
Bitesize History - Castles

Barr Castle



This Castle, which lies about a quarter of a mile south-west of the village is nearly entire as to its walls, but roofless. It is a high oblong tower, of pretty sufficient strength, and very respectable, indeed beautiful, relic of the architecture of the 15th century, as the style of the building would appear to indicate, because it has both slits for arrows, and ports for cannon in the walls.

It stands within the Great Barony of Glen, on lands called Barr and Bridgend, and the family of Glen, who held this land of Barr for some time—up to about 1630.

The castle consists of four stories, besides that under the roof or attic storey—the first, or the ground floor, is vaulted to secure goods in times of danger. The second contained the great hall, in which, as well in the upper chambers, the family lived.

The Castle is about 35 feet in length, by 26 in breadth. The walls are about four feet in thickness. It is furnished with a rampart on the top of the walls all around.

Some traditions exist regarding this castle, that it was built by masons who got only a penny a day for their labour, that it was one time besieged, and that, when the garrison was in great want of provisions, and just on the point of surrendering, the expedient was resorted to, of throwing over the walls, the heel of a skim milk cheese, the last of their stock, on seeing which the besiegers, considering this as an evidence of abundance within, raised the siege and withdrew.

The Castle, and a considerable portion of the lands of Barr, are now the property of Col. Day Hort McDowall of Garthland.

