

# Edinburgh Castle

## Origins

Edinburgh Castle was built in 1130, on top of Castle Rock, which was formed after a volcano erupted over 340 million years ago. It is in the middle of what is now the city of Edinburgh. It was built for David I, son of the famous Saint Margaret of Scotland.

The buildings of the castle as it is now date from the 12th to the 18th century with St. Margaret's Chapel, being not only the oldest building on site but the oldest building in all of Scotland. It was constructed in the early 12th century in memory of Queen Margaret, who died in 1093.

## History

The castle has been occupied since prehistoric times and later, in medieval times, it was home to the kings and queens of Scotland. Its position, high above the rest of the land, offered great protection from enemies.

Edinburgh Castle is the most besieged castle in the UK. It has come under attack more than any other, probably because whoever had the castle had the power and there was always someone else who wanted to take it!

The castle has been the site of many famous battles. The first major battle was when Edward I of England tried to take the Scottish throne in the late 13th century. There were to be many more, especially during the Scottish Wars of Independence.

Edinburgh Castle was also used as a prison and there are many dark dungeons in the castle where prisoners may have been locked up and forgotten.

## Today

Now, the castle is a national monument, an extremely popular tourist attraction and museum. It is home to important Scottish symbols such as the crown jewels (Honours of Scotland), the Stone of Destiny and the cannon called Mons Meg.

- The Stone of Destiny is the traditional coronation stone of all Scottish and English kings and queens and has been constantly fought over by Scotland and England.
- Mons Meg is an enormous cannon, made around 1449, which fired solid stone cannon balls the size of your head, weighing around 400 pounds each. The cannon was able to fire these cannonballs about 2 miles! The ritual of firing the gun, which began as a time signal for ships, still takes place at 1 o'clock every day except Sunday.

As well as attracting over a million visitors each year, the castle is also the location for the annual Edinburgh Military Tattoo, a world-famous event, which takes place every August on the castle esplanade.

## Location

Castle Rock

## Built

1130

## Events

Edinburgh Military Tattoo



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