

= Bodiam Castle =

Bodiam Castle ( / ˈbɒdiəm / ) is a 14th @-@ century moated castle near Robertsbridge in East Sussex , England . It was built in 1385 by Sir Edward Dalyngrigge , a former knight of Edward III , with the permission of Richard II , ostensibly to defend the area against French invasion during the Hundred Years ' War . Of quadrangular plan , Bodiam Castle has no keep , having its various chambers built around the outer defensive walls and inner courts . Its corners and entrance are marked by towers , and topped by crenellations . Its structure , details and situation in an artificial watery landscape indicate that display was an important aspect of the castle 's design as well as defence . It was the home of the Dalyngrigge family and the centre of the manor of Bodiam .

Possession of Bodiam Castle passed through several generations of Dalyngrigges , until their line became extinct , when the castle passed by marriage to the Lewknor family . During the Wars of the Roses , Sir Thomas Lewknor supported the House of Lancaster , and when Richard III of the House of York became king in 1483 , a force was despatched to besiege Bodiam Castle . It is unrecorded whether the siege went ahead , but it is thought that Bodiam was surrendered without much resistance . The castle was confiscated , but returned to the Lewknors when Henry VII of the House of Lancaster became king in 1485 . Descendants of the Lewknors owned the castle until at least the 16th century .

By the start of the English Civil War in 1641 , Bodiam Castle was in the possession of Lord Thanet . He supported the Royalist cause , and sold the castle to help pay fines levied against him by Parliament . The castle was subsequently dismantled , and was left as a picturesque ruin until its purchase by John Fuller in 1829 . Under his auspices , the castle was partially restored before being sold to George Cubitt , 1st Baron Ashcombe , and later to Lord Curzon , both of whom undertook further restoration work . The castle is protected as a Grade I listed building and Scheduled Monument . It has been owned by The National Trust since 1925 , donated by Lord Curzon on his death , and is open to the public .

= = Background = =

Edward Dalyngrigge was a younger son and thus deprived of his father 's estates through the practice of primogeniture , hence he had to make his own fortunes . By 1378 , he owned the manor of Bodiam by marrying into a land @-@ owning family . From 1379 to 1388 , Dalyngrigge was a Knight of the Shire for Sussex and one of the most influential people in the county . By the time he applied to the king for a licence to crenellate ( build a castle ) , the Hundred Years ' War had been fought between England and France for nearly 50 years . Edward III of England ( reigned 1327 ? 1377 ) pressed his claim for the French throne and secured the territories of Aquitaine and Calais . Dalyngrigge was one of many Englishmen who travelled to France to seek their fortune as members of Free Companies ? groups of mercenaries who fought for the highest bidder . He left for France in 1367 and journeyed with Lionel , Duke of Clarence and son of Edward III . After fighting under the Earl of Arundel , Dalyngrigge joined the company of Sir Robert Knolles , a notorious commander who was reputed to have made 100 @,@ 000 gold crowns as a mercenary from pillage and plunder . It was as a member of the Free Companies that Dalyngrigge raised the money to build Bodiam Castle ; he returned to England in 1377 .

The Treaty of Bruges ( 1375 ) ensured peace for two years , but after it expired , fighting resumed between England and France . In 1377 Edward III was succeeded by Richard II . During the war , England and France struggled for control of the English Channel , with raids on both coasts . With the renewed hostilities , Parliament voted that money should be spent on defending and fortifying England 's south coast , and defences were erected in Kent in anticipation of a French invasion . There was internal unrest as well as external threats , and Dalyngrigge was involved in suppressing the Peasants ' Revolt of 1381 . The manor of Bodiam was granted a charter in 1383 permitting a weekly market and an annual fair to be held . In 1385 , a fleet of 1 @,@ 200 ships ? variously cogs , barges , and galleys ? gathered across the English Channel at Sluys , Flanders ; the population of southern England was in a state of panic . Later in the year , Edward Dalyngrigge was granted a

licence to fortify his manor house .

= = Construction and use = =

... Know that of our special grace we have granted and given licence on behalf of ourselves and our heirs , so far as in us lies , to our beloved and faithful Edward Dalyngrigge Knight , that he may strengthen with a wall of stone and lime , and crenellate and may construct and make into a Castle his manor house of Bodiam , near the sea , in the County of Sussex , for the defence of the adjacent country , and the resistance to our enemies ... In witness of which etc . The King at Westminster 20 October .

Dalyngrigge 's licence from Richard II permitted him to refortify his existing manor house , but instead he chose a fresh site to build a castle on . Construction was completed in one phase , and most of the castle is in the same architectural style . Archaeologist David Thackray has deduced from this that Bodiam Castle was built quickly , probably because of the threat from the French . Stone castles were usually time @-@ consuming and expensive to build , often costing thousands of pounds . Dalyngrigge was Captain of the port of Brest in France from 1386 to 1387 , and as a result was probably absent for the first years of the castle 's construction . It replaced the old manor house as Dalyngrigge 's main residence and the administrative centre of the manor . It is not recorded when Bodiam Castle was completed , but Thackray suggests that it was before 1392 ; Dalyngrigge did not have long to spend in the completed castle , as he was dead by 1395 .

Dalyngrigge 's estates , including the castle , were inherited by his son , John Dalyngrigge . Like his father , John enjoyed the favour of the king and was described as the " King 's Knight " ; in 1400 he was granted an annual allowance of 100 marks by the king . He died on 27 September 1408 ; his will ensured that his property belonged to his widow , Alice . John and Alice had no children , so on her death in 1443 the estates and castle were passed on to Richard Dalyngrigge , John 's cousin . Richard died without issue , so in accordance with John 's will the estates passed on to Richard 's sister Philippa in 1470 . She was married to Sir Thomas Lewknor , from a prominent Sussex family who owned land all over the country .

Sir Thomas Lewknor was a supporter of the House of Lancaster during the Wars of the Roses , which began in 1455 . When Richard of the House of York ascended to the throne as Richard III in 1483 , Lewknor was accused of treason and of raising men @-@ at @-@ arms in southeast England . In November 1483 , Lewknor 's uncle and Thomas Howard , the Earl of Surrey , were given permission to levy men and besiege Bodiam Castle , where Lewknor was based . It is not recorded whether the siege went ahead , and Thackray suggests that Lewknor surrendered without much resistance . His property was confiscated , and Nicholas Rigby was made constable of the castle . On Henry VII 's accession to the English throne the attainder was revoked , and Bodiam Castle was returned to Lewknor . However , not all the surrounding land was returned to the family until 1542 . Possession of Bodiam Castle passed through several generations of the Lewknor family . Although the inheritance of the castle can be traced through the 16th and 17th centuries , there is little to indicate how it was used in this period , or if the family spent much time in it .

Following Sir Roger Lewknor 's death in 1543 , his estates were divided among his descendants , and the castle and manor were split . John Levett of Salehurst purchased the castle in 1588 . In 1623 , most of the estates of Bodiam were bought by Sir Nicholas Tufton , later Earl of Thanet . His son , John Tufton , 2nd Earl of Thanet , inherited Nicholas 's property on his father 's death in 1631 ; it was John Tufton who reunited possession of castle and manor when he bought Bodiam Castle in 1639 . John Tufton was a supporter of the Royalist cause during the English Civil War , and led an attack on Lewes , and was involved in a Royalist defeat at Haywards Heath . Parliament confiscated some of his lands in 1643 , and more in 1644 , as well as fining him £ 9 @,@ 000 ( £ 1 @,@ 400 @,@ 000 today ) . To help pay his fine , Tufton sold Bodiam Castle for £ 6 @,@ 000 ( £ 930 @,@ 000 today ) in March 1644 to Nathaniel Powell , a Parliamentarian .

= = Picturesque ruins = =

After the Civil War , Powell was made a baronet by Charles II . Although it is unrecorded when Bodiam Castle was dismantled ( slighted ) , it was probably after it was bought by Powell . During and after the Civil War , many castles were slighted to prevent them from being reused . Not all were destroyed completely , and in some cases care was taken not to unnecessarily deface the structure . At Bodiam , it was deemed sufficient to dismantle the barbican , the bridges , and the buildings inside the castle . When Nathaniel Powell died in 1674 or 1675 , Bodiam Castle was passed on to his son , also called Nathaniel . After the second Nathaniel , the castle came into the possession of Elizabeth Clitherow , his daughter @-@ in @-@ law .

In 1722 Sir Thomas Webster bought the castle . For over a century , Bodiam Castle and its associated manor descended through the Webster family . It was in this period that the site became popular as an early kind of tourist attraction because of its connection with the medieval period . The first drawings of Bodiam Castle date from the mid @-@ 18th century , when it was depicted as a ruin overgrown with ivy . Ruins and medieval buildings such as Bodiam Castle served as an inspiration for the revival in Gothic architecture and the renovation of old structures .

The third Sir Godfrey Webster began looking for buyers for the castle in 1815 , and in 1829 he finally managed to sell it and 24 acres ( 10 ha ) of the surrounding land to John ' Mad Jack ' Fuller for £ 3 @,@ 000 ( £ 240 @,@ 000 today ) . Fuller repaired one of the towers , added new gates to the site , and removed a cottage which had been built within the castle in the 18th century ; he is thought to have bought the castle to prevent the Webster family from dismantling it and reusing its materials . George Cubitt , later Baron Ashcombe , purchased the castle and its 24 acres ( 97 @,@ 000 m2 ) from Fuller 's grandson in 1849 , for over £ 5 @,@ 000 ( £ 470 @,@ 000 today ) . Cubitt continued the renovations that Fuller started . He commissioned the first detailed survey of Bodiam Castle in 1864 , and undertook repairs to the tower at the southwest corner of the site , which had almost entirely collapsed . Because there was then a fashion for ruins covered in ivy , the vegetation was not removed despite its detrimental effect on the masonry , and the trees which had taken root in the courtyard were left .

Lord Curzon decided that " so rare a treasure [ as Bodiam Castle ] should neither be lost to our country nor desecrated by irreverent hands " . Curzon made enquiries about buying the castle , but Cubitt did not wish to sell . However , after Cubitt 's death , Curzon was able to make a deal with Cubitt 's son , and he bought Bodiam Castle and its lands in 1916 . Curzon began a programme of investigation at Bodiam in 1919 , and with architect William Weir restored parts of the castle . The moat , on average about 5 ft ( 1 @.@ 5 m ) deep but 7 ft ( 2 @.@ 1 m ) deep in the southeast corner , was drained and 3 ft ( 0 @.@ 9 m ) of mud and silt removed ; during excavations the original footings of the bridges to the castle were discovered . Nearby hedges and fences were removed to provide an unobscured view of the castle . There were excavations in the interior , and a well was discovered in the basement of the southwest tower . Vegetation was cleared , stonework repaired , and the original floor level re @-@ established throughout the castle . A cottage was built to provide a museum to display the finds from the excavations and a home for a caretaker . Bodiam Castle was given to the National Trust in 1925 .

The National Trust continued the restoration work , and added new roofs to the towers and gatehouse . Excavations were resumed in 1970 , and the moat was once again drained . Bodiam Castle was used in Monty Python and the Holy Grail in an establishing shot identifying it as " Swamp Castle " in the " Tale of Sir Lancelot " sequence . The Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England carried out a survey of the earthworks surrounding Bodiam Castle in 1990 . In the 1990s , Bodiam Castle was at the centre of a debate in castle studies over the balance between militaristic and social interpretations of such sites . The arguments focused on elements such as the apparent strength of the defences ? such as the imposing moat ? and elements of display . It has been suggested that the moat could have been drained in a day because the embankment surrounding it was not substantial , and that as such it did not pose a serious obstacle to an attacker . Also , the large windows in the castle 's exterior were defensive weak points . The castle is a Scheduled Monument , which means it is a " nationally important " historic building and archaeological site which has been given protection against unauthorised change . It is also a Grade I listed building , and recognised as an internationally important structure . Today the castle is open

to the public , and according to figures released by the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions , nearly 170 @, @ 000 people visited in 2014 . In the opinion of historian Charles Coulson , Bodiam " represents the popular ideal of a medieval castle " .

= = Architecture = =

= = = Location and landscape = = =

The castle 's location was ostensibly chosen to protect England 's south coast from raids by the French . A landscape survey by the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments concluded that if this were the case , then Bodiam Castle was unusually sited , as it is far from the medieval coastline .

The area surrounding Bodiam Castle was landscaped when the castle was built , to increase its aesthetic appeal . Archaeologists Oliver Creighton and Robert Higham have described Bodiam as one of the best examples of landscaping to emphasise a castle . The water features were originally extensive , but only the moat survives , along with the earthworks left over from its construction . Roughly rectangular , the moat is supplied by several springs , some of them within it , which made it difficult to drain during the excavations of the 1930s . A moat can prevent attackers from gaining access to the base of a castle 's walls , but in the case of Bodiam it also had the effect of making the castle appear larger and more impressive by isolating it in its landscape . The moat is now regarded more as an ornamental feature than a defence . The approach to the castle through the moat and satellite ponds was indirect , giving visitors time to view the castle in its intended splendour . Military historian Cathcart King describes the approach as formidable , and considers it the equal of the 13th @-@ century castles of Edward I in Wales , such as Caerphilly Castle .

The castle sits roughly in the middle of the moat . The postern gate at the rear would have been connected to the moat 's south bank by a drawbridge and a long timber bridge . The main entrance on the north side of the castle is today connected to the north bank by a wooden bridge , but the original route would have included two bridges : one from the main entrance to an island in the moat , and another connecting the island to the west bank . For the most part the bridge was static , apart from the section closest to the west bank , which would have been a drawbridge . The island in the moat is called the Octagon , and excavations on it have uncovered a garderobe ( toilet ) , suggesting that there may have been a guard on the island , although it is unclear to what extent it was fortified . The Octagon was connected to a barbican by a bridge , probably a drawbridge . The castle 's 28 toilets drained directly into the moat , which in the words of archaeologist Matthew Johnson would have been effectively an " open sewer " .

= = = Exterior and entrance = = =

A quadrangular castle , Bodiam is roughly square @-@ shaped . This type of castle , with a central courtyard and buildings against the curtain wall , was characteristic of castle architecture in the 14th century . Bodiam Castle has been described by military historian Cathcart King as the most complete surviving example of a quadrangular castle . There are circular towers at each of the four corners , with square central towers in the south , east , and west walls . The main entrance is a twin @-@ towered gatehouse in the north face of the castle . There is a second entrance from the south ; the postern gate is through a square tower in the middle of the south wall . The towers are three storeys high , taller than the curtain walls and the buildings in the castle which are two storeys high .

Between the Octagon and the main gatehouse in the north wall was a barbican , of which little survives ? just a piece of the west wall ? although the structure was originally two storeys high . The surviving fabric includes a slot for a portcullis for the barbican 's north gate , although there are no hinges for gates . The base of a garderobe demonstrates that second storey would have provided space for habitation , probably a guard room . Drawings from the late 18th century show the ground floor of the barbican still standing and includes detail such as vaulting inside the passageway .

The gatehouse in the castle 's north wall is three storeys high ; now reached by a static bridge , it

was originally connected to the barbican by a drawbridge . The top of the gatehouse is machicolated , and the approach is overlooked by gun @-@ loops in the gatehouse towers . The gatehouse is the only part of the castle which has gun @-@ loops , and the curtain wall and towers are studded with windows for domestic use rather than military . There are guardrooms on the ground floor and a basement beneath them . The passage would originally have had three wooden portcullises . Above the entrance passage is an arch in the gateway , although it leads nowhere . The ceiling of the passage through the gatehouse into the castle is vaulted and pierced with murder @-@ holes . Murder @-@ holes were most likely used to drop objects on attackers , similar to machicolations , or to pour water to extinguish fires .

Just above the gate , there are three coats of arms carved in relief into the arch ; from left to right they are the arms of the Wardeux , Dalyngrigge , and Radynden families . The Wardeux family was that of Edward Dalyngrigge 's wife ; the Radyndens were relations of the Dalyngrigges . Above the arms is a helm bearing a unicorn head crest . Three coats of arms also decorate the postern gate ; the central arms is that of Sir Robert Knolles , who Edward Dalyngrigge had fought for in the Hundred Years ' War , but those flanking it are blank .

= = = Interior = = =

Although the exterior of Bodiam Castle has largely survived , the interior is ruinous . The domestic buildings within the castle lined the curtain walls . However , remains are substantial enough to recreate a plan of the castle . The structure was divided into separate living areas for the lord and his family , high @-@ status guests , the garrisons , and servants . The south range of the castle consisted of the great hall , the kitchens , and associated rooms . The great hall , to the east of the centrally located postern gate , was 24 by 40 feet ( 7 @. @ 3 by 12 @. @ 2 m ) and would have been as tall as the curtain wall . To the west of the great hall was the pantry and buttery , linked to the great hall by a screens passage . The three standing arches gave access to different rooms , the pantry , buttery and the kitchen which was at the far west of the south range . This layout was typical of large medieval houses . The great hall was the social centre of the castle , and where the lord would have entertained guests . The buttery and pantry occupied the bottom floor , and above was a room of unknown purpose . The buttery had a cellar and was used to store ale and wine , while the pantry held the supplies for the kitchen . To prevent heat from the cooking fires becoming unbearable , the kitchen was as tall as the curtain walls to provide a large space to absorb the heat . In the southwest tower was a well , from which water would have been drawn for the household .

Along the east wall is a chapel , a hall , and an antechamber . To accommodate the chapel , the curtain wall near the northeast corner projects 9 feet ( 2 @. @ 7 m ) further into the moat than the rest of the wall along the east side . Immediately south of the chapel was the main accommodation for the lord and his family . The buildings were two storeys high and incorporated a basement . The exact layout of the rooms is unclear .

Arranged along the west curtain wall was an extra hall and a kitchen ; it is not certain what these were used for , although it is probable that these were intended to provide for the household 's retainers . The " retainers ' hall " had no windows on its west side and would have been relatively dark compared to the great hall . Also , whereas the great hall had a large fireplace , the " retainers ' hall " had none . The hall was adjacent to the kitchen , to which it was directly connected , with no screens passage in between . Above the " retainers ' hall " , which was confined to the ground floor , was a room with no fireplace and of unclear purpose .

East of the main gatehouse was a two @-@ storey building with a basement . The basement was probably used for storage while the above two floors provided accommodation . The purpose of the buildings along the west end of the north range is uncertain . The sparse arrangement , with little provision for lighting , has led to suggestions that it was used as stables , however there are no drains which are usually associated with stables . The tower in the northwest corner of the castle had a garderobe and fireplace on each of the three above @-@ ground floors , and there was a basement underneath .