



Gatehouse

Gatehouse News

6 November 2015

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

Since 2009, every October, Historic England (formerly English Heritage) produce a set of regional booklet outlining the historically important building and sites 'at risk' -that is 'the sites most at risk and most in need of safeguarding for the future'. These are freely

published online as *The Heritage At Risk Register* (see [Historic England](#)). I've tried, annually, to add the references to these registers to the Gatehouse bibliography and also detail the changes in small articles published in the *Castle Studies Group Bulletin*¹.

This year I've decided to add a new page to Gatehouse that lists the site that are, or have been, on the Register. This list can be seen at <http://www.gatehouse-gazetteer.info/Indexes/HRRindex.html>. This is not the prettiest of such listings and there is room for improvement (suggestions on what and how most welcome) but it does give a quick reference point.

Firstly the good news. Year on year the Gatehouse listed sites on the Register have fallen by 2 to 5% each and every year down from 320 in 2009 to 262 this year. How much this is due to improved stewardship and how much to reduced monitoring is a question



Top left- Kettlethorpe Hall
Top right - Baginton Castle
Right - Astley Castle



¹ See [Castle Studies Group Bulletin Sept 2015 pp. 13-14](#); [Castle Studies Group Bulletin April 2014 p. 6](#); [Castle Studies Group Bulletin April 2013 pp. 13-14](#).

beyond my scope to answer although I am sure the answer is not a simple one. Certainly there are a number of fine examples of improved stewardship; [Astley Castle](#) (converted into an award winning Landmark Trust holiday home in 2012 is a fine example of skilled reuse of an historic building); [Baginton Castle](#) (a.k.a. [Bagot's Castle](#)) a great example of foundations and earthworks presented in an accessible manner by a group of volunteers; [Coquet Island Tower](#) conserved, even though little visited; etc.

There do also continue to be a number of sites and buildings on the Register which leave me with questions about the protection of such sites; Warwick Castle, managed by Merlin Entertainment Group, had the 'uninhabited parts' put on the Register in 2012 because of 'Moderate visitor erosion' its condition being 'Generally unsatisfactory with major localised problems' and a 'Declining' trend a state that still exists (current adult admission charge for the castle is £24.60 - visitor numbers are in the hundred of thousands.)

At the other end of upstanding remains, the scant relic of the gatehouse of [Kettlethorpe Hall](#) has been on the Register from 2009 and at risk well before that date. 2009 was the year the owner, Douglas Hogg, claimed £2200, as part of his expenses as an MP, for the cleaning of the associated moat although there doesn't



Bing air photo of Hawton moat

seem to any suggestion this money was intend to be used to preserve the historic ruins. I intend to continue to write the somewhat more detailed report of the changes in this years Register which will be submitted to the Castle Studies Group for publication.

Following on from the last newsletter I realised I'd missed *Hector of ye harlawe* ([Harelaw Tower](#)) from my listing of places marked on the Aglionby Platt. This has now been corrected. I've also added a transcription of Thomas Musgrave's 1583 letter to Lord Burghley 'on the Border Riders' to the [Platt home page](#). This is an important resource for working out the occupiers of the buildings shown on Aglionby's map but is also, for people like me who had a secondary school experience of miserable red 'sp' marks on all my written work, a great example of the flexible use and development of English spelling.

I've done a few bits of tidying up of some pages on Gatehouse.

I've check the [links page](#) (last done 6 months ago) but was happily surprised to see how many site urls have remained stable and how few changes I needed to make.

The '[Other Resources](#)' page has been slightly changed and expanded to make it a bit more easy to read (I hope).

NEW SITE

Dave, of [Abarothsworld](#), kindly informed me of the large manorial moat at [Hawton](#), just south of Newark, Nottinghamshire. The reuse of this late medieval moated manor house as a Civil War redoubt seems to have led to this site being rather overlooked by the recorders of medieval fortifications, although it seems to have been a little known site anyway (The 1st edition OS map does not show it and, presumably, the earlier OS archaeological surveyors had over looked it.). However this was a large medieval moat of a sort very similar to many 'fortified manor houses' recorded in Gatehouse so I've added it as a possible fortified manor house.

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