

= Walmer Castle =

Walmer Castle is an artillery fort originally constructed by Henry VIII in Walmer , Kent , between 1539 and 1540 . It formed part of the King 's Device programme to protect against invasion from France and the Holy Roman Empire , and defended the strategically important Downs anchorage off the English coast . Comprising a keep and four circular bastions , the moated stone castle covered 0 @. @ 61 acres (0 @. @ 25 ha) and had 39 firing positions on the upper levels for artillery . It cost the Crown a total of £ 27 @, @ 092 to build the three castles of Walmer , Sandown , and Deal , which lay adjacent to one another along the coast and were connected by earthwork defences . The original invasion threat passed , but during the Second English Civil War of 1648 ? 49 , Walmer was seized by pro @- @ Royalist insurgents and was only retaken by Parliamentary forces after several months ' fighting .

In the 18th century , Walmer became the official residence of the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports and was gradually modified from a military fortification into a private residence . Various Prime Ministers and prominent politicians were appointed as Lord Warden , including William Pitt , the Duke of Wellington and Lord Granville , who adapted parts of the Tudor castle as living spaces and constructed extensive gardens around the property . By 1904 , the War Office agreed that Walmer had no remaining military utility and it passed to the Ministry of Works . Successive Lord Wardens continued to use the property but it was also opened to the public . Walmer was no longer considered a particularly comfortable or modern residence , however , and Lord Curzon blamed the poor condition of the castle for his wife 's death in 1906 .

Lord Wardens since the Second World War have included Winston Churchill , Robert Menzies and Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother , but they have made only intermittent use of Walmer Castle . In the 21st century , Walmer Castle is run as a tourist attraction by English Heritage . The interior of the castle displays a range of historical objects and pictures associated with the property and its Lord Wardens , protected since the 19th century by special legislation . The grounds include the Queen Mother 's Garden , designed by Penelope Hobhouse as a 95th birthday gift for Elizabeth in 1997 .

= = History = =

= = = 16th century = = =

Walmer 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 the local lords and communities , only taking a modest role in building and maintaining fortifications , and while France and the Empire remained in conflict with one another , 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 very limited in scale .

In 1533 , Henry broke with Pope Paul III in order to annul the long @- @ standing marriage to his wife , Catherine of Aragon and remarry . Catherine was the aunt of Charles V , the Holy Roman Emperor , and he 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 .

Walmer and the adjacent castles of Deal and Sandown were constructed to protect the Downs in east Kent , an important anchorage formed by the Goodwin Sands which gave access to Deal Beach , on which enemy soldiers could easily be landed . The stone castles were supported by a line of four earthwork forts , known as the Great Turf , the Little Turf Bulwark , the Great White Bulwark of Clay and the Walmer Bulwark , and a 2 @. @ 5 @- @ mile @- @ long (4 @. @ 0 km)

defensive ditch and bank . Collectively the castles became known as the " castles of the Downs " and cost the Crown a total of £ 27 @, @ 092 to build .

Walmer was built between April 1539 and autumn 1540 , by a team including Richard Benese as the surveyor , William Clement as the master carpenter , and Christopher Dickenson as the master mason . It was initially garrisoned by a captain , two lieutenants , two porters , ten gunners and three soldiers , at an annual cost of £ 174 . It was probably equipped with a range of brass and cast @-@ iron guns , along with arquebuses and bows for close defence . In 1597 , a report listed the castle 's artillery as comprising a cannon , a culverin , five demi @-@ culverins , a saker , a minion and a falcon .

= = = 17th century = = =

Walmer Castle was left to decline in the early 17th century , with little money being made available for repairs and the garrison receiving low pay , leading some members to reside in nearby Deal rather the fort itself , and to take on additional employment to supplement their wages . Walmer Castle was seized by Parliamentary forces at the start of the first English Civil War between the supporters of King Charles I and Parliament , but did not play a significant role in the remainder of the initial conflict . After the few years of unsteady peace after 1645 , the Second Civil War broke out in 1648 , this time with Charles ' Royalist supporters joined by Scottish allies . The Parliamentary navy was based in the Downs , protected by Walmer and the other Henrician castles , but by May a Royalist insurrection was under way across Kent .

Vice @-@ Admiral William Batten had been forced to resign from his post as Commander of the Fleet the previous year by Parliamentary officials , and he now encouraged the fleet to join the Royalist faction . Sir Henry Palmer , a former sailor , accompanied by other members of the Kentish gentry , also called on the fleet to revolt , taking advantage of the many fellow Kentish men in the crews . Walmer and Deal Castle declared for the King , shortly after the garrisons at Sandown . With both the coastal fortresses and the navy now under Royalist control , Parliament feared that foreign forces might be landed along the coast or aid sent to the Scots .

Parliament defeated the wider insurgency at the Battle of Maidstone at the start of June , and then sent a force under the command of Colonel Rich to deal with Walmer and the other castles along the Downs . Walmer Castle was the first to be besieged , and surrendered on 12 July . Deal was attacked in late July , and in August artillery assaults began on Sandown as well , leading to the surrender of both remaining fortifications . Walmer was badly damaged during the conflict and it was estimated by Rich , responsible for carrying out the repairs , that the work would cost at least £ 500 .

In 1649 , Parliament ordered new supplies of ammunition and powder be sent to Walmer and the other castles of the Downs , which were brought back into good order . The garrison at Walmer remained substantial during the period , with a governor , a corporal and 20 soldiers , but when Charles II was restored to the throne in 1660 he reduced the numbers again to a captain , lieutenant , porter and 16 men . In the Glorious Revolution of 1688 against Charles ' brother , King James II , the townsfolk of Deal seized Walmer Castle on behalf of William III , the Prince of Orange . By the end of the century , however , the castle was increasingly regarded as out of date from a military perspective .

= = = 18th ? 19th centuries = = =

= = = 1700 ? 1828 = = =

In the 18th century , Walmer Castle became the official residence of the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports . The Lord Warden was originally a medieval title linked to five key ports along the coast of England ; the position 's prominence had faded , but it still retained important judicial and military functions . When Lionel Sackville , the Duke of Dorset , was appointed to the post in 1708 he

decided that the existing residence in Dover Castle was unsatisfactory , probably because of the semi @-@ ruinous state of the castle , and moved into Walmer Castle instead .

The Duke occupied the post of Lord Warden until 1765 , save for two periods when it was filled by James Butler , the Duke of Ormonde and John Sidney , the Earl of Leicester . He carried out extensive work to make the castle more habitable , building extensions towards the north bastion and constructing a small house in the south bastion for the soldiers . Under the subsequent Lord Wardens , the politicians Robert Darcy , the Earl of Holderness , and Francis North , the Earl of Guildford , the castle continued to house artillery but it became increasingly less military in character .

The Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger was then made the Lord Warden in 1792 . Pitt was badly in debt and King George III believed that the post , which came with a salary of £ 3 @,@ 000 a year , would usefully supplement Pitt 's income . Pitt made extensive use of the castle and by 1803 he used it as his main residence in an effort to reduce his living costs . Pitt 's niece , Lady Hester Stanhope , joined him at Walmer between 1803 and 1806 ; together with Pitt , she carried out extensive work on the castle gardens , transforming them from a simple kitchen garden into a set of landscaped ornamental enclosures ; Stanhope enlisted the Dover militia to help with the landscaping and planting .

With the outbreak of the French Revolutionary Wars , Pitt became energetically involved in the protection of the ports along the coast , entertaining the local garrison commanders , naval captains and the local gentry at Walmer on a regular basis . After Pitt resigned as Prime Minister in 1801 , fears remained of a French invasion and he formed a volunteer cavalry unit at Walmer Castle , where he lived with his new officers . He also formed a unit of bombardier infantry and a fleet of 35 fishing boats called luggers , which he armed with 12 @-@ pound (5 @.@ 4 kg) or 18 @-@ pound (8 @.@ 2 kg) guns , reviewing them from the castle . Stanhope remarked on the constant drilling of army units around the castle during her time there .

Robert Jenkinson , the Earl of Liverpool , took possession of Walmer Castle following the death of Pitt in 1806 . Liverpool was a favourite of King George 's , and his appointment as Lord Warden was again intended to provide a valuable income and a country retreat . As Prime Minister , Liverpool used Walmer as a personal retreat and as a location for private political discussions with selected guests .

===== 1829 ? 99 =====

On Lord Liverpool 's death , Arthur Wellesley , the Duke of Wellington and the current Prime Minister , asked King George IV for the post of Lord Warden , primarily because he was seeking the use of Walmer Castle . Wellington took up post in 1829 and considered Walmer to be " the most charming marine residence " . He made use of the castle each autumn , entertaining extensively there but living and sleeping in a single room . He was visited there twice by Victoria , once when she was still a princess and later as queen . Wellington let the gardens fall into a poor condition . Wellington died in his room at Walmer on 14 September 1852 . His body was kept in a death chamber in his room to lie in state until 10 November , and when the room was opened for public visitors during the final two days , around 9 @,@ 000 attended . The Duke 's body was finally removed to London via Deal , complete with a military escort .

James Broun @-@ Ramsay , the Marquess of Dalhousie became Lord Warden ; on his death , the Prime Minister Henry Temple , the Viscount Palmerston , took over the castle in 1861 . Palmerston initially declined to buy the contents of the castle from his predecessor 's estate on taking up the post , a practice which had become traditional for the Lords Warden , complaining about the high price being proposed . This raised the risk that the historical contents of the castle might be sold off at open auction ; and some of Wellington 's former belongings were therefore removed by his family for safekeeping .

The politician Lord Granville was offered the post of Lord Warden by the new Prime Minister , John Russell in 1865 . Russell noted that the role would be expensive for Granville to perform ? the salary had been abolished in 1828 ? but that it would provide him with a property by the sea , which

Granville had been seeking to acquire for a while . Granville took over Walmer in 1865 . He expanded the gardens , built new kennels for a hunting pack and spent many years reassembling the furniture and other objects that Pitt and Wellington had used at the castle . He received large numbers of visitors , many of whom stopped off while travelling to or from France . The diplomat Baron de Malortie visited Granville and his family at Walmer , and later praised the homely atmosphere in the castle . He described how , after breakfast , the family and guests would all gather in the drawing room , which was the only large room in the house , and Granville would answer government correspondence amid the daily life of the rest of the household .

The businessman and politician William Smith was appointed Lord Warden in 1891 , but died in Walmer Castle during his first visit here in October of that year . Smith had proposed that the historical artefacts in the castle should be protected from being removed by later Lord Wardens and suggested that government pass an Indenture of Heirlooms Bill . The government carried out the plan after Smith 's death , protecting almost 70 pieces of furniture and 50 artworks at the castle and forbidding them being moved from the castle without the Secretary of State for War 's approval . Robert Gascoyne @-@ Cecil , the Marquess of Salisbury , became the next Lord Warden ; with adequate legal protection now in place , the 3rd Duke of Wellington suggested returning his grandfather 's possessions to the castle , but Lady Salisbury declined the offer .

= = = 20th ? 21st centuries = = =

By 1904 the War Office had concluded that Walmer had no remaining military value and agreed to transfer the castle to the Office of Works , who accepted it on the condition that they were paid £ 2 @, @ 400 in order to carry out repairs . The Office 's survey noted that " the lower floor ... is very inconvenient , dark and not conducive to health while the women servants have to sleep in a sort of dormitory in the slopes of the roof ... The principal floor is , generally speaking , badly arranged and badly lighted and the Dining Room is very small " ; the report suggested that it would be best to demolish the building and rebuild it .

Proposals were made to find the next Lord Warden , George Curzon , the Marquess Curzon , alternative accommodation and the Royal Marines were approached as replacement tenants for the castle , but declined the offer . The Ministry acquired agreement for most of the castle to be opened to the public , with various historical objects related to the property being put on display , including some donated by King Edward VII . Lord Curzon moved into the castle when returned from India in 1905 . His wife , Mary , fell ill , which Curzon believed to be a result of their poor accommodation , and despite being moved to a new residence , she died shortly afterwards . As a result Curzon decided to resign the post of Lord Warden , leaving the castle , and subsequently the Prince of Wales , the future George V , took up the post .

William Lygon , the Earl Beauchamp , became the Lord Warden in 1913 , building a Roman Catholic chapel at the castle and holding large parties there each summer . His children later commented that they found the castle was chilly and cramped . The Prime Minister , Asquith , was invited by Beauchamp to use the castle during the First World War as a weekend retreat , as it had good communication links with the front line in France . Asquith 's wife , Margot , was not initially impressed by Walmer , noting in her diary that while it was " very distinguished " and had " great charm " , it was " terribly exposed " with " cold ... noisy corridors and small rooms " ; she later came to like the castle and noted that she was sad to finally leave it .

Lygon had sexual relations with men , which was illegal in England during this period . Rumours spread about the parties that he had held at Walmer Castle after the war , where , according to the historian Richard Davenport @-@ Hines , he had " behaved indiscreetly with young men " . The King was informed about his lifestyle and Lygon fled the country in 1931 , resigning the appointment of Lord Warden the following year .

Lygon 's successor , the politician Rufus Isaacs , the Marquess of Reading , became the Lord Warden in 1934 , holding jovial family gatherings there . His wife , Stella , attempted to restore Wellington 's old bedroom to its earlier appearance during the Duke 's tenure and , as part of this project , the 4th Duke of Wellington agreed to send the original contents of the room back to the

castle , where they still remain . The politician Freeman Freeman @-@ Thomas , the Marquess of Willingdon , became Lord Warden in 1936 , followed by Sir Winston Churchill who followed him in 1941 during the Second World War . Churchill noted to the Minister of Works and Buildings that he had told King George V on taking up the position that he doubted that he would be able to live at Walmer Castle during the war , as it was within range of the German artillery along the French coast , or indeed that he would be able to afford to live there afterwards , and for that reason he hoped that the state would maintain the castle and gardens , and decide what use it should be put to after the war .

Sir Robert Menzies , the Australian politician , became the Lord Warden in 1965 and visited the castle on an annual basis , staying in the flat there . Elizabeth the Queen Mother followed Menzies in 1978 , initially visiting the castle from the Royal Yacht , but from 1986 onwards taking over the entire castle for three days each July . This required moving furniture , silverware and other furnishings from London and caused difficulties for English Heritage , who managed the property . The current Lord Warden , Admiral the Lord Boyce , took up his post in 2004 .

In the 21st century , the property is managed by English Heritage , attracting 77 @, @ 828 visitors in 2014 . English Heritage carried out a £ 674 @, @ 000 programme of improvements to the castle in 2015 intended to improve the visitor experience . The castle is protected under UK law as a scheduled monument , while the surrounding gardens are protected with a grade II listing .

= = Architecture = =

= = = Castle = = =

Walmer Castle retains most of its original 16th @-@ century structure , with a tall keep , 83 feet (25 m) across , at the centre , flanked by four rounded bastions , one of which served as a gatehouse , and a moat , surrounded in turn by a curtain wall . Its curved walls are 15 feet (4 @. @ 6 m) thick . It was nearly identical to its sister castle at Sandown and was approximately 167 by 167 feet (51 by 51 m) across , covering 0 @. @ 61 acres (0 @. @ 25 ha) . The historian John Hale considered the original castle to form a transitional design between older medieval English designs and newer Italian styles of defence .

The castle had three tiers of artillery ? the heaviest and longest range weapons occupying the upper levels , including the keep ? with a total of 39 firing positions , and 31 gunloops in the basement for handguns should close defence be required . The embrasures in the walls were all widely splayed to provide the maximum possible space for the guns to operate and traverse , and the interior of the castle was designed with vents to allow the smoke from its guns to escape .

From the 18th century onwards , the interior of the castle was converted to provide accommodation for the Lord Wardens , almost all of which is now open to visitors . The castle is still entered through the ground floor of the gatehouse in the western bastion , which contains the original porter 's lodge . In the middle of the castle is the keep , which originally housed the Servants ' Hall and now a set of tea rooms . In the southern bastion is a set of rooms which are reached through the Hall Room , originally built as gunners ' lodgings in the 18th century and converted into the entrance hall to the castle in the 1930s . On the far side of the bastion are the Sackville and Willingdon Rooms , built in the 18th century ; the Willingdon Room is now used as a museum for objects relating to William Pitt . The Lucas Room has been redecorated in a mid @-@ 19th century style and is used to present various items of Wellington memorabilia . The north and east bastions are filled in , providing solid foundations for the gun platforms above .

The second floor contains the Lord Warden 's private apartments in the west bastion and the western half of the keep . In the southern bastion is the Duke of Wellington 's Room and the Lucas Room , originally part of an apartment of rooms selected by William Pitt for his use , as they formed the warmest part of the castle . The corridor running across the castle through the keep was built by Pitt to link the north and south halves of the castle .

The Prince Consort 's and Queen Victoria 's rooms in the keep are named after their use during the

royal visit of 1842 , although their decoration today dates from the interwar period . The Dining Room , Drawing Room and Ante Room , which overlook the northern bastion , date from the 1730s , when the Duke of Dorset constructed them to form a private set of chambers . These rooms feature a range of pink and purple window glass , which tradition says was installed by the Earl of Liverpool to protect his wife 's eyesight ; recent analysis shows that some of the pink @-@ tinted glass dates from the 1730s , and discoloured naturally over time , while other panes were intentionally purchased around 1800 in these hues , but probably as status symbols and not for any medical purpose .

= = = Gardens = = =

The gardens of Walmer Castle date mainly from the 1790s and 1860s and comprise around 32 acres (13 ha) of land , split evenly between formal ornamental gardens and parkland . The main body of the gardens stretches away from the castle towards the north @-@ west , and is made up of protected , well @-@ drained , chalk @-@ based soil , forming a maritime microclimate .

The castle is approached through the castle meadow , an area of open parkland , lined with Holm oaks planted in the 1860s , and is surrounded by the dry moat , now a garden dating from at least the 1850s and planted with trees and shrubs . Adjacent to the castle are the Queen Mother 's Garden and the kitchen garden and glasshouses . The Queen Mother 's Garden was built by English Heritage as a 95th birthday gift for the then Lord Warden in 1997 , the site having been originally part of the wider kitchen gardens , before being turned into a tennis court in the 1920s . Designed by Penelope Hobhouse , the garden incorporates classical and Islamic themes , with a 92 @-@ foot @-@ long (28 m) pool , a viewing mound and a classical pavilion . The two glasshouses have been restored , functioning as cold greenhouses , while the remainder of the kitchen garden is planted with a mixture of vegetables , fruit trees and flowers .

The 262 @-@ foot @-@ long (80 m) Broadwalk is the main axis of the gardens and separates the glasshouses from the 328 @-@ foot @-@ long (100 m) Oval Lawn , planted with lime trees and yews . The Broadwalk is lined by the " Cloud Hedge " , a formal 19th @-@ century yew hedge that grew out of control in the Second World War and was left in its current , undulating style . Two terraces in the middle of the garden , designed by William Masters in an Italianate style , separate the further half of the garden . On the other side are the paddock , planted with Holm oaks , and a curved belt of woodland of beech , ash and chestnut trees , badly damaged in the storms of 1987 and 1990 . At the far end is the Glen , a woodland hollow formed from an old chalk quarry in the 19th century .