



Hadleigh Castle looking North.—From a Sketch by Miss Garrould.

## HADLEIGH CASTLE, ESSEX.

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Thirty-five miles from London, and crowning the line of hills extending from Benfleet to Leigh, stand the ruins of Hadleigh Castle. From its position near the mouth of the Thames, this fortress must have been of great importance, but unfortunately very little exists to tell the tale of its former grandeur. No finer position could possibly have been selected for the site of a baronial castle, whether for the purpose of security and defence, or for the beauty and extent of its scenery. On every side, except where it is approached by a narrow lane from the village, the hill upon which it stands descends with a steep and rapid decline, rendering the approach of any hostile force a most dangerous undertaking.

The ruins of two towers form the principal portion of the remains ; they stand respectively at the north-east and south-east corners, and although considerably reduced in height and very crumbling, the northern one being nearly demolished, still sufficient yet remains to show that they were identical in form and construction. They are circular externally and internally hexagonal. The walls are nine feet thick at the base, and lined with squared chalk beautifully and compactly worked. These towers were probably about sixty feet high. The southernmost one is ornamented by a broad band of flintwork above the string course. The northern tower is decorated by flintwork arranged in alternate squares. Each storey of these towers is pierced with loopholes, widely splayed within and lined with chalk ; in one or two of these windows the iron bars still remain. The towers are about sixty feet apart and were connected by a wall eight feet thick, and apparently about twenty feet high, but very little of its masonry now remains above ground. Although there was probably a gateway in this wall no trace of one is now apparent. The length of the ballium from east to west is 338 feet, and the extreme width 180 feet ; its walls vary from four to six feet in thickness, strengthened at intervals by buttresses of great solidity, reminding one of the Roman work at Rutupiae and Gariannonum. On the south side are the foundations of six apartments or offices, the inner walls of which are four feet thick. The principal gateway was upon the north side and near the west end, where undoubtedly the principal apartments were situated ; it was dominated by a large circular tower, now utterly destroyed, but its foundations are clearly defined. Westward of this tower are indications of apartments upon the north side, and about midway between it and the north east tower are the foundations of a small flanking tower. Traces of a similar tower occur exactly opposite on the south side. The entire structure is built of Kentish ragstone, cemented with mortar of great hardness and tenacity, containing a large quantity of sea shells, principally the cockle. Upon three sides, the north, west, and east, the castle is defended by a deep ditch, now partially filled in ; on the south side it was protected by the arm of the river passing between Canvey Island and

the main shore. It appears probable that at the time the castle was built, this stream was navigable to the foot of the hill upon which it stands, because in constructing the London, Tilbury and Southend Railway, which passes between the castle and the stream, there was found at a depth of twelve feet timbers, evidently belonging to sunken vessels, enclosing large quantities of rag stone.

In 1863 rather extensive excavations were carried out under the supervision of Mr. W. H. King, the honorary secretary to the Essex Archæological Society, when, although much interesting masonry was unearthed, nothing of great moment was discovered. No traces of vaults or undercrofts were observed, and nothing to determine the specific uses to which the apartments whose foundations have been exposed, could be applied. Perhaps the most interesting find was that of a large leaden pipe entering the castle beneath the wall near the great gateway tower. This pipe was traced to some considerable distance and was found to have conveyed water from a spring or reservoir in what is now known as Plumtree Hill, nearly the eighth of a mile from the castle. Some few objects of antiquarian interest were discovered during the course of the excavations. Among them were a number of encaustic tiles some bearing a Fleur de Lys, one large key, part of a sword blade, a candle socket with spike for fixing into a wall, some large nails, a horse shoe and one small silver Edwardian coin; these, with three Nurembourg tokens and large quantities of the bones of various domestic animals and fragments of crockery ware, constituted the "find." No tradition as to the origin, or destruction of, the building exists among the villagers, excepting that it was built by a great king and, of course, battered down by Oliver Cromwell, and that its ruins are haunted by a lady dressed in white anxious to divulge the burial place of vast treasure. Fortunately, among the rich store of documents contained in the Public Record Office, the whole history of the castle can be worked out, and the difficulty which so long existed in reconciling the Edwardian appearance of the ruins with the known fact of its having been built by Hubert de Burgh about the year 1232, explained away by the particulars of all receipts, costs, payments, and expenses incurred about the repair of the old houses as well as the "new making of the towers, chambers, chapel, and walls" from the 2nd of December in the 38th year, to the morrow of the Feast of St. Michael in the 42nd year of Edward the 3rd. Although the names of various clerks and controllers, viz., Henry de Mammesfeld, Godfrey de la Rokele, Richard Snarry,<sup>2</sup> Nicholas Raunche, and John Barnton, are preserved; no mention is made of the architect, but as a charge of 3s 4d. is twice entered for the freightage of certain labourers from Hadleigh to the "Castle of Shepeye," designed and built about 1361 by William of Wykeham, "for the strength of the realm, and the refuge of the inhabitants," may we not fairly conclude that the new castle at Hadleigh

<sup>1</sup> For the particulars of this "find" I am indebted to Mr. W. H. King.

<sup>2</sup> In the year 1850, a silver seal was found at Ashington, near Rochford, the inscription is preceded by a star of six rays, and is as follows "Snarry," the device is singular and probably allusive, being a snail in a field lozengy This

seal has been engraved in the fifth vol. of the Journal of the British Archæological Association and in the Transactions of the Essex Society. Judging by the engraving I have little doubt but that it was the seal of the above Richard Snarry.

owed its design to the same master mind? We know that in 1359, to this great civil and military architect, was entrusted the warden and surveyorship of the king's castles of Windsor, Leeds, and Dover, in order that they might be put into an efficient state of defence. From its very position Hadleigh could have been of scarcely less importance, and, therefore, equally required the care and attention of his guiding hand. Added to this, the proximity of the castle to London, and its contiguity to the widely spread hunting grounds of Rayleigh and Thundersleigh, rendered it a favourite resort of his royal patron and master the Third Edward. In the Minister's Accounts, mention is frequently made of the king and queen's chambers; of the king's hall, chamber, and chapel; of payments for the purchase of iron vessels for the candles in the king's chamber; for bran for cleaning the armour of the king; for olive oil for the king's armour, &c. All this tends to prove that the Majesty of England was no infrequent occupant of the castle, and what so natural as that the favourite friend and architect should plan the building, destined to be one of the royal residences?

Cruden, in his "History of Gravesend," page 123, alluding to this castle says, "it being then in the possession of Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, son of the reigning king (Henry IV.) was, in the year 1405, replenished with weapons and military stores;" in confirmation of this statement, he, in a foot-note, gives the Patent Roll, 15th Henry III., m. 4, as its authority. Unfortunately, for Cruden's accuracy, the document in question is the grant from Henry III. authorising Hubert de Burgh to build the castle. No account of such restoration in the year 1405 can now be found. Having already published abstract translations of the documents relating to this castle, in the "Proceedings of the Essex Archæological Society," vol. i, New Series, it will only be necessary here to refer briefly to those bearing upon its history.

In 1227 we find by the Patent Roll, that Henry III. granted and confirmed "to our well-beloved and faithful Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent, and Margaret his wife, for their homage and service, all the lands and tenements underwritten, to wit: The Manor of Raylee with the honor, knights fees, and all appurtenances, and the Manor of Hadlee, . . . &c. The Lordship of Rocheforde . . . with the advowsons of all the churches of the lands afore written," which formerly belonged to Henry, Earl of Essex. In 1331 we find in the Patent Roll (15 Hen. III, m. 4), "The king, to all whom these present letters shall come, greeting. Know ye that we have granted for us and our heirs to H[ubert] de Burgh, Earl of Kent, our Justiciary of England, and Margaret his wife, that they may at their will construct for themselves and their heirs of the same H[ubert] and Margaret descending or other heirs of the same H[ubert], if it shall happen to the heirs descending from the same H[ubert] and Margaret to die (without issue), without contradiction and difficulty, a certain castle at Hadlee which is of the honor of Rayleg, which honor we formerly gave and by our charter confirmed to the same. In witness, &c. Witness the King at Westminster, the 28th day of November."

Among the "Inquisitiones post mortem," of 34th Henry III. we find the king's writ to the Sheriff of Essex to inquire by jury what rents and tenements belong to the king's Castle of Hadleigh, and how much they are worth yearly. To this the jury say there are 140 acres of arable land

at 3d. per acre, two acres of meadow of the value of 3s., a curtilage of the value of 12d., pasture around the castle and the barns of the castle for supporting a plough, value 3s. 4d., pasture of the marsh for feeding 160 sheep, value 4 marks, also one water mill value 2 marks yearly, also rent of assize of 60s. 7d. at Michaelmas and Easter, and two *alcivia*, value 3d., at Easter. From view of frankpledge, 5s.; from the toll of the fair of Hadleg, half a mark; 123 "opera," yearly value 5s. 1½d.; also 40 works in autumn value 1d. each work; also "opera" for reaping 11 acres of grain in autumn at 2½d. the acre. "And there is a park there but as yet the number of beasts cannot be inquired." In the 40th year of Henry III. the king issued a precept to the Sheriff to take with him four lawful knights of his county and repair to the castle to see in what state the king's well-beloved and faithful (man) Stephen de Salines shall have left it, and in what state Ebulo de Genevre (to whom the King has committed it) shall have received it, and to certify the king. To this precept the Sheriff of Essex made reply, "That he took with him four lawful men of the county of Essex, to wit, John de Brettone, Jordan le Brun of Benfleet, Martin Fitz Simon, and Simon Perdriz, and repaired to the Castle of Hadleg. He found that Stephen de Salines left it in a bad and weak state, the houses being unroofed and the walls broken down, and that all "utensils" necessary for the castle were wanting, and Ebulo de Genevre received it in the same state." In 1290 Edward I. assigned to his bride-elect, Margaret, sister of the King of France, the castle and town of Hadleye, with the park and other appurtenances, in the county of Essex. "To have and to hold to the same Margaret in dower or endowment as long as she shall live." Dated at Canterbury, the 10th day of September, in the 27th year.

In 1312 Edward II. granted by commission to Roger Filiol, the custody of the Castle of Haddede, which Margaret, Queen of England, the king's mother, holds for term of her life. Roger Filiol appears to have been succeeded by Roger de Blakeshall, inasmuch as several petitions were presented to the king by his lieges and free tenants of the town of Hadeleye concerning divers damages suffered by them at the hands of the said constable, Roger de Blakeshall. These petitions seem to have caused his removal, because in 1327 we find the king commanding Roger de Wodeham, constable of his Castle of Hadley, to deliver certain premises to Roger de Estwyk and Alice his wife, according to their petition. In the Originalia Roll, m. 4, the 5th year of Edward III. we find as follows: "The king to Richard de London, late keeper of the Castle of Isabella, Queen of England, the king's mother, of Haddede in co. Essex. Whereas the said queen surrendered the said Castle (among other castles, manors, etc.) to the king on 1st of December last, with her goods and chattels in the same castle, and the king on the 10th of the same month granted to the said queen (that she might the more decently maintain her estate), by his letters patent, all the goods and chattels found in the said castles, manors, &c., saving to the king the grain sown in the said lands, and the seed, and the liveries for servants, ploughmen, and carters necessary till next Michaelmas, and also the ploughs and carts which will serve for the *gayneria* of the lands which the same queen held in *gayneria*, and the animals of the said ploughs and carts; and now by other letters patent the king has granted to Richard de Retlyng the custody of the said castle, at the king's will, rendering £16 10s. yearly. The king commands

the said R. de London to cause all the land pertaining to the said castle, which the said queen, before the said surrender, caused to be sown, to be measured, and the grain sown in the same land, and also the seed, liveries, ploughs, carts and animals aforesaid, reserved to the king, to be appraised, and to deliver the same to the said Richard de Retlyng." Dated at Langele, 3rd February.

In 1335, "The custody of the castle" was committed to John Esturmy, to hold for life, at a certain rent, viz., £16 8s; in 1338 this rent was, on account of his good service, remitted. The king reserving for himself and heirs the "*viridi et venatione*" in the Park.

In 1344, the king, at the request of his kinsman William de Bohun, Earl of Northampton, granted to Roger de Wodham the custody of this castle during pleasure. He was apparently succeeded by Walter Whithors, to whom the king, in 1355, remitted the payment of an annual rent of five marks. In 1359, the period of restoration and rebuilding of the castle commenced; the king appointing John de Tydelside to repair certain houses in his castle of Haddeleye, taking for his wages 12d a day during the king's pleasure. Among the "Ministers' Accounts" of the 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st, and 42nd years of Edward III. we find long accounts and full particulars "of all receipts, mises, costs, payments and expenses incurred in the restoration and rebuilding this castle." Among the items we find—Reygate stone bought 38 cartloads, at 2s. a cartload, including carriage to Baterseye. Kentish Rag at 4½d a ton. Kentish stone "Crestes" scalloped at 17d a foot. "Corbeltables" at 5d a foot. "Coign" scalloped at 2½d a foot. "Ventres" at 8½d a foot. "Anglers" and "Stunchons" scalloped at 2½d a foot. Large quantities of chalk were purchased at Greenhithe and cost, including the carriage to Hadleigh, 7d. a ton. Slacked lime obtained from the same place cost, including the carriage, 20d per quarter. The carriage of sea sand from Milton by water amounted to 3d a ton, the casting (*jactac*) of the same 3d for every 4 tons. For plastering and whitewashing the king's hall, chamber, chapel, and other "defects," for embattelling 16½ perches round the king's chamber, with the chapel, for embattelling 2 "circuits" of the two towers with scalloped stone for the same, for mending a chimney on the castle hill, and for taking down the scaffold of the two towers and stopping the holes, the sum of £17 11s 8d was expended. A hanging lock (*serur pendnt*) bought at London for the gate at the entry of the castle cost 12d. 4 other locks cost 2s 0½d. "Plastre parys" bought at London for making the chandelier in the king's chamber cost 22d. 18½ feet of glass bought of William Glasiere of Reilee, for the windows of the chapel, and other windows within the king's chamber, was paid for at the rate of 12d per foot. Much material, timber, etc., appears to have been obtained from the county generally, as entries of payment for the carriage of various articles to the castle from Billeryke, Thundersley, Northbembfleet, Hanynfeld, Westhanynfeld, Maldon, Dannebury, Frestelyng, Badewe and Nevendon, frequently appear. To meet the enormous expense thus incurred the king appointed John Goldeman, reeve of his manor of Thundersley, and Nicholas Raunche the bailiff of his manor of Estwode, to cut down and sell eight acres of wood called Birches, within Thundersley Park, and all the timber growing in the "*alta strata*" within his park of Reylegh. Among sums so received was £18 6s 9½d from the Reeve of Thundersleye for lopwood sold there and at Frestelyng and Borham. In

1375, the castle with its appurtenances, except the water mill, was entrusted to Walter Whithors the esquire; in 1377, George Felbrygge was custodian; the following year, the king having ordered certain works to be made, appointed his clerk, William Hannay, to be clerk of the works. Richard II., in 1381, gave to Aubrey de Veer, his chamberlain, the bailiwick of the Hundred of Rocheford and the castle of Hadley. In 1402, the castle and town being in the possession of Edward Earl of Rutland, Henry IV. upon the supplication of his "very dear son Humphrey," made a grant of the reversion to the aforesaid Humphrey. Henry VI., in 1447, made a similar conveyance to his very dear and faithful kinsman Richard, Duke of York. In 1453 the same king writes, "Know ye that we of our special grace have given and granted to Edmund de Hadham, Earl of Richmond our very dear uterine brother, our castle and lordship or manor of Hadley in the county of Essex." In 1504 Henry VII. granted to Leo Craiforde, an esquire, the custody of his castle, manor, park, and lordship of Hadleigh, with the offices of constable and doorward of the castle, bailiff of the lordship, and parker of the park, to hold for life, with the usual fees. In 1509-10 it formed part of the possessions of Katherine Queen of England, John Raynesford, knight, being bailiff and constable. In 1513 this demesne supplied towards the building of the great ship "Harry-grace-a-dieu," from the park at Rayleghe, xxvij tonnes of tymber. Item, fro Thunderley, out of a grove called Sopars Grove, viij ton and x fote tymber." In the thirty-fifth year of Henry VIII. the king granted "to Queen Katherine, his consort (in pursuance of the Act of Parliament of 31-32 Henry VIII. enabling the king to do so) in full recompense for jointure and dower, the castle, lordship, and manor of Hadleigh, otherwise called Hadley, in our county of Essex, and one shelf called Hadleigh Roe, and the 'draggyng of muskelles' in Aylesbury Hope, otherwise called Tilbury Hope." Edward Strangman, gentleman of Hadleigh, acted as bailiff for the queen and rendered his first account for one whole year, on the Feast of Saint Michael the Archangel, in the thirty-sixth year of Henry VIII. Upon her decease, Edward VI. sold the castle, manor, and park of Hadleigh, with the advowson of the church, to Richard, Lord Riche, for the sum of £700. In what condition the structure was at this period does not appear, but it seems probable, that having now finally passed from the hands of the crown, its demolition was effected by its purchaser, who had, perhaps, as much knowledge as any one of the value of such a quarry and of the profit of such an undertaking. From Lord Riche, it passed to Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke. It is now the property of Major Spitty, of Billericay, in Essex.

Owing to their situation near Southend-on-Sea, and being less than two miles from the Leigh Railway station, the ruins of this castle are peculiarly accessible to the London excursionist, who as a rule is not very delicate in his dealing with such remains. In the present instance the cockle shells in the mortar prove a great temptation, and in order to obtain them the mortar is loosened, and blocks of stone consequently brought down. Thus the work of destruction, commenced probably in the sixteenth century, carried on in the eighteenth, by the farmers and others in the neighbourhood for the purposes of road mending, wall building, etc., is continued at the present day.