

**THE IDEA OF THE CASTLE  
IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND**

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## ABSTRACT

The castle has long been regarded as a practical, military architecture, introduced by the Normans as a tool of feudal control. More recently, castles have been accorded a certain symbolic significance, expressing military and political power. However, this thesis argues that the castle was a meaningful architecture in a much more sophisticated sense than these arguments admit. It discovers complex iconographies of meaning in castle architecture through examination of castle imagery in a wide range of textual and visual sources, and in the architecture of castles themselves.

The Introduction reviews the different approaches which medieval architecture of different kinds has attracted in modern criticism. An interdisciplinary approach is advocated, which uses a wide range of sources to build up a composite understanding of architectural meanings. Chapter 1 problematises accepted definitions of the castle which, through their rigidity, obscure the castle's ideological significance. Linguistic and archaeological arguments are employed to show that the medieval understanding of the word 'castle' was more flexible than is usually recognised. Subsequent chapters explore particular implications of this flexible understanding of castle architecture within its cultural context. Chapter 2 challenges the idea that the castle was necessarily a private fortification, investigating its use in the construction of civic identity. Chapter 3 discovers affinities between ecclesiastical and castle architecture at practical and ideological levels, revealing the castle's role in medieval Biblical interpretation. Chapter 4 explores the imperial and historical connotations of castles, noting their frequent association with evidence of the Roman occupation of Britain. These medieval ideas of the castle present an architecture with important historical, spiritual and civic symbolisms expressed through a complex architectural iconography. This understanding underlines the importance not only of the idea of the castle, but of the role of architecture in linking the material, the intellectual and the aesthetic in medieval culture.

‘The tumultuous readyng of divers volumes or bookes is also noyous. Also great or carefull studye is like wise hurtefull, in as much as it is not without an earnest & greedye desyre’.

*The Castel of Memorie, Englished by Willyam Fulwod*  
(London, 1562), Epilogue.

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## 0. INTRODUCTION

### 0.0 PREFACE

The castle had a dominant presence in medieval society, both physically and ideologically. Controlled by the elite, castles towered over medieval villages and towns and were sites of judgement and administrative control. However, castles were also depicted over and over again in the medieval arts as heraldic devices (see illustration 1), as pastry or paper table decorations,<sup>1</sup> as ornamental pots,<sup>2</sup> on seals (see illustration 28) and as large-scale props in pageants (see illustration 2). They featured figuratively in sermons,<sup>3</sup> theological treatises<sup>4</sup> and religious lyrics<sup>5</sup> and in fantastic manuscript marginalia (see illustration 3), as well as in the more familiar contexts of romance and chronicle. To a scholar used to modern disciplinary divisions, these ephemeral, miniature and symbolic castles may seem to have little to do with stone-and-mortar fortresses. However, from a wider cultural perspective, a paper castle table decoration and a lord's defended residence have something in common. They are both identified as castles and so express some shared medieval idea of 'castle-ness'. They participate in a common category which spans many media and meanings throughout the medieval period. It is this shared contemporary idea of the castle which I address in this thesis. I wish to discover what it is that these very different castles have in common.

The castles of the medieval landscape are, by definition, defensive architectural forms. They are basically built with military functions in mind. It is from this point of view that they have most often been approached in modern scholarship. This is, perhaps, the quintessential idea that the medieval castle communicates. Small-scale decorative depictions of castles communicate defensive functions just as well as the full-scale, practical architecture of the medieval castle. Pageant castles are constructed

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<sup>1</sup> See M. Andrew and R. Waldron (ed.), *The Poems of the Pearl Manuscript: Pearl, Cleanness, Patience, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, (Exeter, 1987, repr.1994), 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight', l.802, p.238; 'Cleanness', ll.1407-12, p.168; Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. L.D. Benson, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1987, repr.1992), 'The Parson's Tale', l.443, p.301; R.W. Ackerman, "'Pared out of Paper": Gawain 802 and Purity 1408', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 56 (1957): 410-7.

<sup>2</sup> N.H. Nichols (ed.), *Testamenta Vetusta: Being Illustrations from Wills, of Manners, Customs, &c. As well as of the Descents & Possessions of Many Distinguished Families. From the Reign of Henry the Second to the Accession of Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1826), p.325.

<sup>3</sup> G.R. Owst, *Literature and the Pulpit in Medieval England*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1961), pp.77-85.

<sup>4</sup> R.D. Cornelius, *The Figurative Castle: A Study in the Mediaeval Allegory of the Edifice with Especial Reference to Religious Writings: A Dissertation* (Bryn Mawr, PA, 1930).

<sup>5</sup> See (?)William of Shoreham, 'A Song to Mary', in *Medieval English Lyrics: A Critical Anthology*, ed. R.T. Davies, (London, 1966, repr. 1971), l.57, p.105.

to enable the enactment of mock sieges (see illustration 2), actively imitating the function of defence. Other depictions of castles also reproduce architectural features such as arrow-slits and crenellations which cannot actually be used for practical purposes, but which are descriptive reminders of the defensive function of the castle. The practical use of these defensive features is negligible in these representations of castle architecture. However, the idea of defence is communicated just as effectively in these depictions as it is in the stone-and-mortar castles of the medieval landscape.

Because defence is such a practical consideration, rooted in engineering, technology and military strategy, however, it has not often occurred to scholars to treat it as an idea. It is examined as a function of castle architecture and as a practical consideration of castle architects, but it has only recently begun to be considered as an abstract concept which can be communicated ideologically. For this reason, the ideological aspect of castle architecture has been lost to scholarship until recently. But the many medieval depictions and descriptions of castles have also been excluded from consideration, because they lack this practical defensive capability.

I argue in this thesis that the castle can be viewed from an ideological perspective which integrates the structural, visual and textual evidence. In this endeavour, however, I have had to overcome many methodological and critical problems associated with the traditional emphasis on defence as the primary attribute of the medieval castle. I have instead sought different approaches and different ideas which allow a cross-cultural appreciation of the castle. This seemed a necessary strategy in avoiding the fraught subject of defence and military practicalities. However, it has meant that the idea of defence has become only a minor interest in this study.

This may at first look like a grave oversight. However, medieval architecture provides a venerable precedent for such an approach. Medieval ecclesiastical architecture has long been understood as a meaningful architecture, which operates at an ideological as well as a practical level. It is appreciated as the highest physical skill of its period, but also a vessel for the most important religious ideas and beliefs. The ultimate idea communicated by such architecture is, naturally enough, religious. It is built to accommodate religious ceremonies and its characteristic features communicate this religious function to the observer. A spire or a crocketed pinnacle immediately communicates the idea of religious architecture, even to a modern eye. However, historians of ecclesiastical architecture generally do not spend long discussing the simple ideological principle of religion. They engage with the particular nuances of

theological movements, of stylistic expression and of structural typologies. The concept that ecclesiastical architecture communicates the idea of religion is so basic as to be a truism. It is so well understood that it is not worth stating.

The discussion of castle architecture has not yet reached this exalted state of ideological discussion. The concept of defence is still worth mentioning as the basic idea which castle architecture communicates. However, while it may be the basis for all the ideas associated with the medieval castle, it does not seem to me a good starting point to open up discussion on the topic. Like the principle of religion in relation to the meaning of ecclesiastical architecture, it is too basic to encompass the variations and subtleties of the ideology. My discussion of the idea of the castle therefore concentrates on much more specific themes and ideas, leaving defence to the more traditional castle scholars. I see no reason why the castle, an architectural form as sophisticated in its own terms as medieval ecclesiastical architecture, should not be understood as a meaningful architecture in a similar way. I have therefore set about identifying and discussing texts, images and ideas which reveal the more complex symbolic and ideological connotations of the castle.

Some studies of the castle have already been made with similar intentions in mind.<sup>6</sup> For me, however, much of this work has served to highlight the need for a more comprehensively interdisciplinary approach. For example, the volume *The Medieval Castle: Romance and Reality* contains work from an interdisciplinary conference of the same name held in 1983.<sup>7</sup> The range of topics and approaches is wide. There is an empirical study on the cost of castle building.<sup>8</sup> This jostles alongside more speculative architectural approaches, one comparing castle and church building around the time of the Conquest, another considering the castle-like qualities of fortified houses and monastic granges.<sup>9</sup> On the literary side there is a comparison of castles in medieval French literature with French and English castle buildings and a study of Celtic otherworld motifs in castles of Middle English Arthurian Romance.<sup>10</sup> Art History makes

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<sup>6</sup> I mention further examples in the course of the Introduction.

<sup>7</sup> K. Reyerson and F. Powe (ed.), *The Medieval Castle: Romance and Reality* (Dubuque, IA, 1984).

<sup>8</sup> B.S. Bachrach, 'The Cost of Castle Building: The Case of the Tower at Langeais, 992-994', *ibid.*, pp.47-62.

<sup>9</sup> S. Bonde, 'Castle and Church Building at the Time of the Norman Conquest'; M.A. Dean., 'Early Fortified Houses: Defenses and Castle Imagery Between 1275 and 1350 with Evidence from the Southeast Midlands'; *ibid.*, pp.79-96; 147-74.

<sup>10</sup> W. van Emden, 'The Castle in Some Works of Medieval French Literature'; M.A. Whitaker, 'Otherworld Castles in Middle English Arthurian Romance'; *ibid.*, pp.1-26; 27-46.

its way into discussions of castles in Gothic manuscript painting and Malory's castles in text and illustration.<sup>11</sup>

This range of approaches and topics is impressively broad and the individual papers are often innovative and revealing. However, there seems to me a lack of integration at several levels in this volume. Different kinds of material are often laid alongside one another in articles and their likeness or unlikeness discussed; limited typologies are formed in some cases. But these do not pose, or answer, the more fundamental questions about the nature of the castle as a cross-cultural, even interdisciplinary, phenomenon in itself. Nor do they address the complexities of the relationship between architecture, text and image in the Middle Ages. The same might be said of the whole volume. Individual articles sometimes share themes or approaches with others, but there is no attempt to make connections between them. The subject-matter of the volume is very interesting, but the piecemeal approach prevents the formation of any wider conclusions about the castle and its role in medieval life and thought. Medieval castles seem to me an appropriate subject for a more thoroughly integrated interdisciplinary approach.

These criticisms are offered only to illustrate the gaps in scholarship which this thesis addresses. Studies such as *The Medieval Castle: Romance and Reality* have played an invaluable role in drawing attention to the range of issues and approaches through which the medieval castle can be studied. They also importantly highlight areas which others, such as myself, could usefully target.

For these reasons this thesis aims at a thorough integration of material and approaches pertaining to three different disciplines. Literature, art history and archaeology are all important aspects of my approach. My methodology is drawn mainly from these disciplines and my subject matter covers the idea of the castle in medieval writing and thought, in art and in architectural practice. I have committed myself throughout this project to approaching these different disciplines on their own terms. This has necessarily thrown up many contradictions and inconsistencies. However, these difficulties have often turned out to be the creations of modern methodological quirks. My material is, after all, the product of a highly complex and integrated society in which no artefact was produced in cultural isolation. Connections, allusions and resonances are, I believe, to be expected everywhere. Unravelling the

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<sup>11</sup> A.D. McKenzie, 'French Medieval Castles in Gothic Manuscript Painting'; B. Gaines, 'Malory's Castles in Text and Illustration'; *ibid.*, pp.199-214; 215-28.

history of these different disciplines has enabled me to appreciate their present relationships and to choose approaches which aid comparison and mutual comprehension.

It is only because of recent developments in scholarship, like those I have mentioned above, that I have been able to apply an interdisciplinary approach to castles and their symbolism in medieval England. Castles have for a long time been excluded both from the mainstream of medieval architectural studies and from any ideological or symbolic significance. Ecclesiastical and military architecture have traditionally been treated quite separately, both in terms of their architecture and their functions. The obvious differences between a cathedral and a castle have resulted in the one being studied largely as an exercise in spirituality and aesthetics, the other as piece of purely practical military engineering.

## 0.1 HISTORIOGRAPHY

The nineteenth-century scholar Thomas Rickman developed a vocabulary for dating and describing medieval architecture (Decorated, Perpendicular and so on) exclusively for the study of ecclesiastical buildings.<sup>12</sup> This basic taxonomy has remained the mainstay of medieval architectural scholarship. Rickman's typology encourages the comparison of architectural form and detail in the establishment of chronological and stylistic patterns. This can be directed towards stylistic analysis of decorative features such as moulding forms or of iconographic schemes of sculpture or painting. It may also include formal analysis of the structure, materials and form of a building. Historical documents which help to illuminate dating, construction details or patronage have always played an important part in this typological analysis.<sup>13</sup>

Interest in building processes and materials resulted in the development of an archaeological approach to medieval architecture epitomised by Warwick Rodwell.<sup>14</sup> In

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<sup>12</sup> See T. Rickman, *An Attempt to Discriminate the Styles of Architecture in England from the Conquest to the Reformation* (London, 1819).

<sup>13</sup> For a summary of developments in ecclesiastical architectural history, see E. Fernie, 'Contrasts in Methodology and Interpretation of Medieval Ecclesiastical Architecture', *The Archaeological Journal* 145 (1988): 344-64.

<sup>14</sup> See, for example, W. Rodwell, *The Archaeology of the English Church: The Study of Historic Churches and Churchyards* (London, 1981); *English Heritage Book of Church Archaeology* (London, 1989); 'Church Archaeology in Retrospect and Prospect', in J. Blair and C. Pyrah (ed.), *Church*

this form of investigation the building is analysed and stripped back according to the 'value free' systems employed in archaeological digs, whereby every feature is deemed to have equal value and recorded carefully.<sup>15</sup> The social and intellectual implications of medieval architecture have also been added to this list of approaches. Peter Kidson was instrumental in introducing this development and its results can be seen clearly in the work of subsequent scholars such as Richard Gem, Paul Crossley and Christopher Wilson.<sup>16</sup> Perhaps the most impressive synthesis by one individual of all these techniques of architectural analysis is demonstrated by Paul Binski.<sup>17</sup> In the work of all these scholars, architecture is seen as an art form responsive to, and inspiring, other modes of creative expression, religious thought, social movements and intellectual trends.<sup>18</sup>

Castles, however, have remained at the fringes of such developments until relatively recently. As military buildings were excluded from the typology of medieval architecture, they did not obviously fit into the mainstream of formal and typological discussion. Separate formal typologies and chronologies had to be devised for castle architecture by specialist castle scholars. The circumstantial lack in extant castles of surviving decoration and iconographic schemes has often discouraged the inclusion of castles in important architectural studies. Exceptions are sometimes made for features such as mouldings, doors and windows and chapels, which are deemed to fit into ecclesiastical patterns. However it has also been hard to include castles in ideological and textual debates. The theological texts cited in relation to church architecture have seemed irrelevant to castles. Castles have also been deemed to lack architectural

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*Archaeology: Directions for the Future*, Council for British Archaeology Research Report 104 (1996), pp.197-202.

<sup>15</sup> Fernie, 'Contrasts in Methodology and Interpretation of Medieval Ecclesiastical Architecture', p.345.

<sup>16</sup> See *ibid.*, p.357; P. Kidson, P. Murray and P.R. Thompson (ed.), *A History of English Architecture* (Harmondsworth, 1965); P. Kidson, E.C. Fernie and P. Crossley (ed.), *Medieval Architecture and its Intellectual Context: Essays in Honour of Peter Kidson* (London, 1990); C. Wilson, *The Gothic Cathedral: The Architecture of the Great Church, 1130-1530* (London, 1990); R. Gem, 'Towards an Iconography of Anglo-Saxon Architecture', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 46 (1983): 1-18; 'Lincoln Minster: Ecclesia Pulchra, Ecclesia Fortis', in T.A. Heslop and V.A. Sekules (ed.), *Medieval Art and Architecture at Lincoln Cathedral*, British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions 8 (1986), pp. 9-28.

<sup>17</sup> His most impressive volume is P. Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power, 1200-1400* (New Haven, CT, and London, 1995).

<sup>18</sup> For a more detailed analysis of developments in the methodological development of ecclesiastical architecture, I refer readers to R. Krautheimer, 'Introduction to an Iconography of Medieval Architecture', *Studies in Early Christian, Medieval and Renaissance Art* (1969): 115-150; Fernie, 'Contrasts in Methodology and Interpretation of Medieval Ecclesiastical Architecture'; 'Archaeology and Iconography: Recent Developments in the Study of English Medieval Architecture', *Architectural History* 32 (1989): 18-29.

evidence of aesthetic or intellectual implications. Through their exclusion from the mainstream architectural typology, castles have also been excluded from notice as important medieval architectural achievements.

It is fair to say that ecclesiastical architectural historians have consistently been at the forefront of new thinking on medieval architecture, because they have worked on the symbolic and iconographic elements which castles have appeared to lack. Partly as a result of this, there are still few scholars who work both on medieval defensive and ecclesiastical buildings. Such attitudes have been perpetuated by the dominant attitudes within castle studies. The military concerns which first prompted academic interest in castles have been a persistent force. For obvious reasons they have only increased the division which architectural historians originally made between ecclesiastical and defensive architecture.

George T. Clark might be classed as the Thomas Rickman of medieval castle architecture. His book of 1884, entitled *Mediaeval Military Architecture in England*,<sup>19</sup> classified castles within a typological system. Rickman's architectural periods represent successively more complex and daring feats of architectural engineering, but Rickman also identifies and discusses them in aesthetic terms, as changes of style. Clark identified changes of form in his castle typology, but saw technological developments as the sole motivation for developments in castle building. His typology represents what he took to be successive stages in the evolution of military engineering. Changes were, for him, due to advances in defensive strategy, or to changing military conditions, rather than to stylistic or aesthetic considerations. By these solely military criteria, the more lightly defended residences of the later Middle Ages could only be viewed as a sad falling-off from the technological achievements of previous years.

An early voice in opposing Clark's views, Ella Armitage was responsible for introducing an element of social and political analysis into the discussion of castle types. In her book of 1912, *The Early Norman Castles of the British Isles*, Armitage employed a wide variety of evidence including charters and other documents, visual depictions and arguments drawn from linguistics and sociology. Her most prominent contribution was the demonstration that the motte and bailey was a form associated exclusively with the Normans<sup>20</sup> (Clark had thought it an Anglo-Saxon form of

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<sup>19</sup> G.T. Clark, *Mediaeval Military Architecture in England* (London, 1884).

<sup>20</sup> E.S. Armitage, *The Early Norman Castles of the British Isles* (London, 1912); R. Eales, 'Royal Power and Castles in Norman England', *The Ideals and Practice of Medieval Knighthood* 3 (1990): 49-78; p.50-1.

defence). Armitage argued that the change to the feudal system at the Conquest was given material expression in the motte-and-bailey castle. She saw the castle as a private fortification for the protection of the ruling feudal elite, in opposition to the Anglo-Saxon *burh* which, she argued, was built as a communal defence for the people.<sup>21</sup> She connected this complete social change to the introduction of the new word *castel* to England (and English) from the French. She would only use this term to describe fortresses built from the time of the Conquest onwards.

In challenging Clark's definition of the castle, and in defining it herself as a private, feudal and originally Norman form, Armitage was entirely successful in the view of the next generation of castle scholars and subsequent definitions of the medieval castle were based on her suggestions. O'Neil agreed in 1954 that 'it is now clear that the term "castle" should not properly be applied to any structure in the British Isles, whether of earth or stone, erected before the Conquest'.<sup>22</sup> R. Allen Brown repeated the same sentiment in various versions between 1969 and 1992, and acknowledged his debt to Armitage in this:<sup>23</sup>

The castle... was a residential fortress, the fortified residence of a lord, and in that sense was private as opposed to communal or public... Castles... are the perfect architectural expression of feudal lordship of which they were the conscious symbol as well as much of the substance.<sup>24</sup>

Armitage's views thus gained wide acceptance in castle studies, while the influence of Clark's emphasis on military and engineering concerns also survived. Brown himself was the first of a new generation of castle scholars to provide a survey volume, in 1954.<sup>25</sup> Brown relied on evidence of social conditions and relations to reconstruct the changing role of the castle in medieval life. He fitted this evidence to a typology of castle development influenced by the emphasis in ecclesiastical architectural history on form and style.<sup>26</sup> However, *English Medieval Castles* also shows the imprint of Clark's emphasis on progressive military engineering.

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<sup>21</sup> Armitage, *The Early Norman Castles of the British Isles*, p.24.

<sup>22</sup> Five castles built before the Conquest by Duke William's close allies are excepted as being early Norman imports. B.St.J. O'Neil, *Castles* (London, 1954), pp.1-2.

<sup>23</sup> R.A. Brown, 'An Historian's Approach to the Origins of the Castle in England', *The Archaeological Journal* 126 (1969): 131-48, pp.133-4.

<sup>24</sup> R.A. Brown, M. Prestwich and C. Coulson, *Castles: A History and Guide* (Poole, 1980), pp.13-14; see also Brown, 'An Historian's Approach to the Origins of the Castle in England', p.136 and *passim*.

<sup>25</sup> R.A. Brown, *English Medieval Castles* (London, 1954).

<sup>26</sup> R.A. Brown, *Castles from the Air* (Cambridge, 1989), p.1.



Brown begins his account with the Norman motte-and-bailey earthwork topped by its timber tower. Masonry towers gradually replaced these, with both towers and bailey walls eventually built in stone. Shell keeps were a variant, making use of a larger surface area of the restricted motte. As construction in stone became more feasible, tower keeps without mottes took over, combined with stone gatehouses and walls. The 'perfected castle' followed from around 1250 to 1350, with defensive developments such as flanking towers, impregnable gatehouses, concentric defences and machicolations, seen in Edward I's Welsh castles, for example. After this perfection 'the remaining architectural history of the castle is one of rather saddening anti-climax'.<sup>27</sup> The period of decline (1350-1550)<sup>28</sup> saw the construction of elegant but increasingly residential castles such as Bodiam and Nunney.<sup>29</sup>

However, Brown himself admits that castle typology derived from Clark is flawed in several respects. Clark tied his typology to chronological development, arguing for example that stone walls followed wooden ones, and that round towers followed square ones, because the newer forms were militarily more effective. Detailed dating of many castles has in fact revealed that there is no simple relationship between particular forms and chronologies.<sup>30</sup> Different architectural forms and features came and went for a number of reasons, including aesthetic ones, as my later chapters show. More recent work has continued to question the emphasis placed on military considerations.<sup>31</sup>

Battles continue to be fought over Bodiam Castle in debates as to the extent, or lack, of its military provisions. Scholars cannot agree whether it is a small but well-defended castle, or a miniaturised pastiche of a castle with minimal defensive capabilities.<sup>32</sup> But castles were from the earliest days of the Norman Conquest

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<sup>27</sup> Brown, *English Medieval Castles*, p.89.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p.93.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.93-6.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p.36.

<sup>31</sup> For detailed comment on this subject, see Eales, 'Royal Power and Castles in Norman England'; D. Stocker, 'The Shadow of the General's Armchair', *The Archaeological Journal* 149 (1992): 415-20; C. Coulson, 'The State of Research: Cultural Realities and Reappraisals in English Castle-Study', *Journal of Medieval History* 22 (1996): 171-208.

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, C. Taylor, P. Everson and W.R. Wilson-North, 'Bodiam Castle, Sussex', *Medieval Archaeology* 5 (1961): 169-175; D.J. Turner, 'Bodiam Castle, Sussex: True Castle or Old Soldier's Dream House?', in W.M. Ormrod (ed.), *England in the Fourteenth Century*, Proceedings of the 1985 Harlaxton Symposium (1986), pp. 267-77; C. Coulson, 'Bodiam Castle: Truth and Tradition', *Fortress* 10 (August 1991): 13-15; 'Some Analysis of the Castle of Bodiam, East Sussex', *Medieval Knighthood* 4 (1992): 51-107; C. Whittick, 'Dallingridge's Bay and Bodiam Castle's Millpond - Elements of a Medieval Landscape', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* 131 (1993): 119-23; P. Everson, 'Bodiam Castle, East Sussex: Castle and its Designed Landscape', *Château Gaillard* 17 (1994): 79-84.

residences, centres of local administration and architectural markers of prestige and power. Pure military engineering could not begin to accommodate these important functions. Why should scholars then reject later and more residential buildings from the category of castles when they merely emphasise features already present in earlier castles?

Armitage's depiction of the Conquest as a decisive event in castle history has also come into question. Brian K. Davison has been a key player in this debate, presenting new archaeological evidence to show that Anglo-Saxon *burhs* were not as different from castles as Armitage had assumed.<sup>33</sup> Davison collected evidence which showed that many of the fortresses of the Norman Conquest were in the form of rampart defences or ringworks, not mottes-and-baileys. These ringworks are rather similar in some ways to the ramparted defences of the Anglo-Saxons.<sup>34</sup>

He also drew attention to the lack of mottes in Normandy before the Conquest, as well as transitional motte forms in English Conquest castles such as South Mimms and Eynsford. This evidence, he suggested, showed that the motte was developed during and as a response to the process of Conquest, rather than as a pre-designed form imposed as a mark of feudalism.<sup>35</sup> Davison also noted that the feudalism which Armitage, Brown *et al* used as the defining feature of castles was in itself not a phenomenon which could be pinpointed precisely to the Conquest, but which was, again, the result of a process of assimilation over the period of the Conquest and afterwards.<sup>36</sup>

More recent work has supported the adjustments suggested by Davison and others to the story of castle origins in England. Research into *burh* sites and documents has suggested that Anglo-Saxon *burhs* were not all communal defences or towns as Armitage assumed; many were in fact private defended residences,<sup>37</sup> and may have had many similarities to the castles which came to replace them at the Conquest.<sup>38</sup> They could be fenced or hedged, just as Norman castles were pallisaded or walled. The latest

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<sup>33</sup> B. K. Davison, 'The Origins of the Castle in England: The Institute's Research Project', *The Archaeological Journal* 124 (1967): 202-11. I examine Davison's arguments and other contributions to this debate in the following chapter, 'The Idea of the Castle'.

<sup>34</sup> See D.J.C. King and L. Alcock, 'Ringworks of England and Wales', *Château Gaillard* 3 (1969): 90-127; also Eales, 'Royal Power and Castles in Norman England', p.51.

<sup>35</sup> Davison, 'The Origins of the Castle in England', pp.205, 207 and n.10.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, pp.202-5.

<sup>37</sup> A. Williams, 'A Bell-house and a Burh-geat: Lordly Residences in England before the Norman Conquest', *Medieval Knighthood* 4 (1992): 221-40.

<sup>38</sup> Coulson, 'The State of Research: Cultural Realities and Reappraisals in English Castle-study', pp.172-3.

research on the Anglo-Saxon *burh-geat* suggests that it was probably a substantial tower situated on the wall of the enclosure, which may have influenced the design of the early Norman tower keeps and gatehouses.<sup>39</sup>

This casts serious doubt on the definition of the castle as essentially feudal and Norman, and undermines the social and formal analysis of castle architecture which followed from Armitage's ideas, as Davison realised in 1967:

The question is, of course, to what extent can a private defended residence of this sort [i.e., a *burh*] be called a castle? Or, to phrase the question in archaeological terms, in what way did it differ from the private defended residence of a Norman Lord of equivalent status? This really is the crux of the whole problem: just what do we in fact mean by the term 'castle'?<sup>40</sup>

From the time of Armitage onwards it has been commonplace to restrict the meaning of the word castle to medieval defensive buildings of the post-Conquest period. If, however, the most fundamental reasons for making this cultural and chronological distinction disappear, then some other rationale must be found for defining the remit of the word. As Davison suggests, the modern usage of the word is a cause of possible ambiguity because of all the different interpretations and definitions of the castle given by different castle scholars. However, the medieval understanding of the word and the concept of the castle has never yet received thorough scholarly attention.

Alongside these specialist debates, the methodologies applied to ecclesiastical buildings have also made their way into castle studies. Charles Coulson, as well as examining current directions for castle studies, has carried out groundbreaking work on the symbolic significance of crenellations. He combines evidence from archaeological and documentary sources to create a social and ideological interpretation of the crenellation motif and its associations of fortification.<sup>41</sup> Philip Dixon, working with various collaborators, has examined the social and formal symbolism of other motifs of castle architecture, such as the great tower.<sup>42</sup> The dramatic and processional potential of

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., pp.172-5; Davison, 'The Origins of the Castle in England', p.207; D.F. Renn, 'Burhgeat and Gonfanon: Two Sidelights from the Bayeux Tapestry', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 16 (1994): 177-98, pp.177-86; Williams, 'A Bell-house and a Burh-geat: Lordly Residences in England before the Norman Conquest', *passim*.

<sup>40</sup> Davison, 'The Origins of the Castle in England', p.204.

<sup>41</sup> C. Coulson, 'The State of Research: Cultural Realities and Reappraisals in English Castle-Study'; 'Structural Symbolism in Medieval Castle Architecture', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 132 (1979): 73-90; 'Hierarchism in Conventual Crenellation', *Medieval Archaeology* 26 (1982): 69-100.

<sup>42</sup> P. Dixon and B. Lott, 'The Courtyard and the Tower: Contexts and Symbols in the Development of the Late Medieval Great House', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 146 (1993): 93-101; P. Dixon, 'The Donjon of Knaresborough: The Castle as Theatre', *Château Gaillard* 14 (1988): 121-40; P.

castle spaces is also important in his work, aligning his approach with work on the liturgical significance of ecclesiastical space.<sup>43</sup> Heslop and Thompson have made links between castles and literary texts, which I discuss in more detail in a moment. Sheila Bonde has worked specifically on the overlaps between defensive and ecclesiastical architecture.<sup>44</sup>

These developments in specialist studies have gradually percolated through to the overview of medieval castles. While documentary material had always been important, N.J.G. Pounds's work, *The Medieval Castles of England and Wales* collects and collates an impressive array of documentary references and examines in greater detail than before the administrative and socio-political role of the medieval castle.<sup>45</sup> Patronage and social and political symbolism are also important in the work of scholars such as Colin Platt.<sup>46</sup> M.W. Thompson's complementary pair of works are entitled respectively *The Rise...* and *The Decline of the Castle*.<sup>47</sup> They deploy a wide range of material, but the titles demonstrate the persistence of the military agenda. The most recent survey volume has broken free of this layout and features a chapter discussing the different methodologies which can be applied to castles - a refreshingly public forum for this important debate.<sup>48</sup> A brief discursus on a favourite literary castle, from 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight', is even included.<sup>49</sup>

While some of these approaches have taken a long time to make their way from ecclesiastical to castle methodology, certain new approaches have been applied to both from the start. Analysis of the planning of medieval buildings has become an area of interest in both these fields.<sup>50</sup> Access analysis and sociological/anthropological theories

Dixon, and P. Marshall, 'The Great Keep at Hedingham Castle: A Reassessment', *Fortress* 18 (August 1993): 16-23; 'The Great Tower in the Twelfth Century: The Case of Norham Castle', *The Archaeological Journal* 150 (1993): 410-32.

<sup>43</sup> See especially Dixon, 'The Donjon of Knaresborough: The Castle as Theatre'.

<sup>44</sup> S. Bonde *Fortress Churches of Languedoc: Architecture, Religion and Conflict in the High Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1994); 'Castle and Church Building at the Time of the Norman Conquest'.

<sup>45</sup> N.J.G. Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales: A Social and Political History* (Cambridge, 1990, repr.1994).

<sup>46</sup> C. Platt, *The Castle in Medieval England and Wales* (London, 1982).

<sup>47</sup> M.W. Thompson, *The Decline of the Castle* (Cambridge, 1987); *The Rise of the Castle* (Cambridge, 1991).

<sup>48</sup> T. McNeill, *English Heritage Book of Castles* (London, 1992).

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.109-111.

<sup>50</sup> P.A. Faulkner, 'Domestic Planning from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century', *The Archaeological Journal* 115 (1958): 150-84; 'Castle Planning in the Fourteenth Century', *The Archaeological Journal* 120 (1963): 215-35; B. Morley 'Aspects of Fourteenth-century Castle Design', in A. Detsicas (ed.), *Collectanea Historica: Essays in Memory of Stuart Rigold* (Maidstone, 1981), pp.104-113; E. Fernie, 'The Ground Plan of Norwich Cathedral and the Square Root of Two', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 129 (1976): 77-86; 'Anglo-Saxon Lengths: The Northern System, the Perch and the Foot', *The Archaeological Journal* 142 (1985): 246-54.

have also been applied to both kinds of medieval building to determine the status and probable functions of various rooms. Such techniques have been applied notably by Roberta Gilchrist to the architectural enclosure of medieval women, thus introducing the important question of gender into architectural debates.<sup>51</sup> Bonde's work, as I mentioned, has made fundamental architectural and cultural connections between castles and churches in her study of the fortress churches of the Languedoc region. She has also produced a smaller-scale study of similar overlaps in medieval England after the Conquest.<sup>52</sup> Castle architecture has not yet, however, been integrated fully into the iconographic and intellectual methodologies which are applied to the great ecclesiastical architecture of the Middle Ages. The intellectual background to castle architecture has proved harder to find.

Nevertheless, there are isolated exceptions. Various attempts have been made to link medieval castles to contemporary texts. Paul Frankl, an architectural scholar, also made a survey of literary architecture, including castles, collected under the heading of 'Gothic'.<sup>53</sup> Frankl is well qualified in making stylistic connections between the buildings described in texts and medieval architectural forms. Identification of architectural style provides an interesting commentary on a work of literature. However, it does not examine the deeper workings of the relationship between these two art forms, or the ideological role of architecture in mediating between the two.

I would make similar comments about some other attempts to link architecture and text. M.W. Thompson has examined the architectural descriptions in the alliterative poem 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight', and attempted an identification of the castle in the text.<sup>54</sup> Richard Morris has undertaken a more general view of Arthurian resonances in medieval castles.<sup>55</sup> T.A. Heslop has taken a more ideologically ambitious

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<sup>51</sup> R. Gilchrist, *Gender and Material Culture: The Archaeology of Religious Women* (London and New York, NY, 1994); 'Medieval Bodies in the Material World: Gender, Stigma and the Body', in S. Kay and M. Rubin (ed.), *Framing Medieval Bodies* (Manchester and New York, NY, 1994), pp.43-61; 'The Contested Garden: Gender, Space and Metaphor in the Medieval English Castle', in *Gender and Archaeology: Contesting the Past* (London and New York, NY, 1999), pp.109-45; G. Fairclough, 'Meaningful Constructions : Spatial and Functional Analysis of Medieval Buildings', *Antiquity* 66 (1992): 348-66.

<sup>52</sup> Bonde *Fortress Churches of Languedoc*; 'Castle and Church Building at the Time of the Norman Conquest'.

<sup>53</sup> P. Frankl, *The Gothic: Literary Sources and Interpretations Through Eight Centuries* (Princeton, NJ, 1960).

<sup>54</sup> M. Thompson, 'Castles' in D.S. Brewer and J. Gibson (ed.), *A Companion to the Gawain-poet* (Cambridge, 1997), pp.119-30.

<sup>55</sup> R.K. Morris, 'The Architecture of Arthurian Enthusiasm: Castle Symbolism in the Reigns of Edward I and his Successors', in M. Strickland (ed.), *Armies, Chivalry and Warfare in Medieval Britain*, Proceedings of the 1995 Harlaxton Symposium (1998), pp.63-81.

approach, and argued for references at Orford Castle to specific texts and ideas on an imperial theme.<sup>56</sup> However, these studies use literary texts without demonstrating a full understanding of the literary conventions by which they are governed. For example, Thompson matches the poet's description, feature by feature, to Beeston Castle.<sup>57</sup> He does not acknowledge that these descriptive elements, and the arrangement of them, may be determined by literary convention rather than the desire to describe accurately any specific building. The castle is in fact compared in the text to a paper table-decoration, which surely points readers towards miniaturised, decorative castle images, rather than to full-scale, practical architecture.<sup>58</sup>

Other studies of architectural imagery employed in literature and art, on the other hand, lack any comparison with the medieval architecture to which, at some level, they are related. But these more literary and art-historical studies do recognise the symbolic importance of architecture and the artistic conventions in which its depictions participate. Theological and literary castles have been compiled exhaustively and discussed briefly by Roberta Cornelius.<sup>59</sup> Jill Mann has provided a short survey of some of the literary uses of architectural devices, concentrating mainly on Middle English literature.<sup>60</sup> Discussions of particular architectural motifs, including castles, have been made for specific authors such as St. Teresa of Ávila and Chaucer.<sup>61</sup> Arthurian castles and the Castle of Love motif have also been singled out for special attention.<sup>62</sup> Frances

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<sup>56</sup> T.A. Heslop, 'Orford Castle, Nostalgia and Sophisticated Living', *Architectural History* 34 (1991): 36-58. For more detailed information and bibliography on specific castles mentioned in this thesis, I refer readers to two Castle Bibliographies, D.J.C. King, *Castellarium Anglicanum: An Index and Bibliography of the Castles in England, Wales and the Islands* (New York, NY, 1983); J.R. Kenyon, *Castles, Town Defences, and Artillery Fortifications in Britain: A Bibliography* (London, 1978-90).

<sup>57</sup> Thompson, 'Castles', pp.123-5.

<sup>58</sup> Andrew and Waldron *The Poems of the Pearl Manuscript*, 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight', p.238, l.802; Ackerman, "'Pared out of Paper": *Gawain* 802 and *Purity* 1408', *passim*.

<sup>59</sup> Cornelius, *The Figurative Castle*.

<sup>60</sup> J. Mann, 'Allegorical Buildings in Mediaeval Literature', *Medium Aevum* 63 (1994): 191-210.

<sup>61</sup> J. Chorpenning, 'The Literary and Theological Method of the *Castillo Interior*', *Journal of Hispanic Philology* 3 (1979): 121-33; 'The Monastery, Paradise, and the Castle: Literary Images and Spiritual Development in St Teresa of Ávila', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 62 (1985): 245-57; B.E. Kurtz, "'The Small Castle of the Soul": Mysticism and Metaphor in the European Middle Ages', *Studia Mystica* 15.4 (1992): 19-39; D. Lloyd-Kimbrel, 'Architectonic Allusions: Gothic Perspectives and Perimeters as an Approach to Chaucer', *Mediaevistik* 1 (1988): 115-24; P. Brown, 'The Prison of Theseus and the Castle of Jalousie', *The Chaucer Review* 26.2 (1991): 147-12; M. Hallissy, 'Writing a Building: Chaucer's Knowledge of the Construction Industry and the Language of the *Knight's Tale*', *Chaucer Review* 32 (1997-8): 239-59.

<sup>62</sup> C. Ross, *The Custom of the Castle from Malory to Macbeth* (Berkeley, LA, and London, 1997); Whitaker, 'Otherworld Castles in Middle English Arthurian Romance'; Gaines, 'Malory's Castles in Text and Illustration'; R.S. Loomis, 'The Allegorical Siege in the Art of the Middle Ages', *American Journal of Archaeology* 23.3 (1919): 255-69.

Yates and Mary Carruthers have both made important studies of the use of architectural structures as frameworks for rhetorical, mnemonic and devotional purposes.<sup>63</sup>

These discussions all agree on the very wide variety in medieval architectural symbolism and on the wide range of literary sources on which medieval authors drew. Classical texts such as Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and its House of Fame, and Biblical references to the House of Wisdom, the Temple of Solomon or the Heavenly Jerusalem were all available, as well as the many additional examples from medieval works.<sup>64</sup> The literary and artistic studies I have mentioned above recognise that, with such a diverse range of sources and traditions, sacred, secular and defensive architectures often overlap and cannot be discussed in isolation. Their approach is, however, generally typological. Examples which share similar features are compared and routes of transmission are an important part of discussion. This approach allows useful insights into complex patterns of influence and the creation of artistic conventions. However, it does not facilitate comparison with architecture in other contexts. It is, for example, hard to see how a typology of otherworld castle motifs in romances could be compared with the Clark-derived defensive typology of developing castle architecture. There is no common concept of the castle through which the concrete buildings can be compared to their mental and artistic analogues.

Such is the state of scholarship on medieval architecture and its cultural reception in the Middle Ages. The study of medieval ecclesiastical architecture has often shown the way forward for castle studies. I see no reason why castles should not therefore follow where church architecture has led in the discovery of ideological resonances. Medieval ecclesiastical architecture is well known by now to represent an earthly copy of the Heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>65</sup> I have shown elsewhere that castles can share in this imagery.<sup>66</sup> But, with their very different military and social functions, they must also have symbolisms outside the scope of ecclesiastical imagery.

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<sup>63</sup> F.A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (London, 1966); M.J. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1990); *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400-1200*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature 34 (1998).

<sup>64</sup> I have discussed several of these influences in more detail in A.M. Wheatley 'Dream Buildings in Medieval Literature, Art and Architecture' (MA diss., York University, 1997).

<sup>65</sup> See, for example, Krautheimer, 'Introduction to an Iconography of Medieval Architecture'; L. Stockey, 'The Gothic Cathedral as the Heavenly Jerusalem: Liturgical and Theoretical Sources', *Gesta* 8 (1969): 35-41; N. Coldstream, 'The Kingdom of Heaven: Its Architectural Setting', in J. Alexander and P. Binski (ed.), *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England, 1200-1400* (London, 1987), pp. 92-7.

<sup>66</sup> Wheatley, 'Dream Buildings in Medieval Literature, Art and Architecture'.

## 0.2 THE THESIS

I see the castle as a topic which is particularly suited to illustrating the connections in medieval culture between the material and the ideological. In combining different sources and approaches, I have been looking for the kinds of complex architectural iconography and symbolism which the historians of ecclesiastical architecture have used to make these connections in their subject. This wide remit has its limitations in practice. I have not been able to discuss, or even to mention, the full range of different contexts in which the idea of the castle participates in medieval culture.

Rather than attempting this huge task, I have therefore focused on a small number of examples which can be closely related to one another. I have already explained my reasons for avoiding the idea of defence as a guiding topic. The alternative themes through which I explore the idea of the castle have been chosen primarily in order to allow the cross-referencing of concepts between practical architecture and its visual and literary representations. Two of these topics seem at first glance to mirror the kinds of concerns which are now routinely dealt with in castle survey volumes. Chapter 2, 'The Urban Castle' and Chapter 3, 'The Spiritual castle' appear rather similar to chapter-headings used by both Pounds and Thompson.<sup>67</sup> In both these cases my approach is entirely different, dealing with these topics on a predominantly symbolic and ideological, rather than a practical level. However, the fact that both have been explored before in terms of practical castle architecture has been a great help, providing a springboard to the more ideological aspects of these topics. The imperial theme is similarly motivated. A.J. Taylor's famous article provides several hints about how the practical and ideological aspects of such a topic might interact. In Chapter 4 I have followed up these leads, again including much more ideological material.

However, the first chapter provides the foundation for all these themes. The most basic junction of the idea and the form of the castle occurs in the word itself. The fundamental level of meaning in the word, as with the architectural form, is that of

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<sup>67</sup> 'Castle and Community', 'Castle and Church', Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, pp.184-221, 222-245; 'The Castle as Midwife: Monasteries', 'The Castle as Midwife: Towns', Thompson, *The Rise of the Castle*, pp.131-144, 145-156.



defence. However, through examining the connotations and nuances of the word more closely, I have been able to discover a network of more complex ideas attached to the basic defensive function. These additional meanings coincide with and confirm the topics of my other chapters. This is not just a lucky coincidence. The separate topics I have chosen for chapters 2 to 4 are in fact complementary in many ways. Chapter 1 sets out the logic of these connections, and provides the justification for the rest of the thesis.

*The Idea of the Castle in Medieval England* examines in detail a number of contemporary medieval architectural symbolisms in carefully worked examples, comparing particular buildings, literary descriptions and visual representations. Examples are grouped thematically in their chapters, and each theme is traced through time as well as through different media. Obviously I have only been able to tackle a limited number of topics and examples with this approach. This study does not, therefore, by any means represent a comprehensive survey of the idea of the castle in medieval England. However, the themes which I have examined have proved very suggestive. They could successfully be used to explore many examples which I have not discussed, as well as those I have.

The first chapter, 'The Idea of the Castle', identifies the fundamental problem of tracing the concept of the castle in its medieval context. In answer to this problem, I present linguistic evidence suggesting a broader meaning for the term than is usually accepted by castle scholars. The castle was an innovative defensive form, developed as a tool of the feudal system of government, and it has often been assumed that the Middle English term *castel*, which was loaned from French at the same time as the arrival of the buildings, reflected these new and feudal origins. It is indeed possible to connect the term with these historical processes. However, I argue that the word in medieval usage often has quite different connotations. It reflects the use of the Latin term *castellum* in prominent Classical and Biblical texts and denotes a wider range of fortified enclosures than the strictly Norman, feudal and private defences with which it is usually associated. In an example at the end of this chapter, I show how these wider meanings could be used and combined in an interplay of Biblical and Classical symbolism with communal connotations. These three wider meanings for the term *castle* then become the focus for the rest of the thesis.

In 'The Urban Castle', I investigate the ties between the castle and the wider community, in terms of symbolic as well as physical and political relationships. Civic seals, for example, deploy images of castles as badges of communal pride and prestige. This imagery represents symbolically the physical continuity between town and castle defences in many urban examples, some of which (like the planted towns and castles of Edward I's Welsh campaigns) were built and planned together to be mutually supportive in terms of trade and defence. In many cases, too, I have found that the castle and its particular situation or appearance have an important role in the formation of local legends. Castles in these cases may have a reciprocal relationship with mythology, both generating and reflecting references to local narratives, and so being bound up with the identity and prestige of the wider community.

'The Spiritual Castle' deals in a similar way with castles and their relationship with ecclesiastical architecture, in structural and stylistic, cultural and political terms. Castles were from the earliest period of Norman rule an essential part of the Church's administration in Britain, built alongside churches by and for the same patrons, often using the same craftsmen. This close relationship is reflected in the intellectual culture, as the castle became a significant motif in medieval theology. The text of Luke 10.38 (*ipse intravit in quoddam castellum...*), for example, was often interpreted as a Biblical reference to a castle, understood to refer literally to a castle in which the sisters Mary and Martha lived, and allegorically to the castle of the Virgin's body, into which Christ entered at the Incarnation. Such images made their way throughout medieval English culture. The complexity and refinement of some of the relevant imagery confirms that castle architecture was intellectualised to a similar extent, and often in similar ways to ecclesiastical architecture.

The final chapter, 'The Imperial Castle', investigates the imagery and politics of empire associated specifically and generically with medieval English castles. I argue that Classical references containing the word *castellum*, like Biblical references, were understood to refer to castles of the medieval type. This explains the traditions in medieval Britain attributing the construction of medieval castles to Julius Caesar and/or other prominent imperial figures. The famous example of Caernarfon's polychrome walls, which are thought to imitate the land walls of Constantinople, has been accepted as a reference to empire in one particular castle. However, material allusions to Roman construction techniques, architectural styles and extant remains can be detected in a wide variety of sites. I identify examples including Pevensey, Colchester and the Tower

of London from the earliest constructions of the Conquest, as well as later work at Dover and the Tower. As with the Biblical examples, castles are written back into Classical contexts. I argue that polychrome motifs, which were used to decorate several important medieval castles, made connections with imperial architecture described in medieval literature and art, as well as with the extant Roman remains which were readily visible in medieval Britain. Such connotations were used to bolster the political pretensions of successive royal dynasties, and can be linked to imperial claims in national descent myths and foundation legends.

As I have noted, however, the first chapter lays the foundation for these more ideological studies by examining the fundamental meanings of the word *castle* in its medieval context.

# 1. THE IDEA OF THE CASTLE

## 1.0 PREFACE

Dover is termed a 'castle' as early as 1051. In that year, according to the 'D' version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, Earl Godwin and his sons threatened the king with war 'unless Eustace (Count of Boulogne) were surrendered and his men handed over to them, as well as the Frenchmen who were in the castle (*castelle*)'. The whole context of this passage suggests Dover rather than the Herefordshire castle which is its usual interpretation, and Florence of Worcester specifically identifies the 'castle' (*castellum*) as Dover in his version of these events closely based upon 'D'. Next, a 'castle' at Dover figures prominently in Harold's oath to Duke William in Normandy in 1064. William of Poitiers, the principal contemporary source, states that Harold then promised to hand over to the duke *castrum Doveram*, constructed at his own expense, while Eadmer, writing later, says in the same oath Harold promised to make a *castellum* with a well at Dover for William's use, and subsequently, in 1066, makes Harold claim to have done this. Lastly, under the same year 1066, William of Poitiers, Ordericus Vitalis (closely following him) and Guy of Amiens all speak of a castle (*castrum, castellum*) already at Dover when William and his army came there after Hastings, William of Poitiers stating also that, having taken the place, the duke spent eight days in adding to those fortifications which it lacked. It is, however, extremely probable, in a period when feudal terminology had not yet hardened into its precise eventual meanings, least of all in England, that the 'castle' referred to at Dover in 1051 and 1064 and taken by the victorious Normans in 1066 was in fact an Anglo-Saxon *burh* occupying the Iron Age earthwork upon the cliff, as indeed Mrs Armitage argued more than fifty years ago, and that within this larger, communal fortress Duke William placed his castle, on the analogy of Pevensey a few weeks earlier and many places afterwards.<sup>1</sup>

I have already discussed in the Introduction the close correlation which exists in British castle studies between theories about the origins of the castle in England and the question of the proper meaning of the term castle. I have also noted that no thorough study has yet been made of the meaning and development of the word *castle*, despite its great significance for the understanding of the whole subject of the medieval castle. I intend in this chapter to provide a summary of the word's origins and development in English usage in order to clarify this point.

The above passage occurs as a postscript to an article by R. Allen Brown. His position as a defender of Armitage's ideas of the essentially novel and feudal nature of the castle is clear from comments I have already made about his work. However, as this

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<sup>1</sup> R.A. Brown, 'An Historian's Approach to the Origins of the Castle in England', *The Archaeological Journal* 126 (1969): 131-48, pp.144-5.

passage demonstrates, these questions about the origins of the castle are also tied up with fundamental historical issues. The use of language and its interpretation in a historical context, the use of documentary evidence in its own right and in combination with evidence from archaeology and social history and with the ongoing politics of the discipline are all implicated. It will become clear in what follows that I disagree with the arguments and conclusions presented in this passage, but I have not chosen it specifically in order to criticise its author. This passage touches explicitly on issues of terminology and definition, but it also illustrates the implicit assumptions which can be made about language and its meaning in medieval contexts and by modern critics. Brown's attempt to come to grips with the issue of terminology has the merit of acknowledging openly some of the assumptions which underlie the topic, but which are so often unwritten and undiscussed.

Brown's examination of the evidence surrounding the early documentation of the Dover site pivots on the use of various terms. Brown suggests that these terms may or may not be identified with the Norman fortress which he knows was built there shortly after the Conquest. He helpfully cites the historical terms he has pinpointed: *castel*, *castellum* and *castrum* (for ease of reference I will call these historical terms and their variants collectively 'castle words'). He acknowledges the discrepancy between these historical castle words and the modern term *castle* in his typography, italicising the historical examples, and using two different formulations to render these terms in his own language: 'castle' and the straightforward, un-apostrophised castle. These terms are not used in a particularly consistent way,<sup>2</sup> nevertheless, the use of apostrophes around the word in one set of contexts seems to hint that this use is problematised in some way, while uses without the apostrophes at other points are, by implication, unproblematic. This distinction is used to mark a judgement by Brown as to the appropriateness of his modern word to describe different kinds of medieval structure. The problematised 'castle' denotes what was 'in fact an Anglo-Saxon *burh*', and so by implication not properly a castle in his sense of the word. Duke William's fortress, on the other hand, built within the larger, earlier structure, can be termed castle quite straightforwardly. The apostrophised 'castle', then, equates to an example in a historical document of a castle word which does not accord with the modern meaning of the word

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<sup>2</sup> They seem to be used interchangeably on occasion, as for example when Brown refers to the "castle' (*castellum*)' mentioned by Florence of Worcester and to the 'castle (*castrum*, *castellum*)' mentioned by Guy of Amiens *et al*, which he suggests refer to the same site and structure.

castle. The unapostrophised castle indicates a documentary use which does accord with his idea of what may be properly termed a castle.

This distinction echoes the convention which has been accepted by castle scholars before and after Brown: 'that the term "castle" should not properly be applied to any structure in the British Isles, whether of earth or stone, erected before the Conquest', with the exception of the five castles erected shortly before the Conquest by cronies of Duke William.<sup>3</sup> Dover is not one of these. In accordance with this tenet, Brown relies on historical analysis to establish the dating of the first Norman defence at Dover, and decides on this basis alone whether the documentary terms refer to fortifications which he would call castles. I do not wish to fault his identification of the different types of building to which these various documents refer; indeed, his arguments on this front are skilful and convincing. However, his arguments render the architectural terminology of the documents quite irrelevant to the conclusions which are drawn from them. This, in turn, casts doubt on all the instances in which medieval terms such as *castel*, *castrum* and *castellum* are used by historians as evidence for the presence of medieval castles: as, for example, in other parts of Brown's article.

In effect, then, despite his attention to the specific terminology employed by contemporary documents, Brown fits the medieval terminology to his pre-conceived archaeological and socio-historical ideas about castles. Indeed, it seems that he does so willingly, as his comments about language imply a teleological understanding of its changing meanings. He speaks of 'a period when feudal terminology had not yet hardened into its precise eventual meanings, least of all in England', suggesting that ambiguities in language are temporary and occur only early in the use of a particular word, and implying also that the eventual, 'hardened' medieval meaning of *castle* coincides with the modern, feudally-defined understanding of the word. The fact that medieval writers and speakers may have referred to quite different, communal and Anglo-Saxon structures as *castels* has no impact upon Brown's appreciation of the concept - for him this is just a brief aberration on the inexorable journey of the medieval word towards its modern meaning.<sup>4</sup>

The most celebrated examples from medieval documents do indeed support the connection Brown makes between castle words and the Norman fortifications built in England from around the time of the Conquest, as I will discuss later. Others, such as

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<sup>3</sup> B.St.J. O'Neil, *Castles* (London, 1954), pp.1-2.

<sup>4</sup> Brown, 'An Historian's Approach to the Origins of the Castle in England', p.145.

the Dover examples, do not. Yet Brown makes explicit an assumption that historians may choose some examples of word usage as typical, while discarding others, just as they would do with other types of statistical evidence. In forming a general definition of a word, the most common meaning will often be used as the primary definition, but less frequent uses of words are not ruled out of the equation. They may, in fact, supply a crucial subsidiary meaning which helps to specify the main functions of the word.<sup>5</sup> If, as Brown suggests, castle words could be used in the early Dover documents to describe pre-Norman fortifications, then it seems to me that in this instance Brown has in fact added to Davison's evidence supporting a re-think of the definition of such words.

As I noted earlier, I have used the example from Brown's work to point out a number of important points which were demonstrated there, rather than to criticise his scholarship in particular. The problem of historical terminology and its meaning is a very general one, not confined by any means to Brown in particular, or even to castle studies. Susan Reynolds has made many comparable criticisms of historians' understanding of the terminology of feudalism. Reynolds observes that familiar terms and concepts, for example, 'feudalism', tend to become normative in historical criticism: that once a meaning is generally accepted amongst historians, this becomes the yardstick against which the historical record is measured, hindering the examination of each example for its own meaning and within its own context.<sup>6</sup> Reynolds finds an alternative approach to the question of meaning in medieval terminology through a careful examination of a wide range of documentary evidence, resulting not necessarily in a consistent definition of the term in question, but an array of different contexts and connotations which form a composite picture of the range and complexity of the term in contemporary use.

Reynolds' ideas and approaches seem particularly appropriate to the problems in the field of castle studies. She identifies the period around the Conquest as crucial, she places emphasis on the recreation of the contemporary meanings of words and the concepts they describe, and she rejects the accepted picture of an abrupt change across all of society at the Conquest. She concludes that in a legal and administrative context, the post-Conquest arrangements in England showed a marked degree of continuity with what had gone before. There are similarities here with the work of Davison, Coulson

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<sup>5</sup> A.M.S. McMahon, *Understanding Language Change* (Cambridge, 1994), p.176.

<sup>6</sup> S. Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals: The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (Oxford, 1994), Chapter 1 *et passim*.

and other castle scholars who have argued that the Norman castle was influenced, perhaps to a great extent, by indigenous defences, and that castle terminology should be more closely studied with its contemporary medieval meanings and contexts in mind. As I find these arguments in castle studies convincing and important, and wish to expand them further into a linguistic investigation, I will use Reynolds' work as a model for my own. It is worth quoting from Reynolds' observations about language, its definition and its use in historical criticism, to confirm its relevance to the issues I have already identified in this chapter, and to set the agenda for my linguistic arguments which follow:

If we start by discussing words we are liable to assume that words like *feudum* were used in the sense we expect unless the contrary is specified: many of the examples cited by Du Cange or Niermeyer are much less specific than the definitions they illustrate. Discussions of terminology, moreover, generally start from the assumption, not only that certain words are particularly significant for feudalism, but that such words have core or technical meanings and that these technical meanings were somehow more real and more significant than the others. To do this is to ignore how language works. Words used in real life, especially abstract nouns, do not have core meanings which are more central or more right than others. Dictionary makers deduce meaning from usage. They do not control usage. It varies from place to place, even from speaker to speaker, as well as from time to time.<sup>7</sup>

The middle ages have been taken as a time of feudalism, and so whatever does not form part of the image of feudalism is filtered out of the view or adapted to fit into the background... If medieval sources use words we consider feudal then they meant by them what we mean. If they never use them they must have implied them.

Historians who define fiefs generally say that they are defining the 'concept of the fief', but they nearly always start by discussing the word and its etymology and origins, while what they are really concerned with is neither the word nor the concept or notion that people may have in their heads when they use the word, but the phenomena that the word and concept represent... The *concept* of the fief... is essentially post-medieval: it is a set of ideas or notions about the essential attributes of pieces of property that historians have defined as fiefs, some of which may not appear in the sources under any of the words that we translate as fief. There is nothing wrong with that, any more than there is anything wrong with using our own words. We may often legitimately want to investigate the history of concepts or phenomena of which people in the past were not aware, like vitamin C or the doctrine of incorporation. But when the subject under investigation involves notions or attitudes held by people in the society concerned it is vital to distinguish whether a concept is ours or theirs... Much of the discussion of fiefs, as of vassalage, seems to me to assume the

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p.13.



identity of words with concepts, our concepts with medieval concepts, and all three with the phenomena.<sup>8</sup>

I have already shown, using Brown's article as an example, that many assumptions of a similar kind have been made about the relationship between the medieval use of terms such as *castel*, *castellum* or *castrum* and the concept of the castle in working use by the modern historian. Feudal and private associations are attributed to a form of defensive building which, I will argue, did not necessarily connote either of these things in early post-Conquest Britain. Davison, as I have noted, has questioned the assumptions which have so often accompanied the word *castle* in modern critical use. Coulson has commented acerbically on the 'linguistic burglary' of scholars who dismiss medieval documentary use of terms such as *castel* or *castellum* when these do not refer to what are considered 'proper' castles.<sup>9</sup> However, in the absence of any detailed study devoted to the development and meaning of medieval castle words, such urgings have had little effect on the kind of linguistic assumptions displayed by most scholars. The passage quoted above from Brown is in fact from an article written in reply to Davison, dismissing evidence of the need for an archaeological and linguistic re-think.<sup>10</sup>

I hope to provide in this chapter an analysis of the word *castle* which will provide at least some preliminary linguistic findings to promote the continuation of this debate in new and more convincing directions. I wish to argue that, while the archaeological and socio-political evidence for medieval castles has in recent years been the basis of some fine work in the field of castle studies, valuable evidence of other kinds, for example of a linguistic and literary nature, has not often been recognised. These alternative kinds of evidence, I will argue, present the castle as a concept with a much broader range of meanings and a much wider cultural significance than its usual definition in modern use.

Reynolds' distinction between word, concept and phenomenon is a helpful way of clarifying the complicated issues involved in such an undertaking. I have therefore decided to use this distinction as a model for my discussion during this chapter. In the case of the castle, the phenomenon can I think be described under the heading of the

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 9-10, 12-13.

<sup>9</sup> C. Coulson, 'The State of Research: Cultural Realities and Reappraisals in English Castle-Study', *Journal of Medieval History* 22 (1996): 171-208, p.174; O'Neil, *Castles*, pp.1-2.

<sup>10</sup> B. K. Davison, 'The Origins of the Castle in England: The Institute's Research Project', *The Archaeological Journal* 124 (1967): 202-11.

archaeological and historical evidence for the origins and development of castle architecture, function and engineering. As Reynolds implies for the subject of feudalism and fiefs, the phenomenon is the aspect upon which historians usually concentrate, and this is also true in castle studies, as I noted in the Introduction. For this reason I will refer the reader back to the summary I gave there of the physical evidence for castle forms and origins, rather than devoting more space to this issue. The rest of this chapter will therefore be divided up into a 'Words' section on the linguistic evidence for the introduction and meaning of medieval castle words and a 'Concepts' section discussing the wider implications of how both phenomena and words were understood and used in the medieval period. Obviously, discussion of the words and concepts will overlap, as will that of concepts and phenomena, but these general headings will be used as organising devices, rather than strict divisions between ideas.

In order to problematise the modern word, concept and phenomenon of the castle from the start, I will be very careful to specify which of these particular aspects I am referring to each time I use the word, and whether I am referring to a modern or a contemporary understanding. I will indicate the medieval phenomenon by the phrase medieval castle, Norman castle, and so on. I will use *castel* to stand for Middle English castle words, even when these are not spelled in this precise way in the sources. *Chastel* will act similarly for the medieval French word and *castellum* for the medieval Latin word. *Castle* will be used to indicate a linguistic discussion of the term. I will identify the concept with phrases like medieval concept, modern concept. The undifferentiated word castle will be used as an inclusive term for the overall subject and debate.

## 1.1 WORDS

The Conquest has long been noted as a crucial point in English history, marking changes in government, technology, culture and language. However, the extent and nature of these changes is, as I have suggested, a matter for careful analysis. Armitage made a neat summary of her arguments for the novelty of the castle as a technology and

as a concept when she suggested that ‘the thing as well as the term was new.’<sup>11</sup> She was commenting on the borrowing of the word *castel* into English from Norman French around the time of the Conquest, and correlating this with the introduction of the motte and bailey castle by Normans at around the same date. I have already supported the evidence put forward by Davison and others to suggest that Norman fortifications were not wholly the result of importation from France, which weakens one side of Armitage’s equation. Although Armitage was correct in suggesting that the word castle was borrowed into English in the period of the Conquest under Norman influence, there is also reason to reassess the validity of her claims for its linguistic novelty.

In an English context, the words *castellum* and *castel* were not entirely new at the time when Norman influences, linguistic and otherwise, were making themselves felt. While the experts agree that *castel* was re-borrowed into English from French around the time of the Conquest, there also existed an older loan into English of the word *castel*, which had been made at some point before the year 1000, from Latin.<sup>12</sup> Dieter Kastovsky notes the rarity of loan-words into Old English.<sup>13</sup> The roughly 150 examples which were borrowed from Latin at around this period, he suggests, were absorbed in the context of scholarly research resulting from the Benedictine reforms and the growth of learned monastic communities, and this group of loan-words reflect the Classical Latin read in monasteries.<sup>14</sup> The word *castellum* had been around in Latin from Classical times<sup>15</sup> and occurs a number of times within the Bible. In these contexts it is usually translated as meaning a village or small town, as this accords with the ancient meaning of the words in these texts. The attested examples of *castel* and *castellum* at this period in English sources confirm a specialised use in Biblical study, associated closely with Biblical instances of the word *castellum*. This context for the word would have been especially important in monastic circles, consistent with Kastovsky’s analysis.<sup>16</sup> However, the odd contemporary use of the Latin word *castellum*

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<sup>11</sup> E.S. Armitage, *The Early Norman Castles of the British Isles* (London, 1912), p.24.

<sup>12</sup> A.C. Amos, A. di Paulo Healey, J. Holland, D. McDougall, I. McDougall, N. Porter and P. Thompson (ed.), *Dictionary of Old English* (Toronto, 1988 -), 2nd fascicle.

<sup>13</sup> D. Kastovsky, ‘Semantics and Vocabulary’, in R.M. Hogg (ed.), *The Beginnings to 1066*, *The Cambridge History of the English Language* 1 (1992), pp.290-408, p.294; see also B.M.H. Strang, *A History of Old English* (London, 1970, repr. 1974), p.314.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* p.307.

<sup>15</sup> See P.G.W. Glare (ed.), *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (Oxford, 1982).

<sup>16</sup> R.E. Latham and D.R. Howlett (ed.), *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (Oxford, 1975-); Amos *et al.*, *Dictionary of Old English*.

indicates that this word could also be used outside the context of Biblical commentary, to refer to the kinds of defences which Norman castles were later to replace.<sup>17</sup>

While this first loan is attested by only a few examples, the second, from French at the time of the Conquest, was marked by a sudden and frequent usage, and was borrowed under very different circumstances. There are therefore some important differences between these two different loans. However, the need to interpret and translate the Biblical word *castellum* in English usage did not end with the introduction of Norman terminology. Linguists have suggested that the sense of the earlier loan-word lived on well into the Middle Ages, reserved exclusively for dealing with Biblical, and sometimes Classical uses of *castellum*. However, if *castellum* could be used in an English context in the ninth century to describe a defended settlement<sup>18</sup> and the Norman term could also be used in a similar way around the time of the Conquest, there was obviously some overlap between the meanings of the two loan-words. I will suggest later on that this specialist Biblical usage need not necessarily be kept separate from the mainstream meaning adopted for the words *castel* and *castellum* under Norman influence, if the evidence for this period is examined without pre-formed expectations as to the military and feudal meaning of the words. The Conquest certainly did herald some profound changes in the composition and use of the English language, but as with developments in defensive architecture, these changes are not always to be explained by abrupt changes in administration, technology or even vocabulary.

The relationship which was created between French and English by the Conquest is characterised by ‘intimate borrowing’, which is often the linguistic result of a conquest, annexation or mass migration which juxtaposes one language against another. In these circumstances of intimate borrowing the less dominant language group borrows words from the language of the dominant group, and these words often mark the nature of the social and political relationship between the two groups.<sup>19</sup> Leading linguists Jeffers and Lehiste cite the Norman Conquest as an example of exactly this kind, describing the word loans from Norman French into English which occurred from the 11th to 13th centuries, including *castle*, as examples of intimate borrowing.<sup>20</sup> However, Jeffers and Lehiste note that ‘intimate borrowing, unlike cultural borrowing,

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<sup>17</sup> J.H. Round, ‘Tower and Castle’, in *Geoffrey de Mandeville: A Study of the Anarchy* (London, 1892), pp.328-46, p.332.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> R.L. Jeffers and I. Lehiste, *Principles and Methods for Historical Linguistics* (Cambridge, MA, and London, 1982, repr. 1989), p.150.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.; see also MacMahon, *Understanding Language Change*, p.202.

is not limited to cultural novelties'.<sup>21</sup> In other words, in intimate borrowing contexts such as prevailed in England after the Conquest, words are not borrowed only to describe those new phenomena for which a word did not exist in the recipient language. Words may also be loaned for social reasons, when the borrowers adopt terminology associated with the prestige of a powerful group.<sup>22</sup> Careful attention to the documentary evidence shows, to my satisfaction, that the word *castle* falls into this category: it is borrowed into English around the Conquest to reflect the terminology of the dominant social group, but not to mark a completely new form of defensive architecture.

There are several sources from around the time of the Norman Conquest which are often quoted as illustration of the earliest evidence for castles, and for the word *castle*, in an English context.<sup>23</sup> The 'D' manuscript of the Anglo-Saxon chronicle mentions Duke William's policy of castle building and its unfortunate effects on the English people in the entry for the year 1066:

*Oda biscop 7 Wyllelm eorl belifen her æfter 7 worhton castelas wide geond þas þeode, 7 earm folc swencte, 7 a syððan hit yflade swiðe.*

(Bishop Odo and earl William were left behind here, and they built castles far and wide throughout the land, oppressing the unhappy people, and things went ever from bad to worse.)<sup>24</sup>

Similar sentiments are also conveyed in Latin by Orderic Vitalis. He mentions in his *Ecclesiastical History* (1109-1113)<sup>25</sup> the power of the new fortifications against the English, who were ill-equipped to deal with them:

*Munitiones num quas castella Galli nuncupant Anglicis prouinciis paucissime fuerant, et ob hoc Angli licet bellicosi fuerint et audaces ad resistendum tamen inimicis extiterant debiliores.*

(For the fortifications called castles by the Normans were scarcely known in the English provinces, and so the English - in spite of their courage and love of fighting - could put up only a weak resistance to their enemies.)<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p.201.

<sup>23</sup> N.J.G. Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales: A Social and Political History* (Cambridge, 1990, repr.1994), pp.3, 7; M.W. Thompson, *The Rise of the Castle* (Cambridge, 1991), p.48.

<sup>24</sup> G.P. Cubbin (ed.), *MS D, The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition 6* (1996), 1066, p.81; G.N. Garmonsway (ed. and transl.), *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 2nd edn (London, 1973), D1066, p.200.

<sup>25</sup> M. Chibnall, *The World of Orderic Vitalis* (Oxford, 1984), p.176.

<sup>26</sup> Orderic Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. M. Chibnall (Oxford, 1990), 2, Book 4, paragraph 184, pp.218-9.

It is not surprising that these sources are often quoted in debates on the origins of English castles. They both provide very succinct evidence of the Normans' use of fortifications during the Conquest, of the name - *castelas, castella* - which the conquerors gave them, and also of the application of this name to these fortifications by English speakers, whether they were writing in Latin or in Anglo-Saxon.<sup>27</sup> Orderic's observation seems to imply a perception of the Norman castle as a novel piece of technology, and the attachment of the word *castellum* to this novel concept. On the other hand, however, Orderic's comments are specifically directed towards the novelty of the Norman defences in remote rural areas, where defences of any kind may have been lacking at the time of the Conquest: Orderic could be commenting specifically on the 1068 campaign in Northumbria.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, Orderic's phrase, '*munitiones num quas castella Galli nuncupant*' expresses explicitly the urge to preserve the correct Norman terminology, indicating, I suggest, a social motive for perpetuating Norman vocabulary rather than a need to coin a new term.

On a broader examination of the texts from which these extracts are taken, further complications emerge to disturb any neat correlation between a new word and a new technology. As the passage I quoted from Brown showed, the 'D' manuscript of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle could also describe an Anglo-Saxon *burh* as a *castelle*, confounding the idea that defensive technology of pre- and post-Conquest England could be neatly distinguished by differences in vocabulary. Evidence of very diverse uses of Latin castle words is also available from a broader survey of Orderic Vitalis' text.<sup>29</sup> Marjorie Chibnall notes that Orderic uses *castellum* and *castrum* interchangeably with several other Latin words, such as *municipium*, *praesidium* and *oppidum*, to describe a range of defences from fortified towns to military defences and fortified houses.<sup>30</sup> Chibnall also provides an example of a contemporary charter which uses the term *castellum* for Anglo-Saxon *burhs*, adding weight to the similar evidence from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.<sup>31</sup> It seems, therefore, that the words *castelle*, *castellum* and *castrum* in these sources covered rather a wide range of different kinds of defences and

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<sup>27</sup> Although Orderic spent his adult life at the Norman monastery of St. Evroul, he was born and brought up in Shrewsbury: Chibnall, *The World of Orderic Vitalis*, pp.3-4.

<sup>28</sup> Coulson, 'The State of Research: Cultural Realities and Reappraisals in English Castle-study', p.172.

<sup>29</sup> M. Chibnall, 'Orderic Vitalis on Castles', in C. Harper-Bill, C.J. Holdsworth and J. Nelson (ed.), *Studies in Medieval History Presented to R. Allen Brown* (Woodbridge, 1989), pp.43-56; pp.53-4.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p.53.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, n.67.

were not confined specifically to Norman fortresses, even if they did refer to the new defences in the majority of cases.<sup>32</sup>

The small number of studies focused on the early use of castle vocabulary confirm this wider range of meanings for the Latin terms *castrum* and *castellum* both before and after the Conquest. J.F. Verbruggen, writing in 1950 and using a variety of Continental and British Latin sources of the period before and after the Conquest came to some similar conclusions as to the wider meaning of the terms *castrum* and *castellum*.<sup>33</sup> His impressive collection of documentary examples includes many instances in which *castrum* and/or *castellum* is/are used to describe lordly fortresses, but also ecclesiastical and urban defences: examples of these wider meanings start with the annals of the abbey of Saint-Vaast for the year 895<sup>34</sup> and end with Roger of Wendover writing in 1197.<sup>35</sup> In 1976 Coulson was able to provide some very similar references in pre-Conquest Continental sources to the fortified precincts of abbeys as *castra* or *castella*, which complement Verbruggen's thesis very effectively. In 1996 Coulson also noted that pre-Conquest work services of *burh-bot* were Latinised afterwards as *operatio castellorum*, providing further evidence of linguistic equivalence between burhs and early castles. There is, therefore, a substantial amount of documentary evidence already collected, from both before and after the Conquest and from English and Continental sources, to back up a wider range of meanings for the Latin words *castrum* and *castellum*.

There are also early instances in which the terms could be used with considerably more precision, and these examples were the subject of research by J.H. Round, a colleague and collaborator of Armitage. Round published in 1892, as an appendix to his volume on Geoffrey de Mandeville, a study of the use and context of the words for tower and castle in early sources, in Latin and French, describing both the Continental and the English building campaigns of the Normans.<sup>36</sup> Here Round combines documentary with archaeological evidence to identify the careful distinctions which were made in medieval usage between the different elements of the castle structure, especially between the *turris*, *mota* or *arx* - the tower or keep - and the *castrum* or *castellum* which in these cases seems to be used specifically to indicate the

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p.53.

<sup>33</sup> J.F. Verbruggen, 'Note sur le sens des mots *castrum*, *castellum*, et quelques autres expressions qui désignent des fortifications', *Revue Belge de philologie et d'histoire* 28.1 (1950): 147-55.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p.148.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p.152.

<sup>36</sup> Round, 'Tower and Castle'.

fortified enclosure surrounding, appended to or separate from the keep element. He suggests that, in the early post-Conquest examples he cites, this meaning of a fortified enclosure is still in use, referring specifically to the walls enclosing a site, as opposed to the other buildings which might be enclosed by them. For example, in one charter of Matilda in 1141, the Tower of London is referred to as '*turris Londoniae cum parvo castello*', and in another of 1142, Colchester Castle is described as '*turrim et castellum de Colchestr[a]*'.<sup>37</sup> The *castellum* in these contexts is the surrounding defensive wall, rather than the main keep or the whole complex, either of which we might refer to if we were to talk about the castle of Colchester today.

Round stresses that this is a transitional semantic stage, which is preserved in poetic formulae such as '*le chastel e la tur*', but which gave way in the face of the need for a compound name for the entire fortress.<sup>38</sup> A fortified enclosure can be understood in contradistinction to other elements of a defensive complex such as the main tower, but can also be used metonymically to refer to all the elements enclosed either literally or mentally within it. This transitional use of the terms in a precise way also complements the more general meanings the words can have in medieval usage. It underlines the non-specific nature of the defended arrangement characterised by early castle words, which could equally well describe the walled monasteries, the small defences and the lordly fortresses cited by Verbruggen and Coulson. *Castellum* was understood as a word denoting enclosure and fortification; it did not carry the connotations of feudal lordship or of private fortification which are associated with the word in modern usage, and so could be used at this early period to describe any fortified enclosure. Any special relationship between the word and the new Norman fortresses would certainly be of a social nature, as the word did not imply any particular kind of fortification except by context. Indeed, Round supplies examples in which he argues that the word *castellum* is used to describe fortified enclosures of all sorts, from the works of the Normans to pre-Norman earthworks and even Roman remains, reflecting a comparable range to the examples collected by Verbruggen and Coulson.<sup>39</sup> It would also be entirely possible for this range of meanings to encompass the meaning of the earlier, Latin-derived loan-word: the small towns or villages of Biblical examples.

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<sup>37</sup> Cited in full, *ibid.*, pp.89,180; see also p.328.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.331, 333-4.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, esp. pp.331 (and n.3), 332, 336.



A thorough survey of the words *castel*, *castellum* and indeed *castrum* in early post-Conquest sources concerned with Britain is a desideratum. I am confident that, if and when such a survey is eventually undertaken, more evidence will be found to back up the observations of Round, Verbruggen and Coulson. I am equally confident that the reason such evidence has not previously been identified is because, upon seeing castle words in the documentary record, scholars have assumed that these words could only refer to Norman private fortresses, and have interpreted their sources accordingly. The evidence has simply been written out of the record. It is also true to say, however, that such a survey would not be able to provide a complete picture of the range of meaning at one period, or of changes in meaning over time, and that many of the examples with which it dealt might at best be highly ambiguous. This is inevitable from the fragmentary nature of the record with which historical linguists have to deal.<sup>40</sup> I do not in any case have at this time the considerable resources which would be needed to tackle such a survey. Instead I will provide a series of carefully selected examples which seem to me to provide particular insights into the range of meanings which were attached to castle words at particular points in the medieval period. This selection cannot be exhaustive, but it does facilitate close attention to individual examples, many of which seem to me to illustrate some important aspects of the medieval castle which fall outside the limits previously set.

I have argued up until this point for a broader meaning for the word *castle* in the early period after the introduction of the word to Britain at the Conquest, encompassing a variety of different kinds of structure. Bearing in mind Reynolds' discussion of the reductive and normative tendencies of definitions, and the reductive definitions which Brown, O'Neil and others have applied to the word castle, I have tried to avoid suggesting any definitions for medieval castle words. The closest my argument has come to a definition of the broader understanding of the medieval castle I have been advocating has been in quoting Round's work.

Round's suggestion that the Latin terms *castrum* and *castellum* should be understood as meaning a fortified enclosure in many of the medieval contexts in which they are discovered comes close to a definition. But it seems to me to stand apart from the usual run of reductive or tedious suggestions as it is sufficiently broad and yet sufficiently succinct to present the range of possibilities medieval people might have

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<sup>40</sup> McMahan, *Understanding Language Change*, p.185.

had in their heads when they thought about castles. However, I also think that Round's definition has a sound claim because it accords rather well with some medieval explanations of castle terminology which I have found, but which I assume Round had not come across. Contemporary medieval definitions, like other kinds of definition, may also simplify a concept for concision, or apply only to certain contexts, and it may be particularly hard to determine these matters in a historical context with incomplete information. However, the examples I have found, like Round's definition, have the virtue of being remarkably specific, yet keeping open a number of possibilities. I present them here not as the final word on the meaning of medieval castle words, but as a genuine contemporary illustration of some of the ways in which these words could be understood.

My first example comes from a homily sometimes attributed to Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109) and dated tentatively to twelfth century or earlier.<sup>41</sup> The work elaborates on the text of Luke 10.38 and is headed with the Biblical text: '*ipse intravit in quoddam castellum*'.<sup>42</sup> The Biblical passage describes Jesus' literal entry into the *castellum* of Bethany to visit Mary and Martha, but was interpreted as a figurative description of Jesus' entry into the protective body of the Virgin Mary at the Incarnation.<sup>43</sup> The author develops this text into an allegory of the Virgin as a *castellum* of a recognisably Norman type, which most archaeologists would be quite happy to term a 'castle':

*Castellum enim dicitur quaelibet turris, et murus in circuitu ejus*<sup>44</sup>

(Any tower with a wall around it is called a castle)

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<sup>41</sup> R.D. Cornelius, *The Figurative Castle: A Study in the Mediaeval Allegory of the Edifice with Especial Reference to Religious Writings: A Dissertation* (Bryn Mawr, PA, 1930), p.43.

<sup>42</sup> Luke 10.38: '*Factum est autem dum irent, et ipse intravit in quoddam castellum; et mulier quaedam, Martha nomine, excepit illum in domum suam*' (Now it came to pass as they went, that he entered into a certain town: and a certain woman named Martha, received him into her house). In all cases where Biblical passages are cited in the Vulgate, I quote from *Biblia Sacra Vulgatae Editionis* (1959). All translations are taken from *The Holy Bible Translated from the Latin Vulgate: The Old Testament first Published by the English College at Douay and The New Testament first published by the English College at Rheims* (London, Manchester and Glasgow, 1899). I italicise or replace the Douay-Rheims translation of the Vulgate term '*castellum*' throughout this thesis in order to problematise assumptions about translations of this word. The Douay-Rheims edition routinely translates this word as 'town' or 'village'. By doing this I wish to alert readers to the broader meanings which a medieval understanding of the Vulgate text may have encompassed.

<sup>43</sup> This text seems to have been interpreted in connection with the Virgin since the 7thc, and interpreted as an image of the Virgin as a 'castellum' from the 9th: Cornelius, *The Figurative Castle*, pp.37-48.

<sup>44</sup> Anselm of Canterbury, '*Homilia IX*', in *Patrologiae Latinae Cursus Completus*, ed. J.P. Migne, (Paris, 1844-64), 158, col. 645.

This definition is elegantly succinct and yet open-ended. A tower surrounded by a wall might well be found in an Anglo-Saxon *burh*, or in a fortified urban setting, as at Rouen, Le Mans or London, where the Norman tower keeps were defended by the city walls (see illustration 8). It could also, depending on the nature of the tower, refer to an ecclesiastical arrangement or possibly a more private fortress. This medieval definition of a castle demonstrates how the broader meanings I have suggested in this chapter for the castle might be understood to come together in a certain combination of structures. It provides a concept of the castle which is both succinct and carries the possibility of application to a wide variety of structures with equal validity. There is nothing here to suggest that castles are necessarily feudal or private fortresses, or that the word can only be applied to particular types of structure.

The use of the adjective *quaelibet* is notable in this example, as it indicates the open nature of the definition, inviting readers to supply their own range of examples freely: it gives a striking impression of the inclusiveness which the author envisages for the term *castellum*. This accords with the many contexts for the use of the term I have noted in earlier parts of this chapter. The Biblical inspiration for this description makes a compelling case for the reintegration into the mainstream of the whole range of excluded Biblically inspired medieval castle words. The open nature of this definition explains simply and effectively how medieval readers of the period could have reconciled their ideas of the castle against the *castella* mentioned in Classical and Biblical contexts. The symbolic comparison of the Virgin Mary to a castle further underlines the point that castles were in no way seen as being incongruous to sacred scripture.

This concept of the castle is very simple, and invites comparison with a range of structures which were not necessarily feudal or private. Aelred, abbot of Rievaulx from 1147 to 1167<sup>45</sup> chooses the same text and a similar interpretation for his Sermon on the Assumption of the Virgin.<sup>46</sup> The castle which Aelred describes has three elements, a ditch (for humility), a wall on the ditch (chastity) and a tower (charity):

*In castello fiunt tria quaedam, ut forte sit, scilicet fossatum, murus et turris*<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> P. Fergusson and S. Harrison, *Rievaulx Abbey: Community, Architecture, Memory* (New Haven, CT, and London, 1999), p.38.; M.L. Dutton, 'The Conversion and Vocation of Aelred of Rievaulx: A Historical Hypothesis', in D. Williams (ed.), *England in the Twelfth Century*, Proceedings of the 1988 Harlaxton Symposium (1990), pp.31-49, p.33.

<sup>46</sup> Aelred of Rievaulx, 'Sermon XVII: In Assumptione beatae Mariae', in *Patrologiae Latinae Cursus Completus*, ed. Migne, 195, cols.303-5.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, col. 303.

(Three things make up a castle, so that it may be strong, and they are a ditch, a wall and a tower)<sup>48</sup>

Again, the openness of this definition is striking, especially in contrast to the formulae created for this function by modern historians which I cited in the Introduction. Still, there is no suggestion of a social or political criterion to define this castle, and still the three elements are described in loose affinity. Perhaps it is no coincidence that Aelred, a monk, leaves open the possibilities for his definitions of the castle to be applied to structures such as monasteries as well as to lordly fortresses. I discuss this possibility in Chapter 3, 'The Spiritual Castle'. It may also be that there is a similar motivation behind the '*quaelibet*' of the previous example, inviting readers or listeners to fit the castle scenario to their own surroundings. Once again, there is evidence that, far from being carefully segregated from the contemporary meanings of medieval castle words, Biblical castles were integrated in a broader, less feudal definition of the concept.

This is of course a very small sample from which to draw wide-ranging conclusions about the semantic development of the word castle. However, these examples provide evidence of that way the medieval castle could be understood as a number of defensive elements in a certain relationship, rather than as an entity defined by social or political constraints. They also demonstrate that the *castella* of Biblical texts were conceived in a way perfectly consistent with the other defensive buildings of the Middle Ages. In the final part of this section, I will aim to extend my examples further into the later Middle Ages to look at the later developments in the semantics of castle architecture.

I am aware that the majority of examples I have mentioned so far are from Latin writing, with only a few examples of the use of *castel* and its variants in English. Post-Conquest England is often described as a trilingual society in which Latin, English and French jostled alongside one another; however the relationship between these different languages is often not explored by dictionaries and studies, which confine themselves to a single language, or assume that all three are interchangeable and comment no further. It seems especially important to clarify this situation with regard to castle words in English usage, because of the suggestion that a separate, earlier and Latin-derived sense of the English word *castel* was preserved in Middle English for translating *castellum* from Biblical or sometimes Classical Latin. I have suggested above that, if Biblical (or

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<sup>48</sup> My translation.

Classical) use of the word *castellum* suggested a village or small town, then these meanings could have been encompassed quite happily by the castle words used in England under the influence of Norman culture. Linguistically speaking, too, there is no reason to suggest the preservation of a separate and archaic meaning for a word when it occurs in one particular context. Linguists agree on the polysemousness of words: their ability to absorb a number of meanings, even possibly contradictory ones, and their ability to preserve an older meaning while taking on a newer and changed meaning.<sup>49</sup>

More importantly for this case, perhaps, linguists also agree that an understanding of historical and/or obsolete meanings of a word, and of the processes of semantic shift, is suited to modern ways of thinking about words rather than those of the Middle Ages. The idea of semantic change is dependent on the Saussurian concept of the arbitrary connection between the linguistic signifier and its referent. Before the advent of this idea, etymology, of the type practised in the Middle Ages, was thought to reveal not a series of linguistic associations and shifts, but the true and immutable meaning of a word.<sup>50</sup> At any previous historical period, such as the Middle Ages, the meaning a word held at that time was assumed to be the meaning it had always held. Therefore medieval English readers of around the beginning of the 11th century, coming across the word *castellum* in a Biblical or Classical text, must have accepted that this word had the same range of meanings as the *castellum* used in a property charter or chronicle written in their own time.<sup>51</sup> This would probably not have produced very many problems for medieval observers, as such words are very often employed in ambiguous contexts, under the assumption that the meaning will be known. Under these circumstances, a medieval understanding of the word *castellum*, particularly the open understanding of the term I have illustrated, would have fitted in to a great many historical texts, including Biblical and Classical ones. The question still remains, however, of the nature of the relationship between English *castel* and Latin *castellum*.

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<sup>49</sup> McMahon, *Understanding Language Change*, p.176; J. Milroy, 'On the Social Origins of Language Change', in C. Jones (ed.), *Historical Linguistics: Problems and Perspectives* (London and New York, NY, 1993), pp.215-36, *passim*.

<sup>50</sup> McMahon, *Understanding Language Change*, p.177; R. Lass, *Historical Linguistics and Language Change* (Cambridge, 1997), pp.10-11, 17.

<sup>51</sup> Some dictionaries suggest that the two loans of the word *castel* into English preserved the different genders of their original languages: the earlier *castel* being neuter like the Latin and the later being masculine like French *chastel*. Other sources, however, acknowledge that such a distinction was never systematically maintained, and by the twelfth century grammatical gender had anyway disappeared; J.A. Burrow and T. Turville-Petre, *A Book of Middle English* (Oxford and Cambridge, MA, 1992), p.4.

In order to investigate further this relationship I have looked at a series of closely related texts in different languages which show interaction between Latin and English, and indeed French, castle words. These texts do not belong to the charter or chronicle evidence more usually consulted for castle vocabulary, but they do provide a unique linguistic resource of the early post-Conquest period, just as valid for linguistic information as historical records of a more conventional kind, which have been analysed before for the considerable linguistic information they record. Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britannie* (*History of the Kings of Britain*) was written in Latin in 1138, and rapidly came to prominence. In 1155 the poet Wace translated and adapted Geoffrey's work for the English court into Anglo-Norman as the *Roman de Brut*, and at some point between 1189 and the middle of the thirteenth century, Wace's work was turned into an English poem, now known as the *Brut*, by La3amon.<sup>52</sup> These texts span a time of crucial importance in the development of post-Conquest language structures and relationships; their subject-matter, the history of Britain from its earliest, legendary times, was of great importance and popularity throughout the Middle Ages. In fact, the perspective these legendary histories provides raises interesting questions about medieval perceptions of the past which are germane to this investigation. As each successive text is, loosely speaking, a translation of the former, it has been possible to identify castle words in one text and search the corresponding section of the other two to determine whether the usage is consistent between the different languages and authors.

For each instance of the word *castellum* or *castrum* in the Latin text of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britannie*, Wace's Anglo-Norman contains several more *chastels*, and La3amon often adds more *castels*. This numerical incidence is partly accounted for by the relative lengths of the three texts: each expands on the former version. However, on comparison of the positioning of these terms in each of the texts, the transmission of vocabulary from one text to another does seem to follow certain patterns. While Geoffrey, in Latin, has several different words including *castellum* for fortresses, Wace and La3amon are much more consistent: they translate Geoffrey's different words only as (respectively) *chastel* and *castel*. This suggests that, at least in the minds of Wace, vernacular castle words can be used as the equivalent of the Latin

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p.94.

word *castellum*, and also of other, interchangeable Latin words; but it also shows in both authors a marked preference in the vernacular for the words *chastel* and *castel*.

For instance, in paragraph 7 of Geoffrey's text,<sup>53</sup> '*tria castella*' are mentioned, which are the inheritance of a certain Assaracus;<sup>54</sup> Wace renders these into French as '*tres bons chastels*';<sup>55</sup> La3amon into English as 'sele þreo castles'.<sup>56</sup> When Geoffrey describes in the next paragraph how Assaracus provisions these strongholds, they appear as '*oppida*', and again one of these, an '*oppidum*' reappears in paragraph 10.<sup>57</sup> However, these passages are given the word '*chastels*' in Wace,<sup>58</sup> who, furthermore, scatters '*chastels*' freely around the intervening lines, adding instances where no fortress of any kind is mentioned by Geoffrey.<sup>59</sup> La3amon, following Wace, mentions these fortresses as '*castlen*'.<sup>60</sup> A similar pattern occurs when Geoffrey employs the word '*castrum*'. In paragraphs 19 and 20 of Geoffrey's work, the word is employed in its various forms seven times.<sup>61</sup> Wace substitutes the word *chastel* and uses it ten times.<sup>62</sup> At this level of analysis, the texts provide a fairly consistent picture of the use of castle words, showing an appreciation of the equivalence of castle words in different languages. However, in other ways the use of these words is much more problematic.

Geoffrey uses a variety of different words for fortifications but also for settlements and towns, and it is difficult to know if these terms are always used pleonastically or in order to draw distinctions between structures which Geoffrey wanted to differentiate. Tatlock accepts that Geoffrey means a range of different structures, sometimes fortified towns and sometimes for lordly fortresses; he suggests that in the eleventh century the broader meaning of *castellum* was still current, although it was becoming more usual to associate it with the more recently arrived private, lordly structures.<sup>63</sup> Wace and La3amon add many *chastels* / *castels* to their narratives, but they

<sup>53</sup> I refer here to the first variant version, on which Wace based his translation: Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The First Variant Version: A Critical Edition*, ed. N. Wright, *The Historia regum Britannie* of Geoffrey of Monmouth 2 (1988), pp. xi-cxiv; Wace, *Wace's Roman de Brut: A History of the British*, ed. and transl. J. Weiss (Exeter, 1999) (see Introduction p.xviii); La3amon, *Brut or Hystoria Brutonum*, ed. W.R.J. Barron and S.C. Weinberg (Harlow, 1995).

<sup>54</sup> Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The First Variant Version: A Critical Edition*, paragraph 7, p.4.

<sup>55</sup> Wace, *Wace's Roman de Brut*, p.6, l.196.

<sup>56</sup> La3amon, *Brut or Hystoria Brutonum*, p.14, l.195.

<sup>57</sup> Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The First Variant Version: A Critical Edition*, paragraph 8, p.4; paragraph 10, p.5.

<sup>58</sup> Wace, *Wace's Roman de Brut*, p.6, l.215; p.8, l.315.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p.6, ll.201, 216; p.8, ll.264, 317.

<sup>60</sup> La3amon, *Brut or Hystoria Brutonum*, p.14, ll.217, 233.

<sup>61</sup> Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The First Variant Version: A Critical Edition*, pp.14-16.

<sup>62</sup> Wace, *Wace's Roman de Brut*, pp.25-6, ll.937, 948, 960, 965, 979, 981, 982, 999, 1022, 1024.

<sup>63</sup> The context in which Tatlock places these observations shows the influence of both Round and Armitage, but his analysis of the use of the word *castellum* in Geoffrey is attentive and observant and, I

also add towns and other kinds of settlements, so it is again often difficult to ascertain what kind of structures the authors had in mind. At various points in both these vernacular texts, moreover, there are indications that careful distinctions are being made between castles and other kinds of structures. In Wace's *Roman de Brut*, for example, there are several ambiguous phrases which may or may not be meant pleonastically, such as '*chastels, viles e cites*', or for example, '*Lud fist citez e fist chastels*'.<sup>64</sup> La3amon does not follow Wace in such constructions, but sometimes makes an effort to differentiate more clearly between different structures: for example, adapting the line I have just quoted from Wace, he narrows it down: 'Castles made Lud þe king'. However, La3amon then goes on to explain that Lud was especially fond of London, and that there were no 'castles' there except for the tower built by Belinus; Lud therefore built a 'wal' about the 'burh' of London, which is still to be seen there.<sup>65</sup> This particular example demonstrates again the move away from the specific use of *castellum* pinpointed by Round in a charter of 1141 which mentions '*turris Londoniae cum castello*'.<sup>66</sup> It also seems to show the specialisation of castle words in later contexts away from the wide range of structures which Coulson *et al* showed could be indicated by early castle words; a beginning of the process by which castle words became more strongly associated with lordly, military buildings and were differentiated more clearly from other types of defended enclosure such as monastic enclosures or walled towns. However, it is notable that there is no suggestion in any of these texts that castle words do not apply to pre-Conquest defensive buildings.

As these histories all deal with the ancient, legendary foundation of Britain and none of them continues its narrative up to the medieval period, it might be expected that the castle words used cannot be applied to post-Conquest or Norman buildings in this sense. Interestingly however, the Tower of London is an example of several sites mentioned in these texts which in the medieval period, notionally far after the legendary events described, held Norman castles; in some of these cases, as with London, there seems to be an implication that structures either very like or identical to the Norman ones were already present there in the periods the texts describe. Geoffrey and the other authors following him seem to describe the construction of the Tower of London by the

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think, stands up on its own merits: J.S.P. Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia regum Britanniae and its Early Vernacular Versions* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA, 1950), pp.323-6.

<sup>64</sup> Wace, *Wace's Roman de Brut*, p.40, l.1589; p.94, l.3745.

<sup>65</sup> La3amon, *Brut or Hystoria Brutomum*, p.182, ll.3528-33.

<sup>66</sup> Round, 'Tower and Castle', pp.328, 336.



legendary king Belinus, who is supposed to have reigned in Britain well before the time of Julius Caesar.<sup>67</sup> I discuss these references more fully in a later chapter, but they do seem to refer specifically to the White Tower, the central bulwark of the Tower of London, which was in fact built on the orders of William the Conqueror around 1070-80.<sup>68</sup> It is not in fact castle words but various words for tower which are used to describe this structure, but this instance does seem to indicate that the buildings of the remote past were sometimes, in the medieval imagination, very similar or identical to the buildings of their present, and could be named in the same way.<sup>69</sup>

With other, less specific references, it is harder to tell what kinds of buildings were envisaged. Tatlock and others after him have argued that all three authors were influenced by the ancient remains which could be seen standing at various of the sites they mention,<sup>70</sup> so it is probable that these are the physical referent of a number of these references. However, these defences which the legendary founders of Britain encounter and build through the course of the histories are very often described with castle words. In the subsequent history which unfolds, the Romans and Saxons, and all intervening generations, all of whom left identifiable remains for the medieval period, build and attack defences described as *castella*, *chastels* and *castels*.

Two important concepts are implied from this combination of references. Firstly, the apparent references to medieval buildings, transposed back into ancient, legendary times, suggest that, just as historical language change was telescoped to preclude an understanding of change over time, so architectural forms could also be understood as having existed through historical time without change. There is therefore no reason to differentiate the meaning of medieval usage of architectural terms on the grounds of historical context. Castle-like structures were clearly envisaged as having existed long before the arrival of the Normans, even by the time Geoffrey was writing in 1138, and these could be given the same name that was also linked to the Norman imports. On this analogy, it seems quite reasonable to suppose that instances of the word *castellum* in historical texts set similarly in the ancient past - the Bible and Classical authors - might have been understood as referring to buildings in some ways similar to medieval castles, and so within the scope of the Norman-influenced words in current use since the Conquest. No special and archaic meaning of *castellum* would

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<sup>67</sup> Wace, *Wace's Roman de Brut*, p.82, ll.3217-8; La3amon, *Brut or Hystoria Brutonum*, p.156, ll.3018-9.

<sup>68</sup> G. Parnell, *English Heritage Book of the Tower of London* (London, 1993), p.19.

<sup>69</sup> I discuss this possibility in more detail in Chapter 2, 'The Urban Castle'.

<sup>70</sup> Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain*, pp.323.

need to be set aside if Biblical and Classical *castella* were imagined in this way.

Secondly, the description of ancient remains using castle words pushes castle vocabulary into another dimension, expanding its meanings back across the architecture of the past, to describe all fortresses from the fall of Troy, through the ages of the prophets and of Christ, down to the age of Arthur and beyond.

This realisation is difficult for the modern reader to come to terms with, partly, I suspect, because we are brought up with a clear archaeological appreciation of ancient cultures, especially the Roman and Biblical cultures to which the texts in question belong. We know that when a Classical author described a *castellum* he had in mind some kind of temporary military encampment, and that when Jerome chose the word *castellum* to describe Bethany<sup>71</sup> or Emmaus,<sup>72</sup> he had in mind a village or small town. English modern minds, trained by O'Neil and Brown to think of the word castle as intrinsically feudal and only to be applied properly to post-Conquest structures, cannot cope with the idea that, in a medieval context, it could be applied to Biblical or Roman contexts, because to us the idea is linguistically and archaeologically anachronistic. But I suggest it is this received wisdom, rather than the evidence from medieval texts, which has influenced the narrow definition of the word castle in its medieval context, and which has led to the rejection of the idea that Biblical and Classical *castella* could be included within the medieval meanings of the word *castel*.

A closer look at some examples of the English word *castel* in its Biblical and Classical uses confirms that no extraordinary meaning of the word is called for to explain it in this context. Such examples also illustrate further the ways in which the medieval understanding of the word *castel* changed over the years, often becoming more specifically linked to the private fortresses of lords, but in some contexts also retaining the more general meaning which was common in earlier usage. The first homily in Lambeth manuscript 487 (c.1225) indicates no major change in the treatment of the text of Matthew 21. 2, '*ite in castellum quod contra vos est*'.<sup>73</sup> It is rendered as:

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<sup>71</sup> Referred to in Luke 10.38 (quoted above) and John 11.1: '*Erat autem quidam languens Lazarus a Bethania, de castello Mariae et Marthae soror eius*' (Now there was a certain man sick, named Lazarus, of Bethania, of the town of Mary and of Martha her sister).

<sup>72</sup> Luke 24.13: '*Et ecce duo ex illis ibant ipsa die in castellum, quod erat in spatio stadiorum sexaginta ab Ierusalem, nomine Emmaus*' (And behold, two of them went, the same day, to a town which was sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, named Emmaus).

<sup>73</sup> Matthew 21.2: '*Ite in castellum quod contra vos est et statim invenietis asinam alligatam et pullum cum ea: solvite et adducite mihi*' (Go ye into the village that is over against you, and immediately you shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them and bring them to me).

*God [sic, for gop] in þan castel þet is on 3ein eou, and 3e finded redliche þar ane asse 3e-bunden*<sup>74</sup>

In this particular instance the *castel* is not in any way specified, and could be imagined by the author of the homily either as a defended town or as a lordly residence of some description. Even though the text must originally have been meant to refer to a village or town, there is no indication that it must necessarily do so here. *The Southern Passion* (c.1325) treats the same text similarly, rendering it:

Wendeþ fforþ... To a castel þat agen yow is, and 3e shulleþ anon fynde an asse<sup>75</sup>

Again, there is nothing in this text to suggest what particular kind of *castel* is envisaged, but neither is there anything to indicate that a village or town is specifically implied. However, in the middle portion of a *Life of Christ* of around 1300, the context surrounding the word *castel* has been shifted somewhat from the Biblical text John 11.1,<sup>76</sup> possibly indicating a particular meaning for the use of the word. This text links Lazarus, Mary and Martha to the *castellum* of Bethany:

Hit bifel þat Lazar þe kni3t In grete siknesse lai In is castel bi side Betanie<sup>77</sup>

Here, Lazarus is glossed as a knight, and his castle is at Bethany, implying that it is envisaged as a lordly residence rather than as a defended town. A similar inference may be drawn from a treatment of the same text in *Cursor Mundi* (c.1300), which describes how Lazarus and his sisters have jointly inherited a *castel* where Jesus goes to enjoy their hospitality:

þis lazarus o betani  
Had sisters martha and mari,  
Mikel he luued his sisters bath,  
Ne saght he never man wit lath,  
A castel was bath his and þairs,  
Thoru eldres þar-of war þai airs.  
To þis castel was iesus cald  
Til herberi, als I for-wit tald<sup>78</sup>

<sup>74</sup> R. Morris (ed.), *Old English Homilies and Homiletic Treatises of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*, Early English Texts Society, original series 34 (1867-73), p3, ll.5-6.

<sup>75</sup> B.D. Brown (ed.), *The Southern Passion*, Early English Texts Society, original series 169 (1927), p.2, ll.48-50.

<sup>76</sup> Quoted above.

<sup>77</sup> C. Horstmann (ed.), *The Middle Portion of the Life of Christ* (Münster, 1873), l.679.

<sup>78</sup> R. Morris (ed.), *Cursor Mundi*, Early English Texts Society, original series 57, 59, 62, 66 (1874-7, repr.1961), ll.14128-14135.

There also seems to be some concrete evidence that the Biblical Bethany was regarded as a defended enclosure rather than a village. In the twelfth century a convent was built at Bethany in the form of a tower surrounded by a wall with projecting towers.<sup>79</sup> This was one of the many architectural projects carried out in the course of the Crusades to reclaim and re-Christianise the Biblical sites. The form of this structure tallies remarkably well with the medieval castle definitions I quoted earlier. It seems to me likely that this structure was intended at some level to relate to the *castellum* at Bethany mentioned in Luke 10.38 and John 11.1, confirming the suggestion that Biblical *castella* were thought of as being very similar to the medieval architectural form.

The text of Luke 24.13,<sup>80</sup> describing the visit of the disciples to Emmaus, is also consistently rendered as a *castel*. An early fourteenth century lyric says allegorically of Mary, 'Thou ert Emaus, the riche castel, / Thar resteth alle werie'.<sup>81</sup> The castle of Emmaus is also identified as a prominent monument in the Holy Land in the early part of the fourteenth century in the romance of Beues of Hamtoun, which lists a number of famous sites: 'Sire, ich come fro Iurisalem / Fro Nazareþ & fro Bedlem, Emavns castel & Synaie'.<sup>82</sup> Winkyn de Worde also identifies the medieval site of the Biblical Emmaus in a guide for pilgrims of 1515, stating that 'fro Kames is xij myles to the castell of Emaus'. A building project was also carried out in the twelfth century at Abu Gosh, a site identified as Emmaus.<sup>83</sup> The extremely strong construction of the basilica church on this site has been noted<sup>84</sup> converting it, too, into a castle-like structure in accordance with the text of Luke 24.13 (quoted above).<sup>85</sup>

A sermon by Wyclif on the text of Matthew 9. 35<sup>86</sup> demonstrates that around 1425, the more general sense had not disappeared completely from the understanding of

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<sup>79</sup> D. Pringle, 'Templar Castles on the Road to Jerusalem', in M. Barber (ed.), *The Military Orders: Fighting for the Faith and Caring for the Sick* (Aldershot, 1994), pp.148-66; p.151.

<sup>80</sup> Quoted above.

<sup>81</sup> (?)William of Shoreham, 'A Song to Mary', in *Medieval English Lyrics: A Critical Anthology*, ed. R.T. Davies (London, 1966, repr.1971), pp.103-5, 1.57, p.105.

<sup>82</sup> E. Kolbing (ed.), *The Romance of Sir Beues of Hamtoun*, Early English Texts Society, extra series 46, 48, 65 (1885-94, repr.1975), 1.2261-3, p.110.

<sup>83</sup> Pringle, 'Templar Castles on the Road to Jerusalem', p.129.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.124, 129-30.

<sup>85</sup> For both Bethany and Emmaus, the twelfth century building projects were monastic in function, though defensive in form. The medieval understanding of the castle could, I suggest, include this kind of form. However, it seems to me that in the Middle English references to Bethany, a lordly residence is a more appropriate reading than a monastic enclosure. However, it may be that the convent founded at Bethany expressed the form of the Biblical building, but converted the function into a more explicitly monastic one than the Biblical prototype was believed to have had. I discuss these ideas more fully in Chapter 3, 'The Spiritual Castle'.

<sup>86</sup> Matthew 9.35: *Et circuibat Iesus omnes civitates et castella, docens in synagogis eorum, et praedicans evangelium regni, et curans omnem languorem et omnem infirmitatem* (And Jesus went about all the

the castle. However, by this time it might have to be specially explained in an aside to the congregation:

þe gospel seiþ how, *Jesus wente aboute in þe cuntre*, boþ to more places and lesse, *as citees and castellis*...Castels ben undirstonden litil tounes, but wallid, as Jerusalem is clepid a cite bi Mathew; and sich grete castels ben clepid citees.<sup>87</sup>

The general sense seems to be that Jesus spread his preaching around amongst different kinds and degrees of place. In accordance with this sense, Wyclif seems to be clarifying the relationship between the 'castellis' and the 'citees', and justifying their comparison in this passage by reminding his audience of the formal physical resemblance between the walled defences of towns and the smaller but similar castles: a demonstration that this sense of *castel* was not amongst its foremost meanings at this time, but that it could still be revived if the occasion arose. From all these examples it therefore seems clear a) that a wide definition of the castle was in fairly extensive use into the later Middle Ages, and b) that Biblical *castella* participated fully in this meaning. However, this last point also applies to the *castella* of Classical texts.

A linguistic and semantic relationship between Latin *castellum* and English *castel* is also highlighted in a Middle English translation of a Classical text, Vegetius' *De re Militari* into Middle English. The translator takes a chapter with the heading, '*Quod ciuitates & castella aut natura aut opere aut vtroque modo debent muniri*'. He translates this, understandably:

How alle townes & castelles bep warded or wip kynde or wip craft or wip bothe.<sup>88</sup>

This is a fairly straightforward translation, where once again the original text suggests to the medieval translator the similarities of form shared by the walled town and the lordly fortress, which are differentiated mainly by scale. Having observed this comparison, this particular translator then sticks to it, introducing 'castels' into his translation at several points where the original mentions defences for *urbes* but not

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cities, and *towns*, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease, and every infirmity).

<sup>87</sup> John Wyclif, 'Sermon LXIV', *Select English Works of John Wyclif*, ed. T. Arnold (Oxford, 1869), 1, pp.197-201, p.197.

<sup>88</sup> G. Lester (ed.), *The Earliest English Translation of Vegetius' De re militari* (Heidelberg, 1988), p.160 Book IV, Chapter 1; p123.

*castella*.<sup>89</sup> Clearly for this medieval translator, as for Wyclif, it was still possible to understand a lordly fortress as a smaller version of a defended town, acknowledging the continued possibility of a range of meanings for castle words, while also showing that the most obvious meanings of castle words at this later period had become more specialised towards private and lordly fortresses.

I have focused in this section on the varying meaning of castle words in their various contexts, choosing and discussing examples which seemed to me to demonstrate meanings well beyond the limits often set in definitions of the castle. At certain points this has involved discussion of sometimes complex cultural attitudes towards language, architecture and the past, but I have in the main kept the focus on textual examples and their meaning, avoiding for the moment the wider cultural and artistic implications of these meanings. The concept of the castle, which is the subject of the next section of this chapter, is also the subject of the whole of this thesis. In the section which follows, I will begin the process of expanding some of the wider implications of the range of meanings I have suggested for medieval castle words. This process of expansion will continue throughout the thesis. However, as with my initial discussion of castle words, I will continue to tie my argument securely to particular examples, in the hope that these will display the richness and importance of the medieval idea of the castle, while curbing any reductive tendencies towards generalisation or definition.

## 1.2 CONCEPTS

In my introductory discussions of the phenomenon of the medieval castle I showed evidence that the defensive works of the periods before and after the Conquest were not as distinct as has often been argued. In the 'Words' section of this chapter I repeated this exercise in linguistic terms, arguing that the meaning of medieval castle words was broader than has been recognised. While they were often used to refer to the new Norman fortresses, they were also used for a wide variety of other defences, both

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<sup>89</sup> Vegetius, *Flavi Vegeti Renati Epitoma Rei Militaris*, ed. C. Lang (Leipzig, 1885), p.131, Lib.III, 5: compare with Lester, *The Earliest English Translation of Vegetius' De re militari* p.162, Book IV, 5th chapter; Lang p.130 Lib. III, 2: compare with Lester pp.160-1, Book IV, 2nd chapter.

medieval and ancient. Both these arguments broaden very much the categories with which castle scholars have been used to dealing over the years. Nor do they broaden the concept of the castle in neat and manageable ways, but expand it rather into difficult areas of the Middle Ages. They encroach into the social realm, with the abandonment of the idea that the castle was a private, feudal fortress, and the recognition instead that a medieval castle could also imply a communal structure such as a fortified town or a monastery. They reach into the past, with the evidence that Roman fortresses and Biblical sites could be gathered into the castle category. They also extend into religion, with the evidence that Biblical occurrences of the word *castellum* relate precisely to the mainstream medieval concept of the castle, rather than to an obscure and archaic sub-category protected from having contemporary relevance to the medieval world.

The three chapters which follow tackle these issues, separating out different strands of association and imagery under three different headings: 'The Urban Castle', 'The Spiritual Castle' and 'The Imperial Castle'. However, there are also many points of contact between the ideas in these chapters. In the main section of this chapter I have used mainly textual analysis and borrowed much of my methodology from linguistics. In subsequent chapters, as I have hinted, I use examples from a wide variety of sources and media, and employ the apparatus of several different disciplines in order to achieve a composite image of perceptions of the castle across medieval English culture. In order to introduce this change of approach, and as a summary of the main ideas in this chapter, I will end with an example which deploys all three of the issues I have identified as the focus for the rest of the thesis. This example demonstrates the cultural currency of all the various connotations I have noted for the medieval castle, but also shows the infinite flexibility and richness of the castle as a cultural icon, which in this case combines all three of my main themes in one image.

The item in question is a fifteenth-century civic seal of Colchester (illustration 4). Many civic seals of the Middle Ages, in Continental Europe as well as Britain, are decorated with architectural motifs which resemble castles, and have often been interpreted as such. The presence of a castle-like image on a civic seal, by which a town chose to represent itself to the world, highlights again the relationship between towns and castles, and between private and communal defences in the medieval perception.<sup>90</sup> The round fifteenth-century seal of Colchester shows on its obverse side an

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<sup>90</sup> I explore this idea more fully in the next chapter, 'The Urban Castle'.

architectural screen or façade of canopies and niches inhabited by images of St. Helena, Christ and several angels and shields. The reverse shows a collection of buildings surrounded by crenellated walls with towers, standing behind flowing water. Within the walls a variety of roofs and towers can be seen. The inscription around the edge of the obverse side reads:

*SIGILLU . COMMUNE . BALLIUORU . 7 . COMMUNITATIS . VILLE .  
DOMINI . REGIS . COLCESTRIE .*

(Common seal of the bailiffs and of the community of Colchester, town of our Lord the King)

while that on the reverse reads:

*INTRAUIT . IHC . IN . QUODDAM . CASTELLUM . ET . MULIER . QUEDAM  
. EXCEPIT . ILLUM .*

(Jesus entered into a certain castle and a certain woman received him)

The significance of the obverse image is fairly clear from a basic knowledge of Colchester's civic paraphernalia. St. Helena was believed to be the daughter of Cole, the legendary ancient king of Colchester, celebrated in nursery rhyme and thought to have provided the city with its name. Cole reputedly married his daughter to the Roman emperor Constantius in alliance when the latter arrived in Britain with imperial aims; Helena was thus a member of the British royalty in her own right as well as an empress by marriage. By Constantius she was the mother of Constantine, the first Christian emperor, and Helena's great piety was associated with the conversion of her son as well as with her own pilgrimage to the Holy Land during which she supposedly discovered the remains of the True Cross.<sup>91</sup> This accounts for the imagery on the obverse of the seal. St. Helena, daughter of Colchester and adopted as Colchester's patron saint, holds the True Cross. Christ appears above, authenticating His saint's holy achievements. The supporting angels hold the arms of St. George and England, while another shield underneath the saint displays the arms of the city, denoting the royal and national status

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<sup>91</sup> See G. Rosser, 'Myth, Image and Social Process in the English Medieval Town', *Urban History* 23.1 (1996): 5-25; p.8; Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend, Readings on the Saints*, ed. and transl. W.G. Ryan (Princeton, NJ, 1993. repr.1995), 1, p.278; accounts of Helena's origins are various, but often suggest that she is the daughter of a British king: *ibid.*, 1, p.281. See also E.D. Hunt, 'Constantine and the Holy Land (ii) Helena - History and Legend', in *Holy Land and Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire, AD 312-460* (Oxford, 1982), pp.28-49, pp.28-9; J.F. Matthews, 'Macsen, Maximus, and Constantine', *Welsh History Review* 11 (1982-3): 431-48, pp.439, 441-6 *et passim*.



of both Helena and Colchester. The inscription around this imagery, quoted above, reinforces the references in the imagery of the seal to the royal status of the town of Colchester, and also introduces a link between the elite and the community of the place, declaring that this is a seal shared by the bailiffs, the local agents of Royal administration, and by the people of the town.

Interpretations of the imagery on the reverse of the seal have remained somewhat problematic, but I believe it is equally suggestive of links between the town's elite and its community. Experts on the imagery of civic seals have not been able to determine the exact referent of the architectural image depicted here. Harvey and McGuinness see 'the whole town' of Colchester. Gale Pedrick describes 'a castle or castellated town', although he later suggests that 'this design was probably intended as a bird's-eye view of the town', and tentatively identifies 'the lofty tower' as representing Colchester Castle.<sup>92</sup> It seems to me that this is another case where distinction between public and private defences, and public and private interests, is deliberately avoided. The inscription on the obverse of the seal hints at the co-operation between the town and castle when it mentions both the town community and the bailiffs, who were often put in charge of Royal castles. The imagery of the reverse side is a continuation of this theme, depicting a structure which fuses walled town and walled castle into one to represent the common interests represented by the seal.

The imagery of the town and castle also interacts in other respects with the depiction of St. Helena on the obverse. The theme of the Roman empire connects Helena with her birthplace in Colchester through the archaeology and architecture. Both the town and castle of Colchester are founded on the remains of the Roman city which had once been large and prosperous. In parts of the town walls the standing Roman material is not only visible but formidable, standing to over six feet high for extensive stretches.<sup>93</sup> The castle itself was built by the Normans on the plinth of the largest temple of the city, and Roman materials were re-used for the whole of the building.<sup>94</sup> The antiquity of some of this material was understood by medieval observers: a volume of civic annals was compiled following the institution of a new civic constitution in 1372,

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<sup>92</sup> P.D.A. Harvey and A. McGuinness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals* (London, 1996), p.109; G. Pedrick, *Borough Seals of the Gothic Period* (London, 1904), p.55. Bloom describes 'a castle and a bridge of three arches, with fish swimming in the water', but he must be referring to a different seal: H.J. Bloom, *English Seals* (London, 1906), p.222.

<sup>93</sup> I discuss this more fully in Chapter 4, 'The Imperial Castle'.

<sup>94</sup> See P.J. Drury, 'Aspects of the Origin and Development of Colchester Castle', *The Archaeological Journal* 139 (1983): 302-419.

in which it was suggested that the Roman plinth of the castle represented the remains of King Cole's ancient palace.<sup>95</sup> Colchester Castle, then, represented continuity between the ancient past and the medieval present, joining together in one building the aspirations of the Roman empire with the royal and architectural prestige of medieval England. The material remains of Colchester's ancient royal family were thus localised in an important monument, but were also deployed for the glory of the town as a whole: the ambiguous architectural image of the seal provides a visual analogue to this fusion of civic and royal symbolism.

The inscription which encircles the reverse of the seal (quoted above) has not until now been discussed by commentators, due, I suppose, to its seeming incongruence with the rest of the imagery of this seal and of other seals in general. Pedrick, for example, transcribes it but does not attempt to explain it in any way. It is a quotation from Luke 10.38, a text which I have discussed above with reference to the theological imagery associated with the medieval castle. I have noted earlier in this chapter that, although this text literally refers to Jesus' entry into the village of Bethany to meet Mary and her sister Martha, it was understood in medieval exegesis to refer allegorically to the Incarnation, at which Jesus entered into the body of the Virgin Mary. How, though, might this textual and allegorical tradition relate to the imagery of the fifteenth-century civic seal of Colchester?

Such an association suggests the potential of the medieval castle for religious symbolism - a potential not just of the textual castles in described theological treatises, but also of the stone and timber, localised and identified castles of the English medieval landscape. The use of this particular text on the Colchester seal, without other explanation, suggests at least that the text, and the religious symbolism implicit in medieval castle architecture, were widely understood, and could be used in confidence that an observer would understand the connection between the inscription and the architectural image on the reverse of the seal. In more specific terms, however, the text and its exegesis may also bear a particular relation to the legendary history of Colchester, to which other parts of the seal also allude. Colchester was associated in medieval legend with the birth of Constantine, as I have already noted. This was a particularly powerful legend for medieval England, as it made the first Christian emperor of Rome half English. Moreover, Rosser records the legend that Constantine

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<sup>95</sup> Rosser, 'Myth, Image and Social Process in the English Medieval Town', p.8.

was born to Helena, his royal English mother, in Colchester,<sup>96</sup> and what better location for this than her father's supposed palace, Colchester Castle?

The medieval figurative interpretation of the Biblical text Luke 10.38 is based on the gendering of the castle of Bethany, extending its female inhabitants, Mary and Martha, into an allegory of the Virgin's body and, specifically, her womb into which Christ entered at the Incarnation. The inscription on the Colchester seal seems to me to allude to a similar figurative transformation of a castle into a female body, this time of Helena, referring to her delivery of Constantine in Colchester, perhaps even in the castle. Helena is thus typologically another Mary, Constantine another Christ, and Colchester another Bethany, becoming through its legendary history the site of one of the significant events of Christian history. It is perhaps significant that the seal inscription abbreviates the Biblical text so as not to include the name of the '*mulier*' (woman) to which it refers: this may be in order to invite comparison with the famous Christian woman depicted on the other side of the seal. Although the Biblical text specifies 'Martha', 'Helena' could also be supplied mentally to fill the gap in the seal inscription. In the castles of the Colchester seal, then, it can be seen that the castle is importantly not differentiated from the community and the civic defences; that it is associated with imperial Rome both materially and in local legends; also that it is claimed as a participant in the Christian imagery and history of the age.

All three of these possibilities are ignored by the standard definition of the castle in modern scholarship. However, I have set out to show by just one example that these three modifications of the accepted view are essential to an understanding of the medieval castle in its contemporary cultural, linguistic and material setting. The castles which came over with the Norman Conquest were innovatory, but this novelty was not necessarily the defining concept of the castle during the Middle Ages. Castles were indeed associated with the arrival of the Norman culture and language to Britain, but they also carried associations with a range of other defences and with the ancient architecture of Roman and Biblical times. These diverse and perhaps unexpected associations can be discerned by linguistic analysis. However, I have also begun to show how such resonances can also be traced in textual and visual representations of castles and in the buildings themselves.

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

## 2. THE URBAN CASTLE

### 2.0 PREFACE

And also this present boke is necessarye to alle cytezens & habytaunts in townes and castellis / for they shal see, How somtyme troye the graunte / and many other places stronge and inexpugnable, haue ben be-sieged sharpely & assayed, And also coragously and valyauntly defended / and the sayd boke is att this present tyme moche necessarye / for to enstructe smale and grete, for eueryche in his ryght / to kepe and defende <sup>1</sup>

In the previous chapter I showed that the medieval understanding of castle words allowed for a wide degree of overlap between private fortifications and fortified communal and urban enclosures. I used linguistic arguments to explore this link mainly at the level of verbal usage and understanding. However, in this chapter I concentrate on the ways in which the relationship between castle and town was explored symbolically, in medieval literature and art, and in the relationships set up spatially and politically between urban castles and town defences.

The quotation I have used above, from Caxton's preface to his *Eneydos*, serves as introduction to a number of key ideas about the relationship between the medieval castle and town. Formulations such as Wyclif's 'litol townes... wallid' (quoted in full in the previous chapter) may imply an exceptional or occasional invocation of the affinities between castles and towns. However, the quotation from Caxton indicates a wider appreciation of such a relationship. The subject-matter of the text - the siege of Troy - is given an exemplary application 'to enstructe', directed towards dwellers in both 'townes and castellis'. Both communal and private defences are thus united in their joint duty 'to kepe and defend'. But this collective responsibility is defined by social divisions. Two groups, respectively of city and castle, are contrasted socially as 'citizens and habytaunts' and as 'smale and grete'. Joint purpose is thus expressed via hierarchies of person.

However, Troy is ultimately an example of failure as well as of heroic joint endeavour. It was sacked by the Greeks through the treachery of one of its own citizens, in a war brought about by the selfish lust of a member of its aristocracy. The knowledge of this ultimate failure lies behind the exhortations of Caxton's preface, adding

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<sup>1</sup> William Caxton, *Caxton's Eneydos, 1490, Englished from the French Livre des Eneydes, 1483*, ed. W.T. Cutley and F.J. Furnivall, Early English Texts Society, extra series 57 (1890, repr.1962), p.10, ll.9-17.

poignancy to the exemplary united efforts displayed in its defence. Troy might, then, be interpreted as a negative exemplar: a proof of the futility of a sense of duty in struggling for the common good, and of the ultimate incompatibility of the interests of commons and elite. However, the positive example is also a strong part of the medieval Troy tradition.

As I will argue later, medieval legends renewed Troy, recreating its people, its customs and even physical echoes of its famous defences, in the cities and citadels of medieval Europe. Indeed, this idea is perhaps acknowledged by the phrase 'troy the graunte' in the extract from Caxton: this may refer to the original Troy in distinction from the newer Troys founded all over Europe.<sup>2</sup> This happy ending for Troy is the reward for the communal efforts of the vast majority of its inhabitants, demonstrating its continuing value as a positive exemplar. However, the negative overtones of the Troy story also make their appearance at regular intervals, expressing the discord which could also be felt within medieval urban contexts.<sup>3</sup> It seems to me that this dual example, of heroic success and of failure through treachery, echoes the dynamics of social relations in contemporary cities, where co-operation between the different groups within the class hierarchy was the ideal, even though conflict and treachery might be the reality.<sup>4</sup>

This duality has already been detected in the urban foundation myths of medieval Britain and their performances in medieval society. Gervase Rosser, Sheila Lindenbaum and Lorraine Attreed have examined the way in which foundation legends were used to explore the conflicts of the urban situation in later medieval England. They argue that civic pageants explored publicly the dynamics of urban identity and power and negotiated the relationship between civic community, governing elite and royal power.<sup>5</sup> Studies such as these question the reading of such pageants and their legends by scholars such as Charles Phythian-Adams, who argued that they expressed

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<sup>2</sup> J. Clark, 'Trinovantum -the Evolution of a Legend', *Journal of Medieval History* 7 (1981): 135-51, pp.144-5.

<sup>3</sup> S. Federico, 'A Fourteenth-Century Erotics of Politics: London as a Feminine New Troy', *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 19 (1997): 121-155, pp.121-4 *et passim*.

<sup>4</sup> See S. Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe, 900-1300*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1997), pp.153-4.

<sup>5</sup> G. Rosser, 'Myth, Image and Social Process in the English Medieval Town', *Urban History* 23.1 (1996): 5-25; S. Lindenbaum, 'Ceremony and Oligarchy: The London Midsummer Watch'; L. Attreed, 'The Politics of Welcome: Ceremonies and Constitutional Development in Later Medieval English Towns', both in B.A. Hanawalt and K.L. Reyerson (ed.), *City and Spectacle in Medieval Europe* (Minneapolis, MN, 1994), pp.171-88; 208-231.

only social cohesion.<sup>6</sup> The symbol of the castle has been touched on in such studies. Lindenbaum notes that 'the fortified castle was a familiar way of representing London in civic pageantry', symbolising in the particular instance she mentions the mayor's role as guardian of the city walls.<sup>7</sup>

Castles have also occasionally made their way into such discussions through the foundation legends which apply to them. Examples include references to Colchester Castle in connection to King Cole,<sup>8</sup> which I have already mentioned in the previous chapter, and Bevis of Hampton's supposed connections with Arundel Castle.<sup>9</sup>

Civic seals have generated similar discussions in terms of their capacity to overcome the uncertainties of urban power-relations through the selection and publication of a communal civic identity. Bedos-Rezak emphasises that harmony was the urban ideal of the earlier period of the Middle Ages,<sup>10</sup> and that this was expressed in the depiction of cities on their seals. However she acknowledges readily that these idealised images of social cohesion were not a simple reflection of the urban reality, but a projection of the effort to resolve the multiple conflicts of the medieval urban situation.<sup>11</sup> With some seals, the depiction of a central castle in relation to its surrounding town walls can express the resolution of conflict between the ruling aristocracy and the powerful civic interests.<sup>12</sup>

The architecture of civic government, including town and guild halls, has also been the subject of this kind of analysis, considering the spatial, commercial and political and social implications of this particular kind of urban building.<sup>13</sup> However,

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<sup>6</sup> C. Phythian-Adams, 'Ceremony and the Citizen: The Communal Year at Coventry, 1450-1550', in P. Clark and P. Slack (ed.), *Crisis and Order in English Towns, 1500-1700* (London, 1972), pp.57-85; Lindenbaum, 'Ceremony and Oligarchy: The London Midsummer Watch', p.172.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p.175.

<sup>8</sup> Rosser, 'Myth, Image and Social Process in the English Medieval Town', p.8.

<sup>9</sup> J. Fellows, 'Sir Bevis of Hamtoun in Popular Tradition', *Proceedings of the Hampshire Archaeological and Natural History Society* 42 (1986): 139-45, pp.139, 142, 143-4. Helen Fulton has recently begun to explore a number of other texts in which castle and town are represented in a harmonious relationship, or even symbolically fused together. She identifies Rome, Troy and Jerusalem as important models for idealised depictions of medieval cities. I have seen only a part of Dr. Fulton's work on this topic, and in this part she also detects both conflict and harmony in town/castle relationships, but concentrates on the tensions between church and state. H. Fulton, 'The Medieval Town as Allegory', in *Representations of Urban Culture in Medieval Literature* (forthcoming); 'The Feminised Town in Medieval Chivalric Literature' (forthcoming). I am most grateful for access to draft copies of these pieces.

<sup>10</sup> B. Bedos-Rezak, 'Towns and Seals: Representation and Signification in Medieval France', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 72.3 (1990): 35-48, pp.35, 46.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p.39 *et passim*.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p.45.

<sup>13</sup> See for example, R. Tittler, *Architecture and Power: The Town Hall and the English Urban Community c.1500 - 1640* (Oxford, 1991); G. Sheeran, *Medieval Yorkshire Towns: People, Buildings, Spaces* (Edinburgh, 1998).

the castle as an architectural and spatial element in urban space has not been discussed with this understanding of civic power-politics in mind. It might be expected that an urban castle would not be built as an expression of civic independence in the same way as a town or guild hall. However, depictions of castles are brought into civic pageant, legend and visual imagery as part of the articulation of urban conflict and resolution. It therefore seems to me that the castle might be considered in more detail as a participant in the negotiation of urban power relations.

However, castles within an urban context have not yet been thoroughly integrated into this kind of approach. They have been the subject of much analysis in the field of castle studies and both conflicting and harmonious exemplars of relationships between castles and towns are explored. However, in this work, states of harmony and conflict are rarely seen as existing within the same urban context. This attitude, which I have shown is at odds with current thinking in medieval urban studies more generally, may be explained by the continuing emphasis on the definition of the medieval castle as exclusively private and feudal, a definition which effectively opposes the castle to any communal or urban interests. C. Drage's article on urban castles is usually quoted as the definitive study of castle/town dynamics, and it characterises this view of the relationship succinctly:

The familiar association of town and castle conceals a dichotomy that exists between them. A town is a community living off commerce... with a considerable potential for self-organisation, which could lead to outstanding corporate and individual liberty. A castle is essentially a private institution, 'the fortified residence of a lord'. The dominant factor in the development of the castle is the person of its lord, a knight, of whose power it is the 'symbol and substance.'<sup>14</sup>

Castle and town are here defined in economic, social and administrative terms, and the differences between them are indeed great from this perspective. Drage's definition of the castle in this extract is taken from a piece by R. Allen Brown,<sup>15</sup> whose

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<sup>14</sup> C. Drage, 'Urban Castles', in J. Schofield and R. Leech (ed.), *Urban Archaeology in Britain*, Council for British Archaeology Research Report 61 (1987), pp.117-32, p.117. Cantor takes a similar approach: 'Fortified towns have been a common and well-established military practice throughout history and, as in the case of the A-S *burh*, were communal in nature. Castles and fortified houses, on the other hand, belonged uniquely to the Middle Ages and were distinguished by their private character': L. Cantor, *The English Medieval Landscape* (London, 1982), p.127.

<sup>15</sup> Brown writes in this instance with two other scholars, but these sentiments seem unmistakably his own: R.A. Brown, M. Prestwich and C. Coulson, *Castles: A History and Guide* (Poole, 1980), pp.13-14; see also R.A. Brown, 'An Historian's Approach to the Origins of the Castle in England', *Archaeological Journal* 126 (1969): 131-48, p.136.

firm views on the private, elite nature of castles I have already problematized. It is not necessary to reiterate the arguments I presented earlier for a more flexible definition of the castle. However, it is worth noting here that there are as many problems in attempting to define, translate and understand medieval town words as there are for castle words, especially for the early period around and after the Conquest.<sup>16</sup>

As Drage's summary shows, definitions of the medieval town deployed in castle studies rely heavily upon constitutional documents and economic arguments. Debates range around borough charters, burgage tenure and the autonomous powers of urban oligarchies.<sup>17</sup> This way of defining and analysing medieval towns places much emphasis on the legal aspects of medieval town administration and foundation, but it does not cover every aspect of the medieval urban context, as recent urban studies have emphasised. For example, this approach does not necessarily have any particular bearing on contemporary depictions and perceptions of the medieval town, which have proved a rich source for the historian. It is also quite possible that a borough foundation charter did not have a large impact on perceptions of the town, or of life in it, by the ordinary medieval people who lived there.<sup>18</sup>

Nevertheless, the work of Drage, quoted widely by castle scholars, has set the pattern for castle studies. Drage's priorities also suit the approach of Pounds, who specialises in documentary and social evidence for medieval castles.<sup>19</sup> These scholars propose contrasting relationships between two different types of medieval castles and their towns. A distinction is detected between what are termed 'urban' and 'primary' castles. The former are defined as castles imposed on existing urban centres, often by the disruptive means of extensive demolition and clearing; the latter are explained as castles built in non-urban areas which then attract towns to settle at their gates to exploit commercial opportunities.<sup>20</sup> The division between urban and primary castles is

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<sup>16</sup> See for example A.-M. Svensson, *Middle English Words for 'Town': A Study of Changes in a Semantic Field* (Göteborg, 1997); S. Reynolds, *An Introduction to the History of Medieval Towns* (Oxford, 1977), pp.24, 31, 33-4; *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe*, p.157; Bedos-Rezak, 'Towns and Seals: Representation and Signification in Medieval France', p.39.

<sup>17</sup> Reynolds, *An Introduction to the History of Medieval Towns*, pp.91-2.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, p.52.

<sup>19</sup> N.J.G. Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales: A Social and Political History* (Cambridge, 1990, repr.1994). I illustrate the discussion which follows mainly from Pounds and Drage, as their work has summarised this approach in castle studies. Similarly, I illustrate their arguments using only a very few examples for brevity; more detailed descriptions can be found in their works.

<sup>20</sup> Drage, 'Urban Castles', p.117 *et passim*; Schofield and Vince repeat this distinction: J. Schofield and A. Vince, *Medieval Towns* (London, 1994), p.42; Pounds describes a similar dual scheme, maintaining a distinction between the 'castle-gate town' and castles imposed during conquest on existing towns: Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, pp.207-21.



based on evidence of the circumstances of foundation of the castle and /or of the new borough.

The social and political thrust of this interpretation are seen to follow on from the initial circumstances of the castle's foundation. The urban castle is read as an instrument of oppression, thrust upon a community for the purposes of intimidation and administrative and legal control, and hostile to their attempts to gain economic rights. The primary castle by contrast is seen to provide employment and protection for the community, from which it in turn requires services and revenues from economic activity.<sup>21</sup> The twin states of conflict and harmony which were combined in the medieval understanding of an exemplary city like Troy are thus split between two different kinds of urban context, which are depicted as having little in common with one another.

For example, the Tower of London has been called 'the most complete of urban castles', and has been used as an illustration of some of these arguments.<sup>22</sup> William of Poitiers famously records that in 1067 William the Conqueror left London for a few days while several fortifications were erected in the city to protect him from hostile population,<sup>23</sup> including one on the site of the Tower of London. Its defences consisted at this stage of a defended enclosure thrown hastily up against the south-east corner of the extant Roman city wall (see illustration 8).<sup>24</sup> The siting, the hostility of the local populace and the speed of construction all accord with the historians' expectations for this kind of castle, imposed on an existing town and its population as an instrument of conquest and oppression.

The royal status of the Tower is also consistent with the definition of the urban castle. More than half of the royal castles built before 1100 were sited in urban positions,<sup>25</sup> and it seems likely that the Normans deliberately targeted urban headquarters (including London) with their castle-building, as a way of ensuring some continuity of local administration and royal control at a local level.<sup>26</sup> Where a royal castle was situated at the centre of system of counties superimposed by the Normans on

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<sup>21</sup> See previous note for references.

<sup>22</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.213, 207. See also Drage, 'Urban Castles', p.121.

<sup>23</sup> William of Poitiers, *Gesta Guillelmi: The Deeds of William*, ed. and transl. R.C.H. Davis and M. Chibnall (Oxford, 1998), Book 2, paragraph 34, pp.160-3.

<sup>24</sup> S. Thurley, E. Impey and P. Hammond, *The Tower of London* (London, 1996), pp.45-6; H.M. Colvin, A.J. Taylor and R.A. Brown (ed.), *A History of the King's Works* (London, 1963), 2, p.707.

<sup>25</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.57; Drage, 'Urban Castles', p.117

<sup>26</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.57-8, 92; Drage, 'Urban Castles', p.121.

pre-existing system, it became the administrative base from which a sheriff administered the whole area.<sup>27</sup> In about half of royal castles, as for a time at London, the sheriff also held the post of constable of the castle, a more permanent royally-appointed post, which often became hereditary.<sup>28</sup>

The administrative role of the royal castle under these officers varied, but London provides a vivid, though quite exceptional, demonstration of the range of uses to which an urban castle might be put. The Tower was used to house part of the king's wardrobe, an arsenal, a mint and many administrative staff and became the main storage site for administrative records.<sup>29</sup> It was also a repository for the national treasure and a distribution depot for the national wine trade.<sup>30</sup> Meanwhile Castle Baynard, to the west of London, was the headquarters for the city's Procurator, the commander of the city host and banneret of London. This castle, too, was therefore marked out as a centre of seigneurial, if not of direct royal control.<sup>31</sup>

As pre-existing urban sites often already possessed some forms of communal self-determination, it can well be appreciated that conflicts of jurisdiction and interest might arise with the arrival of the urban castle and its administrative apparatus.<sup>32</sup> In the case of London urban self-determination was well established with a regular meeting of the Folkmoot and the Husting.<sup>33</sup> London certainly bears out the evidence for an uneasy relationship between these civic interests and the royal control its castles represented. As early as 1141 Londoners declared a commune and a mayor is mentioned later in the same century. However, neither received unproblematic royal recognition, and controversies and protests continued, for example in the riots of the 1260s.<sup>34</sup> These factors may well have reinforced the resentment of military and administrative roles which the castles facilitated, against the interests of the urban community in economic and administrative terms.

Under these unstable circumstances in urban settings, a marginal location is seen as an important characteristic of the urban castle, manifesting spatially the uneasy

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<sup>27</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, pp.91-101.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.87-90, 96.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.90, 98, 101.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.100-1.

<sup>31</sup> P. Marsden, 'Baynard's Castle', *London Archaeologist* 1.14 (1972): 315-16; C.N.L. Brooke with G. Keir, *London 800-1216: The Shaping of a City* (London, 1975), p.53; G.A. Williams, *Medieval London: From Commune to Capital* (London, 1963), p.26.

<sup>32</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.211; Drage, 'Urban Castles', p.117 *et passim*.

<sup>33</sup> Brooke with Keir, *London 800-1216: The Shaping of a City*, pp.ix-xx; 53, 154; 178; 249-51.

<sup>34</sup> Reynolds, *An Introduction to the History of Medieval Towns*, pp.105, 107-8, 123.

relationship between the elite and the urban populace. This supposedly ensured a quick escape route to the surrounding country should things turn nasty in the town.<sup>35</sup> For those who accept this argument, this relationship seems to characterise the position of the Tower, on the east of the city right up against the city walls. Castle Baynard was similarly located on the west of the city, again close to the walls, as can be seen in illustration 8.

Primary castles and their castle-gate towns, on the other hand, had much to offer their local populations, according to the contrasts drawn by castle historians. Castles and other lordly residences could be expected to attract a certain amount of settlement and commercial activity to the vicinity to supply the demands for labour and services of the lord and his household.<sup>36</sup> A lord could hope to increase his revenues from rent by enlarging this castle-gate community and making its advantages and rights official. New settlers could be attracted by the offer of borough liberties, allowing them commercial rights in exchange for fixed rents. If the new borough was successful in attracting settlement and trade, market activity benefited the community through trade, and the lord through market tolls and increased burgage rents.<sup>37</sup>

Edward I's Welsh castle/town plantations are seen as representing 'the apogee of town and castle foundation', one manifestation of the 'primary' castle/town relationship.<sup>38</sup> Again, these are not typical of the class, but provide a vivid illustration of the kinds of characteristic which Drage *et al.* associate with the 'primary' castle. The economic motivation for these town foundations is clear. English castles in the middle of hostile Welsh territory needed to be sure of a supply of the basic goods and services which their towns could provide. The castles would in turn protect the towns and their populations from attack by the Welsh. The good relations between town and castle were also intended to extend gradually outwards to the Welsh population, enticing them into peaceable trading relationships with - and/or settlement in - the planted towns.<sup>39</sup> Borough charters for several of these settlements, such as Flint, were based on the

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<sup>35</sup> Drage, 'Urban Castles', pp.117-9; Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.207. This idea goes back as early as E.S. Armitage, *The Early Norman Castles of the British Isles* (London, 1912), p.96.

<sup>36</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.216.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.215-6; Drage, 'Urban Castles', p.117.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p.129.

<sup>39</sup> M. Beresford, *New Towns of the Middle Ages: Town Plantation in England, Wales and Gascony* (London, 1967), p.35; Schofield and Vince, *Medieval Towns*, p.29.

generous terms granted by Henry III to his own borough of New Montgomery. These privileges included rights to a gild merchant, two fairs and a weekly market.<sup>40</sup>

In some of these town/castle plantations such as Rhuddlan, Flint, Conwy and Caernarfon, town and castle were planned and built together. In the latter two cases town and castle were also defended together by a continuous circuit of walls (see illustrations 16 and 17).<sup>41</sup> For the French bastides which these planted castle/towns resemble,<sup>42</sup> the aspiration towards harmony and prosperity is communicated by the positive attributes incorporated into their names: Beaulieu (beautiful place), Monségur (safe mount), Sauveterre (safe land), Bonnegarde (good defence).<sup>43</sup>

With Edward's castle/towns these aims can perhaps be read in the name of Beaumaris, suggesting the pleasant, low-lying location (beautiful marsh).<sup>44</sup> Again, this spatial arrangement is interpreted as representing the close, 'symbiotic' relationship between town and castle.<sup>45</sup> With both castle and borough elements planned and built at the same time, a coherent scheme was planned for these complexes in a way which was not possible for other castles and their towns, and which makes concrete the mutual interest and reliance which was their aspiration.

This binary categorisation of urban/primary castle/town relations reveals much about the foundation circumstances of different sites. However, it should be recognised that foundation circumstances do not count for everything. Reynolds warns that 'towns were and are complex entities, and constant mutual influence makes them hard to classify by reference to one feature such as origin, constitution, or type of economy.'<sup>46</sup> The reality this statement reflects can be found in the copious evidence concerning urban and primary castles which reveals similarities between the two types on many levels.

For example, in terms of economic opportunities and feudal obligations, the situation might end up being very similar for the inhabitants of towns at the gates of primary or urban castles. The burgesses of secondary castle boroughs certainly profited from their economic rights. However, an urban castle too could stimulate growth in the

<sup>40</sup> Beresford, *New Towns of the Middle Ages*, p.41.

<sup>41</sup> A.J. Taylor, *The Welsh Castles of Edward I* (London and Ronceverte, 1986), pp.16-17, 45, 79; Beresford, *New Towns of the Middle Ages*, p.35.

<sup>42</sup> There may also have been inspiration from the English examples of Norman origins: *ibid.*, p.11.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.98, 143, 186, 187.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p.59.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p.41; Drage, 'Urban Castles', p.117, 128; Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, pp.218-20.

<sup>46</sup> Reynolds, *An Introduction to the History of Medieval Towns*, p.52.

local community, through demands for craftwork and commerce and through opportunities for employment in the administrative machinery of which the castle was the focus.<sup>47</sup> Social advantages, such as some degree of self-government, could also grace both kinds of town. Both kinds of communities were under the obligation to perform various duties for the castle, but these too could vary enormously according to different circumstances and might be of a similar nature for both kinds of communities, such as the obligation to bake at the lord's oven.<sup>48</sup> The violent action of Londoners demanding their commune gained them privileges arguably even greater than those allowed in Edward I's planted Welsh boroughs, for example.<sup>49</sup> It is clear that the hoped-for commerce never really came to the Welsh planted towns,<sup>50</sup> and in their early years destructive Welsh raids also ensured that they were not the sites of peace and prosperity which had been hoped for.<sup>51</sup>

Spatial layout might not, in the end, be so different either.<sup>52</sup> Caernarfon, for example, is located at one end of a continuous circuit of walls, separated from the town by a gate which faces the borough (see illustration 17). Although the timing of construction of the different elements is very different in the case of London, the situation is the same. The castle nestles in a corner of the continuous circuit of the city walls (see illustration 8). It, too, is separated from the city by the main castle gate which faces onto the town, a situation which has been noted as somewhat unaccountable in the spatial politics of the 'urban' castle, where escape to the countryside is seen as a high priority.<sup>53</sup> It seems to me, however, that such bald statements about the relationship between politics and layout are not altogether sustainable. While foundation circumstances might well influence the layout and growth of towns,<sup>54</sup> the sketchy comparisons Drage provides demonstrate little except the huge variety of forms which castles and their towns could take (see illustration 22).

The evidence therefore suggests that ultimately, lapse of time and changing political and economic conditions eroded the relevance of the original foundation

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<sup>47</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.215; Reynolds, *An Introduction to the History of Medieval Towns*, p.43.

<sup>48</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.221.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p.217.

<sup>50</sup> Schofield and Vince, *Medieval Towns*, p.32.

<sup>51</sup> See, for example, Taylor, *The Welsh Castles of Edward I*, pp.30-1, 72-3, 85-7.

<sup>52</sup> Schofield and Vince, *Medieval Towns*, p.43.

<sup>53</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, pp.212-5.

<sup>54</sup> See Schofield and Vince, *Medieval Towns*, pp.35-46; Hindle's case study of Ludlow shows the detail required for such analysis: B.P. Hindle, *Medieval Town Plans* (Princes Risborough, 1990), pp.57-61.

circumstances.<sup>55</sup> A castle in an urban setting might represent oppressive control and exploitation by the elite, while at the same time it might also protect the surrounding people and their economic enterprises. On the other hand, a unified foundation of a mutually supportive castle and town might equally succeed in controlling its burgesses for economic benefit. Like the example of Troy, the medieval city with its castle could embody both harmony and conflict, regardless of whether the castle might be classed as 'urban' or 'primary'. For both, the urban ideal was harmony and cohesion, but for both the reality might fall far short of this.

Within the context of castle studies, the negative and hostile aspects of the relationship between town and castle have, I suggest, been over-emphasised in studies such as Drage's. In this chapter I therefore concentrate on several positive depictions of the relationship between town and castle in 'urban castle' contexts. The evidence I present in favour of a less antagonistic relationship between medieval castles and their towns does not by any means invalidate the evidence which has been produced defining their administrative, political and legal differences. It is meant to demonstrate that at another level, separate from these important practical considerations, the castle and town were linked by ideological and formal ties, often expressed in art and literature. My conclusions may, however, lead readers to conclude that the presentation and structure of the more traditional kinds of analysis of urban castles should be rethought, in order to avoid outdated assumptions about the respective roles of castle and town.

## 2.1 THE URBAN CASTLE

I will use one main site as my central example: that of London. Although of course the economic and political situation was very different from today, the capital city was still particularly important in medieval England.<sup>56</sup> The control of London was a pivotal factor in the success of any would-be monarch and for this reason the Tower of London was the most important stronghold in the kingdom in political terms. However, just as importantly for my purposes, the medieval mythologies and symbolisms of both the city and its castle are particularly well documented and suggestive. As I have already noted, London could never be claimed as a typical example of the cities, or

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., pp.55-6.

<sup>56</sup> Brooke with Keir, *London 800-1216: The Shaping of a City*, p.30.

urban castles, in the rest of the country. However, the prominence of London, its depictions and symbolic connotations, signal the range of possibilities in perceptions of medieval urban castle and town relations. London would thus also have been an outstanding example for other urban contexts of the Middle Ages.

I have already noted Drage's interpretation of the Tower as an urban castle of the classic type, and provided historical evidence from the history of medieval London to support the perception of conflict between royal control, represented by the castles, and the interests of the urban elite. However, I have also highlighted other factors in London's design and history which align it with more obviously cohesive models of the town/castle relationship. I will show that both these positive and negative overtones are present in literary and artistic representations of London, creating a dual image of the city which has obvious and direct links to the Troy exemplar I discussed at the start of the chapter. At times the city is represented as orderly and harmonious and its castles are depicted as significant markers of the status and history of the whole city. At other times, however, social unrest comes to the fore, and the city's defences are then implicated in the fall of the city from its ideal position.

Significantly, a similar duality can be detected in the deployment of national foundation legends, the very route by which the Trojan example came to have so much relevance to the British urban context. Reynolds suggests that social bonding is in fact an important characteristic of foundation legends throughout Europe from the seventh century down to the beginning of the fourteenth.<sup>57</sup> These myths could sometimes become instruments of power-politics in conflicts between different nationalities.<sup>58</sup> However, Reynolds notes their capacity for ignoring or overcoming even very obvious markers of generic disparity between the people of one kingdom, to form a unifying myth of common descent which transcended language and class barriers within this context.<sup>59</sup> The myth of Trojan descent, which began to be disseminated in British contexts from the ninth century, is a prime example of this phenomenon.<sup>60</sup>

The legend involves Brutus, the mythical eponymous founder of Britain, a descendant of Aeneas and therefore by descent a refugee from Troy after its legendary sack by the Greeks. Brutus is first connected with founding Britain in the *Historia*

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<sup>57</sup> S. Reynolds, 'Medieval *Origines Gentium* and the Community of the Realm', *History* 68 (1983): 375-90, p.390.

<sup>58</sup> For example, with Edward I's invocation of the Brutus myth to prove his right to the overlordship of Scotland; *ibid.*, p.377.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.389-90

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p.376.

*Brittonum*, a Latin text attributed to Nennius, a Welsh author, in the ninth century.<sup>61</sup>

The historical value of Nennius' work has been debated as much as his authorship of it.<sup>62</sup> However, it seems clear that he was working from earlier historical traditions,<sup>63</sup> and that he aimed to provide for his own people, the British, an ancestry as ancient and respectable as that of the Romans, whose culture still cast a long shadow over ninth-century Welsh history.<sup>64</sup> Importantly, perceptions of Rome itself provide a model for the dual values I have noted in medieval urban contexts.

Rome was both the eternal city, centre of western Christianity, and the source of resented papal attempts at controls over national government and religious affairs. Similarly, its historical reputation was simultaneously that of a cruel and oppressive empire and a bringer of status and civilisation. Nennius is for my purposes the beginning of a long relationship between the legendary histories of Britain and Rome, which explores and addresses this duality, often through urban foundation legends.<sup>65</sup>

Britain's legend of Trojan foundation was brought to much wider notice with Geoffrey of Monmouth's work, the *Historia regum Britannie*, finished in 1138.<sup>66</sup> Like Nennius, whose work he used,<sup>67</sup> Geoffrey was probably Welsh, as his toponymic suggests.<sup>68</sup> However, his multiple dedications of his work to powerful members of the ruling Anglo-Norman aristocracy demonstrate some desire to provide a work palatable to the Norman rulers of Britain.<sup>69</sup> The Trojan foundation legend allowed Geoffrey to turn the history of his own Britain to this very objective. It provided a venerable set of predecessors for the English monarchy, including King Arthur, thus flattering the

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<sup>61</sup> A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550 to c.1307* (London, 1974), p.6.

<sup>62</sup> Dumville has waged a long battle to dissociate the name of Nennius with the authorship of the work, most recently in D.N. Dumville, 'The Historical Value of the *Historia Brittonum*', *Arthurian Literature* 6 (1986): 1-26. However, P.J.C. Field has recently reinstated Nennius with his article, 'Nennius and his History', *Studia Celtica* 30 (1996): 159-65. These studies also provide insights into different critical approaches to Nennius' work.

<sup>63</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550 to c.1307*, pp.6-7, 9.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.10-11; see also D.N. Dumville, 'Sub-Roman Britain: History and Legend', *History* 62 (1977): 173-92.

<sup>65</sup> In the final chapter of this thesis, 'The Imperial Castle', I explore in more detail the imagery of Rome employed in medieval castles. Here, Troy is my main interest, because of the very direct relationship which can be detected between the cities of Troy and London, and, importantly, their castles.

<sup>66</sup> Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS 568*, ed. N. Wright, *The Historia regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth 1* (1985, repr.1996), pp.xv-xvi.

<sup>67</sup> Dumville, 'The Historical Value of the *Historia Brittonum*', p.20; Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550 to c.1307*, p.203; Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS 568*, p.xviii.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p.ix; Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550 to c.1307*, p.201; Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS 568*, p.xix and Introduction, *passim.*; J. Gillingham, 'The Context and Purposes of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 13 (1990): 99-118, p.100.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p.101.



Norman rulers by association and bolstering their achievement in conquering and ruling such a realm.<sup>70</sup>

The Trojan foundation legend, for both Nennius and Geoffrey, expressed the greatness of Britain through the imitation of Roman claims to ancient genealogy and foundation.<sup>71</sup> As I will discuss in the fourth chapter of this thesis, comparisons with Rome and its illustrious leaders formed an important part of the self-fashioning of the Norman monarchy of Britain. However, the foundation of the city of Rome is inseparable from Roman national foundation legends, in the stories of both Aeneas and of Romulus and Remus. This Roman model of city foundation may, I suggest, have prompted Geoffrey in his creation of a British counterpart in the city of New Troy.

The process by which Geoffrey 'invented' Brutus' capital city, the New Troy, is complex and has already been dextrously explained by other scholars, so there is no need to repeat the evidence here in full. Briefly, Geoffrey picked up on the name 'Trinovantum', mentioned in Nennius and other of his sources in connection with Julius Caesar's British campaign.<sup>72</sup> He seems to have linked this name, presumably by the (false) etymologies of which he was so fond, to Britain's supposed Trojan origins, and concluded that 'Trinovantum' was a variant form of 'Troia Nova' or 'New Troy'. References in Geoffrey's sources connect 'Trinovantum' with a site on the north bank of the Thames, so Geoffrey was quite happy to equate the name, and the city he supposed it to represent, with London.<sup>73</sup>

This process of elaborating on hints in source texts is quite consistent with Geoffrey's approach to the whole of his *British History*.<sup>74</sup> Yet after many years of academic debate on the *Historia regum Britannie* it is still not entirely clear what

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid.; Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS 568*, p.xix and Introduction, *passim*.; M.B. Shichtman and L.A. Finke, 'Profiting from the Part: History as Symbolic Capital in the *Historia regum Britannie*', *Arthurian Literature* 12 (1993): 1-35, p.4 *et passim*.

<sup>71</sup> Gillingham, 'The Context and Purposes of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*', p.104, 117; R. Waswo, 'Our Ancestors, the Trojans: Inventing Cultural Identity in the Middle Ages', *Exemplaria* 7.2 (1995): 269-90, p.277, 278, 282-3; Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS 568*, p.xix.

<sup>72</sup> Nennius, *British History and Welsh Annals*, ed. and transl. J. Morris (London and Chichester, 1980), chapter 20, p.64. Geoffrey may also have come across 'Trinovantum' in Caesar's *De bello Gallico*, 5.20, or Orosius' *Historiae*, 6.9-10: J. Clark, 'Trinovantum - the Evolution of a Legend', *Journal of Medieval History* 7 (1981): 135-151, p.139.

<sup>73</sup> 'Trinovantum', in historical fact a tribe rather than a city, located around Colchester, is associated in these texts with a battle on the north bank of the Thames, close to a crossing-point. See H. Nearing, 'The Legend of Julius Caesar's British Conquest', *Publications of the Modern Languages Association* 64 (1949): 889-929, p.895; the same conclusions are also reached independently by John Clark, who discusses Geoffrey's role fully: Clark, 'Trinovantum - the Evolution of a Legend', pp.141-3.

<sup>74</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550 to c.1307*, p.204; Shichtman and Finke, 'Profiting from the Part: History as Symbolic Capital in the *Historia regum Britannie*', pp.8-11.

Geoffrey meant by creating these kinds of connection: whether he intended his stories to be taken humorously, symbolically or literally.<sup>75</sup> Nevertheless it is notable how seriously Geoffrey's foundation legends, and Trojan legends in general, were taken in the main by his contemporaries and successors.<sup>76</sup> Troy's historicity was not a matter for doubt, thanks to the wide acquaintance in the Middle Ages with the supposedly eye-witness accounts of the Trojan war by Dares the Phrygian and Dictys of Crete.<sup>77</sup> Nor was there any reason in the medieval period to question the story that Trojans had later settled in Western Europe.<sup>78</sup>

The ancient, Trojan past could therefore be linked to the medieval present not just in exemplary and symbolic terms but through the survival of ancient lineages, customs and even material remains. Whatever the precise intention behind his equation of London with the New Troy, Geoffrey's text had a profound influence on the way in which the city of London was regarded by the Middle Ages. The myth of its Trojan origins was enthusiastically taken up by many of his numerous readers over subsequent years.<sup>79</sup> Just as Rome itself had done, London became an exemplary city through its prestigious founder, and this process reflected the vicissitudes of London's political scene.

William FitzStephen, who wrote a remarkable description of London as a preface to his 1173 life of the London-born saint Thomas Becket, demonstrates that he was an early exponent of the *Historia regum Britannie*.<sup>80</sup> He makes Brutus' foundation of London central to a glowing portrait of the city's venerable Trojan customs and upright people. Within this context, the description of London is aligned strongly with the classical genre of city descriptions, in which foundation legends also played an important part.<sup>81</sup> FitzStephen makes sure that the classical roots of his genre will be

<sup>75</sup> See all the articles on Geoffrey I have mentioned here, as well as V.J. Flint, 'The *Historia regum Britanniae* of Geoffrey of Monmouth: Parody and its Purpose. A Suggestion', *Speculum* 54 (1979): 447-68.

<sup>76</sup> J.C. Crick, *Dissemination and Reception in the Later Middle Ages*, The *Historia regum Britannie* of Geoffrey of Monmouth 4 (1991), p.2.

<sup>77</sup> C.D. Benson, *The History of Troy in Middle English Literature: Guido delle Colonne's 'Historia Destructionis Troiae' in Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 1980), pp.3-5.

<sup>78</sup> Reynolds, 'Medieval *Origines Gentium* and the Community of the Realm', p.378. Benson, *The History of Troy in Middle English Literature*, pp.3-5.

<sup>79</sup> Crick, *Dissemination and Reception in the Later Middle Ages*, p.9 *et passim*; Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550 to c.1307*, pp.201-2.

<sup>80</sup> William FitzStephen, '*Descriptio nobilissimae civitatis Londoniae*', in J.C. Robertson (ed.), *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, Rolls Series 67 (1877; repr.1965), 3, section 12, p.8; section 18, p.12; section 19, p.12; Brooke with Keir, *London 800-1216: The Shaping of a City*, p.119.

<sup>81</sup> J. Scattergood, 'Misrepresenting the City: Genre, Intertextuality and William FitzStephen's *Description of London* (c.1173)', in J. Boffey and P. King (ed.), *London and Europe in the Later Middle Ages*

obvious to the reader, scattering his description with an astonishing number of quotations from the classics, which often seem to be included for bulk rather than relevance or accuracy.<sup>82</sup>

This self-consciously classicising style is reflected in the content of the piece too, as he describes a city with explicitly classical pretensions. As in Geoffrey's *Historia regum Britannie*, London is compared favourably with Rome on a number of occasions, with great emphasis placed on the assertion that Britain was founded first.<sup>83</sup> Like Geoffrey's claim of a Trojan founder for London, rivalling Aeneas' foundation of Rome, FitzStephen's description of London deliberately marks out the city as exemplary in its own right.<sup>84</sup> The relentlessly positive tone of the work certainly enhances this effect, stressing the cohesion and harmony of the great city. However, underlying political tensions are certainly present in FitzStephen's account.

As I have mentioned, the description of London is an introduction to FitzStephen's *Life of St. Thomas*. FitzStephen himself was a secular clerk in Becket's household and seems to have been one of his few followers who witnessed his murder at first hand.<sup>85</sup> It would not be surprising, therefore, if such an author showed bias towards his subject and against the royal regime which had had Becket killed. However, in the description of London, such partisanship takes on a very civic form. Eulogy is heaped upon the citizens and their city, with only the barest explicit hint at tension between the people and their royal rulers.<sup>86</sup> However, as I have suggested, the very harmony of the city description, idealising the city, implies that the reality of the situation may be rather different.

For example, FitzStephen's emphasis on the ancient customs of the city may perhaps be an implicit comment on the unwelcome nature of royal intervention and government. Furthermore, FitzStephen describes the citizens of London as 'barons',<sup>87</sup>

(London, 1995), pp.1-34, pp.10-20; J.K. Hyde, 'Mediaeval Descriptions of Cities', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 48 (1965-6): 308-40.

<sup>82</sup> Brooke with Keir, *London 800-1216: The Shaping of a City*, p.118.

<sup>83</sup> '*Urbe Roma, secundum chronicorum fidem, satis antiquior est*' (According to the authority of the chroniclers, [London] is rather older than the city of Rome). FitzStephen, '*Descriptio nobilissimae civitatis Londoniae*', paragraph 12, p.8; my translation.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, section 12, p.8. See also section 17, p.12.

<sup>85</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550 to c.1307*, pp.299, 301; Brooke, with Keir, *London 800-1216: The Shaping of a City*, p.112.

<sup>86</sup> One such hint can be gleaned: '*Urbs sane bona, si bonum habeat dominum*' (Indeed a good city, if it could have a good lord). FitzStephen, '*Descriptio nobilissimae civitatis Londoniae*', paragraph 7, p.4; my translation.

<sup>87</sup> '*Habitatores aliarum urbium cives, hujus barones dicuntur*' (The inhabitants of other cities are called citizens, but those of this [city] are called barons). *Ibid.*, paragraph 8, p.4; my translation.

apparently a traditional self-styling showing their noble self-image, but later an important element in the struggles of the city for commune status, aimed at freedom from excessive royal control.<sup>88</sup> Importantly, I believe, a description of the Tower and London's other two castles is included prominently amongst the most important landmarks of the proud neo-Trojan city.<sup>89</sup> It seems to me that this is another hint at the tensions between the citizens and their city and the Norman rulers whose had also made the city their stronghold. As Brooke puts it, 'The Norman castles, and especially the Tower, were built to ensure that the citizens recognised their master. It is a symbol in the broader sense of the relationship of love and hate which always existed between the king and the patriciate of London; in a special sense of the presence of the Norman conquerors in the city.'<sup>90</sup>

With the localisation of Britain's Trojan myth in London, it was perhaps inevitable that Brutus' foundation activities might be traced more directly onto the fabric of the medieval city, and specifically its castles. Gervase of Tilbury made the connection in his *Otia imperialia*:

*Brutus ad ueteris Trojae recensendam memoriam condidit firmissimam urbem Trinouantum, in ipsa uelut Ilium ad orientem constituens, ubi Turris Londoniensis est, firmissima munitione palatium circumseptum continens, aqua Tamasis fluuui, quem cotidie ascendentis maris inundatio replet, in ambitu decurrente. Ad occidentem uero Pergama<sup>91</sup> construxit, duo uidelicet miris aggeribus constructa castra, quorum alterum Bainardi, alterum baronum de Munfichet, est ex jure successionis.<sup>92</sup>*

(Brutus founded a very strong city called Trinouantum to keep alive the memory of the old Troy, placing within it a citadel like Ilium, containing a palace enclosed by mighty fortifications, on the eastern side of the city, where the Tower of London is, with the water of the river Thames flowing around it, which is replenished daily when the sea pours in at high tide. On the western side of the city he built a new Pergama, namely, two castles

<sup>88</sup> Williams, *Medieval London: From Commune to Capital*, pp.3, 44, 204 *et passim*.

<sup>89</sup> 'Habet ab oriente arcem palatinam, maximam et fortissimam...: ab occidente duo castella munitissima' ([London] has to the east a great and very strong palatine citadel...: to the west two very well fortified castles.' FitzStephen, *Descriptio nobilissimae civitatis Londoniae*, paragraph 5, p.3; my translation.

<sup>90</sup> Brooke with Keir, *London 800-1216: The Shaping of a City*, p.14.

<sup>91</sup> The proper noun Pergama or Pergamum is poetic usage from the Greek for the citadel of Troy, employed in several classical authors: C.T. Lewis and C. Short (ed.), *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford, 1958). Pergama may look plural, but it is in fact an example of a Latin place-name with singular meaning and plural form, like Athenae.

<sup>92</sup> Gervase of Tilbury, *The Otia Imperialia of Gervase Of Tilbury*, ed. J.W. Binns and S.E. Banks, (forthcoming, 2002), Book 2, chapter 17. I am most grateful to the editors for allowing me to cite their forthcoming work.

constructed with magnificent ramparts, one being Baynard's Castle, while the other belongs by right of succession to the Barons of Monfiquit.)<sup>93</sup>

It is somewhat difficult to translate this passage directly into English, as the changes in tense, which are a normal rhetorical feature of Latin, have no English stylistic equivalent. The precise grammatical parallels in the construction of the two sentences make an exact equation between Brutus' founding of the Tower and the other castles; I think therefore that the phrase '*ubi Turris Londoniensis est*' should be understood as a continuous present, something like, 'where the Tower of London still stands to this day'. Gervase is therefore suggesting that Brutus founded not only the two lesser castles of London, Baynard's Castle and Mountfichet, but the Tower as well.

This backdates London's castles drastically from their historical foundation at the Norman Conquest. According to the chronology provided by Geoffrey of Monmouth, Brutus settled in Britain at the time when the priest Eli was ruling in Judaea:<sup>94</sup> Brutus and his deeds are therefore dated to the period of early Biblical history before the time of Christ<sup>95</sup> and before the reign of King David.<sup>96</sup> As I have already noted in the first chapter, this dating presents a double impossibility for the modern scholar. The White Tower, centrepiece of the Tower of London is manifestly of a post-Conquest date, as masonry keeps of this form were only introduced to Britain with the arrival of the of the Normans.<sup>97</sup> Through this back-dating process, however, such castles become points of visual, material and symbolic contact with the legendary past: sites at which legendary history can be seen, touched and understood. The castles of London thus become an important part of the exemplary value of the city of London, acting as material witnesses to London's Trojan heritage through their supposed antiquity.

Gervase's English origins are supposed by virtue of his toponymic, but in his later diplomatic career he spent much time in Europe, where he probably also composed the *Otia imperialia*.<sup>98</sup> The text was dedicated to the emperor Otto IV, in whose circles Gervase had been moving for some years before the presentation of the finished text, at some point between 1214 and 1218. His information on London and the Trojan foundation legend may well have been gathered at a much earlier stage when he

<sup>93</sup> I have based my translation on that given by Banks and Binns.

<sup>94</sup> Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS. 568*, paragraph 22, p.15.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, paragraph 64, p.42.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, paragraph 27, p.17.

<sup>97</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, pp.20-1.

<sup>98</sup> J.W. Binns and S.E. Banks, *Gervase of Tilbury and the Encyclopaedic Tradition: Information Retrieval from the Middle Ages to Today* (Leicester, 1999), pp.5-6.

was associated with the English courts of Henry II.<sup>99</sup> As I will discuss in more detail in a later chapter, the court circle of Henry II was responsible for a number of texts examining the Troy legend and its British connections, including Benoit de Sainte-Maure's *Roman de Troie* and Wace's *Roman de Brut*.<sup>100</sup> This background does not explain the original line taken by Gervase in his description of the Tower, but it does provide a background for this emphasis on Trojan foundation legends and their relation to the places and institutions of the English royalty.

Gervase's description marks London's exemplary status onto the fabric of the city in a very precise way. I have already discussed in the first chapter the linguistic reasons which existed in the medieval period for linking medieval castles to structures of much more ancient date, mentioned in connection with Roman and Biblical contexts. There, too, I began to explore the not uncommon practice of backdating medieval castles to attribute them to an ancient founder, just as Gervase here treats London's castles. His wording implies that Brutus chose the layout of his defences specifically to recreate the plan of the old city of Troy on the site of London, the New Troy. The medieval visitor to London equipped with this knowledge could experience not only architectural relics from the foundation period of the city and country, but also a topographical recreation of the ancient city of Troy and the relationships it set up between its citizens and its citadel.

Medieval descriptions of Troy, its architectural features and layout, are both detailed and plentiful, as medieval descriptions of London are not. It might be supposed that the two cities, one medieval, the other from ancient antiquity, would in general descriptions have little in common, despite such comparisons as Gervase's. However it is clear that in medieval accounts the city of Troy was imagined very much along the lines of a medieval city. The citadel of Troy, too, mentioned twice in Gervase's account under the names of Pergama and Ilium, fits in neatly to medieval expectations of a castle in an urban context. Examples from Troy-texts which originated for a British context illustrate these similarities. They may also, I hope, be used here to shed reflected light onto medieval perceptions and representations of the city of London, to which the ancient city of Troy was so closely connected in legendary history.

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> See Chapter 4, 'The Imperial Castle'.

Benoit de Sainte-Maure's Anglo-Norman *Roman de Troie*, written between 1160 and 1170 for the court of Henry II,<sup>101</sup> was based closely on the accounts of the Trojan war provided by the supposed eyewitnesses, Dares and Dictys. Benoit describes the fortress of Ilium unequivocally as '*le maistre donjon*' of the city of Troy.<sup>102</sup> In the mid 1180s, Joseph of Exeter based his Latin account of the work of Dares.<sup>103</sup> His description is less specific, but his comparisons of Priam's citadel are suggestive. He emphasises Ilium's immense height, suggesting that it vies with the Tower of Babel; later in the same passage Joseph suggests that the more ostentatious citizens of Troy have built their own, lesser, towers throughout the city to vie with Priam's.<sup>104</sup>

Later Middle English Troy texts were influenced by the Italian Guido delle Colonna's popular *Hystoria Troiana* of 1287, but this in itself followed Benoit's account, and preserved a very similar description of the city.<sup>105</sup> *The Seege or Batayle of Troy*, dated 1350-1400 clearly identifies Troy's citadel as a 'tour'.<sup>106</sup> Chaucer, too, in the Dido section of *The Legend of Good Women*, calls it 'the noble tour of Ylioun / That of the cite was the chef dongeoun'.<sup>107</sup> This is corroborated by the *Gest Hystoriale of the Destruction of Troy*, thought to be dated between 1385 and 1400: the author refers to Priam's favourite vantage point from the 'heghest' of the castle's 'toures'.<sup>108</sup>

Whether it is called a donjon or a tower, the implication is clear and consistent: in all these medieval texts, Ilium is the keep within the royal fortress of Troy. It is a tower in the same way that the Conqueror's White Tower is the centrepiece of London's main castle, the Tower of London (see illustrations 8 and 9). This certainly supports Gervase of Tilbury's equation of the strongholds of the two cities, as ancient Troy was clearly believed to be very like a medieval walled city with a castle. If the further

<sup>101</sup> I discuss the background of this work more fully in 'The Imperial Castle', chapter 4.

<sup>102</sup> Benoit de Sainte-Maure, *Le Roman de Troie par Benoit de Sainte-Maure*, ed. L. Constans (Paris, 1904, repr. 1968), 1, p.154, l.3042.

<sup>103</sup> Joseph of Exeter, *The Iliad of Dares Phrygius*, transl. G. Roberts (Cape Town, 1970), pp.ix-x.

<sup>104</sup> Joseph of Exeter, *Joseph Iscanus: Werke und Briefe*, ed. L. Gompf (Leiden and Koln, 1970), pp.95-6, ll.500-1, 504-5.

<sup>105</sup> Benson, *The History of Troy in Middle English Literature*, pp.4-5.

<sup>106</sup> M.E. Barnicle (ed.), *The Seege or Batayle of Troye*, Early English Texts Society, original series 172 (1927, repr. 1971), l.323, p.27.

<sup>107</sup> Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. L.D. Benson 3rd edn (Oxford, 1987, repr.1992), 'The Legend of Good Women', p.609, ll.936-7.

<sup>108</sup> G.A. Panton (ed.), *The 'Gest Hystoriale' of the Destruction of Troy: An Alliterative Romance translated from Guido de Colonna's 'Hystoria Troiana'*, Early English Texts Society, original series 39, 56 (1869 and 1874; repr. 1969), p.55, ll. 1639-40, 1636. It has been suggested that this poem is the work of one Master John Clerk of Whalley in Lancashire: the evidence for the dating and authorship of this poem is reviewed briefly in J. Simpson, 'The Other Book of Troy: Guido delle Colonne's *Historia destructionis Troiae* in Fourteenth-Century England', *Speculum* 73 (1998): 397-423, p.405 and nn.34, 35. See also T. Turville-Petre, 'The Author of the *Destruction of Troy*', *Medium Aevum* 57 (1988): 264-69.

implications of Gervase's description are also followed, then the spatial and political relationship between citadel and city in descriptions of the ancient Troy may also be found to have a bearing on perceptions of medieval London.

In those medieval accounts of ancient Troy which describe the layout of the city, ordered hierarchy and symmetry are important elements. Benoit de Sainte-Maure describes Troy in the *Roman de Troie* as most beautiful city on earth, emphasising its positive exemplary qualities.<sup>109</sup> The outer walls of the town with large towers around their circuit;<sup>110</sup> the houses within the walls are then mentioned<sup>111</sup> and finally the citadel of 'Ylion' is described, in the highest part of Troy, complete with battlements and crenellations.<sup>112</sup> Joseph of Exeter, in his version of the account by Dares the Phrygian, describes the city walls with their gates;<sup>113</sup> then soaring skywards, 'Ylios' the citadel<sup>114</sup> and the lesser towers scattered throughout the city, homes of its inhabitants.<sup>115</sup> Joseph, however, sounds a note of warning at the Trojans' pride in their city, reminding his readers of its ultimate fall, but his Troy is nonetheless exemplary.

Later Middle English descriptions based on Guido delle Colonna's account emphasise this concentric arrangement even more strongly. They also echo Benoit's description, via Guido, of Troy's coloured marble work, bestowed in measured degrees upon the dwellings of the citizens. Again, the image of Troy is a visually and formally harmonious one - arranged in ordered hierarchies, all centred on the same point. This can be illustrated, for example, in the "*Gest Hystoriale*" of the *Destruction of Troy*, a Middle English account of around 1350-1400, translated directly from Guido delle Colonna:<sup>116</sup>

Of the walle for to wete to þe wale top,  
 xx Cubettes be course accounttid full euyn,  
 þat of marbill was most fro þe myddes vp,  
 Of diuers colours to ken craftely wroght.  
 þat were shene for to shew & of shap noble,  
 Mony toures vp tilde þe toune to defende,  
 Wroght vp with the walle as þe werke rose,  
 One negh to Anoper nobly deuysset.

<sup>109</sup> Benoit de Sainte-Maure, *Le Roman de Troie par Benoit de Sainte-Maure*, p.152, ll.2995-6.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p.152, ll.3005, 3009.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p.153, l.3019.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.154, 156, ll.3041-2, 3047, 3085.

<sup>113</sup> Joseph of Exeter, *Joseph Iscanus: Werke und Briefe*, p.95, ll.485-7.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.95-6, ll. 491-2, 496-7.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, p.96, ll.504-6.

<sup>116</sup> Benson, *The History of Troy in Middle English Literature*, p.35.



Within the Citie, for sothe, semly to ken,  
 Grete palis of prise, plenty of houses,  
 Wele bild all aboute on the best wise.  
 The werst walle for to wale, þere any wegh dwelt,  
 Was faurdy cubettes by coursse, to count fro the vrthe,  
 And all of marbill was made with meruellus bestes,  
 Of lions & Libardes & other laithe wormes.

Priam by purpos a pales gert make  
 Within the Cite full Solempne of a sete riall,  
 Louely and large to logge in hym seluyn,  
 fful worthely wroght & by wit caste,  
 And euyn at his etlyng Ylion was cald;  
 Closit with a clene wall crustrit with towres,  
 Euyn round as a ryng richely wroght, -  
 ffyve hundrith fete fully the heght: -  
 Withoute, toures full tore torret aboue,  
 þat were of heght so hoge, as I here fynde,  
 þat the clowdes hom clede in vnclene ayre.  
 In þe heghest to houe and behold ouer,  
 All the lond for to loke when hym lefe thought.

Of crafty colours to know, all in course set,  
 Made of marbyll with mason deuyse,  
 With ymagry full honest openly wroght.<sup>117</sup>

The precious materials mentioned in this description provide a touch of exoticism, but apart from this the Troy described by the author is clearly comparable in form to any medieval castle within a walled town. The city wall is first described (l.1546) along with its ‘mony toures...þe toune to defende’ (l.1551). Within the city wall lie the houses of the citizens, but more importantly, the ‘grete palice’ (l.1568) built as king Priam’s residence: ‘closit with a clene wall crustrit with towres, / Euyn round as a ryng richely wroght’ (ll.1634-5), it is called Ylion (l.1633).<sup>118</sup>

The relationship between the citadel and its surrounding fortress and city is precisely but economically evoked in the *Destruction of Troy*. Successive lines of defence are graded carefully by the author in order of height. The city walls are twenty cubits high (l.1547), the wall of Priam’s fortress is five hundred feet tall (l.1636) and its most important tower - the keep - even higher to provide a vantage point over the city and surrounding countryside (ll.1640-1). The houses of the citizens also fit into this

<sup>117</sup> Panton, *The ‘Gest Hystoriale’ of the Destruction of Troy*, ll.1546-53, 1567-73, 1629-41, 1644-6, pp.52-5.

<sup>118</sup> The description of Priam’s stronghold as a ‘palace’ should not divert modern readers from its obvious affinity to a medieval castle: Gervase of Tilbury also uses the noun ‘*palatium*’ to describe the Tower of London in a similar usage when clearly referring to a castle complex (see above).

hierarchy. From forty cubits high (l.1571) they are taller than the city walls but considerably lower than the palace complex. In addition to this hierarchy of height, the walls of the city, those of the houses within the city, and of the palace and its defences are all described as being composed of marble - the city walls are marble from half way up (l.1548), the houses of the citizens have walls all of marble (l.1572) and the palace itself is made of marble dressed with different precious metals and stones which are described at some length in the passage immediately after this extract.<sup>119</sup>

The author has, then, established on the one hand a decorative unity among the greatest and least buildings, all being built with marble blocks, yet on the other hand a strict hierarchy of increasing proportions of precious materials and increasing height. The architectural forms are also arranged in a repeating pattern: the towered wall of the city is echoed in the towered wall of the castle within; and the houses of the citizens are mirrored by Priam's residence, the palace. More emphatic than this, a three-way relationship is set up between the defensive architectural forms which are repeated inwards, with the towered walls of the city, the towered walls of the fortress, and the highest tower of the citadel. This unity of form is offset by the strict hierarchy of height and the increasing exclusivity of each subsequent structure. One might well visualise this arrangement in concentric terms, with the central, highest tower (the citadel) surrounded by the lower houses of the citizens, and surrounding all these, the lowest tier of the city wall.

This concentric arrangement is easy to translate into pictorial terms, as it bears strong resemblances to certain medieval conventions for the visual representation of cities and their castles, which show several tiers of successive defensive circuits, with a donjon at the centre. The example I give as illustration 24 demonstrates these points admirably: its three-tiered arrangement fits neatly the descriptions of Troy found in Middle English literature, which specify an outer town wall, an inner palace circuit, and finally the tower of Ilium, all carefully graded in the texts in ascending order of height. Its name echoes the many Troys which were noted around Europe in the Middle Ages, emphasising too Troy's value as an archetypal and exemplary city. Among the new Troys was, of course, London but also Troia in Apulia, called the New Troy by the chronicler Ekkehard in 1022, and the obscure small town of Trothy in Wales which became known as Troy by the later 12th century.<sup>120</sup> I have stretched the point here by

<sup>119</sup> Panton, *The 'Gest Hystoriale' of the Destruction of Troy*, ll.1648-1659. p.55.

<sup>120</sup> Clark, 'Trinovantum - the Evolution of a Legend', pp.144-5.

using Matthew Paris's illustration of Troyes in France, although it not unlikely that this too was thought of as another Troy in the Middle Ages; and the image is certainly very similar to what the medieval descriptions of Priam's Troy had in mind.

However, the concentric arrangement implied in descriptions of Troy does not bear comparison with any of the spatial trends identified by urban historians. In primary castle scenarios, the castle is on the edge of the town or borough, and the same is true of the town/castle plantations established by the Normans and also by Edward I, as I have noted. The idea of a castle surrounded by its town is not one which tallies with the concrete medieval evidence. Significantly, in none of the descriptions of Troy which I have discussed does the author state explicitly that the city, its houses and fortress are physically placed in a concentric or otherwise ordered spatial and formal relationship. It is the deliberate structuring of the descriptions, taking the reader through successive rings of accommodation and defence, which creates this effect, coupled with the repeated architectural forms, details of materials and height which are all carefully graded.

The symmetrical effect then, is not necessarily to be understood as relating to the city's topographical arrangement, but is nevertheless a key part of the aesthetic representation of the exemplary city. The image of concentricity and formal harmony is such a powerful evocation of solidarity between castle and community that it is used again and again, even in medieval contexts whose topographical reality was in fact quite different. For example, Matthew Paris was certainly familiar with images of Rome depicted on imperial bullae, and his interpretations of these show that he had in mind for the Eternal City a concentric arrangement rather like his Troyes image (illustration 25).

Such images of Rome also had other important influences on the depiction of towns in a British context. Medieval urban seals made their appearance in Europe in the mid twelfth century, starting in the seat of the Holy Roman Empire at Cologne and spreading out to France, Italy and England towards the end of the twelfth century.<sup>121</sup> Civic seals display a wide variety of devices amongst which architectural motifs form an important group.<sup>122</sup> The use of architectural devices seems also to have arisen from the imperial origins of these seals, as the seal of the Holy Roman Emperor since the

<sup>121</sup> Bedos-Rezak, 'Towns and Seals: Representation and Signification in Medieval France', p.39; J. Cherry, 'Imago Castelli: The Depiction of Castles on Medieval Seals', *Château Gaillard* 15 (1990): 83-90, p.84.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.; Bedos-Rezak, 'Towns and Seals: Representation and Signification in Medieval France', p.46; P.D.A. Harvey and Andrew McGuinness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals* (London, 1996), p.109.

time of Charlemagne had displayed on its reverse the image of Rome, of the type which Matthew Paris later copied.<sup>123</sup>

From the earliest stage there was, then, an exemplary quality to the architectural imagery of the seal, and an appreciation that the symbolism of one, exemplary city could be overlaid on to other urban contexts. Civic seals of Medieval Britain often show a close visual similarity to the 'Trois' or Rome type of image, with the tiered castle within its town walls, as I will show shortly. Here too the concentric and harmonious depiction stands in implicit contrast to the topographical reality of the actual urban contexts, but the portrayal of harmony is symbolically important for the image of the city.<sup>124</sup>

The round format of seals also facilitated the assimilation of the concentric city images used for portraying Jerusalem on medieval maps.<sup>125</sup> Jerusalem, while embodying a set of civic connotations rather different to the Trojan foundation legends, was of course the ultimate exemplary city for the Middle Ages and is probably the ultimate source for medieval representations of urban spatial and symbolic harmony.<sup>126</sup> However, its dual identity as an ideal and a real city was a fundamental tenet of Augustinian thought.<sup>127</sup>

With depictions of Jerusalem, harmonious qualities could be overlaid on to the much more haphazard topographical reality of the city, just as with the other examples I have discussed. Various different versions of the famous round Jerusalem plan show different stages of this process. The topographical reality of the city may be portrayed within the perfect circle of the walls (illustration 26) or formalised into a symmetrical pattern more reminiscent of descriptions of the perfect, heavenly city (illustration 27).

These qualities can also be detected in the pictorial record associated with urban castles in medieval England. With these images, the castle is central to the image of harmony which the civic authorities choose to represent themselves. For example, the

<sup>123</sup> Cherry, 'Imago Castelli: The Depiction of Castles on Medieval Seals', p.83.

<sup>124</sup> Bedos-Rezak, 'Towns and Seals: Representation and Signification in Medieval France', pp.45-6.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., pp.44-5.

<sup>126</sup> P. Lavedan, *Représentation des villes dans l'art du Moyen Âge* (Paris, 1954), pp.11-12; C. Frugoni, *A Distant City: Images of Urban Experience in the Medieval World* (Princeton, NJ, 1991), p.4 *et passim*.

<sup>127</sup> Helen Fulton gives a useful summary of the development of this imagery in 'The Medieval Town as Allegory', chapter 2 of her forthcoming book, *The Medieval Town Imagined*. I have already discussed something of its relationship to castles and literature of the Middle Ages in my M.A. dissertation, 'Dream Buildings in Medieval Literature, Art and Architecture'. I also touch on the example of Rome more fully in the chapter on 'The Imperial Castle', later. However, I have chosen Troy as the main exemplar of this chapter because of its supposedly direct connections with London and English politics in general, and because of the emphasis on Troy's citadel, which brings it fully into the debate on castle/town relations.

civic seal of York dating from the thirteenth century uses on its obverse a tall fortified structure rising up from enclosing fortified walls (illustration 28). It shares a certain formal resemblance with images such as Matthew Paris uses to represent both 'Trois' and Rome, as can be seen in the way the central element rises up from behind the lower wall, and the way in which this front wall seems to project backwards behind the central tower to enclose it, going up the picture plane. This kind of architectural image was a fairly early development in English seal iconography. This particular example dates from the thirteenth century, but is a copy of an earlier seal of York Minster which dates from the late twelfth century.<sup>128</sup>

Like the fifteenth-century Colchester seal I discussed in the previous chapter, the image has been described differently by different scholars, who have interpreted the structure shown on the obverse as representing different combinations of town and castle. Cherry suggests that the seal 'shows a tall keep, with double windows, rising up behind a town wall with three gates.'<sup>129</sup> G. Pedrick, on the other hand, sees 'an ornate castle, with three pointed and tiled towers and an embattled keep of peculiar form, all masoned';<sup>130</sup> J.H. Bloom also describes 'a castle...of early design'.<sup>131</sup>

However, with the York seal image, as with Matthew Paris's 'Trois' and the city descriptions, it seems to me that a deliberate resemblance is created between the form of the castle and that of the city as a whole. In all these cases, the central castle becomes the innermost in repeated rings of similar defences - a smaller version of the city walls which surround it - very much like Wyclif's idea of castles as miniaturised towns, as 'litol tounes, but wallid'. Yet these images also work outwards as well as inwards: as well as the central castle representing the city in miniature, the enclosing city walls can

<sup>128</sup> There is also a link between the imagery of this seal and religious architectural iconography, which perhaps echoes the influence of Jerusalem images on architectural depictions on medieval seals. An earlier seal of York is preserved in the British Library, dated to some point after 1191 by D.M. Palliser, 'The Birth of York's Civic Liberties, c.1200-1354', in S. Rees Jones (ed.), *The Government of Medieval York: Essays in Commemoration of the 1396 Royal Charter* (York, 1997), pp.88-107, p.92 and n.23 (illustrated in W. de G. Birch, *Catalogue of Seals in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1892), 2, pl.1). This seal bears on its obverse an architectural image notably similar to that on the later civic seal (see illustration 28). However, the inscription around the obverse reveals that this image represents the cathedral, rather than the town: + [SI]GILLVM : ECL'E : SAN[CTI : PET]RI : CAT... EBORAC... It may be that a merging of martial and ecclesiastical architecture is the intended message of this image, a rich topic I discuss more fully in the next chapter, 'The Spiritual Castle'. However, it may also be that church and state powers are shown united in this architecture image. The reverse of the seal confirms this kind of reading, as its inscription mentions the town: + SIGILLVM . CIVIVM . EBORACI . FIDELES . R[EG]IS. The image on this side of the seal also shows unity with the cathedral, showing St. Peter, to whom both the city and cathedral are dedicated.

<sup>129</sup> Cherry, 'Imago Castelli: The Depiction of Castles on Medieval Seals', p.84.

<sup>130</sup> G. Pedrick, *Borough Seals of the Gothic Period* (London, 1904) p.135.

<sup>131</sup> J.H. Bloom, *English Seals*, (London, 1906), p.223.

also be seen to represent an extension of the castle - the outermost of the baileys and defences with which the citadel surrounds itself. With the visual images there is a clear sense that the architectural device could be read as a single unit: this is probably why scholars have often read such structures as castles without reading in the outer, civic, boundaries.

As with the Colchester seal (see chapter 1 and illustration 4), I think that this ambiguity of form is fully deliberate, fusing elements of town and castle into one to represent the exemplary harmony of the urban community. These urban castles are an expression and symbol of their towns and the two entities can be exchanged and identified in this symbolic discourse. This is the case even in a city such as York, where the castles were unquestionably imposed on the town in an act of conquest<sup>132</sup> and which also had its own share of conflict between urban factions.<sup>133</sup> It seems to me that the castle is portrayed very much as a citadel: a stronghold which overlooks and protects the town surrounding it, rather than as an elite preserve. While Bedos-Rezak does not devote much attention to the subject of castle imagery, she does approve this kind of reading: 'Crenellated walls and castles, mayors in arms... the town denies and disproves any alienation from the noble and ecclesiastical worlds by incorporating their iconic representations.'<sup>134</sup>

However, by alluding to an ideal which is necessarily at variance with the reality experienced in both the topography and the politics of urban life, such images also acknowledge the tensions of the medieval urban context. The depiction of the castle at the centre of the town image unites the two factions visually, but also depicts the symbols of each faction in the close juxtaposition which is also the cause of their conflict. Symmetrical harmony was understood as conflicting with the reality of medieval cities, I suggest, and it was this very tension which gave symmetrical depictions of cities their power to transform the everyday urban reality into an exemplary and harmonious ideal city.

As civic seals provide images chosen to some extent by and for their particular urban communities, it might be argued that they provide a surer route to understanding the dynamics of urban society than the legendary or descriptive works created in the imaginations of individual authors. I have, however, found that seals can often mirror

<sup>132</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.7.

<sup>133</sup> Palliser, 'The Birth of York's Civic Liberties', pp.88-107.

<sup>134</sup> Bedos-Rezak, 'Towns and Seals: Representation and Signification in Medieval France', p.45.

very closely the details and the wider relationships suggested in city descriptions and urban foundation legends, as well as the more general dualistic dynamics which I have already described. In some cases, indeed, there seems to be good evidence for the transfer of motifs and ideas between these different genres. This confirms that the foundation legends and city descriptions performed something of a similar social and symbolic function to the seals, in drawing together the conflicting factions of the urban community through a formalised and harmonious representation of it.<sup>135</sup>

The seal of the 'barons' or citizens of London, thought to be of the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, depicts a large figure of St. Paul on the obverse, and St. Thomas of Canterbury on the reverse, both towering above small cityscapes of London (see illustration 11). The cityscapes show spires, towers and lesser buildings surrounded by walls: they are arranged symmetrically and imply some of the characteristics of concentricity which I have identified in images such as the York seal. However, in this case it seems that these depictions also aim at portraying the city with a certain degree of topographical accuracy. The city seems to be viewed from the south on the larger, obverse depiction, with the river and a river wall and gate in the foreground, St Paul's cathedral in the centre, and castles at either end of the enclosed space. St. Paul himself looms behind his cathedral, supporting a heraldic flag of the arms of England. On the reverse, underneath St. Thomas, St. Paul's cathedral again takes the central position, with castles at either end, but the enclosing wall shows no river in the foreground: the viewpoint for this image must be somewhere north of the city.

When John Cherry discusses this image he suggests that the two castle structures shown represent the Tower at one end of the city and either Baynard's Castle or Mountfichet Castle at the other. The respective positions of the Tower and, for example, Baynard's castle at east and west ends of the city respectively, support this reading (see illustration 8);<sup>136</sup> however, other elements of the depiction are not so easy to explain from the medieval topography of the city. For example, the river wall in the foreground of the city on the obverse of the seal did not exist in the Middle Ages. Interestingly, Cherry looks to London's legendary history for an explanation, proposing that the wall shown in the obverse view depicts the Roman river wall mentioned in

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<sup>135</sup> Bedos-Rezak makes a connection between city descriptions and seals: *ibid.*, p.35; Cherry makes a more specific link between FitzStephen's description of London and a London seal, which I will discuss more fully later in this chapter: Cherry, 'Imago Castelli: The Depiction of Castles on Medieval Seals', p.85.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, p.85.

FitzStephen's account and that it thus represents a past and legendary, rather than a medieval, reality.<sup>137</sup>

This interpretation accords very well with the symbolic strategies I have identified in other medieval representations of London, including, of course, FitzStephen's own description of the city. In all these cases, famous landmarks are linked to the city's ancient heritage and are used to map the legendary past of the city on to its medieval present. The seal's very unusual attempt to combine the harmonious, symmetrical arrangement with a schematic topography of the city also places the seal in a very interesting relationship to the literary accounts of the city which were circulating at around the time when the seal was made.

Again, the dating of this seal is ambiguous: the surviving seal was engraved around 1219, but its design may date from the brief period in 1191 when the citizens of London were recognised as a commune.<sup>138</sup> Around the obverse of the seal is inscribed: 'SIGILLUM . BARONVM . LONDONIARVM .' (seal of the barons of London).<sup>139</sup> These 'barons' are the proud citizens of the independent city.<sup>140</sup> I have already discussed briefly some of the political tensions which medieval Londoners experienced. Reynolds in particular stresses the ongoing nature of the struggles and the large degree of autonomy which must already have existed amongst London's elite citizens well before this date.<sup>141</sup> From the period of the Conquest onwards, London's castles, with their administrative and military roles within the city, must have been understood as representing these tensions to some degree.<sup>142</sup> It is particularly significant that in the mid-twelfth century London's castles were involved in attempts to curtail such civic freedoms, when King Stephen used the constables of the Tower and Baynard's Castle as instruments of royal authority and control in the capital.<sup>143</sup> The inclusion of the castles in the ideal city depicted on the seals thus has particular force, signalling opposing royal and civic interests, but drawing them together into a harmonious formal relationship. The depiction of London's castles mediates crucially between the general and the specific, the legendary and the contemporary medieval realities of the city.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.; William FitzStephen, '*Descriptio nobilissimae civitatis Londoniae*', section 5, p.3.

<sup>138</sup> Harvey and McGuinness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, p.107, fig. 104.

<sup>139</sup> Pedrick, *Borough Seals of the Gothic Period*, p.84.

<sup>140</sup> Williams, *Medieval London: From Commune to Capital*, p.3.

<sup>141</sup> S. Reynolds, 'The Rulers of London in the Twelfth Century', *History* 57 (1972): 337-57, pp.338-9 *et passim*.

<sup>142</sup> Brooke with Keir, *London 800-1216: The Shaping of a City*, pp.13-14.

<sup>143</sup> Reynolds, 'The Rulers of London in the Twelfth Century', pp.340-1.



The dating makes it difficult to suggest a specific relationship between the seal and the passage on London's ancient topography in Gervase of Tilbury, who wrote around 1212. It is suggestive, however, that in both the seal and Gervase's account, London's castles are an important feature, in their topographical relation to each other, to the river, and to the city walls, all of which are precisely located on the seal.

If this interpretation is correct, the seal is a much more remarkable piece of iconography than has previously been supposed. It may be the first town seal used in medieval England, and is certainly the earliest surviving one. It is not only very early in attempting to reproduce some account of the city's topography, but manages to combine this with a formalised and symmetrical view, suggesting the archetypal nature of the city of London. Whatever the relationship between the seal and Gervase of Tilbury's Trojan description of the Tower, the presence in the seal of the non-existent river wall from FitzStephen's description<sup>144</sup> confirms that the legendary Trojan foundation of the city must have been known to its designer. The role of Troy as the exemplary city, famous both for its harmony and its treachery, is thus also behind this depiction.

The enduring importance of the barons' seal in translating these ideas into visual form is confirmed by several subsequent images which seem to be derived from it. These later depictions support the legendary allusions which have been detected in the barons' seal, but they also emphasise the position of the Tower within the image of London, as a central feature which carries connotations of both past events and present realities.

The ideogram devised for London in one of Matthew Paris' mid-13th-century itineraries or pilgrim maps<sup>145</sup> (illustration 12) bears a close formal resemblance to the smaller view of London on the reverse of the barons' seal, seen from the north. The Matthew Paris image similarly shows the city wall and two gates in the foreground, St Paul's in the centre of the enclosed space and 'la tur' to the left on the river which forms the further boundary of the city. As with the seal, the Tower is portrayed as a squarish crenellated tower surrounded by enclosing walls, and this time is the only castle included, emphasising its pre-eminent importance as a city landmark. This city is more diagrammatic than the cityscape of the seal: the city gates are placed symmetrically along the walls, and the monuments included are dispersed spaciouly, with no attempt to portray the crowded and populous nature of the city which the

<sup>144</sup> Cherry, 'Imago Castelli: The Depiction of Castles on Medieval Seals', p.85.

<sup>145</sup> In this case the one prefacing his *Historia Anglorum*, British Library, London, MS Royal 14.C VII.

jostling spires and crenellations of the seal achieve. However, the link between these landmarks and the legendary past of the city is made explicit by Paris' inscription over the city:

*La cite de lundres ki est chef dengleterre. Brutus ki primere enhabita engleterre la funda. Et lapella troie la nuvele.*

(The city of London which is capital of England. Brutus who first colonised England founded it. And called it the new Troy.)<sup>146</sup>

As an image, this view of London and its individual elements are similar to Matthew Paris' London ideograms in other versions of his Itinerary (see illustration 13). However, I suggest that in this particular case the similarity of the layout to the image on the reverse of the barons' seal, demonstrates the seal's enduring iconographic impact on medieval perceptions of London, and reiterates the importance of the founding myth within this construction. However, a more general influence from concentric city images can be seen in other versions of this image (for example, illustration 13),<sup>147</sup> in which the walls are arranged in a ring with the river running through the middle and St. Paul's in its central place, with the Tower at the left-hand edge.

This arrangement is markedly more symmetrical, and circular walls portrayed in this way are reminiscent of circular depictions of Jerusalem, whose important and widespread influence on city depictions I have already discussed (see illustrations 26 and 27).<sup>148</sup> This version of the composition is topped by the same inscription citing Brutus. Rather like the barons' seal, this image manages to juxtapose the city's true topography with the ideal of symmetry and concentricity, in a reconciliation of the exemplary, Trojan city and its more fallible, irregular counterpart. Once again in these images, the Tower's presence in London is consistently emphasised, underlining its role in mediating between the ideal and the real city.

A further use of parallel iconography is found in some illustrations for a late thirteenth- to early fourteenth-century copy of the *Historia regum Britannie*.<sup>149</sup> Sketches survive in the lower margins of the manuscript, one of which shows a view of London to illustrate the passage in the text describing the Trojan foundation of the city

<sup>146</sup> My translation.

<sup>147</sup> Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 26, f.1.

<sup>148</sup> Cherry, 'Imago Castelli: The Depiction of Castles on Medieval Seals', p.85.

<sup>149</sup> British Library, London, MS Royal 13.A III.

(illustration 14).<sup>150</sup> The Tower here corresponds to its place in the cityscape of the barons' seal, at the far right of the picture, portrayed similarly as a squarish block surrounded by an outer wall; the artist has added extra distinguishing features such as the carefully differentiated corner towers and the arcaded windows. As in the seal, churches again take up the centre and left of the view, with St Paul's, again, in the middle. Several tall, thin banners, reminiscent of the one St. Paul supports on the seal, stick up into the city's skyline to identify their respective churches. The similar viewpoints, the similar portrayal of two of the main buildings, and the similar arrangement of the tall, thin banners convince me that the artist of the *Historia regum Britannie* knew of the depiction on the Barons' seal and emulated its symbolic depiction of London.<sup>151</sup>

Even more convincing evidence comes from another illustration in the same manuscript (see illustration 15).<sup>152</sup> A sketch also accompanies the section of Geoffrey's text describing Belinus' river gate (identified by Geoffrey with Billingsgate) and the tower he built near it.<sup>153</sup> The picture echoes quite precisely the view of London on the obverse of the Barons' seal, with the curve of the city walls enclosing St Paul's and various other buildings, and a castle at either end of the composition. The two castles included on the sketch also differ from their seal counterparts in being portrayed outside (though apparently attached to) the city walls. Once again there are the characteristic

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<sup>150</sup> Folio 14.

<sup>151</sup> The date of the sketches in this manuscript is by no means certain. It has been suggested that they are by the scribe of the manuscript: C. Caine, 'Our Cities: Sketched 500 Years Ago', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 4 (1898): 319-21, p.319. However, this seems unlikely, as they are squashed into the margins of the text, rather than placed in specially reserved spaces. They have alternatively been attributed to the fourteenth century through the identification of certain specific buildings: H.J.D. Astley, 'Mediaeval Colchester - Town, Castle and Abbey - from MSS. in the British Museum', *Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Association* 8 (1903): 117-35, pp.117-8. The British Museum Catalogue suggests that the drawings are inserted and belong to the early fourteenth century: G.F. Warner and J.P. Gilson, *Catalogue of the Western MSS in the Old Royal and King's Collections in the British Museum* (London, 1921) 2, p.75. However the sketches seem to me more complicated than these simple datings allow. Close inspection of the images shows that they often made up of two layers: under-drawing in a fine, silvery line, and over-drawing in brown line (presumably originally black) which is often slightly thicker. There are several places where discrepancies occur between these two lines, for example in the depiction of London I have discussed, where the silver under-drawing often shows Romanesque type features such as windows, and the over-drawing changes these to a Gothic style (it is very hard to see these details in reproductions of these images, but they are quite clear in the manuscript itself). Such changes may suggest that the images are the production of two different artists, working at different periods and reflecting architectural changes which have taken place. The images are also identified very differently in different commentaries on them. I have made my own identifications of their subject-matter based on my research, but, for example, the image I have just discussed is identified in the British Library Photographic Index as Jerusalem. This does at least show that the sketches are appreciated as depicting exemplary cities, even by modern observers who identify those cities wrongly.

<sup>152</sup> Folio 28v.

<sup>153</sup> Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS 568*, paragraph 44, p.30.

slim banners above the buildings. All of these elements suggest that the artist of the sketch must have studied the Barons' seal quite closely, even if detailed architectural observations were added afterwards. The river wall in the foreground, taken from FitzStephen's description of London, marks the ancient content of this image, and confirms that the buildings depicted are invoked as architectural survivors from an earlier age. The foreground sections of both the seal and the sketch are conjectural reconstructions, and their similarities must therefore confirm the connection between the two images, as well as their joint legendary content.

In this particular case, the sketch from the *Historia regum Britannie* seems to be used to invoke a different foundation legend for the Tower, as it is placed under Geoffrey's description of the foundation of a gate and tower by Belinus, which has been interpreted as a reference to the Tower of London by scholars as distinguished as Tatlock.<sup>154</sup> The placing of this image may suggest that the artist agreed with this reading, although this did not prevent the inclusion of the Tower in the earlier illustration of London accompanying the text for Brutus' foundation of the city. Again, as with both the seal and Matthew Paris' illustrations, these depictions use the medieval monuments of the city to illustrate the Trojan foundation legend, hinting at the correspondences between the surviving buildings and those built by the ancient founders. There may be a blurring of past and present, just as there is a fusion of the identities of castle and town, expressing the unity of the city and its powerful traditions. The Tower again takes its prominent position, a witness to the developments of the ancient and modern cities of London, a visual symbol of the special status of London and of continuity between the old and the new.

I have emphasised in all of these depictions the positive arrangement of the different elements and the parallels between these depictions and positive images of the exemplary cities of Rome, Jerusalem and especially Troy and its medieval counterpart, London. However, I have also noted that such idealised images necessarily admit to a gap between image and urban reality. There are, on the other hand, plenty of cases where the legendary Trojan heritage of London, with its sad beginnings in the sack and treachery at Troy, takes on a mainly negative and divisive function. I will end my discussion with some of these examples, which demonstrate that the negative

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<sup>154</sup> J.S.P. Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia regum Britannie and its Early Vernacular Versions* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA, 1950), p.31; Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550 to c.1307*, p.207.

connotations of the Trojan foundation legend could sometimes be most forceful. The Trojan foundation legend of the Tower might thus be viewed as a rather ambiguous identification, not wholly to the glory of its Trojan city.

This is perhaps illustrated most forcefully by the events which occurred in 1388 when the Lords Appellant convicted a former mayor of London for treason. Nicholas Brembre, the former mayor in question was hanged; his crime, which the Lords Appellant had thought so dangerous, was reputedly a plan to rename London 'Little Troy' and to declare himself its duke.<sup>155</sup> The general reasons for such a violent reaction to an apparent invocation of London's legendary past are explained by Sylvia Federico, who characterises the fall of Troy as precipitated by the moral turpitude of the citizens. She suggests that the war with the Greeks was caused by lust and ended by treachery, so that Trojan connections were thus potentially dangerous in implying that such qualities could be transferred, by inheritance and comparison, to the citizens of medieval London.<sup>156</sup> Federico's model of a degenerate, feminised and reviled New Troy is derived from the invocations of the Trojan foundation legends in contexts connected with the aftermath of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. These connotations, in turn, may explain the very violent reaction to the invocation of the legend by Brembre, former chief representative of the citizens, seven years later.<sup>157</sup>

Gower's *Vox Clamantis* depicts the city in a gendered position of female submissiveness as a vulnerable widow, defenceless against the unnatural depredations of the revolting peasants of 1381. Richard Maydiston's account of the reconciliation between the city and Richard II in 1392 (after the split between them which had been precipitated by disputes over money and liberties) also genders the city, casting Richard's wife, Anne of Bohemia, to plead with the king on behalf of the city in the role of a wife pleading with her husband. The Trojan associations which are mentioned under these circumstances might indeed be expected to take on associations with the negative, disruptive conditions which the city has faced. However, I think a close reading of parts of these sources also reveals an acknowledgement of the positive, unifying side of the Troy legend, even when things look darkest for London.

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<sup>155</sup> See Thomas Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, ed. H.T. Riley, Rolls Series 28 (1863), 2, p.174. Discussed in Federico, 'A Fourteenth-Century Erotics of Politics: London as a Feminine New Troy', pp.121-5, *et passim*.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>157</sup> The image of the feminised town is discussed in a somewhat different context by Fulton, 'The Feminised Town in Medieval Chivalric Literature'.

The first section of *Vox clamantis*, from which this passage is taken, was added by Gower to his existing poem probably shortly after the Peasants' Revolt, as a condemnation of the rebels' actions and an exoneration of the young king.<sup>158</sup> When Gower describes the vulnerability of London to the depredations of the peasants, he applies the gendered imagery of the vulnerable widow to the city, but overlays this on to the architectural features of the medieval city. The city walls are particularly associated with the Trojan heritage in one of these passages:

*A dextrisque nouam me tunc vidisse putabam  
Troiam, que vidue languida more fuit:  
Que solet ex muris cingi patuit sine muro,  
Nec potuit seras claudere porta suas*<sup>159</sup>

(On my right I then thought I saw New Troy, which was powerless as a widow. Ordinarily surrounded by walls, it lay exposed without any wall, and the city gate could not shut its bars)<sup>160</sup>

The lack of walls leaves the city vulnerable and symbolises here the destructive power of social conflict. However, the association between the city walls and the legendary past still remains, with the inevitable implication that, when the walls stood intact, the legendary city was a happy and unified one. The exemplary qualities of the city of London are further reinforced by echoes in this passage of the Biblical Lamentations of Jeremiah, which describes the ruin of the city of Jerusalem in terms notably similar to those used here by Gower.<sup>161</sup> Such Biblical imagery is entirely suitable to a poem whose very name is a Biblical quotation applied as a commentary on Britain's contemporary political troubles.<sup>162</sup>

The imagery of feminisation and violation can also be found in connection with events supposed to have taken place at the Tower during the Peasants' Revolt, extending this imagery to the citadel. Mark Ormrod has produced a fascinating analysis of passages from Froissart and Thomas Walsingham which describe the penetration of

<sup>158</sup> John Gower, *The Major Latin Works of John Gower*, transl. E.W. Stockton, (Seattle, WA, 1962), pp.11-13.

<sup>159</sup> John Gower, *The Complete Works of John Gower*, ed. G.C. Macaulay (Oxford, 1902), 4, 879-82, pp.46-47.

<sup>160</sup> Gower, *The Major Latin Works of John Gower*, p.69.

<sup>161</sup> Lamentations, 1.1: '*Quomodo sedet sola civitas plena populo! facta est quasi vidua domina gentium*' (How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! how is the mistress of the Gentiles become as a widow); 2.8: '*Cogitavit Dominus dissipare murum filiae Sion;... luxitque antemurale, et murus pariter dissipatus est*' (The Lord hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Sion:...and the bulwark hath mourned, and the wall hath been destroyed together); 2.9: '*Defixae sunt in terra portae eius, perdidit et contrivit vectes eius*' (Her gates are sunk into the ground: he hath destroyed, and broken her bars).

<sup>162</sup> Gower, *The Major Latin Works of John Gower*, p.11.

the Tower by the rebels, and their assault on the King's mother, Joan of Kent.<sup>163</sup> As Ormrod notes, it is not in fact established whether this episode ever took place, but this does not prevent its analysis in terms of the gendered imagery of London which seems to cluster particularly around this period.<sup>164</sup> As with Gower's imagery, it is a widow whom the peasants here attack, and the Tower is the location for this scene, much as the walls and gates embody the female city of *Vox clamantis* and Lamentations.

Possibly as a reclamation of the troubled period for the identification of London as the New Troy, a positive reflection of this imagery is used in Richard II's reconciliation with London, performed in 1392. In Richard Maydiston's account of the pageant which accompanied this occasion, the theme of the New Troy and its gendered and submissive imagery constantly recurs.<sup>165</sup> The Tower also makes an appearance as the Trojan citadel under submissive circumstances, as the Queen begs the King to accept the capitulation of the citizens. Maydiston's description announces

*quod se reddent modo cives -  
Corpora, divicias, Pergama, queque sua*

(that the citizens now yield themselves  
bodies, riches, the Trojan citadel, their all)<sup>166</sup>

Again, the gender connotations are unmissable, but there is also the implication that the capital's castles, and their Trojan heritage, play an integral part in the restoration and preservation of social and political harmony within the city. Once again, city and castle are important symbols of civic harmony, even though they are also used to illustrate the temporary breakdown of that harmony. Both Gower's text and the pageant are, after all, supportive of the reconciliation of crown and town and of the long-term stability which this will bring. The threat of urban discontent and division is always present in urban

<sup>163</sup> W.M. Ormrod, 'In Bed with Joan of Kent: The King's Mother and the Peasants' Revolt', in J. Wogan-Browne, R. Voaden, A. Diamond, A. Hutchinson, C.M. Meale and L. Johnson (ed.), *Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts in Late Medieval Britain: Essays for Felicity Riddy* (Turnhout, 2000), pp.277-292.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.278-80.

<sup>165</sup> '*Hic licet accensus foret in te, Troja, parumper, / Grata modo facies se docet esse piam. / Non poterat mordax detractans lingua tenere, / Quin cuperet thalamum sponsus adire suum*' (Although he was angry with you for a while, O Troy, his kind face now radiates parental affection. No detractor's tongue could overcome the bride-groom's longing to enter his bridal chamber). Text and translation from G. Wickham, *Early English Stages 1300-1660* (London, Henley and New York, NY, 1980), 1, pp.65-6, reproduced from Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS E. Museo. 94.

<sup>166</sup> This quotation and translation are cited in Federico, 'A Fourteenth-Century Erotics of Politics: London as a Feminine New Troy', p.146, from C.R. Smith (ed. and transl.), 'Concordia Facta inter Regem Ricardum II et Civitatem Londonie' (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1972), ll.213-14 and p.189. This passage is not included in the extract from Maydiston's account reproduced in Wickham's work, and I have unfortunately been unable to obtain Smith's dissertation in the time available to me.

town/castle images, which juxtapose walls and citadel; the harmony of the layout, however, acts to counteract these divisions and to affirm the medieval belief that consensual government was both desirable and possible.<sup>167</sup>

As if to prove the enduring power of the castle as a unifying civic symbol even in the context of urban disturbances, Maydiston's account also mentions a pageant castle, which is used to re-enact part of an earlier pageant which had celebrated Richard II's coronation. On both occasions this castle contains an angel which descends to the king, offering him a crown.<sup>168</sup> The angel ensures that there are obvious heavenly overtones to this castle: it might be compared to the Heavenly Jerusalem, from which angels constantly descend in Revelation.<sup>169</sup> It might thus affirm to the king the divine mandate of his rule and the ideal kingship to which he should aspire. However, it might also be understood to represent the ideal state of the city of New Troy,<sup>170</sup> handing back to the king the crown which its citizens claimed the right to bestow.<sup>171</sup>

This final demonstration of the castle's importance in urban imagery, and its double-edged significance, also introduces the role of the castle in the religious iconography of the Middle Ages. This is an exceptionally rich topic, which I proceed to examine in the next chapter.

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<sup>167</sup> Reynolds, 'Medieval *Origines Gentium* and the Community of the Realm', pp.380-1.

<sup>168</sup> Wickham, *Early English Stages 1300-1660*, 1, pp.54-5, 69-70.

<sup>169</sup> I discuss the Heavenly Jerusalem of Revelation, and its representation as a castle, in more detail my M.A. dissertation, 'Dream Buildings in Medieval Literature, Art and Architecture'.

<sup>170</sup> Lindenbaum confirms that at a later date, 'the fortified castle was a familiar way of representing London in civic pageantry': Lindenbaum, 'Ceremony and Oligarchy' *The London Midsummer Watch*, p.175.

<sup>171</sup> Williams, *Medieval London: From Commune to Capital*, p.2; see also Brooke with Keir, *London 800-1216: The Shaping of a City*, pp.17-30.



### 3. THE SPIRITUAL CASTLE

#### 3.0 PREFACE

*Ideo, fratres, praeparemus spirituale quoddam castellum, ut veniat ad nos Dominus noster. Audacter enim dico, quia nisi beata Maria hoc castellum praeparasset in se, non intrasset in uterum ejus, nec in mentem ejus Dominus Jesus, nec istud Evangelium in ejus festivitate hodie legeretur. Ergo praeparemus hoc castellum. In castello fiunt tria quaedam, ut forte sit, scilicet fossatum, murus et turris. Primo fossatum, et postea murus super fossatum, et sic turris quae est fortior et excellentior caeteris. Murus et fossatum se invicem custodiunt; quia nisi fossatum praeesset, possent per aliquod ingenium homines accedere ad murum suffodiendum; et nisi murus esset super fossatum, possent ad fossatum accedere, et illud implere. Turris omnia custodit, quia altior est omnibus. Intremus modo animam nostram, et videamus quomodo ista omnia debent in nobis spiritualiter fieri.<sup>1</sup>*

(Therefore, brothers, let us make ready a certain castle spiritually, so that our Lord might come to us. Indeed I say to you [do it] boldly, because unless the blessed Mary had prepared this castle within herself, Lord Jesus would not have entered into her womb, nor into her mind, nor would this gospel be read today on her holyday. Therefore let us prepare this castle. Three things make up a castle, so that it might be strong, namely a ditch, a wall and a tower. First the ditch, and after that a wall over the ditch, and then the tower which is stronger and better than the others. The wall and ditch guard each other; because if the ditch were not there, men could by some device get in to undermine the wall; and if the wall were not above the ditch, they could get to the ditch and fill it in. The tower guards everything, because it is taller than everything else. So let us enter our minds, and see how all these things should be brought into being spiritually within ourselves.)<sup>2</sup>

In the first chapter of this thesis I argued that, to the medieval understanding, the castle was not an exclusively feudal and private fortress. I gave medieval examples in which a more flexible idea of a defended enclosure was intended. This defended enclosure could refer to urban or ecclesiastical as well as aristocratic defensive complexes, especially in the early post-Conquest period. I used an excerpt from the passage above to illustrate the way in which a medieval mind could appreciate a castle as being made up of certain key elements, rather than being defined by particular social or political constraints. However, this example also demonstrated that instances of the Biblical word ‘*castellum*’ (like that of Luke 10.38, from which the above exposition is

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<sup>1</sup> Ailred of Rievaulx, ‘*Sermo XVII: In Assumptione beatae Mariae*’, in J.P. Migne (ed.), *Patrologiae Latinae Cursus Completus* (Paris, 1844-64) 195, cols.303-4.

<sup>2</sup> My translation.

derived) form part of this mainstream medieval understanding of the idea of the castle. I argued that such examples do not need to be relegated to a separate category of meaning, as they have usually been. In this chapter I build on both these arguments. I show that medieval defensive and ecclesiastical architecture could share significant structural and organisational features. However, I also suggest that the architectural symbolisms of the castle and the church were complementary.

This raises important issues about the transmission of meaning through architecture. As I noted in the Introduction, medieval ecclesiastical architecture has long been recognised as a meaningful architecture. Its crockets and spires, its vaults and traceries, transmitted meaning by their very form:

As symbols, arches and vaults were interchangeable with many other arched forms which proliferated in Gothic architecture and art, for all of them signify heaven<sup>3</sup>

The architecture of the church thus communicated a core significance. Churches, chapels, cathedrals and monastic buildings all represented the Heavenly Jerusalem. However, this basic significance was articulated through a complex series of references which could modulate or specify this core meaning. The layout of sacred space was designed to facilitate the expression of specific liturgical meanings, while decorative schemes presented different iconographic emphases.<sup>4</sup> The basic building blocks for this edifice of sacred meaning came from the Bible. Biblical texts inspired both the specific iconography of individual churches, and the greater significance of ecclesiastical architecture as a whole. Thus the west front of Wells cathedral is thought to refer to the many mansions of John 14.2 and the 'strait gate' of Matthew 7.13, in a composite invocation of the Heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>5</sup> This is the kind of model I seek to apply to the castle in this chapter.

Certain levels of meaning have recently been accorded to castle architecture, as I noted in the Introduction. Coulson, Dixon and others have argued that crenellations, towers and other features of castle architecture had symbolic values. According to these critics they expressed status, aggression and defence and sometimes, through their inter-

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<sup>3</sup> C. Wilson, *The Gothic Cathedral: The Architecture of the Great Church, 1130-1530* (London, 1990), p.92. See also N. Coldstream, 'The Kingdom of Heaven: Its Architectural Setting', in J. Alexander and P. Binski (ed.), *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England, 1200-1400* (London, 1987), pp.92-97.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p.97.

<sup>5</sup> Wilson, *The Gothic Cathedral*, p.168, pl.126 and caption. See also P. Tudor-Craig, 'Wells Sculpture', in L.S. Colchester (ed.), *Wells Cathedral: A History* (Shepton Mallet, 1982), pp.102-131, pp.116-120.

relationships, communicated the architectural power-dynamics within particular castles.<sup>6</sup> However, this kind of meaning is hardly comparable to that acknowledged in contemporary ecclesiastical architecture. It is the equivalent of seeing in medieval church architecture an expression of power, status and religion. Such symbolism is manifest, but cannot be said to articulate a specific iconography of meaning, either in structural and decorative details, or in the architectural whole.

The whole of this thesis is an attempt to show that defensive architecture could communicate meaning in the same way as ecclesiastical architecture, through its connection to certain specific ideas. Throughout, I argue that iconographic markers in and on castles, and depictions of castles in particular contexts, could trigger off certain ideological connotations. I show that these could be combined or isolated to articulate the particular significance of an individual castle, but they also contributed to the creation of a shared meaning which could be applied to all castles.

In this particular chapter I address the similarities between this method of constructing architectural meaning and that found in medieval ecclesiastical architecture. Moreover, I also suggest that some of the meanings articulated in this way were similar to the religious meanings of sacred architecture.

The passage I quote above comes from a sermon of the Assumption of the Virgin by Aelred, abbot of Rievaulx from 1147 to 1167.<sup>7</sup> It is based on the text of Luke 10.38, which Aelred cites at the beginning of the sermon: '*Intravit Jesus in quoddam castellum*'.<sup>8</sup> This passage provides a useful introduction to the ideas and approach I use in this chapter. I have noted that the description of the castle in this excerpt can be

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<sup>6</sup> C. Coulson, 'Structural Symbolism in Medieval Castle Architecture', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 132 (1979): 73-90; 'Hierarchism in Conventual Crenellation', *Medieval Archaeology* 26 (1982): 69-100; P. Dixon and B. Lott, 'The Courtyard and the Tower: Contexts and Symbols in the Development of the Late Medieval Great House', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 146 (1993): 93-101; P. Dixon, 'The Donjon of Knaresborough: The Castle as Theatre', *Château Gaillard* 14 (1988): 121-40; P. Dixon, and P. Marshall, 'The Great Keep at Hedingham Castle: A Reassessment', *Fortress* 18 (August 1993): 16-23; 'The Great Tower in the Twelfth Century: The Case of Norham Castle', *The Archaeological Journal* 150 (1993): 410-32.

<sup>7</sup> P. Fergusson and S. Harrison, *Rievaulx Abbey: Community, Architecture, Memory* (New Haven, CT, and London, 1999), p.38.; M.L. Dutton, 'The Conversion and Vocation of Aelred of Rievaulx: A Historical Hypothesis', in D. Williams (ed.), *England in the Twelfth Century*, Proceedings of the 1988 Harlaxton Symposium (1990), pp.31-49, p.33.

<sup>8</sup> Aelred of Rievaulx, '*Sermo XVII: In Assumptione beatae Mariae*', col.303. Luke 10.38 reads: '*Factum est autem dum irent, et ipse intravit in quoddam castellum; et mulier quaedam, Martha nomine, excepit illum in domum suam*' (Now it came to pass as they went, that he entered into a certain castle: and a certain woman named Martha, received him into her house). This text recurs throughout this chapter, so I will not cite it in full or translate it each time. Because of my arguments in Chapter 1 to show that the word '*castellum*' has a meaning consistent with the normal medieval use of the word 'castle', I will translate the use in this text as *castle* throughout this chapter, without further justification.

related to medieval architecture on a literal level. It expresses neatly the kind of conception of the medieval castle which could be applied equally to lordly, ecclesiastical and urban defences. The arrangement of the architectural elements of this castle allegory articulates the idea of defence in the ditch, the wall, the tower and the closed gate.

However, this architectural description is placed firmly within an ideological framework. Each of these elements is accorded a spiritual significance: the ditch is humility, the wall chastity and the tower charity.<sup>9</sup> The text of Luke 10.38 is interpreted as referring figuratively to the Incarnation: the castle is the body of the Virgin, into which Jesus entered to be born as a man.<sup>10</sup> A further reference is made to the text Ezekiel 44.2, which describes the closed east gate of the Temple of Jerusalem.<sup>11</sup> This text, describing the closure of the east gate and its exclusive use by the Lord, is used to elucidate the Virgin birth, signifying the intact state of the Virgin's body before and after Jesus' birth. The castle of Aelred's sermon therefore communicates important tenets of the Christian faith: the Incarnation and the Virgin birth. These individual symbols combine to create the allegorical significance of the whole castle, which represents the Virgin Mary.

This building up of different architectural elements from Biblical texts to create an overall iconography is very similar to the strategy I have identified in medieval ecclesiastical architecture. At the same time, the tenor of the imagery is intensely religious. However, the defensive function of the architecture is an important tenet of the allegory. Luke 10.38 refers significantly to a castle (*'castellum'*), indicating a kind of architecture with specifically defensive connotations. I have suggested that this word might be applied to an ecclesiastical enclosure, but the word *castellum* nevertheless describes a defensive function. It seems to me that all these elements are part of a specific strategy of drawing parallels between ecclesiastical and defensive architecture, in which architectural meaning is conveyed, as well as the way in which the building is described.

These are the ideas which I explore in this chapter. I have chosen the text of Luke 10.38 as the focus of this investigation. As I showed in Chapter 1, this is only one

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<sup>9</sup> Aelred of Rievaulx, *'Sermo XVII: In Assumptione beatae Mariae'*, cols.304-5.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, col.305.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

of many Biblical texts which was the subject of medieval exegesis involving the idea of the castle. The view of the spiritual castle which I build up in this chapter is therefore, necessarily, a partial one. It demonstrates the kinds of meaning which could on occasion be read into the castle, rather than investigating the full range of different possibilities. Roberta Cornelius' survey of figurative uses of the castle in medieval theological texts is still the definitive work.<sup>12</sup> It vividly illustrates the range of different texts and readings, so there is no need to repeat this effort here. However, the examples which I do discuss are intended to challenge some of the assumptions which continue to be made about the relationship between the medieval castle and church, in both ideological and architectural terms.

The church can, and indeed often has been, understood by modern scholars as diametrically opposed to the castle, both architecturally and culturally: the one built as a symbolic celebration of the spiritual role of medieval society's *oratores*, the other as a manifestation of the practical and violent concerns of its *bellatores*. I noted some of the long-standing manifestations of this perceived division in the Introduction. Nevertheless, scholars have recently begun to explore some of the similarities between the architectures and the ideas of castle and church.

It has been recognised in the mainstream of castle studies in recent years that, even just for practical reasons, two prestigious kinds of architecture in one society will inevitably have certain overlaps in patronage, scale, design detail, or in construction personnel and procedures.<sup>13</sup> The survey volumes of Pounds, Thompson and Platt have identified the spiritual aspect of life inside the castle as an important function, discussing the use and positioning of chapels, and drawing attention to the twinned foundation of castles and abbeys which was a standard practice in the Middle Ages. In more specialist studies, Richard K. Morris and T.A. Heslop have both looked at castles which share architectural motifs, and also patrons, masons and probably architects, with nearby churches.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> See R.D. Cornelius, *The Figurative Castle: A Study in the Mediaeval Allegory of the Edifice with Especial Reference to Religious Writings: A Dissertation* (Bryn Mawr, PA, 1930), *passim*.

<sup>13</sup> N.J.G. Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales: A Social and Political History* (Cambridge, 1990, repr.1994); C. Platt, *The Castle in Medieval England and Wales* (London, 1982); M.W. Thompson, *The Decline of the Castle* (Cambridge, 1987), *The Rise of the Castle* (Cambridge, 1991).

<sup>14</sup> R.K. Morris, 'The Architecture of the Earls of Warwick in the Fourteenth Century', in W.M. Ormrod (ed.), *England in the Fourteenth Century*, Proceedings of the 1985 Harlaxton Symposium (1986), pp.161-74; T.A. Heslop, *Norwich Castle Keep: Romanesque Architecture and Social Context* (Norwich, 1994).

Sheila Bonde's study of the fortress churches of Languedoc tackles a topic which demonstrates some of the undeniable overlaps between defensive and ecclesiastical architecture.<sup>15</sup> In her study of this subject in post-Conquest Britain, however, Bonde is not able to produce such expressive examples of this crossover, apart from the much-disputed machicolation slots identified by some scholars on the west front of Lincoln Cathedral. This one example is so exceptional in a British context that David Stocker, Alan Vince, Peter Kidson and Richard Gem have all attempted to explain it. The west end of Lincoln Cathedral has therefore become a celebrated battleground, with little prospect of general consensus, and little in the way of comparable examples in its British context. Charles Coulson has, however, turned his attention to the use of military architectural devices such as crenellations in ecclesiastical architecture. Importantly, his studies emphasise the social and ideological motivations behind such displays of defence, as well as practical and legal considerations.<sup>16</sup> Roberta Gilchrist has also applied some of the spiritual imagery associated with the castle to concrete examples of medieval architecture. She concentrates on imagery of female enclosure, and applies this through spatial analysis to both castles and convents.<sup>17</sup> All these studies confirm that the architectures of church and castle did not represent a binary opposition in medieval society, but were open to certain cultural and functional exchanges.

The symbolic use of the castle in medieval theology, which inspired Gilchrist's work, is a particularly rich topic. As I have mentioned, Roberta Cornelius's thesis of 1930, 'The Figurative Castle', is still the definitive collation and study of theological castle imagery.<sup>18</sup> This encouraged editions of several of the crucial texts in the field,<sup>19</sup> leading to a small but fairly steady flow of studies on the subject in later years. The

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<sup>15</sup> S. Bonde, *Fortress Churches of Languedoc: Architecture, Religion, and Conflict in the High Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1994).

<sup>16</sup> Coulson, 'Structural Symbolism in Medieval Castle Architecture', 'Hierarchism in Conventual Crenellation'.

<sup>17</sup> R. Gilchrist, *Gender and Material Culture: The Archaeology of Religious Women* (London and New York, NY, 1994); 'Medieval Bodies in the Material World: Gender, Stigma and the Body', in S. Kay and M. Rubin (ed.), *Framing Medieval Bodies* (Manchester and New York, NY, 1994), pp.43-61; 'The Contested Garden: Gender, Space and Metaphor in the Medieval English Castle', in *Gender and Archaeology: Contesting the Past* (London and New York, NY, 1999), pp.109-145.

<sup>18</sup> Cornelius, *The Figurative Castle*.

<sup>19</sup> William Nevill, *The Castell of Pleasure by William Nevill: The Text of the First Issue with Variant Readings from the Reprint of 1518*, ed. R.D. Cornelius, Early English Texts Society, original series 179 (1930, repr.1971); R.M. Wilson, *Sawles Warde: An Early English Homily Edited from the Bodley, Royal and Cotton MSS*, Leeds School of English Language Texts and Monographs 3 (1938); Robert Grosseteste, *The Middle English Translations of Robert Grosseteste's Château d'Amour*, ed. K. Sajavaara, *Memoires de la Société Néophilologique de Helsinki* 32 (1967).

spiritual castle imagery of St. Theresa of Ávila has attracted particular interest,<sup>20</sup> while more general studies of architectural imagery in medieval literature have regularly discussed the castle motif and its theological interpretations.<sup>21</sup> Malcolm Hebron's contribution is the latest in this line.<sup>22</sup>

Despite this critical coverage of both architectural and symbolic contacts between the medieval castle and church, it seems to me that some fundamental divisions still exist in the way in which modern scholars tend to think about castles and their relationship with ecclesiastical architecture and thought. Paradoxically, it may be that the recent recognition of links in patronage and structure between castle and church architecture has obscured appreciation of the more complex and fundamental relationship which I think existed between the two. Once again, I attribute this to the restrictive way in the medieval castle has been defined, both linguistically and architecturally.<sup>23</sup>

Firstly, Biblical contexts of the word *castellum* have been prevented by their existing definition from being applied in castle studies. Some literary scholars seem to have been less worried by such distinctions, perhaps because they are interested in textual links rather than architectural definitions.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, a distinction is still often preserved in the modern analysis of Biblical 'castle' texts, creating a false sense of difference between the medieval architectural allegory and the original imagery.<sup>25</sup>

Secondly, a corollary to this, the supposed feudal identity of the castle is routinely brought with it into studies of theological castle imagery. I explained in Chapter 1 my objections to the insistence on this connection. In this specific instance, however, it further increases the perception of difference between the Biblical imagery and the medieval interpretation of it. Hebron, for example, characterises imagery such

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<sup>20</sup> J. Chorpenning, 'The Literary and Theological Method of the *Castillo Interior*', *Journal of Hispanic Philology* 3 (1979): 121-33; 'The Monastery, Paradise, and the Castle: Literary Images and Spiritual Development in St Teresa of Ávila', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 62 (1985): 245-57.

<sup>21</sup> G.R. Owst, *Literature and the Pulpit in Medieval England*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1961); B.E. Kurtz, "'The Small Castle of the Soul": Mysticism and Metaphor in the European Middle Ages', *Studia Mystica* 15.4 (1992): 19-39; J. Mann, 'Allegorical Buildings in Mediaeval Literature' *Medium Aevum* 63 (1994): 191-210; J. Wogan-Browne, 'Chaste Bodies: Frames and Experiences', in Kay and Rubin, *Framing Medieval Bodies*, pp.24-42.

<sup>22</sup> M. Hebron, *The Medieval Siege: Theme and Image in Middle English Romance* (Oxford, 1997), Chapter 6, pp.136-65.

<sup>23</sup> See Bonde, *Fortress Churches of Languedoc*, p.1.

<sup>24</sup> See Cornelius, *The Figurative Castle*, pp.10-13; Mann, 'Allegorical Buildings in Mediaeval Literature', p.198.

<sup>25</sup> This can, for example, be seen in Hebron's translation of a treatise by Godfrey of Admont, which reads: "*Intravit Jesus in quoddam castellum*". *Castellum ubi pro tuitione construitur...*. Hebron renders this: "Jesus entered into a certain village". When a castle is constructed for defence...'. Hebron, 'Allegorical Sieges', p.144.

as Aelred's as an 'allegory constructed with recognisable images of royal power', a 'combination of edifying intent and everyday imagery' which 'was in part the result of the spread of castle-building from the twelfth century'.<sup>26</sup> It is clear that Hebron sees the castle as a characteristically medieval idea applied in exegesis as a self-consciously medievalising strategy. He therefore fails to identify the castle's important role in the medieval understanding of Biblical architectural imagery, as a structure which could evoke religious imagery in its own right, and which was associated strongly with Biblical 'castle' texts. This insistence on the castle as an exclusively medieval, feudal architecture can obscure the importance of the castle motif in the imagery and the architecture of the medieval church. Nevertheless, the imagery of lordship and military power can be used to demonstrate the integral connections in medieval thought between ecclesiastical and defensive architecture:

To the medieval mind, God was almost a feudal lord, albeit of transcendent order, whose glory was manifested by the buildings of his vassal cathedral and conventual establishments, in much the same way as were the honour, power and renown of any earthly *seigneur* and king by the castles of his feudatories. Quintessentially, it was the precinct walls and buildings of religious houses which displayed the divine lordship. The great church was its main focus, of course, but the exclusive and walled close as a whole had a symbolism as eloquent as that of the castellated gentry-residence...It asserted and made effective both the seignory of God and the seclusion of the ministers there in his service.<sup>27</sup>

Once the dependence of the medieval church on such ideas of military power is recognised, it is easier to approach the possibility of architectural and ideological exchanges between ecclesiastical and defensive architecture. The medieval understanding of the castle as a characteristically Biblical architecture, fraught with spiritual significance, plays an important role in explaining this imagery, as I will suggest.

There is, however, one field in which the integral relationship between ecclesiastical and military ideology has been fully appreciated and explored. The role of castles within this field is also recognised. The Crusades furnish the supreme example of the interdependence and co-operation of medieval society's *bellatores* and *oratores*. Crusading was also immensely influential in medieval religious and military thought, as

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp.146, 164.

<sup>27</sup> Coulson, 'Hierarchism in Conventual Crenellation', p.72.



Jonathan Riley-Smith and others have argued.<sup>28</sup> Pope Urban II's call for the First Crusade in 1095 was couched in terms which deliberately elided the religious and the military. As the subsequent campaigns progressed, especially with the capture of Jerusalem in July 1099, the religious rhetoric became more and more emphatic. When knights took the cross, they became pilgrims intent on the goal of Jerusalem, and adhered to certain public vows, devotional procedures and ecclesiastical jurisdictions.<sup>29</sup>

Urban made it clear to his army that they were followers of Christ, and from this language developed the religious terms to describe the Crusades and Crusaders, such as *milites Christi* (knights of Christ), *exercitus Dei* and *exercitus Domini* (army of God, army of the Lord).<sup>30</sup> Such sentiments derived ultimately from Biblical texts: St. Paul's writings are a fertile source of both military and architectural metaphors of the Christian faith which he conceived as spiritual armour for the faithful.<sup>31</sup> In the Psalms, too, God is frequently described as a defender or refuge of the faithful from their enemies.<sup>32</sup> The application of these powerful metaphors spread, just as the label of 'Crusade' was spreading, to describe monastic and ecclesiastical campaigns and ideas, as well as military ones.<sup>33</sup> The emergence of the military orders, religious establishments with martial duties, was a response to crusading issues, and presents exactly this sort of fusion of the military and the religious.<sup>34</sup> The role for which the first

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<sup>28</sup> See, for example, J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (Cambridge, 1986); *The Crusades: A Short History* (London, 1987, repr. 1992); *The First Crusaders, 1095-1131* (Cambridge, 1997).

<sup>29</sup> Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, pp. 7, 37, *et passim*.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8, 37; Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade*, pp. 16-17.

<sup>31</sup> For example, Ephesians 6.13-17: '*Propterea accipite armaturam Dei, ut possitis resistere in die malo, et in omnibus perfecti stare. State ergo succincti lumbos vestros in veritate, et induti lorica iustitiae, et calceati pedes in praeparatione evangelii pacis, in omnibus sumentes scutum fidei, in quo possitis omnia tela nequissimi ignea extinguere; et galeam salutis assumite et gladium spiritus, quod est verbum Dei*' (therefore take unto you the armour of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day... Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of justice, And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace: In all things taking the shield of faith, wherewith you may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one. And take unto you the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, (which is the word of God)); 1 Thessalonians 5.8: '*Nos autem qui diei sumus, sobrii simus, induti lorica fidei et caritatis et galeam spem salutis*' (But let us, who are of the day, be sober, having on the breastplate of faith and charity, and for a helmet the hope of salvation); 2 Timothy 2.3 '*Labora sicut bonus miles Christi Iesu*' (Labour as a good soldier of Christ Jesus).

<sup>32</sup> For example, Psalm 59.2: '*Eripe me de inimicis meis, Deus meus, et ab insurgentibus in me libera me*' (Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God; and defend me from them that rise up against me); Psalm 71.3: '*Esto mihi in Deum protectorem et in locum munitum, ut salvum me facias, quoniam firmamentum meum et refugium meum es tu*' (Be thou unto me a God, a protector, and a place of strength: that thou mayst make me safe. For thou art my firmament and my refuge). See also Psalms 18.2; 31.3; 91.2; 144.2 for similar imagery. I use the Vulgate numbering for the Psalms.

<sup>33</sup> Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, pp. 37, 88, *et passim*.

<sup>34</sup> E.M. Hallam, 'Monasteries as 'War Memorials': Battle Abbey and La Victoire', in W.J. Shiels (ed.), *The Church and War*, Studies in Church History 20 (1983), pp. 47-57, p. 47; M. Barber (ed.), *The Military Orders: Fighting for the Faith and Caring for the Sick* (Aldershot, 1994).

orders were founded was, after all, to provide military escorts for pilgrims on their way to Christianity's most sacred sites.

The architectural efforts of the Crusades also had an important part to play in the developing symbolism of the holy war. Castles were essential to the Crusaders' tactics of conquest and occupation.<sup>35</sup> In the hostile, rocky and parched terrain in which they were often built, the Crusader castles are still some of the most impressive monuments of medieval Christianity, built by faith like its cathedrals. But this architecture of defence was also accompanied by a huge campaign of sacred building at Christianity's holiest sites, the Holy Sepulchre, the Temple, Calvary, and so on.<sup>36</sup> Famous Biblical fortress sites were also important in the Christians' symbolic reclamation of the Holy Land. Godfrey of Bouillon moved straight into the Tower of David after the capture of Jerusalem, putting into practice its Biblical use as the royal residence. He publicised his acquisition of this important Biblical landmark by having it depicted on his royal seal and on coinage, emphasising the symbolic impact of his action.<sup>37</sup>

The sites associated with Biblical *castellum* texts also came in for their share of new building.<sup>38</sup> For example, in the twelfth century a convent was built by Queen Melisende at Bethany in the form of a tower surrounded by a wall with projecting towers.<sup>39</sup> It seems to me highly likely that this structure was intended to relate to the *castellum* of Luke 10.38, both in its form and function. Its appearance seems to have been distinctively defensive, reproducing the castle of Bethany, while its monastic function can be related to Martha and Mary, whom Christ visited at Bethany, and who

<sup>35</sup> Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, p.77.

<sup>36</sup> A.J. Boas, *Crusader Archaeology: The Material Culture of the Latin East* (London and New York, NY, 1999), passim; Riley-Smith *The Crusades*, pp.43-4; *The First Crusaders*, pp.23ff.

<sup>37</sup> Boas, *Crusader Archaeology*, pp.18-19; Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, p.42. 'The Latin Kings of Jerusalem...the new masters of Sion chose for their dominant emblem the Gate of David for several reasons: first, because it had stood since Old Testament days for the earthly and heavenly Jerusalem; second, because it had always been synonymous with the seat of government and was again the citadel and royal residence of the Latin Kings; and, third, because it exemplified the old Frankish doctrine that the Christian king was a "Novus David".' E.B. Smith, *Architectural Symbolism of Imperial Rome and the Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ, 1956), p.104. The Tower of David became an enduring image on the Crusader seal and coin issues of Jerusalem, especially at moments of crisis: see C.J. Sabine, 'Numismatic Iconography of the Tower of David and the Holy Sepulchre: An Emergency Coinage Struck During the Siege of Jerusalem, 1187', *Numismatic Chronicle* 19.7 (1979): 122-32. See also H. Kennedy, *Crusader Castles* (Cambridge, 1994), pp.22-3.

<sup>38</sup> That is, the sites associated with Biblical texts containing the word '*castellum*' or its variants, and so probably interpreted in the Middle Ages as referring to defensive structures. I mentioned some of these in Chapter 1.

<sup>39</sup> D. Pringle, 'Templar Castles on the Road to Jerusalem', in Barber, *The Military Orders: Fighting for the Faith and Caring for the Sick*, pp.148-66, p.151.

represented in medieval exegesis the active and contemplative principles essential to the monastic calling.<sup>40</sup> The dedication of this convent to St. Lazarus<sup>41</sup> further emphasises these connections, as he was believed to have been the brother of Martha and Mary, living with them at Bethany (see Chapter 1). A similar project was also underway in the twelfth century at Abu Gosh, a site identified at this time as Emmaus, where Christ supped with his disciples.<sup>42</sup> The extremely strong construction of the basilica church on this site has been noted<sup>43</sup> converting it, too, into a castle-like structure in accordance with the text of Luke 24.13 which refers to the *castellum* of Emmaus.<sup>44</sup> I have already provided evidence in the first chapter to show that both of these sites were often referred to as castles quite straightforwardly in medieval texts. These sites have not been much discussed in terms of their symbolic or Biblical significance, as far as I know. However, it seems to me highly probable that Crusader building schemes at such sites were meant to recreate symbolically the castles believed to have occupied them at the time of Christ, and which He Himself was thought to have visited. As such, these building projects are every bit as significant as those undertaken at sites such as the Holy Sepulchre. They all express in their form and symbolism a veneration of Biblical architecture by the Crusaders, and a desire to reconstruct it.

The churches of the Crusaders, too, had to be strongly defended in this environment of militant Christianity. The twelfth century Cathedral of Tortosa, for example, displayed thick walls, small windows and arrow slits.<sup>45</sup> The Church of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives was also fortified.<sup>46</sup> Chapels were also a large and central facility in crusader castles, especially those of the religious orders, reflecting the importance of spiritual concerns to their inhabitants.<sup>47</sup> The architectural works of the Crusaders, then, whether primarily castles or sacred enclosures, represented a fusion of the concepts and architecture of the castle and church. They reflected the integral relationship of religious and military principles in the Crusaders' mission. Both castles and ecclesiastical foundations were, symbolically and literally, fortresses of the faith.

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<sup>40</sup> This imagery goes back as far as Augustine: Cornelius, *The Figurative Castle*, p.42.

<sup>41</sup> Boas, *Crusader Archaeology*, p.142.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p.129.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.124, 129-30.

<sup>44</sup> Luke 24.13: '*Et ecce duo ex illis ibant ipsa die in castellum, quod erat in spatio stadiorum sexaginta ab Ierusalem, nomine Emmaus*' (And behold, two of them went, the same day, to a town which was sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, named Emmaus.)

<sup>45</sup> Bonde, *Fortress Churches of Languedoc*, p.13; Boas, *Crusader Archaeology*, p.124.

<sup>46</sup> Pringle, 'Templar Castles on the Road to Jerusalem', p.151.

<sup>47</sup> See, for example, Kennedy, *Crusader Castles*, p.127.

The integral relationship of the military and the religious is obvious in the ideology and architecture of the Crusades. However, in the context of medieval Britain, away from the Crusades, this bond often seems to disappear for the modern historian. Nevertheless, the ongoing conflicts in the Holy Land were an important factor in the religion and politics of medieval Europe. England was no exception, sending knights and money to support the campaigns at various stages throughout the Middle Ages. Ideas of the holy war and of militant ecclesiasticism can also be detected in the government of post-Conquest Britain, as well as in its architecture and language.

Castles were the military tool by which the Normans achieved the Conquest, but ecclesiastical foundation was just as important to the establishment of a political and moral mandate for the kingdom. In this sense, like the fortified Christian sites of the Crusaders, the churches of Norman England were strongholds of religious power: 'the tower defied its enemies, its bells shouted defiance, the churchyard guarded both the living and the dead... the Norman [churches] were fortresses in a hostile world.'<sup>48</sup>

From the first stages of the Conquest, ecclesiastical and military power were deployed side by side. As well as the castles which mark the prominent military sites of the conflict (like Pevensey and Hastings)<sup>49</sup> William founded an abbey on the field of Battle. This is an unusual gesture, which may have been intended to underline God's supposed support of the victory.<sup>50</sup> In the subsequent reorganisation of Britain's government and administration, important church posts were distributed with great prudence, in which the king's favour was at least as important as the reforming drive. Bishops held positions of great political as well as spiritual power, and were often in possession of the highest temporal honours, such as earldoms, alongside their spiritual authorities.<sup>51</sup> Diocesan sees were re-sited in strategic positions, their bishops swore feudal oaths and they were granted baronial rights to armed retinues.<sup>52</sup> Their role in setting up the new government was crucial: Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, was behind the introduction of canon law and the overhaul of the English legal system,<sup>53</sup> while William of St Calais, Bishop of Durham from 1081, may have been in charge of

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<sup>48</sup> F. Barlow, *The Feudal Kingdom of England, 1042-1216* (London, 1974), p.131.

<sup>49</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, pp.6-7.

<sup>50</sup> Hallam, 'Monasteries as War Memorials', *passim*.

<sup>51</sup> Barlow, *The Feudal Kingdom of England, 1042-1216*, pp.93-4.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.116-23.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.123-6.

the whole Domesday operation.<sup>54</sup> With such political and economic power came architectural patronage, as the top clerics rebuilt their churches and monasteries, and made themselves palaces and castles to live in. Here too, the combination of military and ecclesiastical was key.

At Durham the new bishop, Walcher, took over the earlier defences on the Durham peninsula and was the first among his clerical peers to construct a castle for his protection, with the new cathedral positioned in the south bailey. This was obviously necessitated by the dangerous border position of Durham, which faced the threat of raids from Scotland, a situation whose seriousness was underlined when Bishop Walcher was murdered during a raid at Gateshead in 1080.<sup>55</sup>

This was not the only situation in which a cathedral was sited within a fortification for security. The Iron-age hillfort of Old Sarum was used by the conquerors for the foundation of a royal castle and a cathedral, and for a short while the castle was actually handed over to the bishop's care by Henry I.<sup>56</sup> At Henry's death, Stephen repossessed the castle and imprisoned the bishop, and the cathedral was subsequently abandoned in favour of the spacious site at Salisbury, amongst complaints of the close proximity and unholy behaviour of the castle garrison. However, critics have tended to agree that the real motivation was probably the lack of space at the Old Sarum site, which prevented the expansion and modernisation of the cathedral.<sup>57</sup> The close relationship between cathedral and royal castle, after all, seemed to work perfectly well at places such as Lincoln. In addition the lord of Old Sarum castle, William Longespee, Earl of Salisbury, was a close associate and ally of the cathedral chapter.<sup>58</sup>

At Norwich, while the two were not physically joined together in this way, there is evidence that the castle and cathedral were planned and executed 'as a "pair"'.<sup>59</sup> Masons' marks from both buildings match, suggesting an overlap in date and workforce between the two.<sup>60</sup> It is also clear that both were planned in a similar way, employing

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<sup>54</sup> W.M. Aird, 'An Absent Friend: The Career of Bishop William of St Calais', in D. Rollason, M. Harvey and M. Prestwich (ed.), *Anglo-Norman Durham 1093-1193* (Woodbridge, 1994), pp.283-97, pp.290-1.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p.289.

<sup>56</sup> P. Brimacombe, *A Tale of Two Cathedrals: Old Sarum, New Salisbury* (London, 1997), pp.12-13.

<sup>57</sup> T. Cocke and P. Kidson, *Salisbury Cathedral: Perspectives on the Architectural History* (London, 1993), pp.3, 37.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p.37; Brimacombe, *A Tale of Two Cathedrals*, p.22-3.

<sup>59</sup> T.A. Heslop, *Norwich Castle Keep: Romanesque Architecture and Social Context* (Norwich, 1994), p.7.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, and p.12.

the same architectural techniques and detailing motifs, to achieve a harmonious overall effect.<sup>61</sup> Castle and church presented a united architectural front to the populace.

Such twinned architectural projects were also generated by the lay aristocracy, who often built monastic or collegiate foundations along with their castles. The first lord of Hastings founded a college of secular canons within the bailey of the castle itself.<sup>62</sup> A similar foundation was made just below Bramber Castle in similar circumstances.<sup>63</sup> Under the Conqueror's successor, William Rufus, such examples multiplied, with joint castle and ecclesiastical foundations at Chepstow,<sup>64</sup> Lewes and its offshoot, Castle Acre,<sup>65</sup> Colchester<sup>66</sup> and Pembroke.<sup>67</sup> altogether forty-five joint establishments were founded in the eleventh century.<sup>68</sup>

Castles also helped to define the practicalities of worship for ordinary lay people from 1066, as the Normans adapted the Anglo-Saxon parochial system, which had placed the parish church in the care of the local landholder.<sup>69</sup> The church was often located near a new castle, and sometimes within its confines, and the local patron and his family might be buried within the church ground. As church reforms took hold,<sup>70</sup> the castle chapel became a more important focus of aristocratic worship, though it too occasionally filled a quasi-parochial role for the local populace, especially in cases such as the chapel of St Michael at Clitheroe Castle, where the parish church proper was ten kilometres away, too distant for ease of travel.<sup>71</sup>

From the introduction of the castle at the Conquest, then, it had been associated closely with the church, in terms of political control, physical situation and architectural patronage and design. There was also some crossover in religious functions. However, in practice the medieval English castle and church are treated separately in most studies, both architecturally and ideologically. It is to literary and visual sources which I

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., and pp.63-5. See also R. Gilchrist, 'Norwich Cathedral: A Biography of the North Transept', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 151 (1998): 107-136, pp.128-9.

<sup>62</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.233.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p.234.

<sup>64</sup> Thompson, *The Rise of the Castle*, p.139.

<sup>65</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.232; Thompson, *The Rise of the Castle*, p.141.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p.140.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.233.

<sup>69</sup> See R. Morris, *Churches in the Landscape* (London, 1989), Chapter 6, pp.227-74.

<sup>70</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.224.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p.230; J. McNulty, 'The Endowment of the Chapel of St. Michael in Clitheroe Castle', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 91 (1939): 159-63; 'Clitheroe Castle and its Chapel: Their Origins', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 93 (1942): 45-53. Other examples of castle chapels with quasi-parochial functions include those of Farleigh Hungerford and Caerphilly: Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.230.

look to establish the close links between the two. As the opening quotation from Aelred implied, these sources show that the castle was an important symbol in medieval theology. However, they often go further, demonstrating that the idea of the castle was fundamental to the way in which Christianity was understood and practised in medieval England.

### 3.1 THE SPIRITUAL CASTLE

As I have mentioned, I focus my remarks in this chapter on the text of Luke 10.38, on which the opening passage of this chapter was based. I used this excerpt from a sermon on the Assumption of the Virgin by Aelred of Rievaulx to illustrate the main ideas of this chapter. However, Aelred's text repays closer scrutiny, exemplifying the complexities of my argument as well as its salient points. For this reason I return to it here, before moving on to examine other texts and contexts which display some comparable uses of the imagery of the spiritual castle.

The text of Luke 10.38 describes Jesus' literal entry into the '*castellum*' of Bethany to visit Mary and Martha. However, as I have mentioned it was interpreted in the Middle Ages as a figurative description of Jesus' entry into the protective body of the Virgin Mary at the Incarnation, as Aelred's sermon confirms. This particular Biblical text seems to have been interpreted in connection with the Virgin since the seventh century, and interpreted as an architectural image of the Virgin as a '*castellum*' from the ninth.<sup>72</sup> It is therefore quite possible that Aelred was drawing on previous exegesis for some aspects of his exposition of the text in this sermon. However, the overall method of his architectural imagery is also part of an ongoing exegetical tradition.

I have already noted the way in which Aelred builds up his architectural imagery from more than one Biblical architectural text. I suggested that this was a parallel strategy to that which can be detected in the architectural iconography of medieval churches, which build up a complex architectural symbolism by the combination of Biblical architectural references. This is also a recognisable strategy in the theological

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<sup>72</sup> Cornelius, *The Figurative Castle*, pp.37-50; Hebron, *The Medieval Siege*, pp.142-5; Kurtz, "'The Small Castle of the Soul': Mysticism and Metaphor in the European Middle Ages", pp.24-6; Mann, 'Allegorical Buildings in Medieval Literature', p.198.

use of architectural symbolism in the Middle Ages, in which Biblical texts also played a central role.<sup>73</sup> The architectural metaphors of the Psalms provided a background for architectural symbolism in the Bible,<sup>74</sup> but other more complex allegories were also influential on the medieval understanding of the way architectural symbolism operated. The House of Wisdom (Proverbs 9.1)<sup>75</sup> has seven pillars whose individual and collective meanings were examined repeatedly in medieval exegesis,<sup>76</sup> and more complex architectural descriptions, such as the Temple of Ezekiel's vision (Ezekiel 40), and the New Jerusalem of Revelation (Revelations 21.10), outline a number of specific elements in a certain relationship (such as the four walls with twelve gates, the easternmost of which is closed) implying, and in some cases providing, the symbolic reasons for such arrangements.<sup>77</sup> Architectural allegory is thus present not only in medieval exegesis of these texts, but in the texts themselves, providing Biblical precedents for this form of architectural symbolism.<sup>78</sup>

These same Biblical texts also invite the juxtaposition of different architectural texts. The buildings of the Bible interact with each other: the temple of Ezekiel's vision is for example based in many of its features on Solomon's temple (I Kings 6-7) and the Heavenly Jerusalem of Revelation in turn builds upon Ezekiel's temple.<sup>79</sup> The individual features of these buildings are confirmed or differentiated, while particular symbolic significances can be developed or replaced by the other Biblical examples in successive renditions. Medieval exegesis imitates this model, combining and explicating different architectural texts to suit different occasions.<sup>80</sup> Mary Carruthers notes that all these phenomena were well known and used in monastic circles up to about 1200. She presents an abundance of evidence to demonstrate that such architectural schemes were used for mnemonic and devotional purposes, to assist in recall and mental contemplation of important spiritual tenets. Architectural mnemonics

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<sup>73</sup> See M. Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the making of Images, 400-1200* (Cambridge, 1998), especially pp.16-24; Kurtz, "The Small Castle of the Soul": Mysticism and Metaphor in the European Middle Ages', pp.29-33; Cornelius, *The Figurative Castle, passim*.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.23-426; I have already drawn attention above to several Psalms which employ martial imagery.

<sup>75</sup> Proverbs 9.1: '*Sapientia aedificavit sibi domum, excidit columnas septem*' (Wisdom hath built herself a house, she hath hewn her out seven pillars).

<sup>76</sup> Cornelius, *The Figurative Castle*, pp.2-3; Kurtz, "The Small Castle of the Soul": Mysticism and Metaphor in the European Middle Ages', pp.30-2.

<sup>77</sup> Mann, 'Allegorical Buildings in Medieval Literature', pp.192-6.

<sup>78</sup> See Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400-1200*, pp.16-18.

<sup>79</sup> I discuss this relationship in A.M. Wheatley, 'Dream Buildings in Medieval Literature, Art and Architecture' (M.A. diss, University of York, 1997), pp.10-12.

<sup>80</sup> Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400-1200*, pp.16-24.



were derived ultimately from Classical models which were passed on to Medieval thinkers through various treatises, the most famous of which was known as the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and attributed to Cicero. This work advises that items to be remembered are to be located at various points within a familiar architectural framework, so that they can be recalled in order, as the subject progresses mentally through the building.<sup>81</sup>

Carruthers connects such schemes not just with monastic use in general, but specifically with Cistercian contexts,<sup>82</sup> making it more than probable that a figure such as Aelred would have been fully aware of the exegetical and mnemonic traditions associated with Biblical architectural texts. Carruthers also makes very direct connections between the figurative architecture of such rhetorical schemes and the spiritual and figurative understanding of the concrete architecture of the monastic environment.<sup>83</sup> The castle, however, does not find a place in Carruthers' comprehensive account, perhaps because it has not until now been recognised as participating in schemes of allegorical architecture.<sup>84</sup>

Yet Aelred's castle fits neatly into this model of architectural exegesis on a number of levels. It combines different architectural texts, and fuses their meanings in the creation of a meaningful edifice to suit the particular occasion on which he is preaching. It thus demonstrates that Biblical castle texts could be considered an integral part of Biblical architectural allegory. The defensive qualities of the castle rendered it particularly appropriate for certain symbolic situations, expressing conflict and combat in a way which other architectural forms might not. At the same time it could take on aspects of many texts in the Biblical repertoire, absorbing the qualities of more obviously sacred buildings such as Ezekiel's Temple of Jerusalem, for example. The castle was thus a symbol fully integrated into the system of medieval Biblical exegesis, capable of combination with other texts and ideas, but also associated with particular

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<sup>81</sup> For descriptions of the mnemonic technique transmitted to the Middle Ages through the text of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, sometimes attributed to Cicero, see F.A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (London, 1966), pp.5-8 *et passim*; M.J. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1990), pp.73-73 *et passim*.

<sup>82</sup> Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400-1200*, pp.5, 257-69, *et passim*.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.257-76.

<sup>84</sup> The 'arx' or citadel does feature briefly in Carruthers' discussion, but it is regarded in a civic capacity, translated as 'walled city', rather than as 'keep' or 'fortress'. *Ibid.*, p.19. Carruthers does, however, note the general appropriateness of military imagery to monastic mnemonic and devotional allegories: *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400-1200*, pp.105-7.

texts and symbolisms in its own right. Aelred thus draws on established traditions of architectural exegesis, emphasising the castle as an important Christian symbol.

However, he also succeeds in reading into the image of the castle the architectural situation which surrounded him and his fellow monks. I have already suggested that the form Aelred gives to his castle is chosen for its appropriateness to the form of the monastic enclosure as well as the lordly fortress. The spiritual attributes which he attaches to these elements also seem specifically chosen to reflect the aptness of this form to the monastic life. He equates the ditch with humility, the walls with chastity and the tower with virtue of charity which is above all the others. There is an obvious attempt to make these attributes appropriate to their architectural manifestations. The outer walls of the monastery serve to guard and preserve the monks by the exclusion of the depredations and temptations of the outside world. The appropriateness of this imagery to the monastic context was noted by Roberta Cornelius in 1930. However, she had in mind only a general, metaphorical relationship between the attributes of Aelred's spiritual castle and his monastic environment at Rievaulx.<sup>85</sup> This, as I have shown, is certainly there. However, more literal and concrete similarities are also created by Aelred's approach.

The process of building is also an important element of Aelred's spiritual castle. This too is appropriate to monastic architecture, and to Aelred's own experience as a monk. He equates the digging of the ditch with laborious acquisition of humility, the construction of the walls with the careful guarding of the body in chastity, and the construction of the tower with the virtue of charity which is above all others. Again, there is an obvious attempt to make these attributes symbolically appropriate to their architectural manifestations. However, it was by no means unusual for monks to assist in the physical labour of constructing their own monasteries.<sup>86</sup> Indeed, documentary evidence suggests that Aelred himself was involved in such tasks during his early years at Rievaulx.<sup>87</sup> Here again, a very concrete understanding of the architecture of monasticism and its workings forms the basis for Aelred's spiritual imagery.<sup>88</sup> The

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<sup>85</sup> Cornelius, *The Figurative Castle*, pp.49-50.

<sup>86</sup> Fergusson and Harrison, *Rievaulx Abbey: Community, Architecture, Memory*, p.62.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*; see also Walter Daniel, *Walter Daniel's Life of Aelred, Abbot of Rievaulx*, ed. F.M. Powicke, (London, 1950), p.22.

<sup>88</sup> The importance of labour as a spiritual virtue, and its connection to the roles of Mary and Martha in Aelred's Marian sermons, is discussed in D. La Corte, 'The Abbatial Concerns of Aelred of Rievaulx Based on his Sermons of Mary', *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 30 (1995): 267-73, pp.268-70.

castle imagery cannot be seen merely as a metaphorical trope. It is applied directly to the monastic setting, emphasising the symbolic qualities of its architecture.

The imagery of labour, both physical and spiritual, is further elaborated in Aelred's sermon through the figures of Martha and Mary, proponents of the active and contemplative lives. I have already noted the importance of these two women in the medieval understanding of the monastic vocation.<sup>89</sup> This only serves to confirm the bond between the architectures of castle and monastery in Aelred's exegesis. Through this imagery, the monastery becomes a type of the castle of Bethany. Its defensive form is expressed in the term *castellum* applied to it in Luke 10.38, but it is also connected to the monastic life through Mary and Martha. It is worth noting again that an abbey dedicated to St. Lazarus, believed to be the brother of Mary and Martha, was being built on the site of Bethany in the twelfth century.<sup>90</sup> This, too, had a strongly defensive form, but built to house women religious. It seems to me, then, that the imagery of the castle in Aelred's sermon was intended to remind his monks very directly of the Biblical architecture which their monastic enclosure reproduced.

The image of the tower is perhaps harder to relate to Cistercian architecture at a literal level, especially considering the statute of 1157 which forbade the building of towers by the order.<sup>91</sup> However, Aelred does seem to place a somewhat different emphasis of the tower in his image of the spiritual castle. Cornelius, for example, draws attention to the strong Marian associations of Aelred's high tower of charity.<sup>92</sup> This may well be intended as a reminder through personification of the monastery's church or of the monastery as a whole. In Cistercian monasteries such as Rievaulx, these would invariably be dedicated to Mary, as specified in a statue dating from 1098 to 1113.<sup>93</sup> The overarching virtue of charity which Aelred attributes to his Marian tower would certainly be applicable in a general way to the whole of the monastic vocation. However, this particular element may also serve as a reminder of the charitable activities of Rievaulx's patron, whose castle at Helmsley possessed a tower in a perfectly literal sense.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> This imagery goes back as far as Augustine: Cornelius, *The Figurative Castle*, p.42.

<sup>90</sup> Boas, *Crusader Archaeology*, p.142; Pringle, 'Templar Castles on the Road to Jerusalem', p.150.

<sup>91</sup> E.C. Norton and D. Park (ed.), *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles* (Cambridge, 1986), p.328.

<sup>92</sup> Cornelius, *The Figurative Castle*, p.49.

<sup>93</sup> Norton and Park, *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles*, p.318.

<sup>94</sup> Fergusson and Harrison, *Rievaulx Abbey: Community, Architecture, Memory*, p.37.

Aelred thus uses the image of the castle and its construction to explicate to the monks the Biblical and symbolic significance of their architectural surroundings and the effort they put into building them. However, he also transforms this image into a spiritual exercise for each of his listeners. This also accords with the mnemonic and devotional precepts which Carruthers describes in the monastic use of Biblically-derived architectural allegory. I have noted that Cistercian monks such as Aelred himself participated in the physical construction of the architecture surrounding them. However, Aelred also recommends the spiritual construction of a castle in the mind of each monk. At the beginning and end of the extract I quoted earlier, Aelred recommends that the castle he describes is to be contemplated mentally. The description of the castle is enumerated in a specific order, with the ditch first, then the wall and then the tower. When Aelred advises his listeners to prepare this castle spiritually, he is asking them to construct each feature mentally, in the precise order and relationship in which they are described. He proceeds through this process more fully in the passage immediately following this extract, describing in detail the spiritual significance of each of the elements: the ditch is humility, the wall chastity and the tower charity.<sup>95</sup> It is only with the inward construction of the spiritual castle, Aelred advises, that the mind can be prepared for the spiritual and mental reception of God. The spiritual castle therefore becomes a pre-requisite for any believer, an essential tool in the practice of medieval Christianity. It is not just a reflection of the architecture of the castle of Bethany, or of the monastery of Rievaulx. It is also one of the forms which belief takes in the mind of the medieval Christian.

The castle and its defensive imagery are thus inseparable from the monastic situation both physically and spiritually. However, they are also important in terms of the wider relationship between the closed religious environment and the greater medieval world. The specific situation at Rievaulx provides several confirmations of the general appropriateness of military imagery to the monastic situation.<sup>96</sup> The Cistercian rule refers to its monks as '*novi milites Christi*', reflecting, amongst other things, the military precision with which new monasteries were founded and built.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Aelred of Rievaulx, '*Sermo XVII: In Assumptione beatae Mariae*', cols.304-5.

<sup>96</sup> Although my remarks so far have been directed towards the monastic life in general, it seems natural to turn to Rievaulx when considering the environment of which Aelred may have been thinking. Rievaulx reportedly inspired his conversion to the monastic life, and although he travelled widely during his life and was briefly appointed as founder abbot of Revesby in Lincoln, Rievaulx was his home for the rest of his life. See Fergusson and Harrison, *Rievaulx Abbey: Community, Architecture, Memory*, pp.61-6.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p.37.

Bernard of Clairvaux applied this martial imagery specifically to Rievaulx at its foundation in 1131.<sup>98</sup> Rievaulx was founded on land in Yorkshire granted to the Cistercian order by Walter Espec, lord of Helmsley Castle.<sup>99</sup> Important connections continued between this temporal lord and his monastic protégés. Helmsley castle was only three kilometres away from Rievaulx, and so offered protection as well as patronage to the community.<sup>100</sup> This defensive relationship would have been important to Rievaulx in the unstable north of England during this period of the anarchy. It did not, however, prevent the sacking of the abbey twice during the fourteenth century in the Anglo-Scottish wars. Aelred himself, both before and after his recruitment to the monastic cause, played an important role in the political situation in the North of England, moving between King David of Scotland's court and the magnates of the North. For example, in 1138 he travelled to the Scottish border to assist in the transfer of Wark Castle from David to Walter Espec, lord of Helmsley Castle.<sup>101</sup> Around 1155-7 he also wrote a martial poem entitled *Relatio de Standardo* to commemorate Espec's role in the decisive Battle of the Standard in 1138, when Walter had rallied the northern troops to defeat the Scots.<sup>102</sup>

Aelred's sermon provides a masterful demonstration of the integration of the idea and architecture of the castle into all aspects of medieval monasticism. It participates in venerable traditions of exegesis and so invokes some of the most important figures and ideas of medieval Christianity in the Virgin Mary and the sisters Mary and Martha, the Incarnation and the Virgin birth. However, it is also given a more direct relevance to the life of the medieval monk. The castle represents the defences which protect the monk both spiritually and physically, both in the monastic enclosure and in the lordly fortresses which guard its interests. The castle is presented to the monk as an embodiment of both the spiritual and the physical virtues of the monastic profession. It is a mnemonic image of his spiritual and mental life which the monk is exhorted to carry with him, and at the same time a description of the monk's physical and spiritual relationship with his architectural surroundings. Most importantly of all, perhaps, the image of the castle refers to the building which was thought to lie behind

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., pp.37-8.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., p.37.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Dutton, 'The Conversion and Vocation of Aelred of Rievaulx: A Historical Hypothesis', p.33.

<sup>102</sup> D. Baker, 'Aelred of Rievaulx and Walter Espec', *Haskins Society Journal* 1 (1989): 91-8, pp.91-3.

all this, the castle of Bethany where Christ first expounded the virtues of the active and contemplative lives, and so set up the pattern for Christian monasticism.<sup>103</sup>

Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, was probably the most influential English figure in the spread of the spiritual castle motif. The Marian castle forms the central image in an Anglo-Norman poem, written at some point between 1215 and 1253, sometimes called *Carmen de Creatione Mundi* (Poem on the Creation of the World), and sometimes *Château d'Amour* (Castle of Love).<sup>104</sup> This work has been identified as 'the culmination of [the] allegory of the castle as the Virgin',<sup>105</sup> and many of its details have not been traced to any previous source, and so can probably be identified as innovations.<sup>106</sup> The image is, however, derived from Luke 10.38 and shares some notable features with the sermon by Aelred I have just described. It, too, enumerates the features of the castle, explicating their spiritual significance, to create a complex edifice embodying many of the important tenets of the faith. It can also be argued that Grosseteste's spiritual castle has some relevance to the architectural, spiritual and political surroundings of its author. It too develops the exegesis of architectural texts in a way which increases further the relevance of the architectural image to the understanding of medieval religious beliefs and practices.

Grosseteste enumerates the features of the Castle of Love twice during his poem: once to describe its construction and appearance (ll.571-666), and a second time to explicate the symbolic significance of each part of the edifice (ll.671-827).<sup>107</sup> These elements are linked by some shared characteristic. For example, Grosseteste's seven barbicans (ll.727-731 and ff.) reflect the number of the seven virtues, one of which is

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<sup>103</sup> Once again, Carruthers provides indirect endorsement for this reading, noting the practice of mnemonic contemplation of the sites of the Holy Land as a devotional exercise. *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400-1200*, pp.40-44.

<sup>104</sup> On the disputed authorship of the poem Kari Sajavaara points to parallels between the *Château d'Amour* and other writings by Grosseteste, and concludes 'as no absolutely negative evidence has so far been presented and all the evidence available confirms it, Grosseteste's authorship of the *Château d'Amour* cannot be denied.' Grosseteste, *The Middle English Translations of Robert Grosseteste's Château d'Amour*, p.43. See Sajavaara's discussion of the poem's dating on the same page.

<sup>105</sup> Cornelius, *The Figurative Castle*, p.44; see also Grosseteste, *The Middle English Translations of Robert Grosseteste's Château d'Amour*, p.100.

<sup>106</sup> 'No direct source for Grosseteste's castle has been found. Grosseteste may well have developed the allegory himself, but he may, as well, have found it, like the exemplar of the allegory of the *Four Daughters of God*, in some Latin ms. so far untraced. The only link between Grosseteste's castle and other allegorical castle could be the similarity of the symbols, but so far, no other castle bearing these symbols has been found. As long as no source is discovered, the "castle of love" must be considered Grosseteste's invention.' *Ibid.*, pp.93-4.

<sup>107</sup> Robert Grosseteste, *Le Château d'Amour de Robert Grosseteste, Eveque de Lincoln*, ed. J. Murray (Paris, 1918), pp.105-112. I cite this edition throughout, unless otherwise specified.

ascribed to each of the structures; and the three concentric baileys (ll. 709-724 and ff.) represent the Virgin's concentric virtues of maidenhood, chastity and holy marriage. Once again this type of architectural symbolism can be recognised as echoing the treatment of Biblical texts such as the House of Wisdom, with a particular emphasis in Grosseteste's case on the numerological correspondences found in such examples.

Many of the architectural features mentioned by Grosseteste also seem deliberately included as references to Biblical texts concerned with symbolic architecture. The closed gate through which Christ enters the Castle of Love (ll.785-6) refers to the east gate of the temple in Ezekiel, 44.2.<sup>108</sup> This is the same reference which occurred in Aelred's sermon and once again is used to express Mary's virginity in an architectural form. The foundation of the castle upon the firm rock of the Virgin's heart (ll.671-672) is also reminiscent of the wise man of Matthew 7.24 who built his house upon a rock.<sup>109</sup>

Scenes in the narrative surrounding the castle are also reminiscent of Biblical texts. At the end of the explanatory second description of the castle, the narrator momentarily interacts with the architecture, beating on the castle gate for sanctuary against his attackers, the world, the flesh and the devil (ll.789-804). This action seems to refer to a number of Biblical texts with different nuances. The narrator here may be cast as the Christ of Revelation 3.20: 'Behold, I stand at the gate and knock. If any man shall hear my voice and open to me the door, I will come in to him...',<sup>110</sup> knocking to be admitted to the castle of the human soul, embodied in the Virgin Mary. His knocking also recalls Canticles 5.2, 'the voice of my beloved knocking: Open to me, my sister, my love'.<sup>111</sup> The narrator in this case is the lover, knocking to rouse his beloved, also interpreted in medieval exegesis as Christ calling to Holy Church.

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<sup>108</sup> Grosseteste: '*Par la porte close entra / A l'issir close la lessa.*' Ezekiel 44. 2 '*Et dixit dominus ad me: Porta haec clausa erit, non aperietur, et vir non transibit per eam, quoniam Dominus Deus Israel ingressus est per eam*' (And the Lord said to me: This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall pass through it: because the Lord the God of Israel hath entered in by it).

<sup>109</sup> Grosseteste: '*La roche k'est si bien polie, / C'est le cuer la duce Marie*'; Matthew 7. 24 '*Omnis ergo qui audit verba mea haec, et facit ea, assimilabitur viro sapienti qui aedificavit domum suam supra petram*' (Every one therefore that heareth these my words, and doth them, shall be likened to a wise man that built his house upon a rock).

<sup>110</sup> Revelation 3.20: '*Ecce sto ad ostium et pulso; si quis audierit vocem meam et aperuerit mihi ianuam, intrabo ad illum*' (Behold, I stand at the gate, and knock. If any man hear my voice, and open to me the door, I will come in to him).

<sup>111</sup> Song of Songs 5.2: '*Ego dormio, et cor meum vigilat. Vox dilecti mei pulsantis: aperi mihi, soror mea, amica mea*' (I sleep, and my heart watcheth: the voice of my beloved knocking: Open to me, my sister, my love).

Thus Grosseteste's Castle of Love articulates a set of moral attributes, whilst it also indexes a series of Biblical architectural texts in an allegorical narrative. Aelred's version of the Marian castle emphasised the process of construction and the need to recreate this spiritually. In the same way, Grosseteste's castle too seems designed for the mental contemplation of both the building and the texts associated with it, in a highly sophisticated series of verbal echoes and allegorical linkages. The whole structure of the poem, and especially of the Castle of Love section, seems to be designed as an elaborate mnemonic, constructed to facilitate the recall of a series of sacred texts and devotional precepts.

It seems likely that, in a similar way to Aelred's, Grosseteste's castle was also structured deliberately as an architectural mnemonic. It has also been shown that there was an increasing awareness of such mnemonic strategies in ecclesiastical circles around the time it was written. The fourth Lateran council, held in 1215, called for the first time for the cultivation of inward contemplation amongst the lay Christian population. The increasing use of mnemonic devices in religious literature from this time onwards is linked directly to this call. The ultimate aim of such mnemonic schemes was that of spiritual instruction:

What were the things which the pious Middle Ages wished chiefly to remember? Surely they were the things belonging to salvation or damnation, the articles of the faith, the roads to heaven through virtues and to hell through vices. These were the things...which it wished chiefly to remember by the art of memory, which was to fix in memory the complex material of medieval didactic thought.<sup>112</sup>

These values seem to apply particularly aptly to the *Château d'Amour*, which narrates the story of the salvation of mankind from the beginning of the world (as witnessed by the title sometimes used, *Carmen de Creatione Mundi*). A similar point is made by Sajavaara, who identifies the numerological elements in the poem's symbolism as evidence of the influence of Lateran IV, which also encouraged such allegorical schemes.<sup>113</sup> However, the identification of the poem as an architectural mnemonic has not, to my knowledge been made before.

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<sup>112</sup> Yates, *The Art of Memory*, p.55. I have also investigated ways in which such rhetorical techniques can be applied to various Middle English texts, using the castle as the mnemonic *locus*; Wheatley, 'Dream Buildings in Medieval Literature, Art and Architecture', passim.

<sup>113</sup> Grosseteste, *The Middle English Translations of Robert Grosseteste's Château d'Amour*, p.94; M.D. Legge, *Anglo-Norman Literature and Its Background* (Oxford, 1963), p.215.



I would place Grosseteste's *Château d'Amour* firmly among the new wave of comparable vernacular poetic narratives which embody spiritual and devotional truths in the form of a chivalric or visionary narrative. Barbara Nolan identifies these as starting around 1220, for the purpose of lay instruction.<sup>114</sup> Grosseteste's choice of Anglo-Norman (the vernacular language of the court) as opposed to his usual Latin for this poem, has marked out the *Château d'Amour* as a departure from the high theology and focused homiletic material which forms the greater part of his work. As well as being written in the vernacular, the poem is composed in octosyllabic couplets, a metre adopted by popular narrative literature in the twelfth century.<sup>115</sup> The emphasis on mnemonics in this genre also seems to fit the form and function of Grosseteste's poem, and to place it within a specific literary and ideological context which has not been fully recognised before.<sup>116</sup> However, these qualities have also been tied to the idea that the central image of the poem is essentially a feudal one. The juxtaposition of the imagery of church and castle is understood to express the annexation of the spiritual by the secular, the divine by the feudal, in an attempt to transmit difficult theological ideas to the laity.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> See B. Nolan, *The Gothic Visionary Perspective* (Princeton, NJ, 1977), pp.130-3, 144-6. She cites as an example the *Tournoiement Antechrist*, written about 1234 by Huon de Méri, a French Benedictine monk, which is rather similar in its essentials to the *Château d'Amour*: they both rely on the form of Prudentius' *Psychomachia*: Nolan, pp.130-1; Grosseteste, *The Middle English Translations of Robert Grosseteste's Château d'Amour*, pp.96-7 (Grosseteste had certainly read the *Psychomachia*: R.W. Hunt, 'The Library of Robert Grosseteste', in D.A. Callus (ed.), *Robert Grosseteste, Scholar and Bishop: Essays in Commemoration of the Seventh Centenary of his Death* (Oxford, 1955, repr. 1969), pp.121-45, p.142). They also both employ allegorised castles.

<sup>115</sup> R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste: The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1992), pp.225-9; Grosseteste, *The Middle English Translations of Robert Grosseteste's Château d'Amour*, p.41 *et passim*.

<sup>116</sup> The more mundane details of Grosseteste's studies also seem to confirm his interest in and use of mnemonic schemes for both personal and didactic devotions. Many extant manuscripts from Grosseteste's own collection bear witness to his system for indexing works by means of several hundred different symbols which he noted in the margins to mark the occurrence of particular topics. It is clear that this was a highly complex system, providing cross-referencing far more sophisticated than the marginal *notae* often made by less organised readers. Mary Carruthers in fact identifies it as a mnemonic scheme, developed to assist Grosseteste in his memorisation of the material: a scheme similar to, but more sophisticated than, many similar schemes which emerged across Europe around 1220, and which only gained common acceptance in the 1280s, after Grosseteste's death. Grosseteste, then, was a pioneer of mnemonic methods and their devotional application. See Hunt, 'The Library of Robert Grosseteste'; Southern, *Robert Grosseteste: The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, pp.186-98; Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, pp.110, 117-9. It may be significant that Hugh of St Victor, the only twelfth-century author whose work Grosseteste includes in his index, suggested the use of such a scheme for mnemonic marking of texts, both physical and mental (although not in the text cited by Grosseteste). See Southern, *Robert Grosseteste*, p.187; Hunt, 'The Library of Robert Grosseteste', p.144, and Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, pp. 94, 108, 110, 124 *et passim*.

<sup>117</sup> Grosseteste, *The Middle English Translations of Robert Grosseteste's Château d'Amour*, pp.41-2; Southern, *Robert Grosseteste: The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, pp.225-9.

As I have shown, I support the general assessment of these texts inspired by Lateran IV, and the *Château d'Amour* seems to fit very neatly amongst them. However I have already stated that I do not agree that the image of the castle is necessarily a feudal one. The spiritual attributes which Grosseteste attaches to the castle image are admittedly not the monastic virtues used by Aelred. However, they are certainly not directly applicable to the lay life either. They are chosen specially to apply to the Virgin, whom the castle symbolises. Those who label this symbolic use as feudal must therefore be reading into the image modern associations of the castle with feudalism and private fortification. As I have shown, the medieval castle did not necessarily bear feudal associations. On the contrary, its use in theology was heavily based on Biblical texts and precedents, and invited comparison with ecclesiastical architecture as much as with that of temporal lords. In fact, as I have also noted, the great ecclesiastical lords could build and inhabit castles and defend their ecclesiastical sites securely.

I suggest that, far from representing the mediation of difficult theology through an essentially lay and medieval symbol, Grosseteste's *Château d'Amour* expresses the strength of the castle as a Biblical type and a religious image. Even more strongly than in Aelred's example, Grosseteste focuses on the Marian nature of the imagery and anatomises her virtues in the castle of love. However, the exegetical tradition of the castle of Bethany is central to the medieval understanding of this symbolism. The castle Grosseteste describes in his poem cannot be compared in a literal way to any medieval defensive complex I know of. I have already mentioned its seven barbicans and three concentric baileys, for example. The emphasis in these details is obviously on number symbolism rather than on truth to concrete architectural examples. However, these unreal qualities present the castle as a spiritual architecture which can take its place alongside the Heavenly Jerusalem and Ezekiel's Temple as sacred buildings ever-present in the medieval Christian's mind as spiritual goals. Grosseteste's handling of the Marian castle also demonstrates the importance of architectural imagery in the development of medieval Christianity, especially in the movements for lay devotion from the thirteenth century onwards.

As with Aelred's example, Grosseteste's castle may also invite comparison with his own local circumstances. The building he describes may not invite literal comparison with concrete castle architecture. However, the Marian castle in the poem does find parallels in current research interests at Lincoln, where Grosseteste was

Bishop between the years 1235 and 1253.<sup>118</sup> As I mentioned earlier, Lincoln cathedral has recently been the subject of intensive debate, centring on the visible evidence of machicolation slots in the arched bays in the west end (see illustration 29). The cathedral was also from an early stage dedicated to the Blessed Virgin.<sup>119</sup>

As with the defended cathedral sites of Durham, Rochester and Old Sarum which I have already mentioned, defensive precautions had to be considered from the earliest establishment of the diocesan see at Lincoln, due to its vulnerable Northern location. The latest research suggests that the present castle covers only a small proportion of the ground occupied by the earliest Norman one. This seems to have covered the whole of the area of the Roman upper city, within the standing Roman defences (see illustration 30).<sup>120</sup> This area contained a number of Anglo-Saxon churches, as illustration 30a shows, including the Anglo-Saxon Minster of St Mary. This church later became the cathedral when the see of the bishopric of Lincoln was moved from Dorchester-on-Thames around 1072-5 (see illustration 30b).<sup>121</sup> This period is, of course, much too early to have been directly noted by Bishop Grosseteste, but it established the later dynamics of Lincoln's upper city, and demonstrates once again the fact that castles and churches could readily occupy the same defensive enclosure in medieval Britain. The close relationship between the new bishopric and the castle at Lincoln is emphasised by the bishop's duty to provide for the castle guard.<sup>122</sup>

The proximity of the castle motte and tower and the cathedral has been a crucial factor in explanations of the apparent fortifications in the west façade of the cathedral. Richard Gem discussed two machicolation slots which he noticed in the arches over the two outer recessed bays along the front of the building.<sup>123</sup> He interpreted these as belonging to the eleventh-century fortification of the cathedral noted by Henry of

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<sup>118</sup> P. Kidson, 'Architectural History', in D. Owen (ed.), *A History of Lincoln Minster* (Cambridge, 1994), pp.14-46, p.31.

<sup>119</sup> D. Owen, 'Introduction: The English Church in Eastern England, 1066-1100', in *A History of Lincoln Minster*, pp.1-13, pp.12-13. D.M. Owen, *Church and Society in Medieval Lincolnshire* (Lincoln, 1971), p.37.

<sup>120</sup> For similar arrangements in relation to Roman defences, see Chapters 2, 'The Urban Castle' and 4, 'The Imperial Castle'.

<sup>121</sup> R. Gem, 'Lincoln Minster: Ecclesia Pulchra, Ecclesia Fortis', in T.A. Heslop and V.A. Sekules (ed.), *Medieval Art and Architecture at Lincoln Cathedral*, British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions 8 (1986), pp.9-28, p.9; D. Stocker, 'The Two Early Castles of Lincoln', in P. Lindley (ed.), *Lincoln Castle*, Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology Occasional Monographs 11 (forthcoming), p.6. I am most grateful to David Stocker for giving me access to draft documents from this forthcoming volume.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>123</sup> Gem, 'Lincoln Minster: Ecclesia Pulchra, Ecclesia Fortis'; Kidson, 'Architectural History', pp.21-4; Bonde, *Fortress Churches of Languedoc*, pp.36-7.

Huntingdon (writing between 1129 and 1154)<sup>124</sup> (as quoted in the title of Gem's paper) and also by William of Malmesbury in his *Historia Novella* (1140-3).<sup>125</sup> The rest of the west front of the cathedral has been altered since, but, he argues, these slots remain from the eleventh century phases, designed to oppose the defensive capabilities of the castle opposite during the unstable period of the anarchy.<sup>126</sup>

David Stocker and Alan Vince have an even bolder suggestion for the presence of these features. They argue that what is now the west end of the cathedral was in the eleventh century a separate tower keep, constructed as a residence for Bishop Remigius on his arrival from Dorchester-on-Thames. They suggest that this was only later incorporated into the fabric of the cathedral, retaining the machicolation slots still visible today.<sup>127</sup>

This is a controversial suggestion, as some scholars do not even accept that these features on the west façade are defensive in nature. Peter Kidson, for example, rejects their identification as machicolation slots because there are no precedents for them at this early date. However, his only alternative suggestion is that 'one can imagine ornamental hangings being lowered through them on special ecclesiastical occasions.'<sup>128</sup> As this function is equally without precedent, it is hardly an improvement on the military suggestions he dismisses.

Stocker's latest attempt to argue his case is backed up with an impressive array of documentary and archaeological sources, but it remains to be seen how it will be received.<sup>129</sup> Nevertheless, those who have argued for the military function of the west end of the cathedral have been able to quote from twelfth century authors who certainly appreciated the defensive capabilities of the cathedral. They also consistently associated this conceptual fortress-church with its Marian dedication. William of Malmesbury's reference to King Stephen's role in the cathedral's construction is one example:

*aeccliam beatae Dei genetricis de Lindocolino incastellauerat*<sup>130</sup>

<sup>124</sup> A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550 to 1307* (London, 1974), p.194.

<sup>125</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Historia Novella, The Contemporary History*, ed. E. King, transl. K.R. Potter (Oxford, 1998), p.xxxiii.

<sup>126</sup> Gem, 'Lincoln Minster: Ecclesia Pulchra, Ecclesia Fortis', pp.10-11 *et passim*.

<sup>127</sup> This is only a brief summary of Stocker and Vince's argument, which is full of archaeological and documentary detail. See D. Stocker and A. Vince, 'The Early Norman Castle at Lincoln and a Re-evaluation of the Original West Tower of Lincoln Cathedral', *Medieval Archaeology* 41 (1997): 223-33; Stocker, 'The Two Early Castles of Lincoln', *passim*.

<sup>128</sup> Kidson, 'Architectural History', p.20.

<sup>129</sup> Stocker, 'The Two Early Castles of Lincoln'.

<sup>130</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Historia Novella, The Contemporary History*, Book 3, paragraph 42, p.82.

(he had fortified the church of the blessed mother of God at Lincoln.)<sup>131</sup>

This reference is brief, but it is notable that William of Malmesbury identifies the church as that of Mary rather than just as the cathedral of Lincoln. More specifically, he mentions Mary in her role as the mother of God, rather than simply by name, as in the dedication of the church, or by her other roles, for example as intercessor or queen of Heaven. It may be that this is a deliberate device by William to remind his readers of the Marian castle imagery attached to her role in the Incarnation, through exegesis of the text Luke 10.38.

Marian castle-imagery also seems to me to inform a passage from Henry of Huntingdon which has been quoted in discussions of the cathedral's military functions. The passage describes the foundation of the church by Bishop Remigius:

*Mercatis igitur praediis, in ipso vertice urbis juxta castellum turribus fortissimis eminens, in loco forti fortem, pulchro pulchram, virgini virginum construxit ecclesiam; quae et grata esset Deo servientibus, et, ut pro tempore oportebat, invincibilis hostibus.*<sup>132</sup>

(And so, having bought up the estates, in the heights of the city next to the eminent castle with its very strong towers, he built a strong church on a strong site, a beautiful [church] on a beautiful [site], [a church] to the Virgin of Virgins; so that it might be pleasing to those serving God and, as was necessary for the times, invincible against enemies.)<sup>133</sup>

Paul Everson, in collaboration with David Stocker, argues that the '*castellum turribus fortissimis eminens*' refers not to the royal castle, but to Remigius's tower keep, later incorporated into the west end of the Minster.<sup>134</sup> The text presents no objection to this argument, though it has to be said that this phrase could equally refer to the royal castle. However, I think Everson is perfectly right to emphasise the rhetorical polish of this sentence, and to draw attention to the whole construction. Gem's article emphasised the phrase '*in loco forti fortem, pulchro pulchram*' at the expense of its context. However the reference to the '*castellum*' is interpreted, the construction of the sentence is designed to emphasise the juxtaposition and similarity of the '*castellum*' and the church. This juxtaposition of location ('*iuxta*') is strengthened

<sup>131</sup> My translation.

<sup>132</sup> Henry of Huntingdon, *Henrici Achidiaconi Huntendunensis: Historia Anglorum*, ed. T. Arnold, Rolls Series 74 (1879) Book 4, paragraph 41, p.212.

<sup>133</sup> My translation.

<sup>134</sup> P. Everson, Appendix 1, in Lindley, *Lincoln Castle*.

verbally with the repetition of '*fortissimus...fortem*' and the similar case of the words '*castellum*' and '*ecclesiam*'.

The two linked adjectives describing the church as strong and beautiful have often been noted, but in fact three elements are joined here, all qualified by the same verb and subject: the church is built strong, beautiful, and to the Virgin. The triple effect is further emphasised, against the actual syntax of the sentence, by the similarity of the endings of all three pairings: '*forti fortem, pulchro pulchram, virgini virginum*'.<sup>135</sup> Although the last two words perform different functions from the first four, all appear by their arrangement and coincidental similarities of ending to be exactly parallel terms, suggesting an integral link between architectural beauty, strength, and the Virgin: just those qualities combined in the image of the Marian castle of the Incarnation.

These two historical references to Lincoln Cathedral help to demonstrate the ubiquity of the imagery of the Marian castle. But more importantly for my argument, they show, as Aelred's sermon did, that this imagery was applicable not just to the symbolic castles of rhetoric and sermon, but to the concrete architecture of the medieval church. Defended ecclesiastical structures were clearly comparable to lordly fortresses, as my linguistic evidence showed. But the imagery of the Marian castle shows that they were also comparable in symbolic and religious terms, and that this comparison had an important significance in the understanding of the individual Christian. The recognition of the Virgin Mary symbolised in a castle or in a defended church must, I suggest, have triggered the recollection and contemplation of the text of Luke 10.38 and the building it described: the castle of Bethany, a symbol of the Christian faith contained within a defensive building. It may also have invoked other texts and spiritual tenets associated with this central text through the architectural mnemonic created around the castle of Luke 10.38 by authors such as Grosseteste. The very sight or thought of a castle or a fortified church in the Middle Ages must therefore have had the potential to become a religious experience and a step on the path to salvation, as the brief quotations from William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon suggest.

As the English Middle Ages progressed, further triggers to this kind of recollection made their way into the architecture of the church. Paul Binksi identifies

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<sup>135</sup> '*Forti*' and '*pulchro*' are masculine ablative singular, agreeing with the ablative '*loco*'; '*fortem*' and '*pulchram*' are feminine accusative singular, and agree with '*ecclesiam*'. '*Virgini*' is feminine dative singular, referring to '*ecclesiam*' but not in the same case, and '*virginum*' is feminine genitive plural, qualifying '*virgini*' itself.

the mid thirteenth century as the period when military motifs began to become popular in English ecclesiastical architecture. He mentions miniaturised crenellations and turrets, and mock arrow-slits, as well as the less obviously architectural shield devices.<sup>136</sup> This trend seems to have been a particularly British phenomenon, at variance from practice in contemporary France, for example.<sup>137</sup> It is just possible that imagery such as that in Grosseteste's *Château d'Amour* may have been partly responsible for this trend. The poem proved its medieval popularity by being translated into Middle English four times between 1300 and 1450.<sup>138</sup> Interestingly, Binski has also identified Grosseteste's circle as the source of another quasi-military religious device, the shield of faith. This was also amongst the defensive motifs deployed at this period in ecclesiastical decoration.<sup>139</sup> However, generic military motifs would be much harder to trace to any particular source, and in any case I am arguing here for an ideological rather than a causal link between the general circumstances of ecclesiastical architecture and ideas such as those expressed by Grosseteste.

Nevertheless, the defensive connotations of Lincoln's cathedral complex were emphasised by several building campaigns of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, which may have been intended to echo this fortress-church imagery. These, too, are symptomatic of a wider trend in the crenellation of ecclesiastical enclosures: Charles Coulson discusses the defensive enclosures built around ecclesiastical establishments in increasing numbers in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>140</sup> However, he notes especially the grant of royal licences for these structures which, he suggests, indicates a seeking of status rather than a defensive need. At Lincoln, four royal licenses to enclose and crenellate the cathedral complex were granted between 1285 and 1316.<sup>141</sup> Coulson confirms the symbolic intention of these fortifications, noting that 'the cathedral close by gradual degrees expanded and assumed a more pronouncedly castle-like appearance'.<sup>142</sup> Once again, this is a generic development, not restricted to Lincoln

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<sup>136</sup> P. Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power, 1200-1400* (New Haven, CT, and London, 1995), pp.80-1.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, p.81.

<sup>138</sup> A.E. Hartung, *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050-1500* (New Haven, CT, 1967-98) 7, pp.2337.

<sup>139</sup> Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power, 1200-1400*, p.81.

<sup>140</sup> Coulson, *Hierarchism in Conventual Crenellation*, p.72.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, p.75.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

cathedral. But it does demonstrate the ongoing presence of ecclesiastical contexts in which the mnemonic exercise of the castle of Luke 10.38 might be called to mind.

Moreover, other contexts are also available to demonstrate the power of the castle of Bethany as an image in medieval society and thought. I have demonstrated the importance of this image as a tool of the church in spiritual teaching and contemplation. From very different contexts it is clear that the image was widely understood and used by those outside the Church. These contexts show that the Marian castle of the Incarnation was not always invoked in the sacred sense in which the Church employed it. However, its parodic use confirms the understanding and reception not only of the image itself, but of its mnemonic properties. From the earliest stages, such architectural allegories could be imitated to secular as well as sacred ends. Andreas Capellanus in the fourth century could, for example, rework the temple of Ezekiel parodically as the Court of Love, playing on the sexual imagery of the closed east gate (representing the virgin birth of Christ).<sup>143</sup> I detect a similar attempt at parody, and indeed a similar experimentation with sexual architectural symbolism, in certain manifestations of the Castle of Love.

The first account of the pageant of the Castle of Love is recorded in 1214 in Treviso, Italy.<sup>144</sup> Rolandino of Padua describes how a model castle, defended by ladies wielding flowers, fruit and nuts, was attacked by knights bearing similarly playful weapons. After a period of this siege warfare, the ladies of the castle eventually capitulated and each paid the ransom of a kiss to a knight, who entered the castle and carried his lady off. This pageant siege was to be repeated throughout medieval Europe, and even survived in parts of Switzerland up until the eighteenth century.<sup>145</sup> This enacted siege can be found portrayed in its various stages on ivory mirror-backs and caskets of the early fourteenth century, which found their way from their manufacture, probably in Paris, round most of medieval western Europe (see illustrations 31 and 32).<sup>146</sup> Subsequently the image also found its way into other media, appearing in illuminated manuscripts, on tapestries and as elaborately crafted table decorations.

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<sup>143</sup> Mann, 'Allegorical Buildings', p.193.

<sup>144</sup> R.S. Loomis, 'The Allegorical Siege in the Art of the Middle Ages', *American Journal of Archaeology* 23.3 (1919): 255-69; p.255.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.255-8.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.258-9; see also R. Koechlin, *Les Ivoires Gothiques Français* (Paris, 1924); M.H. Longhurst, *Victoria and Albert Museum Department of Architecture and Sculpture Catalogue of Carvings in Ivory* (London, 1929); Joseph Nathanson, *Gothic Ivories of the 13th and 14th Centuries* (London, 1951).



The date of the first recorded enactment of this Siege of Love is, interestingly, one year before the earliest possible date given for Grosseteste's *Château d'Amour*. If there is a connection in the origins of these two traditions, then, it must go back further. Some basic similarities can immediately be appreciated between both these castles in terms of the gender symbolism expressed by metaphors of defensive bodily architecture - either of the besieged ladies, or of the Virgin's body. Scholars of Grosseteste unanimously dismiss any connection between the two phenomena, yet the descendants of both the Treviso pageant and the Grosseteste castle show evidence of having shared in an exchange in later years. There are certain examples of the Castle of Love image which display obviously religious elements. Loomis, for example, describes one such depiction on a fourteenth-century casket, where the castle motif 'is surmounted by a church, and the battlements are held by nuns. They hurl down white pellets on the powers of the world represented by six gaily clad youths'.<sup>147</sup> Presumably, these 'white pellets' represent communion wafers. Loomis sees this as evidence, not of the sacred connotations of the castle image, but of the medieval Church's 'canny instinct for appropriating to its uses any popular image'.<sup>148</sup> However, it seems to me that the Castle of Love, even in its most flamboyant and playful depictions, was capable of reflecting the imagery of the Marian castle of theological exegesis.

Illustrations 33 and 34 show the Castle of Love from folio 75 verso of the Luttrell Psalter (c.1320-40). The image has enjoyed a great deal less comment than some of the other scenes from this famous manuscript, but its commentators have been very consistent in their opinion of it. Scholars of both the Luttrell Psalter and of the Castle of Love image have all agreed with Loomis in his suggestion that the enacted siege of the Castle of Love, depicted on the Parisian ivories, is the ultimate referent of this and other manuscript images.<sup>149</sup> Eric George Millar's publication on the Psalter quotes some of Loomis's evidence for the Castle of Love enactments, and notes that 'the present miniature must be regarded as a general representation of the subject'.<sup>150</sup>

There is no doubt that the Luttrell Psalter image is very similar to the Parisian ivory carvings, in particulars as well as in general appearance. At least two of the figures from the Psalter have very similar counterparts in the ivory carvings. The knight

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<sup>147</sup> Loomis, 'The Allegorical Siege in the Art of the Middle Ages', p.264.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., pp.259-61.

<sup>150</sup> E.G. Millar, *The Luttrell Psalter: Additional Manuscript 42130 in the British Museum* (London, 1932), p.32.

scaling the ladder on the right of the castle and the crossbowman aiming up at the battlements just to his left, are very similar in attitude and appearance to the crossbowman and the ladder-scaler from illustration 31a; these figures also appear in combination in the left-hand panel of an ivory casket, illustration 32, which bears a strong resemblance to the Luttrell Psalter image.

More recently, Michael Camille has looked more closely at the immediate context of the image within the Luttrell Psalter, opening up some interesting possibilities, but again he emphasises the courtly and secular overtones of the image.<sup>151</sup> Camille's most important contribution is to supply an interpretation which integrates text with illustration, opening up the possibility of a castle image being applied to a Biblical text. He links the Castle of Love to the text above it, that of Psalm 38: '*Dixi: custodiam vias meas, ne peccem in lingua mea*' (I said: I will take heed to my ways: that I sin not with my tongue).<sup>152</sup> This text displays a historiated initial of King David, the authorial voice of the Psalms, pointing to his tongue in illustration of this text. For Camille, 'the castle, too, illustrates the same words in a parodic fashion since *custodiam* can mean 'guard' or 'watch' in a military sense.'<sup>153</sup> I do not wish to rule out such a reading, as I think this image can sustain a number of different associations and connotations at once. However, it seems to me that the castle image fits much more neatly the otherwise unillustrated text further up the page, that of Psalm 37.20-23:

*Inimici autem mei viventes confortati sunt, et multiplicati sunt odientes me mendaciter; et qui reddunt malum pro bono adversabantur mihi, Ne derelinquas me, Domine Deus meus, ne elongeris a me; festina in auxilium meum, Domine salutis meae.*

(But my enemies live, and are stronger than I: and they that hate me are wrongfully multiplied. They that render evil for good, have detracted me, because I follow goodness. Forsake me not, O my Lord: do not thou depart from me. Attend unto my help, O Lord, the God of my salvation.)

The relationship of the castle image to these words makes immediate sense; the words of the Psalm seem almost to be spoken by the defenders of the castle, as they cry to God for help in their defence, just as the historiated initial on the same page also illustrates the speaker of the verse suiting his actions to his words. This context, once

<sup>151</sup> M. Camille, *Mirror in Parchment: The Luttrell Psalter and the Making of Medieval England* (London, 1998), pp.118-19; *The Medieval Art of Love: Objects and Subjects of Desire* (London, 1998), pp.87-93.

<sup>152</sup> The first of these verses is all that is included on this folio of the Psalter.

<sup>153</sup> Camille, *Mirror in Parchment*, p.118.

understood, changes the relevance of the image. The similarities with the pageant siege still remain and are emphasised in the immediate appearance of the illumination. However an underlying meaning is encoded in the context of the image. The words of the Psalm point to the evil of the attackers, and suggest no fault but goodness in those attacked, providing a moral complement to the sexual symbolism of the pageant siege. There is a strong resemblance here to the siege of the spiritual castle by the vices, an allegory which is implied in Grosseteste's poem,<sup>154</sup> and which was later elaborated by theologians and sermonists.<sup>155</sup> Owst calls this development of castle imagery the Castle of Mansoul, and identifies it as a reference, not to Luke 10.38 specifically, but to the text of Matthew 21.2, '*Ite in castellum quod contra vos est*', which refers literally to Jesus's instructions to the disciples on Palm Sunday, going to collect the ass for him to ride.<sup>156</sup> In exegetical terms, however, Owst shows that the ass stands for the evil soul of man imprisoned within the fortress of the body and assailed by the vices and virtues. The bodily imagery accounts for the transference of this imagery to the Marian castle of Luke 10.38.

However, the symbolism of the image is not enriched simply by juxtaposition with a relevant text: significant differences are also made from the ivory Castles of Love which confirm and emphasise this spiritual reading. The winged and crowned god of love, prominently placed at the top of the castle in the vast majority of the ivory depictions (see illustrations 31a,b,c and 32, left), is missing. Had he been included, the textual plea, 'Forsake me not, O my Lord' might have seemed to be directed towards the personification of Love, so de-Christianising the words of the Psalm, and emphasising the amorous nature of the siege. As it is, with this omission the Christian symbolism of the castle is instead brought to the fore. The melee has also been moved from its usual place in front of the gate of the castle (see illustrations 31a, b and 32 left and right) to occupy rather an awkward corner, partially obscured by the castle wall. Its place is taken in front of the gate by just one knight, who carries no weapons; his left hand is raised in a fist, and he seems to be knocking on the door of the castle.<sup>157</sup> Again,

<sup>154</sup> Sajavaara notes that the seven barbicans of the virtues also imply an attack by the seven vices, Grosseteste, *The Middle English Translations of Robert Grosseteste's Chateau d'Amour*, pp.96-7.

<sup>155</sup> Cornelius, *The Figurative Castle*, pp.58-67.

<sup>156</sup> Matthew 21.2: '*Ite in castellum quod contra vos est; et statim invenietis asinam alligatam, et pullum cum ea: solvite et adducite mihi*' (Go ye into the village that is over against you, and immediately you shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them and bring them to me).

<sup>157</sup> While Camille does not attribute any particular significance to the gesture, he does agree that the knight is knocking on the door: Camille, *Mirror in Parchment*, p.118.

a particular relevance can be found in this re-arrangement of the scene, if Grosseteste's poem is recalled, with its narrator who knocked on the door of the castle to be admitted, while he was being attacked by the World, the Flesh and the Devil. No other depiction of the Castle of Love I have come across uses this motif, underlining the particular significance which is attached to this figure.

It seems clear to me that the rearrangement of the action in front of the Luttrell Psalter's castle is specifically designed to highlight the figure of the knight, in order to reinforce the textual allusion which his action encapsulates. Not only does this image relate to the text placed above it on the page of the Psalter, it also makes a connection with other Biblical texts and exegetical traditions. As the Christ of Revelation 3.20, the knight transforms the Castle of Love into the Castle of the Soul or the Castle of Mankind, to which Christ begs to be admitted to save souls. And as the lover of Canticles 5.2, he knocks to be admitted to his beloved, transforming the fortress again, into the Castle of the Church. This latter text works particularly well with the trappings of the pageant Castle of Love presented in the Luttrell Psalter, paralleling the medieval reading of the Canticles which identified it as a secular love-metaphor with a deeper spiritual significance.

It is no coincidence that I have found a very similar allegorical technique used in a devotional mnemonic poem of the thirteenth century and an illuminated Psalter of the fourteenth. Suzanne Lewis, for example, sees the Psalter as a visual analogue of the popular devotional narratives responding to the demands of Lateran IV.<sup>158</sup> In the fourteenth century particularly, the increasing emphasis on private devotional contemplation made luxury illustrated texts such as Psalters particularly suited to this task in affluent circles.<sup>159</sup> The Luttrell Psalter might certainly be expected to participate in such trends. The mnemonic scheme is not worked out in great detail in this case and there is no evidence that the artist had come across formal advice on techniques such as the architectural mnemonic, which Aelred and Grosseteste probably knew.<sup>160</sup> However,

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<sup>158</sup> S. Lewis, *Reading Images: Narrative Discourse and Reception in the Thirteenth-century Illuminated Apocalypse* (Cambridge, 1995), pp.265, 272-3.

<sup>159</sup> S. Ringbom, 'Devotional Images and Imaginative Devotions: Notes on the Place of Art in Late Medieval Private Piety', *Gazette des Beaux Arts* 73 (1969): 159-70, p.164.

<sup>160</sup> It is worth noting that Geoffrey Luttrell, for whom the Psalter was produced, was lord of Irnham in Lincolnshire, and that certain illuminations have been compared to images in Lincoln Cathedral (C. Grossinger, 'Misericords' in J. Alexander and P. Binski (ed.), *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England, 1200-1400* (London, 1987), pp.122-4, p.123. It is therefore possible that there may have been a specific local knowledge of Grosseteste's text, which had been translated into Middle English by this time, and its local Lincoln context. It may be that the Psalter image refers directly to such a tradition, but this would be hard to establish.

in this context the castle is still used as a framework for organising a number of precepts and texts. As an architectural and allegorical form, it coexists in the worlds of chivalry and the religion, simultaneously referring to both. This example shows once again that defensive imagery has an important role to play in the medieval understanding of Christianity, directly inspired by Biblical texts. The castle forms an important part of this imagery, again inspired by Biblical precedent, but also plays a significant role in the organisation and communication of these ideas, through its accepted use as an architectural mnemonic which can trigger the recognition of spiritual meanings.

I have already shown how such symbolic strategies could be used in Aelred's sermon to draw attention, amongst other things, to the defensive qualities of monastic architecture. I have also shown that the imagery of the spiritual castle could be applied to medieval churches such as Lincoln Cathedral. However, my last example is designed to show that the medieval castle, in the narrowest understanding of the word as a lordly defensive building, was also fully implicated in such imagery.

Anchoritic literature and practice shows that the medieval castle could simultaneously be the subject and the site of spiritual meditation. Part 7 of the thirteenth century anchoress's guide, *Ancrene Wisse*, describes the siege of a castle with a subsequent explanation of the spiritual significance of the episode. A lady in this case is besieged by her enemies in an 'eorþene castel'<sup>161</sup> while Christ as a male admirer offers to send her aid. While the castle is not given a specific interpretation in the explanation of this tale, it is clear that this image participates in the tradition of the spiritual castle which I have been discussing throughout this chapter. Castles also occur as important images throughout the text. In Part 1 the anchoress is told that the battlements of her castle are her cell's windows, and that she must not raise her eyes above them for fear of being shot at by her attacker, the devil. In Part 4 the anchoress is asked to compare herself to a high tower, surrounded by a deep ditch of sin, and attacked by the Devil;<sup>162</sup> later in this book she is also invited to pour out hot tears against the devil's attack, as a castle pours out scalding water to guard its walls.<sup>163</sup> The relationship between the anchoress and the symbolic and real architecture of her anchor-hold is expressed even

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<sup>161</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien (ed.), *The English Text of Ancrene Riwe: Ancrene Wisse*, Early English Texts Society, original series 249 (1962), p.198.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, p.117.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.125-6.

more clearly in Part 6, where Christ's birth and death are also described in terms of bodily and architectural enclosure:

Marie wombe 7 þis þruh were his ancre huses. I nowðer nes he wortlich mon ah as ut of þe world forte schawin ancren þat ha ne schulen wið þe world na þing habben imeane. 3e þu ondswerest me. ah he wende ut of ba. 3e went tu alswa of bapine ancre huses. as he dude wiþ ute bruche. 7 leaf ham ba ihale. þat schal beon hwen þe gast ent ut on ende wiþ uten bruche 7 wem of his twa huses. þat an is þe licome. þet. oþer os þe uttre hus. þat is as þe uttre wah abute þe castel.<sup>164</sup>

(Mary's womb and this tomb were his anchor-houses. In neither was he a worldly man, but, as it were, out of the world, to show anchoresses that they must not have anything to say in common with the world. Yes, you answer me, but he went out of both. Yes, you will go likewise out of both your anchor-houses, as he did without breakage and left them both intact - that will be when the spirit goes out at the end without breakage or blemish from its two houses. The one is the body, the other is the outer house, which is like the outer wall around the castle.)<sup>165</sup>

Here the relationship between the anchoress and her cell is likened to the castle and the wall round it, and the physical impermeability which both should ideally maintain.<sup>166</sup>

The castle of this image is an architectural expression of a physical and spiritual relationship which the anchoress must seek to remember.<sup>167</sup> This passage seems to refer to Biblical texts in its mention of the Virgin's intact womb, which recalls the text of Ezekiel 44.2 as well as that of Luke 10.38, both of which I have already discussed as important castle texts. However, like Aelred's use of the castle image in his sermon on the assumption of the Virgin, the mnemonic image also makes use of a physical relationship with architectural space, as well as a spiritual one.

While Aelred's main concrete architectural referent seemed to be the monastery, *Ancrene Wisse* may well be referring to medieval castles, several of which in the later Middle Ages are known to have housed anchor-holds. Religious women attached to castle anchor-holds include Idonea de Boclaund in the Tower of London, Emma de Skepeye at Dover Castle, and an unnamed female recluse who lived by the castle at

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., p.193.

<sup>165</sup> H. White (transl.), *Ancrene Wisse: Guide for Anchoresses* (London, 1993), p.173.

<sup>166</sup> See Wogan-Browne, 'Chaste Bodies: Frames and Experiences', p.27. See also J. Price, "'Inner" and "Outer": Conceptualising the Body in *Ancrene Wisse* and Aelred's *De Institutione Inclusarum*', in G. Kratzmann and J. Simpson (ed.), *Medieval English Religious and Ethical Literature: Essays in Honour of G.H. Russell* (Cambridge, 1986), pp.192-208, p.192.

<sup>167</sup> The castle described, with its inner element and outer wall, sounds very like that of St Anselm, who is in fact quoted at another point during the text.

Pontefract.<sup>168</sup> These women enacted the spiritual relationship between body and castle suggested in *Ancrene Wisse* in a quite literal way. These medieval castles could thus become the focus of devotional contemplation just as their literary or artistic counterparts. They, too, could be seen as concrete reproductions of the castle of Bethany: defensive buildings which housed proponents of both the active and the contemplative Christian lives. The castle, and its secular, military role within medieval life, is thus actually transformed into a locus of spiritual devotion and enclosure, as well as representing these precepts on a symbolic level.

Roberta Gilchrist has gone some way to exploring such links, drawing parallels through access analysis between the spiritual castles of medieval religion and the enclosure of women in medieval castles. Her remarks are interesting, although rather general. However, she does not provide any discussion of the mechanisms by which a medieval mind might appreciate the spiritual significance of the concrete architecture of medieval castles. It is this link which I have attempted to make in this chapter. As I have shown, I think the widespread use of the castle as a spiritual mnemonic makes it fair to assume a wide appreciation of the castle as an architecture with spiritual meanings. The castle texts identified by medieval thought in the Bible ensured that the castle participated fully in the iconography of ecclesiastical architecture.

The example of the fifteenth-century seal of Colchester I discussed in Chapter 1 demonstrates that the text of Luke 10.38 could be applied to concrete architecture in a very public context. It referred, I have suggested, to the traditional identification of Colchester Castle with residence of St. Helena and the birthplace of her son, the Emperor Constantine. This provides a final example of the very concrete way in which the Castle of Bethany, and its spiritual interpretation as the castle of the Incarnation, could be applied to secular, as well as ecclesiastical medieval architecture.

This chapter has been based upon the supposition, discussed in Chapter 1, that the Biblical word '*castellum*' could be understood in accordance with the normal medieval understanding of the castle. In the course of this chapter it may have seemed to readers that I have pointed out obvious connections, or gone over material which has been discussed before. However, to me this basic linguistic point is fundamental, allowing the recognition of connections and resonances in texts and images whose profundity could not otherwise be fully appreciated. The few examples I have discussed

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<sup>168</sup> R.M. Clay, *The Hermits and Anchorites of England* (London, 1914), p.78.

have merely demonstrated some of the possibilities this understanding opens up. Kantorowicz famously suggested that every king approaching a city gate in the Middle Ages was symbolically transformed into Christ entering Jerusalem.<sup>169</sup> I hope that in future, every knight approaching a castle will be able to be seen in the symbolic guise of Jesus entering the castle of Bethany. I also hope the archaeological site of Bethany will attract more attention in castle studies, generating discussions about the architectural iconography of the castle just as the sacred architecture of Jerusalem has done for ecclesiastical architecture. However, there are also other Biblical texts to investigate and integrate into this new understanding of the spiritual significance of medieval castle architecture.

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<sup>169</sup> E.H. Kantorowicz, 'The "King's Advent" and the enigmatic panels in the doors of Santa Sabina', *Art Bulletin* 26 (1944): 207-31, p.210; see also his *Laudes Regiae: A Study in Liturgical Acclamations and Medieval Ruler Worship* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA, 1958), pp.71-2, 145-6.



## 4. THE IMPERIAL CASTLE

### 4.0: PREFACE

In June 1283 work was begun on Caernarfon Castle, a part of Edward I's massive castle-building campaign designed to consolidate the English position in Wales by fortifying newly acquired territory (see illustration 18).<sup>1</sup> The castle at Caernarfon alone cost over £20,000, a huge amount of money in contemporary terms, and took nearly fifty years to complete.<sup>2</sup> It was built at the mouth of the River Seiont, site of the ancient Welsh centre of Gwynedd; its thirteen polygonal towers and its exterior wall surface were given decorative treatment through coloured banding in the stonework, achieved by the alternation of dark and light stone courses. The castle was built on and around an older work, probably of Norman origin; also in the year of the new castle's foundation a body was found on the site and re-buried in the nearby church.<sup>3</sup>

In one of the most celebrated pieces of research in castle studies, Arnold Taylor transformed these facts into legends. Through medieval Welsh chronicles he found that the Roman site of Segontium, on the hill above Caernarfon, was connected in legends to Constantine the Great.<sup>4</sup> Taylor was also aware that Nennius, the author of the ninth century work *Historia Brittonum*, had referred to an inscribed tomb of Constantine at Segontium, providing further evidence of the imperial connections of area.<sup>5</sup> Taylor noted that the motte incorporated into the new castle belonged to an earlier, Norman castle. He concluded that this was a material expression of continuity with the past, acknowledging the powerful symbolism of the ruins in this area.<sup>6</sup> He also found documentary evidence to show that Edward I believed that the body which had been discovered was that of the Roman emperor Magnus Maximus, the father of Constantine

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<sup>1</sup> A.J. Taylor, 'Caernarvon', in H.M. Colvin, A.J. Taylor and R.A. Brown, *A History of the King's Works*, (London, 1963), 1, pp.369-95, p.371.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p.394.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.369, 370, n.1.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p.369, n.5.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p.370, n.2. '*Quintus Constantinus, Constantini magni filius, fuit, et ibi moritur, et sepulchrum illius monstratur juxta urbem quae vocatur Cair Segeint, ut litterae, quae sunt in lapide tumuli, ostendunt*': 'The fifth [to come to Britain] was Constantine, son of Constantine the Great, and there he died. His tomb is to be seen by the city called Caer Se[ge]int, as the letters on its stonework show.' Text and translation from Nennius, *British History and Welsh Annals* ed. and transl. J. Morris (London and Chichester, 1980), pp.65, 25.

<sup>6</sup> Taylor, 'Caernarvon', pp.369-70.

the Great. He used this fact to highlight again the physical association created between the new king and the illustrious ancient rulers of the place.<sup>7</sup>

These resonances were confirmed for Taylor by the medieval Welsh text *Breuddwyd Maxen* (*The Dream of Maccsen Wledig*), part of the cycle of the *mabinogi*, or *Mabinogion*, as the collection of works is usually called.<sup>8</sup> Magnus Maximus appears in this text as the emperor Maxen (or Maccsen). Maxen is associated in this text with the beautiful castle of Aber Sein, situated at Arfon in Wales.<sup>9</sup> According to this legend the emperor marries Elen the daughter of this castle's lord, and through her the fortress at Arfon becomes the chief stronghold of the Island of Britain, which is ruled through her as Empress of Rome.<sup>10</sup> This Elen is to be identified with St. Helena, who legendarily found the true cross and was the mother of Constantine the Great.<sup>11</sup>

From this accumulation of textual references and associations Taylor was able to argue that Edward I's Caernarfon was built with a view to making legend into concrete reality. He suggested that Edward I had set out deliberately to build the castle described in *Breuddwyd Maxen*, situated at the mouth of the River Seiont, with the huge multi-coloured towers described in the text. His purpose in so doing was to appropriate to himself the illustrious history the Welsh associated with the legend; to make himself a ruler of Wales in accordance with its own legends.

Taylor interpreted the polygonal towers and polychrome stonework of Caernarfon as another, complementary reference to Constantine. He saw these features as a deliberate evocation of Constantinople, the city most famously associated with that emperor, sometime capital of the Roman empire.<sup>12</sup> Taylor's visual comparison between the two structures is striking (see illustration 19). In his picture the straight stretches of wall between the polygonal towers and the banded polychromy of Caernarfon's

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<sup>7</sup> 'Apud Kaernarvan, corpus Maximi principis, patris imperatoris nobilis Constantini, erat inventum, et rege jubente in ecclesia honorifice collocatum'; 'At Caernarfon, the body of prince Maximus, father of the noble emperor Constantine, was found, and was placed honourably in the church, to the joy of the king'. Matthew of Westminster, *Flores Historiarum*, ed. H.R. Luard, Rolls Series 95, (1890, repr.1965), 3, p.59. My translation.

<sup>8</sup> I. Williams, *Breuddwyd Maxen* (Bangor, 1908); 'The Dream of Maccsen Wledig', in G. Jones and T. Jones, *The Mabinogion* (London, 1949, repr.1950), pp.79-88.

<sup>9</sup> Williams, *Breuddwyd Maxen*, pp.7, 8; Jones and Jones, 'The Dream of Maccsen Wledig', pp.80, 83.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p.85.

<sup>11</sup> Jacobus de Voragine: *The Golden Legend, Readings on the Saints*, ed. W.G. Ryan (Princeton, NJ, 1993, repr.1995), 1, p.278; accounts of Helena's origins are various, but often suggest that she is the daughter of a British king: *ibid.*, 1, p.281. See also E.D. Hunt, 'Constantine and the Holy Land (ii) Helena - History and Legend', in *Holy Land and Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire, AD 312-460* (Oxford, 1982), pp.28-49, pp.28-9; J.F. Matthews, 'Maccsen, Maximus, and Constantine', *Welsh History Review* 11 (1982-3): 431-48, pp.439, 441-6 *et passim*.

<sup>12</sup> In what follows I will retain Taylor's description of the city by its earlier name of Constantinople as this expresses the connection with its founder, the emperor Constantine the Great, most succinctly.

masonry resemble Constantinople's land walls, shown beneath. Taylor noted further visual invocations of imperial imagery at Caernarfon, in the statues of imperial eagles on what was known from an early stage as the eagle tower (illustrations 20 and 21).<sup>13</sup> In Taylor's vision, then, Edward invokes imperial trappings and legends to transform himself into another Constantine or Magnus Maximus. His castle and town at Caernarfon form another Constantinople: the Welsh capital of the king's new empire.

Taylor's greatest contribution to the field of castle studies has been in his detailed research in and application of historical documentation to architecture. This approach led to such triumphs as his identification of Edward I's prime castle architect as the Savoyard, James of St George, which has remained the definitive study of the topic.<sup>14</sup> His impressive synthesis of legendary and documentary evidence at Caernarfon has also remained unparalleled and much admired in castle studies ever since it was published. It has been repeated for the benefit of successive generations of castle visitors and medieval scholars as a unique example.<sup>15</sup> However, in more recent years, scholars have begun to look for ways to emulate this approach and the results can be seen in several projects,<sup>16</sup> including this thesis.

I have shown in previous chapters of this thesis that many of the themes which Taylor identifies in his analysis of Caernarfon can be traced in the design and depiction of other medieval castles. These examples show that Caernarfon was by no means an isolated case in being linked to legendary local history and imperial dynasties. Colchester, for example, boasts a rival link with Constantine and Helena, which is tied firmly to the castle by the Roman remains incorporated into and surrounding the building (see chapter 1). London, too, carries imperial connotations through its Trojan foundation legend, and also demonstrates the idea of one city being seen to deliberately recreate another city, with the castle as an essential feature in this reconstruction (see chapter 2). In these cases, material remains are consistently used as a point of contact

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<sup>13</sup> Taylor, 'Caernarvon', p.371, n.1.

<sup>14</sup> A.J. Taylor, *Studies in Castles and Castle-Building* (London and Ronceverte, 1985).

<sup>15</sup> For example, P. Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power, 1200-1400* (New Haven, CT, and London, 1995), pp.105, 139-40; M. Prestwich, *Edward I* (London, 1988), pp.120, 211-4.; P. Draper, 'The Architectural Setting of Gothic Art', in N. Saul (ed.), *Age of Chivalry: Art and Society in Late Medieval England* (Brockhampton, 1995), pp.60-75, pp.60, 62; R.K. Morris, 'The Architecture of Arthurian Enthusiasm: Castle Symbolism in the Reigns of Edward I and his Successors', in M. Strickland (ed.), *Armies, Chivalry and Warfare in Medieval Britain*, Proceedings of the 1995 Harlaxton Symposium (1998), pp.63-81, p.65.

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, T.A. Heslop, 'Orford Castle, Nostalgia and Sophisticated Living', *Architectural History* 34 (1991): 36-58; Morris, 'The Architecture of Arthurian Enthusiasm: Castle Symbolism in the Reigns of Edward I and his Successors'.

with the legendary past, whether in the plinth of the temple of Claudius used as the foundation for Colchester castle or in the Roman city walls of Colchester and London (chapters 1 and 2 respectively).

Taylor's analysis of Caernarfon castle cannot, therefore, be said to stand as a unique example any more. Indeed, as I have suggested, many of the phenomena he notes have close parallels in other medieval castles. This resemblance may support Taylor's remarks about Caernarfon in some ways, but it also shows up certain elements of Taylor's argument which may need to be modified in the light of new evidence and approaches.

For example, the strength of the Taylor's visual comparison is undermined when it is considered that only a tiny minority of those who saw Caernarfon, or perhaps none at all, would have seen the walls of Constantinople.<sup>17</sup> The vast majority of those medieval observers who visited Caernarfon cannot therefore have been expected to appreciate any connection with the imperial city. Under these circumstances, an elaborately created visual resonance would be pointless. It therefore seems unlikely that the expense and extra effort of polychrome banding would be worth the effort.

Taylor makes a further comparison of Caernarfon Castle's distinctive appearance in his use of the text *Breuddwyd Maxen*. He notes the huge, multi-coloured towers of a castle described there, implying that the local Welsh population would have understood in Caernarfon Castle a reference to the legend. This link would indeed help to explain how the castle's appearance could have carried meaningful connotations of imperial power for those locals who had never seen Constantinople. However, the multicoloured towers in *Breuddwyd Maxen* do not belong to the castle described at Aber Seint at Arfon at all, but to another fortress in the text located on the mainland of Europe.<sup>18</sup> The fortress at Arfon is described quite plainly in comparison.<sup>19</sup> Again, this negates the crucial links Taylor sets up between the appearance of the castle and its significance for medieval observers.

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<sup>17</sup> Taylor can come up with only one figure associated with the court of Edward I who might have visited Constantinople: Taylor, 'Caernarvon', n.4, pp.370-1. Moreover, Taylor himself admits that the famous medieval description of the walls of Constantinople by Villehardouin mentions neither polychromy nor polygonal towers, the features essential to Taylor's comparison of the two structures: *ibid.*, p.370, n.4; See Geoffroy de Villehardouin, *Les Classiques de l'Histoire de France au Moyen Age: Villehardouin: La Conquête de Constantinople*, ed. E. Faral (Paris, 1961) 2, pp.32-5 for the brief and scanty description of the walls of Constantinople.

<sup>18</sup> This castle is described in both Macsen's dream sequence and in the journey of his emissaries as lying at the mouth of a river near the coast, before the sea journey to Britain: Jones and Jones, 'The Dream of Macsen Wledig', pp.79, 83.

<sup>19</sup> Williams, *Breuddwyd Maxen*, pp.7, 8; Jones and Jones, 'The Dream of Macsen Wledig', pp.80, 83.

I do not mean to dismiss the whole of Taylor's hypothesis by these criticisms of his argument. On the contrary, this chapter sets out to confirm his emphasis on imperial imagery in medieval castle design. Fortunately there is other evidence for important contemporary medieval links between the imperial history of the area and the new castle, which Taylor did not include in his study. These alternative sources confirm some of Taylor's assumptions about the castle's imperial connotations, but at the same time shift the emphasis of the imperial symbolism away from Constantinople, to a more immediate source of imperial imagery.

Some of Edward I's other projects help to contextualise the political symbolism of Caernarfon Castle. The king's propensity for making use of legendary histories to support his military and political ambitions is well documented. Accounts survive of some examples particularly pertinent to the campaign of Welsh conquest and assimilation. A letter of 1301 from Edward I to Pope Boniface, for example, defends the claim of the English monarchy to the overlordship of Scotland through legendary precedents.<sup>20</sup> This document cites the legendary Trojan descent of the British people in order to prove the superior rights of the English, through their notional descent from the eldest of Brutus's sons. Wales and Scotland, it is argued, were governed by the younger sons of Brutus who held these lands only in service to their elder brother.<sup>21</sup> The positions of Wales and Scotland are paradoxically both exalted and subjugated by this precedent, as, no doubt, was Edward's intention. They are acclaimed as nations with a venerable past, participants from the first in the foundation history of Britain, included in the arrangements made by the nation's progenitor. At the same time they are declared junior partners, submitted to the rule of their more important neighbour, not to be entrusted to their own resources. Such imagery raises the value of Edward's British military acquisitions, while also asserting his natural right to them.

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<sup>20</sup> Prestwich, *Edward I*, p.121.

<sup>21</sup> '*Sire Brut e ses enfanz sa tere deviseit, / A Loquerin Engleterre, qe lors fu Bretagne; / Escoce à Albanak, qe dit fu Albanie; / A Kamber dona Gales pur sa porcion, / Qe dit fu Kambria, du Kamber prist-il noun. / A ses enfanz pusneés dona son tenement / De Guales e d'Escoce heritablement, / Solunc la lei de Troie, à tenir en feé / Pur homage e service de lour frere eyné*' : 'Sir Brut to his children bequeathed his land, / To Lochrine England, which was then Britain; / Scotland to Albanak, which was called Albany; / To Camber he gave Wales for his portion, / Which was called Cambria, from Camber it took its name. / To his younger children he gave his lordship / Of Wales and Scotland by inheritance, / According to the law of Troy, to hold in fee / By homage and service of their elder brother'. Text and translation from T. Wright (ed.), '*Rescriptio regis Edwardi, ad dominum Bonifacium papam transmissa*', in *The Chronicle of Pierre de Langtoft*, Rolls Series 47 (1869, repr. 1964), pp.404-5.

While the letter to Pope Boniface was mainly aimed at supporting Edward's claims to Scotland, Wales was the target of his political showmanship shortly after its conquest, at a time when work on Caernarfon Castle was already underway. This time attention was aimed at appropriating specifically Welsh connections with powerful figures of history. In 1285 Edward presented to Westminster Abbey a treasured Welsh relic believed to be a fragment of the True Cross.<sup>22</sup> The discovery of the True Cross can be connected to Wales through the figure of St. Helena, whose Welsh ancestry is introduced in the *Dingestow Brut*, a thirteenth-century Welsh version of the *Historia regum Britannie*. Helena is also the wife of Maxen and the mother of Constantine in this source.<sup>23</sup> It seems more than likely that a version of this text must have been the source for *Breuddwyd Maxen*.<sup>24</sup>

Recent research has confirmed the great importance of these particular legends for Welsh historiography and national identity, confirming Edward I's acuity in the manipulation of local legends to his political ends. The figure of Maccsen Wledig, or Magnus Maximus, holds a position of supreme importance in Welsh national history from its earliest days.<sup>25</sup> He is seen as the last of the Roman emperors to rule in Britain, and, with the addition of a British family and important descendants in medieval accounts,<sup>26</sup> he came to be identified as 'the first ruler of an independent Britain, from whom all legitimate power flowed',<sup>27</sup> 'the founder of the Celtic kingdoms of the west, and so ultimately of the Welsh nation'.<sup>28</sup> This role has been compared to that which King Arthur later acquired,<sup>29</sup> and also indirectly to that of Brutus, legendary founder of Britain.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>22</sup> p.62 'Rex Edwardus... portionem Dominicæ Crucis non modicam, ornatam auro et argento et lapidibus preciosis, quam de Wallia secum tulit, apud Westmonasterium cum solempni processione et concentu advexit': 'The King Edward conveyed to Westminster with solemn procession and song... a largish piece of the Cross of the Lord, decorated with gold and silver and precious stones, which he had brought with him from Wales'. Matthew of Westminster, *Flores Historiarum*, ed. H.R. Luard, Rolls Series 95 (1890), 3, pp.62-3. This relic had been presented to him the year before by the Welsh themselves: Prestwich, *Edward I*, pp.203-4.

<sup>23</sup> B.F. Roberts, 'Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia regum Britanniae* and *Brut y Brehinedd*', in R. Bromwich, A.O.H. Jarman and B.F. Roberts (ed.), *The Arthur of the Welsh: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval Welsh Literature* (Cardiff, 1991), pp.97-116, p.112.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p.111 *et passim*.

<sup>25</sup> Dumville identifies Maximus's importance in the work of Gildas, the seventh century Welsh historian: D.N. Dumville, 'Sub-Roman Britain: History and Legend', *History* 62 (1977): 173-92, p.180.

<sup>26</sup> Matthews, 'Maccsen, Maximus, and Constantine', p.445 *et passim*.

<sup>27</sup> Dumville, 'Sub-Roman Britain: History and Legend', p.180.

<sup>28</sup> Matthews, 'Maccsen, Maximus, and Constantine', p.432.

<sup>29</sup> Dumville, 'Sub-Roman Britain: History and Legend', p.181.

<sup>30</sup> D.N. Dumville, 'The Historical Value of the *Historia Britonnum*', *Arthurian Literature* 6 (1986): 1-26, p.20.

The latter comparison is a good one, since the purpose of the Maximus legend was also that of making the British measure up to the Romans,<sup>31</sup> a strategy which I have already discussed in 'The Urban Castle' in relation to the mythography of Brutus. For a monarch who, as I have shown, knew how to use the Brutus legend, an invocation of Maximus and his local connections might well be expected at Caernarfon, the culminating conquest of the Welsh campaign, where it could be used to appropriate the legitimacy attached to Maximus to the new English rule.<sup>32</sup> From this evidence it would seem that Maximus Magnus, rather than his son Constantine, is the focus of the imperial imagery at Caernarfon.

It is also probable that material evidence of the Roman occupation of Wales, and perhaps specifically the area of Segontium Roman fort, were at least partly responsible for the location of the Maximus legend in the area, in a much wider sense than that suggested by Taylor. Standing Roman architecture, Roman roads and smaller finds such as coins have all been listed in addition to the inscriptional evidence which Taylor cites, as causes of an enduring medieval fascination with Roman connections with Wales.<sup>33</sup> This places the emphasis on imperial architecture in Britain, rather than far away at Constantinople, as the likely inspiration for Edward's invocation of Magnus Maximus.

Several of these possibilities are explored in two articles published by R.S. Loomis a few years before Taylor's article.<sup>34</sup> If Taylor had come across them, he would have discovered a complex series of Arthurian and imperial links to the Caernarfon area, which would have strengthened his arguments considerably. However, they would also have directed him clearly towards the material remains of Roman culture and the Roman fort of Segontium on the hill above the new castle as the primary focus of the area's legendary associations.

Loomis dwells at some length on the description of the tomb of Constantine at 'Caer Segeint' by the ninth-century Welsh historian, Nennius, which Taylor mentions

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<sup>31</sup> Macsen's role in this respect is widely discussed: see, for example, Dumville, 'Sub-Roman Britain: History and Legend'; 'The Historical Value of the *Historia Britonnum*'; A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550 to c.1307* (London, 1974), p.10; Matthews, 'Macsen, Maximus, and Constantine'; Roberts, 'Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia regum Britanniae* and *Brut y Brehinedd*'.

<sup>32</sup> See J. Grenville, 'The Rows of Chester: Some Thoughts on the Results of Recent Research', *World Archaeology* 21 (1990): 446-60, p.457.

<sup>33</sup> See for example Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550 to c.1307*, p.11; Matthews, 'Macsen, Maximus, and Constantine', pp.437-8; N.J.G. Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales: A Social and Political History* (Cambridge, 1990, repr.1994), p.174.

<sup>34</sup> R.S. Loomis, 'From Segontium to Sinadon - The Legends of a *Cité Gaste*', *Speculum* 22 (1947): 520-33; 'Edward I, Arthurian Enthusiast', *Speculum* 28 (1953): 114-27.

briefly. Nennius connects this monument with the observation that Constantine sowed seeds of gold, silver and bronze on the pavement of *Caer Segeint*.<sup>35</sup> The ‘seeds’ of precious metals Loomis explains as a cryptic reference to the many Roman coins which have been found around the sites of Segontium and Caernarfon over the years, including several with inscriptions referring to Helena, the wife of Constantius; also of her son, Constantine the Great, and of his son Constantine II.<sup>36</sup> Loomis also suggests that a Roman inscription in the area may have misled Nennius (or his source) into identifying the supposed tomb of Constantine.<sup>37</sup> As such discoveries were still occurring in the twentieth century, it is indeed fair to suppose that similar coins may have aided in the medieval connection of these sites to the persons of the rulers depicted on the coins.<sup>38</sup> Such artefacts do much to support the legendary connections of the area. Loomis links a similar combination of inscription and assumption to the burial by Edward I of the supposed body of Magnus Maximus many years later.<sup>39</sup>

For Loomis the text *Breuddwyd Maxen* fits into precisely this kind of context, demonstrating the real difference of his arguments from Taylor’s. ‘*Kaer Aber Sein*’<sup>40</sup> (the fortress at the mouth of the Seiont) which is described in this text, he suggests, refers to Segontium, the Roman fort referred to by ‘Nennius’ as ‘*Caer Segeint*’.<sup>41</sup> When the author of *Breuddwyd Maxen* describes a fortress at the mouth of the Seiont, he (or she) is describing the Roman fort before its decay, in its glorious past when it was frequented by the great British founder figure, Magnus Maximus. Taylor does not seem to have understood the text in this light at all, or to have made the connection between *Breuddwyd Maxen* and Segontium Roman fort. No doubt guided by the use of the word ‘castle’ to describe the fortress in the translation he was using, he made a connection with the medieval castle built at Caernarfon Edward I, but not with the remains of the Roman fortress of Segontium nearby. For Taylor, the text describes a fantastic, fictional

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<sup>35</sup> Nennius, *British History and Welsh Annals*, pp.65, 25: ‘*Et ipse seminavit tria semina, id est auri, argenti aerisque, in pavimento supradictae civitatis, ut nullus pauper in ea habitaret unquam*’: ‘He sowed three seeds, of gold, of silver, and of bronze, on the pavement of that city, that no man should ever live there poor’.

<sup>36</sup> Loomis, ‘From Segontium to Sinadon - Legends of a *Cité Gaste*’, pp.521.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p.522.

<sup>38</sup> Loomis’s argument is backed up by several other scholars: G.C. Boon, *Segontium Roman Fort, Caernarvonshire* (London, 1963), pp.18-9; Matthews, ‘Macsen, Maximus, and Constantine’, p.447; Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550 to c.1307*, p.11.

<sup>39</sup> Loomis, ‘From Segontium to Sinadon - Legends of a *Cité Gaste*’, pp.521-2.

<sup>40</sup> Williams, *Breuddwyd Maxen*, p.8.

<sup>41</sup> Nennius, *British History and Welsh Annals*, p.65.



castle rather than a Roman fort and for him it was this fictional castle which Edward set out to make into a reality.

In fact the Welsh word '*caer*' has a wide range of meanings, strikingly similar to those I attributed in an earlier chapter to the English word 'castle' in its medieval usage. The *Dictionary of the Welsh Language* cites uses of the word dating from 1200, and lists its meanings as: 'fort, fortress, enclosed stronghold, castle, citadel, fortified town or city.'<sup>42</sup> The flexibility of the word is well shown by the Welsh place names of Segontium and Caernarfon. As I have already noted, Segontium Roman site is referred to in *Breuddwyd Maxen* as '*Kaer Aber Seint*', while Caernarfon, applied to the medieval castle with its attached town, is derived from the phrase '*Caer yn Arfon*'.<sup>43</sup> Welsh '*caer*', like Middle English 'castle', can therefore be used just as appropriately to describe both Roman fortresses and medieval castles. Once again, it seems, a linguistic misunderstanding has directed the course of castle studies. While this casts doubt on the exclusive relationship set up by Taylor between the 'castle' of *Breuddwyd Maxen* and Edward's castle at Caernarfon, it opens up the possibility of a three-way relationship between the '*kaer*' described in medieval texts such as *Breuddwyd Maxen*, the Roman fortress on the hill and the medieval castle further down toward the river.

Loomis assumed from the first that the fortress described in *Breuddwyd Maxen* related to the Roman remains of Segontium,<sup>44</sup> but his interest in the medieval castle and town at Caernarfon is also focused on its relationship to the ancient fortress. For Loomis, Edward's intervention in the area was a sign of the passing of empire, rather than its renewal. He describes the use of ashlar stone from Segontium in the king's new building project as a robbing and depletion of the imperial power attached to the ancient site, marking the beginning of its loss as a locus of potent historic associations.<sup>45</sup>

However, Edward's use of Segontium may also be interpreted in a more positive way, which fits better with other evidence of his ready manipulation of powerful legendary associations. The removal of stones from the Roman fortress for use in the new castle may suggest a transfer of powerful associations, rather than their loss. This

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<sup>42</sup> R.J. Thomas (ed.), *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru: A Dictionary of the Welsh Language* (Cardiff, 1950-67).

<sup>43</sup> Loomis, 'From Segontium to Sinadon - Legends of a *Cité Gaste*', p.530.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.524-7, *et passim*.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.530-1. This is confirmed in more recent archaeological evidence: 'Edwardian silver pennies from the site show that the ruins were being quarried for their dressed stone at the time of the building of Caernarfon Castle and the medieval borough', Boon, *Segontium Roman Fort, Caernarvonshire*, p.4.

interpretation would be quite comparable to Edward's transfer of the powerful Welsh relic of the Cross to Westminster, which I have already mentioned. There is no suggestion that this relic might have lost its power through changing hands and locations. Indeed, the whole point of such an exercise must have been to enhance the status of its new owner through its continued potency. I would suggest a similar interpretation for the material transfer which took place from Segontium to Caernarfon.

I have already suggested that castles could often be seen in the Middle Ages as an architectural form belonging to the Roman past, and that certain medieval castles could also be projected back to give them a (spurious) ancient history. The Roman remains incorporated into the Norman castle at Colchester acted as a confirmation of the supposedly ancient origins of the castle. The legendary figures invoked for Colchester are also very similar to those connected in medieval legends with Segontium Roman fort. In this context it is possible to argue that Edward I, in building his new castle out of the remains of the ruined Roman fort nearby, might have seen himself as renewing and rebuilding the Roman fortress, using some of its original materials as an expression of material continuity between the two sites. Caernarfon Castle might thus be seen both as a renewal of the actual Roman fort and as a reconstruction of the same fortress as it is imagined in its heyday in *Breuddwyd Maxen*.

I would go further to suggest that in this account of Caernarfon's symbolic scheme there lies also a rationale for the distinctive appearance of the castle, which would be perfectly accessible to ordinary medieval observers. Taylor remarks that 'there were...no English precedents' for the polychrome banding of the stonework at Caernarfon.<sup>46</sup> In the exact form of its banding it is true that Caernarfon is unique. However, structures of banded polychrome stonework were standing in this country long before Edward's castle, and can still be seen in many sites. The characteristic form of Roman masonry takes on a banded, polychrome appearance from the use of a rubble core, bound by cement and strengthened by the use of courses of tiles which span the width of the wall and so hold its mixed structure together. The tile courses are repeated at regular intervals to strengthen the wall, and tile and rubble layers form a banded structure, the red tiles contrasting against the cement and rubble (see illustration 7).<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Taylor, 'Caernarvon', p.370.

<sup>47</sup> M. Greenhalgh, *The Survival of Roman Antiquities in the Middle Ages* (London, 1989) p.143; J.C. Higgitt, 'The Roman Background to Mediaeval England', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 36 (1973): 1-15, p.4.

Admittedly, this technique is very different from that employed at Caernarfon, where two different colours of ashlar stone were used to create the banded effect. However, the similarity of the castle's appearance to this kind of Roman building was demonstrated by Taylor. The Theodosian walls of Constantinople are of Roman construction using this technique, with brick courses between masonry layers.<sup>48</sup> The resemblance is certainly assisted at Caernarfon by the choice of red sandstone for the thinner bands of masonry. When freshly cut, these must have showed up very clearly against the paler sandstone on either side of them, and might well have been reminiscent of huge tile courses. I wish to suggest that Caernarfon's resemblance to the Theodosian walls of Constantinople is not indicative of an exclusive symbolic relationship between the two. It seems to me that this particular similarity is incidental to the much wider visual symbolism intended at Caernarfon Castle, which was meant to remind its medieval viewers of all the many Roman remains they would have seen all over Britain. More specifically, this general resemblance to Roman construction techniques may have referred to Segontium, the re-used stone from which would have cemented this relationship in material terms.

Stated in this bald way, this suggestion lacks detailed substantiation. However, the background for this kind of architectural symbolism and material re-use is complex, relating not just to the isolated examples of Caernarfon castle and Segontium Roman fort. I have found enough evidence outside these examples to suggest that polychrome effects had an important role to play in the creation of imperial imagery in medieval castles and other architectural contexts. I have also identified a number of other sources, both textual and material, which demonstrate a medieval understanding that this motif was linked with ideas of empire. In these cases there is often a strong emphasis on the material remains of Roman occupation as accompaniments to such imagery. Both these findings fit closely with the suggestions I have made in previous chapters that castles were regarded in the Middle Ages as representing an ancient form of architecture, and were in some individual cases projected back, as it were, into the ancient past.

In the following section of this chapter I will, therefore, examine in more detail the general and specific precedents for the symbolic re-use of material and structural polychromy in medieval castle building. I will focus my attention on a few examples of

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<sup>48</sup> A.M. Schneider, R.G. Austin (transl.), 'The City-Walls of Istanbul', *Antiquity* 11 (1937): 461-8, p.465.

these practices in castle architecture before Edward I's Caernarfon Castle, and will finally return to Caernarfon, to discuss its participation in local and national schemes of medieval architectural symbolism.

#### 4.1 THE IMPERIAL CASTLE

It is interesting that Taylor should have made Constantine and the city of Constantinople central to his exposition of the concept of *Romanitas* and *translatio imperii* at Caernarfon. These ideas were exemplified for the Middle Ages by Constantine and his works.<sup>49</sup> Constantine was not only the first of the Roman emperors to profess Christianity, but he also transferred the centre of his empire in 327 or 328 from Rome to a new Eastern capital, which he re-named Constantinople.<sup>50</sup> The legendary and divinely sanctioned<sup>51</sup> association of the Roman empire with its original location in Rome, the Eternal City, traditional seat of Emperors and apostolic centre of Christianity,<sup>52</sup> made this an immensely significant move. I have already touched on the idea that one city might be thought of as a reproduction or renewal of another, and Constantine's move to Constantinople was the prime originator of such ideas.<sup>53</sup> Constantine's was likewise a crucial expression of the idea of *translatio imperii*, and defined this concept as encompassing topographical and material shifts and renewals, as well as the theological concept of the transferral of divine imperial mandate.

The succession of power from one empire to another through the ages of the world, often referred to as *translatio imperii*, was a concept originating in Biblical exegesis of the text Ecclesiasticus 10.8, which describes the four empires which are to succeed each other until the Day of Judgement.<sup>54</sup> Interpretations varied, but for the Middle Ages there was general agreement that, after the empires of Babylon, the Medo-

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<sup>49</sup> B. Brenk, 'Spolia from Constantine to Charlemagne: Aesthetics versus Ideology', in W. Tronzo and I. Lavin (ed.), *Studies in Art and Archaeology in Honor of Ernst Kitzinger*, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 41: (1987), pp.103-9, p.104-5.

<sup>50</sup> R. Krautheimer, *Three Christian Capitals: Topography and Politics* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, CA, and London, 1983), p.45.

<sup>51</sup> A. Pagden, *Lords of All the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain and France c.1500-1800* (New Haven, CT, and London, 1995), pp.26-7.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.17-18. See also Chapter 2, 'The Urban Castle', where I discuss exemplary cities, including Rome.

<sup>53</sup> W. Hammer, 'The Concept of the New or Second Rome in the Middle Ages', *Speculum* 19 (1944): 50-62, pp.51-6, *et passim*; Krautheimer, *Three Christian Capitals: Topography and Politics*, p.45.

<sup>54</sup> Ecclesiasticus 10.8: '*Regnum a gente in gentem transfertur*' (A kingdom is translated from one people to another).

Persians and the Graeco-Macedonians, the Roman Empire was the fourth and final empire. As long as the Roman empire lasted, it was believed, the end of the world would not be due.<sup>55</sup> Whether it was envisaged as a religious or a political mandate, Rome's place in this scheme was further confirmed to medieval analysis by the prediction of the city's ascendancy made to Aeneas in Virgil's *Aeneid*.<sup>56</sup> This last text was especially important to the later Middle Ages, as it discussed Trojan participation in the Roman empire, through Aeneas, Trojan founder of Rome. Both Trojan and Roman foundation legends therefore had an important imperial significance for those medieval nations who could claim them, and were an integral part of the concept of *translatio imperii*.<sup>57</sup>

Constantine the Great and his eponymous city long represented the most important material and symbolic transfer of imperial might. The emphasis in this *translatio imperii* was on architectural projects. Constantine's great buildings projects on his conquest of Rome followed the precedents of the Classical empire in their scale and architectural style: the Arch of Constantine, the Lateran Church and St. Peter's.<sup>58</sup> However, all of these projects also involved the re-use of materials from the existing monumental architecture of the city.<sup>59</sup> Constantine made very literal translations, and in some cases transportations, of classical Roman motifs and materials to form a recycled imperial iconography both in the ancient and the new capitals of the empire. Beat Brenk, among others, presents compelling arguments as to the symbolic importance of this re-use:

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<sup>55</sup> E.R. Curtius, W.R. Trask (transl.), *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (New York, 1953), pp.28-9; E. Edson, *Mapping Time and Space: How Medieval Mapmakers Viewed their World* (London, 1997), pp.99-100; R. Folz, S.A. Ogilvie (transl.), *The Concept of Empire in Western Europe from the Fifth to the Fourteenth Century* (London, 1969), pp.45-6, 100.

<sup>56</sup> 'Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento / (haec tibi erunt artes), pacique imponere morem, / parcere subiectis et debellare superbos' (You, Roman, be sure to rule the world (be these your arts), to crown peace with justice, to spare the vanquished and to crush the proud). Text and translation from Virgil, 'Aeneid', in *Eclogues, Georgics, Aeneid I-VI*, ed. H.R. Fairclough, revised G.P. Goold, Loeb Classical Library 63 (1999), Book 6, ll.851-3, pp.592-3. See Hammer, 'The Concept of the New or Second Rome in the Middle Ages', p.50.

<sup>57</sup> I have already stressed the prominence of legendary founders in medieval presentation of important castles in Chapter 2, 'The Urban Castle'. Both Roman and Trojan foundation legends play an important part in this chapter, and draw on the same basic concept of the British desire to stand up to, or surpass, the precedent of Rome, articulated in texts such as the *Historia Britonum* and *Historia regum Britannie*, as I discussed earlier. However, here I am interested in the articulation of imperial imagery, rather than in the construction of civic harmony or discord, or the creation of exemplary cities or castles, through such imagery.

<sup>58</sup> Krautheimer, *Three Christian Capitals: Topography and Politics*, pp.15-23, 26.

<sup>59</sup> Brenk, 'Spolia from Constantine to Charlemagne: Aesthetics versus Ideology', p.103-4.

Such a transference of building materials was by no means inexpensive, let alone practical, since the different heights of the columns (for example in the Lateran) had to be adjusted and levelled. In other words, it is far more difficult to work with *spolia* than with newly made, homogeneous buildings materials...I do not see at all how it could have been possible to save money by using *spolia*. Someone capable of erecting such numerous great buildings as Constantine had vast funds available to him. There cannot have been a lack of artists, either, since the actual Triumph of Constantine was carved by contemporary sculptors.<sup>60</sup>

The large-scale re-use of old material from the monuments of the previous emperors Trajan, Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius cannot, then, be interpreted purely as a prudent device employed to save time or money. It was a symbolic act which transferred the legitimacy of the old order to Constantine himself in material terms, and through Constantine's actions it became inextricably linked to claims of *translatio imperii*.<sup>61</sup>

Constantine's precedents shaped the idea and practice of empire to such an extent that, as the Holy Roman Empire passed from one house to another down to the eleventh century, emperors regularly made a point of transferring the seat of their empire to a new location. Constantinople, Aachen, Trier, Milan, Rheims, Tournai and Pavia are all referred to as new Romes at various points, as each took on the role of imperial capital.<sup>62</sup> Within this constant *translatio imperii*, the importance of material transfer and architectural salvage was maintained down to the later Middle Ages.<sup>63</sup>

Theodoric and Theodosius both went as far as importing materials from Rome all the way to Constantinople to maintain the perceived continuity of empire.<sup>64</sup> Charlemagne in turn arranged for the transport of materials from Theodoric's palace at Ravenna for the palace in his new capital at Aachen.<sup>65</sup> In all these cases it can be appreciated readily that the transportation of these materials cannot have been the most efficient option for these imperial building schemes. This adds weight to the strong arguments for a symbolic motivation for re-use, representative of *translatio imperii*.

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., pp.104, 106.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., pp.104-5.

<sup>62</sup> T. Zotz, 'Carolingian Tradition and Ottonian-Salanian Innovation: Comparative Observation on Palatine Policy in the Empire', in A.J. Duggan (ed.), *Kings and Kingship in Medieval Europe* (London, 1993), pp.69-100, pp.69-100 *et passim*; Hammer, 'The Concept of the New or Second Rome in the Middle Ages', *passim*.

<sup>63</sup> R.G. Calkins, *Medieval Architecture in Western Europe from A.D. 300 to 1500* (New York, NY, and Oxford, 1998), p.66 *et passim*; Zotz, 'Carolingian Tradition', pp.69-70, 77-9, 88-9, 98.

<sup>64</sup> Brenk, 'Spolia from Constantine to Charlemagne: Aesthetics versus Ideology', pp.107-8; Krautheimer, *Three Christian Capitals: Topography and Politics*, p.49.

<sup>65</sup> Brenk, 'Spolia from Constantine to Charlemagne: Aesthetics versus Ideology', p.108. Charlemagne's official coronation as Roman Emperor occurred there at Christmas, 800: K.J. Conant, *Carolingian and Romanesque Architecture 800 to 1200* (Harmondsworth, 1959 repr.1978), pp.31-2.

The re-use of Roman materials also continued throughout the Middle Ages on different scales.<sup>66</sup> However, despite the compelling arguments that material re-use at a grand, imperial level was an expression of *translatio imperii*, it is much harder to make such arguments convincing for more humble re-cycling. This lesser scale of activity not surprisingly accounts for the vast majority of medieval re-uses of Roman materials, and can often be explained by economic necessity.<sup>67</sup> This need not rule out additional symbolic motives for these cases, but they can often be harder to detect.

A much discussed example of re-use is furnished by the defensive walls which were built round a large number of towns in what was then Gaul, probably in the late third or the early fourth century.<sup>68</sup> The re-use in these walls of large quantities of material from earlier Roman monuments has led to two different views about the possible symbolic or economic motivations of the builders. Greenhalgh summarises the arguments neatly:

The first...states that the walls were erected in Gaul to cope with the invasions of the third century: the inhabitants of the towns therefore had to use material to hand (largely the tombstones of their ancestors) with a pressing need...The second argument is that such walls (although clearly necessary and incorporating only a fraction of the city), were too carefully constructed - indeed, in some cases too consciously beautified...to be a response to any one pressing threat.<sup>69</sup>

Greenhalgh presents both arguments here as part of his wider point that a choice between these two alternatives is not always necessary. His study is full of documented examples of the re-use of Roman materials in pressing economic and sometimes

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<sup>66</sup> See Greenhalgh, *The Survival of Roman Antiquities in the Middle Ages*; D. Stocker, 'Rubbish Recycled: A Study of the Re-use of Stone in Lincolnshire', in D. Parsons (ed.), *Stone: Quarrying and Building in England, AD 43-1525* (Chichester, 1990), pp.83-101; T. Eaton, *Plundering the Past: Roman Stonework in Medieval Britain* (Stroud and Charleston, SC, 2000).

<sup>67</sup> David Stocker sets up a tripartite model of re-use, in which he distinguishes between casual, functional and iconic reasons for re-use. He classifies casual re-use as that carried out haphazardly for ease and economy; functional re-use involves the recycling of members for the purpose for which they were originally made, but is also for economic reasons. Iconic re-use he detects only where images or inscriptions are re-used and displayed prominently: Stocker, 'Rubbish Recycled: A Study of the Re-use of Stone in Lincolnshire', *passim*. However, Tim Eaton argues, very sensibly in my opinion, that this model relies only on the materials re-used and does not allow for interpretation of particular circumstances of re-use as possibly carrying meaning in themselves: Eaton, *Plundering the Past: Roman Stonework in Medieval Britain*, p.135 *et passim*. I have therefore sought a different model for the discussion of re-use. I am grateful to Tim for showing me a draft of his work before it was published.

<sup>68</sup> R.M. Butler, 'The Roman Walls of Le Mans', *The Journal of Roman Studies* 48 (1958): 33-9.

<sup>69</sup> Greenhalgh, *The Survival of Roman Antiquities in the Middle Ages*, p.42; see also M. Todd, *The Walls of Rome* (London, 1978), p.78; T.F.C. Blagg, 'The Re-use of Monumental Masonry in Late Roman Defensive Walls', in J. Maloney and B. Hobley (ed.), *Roman Urban Defences in the West*, Council for British Archaeology Research Report 51 (1983), pp.130-5, *passim*.

defensive need, which was nevertheless interpreted as symbolic by contemporary commentators. It is this argument, that symbolic motives can lie alongside more material needs, which I wish to apply to the examples of re-use in the later Middle Ages.

For this purpose, however, the construction of these Gallic defensive walls, as well as their historiography, provides some interesting insights. They are built using the characteristic Roman construction method of rubble courses, with layers of tiles at regular intervals as levelling and bonding courses.<sup>70</sup> However, in certain circumstances this method can itself become a decorative as much as a structural device.<sup>71</sup> In the walls of Le Mans, for example, the tile courses penetrate the core of the wall only to a depth of two tiles,<sup>72</sup> and so cannot carry out their structural function of binding the wall together across its width. These tile courses must therefore indicate a wish to achieve the appearance of levelling courses, even though they do not fulfil a structural function. Although they might not be considered particularly decorative, these tile bands fulfil a symbolic role in perpetuating the aesthetic of a particular kind of structure: a typically Roman one.

It can be said, then, that there are two ideas of re-use or *translatio* encapsulated in the walls of Le Mans. One concerns the materials re-used in the construction of the walls, of Roman provenance. The other relates to the articulation of these salvaged materials to resemble a characteristically Roman style of architecture. While the rationale for such recycling may be expediency, the aesthetic impulse shows a more complex motivation. It may be that even the decorative mimicry seen at Le Mans performs a practical purpose. Perhaps it is meant to eke out an inadequate supply of tiles to create the appearance that the walls are strongly bonded in the reliable Roman fashion. Without documentary evidence it is hard to tell how such banding schemes were valued in a particular time or place. However, this example does demonstrate that

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<sup>70</sup> Greenhalgh, *The Survival of Roman Antiquities in the Middle Ages*, p.143; Higgitt, 'The Roman Background to Mediaeval England', p.4.

<sup>71</sup> Greenhalgh, *The Survival of Roman Antiquities in the Middle Ages*, p.44; Todd, *The Walls of Rome*, p.69.

<sup>72</sup> Butler, 'The Roman Walls of Le Mans', p.34. Webster stresses the necessity of the full course of tiles for any structural advantage: 'The most important function of these tile-lacing courses was to bind the wall together,...the tile courses being to the full thickness of the wall and holding the whole together laterally'; G. Webster, 'Tiles as a Structural Component in Buildings' in A. McWhirr (ed.), *Roman Brick and Tile: Studies in Manufacture, Distribution and Use in the Western Empire*, British Archaeological Reports International Series 68 (1979), pp.285-93, p.291.



issues of re-use need not be purely symbolic or purely practical. Elements of both these motives may be combined in one building project.

A comparable mixture of motives can be found in the attitude of the first castle-builders in Britain towards the re-use of Roman materials. When the Normans arrived in England in 1066 they did not have to look far for evidence of the architecture of the ancient Roman Empire, and they did not neglect it when they found it. All over the country the Normans built their castles in the shelter of the Roman walls which were still standing in many places. I have already discussed in Chapter 2 the Norman propensity for siting castles within existing urban defences. Pounds reckons that, of the thirty-seven royal castles established before 1100, twenty were built within town defences, and twelve of these were in towns of Roman origins (see illustration 23).<sup>73</sup> Nor does Pounds include London in his calculations, arguably the most important of the new Norman castles, and also situated in the corner of the Roman town walls, as I mentioned in Chapter 2 (see illustration 8).<sup>74</sup>

Yet more castles were associated with Roman remains of other kinds. At Pevensey the corner of the Roman fort was used for a castle during the Conquest of 1066, and was followed by Portchester (around 1120), Brough (around 1100) and Bowes (1170s onwards), where Norman keeps were all built inside the substantial remains of Roman forts.<sup>75</sup> Other castles such as Dover (1066 onwards) and Scarborough (from 1127) were sited on or close to Roman remains of different kinds.<sup>76</sup>

In many of these cases it is apparent that there were pressing practical reasons for the choice of these sites. Those Roman towns in which new castles were built were all populous at the time of the Conquest.<sup>77</sup> I have already noted in the chapter on 'The Urban Castle' that the conquerors probably targeted urban centres with their castle building as a means of imposing royal and administrative control on the populace. The remains of the Roman road network also facilitated transport to these sites, and were

<sup>73</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.57.

<sup>74</sup> S. Thurley, E. Impey and P. Hammond, *The Tower of London* (London, 1996), pp.45-6; H.M. Colvin, A.J. Taylor and R.A. Brown (ed.), *A History of the King's Works* (London, 1963), 2, p.707.

<sup>75</sup> B. Cunliffe *Excavations at Portchester Castle*, Society of Antiquaries of London Research Committee Report 34 (1977), p.74; D.F. Renn, *Norman Castles in Britain* (London, 1973), p.120; J. Charlton, *Brough Castle* (London, 1986, repr.1992), p.1;

<sup>76</sup> R.A. Brown, *Dover Castle, Kent* (London, 1985, repr.1995), pp.3-4; G. Port, *Scarborough Castle* (London, 1989, repr.1998), pp.13-14 and Renn, *Norman Castles in Britain*, p.307. I discuss the example of Dover in more detail later.

<sup>77</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.57.

utilised by the Normans for this purpose.<sup>78</sup> Political expedients probably also contributed to the reasons for re-use. At Pevensey and London the extant Roman defensive walls would have saved valuable time for the new invaders, who were hastily consolidating their positions. Colchester seems to have been built around 1074-6<sup>79</sup> in response to a Danish raid on the east coast,<sup>80</sup> so the large existing foundation plinth must have made the construction job considerably quicker and easier. Availability of materials must also have been important here. There were plenty of raw materials for building available from the ruinous Roman buildings all around the town. Re-used Roman materials were used extensively in the castle,<sup>81</sup> where large amounts of Roman brick can be clearly seen to this day (see illustrations 5 and 6).<sup>82</sup>

The practical considerations for the choice of Roman sites, and for the re-use there of Roman materials, are not in doubt. However, I wish to suggest that the symbolism of this siting and re-use was not lost on the Norman castle builders. I have already noted in brief some examples where early castles are juxtaposed in a close relationship with Roman remains of different kinds. The detail of some of these juxtapositions reveals a close understanding by the Norman builders of Roman materials, construction methods and even forms which may be read in the manner of the Le Mans walls, as attempts to imitate or emulate, as well as to repair and recycle.

The characteristically Roman technique of building out of tile banded with rubble was not merely a continental phenomenon. Many prominent British remains, including ones with which medieval castles are associated, display this technique. I have already drawn attention to one of the many examples of this technique from the Roman remains of Colchester (illustration 7); the London wall (illustration 10), the fort walls of Portchester and Pevensey (illustrations 35 and 36) and the Roman *pharos* or lighthouse at Dover (illustration 41) are also good examples. Where this technique is echoed in the construction of castles, perhaps especially in those castles near to extant Roman remains, it may be possible to look for a conscious display of Romanitas, as well as re-use.

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., pp.57-8.

<sup>79</sup> P.J. Drury, 'Aspects of the Origins and Development of Colchester Castle', *The Archaeological Journal* 139 (1983): 302-419, p.302.

<sup>80</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.21.

<sup>81</sup> Drury, 'Aspects of the Origins and Development of Colchester Castle', p.319.

<sup>82</sup> M.R. Hull, *Roman Colchester*, Society of Antiquaries of London Research Committee Report 20 (1958), p.30.

At Chepstow Castle, a Norman foundation, Roman tiles salvaged probably from the nearby Roman town of Caerwent are incorporated into the Great Tower (1067-75) (see illustrations 37 and 38).<sup>83</sup> It is possible that some of the cut stone used in the construction of the tower may also be from Caerwent or other Roman sites,<sup>84</sup> but the tiles are treated rather differently from the rest of the stonework. They run in a single course several tiles thick around the building at lintel height, and their striking appearance is heightened by the way they lift over the arched and decorated tympanum of the main door, echoing its shape. This seems to be a deliberately decorative use of these tiles. At the same time, a connection is maintained with the Roman method of tile coursing, as commentators have remarked.<sup>85</sup> While the tile course does of course decorate and distinguish the building as a whole, it also serves to distinguish the tiles themselves, displaying them in a prominent and elegant position in the building, and grouping them together to make maximum impact. It might be argued that these tiles are treated as a special, or even a precious material, comparable to the beautifully carved stone of the tympanum they surmount, chosen to grace the most prestigious building of the castle. Norman appreciation of Roman materials and aesthetics would account for this use of tiles, which are in themselves not particularly decorative or precious.<sup>86</sup>

Colchester Castle (illustrations 5 and 6) is undoubtedly the most prominent example of a Norman castle in England constructed using Roman remains. There are many practical reasons which may have made this the most sensible course, as I have already indicated. The deployment of the Roman rubble and tile technique is undertaken on a large scale at Colchester castle, if rather untidily. The whole building is constructed using this method, so the technique can certainly be said to carry a structural rather than merely aesthetic function. The appearance of Colchester might also be dismissed in terms of its aesthetic qualities because the end result does not look neat or well-planned. In many places on the castle, however, the tiles seem to be arranged carefully, in spite of the lack of uniformity of the whole and the haste with

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<sup>83</sup> J. Knight, *Chepstow Castle and Port Wall*, revised edn. (Cardiff, 1991), p.37.

<sup>84</sup> Knight, *Chepstow Castle and Port Wall*, p.38; Eaton endorses the likelihood of Caerwent as a site for stone re-used at Chepstow, but he also provides calculations to show that sites as far afield as Lydney Park or Caerleon could also be candidates: Eaton, *Plundering the Past: Roman Stonework in Medieval Britain*, pp.39, 54-5.

<sup>85</sup> Knight, *Chepstow Castle and Port Wall*, p.38.

<sup>86</sup> Eaton supports this idea, citing my arguments about the Chepstow tiles in his book: Eaton, *Plundering the Past: Roman Stonework in Medieval Britain*, p.137.

which the building seems to have been put up. Illustration 6, for example, shows some clear horizontal lines of tiles.

Derek Renn detects a pattern in the surface texture of Colchester Castle, observing a regular alternation of the different materials. He finds that, from above the plinth, a band of small limestone blocks is followed by one of tiles, then one of cemented rubble, another of tiles, another of rubble, then tiles and limestone again, and so on.<sup>87</sup> While this order might not be immediately obvious to the ordinary observer, it does tend to support the idea that the surface of the castle was meant to display its distinctive appearance. Renn is quite happy to connect this kind of polychrome banding with the Roman technique visible all over Colchester, and appends a list of many polychrome features in early Norman architecture.<sup>88</sup> Whatever else may be said about it, the visual effect of Colchester Castle is undeniably striking. It also shows readily visible similarities with the Roman remains in the immediate vicinity of the castle (see illustrations 6 and 7).<sup>89</sup>

While these examples of re-use of Roman materials, techniques and aesthetics in Norman castles are suggestive, they do not provide conclusive proof of Norman emulation of Roman architectural forms. In order to ascertain if such proof exists, it is necessary to look further into the evidence left by other forms of Norman culture, to find if associations are maintained in other ways with the symbolism of *Romanitas* and empire.

I suggested in the first chapter of this thesis that castle words were used in the period after the Conquest in a fairly flexible way. They could indicate defensive enclosures ranging from Roman to Anglo-Saxon fortresses and towns, as well as the fortresses built by the invading Normans. Furthermore, the Latin word *castellum*, used

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<sup>87</sup> D.F. Renn, 'The Decoration of Guildford Castle Keep', *Surrey Archaeological Collections* 55 (1958): 4-6; Higgit agrees: 'The Roman Background to Medieval England', p.4.

<sup>88</sup> Renn, 'The Decoration of Guildford Castle Keep', p.6.

<sup>89</sup> The apsidal projections in the plan of Colchester Castle keep and the White Tower at London have been identified as a reference to Roman architectural styles, particularly because, in the case of Colchester, this feature was thought to arise from the plan of the Roman temple underlying the Norman structure. However, archaeologists have recently raised objections to this stratigraphic interpretation. It has also emerged that Norman keeps in France before the Conquest show similar apsidal projections, lessening the mystique of early English examples. A similar form is also achieved at Pevensey by the incorporation of a Roman bastion into the main building, so it may be that some Roman associations do attach to this form. However, until clearer archaeological evidence becomes available for Colchester and the Tower, it seems best to leave this debate for the present. See R.A. Brown, 'The White Tower of London', in B. Ford (ed.), *The Middle Ages, The Cambridge Guide to the Arts in Britain* 2 (Cambridge, 1988), pp.254-63, p.255; G. Parnell, *English Heritage Book of the Tower of London* (London, 1993), pp.19-20.

in Classical and Biblical texts, would not have been distinguished from the medieval use of the Latin and vernacular castle words. The combination of these two factors seems to have led medieval commentators to the impression that castles very similar to their own existed in Classical contexts, and medieval observers may well have interpreted the remains of Roman forts in just this way. It seems to me that the decision to build Norman castles within such structures might then be seen not as an adaptation of the remains to a new purpose, but a restoration to the ancient form and function they were believed to have had. It may, indeed, be that the sympathetic approach to repairs to the Roman fabric at Portchester, the reverence for Roman tiles at Chepstow, and the attempt at Colchester, although an unsophisticated one, to reproduce the appearance of Roman architecture on a Roman foundation, should all be interpreted in this light.

Other elements of Norman practice at the Conquest certainly demonstrate a desire to emulate certain aspects of Roman culture in the establishment of Norman rule in England. The system of aristocratic hierarchies and titles which the Normans employed were drawn from those used in the Roman Empire.<sup>90</sup> A similar derivation applies to the military insignia used by the Normans,<sup>91</sup> including their seals, which were in some cases antique Roman intaglios specially imported.<sup>92</sup> These examples all show the cultivation of continuity between Roman and Norman cultures. The last instance is also evidence of the appreciation and re-use of Roman materials, and of the high status uses to which re-used objects were put.

More explicit appreciation of Roman culture can be found in the literature of the early Norman rule in Britain. The *Gesta Guillelmi* was written by William of Poitiers about twenty years after the Conquest.<sup>93</sup> William was for many years chaplain to the Conqueror<sup>94</sup> and wrote to justify his patron's claim to the English throne. Events are described in such a way as to prove the Norman right to England, stressing Duke William's right of inheritance from Edward the Confessor and presenting the Normans' victory in battle as a sign of favour from God. It might thus be said that William of Poitiers reflects the official propaganda of the Norman regime.<sup>95</sup> This differs markedly

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<sup>90</sup> D. Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain, 1000-1300* (London and New York, NY, 1992), pp.28-9, 43.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p.180-2, 199.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, p.244.

<sup>93</sup> William of Poitiers, *The Gesta Guillelmi of William of Poitiers*, ed. and transl. R.C.H. Davis and M. Chibnall (Oxford, 1998), p.xxi. See also Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550 to c.1307*, pp.99-102.

<sup>94</sup> William of Poitiers, *The Gesta Guillelmi of William of Poitiers*, pp.xv-xvi.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xxvi.

from figures such as Geoffrey of Monmouth, who fulfils a somewhat similar justificatory brief, as I have suggested, but from a British standpoint (see Chapter 2).

While William's emphases are rather different to those employed in the early twelfth century by Geoffrey of Monmouth, he nevertheless articulates the Norman claims to cultural and literary as well as religious authority in terms of the imperial past. Like his learned contemporaries, William was well-versed in Classical literature and his work is full of allusions to works by Caesar, Virgil, Sallust, Cicero, Juvenal, Tacitus, Statius, Suetonius and Plutarch, Vegetius and Lucan.<sup>96</sup> These references claim the weight of Classical authority by their very presence in the *Gesta Guillelmi*. But William of Poitiers also manipulates this material to bolster the Conqueror's achievements. Duke William is not only associated with Classical heroes and emperors in this text, but he also betters them. The description of the Battle of Hastings provides a good example. Here the Conqueror is eulogised in Classical mode:

*Argiuorum rex Agamemnon habens in auxilio multos duces atque reges, unicam urbem Priami dolo uix evertit obsidionis anno decimo... Item Roma sic adulta opibus, ut orbi terrarum uellet praesidere, urbes aliquot deuicit singulas pluribus annis. Subegit autem urbes Anglorum cunctas dux Guillelmus copiis Normanniae uno die ab hora tertia in uesperum, non multo extrinsecus adiutorio. Si tuerentur eas moenia Troiana, breui talis uiri manus et consilium excinderint Pergama.*

(Agamemnon, king of the Argives, with the help of many leaders and kings, barely succeeded in reducing Priam's single city after a ten-year siege... Likewise Rome, after growing so great in wealth that it wished to rule over the whole world, conquered a few cities one by one, over many years. But Duke William with the forces of Normandy subjugated all the cities of the English in a single day, between the third hour and the evening, without much outside help. Even if the walls of Troy had defended its citadel, the strong arm and counsel of such a man would soon have destroyed it.)<sup>97</sup>

Here the Conquest is praised as speedier in siege warfare than Agamemnon himself and quicker at conquering nations than the Roman empire. William of Poitiers has chosen these comparisons carefully. He aligns the Normans consistently with the victorious sides, but also uses this opportunity to celebrate previous successful campaigns against the British. His references recall the Roman conquest of Britain and the Greek victory

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., pp.xviii, xix, xxi-xxiii.

<sup>97</sup> Text and translation from Davis and Chibnall *William of Poitiers: Gesta Guillelmi: The Deeds of William* (Oxford, 1998), Book 2, paragraph 26, pp.142-3.

against the Trojans, pre-empting British claims to superior status through their supposed Trojan ancestry.

However, the Trojan foundation legend was soon to be exploited by the Normans themselves. The political capital of foundation and descent is also exploited by other Norman sources at around this point, and here again the Norman claim is set up in opposition to the British claims. Reynolds records that early in the 11th century Dudo of St. Quentin derived the Norman's ancestors, the *Daci* or *Dani*, from the *Danai* or Dacians: the Greek side in the Trojan war, giving them a rival status to the British and once again placing them on opposing sides.<sup>98</sup> However, by a further twist, Dudo assimilated the Greeks and Trojans, thereby also assimilating Norman and British legendary genealogies. Orderic Vitalis supported this genealogy in the twelfth century, confirming the eclipse of his own, British nation's foundation legend.<sup>99</sup> Classical allusions are thus employed to support the Norman cause in every possible way, simultaneously acknowledging and bettering the claims made by the British, and so subsuming these claims to the greater Norman power.

It is perhaps significant that one of the comparisons quoted above is made in architectural terms, invoking the walls and citadel of Troy as a measure of the greatness of the Conqueror's victory. This might be read as an indication of the architectural use to which such Classicising strategies were put by the Normans. I have already discussed in a previous chapter the innovative architectural expression the Conqueror made of his righteous victory in building Battle Abbey (see Chapter 3). This illustrates one of the major justifications of Norman rule expressed in the *Gesta Guillelmi*. It could also be argued that the use of surviving Roman structures, materials and sites, and the re-creation of Roman building techniques, illustrate another of these justifications. Such material *translatio* might be read as an architectural analogue to Norman Classical allusions, likening the structural achievements of the Normans to the architecture of the great empire which had preceded them in conquering England. As I will argue shortly, the new Norman castles also became the focus of such imagery.

It is clear, then, that the Normans were fully cognisant with Classical influences and strove to reproduce them in more than one medium as an expression of their own cultural and political aspirations. It may also be that this Classical symbolism extended

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<sup>98</sup> S. Reynolds, 'Medieval *Origines gentium* and the Community of the Realm', *History* 68 (1983): 375-90, p.376.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p.386. Although Orderic spent his adult life at the Norman monastery of St. Evroul, he was born and brought up in Shrewsbury: M. Chibnall, *The World of Orderic Vitalis* (Oxford, 1984), pp.3-4.

to architectural expression. However, the evidence which is perhaps most helpful in shedding light on the imperial symbolisms achievable in medieval castle architecture starts after the Norman castle-building campaigns in England. This does not help to fill in the gaps as far as the intentions behind earlier buildings go, but it does confirm the kinds of association I have been suggesting, both ideological and material.

Portchester castle provides a good later medieval example of the aspiration towards Roman architectural achievements seen in Norman architecture. The Norman castle is sited, as I mentioned above, within the outer walls of a Roman fort (illustration 35). Barry Cunliffe has observed that medieval repairs to these Roman walls seem to imitate Roman the banding pattern in a deliberate fashion.<sup>100</sup> Such imitation of the tile and rubble Roman masonry was, however, achieved by alternating small, white flints with larger, greyer blocks of stone, as can be seen at the top of several of the outer walls as, for example, on the eastern face of the wall, to the left of the Watergate (illustration 35). The repairs are of an indeterminate date, but possibly belonging to the fourteenth century.<sup>101</sup> This is not a purely practical case of repair to a re-used wall. As with Chepstow, it points to an appreciation and emulation of the Roman architectural aesthetic. These medieval repairs at Portchester demonstrate that such emulation was not confined to Norman castle architecture. However, it also demonstrates that such deliberate aesthetic effects can be achieved even without the re-use of Roman materials.

Like Portchester, Dover was an early Norman castle with Roman affinities through its Roman remains *in situ*. Dover was crucial in the Norman invasion, and was fortified as one of the earliest actions of the Conquest campaign.<sup>102</sup> The most impressive stage of the castle's expansion came around a century later, when Henry II built the great square keep in the inner bailey starting in 1182 (illustration 39).<sup>103</sup> It is massive and square like the much earlier White Tower at the Tower of London or Colchester Castle keep (see illustrations 5, 9 and 39). Nevertheless, Dover displays some particularly novel features in English castle design. For example, it has a remarkably innovative system of flushing latrines and running water.<sup>104</sup> Records in the

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<sup>100</sup> Cunliffe, *Excavations at Portchester Castle*, p.7.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> R.A. Brown, 'An Historian's Approach to the Origins of the Castle in England', *Archaeological Journal* 126 (1969): 131-48, pp.144-5. I have discussed Brown's analysis of this Dover evidence in Chapter 1, but have no quarrel with his account of the Norman fortifications there.

<sup>103</sup> J. Goodall, 'The Key of England', *Country Life* March 18 (1999): 45-7, p.45

<sup>104</sup> J. Goodall, 'In the Power House of Kent', *Country Life* March 25 (1999): 110-3, p.110.



Pipe Rolls also show that it was part of an incredibly expensive project at Dover: probably the most expensive architectural undertaking of Henry II's reign.<sup>105</sup>

My particular interest lies in the treatment of the outer surfaces of this prestigious building. The whole keep is neatly finished in ashlar. On three sides of the building, starting at the bottom and stopping at about halfway up, massive bands of differently coloured masonry can be discerned.<sup>106</sup> These consist of alternating bands of light Caen stone and dark Kentish rag (see illustrations 39 and 40). The banding pattern at Dover is thus incomplete, but the part which remains is nonetheless impressive, and is notably concentrated on the façade of the building which greets the visitor first entering the inner bailey.<sup>107</sup>

The huge bands created at Dover hardly resemble the kinds of structural polychromy I have been discussing in relation to Roman remains and re-used materials. There are no tiles involved, and the polychrome effect does not appear to have any structural rationale. The stones of which the bands are made up are of two different types, in terms of size as well as colour (for a close-up see illustration 40). The Kentish ragstone is deployed in small units, the Caen in larger, as befits the properties of the two different stones.<sup>108</sup> However, the bands in which they are laid are of uniform width, without the thin bands which occur when tile-lacing is used. The bands at Dover are also far too big to resemble rubble-and-tile work closely.

However, as I have already mentioned, Dover castle comes complete with its own set of Roman remains, and these certainly do display the characteristically banded masonry (see illustration 41). In what became the outer bailey of the castle is situated a Roman *pharos* (a light-house or signal station). The banded construction of the *pharos* is quite clear from my photograph, which also shows how tile and stone are alternated

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<sup>105</sup> Goodall, 'The Key of England', *Country Life*, p.45.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p.46.

<sup>107</sup> It is interesting to note that this pattern stops about halfway up the building (see illustration 39). This seems to coincide with a break in the construction of the keep which occurred between 1185 and 1188. After the resumption of the work, the bands were discontinued for some reason. I am most grateful to John Goodall and Jeremy Ashbee, who have confirmed these details for me. It should, however, be noted that the existing bands on the keep are visually striking, and those on the north-west face of the building would be seen to particular advantage by anyone entering the inner bailey.

<sup>108</sup> Caen is a high quality, expensive stone, often used for the finer elements of a building such as window surrounds; rag is cheaper, is often used in less regular sizes and shapes, and does not take as fine a finish as Caen. These two stone types were used in a more typical relationship at the White Tower at London, where the walls are composed of rag with Caen dressings. See T.W. Tatton-Brown, 'Building Stone in Canterbury C.1070-1525', in D. Parsons (ed.), *Stone: Quarrying and Building in England, AD 43-1525* (Chichester, 1990), pp.70-82, p.72; 'Medieval Building Stone at the Tower of London', *London Archaeologist* 6.13 (1991): 361-66; B. Worssam, and T. Tatton-Brown, 'Kentish Rag and Other Kent Building Stones', *Archaeologia Cantiana* 112 (1993): 93-125, pp.93-4.

in thin bands of colour round the arches of the window apertures. Such decorative details are particularly emphatic. Is it possible that the banded design of Henry II's great keep at Dover is linked in any way to the banded masonry of the Roman remains at Dover or elsewhere?

It is clear that, at the time of the new building work at Dover Castle, there was an awareness of Roman activity in that area. Wace's *Roman de Brut*, presented to Henry's queen (Eleanor of Aquitaine) in 1155,<sup>109</sup> discusses Caesar's British campaign very fully.<sup>110</sup> In the struggle for control of Dover described in this text, Caesar encamps in the town to await the arrival of Androgeus and the decisive battle of the Roman campaign.<sup>111</sup> Wace also specifies certain architectural products of Roman power, such as the town of Exeter in England, but also a tower in Boulogne and various towns and castles ('*chastels e citez*') throughout Europe.<sup>112</sup> This last reference links to Caesar's campaigns a phenomenon I have already identified in other contexts: the idea that Roman fortifications could be described interchangeably with castles, or even identified with them. In the literary production of Henry II's court, then, the Dover area, and castles in general, could have strong connections with imperial Rome.

Other literary productions of Henry's court circle confirm a particular fascination with the ancient, imperial architecture. However, these provide a somewhat different slant on the kind of decorative finishes employed at Dover. The *Roman de Troie* was another of the volumes dedicated to Queen Eleanor, sometime between 1160 and 1170, by Benoit de Sainte-Maure.<sup>113</sup> I have already discussed this text within the context of Trojan foundation legends and the ideal depiction of the city of Troy in its relationship with its citadel-tower. It is also of relevance to note here the ornamentation which Benoit applies to the tower and city alike in his description. Like later, Middle English treatments of the same topic, Benoit mentions that the walls and tower-citadel of Troy are made of fine marble of many different colours, which he describes vividly.<sup>114</sup> Similar details can be found in other romances of this type and period, such

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<sup>109</sup> Wace, *Wace's Roman de Brut: A History of the British*, ed. J. Weiss, (Exeter, 1999), p.xiii.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.100-122.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p.116.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.122, l.4826; 106, ll.4204-5; 98, ll.3853-4.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xiii.

<sup>114</sup> '*De marbre fin e de liois / Jaunes e verz, indes e blois... / De Marbre blanc, inde, safrin, / Jaune, vermeil, pers e porprin*': Benoit de Sainte-Maure, *Le Roman de Troie par Benoit de Sainte-Maure*, ed. L. Constans (Paris, 1968) 1, ll.3011-2, 3063-4.

as the *Roman d'Eneas*.<sup>115</sup> However, Benoit's description is most strikingly applied to a tower-keep which, I argued in 'The Urban Castle' chapter, should be imagined as very similar to the kinds of keep built in medieval castles like the Tower of London or, indeed, at Dover itself. The description of structural polychromy on a castle keep is very striking in a poem probably written by an official poet of the English court at the time,<sup>116</sup> and provides a context of prestigious historical associations for polychrome effects.

While Dover keep does not of course rejoice in bright colours and precious marbles for its polychrome design, its materials are significantly finer in their finish and general appearance than the rubble-and-tile construction seen in structures like the Dover *pharos*, or for that matter, Colchester Castle keep. As both Dover keep and the *Roman de Troie* are contemporary products of the same royal patronage, it does not seem unlikely that a motif from one might be transferred to the other. Apart from this generic reference to the exotic architecture of the *romans d'Antiquité*,<sup>117</sup> the form of the polychromy deployed at Dover does seem to have a complementary relationship to the banded Roman architecture seen at Dover and elsewhere. The form the motif takes on Dover keep is also one of bands, rather than any other possible kind of polychrome design such as chequers which might be suggested by the description of the multi-coloured marbles in the *Roman de Troie*. It might be argued that the particular forms of polychromy chosen for Dover keep invites comparison of this sort. The keep seems consciously to refer to the much earlier Roman tower, but outdoes it in the richness and scale of the materials. The differentiation between the medieval and the Roman work might be seen to articulate the discrepancy between the archaeological and literary models of imperial architecture available to the medieval world. The Roman remains with their rubble and brick bands are physically impressive but utilitarian, while imagined castles of Trojan princes glisten with multi-coloured precious stones but cannot be attained in material reality.

Henry II himself understood very well this split attitude toward imperial heritage, in a context which might also be articulated as a division between Roman and

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<sup>115</sup> J.A. Yunck (transl.), *Eneas: A Twelfth-Century Romance* (New York and London, 1974), ll.407-470, p.64.

<sup>116</sup> Wace, *Wace's Roman de Brut: A History of the British*, p.xiii.

<sup>117</sup> G.R. de Lage 'Les "Romans Antiques" dans l'Histoire Ancienne jusqu' à César', *Le Moyen Age* 63 (1957): 267-309; 'Les Romans Antiques et la représentation de l'Antiquité', *Moyen Age* 67 (1961): 247-91; E.M. Jeffreys, 'The Comnenian Background to the *Romans d'Antiquité*', *Byzantion* 50 (1980): 455-86.

Trojan precedents. Henry claimed the English throne through his descent on his grandfather's side from the Conqueror. I discussed earlier in this chapter the somewhat roundabout way in which the Normans managed to justify their descent from the Trojans at around the time of the Conquest, in what seems to have been a concerted effort to match British claims to Trojan descent. The *romans* of Benoit and Wace were the most notable literary output associated with the court of Henry II, and have been interpreted as a further consolidation of these claims of the Normans to Trojan ancestors.<sup>118</sup> However, Henry had subsidiary claim to imperial dignity, through his mother Matilda, daughter of Henry I and wife of the Holy Roman Emperor Henry V. It seems that Henry II of England chose the nickname 'Fitzempress' to emphasise the alternative imperial connections he carried in his own right.<sup>119</sup>

Henry therefore embodied a dual inheritance of imperial origins. The architectural symbolism deployed on Dover keep can be seen to fit this agenda neatly. The finely-executed, bold polychrome banding is reminiscent of the ancient splendours of Troy, re-created by descendants of Trojans in England. The imperial force of Rome is also witnessed in the castle's outer bailey by the Roman tower. This is alluded to in the banded design of the new keep as a subsidiary bolster to the imperial posturing of the Plantagenet dynasty.

A similar combination of imagery can be detected in a building campaign at England's most important castle, the Tower of London, some sixty years later. During recent excavations in the Tower moat, the remains of a water gate have been discovered in the western portion.<sup>120</sup> Dendrochronology dates the piles supporting this structure to around 1240, at which time Henry III was engaged on building new defences at the Tower. Documentary evidence provides a further insight into the structure. Archaeologists and historians at the Tower are now convinced that the remains in the moat can be linked to references in the *Chronica Majora* of Matthew Paris, which describe the collapse of a gateway and walls at the Tower in the years 1240 and 1241.<sup>121</sup> The entry for 1240 states that 'the masonry structure of a certain renowned gate, which

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<sup>118</sup> These arguments apply whether these poems were commissioned by Queen Eleanor or Henry himself. Jeffreys, 'The Comnenian Background to the *Romans d'Antiquité*', pp.458-60.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.459-60.

<sup>120</sup> E. Impey, 'The Western Entrance to the Tower of London, 1240-1241', *Transactions of the Middlesex Archaeological Society* 48 (1998): 58-75.

<sup>121</sup> Impey, 'The Western Entrance to the Tower of London, 1240-1241', pp.59, 65, 66-7; Matthew Paris, *Matthaeu Parisiensis, Monachi Sancti Albani, Chronica Majora*, ed. H.R. Luard, Rolls Series 57 (1872-83) 4, pp.80, 94.

the king had constructed most sumptuously with great labour, was struck as if by an earthquake, and fell down along with its forebuildings and outworks'.<sup>122</sup> The probable location of this collapsed work, as well as the dating, fits the remains discovered in the moat very neatly.<sup>123</sup>

It seems to me that the intriguing description of the appearance of the buildings as '*sumptuoso*' (most sumptuous) and constructed '*nimis labore*' (with great labour) can also be explained by the archaeological remains in the moat. Finds suggest that the gate was faced with courses of differently-coloured masonry, of greeny-grey Purbeck marble and creamy Reigate stone.<sup>124</sup> This decorative polychromy might indeed be described with such phrases as Matthew Paris uses, especially as one of the stones used for the banding was Purbeck, a kind of limestone which can take a polish and so has been prized for centuries as a kind of English marble.<sup>125</sup> From my observations on the work of Matthew Paris in Chapter 2 it will be readily appreciated that he was familiar with the concept of Rome as an exemplary city, and of London's rival claims.

Imperial associations at the Tower of London, as at Dover, would have been highly appropriate in a medieval context. I dwelt at some length in my chapter on 'The Urban Castle' on medieval attributions of the Tower of London, probably the White Tower especially, to Brutus, the legendary Trojan founder of Britain. The exotic and, notably, marble polychromy of the *Roman de Troie*, the premier Troy romance of this period, would certainly have created an appropriate context for such a building. However, as with Dover, it is clear that medieval writers knew that much Roman activity had also taken place in and around London.

As I have already mentioned in Chapter 2, Geoffrey of Monmouth was the first author to identify Brutus' capital city, Troia Nova, as London. As I detailed there, he made this connection through references to place names in accounts of the British campaigns of Julius Caesar, which suggested that Caesar had fought a tribe called the Trinobantes on the north bank of the Thames. Geoffrey's identification of the

<sup>122</sup> '*Structura lapidea cujusdam nobilis portae, quam sumptuoso nimis labore rex construxerat, quasi quodam terrae motu concussa, cum suis antemuralibus et propugnaculis...corruit.*' Matthew Paris, *Matthaeu Parisiensis, Monachi Sancti Albani, Chronica Majora*, 4, p.80.

<sup>123</sup> Impey, 'The Western Entrance to the Tower of London, 1240-1241', pp.65-6.

<sup>124</sup> 'The tower's visual impact was almost certainly increased by a continuation of the plinth's banded stonework over the superstructure, as is suggested by the recovery of scattered fragments of Purbeck and Reigate ashlar from the most fills', Impey, 'The Western Entrance to the Tower of London, 1240-1241', p.69.

<sup>125</sup> R. Leach, *An Investigation into the Use of Purbeck Marble in Medieval England*, 2nd edn (Hartlepool, 1975); J. Blair, 'Purbeck Marble', in J. Blair and N. Ramsay (ed.), *English Medieval Industries: Craftsmen, Techniques, Products* (London and Rio Grande, 1991), pp. 41-56.

Trinobantes with the town of New Troy, or Trinovantum, would have ensured that subsequent readers of Caesar and Orosius would locate this part of his campaign in London. Archaeological evidence was also available to confirm Roman activity in London. Just one example is the banded Roman city wall against which the Normans built the Tower of London, and which can still be seen standing in places, as near the Tower of London, to this day (see illustration 10).<sup>126</sup>

The creation of a banded polychrome gate at the Tower may well have referred to this Roman wall in its surface decoration, while surpassing its humble materials. The effect of this gate, though short-lived, must have been even more impressive than the banded design at Dover. The structure at the Tower employed Purbeck marble, thus coming closer than ever to the vision of ancient Trojan splendour conjured up by Benoit de Sainte-Maure. Henry III's reign is in fact remarkable for other introductions of marble polychrome artefacts with imperial connotations. These help to confirm both the imperial connotations of the scheme used on the Tower gate, but also the underline importance of this imperial and material imagery in Henry's royal image-making.

In 1268 the laying of the Cosmati pavement was completed in the sanctuary of Westminster Abbey, a site of immense importance in the coronation ceremony of the English monarchs.<sup>127</sup> The pavement is made up of hundreds of pieces of cut stone of different colours and types, many of them precious marbles specially imported from Rome for use in the pavement by the Abbot of Westminster.<sup>128</sup> Interpretations of the specific symbolisms of this pavement are too complex to rehearse here, but commentators agree on the immense ideological significance of the journey made by the stones from Rome, and the importance of marble as a symbolic material.<sup>129</sup> The inscription added to the pavement on the death of Henry III, and the epitaph of the Abbot of Westminster (who acted as courier for the stones) both place much emphasis on the source and nature of the materials.<sup>130</sup> The pavement can thus be seen as a thirteenth-century enactment of *translatio imperii*, focused on the characteristically

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<sup>126</sup> See D. Perring, *Roman London* (London, 1991), pp.90-1; G. Milne, *English Heritage Book of Roman London: Urban Archaeology in the Nation's Capital* (London, 1995), pp.120-2.

<sup>127</sup> P. Binski, 'The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style', *Art Bulletin* 72 (1990): 6-34, p.31; R. Foster, *Patterns of Thought: The Hidden Meaning of the Great Pavement of Westminster Abbey* (London, 1991), p.2.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.2, 14 *et passim*; Binski, 'The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style', p.8.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.8, 10, 12-13; Foster, *Patterns of Thought: The Hidden Meaning of the Great Pavement of Westminster Abbey*, pp.3, 93, 164, *et passim*.

<sup>130</sup> Binski, 'The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style', pp.10, 13; Foster, *Patterns of Thought: The Hidden Meaning of the Great Pavement of Westminster Abbey*, pp.3, 93-4.

imperial substance, marble, and its polychrome effects. Both the action and the stone type fit with accounts of the material transfers made by ancient emperors, which I have already discussed.

The use of Purbeck marble for the whole of the matrix in the Cosmati pavement at Westminster, surrounding the more precious marbles and stones,<sup>131</sup> is particularly interesting in view of the probable use of Purbeck banding on the Tower gate. Italian Cosmati works use white marble matrices to offset the coloured components.<sup>132</sup> The use of alabaster in the Westminster pavement shows that white marble was available for the project,<sup>133</sup> but Purbeck was nevertheless the preferred matrix material both for the sanctuary pavement and for all the related Cosmati work carried out at Westminster, including the shrine of Edward the Confessor and Edward II's own tomb.<sup>134</sup> This deliberate choice marks Purbeck out as a precious substance in its own right, showing that it must have been considered a fit background for the more colourful and rare continental marbles. However, it also denotes the ready availability of Purbeck in large quantities at this period.<sup>135</sup> This helps to explain how a material with precious connotations could be used as an important component in large-scale architectural projects like the Tower gate.

Although it would never be possible to employ precious imported marbles in the lavish architectural displays described in romances, Purbeck was more economically viable, was considered a marble, and carried connotations of the material culture of empire. However, there were times when even Purbeck was beyond the means of the king. Documentary references preserve the fact that Edward had a faux marble effect applied to pillars and arches in the hall at Guildford castle and posts in his chamber at Ludgershall.<sup>136</sup> The use of Purbeck on the façade of the Tower gate should therefore mark out the structure as one of great symbolic significance. This lavish use of materials certainly deserves its description as '*sumptuoso*' by Matthew Paris. More specifically, it conveys the imperial pretensions Henry wished to attach to the architectural achievements of the English monarchy.

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid., p.34; Binski, 'The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style', pp.9-10.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p.9.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., p.10; Foster, *Patterns of Thought: The Hidden Meaning of the Great Pavement of Westminster Abbey*, p.39.

<sup>134</sup> Binski, 'The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style', pp.9-10.

<sup>135</sup> Blair, 'Purbeck Marble', p.74.

<sup>136</sup> L.F. Salzman, *Building in England to 1540: A Documentary History* (Oxford, 1952), p.158.

Edward I seems to have continued his father's programme of Cosmati monuments at Westminster. The evidence suggests that he was responsible for commissioning Henry III's Cosmati-work tomb,<sup>137</sup> and Edward may even have selected and imported the marble stones for the project himself. It seems that these materials came from France rather than Rome, the significance of which is not entirely clear.<sup>138</sup> However, Binski suggests that the design of the tomb relates strongly to Italian models, which Edward may have seen while travelling through Italy at the time he learned of his father's death.<sup>139</sup> Edward I's other major polychrome project has not gone unnoted in the context of this Cosmati work at Westminster. Binski makes an explicit link between the imperial ideology expressed in the tomb of Henry III and the distinctive design of Caernarfon Castle. He suggests that the common use of polychromy in both projects bears witness to 'a royal visual culture that demonstrates its awareness...of the typology and significance of materials'.<sup>140</sup> Binski follows Taylor's account of the symbolism of Edward I's Caernarfon,<sup>141</sup> but the symbolic strategies employed in the castle and the tomb are even closer if my revisions to Caernarfon's interpretation are accepted.

I noted earlier in this chapter that material from the nearby Roman site of Segontium was used in the construction of Edward I's castle at Caernarfon. This can, I suggested, be read as a material transfer with imperial significance: as a *translatio imperii*, in fact. This idea finds an echo in the material transfers carried out by Edward and his father Henry III in importing marble stones for their respective Cosmati projects at Westminster Abbey. This material symbolism at both Westminster and Caernarfon is twofold. The materials in both cases invoke Roman models in their aesthetic appearance and arrangement. At the same time, they also show a continuing awareness of the imperial symbolism of material transfer.

As I have suggested, these dual aspects of imperial symbolism are consistent components of the use of polychromy in English castle architecture. In the early Norman castles of Colchester and Chepstow, Roman materials are re-used in ways which suggest a respect for Roman architecture and materials. From this period castles were also understood to relate to Roman defensive architecture due to linguistic connections between the two. In later examples of polychrome banding at Portchester,

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<sup>137</sup> Binski, 'The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style', pp.19-22.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., pp.19-20.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., pp.22-3.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., p.32.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., pp.105, 139-40.



Dover and the Tower of London, standing Roman structures nearby ensure a visual comparison between medieval and Roman banding patterns. The medieval work is differentiated in appearance and material from the Roman remains, suggesting the recreation of a more exalted imperial past. This is also expressed through literary composition in legends concerning Troy, the culture which was believed to have preceded and given birth to Rome as well as Britain.

At Caernarfon Castle, these symbolic strategies merge. The banding motif employed at Caernarfon articulates this strategy perfectly. It retains the characteristically Roman aesthetic of narrow bands of red between wide bands of masonry, but enlarges this to a huge scale, using beautifully cut stone. The effort to preserve this aesthetic extends even to the cutting of the red sandstone into long, thin pieces, reminiscent of the proportion of Roman tiles; the brown sandstone of the wide bands is by contrast cut into much chunkier oblongs. The polychrome banding thus imitates the Roman aesthetic, while surpassing its materials and scale. Material *translatio* also transfers potent imperial symbolisms from the Roman fort of Segontium to the new centre of imperial control in the castle. Re-use is not only a prudent deployment of local resources here, but a *translatio imperii*. It imitates the transfer of imperial materials and resonances practised by Constantine and subsequent Holy Roman Emperors. Like theirs, it too signifies the geographical and symbolic relocation of imperial power and asserts the legitimate succession of the new regime. But the castle at Caernarfon stresses the Welsh tradition of a Roman mandate for power through the figure of Magnus Maximus, rather than a direct association with Constantine, his son.

For the first time, the polychrome banding at Caernarfon can be understood within the context of British architecture. This motif is one which, I have shown, had been used before on certain important English castles. However, it is consistently deployed in relation to Roman architecture, and, I have argued, refers to the tile-banding technique characteristic of Roman structures. This native context solves the problems created by Taylor's comparison of Caernarfon with Constantinople. I pointed out earlier that such a reference would be wasted on the vast majority of medieval visitors to Caernarfon, who would have had no idea of the appearance of Constantinople's walls. It may be that a link with Constantinople is one element in the design of Caernarfon, through the resemblance to banded Roman architecture in general. But links with other English castles, and with Roman architecture extant in

medieval Britain, would surely have been of more immediate relevance in conveying imperial associations to medieval observers.

As far as the intentions of medieval castle builders go, the evidence I have provided is suggestive, but it is never explicitly stated. However, the reaction of medieval observers to such symbolism can be recreated from more specific evidence. Documentary references demonstrate particularly strong imperial associations for polychrome castles. Certain of these castles are, for example, ascribed to ancient, imperial builders in yet another instance of the projection of castles back into the ancient past. This is a rather different situation from the one which has proved so interesting at Caernarfon. There the evidence for legendary associations is exceptionally rich for around the time at which the castle was being built. It seems very likely that specific imperial associations were thus built in to the castle from the start. This was the feature which has made Taylor's interpretation so instantly appealing over the years, as it allows an insight into the cultural forces which the castle's medieval designers were attempting to express. However, evidence does not to my knowledge exist to demonstrate the way in which observers regarded such imagery at the time.

In the other cases I have looked at this situation is reversed. Evidence for the attribution of a legendary founder exists, but it seems to arrive some considerable time after the castle's actual medieval foundation, and often after the addition of imperial polychrome banding. While there is thus a gap between the architectural creation of imperial imagery and its reception, I hope to suggest that some relationship of cause and effect can be established between the two. I do not suggest this is necessarily a neat relationship. In some cases, as for example with the Trojan foundation myth at the Tower of London, rumours of imperial connections may have arisen very gradually, drawing on only the most general architectural cues. In other cases, as at Caernarfon, the legend may well have been the primary force, dictating the imperial imagery of the castle architecture. However, the conjunction between legend and polychrome banding does seem to hold good.

I will not repeat in detail the evidence for the imperial foundation legends I have already mentioned in other chapters: Brutus' foundation of the Tower of London (Chapter 2) and Cole's foundation of Colchester Castle (Chapter 2). I have also discussed both of these castles here in terms of their symbolic polychrome banding and significant proximity to Roman remains. However, the dating of these various developments is worth repeating at this point. As I mentioned in the first chapter, the

first recorded connection between Colchester Castle and Cole comes from 1372.<sup>142</sup> The castle itself, originally built on and with Roman remains, dates from around 1074-6. The Tower of London, and specifically its most important element, the White Tower, was built in the 1070s. The first reference I have found to its supposed foundation by Brutus comes from Gervase of Tilbury, who was writing around 1214 to 1218.<sup>143</sup> The polychrome banding of Henry III's gate at the Tower probably dates from 1240. A subsequent legendary development also credited Julius Caesar with the foundation of the Tower; this surfaces in Nicholas Trevet's Anglo-Norman *Cronicles*, written probably between 1328 and 1335.<sup>144</sup> In the same source, Julius Caesar also emerges as Dover's legendary founder; Dover Castle, as with the Tower, was originally a product of the Conquest campaign, and the polychrome keep dates from 1182.

At a glance it seems that in the majority of these cases, the imperial legend lags some way behind the imperial phase of the castle architecture. However the late date of several of these legends may be due to loss in the documentary record, rather than late origin. For example, the link between Colchester and Cole was made by Geoffrey of Monmouth around 1138. So, too, was the link between London and Brutus. The subsequent attribution of the castle to the founder of the city is not a big step, and could probably have happened at any intermediate stage before the emergence of these castle foundation legends into the extant record. Oral traditions may also have been involved, leaving no dateable traces. This leaves the relationship between architecture and legend tantalisingly uncertain. There are, however, certain sources which hint at the kinds of process which might have surrounded the development of imperial imagery at particular castles. The record concerning Dover Castle is particularly suggestive.

As I have mentioned the Dominican Nicolas Trevet provides the first documented reference to Dover's Caesarian foundation, in his Anglo-Norman Chronicle written for the edification and entertainment of Edward I's daughter Mary, a nun at Amesbury.<sup>145</sup> From this dedication, it can be imagined that Britain's legendary history makes an important part of this work, inserted chronologically into the Biblical

<sup>142</sup> G. Rosser, 'Myth, Image and Social Process in the English Medieval Town', *Urban History* 23.1 (1996): 5-25; p.10.

<sup>143</sup> Gervase of Tilbury, *The Otia Imperialia of Gervase Of Tilbury*, ed. J.W. Binns and S.E. Banks (forthcoming, 2002), p.xxxix.

<sup>144</sup> A.E. Hartung (ed.), *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050-1500* (New Haven, CT, 1967-98), 8, p.2667.

<sup>145</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550-1307*, p.504.

history which represents the bulk of the account.<sup>146</sup> Trevet is very casual in his attribution of several castles to Caesar, including them in a long list:

*Julius Cesar... en moustrance de la Conqueste faite sur la terre du Brutaine, q'ore est dit Engleterre, edifa le chastel de Dovre et de Canterburi et de Roncestre et de Loundres*<sup>147</sup>

(Julius Caesar... in demonstration of the Conquest made of the realm of Britain, as England was called, built the castle of Dover and of Canterbury and of Rochester and of London)<sup>148</sup>

This is not the place to go in detail into the tradition of Caesar's successful conquest of Britain and the foundation legends which followed, as this has already been done very thoroughly.<sup>149</sup> (It is perhaps worth noting in passing that both Rochester and Canterbury Castles are in close contact with Roman remains.)<sup>150</sup> However, Trevet's work was well-researched, and his own additions and alterations to his source material are limited.<sup>151</sup> It may well be, therefore, that he gained this information from some source, possibly a monastic one, which has not survived.

A monastic chronicle surviving in a much later manuscript certainly provides a suggestion of the kind of process by which Trevet might have arrived at his Caesarian attributions. The document in question is bound in with a miscellaneous collection of texts in the British Library manuscript Cotton Vespasian B.XI, and comprises folios 72-9. For cataloguing purposes it is entitled *Cronicon Sancti Martini de Dover*, referring to the monastery of St. Martin to which the text refers.<sup>152</sup> This text documents the history of Dover Castle, as well as St. Martin's monastery, in some detail, beginning with Brutus's arrival in Britain and ending with the reign of Henry II. Julius Caesar too plays his part, and is more specifically connected with building activities at Dover. The *Cronicon* records that Caesar built a tower as a treasury, in the place where the Castle

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.; Nicolas Trevet, 'The Anglo-Norman Chronicle of Nicolas Trivet', ed. A. Rutherford (PhD diss., University of London, 1932), pp.14, 52.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p.110.

<sup>148</sup> My translation.

<sup>149</sup> See H. Nearing, 'Caesar's Sword', *Modern Language Notes* 63 (1948): 403-5; 'Julius Caesar and the Tower of London', *Modern Language Notes* 63 (1948): 228-33; 'Local Caesar Traditions in Britain', *Speculum* 24 (1949): 218-27; 'The Legend of Julius Caesar's British Conquest', *Publications of the Modern Languages Association* 64 (1949): 889-929. I also discuss this legend in more detail in A. Wheatley, 'The Tower of London in Myth and Legend', in E. Impey (ed.), *The White Tower* (forthcoming).

<sup>150</sup> Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales*, p.1; Eaton, *Plundering the Past: Roman Stonework in Medieval Britain*, p.29.

<sup>151</sup> Trevet, 'The Anglo-Norman Chronicle of Nicolas Trivet', Introduction, pp.19-23 *et passim*.

<sup>152</sup> See T. Hardy, *Descriptive Catalogue of Materials Relating to the History of Great Britain and Ireland*, Rolls Series 26 (1865, repr.1964), 2, p.263.

of Dover was later built. It even specifies that the same tower still stands next to the church in Dover Castle. This is an unmistakable reference to the Roman signal-station at Dover Castle, whose banded appearance I have already discussed (see illustration 41):

*Iulius Caesar fecit unam turrin in loco ubi nunc est castrum Doverr' ad reponendum illuc thesaurum suum. Quae quidem Turris nunc stat ibidem in Castro Doverr' iuxta ecclesiam*

(Julius Caesar built a tower in the place where the Castle of Dover now is, to place his treasury in. This very same tower now stands in Dover Castle next to the church).<sup>153</sup>

This text is preserved in a document dated to the fifteenth century by handwriting evidence.<sup>154</sup> It therefore comes from well after texts such as Trevet's *Cronicles* and the alliterative poem *The Parlement of the Thre Ages* (1370) which refer to the whole of Dover castle as Caesar's work.<sup>155</sup> However, it does seem to preserve an intermediate phase in the development of Dover's imperial foundation legend, before the medieval castle was explicitly involved. It might therefore be conjectured that such a reference in fact existed long before syntheses such as Trevet's, preserved in local legend and written down later, or surviving only in later accounts. It will probably never be possible to determine if this legend existed in some form before Dover keep was decorated with polychrome banding. However, it is easy enough to imagine how, once the Roman *pharos* was identified as Julius Caesar's work, the impressive banded tower in the castle proper might have been attributed to Caesar by association, and so, eventually, the whole castle.

This example does not provide any easy answers to the complex interactions of architectural and narrative symbolism. However, it does hint at the powerful effect Roman remains could have on the medieval structures nearby, spreading polychromy and gradually transforming entire sites with their imperial connotations. It seems to me highly likely that the polychrome banding deployed on English castles was intended to

<sup>153</sup> From British Library, London, MS Cotton Vespasian B.IX, f.72 (my transcription and translation).

<sup>154</sup> Another reference to this tradition, of a similar date, is mentioned in Nearing, 'Local Caesar Traditions in Britain', p.220: in the *Historia regum Angliae* of John Rous.

<sup>155</sup> Hartung, *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050-1500*, 5, p.1501. 'Thane Sir Sezere hymselfen, that Julyus was hatten, / Alle Inglande he aughte at his awnn will, / When the Bruyte in his booke Bretayne it callede. / The trewe toure of London in his tyme he makede, / And craftely the condithe he compaste thereaftire, / And then he droghe hym to Dovire and duellyde there a hile, / And closede ther a castelle with cornells full heghe': W. Ginsberg (ed.), 'The Parlement of the Thre Ages', in *Wynnere and Wastoure and The Parlement of the Thre Ages* (Kalamazoo, MI, 1992), ll.405-11, p.55.

perpetuate these associations in the minds of medieval observers, as well as causing fresh Roman associations in its own right.

I argued in more detail in my first chapter for an enduring medieval belief that the castle was a form of architecture which had been used by the Romans. I have shown in this chapter how integral imperial imagery was to the articulation of English political power and royal and national identity in medieval Britain. I have also provided ample evidence that medieval castles could easily evoke, or be confused with, the fortresses of antiquity. Within this context, Caernarfon Castle cannot be seen as a unique example of an imperial castle. I have identified several other castles, from the Conquest onwards, which deployed visual signals and legendary material in very similar ways to those identified for Caernarfon.

Moreover, examples of imperial imagery in medieval castles need not necessarily be restricted to those I have identified. The castles I have discussed were all royal, built with great expenditure of resources and discussed extensively in the documentary record. With such important precedents, it is more than likely that examples of imperial association, possibly even of banded polychromy, remain at other sites still to be identified. Renn's list of Norman polychromy, appended to his article on Guildford castle, offers one starting-place for further investigation.<sup>156</sup>

In conclusion to this chapter, however, I would like to open out the whole issue. Castles were a supremely appropriate architectural form with which to express ideas of *translatio imperii*, as they represented to the Middle Ages a continuity with the Roman martial prowess in empire-building and defensive architecture. The polychrome banding and symbolic re-use which I have identified are outward displays of this imperial identity. However, I have argued from linguistic evidence that imperial associations are inherent in the very architectural form and idea of the castle. Even without polychromy, medieval castles therefore carry imperial connotations. As I mentioned earlier, the plain stone castles of Portchester and Pevensey are surrounded by Roman defences. They are associated with their ancient remains through location, but they also take on a similar form, with their rounded bastions and straight stretches of walls (see illustrations 35 and 36). The polychrome banding and meaningful re-use which I have discussed gives expression to this general resemblance. However, for each

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<sup>156</sup> Renn, 'The Decoration of Guildford Castle Keep', p.6.

instance of bright imperial polychromy, castle scholars should probably expect dozens of less obvious imperial resonances.

In medieval accounts Julius Caesar founded castles throughout Europe,<sup>157</sup> and the castles of other Roman Emperors litter the pages of the *Gesta Romanorum*.<sup>158</sup> Vegetius too, in medieval translations, writes of castles on a regular basis.<sup>159</sup> Castles with Roman and more generally imperial associations have been available to historians for generations. I am only surprised that this knowledge has not been applied to the architectural evidence many times before.

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<sup>157</sup> See Nearing, 'Caesar's Sword'; 'Julius Caesar and the Tower of London'; 'Local Caesar Traditions in Britain'; 'The Legend of Julius Caesar's British Conquest'. Nearing lists some other British castles attributed to Caesar: Canterbury, Rochester, Exeter and Salisbury. All these sites are notable for their Roman connections and, in some cases, extant Roman remains - sometimes, as at Rochester, incorporated into the medieval defences.

<sup>158</sup> K.I. Sandred (ed.), *A Middle English Version of the Gesta Romanorum* edited from Gloucester Cathedral MS 22 (Uppsala, 1971); see for example pp.59, 65.

<sup>159</sup> G. Lester (ed.), *The Earliest English Translation of Vegetius' De re militari* (Heidelberg, 1988); see for example pp.160-2.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis has been to establish the medieval castle as a meaningful architecture, involved in a sophisticated series of ideological relationships with its surrounding cultural context. It has set out to trace the architectural iconography of the castle through references in visual and textual sources, and to retrace this iconography back to the concrete architecture of the medieval castle.

Linguistic analysis shows that most modern definitions of the castle are based on criteria which are not always consistent with the understanding of the word and concept in medieval use. The castle was not perceived in medieval England as an essentially feudal, private form of architecture imported by the Normans, as historians so often see it now. The word *castle* seems to have indicated a defensive enclosure of a much more general kind, applicable to urban defences, small houses and ecclesiastical foundations as well as the lordly defended residences with which the word is exclusively associated in modern use. Moreover, the castle also had important historical connotations for medieval readers via the Latin word *castellum* which appears in Biblical and Classical authors. The principles of historical linguistics suggest that it would have been quite natural for a medieval reader to have understood this word in accordance with the general medieval perception of the castle. Consequently, castles of the medieval type were believed to have existed in important ancient contexts long before the introduction of the form to Britain around the Norman Conquest.

These implications of the medieval castle are not confined to linguistic understanding alone. They are applied in very literal ways to depictions of castles in medieval art and thought. They are also reflected in the architecture of medieval castle buildings themselves. Through civic imagery on seals and in city descriptions and foundation legends, and in the spatial arrangement of city and castle defences, the urban castle became an important component in the imagery of the city. It represented both the harmony of the ideal city and the social and political tensions of the everyday urban experience. Such examples challenge the conventional definition of the castle, confirming its importance in expressing social co-operation rather than representing only the private interests of the elite. However, the historical and spiritual understanding of the castle is also important in this context. This was brought out through foundation legends attributing specific castles to illustrious ancient founders



and comparing medieval cities with the ideal, harmonious cities of the Bible and the ancient world.

Spiritual imagery of the castle likewise emphasised the existence of castles in Biblical texts and contexts. Specific texts, such as Luke 10.38, were instrumental in integrating the castle into the system of architectural allegory identified in the Bible. This imagery is reflected in medieval building projects both in the Holy Land on the sites of Biblical 'castles', and in the ecclesiastical and defensive architecture of medieval England. Such precedents assisted in the creation of an iconography for castles similar to that applied to medieval ecclesiastical architecture, built up of different spiritual texts, references and components, but also expressing a spiritual idea in the building as a whole. This idea was often connected with bodily allegories of the Virgin, but also with meditations on the religious life and on the military ambitions of medieval Christianity. The castle, whether in depictions or in concrete architecture, could thus be understood as a trigger to devotional thought. Such evidence confirms the integration of Biblical 'castles' into the mainstream understanding of the medieval castles, contrary to most current definitions.

Classical texts also encouraged medieval readers to believe that the castle was an ancient architectural form for similar reasons. From the Conquest onwards castles were associated with the material evidence of the Roman culture in Britain. Imperial connotations were also emphasised in legends which credited important imperial figures with the foundation of several famous castles actually built in the medieval period. Such imagery was reflected in the appearance of the castles themselves, in the deployment of polychrome banding, reminiscent of the banded masonry characteristic of the Roman architecture which was abundantly visible in medieval Britain. Re-use of Roman materials, too, underlined the affinities perceived between the two architectures, reflecting the ancient imperial custom of expressing *translatio imperii* through material transfer. The medieval castle was thus understood as an deliberate reflection of imperial ideas, but it was also a symbolic reconstruction and reclamation of what seems to have been considered a characteristically Roman architectural form.

These different strands of meaning have been treated in separate chapters in this thesis, but it should nevertheless be clear, even from a brief summary, that there are intimate connections between them. The idea of the castle as an ancient form of architecture with important historical resonances is shared between Biblical and

Classical contexts. The civic and communal affinities of the castle form also reflect both these concerns, through the imagery of ideal cities and their citadels, both Classical and Biblical. This thesis has shown that these ideas all operate at a linguistic level, but also at more explicitly intellectual levels, featuring for example in descriptions of castle architecture and in the design of that architecture itself. The castle thus works as an architectural referent for complex and interlinked ideas of civic harmony, devotional piety and imperial power in both general and very specific ways, touching on the design and location of castles as a group and as individual buildings.

In the first chapter I used the fifteenth-century civic seal of Colchester to demonstrate the intimate ways in which all these ideas could be linked in medieval imagery pertaining to one particular site. Colchester has reappeared in each chapter, confirming this introductory argument. However, other castles have also recurred in different sections of this thesis, showing that Colchester is not the only site which carried a complex series of linked connotations in the medieval perception. Caernarfon exemplified planned unity between town and castle in its spatial arrangement, for example, while its decorative treatment, material structure and siting also invoked strong imperial connotations. The Tower of London mirrored both these themes, but also carried spiritual connotations expressed through civic imagery which emphasised its exemplary status and invoked ideas of heavenly architecture, while the presence in the late Middle Ages of an anchorite at the Tower also underlined its devotional connotations. Dover, too, was a spiritual castle housing an anchorite, but also participated in the imperial imagery shared by the Tower and other castles. Colchester, then, is by no means to be seen as the only castle which was understood to express a combination of the themes I have discussed. Indeed, the linguistic evidence I presented at the beginning of this thesis suggests that all three themes are implicit in the medieval understanding of the castle even at its most basic level. I have managed to detect explicit references to various combinations of these themes in different examples. However, the implicit understanding of every medieval castle may well have encompassed all of the themes I have identified.

There is therefore much scope for future research into the idea of the castle in medieval England. It would certainly be worth investigating the themes I have identified in relation to contexts which deploy less explicit imagery. For example, the castles which have featured largely in the discussion of this thesis were all important royal castles and consequently attracted extravagant building programmes. They also

generated relatively extensive local mythography and an amount of visual and textual representation. It is this web of references in different media which has made it possible for me to analyse these sites through an interdisciplinary approach to the idea of the castle. However, lesser castles may well have supported very similar iconographies at a lesser scale, represented in less obvious ways in their design and medieval reception. Visual and textual descriptions, too, may employ these themes through less obvious imagery, implied in verbal or visual echoes and nuances rather than stated unambiguously in the sources.

A possible source for this level of imagery might be sought in the castles associated with the Arthurian legends, for example. The spiritual implications of these romances are clear, especially in the various grail legends<sup>1</sup> in which castles in Britain and the Holy Land also play an important part.<sup>2</sup> The historical connotations of the castle are also played out in Arthurian legends, which are dated to a distant period shortly after the time of Christ, when the pagan Roman empire was still a force to be contended with in British circles.<sup>3</sup> Specific medieval castles are back-dated to the Arthurian period just as they are to other early periods of British history. The castles of Carlisle, Winchester, Guildford, Tintagel, Arundel, Dover and the Tower of London, to mention but a few, feature in various Arthurian legends.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the urban connotations of Arthurian castles are also maintained, for example, in the conception of Camelot, which is both a city and a castle. It would certainly be interesting to discover whether any of the iconographic programmes I have traced in this thesis, such as the Castle of Love imagery, or that of structural polychromy, could be found in such a context reinforcing the connotations of these Arthurian castles. Such connotations are, I suggest, to be expected, and once identified these could perhaps be traced further to those actual medieval castles implicated in these legends.

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<sup>1</sup> See for example K. Pratt, 'The Cistercians and the *Queste del Saint Graal*', *Reading Medieval Studies* 21 (1995): 69-96; L.N. de Loose, 'A Story of Interpretations: The *Queste del Saint Graal* as Metaliterature', in D.B. Mahoney (ed.), *The Grail: A Casebook* (New York, NY, and London, 2000), pp.237-59.

<sup>2</sup> L. Olschki, E. Vinaver (ed.) and J.A. Scott (transl.), *The Grail Castle and Its Mysteries* (Manchester, 1966); M. Whitaker, 'Castles, Courts and Courtesy', in *Arthur's Kingdom of Adventure: The World of Malory's Morte Darthur* (Cambridge and Totowa, NJ, 1984), pp.31-51, pp.33-4.

<sup>3</sup> See for example L. Johnson, 'King Arthur at the Crossroads to Rome', in E. ni Cuilleanáin and J.D. Pheifer (ed.), *Noble and Joyous Histories: English Romances 1375-1650* (Dublin, 1993), pp. 87-111; F. Riddy, 'Contextualizing the *Morte Darthur*: Empire and Civil War', in *A Companion to Malory*, *Arthurian Studies* 37 (1996), pp.55-73.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Thomas Malory, *The Works of Sir Thomas Malory*, ed. E. Vinaver, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1967), 2, p.1164; 2, p.1065; 1, p.9; 2, p.635; 3, p.1250; 3, p.1164.

There are thus many ways in which the methodology and findings of this thesis could be applied to further research. I have obviously been subject to certain restrictions of time and resources which have confined my own researches to a smaller range of examples. However, the present project does present solid evidence for a whole new range of ideological elements in the medieval understanding of the castle. If this evidence is accepted, many aspects of the modern critical approach to medieval castles will need to be re-assessed and modified. Not least, the modern definition of the medieval castle will need to be broadened, to bring modern investigations into line with the practical and ideological conceptions of the castle which were current in the medieval world.

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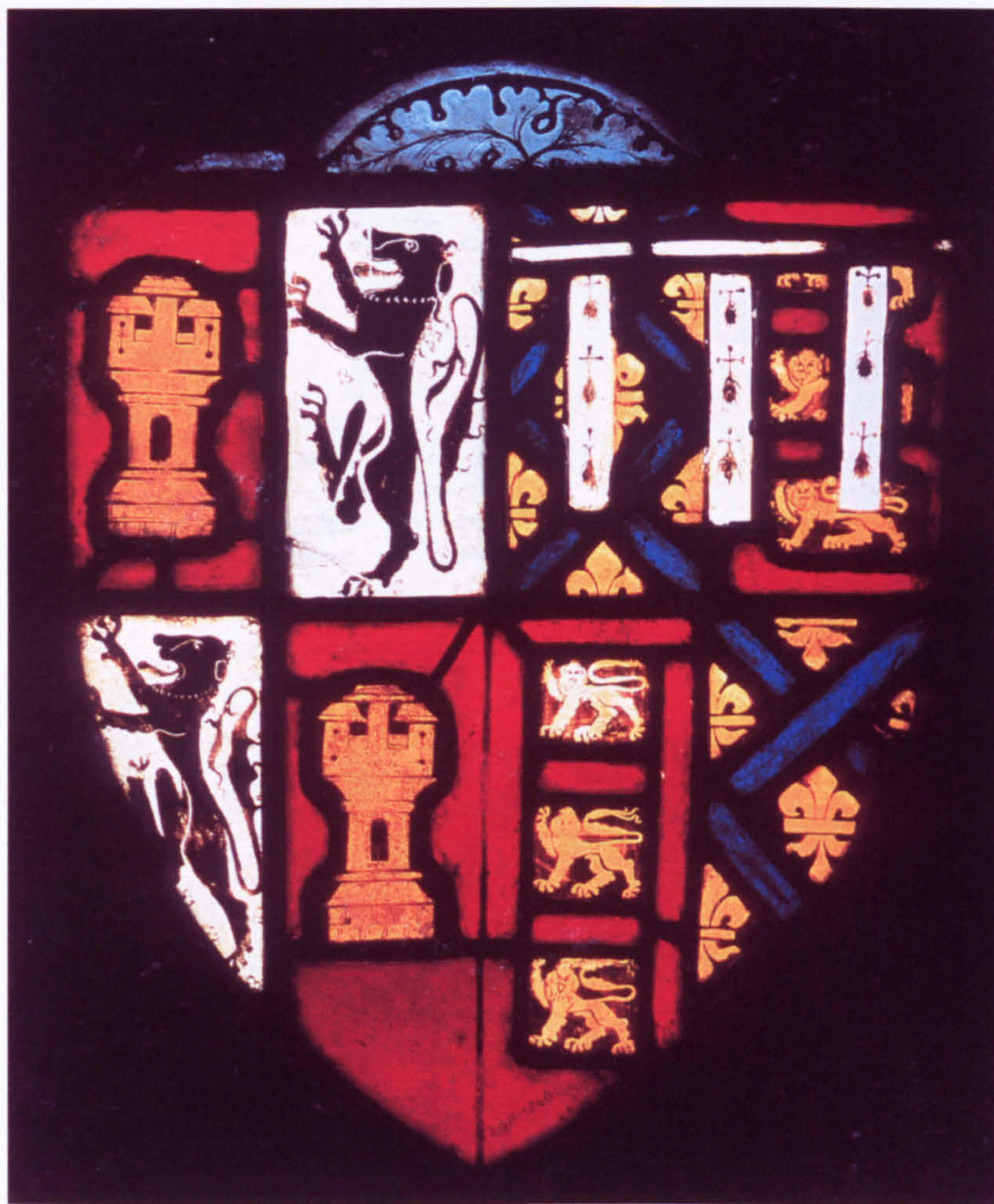
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1. Stained glass of the arms of John of Gaunt, showing England quartered with France ancient, impaled Castile and Leon. 1372-c.1393. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 6911-1860. From J. Alexander and P. Binski (ed.), *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England, 1200-1400* (London, 1987), cat. no.745, p.538.



2. Pageant enactment of the siege of Jerusalem at a banquet given by Charles V of France for the Emperor Charles VI in Paris, 1378. Late 14<sup>th</sup> century. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, MS Français 2813, f.473v. From G. Wickham, *A History of the Theatre* (Oxford, 1985), pl.8.

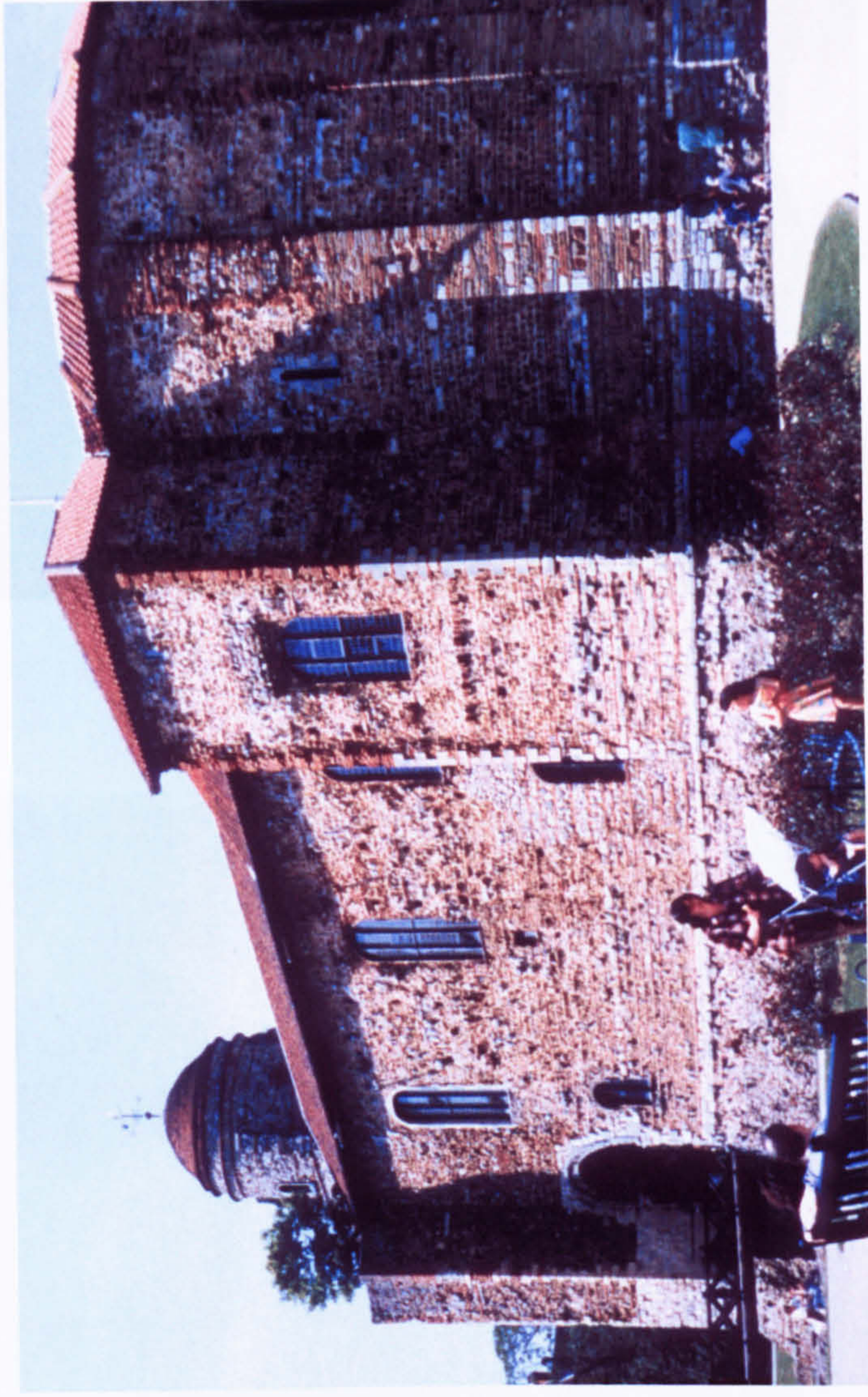


3. Marginal illustration in a Book of Hours from around Maastricht, showing a castle defended by apes, besieged by an ass, a hare and foxes. C.1300. British Library, London, MS Stowe 17, ff.234v.-244. From British Library Postcard BL/C/MS/173.



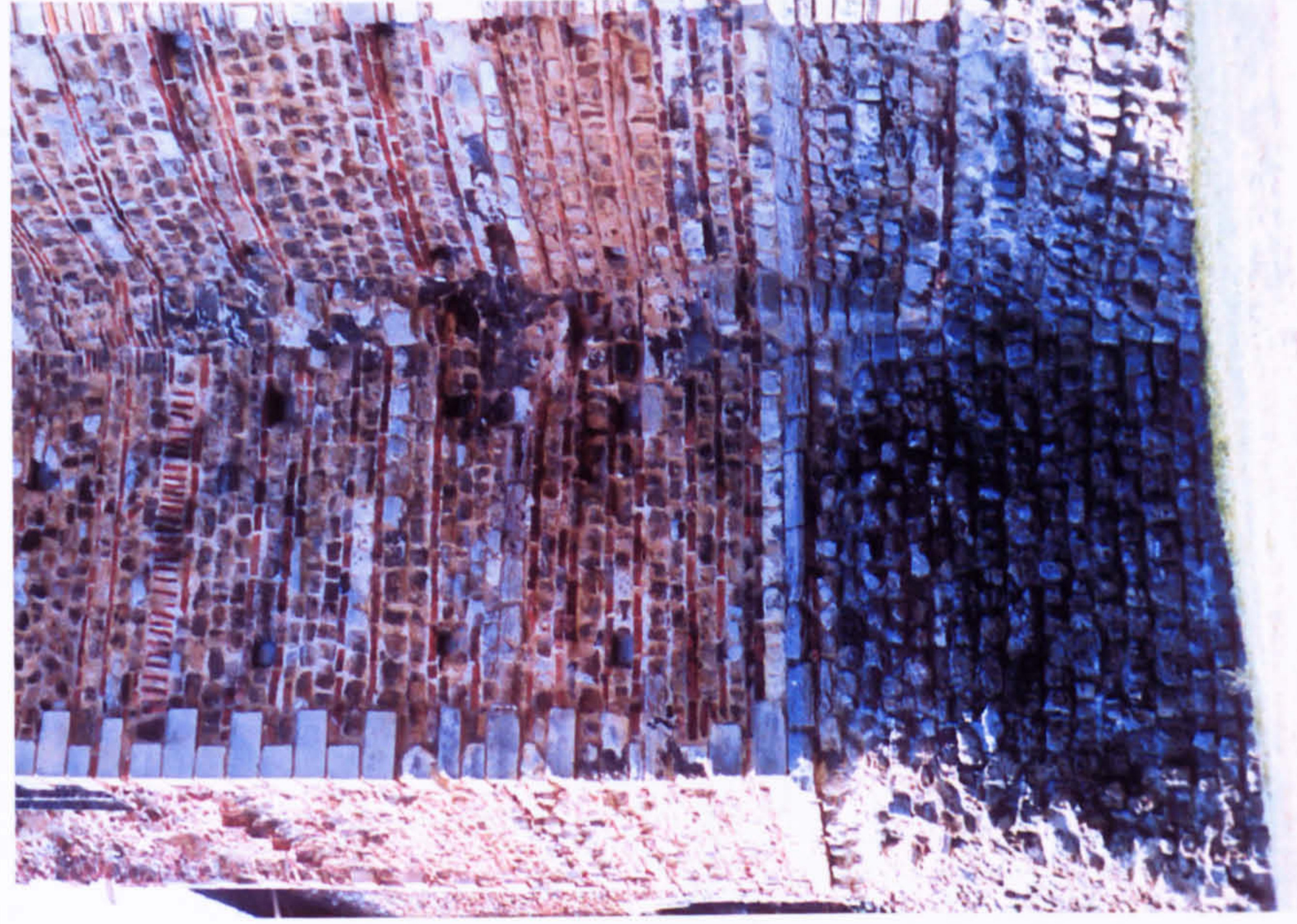
4. Civic seal of Colchester, obverse (left) and reverse (right). 15th century. British Library, London, cat. no.4827.  
From G. Pedrick, *Borough Seals of the Gothic Period* (London, 1904), pl.38.

ORIGINAL IN COLOUR



5. Colchester Castle keep from the south-east. Begun 1074-6.

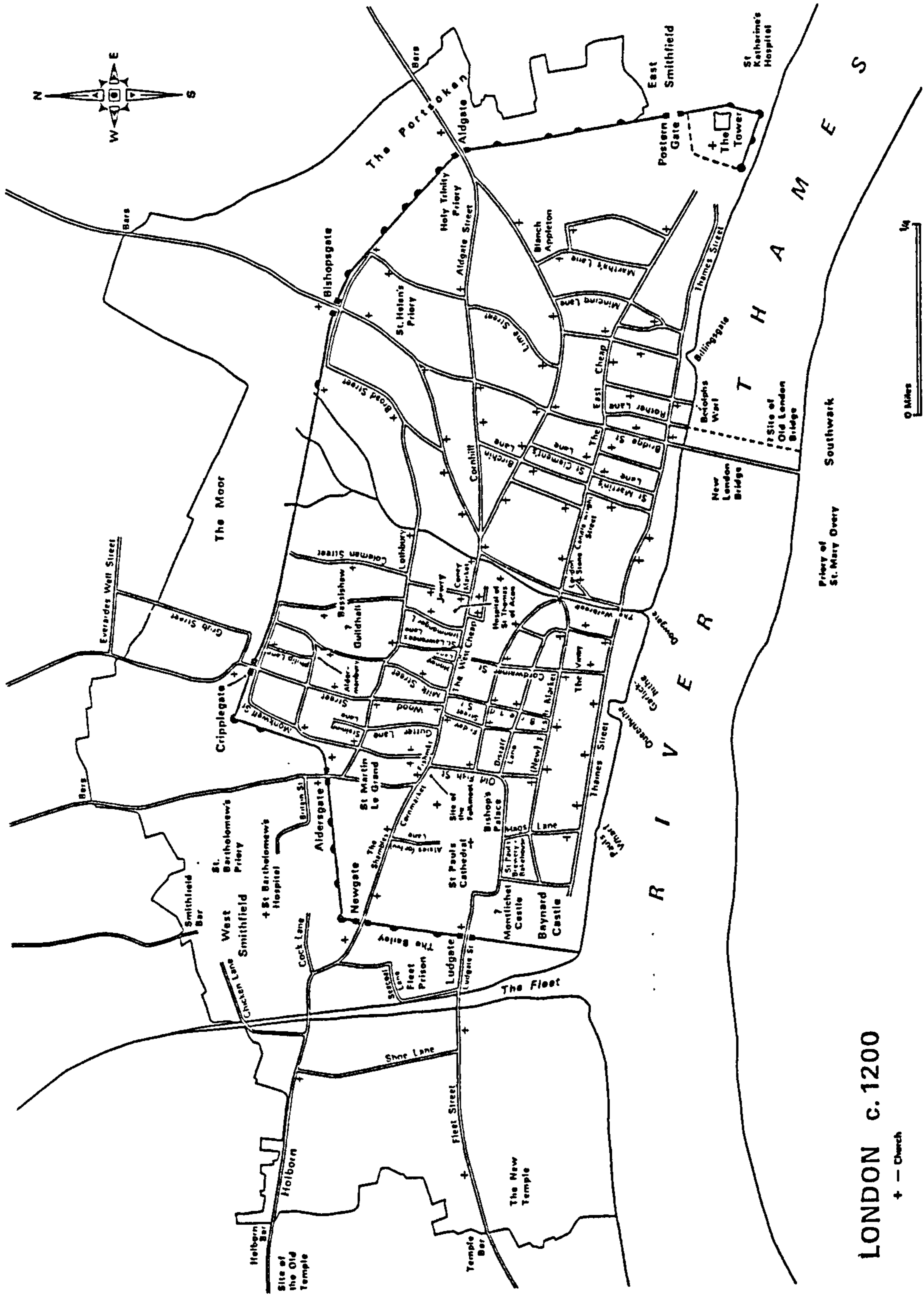




6. Colchester Castle, east face of the south-east corner tower adjoining eastern apsidal projection, showing construction technique of rubble, limestone and tile bands, above Roman plinth. Wall 1074-6, plinth c.49-60 A.D.



7. Roman wall in Colchester Castle Park, showing banded masonry. C.60 A.D.



8. Map of London c.1200, showing the city walls enclosing the Tower (right) and Baynard Castle (left). From C.N.L. Brooke with G. Keir, *London 800-1216: The Shaping of a City* (London, 1975), Map 5, pp.174-5.

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9. The White Tower, Tower of London, south face.  
Begun c.1078.



10. Roman city wall of London at Tower Hill, showing banded masonry. 190-220 A.D.



11. Seal of the Barons of London, obverse (left) and reverse (right). 1191-1219. British Library, London, cat. no.5068.

From G. Pedrick, *Borough Seals of the Gothic Period* (London, 1904), pl.11.





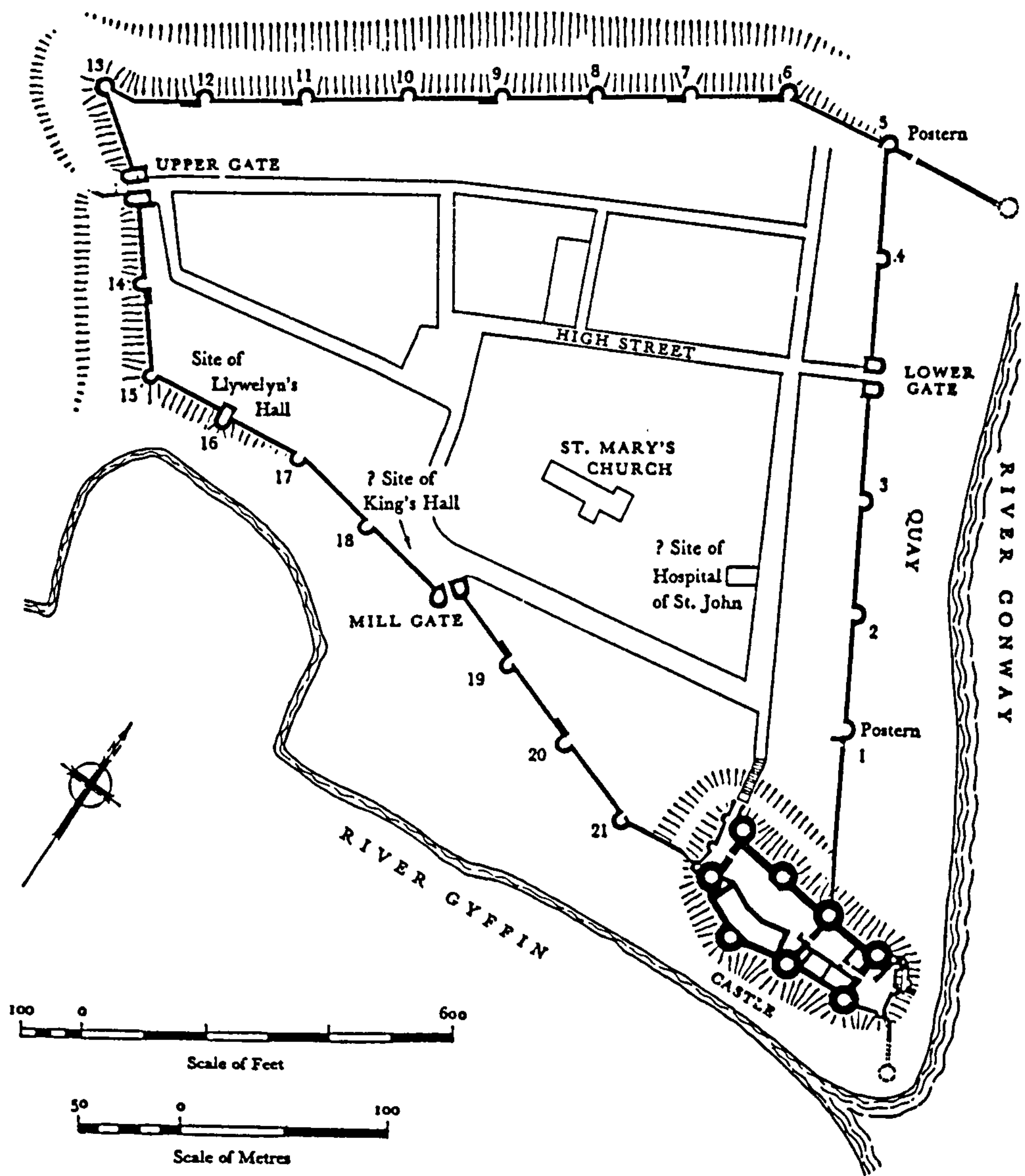
14. Cityscape of London from the *Historia regum Britannie*. Manuscript late 13th century, sketches ?14th century. British Library, London, MS Royal 13.A.III, f.14.

From J. Clark, 'Trinovantum - The Evolution of a Legend', *Journal of Medieval History* 7 (1981): 135-51, fig.2, p.144.



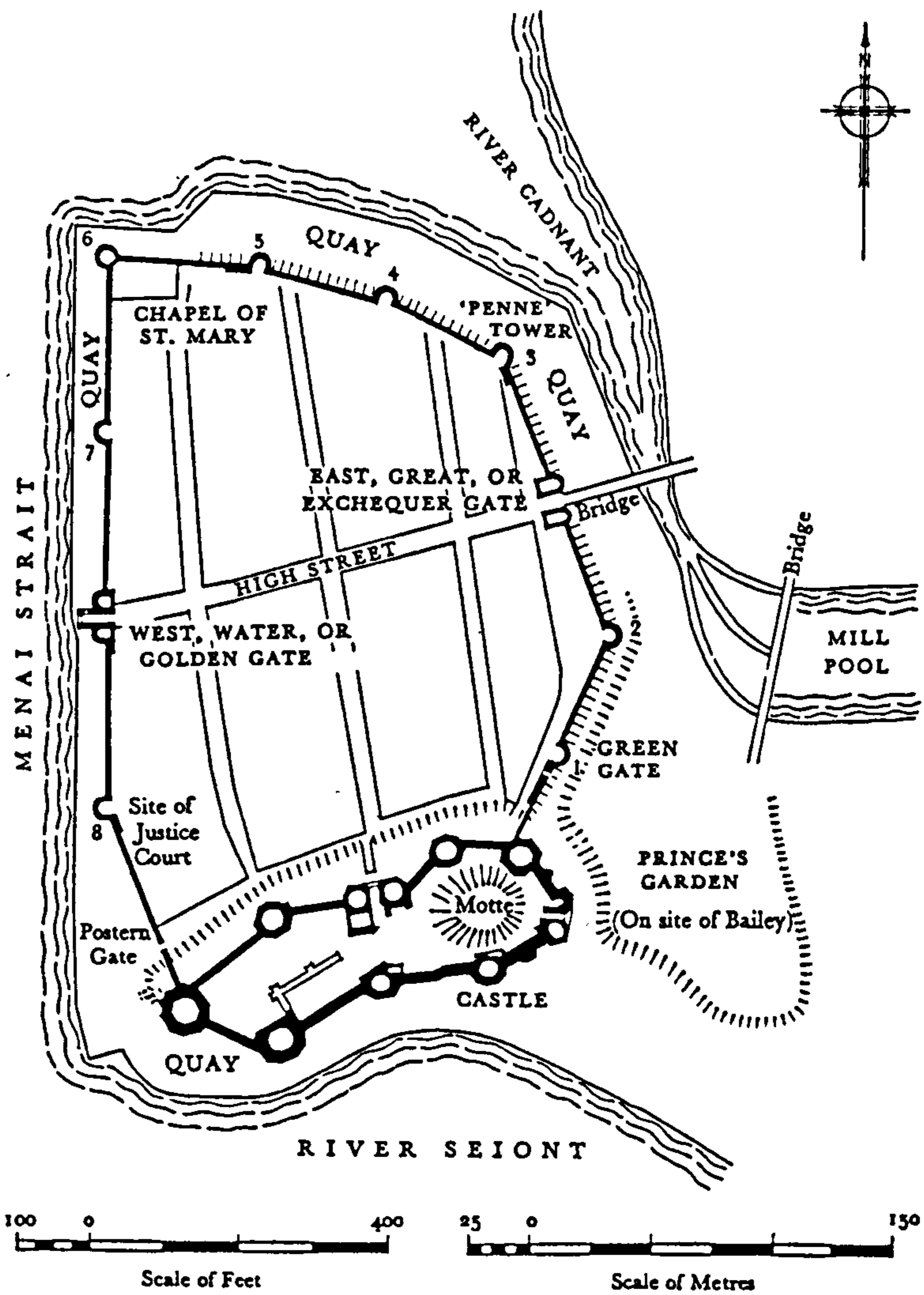
15. Bird's eye view of London from the *Historia regum Britannie*. Manuscript late 13th century, sketches ?14th century. British Library, London, MS Royal 13.A.III, f.28v.

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16. Plan of Conwy Town and Castle in the early 14th century.  
 From A. Taylor, *The Welsh Castles of Edward I* (London and Ronceverte, 1986), fig.5, p.51.





17. Plan of Caernarfon Town and Castle in the early 14th century.

From A. Taylor, *The Welsh Castles of Edward I* (London and Ronceverte, 1986), fig.9, p.88.

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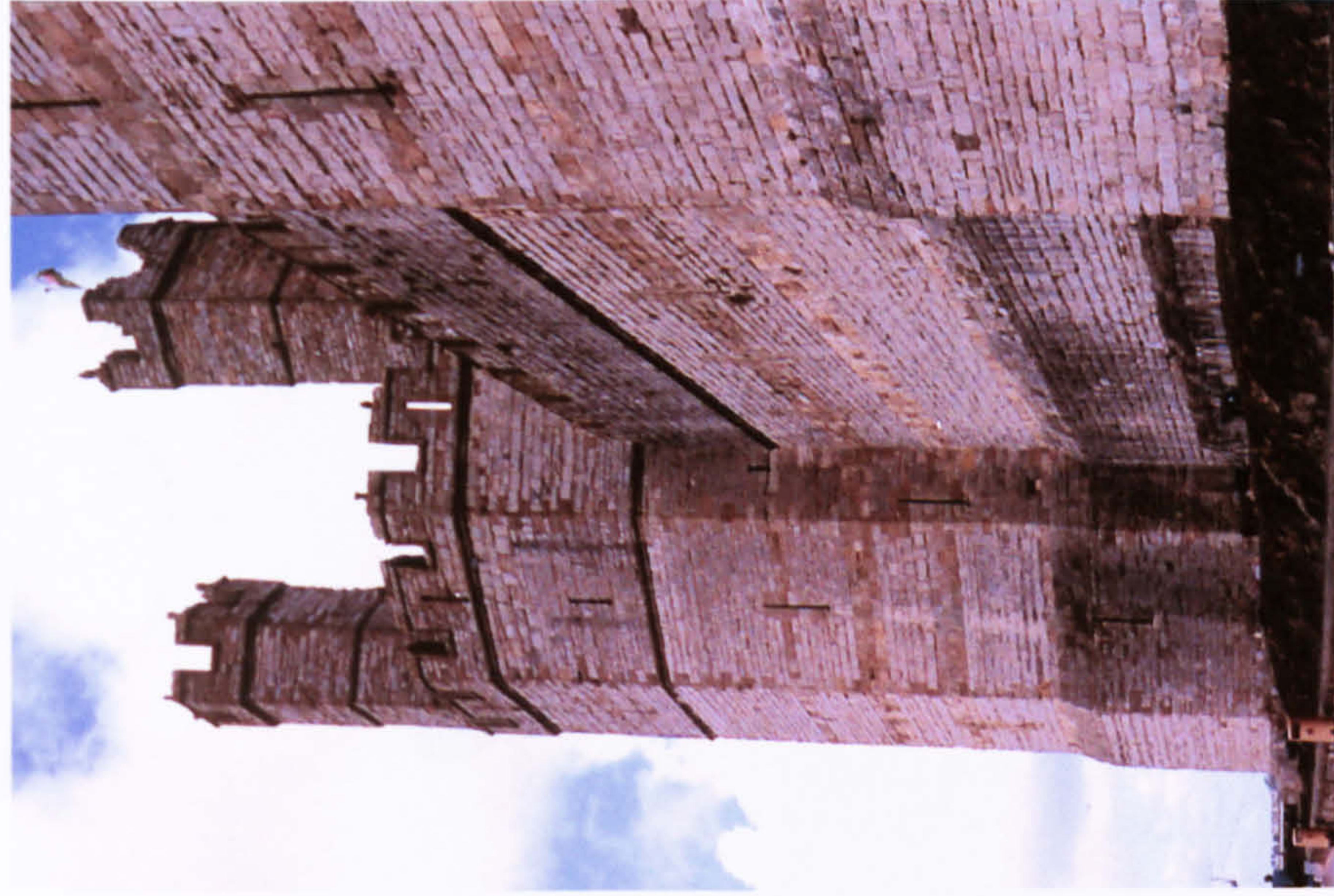


18. Caernarfon Castle from the south-west; Eagle Tower to the left. Begun 1283.



19. Comparison of Caernarfon Castle (top) with the Theodosian land walls of Constantinople. Caernarfon Castle begun 1283, Theodosian walls c.412-39 A.D.

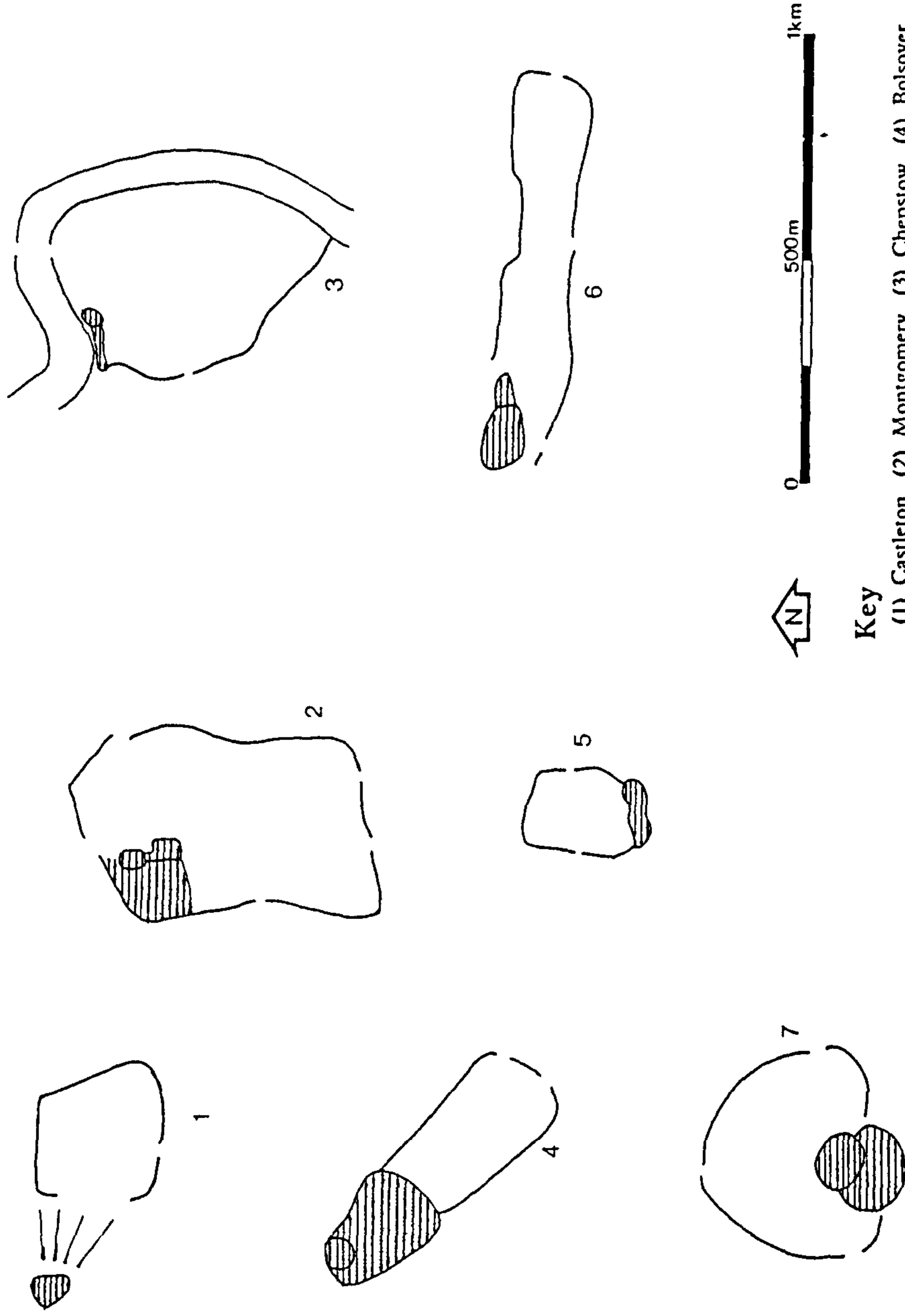
From A. Taylor, *The Welsh Castles of Edward I* (London and Ronceverte, 1986), pl.2.



20. The Eagle Tower, Caernarfon Castle. Begun 1283.

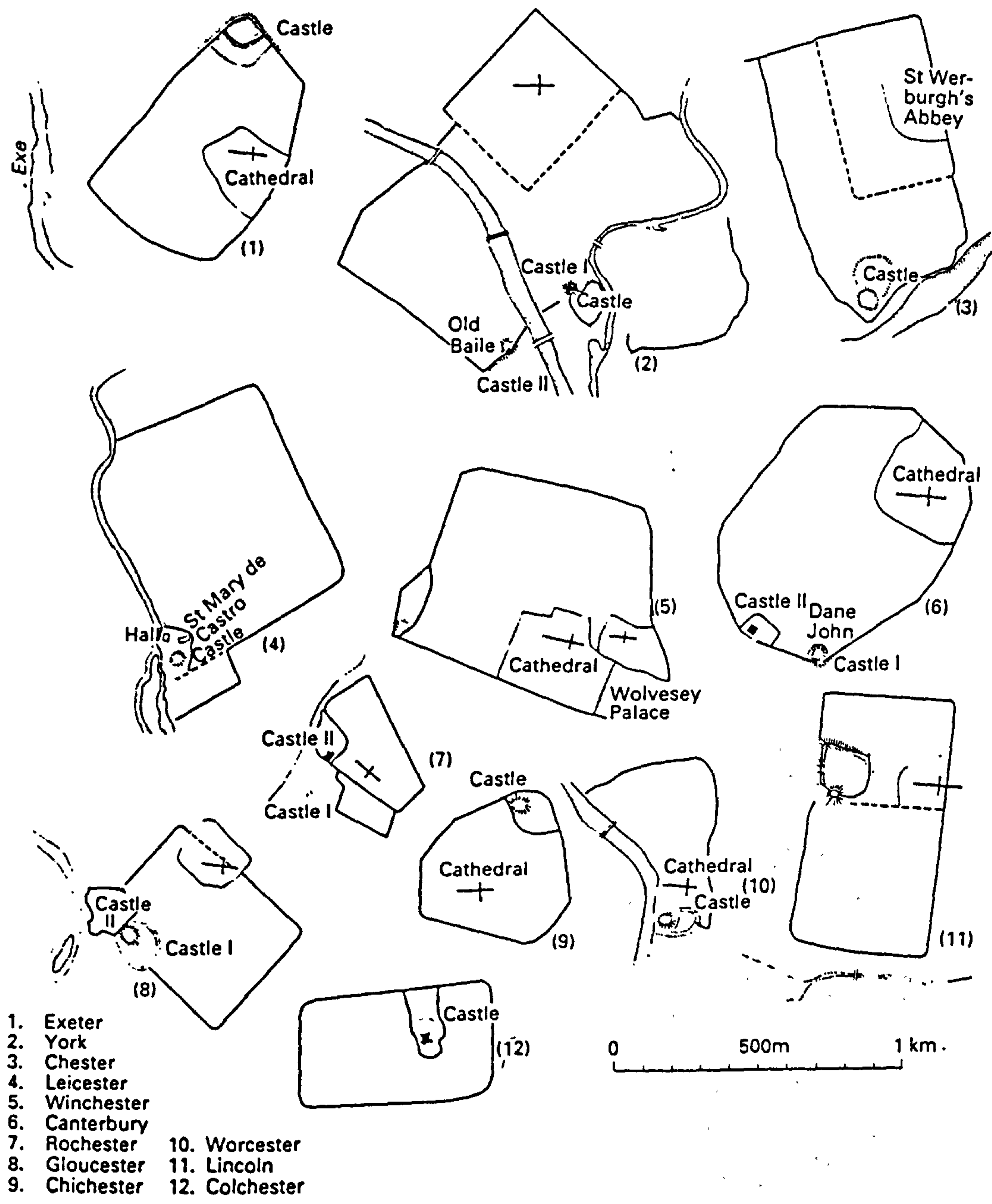


21. Detail of carved eagle, the Eagle Tower, Caernarfon Castle. Begun 1283.

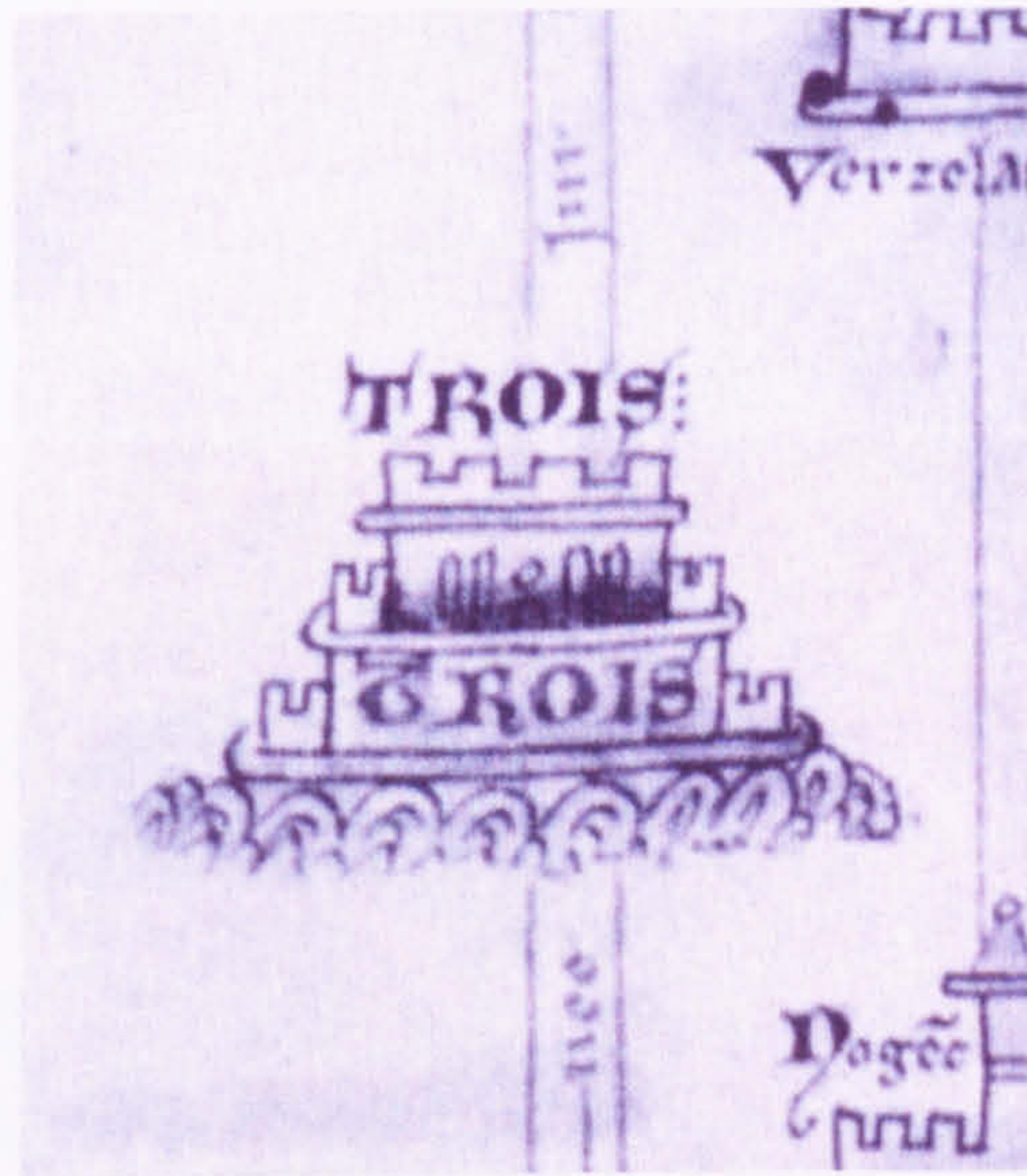


**Key**  
 (1) Castleton (2) Montgomery (3) Chepstow (4) Bolsover  
 (5) Caernarvon (6) Pembroke (7) Pleshey.

22. 'Castles and new town'. Castle area shaded.  
 From C. Drage, 'Urban Castles', in J. Schofield and R. Leech (ed.), *Urban Archaeology in Britain*, Council for British Archaeology Research Report 61 (1987), pp.117-32, fig.56, p.128.



23. Early post-Conquest castles situated within the defences of Roman towns.  
 From N.J.G. Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales: A Social and Political History*  
 (Cambridge, 1990, repr. 1994), fig.8.5, p.208.



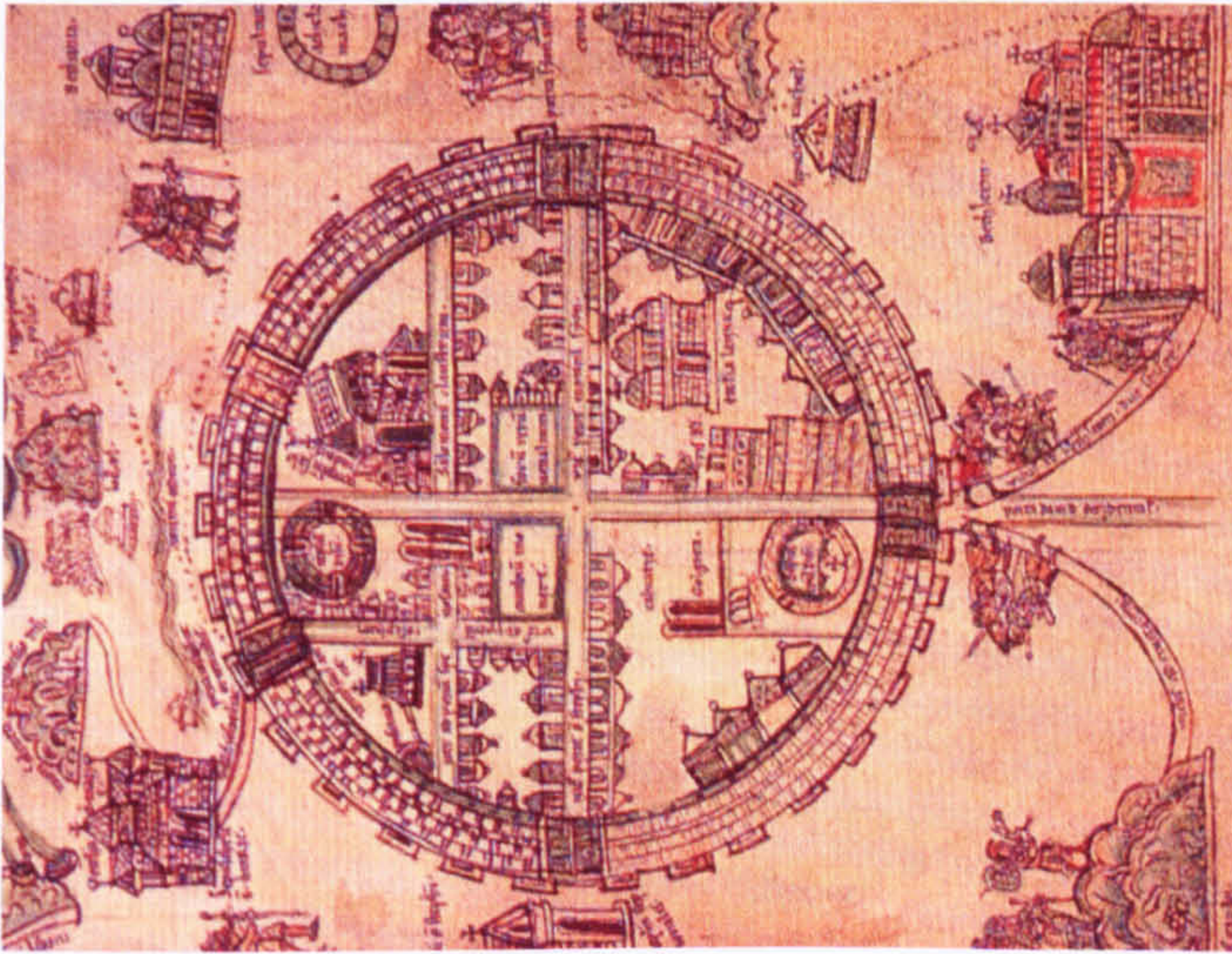
24. Drawing of the city of Troyes by Matthew Paris, from his Itinerary from London to Apulia. C.1253-9. Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 26, f.i v.

From S. Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris in the Chronica Majora* (Aldershot, 1987), fig.209, p.337.

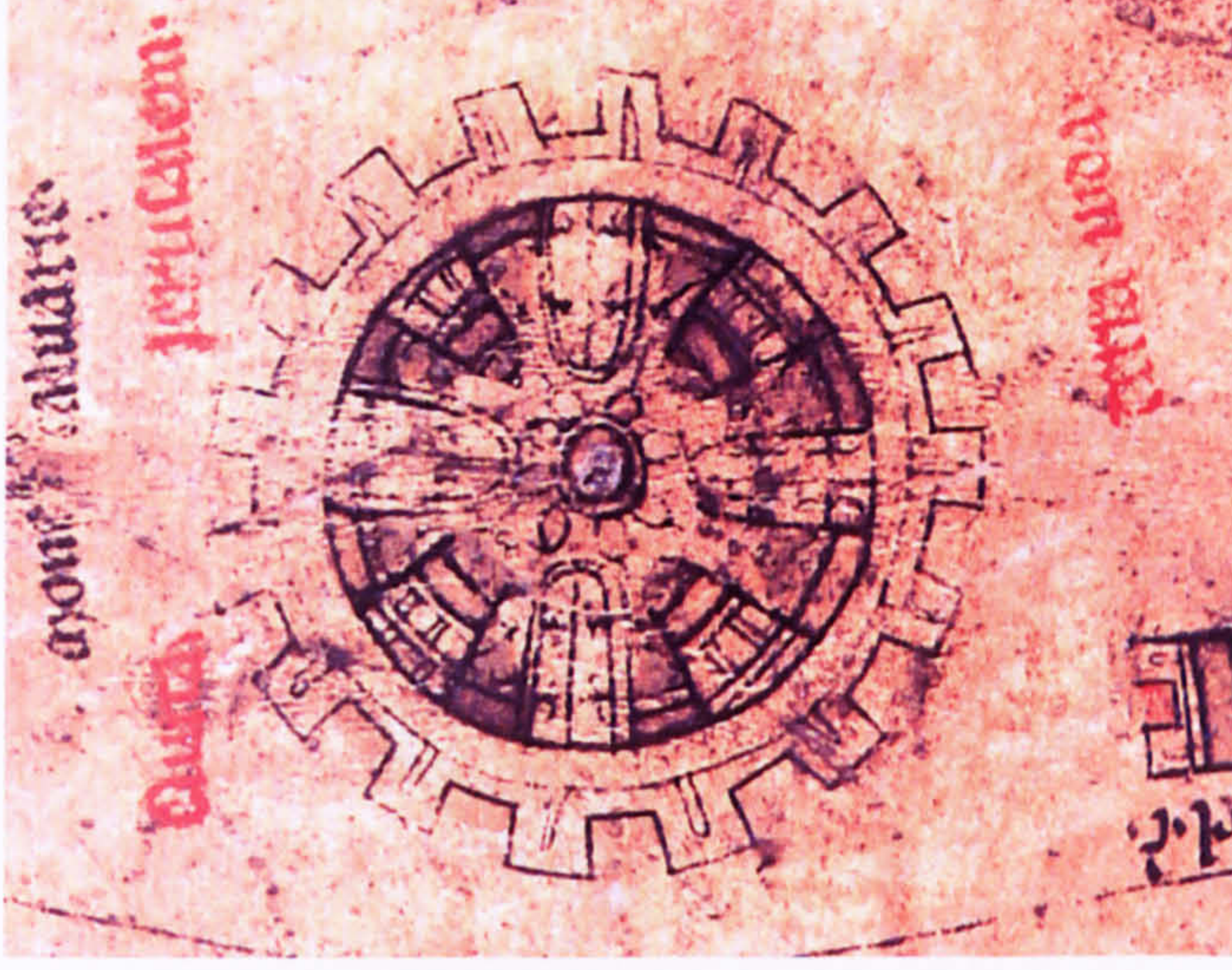


25. Drawing of the seal of Frederick II by Matthew Paris from his *Chronica Majora*. 1229-1253. Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 16, f.72v.

From S. Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris in the Chronica Majora* (Aldershot, 1987), fig.37, p.76.



26. Jerusalem on one of the first Crusader maps, known as *Situs Hierusalem*. C.1100. Bibliothèque Royale Albert 1er, Brussels, MS 9823-9824, f.157.  
From J. Riley-Smith (ed.), *The Atlas of the Crusades* (London, 1990), inset p.44.



27. Jerusalem on the Hereford Mappa Mundi. Late 13th century.  
From P.D.A. Harvey, *Mappa Mundi: The Hereford World Map* (London, 1996), frontispiece.



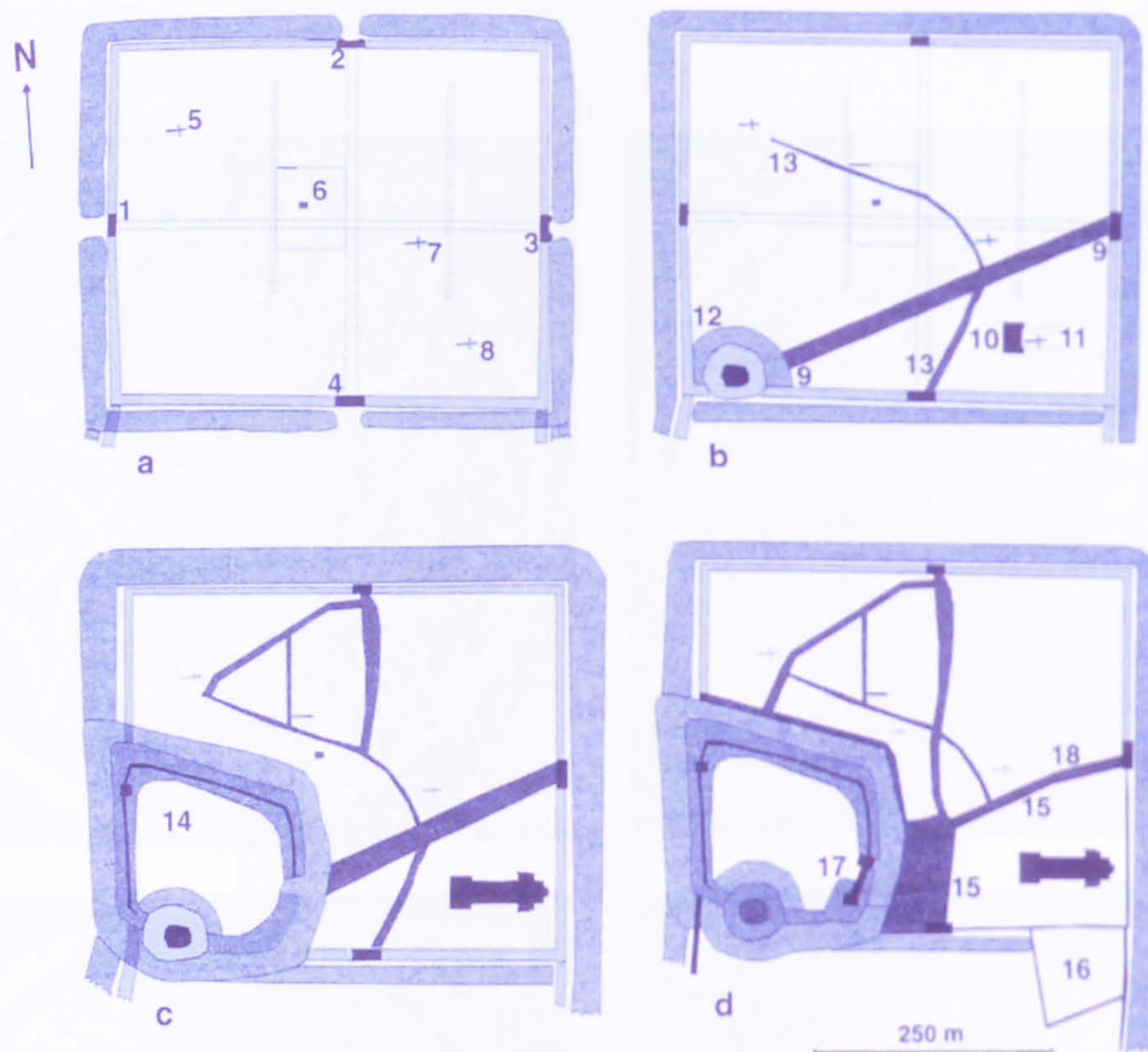


28. Civic seal of York, obverse (left) and reverse (right). 13th century. British Library, London, cat. no. 5543.

From G. Pedrick, *Borough Seals of the Gothic Period* (London, 1904), pl.5.



29. Southern bay of the west front, Lincoln Cathedral, showing machicolation slot. 11th century.



a) The Castle area before 1068: 1 Roman upper city west gate; 2 Roman upper city north gate; 3 Roman upper city east gate; 4 Roman upper city south gate; 5 church of St Clement; 6 church of St Paul in the Bail; 7 church of All Saints; 8 church of St Mary of Lincoln.

b) The Castle area c.1075-c.1100: 9 newly laid-out Eastgate on first alignment; 10 Remigius' Tower; 11 Cathedral under construction; 12 newly constructed motte; 13 possible early road-line linking churches.

c) The Castle area c.1100-c.1125: 14 present castle enclosure under construction.

d) The Castle area c.1125-c.1140: 15 newly defined close; 16 new bishop's palace (from 1137); 17 Castle east gate, associated ranges and second motte constructed; 18 Eastgate on new alignment, new houses built along northern side from c.1140 onwards.

### 30. Plan showing the development of the upper city at Lincoln, pre-Conquest to c.1140.

From D. Stocker and A. Vince, 'The Early Norman Castle at Lincoln and a Re-evaluation of the Original West Tower of Lincoln Cathedral', *Medieval Archaeology* 41 (1997): 223-33, fig.9, p.225.

a



b

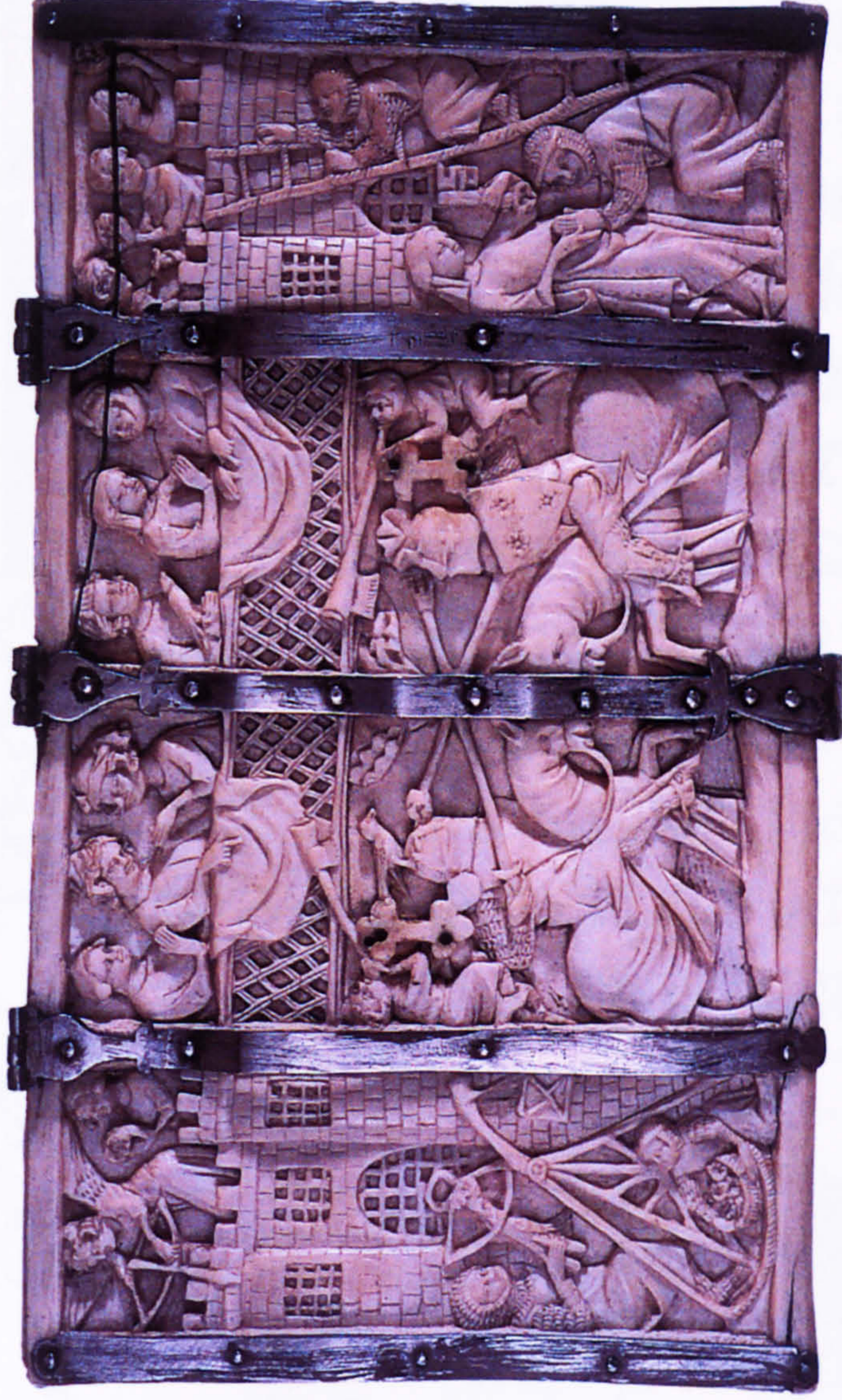


c

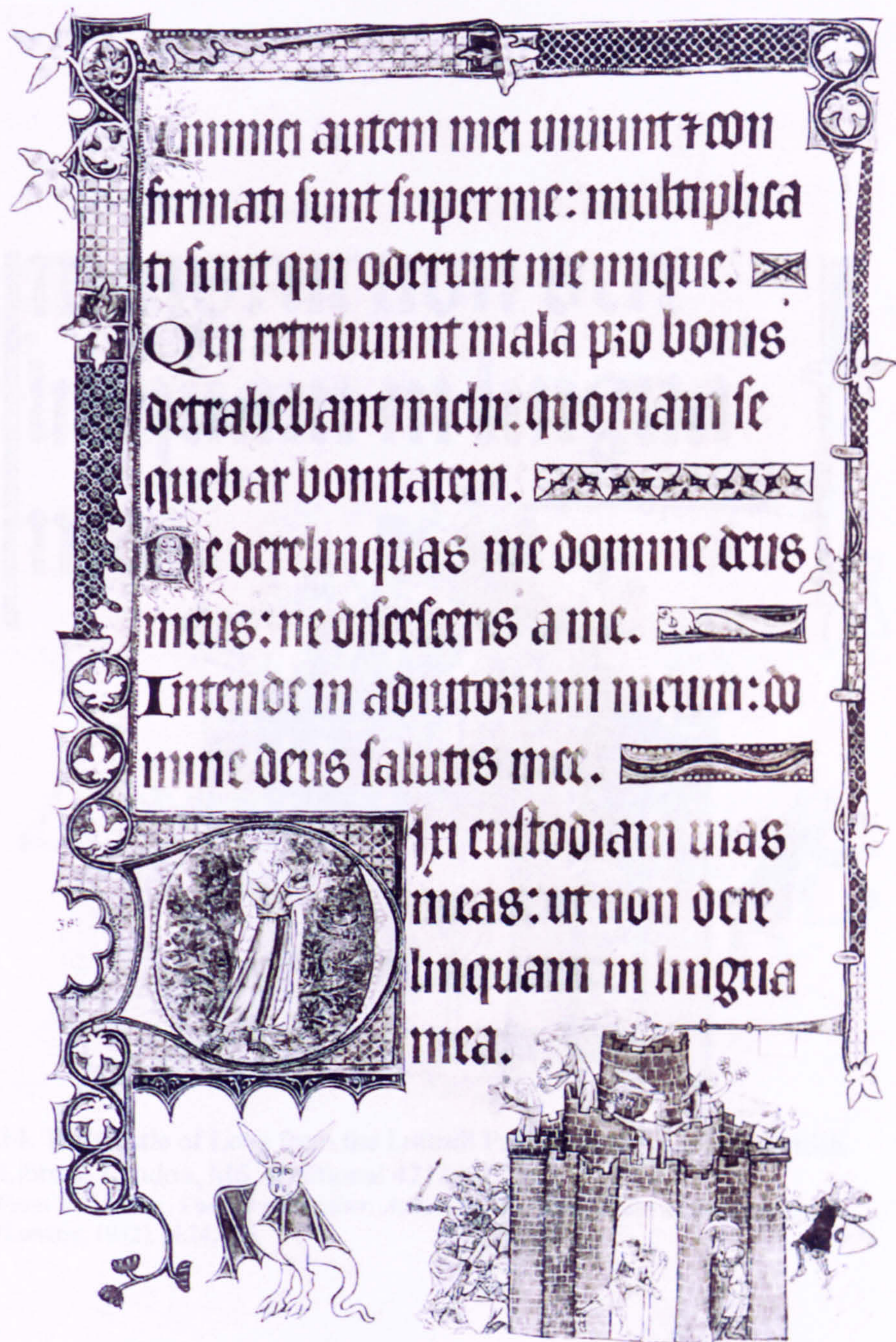


d

31. French ivory mirror-backs depicting scenes of the Castle of Love: a, b, seige; c, capitulation; d, elopement. 14th century. a: Musée Historique, Vienna. b, c: Victoria and Albert Museum, London, cat. nos.1617-55, 9-72. d: Mayer Museum, Liverpool, cat. no.65. From R. Koechlin, *Les Ivoires Gothiques Français* (Paris, 1924), pl.186.

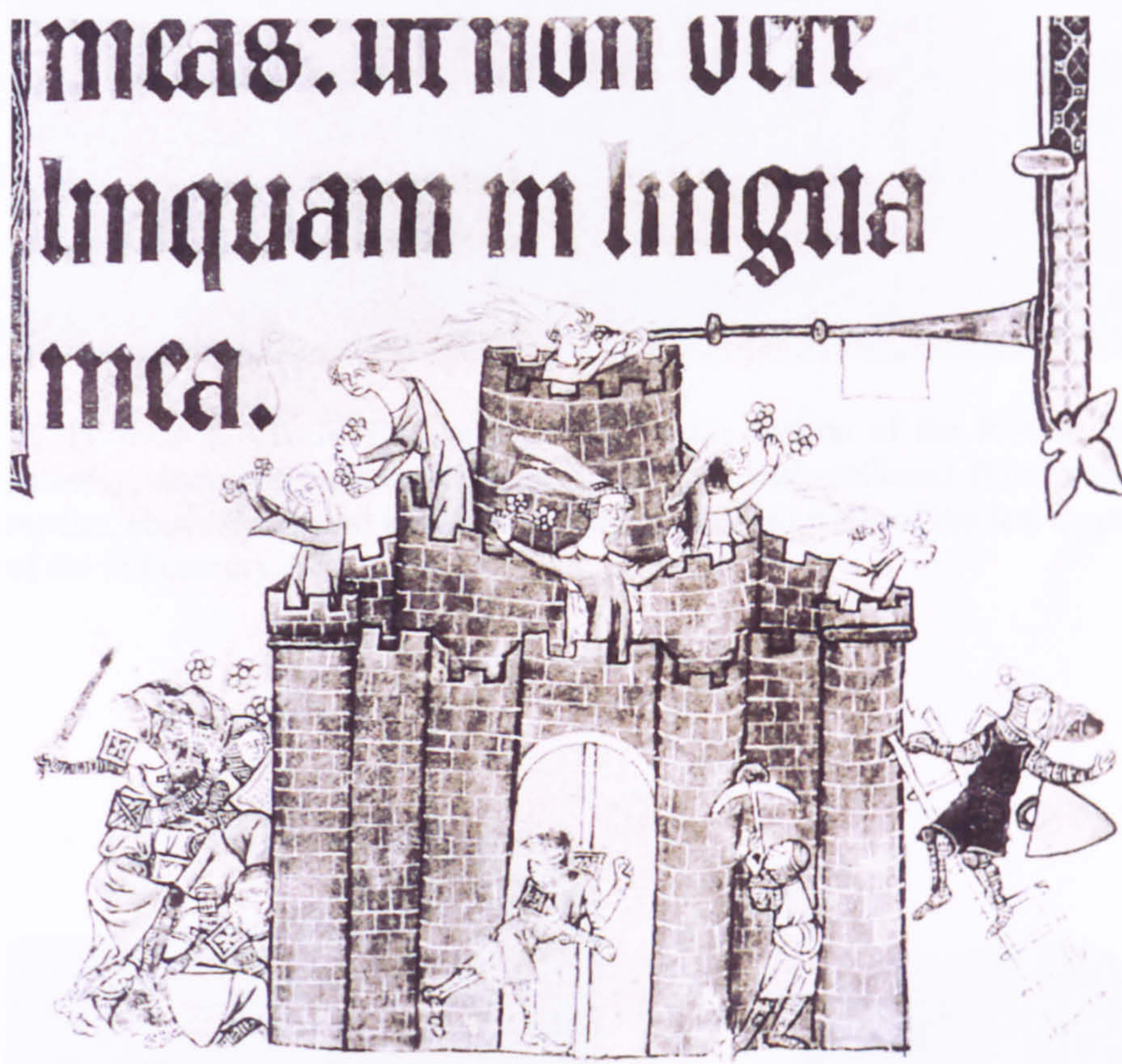


32. French ivory casket depicting the siege of the Castle of Love (right, left) and jousting (centre). 14th century. British Museum, London.  
From M. Camille, *The Medieval Art of Love: Objects and Subjects of Desire* (London, 1998), fig.25.



33. The Castle of Love from the Luttrell Psalter. C.1340. British Library, London, MS Additional 42130, f.75v.

From E.G. Millar, *The Luttrell Psalter: Additional MS 42130 in the British Museum* (London, 1932), pl.24.



34. The Castle of Love from the Luttrell Psalter, detail. C.1340. British Library, London, MS Additional 42130, f.75v.  
From E.G. Millar, *The Luttrell Psalter: Additional MS 42130 in the British Museum* (London, 1932), pl.24.



35. Portchester Castle, Roman fort wall, south bastion of the Roman east gateway, showing tile-banded Roman masonry and medieval flint banded repairs, above. Medieval work ?14th century, Roman walls of the last quarter of the 3rd century A.D.



36. Pevensey Castle, Roman fort west gate showing banded masonry. C.290 A.D.



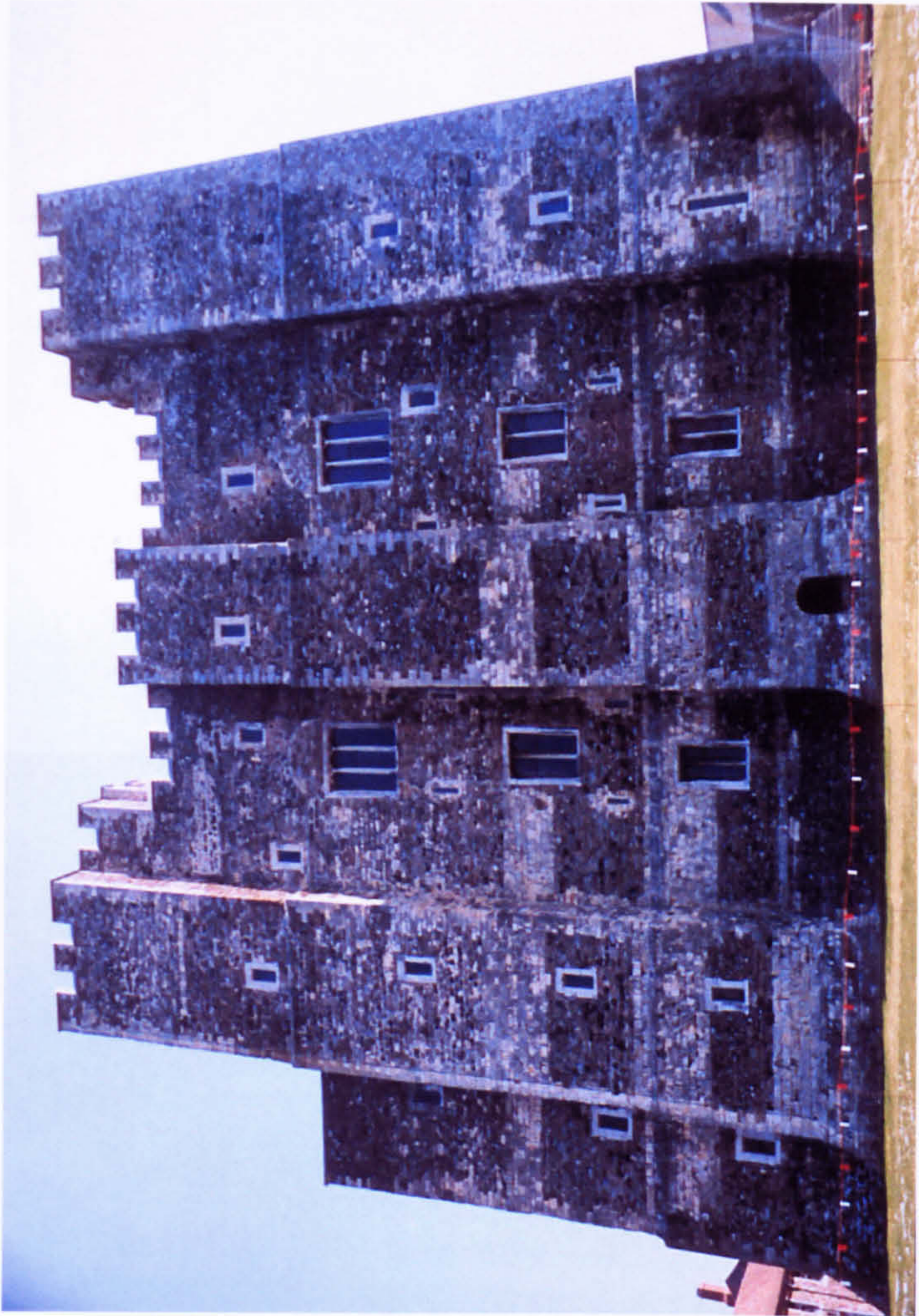
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37. The Great Tower, Chepstow Castle, from the east. 1067-1075.  
From Cadw postcard PA059256/CP560492.



38. The Great Tower, Chepstow Castle, from the south. 1067-1075.



39. Dover Castle keep, north-west face, showing banded masonry. Begun 1183.



40. Dover Castle keep, north corner of the north-west face, showing banded masonry. Begun 1183.



41. Roman *pharos* at Dover Castle, showing banded masonry. 1st century A.D.