

HJELMKOLLEN



5_Hjelmkollen fort_foran til venstre ses mannskapskasserna og kjøkkenet, bak ses inngangen til østre kanonstilling_Tilhører HhS.jpg

During the union crises in the 1890s it was decided to get the Norwegian defensive forces back on their feet to counter the military superiority the Swedes had enjoyed. Towards the end of the union the Minister of the Defence, Georg Stang, re-established Fredriksten Fortress.

In 1901-1903 the Norwegians substantially fortified the border. At Hjelmkollen defensive positions were blasted into the rocks.

A strong border fortress

In 1902 the Ministry of Defence expropriated two lots to provide the site for a border fortification at Hjelmkollen. The Swedes had regularly used the Svinesund bridge on their forays into Norway, and a defence facility was needed to block the sailing lane into Fredrikshald (now the city of Halden).

Hjelmkollen became a strong border fortification with a canon emplacement blasted into the rock, embrasures and brick-worked rooms. It was armed with two 12 cm Schneider fortress canons with revolving armoured turrets. The Swedes reacted very strongly. The distance from the gun muzzles to the Swedish area at Svinesund was now alarmingly short.

Looming threat of war

In 1905 there was an imminent threat of war and the order was given to mobilize. However, under the terms of the Karlstad accord the order was given to demolish the border fortifications, as a neutral zone was to be established between Norway and Sweden. Hjelmkollen was subsequently demolished in 1906.

During WW II (1940 to 1945), the Germans built fortifications at Hjelmkollen, partly based on the old fort. Defence positions were also built on the Swedish side of the Ringdalsfjord.

Hill fort and beacon

Here there are two canon emplacements with a bunker, many metres of trenches, foundation walls from barracks for troops and a freshwater reservoir. In earlier times the crest had been used in the defence of the country. In the beginning of the 19th century a wooden beacon was built to signal the arrival of enemies in the country.