



Gatehouse

# Gatehouse News

1 May 2013

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

Following on from the Isle of Wight update of the last newsletter the last couple of months has been spent on reviewing and revising the castles and rather numerous palaces (mainly hunting lodges) of mainland [Hampshire](#).

Hampshire presents a number of interesting aspects for castle studies:

- There is relatively high concentration of ringwork castles in the county with 9 or 10 out of 18 such castles being ringworks. Normally it is suggested about 20% of the Norman castles of England were ringworks although my count is nearer to 30% (generally it assumed all the lost or very damaged sites had mottes and this assumption inflates the proportion of mottes)
- Most of the county was royal forest and contained a large number of hunting lodges. Some of these were probably the residence and offices of the royal foresters but a number were royal residences and while these don't survive well there are some good historical records with the Pipe Roll record of 1285 for a lodge in Woolmer Forest being notably full (transcribed in Turner and Parker [Some account of Domestic Architecture in England](#) (Oxford: 1851)) where the accounts include two *garderobis* translated as 'wardrobe' but, in the context of building work probably box latrines showing this euphemism is quite old (Latham's *Revised Medieval Latin Word-List* gives 1313 as the earliest use of *garderoba* for privy).



Portsmouth Round Tower.

Photo by [zabdiel](#)

- As a south coast county facing France Hampshire has some fine coastal artillery forts of many ages including one of the earliest surviving examples in the [Round Tower at Portsmouth](#), dating from the early C15.

A couple of castles that caught my attention were [Barley Pound](#) and [Powderham Castle](#), near Crondall. In 1971 David Cathcart King and Derek Renn identified the first as *Lidelea* and the second (along with a third site at [Bentley](#)) as siege castles dating from 1147 and recorded in the *Gesta Stephani*. The identification of the large ringwork and baileys of Barley Pound, which may have had a masonry great tower, as *Lidelea* seems quite reasonable but Powderham Castle, which is a small motte possibly within an ditch enclosure, may be something other than just a siege work. A conjectural reconstruction of the early manors of Crondall suggest that Barley Pound was the manor house of a linear N-S manor running from Crondall village and parish church in the north down to Barley Pound with

another similar linear manor adjacent to the east. This would make Powderham Castle a possible manor house for that eastern manor and while this does not exclude that manor house being occupied, used and possibly modified as a siege work it could be the motte was a more symbolic statement made by the holder of that manor as 'keeping up the Jones's' type statement to the neighbouring Barley Pound. (See 1998, [Cronall Historic Rural Settlement](#), unfortunately I can only seem to identify the initials IH as the author of this work.)

In the list of medieval fortification that the Hampshire county archaeologist sent me was a possible early [artillery fort and harbour boom](#) I'd not previously come across at Hamble le Rice. "Documentary source refers to a the presence of a small wooden fort, built at Oyster Hard, in the C15. It was one end of a chain 'boom defense' which stretched across the river. In 1922 part of the large iron chain was found (no source given)." A little further online investigation brought the suggestion that this was built by William Soper, the shipwright of Henry V's Grace Dieu and was designed to protect his fitting out yards on the Hamble. Unfortunately there my investigations ground to a halt. I've been unable to identify the primary source and the exact wording used to describe this fort and chain. The location is also only approximately identified although if there were a chain this does exclude it being an earlier phase for [St Andrews Castle](#), the artillery fort of Henry VIII. Any further information or suggestions as to where to look for further information are most welcome.

Another site added is the 11th century [Winchester Palace](#). I had previously mentioned this in relation to Winchester Castle but it really needed an entry in its own right. This was the palace of West Saxon kings within Winchester just north of the cathedral but continued to be used after the Conquest, indeed William I may have extended it in 1070 possibly while the castle was being built. This

brings into question what the differences in function were between the palace within the town and the castle, on the edge of the town? When the palace was destroyed in the 1140s it was not replaced and the castle took over all its functions but, by then, Westminster had become the prime seat of government administration and the treasury had moved from Winchester to Westminster.

Moving away from the county of Southampton. A few new books have been added to the bibliography.

- Mike Osborne has written [Defending Essex](#) and [Defending London](#). Both of these are subtitled *The Military Landscape from Prehistory to the Present* and only have a couple of chapters on medieval fortifications. His first book in this series was *Defending Lincolnshire*, was a reasonable text but his real interest is 20th century warfare and this really does show and he explicitly states he focuses on the military aspects of buildings which much limits the interest of his books. The later books seem to show this even more. His castle studies knowledge is pretty dated and boldly stating Colchester Castle was originally two storeys higher shows this. Peter Berridge has now convincingly shown to the castle studies community it was never much higher than it currently is, although it **may** have been **intended** to be **one** storey higher.
- Mike Salter has produced [Medieval Walled Towns](#). Those familiar with Mike's castle guides will know exactly what to expect from this although by putting all the walled towns of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland in the one volume he has produced a much thicker book than the other guides (224 pages). These are very much tourist guides, without proper references but with good, if sometimes elderly, descriptions and histories generally derived from VCH, Pevsner or other such and his own plans which, in this volume, are all done at the same scale giving a very quick visual comparison of the size of towns. *Medieval Walled Towns* continues

with a focus on military defense but has some mention of control of markets and toll collection but very little about the complex idea of expression of civic pride and status that perhaps better explains the more subtle and elaborate features of town defences. Salter texts are useful as onsite guidebooks but as mobile internet devices become more available and as open access publishing become more the norm it may be pretty soon that such guides become obsolete.

- A very different kind of book is Paul Martin Remfry's [Harlech Castle and its True Origins](#) which is full of original research and scholarship. However this, basically self published book, does suffer from production values and the rich number of photographs use to illustrate the surviving remains of the original welsh stone castle built into the Edwardian castle would have been better in colour and modern plans showing his idea of phasing are really needed.

### New sites added

in Hampshire

- [Winchester Palace\(s\)](#) - The Saxon palace used up to the Conquest and the extension built by William I in 1070.
- [Lyndens Bulwark](#) - A timber bulwark of 1539 that was a supplementary defence for the blockhouse at [Gosport](#).
- [Hamble River fort and chain tower](#) - as above

From Mike Salter's *Medieval Walled Towns*

- [Broadstairs York Gate](#) - Congratulations have to go to Mike for identifying this site missed by the usual authorities (notable [Bond](#)). The archaeological databases, seemingly working from Pevsner (authored by John Newman in Kent) record this as an arch, which may be why it has been overlooked, but there seems no reason to not think this much modified feature started as a defensive C16 gate as recorded by Kent county historian Edward Hasted.

Gatehouse is benefits greatly from the help of many people who have my [thanks](#). This issue I'd particularly like to thank Alex Bellisario, of



York Gate Broadstairs  
From [Old UK Photos](#)

the Hampshire AHBR, who went rather further than is usual (although I should say generally county archaeologists are very helpful) in answering some of my enquires and Richard Nevell who let me know of several changes in online source, notably for updates on the reports from Wessex Archaeology, particularly that produced for Time Team about [Hopton Castle](#).