

The Re-imagining of Sudeley's Forgotten South Range

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Reconstructing Sudeley

Sudeley Castle is a historic building with walls that literally has a historical timeline blended in its walls. Rich in history from the medieval period to present day the castle boasts famous guests and residents such as Katherine Parr and Elizabeth I. It's stand against time is reflected in it's persistent renovation and rebuilding to the north and west range, but begs the answer to the questions – what was the south range? Who was there?

Methodology

In order to achieve this, we began with geophysical methods such as a resistivity survey to determine where the foundations of the south range are. Once these foundations were discovered and theory that yes there was indeed a south range, we proceeded with test pits and analysed data from artefacts found to determine a chronology of the area. Test pits were carried out with the help of assisted volunteers from the community eager to engage in their local heritage.

Literature Cited

Dent, E. (1877). *Annals of Winchcombe and Sudeley*. 1st ed. [ebook] London: J . Murray. Available at: <https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=rLYLAAAYAAJ&dq=annals%20of%20winchcombe%20and%20sudeley&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q=annals%20of%20winchcombe%20and%20sudeley&f=false>
Emery, A. (2006) *Greater Medieval Houses of England and Wales, 1300–1500: Volume 3, Southern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Results

The foundations found through resistivity were approximately 32m x 23m inclusive of an eastern tower mirrored to the still standing dungeon tower.

Results reveal a bustling existence in the south range. Wide range of artefacts found, most notable a 17th century cannon ball. Pottery and utensils also found.

Figure 1: Example of the survey that illustrates confirmation of the foundation walls buried underground.

Figure 2: Large amounts of pottery shards that date to 1400's. Vast majority of pottery shards identifiable as culinary and eating utensils such as cooking pots and plates.

Figure 3: Fascinating find of a 17th century cannonball.



Figure 3

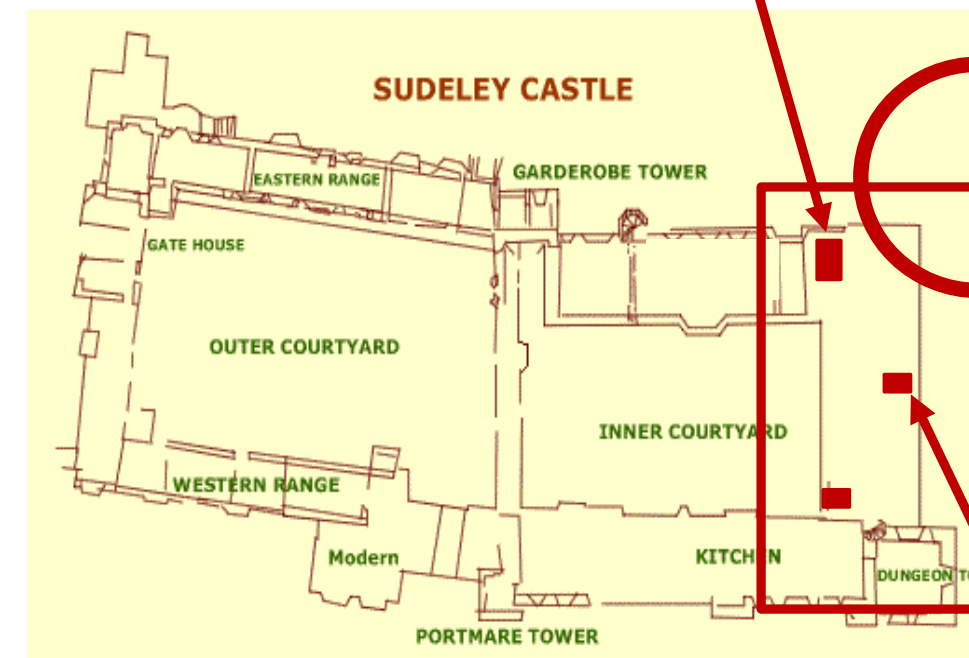


Figure 4

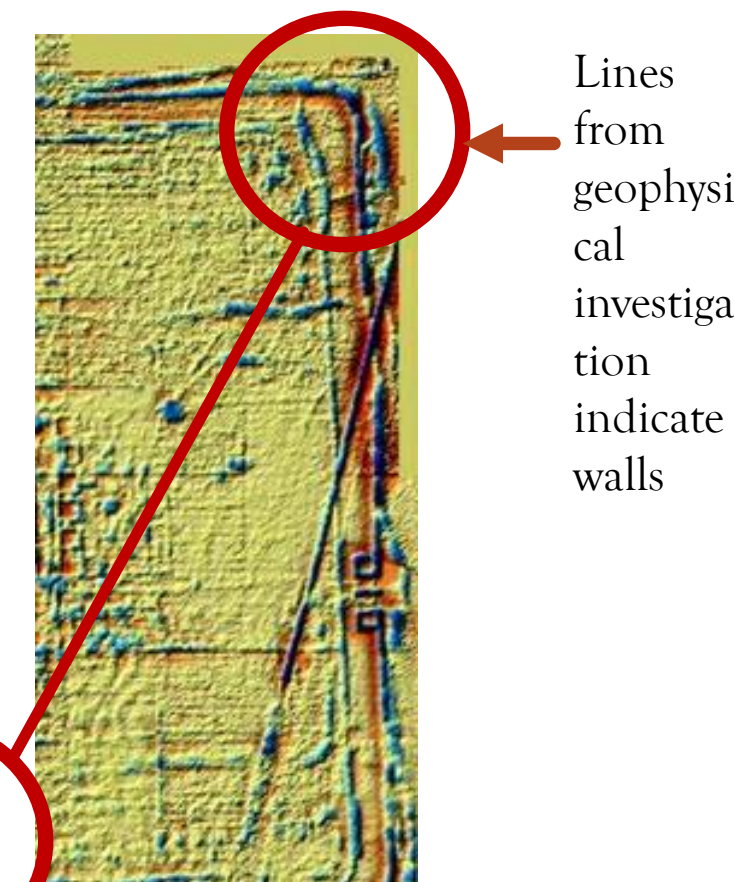


Figure 1.

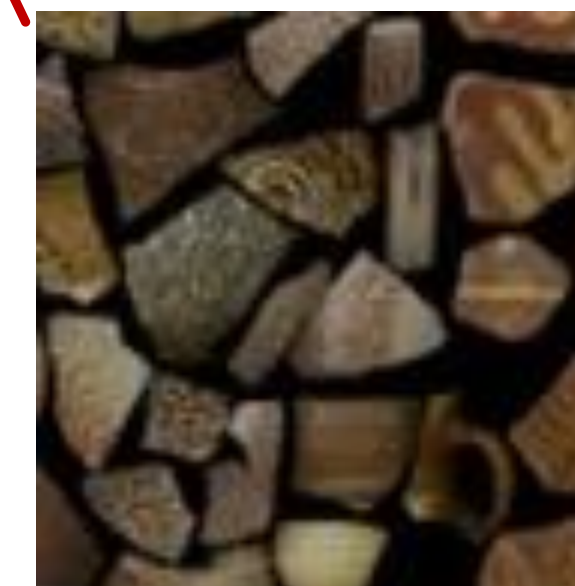


Figure 2

Conclusion

The artefacts discovered provide a fascinating insight to the utilisation over the south range in the 15th century. Culinary and eating utensils indicate that it is very likely that during Ralph Boteler's residence at the castle, it was most likely to be a Banquet/Great Hall as originally estimated by Emery in *Greater Medieval Houses*. This is most interesting as it provokes questioning as to what the purpose of the present 'banquet hall ruins' in the west range were originally. We are able to construct a more detailed illustration of Boteler's grand Sudeley, remodelling a more specific representation of the structure that would have resided Queen Katherine Parr and welcomed Queen Elizabeth I during her celebrated visit for a three day long celebration of her victory of the Spanish Armada. The canon ball is also a brilliant evidence indicative of the siege that caused great suffering and destruction to Sudeley Castle. We can assume the decimation of the south range was a product of an attack on the royalist castle during the English Civil War 1642-1651. Going forward, a further excavation dig would unveil further details of the lost tower of the south range; a mirror image to the Dungeon Tower, it is likely that it was a residential tower adjoining the new suites of the west range. Could we broaden our knowledge of castle residents by exploring more domesticated areas? The success in findings spurs us further on the quest to rebuild Sudeley.

Acknowledgements

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Further Information

For further information, see <https://sudeleyrebuilt.co.uk>

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