

**Deganwy Castle: Descriptive Survey and Watching Brief
October 2010-July 2011**



West Hill: South East Tower 10. Fragment of External Face with String Course.

Documentary sources and archaeological excavation (*Excavations at Degannwy Castle, 1961-6*. Leslie Alcock) trace the history of Deganwy Castle from the late Roman period through an association with Maelgwn Gwynedd in the 6th. century and construction probably of a stone, rather than timber and earth, castle by the Normans in the 11th.century. From that time on it was extended and rebuilt, and provided a stronghold for both Welsh and English settlements until its destruction by Llywelyn ap Gruffudd in 1263. The castle is described in broad detail in the RCAHMW Volume I (East) for Caernarvonshire, pp.152-155 and the town, in précis, in Soulsby 1983, where conjecture places it somewhere between the castle and estuary. The best overview is in the desk based assessment by GAT 2009. Although the town received a royal charter in 1252 stipulating that it should be enclosed with a wall and ditch this was probably never carried out, and both castle and town were destroyed a little over ten years later. GAT suggests that the English town was on the south side of the hill, an area almost entirely built over since 1900, with the Welsh occupation outside the North Gate, where a hollow way appears to form the axis for several house platforms at the base of the west hill. Alcock's account, published in the *Archaeological Journal* 1967, provides no more than a summary of his excavations carried out over a period of 14 weeks in the mid 1960s. Drawings and photographs in his report illustrate both

the extent of Llywelyn's demolition of the castle and the gradual deterioration in the appearance of the site since the 1960s.

Rhyolite provides the common building material, and it may be significant that this distinctive, pale cream stone recurs in the lower part of the northern section of Conwy Town Wall. There are a few remnants of Deganwy sandstone, forming a string or cordon to the South East Tower 10 and a single exposed block of chamfered stone, which may also represent evidence of a string course, in the east tower of the South Gate 17. The remains probably provided a ready made quarry for the Edwardian castle and town on the opposite side of the river, although the establishment of Conwy appears to have temporarily revitalised activity in the town of Deganwy.

The appearance of the castle, in contrast to the surrounding pasture, is one of neglect. Sheep are a nuisance, displacing stone and causing 'scrapes', the east hill being particularly scarred, and encroaching thorn scrub masks much of both hills. It is in private ownership, but is easily accessible by public footpaths from the fringes of Llandudno and Deganwy. A narrow path climbs the west hill from the north end of the bailey and is deeply scored into its east side, and a broad track is terraced into the south side of the hill where the defences are almost entirely lost. This track ascends through two, or possibly three, gateways up to the west hill or 'Donjon', representing the main part of the castle. In the centre of the hill is a roughly rectangular quarry up to 3m. deep, which may have provided stone for the castle and a source of water.

The fragmentary walls are prone to vandalism and thorn trees flank much of the south side of the hill concealing, until recent clearance, a 12m. section of the south curtain wall. Trees were cleared from around the course of this wall up to the track, but more might be removed to fully expose the impressive bank and ditch protecting the stone curtain wall. Isolated trees, providing shelter for sheep and inevitably leading to erosion of turf and walls, have also been removed. Stripping of vegetation from the curtain wall 21 ascending the East Hill in 2009 revealed an impressive section of wall, but it is clear from the scree at the base of this wall and in the now shallow ditch that much has been lost. The curtain wall 20 towards the South Gate (Alcock Plate XIX A) is not visible above ground, but there are the remains of at least one rectangular structure – in perilous condition - built into the steep slope of the hill.

What remained on the ground often bore little resemblance to the plans drawn up by the RCAM in 1948, published in 1956 (Vol.I: East, Fig.148), and to Alcock's plan, Fig. 2, in his report. Many of the walls had become overgrown with turf or appeared to be lost, in particular parts of the 'Tower' and 'Probable Site of the King's Hall' at the south end of the west hill, and the south 'Entrance' – the south gateway - to the bailey. The RCAM plan formed the basis for a preliminary survey, but this was amended after receipt of the more detailed survey by Sterling Surveys in 2010, and a copy of Alcock's report. Especial notice was taken of fragments of both upstanding stone walls and fallen masonry, one of which, in the area of the supposed 'King's Hall', retains its wall plaster. Geophysical survey and selective clearance and excavation may recover other features at present obscured by thorn trees and turf. Every attempt was made to examine visible lengths and fragments of wall, whether in situ or displaced, and numbers applied in order to clarify their location. The dating of the remains was taken from by the 1948 survey and Alcock, the drawing numbers referring to those of the 2010 survey. Clearance of the track up the West Hill focused attention on the area to the south of Tower 10 and, in particular, on the junction of the Curtain Wall 16 with a bastion or tower 25, which is obscured by debris from the track. GAT has applied three numbers to the castle: PRN30301 for the West Hill, PRN30302 for the East Hill and PRN30303 for the Bailey.

1) Bailey North Gate:

This is an isolated section of wall in line with the wide ditch and forwards of the bank forming the north defences of the bailey. It is 5m. long north to south, about 3.2m. high and 1.5m. thick, and represents part of the east wall of a tower, the modern track in to the bailey passing on its east side between the wall and ditch. A rectangular



Bailey: North Gate 'Pillar' 1 from East

hollow to the west of the wall suggests the footings, perhaps with an apsidal end, survive beneath the turf. The position of the tower is odd, since it appears to be built as a barbican across the line of the ditch and in front of the banks 24 and 29. A break through this bank for the modern track has no trace of strengthening to the opening. GAT describes it as a rectangular tower, the entrance was immediately east of it and that it is possible there was a timber tower on that side, although there seems to be no space for one, the distance to the ditch being less than 5m. The tower wall extends almost 7m. further to its south east corner, the south wall being about 8m. long internally. The form of the tower north of the 'pillar' is difficult to make out, its line appearing to be interrupted by a rounded hollow. It is in poor condition, a situation remedied by recent conservation, and there is a drawbar hole implying a doorway into the tower from the entrance. Conserved August-September 2010. Dwg. 7679 08 and 30. RCAM 1245-54, although Alcock suggests it should be attributed to Edward I.

2) West Hill Curtain Wall North Side

This is an impressive section of revetment wall connecting the rock outcrop 26, at the north end of the hill, with that surmounted by the tower 4 and closing off what must have been a ravine between the outcrops. It is 12m. long and 6.5m. high above a

turf 'berm' at its base with its original mortar, although it has lost its upper section above the present ground level. Its relationship with the isolated length of wall 3 is uncertain except that it is set 0.5m. forwards of it and, according to the depth of the putlog holes – between 0.8m. and 1.9m. deep – beneath it. This suggests that it predates wall 3, the RCAM giving a date of c1215 for the revetment wall and 1245-54 for the upper length, although Alcock proposes the opposite sequence. The round putlog holes are arranged horizontally in four lines between 0.65m. and 1.7m. apart, and between 1.0m. and 1.5m. vertically. The diameter of the holes is 0.07 and 0.11m. and almost all are at right angles both in the horizontal and vertical planes to the wall. Conserved August-September 2010. Dwg. 7679 28. RCAM c1215, Alcock 1260s.





West Hill: North Revetment Wall 2, Wall 3 top left and Tower 4 background

3) West Hill Curtain Wall North Side:

This consists of an isolated fragment of a wall 2.5m.long and 1.2m.thick set back from the revetment wall 2 and in line with the more substantial length of wall 5. The RCAM shows it converging on wall 2, but the recent survey disproves this. Probably contemporary with 8, the actual join being either lost or concealed, but was there a N

tower? The bedrock east of this section is roughly semicircular. Conserved August 2010. Dwg.7679 01 1245-54.

4) West Hill North West Tower:

This was estimated to be up to 2.7m.high from the external bedrock, and consists of a curvilinear part of the 'Tower' noted in the RCAHMW plan. There is no evidence that the tower was any more than semicircular in plan. The 2010 survey shows the batter rising up almost 2.0m. directly from the bedrock and, although masked to some extent by ivy, then rising vertically a further 1m.. No details are visible of an internal face to the wall, which is grassed over, and any floor may be a combination of bedrock and rubble. Alcock describes it as a 'bastion' and it was similar in size to the bastion 25 uncovered south of the great round tower 10. He says it was probably part of the pre-Henrican castle, but its relationship with the curtain wall 2 is not clear. (Plate VVIII A)

The edges of large, flat stones were exposed within the core of the east wall close to its butt joint with the curtain wall 5. This junction was built up to protect the core and interior of the tower. Stripping of ivy shows that the wall is quite crudely built, probably by reaching over from the interior, and that it has a distinct, but irregular curve to its battered lower section. The rubble is of even size, the mortar almost everywhere having leached or been pulled out by ivy so that the joints are deep and wide. In contrast, where the ivy had not taken hold, the mortar is in fair condition and there are several patches of render. The change from batter to vertical face is marked by a crowstep or unevenly course of projecting rubble. A comparison with Alcock's photograph shows that several of the upper stones have been lost since the 1960s. Conserved August-September 2010. 7679 01 and 7679 28. 1215 or earlier.

5) West Hill North West Curtain Wall: To rear of NW Tower.

12m.long south west to north east and up to 1.7m.high internally, 2.5m.externally, and 1.5m.thick. There is an embrasure, possibly for a double garderobe, close to the angle with the west part of the curtain wall. The section to the east of this, next to the angle with Tower 4 is undermined and open from both its east and external sides with a horizontal shaft-like opening from the embrasure/garderobe. Is the hole a result of mining, exploited by a badger's sett?

A vertical joint 0.42m. high in the external face may indicate blocking of an arrow loop or some other such opening through the wall, perhaps when the west wall of the tower and what may be a buttress in the angle of curtain wall and tower were built. This seems to be confirmed by an inset in the internal face of the wall, the top of the wall core appearing to be secondary to the lower mass of the wall, with a distinct soil-line between them. This appears to be contradicted, however, by the stump of a side wall at almost a right angle to the curtain wall, which may have formed part of an end wall to a building across the angle of the curtain wall. It seems to be bonded to the curtain wall, but could not be traced further than about 0.4m.away and south east from the main wall, except that it appears to be continued by a scar in the grass slope and to be directed towards tumbled masonry. It was not possible to define its north east side, but the curtain wall is slightly wider than it is to the south west of this stub wall.

Alcock states that the wall *overlies an earlier curtain* (P.194), but this does not appear to be the case, unless he was referring to the modifications to the wall suggested by the blockings noted above. The connection to Tower 4 is not self evident.

Contemporary with 6, to which it is bonded. RCAM 1245-54, but probably incorporating earlier c 1215 work. Conserved August 2010, the hole being filled with reclaimed rubble and mortar in order to support the masonry, but the horizontal shaft being left intact. Dwgs. 7679 01, 7679 28 and 7679 29. 1245-54.



West Hill: North West Curtain Wall 5: 'Hole' and Garderobe? Breach

6) West Hill West Curtain Wall:

Only a 9m. length survives above ground of this section from the angle with the North West Curtain Wall 5, with which it is contemporary, beyond which almost all appears to be either lost or buried in the turf. There is a narrow 'shelf' or offset within the inner face, the wall being 1.5m. thick and up to 2.75m. high from the bedrock on the exterior and 1.6m. high from the inside. The internal ground here is very uneven, as shown in the pits for 2010 scaffold and there may be as much as 0.8m. of debris beneath the turf concealing the lower parts of the wall. Externally, there is a 1.0m. wide recess, probably for a garderobe, near the centre of this section. Most of the external face had been lost, but close to the south end the wall appears to have been set back, perhaps in response to the underlying bedrock, although Alcock's plan (Fig. 2 32) shows a second opening and in his text he suggests at least three latrine chutes in the curtain wall 5/6. His excavations located a roughly square building butted against the curtain wall, although the walls do not appear to correspond with those now visible. Dressings found in the debris indicated a building of quality, which was demolished in 1263.

To the south of this upstanding masonry there may have been a tower for a gatehouse on the lobe of high ground at the south end of the west side, but any connection has been severed by the modern route of the track into the interior. Conserved August 2010. Dwgs. 7679 03 7679 28 and 7679 29. 1245-54.

7) West Hill Centre East of Quarry:

This appears to be the long south wall of a building aligned west south west to east north east 5m. east of the rectangular quarry occupying the centre of the hilltop. It consists of a turf covered bank of which only part of the internal face is visible c 9m. west to east and with side walls extending c 3m. A substantial structure is implied by its dimensions; possibly a hall or chapel, although it is unclear whether Alcock is referring to this structure (p.197) or the King's Hall 11/12. Dwg. 7679 04. 1215 or earlier.

8) West Hill East Curtain Wall:

Discontinuous exposed core or facing stone and turf bank of the Curtain Wall between the South East Tower 10 and the north angle of the West Hill at wall 2/3. The precise relationship between this wall and wall 24 is unclear. Alcock excavated at a trench across the curtain south of the junction with wall 24 (Fig.2, Fig.4 and Plate XX A) with exposed *wide stepped foundations...designed for stability at the head of the slope*. His cross-section suggests that the demolished curtain wall had been reinforced or rebuilt with a 'rough curtain' in 1277? and that there was an earlier drystone wall on the exterior slope which may date back to the second century. At least two of these steps are visible in the turf in places. Dwg. 7679 04 1245-54, but possibly considerably earlier.

9) West Hill North West of South East Tower:

This consists of several short lengths of facework protruding through the turf, including a doorway, to the rear of and north west of the South East Tower 10. Probably forming part of the east end of the South Range/King's Hall. Dwg. 7679 06 1245-54.

10) West Hill South East Tower:

The turf and stone remains bear little resemblance to the semicircular structure shown in the 1948 RCAM plan except for two short sections of the external face of the south east arc of the tower and a similarly short section of the internal face and core. Alcock's plan and excavations (Fig.2 and Plate XXI A) illustrate quite how much remains buried and help to explain what is not at all apparent today. *The outer wall was set in a rock-cut foundation trench, and the tower had a rock-cut basement, entered from the ward of the donjon through a vaulted stair passage. Where the tower joined the east curtain was a latrine chute of excellent masonry, while the junction with the south curtain took the form of a stair projection leading to the upper storey of the tower.* (p.194)

The tower formed a near complete circle c10.5m. external diameter and 6.5m. internal diameter, abutted on the west side by the curtain wall and south wall 11 of the King's Hall and on the north by the east curtain wall 8. The most substantial surviving section is the external face of the south west arc. This curving length includes part of a moulded sandstone string course or cordon which Alcock compares with that on the South Gate 17, although it has a different profile. At first glance, the cordon appears to have been cut away for wall 15 ascending the slope from the south, although wall

and cut-out do not satisfactorily correspond. Further clearance by the contractors exposed a little more of the cordon and a substantial area of render on the external face of the tower. The relationship with two short lengths of wall to the west of 15 and lower down the slope of the tower remains unclear. They seem to relate to wall 15 descending the slope rather than the external stair projection mentioned by Alcock. The diameter of the tower compares favourably with that of round towers at Dolforwyn and Bere. Conserved September 2010.
Dwg. 7679 06. According to RCAHMW 1245-54, Alcock suggesting a date of c1250.

11) West Hill South Curtain Wall/King's Hall:

This is visible as an intermittent bank west of the South East Tower 10 with one or two short lengths of face wall emerging from the turf close to the tower, although these last fragments appear to relate to the wall 15 descending the slope from the South East Tower to the tower/bastion 25.
Dwg. 7679 06. 1245-54.

12) West Hill King's Hall:

Five or six masses of stone are scattered about in the general area of the platform west of the South East Tower and north of the South Curtain wall. The RCAHMW describe this area as 'The probable site of the King's Hall ruins', which is a reasonable supposition given its west to east alignment and location on the most elevated part of the hilltop. Alcock trenched several parts of the area, but found it *impossible to correlate the various cuttings and to give a coherent account of the building*. He found that the north west corner was built on a rock-cut plinth and uncovered two window embrasures. The vault was *clay-packed* which, presumably, means it was either bonded or sealed with clay. It is unclear from Alcock's lengthy description (p.197) of the internal buildings of the west hill if he is referring to this hall or the building 7 to the north and east of the quarry. Whichever it is, it was *embellished with a moulded arch, springing from corbels in the form of human heads*. He argues that the stratification and weathered appearance of these mouldings and carved head dated to the early 13th century rather than the mid-century occupation from 1250 to 1263. He goes on to argue that the head had been *deliberately buried face downwards*, and that this reverence by soldiers of his grandson implied that it was part of the pre-Henrican castle; he does not, however, propose that the carved head actually represent Llywelyn ab Iorwerth.

One of the fallen masses is plastered, confirming Alcock's observation of the inner walls of the hall, and part of both core work and short lengths of wall faces protrude from the turf. The west end may have been the site of a tower for the main gateway at the south west corner of the hilltop since it overlooks a 3m.wide gap and an oval bank close to the terminus of the Curtain Wall 6, but this may be debris from the fallen west wall. The modern track passes on the west side of the oval mound. Dwg. 7679 05 and 7679 06.
1245-54.



West Hill: 'King's Hall' 12 Fragment of Plastered Wall

13) West Hill South West Corner 'Site of Gate':

The only traces of such a gate are part of a wall built directly against the bedrock on the north side and fragments of the lower courses of a buried wall on the south side of the track 5m. apart. This may represent a simple gateway though the walled enclosure below the South Curtain wall through which the approach to the top of the hill passed. The stonework on the north side was, from traces of mortar attached to the bedrock from which the masonry is suspended, was clearly far more extensive. Part of its rendered south east face is intact, but trial excavation at the base of the stonework, where some indication of a gateway might have been anticipated, proved negative. Conserved in August 2010, the void being partly infilled and support provided by building up at the base. Dwg. 7679 07. 1245-54.

14) West Hill Enclosure/South Curtain Wall

Much of this rectangular area is obscured by turf and debris across the line of the track up to the south west corner of the West Hill at 13 and to Tower 10 at the north east corner. The north side is defined by the south wall of the King's Hall, but short sections of wall south west of the tower 10 may have continued west in front of it. Fragments only of the wall are visible through the debris and turf. Clearance of one section 7m. to the west of wall 15 exposed both the curtain wall and the projecting mass of the tower or bastion 25 against which the curtain wall appeared to butt. Dwg. 7679 07. 1245-54?

15) West Hill Enclosure 'Site of Gate' South of South East Tower:

Fragments only of the east wall of the enclosure protruded through the turf of the steep slope up to the South East Tower, until careful clearance of thorn tress and turf exposed more of a substantial wall 1.7m.thick which appears to have terminated short of the South East Tower. This was consolidated in August 2010, and its east face, where it abutted and ascended the bedrock, was recorded. No trace of the wall was noted further south in the relaying of the track up the West Hill, but it is possible that the lower courses of the wall and some evidence of the gateway survive at a lower level. Alcock shows the wall continuing south to the tower or bastion 25 where it is butted by the curtain wall 16 which leads up from the South Gate. He describes it as 'a minor wall'. It is reasonable to assume the gate was a relatively simple affair where the track passes beneath the rocky outcrop on which the tower is built.

The upper part close to Tower 10 was conserved in September 2010. Dwg. 7679 39. Fig.1. 1245-54.

16) Bailey South Curtain Wall:

This is visible in two sections; firstly, as a 3m. length of wall 1.6m. wide abutting the east side of the tower 25 and secondly, as a 13m. length of what appeared, in 2010, to be almost entirely corework at the base of the hill about halfway to the South Gate. Between these points the curtain wall seems to have been demolished although footings may survive below the scree in the thicket of thorn trees. The shorter section attached to the bastion was not conserved; the more substantial, if apparently unstable, lower section of wall was conserved in May and June 2011. A combination of careful removal of tree stumps and clearance of encroaching spill and vegetation exposed far more of the wall than was anticipated. This included the top of the internal face and two short lengths of the external face at each end. This revealed a wall 1.6m. wide, although Alcock's excavations east of the South Gate suggested a wall 3m. thick. Removal of tree roots unearthed the strap handle of a jug SF5 at the east end of this length of curtain wall as well as two further pieces SF6 and several pieces of a hard, grey crystalline rock.

There may be a slight change of alignment between this wall and the west tower of the South Gate 17 of the bailey, the precise line between here and the south gate being unclear – the RCAM show the wall changing direction to meet the west tower of the gate. Alcock (p.193) does not mention a change of direction, although two alignments are shown in his plan, one of which meets the west tower of the South Gate near its rear wall. The curtain wall east of the South Gate was preceded by a palisade and it is likely that also applied to the wall west of the South Gate.

Dwgs. 7679 13 and 7679 39. Fig.1. 1245-54

17) Bailey South Gate:

This is an extensive area of hollows and banks through which there are occasional glimpses of core work and the lower faces of the gatehouse walls. A scatter of tumbled masonry gives the impression of its having been destroyed by explosives, but, presumably, it is rather the result of having been undermined and fired. The modern approach is across the site of the eastern tower rather than on the original line which was, presumably, causewayed across the line of the ditch. In front of the entrance there is a roughly l-shaped bank which may be some indication of an outer defence such as a barbican.

Partly overgrown with a hawthorn tree (removed June 2011), there is a patch of what may be the original floor of the east tower, close to the internal north east angle. A 4.5m. length of its east wall survives beneath the turf and is being damaged by sheep. The wall is 1.05m.thick and of mortared rubble; the South Curtain wall both abuts and bonds with the east wall of the East Tower where a single dressed and chamfered stone is in situ.



South Curtain Wall 16: Lower Section from East Conserved

This may continue beneath the overriding debris and turf, and possibly represents a fragment of an external string-course around the curving front of the tower, which is now lost apart from a section of its south west arc. Much of the rear north wall of the tower probably underlies the turf. The 'Fallen Masonry' in the RCAM plan is an L-shaped up side down mass of coursed rubble 5m. south east of the east tower and it probably represents part of the north east corner of the tower.

The west tower is in a similar condition: a section of the core of its north wall and parts of its turf-grown flanking walls can be made out beneath masses of tumbled masonry. Alcock does not describe the South Gate and seems to have only explored the point where the curtain wall met the west side of the west tower. Overall, the gate measures c 17m. west to east and 11m. north to south, the passage being c3m. wide.

These dimensions compare with that at Criccieth Castle.

Dwgs. 7679 13 and 7679 40. 1245-54.

18) Bailey North of South Gate West Tower:

Six masses of fallen masonry appear to have belonged to the west tower of the South Gate rather than the South East Tower 40m. uphill to the west south west. The most distinctive feature to the north of the South Gate is a rectangular area defined by earth banks backing on to the rear of the gate towers. This may represent a pair of attached buildings, although the entrance into the bailey through the north bank of this area does not seem to be in line with the gate passage, but is deflected eastwards.

Dwgs. 7679 13. 1245-54

19) Bailey North West of South Gate West Tower:

A single mass of stone presumably fallen from the South East Tower on the West Hill. The Bailey slopes gently north to south, although there is distinct terrace or flattened area occupying its north east quadrant. There is also a fairly level terrace at the base of the West Hill. Access up to the West Hill seems to have flanked the north side of an earthen bank, which possibly closed off the south west part of the Bailey, thence ascending close to the line of the modern track rather at the internal base of the curtain wall 16 west of the South Gate. Alcock appears to have excavated two trenches, C81 and C83, in this area but does not describe his findings in the report.

Dwg. 7679 13. 1245-54

20) Bailey South Curtain Wall:

Apart from an eroded area at its junction with the east tower of the South Gate to what may be a rectangular tower, as shown in the RCAHMW plan, this wall is lost above ground. The wall at the east tower is 1.4m. wide and is of mortared rubble overlaid by debris and turf. Part of the north east internal corner of the tower is visible, set back from the line of the curtain wall, but much of the rest appears to be in poor condition and concealed.

Alcock excavated across the curtain wall about 8m. east of the South Gate and it is possible, from comparison with the positions of the trees shown in the photograph (Plate XIX A), to locate this with some precision. He states that the curtain wall was 10' (c3.1m.) thick rather than 1.4-1.6m., although it is possible he has included stepped foundations, *fronted by a rock-cut ditch*. He found traces of a palisade slot to the rear of the wall and the base of the East Hill.

Dwgs. 7679 09 and 7679 13. 1245-54.

21) East Hill: South Curtain Wall

The tumbled remains of the north and east walls of a stone rectangular structure 27 c20m. east of the South Gate appears to have backed on to the rear of the curtain, but this section of the curtain wall has been lost above ground. It has been suggested that it postdates the castle, but the full width of its walls is not visible and it remains a possibility that it formed a turret or other structure backing on to the curtain wall.

Close to the east wall of the structure is a mass of masonry core which appears to be too far to the rear to be entirely part of the curtain wall; it may relate to the opening or passage, perhaps for a window, implied by the face of a wall at a right angle to the curtain wall. This wall, however, also forms the west wall for the suggested turret 27.

Further east is the most impressive surviving section of the South Curtain Wall 3m. high and over 4m. long as it ascends the East Hill, especially after it was cleared of ivy and thorns in July 2010. So much of the lower face had been lost, however, that it is impossible – without excavation – to say if it possessed a batter. It was partially built up in September 2010 in order to support overhanging stone work after the loose bedrock of the East Hill to the east of this section of curtain wall had been secured. Close to its present broken end the alignment of the wall is subtly redirected to a more north easterly course, the change in direction being reinforced with coarsely dressed quoins. Where the wall meets the bedrock at its east end and highest point there is a short, triangular projection, which is difficult to explain unless it formed the lower part of a garderobe, possibly for the putative turret 27 to its rear.

There is, apart from a patch of corework, a 3.5m. gap between this lower section of the curtain wall and the beginning of the upper section. The wall appears to be the same 1.5m. thickness as the lower section, but it narrows to 0.6m. thick, possibly for an embrasure. This area could not be safely investigated because the wall top is fragile and the thin vegetation forms an apparently durable soft capping which, if disturbed, would threaten the surviving wall faces and core. Beyond this, the wall abuts the batter of a change of direction or outward projection – possibly for a turret - at the top. Little remains of the wall itself apart from fragmentary core. This has been treated separately as 28, beyond which it is uncertain if the ephemeral fragments of wall 22 represent curtain wall or the south east wall of Mansell's Tower 23. Dwg. 7679 09 and 7679 13. Conserved September-October 2010. 1245-54

22) East Hill: Curtain Wall

It is unclear if the few traces of the bank or wall overlooking the south east slope of the hill are part of a separate curtain wall extending north east from the possible turret 28 or part of Mansell's Tower 23. One core fragment was repointed in August 2010, but there are other patches of mortar and stone in crevices of the bedrock. Dwg. 7679 09 and 7679 13. 1245-54

23) East Hill: 'Mansell's Tower'.

There appear to be few traces of the stone wall on the south side of the hill top and the tower itself consists of a low hairpin-shaped bank, its long axis aligned south west to north east. Its relationship with the curtain wall 22 and curtain bank and ditch 29 is unclear. It is possible that the tower was originally isolated, and later subdivided by a spine wall parallel to the south east wall/curtain wall. Alcock's excavations could find no evidence for a wall closing off the south west side of the tower, and he states that it therefore should not be compared with the D-shaped towers at Ewloe and Castell

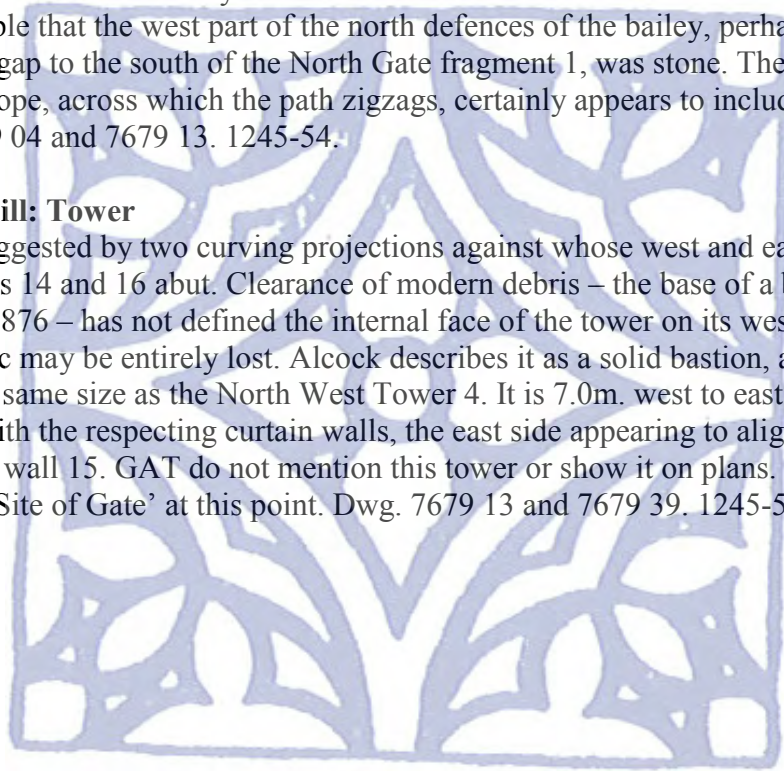
Carndochan, and must have been open-gorged. It was apparently already in existence by 1249 when the order was given for its wall to be raised by a storey, and raised a further 12ft., together with being fitted up with joists and lead, the following year. He also excavated a wall extending north north west across the west side of the hill which may possibly have formed a south west wall for the tower. He does not discuss this feature. One anomaly, shown in the RCAM plan, is the south west end of the north west wall of the tower carrying on considerably further than that in Alcock's plan, but this was not investigated. Dwg. 7679 13. 1245-54

24) West Hill: Connecting Wall

This was omitted from the 2009 survey, and consists of a short wall 1m.thick projecting from the external face of the north east arc of the curtain wall east of the quarry. A second fragment of wall, a little further down the slope amidst thorns, together with tumble suggest that it originally connected the curtain wall and closed off the north side of the bailey down to the Gatehouse 1. Alcock omits the wall, but it is conceivable that the west part of the north defences of the bailey, perhaps as far as the present gap to the south of the North Gate fragment 1, was stone. The bank lower down the slope, across which the path zigzags, certainly appears to include stone. Dwgs. 7679 04 and 7679 13. 1245-54.

25) West Hill: Tower

This is suggested by two curving projections against whose west and east sides the curtain walls 14 and 16 abut. Clearance of modern debris – the base of a bottle dating from after 1876 – has not defined the internal face of the tower on its west side, and the south arc may be entirely lost. Alcock describes it as a solid bastion, and it was roughly the same size as the North West Tower 4. It is 7.0m. west to east between the junctions with the respecting curtain walls, the east side appearing to align with the north-south wall 15. GAT do not mention this tower or show it on plans. The RCAM places the 'Site of Gate' at this point. Dwg. 7679 13 and 7679 39. 1245-54 or earlier?





West Hill: Tower 25 Left and Curtain Wall 16 Right from South

26) Lost Tower?

Roughly semicircular projection of sloping, turf-covered bedrock at the N end of the hill. Possibly formed a base for a lost tower. Alcock excavated the junction of the curtain walls 3 and 24 to the south of this outcrop, but does not describe his findings in the report.

Dwgs. 7679 01, 02 and 7679 10. 1215?

27) Tower?

Both the RCAM and Alcock show a rectangular structure on the internal/north side of the curtain wall 20/21 continuing across to form its S wall. Little is visible above the debris and within the steep eroded slope of the East Hill, apart from part of its west and north walls, an east wall either having disappeared or been concealed by spill. A surviving part of the external face of the west wall closing off the core of the S Curtain wall 21 indicates a width of 0.6m. and an overall width for the structure of c4.5m. The external face of 21 has a triangular projection which may be a fragment of a garderobe, perhaps serving a turret. There was no opportunity to investigate whether these walls have external faces, and it may be that they revetted the slope. They were consolidated in September 2010.

Dwg. 7679 09 and 7679 13. 1245-54.

28) Turret?

The RCAM places a 'turret' here, where the bedrock and few remains of mortared wall forms a kink at the junction of the curtain wall 21 and curtain wall or SE wall 22 of Mansell's Tower. Little actually remains on the ground of this structure, but it was

battered, which is abutted by the curtain wall 21. Alcock shows a wall extending north north west and at a right angle to the curtain wall in his plan (Fig.2), but does not mention it in the text of his report although a wall in this position may, conceivably, have closed off Mansell's Tower.

Dwgs. 7679 09 and 7679 13. 1245-54.

29) Curtain Bank and Ditch

This appears to be a turf, rather than stone, bank between the North Gate 1 and Mansell's Tower 23 on top of the East Hill. It is flanked to the north by a broad ditch which narrows as it ascends the hill, and the bank itself becomes very low, its relationship with Mansell's Tower unclear. A second, shallow ditch to the north may not be defensive and GAT suggests it may be a 'slide' or route for demolition material to be taken down the side of the East Hill.

Dwgs. 7679 08 and 7679 13.

30) Postern?

Alcock writes (p.194) that there may have been a postern where there is 'an easily traversed ledge through the cliffs on the south-west (of the West Hill), and the north end of the ledge carries traces of masonry suggesting a postern which may be Henrican.' The only remains now consist of a two courses of a fragmentary L-shaped wall in this location which appears to have closed off the narrow approach up the west side of the hill from the direction of the quarry.

Dwg. 7679 13

Finds

SF1 Bone Comb fragment 29 x (19) long (incomplete) x 2mm. thick. Metal pin through one broken edge and stain, perhaps, of another lost from the opposite edge. 9 tines. West Hill Anchor Pit 1, within rubble debris close to surface. Medieval?

SF2 Pottery body sherd. Unglazed. Medieval or Prehist.?

SF3 Pottery body sherd. Pale orange/pink. Grey core. Splashes of glaze on one surface. Throwing marks. Medieval.

SF4 Bottle glass. 'WILLM, HILL EST.1876 LLANDUDNO' Broken, thick greenish glass. Debris in angle of Tower 25 west wall and Curtain Wall 14.

SF5 Strap handle and part of rim of jug found in disturbed area of tree roots at the east end of the section of curtain wall 16 west of the South Gate. Slash marks, scar of link between handle and rim, and thumb attachments to rim. Olive/yellowish glaze.

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