

FRAMLINGHAM CASTLE.

THAT there was a Castle at Framlingham at a very early period (probably as early as the sixth century) is beyond doubt, and it is equally certain, that there is now no vestige of it remaining.

A.D. 592 or 599, Redwald or Redowald, king of East Anglia, held his court at Rendlesham,* and is supposed to have had his castle at Framlingham.

In 866, a large force of Danes landed in East Anglia, remained in their camps undisturbed during the winter, and having received fresh provisions and supplies of men—in the following year they ravaged the north. Three years later (870) they added nearly all the eastern part of the Island to their conquest. Edmund, at that time king of the East Angles, although unprepared, rallied his forces and met them at Thetford, where a fierce but indecisive contest took place; the king fled in the night to Framlingham Castle, which the Danes besieged and took. Edmund, however, escaped to a wood near Hoxne, then called Heglinden, or Eglesdene (the Hill of Eagles), and having surrendered to the Danes, was barbarously executed on the 20th Nov. 870.

After the conquest, the Castle, according to Holingshed, was held by William 1st, and Rufus, in their own possession, but in 1103, the third year of Henry I. Roger Bigod having attached himself to the king's fortunes received from him, together with other demesnes, the grant of Framlingham.

* Camden.

A.D. 1120, William Bigod, Roger Bigod's eldest son, was drowned with Prince William, the king's only son; and Hugh Bigod his brother and heir, succeeded him. Having at the death of Henry supported the pretensions of Stephen, Hugh was made Earl of the East Angles, and afterwards taking the opposite side, he was besieged in his castle at Ipswich, and obliged to surrender it to Stephen.

In 1154, Henry IInd resumed all Crown-lands, but immediately restored those of Hugh Bigod; nineteen years afterwards however, in 1173, Bigod espoused the cause of Prince Henry, the king's eldest son, and was joined by the Earl of Leicester at Framlingham Castle, which became the head quarters of the rebels. Leicester with his forces, chiefly Flemish, was totally defeated by Robert de Linci, the Chief Justice, and Earl Bohun, between Fornham and Bury St. Edmunds, and Bigod purchased a peace.

The next year 1174, Henry II. returning from abroad, attacked several places, defeated the Scots, and then concentrating his forces against Bigod, took and destroyed his castles at Ipswich, and Walton. He then marched against those at Framlingham and Bungay, which Bigod surrendered, preventing Bungay Castle, however, from being destroyed, by a payment of one thousand marks.

It was undoubtedly at this time that the demolition of the old Saxon Castle at Framlingham took place, but as I know that there are some who believe that such was not the case, and think they can even now behold walls built by the Saxons, or perhaps even by the Romans, I will briefly give my reasons for stating positively as I do that such is not the fact.

In the first place we have written testimony—for after Henry had besieged and taken the castle from Hugh Bigod, we find the following return made by the Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk to the Exchequer, 1175 (21st Henry II.)—“and towards the payment of Alnodi the engineer, and of the carpenters and masons he brought with him *to throw*

down the Castle of Framlingham, (paid) £14. 15s. 11d. by writ of Richard de Lucy, and also for filling up the foss of the same castle, 36s. 1d. by writ of the same Richard"— and the following year are further charges to the amount of £7. 10s. 6d., under the same writ, and for the same purpose. These amounts are small, but they show that the destruction of the castle was going on for two years at the least, and it must be remembered that wages at the time were but a penny a day, whilst it is not at all clear that these two sums include the whole of the expenditure on the demolition. Moreover, the plunder from the materials pulled down, would alone repay a large body of men. Camden expressly states that it was demolished, and Grose affirms that it was rebuilt during the latter end of the 12th century.

Taking however, the documentary evidence simply for what it is worth, we have a surer and more trust-worthy guide in the character of the work itself. It is well known that the study of the special peculiarities of the early architecture of England has been of late years carried to such nicety, that from internal evidence alone, the date of any building or portion of a building, can be ascertained to almost a certainty. Now there cannot be found at Framlingham Castle, after the most careful examination, any one feature indicative of work of a period earlier than the Norman epoch. We look in vain for the long and short-work of the Saxons, or the peculiar triangular headed window and door openings of their time. Not a single ornament such as the quaint balluster, or the rude flat impost mouldings, so characteristic of Saxon architecture, can be found, nor even the very thin bricks, or rather flat tiles (frequently not more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick) so constantly to be met with in early work. In short, it is impossible to find a single feature of any style of building which is known to have prevailed in England, prior to the Norman conquest. But on the other hand, a Norman capital late in the style, flat Norman buttresses, with Norman beaded angles, and

Norman arches, similarly treated, still remain *in situ*. The supposition, therefore, that the castle is older than the 12th century, can only be attributed to the peculiar disposition there always is, to ascribe a much earlier date to an edifice than there is the slightest warrant for.

That the present castle was built almost immediately after the demolition of the previous one, and during the reign of Richard 1st, there is good reason to believe, for in 1215, king John appeared in arms against Roger Bigod, and the new castle, probably not being then sufficiently completed to stand a siege, and the forces of the Barons, consequently not being concentrated at the place (which we know to be a fact), was delivered up to the king, without any resistance whatever; but on the 21st of March of the following year, it was restored to Bigod, as appears by an entry in the Close Rolls of the 17th of king John, dated from Colchester, and addressed to the Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk.

“In the possession of the Bigods it continued until the 25th of Edward I, when, that family being extinct, it reverted to the crown, and was by the king given to his second son Thomas de Brotherton, Earl of Norfolk, and Marshal of England, who repaired it, as appeared by his arms set up in divers parts of the building. On his decease it came to his two daughters, Margaret and Alice; the latter married Edward de Montacute, who, upon the division of the estate, had in his part the Castle and its demesnes. He left it to his daughter, who married the Earl of Suffolk, from whence it came to the Mowbrays, Dukes of Norfolk, who sometime resided here. From the Mowbrays it descended to the Howards.”*

In 1485, a sum of money due to Richard III. for a wardship, was ordered by him to be expended by John Howard the 1st Duke, in the repairs of the castle; but as both the Duke and King were slain at Bosworth in the same year, the repairs were never carried out, and we are brought to the reign of Henry VII. during which Thomas, son of John Howard, commenced those alterations which are indicated by the moulded red brick chimnies, third pointed or Perpendicular windows, corbels at various places, the stone gateway, &c., &c. Here, indeed, he lived in great splendour,

* Grose.

and having modernised the castle to the requirements of his own time, kept open house after his retirement from public life at the age of 80.

A copy of the will of this duke, dated 31st of May, 1520, is given in Green's *History of Framlingham*, and a perusal of it will afford a very good idea of the luxurious manner in which the castle was furnished. Amongst other bequests is one of "our hanging of the story of Hercules, made for our great chamber at Framlingham," to his eldest son. No doubt a piece of tapestry or water work.

Thomas, the son of the above, commenced the desertion of the castle as a residence, and built a palace at Kenninghall; the former building, however, remained for some time in a habitable state, for after the resumption by the crown, on the attainder of this duke, at the end of Henry the VIIIth's reign, we find that Mary, who had been presented with the castle and manor by Edward VI. in the last year of his reign, retired here, and made it the rallying point for her followers previous to asserting her right to the crown, and tradition still points to an apartment at the N. E. angle which is said to have been her private chamber.

Mary instantly restored to this duke his honors and his estate, and he died in the second year of her reign at Kenninghall, and was buried in Framlingham Church.

The 4th duke held it for 18 years, when at his execution for treason, it passed successively into the hands of Elizabeth and James I. the latter of whom, in the first year of his reign (1603), restored it to Thomas Lord Howard, the last duke's second son, who held it till his death in 1626, and nine years afterwards Theophilus Howard, Earl of Suffolk, the then possessor, sold it to Sir Robert Hitcham, who bequeathed it for charitable purposes, directing that all the castle except the stone buildings, should be pulled down.

I will now endeavour with the help of the accompanying plan to give some idea of what the castle consisted when rebuilt at the end of the 12th century, and likewise what

were the extensive alterations and additions made to it at the end of the 15th century, by the second duke.

Fortunately, an historian of great authority, who lived in the 12th century, Alexander Necham, gives a very minute account of the plan and arrangement of castles and large houses in his time, and from the information to be gleaned from him, and from the researches of the late Dawson Turner, together with the positive data remaining to us, a good general idea of the position and character of the original buildings may be obtained.

Proceeding through the south or principal entrance across the (then) drawbridge, and under the gateway, which was formerly defended by a portcullis (near which was the warder's lodge), a spacious courtyard is entered, in which there was, and still is, a deep well of excellent water. Over this was formerly a lead roof supported by columns, and still existing in 1651.* Passing along the east side, abutting against the oblong tower was the chapel, between which and the next tower came the 'great hall. At the back of this, and on the same level, was the cellar, above which was a chamber communicating with the hall by a stone or wooden staircase, in the interior of the latter. In this chamber was a private postern door, still visible. After these buildings followed the larder, sewery, stables, &c., all probably of wood. The floors were of wood, as seen by the joist holes still extant, and the roofs were of open timber framing.

On the opposite side was the kitchen (a portion of the wall of which is still standing), and another large room, probably originally used by the numerous retainers, but subsequently as a dining hall. This stood on precisely the same spot as the present modern hall occupies, and a few years since the foundations of it were traced, and two semicircular buttresses, very characteristic of Norman work, were discovered on the east front (*see* Plan). The entrance appears

* Leverland's MS. and Dr. Samson.--This covering was probably put up by the 2nd Duke.

to have been at the end, and the room was lighted by one window at the west, having, most likely, other windows or dormers in the roof towards the castle yard.

As refinement progressed, the rooms became multiplied, and these two blocks of buildings were united by a series of chambers, with cloisters under them, as shewn on the plan.

By a valuable manuscript document of the date of *circa* 1730, written by Mr. Robert Hawes, an attorney at Framlingham (for a perusal of which I am indebted to Mr. Green), I find that the dining hall, and the great or common kitchen, with the chambers and low rooms to them belonging, were standing at that time, whilst "the chapple, great hall, buttry, pantry, skollery, inner kitchen, privy kitchen, pastry, porter's lodge, and the chambers with them," together with "the wine cellar, brew-house, and mill-house," had been pulled down. We thus obtain a very full catalogue of what the apartments were, and their several uses.

Returning to the exterior, I must not forget to mention the barbican tower, on the west side projecting towards the mere, which appears to have been very strongly constructed for defence. The date of this is coeval with the earliest part of the castle. The arches below the present roadway, the heads of which are alone visible, probably belonged to chambers which might have been used as dungeons. There is also remaining a staircase to the watch tower, and arched recessed seats for the warders. On this side, but evidently of a later construction (since bricks are used, and there is no juncture with the original walls), there is part of what was doubtless a boundary wall towards the moat and mere, and there are traces of rubble work at intervals, in various parts, all round, enclosing the fish ponds, and the rest of the castle area.

On the opposite or eastern side, are the remains of massive piers (evidently of a late date by the hammered dressed flint work in them.) that doubtless formerly carried a timber bridge, leading to the outer ballium, which seems at one period to have been planted, and turned into a pleasance.

As no traces of walls exist on this side, it is probable that it was only protected by its moat.

Besides its moat and drawbridge, the south entrance was further protected by a half-moon of stone, no vestige of which remains.

There is one more peculiarity well deserving attention, and that is the great number of tubular perforations, commonly inter-communicating, from six to twelve inches in diameter, running both horizontally and vertically throughout the whole of the outer walls. It would be exceedingly interesting to ascertain more about them, and for what purpose they could be intended.

I have only to add that the foregoing remarks are put forward merely as a short, and by no means exhaustive, historical and architectural sketch of Framlingham Castle. I know not where to refer the reader for a more detailed description of the architectural features of the castle than I have endeavoured to give, but he will find deeper and fuller historical accounts of it by going to the same sources from which I have myself drawn, viz., Necham, Leland's Itinerary, Camden, Dr. Samson, Leverland's MS., Grose, Loder, and Green. I ought to add that the plan of the castle which accompanies this paper, is made from actual measurements taken by myself, but that for the outworks, I have availed myself of the valuable and accurate map, published by Mr. Green, in his *History of Framlingham*.

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