

The Peel of Kirkintilloch

Mediaeval Garrison



Artist's reconstruction of Kirkintilloch Castle, as it was in the fourteenth century, showing the stone keep beside the east entrance and a wooden palisade all round. It was the palisade or 'peel' that gave the locality its name.

Kirkintilloch Castle

The mediaeval castle of Kirkintilloch seems to have been built by the powerful Comyn family during the late twelfth or early thirteenth century. The grant of a burgh of barony at Kirkintilloch in 1211 implies that the castle was already in existence at that date. The main buildings were possibly of wood to begin with, but a stone keep was constructed early in the life of the castle.

The War of Independence

During the Scottish struggle for independence, led by heroes such as William Wallace and Robert the Bruce in the reigns of English kings Edward I and Edward II, Kirkintilloch Castle was for long in English hands. For a period Stirling Castle was held by the Scots, so the Kelvin/Carron valley was a real frontier zone.

The Kirkintilloch Garrison

It is clear that the garrison of Kirkintilloch was of strategic importance. In 1302, for example, Sir William Francis commanded 28 men-at-arms, 60 foot soldiers, petty officers, a chaplain and craftsmen to keep the castle in good repair. A later constable, Sir Philip de Moubray, was transferred to Stirling Castle (by then in English hands) about 1311. There he played a role in the significant events of 1314, which proved to be such a watershed in Anglo-Scottish relations.



Fanciful impression of the murder of John Comyn by Robert the Bruce at Dumfries in 1306. The Comyns had been the lords of Kirkintilloch Castle, but their removal cleared the way for Bruce's advance to power. Soon afterwards his loyal supporter, Bishop Robert Wallace of Glasgow, laid siege to the castle at Kirkintilloch.



Burgh Charter of Kirkintilloch (fourteenth century) - a historical copy of a document of 1211. Confirms the grant of a Burgh of Barony by King William the Lion to William Comyn.



The view northwards from the site of Kirkintilloch Castle.



Site of castle keep today.



Site of Kirkintilloch Castle, surrounded by a mediaeval ditch.