

= Bowes Castle =

Bowes Castle was a medieval castle in the village of Bowes in County Durham , England . Built within the perimeter of the former Roman fort of Lavatrae , the early timber castle on the site was replaced by a more substantial stone structure between 1170 and 1174 on the orders of Henry II . A planned village was built alongside the castle . Bowes Castle withstood Scottish attack during the Great Revolt of 1173 @-@ 74 but was successfully looted by rebels in 1322 . The castle went into decline and was largely dismantled after the English Civil War . The ruins are now owned by English Heritage and run as a tourist attraction .

= = History = =

= = = 12th century = = =

Bowes Castle was built within the ruins of the Roman fort of Lavatrae . The route was one of the few upland passes to link England and Scotland and had remained strategically important during the medieval period . The castle site lay within the Honour of Richmond , a grouping of lands traditionally owned by the Counts of Brittany during the early medieval period , but the land itself was a demesne estate , owned by the Crown .

Around 1136 , Alan de Bretagne , the Count of Brittany , built a timber castle in the north @-@ west corner of the old fort . The use made of the older Roman fortification at Bowes was similar to that at the nearby castles of Brough and Malton . This castle was inherited by his son , Conan , and when he in turn died in 1171 , it was claimed by Henry II .

Royal concerns over security led to Henry II investing heavily in a new castle structure on the site between 1171 and 1174 . It was unusual for a new royal castle to be built in this part of England during the 12th century , and Henry appears to have been driven by the military threat from Scotland before and during the Great Revolt of 1173 to 1174 . Henry II spent almost £ 600 on the castle between 1170 and 1187 , most of it in the first few years , rebuilding the older structure under the supervision of the Count of Brittany 's local tenants , Torfin , Osbert and Stephen of Barningham .

The rebuilt castle featured a hall @-@ keep , an uncommon design in English castles ; built of stone , this was a three @-@ storied structure 82 feet (25 m) long , 60 feet (18 m) wide and 50 feet (15 m) high . Internally the keep was divided to form a long hall and a solar and was lit by large , rounded windows . The keep had architectural similarities to various nearby castles in the region , but in particular to those at Middleham and Outhgill . A ditch formed an inner defensive bailey around the keep , with the ramparts of the old fort forming a larger , outer bailey . A mill , then an essential part of any castle , was built by the River Greta to supply flour for the garrison . The village of Bowes was built after the castle and formed a planned site running up to the castle , complete with a church and a market place ; this form of planned village is again unusual in England .

In England , the Great Revolt against Henry 's rule involved a coalition of rebel barons , bolstered by support from the King of Scotland and European allies . William the Lion pushed south from Scotland in 1173 and Bowes Castle was damaged in the raids ; work was carried out in anticipation of further attacks the following year , including repairs to the chamber , gates and the construction of bulwarks around the keep . The next year William of Scotland directly besieged the castle , but was he forced to retreat after the arrival of a relief force led by Henry 's illegitimate son Geoffrey , then the Bishop of Lincoln .

= = = 13th - 14th centuries = = =

Henry II was successful in quelling the Great Revolt , imprisoning William the Lion until a peace treaty was agreed , extending Henry 's authority north into Scotland . In the subsequent years the security situation in the north of England improved significantly . King John gave control of Bowes Castle to Robert de Vieuxpont , an important administrator in the north , in 1203 and he retained

control of the fortification until 1228 . John stayed there himself in 1206 and in 1212 , and the castle was also used briefly to hold John 's niece Eleanor of Brittany , who had been placed under the custody of Vieuxpont . Henry III granted it briefly to William de Blockley and Gilbert de Kirketon , until it was given to Duke Peter of Brittany in 1232 , and then to William de Valence . In 1241 Peter II , the Count of Savoy was made the Earl of Richmond and was then given Bowes by the king .

The castle remained in the hands of the Earls of Richmond until 1322 , by when it was in a poor state of repair . Edward II then gave Bowes Castle to John de Scargill instead ; the local tenants of the Earl of Richmond rebelled and attacked the castle . The lord of the castle was away at the time , and the attackers burnt part of a hall , drank four tuns of wine and stole armour , springalds and other goods . Conflict with Scotland led to further raids against the castle and the surrounding manor ; the neighbouring fields were abandoned as a result and by 1340 the castle was in ruins and the manor worth nothing .

= = = Later history = = =

Still ruined , Bowes Castle was reclaimed by the Crown in 1361 ; between 1444 and 1471 it was controlled by the Neville family , powerful regional landowners , before reverting to the Crown once again . James I sold the castle in the early 17th century and the remaining fortifications were dismantled in the mid @-@ 17th century after the English Civil War . By 1928 , the castle was in a poor condition , with little interest being shown in it from locals or its owner , Lady Lorna Curzon @-@ Howe . Facing death duties on her estate , Curzon @-@ Howe agreed to pass the castle into the care of the Office of Works in 1931 .

In the 21st century , the castle is controlled by English Heritage and operated as a tourist attraction . The ruins of the keep survive , largely intact , and are protected as a Grade I listed building and as a scheduled monument .