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EUROPEAN CASTLES

Introduction

This book was designed to be used by fantasy gamers who wish to include detailed descriptions of castles in their campaigns. All of the buildings depicted in this book are, or were, actual castles of European origin. They can easily be used in any fantasy game as is or can be modified as the players see fit.

As outlined in my earlier book, Weapons and Castles, the development of the castle in Europe went through distinct phases. Please consult that work for more information. Nearly all castles were situated on sites of some earlier fortification. This was especially true if the castle was located at some strategic spot such as at the bend of a river, atop a lone hill, or at some other important place. Many castles made use of walls which were constructed at an earlier period, sometimes centuries earlier.

Included here is a glossary of terms commonly used when discussing castles and similar fortifications.

GLOSSARY

Abacus: Flat portion on top of a capital.
Aisle: Space between arcade and outer wall.
Ambulatory: Aisle round an apse.
Apse: Rounded end (usually of chancel or chapel).
Arcade: Row of arches, free-standing and supported on piers or columns; a blind arcade is a dummy.

Arch: Can be round-headed, pointed, two-centered or drop, that is arch struck from centre on the springing-line; ogee: pointed arch with double curved sides, upper arcs convex, lower concave; lancet: pointed arch formed on an acute-angle triangle; and depressed: flattened or elliptical.
Ashlar: Worked stone with flat surface, usually of regular shape and square edges.
Aumbry: Recess to hold sacred vessels, often found in castle chapels.
Bailey: Castle courtyard and surrounding buildings.
Barbican: Outwork defending the gateway or entrance to castle.
Barrel Roof: Like a covered wagon, or inverted ship; barrel vault is a plain vault of uniform cross-section.
Barbizan: Overhanging battlemented corner turret, corbelled out; common in Scotland and France.
Bastion: Solid masonry projection.
Batter: Inclined face of wall; hence battered.
Battlements: Parapet with indentations or embrasures, with raised portions (merlons) between; also called crenellations.
towers of a castle.

Diaper Work: Decoration of squares or lozenges.

Dogtooth: Diagonal indented pyramid.

Donjon: Principal tower of castle; keep.

Dormer: Window placed vertically in sloping roof.

Drawbridge: Movable bridge; originally moved horizontally like a gangway.

Dressing: Carved stonework around openings.

Drum-tower: Large, circular tower, usually low and squat.

Drystone: Unmortared masonry.

Embattled: Battlements.

Embrasure: Small opening in fortified parapet, usually splayed on inside.

Fillet: Narrow flat band.

Fluting: Concave mouldings in parallel.

Foliated: Carved with leaves.

Footings: Bottom part of wall.

Forebuilding: Block in front of keep, to form lobby or landing.

Fosse: Ditch.

Freestone: High-quality sandstone or limestone.

Fresco: Painting on wet plaster wall.

Gable: Wall covering end of roof-ridge.

Gallery: Long passage or room.

Garderobe: Latrine; privy.

Gable: Wall covering end of roof-ridge.

Garderobe: Long passage or room.

Gargoyles: Oratory: Private chapel in house.

Hillfort: Bronze or Iron Age earthwork of ditches and banks.

Hood: Arched covering; when used to throw off rainwater, called hood-mould.

Impost: Wall bracket to support arch.

Jamb: Side of arch, door or window.

Joint: Timber stretched from wall-to-wall to support floorboards.

Keep: Main tower.

Lancet: Long, narrow window with pointed head.

Light: Component part of window, divided by mullions and transoms.

Lintel: Horizontal stone or beam bridging opening.

Loop: Narrow opening.

Louvres: Opening in roof (often with lantern over) to allow smoke to escape from central hearth.

Machicolation: Projecting gallery on brackets, on outside of castle towers or walls, with holes in floor for dropping missiles, etc.

Mangonel: Siege-engine whose projectile arms turn against fixed stop.

Merlon: Solid part of embattled parapet.

Mullion: Vertical division of window.

Multivallate: Hillfort with three or more concentric lines of defence.

Mural: Wall (adjectival).

Nailhead: Pyramid moulding.

Newel: Centre-post of circular staircase.

Nookshaft: Shaft set in angle of jamb or pier.

Oolite: Granular limestone.

Open Joint: Wide space between faces of stones.

Oratory: Private chapel in house.

Oriel: Projecting window in wall; originally a form of porch; often of wood.

Palisade: Timber defensive screen or fence.

Parados: Low wall on inner side of main wall.

Parapet: Low wall on outer side of main wall.

Pediment: Low-pitched gable over porticos, doors, windows, etc.

Perpendicular: English architectural style, c. 1330–1540.

Pier: Support for arch, usually square as opposed to pillar (round).

Pilaster: Shallow pier used to buttress wall.

Pinnacle: Ornament crowning spire, tower, etc.

Piscina: Handbasin, usually set in or against wall, with drain.

Pipe-Roll: Exchequer accounts, rolled on narrow wooden cylinders.

Pitch: Roof slope.

Pitching: Rough cobbling.

Plinth: Projecting base of wall.

Portcullis: Grating dropped vertically from grooves to block passage or gate in castle; of wood, metal or a combination of the two.

Moulding: Masonry decoration.

Mullion: Vertical division of window.

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Portcullis: Grating dropped vertically from grooves to block passage or gate in castle; of wood, metal or a combination of the two.
Postern: Back door of castle.
Quadrangle: Inner courtyard.
Quoin: Dressed stone at angle of building.
Rampart: Defensive stone or earth wall surrounding castle or town.
Rath: Low, circular ringwork.
Ravelin: Outwork with two faces forming a salient angle.
Re-entrant: recessed.
Refectory: Communal dining-hall.
Revetment: Retaining wall.
Rib: Raised moulding dividing vault.
Ring-Work: Circular earthwork of bank and ditch.
Romanesque: Prevailing architectural style, eighth to twelfth century, with rounded arches.
Roofridge: Summit line of roof.
Rubble: Unsquared stone not laid in courses.
Rustication: Worked ashlar stone, with faces left deliberately rough.
Saltire: Diagonal, equal-limbed cross.
Scarp: Slope on inner side of ditch.
Shaft: Narrow column.
Shell-Keep: Circular or oval wall surrounding inner portion of castle.
Soffit: Underside of arch or opening.
Solar: Upper living room of medieval house or castle; often over the hall.
Splay: Chamfer, or sloping face.
Squint: Observation hole in wall or room.
Stringcourse: Continuous horizontal mouldings on wall face.
Tracery: Intersecting ribwork in upper part of window.
Transom: Horizontal division of window.
Trebuchet: Siege-engine with unequal counterpoise arm.
Trefoil: Three-lobed.
Turret: Small tower, round or polygonal.
Vault: Stone roofing.
Vitrified: Material reduced to glass by combustion.
Vousoir: Wedge-shaped stone in arch.
Wall-Stair: Staircase built into thickness of wall.

Wall-Walk: Passage along castle wall.
Weathering: Sloping surface to throw off rainwater.
Wing-Wall: Wall down slope of motte to protect stairway.
Yett: Iron gate.

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WALL RATING

It is very difficult to evaluate fortifications in terms of damage resistance for use in fantasy type games. The table below gives a general idea of the strength of the wall but it must be remembered that this rating can be affected by materials and workmanship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wall Rating</th>
<th>Thickness</th>
<th>Small Catapult (Number of Hits 5kg stone)</th>
<th>Heavy Catapult (Number of Hits 20kg stone)</th>
<th>Trebuchet (Number of Hits 250kg stone)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2m</td>
<td>21-40</td>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5m</td>
<td>42-60</td>
<td>21-40</td>
<td>2-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7m</td>
<td>62-80</td>
<td>41-60</td>
<td>3-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10m</td>
<td>82-100</td>
<td>61-80</td>
<td>4-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>13m</td>
<td>102-140</td>
<td>81-100</td>
<td>5-30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The hit numbers indicate how many hits would be needed to wreck a given wall. The hits would have to be in the same area of the wall to have any effect. Hits on the tops of embattlements would soon knock the merlons over.
KARLSTEIN
CZECHOSLOVAKIA

BRIDGE

IMPERIAL
PALACE
C. 15TH CENTURY
WALL RISING

0 120 FT
BERKELEY CASTLE - ENGLAND

WALL RATINGS
OUTERWARD WALLS 1
KEEP AND FORTIFIED WALLS 2

THE KEEP IS 49 ft (15 m) high and 87 ft (26 m) in diameter, built in 1153.

BERKELEY CASTLE HAS BEEN CALLED THE MOST GLAMOROUS AND ARISTOCRATIC OF ENGLISH CASTLES.
Dover Castle

The Keep

The Keep is quite huge, 30m x 24m x 24m (or
98.4 x 78.7 x 78.7ft), with walls that are between
3m (10ft) and 6.6m (21.5) thick.

Plan of Inner Bailey

Kings Gate

Ground Floor

Palace Gate

South Barbican

North Barbican

Cistern

Arthurs Hall

100 FT
GOODRICH - ENGLAND

WALL RATING
TOWERS AND BARBICAN 2
KEEP
OUTER WALLS
13TH CENTURY

100 FT

SALLY PORT
GATE HOUSE
DRAWBRIDGE
BARBICAN
MORT
MONT

SOLAR
CHAPEL
TURRET STAIRS
COURT YARD
KEEP
DUNGEON
SE TOWER
S. E. TOWER
N. MORT
LUDLOW CASTLE - ENGLAND

COUNCIL ROOM HALL
PRINCE ARTHUR'S ROOM
WELL
LION DEN'S TOWER
SMALL TOWER AND OVEN
CHAPEL
MORTIMER'S TOWER
OUTER COURT

TOWER OF PENDOVER
ARMOURY
STATE APARTMENTS
NORMAN CHAPEL
CHAPEL CHOR
BEACON TOWER
BARRACKS
GATEWAY STABLES
IRON PALISADES
STONE BRIDGE
PORTER'S LODGE
MOAT
MOAT
MOAT

WALL RATING 8

0 100 FT
ORFORD KEEP, ENGLAND

MAIN ROOF LEVEL

MEZZANINE FIRST FLOOR + ROOF LEVELS

MEZZANINE GROUND & FIRST FLOOR LEVELS

FLOOR

GROUND FLOOR

BASEMENT
QUEENBOROUGH - ENGLAND.

WALL RATINGS:
OUTER WALLS AND MAIN GATE 4
INNER WALLS AND KEEP 3

DRAW BRIDGE
REAR GATEWAY
FORTIFIED WALL
WELL
OUTER WARD
MOAT
DRAW BRIDGE

0 40 M
RHUDDLAN - ENGLAND

WALL RATING
OUTER WALLS 1
INNER FORTIFICATIONS B

OUTER WARD
NORTH TOWER
EAST GATEHOUSE
STAIRS
INNER WARD
WELL
TURRET ON SITE OF TOWER
TOWN GATE
WEST GATE HOUSE
SOUTH TOWER
RIVER GATE
CILLOT'S TOWER
RIVER WALL
MOUNT
MOAT
SPRING

0 100 200 300 400 500 FT

Moat

18
LARGOET-EN-ELVEN
FRANCE

WALL RATING 2
13TH CENTURY

DRAWBRIDGE

24
Ortenberg Castle
-Germany-

View of outer walls and keep

Section looking east

Built in the 13th century
CASTLE DEL MONTE
-ITALY-

GROUND FLOOR VULATING

WALL RATING 4
13TH CENTURY
CASTLE DI SARZANELLO
ITALY
FERRARA: CASTELLO D'ESTE
ITALY.

WALL RATING
13TH CENTURY

0 100 FT
CARREG CENNEN
-SCOTLAND-

WALL RATING
OUTER WALLS
INNER WALLS

3
2

CLIFF WALLS
INNER WARD
OUTER WARD

CLIFFS
NUNNEY CASTLE - SCOTLAND

MOAT - DRAWBRIDGE

INNER WARD

WALL RATING 2

38
ROTHESAY CASTLE
- SCOTLAND

140 FT

WALL RATINGS
OUTER WALLS AND TOWER
INNER WALLS

MOAT

PONTE

WELL

CHAPEL
BELMONTE, SPAIN

WALL RATING 3
13th CENTURY

MAIN ENTRANCE

GATE

KEEP

OPEN STAIRS

INNER WARD

OUTER WARD

0 100 FT

40
WALL RATINGS
OUTER WALLS 2
KEEP/DONJON 5
MAIN TOWER 4

MARGAT - LEVANT (ON THE SYRIAN COAST)
CAERNARVON CASTLE
WALLES.

VIEW OF THE ENTIRE WALLED CITY

THE ACTUAL CASTLE FLOOR PLAN

BUILT BETWEEN 1283 AND 1323
ONE OF THE LARGEST OF ALL BRITISH CASTLES, ITS FORTIFICATIONS COVER 12 HECTARES (30 ACRES). COMPLETED C. 1280.
CASTLE COCH - GLAMORGAN

WALL RATING
OUTER WALL
KEEP AND TOWERS 3

DRY MOAT

BAILEY

DRAWBRIDGE

TOWER
KEEP

POSTERN

CASTLE COCH - GLAMORGAN

BUILT IN THE 13TH CENTURY

0 25 50 FT