



ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

KS2–KS4

TEACHERS' RESOURCE PACK

Deal Castle

This resource pack has been designed to help teachers plan a visit to Deal Castle, one of King Henry VIII's impressive Tudor artillery forts, built to protect the south coast from European invasion. Use these resources on site or in the classroom to help students get the most out of their learning.



INCLUDED:

- Historical Information
- Glossary
- Sources
- Site Plan

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Don't forget to download our Hazard Information Sheets to help with planning.

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HISTORICAL INFORMATION

DISCOVER DEAL CASTLE

Below is a short history of Deal Castle. Use this information to learn how the site has changed over time. You'll find definitions of the key words in the Glossary on pages 5–7.

A RUSH TO PROTECT THE COAST

In the 1530s, Henry VIII (r.1509–47) split from the Roman Catholic Church, partly so that he could divorce **Catherine of Aragon** and marry **Anne Boleyn**. The **Holy Roman Emperor**, Charles V, was Catherine of Aragon's nephew; he was annoyed and embarrassed by Henry's actions. Relations got even worse when Henry began to dissolve the Catholic monasteries in England. However, at this time Francis I, King of France, and Charles V were fighting each other in the latest in a long series of wars over long-disputed lands in northern Italy, so going to war with England was unlikely.

Then, in 1538, Francis I and Charles V signed a **peace treaty**. Around the same time, the **Pope** issued a formal letter permanently excluding Henry VIII from the Catholic Church. The Pope also urged Francis I and Charles V to invade England and remove Henry VIII from the throne. This act of unity between the Catholic powers of Europe meant that the threat of invasion had become very real.

Henry VIII quickly identified weak spots along the coast and built a chain of forts to guard England's ports, anchorages and landing beaches. This national plan was referred to as 'the device by the king' revealing Henry's personal involvement. Deal, Walmer and Sandown castles were in the first wave of castles constructed between 1539 and 1540, built to protect the vulnerable Kent coast and the **Downs anchorage**.



Late 17th century painting showing Deal, Walmer and Sandown castles. 'The Three Castle of the Downs' is thought to be painted by Sir Martin Beckman.

DEAL'S CIRCULAR DESIGN

Deal Castle was carefully designed for all-round defence. With the development of heavy guns in the 14th century, the high outer walls previously used in medieval castle designs were found to be very vulnerable to gunfire. Therefore, Henry VIII favoured circular forts that could still give all-round cover, but were squat, to make them difficult targets for enemy guns.

Although Henry VIII took a very close personal interest in the design of Deal Castle, the actual construction work was supervised by two local **commissioners**, appointed by the king. These men ensured the king's wishes were included in the final designs and that the forts conformed to a common style: squat, rounded **bastions** with thick walls and multiple gun ports, all arranged around a central tower.



Reconstruction drawing by Peter Urmston showing Deal Castle as it may have looked when it was newly completed in 1540.

THE TUDOR CASTLE

Henry VIII needed **Protestant** allies in Europe so he set up a marriage with **Anne of Cleves**, the daughter of a German duke who was also in conflict with Charles V. She landed at Deal on 27 December 1539 and stayed briefly at the castle, then described as 'newly built'.

Thomas Wingfield was made the first captain of Deal Castle in 1540. He was given 34 soldiers, a trumpeter and a drummer. He was in charge of the **garrison** and he took his orders from the **Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports**, based at Dover Castle.

In 1588, the 130 ships of the **Spanish Armada** sailed up the English Channel, on a mission to invade England. The Catholic king, Phillip II of Spain, wanted to end Elizabeth I's (r.1558–1603) support for the Protestant rebels in the Spanish Netherlands. In one of the most famous battles fought by the Royal Navy, the English fleet destroyed more than half of the Spanish fleet. The garrison stationed at Deal Castle probably witnessed the glow of the battle from the castle walls.



Drawing of Henry VIII, the Tudor king who ordered the building of Deal Castle.

CIVIL WAR AND SIEGE

In 1642, the **English Civil War** began. Deal, Walmer and Sandown castles came into the control of the **Parliamentarians** who, by 1647–8, wanted to get rid of the **monarchy** altogether. This was unpopular with large numbers of men in Kent, who favoured controlling the king but not getting rid of him.

In the spring of 1648, the Kentish men rose up, and fought and lost a bloody battle against **Thomas Fairfax** and the **New Model Army** at Maidstone. However, on the coast, ships of the English Navy in the Downs anchorage had declared their support for the king and helped the **Royalists** to take control of Deal, Sandown and Walmer castles.

Fairfax sent **Colonel Rich** to regain control of the castles, but Rich's small number of troops and his lack of **siege** weapons made it difficult. The Parliamentarian, Sir Michael Livesey, sent siege guns to Deal to help Colonel Rich bombard the castle. Royalist ships tried to support the garrison from the sea, but their attempts were unsuccessful.

Royalist hopes were ruined when a final relief force was defeated by Rich's men. An arrow shot over the wall into Deal Castle, with a note tied to it explaining that the Parliamentarians had defeated the king's forces in the north, was the final straw. Two days later, the garrison at Deal Castle surrendered, closely followed by the nearby Sandown Castle.



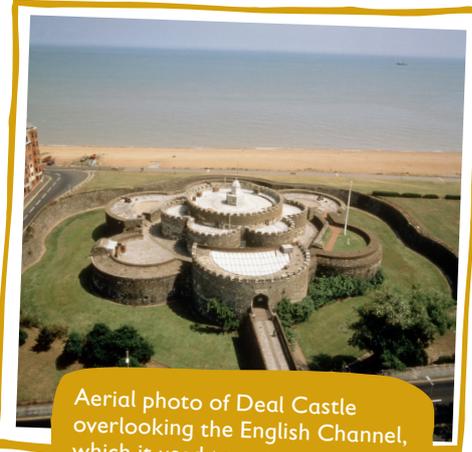
Oil painting of Thomas Fairfax, General of the New Model Army, painted by Robert Walker in the 17th century. © Public Domain

THE AFTERMATH

Colonel Rich was made captain of Deal Castle after its capture by the Parliamentarians. Rich reported the castle 'much torn' by the siege and in need of at least £500 for repairs. A garrison was given to Deal Castle and it continued to be used as a defensive fortress. In 1652, the opening shots of the **First Dutch War (1652–4)** took place off Deal between British and Dutch warships.

In 1660, Charles II (r.1660–85) was invited to reclaim the throne and the English monarchy was restored. Relations between England and the Netherlands temporarily improved. The garrison at Deal was maintained but reduced to 18 soldiers, a porter, a lieutenant and a captain.

When relations with the Netherlands worsened again, leading to the Second and Third Dutch Wars (1665–7 and 1672–4), Deal Castle helped guard the ships of the Royal Navy in the Downs anchorage.



Aerial photo of Deal Castle overlooking the English Channel, which it used to protect.

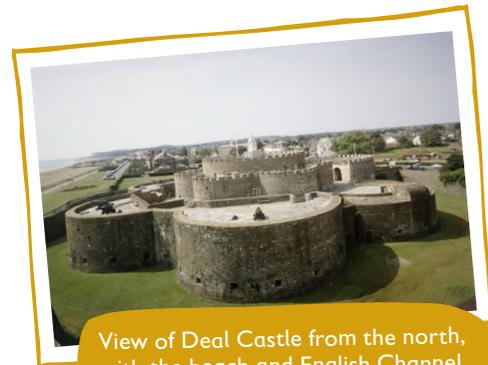
1700s: CHANGES AND DEVELOPMENT

In the early 18th century, Deal Castle's role began to shift; it became a finer, official residence for the captain, while retaining heavy guns to guard the Downs. The captain's role still had political, military and symbolic importance. As such, major changes were made to the castle in the late 1720s to make it more comfortable. Walls were rebuilt, a new house for the captain was added, and rooms were modernised. Most of the garrison no longer lived on site.

Deal Castle ceased to be an active place of defence after 1815 (the end of the **Napoleonic Wars**) but it still retained a few guns – just in case.

The captain's house was destroyed by a German bomber in the Second World War (1939–1945). Instead of rebuilding the house, this part of the castle was restored in the 1950s to how it had looked before 1728.

The castle still has a captain, a ceremonial post held by the Commandant General of the Royal Marines, but captains do not live in the castle any more. Deal Castle is now cared for by English Heritage.



View of Deal Castle from the north, with the beach and English Channel on the left.

GLOSSARY

TRICKY TERMS AND
THEIR MEANINGS

Below is a list of terms you might come across while exploring Deal Castle. Use this Glossary to find out what they mean.

Anne Boleyn – the second wife of King Henry VIII, Queen of England from 1533 to 1536. Anne gave birth to a daughter (Elizabeth) instead of the son Henry had hoped for. She then had three miscarriages and Henry eventually had her beheaded.

Anne of Cleves – the fourth wife of King Henry VIII, Queen of England from 6 January 1540 to 9 July 1540. Henry was disappointed with Anne's appearance and quickly divorced her.

bastion – a low, solid platform for heavy guns. In the case of Deal, and some other Tudor forts, the bastions are semi-circular and form one or more perimeters, arranged in tiers, around a low central tower.

Catherine of Aragon – the first wife of King Henry VIII, Queen of England from June 1509 until May 1533. She did not give Henry a male heir so he divorced her and married Anne Boleyn.

Colonel Rich – a Parliamentary colonel in Oliver Cromwell and Thomas Fairfax's New Model Army.

commissioner – a person chosen by the king to complete a specific task and represent his wishes.

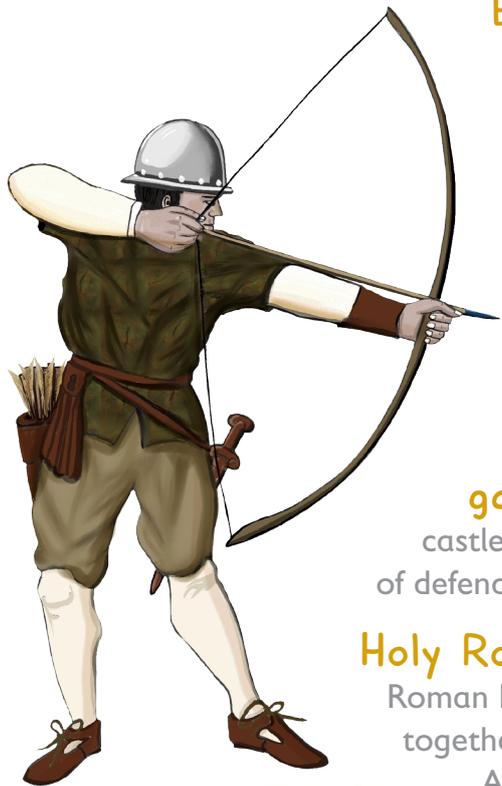
Downs anchorage – an area of water off the south-east coast, located between Deal and the Goodwin Sands. It provides a safe place for ships to drop their anchors and shelter in stormy weather.



An aerial view of Deal Castle showing 12 bastions arranged around the central tower.



Cannon balls on the outer bastions at Deal Castle.



A Tudor soldier; an important member of the garrison at Deal Castle.

English Civil Wars (1642–1651) – a series of armed conflicts between the Parliamentarians and the Royalists, sometimes now called ‘The Wars of the Three Kingdoms’ because England, Scotland and Ireland were involved. They were disputing the way in which Britain was governed.

First Dutch War (1652–4) – a war fought at sea between England and the Netherlands. England won and gained control of the seas around England, including all of the trade that relied on these waters.

garrison – the community of people stationed within the castle, including soldiers, gunners and porters, who had the task of defending it.

Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V – ruler of the Holy Roman Empire from 1519 to 1558. Under his rule, he brought together many parts of Europe and the Spanish colonies in America and Asia.

Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports

– the person who, on behalf of the government, regulated the activities of the five powerful port towns on the south east coast of England: Hastings, Romney, Hythe, Dover and Sandwich. ‘Cinque Ports’ means ‘five ports’ in Norman French.

monarchy – a system of government in which one person (usually a king or queen) is the ruler and dominates law-making and policy decision-making.

Napoleonic Wars (1803–15) – a series of wars fought between France and several other countries, including Great Britain. The French leader, Napoleon Bonaparte, was eventually defeated at the Battle of Waterloo, bringing the wars to an end.

New Model Army – a professional fighting force created by the Parliamentarians in 1645. Thomas Fairfax and Oliver Cromwell felt that forming a professional army would help them defeat the king’s army during the Civil War.

Parliamentarians – people who supported and/or fought on the side of Parliament in the English Civil War. They believed King Charles I should be removed from the throne and that England should be ruled by Parliament instead.



Charles I as he may have looked in the 1640s.

peace treaty – an agreement between governments and countries to end a conflict and restore peace.

Pope – the head of the Roman Catholic Church, worldwide.

Protestant – someone who disagrees with Catholic teachings; a member of a Christian religious movement against the established Roman Catholic Church.

Royalists – people who supported and/or fought on the side of the monarchy in the English Civil War. They believed the king, Charles I, should remain on the throne and keep his law-making and decision-making powers.

siege – a military tactic in which an army surrounds a place with an army and attempts to capture it, either by attack or by cutting off essential supplies (e.g. food and weapons) – thereby forcing the people inside to surrender.

Spanish Armada – a fleet of 130 Spanish ships, sent by Philip II of Spain to invade England in 1558. The English fleet fought several battles along the south coast and defeated the Spanish fleet just off Gravelines, north of Calais.

Thomas Fairfax – the Parliamentary commander-in-chief during the English Civil War. He was in charge of the New Model Army.



Drawing of a 16th century Spanish galleon.



A historical source is something that tells us about life in the past, such as a document, a picture or an object. It may be a primary source, from the time, or a secondary source, created later. Experts at English Heritage have chosen these sources to help you learn about Deal's history.

'1539 – King Henrie the Eight fortifieth his Realme.

with all speede, and without sparing any cost, he builded Castles, platfourmes, and blockhouses, in all needefull places of the Realme. And amongst other, fearing least the ease and advantage of descending on lande at this part, shoulde give occasion and hardinesse to the enemies to invade him, he erected (neare together) three fortifications, which might at all times keepe and beate the landing place, that is to say, Sandowne, Dele, and Walmer.'

Extract from 'A Perambulation of Kent', written in 1570 by Kent historian William Lambarde. You can view the original text at: www.archive.org/stream/perambulationofk00lambuoft#page/130/mode/2up

It describes Henry VIII's response to the threat of invasion from the Catholic powers of Europe. The Old English has been maintained to give a sense of how language has developed since the 16th century. It summarises the actions King Henry took to protect all 'needefull places of the Realme', such as the South-east coast. It refers specifically to the three castles in the Downs: Sandown, Deal and Walmer.

'Anne of Cleves

On 27 Dec., St. John's Day, she took ship, and landed at the Downs, between 6 and 7 p.m., where she was met by the duke and duchess of Suffolk, who, with their train, accompanied her to Deal Castle. There she banquetted, and proceeded to Dover, where she tarried till Monday, and then set forth to Canterbury, where she was received by the Archbishop with other bishops and the gentlemen of Kent.'

Extract from 'Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII', January 1540. You can view the original text at: www.british-history.ac.uk/letters-papers-hen8/vol15/pp1-19

It describes the day Anne of Cleves visited Deal Castle on her way to meet and marry King Henry VIII.



Engraving of Deal Castle, c.1649, by Wenceslaus Hollar. It is the closest reference we have to how the Tudor castle would have originally looked.

'Saturday, Aug. 26. 1648

A Letter from Col. Rich of the Surrender of Deal to the Parliament; the Articles of Surrender was read, and approved of; those within the Castle laid down their Arms, and went home, engaging not to take them up again against the Parliament. Sandown-Castle no doubt will shortly follow.

They Ordered, That Col. Rich should be Governour of Deal Castle.

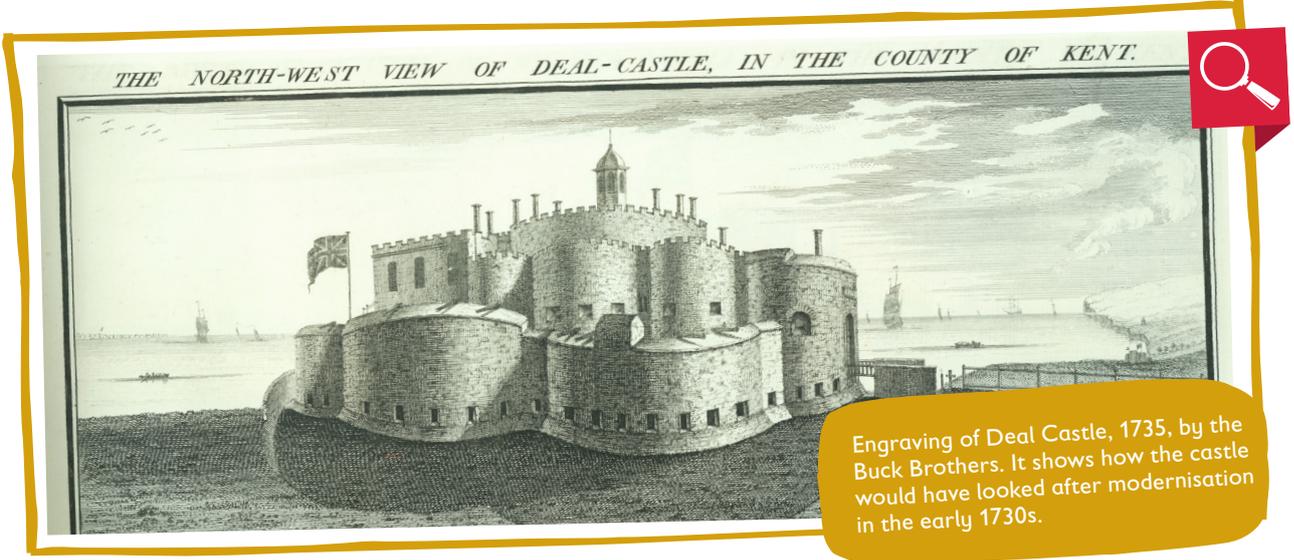
Lieutenant Axtell, that brought this good News, had 100/. given him.

It was referred to the Committee of the Army, to take care for the Repair of Deal and Warmer.

The Army Committee Ordered to repair Deal.'

Extract from 'Historical Collections of Private Passages of State: Volume 7'. You can view the original text at: www.british-history.ac.uk/rushworth-papers/vol7/pp1212-1248

This source is from a collection of Parliamentary papers compiled by John Rushworth. The source is an official government document, written during the English Civil War, explaining that the Royalists have surrendered to the Parliamentarians. It also outlines the subsequent rewards given and actions taken.



Engraving of Deal Castle, 1735, by the Buck Brothers. It shows how the castle would have looked after modernisation in the early 1730s.

SITE PLAN

DEAL CASTLE

