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Aiket Castle: restored first-floor hall window, 2011

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Ayrshire's Castle Restorations

Michael C Davis

Of all my affable late father's saws and sayings, delivered to me in my childhood, one sticks in my memory like a fishbone in the throat. 'Always try to see the other person's point of view', he regularly advised. For me, this approach has generally been a hindrance, blurring edges and inviting lengthy internalised debate. The exception has been the surprising assistance it has given in understanding architectural conservation dilemmas, where theory and pragmatics collide. Of that insight, more later. Of these dilemmas, the debate surrounding Scottish castle restoration is an interesting one,[1] and the write-up of the Ayrshire visit of the Castles Studies Group – the visit that never was – gives a good opportunity to examine this topic before an audience which is united in scholarly interest and yet to some extent probably fragmented in their particular specialisms and perspectives.

Ruins

The idea of undertaking work to modify, renew, re-purpose or prop up castles – whether by way of repairing, consolidating, remodelling, extending, or restoring – has been with us pretty well as long as castles have. In Scotland, as elsewhere, any castle in use over a long period will invariably show signs of modification. In Ayrshire, **Craigie Castle** (Fig. 1 - over) is a good if neglected example. It sits on a mound in the middle of a field, evidently a morass at time of construction as a hall house in the 12th or 13th century. It was heightened in the 15th century and was abandoned at the close of the 17th century as a result of a structural collapse during further building work. These were doubtless only the principal interventions, and the site was probably previously occupied by an earlier fortification. Today, the castle is in a desperate condition, rubble from outer works strewn around, mixed with huge mortared chunks fallen intact, but enough standing to declare its quality. Despite carved detail of quality still surviving from one of the finest domestic vaults in Scotland, Craigie's development seems to have stopped, at least in the sense of man-made interventions. No consolidation is remotely likely, and any more interventionist treatment involving re-roofing seems improbable in the extreme, if only owing to the scale of the structure and the extent of devastation. Yet, Craigie's decline at the behest of natural forces will continue, probably with accelerated speed. Its future will surely encompass the loss of such architectural evidence as remains. Little enough is likely to survive the present century. Comparison of ornamental detail exposed to the full force of wind-driven rain with that more sheltered indicates the nature of what we will lose.

Craigie's plight is unusual only in that it was abandoned due to structural problems. The Scottish landscape today is peppered with ruined castles, towers and fortified or castle-like houses of the 17th century and before, for two interlinked reasons. The Scots remained addicted to the appearance of castellated architecture and to defence against light attack, long after defensive architecture had passed its sell-by date in England. Then, in the 18th and early 19th centuries, the Scots abandoned these houses in favour of more comfortable residences. Those castles which were not enlarged like **Sundrum** or **Craufurdland** in Ayrshire, were generally abandoned for new houses on new sites. Very many remain as ruins, in varying condition, to this day.

There are approximately 36 substantial remains of disused castles still surviving in Ayrshire. Three – **Crosbie** (West Kilbride), **Mauchline** and **Stanecastle** – still have roofs, and four have been thoroughly consolidated in recent decades to allow public inspection.

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Fig. 1. Craigie Castle: general view from NW, 2020

Old Dalquharran Castle is an affecting example of abandoned richesse. It sits by the River Girvan, the high ground dominated by a spectacular 18th-century Robert Adam castle of 1785-90 for which Old Dalquharran was abandoned and which itself was abandoned in 1968. Although several unsuccessful schemes have been touted for the Adam extravaganza on the ridge above, the older castle sits in sequestered decay and neglect. One half is a large residential tower of the 15th century, intact (more or less) to the wallhead; while the other is a 17th century *chateau* wing, sophisticated and elegant in its baroque charm, Francophile in tone though Scottish in interpretation. On my first visit in the 1980s, children were visible on the parapet-less wall-walk of the tower, flinging down loose rubble. They had climbed there, I later learned, by scaling the interior of the great hall fireplace flue. In the event of an injury, the whole site might well have been levelled by the local authority in the interests of safety, a fate which befell **Ardmillan Castle** in 1991 in a pre-emptive strike by Building Control to remove risk. Although there does not appear to have been any interest in the restoration of the old castle of Dalquharran, it is technically feasible that a restorer with deep pockets could take it on. Yet castle restoration has had its share of controversy, and any restorer would be well to bear in mind that his path may not be strewn with roses.

Restoration in the 19th and early 20th centuries

The native tradition of castles and castle-like houses may have stuttered to an end in the course of the 17th century, but it enjoyed a self-conscious after-life in the hands of 19th century antiquarians, revivalists and early restorers, increasingly influenced by concerns with history, ancient buildings and art. Ayrshire furnishes interesting examples of early restorations – **Newark Castle** in 1848, **Maybole** in 1849-59, **Old Knock** *c*. 1850, **Kilhenzie** in 1856, and **Penkill** in 1857 – no doubt enthused and informed by Robert W Billings's well illustrated publication of *The Baronial and Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Scotland* (1845-52).

The first trumpet blast of warning against the taste for restoration was sounded by William Morris and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Building's (SPAB) Manifesto in 1871.[2] The influence of the SPAB, of William Morris and of John Ruskin continues to this day. The problem with the SPAB's reactive 19th-century strictures against restoration is that they create two interlinked paradoxes if applied nowadays. The first of these is that great importance is placed on the retention of past layers of architectural development; yet new alterations are to be resisted in favour of simple repair. This can result in purists defending from alteration the very work which their predecessors had wished to prevent a generation or so before. The

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second is that the emphasis on simple repair leaves no second line of defence: if no repair is carried out, perhaps over decades or even centuries – as has been widely the case in Ayrshire – major interventions will be required, and practicalities will indicate that, if the building is not likely to be connected to the life support system of ongoing state-funding, some compromise may be necessary to save something worthwhile from the wreck of time.

Dean Castle's restoration illustrates the emerging early 20th-century pursuit of restoration as to an extent self-conscious, as an aim in itself, with the provision of comfortable accommodation relegated to a secondary and often compromised consideration. Restoration of the complex began in 1908 and terminated (spectacularly) in 1946 with the completion of timber fighting-platforms which were conjecturally re-imagined and built atop the much reconstructed courtyard wall: a piece of rampant enthusiasm which demonstrated that although ideas surrounding restoration could relegate modern standards of convenience to the dog basket, enthusiasm is as enthusiasm does. It was not quite the aggressive antiquarianism which saw the MacRaes of Ballimore and Eilean Donan very imaginatively (re)construct Eilean Donan in Wester Ross – for that was clannish pride driving architectural enthusiasm – but it certainly combined scholarship with some licence. Dean's cipher is the portrait of its restorer, the 8th Lord Howard de Walden, which dominates the Great Hall, painted in masquerade in Elizabethan togs: we know that it is what it is from his crisp Edwardian haircut, and the fun of Dean today is that whatever is not truly old is now an appealing part of the story of the place. That it is, in its own context, of high quality, surely makes the value placed upon it a discriminating one.

Theory and practice since 1945

The treatment of Ayrshire's ruined castles since 1945 well illustrates the national trend, combining the continued abandonment and ruin, and even demolition of some, with the painstaking state-sponsored consolidations of a few, and the private conversions to homes of a few others.

That ruined castles which are not maintained, naturally fall apart according to various factors can hardly be denied. The **Place of Auchinleck** (Figs 2-4) might be officially 'protected', but such protection can be illusory. Large trees grow from the ruins, exerting ever greater pressures, root systems invading, levering and holding them in transient embrace. There is no 'protection' enforced against abandonment and decay. Only if someone wished to apply to consolidate the structure, would 'protection' kick in. The chaos of past collapses may be tidied away in this particular case, but the ground is littered with a jigsaw puzzle of dressed details pulled from the rubble of more recent falls. This fragile survivor, little recorded, is clearly in accelerated transition.

A litany of other castles moulder in the manner of Auchinleck, often, like **Glengarnock** (Figs 5-6), with more structure to show than Place of Auchinleck, and hence more yet to be lost; and probably few of these have seen an archaeologist or 'standing building' expert carry out anything approaching a serious modern investigation. **Place of Kilbirnie** is an Ayrshire case in point, the spectacular architecture of its residential wing reduced hugely since the 1880s and utterly shrouded in ivy and part buried in its own debris. It is ironic that MacGibbon and Ross commented in 1887 that 'a small outlay would save it for a long time to come'.[3] Perhaps the greatest loss is **Auchans**, an astonishingly attractive 17th century *chateau*

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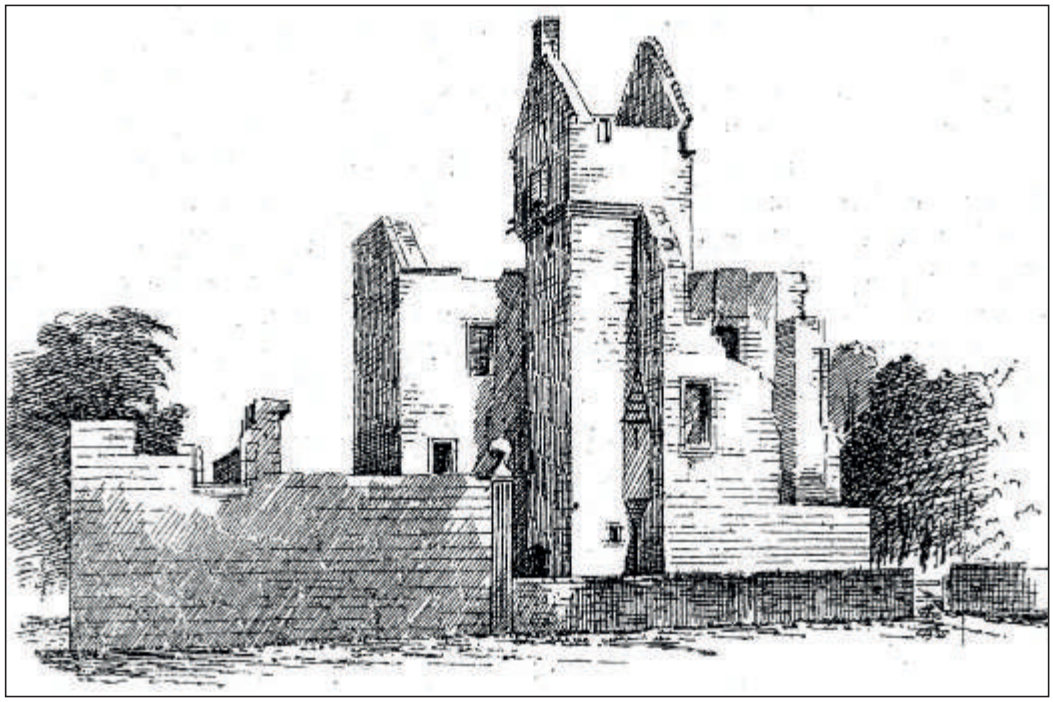

Above: Fig. 2. Place of Auchinleck: engraved view from S, as published in MacGibbon & Ross, Cast and Dom Arch, volume 3 (1889), page 497

Below: Figs. 3-4. Place of Auchinleck: surviving walls of W range, 2020

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Fig. 5. Glengarnock Castle: main tower from NE, 2008 (Wikimedia Commons, Rosser1954)

Fig. 6. Glengarnock Castle: high-level vault over first-floor hall, 2012

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part-formed from earlier work, whose often thin-walled construction together with its terraces and flower garden, have, since the 1920s, melted away from a still roofed state. Despite repeated warnings of loss, Auchans' disintegration to partial ruin has been swift. What magic its panelled interiors possessed, we cannot know, for none recorded them. Deliberate demolitions, often on safety grounds, occurred throughout the second half of the 20th century, accounting for **Brisbane** (late 1940s), **Busbie** (1952) **Ochiltree** (1952), **Hessilhead** (late 1960s), the upper levels of **Haining Place** (1970s), **Pinmore** (1982) and **Ardmillan** (1991). **Crosbie** (West Kilbride, not Troon), was damaged by fire in *c*. 2004, is not for sale, and with a new house close by, may become the first of the losses of the 21st century.

Yet, the story is not wholly one of loss. One of the defining characteristics of modern castle conservation practice has been the consolidation of large ruined castles, generally by the state agency. Ayrshire has its examples of these tidied ruins. The first in the county was **Loch Doon Castle**, meticulously moved, stone by stone, and rebuilt when its island location on its eponymous loch was about to be submerged by a hydro-electric scheme in 1934. **Dunure** and **Dundonald** were consolidated in the 1990s, the former for the local authority and the latter for the state agency, now known as Historic Environment Scotland. **Portencross** (Fig. 11) was consolidated for a community organisation in 2009-10.

Consolidation is not, however, a long-lasting solution unless it brings the reasonable expectation of sustained care, which generally involves the need to scaffold and remove invasive saplings and ivy, and make good vulnerable wall-heads and weak points every few decades.[4] The ruined **Place of Auchinleck** (Figs 2-4), already cited, well displays that consolidating a structure from advanced ruin is no easy option or light-footed exercise. It is necessarily invasive and not without its own conservation dilemmas when a structure has been previously treated at different times in the past.

Given the scale of the problem posed by decay to Ayrshire's extensive portfolio of ruins, private restoration schemes may offer a potential way forward, where a restorer can be found. The term 'restoration' here comprehends re-roofing, rehabilitating and converting. This has undoubtedly saved a few examples from further decay and in some cases from complete loss.

One of the first was **Loudoun Hall**, a merchant's house from the 16th century, in Ayr, fastidiously restored in 1947-56 (architects, Neil & Hurd) and again more recently repaired (Patrick Lorimer). **Newark**'s tower was re-restored in the 1970s (architect, Ronald Alexander), revealing original detail covered by the Victorians. **Aiket** (Figs 7-8) was begun in 1976 (Robert Clow acted as his own architect) as a private rescue for a collapsing ruin, **Mauchline** and **Stanecastle** were re-roofed in the 1980s as a holding measure, and **Law** restored from 1988 (architect, Ian Begg).

The tower-house at **Craufurdland** (architect, Patrick Lorimer) and **Newmilns Tower** (architects, Page & Park) were each reconditioned in the 1990s, **Lady Cathcart's House** (architects, Simpson & Brown) was restored in 1991, and **Dunduff** (architect, Ian Begg) was tackled from 1988. Rotting **Sornhill** was reconditioned *c.* 2000, **Knock** *c*. 2015 (architect, Patrick Lorimer), **Rowallan** more recently has been refitted as a hotel annex, and reconditioning and repair is underway at **Kelburne** (architect, Ben Tindall). From the 1990s, three crowstepped houses of the 17th and early 18th centuries were also repaired and reconditioned – **Bargany**, **Auchmannoch** and

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Fig. 7. Aiket Castle: general view from NW, 2011

Fig. 8. Aiket Castle: restored first-floor hall and fireplace, 2011

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Bruntwood. Aiket, Law, Sornhill and Knock were all roofless, or about to be, prior to restoration, and at Aiket structural problems were so severe that rebuilding the upper storeys was an urgent necessity.

The 1990s saw not only, arguably, the high water mark of castle restoration in Scotland, both private and public, and of public interest in architectural heritage, but also the emergence of a contrary trend of opposition to restoration.[5] This probably hinged on a developed understanding and sympathy for conservation theory and archaeological interests, and was perhaps influenced by a rapprochement between conservation theory and modernist architectural thinking. The furore over the (prevented) restoration of Castle Tioram in the Scottish West Highlands at least led to a wider public exposure to the various philosophical positions. To some observers, however, it seemed clear that Tioram had been 'saved' to be left to fall down.[6]

In Ayrshire, the leading Glasgow architectural practice of Page & Park rehabilitated and converted **Newmilns Tower** to residential use, and consolidated **Dunure Castle,** but neither project injected a particularly modernist agenda, although Dunure introduced visually differenced brick supports. Modernist-styled architectural interventions associated with castle restorations have been almost non-existent in Scotland, and pragmatic revivalist work to fill in any gaps between past loss and present rehabilitation remained the norm, as at Aiket and Lady Cathcart's House. The 1998 restoration of **Dunduff** created upper floors to a tower ruin which was probably never completed in the first place, and which in the lack of expressive historicist features to the new work avoided revivalist display. Nevertheless, it was in sympathy rather than in contrast with the old.

Aiket (Figs 7-8) has come in for criticism and praise in proportion to the aesthetic success and extent of its (re)construction. For some it was controversial, lying outside the state-funded and state agency-led culture, and blurring the distinction between what is 'authentic' and what is modern. The state agency wished the restoration to replicate the precise, known form of the castle after it had been truncated and remodelled as a farm-house, very possibly its least interesting phase, but in line with much conservation theorising.[7] Because the scheme implemented at Aiket mixed conjecture (based on surviving evidence) as to the *c*. 1600 form with a degree of revivalist creativity, it could be seen as likely to mislead – a particular bugbear for many theorists. For others, however, Aiket was a particularly beautiful evocation, palpably less dishonest or misleading than a rebuilding intended to 'authentically' mock-up a lost, former state. Since any with a scholarly interest ought to be able to carry out basic research, it could be argued that it was no more likely to mislead than any other approach. Indeed, as at the later reconstruction of Lady Cathcart's House, the pedimented dormers were clearly dated to indicate the date of the restoration. Aiket was de-listed by the state agency, but received a Europa Nostra award.

Today, the ideological landscape remains obscure to most. Guidance from within Historic Scotland in 2001 argued that 'tactful modern design', as opposed to 'conjectural restoration', was appropriate in only 'very exceptional circumstances' where there was no surviving 'evidence for the last known state of those features' within monuments to be restored.[8] However, this has not, seemingly, resulted in modernist solutions being built, solutions which might be of particular relevance to badly ruined structures where striking interventions might

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Fig. 9. Carleton Castle: general view from E, c. 1986

Fig. 10. Carleton Castle: general view from W, 2018 (Wikimedia Commons, Rosser1954) (cropped)

tick boxes on 'differencing' new work and on 'reversibility'. One reason may be that such structures are less appealing to restorers, owing to a variety of factors.

It may also be that imposed administrative fault-lines between castles which are scheduled, those which are listed, and those which have been both scheduled and listed have naturally given rise to differing underpinning philosophies. Whether or not they could or should be restored, or are even available to restorers, partial but substantial Ayrshire structures like **Auchans**, **Carleton** (Figs 9-10), **Clonbeith**, the forework at **Glengarnock** (Figs 5-6) and **Kingencleugh** are likely to remain ruins with problematic futures.

In 2009, in the wake of the simmering public debate following on from the Castle Tioram refusal for restoration, the state agency was asked by Scottish Culture Minister, Michael Russell, to draw up a list of castles which Historic Scotland actually considered suitable to be restored so that potential restorers could be guided in an appropriate direction. Historic Scotland in due course produced a list of only 26 Scottish ruins, with an apparent emphasis on structures where the need for 'conjecture' in rebuilding was minimised.[9] At the time of writing (September 2020) it still has only 26 properties identifiable with the caveat that the list is not definitive. Nor, of course, are these buildings necessarily available to purchase. In retrospect, it might have been more useful and instructive if Historic Scotland had instead drawn up a list of buildings which they did *not* consider suitable for restoration.

Of course, an approach of visually unobtrusive repair, akin to that of presenting a broken historic artefact in a museum cabinet, is not wrong, but applied as a rule it may be a hindrance to saving badly damaged structures which will never be afforded such protection. Even the state agency's own restorations at

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Stirling Castle, while attempting to reconstruct the past appearance of the interiors, had of necessity to resort to well-researched conjecture when conjuring forth virtually everything that meets the eye: furniture, textiles, wall treatment and ceilings. Products of unintended revivalism, perhaps?

Restoring or presenting interiors

Interiors provide a vivid illustration of the dilemma for conservation theorists who may wish to avoid a reconstructive approach or to minimise intrusion.

Private restorations or rehabilitations to form residences may give rise to concerns through the introduction of necessary modern services 'which can be particularly problematic'.[10] However, unhindered decay can be yet more problematic. Naturally, residential use may indicate alternative valid understandings on pragmatic as well as aesthetic grounds. The interior of **Newmilns Tower**, reconditioned by new owners following a period of neglect after a first treatment in the 1990s, presents, as with **Aiket**'s 1976 treatment, interior fit-outs and furnishing schemes which are refreshingly atmospheric but not blindly historicist in their dance with the past, aiming at being exactly what they are: evocative and traditional in tone (Fig. 8). Unlike Stirling Castle Palace's interiors (reconstructed with education in mind), they are not intended to defrost a precise moment in time, but to happily embrace surviving features of different periods of occupation and introduce furnishings of different (historic) periods. Such winsome private interiors can have real claims to art: they are rooted in Scottish tradition, yet are indicative of the real, living enthusiasm of their modern owners, and could be said to add a new layer of value for the future. Of course, like gardens, interiors are subject to change, and Aiket reveals this: re-listed around 2000, but regrettably only at category C, and now altered and very much extended by new owners. However, its original effect is still available through photographs.

When interiors are to be presented as visitor attractions, the response of the state agency – very often the owner – throughout the 20th century has been to almost exclusively present them consolidated, but otherwise bereft of plaster, textiles and furnishings, even when the rooms themselves are structurally intact and the building roofed. In the case of **Rowallan Castle**, which was still roofed, the state agency has been accused of past stripping-out of later work in order to consciously present in this way. This strategy has in turn been criticised as presenting a primitivised vision of past Scottish culture.[11] James Boswell and Samuel Johnson's visit in 1773 to Ayrshire's long-ruined **Dundonald Castle** is an early and salutary example,[12] though the modern visitor to Scottish castles in state care increasingly faces colourful interpretation boards to attempt to mitigate such misunderstandings, and this is often as much as a visitor should reasonably expect. In some Scottish cases, however, where major interior reconstructions might bring real engagement and cultural advantage, as at Stirling Castle and Argyll's Lodging, also in Stirling, there is good reason for presenting reconstructed interiors in this way, though suggestions of 'Disneyfication' on purist grounds have been levelled at Stirling, despite the scholarship underpinning the re-imagining. The restoration of Ayrshire's **Portencross** (Fig. 11; architects, Peter Drummond and Gray, Marshall & Associates), funded by public money and closely monitored by the state agency, followed the line of unobtrusive consolidation: scaffolding avoided direct engagement with the structure; and the lost pitched roof was not reconstructed in any previous form. Instead, the top of the upper vault was paved to shed

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water. Unsurprisingly in this context, the interiors were repaired more or less as found and not as they would have been originally intended to be seen; this was probably wise, considering the exposure of the structure to potential water saturation.

Conclusion

It must be pointed out that of the 27 Ayrshire castles and fortified houses which have remained in pretty well continuous use, and which are not simply consolidated or unconsolidated ruins, each of them has been treated, often quite dramatically, roughly once every hundred years. Some such as **Blair**, **Caprington**, **Carnell**, **Kelburne**, **Nether Auchendrane**, **Sorn** and **Woodside** are incorporated in large country houses. A few, alternatively, have been re-purposed: **Barr** is a Masonic Lodge, **Kersland** a farmhouse annex, while **Maybole** is no longer a factor's residence and awaits its next potential investment. Such change, though it sometimes resulted in the destruction of past historical evidence, also created layered buildings which have their own interest. While SPAB dogma might advocate avoidance of intervention and concentration on simple repair, it is quite evident – as has previously been noted – that the substantial array of castles currently with us could not be so if previous generations had not attempted to keep them in use, sometimes through invasive and dramatic alterations. Given our present historical understanding and our modern self-awareness, there is surely justification in many cases of a need for careful modern interventions in revivalist or in contemporary Modernist idioms? If more than a few of our present ruined castles are to survive, it is clear that we must pragmatically embrace a degree of diversity of approach, and acknowledge that there may be more than one valid way to keep a structure with us, venerable and instructive, for the future.

This short paper is leading us towards the potentially dangerous territory of subjective decisions, or at least towards embracing a degree of diversity of approach and diversity of underpinning philosophy. Our judgements – yours and mine – may differ; it may also be poor or sound, narrow or permissive. Yet, our judgement – hopefully informed by a breadth of vision rather than thoughtlessly bound to theoretical dogmas – is the best we have. It is clear that to be content to do nothing is not usually credible as a positive outlook, unless we are happy to see historic structures disappear. And if any amongst the broad conservation church are prepared to go down a route of so-called 'benign neglect' or of so-called 'curated decay', the very essence of which is generally lack of active curation, in favour of reserving, untouched, a happy hunting-ground for contractual archaeologists of the future, they should probably realise that loss of the above-ground structure only lessens the future logic for preserving the site from invasive, natural or man-made disturbance.

I began this paper by suggesting that trying to understand other viewpoints can be useful when getting to grips with conservation theory. The truth of the matter is that conservation is a broad church, too broad not to encompass some incompatible views perhaps, for many disciplines and approaches within it may lead to quite different perspectives and priorities. Only, I suggest, by seeing the wider picture, is there hope for compromise.

Fairlie (Figs 12-13), a 15th-century remodelling of an earlier tower, long a ruined shell but complete to the corbel course and located above the Fairlie Burn, may soon be the next Ayrshire castle restoration. The proposals

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Fig. 11. Portencross Castle: general view from S. c. 2012

drawn up by Billy Kirkwood and David Boyle were particularly interesting, minimising intrusion to the tower and placing additions on a lower level on the drop to the burn. These additions were to be modern in appearance, connected by a glass corridor, effectively leaving the tower freestanding.

This is a rare attempt to propose a 'contemporary-styled' solution to designing associated new work. In this instance, of course, the additions do not replace lost, earlier work in any sense. Although revivalist additions and reconstructions have been built elsewhere – I have already reviewed some Ayrshire examples with some interest – there are very few examples of Modernist-styled additions within Scottish castle restorations known by this author, though the small addition to Blair Castle, Perthshire, is certainly of interest. Potentially, well designed work in contemporary, Modernist taste could be a feasible compromise solution to the perilous plight of particularly fragmentary ruins, where much too much yet survives to be lightly lost. What is important to stress, however, is that what is being pressed for in this article is not any single ideology or taste as applicable to all, but a pragmatic approach to carefully assessing opportunities when and if they should arise.

The life experiences we have, including the lessons we learn from our training, from our specific professional discipline, and from our colleagues and the culture of our workplace, necessarily mean that our outlook may diverge from that of others trained in different ways who have learned different professional lessons. It is natural to suppose that an archaeologist may have a different outlook from an architect, or a conservation specialist from a generalist planning officer, a medievalist from a modernist, or a charitable developer from a private restorer. Unfortunately, while such outlooks are usually perfectly valid from within their own silo-contexts, there can be a tendency to forget that architectural

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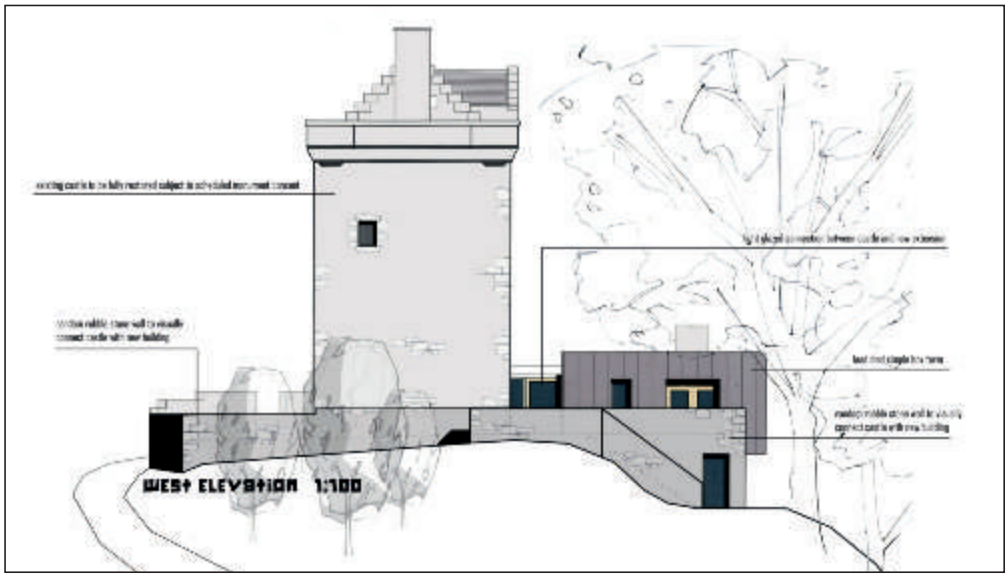
Above: Fig. 12. Fairlie Castle: general view from NW, 2013

Below: Fig. 13. Fairlie Castle: west elevation, one of a series of design drawings showing proposed low-level additions (courtesy of Billy Kirkwood)



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conservation serves an overarching social purpose. Conservation is not simply about conservation: it is about us. While a purist consolidation connected to the state-funded life-support system of generous funding must be welcomed as valid, it may not be universally applicable or the only valid play from the hand of cards we hold. In most cases, it simply is not on offer. More pragmatic approaches have their place, and more creative solutions, if of valid quality, can add much store for the future. But how are we to judge that quality? Ah, there's the rub! There is no rule book that can teach us that, no 'one-route-fits-all'. However, the ability to learn by experience, to try to understand alternative approaches, to searchingly question accepted views, and to employ a little considered common sense will all surely help.

Notes and references

1. For more in-depth treatments of this theme, see Michael C Davis, *The Scottish castle restoration debate 1990-2012* (Ochiltree, 2013), and idem, *Scots Baronial: mansions & castle restorations in the West of Scotland* (Ardrishaig, 1996). For illustrations and references to some of the buildings mentioned in this essay, see also above, Stell & Weinraub, 'Ayrshire Gazetteer', passim. Those which are illustrated here but not mapped or referenced in the gazetteer are located as follows: Aiket Castle (NS 488387); Carleton Castle (NX 133895); Fairlie Castle (NS 213549); Glengarnock Castle (NS 310573); and Place of Auchinleck (NS 500231).

2. The SPAB manifesto can be accessed at https://www.spab.org.uk/about-us/spab-manifesto. 'Although produced in response to the conservation problems of the 19th century, the Manifesto extends protection to "all times and styles" and remains the basis for the Society's work. Applicants for SPAB membership must indicate their support for the Manifesto's conservation principles.'

3. David MacGibbon & Thomas Ross, *The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland*, volume 1 (Edinburgh, 1887), page 395.

4. Richard Fawcett & Allan Rutherford, *Renewed Life for Scottish Castles* (Council for British Archaeology Research Report 165, York, 2011), pp 58-9.

5. Diane Watters, 'Castle reoccupation and conservation in the twentieth century' in Audrey Dakin, Miles Glendinning & Aonghus MacKechnie (eds.), *Scotland's Castle* Culture (Edinburgh, 2011), pages 143-72 at 172.

6. Alastair Robertson, 'Row that proves our heritage industry is in ruins', *Daily Express*, 16 June 2001. Robertson's view was that Tioram was 'in danger of being saved'.

7. Robert Clow, 'Aiket Castle – for owner occupation' in Robert Clow (ed.), *Restoring Scotland's Castles* (Glasgow, 2000), pages 87-109.

8. Richard Fawcett, *The conservation of architectural ancient monuments in Scotland: guidance on principles* (Historic Scotland, Edinburgh, 2001), pages 51-6.

9. Historic Environment Scotland, Castle Conservation Register, available online at: http://data.historic-scotland.gov.uk/pls/htmldb/f?p=2920:10:0 . The list includes two in what was the county of Ayrshire, Baltersan and Thomaston castles.

10. Fawcett, *Conservation of architectural ancient monuments*, page 55.

11. The late Professor Charles McKean (pers. comm.) took the view that a number of castles in Historic Scotland's estate were 'presented as, effectively, roofed hulks bearing no relation to the cultural quality of the people and the society that built them ...a primitivised version of Scottish social history...'.

12. 'Though of considerable size, we could not, by any power of imagination, figure it as having been a suitable habitation for majesty', Ronald Black (ed.), *To the Hebrides: Samuel Johnson's Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland and James Boswell's Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* (Edinburgh, 2007), page 434 (1 November, 1773).