

'Burg Eltz' - the medieval palace in Germany



eral parts. According to tradition, this type of situation usually occurs when several families living in the same area come together to build a single house for their residence.

Nobles

Among the nobles who lived in medieval Europe, only a few had enough assets to create a single palace in their territory. The creation of Garnerbenberg style mansions has been popular among local nobles who only had the control of one village. It is stated that the members belonging to three branches of the Elts lineage have worked together to build the 'Eltz House'.

The main part of the 'Eltz House' consists of private apartments and bedrooms belonging to family members. A strong wall can be seen around the 'Eltz House' which consists of eight towers with a height between 30 - 40 metres (98 - 131 feet). There are over 100 bedrooms in it. A small village where the employees and their family members lived in the past also existed around the 'Eltz House'.

The construction of the Romanesque castle, which is considered to be the oldest part of the 'Eltz House', was started in the ninth century. Originally a walled country citadel, by 1157 it had become an important stronghold of Frederick Barbarossa's empire as it lay on the trade route down the Moselle Valley and the Eifel region.

The nobles of Trier, including the Eltzes, declared war against the Archpriest of Trier between 1331 and 1336 due to their attempt to take over the 'Eltz House', which became a Garnerbenberg-style building in 1268, resulting in a two-year period of 'Eltz's mansion even being raided.

Gothic architecture

Another building constructed according to Gothic architecture and beautifully decorated, became a part of it in 1472. Between 1490 and 1540, the 'Rodendorff House', which became a part of the House some times after, had a flag room with a vault. Another unique feature of the 'Eltz House' is that every

room has been able to be properly heated since the past.

Due to the War of the Palatinate Succession in 1688 - 1689, most of the palaces on the banks of the Rhine were destroyed by the French forces, but Hans-Anton Sue Eltz-Attigen was a high-ranking officer in the French army at the time, but he managed to strategically remove the 'Eltz House' from the list of buildings to be destroyed.

It has been possible, during the French rule from 1794 to 1815, the Eltzes had to leave the 'Eltz House'. It is said that the French forces used it as a fort. However, in 1815, the 'Eltz House' was bought back by Hugo Philippe Suelte.

At present, two of the Eltz House's three main parts are open for public viewing. The gold and silver ware, ceramics, jewellery, glass and ivory, coins, ancient weapons and armoury, and the treasury that are placed in it are considered to be one of the finest collections in Europe. In the knights' room of the 'Eltz House', one can see the ancient armour as well as the masks of the knights.

BY GAYAN NARANDENIYA

The medieval palace known as 'Burg Eltz', which means 'Eltz's House' in German, is between the cities of Koblenz and Trier, Germany, on a hill overlooking a river. Since the 12th century, it has been owned by members of the Eltz family, an ancient German aristocratic fam-

ily. It is reported that the 33rd generation of the Eltz family currently lives there. Another unique feature of the Eltz House is that it has never been destroyed or damaged in its history.

The 'Eltz House' is surrounded on three sides by the Messel River and the linked Elsbach tributary. Located on a 70 metre (230 feet) mountain, an old Roman trade route has passed through it. Cov-

ering an area of over 300 hectares (741 acres), the sparkling green 'Eltz Forest', around the 'Eltz House', was designated as a nature reserve in 2000, and is also considered to be an arboretum full of many local and foreign plant species.

It is not wrong to call the 'Eltz House' as a palace (a Garnerbenberg-style house) that can house several families or several generations at the same time. It has sev-