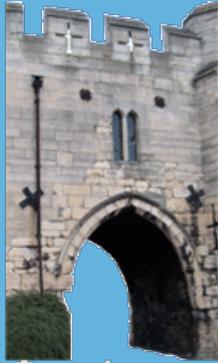


GATEHOUSE NEWS



Gatehouse

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

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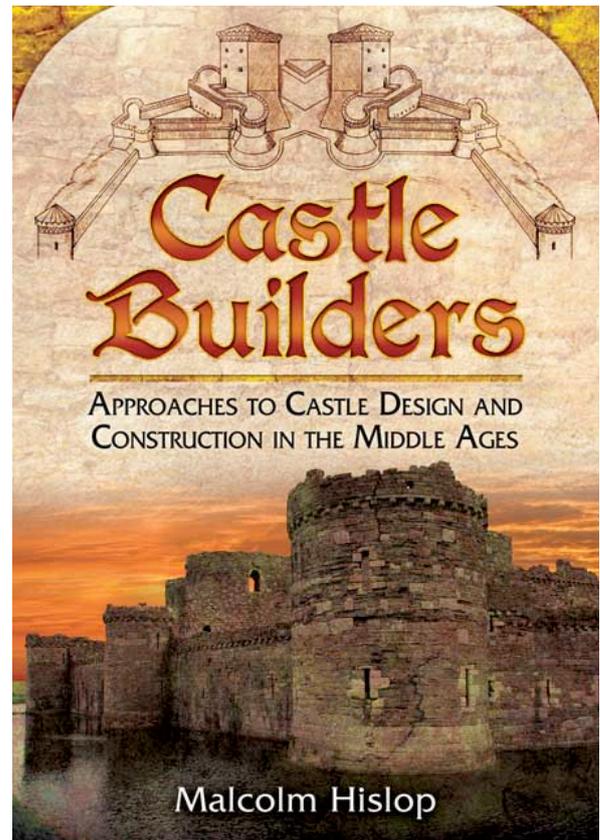
6 February 2017

My apologies for such a long period since the last Gatehouse News. This does reflect the amount of activity and changes in Gatehouse which has been limited over the last 4 months.

I had intended at this point to give the user statistics for Gatehouse in 2016. Unfortunately I am rather bewildered by Google Analytics data which suggest I went from a fairly steady around 500 sessions a day dropping suddenly on the 6 November to less than 20 and have stayed at about that level since. I can't believe such an acute change actually reflects user behaviour. If anyone could suggest a reason for this I'd be grateful for such an explanation.

I wish I could say that I had been busy catching up with reading, although really I've just been subdued. However, a few books of note have been published recently;

■ Malcolm Hislop's *Castle Builders Approaches to Castle Design and Construction in the Middle Ages* (Pen and Sword Books) is a sound and solid text, very readable and with good detail. Pen and Sword Books have done an excellent job with the quality of the illustrations and I would now suggest this book as the standard



introductory text for the intelligent reader although it also contains much of value for advanced student of castle studies.

- Rather more exclusively for the advanced student of castle studies is *Late Medieval Castles* (The Boydell Press) edited by Robert Liddiard. This is a 'collection of the most significant articles in castle studies, with contributions from scholars in history, archaeology, historic buildings and landscape archaeology.' This is a follow on from the earlier *Anglo-Norman Castles* (2003). For many of us with a deep interest in castle studies we will have already read most of the essays collected although it is useful to have them all in one volume.
- Representing new scholarship, although slightly tangential to castle studies is Oliver Creighton and Duncan Wright's *The Anarchy War and Status in 12th-Century Landscapes of Conflict* (Liverpool University Press) which has some interesting content on mid 12th century siege 'castles'. I've only glanced at this text myself, before loaning out my copy, but it does seem to be of value,

although I'm not sure that at £75 it is three times the value of Malcolm's book.

I note and thank both Malcolm and Oliver and Duncan for mentioning Gatehouse in their respective acknowledgements.

Other changes:

■ The online 'HER' for Durham and Northumberland is the quite useful [Keys to the Past](#). This is a really quite cut down version of the HER lacking many bibliographical references but has been around for some time and, considering the size of these two counties HERs, does represent some considerable work. However, for some reason, the urls to the various individual site pages were all changed (the site design has not altered) breaking all my links. These have been repaired in bulk and seem to now work although I've not individually checked all the several hundred links.

■ Robin Page, of Historic England, kindly took the time to let me know of a recent Historic England Research Report on the medieval



graffiti in Carlisle Castle, (Sou, L. 2016, *A survey of the historic carvings at Carlisle Castle, Cumbria, using Structure-from-Motion photogrammetry and terrestrial laser scans* ([Historic England Research Report 53/2016](#)))

■ Simon Taylor, the guardian of [Paul Holme Tower](#) in East Yorkshire, has kept me up to date with the progress in restoring and repairing this fascinating brick manor house. I have to thank Simon for this and for his earlier permission for me to view and photograph the tower. I hope that when the restoration work is finished (due in the autumn of 2017) I will be able to again look at the site.

■ The National Trust's conservation management plan for Bodiam Castle (by the Drury McPherson Partnership) is available online (it's [a large pdf file](#)). The nearly 200 pages contains much valuable information.

■ Roger Wilson has sent me another set of sites to consider, this time in Shropshire and all moated sites. The difficulty here is moated sites are numerous but do these count as 'fortified manor houses' in a meaningful way. For me to count as such they ought to be manorial, that is the home of someone who is, or who represents, a lord of a manor with judicial power even before one gives consideration as to whether the site is 'fortified' (whatever that term means and after 20+ years of study I still don't really know). This then excludes the 'homestead' moats of the wealthier peasantry, although some of these were bigger and more impressive than 'real' fortified manor houses'. However it isn't always straight forward to make such an identification so Gatehouse does include a number of homestead moats and, I'm sure, misses a large number of moated manor houses which some might consider to be fortified.

■ Looking at Charles Holloway's paper 'The lost towers of John de Vere the 13th Earl of Oxford' in latest volume of *The Castle*

Studies Group Journal (Vol. 30 for 2016-17 pp. 263-280) I noted an unfortunate error slightly marring an otherwise excellent paper. Charles misidentified the late 15th house of Sir Thomas Lovell as [Berdewell Hall](#) (a lost house on the site now occupied by West Harling Hall) whereas it was a different lost house, in the same parish, called East Harling Hall. This was certainly a house deserving of being considered as a fortified manor house and I've added a record for it.

■ There have been a few other small changes and additions to bibliographical references probably most notably in the castles due to be visited in the forthcoming Castle Studies Group conference in North Yorkshire and the records for those castles and houses may yet be further updated prior to that conference and again after the conference as I consider the undoubted new insights I will gain from the conference and site visits.

New Sites Added:

- [East Harling Hall](#) - added as a possible fortified manor house. From Roger Wilson
 - Chidleys Farm Moated Site - added as a questionable FMH.
 - Pool Hall moated site - added as a possible FMH.
 - The Bower moated site - added as a questionable FMH.
- All in Shropshire.

Philip Davis



I've been rather enjoying Dr Liv Gibbs contributions to Twitter [@DrLivGibbs](#) which have included a number of antiquarian paintings of castles including this one of Canterbury Castle, Kent by Jonathan Skelton 1757 ([@YaleBritishArt](#)).