



THE LESSER-KNOWN GATEHOUSES
AND GATEWAYS
OF LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE.

By James A. Waite.

Read 17th November, 1898.

SELF-PRESERVATION has always been one of the first laws of Nature, and contrivances for the preservation and defence of men who first entered upon social and settled life are older than history. Of such defences, gatehouses and gateways and entrances must, of necessity, have constituted an essential part, whose beginnings, forms, and adaptations by many of the past races of mankind are lost in the mists of antiquity; and such as remain to us present many points of study and interest to all archæologists and antiquaries. They were of vital importance and prominent features in the cities of eastern civilisation, centuries before the Christian era, in that far-off period when the Pharaohs were all-powerful in Egypt, and also among the Assyrian and Persian races, for they are represented on the monuments of that time, bearing evidence of an advanced state of fortification, and have continued to be used down to recent times; and the tragedies, romances, traditions, and folklore connected with them would be a volume in themselves, and almost a history of mankind.

In all eastern countries every ancient city and town had its gateways to the cities and palaces, and huge pylons to the ancient temples ; and these have their own special features, and serve to convey considerable insight into the life and customs of the various races of people by whom they were erected.

The city gateways were not merely ornamental, and used only for the going in and out of the people, but were necessary for the protection and security of life and property even in time of peace ; for before the use of artificial light, these ancient cities must have been uncomfortably dark, and proportionately unsafe. “ They formed a kind of citadel, and were the strongest part of all the defences. They were the armories of the communities, and the council-place of the authorities. Enemies, therefore, in besieging towns were most anxious to obtain possession of the gates as quickly as possible, and generally the town was conquered when its gates were occupied by the invading troops.”

Each gateway was under the charge of a watchman, or a strong force of men in case of danger of attack, and they were built of considerable strength, with gates secured by heavy wooden bars or bolts ; and many of these gateways were built with towers or turrets, sometimes on both sides for greater strength, and in later centuries both the doors and bars were sheathed with, or made of, iron or bronze. They were opened at sunrise and closed at sunset, and any wayfarer unable to enter before sunset had to wait till next morning before gaining admittance.

These gateways were also places of importance in times of peace, for they stood as an index to the nation's greatness and position among peoples, and as an expression of the advancement and enlightenment of the citizens in civilisation. They were the

public meeting-places for conversation and the discussion of current events. "Sitting at the gate" was and still is synonymous with the possession of authority. The courts of justice were held at the gates, where confidence in the integrity of the magistrate was ensured by the publicity of the proceedings when settling disputes and administering the law. The gates served as a place for reading the law and proclaiming ordinances; it was also usual to have some portion of the law written on the gates. Oriental custom still adorns them with quotations from the Koran or Confucius. The punishment of criminals took place outside the gates, the expulsion therefrom being considered to add to its ignominy.

The gateways were often the bartering-places for all kinds of merchandise and provisions, and even in these modern times country produce is still bought at the gate-markets in the early hours of the day, although the buying and selling of merchandise has been transferred to the bazaars. The gateways of the palaces and temples of the East had their own special uses and features, and so long have many of the ancient manners and customs of the people survived, that they remain to-day much the same as they were a thousand years ago. When from the east the wave of conquest and civilisation gradually spread over the western part of Europe, it was followed, to a great extent, by the imposition on the conquered of the manners and customs of the conquerors.

It was not until after the invasion of our own land by the legions of Rome, under Cæsar, that gateways became one of the prominent features of our ancient cities and towns, though traces of such remain even among the early earthworks. Roman cities or camps were usually built in a parallelogram, having four gateways, and were noted for the

excellence of the workmanship. After the decline of the Roman power in this country these great works were neglected and fell into decay, and many were destroyed. The country was more or less unsettled and harassed for centuries by internecine warfare and the ravages of the Saxons and Danes; and it was not till after William of Normandy had invaded this land, and proclaimed himself king of England, that there was introduced the oppressive feudal system, and with it the need of increased fortifications. The land was taken away from its English owners, and given, in larger or smaller portions, to his Norman followers and the adventurers who came with him; but he took care that this land was only held by them on a feudal service. In order to hold the land securely by this service, his feudatories built numerous castles and fortresses, to effect which large numbers of skilled workmen were brought over from the Continent, and a newer and more advanced style of architecture was introduced into our cities, towns, and churches.

It was in the next four centuries that gatehouses and gateways became such an important and splendid feature of our cities, castles, abbeys, colleges, and fortified houses; and many of the gateways built during this period will be found to be large, massive, and imposing structures. Even until about the year 1600, when the building of castles had become a thing of the past, the defensive character of the gatehouse and gateway was still preserved, and they were looked upon as necessary adjuncts to large residences. Although not so massive and strong as hitherto, but more picturesque and ornate from an architectural point of view, they still retained a certain defensive character.

But it was from the middle of the fifteenth century that the domestic type of gateway became

an important feature in architectural composition, for with the end of the Wars of the Roses the necessity for fortified houses declined. This, together with the rise of the woollen and other industries, and the buying of estates by merchants, was the starting-point of domestic building in this country.

It would perhaps be to our advantage to take a brief review of the different kinds of gateways in our own country, and commence with the old town gateways, that have stood the vicissitudes of peace and war through long centuries, and still stand among the most noteworthy and interesting specimens of defensive mediæval work that we now possess. These will be found in such cities as York (where there are, probably, the most interesting examples of fortified gatehouses at the present time), Canterbury, Norwich, Wells, Winchester, Monmouth, Launceston, Chepstow, Ludlow, Tenby, Conway, Carnarvon, Newcastle, Warwick, Carlisle, Southampton, Lincoln, and other old towns. Their general elevation and construction shows a central gateway for traffic, and side gateways for foot passengers. They were built of great strength, battlemented, and well-adapted for defence in early times. Many of these gateways will be found to combine every feature that skill and forethought could suggest in their design and erection, and some of them are splendid examples of architectural proportion, detail, and beauty. One cannot fail to be struck with the conviction that those men did in reality design with beauty and build with strength. Weathered by time, and subdued in tone to a beautiful tint and surface, they form a series of delightful studies for the pencil or the brush. It is also worth noting how many and varied are the other uses of the simple gateway, and how, by means of alteration in details, its peaceful

character can be changed to all that is stern, grim, and threatening.

In former times the gatehouses, or bars, frequently contained apartments for the accommodation of the watchward, the police of the period; and this custom survived at York until a comparatively recent period. Many gatehouses were used as prisons for high-class offenders. The custom of placing the watchman at the gate was also convenient, for criminals or suspected persons would frequently be recognised when attempting to enter the town, and at once be arrested. And what grim spectacles these town gateways must have presented when it was the custom to draw and quarter the bodies of rebels and traitors, and place their heads on spikes over the gateways, to remain till they were bleached and beyond recognition. This custom remained in force till about the middle of the eighteenth century.

In a few old towns where these gateways have ceased to exist, their memory is still perpetuated by such names as Northgate, Westgate, Bargate, Kirkgate, Briggate, Lydgate, Cripplegate, Castle-gate, Friargate, and many others. Gates in towns invariably suggest the oldest thoroughfares, often the main arteries; and it is a pity to find that the poetic affix has been gradually dying out, while the modern "street," "road," &c., has been usurping its place. It is also regrettable that the old towns have not preserved more of their ancient character, by retaining the old names which have for centuries been their most characteristic feature.

We may now turn to consider the gateways of castles. These were of the strictly military type. The earlier castles were plain, solid structures, often mere fortified towers, built by the immediate followers of the Conqueror to awe the people and keep them in subjection by the strong arm of force,

and to hold with greater security the portion of country allotted to them by the king, in fee for their services.¹ In the castles the choosing of the site was of the first importance, and every advantage, natural and artificial, was taken, to render greater the security of the stronghold. They were built with immensely thick walls; many of the apartments were cramped and small, and devoid of comfort, and the windows mere loopholes and unglazed. Safety, and not elegance or comfort, was the main consideration. The first point to secure would be the gateway, and for this reason the earlier gateways were built as one of the main defences of the building, in military style.

The gateway usually consisted of a single archway, large enough to admit horsemen, with a strong door and one or more portcullises. The ceiling was pierced with holes, through which missiles could be cast down upon an enemy. Often the gateway was protected on either side by bastions or towers, with narrow apertures as outlooks, which were deeply splayed inside to give greater range and command of the gateway on the approach of a hostile force, thus giving the defenders a decided advantage over the attacking party. This custom of placing the gateway between two bastions or towers existed in this country from the end of the eleventh to the early part of the sixteenth century. The approach to the gateway, over a wide, deep moat, was so formed that any body of men approaching the bridge gradually contracted; so that in making an attack only a limited number could assail the gateway at one time, and this crowding of their numbers further exposed them to the discharge of arrows and other missiles of

¹ Professor Meiklejohn says: "So numerous did these castles become, that Henry II is said to have pulled down no less than 1100 castles, most of which were only the dens of freebooters and robbers."

the defenders, from under cover of the protecting towers, and from the machicolations over the entrance, which was a further danger to the attacking party. This strong defence was necessary, the gateway being so important a part of the whole structure.

By the fourteenth century peaceful pursuits had become more advanced, and the general state of society less turbulent. There was a marked modification in the style of military architecture, greater regard being paid not only to defence and security but to appearance and accommodation, and the strength of the fortress combined to a certain degree with convenience and grandeur. The gateway was generally flanked by two lofty and more ornamental round or octagonal towers, with turrets; the rooms were more convenient, and the open aperture was superseded by the glazed window. This progress was a sure indication of the gradual and decided advance to the domestic type of gateway. These features can be seen in many castles from the Late Plantagenet to the Early Tudor period.

The gatehouses and gateways of our abbeys show quite different types, and they grew rapidly in size and splendour under the Norman rule. They were not restricted by limited area of ground, and there was generally more than one gateway connected with the precincts of the building, which was enclosed by a wall. The use of these gateways was of a more decidedly domestic character, of which we have examples in the lives of devotion and self-denial of various monastic orders, in the receiving and lodging of visitors and wayfarers, and the bestowing of alms—all being evidence of the peaceful character of these institutions. These abbey gateways were ornate and dignified, combined with solidity and soundness of workmanship; the

battlements were often enriched by panels, trefoils, quatrefoils, circles, and continuous mouldings, and sometimes bore an amount of heraldic display which rendered them a grand approach to the monastic demesne. The upper chambers and rooms were frequently used for the accommodation of visitors and guests of distinction. In some cases they were the private apartments of the abbot, while in others they formed the courthouse of the abbey, in which all pleadings, disputes, and offences were heard, and justice meted out in all cases over which the abbey extended its domestic authority and power.

Here, again, it has been the fate of many of the grand and stately houses erected by the pious builders of past centuries to be despoiled and converted into farm buildings, so that at the present day they are hardly more than a mass of bare stone walls, mutilated and patched.

Our ancient colleges, though in some cases more restricted in area than the abbeys, by reason of being built in towns, or more centrally situated, possess similar features to abbeys, though their circumstances were somewhat different. Being specially intended for scholastic purposes, which influenced to a considerable extent their construction, they were built on the quadrangular or other defensive plan, having the chief doors and other openings looking towards the courtyard, and generally having the gateway in one wing of the main building, adjacent to the thoroughfare. Still, they are of the characteristic domestic type. We have fine examples of these in the great colleges of ancient foundation, such as we find in Oxford, Cambridge, and Winchester.

In the gateways of fortified houses there was much greater diversity in the form and architectural arrangement, and they ranged from the gateway

arch to the imposing gatehouse, and from the low stunted tower, with stair turret, to the battlemented gateway, with turrets at the four angles, those to the front being generally the largest and most ornate. They were mostly moated; for the value of the gatehouse and gateway for purposes of defence would have been small had they not been strengthened by moat and drawbridge.

When Henry VIII commenced to reign, the sun of feudal England had set, and the dawn of modern England was bursting forth. The Wars of the Roses had become a tale of the past, and the southern country was settling down. The need for fortified houses was past, and the mansions that men built were not fortified castles, but the homes of English gentry. And here we find scarcely a pretence of fortification, but stout and graceful homes became the prevailing fashion, with spacious windows in the outer walls as well as in the inner, and not raised high above the ground, as in earlier examples. Law and order becoming more firmly established, courts of appeal, rather than force of arms, were more resorted to as the means of obtaining redress for wrongs and grievances. Thus the use of the gateway for strictly defensive purposes gradually fell into desuetude. From the middle of the fifteenth to the end of the sixteenth century the domestic type of gatehouse and gateway became generally adopted in England as the approach to the greater halls and manor houses, and they were built to give a grandeur and dignity to the mansions of bygone days, and to set forth the importance of the owner by giving a brave display of his position among men. By the middle of the seventeenth century they had become survivals of an obsolete defensive approach, and before the close of that century the building of gatehouses was discontinued, and they were looked upon as a thing of the past.

The great divergence in style of gateways is mostly due to local conditions and surroundings, and is influenced by the construction, position, and site of the main building. Some are built of stone, others of timber and plaster on stone foundations, and others of a combination of building materials. They were built close to the edge of the moat, with a drawbridge to secure the approach to the house, and were of good elevation, thus retaining their defensive character. Entrance was gained by a moulded archway, giving direct access to the courtyard. These archways were, in many cases, built beneath square hood moulds, with foliated ornamentation filling up the spandrils. The chambers above were well-lighted, with mullioned windows; and the front, from the foundation upwards, had abundant ornament, of mediæval character; the general effect being enhanced by the frequent use of heraldic emblems, which gave dignity and importance to the mansions of that period.

The domestic feature and particular use of these gatehouses was the receiving of visitors and strangers by the janitor or watchward, placed there to ascertain the business of all persons entering the building before giving admittance. This was a very necessary precaution in the stirring times of three centuries ago, securing safety and protection in times of trouble, and privacy in times of peace. It was the custom for visitors to occupy the apartments over the gateway.

Our subject is rendered all the more interesting from the fact that the gatehouses and gateways, as they existed centuries ago, have become obsolete. It is strange that of the few examples left to us, in some instances the gatehouse is all that remains of what was once considered a mansion of importance and dignity.

The gatehouses and gateways to which this

paper particularly refers, are those attached to the old halls and manor houses of Lancashire and Cheshire, the greater part of which were moated. The great divergence in material used in the construction of the main building, gave a corresponding variety in the construction of gatehouses and gateways. In the southern parts of Lancashire and Cheshire, which at that time were mostly woods and wastes, nearly all the old halls were built of timber and plaster; and in this class, of the few that remain intact, we generally find the gateway forming part of the main building, giving direct access to the courtyard. This was a vestige of the castle plan, and was capable of being made strongly defensive. We find this feature in such halls as Speke, Moreton, Agecroft, Bellfield, and others that were built of quadrangular form. In those halls that formed only two or three sides of a square, a curtain wall, connecting the gateway with the main building, formed the courtyard, such as Kenyon Peel, Newbold, and Ordsall (now pulled down).

In the north and north-east of Lancashire we find many of these houses massively built of stone, and mostly situated on high ground; and though bearing no trace of having been moated, they were made strongly defensive by an enclosing wall, entered by a gateway giving access to the main building. Hoghton Tower, Borwick Hall, and Barcroft are examples of this class.

Hoghton Tower is also distinguished by having an outer gatehouse and an inner gateway. Fronting the main building is a long, high stone wall, with a tower at each end, and in the centre is the battlemented gatehouse, giving access to the large outer courtyard. Massively built, and of good elevation, and having a small apartment at each side of the entrance arch, this gateway, with its

large entrance, forms a fitting approach to this historical house. The inner gateway (originally surmounted by a square tower like the outer one) is approached by a broad flight of steps and an ornamental terrace, and gives admittance to the inner courtyard and entrance to the great dining hall. Over both gateways are the arms of the Hoghton family, also initials. That this house was capable of offering a determined resistance was well proved during the war between Charles I and his Parliament.

At Speke we have a beautiful, moulded, stone-faced gateway, flanked by two massive ornamental pillars and side walls, serving as a barbican on the eastern side of the quadrangle, and approached by a stone bridge having half-round recesses on each side with seats, over the now dry moat.

At Wardley we have a fine brick gatehouse, the entrance arch faced with stone and set between two fine stacks of chimneys. This gatehouse was, until within the last three or four years, covered with plaster and painted in the old magpie style.

At Claughton the old gateway opens into the farm kitchen; it has over it a beautiful oriel window, supported on corbels, the lights having trefoil heads, cusped and transomed, and is a good specimen of rather late fifteenth century work.

At Lostock we have a fine gatehouse built of stone, 1590, to a timber and plaster hall of earlier date, now pulled down; the front ornamented with two pillars on each side of the gateway and to each higher story, each supporting the one above at the moulded string course, the roof line being finished with rounded and moulded battlements. Over the long mullioned window above the gateway is a weather-worn crest and coat-of-arms and date, 1590. This gatehouse is now modernised and converted into a farmhouse.

At Barcroft, near Burnley, the gateway is connected to the hall by a high stone wall, and is one of those crow-stepped gateways similar to the outer gate of Martholme. The gateway of Ordsall Hall, built of bricks with stone finishings, was of a similar character; this has been pulled down within the last three years. At Bellfield we have a fine gateway giving entrance to the courtyard, faced with large stones of millstone grit that give a very massive character to this side of the building. At the moated Hutte, at Hale, we have a fine gatehouse built of brick with stone dressings, built on a stone base, and surmounted by a timber and plaster superstructure with coats-of-arms on the front. This was built to a stone building of much earlier date, now in ruins.

At Kenyon Peel we have a stone-built gatehouse of Tudor character, with brick chimneys, entering a stone-walled courtyard in front of a building of timber and plaster that was rebuilt or considerably altered about 1634; and at Mawdsley Hall we have an ornamental gateway approached by steps and standing high above the road, with a small circular recess at one side, with the date 1622.

In Cheshire the gateways to be briefly mentioned are: Bidston, with its beautiful early seventeenth century gateway facing the hall, and standing well above the road; the gateway of the old grange near Chester, known as Saighton Tower, built by the abbots of Chester early in the fourteenth century, has been carefully restored and added to, and now forms the country seat of Lady Grosvenor; and Little Moreton Hall, known to every student of black and white. This fine and almost perfect gatehouse is still in good order and preservation; the hall, surrounded by its moat, only needs the drawbridge to make the picture perfect. It has been so often illustrated and described that any words of mine would be simply repetition.

I think it is quite clear that some of the foregoing examples show that they have replaced an earlier gateway or been added some considerable time after the construction of the main building, such as Lostock, Kenyon Peel, or the Hutte at Hale.

In a short paper like the present it would be impossible to describe in detail each gateway that remains within the borders of our own two counties, therefore I think it will be to our advantage to study some of those examples that do not come under observation every day; and, by avoiding well-trodden ground, we may hope to add something to the common fund of archæological knowledge on gatehouses and gateways.

The particular examples that I wish to bring to your notice to-night are the gateways at Martholme near Whalley, Borwick Hall near Carnforth, Agecroft Hall near Manchester, Newbold Hall near Rochdale, Bradley Hall near Winwick, and Ashhurst Hall as representative examples in Lancashire; Brereton Hall near Sandbach, Ridley Hall near Peckforton, and Holyngworthe Hall near Stalybridge as representing Cheshire examples, believing them to be a representative and varied selection of the gatehouses and gateways of the past, as they stood when I had the pleasure of taking photographs of them and obtaining a few particulars, all within the last eighteen months. Taking the Lancashire examples first, I will commence with

MARTHOLME.

Martholme lies in a low situation on the south bank of the river Calder, about three miles south-east of Whalley and about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles north-east of Great Harwood, and is approached by a rough

bye-road about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length, heading off the main road from Whalley to Accrington, near Cock Bridge. It has in times past been a place of considerable size and importance, and from the depressions round part of the site, appears to have been surrounded by a large moat. The present building appears to be only about half the original size, as can be seen by the position of the original door, and, no doubt, has been rebuilt two or three times since the Fittons first had the grant in the thirteenth century. It afterwards passed by marriage to the Heskeths, who appear to have abandoned it as a mansion some time towards the end of the seventeenth century. The last important rebuilding took place about the beginning of the seventeenth century. The outside walls are strong and massive and between three and four feet in thickness in some places. The house contains two of the old wide and deep fire-places and the moulded oak beams supporting the ceiling; but little else besides the buttery door remains in the interior of an ancient character, and this is probably of the late fourteenth century. Outside, the mullioned windows are generally of a Tudor character, except one window of two lights at the back of the house, which seems much earlier—probably late fourteenth century. The outside of the house generally has been covered over by a coating of rough-cast plaster and partly re-roofed. On the front gable of the house is a sunk panel bearing a shield, on which is the date 1577 and the letters T.H.²

² Sir Thomas Hesketh, Knight (father of Robert), Sheriff of Lancashire, 5 Elizabeth, served in Scotland at the siege of Leith, where he was much wounded and had his ensign struck out of his hand, which he recovered again. Died at Rufford, 1587. Married Alice, daughter of Sir John Holcroft, of Holcroft, co. Lancaster, Knight. (Foster's *Lancashire Peiigrves.*) He was knighted in 1553, apparently at the coronation of Queen Mary. (Metcalf's *Knights.*)—Communicated by Mr. J. Paul Rylands, F.S.A.



MARTHOLME.



BORWICK.

The house, now occupied by a farmer, is approached by an outer gateway and an inner gatehouse or courthouse, both connected with the main building by curtain walls, forming outer and inner courtyard, both of large size, which would considerably strengthen the defensive character of the building in bygone days. The outer gateway is of massive character, the walling of the gateway being 22 inches thick, of rough-dressed stonework, and has over the arch a double line of corbie steps sloping outwards on each side, with a moulded finial for a finish; but this portion seems to have been carefully restored, and with good taste, as the upper part of the stonework is not so weather-worn, and the finial has all the mouldings sharply cut and the wall re-pointed. The stonework of the jambs of the arch appear to have been re-set, for they appear newer, and the edges have been left square and different to the round of the arch, which has a worked moulding. Over this gateway, on the outside face, is a coat-of-arms, showing three sheafs on a bend, the letters R.H., and date 1607.

The gatehouse or inner gateway is a large building, about 43 feet 6 inches long, with a depth of 19 feet 9 inches, of good elevation, and built in very irregular courses of stonework, the walls being 2 feet 2 inches thick, the entrance arch of the through passage having an aperture of 8 feet 1 inch and nearly 10 feet high. On each side of this passage is a large room; these were, no doubt, for the accommodation of the janitor or gate-keeper. One of these rooms has been made into a large loose box by having the timber framing on the passage side filled in with brickwork, and the room on the opposite side is converted into a store for peat moss litter by having a wall built over the timber-work in the passage.

This building is now practically open to the roof, the decayed joists of the chamber floor being in position, but having no flooring boards. In the centre of the passage or archway is the heavy oak frame on which hung the gate, the styles being 11 inches wide and 6 inches thick, the head-piece having a depressed moulded arch of Tudor character, with spandrils having foliated ornamentation, the base of the stem on each side supporting a shield; on one shield is the fleur-de-lis and on the other a sheaf, and the letters T.H.R. in a panel over the gateway frame, but no date. Over the archway on the front side of the gatehouse is a sunk panel, bearing a shield, crest, and initials T.H. over, and date 1567 at the foot of the shield. The face of the front arch has a hollow moulding, much weather-worn, and the face of the rear arch is plain chamfered.

This gatehouse has two windows of three lights on the ground floor to the front, one on each side of the gateway; on the upper floor to the front and right over the arch, one large four-light window, divided by a transom; and a smaller window of three lights on each side, but having no transoms; one large window of three lights, divided by transoms, over the arch at the back; and a three-light window at the northern end of the building on the chamber floor; and a three-light window on the ground floor to the back, the same as at the front. All these lights have round heads, under square window heads, and are divided by stone mullions, with trefoil cavetti, between the heads of the lights, and all of a Tudor character.

At the southern end of the building the square chimney with wide moulded base still remains *in situ*, with a finial at the northern end; the copings and the grey slated roof appear original. The southern end of the building has at an early

period had a small piece built on to it, but it seems to be of later character, and being in the private garden I did not get to measure it. Although the windows have been mutilated and roughly handled, the stone mullions having been destroyed or broken away, and patched in places with brickwork, the gatehouse has been kept in pretty fair repair. The house, however, having been abandoned as a mansion about the close of the seventeenth century, we could scarcely hope for that care to be bestowed on it that it deserves. The present owner and the tenant (Mr. J. Parker) seem to take an interest in the old place, and within the last few years it has been re-pointed and undergone some external repairs.

BORWICK HALL.

About three miles north-east of Carnforth, and standing back from the main road between Lancaster and Kendal, some three-quarters of a mile up a winding country lane, stands the historic home of the Bindlosses, Borwick Hall,—now empty and deserted, except the back premises, occupied by a farmer. In front of the hall is the large courtyard, with high wall on the southern side and the front facing the terrace, and the gatehouse and outbuildings on the northern side, following the winding of the road. The gatehouse is strongly built of stone, rough-cast, and roofed in with gray slates. The walls are some nineteen inches thick; the two chimneys are corbelled out at the level of the chamber floor; and there being no windows to the front on the ground floor, the gatehouse is distinctly of a defensive character. Over the depressed arched entrance is a window of four lights divided by mullions, with a mullioned window of two

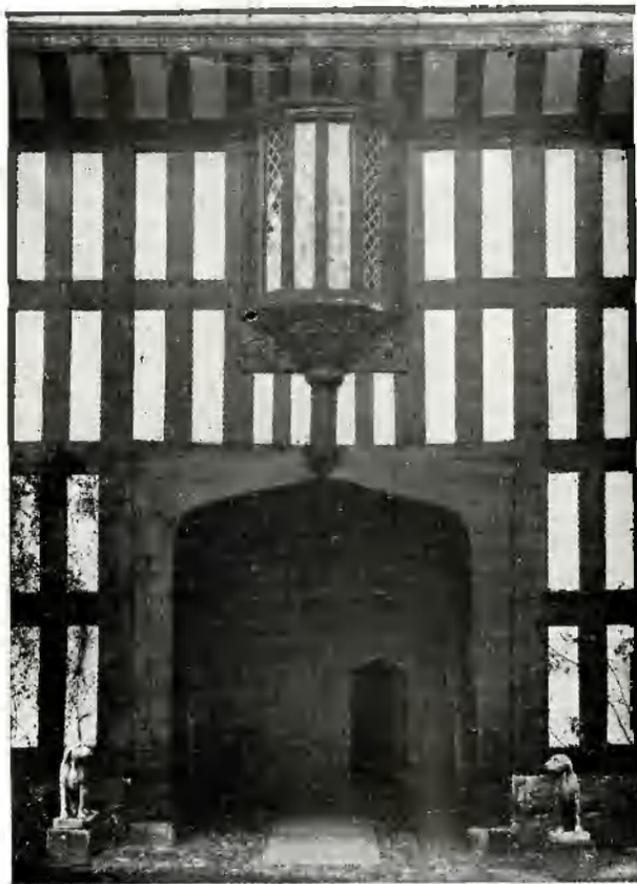
lights at each side, but having no hood-moulds. At each side of the gateway facing the courtyard are mullioned windows of two lights, each 20 feet by 14 feet, and having hood mouldings; the upper windows on this side correspond with those on the front; there are also small single-light windows high up in the gables. The aperture of the gateway is 9 feet 2 inches, opening into a lofty passage 19 feet 9 inches long.

The exterior is made picturesque by having ball finials at the corner of each eave and at the apex of the roof. The left-hand side of the building is 11 feet 11 inches to where it abuts on to the next barn, and on this side is the living-room of the gatekeeper. The right-hand side measures 19 feet 6 inches, but this includes a piece built on to fill in the space between the gatehouse and the long barn, the buildings somewhat following the course of the road; in this portion are the scullery, pantry, and stairs leading to the sleeping rooms above. Over each door in the passage are small deers' heads cut in relief and painted white. The entrance arch is built of large wrought stones, and is chamfered at the edge. Over this archway is a square sunk panel, which bears the initials B over RB, and date 1650 underneath; but I think this panel must have been inserted half-a-century after the erection of the gatehouse, for the style is decidedly of the same period as the hall, and also of Heysham Old Hall, a few miles away, built about 1590. The hall and outbuildings are all characteristic of the Tudor period. On the walls of the barn adjoining the gatehouse is a large irregular stone slab let into the wall, bearing the date and initials

A^oDNI 1590

R B

AB



AGEORFT.



BRERETON.

AGECROFT.

About three miles north-west of Manchester and about one mile from Pendlebury station, and situated in a small well-timbered park, stands Agecroft Hall, one of the very few timber and plaster manor houses of quadrangular form remaining in Lancashire. The exterior—with its groups of ivy-covered chimneys, quaint gables, oriel windows, and the weathered and subdued colour of the grey slates—makes a very charming picture. This manor was granted to the Langleys early in the fourteenth century, and was held by them till 1561, when it passed by marriage to the Dauteseys, in whose family it remained until about the end of last century, when it came into possession of the Rev. Richard Buck, whose brother John, on becoming owner of the estate, took the name of Dautesey, the present owner being Mr. R. Dautesey.

The western side of the house stands close to a steep bluff, and, no doubt, in ancient times the other three sides would be protected by a moat, like all the mansions of the mediæval period in this district, although no trace of this defensive feature exists at the present time. The house has received alterations and renewals in parts from time to time, the oldest part remaining dating, I should think, from the fifteenth century; and although the interior has been considerably altered and modernised, there is still a good deal of ancient oak panelling and carving, and many of the windows contain the remains of heraldic glass, with the arms of the Langleys, John of Gaunt, &c., and other features of an old-world character.

On the eastern front is a double row of oriel windows that well deserve examination on account of their peculiar ornamentation. On this side of

the quadrangle is the ancient gateway, having over it an oriel window, the terminal at the base reaching to the head of the arch beneath, and the whole forming a beautiful example of Gothic work. The outer frame of the gateway is constructed of heavy logs of oak, the styles being 12 inches broad and $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick, the butts resting on the stone base nearly 1 foot above the ground. The entrance has an opening 8 feet $0\frac{3}{4}$ inch wide and about 9 feet 8 inches high, the arch being very depressed; the inner frame, on which hangs the heavy studded oak doors, stands 5 feet 4 inches back from the outer frame, and has a plain square head, the timbers being of the same dimensions as the outer frame, a seat being placed at each side of the gateway between the outer and inner frames, thus forming a porch.

In the right-hand door is a small entrance wicket, being only 4 feet high by 1 foot $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches wide, and at the right-hand side of the porch hangs the bell-chain, terminating in a large iron ring. At the present time this passage does not go through to the courtyard, a much more modern wall having been inserted on the courtyard side to form a modern lobby. The timbers are all morticed and tenoned, and secured by large oak pegs. You will notice that the head of the outer arch is of peculiar construction, the head being straight, except the centre part of the arch, which is worked to the curve of the arch out of the solid beam, the timber on each side being cut away and the spandril pieces joggled in.

This quadrangular form of building being a vestige of the castle plan, with the addition of a moat and other simple outworks, is one that, before the days of artillery, was able to offer considerable resistance to an attacking force. Agecroft is to-day a splendid example of the ancient manor house in

the particular style it represents, and second to none in perfection of detail. Long may the owner be spared to guard and preserve his inheritance!

NEWBOLD.

About $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Rochdale and less than a quarter of a mile away from Bellfield Hall, and only separated from it by the Stanney Brook, on high ground, with its front facing to the north-east, stand the remains of Newbold Hall, built in the sixteenth century. It was for generations the home of the Newbolds, a family of sturdy Lancashire yeomen, who held the estate for about 400 years. The Newbolds are said to have been seated here in the thirteenth century. The hall, though comparatively small, formed three sides of a courtyard, two sides of which remain, the third is now a modern public-house,—the quadrangle being completed by a high curtain wall, in which is what has been the noble gateway, with large ornamental and quaint gate piers, with caps placed diagonally, and having ball finials, giving entrance to the courtyard.

Though mutilated and sadly shorn of its former glory, this strongly built house, with its heavy mullioned windows and massive projecting chimneys, is a good example of the homes of our forefathers in Tudor times. The house at present is divided into tenements, partly empty and going to decay; and the front now faces a narrow dirty street, very different to the pleasant surroundings that it enjoyed when it was the home of a family of some importance. Though showing no signs of having been moated, this old house, from its position on high ground, could be made strongly defensive, and able to offer a vigorous resistance if required, in the stirring times of 300 years ago.

BRADLEY.

Within sound of the bells of the ancient fane of St. Wilfrid of Winwick, and about a mile from Collins Green Station, stand the ruins of the gatehouse of the ancient manor of Bradley, centuries ago the seat of the Haydocks and afterwards of the Leghs of Lyme, through the marriage of Sir Peter Legh, who was knighted at the battle of Agincourt, with Joan, daughter of Sir Gilbert de Haydock.

Here we have the remains of what appears to have been one of the finest as well as one of the most ancient gatehouses in Lancashire. The stout strong walls are faced with large wrought stones, backed by thin irregular courses and grouting. The entrance arch stands well back within the large buttressed piers that face outwards and form a kind of barbican. The partly dry moat that was once spanned by a drawbridge is now crossed by a paved causeway over a stone arch with wooden railings on each side. The depressed entrance arch of the gateway, with moulded plinth, stands under a square panelled head, the spandrils without ornamentation, and within the arch a space of about 12 feet by 10 feet forms the outer ward, having on each side deeply splayed and moulded windows. About 7 feet from the ground are corbels which once carried groining—some portions of which still remain—that show it not only carried upper chambers, but strength and ornateness in construction, with an approach to the ecclesiastical style. About 12 feet within the outer arch on each side, and still *in situ*, are portions of the moulded stone jambs of the inner gate, and beyond and in line with which are the remains of the massive walling, showing it to have been a building of considerable length.

Although most of the ruins are hidden by a thick



BRADLEY.



ASHHURST.

coat of ivy and creepers, sufficient can be seen to indicate the early character of the masonry, which appears to belong to the latter half of the fifteenth century.

Of Bradley Hall itself only a few fragments remain, built up in the farmhouse that now occupies the moated site.

ASHHURST.

On the north-west slope of Ashhurst Hill and close to Ashhurst Beacon stands the picturesque gatehouse that once formed the outer approach and defence to the ancient seat of the Ashhursts, a Lancashire family of considerable note in early times. The hall was pulled down many years ago, and its site is now occupied by a farmhouse. The gatehouse—built of stone in irregular courses, with large quoins at the corners—consists of a centre and wings having a total length of 32 feet 6 inches, the centre standing forward about 6 feet 6 inches, and measuring across the front 11 feet 6 inches. The moulded round-headed entrance arch, faced with large wrought stones, is 5 feet 6 inches wide, and its walls are 20 inches thick. From the centre of the keystone a round stone ornament depends. The jambs that carried the door or gate are set back 4 feet 8 inches and are 15 inches in thickness. The door head is square, the rear arch having a plain round head with walls 22 inches thick. Over the passage is an upper chamber or loft entered by a trap door, and on each side of the passage are doors that give access to the wings, which consist of one room only. The windows, with drip moulds and stone mullions, are of two lights, each being 36 by 16 inches, with small diamond-shaped panes. The roof of each wing slopes from front to back, the eaves at the back being only 5 feet 6 inches from the ground. The dwarfed appearance and low elevation give the impression that the wings have

been reduced in height since they were first erected, while the roof of the central portion slopes from side to side, the whole being roofed with gray slates. The copings are of Tudor character with roll mouldings. There is no evidence to show that the gatehouse was ever connected with the main building. The beautiful coat-of-arms over the gateway, with the date 1649, is in very good preservation.²

BRERETON.

About three miles north of Sandbach and about two miles from Holmes Chapel Station lies the ancient hamlet of Brereton, and about a quarter of a mile from the high road stands Brereton Hall, that was once the seat of the ancient family of Brereton, who held the manor under the barony of Kinderton from soon after the Conquest, down to the early part of the eighteenth century; and during the whole of that long period its members were among the most powerful (both civil and military) that the county could boast, and allied with the principal families of Cheshire. The family spread into many branches; and in 1624 Sir William Brereton, its then head, was created

³ Robert de Ashhurst in 19 Richard II married Matilda, daughter of Hugh de Ince. Arms: *Argent, three torteanxes between two bendlets Gules.* (Visitation, 1613.) This is the second quarter in the shield on the gatehouse, the first being the Ashhurst coat—*Gules, a plain cross between four fleur-de-lys Argent.* The third quarter, *a lion rampant*, is probably for Dalton, the grandson of Roger Ashhurst named above, John de Ashhurst. 15 Henry VI, having married Katherine, daughter and co-heir of Roger Dalton (Foster's *Lancashire Pedigrees*); but if so, the arms are—*Azure, semee of cross-crosetts fitchee Or, a lion rampant Argent.* (Visitation, 1613.) The crest of Ashhurst is *a wolf statant proper.*

William Ashhurst was the son and heir of Henry Ashhurst, by Cassandra his wife, daughter of John Bradshaw of Bradshaw. William married a daughter of Sir Thomas Ellys, of Wyham, co. Lincoln, Knight. William Ashhurst "served with great reputation in several parliaments before and at the commencement of the Civil War, and opposed all parties whose views he deemed adverse to the institutions and freedom of the country so firmly as to have the motto, *sed magis amica veritas*, placed under his portrait from the pencil of Vandyke." (Foster's *Lancashire Pedigrees*.)—Communicated by Mr. J. Paul Rylands, F.S.A.

Lord Brereton, of Leighlin in Ireland; and on the death of Francis, Lord Brereton, in 1722, the male line became extinct, and the manor passed through the female line to Sir Charles Holte, Baronet, and, after several intermediate owners, became the property of the late Aaron Clulow Howard, Esq., whose son, Mr. J. A. Howard, is the present owner.

Brereton Hall—described by Webb as one of the most complete brick buildings in Cheshire, and called the stately home of the Breretons—was built in 1586, and, no doubt, superseded one of those ancient timber and plaster mansions for which Cheshire has always been famous. The present hall was, no doubt, originally quadrangular, but has been altered and reduced in size since 1586, and only the entrance front and portions of the two sides of the quadrangle remain, but still sufficient to show what a fine mansion this has been. The ground in front of the hall falls away down to the banks of the small river Croc, which has been considerably widened out and made into a long ornamental sheet of water, that adds much to the beauty of the site. The hall is built of bricks with stone facings and of very substantial construction, and having, facing the west, a noble entrance gateway, flanked by two lofty octagonal towers, also of brick, with large stone quoins at the angles, that give a special strength and character to this feature of the building that was once the entrance to the courtyard. The hall itself has been transformed into a fine modern residence.

According to an old engraving, the towers were finished with cupolas, but these have been removed, the height slightly reduced, and battlements added; the entrance arch also has been altered to suit modern requirements; otherwise this fine gateway is externally almost unaltered, but the interior has

suffered considerable alterations. The gateway has an outside width of about 33 feet 9 inches above the plinth, and a height of nearly 50 feet to the battlements, the two towers near the top and above the main building being joined by an arch of stone. The face of each angle of the towers is 5 feet wide, and the aperture of the gateway is 8 feet 10 inches wide and nearly 10 feet high; this now forms the hall doorway, the door frame being modern Gothic, the panels being filled with plate glass which admits a good light to the entrance hall and grand stone staircase facing the door. I have no doubt that the height of the gateway was much greater, as the entrance landing is a few feet above the level of the basement story.

The large bay windows of the chamber floor—extending without interruption across the towers and centre—have very stout mullions and transoms to carry the weight of the towers above. The tower on the right-hand side has a plain circular staircase, no doubt quite a modern insertion. Over the doorway and between the brackets supporting the moulding above are three small coats-of-arms, and on the ornamental band above the door and below the window cills of the chamber floor are three more coats-of-arms of larger size,—the royal coat-of-arms in the centre, the one on the left having a Tudor rose with crown above supported by the letters E.R.; the shield on the right bears a portcullis with crown over, and supported by the letters E.R. The face of each angle of the towers has a panel bearing an ornament of floral design between the brackets that support the moulded window-cill. On the ornamental band above the chamber floor over the gateway are three coats-of-arms similar to those on the band below, but not bearing the letters E.R., and having ornamental panels between brackets on each face of the towers

similar to those on the line below, while just below the battlements on the front of each tower is a panel bearing a vase-shaped ornament standing in high relief, although now much weather-worn.

The centre face of the gateway on the roof line, just underneath the arch that joins the towers, is finished with an ornamental pediment. The whole gateway from base to battlements—with an abundance of ornamentation, and still in excellent preservation—forms one of the finest examples of sixteenth century brickwork as well as one of the most perfect gateways remaining in the two counties at the present day, and should, with reasonable care and attention, last for centuries to come. The site being slightly elevated ground and within fifty yards of the church of St. Oswald—an ancient fane, where some of the Breretons sleep their last sleep—there is no trace, so far as I could observe, of the existence of any moat or special defensive feature; but, built originally quadrangular, with battlements, it would be able to offer a vigorous resistance in case of attack. The tenant, Mr. Lowe and family, being away from home and the house closed, I had not the privilege of getting any measurements or particulars of the interior of the gateway.

RIDLEY HALL.

Situated in the Eddisbury hundred, and at the southern side of the Peckforton hills and quite in a wooded valley, stands Ridley Hall, a large brick-built building now occupied as a farmhouse, and comparatively modern.

The original hall, from what we can gather, was a large imposing structure of quadrangular form. Leland says: "Riddle Hawle was made of a poor old place the fairest gentleman's house of all Chestreshire by Syr William Standeley."

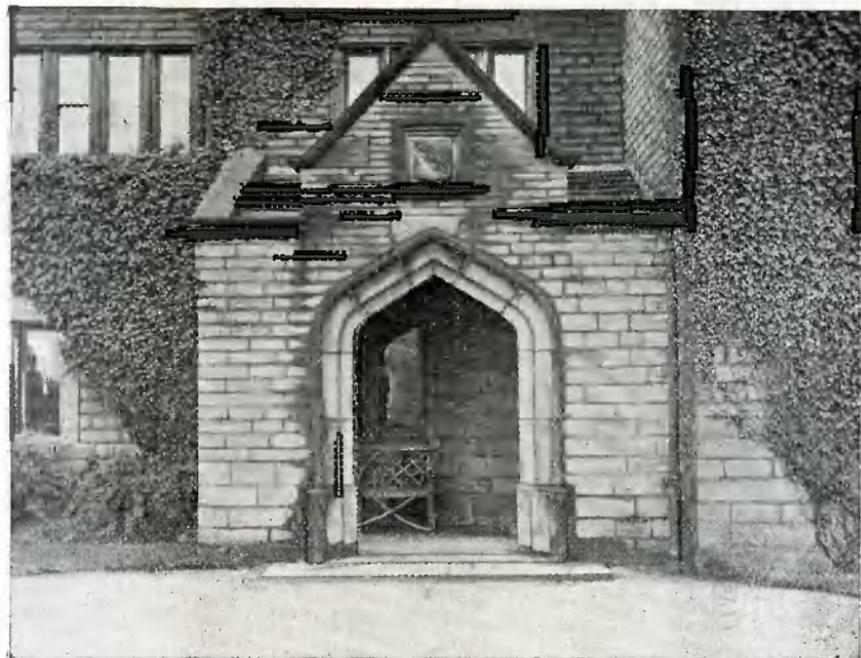
The manor was held in the reign of Edward I—partly from the St. Pierre's and partly from the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem—by a family which assumed the local name of Rydleigh or Rodeleigh, and afterwards passed to the Daniels and Stanleys; and on the attainder of Sir William Stanley was granted to Sir Robert Egerton, and afterwards passed to the Bridgemans.

This hall was unfortunately burnt down in 1700, and all that remains of this ancient seat is the shell of its massive stone gateway, which still retains its original form,—over the centre of which is a finely executed coat-of-arms of the Egertons, who were most probably the builders of the gatehouse. This gateway now forms part of the farm buildings. It is constructed of large well-dressed freestone, the walls being 2 feet 4½ inches thick in the upper portion and 2 feet 10 inches thick below the moulded plinth. The width of the gateway aperture is 9 feet 9 inches, and length of passage through about 25 feet 6 inches, and very lofty. The interior side walls have been rebuilt of common brick; but still, sufficient remains to give us an idea of its strength and importance in the days of its pride.

Within the gateway was formerly an ancient building styled the star chamber, from the number of lozenges in the upper part of the building, carved in form something resembling stars. This was at one time the courthouse, and was removed at the alterations of the hall. This gateway stood the brunt of the assault by the Royalists on the 4th June, 1643, when they sallied from Beeston Castle to attack Ridley. The Royalists were defeated by the garrison, consisting of sixteen soldiers, and left five of their men dead on the ground, while two of the Parliamentarians are traditionally said to have been shot at the window.



RIDLEY.



HOLYNGWORTHE.

The inner archway is of same dimensions and character as the outer arch, but quite plain, bearing no scutcheon, date or initials.⁴

HOLYNGWORTHE.

In the eastern extremity of Cheshire, about 3½ miles from Staleybridge, and situated high among the hills on the northern side of the valley that separates Cheshire from Derbyshire, stands Holyngworthe Hall, the ancient seat of the Holyngworthes, one of the very few Saxon families who held hereditarily the seat of their ancestors up to the middle of the present century. The pedigree is said to commence in 1022, and continued in regular descent to Robert de Holyngworthe, who sold the estate about twenty-five years ago.

The hall, which must have been rebuilt several times, is a building of moderate size and still occupies the original site, and has all the characteristics of a seventeenth century building; but parts of the interior are certainly of much earlier date. The building is said to have been originally quadrangular, with great hall, chapel, and gate tower; but I think this would be before the present structure was built.

When Mr. Taylor, the present owner, first went to Holyngworthe, a kind of gatehouse or porter's lodge was in existence, and stood opposite to the drawing-room. Mr. Taylor had this taken down; and all that remains of this ancient feature is the archway; the Holyngworthe coat-of-arms cut in

⁴ In Dr. Howard's *Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica*, first series, vol. i, p. 293, there is printed a pedigree of Egerton of Ridley, made in 1690, by Randle Holme, the original roll being at Oulton Park. There is upon the pedigree a shield of 8 quarters: 1 and 8, Egerton; 2, Randle, Earl of Chester; 3, Eynion; 4, Nialpas; 5, Bassett; 6, Holford; 7, Brereton; with helm, mantling, and crest, and the motto, "*Fine Fait Tout.*"—Communicated by Mr. J. Paul Rylands, F.S.A.

stone ; and, perhaps, some of the stone worked up and used in the erection of the present porch.

With scarcely more than conjecture to guide us, we can only surmise that the gate-tower was partly taken down and made into a porter's lodge—probably at the re-building of the hall—and the lodge taken down altogether by the present owner, who re-erected the arch and built in the coat-of-arms, &c., when the porch was built.

The gabled porch has a length of 13 feet 4 inches and breadth of 8 feet 6½ inches, with walls about 16 inches thick ; the arch has a width of 4 feet 8 inches on the floor and 4 feet 11 inches above the moulded plinth, which is 24½ inches high ; a height of 6 feet 6 inches to the curve of the arch, and 8 feet 2 inches to the crown of the arch. The splayed and moulded face of the archway is 2 feet wide and has two bold beads and a hollow moulding, all having the character of Tudor work. Over the archway on each side is a holly leaf, and on a shield in sunk panel is the Holyngworthe coat-of-arms—three holly leaves on a bend—but no date or initials.

Having brought to your notice the nine representative examples of the known gatehouses and gateways of the old halls and manor houses of Lancashire and Cheshire that once rendered the homes of our sturdy forefathers to a great degree secure against attack,—and given views, all recently taken,—with the rather brief details I have been able to gather, I hope I have succeeded in demonstrating that these gatehouses and gateways of Lancashire and Cheshire are well worth the study of the antiquary and architect. Now that our county surveys are making headway, a most valuable work might be accomplished if our architectural friends could be persuaded to take up this subject and have all the

examples at present existing in the two counties carefully measured and drawn to scale, and all information gathered and placed on record for future reference before these landmarks of history go down to decay. I regret that some of our able men have not taken up this delightful subject long ago, when examples were much more numerous than at the present time; for I think that these gatehouses and gateways, unassuming as they appear, almost surpass in historic interest many of the more imposing mediæval piles which have absorbed the attention of the antiquary through all the years of history and research.

It is hard to realise what a number of the old houses were pulled down in the first half of this century. Having gone carefully through *White's Gazetteer of Cheshire*, published 1860, I find that since 1800 fifty-seven halls have been re-built, eighteen restored and modernised, nine swept away, and five partly pulled down—making a total of eighty-nine for the county of Chester alone; and I am quite sure Lancashire has fared no better—perhaps worse.

It is very unfortunate that of the many examples of this defensive feature that was once attached to most halls of importance, we have not at the present day one perfect gatehouse with the moat and drawbridge in all its mediæval grandeur. No doubt the fact of the moats being filled up and put under cultivation, and the drawbridge superseded by the cart-road, has taken away a good deal of the romantic interest in these rich examples of mediæval architecture; and also the fact that up to quite a recent period many owners and occupiers seldom showed such regard for the buildings themselves or the historical associations connected with them that we might reasonably expect. Their numbers have so dwindled down that at the

present time we have only about twenty-one examples of the domestic gateway left in the two counties—that is, sixteen in Lancashire and five in Cheshire. But I think the turning-point has come, and that owners and occupiers are displaying much greater interest in these monuments of a day that is dead, and I can only trust that they will receive in the future that care and attention they deserve, instead of being allowed to tumble to pieces and the historical associations connected with them be swept out of memory. If by the influence of our Society we can arouse an interest in these memorials of past architectural composition and be the means of helping to preserve these often unheeded heritages that were built in an age of strength and great achievements and still stand on national records, we shall have done a great deal towards preserving from vandalism, injudicious restoration, and perhaps destruction, these monuments of mediæval art and the laborious workmanship of a bygone day, and assist in passing on to future generations these inventions for the defence of men in past social life—the Gatehouses and Gateways of Lancashire and Cheshire.

