

= Sandown Castle , Isle of Wight =

Sandown Castle was a Device Fort built at Sandown on the Isle of Wight by Henry VIII in 1545 to protect against the threat of French attack . Constructed from stone with angular bastions , its design was a hybrid of Italian military architectural thinking with traditional English military design . The site was raided by a French force that summer while the fortification was still being constructed . The site suffered from coastal erosion and the castle was demolished in 1631 .

= = History = =

= = = 16th century = = =

= = = = Background = = = =

Sandown 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 small 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 then broke with Pope Paul III to annul the long @-@ standing marriage to his wife , Catherine of Aragon and remarry . This resulted in France and the Empire declaring an alliance against Henry in 1538 , and the Pope encouraging the two countries to attack England . Henry responded in 1539 by ordering , through an instruction called a " device " , the construction of fortifications along the most vulnerable parts of the coast . The immediate threat passed , but resurfaced in 1544 , with France threatening an invasion across the Channel , backed by her allies in Scotland . Henry therefore issued another device in 1544 to further improve the country 's defences , particularly along the south coast .

= = = = Construction = = = =

Built between April and September 1545 to protect the south @-@ east coast of the Isle of Wight , Sandown Castle overlooked Sandown Bay . It was constructed by the Italian engineer Giovanni Portinari , the surveyor William Ridgeway and the captain of labourers , John Portinar , at a cost of £ 2 @, @ 400 . Designed around a central courtyard , it had a square tower and two angular bastions on one side , and a circular bastion looking out to sea . The rear of the stone defences was protected by a moat , and the castle had a wooden pier for boats to dock at .

The angular bastions echoed contemporary Italian thinking on military architecture , and may have been influenced by Richard Lee , the King 's Surveyor of Works , as well as by Portinari 's own continental background . Despite being relatively advanced for an English fortification , the castle did not feature the more fashionable Italianate " arrow @-@ head " bastion design used at nearby Yarmouth Castle and has been critiqued by historians : Andrew Saunders describes it as an imperfect " hybrid " of English and continental ideas , John Hale as a timid , confused flirtation with modern designs .

Before the castle could be completed , however , the French attacked . Admiral Claude d 'Annebault crossed the Channel and arrived off the Solent with 200 ships on 19 July , where the local authorities feared Sandown Castle might be the target of a night attack . 2 @, @ 000 French soldiers men landed on the Isle of Wight and attacked Sandown , where labourers were still present . Their advance soon stalled , however , and the French retreated back to their fleet , bringing the

invasion threat to an end ; the castle was finally completed after their departure .

= = = 17th century = = =

By the 17th century , coastal erosion had undermined the castle 's walls . In 1627 , Charles I announced that he would repair the fortification but instead the ruins were dismantled in 1631 by Sir John Oglander . A new fortification , Sandown Fort was built in its place , positioned further inland , but the possible remains of the foundations of the original castle are still visible along the shore at low tide .