

Fort Monckton

Commenced	c1783	Armament	
Completed	1789-90 but updated to 1880s	1872	2 x 7-inch R.B.L. 2 x 8-inch S.B. 9 x 32pr. 2 x 24pr. 6 x 18pr. 7 x 12 pr.
Cost	£ unknown	1893	6 x 64pr. R.M.L.
Map Reference	SZ 612979	Caponiers	Two for musketry (two storey)
Position	Gosport, Stokes Bay (Gilkicker)	Counterscarp galleries	None
Type	Sea Front / bastioned	Haxo casemates	None
Ditch	Dry / Wet	Moncrieff Pits	None
Guns	22 casemated, 6+ on terreplein		
Barrack Accom.			
Present use	Various Military uses		
History	Napoleonic Fort updated in 1860s		
Disposal Condition	Still in Military use Actively preserved		
Access	None		
Sources	“Western Defences of Portsmouth Harbour” G.H. Williams Portsmouth Papers No.30		

History and Description

Fort Monckton was constructed in the 1780s on the site of a former fort know as ‘The Fort at Gilkicker’. Much controversy surrounded its design and construction and it eventually changed its name to the present ‘Fort Monckton’, named after the Governor of Portsmouth Lt. Gen. Robert Monckton who had ordered a Col. Archer to build it. The fort in its original form was practically completed during 1789-90, just prior to the French Revolutionary War of 1793. It was built mainly with civilian labour.

When the 1860 commission was set up Fort Monckton was considered to be well out of date. It was given a minor defensive role in the great scheme for Portsmouth Harbour. In 1878 the Royal Engineers moved into Fort Monckton to use it as a barracks whilst they trained in the use of submarine mines, and later searchlights. In the 1880s the armament of the fort was revised. In 1880 Fort Monckton was the headquarters of the 4th (Submarine Mining) Company Royal Engineers.

The Portsmouth Division Submarine Miners (Militia) Royal Engineers were trained at Monckton for two months each year in May and June. In 1893 the Royal Marine Artillery also had a detachment of subarine miners at Monckton.

During World War One it was used to mount Anti-Aircraft searchlights and in World War Two it held an Anti-Aircraft artillery unit.

Almost the whole of the original fort still exists but it is a present occupied by the Military and no access to it is possible. It can be viewed from a distance across the golf course at Gilkicker but any closer viewing is not recommended. It has the honour of being the only fort of the Portsmouth defences still in Military (as opposed to Naval) hands.

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