

= Hull Castle =

Hull Castle was an artillery fort in Kingston upon Hull in England . Together with two supporting blockhouses , it defended the eastern side of the River Hull , and was constructed by King Henry VIII to protect against attack from France as part of his Device programme in 1542 . The castle had two large , curved bastions and a rectangular keep at its centre ; the blockhouses to the north and south had three curved bastions supporting guns , and a curtain wall and moat linked the blockhouses and castle . The construction project used material from recently dissolved monasteries , and cost £ 21 @, @ 056 . The town took over responsibility for these defences in 1553 , leading to a long running dispute with the Crown as to whether the civic authorities were fulfilling their responsibilities to maintain them .

During the 16th and 17th centuries , the defences were used to imprison Catholic recusants , who were often held in harsh conditions . The castle and blockhouses saw service during the sieges of the English Civil War in the 1640s , and remained in used during the interregnum . After the restoration of Charles II , the buildings were neglected until the King redeveloped the eastern defences of Hull in 1681 , creating a larger fortification called the Citadel . The castle and the South Blockhouse formed part of the new design , although the North Blockhouse was allowed to fall into ruins and finally demolished in 1801 . The former buildings remained in use , with various modifications , until the Citadel was demolished in 1864 to allow the construction of new docks . The foundations survived and have been the subject of archaeological investigations .

= = History = =

= = = 16th century = = =

= = = = Background = = = =

Hull Castle was built as a consequence of international tensions between England , France and the Holy Roman Empire in the final years of the reign of King Henry VIII . Traditionally the Crown had left coastal defences to local lords and communities , only taking a modest role in building and maintaining fortifications , and while France and the Empire remained in conflict , maritime raids were common but an actual invasion of England seemed unlikely . Modest defences based around simple blockhouses and towers existed in the south @-@ west and along the Sussex coast , with a few more impressive works in the north of England , but in general the fortifications were limited in scale .

In 1533 , Henry broke with Pope Paul III over the annulment of his long @-@ standing marriage to Catherine of Aragon . Catherine was the aunt of Charles V , the Holy Roman Emperor , who took the annulment as a personal insult . This resulted in France and the Empire declaring an alliance against Henry in 1538 , and the Pope encouraging the two countries to attack England . An invasion of England appeared certain . In response , Henry issued an order , called a " device " , in 1539 , giving instructions for the " defence of the realm in time of invasion " and the construction of forts along the English coastline . The immediate threat passed , but resurfaced in 1544 , with France threatening an invasion across the English Channel , backed by her allies in Scotland . Henry therefore issued another device to further improve the country 's defences .

= = = = Construction = = = =

Hull Castle was constructed to defend the east side of the town of Kingston upon Hull against a possible French attack ; it was also intended to ensure the loyalty of the population , who had taken part in a revolt against the King in 1536 . Henry had visited Hull in late 1541 and had observed that , although the town had strong walls to the north and west , it lacked adequate defences in the event

of an attack from the east , while the harbour was only protected by a " little round brick tower " . Henry issued orders for the existing town defences to be repaired and renovated but , before the work could commence , he changed his mind and issued fresh instructions in early 1542 . John Roberts , a military engineer previously stationed in Guînes , was brought back to England to construct a major system of defences on the east bank of the River Humber , comprising a central castle linked to two large blockhouses .

The design of the new defences was probably carried out by Rogers and resembled his earlier work near Calais , although the King probably also made some decisions on the project personally . Sir Richard Long and Michael Stanhope were instructed to oversee the construction of the defences , with Thomas Aldred acting as the project 's paymaster and William Reynolds in the role of master mason . Initial estimates suggested that 530 workers would be needed , including masons , carpenters and plumbers , but more may have been required in practice . Some of the building materials were taken from monastic institutions , which had recently dissolved by Henry ; stone and lead was taken from the nearby Meaux Abbey , further stone from the friaries in Hull and probably also from St Mary 's Church in Hull , which had recently collapsed . At least some of the bricks needed were made in a series of ten kilns beside the site itself . The land needed for the buildings had been seized during the dissolution of the monasteries . By December 1543 , £ 21 @, @ 056 had been spent on the project .

The castle was rectangular , with brick and stone foundations and a brick superstructure . It had two large , curved bastions containing chambers on the west and east ends , and a three @-@ storey rectangular keep in the middle , 66 by 50 feet (20 by 15 m) across , set within an inner courtyard . The outer wall was 19 feet (5 @. @ 8 m) thick and contained a gallery and ports for hand @-@ guns , and supported two tiers of artillery . A moat ran around the outside of the castle . The two @-@ storey tall blockhouses were also built from brick and stone , and each had a square central tower and entrance at the rear , and three curved bastions to the front and sides . Their walls were 16 feet (4 @. @ 9 m) thick , sloped so as to deflect incoming fire , and supported two tiers of guns ; the interiors were partitioned , to reduce the risk of explosions damaging the entire fortification . The use of bastions adopted some features from the Italian @-@ style of defences then popular on the continent , but their design was imperfect and failed to provide flanking cover or interlink with the neighbouring defences . A crenellated curtain wall , approximately 900 metres (3 @, @ 000 ft) long and 12 feet (3 @. @ 7 m) high , linked the blockhouses and castle , with a wet moat on the eastward side .

== == Operation == ==

After the construction , Sir Richard Long and Michael Stanhope were placed in command of the castle and blockhouses ; the initial garrison may have been substantial , costing around £ 1 @, @ 000 a year , but this was mostly demobilised at the end of 1542 . Nonetheless , the castle and blockhouses still proved expensive to maintain . As a result , in 1553 , an agreement was reached with the corporation of Hull , under which the town would take over responsibility for their maintenance , in exchange for an annual grant of £ 50 from various local manors . The town provided a bond of £ 2 @, @ 000 as a commitment that it would keep its commitments . The mayor of Hull also took over the role of the Governor of Hull , with " keepers " were appointed by the town to run each of the buildings ; the pasture land behind the fortifications was rented out to bring in income .

Arguments soon broke out between the Crown and the corporation over the deal . The Crown argued that the corporation was not adequately maintaining the castle and blockhouses . The Earl of Sussex complained in 1569 that they were in need of repair , and a 1576 survey stated that their gun platforms were in poor condition and that the ditches had become clogged with earth , while coastal erosion had undermined the South Blockhouse . Queen Elizabeth I provided 300 trees to help the repair work and a new jetty was built to protect the southern end of the defences from the sea . The Crown gave 60 trees to the town to help with further repairs in 1581 . Fears of a Spanish invasion resulted in fresh repairs being carried out , and the threat of the Armada in 1588 resulted in

proposals to build additional earthworks around the blockhouses , but nothing appear to have actually been carried out . The dispute over maintenance between the Crown and the town finally came to court in 1588 ; the corporation argued that green timber had been used in the original construction work and claimed that they had spent £ 2 @, @ 893 between 1552 and 1587 on the defences : the Crown 's case failed .

A new bridge , North Bridge , was built over the River Hull in the 1540s , protected by artillery in the North Blockhouse . From 1577 onwards , the castle and blockhouses began to be used to contain Catholic recusants , with as many as 16 prisoners being known to have been detained at any one time . The ground @-@ floor of the South Blockhouse was often used for this purpose ; the conditions were particularly poor , with contemporary accounts noting that the quarters " have been overflowed with water at high tide , so that they walked , the earth was so raw and moist that their shoes would cleave to the ground " . Another Spanish invasion scare in 1597 led to the castle and blockhouses being put on alert , and the recusants were temporarily removed for security reasons .

= = = 17th century = = =

The arguments over the maintenance of the castle and blockhouses continued in early 1600s . The town of Hull argued that since the revenues of £ 50 granted in 1553 were insufficient to maintain these defences , they should be allowed to use royal customs duties to assist in the work , particularly in protecting the east bank of the river from erosion . As a result , another court case was brought by the Crown in 1601 . A commission was established to examine the defences and concluded that the position of the castle meant that it was militarily useless , and as a consequence it had not been garrisoned or maintained for many years , resulting in it falling into total disrepair . The commission 's report led to the town carrying repairs to the earthwork defences over the coming year . The Crown dropped its law case , but a third case was brought in 1634 , only to see the Crown pull out of the proceedings once again . By now , the corporation argued it had spent £ 11 @, @ 367 on the defences .

Around 1627 , Robert Morton , the mayor of Hull , had an additional rectangular earthwork battery of four guns constructed around the south blockhouse to defend the estuary against a potential Spanish and French invasion threat . The South End Fort was built on the other side of the river from the South Blockhouse at the same time , provided supporting crossfire . In 1634 , a survey showed the North Blockhouse to be mounting 24 pieces of artillery , the castle 29 , and the South Blockhouse 24 guns . Catholic recusants continued to be detained in the castle and blockhouses , where they were ill @-@ treated by the keepers , typically men with strong Puritan sympathies .

At the outbreak of the English Civil War in 1642 , Hull sided with Parliament against King Charles I. Hull was besieged by the Royalists in July 1642 , and the South Blockhouse may have been used to drive off a Royalist naval vessel approaching the estuary . In 1643 , the mayor , Thomas Raikes , and the Parliamentarians in Hull concluded that the governor , Sir John Hotham , was planning to seize the castle and the wider town for the King . In a pre @-@ emptive strike in June , Captain Moyer landed 100 troops from the Parliamentary warship the Hercules and took the castle and blockhouses , while Raikes seized the town itself . Hotham was later executed . A further siege followed in 1643 , during which the area to the east of the castle and blockhouses was deliberately flooded by the defenders to provide additional protection . In September , the south bastion of the North Blockhouse was accidentally blown up by one of the defenders , killing five men .

The artillery exchanges during the sieges and the activities of the garrisons had caused considerable damage , and at the end of the conflict the military Governor of Hull ordered repairs . The North Blockhouse needed work costing £ 1 @, @ 500 , Hull Castle , £ 300 , and the South Blockhouse , £ 220 . During the interregnum , the fortifications were maintained , despite complaints from the town at the costs , and were used to hold both prisoners of war and political prisoners . Henry Slingsby , for example , was held at the castle before his trial in London .

When Charles II was restored to the throne in 1660 , the interregnum army was demobilised ; a guard @-@ force remained in Hull to protect the arsenal there , being officially referred to as the " Hull Blockhouse " garrison . All three sites were garrisoned : surveys reported that the South

Blockhouse was in a good condition and held 21 guns , the castle was in a poor condition and held only 8 light guns , and the North Blockhouse was in a " ruinous " condition and held 10 guns . An order was taken to strip the most ruined parts of the North Blockhouse of its timber , bricks and lead to help improve the remainder , supplemented by additional supplies of timber and bricks donated by the Crown , but the material was misappropriated and used , in part , for construction work on the houses of the Governor and his deputy .

The defences were neglected for several decades , despite calls for improvements and when the military engineer Sir Martin Beckman visited the sites in 1681 , he concluded that they were " very much out of repair " : the North Blockhouse was " altogether dismantled " , the South Blockhouse needed extensive repairs and the moat had been left to entirely silt up . Recusants continued to be detained in the castle , which was regarded by the national authorities as a particularly suitable prison for this class of prisoner .

The Crown decided to construct a new , triangular fortification called the Hull Citadel on the eastern side of the river , incorporating the castle and the South Blockhouse . Beckman was responsible for the design and the work took place between 1681 and 1690 at a cost of over £ 100 @,@ 000 . The South Blockhouse was repaired and strengthened with a water bastion , and formed the south @-@ west corner of the Citadel ; the castle was integrated into the north corner and protected by a new bastion . The intervening curtain wall was partially demolished to make way for the new works , while the last remains of the moat were filled in with clay . By 1699 , the castle itself no longer held any guns , although the South Bastion was equipped with three demi @-@ culverins and four sakers , all which were inoperable due to poor maintenance and the effect of the sea . The new fortifications were protected by a combination of soldiers from the regular Army , from Independent Companies under the control of the governor , and the " Castle Guard " of local soldiers .

= = = 18th ? 21st centuries = = =

The castle and the South Blockhouse continued in use within the Citadel during the 18th and early 19th centuries . In 1746 , the South Blockhouse was redesigned with new embrasures , but the fortifications were largely neglected . During the Napoleonic Wars , the Citadel was extensively repaired ; the South Blockhouse was extensively altered to allow it to hold naval ordnance stores and the castle became an armoury , each wing able to hold 20 @,@ 000 stands of infantry weapons and 3 @,@ 000 cavalry arms . The North Blockhouse and the remnants of the curtain wall beyond the Citadel were in ruins by 1766 ; the blockhouse was let to private contractors , and then demolished altogether between 1801 and 1802 .

By the 19th century , extensive docks had grown up around the Citadel and in 1802 the surrounding land was granted to the Hull Dock Company . The Citadel remained in military use until 1848 , by when developments in military technology had made the fortification obsolete . In 1858 there were proposals to turn the site into a public park , but instead the Citadel , including Hull Castle and the South Blockhouse , was demolished in 1864 to make way for an expansion of the docks .

From 1969 onwards there have been a range of archaeological investigations around the area . The foundations of the Citadel , which had been too substantial to dismantle in the 19th century , were uncovered during urban regeneration works in 1987 , and archaeological digs have occurred on both the castle and the South Blockhouse sites . The foundations of these two buildings , along with the southern end of the Citadel remains , are protected under UK law as an Ancient Monument . During excavations in 1997 , an iron portpiece was discovered on the site of the South Blockhouse . The weapon , now known as " Henry 's Gun " , is one of only four such guns in the world to have survived from the period and is displayed at the Hull Museums . It was either made by Henry VIII 's gun @-@ maker or acquired from the Low Countries . By 1681 it would have been obsolete and was disposed of in 1681 during the construction of the Citadel .