

= St Andrew 's Castle , Hamble =

St Andrew 's Castle was an artillery fort constructed by Henry VIII near Hamble @-@ le @-@ Rice , Hampshire , between 1542 and 1543 . It formed part of the King 's Device programme to protect against invasion from France and the Holy Roman Empire , and defended Southampton Water near the Solent . St Andrew 's comprised a keep and a gun platform , protected by a moat . The castle was decommissioned in 1642 during the English Civil War and has been largely destroyed through coastal erosion .

= = History = =

St Andrew 's 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 . Basic 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 then 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 .

St Andrew 's Castle was built to defend Southampton Water , a body of water which linked the Solent to the important port of Southampton . It was positioned by the shore , on what is now Hamble Common , to the south of the village of Hamble @-@ le @-@ Rice . It was located at one end of an old Iron Age ditch ? the area had previously been occupied during this period , when a promontory hillfort , Hamble Common Camp , was built just along the coast . Construction took place between 1542 and 1543 , but the fortification may not have been fully completed until after Henry 's death in 1547 .

The castle comprised a tall , square keep made from stone , with a semi @-@ circular gun platform on the seaward side , protected by a 25 @-@ metre @-@ wide (82 ft) moat and a wooden breakwater ; it would have been similar in design to the contemporary fortification of West Cowes Castle . A survey in 1559 reported that the castle was heavily armed , with its artillery comprising two iron culverins , an iron demi @-@ culverin , two iron sakers , two bases , an iron falcon , an iron falconet and a quarter sling . The lighter guns would probably have been placed on the roof of the keep , with two heavy weapons lower down and the remainder on the external gun platform . It also held handguns , bows and hand weapons for close defence .

William Paulet , later the Marquess of Winchester , was appointed as Keeper and Captain of the castle in 1547 , being paid £ 19 each year to perform the role ; his garrison included a master gunner , a porter and six soldiers . Paulet also controlled Netley Castle , just along the coast . By 1559 the garrison had decreased slightly , comprising a captain , two gunners and four soldiers .

The castle was still operational in 1623 , but it was decommissioned by Parliamentary forces in 1642 during the English Civil War . The site has been heavily affected by coastal erosion ? the local shoreline was retreating by 0 @-@ 5 metres (1 ft 8 in) a year during the 1990s ? and only a few parts of the masonry and earthworks can still be seen in the 21st century . The remains of the castle and the surrounding common land are protected under UK law as a scheduled monument .