

ART. IX.—*Kendal Castle*. By JOHN F. CURWEN, F.S.A.,
F.R.I.B.A.

Read at Kendal Castle, July 12th, 1907.

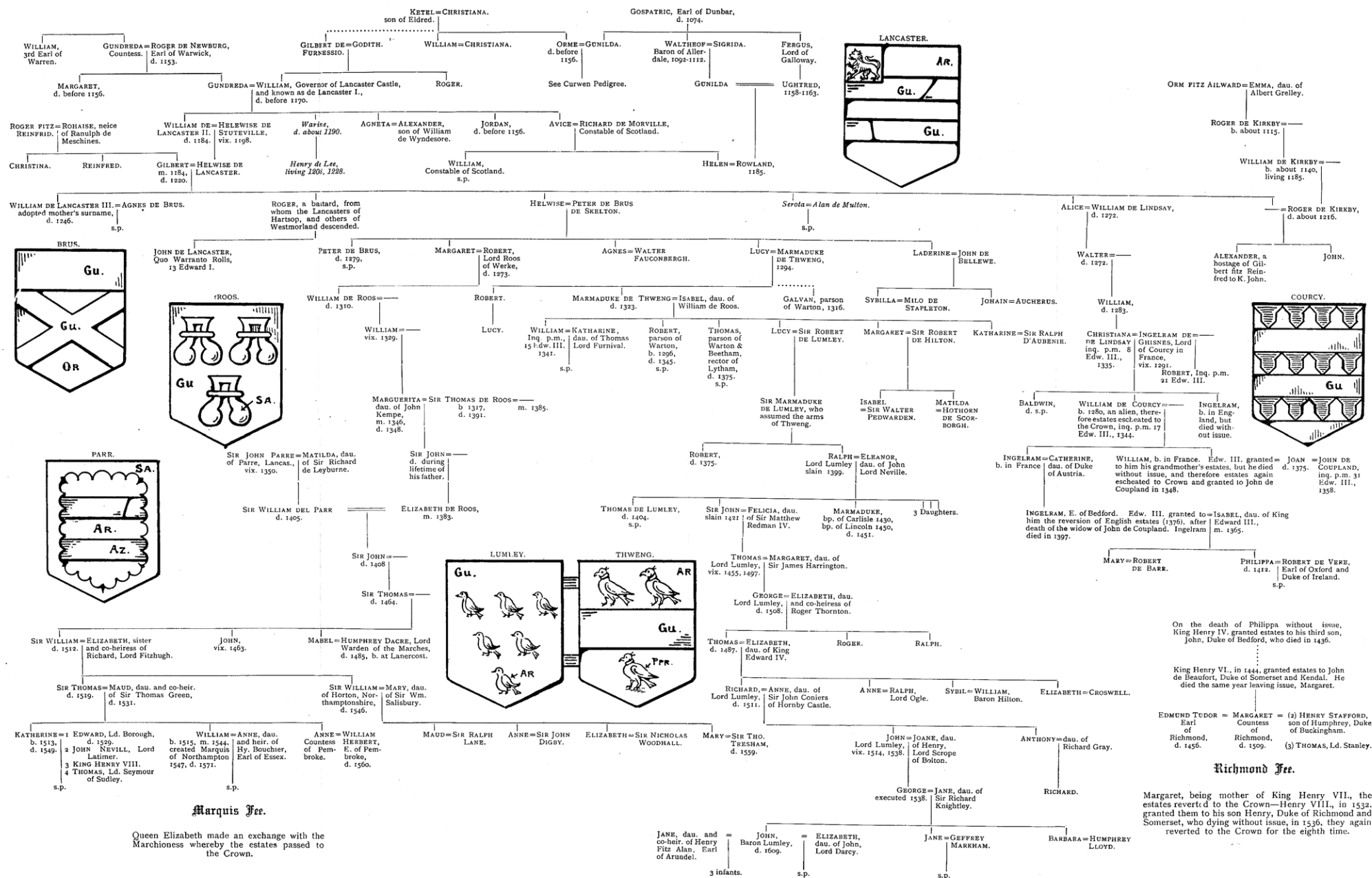
I.—HISTORY.

ALTHOUGH the barony of Kendal was given over to Ivo de Tailbois, after the conquest, it must be remembered that he also possessed considerable estates in Lincolnshire—estates, it is to be imagined, that he found more enjoyable, for we can find no definite information of his ever being a benefactor to the town, of his building a castle, or indeed ever living here. Ketel, the son of Eldred, was allowed to remain in possession of his estates both here and in other manors under the overlordship of Ivo, and it is quite possible that he continued to dwell in the fortified tower on Castle How Hill.

Ivo was succeeded by the de Lancasters, who became in succession barons of Kendal; and Ketel was succeeded by his son Orme. This Orme received from Waltheof, the son of Earl Gospatric, as a marriage gift with Gunilda, the manors of Seaton, Camerton, Flimby, and Greysouthen, whereupon it is surmised that he left Kendal for we find that he “erected a fortified dwelling on the edge of an acclivity sloping rapidly seawards”—most probably the “Burrow Walls” near Workington. Gospatric, the son of Orme, became known as “de Wyrkington,” and further relinquished his holdings in Westmorland by exchanging, with William de Lancaster I., Middleton for other manors in Cumberland. These facts may possibly throw a light upon the date of the dismantling of the fortress on Castle How.

Pedigree showing the descent of the Barony of Kendal into the Marquis, Lumley, and Richmond Fees.

BY JOHN F. CURWEN.



NOTE.—The Marquis and Richmond Fees, which comprise three-fourths of the Barony, were granted by King James I. to his son Charles, Prince of Wales; and King Charles II. granted them in jointure to his Queen, Catherine; after whose death they were granted to the Lowther family. The Lumley Fee.—John, Lord Lumley in 1532 exchanged his moiety of the barony with King Henry VIII., who granted the same together with the Richmond Fee to his son Henry, Duke of Richmond, after whose death, in 1536, the Lumley Fee was granted in 1546 to Alan Bellingham of Levens.

After two generations, the barony passed into the hands of Helwise, the daughter and heiress of the second William de Lancaster. She was married in 1184 to Gilbert, the son of Roger Fitz Reinfred, who obtained from Richard I. the whole forest of Westmorland, of Kendal, and of Furness, to have and to hold in the same manner in which William de Lancaster had held it. And it is to the lasting credit of this feudal lord and his wife that, having nearly unlimited power, they used it to the benefit of the community. Having noted the industry of the Kendal people, they granted them privileges, gave them a seneschal in the person of Matthew de Redman of Levens, practically rebuilt the church, and also with the King's consent instituted a weekly Saturday market. Gilbert and Helwise lived at Kendal, and it seems to me more than likely that we owe to them the first building of a *stone* castle upon this hill.

But Gilbert, the good, was unfaithful to his patron John, the bad, and with the other barons joined in rebellion. Unfortunately his son William was captured at Rochester, and Gilbert had to pay a ransom of 12,000 marks for him together with Ralph Deincourt and Lambert le Brus, his esquires, and further had to deliver unto the King his castle of Kirkby-in-Kendal around which lay all his dependencies. However, the castle and manor were restored to his son William, and we find that he was placed in his father's trust as keeper of the honour of Lancaster under date 25th Henry III.

This William de Lancaster III. and his sister Helwise married respectively Agnes and Peter le Brus de Skelton, whilst another sister, Alice, became the wife of William de Lyndsay. Now William de Lancaster dying without male issue, devised this valuable manor into two portions; the first or principal portion, which included the castle, he granted to his eldest sister Helwise, and the second, subsequently known as the Richmond fee, to his younger sister Alice.

By an inquisition taken in 1279 on the death of Peter le Brus, son of the aforesaid Helwise and Peter, we find that he was seized "of a moiety of the Manor of Kirkby-in-Kendale, and as parcel thereof, of the castle, with the parks, the vivaria within the parks, and herbage therein of the yearly value of ten marks." The castle, "with all in Kendale that had been Peter's in demesnes, villenages, rents, and services of free men and others," subsequently known as the Marquis Fee, fell to the share of his eldest sister Margaret le Brus, who married Robert de Roos. Agnes, the second sister, received nothing in Westmorland, her whole share being in Lancashire and Yorkshire; whilst Lucy, the third sister, received the small share of the barony of Westmorland which subsequently became known as the Lumley Fee.

But it is only with the "Marquis Fee" that we are now interested. This remained in the family of de Roos (as the accompanying pedigree will shew) for the space of six generations until the heiress Elizabeth married in 1383 Sir William del Parr, and thus carried the estates and the old castle into the possession of a good family with limited wealth. Passing over some 150 years we come to another Sir William, who was created Lord Parr and Roos of Kendal in 1539, Baron Hart and Earl of Essex in 1544, and Marquis of Northampton in 1547, from which latter title the fee took its present name. But among all the inmates of Kendal Castle few interest us so much as the Marquis's elder sister, Katherine, that cultivated girl, who was reckoned so fair a prize, that even at the age of eleven years an alliance was sought with her by the great Lord Scrope of Bolton.

Shee was told by an astrologer that did calculate her nativitie, that shee was borne to sett in the highest of Imp'iall Majestie, which became moste true. Shee had all the eminent starrs and planetts in her house: this did worke such a loftie conceite in her that her mother coulde never make her serve or doe any small work, saying her handes were ordayned to touch crownes and scepters, not needles and thymbles.

But however disposed the little Katherine was to dispense with the performance of her tasks, Lady Maud was too wise a parent to allow vain dreams of royalty to unfit her child for the duties of her station, and notwithstanding Katherine's early repugnance to touch a needle, her future skill and industry in its use became so remarkable that there are specimens of her embroidery which could scarcely have been surpassed.

Among the Scrope MSS. there is a curious letter from her mother to Lord Dacre, in which she assures him that "there can be no marriage until my lord's son (Scrope) comes to the age of 13 and my daughter to the age of 12." Katherine, however, was soon married after this to Lord Borough of Gainsborough, "a discreet widower, well advanced in years." Then we find at the age of sixteen she was left a widow, "lovely and wealthy." Whilst still a minor we again hear of her as the wife of a mature widower, John Nevill, Lord Latimer, and undertaking the office of step-mother. Some ten years later, at the age of thirty, that prediction of her brilliant destiny became true, for on the 12th day of July, 1543, she married her royal master, King Henry VIII.

But to return to her brother the Marquis of Northampton. He was attainted of treason on the 18th of August, 1553, for espousing the cause of Lady Jane Grey, was condemned as a traitor, and Kendal Castle was seized by the Crown. However, his life was spared, and in the following year, by special charter, bearing date January 8th, Philip and Mary granted back to William Parr, without his honours, "the whole demesne, manor, castle and park of Kendal and all those desmesne lands without the walls of the said park, and the mill and burgages in the vill or burgh aforesaid." It seems to have been left to Queen Elizabeth in 1559 to grant back to him "for favouring the protestant religion" all his honours and former possessions including the right of holding court here.

William died without legal issue in 1571, and from this time the noble building seems, after long years of neglect, to have gone rapidly to decay. The deer park, which with the fourteen others around Kendal, at this time so celebrated for their fallow deer, suffered first, being disparked in the year 1566.

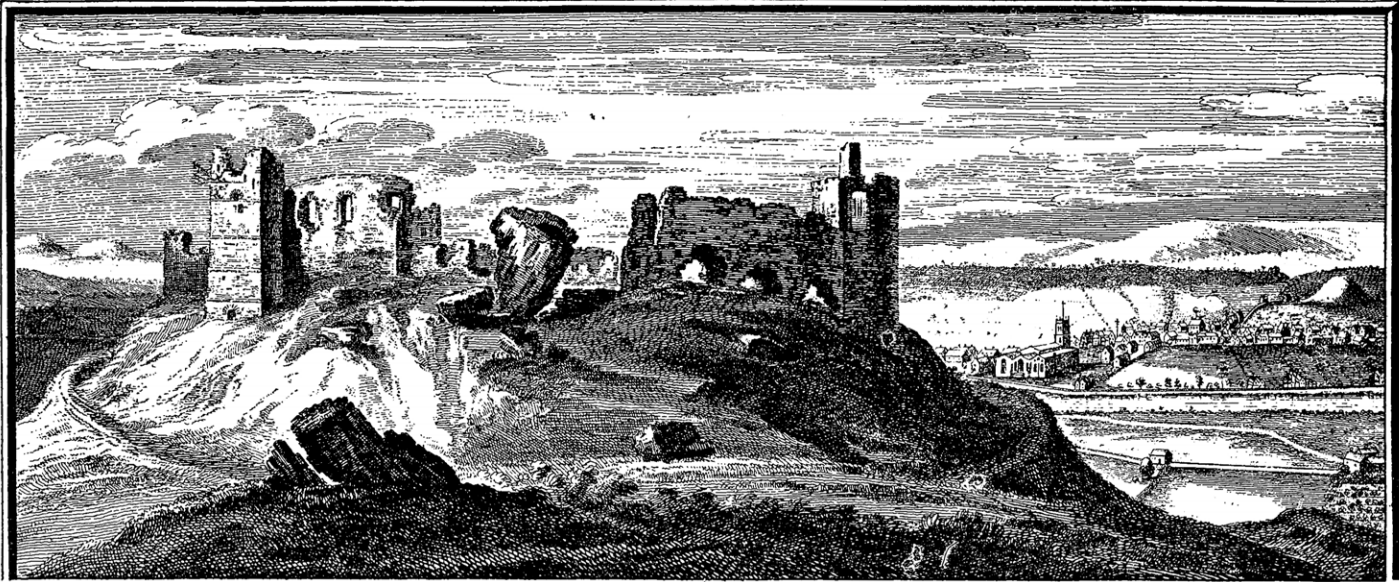
A survey made July 12th, 1572, thus mentions the domestic buildings :—

The out walls embattled 40 f^t square within the same no building left, saving only, on the north side is situate the front of the gatehouse, the hall with an ascent of the stairs to the same, with a buttery and pantry at the end thereof; one great chamber and 2 or 3 lesser chambers, and rooms of ease, adjoining the same, all being in decay both in glass and slates and in all other reparations needful. Under the hall are two or three small rows of cellars. In the south side is situated a dove-cot. The walls are circular, guarded by three towers and a keep, with a large square area in the centre, being all in a state of dilapidation. In its doors and window jambs, and in a few quoins we find the red sandstone, but the main work is built with unhewn blue rock from the hills.

Three years later the slating was taken off most of the roofs as being then dangerous, but in the inventory taken on November 5th, 1578, by Henry Fissher of Kendal, we read that the castle was still partly slated. There is a State paper, addressed by Edward Braddyll to Lord Burghley, then Lord High Treasurer of England, dated April 10th, 1578, setting forth that the "castell at this present" is of less selling value by £25 than it was at the last survey sixteen years ago. This is certified into Her Grace's Exchequer by the "othes of 24 substantiall men of the baronye," who say that "the moste parte of the rouffs of the said castell are falne downe, the tymber and sclayte pitifully broken, the gutters of lead, iron in windowes and doors pilfered and stoln away. And if your Honors take not order of that which remayneth there will be lytle left to sell within short tyme."

Camden (1551-1623) says:—"The castle over against the town is ready to drop down with age," and neither

THE EAST VIEW OF KENDAL-CASTLE, IN THE COUNTY OF WESTMORLAND.



AT what Time, or by Whom, this Castle was built, we can not find in History, but it may be presumed that it was the Mansion of the ancient Barons of Kendal, the first of which was Ivo Taleboys, of whose Posterity William, by consent of Henry II. call'd himself William of Lancaster.

1. Kendal Town

From a 4. Sheet's Drawn by J. Smith. Published according to Act of Parliament, March 1738

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of his learned editors, who, in most instances, added materially to his descriptions, have added a single observation. Grose has altogether overlooked it. The curiously long-credited story that it was blown down by Oliver Cromwell from Castle How is, of course, quite erroneous.

The accompanying illustration drawn by the brothers Buck in 1739, shews the castle pretty faithfully as it appeared in those days.

When the poet Gray visited the ruin, in 1769, he said:—

Almost the whole inclosure-wall remains, with four towers, two square and two round, but their upper parts and embattlements are demolished; it is of rough stone and cement without any ornament of arms, round, inclosing a court of the like form, and surrounded by a moat, nor ever could it have been larger than it is, for there are no traces of outworks.

To this West replied, in 1779, saying:—

Had Mr. Gray ascended from the end of Stramongate Bridge, which was the only way to the castle in its glory, and is the easiest at present, he would have observed a square area that had been fortified with a deep moat, and connected with the castle by a draw-bridge, where was probably the base-court.

And so by degrees did this ancient pile fall gradually to decay, and I can find no record of any endeavour to save it from total destruction, until the January of 1813, when the owner strengthened the foundation, and took many other wise precautions to stay the fall. In consequence of the generous gift of £1000 made by the directors of the late Savings Bank in Kendal to the Corporation with other moneys, they were enabled to approach Lady Henry Bentinck and obtain from her about thirty acres of the castle estate. An additional piece of thirteen acres on the southern slope were subsequently purchased from the Fleming trustees, and the whole ground thus acquired was thrown open to the public on the 22nd of June, 1897, as a memento of our late Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

II.—THE RUINS.

The ruins as seen to-day consists of (1) the earth-works; (2) foundations to the curtain wall; (3) the remains of four towers; (4) the north-east wall of the great banqueting hall and a few vaulted cellars beneath.

The summit of the hill—a terminal moraine—is some 170 feet above the level of the river Kent, or 300 feet above the ordnance datum level. The castle walls enclose an area 250 feet in diameter, whilst outside there is a deep dry moat with the counter-scarp rising, even now, 23 feet to the top of the vallum. Doubtless the moat has been very considerably filled in, with the falling ruins and débris, so that in its original depth we can imagine the formidable nature of these earth-works. Beyond the gatehouse there are the traces of at least one outer bailey, measuring 110 × 96 feet with a broad moat clearly defined around the north and western sides.

The foundations of the rampart wall measure 6 feet 3 inches in width, and from the level of the guard's room floor, in the round tower, above the basement level, it would appear that the rampart walk was some 14 feet in height. It will be noticed that the wall was joined up to the great southern keep at its two diagonal corners, so as to leave the western face of the tower projecting out beyond it some 26 feet.

The gatehouse stood at the northern end of the enclosure with a draw-bridge across the moat. There are no traces of this gate now left, but fortunately we have a very ancient painting preserved in the Kendal Museum which gives, what certainly seems to be, a very good representation, although poorly drawn, of its probable appearance.

If we follow round the western segment we come first of all to the round guard tower projecting about equally without and within the curtain. The basement is a vaulted chamber 10 feet in diameter, and with walls 5 feet 9 inches thick. It is entered from the court-yard by a

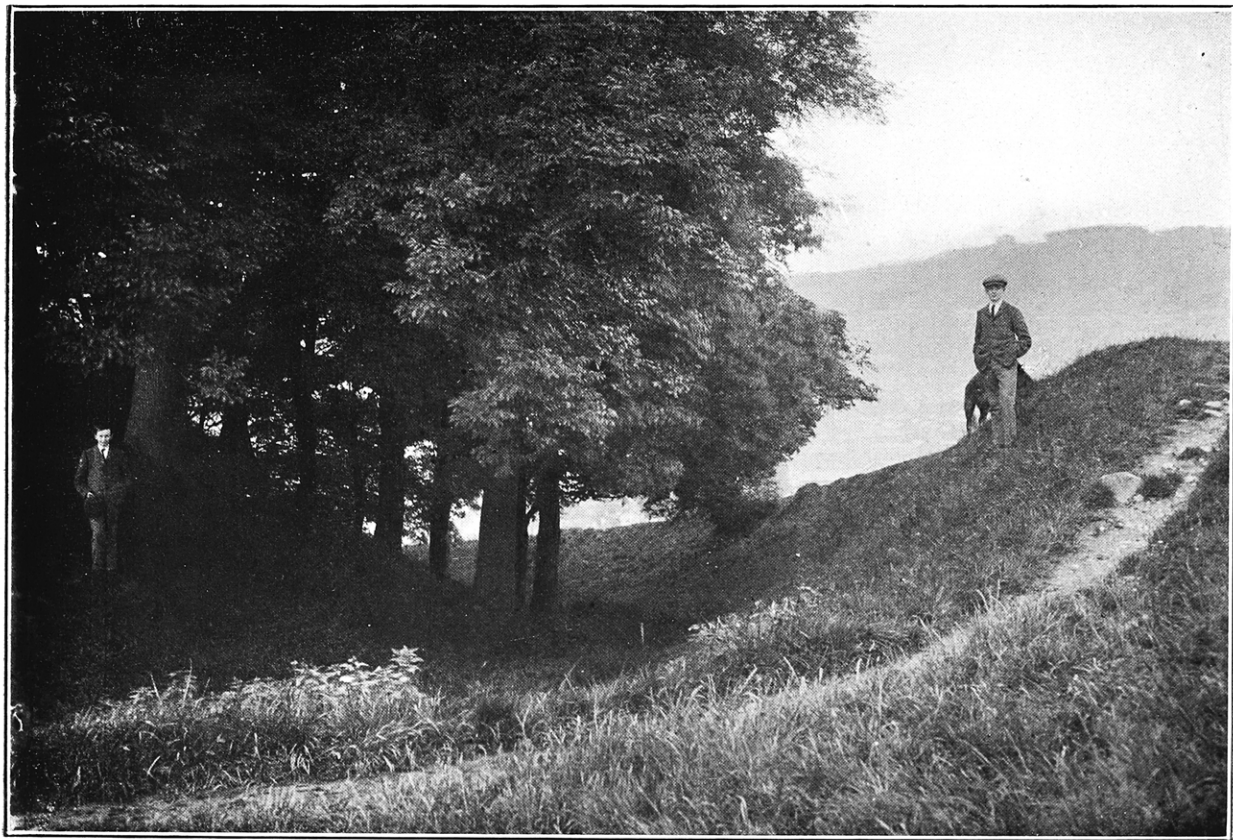
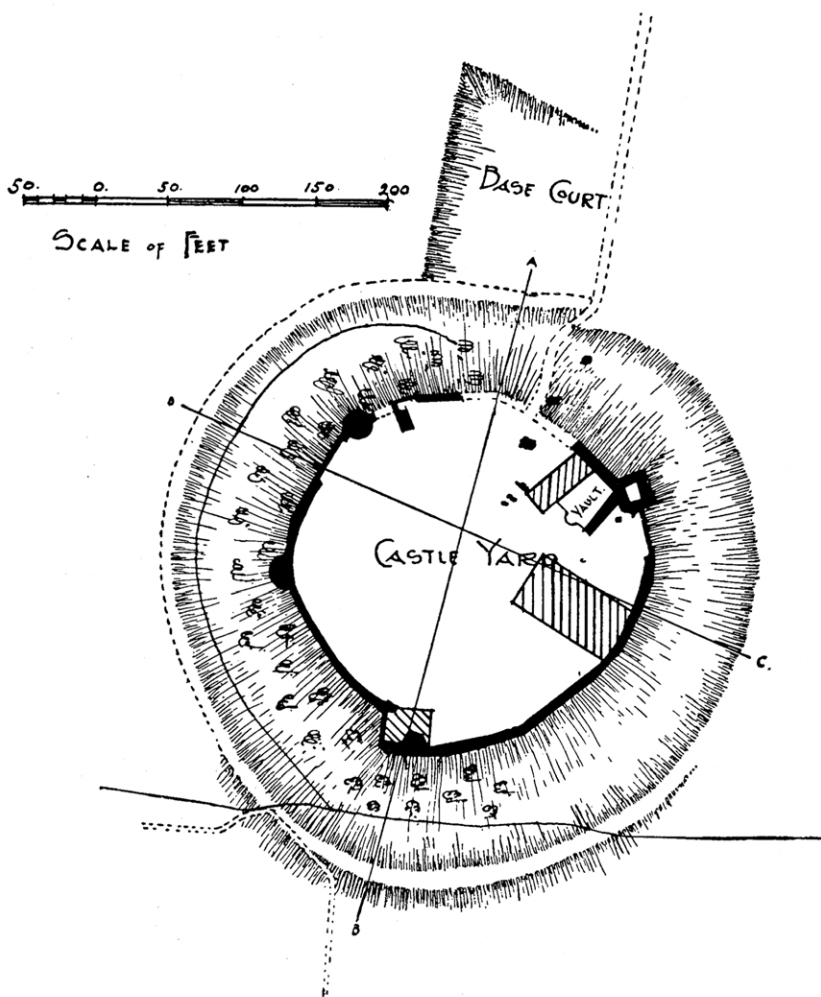


Photo. by J. F. Curwen.

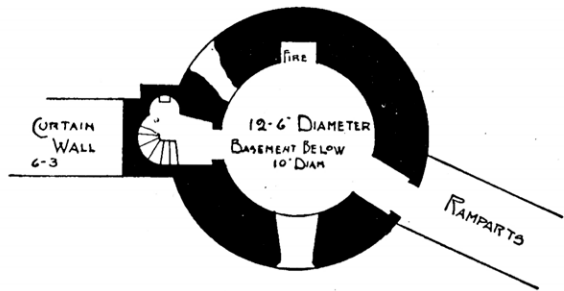
KENDAL CREEK, 1902, 1908, and 1914 North end.

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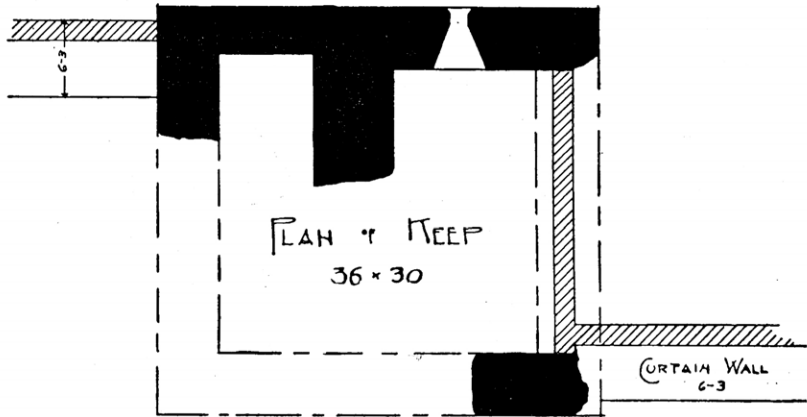


PLAN OF MENDAL CASTLE.
 HATCHED PORTION ACCORDING TO JOHN TODD'S PLAN
 1787.

• KENDAL CASTLE •



PLAN of ROUND TOWER on RAMPART LEVEL



SCALE OF FEET.





KENDAL CASTLE ; Round Tower and portion of Rampart Wall
left as an abutment.

Photo by J. F. Curwen.

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KENDAL CASTLE ; Shewing Eastern Tower and Scarp.

Photo. by J. F. Curwen.

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door-way rebated to receive the door, and it is aired rather than lighted by a very tiny loophole. The guard chamber above has a diameter of 12 feet 6 inches, and was entered direct from off the ramparts; there is a good sized window, facing into the court-yard southwards, and opposite to it there is a fire-place recessed into the wall. A narrow door-way leads out into a small staircase turret, built entirely upon the thickness of the curtain, and which communicated with the floors above. From this stair-way there is a curiously constructed garderobe recess, corbelled out so as to overhang the moat. The upper stories and battlement have disappeared.

Continuing southward we come to a small drum tower 18 feet in diameter, with no internal projection and about half disengaged on the outside. It was a bastion with enfilading loopholes, rather than a tower.

On the southern extremity of the enclosure facing down the valley and hence toward the most probable approach of an enemy, are the remains of the keep. A quadrilateral building measuring 36×34 feet, with walls 5 feet thick. On the outside can be still seen the red sandstone jambs of the postern gate, but there is little else left except a two-feet wide window opening placed almost immediately above.

Returning back around the eastern segment we pass over what was probably the site of the chapel and officers' quarters, until we come to the square tower at the north-east angle. This is the best preserved portion of all the ruins, and can be seen to greatest advantage from the outside, where the face measures 26 feet, and where the northern face projects out 17 feet 6 inches from the curtain. Above the ponderous plinth can be seen the outlet to a mural drain, and as each floor succeeds in height the massive walls set boldly inwards. Like each of the other towers it was clearly built for defence with enfilading loopholes to protect the curtain, and seemingly was also entered from the ramparts. At the north-east

angle there is a circular stair leading up to the chambers above. I think that the kitchens must have been placed just within the enclosure at this point, for there is here a well-contrived drain passing somewhat horizontally through the mass of masonry to the outside.

Between this point and the gatehouse were situated the lord's apartments, of which the only remains are a portion of two sides of the great hall, and a few vaulted cellars beneath. The banqueting hall measured 30 feet wide ; its eastern wall was 8 feet 6 inches thick, and through it, in a length of 40 feet, two large window openings remain. The sketch above referred to, however, shews two additional windows, before reaching the gatehouse which would make the hall and the lord's withdrawing-rooms some 83 feet in total length. If, as I surmise, the kitchens were placed against the tower, then the dais would be at the further end toward the gatehouse with the private withdrawing-rooms behind. There is nothing special to mention relating to the cellars, excepting perhaps the insertion of a fire-place within one of them, and a small arched opening near the ground to the left of it.

The mill, that invariable concomitant of a castle, is to be seen to the west, down by the river. It still bears the name of "The Castle Mills," whilst the Castle Dairy stands, in just its ancient form, a little further up the stream to the northward.



Photo. by J. F. Curwen.

KENDAL CASTLE ; Ruins of Great Hall and Kitchen.
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