

IX.—REVIEWS.

THE MÆDLÆVAL CASTLE IN SCOTLAND (RHIND LECTURES IN ARCHÆOLOGY, 1925-26). BY W. MACKAY MACKENZIE. 8vo, cloth, pp. vii + 249. 69 illustrations and 19 plans (*sic*). London, Methuen & Co., 1927.

Those of us who were present when Mr. Mackenzie read his revolutionary reconstruction of *The Real Bannockburn*¹ to the Glasgow Archæological Society always expect from him freshness of vision, unhampered by over much respect for accepted views, coupled with lucidity of exposition; and such expectations are realized in the work now under review, though the earlier labours of R. W. Billings, Macgibbon & Ross, and Mrs. Armitage had not left much scope for the display of originality in this field of research. When amateurs meddle with architectural problems they often fare no better than did lord Grimthorpe at St. Albans, but there have been exceptions, such as the late J. S. Fleming, who illustrated so charmingly and wrote so interestingly about the domestic architecture of central Scotland and Ireland, not to mention members of our own society, and to these we must now add Mr. Mackenzie, whose latest work is a very competent history of the development of castellated architecture in Caledonia from the twelfth century to the seventeenth inclusive. Perhaps it is a little *too* competent; the reader will vainly seek in these laborious and well compacted pages for any evocation of the romantic associations of such a title as *The Mediæval Castle in*

¹ *Glas. Arch. Soc. Trans.*, 2nd series, vi, 80.

Scotland; nor do we find any real appreciation of the great beauty and refinement of old Scots detail which (*pace* Sir Lawrence Weaver's apology for the Scottish National War Memorial) was seldom coarse and hardly ever ostentatious or "overdone." Mr. Mackenzie is not often moved even to such muted enthusiasm as he evinces for a "handsomely treated" *buffet* at Borthwick and "handsome" fireplaces at Caerlaverock; but it is a little unfair to complain when the object of the book is described in his own words as follows: "The main fundamental principle introduced is that formulated as the palace plan. It is claimed to account for both the new type of structure that appears with the fifteenth century and the use of the term palace as applied in Scotland to a whole class of buildings, a use of which no explanation has hitherto been offered or even thought necessary." Also he seeks to correct certain modern fallacies and, as he says, "to build up a more reasonable conception of what the castle really stood for in the political and social life of its time."

We hope Mr. Mackenzie will take it as a compliment if we pick a few holes in his work—bookworms, like other grubs, are fastidious in their choice of matter for perforation—but some points do call for comment. A few rash statements will, we hope, be deleted from his next edition by the author on further reflection: e.g. that a house with walls of brick-earth tempered and mixed with straw can "with neighbourly assistance be run up in a few hours"! That "every country gentleman of the time who has left a sculptured effigy as a memorial appears, as a matter of course, in a full suit of plate armour *such as he possibly never possessed or almost certainly never wore*" (the italics are ours); and that there is no connection between "broch" and mediæval stronghold—no lineal descent may now be traceable, but a late Norman or mediæval Scottish great tower with its cellular walls is neither more nor less than an improved "broch," square instead of circular in plan, and with its central

space completely instead of partially roofed—not always roofed at wall-head level even in the twelfth century.

Mr. Mackenzie has in Scots phrase “taken a scunner against”² the convenient modern term “keep” and the common misapplication of the old term “bartisan,” but surely without sufficient reason. “Tower” or “great tower” does not enough distinguish the former from the other towers of a fortress; “dungeon” has other associations and only applies correctly to a tower on a “dun” or mound. “Open round” is an inadequate substitute for bartisan; “garret,” “brattish,” and “hoarding” have, at any rate in Northumberland,³ acquired other meanings. “Corbaldsailzie” (corbelled salient), though correct could also apply to a balcony or a jutting window. Mr. Mackenzie himself uses “parapet” instead of “bataylyng,” why should he deny the use of “keep”⁴ to professor Hamilton Thompson? A propos of keeps, Mr. Mackenzie tries to belittle their military importance, but the men of many a beaten garrison must have owed their lives to a keep’s temporary protection while the victors cooled down sufficiently to give quarter. As to those defenders of Caen who surrendered so promptly, we know exactly what stout-hearted Blaise de Montluc—that practical expert of castles—would have said of them: *on peut bien cognoistre à cela qu’ils estoient vieux soldats!*⁵ Mr. Mackenzie’s opinion that mural towers were more ornamental than useful ignores their value as supports for onagers and other engines of war, and is not in accordance with the views of “my uncle Toby”: “Besiegers seldom offer to carry on their attacks directly against the curtain (*sic*), for this reason, because they are so well *flanked*.”⁶

² We prefer this to the popular cant term “complex.”

³ R. O. Heslop, *Lit. & Phil. Lectures*, 1898, p. 194.

⁴ In use at least as early as the time of Leland’s *Itinerary*.

⁵ *Commentaires de Messire Blaise de Montluc*, livre iv, Surprinsse d’Arlon.

⁶ *Tristram Shandy*, vol. ii, chap. xii.

Macgibbon & Ross's classification of fortified dwellings according to plan (E. plan, Z. plan, etc.) is condemned by Mr. Mackenzie, but he offers no quite satisfying substitute, and after all there is no doubt that there are fashions in planning and that useful general rules are not disproved because they will not fit every case. The book contains a most interesting account of the feudalization of Scotland in the twelfth century, but it is surely incorrect to assume that the Dalriadic "Ersemen" exterminated all the non-Gaelic natives when they set the king of Scots on the throne of a more or less forcibly united Caledonia; when William of Newburgh said that "the towns and burghs of the Scottish realm are known to be inhabited by English" he is as likely to have meant by English-speaking folk as by recent settlers from south of the Tweed.

To avoid confusion, E. E. Viollet-le-Duc's surname should always be quoted in full, and as he published more than two dozen books and pamphlets, besides two dictionaries, "Le Duc, vi, p. 210" is not a good enough reference. Macgibbon and Ross also were the authors of more than one work, and indeed the references generally are hardly up to the standard exacted by *our* editor, especially as none of the authors whose opinions are traversed have their names in the otherwise excellent index.

The legend of the "bottle dungeon" dies hard despite the successive attacks of J. H. Parker and C. J. Bates;⁷ even Mr. Mackenzie classes among prisons a hermetically sealed pit at Spedlins measuring 7 feet 4 inches by 2 feet 6 inches by 11 feet 6 inches high.

Some of the photographic illustrations are among the finest we have ever seen, beyond even the standard of the Historic Monuments Commission, but others are of so little value that good clear outline sketches such as the diagram of Tantallon (fig. 8) would have been more

⁷ *Arch. Ael.*, 4th series, v, 96.

economical and more informative: The geometrical drawings are neat, but the plans are too small in scale; the lower part of a round turret at Amisfield is drawn in elevation as if it were square, and on the plan of Dirleton by a draughtsman's error we are shown a segment of "thirteenth century" work clasping the angle of a "mid fifteenth century" wall. Has not this plan of Dirleton been previously published and if so ought the source not to be stated?⁸

Despite minor blemishes *The Mediæval Castle in Scotland* is a store-house of laboriously sifted information presented in an attractive form and adequately illustrated. All future writers on Scottish architecture will have to take Mr. Mackenzie's opinions into account, and some long-accepted views will have to be modified—but the curators of our museum need be in no hurry to surrender their "Keep" or to provide it with any more archaic title!

H. L. HONEYMAN.

LOCAL RECORDS OF WASHINGTON. Vol. I, HISTORY OF WASHINGTON PARISH CHURCH. Compiled by FREDERICK HILL. 8vo. 81 pp. 7 illustrations. Newcastle upon Tyne, Northumberland Press Limited. 3s. 6d.

Mr. Hill has embarked on an ambitious venture: no less than a history of Washington in several volumes, and we now have before us the first instalment, which deals with the ecclesiology and church registers of the parish. Washington, erstwhile a shipbuilding centre, now associated with chemicals, coals and the ancestry of America's first president, would not at first sight seem a promising subject for a regional history. None the less the records of this obscure industrial area contain much

⁸ *Glas. Arch. Soc. Trans.*, 2nd series, viii.

to interest students of church life, local government and economics, and we wish success to Mr. Hill's undertaking.

The author modestly calls his work a "compilation," and hopes it may help some future Brand;¹ but even compilation may be ill done, and when well done it may be of great value to the student, giving him a résumé of facts and referring him to the sources where fuller particulars can be sought. In one respect this book must be almost unique among antiquarian works—there is no word of blame for earlier workers in the same field of research! On the contrary, indebtedness is acknowledged with a courtesy no less rare than estimable. Other good points are Mr. Hill's impartiality on the subject of place names² and his chronicle of changes in the church fabric during the nineteenth century. To-day's despised modernity will be the day after to-morrow's admired antiquity, and the stereotyped details of much modern Anglican "ecclesiastical" architecture render some record of real dates a desirable component of any parish history.

The *History of Washington Parish Church* is well illustrated, convenient to handle, and pleasing in format, but we hope a later volume of the series will contain an adequate map of Washington parish and a comprehensive index.

H. L. H.

¹ The historian of Newcastle was a native of Washington.

² To the list of rather far-fetched derivations for Usworth may we add a simpler one? *Ouse*: water; *worth*: enclosure; the enclosure beside the stream. Derivation of place names from the conjectural personal names of problematical "Saxon" settlers has been greatly overdone in recent years.

A HISTORY OF THE COUNTY OF DURHAM, VOL. III. THE
VICTORIA HISTORY OF THE COUNTIES OF ENGLAND.
London, St. Catherine Press.

The publication of this volume has long been expected by northern historians and antiquaries for it is some twenty-two years since volume II appeared. The reason for this delay is explained in the editorial note: "the work was almost finished and partly in type when the war and post-war conditions required it to be put aside." Though its contents bear the marks of this long interval yet the delay has not been entirely wasted time because by it the editor has been able to utilize the results of recent research, notably for the account of Finchale priory.

The volume begins with an historical description of the city of Durham by our vice-president, the dean of Gloucester (the very rev. Henry Gee, D.D.), followed by a clear account of its various and complicated jurisdictions by the learned clerk to the dean and chapter, Mr. K. C. Bayley, F.S.A.

The lack of an adequate historical account of the castle has long been a standing reproach to our northern historians: this reproach has now been in great part removed by the clear, concise account here written by the architect to the university, Mr. W. T. Jones, M.A. The description is illustrated by plans and by old and modern views of the most interesting parts of the castle. It is greatly to be hoped that this account will be widely read and lead to an increased understanding of the noble and complex group of buildings which contain so much of the history of the bishopric, and of its lords palatine, from the eleventh century with its little Norman chapel to the nineteenth century with its University college. It is not to be thought of that the threatened imminent collapse of this great historical monument should be allowed for want of a generous response to the urgent appeal for funds for its preservation now being made.

The history of the cathedral priory church (known affectionately in more homely phrase as "Abbey" by generations of Durham School boys) is given shortly by the president of the Society of Antiquaries of London (Mr. C. R. Peers, F.B.A.).

This is followed by a detailed architectural account chiefly by the late John Quekett, F.S.A., revised and completed by Mr. F. H. Cheetham, F.S.A., illustrated by numerous half-tone blocks and sketches in the text as well as by a large folding plan showing clearly by different colours the dates of the various parts of the church and of the monastery, from the eleventh to the nineteenth centuries.

Architectural descriptions of the churches of St. Nicholas, St. Mary the Less and St. Mary le Bow are followed by detailed accounts of the outlying parishes of St. Oswald and St. Giles, with views and plans of these churches and of the chapel of St. Margaret. Short histories follow of their different manors and chief families. Finchale priory, lying within the ancient parish of St. Oswald, is fully described, with a large plan and illustrations; the important results of the recent excavations by the Board of Works being detailed by the board's chief inspector, Mr. C. R. Peers.

The latter half of the volume contains an account of the twenty-two parishes and of the two townships of Coatham Mundeville and Sadberge comprised within the Stockton ward of the county. The history of the church, advowson, charities and manors of each parish is accompanied by plans, half-tone blocks and sketches of the churches and other principal buildings. Short accounts, without pedigrees, are given of the chief families, though the county as a whole is lacking in families of the smaller gentry, probably because either the bishop or the prior owned so many of the manors.

Shields of arms, drawn by the skilled pen of the rev. E. E. Dorling, F.S.A., adorn these accounts, the blazon beneath each shield being by the same learned herald.

One may perhaps be forgiven for pointing out one or two slips—even Homer sometimes nods. The shield given (p. 247) for bishop Robert of Stichill is obviously none of any thirteenth century herald's drawing, but a late ascription; no arms of any English bishop are known of earlier date than those of Anthony Bek (1283-1311). The orle of the great house of Baliol of Barnard Castle borne differenced (*gules crusilly and an orle gold*) by Bertram of Mitford, the first Bertram married Hawise daughter of Guy Baliol, should not masquerade (p. 244) as a blue escutcheon on a golden shield, nor should Bek of Redmarshall (p. 316) bear the ermine cross of Anthony Bek—a great bishop but a younger son. Middleton (p. 346) bears feudally the cross paty or patonce of Vesci in the quarter, while the flaming chalices on the shield of Hebburn (p. 331) scarcely represent adequately the blazing beacon on Ros castle, the hill above Chillingham and behind the tower of Hebburn, whence probably came the charges; also the cross of the priory (p. 196) is borne gold like that of the see, while Chaytor (pp. 162 and 328) suffers from a superfluity of quatrefoils. But these be small matters easily forgiven to one whose "diocese" lies chiefly south of Trent and who by his blazons and drawings has added so greatly to the interest and beauty of the volume. Whilst one is in a critical mood it may once again be said—though it seems almost hopeless to do so—that Pudsey was not the name of the great bishop Hugh de Puiset of whom Stubbs (*Hist. Intro. Chronicle of Roger of Hoveden III*) writes so enthusiastically and whose family and ancestry he has traced. Nor does it consort with historical accuracy to speak of the bishops of Durham as "princes" which they were not, they were lords palatine and appear to have ranked as barons (*Comp. Peer.*, new ed., IV, 558); though in a letter of Edward III the bishop is said to be an earl (*episcopus Dunelmensis comes palatinus existat*), but these are small blemishes and need not be magnified. One ends by thanking the editor, Mr. Wm. Page, F.S.A., for a delight-

ful volume and congratulating him upon the many difficulties he has so successfully overcome, whilst one looks forward with gratitude to the favour of a fourth volume, soon to come, which it is confidently hoped will contain a complete index to the whole work.

C. H. H. B.

