

inhabitants. On a further ridge of the same hill is a distinctly-marked Roman Camp of no great size; and further still are North Middleton, remarkable for the pure Arian form of village-community, precisely as it is in Russia and India, having survived there until A.D. 1806, and the ruins of South Middleton. It may reasonably be conjectured that these weapons and ornaments were hidden in some time of trouble, and that the hiders died without having had an opportunity of recovering them. As for the age to which they belong, all, I suppose, that can be safely predicated, is that they are older than the Roman Period, when iron was in general use, and not so old as the Stone Period. They are not all equal in execution, but most of them are highly-finished castings which would do credit to any workman of the present day, and they may, therefore, be presumed to belong to the later period of the Bronze Age—probably after the partial introduction of iron. They are all deposited in a glass case in the hall at Wallington, where they may be inspected at any time.

“Believe me,

“Dear Dr. Bruce,

“Sincerely yours,

“C. E. TREVELYAN.

“The Rev. J. COLLINGWOOD BRUCE, LL.D.,

“Secretary to the Society of Antiquaries  
of Newcastle-on-Tyne.”

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## THE BLACK GATE.

READ BY ROBERT JAMES JOHNSON.

In referring to the Black Gate I cannot do better than quote in the first instance from Mr. Longstaffe's valuable paper on “The New Castle,” printed in Vol. IV. of the New Series of the “Archæologia Æliana.”

The 18th section of that document is devoted to the Black Gate, the second Gate, and their appendages; and the text is as follows:—

“The Black Gate and its accompanying works are now the sole relics of the extensive works of Henry III. in our Castle. Up to June, 1247, the works of a certain new Gate in the Castle of Newcastle cost £514 15s. 11d. A further sum of £36 0s. 8d. was afterwards laid out on the repair of a Gate at Newcastle.”

We proceed to remark that the existing remains of this part of the Castle show that its importance in the fabric was very great—forming as it did the principal and very strongly constructed and fortified entrance to the Castle.

The general plan of the enceinte of the Castle may be roughly described as a triangle with its apex pointing northwards, and with the keep, which we now know as “The Old Castle,” situated within its western boundary about half-way towards the south. The second Gate spoken of above was near the northern angle of the enceinte, and issuing under it along the line of the present old street inside the Black Gate you made a sharp turn to the west, as you do now, and so passed under the archway of the Black Gate, which we still see. This outer archway was defended by a moat spanned by a draw-bridge, and the ultimate protection of the approach was by a further work or Barbican, which has now disappeared, but which may be supposed to have resembled the outer gate still existing at Alnwick Castle, or the Barbican outside Walmgate Bar, at York.

The original architecture of the Black Gate that remains is of very high interest, contemporary as it is with the Abbey Church at Westminster, and it is specially valuable to the antiquary as being a dated example of which the cost is known. The equivalent value in our money of the recorded expenditure would probably be about £8,500, and the great bulk and fine construction of the monument fully accord with this large amount. The ground around has been so much raised that it is only on the north side that the full height is visible; but the whole bulk of the Black Gate above is nearly 60 feet from north to south, 35 feet from east to west, and about 60 feet high. The walls are of great thickness, and most solidly built, and the architecture of the lower stage with its vaulted chambers on either side of the central passage, its trefoiled arcades, and its pointed barrel vault above the passage, is of very great beauty. The general form of the ground plan may be roughly described as an ellipse with the longer sides flattened.

Massive remains exist of the walls connecting this work with the second gate. At the accession of the house of Stuart this gate had fallen into great decay, and there was a grant of it to one Stevenson, who built up between the original buttresses of the 13th Century on the west front, putting in the pointed arch we now see outwards, and the mullioned windows above it, and building up the east side in a similar manner. The lines of the addition on the west front are very clearly visible, the masonry being vertically jointed for some height between the old buttresses, and the rough-pointed arch rudely joined up against the more graceful work of Henry III., almost entirely concealing the outer order of the entrance arch of that date.

In 1739 part of the eastern side of Stevenson's work fell with a great crash, and was repaired in a poor way in brickwork. Very likely the incongruous additions in brick at the top of the building were made at the same time. We have thus before us, notwithstanding subsequent additions and mutilations, a very noble piece of the military architecture of the time of Henry III. ; and not only so, but as far as I know, the only architectural remain of that period that is left in the town.

Its present condition, divided into wretched tenements hardly fit for human habitation, yet still largely occupied, is very distressing, and its appearance hardly appropriate for its position or creditable to the town. Fortunately, however, its massive construction has for the most part defied time and neglect, and the main walls of the original building are sound and substantial, though much weather worn.

It remains to enquire what can be done to make the building more seemly, and how to apply it to some useful and congruous purpose.

Externally the temporary boarding, the shattered brickwork, and the defective tile roofs, should be removed, and the walls should be levelled up in ashlar work to a height rather above that of the top window of the west front. The windows should be repaired, as well as the arcades of the vaulted passage. Little would be required in connection with the main walls, save that on the south side the buttress that has been torn away should be reinstated. The walls being levelled up should be finished with a battlement of suitable character; and the atmosphere of Newcastle would very soon, fortunately or unfortunately as we may choose to look upon it, destroy any great difference in colour between the new and old masonry.

Internally the upper stories of the building should be entirely gutted. New floors being put in; and the walls repaired as might be found necessary, three spacious apartments would be formed, to which ample light could be obtained from the eastern side, and for the upper one, if necessary, from above.

These rooms would be admirably suited for the long-contemplated Museum of the Antiquarian Society. A commodious access would be necessary, and this could easily be made by forming a staircase on the east side of the gateway, utilising for the purpose a considerable portion of the wall still remaining that connected the Black Gate with the second Gate.

I have prepared a sketch showing the appearance that the building would present were these alterations carried out, and have embodied in it the suggestions as to the approaches and levels that are given by a plan of the late Town Surveyor, Mr. Lamb.

According to that scheme a parapet-wall would be built on the east side of the High Level Approach, and the way up from the side to the High Level Bridge would be made by an easy incline which would expose to the bottom the masonry of the Black Gate. A bridge would be thrown over that road, leading into the Black Gate, and thus the original arrangements of the moat and draw-bridge would be suggested and a picturesque addition made to the architecture of the town.

It is difficult, in the present state of the fabric, to offer an opinion as to the cost of the work; but considering that the main walls are sound, I think a sum of from £1,200 to £1,300 would suffice for the repair and adaptation of the Black Gate. Arrangements could perhaps be made with the Corporation whereby the Antiquarian Society should have a grant of the building at a nominal rent on condition of their repairing it, and using it as their Museum. Or, under the Museums' Act, the collections of the Society, subject to their retaining the custody of them and the Corporation repairing the tower, might be made over to the town.

The arrangement of the approaches would remain with the Corporation; but it is above all things earnestly to be desired that no scheme should be sanctioned for erecting buildings on this side of the High Level Approach, as that would destroy one of the most picturesque combinations of mediæval architecture existing in any English city.