Brehon Tower.

Anyone who arrives in Guernsey by boat - who goes to Herm or Sark, or even admires the beautiful view from the town towards these islands —cannot avoid seeing the Brehon Tower in the middle of the Little Russel. From time to time, States' workers go there to maintain the building and to check the light and other aids to mariners which help them avoid the reefs of rocks around there —especially at night.

The tower is big but completely empty —however there is still a roof. In fact, it is a ruin. In 1855, the forts of Saumarez at L'Eree, Le Crocq and Richmond at Vazon and Doyle in the north of the island were repaired and enlarged because the Crimean war had begun the year before. Even though Great Britain and France were on the same side, it was decided to protect the Little Russel by a fortification built on the Brehon Rock. This rock had always been dangerous to ships with its strong tides and in 1744 a (sea) mark was put there. Almost sixty years later it was proposed that a building be put there to house soldiers. It would cost one hundred pounds sterling, but nothing was done.

About fifty years later, in 1856, the tower that we can see today was built. It is oval —like an egg, and it is made of red granite from Herm. There are some steps and a kind of jetty but it is difficult to land. Other steps go up to the entrance, and over the doorway is inscribed "V.R.1856." There was room for thirty-five soldiers in the rooms and five cannons on the top of the fort. It was not a place where anyone would choose to spend weeks and when, at the end of the nineteenth century, there was no more danger of war the fort was abandoned In 1914 the States took on responsibility for the tower, but during the last war, the Germans made it an anti-aircraft base. Now the old tower continues to be a mark for mariners but it is also a sanctuary for terns.