



Extract from

HADDINGTON, EAST LOTHIAN.

The ancient town of Haddington, in the centre of East Lothian, still retains a few very interesting specimens of Scottish town houses. Amongst these the most important is

BOTHWELL CASTLE, HADDINGTON.

This quaint structure is a rare example of a nobleman's town house in his county town. It stands on the right bank of the Tyne, which skirts the town. The building (Fig. 1170) consists of a main block

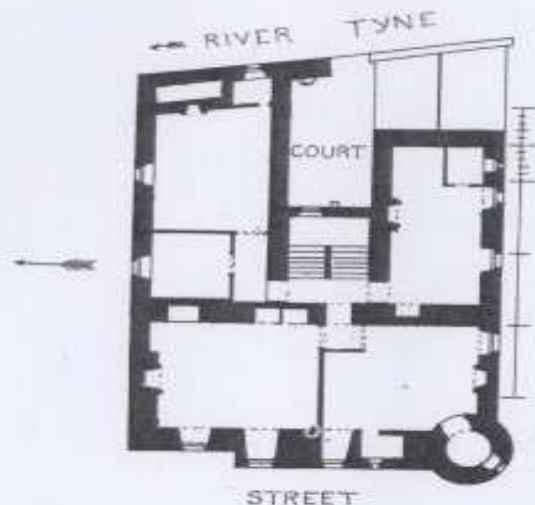


FIG. 1170.—Bothwell Castle. Plan of First Floor.

towards the street, having a round tower at the south-west angle and two wings stretching back to the river (Fig. 1171), with a small open courtyard between them, protected by a wall at the river side. The structure has evidently undergone considerable alteration. The windows

in the main block, which have doubtless been enlarged, have raised chamfered back fillets, which are a seventeenth century detail; while the side wings have a simple splay round the openings, a feature of an earlier period. The continuous skew-stones used instead of crow-steps also indicate late work. The original entrance door, now built up, seems to have



FIG. 1171.—Bothwell Castle. View from South-East. (Opposite Side of the River.)

been in the tower, as above this in a moulded panel was the coat of arms, now unfortunately effaced (Fig. 1172). Probably, also, the staircase was in this tower. At present it contains the staircase from the street to an area floor only. The existing entrance is in the centre of the main block, through which a passage leads to a scale and platt stair at the back. There is a lower story behind, to which this stair conducts.

The kitchen is in the north-east or larger wing. It is vaulted, and has a fine large arched fireplace, the wide flue of which is shown on the Plan of the First Floor. From the kitchen a doorway leads out to the courtyard. The enclosing wall is ruinous, but the present rough opening doubtless occupies the place of a former door opening towards the river. In this wall there is also a stone drain, as shown on the



FIG. 1172.—Bothwell Castle. View from South-West.

Plan and View (Fig. 1171). The arrangement of the floors provided a commodious house of some twelve or thirteen apartments, besides kitchen and cellars. Most of the rooms have walls lined with panelled woodwork, but all are now in a very neglected state. There is a curious projection or thickening of the front wall towards the street, roofed in, as may be observed in Fig. 1172, immediately below the dormer windows. The object of this projection is not obvious. Possibly

it may be a portion of an older wall preserved in the newer house. It contains a mural chamber (shown on Plan), which is drawn, however, from description only, as the room from which it enters was closed at the time of our visit.

A very unusual feature in Bothwell Castle is the dovecot. Such a structure was an almost invariable adjunct of a Scottish mansion, and was generally erected at a short distance from it; but here the dovecot forms a part of the house itself, being placed in the south-east wing next the river.

In the *Lamp of Lothian*, p. 134, the author states that this house belonged to the well-known Earl of Bothwell, and there seems no reason to doubt the accuracy of this statement. We have already said that there appear to have been alterations, but, substantially, the house may be as old as the time of Bothwell. In confirmation of the fact of Bothwell having a house in Haddington, we are informed by the same authority that Cockburn of Ormiston, who was charged with the conveyance of four thousand crowns for the use of the English in Haddington, was waylaid by the Earl of Bothwell, who wounded him and carried off the money; after which deed, Sadler mentions that the Earls of Arran and Moray "went immediately with 200 horse and 100 foot men, with two pieces of artillery, to the Earl of Bothwell's house in Haddington, where he resided, to apprehend him; but Bothwell fled down the Gowl, close to the Tyne, keeping along the bed of the river, stole into a house adjoining," and the inmates favouring him he escaped. For this he granted the latter several privileges, which they enjoyed for long afterwards. The siege of Haddington by the French when occupied by the English took place in 1548, and lasted upwards of four months.

At the beginning of this century this house was used as a school for young ladies. It is now occupied by aged women, pensioners of the proprietors.

This is one of the best specimens of old Scottish domestic architecture left in the town, and it is to be hoped that it will not share the fate of most of the others. It would still make an interesting residence for any one over whom historic associations had any sway, and, if kept in proper order, would preserve a most picturesque feature to the town, and help to maintain its historic and interesting character.

There was another old house in Haddington — now unfortunately destroyed — called "Blair's Castle." It was evidently just such a structure as the above. This circumstance shows that the name "castle" attached to Bothwell's house is not a solitary instance of the practice.