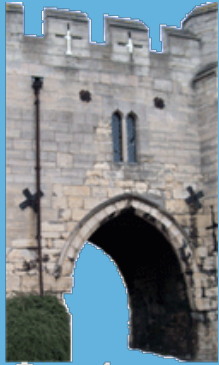


# GATEHOUSE NEWS



Gatehouse

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

## 24 June 2016

I've finally finished extracting the information from Steve Sneyd's *The Devil's Logbooks Castles and Fortified Sites around South Yorkshire* (Hilltop Press 1995). For a booklet of just 19 pages this took some considerable time and effort because the information was so



Tankersley Old Hall, near Barnsley

densely written. I now need to do the same for his other book, covering West Yorkshire, *Giants in Our Earth*. Unfortunately I can't find a copy of this so if anyone could lend me a copy (or sell me a copy at a reasonable price) I'd be most grateful. (please contact me at admin(at)gatehouse-gazetteer(full stop)info). Most of the sites are unlikely as medieval 'fortifications' but do include a number of possible fortified moated manor houses. These are mainly concentrated in the floodplain of the Rivers Don and Aire, north of Doncaster. This was a marshy area and the moats may have more to do with drainage, providing dry firm building platforms, and flood protection. However this was also partly within Barnsdale Forest, an area of some notoriety for outlaws, so these moats may have had a defensive function, as argued by the late Colin Platt in his paper 'The Homestead Moat: Security or Status?' (2010 *Archaeological Journal* Vol. 167). I'm not so sure of this as there may be a few hundred years between the lawless period (classically late C12/early C13) and the drainage of the marshland north of Doncaster (C14-C16).

Another possible site is [Tankersley Old Hall](#), a ruinous late C16 house. This is most famous locally for its use as a set in the 1969 film [Kes](#) (based on Barry Hines's [A Kestrel for a Knave](#)). Peter Ryder suggested this was an enlargement of a three storey late medieval hunting lodge. Despite clearly being in a perilous state this doesn't appear to be in the Heritage at Risk Register.

Of the reject sites a number of 'castle' place-names, some of them mentioned in medieval charters, can probably be explained as being land held in demense by the local lord, some are probably Iron Age sites but some may be references to lost C18 gothic follies. There appears to have been a particular fad for these in the area, the most notable being Stainborough Castle, but a number of others existed most notable a long wall with towers on [Worsbrough Hill](#) (see [Andy Hemingway's](#)



[Stainborough Castle](#). A folly of 1789 erected by Horace Walpole but possibly on the site of an old fortification. I favour a stone revetted or stone embanked Iron Age Hill Fort as was found at nearby [Wincobank](#) (particularly see the 2011 ArcHeritage Report)

[blog article](#)). Worsbrough is an interesting place-name as older place-name studies might suggest this was a *burh* placename but it seems more likely to be a *berga* (mean hill) place-name.

While looking the [Misson Moat](#) site I realised I didn't have the [Nottinghamshire HER](#) record numbers and links to the online version (part of [Heritage Gateway](#)). I've updated the records and added these. I also did a search of the records which added three 'Village Ring' sites. These are under the broadclass DYKE (DEFENCE) but there doesn't really seem to be any suggestion these boundary markers were really defensive (except against wandering livestock). I also came across [Car Colston manor](#) which seems to have been suggested as a motte and bailey, but can be rejected as such, but is a small moated manor

house of the sort which might be consider 'fortified'.

It looks like I'm overdue in checking Heritage Gateway for updates so that has been put on my to do list although finding the time in the summer is more difficult as I get out and visit sites.

A few places I've visited, for the first time, in the last few weeks are;

[Ponthendre](#). This motte is usually suggested as a precursor of Longtown castle but I wonder if it was the castle in the manor of Clodock and occupied at the same time as the early Longtown, which is now in the same parish (a 19th century arrangement), but was a different manor (and parish). Both manors were held by the De Lacy's as overlords but did their sub-tenant at Clodock erect a motte facing the Longtown castle. Who was that sub-tenant?





TOP. The motte and now muddy but originally water filled ditch of Ponthendre. A large structure but limited usable living space.  
LEFT. Good lime mortar difficult to obtain in Radnorshire as the shabby ruins of Aberedw show.  
BOTTOM. The overgrown mounds and banks of Builth Wells give little idea of a great castle of Edward I and look more in common with the late 11th/early 12th century motte of Ponthendre (its origins were as a late 11th century motte) than with the contemporary late 13th castle of Aberedw.





A rather sad pile of stone, in nettles, farm rubbish and dog shit, marks [Aberedw Castle](#). This house, built with money borrowed from Aaron le Blund, a Jew of Hereford, in the 1280s was called a castle in 1284 (or, at least, the calendarists report that but what was the original latin?) but seems in size and plan to be a good sized fortified manor house rather than a castle (if either of those terms has any quantifiable meaning, which they don't). A footpath runs through the middle of it, so it is partly accessible, although the best preserved corner is inaccessible (at least readily) but it is, seemingly, disregarded locally.

Another castle that is not much known, although not quite so disregarded as Aberedw, is Builth Wells. This is accessible but difficult to get around. Depending on your point of view this is either a wonderful piece of unspoilt wilderness in the middle of a town or a near impossible to interpret and view and overgrown with scrub. I'm too old and fat to go clambering all over the steep mounds and banks through nettles and slippy wet grass but I managed a few photos but little real idea of the layout. For those interested (by which I mean all of you) the late Jack Spurgeon's paper on the castle is probably the best source for information ([Brycheiniog Vol. 18 pp. 47-59](#))

Finally, in this short list of some of the site new to me is the [Tump at Pipe Aston](#). This has recently had many of the trees on it cut down so is now nicely visible as a steep sided mound which, originally was probably surrounded by a quite wide if shallow water filled moat. I suspect it was originally probably sheer-sided revetted (possibly in white washed



TOP [Pipe Aston Tump](#).

MIDDLE Interior of [St Giles church](#)

BOTTOM Detail of Church Tympanum. Quite stunning and thats no bullshit - but it is a bull seemingly one with a hammer!



timber painted to look like stone or in the local shale) to make a small but highly impressive building platform for a timber hall, doubly so on a fine day when this would have been reflected in the water of the moat. The quality of the Romanesque, Herefordshire School, carving of the tympanum of the adjacent small church of St Giles is absolutely outstanding as is the preservation of original 12th century interior painting. The whole speaks to me not of a contested frontier but of a small, fashion conscious, lordly site built to impress.

To fill this page a few of my photos of European castles. Test yourself by naming them.





## NEW SITES ADDED

(from Sneyd)

- Braithwell Moat Hall (possible fortified manor house FMH)
- Campsall Old Rectory (poss. FMH)
- Campsall Campsmount place-name (weak place-name)
- Cannon Hall (questionable FMH)
- Cantley Castle Hills (? motte)
- Carlecotes Castle Hill (natural hill)
- Ecclesall Castle Dyke (pre-historic)
- Eckington Castle Hill (? something, possibly just an early bowling green)
- Frickley Old Hall moated site (poss. FMH)
- Hatfield 'mottes' (rejected mounds)
- High Melton Hall (? Tower house)
- Hound Hill (? FMH)
- Hoylandswaine 'Castle Hill' (rejected place-name)
- Little Shepherd's Castle and Long Sherherd's Castle (natural hills)
- Castle Lidget, Maltby (medieval place-name - probably demense)
- Cudworth Veggekastel (ditto)
- Bawtry Manor Holt (poss. FMH)
- Misson moat (poss. FMH)
- Conisbrough Moot Hall (?)
- Netherthorpe moated site (? FMH)
- Netherwood Hall (? FMH)
- Penistone Castle Hill House (reject)
- Penistone Shepherd's Castle (? pre-historic)
- Rockley Abbey (? FMH; ? Pele Tower)
- Rockley Old Hall (?FMH)
- Round About Moat, Arksey (?FMH)
- Squirrel Castle (reject place-name - poss. a C18 folly site)
- Sutton Common earthworks (reject as medieval. Important pre-historic site)
- Swinton Castell Lande (? demense land)
- Tankersley Moat (? FMH)
- Tankersley Old Hall (poss. pele tower)
- Thorpe in Balne moated site (poss. FMH)
- Thurnscoe moat (? FMH)
- Tilts (poss. FMH)
- Todwick Manor (poss. FMH)

- Stubbs Hollins, Walden Stubbs moat 1 (? FMH)
- Stubbs Hollins, Walden Stubbs moat 2 (? FMH)
- Warmsworth Bell Tower (poss. FMH)
- Warren Hall moated site (poss. FMH)
- Wath upon Dearne moat (poss. FMH)
- Whitley Thorpe grange (poss. FMH)
- Wickersley Moat Farm (? FMH)
- Womersley Castle Hill (reject place-name)
- Woodhouse Field Moat, Kirk Bramwith (? FMH)
- Worsbrough Castle Hill (C18 folly)
- Willow Garth Ecclesfield (? FMH)

(from the Nottinghamshire HER)

- Rempstone Village Ring (questionable)
- Plumtree Village Ring (questionable)
- Car Colston Village Ring (questionable)
- Car Colston Manor (reject as motte but possible FMH)



Philip Davis