



WMF News

WMF is a section of the Simon Stevinstichting
Edition 3 of 2003

Composed by Frank PHILIPPART

Dear Reader,

In this autumn number are articles about the Westwall and a coastal battery at Ibiza. Further on you will see some of my observations on the Atlantikwall during my holidays.

SPANISH DEFENCES

Coastal Batteries on Ibiza (Islas Baleares – Spain)

After my article about bunkers on Mallorca way back in 1999, here's another one dealing with less obvious sites having some post 1900 remains of military occupation. No bunkers were found on Ibiza during my one week stay on the island in May 2003. But after having put a question on the net two months earlier using the "Atlantikwall E-Group", I had one reply from Dag Sunduist of Norway revealing the existence of about 4 or 5 coastal batteries and 2 or 3 AA batteries on the small island. According to his sources there should have been the following in place in 1940:

IBIZA was subordinated the Coast Artillery Regiment no 5 at Mallorca.

- Coast battery	Calvario	2 x CHE 150 / 34	Ordonez	fixed
- Coast battery	Botafoc	2 x CHE 150 / 34	Ordonez	fixed
- Coast battery	Martinet	2 x CHE 150 / 34	Ordonez	fixed
- Coast battery	Sant Antoni	2 x 90	Krupp bronze	semi - fixed ?
- AA battery no 7	Ses Salines	2 x 101, 6 / 45	Vickers	ex naval AA guns
- AA battery no 8	Martinet	2 x 101, 6 / 45	Vickers	ex naval AA guns
-		2 x 76 / 40	Ansaldo	Mod 1916 AA guns
- mobil coast defence group		3 x 105 / 22	Vickers	mobile field guns
	and	6 x 75 / 28	Schneider	mobile field guns

Other battery locations :

- the two Ansaldo AA guns located at Cap Serras, the two AA batteries located at : Salinas and Cabo Serras
- the 3 x coast defence batteries with 150 / 34 are located at : Isla Grossa, Calvario and Cap Martinet.

On my explorations during my one week stay I was able to locate evidence of remains of 3 of these sites : Cap Martinet and Illa Grossa, both near the capital of Eivissa or Ibiza Town and Cap Blanc near Sant Antoni on the NW coast.

Cap Martinet has still one accessible large open gun emplacement of approx. 12 m diameter connected by a tunnel to a small shelter. Illa Grossa has three similar large emplacements situated on a plateau near the sea with a beautiful view of the harbour and old fortifications of Eivissa. All are connected by a tunnel system. Cap Blanc has half a dozen of simple concrete annular bases of 4 and 6 m diameter.

But what I would like to develop here is the apparently forgotten site of **Sa Caleta** or Es Caleta - names tending to change in the local slang - I stumbled onto while searching for an archaeological site near the airport (See map). It is a beautiful place with an old fisherman's harbour, remains of a Phoenician settlement and, of course, what could be the best preserved coastal battery on Ibiza.

Please refer to the plan I drew approximately, having no special skills in this matter....



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Gun 1 and roof of the tunnel



Gun emplacement 3



Range finder and gun 1 and 3



Barracks and tunnel entrance.

WESTWALL

An unknown part of the Westwall in a quiet piece of nature

When I was planning a holiday in Echternach in Luxemburg, I found the National Military Museum of Diekirch (LU) website. This museum tells the story of the Ardennes Offensive of December 1944 - January 1945 (Battle of the Bulge). (www.nat-military-museum.lu). It is certainly worth a visit.

On this website I found a description of the "Battle of the Bulge walk". This walk is divided in a 10.5 Km tour via the American front line along the borders of the rivers Our and Sauer and a 8 Km tour via the remains of the Westwall on the German side. The centre of this walk is Wallendorf (DE).

As historical background is it interesting to know that the American 5th Armoured Division, supported by the 12th Inf Reg of the 28th Inf Div at Sep the 11th made a breakthrough through the Westwall and then advanced in the direction of Bitburg (DE).

At the end of September they were forced to return to their positions at the Hoesdorf Plateau in Luxemburg due to fierce German resistance. In October the American units were relieved by elements of the 109th Inf Reg of the 28th Inf Div that had had heavy losses due to the battles in the Huertgen Wald near Aachen.



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In the early morning of Dec the 16th 1944, German combat units of the 352nd *Volksgrenadierdivision* and the 5th *Fallschirmjägerdivision* crossed the river Our after an artillery bombardment. Due to the Americans being in a better (higher) position they succeeded only on the 19th to pass through. The Americans retreated to a defence line south-west of Diekirch and Ettelbrück.

In spite of the defeat of their offensive, they maintained their positions on the heights of Hoesdorf-Bettendorf-Longsdorf until the end of January 1945. Afterwards, Patton's 4th and 5th Inf Div of the 3rd Army forced them to retreat to their initial positions behind the Westwall.

At the beginning of February units of the 80th Inf Div passed the Our and broke through the Westwall.

Let us return to the walk. For the American frontline in Luxemburg you have to read the description on the website.

You start in Wallendorf. A signpost leads you to the information office which is also an hotel. Here you can buy a roadmap in different languages (also Dutch).

The walk is indicated by a white American star painted on the pavement, road signs or walls.

About 50 m away from the hotel lies a German military cemetery constructed in 1948 containing 326 burials, soldiers who died in this area at the of September 1944 and during December 1944 and February 1945. Principally troops of the 2nd *Panzerdivision*, the 108th *Pantzerbrigade*, 352nd, 276th and 212th *Volksgrenadierdivision*, the 5th *Fallschirmjägerdivision*, *Volkswerberbrigade* 18, *Volkartilleriekorps* 406 and some other small units. (The American casualties are buried in the American Cemetery at Hamm near Luxemburg city. There is also a very large German cemetery nearby in Sandweiler.)

Now we follow a steep climbing road that leads to a typical Westwall bunker (see the photo of the Hitler bunker). It has walls 1.5 m thick. The armament consisted of machineguns.

The bunker overlooks the junction of the rivers Sauer (Sûre) and Our and the heights of Luxemburg. According to a witness from Wallendorf, Hitler was here in August 1939 during a visit to the Westwall in the Eifel to take a look at Luxemburg.

From October 1944 onwards the bunker had been used as an observation post or as a fire control post for the artillery. Today there is no longer an entrance to the bunker.

Just after the war (1945-1948) the majority of the bunkers were demolished by the French and American engineers.

(editors' note : Unfortunately, a department of the German government continues this useless job, just to keep on going)

The next stop should be a well preserved Westwall storage tunnel. Actually it is in use as a hibernaculum. But after a while I haven't seen a tunnel, so we returned.

We were able to follow the previous asphalt road a bit higher to the left and passed a little chapel with a view over the valley. A little further along, a signpost pointed in the direction of a dirt road in the wood. There we saw a small bunker. The entrance has been blocked and the embrasure has been demolished. Somewhat further on, the dirt road runs over a built-in bunker of which the entrance has also been destroyed.



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The bunker overlooking the Sûre.



Regelbau 11

From here we have to walk quite a while until we crossed an asphalt road. Then we took a smaller asphalt road. A few hundred meters further we reached a well preserved bunker via a small dirt road. This is a *Doppelgruppenunterstand, Regelbau 11* (See photo). The walls are 1.5 m thick and offered shelter for two groups, about 24 men. The entrances are covered by the close combat room (*Nahkampfraum*) and hand grenades can be thrown from inside by pipes. Down the slope there ought to have been two type C combat bunkers for flanking purposes. I could not enter because there stood 20 cm of water in it.

The location of this bunker was well known by the American 5th Armoured Division because a Luxemburg engineer had made a plan of this section of the Westwall in the early years of the war and had passed it to the American forces. After a few artillery bombardments, the bunker was no longer considered as being a threat.

The next bunker lies near Gentringen, but that was still a few kilometres further and we could not make the effort anymore, so we returned to our departure point.

(editors' note : this bunker is a machinegun bunker, *Regelbau 105d*)

Jean-Pierre Van Vaerenbergh

ATLANTIKWALL

The field battery of Zandvoorde

Some weeks ago I made a rather unpleasant discovery. Namely the farmer on who's land the field battery of Zandvoorde near Oostende stands, "cleaned up" his land a bit. He removed the three small brick storages, the ruined open emplacement and, unfortunately, also a second complete emplacement that was filled with stones.

Luckily he left the remaining two emplacements untouched and these are the most well preserved.

The field battery of Loon-Plage closed

The authorities have closed with earth all the bunkers of the field battery at Loon Plage (Pas de Calais) because would-be refugees used them as shelter.

When will the UK at last introduce identity cards? .Then there would no longer be a need for them to cross the Channel and they will then keep their hands off our bunkers!!!



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The last photo

To the south of Dinard in Brittany lies a FlaK battery for 8.8 cm guns. It was the 2nd battery of *Schwere FlaK Abteilung 243*. It is also called the battery Des Cognets. Nowadays you can still see a L410 for light FlaK, three L410A's for the 8.8's and a L404, being the fire control post (*Befehlsstelle BI*). The problem is that they started building houses between the bunkers and the worse is that they are at the point of removing the L404 to make room for a housing estate. The photo shows you the L404.



WESTWALL

Some Books by Charles Whiting (list supplied by Y Mayo)

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|---|------------------------------|
| Ardennes : | The secret war |
| The Battle of the Bulge: Britain's untold story | Death on a distant frontier |
| | Bloody Bremen |
| Battle of the Ruhr Pocket : | Paths of Death and glory |
| | Patton |
| | Operation Northwind |
| | Pattons last battle |
| West Wall : | The Battle of Hurtgen forest |
| | Bloody Aachen |
| | Bounce the Rhine |

Other books on the subject by other authors:

- * Eistob Peter: Bastogne: The Road Block
 - * Macdonald Charles B: The Battle of the Bulge
 - * Merriem Robert :The Battle of the Ardennes
 - * Tolhurst Michael: Battleground Europe:Battle of the Bulge: StVith
 - * Neil Short: Hitler's Siegfried Line
- (This one is a guide to the Siegfried Line like the guide to the Atlantic Wall.)

Thanks to Yvonne Mayo for the spell check.

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