

Information Data Sheet

Category Mortar & Gun Emplacements

Description

Machine gun emplacements and spigot mortar positions could be either fixed or mobile.

A mobile spigot mortar was known as a 'Blacker Bombard'. These weapons typically fired a 20lb HE mortar bomb and were to be used primarily in an anti-tank role at road blocks or to defend airfields in the event of a German invasion.

Approximately 22,000 Bombards were produced by mid-1942 and several of their fixed pedestals were installed, several of which still survive.

Another anti-tank weapon variant was the Northover Projector, which fired a No. 76 Phosphorus grenade. These were widely used by the Home Guard and were adapted to suit a variety of locations.

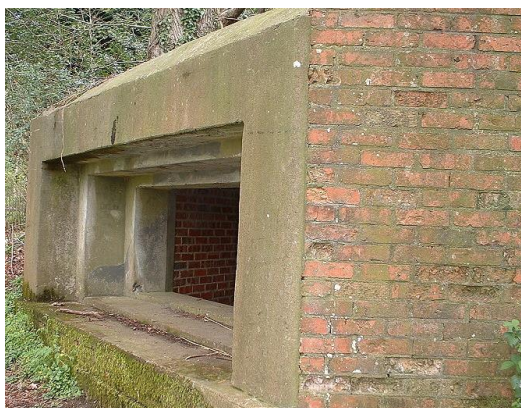


Home Guard soldiers training with the Blacker Bombard

Hazard

Fixed spigot mortar and machine gun emplacements would have been associated with munitions stores containing both small arms ammunition and anti-tank devices such as mortars (14 and 20lb variants) and mines. Whilst most of these would have been removed at the end of WWII, some may have been left and therefore provide a potential source of UXO hazard. Likewise, the unrecorded burial of munitions caches in the immediate vicinity of defensive positions is known to have occurred.

Machine gun emplacements are associated with the firing and storing of small arms ammunition, which does not typically provide a significant UXO hazard. It is known, however, that some gun emplacements were armed with medium-calibre anti-aircraft guns and anti-tank weapons which potentially provide a more significant source of UXO.



Typical WWII machine gun emplacement



Fixed Spigot mortar point