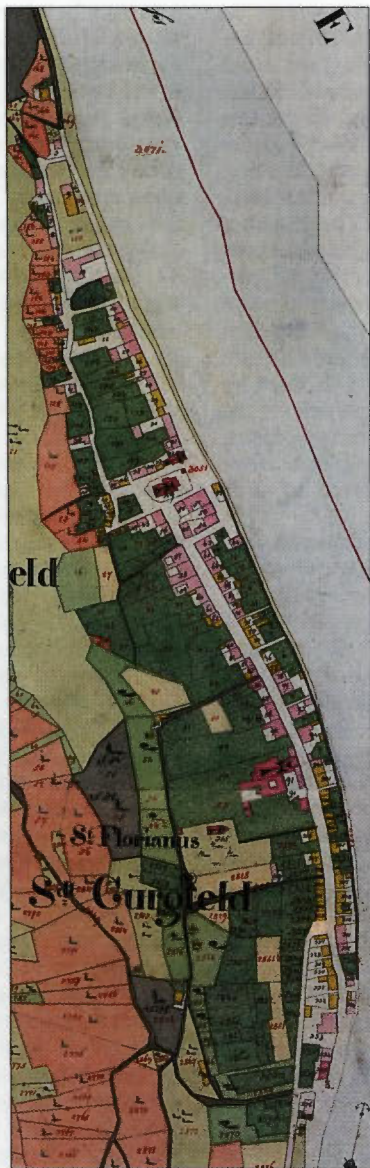


103 km
154 C1
G4

Krško

Gurkfeld



The beginnings of Krško were connected with Krško Castle on the elevation high above the river Sava, where the gorge of the Sava expanded and the plain of Krško Polje began. The formerly mighty castle was deserted in the eighteenth century, and already a ruin in the nineteenth.

The burgage of Krško Castle was mentioned in 1341, the following year, and again the burgages in the borough of the same name in 1351.¹ Since the burgages were sold in the same way as farms, that indicated that the possessions of the borough were legally not distinguished from those of the farms. The position of the citizens of Krško in the middle of the fourteenth century was substantially different from the position of those of Kostanjevica, who could have had free use of their land within the urban area. The owner of the burgages of Krško including the inhabitants was the relevant feudal lord. At the beginning of the fifteenth century transactions of real estate in possession of the citizens of Krško had already been recorded. In the middle of the fourteenth century, when the borough of Krško supposedly came into existence, it comprised sixty burgages and a half. Documents explicitly stated those inhabited by fishermen and hunters, which indicated that the settlement under the castle had the position of a court economy. It can be assumed that artisans resided in it as well, supplying the neighbourhood with their products, and partly living on



agriculture and on vineyards on the slopes of the Trška Gora mountain. Since no important road passed Krško, there were no tradesmen in the first period of the settlement. The closest road was the one from Zidani Most to Brežice, yet it was located on the left bank of the river Sava.² There was a ferry-boat in the broader part of the Sava valley, protected by the castle. It facilitated the connections of Raka, Leskovec and the villages in the hinterland of Krško with the road on the right bank. It must be pointed out that the course of the Sava had been close to the peripheries of the Leskovec hills until 1600, and it had curved towards Brežice at Drnovo.

In the first half of the fifteenth century, under the Counts of Celje, Krško had developed economically. Documents from that period recorded a greater number of artisans, particularly butchers, cobblers and tailors.³ On account of Turkish plundering along trade routes the navigation on the Sava was revived and the town had economically recovered due to freight transfer and increased ferry-boat traffic. In 1478 the new town lord, Emperor Friedrich III, exempted the monastery of Kostanjevica from payment of a bridge toll in Ljubljana and Krško.⁴

Economic and not only strategic reasons were responsible for the establishment of the town of Krško, the same as in the case of most towns of Slovenia. The establishment deed of Emperor Friedrich III of 1477 referred to the defence against the Turks. It

was true, however, that town walls were constructed immediately after the granting of privileges to Krško. It was typical of the spatial plan of Krško that the urban settlement was located in a narrow space between the river Sava and the Trška Gora mountain. Therefore it only developed in one direction, i.e. along the road square which ran on the river embankment. Its southern part was directed to the harbour on the Sava. The road logically continued on the other bank of the Sava, at Videm. The church of St. Florian, protector against fire and floods, used to stand near the port of Krško. The northern part of the town was marked by the town church of St. John the Evangelist,⁵ and was surrounded by church walls. In 1768 the church became the vicariate of the parish of Leskovec. The town spital, first recorded in 1525, leaned on the church walls. The Baroque church by Fuchs from 1777, with its typical festival of the Holy Spirit, was a reminder of it. At the south-eastern corner of the church grounds there was a rectangular street island consisting of three houses. One of them was bought by J. W. Valvasor in 1693. The complex was originally Gothic, and it was rebuilt at the beginning of the seventeenth century.⁶ Maybe the buildings succeeded the court recorded in 1391, which was located beneath the castle on the bank of the Sava, and which was donated by the Counts of Celje to the benefice of St. Nicholas at Krško Castle.⁷

The town walls of Krško had the





form of two parallel barriers. Valvasor's engraving in the *The Glory of the Duchy of Carniola* depicted the northern town walls descending from the castle of Krško past the town church to the river Sava. The course of the southern part ran along the slope of the Trška Gora mountain and south of the Capuchin monastery (built in 1644) to the river bank. If Valvasor's depiction was correct, then the port of Krško was located outside the town walls and functioned as a suburb. The intersection of the present Dalmatin Street and Cesta Krških Žrtev indicated the location of the town gate, which was recorded in a land register of the dominion of Krško from 1570.⁸

The division into plots indicated that the earliest part of the town

with the above-mentioned sixty burgages must have been in the northern part of the road square, i.e. between the present Hočevar Square and the municipal building. The plots by the western side ended under the slope of the Trška Gora mountain, while those by the eastern side were shorter and ended in the direction of the bank of the Sava. Yet the southern part of Krško between the Capuchin monastery and the former harbour was divided into plots in the form of lamellas and had a serried construction of houses.

Due to the narrow space between the main arterial road and the river the only outhouse path led along the foot of the Trška Gora mountain. The northern and southern branch of the path curved and joined the road square. There were



some narrow lateral passages between the square and the path, the present Bohorič Street. One of them, now Firemen Street, is a remnant of the southern branch of the wall path.

The Franz cadastre of 1825 showed that numerous houses were made of timber in the first half of the last century, primarily in the southern part of Krško. Even some years ago there was a house with a timber construction next to Dalmatin Street. Unfortunately, it was pulled down and replaced by a new one during the renovation of the town.

A document from 1411 was of particular interest because it reported how an inhabitant of Krško, butcher Jorg, and his wife sold a house to the Prior of the monastery in Pleterje. The text was written in mediaeval German, and the building was denoted with the words '*gemawrten cheller und gemawrte chomnaten auf dem selben cheller.*' Historians had translated that as 'a stone-built cellar and a stone-built room above it'.⁹ There are two explanations in Lexer's dictionary of the high mediaeval German: the word '*keller*' did not denote 'a cellar', but a 'shop' during the Middle Ages.¹⁰ The word '*chomnaten*' was a written variation of the '*kemenate*' denoting 'a (living) room or place warmed by a fireplace'. Wolf's German-Slovene dictionary from 1860 included the word '*Kemnate*'. It was explained as a 'stone building' and translated as '*kimnata, čumnata*'. The Slovene word '*čumnata*' had lost its meaning of 'a room with heating', and indicated only 'a smaller room in a (rural) house'. Yet it was related to the English and French expressions 'chimney' and '*cheminée*'.

Our source for Krško illustrates the history of urban architecture in Slovenia. It proves that an example of the typical one-storey town dwelling had already existed in a small and rather unimportant borough like Krško at the beginning of the fifteenth century. It is important that the house was built of stone and no longer made of timber. The concepts of the ground floor and the first floor were probably simple, consisting of one cell, yet with the division into the shop or workshop on the

ground floor and living quarters with a fireplace on the first floor.

Jelka Pirkovič

¹ Jože Mlinarič, Krško in njegovo gospostvo v srednjem veku, *Krško skozi čas*, p. 32, and Božo Otarepec, *Srednjeveški pečati in grbi mest in trgov na Slovenskem*, p. 75.

² The road on the right bank under the rock of Deviška Pečina was built only in 1847.

³ Jože Mlinarič, Krško in njegovo gospostvo v srednjem veku, p. 38.

⁴ Jože Mlinarič, *Topografija posesti kostanjeviške opatije 1234–1768*, p. 87. The bridge toll was a special tribute paid by hauliers to the town for general use of the bridges and other facilities in the urban area. The first wooden bridge across the Sava was built as late as 1866.

⁵ The saint by the town walls was depicted in the arms, as determined in the establishment deed of the town. Božo Otarepec, *Srednjeveški pečati in grbi mest in trgov na Slovenskem*, pp. 76–77.

⁶ Dušan Kramberger, konservatorsko poročilo, *Varstvo spomenikov*, 35, 1995, p. 110.

⁷ Jože Mlinarič, Krško in njegovo gospostvo v srednjem veku, *Krško skozi čas*, p. 35.

⁸ Jože Koropec, Krško v obdobju velikih slovenskih kmečkih vstaj, *Krško skozi čas*, p. 53.

⁹ Jože Mlinarič, Krško in njegovo gospostvo v srednjem veku, *Krško skozi čas*, p. 38.

¹⁰ Mathias Lexer, *Mittelhochdeutsches Taschenwörterbuch*, Stuttgart, 1986, pp. 105–106.