

THE ROCHE GOYON



FORT LA LATTE

The Roche Goyon (Goyon's Rock) takes its name from one of the oldest Breton families. According to legend a former castle was built by a Goyon under Alain Barbe Torte in 937.

As for the existing castle, its construction was started before cannons were introduced to Brittany (1364) and its building continued with the help of the Goyon families good fortune in the second half of the 14th century. The castle was completed by 1379 when Bertrand du Guesclin sent a detachment to the castle, which bravely held out but it was eventually seized for the benefit of King Charles V. It was later given back to it's owner at the treaty of Guerande in 1381.

During the 15th century the Goyons continued to climb the social ladder. The family appeared in the "Estates of Brittany." A member of the Goyon family who was the Duke of Brittany's chamberlain, married the Thorigni-sur-Vire baron's heiress. The Goyon family left the Breton seat and went down in the history of France. The castle was given a commanding officer who was housed in a dwelling be-fitting for this purpose. When Brittany joined France, once more the castle was put under siege, this time unsuccessfully by the English in 1490.

The finishing stroke was given to the castle by the "Ligue". The Marshall of Matignon, one of Henry IV's loyal servants, had followed the latter to Guyenne. As a reprisal, a delegate of the Duke of Mercoeur named Saint Laurent besieged and attacked the fort. The castle now called Fort La Latte was dismantled, plundered, devastated and set on fire. Only the keep resisted.

Entrusted with fortifying the coast in order to protect Saint Malo, Sir Garengeau found the castle in ruins. The castle was transformed in accordance with the Matignons' agreement between 1690 and 1715. Its present aspect mainly dates back to that period.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, probably around 1720 the Fort changed hands. It went from the Goyons to the Ministry of war.

In 1715 James Stuart III took refuge here and thought the place was sinister. We have to take into account he landed here on a stormy night in November. The same year Louise-Hippolyte Grimaldi, Duchesse of Valentinois married Francois-Leonor Goyon de Matignon on the condition that he would take the Grimaldi's name and coat of arms without incorporating his.

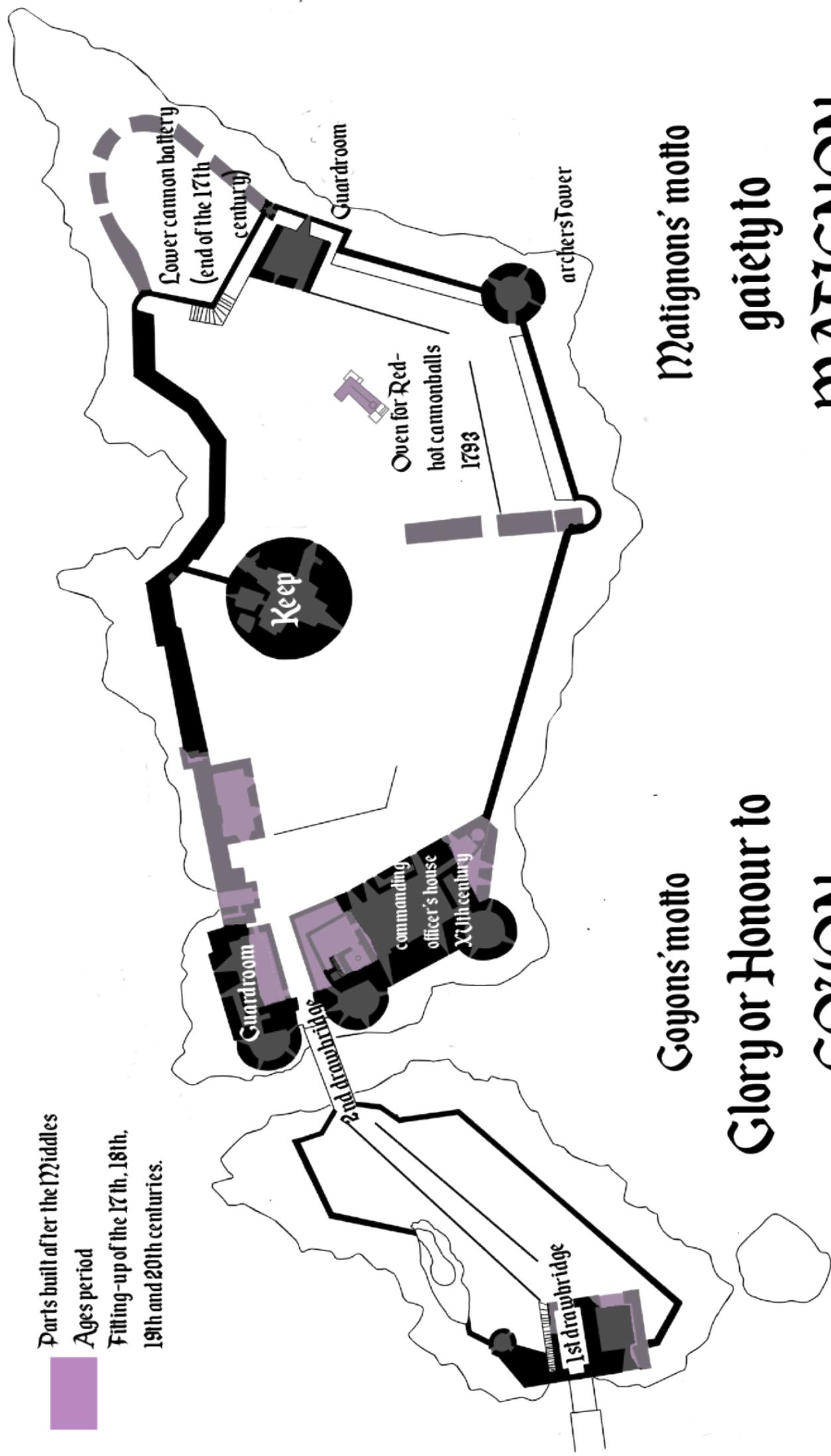
In 1793 a cannon ball oven was built and a few counter revolutionary suspects were imprisoned at the Fort.

A few young men from Saint Malo unsuccessfully attacked the fort during the 'Cent Jours' (1815). This was it's last war episode.

It was gradually abandoned during the nineteenth century. There was only one guardian left to keep watch.

Relegated by the Ministry of War in 1890, it was sold by the Domaines in 1892. It was scheduled as a historical place of interest in 1925. It has since been restored and is now open to visitors.

MAP of « La Roche Goyon » or « Fort La Latte »



Parts built after the 17th century
 Parts built before the 17th century

Goyons' motto
Glory or Honour to GOYON

Maignons' motto
gaiety to MAIGNON