



MCB's business premises are located in one of the most impressive fortifications ever built. We are based in the Magazine and Soldier's Quarters of Crownhill Fort here in Plymouth, Devon.

This particular fort was built in the 19th Century and was the centrepiece for the defence of Plymouth's dockyards. It was designed by Sir Edmund Frederick Du Cane of the Royal Engineers along with 21 other fortifications surrounding the city. The idea to build these fortifications came after the Crimean War where the British had helped seize the Russian port of Sevastopol not by assaulting it directly but by landing elsewhere and taking the port from the landward side.

It occurred to strategic planners that the same fate might befall Britain's primary dockyards. It was Prime Minister Palmerston who was the driving force behind their construction. Later they would earn the nickname of 'Palmerston's Follies' when it became clear that they were unlikely to see any shots fired in anger and some began to question the wisdom of spending so much money on such impressive structures. However, the most impressive weapons to possess are those which you never have to wield. So perhaps these formidable defences helped explain why Britain's ports remained safe and secure throughout the remainder of the 19th and throughout the entire 20th Century. Indeed the fort was used as a military asset up until just after the Falkland's War.

Needless to say, being located in a Victorian fort, our premises are very secure. There are few companies involved in Medical and Legal records who can claim that their offices are protected by a 30 foot deep and 30 foot wide moat

with an additional two tonne gate. Our offices can also withstand artillery and aerial bombardment. If necessary. Our walls are impressively thick with added earth above. There is also a functioning 32 pounder Cannon immediately outside our front office for added peace of mind!

It is something of a privilege to be housed in what is effectively a living museum. The Magazine, where our main office is located, was where all the ammunition and powder used to be stored for all the artillery pieces. No naked lights were permitted in the magazine and so there is a special corridor running around the rooms which allowed for external lamps to provide lighting without endangering the powder inside. The soldiers' quarters are where the gunners and soldiers to man the artillery would have been housed. It would have been a very Spartan home for them.

The fort is now something of an oasis in the middle of Plymouth City. Its grassy banks, large parade ground area, myriad tunnels and ramparts filled with historic artillery pieces provide a surprisingly serene location despite being so close to many of the most important transport arteries in Plymouth City. Of course, the fort also has very impressive views as uninterrupted fields of fire were so important to the original architects and the gunners. We are very fortunate to have our workspace in such a location. Please feel free to contact us if you would like a tour of our premises and of the fort itself.

