

<b>Archaeological Site Report</b>	<b>SiteNo</b>	9/2/111/0026
	<b>Site Name</b>	West Battery (West Fort), Hout Bay, Cape Town
	<b>Date</b>	
	<b>Project</b>	
	<b>CaseNID</b>	
	<b>Coords</b>	-34.055599, 18.347686

Page No: 1      **SiteAutoID:** 27041

Site Category: Building, Battlefield

**SiteComments:**

Archive Import History: The Dutch East India Company, and later the British government, were interested in Hout Bay not only because of its forests, but also because it could serve as an alternative anchorage when Table Bay was unsafe, and above all because it offered a possible landing place for hostile forces. Consequently fortifications were erected towards the end of the eighteenth century, first on the western side of the bay at the foot of the mountain called Hangklip, and later on the eastern side below Chapman's Peak. In 1775 the American Colonies revolted against their motherland, England. In 1778 France, and in 1780 the Netherlands, announced their support of the Colonies and declared war on England. The English sent a naval force to occupy the Cape, but the French, now in alliance with the Netherlands, anticipated this and landed a garrison at the Cape. One of the French regiments, the Pondicherry regiment, was used to "lay down a battery of 20 pieces of cannon" on the western side of Hout Bay. Most of the cannon were taken from ships, while the burgher militia of Swellendam were stationed nearby in case the enemy should attempt a landing. After the war, the battery probably fell into disrepair. In 1794, during the wars of the Revolution, attention was again given to the defence of Hout Bay. The old battery was replaced by three new ones called "Sluijsken", "Gordon" and "Little Gibraltar". The fortifications on the eastern side of Hout Bay were erected during the first British occupation. Craig had a fortified blockhouse built there in 1796; it was 8,5 m long by 6 m wide, had three storeys and was equipped inside with magazines and watertanks. Below this there was a battery of five 18-pounders and five wooden huts for accommodating the men. By 1804 both batteries were derelict and the Batavian authorities were obliged to renew the one and rebuild the other. The eastern battery was now named "Gilquin" and the western, "Zoutman". These names have been revived for the respective sites. After the second British occupation of the Cape the process of neglect was repeated once more and in 1827 even the blockhouse of the eastern battery as well as other fortifications in the Peninsula were dismantled by order of the Cape government. Consequently both batteries are in ruins, but they are nevertheless very important relics of our military history. Some of the trunnions of the original cannon bear dates between 1756 and 1759. On some there is the V.O.C. monogram, while others bear devices that suggest that they were French guns brought there by the Pondicherry regiment. Proclaimed 1936 and 1939" Visual Description: Colours: Site Features: Condition: Construction Date: Materials: Catalogue: , No: , Significance Category:

Damage Types: