



Gatehouse

Gatehouse News

28 May 2014

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

With the lengthening of the days and the reopening of many castles closed over the winter I'm getting out on site visits. Gatehouse is not a photographic resource but I do take photographs at the sites I visit and these can be found at Andrew Herrett's [CastleFacts](#) website, My last pictures being of [Bronsil Castle](#), where the bright low sunshine rather spoils the pictures, and, taken just an hour later, [Castlemorton motte](#), where a icy sleety rain was the problem and my desire to get back into the dry rather shows in very poor quality photos.

These visits, together with a few other things, has slowed progress with the ongoing revision of the Gatehouse database but I'm continuing to work through the records for Northumberland.

However, I have made a few improvements. I think it was while I was at the Castle Studies



[Castlemorton motte](#), Worcestershire

Group Conference in Belfast, or possible while in Worcestershire at the Medieval Settlement Research Group conference, I was informed about the [National Library of Scotland online map images](#). Normally Gatehouse doesn't have much to do with Scotland but this excellent resource has high resolution scans of the earlier editions of the Ordnance Survey Six-Inch maps for the whole of England and Wales (and numerous other early maps). I've added a button on the site pages which will take you to a page with a basic google map over-laid in red, clicking on the centre of this map will open a selection of the OS Six-Inch maps in a column on the right and clicking on one of these will open the scan of that map, although you will then need to pan around the map to get to the specific site. Having a selection of maps of different ages is invaluable as can be seen at the [Burnmouth bastle](#) where the changes between the map surveyed in 1862 and that of 1896 and most illustrative.



[Bronsil Castle](#), Herefordshire



Mexborough OS Six-Inch map surveyed 1849-50 published 1854.
The place-name is now spelt with an extra 'o' usually a southern spelling.

For my own local castle at [Mexborough](#), a motte and bailey important in the history of castle studies because it was an significant site both for George Clark's and Ella Armitage's theories of the castle, the exceptional early survey of Yorkshire (1849-50) is really fascinating showing not only the north-western bailey (a feature now almost entirely lost) but also hints of a road and old crossing point of the River Don directly below the castle, something that does not show up on later maps.

My thanks go to Richard Nevell for letting me know that the Suffolk Institute for Archaeology

and History have put all their *Proceedings* ... [online](#). Praise has to been given to SIAH for doing this and for doing such good quality scans in a text searchable format. The SIAH joins the growing of learned societies that have put their journals online a trend one can only hope all societies will follow. The [Gatehouse page for journals](#) was last updated at the beginning of the year and I will update it again fairly soon but please do let me know of anything I've missed, broken links etc. I've added links to the online copies of the relevant articles on the site pages. One article of particular note to me, with my interest in licences to crenellate is Sue Andrews and



Pond Hall, Suffolk

Photo from Strutt and Parker estate agents brochure

Rosemary Hoppitt article on [Pond Hall](#), a house licenced in 1371 (Andrews, S. and Hoppitt, R., 2011, 'Helming Leget, Royal Servant, and a possible designed landscape at Pond Hall, Hadleigh' *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History* Vol. 42.3 p. 300-324).

NEW SITES ADDED

All coming out of the researches for Northumberland and, more generally, bastles.

- [Hepple Woodside](#). A dubious reference to a 14th century tower, probably an error for the surviving tower at [Hepple](#).
- [Low Park, Raise](#). A possible bastle in Cumbria, mentioned, without detail, in Jessop and Matthew, 2013, *Alston Moor, Cumbria: Buildings in a North Pennines landscape* (English Heritage) (there may be a couple more sites mentioned which I need to investigate and obtain some detail of).
- [Dunstead](#). A possible lost bastle.
- [Whitton The Pines](#). A grade 2 listed house which may have a bastle at its core.
- [Lingyclose Bastle 2](#). A certain bastle adjoining [Lingyclose Bastle 1](#) and previously detailed under that site.
- [Holehouse, Wark](#).
- [Longlee, Wark](#).
- [Bridge House, Wark](#).
- [High Green Farm](#). These four site all come from a footnote in MacLauchlan, H., 1867, *Notes not included in the memoirs already published on Roman roads in Northumberland: taken during a survey made by direction of the Duke of Northumberland* (London) p. 73 where he reports a list of 'Pele Towers' given to him by

an old resident. I consider these were all actually pele-houses (i.e. bastles).

- [Burnmouth Bastle 2](#). In Peter Ryder's report on [Burnmouth Bastle 1](#) he notes another nearby ruined building, although he felt neither really looked like a bastle.

CONISBROUGH CASTLE



[Conisbrough Castle](#) has reopened after a £1.1 million redevelopment of visitor facilities and interpretation tools which I won't detail here although it is generally a great improvement. However one feature is a cut away model of the great tower which features a fourth floor above the current principle chamber. This interpretation, which conflicts strongly with that given by Stephen Brindley in 2012 *Château Gailliard* article, is not, as I had initial thought, an old idea that had missed Stephen article but a deliberate rejection of of his interpretation the there was a sunken conical roof, containing a domed ceiling (c.f. Orford Castle), and a statement that there was a fourth floor. I have to say my opinion is Stephen is basically correct here and the fourth floor is (like that at Hedingham, the Tower of London, Carrickfergus etc.), at best, a much later insertion or a misinterpretation of the scanty and much 'repaired' remains at that level. Unfortunately most of the vital evidence is hidden under the modern roof and not visible. What do you think?