

Have they disappeared, or do their successors still flourish? And if their lands have been bought, and annexed to large properties, when was it? Lincolnshire is so large a county, and its conditions vary so much, that it is not surprising that the answer to these questions shows a very complicated state of affairs. Much depends upon the locality and the nature of the soil. The survivals have been where the land was most suitable for small holdings and there are few large residentiary estates. In the fens, the marsh, and the Isle of Axholme small freeholds are still common. On the Wolds, the Cliff, and the Heath large farms and comparatively large estates are the rule. But even here there are exceptions: e.g. at Ormsby, on the Wolds, there are no small freeholders; at Tetford, the next village, there are several, partly because there has not been there a resident landowner of wealth and position, partly because some of the land is suitable for small holdings, the higher lands being there, as elsewhere on the Wolds, in larger holdings. As regards the date of the purchase of the small holdings I have some evidence. At Ormsby the peasant proprietor had disappeared before 1686, though there were then three freeholders remaining, who were bought out somewhat later.²² At Gunby, on the edge of the Wolds, the freeholds were bought up by the lord of the manor before 1650. Original documents enable me to give particulars. In 1594 fifty-two and a half acres were purchased, in 1642 three holdings of ninety-one, forty-seven and a half, and fifteen acres. And in 1647 two acres were purchased of two labourers for 8*l*. In all about a third of the parish was thus purchased, representing at least as much as one would expect the freeholders to have possessed.

W. O. MASSINGBERD.

The Alleged Norman Origin of 'Castles' in England.

WHILE agreeing with the view ably brought out by Mrs. Armitage¹ that the Normans erected and occupied defensive works of the motte and motte and bailey type, and that these were, in the main, wooden and stockaded structures, I wish to dissent from the contention (which, although not definitely stated, is distinctly implied) that there were no motte or motte and bailey earthworks in the British Isles previously to the Conquest. Such a generalisation appears to be inconsistent with evidence which even at the present time is forthcoming. To begin with, I would notice that the Norman occupation of a motte and bailey earthwork is not necessarily a proof of its Norman origin. Historical reference, whilst of the

²² *History of Ormsby*, p. 303

¹ *Ante*, vol. xix. pp. 209-245, 417-455.

² P. 210 f.

utmost importance, is probably, in the nature of things, of much later date than the actual birth of the mound and fosse, and for this reason archaeology cannot be divorced from history in an inquiry of this kind. It is only by a careful consideration of the internal and relative evidence of many examples, and a comparative study of this type of earthwork in other countries, that an approximately correct conclusion can be arrived at.

I proceed to consider some of the headings under which Mrs. Armitage groups her evidence.

(1) *Negative Evidence*.—The assurance of Ordericus Vitalis that there were few fortifications in the English provinces which the French called castles implies that such structures already existed. The statement is a qualified one and carries with it the implication that in some other part of Britain these structures were more numerous. This qualification may be interpreted as applying to the castles of Edward the Confessor's Norman favourites on the Welsh borders. It is, however, too little realised that the Normans did not invariably employ the motte type of fortification.¹ Many of their castles in Normandy were of the Romano-Gallic variety, i.e. rectangular enclosures. As a notable example the castle of St. Germain de Montgomeri may be cited.

(2) *Inferential Evidence*.—(a) Mrs. Armitage points out, that motte and bailey earthworks are to be found in Normandy, England, Wales, and in the Norman spheres of influence in Scotland, Ireland, and Italy. It should be added that they occur in countries which never came under Norman influence or settlement. Thus good examples are to be found in Holland, Denmark, Germany, both east and west, Austria, Hungary, Bosnia, and in a somewhat modified form in North America. Their widespread distribution must in itself warrant a doubt as to their exclusively Norman origin within the British Isles. Cyveiliog (Merionethshire and the western half of Montgomeryshire), a part of Wales which was never the seat of Norman settlement, presents many examples of the motte and motte and bailey fort. These may indeed be claimed as pointing to a Saxon or Norman model; but there are instances in Ireland where no such explanation is admissible.

The history of the comparatively late Anglo-Norman invasion and the early literature of Ireland, both historical and legendary, with its wealth of allusion to the strongholds of its chieftains, contain much material which is germane to the subject. But Mrs. Armitage merely refers to the work of an eighteenth-century visitor, and takes no note of the earlier historians, Giraldus Cambrensis and the annalists, or of the valuable field work of Mr. Westropp and others in our own day. Now, it is admitted that the Normans did erect mottes in Ireland. The description given

¹ Caumont. *Abécédairé d'Archéologie*, pp. 293, 304.

in the *Song of Dermot and the Earl* of the levelling of the mote of Hugh Tírel at Trim is, as Mr. Round has shown,⁴ conclusive upon this point. The occasional references of Giraldus to weak forts of sod and stake also appear to be capable of the same explanation. But, so far from supporting Mrs. Armitage's theory in its entirety, the Irish evidence points rather to a very early or 'Celtic' origin. Thus Giraldus,⁵ in describing the castles which he attributed to the Norwegians, states that in many places you will find earthworks, very lofty, also round, and many of them having three lines of defence—*unde et fossata infinita, alta nimis, rotunda quoque, et pleraque triplicia*. No better description could be given of the triply defended mottes of Downpatrick, Donaghpatrick, and Killinnane, all of which are to be found in the English pale. The ordinary type of Irish rath could not be alluded to in such terms. The same multiplicity of circumvallation so characteristic of Irish fortification is noticed in the *Book of Leinster* (compiled A.D. 1160). References in early texts to certain Irish forts of the moated mound type clearly demonstrate their pre-Norman origin. Two examples may be noted. Within the circle of the Rath na Riogh at Tara is a large moated mound. It is surrounded by two ditches and ramparts and rises some thirteen feet above its encircling fosse. Connected with it by means of its outer rampart is a large oval, raised, and rath-like enclosure. The late Mr. Petrie in his *History and Antiquities of Tara Hill* identified these earthworks as the Forradh and Teach Cormaic of the topographical poem of Cuan O'Lochain, who died in 1024, and the identification admits of definite proof; so that upon an historic site we find a moated mound which has been topographically described in a pre-Norman poem. The great motte and bailey earthwork of Rathkeltair at Downpatrick is especially interesting, inasmuch as both history and archaeology combine in determining its early Irish origin. Situated in marshy ground on the right bank of the estuary of the river Quoile, and within a short distance of St. Patrick's Cathedral, it is evidently the *monticulus* alluded to in Jocelin's *Life of St. Patrick*⁶—*unum illorum, in loco ubi nunc in Dun aedificata est Ecclesia Sancti Patricii, alterum in monticulo vicino, circumcluso palude pelagi*. Giraldus⁷ relates how John de Courcy invaded Ulster with a force of twenty-two men-at-arms and three hundred others, and constructed a fort of slight materials in one corner of the city of Down, from which he sallied forth to meet the gathering Irish—*exili municipio, quod in urbis angulo tenuiter crexerat*. It is impossible to identify the weak fort of De Courcy, in one angle of the city, with the strong

⁴ *Quarterly Review*, no. 357, p. 48.

⁵ *Topogr. Hibern. (Opp. v.)*, p. 182, Rolls Series.

⁶ Cap. xxxvii. Paris, 1624.

⁷ *Expugn. Hibern. (Opp. v.)* lib. ii. cap. xvii. pp. 359 f.

fort of Rathkeltair, in its immediate vicinity. The positive evidence of Jocelin and the negative testimony of Giraldus, supported by the character of the earthwork itself, with its triple ramparts and circuitous entries, all point to its Celtic origin.

(b) These fortifications occur in an infinite variety, both as to form and size, covering in some instances an area of many acres, as at Thetford, where the mound rises to a height of nearly 100 ft. and has a triple fosse and double rampart, whilst in others they are contained within a space of less than two acres, as in the motte and bailey earthwork at Woolstaston, Shropshire, where the mound only attains the height of 10 ft. The labour entailed in their construction must have varied greatly. Their position too does not always, by any means, indicate the invader's distrust of his neighbours, for numbers are to be found in the centre of villages and in close proximity to the church. This relationship of the motte or motte and bailey to the village church may throw some light upon the subject under consideration. It is known that the lord of the district, whether Saxon thegn or Norman baron, frequently erected a church in the immediate vicinity of his dwelling,* and it may fairly be assumed that, in the majority of instances, the site of the present rural church is also that upon which its Saxon predecessor stood. This can be proved in the case of a large number of churches which contain Saxon features. If in a village of known Saxon antiquity the motte or motte and bailey is found in the immediate neighbourhood of the church, and if, in addition, this church presents Saxon features, we have circumstantial and relative evidence of its pre-Conquest date. It may indeed be maintained that the Norman invader may have erected his motte on the site of the Saxon stronghold. But that this was not invariably the case is proved by the interesting examples of Earl's Barton and North Elmham. The late Saxon tower of Earl's Barton stands, as can be proved by measurement, upon a site which was once occupied by a portion of the ditch and *excavate* of the partially destroyed moated mound which rises immediately from its north-western side. The motte must therefore necessarily be of pre-Conquest date. It may indeed be urged that the mound is in origin sepulchral; but in the absence of spade work this cannot be demonstrated. Of one fact, however, we may be certain, that the portion of the mound which was not destroyed for the erection of the Saxon tower is defensive in its character. At North Elmham a portion of the bailey has been cleared away for the erection of a Saxon church of the basilican type. The Saxon portions of this ruin are probably of two periods, an early foundation of massive carr stones and a later tenth-century superstructure. Whether this portion of the earthwork was re-

* Bede, *Hist. Eccles.* v. 4 and 5; Round, *Archæologia*, lviii. p. 319, note.

moved for the erection of the earlier church, or only for its tenth-century restoration, as has been contended,⁹ is immaterial to the point at issue; for, whichever view is taken, we have undoubted evidence of the removal of a part of a motte and bailey earthwork for the express purpose of erecting a Saxon church.

The trend of recent antiquarian opinion, reflected in Mrs. Armitage's paper, in the direction of regarding the *burhs* of Alfred, Ethelfleda, and Edward as invariably fortified towns or settlements does not appear to have historical warrant. The term *burh* signified any defensive position, small or large, ranging from the six-hundred man's house to the large fortified town or camp. It might well therefore have been applied to forts of the motte and bailey type. This application appears to survive in the name of the mound at Earl's Barton—Bury or Berry Mount. The field in which it stands is called Bury or Berry Field; and this is found also at Towcester and other places.¹⁰ The extension of the term *burh* from the fortified house to the fortified group of houses was gradual. But in the Laws of Alfred, and therefore at the beginning of the great *burh*-building age of the Chronicle, the term was used in the sense of fortified house. Asser also refers to castles or forts in contradistinction to cities and towns.¹¹ Mrs. Armitage contends that an examination of the *burhs* built by Edward and Ethelfleda shows that we never find a moated mound on these sites, unless a Norman castle-builder has been at work subsequently. Let us examine a few sites. The motte in the oval-oblong enclosure at Castle Hill, near Bakewell, may to this day be described in the words of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, a. 924, as being 'in the neighbourhood of Bakewell.' It is separated from the town and church—with its pre-Norman cross and other Saxon remains—by the river Wye. A reference to the Chronicle makes it clear that Edward did not entrench the town of Bakewell, but that he constructed and manned a fort in its vicinity. So too Florence of Worcester states that he placed some stout soldiers in it. *Inde cum exercitu ad Beadecanweallan profectus, non longe ab ea urbem construxit, et in illa milites viribus robustos posuit* (a. 921). In translating the *burh* of the Chronicle by the Latin *urbs* Florence no doubt gave the term *burh* its contemporary meaning. The entry, however, distinctly points to the construction of a *fort* in contradistinction to a *town*. There is no record of a Norman castle there. The name of the site, Castle Hill, is no evidence of a Norman fortification, the term castle being applied to many types of earthwork.

⁹ See the *Builder*, 14 March 1903.

¹⁰ It is, however, possible that the derivation is from *beorh* (berry, barrow, barrow).

¹¹ Plummer's *Alfred the Great*, p. 111; Asser (ed. Stevenson), pp. 78, 79, p. 831, note 91.

Both the Chronicle (a. 921) and Florence (a. 918) have two separate entries with regard to the fortification of Towcester by Edward the Elder. The first notice records the construction of the *burh* or *city* and the second relates how the original fortification was surrounded by a stone wall. It is suggested that the stone wall was built from material already to hand, on the lines of the original Roman enclosure. There is no record of the occupation of the Towcester motte by Normans. Notice of a mill and a lord's oven is all that can be found, but these cannot be taken as proofs of a Norman occupation, as both are undoubtedly of Saxon age.

At Eddisbury a knoll at the south-eastern extreme of the enclosure forms a natural keep. The instances of Maldon and Witham cannot be called upon to prove the non-existence of mottes upon the unaltered sites of the *burhs* of Edward the Elder, for they have been so defaced as to render a definite conclusion as to their original character impossible. The Great Eastern Railway passes through the heart of the fortress of Witham, and the site of the camp at Maldon was partly built upon even in the days of Salmon (1740). Here a motte may have stood in one angle of the enclosure, as at Wareham. Mr. A. E. Fitch in his description of Maldon can only say, 'The site of this Saxon camp can still be faintly traced.'¹² Strutt¹³ thus describes the fortresses of the Anglo-Saxons: they 'raised the whole surface of their station above the common level of the earth in the shape of a keep or low flat hill;' and in his illustration of Witham he shows a low, flat-topped, circular mound, with parapet, fosse, and rampart. Mr. I. C. Gould¹⁴ states that the original fort seems to have consisted of a large enclosure of about 400 by 350 yards, with an inner ward or keep of 200 by 175 yards. The inner rampart rises from a base about 10 ft. above the surrounding enclosure. Although of large dimensions it is evident that the original earthwork of Witham approximated more nearly to the moated mound type of fortification than to that of a simple enclosure. Again, at Laughton-en-le-Morthen there is a motte and bailey earthwork in close proximity to the church, which contains Saxon features. There are also remains of a second court, which probably enclosed the church. Here on the one hand we have no record of a Norman castle, whilst on the other Domesday states that 'here Earl Edwin had his hall.'¹⁵ Bearing in mind the second enclosure referred to above, it may be remarked that the Saxons undoubtedly recognised the necessity of providing the church with some method of defence, as evidenced

¹² *Victoria County History of Essex*, p. 287.

¹³ *Manners, Customs, &c.*, p. 24, 1775.

¹⁴ *Victoria County History of Essex*, p. 288.

¹⁵ The term *hall* was applied in Domesday in the widest sense, embracing on the one side the house of the lesser thegn and on the other the manor itself (D. B. I. 268, i. 387 b, ii. 408 b).

by the placing of lonely churches, such as St. Mary's, Dover, Reculver, in Kent, and St. Peters-on-the-Wall, Essex, within Roman enclosures.

With reference to the town of Wareham, Mrs. Armitage cites a notice from Domesday,¹⁶ mentioning the destruction of seventy-three houses since the time of Hugh the sheriff, which on the face of it appears to imply demolition for a castle site. But when the Domesday of Wareham is read as a whole we find that T.R.E. there were 888 houses, whilst at the time of the survey 208 of these were ruined, destroyed, or waste. A destruction so extensive cannot be attributed to demolition for a castle site. Some other factor must have been at work. An entry with regard to Lincoln affords a probable explanation. In vindication of the sheriff we are told that the remaining seventy-four houses which are waste without the limits of the castle are not so as the result of the oppression of the sheriff or his servants, but by misfortune, poverty, and fire.¹⁷ The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle calls Wareham a fortress of the West Saxons (a. 876). It would be interesting to know whether any definite record of a Norman castle at Wareham is forthcoming, as distinguished from Corfe.

The statement that the motte and bailey plan is still apparent in the ruins of Montgomery Castle is open to question. The castle stands upon a ridge which is divided by three ditches, quarried in the rock, into four wards, or platforms. All these wards, with the exception of the third, which occupies a dip in the ground, are of approximately the same height, and the first and second may quite as justifiably be described as mottes as the fourth ward, which was probably the site upon which the keep stood. It is strange that such a ground plan should have been described by Mrs. Armitage as conforming to the true motte and bailey type. Moreover so far as Montgomery is concerned no such appeal is necessary for the support of her theory, for there is clear evidence not only that the fortification of Henry III was a new castle but also that it occupied a new site. Thus a writ of 22 Nov. 1223 relates to the chapel 'in the new castle.' A charter of 1227 alludes to 'William the parson of New Montgomery.'¹⁸ A charter of Hubert de Burgh to the burgesses makes specific mention of Old and New Montgomery, and of the new bailey, which reached from the road to Bedevin (Cydwelen) to the earl's castle. The earl retains the homages and services of Richard Launce, Thomas de Kevilok, William Saye, &c., as regarded their lands in Old Montgomery; but these tenants were to share in the lands, merchant guilds, &c., allowed to the other burgesses.¹⁹ Within one mile of the present town is the motte and bailey earthwork known as Hendomen, or 'the old mound.'

¹⁶ *Ants.* vol. xix. p. 227.

¹⁷ *Rot. Chart.* 11 Hen. III, p. 2, m. 6.

¹⁸ D. B. i. 55 b.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 13 Hen. III, p. 1, m. 2.

It is now locally called the Old Castle, and is probably the *castrum* which Domesday records as having been erected by Roger de Montgomery.

The demolition of houses in connexion with the building of Norman castles has too readily been assumed to imply clearance for a new castle site. Whilst this explanation is no doubt true to some extent, other and equally important factors were probably at work. Thus the extension of the original area of an old fortification would account for some of the instances better than the clearance of a complete site for a new castle. Again, the castles of the Conquest being almost invariably wooden structures, and liable to accidental or intentional fire from the surrounding houses, an open space was of paramount importance. Further, houses, when in the immediate vicinity of the fortification, might be used for siege purposes. This necessary demolition of neighbouring houses had evidently been neglected in the cases of the earlier Norman castles at York, for Florence (a. 1069) relates how the Normans, who garrisoned the forts, set fire to the adjacent houses, fearing that they might be of service to the Danes in filling up the ditches. Finally, the encroachment of the dwellings of the people upon the area of ancient fortifications was an undoubted fact. Twenty-three houses are noticed in Domesday as being in the town ditch at Nottingham.²⁰ Five houses are stated to be in the city ditch at York.²¹ Where the earthen walls of a city were no longer maintained in a state of efficient defence it would appear probable that the citadel within its gates was similarly neglected.

One point stands out in bold relief in connexion with the destruction of houses noted in Domesday, and it is the great disparity in the numbers of dwellings laid waste at various places. This can hardly be explained on the assumption that the demolition was invariably due to clearance for a motte and bailey earthwork. Mrs. Armitage evidently appreciates this difficulty, for in the case of Stamford, where only five *mansiones* were laid waste, we are told that a passage from the Domesday of Nottingham renders it probable that a mansion was a group of houses.²² However true this may have been in the particular instance of Nottingham, it is certain that the word *mansio* cannot always be rendered in this definite sense, for we find in the Domesday of Lincoln and Stamford that dwellings of the inhabitants are almost invariably described as *mansiones*. Where an exception to this rule occurs we generally find *mansio* equated with *domus*, notably in the double entries relating to the three houses of Gilbert de Gand and the house of the countess Judith.²³ It may be noted that Mrs. Armitage, whilst assuming the composite character of the five

²⁰ D. B. i. 230.

²¹ *Ibid.* i. 298.

²² *Ante*, vol. xix. p. 484, n. 90

²³ D. B. i. 236.

mansiones at Stamford, does not adopt this view when dealing with the 166 *mansiones* destroyed at Lincoln *propter castellum*, but renders *mansio* simply as a house in her translation of this passage.

T. DAVIES PRYCE.

I AM obliged to reply with great brevity to Mr. Davies Pryce's remarks on my papers, and if this brevity should seem to amount to curtness I must beg Mr. Pryce to assign it to the exigencies of space. First, as to his contention that the Saxons had private castles: it is manifestly impossible to bring forward absolutely conclusive evidence that the English never constructed any private castles before the Norman Conquest. All that can be said is that the evidence which we have makes it highly improbable. What has chiefly led me to this belief is the contrast between Saxon history in the Confessor's reign and the same period in the history of Normandy. If any Saxons had private castles, certainly we should expect Earl Godwin and his sons to have had them. But there is no mention of a castle in the account given in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle of the revolt of Godwin and his sons, except of the castles belonging to the Norman favourites of the Confessor. Compare the history of Normandy during the same period; there everything turns on the castles and they are mentioned on every page. Nor can their absence from Anglo-Saxon history be a mere omission of the chroniclers, because when we get to the times of William I and his sons the mention of castles becomes frequent, and we find all the struggles in England turning upon them. I am therefore led to the belief that the *paucissima castella* spoken of by Ordericus (if they refer to private castles at all) refer to those built by the Norman favourites: such as the castle at Hereford, and Richard's, Pentecost's, Hugh's, and Robert's castles; there may have been more. In the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle they appear as things most unpopular, and presumably new.¹ The Normans, however, Mr. Pryce says, did not invariably employ the motte type of fortification. Probably not; my own opinion is that this form was not introduced till the eleventh century; but that it was the prevailing type at the time of the Norman Conquest is sufficiently proved, I venture to think, by the table given in my paper.

The wide diffusion of the motte castle in western Europe does not seem to me to be any objection to its having originated in Normandy, though the country of its birth may be still an open question. Ducange thought it was first invented in Flanders. But that the Normans were the greatest soldiers of the eleventh and

Professor Toller writes: '*Castell*, in earlier Anglo-Saxon writings, means a village or town; it gets the meaning of *castle* only after Norman influence has been at work.'