

Shell-keeps: Catalogue Introduction

References cited at the end of the text for each Catalogue entry are to publications concerned wholly with the particular site or to publications in which it figures prominently. Many sites also figure, in passing, in other, more general publications (occasionally cited within the text of the Catalogue entry). The architectural and archaeological data given are as published, but augmented by personal on-site observations. The data given relate primarily to the shell-keeps and not to other buildings surviving at these sites. Measurements are taken from published descriptions and plans. Unless relevant to constructional phases, building stones are not described. Historical data have been abstracted from the publications cited and have not been re-examined from primary sources.

All sites have been visited by RAH except for: Carisbrooke, Clare, Lincoln, Pickering, Tonbridge, Warwick and Wiston. These have been visited by NG pursuant to this paper. NG's personal observations on a number of other sites, as well as published points picked up by him, have also been included in the Catalogue entries. In some cases, further assistance from other colleagues who have conducted research or who are familiar with the sites in question is acknowledged in the texts.

The reader will quickly observe, in what follows, that the published material is far from uniformly spread across the sites listed below. The presentation of data in the Catalogue entries is therefore far from standardised. To some extent, this arises from the enormous differentiation in survival of shell-keep fabric: at some places there are extensive remains whereas at others remains are fragmentary. But differential survival does not fully explain the variation in the available published record, which arises from a wider set of variables arising (largely) from contexts of ownership, management and academic attention. Some shell-keeps have been subject to modern study and have fully published descriptions and illustrations (e.g. Cardiff, Launceston). Some are subject to current research, sometimes not yet fully published (e.g. Lincoln, Tamworth, Windsor). Some have had no or little study for a very long time (e.g. Trematon). While most have a published plan of some sort, few seem to have been recorded in elevation. Others, however, have remarkably little by way of published plans or other records - at least, easily available in the public domain - despite their prominence in the subject (e.g. Arundel). Thus, while this Catalogue is (hopefully) a useful step towards a better understanding of shell-keeps, it can hardly be said to contain an ideal data-set.

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