

## Castle Rising Castle

Lynn Museum has a collection of images relating to the Castle. Contact the Museum for details on 01553 775001.

Castle Rising Castle is a Norman castle. It was built in around 1141 by William D'Albini II to impress his new wife, Queen Alice, the widow of Henry I.



Castle Rising Castle c.1800s

Castle Rising's most famous inhabitant was Queen Isabella. Later known as 'the she-wolf of France', she was exiled to the Castle because of her suspected involvement in the murder of her husband, King Edward II.

Isabella lived at Castle Rising for 27 years. She was not, however, confined to the Castle, and often left to go hunting and even to visit Walsingham on pilgrimage. Isabella died on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1358 at Hertford Castle.

While Isabella lived at Castle Rising she was visited by her son, Edward III. On his way to visit her he would have passed through Lynn. One such occasion is recorded on the memorial brass of one of Lynn's mayors, Robert Braunch. The brass depicts the Peacock Feast that was held in the King's honour. Peacocks were a luxury food item fit for a king. Robert Braunch's memorial brass is displayed in St. Margaret's Church, King's Lynn.



CASTLE-RISING. NORFOLK.

*Photo. by F. Ralph,  
Deringham and Hunstanton.*

Castle Rising Castle from the Gatehouse.

After Isabella's death the royal connection to the Castle continued. Isabella's grandson, Edward, the Black Prince, inherited the Castle. He used it as a hunting lodge and redesigned parts of the Castle, which by then was over 200 years old. A carving, believed to be of the head of the Black Prince can be found on one of the misericords ('mercy seats') in St. Margaret's Church, King's Lynn.

The castle was eventually returned to the descendants of William D'Albini, the Howard family, by Henry VIII. The Howards were particularly prominent during Henry VIII's reign, due to their connection to the Duke of Norfolk. Henry VIII married two members of the family, the Duke of Norfolk's nieces Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard.



The Keep, Castle Rising

Castle Rising Castle Gatehouse and moat before conservation.

Castle Rising Castle was designed to withstand sieges, although it was never subjected to one. The most noticeable of these defences are the impressive earthworks which surround the castle keep. The moat, however, has never contained water. Along the top of the main earthworks there would have run a wall with three towers and a gatehouse. The gatehouse was equipped with a portcullis, the grooves for which can still be seen today.



THE STEPS, CASTLE-RISING,  
NORFOLK.

*Photo. by F. Ralph,  
Deringham and Howland.*

The fore building leading up to the entrance chamber.

Had attackers reached the castle keep, they would still have needed to get through the sturdy wooden doors at the entrance of the fore building. The recesses where wooden beams could be placed to bar the door can be seen on either side of the door. Above the stairs in the fore building there is a murder hole, through which the castle's defenders could pour boiling water or throw rocks onto attackers attempting to access the entrance chamber. Precautions were also taken to ensure that, in the event of the castle being besieged, the castle inhabitants were provided for. The castle has two large basement rooms, which could be used to store food. In one of these rooms there is also an internal well, ensuring the castle's inhabitants had a secure supply of water.



Basement room with well in Castle Rising Castle

Until the late 1800s the castle dungeon was used as the local gaol for the village of Castle Rising. During this period only two other rooms in the castle were habitable, the entrance chamber and the room above, which has the remains of the Victorian fireplace. By the 1900s the castle was in desperate need of conservation. The site was eventually given to English Heritage. In 1998 management of Castle Rising Castle was handed back to the Howard family.



Castle Rising Castle today.