**Norwich Castle Keep by TA Heslop (1994)**

“Norwich Castle keep is the third in a distinguished line of English royal fortified palaces. The two earlier examples, at the Tower of London and Colchester, originated in the 1070s whereas, it will be argued here, Norwich was designed and begun in the 1090s. There were thus some twenty years between them, and this accounts in part for the great sophistication of Norwich as a piece of architecture… That such a consciously elaborate monument was built in Norwich around 1100 is indicative of the city’s rapidly increasing economic and strategic importance.”

“The strategic importance and military vulnerability of East Anglia must have been apparent to English government throughout the 11th Century. Before the draining of the Fens, Norfolk and much of north Suffolk was effectively cut off from centre England and access to the region by land could be easily achieved only from the south west, though distances were considerable. Of course access to the region by sea was another matter, but that was a double-edged sword, since throughout the period up to the 1080s the threat of incursion or invasion from Scandinavia was likely to become a reality, and so the region was vulnerable to their seaborne assaults as much as accessible to native support.”

“The entry for Norwich in Domesday Book: ‘and on that land over which Harold had jurisdiction there are 15 burgesses and 17 vacant houses which are in the occupation of the castle. And in the borough are 190 empty houses there which were in the jurisdiction of the king and the earl and 81 in the occupation of the castle.’ The broad implications of this information are clear; that the castle had been set up within a quite densely built part of the town, possible within some pre-existing defensive enclosure (if that is what is meant by ‘in the borough’) and that as a result 98 properties were lying vacant (or perhaps rather that there were no burgesses living in them).”

“The winged horse near the apex of the arch is presumably the Pegasus of Greek myth… In the Bayeux Tapestry a pair of winged horses appears on one occasion only, and that is over the head of Duke William as he and his troops ride into battle at Hastings.

 “Fighting was the fundamental attribute of the knight’s calling, but other pursuits marked out both the prowess and privilege of the warrior elite. Hunting was principal amongst them and the capitals to the left of the doorway show stag hunting and boar hunting, both of which were dangerous and aristocratic pastimes.”

“It was architecturally the most ambitious secular building in western Europe”.