

WELSH ARCHITECTURE - ARCHITECTURE IN WALES

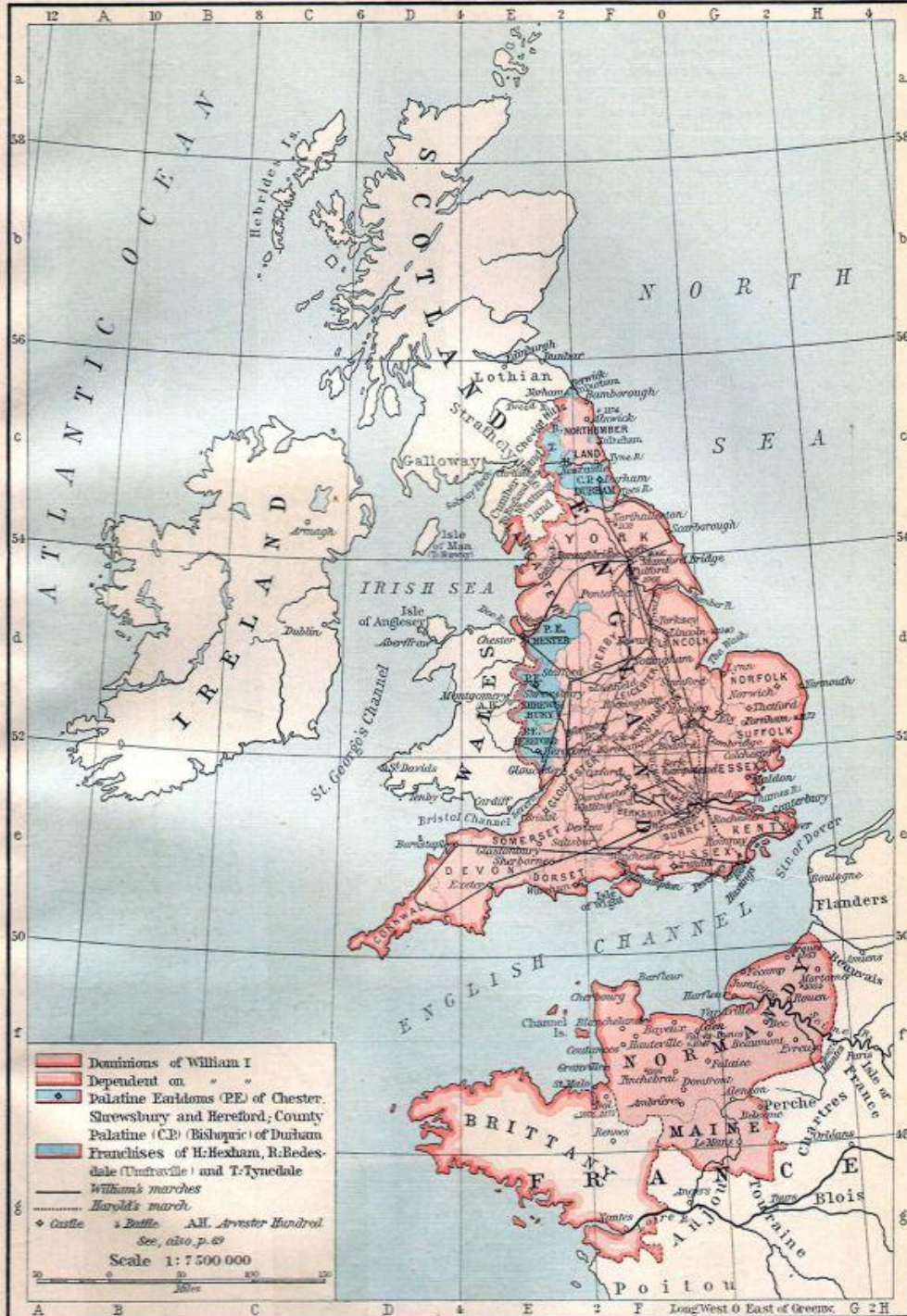
Week 3

Gothic, Late Gothic Periods

Ian Standen

Week 3 – Gothic, Late Gothic Periods

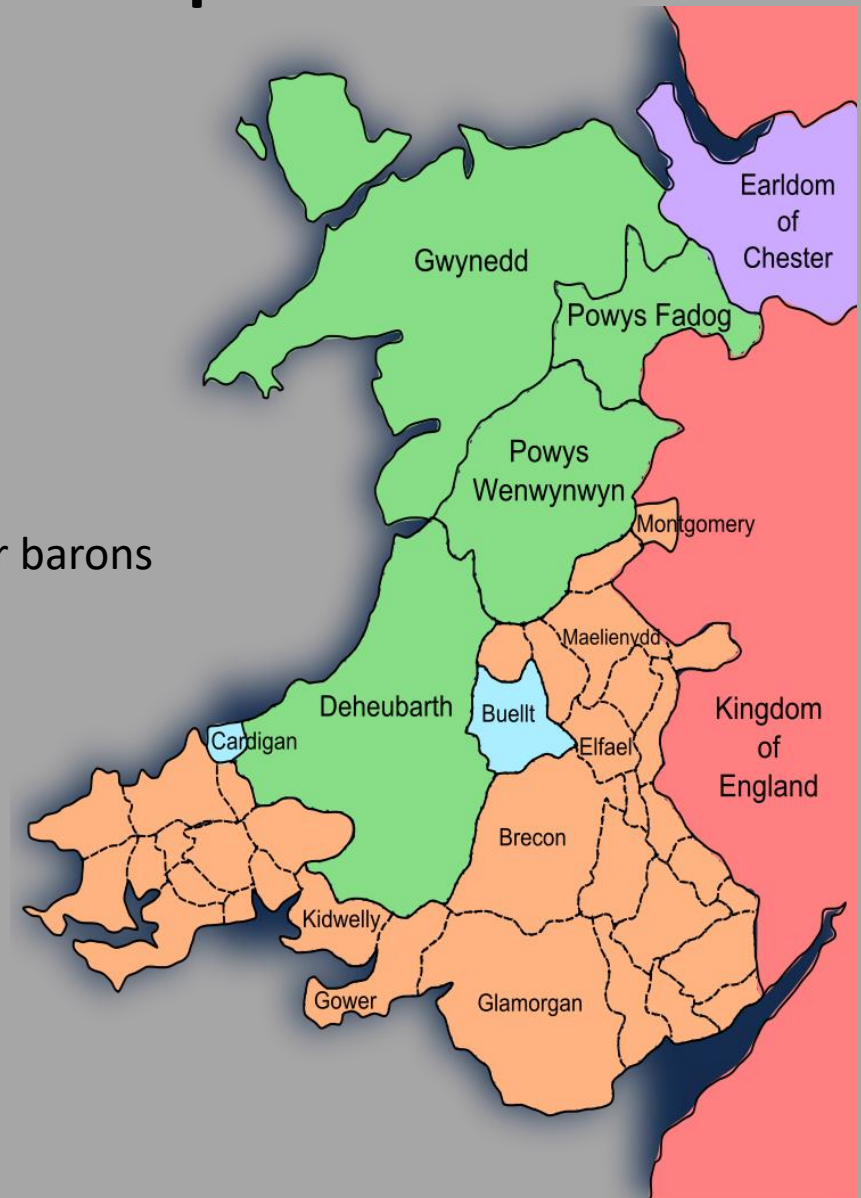
- Aims – To describe the key features and characteristics of **Gothic, Late Gothic** Architecture in Wales; how they are related and subsequently influenced in terms of architectural ‘style’ in Welsh Architecture.
- Objectives- By the end of the sessions students should be able to identify the basic features of each style and appreciate how these have developed, adapted over a period of time.

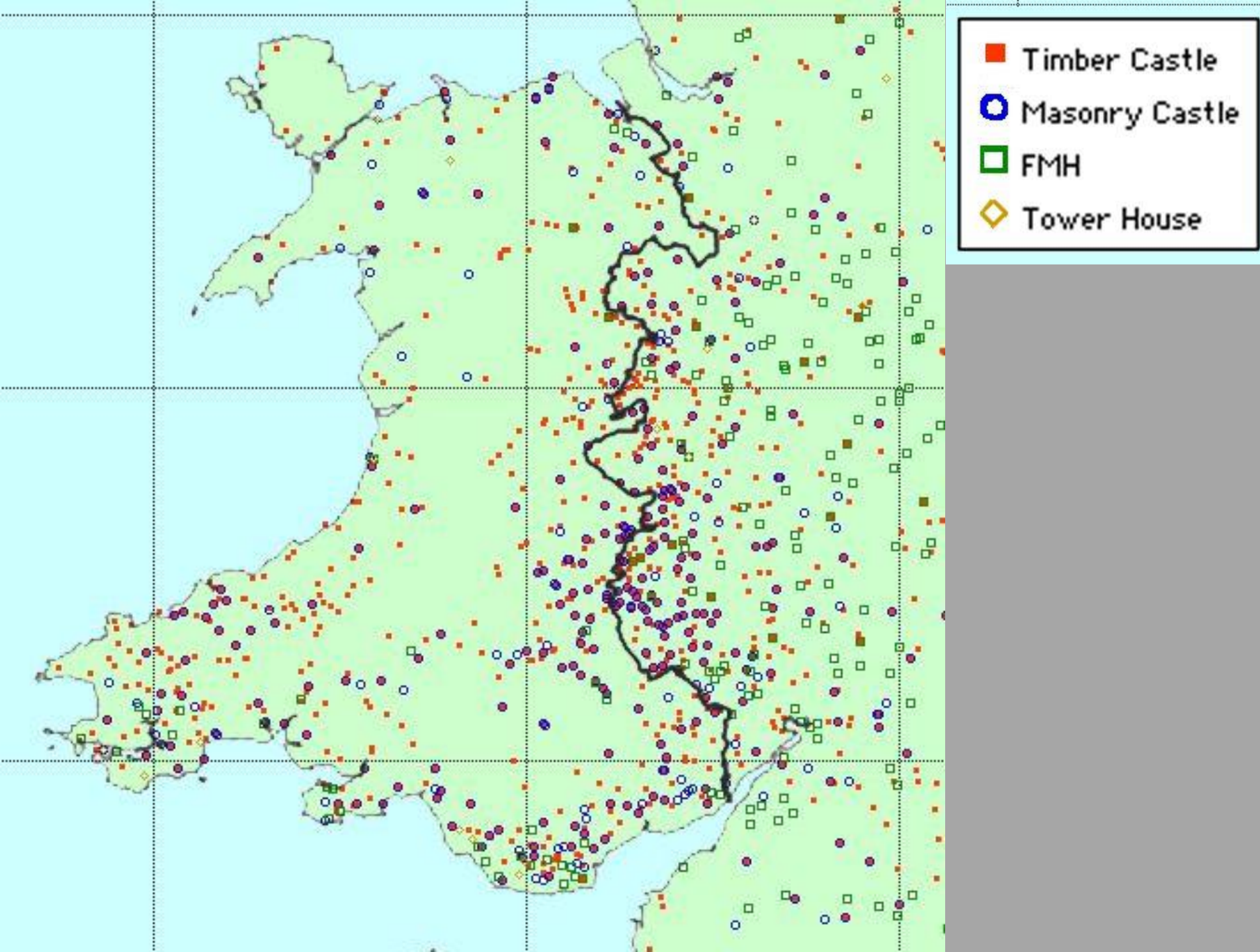


Norman Conquest

Norman Conquest

-  Pura Wallia (independent Wales)
-  Lands gained by Llewelyn the Great in 1234
-  Marchia Wallie - lands ruled by the Marcher barons





Early Gothic

Castles of the Welsh Princes

- Nearly forty earthworks and stone castles are known to have been built by the princes of Deheubarth, Gwynedd, Morgannwg and Powys.
- All of the Welsh stone castles that are now visible date from the thirteenth century, though there is evidence for earlier stone castles.

Early Gothic

Castles of the Welsh Princes

- Most of the Welsh castles were located away from the sea, often on rocky sites, which dictated their irregular plans.
- Consequently, it was sometimes difficult to construct curtain walls in such a way that allowed a good field of fire from towers.
- Often the castles were defended by rock-cut ditches, but rarely had strong gatehouses.

Dolwyddelan Castle 1210-1240 CE



Two rectangular towers linked by an irregular curtain wall guarding the route through the Conwy Valley



<http://www.castlewales.com/dolw.html>

Castell y Bere 1273 CE



Rectangular keeps, simple forms at strategic points in the landscape



Early Gothic

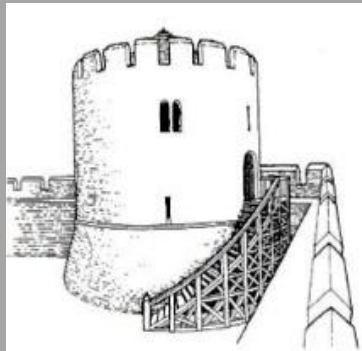
Castles of the Welsh Princes

- Dolwyddelan Castle was built, probably by Llywelyn ab Iorwerth (Llywelyn the Great) between 1210 and 1240, to replace an earlier castle and has a rectangular keep.
- Rectangular keeps were also built at Castell y Bere, Dinas Bran and - as late as 1273 - by Llywelyn ap Gruffudd at Dolforwyn.

Dinefwr Castle, Llandeilo 1220-33CE



Round keeps in the south, simple forms at strategic points in the landscape – Rhys Gryg



Early Gothic

<http://www.castlewales.com/>

Early Gothic

Castles of the Welsh Princes

- Round keeps were built at a number of castles in the south and north.
- The round keeps of the Tywi valley, at Dinefwr (possibly built by Rhys Gryg, about 1220-33) and Dryslwyn, appear to have been influenced by Marcher castles in the south-east.

Dolbadarn Castle 1233-40 CE



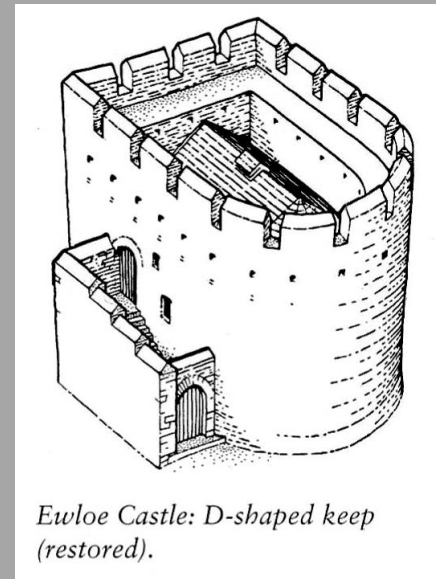
In Snowdon Dolbadarn's dramatically sited round keep probably built by Llewelyn ab Iorwerth about 1230-40 was of sophisticated design with spiral stairs built within the wall thickness.

Early Gothic

Castles of the Welsh Princes

- The apsidal or 'D' shaped keep at Ewloe built about 1257 near- the north- eastern border: was a compromise between the rectangular and round tower.
- The apsidal end overlooked the entrance and gave a better field of fire from the walkway than was possible from a rectangular tower.

Early Gothic Castles of the Welsh Princes



*Ewloe Castle: D-shaped keep
(restored).*



**Ewloe Castle, Hawarden, Flintshire
1257 CE**

Early Gothic

Castles of the Welsh Princes

- Unusually, Criccieth was strongly defended by a massive gatehouse.
- The design was possibly influenced by English examples at Beeston and Montgomery.
- It was probably built by Llywelyn ab Iorwerth, about 1230-40 CE, and comprises two apsidal towers on either side of the gate.

Early Gothic Castles of the Welsh Princes



Criccieth Castle 1230-40 CE

Massive round towered gateway is rare among Welsh-built castles



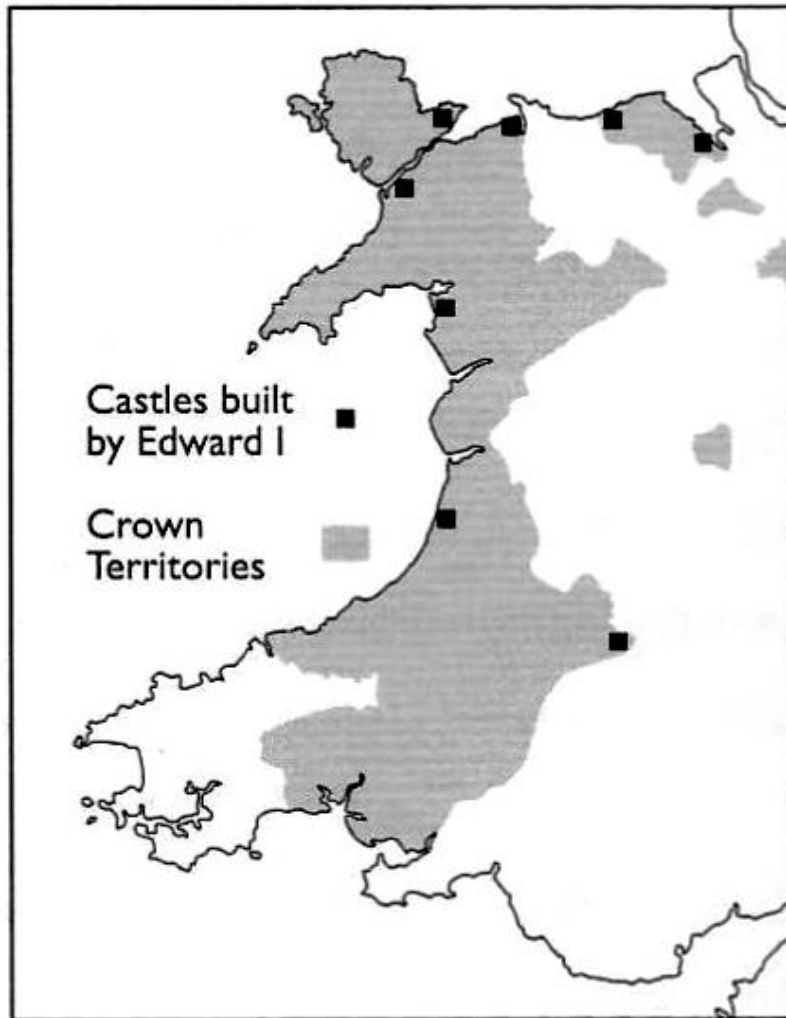
Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Edwardian Castles

- In 1277 King Edward I unleashed a mighty force against the Welsh and followed this by building a chain of castles on the borders of Gwynedd. A further war followed, in 1282-83 during which Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, prince of Wales, was killed.
- With the collapse of Welsh resistance. Edward annexed Gwynedd and Deheubarth and began building another chain of castles along the coast.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Edwardian Castles

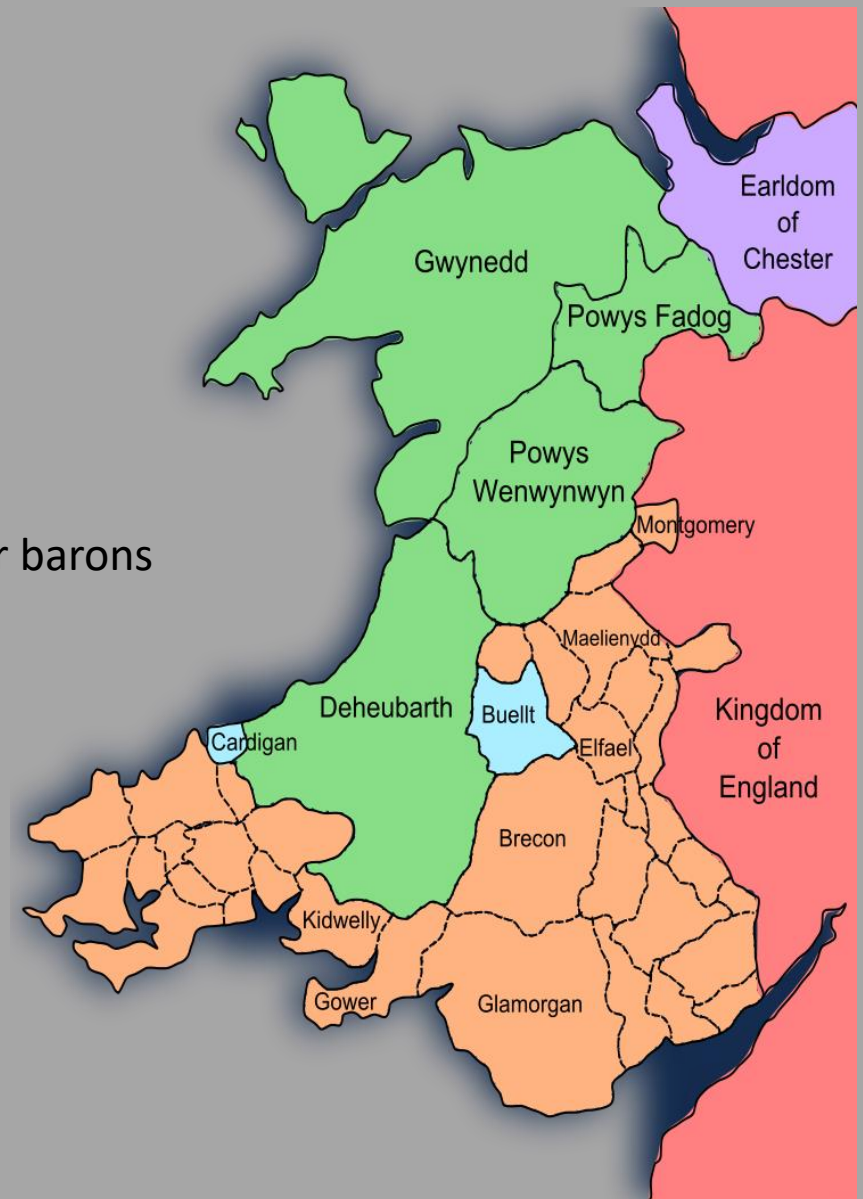


Wales in 1284.

Edwardian Castles

Builth
Aberystwyth
Harlech
Caernarfon
Beaumaris
Conwy
Denbigh
Rhuddlan
Flint
Chirk

-  Pura Wallia (independent Wales)
-  Lands gained by Llewelyn the Great in 1234
-  Marchia Wallie - lands ruled by the Marcher barons



Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Edwardian Castles

- New towns (bastides) were built alongside some of the castles. The purpose of these was to create centres of English influence within the heartland of Wales, as well as providing protection for officials and merchants.
- Each town was defended by walls and strong gateways and was laid out, wherever possible, to a gridiron plan.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Edwardian Castles

- The master mason in charge of building the castles was James of St George, a native of Savoy.
- Each castle was planned as an exceptionally strong fortress and incorporated the latest developments in military technology.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Edwardian Castles

Addressing the king's Exchequer,
Master James wrote

In case you should wonder where so much money could go in a week, we would have you know that we have needed - 400 masons, both cutters and layers, together with 2000 less skilled workmen, 100 carts, 60 wagons and 30 boats bringing stone and sea coal; 200 quarrymen; 30 smiths; and carpenters for putting in the joists and floor boards and other necessary jobs. All this takes no account of the garrison mentioned above, nor of the purchase of material, of which there will have to be a great quantity... The men's pay has been and still is very much in arrears, and we are having the greatest difficulty in keeping them because they simply have nothing to live on (McNeill, 1992)

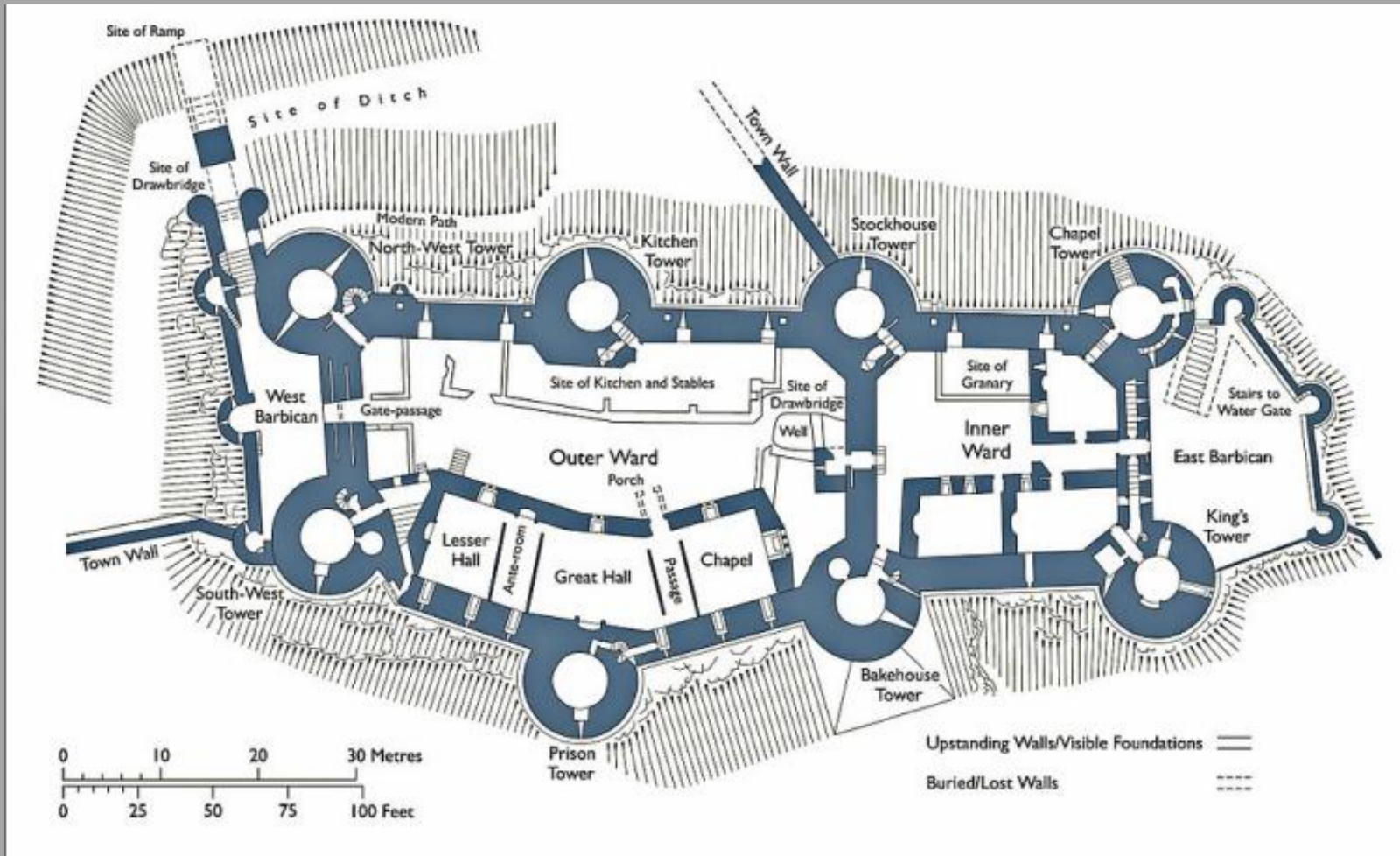
Early Gothic 13th CENTURY Edwardian Castles



Conwy, an outstanding achievement of medieval military architecture stands on a rocky spur overlooking the river and is divided into two wards or baileys.

Conwy Castle, 1283-89 CE

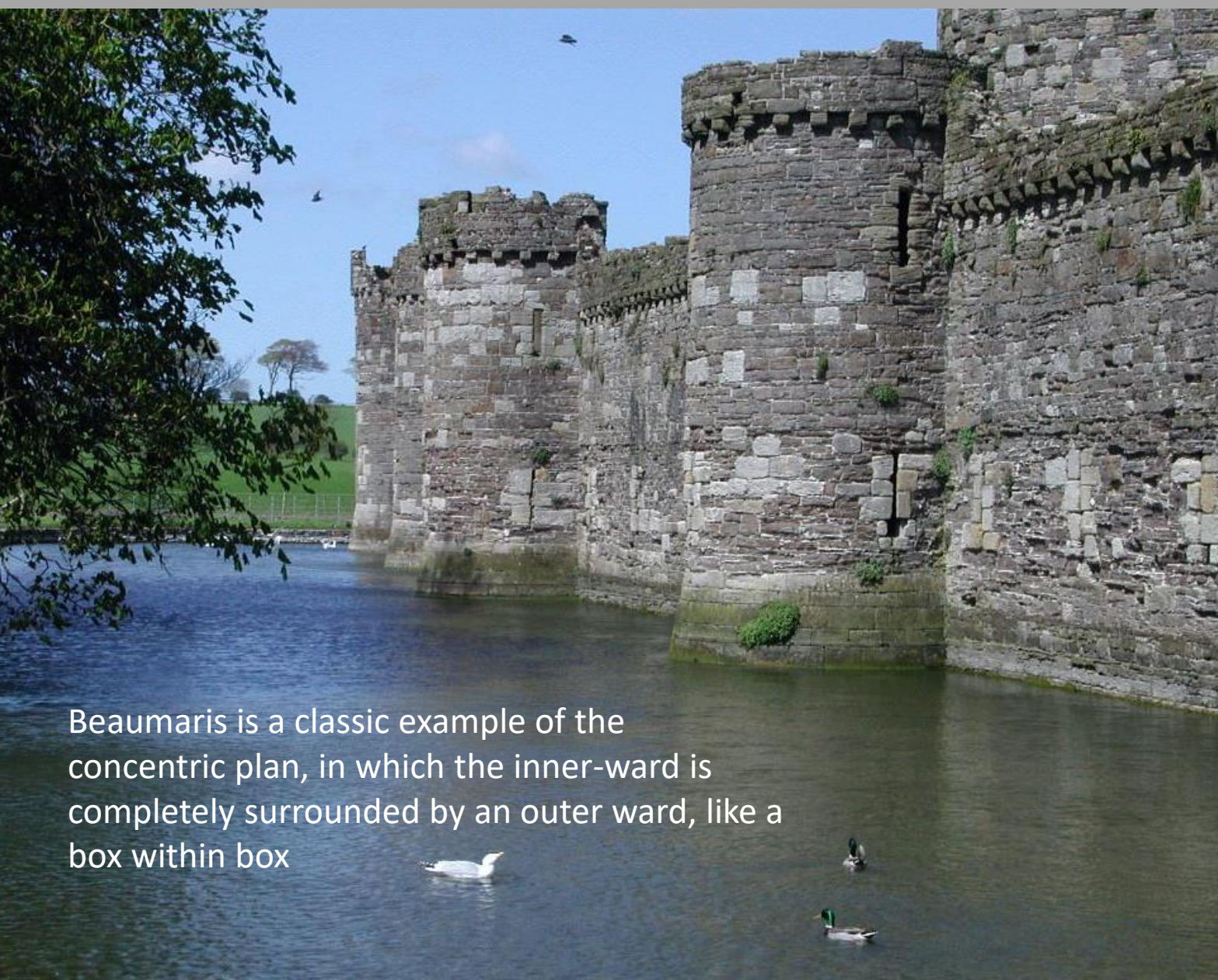
Early Gothic 13th CENTURY Edwardian Castles



The inner ward at Conwy is defended by four great round towers, each surmounted by turrets. The adjoining outer ward is defended by similar towers, but without turrets.

Conwy Castle, 1283-89 CE

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY Edwardian Castles



Beaumaris is a classic example of the concentric plan, in which the inner-ward is completely surrounded by an outer ward, like a box within box

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY Edwardian Castles



Beaumaris Castle
Anglesey 1295 CE

The symmetrical inner ward was designed with massive gatehouses and high curtain walls, from which arrows could be fired over the lower walls of the outer curtain

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY Edwardian Castles



Harlech Castle 1286 CE

Harlech is another example of the concentric plan, in this case built on a rocky hillside. The most striking feature is its enormous gatehouse with apsidal towers to the main gate and solid towers overlooking the outer gate.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Edwardian Castles

- Caernarfon was designed as a striking demonstration of imperial power as well as a mighty fortress.
- The horizontally banded stonework and angular towers were probably inspired by the Roman Walls of Constantinople. The battlements of the Eagle Tower were decorated with stone figures, including an eagle.

Caernarfon Castle 1283CE



Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Religious

- During the thirteenth century, church walls became thinner and lighter. This improvement was achieved by greater understanding of structural principles, better construction and larger windows.
- Improvements however were only brought about gradually and over a long period.
- Often the hesitant transition between Romanesque and Gothic is indicated by a mixed use of features, as at Llanthony Priory where round-headed windows and pointed arch recesses can be seen together on the western towers.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Religious

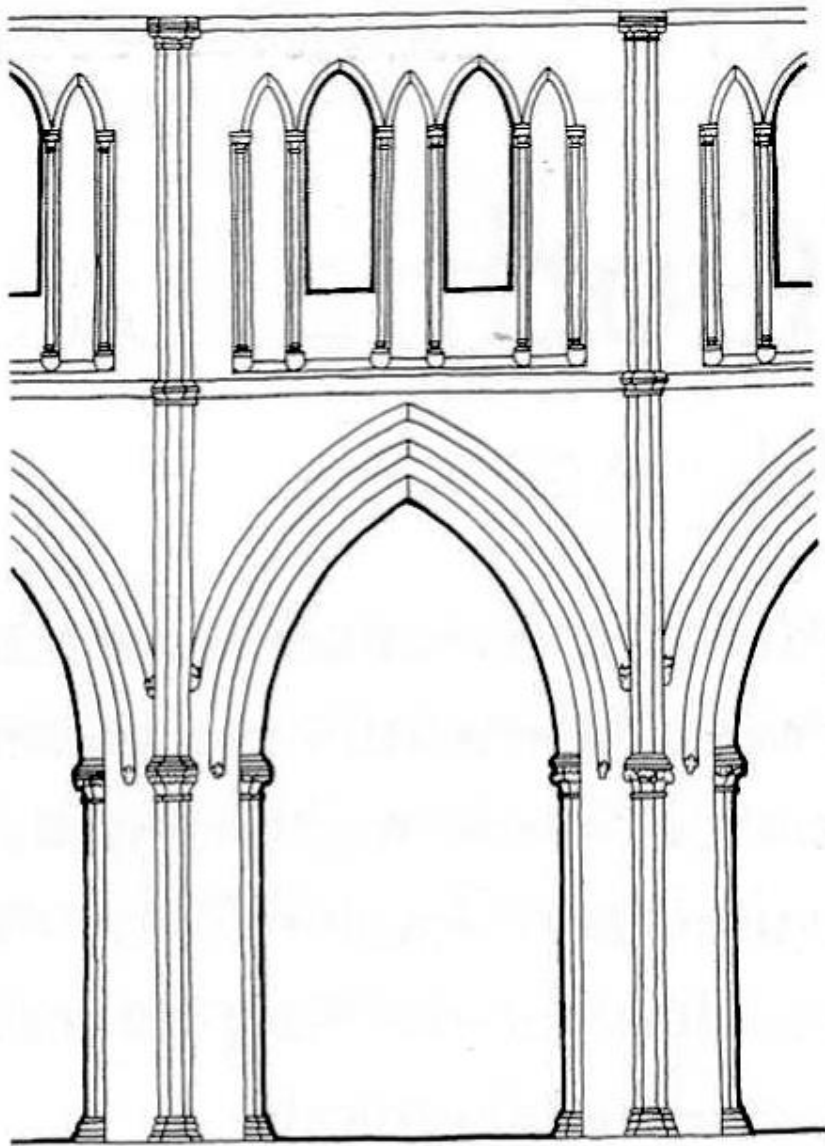
Often the hesitant transition between Romanesque and Gothic is indicated by a mixed use of features, as at Llanthony Priory where round-headed windows and pointed arch recesses can be seen together on the western towers.



Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Religious

- Gradually medieval builders realized that walls need only be very thick at the point where they are required to support the weight or thrust of arches. This led to the creation of buttresses, which were often stepped to provide greater depth and support.
- The main characteristic of Gothic architecture is in the use of pointed arches for windows, doorways and vaulting. Pointed –arch windows were at first tall slim lancets used either singly on side walls or in groups on gable walls.



*Llandaff Cathedral: Nave
arcade, early thirteenth century.*



Early Gothic 13th CENTURY
Religious



The pointed arch was developed on the continent in answer to the need to cover rectangular areas with rib vaulting.

The rib vaulting in chancel of Brecon Cathedral was started in the late 13th C, but not completed until 1862.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY
Religious

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Religious

- Later lancet windows were grouped in clusters and the solid section between the pointed arches was pierced with smaller openings to create plate tracery.
- The more important churches were enlarged by the addition of aisles. Aisles were separated from the nave by arcades of slender piers, linked by tall pointed arches.
- Circular or octagonal piers were often accompanied by delicate shafts, which increase the impression of verticality. Capitals to the piers and shafts were deeply cut and began to use naturalistic forms.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Monasteries

- Monastic communities, introduced from France by the Anglo-Normans, were an important part of Welsh medieval society.
- These highly organized monasteries differed from the earlier and simpler Celtic mother churches and were the result of far-reaching reforms that had taken place in the Continental church.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Monasteries

- The earliest non-Celtic monasteries in Wales were sited in towns and belonged to the Benedictine order.
- The Cistercians, in contrast, placed great emphasis on austerity and sited their abbeys in isolated places away 'from the concourse of men', such as those at Strata Florida and Cwmhir.
- Architecturally the communal concept of monasticism was expressed in a complex of buildings, the basic layout of which was common to most monasteries.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Monasteries



Strata Florida

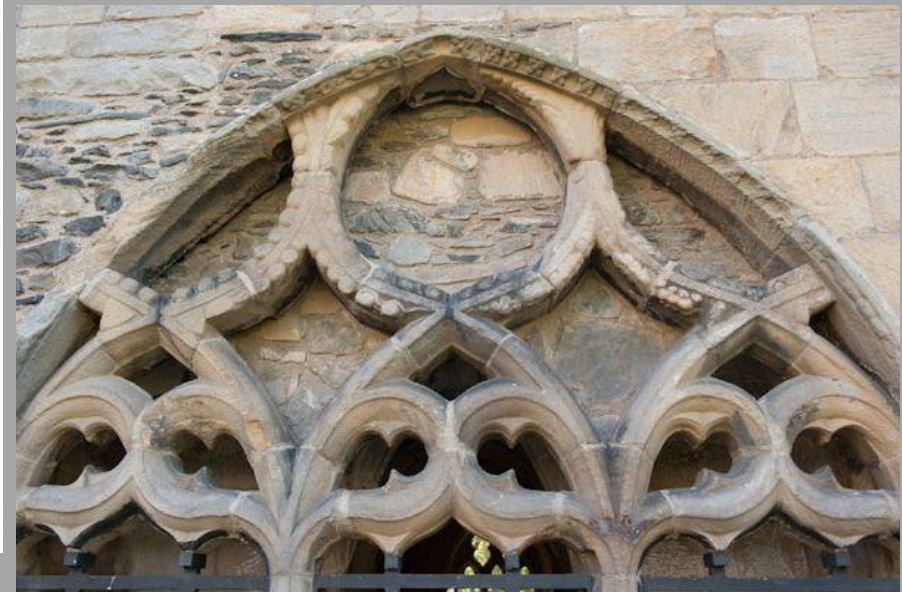
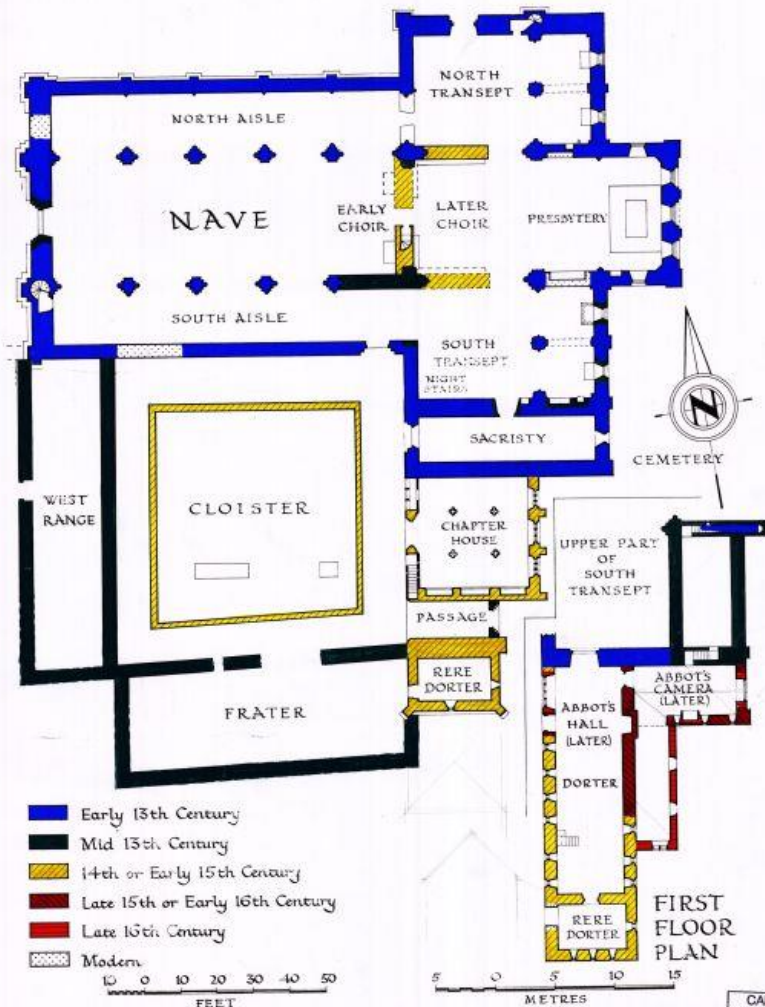


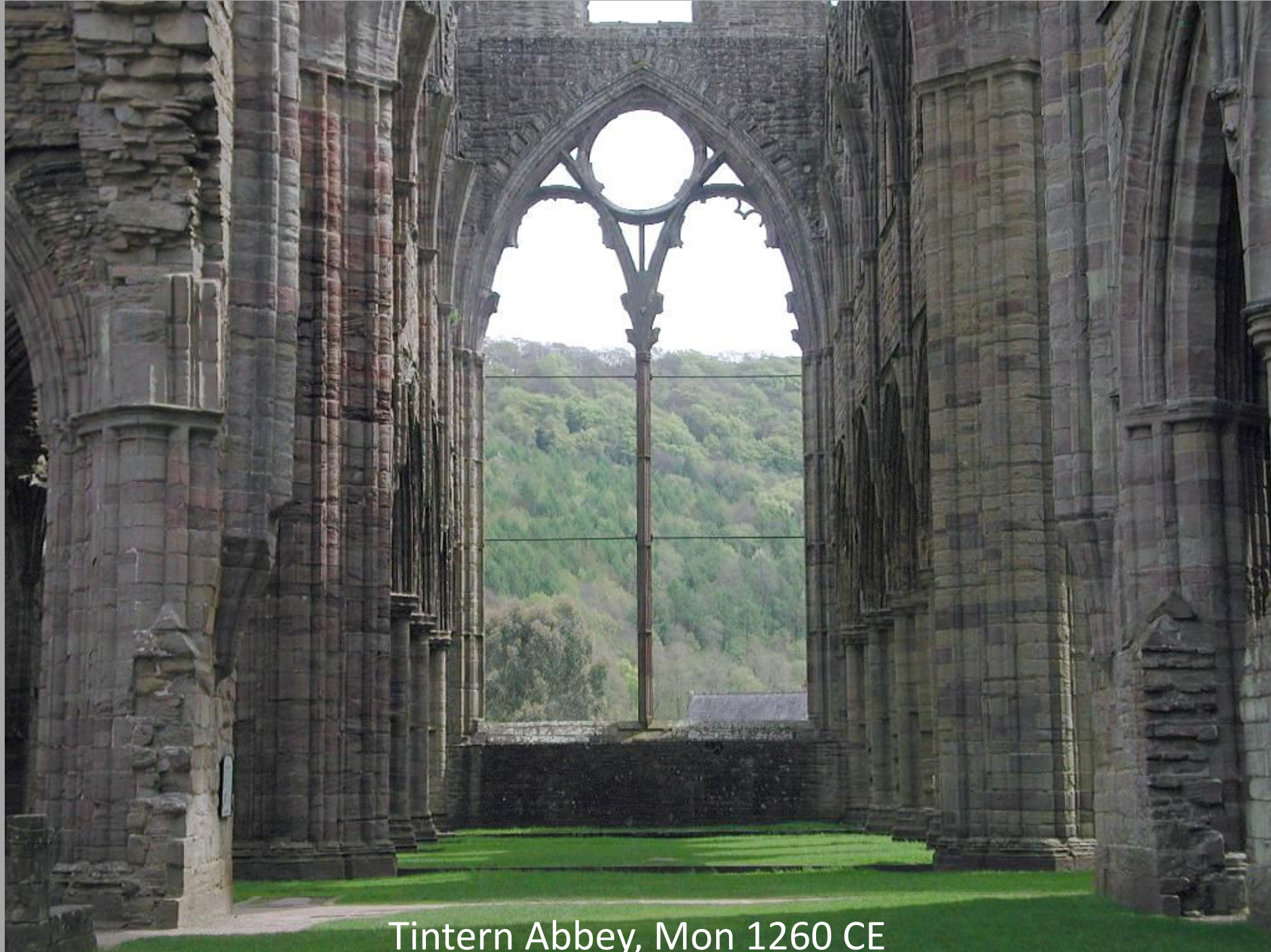
Cistercian abbey located in Llantysillio,
Denbighshire

Valle Crucis Abbey 1201 CE

Valle Crucis Abbey 1201 CE

VALLE CRUCIS ABBEY





Tintern Abbey, Mon 1260 CE



Tintern Abbey, Mon 1260 CE

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Religious

- Advances in building techniques allowed fourteenth-century builders to experiment. Improvements in construction were matched with greater freedom in decoration and sculpture.
- The early part of this period is often known as Decorated due to the more ornamental design of windows.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Religious

- Deeper buttresses allowed thinner walls and this, together with the development of tracery, allowed windows to be wider.
- The solid plate tracery of the Early Gothic period evolved in to light geometric patterns.
- These were further developed into naturalist curvilinear forms with sinuous ogee arches and net like reticulated tracery.
- Doors too, became wider and some had graceful ogee arches.
- Columns are sometimes octagonal or diamond shaped and often has fluting.
- Capitals to columns usually have simple, naturalistic foliage, or take plain moulded forms.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Religious

- During the latter part of the fifteenth century and the early sixteenth century there was a boom in church building.
- This period is often known as Perpendicular. Vertical and horizontal lines predominate giving a feeling of increased height.
- Increasing wealth resulted in more complex layouts. Many existing churches were greatly extended and partly rebuilt and splendid new churches, particularly in the north, were erected.
- Walls became skeletal with windows often taking up the space between buttresses. Windows became flatter and more angular; vertical mullions were carried right through to the arch.

St David's Cathedral



Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Religious

- New towers were usually bold and handsome, elaborately ornamented with pinnacles and openwork parapets.
- In the south, many church roofs were constructed with arch-braced rafters and the whole ceiling panelled over to form a barrel or wagon vault.
- In contrast, open truss roofs strengthened by tie beams and wind braces, often decorated with cusps, are common in the north. A popular form of rebuilding in the north east was the addition of a wide aisle – equal in width and length and height to the body of the church- thus creating a so called double-nave church.



- Open timber roofs of moderate pitch, of elaborate construction, often with hammer beams, richly ornamented with moulded timbers, carved figures of angels and with pierced tracery in spandrels



Holy Trinity chapel fan vaulting

St David's Cathedral, Nave roof 1530-40 CE

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Religious

- Hammer beam roofs with fine, panelled ceilings, often, with carved bosses at junctions, are found in some of the larger churches of the north-east and elsewhere.
- At St David's Cathedral the bosses of the timber-panelled ceiling were developed into decorative hanging pendants.
- Elaborate stone vaulting was used comparatively rarely in Welsh churches.
- Expensive fan vaulting, in which the ribs radiate like a fan, was reserved for special situations such as the well chamber of the remarkable St Winifred's Chapel, Holywell.

TOWERS

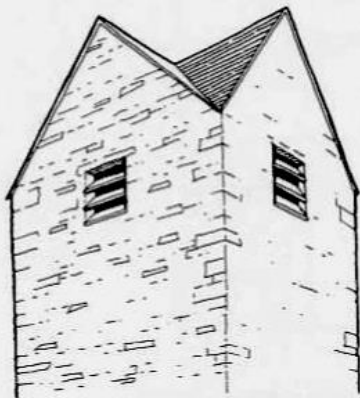
Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Religious

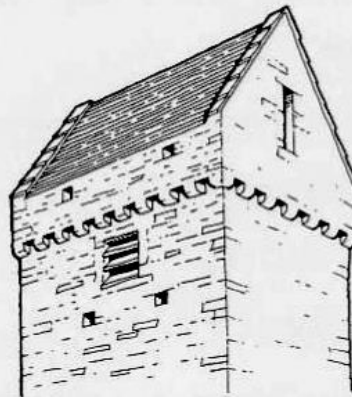
Towers became increasingly important symbolically as well as for lookouts. Apart from the usual pyramidal pitched roof there were regional variations, such as saddleback towers, mainly near the southern coast, and timber lantern-belfries, mostly in Powys and northern Monmouthshire. Spires were rarely built.



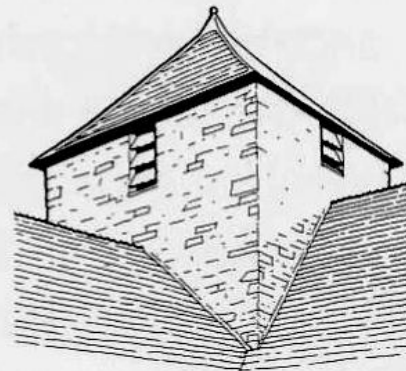
Lantern-belfry



Cross saddleback



Saddleback



Pyramidal

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Religious

- Ball-flower patterns were adopted for mouldings.
- Regularly spaced hook-shaped leaves, known as crockets, were used on sloping angles of canopies, spires and pinnacles.
- Towers were often added to churches occasionally these incorporated steeply sided spires.

St Nicholas Church, Grosmont

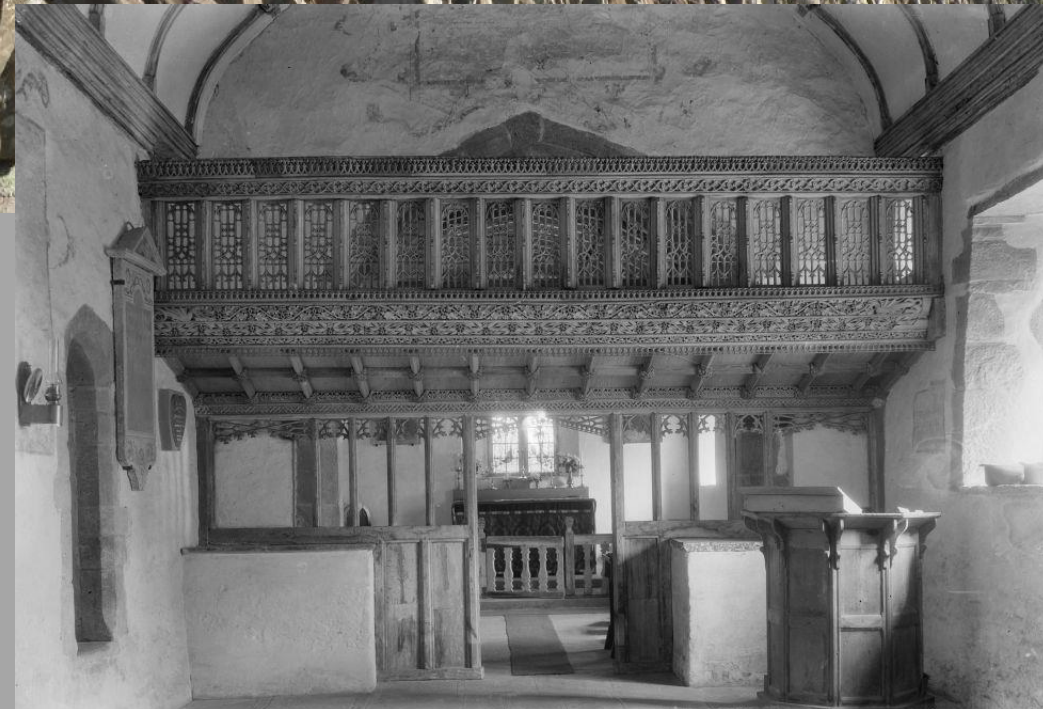


ST ISHOW'S CHURCH

Patrishow Church, Powys



Includes pre-Reformation stone altars with consecration crosses to the left and right of the chancel arch, a rood screen above these altars of c1500, a number of pre and post-Reformation wall paintings, and a round font of around 1055



Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Religious

Intricately carved rood screens and lofts were important feature of many churches.

Some excellent examples survived the hands of later iconoclasts in a few isolated places, such as Llananno, Llanfilo, Llanwnnog and Patrishow in Powys, and Betws Newydd in Monmouthshire. Those in the Severn Valley are bold and rich; those in the Black Mountains tend to be more restrained and delicate.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Secular

- With the demise of independent Wales at the end of the thirteenth century, the need for military fortifications declined and the castle gradually gave way to the manor house.
- In the more settled conditions that followed there was a growth in trade and improved rural prosperity.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Secular

- An early type of manor house was the hall-house, In its commonest form this comprised three units. There was a ground-floor hall (open to the roof and heated by an open fire) in the centre, with service rooms at one end, and private rooms at the other. An ornate spere truss sometimes marked the screens passage between the hall and the service rooms.
- In some cases such as Tretower, a castle might be abandoned altogether for a new house nearby.

Tretower Court



Tretower Court



Tretower Court



Tretower Court



Tretower Court



Tretower Court



Tretower Court



Tretower Court



Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Secular

- Here in the 15th Century a wing containing the hall with a fireplace was set alongside a suite of lodgings. The further addition of a gatehouse and wall walks to form a protective courtyard reflect less settled conditions in the late fifteenth century.
- The wealthiest Landowners built extravagantly, Bishop Gower, (1328 - 47 CE) for example, erected splendid palaces at St Davids, Swansea and Lamphey. The main rooms were at first-floor level, above vaulted under crofts, typical of upper class houses in the south-west. Each palace was surmounted by decorative, arcaded parapets and the great hall at St Davids was lit by a fine wheel window.

END