

PANMURE ESTATE

Ancient monuments and other buildings listed as being of 'special architectural or historical interest'

Situated on Farms:-

Arbirlot Meal Mill
Millhill Meal Mill
Curlungie Earth House (Maintained by Department of Environment)
Downichill Dovecot
Mains of Ardestie Farmhouse
Mains of Ardestie Earth House (Maintained by D of E)
Hatton Farmhouse
Pitairlie Dovecot

Situated within Estate Policy Lands:-

Panmure Testimonial (Monument)
Camus Cross
Artificial Ruins
Castle Bridge
Commemorative Column
East Gates and Lodges
Carniara Den - Two Gazebos
Margaret's Mount
Montague Bridge
West Gate
Panmure Castle and moat.

Panmure House:-

The erection of Panmure House was begun by George, 2nd Earl of Panmure. The architect and first builder was the famous John Miln, 'Master Mason to His Majesty'. The foundation was laid in the first week in April, 1666 and 30 skilled masons and 10 wrights plus artisans continued work for about 5 years. John Miln died in December 1667 and was succeeded by Alexander Nesbit, mason and free burgess of Edinburgh. Nesbit had been foreman of the works and had been John Miln's right-hand man in all his great undertakings. The wright was James Bain. The stone came from Gallowhill Quarry - 1 mile north of the house. The slater, Andrew Low began to lay the slates on the house in July, 1668 and finished in August, 1669. His bill was £154. 1. 4d. The slates came from The Guynd. The stables were finished in 1670. The masons were paid £33,104 scots and the probable total cost of the house was around £100,000.

The great drawing room was 68½ feet by 23 feet. The 2nd Earl died in March, 1671 and probably did not inhabit the house.

James, the 4th Earl (2nd son of the 2nd Earl) added wings to each end of the house and erected the great gateway ½ mile to the west, built the elegant Pillar in the wood and formed miles of avenues within the Policies. The Gateway and Pillar were designed by Sir William Bruce and erected in 1694. The pillar bears this date and the names of the Earl and Countess Margaret (daughter of the 3rd Duke of Hamilton).

Earl James played a prominent part in the insurrection of 1715, of which his nephew, the Earl of Mar, was the leader. Although nearly sixty he fought gallantly at Sherriffmuir. He escaped to the Continent and died in Paris seven years later. His extensive properties were confiscated and in 1719 were brought under the hammer.

At best the original house was a large and comfortable residence - externally it was plain. However the alterations made by Bryce from 1852 - 1858 almost entirely changed the general character of the building and gave it a grand and imposing appearance. They consisted of the addition of two towers with elegant pavilion roofs, one at each angle of the East side of the edifice. An attic storey, with elegant dormer windows was added to the main building. A great central square battlement tower with turrets was also added. The range of buildings all linked, extended to 464 feet, or 100 feet longer than Dundee High Street. The main house was 150 feet by 90 feet. The wings increased the length to 354 feet and the stables added another 110 feet. The house contained 87 rooms with fireplaces and 70 other

apartments and 25 w.c.'s (but with only one bathroom). There were 345 windows. Light was by gas. It was considered to be one of the finest and most comfortable baronial mansions in Scotland. In 1860 the Earl succeeded to the Earldom of Dalhousie and removed to Brechin Castle and as a result the house was little used. In 1872 it was occupied by a Mr. O.G. Millar, a Dundee merchant. It was used occasionally by shooting parties in the early 1900's and remained fully furnished until 1930's. When the estate was sold in 1951 a decision was made to dispose of the house as it was too costly to maintain, having dry rot in the roof. It was offered to the Coal Board and the Hospital Board as a possible convalescent home but there were no takers, and it was demolished in 1953/54 by Brands.

The Grounds:-

Extend to 1200 acres intersected by two streams. The deep ravine through which the western streamlet runs is the Corriera Den. The 3 arch bridge is Montague Bridge, erected in memory of Lady Panmure, wife of the Earl, in 1872.

The wrought iron gate in the avenue from the west (formerly the principal approach to the house) has never been opened since Earl James left in 1715.

Among the woods about 1 mile to the north of the house is what appears to be the ruins of an old abbey. It is a clever imitation of an ancient edifice which was erected about 1770 and is now overgrown with ivy.

The Pillar, a massive column about 45 feet high has an inscription on the south side - 'James Earle of Panmure 1694' and on the north side - 'Margaret Countess of Panmure 1694'.

There were deer parks on the estate and deer abounded until 1822, in the winter of which year there was a long and continuous snowstorm which filled up the sunk fences and made it easy for the deer to escape. Many wandered about the countryside for many weeks but others, perhaps the greater part, found their way to a row of large yew trees near the house and ate the twigs so heartily that they died.

Old Castle of Panmure, this formerly crowned the summit of the rocky eminence to the south-east of the gardens. Although every tract of stone and lime has disappeared, the outline of the foundations are distinctly marked by elevated mounds on the grass covered hill. The castle was built in a square with high buildings around an interior court and strong towers at the angles. There was a drawbridge on the north side.

Panmure Monument. On the highest point of Cambustone hill and upwards of 500 feet above sea level, the monument is 105 feet high. A spiral staircase leads to the top which has a circular parapet. The view takes in seven counties. The monument was erected in 1839 by tenantry of Lord Panmure, the inscription reads 'to perpetuate the memory of a nobleman who, through a long life has made the interests of his tenantry his sole and unwearied object'.

Camus Cross. Said to be the tombstone of the leader of Danish invaders who, after the Battle of Barry in 1010 against Malcolm II, fled to this hill where he was overtaken and slain. The cross is about 7 feet high and covered with carvings. There is a man flanked by two kneeling angels and two sets of priestly figures below. It is mentioned as the Cross of Cambuston in a Deed of 1481. The tomb was opened in 1620 by the then Lord Panmure and a large skeleton, in a good state of preservation was found, which had a damaged skull.

History: King William the Lion gave the Panmure lands to Philip de Valouis, grandson of a Norman baron who came to England with William the Conquerer. Panmure Castle was the seat of the Barons of Panmure. The barony was acquired by marriage by Sir Peter de Maule, whose 13th descendant in 1646 was raised to the Scottish peerage as Baron Maule of Brechin and Navar and Earl of Panmure. Both titles were forfeited by the 4th Earl for his share in the 1715 rebellion, but the title of Baron Panmure was conferred, in 1831, on his great-great-nephew, the second son of the eighth Earl of Dalhousie, and his son - Fox Maule Ramsay, succeeded in 1860, to the Earldom of Dalhousie.

The estate was purchased by Miss J.A. Harrison (1924) Settlement in 1951 (Mrs Wightman-Harrison) Then sold to Robinson of Robinson's Rentals in late 1960's. It is presently owned by Commercial Union Assurance Co. Ltd., who purchased it in 1975.