

Spanish Battery

Commenced	5th. February 1902	Last	Armament	
Completed	25th August 1904	Restoration		
Cost	£ £3,626		1882	3 x SB guns
Map Reference	NZ 374692		1887	NIL
Position	South side of Priors Haven		1893-1901	1 x 6-inch (HP) BL 2 x 6pdr QF
Type	Coast Battery		1902-1908	2 x 6-inch BL Mk VII 2 x 12pdr QF
Ditch			1908-1956	2x 6-inch BL Mk VII
Guns	4 to 2			
Barrack Accom.				
Present use				
History	Coast Battery		Caponiers	None
Disposal	To Local Authority		Counterscarp galleries	None
Condition	Demolished/Buried			
Access	Open (gun aprons only)		Haxo casemates	None
Sources	Material at Nat. Archives in Classes CAB 3, 12, 36 and WO 33, 44 and 78		Moncrieff Pits	None

History and Description

The Battery is on the opposite side of Priors Haven to Tynemouth Castle. The Crown took over the site in 1539 and it became a semi-fortified outwork on the south side of Tynemouth Castle overlooking the River Tyne. The name is said to refer to the site being a camp for a body of Spanish mercenaries employed during the Scottish campaign at the end of Henry VIII's reign in the fifteen forties.

In the early Victorian period the Battery was extant but unarmed though by 1882 it had acquired three SB guns, however by 1887 there was no armament. In 1893 the Battery was rebuilt for a 6 inch BL gun on an HP mounting firing seawards with a battery for two 6 pdr QF guns in the right flank to cover the river where there was to be a minefield.

Between 1902 and 1904 the Battery was reconstructed for two 6 inch Mk VII and two 12 pdr QF guns; the existing 6 inch emplacement was converted for a Mk VII gun and a new emplacement was built for the second gun, the underground magazines were altered accordingly, additional ones were provided together with shelters; this accounts for the new six inch emplacement being slightly in the rear of the original one. The 12 pdr QF battery was built adjacent to the former 6 pdr one, and over one of the former battery's positions. The Battery received aerial protection mantelets for the six inch guns in World War II and the guns remained in place until 1953

Only the aprons of the four guns emplacement can be seen at the site today as the battery has been either demolished or buried, and is the site of a municipal car park.

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