

# **SURVEY OF WORLD WAR TWO DEFENCES IN THE BOROUGH OF COLCHESTER**

**PROJECT REPORT: NOVEMBER 2007**

**(2020 on-line edition)**

**Fred Nash**

for

Colchester Archaeological Group

and

Essex County Council

## **Site Records**

### **Section C: SMR 20494 -- 21159**



## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), "Sheepen Hill Estate", Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20494  
**NGR:** TL 9873 2574

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Apron Wiring, section posts & M.G. posts, tubular scaffolding, ammunition shelters. O.S. Nos. 651, 652, 496, 497, etc., Sheepen Hill Estate. Map ref. 434438" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

It can be seen from aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and May 1948 that this entire area S of Cymbeline Way from TL 980 to TL 988 (modern map references W to E) contained a great many ammunition shelters. Fifteen can be counted - all of them "nissen-type" with curved roof. At least some of them, probably all originally, had a blast wall across the entrance. This example is the easternmost standing just W of Sheepen Road. This area is now a patch of thicket. <2> <3>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

- <1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Colchester
- <2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4276, , RAF, 1946, May 1946
- <3> AP: 58-47-5299, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

**Ammunition Shelter (destroyed),  
"Sheepen Hill Estate", Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20495  
**NGR:** TL 9867 2574

**Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Apron Wiring, section posts & M.G. posts, tubular scaffolding, ammunition shelters. O.S. Nos. 651, 652, 496, 497, etc., Sheepen Hill Estate. Map ref. 434438" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

This ammunition shelter, a "nissen-hut" type, can be seen on aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and May 1948 standing N of a track near Sheepen Road. <2> <3>

This area is now a school playing field.

**Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

**Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4276, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

<3> AP: 58-47-5299, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), "Sheepen Hill Estate", Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20496  
**NGR:** TL 9863 2574

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Apron Wiring, section posts & M.G. posts, tubular scaffolding, ammunition shelters. O.S. Nos. 651, 652, 496, 497, etc, Sheepen Hill Estate. Map ref. 434438" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

One of the ammunition shelters, a "nissen-hut" type, can be seen on aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and May 1948 standing N of a track near Sheepen Road. <2> <3>

This area is now a school playing field.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4276, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

<3> AP: 58-47-5299, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), "Sheepen Hill Estate", Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20497  
**NGR:** TL 9862 2582

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Apron Wiring, section posts & M.G. posts, tubular scaffolding, ammunition shelters. O.S. Nos. 651, 652, 496, 497, etc., Sheepen Hill Estate. Map ref. 434438" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

This ammunition shelter, a "nissen-hut" type, can be seen on aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and May 1948 standing on the S side, and close to, the junction of Cymbeline Way and Sheepen Road. <2> <3>

Nothing of it now survives.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4276, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

<3> AP: 58-47-5299, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), "Sheepen Hill Estate", Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20498  
**NGR:** TL 9859 2566

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Apron Wiring, section posts & M.G. posts, tubular scaffolding, ammunition shelters. O.S. Nos. 651, 652, 496, 497, etc., Sheepen Hill Estate. Map ref. 434438" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

This ammunition shelter, a "nissen-hut" type, can be seen on aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and May 1948 standing to the E of a N/S path. <2> <3>

This area is now a school playing field.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Colchester  
<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4276, , RAF, 1946, May 1946  
<3> AP: 58-47-5299, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), "Sheepen Hill Estate", Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20499  
**NGR:** TL 9858 2577

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Apron Wiring, section posts & M.G. posts, tubular scaffolding, ammunition shelters. O.S. Nos. 651, 652, 496, 497, etc., Sheepen Hill Estate. Map ref. 434438" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

This ammunition shelter, a "nissen-hut" type, can be seen on aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and May 1948 standing by a footpath 50 yards S of Cymbeline Way. <2> <3>

This area is now a school playing field.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Colchester  
<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4276, , RAF, 1946, May 1946  
<3> AP: 58-47-5299, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), "Sheepen Hill Estate", Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20500  
**NGR:** TL 9855 2568

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Apron Wiring, section posts & M.G. posts, tubular scaffolding, ammunition shelters. O.S. Nos. 651, 652, 496, 497, etc., Sheepen Hill Estate. Map ref. 434438" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

This ammunition shelter, a "nissen-hut" type, can be seen on aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and. May 1948 standing in a depression or rough pit. <2> <3>

This area is now a school playing field.

**Grading:**Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester  
<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4276, , RAF, 1946, May 1946  
<3> AP: 58-47-5299, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), "Sheepen Hill Estate", Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20501  
**NGR:** TL 9854 2573

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Apron Wiring, section posts & M.G. posts, tubular scaffolding, ammunition shelters. O.S. Nos. 651, 652, 496, 497, etc., Sheepen Hill Estate. Map ref. 434438" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

This ammunition shelter, a "nissen-hut" type, can be seen on aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and May 1948, standing 50 yards S of Cymbeline Way. <2> <3>

The area is now a school playing field.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester  
<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4275, , RAF, 1946, May 1946  
<3> AP: 58-47-5299, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), "Sheepen Hill Estate", Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20502  
**NGR:** TL 9852 2572

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Apron Wiring, section posts & M.G. posts, tubular scaffolding, ammunition shelters. O.S. Nos. 651, 652, 496, 497, etc., Sheepen Hill Estate. Map ref. 434438" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

This ammunition shelter, a "nissen-hut" type, can be seen on aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and May 1948 standing 50 yards S of Cymbeline Way. <2> <3>

The area is now a school playing field.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

- <1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester
- <2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4275, , RAF, 1946, May 1946
- <3> AP: 58-47-5299, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), "Sheepen Hill Estate", Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20503  
**NGR:** TL 9843 2564

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Apron Wiring, section posts & M.G. posts, tubular scaffolding, ammunition shelters. O.S. Nos. 651, 652, 496, 497, etc., Sheepen Hill Estate. Map ref. 434438" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

This ammunition shelter, a "nissen-hut" type, can be seen on aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and May 1948, standing in an open field 100 yards S of Cymbeline Way. <2> <3>

The area is now the grass and trees of Hilly Fields nature area.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

- <1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester
- <2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4275, , RAF, 1946, May 1946
- <3> AP: 58-47-5299, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), "Sheepen Hill Estate", Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20504  
**NGR:** TL 9818 2549

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Apron Wiring, section posts & M.G. posts, tubular scaffolding, ammunition shelters. O.S. Nos. 651, 652, 496, 497, etc., Sheepen Hill Estate. Map ref. 434438" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

This ammunition shelter, a "nissen-hut" type, can be seen on aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and. May 1948 standing on the S side of a field boundary. <2> <3>

This area is now part of Hilly Fields nature park.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<3> AP: 58-47-5236, , RAF, 1948, May 1948  
<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4275, , RAF, 1946, May 1946 <1>

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), "Sheepen Hill Estate", Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20505  
**NGR:** TL 9814 2547

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Apron Wiring, section posts & M.G. posts, tubular scaffolding, ammunition shelters. O.S. Nos. 651, 652, 496, 497, etc., Sheepen Hill Estate. Map ref. 434438" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

This ammunition shelter can be seen on aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and May 1948 standing on the S side of a field boundary. Like other ammunition shelters discernible on contemporary aerial photographs of the estate, it is a 'nissen-type' with curved roof. <2> <3>

This entire area is now Hilly Fields nature area.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester **Sources:**  
<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4276, , RAF, 1946, May 1946  
<3> AP: 58-47-5236, , RAF, 1948, May 1948



## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), 'Seed & Trial Grounds', Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20506  
**NGR:** TL 9806 2540

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "4 ammunition shelters. Seed & Trial Grounds, adj. Bye-Pass Road. Map ref. 425437" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

One of these can be seen on aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and May 1948, by the N boundary of a field overlooking Cymbeline Way. A 1969 O.S. map refers to the area as a 'nursery'. The shelter appears as a nissen-type structure with curved roof. <2> <3> <4>

The field still remains as it did in 1946, now known as "Bunting Meadow". There is no sign of the ammunition shelter although the area where it stood is covered with bramble and thicket.

**Grading:** Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

- <1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Colchester
- <2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4276, , RAF, 1946, May 1946
- <3> AP: 58-47-5236, , RAF, 1948, May 1948
- <4> Map: 1:2500 Post War National Grid (5th Epoch), , Ordnance Survey, 1945-present, TL9825 and TL9925 dated 1969

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), 'Sheepen Hill Estate', Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20507  
**NGR:** TL 9819 2530

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Apron Wiring, section posts & M.G. posts, tubular scaffolding, ammunition shelters. O.S. No. 651, 652, 496, 497, etc., Sheepen Hill Estate. Map ref. 434438" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

One of the ammunition shelters can be seen on aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and May 1948 standing just a few yards E of the extant pillbox on the hilltop (SMR 10934). This is the southern boundary of Hilly Fields nature area. The shelter can be seen to have been a 'nissen-type' with a curved roof. Nothing of it now remains. <2> <3>

**Grading:** Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

- <1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Colchester
- <2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4275, , RAF, 1946, May 1946
- <3> AP: 58-47-5236, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), 'Westacre', Lexden Road, Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20508

**NGR:** TL 9763 2519

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Ammunition shelter. Grounds at "Westacre", Lexden. Map ref. 425435" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

'Westacre' stands on the corner of Lexden Road and Glen Avenue and although now with a relatively modest plot of land, an aerial photograph taken in May 1946 shows it to have stood in grounds extending from Lexden Road to Elianore Road.

No more is known about this shelter and the NGR above is that of "Westacre" house.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Colchester

## **Kingswode Hoe defended area, Sussex Road, Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20509  
**NGR:** TL 9830 2520

### **Description:**

During World War Two, "Kingswode Hoe" was a large house standing on a block of land overlooking Hilly Fields to the north. The estate covered an area approximately 200 yards square. Contemporary records list a number of defence works in the grounds of the house:

"3 weapons pits, 3 slit trenches. Land at rear of Kingswode Hoe, Sussex Road. Map ref. 430434" (Mil. Ed.). The date of entry is 1.8.41.

"Small defence post near greenhouse, weapon pit & slit trench near Bungalow. Garden of Kingswode Hoe, Sussex Road. Map ref. 432435" (Mil. Ed.). The date of entry is 1.8.41.

"Triple dannert wire, 2 spigot mortar positions, 2 rifle positions & ammunition shelter. Paddock adjoining & to W. of Kingswode Hoe, Sussex Road. Map ref. 430435" (Mil. Ed.). The date of entry is 20.5.42.

"Storehouse for explosives. Paddock adj. Kingswode Hoe, Lexden Road, S.W. corner. Map ref. 430433" (Mil. Ed.). The date of entry is .42.

Much of the former estate has now been built over with Kingswode Hoe school and its playing field retaining perhaps a third. The "bungalow" still survives as a private residence - the end house of Sussex Road. The owner of the bungalow recalls, c. 1967/70, what was probably an 8' x 9' corrugated iron ammunition shelter at TL 9838 2527, between the bungalow and Sussex Road. There was also a lot of dismantled corrugated iron sheeting in the area at that time. It was reported that the bungalow (and the main house?) was occupied by the military during the war.

The specific purpose of this concentration of defence works in one small area is not known. Given its hill-top position and many defences it is possible that it was intended as a "keep" - a last ditch area to be defended when all around had been taken. Alternatively, it could have been linked to the large ammunition dump on Hilly Fields - at least fifteen ammunition shelters are known to have been sited there.

No remains of Kingswode Hoe's former defences were found at the time of the site visit. <1>  
<2>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

<2> Verbal communication: Owner, the "bungalow," Sussex Road, , Owner, the "bungalow," Sussex Road, 2001, April 2001

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), 'Rutland House', Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20510  
**NGR:** TL 9809 2527

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Tubular steel scaffolding, concrete blocks, apron wire & ammunition shelters. Field to rear of Rutland House, 121 Lexden Road. Map ref. 428434" (Mil. Ed.) The date of entry is 15.4.42. <1>

One of the ammunition shelters, a nissen type, can be seen on aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and May 1948. It stands in the grounds of Rutland House, by the north boundary. This area is now built over by the houses and gardens of The Chantry. <2> <3>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

- <1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester
- <2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4276, , RAF, 1946, May 1946
- <3> AP: 58-47-5236, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), 'Rutland House', Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20511  
**NGR:** TL 9811 2517

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Tubular steel scaffolding, concrete blocks, apron wire & ammunition shelters. Field to rear of Rutland House, 121 Lexden Road. Map ref. 428434" (Mil. Ed.). The date of the entry is 15.4.42. <1>

One of the ammunition shelters, a nissen type, can be seen on a low-level aerial photograph taken in May 1948. It stands, half hidden beneath trees, about 30 yards W of a pillbox (SMR 20512). This area is now built over by the houses and gardens of The Chantry. <2>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

- <1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester
- <2> AP: 58-47-5204, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

## **Pillbox (destroyed), Rutland House, No. 121 Lexden Road, Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20512  
**NGR:** TL 9814 2517

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Wiring, concrete blocks, pillboxes, etc. Meadow adjoining Rutland House, Lexden Road. Map ref. 428434" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

One of the pillboxes can be made out on an aerial photograph taken in June 1960. It stood on the E boundary of the meadow to the E of Rutland House (now No. 121) and was hexagonal with its entrance on the S face. In May 1946 this area was beneath trees and thus cannot be seen on aerial photographs of this date. <2>

The area has now been built over by the houses and gardens of Endsleigh Court.

**Grading:** Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

<2> AP: Run 14-059, , HSL, 1960, June 1960

## **Road Barrier (destroyed), Lexden Road, Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20513  
**NGR:** TL 9802 2500

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Wiring, concrete blocks, pillboxes, etc. Meadow adjoining Rutland House, Lexden Road, Map ref. 428434". (Mil. Ed.) <1>

The "concrete blocks" element of this entry probably refers to anti-tank cubes flanking a road barrier across Lexden Road. This would be entirely in accordance with the perimeter defences of Colchester. The NGR given above is thought to be the most likely position. It maintains the relationship with the pillbox 60 yards to its rear and follows the line and pattern of the road barrier and pillbox on Park Road (SMRs 20516 & 20517).

This area of Lexden Road has changed considerably since the 1940's and the possible site of the road barrier is now the Norman Way/Lockhart Avenue/Lexden Road road junction.

**Grading:** Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

## **Pillbox (destroyed), Rutland House, No. 121 Lexden Road, Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20514

**NGR:** TL 9808 2499

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Wiring, concrete blocks, pillboxes, etc. Meadow adjoining Rutland House, Lexden Road, Map ref. 428434" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

What is thought to be the edge of one of the pillboxes referred to above, can be made out on an aerial photograph taken in May 1948. One obtuse angle can be seen beneath trees on the southern boundary of the meadow bordering Lexden Road. This position continues the line of pillboxes (SMRs 10934, 20512, 20516) and would support a road barrier across Lexden Road (SMR 20513). <2>

This area of Lexden Road has changed considerably. The original site of the meadow has been completely built over.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<2> AP: 58-47-5204, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Colchester

# Spigot Mortar Emplacement, 38 Lexden Road, Lexden, Colchester

**SMR No:** 20515  
**NGR:** TL 9808 2497

## Description:

Contemporary records state, "Spigot mortar position. Front garden of Stanmore House, Lexden Road" <1> Stanmore House is No. 38 Lexden Road and the 29mm spigot mortar emplacement still survives in the front garden.

Most of these Home Guard artillery positions were constructed as a concrete-lined octagonal pit with a central pedestal on which to mount the gun. The pedestal was usually made from a 3'6" diameter sewage pipe turned on end and filled with concrete. The gun was located onto a stainless steel pintle fixed into the top of the pedestal such that it could be swung through 360 degrees by the Home Guard crew. The weapon was issued in the spring of 1942 and it appears that most towns, certainly in Essex, were guarded by one or more sited to cover the main approach roads.

The example at Lexden Road is, however, different to the norm. This pedestal has been built to stand at ground level, 3 feet high, and, instead of a pit, a full-height brick wall has been built around it to give protection. This wall is completely circular with an outer diameter of 11'5". The features of the pedestal - stainless steel pintle, size and construction - appear to follow the standard seen elsewhere. Since the war, the "pit" between the pedestal and the wall has been filled in with soil. This has been planted up and the whole structure now appears as a circular, raised flower bed. However, from above, the top of the pedestal and its pintle can still be seen.

Together with the pillbox on the other side of the road (SMR 20514) this emplacement would have been sited to cover the anti-tank road barrier which crossed Lexden Road some 80 yards to the west (SMR 20513).

Five photos of site. <2>

## SITE ASSESSMENT:

At the time of compiling this record just two spigot mortar emplacements remain extant in Colchester town out of an original complement of well over twenty. Although unusual, this pattern of "above ground level" pedestal is not unique. Other examples survive beneath Chappel viaduct (SMRs 10997, 10998).

## Grading:

Essex Grading \*\*\*

## Sources:

- <1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Colchester
- <2> Photograph: Spigot Mortar Emplacement 38 Lexden Road, , Nash, F, 2001, 5 frames, April 2001





*SMR 20515: An imaginative and particularly attractive way of conserving a spigot mortar emplacement.*



## Road Barrier (destroyed), Park Road, Lexden, Colchester

**SMR No:** 20516  
**NGR:** TL 9797 2483

### Description:

Contemporary records state, "O.S. No. 1216. Pillbox, sandbagged site, apron wire & conc. blocks ' Magazine Fruit Farm, Park Road. Map ref. 422429" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

The concrete blocks can be seen on aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and May 1948. In a staggered formation, there are three on the S side of Park Road and six on the N side. These would have formed the flanking elements of a road barrier constructed to guard against an attack from the west. <2> <3>

This area has now been re-developed; the barrier stood where Park Road meets Norman Way.

**Grading:** Essex Grading: 0

### Sources:

- <1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Colchester
- <2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4276, , RAF, 1946, May 1946
- <3> AP: 58-47-5173, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

## Pillbox (destroyed), Park Road, Lexden, Colchester

**SMR No:** 20517  
**NGR:** TL 9804 2482

### Description:

Contemporary records state, "O.S. No. 1216. Pillbox, sandbagged site, apron wire & conc. blocks ' Magazine Fruit Farm, Park Road. Map ref. 422429" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

The pillbox, an hexagonal type, can be seen on aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and May 1948 standing at the southern edge of a field on the N side of Park Road. Part of a line of pillboxes and road barriers which ran S to N from Shrub End Road to Cymbeline Way, this defence position would have guarded the town against an attack from the west. <2> <3>

The area is now built over by housing.

**Grading:** Essex Grading 0

### Sources:

- <1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Colchester
- <2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4276, , RAF, 1946, May 1946
- <3> AP: 58-47-5173, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), Park Road, Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20518  
**NGR:** TL 9819 2480

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Spigot mortar position and slit trenches in S.E. corner. Field at rear of St. Mary's Lodge in S.E. corner of Park Road. Map ref. 430430" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

What may be the spigot mortar emplacement can be seen, indistinctly, on an aerial photograph taken in May 1946 as a pinpoint of white matching the known, extant, spigot mortar pedestal on the opposite corner of the bend (SMR 20519). This position is a grass verge where the bend of Park Road turns through a right-angle.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4276, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

## Spigot Mortar Emplacement, sports ground, Park Road, Lexden, Colchester

**SMR No:** 20519

**NGR:** TL 9820 2478

### Description:

In the extreme NW corner of a playing field, close to Park Road, is the extant pedestal of a spigot mortar emplacement. It stands some 18" out of the grass, measures c. 3' 6" across, and is surmounted by the stainless steel pintle on which the gun was mounted. Typically, these pedestals were constructed within a concrete-lined pit and the remains of this may survive beneath grass level. This emplacement was probably one of two at this location, the other is indicated in contemporary records as having stood on the other side of Park Road to the NW of this position (SMR 20518).

See SMR 20515 for more details of spigot mortars. Three photos of site. <1>

**SITE ASSESSMENT:** At the time of compiling this report, just two spigot mortar emplacements have been found extant in Colchester. This example is therefore a rare survivor of the town's former defences.

**Grading:** Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### Sources:

<1> Photograph: Spigot Mortar Emplacement, sports ground, Park Road, , Nash, F, 2001, 3 frames April 2001



*SMR 20519: Surviving spigot mortar pedestals can often stand unrecognised for what they are.*

# Pillbox, South of Colchester County High School for Girls

**SMR No:** 20520  
**NGR:** TL 9805 2455

## Description:

Contemporary records state, "O.S. No. 1265 - 2 pillboxes & apron wire 'Magazine Fruit Farm, Park Road. Map ref. 422429" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

O.S. No. 1265 was a large field, bounded by hedges and trees, which stretched at its westernmost point from TL 9764 2456 to TL 9805 2458. Aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and May 1948 show one of the two pillboxes standing, half beneath trees, almost at the NE corner. From here, its field of fire would have covered the ground west and southwards. A belt of trees immediately across its northern face would have limited the fire in this direction. <2>  
<3>

In the past 60 years this area has changed considerably but the pillbox still remains. Standing now on a playing field S of Colchester County High School for Girls, it is an hexagonal Type FW3/22 12' 6" across, 15" thick walls and 12" high x 10" wide loopholes. Beneath each loophole, the remains of wooden battens can be seen. Originally these would have supported a shelf which acted as an elbow rest when firing.

Unfortunately, the original entrance, on the N face, has been widened to 5 feet in width. This has probably been done to accommodate a field grass mower; the central pillar has also been truncated to allow more space.

Four photos of site. <4>

## SITE ASSESSMENT:

Not a great many pillboxes survive on the original Colchester defence lines and it is therefore particularly unfortunate that this example has been devalued by the "modifications" to the entrance and central pillar. Nevertheless, it has survived; one of the few remaining links in the defence chain.

## Grading:

Essex Grading: \*\*\*

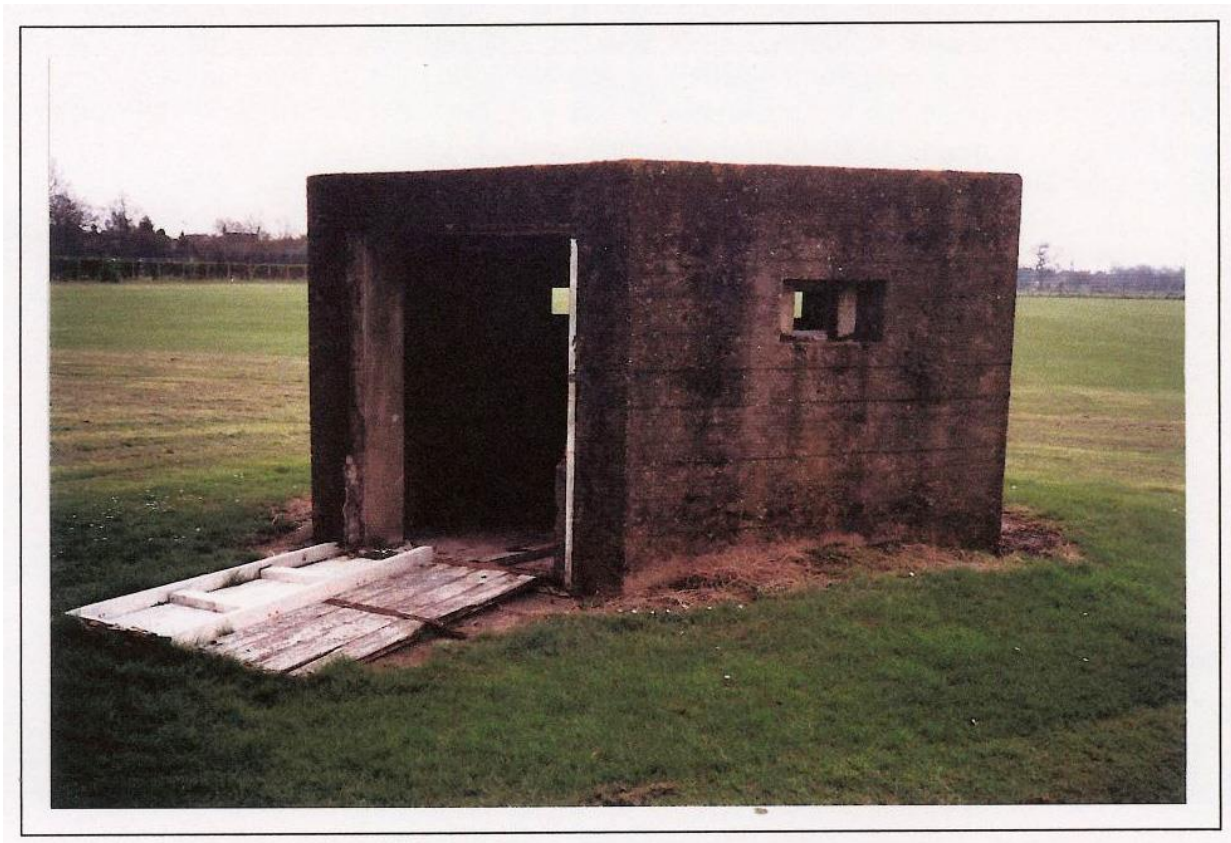
## Sources:

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4276, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

<3> AP: 58-47-5173, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

<4> Photograph: Pillbox, S of Colchester County High School for Girls, , Nash, F, 2001, 4  
Frames April 2001



*SMR 20520: In many ways it is a surprise that this pillbox has survived at all, as so many around Colchester have not.*



## **Pillbox (destroyed), east of The Philip Morant School, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20521  
**NGR:** TL 9788 2423

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "O.S. No. 1272 - Pillbox & apron wire.. Magazine Fruit Farm, Park Road. Map ref. 422429" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

Clearly seen on an aerial photograph taken in May 1946, the pillbox stood by a track on the S boundary of a field, OS No. 1272. It was hexagonal, probably Type FW3/22, with its entrance on the NE face. This may have been the southernmost of the line of pillboxes which stretched from the main defence line at Shrub End to Sheepend Farm Estate at Lexden. <2>

The site of this pillbox is now the south boundary of a playing field to the east of The Philip Morant School.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-3281, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

## **Pillbox (destroyed), Spring Lane, Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20522  
**NGR:** TL 9712 2541

### **Description:**

Aerial photographs taken in May 1946 and May 1948 show an hexagonal pillbox, possibly Type FW3/24, standing on the SE corner of the junction where Spring Lane met London Road. <1>  
<2>

The main defence line for Colchester is thought to have run N/S across Cymbeline Way some 250 yards to the E of this position. This pillbox, then, would have been one of a number outside the line, guarding the approach roads.

The geography of this area has changed considerably with the construction of the Spring Lane Roundabout. The position of the pillbox was approximately 40 yards NNW of the house known as "The Little Glebe".

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4278, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

<2> AP: 58-44-5311, , RAF, 1948, May 1948

## Anti-Tank Cubes, Lexden Park, Colchester

**SMR No:** 20523  
**NGR:** TL 9730 2472

### Description:

The line of the anti-tank barrier which encircled Colchester during World War Two almost certainly followed Lexden Dyke using the ancient ramparts as a ready-made obstacle to enemy tanks. In Lexden Park there is a weakness in the line where a gully running parallel to the dyke climbs upwards from the lower park level to the height of the dyke at the N end of Bluebottle Grove. To seal this, the local defence planners clearly erected a concrete cube barrier at the narrowest part of the gully. It is not known how many there were originally but at least eight of them still remain, scattered over a 25 yard area of the cutting. These are of varying sizes averaging 2' 6" to 3' square. All are badly deteriorated. Many have the remains of steel posts embedded in them. These would either have acted as anchorage posts for barbed wire or for a heavy linking chain to prevent them being pushed aside separately.

Four photos of site. <1>

**Grading:** Essex Grading: \*\*

### Sources:

<1> Photograph: Anti-tank cubes Lexden Park, , Nash, F, 2001, 4 frames July 2001



*SMR 20523: Unrecorded in wartime records and not visible beneath the trees on 1940's aerial photographs, the configuration of these anti-tank blocks, as they stood in the ground, is not known*

## **Pillbox (destroyed), junc. Heath Road/Church Lane, Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20524  
**NGR:** TL 9692 2443

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Pillbox. Junction of Heath Road & Church Lane. Map ref. 417427." (Mil. Ed.)  
<1>

This pillbox can be seen as an aerial photograph taken in May 1946 standing on the SW junction of the two roads where it would have acted as one of the outer defences which, during World War Two, encircled South Colchester outside the main anti-tank defence line. An aerial photograph taken a year later, in September 1947, shows it to have been demolished by that date. Like the other outer defence pillboxes, this example was probably a Type FW3/22. <2> <3>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Colchester  
<2> AP: 106G- UK 1492- 4190, , RAF, 1946,  
<3> AP: CPE-UK-2300-5136, , RAF, 1947,

## **Pillbox (destroyed) North end of Bluebottle Grove, Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20525  
**NGR:** TL 9740 2461

### **Description:**

The western defence line around Colchester clearly used the Bluebottle Grove section of Lexden Dyke as an anti-tank obstacle as pillboxes overlooked it from its east bank and the wartime anti-tank ditch continued the path of the dyke from its southern end. At the north end of Bluebottle Grove a pillbox can be seen on May 1946 aerial photographs. <1>

It is a large, hexagonal type with its entrance on the NE face, probably of the same 20' across pattern as those seen on the Eastern Command Line north and northwest of Colchester. This pillbox is recorded in contemporary documentation, "O.S. No. 1227 - Pillbox & apron wire ... Magazine Fruit Farm, Park Road. Map ref. 422429" (Mil. Ed.) <2> Nothing now survives in this location.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4276, , RAF, 1946,  
<2> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Colchester



## **Pillbox (destroyed) South end of Bluebottle Grove, Lexden, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20526  
**NGR:** TL 9763 2428

### **Description:**

The western defence line around Colchester clearly used the Bluebottle Grove section of Lexden Dyke as an anti-tank obstacle as pillboxes overlooked it from its east bank and the wartime anti-tank ditch continued the path of the dyke from its southern end. Here, a pillbox can be seen on May 1946 aerial photographs <1> It is a large, hexagonal type with its entrance on the NE face, probably of the same 20' across pattern as those extant on the Eastern Command Line north and northwest of Colchester. Nothing now survives at this location.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G- UK 1492- 3281, , RAF, 1946,

## **Pillbox (destroyed), field OS No. 1312, North of Shrub End Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20527  
**NGR:** TL 9776 2403

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "A/T ditch, wiring, 2 pillboxes in O.S. No. 1369, clearing of hedges, pillbox in O.S. No. 1312. O.S. No. 438, 1315, 1369, 1312, 1275, 1319, Rayners Farm, Shrub End." Field No. 1312 lay halfway between Bluebottle Grove and Shrub End Road. At this point, aerial photographs from May 1946 show the anti-tank ditch which ran round south Colchester dog-legged. Just off the SE corner of field no. 1312, immediately E of the dog-leg, something can be made out - probably the rubble from a demolished pillbox. <1> <2>

This area is now completely built over by the houses of Reynolds Avenue.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

<2> AP: 106G- UK 1492- 3281, , RAF, 1946,

## **Pillbox (destroyed), Allotments, Shrub End Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20528  
**NGR:** TL 9791 2395

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Pillbox & apron wire. Allotments, Shrub End Road. Map ref. ???424" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

The wartime anti-tank ditch crossing the fields from the NW, probably terminated at TL 9791 2395, the corner of allotment gardens. The pillbox referred to above probably stood at this point. Something approximating to the size and shape of a pillbox can be seen on an aerial photograph taken in September 1947 but it is too indistinct to be positive. From here to Shrub End Road, about 40 yards away, the anti-tank barrier may well have continued by using cable-linked anti-tank cubes (see SMR 25038, barrier at Layer Road). <2> This area of allotments is now Norman Way.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester  
<2> AP: CPT- UK 2300- 5128, , RAF, 1947,

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), Shrub End Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20529  
**NGR:** TL 9794 2394

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "a) Spigot Mortar Position. b) 2 Sandbagged Defence Posts. Allotment near Berryfield House, Shrub End Road." Berryfield House is no. 45 Shrub End Road and the allotment can be seen on an aerial photograph taken in May 1946. It lay on the N side of the road bend, directly opposite what is now Boadicea Way. It is probable that the spigot mortar emplacement was sited immediately alongside the road at the edge of the allotment. From here, it could cover the road approach from the W up to the road barrier (SMR 20530). This position is now part of Norman Way.  
<1> <2>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<2> AP: 106G- UK 1492- 3281, , RAF, 1946,  
<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

## **Road Barrier (destroyed), Shrub End Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20530  
**NGR:** TL 9793 2391

### **Description:**

The wartime anti-tank defence line which protected Colchester from attack from the south, crossed Shrub End Road on the bend where Norman Way and Boadicea Way now run. Supported by written contemporary records, aerial photographs from 1946/7 give some indication of the defences around the crossing but the exact route of the anti-tank ditches and the formation of the concrete anti-tank defences has to be deduced from the soil marks of the ditches and the scattered cubes lying on both sides of the road.

The anti-tank ditch from the NW probably ended at a pillbox (SMR 20528) at TL 9791 2395, some 40 yards from Shrub End Road. From here it is thought likely that spaced-out concrete blocks, linked by steel cable, crossed the ground to the roadside. Across the carriageway, a removable "socket and railway line" obstacle was a standard road barrier. On the S side of Shrub End Road a row of concrete cubes probably connected the road barrier and the re-commencement of the ditch at around TL 9797 2389. Although some of this is supposition, it is thought to be reasonably accurate, conforming to the evidence seen on the aerial photographs.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester  
<2> AP: 106G- UK 1492- 3281, , RAF, 1946,

## **Pillbox (destroyed), Shrub End Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20531  
**NGR:** TL 9798 2392

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "A/T ditch, wiring, 2 pillboxes, weapons pits. O.S. No. 1313, 1314 Drury Farm, Shrub End. Map ref. 427420" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

The anti-tank ditch around south Colchester "crossed" Shrub End Road where its junction is now with Boadicea Way. The pillbox in field OS No. 1314 can be seen on aerial photographs taken in September 1947 and May 1948. <2> <3>

It is an hexagonal infantry pillbox with its entrance in the NE face, standing beside Shrub End Road. From this position it would have looked across the road barrier some yards to the W. This site is now grass and flower beds on the corner of Boadicea Way.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester  
<2> AP: CPE-UK-2300-5128, , RAF, 1947,  
<3> AP: 58- 44- 5255, , RAF, 1948,

## **Pillbox (destroyed), "The Leather Bottle", Shrub End Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20532  
**NGR:** TL 9704 2323

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Pillbox & gunpit. Garden in front of "The Leather Bottle", Shrub End. Map ref. 418416." (Mil. Ed.) <1>

"The Leather Bottle" public house stands at the junction of Straight Road and Shrub End Road about three quarters of a mile outside the main defence line and anti-tank ditch around south Colchester. Each of the main routes into the town from the south appears to have been covered by pillboxes at a similar distance from the main defences. Aerial photographs taken in March and July 1945 show the green outside "The Leather Bottle" at the road junction. On the verge by Straight Road, is, indistinctly, a pillbox, probably hexagonal, positioned to give a field of fire to the S and SW. In the centre of the green is a pit - presumably the gun pit referred to in the wartime record. <2> <3>

The area of the green is now a tarmaced-over parking area.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester  
<2> AP: 106G- LA170- 2016, , RAF, 1945,  
<3> AP: 106G- UK 555- 4069, , RAF, 1945,

## **Pillbox (destroyed) Allotments opposite "The Leather Bottle", Shrub End Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20533  
**NGR:** TL 9711 2324

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Pillbox. Allotments opposite "Leather Bottle" at junction of Maldon & Gosbecks Roads. Map ref. 418415" (Mil. Ed.) <1> One of a pair guarding the road junction and approach into Colchester (see SMR 20532), this pillbox stood close to the E side of Shrub End Road, 25 yards from its junction with Gosbecks Road. It can be clearly seen on an aerial photograph taken in March 1945 - hexagonal (probably an FW3/22 type), with its entrance on the NW face. From this position it would have had a field of fire to the E (across the allotments) and the NE. <2>

This position is now Shrub End Social Centre.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester  
<2> AP: 106G- LA170- 2016, , RAF, 1945,

## **Pillbox (destroyed), fields between Shrub End Road and Layer Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20534  
**NGR:** TL 9802 2325

### **Description:**

The anti-tank ditch around the west and south of Colchester ran across the fields from Shrub End Road to Layer Road. At this point the ditch ran round a pillbox emplaced at a junction of three fields. An aerial photograph taken in March 1945 shows this clearly. It was an hexagonal type with its entrance on the NE face. From here it would have dominated the meadows across the anti-tank ditch to the west. <1>

This entire area has now been built over and the original site of the pillbox lies between Gloucester Avenue and Devon Road.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G- LA170- 2014, , RAF, 1945,

## **Pillbox (destroyed) West side of Layer Road, opposite Reed Hall Avenue South, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20535  
**NGR:** TL 9832 2323

### **Description:**

An aerial photograph taken in March 1945 shows, very clearly, an hexagonal pillbox standing on the W side of Layer Road opposite what was Reed Hall Avenue South, but is now fenced off by the military camp. It appears as a small hexagonal FW3/22 type with the entrance on the E face. It is difficult to understand the siting of this emplacement, behind the main defence line (SMRs 20537 & 20538). <1>

It is referred to in contemporary records as "Pillbox. W. side of Layer Road, opp. Reed Hill Avenue (sic). Map ref. 431415" (Mil. Ed.) <2>

The position is now the grass roadside backing onto a sports field.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G- LA170- 2014, , RAF, 1945,  
<2> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

## **Pillbox (destroyed), East side of Layer Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20536  
**NGR:** TL 9823 2314

### **Description:**

An aerial photograph taken in March 1945 shows, very clearly, an hexagonal pillbox standing on the E side of Layer Road. It appears as a small, hexagonal FW3/22 type with its entrance on the E face. Like the similar pillbox on the other side of the road 130 yards to the north, it is difficult to understand its siting, behind the main defence (SMRs 20537, 20538) <1>

This emplacement is referred to in contemporary records as, "Pillbox. W. side of O.S. No. 1366, Layer Road. Map ref. 430414" (Mil. Ed.) <2>

The position is now the grass verge fronting housing.

**Grading:** Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G- LA170- 2014, , RAF, 1945,  
<2> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

## **Pillbox (destroyed), overlooking anti-tank ditch, Layer Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20537  
**NGR:** TL 9809 2289

### **Description:**

The anti-tank ditch around the south of Colchester ran from Shrub End Road to Layer Road. At TL 9807 2287 the ditch "crossed" Layer Road, probably with a road barrier across the carriageway. It then skirted a pillbox positioned on the E side of Layer Road before heading eastwards. The pillbox can be clearly seen on an aerial photograph taken in March 1945 as a large hexagonal type. <1>

It is referred to, in contemporary records, as "O.S. No. 1365 - A/T ditch, 2 pillboxes & wiring Gosbecks Farm, Shrub End. Map ref. 428415" (Mil. Ed.) <2>

The position is now a grass verge S of Salerno Crescent.

**Grading:** Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G- LA170- 2014, , RAF, 1945,  
<2> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

## **Anti-Tank Barrier (destroyed), West of Layer Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20538  
**NGR:** TL 9805 2289

### **Description:**

The anti-tank defence line around south Colchester crossed Layer Road at TL 9807 2287. A wartime aerial photograph taken in March 1945 shows all the extant defences very clearly, with the exception of the road barrier itself - probably a removable "socket and railway line" type. <1>

The anti-tank ditch traced its path from the NNW to TL 9804 2292- a position W of a pair of houses. From here a row of seven anti-tank cubes can be seen, but unlike the normal solid barrier, they are spaced out to cover the 40 yards to Layer Road at TL 9807 2287. Almost certainly, they were connected by a double row of steel cable concreted into the cubes (for example, see "Anti-Tank Blocks, Castle Park Grounds, Colchester" SMR 10912). On the E side of Layer Road the ditch re-commenced to skirt a large pillbox (SMR 20537) and continue eastwards.

The area of the anti-tank barrier is now occupied by new housing.

**Grading:** Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G- LA170- 2014, , RAF, 1945,

## **Pillbox (destroyed), West side of Layer Rd, North of Berechurch Hall Road junction**

**SMR No:** 20539  
**NGR:** TL 9790 2254

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, 'A/T ditch, pillbox and dannert (barbed) wiring. OS No. 407 (Layer Road) - past Lamberts Farm. Map ref. 42640' (Mil Ed.) and 'Pillbox. Near junction of Layer and Berechurch Roads. Map ref. 426408' (Mil. Ed.) <1>

This pillbox can be seen, indistinctly, on aerial photographs taken in 1945. It stood by the side of the road approximately 200 yards north of the Berechurch Hall Road junction. A short anti-tank ditch protected its west flank. Open fields in 1945, the area is now housing and light industry. <2> <3>

**Grading:** Essex Grading 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester p.3

<2> AP: 106G-LA170-2014, , RAF, 1945, March 1945

<3> AP: 106G-UK555-4069, , RAF, 1945, July 1945



## **Pillbox (destroyed), Layer Road, North of Berechurch Hall Road junction, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20540

**NGR:** TL 9796 2258

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, 'Pillbox. O.S. No. 1360, east side of Layer Road, near junction of Berechurch Hall Road. Map ref. 427409' (Mil. Ed.) <1>

This pillbox can be seen, indistinctly, on an aerial photograph taken in March 1945. It stood on the east side of Layer Road some 80/100 yards north of a similar pillbox on the west side (see 20539). Open fields in 1945, the area is now greensward fronting housing. <2>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester p.3

<2> AP: 106G-LA170-2014, , RAF, 1945, March 1945

## **Pillbox (destroyed), overlooking anti-tank ditch between Layer Road and Berechurch Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20541

**NGR:** TL 9849 2290

### **Description:**

The anti-tank ditch which guarded the south of Colchester ran E from Layer Road. At TL 9849 2290 it skirted an hexagonal pillbox with an entrance in the NW face. This can be clearly seen on a wartime aerial photograph taken in March 1945. An aerial photograph taken four months later shows that the ditch along this stretch was filled in between these two dates. <1> <2>

The site of the pillbox has now been built over by the houses of Fallowfield Road.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G- LA170- 2013, , RAF, 1945,

<2> AP: 106G- UK 555- 4069, , RAF, 1945,

## **Pillbox (destroyed), between Layer Road and Berechurch Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20542  
**NGR:** TL 9860 2306

### **Description:**

Aerial photographs taken in April 1946 and May 1948 show a pillbox on the N side of a track between Layer Road and Berechurch Road. A 1:1250 OS map, compiled in 1952, shows it as hexagonal with an entrance on the NW face. Clearly smaller than those along the Colchester anti-tank ditch, it was probably a Type FW3/22. <1> <2> <3>

From this position the pillbox would have overlooked the ditch which ran across the fields some 150/200 to the S.

Aerial photographs from 1970 and 1980 show it to have been demolished between those two dates. The area is now MOD property.

**Grading:** Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G- UK 1367- 7358, , RAF, 1946,  
<2> AP: 58- 44- 5298, , RAF, 1948,  
<3> Map: 1:1250 OS Post War National Grid, , OS, , TL9823SE date 1952

## **Pillbox (destroyed), between Layer Road and Berechurch Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20543  
**NGR:** TL 9901 2301

### **Description:**

Aerial photographs taken in April 1946 and May 1948 show a pillbox on the N side of a track between Layer Road and Berechurch Road. Clearly smaller than those along the Colchester anti-tank ditch, it was probably an hexagonal Type FW3/22. <1> <2>

From this position the pillbox would have overlooked the ditch which ran across the fields some 150/200 yards to the S.

Nothing of it now survives and the area is tree-lined agricultural land.

**Grading:** Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G- UK1367- 7358, , RAF, 1946,  
<2> AP: 58- 44- 5297, , RAF, 1948,

## **Pillbox (destroyed) near 'Rosary', west side of Berechurch Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20544  
**NGR:** TL 9868 2224

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, 'Pillbox O.S. No. 16459, west side of Berechurch Road near Rosary. Map ref. ??4406' (Mil. Ed.) <1>

This pillbox can be faintly seen on aerial photographs taken in March 1945 and April 1946. It stood by a bend in Berechurch Road and together with its partner on the opposite side of the road (see 20545) it would have acted as the outer line of defence against an attack from the south. <2> <3>

The aerial photographs are too indistinct to determine the type of the pillbox although it can be seen to have been small - probably a type FW3/22. <4>

**Grading:** Essex Grading 0

### **Sources:**

<4> DESC TEXT: Pillboxes, , Wills, H, 1985, p. 28  
<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester  
<2> AP: 106G-LA170-2013, , RAF, 1945,  
<3> AP: 106G-UK1367-7358, , RAF, 1946,

## **Pillbox (destroyed) near 'Rosary', east side of Berechurch Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20545  
**NGR:** TL 9870 2223

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, 'Pillbox O.S. No. 1646, road verge at east side of Berechurch Road near Rosary. Map ref. ??5406' (Mil. Ed.) <1>

This pillbox can be faintly seen on aerial photographs taken in March 1945 and April 1946. Standing on the east side of a bend in Berechurch Road. Together with a similar pillbox on the other side of the road (see 20544) it would have constituted the outer defences of Colchester against an attack from the south. <2> <3>

The type cannot be determined from the aerial photographs although it can be seen to have been small - probably a type FW3/22. <4>

**Grading:** Essex Grading 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester  
<2> AP: 106G-LA170-2013, , RAF, 1945,  
<3> AP: 106G-UK1367-7358, , RAF, 1946,  
<4> DESC TEXT: Pillboxes, , Wills, H, 1985, p. 28

## **Pillbox, overlooking anti-tank ditch, West of Berechurch Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20546  
**NGR:** TL 9920 2283

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "A/T ditch & 3 pillboxes. O.S. No. 1623, Monkwick Farm, adj. Berechurch Road. Map ref. 440412" (Mil .Ed.). <1> Field No. 1623 was a large field which stretched about 700 yards westwards from Berechurch Road. Two of the pillboxes stood on its N boundary (SMRs 20542, 20543) while the third stood beside Berechurch Road. From here it overlooked the anti-tank ditch, 30 yards away, which encircled south Colchester. <2> <3>

This pillbox still survives. Just inside the entrance to a wooded meadow, it is a large, brick and concrete, hexagonal type measuring 20' across with 11' 3" walls. The entrance, on its NW face, has been sealed up, as has each of the loopholes. Around the pillbox, earth has been piled up to the level of the loopholes to provide extra protection. Two photos of site.

<4>

**SITE ASSESSMENT:** The great majority of the defensive pillboxes around Colchester have been demolished and this example is one of the few survivors. It is an integral part of the history and heritage of the Borough and every effort should be made to ensure its continued survival.

In 1940, the songwriter Ross Parker, then in his mid-twenties, was stationed at Roman Way Camp. The previous year, together with Hughie Williams he had written "We'll Meet Again", which was to become a wartime favourite, sung by Vera Lynn. Now he was in the throes of composing a new song, one which was, like his previous hit, particularly redolent of the times. It was "There'll Always be an England". Unable in the noisy barracks to find the peace and quiet he needed to continue his work, he regularly retired to the one place he could be alone - the local pillbox. There is every chance this very pillbox still survives. All the wartime defence sites in the area have now been recorded and the three most likely candidates still exist, all close to the barracks. SMRs 20546, 20547, 20548. It would be a fitting tribute to both the composer and to Colchester's World War Two heritage if a "There'll Always be an England" plaque could be erected at one of these three sites.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### **Sources:**

- <1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester
- <2> AP: 106G-UK1367-7357, , RAF, 1946,
- <3> AP: 58-44-5297, , RAF, 1948,
- <4> Photograph: , , Nash, F, 2001,



*SMR 20546: One of the three 'There'll always be an England' pillboxes. From the outside it appears to be in good condition but, sealed up, nothing of its interior is known*

## Pillbox, South of Roman Way Camp, Berechurch, Colchester

**SMR No:** 20547  
**NGR:** TL 9923 2225

### Description:

Outside the main wartime defence line around southern Colchester, small pillboxes covered the approach roads. This pillbox is one of these latter fortifications. It stands 70 yards to the W of the road which skirts Roman Way Camp, in a hedgeline. It appears as a typical Type FW3/22, hexagonal, 12' 6" across with 7' 3" walls. The construction is of concrete (15" thick) with its entrance on the NE face. The loopholes are 12" square with steel side pieces. Beneath the undergrowth, the entrance appears to have been sealed up, as have most of the loopholes. <1> Three photos of site. <2>

**SITE ASSESSMENT:** At the time of compiling this record, this is one of only two (see SMR 20552) surviving "outer defence" pillboxes which guarded the approach roads into Colchester. Although not nationally a rare type it is locally an important part of the Borough's heritage and every effort should be made to ensure its continued survival.

In 1940, the songwriter Ross Parker, then in his mid-twenties, was stationed at Roman Way Camp. The previous year, together with Hughie Williams he had written "We'll Meet Again", which was to become a wartime favourite, sung by Vera Lynn. Now he was in the throes of composing a new song, one which was, like his previous hit, particularly redolent of the times. It was "There'll Always be an England". Unable in the noisy barracks to find the peace and quiet he needed to continue his work, he regularly retired to the one place he could be alone - the local pillbox. There is every chance this very pillbox still survives. All the wartime defence sites in the area have now been recorded and the three most likely candidates still exist, all close to the barracks. SMRs 20546, 20547, 20548. It would be a fitting tribute to both the composer and to Colchester's World War Two heritage if a "There'll Always be an England" plaque could be erected at one of these three sites.

### Grading:

Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### Sources:

<1> DESC TEXT: Pillboxes, , Wills, H, 1985, p26  
<2> Photograph: , , Nash,F, 2001,





*SMR 20547: All of the three pillboxes which Ross Parker could have used are still extant. This one is only a short stroll away from the entrance to the camp.*

## Pillbox, North of Roman Way Camp, Berechurch, Colchester

**SMR No:** 20548  
**NGR:** TL 9945 2286

### Description:

Immediately N of Roman Way Camp stands a pillbox almost completely hidden by thicket. At the time of the site visit it was possible to see just one loophole through the undergrowth and to determine that the construction was of brick and concrete. However, an aerial photograph taken in April 1946 shows it clearly as a large (probably 20' across) hexagonal type with its entrance on the NW face. From this position it overlooked the anti-tank ditch which crossed the area some 20 yards from its S face. <1> One photo of site. <2>

**SITE ASSESSMENT:** Although it was impossible to ascertain the condition of the pillbox at the time of the site visit, there are few survivors from the wartime defences of Colchester. Every effort should be made, therefore, to ensure the continued survival of this part of the Borough's recent heritage.

In 1940, the songwriter Ross Parker, then in his mid-twenties, was stationed at Roman Way Camp. The previous year, together with Hughie Williams he had written "We'll Meet Again", which was to become a wartime favourite, sung by Vera Lynn. Now he was in the throes of composing a new song, one which was, like his previous hit, particularly redolent of the times. It was "There'll Always be an England". Unable in the noisy barracks to find the peace and quiet he needed to continue his work, he regularly retired to the one place he could be alone - the local pillbox. There is every chance this very pillbox still survives. All the wartime defence sites in the area have now been recorded and the three most likely candidates still exist, all close to the barracks. SMRs 20546, 20547, 20548. It would be a fitting tribute to both the composer and to Colchester's World War Two heritage if a "There'll Always be an England" plaque could be erected at one of these three sites.

### Grading:

Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### Sources:

<1> AP: 106G-UK1367-7357, , RAF, 1946,  
<2> Photograph: , , Nash, F, 2001, one frame



## **Pillbox (destroyed), between Berechurch Road and Mersea Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20549

**NGR:** TL 9997 2298

### **Description:**

An aerial photograph taken in April 1946 shows an hexagonal pillbox standing S of a track which ran between Berechurch Road and Mersea Road. The entrance can be seen on the N face. This position was only a few yards N of the anti-tank ditch which guarded S Colchester and the pillbox, which would have overlooked the ditch, was probably of the large 20' diameter type. <1>

Nothing now remains and the site is occupied by the tennis courts by The Ormiston Centre, and sports complex.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G- UK 1367- 7357, , RAF, 1946,

## WWII Anti-Tank Ditch, Berechurch Ramparts, Colchester

**SMR No:** 20550  
**NGR:** TL 9982 2097

### Description:

Aerial photographs taken during the 1940s, show the typical soil marks of a filled-in anti-tank ditch stretching from its northernmost point where it connected with the Colchester anti-tank ditch to its southernmost point at Abberton Reservoir.

The scar starts at TL 99982297, the junction of the two ditches. It runs south past the E side of "Monkwick" (now demolished) to a pond at TL 99952270, before turning south-westwards to TL 99852263. Here it re-commenced its southward path alongside the E boundary of Roman Way Camp. At TL 99692190 it "crossed" Berechurch Hall Road via a road barrier (SMR 20551). On the S side of the road it skirted the E side of Rampart Lodge (No. 83) before continuing southwards apparently, from the soil marks, immediately to the E of, and alongside, the ancient Roman ramparts. At TL 99722062 it left the ramparts to skirt "Charlotte's Grove" with a dog-leg at TL 99882058. Crossing Ball Lane and the Roman River at TL 99942009 it met and crossed Oxley Hill at TL 99961954. Skirting Abberton Hall to its W, it finally abutted, via an area of anti-tank pimples, Abberton Reservoir at TL 99661896. The total length of the ditch was approx. 3 miles. <1> - <7>

### SITE ASSESSMENT:

There are few surviving elements of this defence line, although in one stretch - across a field immediately to the N of Roman River (TL 99872030 - TL 99942010) the depressed imprint of the ditch can still be seen. Each of the points where the line crossed a thoroughfare would probably have been "bridged" by a concrete and steel barrier with anti-tank pimples at the road sides. In only one place have any been found to have survived - a provisional visit in August 2002 found one pimple in situ on the N side of Oxley Hill (TL 99961955) and four dug up in the field to the S. At the time of compiling this record, it is not known if any of the Abberton Reservoir pimples still survive. (7:2007 See SMR 21102)

On balance, studying 1940's aerial photographs, it is considered that the WWII planners did not use the existing Roman ditch for their defence works. South of Berechurch Hall Road it is thought to have been built just outside (to the E) of the belt of trees which now defines the path of the Roman ditch. S of Park Farm the "modern" ditch leaves the path of its ancient counterpart. However, N of Berechurch Hall Road the 1940 ditch is thought to have cut the Roman ditch twice. Immediately N of the road, where the 1940 ditch followed the exact boundary of Roman Way Camp, the Roman ditch, starting from a position some yards to the W of the later earthwork, angled across the WWII ditch as they both made their way northward. A.F. Hall, 1960, records, "This stretch (of the Roman ramparts) was proved by a tank trap which cut the ditch at a fair angle (for 122 yards N of Berechurch Hall Road)". Just S of "Monkwick" - now demolished - the WWII ditch re-crossed the Roman earthwork from W to E at a much sharper angle before ending at the main Colchester defence line N of "Monkwick". <8>

One photo was taken of the ditch "imprint" N of Roman River. <9>

**Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

**Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G- UK 1367- 5357, , RAF, 1946,

<2> AP: 106G- UK 1492- 4354, , RAF, 1946,

<3> AP: 106G- UK 555- 4066, , RAF, 1945,

<4> AP: 106G- UK593- 4111, , RAF, 1945,

<5> AP: 106G- UK 555- 3067, , RAF, 1945,

<6> AP: 106G- UK 1367- 7357, , RAF, 1946,

<7> AP: 106G-UK 1367- 5341, , RAF, 1946,

<8> DESC TEXT: Colchester Archaeological Group Bulletin Vol. 3, , Hall, A. F, 1960,

<9> Photograph: One Frame, , Nash, F, 2002,

## **Road Barrier (destroyed), Berechurch Hall Road, Berechurch, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20551  
**NGR:** TL 9969 2190

### **Description:**

During World War Two an anti-tank ditch ran N to S on each side of Berechurch Hall Road. The crossing point was bridged by a road barrier by, what is now, No. 83. Contemporary records state, "Concrete pimples. Rampart Lodge, 6 Berechurch Hall Road. Map ref. ?44402." (Mil. Ed.) <1>

Aerial photographs taken in August 1945 and April 1946 show a number of these anti-tank pimples, both on the N side of the road opposite Rampart Lodge and in the field on the E side of the house. In 1954/55 the house was re-numbered from No. 6 to No. 83. <2> <3> <4>

No pimples have survived on the N side of the road and none were apparent (viewed from the roadway) in the field on the S side.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester <2> AP: 106G- UK 593- 4111, , RAF, 1945,  
<3> AP: 106G- UK 1367- 7357, , RAF, 1946,  
<4> LIST: Benham's Colchester Directories, , Benham, 1954- 55,

## **Pillbox, Stansted Road, Berechurch, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20552  
**NGR:** TM 0030 2239

### **Description:**

On the north side of Stansted Road, close to its junction with Mersea Road, stands an FW3/22 concrete pillbox. It measures 13 feet across, is 7 feet 6 inches high and its sides are 7 feet 3 inches long. The entrance is on the north face and the whole structure sits on a raft of concrete. The loopholes and the entrance have been sealed to prevent access. Three cut off steel pipes, coming out of the west loophole are not thought to be contemporary.

Although the entire edifice, in good condition, is now emplaced in a small rose bed surrounded by housing, aerial photographs taken in April 1946 and September 1947 show it to have then stood just north of a belt of trees in almost open farmland. Only the houses along Mersea Road immediately north of the pillbox were built at that time. This defence point was one of two pillboxes and an anti-tank ditch (see 20553) built in this area of Mersea Road as one of the outer defences of Colchester. <1> <2>

The main defence line, with its own pillboxes, were across Mersea Road some 600 yards to the north.

Seven photos of site. <3>

### **SITE ASSESSMENT:**

This pillbox, although not accessed internally, is externally in good condition with no sign of vandalism or deterioration. It is a typical type FW3/22 and stands (at the time of writing) as one of only two surviving pillboxes (there were at least ten, but probably significantly more) which formed the outer defences of southern Colchester during World War Two (see 20547).

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G-UK1367-7356, , RAF, 1946,

<2> AP: CPE-UK2300-5022, , RAF, 1947,

<3> Photograph: Pillbox, Stansted Road, Berechurch, Colchester, print, Nash, F, 2001,



*SMR 20552: The setting of this pillbox has changed unrecognisably since World War Two. It nevertheless has survived remarkably well.*

## **Pillbox (destroyed), Stansted Road, Berechurch, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20553  
**NGR:** TM 0034 2237

### **Description:**

Aerial photographs taken in April 1946 and September 1947 show two pillboxes standing on the west side of Mersea Road, where Stansted Road is. In a semi-circle around southern Colchester, each of the roads leading up to the main defence line (600 yards to the north) were similarly guarded during World War Two. One pillbox stood 50 yards from Mersea Road - this still survives (see 20552). The second stood to its southeast immediately alongside Mersea Road. This has now been demolished. The aerial photographs show this second pillbox to have been hexagonal with its entrance on the north face - almost certainly an FW3/22 like its partner.

<1> <2>

Both pillboxes were protected by a short anti-tank ditch which ran from northwest to southeast across their face about 50 yards away, and continued for a short distance on the east side of Mersea Road.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G-UK1367-7356, , RAF, 1946,  
<2> AP: CPE-UK2300-5022, , RAF, 1947,

## **Pillbox (destroyed), East of Berechurch Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20608  
**NGR:** TL 9958 2325

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Pillbox. E. side of Berechurch Road app. Beehive Farm. Map ref. 444415" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

This pillbox can be seen clearly on a low level aerial photograph taken in October 1947. It stood on the E side of the road, a hexagonal Type FW3/24 with its entrance on the long NE face. An aerial photograph taken seven months later in May 1948 shows it to have been demolished by that date. <2> <3> <4>

The area is now a grass verge at the side of an arable field. No sign of remains could be found at the time of the site visit.

**Grading:** Essex Grading 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester  
<2> AP: CPE-UK 2340-5081, , RAF, 10:1947,  
<4> AP: 58-47-5222, , RAF, 5:1948,  
<3> DESC TEXT: Pillboxes, , Wills, H, 1985, pp30-31

## **Pillbox (destroyed), West of Mersea Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20609  
**NGR:** TM 0042 2298

### **Description:**

Aerial photographs taken in April 1946 and May 1948 show an hexagonal pillbox standing approximately 80 yards W of Mersea Road. This position overlooked the anti-tank ditch which encircled southern Colchester during World War Two. The ditch ran E/W just a few yards to the S; the site of the pillbox was just outside the rear gardens of the houses on Mersea Road. This position is now occupied by the garden of No. 2 Queen Elizabeth Way. <1> <2>

From the apparent dimensions the pillbox was probably of the 20' diameter type. The entrance can be seen on the N face.

**Grading:** Essex Grading 0

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G-UK 1367-7355, , RAF, 4:1946,  
<2> AP: 58-47-5007, , RAF, 5:1948,



## **Pillbox, Middlewick Ranges, E of Mersea Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20610  
**NGR:** TM 0051 2298

### **Description:**

On the E side of Mersea Road, just inside the entrance to Middlewick Ranges, stands a concrete hexagonal Type FW3/22 pillbox. The entrance is on the NE face. The pillbox measures 12'6" across and has 7' 3" long side walls. There are a number of small horizontal slots on some of the faces but the purpose of these is not known. The entrance and the loopholes have been sealed.

During World War Two, the anti-tank ditch which encircled southern Colchester "crossed" (via a road barrier) Mersea Road at this point and the pillbox would have defended this crossing.

Three photos of site. <1>

### **SITE ASSESSMENT:**

Of the many pillboxes which protected Colchester during World War Two, comparatively few remain. This example guarded one of the main routes into the town and as an important part of the history and heritage of Colchester; every effort should be made to ensure its continued survival.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### **Sources:**

<1> Photograph: , , Nash F, 7:2001, three frames



*SMR 20610: A familiar sight along Mersea Road, the pillbox at Middlewick Ranges*

# Spigot Mortar Emplacement, Middlewick Ranges, Colchester

**SMR No:** 20611

**NGR:** TM 0051 2301

## Description:

Just a few yards to the E of Mersea Road, on Middlewick Ranges, is a 29 mm spigot mortar emplacement. The pit is extant in tall grass; there are four ammunition alcoves. Off the N face there is probably an L-shaped integral trench although it is difficult to be certain of this in the bramble and thicket. In the centre of the pit is the mounting pedestal, typically constructed of a sewage pipe standing on end. The stainless steel pintle has, oddly, a steel collar. This is unusual and indicates that perhaps either part of the spigot mortar was left on the pintle or a different type of gun was mounted, using the steel collar.

Two photos of site. <1>

## SITE ASSESSMENT:

Spigot mortar emplacements are, in their own right, important and comparatively rare World War Two defence types. As an integral part of Colchester's wartime defence structure this emplacement is also part of the town's heritage, complementing its many older monuments. Every effort should be made to ensure its continued survival.

**Grading:** Essex Grading: \*\*\*

## Sources:

<1> Photograph: , , Nash F, 6: 2002, two frames



*SMR 20611: One of two surviving spigot mortar emplacements close to the pillbox (SMR 20610) at Middlewick Ranges.*

## Spigot Mortar Emplacement, Middlewick Ranges, Colchester

**SMR No:** 20612

**NGR:** TM 0055 2298

### Description:

40 yards to the E of Mersea Road and the pillbox at TM 0051 2298 (SMR 20610) stands the pedestal of a Home Guard spigot mortar emplacement. It is located on the grassland of Middlewick Ranges and, like its partner 50 yards to the NW (SMR 20611), would have been sited to cover the approach road into Colchester from the S. Although standing as a lone pedestal, an aerial photograph taken in April 1946 shows a typical spigot mortar pit with ammunition alcoves and the pedestal in the centre. The pit and alcoves probably survive below ground level. <1>

Two photos of site. <2>

### SITE ASSESSMENT:

Spigot mortar emplacements are, in their own right, important and comparatively rare World War Two defence types. As an integral part of Colchester's wartime defence structure this emplacement is also part of the town's heritage, complementing its many older monuments. Every effort should be made to ensure its continued survival.

### Grading:

Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### Sources:

<1> AP: 58-47-5007, , RAF, 5:1948,

<2> Photograph: , , Nash F, 6: 2002, two frames





*SMR 20612: The pit and alcoves around this pedestal were filled in many years ago, but probably still survive beneath the grass and soil*

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), North of Cemetery, Mersea Rd, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20613  
**NGR:** TM 0025 2387

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Spigot mortar position. Paddock, Mersea Road to the N. of cemetery and opp. entrance to White Lodge. Map ref. 450421." (Mil. Ed.) <1>

White Lodge stood on the NE corner of Bourne Road and an aerial photograph taken in 1946 shows a paddock on the W side of Mersea Road opposite White Lodge. This area is now the houses of Bourne Court. <2>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-3278, , RAF, 1946,

## Pillbox, Middlewick Ranges, West of Old Heath Road, Colchester

**SMR No:** 20614

**NGR:** TM 0136 2293

### Description:

Three hundred yards W of Old Heath Road, on the edge of Middlewick Ranges, is a 20' diameter hexagonal pillbox. It stands in a small clump of trees and once guarded the wartime anti-tank ditch which ran across its S face. It is constructed of brick and concrete with walls 4' thick and a low entrance on the N face.

One photo of site. <1>

### SITE ASSESSMENT:

Of the many pillboxes which guarded Colchester during World War Two, comparatively few now remain. As an important part of the heritage and history of the town, every effort should be made to ensure the continued survival of this example.

### Grading:

Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### Sources:

<1> Photograph: , , Nash F, 6: 2002, one frame



*SMR 20614: Pillboxes were designated as 'bullet-proof', generally with 15" walls, or 'shell-proof' with much thicker walls, as with this example.*

## **Pillbox, Middlewick Ranges, West of Old Heath Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20614  
**NGR:** TM 0136 2293

### **Description:**

Three hundred yards W of Old Heath Road, on the edge of Middlewick Ranges, is a 20' diameter hexagonal pillbox. It stands in a small clump of trees and once guarded the wartime anti-tank ditch which ran across its S face. It is constructed of brick and concrete with walls 4' thick and a low entrance on the N face.

One photo of site. <1>

### **SITE ASSESSMENT:**

Of the many pillboxes which guarded Colchester during World War Two, comparatively few now remain. As an important part of the heritage and history of the town, every effort should be made to ensure the continued survival of this example.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### **Sources:**

<1> Photograph: , , Nash F, 6: 2002, one frame

## **Concrete Firing Post (destroyed), Old Heath Rd, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20615  
**NGR:** TM 0152 2307

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Concrete firing post in N.E. corner & 2 sand-bagged defence posts. Garden of Old Heath Cottage & meadow adjoining. Map ref. ?64413" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

Considering the lie of the land and the fields of fire, the concrete firing post probably stood in the N.E. corner of the meadow (to the W of Old Heath Cottage) rather than the garden. From here it would have looked down on the anti-tank ditch which encircled South Colchester. Old Heath Cottage no longer survives and this entire area has been re-developed.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester



## Anti-Tank Obstacles (destroyed), 287 Old Heath Road, Colchester

**SMR No:** 20616  
**NGR:** TM 0162 2297

### Description:

Contemporary records state, "5 Concrete Cubes. 275 Old Heath Road, Colchester." These anti-tank blocks can be clearly seen on aerial photographs taken in 1946 and 1948. They ran in a line across the garden of not No. 275 but No. 287, from W to E, on the N side of the house. <1>  
<2>

With the demolition of Old Heath Cottage and the construction of houses on the site, it is believed that some of the original houses were re-numbered, and the wartime 275 became the present 287. Notwithstanding this, it is difficult to understand the siting of these cubes. The anti-tank defence line apparently crossed Old Heath Road some yards to the N, at TM 0162 2300, and the positioning of these obstacles thus appears unnecessary.

### Grading:

Essex Grading: 0

### Sources:

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester  
<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-3360, , RAF, 5:1946,

## Anti-Tank Cubes, 370 Old Heath Road, Colchester

**SMR No:** 20617

**NGR:** TM 0163 2301

### Description:

Aerial photographs taken in 1946 and 1948 show a line of 16 anti-tank cubes on the E side of Old Heath Road between TM 0163 2301, where there must have been a road barrier to the anti-tank ditch on the W side, and TM 0163 2304, where the anti-tank ditch continued eastwards to the sewage works. The houses on the E side of Old Heath Road now occupy the site of the blocks but two of them still remain in the front garden of No. 370. These appear to have been the southernmost blocks, immediately before the road barrier. One of them is complete but the other has been chiseled off where it once stood on the boundary of No. 368. <1><2>

Two photos of site. <3>

### Grading:

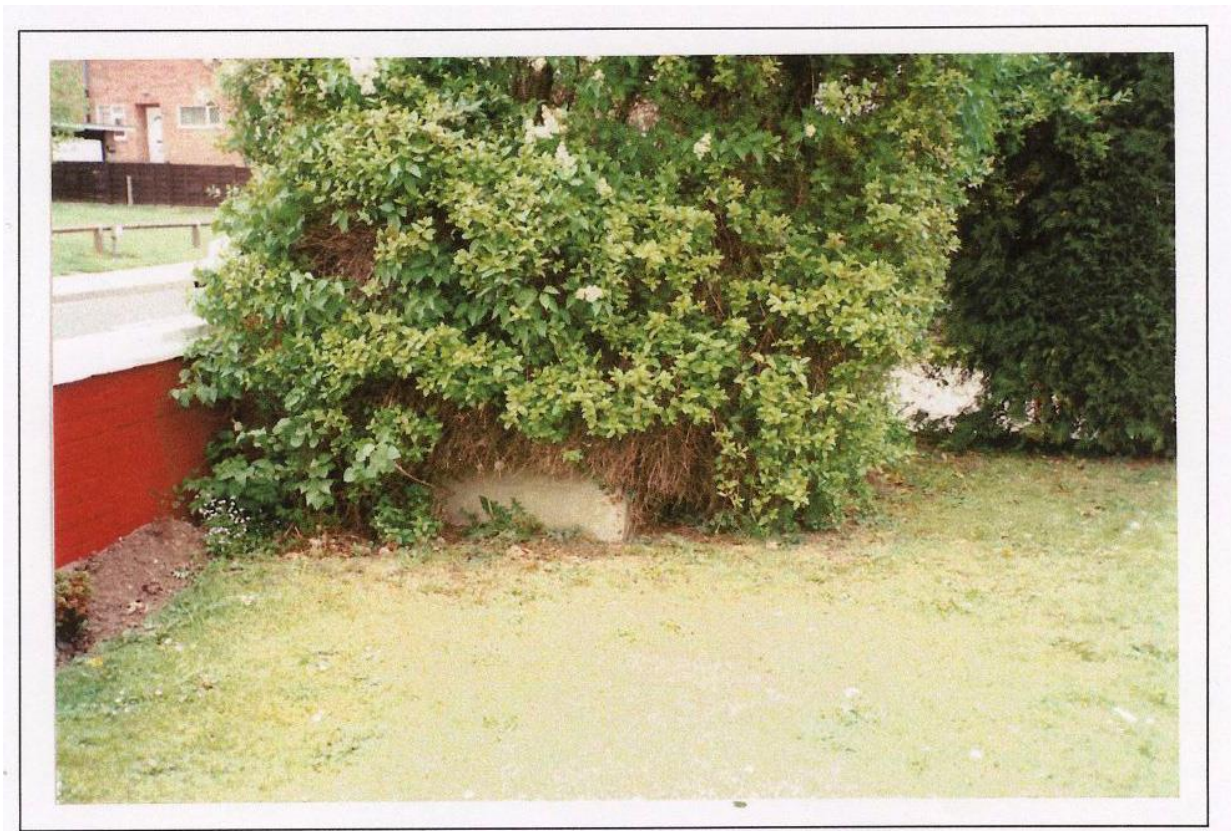
Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### Sources:

<1> AP: 106G-UK 1492-3360, , RAF, 5:1946,

<2> AP: 58-51-5003, , RAF, 5:1948,

<3> Photograph: , , Nash F, 4:1997, two frames



*SMR 20617: Barely visible beneath foliage, two concrete blocks, once part of an extensive road barrier, still stand in the front garden of No. 370 Old Heath Road*

## **Pillbox (destroyed), West side of Old Heath Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20618  
**NGR:** TM 0161 2303

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Pillbox in garden, trenches and barbed wire in field. Garden of Old Heath Cottage & field W. of same, Old Heath Road. Map ref. ??3413" (Mil. Ed.) and "Pillbox. Land adj. Old Heath Cottage, Old Heath. Map ref. ??5414" (Mil. Ed.) <1>

Old Heath Cottage stood on the W side of Old Heath Road just S of Old Heath Community Primary School. This area has now been built over by the houses of Cottage Drive.

An aerial photograph taken in 1946 shows the indistinct shape of a pillbox on the SE corner of the cottage garden by the road. <2> This location is now just inside the front garden of No. 277 Old Heath Road.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-3360, , RAF, 5:1946,

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), Old Heath Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20619  
**NGR:** TM 0164 2307

### **Description:**

An aerial photograph taken in 1946 shows the clear pattern of a spigot mortar emplacement with 4 ammunition alcoves in a meadow on the E side of Old Heath Road. From this position it would have covered the road barrier where the anti-tank line crossed the road at TM 0162 2301. This part of Old Heath Road has now been built over and this position is now occupied by No. 362. <1>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G-UK 1492-3360, , RAF, 5:1946,

## **Pillbox (destroyed), East side of Old Heath Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20620  
**NGR:** TM 0162 2308

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "a) Concrete pillbox b) A/T ditch c) Gun emplacement. O.S. No. 1492, land near Old Heath Cottage, Old Heath. Map ref. 465414" (Mil. Ed.). Field O.S. No. 1492 was on the E side of Old Heath Road directly opposite Old Heath Cottage. <1>

An aerial photograph taken in 1946 shows the pillbox standing in the field close to the road, a site which is now the front garden of No. 360. This pillbox and its position is confirmed locally. <2> <3>

An aerial photograph taken in 1960 shows it to have been demolished by that date. <4>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-3360, , RAF, 5:1946,

<3> Verbal communication: Local resident, , , 5:1997,

<4> AP: Run 15-119, , HSL, 6:1960,

## **Two Anti-Tank Cubes (destroyed), Sewage Works, Old Heath, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20621  
**NGR:** TM 0180 2321

### **Description:**

From study of aerial photographs and contemporary records it is clear that the anti-tank defence line crossed Old Heath Road south of Old Heath Cottage (now demolished) and followed a water-filled ditch from TM 0162 2304 to TM 0180 2321. Here, the line "bridged" via two anti-tank cubes to a small watercourse on the edge of the sewage works. Contemporary records state, "2 concrete blocks. Old Heath Market Gardens, Old Heath, in S.E. corner. Map ref. ??5415". (Mil. Ed.) <1> The two cubes can be seen on an aerial photograph taken in October 1947. <2>

Nothing was found at the time of the site visit, and nothing can be seen on post-1960 aerial photos, but it is nevertheless possible that the cubes still survive in the dense undergrowth.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester  
<2> AP: CPE-UK 2340-5088, , RAF, 10:1947,

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), Place Farm, Old Heath, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20622  
**NGR:** TM 0182 2319

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Ammunition shelter. Meadow near boundary of Sewage Works, Place Farm". No grid reference is given, but the sewage works and Place Farm are in Old Heath. <1> What is probably this ammunition shelter can be seen on an aerial photograph taken in May 1946. It appears as a "Nissen-type" hut, typical of ammunition shelters, in a field immediately alongside the boundary with the sewage works, a boundary which formed the outer defences of Colchester during World War Two. An aerial photograph taken in September 1970 shows it to have been demolished and cleared away by that date. <2> <3>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester  
<2> AP: 106G - UK 1492 - 3275, , RAF, 1946,  
<3> AP: Run 101-2086, , HSL, 9:1970,

## **Anti-Tank Cubes (destroyed), Sewage Works, Old Heath, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20623  
**NGR:** TM 0206 2324

### **Description:**

A low-level aerial photograph taken in 1948 shows two anti-tank blocks, one each side of a N/S track, between a drainage ditch on the W side and sewage sludge lagoons on the E side. It is thought that the southern defence line around Colchester crossed the track at this point before ending at the pillbox between the lagoons and the River Colne. (SMR 10882). <1> This area, and the sludge lagoons and drainage ditches, has changed considerably since 1948. The site has not been visited but nothing of the cubes can be seen on aerial photos post-1960.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 58-69-5125, , RAF, 1948,

# Six Military Air Raid Shelters, Colchester Garrison, Colchester

**SMR No:** 20625  
**NGR:** TL 9993 2429

## Description:

On the W side of Mersea Road, beneath tall trees, there is a fenced-off compound which encloses six military air raid shelters. From ground level they appear as a row of long grassy humps, each with a sloping slabbed-over entrance at the E end of the N face and the W end of the S face. Each hump measures c. 36' long x 20' wide from the base of the grassy slope. The heights vary between 3' and 5', according to the differing ground levels. Protruding from the top of each hump, the ends of up to five steel ventilation pipes can be seen. The slabbed-over entrances are constructed of 3 to 4 inch solid concrete measuring 7'6 x 3'6. These slabs have been themselves concreted into position making access to the shelters impossible without heavy lifting equipment. It is now known how long the shelters have been sealed. Each of the six shelters appears identical although in the top of the second (counting from the north) there is a large grassy depression. It is not known if this is indicative of a collapsed roof or whether the earth has simply been removed at this point.

The compound is maintained by Colchester Garrison. Access to the compound is via a locked gate.

Eight photos of site. <1>

## SITE ASSESSMENT:

Site recording at other military establishments in Essex indicates that this pattern of air raid shelter may have been standard at such sites. It can be seen from 1940's aerial photographs that at Colchester Garrison there were many of them. At the time of compiling this report there are just nine remaining. (See SMR 20626 two shelters S of Napier Road and SMR 20627 one shelter S of Napier Road).

As more and more military sites become subject to redevelopment so this type of air raid shelter becomes more rare. At Deadman's Point 6-inch coastal artillery site, on Canvey Island (SMR 7216), four were recorded as extant in 1996. In 2000, nine were recorded at Shoeburyness Old Ranges from an original complement of over fifty. The six shelters in the compound at Colchester Garrison are an important part of the history and heritage of the town and as such every effort should be made to ensure their continued survival, ultimately to Scheduled Monument status.

## Grading:

Essex Grading: \*\*\*\*

## Sources:

<1> Photograph: , , Nash F, 6:2002, eight frames





*SMR 20625: In a compound at Colchester Garrison, these six military air raid shelters have been sealed for many years.*



## Two Military Air Raid Shelters, Napier Road, Colchester Garrison

**SMR No:** 20626  
**NGR:** TL 9973 2451

### Description:

On the S side of Napier Road, immediately alongside the road, two air raid shelters of a type found on military sites, still survive. They appear to be of the same type as the six shelters recorded at TL 9993 2429 (SMR 20625) semi-sunken, an entrance at opposite ends of the sloped faces, and banked-over earth. However, the easternmost of the pair has been heavily modified with up-standing brick-built entrances and a tall brick and steel flue outlet. A notice on the door identifies its current usage as a "Plant Room". The western shelter is significant in that one of the normally slabbed-over entrances is clear, enabling access down the concrete steps to a wooden internal door. This, however, is barred and bolted. A sign says "53 COY. (v)." Outside the door, opposite the entrance steps, is a toilet cubicle, although the door is missing. At the opposite end of the shelter, the second entrance remains slabbed over.

Seven photos of site. <1>

### SITE ASSESSMENT:

Unlike the six shelters recorded at TL 9993 2429, these two examples have clearly had recent usage - either modified to provide an alternative function or as storage facilities. As such, they will have lost much of their integrity as World War Two monuments.

### Grading:

Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### Sources:

<1> Photograph: , , Nash F, 6:2002, seven frames



*SMR 20626: These military air raid shelters have clearly been modified to some extent.*

# One Military Air Raid Shelter, Napier Road, Colchester Garrison

**SMR No:** 20627

**NGR:** TL 9978 2449

## Description:

On the S side of Napier Road is a sports pavilion overlooking the cricket ground. Between the pavilion and the road, behind a high wire fence, is a semi-sunken air raid shelter. It is apparently of the same design as those at TL 9973 2451 (SMR 20626) and TL 9993 2429 (SMR 20625) with two slabbed-over entrances, at the E end of the N face and the W end of the S face. The entire structure has been covered with banked-up earth which is grassed over. From this, a number of steel ventilation pipes protrude. Taken from the base of the slopes, the mound measures c. 40' x 20'. Three photos of site. <1>

## SITE ASSESSMENT:

Like the six remaining air raid shelters at TL 9993 2429 (SMR 20625), this shelter appears, from the outside, to be in original unmodified form. As such, it is an important part of the heritage of the Garrison.

**Grading:** Essex Grading \*\*\*

## Sources:

<1> Photograph: , , Nash F, 7:2002, three frames



*SMR 20627: During World War Two there were a great many air raid shelters at Colchester Garrison. Now, just a handful survive*

## Underground "Bunker", Cistern Yard, Colchester

**SMR No:** 20628  
**NGR:** TL 9933 2549

### Description:

It is reported that a World War Two bunker survives beneath Cistern Yard in Colchester and that a ventilation grill can be seen high up on the Roman Wall leading from the bottom of North Hill to Balcerne Hill. <1>

On the ground, in Cistern Yard, there is a rectangular area of concrete on the otherwise rough surface, approximately 18' x 21'. This is located 50 yards to the W of North Hill along the N side of the yard. This could be the roof of an underground bunker, possibly an air raid shelter or an ammunition shelter. The height of this roof is on a level with the top of the Roman Wall immediately alongside its N edge. In the wall at this point, eight feet up, are two rough holes. These are c. 8" square and c. 6' apart. Three photos of site. <3>

### Grading:

Essex Grading

### Sources:

<1> DESC TEXT: , , Doncaster A, 8:1994,  
<2> Photograph: , , Nash F, 7:2002, three frames





*SMR 20628: No further details of a bunker beneath Cistern Yard have come to light. These are the holes in the wall.*

## **Ammunition Dump (destroyed), Roman Wall, Holly Trees Meadow, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20629  
**NGR:** TL 9998 2556

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Ammunition Dump. Part of Roman Wall, Holly Trees Meadow. Map ref. ?46347". (Mil. Ed.). The first figure is obliterated but must have been a "4." The digits "3" and "4" have been transposed. The correct map reference is therefore "446437". <1>

Holly Trees Meadow is the field immediately to the E of the Castle which runs down to the Roman Wall. There is a large "Nissen-type" hut, with an asbestos roof, at the bottom of the meadow alongside the Roman Wall, but aerial photographs show this to have been erected post-war between 1946 and 1960. <2> <3>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Colchester

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4195, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

<3> AP: Run 14-061, , HSL, 6:1960,

## World War Two Air Raid Shelter, 27 Roman Road, Colchester

**SMR No:** 20630  
**NGR:** TM 0016 2543

### Description:

In the centre of the rear garden of No. 27 Roman Road is a World War Two air raid shelter. Unusually, it is built entirely underground and had lain hidden beneath the level of the soil until discovered and dug out by the son of the present owner. The inside is accessed via a flight of concrete steps which descends to 6 feet below ground level. At the bottom, an entrance doorway (the door is no longer extant) leads to the single chamber constructed of curved corrugated iron sheeting braced with steel ribbing. The chamber measures 6' long x 4'6" wide x 5'6" high. The floor is made of concrete. It can be seen that originally the steel walls were painted white but rust has now corroded much of this away. Above ground a deteriorating slab of 7" thick concrete covers part of the roof. It is probable that this concrete once covered the entire structure but over the years it has crumbled away and a large part of the corrugated iron roof sheeting can now be seen at soil level. Five photos of site. <1>

### SITE ASSESSMENT:

Private air raid shelters (as opposed to military) are not generally included as a category within the World War Two Defences in Essex project and their detailed typology and survival is not known. At some time in the future, when there is more specific information on these shelters or a project to record them is undertaken, two features of the Roman Road example may be investigated. The overall size may be particularly small - current information mentions four and six berth shelters which this is surely not - and the depth of its emplacement. It is thought that private shelters were normally semi-sunken to a depth of perhaps three/four feet rather than entirely below ground level. <2>

### Grading:

Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### Sources:

<1> Photograph: , , Nash, 10:2001, five frames

<2> DESC TEXT: The Blitz - Then and Now, , Hyde, A, 1986, Vol. 2/ p114





*SMR 20630. Private air raid shelters are not normally recorded by the World War Two Defences in Essex project but this example, discovered only recently, is particularly unusual.*



## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement, North of Roman Way Camp, Berechurch, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 20824  
**NGR:** TL 9950 2298

### **Description:**

Immediately N of Roman Way Camp, at the junction where the road which passes the camp meets Berechurch Road, is an extant 29mm Spigot Mortar emplacement. It lies on the E side of the junction, N of a footpath.

The pit which holds the mounting pedestal is 9' across and is, very unusually, lined with sandbags. Also, again unusually, it is circular. Normally, these pits were formed from concrete or house bricks in an octagonal shape. Over the years, the bags have rotted away, leaving the impacted sand stacked up, still in its sandbag shapes. This is, naturally, very fragile and could easily crumble. In the centre is the mounting pedestal. This is made, typically, from a 3'6" diameter sewage pipe, stood on end. Inside this, the steel framework and pintle were fixed, the whole pipe then being filled with concrete. The pintle, on which the spigot mortar was mounted, is in this case made of steel rather than the far more normal stainless steel. The outer sewage pipe has broken and a large part is missing, although the inner concrete has kept the pedestal solidly in shape. In the E side of the pit an ammunition alcove has been formed for holding the "bombs". Again, this has been made from stacked-up sandbags, with a concrete slab across the top. The alcove is c. 4'6" wide. The entire pit is half-filled with debris and is now c. 2' in depth.

During World War Two the anti-tank ditch which protected Colchester ran from E to W across the Roman Way Camp road some 150 yards to the S. Although this is well within the range of a 29mm spigot mortar, the recommended engaging distance was 80-100 yards. The ditch and its covering pillboxes were constructed in 1940. Two years later, when spigot mortars were issued, this emplacement may have been sited by the Home Guard (it was a Home Guard weapon rather than regular army) to cover both the defence line and the junction, as its field of fire clearly covers Berechurch Road to the W and the Roman Way Camp road to the S.

Nine photos were taken of the site. <1>

### **SITE ASSESSMENT:**

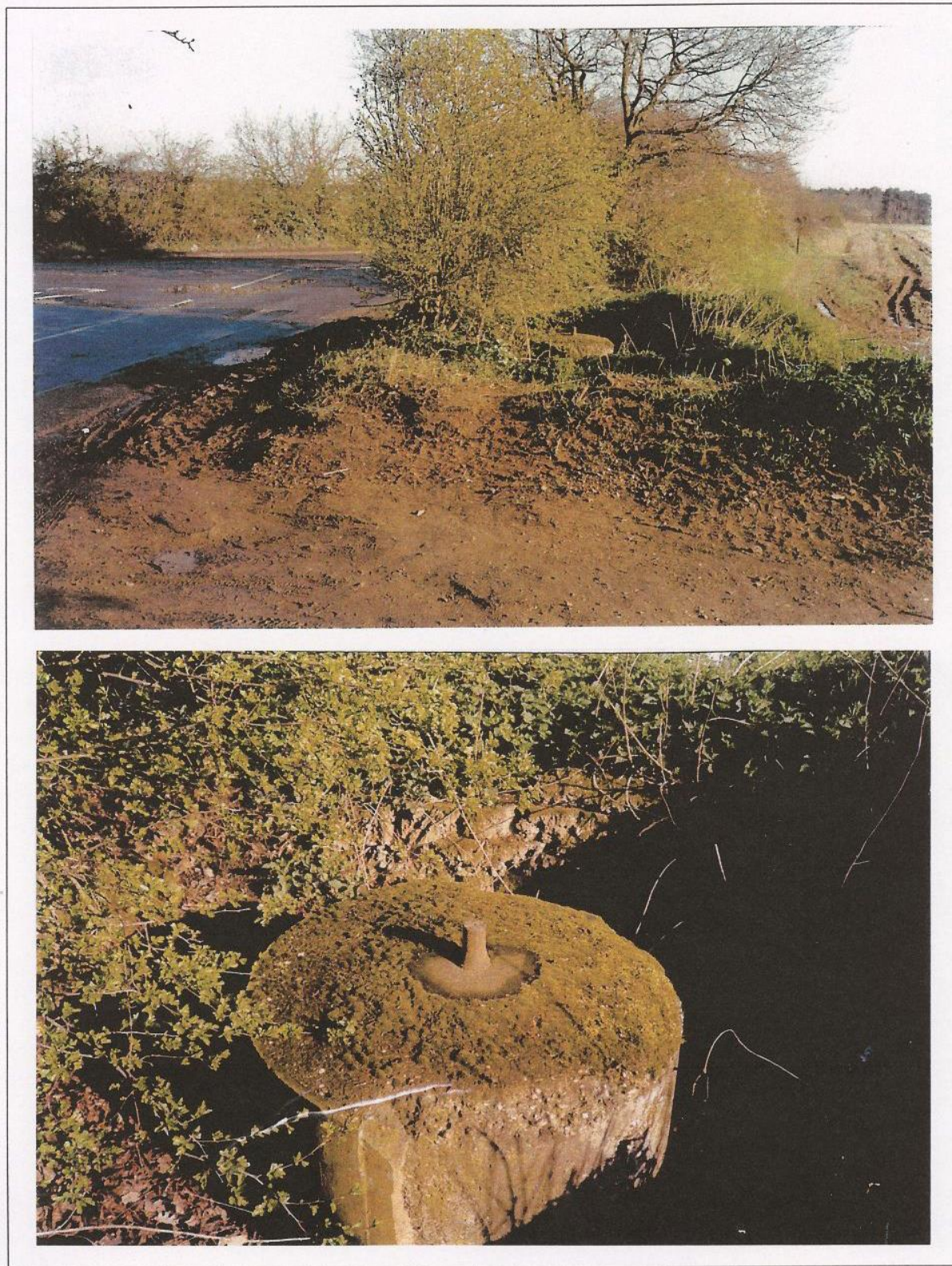
At least 20 spigot mortar emplacements are known to have been built around Colchester and this is the fifth to be discovered extant. Like the others, and the surviving pillboxes, it is an integral part of the history and heritage of Colchester and every effort should be made to ensure its continued survival.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### **Sources:**

<1> Photograph: , , Nash F, 4:2004, nine frames



*SMR 20824: This spigot mortar pit was only discovered in 2004. Filled in and forgotten after the war, it is probable that many more still survive across the county.*

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), Hall grounds, Little Horkesley**

**SMR No:** 21087  
**NGR:** TL 9600 3197

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Erection of Anderson Shelter for storage of ammunition. Hall Grounds, Little Horkesley. Map ref. 409503". (Mil. Ed.) <1>

It is reported that this ammunition shelter survived until just 3 years ago when it was demolished. However, it is not known where it stood within the Hall grounds and the NGR above is the approximate conversion from the Military Grid Reference <2>

**Grading:** Essex Grading 0

### **Sources:**

<2> Verbal communication: Personal comment, , Present Owners, 2005, <1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Great Horkesley

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), Police Station, Great Horkesley**

**SMR No:** 21088  
**NGR:** TL 9780 3073

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Spigot mortar position. Police Station. Garden at rear. Map ref. 427491". (Mil.Ed.) <1>

An aerial photograph taken in May 1946 shows what may be the remains of this emplacement immediately off the NE corner of the police station in the rear garden. However, unusually for such emplacements which are octagonal, this appears as a rectangle with two exterior, but integral ammunition alcoves. From here, the gun would have covered the northern approach to the village.

In 2005, the police station is now two private houses, on the east side of The Causeway. Nothing of the emplacement is apparent in the rear garden of the northernmost house. It was not possible to access the southern house at the time of the site visit. <2>

**Grading:** Essex Grading 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Great Horkesley  
<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4032, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), Woodlands Farm, Great Horkesley**

**SMR No:** 21089

**NGR:** TL 9788 3051

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Erection of Anderson Shelter for storage of ammunition. Land at rear of Woodlands Farm, Great Horkesley. Map ref. 429492". (Mil. Ed.) <1>

This ammunition shelter can be seen as a small Nissen-type hut, typical of its type, on an aerial photograph taken in June 1960. It stood on the west side of an orchard a few yards north of Broad Lane. This is confirmed by the present owner; it was, apparently, demolished about thirty years ago. Although the orchard is now a tennis court, scattered pieces of concrete beneath neighbouring bushes are probably the remains of the shelter base. <2> <3>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Great Horkesley

<2> AP: Run 11-066, , HSL, 1960, June 1960

<3> Verbal communication: Personal comment, July 2005, , Owner, 2005, July 2005



# Royal Observer Corps Post, Boxted Church Road, Great Horkesley

**SMR No:** 21090  
**NGR:** TL 9868 3258

## Description:

On the S side of Boxted Church Road, where high ground commands wide views in every direction, is a finely-surviving World War Two Royal Observer Corps post. The structure, appearing above heavy undergrowth at ground level, is of a brick-built rectangular building with one half open-topped and the other with a flat concrete roof. The outside measurements are 14' 9" x 8' 3". The height is approximately 7 feet above the rough ground.

The interior is approached via a short flight of concrete steps, through an open entrance. Here, there is an open-topped chamber measuring 8' 7" x 6' 9". The dominant feature is the central steel post, 4' 3" high, which has an instrument mounting plate on the top. (See photograph <4>) On the wall in the enclosure, in the southwest corner, the letters "SW" are painted in white. In the NW corner is an entrance doorway (but no door) to a roofed-over chamber. This is at a lower level than the observation enclosure. This is a small room measuring 4' 5" x 6'. In the west wall, low down, is an open escape hatch which, during wartime, would probably have been sealed with loosely laid bricks. In the N wall there is a small observation opening. Between the two chambers is a small window which has no glass but has retained its wooden frame.

Around the top of the open enclosure wooden framing has been attached. Onto this a steel framework and corrugated iron sheeting remain. This is probably a post-war addition to enable the structure to be re-used, perhaps for storage.

Aerial photographs from May 1946, April 1949 and August 1950, at NMR, Swindon, show the structure standing open-topped looking much as it does now. In these photographs something is apparent alongside the ROC post, on its W side. This may have been a small overgrown hut.  
<1> <2> <3>

Nine photos of site. <4>

## SITE ASSESSMENT:

R.O.C. posts of this type are now thought to be very rare, certainly in Essex, and this example is in particularly good condition. As such, every effort should be made to ensure its continued survival, ultimately to Scheduled Monument status.

## Grading:

Essex Grading: \*\*\*\*

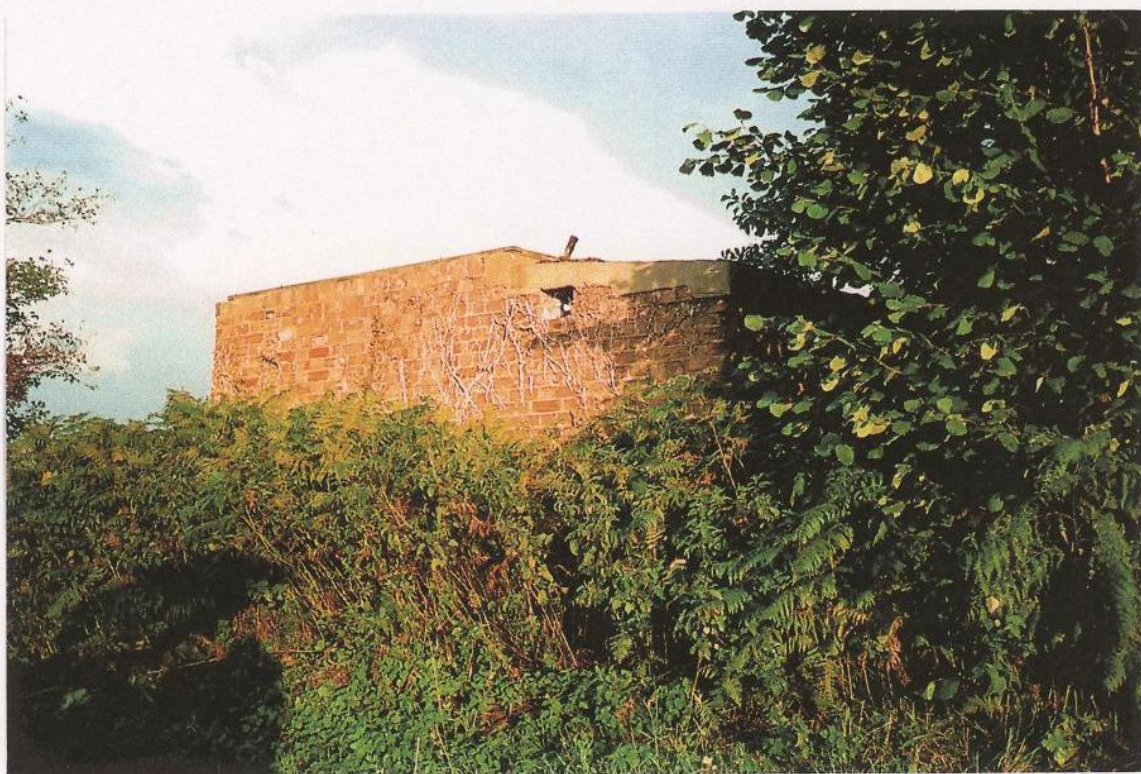
## Sources:

<1> AP: 106G-UK 1492-3033, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

<2> AP: 58-216-5085, , RAF, 1949, April 1949

<3> AP: 58-544-5217, , , 1950, August 1950

<4> Photograph: Royal Observer Corps Post, Boxted Church Road, Great Horkesley, , Nash, F, 2005, 9 frames, Aug 2005



*SMR 21090: The survival of the R.O.C. post, by no means as substantial as, say, a pillbox, is remarkable.*

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), Burnt Dick Hill, Boxted**

**SMR No:** 21091

**NGR:** TL 9897 3338

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Spigot mortar position & communicating trench. Boxted Hall, W. bank of arable field N. of Boxted Hall. Map ref. 443515". (Mil.Ed.) <1>

It appears most likely that this spigot mortar emplacement was sited to cover an approach up the steep incline of Burnt Dick Hill. On the ground, there is a bank running at right-angles to the road overlooking the steepest part of the hill. This is immediately to the W of Burnt Dick Hill Cottages – now one residence – and forms the boundary of the property beneath thick hedging. No further locational evidence has been found and the NGR above is that of the bank noted.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Boxted

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), Straight Road, Boxted**

**SMR No:** 21092

**NGR:** TM 0015 3184

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Spigot mortar position. Noaks Farm, Boxted Cross, E. boundary of arable field N. of Cottage Garden. Map ref. 449500". (Mil. Ed) <1>

"The Cottage" stands W of Straight Road with an arable field N of it. However, no further evidence of the location of the spigot mortar emplacement has been found. On balance, bearing in mind the probable positioning of an ammunition shelter at Boxted Lodge (SMR 21093) it appears most likely that the spigot mortar was emplaced by the road just S of Line Cottages. This patch of ground has now, however, been concreted over.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Boxted

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), Boxted Lodge, Boxted**

**SMR No:** 21093  
**NGR:** TM 0016 3192

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Ammunition shelter. Boxted Lodge, Adj. small plantation strip in parkland W. side of Straight Road". <1>

This plantation appears to be that which lies immediately W of Straight Road, to the N of Line Cottages. However, no further locational evidence has been found and the NGR above is a point in this grove of trees.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Boxted

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), S of Gol Grove, Heckfordbridge**

**SMR No:** 21094  
**NGR:** TL 9460 2186

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Dannert wire, spigot mortar position & slit trench. 2 fields S. of Col Grove and S. and N. of stream. Map ref: ??3403". (Mil.Ed) <1>

This entry for defence works at Heckfordbridge covers a number of Home Guard positions to the west of Maldon Road, apparently N and S of the river. It is recalled locally that the Home Guard were very active in and around Gol (not Col) Grove. However, as the entry includes a number of defences it is now difficult to ascertain with any confidence where the spigot mortar might have been. Site visits and local knowledge have been unsuccessful and the NGR quoted above is therefore a midway point in the general area. <2>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Birch

<2> Verbal communication: Personal comment, , Local resident, 2005, July 2005



## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), Birch Road, Heckfordbridge**

**SMR No:** 21095  
**NGR:** TL 9465 2172

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state "Dannert wire, slit trenches & spigot mortar position. 4 fields N.E. of Luke's Farm N. and S. of Birch Road, Heckfordbridge bridge. Map refs. ??3399 & 395401". (Mil.Ed) <1>

This entry for defence works at Heckfordbridge covers a number of Home Guard positions in the fields S of Birch Road and the low lying piece of land N of Birch Road but S. of the river. However, as it is a compound entry it is now difficult to ascertain where the spigot mortar might have been. On balance the most likely position appears to lie on the hillside S of Birch Road overlooking the bridge to the NW. However, local enquiries have been unsuccessful in confirming this. The NGR quoted above is of this position. <2>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Birch

<2> Verbal communication: Personal comment, , Local resident, 2005, July 2005

## **Ammunition Shelter, The Bungalow, Heckfordbridge, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 21096  
**NGR:** TL 9465 2197

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state "Ammunition shelter. Garden of The Bungalow, Heckfordbridge bridge. Map ref. 393492". (Mil. Ed). Although the wartime Military Grid Reference is wrong (it should be 393402), this ammunition shelter still survives. It stands on land S of "The Bungalow" 30 yards from the road. <1>

At the time of the site visit it was not possible to access the shelter directly but it can be clearly seen from both the road and the woodland known as Gol Grove. It appears as a typical 8' x 6' rectangular building with concrete sides and a 6" concrete roof. The full height entrance (now boarded up) is midway along the N wall. Indicative of ammunition shelters, there is a ventilation brick high on the E wall.

"The Bungalow" is clearly a post-war house. Reportedly, the wartime house was demolished and replaced by the present house, taking the same name. Part of the garden was sold off and this piece of land is where the ammunition shelter now stands. <2>

Two photos of site. <3>

### **SITE ASSESSMENT:**

WWII ammunition shelters are becoming rarer and rarer as the remaining few across the County are demolished, generally through lack of recognition or appreciation of their wartime role. As part of the history and heritage of Heckfordbridge and the Home Guard (it would have been constructed to store weapons and ammunition for the local unit) every effort should be made to ensure the continued survival of this shelter.

### **Grading:**

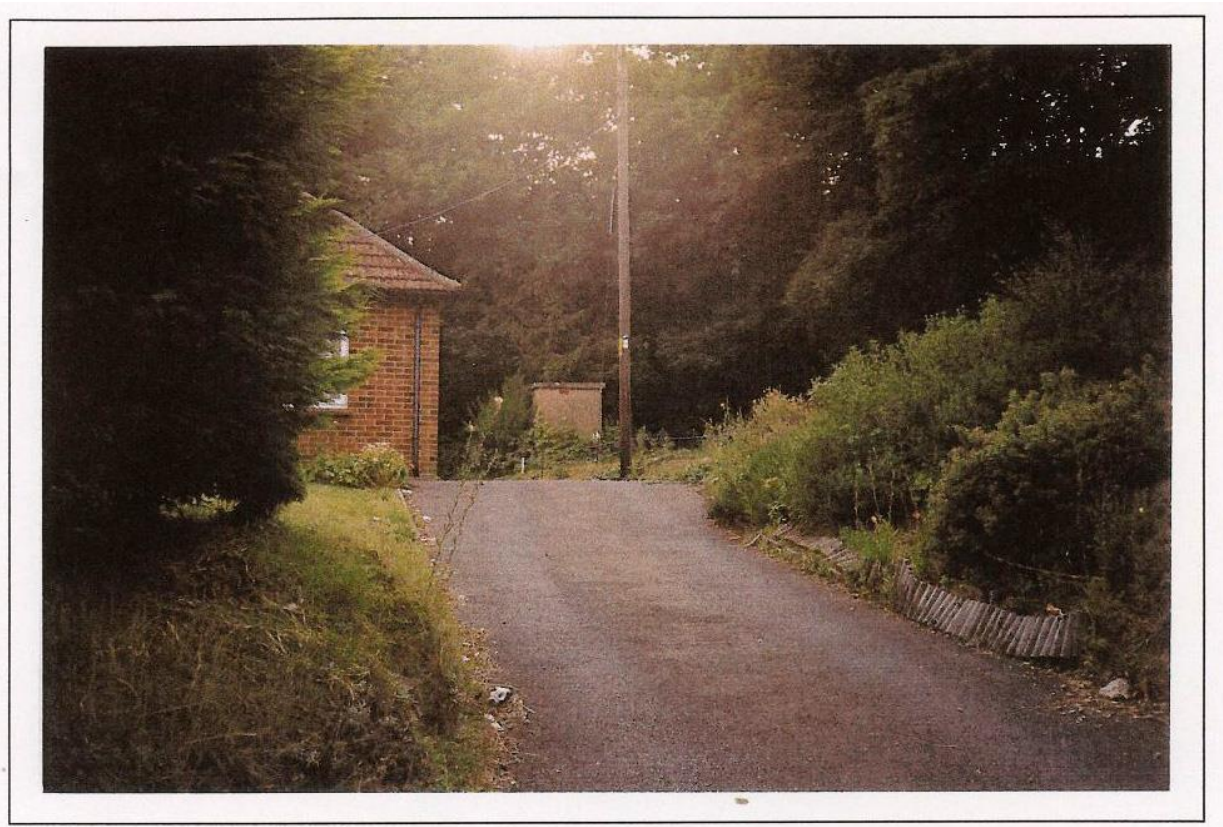
Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Birch

<2> Verbal communication: Personal comment, , Local resident, 2005, July 2005

<3> Photograph: Ammunition Shelter, The Bungalow, Heckfordbridge, , Nash, F, 2005, 2 frames, July 2005



*SMR 21096: Once common, ammunition shelters are now much more rare. They followed a number of patterns; this example appears to be typical of the rectangular, flat-roofed type, as opposed to those built as a small Nissen hut.*

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), Wigborough Road, Layer-de-la-Haye**

**SMR No:** 21097  
**NGR:** TL 9634 1894

### **Description:**

A survey of Essex parish councils in 1995 resulted in over 60 replying with details of locally-known WWII sites. Layer-de-la-Haye parish council highlighted a spigot mortar emplacement which stood on the W side of Wigborough Road immediately N of a footpath. This was confirmed in 2005 by an ex-member of the Home Guard who spent many hours at the site during World War Two. <1> <2>

Surveyed in January 2006, the site sits at the top of a steep hill commanding the approach from the S. Nothing, however, now remains of the emplacement.

**Grading:** Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> Graphic material: Plan, , Layer-de-la-Haye Parish Council, 1995,  
<2> Verbal communication: Personal comment, , ex-member of Home Guard, 2005

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), Brickwall House, Layer-de-la-Haye**

**SMR No:** 21098  
**NGR:** TL 9667 2004

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Spigot mortar position, Sandbagged defence post, Slit trenches, Dannert wiring. Red Brick Wall House, Layer-de-la-Haye". The original map reference is largely illegible (42639?) but 426397 has been added above the original typed number. This, however, cannot be correct as this location is in a wood, well away from any property or roads. <1>

Brickwall House stands on the N side of Birch Road some 70 yards W of Layer Cross. A spigot mortar and supporting defences here would guard the western approach to the central crossroads and be typical of such defensive siting. It is known that another spigot mortar guarded the N approach to the crossroads.

Nothing remains of the Brickwall House emplacement and the NGR above is deemed to be the most likely siting, close alongside the road with a commanding view of the approach.

**Grading:** Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Abberton (including Layer-de-la-Haye)

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), school grounds, Layer-de-la-Haye**

**SMR No:** 21099  
**NGR:** TL 9672 2018

### **Description:**

It is reported by the Parish Clerk of Layer-de-la-Haye Parish Council that an "Ammunition shed, used by the Home Guard" stood in the grounds of Layer-de-la-Haye School, New Cut and that it was demolished in the summer of 1995. <1>

A low-level aerial photograph, probably taken around 1990, shows this ammunition shelter very clearly. It stood on grass 70/80 yards NW of the school buildings; a rectangular flat-roofed structure perhaps 8' x 6' in dimensions. It was built of brick with a concrete roof, typical of its type. <2>

This position is still grassland, close alongside a high fenced enclosure. A rectangular depression in the ground continues to show its apparent site.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> CORRESPONDENCE: Letter from Parish Clerk, , Bunting, Mrs V, 1995, Nov 1995

<2> AP: Layer-de-la-Haye School, , not known, 1990 ?, c. 1990

## WWI/WWII Pillbox (destroyed), Forge Garage, Layer-de-la-Haye

**SMR No:** 21100  
**NGR:** TL 9678 2004

### Description:

The garage on the NE corner of the crossroads at Layer-de-la-Haye is a single storey, brick and timber building with a tiled roof. It is clear from existing photographs and local memory that a concrete pillbox or defence post was attached to the NW end of the garage for many years, probably from the First World War until the 1960's. <1><2><3><4>

The earliest photograph, dating from c1924 shows a square, concrete "annex" to the garage possibly 10' square. In the side facing the crossroads, the W face, a concreted-up loophole can be seen. This has been painted around with the black shape of a window as an attempt at camouflage. A tiled roof with wooden gable has been added to blend in with the style of the garage.

The second photograph, dated c1952 shows the garage changed in a number of respects but the pillbox is still there. With a clearer view, it can be seen that there were at least three loopholes in the W face, all concreted up. There is now no sign of the painted window. The tiled and boarded roof is still there.

Lastly, in 1964 the walls of the pillbox are still there but the roof has gone and the concrete walls now form an open enclosure, c 6' high, in which a shed now stands with its roof visible.

From the photographs it is not clear whether the pillbox ever had a concrete, flat roof beneath its tiled and boarded camouflage or whether it was always an open enclosure. Clearly, the entrance was from within the garage.

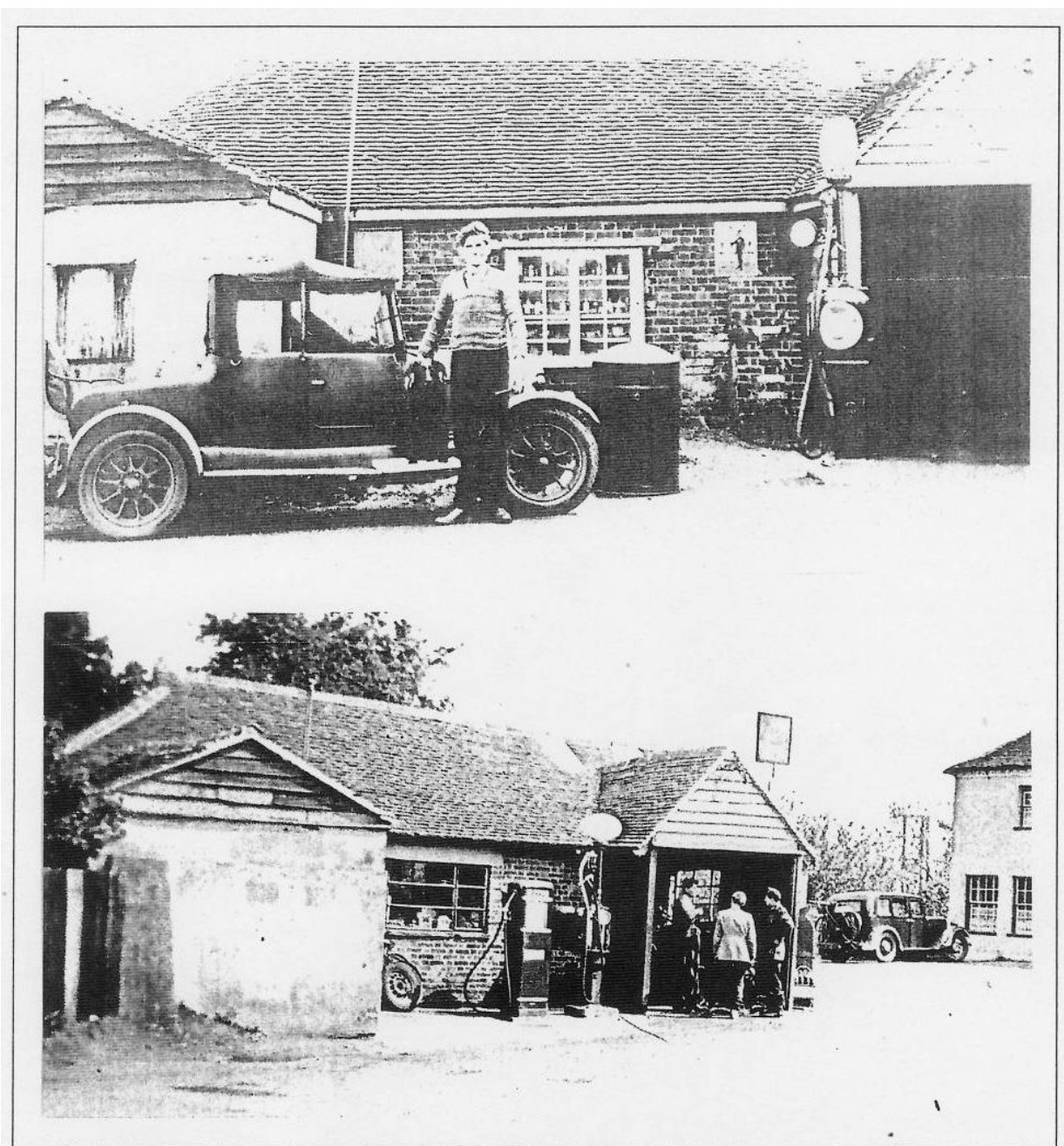
Nothing of it now remains. Two photos of site. <5>

### Grading:

Essex Grading: 0

### Sources:

- <1> Photograph: -, , unknown, 1924,
- <2> Photograph: -, , unknown, 1952,
- <3> Photograph: -, , unknown, 1964,
- <4> Verbal communication: Personal comment, , garage owner, 2006, Jan 2006
- <5> Photograph: Forge Garage, Layer-de-la-Haye, print, Nash, F, 2007, 2 frames, Nov 2007



*SMR 21100: Two early photographs of Forge Garage, Llayer-de-la-Haye. The upper picture was taken around 1924 and clearly shows the attached pillbox to the left. The First World War had ended just six years earlier and the painted window camouflage can still be seen. By 1952, the garage had changed in some respects but the pillbox, now without its camouflage, still remained. (Photographs, John Morse.)*



## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), North of "Mustows", Layer-de-la-Haye**

**SMR No:** 21101  
**NGR:** TL 9684 2015

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state "Slit trenches, spigot mortar position, Dannert wire. Paddock and garden N. of Mustow House, High Road. Map ref. 416385". (Mil.Ed) <1>

"Mustows" stands on the NE corner of Layer Cross in the centre of Layer-de-la-Haye. An aerial photograph taken in April 1946 shows open land to the NE of the house with indistinct paddocks or garden running N alongside High Road. <2>

In 2006, this entire area has been built over. The NGR above is the equivalent of the wartime Military Grid Reference.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Abberton (including Layer-de-la-Haye)

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1367- 5337, , RAF, 1946, April 1946

## Anti-Tank Pimples, North-east side of Abberton Reservoir, Colchester

**SMR No:** 21102  
**NGR:** TL 9965 1895

### Description:

During World War Two, an anti-tank ditch was dug from Colchester Cemetery southwards to Abberton Reservoir (SMR 20550). Here, it terminated in a block of c. 32 anti-tank pimples between the end of the ditch and the reservoir. These can be clearly seen on an aerial photograph taken in April 1946. <1>

In 2005, there is no trace of the ditch by the reservoir nor anti-tank pimples embedded in the grass or concrete top of the embankment. However, at least 12 pimples lie randomly dumped in the water at the edge of the reservoir here. It is not known how many more lie beneath water level. Clearly, these are twelve of the original number taken up and left. Three photos of site. <2>

### Grading:

Essex Grading: \*\*

### Sources:

<1> AP: 106G-UK 1367- 5342, , RAF, 1946, Apr 1946

<2> Photograph: Anti-tank pimples, Abberton Reservoir, , Nash, F, 2005, 3 frames, Dec 2005



*SMR 21102: Although it is clear that these anti-tank pimples are some of those which breached the gap between the anti-tank ditch and the reservoir, it is not known how they came to be dumped in the water.*

## Road Barrier (destroyed), Rectory Lane, Abberton

**SMR No:** 21103  
**NGR:** TL 9992 1932

### Description:

The anti-tank ditch which ran from Colchester Cemetery to Abberton Reservoir (SMR 20550) crossed Rectory Lane at this point. The soil marks from the filled-in ditch can be clearly seen on an aerial photograph taken in April 1946. <1> Here, there would have been a road barrier, probably the "socket and railway line" type. However, nothing of it can be made out on the aerial photograph and nothing survives in 2005.

### Grading:

Essex Grading: 0

### Sources:

<1> AP: 106G-UK 1367- 5342, , RAF, 1946, Apr 1946

## Road Barrier, Oxley Hill, Abberton

**SMR No:** 21104  
**NGR:** TL 9996 1954

### Description:

The anti-tank ditch which ran from Colchester Cemetery to Abberton Reservoir (SMR 20550) crossed Oxley Hill at this point. The soil marks from the filled-in ditch can be clearly seen on an aerial photograph taken in April 1946. <1> Here, there would have been a road barrier and some of the anti-tank pimples which were the fixed elements on each side of the road still survive.

Buried deep in the hedge on the N side is a single pimple. There were probably more here but as the bank drops sharply perhaps no more than 2 or 3. There are none in situ on the S side of the road but only a few yards away to the SE there lies four more pimples. These appear to have been lifted from their original position by the roadside and dropped here, in a small grassy meadow perhaps 30 yards away. Three photos of site. <2>

### Grading:

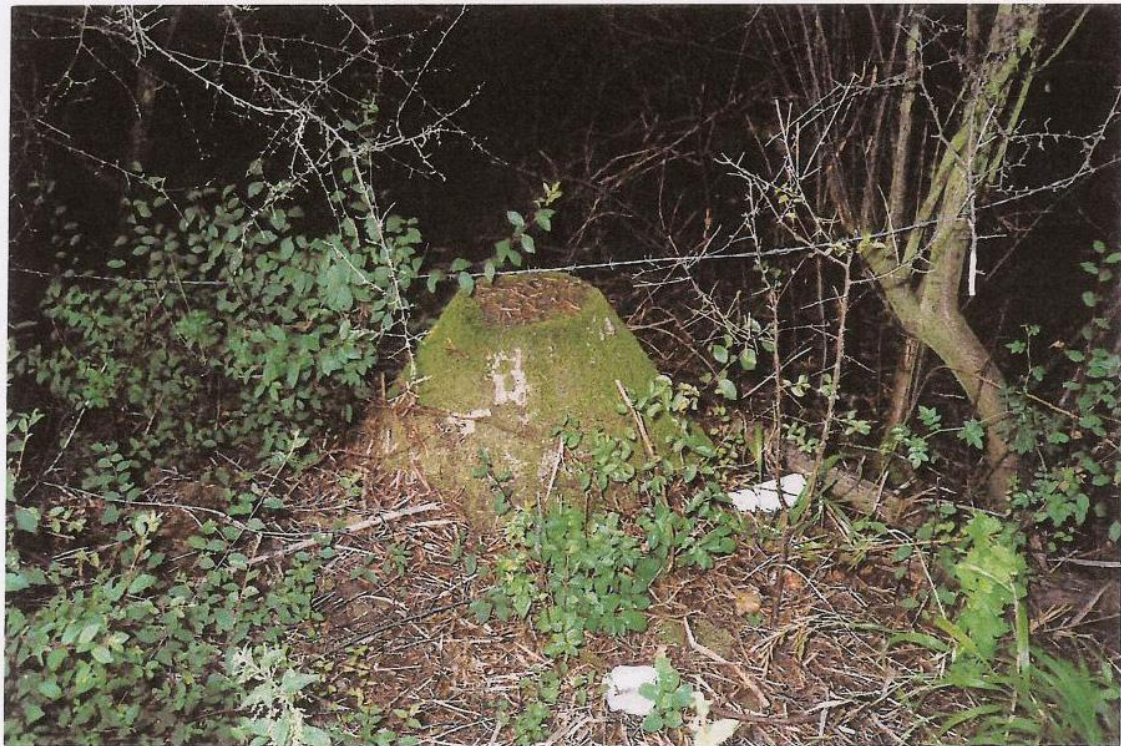
Essex Grading \*\*\*

### Sources:

<1> AP: 106G-UK 1367- 5342, , RAF, 1946, Apr 1946

<2> Photograph: Remains of road barrier, Oxley Hill, Abberton, , Nash, F, 2005, 3 frames, Dec 2005





*SMR 21104: Just one pimple remains in situ in the hedge, but on the other side of the road some of those which were taken up still lie in a field.*

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), The Gate Poultry Farm, Abberton**

**SMR No:** 21105  
**NGR:** TM 0043 1910

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Spigot mortar position. O.S. No.68, Gate Poultry Farm, Abberton ." Field No. OS 68 lay behind the houses on the NW corner of the main crossroads at Abberton. An aerial photograph taken in April 1946 shows nothing significant in this field but immediately alongside, within a few yards, there is the pinpoint of a possible spigot mortar pedestal. The position of this, at the side of a field covering the W approach to the Abberton crossroads along Layer Road, would be typical of such emplacements. <1>

This position has now been built over.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Abberton

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), The Gate Poultry Farm, Abberton**

**SMR No:** 21106  
**NGR:** TM 0043 1913

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Ammunition shelter. Rear of Gate Poultry Farm, Abberton". Ammunition shelters were typically built to house the bombs of a spigot mortar emplacement, usually located within a 100 yards of such a site, to its rear. <1>

A similar location to this is given for a spigot mortar emplacement in "O.S. No.68, Gate Poultry Farm, Abberton" (SMR 21105) and it is probable that the ammunition shelter was built to support this. Various buildings and structures can be made out in and around Field No OS 68 on an aerial photograph taken in April 1946 but none are clear enough for a positive identification. The NGR quoted above is, therefore, what may be the most likely of these structures standing, at that time, some 50 yards to the N of the apparent spigot mortar emplacement. However, the photographic identification of both of these sites is somewhat tenuous although the general area of both is thought to be correct. <2>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Abberton

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1367- 5342, , RAF, 1946, Apr 1946

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), Front garden, 3 Hillcrest Cottages, Abberton**

**SMR No:** 21107  
**NGR:** TM 0065 1918

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Spigot mortar position. Front of garden, 3, Hillcrest, Abberton". The short row of cottages on the E side of Mersea Road are Hillcrest Cottages and No 3 is the northernmost of a semi-detached pair. From here, a spigot mortar would have had an unobstructed view northwards along Mersea Road, guarding the crossroads against an attack from the Colchester direction. <1>

Nothing of it can be made out on an aerial photograph taken in April 1946 and nothing is apparent now. However, since the end of the war the front fences along this stretch have been dropped back from the roadside and it is very possible that the spigot mortar emplacement was sited where the grass verge now is, outside the property.

**Grading:** Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Abberton

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), Rear Garden, 4 Hillcrest Cottages, Abberton**

**SMR No:** 21108  
**NGR:** TM 0071 1917

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Weapon Pit. Garden at rear of 4, Hillcrest, Abberton". No. 4 Hillcrest Cottages is the southernmost of a pair of semi-detached cottages on the E side of Mersea Road. The term "weapon pit" appears many times in War Time Contraventions 1968 and it is not positively known to what it refers. Rifle position, machine-gun nest or anti-tank gun site are possibilities; perhaps it is a ubiquitous description encompassing a position where many types of weapon could be deployed. In the one confirmed site at Billericay, it was a mortar position. <1>

Here at Abberton it appears to have been a spigot mortar emplacement. It is recalled locally as a concrete pedestal with a stainless steel pin on the top – the exact description of such a site. It stood at the bottom of the garden behind No. 4 and was subsequently broken up. The broken concrete may still lie beneath the undergrowth here. <2>

From this position, the spigot mortar would have a good field of fire to cover the E approach along Fingringhoe Road towards the Abberton crossroads.

**Grading:** Essex Grading 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Abberton

<2> Verbal communication: personal comment, , local resident of Abberton, 2005, Dec 2005



## Observation Post, Peldon Church Tower

**SMR No:** 21109  
**NGR:** TL 9894 1678

### Description:

Contemporary records state, "Observation post. Peldon Church Tower. Map ref. 436351". (Mil. Ed.) <1> There are surprisingly few entries in War Time Contraventions 1968 listing church towers used as observation positions. However, this must surely have been a regular occurrence; a natural position for the local Home Guard to keep a watch over the surrounding countryside.

It is not known whether anything would have been actually built on the tower top to facilitate the position. Probably not, perhaps a table and chair would have sufficed.

At the time of the site visit it was not possible to access the tower.

### Grading:

Essex Grading

### Sources:

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Peldon

## Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), behind Rose Inn, Peldon

**SMR No:** 21110  
**NGR:** TM 0064 1593

### Description:

Contemporary records state, "Ammunition Shelter. Land at rear of The Rose Inn, Peldon. Map ref. 454343". (Mil. Ed.) <1>

The Rose public house stands on the corner of Mersea Road and Colchester Road behind a triangle of grass. An aerial photograph taken in April 1946 shows a tract of land immediately behind it with a small structure in the middle, too indistinct to be truly identifiable. <2>

A second entry in the records lists "sandbagged defence post with trench" on the triangular plot in front of the inn and given that both entries are dated 23/10/40, the only two of that date in the Peldon records, it is clear that the ammunition shelter was built to accommodate the needs of the defence post in front of the inn.

Nothing of these structures now survives.

### Grading:

Essex Grading: 0

### Sources:

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Peldon

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1367-5137, , RAF, 1946, April 1946



## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), behind Rose Inn, Peldon**

**SMR No:** 21110

**NGR:** TM 0064 1593

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Ammunition Shelter. Land at rear of The Rose Inn, Peldon. Map ref. 454343". (Mil. Ed.) <1>

The Rose public house stands on the corner of Mersea Road and Colchester Road behind a triangle of grass. An aerial photograph taken in April 1946 shows a tract of land immediately behind it with a small structure in the middle, too indistinct to be truly identifiable. <2>

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Nothing of these structures now survives.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Peldon

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1367-5137, , RAF, 1946, April 1946

## Anti-Invasion Obstacles, West Mersea

**SMR No:** 21111  
**NGR:** TM 0051 1232

### Description:

Paralleling the beach at West Mersea, some 30/40 yards out on the mudflats, is a long row of World War Two anti-invasion obstacles. Each consists of a short length, 3 to 4 feet, of railway line embedded in a large footing of concrete. The bottom of each of these stakes has a steel cross-piece for better anchorage in the concrete, the top of each has been cut off at an angle to present a sharpened point. There are c 22 obstacles in total stretching for c 100 yards. Over the years, the footings have all come adrift from the mud. They, with their steel stakes, have then fallen over such that in each case the bottom of the concrete base now faces the beach while the stake points out to sea.

In practice, these obstacles would have been laid by men working between the tides to erect a line of steel stakes to protect this part of the West Mersea shoreline. Any invasion would probably have come at high tide when the sharpened stakes would have waited hidden just below the water. Like similar German defences along the Normandy coast, they would have been intended to rip the bottom out of the invasion craft, or at least prevent them from having a straight-forward beach landing. It is possible that the line was once longer than now and that others have been removed.

One aerial photograph of the area taken in May 1985. <1> Two aerial photographs of the area taken in Oct/Nov 2000. <2> <3> Five ground level photographs taken of the anti-invasion obstacles in Jan 2006. <4>

### SITE ASSESSMENT:

This type of anti-invasion obstacle in the sea is now very rare and these are an important part of our World War Two heritage. No others are known to still exist in Essex. However, there is little doubt that they could present a danger to wind surfers, jet skiers and swimmers. A tall steel post with a warning triangle has been erected at each end of the line but there is no indication of what this means or the fact that a potentially dangerous obstacle lies hidden between the posts at high tide. It is strongly recommended that a more explanatory warning sign be erected on the beach, possibly combined with an information board on the World War Two heritage of Mersea.

### Grading:

Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### Sources:

- <1> AP: TM 003 126, , unknown, 1985, May 1985
- <2> AP: CP/00/29/13, , Tyler,S, 2000,
- <3> AP: CP/00/29/15, , Tyler,S, 2000,
- <4> Photograph: Anti-invasion obstacles on the mudflats at West Mersea, , Nash, F, 2006, 5 frames, Jan 2006



*SMR 21111: Uprooted by man or nature sometime during the past 67 years, these anti-invasion obstacles now lie encrusted in mud and seaweed. It is not known whether this was the total length of the line of such obstacles here or whether, perhaps soon after the war, others were removed.*



## Pillbox base, St Peter's Well Beach, West Mersea

**SMR No:** 21112  
**NGR:** TM 0052 1238

### Description:

On the sands at St Peters Well Beach, there is the base and some low walling remains of a "thin-walled", concrete Type FW3/24 infantry pillbox, facing S out to sea. The base measures c 19' front to back x 21' wide and the pillbox marks and remains on the base measure c 13' front to back x 15' wide. <1>

Four photos of site taken in February 1999. <2> Two photos of site taken in January 2006.  
<3>

### Grading:

Essex Grading: \*

### Sources:

<1> DESC TEXT: Pillboxes, , Wills, H, 1985, p.31

<2> Photograph: pillbox base, St Peter's Well Beach, , Nash, F, 1999, 4 frames, Feb 1999

<3> Photograph: pillbox base, St Peter's Well Beach, , Nash, F, 2006, 2 frames, Jan 2006



*SMR 21112: Although not much more than the base of this pillbox now remains, much can still be made out of its original size, type and structure.*

## **Birch WWII Airfield — Administrative Site**

**SMR No:** 21113  
**NGR:** TL 9120 1900

**Description:**

May 2006: The Administrative Site of Birch Airfield, seven buildings including the Operations room, lay to the SW of the airfield. Visited in May 2006, nothing of it now survives and the area is an open field. <1>

**Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

**Sources:**

<1> Map: Birch Airfield Record Site Plan, , Air Ministry, 1944, Site No. 1

## **Birch WWII Airfield - No 4 Dispersed Site**

**SMR No:** 21114  
**NGR:** TL 9055 1897

**Description:**

May 2006: No. 4 Dispersed Site of Birch Airfield, lay to the SW of the main site. An Air Ministry plan dated November 1944 shows that it comprised 41 buildings and other structures. The site is now an open field with nothing surviving. <1>

**Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

**Sources:**

<1> Map: Birch Airfield Record Site Plan, , Air Ministry, 1944, Dispersed sites nos. 2-14

## **Birch WWII Airfield — Dispersed Site No.9**

**SMR No:** 21115  
**NGR:** TL 9073 1834

**Description:**

May 2006: Birch Airfield Dispersed Site No.9 lay on the N side of the B.1022 Maldon Road and comprised 41 buildings and other structures. The site is now an open field. <1>

**Grading:** Essex Grading: 0

**Sources:**

<1> Map: Birch Airfield Record Site Plan, , Air Ministry, 1944, Dispersed sites nos. 2-14

## **Birch WWII Airfield — Dispersed Site No.10**

**SMR No:** 21116  
**NGR:** TL 9089 1801

**Description:**

May 2006: Birch Airfield Dispersed Site No.10 lay to the S of the B.1022 Maldon Road, S of Haynes Green Cottages. It comprised 41 buildings and other structures. The site is now an open field. <1>

**Grading:** Essex Grading: 0

**Sources:**

<1> Map: Birch Airfield Record Site Plan, , Air Ministry, 1944, Dispersed sites nos. 2-14

## **Birch WWII Airfield — Dispersed Site No.13**

**SMR No:** 21117  
**NGR:** TL 9075 1892

**Description:**

May 2006: No.13 Dispersed Site of Birch Airfield lay to the SW of the main site immediately alongside and E of No.4 Site. An Air Ministry plan dated November 1944 shows that it was the WAAF site, comprising 46 buildings and other structures. Visited in May 2006, the site is now open fields with nothing surviving. <1>

**Grading:** Essex Grading: 0

**Sources:**

<1> Map: Birch Airfield Record Site Plan, , Air Ministry, 1944, Dispersed sites nos. 2-14



## Road Barrier (destroyed), Maldon Road/Station Road, Tiptree

**SMR No:** 21118  
**NGR:** TL 8903 1560

### Description:

An aerial photograph taken in April 1946 shows a huge band of anti-tank pimples and sockets across the junction of Maldon Road and Station Road sealing off the approach into Tiptree from the SW. The barrier is anchored at its N end to "Rawalpindi" (now No.112 Maldon Road) with a five-row pimple barrier stretching S across the corner of a field (now the front garden of No.114) to the carriageway. It continued via anti-tank sockets to the grass triangle at the junction of the two roads. Here, it once again reverted to pimples before changing again to sockets across Station Road. On the S side of Station Road, continuing the straight line of the band, pimples again traced a path (largely invisible on the aerial photograph), this time to the southern anchorage point at Birkin House (still extant). TL 8904 1562 - TL 8903 1558 . <1>

The image on the 1946 aerial photograph is supported by contemporary records which state, "21 concrete pimples. Front garden of 'Rawalpindi', Maldon Road", "9 concrete pimples. Market garden to W. of and adjoining Maldon Road" and "28 concrete pimples. Front garden of Birkin House', Maldon Road". <2>

A ground-level photograph in a book on Tiptree in Tiptree Public Library shows the junction in, reportedly, 1945. This is very clear and shows, close up, six pimples at the roadside outside 'Rawalpindi' plus four on the grass triangle. At least four rows of anti-tank sockets cross the junction. <3>

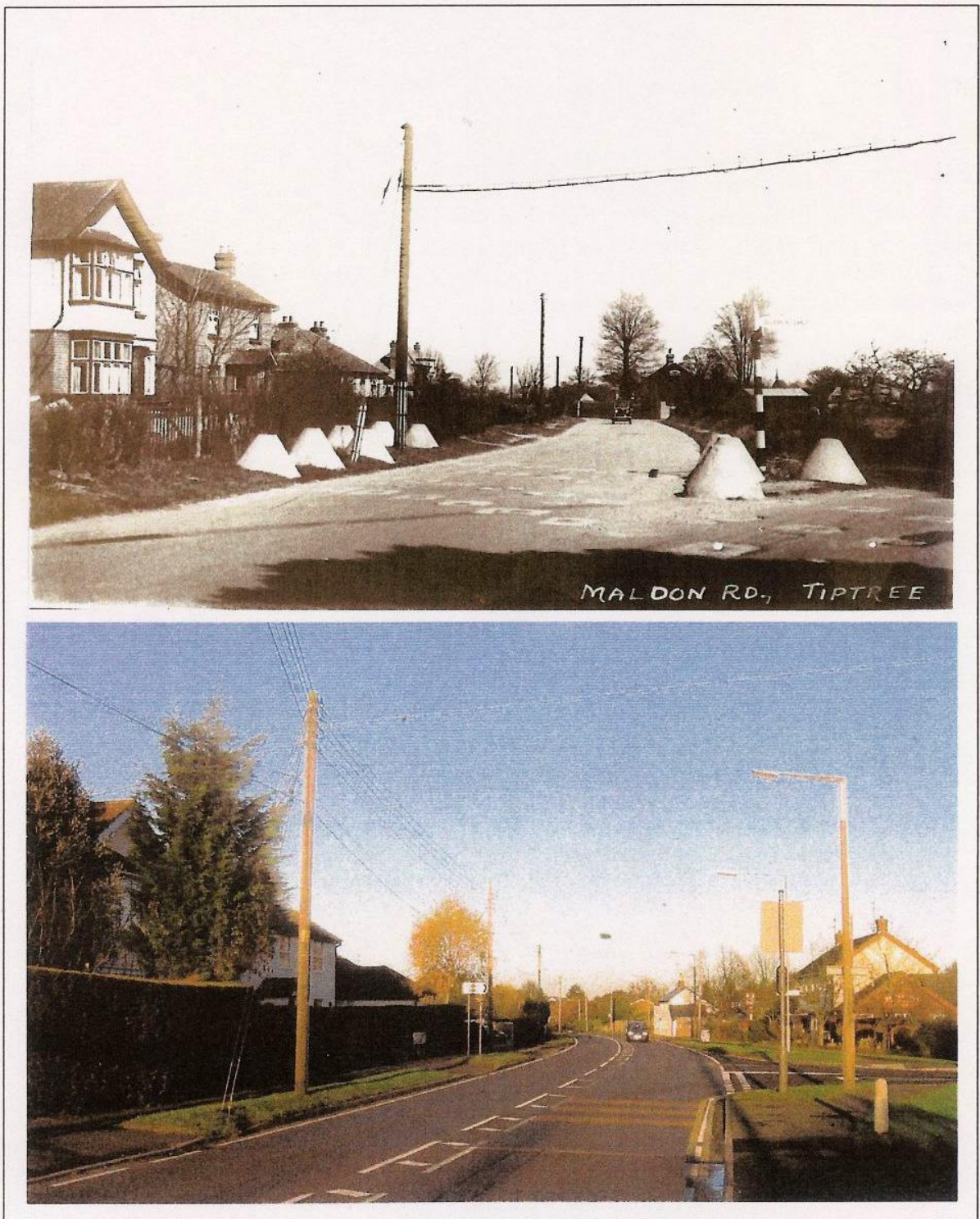
In 2006, the angle of approach of Station Road has changed; the sharp fork has become a right-angle and the previous grass triangle has become part of the grass verge to the W of Station Road. Nothing of the pimples or sockets now survive. <4>

### Grading:

Essex Grading: 0

### Sources:

- <1> AP: 106G-UK 1367-5155, , RAF, 1946, Apr 1946
- <2> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Tiptree
- <3> DESC TEXT: Tiptree, one day a city?, , Bamford, E, 1996, photograph c.1945
- <4> Photograph: Junction of Maldon Road and Station Road, Tiptree, , Moore, J, 2006,



SMR 21118: Wartime photographs of road barriers are very rare, particularly of sites which can be identified now. The upper picture, taken at the junction of Maldon Road and Station Road shows, very graphically, the fixed anti-tank pimples on the grass verges and the sockets across the road. These would each have had a steel cover, removable to allow a length of railway line to be dropped in. Bottom, the scene taken from the same spot today. (1945 photograph, Elaine Bamford. 2007 photograph, John Moore)

## **Road Barrier (destroyed), Maypole Road/Kelvedon Road, Tiptree**

**SMR No:** 21119  
**NGR:** TL 8928 1673

### **Description:**

An aerial photograph taken in April 1946 shows the clear image of a substantial road barrier at the major junction by Windmill Green. A five-row band of anti-tank pimples are anchored to the N side of the small Eastern Electricity building which stood on the E side of the junction between Maypole Road and Church Road. Between this building (no longer extant) and Maypole Road around 25 pimples can be counted. Across the road, the faint marks of sockets can be made out. On the green itself, possibly 13 pimples crossed the southern tip to Kelvedon Road. Again faint socket marks can be seen crossing Kelvedon Road to a building on the W side. TL 8930 1672 - TL 8927 1673. Nothing of the barrier now survives. <1>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> AP: 106G-UK 1367-5155, , RAF, 1946, Apr 1946

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), Vine Road, Tiptree**

**SMR No:** 21120  
**NGR:** TL 8902 1672

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state "Spigot mortar position. Vine Farm, Field opposite farmhouse". <1> Vine Farm lies on the W side of Vine Road. "Opposite farmhouse" is assumed to mean on the E side of the road and an aerial photograph taken in April 1946 shows a small field here although this is just one of a number on both sides of Vine Road. The entire area has now been built over, however, and the NGR above is thought to be the most likely position. <2>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Tiptree  
<2> AP: 106G-UK 1367-5154, , RAF, 1946, Apr 1946

## Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), "Milldene", Tiptree

**SMR No:** 21121  
**NGR:** TL 8934 1651

### Description:

Contemporary records state, "Spigot mortar position. Field at rear of 'Milldene'." <1> This is just one of three very similar entries all documenting a spigot mortar emplacement on land belonging to "Milldene".

This house still survives although in a much altered setting to that of wartime Tiptree. It stands on the N side of Ransom Road surrounded by houses on all sides. It can be seen on pre-war OS maps and an aerial photograph taken in April 1946 that it then stood amid fields with no more than two houses and a few barns around.

It is now impossible to say which field the spigot mortar emplacement was in and the NGR above is that of the house itself. <2>

### Grading:

Essex Grading: 0

### Sources:

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Tiptree

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1367-5154, , RAF, 1946, Apr 1946

## Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed) at rear of the windmill, Tiptree

**SMR No:** 21122  
**NGR:** TL 8941 1662

### Description:

Contemporary records state, "Spigot mortar position in N.W. corner. At rear of The Old Windmill, Church Street". <1>

Tiptree windmill stands to the E of Church Road (not Church Street) now surrounded by houses. An aerial photograph taken in April 1946 shows it with fields around although it is difficult to tell which would be the rear or whether "NW corner" refers to a field or yard. Without more evidence the NGR above is the position of the windmill. <2>

### Grading:

Essex Grading: 0

### Sources:

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Tiptree

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1367-5154, , RAF, 1946, April 1946

## Road Barrier, Chapel Road/New Road, Tiptree

**SMR No:** 21123  
**NGR:** TL 9026 1605

### Description:

An aerial photograph taken in April 1946 shows the clear image of a substantial road barrier across the Chapel Road/New Road junction. At its northern end, a three-row band of anti-tank pimples is anchored to the W side of No. 99 Chapel Road. Four rows of anti-tank pimples cross New Road to the corner. A row of anti-tank cubes, perhaps eight, then runs W along the boundary of the corner garden to the front of No.97. At this point, four rows of anti-tank sockets cross Chapel Road to the S side. TL 9027 1607 - TL 9026 1603. <1>

Contemporary records list no fewer than four entries covering the length of this barrier. "Road Barrier. Nr. Congregational Chapel. Map ref. 349345" (Mil.Ed.), "14 concrete pimples. Garden of 'Woodlands', Chapel Road", "8 concrete pimples & sockets. Garden of 12, Paternoster Row, Chapel Road" and "7 concrete pimples & sockets. Garden of Tiptree Villa, Chapel Road". Unfortunately, house names have now been dropped and it has not been possible to match up the current house numbers with the documentary entries. <2>

However, one element of the barrier still survives. It can be seen on the aerial photograph that two rows of anti-tank sockets crossed Chapel Road directly outside No.97. It is now clear that they were laid, in fact, right across the pavement and hardstanding (which may well have been a lawn at the time) and up to the front of the house as their "footprints" are still there. The original steel sockets into which lengths of railway line were dropped were formed by digging a roughly 2-foot square hole, placing the 8-inch square socket in the centre, with its steel lid, and filling around the socket with concrete. At some point since World War Two it appears that the lids have been removed from those in the garden of No.97 and the sockets filled with concrete. As this is a different colour and texture from the surrounding concrete the imprint of seven anti-tank sockets, staggered in two rows, is plain to see. The 1945 photo of the Maldon Road/Station Road barrier (SMR 21118) gives a clear impression of the visual effect still extant at No.97 Chapel Road.

### Grading:

Essex Grading

\*

### Sources:

<1> AP: 106G-UK 1367-5153, , RAF, 1946, Apr 1946  
<2> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Tiptree

## Road Barrier (destroyed), Factory Hill, Tiptree

**SMR No:** 21124  
**NGR:** TL 8994 1570

### Description:

Contemporary records state, "Concrete blocks (6). 1, Trewlands Cottages", "Concrete blocks (8). 2, Trewlands Cottages" and "Concrete blocks (17). Factory Hall". <1> These three entries all refer to a road barrier across Factory Hill to the SE of Tiptree. Trewlands Cottages stand on the E side of the road with Factory Hall, part of Wilkin & Sons Ltd the jam producers, directly opposite. Nothing of the barrier now survives.

### Grading:

Essex Grading 0

### Sources:

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Tiptree

## Spigot Mortar Emplacement, Bowdens Cottage, Wormingford Bridge

**SMR No:** 21125  
**NGR:** TL 9341 3287

### Description:

Contemporary records state, "2 spigot mortar positions. Cottage in Rowdens Lane. Grass paddock adj. garden & garden at rear of cottage. Map ref. 383513". (Mil. Ed.) <1> "Rowdens Lane" is in fact Bowdens Lane and the land on which these two spigot mortar emplacements still stand is Bowdens Cottage. <1>

This pedestal, with its stainless steel pintle on top, stands just a foot out of the grass to the W of a small hay shed or pig sty. From here, the gun could have fired on both Wormingford Bridge less than 100 yards to the NW or along Bowdens Lane which runs N to S just a few yards away.

One photo of site. <2>

### Grading:

Essex Grading \*\*\*

### Sources:

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Wormingford

<2> Photograph: Spigot Mortar Emplacement, Bowdens Cottage, , Nash, F, 2006, 1 frame, Aug 2006





*SMR 21125: Like its partner (SMR 21126) it is probable that beneath the grass and soil, the pit, with its ammunition alcoves, still survives.*



*SMR 21126: Most spigot mortar pintles were formed from high grade stainless steel which still remains bright to this day*

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement, Bowdens Cottage, Wormingford Bridge**

**SMR No:** 21126  
**NGR:** TL 9341 3293

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "2 spigot mortar positions. Cottage in Rowdens Lane. Grass paddock adj. garden & garden at rear of cottage. Map ref. 383513". (Mil. Ed.) <1> "Rowdens Lane" is in fact Bowdens Lane and the land on which these two spigot mortar emplacements still stand is Bowdens Cottage. <1>

Just the top of the pedestal, with its stainless steel pintle, can be seen of this emplacement. It lies in the SE corner of a small meadow bordering the River Stour which runs alongside the property. From this position the gun could easily cover the approach to Wormingford Bridge which is less than 100 yards away to the SW.

One photo taken of site. <2>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### **Sources:**

- <1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Wormingford
- <2> Photograph: Spigot Mortar Emplacement, Bowdens Cottage, , Nash, F, 2006, 1 frame, Aug 2006

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), Church Hall, Wormingford**

**SMR No:** 21127  
**NGR:** TL 9328 3232

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Anderson shelter for storage of ammunition. Grounds of Church Hall, Back Driveway". <1>

This ammunition shelter survived until just a few years ago. It stood in a garden c.30 yards to the NW of Church Hall and is, in fact, marked on a 1961 1:2500 OS map of the area. <2>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

- <1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Wormingford
- <2> Verbal communication: personal comment, , local resident of Wormingford, 2003, August 2003

## **Road Barrier (destroyed), Fordham Road, Wormingford**

**SMR No:** 21128  
**NGR:** TL 9321 3037

### **Description:**

A series of very clear ground-level colour photographs taken by an American serviceman during World War Two shows local scenes around Wormingford airfield, where he was based. <1> One of these was taken looking N along Fordham Road from outside the entrance to "Rochfords". Although clearly not the subject of the photo, an anti-tank cube stands by the roadside. Such cubes, in this position, are almost always the fixed element of a road barrier. The entrance to the airfield was just a few yards further to the N and a road barrier here would have been sited to guard the approach to this entrance. Nothing of the barrier now survives.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> Photograph: Photos by an American Serviceman, , Jackson, J, 1940's, WWII photos - Fordham

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), near Post Office, Fordham**

**SMR No:** 21129  
**NGR:** TL 9286 2870

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Anderson Shelter for storage of ammunition. Near entrance to arable field opp. Post Office, Fordham, part of Hall Farm. Map ref. 377472". (Mil. Ed.) <1> An aerial photograph taken in May 1946 shows what appears to be a small Nissen hut standing in the field 50 yards NW of the Post Office. While this looks "right", and concords with the map reference given, it is difficult to reconcile it with the location quoted in the contemporary record. Without more evidence, this is the NGR above. Nothing survives now.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Fordham



## Ammunition Shelter, Fiddlers Wood, Fordham Bridge

**SMR No:** 21130  
**NGR:** TL 9300 2696

### Description:

Contemporary records state, "Anderson Shelter for storage of ammunition. Fiddlers Wood, near Bridge over R. Colne, on N. boundary. Map ref. 378454". (Mil. Ed.) <1>

The remains of this ammunition shelter still survive just inside the edge of Fiddlers Wood, 40 yards from the road. The concrete base with low side walling is still there; the entrance can be clearly seen on the E side. All over the site are the collapsed Anderson shelter sheets which once sat on the walling.

This shelter would have been primarily erected to house the bombs for the two spigot mortar positions on each side of the road (SMRs 10967 and 10972). Two photos taken of site. <2>

### Grading:

Essex Grading@: \*\*

### Sources:

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Fordham

<2> Photograph: Ammunition Shelter, Fiddlers Wood, , Nash, F, 2006, 2 frames, Aug 2006



*SMR 21130: Documented in wartime records, the remains of the Fiddlers Wood ammunition shelter still lie beneath the trees.*

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), Dedham Mill, Dedham**

**SMR No:** 21131  
**NGR:** TM 0569 3343

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Spigot mortar position. Flour Mills, In corner of grass field at rear of Mill — adj. river wall. Map ref. 505516". (Mil. Ed.) <1>

From the Military Grid Reference and the description and the position of what was probably its ammunition shelter (SMR 21132) it is thought that this spigot mortar emplacement was probably sited on the river bank immediately W of the mill. However, nothing of the wall survives, nor is there any sign of the emplacement.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Dedham

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), Dedham Mill, Dedham**

**SMR No:** 21132  
**NGR:** TM 0570 3343

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state "Ammunition shelter. Flour Mills, In grass field at rear of Mill — adj. river wall. Map 505516". (Mil. Ed.) <1> This ammunition shelter can be seen on an aerial photograph dated June 1960 as a Nissen hut close to the river immediately W of Dedham Mill. In addition, it is shown on an OS map dated 1968. <2>

However, nothing of it now can be seen and the area is grassland.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Dedham

<2> Map: 1:2500 Post War National Grid (5th Epoch), , Ordnance Survey, 1945-present, TM0433-0533, 1968

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), track East of Mill Lane, Dedham**

**SMR No:** 21133  
**NGR:** TM 0578 3344

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Spigot mortar position. Footpath leading to Sewage Works, adj. Riverside Garage land. Map ref. 506516". (Mil. Ed.) <1> On the E side of Mill Lane there is a public footpath leading to the sewage works at TM 0595 3355 (centre). From the Military Grid Reference it appears likely that this emplacement was sited immediately to the E of Mill Lane, looking down to the bridge 70 yards away. However, nothing of it was found at the time of the site visit.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Dedham

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), Dedham Mill, Dedham**

**SMR No:** 21134  
**NGR:** TM 0576 3344

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state "Anderson Shelter for storage of ammunition. Land adjoining buildings S of Clovers Mill. Map ref. 506517". (Mil.Ed.) <1> With no other information it is not known whether this location refers to the yard immediately S of Dedham Mill or the field alongside it. With nothing positive on 1960 aerial photographs, the yard is thought to be the most likely. In 2006, this has been completely redeveloped and is now the private entrance gardens by residential apartments. <2>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Dedham  
<2> AP: Run 9-098, , HSL, 1960, June 1960



## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), island, Dedham Mill, Dedham**

**SMR No:** 21135  
**NGR:** TM 0572 3348

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Spigot mortar position. Flour Mills, Land between Mill Race & river. Map ref. 506517". (Mil.Ed.) <1>. From the description of the location it appears that this spigot mortar emplacement must have been sited on the island between the mill race and the lock. This area is now a private garden laid mainly to grass with nothing apparent of the emplacement surviving.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Dedham

## **Road Barrier (destroyed), Stratford St. Mary Bridge, Dedham**

**SMR No:** 21136  
**NGR:** TM 0425 3348

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Road Barrier. Stratford St. Mary Bridge. Map ref. 492517". (Mil. Ed.) <1> Stratford Bridge lies to the S of Stratford St Mary, one of the few bridges along this stretch of the River Stour. As such it would have been an important position to block during World War Two. However, nothing of the barrier now survives.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Dedham

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), East of Ipswich Road, Dedham**

**SMR No:** 21137  
**NGR:** TM 0365 3240

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Spigot mortar position. Dines Farm, Ipswich Road, Arable field E of road. Map ref; 486507". (Mil.Ed.) <1> Dines Farm has not been traced but the Military Grid Reference equates to a position just N of Blackbrook Farm, which is given as the owner. This is indeed E of Ipswich Road amid arable fields. However, at the grid reference given the widening and redirection of Ipswich Road has obliterated the area immediately E of the former route of the roadway. Without more evidence, the NGR above is that of the Military Grid Reference.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Dedham

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), Birchwood House, Ipswich Road, Dedham**

**SMR No:** 21138  
**NGR:** TM 0333 3130

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Ammunition Shelter. Grounds of Birch Wood House, Ipswich Road, Dedham. Map ref. 484495". (Mil.Ed.) <1>

Birchwood Farm lies to the E of Ipswich Road. Birch Wood House lay between it and the road, seen amid extensive gardens and orchard on a 1946 aerial photograph. <2> However, the area is now derelict waste land and a petrol station.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Dedham

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4042, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), West of Watch House Farm, Chappel**

**SMR No:** 21139  
**NGR:** TL 8951 2862

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Ammunition Shelter. Grass field west of Watch House Farm and north of Main Road. Map ref. 344470". (Mil.Ed.) <1> Watch House Farm (now Watch House) lay on the NW corner of the crossroads at Chappel Corner. It can be seen on a 1946 aerial photograph that around the house was a wooded garden and around that to the N and W, was an open field. Although no ammunition shelter can be made out, there is the concrete base of a rectangular building of the "right" size in the field at this location. <2> Without more evidence, this is the NGR above. This site is now an estate of houses.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Chappel and Wakes Colne  
<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4140, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), Bridgewick Hall, Chappel**

**SMR No:** 21140  
**NGR:** TL 8942 2841

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Storehouse for explosives. Bridgewick Hall, Chappel. Land adj. residence. Map ref. 343468". <1> Bridgewick Hall lies to the W of The Street, Chappel and 1946 aerial photographs show the grounds behind, to the N of, the house to have been extensive. However, no ammunition shelter can be made out beneath the man) trees which dotted the area. Without more evidence the NGR above is a position some 50 yards N of the house.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Chappel and Wakes Colne  
<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4140, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), Smithy, Fordstreet**

**SMR No:** 21141  
**NGR:** TL 9207 2704

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Ammunition Shelter. Orchard Garden at rear of Smithy, Fordstreet". <1> The smithy lay on the E side of Fordstreet at TL 9204 2703, a single-storey detached building which still survives in the front garden of a private house. What was almost certainly the ammunition shelter can be seen on a 1946 aerial photograph in the SE corner of the garden, a curved-roof Nissen hut. <2> However, nothing of it now survives.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Aldham

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), The Bakery, West Bergholt**

**SMR No:** 21142  
**NGR:** TL 9596 2835

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Ammunition Shelter. Paddock at rear of The Bakery, West Bergholt. Map ref. 408467". (Mil. Ed.) <1> The bakery lay immediately S of the White Hart public house at TL 9594 2834, now a private house. An aerial photograph taken in 1946 shows a structure a few yards from its E side but not clearly enough to be identifiable. Without further evidence this is the NGR above. <2>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , West Bergholt

## British Resistance Hideout, Gravelpit Wood, Copford

**SMR No:** 21143  
**NGR:** TL 9311 2339

### Description:

In Gravelpit Wood, known also as Copford Pits Wood, are the remains of a World War Two British Resistance hideout. Its existence has been known locally for many years and in 1974 it was photographed, whilst still in a reasonable and very recognizable state of preservation. Copies of two of these photographs are in the SMR archive. <1> <2> The site was dug out of the top of a steep embankment and then re-covered. The 1974 photos show a winding trench around an oak tree, probably the collapsed entrance tunnel. This leads to the open entrance of the main chamber very clearly seen in the photos. This is some 3 feet below the level of the top of the embankment which is grassed over. The entrance is framed in, typically for such hideouts, corrugated steel Anderson shelter sheeting, rusted but still intact at that time. Beyond the length of the chamber, perhaps 15 feet long, the trench continues. Like the entrance tunnel, this is probably where the escape tunnel, standard for such sites, had collapsed.

In 2004, the site was re-visited and re-photographed. <3>. By now, the main chamber itself had collapsed leaving a long, wide gully in the top of the embankment with the narrower entrance and escape gullies at each end. Covered with fallen twigs, leaves and light bramble the site was by now somewhat difficult to recognise from the clear intact remains seen 30 years earlier. However, the oak tree is an unchanging recognition point. One major change is the addition of a wooden footbridge across the gully formed by the collapse of the entrance tunnel, alongside the oak tree. This was erected by Copford Pits Wood Trust, with a grant from Rural Action, some time before December 1993. <4>

Visited as part of the World War Two Defences of Rural Colchester project in February 2007, the site is approached via a gateway on the W side of Hall Road at TL 9316 2337. Immediately inside, a wide pathway leads straight into the wood with a high embankment on the right-hand side. After 50 yards, there are wooden steps up the embankment at the top of which is the bridge. The remains of the bunker lie to the left. The widest part of the gully, formed mainly by the collapse of the main chamber, is very approximately 30 feet long x 10 feet wide, about 3/4 feet deep. The remains of some of the corrugated steel sheeting still stick out of the ground. It is probable that 90 percent of it still remains below ground. Interestingly, some of the ceramic piping which would have been used as a flue for the stove still remains sticking out of the side of the gully. No brick walling was found at the time of the site visit. The end walls were often made of brick but in this case, as can be seen in the 1974 photos, they were clearly formed from straight lengths of corrugated steel sheeting. The roof would have been made of the same material but curved. Although the entrance and escape tunnels have been assumed it is not known how long these were, nor exactly where the entrance/exit hatches were.

Thirteen photos of site. <5>

### SITE ASSESSMENT:

All British Resistance sites are interesting; all are important in the assessment of World War Two defence archaeology. Although this site survived well up to at least 1974 it is now

deteriorating rapidly and nothing should be done to increase this deterioration. Interest in WWII remains has grown considerably in recent years. It is recommended that alongside the wooden bridge, erected to enable local people to further enjoy walks through the woodland, an interpretative board should be erected outlining the history of the British Resistance "Auxiliary Units" during World War Two and the significance of the remains at Copford Pits Wood.

**Grading:**

Essex Grading: \*\*\*

**Sources:**

- <1> Photograph: British Resistance Hideout, Gravelpit Wood, Copford, , Moore, D, 1974, 2 frames
- <3> Photograph: British Resistance Hideout, Gravelpit Wood, Copford, , Moore, D, 2004, 5 frames, Feb 2004
- <2> CORRESPONDENCE: British Resistance Hideout, Gravelpit Wood, Copford, , Moore, D, 2004, Feb 2004
- <5> Photograph: British Resistance Hideout, Gravelpit Wood, Copford, , Nash, F, 2007, 13 frames, Feb 2007
- <4> DESC TEXT: Rural Action for the Environment, , Rural Action, 1993, Dec 1993





*SMR 21143: The British Resistance hideout at Gravelpit Wood. By 1974, the entry tunnel had collapsed leaving the main chamber intact and clearly visible. Thirty-three years later, in 2007, this too had fallen in leaving a much more difficult to recognise depression. However, the tree provides an excellent reference point from which to trace the remains. (1974 photograph, Derek Moore)*

## **Anti-Tank Cubes (destroyed), The Quay, Wivenhoe**

**SMR No:** 21144  
**NGR:** TM 0393 2142

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state "Concrete Cubes. The Quay. Map ref: 486397". (Mil. Ed.) <1>

There are two entries for concrete cubes on The Quay at Wivenhoe, identical except for different ownerships, and two sets can be seen on 1946 aerial photographs. Those covered by this record stood on the quay immediately S of Bethany St as a clump of five, three on the W side of a hard and two on the E side, these two seemingly larger than the two on the W side.

It is probable that they were positioned here, with a cable or steel rails across the hard, to block enemy armour crossing the river and using the hard as an access point. <2>

Visited in 2007, two of these cubes appear to survive although this survival is not straightforward. They stand on the quay-side some 20 feet apart, the easternmost 4 feet square, the westernmost 4' 6" square. This latter has a winch mounted onto the top. Both stand 21 inches proud of the quayside. However, the westernmost at least cannot be original. It does not appear on either the 1946 aerial photograph or 1960. Similarly, the easternmost, although close to, but not in the same position as those seen on 1946 aerial photographs, cannot be made out on 1960 photos. It therefore appears likely that either both have been moved here or, more probably, that they are not in fact World War Two survivors but were constructed here post-1960. <3> Two photos of site. <4>

**Grading:** Essex Grading 0 -

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Wivenhoe

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-3364, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

<3> AP: Run 16-074, , HSL, 1960, June 1960

<4> Photograph: The Quay Wivenhoe, , Nash, F, 2007, 2 frames, Feb 2007





*SMR 21144: Although looking every inch like WWII anti-tank blocks, they cannot be seen, in this position, on 1946 or 1960 aerial photographs.*

## **Anti-Tank Cubes (destroyed), The Quay, Wivenhoe**

**SMR No:** 21145  
**NGR:** TM 0396 2142

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state "Concrete Cubes. The Quay. Map ref. 486397". (Mil.Ed.) <1>

There are two entries for concrete cubes on The Quay at Wivenhoe, identical except for different ownerships, and two sets can be seen on 1946 aerial photographs. Those covered by this record stood on the quay 30 yards E of Bethany St. They run as a line diagonally from the corner of a building to what appears to be a wooden pier, sealing off a gap between buildings which could have been used by enemy armour to gain entry into the town after a river crossing. There were 4 or 5 cubes in the line. <2> Nothing of them now survives.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Wivenhoe

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-3364, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

## **Spigot Mortar Emplacement (destroyed), Colchester Road, Wivenhoe**

**SMR No:** 21146  
**NGR:** TM 0412 2287

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Spigot mortar position in N.E. corner. Grass land S. of The Anchorage, The Avenue. Map ref; 489412". (Mil.Ed.) <1>

"Anchorage" is a private house which still stands on the E side of Colchester Road just N of the Wivenhoe Cross/Rectory Road junction. An aerial photograph taken in 1946 shows a meadow immediately S of it. This has now been built over with houses and gardens and nothing appears to survive of the spigot mortar emplacement.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Wivenhoe

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-3364, , RAF, 1946, May 1946.

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), Tower Road, Wivenhoe**

**SMR No:** 21147  
**NGR:** TM 0392 2281

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "H. G. Ammunition Shelter. Adj. garden ground, Tower Road Wivenhoe". The owner is given as Mrs. M. Frostick, Wayside, Tower Road, Wivenhoe <1:

"Wayside" still survives as No.15 Tower Road. An aerial photograph taken in 1946 shows the house surrounded by large gardens with several identifiable features, one of which was probably this Home Guard ammunition shelter. In 2007, the major part of these gardens have been re-developed with houses now standing both N and S of the house. <2>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Wivenhoe

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-3364, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

## **British Resistance Hideout, Wivenhoe Wood, Wivenhoe**

**SMR No:** 21148  
**NGR:** TM 0350 2195

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Underground chamber. Wivenhoe Woods, Wivenhoe". <1> These woods lie to the W of Wivenhoe between the railway and the town. There is nothing to suggest what the "underground chamber" may have been except that the only other entry of this description so far noted in War Time Contraventions 1968, at Beeleigh Mill (SMR 20277), the underground chamber was discovered to be a British Resistance hideout. On this limited evidence, together with the fact that most of these hideouts were built in woods, the Wivenhoe Wood structure is provisionally listed here as such a site until such time as further information may become available.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , , Wivenhoe

## Loopholes, "Hare and Hounds", Birch Green

**SMR No:** 21149  
**NGR:** TL 9441 1881

### Description:

Contemporary records state, "Loopholes in stable & shed. Stables & shed, adj. Hare & Hounds, Layer Breton, Colchester. June 1940". <1> The "Hare and Hounds" is a public house which stands on the NE corner of a crossroads at Birch Green. A few yards from its E side, overlooking the crossroads, the "stables and shed" still survives. This is a 30-foot long, wood-clad, single-storey building sub-divided inside into two parts, now apparently used for storage. At the time of the site visit, part of the wooden cladding had come away, revealing an inner wall of both old and new brick. Although at the right height, it is not known if the new brickwork was to seal the wartime loopholes or in fact if they still survive, unseen behind the cladding. Two photos of site. <2>

### Grading:

Essex Grading

### Sources:

- <1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester
- <2> Photograph: Loopholes, "Hare and Hounds", Birch Green, , Nash., F, 2007, 2 frames, Feb 2007



*SMR 21149: Differing brickwork can be seen beneath the wooden cladding but it is not known if this indicates blocked-up loopholes.*



## British Resistance Hideout, Chest Wood, Layer-de-la-Haye

**SMR No:** 21150

**NGR:** TL 9635 2096

### Description:

In early 1997, the remains of an underground British Resistance (or Auxiliary Unit) hideout were reported by ECC officers at Chest Wood, Layer-de-la-Haye. The structure had been cut into an ancient dyke, at its N end, and then re-covered to lie hidden beneath the forest floor. By 1997, the top of the dyke had fallen into the main chamber of the hideout exposing the rotting arches of the corrugated steel roof. Eight photographs were taken of the site. <1>

Visited in February 2007, the remains were re-discovered and documented for this record. It is typical of British Resistance hideouts to be located in woodland, often quite far from habitation. It is also typical that they should be cut into a bank, in this case an ancient dyke, as this would be easier to construct than a deep hole in the flat ground. The top of the dyke has collapsed over a significant area here, probably into the entrance tunnel, the outer chamber and the main chamber. All hideouts are thought to have had an escape tunnel and the ground has probably fallen into this as well. However, a substantial part, perhaps 4 feet of the central width of the roofing now lies exposed and investigating the gap beneath this it is clear that much of the roofing is still intact. However, the survival of end walls, entrance, escape tunnel, etc is unknown.

Around the site, bits of corrugated steel sheeting lie half-buried in the overgrown, broken-up ground. Along the W side of the dyke a small stream contributes to the difficulties in gaining the overall picture of the site.

Ten photos taken of the site. <2>

### Grading:

Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### Sources:

<1> Photograph: British Resistance Hideout, Chest Wood, , Gibson, S and Westover, S, 1997, 8 frames, 1997

<2> Photograph: British Resistance Hideout, Chest Wood, , Nash., F, 2007, 10 frames, Feb 2007



*SMR 21150. In the brambles and thicket, the remains of the British Resistance hideout at Chest Wood are difficult to find, and photograph. The bottom picture was taken by thrusting a hand-held camera into the roof opening.*

## **Prisoner-of-War Cage (destroyed), Achnacone Grounds, Braiswick**

**SMR No:** 21151

**NGR:** TL 9790 2715

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "P. of W. Cage and barbed wire obstacles. Field W. of Achnacone Grounds, Braiswick, St. Botolphs Hill. Map ref. 429454". (Mil.Ed.) <1> "Achnacone" was, apparently a large house which stood in its own grounds N of Braiswick. An aerial photograph taken in 1946 shows it very clearly, with the surrounding fields. However, no evidence of a Prisoner-of-War camp can be seen. The field to the W of "Achnacone" is seemingly clear with no sign of huts or the bases on which they may have stood. <2>

In 2007, the area has been built over with only Achnacone Drive to show where the house stood. Without further evidence the NGR above is that of the field immediately W of the house.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-3124, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

## Road Barrier (destroyed), North Bridge, Colchester

**SMR No:** 21152  
**NGR:** TL 9937 2560

### Description:

A series of very clear, ground level, colour photographs taken by an American serviceman during World War Two shows scenes around Wormingford airfield, where he was based, and around Colchester and beyond. <1>

One of these has been taken near North Bridge, Colchester looking S towards North Hill. On the right-hand side of the road (the W side) are four anti-tank cubes, apparently part of a road barrier. Analysis of this photograph, plus an aerial photograph taken in May 1946 and walking the ground has failed to positively identify the site but, on balance, it is thought to have been across the road between what is now No. 18 and 22 Middleborough. This is some 40 yards S of North Bridge. <2>

In 2007, much of the area has changed since World War Two contributing greatly to the difficulty in identifying the site. However, it is known that the River Colne was part of the Eastern Command Line and a road barrier on, or close to, the bridge would be a natural and necessary part of the defence line.

### Grading:

Essex Grading: 0

### Sources:

- <1> Photograph: Photos by an American Serviceman, , Jackson, J, 1940's, WWI photos - North Bridge, Colchester
- <2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4195, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

## Road Barrier (destroyed) outside Siege House, Colchester

**SMR No:** 21153  
**NGR:** TM 0075 2531

### Description:

A series of very clear, ground level, colour photographs taken by an American serviceman during World War Two shows scenes around Wormingford airfield, where he was based, and around Colchester and beyond. One of these is a photo of the Siege House, in Colchester, a medieval timbered building standing on the N side of East Street. On the pavement immediately outside is an anti-tank cube and across the width of the visible roadway are anti-tank sockets for accepting upright lengths of railway line. There are clearly elements of a road barrier across East Street at this point.

Nothing of it can be seen on an aerial photograph taken in 1946 and nothing of it now survives.  
<2>

### Grading:

Essex Grading: 0

### Sources:

- <1> Photograph: Photos by an American Serviceman, , Jackson, J, 1940's, WWII photos - Siege House, Colchester
- <2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4197, , RAF, 1946, May 1946

## Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), Arclight Works, Colchester

**SMR No:** 21154  
**NGR:** TM 0002 2626

### Description:

Contemporary records state, "Ammunition Shelter. Premises at rear of Factory Buildings at Arclight Works, Colchester By-Pass. Map ref. 449446". <1> The Arclight Works stood to the N of Cowdray Avenue where the Cowdray Centre now stands. This ammunition shelter can be seen on an aerial photograph taken in May 1946 as a large Nissen hut immediately behind the main factory buildings. <2> A detailed OS map dated 1953 shows the factory to have expanded to cover the position of the Nissen hut by that date. <3>

### Grading:

Essex Grading 0

### Sources:

- <1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester
- <2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-4273, , RAF, 1946, May 1946
- <3> Map: 1:2500 Post War National Grid (5th Epoch), , Ordnance Survey, 1945-present, TM0026, date 1953

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), The Old Rectory, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 21155  
**NGR:** TM 0114 2476

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Ammunition Shelter. Grounds at rear of The Old Rectory, Hythe Hill. Map ref. 457431". <1> The Old Rectory still survives on the N side of Hythe Hill as No.143. However, the "grounds at rear" are now completely re-developed with new housing. It is not known exactly where the ammunition shelter was located and the NGR above is a point some 30/40 yards N of the house.

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

## **Ammunition Shelter (destroyed), Hythe Station Road, Colchester**

**SMR No:** 21156  
**NGR:** TM 0172 2484

### **Description:**

Contemporary records state, "Ammunition Shelter. Yard at rear of office at corner of Hythe Station Road and Clacton Road. Map ref. 465431". (Mil. Ed.). The owner is given as F. W. Brackett & Co. <1> The "office" referred to was presumably, the office of F. W. Brackett & Co., who were an engineering works. Clacton road is now Greenstead Road.

From a study of 1946 aerial photographs F. W. Brackett & Co appears to have stood on the S corner of the junction and what looks like a Nissen hut can be made out in the yard behind the building. This then is the NGR quoted above. <2>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading: 0

### **Sources:**

<1> LIST: War Time Contraventions 1968, , , Colchester

<2> AP: 106G-UK 1492-3432, , RAF, 1946, May 1946



## **Boxted WWII Airfield — Administrative Site**

**SMR No:** 21157  
**NGR:** TM 0165 2972

### **Description:**

1996: The SHQ/Ops site was located in Kiln Wood at TM 0163 2970 of which there may be upstanding remains.

2006: An Air Ministry plan of Botted Airfield and its Dispersed Sites, dated November 1944, shows the Administrative Site in Kiln Wood and an adjacent meadow. It comprised eight buildings and other structures including the Operations Block. Current survival is not known.  
<1>

### **Grading:**

Essex Grading

### **Sources:**

<1> Map: Botted Airfield Record Site Plan, , Air Ministry, 1944,

## Spigot Mortar Emplacement, Nightingale Corner, Layer-de-la-Haye

**SMR No:** 21159  
**NGR:** TL 9742 2081

### Description:

Nightingale Corner is the junction of High Road, Layer Road and The Folly, NE of Layer-de-la-Haye town centre. Here, High Road is lined with tall trees, Layer Road descends steeply downhill with King's Ford Bridge at the bottom, and the country lane known as The Folly turns southwards towards Malting Green.

Beneath the trees on the S side of High Road, 30 yards from the road junction is the 3'3" diameter pedestal of a 29mm spigot mortar emplacement. Typically, just a few inches of the domed top can be seen above ground level, with the stainless steel pintle in the centre. It is probable that the concrete pit, possibly with ammunition alcoves, still lies extant beneath the earth around the pedestal.

The 29mm spigot mortar was a Home Guard weapon introduced to fill the gap in their anti-tank capability in late 1941 / early 1942. Although it could be deployed on four horizontal legs it was more usually mounted on just such a pedestal as this with its crew in a surrounding purpose-designed pit. In this location, it was undoubtedly sited to cover the approach up the steep hill to its NE, an ideal position from which to block any passage by enemy armour.

Three photos of site. <1>

### SITE ASSESSMENT

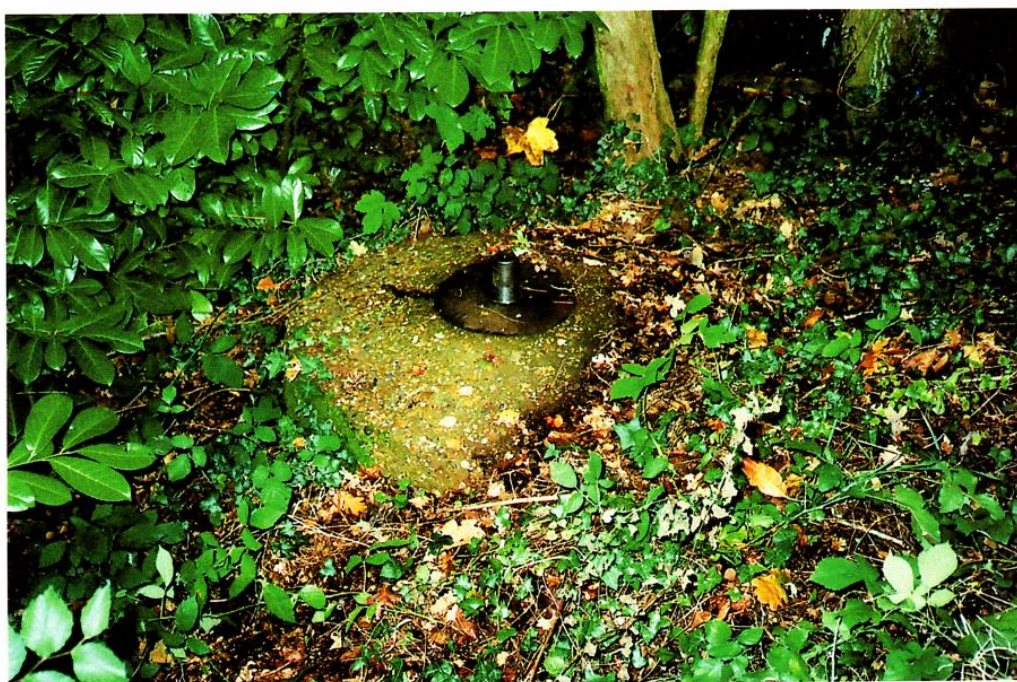
All spigot mortar emplacements are important in WWII history and heritage. They were built by local contractors, to be manned by the local Home Guard to defend the local community. As such every effort should be made to ensure the continued survival of all that remain.

### Grading:

Essex Grading: \*\*\*

### Sources:

<1> Photograph: Spigot Mortar Emplacement, Nightingale Corner, Layer-de-la-Haye, print, Nash, F, 2007, 3 frames, Oct 2007



*SMR 21159: Unrecorded in wartime records, a 29mm spigot mortar emplacement lies hidden beneath the trees close to Nightingale Corner.*