Sandgate Castle

1539 - 1950

HISTORICAL NOTES

by

P. J. F.

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The Castle has been opened to the public under the auspices of the Sandgate Improvement and Publicity Association through the kind co-operation of the owner, W. A. Workman, Esq., and it is hoped that visitors will be interested by a visit to this historic building.

Sandgate Castle

After the dissolution of the English monasteries and his quarrel with the Pope, King Henry VIII was expecting an invasion of England by the combined forces of France and Spain. He accordingly ordered the building of forts or castles along the South coast, and on March the 30th, 1539, work was started on the Castle at Sandgate. Thomas Cockes and Richard Keyes were appointed Commissioners to supervise the building operations and Steven von Hassenperg was appointed the "Devizer" or Engineer and Master of the Works. The latter was a Moravian, or what would now be called a Czech, and was employed in a similar capacity at Deal, Walmer and Sandown Castles and at Carlisle. Nearly 850 men were employed on the building, and as there were not sufficient masons available, Thomas Busshe, the Clerk of the Ledger, was empowered to press or enlist masons from Somerset and Gloucestershire. He obtained 54 men in this way in June, 1539, and 71 more in March, 1540. A further indication of the urgency of the task is shown by the powers conferred on Reynold Scott, who had succeeded Cockes as Commissioner, and Keyes—"to take and retain in the King's name as many free masons, carpenters, etc., etc., and other artificers, laberers, as they shall think requisite for the completion of the King's Works, and as much stone, timber, and other material as they shall require, with carriage for same; and also to take up horses at Gravesend, Rochester, Syttynborne, Canterbury, or elsewhere, at the usual prices, with power to imprison those who refuse such assistance without bail or main price during their pleasure." This order was dated 12th February, 1540, and in June of that year 900 men were employed on the Castle.

The accommodation of such a large labour force must have been a great problem. Only one house is known to have existed at Sandgate at that time, apart from one or two farms at some distance from the shore, and Hythe and Folkestone were very small towns then. The problem seems to have been solved by using tents or "pavillions" and the erection of a few huts or "lodges" which were temporary structures thatched with bracken. The one house referred to was hired from William Jenkin and was used as an office and was known as "the King's pay house." It is believed to have stood on the site of the Fleur de Lis Inn.

The materials were locally quarried stone and timber from the neighbourhood, but a certain amount of previously worked stone was used from the recently dissolved monasteries of St. Radegund's, Bradsole, Christ Church, Canterbury, Monk's Horton and other local religious houses. Lead and other materials were also obtained from the same source.

The work was finally finished on October the 2nd, 1540 at a total cost of £5,543 19s. 2¾d., a tremendous amount for those days. The two Commissioners were duly rewarded for completing the building in such good time, Reynold Scott with a knighthood and Richard Keyes with the appointment of first Captain of the Castle. In March of the following year the Castles, including Sandgate, were visited by King Henry VIII, and on May the 2nd, 1542, the King again visited the Castle where he dined and received the Mayor of Folkestone and others interested in the building of Folkestone Harbour.

In 1558 Thomas Keyes, the son of the first Captain, held the same office in addition to that of Sergeant Porter to Queen Elizabeth and in 1565 he secretly married the Lady Mary Grey, the sister of

Lady Jane, the unfortunate Nine Days Queen, and cousin to Queen Elizabeth. The secret was not kept long and Keyes was imprisoned in the Fleet Prison and the Lady Mary was placed in "protective custody" at various country houses and finally at Chequers in Buckinghamshire. Keyes was later released but not permitted to return to Court, and he apparently resumed his duties at Sandgate for he wrote from here on May the 7th, 1570, for permission to live with his wife. His petition was unsuccessful and he died in September, 1571, possibly at Sandgate Castle. The other figure in this unhappy love story, the Lady Mary, was then released, but she died in 1578, aged 33.

On August the 25th, 1573, Queen Elizabeth dined and rested at the Castle during her progress from Westenhanger to Dover. Throughout the rest of the Queen's reign the Captain of the Castle was John Warde (1574-1602), who had served in practically all the wars of the last three reigns and was "Mayster of the Camp" of the forces under Sir Thomas Scott at the time of the Spanish Armada.

In 1617 occurred the first recorded damage caused to the Castle by the sea, and in 1627 and 1638 it was reported that the Castle was in a bad state of disrepair, but it was apparently repaired shortly after this and during the Commonwealth the garrison was strengthened, and the Captain, Richard Hippisley, was removed because of his Royalist sympathies and was replaced by Laurence Knott. At the Restoration in 1660 the strength of the Garrison was reduced and Thomas Allin was appointed Captain. He was an Admiral in the Dutch Wars, commanded an English fleet in the Mediterranean against the pirates of Algiers, was Comptroller of the Navy, and a friend and colleague of Pepys.

From this date until the Napoleonic Wars the Castle has little history save for the appointment of Captains and Lieutenants and the visits of the Duke of Cumberland in 1756 and the Duke of Gloucester in 1767. In 1803 the Duke of York, the Commander-in-Chief, William Pitt, the Lord Warden, and Sir John Moore, Commanding the troops at Shorncliffe, visited the Castle on a tour of inspection of the defences of South-east England, and in January, 1805, a plan for modernising the Castle was prepared by Brig.-General Twiss. The alterations to the Castle were a part of the general plan for the defence of Southern England against invasion, which also included building Martello Towers from Folkestone to Hastings, digging the Royal Military Canal from Seabrook to Appledore, and building batteries at various points, including Battery Point, Sandgate. The work at Sandgate Castle included removal of the upper storey of the Keep Tower, the destruction of the three existing towers, with the exception of their basements, and the filling in of the moat. New guns were put into position and the Castle was ready for use by August the 20th, 1805. However, on October the 5th following, the French fleet was destroyed at Trafalgar and the Grand Army withdrew from Boulogne. The threat of invasion was over and Sandgate Castle had been altered in vain. However, the Castle continued to be garrisoned intermittently, and during the Crimean War was used temporarily as a prison while the British German Legion was encamped at Shorncliffe. In 1859 when it was thought there was a possibility of a war with France, new guns were provided, but the Castle was only used by the Sandgate Artillery Volunteers for gun drill and occasional practice shoots.

In 1866, 1875 and 1877 the Castle was badly damaged by the sea, and in 1881 it was sold by the War Office to the South Eastern

and Chatham Railway, who at that time intended to build a railway line through Sandgate to Folkestone Harbour. However, this plan did not materialise and on August the 22nd, 1893, the Castle was opened to the public under the auspices of the original Sandgate Improvement and Publicity Association. This body did not have a very long life, but the Castle was kept open as a place of public interest and a small private museum was maintained in the Porter's lodge until the 'twenties when the Castle was closed and the contents of the museum dispersed.

During the first German War the Castle was used as an air-raid shelter and was temporarily occupied by the Royal Field Artillery in April, 1915. In 1927 the Castle was seriously damaged by the sea and was sold by the Southern Railway and later passed into the hands of the owner of the adjoining house, Castle Close.

In the second German War the Castle was again used as an air-raid shelter and as a guard post by the Home Guard, and anti-aircraft guns were manned in the Castle. A "pill box" was built on the Southern Bastion and its weight materially contributed to the damage caused by the sea since the war.

The Castle was badly damaged in January, 1949, and again in October and November, and the remains of the Southern Bastion were finally destroyed in February of this year.

The Castle now consists of a central keep-tower, which was reduced in height in 1805, and the basement stories of the North-Eastern and North-Western Towers. The entrance to the basement of the Southern Tower can still be seen, but all that part of the Castle is in ruins. The grass-covered platform was formerly the moat and was filled at the alteration of the Castle, but the "half

moon" or gate-house tower is in practically the same condition as when it was built. Visitors will also notice a fine Tudor fireplace in the Keep, and the spiral staircases to the roof and to the basement which are also original. The shell of the Keep is as it was built by Steven von Hassenperg, although the outer wall has been re-faced. A print showing the Castle in 1735 is to be found in the Sandgate branch library, and some other views of the Castle can be seen at the Folkestone Museum on Grace Hill. (Further details of the history of the Castle can be found in Archæologia Cantiana, Vols. XX and XXI).

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Archaeological Investigations at Sandgate Castle, Kent, 1976-9

By EDWARD C. HARRIS

SUMMARY: *As a part of the restoration of Sandgate Castle, near Folkestone, Kent, archaeological work traced the remains of three major periods of construction. The Castle was built in 1539-40 as an element in Henry VIII's design for the defence of the English Coast. This paper gives the archaeological evidence for the Tudor castle, its alteration during the Napoleonic Wars into a 'glorified Martello Tower', and further alterations in 1859. An attempt is made to give a view of the fort after its construction in 1540 and its refurbishment in 1808.*

INTRODUCTION

Under the supervision and with the assistance of the Department of the Environment, the restoration of Sandgate Castle was begun in 1975 by the owners, Drs. P. and B. McGregor. Archaeological investigations were a necessary adjunct to the restoration and there were three aspects to that research. Many areas of the site had to be cleared of debris which was often a metre deep. Limited excavations were then sometimes made in those areas and the various features recorded. At the same time, detailed drawings were made of the upstanding remains of the Castle: the majority of this record is found in this paper. Finally, a major excavation took place in the eastern part of the site, its object being to recover the Tudor features of the NE bastion and battery buried under several metres of building rubble. The project is now complete. Its success is due to the constant encouragement of the D.o.E. through its Inspector, Jonathan Coad, the enthusiasm of the owners, and the hard work of Junior Leaders and a small group of loyal friends and volunteers.[1]

In this paper, I have attempted to give the evidence of the remains of Sandgate Castle mainly by illustrations from drawings made at the site. The artefacts from the excavations will be available for study at the Castle when it is open to the public in several years. There are two late seventeenth-century collections of pottery from the chamber under the Gatehouse and the Tudor cesspool and a further collection of 19th-century objects from other areas of the site. The finds are of little importance in the dating of the structural periods of the site, to which aspects this paper is addressed.

In most areas, the monumental features divide into the two major periods of construction of 1539-40 and 1805-8. There are occasionally structures which probably date to 1859. A short history of the site is given. This is followed by discussions of various parts of the site, beginning with the present Gatehouse and ending with the Keep. A view is then given of the Tudor fort and of the great Martello tower into which it was later transformed.

A BRIEF HISTORY

Sandgate Castle was constructed in 1539-40 by King Henry VIII in response to threats of invasion by a continental alliance[2] and it was an important link in 'the first coastal defence on a national scale since the Saxon Shore forts'[3]. As W. L. Rutton suggested, the purpose of the fort was to guard the 'gate' to the Kentish hinterland at the beachhead a few miles west of Folkestone (FIG. 1).[4] During later defence works of the Napoleonic era, the original Keep was rebuilt and the outer works were debased to form a continuous esplanade for a series of gun emplacements (FIG. 2). Sandgate Castle became, in O'Neil's words, a glorified Martello Tower.[5] The phrase is fitting, not only because of the extra armament placed at the fort, but also for the attention which was paid to its rebuilding. The builders in 1805-8 made excellent use of the existing stonework and the Keep, in particular, conforms to the Tudor arrangement in some respects. It was thus an exception to the usual Martello patterns, as recently expounded.[6] In the rearmament of the late 1850s,[7] a new magazine was built between the Gatehouse and the Keep and alterations were made to the existing gun emplacements.

Alterations at the hand of nature were often made and the Castle was breached prior to 1725 (FIG. 1) and in the 1870s.[8] The seaward portion shown in Plate I was irreparably undermined in 1928 and further erosion before the building of the seawall in the early 1950s accounts for the loss of a third of the original monument.

In 1881, the site was sold to the South-Eastern Railway Company for a proposed station at Sandgate Village. By 1893, it passed into private ownership and was occasionally open with its museum to the public.[9] The present restoration should soon be completed and the future visitor will be able to see for himself the features which are now discussed.

THE GATEHOUSE (PL. II)

The present Gatehouse was originally known as the 'Half Moon', the Tudor gatehouse being a northern extension of the Keep. The Castle was always (as it is today) entered through the ground floor of the Half Moon, 'not as might be expected in its front side to the north, but in the rear of the semicircle, and as it were round the corner'.[10] (FIGS. 3 and 4). The building was thought to have survived in its Tudor form,[11] but may now be shown to have been almost entirely rebuilt from first floor level in 1806. Thus the first floor doorway, fireplace, window and vaulted ceiling (FIG. 3) are of the later period.

The ground floor is however original and three gunports exist in its north

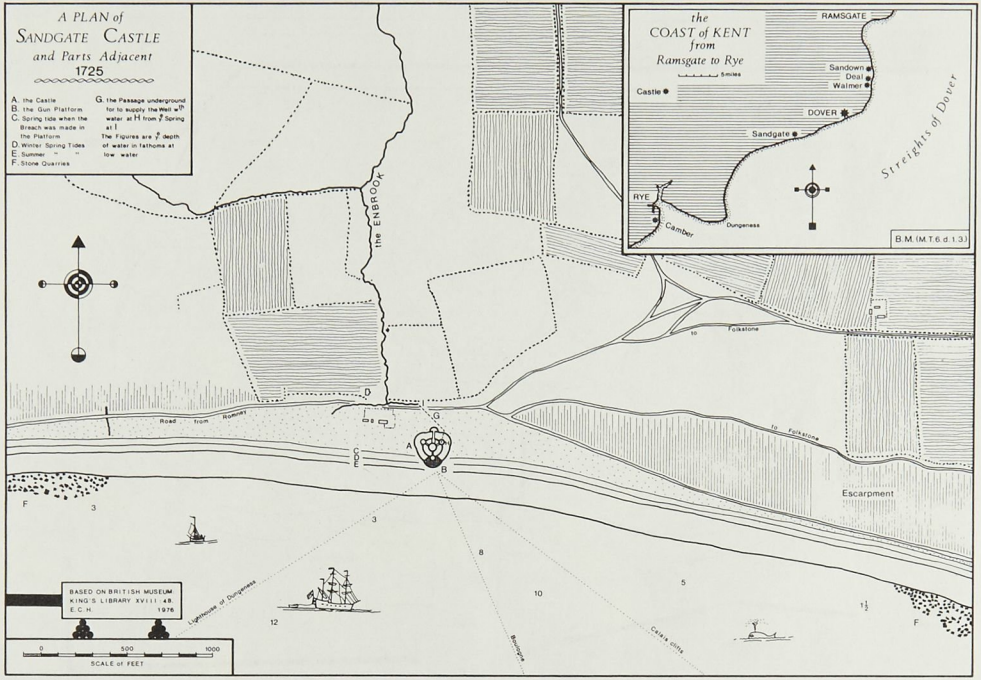


FIG. 1
A plan showing the location of Sandgate Castle, drawn from documents in the King's Library, British Museum.

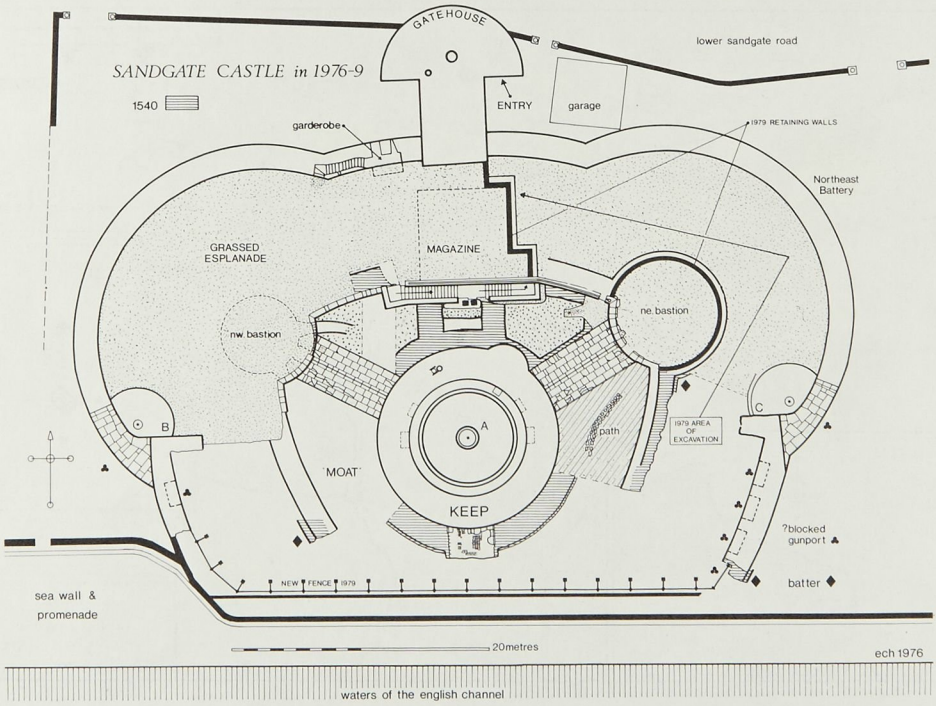


FIG. 2
The site as it exists today, showing areas of excavations and the general arrangement of the Castle.

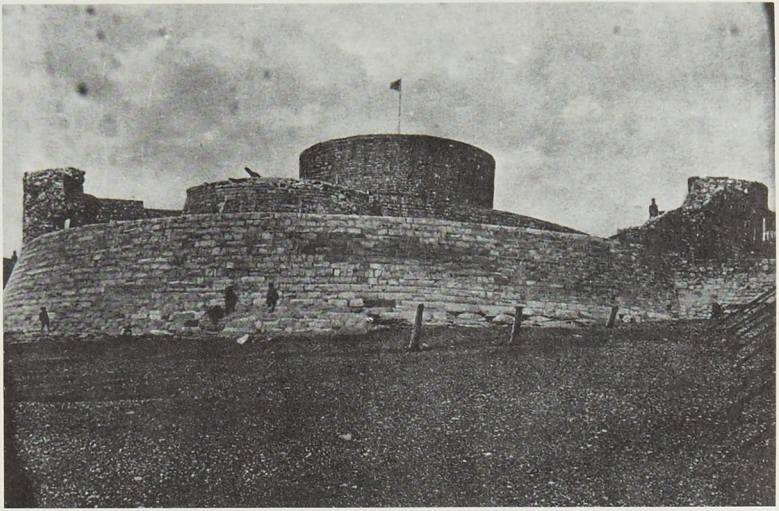


PLATE I
A late nineteenth-century view of Sandgate Castle from the shoreline. Source: Anonymous.

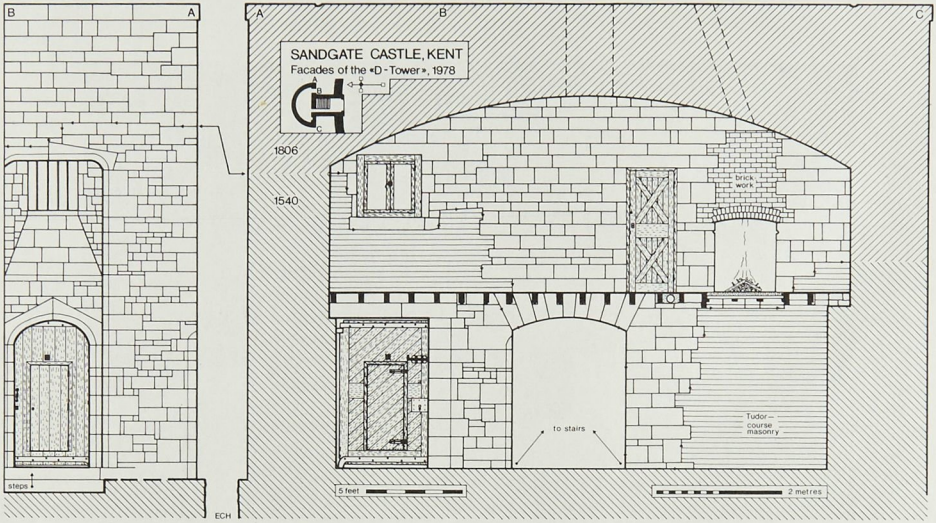


FIG. 3
Two elevations of the Half Moon, that on the left is an exterior view of the main entry, on the right is a record of the face of the southern wall of the building. The wicket door postdates the work of 1806.

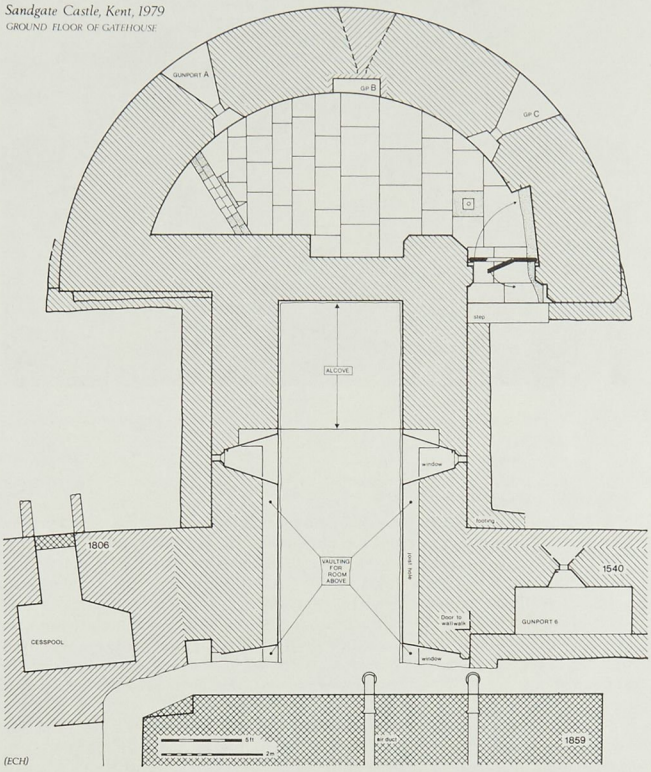


FIG. 4
A plan of the Half Moon and present Gatehouse, with some details of the adjoining Outer Curtain Wall and the 1859 Magazine.

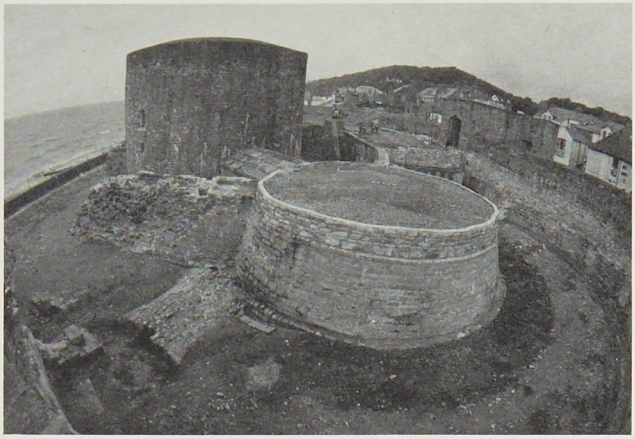


PLATE II
A general view of Sandgate Castle in 1979 taken from the wall of the NE Battery, looking westwards. Photo: D. Cunliffe.

wall, the central one being blocked (FIG. 4). These gunports were complemented by two more on the floor above (FIG. 5).

The rest of the Castle was reached by a flight of steps in the wide corridor which forms the southern part of the Gatehouse. The present steps and the gangway to the first floor of the Half Moon (FIG. 5) belong to the Napoleonic period, the original steps, by contrast, spanned the full width of the corridor (see Booth plan, FIG. 21). The present steps also override the eastern recess for the 'falling door' (FIG. 6), identified by Rutton from the ledger of the building accounts for the work of 1539-40.[12] The western recess for this trap door has been destroyed, but the lower hinge-pin for the door itself was found below the floor of the gangway (FIGS. 5 and 7). Above the recess areas, the fabric is of the later period (FIGS. 7A and C).

To the south of the recesses, the gatehouse was entirely rebuilt in 1806. The result was a first floor level which is about 50 cm. higher than in Tudor times and the creation of a small strong-room before the esplanade. This room is 2.2 m. square and appears to have had two doors, the southern of which remains (FIGS. 5 and 8). The sockets for the upper hinges of the northern door are also *in situ* (FIGS. 6 and 7). The vaulting of the ceiling for this room is set apart from that of the remainder of the corridor. In addition, the floor of the room is founded upon stone vaulting which springs from the reused joist-holes of the Tudor period (FIG.

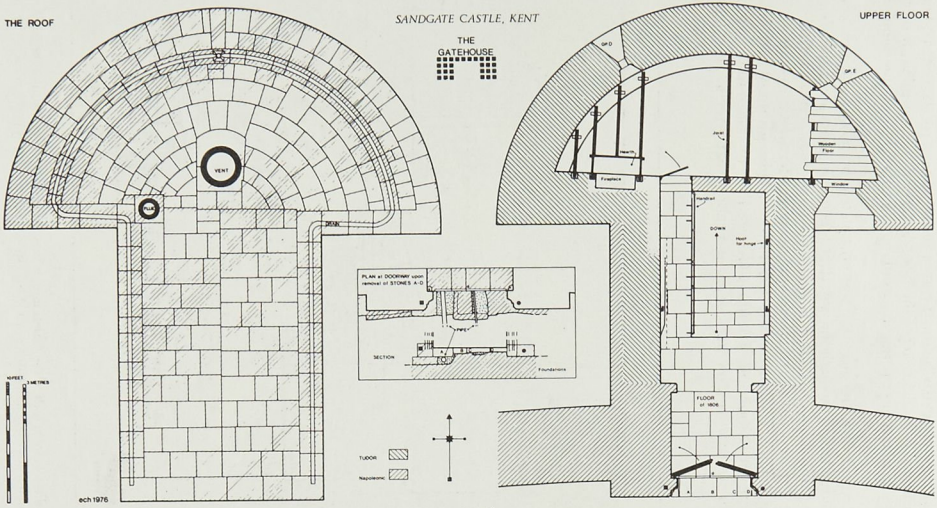


FIG. 5
A plan of the Half Moon and Gatehouse at first floor level and another of its roof which was drained by a gully incised in the stonework.

8). This vaulting only exists below the area of the strong-room (FIG. 4); between the room and the top of the steps, the floor is carried on a simple raft of rubble masonry, itself placed upon the accumulated stratification of the room below (FIG. 7B).

This room below the corridor was completely unknown and unsuspected, but is of Tudor fabric throughout. Whatever its original purpose, the room saw little service and was slowly filled with mainly horizontal deposits. Three layers (FIG. 7B, 81, 87 and 89) were replete with roofing tiles which may attest to the decay of the original roofing on two occasions, the latest group of tiles probably deriving from the demolition of 1805. A George I penny (1721) found on the sill of the north-western window may be an indication that layer 87 was deposited before that date.

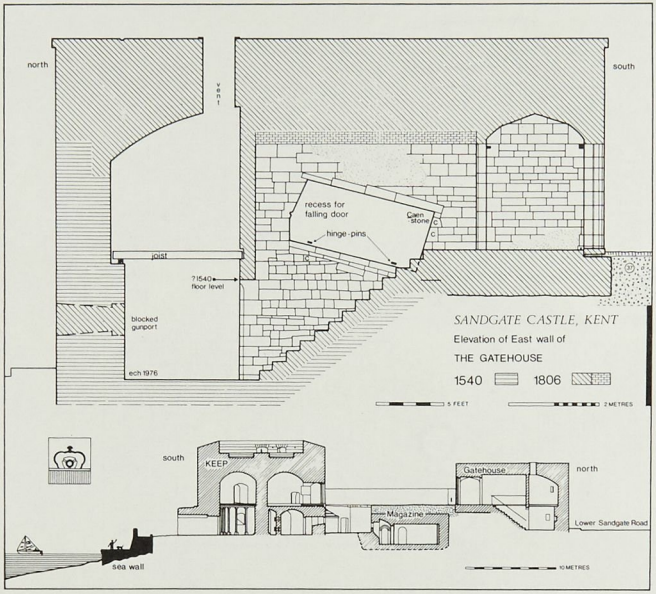
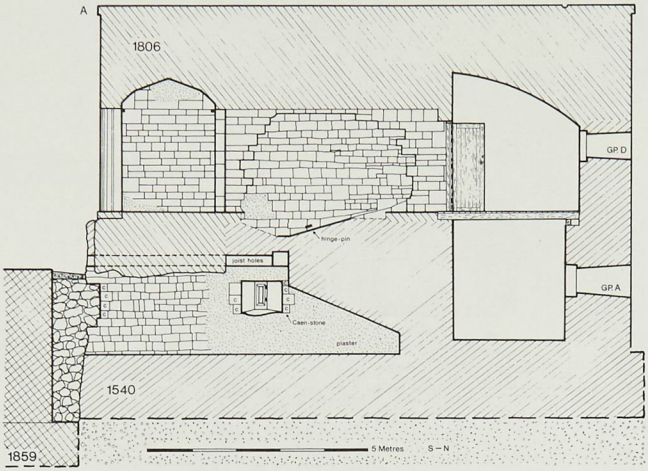


FIG. 6
An elevation of the eastern wall of the Gatehouse, with a general elevation through the whole Castle on a N/S axis, the latter being drawn from a D.o.E. survey carried out by permission of the owners.



SANDGATE CASTLE, KENT, 1979

A. elevation of west wall of gatehouse
B. cross-section of gatehouse, s—n
C. ditto, w—e (ech)

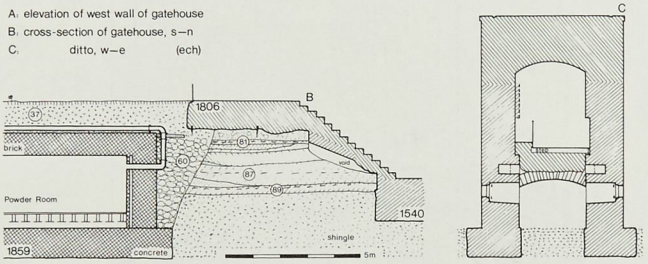


FIG. 7

Complementing Figure 6, this gives an elevation of the western interior wall face of the Gatehouse, a cross-section of the Tudor room below and a transverse view of that room and the Gatehouse above.

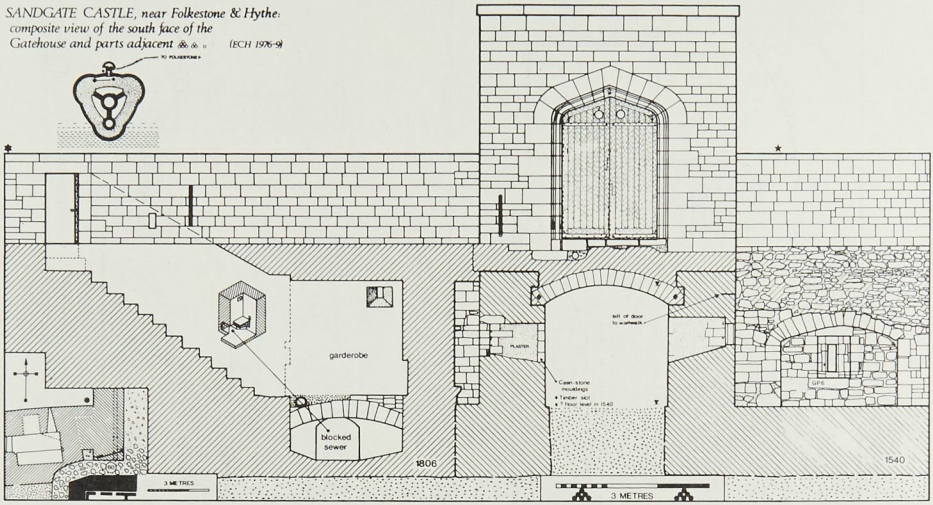


FIG. 8

This diagram is partly an elevation of the southern exterior of the Gatehouse and adjoining features of the Outer Curtain Wall and a cross-section through both structures.

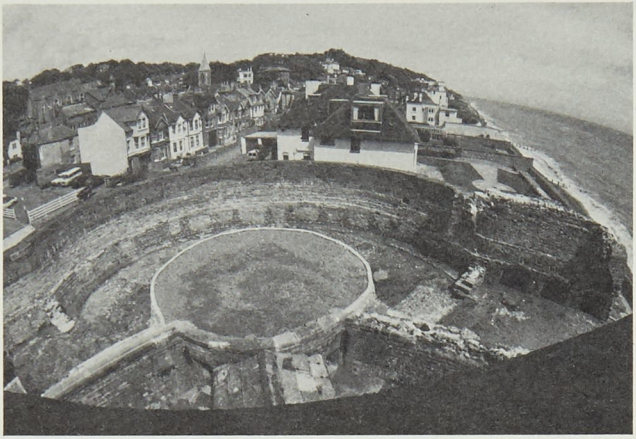


PLATE III
Another view of Sandgate Castle after the excavations in 1979, looking in the opposite direction to Pl. II. Photo: D. Cunliffe.

plan of 1834 (FIG. 22), but was mistakenly projected into a more eastern position below the Gatehouse.

The esplanade of 1806 was made by infilling the space between the original curtain walls with demolition rubble. It formed a continuous parade around the Castle and also functioned as a platform for a battery of at least eight guns, oriented towards the sea. Two of these emplacements survived the depredations of the sea (FIG. 9). The yellow sandstone of these emplacements is the same as that of the later arrangement on the roof of the Keep. The stonework of gun emplacements B and C may thus date to 1859, but the footings on which they rest appear to be of Napoleonic date. Emplacement C was examined in detail and its dimensions shown in Figure 14.

The Tudor remains of the Outer Curtain Wall were revealed after the removal of the eastern half of the surviving esplanade. They can be recounted by working one's way eastwards from the Gatehouse. Firstly, there is the door to the wallwalk above the ground floor gunports from the first floor of the Gatehouse (FIGS. 8 and 10). The wallwalk could also be reached by stairs at the re-entrant angles of the NE Battery (FIGS. 11 and 12).

Between the NE Battery and the Gatehouse there are two gunports for handguns (FIGS. 4, 8, 10 and 11). These were blocked at discovery, but in the case of

Three structural aspects of this room are of interest. It contained four windows, two of which opened to the exterior of the Castle and the others into the Outer Ward. The latter were to the south and were cut in half by the construction trench of the 1859 magazine (FIG. 4); the former, to the north, were blocked prior to the 1720s. The mouldings of the northern windows were intact behind the blockings (FIG. 7A) and the windows have been brought back in service.

The northern part of this room forms an alcove (FIGS. 4 and 7). It has a vaulted ceiling which supports the flight of stairs from the ground floor of the Half Moon. This alcove and the rest of the room appears to have been finished in a thin, white plaster. The quoins of the windows and the mouldings of the southern windows are made of Caen-stone. The vaulting of the alcove and the mouldings of the northern windows are Kentish Rag. The Caen-stone came from dissolved priories such as Monks Horton and Rutton presumed it was 'doubtless used in the jambs, lintels, parapets and embrasures, and wherever the easily-worked freestone was preferable to the obdurate "Kentish Rag" '.[13] As the example from this room may indicate, the use of the Caen-stone does not form a consistent pattern. The Kentish Rag was obtained from nearby outcrops (FIG. 1).

Above the windows is found the third structural feature, the joist-holes or beam-slots. There are two types, shown on Figures 4, 7 and 8. The first run down the length of the walls. The second extend into the walls at the northern ends of the longitudinal slots. This point marks the beginning of the alcove (FIG. 7C) and presumably the southern end of the original flight of steps from the ground floor of the half moon. The southern limit of the recesses for the Tudor falling door also coincides with this line (FIG. 7A). The longitudinal slot would probably have carried the joists for the original floor of the corridor, while a larger transverse beam was placed in the northern slots in some arrangement connected with the falling trap door above the original stairs.

THE OUTER CURTAIN WALL (PL. III)

The Outer Curtain Wall was largely rebuilt in 1806. The exterior face of the wall was almost entirely refaced, as was the interior face from the level of the esplanade (FIGS. 8 and 10). Below this interior, ashlared face, the wall was rebuilt in rough masonry which occupies the space of the original wallwalk above the ground level gunports of the Tudor Period (FIGS. 8 and 10). Two major features of 1806 are associated with the new wall, namely the garderobe and the gun emplacements.

Between the NW Battery and the Gatehouse, the Outer Curtain Wall was entirely remade to house a garderobe within its thickness. This facility was entered by a flight of stairs from the first floor level of the esplanade (FIG. 8). It appears to be commodious enough to have had three seats, presumably of wood and situated above a small flagstoned cesspool. As originally designed, this cesspool drained through the Curtain Wall by a stone sewer, eventually blocked. Later drainage pipes passed above the cesspool and were probably fed from temporary toilets on the esplanade. The garderobe is recorded in an Ordnance

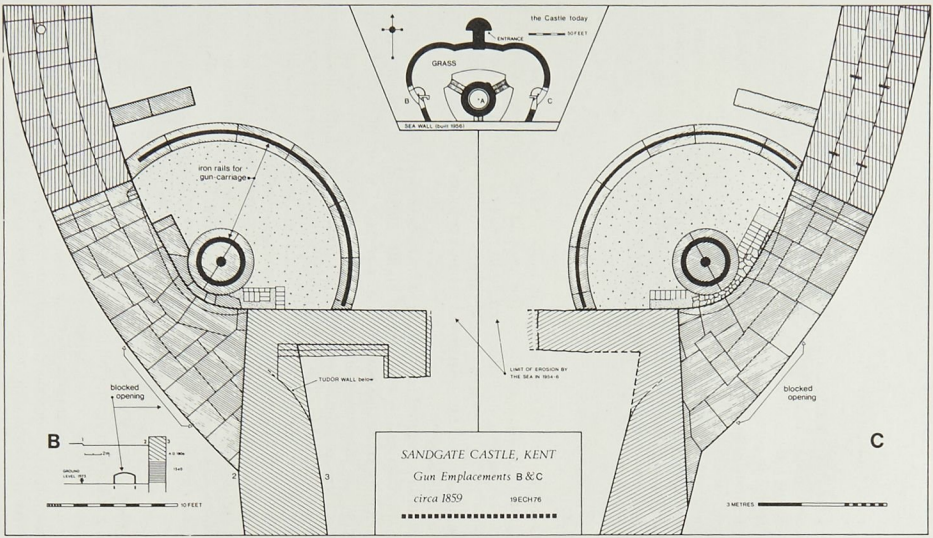


FIG. 9
The plans of the two remaining gun emplacements of 1806 placed upon the esplanade at first floor level.

Gunport 6 it was possible to remove a part of the blocking. The unblocking of Gunports 10 and 11 in the NE Battery showed, by contrast, that the eight gunports of this battery were for cannon. These gunports were separated one from another by shot-lockers, that between Gunports 10 and 11 being unblocked in 1979.

There were three batteries in the original design of Sandgate Castle, as seen in a 16th-century drawing of the site.[14] In the north, the batteries were connected by the Gatehouse and its flanking walls. The two northern batteries were attached to the seaward one by two arms of the Outer Curtain Wall. A portion of the eastern arm survives with a series of four arched openings which appear to be shot-lockers. Their spacing would allow for seven such features in each arm of the wall as originally built. It was not possible to fully investigate these features in the recent work, but they are probably gunports, now partially blocked, rather than lockers. Their shape may be an indication that they are for hand-guns, rather than cannon, as they are akin to Gunports 6 and 7.

THE OUTER WARD

The Outer Ward between the curtain walls was reached from the Gatehouse by way of the wallwalk. Conversely, this ground floor level from which were operated the cannons of the batteries could be reached through a door in the NE bastion (FIG. 13).[15] The area would appear to have been simply grassed throughout, except for the underground chamber found next to the southern re-entrant of the NE Battery.

This chamber, vaulted in stone, appears to have been the main cesspool for the Castle. It contained several feet of undifferentiated soil and an interesting group of artefacts, to be discussed in a later article. The chamber was fed by two main sewers, one probably coming from the garderobe in the Keep (FIG. 21, Upper Floor plan) and the other, which is a vertical shute in the thickness of the Inner Curtain Wall, taking the waste from the presumed kitchen located in the Inner Ward next to the NE Bastion at first floor level (FIGS. 11 and 12). The bottom of the chamber is shingle which served as a soakaway. Provision however was made for cleaning out the cesspool, for which task several steps and a small doorway were provided in the eastern wall of the chamber. It may be assumed that this entry was kept open by a timbered man-hole of which all trace has vanished. This cesspool and the facilities which it served are all Tudor.

THE INNER CURTAIN WALL AND THE INNER WARD

During the constructions of 1805-8, the Inner Curtain Wall was reduced to first floor level. Enough of its eastern and western arms survive to indicate that there were no gunports at these points at ground level. The northern flanks of the wall which existed between the original gatehouse and the two northern bastions were however provided with one gunport each (FIG. 11). These were operated

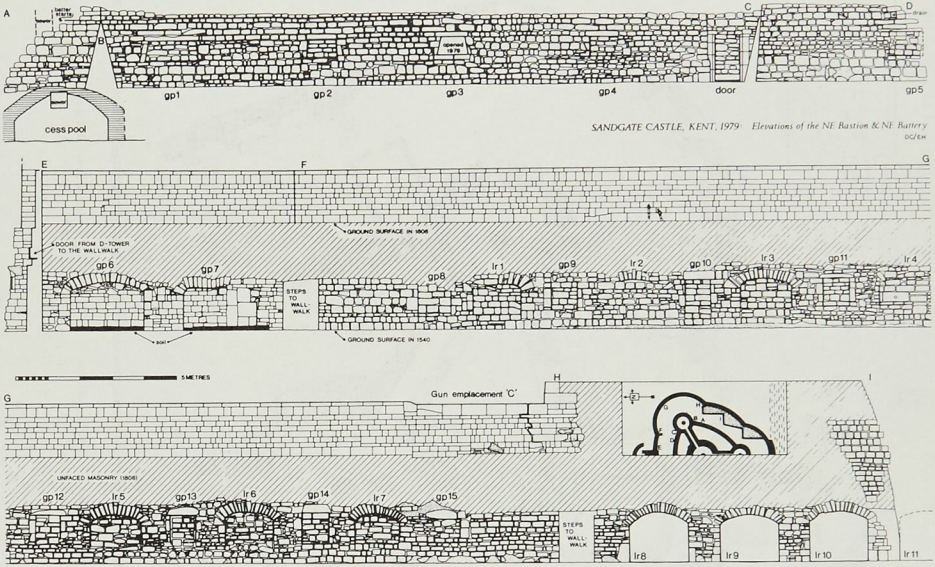


FIG. 10
Two elevations; the upper is of the exterior face of the NE Bastion and portions of the Inner Curtain Wall, the lower drawing being of the southern face of the NE Battery.

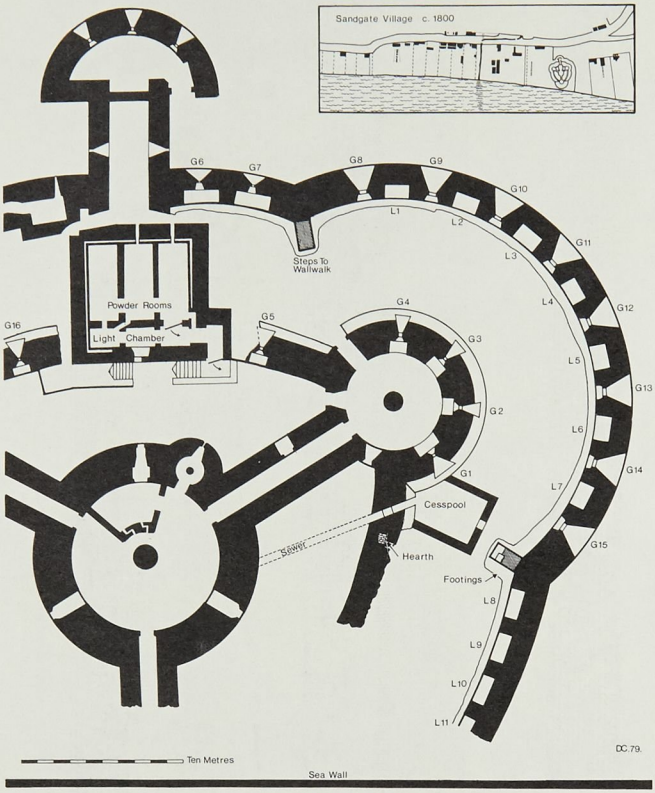


FIG. 11

A plan of the north-eastern part of Sandgate Castle showing features of several different dates. Lockers 8-11 are probably blocked gunports. The plan of 1800 is taken from a survey found in the archives at the Folkestone Library.

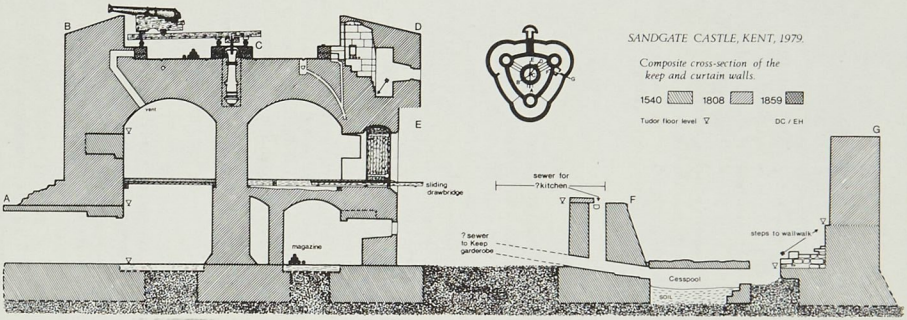


FIG. 12
This is a composite cross-section of Sandgate Castle. The gun and its carriage are a reconstruction; the shape of the sunken cannon is partly conjectural.

from the ground floor rooms to either side of the original gatehouse (see FIG. 21) and were for hand-guns (FIG. 13).

As suggested on the Booth plan (FIG. 21), the Inner Ward was composed of two rooms in its northern segment. To the west and east, however, it appears that the whole ground story was infilled with soil. From this surface, cannon could be deployed from the Inner Curtain wall, as indicated in the Booth perspective.[16] Such gunports are perhaps mistakenly shown one story too high on Booth's 'Upper Floor Plan' (FIG. 21). If for the Booth plan, one substitutes a wallwalk and parapet embrasures on the curtain wall at this penultimate level, the arrangement of these arms of the wall makes more sense. The Inner Curtain Wall connected the three small bastions which are a distinctive feature of the design of the Tudor castle. On the north, it connected bastions to the original gatehouse. That part of the gatehouse in the Inner Ward was destroyed in 1805, while the remainder in the Outer Ward was removed with the construction of the 1859 magazine.

THE 1859 MAGAZINE

As this large building does not appear on the Ordnance plan of 1834 (FIG. 22), it may be dated to the rearmament of 1859.[17] The magazine was built upon a raft of concrete which extended some 50 cm. beyond the exterior faces of its walls (FIG. 7). This flange formed the bottom of the construction trench which was then infilled with large boulders. These rocks were capped by a layer of concrete which abutted the magazine at roof level, the whole arrangement serving to keep dampness away from the sides of the building.

Internally, further care was lavished on the building in an attempt to keep it dry. The walls were set on a damp-proof course of asphalting and a cavity or air pocket runs around the entire length of the interior walls (FIG. 11). The floor joists were carried on sill beams which set the planking about 50 cm. above the concrete footing. The flooring was of softwood and was joined by copper nails.

There were three similar powder rooms which were served by three lights in the light chamber to the south. The magazine was entered down a flight of stairs from the ground level of the Inner Ward. The construction throughout is brick, rendered on the exterior and there also covered with bitumen on the roof.

THE NORTHEAST BASTION

The NE Bastion was also reduced to first floor level in 1806 and was capped with a vaulted dome carried on a brick pier (FIGS. 13 and 14). In the 1806 plan, the only access to this room was by the corridor from the Keep. The door which now leads into the 'moat' of the Inner Ward is modern and was a window in 1806 (see plan, FIG. 22). These alterations blocked the Tudor features of the bastion at ground level. There were four gunports and a doorway into the Outer Ward at that date (FIG. 10). Gunport 3 (FIG. 11) was unblocked externally and the shape of the feature was thereby determined.

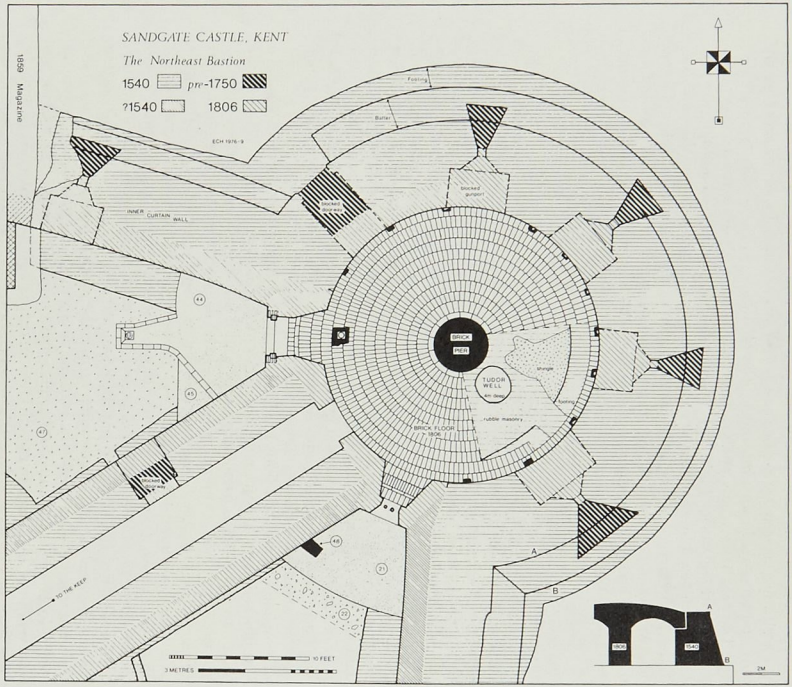


FIG. 13
This is a plan of the ground floor of the NE Bastion, the NE corridor to the Keep and the connecting arms of the Inner Curtain Wall.

Below the present floor of the bastion was discovered the original well, shown on the Booth plan. It is a stone-lined feature, about 4 m. deep, with a shingle base. It was apparently fed by a conduit from a nearby stream, the Enbrook (FIG. 1), but no evidence of such a channel or piping has been found. The well must have been cleaned just before it went out of use, for it contained only building rubble, an adze, and a cannonball.

The NE Bastion was always connected to the Keep by a covered corridor, originally three stories high. This passageway was reduced to a single story in 1806 and covered by a flagstoned roof. Access was also gained from this corridor, in the Tudor period, to the northeastern room of the Inner Ward. This blocked doorway was discovered during reconstructional work in 1979 (FIG. 13). Unlike the other known Tudor doorways, it is finely built in red brick, rather than the more usual Caen-stone.

THE KEEP

This building is O'Neil's glorified Martello Tower and in comparison to its namesakes, it is both handsome in style and different in character. It originally contained three stories, plus the roof level; today it has two and the roof. Unlike the other Martello Towers, Sandgate was built in stone. Unlike the other towers, which were ovoid with inner and outer circles of their walls struck eccentrically,[18] the Keep at Sandgate is a true circle and conforms with its original shape and position. The walls also rise as a straight cylinder, in contrast to the 'upturned flower-pot' shape of other Martello Towers.[19] In addition, much of the original Tudor fabric remains, particularly on the interior wall of the Keep (FIG. 15). All four of the original doorways at ground level survive, although the northern one has been partially altered into a window (FIG. 16). These doors have jambs composed entirely of Caen-stone.

At the original first floor level (50 cm. below that of 1806), can also be seen the blocked doorways into the corridors to the bastions (FIG. 15). That to the southern bastion was partly unblocked and it was found that the door hung on the eastern side of the entry, its hinge-pin being *in situ* (FIG. 17). The outer limits of the original window boxes were also traced, being somewhat larger than their successors. Evidence for the doorway into the southern apartment, at second floor level above the corridors to the bastion, was also found on the interior wall of the Keep (FIG. 15). A cordon of grey stone, unlike any other seen at the Castle, also appears to have run around the edge of the first floor. Where this cordon passed the windows, it became a step up into the window boxes.

Elsewhere in the Keep, the features conform to the plan for the ordinary Martello Tower. At ground floor level, a small magazine was erected in brick and was ventilated by a shaft in the thickness of the wall of the Keep (FIGS. 16 and 17). The floor at this level is oak, below which next to the newel stair is found the soakaway for the drainage of the roof (FIG. 16). From this level rises the central pier which supports the roof and its gun emplacement (FIG. 12).

The first floor conforms only in part to the general pattern. In other towers,

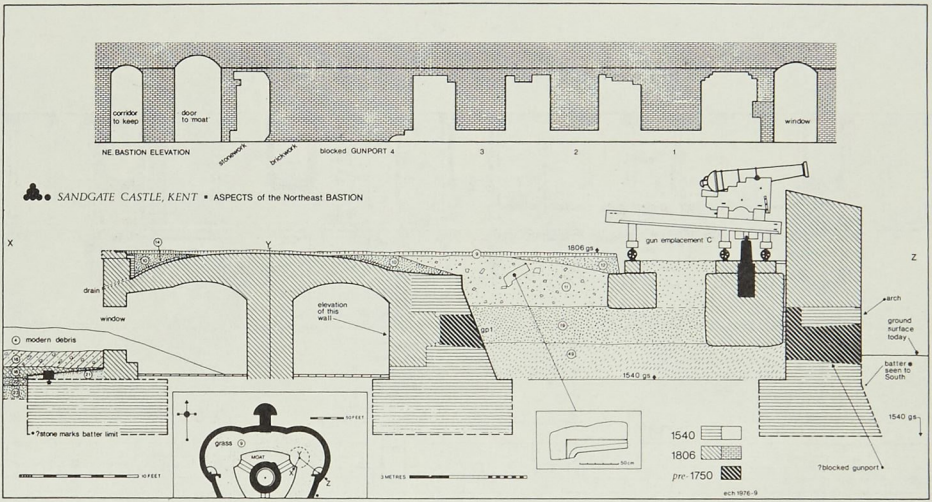


FIG. 14

The upper diagram is an elevation of the interior wall face of the NE Bastion, showing the blocked gunports. The lower drawing is a cross-section through the Bastion and the Outer Ward, infilled in 1806 from the surface of Layer 49, and the Outer Curtain Wall: gun and carriage reconstructed based upon example from Tower No. 24 at Dymchurch, a few miles from Sandgate.

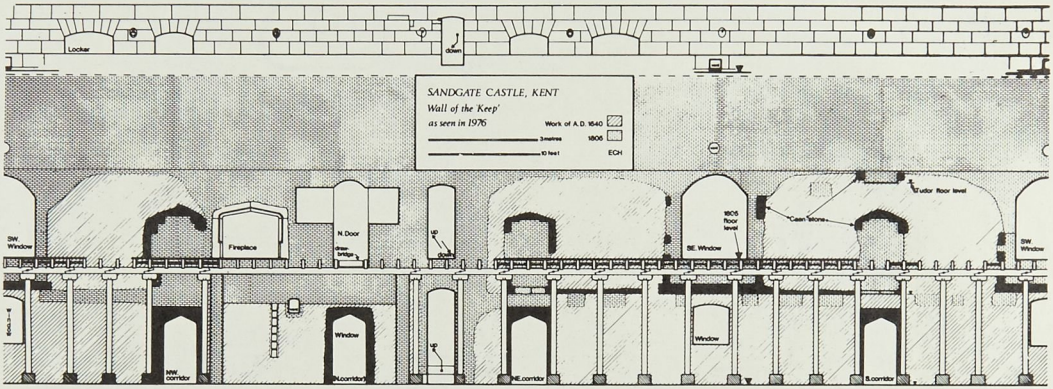


FIG. 15
An elevation of the interior wall face of the Keep and the parapet above.

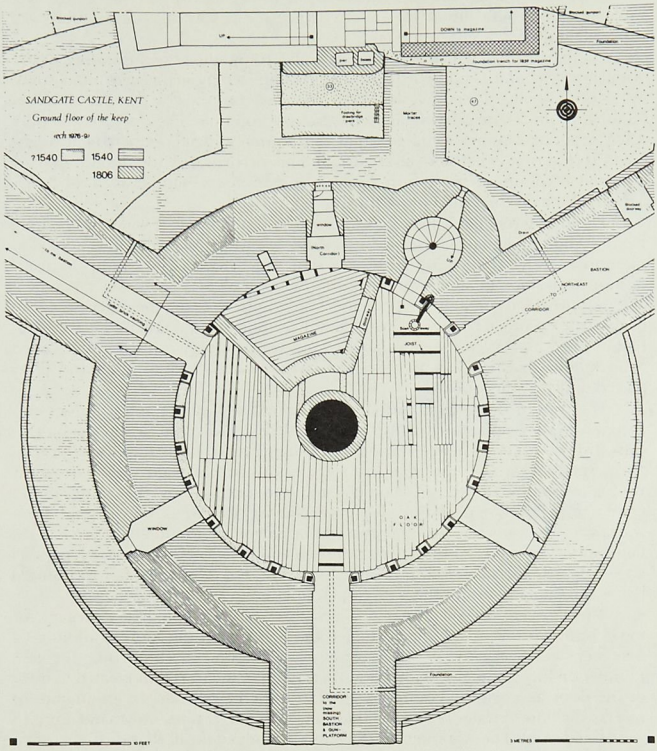


FIG. 16
A plan of the ground floor level of the Keep and the northern part of the Inner Ward, which was a moat in the scheme of 1806.

the floor joists were supported by stone corbels,[20] as may be seen today at Tower No. 24 at Dymchurch. At Sandgate, the joists are carried on circular sill-beams which themselves are supported by a series of oak columns. All of these features at Sandgate are made from English Oak. The need for a trap door leading by a ladder to the ground floor does not arise at Sandgate as the circular staircase, although entirely rebuilt, connects all levels of the Keep.

Another feature which may be particular to Sandgate is the sliding drawbridge (FIGS. 12 and 17). This bridge could be retracted by a cogwheel into a space below the flooring; it ran on a series of bronze casters placed on its sides as well as on the bottom. These casters themselves ran on iron rails. The bridge could only reach about halfway across the moat, at which point it met a permanent arrangement, shown on the plan of 1834 (FIG. 22). This permanent structure was carried on wooden columns which sat on two masonry footings built between the foundations of the original gatehouse (FIG. 16).

The first floor had a fire-place in 1806, the surround of which was reused from a Tudor original. It also had two windows, which may also have served as gunports. Above these windows was a vent which had its escape in the usual fashion at roof level,[21] as shown in Figures 12, 15 and 18. A window arrangement at the drawbridge entry allowed one to let in light by opening the outer door, but drafts were excluded by the closing of an inner door which was glazed in its upper half. The room was further insulated by a layer of mortar, which Frank Green (who kindly analysed a sample) suggests was made of animal dung and lime, placed under the floorboards.

The roof of the Keep is entirely a 19th-century structure and it housed two successive gun emplacements. In the original design of 1806, it was possible to walk directly from the newel stair on to the flagstoned roof. Before the door (FIG. 18), a small drain took the water from the doorway. Elsewhere, the floor of the roof is incised by a drainage channel leading to three sumps, the northernmost conducting the water into lead piping whence it fell to the ground floor soakaway. The rails for the 1806 gun emplacement are found at the level of the flagstones. The centre rail has been removed and the space, along with a parallel series of small circular holes, was filled with mortar. The outer rail was buried below the foundations for the later emplacement.

This later emplacement may be dated to 1859 and through its disregard for the existing arrangement, it confounded the drainage of the roof. In addition, a new step was necessary at the doorway to allow one to climb over the new foundation for the outer rail for the gun-carriage. A well was thus created in front of the door and water constantly seeped into the newel stair. In an attempt to reverse the flow of water before the door, the original features shown in Figure 18 were uncovered. The workmen of 1859 also set the outer rail slightly higher than the existing edge of the wallwalk and many drainage channels were subsequently cut through their stonework to stop water accumulating behind the stonework of the rail. Both this problem and that associated with the doorway to the roof seems to have occurred also at the Dymchurch Tower. At the same time, the stonework for this newer outer rail blocked the escape for the vents from the

windows below. These vents had little wooden doors at the roof level, the decaying remains of which were found in position. Finally, the emplacement of 1859 also caused drainage problems around the central pivot of the gun carriage, and during the restoration work carried out there, it was discovered that the central iron pivot was in fact imbedded in the mouth of a cannon (FIG. 12). The flagstone floor of the roof originally surrounded this cannon which thus protruded about a foot above the floor: it is this view which was recorded in the survey of 1834 (FIG. 22).

Such are some of the details of Sandgate Castle as found during the recent

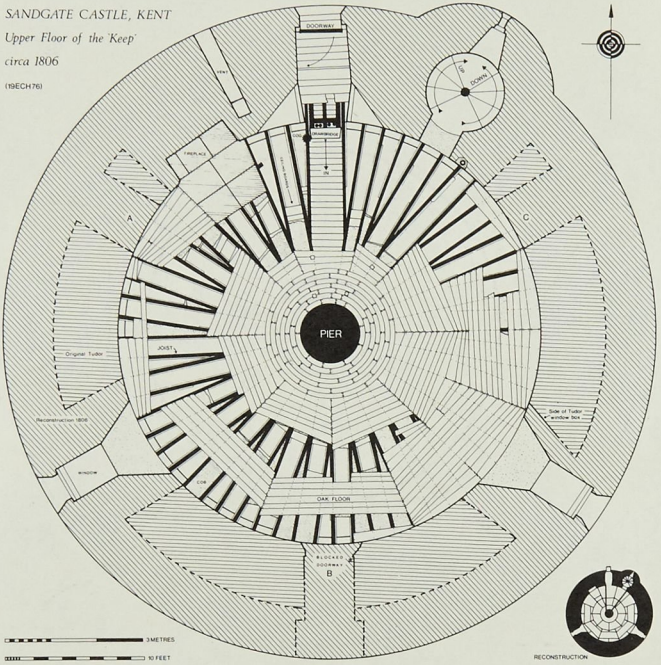


FIG. 17
A plan of the first floor of the Keep and a cross-section of its wall at that level.

restoration and archaeological investigations. It may now be of interest to attempt to see the fort in a more general setting and to place it within an historical context.

THE TUDOR FORT (FIGS. 19-21; PLS. II and III)

Sandgate Castle was built in less than two years and the building accounts for its construction in 1539-40 survive in a British Museum manuscript.[22] Some indication of the wealth of detail in the ledger can be found in Rutton's paper on the Castle,[23] in which much of the information is summarized.

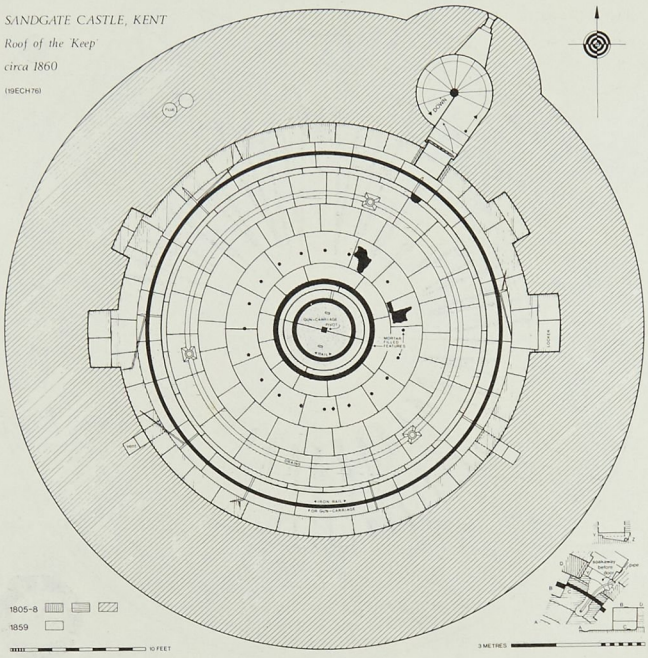


FIG. 18

A plan of the roof of the Keep, with a detail of the two periods of gun rail next to the doorway from the circular stair.

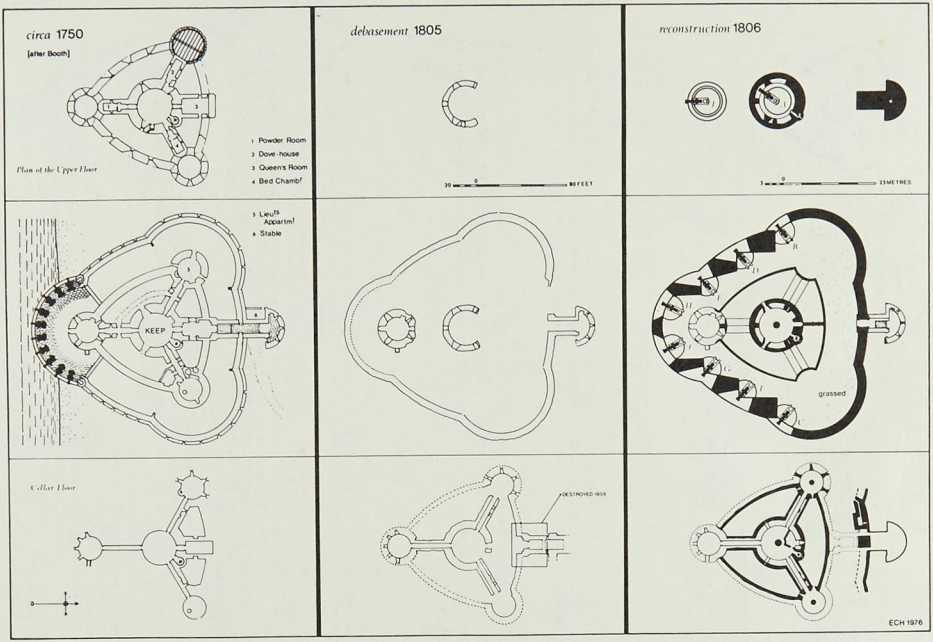


FIG. 21

The series of plans *c.* 1750 are taken from an original in the Kent County Record Office (K.A.O. U486); the central plans show the debasement of the Castle based upon archaeological evidence; the final set of plans is an impression of the arrangement of the site in 1806.

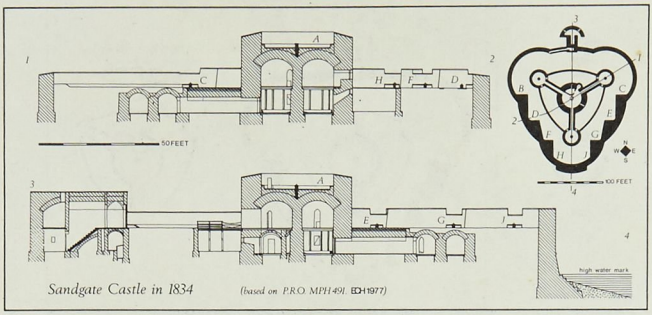


FIG. 22

These diagrams are a faithful reproduction of an Ordnance survey of 1834 in the Public Record Office. Note that all of the pivots for the gun emplacements were assumed to be embedded in old cannon: this appears in fact to only be true of the emplacement on the roof of the Keep.

also built under the esplanade to the south of the Gatehouse. At both these later periods, the function of Sandgate Castle was unchanged from the time of its conception, namely, to guard the gate at the sands against the landing of an invading army.

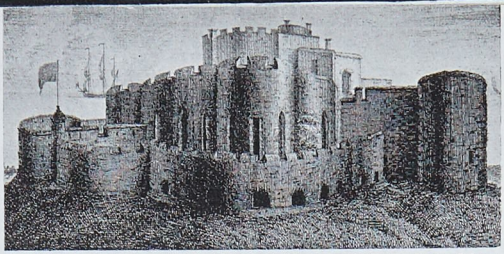
[1] I am grateful to the Department of the Environment for their support of the excavations and for making a general survey of the site which assisted in the making of more detailed archaeological records. Jonathan Coad and Mr. D. Willey of the Department were a source of advice and encouragement throughout the work. The labour of excavation and clearance was undertaken by the men of the Junior Leaders Regiment, Royal Engineers, Old Park Barracks, Dover and latterly by a group from the Shorncliffe Camp under the direction of Major B. Hodgson. Their involvement in this work was instigated by Mr. R. Benson and Major S. Jardine, RE, and took place with the encouragement of Commanding Officers, Lt. Col. D. J. R. Cook, RE, and Lt. Col. J. N. Blashford Snell, MBE, RE. The success of the project came from the assistance of Major C. Hastings, MBE, RE, Major P. Heier, RE, Lt. T. Anslow and Sgts D. A. Leishman, D. Malley, M. Grimshaw and their colleagues.

The machine excavations were carried out by Jenner Plant Hire (Folkestone) and their driver, R. Godden. The spoil was removed to the Hythe Ranges by courtesy of the authorities. The following friends were indispensable to the project: C. Carmichael, G. Priestley Bell, S. Garfi and Wayne Poon. Particular thanks are due to the volunteers in 1979. Simon Hayfield kindly made Figures 19, 20 and 23, and Deborah Cunliffe drew a number of the other illustrations. I am greatly indebted to the owners, Peter and Barbara McGregor and their family for their abiding interest and hospitality and to the Priestley Bells of Hawks Hill Farm for many hospitable evenings.

This paper was originally submitted in its greater part in 1976, but its publication was unfortunately delayed. It has therefore not been possible to revise Figures 19 and 20 and my apologies are due to S. Hayfield for the delay in the publication of his work through circumstances beyond my control.

The restoration of Sandgate Castle which has revealed many features of archaeological interest has been assisted by the Kent County Council and the Department of the Environment.

Particular thanks are due to Professor M. Biddle for allowing me to read his typescript on Sandgate Castle prepared for *The History of the King's Works*.



Buck's view of Sandgate Castle, 1735 [*From a print in the Public Library*

SANDGATE CASTLE

UNTIL the building of the Castle, Sandgate had stood outside the liberty of Folkestone, but as it presented an uninhabited and accessible landing place, responsibility for its defence and for the upkeep of the warning beacon there was shared between Folkestone and neighbouring villages. When Henry VIII decided to build in 1539, he used stone from the dissolved priory. The Castle was built on much the same plan as Camber and Walmer—a circular central tower surrounded by semi-circular bastions. As soon as built, it was garrisoned under the charge of a Captain and Lieutenant. One of the first Captains, appointed 1546, was Thomas Keyes, who disgraced himself by marrying Elizabeth's cousin Lady Mary Grey and was imprisoned for life in his own castle.

In 1616 the place was in need of repair. In 1618 the whole garrison was declared to be deficient in duty. That year there was a terrible quarrel about sittings in Folkestone Parish Church. A note in the Register declares a certain pew reserved for ever for the Captain's Household. In 1623 the "proudly conceited" Mr. Harris, Gunner and underporter, kept scholars in the Castle, acted disrespectfully and neglected his duties by allowing passengers to go unexamined. These may have been smugglers of Jesuits. A recusant had been caught in 1620 and Seminary priests were suspected of waiting in disguise at Dieppe ready to cross. Mr. Harris was also suspected of stealing old iron which he sold to Thomas Haines the blacksmith. In 1625 the Castle was still in bad repair with no ordnance; the next year money was set aside for it but probably never spent as in 1627 it was reported as being neither habitable nor defensible. In 1635, the estimate for repairs was £610 but by 1638 nothing had been done and no munitions had been sent since 1629. When Cromwell came to power a new garrison was sent, the monthly cost, exclusive of clothes, arms and equipment was £36 17s. 4d. The Captain's salary was £40 a year. Charles II reduced the Garrison but the place once again needed repair; £200 was allotted and the rest was to be raised from wool seized from smugglers. A Garrison continued there till the Nineteenth Century and a Martello Tower was built in the middle of it. It was rapidly falling a prey to the sea, but it may be saved from complete destruction by the new sea wall completed in 1953.

Defence of his realm

England had a weak navy and only a few coastline fortresses when Henry VIII came to the throne in 1509. The turnaround was fast and furious

WORDS **NIGEL JONES**

Our image of Henry VIII is often contradictory: once a great sportsman and later obese; a great statesman equally admired and feared; a builder of palaces but a destroyer of monasteries.

Henry was also, arguably, the father of the Royal Navy. In addition, he was responsible for constructing a huge chain of coastal forts, known as 'the Device', along England's southern coast. Many of these fantastic edifices survive to this day in the care of English Heritage.

When Henry succeeded his father Henry VII in 1509, England's defences were in a sorry state. Henry VII was a notorious miser, reluctant to spend money on anything, and he left his son a 'navy' consisting of just seven vessels, only five of those seaworthy warships. Young Henry lost no time in improving matters. By 1512, the year of the Battle of Brest in which his new navy beat a French fleet off the Brittany coast, it already numbered a score of warships laid down on the new king's orders, including the first *Mary Rose* (a 600-ton vessel, the predecessor of the later ship sunk in 1545, raised in 1982 and now on display in Portsmouth) and the 450-ton *Peter Pomegranate*.

Above top Deal Castle, Kent **Above** King Henry VIII **Below** The 24-foot long cannon, 'Queen Elizabeth's Pocket Pistol', at Dover Castle was presented to Henry VIII by the Count of Buren in the Netherlands

Henry took a great interest in maritime matters, frequently visiting his dockyards at Portsmouth and Deptford to inspect progress on the ships he had commissioned. He delighted in wearing a gaudy Admiral's uniform, consisting of a tunic of gold brocade reaching down to his thighs, breeches of cloth of gold and scarlet stockings. The ensemble was finished off with a metre-long gold bosun's whistle, encrusted with jewels, which the king wore round his neck and 'blew near as loud as a trumpet or clarinet', according to one witness.

Bring out the big guns

Henry's pride and joy was the four-masted 1,000-ton flagship of his fleet, named in his own honour, *The Great Harry*. Costing a hefty £10,000, she was the largest warship yet built in England, and revolutionary in design, constructed as a gun platform around its 180-plus cannon, which were arranged on seven decks. The biggest guns were brass breech-loaders, 2.5m long and firing a stone or iron ball weighing 2.7kg. Medieval warships had been light vessels, with a couple of cannon mounted on the top decks. The *Great Harry*'s 38,000 kilograms of ordnance, by contrast, were fired through portholes cut below decks and, although shipboard hand-to-hand fighting remained the primary purpose of engagement, broadside armament fired at the last minute before boarding the enemy ship became a powerful card.

By the end of Henry's reign in 1547, his navy had, like its creator, swelled in size; it totalled no fewer than 106 ships. But Henry's defence of his realm was not confined to the 'wooden walls' of his fleet. His more permanent memorial, in solid stone and brick, is the chain of coastal forts he commanded to be built to defend England's southern coast against the perennial threat of a cross-Channel invasion. That threat was a real one. During the Hundred Years' War with France, which ▸

2

A terrace of six three-storey houses in poor condition, with steps from the first-floor front doors over the gardens to the pavement. Unknown location. AA064166

3

Shoppers at a street market, almost certainly in Camden, although the exact location is unknown. There is a Courage and Barclay brewer's sign in the background. AA065264

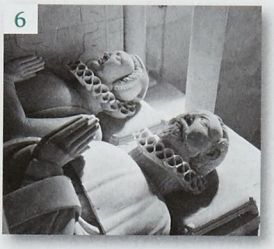
4

Holiday-makers seated in deckchairs, under a covered promenade supported by a colonnade of a modern design, with a pier in the background. AA086643

5

A type K6 telephone kiosk near a road, opposite a row of stone rubble cottages in Dorset, probably in Sherborne. AA091624

6



An unidentified 16th-century tomb in Devon, depicting a man and a woman in period dress in recumbent positions. AA087291

7

An unidentified stone bridge over a river in Cornwall, most likely North Cornwall, with cutwaters that continue to parapet level forming refuges for pedestrians. AA086779

8

A thatched cottage and a flint church with a west tower and embattled parapet with flushwork panels on a country lane in Norfolk. AA081034

9

View of the wrought-iron gates and ornate façade of an unidentified building in London, most likely in Westminster, possibly near Victoria Station. AA077597

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More uncaptioned images can be found at www.english-heritage.org.uk/doyourecognisethisplace. If we are able to identify any of these images we will let you know in the October 2009 issue of *Heritage Today*.

Sandgate Castle – Constructed 1539 -1540 by Henry V111th

6 and 7 on Castle walls in Castle Road and on the Sandgate Walkway

The original castle, started in 1539, is one of the most comprehensively documented of its time and the record still exists in the British Library.

The original castle comprised a large, three-storey central keep surrounded by two concentric curtain walls. The inner curtain wall had three smaller, round towers and the outer curtain wall had a three-storey gatehouse to the north All of the buildings were originally roofed and the castle was designed so that it rose progressively from the outside in to provide up to four tiers of heavy guns positioned behind 65 gun ports.

During the castle's long history Henry VIII visited in 1542, Elizabeth I in 1572 and 1588 and Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in the late 1800s. In 1805-1806, during the Napoleonic wars, a major series of alterations were carried out on the castle to convert it into a gun fort/castle. The tops of the original defensive towers were removed and the central tower converted into a Martello-style tower mounting a coastal battery.

From the late 1890s the castle has gone throughmany changes. It became a private house in the late 1890s, but was again requisitioned for defence in both the 1st and 2nd World Wars. The South Eastern Railway Company applied to have the castle demolished in 1911 to provide a rail link along the coastline from Hythe to Folkestone In 1960 another application for demolition and replacement with a block of flats was rejected by the planning authority.

The great storm of 1950 took around a third of the front portion of the castle and most of the outer wall on the south side was destroyed by coastal erosion. New sea defences were built shortly thereafter to protect it for the future. The castle title deeds still contain ownership below the low water mark where the castle originally stood.

For a period it became a museum, then a banqueting facility/restaurant and was finally converted into a permanent private dwelling in the late 1990s under the strict supervision of the Department of Environment and English Heritage

The castle is now in good heart as a private dwelling and the main keep is topped with a distinctive stainless

5. 2. 99

SANDGATE CASTLE -- Transformations

In 1539, Henry VIII put Sandgate truly on the map with the building of Sandgate Castle, one in a chain against a Spanish or French invasion. Since then it has undergone many transformations. During the Napoleonic threat the Castle, in modified form, was keyed with other coastal defences -- six Martello Towers overlooking Sandgate, the massive Shorncliffe Battery walls and the start of the Royal Military Canal on our border. In 1940, this history book in stone was designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument; in 1949 it received a Grade 1 listing and, in 1972, it naturally fell within a Sandgate Conservation Area. Thus, appropriate Planning Policies should apply, though little can protect it against its major enemy, the sea.

The Castle was a partial ruin when, in 1974, Dr Peter (d.1997) and Dr Barbara Macgregor started herculean efforts to restore it,* mainly at their own expense. We remember the ancient spell which lingered over so many enjoyable events (incl. the Buffet Supper on the 25th anniversary of the Sandgate Society). We cannot forget Graham MacGregor's inspired catering and, not least, the chain of tragedy which befell its owners.

? can anybody check date & death

But watch for transformation. We rejoice that the Castle has found a 'knight in shining armour' -- Mr Geoffrey Boot -- to convert it to a private residence, patterned on Martello No 8 on Hospital Hill. His initiative reflects Govt. Planning Policy Guidance PPG 15: 'Generally the best way of securing the upkeep of historic buildings is to keep them in active use'.

* No help from Shepway and mainly etc. - - -

Recommendation for Scheduled Monument Consent is currently with English Heritage who are keeping a keen eye on conversion plans. Their control ends at the outer curtain wall. All major changes will be reversible, if ever needed.

There is some cause for lament, however. The size of the new garage/office block (40' x 21' with pitched slate roof 21' ~~high~~ above ground approx) in the north west curtilage ~~of the Castle~~ will surely diminish ~~its~~ the Castles setting as seen by residents and tourists passing along Castle Rd. This apparent loss conflicts with PPG 16: 'The desirability of preserving an ancient monument and its setting (my underline) is a material consideration in determining Planning Applications whether that Monument is scheduled or unscheduled'.

To our Councillor Robert Bliss I wrote (15 Dec) -- 'clearly Mr Boot has an over-riding need' for this ancillary accomodation but it was to be hoped that the Development Control Committee (on which no Sandgate Councillor sits) would see fit to recommend some modification. My view entirely accords with that of English Heritage (7 Dec. to Mr Stack Assistant Director, Planning) of which we were then unaware. Further borne out by Sir Jocelyn ~~Stevens~~ Stevens, Chairman EH, 22 December to myself.

Planning Application SH/1039/SH regarding this major Shepway landmark (no humble backyard addition) was due to be decided by delegated powers if one of our three councillors Gordon Elliott and Councillor Trevor Buss (Cheriton) had not called it in! It made no difference. The Development Control Committee, it transpires, was influenced inter alia by the fact that the Castle was already hemmed in by Castle Close (c.1910) to the east and by the former Sandgate National School (1845) to the west, now the Sea Cadets HQ. Surely no grounds to hem the Castle in still further?

Previously, on 14 December 1998, Mr Geoffrey Boot was present at a hastily convened meeting in the Old Fire Station when Roger Joyce, the architect in charge, gave a long and detailed presentation to six Sandgate Society Committee Members and chairman Ann Nevill, to which I was invited ex-officio. I prefer to think that, given more time, the Society would ~~have made~~ be seen to make a stronger stand. Alas, this did not happen and from what transpires the Society's concerns along with those of Folkestone Charter Trustees and English Heritage were brushed aside, carried little weight. anyway. We know how Shepway Conservation policies can be applied very selectively and the ancillary building was ~~unanimously~~ unanimously agreed without the hoped-for modification

The die is cast. We welcome Mr Boot to Sandgate and can only wish him every success in his laudable and costly undertaking. Like SAGA it could be of special pride to Sandgate and we hope that, in the fulness of time, we may all be permitted an occasional glimpse of its inner fortifications and ramparts.*

Linda René-Martin

NOTE

Starting as from the next Development Control Committee Meeting (16 Feb) apart from members of the Committee and Council Officers, the Applicant or his Agent, a representative of a town or Parish Council and one local resident may speak for a limit Period of three minutes each at a meeting.

TOO LATE, but very WELCOME for the future.

* PS. I believe Mr Boot has intimated as much, to Roy Brightman.

Sandgate Castle

Henry VIII became King in 1509 after the death of his father Henry VII. He was known for radically changing the English Constitution ushering in the Divine Right of Kings to England. The Act of Supremacy was passed in 1535 declaring Henry to be the only Supreme Head of the Church of England thus initiating the English reformation. He transformed England from a Catholic Country to a Protestant one.

Henry sanctioned the destruction of shrines to saints – England's remaining monasteries were all dissolved and property transferred to the Crown. In 1539 there was the suppression of the larger monasteries and about 3,000 or more were destroyed.

In 1538 he began to build a chain of expensive, state of the art, defences along Britain's southern and eastern coasts from Essex to Cornwall, largely built of material gained from the demolition of the monasteries. They were known as Device Forts also known as Henrician Castles.

dist & Forts

Sandgate Castle was built as an artillery castle in 1539/40 as one of the coastal defences in response to the threat of an invasion from the French and the Holy Roman Empire. Sandgate's construction was supervised by a Moravian engineer Stefan von Haschenperg and Thomas Cockys and Richard Keys acted as commissioners for the project (Reginald Scott of Scott's Hall, Smeeth replaced Thomas Cockys in January 1540. He was knighted in 1540 and became Sheriff of Kent in 1541).

Photo

In the initial stages of the work in 1539 a team of 255 men were employed with 102 masons, quarrymen, 4 sawyers, 17 lime burners, 4 carpenters and 28 wood fellars preparing the site. The masons came from Somerset and Gloucestershire. By the summer there were over 500 workmen, including labourers, brick layers, carpenters and sawyers. After a pause during the winter months in the following summer there were on average 630 working daily on the castle.

The Castle's foundations rested on the underlying shingle of the beach. The walls were made from Kentish ragstone, mostly roughly laid with some work using finer ashlar, with Caen stone used in the detailing. Ashlar is finely dressed masonry, either an individual stone that has been worked on or the masonry built of such stone. It is capable of very thin joints between blocks. Most of the ragstone came from the local beaches. 459 tons of Caen stone were recycled from the priories of Christchurch, Canterbury, St Radigunds, Dover and Monks Horton. In C H Bishop's book on Folkestone he states that the stones from the Priory in Folkestone were also used but I cannot find

that anywhere else. In total 147,000 bricks were used, produced at thirteen different brickyards, and 44,000 tiles mostly manufactured in Wye, along with 1829 loads of lime, 110 tons of coal and 979 tons of timber. The total cost was £5,543. 19s 2 ¾ d. In today's money it would be approximately £1.8 million.

At the centre of the Castle was a circular keep with three ovoid towers and bastions around it on the north-west, north-east and south sides and a gatehouse to the north. These were surrounded by two curtain walls forming a triangular inner and outer ward (wall). Covered stone passageways, three storeys high, linked the towers, the keep and the gatehouse. The outer ward was grassed over with a stone cesspool by the side of the north-east tower linked by the sewers to the inside of the castle.

The castle was entered through a doorway in the rear of the gatehouse originally called "Half Moon", linked by a stairway in the covered passageway to the keep. There were four tiers of guns from the ground level up to the roof of the keep and a total of 142 firing points for cannon and handguns, a design closely resembling those of nearby Walmer and Deal Castles. The Castle was completed by the autumn of 1540.

Henry may have visited when he was in Folkestone in May 1542. Elizabeth Ist visited the fortification in 1575 and Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in 1855.

It was possibly also used to imprison the courtier Thomas Keys, son of Richard Keys, for a period after he married Lady Mary Grey in 1565 against the Queen's wishes. He was Captain of Sandgate Castle in 1559 and also sergeant porter to Queen Elizabeth 1st.

17th to 18th centuries

In 1609 the garrison comprised of a Captain, Lieutenant, 5 soldiers, 2 porters and 10 gunners. The mortar used in the construction of the castle had seriously decayed and proposed repairs, costing £260 were done and a gun platform for 10 weapons was built along the southern walls to replace the original southern battery.

In 1627, amid fears of war with France and Spain the castle was once again found in a poor condition so much so that the artillery had to be dismounted and placed along the beach. It was probably not repaired until about 1638.

The Castle was seized in 1642 by Parliamentary forces at the start of the first English Civil War. This ended in 1646 but again broke out in 1648. The Parliamentary navy was based in Kent, protected by the Castles of Walmer, Deal and Sandown but by May a Royalist insurrection was underway across the country and Sandgate and its sister Castles were occupied by the Royalists. Sandgate was recaptured in late 1648. When Charles 11 was restored to the throne in 1660 Sandgate Castle and the other Device Forts remained at the heart of the south coast defences. Once again Sandgate had fallen into disrepair and £200 was given in 1663 for its repairs.

View of Castle 1735 1762

19th Century

Sandgate Castle was still in use during the Napoleonic Wars but was heavily rebuilt. Brigadier-General William Twiss surveyed the south coast in 1804 and proposed building 58 new defensive towers along it and converted Sandgate into a "secure sea battery". After some opposition and many delays within the War Office the work on the Castle was finally finalised in 1805. They lowered the height of the Castle destroying much of the fortification. The upper storeys of the keep, the towers, the covered passageways and gatehouse were demolished. The resulting rubble was used to backfill the outer ward raising its height and turning the inner ward into a dry moat. The inner curtain wall was reduced to one storey and the outer curtain wall was refaced. An esplanade and wall-walk were built round the outer walls which supported at least 8 gun emplacements.

The circular tower was turned into a Martello tower and was now only two storeys high, the original interior walls and doorways largely remained untouched. It was accessed on the first floor by an unusual sliding drawbridge which was supported on rails and could retract into the floor. The storeys were linked by a spiral staircase. On the ground floor of the keep was a brick built magazine and the roof held a single large gun emplacement.

The north east and north west towers which were one storey high were turfed, turning the rear of

The [illegible] were rebuilt although the ground floor remained

This was completed in 1808 and held eight 24-pounder guns along the outer wall, a gun on the roof of the southern bastion and another on the keep. The new castle held a garrison of 40 men.

Photo

In 1859 the castle was re-equipped with [illegible] pounder guns. A new magazine was built divided into three rooms for storing the gun powder,

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The north-east and north-west towers which were one storey high were turfed, turning the rear of the outer ward into a flat grassed esplanade. The southern tower, now two storeys, was used as a gun platform. The upper storeys of the gatehouse were rebuilt although the ground floor remained in its 16th century condition.

This was completed in 1808 and held eight 24-pounder guns along the outer wall, a gun on the roof of the southern bastion and another on the keep. The new castle held a garrison of 40 men.

Photo 1817

In 1859 the Castle was re-equipped with heavier artillery with a mixture of 32-pounder and 68-pounder guns. A new magazine was built divided into three rooms for storing the gun powder,

Sandgate Castle
Restoration

especially to keep the powder dry. The exterior gun emplacements were also redesigned re-using the 1806 foundations. The two surviving emplacements in the north-east and north-west bastions dated from 1859.

Coastal erosion remained a problem and in 1866 the walls had been undermined by the sea. Protective piles were driven in around the Castle but it was badly affected by flooding in 1875 and then 1878.

Plan 1867

Due to the high maintenance costs the Castle was sold to the South Eastern Railway in 1888, who intended to turn it into a railway station.

Sketch 1893

Photo 1903

In 1893 the Castle was opened to the public by the Sandgate Improvement Association who took a peppercorn lease from the railway company. A small museum was opened in the Porter's Lodge until 1928.

There was a severe storm, in 1927 and 1950 which undermined the sea side of the Castle. By the time the new sea wall was built in the early 1950's the southern third of the Castle had been entirely destroyed.

Photo 1927 1925 ? 1950's

In 1928 the Castle and Castle Close were sold to Mr Albert Batchelor of Bleak House, Broadstairs, a financier and founder member of the Royal Aero Club, who built a sea wall to protect the building which had been partially ruined by the sea. His wife Mary Hunt of Strood became one of the first women to fly in an aeroplane and also the first woman to ride a bicycle!

Newspaper cutting 1925

In 1936 the Castle and Castle Close were sold by a Mr W A Allen.

The Castle was eventually scheduled as an ancient monument in 1939.

In World War 11 the Castle became the base of operations for the Platoon of the Home Guard formed at Shorncliffe Camp.

Photo

In 1954 Mr W A Workman, who was the Director of the Legal and General Assurance Company, sold the Castle and Close at auction to a Mr Frederick Black for £5000. He bought it for his daughter Barbara.

In approximately 1962 Barbara put in an application to demolish the Castle and build a block of flats and garages. Luckily the Planning Authority refused the application. An outline application was also

submitted by Barbara for the demolition of Castle Close so that they could build a block of 32 flats and garages but again it was refused.

From 1975 to 1979 the Castle was restored by Doctors Peter and Barbara McGregor (Black) under the supervision of the Department of the Environment and with support from KCC and the British Army. They then turned the keep into a private residence.

The Castle was reopened to the public in 1983 and the Restaurant and Dungeon Coffee Shop did well but the debts became too much and in 1997 Lloyds bank foreclosed on Sandgate Castle.

Their son used to hold dinners in the Castle and I remember going to a works Christmas Party there in the 1990's and walking into this fascinating round room with a glorious fire and then down the stairs to the dining room.

In 1999 it became a private residence monitored by English Heritage.

In 2000 it was bought by "Baron" Geoffrey Boot and is protected under the UK law as a Grade 1 listed building. It is the base for his estate management firm AMT South Eastern Ltd which is run from the castle by his daughter Tabitha.

The two 16th century ledger books from the original construction written by the project clerk Thomas Busshe are in the British Library. They are 350 pages long and form what the historian Peter Harrington has described as "the most complete building account of any Tudor fortification".

If anyone is interested I have printed out, from the translation of the ledgers by Mr. William Loftie [illegible] construction.

Sandgate Castle

Sandgate Castle

Henry VIII (1491-1547)

JUNE 14TH 1984

F3

bastion of history

400 years of history looked sure to end ignominiously in the 20th century.

Her decision to take on the building sparked an almost unanimous reaction from family and friends. "The all said I was mad," laughed Dr. McGregor.

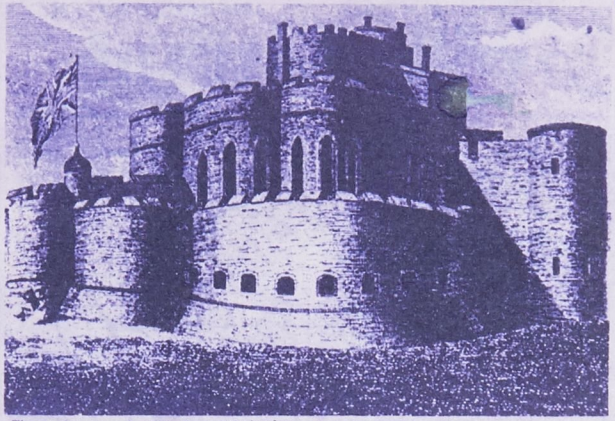
One of the most impressive rooms is the Great Hall, where Henry VIII dined in May, 1542. And it is situated in the keep, Dr. McGregor's pride and joy.

She is currently working on one of her most ambitious projects, the restoration of a drawbridge link with the outer defences. When completed it will be the only working slide-bridge in England.

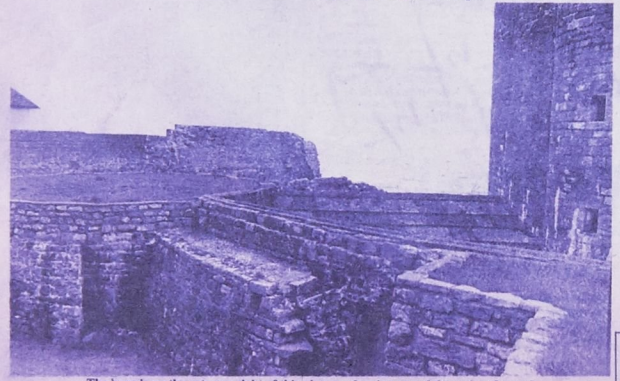
The two doctors have been fortunate in the financial backing obtained from both the DoE and Kenty Councy Council. What it has cost them personally, they will not say — but Sandgate castle today is testimony to their devotion.

Story
Nigel Munson

Pictures
Gerry Whittaker



The way it was . . . Sandgate Castle in its heyday.



The keep is on the extreme right of this picture, showing one of the series of round

An 18ft Tudor well forms part of one of the guard-rooms at the castle.

MORE county council funds are being made available to help rebuild Shepway's historic Martello Towers.

Last December the Amenities and Countryside Committee granted £1,500 towards the cost of repairs to Tower No. 1 on Folkestone's east cliff.

Now the committee has pledged another £1,000 to help restore the nearby Tower No. 3.

Shepway District Council estimates that the cost of the latest renovations will be nearly £10,000. In addition to seeking KCC help it is looking for financial aid from the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission.

The proposed works — designated urgent — include the replacement of a timber floor, an internal staircase and defective windows and re-rendering of the tower to simulate masonry in the original manner.

The tower is part of a chain built in the early 19th century to protect the exposed east Kent and Sussex coasts against a threatened Napoleonic invasion.

JUNE 14TH 1984

New life for a

A view across the southern curtain bastions, which were being eroded by the sea until a new wall was built

Dr. Barbara McGregor points out part of the original tudor underground workings.

PIECE by piece, month by month, a dream is slowly becoming reality for dedicated Dr. Barbara McGregor.

She has devoted the last 11 years of her life to the restoration of Sandgate Castle, one of the south coast's most important ancient monuments.

In two, perhaps three, years time Dr. McGregor believes that the famous old building will stand on the threshold of an exciting new chapter in its long history.

She wants the castle to fulfill a leading role in the life of the Sandgate community and become a valuable addition to Shepway's tourist attractions.

Dr. McGregor and her husband Peter — co-partner in their medical practice — feel that the castle could become the perfect setting for meetings of local organisations and an even better venue for wedding receptions.

"It is a wonderful place and we want people to have fun here," says Dr. McGregor. "It is a happy, cheeky, castle."

The castle, once near derelict and rapidly falling into the English Channel, today stands as a monument to the determination of a couple fired by a quest. With the assistance of some quite remarkable craftsmen they are giving the castle back its pride.

It was built between March, 1539 and October, 1540. At one time 900 men were involved in its construction and the cost — £5,543 19s 2¼d — was a staggering amount.

A typical Tudor arched doorway stands at one corner of a room where the old timbers have been revealed before making way for a new floor.

Visitors

But Henry VIII, who wanted the castle built to fill a gap in his chain of coastal defences, considered it money well spent. The much-married monarch visited it on two occasions and Queen Elizabeth 1 was another Royal visitor in the 16th century.

The castle was unchanged until the 18th century when the tower was converted to take heavy ordnance, giving it a similar appearance to the Martello chain.

It is now a grade 1 listed building and a scheduled ancient monument — which means that Dr. McGregor has to get approval from the Department of the Environment before she contemplates any works.

She emphasises, however, that the DoE have been very considerate towards her aims and ambitions for the castle and a close working relationship exists.

When Dr. McGregor's father, now aged 94, bought the castle 30 years ago it was in a terrible state. The unrelenting sea and vandals had done their worst and

A uniaue concept