

## Slough Fort

<b>Commenced</b>	Early 1860s
<b>Completed</b>	Substantially complete by 1868
<b>Cost</b>	£ 27,343 Estimated
<b>Map Reference</b>	TQ 837 785
<b>Position</b>	South bank of River Thames
<b>Type</b>	Sea/river
<b>Ditch</b>	Dry
<b>Guns</b>	7
<b>Barrack Accom.</b>	3 officers, 1 N.C.O. and 75 men
<b>Present use</b>	Maintained by Slough Fort Preservation Trust
<b>History</b>	Later used as riding stables
<b>Disposal</b>	Sold by Army 1929
<b>Condition</b>	Good
<b>Access</b>	By arrangement with Slough Fort Open during the Summer on selected weekends
<b>Sources</b>	Wilson, Later 19th Century Defences of the Thames (Journal of the Socy. for Army Historical Research 1963)

### Armament

#### 1875 - 1887

7 x 7-inch RBLs

#### 1895

2 x 6-inch & 2 x 9.2-inch BLs added in wing batteries all on H.P. disappearing carriages.

3 x 3pr. QF

6 x Machine Guns

#### 1905

2 x 9.2inch BL on barbette (right flank)

1912 Disarmed

#### 1940

2 x 12pr QF for anti torpedo boat defence

### History and Description

Slough Fort, although part of the Thames defences, was also intended to defend a possible approach to Chatham. It was constructed to prevent an enemy landing at the only accessible point for the purpose of attacking Chatham Dockyard from the North. The fort is a semi-circular casemated work of granite and Kentish ragstone. The armament was intended to be mounted on the roof and in seven gun casemates for 7-inch 7-ton guns underneath, protected by iron shields seven feet square. The terreplein was prepared for three guns with two expense magazines communicating with the basement magazines by lifts. This part of the armament was never supplied.

The fort was closed at the gorge by a defensible barracks, accommodating 3 officers 1 NCO and 70 men, with offices and an adequate water supply. The original plan for rearward defence, a gate, was considered inadequate and a ditch with drawbridge was added to the plans. In 1869 the work was complete apart from the drawbridge and provision for the shields.

In 1887 the fort was armed with 7-inch RBL guns. It was then recommended that the ditch be arched over to form a gun store for 4 x 16pr. RML field guns, 3 x 3pr. QF guns on field carriages and three machine guns. As part of the 1888 Imperial Defence Loan plans, the front of the fort was earthed up and the gun casemates were completely removed leaving the magazines which were reappropriated as three barrack rooms for 17 men, 1 officer's quarter and three married soldier quarters.

Two wing batteries for 6-inch and 9.2-inch BL guns were added by 1895 to the left and right of the fort respectively. By 1905 two 9.2inch BL guns on barbette mountings were placed on the right flank positions, the HP guns being withdrawn. The fort was disarmed by 1912. In November 1940 two 12pdr QFs were mounted on the fort's roof for anti-MTB defence.

At one point the fort housed a small zoo, and alterations from this period make the roof a little difficult to understand. It was used for many years as a stables for the riding school. In 2012 it was decided that the fort should be renovated and conserved. The stables were moved to premises nearby. The fort is now actively maintained by volunteers of The Slough Fort Preservation Trust and is opened for visits on selected occasions during the Summer.

