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ARHEOLOOGILISED VÄLITÖÖD EESTIS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK IN ESTONIA

2001

Koostanud ja toimetanud
Ülle Tamla

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Esi- ja tagakaas: 2001. aastal Haapsalust leitud ahjukahlid. 16. saj. esimene pool.
Cover and back cover: Stove-tiles found from Haapsalu in 2001. The first half of the 16th century.

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TARTU ÜLIKOOLI
RAAMATUKOGU
SUNDEKSEMPLAR

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PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS AT KILTSI MANOR-HOUSE

Tõnno JONUKS

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Archaeological investigations at the manor-house of Kiltsi were started at the request of Mõisaprojekt Ltd., who prepared the project for the more effectual use of the ground floor of the manor-house for the local school. Preliminary investigations were carried out in two stages, first of them in summer 2001 (Jonuks 2001) and the second in autumn and winter 2001 (Jonuks 2002). Previously the manor-house of Kiltsi has been investigated by the archaeologist Toivo Aus (Aus 1986), whose aim was to find out the building sequence of the northern wall and the northeastern tower and also the difference between the I and II construction stages of the castle. Two trial pits were dug on the north side of the building and a trench on the south side. It was established that the northeastern tower was later than the northern wall and their basements were on different levels, but it was not possible to specify the limit between the two construction stages of the castle.

SURROUNDINGS

The manor-house of Kiltsi was built on the clay hill which is surrounded by springs and a pond on the north side, the Vorsti river and ponds on the west side. Uno Hermann (1975, 8–10) assumed there was an additional water system also on the southern side, where presently a spring and a small brook connecting it with the pond are preserved, and on the eastern side, where there could have been an artificial trench which was filled later. About 20 meters north of the present-day manor-house, a limestone wall is still discernible under the turf. Armin Tuulse (1942) has suggested that it might be a part of the ruins of an auxiliary building.

HISTORY

The time of the erection of the vassal castle is not clear. According to the oldest dating, based on the Arndt chronicle, the castle was built in 1293. Later researchers have doubted it, and Armin Tuulse considers more likely that the castle was established in the 14th century, which is also the date of the earliest enfeoffment (Tuulse 1942, 118). More reliable information about the house dates from

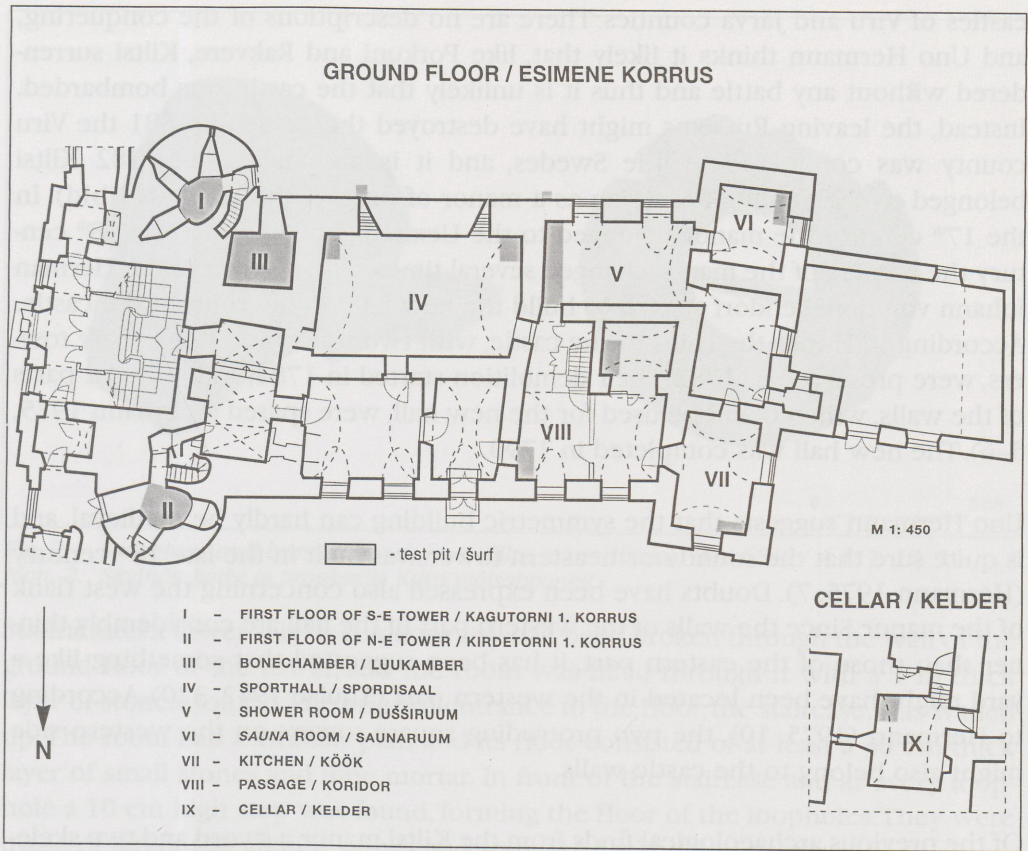


Fig. 1. Kiltsi manor-house.

Joon. 1. Kiltsi mõisahoone.

the 15th century, when Kiltsi has been mentioned as a manor on June 29th 1466 (Johansen 1933, 178). The base of the vassal castle has been dated to the 15th century also by Tuulse (1942, 118). In the 15th – early 16th centuries the manor-house belonged to the Wrangell family, and since the first half of the 16th century to the Gilsens, who also gave their name to the manor (Kiltsi). It has been suggested that before the Livonian War the castle was fortified and a round tower with loopholes was built at the south-east corner (Hermann 1975, 5). During the Livonian War the castle became the military foothold, where on February 7th 1558 a battle was held between the Russians and the nobleman who had escaped to the castle. This battle was also mentioned by Johann Renner in his chronicle (Renner 1995, 31). According to the description of the chronicle there was a barn building close to the castle, where horses were kept, since there was not enough space inside the castle. From this description it has been deduced that the castle had no inner yard. In summer 1558 Kiltsi was conquered by Russians, together with the other

castles of Viru and Järva counties. There are no descriptions of the conquering, and Uno Hermann thinks it likely that, like Porkuni and Rakvere, Kiltsi surrendered without any battle and thus it is unlikely that the castle was bombarded. Instead, the leaving Russians might have destroyed the castle. In 1581 the Viru county was conquered by the Swedes, and it is known that in 1582 Kiltsi belonged to the family of Asserien as a manor of only 41 ploughlands (ibid). In the 17th century the manor belonged to the Uexküll family. During the 18th century the owners of the manor changed several times. One of them, major Herman Johann von Benckendorf started to build the new hall on the ruins of the castle. According to Hupel, the ruins of the castle, with two round and two square towers, were preserved in 1782. Their demolition started in 1784, and only the parts of the walls, which could be used for the new hall, were spared (Hermann 1975, 5-6). The new hall was completed in 1790.

Uno Hermann suggests that the symmetric building can hardly be medieval, and is quite sure that the round northeastern tower was built in the late 18th century (Hermann 1975, 7). Doubts have been expressed also concerning the west flank of the manor. Since the walls of the western part of the hall are considerably thinner than those of the eastern part, it has been suggested that something like a yard might have been located in the western part (Tuulse 1942, 320). According to Hermann (1975, 10), the two protruding square towers on the western side might also belong to the castle walls.

Of the previous archaeological finds from the Kiltsi manor, a sword and two skeletons are known, found in late 1930's or early 1940's in the course of digging a septic tank. According to the local people, archaeologists from the Tartu University had been there and taken the sword with them. The present location of the sword is unknown in the archaeological collections of the Tartu University, the Institute of History, the History Museum or the Rakvere Museum.

PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS

The aim of the investigations was to establish whether and where a medieval cultural layer is preserved, and also to investigate the extent and the different building stages of the castle. To that purpose two test pits were dug at the southern side of the building, and several pits in the floors of the ground floor and basements. During the investigations three rooms (ground floors of the southeastern and northeastern towers and the bone-chamber) were emptied completely, to the original floor level (Fig. 1). In the present article rooms have been named by their function according to the preliminary project.

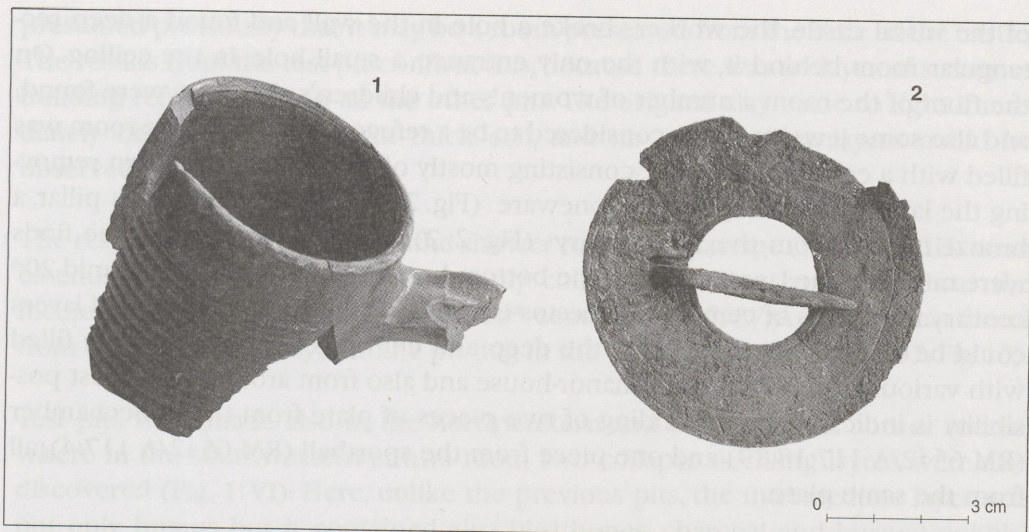


Fig. 2. Stoneware and bronze brooch from Kiltsi manor-house. (RM 6542 / A 117: 17, 7.)
 Joon. 2. Savinõu katke ja pronksõlg Kiltsi mõisahoonest.

Southeastern tower (Fig. 1: I). A doorway had been broken through the wall of the ground floor of the tower, and the room was filled through it with a 1 m thick layer of stones, soil etc. The original entrance to the floor, the staircase, was walled up. The room had a circular plan and its floor consisted of at least a 30 cm thick layer of small stones and lime mortar. In front of the staircase and at every loophole a 10 cm high step was found, forming the floor of the loopholes. They were made of larger flat granite stones and smoothed with lime mortar.

Northeastern tower (Fig. 1: II). The ground floor of the northeastern tower was also emptied. Just as in the southeastern tower, the original staircase here had also been walled up and a new doorway had been broken through the wall. Above the new doorway, there seems to have been another loophole. The northeastern tower was also filled in with soil, stones, etc., beneath which a floor of limestone slabs, resting on a sand layer and smoothed with lime mortar, was discovered. The limestone floor extended also into the loopholes. The floor was destroyed only at the westernmost loophole, and there a test pit was dug, to study the layers below the limestone pavement. Unfortunately the whole damaged area was full of large granite stones, with dark soil, mortar fragments, etc. between them, and it was impossible to remove these without destroying the floor.

The third emptied room was the so-called bone-shamber (Fig. 1: III) where, according to the description by Körber, some skeletons had been found in the late 18th century (Hermann 1975, 7). In the course of the dismantling of the ruins

of the vassal castle, the workers broke a hole in the wall and found a deep rectangular room behind it, with the only entrance, a small hole, in the ceiling. On the floor of the room a number of women's and children's skeletons were found, and also some jewelry. It was considered to be a refuge for wartime. The room was filled with a ca. 1 m thick layer consisting mostly of stones, soil, etc. When removing the layer, graven fragments, stoneware (Fig. 2: 1), two ashlar from a pillar, a bronze brooch from the 16th century (Fig. 2: 2), etc. came to light. All the finds were mixed in the layer, and from the bottom horizon the finds from the mid-20th century fragments of cemented asbestos etc. were discovered. No temporal layers could be distinguished. Probably the deep and empty cellar was gradually filled with various rubbish from the manor-house and also from around it. The last possibility is indicated by the finding of two pieces of plate from the bonechamber (RM 6542/A 117:18,19) and one piece from the sporthall (RM 6542/A 117:4), all from the same plate.

Below the filling layer a floor was found, made of large granite stones, smoothed with lime mortar, just like in the loopholes of the southeastern tower. Unfortunately no cultural layer was preserved intact on the floor. Only a couple of brands were discernible on the stones. The floor was damaged in the southeastern corner: the stones were lifted up and overturned, and below them a hole had been dug, with a depth of 50 cm, now filled with black and dense soil. A fragment of a pillar was found from the damaged part. A small test pit was dug also through the northwestern corner of the floor, which revealed that the floor stones had been originally placed on a surface of clay without any intermediate sand layer.

Two test pits were dug in the sports hall (Fig. 1: IV), one in the southeastern and the other in the southwestern corner. Both pits produced similar results: under the modern floor layers there were two collapse or filling layers of limestone and mortar, separated by a 5-10 cm thick humus layer. In both pits, floors were discovered under the lower filling layer. In the southwestern pit the floor consisted of small granite stones, resting on the original clay, with black compact soil between them. The floor in the southeastern pit consisted of a 5 cm thick sand layer, with a 14 cm thick layer of black soil containing animal bones and charcoal on top of it. Since the sports hall seems to be too large for the medieval castle, it is more likely that there had been two separate rooms with two different floors, and the wall between the two rooms was dismantled during the construction of the manor-house.

A test pit was dug also in the cellar east of the sports hall (Fig. 1: IX). It has been

presumed previously that it may be a room preserved from the time of the castle. The results from the test pit confirm this, because there was no layer of stones or building refuse, found in all the other pits. The original clay came to light immediately below the 40–50 cm thick soil, and no intermediate layers could be observed.

The results from the test pits in the shower room and passage (Fig. 1: V, VIII) were essentially the same: under the two-ply collapse or filling layer there was the medieval floor. A potsherd from the 16th century (RM 6557/A 125: 2) was found from the lower floor layer in the pit dug in the passage (Tvauri 2000, 107, Fig. 10).

Test pits were made also in the northwestern and southwestern corner rooms, where in the southwestern sauna room two collapse or filling layers were also discovered (Fig. 1: VI). Here, unlike the previous pits, the intermediate layer was not only humus but it contained also bird bones, charcoal and burned cobblestones. Unfortunately we got no information from the kitchen in the northwest corner (Fig. 1: VII). Water pipes and sewerage ran through the test pit and the layers were mixed with probably additional fill along the whole cross-section.

The test pits at the southern side of the building produced no information either. The western one of these was dug on the site of the trench made by Toivo Aus at the southern wall in 1986. Unfortunately his report contains no descriptions of layers. The foundation trench could be observed only at the bottom of the pit, in the original layer.

SUMMARY

In the course of the preliminary investigations it was established that below the manor-house of Kiltsi, the cultural layer of the medieval vassal castle is quite well preserved. Almost in every room the double layer of stones and lime mortar lies upon the medieval layer. The lower one of these probably dates from the period of the Livonian War, when the castle was besieged and the vaults collapsed or, as supposed by Uno Hermann, the retreating Russian troops demolished the castle. The intermediate humus layer probably dates from the period of a couple of centuries, when the castle was in ruins, and the upper fill layer dates from the late 18th century, when part of the ruins of the castle was dismantled to build the new manor-house upon them. The only room where the collapse and filling layers were absent was the cellar, behind the sports hall. It had been presumed already earlier that its vaults date from the Middle Ages.

As to the extent of the medieval castle, an opinion has been expressed that the southeastern tower and eastern part of the building belong to the Middle Ages (Tuulse 1942, 322; Hermann 1975, 7–8), and the presence of the medieval castle walls has been presumed also in the western part of the building (Hermann 1975, 10). In the course of the investigations, we discovered that the medieval cultural layer extends also westward of the N–S oriented central wall, which has been suggested as the outer wall of the castle (Aus 1986).

Concerning the extent of the medieval castle, the opinion was formed during the investigations that the whole building, including the northeastern tower and western square towers, were built in two stages in the Middle Ages. This would be more likely than the possibility that the northeastern tower and the western flank were added in the 18th century. Thus the earlier part of the castle consists of the southeastern tower and the eastern part of the building where the walls are considerably thicker than in the western part. The northeastern tower and the western part of the building probably date from the period immediately before the Livonian War. But whether these suggestions are tenable can be decided only after more extensive investigations, planned for the year 2002.

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ARHEOLOOGILISED PROOVIUURINGUD LÄÄNE-VIRUMAAL KILTSI MÕISAS

Tõnno JONUKS

Arheoloogilisi prooviuuringuid tehti OÜ Mõisaprojekt tellimusel seoses renoveerimis- ja restaureerimistöödega Kilti mõisas. Töö eesmärk oli välja selgitada, kas praeguse mõisa all on säilinud keskaegse vasall-linnuse kultuurkiht. Selleks kaevati kaks proovišurfi mõisahoonelõunapoolse välisseina äärde, tehti mitmeid prooviauke hoone sisemusse ja tühjendati ladestunud kihtidest kolm ruumi (joon. 1: I-III).

Selgus, et pea kõikjal on mõisa all kahekihiline varingulade, mille all on säilinud keskaegne kultuurkiht. Esialgse arvamuse kohaselt tekkis varingukihi alumine osa Liivi sõja ajal, mil linnuse võlvid langesid kokku kas pommitamise tagajärjel või purustati need taanduvate vene vägede poolt. Kahe varingukihi vaheline huumuskiht tekkis tõenäoliselt paarisaja aasta jooksul, mil linnus seisis varemetes. Ülemine varingukiht on pärit tõenäoliselt 1780. aastatest, mil linnusevaremeid mõnevõrra lammutati, et ehitada samale kohale uus mõisa peahoone. Erinevalt varasematest oletustest tekkis käesolevate uuringute jooksul arvamus, et mõisa kavatis pärineb üksnes keskajast. Ilmselt ehitati linnus kahes etapis: kõigepealt kagutorn (joon. 1: I) ja praeguse mõisahoonelõunaosa ning hiljem kirdetorn (joon. 1: II) ja lääneosa koos kahe läanetorniga. Keskaegsest kultuurkihist leiti üksnes Liivi sõja eelsesesse perioodi kuuluvaid leide (joon. 2). Esialgsete oletuste paikapidavust keskaegse vasall-linnuse kohta saab kontrollida 2002. aasta välitöödel, kui plaanitakse tühjendada veel mõned ruumid.