

**The Language of Authority:
The Expression of Status in the Scottish
Medieval Castle**

M. Justin McGrail
Department of Art History
McGill University Montréal
March 1995

*“A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate
Studies and Research in partial fulfilment
of the requirements of the degree
of Masters of Arts.”*

© M. Justin McGrail, 1995



**National Library
of Canada**

**Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services**

**395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada**

**Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada**

**Acquisitions et
services bibliographiques**

**395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada**

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-44096-6

Canada

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. H. J. Böker for his perserverance and guidance in the preparation and completion of this thesis.

I would also like to recognise the tremendous support given by my family and friends over the course of this degree.

Abstract

The visual appearances of twelfth and thirteenth century Scottish castles are interpreted through an iconographic and iconological analysis. In examining the symbolic possibilities evidenced in the castles's visual programs, an architectural language of authority, "castle style," is identified. The connections of this architectural language to twelfth and thirteenth century "new men" is considered through a review of historical and architectural evidence. Socio-political ambition and the representation of social stature are recognizable in "castle style."

Résumé

Les apparences visuelles des châteaux écossais du 12^e et du 13^e siècles sont interprétées en utilisant une analyse iconographique et iconologique. En regardant les possibilités symboliques de le programme visuel du château, un langage d'autorité, "castle style" est identifié. Les liaisons de ce langage architectural aux "nouveaux hommes" du 12^e et du 13^e siècles est envisagé par une analyse des preuves historiques et architecturales. On retrouve l'ambition socio-politique et la représentation du rang social dans le "castle style." En conclusion, on voit que la forme et l'apparence des châteaux écossais médiaevaux met l'emphase sur l'expression de status.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....1

Chapter I: Castle Style4
Eilean Donan Castle.....11

**Chapter II: Iconological and Environmental
Considerations28**
Rothsay Castle.....34
Lochindorb Castle.....42
Caerlaverock Castle.....50
Summary.....59

**Chapter III: Normans and the Introduction
of the Castle in Scotland.....62**
Kinclaven Castle.....76
Dirleton Castle.....79
Bothwell Castle.....86
Summary.....94

Conclusion.....98

Bibliography.....105

**Index to Illustrations, Maps
and Photographs110**

Figures and Maps114

Introduction

The forms and appearances of Scottish medieval castles are the products of an architectural style centred on the representation of social status. The architectural features had both military and symbolic functions. As a type of fortification, the real strength of castle architecture lay in its symbolic, not military, value. The castle physically represented the socio-political authority of the castle holder. As a symbol of authority, the visual appearance of the castle was synonymous with the castle holder's claim of lordship. Thus, the communication of "strength" through architectural forms supported the credibility of the castle holder's authority. This expression forms the basis of the "castle style" of architecture.

The castle, defined as a private, fortified residence, appears in Scotland in the eleventh century. The building of castles is connected to the Anglo-Norman "new men" who came to Scotland as friends and supporters of Scottish kings between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries. The social aspirations of these men, who provided military and financial aid to the crown, are evidenced in their conscious imitation

of the landed nobility, whom they emulated in trappings and custom. Naturally, Anglo-Norman “new men” emulated the Anglo-Norman nobility. In Scotland, the Anglo-Norman leanings of the Scottish king gave support to this emulation of Continental nobility. The castle was a fundamental accoutrement of nobility.

This thesis will examine the social phenomena of the “new men” as reflected in “castle style.” The iconological messages of “castle style” are the indices of the patron's desires in the appearance of the castle. These messages and the characteristics of “castle style” are examined in the first chapter. Eilean Donan Castle will be analysed on the basis of the environmental setting and architectural features which facilitate the expression of iconology. The emergence of stone castles in the Scotland and their compositional elements are examined in the second chapter, focusing upon the iconographic representation of social status. The castles of Rothesay, Lochindorb and Caerlaverock are analysed on the basis of their visual programs and spatial considerations. In the third chapter, the Anglo-Norman “new men” are examined in their historical context, focused primarily on their relationship to the crown. The

castles of Kinclaven, Dirleton and Bothwell are examined as reflections of the social aspirations and affluence of the “new men.” A concluding chapter reviews and synthesises the issues raised in the thesis and finds that the form and appearance of the castle in Scotland is determined by symbolic considerations in the expression of stature.

Chapter I: Castle Style

The medieval castle is rarely approached with the assumption of artistic qualities. Art-historians have labelled such fortified structures “functional,” implying a modern definition of “function,” inspired by Louis Sullivan's “Form Follows Function.” Yet, how a castle looks, supplied by its “form,” is as much its “function” as any inferred military use. Castles are structures meant to be seen. The question of who is meant to see a castle and what meaning is to be derived from it is wholly linked to its function. This sort of approach seems to be lacking in most widely held views of medieval art and architectural history. Popular lines of thinking denote castles as utilitarian structures whose appearance is wholly guided by the military realities of medieval warfare. As such, these *military uses* preclude both artistic composition and ornament; questions of symbolism and architectural allusions to the past are likewise dismissed. This is unfortunate, for such conclusions about castles ignore important aspects of their appearance. They also

distort our view of the Middle Ages. The sophisticated meanings found in ecclesiastical monuments greatly contrast with the dull mechanics of "military" buildings. The "Form Follows Function" equation does not actually tell us much about the history of either type of building. Fortifications have been especially subject to such analysis. The prevalent use of the equation by past art historians seems partially rooted in an aversion to things military in a discipline which has traditionally focused on beauty. Yet its use fails to reveal anything beyond this preference for the delicate and handsome. This has proven the case with most architecture denoted "military." A particularly clear example describes pre-Confederation forts in Canada:

The old forts of Canada are interesting, first of all, from the modern "functional" point of view. It is not only that they are composed of precisely the kind of geometric forms - pyramids, cones, octagons, cubes - that the taste of our times has come to admire in architecture; but even more because these forms are the direct result of applying what seems a characteristically modern formula Form Follows Function.¹

¹. A. Gowans, *Looking at Architecture in Canada* (Toronto, 1958), pp. 29-30.

The formula is modern. Any recognition is pure hindsight. In the case of the medieval castle, similar views betray an insufficient understanding of the military and socio-economic situations within which castles were involved. The study of these matters have led me to perceive in castles a consistency of appearances which go beyond a mere correlative with military technology. All architecture is partially interpreted through its appearance, as buildings occupy and activate space visually. Medieval castles were constructed for those who wished to be seen. This was facilitated by the size and architectural features of the building: the constituents of a visual program.

It is clear from field work and documentary research that a visual program, a "military aesthetic," exists in a medieval castle's appearance.

The visual program is there to express a message about rule, society, military might and money. It is these concerns which underlie "castle style." Similar to contemporaneous ecclesiastical and monastic architecture, "castle style" makes full use of scale, location and illusionistic and iconographic devices to communicate with the beholder.

The basic concern of the military aesthetic is the expression of strength.

From this evolves the ideas of political control, military power, social status and money; strength is the basis upon which the nobility legitimised their right to rule. The castle exists to express and justify social distinction implied by the military nobility. The control of rural economies, which castles became the centre of from the tenth century onward, was an important reason for this expression of strength.

Intimidation was a key in the maintenance of this method of economic and political rule, referred to as "feudalism."² J Bradbury observes,

Castles have more to do with internal social struggle in the west than with defence against external invasion. Hence they fail to conform in distribution to frontier patterns.³

The politics of conquest and dynastic ascension in the eleventh and twelfth centuries relied upon the active service and loyalty characteristic

². My conception of "feudalism" has been influenced by the following studies: M.Bloch, *Feudal Society, Vols 1 & 2* (Chicago,1961), trans. L.A.Manyon; G.Duby, *The Age of Cathedrals* (Chicago,1981), trans. E.Levieux & B.Thompson; A.A.M.Duncan, *Scotland: The Making of the Kingdom* (Edinburgh,1975); T.Hunt, "The Emergence of the Knight in France and England, 1000-1200", *Forum for Modern Language Studies, Vol.XVII, No.2* (St.Andrews, 1981); S.Painter, *The Rise of Feudal Monarchies* (Ithaca,1951); J. Wormald, *Lords & Men in Scotland: Bonds of Manrent, 1442-1603* (Edinburgh,1985).

³. J.Bradbury, *The Medieval Siege* (Suffolk,1992), p.52.

of “feudal” nobility. The castles built by the nobles served as tools in the realisation of both royal policy and individual ambition. The expression of these aims is observable in the visual program of the castle.

By the 13th century, castles were important symbols in the identification of the nobility. The issues of status, lifestyle and visible power, which characterised castle organisation, were integral aspects of the nobility's self-awareness within medieval society. The self-awareness was manifest in the social distinctions underlying the trappings and titles of the nobles; along with heraldry and an evolving system of etiquette, castles were part of the “new language of the symbolism of power.”⁴ Thus, the visual program was key to the proper reception of castles as symbols of status. In the manipulation of an aesthetic and architectural vocabulary, affected by technology and traditions, the components of a style are evident. “Castle style” creates an architectural setting for the practise of local rule and the carrying out of feudal responsibilities; these were the typical castle “functions” that

⁴. D.Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain, 1000-1300* (New York, 1992), p.345.

linked it to the community. As such, the relation of the castle to its local environment is of great visual importance. As previously stated, castles were meant to be seen. Thus their conspicuous location was the visual affirmation of community leadership and social order.

In Scotland, castles are first evidenced in the eleventh century. They began to be built in earnest by the Anglo-Norman nobles who settled under the patronage of King David I (1124-53). By the thirteenth century this practise had been enthusiastically adopted by the native aristocracy. Political, economic and cultural developments in Scotland, between 1000 and 1300, fit within the major trends of contemporary Western society. Scottish ecclesiastical and monastic architecture “were in the full floodstream of European ecclesiastical activity.”⁵ Trade relations with England, France, Flanders and the Hanseatic States during these centuries reflect Scotland's active place amongst the Western kingdoms. The social distinctions by which the western nobility defined their status were becoming part of Scottish life by the thirteenth century. Within this cultural context, the “language of

⁵. S.Cruden, *The Scottish Castle* (Edinburgh, 1981), p.17.

power" naturally affected a Scottish "dialect," sensitive to the natural and human environment.

Eilean Donan Castle

Consider the visual image of Eilean Donan Castle, Ross-shire.⁶

Occupying a small island in Loch Duich, the castle is foremost regarded in the context of its relationship with the landscape. Shadowed by the mountains of Kintail, the castle's prominence is ensured by its island location, around which run waters of the lochs Duich, Long and Alsh.⁷

The scale and layout of the castle is relative to the island's features.

Grouped on the slight highground, the castle occupies the north-west half of the island. In the resulting delineation of active and nonactive spaces, the keep's height creates a vertical axis on the otherwise flat site. It dominates the island as the local mountains dominate the landscape, as a lord dominates his vassals. This spatial balance imbues the location with much visual power.⁸ A practical reason for the spot chosen on the island was the need for a landing-place useful even at low tide. Due to the depth of the channel between the island and the

⁶. Figure #1.

⁷. Map #1.

⁸. Figure #2.

mainland, the landing-place was made on the west side of the site, which was reached by a steep staircase. As well, the swift currents make the loch a dangerous obstacle at high tide. According to tradition, the MacRaes, the Constable of Eilean Donan in the sixteenth century, would imprison captives atop the walls for days before throwing them into the water. If they survived the swim to shore they were free.⁹

The present castle is of twentieth-century construction. Built between 1912 and 1932, the design was primarily conceived by Farquar MacRae; in a dream, he is said to have seen "the ruined stronghold restored to its former glory."¹⁰ Plans of the castle, discovered in Edinburgh Castle, have apparently confirmed his layout. While the age of these plans is uncertain, Farquar MacRae's castle was built upon the existing ruins.¹¹ These ruins are documented by MacGibbon and Ross,

⁹. J. MacRae, *Eilean Donan Castle* (Newport, 1978), p.14.

¹⁰. *Ibid.*, p.4.

¹¹. In the course of research I have found no reference to these plans in Edinburgh Castle other than in John MacRae's guidebook. Why such plans exist and what they illustrate are questions presently left unanswered.

whose sketches of the remains fit the site's present outline.¹² As the castle is an active residence, accessibility is limited to the west curtain wall-walk, the courtyard and two floors of the keep.

The island has long been a fortified location. Once the site of a Pictish fort, it became the home of the hermit S. Donan, who gave his name to the island. Eilean Donan was first fortified with stone in the early thirteenth century, during the reign of King Alexander II (1214-1250). The present building is a recreation of the castle begun in 1263 by Colin Fitzgerald, son of the Irish Earl of Desmond and Kildare. Fitzgerald was made Chief of Kintail in the same year by King Alexander III in recognition for his services in the Scottish victory at Largs; his descendants became the MacKenzies of Kintail, who were the ruling local nobility into the eighteenth century.¹³ According to lore, Robert the Bruce briefly stayed at Eilean Donan in 1306, while hiding from the English.¹⁴ During the minority of Bruce's heir, King David II,

¹². D.MacGibbon, T.Ross, *The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland, Vol.3* (Edinburgh, 1887), pp.82-84. Figure #3.

¹³. Ibid.

¹⁴. R.M.Scott, *Robert the Bruce, King of Scots* (New York, 1989), p.89.

the regent Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray, dispatched a crown officer to Kintail to enforce loyalty to the infant monarch. The grisly methods of the crown officer will be discussed later. In 1509 the MacKenzie chief gave the castle to his body guard, the MacRaes, who, to the present day, occupy the site. In 1719, to revive the Old Pretender uprising of 1715, Spanish troops came to Eilean Donan in the Jacobite cause. The forty-eight Spaniards, commanded by William MacKenzie, Earl of Seaforth, were attacked in the castle by three Royal Navy frigates on May 10, 1719. A quick surrender followed. The Spaniards were imprisoned, the Jacobite rebellion was defeated a month later at Glen Shiel and the castle was bombarded and laid to ruin by the navy guns.

Sources on Eilean Donan are very limited. Most connected information is derived from local folklore; architectural documentation is limited to a slight amount of writing. I feel the castle can only be analysed on the basis of the 1887 report by MacGibbon and Ross, especially their field-sketch, and on Farquar MacRae's actual reconstruction. Due to their nature or intention, other writings mentioning Eilean Donan do not provide much architectural information

useful for this study. Any attempt to conceptualise the thirteenth and fourteenth century appearance of Eilean Donan is generally hampered by MacRae's reconstruction, which, in many aspects, conflicts with the ruins documented by MacGibbon and Ross.

While Farquar MacRae's reconstruction is problematic, it seems the layout of the *enceinte* was determined by the castle of Fitzgerald. Enclosing an oblong bailey, the curtain walls are, on average, 3 m thick and 6 m high. Given the defensible quality of the island, which lacked a stone causeway in the thirteenth century, this wall-thickness is more than sufficient. It also carried the wall-walks without any reported structural failure. The "castle of *enceinte*,"¹⁵ in which the keep occupies the high ground and itself forms part of the exterior wall, is a form of castle with thirteenth-century antecedents in Scotland.¹⁶ As a ruin, the keep measured 17 m long and 13 m wide.¹⁷ The walls exceed 4 m in the

¹⁵. N. Tranter, *The Fortified House in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1970), p. 155.

¹⁶. The "development" of Scottish stone fortifications is outlined by S. Cruden, *op cit.*, and W. M. Mackenzie, *The Medieval Castle in Scotland* (London, 1927).

¹⁷. D. MacGibbon, T. Ross, *op cit.*

lower stories of the keep, which tapers as it rises. The entrance door is at the south-east corner of the keep, reached by an external set of stairs. Perpendicular to the doorway, a rounded extension of the wall abuts the stairs, fitted with an arrow loop while above, at the rood level, a stone gallery with machicolations overhanging the entry spot.¹⁸ Similar galleries overhand the east face of the keep, between which stone consoles jut out from the wall; such consoles would support temporary, wooden hoarding during a siege.¹⁹ In MacRae's reconstruction, the consoles serve as dripstones to project rainwater clear of the walls.

Judging from the ruins surveyed by MacGibbon and Ross, the castle walls originally enclosed an open bailey. This is hardly discernible in MacRae's work, where numerous buildings and walkways cluster the bailey. One may surmise that in Fitzgerald's castle of the thirteenth century, the open bailey would be occupied by wooden constructions, leaning on the interior curtain faces. Such structures would house stable and workshops. Extending south-east of the keep

¹⁸. Figures #4 & #5.

¹⁹. Figure #6.

two curtain walls connect an open water cistern to the *enceinte*. This is housed within a heptagonal tower, 6 m in diameter, which is considerably lower than the elevation of the bailey. The two curtain walls which connected the water cistern are only 1.5 m thick and 4.5 m high.²⁰

It is interesting to note the castle lacks a chapel. A baptismal stone font, now in a recess in the keep, is claimed to have been used at the castle.²¹ The existence of a chapel within a castle was an important mark of prestige among the nobility. It showed financial resources as outfitting a sanctuary was expensive. The chapel was a significant mark of differentiation between the private and public life of the lord. The courtyard and chapel were private, shielded by the public curtain walls and church. D. Crouch observes, “[The] lord of the village might still be buried in his parish church, but he would only be seen dead in it.”²² Yet

²⁰. D.MacGibbon, T.Ross, *op cit*.

²¹. I have found no information concerning where the stone font was discovered and when it was believed to been in use. Neither John MacRae's guidebook, which mentions the font, nor castle-guides offer any insight on this matter.

²². D.Crouch, *op cit.*, p.270.

the lord's absence in body during his life was made up by his box and chair in the church, which substituted for his person and authority. In the example of Eilean Donan, the lack of a visible chapel could be due to various possibilities: the MacKenzies may have lacked the "prestige," i.e. the adequate finances; there may have been a chapel which was not discernible amongst the ruins and later not envisaged by Farquar MacRae in his "dream;" or, within the original keep a small sanctuary may have existed, just off of the lord's inner-chambers, which possibly housed the baptismal font. This latter possibility would follow the thirteenth and fourteenth century trends in domestic arrangement, following the steady inclination of lords to favour their inner-chambers over the main hall and courtyard. The political and judicial relationship of the castle holders with the local populace may have also fuelled a preference for private worship. In 1331 a crown officer was sent to Eilean Donan by the regent Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray. Randolph's reasons for this action are unknown; a situation of "lawlessness" in Kintail is alluded to in sources yet its cause is undisclosed. I presume Randolph's motives were to enforce loyalty to

the infant King David and to demonstrate support for the MacKenzie chiefs. Whatever the reason, the result saw the heads of fifty locals displayed along the top of the castle walls.²³ Intimidation backed up by slaughter hardly suggests amiable community relations. The story of the heads is also architecturally suggestive of a castle's fourteenth-century appearance. W.M. MacKenzie argues that the "wall of the heads" would form part of the *enceinte* that extended down to the edge of the island; this he believes "may be represented by some portions of foundations surrounding the island."²⁴ That he does not describe these "foundations," which presumably represent some of the building wreckage reported by MacGibbon and Ross, leaves the vision of the extended curtain walls unsubstantiated. The layout of the present *enceinte* would not preclude the visibility of the heads from the shoreline, especially if displayed on the east face and water cistern walls. In the case of the heads, I presume that not many locals would care to be so close to the castle as to view them directly. For those

²³. J.MacRae, *op cit.*, p.4.

²⁴. W.M.Mackenzie, *op cit.*, p.43.

whose tasks or responsibilities entailed visiting the castle at this time, the *enceinte* layout would provide an adequate stage for the crown officer's display of justice.

Eilean Donan Castle, reconstruction notwithstanding, exhibits the medieval military aesthetic. The highly visible location and architectural features present a vivid expression of authority, status and wealth. The castle's spatial relationship with the island and the surrounding landscape frame the composition. The scale of the castle, particularly the keep, is a fundamental aspect of the social differences the architecture accentuates. Even today, the keep is a grand-looking residence.²⁵ Its great size and sturdiness equate directly with the lord and his claim to wield authority. The materials are also significant in this visual presentation of power. Recalling H. Focillon's model of "wood civilisation," the use of stone and mortar in the lord's residence creates a contrast with the homes of locals.²⁶ Wood was the prevalent material used in both urban and rural construction well into the eleventh

²⁵. Figure #7.

²⁶. H.Focillon, *The Year 1000* (New York, 1969), pp.75-76.

century, other materials being too costly.²⁷ Stone was not just monetarily expensive. If the patron desired fine, ashlar courses, extra labour was required to make the proper cutting tools. Also the skills necessary to do the work were not always common.²⁸

Preserved records of the materials and labour costs of a castle's construction are very rare. The proportion of ashlar to rough-cut masonry in the thirteenth-century Eilean Donan is unknown.²⁹ However, the amount of stone necessary to complete the *enceinte* and keep was considerable and not directly available on the island itself, with the exception of stone unearthed in the drilling of the well. Thus, the use of stone, the scale and layout of the castle reflect the station, wealth and social habits of its noble patron. A castle's size and refinement has a direct connection to the position of the lord within the hierarchy of power; in times of strong monarchies, a noble in high favour

²⁷. H.E.Kubach, *Romanesque Architecture* (New York, 1988), p.184.

²⁸. D.Crouch, *op cit.*, p.263.

²⁹. Farquhar MacRae's reconstruction, consisting almost entirely of quarry-face stone and rubble-mortar, was completed at the cost of one quarter-million pounds. (J.MacRae, *op cit.*, p.4).

would often build, or expand, his castle to display this good standing. In this we observe authority through association.

In this architectural language of power there are recognisable iconographic and iconological elements. These may be easily differentiated: iconography refers to the physical features of the castle; iconology refers to the link between these physical features and the social system of order. In the context of the thirteenth century, towers, crenellated curtain walls, gate-houses, galleries, archery loops and machicolations are common iconographic castle features. While their military origins are evident, the symbolism inherent in these features should not be dismissed. As will be discussed later, the military value of certain features was displaced by progress in field-arms and siege tactics. Obsolescence, however, did not prevent their continued appearance in castle construction. The worth of such features lies in the visual power they contribute to the military aesthetic by enhancing the social *message*. This forms the iconology of the castle-style. From visiting many sites, I feel the iconological message intended by castle holders is one of power, law, order and fear. The expression of this

message is by far the most significant, social function of the castle-style.

It also partially explains why castles continued to be built well after becoming militarily redundant; the emotive power of the iconology was especially recognised by nineteenth century British architects, who made full use of the castle-style in constructing homes for their affluent patrons.³⁰

Eilean Donan is especially well-suited to an iconographic and iconological discussion. As a recreation, the castle presents itself as a modern interpretation of the medieval past. The historical validity of Farquhar MacRae's arrangement is questionable, being attributed to a dream and to unpublished plans. The wall foundations recorded by MacGibbon and Ross do not match some of MacRae's buildings, particularly the residential wing occupying the southern portion of the courtyard. MacGibbon and Ross report no foundations nor traces which would indicate the existence of buildings in this area. I feel their existence is due not to misguided reconstruction but rather to the certain twentieth century realities. When the reconstruction project

³⁰. M.W.Thompson, *The Decline of the Castle* (Cambridge, 1987), p.158.

began, it intended to furnish a tourist attraction and restore the tradition seat of the MacRaes. From the onset, the castle was to become the residence of the clan's modern chiefs. However, residential needs tend to conflict with issues of tourism. The ruins of the castle indicate the keep to be the only permanent shelter on the site. This matches what is known of the domestic arrangement in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Yet the three-storey keep hardly affords space sufficient for both residential and tourist needs: visitors to the castle would obviously be disappointed if the keep, which so dominates the site, was off limits. To remedy this an architectural compromise was created. The top floor of the keep and the new buildings created along the southern wall of the courtyard are private. Visitors have access to two floors of the keep, which are both decorated with historical memorabilia connected to the MacRae clan. Naturally, the new buildings were constructed to fit within the medieval composition, pierced by arrow loops and crowned with crenellations.³¹ The courtyard is a thick congestion of stone walkways and stairs which hardly recall the original

³¹. Figure #8.

function of such a space within a castle. As I feel Eilean Donan should be regarded as a modern interpretation of the medieval castle rather than an accurate reconstruction, the issues of iconography and iconology become clearly identifiable. The features and detailing of the buildings indicate Farquhar MacRae's knowledge of the architectural vocabulary of the castle-style. His castle is a composition determined by site and existing ruins upon which is built up a pastiche of iconographic features.

As the features were obviously not chosen out of military necessity, their arrangement was wholly determined by the compositional framework of MacRae's design. Thus is the visitor confronted by a machicolated gallery just east of the entrance; the military appearances of this feature are discounted by the open arches above the machicolations.³² This gallery appears to serve as a small balcony for the residential space built behind it. It was important however, to ensure a proper martial appearance even for a feature intended for modern convenience. MacRae's design shows the manipulation of the castle style in the creation of a multi-use building: a hallowed

³². Figure #9.

residential seat and a booming tourist attraction.³³ The iconological message is no longer power, law, order and fear. Instead it has been transformed into an entirely different form of social statement. The present castle is best seen as a cultural mirror, reflecting modern conceptions of medieval architecture and society. As an arrangement of situation and iconographic elements, MacRae's castle illustrates what modern society accepts as medieval reality. The castle, as an interpretation rather than reconstruction, is perhaps more informative as an index of contemporary notion so history than as representation of that history. Still, to this day, Eilean Donan is recognised by visitors as an awe-inspiring building. I feel this indicates that, despite the passage of time, the language of power still resonates within the beholder. The visual program of Farquhar MacRae, even when all military uses are dismissed, still evokes the reactions that were intended in the Middle Ages.

³³. It is estimated, in many publications, that Eilean Donan is the most photographed castle in all of Scotland. It was also used extensively in the filming of the 1986 movie *Highlander*.

In identifying the visual program at Eilean Donan, the constituent elements of "castle style" becomes recognisable. The curtain walls, crenellations, towers, galleries, gates and keeps are iconographic features which form the architectural vocabulary. This vocabulary was used in Scotland for the expression of royal and noble authority. The effectiveness of such expressions were naturally dependent upon the environment in which the castles were constructed. The scale and refinement of Scottish castles, for example, are indices of the economic and social conditions governing the actual period of construction. In examining the introduction of castles in Scotland and in the application of "castle style," the relationship of the architecture to the natural and social settings can be discerned. This relationship is the basis for understanding the meanings intended and inferred by "castle style."

Chapter II: Iconological and Environmental Considerations

Stone and lime castles began to be common in Scotland in the latter half of the twelfth century.³⁴ The stone, curtain wall castle, replacing the timber and earthen motte-and-bailey and ring works characterises Scottish fortifications between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries. The reasons for the substitution of materials and expansion of scale are political and economic. Castle construction in this period is indicative of both continental influences, especially at the royal court, and the social mobility of the foreign nobles and adventurers who began to settle in earnest during the reign of David I (1124-53). Neither external military threats nor domestic unrest suffice to wholly explain the growth of castles after the twelfth century; considering the time, expense and specialised labour involved in stone and lime construction, it is unlikely such castles could be built during periods without peaceful

³⁴. E.J.Talbot, "The Defense of Earth and Timber Castles", *Scottish Weapons and Fortifications, 1100-1800* (Edinburgh, 1981), ed.D.H.Caldwell, pp.1-9.

conditions.³⁵ Thus, the number and style of castles might indicate a social phenomenon linked to the shifting conditions within the aristocratic hierarchy. Viewed within the context of chivalry, the castle is a symbol of great importance: it visually communicates the status of the castle-builder. The idea of status, or "estate," is crucial in the construction of a castle.³⁶ Thus "castle-style" is the manipulation of compositional and iconographical elements in order to proclaim the finer qualities of the patron. Architectural references to forms associated with the "older nobility" are used to proclaim the aristocratic credibility of the patron.

The building of the "status castles" in Scotland is linked to the Anglo-Normans who arrived in the twelfth century and whose architectural programs were influenced by experiences in eleventh and twelfth century England. Norman motte-and-bailey castles could be built quickly from materials at hand at no great cost; they were

³⁵. G.Stell, "Late Medieval Defences in Scotland", *ibid.*, pp.21-54.

³⁶. The etymological link of "estate" to "status" and its social manifestations in the Middle Ages are examined by H.Kaminsky in "Estate, Nobility and the Exhibition of Estate in the Later Middle Ages", *Speculum*, 68, No.3. (1993), pp.684-709.

employed mainly as a military expedient in post-Conquest England. By the twelfth century, the high cost of castle garrisons left few nobles able to maintain several sites. Indeed, it seems the main reason for the abandonment of many castles at this time was expense.³⁷ Manorial and market developments also affected castle building. The economic growth of markets and the Matilda peace lessened the need for direct control of individual manors from local castles. Many barons were able to reside at one site and there collect the revenues of their various manors.³⁸ The implications of this economic sophistication are clearly seen in the castles. By reducing the financial burden of maintaining many sites, a noble was able to concentrate spending on one castle. The castle became increasingly subject to residential concerns; this in turn inferred new symbolic meanings. Reflecting upon the changing socio-economic situations A. Hauser observes,

³⁷. The financial burden of maintaining several castles was greater than the means of most Anglo-Norman nobles in the twelfth century. The Angevin ascension led to the abandonment of many sites built during the anarchy of Stephen and Matilda, due to political and financial reasons. See S.Painter "English Castles in the Early Middle Ages", *Speculum*, 10, No.3 (1935), pp.321-332; D.F.Renn, *Norman Castles in Britain* (London, 1968), pp.70-75.

After the eleventh century there was an enormous rise in standards of living, and men's taste in such matters as clothing, armour and housing underwent a prodigious refinement.³⁹

The use of stone, the building of large enclosures and keeps reflect such refinements. Stone is a good defensive material being immune to fire; further, it facilitates the building of walls to a girth greater than that of a palisade. It should be noted that motte-and-bailey castles were, in a few cases, revetted with timber and stone; at Abinger, England, the summit of the revetted motte was overlaid with mortar.⁴⁰ Brian Davison observes that to the viewer of this site "no earthwork would have been visible at all."⁴¹ The use of stone is as much a structural innovation as a shift to materials associated with status, reflecting the changing social conditions of the twelfth century. The architectural direction of castle building follows a steady thread of development from motte-and-bailey to stone and lime. Mr Davison further observes:

³⁸. S.Painter, *op cit.*, p.322.

³⁹. A.Hauser, *The Social History of Art, Vol.1.* (New York, 1951), p.197.

⁴⁰. B.K.Davison, "The Origins of the Castle in England", *The Archaeological Journal*, CXXIV (1967), pp.202-211.

⁴¹. *Ibid.*

If one sees the earthen motte as merely the surviving corework of a timber-revetted plinth to a great timber tower, the contrast between the early earthwork castles and the latter stone keeps is considerable reduced. We are in fact dealing with a difference in building material, between stone and timber - and both are materials capable of great verticality.⁴²

The stone castle is a vivid symbol of monetary and political status.

Combining a private residence with a seat of law, it expresses the wealth, authority and social habits which define "the noble way of life."⁴³

English stone castles also reflect the far reaching consequences of the Conquest. In Scotland, Anglo-Normans came at the behest of the king. As royal supporters, not open invaders, their military abilities were gladly accepted and used by the Scottish monarchs to further their economic and territorial ambitions. Of this Ritchie asks the question "Norman conquest or Tenurial revolution?"⁴⁴ the castles reflect this socio-economic role.⁴⁵ The role of the Anglo-Norman families in Scotland

⁴². Ibid., n.2.

⁴³. M.Bloch, *Feudal Society, Vol.2* (Chicago,1961), trans. L.A.Manyon, p.288.

⁴⁴. R.L.G.Ritchie, *The Normans in Scotland* (Edinburgh,1954), p.236.

⁴⁵. S.Cruden, *The Scottish Castle* (Edinburgh,1981), p.16.

will be discussed in the next chapter. My present concern however lies with the appearances of stone castles built between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries.

It is not my intention to classify stone castles into “types” based upon chronological or technological factors. The detriments of such a “Darwinian approach in history”⁴⁶ are evident in the many misconceptions which surround the development of castles.⁴⁷ By examining three sites, I intend to identify iconological meanings and environmental considerations in Scottish castle style. The relationship of the castle to locality and the intentions of the patron, as interpreted through the appearance of a given site and contextual evidence, are key to perceiving castles as symbolic units. The castles of Rothesay, Lochindorb and Caerlaverock provide variety in their shape and locale.

⁴⁶. D.J.Cathcart King, *The Castle in England and Wales* (London, 1988), p.28.

⁴⁷. Geoffrey Stell provides an examination of the different attempts to classify castles in “The Scottish Medieval Castle: Form, Function and ‘Evolution’” *Essays on the Nobility of Medieval Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1985), ed.K.J.Stringer, pp.195-209.

It is the visual effect of these factors upon the castle message of power, law, order and fear that will be considered.

Rothesay Castle

Located on the island of Bute in Strathclyde, Rothesay Castle has the distinction of being the only round curtain wall fortress in north Britain.⁴⁸ For this reason it has often been described as a “shell-keep.” A “shell keep” most often denotes an adapted motte-and-bailey castle; the timber garillum is replaced in stone, which crowns an artificial mound.⁴⁹ However in the case of Rothesay, there is little evidence to suggest that the curtains were raised upon a motte. Given the size of the *enceinte*, the courtyard diameter is 43 m, the girth of the walls, 3 m thick, and the extant visual evidence it seems unlikely a motte was part of the site.

To the viewer, the exterior of Rothesay presents four facades. The *enceinte* is divided into four stretches of wall, abutted at either end by a

⁴⁸. Map #1 & Figure #1

⁴⁹. D.J.Cathcart King, *op cit.*, pp.62-67.

corner tower. Each delineated length of wall, together with the respective pair of towers, creates a facade. As both the *enceinte* and towers are rounded forms, each facade presents a convex stretch of masonry which bulges foremost in the halfway point between the defining towers. The castle, while visually defined as a four-sided unit (a square), activates a great amount of rounded space because of convex facades. Surrounded by a pentagonal moat, these features create a strongly expressive exterior the viewing of which is determined by the overall composition of the site. One views the castle from beyond the outline of the moat. The length of moat in front of the north facade, which contains the gate, forms the triangular section of a pentagon which defines the shape of the moat. This moat shape emphasises the square, four-sided nature of the castle although the triangular section requires further explanation. The north facade contains the gate which is the most vulnerable part of a castle. In the triangular shape of the moat, the builders achieved maximum width at the point exactly opposite the gate. This not only creates a greater sense of security, it accentuates the visual power of the entrance-way, the feature that

differentiates the north from the other three facades. This visual effect is also facilitated by the fact the ground slopes away from the castle to the north, towards the shore.

I assume the parapets of the curtain walls and towers featured embrasure; in Eirspennill's Hakon Hakonsson's Saga, it is described that during the 1230 siege, the castle's defenders "poured out boiling pitch" onto the Norse.⁵⁰ While the thirteenth-century castle was probably crenellated, Rothesay would feature wooden hoarding and machicolations, as posited in reconstructive drawings. The sole remaining tower is partially capped by a wide strip of extra stone, which seems to be some sort of foundation remnant from a stone gallery;⁵¹ certainly the splayed base of the exterior walls was partially inspired as part of the gallery system, providing a surface for projectiles to travel horizontally, away from the castle.⁵² The tower, named the "Pigeon Tower" after the cot that occupied the interior of the upper storeys at a

⁵⁰. A.O.Anderson, *Early Sources of Scottish History, AD 500 to 1286* (Edinburgh, 1922), p.476.

⁵¹. Figure #2.

⁵². Figure #3.

later date, is pierced by arrow-loops which possibly traced an interior staircase which serviced the wall walk.

The interior appearance of the *enceinte* benefits from the convex nature of the four, exterior facades. One enters through a vaulted passageway beneath the fifteenth century forework.⁵³ The passage alights onto a large and fairly level interior courtyard.⁵⁴ This space presently contains a well and two walls of a chapel built up against the curtain wall. Off the courtyard is a flight of stairs leading to the north wall-walk, abutted by the rear of the forework to the north.⁵⁵ The arch of a postern gate and garderobe passage are cut into the western section of curtain wall, sunken off the courtyard level. The sensations of being within the curtain-walls presents a contrast with the exterior. The convex exterior is reversed with large fields of masonry coming forward at the points where the towers are connected to the courtyard. The interior facades recede in the centre, where the foremost point is at the

⁵³. Figure #4.

⁵⁴. Figure #5.

⁵⁵. Figure #6.

centre of the facade. With the exception of the chapel ruins and the flight of stairs, the interior lacks a large degree of architectural articulation. This creates a large interior space defined by the curvature of the wall. When Rothesay was in use in the thirteenth century, the inner-courtyard would have featured residential wooden structures, whose foundations are left in stone outline in the ground of the courtyard. The construction of the forework, essentially a keep, may or may not have had an effect on the number of structures in the courtyard despite its entailing the lord's moving his household in the keep.

Towers, as seen in motte-and-bailey castles, are the architectural features which are most visible and most associated with the power of the site. The keep is the building which directly develops out of the motte-and-bailey towers yet at Rothesay, curtain walls with mural towers and an interior domestic range reflect a separation of the keep's twin functions. The four towers, commanding equal sections of wall, express power, law, order and fear, the iconological message of the "castle-style," while the domestic range is more connected to the "noble way of life." Thus the site suffers little from the lack of a central keep.

In fact, by having the most monumental features at and about the curtain walls, the occupants of Rothesay merely amplified the iconological message they were seeking.

Estimated construction dates for the castle range between 1150 and the early 1200s.⁵⁶ The earliest written records of Rothesay describe a siege by the Norse in 1230.⁵⁷ The attack was led by Uspak Hakon, the King of the Isles best known for pillaging Iona in 1210.⁵⁸ With a force of eighty ships, Uspak was intent on subduing any Scot resistance to his royal title and hence did descend upon Bute and Rothesay Castle. After unsuccessful storming attempts, the Norse employed a *masculus*, a “cat,” in order to approach the walls. As the besieged dropped projectiles and “poured out boiling pitch,” onto the top of the *masculus*, to no

⁵⁶. The early date is proposed by J.Forde-Johnston in *Great Medieval Castles of Britain* (London, 1979), p.61. However as the castle is associated with the Fitz Alan family, who only acquired Bute after 1200, this early date is seemingly untenable.

⁵⁷. The Norse siege is described in three medieval sources: *The Chronicle of Man*, *The Chronicle of Lanercost* and *Eirspennill's Hakon Hakonsson's Saga*. See A.O.Anderson, *op cit.*, pp.471-476.

⁵⁸. R.Power, “Scotland in the Norse Sagas”, *Scotland and Scandinavia, 800-1800* (Edinburgh, 1990), ed.G.G.Simpson, pp.13-24.

apparent effect, the Norse "hewed at the wall with axes because it was soft."⁵⁹ Upon effecting a breach, the Norse entered the enclosure and secured the castle.

Upon the basis of the wall's softness, it has been argued that the present castle could not have been the site besieged in the 13th century.

W.M. Mackenzie feels Norse weapons would not be sufficient to the task of hewing stone and thus posits an earlier castle existed, constructed of earth, timber and clay. This is countered by S. Cruden who cites the use of a *masculus* by the Norse as indicative of their military fitness. More importantly no record or tradition mentions the castle ever being dismantled and there is architectural evidence to suggest that the castle of the siege has survived into the present.⁶⁰ This is to be discerned in the curtain-walls on top of which latter construction was raised. An example is seen on the north-east side where whinstone rubble and mortar are built up from existing crenellations. The mortar is a sandy

⁵⁹. *Eirspennill's Hakon Hakonsson's Saga*, A.O. Anderson, *op cit.*, p.476.

⁶⁰. The positions of Mackenzie and Cruden concerning Rothesay are outlined in Cruden's *The Scottish Castle*, *op cit.*, pp.30-37.

mixture of pebble and shell.⁶¹ To the touch, these sections are grainy and indeed soft. After visiting the site and examining the older sections of wall, I feel there is little evidence to suggest the Norse besieged a castle other than that which presently stands. The castle of the 1230 siege is preserved beneath the construction and additions of later periods. That the Norse were able to breach the wall because it was "soft" I do not doubt; that they used their axes, and not some other, less-dignified weaponry, is question which concerns posterity and does not alter the success of their attack.

The island of Bute was acquired by Alan, son of Walter fitz Alan, in about the year 1200.⁶² The Breton Walter fitz Alan was one of the companions of David I who came to Scotland in the 1130's, serving as the king's steward. This office became the hereditary possession of the fitz Alan family, who later ascended the throne, founding the Stewart royal line. By the thirteenth century, the family had become one the greatest landholders in Strathclyde and Lothian, with castles at

⁶¹. Figure #7.

⁶². G.W.S.Barrow, *The Anglo-Norman Era in Scottish History* (Oxford, 1980), p.68.

Renfrew, Inverwick and Dunoon.⁶³ The stone *enceinte* of Rothesay, set in dressed ashlar, reflects the wealth generated by the family estates; by 1200, the fitz Alans rivalled the kings in territorial holdings and thus financial resources. It seems that Rothesay was built by Alan, son of Walter fitz Alan, shortly after adding Bute to the family possessions; his son Walter was the “certain steward” who was recorded as leading the defence of the castle during the 1230 siege.⁶⁴ The ascension of Robert II, the first Stewart king, in 1328 made Rothesay a royal residence, a change reflected in the expansion of the site, most notably the forework and the chapel. The castle remains to this day, a possession of Walter fitz Alan's descendants.

Lochindorb Castle

Located in Moray, Lochindorb Castle sits on a small island in a loch of the same name.⁶⁵ The loch itself forms a basin in a rugged

⁶³. E.S.Armitage, *The Early Norman Castles of the British Isles* (London, 1912), p.313.

⁶⁴. A.O.Anderson, *op cit.*, p.476.

⁶⁵. Figure #8.

landscape that is surrounded by moors and mountains that rise up to 460 m above sea-level. The location is isolated and withdrawn from the towns and lands over which the lords of Badenoch, the castle's holders, held control.⁶⁶ The remoteness of this site will be made more understandable in light of the area's history. The island on which the castle sits is one Scottish acre in extent and is home to several trees and much plant life. It has been suggested that the island is partially artificial. This idea is based upon the sighting of planks and rafts washed up on the island or beneath the water in the shallows of the landing-place.⁶⁷ However, personal investigation of the island has made me sceptical of this theory. It has been posited that the wooden artifacts are possibly the remnants of a landing-place construction, or a drawbridge or even, the foundations of an antique, wooden castle.⁶⁸ Of

⁶⁶. Map #2.

⁶⁷. This idea appears in the *First Statistical Account of Scotland*. I was not so lucky on my visit to Lochindorb as to see any planks or rafts either on the shore or beneath the water.

⁶⁸. Rev.J.Grant, "The Parish of Cromdale, Inverllan and Advie", *The Counties of Moray and Nairn, The Third Statistical Account of Scotland* (Glasgow, 1965), ed.H.Hamilton, pp.398-408.

these possibilities, I feel the landing-place construction, a "pier," is the most likely. A drawbridge would be of little use on the island and there is no extant architectural evidence which would indicate such a mechanism. Of an antique wooden castle, I am unaware of any evidence to support such an argument; the presence of fortifications on the island is associated with the Anglo-Norman Comyn family who received lands in the area after the 1212 marriage of William Comyn, justiciar of Scotia, to Countess Marjory of Buchan.⁶⁹

The castle is defined by a quadrilateral trace, with semi-circular towers at each corner.⁷⁰ As the diagram indicates, an outer-wall stretches before the east and half of the north curtain-faces. This outer-wall is 2 m thick, rising up to 6 m in the least ruined sections. The curtain walls are 2.5 m thick and 6 m high; as the ground rises from the shore, the curtain-walls of the trace are slightly taller than the outer-wall construction. The present ruin remains fairly intact. The convex sections of the south-east and west towers, the stone structures within

⁶⁹. A.A.M.Duncan, *Scotland: The Making of the Kingdom* (Edinburgh, 1975), p.188.

⁷⁰. Figure #9.

the courtyard and the north-east length of the outer-wall are all collapsed, intelligible only in scattered stones and foundation lines. A few shallow depressions in the courtyard and sections of wall perhaps reflect damage wrought by Allied field artillery, who used the site as a practice target during the Second World War.

The castle ruin can only be accessed by boat. From the shore, the castle presents a fairly plain and stout image of noble fortification. It appears to be wholly composed of lengths of curtain wall without any contrasting towers; from my vantage point, both north-facing towers were hidden from view.⁷¹ The castle's relative scale to the island emphasises the architectural massing of features. Some visual effects may be conjectured. While the corner towers were only two storeys high, their appearance would seem taller, I think, due to the contrasting flat surface of the water and the small extent of the island. From the shore the castle's appearance, its details muted, would be characterised by a horizontal mass vertically accented by corner towers. Embarking in a rowboat, the castle's details and particular forms slowly begin to

⁷¹. This view-point is represented by Figure #8.

visually assert themselves.⁷² The castle seems to occupy nearly all the island, an image strengthened by the sloping ground which rises from the water to the base of the curtain-walls. The walls themselves are composed of non-uniform, quarry-faced stones, set with a grainy mortar.⁷³ The composition of the outer-wall however, features a greater uniformity of stone-shape and, in the sections nearest the gateway, rough, ashlar courses. Such visual evidence suggests the outer-wall to be a later construction, as posited by many scholars.⁷⁴ The surviving north-east and north-west towers are both 7 m in diameter and joint-holes for wooden floors are observable on the inside walls of the towers. Near the north and south-west towers three garderobes are built within the thickness of the curtain-wall. Their close proximity, accessible via the wall-walk, suggests the tower's more domestic aspects and residential use by the castle's occupants. The interior space, judged by

⁷². Figure #10.

⁷³. Figure #11.

⁷⁴. Edward I, who stayed at Lochindorb in 1303 while on his progress of Scotland, is often credited with having the outer wall built. S.Cruden, *op cit.*, pp61-62; D.MacGibbon, T.Ross, *The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland, Vol.1* (Edinburgh, 1887), pp.70-71.

the tower's diameter, would form a single space, divided by the flooring into two storeys with twin small rooms. The castle's residential space would be augmented by wooden, and eventually stone, ranges built up against the interior of the curtain walls.

From the landing place the courtyard is accessed through a wide break in the curtain wall, judged to have formerly been a gateway. Perpendicular to this "gateway," an arrow loop is cut into the west-facing length of the outer wall. Behind this slit is a curved indentation built within the thickness of the outer wall which provides the platform necessary for the use of the arrow-loop. The courtyard itself is 49 by 38m in extent, spread over fairly uneven ground.⁷⁵ The remains of stone buildings are found built up against the west and east curtain walls; with the exception of a few broken lengths of wall, the buildings are made evident solely by the outline of their foundations. Apart from these features, the courtyard is quite plain and, due to the sloping ground, the curtain walls appear shorter from the interior of the castle. Entranceways occur at the landing place, in the eastern curtain-wall

⁷⁵. Figure #12.

near the north-east tower, in the eastern face of the outer-wall and in the interior sides of the four corner towers. The entranceway in the outer wall provides the best preserved of Lochindorb's gateways. Portcullis grooves and dressed freestone are visible on the sides of the entrance. The entranceway in the eastern curtain wall provides the only access from the courtyard to the basecourt contained between the outer wall and curtain walls.⁷⁶ This seems indicative of how the basecourt was used when the castle was in operation. While it has been suggested the north-western corner of the basecourt, the area featuring the arrow loop, in the curtain-wall flanking the landing-place, contained a hall, I feel this is questionable considering the lack of free access between the residential areas and the proposed hall.⁷⁷ It seems the basecourt, derived from *basse-cour*, was intended to contain cattle as well as to complete the fortifying of the whole island. I believe the "hall" was a barn for the castle animals that lived in the basecourt.

⁷⁶. Figure #13.

⁷⁷. The hall is posited in N.S.Cowan's 1931 plan of Lochindorb.

The castle's earliest associations are with the Comyn family, who, as previously stated, are connected to the area by a marriage in 1212. This is an auspicious date, coinciding with the defeat of the rebel Guthred, son of Donald MacWilliam, heir to Moray. His father Donald had led a previous revolt in 1181-1187; conflict between Moray and the Scottish kings, representing the two ancient lines of royal descent, frequently broke into rebellion between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries.⁷⁸ It is likely the castle was built by William Comyn upon his arrival into the area as the Earl of Buchan. Its location in the interior, away from the coastal towns, certainly indicates its role as a garrison castle, intended to quell any future rebellion at its source, in the highlands of Moray. Little would indicate any of the Comyn Earls of Buchan maintained Lochindorb as a principal seat; the castle, even by thirteenth century standards, was hardly amenable to luxury. The lack of a keep and the small space afforded within the towers indicate a simple domestic arrangement for the dwellers of the castle. As a

⁷⁸. G.W.S.Barrow, *Kingship and Unity: Scotland 1000-1306* (Toronto, 1981); A.A.M.Duncan, *op cit.*

garrisoned castle, Lochindorb reflects the reasons for the arrival of the Comyns to Moray, as representatives of King William and overseers of the rebellious region. Hardly an ideal military stronghold, being dependent on the concerted influence of other castles and towns to keep lines of supply, the castle does present a powerful symbols of imposed order and royal will. In this way, does Lochindorb fulfil a useful role in the attempt to pacify and control Moray after MacWilliam's rebellion.

Caerlaverock Castle

Caerlaverock Castle is one of Scotland's most celebrated medieval buildings. Located 15 km south of Dumfries, the castle overlooks the estuary of the river Nith. The Solway Firth is to the south and the Lochar river and moorland to the west.⁷⁹ The castle is situated on low ground bounded by forest and moors, facing hills which slope towards the Nith and Lochar. The castle is triangular shaped with two corner-towers and a double-towered gatehouse.⁸⁰ Rising out of a wet moat, the

⁷⁹. Map #3.

⁸⁰. Figure #14.

curtain-walls are 7.5 m high and 45 m in length; the corner and gate towers are respectively 6.5 and 8.5 m in diameter. The enveloping wet moat, 15 to 18 m in width, is bounded by an earthen bank which, it has been posited, was once topped by a palisade.⁸¹ A second wet moat, now dry, encircled this earthen bank, creating a broad apron of space around the site. Built in red sandstone, the castle presents a vivid colour contrast with the green surroundings. It is this contrast which visually defines the castle's environmental context.

The castle is approached from the north. The massive double-towered gatehouse forms the castle's principal facade.⁸² The gateway is flanked by the two towers, in a manner similar to Roman and Continental versions of this architectural form. The gate itself is deeply cut into the fabric of the facade wall, arched and framed in a vertically defined section; a composite photograph taken from the bridge shows the distinction between the towers and this section.⁸³ The gatehouse facade

⁸¹. Figure #15.; J.Forde-Johnston, *op cit.*, pp.129-130; G.Stell, *Exploring Scotland's Heritage: Dumfries and Galloway* (Edinburgh, 1986), p.17.

⁸². Figure #16.

⁸³. Figure #

may be also seen on three, horizontal levels: the gateway section, the area up to the parapet and the caphouse. These are divided by the parapet and the level where the gateway section joins the fabric of the towers. The effect of this spatial organisation upon the viewer is an emphasising of the gateway. The gateway section protrudes from the facade and rises through the parapet into the caphouse. The gate itself however, is recessed into the facade and is dwarfed by all the other features. The height and protrusion of the gateway section accentuates the minuteness of the actual entrance passage. Not only communicating the well-protected nature of the gate, this contrast also dwarfs anyone entering into the castle; one feels very small when approaching and entering through the gatehouse. The massiveness of the gatehouse is also due to its domestic functions, housing guardrooms and, in the 14th century, the lord's chambers and hall.

Of the castle's triangular *enceinte*, only the east and west lengths of the curtain-wall remain standing. The east and west arms of the *enceinte* are 46 m in length and the southern arm is 52 m; the curtain-wall is pierced by a sole window, servicing the 15th century "New Hall"

or "Library," while the east curtain-wall contains five large windows and three smaller basement-level apertures connected to the 17th century "My Lord's Hall," or "Nithsdale Apartments."⁸⁴ The south curtain-wall is completely dismantled along with the 17th century "Long," or "Banqueting Hall" that was once built up against it; wall foundations and an arched entrance-way are the only remains of this structure. The demolition of the southern arm of the *enceinte* does however permit a very clear view of the castle interior.⁸⁵ While the eastern corner tower is also dismantled, the western tower, "Murdoch's Tower," remains in good condition and is most probably an adequate mirror of the missing tower; in fine castle "tradition," the tower's name is derived from its most renowned prisoner, Murdoch Stewart, the Duke of Albany. Like the gatehouse, the tower rises well above the level of the curtain-wall parapet. Its surface is pierced by arrow and gun loops that flank the curtain-faces and it is capped by 15th century machicolations.⁸⁶ The

⁸⁴. Figures #18 (west curtain) & #19 (east curtain).

⁸⁵. Figure #20.

⁸⁶. Figure #21.

tower has a 21 foot internal diameter and is divided into three storeys. It is accessed at courtyard level and by a stair connected to the wall-walk,.

The interior arrangement of Caerlaverock reflects the site's different periods of residency. Along with the domestic sections of the gatehouse three ranges are built up against the curtain-walls, each from a different era. The castle courtyard is surprisingly small, cramped by the three ranges; while the curtain-walls have an internal length of 42.5m, the domestic ranges reduce the sides of the triangular-shaped courtyard to 21 m.⁸⁷ This sense of restricted space is immediate upon entering the castle. The entranceway passage is long, with three sets of portcullis grooves and indications of several doors, possibly a total of five. It seems that the gatehouse was expanded both internally and externally to allow for this complex series of portcullis and gates. MacGibbon and Ross observe that the gate is built in front of an older entrance and that the present wheel-room for the drawbridge was likely

⁸⁷. J.Forde-Johnston, *op cit.*

a wooden hoarding that was later translated into stone.⁸⁸ Thus the original entrance was even further recessed in between the gatehouse towers. The gatehouse itself was the domestic centre of the castle until the building of the "Nithsdale Apartments." The entranceway passage is flanked on both sides by guardrooms. A rib-vaulted main hall was directly above the passage. Off this hall are garderobes and the lord's private rooms, built above the guardrooms in the towers. The gatehouse culminates in the caphouse built above the level of the hall and wheel-room. Connected to the gatehouse are the "Nithsdale Apartments," a three storey domestic range built during the 1630's by Robert Maxwell shortly after becoming the first Earl of Nithsdale. Renaissance in style, the range features a symmetrical, six-bay facade of which four bays remain. Moulded window frames, attached shafts and carved pediments featuring family arms and relief sculptures reflect a degree of affluence on behalf of the Earls of Nithsdale: the Classical stories which make up the sculptural program certainly reflect Robert Maxwell's styled

⁸⁸. D.MacGibbon, T.Ross, *op cit.*, pp.127-136.

nickname, "the Philosopher."⁸⁹ The inside of the range is moulded around the fire-places and chimneys of the ground and first floors. The ground floor is divided into a well-room and kitchen, while the above stories are partitioned into private chambers. A large stair case is located at the southern end of the range and provides access to the "Long Hall." The Renaissance style of the "Nithsdale Apartments" is continued in the arched entranceway of the "Long Hall." Judging from the detailing and precision of this entranceway, featuring a barrel vault beneath a blank entablature, it is probable the "Long Hall" was similar to the Nithsdale Apartments in appearance; both buildings are believed to have been built by Robert Maxwell. The New Hall is opposite to the Nithsdale Apartments and is generally dated as 15th century in origin. The two-storey building is sub-divided into three rooms, an interior arrangement indicated by the partitions of the facade. This range seems to have been used for the accommodation of guests. The interior buildings are all quite large and indicate a desire to attain a degree of comfort by maximising a limited architectural space. The piercing of

⁸⁹. Ibid.

windows through the curtain-walls also indicates a changing vision of castle-style. Status architecture of the 17th century was not that of the 13th. However as Caerlaverock was besieged in 1640 by Scottish Covenanters, barely ten years after Robert Maxwell's renovations and constructions, it seems certain socio-political realities remained unchanged.

The barony of Caerlaverock was acquired by Sir John de Maccuswell (Maxwell) in the first half of the 13th century.⁹⁰ He briefly served as Chamberlain to Alexander II between 1230-33 and is believed to have received the barony from that monarch. It is not certain whether he or his son, Sir Aymer, or grandson, Sir Herbert, built the castle. What is known is that when the castle was besieged by Edward I of England in 1300, its appearance was similar to what is seen now. The siege is recorded in the "Song of Caerlaverock," an eyewitness metrical history ascribed to Walter of Exeter, believed to have been commissioned by Sir Robert Clifford, Edward I's Warden of the March of

⁹⁰. A history of Caerlaverock and the Maxwell family is provided in William Fraser, *The Book of Carlaverock* (Edinburgh, 1873).

Scotland.⁹¹ Defended by a garrison of only sixty men, the castle was surrendered after a siege of three days. Caerlaverock was occupied by Sir Robert Clifford until 1312 when Sir Eustache Maxwell regained his family seat after declaring for Edward II. The castle was besieged several more times, being only briefly lost to the Maxwells through its active history. While written records describe frequent demolishings and rebuilding of the castle, I think these indicate only a partial dismantling and not the complete razing of the site. As both a military and symbolic unit, a castle is easily rendered ineffective by a large breach in the *enceinte*; the mottled exterior stonework of Caerlaverock indicates different periods of construction and repairs.⁹² The presently dismantled southern curtain-wall and eastern corner tower is the result of the siege of 1640. In the dismantling of one arm of the *enceinte*, the spatial distinction between the private interior of the courtyard and

⁹¹. N.Denholm-Young, "The Song of Caerlaverock and the Parliamentary Roll of Arms", *Proceedings of the British Academy* (London, 1961), pp.251-262.

⁹². Figure #22.

public exterior of the curtain-walls dissolves. With the loss of facade, the iconological message of castle-style loses its voice.

Summary

A forceful message of social distinction, order, wealth and authority forms the iconological content of castle-style. In the three castles examined in this chapter, each site visually communicates this meaning through monumental forms and environmental positioning. All the sites are “castles of *enceinte*.” Thus, the architectural space is defined by the shape and breadth of the curtain-wall enclosure. As the shapes of the enclosures differ, so do their visual effects. The convex facades of Rothesay push out, towards the viewer, between towers which serve like pins, keeping the walls from further forward movement; the interior benefits from the wall's curvature in the large amount of space which spreads directly up against the walls. The castle thrusts into the public sphere, maximising the amount of private space created. The curtain walls of Lochindorb are built close to the water's edge, emphasising their height and the complete occupation of the island by

the castle. The rectangular enclosure divides the island into four distinct facades, imbuing the natural site with a visual image of regularity. Once inside the courtyard, the walls seem quite short, barely restricting the view of the loch side. The spatial possibilities of the natural setting are fully exploited in the massing of features along the island's perimeter. Caerlaverock's unusual shape and double moat activate a large architectural space, visually accentuated by the double-towered gatehouse and the corner towers. With the reduction of curtain wall, these towers are emphasised, the gatehouse constituting an arm of the *enceinte* itself. Viewing the site, the scale and style are both overwhelming. The surrounding landscape actively forms part of this architectural unit: the marshes and woods are an additional cordon surrounding the castle.

The concerns of the patron are evident in the monumental scale and style of the castles. The financial means of the nobility is also evident in such projects. As the three castles each represent a great investment of time and money, there is little doubt that the patrons sought to establish permanent authority. The castle programs centre on

the expression of such aims. The ideas of hereditary rights and social positions being expressed in the castle are made clearer with the successful manipulation of the natural setting. The castle visually expresses the manorial claims of the patron over the surrounding environment. It is the symbolic and practical connection of the lord to the land.

Chapter III: Normans and the Introduction of Castles in Scotland

The first Normans in Scotland arrived as exiles from England in 1051. These men were soldiers formerly serving in King Edward the Confessor's "castles" in Herefordshire, expelled for dubious action during Godwine's revolt.⁹³ They travelled to Scotland where they taken into the service of King Macbeth MacFindlaech, fighting on the Day of Seven Sleepers against the forces of Malcolm Canmore and Earl Siward of Northumbria. It is with the ascension of Malcolm Canmore in 1058 that the "Norman" period of Scottish history begins.⁹⁴ Over the course of the eleventh and twelfth centuries Normans were encouraged to settle during the reigns of Malcolm and his three sons. The institutions and

⁹³. W.E.Kapelle, *The Norman Conquest of the North* (London, 1979), pp.46-47; R.L.G.Ritchie, *The Normans in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1954), pp.7-9.

⁹⁴. Macbeth was killed in 1057 as was his heir Lulach MacGillacomgain in 1058. Malcolm ascended the throne after his two rivals were dead. All three had legitimate claims to the throne through descent from the sons of Alpin: Macbeth and Lulach of Moray, descended from Loarn; Duncan and Malcolm Canmore of Dunkeld descended from Fergus Mor.

ideas which were introduced to Scotland as a result of the close relationship between the kings and the settlers, permanently altered Scottish society and its administration. The castle was a primary institution in the transformation of the kingdom.

Malcolm Canmore gained the throne with the support of the half-Norman King Edward of England. Having spent fourteen years in exile at the English court, Malcolm was familiar with Norman courtiers and clerics. Their presence certainly impressed him, influencing his vision of monarchy and its appropriate trappings. Many features of the Anglo-Norman court were later emulated by Malcolm at his court in Dunfermline. This was also due to the influence and actions of his wife Margaret, King Edward's niece. Raised at the Hungarian court, she was the daughter of the exiled Edward, a prince of the Old English House of Cedric banished by Cnut. Margaret was twelve when her father was recalled to England. She spent the next twelve years of life at the English court where she probably met Malcolm Canmore. Their marriage in 1069 linked the Scottish House of Alpin with both the House of Cedric and the dukes of Normandy. It also opened the Scottish court

up to a great infusion of Continental ideas. The influence of Norman concepts of monarchy, governance, fealty and nobility was fundamentally due to the support of Malcolm and Margaret.

In the context of eleventh and twelfth century Scotland, "Norman" is more of a linguistic and cultural distinction than an indication of descent linked to Normandy. Ritchie observes that William's host at Hastings consisted of Bretons, Gascons, Picards, Flemings, Lotharingians as well as Normans.⁹⁵ The Norman "banner" was carried by individuals whose diversity of origins were bridged by cultural affinities and a common language. In Scotland "Norman" settlers were so defined upon the basis of French customs and language. The "Normanisation" of Scotland was as much the victory of French over Gaelic as it was that of Norman over Celt.

Norman influence and military support is evident in the overturning of Scottish royal succession. The Celtic custom of tanistry or collateral succession was replaced by Malcolm and his sons with primogeniture. This transition was not, however, achieved by decree.

⁹⁵. R.L.G.Ritchie, *op cit.*, p.xvii

When Malcolm was killed in 1093 his brother Donald Bane was elevated king following the collateral custom. Malcolm's eldest son Duncan, with the aid of William Rufus, overthrew Donald Bane and usurped the throne. According to the Anglo Saxon Chronicle, he was conditionally accepted by the nobility: "Afterwards they were reconciled on the basis that he never again brought into the land English or French."⁹⁶ While this condition evidently refers to Duncan's armed supporters, it might also be a reaction to his father Malcolm's encouragement of settlement. A few months later, perhaps after fulfilling this condition, Duncan was ambushed and killed and Donald Bane resumed his reign. Duncan's half-brother Edgar inherited the royal claim. In 1097, with the aid of William Rufus, Edgar drove Donald Bane from the throne. Donald was last Scottish king elevated upon the basis of collateral succession and his overthrow by Malcolm's sons, their claim based upon primogeniture, marks the end of the Celtic monarchy. It also indicates the role taken by William Rufus in regards to Scotland. He, and his successors, consistently sought to "put a vassal" on the Scottish throne and the

⁹⁶. *The Saxon Chronicle* (London, 1823), trans. J.Ingram, p.307.

prosecution of this policy set the tone for Anglo-Scotch relations into the fourteenth century.⁹⁷

This shift in succession, facilitated by Anglo-Norman military force, was accompanied by other new ideas which were fostered at Edgar's court. Malcolm's sons had all spent considerable time at the court of England's Norman kings, typically as hostages.⁹⁸ Malcolm's sons Edgar, Alexander and David were raised in the manner of Norman nobles. Knighted and educated in eleventh century chivalry, Malcolm's sons appropriated the attributes by which the Norman nobility was socially defined: martial abilities, etiquette and manners, dress and heraldry.⁹⁹ David, the youngest son, was more Norman than Scottish in all aspects but blood. Becoming king in 1124, he ruled in the fashion of the Norman court. Thus, clerics and scribes penning grants and charters occupied his court while castles, burghs and monasteries spread out

⁹⁷. W.E.Kapelle, *op cit.*, pp. 153-157.

⁹⁸. Malcolm's border raids provoked strong retaliations in which the Scottish king was consistently humbled.

⁹⁹. D.Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain, 1000-1300* (New York, 1992), P.25.

across his domain. David was the first Scottish king to mint coinage, founding mints at Berwick and Roxborough. He was also the first Scottish king “to embrace the rituals and ethos of knighthood.”¹⁰⁰ These aspects of his reign clearly set him apart from past kings and drew the Scottish court into the floodstream of French medieval culture; the word “court” itself and the clerical style of rule it connotes are both French in origin.¹⁰¹ While his father and brothers introduced many Norman conventions, it was under David that the “Normanisation” of Scotland came to full flower. His appointment of Normans to the highest offices, his policies of aggressive settlement and economic development transformed the role of the Scottish nobility. This, in turn, transformed the nobles themselves.

David's aim was a centralised kingship. In order to extend royal authority, he granted large estates to his close supporters. They divided these estates into fees distributed amongst their armed retainers. The economic basis of the fee was agriculture and thus, a pastoral peasantry

¹⁰⁰. Ibid., p.153.

¹⁰¹. R.L.G.Ritchie, *op cit.*, p.81.

was encouraged to become agrarian.¹⁰² Fee holders built castles and established themselves as local representatives of the king. In this assertion of authority, the motte and bailey castle was an active “symbol of alien authority.”¹⁰³ In claiming all lands were fundamentally royal possessions, David aspired to a level of power never before seen in Scotland. The strength of such kingship lay in the mutually dependent relationship between the crown and the nobility. As the crown was the source of land, the nobility was the source of security. In the resulting tenurial hierarchy, wealth and power rest with royal patronage. This model of feudal relations was only partially realised in Scotland. In comparing the feudal experience of Scotland to England, Barrow observes:

Of course, the king and the great magnates dominated the land and its people, as they were to do until the eighteenth century, but the majority of baronies were small, knighthood remained comparatively rare, and there seems to have been much less intensive villanization of the peasantry.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰². Ibid., p.170.

¹⁰³. G.G.Simpson, B.Webster, “Charter Evidence and the Distribution of Mottes in Scotland”, *Essays on the Nobility of Medieval Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1985), ed. K.J.Stringer, pp.1-24.

¹⁰⁴. G.W.S.Barrow, *The Anglo-Norman Era in Scottish History* (Oxford, 1980), pp.167-168.

While the crown and nobility operated on feudal terms, outside of court service and loyalty remained as connected to clan as to vassalage. The degree to which David was able to assert his authority varied with different parts of the kingdom. Cumbria and Lothian, the areas with the most foreign settlement, were firm supporters of the crown. Galloway was not so compliant. Unsurprisingly the high number of motte and bailey castles in Galloway contrasts with the few identified from this period in Cumbria and Lothian.¹⁰⁵ In the northern areas where the crown held less sway, the circumstances were different. In 1130 David invaded the north to suppress the rebellion of Angus "King of Moray", grandson of Lulach and northern royal claimant. Defeating Angus at Stracathro, David annexed Moray. He divided the land into baronies, fees, merchant burghs and monasteries. The "colonists" were Anglo-Norman landholders, Flemish merchants and French churchmen. The "colonisation" of Moray aimed at the firm establishment of royal law and taxes, trading centres and the extension of spiritual control in an Christian area more Patrician than Roman. The castle, burgh and

¹⁰⁵. G.G.Simpson, B.Webster, *op cit*.

monastery were the means by which David's centralised kingship would be pursued.

The castles built during David's reign were mainly wooden motte and bailey constructions. Simpson and Webster posit three "types" of castles may be perceived in Lothian and Galloway.¹⁰⁶ Administrative castles were regional centres overseen by sheriffs and connected to towns or burghs, such as Roxborough and Berwick. Fee castles were the private possessions of barons and lesser-gentry, usually close to royal demesne lands. Settlement castles are "frontier" or "pioneering" centres, intended as the vanguard in hostile areas for the assertion of royal authority. These three "types" of castles all serve to visually enforce the claims of overlordship made by the crown.

In the establishment of authority, the castle operated as both a military centre and as a symbolic unit. While the meanings to be derived from pallisaded enclosures and raised towers were not difficult to interpret, the private nature of the castle was new.

It stood for more than self-defence of the lord and his possessions; it represented in physical terms the fief and the

¹⁰⁶. Ibid.

social, economic and military position of its holder. It was both the symbol of personal power of the lord and a factor in his relations with his overlord ¹⁰⁷

This personal association with the landholding underscores the feudal organisation the castle represents. In this way, the castle reflects status.

It also reflects social functions. Judicial responsibilities were exercised at the gate, the point of connection between the private and public space.

The location of the private residence in a raised tower is a visual indicator of social differences which are underlined by military threat.

The palisade is both a protective cordon and an emblem of "domestic exemption."¹⁰⁸

Castles were also the centres of agrarian economies. As such, the castle holder's managing abilities were as crucial as his martial prowess.

Jean Scammell notes the social distinction between "cultivators and

¹⁰⁷. A.D.Saunders, "Introduction: Five Castle Excavations", "Reports on the Institutes Research Project into the Origins of the Castle in England", *Archeological Journal*, Vol. 134 (1977), pp.1-8.

¹⁰⁸. G.Duby, "Introduction: Private Power, Public Power", *A History of Private Life: Vol.2 - Revelations of the Medieval World* (Cambridge, Mass., 1988), trans.A.Goldhammer, pp.18-19.

warriors" is emphasised with the raising of private fortresses.¹⁰⁹ While the chivalrous language of status conduct encouraged an aversion to farming and physical labour, such fashion could only be followed and maintained by landholders who were able agrarian managers. The castle reflects both social status at court and agricultural success in the landholding.

In the context of social distinctions, the castle holders themselves are worth examination. The Normans who arrived during David's reign were "new men", adventurers seeking fortune in "the land for younger sons."¹¹⁰ When considering the origins of the families prior to their arrival in Scotland this label is appropriate. The Fitz Alans, Bruces, Balliols and Comyns, the most powerful families in Scotland by the thirteenth century, are all descended from individuals who either fought at Hastings or arrived as a result of the Conquest. Their offspring were the companions of Malcolm's children at the royal court. These men

¹⁰⁹. J.Scammell, "The Formation of the English Social Structure: Freedom, Knights and Gentry, 1066-1300", *Speculum*, 68, No.3 (1993), pp.591-618.

¹¹⁰. G.W.S.Barrow, *op cit.*; R.L.G.Ritchie, *op cit.*

became the bodyguards, advisors and friends of Malcolm's sons. Upon the ascension of David, these men formed the upper echelon of government, supplanting the native nobility in influence and patronage, if not in status. The "new men" in Scotland, as in England and France, were highly aware that their rise based on service and not birth separated them from the older nobility. Their social rank could only be defined by their virtues, habits and aristocratic trappings. Their ambition for prestige and wealth, as further emulation of the older nobility, was directed by David into his pacification of the Celtic hinterlands and consolidation of authority. Wealth, derived from land holdings, certainly spurred ambition into action and made the accumulation of honour profitable. The "new men's" anxiety about birth matched that of the royal claim of Malcolm's sons; both lacked complete credibility. In such this situation, the pursuit of ambition is cultivated as service. In the "frontier areas" of Scotland, this basic relationship of service and reward was used by the crown to advance territorial aspirations.¹¹¹ It also granted favour to the "new men" whose ambitions

¹¹¹. W.E.Kapelle, *op cit.*, pp.202-203.

were animated by fearless enthusiasm. In this situation, "ambition...made a man busy in both sense: externally active and pressed for time."¹¹² For David's "new men", time was surely the only obstacle to their desired establishment amongst the nobility.

The castle, as a private, noble residence, was the most significant symbol of status for the "new men." It is fitting that the castle, a mirror of the martial and political abilities of its holder, is the product of peace. The Normans involved in David's colonisation were aware of their opportunity to press hereditary claims to their new lands. The building of a castle, especially in stone, expressively links the family to the land holding. The recognition of such links was a recognition of the family bloodline. The acquisition of hereditary rights was what the "new men" wanted yet in the twelfth century, their castles were more expedient than visually satisfying in expressing these ambitions. The stone castles built by their descendants in the thirteenth century, are more accurate portraits of ambition. Expensive and time consuming, the raising of a

¹¹². A.Murray, *Reason and Society in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1990), p.105.

stone and lime castle is indicative of peace and the recognition of authority. It seals the conquest.¹¹³

David died in 1153 and was succeeded by his grandson Malcolm IV. Ninety-nine years after the Day of Seven Sleepers, the Scottish monarchy bore more in common with the courts of London and Caen than the traditional assemblies at Scone. The institution of hereditary court offices, a permanent Curia Regis, the use of charters and the elevation of primogeniture over tanistry were firmly established facets of governance by the ascension of Malcolm IV. Over the course of his reign (1153-1165) and his successor William I (1165-1214), the colonisation of the hinterlands continued, resulting in the further growth of the great family estates, burghs and monasteries into the thirteenth century. At this same time, the southern parts of the kingdom developed apace with northern England. Economic prosperity and political stability in these areas saw the enrichment of the nobility. The construction of stone castles was a result of this prosperity.

¹¹³. G.Stell, "The Scottish Medieval Castle: Form, Function and 'Evolution'", *Essays on the Nobility of Medieval Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1985), ed. K.J.Stringer, pp.195-209.

Kinclaven Castle

Kinclaven provides an example of an early stone castle. Built upon the banks of the river Tay in Perth-shire, estimated construction dates for the castle hover around the turn of the thirteenth century.

Kinclaven is a rectangular castle of *enceinte*, enclosing a courtyard with a diameter of 12 m girded by 7.5 m tall curtain walls.¹¹⁴ Although presently overgrown and neglected, the castle retains the echo of its iconological message.¹¹⁵

The land about the castle is varied. To the north and west, the ground is level and wooded. It slopes gently down to the river to the east and steeply to the south. With the exception of the west facade, the enclosure is breached on three sides. It is evident the south-east and north-east corners featured towers. Cruden, MacGibbon and Ross all posit these towers were square.¹¹⁶ While the stone traces at the north-

¹¹⁴. Figure #1.

¹¹⁵. Figure #2.

¹¹⁶. S.Cruden, *The Scottish Castle* (Edinburgh, 1981), pp. 50-51; D.MacGibbon, T.Ross, *The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland, Vol.1* (Edinburgh, 1887), pp.67-69.

east corner do indicate a square layout, examination of the south-east corner reveals the ground to be slightly raised and rounded; this shape is further accentuated by one or two stones remain set in the earth. The contrast of a square tower to the west and a round tower to the east is quite feasible given the natural site. I feel the south-east tower, facing the river and cresting the steep slope, serves to enhance the visual effect of elegance and height produced by the slope. The north-east tower, facing the fairly level ground to the north, achieves its visual effect in emphasising girth and solidity. Although both towers seem to have been of similar dimensions, the shape directs the visual emphasis: a round tower, being one continuous surface, emphasises height while the angled, three sided square tower emphasises girth. The main gate was situated in the northern curtain wall, the facade furthest from the river. It featured a portcullis and a drawbridge which stretched over a ditch, which enclosed the site to the west, north and the east. The fourteenth century author known simply as Henry the Minstrel described Kinclaven in the context of Sir William Wallace's siege of 1297:

Leit doun the bryg, kest up the yettis wide,

The frayit folk entrit, and durst noche byde.¹¹⁷

On the northern facade the curtain wall thickens inwardly to the east of the gate way. This seems to indicate an interior stair, presumably giving access to both the wall walk and the wheel room above the gate. Apart from this slight feature, the courtyard is wildly overgrown and lacks any structural remains. A slight depression near the southern curtain wall is the only indication of any interior building.

While lacking the iconographic complexity of the other sites previously examined, the ruined Kinclaven does present a stark expression of "castle style." The lower sections of the curtain walls reveal ashlar courses and the postern gate in the western facade is similarly set in finished stone. The enclosure's walls, particularly the southern facade, tower well above the viewer, an effect that is enhanced by the unarticulated exterior wall surface. Above all, the simplicity of the ruins serves to accentuate the relationship of the architectural volumes to the natural setting. Viewed from the riverside, the castle appears as the natural extension of the sloping ground, emulating the

¹¹⁷. D.MacGibbon, T.Ross, *op cit.*

visual effects achieved with a motte castle. Kinclaven seems to grow directly out of the ground upon which is set, an effect that the present state of overgrowth emphasises.

The starkness of Kinclaven is contrasted by castles raised in the mid-thirteenth century at Dirleton and Bothwell. Both sites are monumentally scaled, detailed and in excellent states of preservation. The castles exhibit both the sophistication of the Scottish nobility and the aspirations to greatness and permanence of the patrons.

Dirleton Castle

Located in East Lothian, Dirleton castle is one of the most august and intimidating buildings preserved since the Middle Ages. Resting upon a rocky outcrop, the castle is defined by a quadrilateral *enceinte* featuring high curtain walls and circular towers.¹¹⁸ The castle was possessed by three families, all of whom contributed distinct sections of construction: the de Vauxs, the Halyburtons and the Ruthvens. As a result of the castle's long history of occupancy and its' excellent state of

¹¹⁸. Figure #3.

preservation, one may discern the language of power and domestic refinement as it evolved over four centuries. Certainly the changing outlooks and tastes in the trappings of status are evident in the castle's features.

The castle crowns a hill, resting upon exposed rock, from which the Firth of Forth and much countryside is visible. The shape of the *enceinte* follows the natural contours of the outcrop. While the west side of the site is a steep, bare rock-face, the other three sides were originally enclosed by a moat. Only before the southern arm of the *enceinte* does the moat still exist, the other parts filled in during the fourteenth century. The retention of the moat before the south facade seems due to two reasons: it is the facade that features the main gate and the demolition carried out during the War of Independence was centred on the south-east and north-east towers, the masonry of which was hurled into the moat.¹¹⁹ I presume the materials that were not used again in other construction phases are still in the covered moat, although I am unaware of any excavations taking place for such a reason. The south

¹¹⁹. J.S.Richardson, *Dirleton Castle (Edinburgh, 1982)*, guidebook, p.5.

facade is dominated by the thirteenth century group of towers which form the south-west corner of the enclosure. This group comprises the sole visible remains of the de Vaux castle, with the exception of the base of the south-east tower. The group features a round keep flanked to the north-west by smaller square and round towers. Set in dressed ashlar courses, the deVaux buildings are deeply built into the visible rock of the outcrop.¹²⁰ The use of the natural base would confound any sapper while also supporting the weight of the towers. With an exterior diameter of 11 m, the keep is two-storeys tall, pierced by three windows on the upper level. With a wall thickness of 3 m, the keep is extremely muscular and seems more broad than tall; a solid mass “growing” directly out of the rocky base, an effect which visually temporises the achievement of height. East of the de Vaux keep is the gateway, dating from the fourteenth century Halyburton phase of construction. The original gate, in the same location, was built over with erection of Halyburton forework. Framed by two projecting jambs, the gateway forms a tall-pointed arch. Nearly at the level of the parapet the pointed arch is set

¹²⁰. Figure #4.

in three bands, flanked by the ruined corbels cresting the jambs.¹²¹ The south-east and north-east corner towers that were cast down in 1311 were both round and projected off the *enceinte*. As previously stated, the plinth of the south-east tower is visible beneath the construction of the Halyburton curtain wall. Mackay Mackenzie attests excavations in the north-east corner have revealed the lower foundation courses of the corner tower.¹²² Excavations also reveal the north-west corner lacked a tower yet the visual effects of accentuated height would be achieved through the bare rock-face of the western face.¹²³ Built over in many places, the de Vaux curtain walls consisted of dressed ashlar courses rising from spreading bases. Contrasted with the large stone and rubble masonry of the Halyburton walls, the de Vaux curtains possess both strength and crafted elegance.¹²⁴ Both traits are key elements in status

¹²¹. Figure #5.

¹²². W.Mackay-Mackenzie, *The Medieval Castle in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1927), p.49.

¹²³. Figure #6.

¹²⁴. Figures #7 (south-west corner, de Vaux) & #8 (north-east corner, Halyburton).

architecture. Viewing the thirteenth century south-west corner, I am struck by the balance and refinement evidenced in this application of "castle style." It would seem the de Vaux family spared little expense in the building of the castle.

Upon entering the courtyard, the castles' thirteenth century construction disappears beneath the Halyburton and Ruthven buildings. The present amount of open space in the courtyard is due to the ruined brewhouse and sixteenth century hall. While the de Vaux courtyard would have been fairly open, with wooden ranges and stables built against the walls, later periods of occupancy saw the clustering of new buildings in the courtyard. The de Vaux keep is entered via the sixteenth century Ruthven Lodging which abuts the lesser close, resting upon thirteenth century foundations. The ground floor of the keep is a six-sided vaulted chamber perforated by three arrow loops on the southern adjoining walls. There is access to a garderobe located between the keep and the square tower, and a small hearth opposite the walls with arrow loops. The vaulted ceiling is articulated by ribs which spring from the walls at the level of the arched passageways. This arrangement

is repeated in the second storey Lord's Chamber on a greater scale with greater elegance. Ascending via the stairs in the lesser close, one enters the Lord's Chamber. The ground floor vault is replaced by a domed ceiling, articulated by ribs. The interior diameter of the chamber is 6.5 m. The space is visually enhanced by both the dome and the deeply recessed window niches, adjoining on the chambers' southern side. Each window niche features a banded arch and inset stone benches. As with the ground floor, the chamber's hearth faces the south wall window niches. It is large, with detailed carved shafts supporting a moulded, broad arch. Moving westward beneath a pointed arch, one enters the privy which occupies the upper story of the square tower. This room is 4.5 m in length and is rib-vaulted. Two braziers and an adjacent garderobe complete the privy's amenities. Directly off the privy is the stair leading up to the parapet level of the keep. The level is nearly wholly occupied by the exterior of the dome of the Lord's Chamber, which delineates the circuit of the wall walk.¹²⁵ These features account for the remains of the thirteenth century domestic arrangement.

¹²⁵. Figure #9.

The de Vaux (or de Vallibus) family acquired the barony of Dirleton in the twelfth century. The family was a major landholder in Cumberland, originating in a grant from Henry II to Hubert de Vaux in the 1150's.¹²⁶ During the reigns of Malcolm IV and William I royal charters were witnessed by John de Vaux, Hubert's younger brother. It is most likely that John de Vaux was the first "feudal" lord of Dirleton. John died in 1180 and his son William succeeded to the barony, which was to remain in the family into the reign of David II (1329-1371). The present structure replaced a timber motte castle from the twelfth century, which may have occupied the same site. Armitage notes that 5 km from the site is a large motte called Castle Hill.¹²⁷ The thirteenth century castle is attributed to either William's son John or his grandson Alexander. While little is known about Alexander, John de Vaux was the seneschal to Marie de Coucy, consort of Alexander II (1214-1249). This was certainly a position of status sufficient to fund the building of an elaborate stone castle. Dirleton was besieged in 1298 by English forces

¹²⁶. G.W.S.Barrow, *op cit.*, p.198.

¹²⁷. E.S.Armitage, *The Early Norman Castles of the British Isles* (London, 1912), p.319.

commanded by Anthony de Beck, Palatine Bishop of Durham.

Alexander's son John withstood the assaults until the arrival of siege engines. The castle was taken and occupied by minions of Edward I until 1311 when it was seized by the Scots under Robert the Bruce. In accordance with Bruce's practise, part of the curtain wall was demolished, along with the south-east and north-east towers and the gate. When the grand-daughter of John de Vaux married Adam Halyburton in 1350, the barony and castle passed into the possession of the Halyburton family.

Bothwell Castle

Overlooking the river Clyde, Bothwell castle is located in the county of Lanark. The name itself is tentatively posited by George Thomson as derived from "both" (eminence) and "wale/well" (fort): bothwell (fort upon an eminence).¹²⁸ The castle is very large, resting upon level ground that slopes southward to the riverbank. Built of bright

¹²⁸. G.Thomson, "The Parish of Bothwell", *Third Statistical Account of Scotland, County of Lanark* (Glasgow, 1960), p.277.

red sandstone, Bothwell presently consists of a rectangular *enceinte* measuring 99 by 43 m.¹²⁹ The most prominent feature is the tall thirteenth century keep. Set into the western curtain wall, the keep is separated from the courtyard by its own moat. With walls 4.5 m thick, the keep rises 25 m, enclosing an interior diameter of 20 m. Partially destroyed in 1337, only the courtyard half of the keep remains, the rest is built over by a blocking wall. Bothwell's present appearance is, like Dirleton, the result of many occupancies and phases of construction. As discovered through excavation, the original layout was far grander than the present rectangular *enceinte*.¹³⁰ As the plan indicates, the northern wing wall off the keep was to extend to a double towered gatehouse. Off the gatehouse, a north-east length of curtain wall would connect a circular tower which formed the north corner of the east facade. The ruins indicate that these curtain walls were never built; the foundations of the gatehouse and tower were never completed beyond a few courses of masonry. Construction was interrupted by the War of Independence.

¹²⁹. Figure #10.

¹³⁰. J.R.Kenyon, *Medieval Fortifications* (Leceister, 1990), pp.63-69.

When building resumed in the fourteenth century, the exterior half of the keep was already dismantled and the planned *enceinte* was abandoned in favour of the more modest rectangular enclosure. In the late fourteenth century the present northern curtain wall was built, permanently fixing the castle's northern expansion.

The castle is approached from the north where an outer ditch remains. Beyond the ditch are the gatehouse and eastern corner tower foundations, separated from the northern curtain wall by an expanse of level ground. The northern curtain wall is made of large rock and rubble masonry resting upon a coursed plinth.¹³¹ This wall was heightened, possibly in the fifteenth century when the courtyard hall was built. The gap in the northern facade indicates the castle's gate, torn down in the seventeenth century; this wall was recently filled in with contemporary masonry by Historic Scotland. The western facade, constituting the thirteenth century remains, consists of the keep, adjoining wing walls and the "prison tower" which forms the south-west corner. The wall raised to block off the ruined side of the keep is now stripped of any

¹³¹. Figure #11.

facing, revealing a mass of various, packed stones.¹³² The window arches of the upper storey are the only visible signs of the keep behind the blocking west wall. Extending southward from the keep is a wing wall of coursed ashlar, connecting the keep to the “prison tower.” The “prison tower” is a small circular tower that forms the south-west corner of the present *enceinte*.¹³³ Similar to Dirleton, the “prison tower” features two, corbelled garderobes. The tower is flanked to the east by a sunken postern gate which is the last remaining thirteenth century feature. East of this gate extends the fifteenth century southern curtain wall and south-east corner tower; again like Dirleton, the castle rests upon exposed stone, which serves as a craggy plinth for the structure.¹³⁴ The southern curtain is pierced with numerous window arches, the sole indicators of the courtyard arrangement of the southern interior ranges. The eastern curtain is of the same period as the northern facade and of similar appearance. The ruined north-east square tower, of which only a

¹³². Figure #12.

¹³³. Figure #13.

¹³⁴. Figure #14.

few courses remain, seems to have served as the castle keep, replacing the ruined western keep. Although this square keep was built up in the early fifteenth century, its foundations were laid in the thirteenth century. Presumably its importance arose following the 1337 demolition of the western keep.

The refined courtyard of the castle contrasts strongly with the roughness of the exterior. The levelled ground and the interior facades imbue the space with a sense of calm order and volumetric balance. The courtyard is dominated by the preserved wall of the western keep.¹³⁵ Passing over the interior moat via a small drawbridge, the keep is entered through a pointed doorway shadowed at the parapet level by stone hoarding. The keep is pierced by two windows at the level of the hall and the uppermost storey. A doorway connects the upper storey to the southern wall walk leading to the "prison tower." Entering the keep one walks through a zigzag passage which alights upon the Lord's Hall. Originally resting upon a wooden floor, this room was octagonally shaped and rib-vaulted. The single window niche, looking eastward into

¹³⁵. Figure #15.

the courtyard, is barrel vaulted and fronted by a pointed arch. Judging from the visible trace of wall ribs, it seems the arrangement of the window niche was repeated on other sides of the keep: each niche served as a bay in the vaulting system.¹³⁶ In between the niches are the remains of rib-springers which effectively mask the corners of the octagon. The rib vaulting in the keep would certainly have been made of wood, stucco and paint.¹³⁷ The use of decorative wooden vaulting is witnessed elsewhere in North Britain and its ornamental use at Bothwell presents a further refinement of "castle style." Stone vaulting was not only very expensive, primarily because the skills were rare, the structural support necessary would greatly alter the appearance of the keep. The elegant, ashlar exterior of the keep would be visually broken up by the necessary buttressing, even with the tremendous girth of keep's walls.. The cost of such construction was beyond the means of even great magnates. The upper stories of the keep were unvaulted, evidenced in the joint-holes for floor rafters and the horizontal string

¹³⁶. Figure #16.

¹³⁷. S.Cruden, *op cit.*, p.80; W.D.Simpson, *Bothwell Castle* (Edinburgh, 1990), guidebook, p.22.

courses which delineate the two levels.¹³⁸ The uppermost room was the privy while the lower was a retainer or common hall. Beneath the Lord's Hall is the basement, containing a well and the base of the keep's central pillar, neatly cut in half by the blocking west wall.¹³⁹ This pillar extended through the basement ceiling to form a central pier in the Lord's Hall. The resulting vaulting arrangement would be akin to that of a chapter house. One can imagine the arrangement of the keep on four levels: basement, the Lord's Hall, the common hall and the privy. Corresponding to the levels above the basement are garderobes located in the wing walls. Access to the wall walk and "prison tower" is off the privy. This provided the lord with access to the "prison tower" and its adjacent postern gate. The "prison tower" is divided into three storeys, the lowest of which is the cell from which the tower derives its name. The tower was intended as a strong post for the defence of the southern postern gate. The lack of surface articulation and the cramped spaces indicate the tower was not used for domestic purposes.

¹³⁸. Figure #17.

¹³⁹. Figure #18.

The estate of Bothwell was acquired by the Flemish Olifard family in the 1150's.¹⁴⁰ Upon the death of Walter Olifard, Alexander II's justiciar of Lothian, in 1242 Bothwell passed into the hands of Walter de Moravia following an expedient marriage.¹⁴¹ It was Walter who built the first stone castle on the present site. The scale of the planned castle, along with the refined masonry and detailing of the keep, clearly indicate this residence was contemplated and constructed in peaceful conditions. The placid reigns of Alexander II and Alexander III were appropriate for the realisation of such a project. The construction seems to have begun shortly after Walter acquired Bothwell. The keep was begun in about 1250.¹⁴² Thus, at the time of the War of Independence, only the keep, wing walls and "prison tower" were completed and the great *enceinte* was only at foundation levels. The castle was fought over between 1289 and 1337; after passing from one side to the other, Sir Andrew de Moray rendered the site untenable by demolishing half of the

¹⁴⁰. G.W.S.Barrow, *op cit.*, pp.44-45; A.A.M.Duncan, *Scotland: The Making of the Kingdom* (Edinburgh, 1975), p.136.

¹⁴¹. A.A.M.Duncan, *op cit.*, p.440.

¹⁴². J.Kenyon, *op cit.*, p.69.

keep. The site was unattended until 1362 when the Douglas family obtained the barony and occupied the castle. This event signalled a new phase of construction. This was embarked upon with a vision of "castle style" that partook of new social conditions and thus, inferred new iconological programs.

Summary

The refinement and strength seen at Dirleton and Bothwell reflect the progress of Norman social ascent. Descendants of David's "new men" were, by the thirteenth century, the most powerful magnates in Scotland. The transformation of their residences from wood to stone castles illustrates their financial and political success. The keeps of Dirleton and Bothwell are status portraits, structures with the highest degrees of defensibility and domestic luxury. The symbolism inferred by the keeps is dual: externally bespeaking the public voice of power, law, order and fear, while internally using the public voice of wealth, prestige and social habits. The height of the keeps, for example, partakes in both of these voices. As a public representation of military and social status,

elevated far above the level of common life, the keep's height is its most visually dominant feature. The location of the privy in the uppermost storey emphasises the hierarchy which characterises even private social relations.¹⁴³ The privy's location also indicates the functional aspect of height: the concentration of light and the facilitation of drainage. The castle's also reflect a tremendous investment in time and money. Even though Bothwell was never constructed along its original lines, that which was built undoubtedly consumed much of the barony's income for some time. Viewed as such, it is unsurprising that the families which funded the building of such castles were anxious to establish hereditary rights to the sites.¹⁴⁴ In associating their bloodlines to their material possessions, the Norman families sought permanence of position. Their claim to the land was most succinctly expressed in their residences. The keeps and curtain walls of Dirleton, Bothwell and Kinclaven which "grow" out of the ground and rocks upon which they rest, illustrate the

¹⁴³. P.Dixon, B.Lott, "The Courtyard and The Tower: Contexts and Symbols in the Development of Late Medieval Great Houses", *Journal of the British Archeological Association*, Vol.CXLVI (1993), p.95.

¹⁴⁴. N.Denholm-Young, *History and Heraldry, 1254-1310* (Oxford, 1965), p.77.

connections the families sought to make to the land. This visual connection to the earth, coupled with the great architectural scale, creates a profound expression of monumentalism. The hereditary and political aspiration of the families were certainly as solidly based as their castles. The ambitious building campaigns indicate the families were seeking to ease any anxiety of temporality.

The deaths of Alexander III in 1286 and Margaret, Maid of Norway in 1290, brought the royal line of Alpin to an end. The subsequent War of Independence saw the final phase of Scottish "Normanisation." David I's legacy to his successors was a institutionalised infrastructure for the enlargement of royal authority and the pacification of the Celtic hinterlands. His "new men" and their castles were integral in the realisation of such policies. It is in this role, as propagators of a royal dynastic message, that the Normans served the Scottish crown. The resulting expansion of royal authority, respect for royal law and agricultural and mercantile development are the evident results of "Normanisation." The financial and social prosperity enjoyed by the families in the thirteenth century reflects the profitability of such

policies. Where David's "new men" erected wooden castles in a frontier setting, their descendants built in stone under relative peaceful conditions. Military concerns of security gave way to residential convenience and status presentation. The benefits of twelfth century colonisation were reaped by the generations of the subsequent centuries. The Norman conquest was complete in all regards save one, the crown. Upon Margaret's death in 1290, the two contenders for the throne, John Balliol and Robert the Bruce, were both descendants of David I's Norman companions. The ascension of Robert I in 1306, and the founding of the Stewart line with the marriage of the Bruce's daughter Marjorie with Walter fitz Alan, was the start of a new royal dynasty in Scotland. Expressing a dynastic message, castles continued to be used well into the fifteenth century. However, this Norman "tool" would now serve a Norman dynasty.

Conclusion

In examining the forms and meanings of "castle style", it becomes clear that military considerations are overshadowed by political and status symbolism. A castle's martial appearance expresses a claim of authority and social prestige. The strength of the patron's claim was synonymous with the strong image of his castle. In "castle style" strength is expressed in monumental forms. This expression of strength underlies the environmental positioning of the castle and determines the iconographic elements of the visual program. The curtain walls, towers, keeps, moats, crenellations and gate houses form an architectural vocabulary, elements of which appear in other building forms. Crenellated architecture is an architectural language of power. The widespread use of "castle style" in ecclesiastical, monastic and town architecture evidences this "non-functional" application of "military" features.¹⁴⁵ It should thus be clear that crenellated architecture is not an reliable indicator of violence and militarism in medieval Scotland. When

¹⁴⁵. C.Coulson, "Hierarchism in Conventual Crenellation", *Medieval Archaeology*, Vol.26 (1982), pp.69-100.

considering the time and cost involved, the construction of crenellated architecture seems to indicate times of peace and prosperity.

As with any form of architecture, "castle style" represents the concerns of the patron. These concerns were clearly the overt display of power, authority and social distinction. The castle builders in twelfth and thirteenth century Scotland were foreigners needing to make connections with their recently acquired possessions. These "new men" were united in their dependence upon the crown for social ascension and the accumulation of wealth. The cultivated relations between the crown and the "new" nobility served the political aspirations of both groups. The latter was desirous of personal wealth while the former sought to extend royal authority over Scotland's Celtic regions. This relationship of service and reward is highly evident in the colonisation of Galloway and Moray, where military participation was rewarded with land grants and titles. The crown's influence in aristocratic marriages, though hardly absolute, was another means of reward at the king's disposal. The marrying of "new men" to the heirs of established families was a way to satisfy mutual ambition. The physical representation of royal

favour and rewards was key to those seeking to permanently establish their status. The “new men” needed the respect of the society they proposed to exploit. This was an anxiety that fuelled the display of “nobility” that underlies the castle. The crown manipulated this anxiety for the realisation of policy in Galloway and Moray; the castles expressed both the patron's ambition and the dynastic aspirations of the crown. Both sought hereditary ownership's of their possessions. The descendants of Malcolm Canmore faced frequent rebellions against their attempts to found a dynasty on the basis of primogeniture. The crown encouraged castle construction as a means to make claims of authority and extend support for their dynastic aspirations. Commenting upon the anxieties of kings and nobles in medieval Europe, Howard Kaminsky describes the medieval estate as “a reified status continuously validating itself by exhibition in the public space of the polity.”¹⁴⁶ For the patron, the castle was the solid representation of “nobility”. In Scotland, men lacking native ancestry and significant birth used the trappings of

¹⁴⁶. H.Kaminsky, “Estate, Nobility and the Exhibition of Estate in the Later Middle Ages”, *Speculum*, 68, no.3 (1993), pp.684-709.

nobility to publicly assert their virtue and stature. The castle was the most important of trapping.

In architecturally reflecting the “acquisition of rank by virtue”¹⁴⁷, material and iconographic considerations are paramount. The scale of construction, especially height, the arrangement of features and the type of stone are all measures of refinement. Dressed ashlar, for example, is the most expensive type of available stonework. Naturally, its use inferred the patron's level of affluence and was thus an important mark of rank. The red sand-stone ashlar courses and monumental scale of Caerlaverock and Bothwell indicate the wealth of the two baronies and their respective lords. They also reflect the political history of Alexander III's reign, 1249-1286. The Maxwell of Caerlaverock and the Morays of Bothwell held positions of substantial authority at different points of Alexander III's reign.¹⁴⁸ The stature and rewards enjoyed by both families are clearly reflected in the visual programs of their castles.

¹⁴⁷. A.Murray, *Reason and Society in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1990), p.94.

¹⁴⁸. A.A.M.Duncan, *Scotland: The Making of the Kingdom* (Edinburgh, 1975), pp.566-567.

The symbolic power of "castle style" is clearly seen in Robert I's policy of demolition during the War of Independence. Castles that were successfully besieged by the Scots were partially dismantled. This policy reflects a sensitivity to the military and symbolic qualities of castles.

The casting down of walls and towers, such as at Dirleton, rendered the fortress useless. It also reflected the castle holder's loss of authority; as the visual representation of stature and power, the castle symbolised the credibility of the lord's right to wield public authority.¹⁴⁹ The demolition of parts of a castle served public notice of the lord's loss of authority and court status. This expression was directed at the surrounding community, whose vassalage was owed to the holder of the castle more than the actual family. The demolished castle reflected both a lord's fall and the absence of royal authority, for without the castle and an active lord, judicial and financial rights wavered. The re-establishment of royal authority is evident in the latter years of Robert I's reign, partially evidenced in the repairing of many "razed" castles and the re-emergence

¹⁴⁹. A. Debord, "The Castellan Revolution and the Peace of God in Aquitaine", *The Peace of God: Social Violence and Religious Response around the Year 1000* (Ithaca, 1992), ed. T. Head & R. Landes, pp.135-164.

of many families to power. In his wartime policy, Robert I sought to temporarily disempower these symbols of authority until he was in a position to use them in the propagation of his own claim. This is why the dismantling was only partial and usually centred on symbols of authority, such as towers and gates. The re-use of castles by Robert I's followers reflects the connection of local authority to the castle. The establishment of credible authority required the castle, the physical manifestation of the royal and noble power. It was the means of political representation in the public sphere.

The representation of social stature and political authority was the determining motive in "castle style." A castle's visual program accentuates the spatial divisions created by an enclosing circuit of walls. The contrasting appearance of public and private facades reflects the iconological message of implied by such spatial divisions. Private protection, social habits, authority and wealth defined "nobility", the claim of which "castle style" expressed in architecture. The strength of the claim to public authority was represented by the castle's exterior appearance. The interior appearance represented the patron's

sensitivity to the private accoutrements of prestige and social behaviour.

Together, the public and private facades are a physical representation of "the noble way of life."¹⁵⁰ The introduction and widespread utilisation of "castle style" in twelfth and thirteenth century Scotland indicates the emergence of individuals who asserted their social claims through the building of castles. The forms and appearances of the castles are determined by the socio-political aspirations of these patrons. The iconological message evidenced in the Scottish medieval castle is a reflection of this social phenomena, the "new men", and the role they assumed under the guidance of kings anxious to assert dynastic control of succession. The castles were primarily symbolic units that afforded a degree of protection, sufficient for the maintenance of local order yet rarely adequate to meet the challenges of an organised siege. The strength of the castle lay more in its symbolic value than in its' military use.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰. M.Bloch, *Feudal Society*, Vol.2. (Chicago, 1961), trans. L.A.Manyon, p.288.

¹⁵¹. Figure #1.

Bibliography

- Anderson, A.O. *Early Sources of Scottish History, AD 500-1286.* (Edinburgh, 1922).
- Armitage, E.S. *The Early Norman Castles of the British Isles.* (London, 1912).
- Barrow, G.W.S. *The Anglo-Norman Era in Scottish History.* (Oxford, 1980).
- Barrow, G.W.S. *Kingship and Unity: Scotland, 1000-1306.* (Toronto, 1981).
- Bloch, M. *Feudal Society, Vol.s 1 & 2.* trans. L.A.Manyon. (Chicago, 1961).
- Bradbury, J. *The Medieval Siege.* (Suffolk, 1992).
- Coulson, C. "Hierarchism in Conventual Crenellation." *Medieval Archaeology, Vol. 26.* (1982). pp. 69-100.
- Crouch, D. *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain, 1000-1300.* (New York, 1992).
- Cruden, S. *The Scottish Castle.* (Edinburgh, 1981).
- Davison, B.K. "The Origins of the Castle in England." *The Archaeological Journal. CXXIV.* (1967). pp. 202-211.
- Debord, A. "The Castellan Revolution and the Peace of God in Aquitaine." *The Peace of God: Social Violence and Religious Response around the year 1000.* ed. T.Head. (Ithaca, 1992). pp. 135-164.
- Denholm-Young, N. *History and Heraldry, 1254-1310.* (Oxford, 1965).
- Denholm-Young, N. "The Song of Caerlaverock and the Parliamentary Roll of Arms." *Proceedings of the British Academy.* (London, 1961). pp.251-262.
- Dixon, P., Lott, B. "The Courtyard and the Tower: Contexts and Symbols in the Development of Late Medieval Great Houses." *Journal of the*

- British Archaeological Association. Vol. CXLVI.* (London, 1993). pp. 93-104.
- Duby, G. *The Age of Cathedrals.* trans. E.Levieux. B.Thompson. (Chicago, 1981).
- Duby, G. "Introduction: Private Power, Public Power." *A History of Private Life. Vol.2. Revelations of the Medieval World.* trans. A.Goldhammer. (Cambridge, Mass., 1988). pp. 3-31.
- Duncan, A.A.M. *Scotland: The Making of the Kingdom.* (Edinburgh, 1975).
- Focillon, H. *The Year 1000.* (New York, 1969).
- Forde-Johnston, J. *Great Medieval Castles of Britain.* (London, 1979).
- Fraser, W. *The Book of Carlaverock.* (Edinburgh, 1873).
- Gowans, A. *Looking at Architecture in Canada.* (Toronto, 1958).
- Grant, Rev.J. "The Parish of Cromdale, Inverllan and Advie." *The Counties of Moray and Nairn. The Third Statistical Account of Scotland.* ed. H.Hamilton. (Glasgow, 1965). pp. 388-408.
- Hauser, A. *The Social History of Art. Vol.1.* (New York, 1951).
- Hunt, T. "The Emergence of the Knight in France and England, 1000-1200." *Forum for Modern Language Studies. Vol. XVII. No. 2.* (St.Andrews, 1981). pp.993-106.
- Kaminsky, H. "Estate, Nobility and the Exhibition of Estate in the Later Middle Ages." *Speculum. 68. No.3.* (Cambridge, 1993). pp.684-709.
- Kapelle, W.E. *The Norman Conquest of the North.* (London, 1979).
- Kenyon, J.R. *Medieval Fortifications.* (Leicester, 1990).
- King, D.J.C. *The Castle in England and Wales.* (London, 1988).
- Kubach, H.E. *Romanesque Architecture.* (New York, 1988).

- MacGibbon, D., Ross, T. *The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland. Vols. 1. & 3.* (Edinburgh, 1887).
- Mackay-Mackenzie, W. *The Medieval Castle in Scotland.* (Edinburgh, 1927).
- MacRae, J. *Eilean Donan Castle.* (Newport, 1978).
- Murray, A. *Reason and Society in the Middle Ages.* (Oxford, 1990).
- Painter, S. *The Rise of Feudal Monarchies.* (Ithaca, 1951).
- Painter, S. "English Castles in the Early Middle Ages." *Speculum.* 10. No.3. (Cambridge, 1935). pp.321-332.
- Power, R. "Scotland in the Norse Sagas." *Scotland and Scandinavia, 800-1800.* ed. G.G.Simpson. (Edinburgh, 1990). pp.12-24.
- Renn, D.F. *Norman Castles in Britain.* (London, 1968).
- Richardson, J.S. *Dirleton Castle.* (Edinburgh, 1982).
- Ritchie, R.L.G. *The Normans in Scotland.* (Edinburgh, 1954).
- Saunders, A.D. "Introduction: Five Castle Excavations.", "Reports on the Institutes Research Project into the Origins of the Castle in England." *The Archaeological Journal.* Vol. 134. (1977). pp.1-8.
- The Saxon Chronicle.* trans. J.Ingram. (London, 1823).
- Scammell, J. "The Formation of the English Social Structures: Freedom, Knights and Gentry, 1066-1300." *Speculum.* 68. No.3. (Cambridge, 1993). pp.591-618.
- Scott, R.M. *Robert the Bruce, King of Scots.* (New York, 1989).
- Simpson, G.G., Webster, B. "Charter Evidence and the Distribution of Mottes in Scotland." *Essays on the Nobility of Medieval Scotland.* ed. K.J.Stringer. (Edinburgh, 1985). pp.1-24.
- Simpson, W.D. *Bothwell Castle.* (Edinburgh, 1990).

Stell, G. *Exploring Scotland's Heritage: Dumfries and Galloway*. (Edinburgh, 1986).

Stell, G. "Late Medieval Defences in Scotland." *Scottish Weapons and Fortifications, 1100-1800*. ed. D.H.Caldwell. (Edinburgh, 1981). pp.21-54..

Stell, G. "The Scottish Medieval Castle: Form, Function and Evolution." *Essays on the Nobility of Medieval Scotland*. ed. K.J.Stringer. (Edinburgh, 1985). pp.195-209.

Talbot, E. "The Defense of Earth and Timber Castles." *Scottish Weapons and Fortifications, 1100-1800*. ed. D.H.Caldwell. (Edinburgh, 1981), pp.1-9.

Thompson, M.W. *The Decline of the Castle*. (Cambridge, 1987).

Thomson, G. "The Parish of Bothwell." *The Third Statistical Account of Scotland. The County of Lanark*. ed. G.Thomson. pp. 275-297.

Tranter, N. *The Fortified House in Scotland*. (Edinburgh, 1970).

Wormald, J. *Lords and Men in Scotland: Bonds of Manrent, 1442-1603*. (Edinburgh, 1985).

Index To Illustrations, Maps and Photographs.

Chapter I.

Figure 1. - Eilean Donan Castle: seen from north-west.

Map 1. - Eilean Donan Castle. J.MacRae. *Eilean Donan Castle*. (Newport, 1978). endcover.

Figure 2. - Eilean Donan Castle: seen from south-east.

Figure 3. - Eilean Donan Castle: groundplan. D.MacGibbon, T.Ross. *The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland. Vol. 3.* (Edinburgh, 1887). p.83.

Figure 4. - Eilean Donan Castle: southern exterior of the keep.

Figure 5. - Eilean Donan Castle: exterior stair to keep.

Figure 6. - Eilean Donan Castle: eastern exterior of keep.

Figure 7. - Eilean Donan Castle: seen from the east, on the bridge.

Figure 8. - Eilean Donan Castle: courtyard range built against southern curtain wall.

Figure 9. - Eilean Donan Castle: southern exterior.

Chapter II.

- Figure 1. - Rothesay Castle: groundplan. J.R.Hume, *Rothesay Castle*. (Edinburgh, 1992). p.15.
- Map 1. - Rothesay Castle. *The Thrid Statistical Account of Scotland. The Counties of Bute and Renfrew*.
- Figure 2. - Rothesay Castle: western curtain wall and "Pigeon Tower."
- Figure 3. - Rothesay Castle: southern curtain wall and plinth of south-east tower.
- Figure 4. - Rothesay Castle: entrance way into courtyard.
- Figure 5. - Rothesay Castle: courtyard, looking to the south.
- Figure 6. - Rothesay Castle: courtyard, looking to the north and the entrance way.
- Figure 7. - Rothesay Castle: detail of masonry, north-east wall walk.
- Figure 8. - Lochindorb Castle: view of island from north-east.
- Map 2. - Lochindorb Castle: *The Third Statistical Account of Scotland. The Counties of Moray and Nairn*.
- Figure 9. - Lochindorb Castle: groundplan. D.MacGibbon, T, Ross, *op cit.*, Vol.1. p.70.
- Figure 10. - Lochindorb Castle: exterior from the south-west.
- Figure 11 - (a) Lochindorb Castle: northern curtain wall.
(b) Lochindorb Castle: western curtain wall.
- Figure 12. - Lochindorb Castle: courtyard, looking south-west.
- Figure 13. - Lochindorb Casrle: *basse-cour* , looking north.
- Map 3. - Caerlaverock Castle. *The Third Statistical Account of Scotland. The Counties of Dumfries and Galloway*.

Figure 14. - Caerlaverock Castle: groundplan. D.MacGibbon, T.Ross, *op cit.*, p.128.

Figure 15. - Caerlaverock Castle: looking douth-west from bridge.

Figure 16. - Caerlaverock Castle: gatehouse facade.

Figure 17. - Caerlaverock Castle: detail of gatehouse.

Figure 18. - Caerlaverock Castle: western curtain wall.

Figure 19. - Caerlaverock Castle: eastern curtain wall.

Figure 20. - Caerlaverock Castle: view from south.

Figure 21. - Caerlaverock Castle: "Murdoch's Tower."

Figure 22. - Caerlaverock Castle: gatehouse from the east.

Chapter III.

Figure 1. - Kinclaven Castle: groundplan. D.MacGibbon, T.Ross, *op cit.* p.67.

Figure 2. - Kinclaven Castle: southern curtain wall.

Figure 3. - Dirleton Castle: groundplan. D. Hume , *Dirleton Castle.* (Edinburgh, 1982). endcover.

Figure 4. - Dirleton Castle: south west corner, the keep and square tower.

Figure 5. - Dirleton Castle: southern gateway.

Figure 6. - Dirleton Castle: western rock-face.

Figure 7. - Dirleton Castle: detail of southern curtain wall between the keep and main gate.

Figure 8. - Dirleton Castle: north-east corner.

Figure 9. - Dirleton Castle: exterior of dome, viewed at parapet.

Figure 10. - Bothwell Castle: groundplan. W.D.Simpson, *Bothwell Castle* (Edinburgh,1990), endcover.

Figure 11. - Bothwell Castle: northern curtain wall.

Figure 12. - Bothwell Castle: view of the keep and blocking wall from the west.

Figure 13. - Bothwell Castle: the "Prison Tower."

Figure 14. - Bothwell Castle: southern curtain wall.

Figure 15. - Bothwell Castle: the keep viewed from the courtyard.

Figure 16. - Bothwell Castle: interior of keep, looking north.

Figure 17. - Bothwell Castle: interior of keep, looking east.

Figure 18. - Bothwell Castle: remains of pillar in the basement of the keep.

Conclusion.

Figure 1. - "Hagar the Horrible." C.Browne. *The Montreal Gazette*. (March 7, 1994).

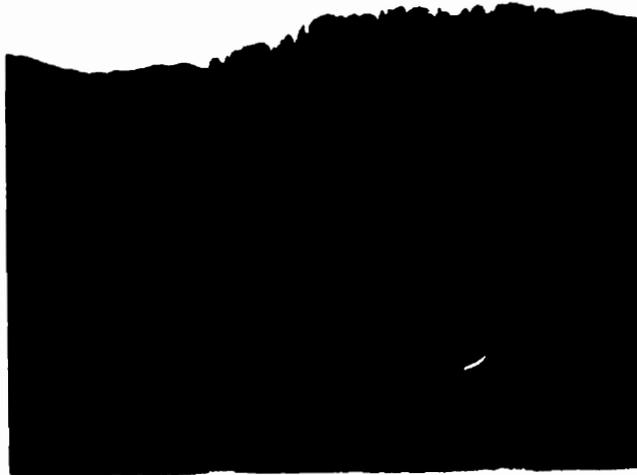
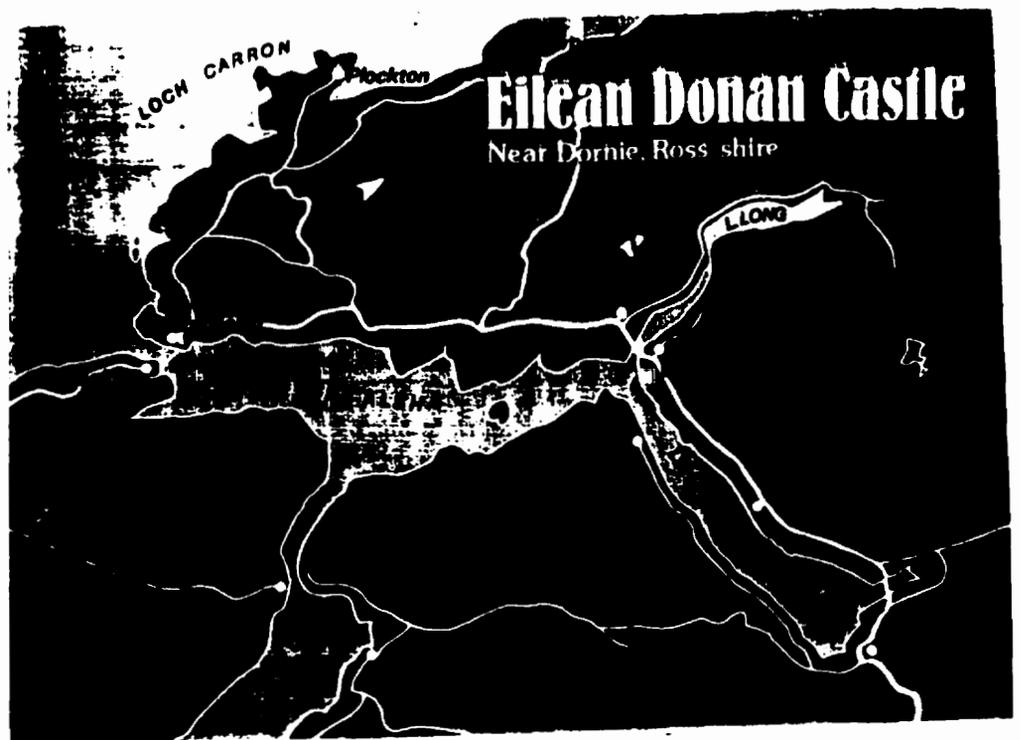


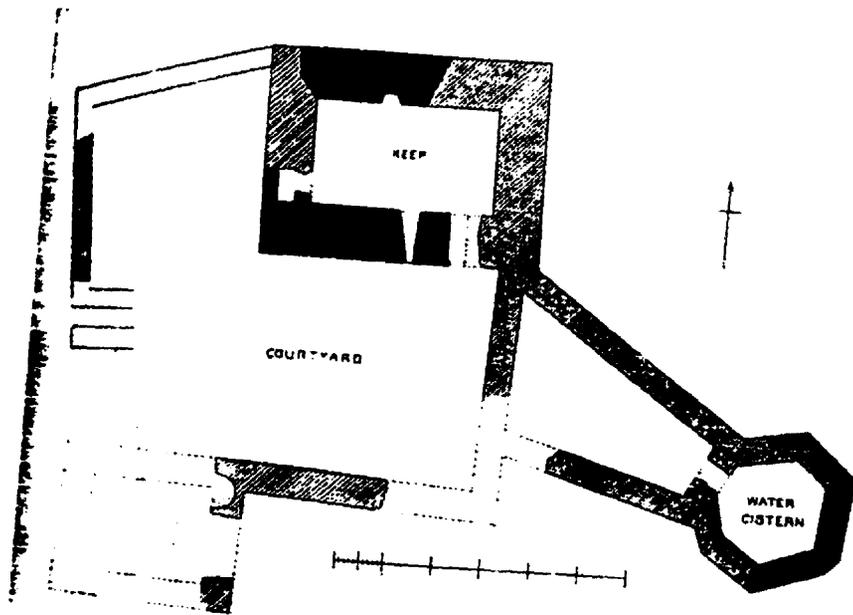
Figure 1.



Map 1.



Figure 2.



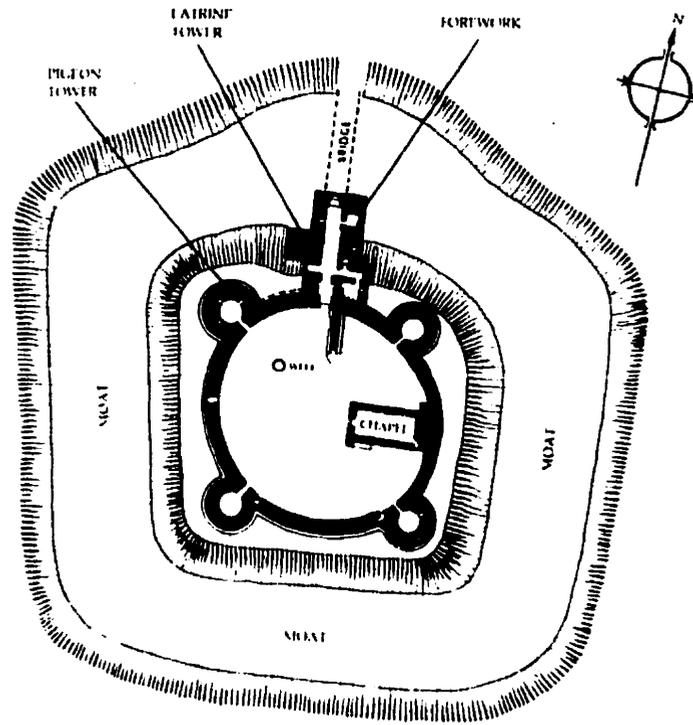


Figure 1.

Map 1.



Figure 7.

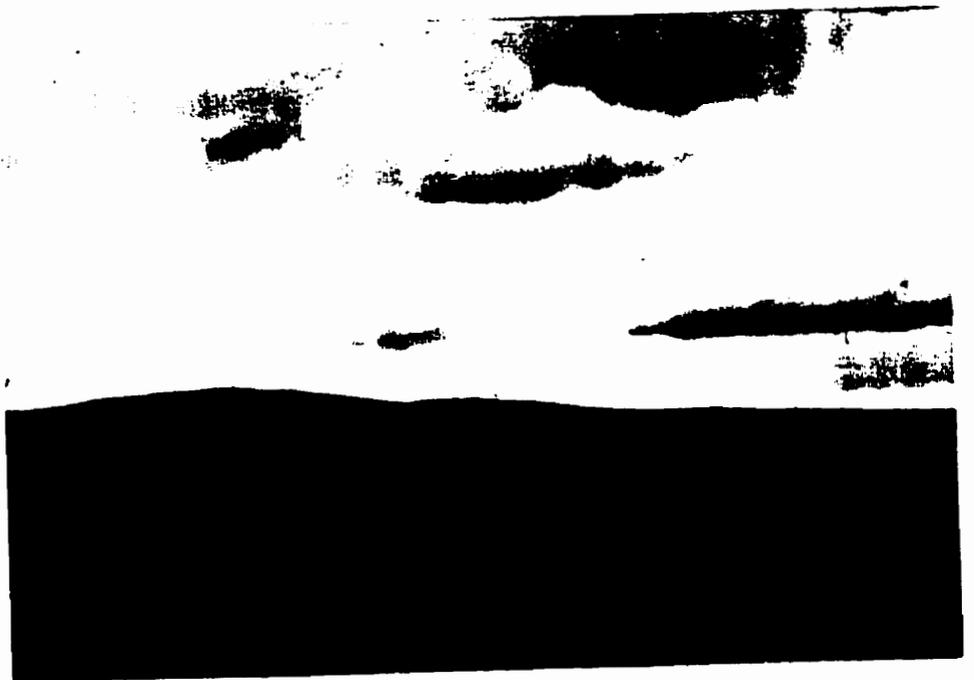


Figure 8.

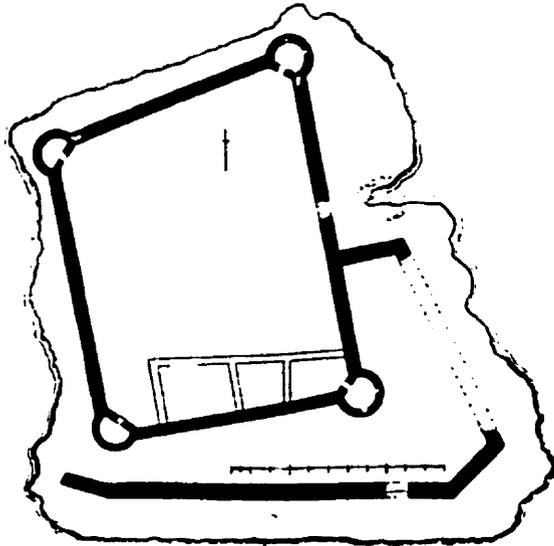
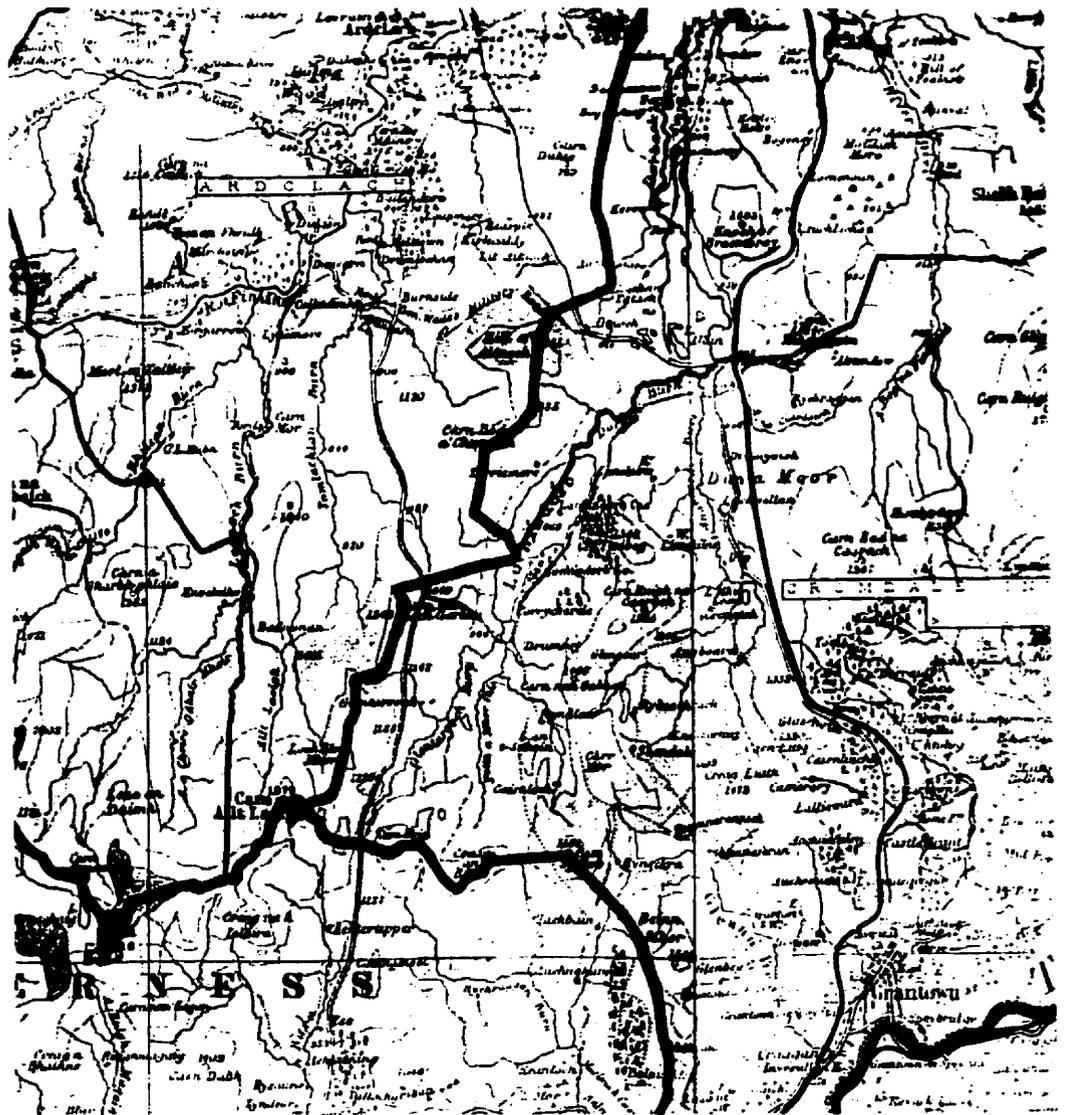


Figure 9.



Map 2.



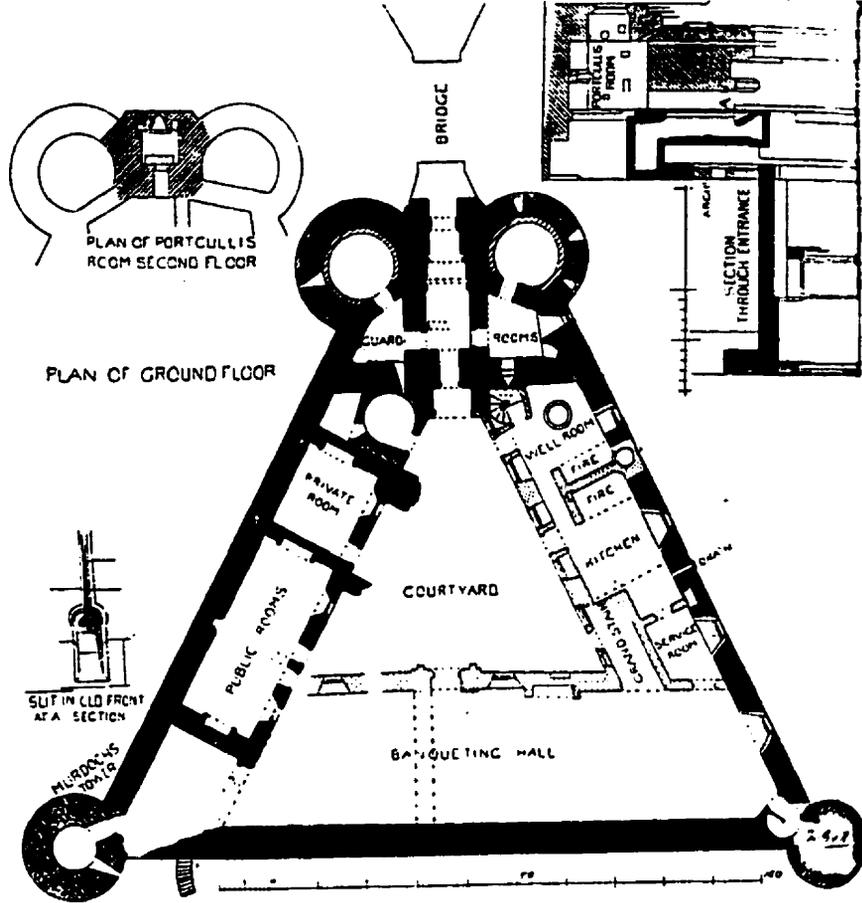


Figure 14.



Figure 15.

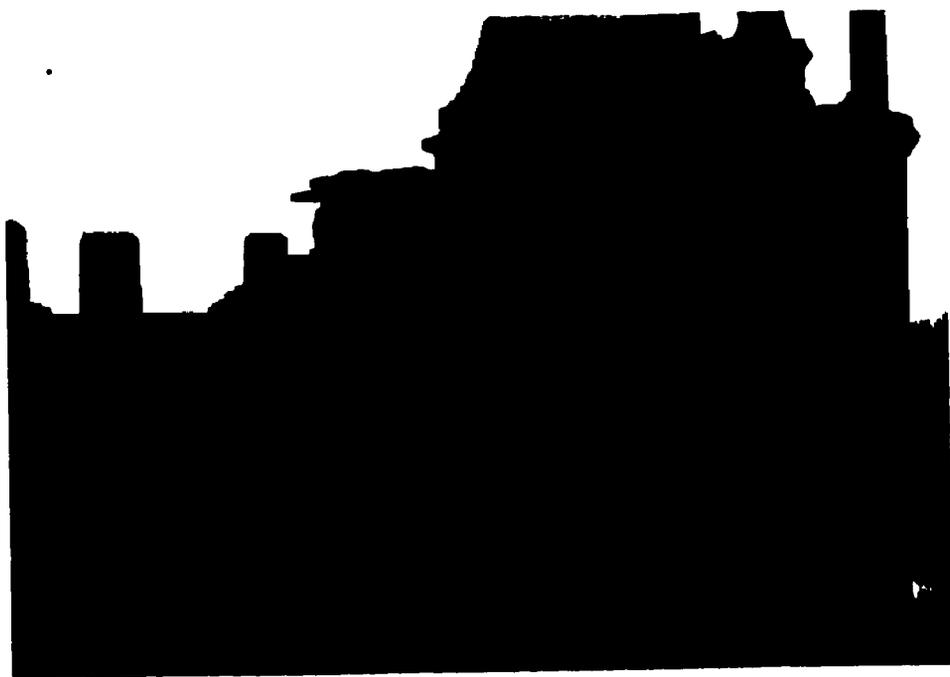


Figure 19.



Figure 21.

Chapter III.

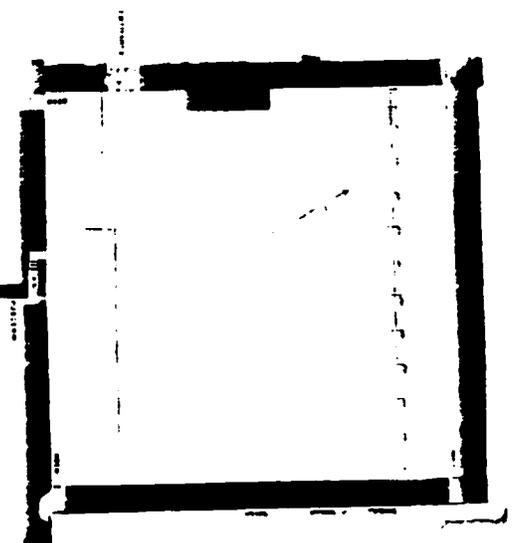


Figure 1.



Figure 2.

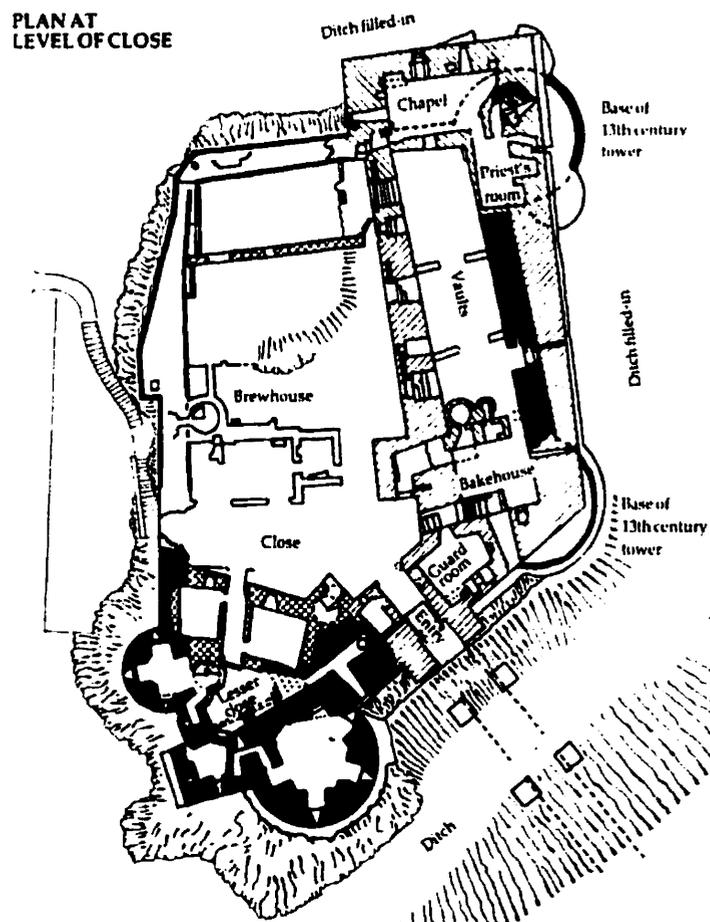


Figure 3.



Figure 8.

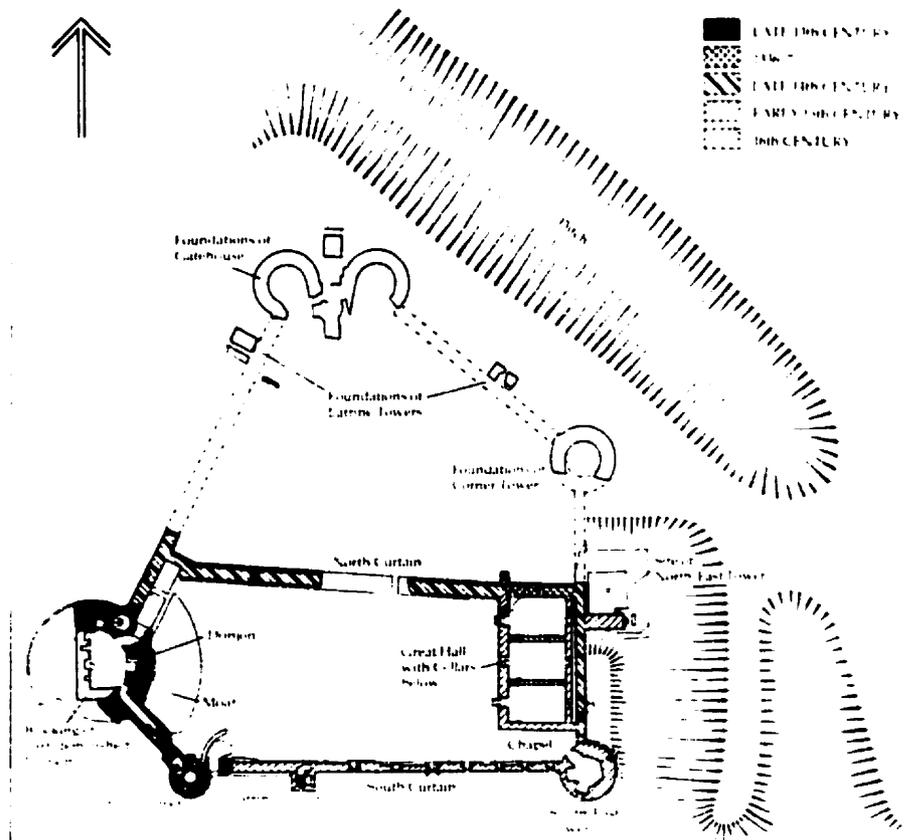


Figure 10.



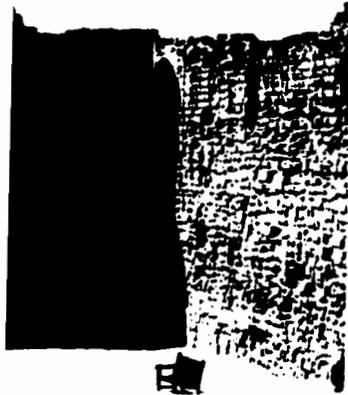


Figure 15.



Figure 16.

Conclusion.

Hägar The Horrible

By Dik Browne



Figure 1.