

EXTRACT FROM ENGLISH HERITAGE'S RECORD OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS

MONUMENT: Enclosure castle known as Triermain Castle

PARISH: WATERHEAD

DISTRICT: CARLISLE

COUNTY: CUMBRIA

NATIONAL MONUMENT NO: 27695

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE(S): NY59466680

DESCRIPTION OF THE MONUMENT

The monument includes the upstanding and buried remains of Triermain medieval enclosure castle. It is situated immediately to the east of Triermain Farm and stands on a small glacial mound in the midst of a wide valley. The castle was quadrangular in plan with towers on the east and west sides. It was surrounded by a curtain wall and flanked by a moat. The upstanding remains of the monument include the ruins of an internal building and a fragment of the gatehouse to the west.

The castle was built with material from Hadrian's Wall which runs c.1km to the south. The mound upon which it stands is littered with grass-covered rubble which represents the tumble from the monument's walls. The main internal building measured c.22m by 21m but its only upstanding fragment is a corner which still stands to almost its full height. Within the fabric of this masonry there are traces of a newel staircase and, at first floor level, remains of a window and part of a door jamb. The surrounding moat has been partly infilled but still survives at the south east corner and along parts of the south and east sides where it measures up to 5m wide by 1m deep. To the west of the castle, and adjacent to modern farmbuildings, there is a fragment of masonry measuring c.4m long and up to 1.4m high which originally formed part of the gatehouse to the castle.

Triermain was included in a grant of land given by Henry II in 1157 to Hubert de Vaux. The date of the castle's construction is unknown but in 1340 Roland de Vaux was given licence to crenellate his 'dwelling place of Trevermame'. In the latter half of the 15th century the manor of Triermain was purchased by the Dacres and about this time Triermain Castle appears to have been abandoned in favour of a new castle at Askerton a little over three miles away. Latterly the monument has received literary recognition through Sir Walter Scott's poem 'The Bridal Of Triermain', Robert Carlyle's poem 'De Vaux, or the heir of Gilsland', and Samuel Coleridge's 'Christobel'.

All walls, fences, gateposts, and the concrete surface of a stock pen are excluded from the scheduling but the ground beneath all these features is included.

ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE

An enclosure castle is a defended residence or stronghold, built mainly of stone, in which the principal or sole defence comprises the walls and towers bounding the site. Some form of keep may have stood within the enclosure but this was not significant in defensive terms and served mainly to provide accommodation. Larger sites might have more than one line of walling and there are normally mural towers and gatehouses. Outside the walls a ditch, either waterfilled or dry, crossed by bridges may be found. The first enclosure castles were constructed at the time of the Norman Conquest. However, they developed considerably in form during the 12th century when defensive experience gained during the Crusades was applied to their design. The majority of examples were constructed in the 13th century although a few were built as late as the 14th century. Some represent reconstructions of earlier medieval earthwork castles of the motte and bailey type, although others were new creations. They provided strongly defended residences for the king or leading families and occur in both urban and rural situations. Enclosure castles are widely dispersed throughout England, with a slight concentration in Kent and Sussex supporting a vulnerable coast, and a strong concentration along the Welsh border where some of the best examples were built under Edward I. They are rare nationally with only 126 recorded examples. Considerable diversity of form is exhibited with no two examples being exactly alike. With other castle types, they are major medieval monument types which, belonging to the highest levels of society, frequently acted as major administrative centres and formed the foci for developing settlement patterns. Castles generally provide an emotive and evocative link to the past and can provide a valuable educational resource, both with respect to medieval warfare and defence and with respect to wider aspects of medieval society. All examples retaining significant remains of medieval date are considered to be nationally important.

Despite many centuries of neglect, the site of Triermain Castle survives reasonably well and still retains upstanding medieval fabric. The monument remains largely unencumbered by modern development and will contain significant buried remains of the medieval castle which is known to have been occupied until the late 15th century.

SCHEDULING HISTORY

Monument included in the Schedule on 17th February 1953 as:

COUNTY/NUMBER: Cumberland 22

NAME: Triermain Castle

Scheduling amended on 1st April 1974 to:

COUNTY/NUMBER: Cumbria 368

NAME: Triermain Castle

The reference of this monument is now:

NATIONAL MONUMENT NUMBER: 27695

NAME: Enclosure castle known as Triermain Castle

SCHEDULING REVISED ON 18th March 1996