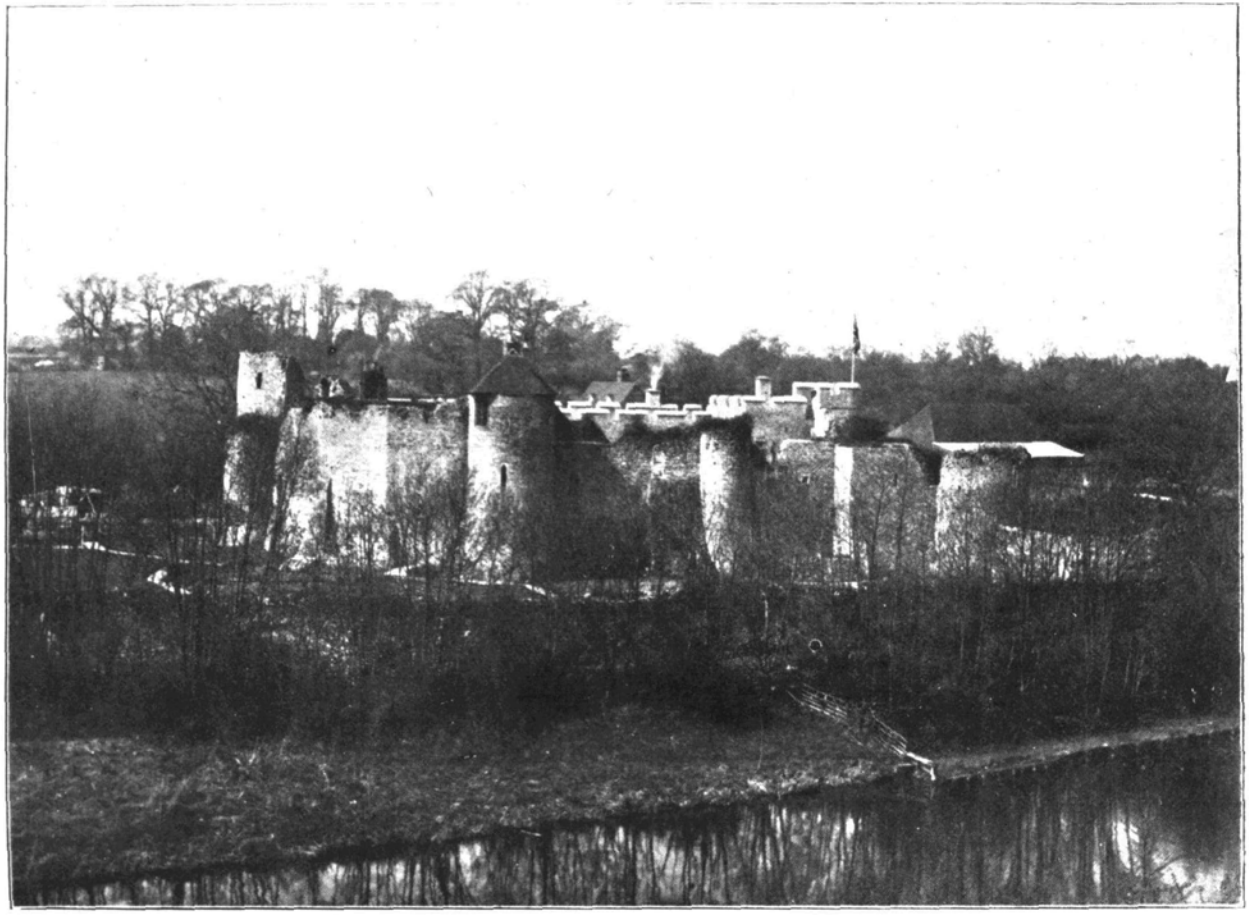


Photo.] ALLINGTON CASTLE (A): GENERAL VIEW FROM E. [*W. G.-W.*

ALLINGTON CASTLE.

BY SIR W. MARTIN CONWAY, M.A., F.S.A.

The immediate neighbourhood of Allington Castle appears to have been a very ancient site of human habitation. It lies close to what must have been an important ford over the Medway, at a point which was approximately the head of low-tide navigation. The road from the east, which debouches on the right bank of the river close beside the present Malta Inn, led straight to the ford, and its continuation on the other bank can be traced as a deep furrow through the Lock Wood, and almost as far as the church, though in part it has recently been obliterated by the dejection of quarry débris. This ancient road may be traced up to the Pilgrims' Way, from which it branched off. In the neighbourhood of the castle, at points not exactly recorded, late Celtic burials have been discovered containing remains of the Aylesford type. Where there were burials there was no doubt a settlement.

In Roman days the site was likewise well occupied, and the buried ruins of a Roman villa are marked on the ordnance map in the field west of the castle. The site seems to be indicated by a level place on the sloping hill, and when the land in question falls into my hands I propose to make the researches necessary to reveal the situation and character of the villa. Roman interments have also been discovered by the quarrymen at points both north-west and south of the supposed villa site, so that probably the neighbourhood was settled in Roman days. There can hardly be any doubt of the object of the settlement. It was probably a village of quarrymen, and the villa was the residence of the overseer or owner of the quarry.

It will be remembered that the Roman wall of London

is built of Kentish rag. This stone was, of course, water-borne. Allington is, I believe, the nearest point on a water-way leading to London where rag-stone can be quarried. Tradition asserts that Allington supplied the rag which constitutes the mass of the White Tower of London. Nothing is in the nature of things less improbable, and if that is true of the Norman tower it is equally true of the Roman wall. The existence of a Roman villa at this spot is thus comfortably accounted for.

The name "Allington" is an unfortunate corruption. In Doomsday Book it is spelt "Elentun," the first syllable being pronounced as the first syllable in Aylesford, and representing the Celtic name for the Medway—the Eyle or Egle. Later on, throughout the Middle Ages, the name is generally spelt "Alynton," the "a" no doubt still being pronounced as in the word "fate." It was only in relatively recent years that the mis-spelling (and consequent still later mis-pronunciation) was adopted by attraction to that of the many other Allingtons that exist in different parts of the country. I wish it were possible to return to the original form, but such returns are rarely accomplished.

No Anglo-Saxon remains have been recorded at Allington, but Kilburne and other early writers record a tradition that there was here a Saxon fortress, and nothing is less unlikely, regard being had to the position of the ford. The tradition likewise recorded by Kilburne that the Danes destroyed this fortress is also probably respectable, for it is just where the Danes would have been likely to force a landing, and where some sort of fort probably would have been erected to keep the Danes away. But when Kilburne and Philipott assert that this fort was built by the Columbarii, or family of Columbers, they are no doubt, as we shall see, very premature.

At the time of the Conquest Allington was held of Alnod Cilt by one Uluric. Whether, as Hasted imagines, Alnod Cilt was Ulnoth, fourth son of Earl Godwin, I cannot say. At all events, after the Conquest the land was confiscated and formed part of the vast estates granted to the Con-

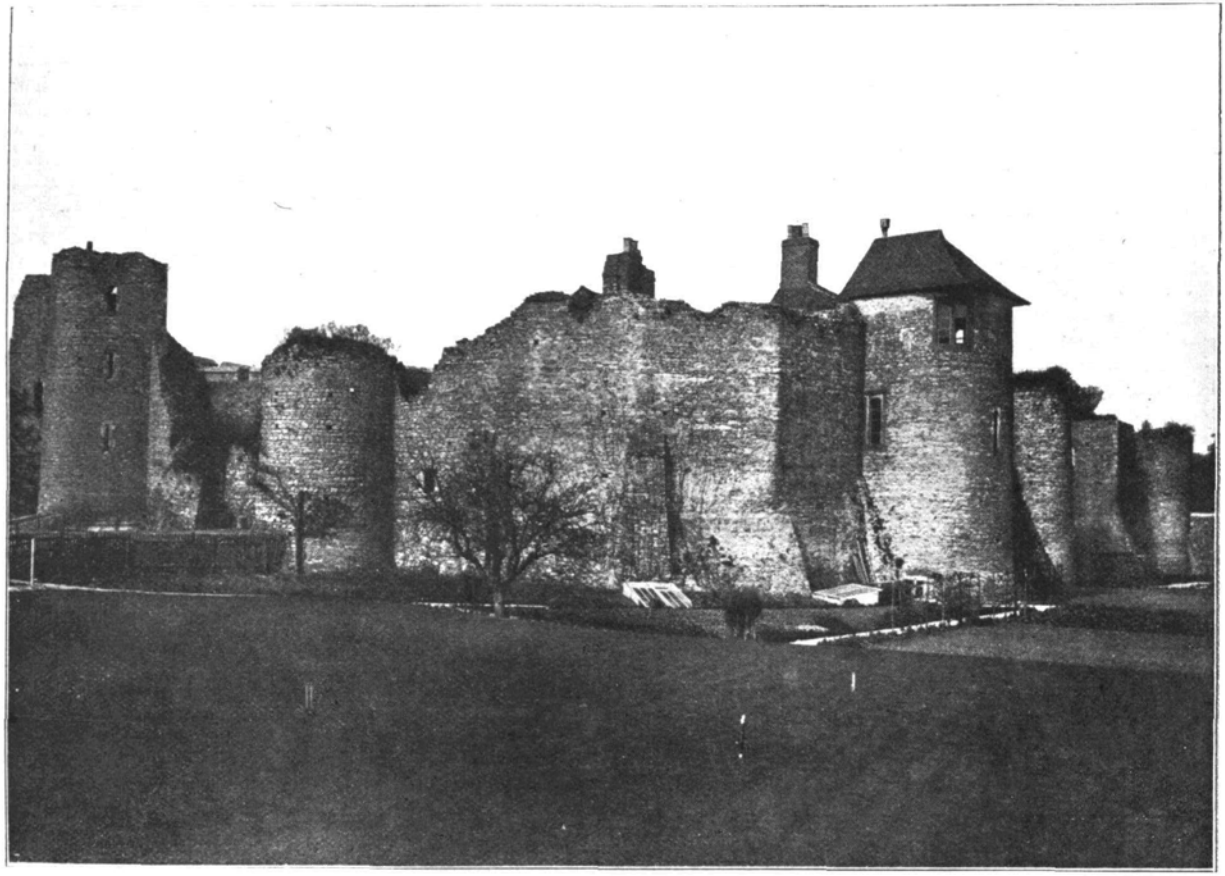


Photo.] ALLINGTON CASTLE (B): VIEW FROM S.E. [*W. G.-W.*

queror's brother Odo, Bishop of Bayeux. It was held of him by one Anschitil, otherwise called Anschitillus Rubitonensis, or Anschitil de Ros or Roos. The same tenant also held Horton Kirby, likewise of Odo; and down to the time of Queen Mary Allington is held as half a knight's fee "as of the manor of Horton Kirby," which, I suppose, accounted for the other half. At the time of the knighting of the Black Prince, Margaret de Penchester owed suit for Allington to a De Ros of Horton Kirby, doubtless a descendant of the original Anschitil. The name "Anschitil" is clearly of Viking origin.

The following is a translation of the Doomsday entry about Allington:—

"Anschitil holds, of the Bishop (Odo), Elentun. It answers for one solin. There is the arable land of three teams. In demesne there are two teams. And 15 villains with two bordars; they have one team and a half. A church there. And two slaves. And half a mill. And one dene of 15 shillings. Wood of 8 hogs. And one acre of meadow. In the time of King Edward it was worth 100 shillings. When he received it 60 shillings. Now 100 shillings. Uluric held it of Alnod Cilt."

A "solin," according to Vinogradoff, "contained from 180 to 200 acres, and may even have been reckoned at 240 acres if its two hundreds were to be taken as long hundreds." That was the area of the estate. Out of it there was arable land reckoned as enough to be ploughed by three teams of eight oxen each, though, as a matter of fact, there were three and a half teams actually on the ground. The fifteen villains were the principal tenants of the manor. They were "a class on whose work and rents the landlord depended." They were subject to the harsh discipline of the hall and the steward, and to burdensome rustic duties. The two bordars were crofters—smaller householders than the villains—subjected to the same kind of service as the villains, but the amount of the service considerably less. According to Vinogradoff,* the latest authority, villain-holdings correspond to

* *Villainage in England* (1892). See also *Eng. Soc. in the 11th century* (1908).

the large fractions of the plough-team and plough-land. Bordars had small plots of about five acres, rarely as much as ten or twelve acres. The villains and bordars of Allington owned between them a team and a half, or twelve oxen among seventeen men. The demesne consisted of the home-farm and the *aula* or hall. The hall probably stood on the site of the existing castle. For working the home-farm there were two teams, or sixteen oxen. There were also two slaves, the same in number (as so often in Doomsday) as the teams of oxen. In other cases the slaves are twice the number of the teams. Vinogradoff says that the slaves were probably men holding a definite job on an estate, more especially ploughmen.

The old church of Allington, Saxon or Norman, existed even after the middle of the nineteenth century, when it was ruthlessly destroyed, and a forged Wardour-Street Early English church built on its site, only the fourteenth century porch being retained. It was at a later time included within the castle boundaries, and is still called the 'Church of St. Lawrence within the walls of Allington Castle.' In the rectory garden the foundations of a bastion tower have been found, and it is possible that it formed part of a wall that enclosed the castle and the old quarry (now covered by the Lock Wood). It is tantalising to know that the old church, when destroyed, contained some wall-paintings which, to judge from a tiny and very rough sketch of them which I have seen, may even have come down from the twelfth century.

As to the half-mill I have learnt nothing. I have sometimes thought that the dene of fifteen shillings might be the quarry. "A dene," says Vinogradoff, "is a clearance in the thicket in which men and animals may move with some ease; such pasturage grounds within the wood were especially numbered and guarded, and mostly contained a few huts for the keepers and herdsmen." The Allington dene was worth almost one-seventh of the whole land, a considerable proportion when the whole area was so small, and I am inclined to think that the suggestion that it was quarry is worth

consideration. Besides the dene there was a wood of eight hogs. As to this I can only again quote the most recent authority. He says, "The way of estimating its (a wood's) value is very often to indicate the number of swine which might get their food in it. Another mode of appreciation based on the same feature—the nutritive capacity of the wood—was to specify how many animals were rendered in dues for the use of the pannage; this seems the most appropriate explanation for otherwise odd expressions, such as 'wood for two pigs.'" The acre of meadow must have been situated in the low ground near the river. Immediately after the Conquest the value of the estate fell from 100 to 60 shillings, but by the time of Doomsday it had risen again to its former value of 100 shillings.

After Odo of Bayeux' rebellion his lands were confiscated, and Allington was granted to William, Earl Warenne, afterwards created Earl of Surrey by William Rufus. It was he who built the first castle at Allington, a moated mound, of which considerable traces remain close to the south of the present castle enclosure.* This mound was raised at the edge of a swamp, which was probably much swampier then than now, though even to-day it is very wet except in the dry summer season. I have raised the level and thus dried part of it, and intend to deal in the same way with the rest. Close to the north edge of this mound remains a portion of wall of very evident early-Norman date. It is in a most ruinous condition, and as it threatened to fall I have had to underpin it and patch it up. The masonry is similar to that characteristic of Gundulf's work, with courses of stones laid obliquely.† The moat used to run between this wall and the mound, but has been filled up. I intend to reopen it. The existing fragment of Norman wall is included in the circuit of the late twelfth-century enclosure, to which I must presently refer. Presumably the eleventh-century wall surrounded the Norman village, and formed a bailey adjacent

* See the "Map."

† *Cf.* the masonry of Rochester Castle, illustrated in Vol. XVIII., 126.

to the moated mound, but most of it probably fell down and had to be replaced.*

Earl Warren is stated to have "transferred" Allington to Lord Fitz-Hugh, about whom I know nothing as yet. From him it descended, as in its case has so often happened, to a daughter. She married a certain Sir Giles, who took the name of the place and is called Sir Giles de Allington. William de Elinton may have been his son. William's widow and three children, under age, are mentioned in the Pipe Roll, 13 Henry II. (1167). This William was no doubt the builder of the adulterine castle,† which was the next building we have to consider. Philipott (in 1659) writes that Darrell and Mersh do assert that Allington Castle "was erected by William de Columbariis or Columbers." This William Columbers was without doubt the same as William de Elinton, perhaps son of Sir Giles. This castle was destroyed in 1174-5 by order of Henry II., the Pipe Roll of 21st Henry II. containing the following entry, "In prosternendo Castello de Alintone 60s."

The foundations of a semicircular tower and adjacent rooms, which doubtless formed part of the keep of this Columbers Castle, were excavated by me in the south courtyard of the existing castle, and I have caused them to be marked out on the surface of the ground by cementing them over.‡ Where the walls were not bonded together I had a row of tiles inserted edgewise, which can easily be traced in the cement surface. The characteristic of these foundations is the heavy buttressing they display, the buttresses having been built against and not bonded into the wall. The plan of the Columbers keep is manifestly incomplete. Part of the existing south wall of the castle, adjoining the

* The lines of this "original" or "old boundary wall," partly rebuilt, partly indicated by foundations discovered, are shewn on the "General Plan." On the west side the lines are "conjectural."

† *Castra adulterina*, or castles erected without licence of the sovereign, had sprung up in great number in the troubled reign of Stephen. The treaty of Wallingford provided for their destruction, which was carried out by Henry II.; but Allington was not overthrown till later than the general destruction.

‡ See the parts of the "Historical Plan" coloured grey.

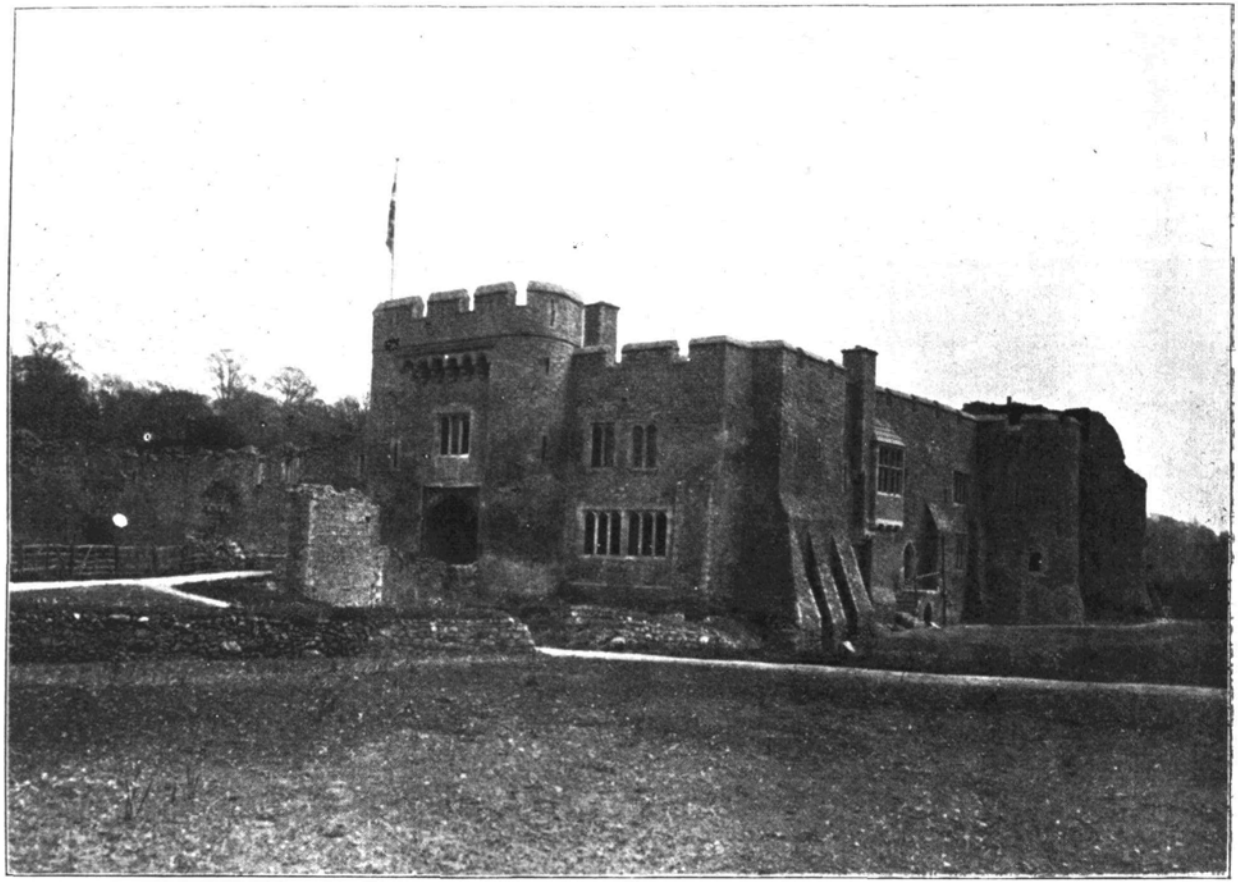


Photo.] ALLINGTON CASTLE (C): VIEW FROM N.W. [*W. G.-W.*

foundations, seems to be of earlier date than any other existing walls (except the early-Norman fragment of the boundary wall), and probably belonged to the keep; but it is too thin to have been its outside wall. It may have been an inside wall dividing the keep into two parts by an arrangement still seen in the twelfth-century keeps of Rochester and Colchester. If so, a considerable part of the keep lying to the south of this wall must have been destroyed, leaving no trace of its foundations.

Certainly one and probably both of the existing dove-cotes were likewise built at this time. The east dove-cote was standing before the existing enclosure wall was built up against it, as anyone can see at a glance. That enclosure wall belonged to the late twelfth-century manor-house. The dove-cote is therefore earlier and must belong to the previous stage of building, that is to say, to William de Elinton's castle. Now William de Elinton is also known as William de Columbariis or Columbers. It is tolerably clear that he must have taken his name from these very *columbaria*. The west dove-cote has been much altered by being turned into an oast-house, but in style of building it must have been identical with the other. These two dove-cotes are the oldest existing in England as far as I have been able to discover.

As above stated, the Columbers castle was destroyed in 1174-5. An agricultural estate without some kind of manor-house could hardly get along. When the castle was destroyed a manor-house had to be built, and no doubt it was built at once, that is to say in or immediately after 1175. Of this manor-house there remain very considerable fragments. It was built out of the materials of the destroyed Columbers castle, and contains, mixed up in the body of the walls along with the general mass of Kentish rag, numbers of wrought blocks of Caen stone shewing Norman tooling. The lower part of the present gate-house and the north end of the west wing of the castle belong to this late twelfth-century manor-house.*

* See the parts of the "Historical Plan" coloured brown.

The gate-house, or north wing, of this manor-house was greatly altered in 1282, but within its upper chamber can be seen the ends of the old corbels embedded in the wall, and the line of the original wall-top much below that of the thirteenth century. Similar broken-off corbels can be seen in the two upper rooms in the north part of the west wing, whilst the profile of the inner wall of the north wing can be clearly seen on the east face of the gate-house. The south end of the west wing of the manor-house is plainly visible with its coign stones forming a vertical line in the middle of the present west wing of the castle, as seen from the outer courtyard, and a corresponding line of junction can be observed in the upper part of the outer wall of the same wing facing the moat. In the end or south wall of this wing of the old manor-house (now merely a partition wall between two rooms of the lengthened thirteenth century wing) there remains a blocked-up slit-window, which I hope presently to open again. All but one of the windows of this manor-house were replaced by larger openings in Wyatt's days. The only original window is that on the ground floor facing south beside the entrance archway. There are several original arrow-slits, some of them very small with no place for the knuckles of the archer. One larger arrow-slit facing west was half cut away in the fourteenth or fifteenth century and a trefoil-headed window inserted. Some of the arrow-slits of this period in the north wall were built up by Wyatt.

Another fact about the twelfth-century manor-house worth mention is the immense thickness (some 2 feet) and relatively marked slope of its flat roof, as shewn by the offsets that outline it above and below on the gate-house wall. It must have been made of rammed clay carried on timbers supported by the great corbels I have mentioned. The Penchester additions, a century later, were roofed with lead, of which the cut-off strip remains built into the wall in one place.

Another partly remaining feature of this manor-house is the enclosure or garden-wall. This started from the south

end of the west wing, and still remains as the substructure [coloured brown in the plan] of the west wall of Penchester's addition. It was knocked down to make way for Solomon's tower, but its foundations exist beyond that tower to the south, where I found them by excavation, and they continue south and then bend round east to join and include the remaining fragment of the eleventh-century wall above described. The wall continues beyond the Norman bit, following round within the moat and about ten feet from it, going north-east and then due north till it comes almost tangentially against the east dove-cote. It is thinned up against this, but widens beyond it again. Against it, just where the moat opens into the Medway, was a sentry-box tower, of which I discovered the base when cleaning out the inner of the two north moats. It crossed the inner moat at this point, but I found its foundations curving round ten feet within the outer moat, till, close to the present entrance drive and at a point nearly north of the entrance gate, it ended up against a problematic mass of masonry, which appears to have blocked the outer moat at this point. However, the foundations begin again a few yards further on, starting away from another mass of masonry of similar character to the former, but quite unsymmetrically placed. It then continued curving round and was heading almost due south, where the last traces of it were lost, close on the margin of the inner moat. There seems little doubt but that it crossed this inner moat again and joined the north-west angle of the manor-house at a point where its broken-off foundations can be clearly seen emerging through the moat-bank, just under that angle.

It is not unlikely that this twelfth-century garden-wall was built for the most part on the lines of the wall which has been referred to as having surrounded the early-Norman village, and which may have been overthrown when the Columbers Castle was demolished. The moat that followed round a few feet from it may well have been of the same early date, or even earlier—the deepened edge of the original swamp. The peculiar way in which the garden-

wall curves in to form the south wall of the manor-house suggests that here it left the original line.* The inner moat along the north cuts through this wall in two places, as already described, and would seem, therefore, to be of later date; but the gate-house contains a place for a drawbridge which seems to belong to the manor-house work and points to the existence of some sort of inner moat previous to Penchester's restoration of the castle.

The only reference to Allington during its manor-house days that I have yet found is in the *Liber Rubeus de Scaccario*, 12 and 13 John, where amongst the "Milites tenentes de Archiepiscopatu Cantuarensi" in Kent is entered:—

Avelina de Longo campo tenet dimidium feodum in Alintone.†

How it came to pass that the owner of Allington at this time and henceforward held of the archbishop I cannot say. Allington was not one of the manors recovered by Lanfranc from Odo and others at the famous assembly at Penenden Heath. Warenne did not hold it, so far as I can discover, of the archbishop. I cannot find out when it was granted to him.

I find a note in Philipot that in Darell's MSS., which I have not been able to trace, it is stated that there exists in the Tower records, therefore now in the Record Office, a list of castles of the eighth year of Henry III. (1223-4), where Allington is said to belong still to one of the Columbers family. Of this list I can hear nothing. Besides, in 1223 Allington was not a castle. Nor do I know anything more about Avelina de Longo campo. For convenience and clearness of reference I always refer to the twelfth-century manor-house as the 'Avelina' house.

We now come to the purchase of Allington by Stephen of Penchester or Penshurst, a man about whom much might be said, for he was a remarkable person, but I have to economise space and must leave an account of him for another occasion. Darell's MSS., I believe, are again the

* See the "Map."

† H. Hall: *The Redbook of the Exchequer*, vol. ii., pp. 469, 472.

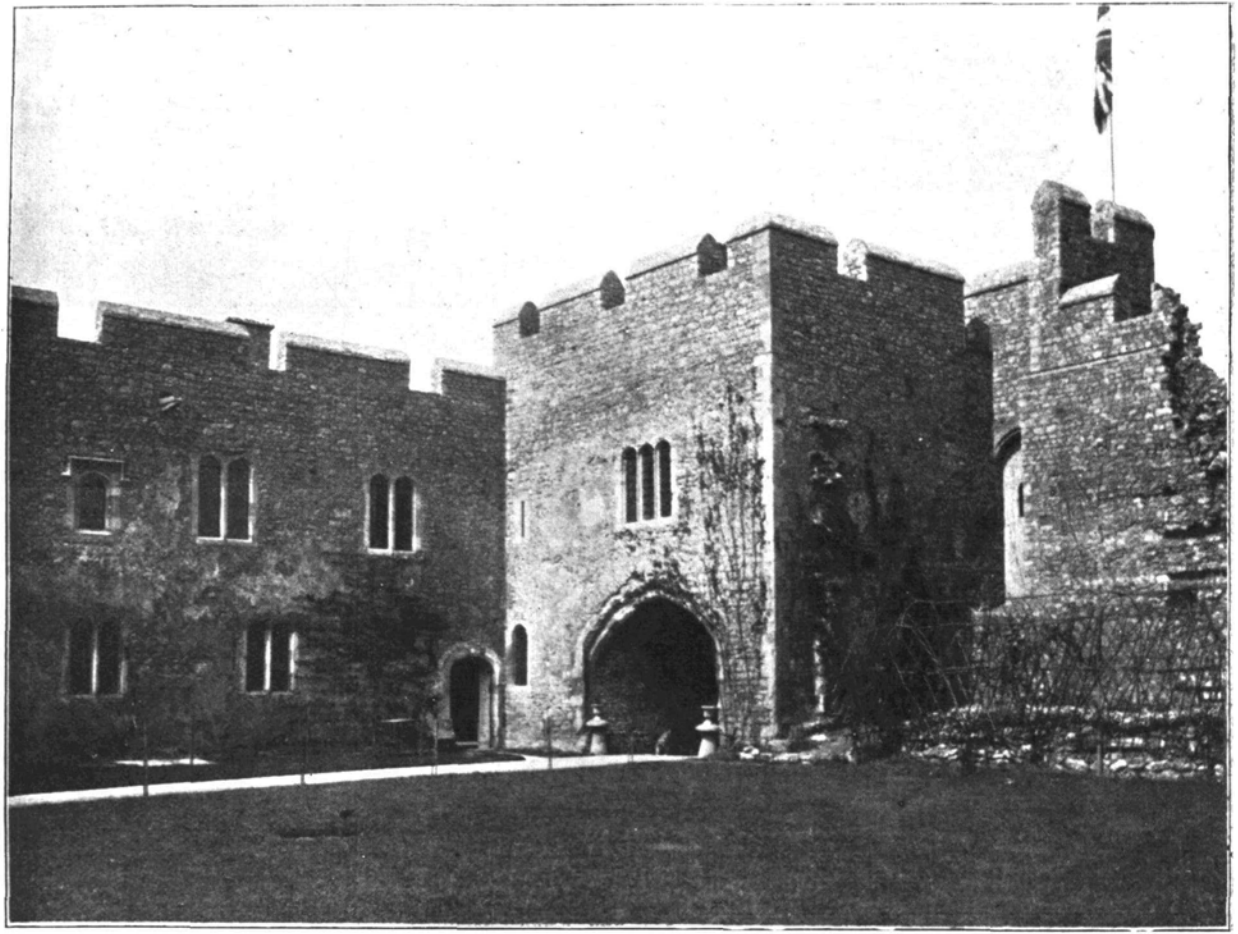


Photo.] ALLINGTON CASTLE (D): MANOR-HOUSE AND GATE-HOUSE. [*W. G.-W.*

authority for the statement that Stephen of Penchester made the purchase from one Osbert, apparently a Columbers. At what date this occurred is not stated. When we come, however, to the eighth year of Edward I. (1281), which cannot have been long afterwards, we are on firm ground, for on May 25 in that year Stephen of Penchester and Margaret his wife obtained licence in due form to fortify and embattle their mansion-house at Allington.* We may assume the work to have been begun at once and to have been finished within a very few years, for castles had to be built complete for immediate use and did not drag along in the building like places of worship. Margaret was the daughter of John de Burgh, Earl of Kent, and widow of Robert de Orreby. She was Penchester's second wife, and I am inclined to think that the purchase of Allington was in some way connected with this second marriage, the date of which I cannot discover. At all events the mention of the wife's name in the licence to crenellate, and the fact that on Penchester's death in 1299 Allington remained the property of Margaret during her life, and did not go to the children of the first wife till Margaret died, seem to imply that the property was in reality hers.

An examination of the existing remains shews that the new work was probably done in the following order.† The gate-house was raised and embattled, and so were the outer walls of the two wings (west and north) of the Avelina house. The north and east wings of the castle were built, from the gate-house round to the remains of the destroyed Columbers keep on the south side, with a tower at the north-east corner. The outer walls along the east and south-east sides were heavily-buttressed in a manner which may have been suggested by the destroyed Columbers keep. The work included considerable ranges of buildings. A banqueting hall and fine rooms behind it to the north, and to the south of it a room which was divided, I suppose, into

* "Quod Stephen de Penchester et Margaretta ux. ejus possint Kernellare domum suam in com. Kanc." (Pat. Rolls. See Cal., p. 437.)

† See the parts coloured blue in the "Historical Plan."

buttery, kitchen, etc., were built along the east side. The fire-place of the hall was enclosed in a semi-circular projection with flanking buttresses which slope up its sides on to the outer face of the east wall. A little further south there came a large tower. In the south wall, at its junction with the remnants of the Columbers keep, was built a semi-circular projection enclosing another fire-place, very similar to that of the great hall, but the building which it served has disappeared, all the existing buildings to the south of the buttery and kitchen adjoining the great hall being later additions. A garderobe, forming a square projection externally, was inserted in the bit of Columbers wall that still exists in the south wall of the castle. A little to west of it the Penchester work begins again, and the junction with the Columbers wall can be clearly traced right down to the bottom of the foundations. The ground floor of the tower called Solomon's Tower was built, when suddenly the whole style of the building changes, and a new architect obviously came in. He completed Solomon's Tower and built the chambers north of it that fill the space up to, and abut against, the south end of the west wing of the Avelina house. These chambers I call the Penchester lodgings. Their outer wall consists in its lower part of the Avelina wall of enclosure, which was strong enough to carry the weight of the upper part of the wall now added. The same architect also built the tower outside the Penchester lodgings. It is built against and not bonded into the previously existing wall below, but it is bonded into the now added upper part of the wall.

Penchester's work thus falls into two periods or stages. In the first the vaults are roughly made of rag, and the coigns and arches are often of rag or firestone, rather roughly handled, though sometimes of a better stone. The mortar used is not very good, and the work appears to have been quickly and rather indifferently done. In the second period all this is changed. The vaults are now made very neatly of brick. Excellently-tooled Caen stone is employed for all openings and coigns. The mortar used is excessively

hard. Analysed by the London County Council analyst it was pronounced by him the strongest he had ever seen. The bricks have been burnt in a very hot fire, and many of them are quite vitrified. There is no doubt whatever of their age, which has been accepted by such authorities as Mr. St. John Hope and the late Mr. Micklethwaite. I suspect the architect of this later period to have been a Frenchman. Brick vaults of the same sort were employed in the south of Normandy and in Anjou and Maine* at this time. Moreover, there is an unusual and remarkable symmetry about the design of the Penchester lodgings, a neatness and a logicalness of arrangement very un-English in character. On the ground floor are two main chambers which appear to have been guard-rooms, each entered by a door from the court, and lit by two trefoil-headed windows looking into the court. There was access from one of them into the lower part of the tower, which is placed quite symmetrically with relation to the rooms. The same arrangement is repeated on the upper floor, except that there both rooms have access to the upper room (a garderobe) in the tower, and each of those rooms had two windows, like those below, looking into the court. In the midst of the façade on the court side was a rectangular tower, containing on the ground floor a small vaulted chamber lit by a slit, to which access was obtained from the south guard-room. This may have been a prison or armoury. Above it, on the upper floor, was a lobby approached from outdoors to north and south by two symmetrical staircases, each starting from just without the door leading into the ground-floor rooms from the court. This lobby gave access to the two first-floor rooms, and is one of the best preserved pieces of the old work. I have been thus detailed in describing this building because when Wyatt built the cross-building up against it, dividing the courtyard in two, he broke down one of the staircases and entirely masked the original design, besides destroying some of the windows, so that I only by degrees discovered the original and very remarkable arrangement.

* My informant is Mr. Ed. Dillon, F.S.A.

Another notable detail about this building is the drain. This runs obliquely from the court under the north guard-room, through the bottom of the tower, and out to the moat. It was massively built of large stones well embedded in the strong mortar. It flushed the foot of the two shafts that descended from the upper floor garderobe of the tower, and then it passed out through a low archway at the foot of the tower and down into the moat. It must be remembered that, before there was a lock, the moat was filled and almost emptied at every spring-tide, so that tolerably good drainage was thus obtained.

It should perhaps here be added that Kilburne (p. 12) states that Penchester built "a faire Tower called Solomon's Tower," and as Solomon's Tower in its upper part was built in exactly the same style as the Penchester lodgings, it is to be concluded that if Penchester built the one he also built the other. Unfortunately it is likewise stated that the gate-house was built by Penchester's successor, Henry de Cobham. For several reasons it is impossible to accept this statement without reserve. To begin with, the gate-house is part of the Avelina manor-house. Then, as far as its embattlement and elevation are concerned, the work is of the same kind and date as that of the *ground floor* of Solomon's tower, which must have been earlier than the upper floors. Lastly, the gate-house seems to have been almost if not quite the first thing taken in hand when the restoration was begun, so that if Penchester built the tower he embattled the gate-house. It used to trouble me because I could find no castle gate-house of the time of Edward I. at all resembling this one.* Its flanking towers are so weak and slender and have so little salience. It was only when I realised that the lower part of it might be really nothing more than the gateway of an unfortified manor-house of the end of the twelfth century that the difficulty seemed to be overcome.†

* That at Lewes comes closest to it.

† Awaiting detailed analysis the whole of the gate-house has been coloured both brown (Avelina) and blue (Penchester) in the "Historical Plan."

[A query as to whether the inner moat could not be assigned to Penchester

Photo.] ALLINGTON CASTLE (E): PENCHESTER LODGINGS. [*W. G.-W.*

Penchester when he embattled the gate-house also built the existing bridge and now ruined barbican before it. The latter consisted of two thick walls of masonry on either hand and was closed to the north by great wooden gates overhung by machicolations. Each of the side walls could be ascended by small flights of steps leading to the machicolation platform. The bridge walls were high enough to protect a man on horseback. Further north at the outer moat was some other defensive work, but of that only trifling and inexplicable foundations remain.

Amongst the fragments of old work which I have recovered in excavation or out of the old walls is a bit of a sculptured corbel of the thirteenth century, and a portion of a deep hood-moulding of the same date, both possibly from the inside face of one of the destroyed windows in the west side of the banqueting hall. A jamb of one of these windows still exists smothered in later work. A fragment of a small late-Norman window jamb, elaborately adorned with a nail-head moulding retaining traces of colour, was also found in the soil of the court. I have no idea whence it came.

Stephen of Penchester died at Easter 1299, and was

has elicited from the author a letter containing further remarks, which are too important to omit—"I find for quite certain that (I.) the room over the gate house and the upstairs room of the Avelina wing are earlier than Penchester. Both were of the same height and were lower till Penchester raised them. In both Penchester cut off the ends (which still exist) of the corbels which supported the lower roof. Both contain re-used Norman stones. Hence the bulk of the gate house and the bulk of the Avelina wing are of the same date. It is only the angle-room at N.W. corner that seems to have been much altered, the section of the N. wall being this—much thicker for ground than first floor." (Here follows a section shewing a deep interior off-set, on which the joists of the first floor rest.) "(II.) The gate house had a drawbridge before Penchester. Penchester built the barbican which made drawbridge useless. Hence that moat must have existed before Penchester. .... Of course, if it o^d be shewn that that Cobham (or a Cobham) built the barbican, then P. m^t have arranged the gate house and made the moat. But this is improbable. A drawbridge was common to every old manor house and the moat was more essential at the gate than anywhere. As the upper gate-house room is Avelina the ground floor must be. Also Penchester in 1282 w^d not have built from the ground level such a weak gate-house as this." Perhaps the puzzle presented by the relation of the inner moat to the Avelina garden-wall, which crosses it at two points, may be explained by the possibility that the drawbridge and an inner moat were made in the interval between Avelina and Penchester.—ED.]

buried in Penshurst Church under an altar-tomb; only a portion of his effigy remains. It seems to have been carved in the same workshop as the effigy of his son-in-law, Sir Henry de Cobham, in Shorne Church. Allington belonged, as aforesaid, to his widow Margery for life. She is recorded as having held it as half a knight's fee of John de Roos as of his manor of Horton Kirkby, and he of the archbishop. Penchester by his first wife had two daughters, Joan (b. 1259) and Alice (b. 1269). Joan married Sir Henry de Cobham of Rundall-in-Shorn, and in due course conveyed Allington to him, when the widow Margaret died in 2 Edward II. (1308-9). The other daughter, Alice, married Sir Philip de Columbers. She inherited Penshurst* and Lyghe. Henry de Cobham was surnamed "le Uncle." He was second son of John de Cobham, and was the first Justiciary of all England, Warden of the Cinque Ports, and Constable of Dover, Rochester, and Tonbridge Castles. He was more than once Sheriff of Kent. In 1282 he was with Edward I. at the siege of Caerlaverock. When he died, about 1316, his widow Joan held Allington till her death in 18 Edward II. (1324-5). She was succeeded at Allington by her son Stephen de Cobham. His wife was named Anicia or Avice. He was summoned to Parliament from 20 Edward II. to 6 Edward III., in which year (1332) he died. Allington was held by his widow till her death in 1340, and she was succeeded by her son John de Cobham (b. 1319). In 1342 John de Cobham was in parts beyond the sea in the King's service.† He was one of the retinue of his uncle Reginald de Cobham in the expedition to France.‡ In 1346 he paid aid for Allington as half a knight's fee at the knighting of the Black Prince.§ He died 14 September 1362. He was succeeded by his son Thomas

* The Lieger booke of Feversham, quoted by J. Weever (*Monuments*, p. 330), states: "Alicia vero natu minor Stephani de Pynchester filia et una Heredum in virum accepit Dominum Philippum de Columbaris militem, ex qua duos suscepit filios, Stephanum et Thomam."

† Calendar, Close Rolls, Edward III., 1341-3, p. 683.

‡ Dugdale.

§ State Papers. Feudal Acts, vol. iii., p. 42.

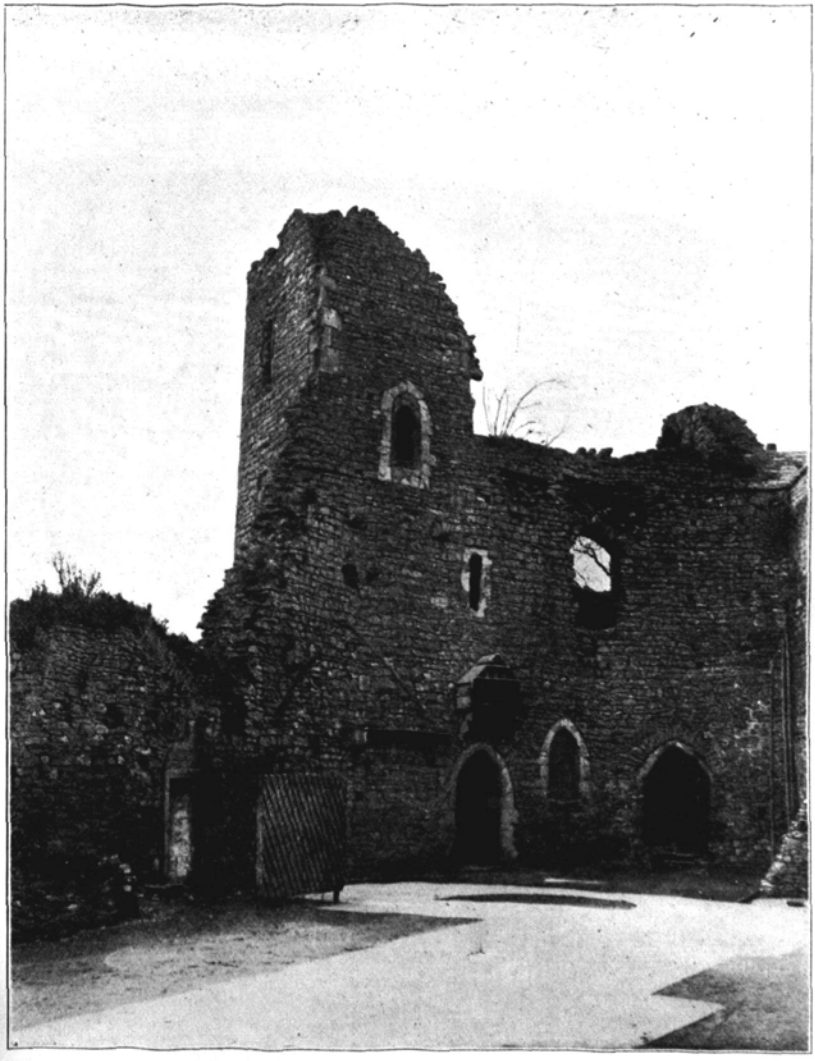


Photo.] ALLINGTON CASTLE (F): INNER COURTYARD. [*W. G.-W.*

de Cobham, aged 19, who was Sheriff of Kent in 1 Richard II. (1377-8). He married Maude, daughter of Sir William Pympe (? John Pympe); she died 9 April 1380, and her brass is in Cobham Church. It is engraved in the Sepulchral Memorials of the Cobham Family (Maidstone Library). Beyond this point I cannot follow the Cobhams of Allington, for Dugdale says "of Thomas de Cobham and of his descendants I have no more to say in regard they were not peers of this Realm." I hope some day, however, to find out more about them.

There now comes an absolute blank in the history of Allington Castle extending over about 100 years. During this time the Allington Cobhams, like so many of the Kent gentry, probably grew poor. During the hundred years' war Kent sunk from the fifth to tenth place in wealth among English counties. In 1454 the wool of Kent was almost the poorest in quality in the country. Kent, too, was badly involved in the Cade rebellion and in the wars of 1460 and 1470.* Certain industries indeed advanced in Kent in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but the nobles did not share in them, and they only grew poorer as trade developed. The brewing and iron industries went ahead at this time, but the Cobhams of Allington were neither brewers nor iron-masters. I think it very probable that the castle suffered from some military attack in this dark period, and that then it was that the south wall was broken down as we see it to-day, and Solomon's Tower breached. Certain it is that Solomon's Tower was not among the parts occupied by the Wyatts, for they put new windows in all the parts they inhabited. The only sign of any repairs at this period to Solomon's Tower is the filling of the top doorway, which gave access from the staircase to the south battlement walk. This was roughly turned into a window, I suppose to prevent people falling out when the battlement walk was gone. In the Jacobean restoration a rough and tumble roof was put

* For the sufferings of Kent in the war of 1470 see Warkworth's *Chronicle*, 21, 22.

on to the broken remains of Solomon's Tower, but no attempt was made to build it up.

Thus, I think, it is tolerably certain that Allington was in a bad way throughout the fifteenth century, and was going from bad to worse. According to Darell, quoted by Philipot, it passed into the possession of the Brent family in the beginning of the reign of Edward IV., having been purchased by Robert Brent. There is some doubt, however, of the truth of this statement. It is more probable that it passed either by purchase or marriage into the hands of the Moresbys, and the known facts are as follows. Joan, daughter and heiress of Reginald Moresby, already owned Allington when, in or before 1475, she married John Gainsford of Lincolnshire. This same John Gainsford was, in 1483, a traitor living at Allington. In 1484 he was attainted, and in 1485 pardoned with a number of others by act of parliament. Before 10 August 1486 he was dead, leaving a son Robert (born 1476). On that date Joan Moresby, widow, settled Allington in the hands of Nicholas Gainsford and William Covert as trustees. It is stated incidentally that the manor and advowson of Allington at that time were worth 100 shillings, exactly the same valuation as that recorded in Doomsday Book. Allington is still held as of the manor of Horton Kirkby by service of half a knight's fee. Shortly after this settlement the widow Moresby married John Brent, and this is the first appearance I can find of the Brents in connection with Allington. She died 16 July 1492, John Brent having predeceased her. Robert Gainsford was the heir to Allington. He was aged 16. Allington was sold by his trustees to Sir Henry Wyatt in the same year, 1492. The Brents therefore never owned Allington at all. The sale of young Gainsford's Kentish property was doubtless due to two considerations. First, the castle was certainly in very bad repair and needed much money spending on it. Secondly, young Gainsford was a Lincolnshire lad, and apparently had property in that county, where, I believe, his descendants still survive.

Of Sir Henry Wyatt's life and doings I need say nothing

here, as the facts about him and his son and grandson are easily discoverable in the *Dictionary of National Biography* and the authorities there referred to. Let it suffice if I call attention to his portrait painted by Holbein, which is in the Louvre, whereof a copy belongs to Lady Romney. A pendant to it, likewise probably a copy of a better original, is the portrait of Wyatt's favourite cat. At a later date (prob. for George Wyatt) a picture of Sir H. Wyatt in prison was made up out of these two pictures. Of Sir Thos. Wyatt, the poet, there exist copies of a circular portrait, no doubt by Holbein, and agreeing with the well-known woodcut after Holbein; on the back of this original was a representation of Wyatt's maze, whereof there is a copy, along with the other family portraits belonging to Lady Romney. Another portrait of Sir T. Wyatt is recorded by Vertue as in the Earl of Stafford's possession; it was inscribed on the frame: "Anno Æta suæ XXIII; (A)D MDXXVII." Where is this picture?

The work done by the Wyatts at Allington was very considerable.* To begin with, the whole place was put in order. The Early English windows were knocked out in many places and larger Tudor windows inserted. A fine porch was added before the entrance of the banqueting hall, with a lady's bower above it. An entirely new building was erected, cutting the courtyard into two. The ground floor of this was offices, the first floor a long gallery—an essential convenience for any up-to-date Tudor house. All the principal rooms were panelled. New fire-places were inserted in rooms where there had been none, and some old Early English fire-places were replaced by new ones of Tudor style. In the great hall a gallery seems to have been constructed, and a doorway made on the first floor to give access to it, whilst a staircase was recklessly hewn out of the substance of the east wall of the hall, so that it is a wonder how the great mass of wall above is supported on the edge of the thin remnant below. A new kitchen with servants' rooms over

* The Tudor and later works are coloured pink in the "Historical Plan."

it was built at the back of the old kitchen, and I was fortunate enough to find still preserved under plaster the old doorways and hatch whereby it was entered and the dinner served. Much of this work was done in a rough and ready fashion, and some of it was sheer jerry-building.

Thomas Wyatt, destined to become poet, statesman, lover of Anne Boleyn, friend of Henry VIII., and what-not, was born at Allington in 1503. Sir Henry Wyatt died 10 November 1537. Sir Thomas only outlived him till the 11th October 1542. Nevertheless, Camden and others give the chief credit of the Allington restorations to Sir Thomas. Thus Camden (*Britannia*, edition of 1607, p. 245) writes: "Allington Castrum, ubi splendidas ædes construxit T. Wiattus." It is, I think, clear that the Tudor work falls into two parts. The long gallery with the archway beneath it, and the very simple windows in different parts of the castle, whose only adornment is a plain chamfer, are evidently part of a different restoration from the porch of the great hall. In the gate-house the windows inserted in the first-floor room are of different dates, and so are the two windows in the north-west corner room upstairs; in each case one is much simpler than the other. To the earlier work (which we may well ascribe to Sir Henry) likewise belongs the wall forming the north boundary of the privy garden, and uniting the north-east tower to the east dove-cote. At this time, I take it, the encircling wall north of the castle, and within the outer moat, was knocked down, and perhaps the outer moat itself was filled in.

Sir Henry Wyatt's work seems to have been simple and purely done for practical purposes. Sir Thomas added whatever was of a "splendid" description. This epithet, I fear, can only have been properly applied to the fine panelling, doors, and other internal decorations, of which not a trace remains. At Ladd's Court, Chart Sutton, the fine oak lining of the hall-porch may still be seen, as well as some of the doors and the nobly-moulded oak beams; but this is all. The rest was turned to I know not what mean uses at a relatively recent date. It is stated in Russell's *History of*

Maidstone (1881, p. 47) that in 1848, "on the mantel piece of the refection room [*sic*] at the Castle might be seen the initials of Sir Thomas Wyatt, T. W. 1538," which gives us a date for some at least of the decorations. The room referred to was not the banqueting hall, for that had been burnt down long before 1848. Sir Thomas Wyatt was succeeded by his son Sir Thomas the younger, but he only held the place till 1554, when he was beheaded for his share in the Kentish rebellion. He apparently did nothing for the place.

During the Wyatts' tenure of Allington the castle enjoyed its most glorious days. Here Henry VII. visited Sir Henry. Henry VIII. came here in 1527 to meet Wolsey in all his glory returning from that famous embassy of his to France, when he negotiated the treaty which was sealed by both sovereigns with those splendid golden seals, whereof one is shewn in our Record Office museum and the other is in the archives of France. Henry VIII. seems to have been here again in 1530, if the well-known chair in the Maidstone Museum does not lie; whilst he was certainly here on 31 July 1536, for two royal grants on that day are dated from Allington Castle. In October 1544 Queen Catherine Parr dined here on her way to Leeds Castle, and 7s. 4d. is charged in her accounts for making her dinner ready.

After the failure of the Kentish rebellion, the castle, now in the hands of the Crown and destined soon to be confiscated, was used as a place of detention by the Sheriff of Kent for such of the prisoners awaiting their trial as were "men of substance." Into whose hands the castle came after that I cannot say, but a document exists in the Record Office, dated 17 December 1559, in which one Tho. Norton is described as "of Allyngton Castle."*

The rest of the story is well known and need not be related at any length. In 1568 Queen Elizabeth granted the castle and lands to the master of her jewel-office, John Astley, to hold by knight's service for 30 years at an annual

* Calendar State Papers (Domestic), 1547—80.

rental of £100 2s. 7d.; at the same time she granted him the palace at Maidstone. He repaired and resided at the latter and abandoned the former, which was never again inhabited by its owner till the other day. At this time the lands were disforested.*

In 1583 Queen Elizabeth granted in perpetuity the castle, manor, and advowson of Allington to Sir John Astley's son. In 1591† there was some trouble about the lands granted to Mr. Astley, which for an unstated reason (probably the end of the 30 years' lease) were sequestered by the Queen and were in Mr. Floyd's custody, and he was cutting down trees, etc. The matter appears to have been settled, as the property remained in possession of the Astleys.

In the seventeenth century we find the Bests, a well-to-do Kentish family, resident at Allington for a long series of years. It was probably to make it suitable for their occupation that the last considerable restoration, to which I must refer, was undertaken. I can find no reference whatever to it in any document, but the main facts are obvious. Probably before it was taken in hand there had occurred a considerable fire, which burnt down the great hall, the chambers behind it, the north-east tower, and the north wing. Traces of fire can still be observed at many points in this area. This fire must have occurred before the Astley restoration, or those buildings also would have suffered. It is probable that the fire happened somewhere about 1600, and that the restoration soon followed it. The purpose of the restoration was to provide more accommodation for servants and farm hands, the castle henceforward being practically nothing but a large though gradually diminishing house for a gentleman farmer of some means. What was done was in the last degree destructive. To begin with, all the battlements except three embrasures in the south-east wall and one at

* I ought to have mentioned above the grant in 1520 to Sir H. Wyatt (who in his day had been Master of the Crown jewels) of free warren in his demesne lands of the manors of Alynton, etc.

† Calendar State Papers (Domestic), 1591-4, page 3.

the north-west angle were cut away. The lead roof of Penchester was stripped off and an attic storey was added all over the building. The battlements of the long gallery (of which I afterwards found fragments) were likewise removed and a new tile roof was put on there. A new storey was also added to the kitchen building, and the gate-house and its towers were crowned with tiled roofs. The remains of Solomon's Tower were also roofed in a rough and ready fashion. The interior was probably little if at all changed, the panelled rooms certainly being respected. I believe that at this time Wyatt's porch, probably damaged above by fire, received its new roof, whilst a new roof was likewise given to the building whose ground floor was the thirteenth-century kitchen. Its upper part was much cut about and patched, so that I have not yet been able to interpret it. There are the remains of a large cross-formed arrow-shoot at the top on the west side, not wholly cut away when the wall was shaped down to form a gable end. At this time too the battlements of the east tower were filled in and the whole raised and roofed over so as to give an extra room on the top. The filled-in arrow-shoots and battlements can still be traced in it.

The house thus prepared was leased to John Best (born 1573) sometime early in the seventeenth century. He was living there in 1619 with a son aged 21 years, and he was still living there at the time of the Heralds' Visitation of Kent in 1663-8, upwards of 90 years of age. He can hardly have been alive still in 1672, when some work must have been done at Allington, for a Kent newspaper of 1890, of which I have a cutting, records that "in one apartment on the right hand side near the gateway is—or rather was till recently—the date 1672 over the fire-place," doubtless carved on an overmantel. I suppose this to have been done by the next occupant, whose name is unknown to me. He no doubt was the master of the unfortunate young domestic servant at Allington Castle, who, in 1678, was sentenced to death for murdering her new-born infant by throwing it out of one of the upper windows.

In 1720 Sir Robert Marsham, first Lord Romney, a descendant of Sir Thomas Wyatt in the female line, acquired Sir Jacob Astley's Kent estates by exchange for his estates in Norfolk.* From that time the progress of the castle was steadily downhill. Buck's view, engraved in 1735, shews the condition of the place about the time of the transfer. In 1760, according to a note which I copied in the Maidstone Museum, the castle was definitely converted into a farmhouse. Plenty of sketches and engravings exist from this time on, but they give little information that cannot be gathered from the building itself. They shew it in an ever increasingly filthy and abandoned state, with the courtyard full of beasts and their litter, and cluttered up with farm refuse of every kind.

In 1792 the Lower Medway Navigation Company was incorporated, and in 42 George III. it obtained, amongst other powers, the right of building a lock at Allington. This put an end to the ford, which was drowned out.

A drawing made in August 1822, now in the British Museum, shews the end of the long gallery still standing. Not long afterwards there was a fire and it was burnt down. The lower storey of this transversal building was presently patched up, I believe in 1829, and part of it made into a brewhouse. The place of the long gallery was taken by a new and very disfiguring tile roof, which I had the felicity of pulling down when I re-erected the long gallery. At this time the remains of the castle were divided into two farmhouses. Farmer Fauchon occupied the west wing and the gate-house. He made cider in one of the upper rooms of the Penchester lodgings, whilst the guard-room was his dairy. The room over the gate-house was his bedroom, and there he died, its last inhabitant. Mr. Pack lived in the Wyatt kitchen and the rooms above it and above the old thirteenth-century kitchen, which itself was his dairy. When Fauchon died about 1840 the west wing was abandoned, and at this time the roof was torn off, the floors

* See Act of Parliament, 6 Geo. I.

removed, the panelling torn out, the pavement wrenched up, and the materials were used for building operations in the neighbourhood. Indeed, the order had gone out to tear down the walls and use the materials for building a new farmhouse, but the Rev. Lambert Larking, to his eternal honour, intervened and made so strenuous and effective a protest that the old walls were allowed to stand. Ivy rapidly invaded them and had done, and was doing, dreadful damage, when in 1905 I was able to have it bodily removed and the plague stayed. At some unrecorded time the north moat was filled in, and an orchard planted beside and over it.

Meanwhile the other house continued in occupation. It came to be subdivided, I believe, into two labourers' cottages, but, as little was done to maintain them, it fell into ruinous condition and was in its turn about to be abandoned and perhaps disroofed in the year 1895. Fortunately Mr. Dudley C. Falcke at that moment intervened and pluckily took a lease of the wretched tenement. He it was who saved it from destruction. He cleared away the farmers' mess and substituted roses for it. He made weak places strong, and kept things safe and sound for eleven years. When I first saw the castle it was in a very different state indeed from that in which he had found it. Outside unfortunately, while he had been embellishing and saving it within, the neighbourhood was being destroyed by the formation immediately in front of the gate-house of a hideous manufactory for tar pavement, which might just as well have been placed close to the lock, where it would have been less injurious.

I was fortunately enabled in 1905 to purchase first the lease and afterwards the freehold of the castle and some 40 acres about it. The leases of the various philistine undertakings in the immediate neighbourhood will shortly be terminated, and away will go the tar-paving people, the manure wharf, and the oast-houses which form so sordid a setting for the castle. Whether what I have done and am doing in the nature of restoration to bring the place again into a habitable condition does or does not meet with public approval I do

not know. My object has been to preserve all the historical features that can be kept, and at the same time to make the place a comfortable residence. The new battlements accurately reproduce such of the old ones as had been removed. Where I want windows I make them, and no one will ever confound my windows with earlier work. Ultimately I hope the place will be a credit to the neighbourhood, but I must confess that primarily I am at work upon it to satisfy myself. I must add in conclusion that the assistance and advice I have received from my old friend Mr. W. D. Caroë as architect have been of the most important and determining character, and that the details are his. My share of the work has been confined to discovering historical facts and to planning the arrangement of internal communications and adaptations for living purposes.

* * * * * *

Since writing the above I have discovered the position of the original postern. Its remains exist, blocked up, at the east end of the south wall, just below a small window inserted by Wyatt. The doorway is at so low a level that it must have been reached by steps descending to it from the inner courtyard. I have also discovered that the north-east tower, assigned to Penchester, was built on older foundations.

There are remains of the ends of walls at the exit of the moat into the Medway. These probably supported some form of weir or water-gate, by means of which the moat could be kept full of water at all states of the tide. Only spring tides can ever have filled it.

From Brewer and Gairdner's *Henry VIII.* (vol. ii., p. 226) I learn that Cavendish was wrong in saying that Henry VIII. met Wolsey at Allington in 1527. Wolsey probably visited Sir H. Wyatt on his way from Dover to London, but it was at Richmond that he met the king.

MARTIN CONWAY.

I.

MEDWAY

RIVER

Ruined abutments of old weir under mod: bridge

SWAMPY GROUND

MOAT

Avelina wall probably on lines of earlier wall

DOVECOTE

GARDEN

E. Norman wall

Old landing place

Old Moat

Old boundary wall

INNER MOAT

CASTLE

Remains of early-Norman moated mound

MODERN

ORCHARD

Lines of Old Moat

FIELD

Conjectural lines of original boundary wall

MOAT

Oast House

New Drive

Footpath to Back Entrance

DOVECOTE

Approximate North

OLD STABLE

ROAD to Field

SCALE OF FEET.

MAP

OF

ALLINGTON CASTLE.

1905

Made for reproduction by P.D.B.

PLAN OF ALLINGTON CASTLE 1905

North-east Tower

Penchester Banqueting Hall

Buttery and Kitchen

Yard

Wyatt

Kitchen with rooms over

over

long gallery

offices with

Wyatt

Foundations of Columbers Castle

Approximate North

COURTYARD

Remains of barbican and drawbridge

Gate House

Avelina Manor House

Penchester Lodgings

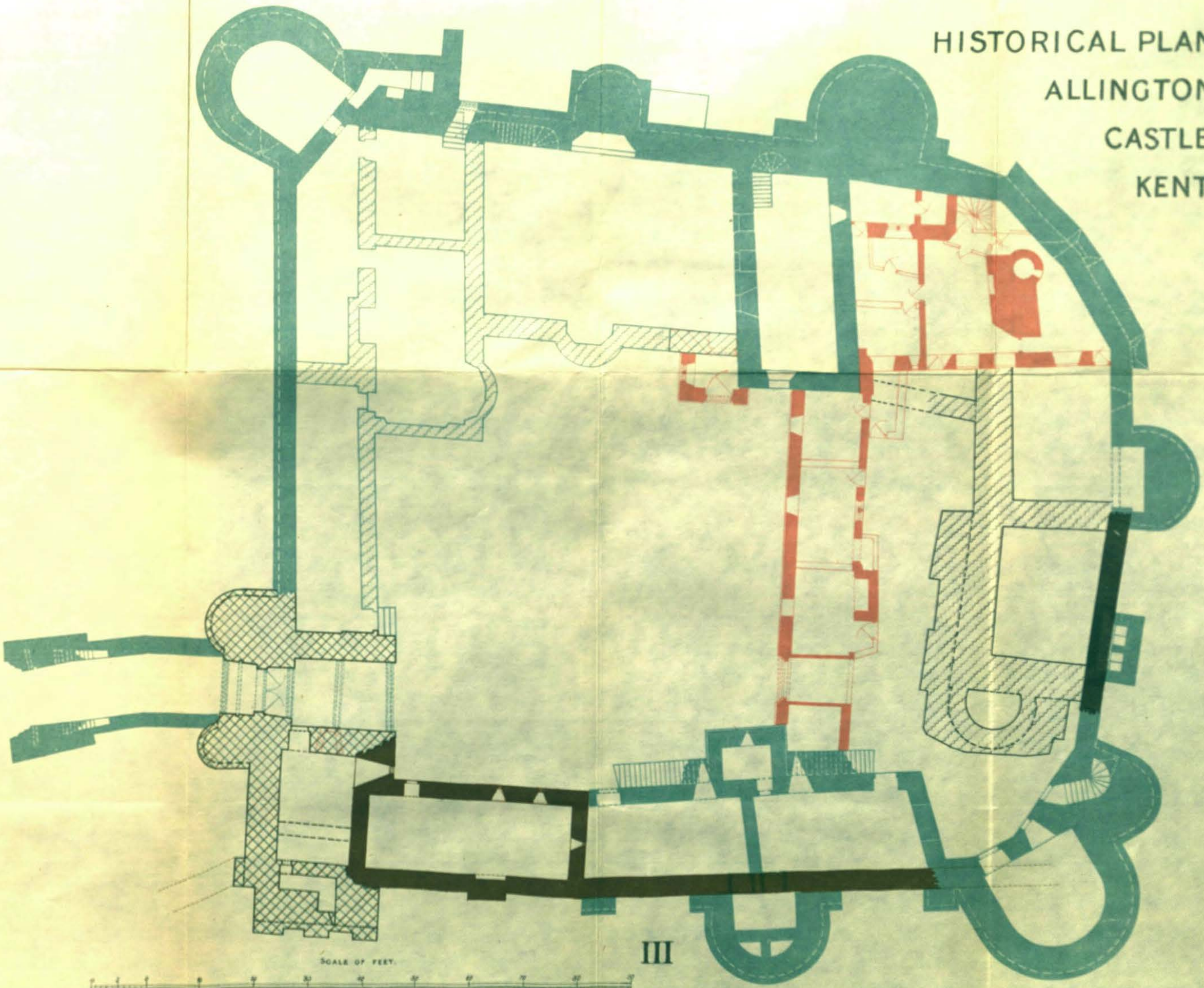
Solomons Tower

II

SCALE OF FEET.

10 5 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90

HISTORICAL PLAN
ALLINGTON
CASTLE
KENT



III