

The Landmark Trust

ROSSLYN CASTLE History Album



**Compiled by
the Earl and Countess of Rosslyn
2000, updated in 2024**

The Landmark Trust Shottesbrooke Maidenhead Berkshire SL6 3SW
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BASIC DETAILS

Built: c.1300 if not earlier

Keep added: c.1400

Enlarged: 1580-1622

Largely destroyed: 1650

Listed: Category A

First restored by the 7th Earl Rosslyn: 1983-84

Architect: James Simpson, Simpson & Brown, Edinburgh

Consultant engineer: Tony Sykes, Wren and Bell

Quantity Surveyor: Alan Miller, Gibson & Simpson

Contractor: Local tradesmen

First Landmarkers: Summer 1985

Further restoration & repair by Rosslyn Chapel Trust: 2022-24

Architect: Page\Park

Consultant Engineer: Narro Associates

Quantity Surveyor: Morham & Brochie Partnership

Contractor: John Dennis & Company (Scotland) Ltd

Contents

Summary	5
Introduction	5
Photographs by HM Office of Works, Ancient Monuments Department, 1928	12
Rosslyn Castle before restoration in March 1983	22
Rosslyn Castle during restoration works in March 1983	26
Major repair & restoration works in 2024.....	44
*Three Descriptions of the Castle	54
Rosslyn Castle, Its Buildings Past and Present, <i>by Andrew Kerr</i>	55
<i>The Fortified Houses of Scotland</i> , MacGibbon & Ross	71
‘Rosslyn Castle, Lothian’ by Richard Haslam, <i>Country Life</i> , 1989	82
Extract from <i>In Search of Scotland</i> , by H V Morton.....	86
The St Clairs of Rosslyn	88
The Restoration of Rosslyn Castle	102
<i>Roslin’s Famous Battle</i> , by M McGowan	110

*This section omitted in this temporary copy, pending production of the bound version.



The precipitous valley-side elevation of the Castle after repair in 2024.

Summary

Rosslyn is famous for three things: its ancient Castle, an extraordinary chapel and precipitous glen full of scenic romance. In the words of Sir Walter Scott, 'A morning of leisure can scarcely be anywhere more delightfully spent than in the woods of Rosslyn'. Rosslyn Castle sits on an almost insular rock overhanging river Esk; there has been some form of fortification on the site since at least the early 14th century. William de St Clair, who came from Normandy with William the Conqueror, obtained from Malcolm Canmore much of the lands of the Barony of Roslin in the 11th century, and may well have built some sort of edifice here.

The present Castle dates from various periods having suffered a chequered history. The earliest standing remains are those of the tower by the present bridge, probably built shortly after the Battle of Rosslyn in 1302. This crushing defeat of the English involved a small Scottish army fighting three battles against different English forces all on the same day; the first on the Bilston Burn, and the second and third between Dryden and Hawthornden. Local names perpetuate the sites: Shin-bones Field, where bones have been found when ploughing; the 'Hewings', where there was great slaughter; and the 'Killburn', a stream that ran red for three days.

The only access to the Castle was then, as now, along a one arched bridge across a deep gully. Originally the gap would have been crossed by a drawbridge between ashlar piers of which only the southerly one remains. The entrance was defended by a gate of great strength, the remains of which are just visible today and it is shown in the pre-1700 drawings. However, as the *Imperial Gazetteer of Scotland* (1871) points out, 'though highly pleasant and romantic, (the site) is very ill chosen for a fortalice; for while it finely overlooks the sylvan stream below, it is itself commanded by heights which press closely on its precincts, and look almost right down upon the tops of its chimneys'.

The rounded keep on the south-west corner was added c.1400 by Henry St Clair, the second Prince of Orkney. His son, Sir William, third St Clair Prince of Orkney, considerably enlarged and strengthened the Castle. This Sir William had travelled extensively in France, which probably explains the strong French influence in the design. The curious round buttresses, for example, are similar to the Chateau of Guillard on the Seine. He was also responsible for the justly famous Rosslyn Chapel, begun in 1446, and described as a 'Bible in stone', renowned for its richly carved interior. At this time, the St Clair family was wealthy enough to dine from gold and silver ware. When Sir William's wife, Lady Elizabeth, undertook to visit the family house in Edinburgh, she had an escort of 200 men on horseback. Sir William was so rich and powerful that he could even mint his own coins.

The works had hardly been completed when a fire destroyed part of them in 1447, caused by a lady-in-waiting looking for a dog under a bed and setting the bedclothes alight with her candle. The fire spread rapidly, ravaging a large part of the Castle. According to legend, this event was heralded by a mysterious warning. Edward St Clair of Dryden, riding hounds to meet Sir William, met a great company of rats. Amongst these, being led by the rest, was an old blind rat with a straw in its mouth.

This damage was repaired, and the Castle remained intact for nearly a century. In 1544 it was set on fire again, this time by the English under the Earl of Hertford during the 'Rough Wooing', when Henry VIII issued instructions to 'put all to fire and sword' in

Scotland in an attempt to secure the marriage of his son Edward to the infant Mary Queen of Scots. Edinburgh, Leith and Craigmillar Castles all suffered the same fate as Rosslyn. But the Castle was repaired again and from 1580 more buildings along the south-east side of the courtyard were erected by another Sir William including the clock tower and the great hall, underneath which three lower floors go down a further 50 feet to the solid rock. The fine moulded fireplace in the restored Great Hall bears a shield with the arms and initials of Sir William and his wife, Jean Edmonston and the date 1597. The extensive vaults below would have provided the kitchens, bakery and store-rooms for Sir William's more domestic quarters.

In 1622, the date over the front door and on the drawing room ceiling, Sir William's son, yet another William, completed the Castle by finishing the range begun by his father, adding confident Renaissance detailing and fine plaster ceilings. Alas this was to be short lived. In 1650, after the disaster at the Battle of Dunbar, Cromwell's troops under the command of General Monck, besieged the Castle with four cannon, a mortar, and 600 troops. The walls were battered down and the Castle sacked and slighted, leaving only what stands today. Monck is said to have displayed his contempt for idolatry and pomp by stabling his horses in Rosslyn Chapel, which may have ensured its survival.

The Castle however never recovered, and by 1788 the remains were described as 'haggard and utterly dilapidated'. The Gazetteer described them thus in 1871 - 'the mere wreck of a great pile riding on a little sea of forest, and not far from contact with commanding rocks, - a rueful apology for the once grand fabric'. The combination of decayed Castle, ornate chapel and dramatic scenery fired the romantic imagination throughout the late-18th and 19th centuries, and Rosslyn became an essential stop on any Scottish itinerary. Turner came here to paint, and Dorothy Wordsworth was to write 'I never passed through a more delicious dell than the glen of Rosslyn'.

For some years during the 20th century the Castle was occupied by a tenant, Miss Leitch, but when she died in 1980 it fell victim to vandals who used the panelling for firewood. When the current 7th Earl of Rosslyn inherited it on his father's death in 1977, a rescue package was drawn up. The restoration was completed in 1984 and the first Landmarkers stayed in the summer of 1985. Unusually, the Landmark Trust does not own or lease Rosslyn Castle, but lets it on behalf of Lord Rosslyn. This has proved to be a great success and since 2002, Collegehill House, which was built as an inn and stands next to the chapel, has been let by the Landmark Trust in the same way.

In 2016, Rosslyn Castle and Collegehill House came into the care of Rosslyn Chapel Trust, bringing together for the first time responsibility for these two buildings, Rosslyn Chapel and areas of Roslin Glen.

In September 2022, a second major programme of restoration and conservation was undertaken at Rosslyn Castle, to safeguard the fabric of the building. Comprehensive repairs were undertaken to the habitable part of the Castle and a sustainable heating strategy implemented through the addition of air source heat pumps in the vaults. Scaffolding was erected from ground level and the great south wall repointed, with vulnerable masonry consolidated and protected. The Great Hall, dating from 1597, and an adjacent derelict tower in the south-west corner were both re-roofed, creating a large kitchen further bedroom. Works were concluded in July 2024 and the Castle made available once again for Landmark tenants under the same arrangement as before.



'Roslin Castle ', watercolour by J M W Turner, c1820 (Indiana Museum of Art)

Introduction

Rosslyn is famous for three things: its ancient Castle, an extraordinary chapel, and a precipitous glen full of scenic romance. In the words of Sir Walter Scott, 'A morning of leisure can scarcely be anywhere more delightfully spent than in the woods of Rosslyn'. There has been some form of fortification on the site of Rosslyn Castle, an almost insular rock overhanging River Esk, since at least the beginning of the 14th century. William de St Clair, who came from Normandy with William the Conqueror, obtained from Malcolm Canmore a great part of the lands of the Barony of Roslin in the 11th century, and may well have built some sort of edifice there.

The present Castle dates from various periods having suffered a chequered history and the earliest remains still standing are those of the tower by the present bridge, probably built shortly after the Battle of Rosslyn in 1302. This crushing defeat of the English involved a small Scottish army fighting three battles against different English forces all on the same day; the first contest took place on the Bilston Burn, and the second and third between Dryden and Hawthornden. A brief account appears later in this album. Local names perpetuate the sites: Shin-bones Field, where bones have been found when ploughing; the 'Hewings', where there was great slaughter; and the 'Killburn', a stream that ran red for three days.

The only access to the Castle was then, as now, along a single-arched bridge across a deep gully. Originally the gap would have been crossed by a drawbridge between ashlar piers of which only the one to the south remains. The entrance was defended by a gate of great strength, the remains of which are just visible today; it is shown in the pre-1700 drawings. But as the Imperial Gazetteer of Scotland (1871) points out, 'though highly pleasant and romantic, (the site) is very ill chosen for a fortalice; for while it finely overlooks the sylvan

stream below, it is itself commanded by heights which press closely on its precincts, and look almost right down upon the tops of its chimneys’.

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erected by another Sir William including the clock tower and the great hall, underneath which three lower floors go down a further 50 feet to the solid rock. The fine moulded fireplace in the newly restored Great Hall bears a shield with the arms and initials of Sir William and his wife, Jean Edmonston, and the date 1597.

The vaults below would have provided the kitchens, bakery and store-rooms for Sir William's more domestic quarters. They are described in the Gazetteer – 'a descent of a great number of stone-stairs conducts through part of the existing structure to the bottom, and leads into a large kitchen, whence a door opens into a once famous garden.' These 'lower apartments are ill-lighted and confined, and possess far more of the coldness and gloom of a prison than the comfort and convenience of a modern residence.'

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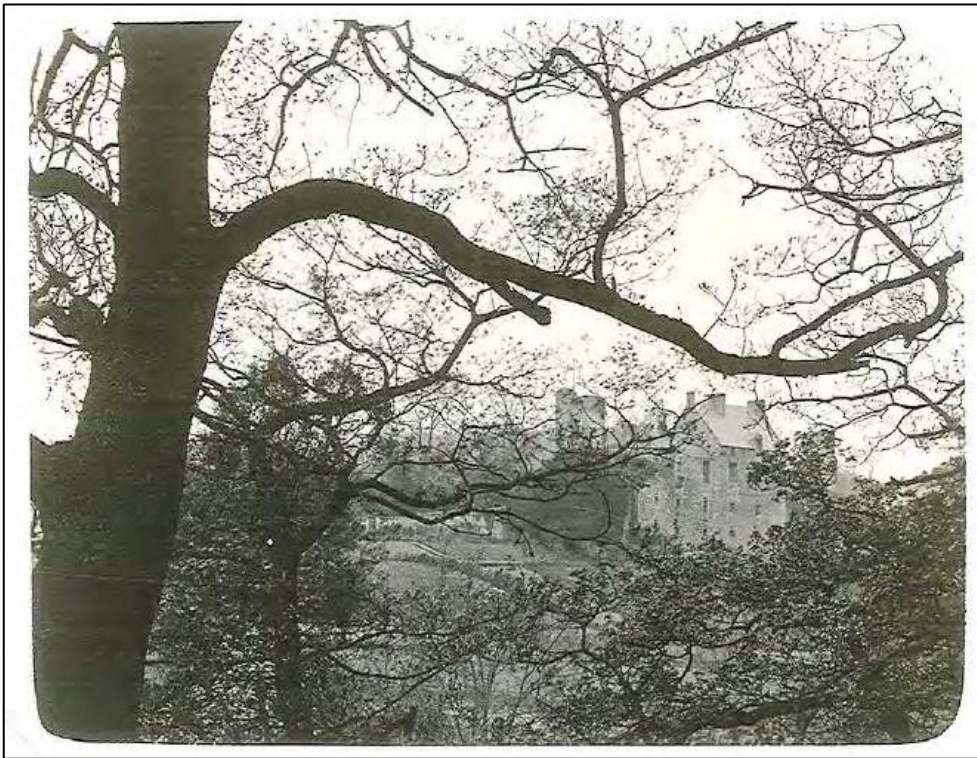
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Photographs by HM Office of Works, Ancient Monuments
Department, 1928

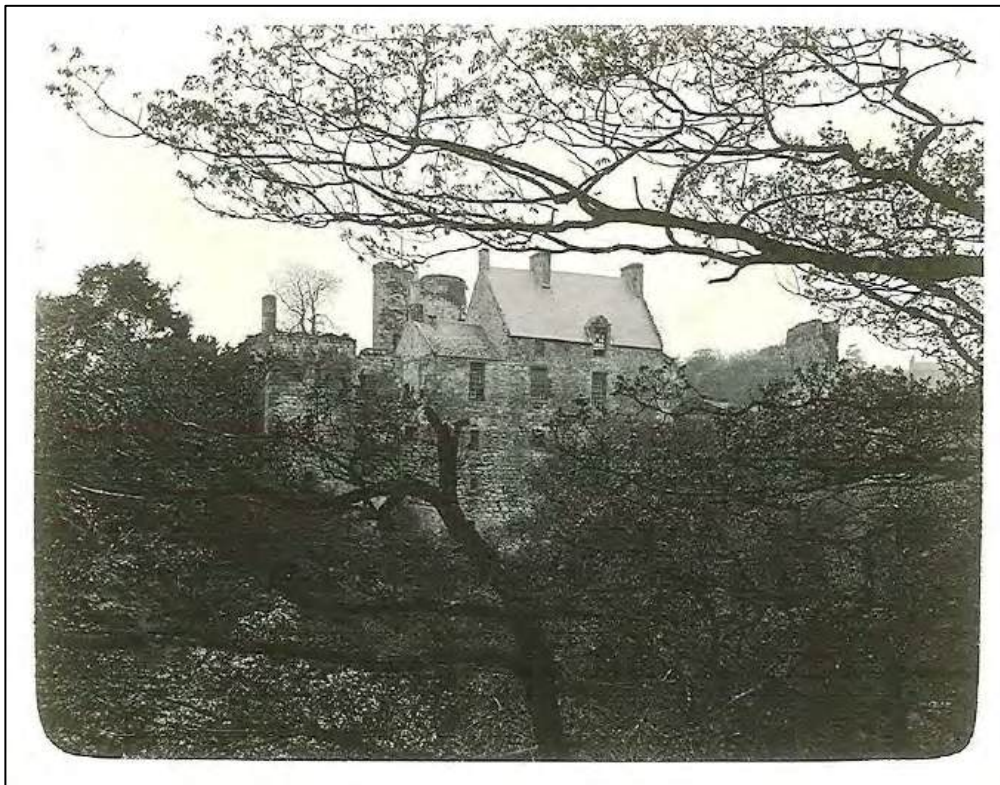


From the northeast





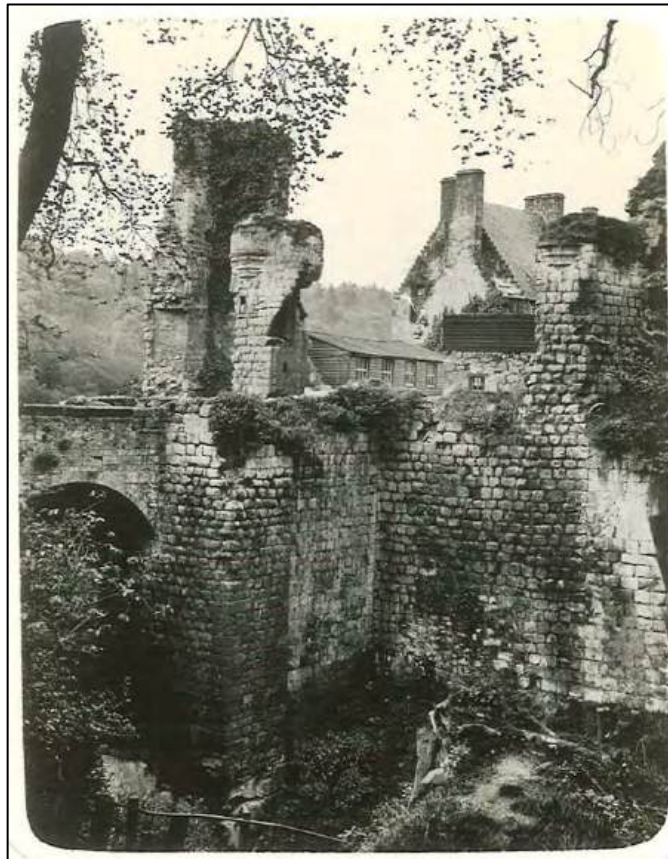
From the south





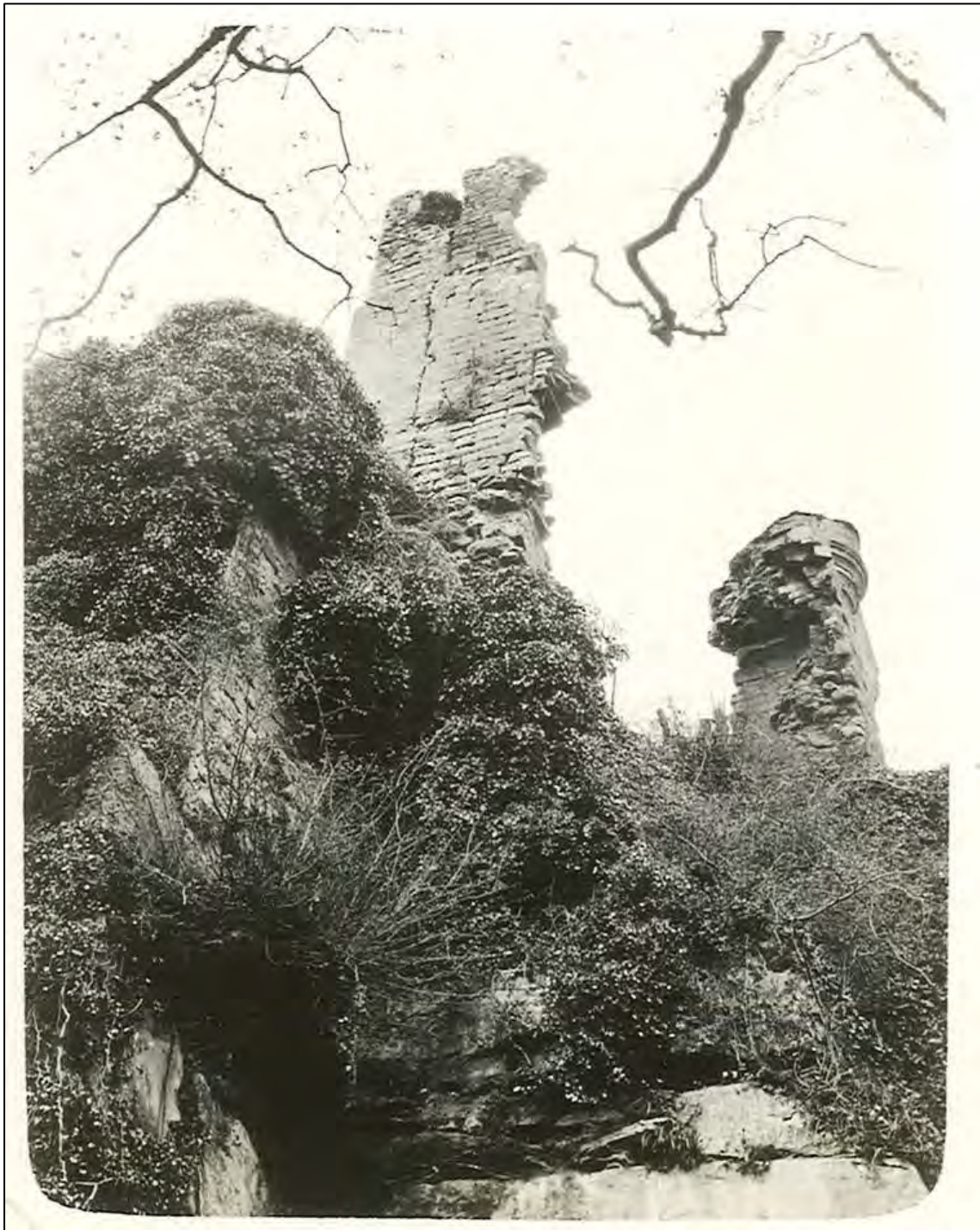
From the east (above). The approach to the Castle (below)





The tower and gateway





Exterior of tower and gateway



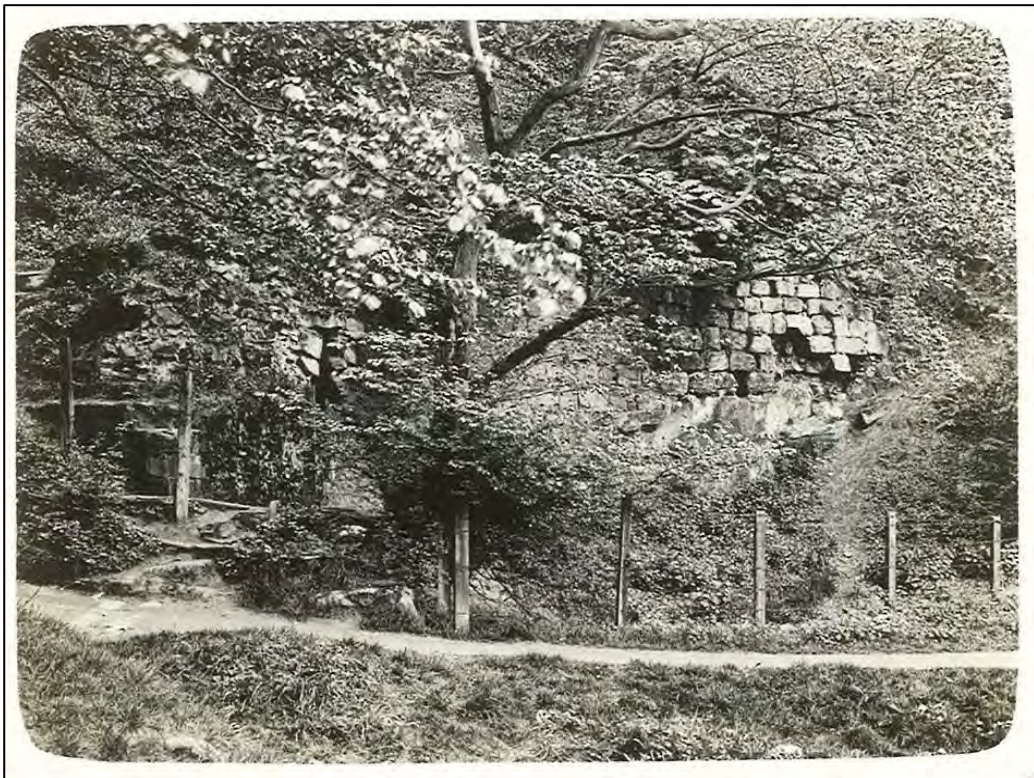
Interior face of 'keep' and chapel



Buildings east of courtyard. East wall.

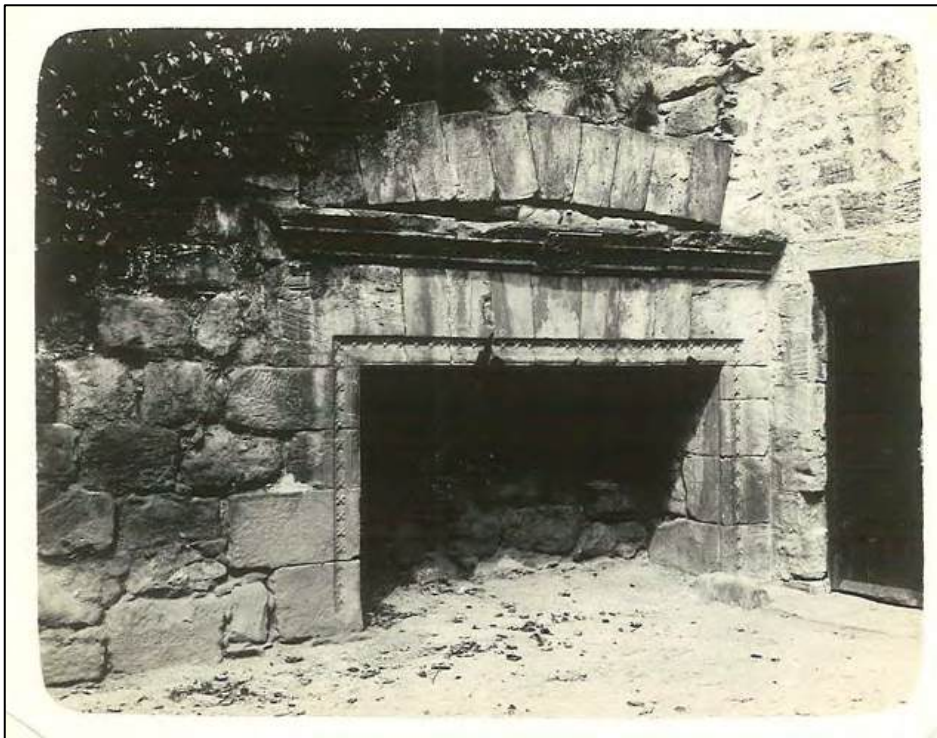


**Retaining wall, west of gateway (above). West enclosure wall
(below)**

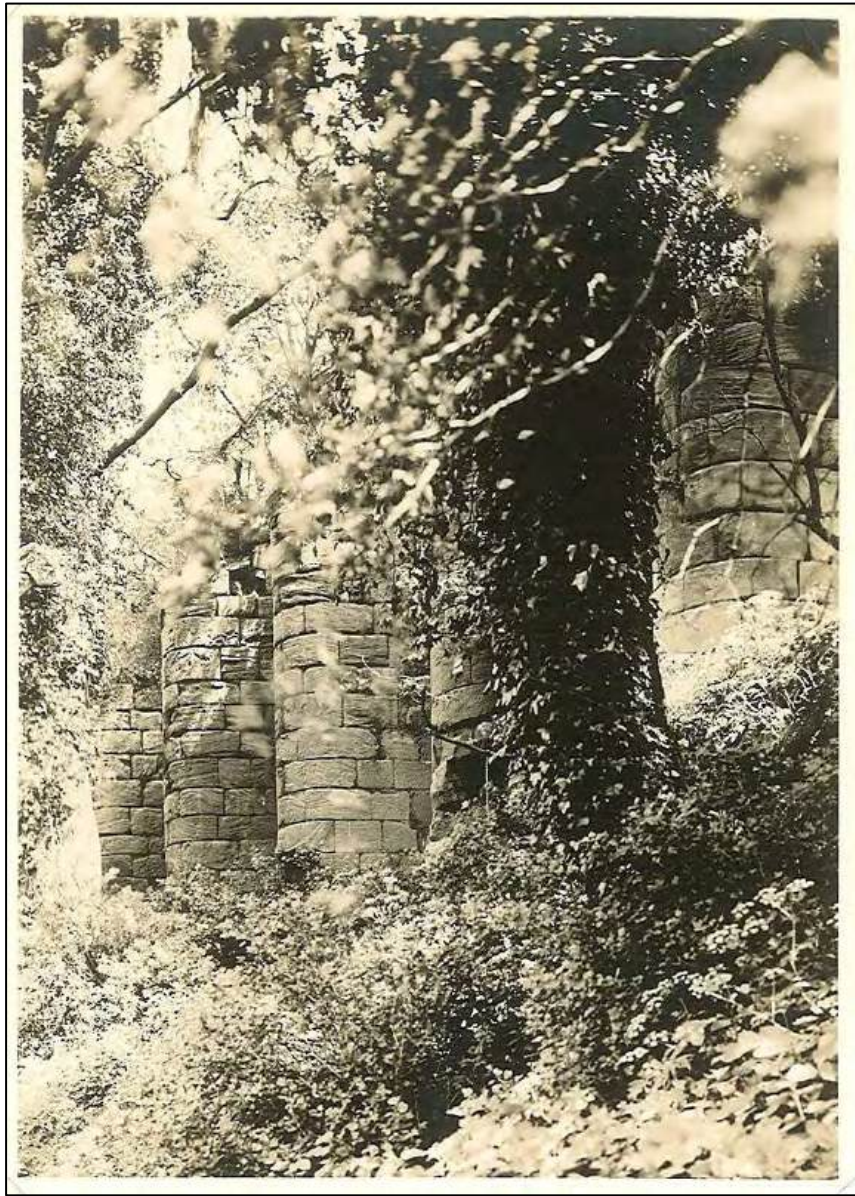




Buildings east of courtyard. Elevation to courtyard



Hall fireplace. Buildings on east of courtyard.



'The Rounds', formerly thought to have been a chapel in the Castle . This theory is now discounted due to the westerly orientation of the space inside.



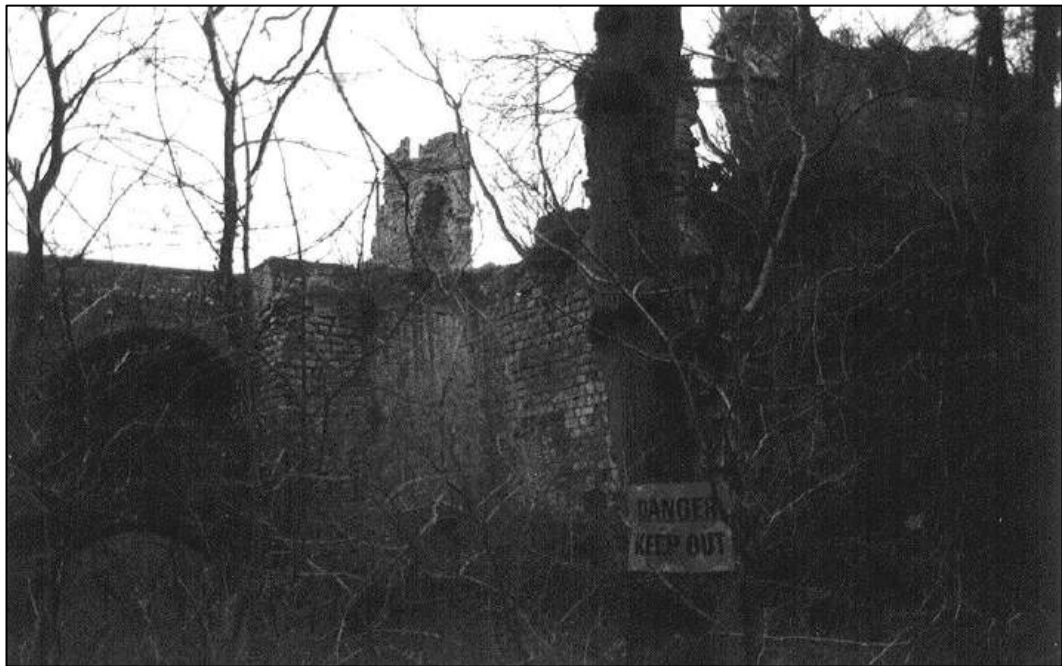
Interior face of keep and 'the Rounds'.

Rosslyn Castle before restoration in March 1983









Rosslyn Castle during restoration works in March 1983



November 1983





November 1983





Dismantling the old range in the Dining Room, November 1983





Repairing a hole in the ceiling in the Dining Room, January 1984



Repairing the doors and fireplace



The Dining Room, August 1985





Repairing the panelling in the Dining Room, June 1984



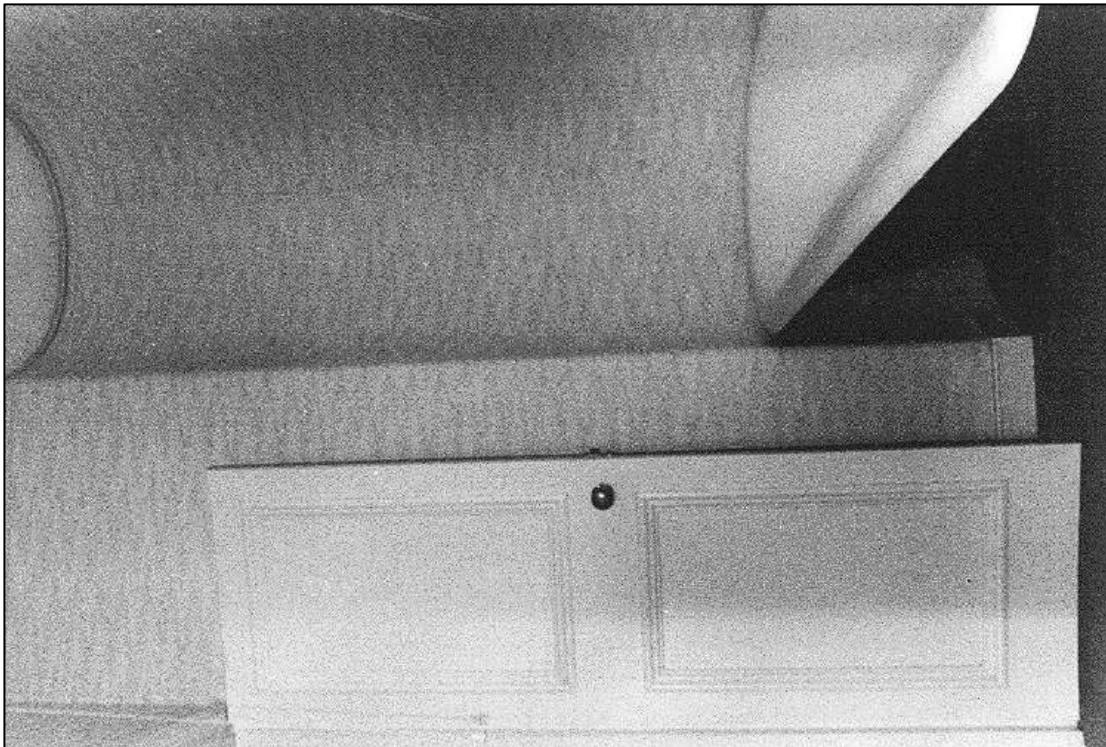


Before the Bathroom walls were constructed, November 1983



Constructing the bathroom and upstairs passage walls, November 1983





The bathroom is finished, November 1984



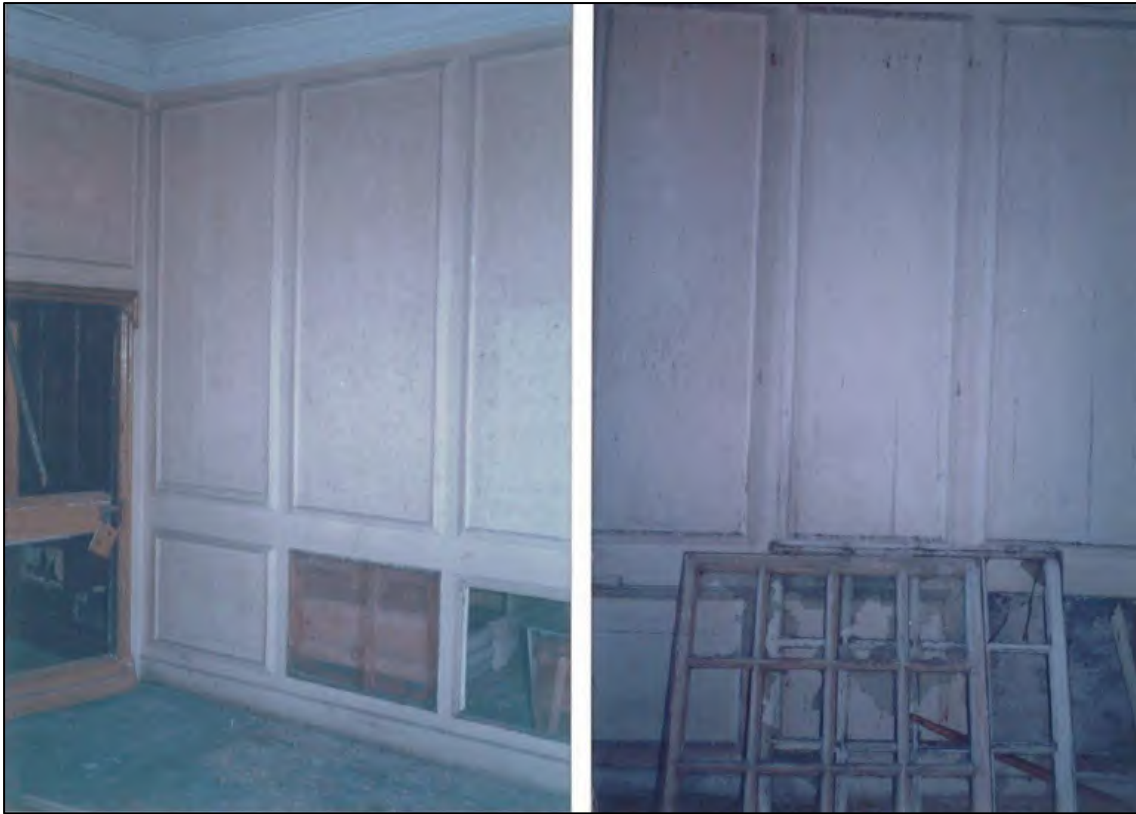
The Blue Bedroom in July and November 1984 and August 1985 (below)





The kitchen in July 1984 and September 1984 (bottom right)





The panelling and window in the Yellow Bedroom, Sept-Dec 1983





An old passageway becomes a kitchen, June 1984





Standing inside the front door looking up, Nov 1983



The top of the window in the Yellow Bedroom



The window in the dressing room



Repairing walls and panelling in the Yellow Bedroom, July 1984



The Yellow Bedroom looking towards the Blue Bedroom



The Yellow Bedroom looking towards the Brown Bedroom



The Yellow Bedroom, September 1984



The Yellow Bedroom, September 1984



The Yellow Bedroom, August 1985



The Great Room, November 1983





The Great Room, November 1984



The Great Room, December 1985

Major repair & restoration works in 2024

In 2024, Rosslyn Chapel Trust completed a major 'once in a generation' programme of restoration and repair at Rosslyn Castle. The ambitious £4m project to reroof the Great Hall and Tower, to conserve and consolidate the Castle's stonework and to develop a sustainable heating strategy was entirely self-funded by the Trust.

For the first time since 1650, Rosslyn Castle's East Range now has a permanent roof over the Great Hall and Tower, protecting important masonry carvings and the three levels of vaults below ground level. The Great Hall and Tower were sympathetically restored, using local and traditional skills and materials, and these spaces have been brought back into use to transform the experience for guests. The entire building is also now Net Zero ready, with heating and hot water provided by six air source heat pumps, removing the need for traditional fossil fuels.

The Great Hall and Tower were partially destroyed in 1650 when Cromwell's troops, under the leadership of General Monk, attacked the building. Key contemporary sources relating to the siege of Rosslyn Castle are reported in two issues of the Parliamentary newspaper '*Mercurius Politicus*' in 1650:

'Col. Monk with a Party of Horse and Foot, went last weeke to take in Rosclane Castle, 7. miles from Edinburgh; of which it's hoped he will speedily give an Accompt; Just upon the Close of this, we are assured that Rosclane is surrendred upon mercy.'

Mercurius Politicus, No. 25, 21-28th November 1650

'The last week Col. Monk Commanded out a small Party to Roslin-house, neare Dalkeith, where the Moss-Troopers sheltered Themselves. After he had shot with his Guns, and plaid some Granado's, they surrendered at mercy. There were not in it above five or six and twenty men.'

Mercurius Politicus, No. 26, 28th November-5th December 1650

A letter from Edinburgh on 20th November 20, 1650 reported:

'On Sunday last Rastlin Castle was taken in by Coll. Monke, who came before it the day before with about 600. Foot, besides Horse; the Foot were

a company out of severall Regiments; and after the playing of 4. great Guns for some few hours, and a breach made, they within yielded to mercy; we took in it Mr. Sinclair the Governor, and about 24. other prisoners.'

As part of the new sustainable heating strategy, heating and hot water are now provided by six air source heat pumps, located in the Castle's vaults. These were chosen for their excellent sustainability and renewable energy credentials and remove the need for traditional fossil fuel supplies such as oil or gas. Rosslyn Castle's entire East Range is now Net Zero ready and engineers believe that this may be the oldest building in the world to have adopted air source heat pumps as a sustainable, low carbon technology of the future.



**The Great Hall and Tower in ruined condition
before reroofing work began.**



A canopy was installed, as part of the extensive scaffolding, to allow work to continue all year round (Picture: K Neville)



Work underway to reroof the Great Hall; important masonry carvings were revealed, such as the fireplace inscribed with the initials and shield of Sir William St Clair and dated 1597.





A new fireplace and chimney were installed in the west wall of the great hall, replacing a much earlier one.



The stonework in the upper levels of the Castle was consolidated and repaired.



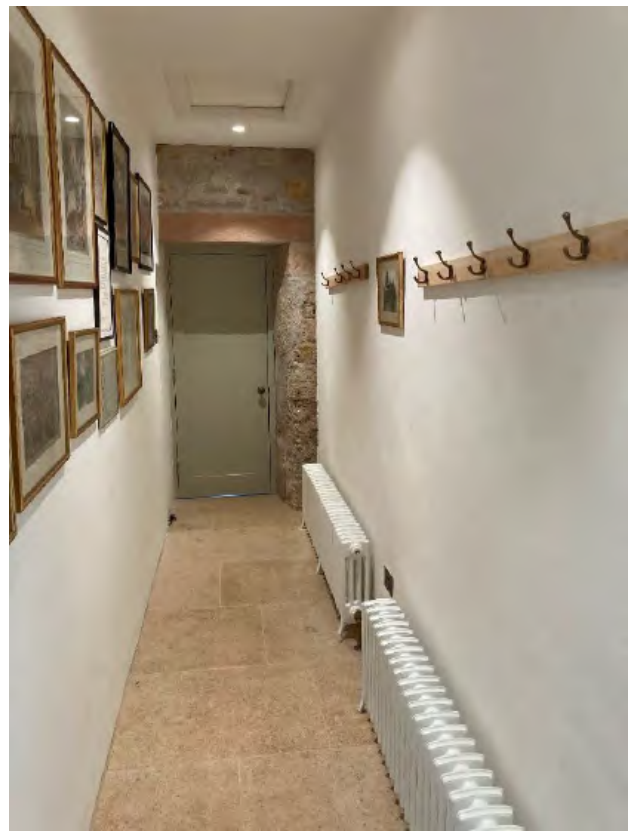
The west gable wall was built up and now incorporates a large window overlooking the historic yew tree.





The north side of the Castle before, and after, the Great Hall was reroofed The Castle's former kitchen is now the passageway leading to the Great Hall.





The Castle's former kitchen is now the passageway leading to the Great Hall.



Much of the work was carried out by local contractors highly skilled in traditional craft skills.



Three Descriptions of the Castle

Rosslyn Castle has been well described in a number of learned articles, three of which follow:-

Rosslyn Castle, Its Buildings Past and Present, by Andrew Kerr in the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, December 10th 1877.

Rosslyn Castle in MacGibbon and Ross, *The Fortified Houses of Scotland* 1887.

'Rosslyn Castle, Lothian' by Richard Haslam in *Country Life*, 1989

Rosslyn Castle, Its Buildings Past and Present, by Andrew Kerr

412

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SOCIETY, DECEMBER 10, 1877.

II.

ROSSLYN CASTLE, ITS BUILDINGS PAST AND PRESENT. By
ANDREW KERR, Esq., F.S.A. SCOT. (PLATES XXI.-XXIV.)

It appears from various notices and traditions that a castle must have existed at Rosslyn as early as the twelfth century, although there is no description of its form or extent, nor any remains of the building which can be traced with certainty.¹ Wherever it was situated, it appears to have been occupied until about the year 1302 by the St Clairs, a branch of the Anglo-Norman family of Saint Clair who came into Scotland in the reign of David I., who granted to Sir William St Clair, the first of the name, the barony of Rosslyn, afterwards held by his successors, who were intimately associated with the kings of Scotland in many important national events, and became connected by marriage with the leading nobility of the kingdom. Sir William St Clair, son of the Sir William already noticed, was succeeded by his son Sir Henry, who was succeeded by his son, also named Sir Henry St Clair. His son and successor, Sir William, took the side of Bruce in the contest for the crown; and in 1307 and 1308 letters were addressed by Edward I. of England to him and other friends in Scotland, calling upon them to assist in suppressing "the Rebels." It is therefore not probable that Sir William was engaged at the battle of Rosslyn,² although an English gentleman may have resided

¹ The site is still pointed out, upon the south bank of the Esk, opposite to the ruins of the present Castle. A doubt has, however, been expressed regarding this site, and some of the old people about Rosslyn state that they have heard that the old castle stood near the Collegiate Church.

² Father Hay, in his "Genealogy of the Saint Claires of Rosslyn," states that "he (Sir William) built a portion of the present Castle, upon the suggestion of an English prisoner, carried with him from the battle of Rosslyn, which was fought in the year 1302. He is described as a man of no small estimation in England, whom Sir William Saint Claire entertained so well, that whilst he remained with him all things that might any way turn to the best advantage he gave him counsel in, as well amongst the rest, because he saw the Castle of Rosslyn not to be strong enough, he advised him to build it on the rock, where it now standeth: which counsel he embraced and builded the Wall Tower, with other buildings, and there he dwelt."

ROSSLYN CASTLE, ITS BUILDINGS PAST AND PRESENT. 413

with him and advised the building of the castle on its present site. Considering the mode of warfare practised at that period, the new site was much superior to either of the two ascribed to the older building, being upon a narrow high ridge of rock surrounded on three sides by low, flat ground, bounded by the river Esk, and on the fourth protected by a trench and drawbridge. (See Ground Plans, Plate XXI.)

It is probable that at this time a lake extended along the north-west side of the castle, as the lynn must formerly have been a more distinct feature than it now is, seeing that the name of the locality is derived from it,—Rosslyn being composed of two Gaelic words, *ross* signifying a promontory, and *lynn* a waterfall. If the ridge of rock extended across the Esk at the height indicated on each side, the lynn would be deep and the water above would be confined to such an extent as to cover the low ground for a considerable distance. The rocky barrier being worn down in the course of years, the level of the water above would become gradually lower and form a marsh, such as is afterwards noticed as the “Stanks of Rosslyn.”¹

The corner tower on the south-east side of the entrance, now known as the lantern or lamp tower, along with some of the buildings behind it, is supposed to be the portion of the castle which was first erected. In its general appearance and limited accommodation the castle would thus be similar to the peel towers still remaining in several districts of the country. The lower masonry of this corner tower, with the adjoining south-east wall, is evidently the oldest in the existing castle, and has the appearance of having been erected in the early part of the fourteenth century. The surface of the court-yard immediately behind is formed over deep vaults, the entrance to which is now covered up.

On the face of the rock, towards the garden, there are indications of the supports of a stair, but these appear to have been connected rather with a terrace than with the old building. The position in which the wall or lamp tower was placed suggests the probability of the idea being entertained from the first of erecting a more extensive building, such as was then common in France, and such as Rosslyn by additions at different periods ultimately became. (See Plates XXII. and XXIII.)

¹ Upon this flat ground a spot is still pointed out bearing the name of the “Goos Mound” upon which the birds used to rest.

Sir William St Clair, who founded the castle, though at first favouring Baliol, afterwards became the attached friend of King Robert the Bruce, and was engaged at the battle of Bannockburn. He accompanied Sir James Douglas and Sir Robert Logan of Restalrig when they set out for Palestine with the heart of the Bruce, but was slain in 1330, while fighting against the Moors in Spain, along with the King of Leon and Castile. He was succeeded by his son, also named Sir William, who is said to have married Elizabeth, daughter of Malise Earl of Strathearn, Caithness, and Orkney. Their son Sir Henry thus obtained the title of Earl of Orkney, which was held under the kings of Norway by jarls, or earls, who, though subject to Norway, were practically almost independent princes. His son Henry, who had the guardianship of James I. during his minority, succeeded him as Earl of Orkney, and married a daughter of Sir William Douglas of Nithsdale. "He builded the great dungeon (or keep) of Rosslyn and other walls thereabout, together with parks for red and fallow deer." This dungeon (or keep) of Rosslyn is the south-west corner tower, sometimes called the clock tower, and also the bell tower.¹

Its walls are nine feet thick, and the ground floor was covered by a semi-circular arch of solid masonry, a portion of which still remains. "The other walls thereabout" may have been the strong walls situated at the top and bottom of the slope, extending along the entire north-west side of the castle, portions of which can still be traced.

Sir Henry St Clair was succeeded about 1417 by his son Sir William, the last Earl of Orkney, who lived in the reigns of James I., II., and III. of Scotland. He married Margaret or Elizabeth Douglas, daughter of Archibald, fourth Earl of Douglas, and afterwards Duke of Touraine in France. She died about 1452, leaving one son, named William, and four daughters. Sir William's second wife was Lady Marjorie Sutherland, daughter of Alexander Sutherland of Dunbeath, by whom he had four sons—Oliver of Rosslyn, William Earl of Caithness, and two others. He is described as having been given to building of castles, palaces, and churches. He was married to his first wife in St Matthew's Church at

¹ A tradition is preserved by the Rosslyn villagers that it was by means of a bell-rope suspended in this tower that Sir William Sinclair's chaplain escaped when the castle was accidentally burned about 1452.

ROSSLYN CASTLE, ITS BUILDINGS PAST AND PRESENT. 415

Rosslyn, and during his life made large additions to the castle. The Collegiate Church of Rosslyn, now known as Rosslyn Chapel, was founded by him in 1450, "when age was creeping upon him." His death took place about 1484.

It will be observed that St Matthew's Church, situated in the burying ground (the site of which is noted on the Ordnance Survey maps), being then the only church in Rosslyn, must therefore have been the one in which the earl's first marriage was solemnised. Its foundations are occasionally exposed by the grave-digger, and several ancient slabs with incised crosses and swords have been found, one of which, inscribed "William de Saincler," is preserved above the entrance to the chapel grounds, another in the adjoining garden, and a third was dug up about two years ago, but it is now much defaced and used as a gravestone. (See Plate XXIV.)

The foundations of the old church are not far below the surface, but there is no record of the area having been carefully examined. The position of the east gable is marked by some building at the root of an old elm tree, and that of the west wall by two rubble buttresses which had subsequently been erected against it. The plain surfaces formed in building against the old wall indicate that the south-west corner had leaned outward.

It is probable that the building, being in an unsatisfactory condition, was partially taken down about the time that the collegiate church was completed.¹ Outside the west wall of the burying ground is "St Matthew's Well," fed by a copious spring which affords the chief water supply to the inhabitants of Rosslyn.

The additions made to the castle at this time are thus described by Father Hay:—"He (William St Clair) builded the church walls of Rosslyn, having rounds with fair chambers and galleries thereon: he builded also the fore-work that looks to the north-east; he builded also the bridge under the castle, and sundrie office houses. In the south-east side thereof, over against the chapel wall, he made plain the rock on which the castle is builded for the more strength thereof." This portion of the building extends from the keep, or south-west tower, northward, turning along the north-east front to the original wall tower, which was built about 1304, and is readily

¹ Some old dressed stones have been found built in the openings at the west end but portions of the old gables remained until about 1831.

recognised from the elevations being built in polished stone. The area of these buildings is also found to be supported to a considerable extent upon vaults, the top of one having been opened by some workmen when cutting a track for a waterpipe a few years ago. Nearly the whole of the north-west outside wall, with its "rounds" still remains, but that towards the court-yard has been destroyed, and the foundations taken up. In doing so it was found that the foundation course throughout was laid upon a bed of prepared clay, three inches thick.

The notices regarding the church walls, such as: "The church walls having rounds with fair chambers and galleries thereon;" and again, "In the north-east side of the castle, over against the chapel wall, he made plain the rock," show that there was a chapel within the castle. The rounds are still attached to the north west wall, and the surface of the rock on the south-east side, towards the garden, is carefully hewn to a uniform face. The windows which are between the rounds are small and near the ground, with recesses at the side for receiving strong projecting shutters. As there was a high screen wall on the outside a short distance from them, they could not have been intended entirely for the purpose of lighting the lower apartments, which may occasionally have been used for keeping cattle, when they could not readily be got from without; and in that case the windows, or openings, would be used for admitting air and communicating with the area inside the screen wall, for feeding purposes.

The apartments above have evidently been lighted from the court-yard. Some of these were accidentally burned about 1452 by a bed having caught fire, "the flames of which passed to the ceiling of the great chamber in which the princess was, whereat she, with all who were with her in the dungeon, were compelled to fly." The damage must have been immediately repaired, as Sir William appears to have resided there while engaged in erecting the collegiate church, which was not completed at the time of his death, about 1484. The site of the "sundrie office houses" erected by him cannot now be ascertained, although they must have been of considerable extent to provide the accommodation necessary for his numerous attendants.¹

¹ Foundations of buildings appear in the orchard, to the east of the Collegiate Church, but they are not sufficiently exposed to enable an opinion to be formed of their extent, or the purpose for which they had been erected.

ROSSLYN CASTLE, ITS BUILDINGS PAST AND PRESENT.

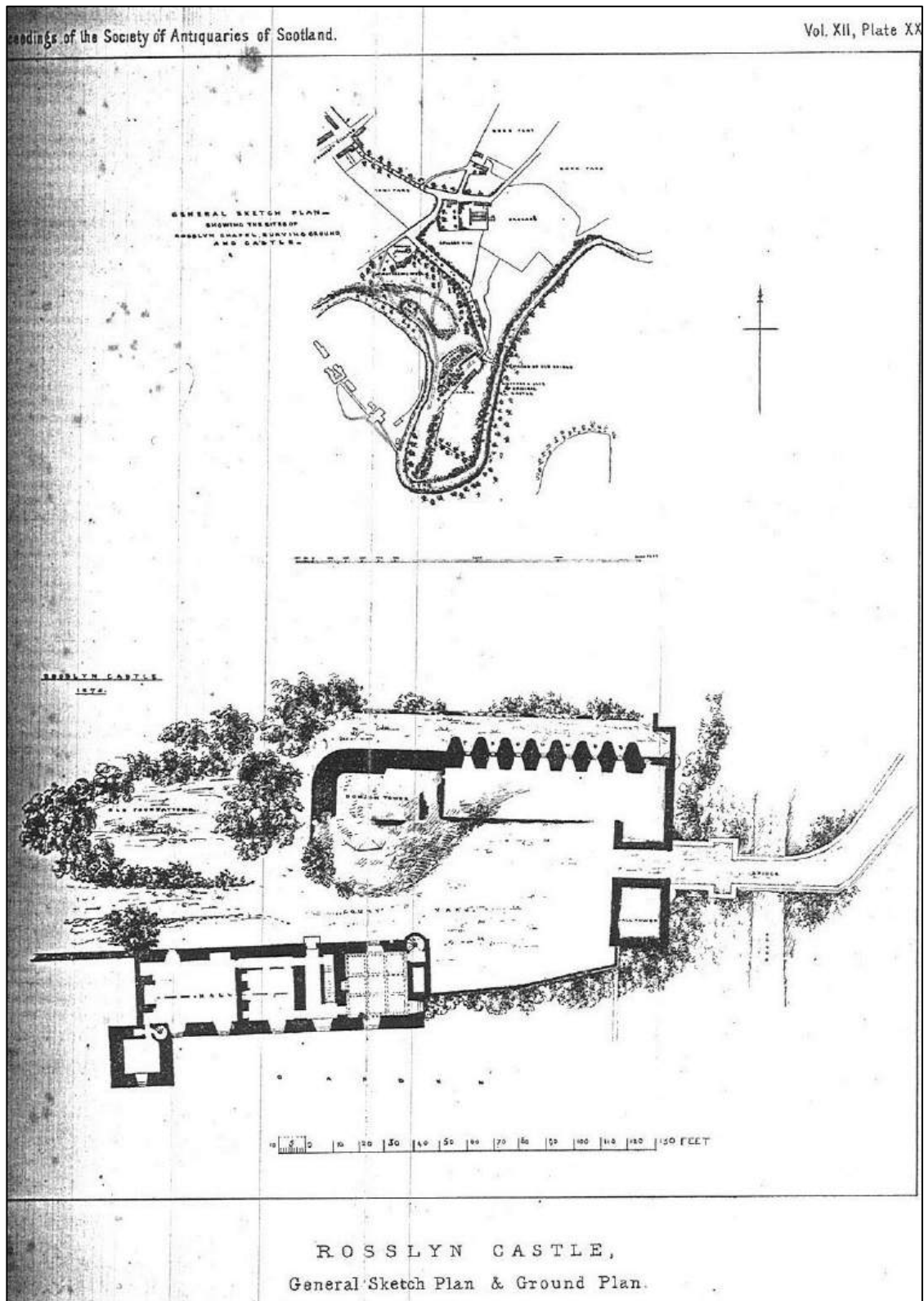
417

The additions made to the castle at this time exhibit many French features, such as the galleries already described, with the projecting chambers and turrets, forming a communication round the top, and occasionally connecting the flat roofs with the towers or higher parts of the buildings. This is accounted for by the fact that Sir William St Clair and his lady resided for some time in France, under circumstances which led to their being intimately associated with the court and nobility of that country. They thus had ample opportunity for observation, and doubtless acquired a taste which originated much that was afterwards done at Rosslyn, both as regards their domestic arrangements and the buildings erected during their lifetime. A considerable extent of the external north-west wall had no cross divisions connecting it with the one towards the court; and the "rounds" of solid masonry, which are confined to this portion, were therefore necessary to secure its stability. It also appears, from the remains of the corbelled tower at the top, to have been built much higher than the roof adjoining, perhaps to prevent the court-yard being overlooked, or to protect it from the effects of the northern blasts.

The bridge below the castle formed a continuation of the low road across the Esk to its south bank. The middle of the arch was destroyed about 1700; but the abutments, with about eight feet of the masonry at each end, remained projecting over the river until about nine years ago, when that on the south side fell; the other, however, still remains. About 1445 an order was issued by Parliament that no subject be allowed to build castles or strongholds unless that in time of war they belonged to the king.

In 1455 James II. gave to Sir William St Clair the earldom of Caithness, in exchange for that of Nithsdale, and afterwards conferred upon him, in consideration of the elegant buildings that he had erected, the dignity of "Grand Master Mason of Scotland." This title remained in the family until 1736, when it was given over to the Scottish Masonic craft, who instituted "The Grand Lodge of Scotland" as a representative body, with power to elect the Grand Master annually.

The family possessions and honours became separated about 1450. In that year William St Clair, son of Lady Margaret or Elizabeth Douglas, received from his father the lands of Newburgh in Aberdeenshire. In 1470 his father also resigned the earldom of Orkney to James III., and



was afterwards styled Earl of Caithness. This title he gave up in 1476 to his son, Sir William St Clair, by his second marriage with Marjorie Sutherland. His other son by the same marriage, Sir Oliver St Clair, received the lands of Rosslyn and other large estates. This settlement being disputed by William St Clair of Newburgh, Sir Oliver relinquished to him the lands of Cowsland, Mid-Lothian, with the barony of Dysart, and castle of Ravenscraig in Fife, also the lands of Dubbo, Carberry, and Wilston adjacent thereto. These had been bestowed upon their father when he resigned the earldom of Orkney. On the other hand, William St Clair of Newburgh and his son Henry renounced all title to the barony of Rosslyn, by instrument dated 9th February 1482. This son Henry became Lord St Clair in 1489, which title descended through several generations, until his family was represented by an only daughter, the Hon. Catherine Sinclair, who married John St Clair, younger of Hermandston, Haddingtonshire, on the 14th April 1659. Their son Henry succeeded to the title as eighth Lord St Clair; but was created anew to the same title, with the former precedence, by Charles II. in 1677. The St Clairs of Hermandston came into Scotland in the twelfth century. The families of Lord St Clair of Newburgh and St Clair of Hermandston being thus united, the title was continued to their descendants. The Hon. James St Clair acquired the lands of Rosslyn by purchase about 1736 from William Sinclair, who died in 1778, aged 78 years, being the last of the direct male line of Rosslyn by the marriage of Marjorie Sutherland.

Sir Oliver St Clair of Rosslyn, eldest son by the second marriage, succeeded his father Sir William (founder of the collegiate church) in the Rosslyn possessions, and terminated the building operations without completing the design of the church. He was married twice, his first wife being Elizabeth Borthwick, and his second Isabella Livingstone. His eldest son George married Agnes Crichton, but leaving no issue, the estate fell to his brother Sir William, who married Alison Hume, and was succeeded by his son, also named Sir William, who espoused Lindesay, daughter of the laird of Egle.¹

¹ "He was made Lord Justice General of Scotland by Queen Mary in 1559. On an occasion of his returning from Edinburgh to Rosslyn, he delivered an Egyptian from the gibbet on the Burgh-muir, on account of which these grateful creatures assembled long afterwards at Rosslyn, yearly, in the months of May and June, an

ROSSLYN CASTLE, ITS BUILDINGS PAST AND PRESENT. 419

In 1544 the castle of Rosslyn was burned by the English forces of Henry VIII., under the command of the Earl of Hertford, the building being almost totally destroyed. The effect of this burning may still be seen upon the surface of the stones of the lower part of the north-west wall, which are much calcined.

Edward St Clair, son of the last named Sir William, having no issue, interdicted himself in 1580, and infeft his brother-german Sir William in the estate, who "married Jean Edminston, daughter to the laird of Edminston in the Mers. He built the vaults and great turnpike of Rosslyn, and upon the last his name and arms, along with the arms of his wife, are to be seen. He builded one of the arches of the drawbridge, a fine house by the mill, and the tower of the dungeon where the clock was kept. The initial letters of his name were graven on a stone above the dial, with the date 1596, which designs the year wherein that work was finished." The vaults and turnpike thus referred to by Father Hay exist upon the south-east side, and consist of three floors below the level of the court-yard, or principal floor, lighted from the south-east side. A portion of the first floor down is still occupied by the keeper; the large kitchen is in the second floor down; and the remainder of the apartments, along with those on the lower floor, appear to have been used as store cellars. In the side of the passage of the second floor, there are square recesses opposite to the doors and windows of the apartments, which appear to have been made for placing lamps in at night. There are similar recesses in the lower chapel and entrance to the collegiate church, evidently for the same purpose.

The "great turnpike" is a well constructed "scale and plat" stone stair, fully four feet wide, situated about the middle of the building, and extending from the lowest vaults to the bedrooms above the principal floor, the latter being level with the court-yard. This stair also communicates throughout with the several apartments on the respective floors. Openings for a lift three feet square have also been formed in the front landings of this stair, serving the apartments on the three lower floors and the great hall on the

acted several plays. Two towers were allowed them for residence, one named "Robin Hood" and the other "Little John," both of which are supposed to have been situated at the bottom of the steep bank on the north west side of the Castle.—Father Hay's "Genealogy of the St Clairs."

principal floor. A portion of the latter has been converted into a kitchen, and the remainder, now roofless, occupies the space over the vaults southward from the staircase.

The hall has originally been about 50 feet long, by 23 feet wide, with an ante-room at the south corner, from which a circular stone stair descends to the floor below. It has been lofty and well lighted by large windows in the south-east side and towards the court-yard; also by two at the south-west end, placed at each side of what appears to have been a dais or state seat, projecting into the apartment. The fire-place is in the side, and is of a Gothic character, having upon a shield, in the centre of the moulded shelf, the arms of Sir William Sinclair and his lady Jean Edminston impaled, with their initials in the upper corners, and the date, 1597 (see Plate XXIV.) This is probably the coat of arms referred to by Father Hay as being in the great turnpike. In the jamb of the window, opposite to the fire-place, there is a small recess, having a neat Gothic moulding and ornaments, connected with a waterspout outside, which possibly may have served the same purpose as a washing place for glasses, &c., in a modern butler's pantry. The portion over the vaults eastward from the great staircase was erected in 1622. The elevation towards the court-yard is of dressed stone, but the others are built in plain rubble work.

Although the entrance to the castle is described as a drawbridge, it does not appear to have been used as such after 1597. The first arch was erected about 1440, and "the rock made plain." The second, which is in the south-east side, is evidently the one erected by the husband of Lady Jean Edminston.

The fine house near the mill, with the mill itself, have long since disappeared, but the water course, neatly cut in the rock, may still be seen at the linn upon the Esk, a little south from the castle. The clock tower upon the donjon or keep at the south-west corner of the court was also built and completed in 1596, a year prior to the date in the large hall; but the stone described as recording the date and initials upon the tower cannot be found. It may yet, however, be discovered, if the large pile of stones which now cover the greater part of the site should at any time be removed.

Sir William Sinclair of Pentland succeeded his father Sir William of Rosslyn, and about 1610 married Anna Spotswood, daughter of

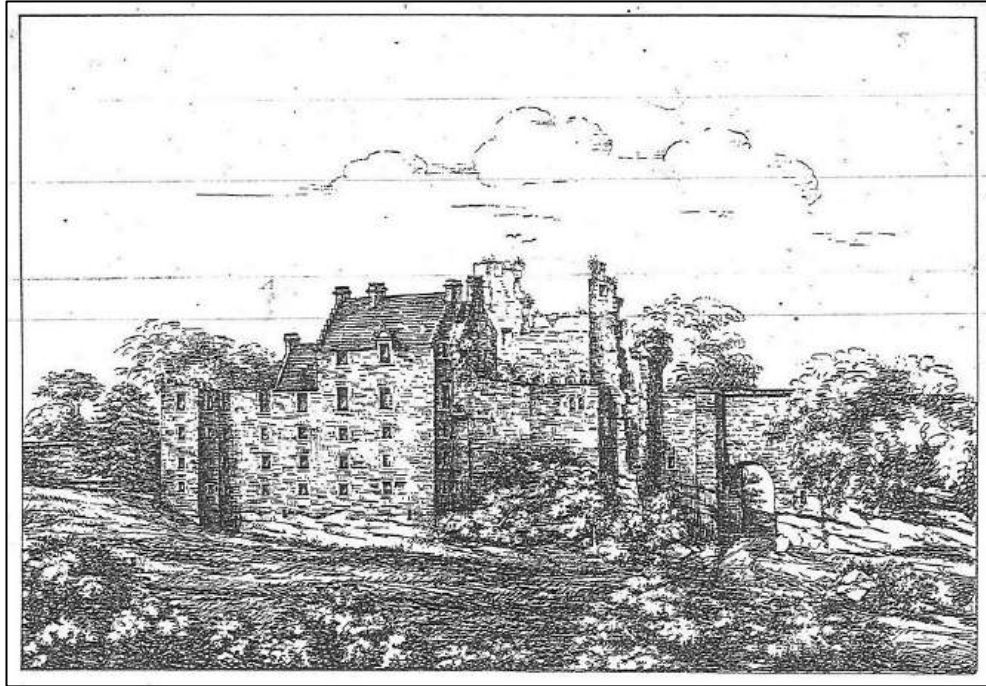
ROSSLYN CASTLE, ITS BUILDINGS PAST AND PRESENT.

421

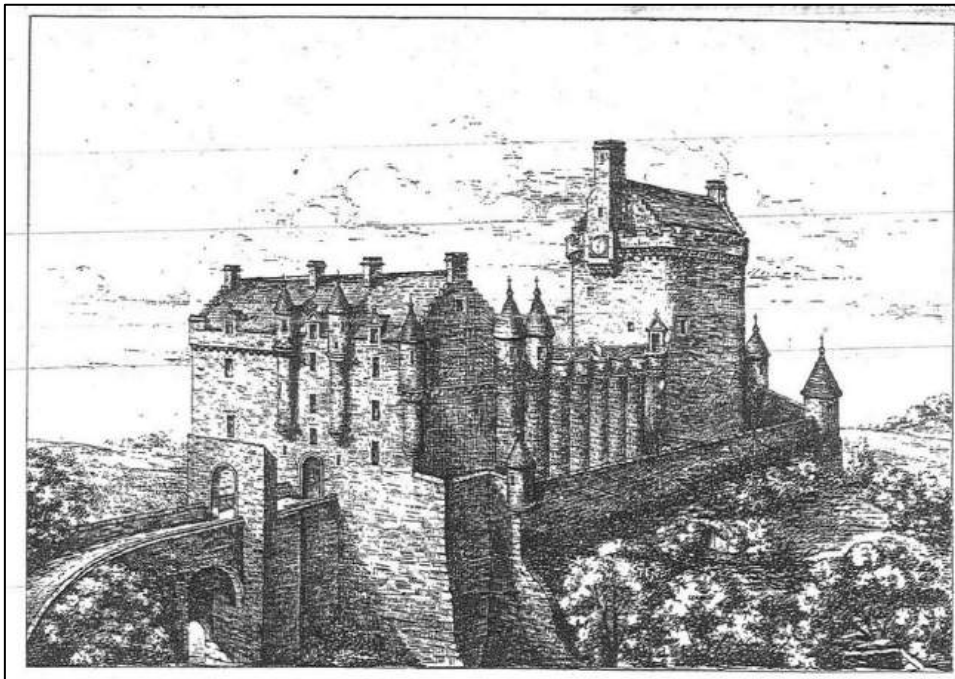
the Archbishop of St Andrews. He continued the building of the south-east side of the court eastward from the great staircase, consisting of the dining room in the principal floor, and the bedrooms above, which are still occasionally occupied. His initials, and the date 1622, are cut upon the lintel of the door leading to the great staircase. The ceiling of the dining-room is of plaster, and remains entire. It is divided into nine panels, the whole being richly decorated with hunting and hawking scenes, serpents charming birds, and a considerable variety of floral ornament. The central panel is filled with the arms of Rosslyn proper, viz., the shield with engrailed cross, dexter supporter a mermaid with a comb in one hand and a bunch of sea-wrack in the other, the sinister a griffon, the crest a dove, and the motto, *Credo*, nearly obliterated; but the date 1622 is quite distinct. There are two dormer windows with moulded heads, the one towards the court containing the Rosslyn shield, and the letters W. S. (William Sinclair). The other at the back is covered with neatly cut curved lines of a fanciful design.

At no period of its history does the castle appear to have been in a more complete state than at this time, the portions formerly destroyed having been rebuilt, and those recently in progress finished. A stone lintel, apparently of a large richly moulded window, much defaced, may be seen used as a cope stone to the parapet of the bridge at the entrance. An inscription has been cut along one of the mouldings, and in the centre there are the remains of a shield having a portion of the arms of Rosslyn and Spottiswood impaled, with the date 1622. The partial reconstruction and erection of these buildings required a very large expenditure, which pressed heavily upon the family, and involved them in considerable trouble.

Sir William Sinclair died in 1650, and was interred in the chapel on the 3d September of that year. The eldest son, also Sir William, having died in France, his second son John succeeded, and held the castle in the same year by a commission from Charles II. against General Monck, who with a party of 600 men battered down almost the entire north-west side, took the castle by force, plundered it of everything valuable, and sent the proprietor a prisoner to Tynemouth Castle. The site of Monck's battery is still pointed out upon an artificial square mound to the north of the orchard. It commanded the entire length of the castle, and thus readily accomplished the destruction above described, leaving a part of the



Rosslyn Castle – View of Remains existing in 1877 from the North-east



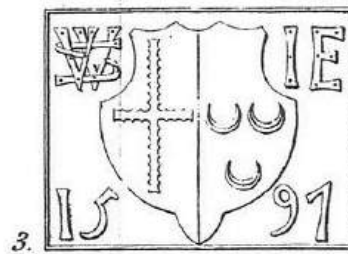
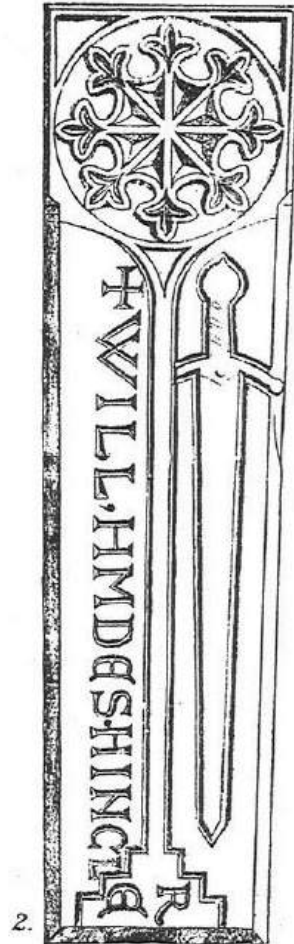
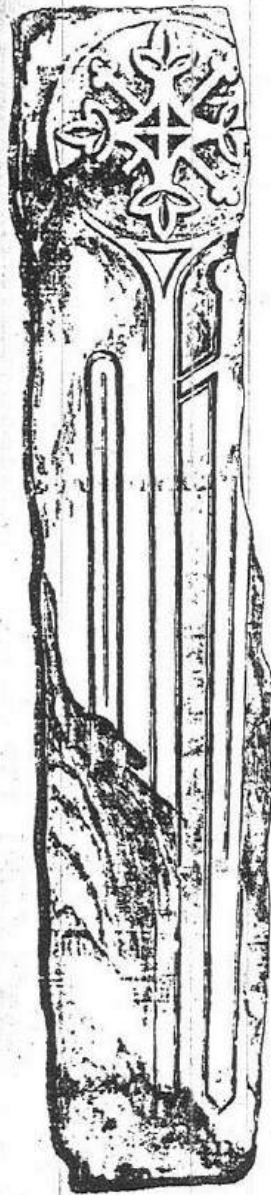
Rosslyn Castle – View of the Castle in a complete state from the North-west

south side comparatively little injured ; yet so great was the destruction of the building that no attempt was afterwards made towards its complete restoration. It may be worthy of notice that one of the workmen employed in removing building materials from the castle a few years ago remarked that they had all been previously turned over, as not a vestige of any article of furnishing had been discovered. Mr John Sinclair returned from Tynemouth, and died at Rosslyn in 1690.

James Sinclair, the proprietor's younger brother, redeemed or rather purchased the estate from his brother's creditors, and married Mrs Jean Spotswood, widow of Mr George Hay, who was the father of Richard Augustine Hay, author of the work entitled "The Genealogie of the St Clairs of Rosslyn." "He built a wall about the garden towards the linn and the forepart of the castle on the left hand entering the drawbridge, upon which his arms, conjointly with those of his wife, were engraven upon a stone. He also builded the legions (parapets) of the bridge on the water of the Esk, under the castle, with a gate to stop passengers, and brought water in leaden pipes to the inner court of the castle of Rosslyn and to the lower vaults." The latter work was carried out by a person named Bruce, who was also employed to bring water to the several fountains of Edinburgh.

This was the last attempt to restore any portion of the castle buildings. On the 11th December 1688 it was attacked, plundered, and defaced by a mob, said to consist of parties from Edinburgh, but chiefly of the inhabitants and tenants of the district, and it has remained much in the same state in which they left it. On the same night about ten o'clock they defaced some portions of the chapel, but not to any considerable extent.

Mr James Sinclair had two sons, James and Alexander. James died young ; and Alexander, the second son, born 30th November 1672, succeeded to the estate. He was married to a daughter of Lady Semple, was served heir to his father in the lands of Rosslyn on 5th April 1699, and died in 1706. William Sinclair, their son, commonly known as the last Rosslyn, was served heir to his father on the 4th of August 1727. He married Cordelia, daughter of Sir George Wishart of Clifton Hall, and died 24th January 1778, aged seventy-eight. He resigned the office of Hereditary Grand Master Mason of Scotland to the Scottish Freemasons



INCISED SLABS & COAT OF ARMS
at Rosslyn.

in 1736, and about the same period sold the estate of Rosslyn to the Hon. James St Clair, second son of Lord Sinclair of Hermandston. By the marriage already mentioned, namely, that of the Hon. Catherine Sinclair in April 1659, he represented the line of William St Clair of Newburgh, eldest son of William third earl of Orkney and Elizabeth or Margaret Douglas. He was a general in the army, and from his brother being attainted in 1715, he succeeded as ninth Lord Sinclair, but did not assume the title, which continued in the Hermandston family after his decease. He took much interest in the Rosslyn estate, causing considerable repairs to be executed upon the chapel, and died in 1762 without issue. Colonel James Paterson, his nephew, succeeded him, and assumed the name of St Clair. He was the son of the general's eldest sister, the Hon. Grissel St Clair, and John Paterson, Esq. of Preston Hall. Colonel Paterson died unmarried in 1789. The St Clair property then devolved on Sir James Erskine, Baronet, second Earl of Rosslyn, and grandson of the Hon. Catherine St Clair, the general's second eldest sister, who married Sir John Erskine of Alva, Baronet.

The title of Earl of Rosslyn was conferred in 1801 upon Alexander Wedderburn, Lord High Chancellor of England, who did not possess the Rosslyn estate, but contributed largely to the preservation of the chapel.

Sir James Erskine, Bart., succeeded his uncle as second Earl of Rosslyn in 1806. He was the son of Sir Henry Erskine of Alva and Janet Wedderburn, sister of Alexander first Earl of Rosslyn. He married Henrietta Elizabeth, daughter of the Hon. Edward Bouverie.

James Alexander St Clair Erskine, third Earl of Rosslyn, succeeded his father in 1837, married Francis, daughter of the late Lieutenant-General Wemys. Francis Robert St Clair Erskine, fourth and present Earl of Rosslyn, who succeeded his father in 1866, married Blanche Adeliza, second daughter of Henry Fitz Roy, Esq., of Salcey Lawn in Northamptonshire, and widow of the Hon. Charles Henry Maynard.

Much care has been bestowed during a long series of years, both by the late and present Earl of Rosslyn, in preserving the ancient buildings, and also in having extensive works carried out under the direction of Mr Bryce, architect, Edinburgh, in reinstating the dilapidations of the chapel and other interesting architectural remains.

On carefully examining the ruins of the castle, no loopholes or other

defensive openings are to be found in the north-west and north-east sides, while in those of the south-east side, small round eyelets are placed below almost every window. Although the purposes of the castle were kept in view from the first, arrangements for domestic comfort have not been overlooked. As society became settled, the restorations and additions assumed less of the appearance of a castle and more of a domestic residence.

A considerable extent of decorative features have existed upon the elevations towards the court-yard. The doorway forming the entrance to the chapel grounds is said to have been removed from it,—the style of which, with that of several carved stones still to be seen at the castle, is of a Renaissance character, inclining to Gothic.

As already noticed, the tower at the north-east corner was first erected early in the fourteenth century, the donjon tower about 60 years later, the connecting buildings on the north-west side onward to the north-east corner about 1446, the south-east side to the level of the court-yard and the great hall in 1597, and the south-eastern part in 1622. Large portions of the castle have evidently been rebuilt from time to time upon the old foundations, after having been partially destroyed by the repeated assaults which it has sustained.

The existence of vaults below the court-yard was previously noticed, but they evidently extend farther westward, as in the first floor down, in the south-east side, there is a built-up entrance to them from the great staircase.¹

The history of the St Clair family has been introduced into this paper more extensively than was originally intended, but as it was so much interwoven with that of the castle it could not be avoided, especially in distinguishing the periods in which the different portions of the building were erected.

[Since this paper was printed it has been pointed out by the editor of the first volume of the Exchequer Rolls, just published (Pref. p. lxxvii.), that Sir William St Clair, who was slain in 1330, is incorrectly designed of Roslin, inasmuch as his father survived him.]

¹ Slezer, in his *Theatrum Scotiæ*, published in 1693, says, "A great treasure, we are told, amounting to some millions, lies buried in one of the vaults. It is under the guardianship of a lady of the ancient house of St Clair, who, not very faithful to her trust, has been long in a dormant state. Awakened, however, by the sound of a trumpet, which must be heard in one of the lower apartments, she is to make her appearance, and to point out the spot where the treasure lies."

The Fortified Houses of Scotland, MacGibbon & Ross

THIRD PERIOD

— 366 —

EDZELL CASTLE

three stars above pierced in the centre as shot-holes. Over the centre of each compartment there is a small niche with a carved cushion, on which a bust or other ornament might rest. These cushions, although all very similar in design, have considerable variety of details. Over the niches is a small curved pediment containing a scroll. All the above-mentioned recesses have the sill hollowed out as if for the reception of soil for a flower or plant. It is supposed that the chequered design and the three stars represent those figures in the Lindsay arms, which are gules, a fesse chequé argent and azure, with three stars in chief of the second.

The bas-reliefs are in the somewhat debased style of sculpture prevalent at the period, but are very varied in design. Those on the east wall represent the Celestial Deities, those on the south wall the Sciences, and those on the west wall the Theological and Cardinal Virtues.

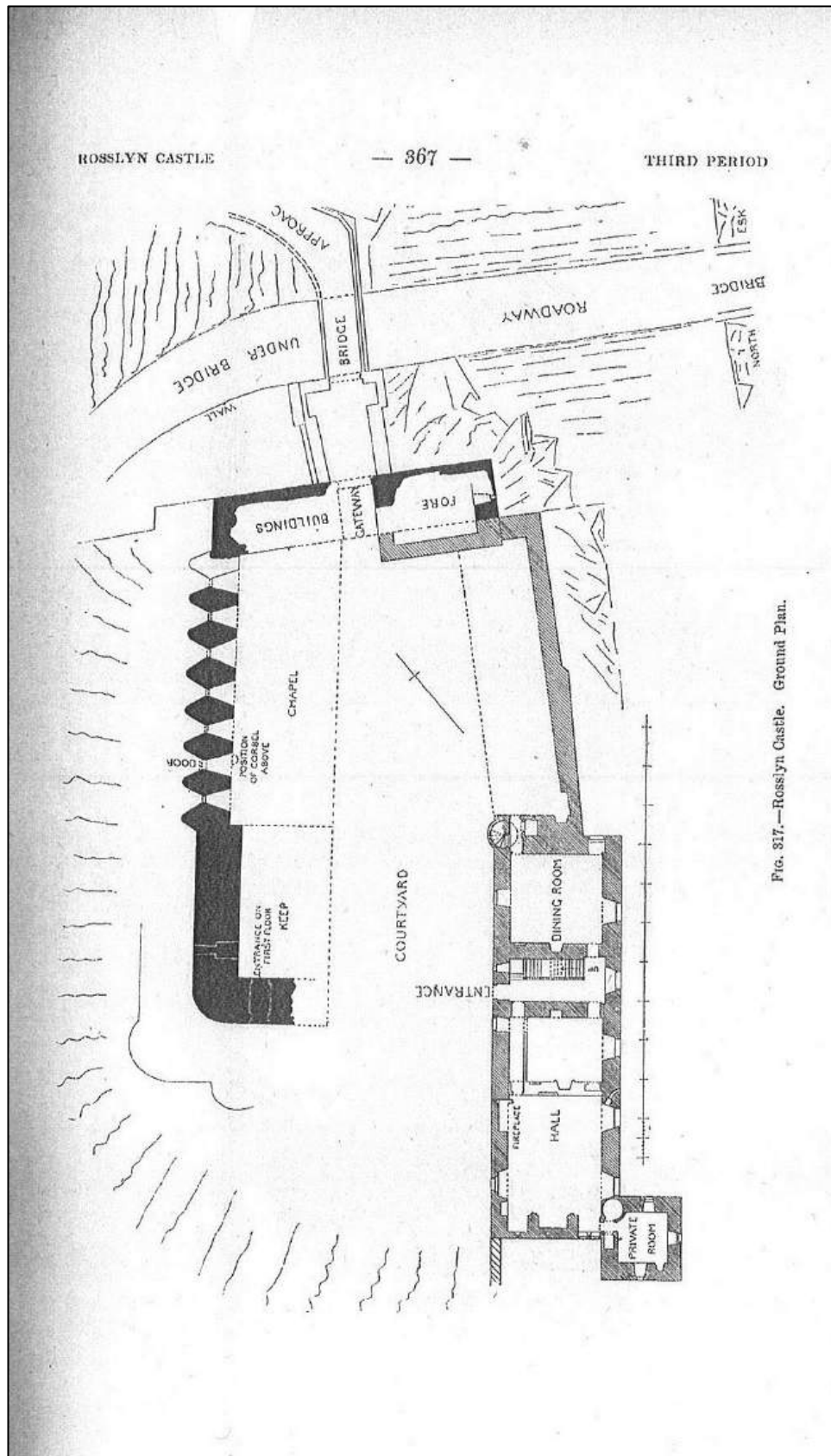
At the south-east angle of the garden stands the very picturesque lodge and garden-house (Figs. 312 and 316), with monogram of David Lindsay entwined with foliage carved in the tympanums over the windows. The lodge is a single room entering from the exterior. The garden-house enters from the garden, and has a ribbed and groined vault, and stone seat all round. From this room a turret stair conducts to two rooms in the upper floor, which may have been used as fruit rooms. At the south-west angle of the garden are situated the well, and the remains of what was probably a bath-house. The well is carefully built in the thickness of the garden wall, and access is provided to it both from the garden and a small room attached to the bath-house, in which there is a stone sink for emptying out water.

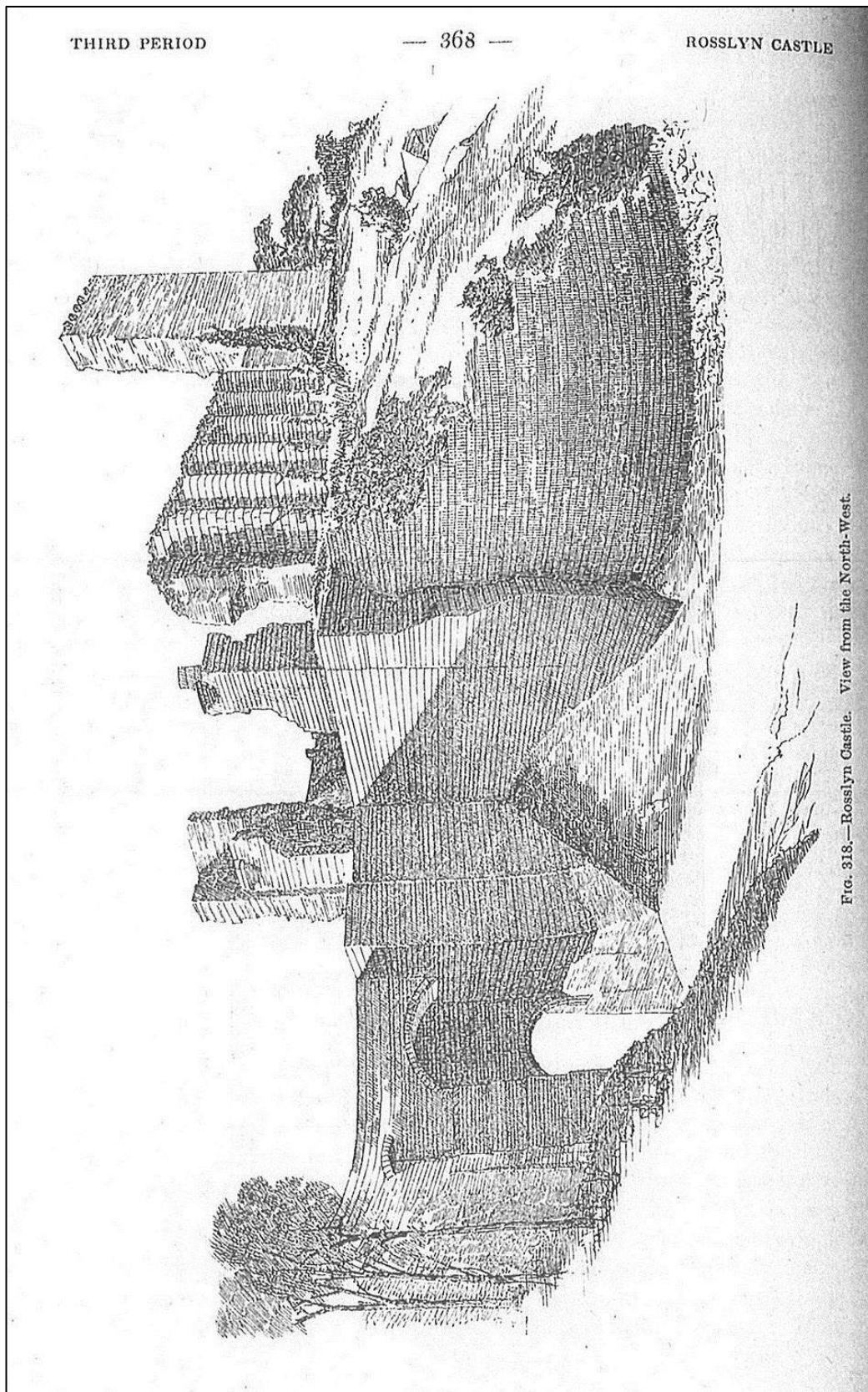
Notwithstanding the ruinous state of the quadrangle, its great extent, and the elegant and commodious arrangements of the pleasure garden of Edzell, give an impressive idea of the advancement and refinement of the last years of the sixteenth century.

The castle now belongs to the Earl of Dalhousie, and the ruins are well taken care of.

ROSSLYN CASTLE, MIDLOTHIAN.

On a rocky promontory projecting into the haughs lying along the banks of the North Esk stands the Castle of Rosslyn. The river winds round the castle on three sides. On the north-west a calm and rather sluggish stream, it rounds the point of the promontory, and dashing over a lynn it enters a wild rocky gorge, and rushes past the south-east side of the castle at a distance of forty or fifty yards. The natural approach to the castle (Fig. 317) was by a narrow ridge of rock, which has been cut through at the neck of the promontory. A high access bridge is thrown across the chasm (Fig. 318), but it was undoubtedly originally spanned by a drawbridge. Through this cutting a road





ROSSLYN CASTLE

— 369 —

THIRD PERIOD

led straight down to the river which was crossed by another bridge, now only represented by a part of the ruined arch on the castle side (but shown as if complete in the general view from the north-east, Fig. 319). The high bridge was evidently further defended by a gate close to its

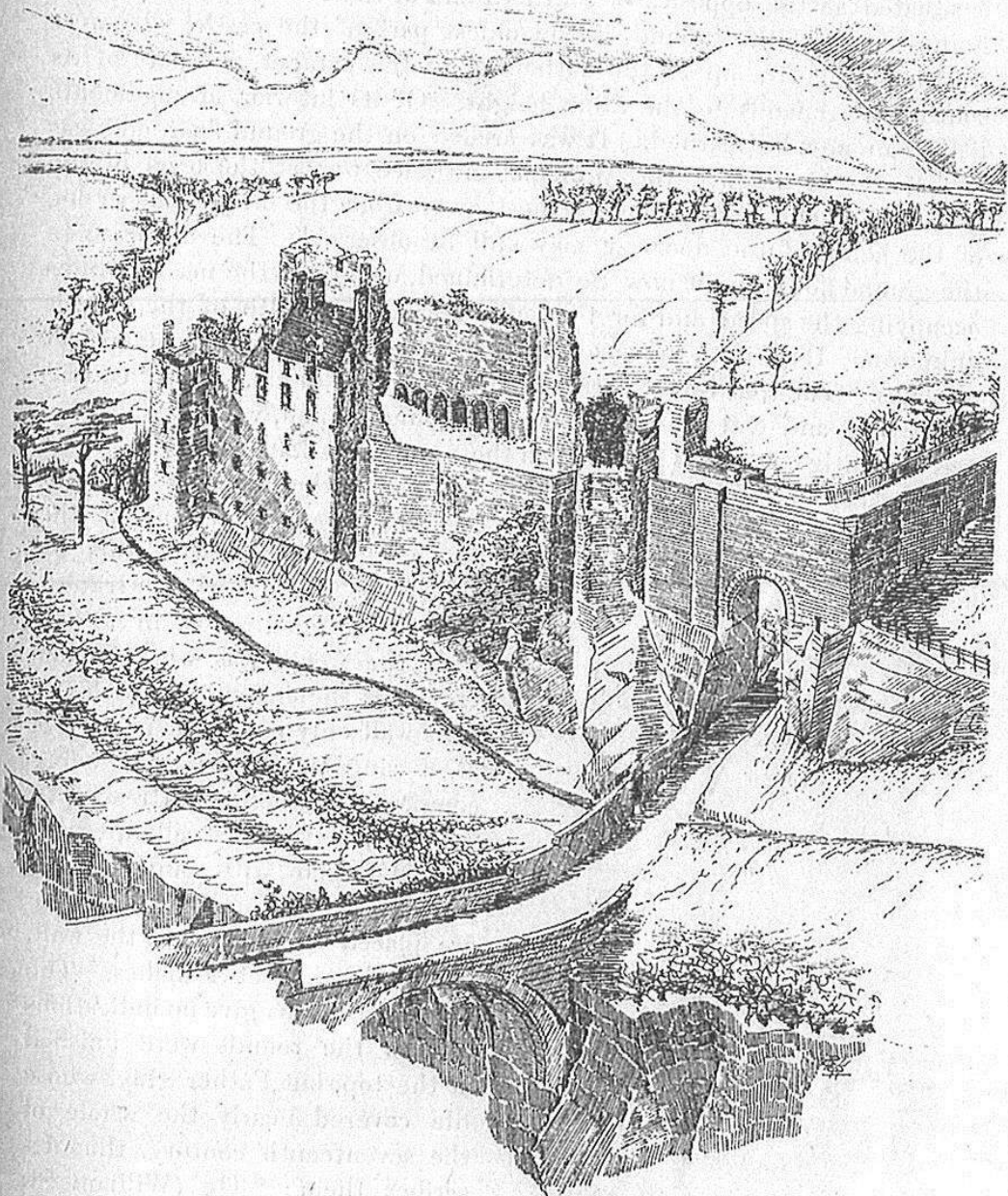


FIG. 319.—Rosslyn Castle. General View from the North-East.

southern end, as part of the rybats for hanging it to still exist. At 27 feet back from this gate rise the ruined outer walls of the castle, through which a gateway gave access to the courtyard. Above the gateway was

2 A

a gatehouse with round turrets facing the bridge, of which the corbelling and some courses of masonry still remain (Fig. 318). On the east side of the gateway the ruins of a square tower may still be traced, while broken walls indicate the existence of buildings on the west. The keep, which is situated at the opposite or southern end of the courtyard, and on the highest part of the ground, is the oldest part of the castle. Its west wall stands entire up to the corbelling of the parapet, and part of its south wall remains to the same height. Of its interior arrangements little can now be learned. It was arched on the ground floor, and was five stories in height; the principal entrance was at the level of the first or hall floor on the side furthest away from the bridge, where one of the jambs of the doorway may still be observed. The entrance to the ground floor cannot now be determined, owing to the mass of ruins occupying the space, and for the same reason the width of the keep is unknown. Its length, however, can be clearly ascertained to be 50 feet 3 inches. The south-west corner of the keep is rounded, and the corbels of the side and end walls stop at the round which, with a plain face, was evidently continued higher than those walls as a staircase turret to the roof. According to Father Hay, the historian of the family of St. Clair,

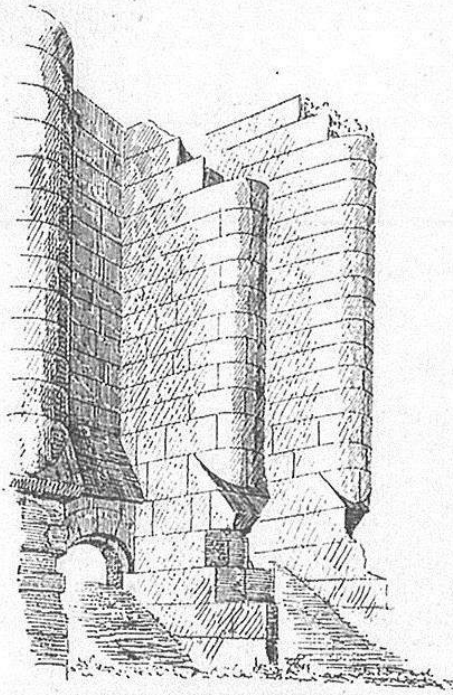


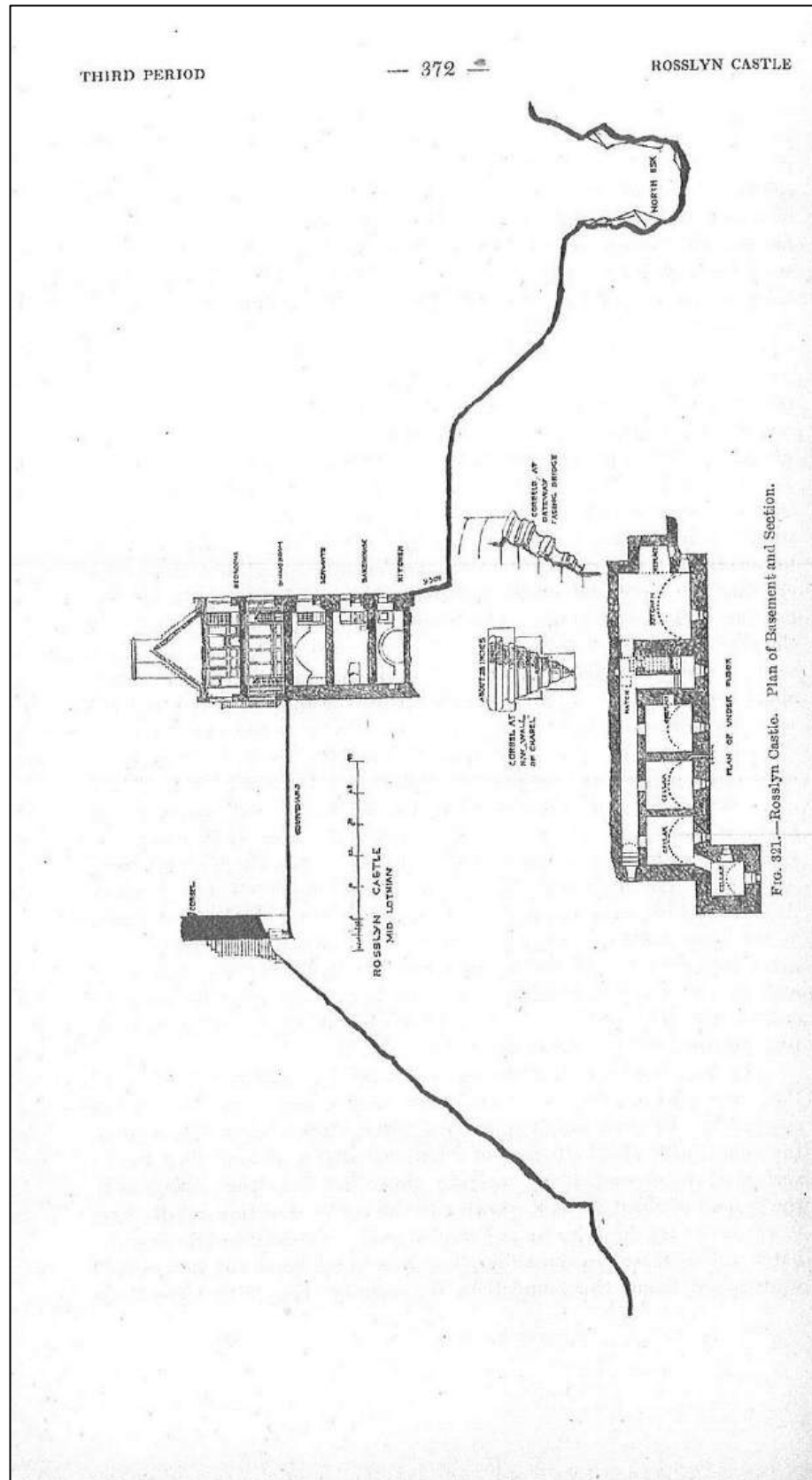
FIG. 320.—Rosslyn Castle.
The "Rounds" of the Wall of Enceinte.

this keep was erected about the end of the fourteenth century by Henry St. Clair, Earl of Orkney. Continuing northwards, in a line with the keep, was what Father Hay calls the chapel, of which the west wall only now remains. It is of a singular description, being composed of eight buttresses or "rounds," as they are called, wedge shaped on plan, with rounded outer faces (Figs. 317 and 320). These are placed 2 feet apart at the wall, and project 5 feet 4 inches. The existing remains give no indications of how the rounds were finished at the top, but Father Hay, whose life covered nearly the whole of the seventeenth century, thus describes them: "He (William St. Clair) built the church walls of Rosslyn, having rounds, with fair

chambers and galleries thereon." From this description it seems probable, either that arches were thrown from "round" to "round," and a gallery continued along the top, or that a parapet ran round the wall-heads of the buttresses as well as the top of the wall, in which case the former

would create recesses (such as are sometimes met with over the piers of bridges), and would thus represent the "fair chambers," while the parapet walk at the wall-head would form the "galleries." Sir William succeeded his father, Henry, just referred to, in the beginning of the fifteenth century, and died about 1484. He was a great builder, and founded the famous Collegiate Church of Rosslyn in 1450. There are small windows between the "rounds" on the ground floor, having widely splayed jambs and a flat arch on the inside, with shutter recesses cut in the former. In one case there is a door, finished in the same way as the windows on the inside, with a sloped tabling outside above the door (Fig. 320). Near the top of this wall, on the inside, there is a round moulded corbel at the position shown on the plan, which was in some way doubtless connected with the parapet walk or gallery (see sketch, Fig. 321). There are no indications of any buildings having stood where Father Hay describes the church to have been; and there is no appearance of there having been either cross partitions or floors to divide it into stories. Sir William is further said by Father Hay to have built the fore-work on the north side of the entrance gateway and the bridge crossing the river, and in all probability the gatehouse containing the entrance was also his work. The tower or fore-work on the east side of the gateway, along with the under part of the wall extending eastwards, seems to be older than Sir William's work, and may have been erected about the same time as the keep, as part of the walls of enceinte which probably surrounded the whole castle area. Owing to the almost perpendicular configuration of the rocks, this wall and the tower on its two outer extremities rise from a considerable depth below the court level. There are remains of a wall running along the west and south sides of the keep, at a distance of about 13 feet from the wall. It probably continued along in front of the "rounds" till it reached the high retaining wall at the roadway (Fig. 318). In a drawing, dated 1700, in the Advocates' Library, a wall is shown in this position, with rounded towers at the south-western end, as indicated on the plan. There are also great fragments of walls at the bottom of the hill round the north-west and part of the south sides, which may have fallen from above. The castle seems to have been of the extent above described when, in 1544, it was burned by the Earl of Hertford.

The next builder at Rosslyn was also a Sir William, who constructed the large addition shown on the plan at the south-east side of the courtyard. This consists (Fig. 321) of three stories below the level of the court, with about 10 feet of additional depth of bare rock to the surface of the ground, being a depth altogether from the courtyard to the ground of about 52 feet. Owing to the confined nature of the site, it was necessary, in order to preserve a good courtyard, to bring up the outer wall of these new buildings from near the base of the rock, which was scarped below the foundations for security (Fig. 321). The three



stories below the level of the courtyard were thus a necessity. These stories are arched in stone, while those above the court level are joisted in timber. A wide easy staircase gives access down from the level of the court to the various floors (Figs. 317 and 321), while from the middle or bakery floor a door leads to the outside at the west end of the passage, the ground being there at the same level as that floor.

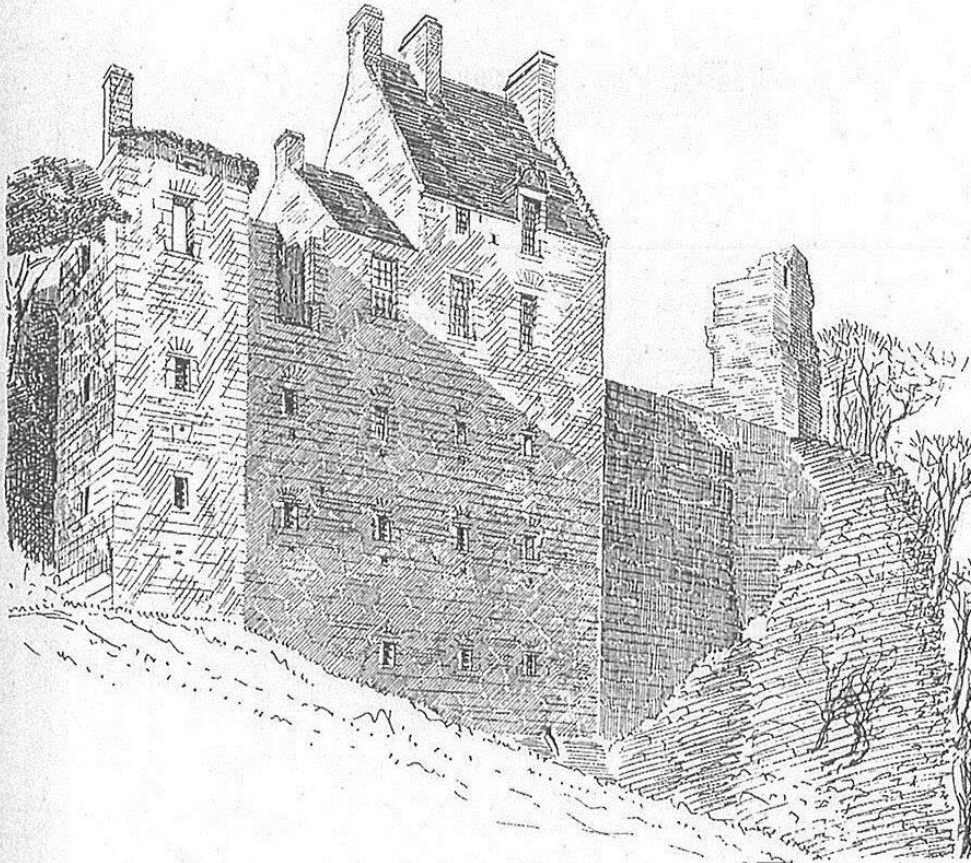


FIG. 322.—Rosslyn Castle. View from the South-East.

In the basement floor is situated the kitchen, having a large fireplace with a small window in it, about 6 feet above the floor. A passage leads from the kitchen to the other end of the building, from which the various rooms are entered. The first and second floors above are similar in arrangement. On the first floor over the kitchen is situated the bakery, with an oven in the corner where shown on section. From the great hall, situated on the level of the courtyard, a small private newel stair leads down to the cellars on the floor below (Fig. 317). Beneath the window-sills of the three under stories are small round shot-holes, splayed only to the inside. In the arched roofs of the passages a hatch is constructed for a hoist from the kitchen, etc., and in the passages on each floor are recesses for lamps. The great hall

THIRD PERIOD

— 374 —

ROSSLYN CASTLE

was a room 54 feet long by 23 feet wide, with a fine moulded fireplace (Fig. 323), bearing a shield with the arms and initials of Sir William and his wife, Jean Edmonston, and the date 1597. In the jamb of the opposite window is a piscina-looking recess, probably used as a wash-hand basin. In the end of the hall there is a recess, but it is so ruined that its purpose cannot be determined. It may have been for a seat, a side-

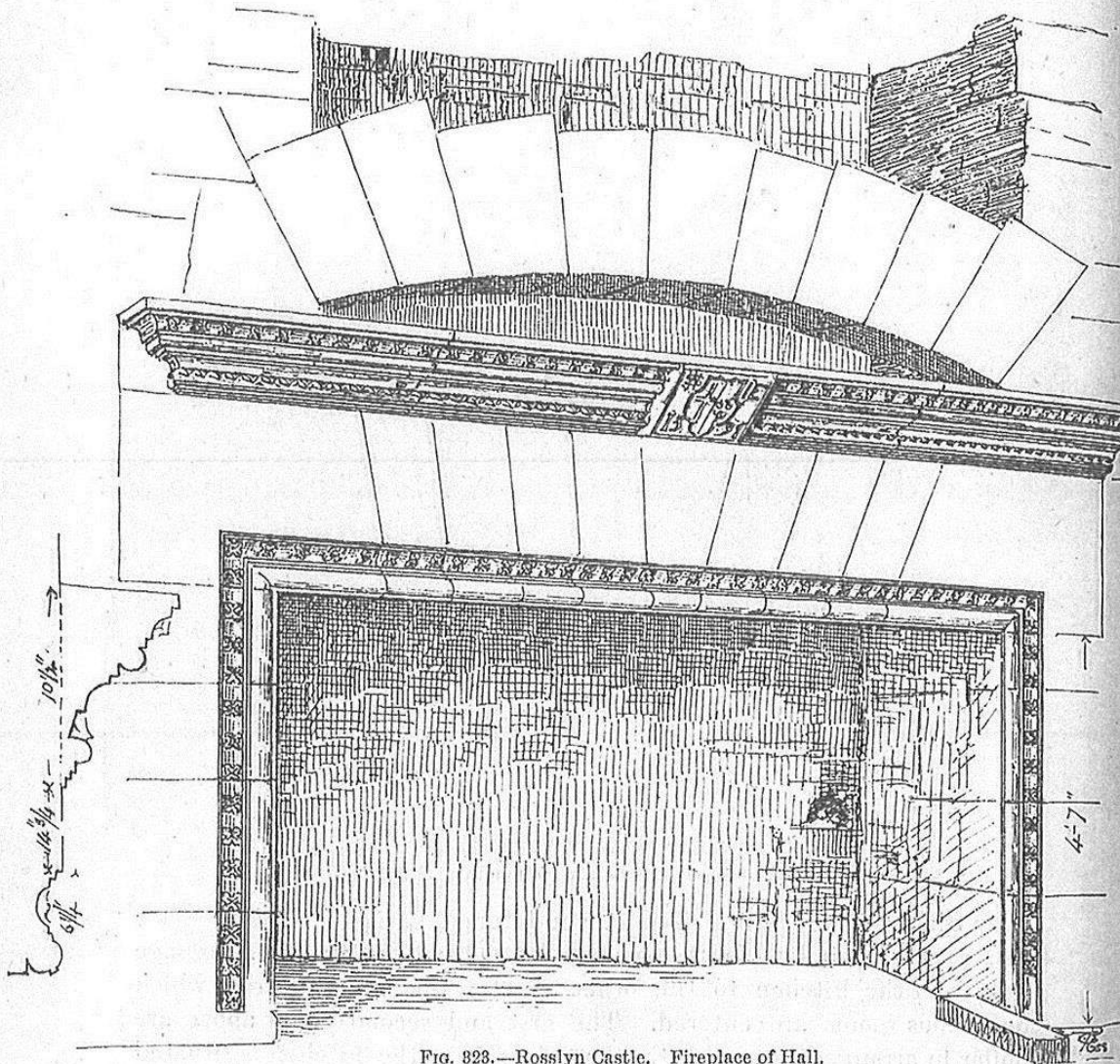


FIG. 323.—Rosslyn Castle. Fireplace of Hall.

board, or even a second fireplace. Sir William seems to have built the three under stories just described, and the hall. In 1622, his son, of the same name, completed the buildings north of the staircase above this level (Fig. 324). Thereafter they remained as they now stand, except that at some later period the hall has been cut in two by a wall, the lines of which are shown on the plan. On the outer doorway, and dormer

ROSSLYN CASTLE

— 375 —

THIRD PERIOD

(Fig. 324), and on the plaster ceiling, a view of which is given (Fig. 325), are his initials with the above date.

Part of the space beneath the courtyard is supposed to contain vaulted chambers. The construction of the bridge leading to the castle

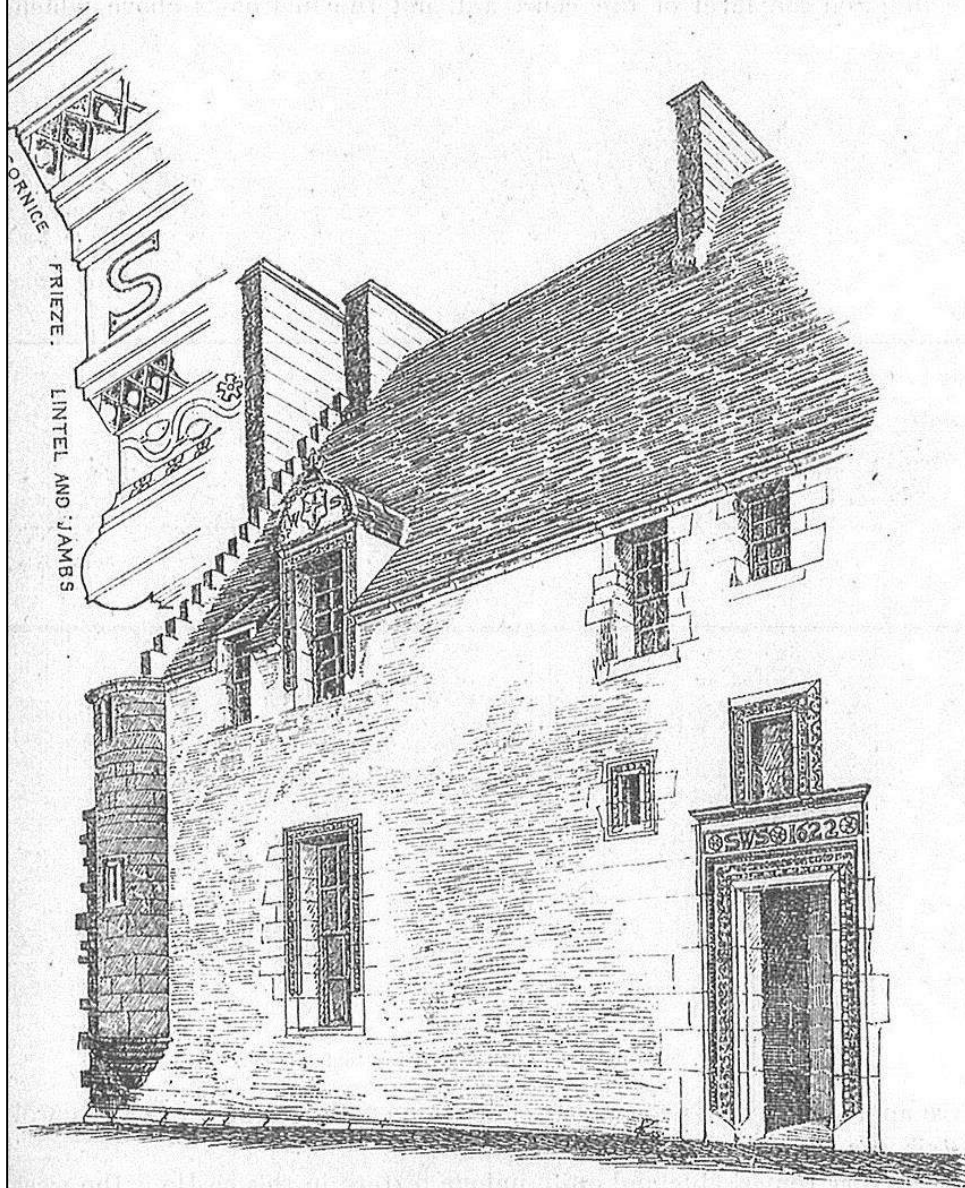


FIG. 324.—Rosslyn Castle. East Side of Courtyard.

is peculiar, the ring next the river being some 12 or 15 feet lower than the portion bearing the roadway (Fig. 318).

The various portions of the castle correspond in style with the periods at which they are said to have been built. We have first the fifteenth-century buildings, consisting of the keep, and the enclosing walls defended by a drawbridge and gatehouse.

THIRD PERIOD

— 376 —

ROSSLYN CASTLE

In the later buildings, again, we see the more enlarged requirements of the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century met by the extensive accommodation in the basement floors, the large and elegant hall, the withdrawing-room with elaborately ornamented ceiling, on the level of the courtyard, and the bedrooms above, which

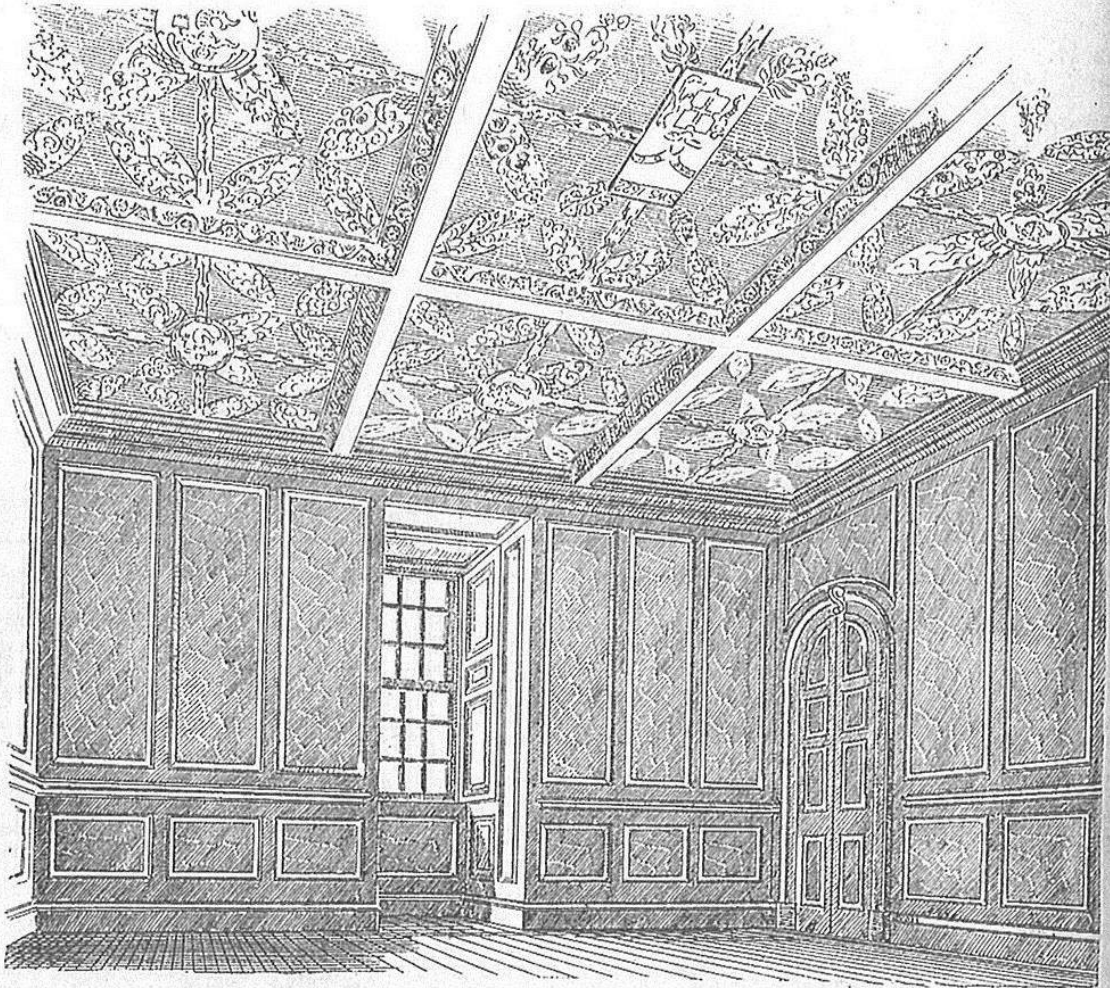


FIG. 325.—Rosslyn Castle. Interior of Dining Room.

are approached by a wide square stair at one end, and by a private newel stair in a projecting turret at the other.

A very remarkable and quite unique feature in this castle is the west wall of enceinte, with its buttresses or "rounds." We are not aware of any other castle provided with similar defences. The only example at all analogous to it is that of the wall of enceinte of the Château Gaillard, before referred to (Fig. 20).¹

¹ An interesting and valuable paper on 'Rosslyn Castle: its Buildings Past and Present,' will be found in vol. xii. p. 412, of the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*.

'Rosslyn Castle, Lothian' by Richard Haslam, *Country Life*, 1989

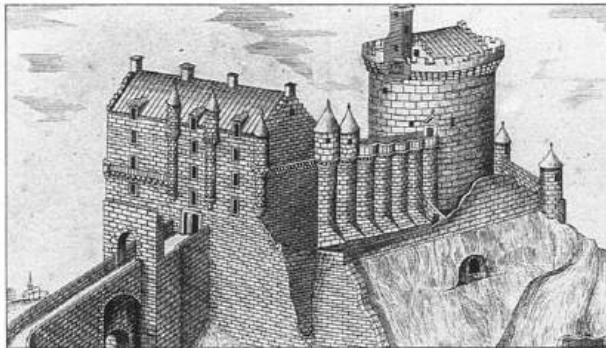
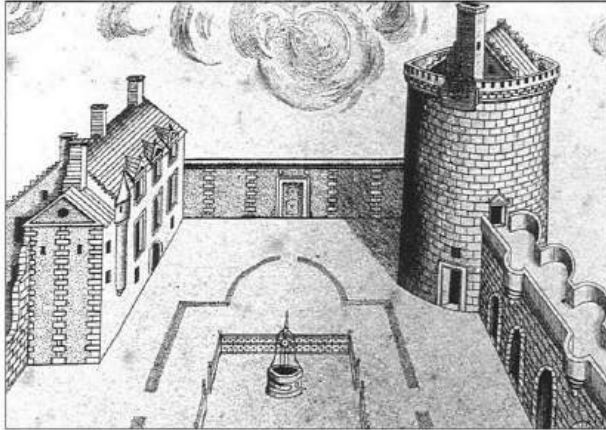
112

COUNTRY LIFE

APRIL 13, 1989

ROSSLYN CASTLE, LOTHIAN

THE PROPERTY OF THE EARL OF ROSSLYN by RICHARD HASLAM



1-4—What remains of Rosslyn Castle, near Edinburgh, today (above right) is only a fragment of its former splendour, as shown by engravings, after 12th-century drawings, taken from Richard Hay's *Genealogie of the Sainteclaires of Rosslyn* (1822), (above left)

THE collegiate church built in about 1450 at Rosslyn, just south of Edinburgh, by William St Clair, Prince of Orkney, offers such an extraordinary picture of late medieval sumptuousness that it has somewhat outshone the more ruinous castle below, to which it is attached. Rosslyn Castle was begun 150 years before, but in its present form it is largely the work of William and his father, Henry St Clair, 2nd Prince of Orkney, in the 15th century, and of two of their successors—both called Sir William St Clair—who rebuilt the living quarters after these had been burned by Lord Hertford in 1544.

Like the medieval parts, this more domestic range was severely damaged in General Monk's siege in 1650 and the castle has never fully recovered—despite a number of partial restorations, the most recent of which (just completed) has brought this amazing ruin back into use.

The story of such places is often the story of a family. At Rosslyn the fate of a line of near-royal status in 15th-century Scotland, as it confronted the turmoil of the 16th and 17th centuries, led to predictable difficulties. This was revealed by the charters of Rosslyn, which were

thrown in four chests from the burning dungeon tower in 1477 and subsequently partly copied by a clerical member of the family, Father Richard Augustine Hay, sometime before 1700. Many uncertainties remain, however, since they have long vanished from the library of the Faculty of Advocates in Edinburgh.

Piecing together accounts brings its own risks, but it appears that the castle passed from the Roskelyn family to Sir William St Clair by his marriage to the heiress, Amicia, in about 1280. The site is said by Hay to have been pointed out by an English prisoner after the Battle of Rosslyn in 1302, in which the Scots resisted an army of Edward I. While both spellings exist, the village is commonly spelled Roslin and the castle, chapel and earldom are spelled Rosslyn—as is Rosslyn, Virginia.

A tower was built at the north of a rocky promontory overlooking the River North Esk, but it seems that full advantage was not taken of the strength of the site until the 2nd Prince of Orkney built the dungeon tower between 1404 and 1418. Hay, in the *Genealogie of the Sainteclaires of Rosslyn* (1822), interprets this as circular in plan in his drawings (Figures 1 and 3), but

the surviving fragment of wall under its collapsed masonry indicates that it was a rectangular keep of the local type.

What Sir Walter Scott made still more famous in the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805) and Turner made a more familiar image in his watercolour published as a print in 1822, was already public property in a sense. To take only two examples from the 18th century, Grose had written in 1788 of "the mere wreck of a great pile riding in a little sea of forest . . . a rueful apology for the once grand fabric of Rosslyn Castle", and an article on the chapel had been published in *The Edinburgh Magazine* in 1761 by Dr Forbes, Bishop of Caithness, with an engraving by A. Bell.

However, these pale beside the researches of Father Hay, published in 120 copies in 1822 but written between 1686 and 1700. Despite their pervasive inaccuracy, his writings carry the hallmarks of authenticity. His mother married Sir James St Clair as her second husband, and Hay knew well the struggles that he, his elder brother, Sir John, and his second son, Sir Alexander, had with the wreck of their family property in that troubled period for those with long political and religious loyalties.

The 15th-century fortifications of Rosslyn Castle, just south of Edinburgh, were mostly built by William St Clair, 3rd Prince of Orkney. He was also patron of the sumptuous but unorthodox collegiate church. The domestic range (1580–1622) retains some panelled rooms and has recently been restored.

Born in 1661 and trained as a priest in France, Hay not only transcribed many of the charters which play a vital part in the narrative, but saw various drawings made before the castle was slighted in 1650. These show the fortress in a magical state of completeness, and the three reproduced in this article depict one of the most romantic of medieval creations.

Enough remains of the 15th-century constructions which give Rosslyn Castle its implausible appearance to confirm that these drawings are accurate. The red, rocky spur around which the North Esk flows on three sides was weakest at its southern point, where the donjon was built. The rough western faces of the spur were scarped clean to form the breaches of its gate tower and of the retaining wall of the courtyard 50ft above (Fig 5).

A sheer ditch was cut in the neck of rock connecting the castle to the plateau above, on which the village and the chapel stand. This was first spanned by a drawbridge, but later provided with a low bridge, and later still, in 1580, with a higher one (Fig 4). Fortunately, this dramatic access escaped destruction in 1544 and in 1650, when the gate and forework that must have made it impregnable to assault, except by artillery, were battered down.

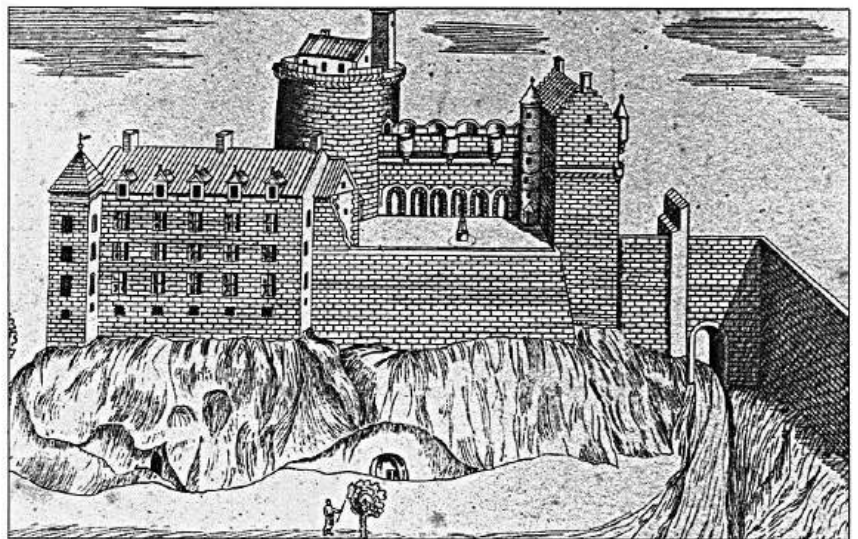
This forework rose to four full floors and a dormer storey, and as a dwelling for the retinue of the Princes of Orkney it partly explains the royal state in which they lived. The 1st Prince, Henry, came to this dignity through his mother, Isabel, heiress of Caithness and Orkney, and was invested in 1379 by King Haakon of Norway. His prerogatives included the making of laws and the minting of coins. As an admiral he is credited with the discovery of Greenland. He built Kirkwall Castle in Orkney and died in 1404. His son, Prince Henry, travelled with an escort of 300 and is thought to have built the donjon at Rosslyn.

The third and last prince, William St Clair, was invested in 1434. In 1446 he went to much trouble to draw up from his charters a Diploma of Succession for the benefit of his Scandinavian overlord, despite the close relationship of the St Clairs with the royal family of Scotland. Created Earl of Caithness in 1455, he resigned Orkney to the King of Scotland in 1470, receiving in return lands at Ravenscraig and Dysart in Fife. There the family lived from the time after the Civil War when Rosslyn became impracticable, until 1896 when they were sold. By his two marriages he founded three branches of the family, two of which came together in a complex process of deliberate preservation between 1735 and 1805 to establish the present line.

Prince William made Rosslyn the seat of the St Clairs, adding to the castle the bridge and forework to make a court 200ft by 90ft and also the strange, round-buttressed wall on the east (Fig 3). This



5—Rosslyn never recovered from General Monk's siege of 1650. (Below) 6—The Renaissance house was added to the south-west of the medieval castle



Hay supposed to have been the castle's chapel. The engravings show a most enigmatic structure, with a row of round-arched recesses facing the courtyard, and a wall-walk on top which followed the

ground plan for the five southern buttresses but had two tourelles on each of the other two.

By 1450, the Prince of Orkney had embarked on building Rosslyn Chapel, an



7 and 8—The Collegiate church of St Matthew (seen below in a print of 1837 by Samuel Swarbreck) was built above the castle by William, Prince of Orkney, in 1450–84



architectural enterprise which remained unfinished at his death in 1484. This was in keeping with the richness of his tapestries, his gold plate, his lordly household and courtly customs at the castle. While some 30 collegiate churches were built in Scotland between 1406 and 1513, according to *Rosslyn* (1973) by the 6th Earl of Rosslyn, and many had schools attached, it is easier to see the Prince's ambitious and idiosyncratic church as a court chapel, like, for example, the Duke of Savoy's Eglise de Brou at Bourg-en-Bresse. His connections with France included an embassy to the French court, and Hay says he was esteemed by Louis XI.

This is not the place in which to describe this fantastic church, intended for a provost and six prebendaries. In *The Buildings of Scotland: Lothian* (1978), Christopher Wilson points out the dependence of the plan, with its rectangular ambulatory, on churches of around 1200, such as Glasgow Cathedral and nearby Newbattle Abbey, as well as the dangers of comparing the carving with the later Plateresque style in Spain and Portugal.

Only the chancel was achieved after 40 years' work; the heir, Sir Oliver St Clair, did not attempt to complete the 90ft nave, which was apparently to have a great pointed vault like that at Borthwick Castle. The four altars in the Lady Chapel—to the Virgin Mary, St Matthew, St Andrew and St Peter—were dedicated in 1523. The fabric of the church was reduced with their demolition in 1592, but the family remained with the old faith.

The repair history of the church began in the 1730s, when General Sinclair glazed the windows through which the rain had driven causing damage to the carving. In Victorian times, two leading Scottish architects worked there, David Bryce in 1860, who had most of the sculpture retooled, and Andrew Kerr in 1880, who replaced the blank wall terminating the west end of the chancel with a baptistery and organ loft. This was done for the 4th Earl of Rosslyn, buried here like all his ancestors, but outside, in a Rosslynescue tomb of 1890. The church was reconsecrated for the Episcopalians in 1862, but remains the family's property.

At a date when many of Scotland's castles were just being started, Rosslyn received its crowning building: the clearly French-influenced domestic range at the south-west angle (Fig 6). What can be seen at courtyard level (Fig 2), which is only half the upper-level intended as the family's quarters, gives no clue to the three storeys which rise from the chasm below. This is a matter of some concern to today's window cleaners, now that this range has been repaired, and weak parts of the ruins have been underpinned, by the present owner.

This range was begun after the Henrician sack, and partly destroyed in 1650. Two Sir William St Clairs, father and son, were the builders. The elder was grandson of Sir Oliver, to whom the last Prince bequeathed Rosslyn. A collector of manuscripts from the recently dissolved monasteries, he had the Orkney Diploma translated from Latin into Scottish by



Thomas Guild, formerly a monk at Newbattle. The lower floors with their kitchen and service quarters under longitudinal vaults and linked by stairs in straight flights were his work, as was the top arch on the causeway and the clock tower of 1596 on the donjon. His son completed the work with a hall, now ruined, where the fireplace is dated 1597, and the surviving section at this level, where the quatrefoil-decorated doorway is dated 1622, as is the more conventional Jacobean decoration on the drawing-room ceiling (Fig 10).

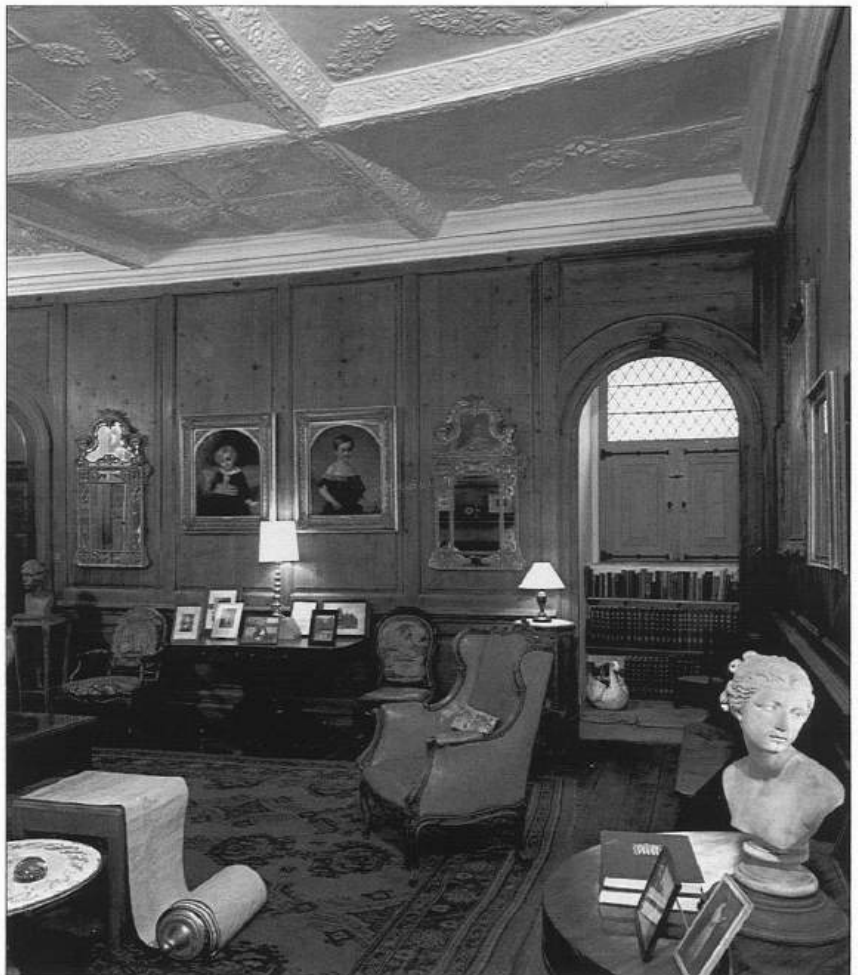
Rosslyn's fortifications never recovered from General Monk's siege. The Renaissance dwelling house was only partly repaired and was then panelled in stages up until the early 18th century. These repairs were financed by selling all but 99 acres of the nearby estates. All but one of the children of the Laird of Rosslyn predeceased him, so he chose another descendant of Prince William, in the senior line, General James Saintclair, and settled the property by entail in 1735.

Thus it came in 1789 to Sir James Saintclair Erskine through that line. Sir James's maternal grandmother was Sarah, the last laird's only surviving child. Her son, Alexander Wedderburn, rose to be Lord Chancellor in 1793, and was created Earl of Rosslyn in 1801, with special remainder to his nephew, Sir James, who already owned the castle. He became the 2nd Earl. It all illustrates what was felt about medieval Scotland among antiquaries, poets and the general public, in the years between the building of neo-Classical Edinburgh and the building of Abbotsford, the subject of a forthcoming article in COUNTRY LIFE.

Photographs: Jonathan M. Gibson.

Rosslyn Chapel is open from April 1 to October 31. Rosslyn Castle is managed by the Landmark Trust, Shottesbrooke, Maidenhead, Berkshire.

9—The south buttresses of Rosslyn Chapel. (Below) 10—The drawing room, with its ceiling of 1622. This part of Rosslyn Castle is now managed by the Landmark Trust



Extract from *In Search of Scotland*, by H V Morton

IN SEARCH OF SCOTLAND

67

'literary gentleman' should be mortgaged up to the hilt and provided with a view of a soap factory. The handmaids of literature are necessity, discomfort, and a wife who is always 'in rags', but house-agents, having at some time seen 'Patience', visualize a kind of Bunthorne as the victim for the decayed barns, the mews, and the desiccated cottages which are too full of 'atmosphere' for normal people. Roslin Castle advertised by a London agent in a fit of congenial lyricism would most certainly become the home of all inspiration. And in the ghost of Fair Rosamund what a pleasingly elusive pretext for a fat premium!

Strangely enough, the agent would be speaking the truth! Roslin is the ideal place for the writing of a humorous novel. The 'literary gentleman', concentrating against his dungeons, would seek refuge in a Wodehouse hero, or, removing his desk to a torture-chamber hacked with axes in the solid rock in the time of Robert the Bruce, he might write a rollicking revue.

Perhaps the greatest attraction in Roslin for a 'literary gentleman' is the legend of the buried millions said to be lying in a vault beneath the courtyard. The only person who knows the hiding-place is a lady of the house of St. Clair, now inconveniently dead. If, however, a trumpet blown in the upper apartments is heard in the dungeons, she will appear and lead on to the gold. (Who more likely to awaken her than a 'literary gentleman' accustomed to blowing his own trumpet?)

In the ancient dining-hall are the arms of that St. Clair who restored the castle in 1580. Above are four bedrooms with a fine view of the mess Monk's cannon made of the keep in 1650, but below in the rock are the chain of passages and the dim caverns lit by holes as small as your hand, in which, if I rented Roslin, I would give my dinner-parties—a thin trickle of water down the slimy rock as an orchestra. By the way, a dinner-party in these dungeons would establish the reputation of any Mayfair hostess.

The present tenant, who shows visitors over the castle, is the best guide I have met in Scotland. He knows the castle from the rock upwards. He has a marvellous trick of projecting himself back in time, so that when he is talking you can positively feel what it was to take a spar of wood and, push a scaling ladder from the ramparts, and then leaning over, to watch your enemies tumbling and turning in the air, on their way to the glen beneath.

CHAPTER THREE

I SEE THE CASTLE OF ROSLIN, CROSS INTO THE KINGDOM OF FIFE, SEE THE END OF THE GERMAN FLEET, AND GO ON TO THE TOWN OF ANDREW CARNEGIE, TO LINLITHGOW, AND SO TO THE BEAUTY OF STIRLING, WHERE I REMEMBER A QUEEN

SET out from Edinburgh with the intention of crossing over into Fife. But I had gone no more than a mile or so when I remembered that among the 6,082 things which I had not done in, or in the neighbourhood of, Edinburgh, was to see the Castle of Roslin. Why do beautiful hostesses extort from the innocent wanderer his word of honour that he will go to such and such a place and in the fullness of time write to her about it, or, at least, send her a post card? This love of sending men on inconvenient journeys is a peculiar trait in the mentality of women. It is probably a survival from days when every girl in every bower took a singular delight in sending reckless young men to obtain impossible gifts or to encounter appalling dangers. I suppose there was no other way of weeding out suitors in the Middle Ages.

However, a promise is a promise, and it is, in addition, the worst kind of bad luck to break faith with a beautiful hostess. So, sighing, I turned south and came in a short time to Roslin.

I saw, sitting on the edge of a crag above a woody ravine, all that is left of a noble castle. I crossed what was once a magnificent drawbridge and met a man who offered to rent me the whole place for £250 a year. The idea went to my head. It seemed incredible that for less than the price of a third-rate Kensington flat I could live on this cliff and write to all my friends on newspaper stamped 'Roslin Castle, Scotland', or, even better—the old spelling—'Rosslyn'. Yes, there was a bath (h. and c.), four bedrooms, and a dining-room with windows flush with the gorge; and among the fittings is 'Fair Rosamund, the White Lady of Roslin', who, alas! no longer walks as well as she used to do.

I have often wondered what Dick Turpin and Company mean when they advertise an 'ideal residence for a literary gentleman'. My own belief is that the ideal residence for a

'Do you mean to tell me you have never dug for the treasure?' I asked him.

'I have that I've admitted, with a grim smile. 'I've dug everywhere, but I canna locate it.'

There is a possibility, I understand, that Roslin Castle may be taken over by the Office of Works as an ancient monument. If so, a professional excavation will be made, with perhaps exciting results. But they will find nothing in the dungeons. The hardy Scots who built the first castle cared nothing for difficulties. They just hacked rooms in the rock. There is a dungeon in Roslin (no one knows where it is) known as 'Little Ease'. It was merely a pit. The prisoner was thrown into it, or, if his captor was in a kindly mood, let down on a rope. Here hopelessness closed over him as he lingered, growing blind and insane.

There are other dungeons quite as horrible. You stand in them, and there is no sound, but the slow drip, drip, drip of one spot of water on a stone. It is outside the dungeon, so that if you were dying of thirst you would beat your bleeding knuckles on the stone door to get to it. If not, you would just sit there year after year counting the drips, waiting for them, and probably in time talking to them.

The finest room in the rock is a kitchen with a gigantic fire-place. There is a gutter round it, hacked in the rock, so that the fat from a roasting ox would run away into a receptacle placed for it. When St. Clair gave a dinner-party in the Middle Ages this place must have been chaos, black with smoke, loud with shouts and sounds of sizzling fat, and the yelps of hounds kicked away from the fire. As you stand in it and listen to your guide you can see the cooks and the servants, the men-at-arms lounging in from the guard-room, ready to slice a piece of meat from the roasting carcase with a dagger. Then from above would come a great shout from a wide opening in the rock: 'Hurry up there, you scum, St. Clair's hungry!'

For Roslin Castle has perhaps the earliest speaking-tube and service lift in the world. The hall was above, so what easier to those relentless architects than to bore down through the rock to the kitchen, and make a hole big enough for an ox to be hauled through?

Outside is the most venerable-looking tree on earth. This yew is said to have been planted at the beginning of the fourteenth century. It looks like the ancestor of all yew-

trees. It casts an almost black shade over the mouth of the dungeons. Its sinister arms wave in every direction. Its trunk, furrowed by centuries, is supported by a buttress of wood. I am sure that if I searched for the White Lady I would discover her some night under this tree.

There is also a tremendous Scotch thistle higher than a man. Bits of this mighty thorn grow and blossom in every part of the world.

'I'm always sending shoots out to people who have been here,' said my guide.

A short walk from the castle is Roslin Chapel, the most extraordinary Protestant church in Scotland.

It is the most ornate piece of Gothic in the British Isles. It is the choir of a great church which William St. Clair founded in 1446, but never completed. Every liberty which men of abundant imagination could take with the chastity of Gothic has been taken with a sort of competitive enthusiasm. One can imagine them scheming and plotting to work in an extra saint or a redundant spiral. There is not an unspurred inch in the building. The effect is fine, but distressing. They could not let the stone rest. They refused to allow beauty of line to speak for itself. It is the strangest—most alien—thing I have seen on Scottish soil. The nearest extravagance of the kind is probably the church of Belem, near Lisbon.

The caretaker asked if I were a Freemason. When I said 'No' he was disappointed. Apparently only a Mason can understand Roslin Chapel. I wish some Mason would go there and explain it to me!

Beneath the chapel lie the St. Clairs, buried in full armour. Roslin Chapel stands over them, in fantastic flamboyancy, a choir without a nave, as though it had exhausted the invention of its makers.

§ 2

The Palace of Linlithgow, like Kenilworth, in Warwickshire, is the roofless shell of its former self, but enough of it remains for a man to prowl round in the silence, hearing in imagination the creak of harness, the skirl of pipes, and the uneasy footfall of sad kings and even less happy queens.

In the great dining-hall, with its tremendous fire-place and

The St Clairs of Rosslyn

The St Clair family is described in the following chapter taken from the guide book, *Rosslyn Chapel*, written by the Earl of Rosslyn and published in 1997.

There is a copy in the Castle bookcase.

CHAPTER IV

THE ST CLAIRS OF ROSSLYN

THE ST CLAIR family are descendants of Rognvald 'the Mighty', Jarl or Chief of the Orkneys and Earl of Moere and Romsdahal in Norway, who was born in 835 AD.

His son Rollo first fought and then in 912 made peace with King Charles 'the Simple' of France. At the treaty they signed at St Clair-sur-Epte, whence our family takes its name, Rollo was created 1st Duke of Normandy and he later married Gizele, one of Charles' daughters.

William St Clair subsequently came to England with his first cousin, William the Conqueror, and fought with him at the Battle of Hastings in 1066, as indeed did eight other St Clair knights.

In the years that followed many Anglo-Norman families, the St Clairs among them, came to Scotland. Some were disillusioned by King William's ruthlessness, others attracted by offers of land from King Malcolm Canmore, who had started to transform Scotland by reorganising its church and by introducing the feudal system. The latter depended on barons like St Clair. Father Hay, who made a study of the history of the St Clairs at the end of the seventeenth century, says that William St Clair soon became a favourite of King Malcolm and was nicknamed 'the Seemly St Clair' for 'his fair deportment'.

William escorted Malcolm's bride, the Saxon princess Margaret, from the court of Hungary, where she was brought up, to Scotland. He was made cup-bearer to Queen Margaret and obtained a life interest in the barony of Rosslyn. He was also made Warden of the Southern Marches with responsibility for defending Scotland's border area against the frequent attacks of the English, and on one of these expeditions he was killed.

He was succeeded by his son Henry, who was said to be 'of a free nature, and candid in his thoughts and words; very wise, and more given to study war than peace, for which rare qualities he was entrusted with military commands.' He was knighted by King Malcolm and awarded the barony of Pentland following a number of military successes against the English. He was with the king when Malcolm was killed in 1093 during the siege of Alnwick in Northumberland.

Henry's son, also Henry, was the first of the St Clairs to live at Rosslyn. Knighted by King David I and made a privy councillor, he was sent by King William the Lion as ambassador to Henry II of England, to reclaim from the English king the disputed territory of Northumberland. He fought at the Battle of Northallerton in 1138 and was rewarded with the gift of Cardain in 1153, thereafter



Coat of arms of the earls of Rosslyn

being known as Cardain Saintclair.

The barony of Rosslyn passed from father to son through several generations. Henry St Clair (succeeded 1243, died 1270) assisted King Alexander III in the capture of the Western Isles and William (1270–1297) was appointed ambassador to France. He was captured in the Battle of Dunbar in 1296 and died in the Tower of London in the following year.

Henry (1297–1331) and his two sons, John and William, fought at the Battle of Bannockburn. Robert Bruce rewarded Henry for his bravery with the gift of Pentland Moor. He was one of the Scottish nobles who in 1320 signed the Declaration of Arbroath, which proclaimed to the Pope Scottish independence from England. Henry's brother William was made Bishop of Dunkeld and displayed great valour in 1317 when he repelled an invasion of the English who had landed on the Fife coast while the king was in Ireland. Thereafter the king referred to William as 'the fighting Bishop'.

Henry's son William took part in the 'Royal Hunt' on the Pentland Hills. It is said that 'King Robert Bruce, in following the chase upon the Pentland Hills, had often started a white faunch deer, which his hounds were not able to catch. He asked his nobles around him if any of them had dogs swift enough to secure the prize. Of course none of them would like to affirm that his own hounds were superior to the King's, until Sir William was heard unceremoniously to exclaim that he would wager his head that his two favourite hounds, 'Help' and 'Hold', would kill the deer before she reached the march burn. The words being repeated to the King, he held him to his wager, and commanded all other hounds to be tied up, except a few ratches, or slow hounds, to start the deer. When the deer was started we are told that St Clair called upon Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and St Catherine for their help. As Sir William slipped his two favourite hounds, Douglas is said to have exclaimed

"Help, Hold, gin ye may

Or Rosslyn tynes his head this day."

The deer reached the middle of the burn when she was stopped by Hold and Help coming up, the deer was turned back and killed by Sir William's side.'

After the death of Bruce, this same Sir William was chosen along with Sir James Douglas and Sir Robert Logan of Restalrig to carry Bruce's heart to Jerusalem and deposit it in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. They never reached their destination; during a fierce battle with the Moors at Teba in Spain in 1330 William, William's brother John, and Douglas were killed. The Moors were so impressed by the courage of the Scottish knights that they allowed the survivors to take their dead – and Bruce's heart – for burial back home.

Since William died before his father, Sir Henry was succeeded by his grandson, also William (1330–1358). He married Isabella de Strathearn, daughter of Malise, Earl of Caithness, Strathearn, and

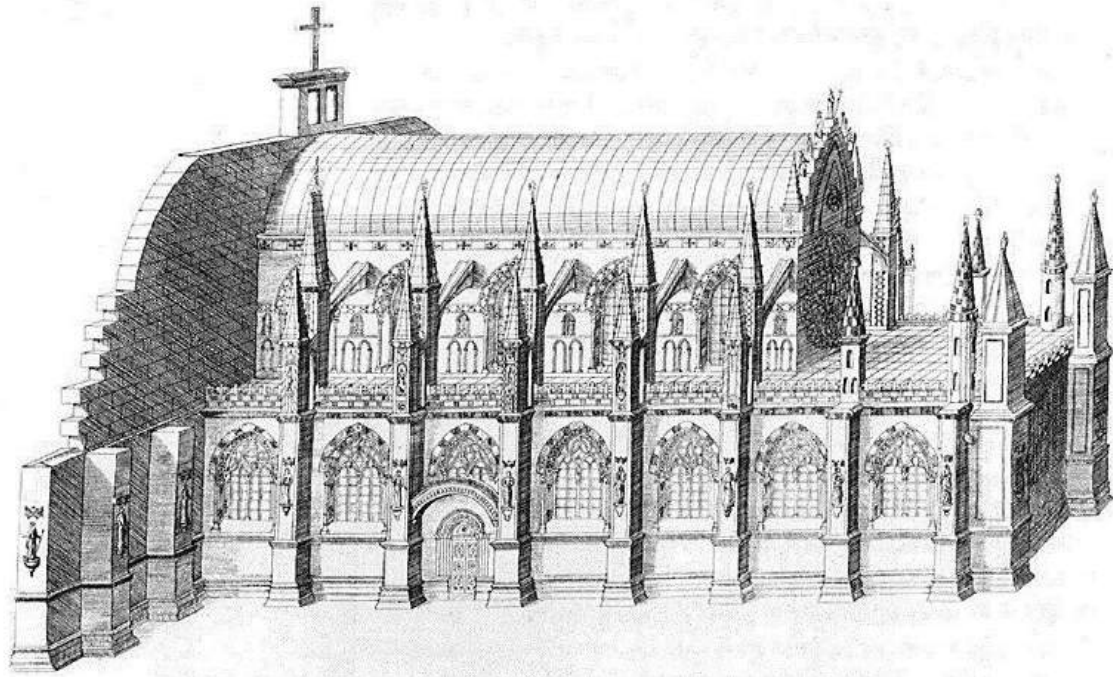
Orkney. Malise had no male heirs and after William's death his and Isabella's son Henry was recognised as 42nd Earl of Orkney in 1369 and ten years later as the first St Clair Prince of Orkney. In addition to the titles inherited from his father, Henry also became Lord Shetland, Lord Sinclair, Lord Chief Justice of Scotland, Admiral of the Seas, Great Protector, and Keeper and Defender of the Prince of Scotland. His rank and influence were so great that he was allowed to issue coins within his own domains and to exercise judicial authority.

He was succeeded in 1400 by Henry, 2nd Prince of Orkney, described as 'a valiant Prince, well proportioned, of middle stature, broad bodied, fair in face, yellow haired, hasty and stern.' His marriage to Egida, daughter of Sir William Douglas, brought him the lordships of Nithsdale, the wardenship of the three marches, and six further baronies. 'He had,' Father Hay tells us, 'continually in his house 300 riding gentlemen and his Princess 55 gentlewomen whereof 35 were ladies. He had his dainties tasted before him. He had meeting him when he went to Orkney 300 men with red scarlet gowns and coats of black velvet.'

He was guardian to James I of Scotland during his minority. In 1406, the 12 year old prince was sent to the French court for education and safety and was accompanied by Sir Henry. There are two accounts of what happened during the voyage. One suggests that the young prince became seasick and the ship was forced to land on the English coast where all were taken prisoner by the soldiers of Henry IV of England. Alternatively, the prince and his escort sailed from North Berwick on a ship loaded with wool and hides but were captured off Flamborough Head, Yorkshire, by an English merchant vessel whose crew was rewarded by King Henry with the gift of the cargo.

The heir to the Scottish throne was taken to the Tower of London, where he remained in captivity for eighteen years. He was not allowed to return to Scotland until 1424, when he was 30, and then only in exchange for £40,000, a sum described as a bill for the upkeep and education of the young prince. Sir Henry obtained his own freedom in 1407 by payment of a ransom, although Hay has an alternative story:

'One John Johnstone of Pentland and tenant of Sir Henry went to England where his master was, and then played the fool so cunningly that without suspicion he gained entrance to the prison and one evening conveyed his master without the gate in disguised apparel. They travelled by night and rested by day; they found great enquiry for them when they came to the Borders. Two Southerns made for them and laid hold of their horses, but Sir Henry knew how to use his fists and struck one of them to the ground where he died. The other fled with shrieks and lamentable cries. Arriving in Scotland Sir Henry asked his deliverer what reward he would like but he declared that he wished no reward but that he might go to Pentland before he went to Rosslyn and pass three times around the linstone [boundary stone] which he duly did.'



J. Gellatly, *Rosslyn Church*,
ante 1700. Engraving

This is a good story and a pity to spoil it, but I hope that, if true, my ancestor did rather more for him than John Johnstone so modestly requested.

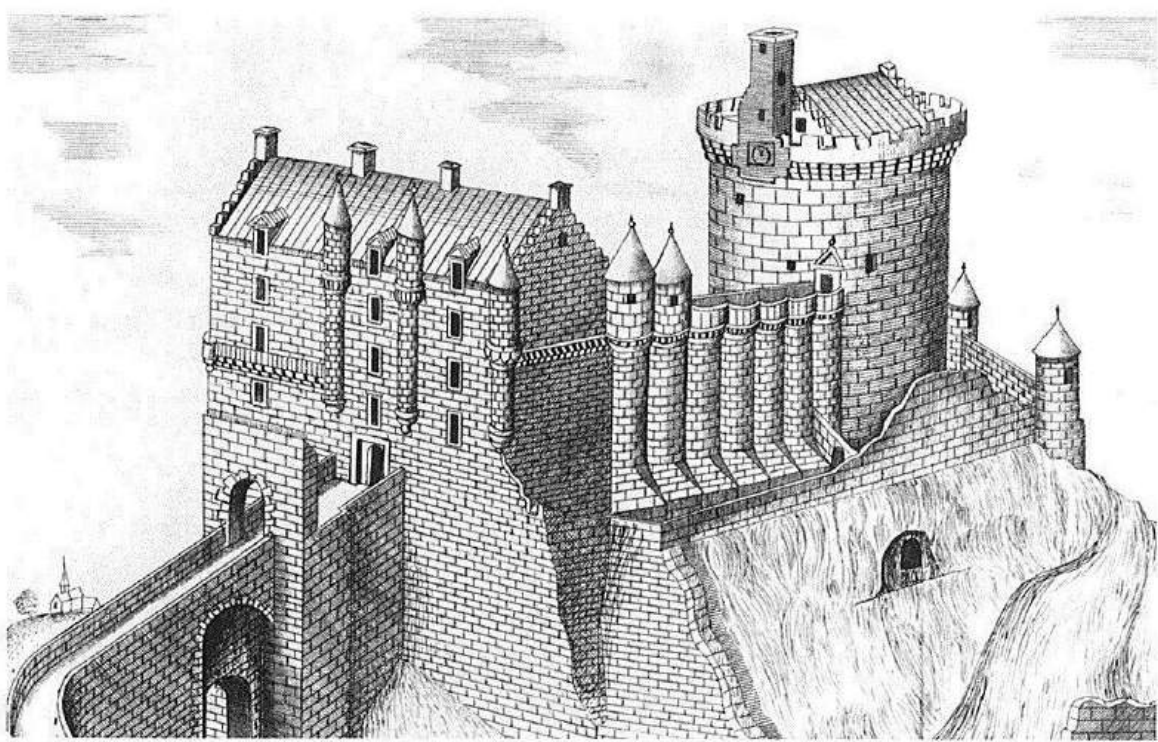
Sir Henry was succeeded in 1420 by William, 3rd Prince of Orkney, described as 'a very fair man of great stature, broad bodied, yellow haired, well proportioned, humble, courteous and given to policy as building of castles, palaces and churches'. This Sir William was the founder of the Chapel and also made substantial additions to Rosslyn Castle.

He married first Margaret Douglas, daughter of Archibald, 4th Earl of Douglas and 1st Duke of Touraine, and widow of the Earl of Buchan. By this marriage he had one son, William, and four daughters. Margaret died in 1452 and he married secondly Marjory, daughter of Alexander Sutherland of Dunbeath, by whom he had five sons, Oliver, William, David, Robert, and John.

The founder of the Chapel held vast territories and influence. His power was seen by James III as a threat, the more so since Sir William's sister was married to the king's brother, the Duke of Albany. Relationships between king and brother were difficult and at one stage James imprisoned Albany in Edinburgh Castle.

In 1455 James III gave Sir William the earldom of Caithness in exchange for that of Nithsdale and in 1471 Ravenscraig for the earldom of Orkney. James III had acquired Orkney by his marriage to Queen Margaret of Denmark, and it was formally annexed to the Scottish Crown by Act of Parliament in 1471.

During his lifetime Sir William divided his estates between his three eldest sons: William, from his first marriage, and Oliver and William, from his second. By far the best portions of the estate



went to Oliver and thus his eldest son, known as 'William the Waster', was effectively disinherited. He received from his father only the barony of Newburgh in Aberdeenshire. Rosslyn, Pentland, and the more prestigious land went to Oliver. William the Waster disputed his brother's claim to Rosslyn and a subsequent contract between them was agreed, which confirmed Oliver's right to the estates at Rosslyn. But Oliver ceded to William other lands in Midlothian, together with the castles of Ravensheugh and Dysart in Fife. William was also afterwards declared by Act of Parliament chief of the St Clairs with the title of Baron Sinclair.

J. Gellatly, *Rosslyn Castle*,
ante 1700. Engraving

To the second son of his second marriage, also called William, Sir William had given in 1476 the earldom of Caithness. This 2nd Earl of Caithness fell at Flodden in 1513. It is the tomb of his grandson, the 4th Earl of Caithness, which you can see in the Chapel (see page 14).

Thus by the time of the founder's death in 1484, his vast possessions had been divided among three branches of his family: the Lords St Clair of Dysart, the St Clairs of Rosslyn, and the Sinclairs of Caithness.

The barony of Rosslyn passed to his son Oliver. A great favourite of the queen, he married a daughter of Lord Borthwick. He had four sons, George, Oliver, William, and John, the last becoming Bishop of Brechin and Lord President of the Court of Session and performing the marriage ceremony between Mary Queen of Scots and Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, at Holyrood on July 29th, 1565.

Oliver was succeeded by his third son, William, who further endowed the Chapel. Thereafter the succession passed to William's

eldest son, also William, who was made Lord Chief Justice of Scotland by Queen Mary in 1559, and in turn to his eldest son, Edward, who, having no children, made the estate over to his brother William.

This William also made significant additions to the Castle, building the vaults, the great hall and clocktower, and also the great turnpike of Rosslyn – the large stone staircase, four feet wide, leading up from the basement to the top floor of the Castle.

To his son William were granted the charters of 1630 from the Masons of Scotland, recognising that the position of Grand Master Mason of Scotland had been hereditary in the St Clair family since it was granted by James II in 1441. The original charters had been destroyed in a fire. He continued his father's work to the Castle, building over the vaults up to the level of the courtyard. It is his initials SWS with the date 1622 which can be seen above the door to the Castle today. He died on September 3rd, 1650, the day of the Battle of Dunbar.

His son John, called 'the Prince', held out for a time when the Castle was besieged in 1650 by Cromwell's troops under General Monk. Rare literary and historical treasures were destroyed in the bombardment from Monk's four pieces of ordnance and the assault of six hundred troopers. All that escaped the catastrophe were the sections still standing today. The east and west sides were battered down and the Castle sacked. John was captured and sent to Tynemouth Castle, only returning to Rosslyn shortly before his death in 1690.

His brother James was next in the line of descent. He was stepfather to Father Hay and was described by him as 'a very civil and discreat man'. He had two sons. The eldest, James, was killed at the Battle of the Boyne, leaving his brother Alexander to succeed. He was followed by his son William, the last male heir of the Rosslyn branch of the St Clairs.

This Sir William was considered by Sir Walter Scott, who knew him well, to be a Scottish laird of the old school and he described him thus:

'The last Rosslyn was a man considerably over six feet, with dark grey locks, erect and graceful, broad shouldered, athletic, for the business of war or chase, a noble eye of chastened pride and undoubted authority, and features handsome and striking in their general effect though somewhat harsh and exaggerated when considered in detail. His complexion was dark and grizzled and we schoolboys who crowded to see him perform feats of strength and skill in the old Scottish games of Golf and Archery, used to think and say amongst ourselves, the whole figure resembled the famous founder of the Douglas race. In all the manly sports which require strength and dexterity, Rosslyn was unrivalled, but his particular delight was in Archery.'

He was four times captain of the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers and on three occasions, the last at the age of 68, won the Silver Club, which from 1744 was awarded in open

Sinclair clan badge





Sir George Chalmers, *Sir William St Clair of Rosslyn*.
Oil, 1771

competition by the town of Edinburgh. He was also a brigadier of the Royal Company of Archers, the Queen's Body Guard for Scotland.

Having no male heir, he resigned his office as hereditary Grand Master Mason of Scotland to the Scottish Lodges at their foundation in 1736. The Lodges then appointed him as the first non-hereditary Grand Master Mason of Scotland at their meeting on St Andrew's day of the same year. Ironically, Sir William wasn't already a freemason, so he first had to be initiated into the Canongate-Kilwinning Lodge, whose chapel contains a full length portrait of him.

In his funeral oration in 1778 it was said that,

'Descended from an illustrious house, whose heroes have often bled in their country's cause, he inherited their intrepid spirit, united with the milder virtues of humanity and the polished manners of a gentleman . . . *non sibi sed societati vixit* [he did not

After James Northcote R.A.,
*Alexander Wedderburn St
Clair, first Earl of Rosslyn*, by
F. Bartolozzi. Engraving, 1800



live for himself but for his community].’

He had married Cordelia, daughter of Sir George Wishart, baronet of Clifton Hall, by whom he had had three sons and five daughters. But all died young except his daughter Sarah, through whom the succession then passed.

She married Sir Peter Wedderburn of Chester Hall and they had a son, Alexander, and a daughter, Janet. Janet was married to Sir Henry Erskine, 5th Baronet of Alva.

Alexander Wedderburn St Clair did much towards the preservation of the Chapel. He was also, in turn, Member of Parliament for the constituencies of Ayr Burghs, Richmond, Castle Rising, and Oakhampton. He became Solicitor General in 1771, Attorney General in 1778, Lord Chief Justice in 1780, and Lord Chancellor in Pitt’s government of 1793, a post he held until 1801.

Friend of Adam Smith and David Hume, whom he defended in a case brought by the Kirk of Scotland, Wedderburn was a tough and ambitious individual with something of a temper. Having won a case in the Scottish courts before Lord Craigie, he was reprimanded for intemperate remarks he had made during the trial. He tore off his gown in a fury and vowed never to appear in a Scottish Court again; nor did he, considering that in any event the opportunities for advancement in Scotland were insufficient for a man of his ambition.

In 1780, he was created Baron Loughborough of Loughborough in the county of Surrey. Although twice married, he had no children and in 1795 he was created anew Baron Loughborough of Loughborough, this time in the county of Leicester and with provision for the title to be passed to his nephew. In 1801 he was created 1st Earl of Rosslyn in the county of Midlothian, with a similar provision for the succession. Records show that his disbursements in executing all of this amounted to £427.14.0.

When he died in 1805, he was buried in St Paul's Cathedral. He was succeeded by his nephew, Sir James St Clair Erskine, who was at various times Member of Parliament for Castle Rising, Morpeth, and Kirkcaldy, Director General of Chancery in Scotland, Lord President of the Council, and Grand Master Mason of Scotland. He married Henrietta Bouverie, daughter of the Hon. Edward Bouverie. When he died in 1837, he was succeeded by his son James Alexander St Clair Erskine, who became 3rd Earl of Rosslyn.

The 3rd Earl was Master of the Buckhounds and Under-Secretary of State for War in 1859. He married Frances Wemyss, daughter of Lt. General William Wemyss of Wemyss Castle in Fife. It was he who restored the Chapel as described in Chapter One. He died in 1866 and his second son, Francis Robert St Clair Erskine, became 4th Earl of Rosslyn.

Together with the title, he inherited from his father an estate in Fife of more than three thousand acres, worth over nine thousand pounds in rents and coal-mining royalties. He was High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on four occasions and captain of the Corps of Gentlemen at Arms. In 1870 he held a Grand Masonic Fete at Rosslyn attended by over one thousand freemasons and in the following year he was elected sixty-ninth Grand Master Mason of Scotland. When he indicated in the summer of 1871 that he did not wish to be considered for re-election, a petition of seven thousand signatures raised by the Lodges persuaded him to reconsider.

He married in 1866 Blanche Adeliza, second daughter of Henry Fitzroy and widow of the Hon. Charles Maynard.

The 4th Earl was a poet of some substance and there is reason to believe the tradition that he would have been made Poet Laureate in succession to Tennyson but for his death in 1890. He was the author of a volume of sonnets (1883) and *Sonnets and Poems* (1889), which included a Jubilee Lyric entitled 'Love that lasts Forever'. Written in 1887, it was dedicated to Queen Victoria and published at her command.

He was Ambassador Extraordinary to Madrid on the occasion of the marriage of Alfonso XII to Mercedes de Bourbon in January 1878, and when Alfonso's eighteen year old bride died in June of the same year, he wrote an elegy in her memory. In a letter from Madrid he recorded:

'The poor King remains leaning on her bed and calling her

Below. Ancient Hunting Sinclair tartan

Bottom. Masonic regalia of the 4th Earl of Rosslyn





Top. The 4th Earl of Rosslyn, from *Vanity Fair*, November 12th, 1881

Middle. The 5th Earl of Rosslyn in Cuba, 1930, and his horse Buccaneer (above)

name Mercedes mia, Mercedes mia. To the last her eyes were turned on the King. I have seen him twice and all he said was that for him there was no consolation but that he would do his duty.'

He was a breeder and trainer of horses, and a member of the Jockey Club. One day a stud groom told him that a newborn foal had died in the care of a groom who had had too much to drink. 'Drunk?' queried the horrified Earl. 'Yes my Lord, drunk as a Lord, my Lord,' stammered the stud groom. 'Drunk as a bloody groom, you mean,' the Earl shot back.

He was buried at his own request in the south-west corner of the Chapel gardens, the first of a long line of St Clairs of Rosslyn to be buried outside the Chapel. A handsome monument to his memory and that of his wife, who died at the age of 94, can be seen there. It was carved in red sandstone by W. Birnie Rhind in 1899. In a letter to the 4th Earl's widow dated April 23rd, 1891, the estate architects remarked that Rhind seemed determined 'to obtain the order to do the work by estimating almost regardless, as it seems to us, of his own interests'.

The memorial is inscribed with a passage from one of the 4th Earl's sonnets:

*Safe, safe at last from doubt, from storm, from strife,
Moored in the depths of Christ's unfathomed grave
With spirits of just, with dear ones lost,
And found again, this strange ineffable life,
Is life eternal: death has here no place, and
We enter life, but through the gates of death.*

He was succeeded in 1890 by his eldest son, James Francis Harry St Clair Erskine, 5th Earl of Rosslyn, who married in the same year Violet, daughter of Robert Charles de Grey Vyner. At their wedding the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, proposed the health of bride and groom. Harry was a close friend of the prince, who later became godfather to his son. Like the 4th Earl, he was a keen racehorse owner. A particular favourite was Buccaneer, who won the Gold Cup at Ascot. But he was also a gambler, and on one occasion bet £15,000 on Buccaneer to win the Manchester Cup. The horse lost.

He gambled at the roulette tables of Cannes and Monte Carlo and recounted his exploits in his autobiography, *My Gamble With Life* (1928). His gambling addiction cost him dearly. Six years after inheriting title, properties, estates, collieries at Dysart, assets of £50,000, and a steam yacht of great splendour, he had lost everything and was declared bankrupt.

The family silver, gold, and silver gilt plate was sold at a three-day auction in Edinburgh. A local paper reported that 'dealers were present from all over the kingdom and the continent'. Star of the sale was the magnificent Ascot Cup of 1892, designed and executed by Garrard, which was knocked down for £438.

On being made bankrupt he resigned his commission in the

Fife Light Horse, and he was rebuffed when he attempted to rejoin the regiment at the outbreak of the Boer War. Anxious to travel to South Africa, he secured a job as war correspondent for the *Daily Mail*. In this capacity he witnessed more of the campaign than he might have foreseen, taking part in the relief of Ladysmith and being taken prisoner on two occasions. He wrote about these experiences in his book *Twice Captured*.

Harry's sister Millicent married the heir to the Duke of Sutherland. She was just 14 when she accompanied her elder step-sister to Dunrobin Castle for a fortnight's holiday. It was the latter who was thought of as a possible match for Cromartie, the future 4th Duke. But Millicent sat next to him at dinner and he was intrigued by her attribution of a family portrait. Few romances begin with the phrase 'Is that a Romney?', but a proposal followed six months later and they married in St Paul's Knightsbridge on her seventeenth birthday, when he was thirty-two.

Harry's own marriage to Violet ended when he was discovered by his father-in-law to have presented a £2,000 turquoise tiara to a lady friend. Before his divorce, Harry had joined with some friends to establish 'Lord Rosslyn's Theatrical Performances'. He now drew on that experience and joined a touring company. 'Of course the Prince of Wales has been none too pleased at my taking up an actor's career,' he wrote, 'and if we ever met was quite cold to me.' In 1897, he toured with *Trelawny of the Wells* in Newcastle, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Liverpool, and Manchester.

It was during his acting career that he met and within a few days married his second wife, Georgeiana. She was an American actress. The marriage lasted two years, and in 1908 he married for a third time.

In 1917 he was reinstated as a director of the collieries at Dysart and he worked there until 1923, when they were leased to the Fife Coal Company. Even when no longer living at Dysart he visited regularly, and one old resident recalled:

'I remember when I was a boy helping my grandmother to sell fish. We were in Fitzroy Street when this tall gentleman, beautifully dressed, crossed the street and took her by the shoulders and greeted her like an old friend. He asked her how the boys were, my father and uncles Bill, John, Dave and Archie. I didn't know who he was, and when he left he shook her hand. Who was that, I asked her. The Earl of Rosslyn, she said, and held out her hand showing two golden sovereigns among the fish scales; and I never saw it done.'

Harry died in 1939 and was succeeded by his grandson, my father, Anthony Hugh Francis Harry St Clair Erskine, 6th Earl of Rosslyn. My father took great interest in the Chapel and during the early 1950's undertook work to conserve it, as described in Chapter One. He died in 1977.



The 6th Earl of Rosslyn in coronation robes, 1953

THE ST CLAIRS OF ROSSLYN

William St Clair - came over with William the Conqueror in 1066; given the barony of Rosslyn

Henry

Henry - first St Clair to live at Rosslyn

Henry d1270

William d.1297

Henry d. 1331 - ? built the entrance tower

William d.1358 - grandson of Henry

Henry - 1st Prince of Orkney; d. 1400

Henry - 2nd Prince - built the keep; d. 1420

William - 3rd Prince; enlarged Castle ; founded the chapel in 1446; d.1484

Oliver - completed the chapel

William

William

Edward

William - brother of Edward; added vaults, great hall (fireplace 1597), and clock tower

William - 'SWS' over door and on ceiling; finished father's Renaissance house in 1622; d.1650

John - d. 1690; owner when Castle was besieged in 1650

James - brother of John

Alexander

William - last male heir of the Rosslyn St Clairs; d. 1778

Sarah - marries Sir Peter Wedderburn

Alexander Wedderburn St Clair- 1st Earl Rosslyn; d. 1805

James St Clair Erskine - nephew of Alexander; 2nd Earl; d. 1837

James Alexander - 3rd Earl; d.1866

Francis Robert - 4th Earl; d.1890

(James Francis) Harry - 5th Earl; d.1939

Anthony Hugh Francis Harry - 6th Earl; grandson of Harry; d. 1977

Peter - 7th Earl; current owner of Rosslyn Castle

The Restoration of Rosslyn Castle

James Simpson, one of Scotland's leading conservation architects, was the Earl's choice for the repair of the Castle and ruins in the early 1980s. He described the restoration saga in an article for *Historic House*, the publication of the Historic Houses Association, in the autumn of 1991.



From this view Rosslyn Castle bides its dramatic recent history.

The Rescue of Rosslyn

James Simpson, architect of Edinburgh based practice Simpson & Brown, describes the determined effort to save Rosslyn Castle, and the unique arrangement by which it is now let as holiday accommodation through the Landmark Trust.

Focus on buildings

The Rescue of Rosslyn was an epic drama which ran through most of the 1980s with a large cast of local and central government officials, tradesmen, professional colleagues and a chorus or mob represented by the participants in a Manpower Services Commission scheme set up under the 'Community Programme'.

The title role was Lord Rosslyn's, but the other principal part was mine; his appearance was occasional, for it was a slow-running piece which lurched from crisis to near disaster and my job was to keep the action moving, to keep the curtain up until the play was ended and to ensure that the resolution in the final act was a happy one, for the tendency towards tragedy was never far from the surface.

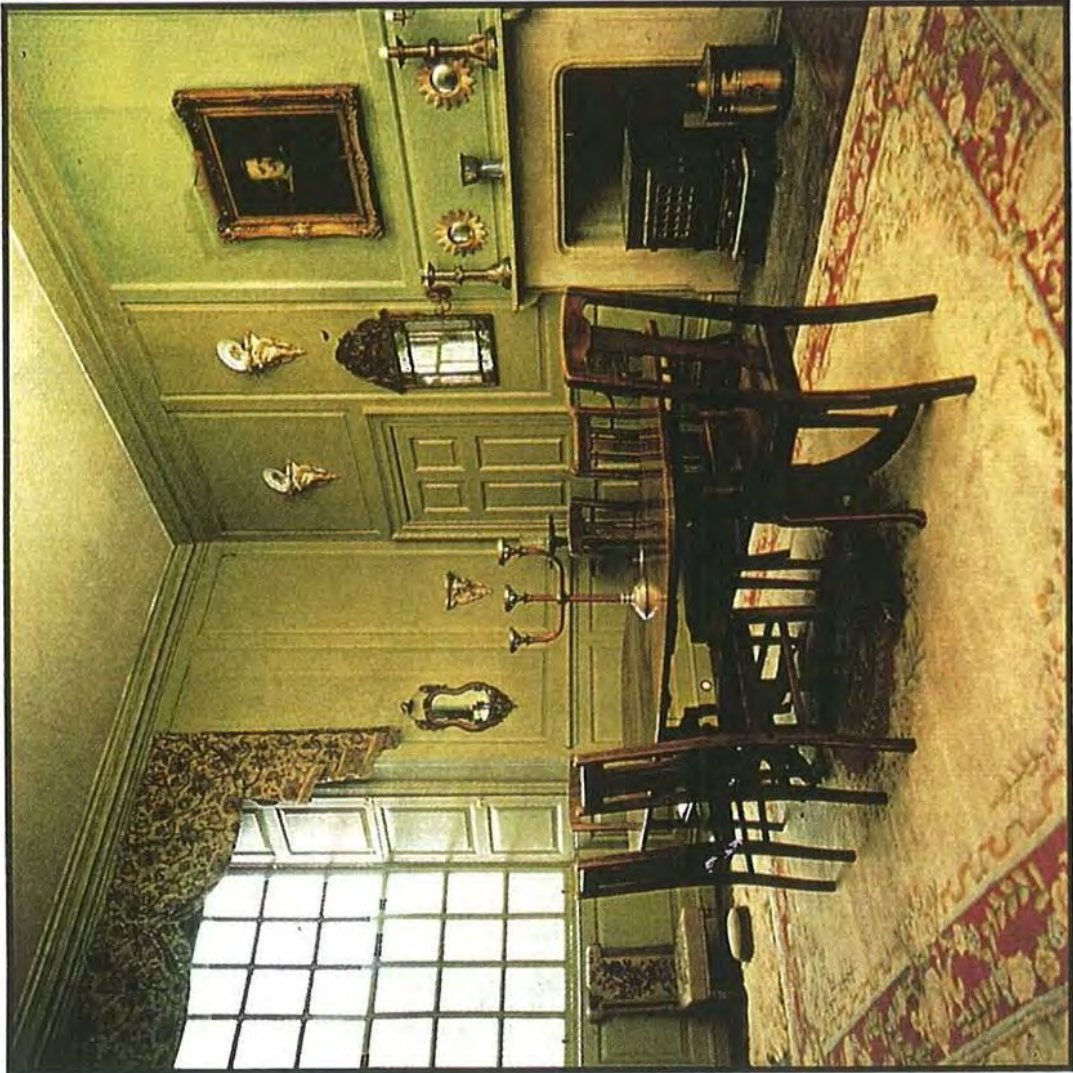
In fact, the spectre of failure, menacing though it was, was probably vital to the performance, if only because it kept all the actors on the stage! In the end, I think the show was a quiet triumph, though not one which has received much notice from the critics – which is probably a good thing, for much that is best in conservation, unlike opera, should be unsung.

When Lord Rosslyn succeeded as 7th Earl in 1977, he was still an undergraduate at Bristol University, committed to a career in the Metropolitan Police. His extraordinary inheritance included Rosslyn Castle and Rosslyn Chapel and not much

else. Rosslyn is in Midlothian, just twenty minutes or so by car due south of the centre of Edinburgh. The castle, set within an oxbow on the river North Esk, was built by the Sinclair Earls of Orkney in the 15th century and was one of the great castles of late mediaeval Scotland. Rosslyn Chapel is justly famed as the most richly carved gothic fabric north of the Pyrenees; set on a hill overlooking the castle, it is the choir – all that was built – of what would have been the most ambitious collegiate church in Scotland, similar in scale to Trinity College in Edinburgh, which was a royal foundation.

By the 18th century, Rosslyn had become an essential stopping point for every visiting antiquary, early tourist and student of the picturesque, a subject for every romantic poet, topographical draughtsman and landscape painter. It had indeed become, and it remains, one of the most sublime, dramatically beautiful and powerfully atmospheric sites in the whole of Britain.

Rosslyn Chapel has had a resident custodian, who has cared for the building and managed admission charges, since the 1920s. It has also been used for worship, since its restoration in the 19th century, by an Episcopalian congregation. Its condition gives no cause for complacency, but nor is it – mainly because of the sort of all stone roofed and vaulted structure it is – a cause for acute concern. Maintenance continues, repairs are



*The habitable part of
the main building is
now fully restored,
and is let out via the
Landmark Trust.*

necessary, not urgent, and must wait. The same could not, alas, be said of the castle when I first looked at it professionally in 1980.

The castle is built of good red sandstone, quarried from the rock on which it stands. The approach from the north is by a sharp bend and a narrow stone bridge over a deep cut in the natural rock. A hundred feet below another path leads from the surviving abutment of a mediaeval river bridge, passes under and circles to join the main approach, for all the world like the road to a sandcastle on some fantastic beach! To the north and east, the platform on which the castle stands is supported by massive revetments, partly natural, partly cut and partly built. The ruined remains of the north gatehouse stand up like great teeth, the surviving pend arch voissior overhanging ominously. What is left of the west wall and south west tower is both impressive and tantalising, with massive curved splayed buttresses intended, apparently, to support a row of open bartizans outside the wallwalk. The most substantial surviving structure, however, and the only part of the castle to be roofed and habitable, is the east range, three vaulted floors of which are below the courtyard level, built on a shelf cut into the natural rock. Above courtyard level, this range once contained a hall at the south end, whose fireplace is dated 1597, and two chambers, the lower of which retains a fine, compartmented plaster ceiling of 1662, all initialled and monogrammed to show that it was the work of Sir William Sinclair of Rosslyn. The southern end of the hall is roofless, but the remainder of these two floors has been continuously occupied and is fitted out with bolecion and fielded pine panelling of more than one

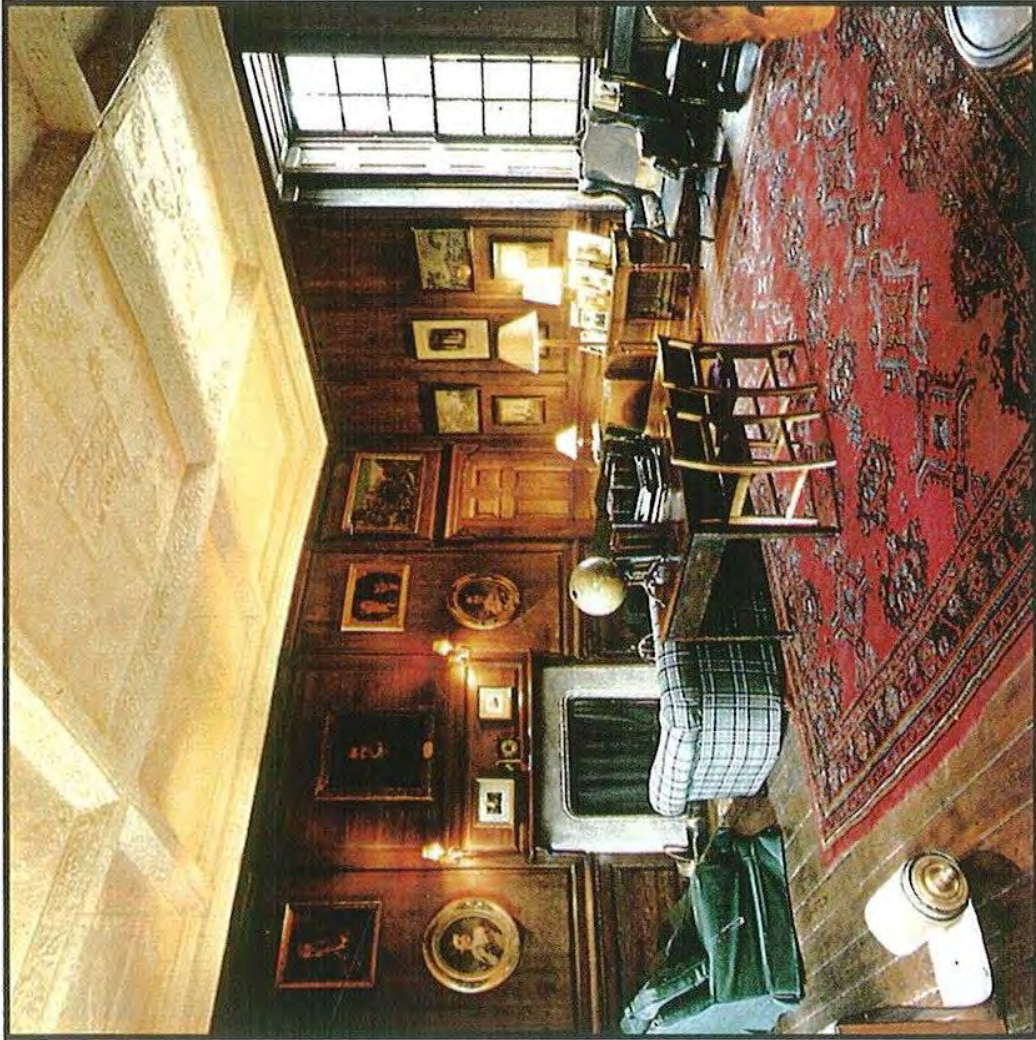
period from the late 17th century to the mid 18th century, heavy fillet and ovolo sash windows, and moulded and basket arched fireplaces.

Like the chapel, the castle was looked after for most of the present century by a resident caretaker, who opened it to visitors on request. Miss Leech lived simply around a black iron range in what is now the Dining Room, and when she died at an advanced age in 1980 the castle was left empty and not particularly well secured. It became a popular venue for student parties, with candles in wax-covered wine bottles, cans of beer and loud music. It began to receive attention from the local children too with Miss Leech no longer there to chase them away; the cylinder glass in the windows was smashed, ways in were found and bolecion panelling became a ready source of fuel, for burning in the grates while sitting round on upturned beer crates smoking cigarettes and spraying obscenities on the walls. That the castle survived this period as a habitable house is miraculous, but there was worse to come.

On finding himself responsible for the castle, the new Earl, who might easily, it seems to me, have walked away from the enormous problems which quite obviously lay ahead, and have sought to pass them on to some other body, did no such thing, but committed himself immediately, totally and with enthusiasm to finding solutions which would keep the Rosslyn property within his control.

He consulted the HHA's technical adviser, and it was with the soundness of Norman Hudson's advice that the foundations were laid for all that has been constructed since. The strategy, I believe, though I was not party to it, was three-legged:

Focus on buildings



*The fine panelled
rooms show almost
no signs of the work
of local vandals.*

first, to repair and improve the habitable part of the castle for holiday letting on Landmark Trust lines, to maximise income; secondly, to maximise grants and other public support, particularly for non-productive things like the ruins, with minimum loss of control; and thirdly, to improve and increase visitor numbers and income to the chapel. I was contacted in May 1980 and from then on we were engaged in a long, drawn-out and sometimes fiercely fought campaign.

After some initial thinking and preliminary contact with Historic Buildings Council and Midlothian District officials, I met Lord Rosslyn in July and Norman Hudson in September. I was made aware from the start that the available cash was virtually nil; there was the possibility of selling a site, but planning consent was not forthcoming, and there were the proceeds of the sale of a family holiday cottage in the north of Scotland, but nothing more. We undertook a detailed survey and inspection of the castle, to assess the scale of the task, and in November we invited representatives of what were then the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Divisions of the Scottish Development Department (now Historic Scotland), of the District Council, the Countryside Commission for Scotland, and the Scottish Tourist Board to a big meeting and put our cards on the table.

It was the right thing to do; and much stemmed from that meeting; there was much goodwill, but also caution and concern, and it emerged later that there was considerable doubt in the minds of some SDD officials that Lord Rosslyn had sufficient resources of his own to see the project through. Such doubt was well founded, but the lesson to be

learned is that financial resources are not necessarily the only ones which count.

The next year was fraught, and the future of the castle hung in the balance. The state of the ruins was always a worry and in February 1982 part of the north revetment collapsed. The District Council served a notice under the Building Acts requiring all the ruins to be made safe. The Ancient Monuments officials could neither contemplate taking part of the castle into care, nor offer grant aid at more than forty per cent, nor agree – the whole castle being a Scheduled Monument – that their Historic Buildings colleagues could assist with the vulnerable and continuously threatened habitable east range until the future of the ruins was resolved. We were casting around, spending abortive time in the knowledge that there was no money for professional fees. In August I recorded in a file note that I was ‘getting desperate’! In September John Taylor who had been custodian at the chapel for as long as anyone could remember, and whose father had been custodian before him, died. We were sustained at this time by a few chinks of light, such as a remark from the Chief Inspector of Historic Buildings, that something must be “cobbled together, little by little”. That was precisely what we were trying to do! . . .

In autumn of 1982, the logjam began to free itself. The new HBC secretary asked to visit the castle and at a meeting in October a possible way forward began to emerge. The formula discussed was that Lord Rosslyn should enter into a guardianship agreement with Midlothian District Council, that consolidation of the ruins should be undertaken by Manpower Services Commission labour through the District Council's Community

Programme agency, under the direction of my firm, and with Ancient Monuments grant to cover the full cost of materials, scaffolding and professional fees. Historic Buildings grant could then be offered at the rate of seventy-five percent for the work to the roofed part of the castle. It was complicated, and we knew that there would be hurdles to be crossed, but suddenly it all seemed possible.

1983 promised to be a much more fruitful year at Rosslyn. Judy Fiskien had taken over as custodian at the chapel, Andrew Fiskien was to take on responsibilities at the castle and in the spring Nikki Foot, then a student in our office, set up camp with her future husband Alastair Darroch in the castle, where they kept the vandals at bay, had a social summer and brought up a litter of Weimaraner puppies! In April I wrote to Sir John Smith to see if some arrangement might be possible whereby the castle could be listed for holiday letting as if it were a Landmark Trust property. In the meantime, neither Midlothian District Council nor Lord Rosslyn were keen on the sort of 'Guardianship Agreement' favoured by the Ancient Monuments officials, and in the end an 'Access and Management Agreement' was acceptable to all.

But our difficulties were by no means over: in July a fifty yard stretch of the only access road to the castle began to subside, slipping slowly, trees and all, down into the North Esk. In October the trades unions objected to the work being done through the Community Programme, the local MSC committee decided that work on a privately owned monument was not eligible under the scheme and the project was referred to the main board in Sheffield!

Everything was back in the melting pot as far as the ruins were concerned, but luckily it was too late to prevent the work on the east range from starting and to our delight a favourable response had been received from Sir John Smith: uniquely, Rosslyn Castle was to be treated as if it were a Landmark Trust property, and the entire proceeds less a service charge were to be devoted to the maintenance and repair of the castle. For the first time there was a little light at the end of the financial tunnel to justify the faith with which we had all gone forward. Work began on the east range, for which a grant of £60,000 towards £80,000 of work had been confirmed, in September. The projected cost, as events were to prove, was less than it should have been, and to keep it to a minimum we worked without a main contractor, using local firms on a separate trades basis.

The MSC project was finally approved on the last day of February 1984, whereupon, as is the nature of these things, we had to spend the £15,000 of Ancient Monuments funds allocated within two weeks, or lose it at the end of the financial year! In the course of a fortnight's frenzied activity, buying materials and working with contractors, we actually managed to spend



Roslin's Famous Battle, by M McGowan

Most of the residents of the village of Roslin, Midlothian, are acquainted with the fact that in the year 1302 a battle was fought between the Scots and English near the present site of Dryden Mains Farm. Few, though, realise just how important this battle is in the annals of Scottish history. John of Fordun, in his 'Chronicle of the Scottish Nation' states 'From the beginning of the first war which ever broke out between the Scots and the English, it is said there was never so desperate a struggle, or one in which the prowess of knightly valour shone forth so brightly'. This is a short account of the events leading up to, and culminating in this famous battle.

In the summer of 1298 an admonition was delivered against King Edward I of England charging him of unjust aggression on Scotland. This was followed by another more to the point. It charged him distinctly with a violation of the liberties and rights of the Kingdom and Church of Scotland, done under the false pretext of a right of superiority over that country. The meaning of which was in fact that Scotland was a free sovereignty with no subjections, save such as in that period of time, all sovereigns owed to the Church of Rome. It must be remembered that in these trouble times Scotland was without a sovereign, John Baliol having abdicated after the Battle of Dunbar in 1296 and the vacant throne being hotly contested by various factions, notably those of John 'The Red' Comyn and Robert Bruce. Edward however did not agree with the findings of the Court of Rome and he duly sent a strongly worded protest against this attempt to interfere with the feudal and constitutional prerogatives of the Crown of England.

We are told that in the year 1300 on St John's or Midsummer's Day, King Edward held a court at Carlisle and ordered a general muster against the Scots. In May 1301 King Edward had been strenuously working by special summonses, general commission of array, and in other ways to gather an army sufficient for an effectual and final invasion of Scotland. The first blow he was able to strike was the destruction of Caerlaverock Castle in Dumfriesshire. In 1301 Edward seems to have had the range of Scotland south of the Forth, for this writs are dated from various places there.

Now came the famed encounter which was to earn the village of Roslin a well deserved niche in Scotland's heritage.

In 1302, an English army was sent into Scotland under the command of John de Segrave, appointed Governor of the 'Province' of Scotland. He was accompanied by another important person, Ralph de Manton, or Ralph the Cofferer as he was called, due to his position as paymaster.

This army, under a feeling of false security, was broken up into three divisions near Edinburgh, one under Segrave, himself being posted at Roslin.



All had been in winter quarters as it was the month of February, and no opposition seems to have been expected. On the 24 February, as the 'English Chronicler' tells us, a boy ran into the camp shouting that from the top of one of the high banks abundant round Roslin, an army was close upon them. It had come from the uplands of Peebles and Lanark.

John Comyn and Simon Frazer had come briskly through from Biggar to Roslin in one night with some chosen men 'who chose rather death before unworthy subjection to the English Nation' (Fordun). They immediately fell upon Segrave's division and soundly defeated it, Segrave himself being severely wounded and taken prisoner, Manton slain, and a great many knights captured.

While the Scots were dividing up their spoils, a second division appeared in full battle array. This was also engaged by the Scots and suffered the same fate as the first. Hardly however, had this been achieved than a third and more powerful force arrived to enter the fray. The Scots understandably fatigued in both body and spirit, somehow rallied themselves and, after a fiercest struggle, gained, surprisingly, a third victory. This was slightly marred, however, by the rescue of John Segrave by Robert Neville, one of the English knights.

Many varying estimates are given as to the numbers in each force, the most common being approximately eight thousand Scots and twenty-four thousand English in the combined divisions. We can perhaps gain some idea of the numbers involved from an extract from John of Fordun's Chronicle of the Scottish Nation.

'So after this manifold ordeal and awful struggle, the Scots, who if one looked on the opposite side, were very few in number, as it were a handful of corn or flour compared with multitude of the sea sand, by the power, not of man, but of God, subdued their foes and gained a happy and gladsome victory'.

Thus, this small, and today, quiet Midlothian village, became the stage for what has been called the 'fiercest struggle ever' between the Scots and English nations.

Today visitors come from every corner to see Roslin Chapel with its famed Apprentice pillar, but unfortunately, and inexplicably, the site of this magnificent victory and tribute to the spirit of the Scottish Nation lies desolate and unmarked, but fortunately not totally forgotten. I would like to think that eventually the funds would be found to provide a permanent memorial to this famous chapter in our Nation's history.

Sources: National Library of Scotland, from Callender's Scotland Papers
 Groomes Gazetteer
 John of Fordun's Chronicle of the Scottish Nation



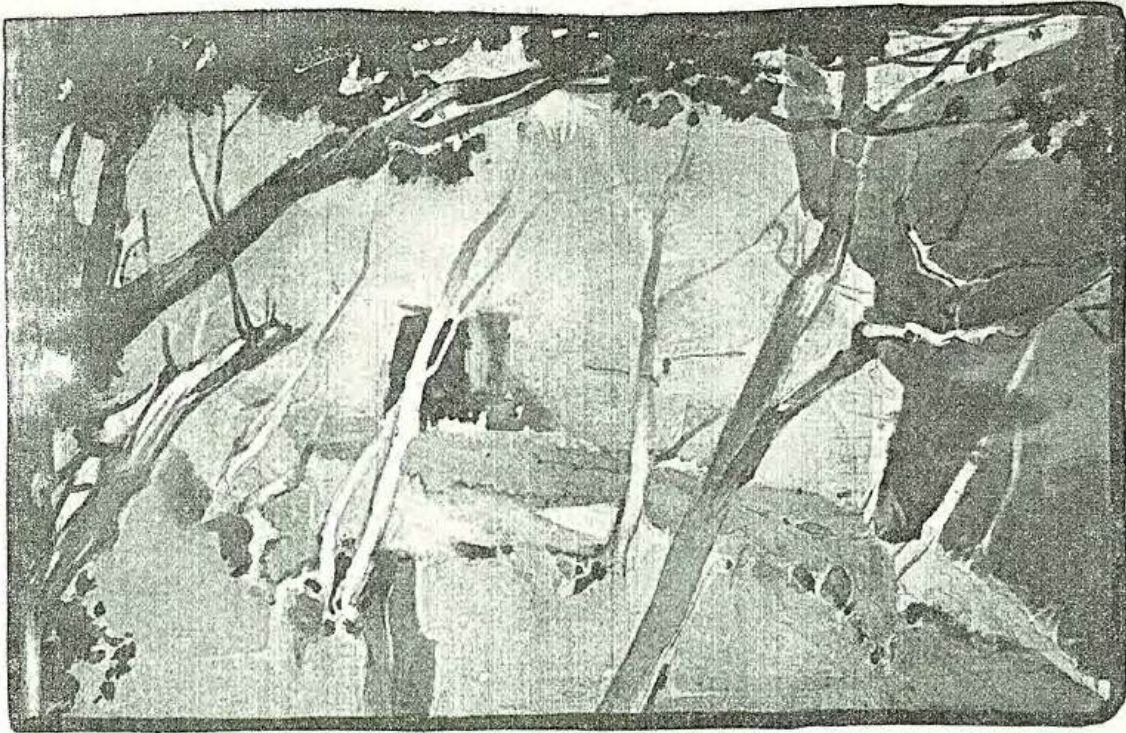




'To Roslin and Hawthornden', *The Architectural Review*, 1897

212

To Roslin and Hawthornden.



ENTRANCE TO "WALLACE'S CAVE," HAWTHORNDEN.

FROM A WASH DRAWING BY EDGAR MITCHELL.

TO ROSLIN AND HAWTHORNDEN:
BY D. S. GRAEME: WITH DRAW-
INGS BY EDGAR MITCHELL.

WHAT does a drive to Roslin promise? From native Scots you soon learn that, beside a mediæval castle in picturesque ruin, old home and hold of a baron of Lothian, there is a *bizarre chapelle*, a curiosity in religious art. And have you never heard of Hawthornden's rustic nook where dwelt, hermit-like, William Drummond, the first Scotsman who wrote in English?

Though outward bound to a glen, hallowed of song, of war, and of religion, no law compels you to be wholly devoted to things of the fateful past. Over the rising ground between the Pentland Hills and Arthur's Seat comes the west wind, older and younger than all written history; as the sun breaks into shafts of silver through the morning clouds above the landscape. And from the height of Liberton Brae one is prone to look back on distant Edinburgh, to the Scots what Delphi was to Greeks, what Benares is to Hindus. Doubtless, cosmopolitan Drummond, too, walking home some evening at sunset, after a day in town, would remark the panorama, some deal piously, often ironically, but oftener, one may suppose, with a sense of beauty, as the city lay against a shield of tawny gold. On this fine day, which harks back not too much to the deeds of yesterday, and lets factions sleep

with the dead, on a hundred steeples, domes, towers, and spires, silvern light glints like flashes from spears, the horizon purpled with a fine haze. Over the hill, however, clammers our ponderous *diligence*, in half an hour driving up to the door of the inn at Roslin Village. Dismounting, the connoisseur in Gothic Architecture, the lover of literary reminiscence, seeks out what in the glen shall easily find occupation for the fancy, if it be only to recollect, to begin with, that three centuries ago these quiet woodlands echoed the boom of cannons that shook down castle walls, while from battlements and tower, furred in smoke, the war-shouts of soldiers came.

Roslin Castle was one of the places which got ruth of Bluff King Hal in that arrogant "rough wooing." Being defied, he angrily sent the Earl of Hertford northward to fire and ravage Edinburgh and set Leith in flames, because the king's son must be betrothed to infant Mary, afterward Queen of Scots. Pursuant thereto, this castle fell in 1547 to Hertford's siege on his way to the Scottish capital. We know that the desired union of hearts (and of crowns) never came to pass. Another foe appeared in 1650—the Roundheads. Under orders to crush the feudal power of Scotch nobles, Cromwell's general, Monk, fixed a battery on the hill above, and sent down into final ruin the baronial pile. Ivy now climbs up the walls as if lovingly to hide the wreck. What

To Roslin and Hawthornden.

213

remains looks a pathetic fragment of Castledom, when the "seemly" St. Clairs, Princes of Orkney, dwelt in the halls as manor-lords, whose vassalage to the Crown was little more than a name. Not democrats like us of four centuries later can realise, even if our passionate hatred of one-man rule allow us, the proud powers of Scots nobles. Merely to recall the tragedies of that grim struggle betwixt king and king's men is catching a gleam which reveals the shadow of intrigues behind the throne; and around this conflict, of course, gathers a large part of Scotland's political history. But how far a cry from the fighting age when Roslin's *châtelain*, like his fellows, sat in his little barony like a local king! Yet, there, washed on three sides by Esk's waters, tumbling over a lynn, lingers his shattered home to warn us of vicissitude; to entice our imagination or capture our hearts; insomuch as we fancifully rebuild halls peopled with knights and dames sitting at banquets, which the good Father Hay, the family chronicler, declares second only to the king's. If once we begin these tricks of novelists, or usurp the functions of historical painters, down drops yonder drawbridge over the moat; whereat horsemen, with hawk on fist, and followers with leashed hounds, clatter over the wooden platform, all riding forth to hunt, with jest on lip, with joy in the heart, and sport in the eye, as horns echo in the crisp air of the morning; ladies on the ramparts waving adieus. Or, at spring-time, in the orchard, beside the stream, a still green place dappled with sun and shade, full of "leaves and the odour of floures and the fresh sight," harken to the lute trilled by minstrels, or follow, like the groups of castle-folk under the trees, some song of love or story of war. It was not always battle, even in chivalry days.

The *petite* chapel of Roslin, bristling with pinnacles on a height beyond the castle, and high over the trees of the glen, gives off, from certain stand-points, an Oriental air, more like an Asiatic mausoleum than a fane of the Virgin. A nearer view, however, discovers an eccentric experiment



THE POET DRUMMOND'S HOUSE,
HAWTHORNDEN.

FROM A WASH DRAWING BY
EDGAR MITCHELL.

(is the word too strong?) in church-building, mainly Gothic, dashed with a *soupeçon* of Provençal or North Spanish styles.

What can be that naïve charm which surprises, amuses, puzzles, wholly allures, if not this exotic flavour? Certainly, sticklers for orthodox art-canonists may cavil at some real monstrosities. What else, in sifting good from bad, in so eclectic a style of Architecture, could one truthfully do? But, after all, the great Public, yielding homage to a deed done, *un fait accompli*, a yearning made a fact, takes, with zest, as grist to the mill of pleasure, whatever withstands the destroying years. If such a work of Art be daring, *bizarre*, and so forth, so the more interesting; while, for the reasonable critic himself, he, with a still keener

To Roslin and Hawthornden.

delight in the beauties of Roslin's bijou cathedral, which condone many blemishes, is not second in the general chorus of praise. Nor should one forget that this "temple of the Madonna" was meant to be an original and personal expression of the founder's mind; and, in sooth, "a most curious worke" it is. On this "unfinished thought in stone" (to quote another apt phrase), as choir of a larger building designed for the Collegiate Church of St. Matthew, with Provost and prebendaries, the founder, Sir William St. Clair, third Earl and Prince of Orkney, lavished both wealth and thought for the last thirty years of his life. Was the noble Earl urged to build perforce of enthusiasm for religious Art, or of a religious enthusiasm? Apparently a man of character, and of pious feeling, with a connoisseur's taste for art, it is opined he acted as his own Architect. Was his zeal in building "a Bible in stone" (as the Chapel has been called) directed against some contemporary moral lapse?

About the date of the foundation, namely, 1450, of this college of religion, other kinds of schools, secular ones, the earliest of Scottish universities, had sprung up to exert a new influence on men's thoughts, one, moreover, likely to become popular. If the founder's motive was to touch old emotions, and persuade the will towards ancient truths, his zeal for the Madonna's sake appears in the series of allegories (a strong feature of the Chapel) that strove to convey through the eyes (of barbaric folk?) the gist of biblical stories. Did he seek to combat the new spirit of the times that culminated, just a hundred years later, in that fierce, unconservative reformer, anti-papist John Knox? Be that as it may, nevertheless, like the poet whose songs, or the artist whose pictures, live after him, or like Knox himself, who left certain traces of his fervour behind upon earth, after he went to heaven, the Earl also has his monument in the chapel of Roslin. But, whether or no, on learning its history, you, as a student of life, are fain to consider what is left of the religico-artistic ambition of a knight of chivalric days as another illustration of Dr. Samuel Johnson's pet theme—the vanity of human wishes—how should that deter one from being curious of the place? It has its peculiar halo.

In respect of the general plan, especially the feature of the central pillars at the east end between the choir and retro-choir, the structure resembles Glasgow Cathedral built a hundred years before. But for the rest, the decorative *motifs* or character of the carvings, Roslin Chapel has no counterpart. Their prolific variety is extraordinary. The craftsmen have laboured with love and patience. Whoever urges among moderns a revival of Arts and Crafts will find here his plea

embodied. Everywhere the mind and obeying hand of each sculptor shows. As plain is the evidence that the Architect shook himself free of the restraint of convention; and the result, happily, a building at once *outré* and beautiful.

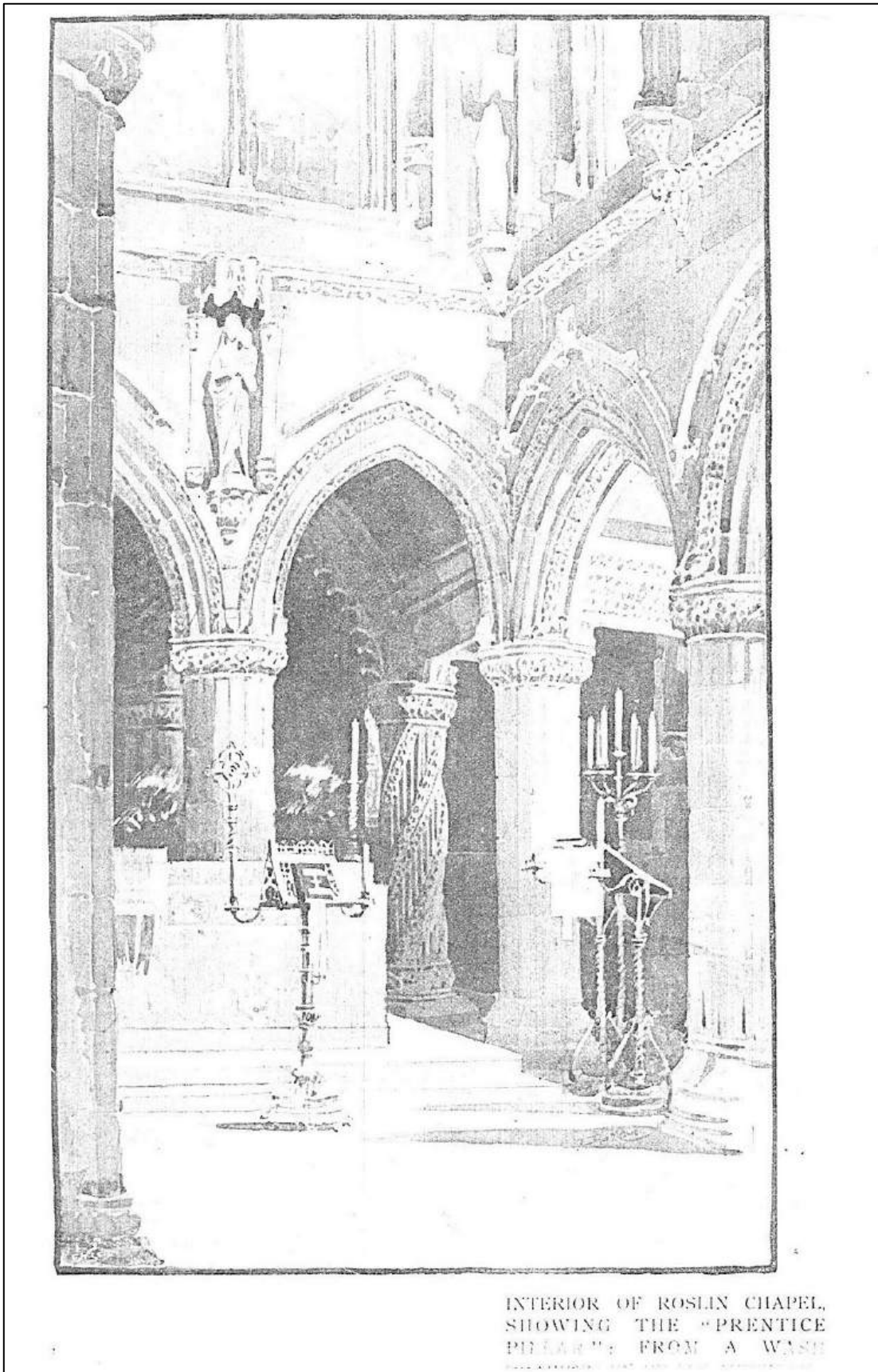
The details, hardly any of which repeat themselves, are charged with meaning nearly to excess, throwing off an impression of robust fulness of invention. Yet, over all, from the vigour, grace, and simplicity that somehow overrules even the fantastic lines, the dominant feeling of the artist emerges like music from the stone; with such sympathy have the carvers wrought out the founder's conception; with such verve have natural objects, rioting round pillar and over arch, become spiritualised by the imagination of man.

To linger at twilight-time in the bays of the north aisle, when (as may well happen) the fiery autumn sunset over the Pentland Hills flushes rosy the upper windows, is to remember "The Dirge of Rosabelle," tradition made a ballad of by Sir Walter Scott, and to understand how

Seemed all on fire that Chapel proud,
Where Rosslyn's chiefs unconfined lie;
Each baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply.

To hear in the Chapel's stillness blackbirds piping a lay in rustling trees outside is, by this contrast of careless Nature and sorrow-laden Art, to touch the inner chords of "the music of humanity." Alike appeals the vista that draws your gaze through the low arches, across the altar, to where the famous "Prentice Pillar" stands under the groining, amidst shadows broken by dramatic shafts of light. The legend of the youth killed by his jealous master for completing the beautiful pillar in his absence at Rome glimmers up into your thoughts. Or the Christ theory of human life, whether in the older form, such as the series of allegories, Virgin Maries, symbolic angels, and the like carved in the groinings and on straight arches of the aisles seek to interpret. Or, in the newer form, exhibited in that night scene here in 1688, when a torch-bearing mob of John Knoxians broke open the doors and tore down image of Madonna and idol of saint with the Reformer curse. For certainly Roslin Chapel, like living mortals, suffered vicissitude enough to condone a visitor's indulgence in a little romance. And there was one we accidentally saw—a lady, a stranger.

Further down the deep and narrow rocky gorge there are some historic caves, where Bruce and other fugitive patriots of the War of Independence often took refuge. Ramsay of Dalhousie, who taught young scions of noble houses the art of war, led herefrom his trained bands of troopers on many a foray across the English border. As



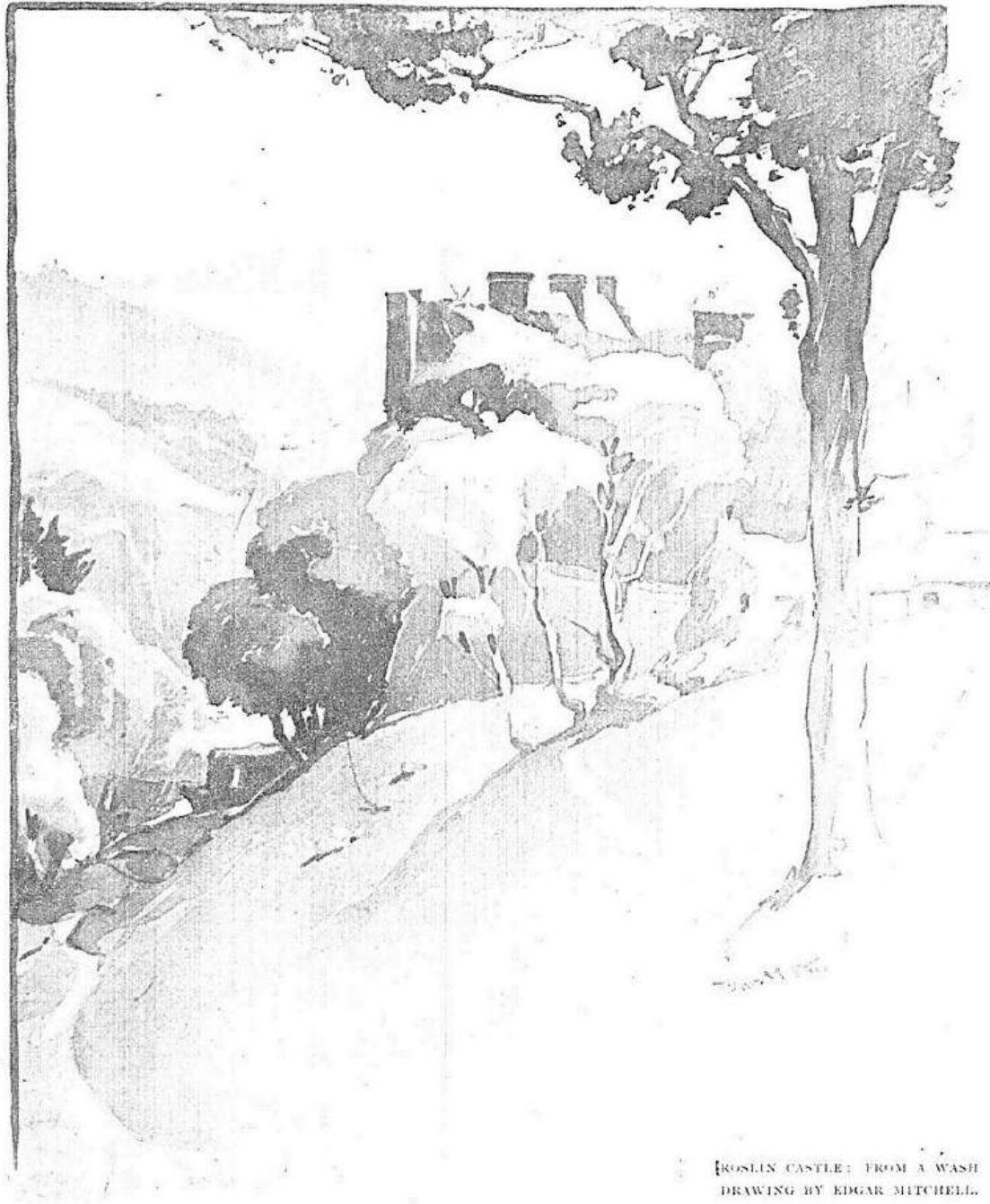
INTERIOR OF ROSLIN CHAPEL,
SHOWING THE "PRENTICE
PILLAR" FROM A WASH

To Roslin and Hawthornden.

217

the whilom fastness of men devoted to the deliverance of their fatherland, in hero-making epochs, when the ups of fortune, the smooth, were followed by the downs of fortune, the rough, these holes in

guide-book writer inclines to cavil at) calls the "King's Gallery," "Bruce's Bedroom," and "Bruce's Library"—quite a suite of royal rooms! Here, besides, another annalist says, the Young



ROSLIN CASTLE: FROM A WASH
DRAWING BY EDGAR MITCHELL.

the rock-cliffs bring grim reality into old stories, which, to us that come by so long after the event, live in the halo of romance. In those below the ancient fortalice ruins adjoining Hawthornden House, there is what tradition (which the reverend

Pretender was searched for. But long before any of these incidents, the grottoes hewn by hand probably existed. Whose hands? This is a theme for endless conjecture. Whether such a curious place was the King of Pictland's castle and palace,

or a receptacle for robbers, or a safe retreat when the Picts and English, English and Scots, fought their battles, or when Danes, sailing up the Firth of Forth, plundered the hapless country, who shall say?

To the literary pilgrim, Hawthornden, as a shrine, disappoints not, as such fancy-formed places are prone to. More pleasing it could scarcely have been, even when "the tender lover, gentle poet, and handsome cavalier," Drummond, dwelled in that quaint mansion, perched aloft, like a castle, on a tremendous cliff of brown rock, where the river turns and meanders through the gorge.

Hitherto one had, doubtless, often wondered what Hawthornden was really like. Hence all past fancies start into being on beholding the classic home of the recluse, an idealist who from a poetic solitude might well look out on the wrangling, barbaric Scotland of his time with the exasperation of a humanist. A short distance from the house and cut out of the cliff face is "The Grotto." "In this sheltered spot," writes Campbell, after his visit in 1802, "secluded from every human eye, the power of imagination can present a lively image of Drummond in the moment of inspiration, in the bosom of his favourite bower. A shower is heard pattering among the trees; it is over. The fragrance it has caused, and the soft salubrity which steals on the sense of smell; the mildness and freshness of the air; the murmuring of the rivulet, clear and reflective; the gentle movement of the living branches; the singing of birds, and the pauses filled by the lowing of cattle among the neighbouring woods; the bleating of sheep, far distant and out of view; with other rural sounds stealing at intervals on the ear; all, all touch and transport the poet to ecstasy." Against the fear of eternal death, this scene, with its sense of hope, might naturally inspire the mood to write out, in strict reason, those vague, passionate aspirations of his mind which Drummond put into the book entitled "The Cypress Grove."

It needs all kinds of men to make the world. Nevertheless, as one walks these haunts, in kindly-curious mood, by which the chief facts of Drummond's career gather, like *dramatis personæ*, into one stage-picture, it is impossible to forget how this man of genius, who in a sonnet averred

Thrice happy he who, by some shady grove,
Far from the clamorous world, doth live his own,

reaped anathema, like a whirlwind, from the mob of Christians of the period, bent on violent change; how the same hand that wielded the pen of satire and pasquil, signed, perforce, the Covenant truly to save his life, but to enrage his conscience. Human life was doubtless as full of "little ironies" then as now.

As a politician must choose one side or the other, the humanistic poet, selecting the lesser evil,

loyally backed King Charles. However he might seclude himself at Hawthornden, the noise of the metropolis was not afar off.

So the more grateful would be the beloved solitude of his rustic home. Musings under the stars, walks through the dell by soft moonlight, or rambles by the river through the spring or autumn woods doubtless eased the poet's feverish brain, and helped Drummond to forget as often as possible the rancours and strifes of cities. Moreover he was a wit, if that ribald treatise printed at Edinburgh in 1684, entitled "*Breviuscula et Compendiuscula Tellatio de storia memorabili Fecitæ merveabilis quæ fuit inter Muckreillios et Horsboyas atque Ladwos, etc., in hoc Libellulo, cujus inscriptio famosa hæc est, POLEMO-MEDINIA INTER VITARVAM ET NEBERNAM, placide et jocose tractatur*," be his work. According to Grose, this pleasant poem of the Dunghill Battle has shaken the sides of successive generations. Did not Drummond also under the famous sycamore tree (still flourishing) greet rare Ben Jonson, then Poet-Laureate, with "Welcome, welcome, royal Ben," to be answered by him, who was no dullard either, with "Thank ye, thank ye, Hawthornden"? In after times, when both had gone beneath the grass, many are the wits, peers and commoners, who have come here, mused and passed by.

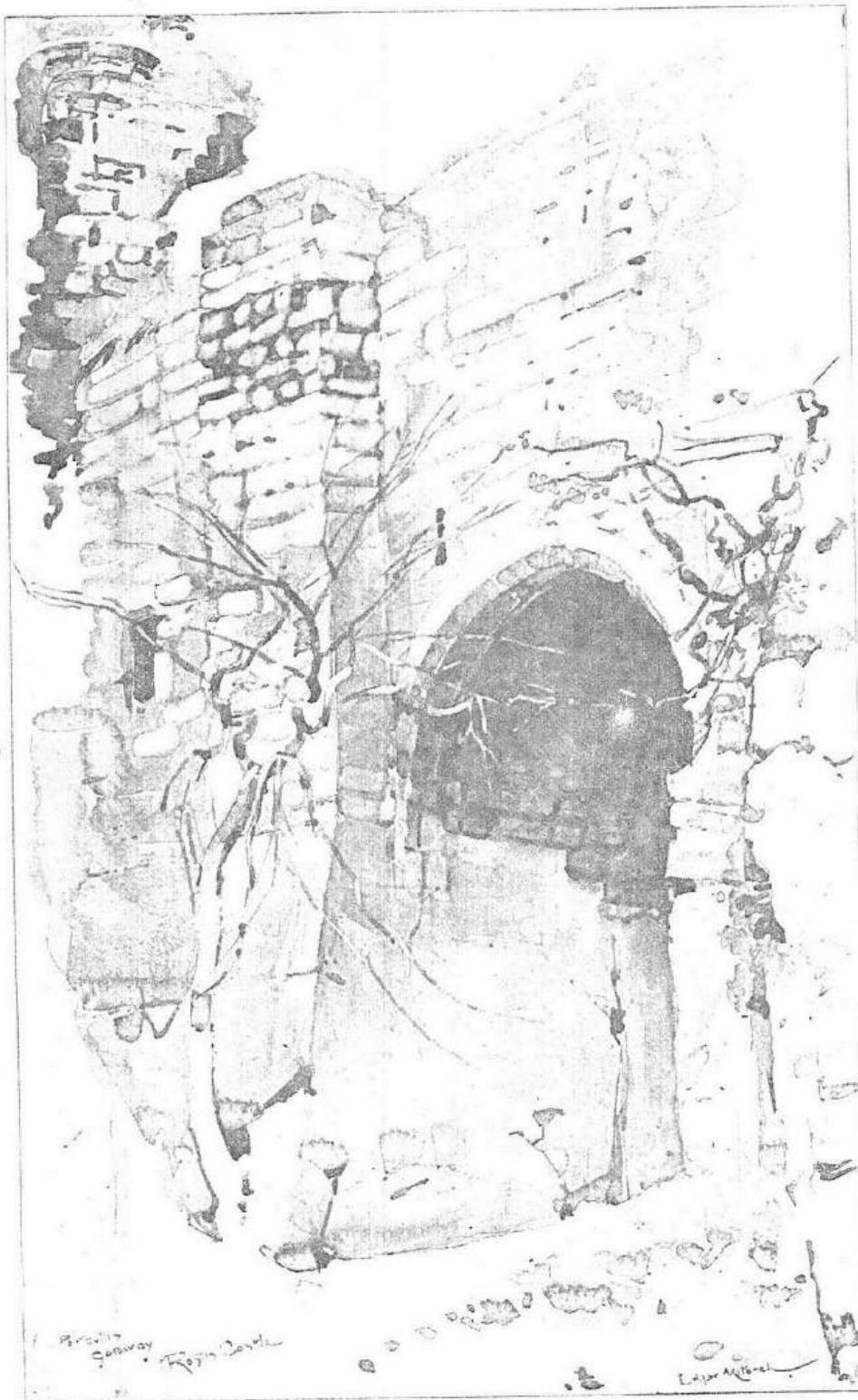
"RESTORED" HUMANITY:

It appears from the official report of M. Maspero, Director-General of the Excavations and Antiquities of Egypt, describing the unrolling of the mummies of Rameses II. and Rameses III. at the Museum of Boulak, that the process of embalming, which, as is well known, forms an important part of ancient Egyptian ritual, was termed "restoration," and is so described in an inscription discovered on a white sheet enveloping the body of the latter potentate. This inscription is as follows: "The year XIII., the second Month of Shomou, the 28th day, the first prophet of Amen, King of the Gods; Pinotem, Son of the first prophet of Amen, Piankhi, the Scribe of the Temple Zonerou-Khonsu and the Scribe of the Necropolis Boutchamou, proceeded to *restore* the defunct King Ra-user-ma-Mor-Amen, and to establish him for Eternity." The process of embalming embraced the removal of the brain and intestines of the deceased person, and the injection of asphaltum or some similar preparation into the cavities, the swathing of the body in linen, upon which hieroglyphics were painted, and the covering of the whole with a cartonnage of paper, which adhered closely to the features, and was painted to represent their natural colours.

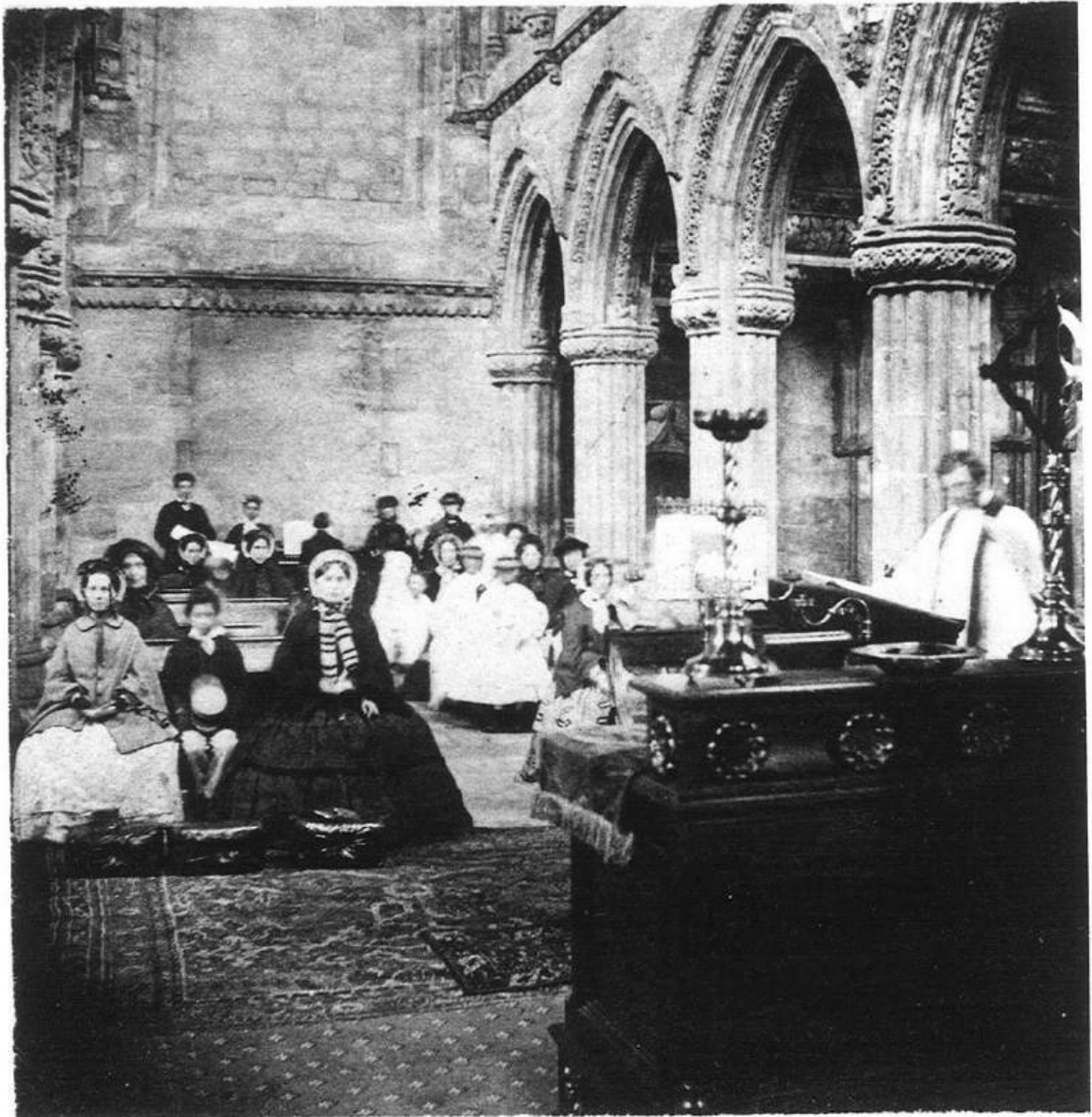
J. H.

To Roslin and Hawthornden.

219

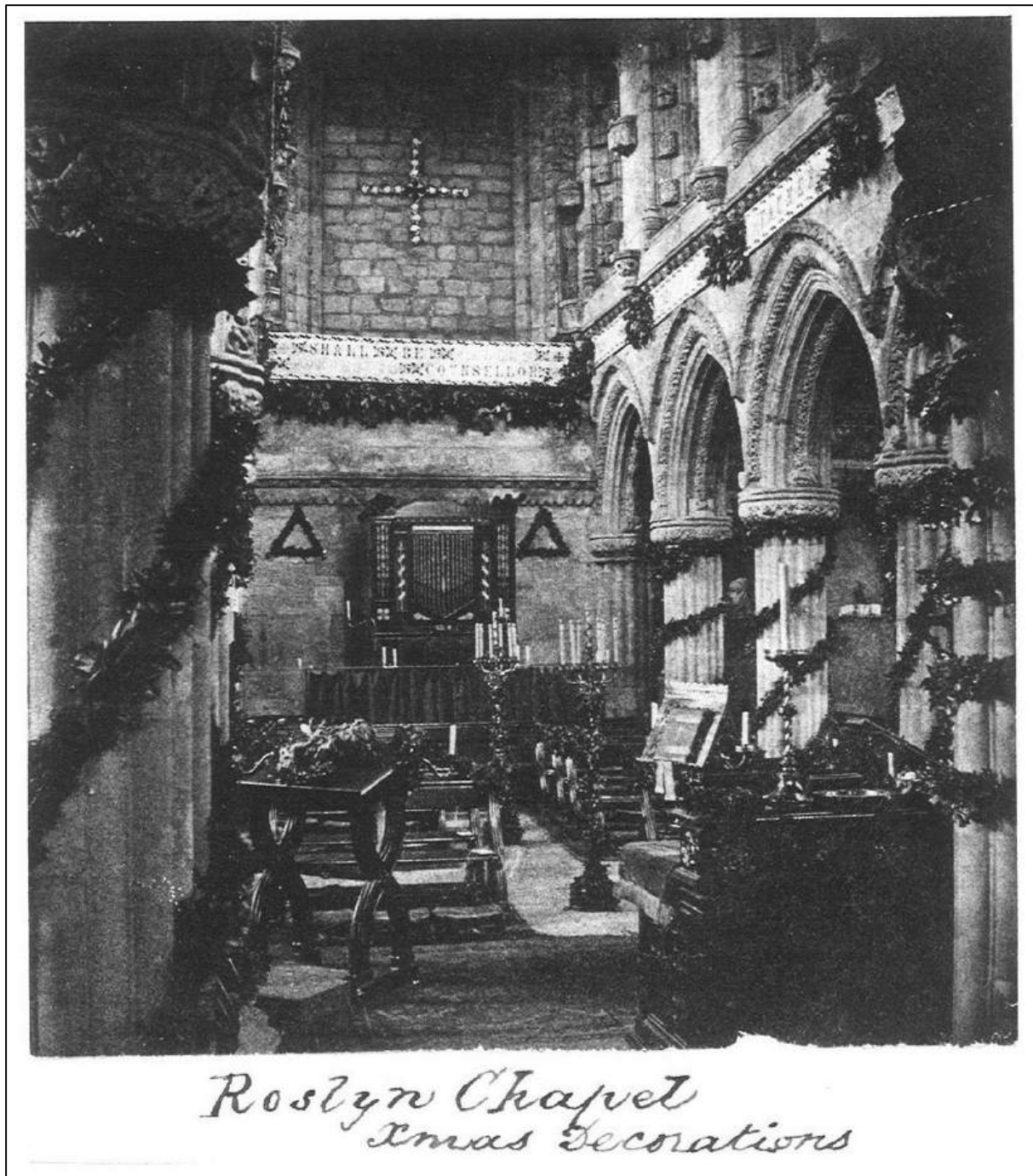


PORTCULLIS GATEWAY,
ROSLIN CASTLE: FROM A
WASH DRAWING BY EDGAR
MITCHELL.



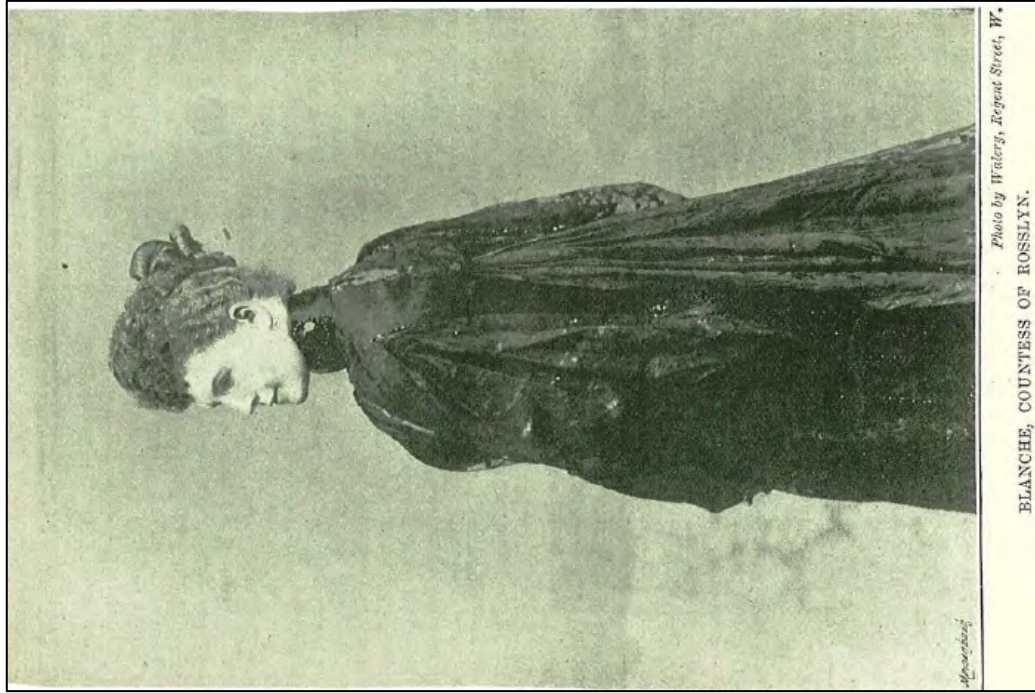
Rosslyn Chapel

Rosslyn Chapel – the south aisle in the 1870s (RCAHMS)



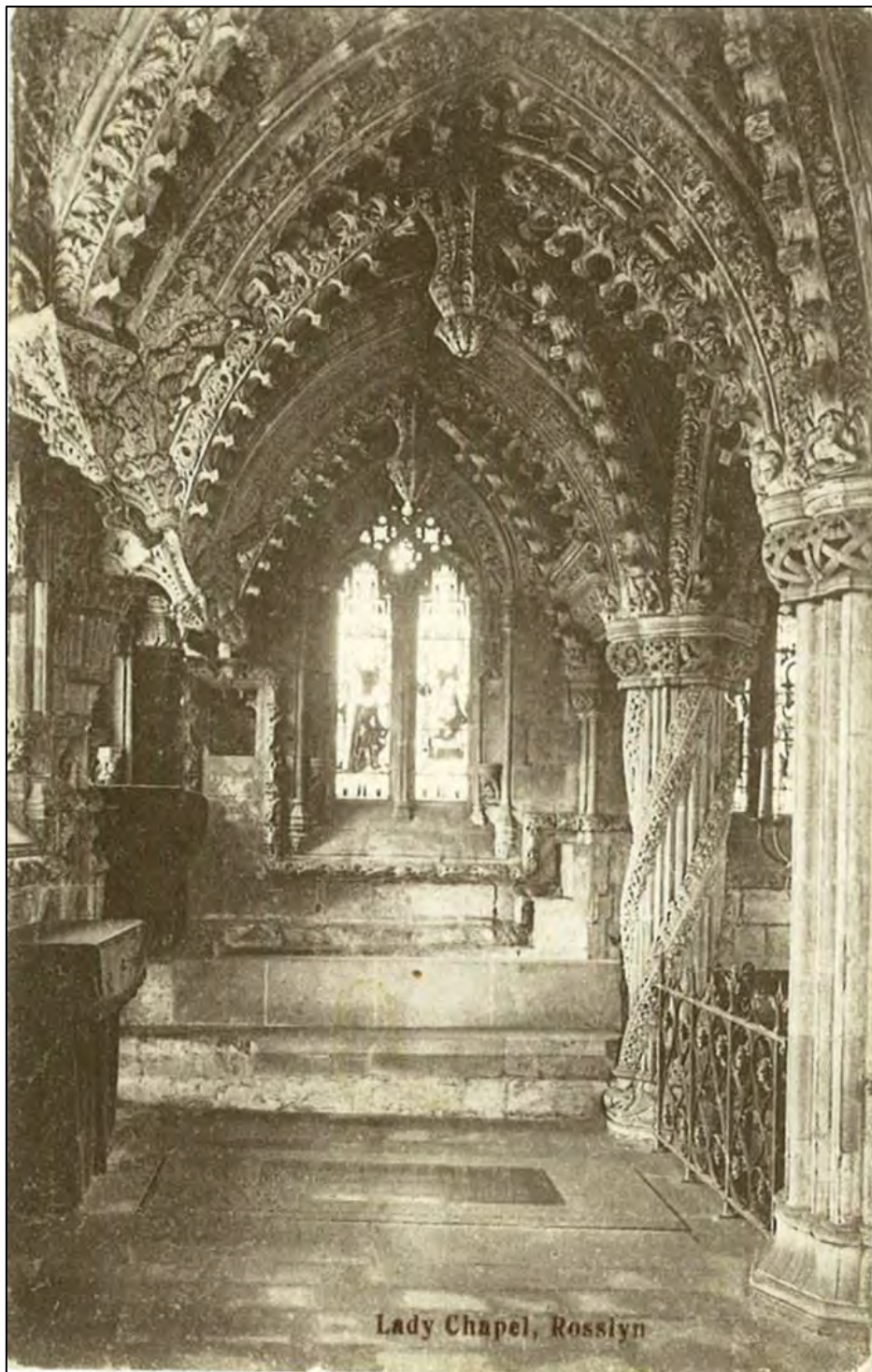
Rosslyn Chapel – the south aisle in the 1870s (RCAHMS)



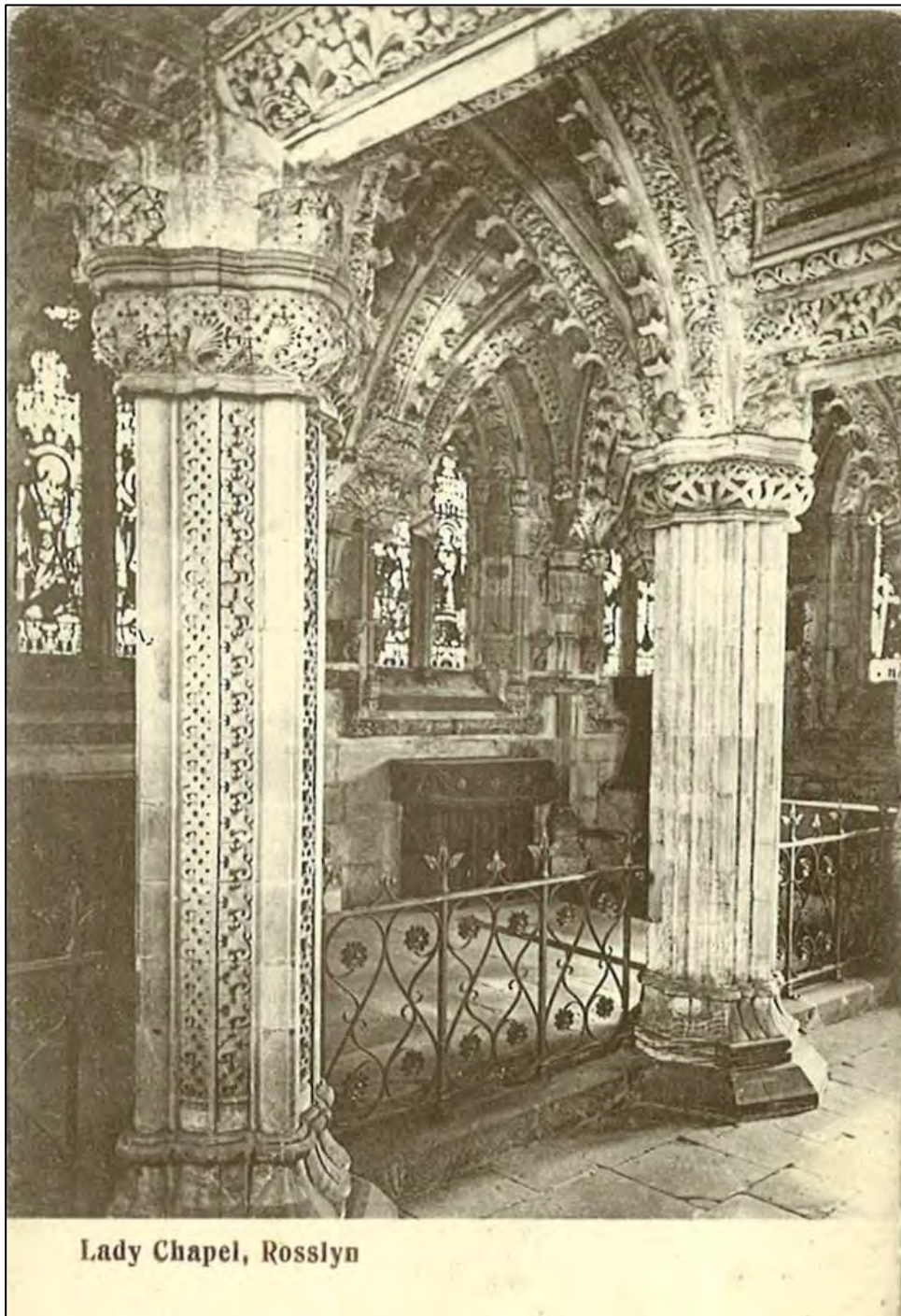


The 4th Earl of Rosslyn and his wife





Lady Chapel, Rosslyn



Lady Chapel, Rosslyn



Roslin Castle, watercolour by JMW Turner, c1820 (Tate)

I may here incidentally mention that, even as a child, I always had a great love for the beauties of nature. Perhaps this love of the picturesque may have been fostered in early childhood by the charming surroundings of Roslyn Castle, where I stayed some weeks when I was between the ages of seven and eight.

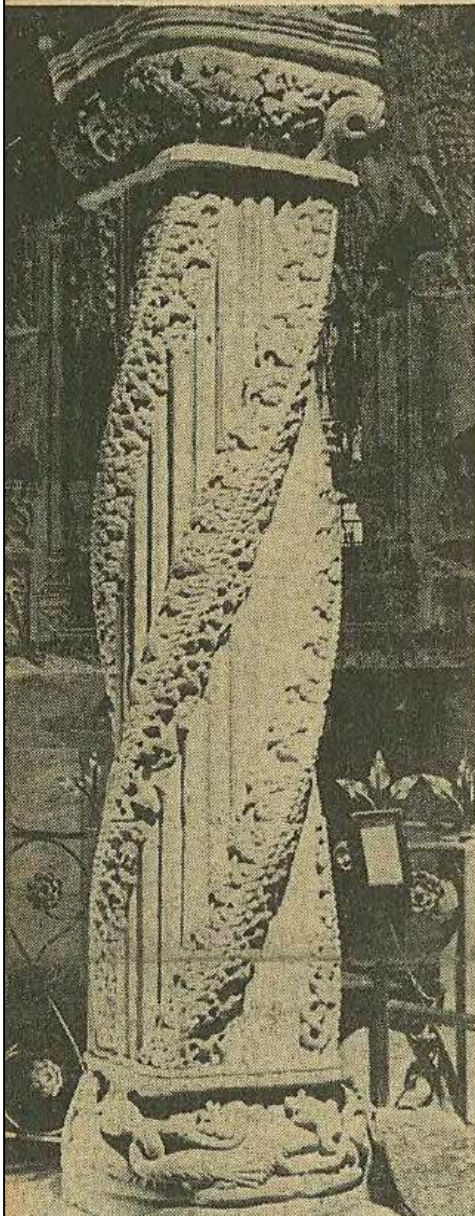
At that time my grandmother, Mrs. Hudson, lived in a part of the castle, which was then let as a residence, and my mother had taken me there on a visit.

I have a vivid recollection of the wild glen with its waterfall at the foot of the castle, and I can, in imagination, see myself looking with eyes of wonderment at the foaming cascade and the overhanging wood, and then resting myself upon a ledge of rock that chance had formed into a rustic seat, and which nature had upholstered with thick moss, even softer than velvet. The castle itself, with its gloomy dungeons, conjured up mysterious feelings within me. And as children at the age

I was then, are very imaginative, it would not have taken much to persuade me that it was haunted by the ghosts of the knights of old who had dwelt there, or of the prisoners who had pined away in captivity.

The deep impression made upon me by Roslyn Castle has never faded from my memory, despite the number of years that have elapsed since I stayed there as a little child. I still feel as if, should I ever revisit it, I could find my way about the weird ins and outs of the ruins as easily as if I had been living there ever since.

WORLD SEARCH BY TEACHER ENDS AT CHAPEL AFTER 18-YEAR-QUEST



The Prentice Pillar in Rosslyn Chapel.

'The Holy Grail at Rosslyn'

The Holy Grail—the legendary chalice thought to have been used by Christ at the Last Supper—may be concealed in a pillar at Rosslyn Chapel, Roslin, Midlothian.

This is the theory of an Edinburgh school master who has sought the Holy Grail since he was a prisoner of war.

The teacher, 41-year-old Mr Trevor Ravenscroft, on the staff of the Rudolf Steiner School, Colinton Road, revealed his "find" last night.

He claims that the Holy Grail is hidden in the beautifully ornate "Prentice Pillar" in the fifteenth century Rosslyn Chapel, known locally as the "Church of the Holy Grail." How the chapel came by the name is not known because its records were destroyed on the orders of Henry VIII.

Mr Ravenscroft has told Professor J. H. S. Burleigh, Principal of New College, and Professor of Church History, of his research and discovery.

To-day Professor Burleigh said: "There might be something to this claim. It is certainly a very interesting story. As far as I know this is the first theory of its kind as far as Rosslyn is concerned. Mr Ravenscroft has evidently studied the symbolism of these things and understands them."

The Holy Grail is supposed to have been preserved by Joseph of Arimathea, and many poets and romancers have made the "Quest of the Holy Grail" the subject of their writings.

Mr Ravenscroft, who lives at Harlaw Farm, Balerno, told the "Dispatch" of his 18-year search for the Holy Grail. It began when, as a P.O.W. in Germany, he obtained several books on the subject.

He learned that the Holy Grail would be in a pillar of a church visited by knights on returning from the Crusades. He has travelled all over the world in his search.

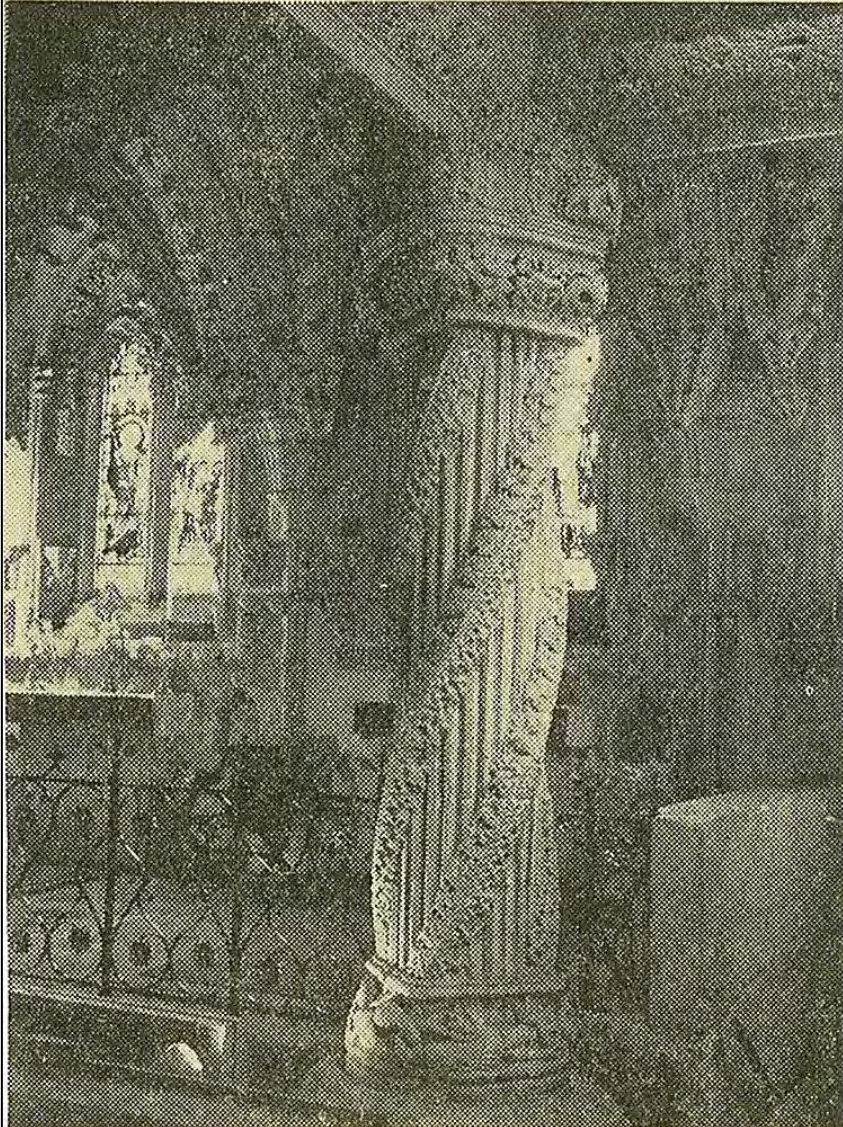
"I had almost despaired when I visited Rosslyn Chapel while on holiday two years ago. I was amazed. The 'Prentice Pillar' had all the marks and signs I was looking for."

Mr Ravenscroft explained that the mark of the pilgrimage was the sign of a scallop shell which he had followed on the cathedrals en route.

"Above the 'Prentice Pillar' was the mark of the scallop shell and the 'mark of the Holy Grail'—a sun and crescent moon. I could hardly believe it."

Mr Ravenscroft has used a metal detector on the "Pillar" and to-day he said: "There is definitely something metallic inside. I cannot say what it is but I hope to use X-ray equipment to get a picture of anything inside."

NEW YORK
Herald Tribune



United Press International.

PARSIFAL, IT'S HERE!—This ornate column, the Prentice Pillar, in the 15th-century chapel of Roslin, Scotland, may contain the Holy Grail, sought for many years by countless knights in shining armor. An Edinburgh schoolmaster, Trevor Ravenscroft, who has done research on the subject, asserts that the Grail was hidden in a pillar. After inspecting thousands of pillars in Spain and England for the appropriate signs, Mr. Ravenscroft believes he has found the right one. The pillar has been inspected electronically and reveals some metal in its core. Mr. Ravenscroft is seeking permission to open the pillar to see if the Grail is there.



The Queen and Prince Philip's visit to Rosslyn in June 1961



BALMORAL CASTLE

7th Sept.
1874.

Dear Mom

How nice to hear from
you again and thank you
very much for sending the
little booklet on Rosslyn
Chapel. I remember our
visit there so well, and
am very interested to see
the photographs which are
really excellent.

We have all been enjoying
a bit of a rest up here
with the family before school
starts again - lovely weather
until today when it is thick
mist and rain which is unknown
on the Trossachs who have power
in for the 'Braemar Gathering'.

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth