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By Lawrence Butler

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Pickering is a fine example of a motte-and bailey castle, first built in earth and timber by William the Conqueror in the years following the Norman Conquest. It was rebuilt in stone and extended by subsequent kings, notably Henry III and Edward II, in response to the threat posed at different times by rebellious barons and the Scots. In 1267 the castle was granted to Edmund Earl of Lancaster, whose son Thomas led a revolt against Edward II. Thomas was ultimately defeated at the battle of Boroughbridge, not far from Pickering, and the castle was returned to royal hands. This colour handbook provides a full account of the history of the castle, including its various functions as administrative centre, royal hunting lodge, law court and prison; and includes a tour of the extensive remains that can still be seen today.

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