ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

TEACHERS' KIT

Conisbrough Castle

KS1–2
KS3
KS4+

This kit helps teachers plan a visit to Conisbrough Castle, a picturesque medieval castle whose ruins inspired Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*. Use these resources before, during and after your visit to help students get the most out of their learning.

GET IN TOUCH WITH OUR EDUCATION BOOKINGS TEAM:

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Share your visit with us **@EHEducation**

Step into England's story

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ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

WELCOME

This Teachers' Kit for Conisbrough Castle has been designed for teachers and group leaders to support a free self-led visit to the site. It includes a variety of materials suited to teaching a wide range of subjects and key stages, with practical information, activities for use on site and ideas to support follow-up learning.

We know that each class and study group is different, so we have collated our resources into one kit allowing you to decide which materials are best suited to your needs. Please use the contents page, which has been colour-coded to help you easily locate what you need, and view individual sections. All of our activities have clear guidance on the intended use for study so you can adapt them for your desired learning outcomes.

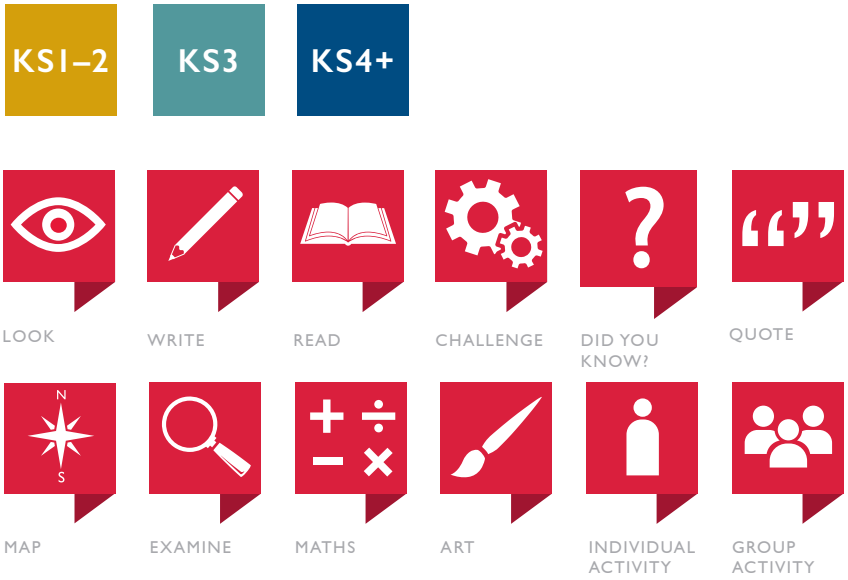
To further aid your planning, we have created Hazard Information, which you can download from the **Conisbrough Castle School Visits page**. Here you can also find information on our expert-led Discovery Visits and an overview of what your class can experience. You can find more practical information about your booked visit to Conisbrough Castle on your Education Visit Permit and in our Site Information Pack on the **Conisbrough Castle School Visits page**.

We hope you enjoy your visit and find this Teachers' Kit useful. If you have any queries please don't hesitate to get in touch with a member of our team either via **bookeducation@english-heritage.org.uk** or on 0370 333 0606.

English Heritage Learning Team

ICON KEY

The icons below will help you quickly identify the types of activities and information presented.



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KS1–2 KS3 KS4+

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PRE-VISIT

Information and activities you can use in the classroom before your visit.

CONISBROUGH CASTLE

SITE PLAN

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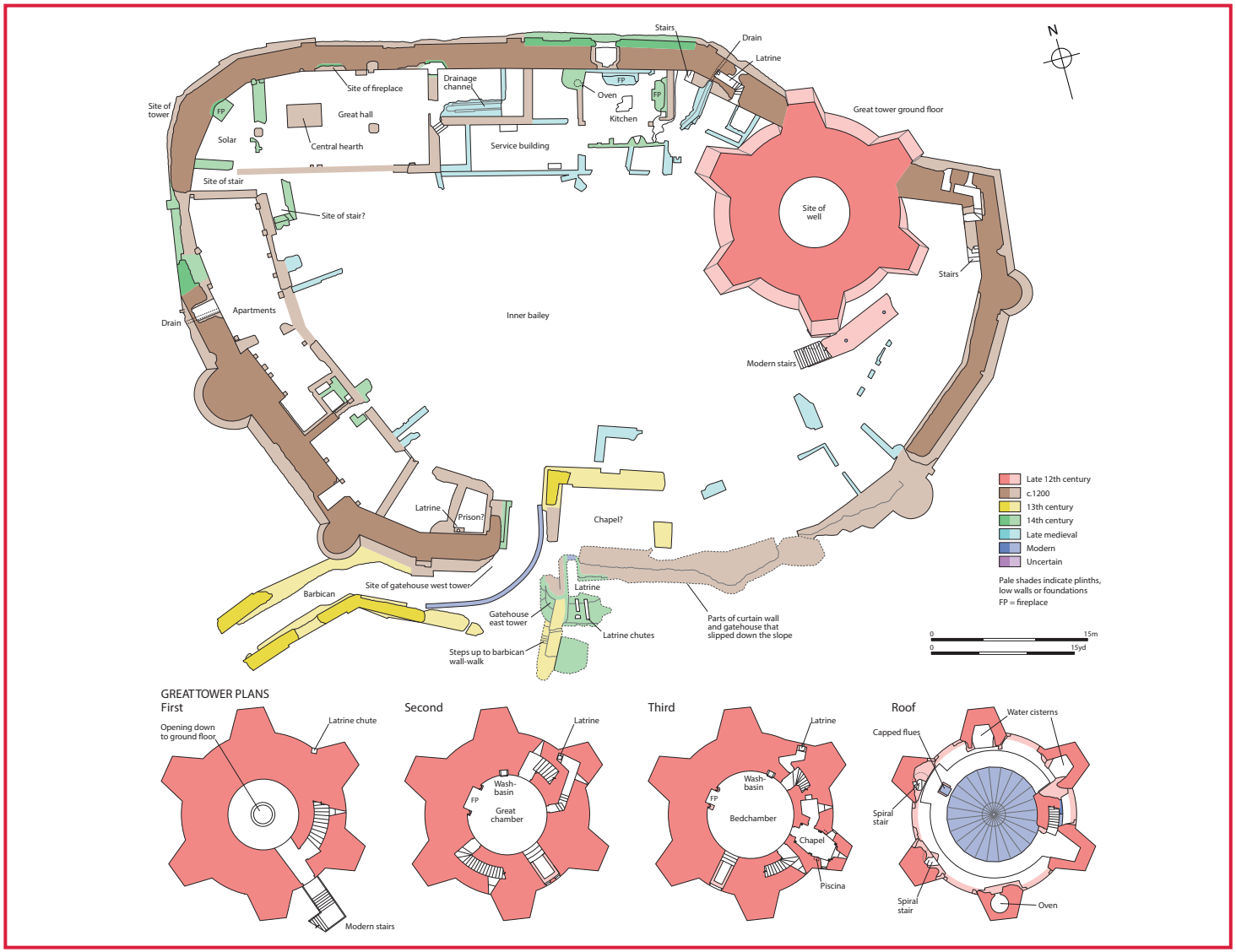

ENGLISH HERITAGE EDUCATION

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

DISCOVER THE STORY OF CONISBROUGH CASTLE

Below is a short history of Conisbrough Castle. Use this information to learn how the site has changed over time. You'll find the definitions of the key words in the Glossary.

ANGLO-SAXON ORIGINS

Archaeological evidence tells us that the land around Conisbrough Castle was inhabited in Anglo-Saxon times (450 to 1066). The nearby Church of St Peter, which lies just outside the current boundaries of the castle, is the oldest building in South Yorkshire and dates from the 7th or 8th century. Around this time, this area was known as 'Cyninges-burh' or 'Kunung-burh', 'the king's fortified place'. Whether the king in question was that of Northumbria or the Danelaw is not clear because the evidence is limited.

The area was part of the Danelaw, ruled by Viking kings on and off, but again details are limited. During the Anglo-Saxon period power in Yorkshire changed frequently between Vikings and Anglo-Saxon kings, and over time people lived together in the area.

There might have been an Anglo-Saxon fort on the site before 1066, but as these were built of wood, archaeological evidence is limited. Conisbrough was part of a very large South Yorkshire estate, comprising many lands and properties especially in the south-east. In the 1060s this land was owned by Earl Harold Godwinson, the richest man in England. Harold Godwinson was so powerful he was able to make himself King of England after the death of Edward the Confessor.

King Harold Godwinson owned Conisbrough and the land around it before the Battle of Hastings, 1066.

NORMAN POWER BASE

Following the defeat of Harold Godwinson at the Battle of Hastings in 1066 all his lands were seized by the new King William I, who had been Duke of Normandy when he invaded England. **William the Conqueror** (as he became known) granted those lands to people who had fought with him at Hastings. One of the men to be given lots of land and power for their loyalty was William de Warenne. He was loyal to William I and as a reward for risking his own life in battle was made the **Earl** of Surrey. He was given lots of land, including Conisbrough. The family built a castle of wood. In this era, the buildings of such castles were often covered in plaster and painted. The early castle at Conisbrough comprised a raised platform, ringed with a **palisade** and with several buildings in the yard. The only part of the early castle which survives is the **earthworks**.

William the Conqueror, who granted the lands at Conisbrough to William de Warenne, 1st Earl of Surrey.

William de Warenne fought alongside William the Conqueror at the Battle of Hastings. Norman soldiers wore armour like this.

Castles were an important part of how the Normans kept control of the local people. They were places where the leaders of society could supervise their estates, conduct **diplomacy**, make judgements in legal cases, live very comfortably, and – in times of war – seek safety. The de Warennes built castles in lots of different parts of their lands, including a stone castle which they lived in, near Lewes on the south coast of England.

The de Warenne family continued to be very significant. They married royalty and members of other powerful families and became one of the richest and most important families in the land.

A MEDIEVAL CASTLE

Today Conisbrough Castle is a picturesque example of a medieval castle. Most of what you see today was built by Hamelin of Anjou (1130–1202); it was constructed to be a lavish and imposing home for his family.

Hamelin became Lord of Conisbrough Castle when he married the heir to the estates, Isabel de Warenne, and adopted her family's surname. She was the richest heiress in England. Hamelin was the half-brother of the King, Henry II (1133–1189). At Conisbrough, Hamelin created a modern and impressive castle which combined contemporary fashions to make somewhere his royal family would be happy to visit.

King Henry II's half-brother Hamelin married Isabel de Warenne. Together they built the existing castle.

He began with construction of the **keep** in the 1170s and 1180s. The keep is highly original because of its shape and would have stood out brilliant white in the landscape. It was a combination of styles – part inspired by de Warenne castles in Normandy, part by his brother's designs.
It is an imposing building with lavish interior rooms for guests to be waited on by lots of servants. From 1200 Hamelin also added the exterior wall around the bailey and some of the buildings inside the bailey.

After Hamelin's death his son, William, inherited Conisbrough Castle. William's grandson John, the last de Warenne lord, died in 1347, and the lands were returned to the **Crown**. King Edward III (r.1327–1377) gave Conisbrough Castle to his son, Edmund of Langley. Conisbrough Castle continued to be used as a family home by Edmund and his descendants, the House of York. During this time, more buildings were added to the inner bailey.

Edmund's grandson Richard was living at Conisbrough Castle when he became Duke of York in 1415. The Yorks were one of the most powerful families in the country. By 1455 they were at war with their cousin, King Henry VI (1421–1471). The **Wars of the Roses** (1455–1485) were about who should be king and how England should be governed. When Richard's son Edward became King Edward IV in 1461 Conisbrough became a royal castle, but the wars continued. Edward died during in the Wars of the Roses in 1483, as did his brother King Richard III (in 1485).

TUDOR DECLINE

King Henry VIII ordered an inspection of Conisbrough Castle in 1537.

Conisbrough Castle had become a royal castle, but it was not as impressive or fashionable as many others. There is no record of subsequent kings or queens living in the castle. At the end of the Wars of the Roses King Henry VII (r.1485–1509) became the first Tudor king. In 1538 his son King Henry VIII (r.1509–1547) ordered a **survey** of the land. It found that part of the castle wall had already collapsed, as had one of the floors in the keep. It was falling into ruin. Henry VIII decided against fixing the problems at Conisbrough, in part because the Crown held a large number of castles in disrepair in the aftermath of the Wars of the Roses.

This decline likely saved Conisbrough Castle from further damage, as it was not strong enough to be used during the English Civil Wars (1642–1651). This meant the ruins stayed as they were.

GEORGIAN ARTISTIC INSPIRATION

In 1737 the Duke of Leeds bought Conisbrough Castle as a ruin but did not live there. Conisbrough Castle inspired many different artists, who painted the medieval ruin. This was something very fashionable at the time and the Duke of Leeds allowed people to visit the castle for this reason. While travelling through the area Sir Walter Scott, a famous author, saw the castle and was inspired to write *Ivanhoe*, a fictional story which ignited public interest in chivalry and the medieval past. As the book became increasingly popular, Conisbrough Castle became more famous again.

Engraving from a copy of *Ivanhoe*, showing the characters' at 'Coningsburgh', the castle in the story inspired by Conisbrough Castle. Created by J.C. Bentley in 1837 © The University of Edinburgh

Artists continued to visit Conisbrough Castle for **inspiration**, and the wider public began to appreciate its ruins too. With big cities like Sheffield, Doncaster and Leeds nearby, people enjoyed days out of the city to the countryside, and Conisbrough Castle was one of the places people chose to visit. Many people thought that the old ruined castle was beautiful.

MODERN DAYS OUT

People have continued to visit Conisbrough Castle for days out, including King George V and Queen Mary. In 1912 they visited the castle. Crowds turned out to greet the King and Queen, taking time off work. Many miners were therefore not at Cadeby Colliery the following day when there was an accident. Many believe that far more people would have died in the disaster if not for the royal visit.

Photograph showing children playing in the grounds of Conisbrough Castle in 1938.

Since the 1950s archaeological excavations began, to explore more of the castle's history, including uncovering the layout of the buildings in the bailey. This has helped historians to understand more about what the castle looked like in the past.

Photograph showing children playing in the grounds of Conisbrough Castle in 2014.

In 1984 Conisbrough Castle passed into the care of English Heritage. Since then, a roof has been added to the keep preventing further damage, as well as stairs and floors inside so that the public can access more of the site and enjoy the amazing views from the roof. The castle continues to welcome visitors from nearby and further away, so that people can learn more about the castle and its history.

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GLOSSARY

TRICKY TERMS AND WHAT THEY MEAN

Below is a list of words you might come across while exploring Conisbrough Castle. Use this Glossary to find out what they mean.

Anglo-Saxon – the period between 450 and 1066 when the Anglo-Saxons settled in England. The Norman Conquest in 1066 marks the end of the Anglo-Saxon period.

archaeological – something connected with the discovery of history through excavation (careful digging) and study of artefacts and other remains

bailey – the strongly defended area at the centre of a castle, often surrounded by a stone curtain wall. Some castles, like Conisbrough, have an inner and outer bailey.

castle – a big building designed to keep the people inside it safe

the Crown – the monarchy; the ruling king and/or queen

curtain wall – a fortified wall of wood or stone around a medieval castle or abbey, often linking towers together

Danelaw – the part of England ruled by the Vikings in the 11th Century. It was in the North and East, while Anglo-Saxon kings rule the south and west of England.

diplomacy – managing relationships with different countries and people

Domesday Book – a record of the size and value of nearly all the land in England, made in 1086 by order of King William I

dungeon – a prison within a castle

Earl – a title given to an English nobleman ranking above 'lord' and below 'duke'

earthworks – a large, artificial bank of soil, often used as fortification

Domesday Book shows the lands of Conisbrough Castle owned by William de Warenne.

Medieval tower-building techniques

fort – protected by defensive structures

great hall – the main hall in a castle or palace that is used for dining and entertainment

Harold, Earl of Wessex – (r.Jan. 1066–Oct. 1066), the last Anglo-Saxon king of England. Harold was named as Edward the Confessor's successor and reigned until he was killed at the Battle of Hastings on 14 October, fighting the Norman invaders led by William the Conqueror.

heir/heiress – a person who has a legal right to inherit the family estates

King Henry VIII – King of England from 1509 until his death in 1547. He was the second Tudor monarch.

heraldry – the use of symbols to display power and identity. In the 1100s, knights in England began to paint unique combinations of colours, shapes and animals, on their shields so that they could be recognised on the battlefield and so people would recognise their servants.

illegitimate – in royal and noble families, a child whose parents were not married to each other

inheritance – money, objects or titles that are passed down to the next generation when someone dies

inner bailey – the strongly fortified enclosure at the centre of a castle, often surrounded by a stone curtain wall

To access the Inner Bailey visitors had to pass through a heavily defended gate with a portcullis.

inspiration – when you see or hear about something and it makes you want to create art. Conisbrough Castle inspired Sir Walter Scott to write a book about a knight called Ivanhoe.

keep – the central tower of a castle, often used as a final refuge during a siege

King John – (r.1199–1216) John lost most of his French lands to King Philip II of France, resulting in the collapse of the Angevin Empire

knight – in the Middle Ages, an important man who served his sovereign or lord as a soldier

latrine – a toilet, built over a hole in the ground or stream

medieval – a period of history between the 5th and 15th centuries, also referred to as the Middle Ages

Norman – the name we give to the period of English history between 1066 and 1154 when the Norman kings were on the throne. William I (who won the Battle of Hastings in 1066) was the first Norman monarch and Stephen was the last.

A Norman soldier.

palisade – a wall, often made of wood to keep a castle safe

Roman – relating to ancient Rome, the Roman Empire or its people

siege – When a castle is attacked, and the attackers cut them off so that no one and nothing (including food and water) can get in or out

survey – a general view, examination, or description of someone or something; a study

tourist – someone who is travelling for pleasure and visiting places of interest

Tudor – the name we give to a period of English history between 1485 and 1603 when the Tudor royal family were on the throne. Henry VII was the first Tudor monarch and Elizabeth I was the last.

Wars of the Roses – (1455–85) a civil war in England over who would be king. The two sides (Yorkists and Lancastrians) were each represented by a rose symbol.

William the Conqueror, King William I – (r.1066–87), the leader of the Norman Conquest. He won the Battle of Hastings in 1066 and became the first Norman king of England.

Ink well and quill.

ROMAN BRITAIN
AD 43–410

EARLY MEDIEVAL BRITAIN
AD 410–1066

ROMANS

ANGLO-SAXONS, VIKINGS & BRITONS

EVENTS IN BRITISH HISTORY

AD 43
The Romans arrive to conquer Britain.

AD 61
Boudicca, leader of the Iceni tribe, is defeated.

AD 122–128
Emperor Hadrian builds a wall to defend northern occupied Britain from invasion by Pict tribes.

AD 410
The Romans leave Britain.

AD 450
Britain is divided into small warring kingdoms. Eventually there are just seven of these: Northumbria, Mercia, Anglia, Wessex, Essex, Sussex and Kent.

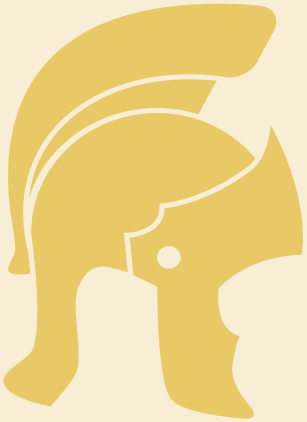
AD 870
The Vikings are beginning to conquer the northern, midland and eastern Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.

AD 1

AD 400

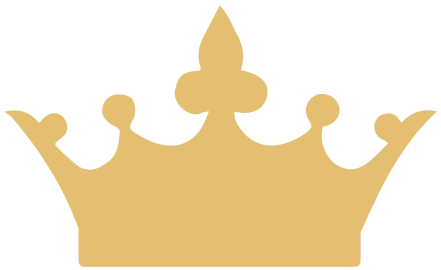
HISTORY OF CONISBROUGH CASTLE

AD 100–400
There is evidence of a Roman river crossing of the River Don at Conisbrough.



Around 1000
The area is recorded as being called 'Cyninges burh', or 'Kunung-burh', 'the king's fortified place'. Whether the king in question was that of Northumbria or the Danelaw is not clear because the evidence is limited.

Around 1060
Conisbrough, and a large area of South Yorkshire belong to Earl Harold Godwinson who becomes King of England after the death of Edward the Confessor. There is archaeological evidence of some sort of Anglo-Saxon fort on the site.



1ST–4TH CENTURIES

5TH–11TH CENTURIES

ENGLISH HERITAGE
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NORMANS
1066–1154

1066
William the Conqueror is victorious at the Battle of Hastings. The Norman Conquest of England begins.

1086
Domesday Book is completed.

1154
Henry II is crowned King of England.

1189
Richard I is crowned King of England and prepares to depart for a crusade in the Holy Land.

1100

1066
The area of Conisbrough is granted to William de Warenne, the new Earl of Surrey who fought beside William the Conqueror at the Battle of Hastings. A small castle is built at Conisbrough, with raised earthworks and a wooden palisade.

Around 1170–1180
Hamelin marries Isabel de Warenne and set out to build the imposing stone keep at Conisbrough.

11TH CENTURY

12TH CENTURY

1215
King John signs Magna Carta at Runnymede. Soon afterwards the barons revolt against the king, aligning with Alexander II, King of Scotland and Prince Louis of France, to try to remove King John.

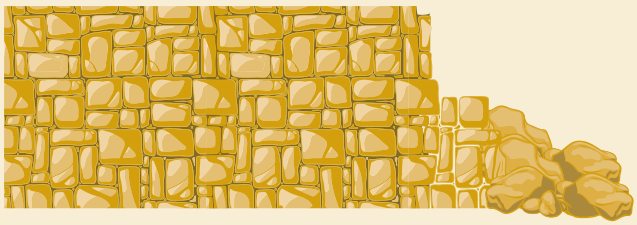
1216
King John dies. His son, Henry III, is crowned at nine years old.

1237
The Treaty of York means that the Scots abandon their rule of northern England. The Anglo-Scottish border line is drawn.

1200

Around 1200
Hamelin adds the curtain wall around the inner bailey.

1201
John visits Conisbrough Castle. He is Hamelin's nephew, and later becomes King John.



13TH CENTURY

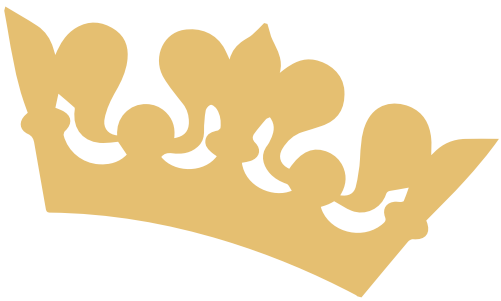
1307
Edward I dies and his son, Edward II, becomes king.

1314
The English are defeated by the Scots at the Battle of Bannockburn.

1327
Edward II is forced to give up his crown. His son, Edward III, becomes king.

1300

1347
The last de Warenne heir dies. King Edward III gives the estate to his son, Edmund of Langley.



14TH CENTURY

TUDORS
1485–1603

1415
Henry V (r.1413–22) and his English army wins the Battle of Agincourt, defeating Charles VI of France and ending the Hundred Years War.

1455–87
The Wars of the Roses between the Yorkists, who wear a white rose and support Richard, Duke of York, and the Lancastrians, who wear a red rose and support King Henry VI (1422–61 and 1470–71).

1534
The Acts of Supremacy recognise Henry as head of the Church in England. Pope Clement excommunicates Henry.

1539–47
Henry's government carry out a programme of building coastal defences called 'the Device by the King'.

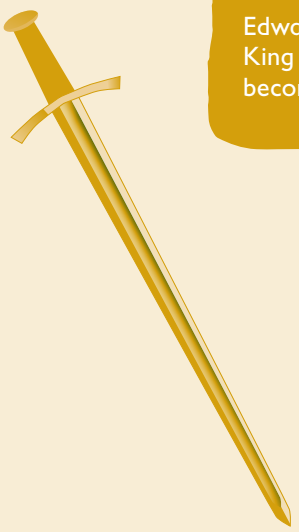
1588
English ships defeat the Spanish Armada.

1400

1500

1415
Richard of Conisbrough becomes Duke of York when his uncle dies. He campaigns to be king instead of Henry VI, starting the Wars of the Roses.

1461
Edward, Richard's son, becomes King Edward IV and Conisbrough becomes part of the royal estates.



1538
Henry VIII orders a survey of Conisbrough Castle, which finds that it is already a part ruin as some of the curtain wall has collapsed.

15TH CENTURY

16TH CENTURY

20TH CENTURY
1900–2000

GEORGIANS AND VICTORIANS
1714–1901

MODERN DAY

1714
The House of Hanover takes the throne. George I is crowned king.

1826
The world's first photograph is taken.

1837–1901
Reign of Queen Victoria.

1910–36
Reign of George V.

1952–2022
Reign of HRH Queen Elizabeth II.

1948
National Health Service (NHS) is established.

1700

1900

1737
Duke of Leeds buys Conisbrough Castle as a pretty ruin. People start to visit Conisbrough Castle for nice days out.

1819
Sir Walter Scott publishes *Ivanhoe* inspired by seeing Conisbrough Castle.

1912
King George V and Queen Mary visit Conisbrough Castle, the day before the Cadeby Colliery disaster.

1960s–1970s
A series of archaeological excavations uncover more about the history of the castle.

1984
English Heritage takes over the site.

1995
A roof is put back on the keep, and new stairs are added to the outside so that visitors can see more of the site and it does not get more damaged by the weather.

18–19TH CENTURIES

20TH–21ST CENTURIES

CONISBROUGH CASTLE TIMELINE

SELF-LED ACTIVITY
FLOURISHING FAMILY TREES

KS1–2

Recommended for

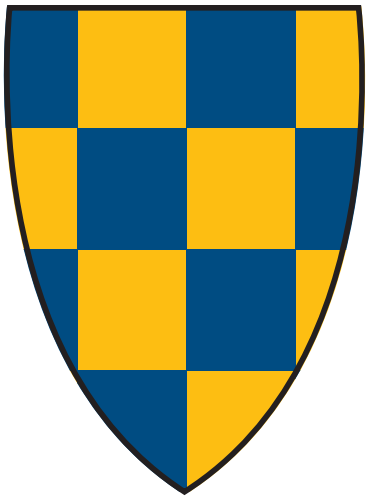
KS1–2 (History, English)

Learning objectives

- Understand the history of the de Warenne family who built Conisbrough Castle.
- Create a family tree.

Time to complete

20–30 minutes



The de Warenne family, who lived at Conisbrough, used this coat of arms.

SUMMARY

The de Warenne family built Conisbrough Castle in the 11th century following a gifting of land from William the Conqueror. In this activity students will have the chance to learn about family trees through the de Warenne family and then create their own. (This can be either their own family or another such as the British Royal Family, or a fictional family like Peppa Pig). The Norman Power Base and Medieval Castle sections of the Historical Information on pages 7 and 8 provide useful context so it would be helpful for students to have read these (independently or with support) before beginning the activity.

FLOURISHING FAMILY TREES

Print out enough of the activity sheets (on pages 20–21) for your class. This will guide them to complete the activities:

1) Firstly, look at the de Warenne family tree. Link the marriages and the children to learn how a family tree works.
2) Then, identify the links in the family tree using familial terms, like 'mother', 'father', 'son', 'daughter', 'husband', 'wife', and so on.
3) Using the blank family tree template (on page 21) students should create a family tree for their own family, or for a family from a story you have read in class. They should put in the main character or themselves at the bottom and then work back; parents, grandparents, as far as possible. Add more boxes for the connections in the family you they are writing about, so that it suits that family rather than the de Warennes.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Add images to your family tree.

Explore family trees further; make a more complex family tree with siblings on it too. Add dates and time periods. Investigate more about what life was like.

Create a factfile of the life of one of the people in your family tree. Include an image and five facts about the person.

FLOURISHING FAMILY TREES

This is the family tree of the de Warenne family, who were granted Conisbrough Castle by William the Conqueror following the Norman Conquest in 1066. Family trees help us to understand who is who within a family. The de Warenne family tree shows us that Isabel was the great-granddaughter of the 1st Earl of Surrey.

- William de Warenne, 1st Earl of Surrey
- Gundrada, daughter of Gerbod
- William de Warenne, 2nd Earl
- Isabel de Vermandois
- William de Warenne, 3rd Earl
- Adela of Pothieu
- 1st marriage to William of Blois, who dies in 1159
- Isabel de Warenne
- Hamelin of Anjou
- William de Warenne, 5th Earl

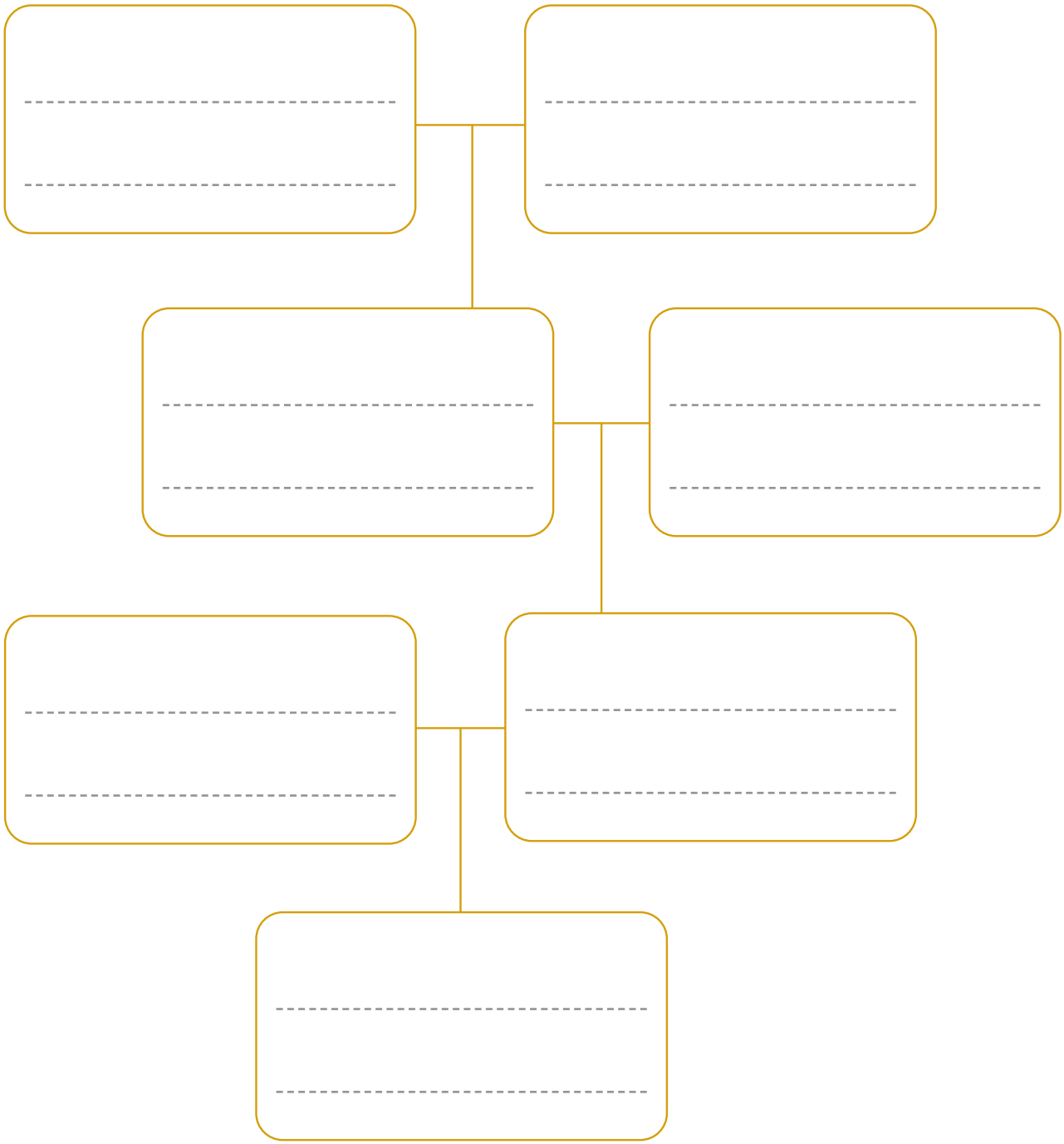
Hamelin and Isabel de Warenne built the Conisbrough Castle we can see today.

DID YOU KNOW?

Hamelin, Isabel de Warenne's husband, had his own important family tree. His half-brother Henry II was king. They had the same dad, Geoffrey of Anjou.

FANTASTIC FAMILY TREE

Make your own family tree. You could make one for a character from a story you've read in class or at home. You could even make one for the Royal Family. Think about a family where parents, grandparents, and brothers and sisters were all part of the story.



ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

AT THE CASTLE

Activities for students to do at Conisbrough Castle to help them get the most out of their learning.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY
EXPLORING BY NUMBERS

KS1–2

Recommended for

KS1–2 (History, Maths)

Learning objectives

- Explore Conisbrough Castle.
- Understand the design features of the castle.
- Practise maths skills.

Time to complete

30–45 minutes per activity

A photograph of the keep at Conisbrough Castle.

SUMMARY

Conisbrough Castle is a remarkable example of a medieval castle. The keep, built by Hamelin de Warenne during the 1170s and 1180s, is a particularly notable shape. The design makes the keep defensible, but it was largely created to make a lavish family home. Inspired by the unusual shape, students will use their maths skills to explore Conisbrough Castle and its space. They will identify key features to learn more about castles.

YOU WILL NEED

Print out the activity sheet on pages 25 and 26. Students will need a worksheet, pencil and clipboard. To encourage collaborative working students can work together in small teams, up to six is ideal, although students can each complete a sheet for themselves.

Please also collect a measuring wheel from the visitor centre, which will help you with question 4.

Students will need support with some of the questions, including using the measuring wheel and identifying the latrines. The map on the Teachers' Answers sheet on page 24 should help.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Extension challenge to help you with exploring Conisbrough Castle. These questions might help you to learn more while completing the trail. The answers are in signs in the castle, and the map on page 5, or can be researched back at school.

- Other than the dungeon, what other buildings were in the bailey?
- What did medieval people use for toilet paper?
- What is the space in the bottom of the keep used for? How might this have helped people living in the castle?
- Why is a keystone called that?

EXPLORING BY NUMBERS
TEACHERS' ANSWERS

1. Outside the castle. How many circular towers can you see from here on the curtain wall? Two

2. Inside the bailey. On the left is the remains of the dungeon. What shape is it? Square

3. Starting in the dungeon and walking around the castle wall to the left there are the remains of two latrines. Can you find them? Tick each. The following map will help you to direct the students.

4. The curtain wall protects the inner bailey. This large space used to contain many buildings. Measure: how many metres long is it? 75m

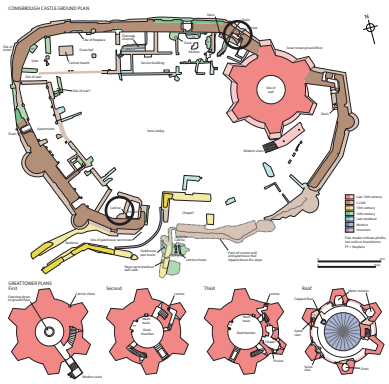
   Ext: Measure the width too. Calculate the approximate area of the inner bailey by multiplying the width and length. 75m x 40m = 3,000m^2

5. The keep (big tower) is a very unusual shape. It is an icositetragon; how many sides does that mean it has? 24

6. The door to the keep is very high up the wall. This helped to keep the people inside the tower safe if they were attacked. How many steps do you have to climb to
   get inside? 37

7. In the centre of the first floor is a well. What shape is the opening? Circular

8. Go upstairs in the keep to the next floor. The fireplace has a special piece in the centre called a keystone. It is a rare shape. Can you draw it here? The photograph of the fireplace will help.



Plan of Conisbrough Castle

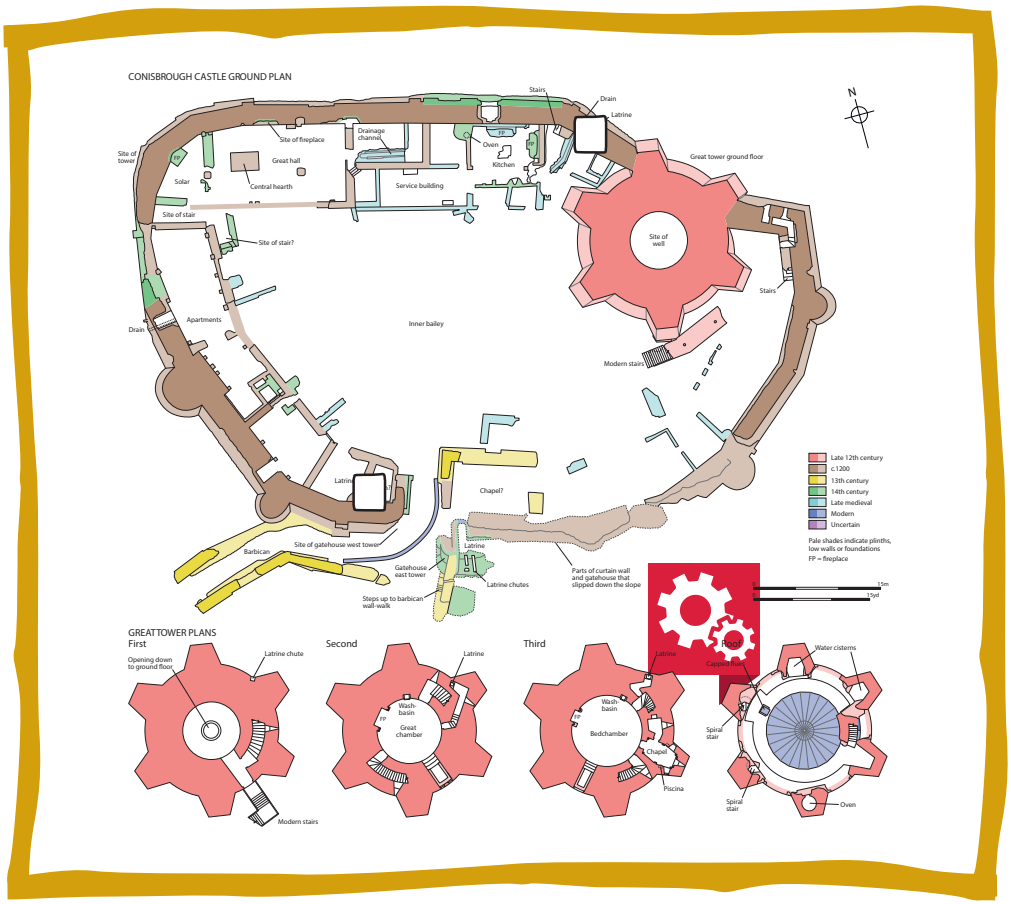
Photograph of a fireplace in Conisbrough Castle keep. Note the unusual keystone. It is called joggled construction.

EXPLORING BY NUMBERS

1 Outside the bailey. How many circular towers can you see from here?

2 Inside the bailey. On the left is the remains of the dungeon. What shape is it?

3 Starting in the dungeon and walking around the castle wall to the left there are the remains of two toilets (often called latrines). Can you find them? Tick the boxes when you find them.



4 The curtain wall protects the inner bailey. This large space used to contain many buildings. How many metres long is it?

CHALLENGE TIME

Extension: Measure the width in metres too. Calculate the approximate area of the inner bailey using the equation area = length x width.

5 The keep is a very unusual shape. It is an icositetragon; how many sides does that mean it has? (HINT: Counting on the map might help.)

6 The door to the keep is very high up the wall. This helped to keep the people inside the tower safe if they were attacked. How many steps do you have to climb to get inside?

7 In the centre of the first floor is a well. What shape is the opening?

8 Go upstairs in the keep to the next floor. The fireplace has a special piece in the centre called a keystone. It is a rare shape. Can you draw it here?

CHALLENGE TIME

Learn more about the different areas of the castle you have visited. Think about what used to be here and how it might have been used.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY
CREATING A CASTLE STORY

KS1

Recommended for

KS1 (History, English)

Learning objectives

- Explore Conisbrough Castle.
- Use adjectives to create your own story.
- Use creative writing skills to enhance your own story.

Time to complete

30–40 minutes per activity

A reconstructed drawing of a feast at Conisbrough Castle.

SUMMARY

In 1819 famous author Sir Walter Scott wrote a book about a knight, after he saw Conisbrough Castle. The story was called *Ivanhoe*. Other artists have been inspired by Conisbrough Castle and by *Ivanhoe* to create their own stories about the castle.

We've created an outline story about Conisbrough Castle inspired by the enthusiasm for dragons shown by past KS1 visitors. The story describes preparations for a great feast the dragon is hosting at Conisbrough Castle.

In this activity students should work to complete the story by adding in adjectives inspired by the spaces within Conisbrough Castle.

YOU WILL NEED

Using the student trail, explore the different areas of the castle and fill in the gaps so that students can create their own story about Conisbrough Castle.

Students will each need a copy of the student trail (page 28) and a clipboard and pencil.

As you move around the spaces, learn more about life in the castle and the buildings and add detail to the story with adjectives. The map on page 5 will help you to find your way around the different spaces in the castle. The order of spaces to visit is: the apartments, kitchen, great hall (all in the bailey), then up into the keep for the end of the story.

Using their senses will help the students to add some brilliant adjectives to the story, thinking about what the dragon might be able to see, hear, touch, taste and smell.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Create a front cover for your story with the image representing your favourite part of the story.

Act out your story as a class. Create a freeze frame of the feast showing the celebration.

CREATING A CASTLE STORY

In 1819 a famous author called Sir Walter Scott wrote a book about a knight after he saw Conisbrough Castle.

Explore the castle and create your own story about a dragon by filling in the gaps with nouns and adjectives.

Once upon a time there was a brilliant castle in Conisbrough. It had _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ walls and a _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ tower.

The Castle is home to someone very special. A dragon lives here! The dragon is called _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _. The dragon wakes up in the apartments. The dragon sleeps in a _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ bed. Today the dragon wants to bake a _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ cake for a birthday feast!

The dragon needs to go to the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _. In castles kitchens don't have ovens, they use fires. The dragon lights the fire by _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _. It is _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _. It's nearly time for the feast, which will be in the Great Hall. The dragon decorates the Great Hall with _.
The dragon is very excited for the party! Are the guests nearly here?

The dragon goes to the roof of the tower to look out for everyone. The dragon can see _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _. It's feast time!

Hint: Think about your senses. What can the dragon see, hear, feel, smell or taste?

POST-VISIT

Add to your story back in school. The following questions can help you:

- What else happened at the party?
- What games do you think a dragon might play with their friends?
- Where in the castle might they go?
- What would they do there?

SELF-LED ACTIVITY
STORYTIME WITH SIR WALTER SCOTT

KS2

Recommended for

KS2 (History, English)

Learning objectives

- Explore Conisbrough Castle.
- Use creative writing skills to create your own story about Conisbrough Castle.
- Use your senses to enhance your story.

Time to complete

30–40 minutes per activity

A reconstructed image of knights approaching Conisbrough Castle.

SUMMARY

In 1819 famous author Sir Walter Scott wrote a book about a knight, after he saw Conisbrough Castle. The story was called *Ivanhoe*, and it was an immensely popular bestseller and has been made into plays and films. Other artists have also been inspired by Conisbrough Castle and by *Ivanhoe* to create their own stories about the castle.

YOU WILL NEED

Using the student trail on pages 30–32 explore the different areas of the castle so that the students can create their own story about Conisbrough Castle. This story is inspired by how knights defended the castle in the event of an attack. Their job to stop the attackers from getting in and seizing the castle, whilst also keeping the people inside the castle safe.

As you move around the spaces learn more about life in the castle and the buildings. Students then use this to add to their story. The students have a range of questions they can consider to shape their own story of an attack on Conisbrough Castle. The map on page 5 will help you to find your way around the different spaces in the castle. The order for the story is: keep roof, keep rooms, great hall, bailey and barbican. The interpretation signs around Conisbrough Castle will help the students imagine who lived here, what the site would have been like and what would have happened in an attack.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Try changing the style of your writing. Turn the story of the attack into a newspaper article about what happened or a diary entry imagining you were in the castle at the time of the attack.

STORYTIME WITH SIR WALTER SCOTT

In 1819 a famous author wrote a book about a knight after he saw Conisbrough Castle. The book was called *Ivanhoe*; it was written by Sir Walter Scott.

Use the map (page 5) and explore the castle. Visit each place and answer the questions. These will give you ideas and help you to shape a story based on Conisbrough Castle.

Under attack!

1 Start at the top of the tower. This is the beginning of your story. Write about what happens at the beginning of your story on the lines below. Some questions to consider:

A. What would people have been doing up here?

B. What would happen if they saw an attack coming?

C. What would the knights need to do?

2 Send a warning down below. Your first job is to warn the lords and ladies in the keep. This is where the most important people would be. Write about what happens on the dotted lines below. Some questions to consider:

A. What will you say to them? (HINT: Use inverted commas to add speech to your story.)

B. What do you think they should do and why?

3 Leave the keep and go to the Great Hall. This is the largest room in the castle and the best place to talk to everyone at once. Write about what happens on the lines below. This is the third part of your story set in the Great Hall. Some questions to consider:

A. What will your plan be?

B. How do you think people might be feeling?

C. What different roles do you think people might take on in an attack?

4 Get ready! The castle is under attack. Write about what happens on the lines below. This is the end of your story. Some questions to consider:

A. Where will your knights be?

B. How will they keep the people inside safe?

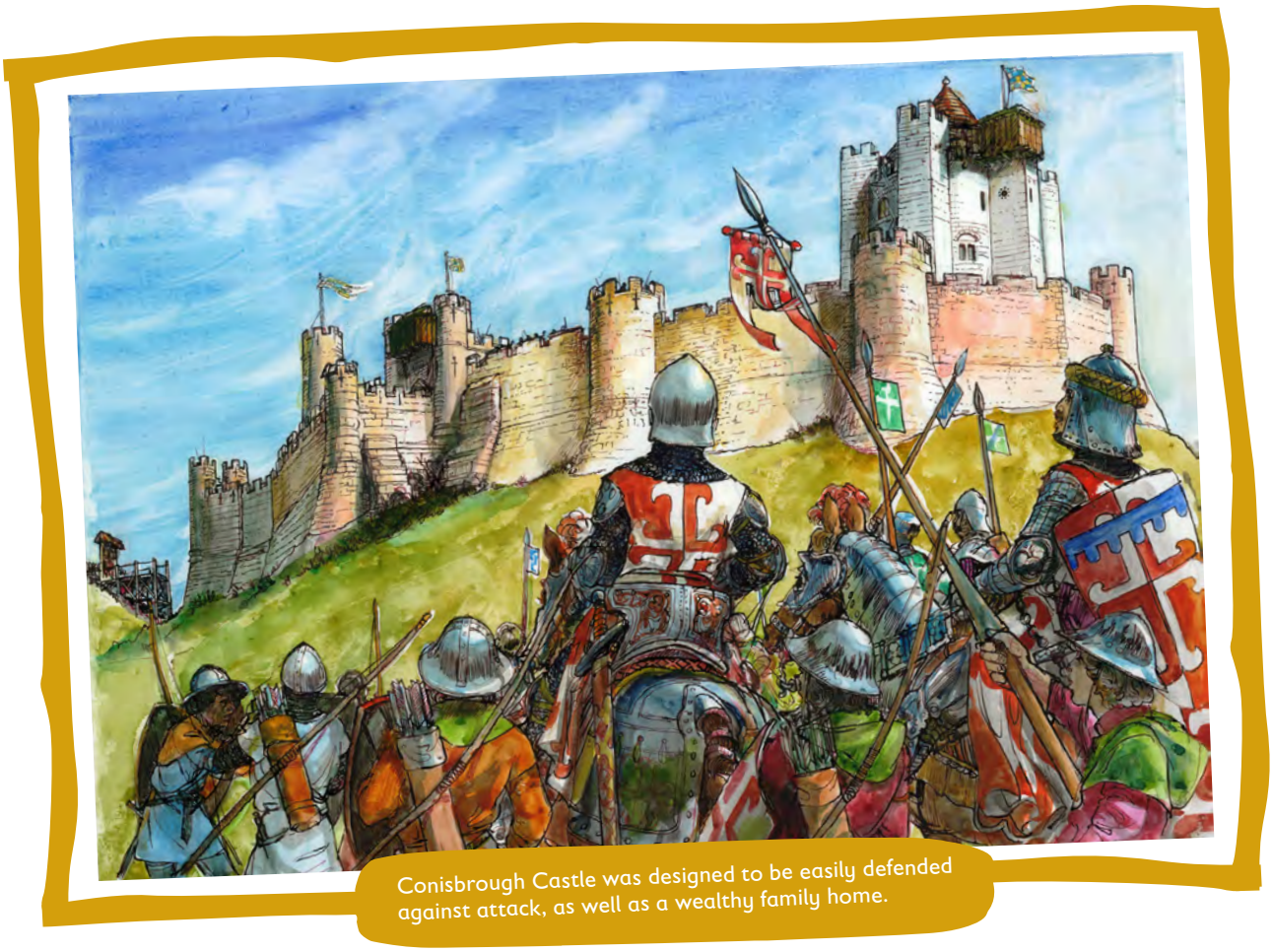
C. Can you use the barbican to stop them?

> Hint: The signs in the barbican will help you to understand this tactic.

POST-VISIT

Add to your story back in school. The following questions can help you:

- how long did the battle last for?
- what tactics were used?
- were the people in the castle successful?



Conisbrough Castle was designed to be easily defended against attack, as well as a wealthy family home.

ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

POST-VISIT

Information and activities to help you extend your students' learning back in the classroom.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY
HEROIC HERALDRY

KS1–2

Recommended for

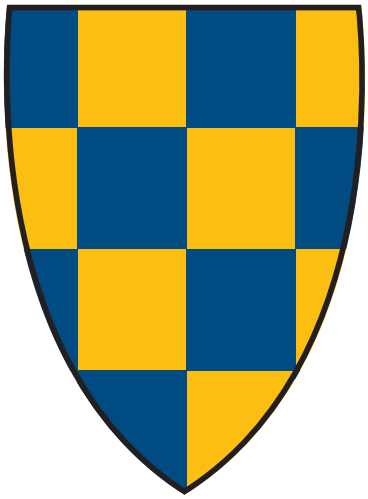
KS1–2 (History, English)

Learning objectives

- Understand the importance of having a coat of arms to identify yourself in medieval times.
- Create your own heraldry.

Time to complete

20–30 minutes



The de Warenne coat of arms.

SUMMARY

Heraldry and the family coat of arms were incredibly important to noble families in medieval Europe. They were important on the battlefield, but also as identification in everyday life. Soldiers wearing the de Warenne coat of arms were easily recognised by people living around Conisbrough. They would know that they were working on behalf of the de Warenne family.

In this activity students will create their own coat of arms inspired by heraldry at Conisbrough Castle when Isabel and Hamelin lived here. The activity is simplified tointroduce younger students to the idea of heraldry. Some students might benefit from using the further extension information on the ome students might benefit from the additional heraldry information in the kids area of the English Heritage website.

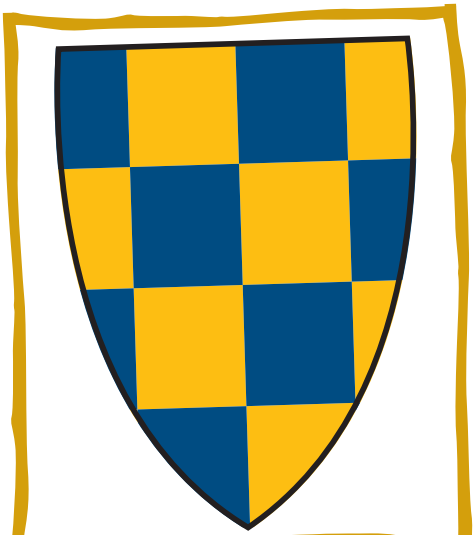
- Use the sheets on pages 35–36 to learn about the ideas behind heraldry, and as a template for the students to create their own.
- Pupils will need one template sheet each to complete.
- Students should think about the colours and shapes they would like to use. They can also consider adding animals, or other symbolism to represent themselves.
- More information about heraldry, with specifics about the names of and meanings behind different designs can be found on the learning pages of the **English Heritage website**.
- When they have finished making their coat of arms, challenge the students to identify their classmates by the heraldic signs they created.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Build on the students' understanding of heraldry and the importance of images to communicate in a society where only some could read or write. Identify ways that we use images to communicate in society today instead of written words. Think about gestures like a thumbs up, emojis and logos. Write a sentence or name of a book in just emojis.

HEROIC HERALDRY

This is the de Warenne coat of arms.



The de Warenne coat of arms.

Heraldry was very important to knights and families like the de Warennes. It was like a sports kit; you could find the other people on your side easily in battle if you recognised the coat of arms on their shields.

Hamelin's brother King Henry II had lions on his heraldic arms.

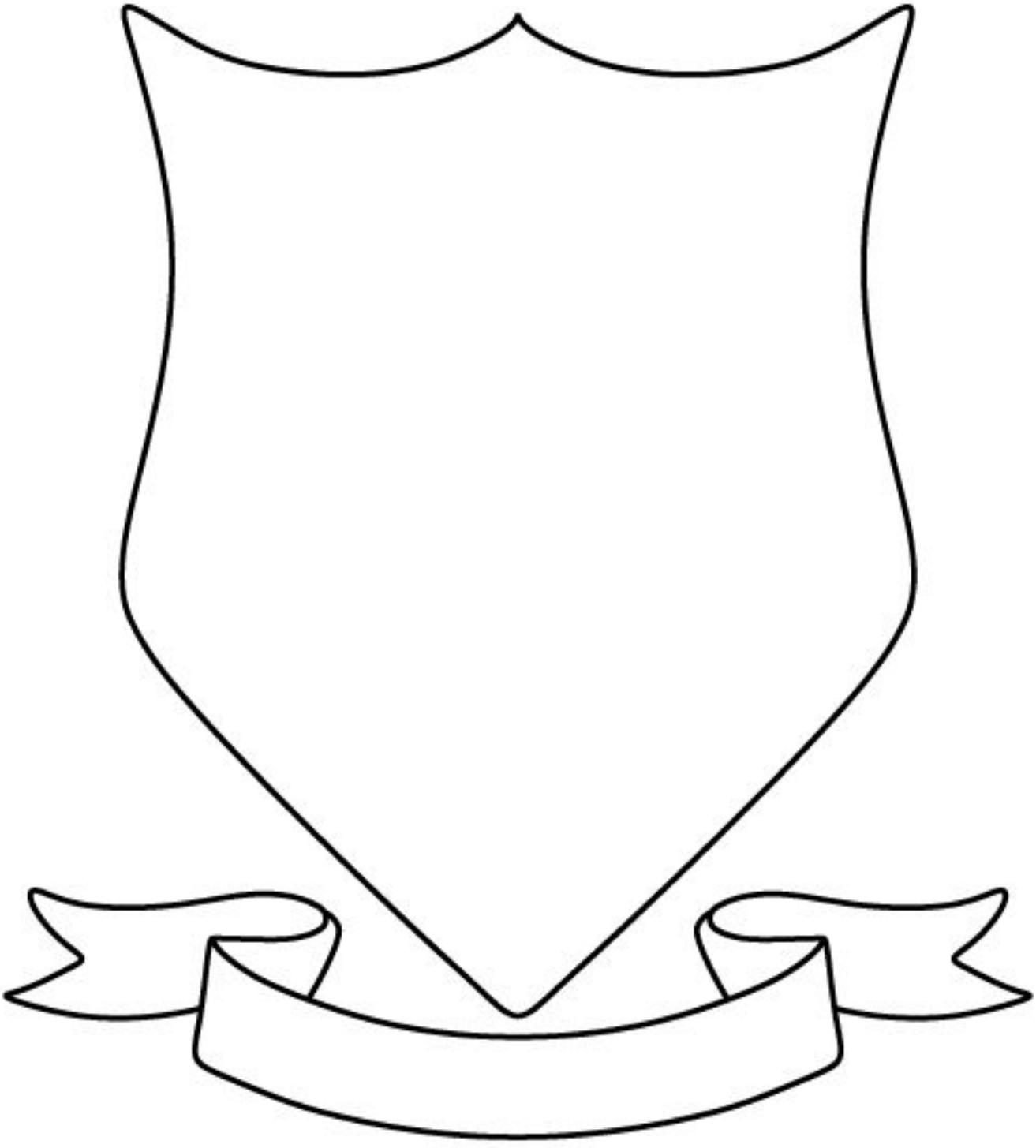
It is from him that we still have a lion on the British Royal Coat of Arms today:

King Henry II's coat of arms.
© sodacan CC BY-SA 3.0 DEED

British Royal Coat of Arms.
© sodacan CC BY-SA 3.0 DEED

Design your own heraldry. Think about what you want to represent you.

MAKE YOUR OWN COAT OF ARMS



SELF-LED ACTIVITY
MEDIEVALS ON THE MOVE

KS1–2

Recommended for

KS1–2 (History, English)

Learning objectives

- Understand how rich people travelled in medieval times.
- Calculate the time it took to travel between de Warenne lands.

Time to complete

30–45 minutes

Illustration from an English manuscript of about 1325 showing a royal lady travelling in a sumptuous carriage. From the British Library archive

SUMMARY

Records show that Hamelin and Isabel spent a lot of time in Conisbrough and their other lands in England and Normandy in northern France. The family travelled around a lot visiting their lands, making important decisions, and seeing family and friends. There are also records that Hamelin's brother, King Henry II, his wife Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine and their children visited Conisbrough Castle too.

Travel for wealthy people in the medieval period was a lot more time consuming than today and also involved a lot more packing. Travel was far slower, with an average of 26 miles per day covered.

This activity encourages students to look at a list to consider what may have been packed. The list contains some historically accurate items and some anachronisms. Students should try to work out what they think people would have packed.

YOU WILL NEED

Students will need the list and map on pages 40–41. They will also need a ruler, pencil and calculator to measure the distance between de Warenne lands and calculate the time it took to travel these distances.

The teachers' answer sheet on pages 38–39 will provide the answers to the packing list and the distances, along with contextual information to explain the packing decisions. These help us to understand more about medieval life and how different life is to today.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Travel in the medieval period was limited for most of the population, but nobles and traders sometimes travelled long distances. Research some of the items from the packing list, particularly the food and drink to find out where they came from. Students can identify on a map the distances and trade routes used by medieval people to obtain these items - for instance they would not have been able to fly in oranges from Spain.

MEDIEVALS ON THE MOVE
TEACHERS' ANSWER SHEET

MEDIEVALS ON THE MOVE

- Silver plates and bowls – yes (people often took their best silverware between their properties to be able to use them at all times)
- Leeds United pyjamas – no (the first game which could be described as football is from Tudor times but is still very different from today. Leeds United was founded in 1919, so far too late to be in a packing list)
- Wall decorations – yes (wall hangings like tapestries were expensive but important to keep a room warm and travelled with families)
- Torch and spare batteries – no (they used lamps and candles)
- Clean clothes – yes
- Bed – yes (it was common for medieval people to travel with their beds. Servants put them up for their masters before they could go to sleep)
- Teddy bear – no (medieval children had small toys, often mini versions of things grown-ups used, like a bow and arrow. The first teddy bear was made in 1903)
- Furs to keep warm – yes (the horse and carts used for travel were not heated)
- Shower gel – no (although medieval people used soap. Shower gel was not invented until the 1970s)
- A football – no (modern football was invented in the 19th century)
- Food for the journey – no (families would find places to stop along the way to stay the night and have food. Without fridges and freezers they couldn't pack food to last the whole journey)
- Toothpaste – no (it hadn't been invented yet. The Ancient Egyptians used something they called dental paste, but this was not like our toothpaste today)
- Pens and paper for writing – yes (important medieval people would need to be able to send letters from wherever they were, so they would have servants who travelled with them to help with this)
- Slippers – yes
- 200 oranges – yes (the Duke of Buckingham packed these for a journey in 1503)
- Shoes – yes (medieval shoes were handmade from leather. They did not have the technology we use today like Velcro or lights).

continued overleaf …

MEDIEVALS ON THE MOVE
TEACHERS' ANSWER SHEET

- Suntan lotion – no
- Wine – yes (people mostly drank watered-down beer and wine. Wealthy medieval travellers would want to make sure that they brought enough with them for their stay)
- Spices for cooking – yes (these were mostly imported from abroad and were very expensive. People would not want to lose them or have them stolen. They would also want to make sure that the cook had them to make delicious food when they arrived)
- Wellies in case it rains – no (they first boots like wellies were used by the British Army in the 1790s, but they were popularised by the Duke of Wellington – hence the name – in 1817)
- Distance from Conisbrough Castle to Lewes Castle is 189 miles. It would have taken approximately 7 and a half days to travel between the two homes.
- Distance from Conisbrough Castle to Castle Acre is approximately 98 miles as the crow flies, which would take approximately 3 and a half days; however, some of that travel involves a boat trip (or treacherous journey across at low tide) across the Wash. Perhaps the de Warennes would have chosen to travel around.

MEDIEVALS ON THE MOVE

Travel was very slow. It took a long time to travel by horse and cart, the standard method of travelling in the medieval world. Wealthy individuals, especially women, would travel in comfortable and decorated wagons to keep them warm and dry.

Mud roads made it particularly tricky, especially when you had so many things in your packing. Records show that the Earl of Northumberland used 17 carts to travel with all his belongings in the 16th Century.

On average, people were able to travel 26 miles a day; this is approximately the distance from Conisbrough Castle to Chesterfield. It would take lots of time for Isabel and Hamelin to travel between their lands. On the way they stayed the night in monasteries and the homes of their friends.

Illustration from an English manuscript of about 1325 showing a royal lady travelling in a sumptuous carriage.

Help Hamelin and Isabel pack for a trip. Which of the following do you think they would need? Tick the things you think they should pack.

- ☐ Silver plates and bowls
- ☐ Leeds United pyjamas
- ☐ Wall decorations
- ☐ Torch and spare batteries
- ☐ Clean clothes
- ☐ Bed
- ☐ Teddy bear
- ☐ Furs to keep warm
- ☐ Shower gel
- ☐ A football
- ☐ Food for the journey
- ☐ Toothpaste
- ☐ Pens and paper for writing
- ☐ Slippers
- ☐ 200 oranges
- ☐ Shoes
- ☐ Suntan lotion
- ☐ Wine
- ☐ Spices for cooking
- ☐ Wellies in case it rains

Choose your top three things to pack to travel like a wealthy medieval person. What are they? Why did you choose these items? Are they practical or luxuries?

This is a map of the lands of the de Warenne family in 1086, when King William I had lands in the UK recorded in Domesday Book.

Lands owned by the de Warenne family are indicated with white circles on the map.

Scale:

1cm = 26 miles

50 miles

Use the map, a ruler, and scale to answer the following questions:

1 How long would it take Isabel and Hamelin to travel from their castle in Lewes to Conisbrough Castle?

2 How long would it take them to get from Conisbrough Castle to Castle Acre (also de Warenne land) and back?

SOURCES
SITE-SPECIFIC STUDY

KS3 KS4+

Recommended for

KS3–4 (History)

Learning objectives

- Learn more about Conisbrough Castle and how it has changed over time.
- Understand the changes that have taken place and have evidence for them.

Conisbrough Castle today.

SUMMARY

Conisbrough Castle is a picturesque medieval castle. On the site of previous wooden castles, over time it has been a sumptuous family home, an inspiring ruin and a tourist attraction. The following sources have been compiled to illustrate and provide evidence for the changes to the castle over time.

These sources can be used for any students, but particularly complement a visit by KS3 or KS4 students to practise their historical investigation skills.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Schools who wish to use Conisbrough Castle for their study of the historic environment for OCR Spec B: History Around Us can find a completed site proposal form on the Teaching Resources page of the English Heritage website.

These sources have been sorted into chronological order, to correspond with the changing uses of the site.

Edexcel relevant source questions:

- What can you infer from Source 3 about the significance of Conisbrough Castle?
- Explain why Conisbrough Castle is still famous today, referring to Sources 7 and 10.
- How useful are Sources 4 and 6 for learning about Conisbrough Castle over time?

AQA relevant source questions:

- How useful is Source 6 to a historian studying the development of Conisbrough Castle over time?
- Is Source 7 or Source 3 more useful as evidence of the history of Conisbrough Castle?
- How similar are Sources 7 and 11?
- Study all of the sources, how far do they support the idea that Conisbrough Castle was most significant in the 1200s?

ENGLISH HERITAGE EDUCATION

SOURCES

PEER INTO THE PAST

A historical source is something that tells us about life in the past, such as a document, a picture or an object. It may be a primary source, from the time, or a secondary source, created later. Our experts have chosen these sources to help you learn about Conisbrough Castle's history.

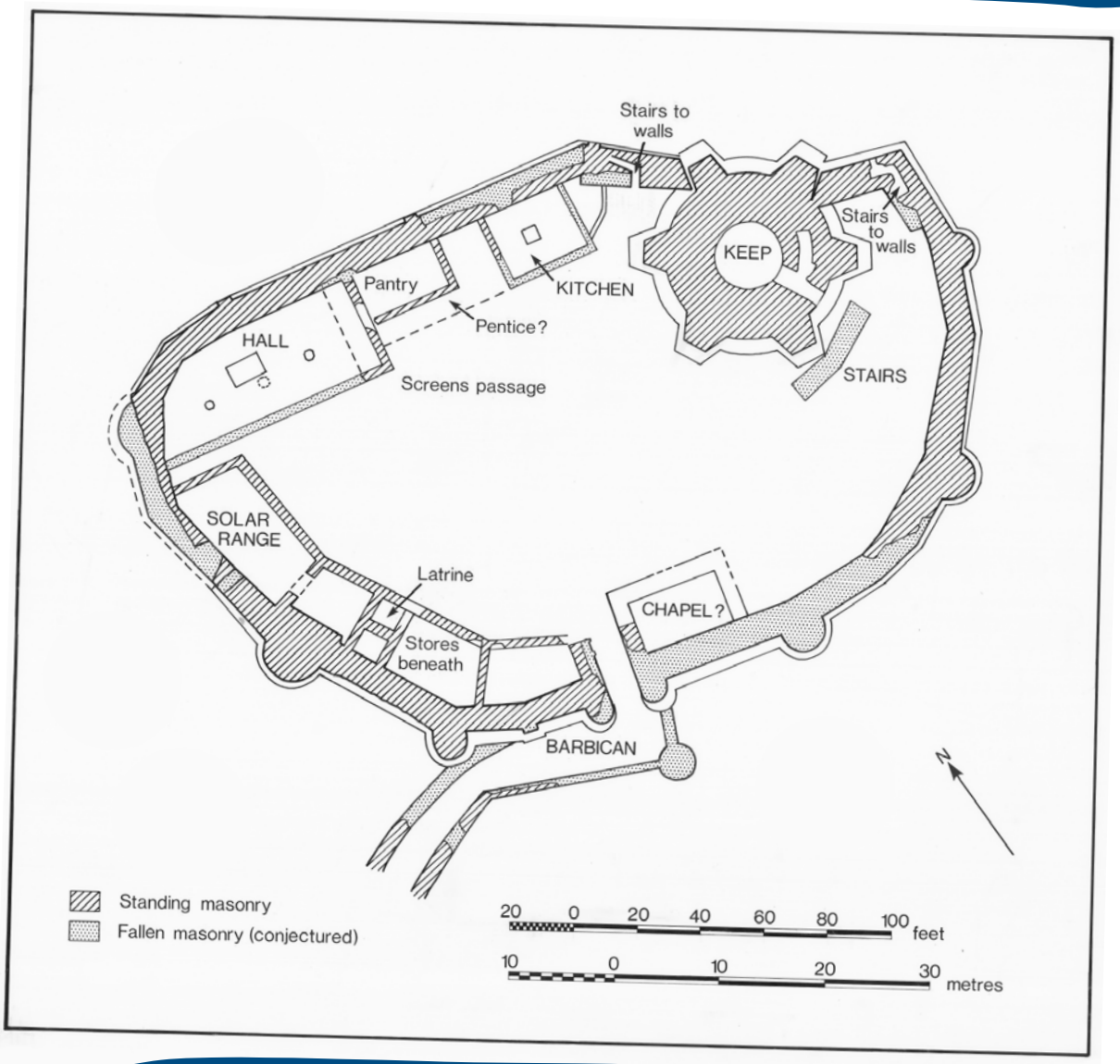
ANGLO-SAXON CONISBROUGH

SOURCE 1

Fragments of Anglo-Saxon pottery found at Conisbrough Castle during an archaeological survey.

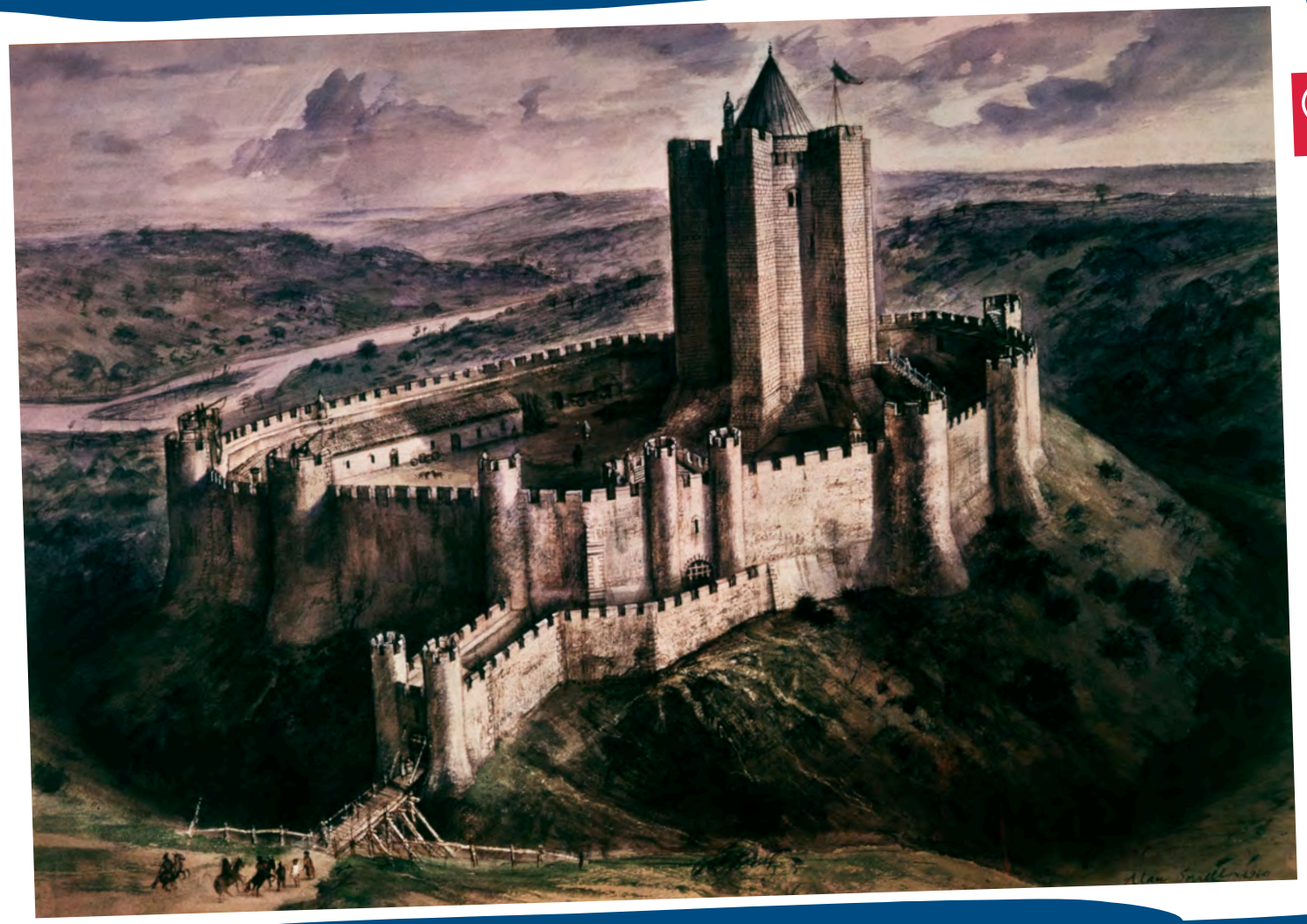
Map of Conisbrough estate as recorded in Domesday Book, 1086. From *Early Yorkshire Charters: Warenne* by CT Clay (ed.) © Yorkshire Archaeological and Historical Society

MEDIEVAL CONISBROUGH
SOURCE 3



The question marks are from the archaeologists. They have added their best guesses for what these spaces would have been. We call these inferences. A floorplan of the bailey and keep at Conisbrough, demonstrating the location and size of the buildings in the bailey between c.1200 and 1537. © Crown Copyright. Historic England Archive

SOURCE 4



Reconstructed image of Conisbrough Castle between c.1200 and 1537, after the curtain wall was completed but before the side on the right of the gatehouse collapsed. © Crown Copyright. Historic England Archive

SOURCE 5

‘To cunesbow [Conisbrough] … by stony way and enclosid ground. Wher I saw no notable thing but the castel stonding on a rokket [rock] of stone and dichid [ditch]. The waulles of it hath be strong and full of toures [towers].’

Translation:

To Conisbrough ... by stony path and enclosed ground. Where I saw no notable thing but the castle sited on a stone hill and surrounded by a ditch. The walls of it were strong and had many towers.

This extract is from John Leyland’s *Itinerary*, 1539–43. John Leyland wrote a report on the state of Conisbrough Castle commissioned by King Henry VIII.

ARTISTIC RUIN CONISBROUGH CASTLE
SOURCE 6

1725 engraving of Conisbrough Castle created by Samuel Buck.

SOURCE 7

Engraving from a copy of *Ivanhoe*, showing the characters at 'Coningsburgh', the castle in the story inspired by Conisbrough Castle. Created by J.C. Bentley in 1837 © The University of Edinburgh

TOURIST CONISBROUGH CASTLE
SOURCE 8

A photograph of a car arriving at Conisbrough in the 1950s.

SOURCE 9

Ordnance Survey Map showing land around Conisbrough Castle and the development of the town c.1930.

SOURCE 10

A photograph showing King George V and Queen Mary visiting Conisbrough in 1912. Image provided by City of Doncaster Archive

CONISBROUGH CASTLE TODAY
SOURCE 11

Contemporary photograph of Conisbrough Castle.