

## Airthrey Castle (Where I was born)

*Airthrey Castle ©1995-  
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Airthrey Castle lies just to the east of Bridge of Allan, 2 miles (3 km) north east of Stirling, and today forms the administrative centre for the

University of Stirling, lying at the centre of a 134 ha (330 acre) parkland campus.



The Castle was used as a Maternity Hospital during World War II before being purchased by Stirling County Council and later passed to the University. A fire in July 2000 caused considerable damage to the castle, but the University quickly committed to restore the building to its former glory.

It was built in 1791 to a design by Robert Adam (1728 - 92) for the evangelist Robert Haldane (1764 - 1842), whose family had owned the estate since 1759. The castle includes two standing stones which may mark a battlefield where King Kenneth I (d.858) defeated the Picts to unite Scotland in 839. The estate is first mentioned in 1146 in a charter of King David I (c.1080 - 1153). In 1368, it ceased to be crown property and passed to the Keeper of Stirling Castle. In 1472, the Airthrey Estates passed to the Grahams of Montrose and in 1645, the manor house was burned to the ground by Archibald Campbell (1598 - 1661), the covenanting Marquis of Argyll, in reprisal for the burning of his nearby Castle Campbell by the royalist Grahams. John Hope of Hopetoun (d.1682) who bought the estate in 1678, sold it to the Dundas family in 1706. They in turn passes to the Haldanes in 1759. Robert Haldane improved the estate, created the loch and landscaped the grounds before selling the estate in 1798 to Sir Robert Abercromby (1740 - 1827) who further developed the estate and the surrounding area. Abercromby discovered an ancient whale's skeleton at Airthrey in 1819 (the seashore had originally run along the base of the Ochil Hills). Sir Robert gifted the skeleton to the Natural History Museum at Edinburgh University.