

Edinbu rocks!



Around **640** Din Eidyn besieged

1 Poetry that may date to about AD 600 provides the first suggestion of a stronghold on Castle Rock. Known as 'Din Eidyn', meaning the 'stronghold of Eidyn', the fortification was

held by the Gododdin people for many centuries.

The poetry also talks of a warband assembling at the hill fort before marching to fight the Angles in Yorkshire. With half the numbers of their opponent,

the Gododdin suffered a brutal loss at the hands of their foes.

Din Eidyn was probably captured around AD 638, and the stronghold was given the anglicised 'Edinburgh' title that we know today.

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Key moments in the history of Edinburgh Castle

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1093 Castle of the Maidens

2 The first castle here was recorded in 1093 and named 'Castle of the Maidens' in the 1100s. One legend says the castle was given this title because the Picts kept virgins there; another that it was named after St Moninne and her nuns, who founded a church on Castle Rock.

Confined mainly to the summit of the rock, this castle would have been largely made of timber before being rebuilt in stone in the 13th century. It was here, in 1093, that Queen (later Saint) Margaret took to her bed and died after learning of the death of her beloved husband Malcolm III.



The Castle of Maidens by Edwin Austin Abbey

1130 St Margaret's Chapel

3 Built in 1130, the tiny St Margaret's Chapel in Edinburgh Castle was constructed by David I in memory of his mother, and was intended to be a private chapel for the royal family. It is not only the oldest building in the castle, but also in the whole of Edinburgh, and to this day the minute chapel is a popular wedding venue.



Tiny St Margaret's Chapel



This trebuchet ball, which is on display at the castle, probably came from the 1296 siege

1296 Edward I takes Edinburgh Castle

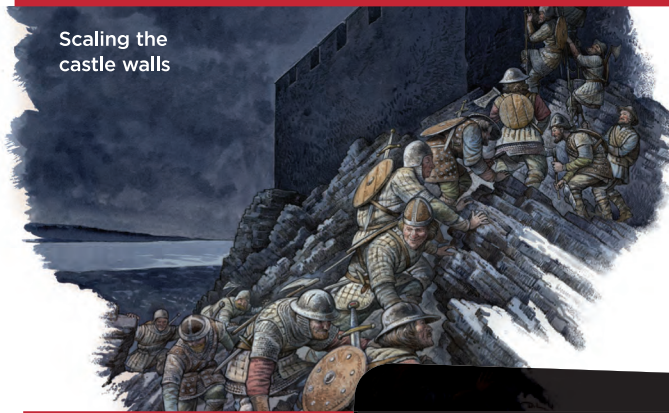
4 King Edward I's first major invasion of Scotland began in 1296 with the sack of Berwick, after which the Scots suffered a resounding defeat at the Battle of Dunbar.

All of the main castles in Scotland quickly

surrendered, but Edinburgh Castle alone fought on for three days despite a violent onslaught from the English army.

It was during this year that the Stone of Destiny was also captured by Edward I and taken to Westminster Abbey.

Engraving depicting King of Scots John Balliol surrendering to Edward I in 1296



Scaling the castle walls

1314 The night attack

5 For the English, Edinburgh Castle was an important tactical location which gave them a foothold from which to launch northern campaigns.

After nearly 20 years of occupation, this hold was broken in 1314 by a mere 20 men led by Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray. In the dead of night, these men scaled the walls and recaptured the castle from the English just three months before the Battle of Bannockburn.

1380s David's Tower built

6 David's Tower was commissioned by King David II as part of the castle's great reconstruction.

Standing over 30m high, the tower was a prominent feature of the Edinburgh skyline for nearly 200 years. The collapse of David's Tower in 1573, during the Lang Siege of 1571-3, blocked the castle's main water supply and effectively ended the siege.

1440 The Black Dinner

7 This brutal tale may seem eerily familiar to *Game of Thrones* fans. Following the assassination of King James I in 1437, six-year-old James II became king. In 1440, Sir William Crichton, governor

of Edinburgh Castle, invited the powerful Black Douglases to dine at the castle. Sir Walter Scott is believed to be the source for the legend that during the feast, the sixteen-year-old 6th Earl of Douglas and his

younger brother were supposedly presented with the head of a black bull, a portent for death. Despite the pleas of the young king, the Douglases were found guilty of high treason and beheaded on the Castle Hill.



A last supper for the Douglases



1457 Mons Meg

The magnificent six-tonne siege gun Mons Meg was gifted in 1457 to James II of Scotland by Duke Phillip of Burgundy (whose great-niece, Mary of Guelders, was married to James).

Back then, the gun was simply known as 'Mons', after the Belgian town where she was assembled in 1449. With the ability to fire gunstones weighing 330lbs a distance of almost two miles, Mons Meg was at the forefront of artillery technology.

In 1497, Mons Meg saw

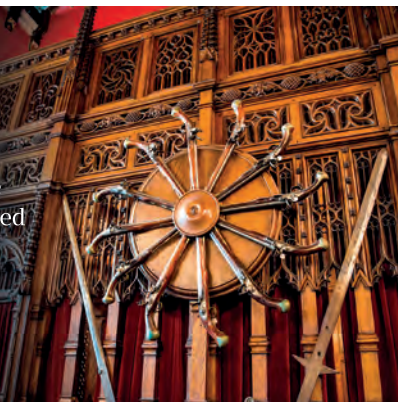
action when James IV invaded England and besieged Norham Castle.

In 1681, during a birthday salute for the then Duke of Albany (later James VII), Mons Meg's barrel burst. Her huge weight prevented her from being melted down, so she now sits proudly on the battlements of Edinburgh Castle.



1511 The Great Hall

Commissioned by King James IV, the Great Hall is the chief place of state assembly in the castle. When Oliver Cromwell's army captured the castle in 1650, the Great Hall was transformed into military barracks, and later a military hospital. Today, the roof of the Great Hall holds particular historical significance as one of only two medieval halls in Scotland with an original hammerbeam roof.



FALKENSTEINFOTO / ALAMY, SHUTTERSTOCK, ROBERTO RICCIUTI / GETTY

1566 James VI Born

In 1566, James VI was born in Edinburgh Castle. He became king of Scotland in 1567, aged just 13 months, after his mother, Mary Queen of Scots, was forced to abdicate.

In 1603, following the death of Elizabeth I, James also became king of the kingdoms of England and Ireland. While James ruled over all three kingdoms, they remained individual sovereign states.



21ST-CENTURY EVENTS AT EDINBURGH CASTLE



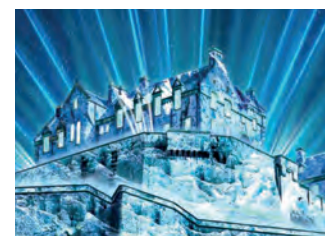
Edinburgh Military Tattoo

From modest beginnings in 1950, the Edinburgh Military Tattoo now draws crowds of around 220,000 spectators annually. In 2020, the Tattoo will be celebrating 70 years of music and marching.



Concerts

The esplanade sometimes serves as an impressive concert venue for such popular musicians as The Proclaimers, Bryan Ferry, Paul Weller, Kylie Minogue and Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds.



Castle of Light

This winter Edinburgh Castle is being transformed by a breathtaking array of light and colour, as the history of the castle is beamed onto the walls of the historic fortress.

1571 The Lang Siege

11 Appropriately named after the Scots for 'long', the Lang Siege on Edinburgh Castle spanned a staggering 17 months. Sir William Kirkcaldy of Grange – and others loyal to the cause of the deposed Queen Mary – held the castle against the regents of her infant son King James VI.

Much of the castle was reduced to rubble as Queen Elizabeth of England donated 20 heavy guns to the cause. Kirkcaldy was forced to surrender when the castle's water supply was choked; his head was impaled on a spike on the castle walls as a grim warning to others. It was during this siege that David's Tower was destroyed.

The Lang Siege lasted from October 1571 to May 1573



1745 The last siege

13 An unsuccessful attempt by Jacobite supporters of James VII to capture the castle in 1715 resulted in the strengthening of the artillery defences.

When Prince Charles Edward Stuart, known as 'Bonnie Prince Charlie', launched an attack in 1745, he did not have the firepower necessary to mount a serious assault that would penetrate the castle's defences. This proved to be the final siege of Edinburgh Castle.



A 1656 Samuel Cooper portrait of Oliver Cromwell

1650 Oliver Cromwell captures the castle

12 Following Scotland's catastrophic defeat at the two-hour long Battle of Dunbar in 1650, Oliver Cromwell

marched upon Edinburgh. After a three-month siege, the castle was taken when the Governor of the Castle, Colonel Walter Dundas, surrendered.

1818 Honours re-emerge

14 Collectively known as the Honours of Scotland, the Crown, Sceptre and Sword of State are the oldest Crown Jewels in Britain. They were removed from Edinburgh Castle and hidden away from 1651-1660 to prevent them from falling into Oliver Cromwell's hands.

They lay buried first at Dunnottar Castle near Stonehaven, and later under the floor of nearby Kinneff Old Church. Following the Act of Union in 1707, they were locked in the Crown Room until 1818, when Walter Scott rediscovered them.



The gun is still fired at 1pm



1861 One o'Clock Gun

15 In the early 18th century, a Scotsman called Captain Wauchope invented the time ball, a visual signal to help sailors calibrate their chronometers.

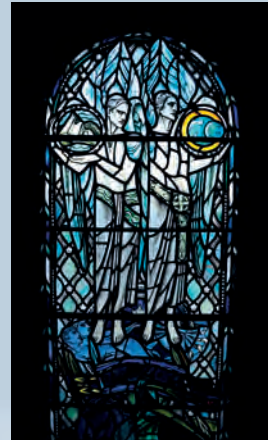
Charles Piazza Smyth installed a time ball on top of Nelson's Monument, to drop at 1pm, but it soon became obvious that sailors did not always notice the signal. In 1861, businessman John Hewitt brought the idea over from Paris for a One o'Clock Gun that would act as an auditory signal which could be heard from the Firth of Forth, two miles away.

1923 Scottish National War Memorial built

16 James V transformed the castle church of St Mary into a munitions store in the 1530s, before it was eventually demolished and replaced with the North Barracks in 1754. Today in its place, the Scottish National War Memorial

stands to honour those who fell in both world wars and conflicts since 1945.

Designed by Sir Robert Lorimer in 1923, the building houses the Rolls of Honour for the Scottish dead of the Great War, and features grand stained glass windows depicting scenes from World War I.



1950 Edinburgh Military Tattoo on esplanade

17 With a mere 6,000 spectators, the first official Military Tattoo in 1950 was a far cry from the spectacle it has become today. That first Tattoo had eight items on the schedule and combined the precision of the military with the tradition of Scotland's iconic music.

Military bands and performers now come from all over the world to take part, with 48 countries having been represented at the Tattoo.



1996 Stone Of Destiny Returns to Scotland

18 An ancient symbol of Scotland's monarchy, for centuries the Stone of Destiny was used for the inauguration of Scottish kings.

In 1296, the Stone was taken from Scotland by King Edward I of England. It was built into a new throne at Westminster Abbey and used for coronation ceremonies. In 1950, on Christmas Day, four Scottish students removed the stone – it was found months later at the high altar of Arbroath Abbey.

In 1996, the Stone was officially returned to Scotland and is now displayed in the Crown Room.

