



Coat of arms of the Fock and Kerpen families



Coats of arms of the Fock and Faily families



Sketch of the keep



Tombstone of Peter Blum, lord of Reckingen

Pettingen castle



mersch

Schönfels, Pettingen, Reckingen



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The Reckingen Fortress in the Middle Ages

+ RECKINGEN CASTLE (PRIVATE PROPERTY, NOT OPENED TO THE PUBLIC)

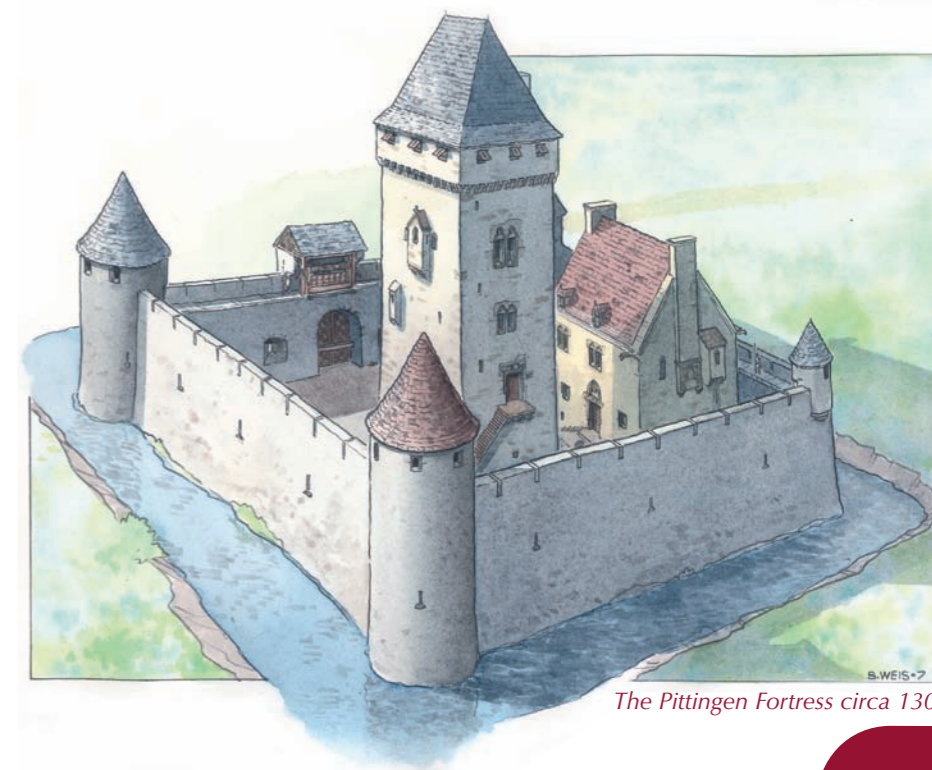
In the 12th century, the lords of Reckingen were mentioned for the first time in documents. In the 16th century, the family Fock von Hübingen became the owner of the Reckingen castle. Ernst Fock von Hübingen, who died in 1573, lies in the parish church of Mersch in a magnificent vault dating from the Renaissance and walled into the St. Michel tower after 1850. In 1699, the cavalry captain Peter Blum became the lord of Reckingen when he acquired the castle. He was also buried in the parish church of Mersch. The tombstone, which was preserved in a Baroque lodge in the parish garden, disappeared without trace! In 1870, the castle was entirely flattened. A height of three metres was preserved of the medieval 9 by 9 m keep with walls 1.5 m thick. The coats of arms of the former lordships are walled into this keep.

FORTRESSES AND CASTLES

Built in the Middle Ages, strongholds had defensive purposes. At the heart of the fortress could be found the court and the keep, composed of fortified walls and allowing any assailant to be resisted.

After the capture of the Luxembourg stronghold by Vauban in 1684, the French General Boufflers received from Louis XIV the order to flatten the strongholds of Schönfels and Pittingen. The French just demolished the outer walls, which since the invention of gunpowder lost most of their dissuasive value, and filled the moats.

The keep was preserved. Large windows were cut into its walls to make the building more habitable. New buildings were also erected around the keep, changing the name of the new structure to «castle».



The Pittingen Fortress circa 1300

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Plan of the Schönfels castle in 1930



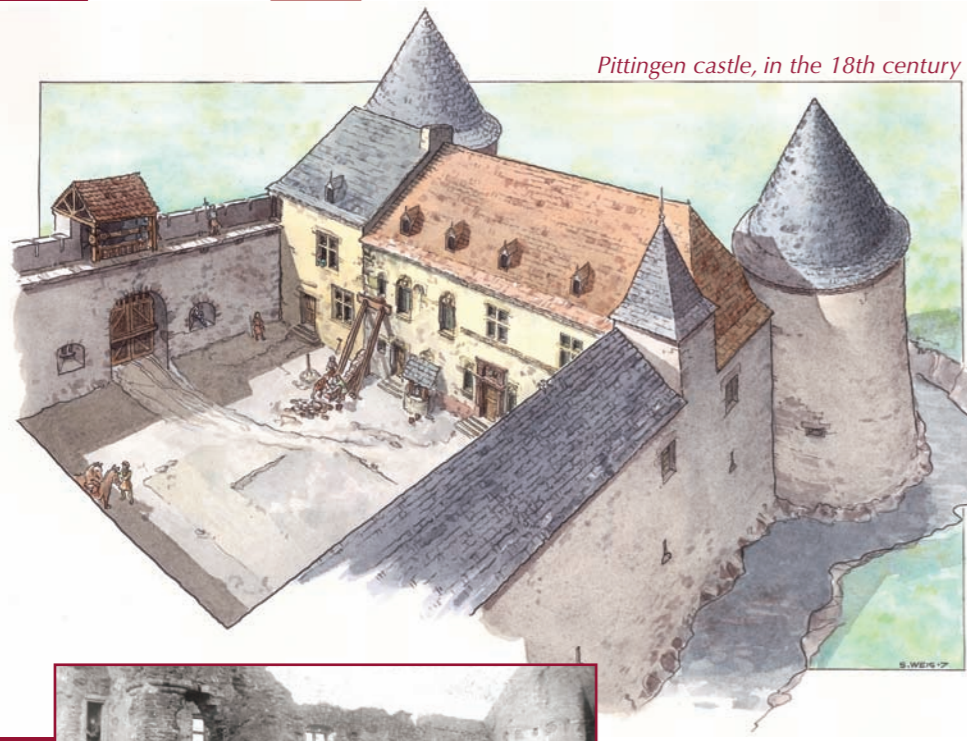
Schönfels



Pettingen

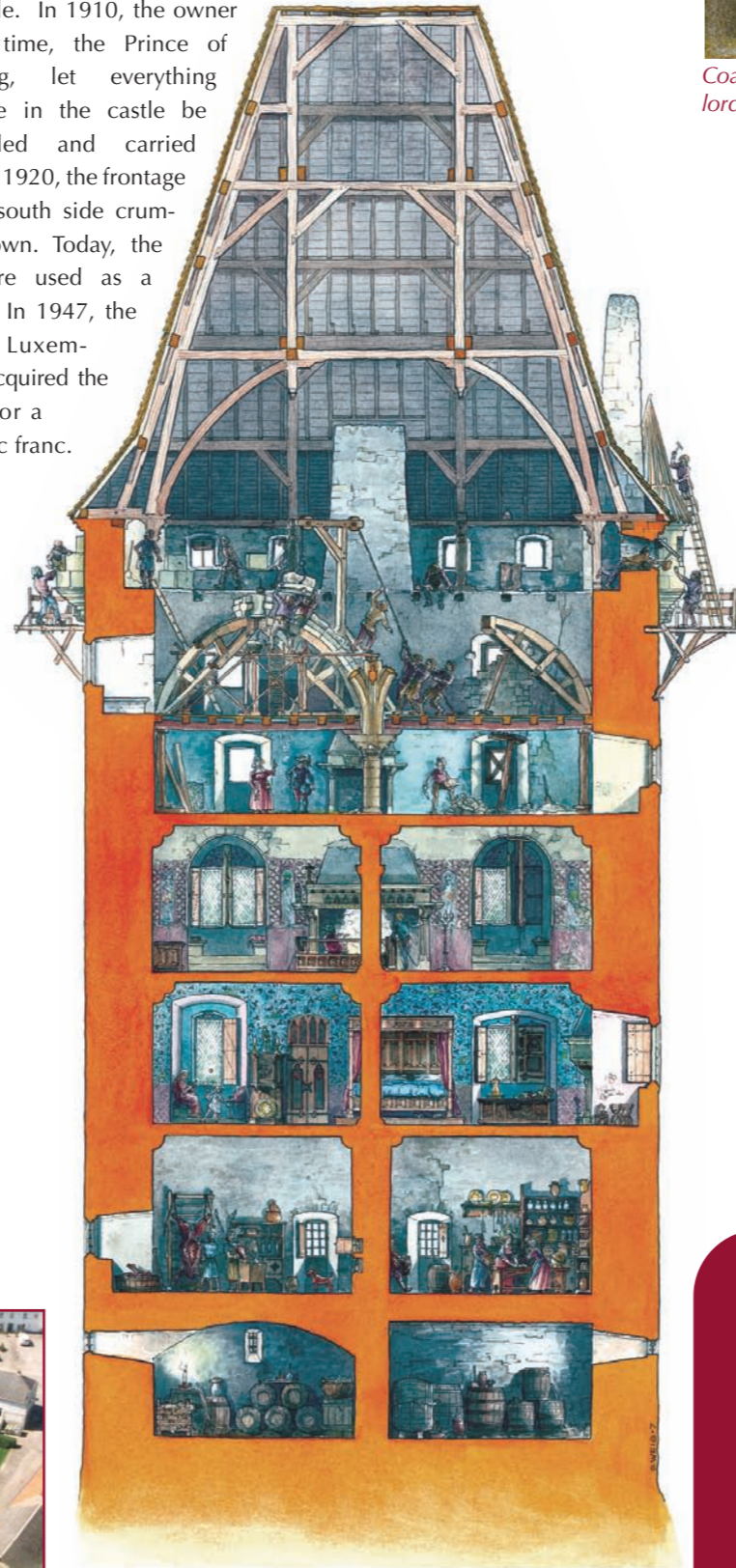


Renaissance – the tomb of Fock von Hübingen, Lord of Reckingen



Pittingen castle, in the 18th century

The original cadastral plan (after 1824) reveals the state of the castle. Annexes, which are still used, were added to the four external walls. In the south-west, the castle was fitted with larger buildings, which are today completely destroyed. In 1850, the Historian Engling noted the disrepair of the castle. In 1910, the owner at the time, the Prince of Arenberg, let everything of value in the castle be dismantled and carried away. In 1920, the frontage on the south side crumbled down. Today, the ruins are used as a quarry. In 1947, the State of Luxembourg acquired the castle for a symbolic franc.

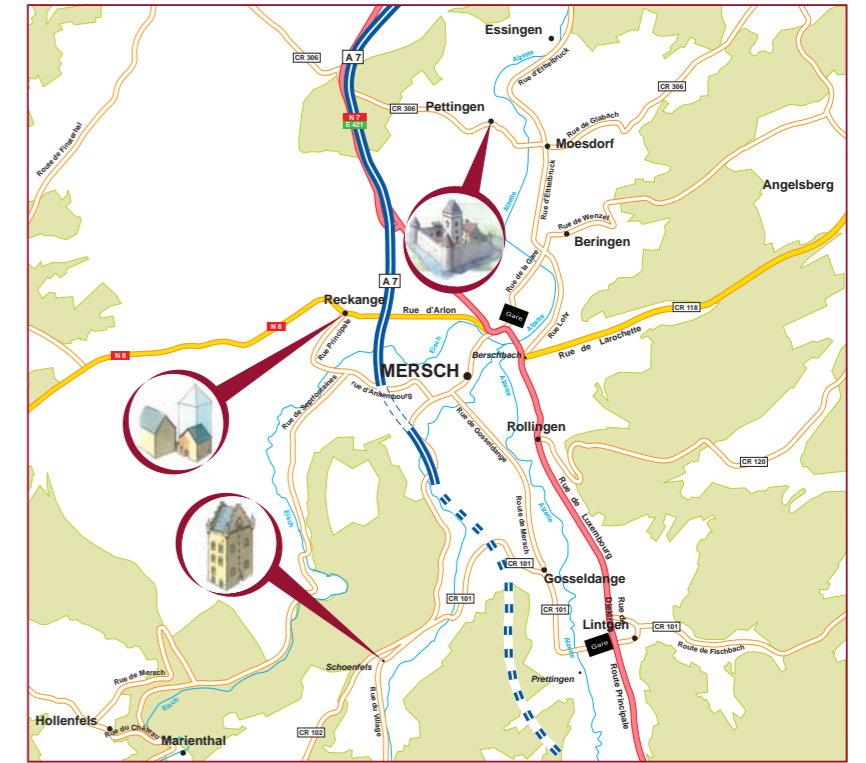


The Schönfels Fortress

+ Layoutplan +



Coat of arms of Schloeder von Lachen, lord of Schönfels (above the door)



Some American soldiers in the castle yard from 1918 to 1919

PITTINGEN PETTINGEN

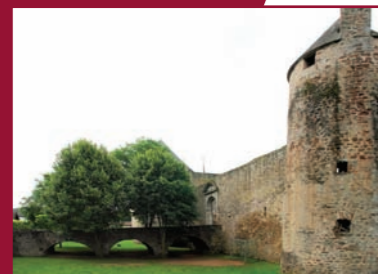
Pittingen is one of the best preserved strongholds with moat in the country. The square building of around 30 m long was surrounded by a 15m wide moat. At the centre of the fort was situated the 9 x 9 m keep, with walls 2.2 m thick. In 1244, Arnold von Pittingen, vassal of the Countess Ermesinde, signed the Charter of Freedom of the City of Luxembourg. Johann der Blinde granted the Pittingen family absolute power over the domain.

The stronghold was destroyed in the 15th century, then rebuilt and transformed into a castle at the beginning of the following century. The four corner towers were added in 1571. «Castrum amoenum ac situ jucundum» (beautiful castle and enjoyable place): this is how the Abbot Bertels described Pittingen castle in his «Historia Luxemburgensis» published in 1605.

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Keep



Fortress moat



Map of the castle

+ SCHÖNFELS

The great 17 by 13 m tower 21 m in height is the most impressive inhabited defence tower of the region.

In 1292, the name Friderich or Ferri von Schönfels, architect of a fortified yard, appeared for the first time in a document. However, nothing so far allows us to say whether the keep already existed at the time.

This keep was transformed several times in the following centuries, as witnessed by the inscription of the year 1536 by the side of some wall figures.

In the 19th century, its appearance was modified in the neo-gothic style. The windows were widened and mansards were added. In 1971, the State became the owner of the castle.



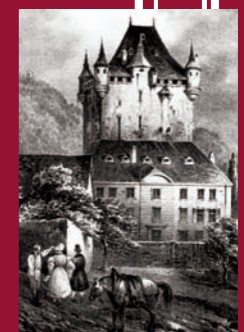
Inhabited keep



Watch tower with wall figures (1536)



Top floor with gothic arch



Drawing by N. Liez, 1834