



Gatehouse

# Gatehouse News

31 Dec 2014

**Developments of the Gatehouse Website. The comprehensive bibliography and gazetteer of the castles, fortifications and palaces of medieval England and Wales.**

2014 has been a busy year for me. I've moved house and have now set myself up with an office that hopefully will aid my ongoing work on Gatehouse. Certainly I've rather more bookshelf space and have spent a considerable amount of an inheritance on filling that shelf space helped by some very kind gifts. I've also been able to get out to few places and a week in Northumberland in the early summer was most rewarding for my understanding of bastles and pelehouses, as was a day out in Cumbria with the [Cumbria Vernacular Building Group](#) in June.

Other organisation based trips were:



- The spring conference of the [Castle Studies Group](#), this year in Belfast, Northern Ireland, so of less direct concern for Gatehouse, which doesn't directly deal with the island of Ireland, but the discussions with other castle enthusiasts, amateur and professional, is always worthwhile.
- A day trip to Wrestle Castle, organised by the [Yorkshire Archaeological Society](#), and lead by Peter Brears (whose 2011 article on the castle, in the *Archaeological Journal*, was outstanding).
- For me the most memorable events was to be invited to attend the Château Gaillard Colloquium in Bad Neustadt, Germany where I enjoyed nine days of field trips and

lectures in the company of some of the most distinguished of north Europe's castellogists. I followed my time in Germany with a week in Normandy taking a leisurely look at a few castles there (a whole day at the actual [Château Gaillard](#), brilliantly white after a recent restoration). A number of conferences were castle related or had castle related papers and I attended [The Tower as Status Symbol Conference](#) at Newcastle; [Lives and Landscapes of Early Medieval Wessex](#) in Winchester with Papers on Winchester and Exeter



[The Hole Bastle](#)



Peter Brears at [Wressle Castle](#)

castles and [Castles and Crenellations in the North West](#) in Chester plus a few other more local (for me) talks such as Erik Matthews talk on his work at Hornby Castle given at Middleham this November.

There were a number of books published this year but I intend to give a better round up of my reading in the next newsletter after I put some much needed and overdue work into improving and updating the Gatehouse bibliographies. However one piece of news worth repeating is that English Heritage have made freely available many of their monographs, via the [Archaeological Data Service](#), including things like Guy Beresford's seminal *Goltho: The development of an early medieval manor c 850-1150*.

For Gatehouse, as a website things, have been much quieter with, until this week, few significant changes and just the general update of records (The year seemed to be mainly taken up with updating the records for Northumberland).

However, as mentioned in the last [Gatehouse News](#) I have now changed the 'county'

grouping of sites to reflect the grouping used by David Cathcart King in *Castellarium Anglicanum* which is the main inspiration for the Gatehouse website (which merely intends to update this work). This has little effect on the records for Wales but does have a number of effects for English records.

King grouped his sites by counties based on the counties in 1974, just before a major change, which reflected roughly the state of the counties when he did the bulk of his fieldwork, in the 1950s, 60s and 70s.<sup>1</sup>

For some reason King separated the Isle of Lundy from Devon and the Isles of Scilly from Cornwall and placed them in his group 'The Islands' consisting of The Isle of Man and the Channel Islands. While the later are not parts of the United Kingdom (being independent [Crown Dependencies](#)), the former certainly are and their separation from their counties is rather idiosyncratic, but I have partly followed this. (see the [listing page](#) to see these counties) Previously I had tried to get closer to the actual medieval administrative bodies by using the county as shown on the 1st edition OS maps of the mid 19th century. From now on I will be using as my 'historic' county borders those used

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<sup>1</sup> King's counties were a very short lived division lasting from 1968 to 1974 only. Most online maps of the 'historic counties' of England seem to represent a state that **never** existed (they don't show London - created a county in 1888 - or the Isle of Ely - a county until 1968 (although always closely associated with Cambridgeshire into which it was absorbed)).



Antiquarian and Archaeological Society). I went through this valuable 'illustrated gazetteer and research guide' quite a few years ago when my research skills were somewhat less developed and it was time for a new look. This will expand the bibliography for many sites in Cumbria, including some primary references, although the references in Perriam and Robinson are not always clear and it is taking some time to chase the exact reference. When I originally went through the book I omitted a number of sites which I will now be adding (although most as questionable) and there may be other new additions as complex sites are differentiated.

#### NEW SITES ADDED

All from the first 50 pages of Perriam and Robinson.

- **Boltons Moat** - A duplicate record of **Whitehall Moat** at an erroneous map reference - reject.
- **Bothel** - unsupported reference to an earthwork of a moated site - questionable.
- **Overwater Moat** - A sizeable moat, a scheduled monument. Omitted from early versions of Gatehouse as a 'homestead' moat but seems more significant than that - possible.

- **Torpenhow Hall** - Dubious reference to an uncertain fortification - questionable.
- **Weary Hall Moat** - A supposed moat - questionable.
- **Randalholme Hall Bastle** - A pelehouse type bastle building attached to **Randalholme Hall**, a small tower house. As this is on a different alignment and not directly attached to the Hall it is now separately listed in Gatehouse although it was previously described in the Randalholme Hall record - possible.

Finally my best wishes to all of you for 2015.

Philip Charles Davis



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