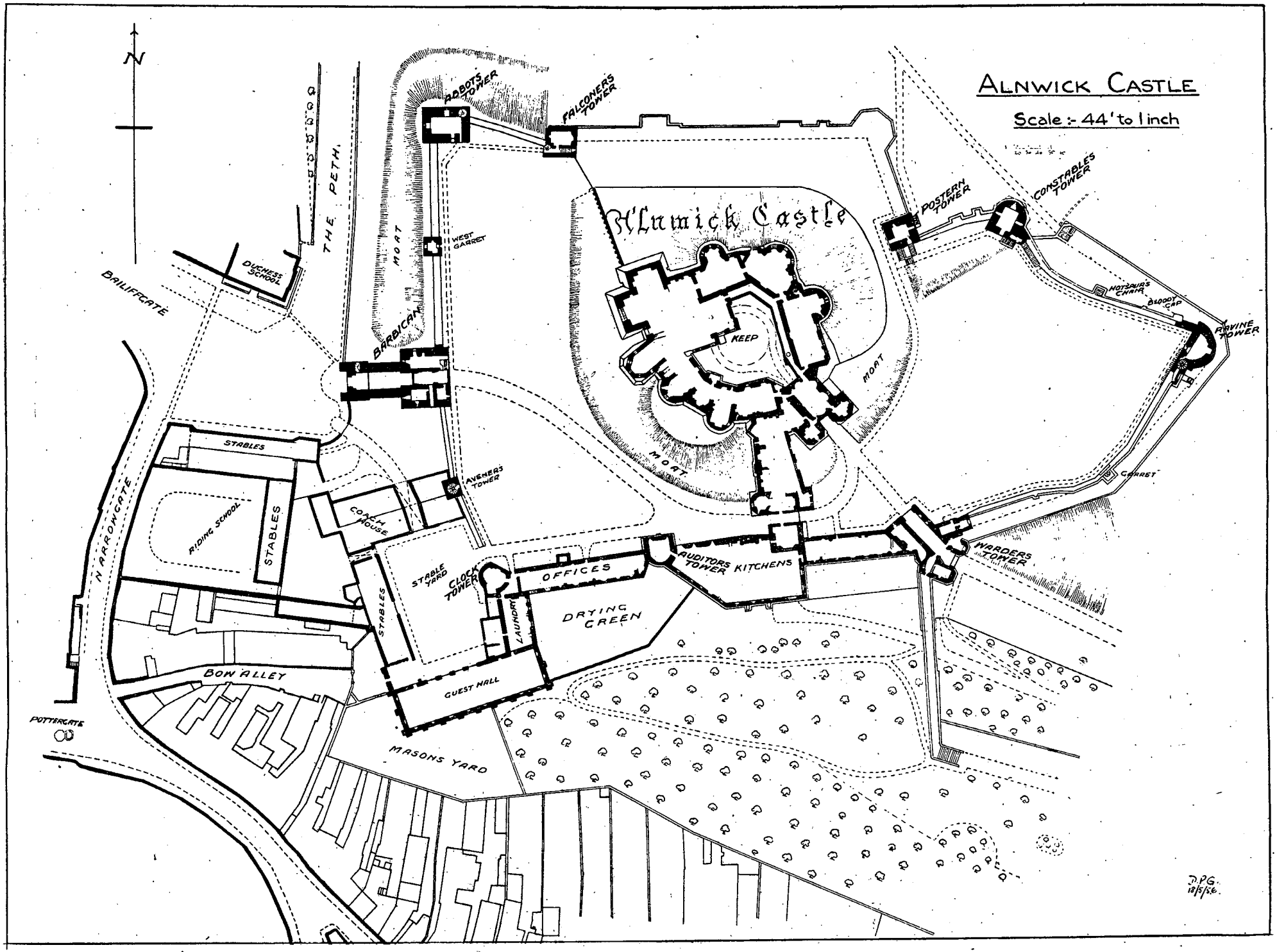

A SURVEY OF ALNWICK CASTLE, 1956.

IX.—THE STATE OF ALNWICK CASTLE, 1557-1632.

By G. R. Batho.

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I am indebted to His Grace the Duke of Northumberland for allowing me the freest access to his archives and to his library and to Mr. D. P. Graham of the Estates Office, Alnwick, for adding to many other kindnesses by preparing me a plan of the Castle as it is to-day (reproduced facing p. 129). I am also indebted to the University of Sheffield Research Grant Committee for financial aid.

Alnwick Castle stands on the main road to Berwick on the south side of the river Aln, looming large over the county town to its south and east as its masters have loomed in the history of the area. To-day the seat of the dukes of Northumberland, it has been the object of innumerable restorations over the centuries, until at the present time the interior of its Keep is neither mediæval nor Adam but largely Italian Renaissance work of the mid-nineteenth century and the castle's exterior contrives to combine the general appearance of an Edwardian castle—it has been aptly termed "the Windsor of the North"—and the evidence of the hand of every century from the twelfth to the nineteenth.

The concentric nature of the castle was given it by its first Percy owner, Sir Henry Percy, first Lord Percy of Alnwick (1309-15), who bought it in 1309. There had been a stone castle on the site since the time of Stephen (1135-54) and the masonry of its then lord, Eustace FitzJohn, may still be traced in places, especially along the curtain walls, with its small, squarish stones running parallel to the lie of the land. Eustace probably levelled the *motte* of the Norman timber castle to the height of the present mound on which the Keep stands. Under the first and second Barons Percy in the first half of the fourteenth century the castle was considerably strengthened and it remained a great place of

defence for two centuries until artillery discounted the value of castles for defence and border warfare became a matter of constant guerilla sallies in which numerous pele towers counted for more than a few fortresses. As was commented in 1570, "neither is the Castle itself nor the situation of the place of any great strength, but for the manner of the wars of that country, and otherwise not able to abide the force of any shot or to hold out any time, if it should be assaulted." As an ordinary residence it was little used in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and in the sixteenth not at all; it was always a stronghold from which forays against the Scots could be made. In the words of the historian of Alnwick, "it was only when the baron was of a warlike disposition or compelled by his office as Warden of the Marches between England and Scotland, that he dwelt in the halls of Alnwick Castle amidst his armed Northumbrian vassals."[1]

When at the end of one of the periods during which the family had been under attainder, Thomas Percy became the seventh earl of Northumberland and master of Alnwick in 1557, the castle was suffering from twenty years' neglect and a man had to be hired in 1562 "to root out and destroy grass and underwood growing upon the stone walls and in diverse garrets". So much repair was needed that it was worth the earl's while to enter into an indenture with three masons "that they should, as often as is wont, necessary and becoming, make repairs and exercise their masons' craft about Alnwick Castle" in return for their livery, implements and annual stipends of £7 for two of them and £3 for the third. Nevertheless, in 1567 the castle could be described as "a very ancient, large, beautiful and portly castle". The survival of both documentary and architectural evidence enables us to have a detailed picture of the state of the castle at this time. The layout of the castle in the 1560's is described in two contemporary surveys—that of George Clarkson in 1567 when it was contemplated that the earl might "continually lie" at Alnwick and that of Edmund Hall and

[1] Humberston, f. 93 *recto*; Tate, i, 253.

William Humberston for the Crown in 1570 after the Rising of the North in 1569 in which the earl had taken a leading part. These accounts can be checked and amplified from the architectural remains of to-day, from the records of what remained in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when the two great modern restorations of Alnwick took place, and from the vellum plans of the castle drawn in 1608 by Ralph Treswell the younger for the ninth earl. Treswell's plans provide good guides for tracing the work done at the castle in the sixty years after the Rising of the North, a period when letters and estate accounts yield numerous references to its condition.[2]

The main entrance to the castle consists of a Barbican and Gatehouse, both dating from at least the time of the second earl of Northumberland (1414-55), the son of Harry Hotspur; it was essentially an Edwardian development to make the barbican an extension of the gatehouse forward into the field so designed that the approach to the main gatehouse was by a narrow passage overlooked from all sides. In 1567, the Barbican cannot have looked very different to what it does to-day. The shield above the doorway bears the Percy lion rampant carved in stone, with their motto "*Esperance ma Comforte*" beneath it. This is a replica of that placed there by the fourth earl (1461-89). The figures of the warriors which decorate the merlons of the Barbican, as they do most of the towers of the castle, are the successors to those which stood there in mediæval times—they were a common ornament in the early fourteenth century and, though most of those now standing date from the first duke's restoration in the middle of the eighteenth century, some incorporate earlier work. What one would have found in 1567 and does not to-day is a pair of wooden gates to the Barbican. Between the Barbican and the Gatehouse in mediæval times there was a moat, drawing its water from the Bow Burn which flowed along the south and east

[2] Clarkson, f. 5 *recto*; James, 47-48. The Treswell plans are reproduced as plates XIII-XVII.

sides of the castle, but already by 1567 this had been filled and paved; this moat was partially excavated in 1903. One can appreciate its original depth by looking through the gratings on either side of the further half of the entrance passage, which is floored with timber. Under the first doorway of the Gatehouse there is a pit 11 feet square and 21 feet deep in which the butt end of the drawbridge fell when it was raised, the fulcrum being a wall rising from the moat slightly in front of the Gatehouse. The Gatehouse was further guarded by a portcullis and the marks for the chains by which the drawbridge was manipulated as well as the groove for the portcullis may still be seen. There is no mention in 1567 of moat, drawbridge or portcullis, but we read of "a fair gatehouse covered with lead with two pairs of wood gates" and of a two-storeyed porter's lodge, "now ruinous and in decay by reason the floors of the upper house is decayed as well in dormants and joists as in boards and very necessary to be repaired".[3]

The north-western part of the Outer Bailey has changed little since mediæval times. The curtain wall running north from the Gatehouse is mainly stonework of the time of the first Lord Percy (1309-15), with occasional traces of twelfth-century masonry and the battlements and upper part of the wall restored by the second earl *circa* 1440. A small watch tower halfway along this wall, known as the West Garret, and the large tower at the north-west corner of the Bailey, the Abbot's Tower, were both built by the first Lord Percy. Of the many explanations which have been offered of the name Abbot's Tower, the least improbable seems to be that it was manned in mediæval times of danger by the tenants of the lands of the nearby Abbey. In 1567, the western half was in use as an armoury and the eastern half is described as lodgings in need of repair. Until the restoration of the fourth duke (1854-65), the curtain wall east of the Abbot's Tower inclined to the south and joined the Keep; along it were the Falconer's and Armourer's Towers. Now the

[3] Alan, 29-30; Clarkson, f. 5 *recto*; Hartshorne, facing p. 172.

curtain wall of old stonework terminates in the Falconer's Tower, built by the fourth duke on the site of the fourteenth-century tower of that name, and a considerable area not within the castle walls in earlier times has been bounded by a wall running east of this tower to north of the Postern Tower in the Middle Bailey. Equally, all of the Keep which can be seen from the Outer Bailey looks very different to what it did in earlier times. The Chapel with its pointed roof and the Prudhoe Tower at the western end are the work of the fourth duke; the remainder of the western half of the Keep was reconstructed by the first Percy duke *circa* 1764, partly with mediæval materials.[4]

South of the Gatehouse, the curtain wall ran in 1567 as it does now to a corner tower, with a single small turret halfway along it, and then turned eastwards to terminate at the Middle Gatehouse, with a very small turret and a large tower, the Auditor's Tower, along it. But there is little more than a general plan in common between this part of the castle as it was in 1567 and as it is to-day. The first small turret has been entirely rebuilt by the first duke as the Avener's Tower; the avener was the chief officer of the stables. To the west and south of the curtain wall there is a body of buildings, mostly stables, first built in the eighteenth century and remodelled in the nineteenth, to which access is gained by an archway in the south-west corner of the Outer Bailey. The corner tower at the side of this archway is to-day known as the Clock Tower; it was built on the site of a fourteenth-century corner tower in the time of the first duke. The Auditor's Tower was originally built in the fourteenth century; in 1567 it was covered with lead and in good repair, with its ground floor used as a stable and its two upper floors described as "fair chambers". The great difference, however, between the scene in the Outer Bailey to-day and that of 1567 is that then there were three outbuildings standing in the Bailey. On the left hand just inside the Bailey from the Gatehouse stood the Exchequer House, a two-storeyed

[4] Hussey, LXVI, 16; C.F., 12.

building of which the ground floor was used as lodgings and the upper as a court house—it was here that the rents were received at Michaelmas, at the time of the annual audit; it was covered with slate and in good repair. The other two outbuildings were stables. One of them ran parallel to the west curtain wall on the south side of the Gatehouse; it was also two-storeyed and the upper floor was, in 1567, being lofted for use as a granary. The other stood parallel to the south curtain wall; it was not specified in 1567 as having two floors, though it was newly covered with slate and in good repair, but by 1608 it appears to have had a similar upper storey to the first and was possibly also in use as a granary. All these buildings were pulled down in 1755.[5]

To-day, the Middle Gatehouse is joined with the Keep by buildings so extensive that they are able to form the principal rooms of a training college for teachers. In 1567, a single curtain wall linked the Keep with the Middle Gatehouse and so it remained until Adam put a chapel and library there in the 1760's. The Middle Gatehouse in the sixteenth century consisted of three and, in places, four storeys. On the ground floor, there was a "strong prison" to the left and a porter's lodge to the right. Above, all the floors were in the occupation of the constable of the castle and included a hall, kitchen, buttery and pantry. The Gatehouse was built by the first Lord Percy (1309-15) and had been restored by the second earl (1414-55); the wall between the Auditor's Tower and the Gatehouse is largely of twelfth-century work.

The south-west corner of the Middle Bailey, which is entered through the Middle Gatehouse, has seen a number of changes in the last four hundred years. Immediately on the right is largely nineteenth-century work—a stretch of curtain wall running eastwards to an archway with two towers at its south end; this is called the Warder's Tower. It is through this archway that access is gained to the private gardens, a little known but delightful part of the castle. In 1567, there stood on the curtain wall a building some 25

[5] Clarkson, f. 5 *verso*; Treswell (plates, XIII, XIV and XVII).

yards long and 25 feet wide; the ground floor comprised two stables, the two upper floors were garners. At its eastern end there was a little stone house covered with slate which had been a horse mill but which was disused; it projected beyond the curtain wall from a square tower called the Garner Tower, with a stable, a garner for hay, and a chamber on its respective floors. Still further east, immediately past this Garner Tower, there was another little house for storing hay, with a small garden enclosed by the curtain wall and another stone wall twelve yards long; one can see this clearly on the 1608 plan (plate XIII).

From this point the curtain wall runs east and north-east to terminate in the Record Tower. This stretch of wall is of mixed dates, though mainly early fourteenth century. The small tower halfway along it, the East Garret, is the survivor of two such garrets, described in 1567 as serving only as buttresses to the wall below and privies above, and covered with stone. The Record Tower at the south-eastern corner of the Middle Bailey was rebuilt by the sixth duke about 1885 but stands on the site of the mediæval tower; it incorporates some fourteenth-century stonework in its lower external walls.[6]

The curtain wall now turns in a north-westerly direction. The two recesses with seats in the thickness of the wall are blocked-up windows; there is no mention of any building here in the 1567 survey and no indication of anything on the 1608 plans, but the windows are shewn on Canaletto's painting of the castle in 1752. It is probable that they belonged to a building placed here by the tenth earl in the 1630's when he is known to have carried out repairs to the castle—it is a point which may one day be elucidated from an analysis of his household accounts which survive for the period. Beyond these recesses is a stretch of eighteenth-century wall which is known as the "Bloody Gap" and

[6] Clarkson, f. 6 *recto* to f. 7 *recto*; C.F., 7, 12. The Record Tower is to-day also known as the Ravine Tower and is so marked on Mr. Graham's survey reproduced as a frontispiece to this paper; it is not to be confused with the mediæval Ravine Tower, mentioned *infra*.

round which legends have grown. A comparison of Clarkson's survey and of a modern survey of the castle shews that this was the site of the Ravine Tower; it is described as fourteen yards west of the corner tower in 1567 and that is exactly the distance from the Record Tower to this point. The Ravine Tower in 1567 was likely to fall, we are told, for it was "rent and decayed" and this despite the fact that it was covered with lead and had its top chamber (it was a three-storeyed building) in good repair. A small turret a few yards further along the wall is known as Hotspur's Seat and is attributed to the early fourteenth century, but it does not appear on the 1608 plans and is not mentioned in the 1567 survey. Some thirty yards further west there stands, at the end of a stretch of twelfth-century stonework, a large tower of great interest because it is virtually untouched since its building in the time of the first Lord Percy (1309-15). Like the other towers on the northern side of the Middle Bailey, it is round on three sides. On its eastern exterior one may see long-bow slits in the masonry converted for the use of the cross-bow. Though larger than the other towers—its circumference is given on the 1567 survey as 36 yards against the 17 yards of the corner tower on the site of the present Record Tower—its ground floor served only as a buttress to the curtain wall, but its two upper floors were lodgings in the sixteenth century. It is known, and was known in the sixteenth century if not earlier, as the Constable's Tower, but there is nothing apart from the name to suggest that the constable lived there—we have seen that he had quarters in the Middle Gatehouse. Twenty-three yards to the south-west of the Constable's Tower along a stretch of fourteenth-century wall is the Postern Tower. The Postern Gate was on its ground floor; apart from the Main Gatehouse, this was the only entrance or exit to the castle in the early centuries of its history. Since, at that time, the Postern Tower was joined to the Keep by a curtain wall and then for a distance of seventy yards the Keep itself formed the outer line of defence, this was a vulnerable point. Its two upper

floors were chambers in 1567 and had been leaded in the seventh earl's time; a garret above the battlement of the north-west corner commanded the postern entrance.

Apart from the removal of the Ravine Tower and the reconstruction of the corner tower, the northern part of the curtain wall of the Middle Bailey remains little different from what it was in 1567. But the general appearance of the Bailey has vastly changed with the passing of the centuries. In times past, Clarkson tells us, there were lodgings built right over from the Garner Tower to the Ravine Tower but nothing of this remained in 1567, for the stones had been taken away and used elsewhere in the castle. Here, he thought, there could be made "a trim garden" and for a small charge a banqueting house could be built with a fair gallery going from it to the Ravine Tower. Immediately to the east of the postern gate one can still see signs of fire on the lower courses of stone. Here there stood in 1567 the bakehouse, 15 yards long and eight wide, with two ovens and a bolting house. At its southern end—it stood south and north—was a two-storeyed building which served as a slaughter house and a storehouse, with a hayhouse and chambers above for the launderers. At one time there had adjoined the bakehouse at the west side what had been called the Chancery House; it had served as cellars and chambers for the prison, but all that was left in 1567 was a wall of 33 yards leading to the keep entrance with a wood garth there and another in front of the Middle Ward, enclosed with a little stone wall 16 yards long. Until 1755 the castle chapel was a separate building which stood by the curtain wall between the Constable's Tower and the Ravine Tower. It is described in 1567 as 19 yards long, 21 feet high and 21 feet wide; it was covered with slate and apart from its roof in good repair, being well glazed. One has a good impression of it from Ralph Treswell's bird's eye view in 1608 (plate XVII), but in 1567 there was also a two-storeyed building adjoining it, over against the curtain wall. The lower part of this building served as a vestry and the upper part was

"a stone chamber with a stone chimney wherein the lord and lady with their children commonly used to hear the service"; its slated roof needed repair. In front of the Chapel door stood the cistern of the conduit (plate XIII) which drew its water from the well in Howling Close just beyond the castle walls; the water of the conduit, Clarkson tells us, ran in leaden pipes to the brewhouse only "and cannot be brought to have course to any other houses of office but such as are built and to be built without the donjon". The brewhouse stood between the Constable's Tower and the Postern Tower; it was a building of some 20 yards' length and nine yards' width and fully equipped to brew 24 bolls of malt. The term 'boll' is a difficult one to define precisely, as so many local measures are, but seems to mean six bushels of malt in this context. The brewhouse was, then, of fair size and in 1562 we know that the seventh earl had spent a little on it, buying among other things a great tun called the "great fatte". In a castle the size of Alnwick, one would have expected the domestic quarters of the family to have spread permanently into the Middle Bailey; the fact that of these outbuildings only the Chapel remained standing in 1608 is eloquent testimony to the disuse of the castle in the latter half of the sixteenth century and early seventeenth century and renders absurd De Fonblanque's widely quoted statement that the ninth earl of Northumberland (1585-1632) made Alnwick his chief residence in the north.[7]

The Keep, in Clarkson's phrase, "is set of a little moat made with men's hands", 225 yards in circumference "measured by the bratticing". In mediæval times the dry moat was lined on its outer edge with pointed stakes and other obstacles. A wooden bridge to-day replaces the drawbridge, which may have disappeared by 1567, for Clarkson does not mention it. The Keep itself at that time consisted of seven towers and four garrets with lodgings between and

[7] Clarkson, ff. 6-8; J. Britten, *Old Country and Farming Words* (English Dialect Society, 1880), 168; E. B. De Fonblanque, *Annals of the House of Percy* (privately printed, 2 vols., 1887), ii, 200.

a gatehouse of two towers. The gatehouse of Eustace Fitzjohn, the builder of the first stone castle at Alnwick, had been flanked with two octagonal towers in the middle of the fourteenth century; immediately beneath their string course is a row of shields shewing the armorial shields of King Edward III, after 1340, and of various families allied by marriage or otherwise connected with the second Lord Percy (1315-52), who built them.[8] The groove in which the mediæval portcullis worked may still be seen; the great wooden doors of the archway to the Keep are ascribed to the seventeenth century and no doubt replaced earlier ones. Beneath the eastern flanking tower there remains a bottle-shaped cell, typical of its kind, nine feet by eight, with smooth, sloping sides; the prisoner entered by a trap-door and would be unable to get out without assistance. There were a porter's lodge, a wine cellar and a scullery here in 1567. The rooms of the lord and lady were on the south side of the Keep. Beyond the restored Norman archway with its original dog-tooth pattern there is on the right hand a recess with a seat in it; this marks the original main doorway of the Keep. On this east side of the keep, there were the Hall, Kitchen and Pantry, with " a marvellous fair vault " beneath, the Buttery, 16 yards by 6, and the Larder next to it. During the restorations of the fourth duke in the middle years of the 1850's, when the work of Robert Adam of nearly one hundred years before was stripped, the mediæval walls of the Hall were exposed. At the south end of the room were found marks of the dais that stretched across it; over the dais was the buffet for the display of silver, with a lion's paw as the termination of the hood-mould. The hooks for hanging tapestry remained set in the walls, but unfortunately expert opinion at the time deemed the walls too unsafe to permit their preservation. What has been preserved is the draw-well, standing a little north of the recess with the seat and dating from the fourteenth century. It still has its original wooden pole and wheels for winding up the buckets,

[8] C.F., 11. See also Arch. Ael., 3 Ser., VI, p. 89 and frontispiece.

and this despite the statement in 1567 that it had for a long time been disused; the statue of a saint above the well is an eighteenth-century addition. Of the remaining parts of the Keep as described in 1567, little remains after two major rebuildings of the State rooms of the castle. Apart from the gatehouse towers, which are of four storeys, the Keep was three-storeyed. Upon the leads there was "a trim walk and a fair prospect", with six places of entry to the Keep; they are clearly seen on Treswell's plan of the leads of the Keep in 1608 (plate XVI). A little square tower stood above the leads on the west side; here a watchman could stand or a beacon be set or hung. The appearance of this watch tower in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century may be gathered from Treswell's bird's eye view of 1608 (plate XVII); later it appears to have had a steeple added.[9] The general condition of the Keep in 1567 Clarkson reported as good, though he advised the earl that a slater should be employed and that lead should be available for repairs, as well as making his famous comment that "because through extreme winds the glass of the windows of this and others my Lord's castles and houses here in this country do decay and waste it were good the whole height of every window at the departure of his Lordship from lying at any of his said castles and houses and during the time of his Lordship's absence or others lying in them were taken down and laid up in safety and at such time as either his Lordship or any other should lie at any of the said places the same might then be set up of new with small charges".[10]

Had he chosen and had circumstances permitted, it is clear that the seventh earl could, for the cost of relatively minor reparations, have made Alnwick Castle his chief residence. In the event, he took part in the 1569 Rising and was executed at York in 1572. In the five years from the

[9] C.F., 5, reproduces the seventeenth-century painting of Alnwick in the Northumberland Collection; note that the steeple in this painting seems lower than in the Canaletto painting of Alnwick Castle, 1752, also in the Northumberland Collection.

[10] Clarkson, ff. 8 *recto* to 9 *recto*; Alan, 35-38; Hartshorne, 184.

time of the rebellion to the restoration of the castle to his heir, his brother Sir Henry Percy, later eighth earl, the local families who were opposed to the Percy interests did all they could to render the castle uninhabitable. Nicholas Forster was in charge of the castle at this time and when Sir Henry's officers took possession of it they reported "great decay" in the timbers and lead, especially in the lead much of which had been removed.[11]

Neither the eighth nor the ninth earls lived in the castle; its use was as a residence for the constable and as a base for the principal estate officers of the earl to collect rents and to administer the extensive Percy lands in the north. In consequence, there were in the next sixty years only minor repairs, though a great number of them. Among works carried out in 1578, repairs were made to the staircase in the hall, to the lantern above the kitchen and to the leads of the roofs. Masons were retained at Alnwick again at this time and a small lodge built in one of the castle baileys for them. Next year, the bakehouse was repaired; in 1580 the treasure or Exchequer House, and in 1581 the Abbot's Tower. After this, however, we read of nothing more in the eighth earl's time (*Ob.* 1585). Some minor repairs were carried out in 1586 and we are reminded that the prison was still of use by these charges on the estate accounts for 1587: "for two iron slots for men's legs, 2s. 6d.; repair of bar to the door called the Dungeon Wicket, 8d.; a key, 6d.; a hinge for the door of the prison, 6d." In 1591, carpets and a cupboard cloth were bought for the Exchequer House and the Receiving House.[12]

These minor repairs were not enough to keep the castle in good order. It is not surprising to find the earl writing in 1594 to instruct his officers to "take due course with expedition to save and preserve the timber and lead of such of the towers in my castle of Alnwick as are now in decay and ruin and cover the same towers with thatch or other means

[11] S.H. MSS., P. II. 2b.
[12] James, 57, 61, 62, 66, 72, 93, 98, 114.

for the preservation of the walls". No attempt was made to do more, however, and in the next few years the records which have survived indicate only minor repairs to the castle. In 1595 19s. 8d. was spent on repairing windows in the castle and 4s. on three fetterlocks for use in the prison. In 1598 £3 18s. 2d. more was spent on glass for repairing windows in the castle and in the Exchequer House, £2 was spent on plumbing and the "Constable's stable" was repaired. One presumes that the "Constable's stable" was the stable by the constable's lodgings in the Middle Gatehouse.[13]

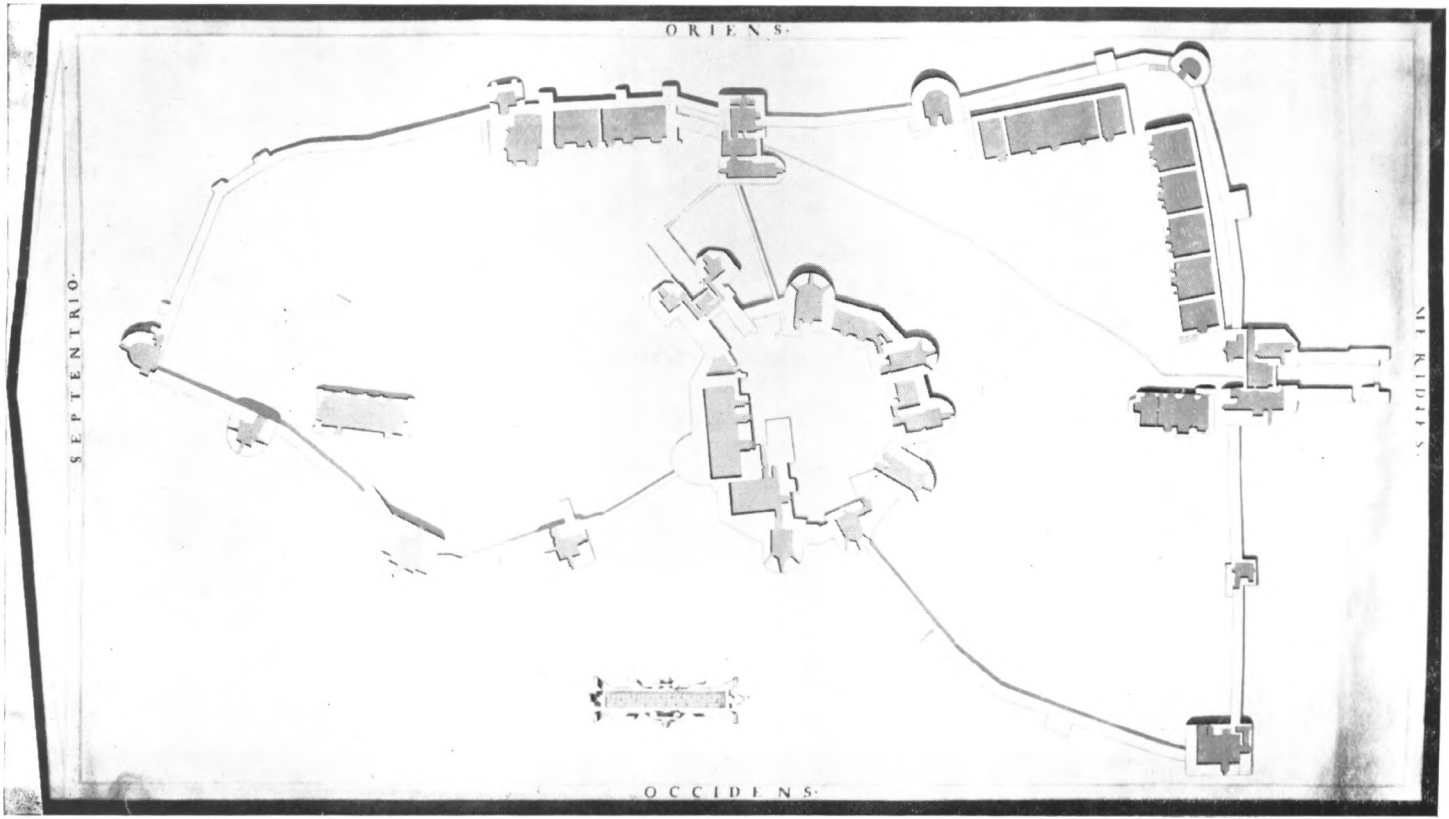
After the revelation of the Gunpowder Plot in 1605, in which the constable Thomas Percy played a leading part, the castle was out of the hands of the earl only a few months. Soon after he made Robert Delaval of Seaton Delaval the new constable, the earl wrote to him on the subject of the state of the castle: "Whereas I understand that my Castle and houses thereto belonging of Alnwick within the County of Northumberland, do grow into ruin and decay for want of repairing and amending the same, these shall be to let you know that my mind and pleasure is that so often as need shall require you provide workmen, and staff, and so the said Castle and houses belonging to it well and sufficiently repaired and amended in such places and places where most need shall require and the same to keep, maintain and sustain during such time as you shall be my officer there for the doing whereof this shall be your sufficient warrant." But the earl added a pointed postscript: "I expect that the charge be not much for all this general warrant without my privity and that half yearly I be informed what is done by bills." There is mention on the accounts of the cost of staying timber above the Great Chamber or Hall (9s. 10d.) in 1606, of unspecified repairs to the castle and mills (£13 11s. 10d.) in 1607, and (£6 0s. 7d.) in 1609, and of sundry repairs to the leads of the castle as well as the new making of stairs in the Exchequer House and of the mending of racks and bays in the stone stable in 1610 (£4 10s. 11d.). But

[13] S.H. MSS., P. II. 2g; James, 137, 153.

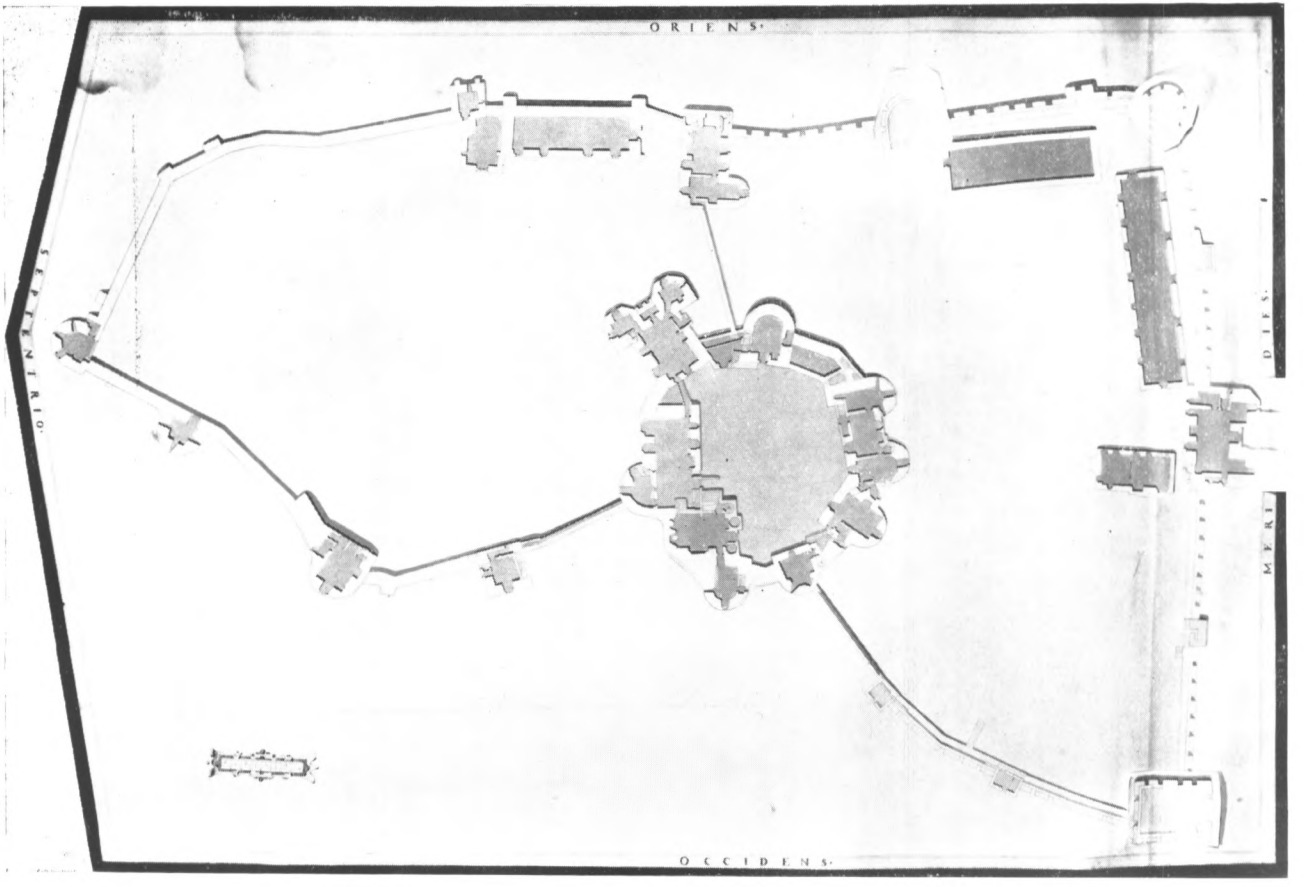
nothing on any scale could have been done, for the steward of Northumberland, Timothy Elks, was able to write in April, 1611, that men were carrying wrought stones from the castle to Chillingham and into the town of Alnwick "at will, even towers new fallen are upon mine own knowledge taken to other men's uses, new wrought upon your own castle ground and carried away". We know that at this time the Greys were reconstructing Chillingham Castle, a dozen or so miles from Alnwick, and one suspects from what Elks says that some of the stone was coming from Alnwick.[14]

This story of decay and ruin is easily explicable in the light of the history of the use of the castle, but it is markedly at variance with the impression which one would get from a study of another source alone—namely, from the beautifully executed set of five plans of the castle drawn for the earl on vellum in 1608 by that great surveyor, Ralph Treswell the younger, whose productions probably covered every manor held by the Percies at this time and whose surviving plans are among the most valuable of the Percy archives to-day (plates XIII-XVII). The household accounts tell us that he was paid £7 10s. for making and drawing the five plans and that the vellum cost £1 7s. 6d. Besides giving us four detailed ground plans of the castle, Treswell has left a bird's eye view of the whole, unfortunately damaged in one corner. In this, the castle appears as spick and span as a child's newly constructed toy cardboard fort. But there is an air of artificiality about it; the soldiers manœuvring in the baileys, for example, are to be seen firing in opposite directions. In short, it is a view of the ideal state of the castle and not of its actual condition (plate XVII). That this is so, is confirmed by other evidence. Though in 1611 we have a record of repairs to the Exchequer House and to the chambers of the Auditor and Steward, in 1614 the "decays of Alnwick Castle" were viewed and a warrant

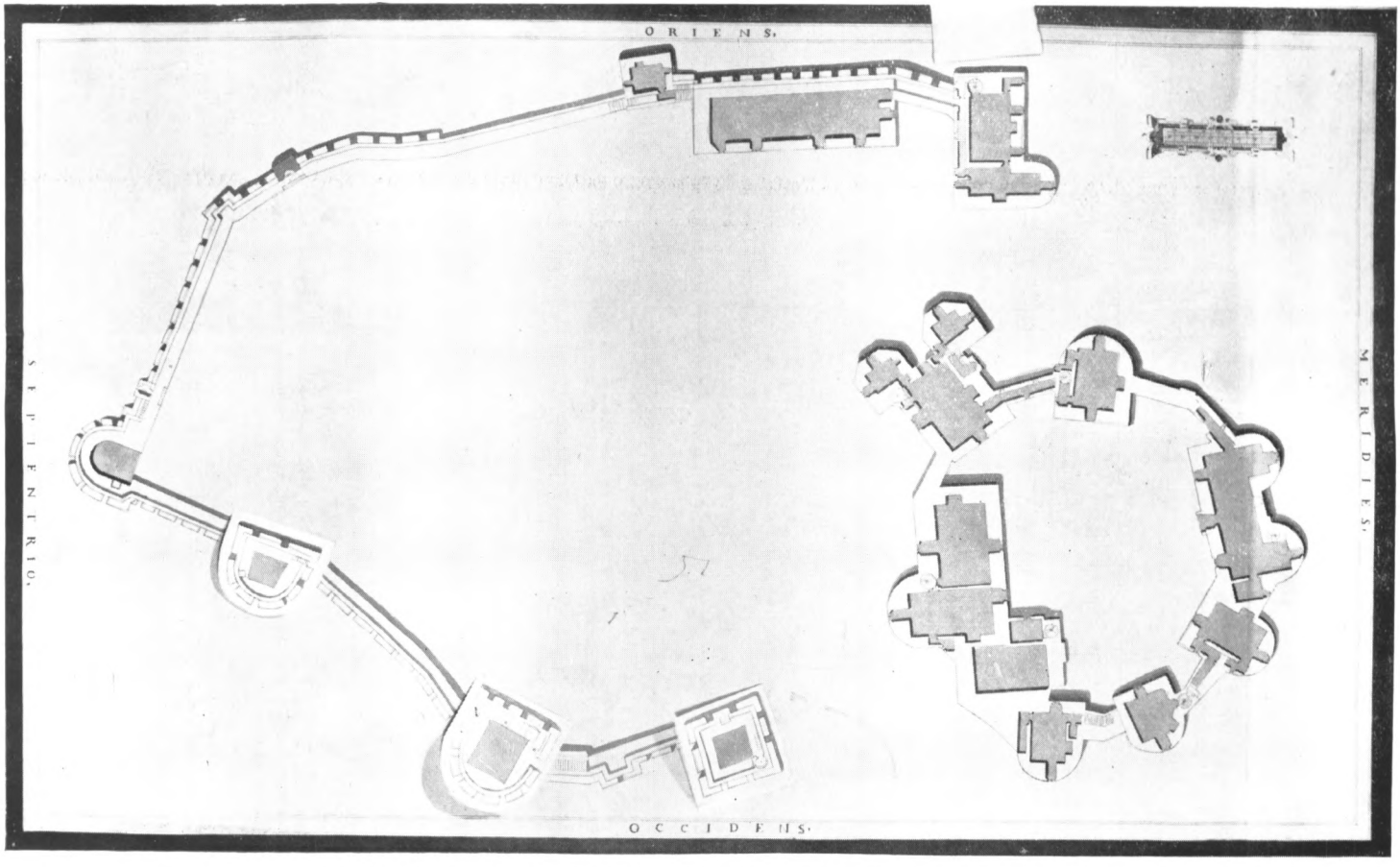
[14] Aln. MSS., L. & P., vol. 9A, f. 42; James, 167, 174, 180, 191; S.H. MSS., P. II. 2s; *County History of Northumberland* (Newcastle, 1893-1940, 15 vols.), xiv, 334.



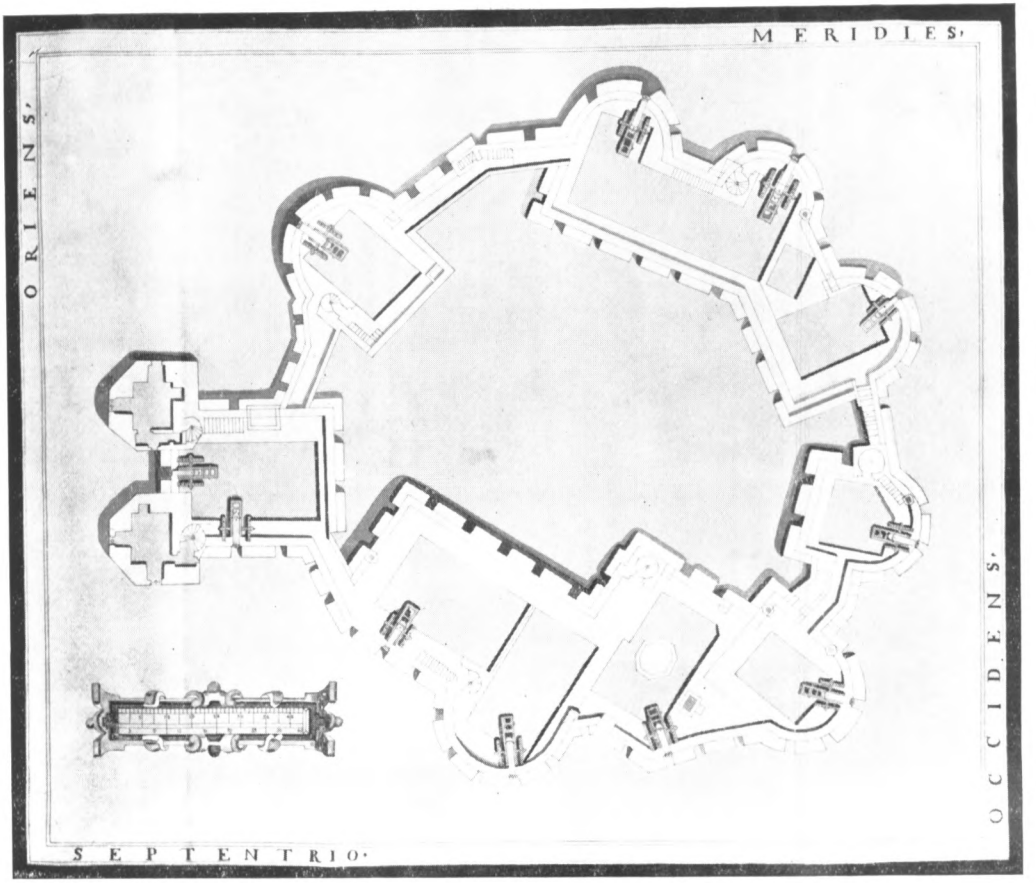
TRESWELL'S GROUND PLOT OF ALNWICK CASTLE, 1608.



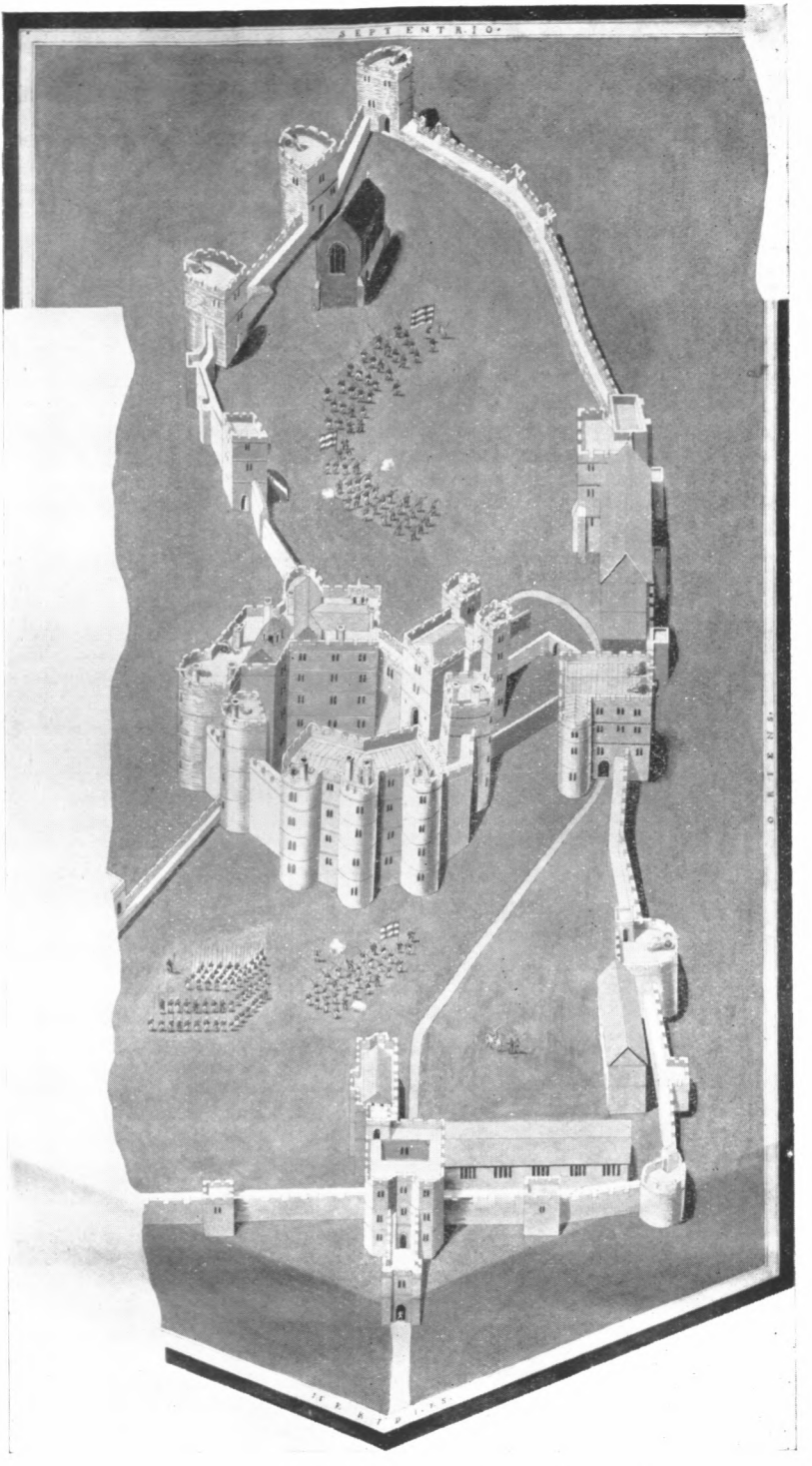
TRESWELL'S PLAN OF THE FIRST STOREY, ETC., OF ALNWICK CASTLE, 1608.



TRESWELL'S PLAN OF THE SECOND STOREY OF THE KEEP AND MIDDLE BAILEY, ALNWICK, 1608.



TRESWELL'S PLAN OF THE LEADS OF THE KEEP, ALNWICK, 1608.



TRESWELL'S BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF ALNWICK CASTLE, 1590.

issued by the earl in December to have repairs carried out, starting the following March. They could only have been further minor repairs, since in 1622 when Mayson carried out his great survey of the earl's lands, the castle was still in ruins. Here is his description:

"The Castle being the Chief site and Capital Mansion House of the whole Barony of Alnwick has in former times been a very large and fair building but now very ruinous and in great decay, both in the outwalls, towers, houses of office, and other buildings, save only a hall, a parlour, chambers over the parlour and over the dungeon, a buttery within the hall, the kitchen, two long stables in the forecourt, the Constable's stable, the stable under the granary, the granary itself, the prison, and the porter's lodge by it, all which remain yet in reasonable good repair."

It was the neglect resulting from the absence of its masters for many decades that had brought the "portly" castle of Alnwick to this parlous condition and it remained "ruinous and in great decay" when Lord Percy, the future tenth earl, came on a visit to his father's northern estates in 1630. This tenth earl was to do something to rectify the situation. But that is a story which must await another day. . . .[15]

[15] S.H. MSS., C.I. 4b; Aln. MSS., A.V. pt. 1, f. 3 *recto*; Aln. MSS., L. & P., vol. 9A, ff. 182, 190; James, 197.

KEY TO PLATES.

These five plans on vellum, drawn by Ralph Treswell the younger of London in 1608 for the ninth Earl of Northumberland, are among the earliest surviving examples of the scientific approach to surveying which was in its infancy in the England of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. They were designed to hang on the wall and decorated to that end. They are orientated to the magnetic and not to the geographical north.

Plate XIII Alnwick MSS. B. II. 1a, A ground plot of the Castle with its wards, towers, turrets, keep and buildings.

Plate XIV Alnwick MSS. B. II. 1b, A ground plan of the first storey of the Inner Ward or Keep, of the towers and turrets of the Middle Bailey, of the first and second storeys and leads of the Gatehouse Tower and of the turrets of the Outer Bailey.

Plate XV Alnwick MSS. B. II. 1c, A plan of the second storey of the Inner Ward or Keep and of the second storey and leads of the towers in the Middle Bailey.

Plate XVI Alnwick MSS. B. II. 1d, A plan of the leads of the Inner Ward or Keep.

Plate XVII Alnwick MSS. B. II. 1e, A bird's eye view of the Castle.

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