

Source – Our Parish Booklet 1967

Our Heritage...Sketch of Parish History of Ferry-Port-on-Craig (Tayport) by Douglas Young.—April, 1967

FERRY-PORT-ON-CRAIG was made into a separate parish in 1606, having formerly been part of Leuchars parish. Its main community was at the Tay ferry to Broughty, known from documents as the East Ferrie or South Ferrie. The inhabitants seem to have been “kindly tenants” of the Bishops and Archbishops of St Andrews, holding their tofts on condition of ferrying passengers across the Tay and of helping to defend the castle of St Andrews at need. A castle built at Tayport, probably about 1455 by King James II, on the site of the modern “Castle Cottage,” at the west end of Castle Terrace, survived till 1855. It had a vaulted ground floor, and a North-west tower two storeys high; but the original design may never have been completed. The only historical event recorded in the parish appears to be the battle of 27th December, 1547, when, according to Lindsay of Pitscottie, a Fife force killed some 160 soldiers sent by the English Lord Protector Somerset. They had occupied Broughty Castle during the wars of religion, and were probably largely Greek and Spanish mercenaries, who had sacked Balmerino Abbey on Christmas Day, two days before.

The original parish kirk was built in 1607, and rebuilt in 1794. The tower may be early seventeenth century. It was described by ‘Cynicus’ (Martin Anderson, the cartoonist) as “the only thing in Tayport with a leaning towards the kirk.” The arms on it are those of Sir John Buchanan and his wife Margaret Hartsyde.