

## Castle Rising

The village, four miles northeast of King's Kynnm takes its name from the Norman castle which dominates it. William d'Albini, Earl of Sussex, started building here about 1139. One of the foremost barons of his time, he was loyal to King Stephen but consolidated his own power during the Anarchy.

Castle Rising's earthworks are prodigious, comprising an oval ring work and a smaller bailey in front. Such is the height of the ring work bank that is almost conceals the splendid keep within. This keep is the sole building of any substance left, though there was once a well-appointed group of residential buildings alongside. The only other masonry remains are the truncated gate tower and the ruin of an early Norman church. Set in a gap in the ring work bank, the gate tower is contemporary, with the keep, but the surviving fragment of wall is later medieval. The church originally served the village. William d'Albini buried it in his rampart and built the beautiful church that still stands nearby in recompense.

The keep stands virtually intact, though long deprived of its roof and floors, except in the fore building tower. It is a rectangular structure that is considerably longer than it is high—in other words, a hall keep, and the best example of this rare type.

The ground floor was just an undercroft for storage, the principal accommodation lying on the floor above. Owing to its importance, the first floor rises through two stages, giving the illusion of three stories in all. The keep is divided longitudinally by a cross wall, thus separating the hall from the solar on the first floor. Stone vaults support a kitchen and pantry at one end of the hall, and another vault supports a chapel beyond the solar. A gallery runs along one wall at hall level.