

Some moments in history.

In 1402, following a French incursion during the preceding reign, Henry IV gave permission for a local defence system to be put in place.

In 1540 Henry VIII ordered that a blockhouse be built at Coalhouse Point. This was one of five installations built either side of the river, being part of a national defence system designed to counter any Rome inspired invasion of England.

In 1799, when a French invasion was feared a new battery was built at East Tilbury. Following its demise circa 1855 a small fort incorporating the 1799 site was constructed. From 1861 to 1874 in response to Parliament's decree and the perceived threat of yet another French invasion, Coalhouse Fort and sister forts at Cliffe and Shornemead in Kent were built.

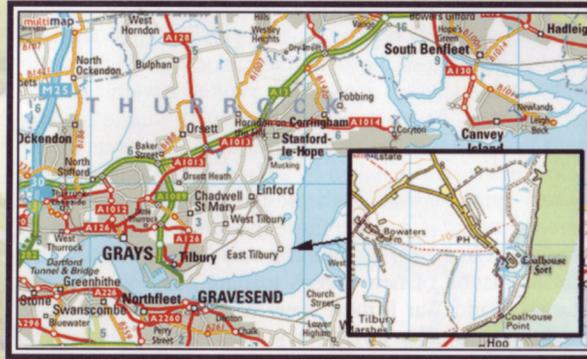
For part of the overall construction period they were supervised by Lt. Col. Charles George Gordon, later General Gordon of Khartoum.

Coalhouse Fort continued to be modified to keep pace with military technology and occupied by the military through the two world wars up to their departure in 1962.

Following the military departure the fort was acquired by Thurrock Council. From 1983 to the present day it is maintained by The Coalhouse Fort Project.



Where to find us.



By Road: Leave the A1013 (This runs parallel to the A13 between the A128 and the A1014) at the Brown Sign, **Coalhouse Fort**, and follow the road to its end. There is a large car park fifty yards from the fort.

By Train: The fort is about one and a half miles (half an hour's walk) from East Tilbury Station.

The fort is open to the public on the last Sunday and Bank Holidays of each month from March until November. A special Halloween event is held on two evenings at the end of October.

Details of open day dates are in the attached insert and notices in local libraries, etc.

For further information please telephone

01375 844203

or on the web site:-

www.coalhousefort.co.uk

Children under 16 years must be accompanied by an adult.

Dogs are allowed in the fort, but owners are requested to keep them under control at all times.

Refreshments are normally available at the fort and picnic tables are both inside the fort and in the surrounding park.

Organised Parties are welcome and special visits can be accommodated with prior application.

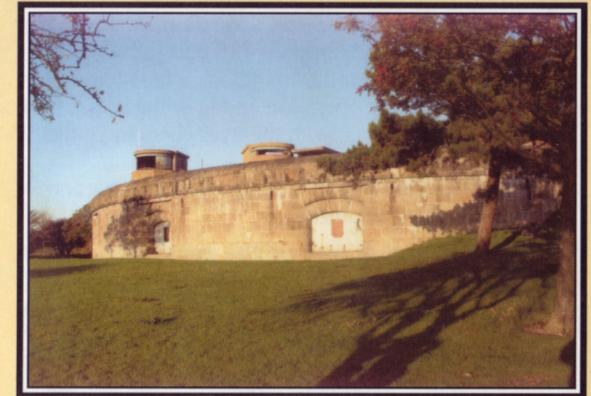
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The information contained in this leaflet was correct at the time of printing.

Some facilities and services mentioned may not always be available.

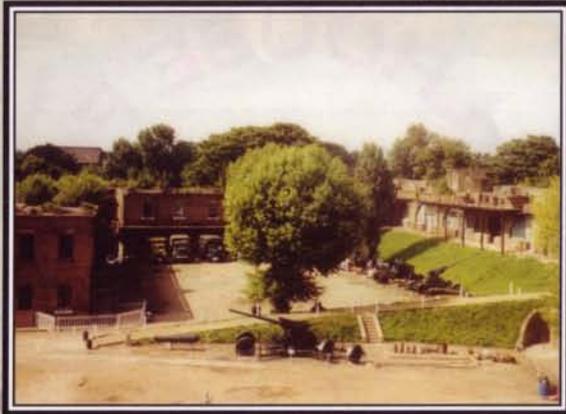


East Tilbury Village, Essex



***A Fine Example of
Mid-Victorian
Military Architecture***

The Coalhouse Fort.



A visit to Coalhouse Fort gives the visitor plenty of interesting things to see which include many displays of artillery and military vehicles in its two large parade areas and periodic exhibitions in its casemates.

A guided tour (included in the admission price) allows visitors to examine the ingeniously designed tunnel system and magazines in which the munitions were stored plus learn about its military operation and how the upper roof was utilised to keep pace with the ever changing military requirements.

A bonus of your guided tour is the spectacular view across and along the River Thames.

“Coalhouse Fort is one of the most important Historic Military sites to be found in Essex.”



About The Coalhouse Fort.

Built between 1861 - 74 as part of the first line of defence for London against possible invasion via the River Thames. The fort was state of the art for the period with thick granite walls, behind which have large vaulted caverns known as casemates. These housed heavy rifled muzzle loading guns up to 38 ton. Ammunition for these guns was stored below in magazines linked by a continuous double tunnel system. Improvements in the design of both warships and breech loading guns soon made the fort and its RML guns obsolete. Circa 1903 saw the fort was kept operational by the installation of new breech loading guns on the roof. During World War II these were replaced by even more modern guns. The Royal Navy was also present at the fort operating a Degaussing Monitoring station that was to play a vital role in checking a ship's protection against magnetic mines. Today the fort is thriving with two museums and a registered memorial park. THAMESIDE AVIATION MUSEUM has a large selection of aviation material from many archaeological digs in South East England together with their histories, which remind us of these brave flyers who gave so much to keep us free.

THE FORT MUSEUM exhibits the history of the fort from its inception to the present day with many items of military interest including a naval area dedicated to the time when the fort was known as HMS St. Clement

THE MEMORIAL PARK.

The memorial park is dedicated to all members of the British forces who served and gave their lives for the cause of freedom. The centrepiece of the park has a third scale replica of the original obelisk that stood outside the fort and was unceremoniously blown up in 1917.



The Muzzle Loading Gun.

A new and exciting exhibit being developed is the full scale replica of a 38 ton Rifled Muzzle Loading gun set in an authentic looking casemate and illustrating how and who was responsible for its operation.



The Fort Environs.

The fort is surrounded by beautiful riverside parkland with interesting walks, a lake and play areas for the children. There are also a number of other items relating to our military heritage including an open quick fire battery, radar and minefield control towers and spigot mortar bases.

The remains of a jetty which was linked to the fort by a railway line originally built to supply the fort with provisions and munitions brought down by river.

