

RIA Self-Guided Tour: Fort Flagler & the Sundial

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"On behalf of the officers, men and civilian workers, I accept this sundial for the U.S. Army Weapons Command. As a symbol of time, the stuff that life is made of, this sundial will be a constant reminder that given the time, the many wonderful people of the U.S. Army Weapons Command and its Rock Island Arsenal will solve today's and tomorrow's problems while providing rich contributions to the life of the community."

Major General Henry Rasmussen

Commanding General, U.S. Army Weapons Command

September 28, 1970

Sundial

In 1877, Frankfort Arsenal, Pennsylvania, gave this sundial as a gift to Rock Island Arsenal. Today, the sundial remains in the same site it was originally placed, and is one of the few meso-sized artifacts still in its original location. The surface of the sundial was repaired in 1969, and it was rededicated in September 1970.

Flagler's Battery

Named after Lieutenant Colonel Daniel W. Flagler, commander of Rock Island Arsenal, Flagler's battery was constructed around the same time the sundial was installed. It is believed that it was built as a salute battery instead of as an actual defense. By the time of its construction, the battery would have been obsolete for use as an island defensive method. The close proximity to Quarters One and the surrounding grounds only adds weight to this theory, as it would have been in a prime location for ceremonies or events. The battery consisted of two 30-pound Parrott rifled cannons.

The battery was decorated with stacks of cannonballs similar to what is seen elsewhere on the island. It is unknown when the battery was removed, but it is estimated that it may have been sometime in the 1920s or 1930s, around the time that the tea house at Quarters One was destroyed.