

## HAY CASTLE

<b>Ref No</b>	<b>PGW(Po) 11 (POW)</b>
<b>OS Map</b>	161
<b>Grid Ref</b>	SO 229423
<b>Former County</b>	Powys
<b>Unitary Authority</b>	Powys
<b>District</b>	Brecknock
<b>Community Council</b>	Hay
<b>Designations</b>	Listed Building: Hay Castle Grade I, Coach House and Stables Grade II, Outbuilding range Grade II, Main entrance gates Grade II. Conservation Area: Hay-on-Wye. National Park: Brecon Beacons. Scheduled Ancient Monument: Hay Castle Cadw Ref: 17/1104/BR076(POW)R
<b>Site Evaluation</b>	<b>Grade II</b>
<b>Primary reasons for grading</b>	A small site with strong historical interest. Remains of seventeenth-century terraced formal garden to north and eighteenth/nineteenth-century pleasure grounds to south, all within site of Norman marcher castle (south side being site of outer ward).
<b>Type of Site</b>	Border castle c. 1200. Jacobean manor built on to castle c. 1660; formal gardens by 1741. South gardens developed from at least c. 1809
<b>Main Phases of Construction</b>	c. 1660; c. 1809 on

## SITE DESCRIPTION

Hay Castle lies on the south side of the town, behind the market place, on the north edge of a ridge which descends to the south below. From the castle views can be taken north into south Radnorshire or south towards Cusop and the Black Mountains. The present house and surviving portion of the castle keep and inner curtain wall lie on the north and north-east sides of the medieval motte and bailey ensuring a position above the town. The house is a tall, stone two-storeyed Jacobean manor which faces

north and south, with seven Dutch dormer gables, the south front covered in Virginia Creeper. To the south it looks on to a small circular area of enclosed garden/grounds which lie within the site of the outer ward. On the north front a stone, seventeenth-century ornamental door casing survives on the third bay from the left. It creates the southern point of a formal axis of terraces descending to Castle Street (see below). This doorway is now bricked up.

The large castle was originally constructed between c. 1200 and 1211 by Marcher Lord William de Breos and his wife Matilda, daughter of a Welsh border prince. Henry III rebuilt the castle in 1233 following the burning of the town by Llewelyn in 1231. In 1265 the castle was reduced to its present area by a Simon de Montfort but remained a strategic site. The castle came into the Beaufort estates and in 1460 was badly damaged during border campaigning. Between 1600-50 a manor house was erected alongside the keep by a Howell Gwynne and it was this house that was replaced by the present Jacobean house, built for James Boyle in 1660. ( Samuel Lewis, 1842, offers a different history to Richard Haslam stating that the Castle passed from the Stafford family, the Dukes of Buckingham, to James Boyle from whom Howell Gwynne inherited after 1603, building the present house. On the death of Gwynne's widow in 1702 the house was divided into separate rented apartments). Hay became a modest, tenanted manor house until 1809 when Joseph Bailey (later of Glanusk Park) leased the castle, from its then owner's the Wellington family, and bought land to the south of the site which became known as the Castle Gardens. Bailey later bought Hay Manor in 1844 but from 1825 the castle itself became the home of the Hay clergy until 1904 when the Baileys leased it to the Morell family until 1906, taking it back into the family as the home to the first Dowager Lady Glanusk.

Between 1810 and the late nineteenth-century the old castle keep was used as a supplementary lock-up for the town. It also attracted the attention of the nineteenth century tourists including Richard Fenton and Sir Richard Colt Hoare who remarked on its romantic appearance 'finely clad with ivy', or sketched it, respectively.

In about 1910 the manor house was partly restored by the architect Caroe but was fire damaged in 1939 two years after the Bailey's had sold to a banker, Benjamin Guinness. In about 1961 bookseller Richard Booth bought the manor house as part of plan to create a rural centre for book selling. In 1977 a second fire badly damaged the manor house, the eastern end surviving only as a shell.

The stables date from the early nineteenth-century, the date of the service court is unknown. The stables and service buildings lie to the south-west of the house aligned north-south, the service buildings connecting to the house at its western end. These buildings reflect the curved side of the motte through variations in roof line and level. The service drive leads to Oxford Drive at the same point as the main drive and steeply ascends uphill into a narrow, cobbled yard enclosed on the west and east by buildings. The Stables, dating to the early nineteenth-century, are the southernmost building. Of dressed stone, a pedimented carriage archway with glass lights leads into the stables and, once, through to the south front of the house. This eastern access is

now bricked up. The stables are presently a book shop. The service buildings north of the stable are of rough, local stone with slate and stone tiled roof. Variation in building styles suggest that these buildings may date from at least c. 1600. All have been remodelled to serve as bookshops.

The gardens of the Castle are contained within the medieval boundary of the outer ward. To the north the remains of a formal seventeenth-/eighteenth-century terraced garden descend a steep slope directly below the house to Castle Street. On the south, within the site of the Castle's outer ward, there is a small circular level lawn, which is partially wooded and enclosed along its southern boundary by yew, laurel and rhododendron planted on a south facing bank. This area covers approximately 1/4 acre and an old, circular drive runs around the periphery of the south garden which is enclosed by a stone wall entering the area through a pair of fine seventeenth-century stone gate piers set in the south-west of the boundary wall.

The history of the site until the Tudor succession in 1485 suggests that there would have been little time for the making of either productive or pleasure gardens. A possible exception to this could have been the planting of orchards to the south of the site. The first clear evidence of ornamental gardens at Hay Castle was recorded in a drawing of about 1684 by Thomas Dineley who was accompanying the 1st Duke of Beaufort around Wales. Dineley illustrated the north front much as it is today with grass terraces and small clipped holly and yew trees. The terrace steps are shown in a series of zig-zags as he apparently could not draw perspective. The formal garden appears to have changed little in appearance between this date and a second illustration, an engraving by Samuel and Nathaniel Buck of 1741. At this time it appears that at least five terraces descended the north front, linked by a central flight of stone steps. On each terrace yew or box topiaries stand at regular intervals. They appear to be quite large, over 1.5m high. The lower north enclosure, behind Castle Street, appears much the same as now. The view also records what appear to be ornamental orchards on the eastern slope of the site, above Castle Lane. Four long, rectangular beds with four, square beds are illustrated, bordered with ornamental fruit trees. Owing to the extremely steep slope of this area today, and to the often 'inaccuracies' of such views it is possible that this orchard actually lay to the south of the Castle, and therefore out of view, either within the outer ward, where it would have been on a level terrace, or beyond the southern site boundary, Oxford Road, in the area where a substantial orchard was recorded on the 1888 Ordnance Survey map.

The date of these improvements is not known. It is possible that as the Castle was in the ownership of the Dukes of Beaufort the origins of these gardens were contemporary to great garden works at Raglan commenced in about 1549, although on a much smaller, more domestic scale. It is more likely, however, owing to orientation of the manor house, and the garden's relation to it, that the terracing was installed in about 1660 on the house's construction. They were certainly in place by 1684 when Dineley noted and drew them. Nothing more is known of possible developments in the gardens until the lease in 1809 by Joseph Bailey who was probably responsible for establishing the circular drive, probably on the line of an existing access track, and planting some of the accompanying trees. A small 'pleasure ground' resulted, with a

woodland area to the eastern side. No evidence of any flower planting is known until a late nineteenth-century photograph of the south front, which records a small area of bedding within the centre of the gravelled turning circle immediately in front of the house. The age and condition of the surviving trees in the garden suggest that the majority were planted from about 1860/70.

Bailey also purchased land about 1/2 km south-west of the site and constructed a walled kitchen garden within an area described as 'Castle Gardens'. The style and detail of these possible ornamented gardens is unknown, as is the actual date of their demise. The northern terraced gardens seem to have survived in form from 1809, although they have evidently declined in quality.

No kitchen gardens have survived at the castle site and no reference to any has been found. The vicinity of the castle to the town's market may have made a productive garden at the castle unnecessary - the castle site is also relatively small. However, following the lease of the castle by the Baileys in about 1809, land to the south of Oxford Road was purchased by the family. By 1888 the Ordnance Survey map records a large orchard immediately south of the road (which could well have predated the Bailey's purchase as Castle property) and, most significantly, a walled kitchen garden with south-facing glass houses and internal periphery fruit trees, sited within an enclosed area of land called 'Castle Gardens' which abutted the Longtown road, south-west of an area of common land. On the 1927 Ordnance Survey map this garden survives, although no glass and fewer internal trees are recorded. Since about 1960 this area has been developed as a small housing estate. Surprisingly part of the north-west and north-east walls still stand. They are made of rubble and brick, are partly capped, and stand to about 2m high. They are used to create the property boundaries of at least three houses within the estate. To the north of the walls there is a small, older house in its own garden. This house has been modified and extended but it could be the building on the north of the garden as marked on the 1888 Ordnance Survey map, perhaps the gardener's house. In the garden of this house there is a small Victorian sundial, a simple bronze dial set on a stone column base standing to about 1.2m high. This sundial is thought to have stood within the kitchen garden but there is no clear proof of this. No other traces of the kitchen garden are known to have survived.

The common ground to the south of the car park survives, footpaths crossing it are much the same as those recorded on the 1888 Ordnance Survey map. On the south-west of the car park there is a second length of stone and brick wall which creates part of the north-east and south-east boundary of Hay Primary School. According to map evidence the south-east wall stood on the north-west of the kitchen garden, creating the outer boundary of the Castle Garden site.

## Sources

- Primary** 1741, engraving of the north-front, Samuel and Nathaniel Buck. Powys Archives (B/D/C2/1/187)  
Photograph c. 1890, the south front of Hay Castle. Private collection.
- Secondary** Booths' Books Hay-on-Wye pamphlet.  
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