the roof.

The hall is connected to the Married Quarters by a single door in the corner of the north-east wall. Only the first bay, next to the hall, was accessible at the time of survey. This bay comprised three rooms; a small bathroom and a scullery on the south-west side of the building, giving onto a kitchen/living room on the north- east. Although a large stack, shown in 1926 for a kitchen range, has been removed, the walls of the kitchen and bathroom and the steps to the cellar remain. The rest of the quarters consisted of two bedrooms divided by a passage with steps leading down to a door in the north-east gable. This door was the only external entrance, reached from Citadel Road by another door into an enclosed yard with privies and a coal store. The yard has been demolished, leaving only the wall onto Citadel Road, with the original door blocked.



The 1903 work, undertaken to convert the entire building into a school and educational establishment, forms a two-storey wing partially over and projecting south-east of the original structure. It is of brick laid in stretcher bond with a pitched slate roof parallel to the original building. On the 1926 plan, the ground floor provided an additional classroom, along with the one converted from the room at the south-west end of the 1898 building, a teachers' room and seven lavatories; girls and teachers on the ground floor, boys in a small basement. The first floor was taken up largely by a Mens' Educational Room, with a small store room in one corner, and was reached via a stair from the lobby of the 1898 building, the construction of which may have required the blocking of the door to the original south-west room. The original external door at the south-east end of the lobby now leads to a passage serving the ground floor of the 1903 wing and onto the veranda. The hall of the 1898 building became a Lecture Room (NMR: WD/2323).

Like the classroom and the hall of the 1898 building, large tripartite window frames are used in the 1903 wing. On the north-east, south-east and south-west walls of the first floor, there are central timber-built oriel windows, supported on brick piers and capped by pitched pantiled roofs projecting at right angles from the main roof structure, to bring copious light into the Men's Educational Room. This room has an arched-braced roof and fireplaces carefully positioned in the corners, producing a lofty unobstructed space suitable for lectures and teaching.

A veranda was built in 1903, from the new wing along the south-east wall of the 1898 building, as far as the first bay of the Married Quarters. Small stylistic details, notably the shaped and notched ends to the rafters of the veranda roof, which match those under the oversailing eaves of the 1903 wing, confirm the construction date of the veranda.

At a later date the south-east wall of the hall was extensively altered to give access onto the veranda. It was rebuilt with two doorways and two bay windows, all of which have blue bullnose-brick jambs and lintels. That these bay windows were built after the veranda is shown by the gap left in the top courses of brickwork to accommodate the purlins of the veranda roof.



4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Casemated Barracks of South Front are one of three defensible barracks constructed on the Western Heights in the late 1850s and 1860s. The other two were placed in similar positions in the ditch of the Western Outworks of the Citadel (The North and South Casemates) while similar, bomb-proofed but not defensible barracks were built for officers in the Drop Redoubt (Pattison and Menuge 2002; Brown *et al* 2001). In each case the barracks were recessed and concealed, with one main elevation forming the scarp revetment to a defensive ditch. Furthermore, at South Front, the Drop Redoubt and the South Casemates the other main elevation gave onto a gorge and all except the Drop Redoubt incorporated flank defences. At the time, these measures rendered the barracks relatively safe from all but highly accurate high angle mortar bombardment. Similarly, all were built solidly to a high standard, incorporating fine decorative brickwork detail.

This level of defensive provision at South Front Barracks reflects the contemporary trend for cross-over in the planning of fortresses and barracks and is in sharp contrast to the exposed and vulnerable Grand Shaft Barracks, built for the troops on the Western Heights in 1804-5. Such measures are seen elsewhere, for instance in the gorged, casemated barracks built in the new forts defending Portsmouth in the 1850s and 1860s, notably Fort Purbrook (1859), St George's Barracks, Gosport and Fort Wallington (Douet 1998, 157-60). It was also employed extensively in the other Royal Commission forts built around the country in the 1860s and 1870s, notably in Dover itself at Fort Burgoyne. However, by this time the appearance of powerful rifled artillery had rendered even these defensive measures of questionable value.

The accommodation in the Casemated Barracks was given to the RGA to form their record and pay offices around 1912, while other buildings remained in use. This probably reveals a reduced garrison of regulars at Dover, in accordance with the mobilisation plans of the time, to be augmented from elsewhere in the event of an invasion. However, the Casemated Barracks were totally disused in 1927 but may have been brought back into use for miscellaneous accommodation following the outbreak of war in 1939.

Photographs taken at South Front before demolition in 1959 capture the impressive scale and detail of these barracks, with their sweeping brick vaults and elaborate Victorian ironwork verandas and bridges. Their loss must be viewed as a matter of some regret, offset only to a small degree by the ancillary buildings which survive along Citadel Road.



5. SURVEY AND RESEARCH METHODS

The survey was carried out by Paul Pattison, Moraig Brown, Andrew Williams and Adam Menuge. Data was captured at 1:1000 scale, using measuring tapes and conventional graphical methods.

All photography is by Steven Cole and Alun Bull: finished drawings are the work of Paul Pattison and Moraig Brown.

This report has been researched and written by Paul Pattison and Andrew Williams.

The site archive and a copy of this report have been deposited in the archive of English Heritage at the National Monuments Record Centre, Kemble Drive, Swindon SN2 2GZ (NMR Number TR 34 SW 512, HOB UID 1349557).

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6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to thank the following for their help in this project:

John Iveson and the staff of Dover Museum

Paul Johnson of the Public Record Office



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8. LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN DURING THE SURVEY

Held in the National Monuments Record Centre, Swindon

- | | |
|----------|---|
| AA028133 | Remains of the South Lines Casemates and <i>Caponier</i> , from the east. |
| AA028134 | Remains of the South Lines Casemates, from the east across the haulage yard |
| AA028135 | South Front Barracks; Victoria Hall from the west |
| AA028136 | South Front Barracks; Warrant Officers Quarters Nos 2 and 3, from the south |



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The National Monuments Record contains all the information in this report - and more: original photographs, plans old and new, the results of all English Heritage and RCHME field surveys, indexes of archaeological sites and historical buildings, and complete coverage of England in air photographs.



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