

Fowey Battery

Commenced	1855	Armament	
Completed			
Cost	£ Unknown		2 x 32pr. S.B.
Map Reference	SX118508	1889	
Position	Adjacent to St.Catherine's Castle		2 x 64pr. R.M.L.
Type	Coastal battery (barbette)	1940-45	
Ditch	None		1 x 4.7-inch Q.F. (Naval)
Guns	2		
Barrack Accom.	None	Caponiers	None
Present use	Ancient Monument	Counterscarp galleries	None
History	Costal battery	Haxo casemates	None
Disposal	1945 National Trust	Moncrieff Pits	None
Condition	Conserved and restored		
Access	All year (English Heritage and National Trust)		
Sources	Various		

History and Description

Fowey was an important medieval port but it was not until very late in that period that any defences were built to protect the port, when they were it was in the form of two towers covering each end of the harbour chain. One of the towers substantially altered over the years remains at Polruan. At the harbour entrance St. Catherine's castle was built by a leading citizen of the town in the reign of Henry VIII and was substantially completed just before the great scheme of coastal defence initiated in 1539. The Castle is 'D' shaped with gun ports at ground level similar to those at Dartmouth and Kingswear castles. In Napoleonic times three batteries defended the harbour entrance but after 1815 were disarmed and abandoned. In 1855 a two gun battery was constructed below St. Catherine's Castle, part of which was utilised as a magazine; the landward side of the battery was protected by a loopholed wall. Just inside the entrance was the main magazine with a store building behind the gun positions. The guns were mounted en-barbette and at the end of its active existence the battery was classed as a practice one. In the closing years of the last century Fowey was considered of sufficient importance, as a port for the china clay trade, to warrant the updating of the defences but nothing was done to implement the proposals so that at the turn of the century the battery was disarmed.

In 1940 a battery of two 4.7-inch naval guns was constructed to protect the harbour entrance, one gun (No.11) was mounted in a concrete emplacement built over the right hand gun position of the Victorian battery. The other gun was mounted behind the castle on the headland; later in the war a French 75mm Q.F. and a bofors gun were added to the armament. By November 1945 all the guns and associated equipment had been removed and the site vacated. The No. II gun position of the wartime battery has been removed so that the Victorian battery stands complete.

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