

SUMMARIES

KRUMMAU CASTLE. A CONTRIBUTION TO ITS HISTORY AS A FORTIFIED CASTLE

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The building of Krummau Castle is very closely related to the efforts of the Witigones to build up a „Hausmacht“, by means of colonization in the border area of southern Bohemia. In this process, the castles of Rosenberg and Krummau, probably built in the years 1230—1250, were to represent the bases from which the further expansion was to proceed. This was especially the case with Krummau, for directly before this castle stretched a broad expanse of fertile land — at the time still royal property — whose acquisition appeared to be entirely within the realm of possibility. Not only the lords of Krummau, but the whole family of the Witigones needed a strong castle. Because of this and the fact that the terrain was eminently suited for it, Krummau was built as a double castle. Its two castles, each capable of defending itself, were originally separated from each other by a moat. Though the lower castle, situated in front of it, was always called the „Little Castle“, the „Hradek“ was never termed the outer works. Because the terrain in front of the lower castle was only slightly inclined, it was, as the forefield of defense, provided with a fortified wall, which enclosed the extraordinarily large area called still today the „Tummelplatz“. The lower castle was sealed off from this by a moat in front of the gate, which, strengthened by a rampart, also enclosed it on the north side. The lower castle was further protected by a large fish-pond, which Ullrich II of Rosenberg had created prior to 1450 by damming up the „Blätterbach“. The strongest bastion of the lower castle, whose bailey was reached by a drawbridge of the circular wall's gatehouse, was the mighty circular tower. The latter, as well as the apartments which it protected, could be reached only through a staircase-tower over a small drawbridge.

Unlike the lower castle, the upper castle did not have a circular wall. The narrow, steeply sloping rock crest would not have permitted placing a circular wall around its core. It is a typical case of a castle taking advantage of the natural defensive possibilities offered by the terrain, and its original dimensions can be recognized from the two main towers whose foundations are still preserved. Interestingly enough, they stand diagonally across from each other. The ascent to the upper castle was made via a bridge leading over a moat to the lower gatehouse, and in back of it, by a steep gateway to

the upper gate, leading along a low wall. Through the latter, one entered the bailey of the upper castle. Toward the east the upper castle was protected by the steeply sloping rock crest and by the lower castle, directly to the west of the castle the hill ascended still further. Here, between the dwellings and the deep, wide „Halsgraben“, situated still further to the west, a keep was layed out. It cannot be satisfactorily determined what this looked like. It probably soon received a strong, high curtain wall, as had generally become customary in castle-building. The present stone bridge over the „Halsgraben“ which is built on mighty, high arches, is named „Curtain Bridge“ after this wall. In the great project of enlarging the castle which was carried out by Ullrich II of Rosenberg, with the help of Master Andreas, in the period 1444—1451, the keep and curtain wall disappeared. In this project the upper castle was enlarged and extended to the „Halsgraben“. In the course of the building project, which was probably occasioned by the lack of living quarters, the fortified character of the castle was preserved. This is shown by the remains of the parapets in the masonry on the „Halsgraben“, as well as the angular course of the tunnel-like gateway to the castle. This was the last enlargement of Krummau Castle which was fortificational in its nature. With the development of firearms, the view that castles had, above all, to be fortified structures, lost its validity also for Krummau.