



Fig. 1. Pickering Castle from the NW. 'Pickering Castle from Cattgates Mill, 1715' and in another hand: 'F(rancis). Place delin'. © Trustees of the British Museum. Museum No: 1850,0223.826. Used under a Creative Commons Attribution - Non-Commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0).

Suggested buildings: (L-R). Inner (north) Ward: 1. Diate Hill Tower; 2. Rosamund's Tower & East Turret; 3. Constable's Lodging & postern (missing); 4. Battlements (Old Hall behind); 5. Shell-keep; 6. Wall tower (now missing); 7. Mill Tower. Place appears to have deliberately distorted the perspective and has stretched out the NE side to appear in the drawing (left). The polygonal angularity of the shell keep is clear.

Pickering

12. Pickering

Most shell-keeps are on mottes situated at the edge of a castle, but that at Pickering (like Windsor and Arundel) is more central and is flanked by two baileys (fig. 2). The castle originated in the Norman Conquest of the north, 1069-1070, and remained a royal possession until assigned to Edmund, earl of Lancaster in 1267. Although the structure is not specified in the expenditure, the polygonal shell-keep may have been built when works, including extensive repairs to the bailey curtain, were recorded in the 1220s. In the 14th-century records, the shell-keep was referred to as "the King's Tower". The published phasing of the site, however, assigns the wing-walls which ascend the motte to the 1180s, so there must also have been an earlier structure on top of the motte, whether of timber or of stone. Access to the shell-keep's main entrance (partly destroyed) was via a stair ascending on top of the western wing-wall (figs. 4, 7, 8). Another stair up the eastern wing-wall reached a lesser entrance.

The perimeter of the shell comprises two "D" shaped segments with straight facets on the outside (G. T. Clark, who called "the keep....a shell of masonry", suggested a nonagon with sides of 24ft). Features include a staircase in the wall-thickness (figs. 9, 10), and some wall-footings indicate structures formerly adjacent to its inner face, while other wall-footings may suggest some structures were free-standing. The

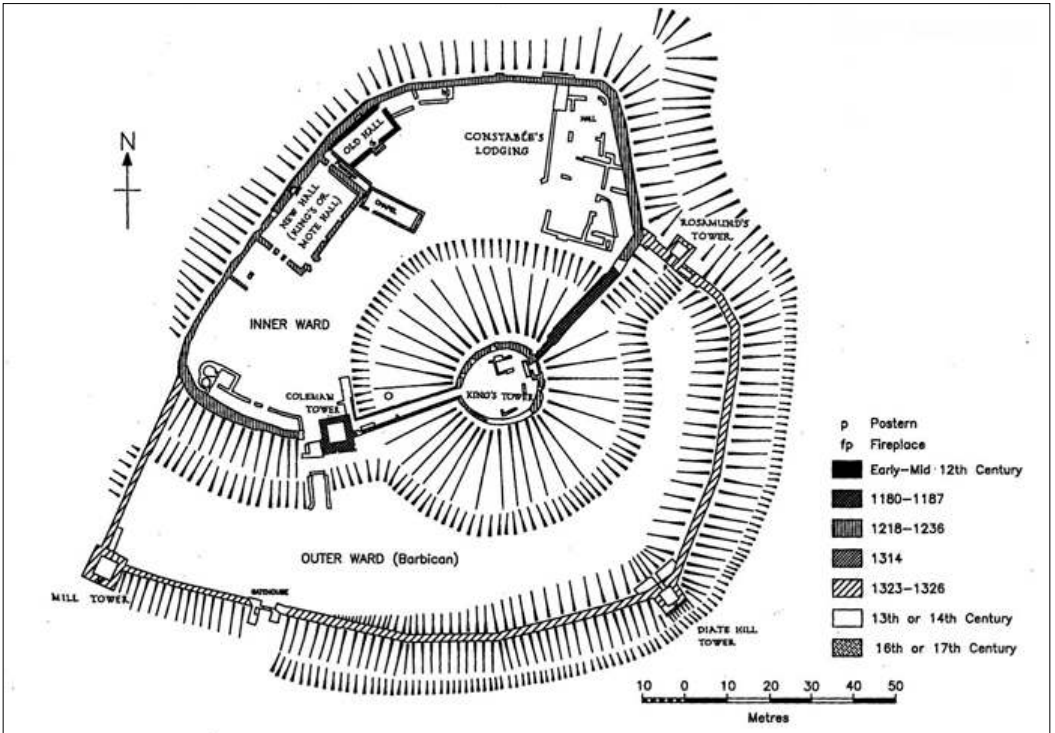
perimeter originally had a series - as many as ten have been suggested - of splayed arrow-slits below the wall-walk (figs. 5, 6). If these existed all around the circuit, then the domesticity of the building range must have been somewhat affected. But, since only two slits survive (on the north side, facing into the inner ward, though there are indications of a further three), it is possible that they belonged to particular buildings. They are 6ft high, within flat-headed recesses. (Clark, 1884, unaccountably described them as having round-headed recesses). The embrasures are at the current ground-floor level, as they were in Clark's day, and as the wall-walk is only just above them, it is doubtful that there could have been a first-floor range of rooms ranged round the inner circle (although antiquarian views suggest a greater height). The inner chamber arrangements would have been very unusual unless freestanding buildings had a second storey. On the east, a stair in the shell wall led to the parapet and access to the east wing-wall (fig. 10).

Internal Diameter: 60ft (18.3m).

Shell wall height: approx. 20ft (6.1m)

Motte height: 65ft (20m)

Published refs: Clark 1873; Clark 1884, II, 368-375; Brown *et alii* 1963, II, 779-781; Renn 1968, 279-280; King 1983, II, 522; Butler 1993; J Clark 1997.



ABOVE: Fig. 2. Pickering Castle. Plan, from J. Clark, 1997.

BELOW: Fig. 3. Pickering Castle from the west. From Grose's *Antiquities of England & Wales*, 1785. Slightly cropped.

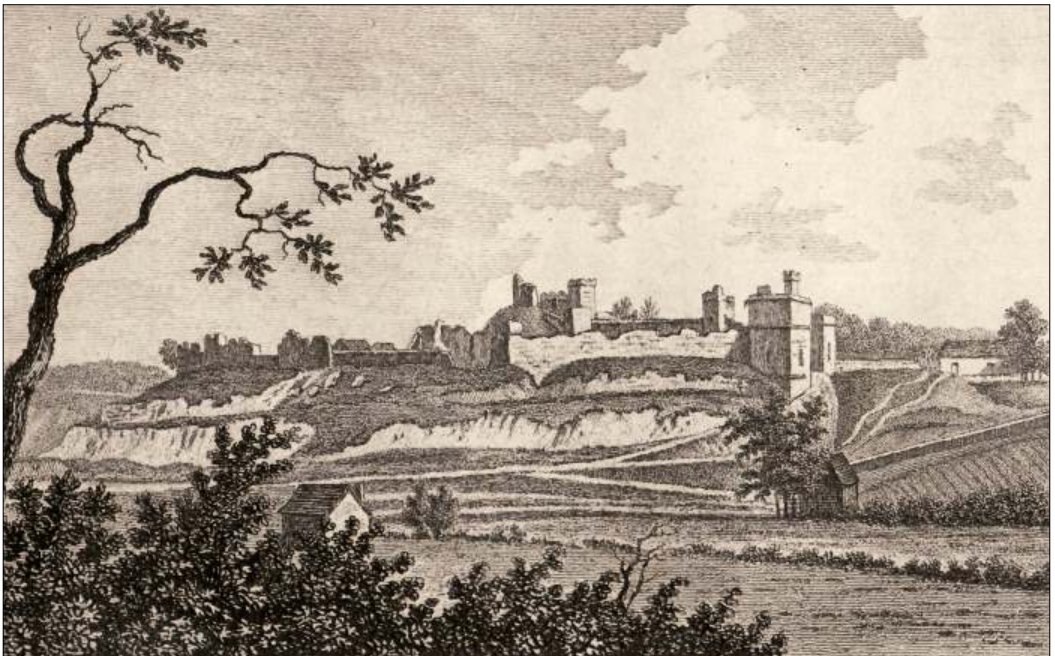




Fig. 4. Pickering Castle. The shell-keep from the west, from the ditch that divided the Outer Courtyard (right) from the Inner (left). The bridge allows entry into the Inner Ward adjacent to the square Coleman Tower, which has lost its outer face. The tower also controls access to the stairs that rise to the motte top as a wing-wall. The Coleman Tower has been heightened and the stone bridge was probably added in the early 14th century.



ABOVE: Fig. 5. Interior of the shell-keep looking NW. The two remaining complete embrasures with splayed arrow-slits below what is assumed to be the wall-walk.

BELOW: Fig. 6. The same section of shell wall with the long arrow loops, from the exterior at the base of the motte, looking SE.





ABOVE: Fig. 7. Pickering Castle. The Coleman Tower (left) and west wing-wall, with a series of arrow loops ascending the protected wall-walk; seen from the Outer Ward.

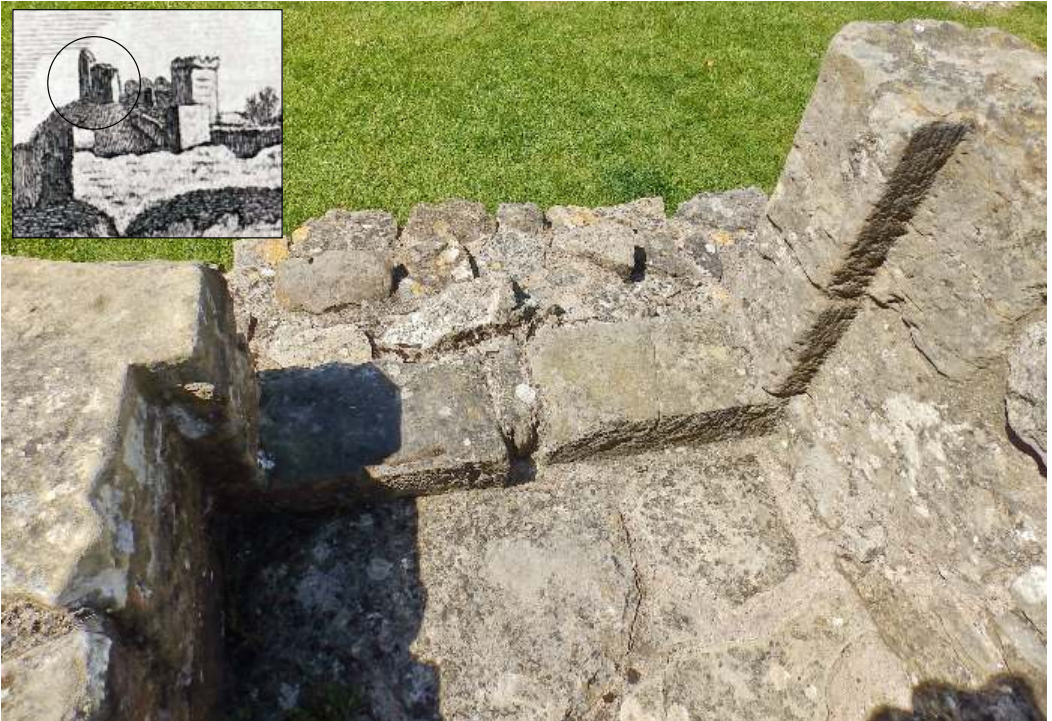
BELOW: Fig. 8. Pickering Castle. The west wing-wall and stairs from the motte top, looking south-west. Outer Ward gatehouse to the left.





ABOVE: Fig. 9. Pickering Castle. Motte top looking east.

BELOW: Fig. 10. Door jambs and rebate giving access to the steps up to the wall-walk and probably access to the east wing-wall. It may also have led into a narrow tower along the line of the shell-keep (see insert from Grose, fig. 3) .





ABOVE: Fig. 11. line engraving by W. Tombleson after Henry Gastineau. Published in 1823. The shell-keep from the interior of the Outer Ward, looking from the east, with the east wing-wall & Rosamund Tower to the right.

BELOW: Fig. 12. 'Landscape with ruined castle, houses, church and watermill at right; illustration to the Copperplate Magazine. 1797.' Etching and engraving, after: J Hornsey, published by John Walker. Slightly cropped. View from the west. From R-L: Mill Tower (corner), Outer gate tower (at the back); wall tower (above horse, now missing); Coleman Tower (at the foot of the shell-keep).

