

Frenchman's Point Battery

Commenced	3rd September 1900
Completed	27th March 1903
Cost	£ £10,322 Os 7d
Map Reference	NZ 388664
Position	Near Frenchmans Point
Type	Coast Battery
Ditch	At front for wire entanglement 3
Guns	
Barrack Accom.	2 NCO's and 24 men
Present use	Coast Defence Battery
History	Sold into private ownership initially
Disposal	Demolished/Buried
Condition	
Access	Open (if you know where to look)
Sources	Material in N. Archives in Classes CAB 3, 12, 18 & 36 WO 33, 78 and 192

Armament

1888

Proposed 2 x 9.2inch BLHP
2 x 6inch BLHP

1895 RA & Re Works Committee

Approved 1 x 9.2inch B.L.
3 x 6in B.L.

Proposed 1 x 8inch B.L.
3 x 6-inch B.L.
1 x M.G.

1903-1922 1 x 9.2-inch BL Mk X
2 x 6-inch BL Mk VII

1906 - 1915

above armament reduced to reserve/practice status

1941 - 1943 3 x 7.5 inch BL Mk VI

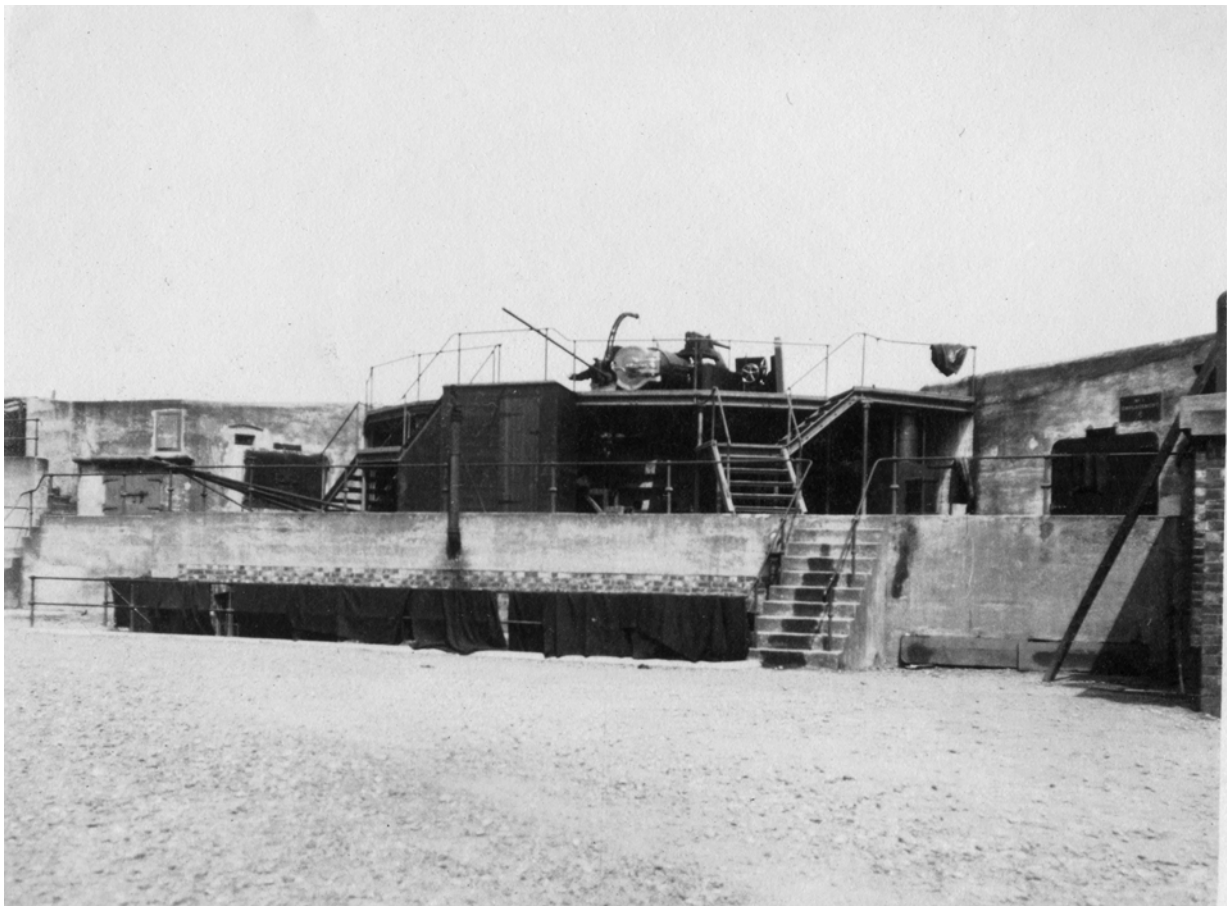
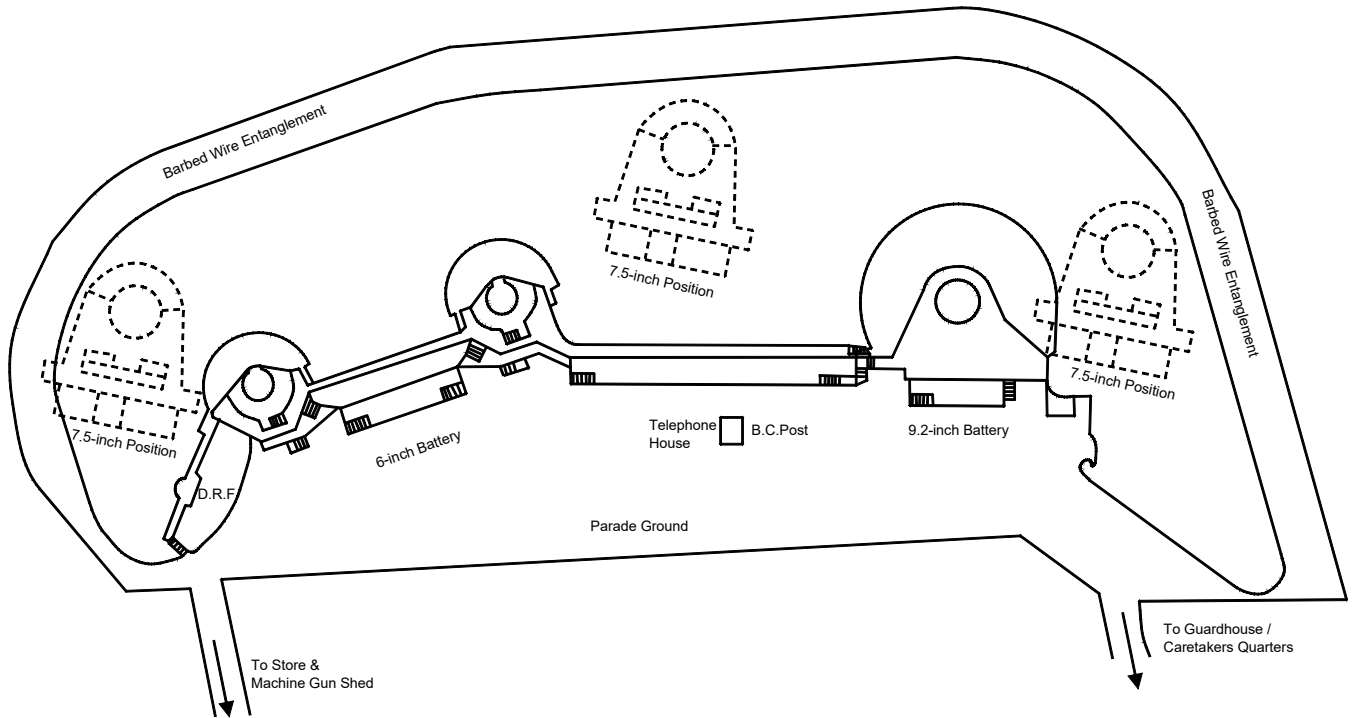
History and Description

The Battery is to the south of the River Tyne and is the twin of Tynemouth Castle. A Battery was scheduled for the site in 1888 when the RA and RE Works Committee proposed one 9.2inch and three 6inch BLs on HP mountings. No work was done except to purchase the site. The battery was commenced in September 1900 and completed in 1905 for one 9.2inch BL Mk X and two 6inch BL Mk VII mirroring the battery at Tynemouth Castle. The Owen Report of 1905 declared the Battery superfluous and it was reduced to reserve status, the six inch guns being used for practice. With the increase in the defences of the north-east coast after the bombardment of Hartlepool by the Germans in December 1914, the Battery was restored to the Tyne defences with its full complement of guns.

By 1922 large cracks had appeared in the emplacements due to subsidence from underground mining operations the cost of repairing the damage was considerable and it was felt that this was not justified so the guns were dismounted; the Battery was sold and became a holiday camp. Bearing in mind the reasons for the Battery being abandoned, it is somewhat surprising that it was re-occupied in the Second World War. Initially two six inch naval guns were mounted in the old six inch emplacements during the period of the Dunkirk evacuation and were manned by Royal Marines, until March 1941 when the guns were withdrawn to Park Battery. Between November 1941 and July 1942 three 7.5 inch guns were mounted in specially constructed positions in the glacis of the old Battery; these guns were removed by November 1943 and the Battery was abandoned.

The site of the Battery is in an area known as The Leas and is now owned by the National Trust; the remains, such as they are, lie buried but the site is identifiable by three earth covered mounds no doubt the positions for the three 7.5-inch guns.

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Frenchman's Point 9.2inch B.L.