

# The Heer Küste Artillerie Abteilung 1161

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## Abstract

This article presents the history of the German *H.K.A.A. (Heer Küste Artillerie Abteilung—Army Coastal Artillery Group) 1161* during the WWII in the Finistère (FR). The emplacements *Stps Av 34* or *Av 55*, *Av 64*, *Av 66a*, *Av 67* of its four companies *1./H.K.A.A. 1161*, *2./H.K.A.A. 1161*, *3./H.K.A.A. 1161* and *4./H.K.A.A. 1161* have been visited and the preservation state of the remaining components, at about 77 years from the end of the WWII, ascertained. The problem of inhomogeneities between the information from different historical sources has been addressed by not altering the information from a source also in case of partial agreement with information from other sources and to discuss the information from different sources in case of relevant discrepancies in order to obtain the correct information. The preservation of the emplacements in the future is not assured, in fact, no classification as monuments or architectural heritage is foreseen and they are menaced by the expansion of the urbanization of the nearby cities.

## Keywords

WWII, Atlantic Wall, Plouguerneau, Lannilis, Landeda, *H.K.A.A. 1161*, Finistère, France

## 1. Introduction

The fortuitous encounter in the Finistère department (FR), along the departmental road D32, with an isolated group of bunkers at the locality of Ranorgat (Rann Enezi) en Plouguerneau, stimulated my interest for studying the history and the emplacements of the batteries of the *H.K.A.A. (Heer Küste Artillerie Abteilung—Army Coastal Artillery Group) 1161*.

The problem of inhomogeneities between the information from different sources has been addressed by not to alter the information from one source also in case of partial agreement with the information provided by other sources and to discuss the information from different sources in case of relevant discrepan-

cies in order to obtain the correct information.

## 2. The History

In the Finistère, Plouguerneau was the first municipality affected by the WWII. The German invasion troops arrived in the department on 19<sup>th</sup> June 1940. But on 18<sup>th</sup> June 1940, at around 1 p.m., a reconnaissance aircraft *Ju 88A* of the *Lehrgeschwader 1*, touched by the Brest anti-aircraft defence, made an emergency landing at the place named Leuré Lann ar Floc'h. The four crew members, two of which injured, would have been apprehended with a certain harshness by persons who arrived on the place. On 22<sup>nd</sup> June, the German troops arrested five persons, who were judged by a German military tribunal in Brest. Three of them were released, but Jean-Marie Kerandel, 57-year-old, sentenced of death, was shot on 28<sup>th</sup> June and Jean Balcon, having his sentence commuted to eight years of forced labour, was deported to Germany from where he returned on 1945.

The *Stab* of *H.K.A.A. (Heer Küste Artillerie Abteilung—Army Coastal Artillery Group) 756* (Unit 44 818A) comprising 5 officers, 6 non-commissioned officers and 21 gunners, arrived at Brest on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1942. From 16<sup>th</sup> August, it quartered at Lannilis, in shacks in Saint Sebastien district. The *H.K.A.A. 756* changed its name in *H.K.A.A. 1161* at the end of December 1943.

From 1<sup>st</sup> March 1942, the future *1./H.K.A.A. 1161* (Unit 44 818B) is signalled at Landeda (likely at the *Stp Stützpunkt—Support Point Av Aber Wrac'h 34*—author's note). The *2./H.K.A.A. 1161* (Unit 44 818C), former *9./H.K.A.A. 746* (Unit 30 287) was at Ranorgat (Rann Enezi) en Plouguerneau at the *Stp Av 64*. The *3./H.K.A.A. 1161* (Unit 44 818D), former *10./H.K.A.A. 746*, comprising 3 officers, 9 non-commissioned officers and 69 gunners, was at Flescou en Lannilis at the *Stp Av 66a*, with 4 × 150 mm guns. The *4./H.K.A.A. 1161* (Unit 44 818E), former *3./H.K.A.A. 347*, comprising 3 officers, 21 non-commissioned officers and 107 gunners was at Cleus Fos en Landeda at the *Stp Av 67* with 6 × 155 mm guns (Floch, 2009, 2012) (Figure 1).

An *Organisation Todt (O.T.)* camp was at Plouguerneau from 1942. On 1944 its workforce comprised 207 workers. The *O.T.* built nine defensive structures at Vougo (*Stp Av 24*) (Tomezzoli, 2017b), Enez Terc'h (*Stp Av 32*), Mogueran (*Stp Av 26*) and Anse de Koréjou (*Stp Av 27*).

The *4./RAD-Gruppe VI (Reicharbeitsdienst—paramilitary engineering organization serving the German Wehrmacht)* comprising 46 workers was in Plouguerneau from 4<sup>th</sup> January 1943 doubtless on the worksite of the *2./H.K.A.A. 1161*, as well as the *Kabelschalt-Kompanie (wiring company) Festungs-Nachrichten (Fortress-Communications) 9* (Unit 01 603) (Floch, 2009, 2012).

The *Stp Av 34* comprised 150 mm × 4 guns each under *R 650* bunker (Appendix, Figure A1), 75 mm × 2 guns each on an open gun emplacement *Fl 243a* bunker and light *Flak* weapon emplacements. It allowed the firing from the shores north of Ploudalmézeau to the Aber Benoît and then to oppose an allied landing at Sainte Marguerite peninsula or especially, to oppose the progression



**Figure 1.** H.K.A.A. 1161 battery positions: (1) *Stp Av 34*, Croaz Huella en Landéda; (2) *Stp Av 64*, Ranorgat (Rann Enezi) en Plouguerneau; (3) *Stp Av 66a*, Flescou en Lannilis; (4) *Stp Av 67*, Cleus Fos en Landéda; (5) *Stp Av 55*, La Métairie/Le Veleury en Pluider; L Lannilis; P Plouguerneau.

of allied troops toward the land interior. Its commander had the whole Sainte Marguerite peninsula defence system at his orders (Lécuillier, 2010).

The *Stp Av 64* comprised 15 cm. *s.F.H.25* × 4 guns each under *R 669* bunker (Appendix, Figure A2), the two extremes of which carried a superimposed 20 mm *Flak* emplacement. It allowed firing the shores of Saint Michel and Vougo as far as Guissény; the field of fire was limited approximately from North to 60°. The construction started in January 1943 and was still in progress in 1944. It comprised some 80 gunners (Lécuillier, 2010).

The *Stp Av 66a* comprised 10.5 cm *K.331* × 4 guns each under *R 650* bunker, the two extremes of which carried a superimposed 20 mm *Flak* emplacement (Lécuillier, 2010).

The *Stp Av 67* comprised 15 cm *s.F.H.25* × 4 guns, one under *R 669* bunker, the other in open gun emplacements, several *Flak* emplacements, numerous *R 134* ammunition bunkers and personnel bunkers. At the end of the WWII, it was still under construction (Lécuillier, 2010).

In the night from 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> August 1944 the manor of Trébabu (Kerbabu) near Plouguerneau was attacked by French resistants, but they collided with a German heavily armed garrison. Ten resistants were injured or killed, of these five killed by the explosion of their own grenades. The German sergeant, Luitpold Weidiger, 41-year-old, remained killed.

The corporal major (*Obergefreiter*) Erich Simon, 34-years-old, fell on 5<sup>th</sup> Au-

gust 1944 at Groannec near Plouguerneau (Floch, 2012).

On 9<sup>th</sup> August 1944 the *Stp Av 34* reacted to the American artillery which bombarded Plouguerneau where a few cripples and stragglers were firing weakly the American vanguards and the *FFI* (French Forces of the Interior). On 10<sup>th</sup> August 1944 around 3 p.m., it was cannoned and bombarded; the two open gun emplacements and other gun emplacements were quickly reduced to silence; its 300 Germans gunners withdrew during the night. Its components were completely destroyed by the Americans troops upon their arrival (Lécuillier, 2010).

On 10<sup>th</sup> August 1944, five gunners of the *Marine-Flak-Abteilung 231*, who retreated from the Île de Batz to Brest, were killed by American troops at the workshop of Traon en Plouguerneau.

The *Stp Av 64* was evacuated on 18<sup>th</sup> August, 1944.

Lannilis was liberated on 11<sup>th</sup> August 1944 and Plouguerneau on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1944.

The sergeant Paul Berger, 43-years-old, died in Plouguerneau on 29 September 1945, doubtless during a demining operation. The grenadier Karl Eder, 18-year-old, died in Plouguerneau on October 1944. The German soldier Ludwig Kriegl, 43-years-old, died on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1944 at the manor of Kerbabu (Floch, 2009, 2012).

### 3. Battery Emplacements

At about 77 years from the end of the WWII it was interesting to visit the *Stps Av 34, Av 55, Av 64, Av 66a, Av 67* for studying their organisation and the preservation state of their components.

#### 3.1. *Stp Av 34*—Croaz Huella en Landéda

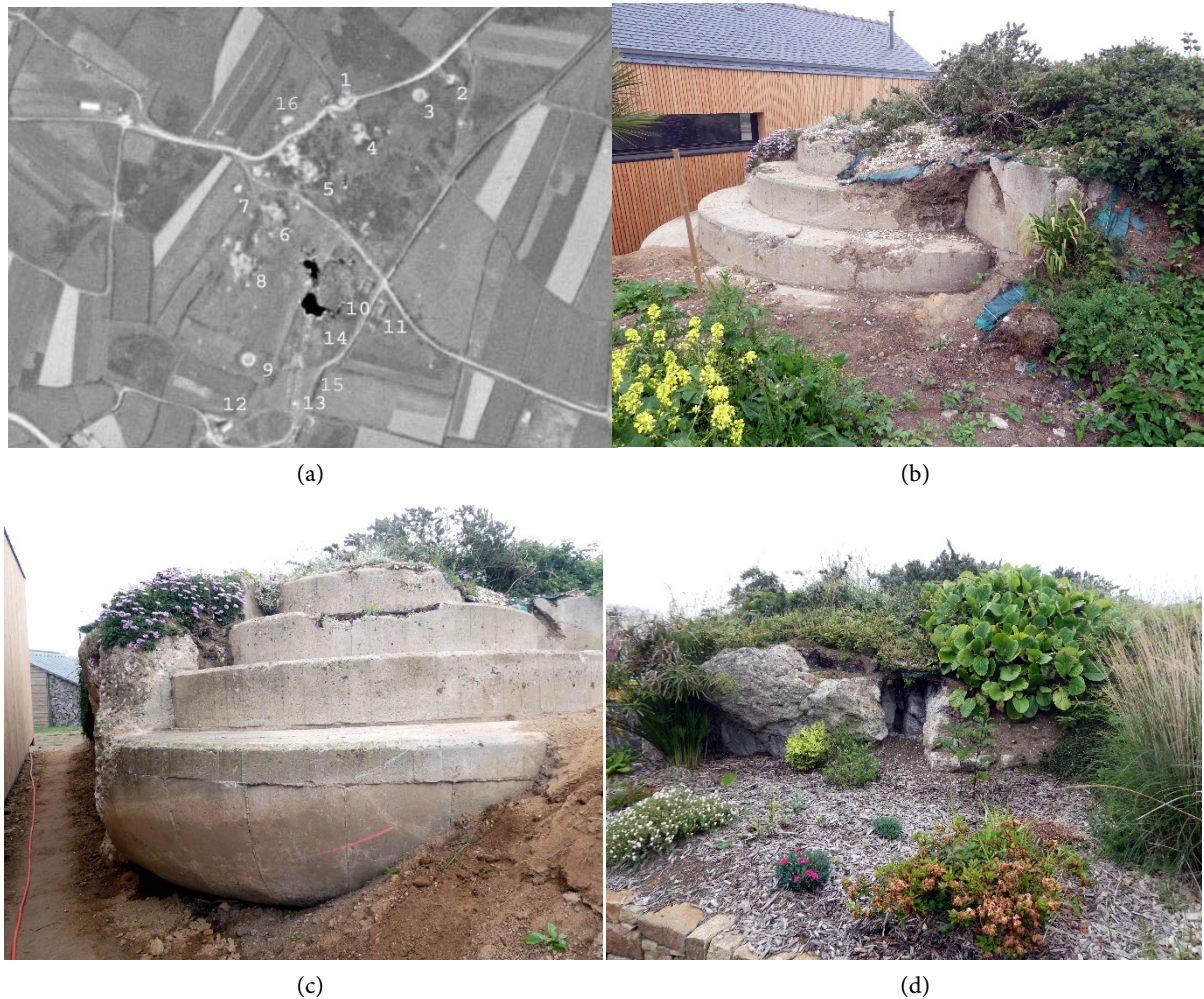
The *Stp Av 34* (48°35'20.36"N, 4°35'18.47"W, height 43 m) about 1.5 km northwest from Landéda, on the left side of the departmental road D128A toward Sainte Marguerite Peninsula, comprised: a Leitstand, *R 650* × 4 (en cours), *Geschützstellung* (gun emplacement) × 7, *Fl 243b* × 2 *Flackstellung* (*Flak* position), *Ls.* bunker (*Luftschutz* bunker—air raid protection bunker), *VfMG* × 2, 2 cm *Flak 30*, 2 cm *Flak 38 Vierl*, 7.5 cm *Flak M22* × 2, 15.2 cm *K.390/1* (r) × 6, 15.5 cm *s.F.H.414* (f) (Chazette, 2008). Nowadays, it is located part on a public and part on private terrains. Another source (Peeters, 2015) provided evidence that actually the *Stp Av 34* guns were instead each under an *M 170* bunker (Appendix, Figure A3).

The visit took place on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2022. Thanks to a post WWII French air reconnaissance image (Mission C0816-0031\_1952\_F0216-0816\_0102, No. 102, 1/26600, Argentique, 21/05/1952) (Figure 2(a)) the *Stp Av 34* identified components (Figures 2-4) were the following.

A possible *Flak* emplacement (1) (48°35'23.35"N, 4°35'17.41"W, h 40.78 m). No ruins have been identified.

An unknown emplacement (2) (48°35'23.68"N, 4°35'12.45"W, h 45.23 m). No ruins have been identified.





**Figure 2.** *Stp Av 34*: (a) general plan: (1) possible *Flak* emplacement, (2) unknown emplacement, (3) *Fl 243b* open gun emplacement, (4) *M 170* emplacement, (5) *M 170* emplacement, (6) *M 170* emplacement, (7) pentagonal watch post, (8) *M 170* emplacement, (9) *Fl 243b* emplacement, (10) shack emplacement, (11) shack emplacement, (12) possible shack emplacement or farm, (13) unknown emplacement; (14) one room bunker; (15) bunker of unknown type; (16) upside down fragment of *M 170* (5)—Mission C0816-0031\_1952\_F0216-0816\_0102, No. 102, 1/26600, Argentique 21/05/1952; (b) upside down fragment of *M 170* (5), side view; (c) upside down fragment of *M 170* (5), side view; (d) upside down fragment of *M 170* (5), rear side.

An *Fl 243b* (3) ( $48^{\circ}35'23.56''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}35'14.29''\text{W}$ , h 44.1 m) partially covered by vegetation so that the embrasure of its close combat room was not visible. Its concrete structure was in a good preservation state without damages due to combats. It preserved the *Flak* gun emplacement disfigured by modern graffiti, a labyrinth entrance on one side having a rectangular niche, ammunitions niches on each other side and at the centre a 21 screws ring for fixing the support of the *Flak* gun. The traces of the formwork boards typical of the German masonry and the pebbles of the *Ero Vili* (Tomezzoli & Marzin 2015) were clearly visible on the concrete structure.

A *M 170* emplacement (4) ( $48^{\circ}35'22.07''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}35'18.3''\text{W}$ , h 41.72 m). No ruins have been identified.





**Figure 3.** *FI 243b*: (a) External view; (b) Labyrinth entrance with rectangular niche; (c) Open gun emplacement; (d) 21 screws ring.

A *M 170* emplacement (5) ( $48^{\circ}35'21.61''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}35'19.21''\text{W}$ , h 42.17 m). No ruins have been identified.

The ruins of *M 170* (6) ( $48^{\circ}35'21.45''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}35'20.66''\text{W}$ , h 40.56 m) on a private terrain. The remaining visible concrete fragments let the original concrete structure unrecognizable.

A pentagonal watch post (7) ( $48^{\circ}35'21.7''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}35'22.32''\text{W}$ , h 38.92 m). Its concrete structure was in a good preservation state without damages due to combats. Its entrance was on the longer side and an embrasure was on each of the shorter sides. The traces of the formwork boards and the pebbles of the *Ero Vili* were clearly visible on the concrete structure.

A *M 170* emplacement (8) ( $48^{\circ}35'20.84''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}35'21.68''\text{W}$ , h 41.07 m). No ruins have been identified.

An *FI 243b* emplacement (9) ( $48^{\circ}35'18.55''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}35'22.64''\text{W}$ , h 43.04 m). No ruins have been identified.

A shack emplacement (10) ( $48^{\circ}35'18.45''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}35'16.13''\text{W}$ , h 48.2 m). **Figure 2(a)** suggests that a shack was located in a ditch like those at *La 318 Frosch* at





**Figure 4.** (a) Pentagonal watch post rear side; (b) Pentagonal watch post front side; (c) One room bunker (14) entrance; (d) One room bunker (14) internal room.

Cap Fréhel (Tomezzoli & Moser, 2021) and Qu 500 and Qu 13 at the Pointe du Raz (Tomezzoli, 2021). No ruins have been identified.

A shack emplacement (11) ( $48^{\circ}35'17.6''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}35'15.55''\text{W}$ , h 48.49 m). **Figure 2(a)** suggests that a shack was located in a ditch like those at *La 318 Frosch* at Cap Fréhel and *Qu 500* and *Qu 13* at the Pointe du Raz. No ruins have been identified.

A possible shack emplacement (12) ( $48^{\circ}35'14.56''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}35'21.89''\text{W}$ , h 43.23 m) not protected in a ditch, or a farm. No ruins have been identified.

An unknown emplacement (13) ( $48^{\circ}35'14.76''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}35'19.32''\text{W}$ , h 47.96 m). No ruins have been identified.

A one room bunker (14) ( $48^{\circ}35'17.06''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}35'16.5''\text{W}$ , h 47.93 m) on a side of a country road. Buried in the terrain and covered by vegetation, the preservation state of its concrete structure remained unknown. Its entrance was unobstructed allowing the inspection of the interior. All the original furniture disappeared. The floor was covered by scraps and debris of various kinds. The internal walls built by stones and the concrete ceiling had no damages due to combats.

Some peasants questioned about the presence of other bunkers informed of another bunker of unknown type, buried in the terrain, near the one room bunker (14), on the opposite side of the country road and a further bunker (15) ( $48^{\circ}35'14.48''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}35'18.06''\text{W}$ , h 48.01 m) of unknown type on which a house was built.

An upside-down *M 170* fragment (16) ( $48^{\circ}35'22.67''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}35'19.88''\text{W}$ , h 39.52 m) comprising the *M 170* (5) rounded coverage and Todt front with four re-entrant semi-circular steps.

### 3.2. *Stp Av 64*—Ranorgat (Rann Enezi) en Plouguerneau

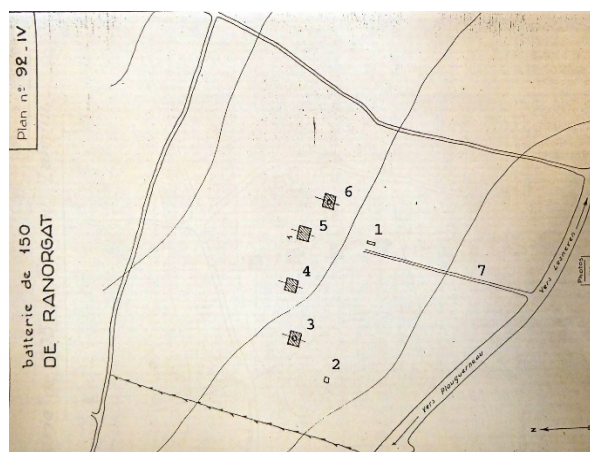
The *Stp Av 64* ( $48^{\circ}36'1.02''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}29'42.42''\text{W}$ , h 60.15 m), about 1 km south-east from Plouguerneau, on the right side of the departmental road D32 toward Plouguerneau, comprised: *R 669*  $\times$  4, 10.5 cm *s.F.H.25*  $\times$  4, *Flakstellung*  $\times$  2, 7.62 cm *F.K. 39* (r) (Chazette, 2008). Nowadays it is located on a private terrain. The visit took place on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

The *Stp Av 64* identified components (Figures 5-8) were the following.

A watch post (1) ( $48^{\circ}35'55.95''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}29'43.49''\text{W}$ , h: 58.26 m) on the right side of the access road (7). Completely covered by vegetation, the preservation state of its external structure remained unknown. Its entrance was unobstructed allowing the inspection of the interior. All the original furniture disappeared. The floor was covered by wooden planks and scraps. The internal walls had no damages due to combats, preserving the original white painting faded by the time without traces of the formwork boards. An observation window on a wall permitted the surveillance of the east side of *Stp Av 64*.

A non-concrete gun platform (2) ( $48^{\circ}36'2.5''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}29'47.61''\text{W}$ , h: 59.25 m) (Pinczon de Sel, 1947-1948). Located on a cultivated terrain and completely covered by vegetation, it was inaccessible and its preservation state remained unknown.

A *R 669* (3) ( $48^{\circ}36'1.93''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}29'45.21''\text{W}$ , h: 60.21 m). Located on a cultivated terrain and completely covered by vegetation, it was inaccessible and the preservation state of its structure remained unknown. On its coverage, a Flak emplacement covered by vegetation was clearly visible.



(a)



(b)





**Figure 5.** *Stp Av 64*: (a) General plan (Rapport Pinczon du Sel, 1947-1948): (1) watch post, (2) non-concrete gun platform, (3) *R 669* with *Flak* emplacement, (4) *R 669*, (5) *R 669*, (6) *R 669* with *Flak* emplacement, (7) access road; (b) Photo 73 (Rapport Pinczon du Sel, 1947-1948), on the foreground *R 669* (3) with *Flak* emplacement, on the background *R 669* (4) and (5); (c) watch post (1) covered by vegetation; (d) watch post (1) interior.



**Figure 6.** (a) *R 669* (3); (b) *R 669* (4) rear side; (c) *R 669* (4) grid of the exhausted combat gas pipe; (d) *R 669* (4) front side.





**Figure 7.** (a) *R 669 (5)* rear side; (b) *R 669 (5)* interior, (c) *R 669 (5)* rusted ceilings with two gun lifting joints and two elongate gates of the combat gas extraction system; (d) *R 669 (5)* front side.

A *R 669 (4)* ( $48^{\circ}36'2.45''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}29'42.57''\text{W}$ , h: 60.65 m) presenting a well-preserved external concrete structure, without damages due to combats. The traces of the formwork boards and the pebbles of the *Ero Vili* were clearly visible on the concrete structure. The combat room rear opening was closed by a modern heavenly painted double door and obstructed by wooden pallets and vegetation; the combat room front opening was closed by a modern brick wall with an elevated rectangular window. Therefore, the interior inspection was not possible and its preservation state remained unknown. A well-preserved rusted grid of the exhausted combat gas pipe (Tomezzoli & Pottier, 2016) was clearly visible on the rear side of *R 669 (4)*.

A *R 669 (5)* ( $48^{\circ}36'1.59''\text{N}$ ,  $4^{\circ}29'40.87''\text{W}$ , h: 60.94 m) partially covered by vegetation, presenting a well-preserved concrete structure in the exposed portions without damages due to combats. The traces of the formwork boards and the pebbles of the *Ero Vili* were clearly visible on the exposed portions. The combat room rear opening allowed the interior inspection. All the original furniture





**Figure 8.** (a) *R 669 (6)* with Flak emplacement, rear side; (b) *R 669 (6)* and annexed construction, (c) Annexed construction entrance; (d) annexed construction interior; (e) *R 669 (6)* front side.

disappeared. Various materials and scraps were stacked on the floor masking all its features (Tomezzoli & Pottier, 2016). The walls preserved the original white

painting with no traces of a thermal insulation system. The rusted ceiling preserved two gun lifting joints and two elongate gates of the combat gas extraction system deprived of their original grids. Materials stacked against the walls prevented the inspection of the ammunition rooms. The rear side, covered by vegetation masked the grid of the exhausted combat gas pipe and a possible niche hosting it (Tomezzoli & Pottier, 2016). The combat room front opening was partially closed by bricks and obstructed by vegetation.

A *R 669* (6) (48°36'0.3"N, 4°29'40.1"W, h: 60.51 m) covered by vegetation, presenting a well-preserved concrete structure in the exposed portions without damages due to combats. On its coverage a well-preserved *Flak* emplacement was clearly visible. The combat room rear opening and front opening were obstructed by vegetation so that the interior inspection was not possible and its preservation state remained unknown. Covered by vegetation the access stair to the pentagonal *Flak* emplacement was inaccessible. However, post WWII French air reconnaissance images shown that its concrete structure and labyrinth entrance were well-preserved without damages due to combats. Covered by vegetation, the grid of the exhausted combat gas pipe was not visible. The vegetation covered a rectangular, annexed construction on the west side of *R 669* (6). Its entrance was unobstructed allowing the interior inspection. All the original furniture disappeared. The floor was covered by stones and scraps. A wooden plank was secured on one of the internal walls. The walls preserved the original white painting faded by the time without traces of the formwork boards.

The search on the site for possible gunner lodgements shacks, a canteen, a kitchen and latrines, revealed no ruins as confirmed also by the post WWII French aerial reconnaissance images: C3639-0421\_1948\_MISSIONBRETAGNE8\_0137, n°137, 1/24651, Argentique 16/04/1948 and C0816-0031\_1952\_F0216-0816\_0105, n°105, 1/26477, Argentique 21/05/1952.

### 3.3. *Stp Av 66a*—Flescou en Lannilis

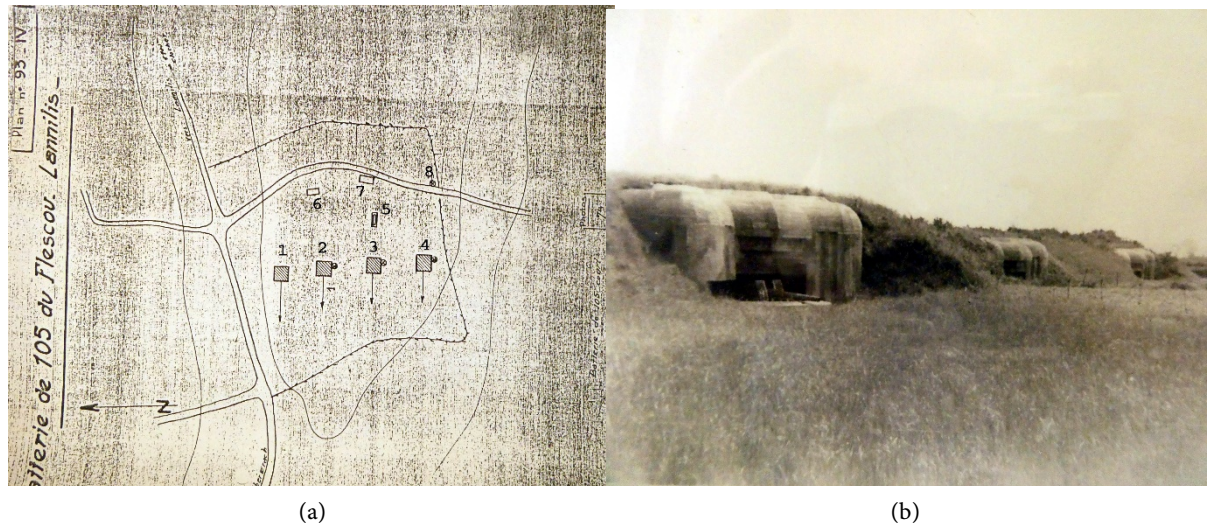
The *Stp Av 66a* (48°36'21.9"N, 4°32'10.72"W, h 49.31 m), about 1 km west from Lannilis, on the left side of the departmental road D128 toward Aber Wrach, nowadays is located part on a public and part on private terrains. The visits took place on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022 and 9<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

The *Stp Av 66a* identified components (Figure 9 & Figure 10) were the following.

The ruins of a *R 650* (1) (48°34'24.1"N, 4°32'9.58"W, h 52.57 m) for 150 mm gun *K. 331* (Pinczon de Sel, 1947-1948) near the entrance of a water tower enclosure. Completely covered by terrain and vegetation, the concrete fragments let the original structure unrecognizable. The traces of the formwork boards and the pebbles of the *Ero Vili* on the fragments were clearly visible.

A disappeared *R 650* (2) (48°34'22.85"N, 4°32'10.84"W, h 48.19 m) for 150 mm gun *K. 331* inside the water tower enclosure. Only fragments covered by terrain and vegetation were visible.





**Figure 9.** *Stp Av 66a*: (a) general plan: (1) *R 650*, (2) *R 650*, (3) *R 650*, (4) *R 650*, (5) unburied shelter or hold, (6) non-concrete gun platform, (7) non-concrete gun platform, (8) *tobruck*; (b) Photo 74 (Pinczon de Sel, 1947-1948): *R 650* (2), *R 650* (3), *R 650* (4).



**Figure 10.** *Stp Av 66a*: (a) *R 650* (1) fragment; (b) *R 650* (1) fragment; (c) *tobruck* (8), side view; (d) *tobruck* (8), side view.



A *R 650* (3) (48°34'21.55"N, 4°32'12.19"W, h 51.97 m) for 150 mm gun *K. 331* on a private terrain, partially covered by terrain. Post WWII French air reconnaissance images shown a well-preserved concrete structure in the exposed portions without damages due to combats.

A *R 650* (4) (48°34'20.21"N, 4°29'12.94"W, h 47.85 m) for 150 mm gun *K. 331* on a private terrain, partially covered by vegetation. Post WWII French air reconnaissance images shown a well-preserved concrete structure in the exposed portions without damages due to combats and a superimposed pentagonal *Flak* emplacement having a well-preserved concrete structure with labyrinth entrance without damages due to combats.

The emplacement of a disappeared unburied shelter or hold (5) (48°34'20.96"N, 4°32'10.44"W, h 48.13 m).

The emplacement of a disappeared non-concrete gun platform (6) (48°34'22.57"N, 4°32'9.2"W, h 50.68 m).

The emplacement of a disappeared non-concrete gun platform (7) (48°34'21.68"N, 4°32'9.01"W, h 48.7 m).

A *tobruck* (8) (48°34'18.94"N, 4°32'10.31"W, h 47.32 m) partially covered by terrain and vegetation, presenting a well-preserved external concrete structure in the exposed portions, without damages due to combats. The traces of the form-work boards and the pebbles of the *Ero Vili* were clearly visible on the concrete structure. The aperture of its combat room and its entrance were obstructed by terrain and vegetation; therefore, the interior inspection was not possible and its preservation state remained unknown.

### 3.4. *Stp Av 67*—Cleus Foz en Landéda

The *Stp Av 67* (48°35'1.54"N, 4°33'1.19"W, h 45.41 m) at Cleus Foz en Landéda, about 2.5 km from Landéda on the right side of the departmental road D128A toward Landéda, comprised: *R 669* × 1, *Geschutzstellung* × 4, *R 134* bunker, *Wasser* bunker, *Unterstand*, *Flakstellung* × 2, 15 cm sF.H.25 (t) × 4 (Chazette, 2008). Nowadays, it is located on private terrains. The visit took place on 06<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

The *Stp Av 67* identified components (Figure 11) have been already described in a previous publication (Tomezzoli, 2017a). The present study identified *4./H.K.A.A. 1161* as the unit in service at *Stp Av 67*.

## 4. Discussion

The *Stps Av 34*, *Av 64*, *Av 66a* each aligning four artillery bunkers, manifest the same organization of *Stp Av 55* (Tomezzoli, 2016), *Stp Re 77* at Kérigoarn-Kerizauen, *Stp Re 79* at Kergounan, *Stp Re 80* at La Villeneuve-Suernevez (Tomezzoli, 2018), *Stp Ra 110* at Saint Coulomb (Tomezzoli & Pottier, 2016). In the first three ones, however, the anti-aircraft protection was increased by a *Flak* emplacement superimposed on two or more bunkers. In all the mentioned cases, however, the absence of a fire observation bunker, like the *R 120a* at *Stp Ra 109*





**Figure 11.** *Stp Av 67*: general plan—(1) *R 669*, (2) - (3) *Vfs*, (4) open emplacement, (5) *Vf*, (6) *M 134*, (7) *Flak Vf*; (8) open emplacement, (9) - (13) *Vfs*, (14) open emplacement, (15) - (18) *Vfs*, (19) possible bunker buried in the terrain, (20) *Flak Vf*; (21) *M 134*, (22) *Vf*, (23) agricultural shed; a access road, b central area, c external road; A Armorique peninsula; AW Aber Wrach; B Brest; C Cleus Foz battery; KW Keringar Wraz *M.K.B. Graf Spee*, KV Keringar Vihan base, V Vougo-Kerizoc radar base (Tomezzoli, 2016) [Geoportail].

at Pointe de la Varde (Tomezzoli & Pottier, 2016), let to suppose that they directed the fire on the basis of information from their *Stabs*.

The supply in electricity to the *Stps* is not well known. However, the lack of power supply bunkers let presume that they received electricity from the French public net.

My requests to the city halls of Plouguerneau and Lannilis for consulting the municipal archives for more information about *Stps Av 34*, *Av 64*, *Av 66a*, *Av 67* received no reply.

To the same request, the city hall of Landeda replied that the city hall burned down in 1983, so that the municipal archive has no documents preceding that date.

A search at Bundesarchiv Abt. Militärarchiv (BAMA) in Freiburg (DE) concerning *H.K.A.A. 1161* provided no relevant documents.

#### 4.1. *Stp Av 34*

The presence of *1/H.K.A.A 1161* at *Stp Av 34* in Croaz Huella en Landéda is controverse. A first source (Floch, 2009) signals *1/H.K.A.A 1161* at Landeda without providing evidences. A second source (Floch, 2012) reports that the *1./H.K.A.A.* was at La Métairie/Le Veleury en Pluider at *Stp Av 55* (Figure 1,

**Figure 11**) from 19<sup>th</sup> December 1943, that this battery bombarded the American positions in August 1944 and also Lesneven provoking many destructions in the city. The same source places *3./HKB 747*, coded after *H.K.B. 1273* (Unit 11 720), at *Stp Av 34* and adds that it was at Croaz Huella en Landeda from November 1941 to August 1944, formed by Russian 155 gun × 6 pray of war, and that they were served by 3 officers, 21 non-commissioned officers and 107 gunners lodged at the Hotel-Restaurant Calvarin. The location of *H.K.B. 1273* at *Stp Av 34* is confirmed by a third source (Chazette, 2008) which places *1./H.K.A.A. 1161* at *Stp Av 55*. A fourth source (Jopaerya, 2015) contradicts the last two placing *H.K.B. 1273* at *Stp Av 69* without providing evidences. Therefore, because of the agreement of the second and the third source it is highly probable that *H.K.B. 1273* was in service at *Stp Av 34* and that *1./H.K.A.A. 1161* was in service at *Stp Av 55*.

The post WWII French air reconnaissance image Mission C0816-0031\_1952\_F0216-0816\_0102, n° 102, 1/26600, Argentique, 21/05/1952 (**Figure 2(a)**), and the fact that only one *Fl 243b*, a pentagonal watch post and a one room bunker were identified confirm that *Stp Av 34* components were completely destroyed by the Americans troops upon their arrival (Lécuillier, 2010). Their ruins were covered by terrain and vegetation or maybe were removed. Because of their destruction it was not possible to ascertain whether one or more *M 170* hosted a superimposed *Flak* emplacement. The *Fl 243b* probably hosted an 88 mm or a 105 mm gun and the niche on one side of the labyrinth entrance probably hosted a radio post (Tomezzoli & Colliou, 2017).

The *M 170* Todt front and rounded coverage optimized the opening of the *M 170*. In fact, a reduced combat room front opening would reduce the gun firing range, and an enlarged opening would enlarge the gun firing range, but would increase the risk of penetration of enemy's shells and splinters. The Todt front with its re-entrant semi-circular steps closed the upper portion of the opening against shells and splinters and allowed the gun to reach its maximum elevation. The upside-down *M 170* (5) Todt front and rounded coverage (16) heavy of some tens of tons, at about 40 m from the *M 170* (5) emplacement, testified the violence of the explosions that destroyed *M 170* (5) and the other components of *Stp Av 34*.

#### 4.2. *Stp Av 55*

The visit of *Stp Av 55* took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2016. The *Stp Av 55* identified components (**Figure 1**, **Figure 12**) have been described in a previous publication (Tomezzoli, 2016). The present study identified *1./H.K.A.A. 1161* as the German unit in service at *Stp Av 55*.

#### 4.3. *Stp Av 64*

The components of *Stp Av 64* appear well preserved but the site was in a pity state occupied by a car graveyard and vegetation. The absence of gunner lodgements shacks, a canteen, a kitchen and latrines indicate that the bunkers were





**Figure 12.** *Stp Av 55*: general plan: (1) dismantled *H 671*, (2) one room bunker, (3) *H 671*, (4) one room bunker, (5) one room bunker, (6) *H 671*, (7) *H 671*, (8) place of two bunkers buried in the terrain, (9) Plouider, (10) farm (Tomezzoli, 2016) [Flash Earth].

supervised by sentinels and the gunners lodged in Plouguerneau or nearby farms and reached the *R 669* in case of alarm.

#### 4.4. *Stp Av 66a*

The *Stp Av 66a* partially survived the destruction. The post WWII French air reconnaissance images C3639-0421\_1948\_MISSIONBRETAGNE8\_0163, n°163, 1/26476, Argentique 16/04/1948 and C0816-0031\_1952\_F0216-0816\_0104, n°104, 1/26521, Argentique, 21/05/1952 permitted to recognize that *R 650* (1) remained destroyed at the end of the WWII, therefore it was not possible to ascertain whether it hosted a superimposed *Flak* emplacement. The post WWII French air reconnaissance image CIPLI-0081\_1982\_IPLI8\_0137, n°137, 1/20169, Argentique, 02/08/1982 permitted to ascertain that *R 650* (2) was demolished after the construction of the water tower in the years eighty of the last century.

The presence of the bunkers *R 650* (3), *R 650* (4) on private terrains ensures, due to the care of their owners, their survival in the near future.

#### 4.5. *Stp Av 67*

The organization of *Stp Av 67* is rather different from the previous discussed *Stps*. Only one gun was located in a bunker *R 669* with superimposed *Flak* emplacement; the other three guns were placed in open emplacements. This permitted the guns to fire on 360°, but exposed them unprotected to possible air at-

tacks. The *R 669* and the gun emplacements were not aligned along a line or semi-circle as in the previously discussed *Stps*. The presence of many other bunkers suggests a logistic role of *Stp Av 67*.

## 5. Conclusion

The searches in literature, the post WWII French air reconnaissance images and the visit on the field clarified many historical aspects of *H.K.A.A. 1161*: its situation during the WWII in the Finistère, the emplacements of its companies and in particular that of *1./H.K.A.A. 1161*, the organization of the battery components and their preservation state. *Stps Av 55, Av 64, Av 67* survive up to now practically intact, *Av 66a* survives in a degraded state, *Stp Av 34* did not survive a complete destruction. The preservation of the surviving batteries in the future is not assured, in fact, no classification as monuments or architectural heritage is foreseen and they are menaced by demolition because of the urbanization expansion of the nearby cities. Moreover, no information or tourist board informs of their existence. In any case, I hope that this article will attract the attention of archaeologists, scholars and a large public about the German unities operating in France during the WWII and the defence structures of the Atlantic Wall.

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The author is grateful to Mr. Fleuridas P. for the useful discussions and explanations and his kind permission to insert in the Appendix the plans of the bunkers *R 650, R 669, M 170* and to Mr Haas B. for the search at BAMA for relevant documents concerning *H.K.A.A. 1161*.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article.

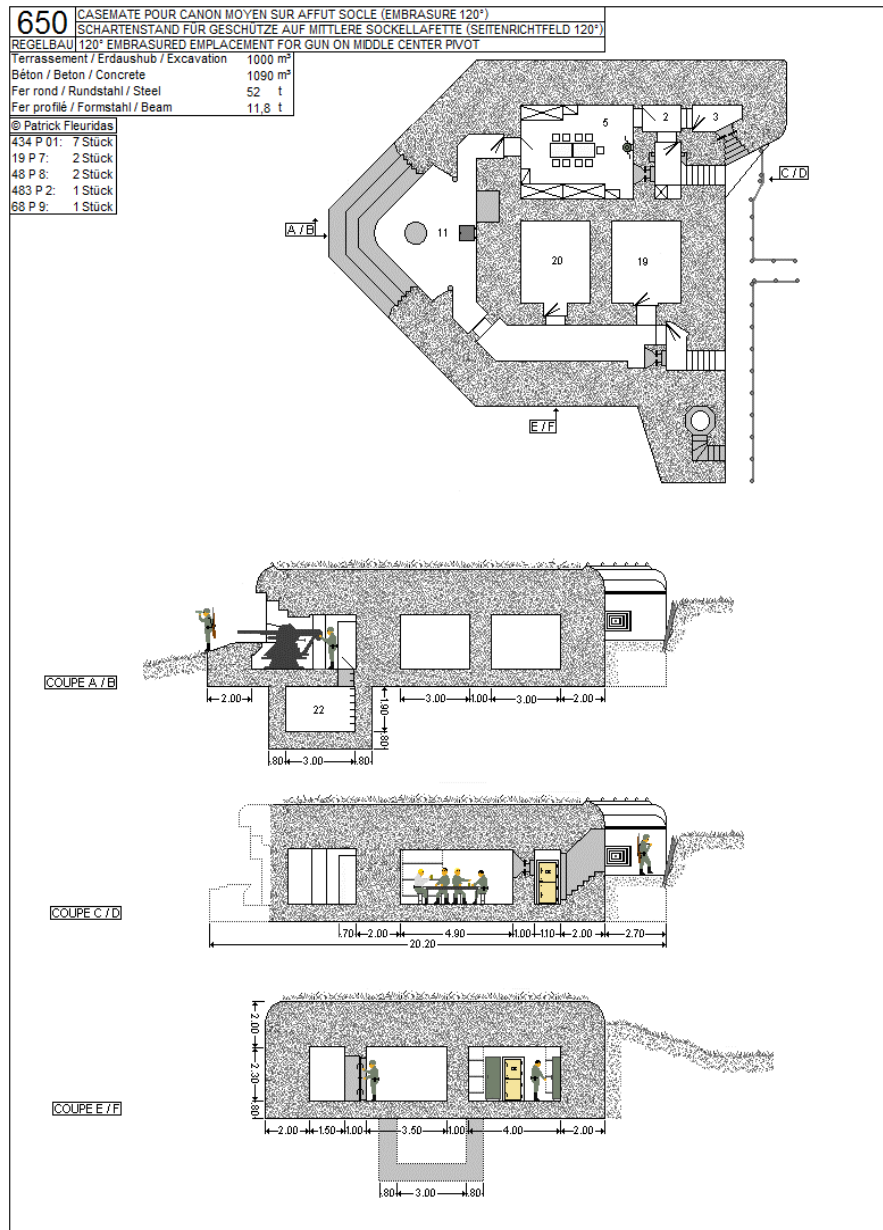
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## Appendix



**Figure A1.** R 650: 2 gas lock, 3 close combat defence, 5 personnel quarter, 11 combat room, 19 cartridge store, 20 shell store, 22 spent casing pit (Courtesy Fleuridas P.).



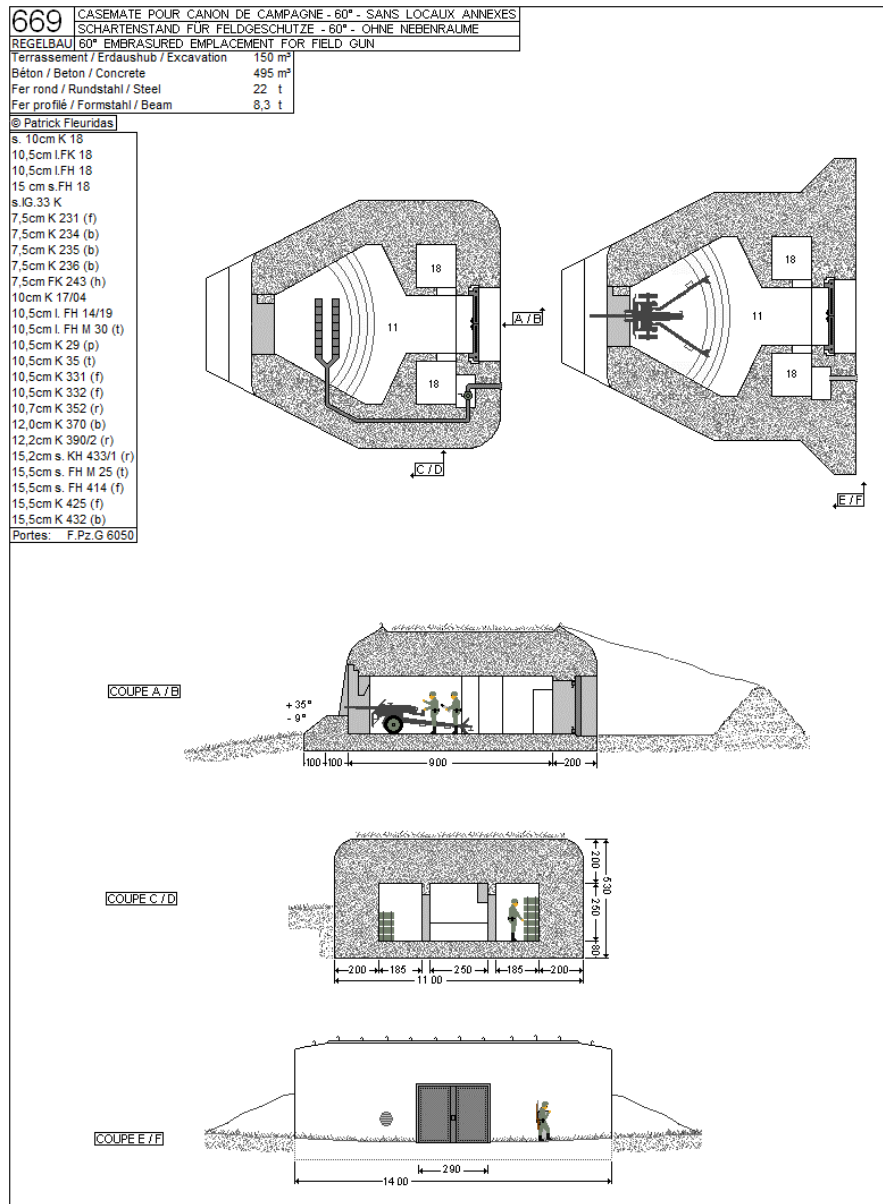


Figure A2. R 669: 11 combat room, 18 ammunition room (Courtesy Fleuridas P.).

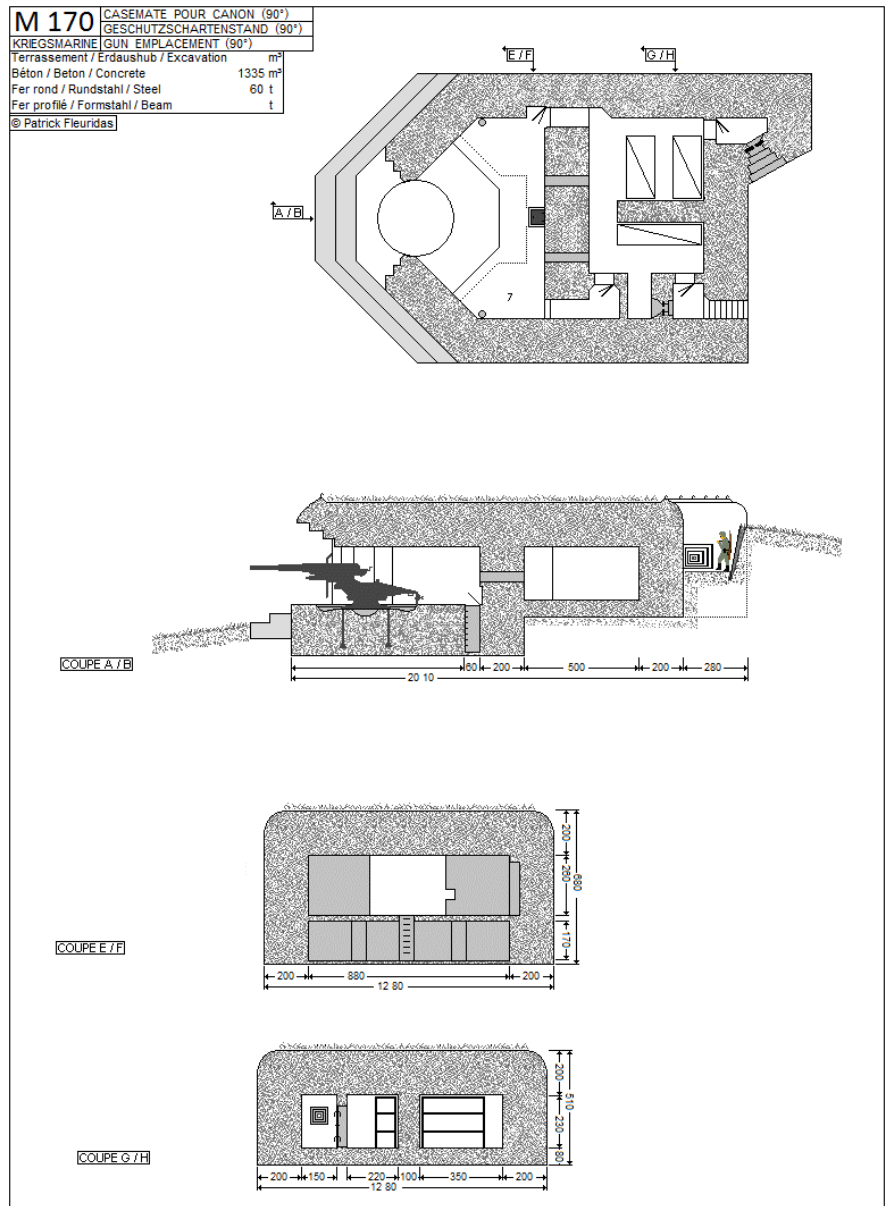


Figure A3. M 170: 7 combat room (Courtesy Fleuridas P.).