

EXPLORER'S TRAIL

EXPLORE THE FORT AND FIND THE ANSWERS

YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS TRAIL IN ANY PARTICULAR ORDER. THERE ARE MAPS AROUND THE MUSEUM AND IN THE SOUVENIR GUIDEBOOK.

PARADE GROUND & RAMPARTS



From the Parade Ground, in the middle of the Fort, you can see where the guns would have been positioned up on the ramparts.

The first guns didn't arrive at the Fort until 1882, and by this time the threat of invasion had faded. Fort Nelson's guns were never fired in anger. The volunteer soldiers manning the Fort would do regular gun drills, however, they were not allowed to fire live ammunition onto the local farms!

HAVE A GUESS!
HOW MANY BRICKS WERE USED TO BUILD FORT NELSON?

- 1 Million
- 4 Million
- 2.5 Million

HOW MANY GUNS DO YOU THINK WERE POSITIONED ON THE RAMPARTS?

THE KILLING FIELD & DITCH



Take the tunnel to the North Mortar Battery. Just beyond is an area known as The Killing Field. From here you can look down into the deep ditch that runs around the Fort.

All the Forts defending Portsmouth were designed to be invisible from the North, so an advancing French invasion force would first face a deep defensive ditch.

At the bottom of the tunnel you will find the guns that would have fired along the ditch. You can also see just how thick the Fort Walls are.

If the enemy managed to get across to the Killing Field the Fort soldiers could retreat through the two gates and reappear at the loop-holes (narrow windows) with their rifles ready to open fire.

HOW MANY LOOP-HOLES ARE THERE IN THE KILLING FIELD?

FACE FRONT!



The area around the entrance is actually the back of the Fort. Fort Nelson was built in the 1860s to protect Portsmouth from a French attack. It was thought that the enemy would make their way inland and attack Portsmouth from behind with new long-range guns.

This is why Fort Nelson's guns face North towards the land and not out to sea.

CHECK OUT THE BIG GUNS OUTSIDE THE FORT



Look South towards Portsmouth.

WHICH FAMOUS LANDMARK CAN YOU SEE FROM THE FORT?



HOW DID FORT NELSON GET ITS NAME?

(Hint: Go to the far side of the car park)