

Grain Tower

Commenced 1847
Completed November 1855
Cost £ 16,798
Map Reference TQ 898 760
Position Mouth of River Medway on Grain Spit

Type Sea Tower (Grain Martello)
Ditch The sea
Guns 3
Barrack Accom. 30 men within tower
Present use None

History Re-armed both wars
 Abandoned by Military 1946

Disposal Reasonable
Condition Yes but private property

Access 'Coast Defences of England and Wales' Hogg, 'The Isle of Grain Defences' Macdougall K.D.R.G. J.D. Wilson 'Later Nineteenth century defences of the Thames, including Grain Fort' WO 192/49 Archives

Sources

Armament

1855
 Proposed 3 x RML guns
 1 x 56pr, 2 x 32 pr S.B.
1884 3 x 68pr. S.B.
1895 nil
1912-1929 2 x 4.7-inch Q.F.
1941 1 x Twin-six-pounder

History and Description

Grain Tower was built in the Medway Channel opposite Garrison Point on Grain Spit as a supplement to the guns at Garrison Point. and to prevent a landing on the island. The foundations were commenced in 1847 when two hundred and forty five timber piles were laid down and covered with six foot of cement. The Tower itself is oval shaped, built of granite. The average thickness of the solid masonry is 12 feet. The outer dimensions are 63 feet by 71 feet, underneath is a barrack room capable of accommodating 30 gunners, and an officers private room.

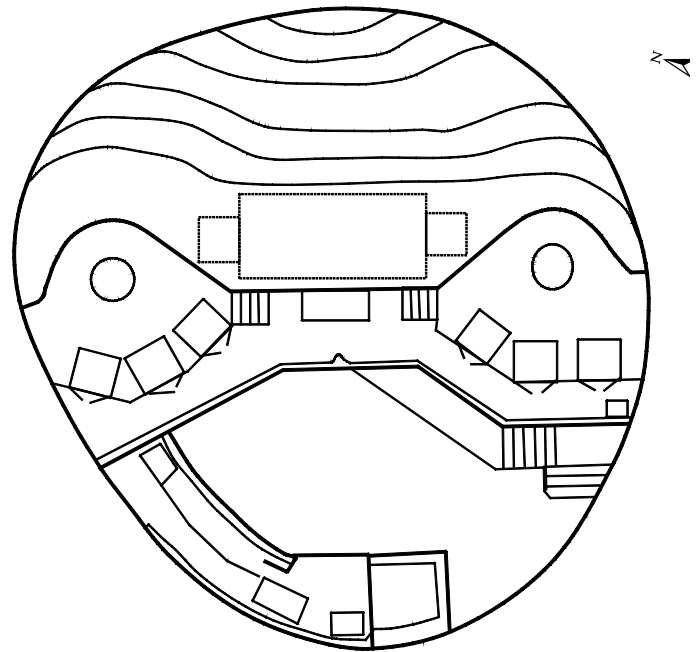
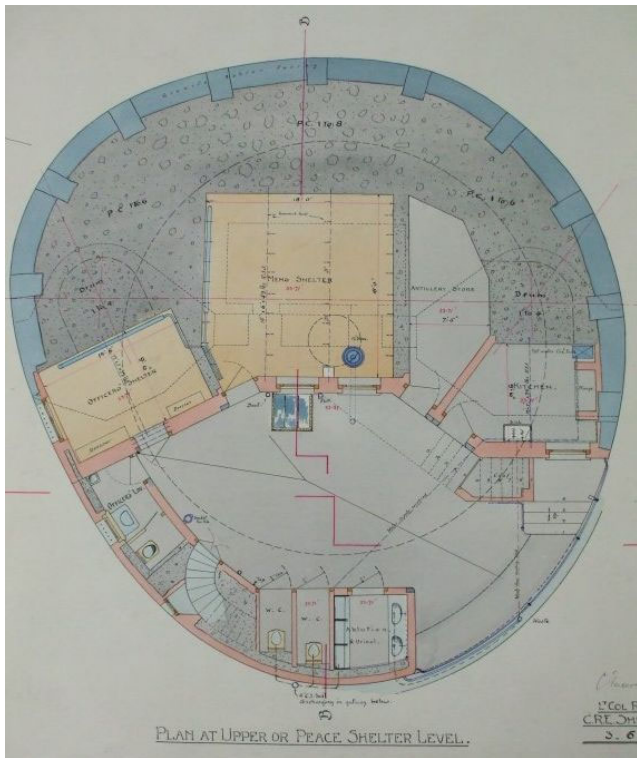
The basement story contains the following rooms; viz, ordnance store, provision store, barrack store, regimental store and magazine, the latter being encased with an entire coat of asphalte.

The whole of this basement is lined with nine-inch brickwork, all being within a 12-foot wall of masonry. Embrasures cut into the tower were for a 56pr. to rake the Nore whilst a 32pr. swept the sea in front of Sheerness and another 32pr. covered the northern channel. It was examined by the Royal Commission and a proposal was made to rebuild it as a casemated work. This was never done. It was struck from the estimates.

From 1892 until the abolition of Submarine Mining it was used as a Submarine Mining Station with test room on Barrack Floor and two observing stations on the roof. In 1895 no armament was mounted. In an article concerning the 2nd. Volunteer Middlesex Artillery dated 1897 it is stated that "*the tower was originally fortified but is not now considered of any value as a means of defence*".

Towards the end of the century it was proposed to mount two 12pr. Q.F. guns but this does not appear to have been done. However in 1912 two 4.7-inch Q.F. guns were installed, having been moved from Grain Wing Battery. This re-disposition was presumably for the better defence of the Medway Boom and minefield. At this time numerous buildings were added to the tower. The guns were withdrawn in 1929 and the Tower reverted to communications use. During WWII, in 1941 a Twin-six-pounder QF was mounted on the roof to counter the threat from 'E' boats. The Tower was finally abandoned in 1946 and reverted to the role of signal station, a role which it had intermittently since 1910.

Grain Tower



Gun floor 1914

