

= St Mawes Castle =

St Mawes Castle ( Cornish : Kastel Lannvowshedh ) is an artillery fort constructed by Henry VIII near Falmouth , Cornwall , between 1540 and 1542 . It formed part of the King 's Device programme to protect against invasion from France and the Holy Roman Empire , and defended the Carrick Roads waterway at the mouth of the River Fal . The castle was built under the direction of Thomas Treffry to a clover leaf design , with a four @-@ storey central tower and three protruding , round bastions that formed gun platforms . It was initially armed with 19 artillery pieces , intended for use against enemy shipping , operating in partnership with its sister castle of Pendennis on the other side of the estuary . During the English Civil War , St Mawes was held by Royalist supporters of King Charles I , but surrendered to a Parliamentary army in 1646 in the final phase of the conflict .

The castle continued in use as a fort through the 18th and 19th centuries . In the early 1850s , fears of a fresh conflict with France , combined with changes in military technology , led to the redevelopment of the fortification . The out @-@ dated Henrician castle was turned into a barracks and substantial gun batteries were constructed beneath it , equipped with the latest naval artillery . In the 1880s and 1890s an electronically @-@ operated minefield was laid across the River Fal , operated from St Mawes and Pendennis , and new , quick @-@ firing guns were installed at St Mawes to support these defences . After 1905 , however , St Mawes ' guns were removed , and between 1920 and 1939 it was run by the state as a tourist attraction .

Brought back into service in the Second World War , naval artillery and an anti @-@ aircraft gun were installed at the castle to defend against the risk of German attack . With the end of the war , St Mawes again returned to use as a tourist attraction . In the 21st century , the castle is operated by English Heritage . The castle has elaborate , carved 16th @-@ century decorations including sea monsters and gargoyles , and the historian Paul Pattison has described the site as " arguably the most perfect survivor of all Henry 's forts " .

= = History = =

= = = 16th ? 17th centuries = = =

= = = = Construction = = = =

St Mawes 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 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 .

The stretch of water known as Carrick Roads at the mouth of the River Fal was an important anchorage serving shipping arriving from the Atlantic and the Mediterranean , and plans were made to protect it with five castles . In the event , only two of these were constructed , St Mawes and Pendennis , positioned on each side of Carrick Roads . The two castles ' guns could provide

overlapping fire across the water , while St Mawes also overlooked a separate anchorage on the eastern side of the estuary . The construction work began in 1540 , under the direction of Sir Thomas Treffy , a prominent member of the local gentry appointed to act as the project 's Clerk of Works by Lord Admiral Russell . By later that year , the castle was described as being " half @-@ made " , with most of the build having been finished by 1542 . The total cost of the project was £ 5 @, @ 018 .

The clover leaf shaped castle , with an additional small blockhouse at the water 's edge below , was armed with 19 artillery pieces - a demi @-@ cannon , a demi @-@ culverin , a demi @-@ sling , five slings , four portpieces and seven bases - along with 12 large hagbusshes , a form of arquebus . The artillery was originally mounted in the castle 's stone bastions and was intended as " ship @-@ sinking " weapons for use against enemy vessels . A smaller blockhouse was constructed beneath the main castle , at sea level ; this may have been constructed ahead of the main castle build as a form of early protection . Normally the castle would have held a small garrison , which would have been supplemented by the local militia in the event of a crisis ; St Mawes had 18 billhooks and 30 bows in its stores , probably for the use of the militia in such a situation .

= = = Initial operation = = =

Michael Vyvan , a member of the local gentry , was appointed as the first captain of St Mawes and the surrounding land in 1544 , and was followed by Hannibal Vyvyan in 1561 . On Vyvyan 's death in 1603 , his son , Sir Francis Vyvyan , became captain . The captains of St Mawes frequently argued with those of Pendennis Castle and in 1630 a legal dispute broke out about the rights to search and detain incoming shipping : both castles argued that they had a traditional right to do so . The Admiralty issued a compromise , proposing that the castles share the incoming traffic . Sir Francis was dismissed from office in 1632 , accused of " practising a variety of deceptions " at St Mawes , including falsely claiming wages for non @-@ existent members of the garrison , and was replaced by first Sir Robert Le Grys and then Thomas Howard , the Earl of Arundel and Surrey .

Meanwhile , the invasion threat from France passed and a lasting peace was made in 1558 , but the Spanish threat to the south @-@ west of England grew in importance to the government . War broke out in 1569 , with the threat of invasion and the garrison at St Mawes was strengthened : in 1578 it comprised 100 soldiers . An additional battery of guns was built to allow the fort to fire further upriver . Fears of a Spanish attack continued especially after the failed Armada of 1597 ; two earth and timber bastions were built out from the original stone castle to hold guns , eventually becoming the main batteries for the castle . By 1623 the castle held two brass culverins , six iron culverins , one demi @-@ culverin and one saker , with a small garrison of 14 men , overseen by a captain and a lieutenant . A survey in 1634 indicated structural problems , and suggested that £ 534 was needed for repairs .

= = = English Civil War and Restoration = = =

When civil war broke out in 1642 between King Charles I and Parliament , St Mawes and the south @-@ west of England was held by the Royalists . The growing town of Falmouth was a strategically important part of their supply routes to the Continent , while Carrick Roads formed a base for Royalist piracy in the English Channel . The war turned in favour of the Parliamentarians and , by March 1646 , Thomas Fairfax had entered Cornwall with a substantial army .

The captain of the castle , Major Hannibal Bonithon , was invited by Colonel John Arundell to retreat to the stronger fortress of Pendennis , but Bonithon and his men surrendered immediately without putting up resistance . This decision has been put down to a result of war @-@ weariness , the large numbers of Parliamentary troops facing them and the generous surrender terms on offer , although the 19th @-@ century historian Samuel Oliver also suspected that Bonithon might have had Parliamentary sympathies . 160 small arms and 13 artillery pieces were captured : the castle 's guns were removed and redeployed in the siege of Pendennis , which fell that August .

The castle was placed on a " care and maintenance " footing , with a skeleton garrison . Parliament

appointed George Kekewich as the new captain and he probably remained in post until the restoration of Charles II to the throne in 1660 , when Sir Richard Vyvyan , Sir Francis 's son , took over command . Richard inherited a garrison of 13 men , which he considered insufficient . Richard 's son , Sir Vyel Vyvyan , became captain in turn on his father 's death , but he had no heirs and separated the castle 's lands from the captaincy , selling them to John Granville , the Earl of Bath .

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

The castle continued in use as a fort through the 18th and 19th centuries under the command of successive captains , still operating in conjunction with Pendennis . A review by Colonel Christian Lilly in 1714 reported that the fortification was in a satisfactory condition , and in the 1730s , St Mawes was equipped with 17 artillery pieces , including six 24 @-@ pounder ( 11 kg ) cannons , mostly positioned in the batteries beneath the Henrician castle . Britain 's wars with France in the late @-@ 18th century made the defence of Falmouth critical and from 1775 until 1780 the local militia was called up to defend St Mawes . By the 1780s , the castle was equipped with over 30 pieces of heavy artillery . There were repeated concerns emerged about its ordnance , however , and an inspection in 1797 during the French Revolutionary Wars found that only one 24 @-@ pounder gun was serviceable .

In 1796 , a new gun battery was created at St Anthony Head , just along the coast from St Mawes . For a period this battery became the primary defensive position on the east side of the estuary , although in 1805 St Mawes was still armed with ten 24 @-@ pounder guns . The poet Lord Byron , visiting in 1809 , complained that St Mawes was " extremely well calculated for annoying every body except an enemy " , and commented that the fort was garrisoned by only one , elderly man . At the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 , the St Anthony 's battery was closed but St Mawes remained in use , albeit being operated once again on a " care and maintenance " basis in the post @-@ war years .

Falmouth Harbour became one of the most important ports in England during the 19th century , attracting much of the transatlantic shipping trade . The Tudor office of the captaincy was abolished in 1849 , with the death of the final incumbent , Sir George Nugent , and the command of the garrison became a regular military appointment . In the early 1850s , fears of a conflict with France led to a review of the state of the harbour 's defences . The development of ironclad warships equipped with rifled guns meant that St Mawes required a comprehensive overhaul . A new Grand Sea Battery and magazine was built beneath the Henrician castle , linked with deep passages , and equipped with eight 56 @-@ pound ( 25 kg ) and four 64 @-@ pounder ( 29 kg ) rifled muzzle loader guns . The old castle was used as a barracks but , since it could only hold 30 men , St Mawes was typically used as a training base and manned by militia and volunteer units .

Fresh concerns about France rose in the 1880s and an electronically @-@ operated minefield was laid across Carrick Roads in 1885 , jointly controlled from St Mawes and Pendennis . Additional contact mines were added , forcing incoming vessels to sail into a channel alongside St Mawes , illuminated with electric search lights . As part of this transformation , the castle 's 64 @-@ pounder guns were partially replaced with light , quick @-@ firing guns in the 1890s , able to engage any torpedo boats or mine sweepers attempting to break through the defences . The batteries for these were found to be poorly sited , and an additional battery was therefore built above the Henrician castle between 1900 and 1901 , again for housing quick @-@ firing guns .

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

A 1905 review of the Falmouth defences concluded that the naval artillery at St Mawes had become superfluous , as the necessary guns could be mounted at combination of Pendennis and the recently re @-@ established battery at St Anthony 's instead . Disarmed , St Mawes was then used as a barracks in the First World War . In 1920 the castle was transferred to the control of the government 's Office of Works , and was opened to visitors , being promoted as a tourist destination by the Great Western Railway company who hoped to profit by increased numbers of visitors to

Falmouth .

With the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 , St Mawes was reoccupied by the British Army . In late 1941 , the No 173 Coast Battery took over running a new , twin 6 @-@ pounder ( 2 @.@ 7 kg ) battery positioned just north @-@ west of the castle , combined with a 40 @-@ millimetre ( 1 @.@ 6 in ) Bofors gun closer to the castle for anti @-@ aircraft protection , and searchlights along the base of the Grand Sea Magazine . Some of the 115 @-@ strong garrison lived in a local Nissen hut , with the remainder housed in St Mawes itself .

The castle was removed from active service in January 1945 and reopened to the public the following year . The Second World War gun battery was finally closed in 1956 after several years of use as a training site . Between 1945 and 1970 , much of the Victorian earthwork and concrete defences were cleared from the Grand Sea Battery , and the 1941 battery was completely destroyed .

In the 21st century , St Mawes Castle is operated by English Heritage as a tourist attraction , receiving 21 @,@ 104 visitors in 2010 . It is protected under UK law as a Scheduled Monument .

= = Architecture = =

St Mawes Castle is situated on a headland over the Carrock Roads , overlooked by higher land to the rear . At the top of the site is the entrance to the castle , the high @-@ level gun batteries and the 16th @-@ century Henrician Castle ; the terraced site slopes down to the water , where gun batteries and the 16th @-@ century blockhouse look out across the water .

= = = Henrician castle = = =

The central castle is built from slatestone rubble , with granite features and detailing ; it has a clover leaf design with a central , four @-@ storey circular tower , or keep , at its core , and three circular bastions emerging from it . The design allowed for multiple levels of artillery , and may have been influenced by the contemporary work of the Moravian engineer , Stefan von Haschenperg , on some of the other Device Forts constructed during this period . It had little protection to the landward side , and would have depended upon the local militia providing protection against such an attack . The castle has been little altered since its original construction , and the historian Paul Pattison considers it to be " arguably the most perfect survivor of all Henry 's forts " .

The castle is extensively decorated with carvings and inscriptions in stone and wood , praising Henry VIII and his lineage , leading the historian A. L. Rowse to describe the castle as the most decorative of all of Henry 's building works . These include Latin verses , such as " Henry , thy honour and praises will remain forever " , written by the antiquarian John Leland , and " Let fortunate Cornwall rejoice that Edward is now her Duke " , referring to Henry 's eldest son and heir . Carved sea monsters and gargoyles also feature around the fortification , along with heraldic shields which would originally have been painted and visible from the river .

The castle is entered through the gatehouse , a polygonal , stone building approximately 25 feet ( 7 @.@ 6 m ) across . The gatehouse has gunloops , murder holes and slots for a drawbridge , although it is uncertain if one was ever fitted ; it would originally have formed a sort of protective barbican . The yard behind it is approximately 20 by 59 feet ( 6 by 18 m ) and dates from before 1735 , originally being used a stable . This leads to a stone bridge that crosses a 25 feet ( 7 @.@ 5 m ) wide moat , cut out of the rock , to the main castle .

The central tower is 47 feet ( 14 m ) across and 44 feet ( 13 m ) high , with 8 feet ( 2 @.@ 4 m ) thick walls . The basement was originally a kitchen and storerooms , with the first floor was subdivided and used by the garrison , before being later converted for storing gunpowder . The bridge across the moat leads into to the second storey , which originally had four chambers with fireplaces and windows , linked by a central corridor ; this area may have been used by the castle 's officers , and to house an enlarged garrison in an emergency . The third floor forms a single , large room with gun embrasures , and was probably used by the garrison as living accommodation . Above it , the parapetted gun platform on the fourth floor could support up to seven guns and

incorporates a lookout turret , topped by a 17th @-@ century cupola , designed as a daymark to guide passing ships .

The central tower is linked to the forward bastion , 59 feet ( 18 m ) in diameter , which in turn has steps leading to the side bastions , each 54 @-@ foot ( 16 @. @ 4 m ) across . Each of the bastions forms a gun platform , with embrasures for larger artillery pieces - five in the forward bastion , three on each of the sides - as well as swivel mounts for lighter guns , and parapets for protection . The forward bastion 's roof is modern and was added after an archaeological debate in the 1960s as to whether the bastions would originally have been covered . The bastions have various 18th- and 19th @-@ century artillery pieces on display , as well as a bronze saker dating from 1560 called the Albergheti gun , recovered from a shipwreck off the coast of Devon .

= = = Batteries and auxiliary buildings = = =

Gun batteries and other auxiliary buildings stretch across the St Mawes Castle site . Above the Henrician castle is the 12 @-@ pounder quick @-@ firing high @-@ level battery , dating from the start of the 20th century . Its four concrete platforms and earth parapets have survived , along with an underground magazine just behind the site . A small bungalow from this period at the entrance to the battery is still in use , serving as the English Heritage custodian 's house . Alongside the Henrician castle is the Engine House , approximately 41 feet ( 12 m ) square and dating from around 1902 . It originally contained an internal combustion engine , generating power for the castle 's searchlights , but was later converted into a storeroom .

Beneath the Henrician castle is a complex of artillery positions , cut out of the rock from around 1854 onwards , and collectively known as the Grand Sea Battery . The Grand Sea Battery was served by a 19th @-@ century magazine for holding gunpowder , approximately 35 by 18 feet ( 10 @. @ 7 by 5 @. @ 5 m ) with stone walls and bomb @-@ proof brick roof , topped with turf to help to protect against incoming shells . For many years the magazine was protected by an additional concrete fortification , but this was removed in 1970 . There are two gun platforms along the west and east sides of the complex , 110 feet ( 34 m ) and 80 feet ( 24 m ) across respectively and known as the Lower Gun Battery . The current design of the western platform dates from the 1890s , with two raised concrete platforms for rotating guns and a brick @-@ vaulted magazine just behind the battery . The eastern platform has pivots and racers for mounting four traversing gun carriages , one of which now houses a 12 @-@ pound smooth @-@ bore artillery piece dating from 1815 , mounted on a replica carriage .

Just below the Grand Sea Battery is the 16th @-@ century blockhouse , positioned by the water 's edge , 160 feet ( 49 m ) from the Henrician castle . The blockhouse is semi @-@ circular in shape , with 56 feet ( 17 m ) wide with 9 @. @ 8 @-@ foot ( 3 m ) thick stone walls facing the sea , but much thinner walls to the rear . It originally had four gunports , one of which has since been blocked up , along with an upper gun platform and battlements . The upper storey was later destroyed to turn it into a solid gun platform , although this has since been re @-@ excavated . Beside the blockhouse are the foundations of four searchlight emplacements dating from the Second World War .

To the west of the Grand Sea Battery are landscaped gardens , built on top of earlier gun positions along the site . Five 19th @-@ century smooth @-@ bore guns from the Napoleonic period are on display , forming a saluting battery . Beyond the gardens is the site of the Second World War 6 pounder battery , but little now remains of this position .