

= Dirleton Castle =

Dirleton Castle is a medieval fortress in the village of Dirleton , East Lothian , Scotland . It lies around 2 miles (3 @. @ 2 km) west of North Berwick , and around 19 miles (31 km) east of Edinburgh . The oldest parts of the castle date to the 13th century , and it was abandoned by the end of the 17th century .

Begun in around 1240 by John De Vaux , the castle was heavily damaged during the Wars of Scottish Independence , when it was twice taken by the English . In the 14th century , Dirleton was repaired by the Haliburton family , and it was acquired by the Ruthvens in 1505 . The Ruthvens were involved in several plots against Mary , Queen of Scots , and King James VI , and eventually forfeited the castle in 1600 . Dirleton ceased to be a residence , although Oliver Cromwell was forced to besiege the castle to flush out a band of " mosstroopers " (marauders) , during the Third English Civil War in 1650 . The damaged castle was then acquired by John Nisbet , Lord Dirleton , who decided to build a new country house on the nearby Archerfield Estate . The Nisbet family of Dirleton continued to maintain the castle 's gardens , before handing Dirleton into state care in 1923 . The ruins and gardens are now maintained by Historic Scotland .

Dirleton Castle stands on a rocky outcrop , at the heart of the rich agricultural lands of the barony of Dirleton , and guards the coastal approach to Edinburgh from England , via the port of North Berwick . The ruins comprise a 13th @- @ century keep , and a 16th @- @ century house which the Ruthvens built adjacent . Only the basement levels survive of the 14th- and 15th @- @ century additions built by the Haliburtons , although these comprised a large hall and tower house along the east range . Other buildings within the courtyard have also been demolished . Surrounding the castle are gardens , which may have been first laid out in the 16th century , although the present planting is largely of the 20th century . The garden walls enclose a 16th @- @ century doocot , or pigeon house .

= = History = =

= = = de Vaux = = =

The Norman family of de Vaux originated in Rouen , northern France , and settled in England following the Norman Conquest of 1066 . Two de Vaux brothers , or cousins , were among a number of Anglo @- @ Norman knights invited to Scotland , and granted land , by King David I of Scotland in the 12th century . Hubert de Vaux was given the barony of Gilsland in Cumbria , at that time part of Scotland , while John de Vaux was granted the barony of Dirleton . John built a castle at Eldbottle , probably to the north @- @ west of modern Dirleton , and another , named Tarbet Castle , on the island of Fidra , although neither survives .

In 1220 , Fidra was gifted to the monks of Dryburgh Abbey by William de Vaux . William 's son , another John , had been held hostage in England as surety for the good conduct of King William the Lion in 1213 , and succeeded to the barony in the 1220s . He then began the construction of a replacement for Tarbet at Dirleton , which was recorded as a " castellum " in 1225 , although this may refer to an earlier timber structure . In 1239 , de Vaux was appointed seneschal , or steward , to Marie de Coucy , on her marriage to King Alexander II . Marie de Coucy was the daughter of Enguerrand III , Lord of Coucy (d.1242) , builder of the Château de Coucy , in Picardy (c.1220s) , which probably served as a model for Dirleton . The 13th @- @ century stone castle , of which only the donjon , or keep , remains , represented a show of de Vaux 's status , and would have required peaceful times to permit a prolonged construction project .

Peaceful times ended in 1296 , with the outbreak of the Wars of Scottish Independence . Dirleton , which guarded the route between Edinburgh and the English border , changed hands several times through the invasions of the English under King Edward I. During the campaign of summer 1298 , the castle was besieged by English forces under Antony Bek , the Bishop of Durham . Dirleton withstood the assault for several months , until the English victory at Falkirk allowed them to bring up

large siege engines , after which the castle was soon reduced . Dirleton was garrisoned by the English , but must have been retaken by the Scots before 1306 , when the English commander Aymer de Valence , 2nd Earl of Pembroke recaptured Dirleton once more . It was finally retaken by the Scots some time before 1314 , and was slighted , or deliberately damaged , to prevent its reuse by the English .

= = = Haliburton = = =

The castle and lands of Dirleton passed to the Berwickshire family of Haliburton (or Halyburton) when John Haliburton (d.1355) married the heiress of the de Vaux family , shortly before 1350 . The castle had been repaired by 1363 , when it was seized by William Douglas , 1st Earl of Douglas , during his brief rebellion against King David II , although it was later returned to the Haliburtons . In the 1420s , Sir Walter Haliburton (d. before 1447) acted as a hostage in exchange for the release of King James I , who had been held captive by the English since 1406 . He was rewarded in 1439 by being appointed Treasurer of Scotland . Either Walter , or his eldest son John (d. before 1454) , was ennobled as a Lord of Parliament in the 1440s , with the title Lord Dirletoun . The Haliburtons carried out extensive works at Dirleton , heightening the original towers , and constructing a new gatehouse to the south @-@ east . A large hall and tower house were added to the castle in the 15th century , forming the east range . King James IV visited Dirleton in 1505 , and gave money to the masons then engaged on works in the north @-@ east part of the castle . Later that year , Patrick , the last Haliburton of Dirleton , died , and his estates were divided among his three daughters , Janet , Margaret , and Mariotta .

= = = Ruthven = = =

The eldest daughter , Janet , married William Ruthven , 2nd Lord Ruthven (d . 1552) in 1515 , and the castle and lordship of Dirleton passed to the Ruthven family . The son of William and Janet , Patrick , 3rd Lord Ruthven (c . 1520 ? 1566) , was one of the leaders of the group who murdered David Riccio , private secretary to Mary , Queen of Scots , in 1566 . Patrick was forced to flee to England , where he died , leaving Dirleton to his son William (c . 1541 ? 1584) , who was created Earl of Gowrie in 1581 . Lord Gowrie led a plot , later known as the Raid of Ruthven , in which the 16 @-@ year @-@ old King James VI was seized , in August 1582 . Ruthven then ruled in the king 's name , while James was held captive . Although Gowrie was pardoned the following year , he was executed in 1584 for his part in another plot to seize Stirling Castle , and his lands were forfeited to the crown . A keen amateur arboriculturalist , Lord Gowrie is thought to have laid out the gardens at Dirleton , and planted numerous trees . Except today , it is known that most of the stories told about the Ruthvens and the plot of Gowrie House , and the attempted kidnap of King James , was made up by the king , after he and his men murdered John Ruthven 3rd Earl of Gowrie and his brother Alexander , in a plot for revenge , murder and also to get the king out of paying a large debt he owed the Ruthven Earl , and most evidence was forged at the kings order .

James VI granted Dirleton to the Earl of Arran , who entertained the King there in 1585 . The following year , the castle was restored to Lady Dorothea , widow of the first Earl , and by 1600 had passed to John Ruthven , 3rd Earl of Gowrie (c . 1577 ? 1600) , their second son . However , in August that year , in an event known as the " Gowrie Conspiracy " , Lord Gowrie and his younger brother were killed attempting to kidnap or assassinate James VI at Perth . Lord Gowrie is said to have persuaded Robert Logan of Restalrig to join the plot by offering , as a bribe , Dirleton Castle , which Logan described as " the pleasantest dwelling in Scotland " . However , the failure of the plot led to the attainder of the Ruthven family , and the castle was forfeited once again . Dirleton was granted to Thomas Erskine of Gogar , who had killed Lord Gowrie and helped to save the King , although Lady Dorothea was permitted to live there until her death in 1605 , after which the castle ceased to be a noble residence . Erskine was later created the 1st Earl of Kellie , but sold the castle to Sir James Douglas in 1625 . Douglas sold it on to Alexander Morieson of Prestongrange , who sold it in turn , in 1631 , to James Maxwell of Innerwick (d. c . 1650) , who was created Earl of

Dirletoun in 1646 .

= = = Cromwell = = =

Oliver Cromwell 's army invaded Scotland in 1650 , during the Third English Civil War , and defeated the Scots Royalists at Dunbar on 3 September . With this victory , Cromwell gained effective control of southern Scotland , but bands of Royalist moss @-@ troopers continued to harry the English supply lines . One such band was based at Dirleton , and Cromwell ordered General Monck and General Lambert , with 1 @,@ 600 troops , to capture the castle . This was achieved on 10 November , using mortars to destroy the drawbridge and inner gate . The captain of the moss @-@ troopers was hanged from the walls with two of his comrades . The castle was slighted once more , and although briefly used as a field hospital , it was then left to decay . The soldier and engineer responsible for Cromwell 's effective use of artillery was a German , Major Joachim Hane . He also designed fortresses near Inverness and in Ayr , and directed the mortar fire at the siege of Stirling Castle in August 1651 . He later spent a year spying for Cromwell 's Secretary of State , John Thurloe .

= = = Nisbet = = =

Dirleton Castle and estate were purchased , from the widowed Countess of Dirletoun , by the lawyer John Nisbet (c . 1609 ? 1687) in 1663 . Nisbet , who took the title Lord Dirleton when he was appointed as a judge , built a new house at Archerfield , to the north @-@ west of the village . The Nisbets continued to maintain the gardens around the castle as part of the park around Archerfield , and installed the bowling green . The 19th @-@ century garden walls were added by Mary Nisbet , Lady Elgin (1778 ? 1855) , wife of the Earl of Elgin , as part of a " beautification " of Dirleton village . In the mid @-@ 19th century , two new parterres were laid out by the head gardener , David Thompson . Although neither survived , the west garden was restored , based on 19th @-@ century plans , in 1993 . The north garden was replaced in the 1920s with an Arts and Crafts @-@ style garden of herbaceous borders . Also in the 1920s , the castle was passed into state care , and is now maintained by Historic Scotland , an agency of the Scottish Government .

The castle and grounds are protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument , while the gardens appear on the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland , the national register of historic gardens . The castle , doocot , and boundary walls are Category A listed buildings , the highest level of protection for a historic building in Scotland .

= = = The Barony of Dirleton = = =

The Barony of Dirleton was re @-@ erected by the Crown for the benefit of Camilo Agasim @-@ Pereira of Fulwood and Dirleton , who is the present Baron of Dirleton . He was born in Brazil and educated in the US , Brazil , and Israel . After serving in the Israeli Defense Forces , he served as an assistant community envoy and spokesman in the Israeli Consulate in Philadelphia . Late on he was also a member of the Israel Police and Security Forces . From 1993 to 2000 he was acting Hon. Consul of Mozambique in United States , and Consul from 2000 to 2006 . Presently he heads the Barony of Fulwood Foundation and The Brazilian Art Exchange Foundation , The Florida Bureau of Mediation , Breeze Broadcast Group , and Camax Communication Group . He is a Patron of the Royal Academy of Arts in London and The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Museum in South Africa . The Baron is married to Maxine Ann Agasim @-@ Pereira of Fulwood and Dirleton . They have four children : Jay , Sara , Elio and Yaalit .

= = Description = =

The castle is built on a natural rocky outcrop , on a low ridge overlooking the farmland of East Lothian . It comprises a kite @-@ shaped courtyard , 40 metres (130 ft) by 27 metres (89 ft) ,

flanked by buildings on the south and east sides . The most substantial remains are the Ruthven Lodging , the gatehouse , and the de Vaux keep to the south , while only the basement of the east range survives . Fragments of the north and west curtain walls outline the courtyard , which was formerly divided in two by further 16th @-@ century buildings . The castle was originally approached from the south , via a bridge and 3 @.@ 4 @-@ metre (11 ft) drawbridge , across a 15 @-@ metre (49 ft) wide ditch . In the 16th century , steps were built to access the Ruthven lodging from the west .

= = = The keep = = =

The keep , or donjon , survives largely intact from the 13th century , and forms the south @-@ west part of the present castle . Described by architectural historian W. D. Simpson as a " cluster keep " , it comprises a large round tower to the south , a smaller round tower to the west , with the two joined by a square tower . The masonry is of squared ashlar , or dressed stone blocks . Internally , the original use of the rooms is difficult to interpret , although the round towers may have served as private suites for Lord Dirleton and his Lady . The large tower contains a six @-@ sided chamber at ground level , possibly a kitchen , with a seven @-@ sided main chamber above . This room has a pointed vaulted ceiling , window seats in the large windows around the south wall , and a carved fireplace at the north . To the east is a postern , or side door , and beyond is a well . Adjacent to the well is a floor hatch , which would have allowed food to be transferred directly from the kitchen to a servery above . A room in the square tower to the west , possibly the lord 's bedroom , has holes in the ceiling to allow smoke from braziers to escape . The more ruined west round tower probably contained another hall , with chambers above and storage below . In the 17th century , the top of the main round tower was lowered and remodelled to form a gun platform .

Only fragments of the rest of the 13th @-@ century castle remain . A fourth tower , where the Ruthven lodging now stands , may have completed the " cluster keep " . Bases of round towers at the south @-@ east and north @-@ east corners of the castle are visible below the later walls . Parts of the north @-@ west wall are 13th @-@ century work , as is the blocked postern in the basement of the east range . The overall plan of the castle , however , was not greatly changed through later rebuilding work . Dirleton is the earliest dated example in Scotland of a castle with round towers that project beyond the curtain wall , as opposed to those at Dunstaffnage , for example , where the towers are contained within the walls . This new form was subsequently used in other 13th @-@ century Scottish castles , including Bothwell and Kildrummy .

= = = The east range and gatehouse = = =

The gatehouse , kitchens , and east range were built by the Haliburtons in the 14th and 15th centuries . The gatehouse , built in the 14th century to the east of the keep , is similar to the one at nearby Tantallon Castle . It is fronted by a high , pointed arch , formerly with bartizans , small round turrets , at the top . The gate was protected by a drawbridge over the outer ditch , a portcullis , and three sets of doors . Guard rooms open off the entrance passage , and a round opening in the roof , known as a " murder hole " , allowed defenders to drop objects on to any attacker who breached the outer gate .

The large kitchens occupy the south @-@ east angle of the castle . The 9 @-@ metre (30 ft) high main kitchen has two 4 @-@ metre (13 ft) wide fireplaces for cooking , and a circular vent in the vaulted ceiling . Hatches in the floor give access to a well (11 @.@ 5 metres (38 ft) deep) and cellars below . The adjacent passage linked the kitchen to the hall in the east range .

The east range itself runs the length of the east side of the castle , and originally comprised a large hall , with a square tower house at the north @-@ east corner . Although only the basement survives , this once formed one of the finest noble residences of its time in Scotland , and would have been similar to the contemporary buildings at Doune Castle . The basement is a single tunnel vault , with low walls subdividing the area into stores . Two large ovens and a well lie at the south end , while at the east is the 13th @-@ century postern , blocked when the wall was thickened to

support the new buildings above , and re @-@ used as a fireplace . At the north end of the basement is a vaulted prison for freemen , and below this , a rock @-@ cut pit , 3 metres (9 @. @ 8 ft) square , to house prisoners of the peasant classes . Above the prison , but still within the basement , is a vaulted chapel with various ceremonial recesses , such as a sacristy and a piscina , or water basin . A private chamber for the priest is next door . The hall above is 22 metres (72 ft) by 7 @. @ 5 metres (25 ft) , and once had a high timber roof , and a minstrel 's gallery at the south end . An ornately carved stone buffet , or cupboard , is located on this wall , which formed part of the servery next to the kitchen . At the north @-@ east corner of the castle , a tower house provided accommodation for the Lord 's family and guests . Again , only the lowest floor remains , above the chapel . This probably formed a private chamber for the Lord , and was connected to the adjacent hall .

= = = The Ruthven Lodging = = =

Constructed by the Ruthvens after they acquired the castle around 1515 , the Ruthven Lodging represents the final stage of building at Dirleton . In the later part of the 16th century , it served as the main residence of Lady Dorothea , wife of the first Earl of Gowrie , and their 15 children . The three @-@ storey building is constructed , like the Haliburton range , from undressed stone , although the Ruthven Lodging is decorated with string courses , horizontal mouldings running around the walls . The large windows were protected by iron grilles and small gun holes . The rectangular Lodging is immediately to the north of the de Vaux building , separated by a narrow irregular courtyard , which is accessed via a passage in the ground floor of the Lodging . The remainder of the ground floor was occupied by cellars , with family rooms and bedrooms on the upper floors . The first @-@ floor dining room was paved with patterned floor tiles , and may once have had a painted timber ceiling .

= = The gardens = =

The castle is set within extensive gardens , bounded by a 19th @-@ century wall . The gardens were first laid out in the 16th century , but have undergone many changes . A bowling green lies to the west of the castle , fringed by yew trees , which may once have formed a hedge around a parterre in this area . West of the bowling green is a flower garden , laid out in 1993 to an 18th @-@ century design , and containing yew , cedar , monkey puzzle and Lawson 's cypress trees . To the north is the 1920s Arts and Crafts garden , which is home to a 215 @-@ metre (705 ft) -long herbaceous border , and is overlooked by a castellated 19th @-@ century gazebo , or summer house . The border is recognised by the Guinness Book of Records as being the longest in the world . The rest of the gardens comprise lawns , with numerous mature specimen trees , including redwood , beech , and sycamore .

There is a well @-@ preserved 16th @-@ century beehive @-@ shaped doocot , or pigeon house , in the castle grounds . The doocot is 7 @. @ 6 metres (25 ft) high , and contains around 1000 nesting boxes for pigeons , which were an important source of food for the castle 's inhabitants . To the north @-@ east , now located outside the castle gardens , is a 16th @-@ century gateway which formerly served the castle , but now serves the adjacent farm .