

The Wish Tower



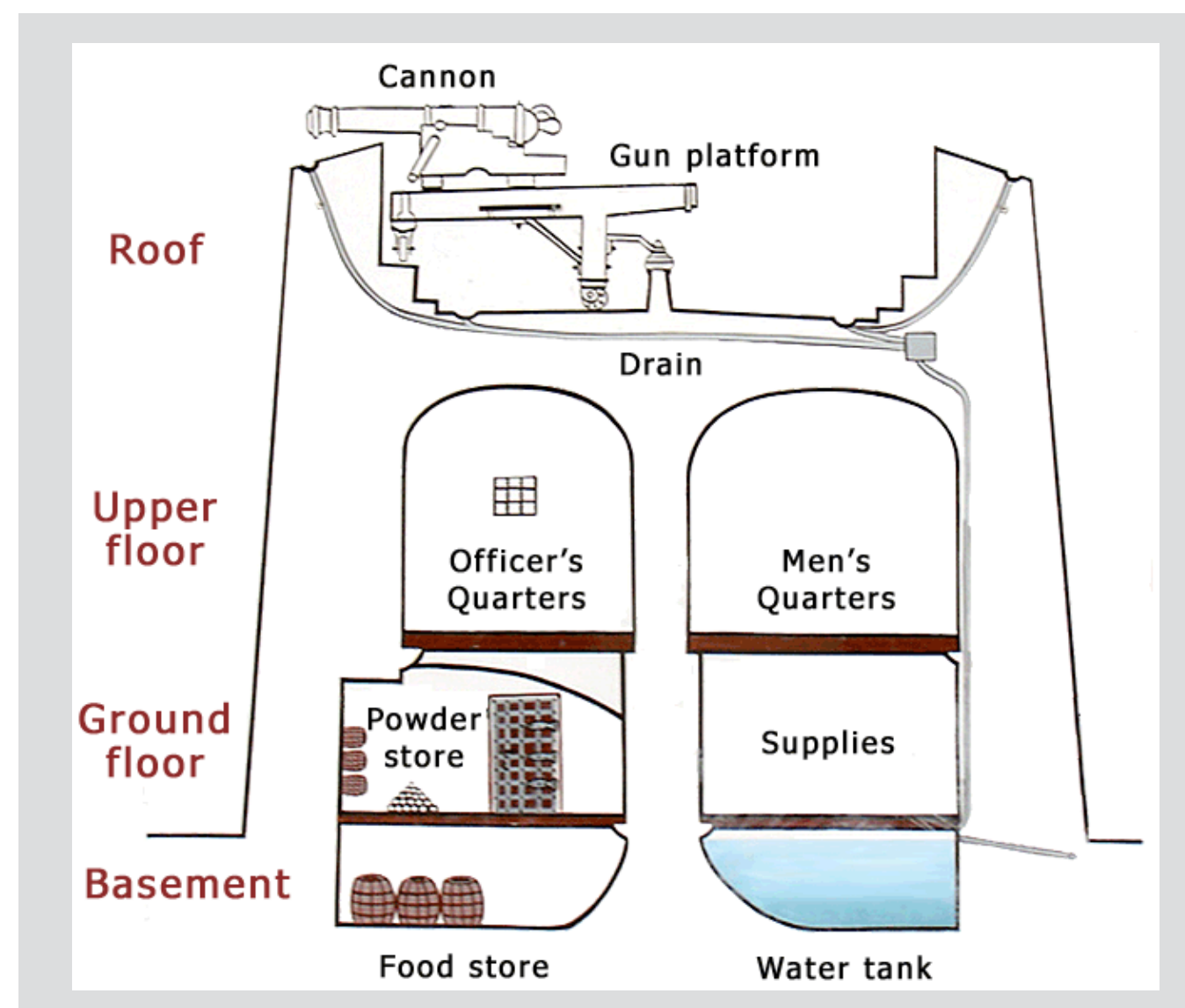
A Line of Defence

Between 1805 and 1810 a chain of defensive towers was built on the Sussex, Kent, Essex and Suffolk coasts.

The design of the towers was based on one that the Royal Navy had encountered at Mortella Point in Corsica some years earlier, it having resisted their initial attack very successfully.

The towers were called “Martello” and the most likely explanation of this name is a simple mispronunciation of Mortella.

Line of Martello Towers, Pevensey Bay (pre-1850)



The towers are built to be enormously strong to resist cannon bombardment and have a revolving gun on the top to return fire through a full 360 degrees of movement.

About halfway up the internal height of the tower is a wooden floor. This would have acted as an accommodation level for the planned 24 men and one officer who were expected to have been garrisoned there.

In the event, the towers were not needed for their intended purpose but many saw action of other types over the years.

Today, 43 of the original 103 towers remain standing. Some are now houses, some are museums and others lie derelict. Only a few are open to visitors.