Henry VIII of England fathered the British Navy, building warships that were basically floating gun batteries, like his flagship, the Mary Rose. Yet, not relying entirely on such wooden walls, he also established in the 1530s a coastal defensive system for southern England. The rolling hills, promontories, and deep estuaries of the English Channel coast made it an attractive target for enemies, from large-scale invasion to quick raiding party. The Henrician artillery forts, which were still called ‘castles’, had new designs that concentrated fire power in thick-walled structures, often arranged in multi-level firing platforms, around a short central tower. Henry aimed at a comprehensive defense against Catholic Europe. The locations of artillery forts were typically planned with regard to line-of-site communications and cannon range. Some were sited to cover strategic waterways like the Solent; others defended traditionally important harbours like the Cinque Ports. The fort plan could be square or round, and to deflect artillery attack, most had the round bastions of German defensive theories (Figure 4.1). A few later forts employed the angular bastions then being developed in the Italian Renaissance, such as Sandown and Portsmouth, with the extant example of the 1547 Yarmouth Castle, where a square masonry blockhouse had two water-facing sides with tiers of gunports and overlooking a moat, and two landward sides met

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Figure 4.1. Pendennis Castle, Cornwall: Henrician masonry artillery fort displaying three tiers of embrasures. Photo by the author.

Figure 4.2. Map of Fort Protector, erected 1548 (later Maryborough Fort), County Laois, Ireland. Note the absence of Renaissance angled design and the presence of both rectilinear and round corner bastions or towers. Trinity College, Dublin, MS 1209 (10).