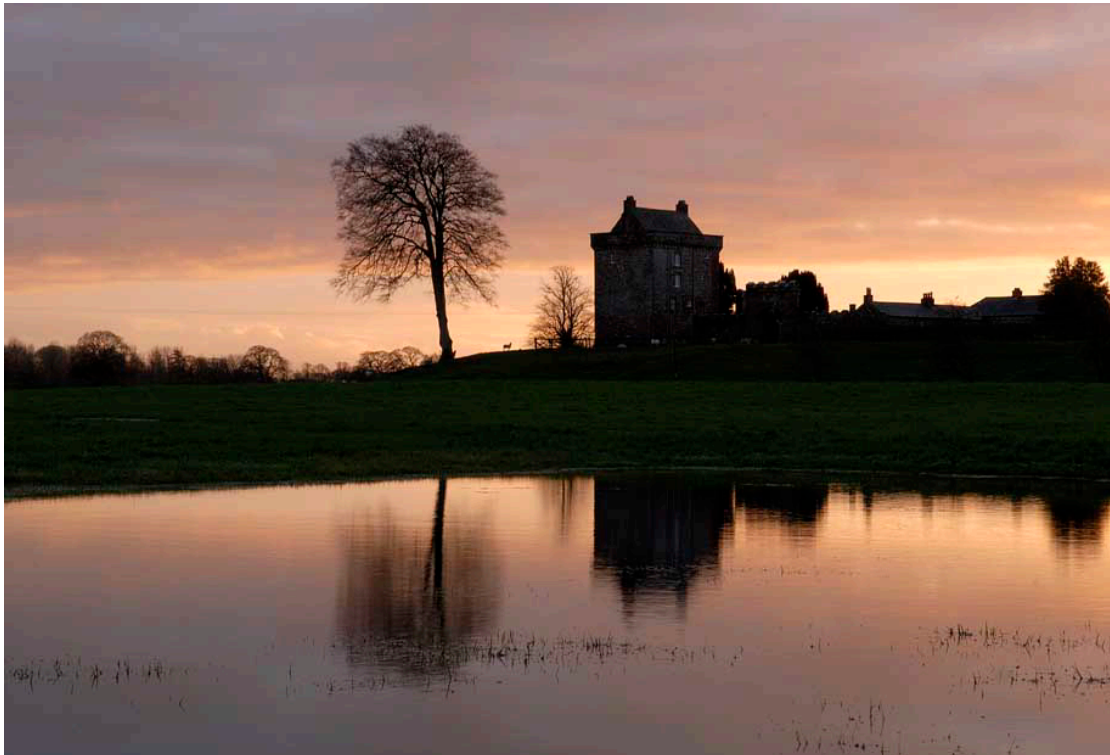


Kirkandrews on Esk

There are certain places in Cumbria which possess a tingle factor. I'm not just talking about breathtakingly beautiful Lake District places such as Derwentwater and Wastwater, but also the smaller and obscure spots. One that excites me is the Church and Tower at Kirkandrews on Esk, near enough Scotland to sound and feel more Sassenach, but still, by a streak, within the Cumbrian border. The area possesses that indefinable 'sense of place', where I know for certain I'll find photographic inspiration. There is the River Esk itself with the narrow suspension bridge supported by encrusted and lichened cables and anchorages. Then the elegant Church (described by Pevsner as "not at all a villagy job") with its open rotunda, rising above a whole host of weathered sandstone tombstones. To cap this terrific stage set there is a Pele Tower with a commanding presence over the surrounding parkland.

The early December afternoon when I visited was gloomy, but with a forecast of clearing skies I was fairly confident of conditions I wanted – evening sun (3.20pm to be precise, this being the middle of winter) streaming across, illuminating the clouds above. Well naturally it didn't go exactly to plan, but I am nonetheless happy with what I got. A large puddle in the field proved useful for providing foreground interest (i.e. reflections!) I'd forgotten my wellies, but wet shoes were a small price to pay.



Taken with my Nikon D200, I had the ISO set at 200, though I think 100 would have eliminated more grain, $f/16$ (aperture priority) and used centre-weighted average metering. As my resulting speed was $1/10^{\text{th}}$ second, a tripod was essential. However I could reasonably have made the aperture wider, say to $f/8$ and increased the speed. I used auto focus.



The details are similar to the main shot. I like the spareness of this photo, but do find that horizontal line dissecting the image above the water a bit annoying. I needed to take this from a low angle to include the reflection of the Church tower in the puddle. Oh dear, wet trousers as well as wet knees!