

WELSH ARCHITECTURE - ARCHITECTURE IN WALES

Week 2

**Romanesque, Norman and Early Gothic
Periods**

Ian Standen

Week 2 – Romanesque, Norman and Gothic Periods

- Aims – To describe the key features and characteristics of **Romanesque, Norman and Early Gothic Periods**
- 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.

ENGLAND

in 626

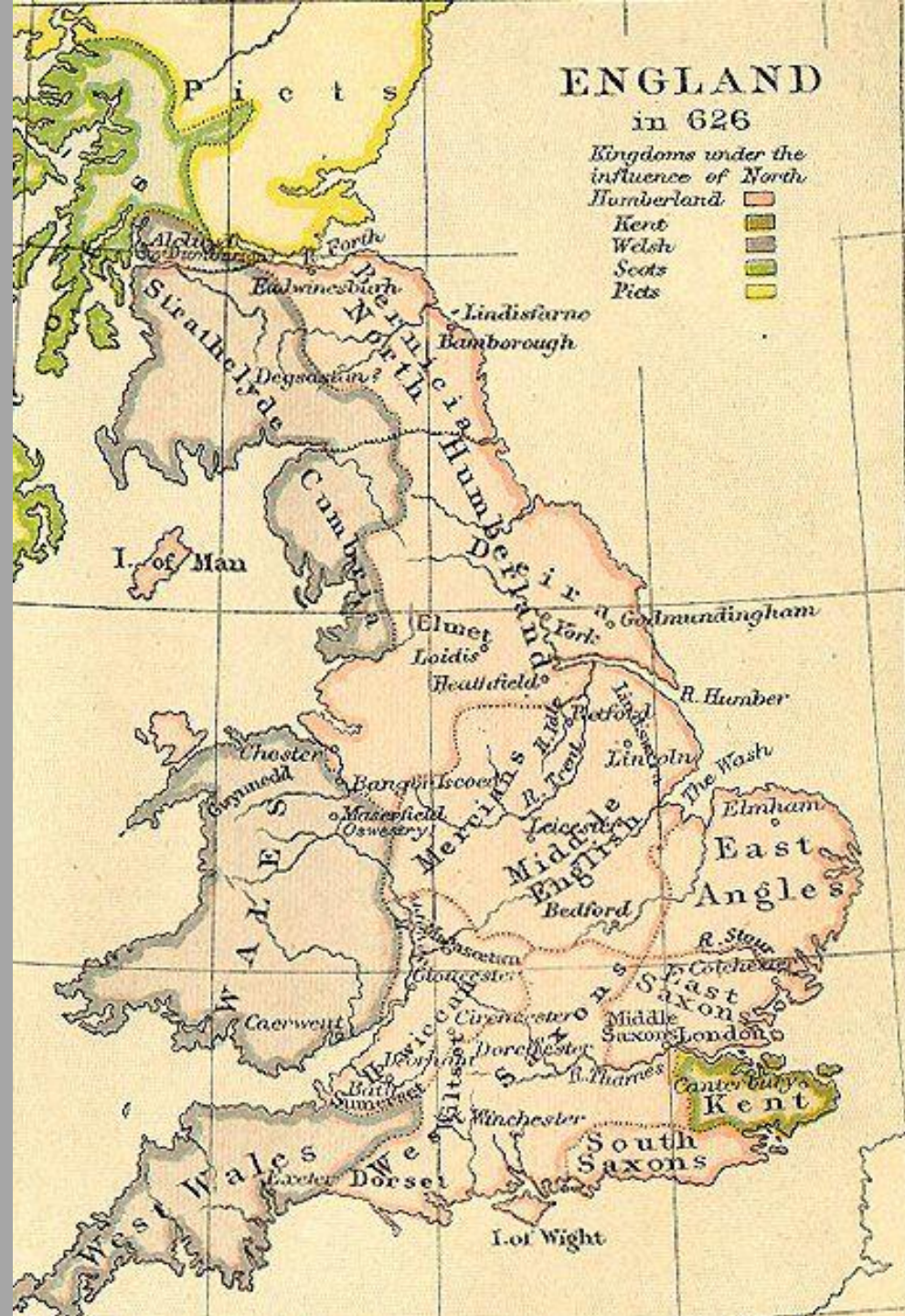
*Kingdoms under the
influence of North
Humberland*

Kent

Welsh

Scots

Picts



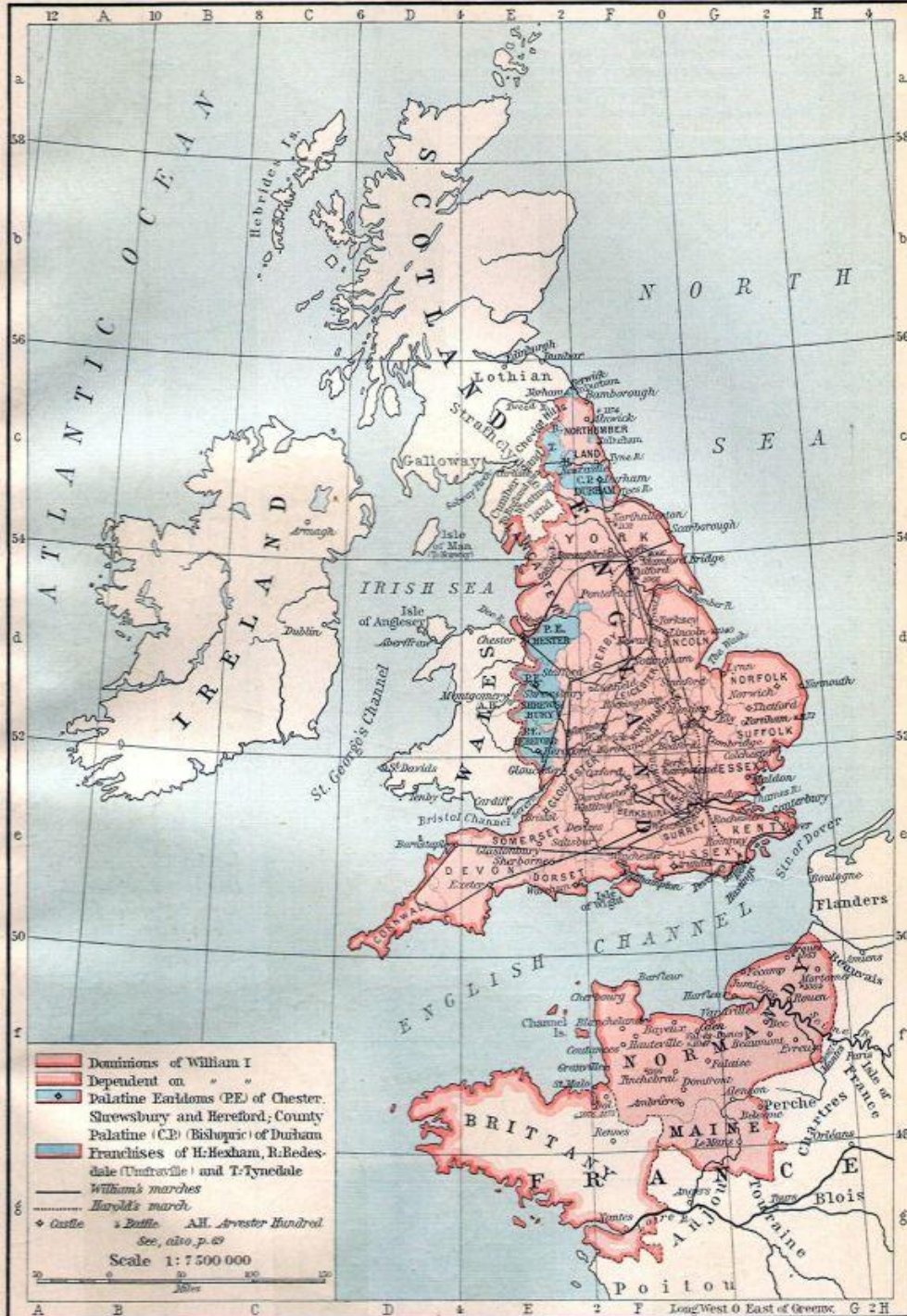
Norman Conquest

1066CE



Norman Conquest

- The Norman Conquest following the Battle of Hastings in 1066 CE
- Chepstow one of the earliest stone castles in Britain was built to guard the crossing of the Wye.



Norman Conquest

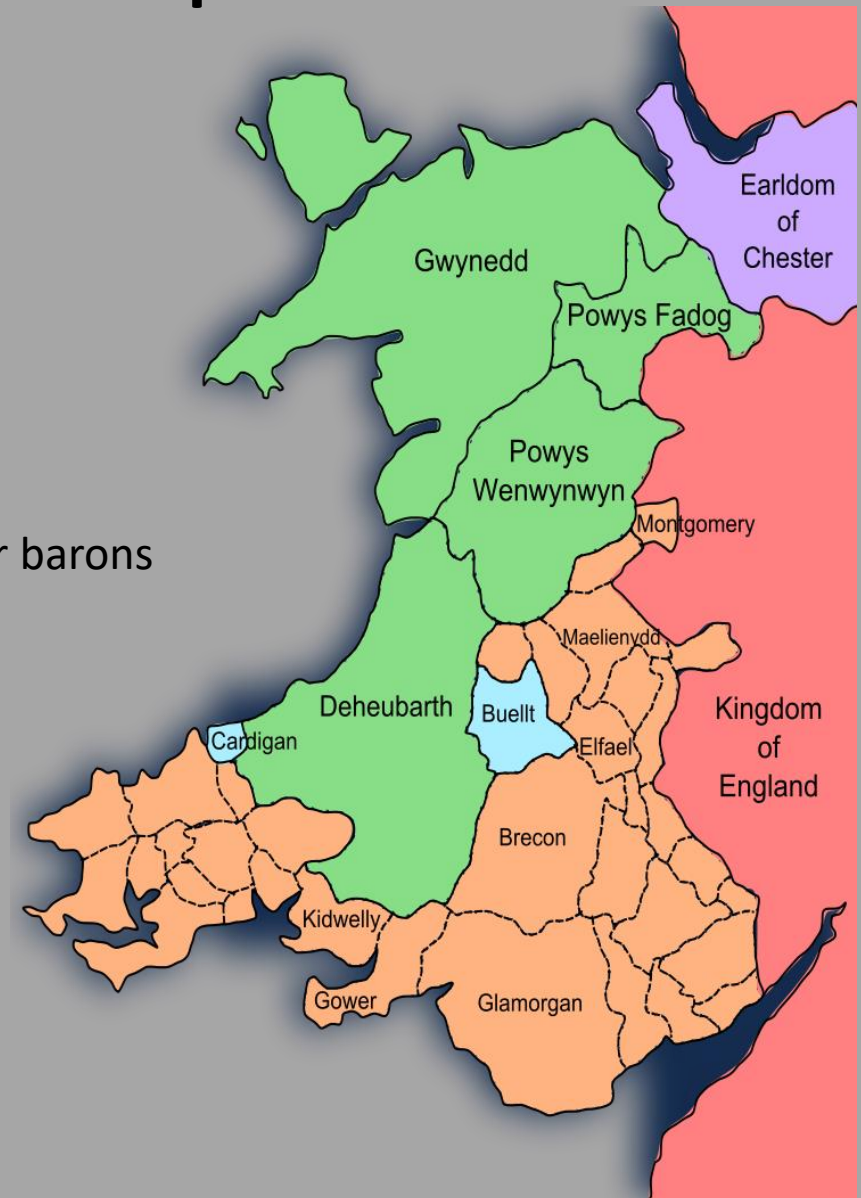
Romanesque

Anglo-Norman Castles

- In the late eleventh century, the Normans quickly overran the southern and the northern coastal lowlands of Wales, together with the Severn and Usk valleys.
- But after the initial thrusts, the Norman onslaught was brought to a halt and most of Wales remained in native hands.
- In the conquered areas the Norman lords erected castles to consolidate their hold.

Norman Conquest

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



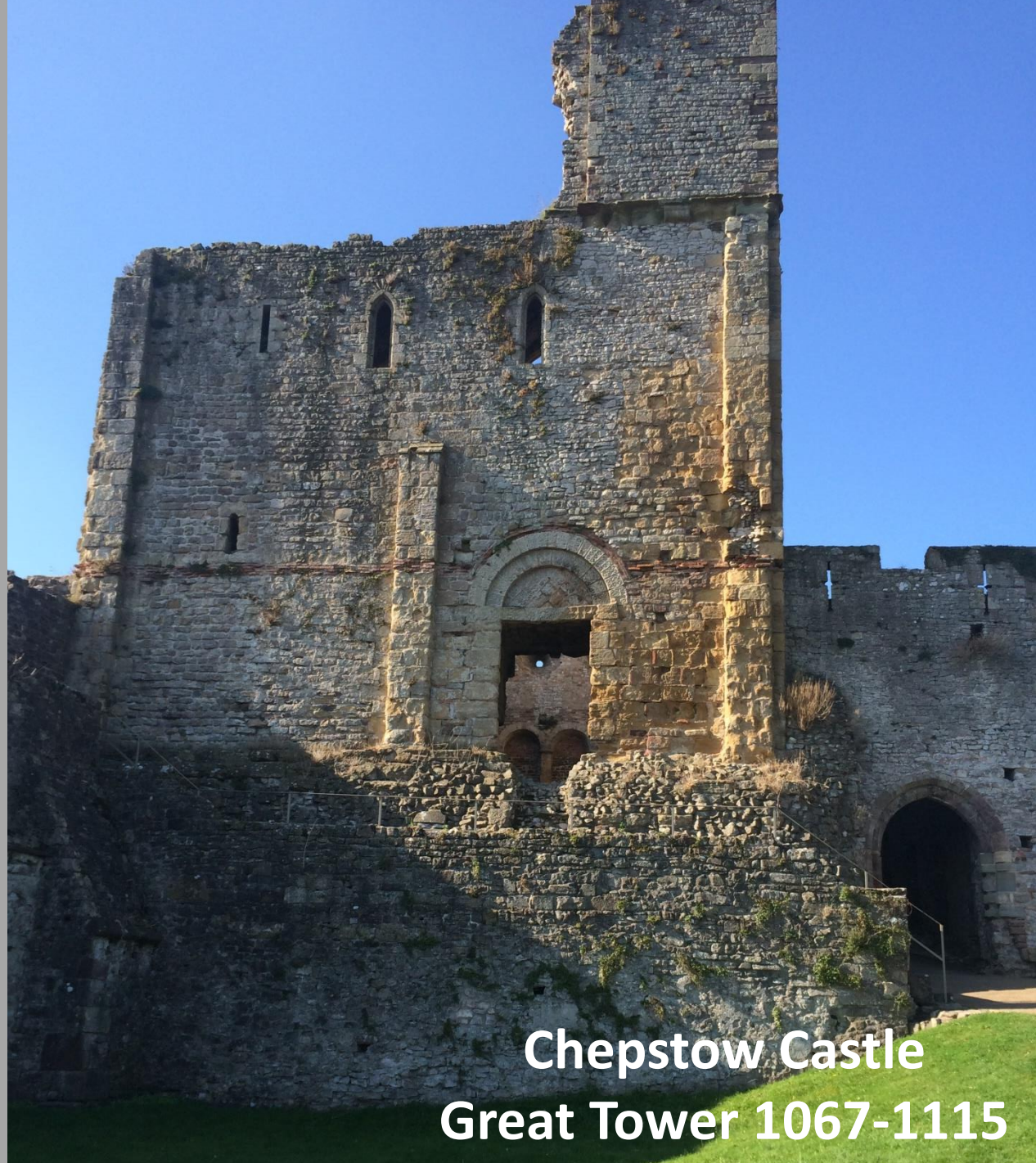
Romanesque

Anglo-Norman Castles

- Chepstow, one of the earliest stone castles in Britain, was built to guard the crossing of the Wye. The great tower, a large rectangular keep, was erected above the sheer cliffs overlooking the river.
- Windows were relegated to the secure river side; so too was access with the exception of a large ceremonial doorway at the east end of the building.



Chepstow Castle ('ystraigyl' marcher Lordship of Striguil)
Great Tower 1067CE
Reconstruction -Artist's Impression



Chepstow Castle
Great Tower 1067-1115



Chepstow Castle
Great Tower 1067-1115



Chepstow Castle
800 year old door



Chepstow Castle
Great Tower 1067-1115

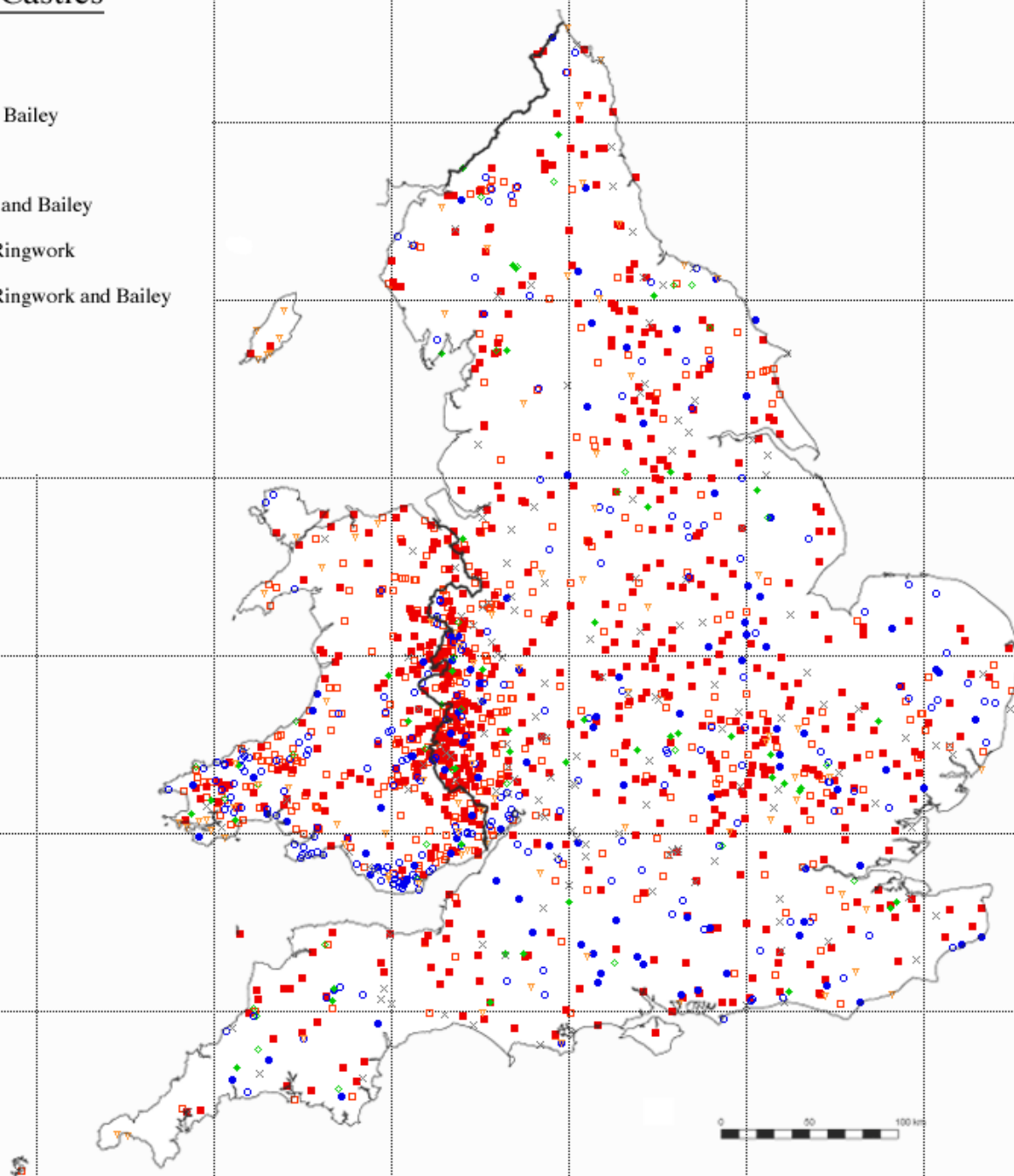


‘The whole site is a lesson in longevity. From around 1067 through to 1690, the castle, almost chameleon-like, changed its appearance as fashions changed in military architecture’ CADW

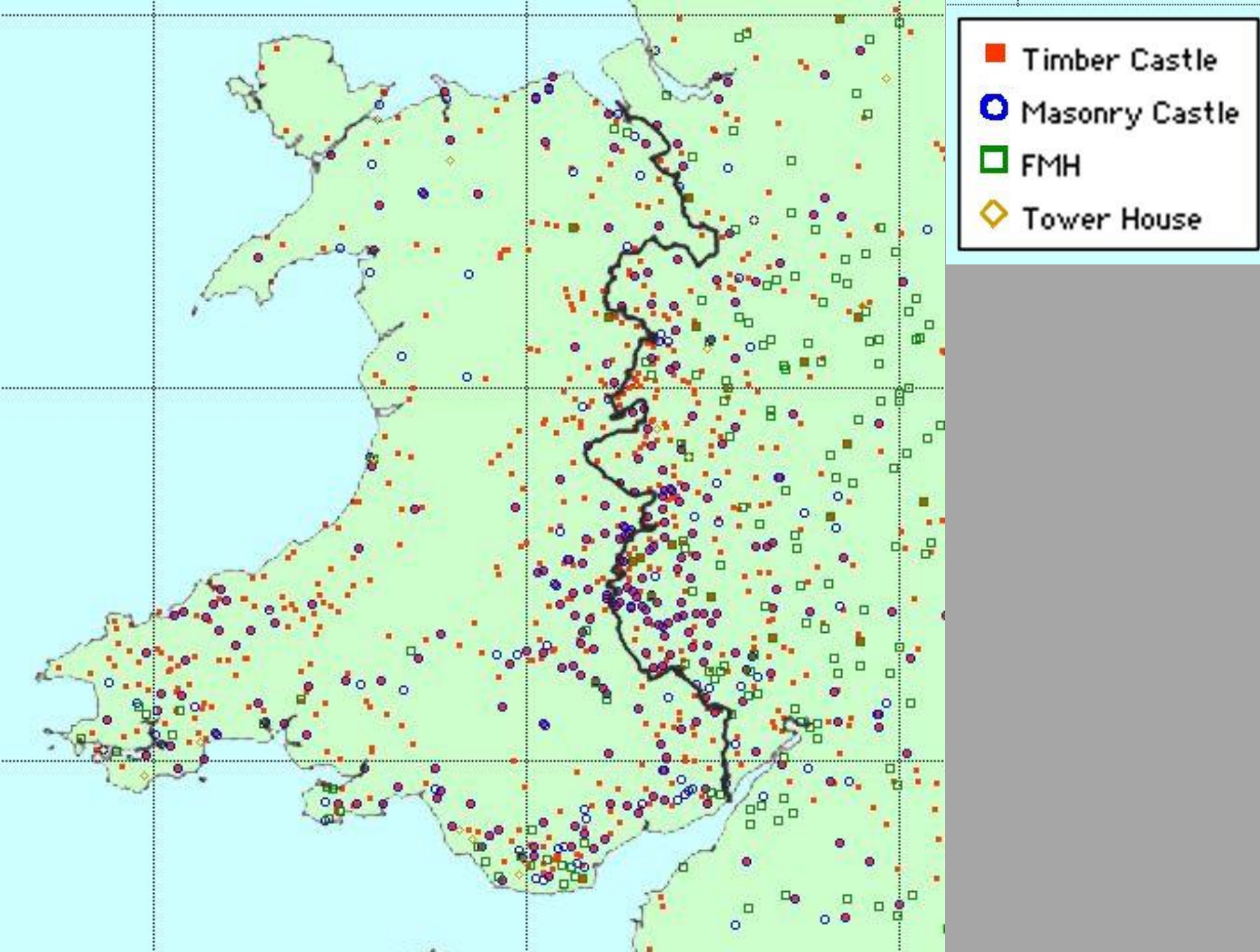
Chepstow Castle
Started 1067CE

Early Castles

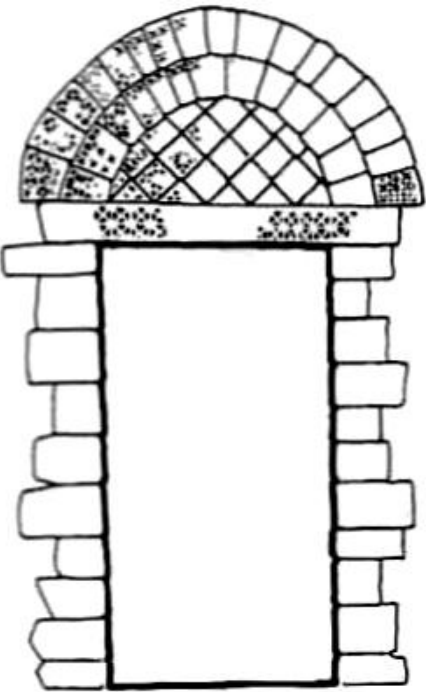
- Motte
- Motte and Bailey
- Ringwork
- Ringwork and Bailey
- ◇ Motte or Ringwork
- ◆ Motte or Ringwork and Bailey
- ▽ Other
- × Uncertain



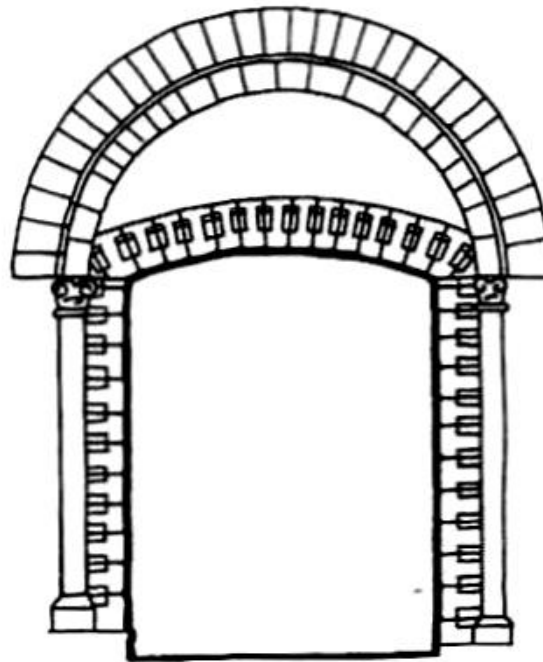
<http://www.gatehouse-gazetteer.info/distrib.html>



Norman Castles- Windows and Doors



Chepstow: Great tower doorway.



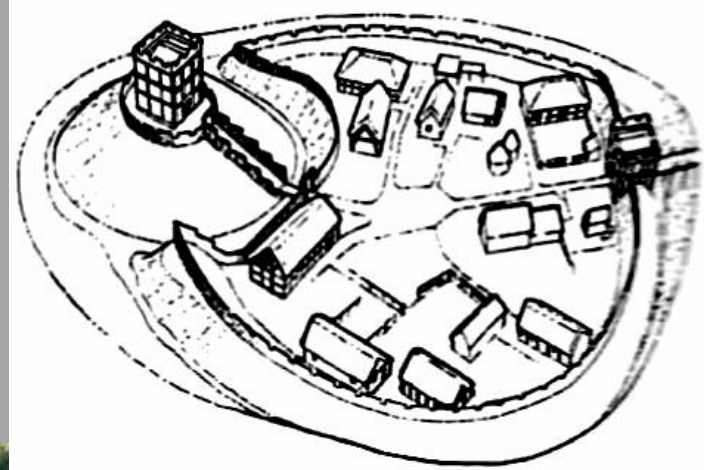
Newcastle, Bridgend: Curtain wall doorway.



The austere stone walls of Anglo-Norman castles are generally featureless apart from occasional arrow loops and flat pilaster-like buttresses. Windows were generally small and round headed, and used sparingly. The main entrance, on the other hand, could be quite flamboyant as in the geometrically decorated doorway at Chepstow and the boldly detailed example at Newcastle, Bridgend.

Motte and Bailey Castles

- Most of the early castles were constructed from earth and timber. The commonest type, known as a motte and bailey, comprised a large courtyard (bailey) - protected by a ditch and earthen rampart – and an artificial mound of earth (motte) surmounted by a wooden tower (keep).
- The tower acted as a lookout as well as the residence of the lord. The courtyard accommodated various service buildings.



*Wiston Castle: An impresssion
of the motte and bailey.*



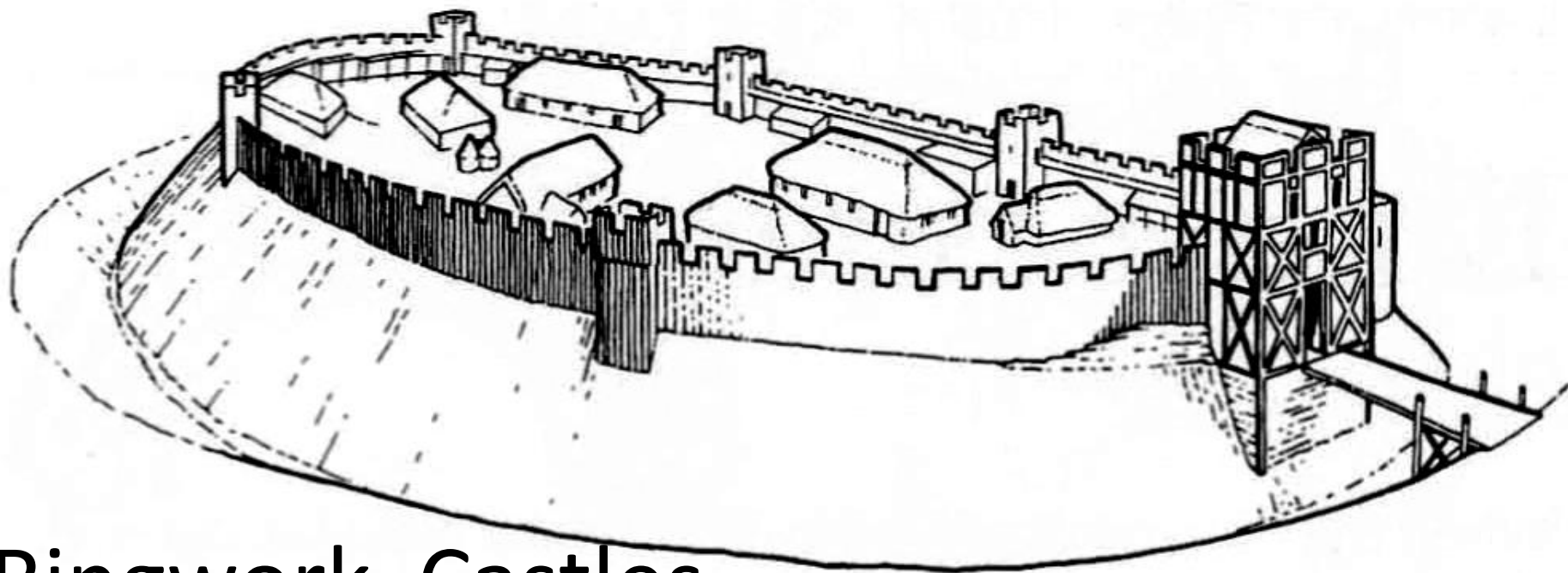
**Wiston Castle 12th C, Haverfordwest –
Motte and Bailey**

Motte and Bailey Castles

- *An Anglo-Norman power base: Wiston Castle, Pembrokeshire, is an archetypal motte-and-bailey castle, and one of the best preserved in Wales.*
- *The 7 metre high motte or mound is crowned by the ruins of a circular stone keep and surrounded by a deep ditch. The surrounding bailey may even originally have been an Iron Age defended settlement re-used in the medieval period.*
- *The castle was probably established by an early Flemish settler, Wizo, during the twelfth century. In 1220 it was captured and destroyed by Llywelyn the Great, Prince of Gwynedd, during one of his campaigns in south Wales.*

Ringwork Castles

- A ringwork castle was a simpler type and may represent an earlier form of Norman fortification, or its form could have reflected topographical considerations.
- Ringwork enclosures were often raised above the surrounding ground level. They were generally defended by a deep moat and entered through a tall timber gate house.



Ringwork Castles

Kidwelly Castle: Impression of the ringwork.



Ringwork Castles

- *Kidwelly Castle is an imposing ruin, situated on a scarp above the upper tidal limit of the Gwendraeth Fach Estuary. It was built for Roger, Bishop of Salisbury (1102-1139) as the centre of a significant lordship comprising the commote of Cydweli.*
- *The castle was established between 1106 and 1115, at the same time as the Benedictine Priory, now St Mary's Church located some 180m south (upstream, on the other opposite side of the estuary).*

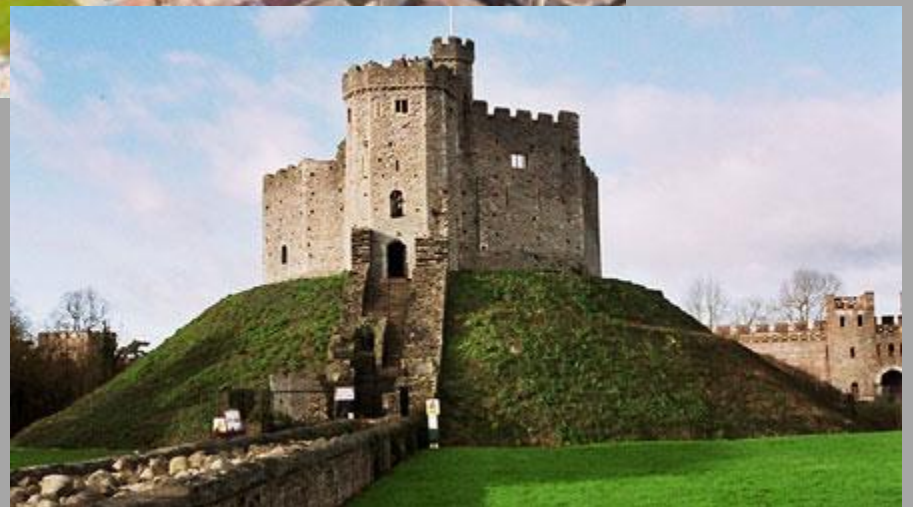
Motte and Bailey (Stone)

- When conditions permitted, many of the early castles were rebuilt in stone.
- Cardiff is a good example of a motte-and-bailey castle (constructed about 1081 within the remains of a Roman fort) where the original timber keep was replaced in the early twelfth century by a stone shell keep. The fine gatehouse tower was added in the thirteenth century.

Cardiff Castle – Stone Shell Keep 12th C



Cardiff Castle -aerial view



Romanesque Religious

- When the Normans arrived in Wales they brought the Romanesque style with them. Architecturally their most important type of building was the church.
- At first most churches were stocky in appearance and relatively plain in design with simple aisle-less naves and chancels.

Romanesque Religious

- Walls of Romanesque churches are thick with shallow, flat buttresses and few openings. Herringbone masonry, similar to earlier Saxon construction, occurs sometimes in the south-east where most Romanesque buildings are located. Windows are round headed and tend to be narrow.
- Occasionally they are linked together or flanked by blind arcades.

Romanesque Religious

- Doorways are usually enclosed in semi-circular arches. In later buildings doorways are often very decorative with tiers of receding arches (orders), each embellished with mouldings.



St Mary's Church
Chepstow (1072 CE)

Romanesque Religious

- Romanesque interiors are very heavy in appearance: openings seem to have been cut out of solid masonry. Columns are massive, usually square or cylindrical, occasionally octagonal or compound.
- Capitals at the tops of columns tend to be either square or round and have a cushion , scalloped, or; later; trumpet form.
- The heaviness was sometimes relieved by painted decoration in the form of ashlar joints and bell-like flowers as at Ewenny Priory.

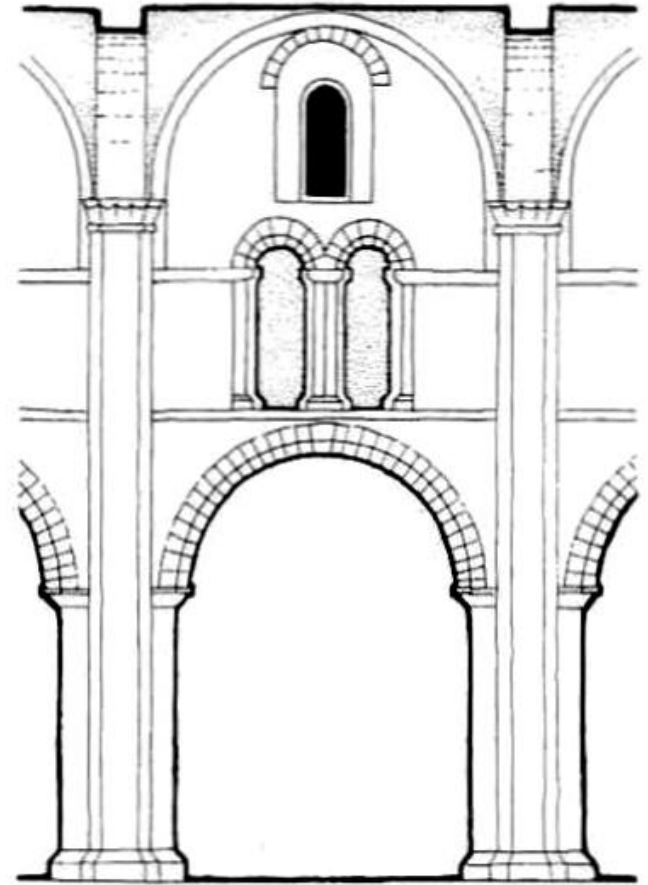
Bayeux Cathedral, Normandy (crypt) 11th C



Bayeux Cathedral, Normandy 11th C



St Mary's Church Chepstow (1072 CE)



*St Mary's Priory Church,
Chepstow: Nave arcade (restored).*

Margam Abbey: West Front about 1170-80 CE



Romanesque Religious

- Everywhere the semi-circular shape is apparent: in doorways, windows , arches of the aisle arcades of larger churches and in barrel-vaulted ceilings (as at Ewenny Priory) where these were constructed in masonry.
- St Mary's, Chepstow, is on the site of the earliest Norman church (about 1072) in Wales.
- The present nave belongs to an early twelfth century rebuilding. Initially, stone barrel vaulted ceilings were like semi-circular tunnels extending along the length of the covered area .
- Rib vaulting developed from barrel vaulting as a means of reducing weight. But at first because arches were semi-circular; it could only be used for covering square areas.

Romanesque Religious

- Towers were usually centrally placed at the crossing and were plain. In some churches in the north and west there is a distinctly Celtic flavour; both in the simplicity of structure as in the pyramidal tops of some Anglesey towers and the naturalistic, curvilinear decoration, as at Penmon Priory.
- *St Davids Cathedral: Nave about 1180- 1200.*



**Penmon Priory: About 1140-70CE
with additions around 1220-40CE**

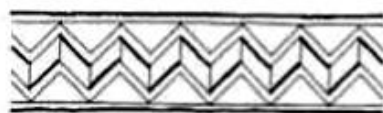


MOULDINGS

Romanesque is often characterized by rich decoration, notably mouldings in the form of bold geometric designs. Scandinavian influence is seen in the beakhead type of moulding and in the carved tympanum at Penmon Priory.



Billet



Chevron



Cable



Beakhead



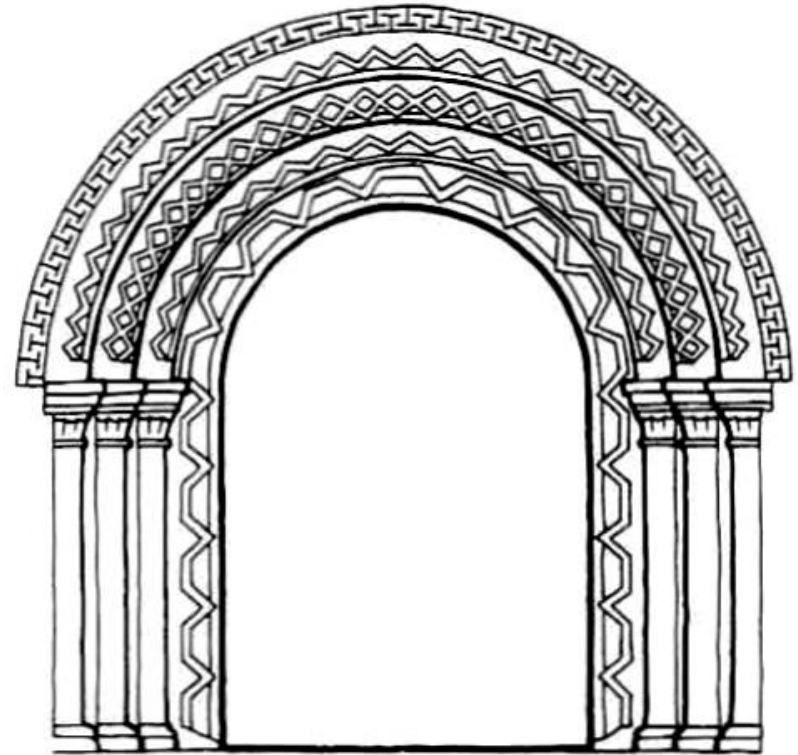
Nailhead

St David's Cathedral

1180-1200 CE



Llandaff Cathedral: South doorway 1180-1200CE



Llandaff Cathedral: South doorway, about 1180–1200.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Castles of the Marcher Lords

- By the beginning of the thirteenth century Anglo-Norman Marcher lords dominated the southern coastal strip and the Usk and Wye valleys as well as exercising spasmodic overlordship of areas further inland.
- The latter areas were constantly under threat from Welsh princes. In order to maintain control many castles of the March had to be rebuilt.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Castles of the Marcher Lords

- The craggy remains at Tretower illustrate this process. Initially a motte-and-bailey castle was erected (near the Usk).
- In the mid-twelfth century this was replaced by an angular, stone shell keep.
- During the early thirteenth century, an imposing circular tower was erected within the earlier shell keep.

Tretower Court and Castle 13th C

Near Crickhowell



Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Castles of the Marcher Lords

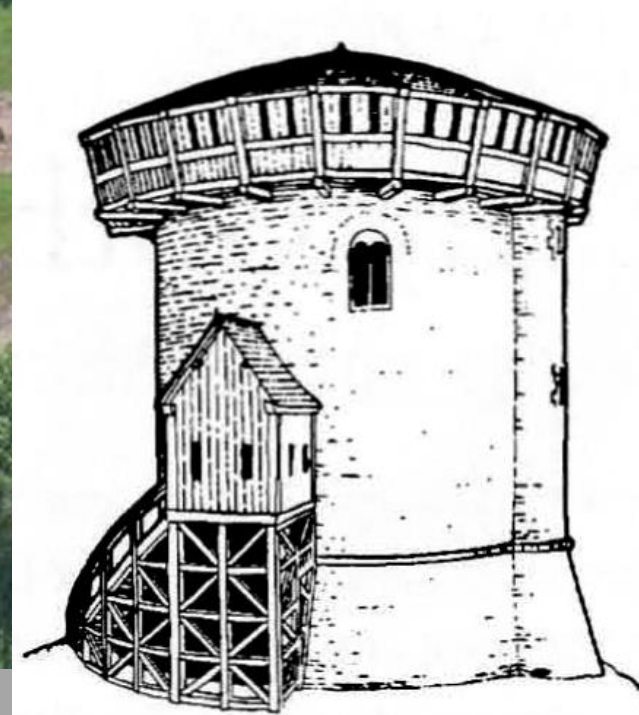
- The inspiration for many round keep towers in Wales appears to have been the majestic donjon at Pembroke, which was built by William Marshal soon after 1200CE.
- Other Marcher lords in the south-east also erected round keeps to strengthen their castles.
- Round keeps were superior to rectangular keeps because they gave better all-round fields of fire and had no corners that could be broken by battering rams.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY Castles of the Marcher Lords



Pembroke Castle: Keep, about 1200-05 CE

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY Castles of the Marcher Lords



*Skenfrith Castle: Keep
(restored).*

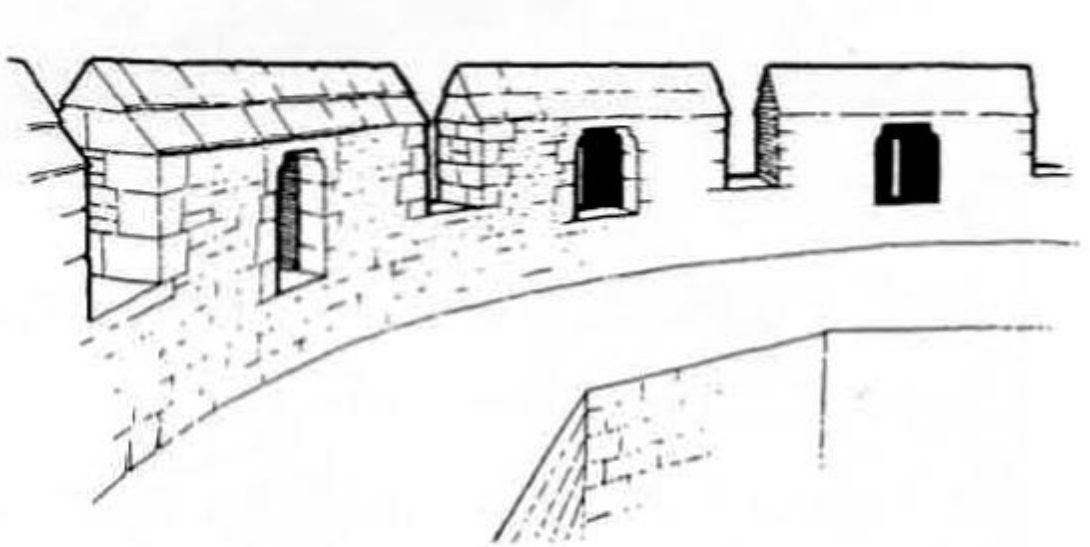
Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Castles of the Marcher Lords

- The entrance, accessible by wooden steps, was usually on the first floor; upper floors were reached by stone spiral stairs. In times of war the keep tower would have been crowned by a circular fighting platform or hourd.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY Castles of the Marcher Lords

- The tops of walls were generally battlemented, or crenelated.
- The solid projections known as merlons, often incorporated arrow loops.



Medieval crenellation.

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Castles of the Marcher Lords

THIRTEENTH-CENTURY ARROWLOOPS

The design of arrowloops, or loopholes, varied considerably. They were usually narrow vertical slots, splayed on the inside to give archers room to shoot.



Skenfrith



Pembroke



Manorbier



Chepstow



Chepstow

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY

Castles of the Marcher Lords

- The largest and most spectacular of all Marcher castles is Caerphilly, begun by Gilbert de Clare in 1268.
- It was surrounded by an artificial lake and equipped with an almost impregnable system of defences, including five twin-towered gateways and an elaborate defence platform above a water barrage.

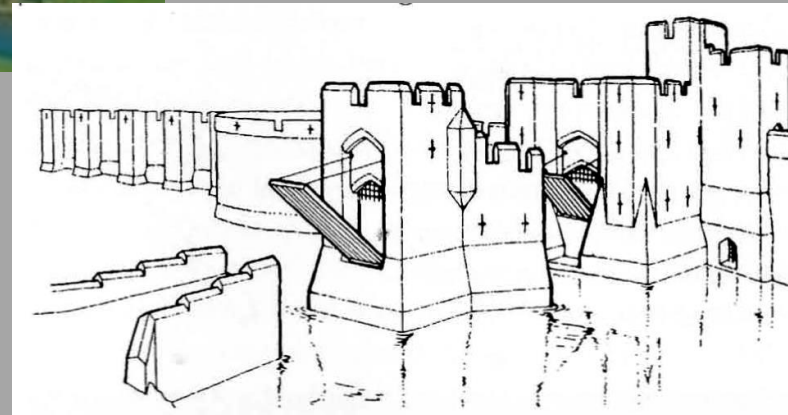
Early Gothic 13th CENTURY Castles of the Marcher Lords



**Caerphilly Castle 13th C
– Gilbert de Clare**



Early Gothic 13th CENTURY Castles of the Marcher Lords



Caerphilly Castle: The main gate (restored).

Caerphilly Castle 13th C – Gilbert de Clare

Early Gothic 13th CENTURY Castles of the Marcher Lords



Caerphilly Castle 1268 CE— Gilbert de Clare

Discussion/ Reflection/Recap