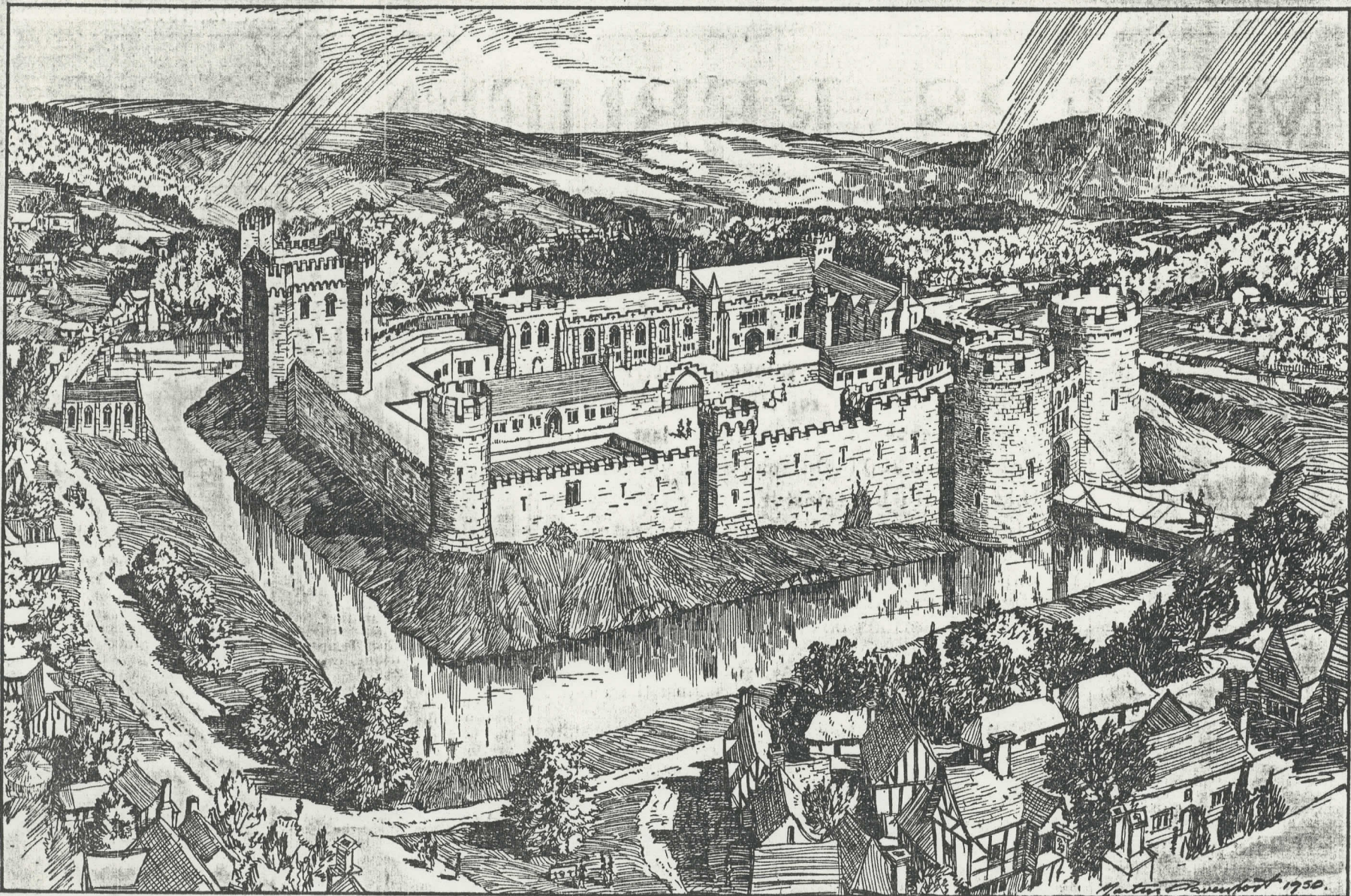


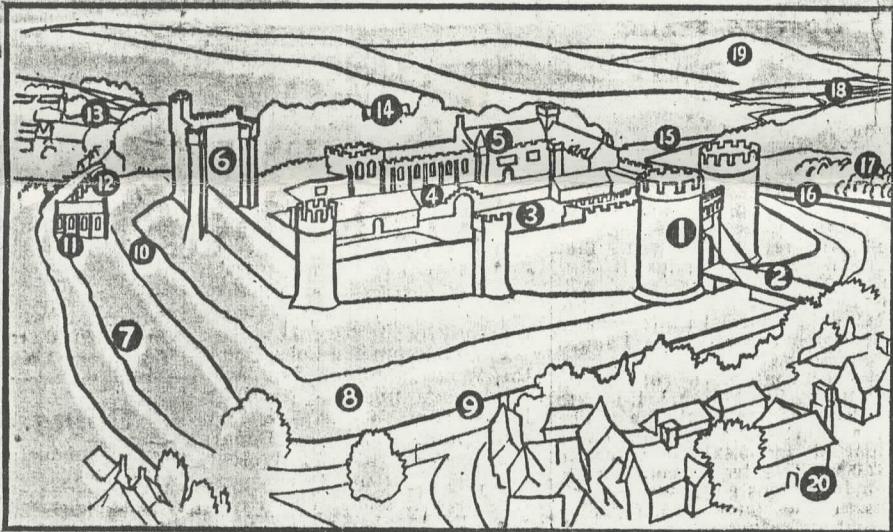
Sheffield Castle Recons.

Tuesday, Jan 10th 1950



★ Drawings By Martin Davenport ★

KEY: 1, Entrance with bastion towers. 2, Drawbridge. 3, Outer courtyard. 4, Inner courtyard. 5, Great hall. 6, Square tower or keep. 7, Wain-gate. 8, Moat. 9, Approximate position of Exchange Street. 10, Moat cut from the Don. 11, Chapel of Our Blessed Lady of the Bridge (1538). 12, Lady's Bridge and the Don. 13, Nurseries (origin of Nursery Street). 14, "Sembly Green" and Wicker archery butts. 15, Confluence of Don and Sheaf. 16, River Sheaf. 17, Orchards. 18, Attercliffe and Tinsley. 19, Win-cobank Hill. 20, Dixon Lane site.



YOU buy fruit and fish today where once stood a noble castle whose walls echoed for centuries the sound of marching men.

Outside Castle Hill Market in 1950 a bombed site emphasises one of the drabest corners of all dear, dirty Sheffield. Soon the markets will spread over the cavity.

Affronted spectres of one-time feudal glory assuredly shun those unromantic tiers of kipper, cod, and cauliflower, replacing the "ancient faire castle" which Sheffield lost 301 years ago.

A parliamentary fiat of 1648, soon after the battering of the Civil War, brought down this great stronghold.

And in a lusty industrial town, the ancient site was absorbed by cottages, furnaces, forges, inns, shops.

A Saxon building stood there before the de Lovetot castle (whence they rode to the Crusades). The de Lovetot castle, destroyed or damaged by fire in the Barons' War, gave place to the Furnival castle of 1270.

And until the 1640s its bastions crowned on the little town on the flanking hillside.

Walnut Avenue

ITS lay-out is almost a complete mystery. No reproduction has survived. The only verbal description is surveyor Harrison's technical summary of 1637.

We know it stood on a little over four acres in the angle formed by the confluence of Don and Sheaf, that it was built of stone and very spacious, and stood around an inward and an outward court.

Orchards, nurseries, and yards covered nearly 15 acres around, and from the entrance to the glorious Park a stately avenue of walnut trees led to the Manor ("pleasantly situated upon a hill and in a good ayre"—Harrison).

Sheffield Manor timber was famous, and among the country's biggest. It was said of Rivelin that a squirrel could travel from tree to tree for seven miles without going to ground.

Harrison speaks of trees in Sheffield Park and, in Rivelin that rose 60ft. before coming to a knot or a bough. In 1679 diarist Evelyn, in his discourse on forest trees, admires the timber at Sheffield.

Rich Inventory

FORTUNATELY we know something of the furnishing of the castle at its most intriguing period—when Mary Queen of Scots was a prisoner there.

In 1671 Dr. Nathaniel Johnston, a Pontefract antiquary, rescued "from amidst multitudes of waste papers and the havoc that mice, rats, and wet had made" at the Manor a number of letters to



The castle site, 1950.

which he gave the name of the Talbot Papers, and bound them in 15 volumes.

They included an inventory of the "household stuff" at the Castle and the Lodge (Manor) "within the charge of John Deckenson and Wm. Kettericke, the ward-roppe men, and others, seen and viewed the 18th day of June, 1582."

Here is a numerical sea of silks and satins, velvets, carpets, hangings, and furnishings of stricter utility ("77 feather beds and 5 past service," for example). Mary's own chamber had eight "hangings of the Passion and of wars, and one of imagery," and its other items embraced a cushion of cloth of gold tissue, and a stool.

I quote from my copy of a reprint of J. D. Leader's paper of 1872 describing the inventory.

In a reference to nursery furniture, Leader states: "Once more we come across a trace of merry child life, under the roof that sheltered the object of half the plots in Europe."

It was at Sheffield Castle that young Anthony Babington, of Dethic, received into Shrewsbury's household as his ward, formed his attachment for Mary's cause, leading years later to the famous Babington Conspiracy that brought her to the block.

Cromwell's Cannon

SCOPE for antiquarian research arose in 1927-29, through excavations for the building of the market and of the Co-operative store, bombed in 1940.

Mr. A. Leslie Armstrong's full story, in the Transactions of the Hunter Archaeological Society, is accompanied by photographs of the remains of the bastion tower, gatehouse, courtyard, drawbridge pier, and other remains found (Thus holes made by Cromwell's cannon in 1644 were permanently recorded.)

Remains fronting the courtyard are preserved underneath Castle Hill Market. Only trace above ground is a few feet of ancient walling in Castlegate. Relics found in 1927-29, kept in a showcase in the Co-operative building, were destroyed in the blitz.

GEORGE HOPKINSON

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