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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

EDINBURGH CASTLE



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EDINBURGH CASTLE OVERVIEW STATEMENT

Edinburgh Castle is a large and sprawling complex of buildings, fortifications, spaces and national treasures. This Statement of Cultural Significance presents an overview of the entire property. Separate Statements exist also for the following:

- Foog's Gate area of Upper Ward
- St. Margaret's Chapel
- David's Tower
- Palace
- Great Hall
- Scottish National War Memorial
- Queen Anne Building
- Vaults
- Honours of Scotland
- Stone of Destiny
- Mons Meg
- Esplanade
- Defences
- Gatehouse and Lower Ward
- Portcullis Gate and Argyle Tower
- Mills Mount Cart Shed and One o'clock Gun
- Governor's House
- New Barracks
- Military Prison
- Ordnance Storehouses

NOTE: This Statement of Cultural Significance does not include the collections of the National War Museum, the Royal Scots Regimental Museum and Royal Scots Dragoon Guards Regimental Museum.

SYNOPSIS

Edinburgh Castle, perched on Castle Rock in the heart of the city of Edinburgh, has a proven 3000-year history of human settlement, reaching from at least as early as the late Bronze Age (c 900 BC) to the present day. It therefore has the distinction of being the longest continuously inhabited place in the U.K.

Edinburgh Castle has become an icon of Scotland. It houses the nation's Crown Jewels (the Honours of Scotland), the Scottish National War Memorial, the National War Museum, the headquarters of the Royal Regiment of Scotland and two regimental associations and museums (the Royal Scots and Royal Scots

Dragoon Guards). It is a major stage for international and state events and hosts the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo every August. It is also the country's leading paying visitor attraction, attracting well in excess of one million visitors annually.

CHARACTER OF THE MONUMENT

Historical Overview:

- C. 340,000,000 BC – the igneous Castle Rock is formed during a period of intensive volcanic activity.
- C. 25,000 BC – the last ice age creates Edinburgh's famous 'crag and tail'.
- C. 900 BC – the earliest evidence for human settlement on Castle Rock, in the late Bronze Age.
- C. 100 BC – AD 200 – Castle Rock is intensively settled by Iron-Age people.
- c. 600 – the first historical reference to Din Eidyn, residence of Mynyddog 'the Magnificent', warlord of the Gododdin (in Aneurin's *Y Gododdin*).
- 638 - Din Eidyn is captured by the Angles of Northumbria, who rename it Edinburgh.
- 1093 - Queen (later St.) Margaret, Malcolm III's widow, dies whilst in residence on Castle Rock. Her body is taken to **Dunfermline Abbey** for burial.
- c.1107 – King Edgar, Malcolm and Margaret's fourth son, dies in the castle and is also buried in **Dunfermline Abbey**.
- c.1124 – David I, Malcolm and Margaret's youngest son, transforms the residence on Castle Rock into a formidable royal castle and founds a royal burgh to its east.
- 1128 – David I founds the Augustinian abbey of **Holyrood** to serve the royal castle. St. Margaret's Chapel is built around this time.
- c. 1140 - the first record of the body that became the Parliament of Scotland meeting in the castle.
- 1174 – following King William the Lion's capture by the English, an English garrison is foisted on the castle (and others throughout the realm). Reginald is the first recorded keeper (constable). The castle is not returned to the Scots until 1186.
- 1278 – Alexander III's first queen, Margaret, describes the castle as 'this sad and solitary place'.
- 1286 – Alexander III leaves Edinburgh for Fife, to be with his second queen, Yolande, but is killed after falling from his horse. His untimely death creates a problem for the royal succession.
- 1291 – Edward I of England stays in the castle following his appointment as 'overlord' of Scotland to determine the Scottish succession (the 'Great Cause'). Whilst there he receives homage from notable Scots.
- 1296 - Edward I invades Scotland and captures the castle after a short siege. The royal regalia, state records and other treasures in the castle are removed to London, along with the Stone of Destiny, removed from Scone Abbey. In 1300 the English garrison numbers almost 350.
- 1314 – a Scottish assault party, led by Sir Thomas Randolph, recaptures the castle. Robert I (the Bruce) then orders its destruction.
- 1334 – the English recapture the castle and make repairs.

- 1341 – the Scots, led by Sir William Douglas, retake the castle for David II.
- 1356 - David II, newly returned from lengthy imprisonment in England, orders the rebuilding of the castle, centred on David's Tower and Constable's Tower.
- 1362 – the Well-House Tower, at the north base of Castle Rock, is built to augment the Fore Well in the castle.
- 1371 – David II dies in the castle and is buried in **Holyrood Abbey**.
- 1384 – an 'instrument called a gun' is purchased for the castle, the first record of gun-powdered artillery in the fortress.
- 1440 – the infamous 'Black Dinner', at which the earl of Douglas is killed in the presence of James II, is held in the castle.
- 1457 – Mons Meg, the great bombard forged in Mons in 1449, arrives at the castle.
- 1469 – James III begins his personal reign, lived almost entirely in Edinburgh Castle. He makes Edinburgh the 'capital' of Scotland, and all but one Parliament of his reign is held in the castle. James probably also creates the principal courtyard now called Crown Square, raised above a labyrinth of vaults.
- c. 1494 – The Sceptre is presented to James IV, probably by Pope Alexander VI.
- 1508 – the Sword of State is presented to James IV by Pope Pius II.
- 1511 – the Great Hall is completed for James IV.
- 1532 – Janet, Lady Douglas, the earl of Angus's sister, is burned on Castle Hill, accused of plotting James V's death by poison and evil charms.
- 1540 – the Crown of Scotland is refashioned to its present appearance for James V by John Mosman.
- 1542 – Register House (between the Palace and the Great Hall) is built to hold the state records.
- 1544 – the first contemporary sketch is made of the castle during a siege of the castle by Henry VIII of England's forces.
- 1548 – the Spur, an advanced form of artillery fortification, is built on Castle Hill (where the Esplanade is today), to help protect the castle from English cannon.
- 1558 – Mons Meg is fired to celebrate Mary Queen of Scots' first marriage, to the future François II of France.
- 1560 – Mary of Guise, the queen-regent, dies in the castle.
- 1566 (19 June) – Mary Queen of Scots gives birth to the future James VI & I in the castle.
- 1571-3 – the 'Lang Siege' of the castle, which brings the civil war between the supporters of Queen Mary and her son, James VI, ends in the destruction of David's Tower and Constable's Tower. Regent Morton oversees the rebuilding of the castle's defences, including the Half-Moon Battery and the Portcullis Gate.
- 1591 – John Fain, 'secretary' of the North Berwick Witch Coven, is burned on Castle Hill.
- 1603 – James VI's court moves to London following his accession to the English throne.
- 1615 - 17 – the Palace, badly damaged in the 'Lang Siege', is restored in time for James VI's 'hamecoming' to celebrate his golden jubilee as king of Scots.
- 1633 – Charles I stays in the Palace on the eve of his Scottish coronation, the last sovereign to reside in the castle.

- 1639 – General Leslie's Covenanting army besieges and takes the castle from Charles I but hands it back shortly after.
- 1640 – General Leslie has to besiege the castle again, this time causing considerable damage to the eastern defences before succeeding in taking it.
- 1647 – James Gordon of Rothiemay produces his 'bird's-eye view' of Edinburgh, including the first accurate depiction of the castle.
- 1650 – Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector of England, captures the castle following his invasion. The Great Hall is fitted out as soldiers' barracks. The Honours of Scotland, already taken to Scone Abbey for Charles II's coronation (1 January 1651), are hidden in Dunnottar Castle (Kincardineshire).
- 1660 – following Charles II's restoration, the Honours are returned to the castle, which is now effectively a garrison fortress.
- 1671 – Captain John Slezer, a Dutchman, becomes chief engineer to the royal artillery train and begins to design new fortifications and buildings at the castle, including the artillery defence around Foog's Gate.
- 1681 – Mons Meg cracks during the firing of a salute for the future James VII, and is unceremoniously dumped near to the Portcullis Gate.
- 1689 – following James VII's overthrow, forces loyal to the new sovereigns, William & Mary, capture the castle.
- 1692 – the last of the state records are taken from Register House to Parliament House in the Royal Mile.
- 1707 – the Honours are locked away in the Crown Room following the Act of Union creating the United Kingdom of Great Britain.
- 1708 – following the abortive '08 Jacobite Rising, the defences are improved (including Dury's Battery) and barracks (the Queen Anne Building) built for officers and gunners.
- 1715 – Jacobites supporting the exiled 'Old Pretender', James Stuart, almost penetrate the western defences during the '15 Rising.
- 1720 – 21 'black flag' pirates are held in the castle prior to their execution by hanging on Leith Sands.
- 1724 - Major-general Wade arrives in the castle, and instructs a wholesale rebuilding of the western and northern defences. The building contractor is William Adam, the famous architect and father of Robert Adam.
- 1742 – the Governor's House is built to house the governor, master gunner and store-keeper.
- 1745 – Prince Charles Edward Stuart's Jacobites besiege the castle early in the '45 Jacobite Rising, the last siege in the castle's history. Following the battle of Culloden (April 1746), a number of leading Jacobites, including the earl of Kellie, Macdonnell of Glengarry and McDonald of Glencoe, are held prisoner in the castle. Mills Mount Cart Shed is built to serve the large garrison of government troops.
- late 1740s/early 1750s – Major-general Skinner, designer of **Fort George**, instructs the construction of more garrison buildings, including two Ordnance Storehouses and the North Barracks (the latter forming the shell of the Scottish National War Memorial). He also creates a parade ground on Castle Hill (now the Esplanade). William Roy, father of the ordnance Survey, is based in the castle during the creation of the Military Survey of Scotland for the Duke of Cumberland.

- 1754 – Mons Meg is taken to the Tower of London as a result of the Disarming Act.
- 1757 – the first French POWs are imprisoned in the Vaults.
- 1796-9 – the gargantuan New Barracks are built to house troops raised to fight in the French Revolutionary Wars.
- 1811 – a mass break-out of POWs leads to the closure of the castle as a POW depot.
- 1818 – the Honours are rediscovered in the Crown Room by Walter Scott and placed on public display. The Office of Works takes over responsibility for the Crown Room from the War Office.
- 1822 – George IV visits the castle, the first reigning sovereign to do so since Charles I in 1633. The Nor' Loch is finally drained to create Princes Street Gardens.
- 1829 – Mons Meg is brought back to the castle from the Tower of London.
- 1836 – 'Queen Mary's Rooms' are opened to visitors.
- 1842 – the Military Prison is built for soldiers from across Scotland.
- 1845 – St. Margaret's Chapel is rediscovered and thereafter restored.
- 1860 – Viscount Melville retires as Governor, and the position falls into abeyance.
- 1861 – the One o'clock Gun is fired for the first time, from the Half-Moon Battery.
- 1877 – the Office of Works takes over responsibility for St. Margaret's Chapel and 'Queen Mary's Rooms' from the War Office.
- 1881 – the castle becomes the permanent regimental depot of the Royal Scots.
- 1887 – the Argyle Tower is added to the top of the Portcullis Gate.
- 1888 – the present Gatehouse is built, replacing an altogether plainer main gate.
- 1891 – the Great Hall, restored by Hippolyte Blanc, is officially opened by H.R.H. the duchess of Lorne.
- 1896 – the Office of Works takes over responsibility for the Great Hall and Argyle Tower from the War Office.
- 1897 – the Ordnance Storehouses are converted into a military hospital.
- 1905 – the Office of Works takes over responsibility for the entire castle from the War Office.
- 1912 – David's Tower is rediscovered and made accessible to visitors.
- 1916 – a German Zeppelin drops bombs on the castle, but without causing casualties or damage.
- 1916/17 – the castle prison is used to detain members of the Marxist Workers' Republican Party, including John Maclean and David Kirkwood (later Baron Bearsden).
- 1923 – the Army formally vacate the castle for Redford Barracks, in the Edinburgh suburbs.
- 1923 – 27 – the North Barracks is converted by Robert Lorimer into the Scottish National War Memorial and officially opened by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.
- 1929 – bronze statues of King Robert the Bruce and Sir William Wallace are added to the Gatehouse façade.
- 1933 – the Naval and Military Museum opens in the Queen Anne Building.

- 1935 – the office of governor is re-established with purely honorary duties.
- 1942 – the Honours are buried in David's Tower for safe-keeping.
- 1949 – the Naval and Military Museum becomes the Scottish United Services Museum and expands into part of the Palace.
- 1950 – the first Edinburgh Military Tattoo is held on the Esplanade.
- 1953 – the Honours are carried to St. Giles Cathedral for the Service of National Thanksgiving (24 June), following the accession of Queen Elizabeth.
- 1968 – a major 'rock bolting' exercise begins, to secure the failing margins of Castle Rock. The work takes over ten years to complete.
- 1969 – limited responsibility for the castle devolves to the Scottish Office.
- 1971 – a bomb explodes in the Palace, causing extensive damage. The One o'clock Gun is relocated to Mills Mount.
- 1979 – full responsibility for the castle devolves to the Scottish Office.
- 1982 – a souvenir shop is opened in Mills Mount Cart Shed.
- 1984 – Historic Buildings and Monuments (now Historic Scotland) is created as an executive agency within the Scottish Office, and takes responsibility for the castle on behalf of the Scottish Office. A 'blueprint' for the future of Edinburgh Castle is seen as a priority, and the Boys Jarvis Partnership, from Glasgow, is contracted to produce a study.
- 1986 – the Boys Jarvis report is published. A major recommendation – that a tunnel be formed through the castle rock, from the Esplanade to beneath Mills Mount, to take service and emergency vehicles - is accepted.
- 1989/0 – the tunnel is constructed, accompanied by major archaeological investigations that push the castle rock's history of human settlement back into the late Bronze Age.
- 1992 – Mills Mount Cart Shed becomes a café/restaurant. The leaders of the European Council lunch in the Palace (11 December).
- 1993 – H.M. Queen Elizabeth opens the 'Honours of the Kingdom' exhibition in the Palace, including a redisplay of the Honours of Scotland.
- 1995 – Edinburgh Castle is inscribed on the World Heritage List as part of the 'Old and New Towns of Edinburgh' World Heritage Site.
- 1996 – the Stone of Destiny, newly returned from Westminster Abbey, London, is placed on permanent display in Crown Room beside the Honours.
- 1999 – the Crown of Scotland is present at the State opening of the new Scottish Parliament.
- 2000 – the National War Museum (formerly the Scottish United Services Museum), newly housed in the 18th-century Ordnance Storehouses, is officially opened by H.R.H. Princess Anne.
- 2004 – the Queen Anne Building, formerly housing the Scottish United Services Museum, re-opens as a conference centre/café/education centre. The Vaults below house a new Prisons of War exhibition.
- 2009 – a new Ticket Office is formed over the Old Coal Yard to the north of the Gatehouse.
- 2010 – excavations in advance of constructing new Tattoo stands find evidence for the 16th-century Spur, or 'forte of the castle hill'.

Archaeological Overview:

- Until the archaeological excavations carried out prior to constructing the vehicle tunnel in 1989-90, the castle's archaeological potential was deemed to be not very high. The feeling was that, being built on top of a rock outcrop, and having been thoroughly redeveloped over recent centuries, the chance of anything archaeological surviving below-ground was slight. The vehicle tunnel excavations proved how misguided that perception was.

The vehicle tunnel excavations

- The excavations, centred on Mills Mount, resulted in the castle's occupation being taken back a further 1500 years, from c. AD 600 to c. 900 BC. They also cast new light on almost every episode in the castle's extraordinary history thereafter, including most importantly the Iron Age and medieval times, but also more recently, fleshing out data from written and other sources.
- It is clear, therefore, that there remains huge potential for archaeological discovery in the future.
- The full excavation report is published (see Driscoll & Yeoman).

David's Tower excavations

- Until the development of the Queen Anne Building in the early 21st century, little excavation had been carried out in and around Crown Square. The major exception was the excavation of David's Tower in 1911/2 (see Oldrieve). A re-excavation in 1988 by Peter Yeoman (see Ewart & Gallagher) has cast new light on the later 14th-century structure, particularly the development of its SE re-entrant angle as a barbican.

The Queen Anne Building/Vaults excavations

- Excavations and standing building survey in the Queen Anne Building and Vaults found important new evidence for the medieval castle, including substantial parts of a later 14th-century tower, as well as furnishing new insights into the development of the House of the Artillery on the site from the later 15th century.
- The results of this investigation is published (see Ewart & Gallagher).

The Palace

- Standing building archaeology carried out in the Palace in the 1990s - in advance of the Laich Hall scheme (ground floor), Honours of the Kingdom exhibition (first floor) and Historic Scotland offices (second floor) - has shed much-needed light on the origins and development of this enormously complicated building.
- The results of this are published (see Ewart & Gallagher).

The Great Hall

- Dendrochronology of the hammer-beam roof over the Great Hall has finally solved one of Scotland's architectural riddles – who built it, James IV or James V? The tree-ring dating showed that the Great Hall was completed in 1510, under James IV (see Crone & Gallagher).

Ordnance Storehouses

- Excavations in advance of creating the National War Museum uncovered evidence for the castle's emerging role as a garrison fortress from the later 17th century, including hitherto hidden remains of the Charles II-period powder magazine, designed by Captain John Slezer, and buried military artefacts of c.1700, including unique shot gauges, gun flints, etc.
- The full report is in preparation (see Ewart & Gallagher).

The Eastern Defences and Spur

- The tunnel excavations in the Old Coal Yard, to the north of the Gatehouse, found evidence for two enormous ditches defending the eastern approach to the castle rock. The fragmentary evidence suggested an Iron-Age date, with continued use into the later Middle Ages. Further bore-hole work in the area, carried out in advance of creating a new ticket office, showed that the ditches were even larger than initially thought.
- Excavations on the Esplanade in advance of constructing new Tattoo stands uncovered evidence for the innovative artillery fortification, known as the Spur, built on Castle Hill in 1548 and demolished a century later.
- The full report is in preparation (see Ewart & Gallagher).

Elsewhere

- Other works monitored archaeologically have brought to light other small pieces of the huge jigsaw that is Edinburgh Castle. These include the excavation of the 1750s Sallyport Guardhouse on the Western Defences, and the discovery of mid-19th-century latrines in the North Barracks, during the creation of wheelchair access to the Scottish National War Memorial.
- The results of many of these minor archaeological works form part of a recent publication (see Ewart & Gallagher).

Conclusions

- As a result of all this recent archaeological activity, it has become clear that considerable archaeological potential remains throughout the castle, from Crown Square to the outer defences and beyond. Even existing service trenches have the potential to shed light, as the recent discovery of a bone artefact decorated with heraldry demonstrates.
- It is also evident that there is archaeological potential in standing building survey.

Architectural/Artistic Overview:

- The castle is a vast, sprawling complex, with buildings and fortifications spanning almost 1000 years. Most have been altered considerably during their life, often more than once, to adapt them for new uses. Nevertheless, the portfolio is of outstanding importance, both for the quality of its architecture and also for its association with some of Scotland's most noted architects, engineers and craftspeople. In addition, most retain internal fixtures and furnishings that are themselves of high artistic value.

- In addition to the buildings and fortifications, the castle is also home to significant national treasures.
- The buildings, fortifications and treasures are treated in detail in separate Statements of Cultural Significance (see the list under SYNOPSIS). This Statement of Cultural Significance provides an overview only.
- The castle has four main zones: the Upper Ward, housing the most important buildings; the Middle Ward, housing structures built mostly for the Army; the Lower Ward, housing the main entrance; and the Esplanade, originally part of Castle Hill.

Buildings

Buildings in the Upper Ward

St. Margaret's Chapel

- Widely appreciated as the oldest standing building in Edinburgh, this little chapel, built by David I c. 1130, is a rare example of Romanesque architecture in Scotland. The possibility that it originally formed part of a larger tower-keep (eg., Bamburgh Castle) has been postulated (Fernie).
- The chapel fell out of use in the 16th century, following the transfer of the royal residence in Edinburgh to Holyrood, and was converted into a powder magazine. Subsequently hidden in a warren of military structures, in 1845 it was identified as St. Margaret's Chapel by the antiquarian, *Daniel Wilson*, and restored by *Lt.-Col. George Phillpotts*, RE., in 1851-3. The stained-glass, by *Douglas Strachan*, was installed in 1922, and the present doorway, by *J. Wilson Paterson*, was added in 1939.

David's Tower

- The ruin of David's Tower, now entombed beneath the Half-Moon Battery, is the only surviving remnant of the castle rebuilt by David II after the Wars of Independence with England. Begun in 1367 and completed in 1377, David's Tower was among the first of a new form of tower-house castle then being built in Scotland (another was **Threave Castle**). A fragment of contemporary curtain wall survives to its south.
- The three-storey, L-plan tower house was enlarged in the 15th century, but largely destroyed during the 1571-3 Lang Siege. It was rediscovered and excavated 1911-12.

The Palace

- This is one of the most important, but least understood, medieval buildings in Scotland. In its present form it is substantially the building constructed in 1615-17 for James VI's 'hamecoming', the old Palace having been badly damaged in the Lang Siege. The architect of the three storey, double-pile building was probably *James Murray*, master of works. Other craftsmen included *William Wallace*, stone-mason, who carved the attractive pediments over the windows facing east and north, and *John Anderson*, who painted 'the rowme quhair his Majestie was borne'.
- The Palace incorporates important but frustratingly incomplete work from earlier periods, most notably the stumps of three oriels on the east façade

(similar to those at **Linlithgow Palace**), two large fireplaces in the ground floor, and the straight stair rising from Crown Square.

- From the later 17th century, the Palace was taken over for use by the garrison, resulting in substantial internal alterations. As a result little now survives of the Jacobean royal apartments, other than King James's Birth-chamber on the ground floor, and the Crown Room on the first floor, the home of the Honours of Scotland since the early 17th century, and since 1996 the resting-place of the Stone of Destiny (see below).

The Great Hall

- Completed in 1511, during the reign of James IV, the Great Hall, despite the vicissitudes of time, remains one of the most important medieval buildings in Scotland. Not only does it retain one of only two *in situ* medieval roofs in Scotland (the other is at Darnaway Castle), but the stone consoles supporting the roof are carved with some of the earliest Renaissance motifs in the British Isles.
- The Great Hall was converted by Cromwell into soldiers' barracks in 1650. It was further subdivided into three storeys in 1737, and converted into a military hospital in the 1760s, before being restored to something approaching its former glory in 1887-91 by *Hippolyte Blanc*, an Edinburgh architect of French extraction. Much of what survives today internally is his handiwork, including the great fireplace, panelled walls, screens gallery and stained glass. The Hall also houses an important collection of arms, on loan from the Royal Armouries. Although Blanc maintained his was an archaeologically-based restoration, what exists today is very much a late-Victorian masterpiece, and not in most respects James IV's Great Hall.

The Queen Anne Building

- Designed by *Captain Theodore Dury*, engineer for Scotland, the two storey barracks for officers and gunners built c. 1708 was gutted internally in 1928-30 to house the Naval & Military Museum, and none of the original fixtures and fittings survives. Nevertheless, it remains one of the earliest barracks built in the British Isles, predating Berwick Barracks by a decade.

The Scottish National War Memorial

- This ostensibly early 20th-century building was created from the shell of the North Barracks, designed by *Charles Tarrant*, engineer, and built in 1755. In an attempt to help make the castle more 'historic', in the 1860s *Robert Billings*, architect, oversaw the barracks' 'make-over'. The works included recessing part of the façade facing Crown Square and topping the wall-heads with a 'baronial' parapet.
- The Scottish National War Memorial was designed by *Sir Robert Lorimer* and built in 1924-7. Lorimer retained the shell of the old barracks (its former military use was seen as an important part of the symbolism of the new building), and added the porched entrance and five-sided apse housing the Shrine. He assembled a team of talented artists and craftsmen to help him create it, including *Douglas Strachan*, *Phyllis Bone*, *C. d'O. Pilkington-Jackson*, *Alexander Carrick*, *Thomas Hadden* and *Morris and Alice Meredith-Williams*. The result is one of the most moving, most spiritually uplifting internal spaces in Scotland.

The Vaults

- The buildings around the east, south and west of Crown Square were built over a labyrinth of stone vaulted cellars. The vaults beneath the Palace and Queen Anne Building date from David's reign in the late 14th century, whereas those beneath the Great Hall belong to a century later, probably built in the reign of James III.
- The Vaults beneath the Great Hall and Queen Anne Building are impressive spaces for the most part, but are otherwise quite plain. Two vaults and two sub-vaults beneath the Great Hall seem to have been built as pit-prisons. All the existing ironmongery (window bars, chains, gates, etc.) dates from the Vaults' use as a prison of war in the later 18th century.

Buildings in the Middle Ward

Portcullis Gate/Argyle Tower

- Much of this structure was built in the aftermath of the 1573 Lang Siege, to replace the badly-damaged Constable's Tower, the Portcullis Gate, possibly designed by *William McDowell*, master of work, is an impressive structure, particularly when viewed from the east side. Here the façade uses Renaissance detail with flair - two tiers of spindly Tuscan pilasters flanking the roll-moulded segmental arch and, above a string-course, a pedimented aedicule decorated with hearts and mullets (the arms of Regent Morton) and flanked by crouching lions.
- New light has recently been shed on the development history of this structure as a result of new research and investigation, suggesting that parts of the upstanding gate may have much earlier origins.
- The original single-storey structure was heightened in 1584, under the direction of *William Schaw*, but this was removed in 1886-7 to accommodate the Argyle Tower, designed by *Hippolyte Blanc*, in an attempt to recreate the presumed later 14th-century appearance of David II's Constable's Tower.

The Governor's House

- Designed by *Dugal Campbell*, engineer, the structure was built in 1740-2 to house the governor (in the five-bay main block), and the master gunner and store-keeper (in the flanking, three-bay pavilions). The most distinguished of all the castle's Georgian military buildings, it is an outstanding example of Board of Ordnance design.

Mills Mount Cart Shed

- The only structure built in the castle in the immediate aftermath of the '45 Jacobite Rising, *Dugal Campbell's* single-storey open-fronted shed was extended at the rear and converted into soldiers' barracks c. 1810; the present stone front and internal fireplaces date from then. In the 1890s the extension was demolished, to make room for recasting the north Ordnance Storehouse as a military hospital. The present rear extension was added in 1992, as part of the building's conversion into a restaurant.

Ordnance Storehouses

- The twin Ordnance Storehouses, designed by *Major-General William Skinner* (of **Fort George** fame), were built in 1753-4. The two-storey structures, arcaded at ground level to accommodate heavy guns, faced each other across an open court; the west side of the court housed the castle's main powder magazine, built in 1748. The conversion of the Storehouses as a military hospital in 1895-7, resulted in the demolition of the magazine and the raising to three storeys of the north Ordnance Storehouse, all to a design by *E. Ingress Bell*. The late-1990s conversion of the two Storehouses as the National War Museum re-instated some of the original elements, most notably the ground-floor arcades of the south Ordnance Storehouse.

New Barracks and Military Prison

- This massive six-storey barracks, possibly designed by *Thomas Ruydyrd*, and built in 1796-9, is by far the largest structure in the castle. Viewed from the east, the building reads as a three-storey structure, its ends and pedimented centre, all with Roman Doric porches, advanced. From the west the full enormity of the structure is revealed, plain and overwhelming in scale. The first-floor verandah was added in 1893. The new addition was not well received at the time, Sir Walter Scott described it as looking like 'a vulgar cotton mill', whilst his contemporary wrote: "Look on the west side of the castle – and SHUDDER"!
- The adjacent Military Prison, built in 1840-2, was influenced by contemporary ideas of civil prison reform (eg., Perth). The open central 'hall' gives access to two floors of solitary confinement cells. The building was heightened and extended in the 1880s, both to increase the number of cells but also in response to improved penal standards.

Building in the Lower Ward

The Gatehouse

- Built in 1886-8 to a design by *R. Lawson Scott, R. E.*, the Gatehouse replaced a somewhat plain 17th-century gate; the two stone panels in the entrance pediment, depicting Mons Meg and other munitions, were taken from that earlier gate. The castellated structure was intended as a conscious attempt to make the garrison fortress look more like a medieval castle. The bronze statues of King Robert the Bruce (by *Thomas J. Clapperton*) and Sir William Wallace (by *Alexander Carrick*) were added in 1929, to mark the 600th anniversary of King Robert's death.

The Old Guardhouse

- Built as an early 18th-century gun battery flanking the entrance-way, in 1853 it was roofed over and converted into the main guardhouse. Prison cells were added to the rear (west) in 1864. It was converted into the castle's souvenir shop in 1992.

Vehicle Tunnel

- Constructed in 1989-90, the tunnel was a major engineering feat, cut partly through solid rock and partly through archaeological levels. The tunnel, designed for use by service and emergency vehicles, has enabled the castle to

operate more effectively as a place of work and enjoyment, largely by creating a pedestrian access route up the principal approach road.

Defences

Half-Moon Battery and Forewall Battery

- This great, half-round artillery defence was built over and around the ruined David's Tower in the aftermath of the 1573 Lang Siege. Its design descends from a long line of thinking on artillery fortification, and although the rounded-bastion form, heavily promoted by Albrecht Dürer in the 1520s, was obsolete by the 1570s, it still had a place on difficult sites such as Castle Rock.
- The gun battery gave a wide, horizontal sweep of fire. This was supported by guns at the same level on the Forewall Battery, to its north, and a single gun at a lower level, both of which originated in the 1540s; the latter embrasure was blocked in 1695, when the present embrasured parapet was built, following the 1689 siege.

Foog's Gate and the Lang Stairs

- The defensive wall around the west side of the Upper Ward dates from the 1670s and was designed by *Captain John Slezer*. Loop-holed for artillery and muskets, it protects the enigmatically named Foog's Gate. This stretch of defensive wall is all that remains standing of the extensive artillery works erected during Charles II's reign, although archaeological excavations have unearthed other stretches down in the Middle Ward.
- It is just possible that elements from the medieval castle defences survive along the north side of the Upper Ward. The curved wall below St. Margaret's Battery, which today supports the Dog Cemetery, may be a fragment of the 14th-century Constable's Tower, built contemporary with David's Tower. The Lang Stairs are depicted on the 1544 spy drawing, and the present flight of 70 steps, formed in the 18th century, perpetuate that principal approach to the Upper Ward in the later Middle Ages.

Northern and Western Defences

- These defences, incorporating the Argyle Battery, Mills Mount Battery, Low Defence and Western Defences, date mostly from the 1730s, and replaced works designed by Slezer and built some 50 years earlier. The angled lengths, topped by the occasional domed sentinel box, were designed by *Captain John Romer* (whose handiwork can also be seen at **Dumbarton Castle**). The works were actually built by the family business run by *William Adam*, architect and building contractor to the Board of Ordnance, which also built **Fort George**.
- These defences and the sheer precipices they surmount provide one of the most dramatic elements in the prospect of the castle.

Esplanade

- The broad terrace lies over the site of Castle Hill. Roughly formed in 1752-3 as a parade ground, under *Major-General Skinner's direction*, it was widened, paved and enclosed by stone walls in 1816-20. The first monument – a bronze statue of Frederick, duke of York, by *Thomas Campbell*, was erected in 1839, and the last – a block of Swedish granite commemorating Ensign Ewart, by

William H. Kininmonth, was installed in 1938. Foundations of the Spur, an artillery fortification built in 1548, were recently found beneath the surface.

Treasures

The Crown Jewels and Stone of Destiny

- On display in the Crown Room in the Palace are the Crown Jewels and Stone of Destiny. The Crown Room itself was created in 1615-17 to house the Honours of Scotland (Crown, Sceptre and Sword of State); where the Scottish regalia were kept prior to then is unknown.
- The Honours date from the reigns of James IV and James V, making them the oldest suite of sovereign regalia surviving in the British Isles. They were created in Scotland and Italy, and were first used together for the coronation of Mary Queen of Scots in **Stirling Castle** in 1543.
- The Honours have had a most eventful history, including narrowly escaping Cromwell's clutches in the 1650s (when they lay buried in Dunnottar Castle and Kinneff Kirk) and being buried once more, in David's Tower in 1942, this time to hide them from the Germans. They were locked away in the Crown in 1707, after the Act of Union with England, and were re-discovered 111 years later.
- In June 1953 the Honours were taken to St. Giles' Cathedral, in Edinburgh's Royal Mile, where they were presented to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth at a Service of National Thanksgiving, held soon after her Coronation. The Crown alone continues in active use, as representing the sovereign at the opening of Scotland's Parliament, held every four years.
- Since their rediscovery by Walter Scott in 1818, the Honours have been joined by other Crown Jewels. The Stewart Jewels came from the estate of Cardinal Henry, the last Stuart claimant to the British throne, following his death in 1807 and were presented to Edinburgh Castle by William IV in 1830. The jewels include the St. Andrew Jewel of the Order of the Thistle and the Collar and Great George of the Order of the Garter that belonged to James VII & II. The Lorne Jewels were bequeathed to the people of Scotland in 1939 on the death of Princess Louise, fourth daughter of Queen Victoria.
- In 1996, the ancient Stone of Destiny, Scotland's royal inauguration stone, was placed on display in the Crown Room, beside the Honours of Scotland. It had newly returned from Westminster, whither it had been taken by Edward I in 1296. An integral part of the Coronation Chair, the Stone will only be taken south of the Border for future coronations of British sovereigns.

Mons Meg

- Mons Meg, on display beside St. Margaret's Chapel, is one of Europe's oldest surviving medieval cannon. The six-tonne gun was forged in Mons (modern Belgium) in 1449 and presented by Philip, duke of Burgundy, to James II in 1457. Known then simply as 'Mons', the gun was at the leading edge of artillery technology, firing gun-stones weighing 330lbs (150kg) a distance of almost two miles.
- Mons Meg proved far too cumbersome to cart around, and in the mid-15th century became a ceremonial gun. In 1558, she was fired to celebrate Mary Queen of Scots' first marriage, to the French dauphin. She broke her barrel in 1681 during a salute welcoming the future James VII & II to Scotland. She lay

neglected in the castle before being removed to the Tower of London after Culloden.

- Sir Walter Scott was pivotal in getting her returned to Scotland, which despite objections he achieved in 1829. The great bombard was mounted beside St. Margaret's Chapel, and has remained there ever since (other than a short interlude in the 1980s when she was taken to the Vaults for her better protection. There is no doubt that Mons Meg remains one of the castle's 'star' attractions.

The One o'clock Gun

- Although the present One o'clock Gun, a 105mm field gun, was installed only in 2011, it perpetuates a well-known castle tradition that dates back to 1861, when the first One o'clock Gun, a 64-pounder muzzle-loader, was fired from its then location on the Half-Moon Battery. The Gun, which is fired every day except Sundays, Good Friday and Christmas Day, has become one of the enduring symbols of Edinburgh Castle.

Social Overview:

- Edinburgh Castle, by its very position in the heart of Scotland's capital city, plays a leading role in the life not only of the city but of the entire nation. It is seen as an icon of Scotland and its long, proud history, not just at home, but in the wider Scottish diaspora, and across the world generally. The castle is still very much a living 'ancient monument'. The Crown and Scottish Ministers both use the castle, chiefly the Palace and Great Hall, as a meeting-place and as a place of reception and hospitality for foreign dignitaries. The Army retains a significant profile – as headquarters of the Royal Regiment of Scotland; as home of the Army Benevolent Fund; as official residence of the Governor and as Officers' Mess; as home to two regimental associations and museums – the Royal Scots and Royal Scots Dragoon Guards; and as the office of the Trustees of the National War Memorial (Palace). The National Museums Scotland also have their National War Museum there (Ordnance Storehouses).
- The castle is known throughout the world for its One 'clock Gun, that fires each day (except Sundays, Good Friday and Christmas Day) at 13.00hrs.
- The castle provides a stunning backdrop for national and civic events, most notably of course the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, held on the Esplanade each August. Other open-air concerts are also held there during the Edinburgh International Festival. The Virgin Money Fireworks Concert, held in West Princes Street Gardens on the north side of Castle Rock, makes stunning use of the castle backdrop for the finale.
- The castle currently welcomes around 1.5 million visitors a year, from all over the world, thus making it the most popular paying attraction in Scotland, and second only to the Tower of London as the U.K.'s most popular built heritage attraction.
- Addressing the needs of the various demands inevitably places a huge strain on the built fabric. Edinburgh Castle, unlike almost all other properties in Historic Scotland's care (the exceptions are **Fort George** and **Dunblane** and **Glasgow Cathedrals**), is still a living, functioning environment. It is still being built – the latest permanent structure, a new ticket office, was opened as recently as 2008. It is a site where change is inevitable. How Historic Scotland

and its fellow members of the 'castle family' manage that change is key to the continuing success of Edinburgh Castle as 'symbol of Scotland'.

Spiritual Overview:

Historic

- The castle has strong spiritual associations. Undoubtedly the strongest is the association with St. Margaret, who died there whilst in mourning for her husband, Malcolm III, and their eldest son, Edward, both killed by the Normans near Alnwick (Northumberland) in 1093. The little Romanesque chapel built c.1130 by their youngest son, David I, subsequently became known as St. Margaret's Chapel; Queen Margaret was canonised by Pope Innocent IV in 1249.
- In the Middle Ages the castle was sometimes referred to as *Castrum Puellarum*, 'the Maidens' Castle', though quite why is unclear; the name might suggest that there was a house of nuns on Castle Rock in Queen Margaret's day.
- In the later Middle Ages, there were two places of worship in the castle. St. Margaret's Chapel was for the exclusive use of the royal family, who were obligated to attend mass prior to breaking their fast (breakfast) and beginning their day. St. Mary's Church, on the site later occupied by the North Barracks/Scottish National War Memorial, was for more wider public use. Its origins are shrouded in mystery (tradition holds that St. Monenna, c.600, founded a church in Edinburgh), but it was probably built by David I (a Romanesque stone fragment was found re-used in the walls of the North Barracks in the 19th century). The building was substantially rebuilt for David II in the 1360s, but converted into the Munition House for James V in 1539-40; by that date the royal residence in Edinburgh was effectively down at Holyrood Abbey. The building that had once been St. Mary's Church was finally demolished in 1755 and replaced by the North Barracks.
- Following the abandonment of St. Mary's Church, the castle garrison worshipped in churches in the town. Only in exceptional circumstances (eg., sieges) does the castle appear to have been used for spiritual purposes. Graphic illustration of that was found during the tunnel excavations in 1989-90, when 15 male skeletons were discovered in the Old Coal Yard north of the present Gatehouse. They are thought to have been victims of the 1689 siege, who were unable to be buried in the town.
- The Esplanade is associated with witchcraft, and the burning of witches on Castle Hill, particularly in the 16th and 17th centuries. A fountain on a wall at the entrance to the Esplanade from the town commemorates the fact.

Today

- The spiritual association with St. Margaret and her chapel continues. The chapel is used for baptisms and wedding ceremonies. These had formerly been restricted to those with Army associations or who worked in the castle, but now the building is available for hire more widely. The Guild of St Margaret maintains the furniture and furnishings therein – the present furnishings date

from 1997, the 900th anniversary of St. Margaret's death on Castle Rock - and daily provides fresh flowers.

- The castle is seen to embody the nation's proud military past; hence the presence of the Scottish National War Memorial (also known as the National Shrine), built in the aftermath of the Great War to honour the nation's war dead. A Service of Remembrance is held there each Armistice Day.
- The Dog Cemetery, sited in a small garden directly below St. Margaret's Chapel, also contributes to the spiritual life of the castle, having served as a graveyard for regimental mascots and officers' dogs since 1845, and continuing to do so.

Aesthetic Overview:

- Mighty Edinburgh Castle dominates the skyline of the City of Edinburgh. It can be seen from many miles around. Particularly fine views may be had from **Holyrood Park** to the east, and those from the north, where the castle on its rock clearly dominates the ridge to its east along which the Old Town sits.
- The views out from the castle, particularly to the north over the Georgian New Town and out to the Firth of Forth, are simply stunning. Whilst views may be had to the west, south and east, these pale into insignificance when compared to the north prospect.
- Edinburgh Castle is a vast, sprawling complex, a fascinating mix of impressive buildings, intriguing enclosed yards, green open spaces and vertiginous rock faces. The buildings and defences present a fascinating variety of shape, size, colour and feel, understandable in view of their disparate ages.
- Equal variety is to be found internally in the buildings, including most memorably the quiet, grey, sombre and reflective mood of the Scottish National War Memorial, the hugely impressive and colourful Great Hall, and the dark, haunting spaces of David's Tower and the Vaults.

What are the major gaps in understanding of the property?

- When did humans first inhabit the castle rock?
- What role did the rock serve through prehistory, and in particular how did it relate to other forts of the Pictish (eg, Arthur's Seat; Traprain Law)?
- What was the nature of King Mynyddog's stronghold called Din Eidyn, and how was it affected by the Anglian conquest of 638?
- What was the nature of the residence in which Queen Margaret died in 1093?
- What form did David I's castle take, and was St. Margaret's Chapel part of a larger tower-keep?
- What was the form and extent of the castle as rebuilt for David II?
- What form did the Palace take prior to its remodelling in 1615-17?
- What else lies under the Esplanade besides the mid-16th century Spur?
- Whatever happened to the 'coffin in the wall' discovered in the Palace in 1830?

A new programme of historical research and archaeological investigation and recording is currently on-going at Edinburgh Castle. This work will inform new interpretation, will feed into updated Statements of Significance and will inform future management of the castle.

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Key Points

- Castle Rock is one of the best examples of the geological formation known as a 'crag and tail'.
- Castle Rock has a proven high archaeological potential reaching back 3000 years, giving it the distinction of being the longest continuously occupied place in Britain.
- The castle is seen as an icon of Scotland. It houses the National War Memorial, the Honours of Scotland and Stone of Destiny, and the National War Museum, and plays host to the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo.
- The castle complex has some of the most important historic buildings in Scotland, inc. St. Margaret's Chapel (Edinburgh's oldest standing building); David's Tower (one of the first new-style tower houses built); the Great Hall (with one of only two medieval roofs surviving *in situ* in Scotland, as well as some of the earliest Renaissance sculpture in Britain); the Palace (a key Jacobean building incorporating rare early 17th-century painted decoration), and the Half-Moon Battery (unique artillery fortification).
- The castle is the single most important building in Edinburgh, and the most dominant feature on central Edinburgh's skyline, and as such contributed significantly to 'the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh' being inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1995.

ADDENDA

Associated Properties:

(*some other prehistoric forts in the area*): **Arthur's Seat; Castlelaw Fort; Chesters Fort;** Kaimes Hill; Traprain Law.

(*some other Dark-Age strongholds*): **Burghead Fort; Dumbarton Rock; Dundonald; Dunadd,** Forteviot.

(*other important medieval royal castles*): **Blackness; Dumbarton; Rothesay;** Roxburgh; **Stirling.**

(*other later medieval royal residences*): **Doone Castle; Dunfermline Palace;** Falkland Palace; **Holyrood Palace; Linlithgow Palace.**

(*other innovative artillery fortifications*): **Craignethan Castle;** Dunbar Castle; Eyemouth Fort; **Fort Charlotte; Fort George;** Fort William; **Threave Castle.**

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hill-fort, castle, ditch, tower, artillery fortification, garrison, regalia, barracks.

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