

CAN YOU DIG IT?



MYGALLOWAY BALMACLELLAN

The village of Balmaclellan has a little bit of everything in its past. A few ancient offerings, a medieval castle, a little bit of witch folklore and even a touch of the Crimean War, you would never guess how much history has left its mark in this area. A quick search of the National Record of the Historic Environment on Canmore is enough to show this, but many of the records are missing images or further information and this is where you can help. Here are some entries we've spotted but have a look for yourself, and use our MyGalloway guidance notes to get you started.

Balmacellan Mote **Canmore ID: 64193**

Visit Balmaclellan and it'd be hard to miss the large mound that sits like a proud 'Christmas-pudding' on the top of Mote Hill to the north.

This mound is actually the surviving motte of what was once the site of a 'motte-and-bailey' castle, one of the earliest types of castle to appear in Scotland during the 12th century.

Building the mound would have been a relatively quick and simple way to create a defensive stronghold, and it's on top of this that the keep of the castle stood.

Canmore gives the dimensions of the motte – 5m high and 27m in diameter at the base narrowing to 11m at the top – but there is only one photograph, an aerial image taken from some distance away.

It would be lovely to see some photographs of the motte taken from anywhere other than a plane thousands of feet in the sky.

Balmaclellan School **Canmore ID: 208442**

One single black & white photograph and a location is all the information to be gleaned about Balmaclellan school from its Canmore entry. So, we'll be able to find it (as long as it hasn't changed too much since then) but we won't know anything about what we're looking at when we get there.

Apparently it's been around since 1781 and was known to be a free school. Anyone know if this is true, or have more information that they can add? Or maybe even a photograph of how it looks now?



PRO TIP!

Searching for 'Balmaclellan' on Canmore won't include sites that sit very near to the village but fall into neighbouring parishes. Instead, we used the interactive map at **www.pastmap.org.uk** to allow us to search through all the sites which sit nearby.

Balmaclellan Churchyard

Canmore ID: 64195

Surrounding the church, is a churchyard full of 17th, 18th and 19th century gravestones which include a memorial to Covenanter, Robert Grierson.

There's even a sculpture at the front of the churchyard of 'Old Mortality' – Robert Paterson – and his pony. The Canmore entry contains these basic facts but no description of who Old Mortality was or a photograph to show what the sculpture looks like.

A separate entry, **Canmore ID: 64198**, exists for an unmarked stone sat near to the edge of the churchyard. This stone appears to be a bit of a puzzle and interpretations range from an ancient standing stone to the grave-marker of a witch's burial. It would be lovely to have a photograph of the stone to go along with the entry so that people worldwide can continue to be baffled by this feature.

Crimean War Memorial

Canmore ID: 299037

In the churchyard of Balmaclellan, stands the *only* civic Crimean War Memorial in Scotland, in memory of five soldiers from the parish who died during the war.

The Crimean War took place from 1853 to 1856 between Russia on one side and an alliance of British, French, Ottoman and Sardinian troops on the other. The Victoria Cross, one of the highest decorations for bravery, was introduced in recognition of the human cost that the war entailed.

Beyond a simple statement about what the memorial is, the Canmore entry has no further information regarding the people named on it or an image of the memorial itself. Any images or information that you can add would be a great addition in making the importance of this feature more widely recognised.

Balmaclellan Parish Church

Canmore ID: 208394

At the heart of the village, the church is protected as a Listed Building with records stating that its main body dates back to 1753!

Aside from three black & white photographs taken of the church in the 1970s, however, there is nothing else to be found in its Canmore entry.

Surely there must be more to know and many features that could be photographed? We hear tell of a remarkable timber ceiling and a stained-glass window that's nearly a century old... has anyone got anything to help show it off?

NEW SITES

What you can't do in MyCanmore is add new sites, but if there are any that you would like documented, you could upload their images to **Canmore entry ID: 113892**, Balmaclellan General, and include a description. This way they can still be included in the national record for everyone to see.