

V.—MITFORD CASTLE.

BY C. H. HUNTER BLAIR, PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY.

[Given at Mitford 12th September 1936.]

I.—HISTORY.

The castle was the head of the barony of Mitford, held in the reign of Henry I by William Bertram, as it had been held earlier by his father, whose name is unknown.¹

The account given by Hodgson,² quoting Wallis, states that William was the son of Richard Bertram, "a son of the lord of Dignam in Normandy," who married "Sigil or Sybil only daughter and heiress of John lord of Mitford in the time of Edward the Confessor." This fantastic statement probably originated in the fertile imagination of a seventeenth century herald whose zeal for "Saxon" origins was greater than his knowledge of Anglian nomenclature or of Norman place-names.

We know nothing of William Bertram's ancestry; his wife was Hawis daughter of Guy of Baliol, a great northern baron lord of Bywell and of Barnard Castle. He founded and endowed the Augustinian priory of Brinkburn on Coquet.³ William was succeeded by his son Roger Bertram I, who in 1166 certified that he held his barony by the service of five knights.⁴ William the Lion of Scotland was at Mitford about the year 1175, when he granted an undated charter from there to the prior and monks of Durham.⁵ In the year 1177 Roger's son, by Ada his wife, William II, whose wife was Alice daughter of Odinel of Umfreville, lord of Prudhoe and Ridsdale, paid the large sum of

¹ See note 4 below.

² *History*, II, ii, p. 39.

³ S.S. Pubs., no. 90, p. 1.

⁴ "... et sciatis domine quod feodum meum non debet vobis servitium nisi tantum de V militibus" (*Red Book of Exchequer*, ed. Hall, p. 437).

⁵ Raine's, *North Durham*, app. 10, no. XLVIII.

£200, *pro fine terris sui*.⁶ William was succeeded by his son Roger II, who also held his barony by the service of five knights.⁷ He was one of the leaders of the northern barons in the year 1215 against king John; for his share in the rebellion his castle and barony were confiscated and given in charge of the sheriff of Northumberland, the unpopular but able and energetic Philip of Ulecotes.⁸ John was himself at Mitford during his fierce campaign against the northern barons in the winter of 1215-16. His mercenary troops, under their leader Fulke de Breauté, laid waste the whole of the north, destroyed the castles of the rebels, "burning without mercy all their towns and oppressing the inhabitants with tortures to extort money." It seems, however, from architectural evidence and from its immediate subsequent history, that Mitford castle was spared and not destroyed in this savage campaign. The castle was still in charge of Philip of Ulecotes, with whom was Hugh of Baliol, when in May 1217 it was besieged by Alexander II of Scotland, who after beleaguering it for a week with his whole army failed to capture it,⁹ and so disappointed returned to his own country, but Philip and Hugh threatened "that they would be revenged upon the king of Scots by ravaging his land." Later in this year Roger Bertram made his peace with the young king (Henry III), and after payment of a fine of £100 and some months of litigation had restitution of all his lands.¹⁰ He was a justice itinerant for Northumberland, Cumberland and Lancashire in the years 1225-37.¹¹ In the early spring of 1242 he paid a fine to be excused from the expedition to Gascony of that year, and died shortly thereafter; on 24 May 1242 his lands were delivered to the king's

⁶ *Family Origins* by J. H. Round, p. 232, quoting *Pipe Roll*, Henry III.

⁷ "Rogerus Bertram tenet in capite de domino rege baronium de Midford per servitium V militum" (*Book of Fees*, p. 201).

⁸ *Cal. Pat. Rolls* 1216-25, p. 122.

⁹ *Chronicle of Melrose*, ed. Stevenson, p. 167.

¹⁰ *History of Northumberland* by J. Hodgson, II, ii, 40.

¹¹ *Dict. Nat. Biog.* IV, 413.

escheator.¹² His wife Agnes, whose surname is unknown, survived him and was still living in 1253.¹³ His son Roger Bertram III was born 5 December 1224 and proved his age as twenty-one on the Eve of St. Nicholas, and had livery of his inheritance on 28 June 1246.¹⁴ He had married before May 1252 one Ida of whose parentage nothing is known.¹⁵ On 13th September 1256 he had a grant of free warren in his demesne lands of Mitford and Felton, but in the following November for some unknown reason the escheator was ordered to take his lands into the king's hand.¹⁶ He was summoned *cum equis et armis* from January 1257/58 to March 1263/64 by writs directed *Rogero Bertram de Mitford*.¹⁷ He took part with the barons against Henry III and was taken prisoner at Northampton, but must have been released at once as he fought against the king at the battle of Lewes on 8th May 1264.¹⁸ His lands had been confiscated shortly before this and given in charge to Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke. He was summoned to Simon de Montfort's parliament of 14 December 1264, "which writ, however, having issued in rebellion did not create a peerage dignity."¹⁹ He had before this time made large grants or sales of lands to the monasteries of Newminster, Brinkburn and Tynemouth²⁰ and was greatly in debt to the Jews, and had also alienated the five knights' fees by which he held his barony; his poverty was so great that he was unable even to repair the decayed fences of his park at Whitley.²¹ He died, aged about forty-eight, leaving a daughter and heiress Agnes but without legitimate male issue, before 14 April 1273, when his widow Ida was the second wife of Sir Robert

¹² *Fine Roll* 26 Henry III.

¹³ *Pat. Rolls* 33 and 37 Henry III.

¹⁴ *Comp. Peer.*, new ed., II, 160, and references there given.

¹⁵ *Charter Roll* 36 Henry III, 389.

¹⁶ *Comp. Peer.*, *loc. cit.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ S.S. Publs., no. 32, p. xiv.

¹⁹ *Comp. Peer.*, *loc. cit.*

²⁰ *Close Roll* 3 Edward I, p. 151.

²¹ *Comp. Peer.*, *loc. cit.*, note k.

Neville of Raby.²² The pedigree in *Hodgson*²³ gives Roger Bertram III a son and heir Roger IV, who is there made the father of Agnes, and Roger III's four sisters are there made his daughters.

This Roger IV is an invention of Dugdale or of one of his predecessors, as it is certain that Roger III left an only daughter Agnes, who was his heiress;²⁴ though he had an illegitimate son Thomas who held the manor of Throphill.²⁵ This Agnes, who had married before 1253 one of the sons of Piers de Montfort,²⁶ died before January 1310/11, when the descendants of her father's four sisters were found to be his heirs. Agnes had given the town and castle of Mitford and the manors of Molesden and Felton, of which she was seized, to Alianore of Provence,²⁷ widow of Henry III, before 26 May 1275, on which day the queen mother gave them—"which she had of the inheritance of Sir Roger Bertram"—to Alexander of Baliol in free marriage with Alianore de Genovre and to the heirs of Alianore by any husband begotten.²⁸ Alexander was the second son of John Baliol of Bywell and Barnard Castle; he succeeded his brother Hugh there before 1271 and died without issue in 1278.²⁹ His widow married Robert d'Estouteville, who died at Mitford castle on the Eve of Whitsunday 1306.³⁰ John d'Estouteville, his son and heir by Alianore de Genovre, sold Mitford, Molesden and Felton in February 1314/15 to Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke, who shortly thereafter appointed Sir John Evers to be guardian of Mitford castle.³¹

The earl died in 1324 possessed of the manor and castle

²² *Close Roll* I Edward I, p. 44.

²³ *History*, II, ii, p. 41.

²⁴ *Comp. Peer.* II, 161, note g and references there given.

²⁵ S.S. Pubs. 66, p. 242.

²⁶ *Cal. Pat.* 37 Henry III, p. 203.

²⁷ *Comp. Peer.* II, 161, quoting *Placita de quo warranto*, 587.

²⁸ *Ancient Deeds*, A, no. 11535.

²⁹ *N.C.H.* VI, 73.

³⁰ *Hodgson, History*, II, ii, 42.

³¹ *Feudal and Military Antiquities of Northumberland*, II, cxxxix.

of Mitford held in chief of the king by the service of a barony and rendering 31s. 4d. for cornage to the castle of Newcastle upon Tyne.³² His widow, Marie de St. Paul, held the castle and town of Mitford, with the manor of Felton in dower.³³ It was whilst Mitford belonged to Aymer de Valence that, in the year 1317, Sir Gilbert Middleton, probably with the consent of Sir John Evers, its guardian for the earl, who appears to have been leagued with Sir Gilbert,³⁴ made the castle his headquarters, from which he and his band of rebels ravaged and pillaged the whole of the north country, filling the dungeons of the castle with prisoners whom they held to ransom.³⁵

The most dramatic deed of these marauders was the ambush laid by a band led by Sir Gilbert Middleton, with whom were Sir John Evers and Sir Walter Selby, at Rushyford, a few miles south of Durham, on 1st September 1317. They captured there Lewis Beaumont, bishop-elect of Durham, and his brother Sir Henry Beaumont, together with two Roman cardinals, Gaucelin d'Eauze cardinal-priest of SS. Marcellinus and Peter, and Luca Fieschi cardinal-deacon of Santa Maria in Via Lata,³⁶ who were on their way to Scotland to negotiate a peace between Edward II and Robert Bruce. They were travelling in the same company as the bishop-elect and his brother because Lewis desired to be consecrated and enthroned in the cathedral priory church of Durham in their presence—*ad magnificentiam nominis sui*. Sir Gilbert and his band seized all the goods and treasure, kept the Beaumonts captive, but allowed the two cardinals to go to Durham, giving them a horse each for the journey. They arrived there in evil plight but in a great rage, as they, probably not without cause, blamed the prior and monks for what had befallen them—*tu Cuthberte respondebis nobis de*

³² I.P.M. taken 14 September 1324; *Hodgson*, III, i, pp. 64 and 69.

³³ *N.C.H.* VII, 242.

³⁴ *Cal. Pat.* 1317-21, p. 88.

³⁵ *N.C.H.* IX, pp. 110 ff.

³⁶ *Arch. Ael.*³ XVI, p. 189, nos. 3698/99.

omnibus oblatis.³⁷ Lewis and Henry Beaumont were kept prisoners, the one in Mitford castle, the other in that of Morpeth, whence they were ransomed at a high price.³⁸ This outrage against the church forced the government to greater energy, and in December 1317 a band under the command of Sir William Felton, a knight of the king's household, and Sir Thomas Heton took Mitford castle by a ruse. Sir Gilbert and his brother John Middleton were captured, sent to London, and after trial were hung, drawn and quartered on 26 January 1318.³⁹

Sir John Evers received pardon for his share in the attack on 12th November 1318, probably through the influence of the earls of Lancaster and Pembroke.

Sir Walter Selby fled to Horton castle near Blyth, which he had seized from Sir Bertram Monboucher, where he was besieged for some weeks by a royal force commanded by Richard of Emeldon, surrendering upon promise of pardon by April 1318.⁴⁰ Sir Walter Selby, however, made his escape, and in May 1318 had taken possession of Mitford castle, probably in alliance with the Scots, whom the chronicler of Lanercost tells us had "taken Mitford castle by guile"⁴¹ in the Lent season of that year. He held the castle for some time, probably until 1321, when he surrendered to the king's commissioners upon promise of pardon.⁴² On 22nd November 1321 John of Fenwick, then sheriff of the county, was ordered to restore to the earl of Pembroke his castle of Mitford lately captured from him by Walter of Selby.⁴³ The fabric of the castle must have suffered severely at this time; it seems very probable that it was then entirely dismantled and never

³⁷ S.S. Publs. no. 69, p. 100.

³⁸ See *Arch. Ael.*³ *Durham Seals*, vol. IX, p. 307, nos. 1782 and 1783, receipts by Sir Gilbert Middleton; also *N.C.H.* IX, 109.

³⁹ For detailed account of the life of Sir Gilbert Middleton see *Sir Gilbert Middleton* by Sir A. E. Middleton, Newcastle, 1918.

⁴⁰ *Cal. Pat.* 1317-21, p. 71; also *N.C.H.* IX, pp. 58/59.

⁴¹ Ed. Maxwell, p. 220.

⁴² *Cal. Pat.* 1321-24, p. 37.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

restored.⁴⁴ After the death of earl Aymer in 1324 the castle, barony and manor of Mitford passed, by Joan sister and coheir of John Comyn of Badenoch and niece and coheir of earl Aymer of Pembroke, to her husband David of Strathbogie eleventh earl of Atholl, who died 28 December 1326. His I.P.M. was taken at Newcastle on the Tuesday after Palm Sunday 1327, when he was found to have died possessed of the manor of Mitford, including "*the site of a castle wholly burned,*" held, for his life by the courtesy of England of the inheritance of his wife Joan, in chief by the service of a baron and 3s. 4d. cornage to the king's castle of Newcastle upon Tyne.⁴⁵ The castle had therefore by now ceased to be habitable and was useless for defence, but its site and royalties remained, and of these David twelfth earl of Atholl, who was born at Newcastle 1 February 1308/09 and baptized in the church of St. Nicholas there, had livery on 6th May 1330.⁴⁶ He was killed in a skirmish at Killblane 30 November 1335. His wife Catherine daughter of Henry Beaumont, earl of Buchan, had the castle and manor of Mitford assigned to her as dower 28 March 1337. David the thirteenth earl of Atholl was only three years of age at his father's death; he had livery of his possessions on 8 May 1355 and died 10 October 1369, leaving his two daughters, Elizabeth and Philippe, his coheirs.⁴⁷ The former married, in 1376 or 1377, Sir Thomas Percy, second son of Henry first earl of Northumberland, who died in Spain in 1388, leaving a son and heir by Elizabeth Strathbogie, Sir Henry Percy, called of Atholl, who died 25 October 1432, possessed of the castle and manor. By his wife Elizabeth Bruce he left two daughters his coheirs. The eldest, Elizabeth, married firstly Sir Thomas Burgh, and their son Thomas, lord Burgh, K.G., succeeded to Mitford upon her death in the autumn of 1455. Nearly one hundred years later, namely

⁴⁴ See below, p. 89.

⁴⁵ *Cal. of Inq.* Edward II, 323.

⁴⁶ *Comp. Peer.* I, 307.

⁴⁷ *Comp. Peer.* I, 308, note *e.*

in 1556, his descendant William lord Burgh sold his (William's) lands in Mitford to Cuthbert Mitford, but reserved to himself the castle and its royalties.⁴⁸ Robert Mitford, son of the above Cuthbert, held his lands in Mitford as of the manor and by military service, and about the year 1666 he had a grant of the castle and its royalties from Charles II; since when this ancient barony, castle and manor have remained a possession of that distinguished family.

It was the above named Robert Mitford who "certified" his pedigree, on 24th August 1666, at Newcastle upon Tyne before the visiting herald William Dugdale, Norroy King of Arms.⁴⁹ The claim therein made to descent from Matthew, brother of "Sir John Mitford of Mitford castle, temp. W. Conq.," whose daughter "Sibill" married "Richard Bartram who came in with ye Conqueror," cannot be taken seriously.⁵⁰ "Saxon" men were not called either "John" or "Matthew" nor were their daughters called "Sibill," nor was there a castle at Mitford in 1066. The generations in this pedigree before Gilbert are unreliable and unsupported by any evidence. Gilbert of Mitford, who was controller of customs in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1351, died before 1357,⁵¹ owning lands in Newcastle and Mitford. His widow Isabel, who married as her second husband one John of Hoveden, had assignment of dower of lands in Mitford and Newcastle 8th February 1357.⁵² This Gilbert was in all probability the father of Sir John Mitford, a man of importance and much employed by the king on public affairs. He purchased the manor of Molesden and certain lands in Mitford, in the year 1369, from David of Strathbogie earl of Atholl. He died 16 July 1409 seised of the manor of Molesden and of a principal messuage in Mit-

⁴⁸ *H.N.* II, ii, 38.

⁴⁹ *Northumberland Visitation Pedigrees*, ed. Foster, p. 86.

⁵⁰ See *Peerage and Pedigree* by T. H. Round, vol. II, p. 42; also *The Traditional Pedigree*, being chap. II in *The Hero* by lord Raglan.

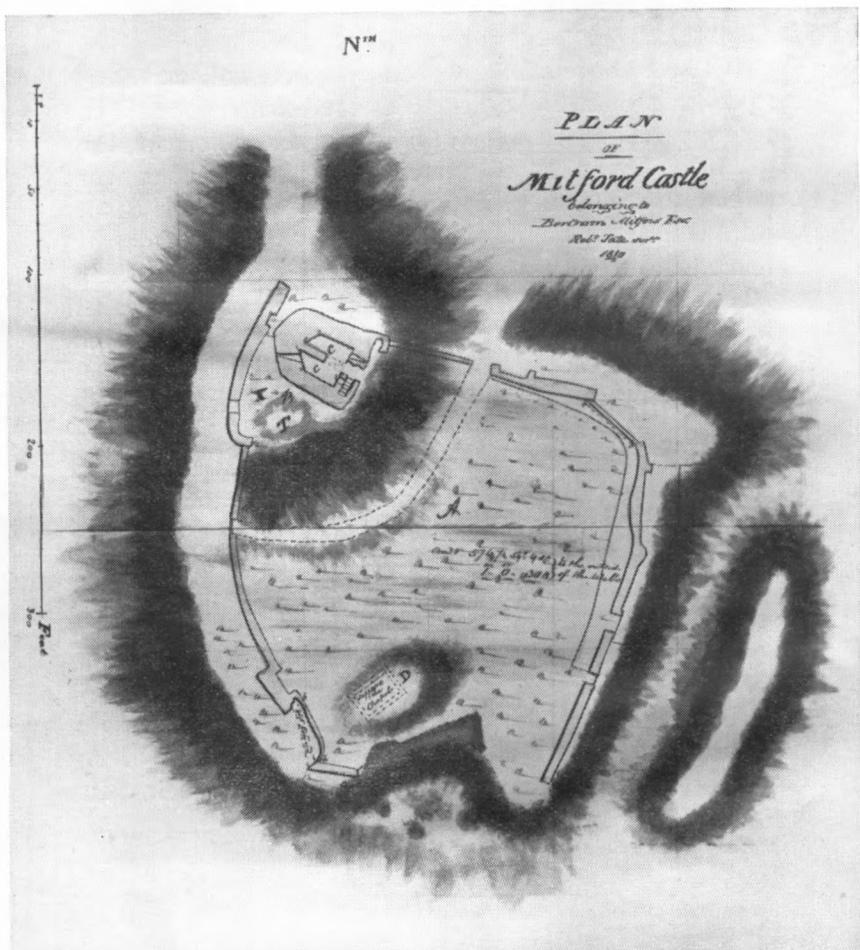
⁵¹ *Arch. Ael.*⁴ XI, p. 55, and authorities there given.

⁵² *Cal. Close Rolls* 1337-39, p. 27.

ford.⁵³ He was succeeded by his son William, the details of whose life and those of his descendants are fully given in the pedigree of Mitford in Hodgson's *History*,⁵⁴ and therefore need not be repeated here.

⁵³ For more details of his life see *Arch. Ael.*⁴ xi, p. 55.

⁵⁴ Part II, ii, pp. 45 ff.



II.—DESCRIPTION.¹

The castle stands on the right bank of Wansbeck, a short distance south of the ruins of the Jacobean hall of the Mitfords and of the restored Norman church. Its site is a natural hill of sandstone rising to some height above the level of the beautifully wooded valley of the river which here flows southwards before curving again north and east to where it receives the waters of Font.

The castle is one of many in Northumberland which guard the line of rivers; like Norham and Wark on Tweed, Etal and Ford on Till, Alnwick on Aln, Harbottle and Warkworth on Coquet, Bothal lower down on Wansbeck, and Prudhoe and Newcastle on Tyne, though the last named, like Berwick upon Tweed, guards, as a bridgehead, the north bank of the river; the others are all situated upon the south bank, the rivers forming a first defence on the north. The natural mound upon which Mitford castle stands has been scarped and heightened by material taken from the surrounding ditches; its bailey or outer ward slopes gently south-eastwards from the keep and inner ward, whilst its whole area was surrounded on south and west by the Park burn, which separates it from the higher ground of Mitford Park to the south, and formed an outer defence beyond the deep ditches on both south and west.

There was a stronghold here before 1138, as in that, the year of his defeat on August 22nd at the battle of the Standard, David I of Scotland laid waste the country and entirely destroyed the crops around the *oppidum* of William Bertram.²

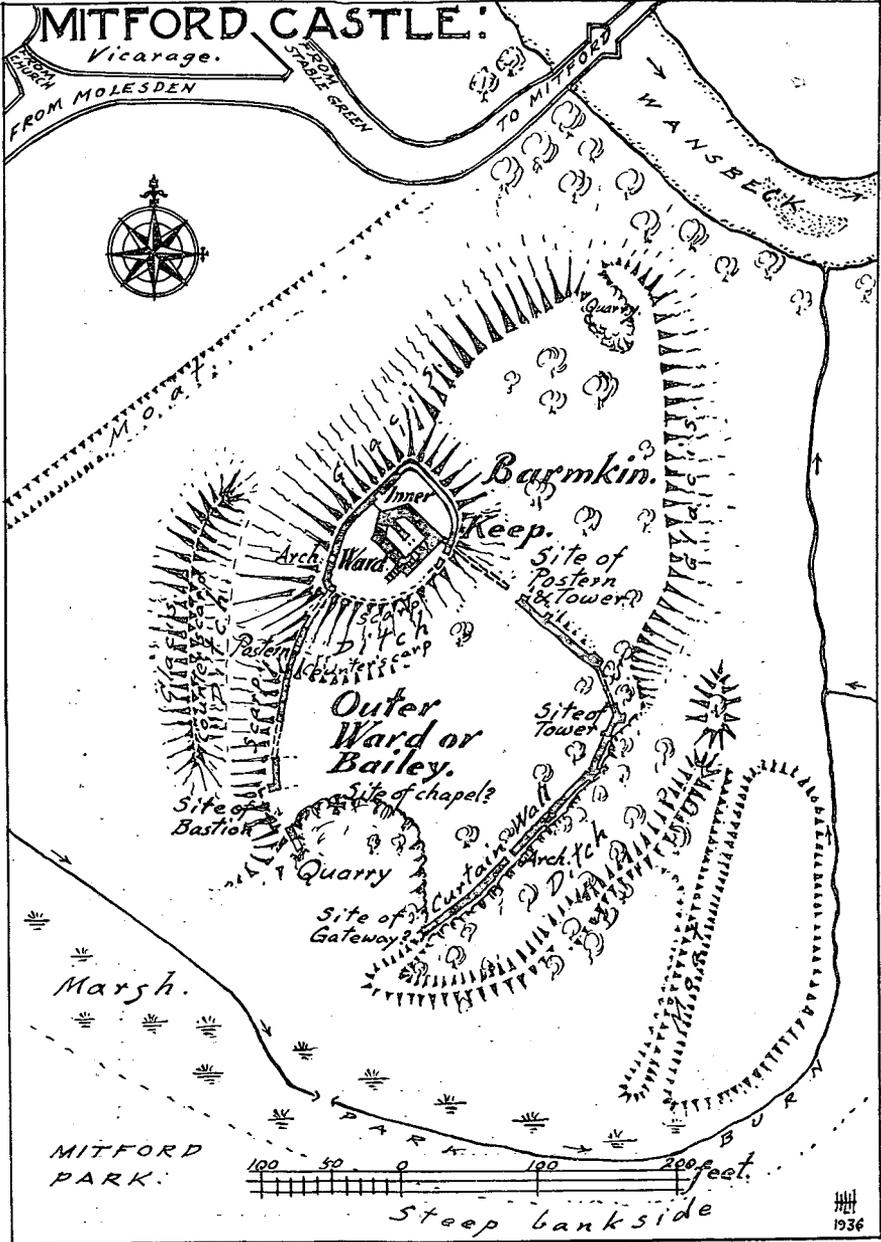
There are now no traces remaining of an earlier fortification, no early ramparts of earth such as are yet visible at

¹ The architectural description of the castle has been written in collaboration with Mr. H. L. Honeyman, who has also drawn the plan on p. 85.

² S.S., no. 44, p. 85.

Norham and Hārbottle; nevertheless the plan of the present castle with its artificially scarped mound makes it probable that at the beginning of the twelfth century, in the time of William Bertram's father, there was an early castle here of the type known as a *motte-castle*—one not built of stone but whose defences were wholly of earth and wood. The mound or *motte* crowned by a wooden tower, isolated from the attached bailey by a stockaded ditch crossed only by a steep wooden ladder; the bailey also defended by a ditch with a wooden paling (*palitium*) on its inner lip or scarp and having its outer edge or counter-scarp planted with something of a bristling nature (*hericio*), possibly an actual hedge of thorns or of stakes interlaced with thorns—a forerunner of the barbed-wire defences of modern times. However this may be, before the year 1138 a thick and lofty stone wall of rude masonry, founded upon a massive stone plinth of about nine inches projection, had been built around the top of the *motte* enclosing and defending the buildings within it (plate VI). It formed in fact a shell-keep of an irregular quadrant shape, curved on the south and having three almost straight sides on east, west and north with circular corners without quoins (plan, p. 85). The plan of 1810 (page 82) shows only the west side and the circular south-west corner to have been then visible; the foundations of the straight north side have since been traced (plan, p. 85); the south side has been completely destroyed by quarrying. The east side has also disappeared, except for a short length in which is a semi-circular doorway giving access to the inner ward (plan, p. 85), the upper part of which and its south jamb are modern reconstructions.

The marks of the roofs and floors of the buildings formerly inside this wall are still to be seen on its inner side as well as the spouts of two drains which project from its north face, probably from the early kitchen. At the places marked X and T on the plan of 1810 (page 82), the surveyor notes, were the tops of vaults "which



SKETCH PLAN OF MITFORD CASTLE ADAPTED FROM O.S. NORTHUMBERLAND SHEET N.LXIX.5 AND OTHER SOURCES.

have not been opened in the memory of man"; these are not now visible and excavation would be needed to confirm the statement. On the west front of this early wall there is an arched opening of early Norman type (plate VIII, fig. 1) which does not seem to have been either a door or a window; it may possibly have been made to give access to an outer balcony of the *camera* similar to that on the west side of the chamber at Warkworth. A stone keep replaced, about the beginning of the thirteenth century, whatever buildings had formerly been upon the top of the mound (plans, pp. 82 and 85). It was of small size, but, even so, it almost filled the inner ward, its north-east corner nearly touching the curtain wall just north-west of the gateway mentioned above (plan, p. 85). The north wall of this keep was built with "an obtuse salient angle, so that the keep forms an irregular pentagon."³ It is the only example of a five-sided keep in England.⁴ The entrance to it was probably by an outside stone stair on its south side leading to an entrance on the first floor, but all has been destroyed except part of the half-sunk basement lighted by small windows set high so as to open above the outside ground level. Access to this semi-basement was by a narrow mural stair in the south wall of the keep, lighted by a window on its east side (plate VIII, fig. 2).

A segmental-headed doorway, with a large heavy sill set well above the ground level of the chamber it gives access to, opens off this into the southern vault (plan, p. 82, marked with a small letter s). The door opened outwards towards the stair and has been very strongly closed by many bolts and bars. This basement consists of two barrel-vaulted chambers (marked *c c* on plan, p. 82) separated by a cross wall running east and west on the centre line of the keep. Both these chambers are lined and vaulted with

³ *Military Architecture in England*, by A. Hamilton Thompson, pp. 166/167.

⁴ *Early Norman Castles*, by Ella S. Armitage, p. 373.

hewn ashlar, they have chamfered plinths and their vaults spring from chamfered imposts.

The north vault is entered by a doorway in the central dividing wall and has a small window at its east end; a like window is in the west wall of the south vault. There is a stone spout in each vault, one in the west wall of the north vault, the other in the south-east corner of the south vault; these extend horizontally at least four feet into the masonry, but their use or purpose is not at all clear. The plan of 1810 (page 82) shows four of these channels marked o o o o on the west side of the vaults, but only one is now to be seen there; the then surveyor remarks that they "appear to have been for the purpose of admitting water." The vaults must surely have been used as prisons where, as well as in the vaults outside the keep seen in 1810, the unfortunate captives of John's unpopular sheriff Philip of Ulecotes and afterwards those of Sir Gilbert Middleton and his band of freebooters were imprisoned until ransomed. The curtain wall of the outer ward was probably built a little earlier than the keep. It began at the north-east corner of the wall of the inner ward and ran down to the east end of the inner ward ditch, where there was a postern gate and tower (plan, p. 82) flanked and protected by the keep and by the wall of the inner bailey. This part of the curtain has now gone, and the present ruined wall begins at the south lip of the inner ditch; from the plan on page 82 it was a broad strong wall, but it has almost entirely disappeared except for some ragged remnants at the north-east corner, where there seems to have been a tower. Just before this corner the plan of 1810 shows that the wall had been destroyed and a narrow wall built in the breach; this is marked *a a* on the plan. This plan shows a wide strong wall on the east side where it is built on the edge of a deep rock-hewn ditch; the north end of this wall is now very ruinous, but the remains of what were probably mural chambers and garde-robes can still be traced (plate VIII, figs. 3 and 4). Towards its south end

the east curtain becomes more complete; it here stands to-day to a considerable height, faced with characteristic Norman ashlar. It is pierced by a large semi-circular headed, through-arched opening whose purpose is not clear (plate VII, fig. 2). It is not a window nor can it be a doorway, as it opens upon the brink of a precipitous rock-cut ditch which may have served as a quarry whence the stones for the castle buildings were hewn. The whole of the southern defences, including the gate-house, which would almost certainly be situated here, were destroyed by a quarry worked there unfortunately before the plan of 1810 was made. It was opened to provide stone to build the early nineteenth century Mitford Hall.⁵ A small part of the west end of the south curtain wall was left in 1810 and is still there (plan, p. 82), and adjoining it on the west a stretch of narrow wall marked *b b* on the plan was built behind the foundations of an earlier and wider wall; these are now destroyed. This west curtain wall now begins with a re-entrant angle of a now vanished bastion as shown on plan of 1810. The curtain here has had a building set against it, called a chapel on the ordnance map, apparently without any authority. The lower part here is of thirteenth century ashlar, but it has been afterwards heightened by large square blocks of early fourteenth century masonry. North from here the wall is now destroyed, to its foundations, for some little distance, after which there is a stretch of thirteenth century walling. Adjacent to which, on the north, the wall has been breached and rebuilt with large square stones of early fourteenth century type, though the two lowest courses are of an earlier style (plate VII, fig. 1). Northwards from this patch the early thirteenth century masonry continues across the end of the inner ditch to the wall of the inner ward. At the bottom of this ditch the curtain wall is pierced by a passage covered by flat stone slabs resting on two courses of plain square corbelling. Its outer face has projecting chamfered jambs for a door, and

⁵ Hodgson's *History*, II, ii, 54.



MITFORD CASTLE FROM NORTH WEST.



SHELL KEEP OF MITFORD CASTLE FROM NORTH WEST.



Fig. 2. SOUTH-EAST CURTAIN WALL, MITFORD CASTLE.



Fig. 1. WEST CURTAIN WALL AND POSTERN, MITFORD CASTLE.



Fig. 3. SOUTH-EAST CURTAIN WALL, MITFORD CASTLE.



Fig. 4. EAST CORNER OF CURTAIN, MITFORD CASTLE.



Fig. 1. OPENING, WEST WALL OF SHELL KEEP,
MITFORD CASTLE.



Fig. 2. ENTRANCE TO BASEMENT OF KEEP,
MITFORD CASTLE.

its head is lowered so that there is only one corbel on each side (plan, p. 85). Above this passage is a pointed relieving arch on both the inner and outer face of the curtain wall (plate VII, fig. i). There was probably an outer yard or barmkin on the lower ground to the north-east of the mound, but if so, none of its defences now remain. There are indications of buildings in the outer ward, where the usual domestic offices of a mediaeval castle were generally situated; possibly, considering the small size of the keep, the hall and chapel were also in this ward.

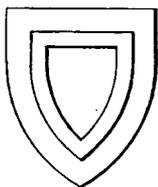
On the plan of 1810 (page 82) the foundations of a square building marked D are shown and "supposed the chapel." Extensive excavations would be needed to determine the sites and use of the various buildings.

There is now no masonry to be seen at Mitford castle, excluding some few modern repairs, later in date than the early fourteenth century. This agrees with its history as written above. The last of its owners known to have dwelt within it was Robert d'Estouteville, who died there at Whitsuntide 1306.⁶ It was besieged once and again between the years 1318-1321, and must have been completely dismantled shortly after the latter year, as by the year 1327 there was no castle but only the site of one "wholly burned."⁷ It was never rebuilt nor restored. The antiquary John Leland saw it about the year 1538; he describes it as "the ruines of a castle longinge to the lord Borow at Mydforde on the southe side of Wansbeke." In later times both the ruins and the site must have been used, as said above, for quarries, whence stone was procured for the Jacobean mansion house of Robert Mitford, whose picturesque ruins still stand near the church, and later to build the stately hall, the early nineteenth century home of the Mitfords.

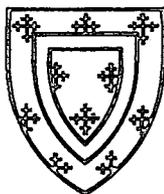
⁶ See above, p. 77.

⁷ See above, p. 80.

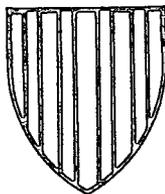
III.—ARMS OF THE LORDS AND CAPTAINS OF MITFORD.



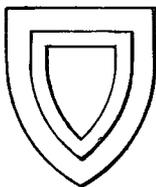
BERTRAM—The earliest known shield of arms of this family is on a seal used in 1262 by Roger Bertram III. The blazon is probably *gules an orle gold* (seal plate IX, no. 1).



BERTRAM—*gules crusilly and an orle gold* (seal plate IX, 2 and 3).



ALIANORE OF PROVENCE, queen of Henry III—*gold four pales gules*.



SIR ALEXANDER BALIOL—*gules an orle silver*.



SIR ROBERT and SIR JOHN D'ESTOUTEVILLE—*barry silver and gules over all a lion rampant sable* (seal plate IX, 10).



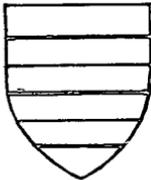
SIR AYMER DE VALENCE, earl of Pembroke—*barry silver and azure ten martlets in orle gules* (seal plate IX, 4 and 9).



SIR JOHN EVERS—*quarterly gold and gules on a bend sable three escallops silver.*



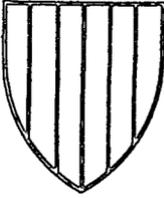
SIR GILBERT MIDDLETON—*quarterly gold and gules a stag's head caboshed silver in the first quarter.*



SIR WALTER SELBY—*barry gold and sable.*



JOAN COMYN (of Badenoch)—*gules three sheaves gold.*



STRATHBOGIE, earls of Atholl—*paly gold and sable* (seal plate IX, 6).



SIR HENRY PERCY of Atholl—*gold a lion rampant azure*, with due difference.



SIR THOMAS BURGH and his successors the lords Burgh or Borough of Gainsborough, *quarterly I and IV azure three fleurs de lis ermine—Burgh, II and III grand quarters I and 4 gold a lion rampant azure—Percy, 2 and 3 paly gold and sable—Atholl.*



MITFORD—*silver a fess between three moles sable*. This shield is first blazoned in the roll called the *Elizabethan* (S.S. Publs., no. 41, p. xxxiv). The shield is, however, earlier than this, as these arms are on the armorial seal of William Mitford, son and heir of Sir John Mitford, used by him early in the fifteenth century. They are canting in origin, referring to the manor of *Molesden*, purchased by Sir John Mitford in 1369, and show that armorials were not used by the Mitfords before that date.

IV.—KEY TO SEALS OF THE LORDS OF MITFORD (plate IX).

1. ROGER BERTRAM,
- an orle*
- , shield shaped.

*SIGILL'·ROGERI·BERTRA'

P.R.O. Anc. Deeds, A4769, A.D. 1262.

This seal is used by Roger III but is probably that of Roger II.

2. ROGER BERTRAM III,
- crusilly, an orle*
- .

*S'·ROGERI·BERTRAM.

Durham Treas. Misc. Charts. 5227. N.D.

3. ROGER BERTRAM III, equestrian, shield and horse trappers blazoned,
- crusilly an orle*
- .

*S'·ROGERI·BERTRAM·DNI·D' MIDFORD.

P.R.O. Anc. Deeds, A4771, N.D.

4. AYMER DE VALENCE, earl of Pembroke,
- barry of fourteen an orle*
- ; the shield hangs from the branches of a tree and upon each side is a bird in tracery.

*SIGILL' : ADEMARI : DE : VALENCE.

B.M. 14,076; A.D. 1301.

5. MARIE DE ST. PAUL, countess of Pembroke, the countess standing facing, on the dexter the shield of Valence, on the sinister that of Chastillon.

*S'·MARIE DE SCO·PAVLO·COMITISSE·PEMBROCH'

DNE·D'WEYS·D'MONTIGNAC'ET·D'BELLAC.

Pembroke Coll. Charts., A.D. 1347.

6. DAVID OF STRATHBOGIE, earl of Atholl,
- paly*
- , above shield is a leopard, on each side a sheave of cummin derived from the shield of Comyn of Badenoch.

*SIGILLUM [DAVID] COMITIS ATTELLIE.

7. PHILIP OF ULECOTES, *paly of thirteen, a border charged with roundels.*

*SIGILLVM·PHILIP·DE·VLECOTES.

Durham Treas. 2-6 Spec., no. 19.

8. JOHN COMYN, of Badenoch, *three sheaves of cummin.*

S'·DOMINI·IO[HAN]IS·CUMIN.

Durham Treas. 4-1 Sacr., no. 15.

To represent his daughter Joan Comyn. -

9. AYMER DE VALENCE, earl of Pembroke, *barry of fourteen an orle of martlets.*

ADOMARVS·DE·VALENCIA·COMES·PEMBROCHIE·DN'S·

WEYS'ET·DE·MONTINIACO.

Counter seal, P.R.O., B.S. 87, N.D.

10. JOHN D'ESTOUTEVILLE, *barry of fifteen a lion rampant.*

S' IEHAN·DE·STOUTEVILE.

Durham Treas. Misc. Charts. 254, A.D. 1318.



MEDIAEVAL SEALS—MITFORD CASTLE.

