

been enclosed by a barmkin wall, the house itself forming part of the enclosure on the s. The barmkin, now very fragmentary except for a n stretch pierced with gunloops, has had a battlement and projecting round towers.

The tower is of four storeys and attic, the rubble walling rising sheer to a cavetto cornice on the long n and s sides. At the ne and se corners, angle rounds linked by a parapet walk stretched across the e gable at third-floor level. The corbels of the rounds and walk are set between bands carved with dog-tooth and cable ornament. In the n wall, windows with chamfered margins, and round gunholes at the ground, first and second floors; also on the ground floor, an inverted keyhole gunloop. The e gable's only opening is the door onto the parapet walk. In the s wall, the main entrance guarded by another gunhole. Almost in line above, a stack of sizeable windows, with chamfered margins like the others. The w gable has fallen, as has the extension built against it.

Inside, a tunnel-vault over each floor except the third, whose ceiling has been provided by a wooden mezzanine below the attic's vault. Ground-floor kitchen with a big fireplace at the e gable. On each of the upper floors, the space s of the kitchen flue has formed a small private room, with a narrow window in the s wall.

CASTLE LEOD

0.9km. n of Strathpeffer

Large red sandstone tower house of the early c 17. In the charter of 1608 by which Kenneth Mackenzie of Kintail granted his younger brother Roderick the barony of Coigach and the lands of 'Cultelloud', there was mention of a mansion house here, but not of a tower. The present house was probably begun very soon after the granting of that charter, and a likely date for its completion is provided by two dormerheads on the n elevation which are carved with the initials of Roderick Mackenzie and his wife, Margaret Macleod, together with the date '3 Agvs [August]', 1616. But it must have been very soon after that the building was enlarged, acquiring a fashionable stair to the first floor and additional bedrooms, the resulting external appearance very stolid. The house seems to have been little used in the c 18 and was described as 'deserted except by Crows' and 'quite a ruin' in 1814, when repair was begun. In 1851 *Andrew Maitland*, adapting a design by *David Bryce*, placed a single-storey addition on the e and a low wing to the n. This n wing was thickened by a two-storey block on its w in 1874 before being mostly rebuilt in 1904 and extended further n in a gentle Baronial manner by *Donald Matheson*, 1912.

The house as first built was of five storeys, L-plan, with its se jamb projecting to both s and e. Crowstepped gables. Corbelled parapet walk placed below the wallhead on all sides except the n of the main block, where the top windows rise through the

eaves into stone dormerheads. At the walk's corners, round bartizans, those on the n with candle-snuffer roofs and continuous corbelling forming panels. The c 17 enlargement thickened the house to the s, although still allowing the jamb to project slightly. The addition is a little higher than the original building and dispenses with a parapet walk, although it has a conical-roofed turret at the se corner to give a hint of martial display. Over the top windows, stone dormerheads with scrolls on the sides. Moulded door near the s front's e end; above it, a long stone carved with heraldic panels separated by attached baluster columns.

Inside, the ground floor of the c 17 extension is mostly filled by a vestibule and the stone scale-and-platt stair to its l. Behind the vestibule, in the original main block, a passage off which open three stores; kitchen in the jamb. The main rooms are now plain late Georgian, except for a large c 17 stone chimney-piece in the original first-floor hall.

CHAPELHILL *see* NIGG

CHARLESTOWN *see* NORTH KESSOCK AND CHARLESTOWN

CONAN HOUSE

2km. s of Conon Bridge

5050

Harled late Georgian mansion house of the Mackenzies of Gairloch. The three-storey main block was built in 1790-8. Five bays, the pedimented centre minimally advanced and with a Roman Doric columned doorpiece, its frieze carved with rosettes between the triglyphs. Tall first-floor windows marking the *piano nobile*. Steeply pitched and bellcast roof. c. 1805 the house was made H-plan by the addition of two-storey wings, each with a full-height bow projecting to the front and a first-floor Venetian window at the side. Back extensions by *Andrew Maitland & Sons*, 1904. - Corniced early c 19 ashlar GATEPIERS at the entrance to the drive from the se.

Large U-plan STEADING to the sw, dated 1822. In the centre of the long s front, a tower, its lowest stage containing a huge roundheaded pend arch, the second a Venetian window (the outer lights blind) flanked by coupled pilasters topped by crenellations, the top a tall belfry-cupola, its weathervane displaying a plough. Two-storey ranges, their windows much altered. - To the e, a tall octagonal rubble-built DOOCOT, probably late c 18, its pyramid roof now felted. One ratcourse with flight-holes above. At the wallhead, a s-facing small gablet with flight-holes.