

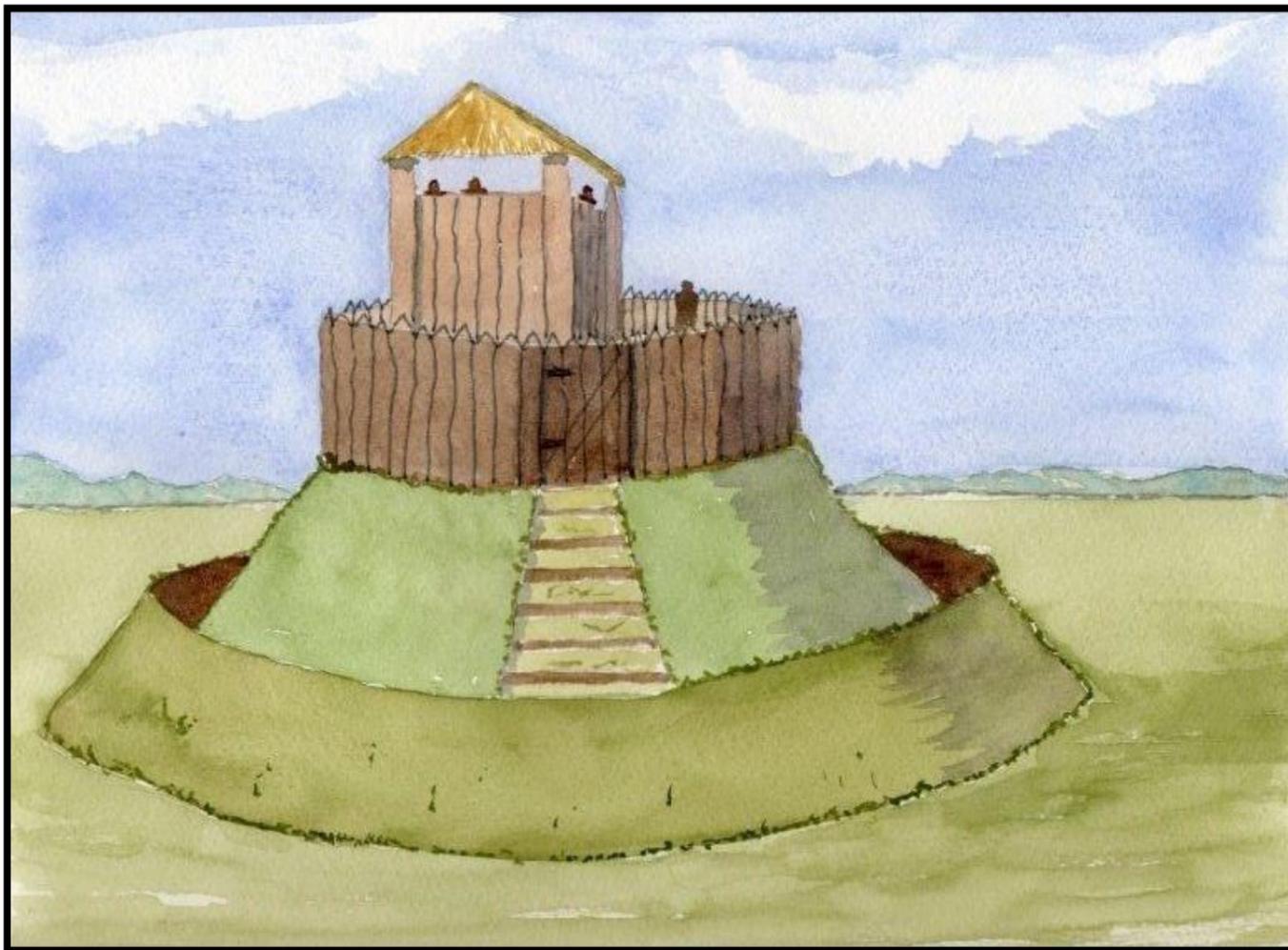
THE NORMAN MOTTE

Following the Norman Conquest in 1066, the Normans introduced these medieval fortifications into Britain and, as their forces advanced across the country, built these castles to house their garrisons and later to act as strongholds and to become centres for their administration. Mottes were strategically placed to dominate their immediate locality and comprised a large conical mound of earth or rubble much of which came from the ditches dug around them. On top of this mound was built a palisade surrounding a tower. Many mottes were surrounded by baileys, a raised but flatter enclosed area with living accommodation and other buildings.

Over 600 motte castles and motte and bailey castles exist but only 100 – 150 of these, of which this is one, have no bailey and are classified as motte castles. The towers were built at first of timber and later of stone. The lack of evidence of any stone structure here suggests this was one of the early ones.

The top of the motte was deliberately levelled in the 18th Century to produce a bowling green. Nonetheless it survives comparatively well as a mound measuring approximately 53m in diameter surrounded by a partly buried ditch up to 12m wide with a causeway to the south west approximately 3m wide. It is considered to contain archaeological and environmental evidence relating to its construction, maintenance, domestic arrangements, social, strategic, political and economic significance as well as its longevity and abandonment.

The motte is in private ownership and is not open to the public.



HOW THE MOTTE MAY HAVE LOOKED – COURTESY OF PATRICK HARGRAVE