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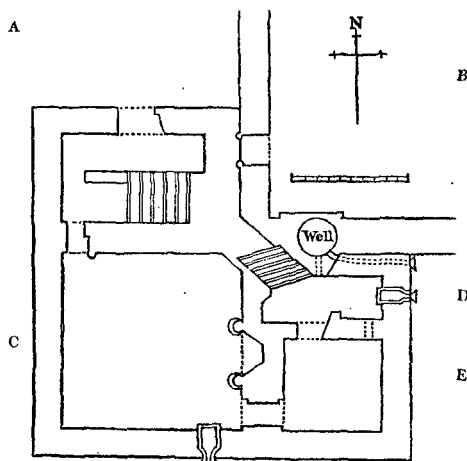
NOTICE OF THE RUINS OF BATHS DISCOVERED AT EDZELL CASTLE,
FORFARSHIRE, IN MAY 1855, &c. BY ANDREW JERVISE, Esq., CORRE-
SPONDING MEM. S.A. SCOT., BRECHIN.

Towards the end of May 1855, while workmen were employed removing rubbish from a field adjoining the ruins of the old castle of the Lindsays, at Edzell, in Forfarshire, an interesting discovery was made of the ruins of bath-rooms, which were in connexion with that building. Although baths are found at almost all the old palaces and villas on the continent, they are rarely met with at the old baronial buildings in Scotland; indeed, so far as known to the writer, those lately discovered at Edzell are the only specimens of the kind that have been found in this country.

It has long been a popular tradition, that, among the many luxuries which the Lindsays of Edzell enjoyed beyond most of their neighbouring barons, were those of *baths*, but the fact is only now established. These bath-rooms were attached to the south-west corner of the flower-garden; and unfortunately little more than the foundations are traceable; for, like the castle itself, the baths suffered sadly at the hands of despoiling utilitarians, who had the materials taken away to build field fences and drains.

Some parts of the ruins, however, are fully three feet high, and, as will be seen from the prefixed plan, which was made at the time of the discovery, the

foundations of the whole are quite distinct. These remains (see plan) consist of a bathing-room (D), dressing-room (E), and sitting apartment (C), &c., together with a passage or entrance from the flower-garden (B), which terminates in a flight of five steps leading to the sitting apartment (C), and from this passage



A, the great park—B, the flower-garden—C, sitting-room
—D, the bathing-room—E, the dressing-room.

there had also been an entrance to the great park (A) in front of the castle. There is also a narrow stair or private entrance from the lobby to the bathing-room, consisting of five steps, and these, along with the stove pipes, which conducted water from the well to the bathing apartment, are in nearly as good preservation as when first erected. The moulded base of the pilasters of the chimney in the large room are also distinct, showing much the same sort of ornament as that used in various parts of the more recent portions of the castle.

Indeed, the style of the building of those baths show a later and superior style of workmanship to that of any other part of the building, particularly the well or reservoir, which is composed of carefully hewn ashler, and so ingeniously concealed in the centre of the wall, between the flower-garden and the bathing-room, that it is not perceptible at first glance.

The well is 25 feet deep, and during the whole of last summer, contained about 3 feet of water. It was cleared out about the same time as the baths were discovered, and an antique bucket or water pail, with iron handle and iron hoops,

together with a garden roller of stone, were found in the bottom, immersed among the water. Niches in the wall, at the top of the well, in which the wooden beam was fixed for holding the apparatus for drawing the water, are also quite distinct.

Perhaps the bath-rooms were the same externally as the summer-house at the south-east corner of the flower-garden, as remains of the base of a turret project from the upper part of the garden wall and reservoir. That the bath-rooms were among the latter parts of the once extensive buildings at Edzell, there seems little room for doubt, and as it is pretty satisfactorily ascertained that the whole were erected, with, perhaps, the exception of the Stirling Tower, or the large square keep on the south of the castle, by the ninth Earl of Crawford and his son, Lord Edzell, there is little difficulty in arriving at the date of the building in question.

David Lindsay of Edzell, or the ninth Earl of Crawford, whose splendid character is so beautifully drawn by Lord Lindsay, succeeded to the earldom, as is well known, under peculiar and painful circumstances, so far as related to the elder branch of the house of Crawford, and dying in 1558, he was succeeded in the earldom, at his own special request, by the son of the "Wicked Master" of Crawford, while his estates of Edzell and Glenesk devolved upon his elder son, Sir David, afterwards Lord Edzell. Having a singularly fine taste in art, Lord Edzell not only carried out the improvements which his father had commenced on the castle of Edzell, but added others of a more gigantic and ornamental character. Among these were the bathing apartments recently discovered, and the flower-garden, which Mr Pinkerton, the antiquary, late in life, characterized as the most magnificent place he had anywhere seen.

It may be remarked, that the peculiar excellence of the flower-garden at Edzell consists in the beauty and number of the sculptured figures that are built into different parts of the wall, and also in the ingenuity displayed in the construction of the wall itself. The east, south, and west walls are of hewn ashler; and, amidst a quantity of other ornament,—such as the representation of twisted and variegated cushions, which project from the top of the wall, and beautiful corbels for flower-pot stands, which abut at regular intervals from near the foot and middle of the wall,—these walls are divided into various compartments, constructed to represent the *fesse chequée* of the Lindsay arms, being, at same time, useful as depositories for flowers; whilst over all are carved the three stars or mullets of the ancient family of Stirling of Glenesk, by the marriage of the heiress of which, Sir Alexander Lindsay acquired the extensive domains of Edzell and Glenesk, and other lands in Inverness-shire.

Between each of the compartments on the east wall is an elaborate repre-

sentation of one of the Celestial Deities ; on the south wall are the Sciences, and on the west the Theological and Cardinal Virtues. The individual peculiarities of these carvings I have before described in another place,¹ and need not repeat here ; but an inscription, which I have since discovered upon the figure of Mars, and which I believe has not before been noticed, may prove interesting, and perhaps lead to the discovery of the name of the sculptor of those unique carvings. The figure of Mars bears the usual accompaniment of a battle-axe, and upon the blade of the axe is inscribed, in small Roman capitals, the initials I. B., and these, I infer, are those of the sculptor. I am not aware that there is any means of establishing this interesting fact,—perhaps, were the attention of Lord Lindsay directed to the matter, he might find some trace of the name among the family papers. There, too, a cue might be found to the origin of the designs of these carvings, which, like the paintings by De Wit, in the gloomy chapel at Glamis Castle, may have been copied from some old illustrated works.

It ought to be observed, it being honourable alike to the good taste and feelings of the noble proprietor of Edzell, that, prior to his succession to the estates of Panmure in 1852, the magnificent ruin of Edzell Castle was quite uncared for, and the vaults and other parts were chocked full of rubbish ; but in the course of a few months from that date, Lord Panmure not only had the rubbish removed, but the ruins of the castle and garden-wall pointed in many parts with Roman cement, so as to insure them, as far as possible, against further decay. Many curious relics of the old possessors were found among the debris of the ruins, all of which are carefully preserved in the flower-garden ; and as I had an opportunity of stating before, when I had the honour of presenting to the Society photographs of eight oak carved panels, these interesting relics are also, through the kindness of the same nobleman, strongly fitted up and secured in the summer-house, which has recently been put into a state of excellent repair for the accommodation of visitors.

¹ Land of the Lindsays, p. 330.