

Mont Orgueil Castle dictionary

When talking about castles there are a number of specialist words used to describe different features. Here is a list of some of the technical terms used in Mont Orgueil.



Mont Orgueil from Mont St Nicolas

angled flanker – an arrowhead-shaped fortification guarding the side (the flanks).

arrowhead flanker - an arrowhead-shaped fortification guarding the side (the flanks).

arrow loop - narrow openings through which arrows could be fired.

barbican - a fortified outwork defending the gate of a castle.

bar holes - holes in a wall into which bars could be slid in order to fasten gates securely.

barracks - building in which soldiers are lodged.

bartizan - an overhanging corner turret.

bastion - a strongpoint projecting from the walls to cover dead ground and to provide crossfire.

battery - an emplacement for cannon.

battlements - the stonework protecting the wall walk.

bulwark - defensive strongpoint.

buttery – a store room for drink.

buttress – a column of stone built up against a wall to support it.

Caen stone - an easily carved stone from the Caen region of Normandy.

chantries - chapels where masses were said for the souls of the dead.

cistern - container for holding water.

consecration crosses - before the Reformation altars had five crosses, representing the Five Wounds of Christ, cut into them.

corbel - a projecting stone (or timber) feature on a wall which can support an overhanging parapet, platform or turret.

crenellations - the protective stonework at the top of a castle wall also known as battlements.

crenellations - protective stonework on the top of a wall - the crenel is the low part and the merlon is the tooth-like part.

cross wall - an internal wall dividing the castle into separate areas.

crosslets - a loophole arranged in the form of a cross.

crypt - underground chamber, especially in a church, used as a burial place.

curtain wall - a wall enclosing the castle. Most often it was attached to the towers and gatehouse.

drawbridge - moveable wooden bridge designed to span the ditch or moat.

embrasure - splayed opening in a wall or parapet.

flanker - fortification guarding the side (the flanks).

flanking tower - a tower set into the curtain wall from which it is possible to cover the entire face of the wall.

garderobe – a toilet.

gatehouse - the strongpoint designed to house, protect and defend the gateway.

gun port - a window or embrasure from which cannon could shoot.

keep - the main citadel of a castle. A great, fortified tower containing living quarters.

loophole - vertical slit for air, light, or shooting through.

machicolations - down-ward facing openings above gateways through which defenders could drop or shoot missiles.

magazine - strengthened storeroom for gunpowder and arms.

merlon - the "teeth" of the battlements, between the crenels or embrasures.

niches - the arched openings set into the walls to house statues.

oriel window - a large projecting window supported by corbels.

pantry – a store room for bread.

parade ground – square used by soldiers for drills and inspection.

parapet - protective wall on outer side of wall walk.

pintle - iron pin or spike on which a gate swung.

portcullis - a heavy grilled door that dropped vertically down through slots.

postern - a small gateway, secondary to the main entrance. It was often hidden from view to allow defenders to enter and leave without being seen.

putlog holes - holes left by the withdrawal of timbers used to secure scaffolding.

rampart – a defensive bank made from earth or rubble often faced with a stone wall to make a protected fighting platform.

rampier - alternative name for a rampart - a defensive bank of earth or rubble.

recess - a niche or an alcove in a wall.

relieving arch – an arch built between two solid foundation points to support a wall above.

sally port – a small, narrow gate.

shoulder stone - the stone from which an arch starts.

sill stone - slab of stone at the top of the well.

springer - the lowest tilted stones of an arch or vault.

sutler's house - place where the garrison could buy provisions.

towers - were built into the curtain walls or onto gatehouses. They could be square, D-shaped, or round. They gave access onto the wall walks; they were lookout points and sleeping quarters for the castle garrison and contained staircases.

undercroft - room beneath a domestic building in a castle, most often used for storage.

vault - an arched roof usually of stone.

voussoirs - stones or bricks, usually wedge shaped, used in the construction of an arch.

wall-walk - a walkway on top of a wall, protected by a parapet.

ward - a courtyard enclosure of a castle. A smaller and more confined version of a bailey with a stone wall.

windlass - hand powered, barrel-shaped machine on wheel and axle principle used to haul up the portcullis.

Iron Age - in Jersey, the Iron Age was between 700 BC and the arrival of the Romans about 50BC.

Reformation - religious reform movement in the 16th century which saw the establishment of the Reformed or Protestant Churches.

Tudors - rulers of England between 1485 and 1603

Henry VII 1485-1509

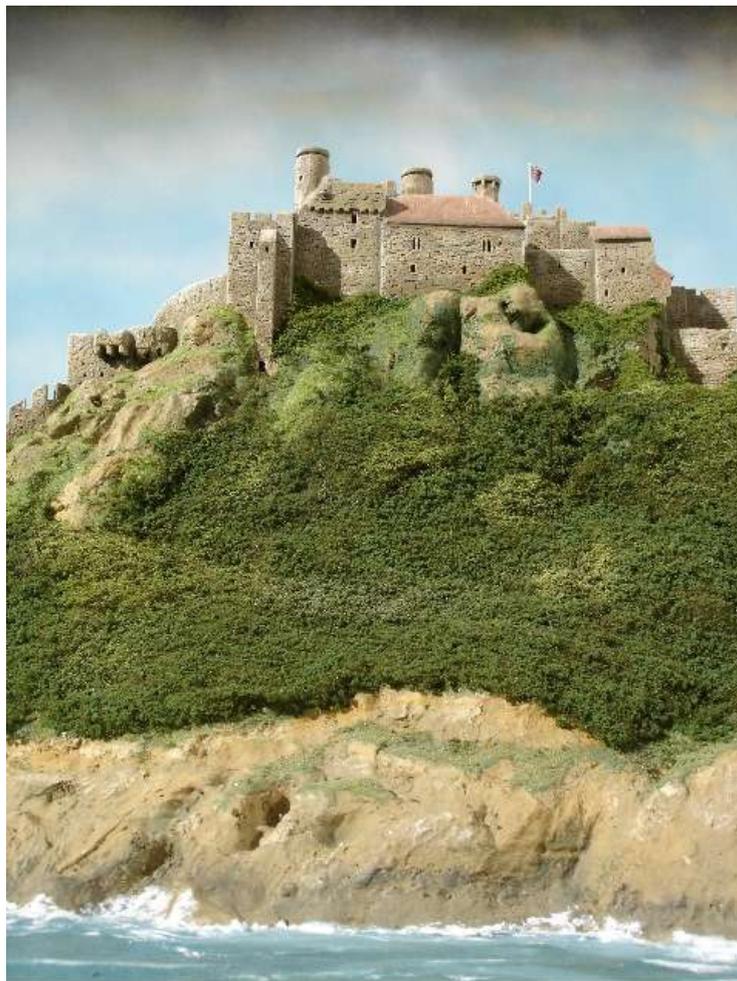
Henry VIII 1509-1547

Edward VI 1547-1553

Mary I 1553-1558

Elizabeth I 1558-1603

The Occupation - the name given to the period between 1 July 1940 and 9 May 1945 during World War II when the Channel Islands were occupied by the Germans.



Mont Orgueil from the seaward side