

## Coastal fortifications in New South Wales

During the first half of the twentieth century many Australians felt the threat of foreign invasion. In New South Wales a series of fortifications was built along the coast and coastal defence plans were established in order to counter this threat. During their heyday these coastal fortifications played an important role in the home front defences of Australia, although following World War II most were dismantled and left to decline. The National Archives in Sydney holds a number of Australian Military Forces (AMF) and Commonwealth property records which deal specifically with coastal defences or fortifications.

### Defence files

Over 200 record items have been identified relating to coastal fortifications. They include details of staffing, installations, transfers of equipment, plans in the event of attack, and general orders regarding certain fortifications.

Series [SP553/1](#) deals wholly with coastal fortifications. Many individual files within the other series also contain relevant information.

### Defence records relating to coastal fortifications

| Title or description of record                                     | Date range | Series number |
|--|------------|---------------|
| <a href="#">Miscellaneous records Headquarters Eastern Command</a> | 1870–1967  | SP1141/1      |
| <a href="#">AMF correspondence files</a>                           | 1912–64    | SP459/1       |
| <a href="#">AMF general correspondence, 'S' (secret) series</a>    | 1922–51    | SP1048/7      |
| <a href="#">AMF records of fortress installations (NSW coast)</a>  | 1934–50    | SP553/1       |

### Property files

The records listed below are only some of the individual record items which specifically relate to property acquisitions, sales and leases. You will find additional items relating to land in specific suburbs and towns by searching the property files relating to those areas.

## Property files relating to coastal fortifications

| Title or description of record   | Date range | Series, item number    |
|--|------------|------------------------|
| <u>Correspondence – acquisition and sale of land and property by Commonwealth in NSW</u>                                       | 1901–48    | SP394/1                |
| <u>Fort Scratchley – acquisition of extra land</u>   | 1920–41    | SP394/1, CL3284        |
| <u>Fort Scratchley, Newcastle – acquisition, claim of JW McIlveen</u>  | 1939–41    | SP394/1, CL5855        |
| <u>Correspondence relating to property acquisitions, disposals, etc.</u>   | 1905–63    | SP615/1                |
| <u>Clovelly – Coogee Forts – Disposal of part of sewer pipe line</u>   | 1955–62    | SP615/1, 1960/1292     |
| <u>Stockton – Fort Wallace – easement to NSW Public Works</u>  | 1957–58    | SP615/1, 1960/1998     |
| <u>Commonwealth property files</u>   | 1909–48    | SP351/1                |
| <u>Wollongong Fort (Smiths Hill Fort) Cliff Road, re Transfer to State of New South Wales</u>                                  | 1922–26    | SP351/1, A25/3834      |
| <u>NSW coast defences – proposed acquisition of area at Redhead for observation post (contains maps and plans of the site)</u> | 1938–43    | C SP351/1, L10652      |
| <u>Correspondence re Property Matters on behalf of Army</u>  | 1922–60    | SP857/3                |
| <u>Newcastle, NSW, Fort Scratchley, Nobby's Head</u>   | 1920–40    | SP857/3, PC/104 Part 1 |
| <u>Newcastle, NSW, Fort Scratchley</u>   | 1924–56    | SP857/3, PC/104 Part 2 |
| <u>Fortress areas – Eastern Command</u>  | 1941       | SP857/3, PC1941/250    |
| <u>Fort Scratchley, Newcastle Defence Area, lease to Mrs E McMorrine</u>   | 1943–49    | SP857/3, PC/580        |
| <u>Breakwater and Illowra Batteries, Kembla Fortress Area, proposed acquisition</u>  | 1944–49    | SP857/3, PC1944/631    |
| <u>Newcastle, NSW, Fort Scratchley military area, acquisition and disposal of part</u>   | 1956–66    | SP857/3, PC/104 Part 3 |

## For more information

Further information on records holdings relating to coastal fortifications is available in the following Fact Sheets:

- *Fact sheet 36 - Military records held in Hobart*
- *Fact sheet 55 - Fremantle Harbour*
- *Fact sheet 91 - Coastal fortifications in South Australia*

Comments or other feedback can be sent to [archives@naa.gov.au](mailto:archives@naa.gov.au)