

## **Miyama 1st Battery**

The Miyama 1st Battery was one of five gun batteries constructed in the 1890s in Kada to defend the Kitan Strait. The 11-kilometer-wide strait was strategically important because it controlled access to Osaka Bay and to Osaka, Japan's second largest city and a major industrial center, as well as to Kobe, an important port.

The battery is divided into three sections, each with two circular gun mounts, for six guns in total. There are two underground magazines in between these sections. A narrow tunnel behind the magazines connects one end of the battery to the other.

The battery is built into the hilltop behind brick parapets for defensive purposes. When the battery was operational, there were no trees around it. One noteworthy detail is the speaking tube in the front parapet.

The guns were 28-centimeter howitzers, short-barreled guns that fired their shells upward in a parabolic trajectory. The battery was situated high up on the hill so that the shells could reach a higher altitude and

descend faster for maximum destructive impact. None of the howitzers survive, though a single howitzer shell is on display at Nonaura Pier on nearby Okinoshima Island.

Originally constructed to fend off potential threats from China, Russia, and the Western powers during the Meiji era (1868–1912), the batteries were dismantled in 1914 without having fired a shot in anger.