

## *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*

Updated on 15/06/2007

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	South Lanarkshire
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	Bothwell Castle
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	HSCO-90038-2013-01
<b>PARISH:</b>	Bothwell (Hamilton)
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Gordon Ewart
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	Kirkdale Archaeology
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Archaeological monitoring
<b>NMRS NO(S):</b>	NS65NE 5.00
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	Castle
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	None
<b>NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)</b>	NS 6878 5936
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	30 January 2013
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	12 February 2013
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)</b>	
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (May include information from other fields)	<p>A watching brief was maintained during the removal of 'rough racking' and other recent repairs at the wall head of the north rampart. The exposed masonry was examined and recorded. The main focus of the repair programme was the western half of the 14th Century N rampart, built against a reduced section of residual curtain wall, running up to the circular <i>donjon</i>.</p> <p>Two main phases of construction were identified. The new build comprised well-shaped rectangular red sandstone blocks as facing stones for the surviving upper 1m, with more random rubble as wall core. The recent rough racking consisted of a jumble of large blocks of red sandstone with copious amounts of cement, creating a random rubble wall core.</p> <p>The most striking aspect of the N rampart is its sheer mass and stability. This is in part the result of the use of the reinforced centrally placed entrance, and tower at the W end, and the short section of masonry built at right angles to the residual 13<sup>th</sup>-century N curtain wall. These measures enabled a width to length ratio of c. 1:10 (2.8m : 28m for the main N rampart build). This is comparable to the broadly contemporary 'Douglas' work at Tantallon Castle (East Lothian), where a similarly massive, and apparently free standing screening wall, is threaded between corner and central towers; a wall c.3.6m wide (at intervals) and c.35m long.</p> <p>This, and other such basic formulae, appear to be an aspect of a long tradition of wall construction, based on practical experience and a knowledge of the physical properties of the resources available, as much as any by aesthetic/strategic considerations.</p>
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>	
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	Historic Scotland
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<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION</b>	Archive to be deposited in NMRS

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Updated on 15/06/2007

(intended/deposited)	
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**HISTORIC SCOTLAND PROPERTIES IN CARE  
MINOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS 2013**

**Bothwell Castle • Monitoring • January / February 2013**

**HS PIC Index Number: 90038**

**SITE:** Bothwell Castle, Uddingston

**N.G.R.:** NS 6878 5936

**DESCRIPTION:** An occasional archaeological watching brief during the removal of 'rough racking' and other recent repairs at the wall head of the N rampart

**PROJECT CODE:** HSCO-90038-2013-01

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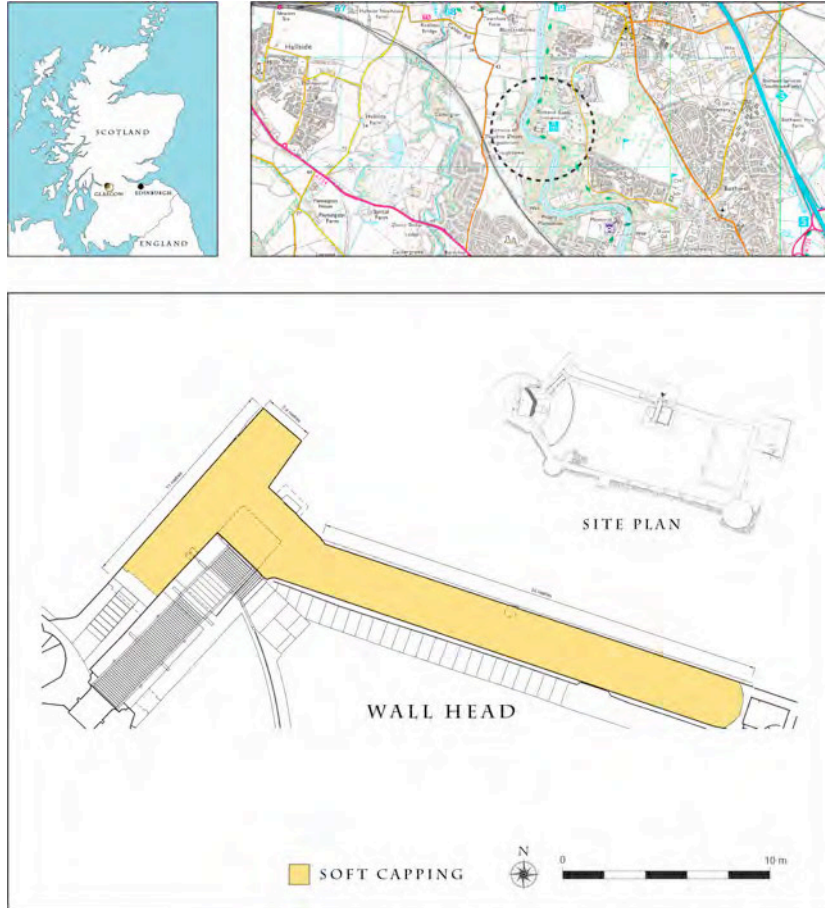


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**MARCH 2013**

## INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its PIC call-off contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked to undertake an occasional archaeological watching brief during the removal of 'rough racking' and other recent repairs (down to the historic wall fabric), at the wall head of the N rampart at Bothwell Castle (Fig.1).



**Figure 1:** Plan showing the location of Bothwell Castle and the area of works.  
Inset No. 2 © Crown copyright. All rights reserved 2013. Licence number 100036933.

The castle dates initially from the 1270s - 1290s, when the English captured it, only to be lost to a Scottish force in 1297. It was captured again in 1301, this time by Edward I of England, but it reverted to Scottish control after Bannockburn (1314). Edward III captured it in c.1331 when it was extensively restored and extended. In 1337, it once again returned to Scottish control and was partially slighted. After 1360 the castle was repaired, with work completed on the hall, chapel and parts of the outer walls, including the N curtain wall.

Site inspection took place on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2013, 6<sup>th</sup> February 2013 and 12<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

## **DESCRIPTION**

The work involved the occasional monitoring of an extensive programme of clearance over much of the N rampart wall head, in advance of the establishment of soft capping.

The main focus of the repair programme was the western half of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century N rampart, built against a reduced section of residual curtain wall, running up to the circular *donjon*. The new build comprised well-shaped rectangular red sandstone blocks as facing stones for the surviving upper 1m, with more random rubble as wall core. The recent rough racking consisted of a jumble of large blocks of red sandstone with copious amounts of cement, creating a random rubble wall core (Plate 1). It was noticeably deeper (*c.*1m) towards the middle area of the wall and was easily distinguished from the whitish mortar of the historic wall fabric by the use of hard grey cement (Plate 2). Once mostly removed, the rough racking was replaced by soft clay (Plate 3).

In addition to these general observations, it was noted that three stones at the top of extreme E end of the N rampart featured a weathered chamfer on their upper edges (Plate 4), not matched at the W end by stones at same height, confirming the two phased nature of the surviving masonry.



**Plate 1:** The exposed wall core



**Plate 2:** The hard grey cement atop the historic wall fabric

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The most striking aspect of the N rampart is its sheer mass and stability. This is in part the result of the use of the reinforced centrally placed entrance, and tower at the W end, and the short section of masonry built at right angles to the residual 13<sup>th</sup> Century N curtain wall.

These measures enabled a width to length ratio of  $\approx 1:10$  (2.8m : 28m for the main N rampart build). This is comparable to the broadly contemporary 'Douglas' work at Tantallon Castle (East Lothian), where a similarly massive, and apparently free standing screening wall, is threaded between corner and central towers; a wall  $\approx 3.6$ m wide (at intervals) and  $\approx 35$ m long.

This, and other such basic formulae, appear to be an aspect of a long tradition of wall construction, based on practical experience and a knowledge of the physical properties of the resources available, as much as any by aesthetic/strategic considerations.



Plate 3: The installation of the soft clay



Plate 4: Chamfered stones at the E end of the N rampart

## LIST OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

No.	Description	From	Date
1	The N rampart, wall head	E	12/02/2013
2	Detail of historic /14 <sup>th</sup> Century wall fabric	E	12/02/2013
3	View of the wall head, of the angled, linking masonry between the 14 <sup>th</sup> Century N wall and residual masonry	W	12/02/2013
4	View of the N wall, showing area of repair	N	12/02/2013