It is one thing to excavate; quite another to publish and analyse the results. It is only recently that a number of interesting castle excavations, excavated decades ago, have finally been properly published. The authors of this monograph are to be congratulated for their speed in publishing the results of this major project, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council; furthermore, they include details of previously unpublished excavations in the town, as well as documentary evidence and other finds, to give as complete a view of the town’s development as possible. The book is copiously illustrated, with numerous clear plans, charts diagrams, resistivity results and numerous photographs of finds (and archaeologists in trenches). As well as the lead authors there are contributions by nearly forty specialists, including members of The Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society (TWHAS), a very active local society which also provided human resources to assist with a range of activities, including excavating, pot washing and the extensive resistivity surveying.

Wallingford, now in southern Oxfordshire, was the largest town in Berkshire in the Domesday survey, similar in size to Oxford, with a royal castle. But the town did not develop in the later middle ages and was eclipsed by Oxford and Reading. Thus it retained the ramparts of the Anglo-Saxon burh, castle site and even open spaces within the town, providing opportunities to study its development. The book’s approach is broadly chronological, after two chapters introducing the project and its methodologies.

Chapter 3 (Wallingford before the burh) notes that Dorchester on Thames was the local Roman centre and, although there was an early Anglo-Saxon cemetery just outside the later burh perimeter, and Wallingford’s name seems relatively early, the evidence suggests the burh was founded on a largely undeveloped site. Chapter 4 (The emergent burh: early medieval Wallingford) investigates probably the most significant element of the project. Wallingford was part of Alfred the Great’s planned fortification system for Wessex; one of 33 forts recorded in the Burghal Hidage. The burhs were spread across his kingdom, designed to secure communications (including river crossings), offer refuges, and be centres for musters and storing supplies. Wallingford is noteworthy because its rating of 2,400 hides was the joint highest within the Burghal Hidage list, the same as Alfred’s capital Winchester. Unlike Winchester, with its Roman city walls, Wallingford was a new foundation, so an important ques-
tion is why the site at Wallingford was selected (considered pp. 68-9). Wallingford’s earthen defences, with a managed water flow into its ditches, are the most impressive survivals of the burghal period (pp. 80-3). Its ramparts enclosed 43ha (106 acres) and its approximately rectangular outline and rough grid plan roads, showing it was a planned town, led antiquaries to believe it was Roman. The project team excavated the ramparts, particularly around the area of the north gate, where they partially re-opened excavations of the 1960s (not fully published at the time). As well as publishing the earlier work it enabled them to re-interpret the findings. Bringing together the limited evidence of buildings within the burh suggests the most densely occupied area was the south east quarter, alongside the Thames, while the current open spaces within the ramparts on the west and north west seem to have been largely open in the pre-Conquest period, utilised for agriculture, markets, and probably the occasional accommodation of armies and refugees.

Chapter 5 (Structures of power: the castle) considers the royal castle, founded soon after 1066, when William the Conqueror crossed the Thames at Wallingford on his approach to London. It was built in the north east quarter of the town, probably on a site mentioned (uniquely) in Domesday as having been previously occupied by royal housecarls (pp. 149-50). The castle was held for Matilda and her son (the future Henry II) throughout the wars of Stephen’s reign, but by the later Middle Ages functioned as a palace, before being demolished in the 16th century. Royalists re-fortified the site in 1643, though it surrendered to Parliamentary forces in 1646 after a blockade. Today, the castle earthworks, with only a few upstanding stone fragments, have the unmistakable form of a motte and bailey, albeit with extensive outworks. Analysis of the earthworks (by Michael Fradley) suggests a complex series of developments throughout the Middle Ages, the significant impact of the 1640s refortification, and even later changes such as laying out formal gardens. Resistivity surveys and excavation enable an outline phasing of the castle to be produced (pp. 215-7).

The current bridge over the Thames has been much rebuilt but seems to retain a 12th century arch. Its timber predecessors may have been part of a burghal era plan to block Viking ships, with a military bridgehead on the east bank of the Thames (opposite the town). An exciting find is the remains of a 12th century siege castle at Crowmarsh (and, tentatively, a second nearby), on the east bank, just beyond the boundary of the bridgehead, sited to block the end of the bridge (pp. 229-36, in chapter 6: Approaching Wallingford castle and town). There is an interesting discussion on the three sieges of Wallingford during Stephen’s reign, of 1139, 1146 and 1152-3. All three were attempted blockades utilising siege castles; the 1152-3 siege, the last major action of the wars, definitely involved a siege castle at Crowmarsh (pp. 202-8).

The authors take a restricted view of the castle’s military functions, referring to ‘two short, sharp bursts of violence’ (p. 202, repeated 215, 397); the chapter 5 summary states: ‘The site’s military role was restricted to two sieges, in the mid-12th-century ‘Anarchy’ and the mid 17th-century English Civil War’ (p. 217). An alternative view is that at outbreaks of war during the two centuries following the Conquest records show the castle being prepared for action, suggesting a continuing, probably largely continuous, fundamental military capability. The strategic rationale for siting the castle at Wallingford is noted, and it was founded while the campaigns of the Conquest were continuing (p. 151). It played a central role in the wars of 1139-53 (noted, of course, as a violent episode), ending as one of the strongest castles in the kingdom. £60 was spent strengthening it prior to the 1173-4 rebellion (p 158), and under King John it ‘was once more revealed as a defensive stronghold’, ‘a castle of growing defensive capability’. In 1215-6 it was prepared for siege conditions (pp. 153-4), should Windsor castle have fallen to the rebels. Henry III’s brother, Richard earl of Cornwall, spent lavishly on the castle, apparently transforming it into a ‘concentric
show-fortress’ (p. 155, 398; ‘show castle’ 217). The latter stages of Richard’s rebuilding coincided with increased political tensions in the 1250s, so his planning may well have encompassed defensive considerations as well as style and impressiveness. In 1264 Richard was captured by Simon de Montfort at the battle of Lewes and imprisoned in Wallingford castle. He was moved to Kenilworth after an unsuccessful surprise attack to release him. The Waverley Annals report Simon de Montfort partly losing support because he maintained foreign troops in the castle garrisons at Dover, Windsor and Wallingford, which suggests de Montfort thought it of some significance, even if not a first-rate fortress like the other two.

Chapter 7 (Religious landscapes: spaces, structures and status) recounts the archaeological work to learn more about the (archaeologically rather elusive) priory that occupied the north west quarter of the town, as well as the parish churches, which declined in numbers over the centuries. Chapters 8 (Living, working and trading in medieval Wallingford) and 9 (Provisioning burh and borough: mint, markets and landscape) also try to estimate changes in the population. The mint was important from the late 920s to 1125, and may have begun soon after the burh’s foundation in the late 9th century.

The final chapter, 10 (Situating Wallingford), summarises the development of medieval Wallingford and its failure to thrive. There are also reflections on a number of themes and debates about medieval urbanism, considering comparative sites. Issues concerning burhs, especially those in the Thames valley, are naturally to the fore, but there are also interesting observations on the impact of the imposition (or otherwise) of urban castles on 11th century town development, questioning aspects of received wisdom. This chapter also includes ideas on further lines of inquiry. Meanwhile, TWHAS continues their test pit programme and another book, concentrating on the extensive documentary records of castle and town, is due out shortly.

Richard Hulme
How to Read Castles - A crash course in understanding fortifications - is a delightful, concise and beautifully illustrated handbook. It forms part of the Bloomsbury series of handbooks that include subjects such as bridges, churches, gardens, houses, and even graveyards. It is a pocket-sized primer that takes a strictly visual approach to castle architecture, helping visitors to easily recognize and date the principal types of castle buildings as they developed and to recognize the visual clues that the details of the various elements of the castle’s structures present. The two main sections are: ‘The Grammar of Castles’: Function, Fortress; Residence; Design & Build; Castle Types; Destruction and Revival, and ‘Feature by Feature’: The Great Tower; Enceinte; Towers & Turrets; Wallhead Defence; The Gateway; Barbicans; Accommodation; The Chapel; Prisons; Doors & Porches; Windows & Loops, Water & Sanitation; Heating; Staircases. Followed by a useful Glossary, Gazetteer and Index.

Throughout, the writer uses not photographs but prints, engravings and fine line drawings from a variety of reliable sources. These include Eugene Viollet-le-Duc, Turner & Parker, C H Hartshorne, Sidney Toy (plans and sections) and others. These beautifully executed drawings remain unmatched and give clarity and precision to the points being illustrated on each page, although very occasionally the silver-grey prints lose some sharpness (e.g. the J. P. Neale view of Leeds Castle, p. 126, and the unusual view of Manorbier, p. 118). But the drawings have been carefully chosen for their instructive qualities and are well-presented within their context. In the first ‘Grammar of Castles’ section, the choices and examples of castles used are not limited to France and Britain, but ambitiously include castles from Italy, Spain, Germany, Russia, the Crusader kingdoms, and Japan, all included perhaps to extend the range of its possible readership appeal.

On the other hand, most of the ‘Feature by Feature’ details are drawn from castles within the UK and France. Within each feature, the subject is further broken down: thus Accommodation is in three sections: Early Great Halls - (Oakham, Hedingham); Mid-medieval Great Halls - (Stokesay, Acton Burnell); Late Medieval Great Halls - (Kenilworth, Yanworth, Raglan). Of necessity the writer has had to make a rigorous selective process to identify key buildings or features that are representative of different time periods, so only two or three suffice.

The longest section deals with the vital subject of the keep or ‘Great Tower’ (pp. 94-117). This includes 11 sub-sections broadly developed in chronological order: Shell keeps (Lincoln, Berkeley, Launceston, Tamworth), Hall keeps (Colchester, Caste Rising), Tower keeps (Loches, Hedingham, Bellver, Château de Landskron in Alsace), Forebuildings (Arques-la-Bataille, Orford, Newcastle); Cylindrical keeps (Coucy, New Buckenham); Cylindrical keep variants (Conisbrough, Houdan); Quatrefoil keeps (Étampes); Polygonal Keeps (Provins); Tower House (Langley, Borthwick, Tukhlah [Syria]; Solar Towers (Longthorpe, Stokesay, Mortham, Tattershall); Later Great Towers (Warkworth,
Malcolm is especially known for his knowledge and expertise in the castles of northern England and this becomes evident throughout the pages by the selection of many of the castle elements which are taken from C. H. Hartshorne’s *Feudal and Military Antiquities of Northumberland* (Alnwick, Warkworth, Raby, Prudhoe etc) and Turner & Parker’s Aydon Castle amongst others. Viollet-le-Duc’s illustrations (*Dictionnaire raisonné de l’architecture française du XIe au XVIe siècle*) are normally from Carcassonne, Coucy or Pierrefonds.

As one would expect, the writer’s commentary and analysis reflects his up-to-the-minute awareness of current knowledge, trends and revisionist thinking within castle studies. Thus, when discussing ‘Murder Holes’ (pp. 164-5) he carefully notes that: ‘the so-called murder hole is a type of machicolation largely confined to gateways. It consists of an opening, often one of a group of similar features in the vault or elevation of a gate-passage that could be used by the occupants of the floor above. In the past they have been explained as a means by which the defenders of a castle could harry an enemy with missiles in the event of them gaining unauthorised access to the gate-passage, but alternative interpretations, including their use as a supply hatch, are equally, if not more valid’. Thus, some of the ‘murder holes’ in the gate-passage at Goodrich Castle, viewed recently by this reviewer, are now seen not as murder holes, but, as the EH display panel explains, for the counterweights of the portcullis mechanism when being raised and lowered.

Of the definition of ‘Tower House’ the author notes that (p. 112): ‘Tower house is a name given to great towers that are self-contained dwellings. The name is usually applied to smaller towers built by the lesser nobility in unsettled regions in which the characteristic form of residence was a tower. It is not generally applied to the great towers that form part of the castle. However, some great towers were as self-contained as tower houses and some buildings that are described as tower houses form elements of wider complexes. The term is therefore used in an imprecise fashion, and there is no universally accepted definition’.

There are nearly 1000 illustrations in the book and Malcolm is normally punctilious in specifying which castle the drawing or illustration refers to. However, there are a few that are untitled, and it is a useful intellectual challenge to try to put a name to the castle. Examples include: p. 94 (Gisors), 114 (Longthorpe Tower), 118 (Manorbier), 138 (Eagle Tower, Caernarvon), 154 (Alnwick), 168 Villeneuve-sur-Yonne (one of the town gates) 169 (right - Caerphilly), 190 (Broughton Castle near Banbury), 202 (Wingfield Manor), 216 (Alnwick), 233 (Wingfield Manor), 240 (Carcassonne), and a few more.

Any basis for producing accessible and readable text and commentary is summed up by John Ruskin: ‘It is far more difficult to be simple than it is to be complicated; far more difficult to sacrifice skill and easy execution in the proper place, than to expand both indiscriminately’. Efforts required to simplify concentrates the mind, and the apparent succinct simplicity of Malcolm’s explanatory comments belies much hard work in reducing a complicated subject to its basics, yet doing so in an authoritative way that informs and educates.

Any cavils are minor and have more to do with the reproduction of a few images rather than supporting texts. The nature of the pocket-sized publication requires many of the full, and sometimes long distance castle images to be thumb-nail size. This, coupled with the grey-scale tones sometimes produces an indistinct thumbnail visual. That, together with the failing eyesight of this ageing reviewer, and the small font size of the print demands quite close concentration. But that does not detract from the pleasure of assimilating the wonderful architectural detail drawings that bring these buildings to life and illustrate complex concepts so clearly.

Malcolm has for many years been an active member of the Castle Studies Group and over the last few years has authored various excellent books and papers, including *How to Build a Cathedral* (2012) and *John Lewyn of Durham: A Medieval Mason in Practice* (BAR British Series, 2007).

**Neil Guy**
Clogh Oughter Castle, Co. Cavan: Archaeology, History and Architecture.

Author: Conleth Manning
Publisher: Stationery Office, Dublin.
Sponsor: Dept. of the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
ISBN: 978-1-4064-2777-6
Publication Details: 2013
Soft Cover: Price: €30.00

Clogh Oughter Castle, Co. Cavan: Archaeology, History and Architecture is No. 8 in the highly respected Archaeological Monograph Series. The series began in 2003 with No. 1, edited by Conleth Manning, entitled: Excavations at Roscrea Castle. Others have followed in the same format, including two other castle monographs: No. 6, Trim Castle, Co. Meath: Excavations 1995-8 (Alan R. Hayden), and No 7: Parke’s Castle, Co. Leitrim: Archaeology, History and Architecture (Clare Foley and Colm Donnelly). For the latter, see the CSG Bibliography for 2013 (p. 12).

The production quality of these monographs is outstanding and Clogh Oughter is no exception. It is in the usual A4 format with full colour throughout, printed on high quality silk-gloss finish paper. Layout, typesetting and presentation makes this handsome monograph a pleasure to browse and read. The book is packed with images and the stunningly sharp and often dramatic ground and aerial views supplied by the Photographic Unit of the NMS add extra clarity and vibrancy to the text (e.g. Pl. 3.1). Footnotes, mainly confined to Chapter 2 (History), are kept to a minimum.

Conleth Manning needs no introduction to CSG members. He is a senior archaeologist in the Department’s National Monuments Service, and the monograph illuminates the development of the castle using the results of survey and archaeological excavations that were carried out at the site in 1987-8 to facilitate conservation works on the castle. From these early days Manning oversaw the excavation. This was followed by an underwater investigation of the castle in 2012 by Karl Brady. Manning has now finally been able to bring this thorough, model report into print. The long gestation period has allowed for rigorous research and considered discussion. For example, an important section of the discussion on C13 round towers (Chapter 7) was dealt with in Château Gaillard 25 (Clogh Oughter Castle, Co Cavan, and Thirteenth Century Circular Towers in Ireland), pp. 223-231.

The chapters of the book consider (1) the setting of the castle, (2) its history, (3) detailed description, (4) the rationale for its conservation and (5) excavation. The sixth chapter contains the specialist reports on various aspects of the archaeology, such as bone objects, military artefacts and textiles, while the final section (7) (discussion) is an informative and thought-provoking analysis on the results of the excavation and investigation and their significance in the local and national contexts. The archaeological excavations and accompanying historical research associated with it have thrown much light on the architectural and building history of the castle, particularly on its later use during the mid seventeenth century and on the final siege and subsequent partial destruction of this great early thirteenth-century tower.
Clogh Oughter is tucked away in a remote cor-
ner of Co. Cavan, on a tiny island in Lough Oughter. In the ‘Discussion’ section Manning introduces to the reader the concept and back-
ground of the Irish crannog and suggests that the ‘Crannog of the O’Reillys’ - an island built up of stones thrown down on a bedrock base in a shallow part of the lough, is probably the same island on which the Anglo-Norman de Lacy’s father-in-law was Llywelwyn ab Iorwerth (the Great), who actually built Dolbadarn.

Whilst there is no close dating evidence for Dolbadarn (R. Avent, Cadw guidebook, Dolwyddelan Castle, Dolbadarn Castle, 2004, 12), a date in the 1230s has been suggested, although an earlier date is also possible. So there may be a familial link stylistically with these two towers. However, Dolbadarn’s turret is simply a garderobe tower and the spiral stair is built elsewhere within the thickness of the cylinder wall. In regard to Clogh Oughter tower’s near doubling of height by c. 1224, it is noted that ‘the builder of Phase 2 appears to have been more interested in the imposing appearance of the higher tower than in providing further accommodation’, (p. 197), and no additional floors were added until the C17 (Phase 3, 1610-20).

The discussion of stand-alone circular towers built in the early 13th century (pp. 198-201) is a key section of the monograph in putting the round tower into local and Europe-wide context. This section should be read in conjunction with Château Gaillard 25, where Manning is able to give greater details of comparative towers and elaborate his arguments with detailed plans (Table 1 is particularly useful, listing all Irish/Welsh/English round towers, with their external/internal diameters and wall thicknesses). It is most likely that the Clogh Oughter tower was built either butting up against or adjacent to the curtain wall (now missing), or at least having access to the curtain wall (now missing), or at least having access to the curtain wall perhaps via a bridge from the 1st-floor level. There were three doorways at 1st-floor level (Openings 4, 6 and 8, Figs. 3.3 & 3.19). Opening 6 was there from the start, possibly in Phase 1, giving access to the curtain wall and a garderobe attached in some way to it. In Phase 2 the stair turret was added and this same doorway was used for access. Opening 4 was the main entrance and opening 8 could also have given access to the curtain wall (wall tooting underneath it).
There is a really interesting section on the various types of window openings and embrasures being constructed in towers at this period, the options of segmental, round-headed or pointed arches and variations on the width and geometry of the embrasures and loops. (p. 199). Some windows, of course [perhaps the majority] have parallel-sided embrasures (Dundrum, Nenagh, Kilkenny, Dublin - Record Tower). Unusually, at Clogh Oughter the sides ‘initially diverge from the inner face as radii of the circle’ (in other words, on plan, they look like a pentagon in geometric form). Apparently this is only paralleled once in Ireland at Kiltinan as a standalone tower and in one mural tower on the walls of Kilkenny. (It would be interesting if any readers can suggest any examples of this form found in England and Wales). The fact that Clogh Oughter has a combination of segmental (ground floor) and pointed arched heads (first floor) to the door/window embrasures suggests to the author that this would probably favour a date in the 1220s rather than any earlier date in towers of this type.

However there still remain a number of mysteries. On the western side of the tower is a large rectangular parallel-sided hole running through the wall (Pls. 3.18 & 3.24). The hole is about .75 m high and about .5 m wide. Its base is roughly level with the head of the third floor opening. There was a corresponding opening in line with it in the eastern wall. The author suggests that these holes held a massive beam of timber which must have been put in place when the wall of the tower reached this height. The function of this massive beam remains unclear - but it may have in some way supported the Phase 2 roof structure. It seems certain that this was an original feature of the upper part of the tower (pp. 57-58). (They are out of view in the image above left, which is a view from the south. The missing section contained the original first floor entrance. ).

From the outset of the conservation project it had been hoped that it would be possible for members of the public to access the top of the tower so that the view could be enjoyed. The difficulties of achieving this objective on an isolated non-custodial building gradually became apparent. There is a system of wooden platforms that have been permanently installed, but only with moveable ladders, thus allowing maintenance and cleaning works (p. 71).

Clogh Oughter Castle is a magnificently conserved monument, located in the most beautiful of settings, and is emblematic of the high quality of Ireland’s heritage resource. Conleth Manning and the staff of the National Monuments Service are to be congratulated on setting the highest standards in unravelling and superbly illustrating its history and project managing the physical rescue and renewal of this dramatic, monumental building. There is no doubt that this lucid and cultured monograph will be the standard reference for Clogh Oughter Castle for many years to come. It can be purchased directly from www.wordwellbooks.com.

Neil Guy
Carmarthen Castle - The Archaeology of Government

Author: Neil Ludlow
Publisher: University of Wales Press
Hardback: £34.99
ISBN: 9781783160129
Pages: 475, size: 189 x 246 mm; figs: 166.
Black & white throughout
Published: 15 June 2014

Carmarthen Castle was one of the largest castles in medieval Wales. It was also one of the most important, with its role as a centre of government and as the sole Crown possession in a region dominated by Welsh-controlled lands and Marcher lordships. Largely demolished during the seventeenth century, it was subsequently redeveloped, first as a prison and later as the local authority headquarters. Yet the surviving remains, and their situation, are still impressive although until the mid-90s, due to encroachment and peripheral development the best remaining features of Carmarthen Castle were essentially hidden from view.

The situation changed with a major programme of archaeological and research work from 1993 to 2006, which is described in close detail in Neil Ludlow’s book. The castle’s history, its impact on the region and on Wales as a whole are also examined; the officials and other occupants of the castle are described, along with their activities and how they interacted with their environment. Excavations at the castle, and the artefacts recovered, are described along with its remaining archaeological potential.

The reader is first confronted with an illuminating, eye-opening, detailed bird’s eye view of a conjectural reconstruction of Carmarthen Castle viewed from the south-west, as it may have appeared in c. 1500 (see cover). It is the essential key that unlocks the castle. Much of this has now gone, but the author follows a meticulous evidential process through survey, archaeological excavation, documentary history, research, and topographical analysis, to establish the accuracy and feasibility of the architectural detail presented. The full extent of the castle’s two wards is calculated as 1.4 hectares (3.5 acres), which would make it one of the largest castles in Wales after Caerphilly. Sadly, due to demolition and later layers of development (the county gaol and later county hall) much of this remains buried or masked. But much does still remain above ground - the Shell Keep, the west Great Gatehouse, the SW Tower and the south Square Tower.

The 7 chapters are: 1:Introduction; 2: Carmarthen Castle and its place in Medieval Wales; 3: The Physical Remains; 4: Reconstructing the Castle; 5: Division, Demolition and Development: The Post-Medieval Castle; 6: Pottery and Other Finds; 7: Epilogue: The Castle Rediscovered. Chapters are richly illustrated with meticulously drawn maps, plans, elevations and sections. The tonal and compositional qualities of the black and white photographs add and enhance detail to architectural features, whereas colour can often do the reverse. The archaeological/architectural plans and sections that accompany Chapter 3 can be singled out for their instructive clarity, generous helpful labelling and their innovative design and this is the chapter that drills down into the archaeological detail of the remains that have been surveyed or unearthed since 1993, underpinning the narrative.
For this reviewer Chapter 4 is the most ambitious section wherein the author attempts to reconstruct the physical evolution of the castle from 1106 to 1550. Neil identifies or postulates 7 phases: 1: The Timber Castle 1105-1180; 2: The Shell Keep, 1181-1222; 3: The Masonry Defences 1223-1240; 4: Buildings for the King, 1241-1278; 5: More Accommodation 1279-1300; 6: Buildings for Government 1301-1408; 7: Damage and Rebuilding, 1409-c. 1550. The first 4 of these phases can be directly related to the important parts of the castle that remain - the motte/shell keep, main gatehouse and the SW Tower, and much analysis is given to analogues of castles that have comparative dates or that have similar architectural features both in Wales and elsewhere.

Whilst the lobed masonry ‘shell keep’ is traditionally and conventionally dated to the 1220-30s (and Neil gives plenty of good reasons why this may be so), he also offers a well-argued alternative scenario, that the revetting of the existing motte, the shell wall with its three (possibly 4) unusual semi-round turrets was the product of a campaign in the 1180s when the castle was in Crown control. A comparison is made here with Berkeley Castle of a similar or earlier date with its three half-round ‘bastions’ and includes other circumstantial evidence of a link between Berkeley and Carmarthen (pp. 180-3). Excavation also found the footings of a central circular structure within the shell keep - too small in diameter to be a ‘keep’ but it may have been a watch-tower, which might account for the reference to the shell keep described as ‘four high towers with the watch-tower (garit)’ of an account from 1321 (p. 181 & fig. 115). (Alternatively the 5 towers in total may refer to the complete circuit of towers ringing the Inner Ward, the shell keep complex included as one of the 5). This reviewer also notes from HKW (II) (p. 601) of repairs made in 1250-60 to the ‘roof of the keep’ (n.2), and wonders if the shell keep, in fact, may at one time, in its earliest stages, have had a composite roof similar in principle to Clifford’s Tower, York. However, this may refer to the composite roof of all the structures within the inner perimeter of the shell.

In connection with Phase 3, (1223-1240), when the castle was under the control/ownership of Hubert de Burgh / William Marshal the Younger, most of the Inner Ward Towers and gates were completed. The author notes that: ‘Hubert de Burgh and the Marshal earls were among the leading innovators in castle design during the early thirteenth century. The Marshals built extensively at Chepstow, Pembroke, in Ireland and elsewhere. Hubert de Burgh - who, as acting regent during the minority of Henry III, effectively was the Crown - also built on a considerable scale. The work at Carmarthen however, stands at an important juncture in British castle development. Hitherto, the great barons had been influential in this development. From the mid-thirteenth century, however, they increasingly looked to the buildings of the Crown - the ‘king’s works’ - for architectural trends and patterns of castle design’.

This period (Phase 3) probably includes the construction of the SW Tower, a large spurred drum tower with high spurs clasping the tower flanks, is of a type generally dateable to the last three decades of the C13. The author argues for the possibility of a much earlier construction date, partly relating to its close affinity to the very similar North Tower at Cardigan Castle, reliably dated to the 1240-50s period (pp. 184-6). Discussion follows on the general development of spurred towers in C13/14 castles in Britain, highlighting the two main variants - the pyramidal type, normally only seen in Wales and the broached square base to round tower type seen in England at Dover and elsewhere. This is an informed discussion drawing on a wide range of examples and builds on the valuable account of spurred tower development by John Goodall (English Castles pp. 171-4, 206-9). The author notes that (with one exception, St. Briavels), pyramidal spurred towers are all developed at baronial castles, that Cardigan’s North Tower was probably begun under baronial tenure, and posits that Carmarthen’s SW Tower may have been its model and precursor. In other words Carmarthen represents the first example of a
pyramidal spurred cylindrical tower built in Britain (c. 1230s), the concept of which was possibly carried forward by the Clares to Tonbridge in the 1250s, rather than anything developed at the Tower of London. In all this comparative analysis, the author brings to bear a wide range of contemporary sources demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of the current level of knowledge, trends and thinking in the developmental architectural aspects of castle studies, adding weight to this work.

Each sequential construction phase is accompanied by a clear progressive sketch showing a suggested development of the layout of buildings within the Wards. Thus, Phase 4, fig. 119, highlights the work of Henry III during the period 1241-78. This work included the King’s Hall, Chamber and Tower, all conjoined, in the SE quadrant of the Inner Ward. These are clearly illustrated on the bird’s eye reconstruction. The Inner Ward was later dissected by an E-W cross-wall creating a more private inner sanctum to the south - in effect a zoned-off third ward, with all or of most the administrative buildings to the north of this cross-wall. (But oddly, the Middle Gate seems to connect directly into the walled off ‘King’s space’ - see also the Speed map, fig. 112). (The use of private space is dealt with more fully under the section ‘Social Organisation: the Castle as Residence pp. 205-211).

The author’s creative ideas for the scholarly reconstructions of many of these lost buildings appear to be drawn from the mid-C13 Henry III towers at the Tower of London with their single or twinned ‘ears’, Goodrich, Helmsley, Pembroke, Montgomery, and with, perhaps, a few personal ‘flights of fancy’ e.g. the long pentise on the inside face of the north wall. It all serves to highlight what high quality buildings are lost.

Chronologically arranged topographical views of Carmarthen have to wait until Chapter 5. John Speed’s view is illustrated in Chapter 4 (fig. 112, p. 176), but Speed can often illustrate buildings in a representational way and is potentially (but not always) unreliable. ‘Speed’s plan is not always easy to interpret and must be used with caution. For example, the cross ditch is not shown..’ (p. 176). And ‘Speed’s drawing
of 1610 may be misleading’.. notes the author (p. 229). The earliest extant views seem to be those by the Buck brothers and Neil makes good use of them, referring to them frequently. There are two, both taken from the south. The first (1740) is from the SW with the river bridge on the right, and the second (1748) from the SE with the bridge on the left. Both have their virtues and vices, and both are illustrated (figs. 126, 127, pp. 230, 235). However, both are fairly small reproductions. It may have been a little more helpful to have had each of the Buck prints cropped, enlarged and labelled to show more individual detail, and to have included them in Chapter 4 placed against the various architectural features as they are discussed point by point. It is true that the two Buck views sometimes show dissimilar features - they are not obviously consistent with each other - but Buck did deliberately bend perspective to allow more sides of a building to seen than is possible with the naked eye, so often these discrepancies can be resolved. It is also possible that some towers had fallen or had been demolished between 1740 and 1748. For some reason the C15 Square Tower along the south perimeter, which should be near the SW Tower is not shown, and the southern end of the N-S cross-ditch, which Neil illustrates bridged by a square postern tower seems difficult to locate. (It looks like a fissure in the rock face). The shell-keep is also difficult to reconcile between the 1740 and 1748 views and the building with the large gable behind and extending from the Great Gatehouse is shown on a parallel axis with the entrance in the 1748 view, but on a cross-axis with the entrance on the 1740 view. As the Bucks and most later views are all from the south from across the Tywi river topographical analysis from the C18 is necessarily limited and difficult. However, there are a number of important elements to the castle’s development that are now firmly established by the author, often for the first time, proven either through archaeological excavation, topographical analysis or through the available historical documentation (well detailed in the Appendix). Many of these features are no longer readily
evident due to later development, and it is worth listing the points to remind ourselves of the scope of this work. To recap a few of these main points:

1. Its early form: two distinct wards or baileys cut by a deep N-S dry cross-ditch. The Outer Bailey (or suggested hornwork) to the east may well have been the initial primary entry route, entering via a gate near Spilman St, and then via a timber bridge over the N-S ditch into the Inner Ward through the Middle Gate (shown on Speed’s map). It may have been William Marshal II (or earlier) who ‘turned around’ the castle to face west - to the town - at some point after the town had been fully established (p. 179).

2. The motte may have developed into a masonry shell keep by the 1180s; it was at least tri-lobed in form, and had a small circular tower at its centre, discussed above. Analogies for the shell and lobes are made with Berkeley. The circular tower with stone footings have may been half-timbered, and may pre-date the shell keep construction (pp. 180-4).

3. The SW spurred drum tower may be the product of a 1230s building campaign by the Marshals, (or H. de Burgh) and the North Tower at Cardigan (1240s-60s) may be a direct copy from it. It may have influenced the spurred gatehouse towers at Tonbridge (pp. 184-8).

4. The south-east part of the Inner Ward became zoned off as the King’s private space following the work of Henry III in the mid-12th century. The King’s Tower (D-shaped, based on Helmsley in the reconstruction, now lost), was conjoined with the ground-floor Great Hall and King’s Chamber and may have been the most significant tower in the castle.

5. The Outer Ward was probably walled in stone in the 1280-90s. Two significant corner towers are (NE & SW) shown by Speed (although Speed does not show the N-S cross-ditch). It may also have housed the great stable block. Its north gate may have later included a barbican.

6. The west Great Gatehouse is a rebuild c. 1409 over a C13 twin-towered gatehouse. The mason who was in charge of building the Kidwelly gatehouse may have been the same. Excavation revealed the two stone piers for a bridge and drawbridge, leading to a significant barbican (also shown by Speed). The gatehouse had previously been extended to the rear in Phase 5, 1279-1300, (fig. 120), possibly losing a spiral stair turret in Phase 7 (fig. 124).

7. The remodelling of the motte, hitherto unremarked in any published studies is seen as a massive civil engineering project. It appears to have accompanied the building of the adjacent Justiciar’s Mansion, c. 1310-20 which overlies the motte ditch and encroached upon the south part of the motte. It may have been at this time that the shell keep forebuilding was (re)built.

8. The intermediate south Square Tower (ex tant, but not shown by Speed or Buck) is probably late 14th or early 15th century, with contemporary comparisons to the changing preferences for square towers, cf. Pickering.

It should be mentioned that in addition to addressing the physical remains and the conjectural development of the castle, much is also written about the landscape setting, the castle’s role in politics and war, as a centre of government, social organisation, decline and re-use; and development as prison and seat of the county council - matters not discussed in this review.

Carmarthen Castle is a pleasure to read. The text is erudite, argument is strong yet undogmatic, and the figures - illustrations, plans, sections etc - are outstanding in their clarity and precision. The footnotes, placed at the end of each chapter are in an unusually good-sized font and very easy to read. The author writes with authority. This is borne out of the author’s meticulous research, an intimate knowledge of the whole structure after living with it for nearly 20 years, and a wide-ranging awareness of the current state of knowledge and of all the various strands of thinking within castle studies. The book puts Carmarthen Castle, (somewhat still unloved it must be said), at the heart of the history of medieval Wales, the whole study combining to restore the castle’s pre-eminence and make a major contribution to the history of one of Wales’s great towns. Carmarthen Castle may well be the castle ‘Book of the Year’ for 2014, both in Welsh and English.

Neil Guy
Goodrich Castle: Its History and Buildings

Author: Ron Shoesmith
Publisher: Logaston Press
Paperback: 240 pages
Published: Soft Cover edition: April 2014
Price: £12.95

This publication has its origins as far back as 1989, when a ‘feasibility study’ for a book, or monograph, was prepared for English Heritage. The main part of the project took place between 1999 and 2002, and at the time it was intended that this should be an academic publication; almost 180,000 words were written with exhaustive details about every feature. Unfortunately the programme was put on hold and went into abeyance in 2002. It was rescued in 2012 with much help from Dr. Nigel Baker of Herefordshire Archaeology and funding restored, (Baker, N, ‘A Revised Project Design... The Completion, Editing and Publication of Goodrich Castle, Herefordshire’, February 2012). The revised project was to be a book of more popular interest. Ron Shoesmith’s introduction notes that: ‘all those long descriptions of mouldings, door fastenings, etc had to go, the text had to be reduced by half and many site drawings were replaced with photographs. With much effort and with many groans from the various contributors, this has been done’.

Contributors to various chapters include Bruce Coplestone-Crow, Pat Hughes, Loretta Nikolić, P J Pikes and Thomas Richards. The book is now in four distinct parts: The Goodrich Area; The Historical Background; The Buildings; and The Finds & Life at the Castle. The first part sets the scene and covers the background history. The historical background deals with the people who built and lived in the castle, the destruction caused by the Civil War and the gradual emergence of the building, first as a romantic ruin and then as an ancient monument. Chapters 11-18 deal with the building and its description is led by its various constructional periods rather than by individual buildings. The sections within this deal broadly with the following: possible earthworks and the first stone castle; the grand 13th century Edwardian castle which included the addition of curtain walls, corner towers and some internal buildings; 14th century additions and alterations; the barbican; the gradual conversion to houses from the 15th to the 18th century.

have been variously dated: we have the present EH guidebook suggesting most ‘Edwardian’ work was done by 1296, Anthony Emery’s Vol. II entry suggesting most was done by Aymer, 1307-24 (d. 1324). Ron Shoesmith’s revisionist monograph moves away quite a lot from the current guidebook and it is worth listing the major areas where views radically diverge:

**The Norman Keep (pp. 108-116)**

This is seen as a ‘solar keep’, built by Baderon of Monmouth (p. 26). Thurlby gives reasons for supposing that the carved decoration of the keep is allied to the work of the Herefordshire School of Romanesque Sculpture, active in Herefordshire and neighbouring counties and suggests that the keep should be dated c. 1120-40. (Pl. 13, p. 64).

**The Edwardian Castle (William, & Aymer Valence), (1250-1327)**

Rock-cut ditches on the East and South; New curtain walls and corner towers (SE, NW, SW (the SW tower later rebuilt by the Talbots) North range (solar/hall) and vestibule Gatehouse and Chapel Towers Low status east building. 1st Barbican

**The Talbot Work: (1327-1421)**

New west curtain including the Great Hall and lobby Alterations to chapel - balcony/wall steps/upper room inside gatehouse for canons.

Replacement of SW Tower with the ‘Great Tower’ (p. 130, fig. 12.13).

New beaked south curtain wall linking the SE & SW tower with rooms around the Norman keep including the dungeon (jail) and kitchen. New east hall.

Alterations to barbican and improvements to the gatehouse.

**The Shrewsburys: (1442-1590)**

Addition of 1st floor to N. Range with galleries 3-storey timber E range with galleries Grand staircase hall in lobby.

Insertion of garderobe tower on E. Wall.

Further extension eastwards of gatehouse New windows in chapel Formation of N & W (outer) wards with enclosing walls and towers

Stables in west ward and associated works. Piped water supply and alterations to kitchen.

See the ‘Chronological Table’ pp. 22-23 for a quick guide to these suggested changes. Clearly there is a lot to consider, and the CSG will be able to look carefully at the castle in 2016 as part of their April Conference itinerary based in Hereford. Perhaps, in all of this, the most radical view is the suggestion that the west range, including the great hall, lobby and the SW tower was built/ rebuilt c. 1330-40s - such a short time after their completion by the Valences in, say, the 1290s.

The book is generously supplied with plans, images, survey drawings, and antiquarian views with some excellent full-page close-up photographs of the castle’s interiors (by the late John Stevenson). The EH ground plan has been colour modified to highlight the suggested dating sequence changes and there are a number of very fine reconstruction drawings around the interior courtyards (figs. 7.3, 11.8, 12.5, 12.9 etc). Floor plans of each spurred corner tower are usefully shown at all levels, including the floor-joist patterns. A few of the rarely seen views by topographical draughtsman and engraver Thomas Bonnor (c. 1798) are also included (fig. 6.1, 8.5, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5). (From Bonnor’s Copper-plate perspective itinerary, or, Pocket Portfolio: Ten perspective views, the beauties of Gloucester Cathedral. Ten views of Goodrich Castle). Bonnor was one of the ablest topographical artists of his time. Shoesmith also rightly refers to Edward King’s (1735-1807) 1804 Munimenta Antiqua or Observations on Ancient Castles, which contains a remarkably well-illustrated section on Goodrich with detailed plans and line drawings. However, much of King’s rather faulty text is repeated in Brayley & Britton’s Description of the County of Hereford (1805) which adds little more than King. All, including Goodrich Castle, Its History and Buildings are essential reading to begin to understand one of the finest and most significant castles of the 13th and 14th century.

Neil Guy
The Jacobean plantations in seventeenth-century Offaly: an archaeology of a changing world

Author: James Lyttleton
Publisher: Four Courts Press, Dublin,
Publication Date: October 2013
Size: 352 pp; large format, full-colour ills.
ISBN: 978-1-84682-383-0 (hb; Euro 49.50)
ISBN: 978-1-84682-492-0 (pb; Euro 26.95)

This is so much more than a book about early modern Ireland’s fortifications or strong houses, for it looks at the plantation in its widest sense, albeit in one county. However, it must have a place in the reviews section in the CSG’s journal, because of, in particular, the fifth and sixth chapters, which examine the tower and fortified houses in Jacobean Offaly.

The author states in the preface that by ‘re-appraising the various categories of secular and non-secular buildings such as tower houses, fortified houses, farmhouses and churches, one can go beyond morphological concerns and explore the extent to which individuals influenced their own social, economic and cultural positions in society...’. Nevertheless, it is the architecture which will interest most CSG members, and it is on that I will concentrate, but emphasising that this book is a major contribution to British and European early seventeenth-century history.

The introductory chapters help to set the scene, particularly invaluable for non-Irish readers, examining the impact of the arrival in the 1540s of the first English in the area since the thirteenth century. We find Englishmen leasing property from the Crown, such as former monastic lands, and at the former priory church at Seir Kieran there still stands a small gun tower of the 1550s or ‘60s with small loops for muskets.

Settlers arriving in 1619-20 would have found tower houses as the dominant architecture, with considerably more standing then compared to the number visible today. In south and west Offaly the design generally follows the pattern in west Ireland and to the south, with rectangular towers three to five storeys high, ground-floor entrances with yetts, a main room (or two) to each floor, sometimes supplemented by mural chambers. As one would expect, the higher one went up a tower, the more ornate and comfortable the accommodation. A Scotsman or an Englishman from the north would not find the architecture in Offaly and elsewhere too dissimilar from back home. Luke Gernon’s well-known description in 1620 of a Limerick tower house in his ‘Discourse of Ireland’ (British Library, Stowe manuscripts) gives a flavour of these towers, and particularly how visitors were welcomed, useful in that documentation is sparse regarding household inventories and accounts.

The tower house chapter also examines the buildings associated with them, both through archaeology and documentary evidence, and the social arrangement and function of areas of the towers based on gender.

With a growing amateur interest in late Elizabethan and Jacobean architecture in England and Wales, it was the sixth chapter, on the fortified house, that the reviewer found of great interest. Like the towers, they could be associat-
The author traces the rise of Marshal from penniless younger son to renowned knight, national hero and defender of the Magna Carta. A fascinating story of a man negotiating the brutal realities of medieval warfare and the conflicting demands of chivalric ideals, and who against the odds defeated the joint French and rebel forces in arguably the most important battle in medieval English history – overshadowing, arguably, even Agincourt.

The book is in the excellent format that we have come to expect from Four Courts Press, and is very well illustrated and foot-noted. Far be it from the reviewer to be pedantic (!), but three different spellings of ‘crenellation/ed’ in one paragraph did have me reaching for my pen. That aside, anyone with an interest in Irish architecture should acquire this book, and certainly it should be on the shelves of those CSG members in Britain who frequently attend the annual conferences whenever they are held in Ireland.

John R. Kenyon

The Knight Who Saved England: William Marshal and the French Invasion, 1217

Author: Richard Brooks
Publisher: Osprey
Pb; April 2014; 344 pp
ISBN: 9781849085502

In The Lordship of the Isles, twelve specialists offer new insights on the rise and fall of the MacDonals of Islay and the greatest Gaelic lordship of later medieval Scotland. Portrayed most often as either the independently-minded last great patrons of Scottish Gaelic culture or as dangerous rivals to the Stewart kings for mastery of Scotland, this collection navigates through such opposed perspectives to re-examine the politics, culture, society and connections of Highland and Hebridean Scotland from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. It delivers a compelling account of a land and people caught literally and figuratively between two worlds, those of the Atlantic and mainland Scotland, and of Gaelic and Anglophone culture.

Contributors are David Caldwell, Sonja Cameron, Alastair Campbell, Alison Cathcart, Colin Martin, Tom McNeill, Lachlan Nicholson, Richard Oram, Michael Penman, Alasdair Ross, Geoffrey Stell and Sarah Thomas.
Michael Davis’s discussion paper, *The Scottish Castle Restoration Debate 1990-2012*, is published as a slim book, elegantly written and attractively illustrated with photographs of the interiors and exteriors of many of Scotland’s small domestic castles and tower houses. It is a polemic as well as a discussion paper; Davis has trenchant views on the restoration debate which he puts forward in a carefully argued text, backed up by several case studies. The core of his argument – if I can summarise a complex and nuanced essay in a few words – is that responses to the castle restoration debate should not be informed solely by limiting ideology, particularly that of the non-interventionist SPAB supporters, but should instead be flexible, intelligent and diverse if we are to save those ruined Scottish castles that are still at risk of further deterioration. “Such work as we do should not simply aim to culturally roll over and play dead in all cases, hoping to avoid detection as if our whole intervention had not happened…We should not be ashamed or fear that grandchildren may honour or admire our work as being of our age. We should instead fear most that they condemn it on grounds of it lack of quality or lack of interest.”

Davis argues for a moving on from the Victorian attitudes to restoration, based on the views of Ruskin and Morris, who argued passionately against the practice of imposing contemporary aesthetic standards upon late mediaeval buildings. Of course, there are now far fewer Scottish castles left to be passionate about, and many of the ruins that remain are at serious risk of collapse. If we pander to the entrenched attitudes of those in power who would rather see a building crumble than restore it for modern usage, then we will be left with rickles o’ stanes* throughout Scotland where once we had built heritage to be proud of. Davis uses the example of the fiasco of Castle Tioram (“in danger of being saved”) throughout his essay to illustrate what can go wrong when those in power – i.e. Historic Scotland in this instance – are driven by dogma and simply will not listen to the voices of those who care about saving much loved castles. Across the political spectrum, campaigners in favour of restoring Castle Tioram united against HS’s view, but the organisation’s intransigence led to a public enquiry in 2002 which rejected restoration plans. As Davis pointed out: “Historic Scotland may have won the battle over Tioram, but in following its line over Tioram, it was therefore storing up problems for itself and for the future management of Scotland’s architectural heritage. A few years later, in 2011, Historic Scotland dramatically changed tack and signalled that they would permit restoration of Castle Tioram. Tioram, however, remains a ruin.”
Davis’s exasperation at an apparent inability to get things right and to fly in the face of overwhelming advice about the sensible way to approach a building from local people, architects, historians, politicians and heritage campaigners is palpable. However, he is careful to give credit where it is due: “As far as castle restoration is concerned, over the last 50 years Historic Scotland has made a major contribution... The string of castle restorations of the last half century – funded and non-funded – has often provided startlingly new and often creative input which has run counter to the main architectural trends and preoccupations of this period, and Historic Scotland has helped to mould this phenomenon.”

Paradoxically, the second case study which Davis uses to illustrate his points is that of Caldwell Tower, the botched restoration of which featured on an episode of Channel 4’s *The Restoration Man*. The presenter, George Clarke, himself an architect, was visibly shocked by the inconsistent behaviour of HS and local planners in finally allowing an inappropriate restoration, having earlier turned down several much more sympathetic plans. Inconsistency in approving or blocking restoration and conservation plans is something that Davis highlights and it is to be hoped that the future Historic Environment Scotland body will be able to iron out such anomalies and take a measured, flexible approach to applications.

We all await with interest what will come out of the merger between Historic Scotland (HS) and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RC-AHMS) and how the castles of Scotland will be affected. Davis forecast that the two agencies would already have merged by the time his book was published. Not so. Unlike the publication of the HS booklet on castle and tower house restoration, which was put out to tender in May 2009 for publication in November 2009 and which, incredibly, is *still* out for consultation and not yet published, Davis’s book was published in a timely fashion in 2013. The merger of HS and RCHAMS is not time-tabled to take place until October 2015, although trustees of the new Board are expected to be appointed by January 2015 and take up their posts by April 2015. Gerald Warner said in his review of Davis’s paper in *The Scotsman*, “Whether this dysfunctional agency is abolished or radically reformed beyond recognition may be academic; but to reinvent it as a charity, as the Scottish Government reportedly intends, is hardly appropriate.” I agree that HS has become dysfunctional in recent years, as does Davis by implication in his essay, but the prospect of the newly formed Historic Environment Scotland body, or Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), being overseen by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) is not so very terrible. What is important is that in its new guise, as Davis says, “Historic Scotland personnel should operate within a culture which excludes narrow and exclusive conservation viewpoints (such as that of SPAB)…. At the highest levels, leadership which is charismatic and passionate about our architectural heritage and inspires other staff members is essential.” It is to be hoped that his vision for the future will come to fruition – in terms of securing the future for Scotland’s many ruined and crumbling castles, a great deal depends upon it. Davis has carried off a tour de force by writing a paper that is at once scholarly and accessible, passionate and measured, and conceptually sophisticated yet practical and down to earth in terms of its advice.

* a small pile of stones – see, for example S. R. Crockett’s *Lochinvar* (1897): “An auld disjasket rickle o’ stanes like the Hoose o’ Grenoch”.

Janet Brennan-Inglis

Janet is currently Chairwoman of the Scottish Castles Association, and recently published *Scotland’s Castles - Rescued, Rebuilt and Re-occupied*, which we hope to review next year.

The cover image of Ballone Castle, Portmahomack, is reproduced by kind permission of Andreas von Einsiedel.
Scotland’s Castles: Rescued, Rebuilt and Re-occupied

Author: Janet Brennan-Inglis  
Publication Date: 7 July 2014  
Paperback: 192 pages  
Publisher: The History Press  
Price: £10.49

Scotland’s Castles is a beautifully illustrated celebration and account of the renaissance of Scottish castles that has taken place since 1950. Over 100 ruined and derelict buildings – from tiny towers to rambling baronial mansions – have been restored as homes, hotels and holiday lets. These restorations have mainly been carried out by new owners without any connections to the land or the family history of the buildings, which they bought as ruins. Their struggles and triumphs, including interviews and first-person accounts, form the core of the book, set in the context of the enormous social, political and economic changes of the late twentieth century. Gillian Eadie will review this for CSG Journal 29.

A Short History of the Normans

Author: Leonie V Hicks  
Publication Date: Sept 30th 2014  
Paperback: 272 pages  
Publisher: I B Taurus  
Price: £55.55 hb, £12.21 pb.

The Battle of Hastings in 1066 is the one date forever seared on the British national psyche. It enabled the Norman Conquest that marked the end of Anglo-Saxon England. But there was much more to the Normans than the invading army Duke William shipped over from Normandy to the shores of Sussex. How a band of marauding warriors established some of the most powerful kingdoms in Europe - in Sicily and France, as well as England - is an improbably romantic idea. In exploring Norman culture in all its regions, Leonie Hicks places the Normans in the context of early medieval society. Her comparative perspective enables the Norman story to be told in full. From Hastings to the martial exploits of Bohemond and Tancred on the First Crusade this is a fresh and lively survey of one of the most popular topics in European history.