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# THE CASTLE OF EDINBURGH

Official Guide

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# THE CASTLE OF EDINBURGH

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EDINBURGH
HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE
1948

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# *Description*

THE summit of the Castle Hill is 443 feet above the level of the sea, and approximately 270 feet above the valley now occupied by West Princes Street Gardens and King's Stables Road. With few exceptions the buildings on the hill are of little architectural interest. They were raised as necessity demanded, and placed or grouped as the limits of space permitted.

## *Citadel*

The main group consists of the buildings which surround the Palace Yard, occupying a high position on the south-east corner of the hill. This, and the area to the north, are now known as the CITADEL of the Castle. The Palace Yard, previously called "The Close," has been formed by levelling rock upcrops, and by raising vaults from the lower levels of the hill. As seen from outside the Castle, the walls of the buildings which are entered from the Courtyard level on the east, south, and north sides, are of great height, the masonry rising as if a natural continuation of the precipitous rocks.

The curtain walls, encompassing the Castle and its Citadel, follow the rugged outline of the rock; within these, terraced gun platforms have been made.

The earliest buildings are in the Citadel, the most ancient being St. Margaret's Chapel, founded more than eight centuries ago. Next in antiquity is David's Tower, begun in 1367. This ruin, forming the core of the Half Moon Battery, was revealed in 1913, after it had been closed up for over 300 years. Then follows the late 15th century part of the Palace Yard buildings.

The Castle buildings, with the exception of St. Margaret's Chapel, were destroyed in 1314 by Randolph, Earl of Moray, in pursuance of Bruce's policy, so that the fortress would be untenable should the English re-occupy it. There is now no trace of any building which may have been erected between 1314 and 1367. The Constable's Tower, which stood close to the "Lang Stairs," was destroyed in the siege of 1573.

The original pathways leading to the Castle have long disappeared. One approached the doorway situated on the south

side of David's Tower, another was on the line of the lower part of the present roadway within the Castle, and a third led to the Citadel from the west side of the hill.

The present approach to the Castle is by the Esplanade, constructed in early Victorian times as a parade ground for Regiments of Foot. In the reign of Charles I part of the ground now covered by the Esplanade was representative of Nova Scotia, and it was here that the new Barons took Sasine of their inheritance. At the entrance to the Castle is a large, dry ditch which was formerly spanned by a drawbridge; only parts of the stone piers of the old drawbridge now remain. The modern entrance buildings are built upon the inner wall of the ditch and occupy the site of the Outer Barrier. The statues of Wallace and Bruce, in niches at the side of the entrance, were unveiled in 1929. Built into the walls of the arched entry are two stone panels of late 16th or early 17th century date, sculptured with a display of ordnance. Among the objects portrayed is "Mons Meg," mounted on a long wood carriage furnished with two sets of cogged wheels and having a gunner's quadrant in the mouth of the gun.

Immediately within the Castle the massive high wall of the Half Moon Battery rises from the rock. The buried remains of David's Tower are at the back of this.

There is a gun-loop recessed in the wall-face considerably under the level of the Half Moon gun platform. The gun-loop commands the approach from the street. This is the oldest feature of its kind in the Castle and was found during the unearthing of David's Tower. It had been masked by the building of the Half Moon curtain-wall.

A few yards from the Entrance are the remains of the Inner Barrier. Rising from a steep bank on the left is the curtain of the Forewall Battery; on it is set a modern memorial tablet to Kirkcaldy of Grange, who held the Castle for Mary Queen of Scots.

The existing roadway was made late in the mediaeval period in order that the train of artillery could be conveyed to a place of safety within the Upper Defence.

### *Portcullis Gate and Chamber*

The roadway passes under the PORTCULLIS GATE erected by the Regent Morton in 1574. As it is now, the building contains a long vaulted trance, once furnished with two outer double doors, a portcullis, and an inner double door; over this is a PORTCULLIS CHAMBER. The east side of this building is of the

THE PORTCULLIS ENTRANCE

[*Photo: Valentine & Sons, Ltd., Dundee.*

THE CASTLE FROM THE EAST

Scottish Classic Renaissance character peculiar to this period. The heraldic panel is a restoration, the only original parts being the base, the entablature, and the pediment of the frame. The frieze is decorated with the heart and mullet: devices from the Earl of Morton's coat-of-arms. The building above, with its stone roof and parapet walk, is modern. On the left of the Portcullis Gate are the "Lang Stairs" leading to the Upper Defence. Set on the wall close by is a modern panel to the memory of Randolph, Earl of Moray. On the north side of the roadway is the Six Gun or Argyle Battery, mounted with muzzle-loading eighteen-pounders of late 18th century date.

Below this terrace is the Low Defence, on the wall of which stands an iron beacon basket.

In the late 18th century there was a barrier across the road near the foot of the stairway.

The small barrack building in front of the modern Hospital is situated on "Mill's Mount," the site where a "Storekeeper's House" stood in the 17th century.

The north block of the Hospital is modern, while the south block is a reconstruction of an 18th century armoury. Close to this there was formerly the Powder Magazine constructed in the 17th century.

### *Queen's Post*

To the west, below the Hospital Buildings, is the part of the Castle wall called the QUEEN'S POST, and also a postern doorway situated near the site of the original west Sallyport, where John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, held a final conference with the Duke of Gordon, Governor of Edinburgh Castle, on the 18th March 1689.

### *Governor's House and New Barrack*

Higher up the hill is the GOVERNOR'S HOUSE, a building of early 18th century character. Beyond it is the New Barrack erected at the end of that century. This building occupies the site of the "Old Back Parade" and "The Butts." At the south end of this old parade ground there stood the old "Back-Barracks" and the "Mault Kiln." Near the north end of the New Barracks is the Back Draw Well of the Castle; to the west of this lies the Butts Battery. The ground in front of the Barracks was formerly "the Hawk Hill," an elevation fortified with a spur battery.

By ascending the hill through the old archway formerly called "Foggy" now Foogs Gate, the Upper Defence is reached. This elevated ground is the site of the original Castle. Immediately to the left was an 18th century Shot Yard, the site of which is now occupied by modern buildings. Close to this, when the foundations for the fire-engine house were being dug, two uncoffined skeletons of soldiers were found lying side by side, apparently buried during a time of siege.

### *St. Margaret's Chapel*

SAINT MARGARET'S CHAPEL, an interesting Scottish example of Norman architecture, stands upon the highest part of the Castle Rock. Its perched appearance is due to the lowering of the ground levels on the east, south, and west sides, the rock having been quarried away when the present roadway leading to the Palace Yard was constructed; this was after the siege of 1573. The removal of the rock necessitated the underpinning of the Chapel with rubble. This masonry is clearly recognisable from the 11th or 12th century ashlar work, the latter being composed of dressed rectangular blocks of freestone of a reddish or grey colour built in coursed beds. Above this ashlar the wall is carried up in rubble of post-Reformation date.

Of all the window exteriors there is only one in its original state. It is the westermost of the three on the south side, and the outside check for holding the Norman window frame can still be seen. Modern stained glass now fills the windows.

The entrance to the Chapel is on the north side at the west end. It is an addition, erected in 1853, in the place of the original doorway. When the stone-vaulted ceiling was inserted into the west part of the Chapel, the internal wall-faces were redressed, and the building furnished with a font and piscina.

The interior consists of a nave, originally roofed with timber, and a small semi-circular stone-vaulted apse. The plan of this east end is remarkable in that it is circular internally and square externally. The compartments are separated by a later wall which contains an archway ornamented on its west side; the detail is characteristic of the time of Margaret's son, David I. Each jamb has two monolithic shafts, set in nooks; these are restorations, but the moulded bases and cushion caps are original. The arch, with its corresponding orders, is enriched with chevron design, and the outer ring or label is carved with a lozenge pattern. On its inner side the arch is plain.

After the Reformation, St. Margaret's Chapel, with a storey added to it, was used as the "Gunners' Storehouse." On the west was the "Gunners' Yard," entered through the now built-up doorway of late date in the west wall of the Nave. A new Garrison Chapel was built against the east wall. All these post-Reformation additions were removed in 1853 when the Chapel again became an isolated building.

### *Mons Meg*

To the north is MONS MEG. This famous piece of ordnance was forged in the 15th century, and the construction is similar to that of the great cannon at Ghent, known as "Mad Marjory," and of others on the Continent. The gun is of iron, and the total length is 13 ft. 4 in. The chase measures 9 ft. 2½ in., and is constructed of long, flat-hammered bars, girded by hoops. The bore is 1 ft. 8 in. and, according to an old record, Mons Meg or "Munce," if discharged with 105 lbs. of powder well rammed in the chamber, and set at an angle of 45 degrees, could project an iron ball 1408 yards, or a stone one 2867 yards. The carriage is modern.* Mons Meg was probably made in Flanders, although an old tradition affirms that it was made within the Castle by Robert Borthwick, and that the first shot was fired as a salute on the day King James V was born at the Palace of Holyroodhouse. Another patriotic and popular tradition is that Meg was made near Castle Douglas in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, by a blacksmith called McKim, and that the gun was used by King James II at the siege of Threave Castle.

In 1754 Mons Meg was removed to the Tower of London, where it remained until it was returned to Scotland in 1829. Landed at Leith, the gun was escorted back to the Castle by three troops of Cavalry and the 73rd Regiment, accompanied by pipers.

To the north of the platform on which Mons Meg stands, and at a lower level, is a small defence. This has been used in recent times as a burial-place for soldiers' dogs.

### *The Lang Stairs*

To the east of St. Margaret's Chapel is the head of the LANG STAIRS. In the 15th century it was furnished at the top with an iron gate, called "St. Margaret's Yett." Extending beyond this

* Modelled on the gun carriage portrayed in the carved panel described on page 4.

gate, towards the south, is the Grand or Forewall Battery (probably a corruption of forewell), now mounted with muzzle-loading eighteen-pounders of George III period.

### *Fore Well*

Between the Forewall and the Half Moon Batteries is the ancient FORE WELL. This supplied the water for the storage tanks built over the ruin of David's Tower. The well is 110 feet deep, the lower 90 feet being hewn out of the rock.

### *Half Moon Battery*

The HALF MOON BATTERY, or "Great Half Bastion Round," built by Regent Morton, stands on a platform partly founded on the ruins of David's Tower and partly on the old water tank vaults. It is girded by a massive curved wall, which forms a very imposing feature of the Castle. An entry in Sir Thos. Hope's Diary, under 20th November 1639, reads as follows: "This day a part of the Castel wall quhilk is towards the entrie on the south, fell in the nycht, with sich a noise that all within took it for a myne or surprise of the Castel of Edinburgh." The curtain wall was repaired at that time; "the Foir Bastner" and its gun embrasures, which were shaken and rent, being rebuilt in 1662 by Robert Mylne, the King's Master Mason, who rebuilt the Palace of Holyroodhouse in 1672. A beacon basket stands on the cope of the Half Moon parapet.

### *David's Tower*

The entrance to the ruin of DAVID'S TOWER is just behind the Half Moon defence. Before the "Long Siege," this Tower was the most important defensive building on the Castle. Placed on a projecting spur of rock, at a considerably lower level than the summit, it commanded the approaches on the east side. It is stated in a contemporary record to have been about 60 ft. high. From this record we learn that a curtain with six gun-loops, "looking in the streetward," extended from the Tower northwards, "and behind the same stands another tier of ordnance, like 16 ft. climb above the other, and at the north end stands the Constable's Tower, and in the bottom of the same is the way into the Castle with (XL) steps." The remains of a high wall, with a doorway, extend southward from the south side of the Tower.

The plan of the original building was "L" shaped; later it was extended and the plan made square. The main part of the original building has been greatly lowered; only the remains of the vaulted chamber which was under the Hall is now to be seen. Above this, the space is occupied with two of the reservoir vaults. At the south end, the walls of the tower rise to the level of the Half Moon platform; these walls were the remains of the original jamb and the later addition. The latter contains a vaulted chamber at a low level, where at the east end is a fireplace and at the south-east corner a mural garderobe. There is a doorway on the south wall of the jamb, which has been furnished with three doors. Immediately inside is a sunk pit 4 ft. wide and 5 ft. 6 in. deep. Another doorway, formerly having two doors, gives access at a higher level to the ground floor of the King's Lodging. The pointed arches of the window recesses belong to the late 14th century.

### *Lyon's Den*

When the Tower was buried, this doorway and the small space beyond were left accessible from the Palace, and it was here that a tame lion was kept in King James VI's time. The vault is described on an old plan as a "LYON'S DEN." It is interesting to note that there is also a Lion's Den at Stirling Castle.

The Scottish National War Memorial incorporates part of the walls of the old North Barracks built in 1751. This Barrack building replaced the Church of St. Mary, used in post-Reformation times as the "Great Store," when an armourer's forge was built against the outside of the north wall. St. Mary's Kirk formed the north side of "The Close." Against its south wall there was a covered walk. The entrance doorway was near the west end, the windows were large, slightly pointed, and filled with bold tracery of 15th century Scottish character. Fragments of the windows have been recovered from the walls of the Barrack building; these are now placed in one of the vaults underlying the Great Hall.

The building now known as the Palace Block is situated on the east side of "The Close" and the principal apartments overlook the old Town.

### *The King's Lodging*

Dating from the 15th century, this building has been considerably added to and altered. The northern or higher part,

formerly called THE KING'S LODGING, was entirely remodelled and heightened in 1615–17, at a cost of over £25,000 Scots, for "His Majesties' Hame Coming," an event which was accompanied by much rejoicing, shooting of cannon, firework displays, music pageantry, and Morris dancing. A boy who performed on a hobby horse came from Berwick.

The King's Apartments were to the east, and, therefore, the principal elevation is on this side overlooking the town. In style, it is an example of Scottish Classic Renaissance carefully executed in "hewin wark." The windows have been protected with iron cage grilles and furnished with mullions and transomes of stone. The window pediments were ornamented with Royal Monograms crowned flanked with swags of fruit. The carving was done by William Wallace, King's Master Mason, a well-known stone carver of his time. Between the three upper windows, there are two large panels set within enriched frames. The one depicts "The Honours," viz., the Crown, Sceptre, and Sword of State, set above a label of strapwork design; the other contained the Royal Arms, referred to in the contemporary building accounts as "the grit armes in the new wark." Both panels were carved by Wallace. The Arms and the Royal Monograms were erased by Cromwell's orders. The east elevation has suffered from bombardment, and the damage caused by the shot can still be seen on the stone-work.

The building has a plarform roof. The embattled parapets are ornamented with imitation water-spouts representing cannon. At the south-east and north-east corners of the roof are small square pavilions, now roofless, and it was in the centre, between these, that the flagstaff stood in the 17th century. Later, the flag was flown at the Half Moon Battery, and, since 1830, the flagstaff has been on the west stair tower of the Palace Block.

The north elevation of the Palace is built in rubble masonry and has three large windows having pediments ornamented with the Rose, Thistle, and Harp, The Honours and a Crowned Royal Monogram. A projecting turnpike stair leads to the upper floors and at one time continued to the roof. On the stair tower the date 1615 is to be seen carved on a panel.

The lesser apartments were on the courtyard side and entered from the turnpike stair which gives access to the Crown Chamber, a stone-vaulted strong-room where the Regalia of Scotland and otber Royal Jewels were and are still kept. The window of this room has been enlarged. The original window which was smaller and protected by an iron cage grille, was filled in with masonry wben the "Honours of Scotland" were sealed up in

this room on the 21st March 1707. An old iron yett is to be seen at the doorway.

Within the Palace, not a vestige of its previous furnishing remains to indicate that it was at one time a Royal residence. The principal rooms were panelled and had plaster ceilings ornamented with designs. Some of the moulds were made by Wallace the carver, others were brought from Kellie Castle, Fife, where there is a ceiling ornamented with impressions from the moulds which were afterwards used for Edinburgh Castle. The plasterers employed were brought from York.

The ground floor of this building was part of an older Royal Lodging. The two rooms on the east side each contain a mutilated fireplace of late Gothic character. The windows at the south end originally took the form of projecting oriels. These were destroyed in the "Long Siege," and only fragments of their corbelled supports now remain. The larger room was the "Laigh Dyning Roume," and to the west of it was the "King's Kitchen" furnished with two large fireplaces. The room immediately over the kitchen was used as a State prison in the 18th century.

Under the ground floor are stone-vaulted cellars and a narrow stairway connects the two floors; the vaults are now entered from the north end. In one of these the Crown Jewels were placed for safety during the years of the War of 1914–18.

The accounts of the King's Masters of Works for 1615–17 inform us that the hewn work, used in the King's Lodging, came from the quarry of "Innerleith Craig" and the free quarry "bewest from Sanct Cuthbert's Kirk." Oyster shells used for pinnings were obtained at Newhaven; lime came from Kirkliston, and sand and sea-clay from Leith. "Wainscottis" were brought from Leith, probably imported from Norway, and from the same port came the "grit timber," brought from London by "twa little schippis," and "Sir George Bruce's grit schip." The timber was oak, elm and ash, from Orpington and Danford. Iron from Sweden and Danzig was also utilised.

There are many interesting little sidelights to be found in the Building Accounts. Sums were paid on several occasions to a barrowman "for helping of one sore leg gotten in the wark," while another received an extra sum of twenty-four shillings, Scots, "in consideration in respect of his talnes and mekilness that he was not abell to leve upon the enterteainement of the rest." Alexander Galbraith, a mason, "quha being wrang handit wes put to ane daingerous peice of wark to hew that other right handit maissouns could nocht win to," received an extra twenty shillings, Scots. Danger money was paid to masons

"in consideration of thair dangerous standing upon ledders," and to others who harled the walls from hanging cradles; one of these, "Johnne Thomsone" by name, received additional compensation for "the waisting and wyring of his clothes," while undertaking the work. John Reid, a smith, received a small sum for "drink on his brydall day in consideration of his good service."

"His Majesties' Armes" throughout the Castle were painted and gilded, the chimneys and doors of the new Hall were treated in imitation of marble, and John Sawers received the sum of £16, 13s. 4d., Scots, for "furnesing all maner of colloures for painting of his Majesties' bed that was sent up to London."

### *Queen Mary's Room*

Within an older building, to the south of that already described, is the lirtle room where Queen Mary gave birth to her son James, who was the first King of the three Kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland. This small apartment, entered from the Chamber known as "Queen Mary's Room," is panelled in oak: this is restoration work. The upper part of the walls is lined with boards, probably of Queen Mary's time, and the ceiling is similarly treated; it is divided into four panels by moulded ceiling ribs. The coat-of-arms, the prayer, the Royal Crowned Monograms, M.R. & J.R., and the date 19th June 1566, were according to the building accounts either introduced or repainted in June 1617, by John Anderson, who received £100 Scots, in payment. The coat-of-arms is that of the Royal House of Stewart. Under, in Gothic letters, is the verse:

"Lord Jesu Chryst that Crounit was with Thornse,
Preserve the Birth quhais Badgie heir is borne,
And send Hir Sonee Successione to Reigne still
Lang in this Realme, if that it be Thy will
Als Grant, D Lord qubat ever of Hir proseed
Be to Thy Glorie Honer and Prais sobied."

In Queen Mary's time the window of this small apartment was divided by a stone mullion and transome.

Queen Mary's Room had an oriel window corresponding to those of the apartment to the north. It contains an oak chair of early 17th century date, the only piece of furniture remaining which has any claim to an old association with the Castle.

The room to the west of Queen Mary's has been used as a kitchen. The room above, with the large window, was formerly

the Register's Chamber, and, on this floor, other rooms to the north and south were used to house the national archives. On the east and south sides of this building, there was originally a parapeted wall-walk overlooking the Grassmarket and the approach to the West Port.

Over the Courtyard entrance to Queen Mary's Room is a panel bearing the cypher of Mary and Darnley and the date 1566. Above this, on the wall, is another panel bearing a crowned shield once emblazoned with the Royal Arms. On the wall to the south is a modern panel extolling the virtues of Queen Mary's mother.

### *Great Hall*

On the south side of the Palace Yard is the GREAT HALL built at the beginning of the 16th century by King James IV. Against the front of this building was a covered walk, similar to the one in connection with St. Mary's Church on the north side of the Square. The original doorway was in the centre of the building, but now the entrance is at the west end. Inside this Great Hall, the features of architectural interest are the great timber hammer-beam roof with carved human and animal masks at the end of the hammer-beams, and the carved stone corbels designed in the manner of the early period of Classic Renaissance, representing one of the oldest examples of this style in Scotland. Each corbel is enriched with carving; the various motifs represented are: I.R.4 crowned; the Crowned Royal Arms; the Fleur-de-Lys; the Thistle; in a vase a combined thistle and rose; a cherub's head; the head of a man set in a leafy background, said to represent the King; the head and bust of a woman said to represent his Queen, Margaret Tudor, and a Rayed Sun in the centre of which is the religious symbol I.H.S. with the cross surmounting the central letter. At the wall-head level and between the great timbers of the roof are heraldic shields painted with the arms of various Constables and Governors. These were introduced when the roof was repainted.

The fireplace, panelling, screens and heraldic window-glass are all modern. The Hall now contains a collection of arms and armour.

From the end of the 17th century to the time of its restoration, this building contained two additional floors and was used as Soldiers' Barracks and later as a hospital. At the east end of the Hall was the dais. The dais chamber was on the first floor of the adjacent building, a building formerly covered by a massive

stone roof. The great kitchen was to the west of the Hall and above the bakehouse, but the building appears to have been demolished sometime in the 17th century, the site being occupied later by a battery, and, in Queen Anne's time, by the little barrack block now occupying the west side of the Courtyard. This Barrack was built in 1707 for officers' and ministers' quarters. It is now adapted to form a Museum in connection with the Scottish National War Memorial.

### *Casemates*

Under the Hall and under the southern part of the Queen Anne building are the CASEMATES, great vaulted chambers. The vaults immediately under the Hall form a double storey, the upper ones being entered from the outside walk on the south. Two of these vaults were prisons which had, at one time, only small narrow airshafts instead of the present window-openings. The casemates had stairways leading up to the Hall and to the Courtyard. The larger vaults were used as a prison at the end of the 18th century, and also during the Napoleonic period, for Dutch and French prisoners of war. The prison features of the doors and windows still remain. On three pine doors the following names of privateersmen occur, DUCATEZ, DE BEUGNIES, PIERE JEAN LE FEVRE, MICHCL BRANSOYS BARC ONOU, ANTONEANRIS LACORINIA, LIONARD MOTI & PETER GARRICK; these are dated 1781, and appear along with crude knife carvings of ships, a running stag, a stag's head, gallows and a guillotine. One of the ships has a North American flag, indicating that one of the sailors had fought in the service of that country. Carved on one of the rybats of the west entrance is: "CHARLES JOBIER DE CALAISE, 1780," and on another, "1780, PROYOL PRISONNIER (?) NEE NATIFFE DE BOURBOUURG."

On the north side of the Castlehill, underlying the rock, is the ruin of the Wellhouse Tower. Immediately above this, on the top of the crag, is a bastion on which stood the crane used in bringing up the water from the Wellhouse. An elaborate scheme for a hand-chain pump in two stages was contemplated in the 18th century, but it was never carried into effect.

# *History*

THE story of the Castle of Edinburgh is almost inseparable from that of Scotland as a whole. The Castle was not merely a fortress, but a palace, a treasury, the home of the national records, a workshop and a storehouse for munitions. It was a place of refuge for sovereigns during their minorities, the prison of their enemies, and the last post of defence for lost causes.

## *Early Occupation*

The origins of the Castle are lost irrecoverably, for in the legend and tradition, which are all that is left, there is little upon which to build. The very name is still a debatable subject. Yet, by comparison with other Scottish hill forts of which more is known, such as Traprain and Dumbarton, to mention no others, it is possible to conjecture as early a period as theirs, the Bronze Age. The natural formation must have marked it out early as a likely spot for defence and retreat in time of danger. It possessed springs of water, had slopes to the west suitable for the pasturage of the cattle of the community, and stood high and clear of the surrounding marshes and forest. The crest of the rock was probably an Iron Age fort, and it seems not unnatural that when the Pictish Kings extended their rule towards the Lothians, the fort on the rock would commend itself to them as a defensible spot. But successive alterations on the surface of the rock have obliterated all trace of early occupation, so that nothing is left but surmise.

## *Queen Margaret and her Chapel*

Not until the 11th century is any reliable information found about the Castle, and that is in the reign of Malcolm III, *Cean Mor*. After his marriage with Margaret, sister of Edgar Atheling, the King and Queen made the Castle their residence. So much is changed that it is difficult to picture the fortress as it was then, but probably the buildings were on the highest part of the rock, surrounded by a wooden stockade to which access was gained

by a flight of stairs. Of these buildings only one remains, the chapel built by Queen Margaret for herself, which was near the palace. Although the situation is lost, something is known about the palace with its "chamber of the blessed Margaret," in which future Kings were to hold audience. The Queen adorned this residence and particularly her chamber with luxuries till then unknown in Scotland, and there she lived and worked with her ladies. In her chapel she heard Mass the day before her death upon 19th June 1093. She had been ill at the time of the departure of her husband upon his last ill-fated raid on England. Her biographer, Turgot, records that as she lay on her bed gazing on her treasure, the Black Rood, which contained a fragment of the True Cross, and surrounded by choristers chanting psalms, her son Edgar brought news of the death of Malcolm at Alnwick, and of her eldest son, Edward, shortly after he had crossed the Border. Stretching out her hands to Heaven she gave thanks to God for the agony she suffered at her passing for her cleansing from certain stains of sin, and so died. And, for her life in Scotland, she became known as Saint Margaret.

The news of the King's death was followed by the first recorded siege of the Castle. Donald Bane, younger brother of the King and, according to the laws of Tanistry, the heir, surrounded it with his army, but, as it was held impregnable, contented himself with guarding the main approaches. Under cover of mist the body of the Queen was carried down by the path on the west, leading to St. Cuthbert's Church, on its way to the coast and her Abbey of Dunfermline, where she still lies buried.

### *David I and the Canons*

The reign of Queen Margaret's youngest son, David I, is one which adds to our knowledge of the Castle. Among many abbeys founded by the "sair sanct" was that of Holyrood in 1128, and its history begins on the rock. His first recorded charter to them, about 1143–7, confirmed to the canons the church in the Castle, but previous to that date they had probably occupied it. How old the church was there is no means of telling, but a tradition held that it had belonged to nuns who were expelled to make room for the canons. It is mentioned in 1130 in a confirmation by the Bishop of St. Andrews of the King's grant to his new abbey and it is probable that the canons-regular officiated there until that year when they removed to Holyrood. The King also granted to them the gardens of the Castle which stretched widely to the north and south. The King himself often

stayed there, and when on his journeys carried with him the much-prized Black Rood, which was in his hands when he died at Carlisle in 1153.

Although it was long till Edinburgh became the recognised capital of Scotland, the Scottish Kings lived in the Castle frequently. For that reason it became a place for Councils and other assemblies, and was held a safe place for keeping the treasure and records of the kingdom. It was in the reign of David I that, at an assembly there, the concord was made regarding the tithes of the church of Eccles (St. Ninian) between the Bishop of St. Andrews and the Abbot of Dunfermline, an agreement which was of much importance in the evolution of the parochial organisation by affording a precedent for the system of tithes thereafter in use in Scotland. Indeed it is said that the precedent was of wider application. A Council is recorded as being held there during the reign of William the Lion by the Papal legate, Cardinal Viviani. This dealt with a dispute between the King and the Pope over the appointment of a Bishop of St. Andrews. The legate deposed the King's candidate and consecrated the one elected by the canons and approved by the Pope. The ceremony is described as performed in the monastery of the Holy Rood *apud castra puellarum*, though one authority states that it was held in Queen Margaret's chamber. One trace of the stay of the canons of Holyrood in the Castle may be the right of sanctuary which lingered there till abolished in the 18th century.

### *The Castle in English Hands*

In 1174 occurred its first recorded occupation by the English enemy. William the Lion, defeated and captured at Alnwick by Henry II, was forced to place four Scottish fortresses in the hands of the English King as security for his ransom. Of these Edinburgh was one, and it remained in English hands till the marriage of William with Ermardis de Beaumont, when it was restored, and given by him as dowry to his wife.

### *A Sad and Solitary Place*

The Castle is noted as being the safe place where Alexander III, married at the age of ten to Margaret, daughter of Henry III, lived with his child wife. It was certainly a refuge for the King from the strife of his nobles, but the young Queen found it a dreary change from England. Her opinion of it has been

recorded, "a sad and solitary place without verdure, and by reason of its vicinity to the sea, unwholesome." The poor queen evidently suffered from the easterly haar, but her description errs on the severe side. Trees there may not have been, but the parts of the rock yet unfortified, to the west where the Hawk Hill lay, and to the north, were grass-covered, for they were used for grazing the cattle belonging to the Castle, and below lay the King's gardens and orchard. But the stay of the young King and Queen was cut short by two English envoys who conveyed the children to Wark, where Alexander was persuaded to put into power the nobles who favoured England.

There are letters extant which show that Alexander III towards the end of his life lived in the Castle. One pathetic letter to Edward I, in April 1284, speaks of the death of his son the Prince of Scotland, and mentions the only one of his descendents yet living, Margaret of Norway, only child of his daughter and the King of that country. His death was followed shortly after by hers, and thus Scotland was plunged into the troubles of the succession.

### *Treasury and Record House*

To these troubles and the part played in them by Edward I a great loss sustained by the Scottish nation is due. The Castle was then, as for many centuries later, the repository of the national muniments of Scotland; it served also as the treasury where lay the jewels of the Scottish Kings. For the purpose, ostensibly, of judging the rights of the claimants to the Crown of Scotland, Edward in 1291 and 1292 caused the records and treasure to be removed. Two documents exist which show the great number of papers thus treated. The reason given by the English King was no more than a pretext; had it been otherwise the muniments should have been restored to the Castle when John Balliol became King, but they were kept, in view of Edward's design on the independence of Scotland. These inventories also give some of the jewels and relics removed from the treasury, some of which found their way to the royal wardrobe at Westminster. In one among ecclesiastical vestments, probably those of St. Margaret's Chapel, was included the famous Black Rood in a gilded silver case. A schedule of 1296 has a list of the "jewels found in Edinburgh Castle," sent to London with one John le Candelar. These include "a shrine with the King of Scotland's arms covered with red sindone," crystal cups mounted in silver-gilt, ivory horns decorated with silk and silver, a nut with a foot

and cover of silver-gilt and silver cups, mazers and basins of differing sizes and values. Little of this was ever to return. It is true that the Black Rood was restored, for it was in the possession of David II, only to be lost by him at the battle of Neville's Cross. Thereafter that relic found its way to Durham Cathedral, whence it was lost irrecoverably at the Reformation. But such muniments as remain are still in England, though one of the conditions of the Treaty of Northampton in 1328 was that the records of Scotland were to be restored. The Prayer Book of St. Margaret, now in the Bodleian Library, possibly was taken at the same time. The volume shows marks of having been wet, thereby perhaps confirming the story of its loss at the Queensferry and miraculous recovery.

When the Castle was rebuilt at the close of the Wars of Independence, it became again the Treasury and Record house. The "black kist" of James III, in which fabulous wealth was said to be stored, was kept in David's Tower and among its reputed treasures was Robert the Bruce's "sark." The Regalia or Honours of Scotland found an abiding home there and somehow survived many troubles and sieges. It may have been intention, or merely coincidence, but when the royal wing of the Castle was rebuilt, on the east wall, at the spot behind which lies the room in which the Honours were kept, was placed a stone carved with the Crown, rod and sceptre. Above this was the place where the royal standard flew. Though the royal coats-of-arms were defaced during the Commonwealth, this stone escaped, though considerably damaged by the bombardment of Cromwell in 1650. To him, it may be noted, was due a second plundering of the Scottish records. Taken to Stirling Castle, and thence to London, some were returned in 1657; the remainder, after the Restoration, were sent to Leith and suffered loss by ship-wreck, in what degree is not exactly known. Not long after, because of lack of accommodation and for greater ease of access, the records were transferred to the vaults below the Parliament House, and thence to the Register House, completed about the time of the French Revolution.

### *The Honours of Scotland*

The story of the Honours was a more fortunate one. They were guarded so zealously by Kirkcaldy of Grange, Captain of the Castle, that a Parliament of the Queen's adversaries, meeting in Canongate, had to content themselves with counterfeits of gilded copper. They survived the siege which ended in 1573

and were used for the coronations of James VI and Charles I. The loyalty and ingenuity of certain persons, including the wife of the minister of Dunnottar, and a burgess wife of Edinburgh, contrived to preserve them from Cromwell and the fate of the Crown jewels of England. They were replaced in the Castle at the Restoration, which they left only for the meetings of the Scots Parliament. Carried in state at the last of these, that "end of an auld sang," they were restored to their chest in the jewel room to be lost to sight till 1818 when, thanks in part to Sir Walter Scott, they were re-discovered and restored to the place which they now occupy.

### *The Castle and the English*

But the story of the national treasures has gone far beyond the time of Edward I. He visited Edinburgh in the summer of 1291, stayed one night in the Castle, and received there homage from some of the Scots. It is recorded that on the 8th July in the chapel of the Castle he received the homage of the Abbot of Holyrood. A few weeks later, in the same place, the Abbess of Haddington swore fealty, and in the King's chamber, formerly known as the chamber of the Blessed Margaret, the Prior of the Knights Hospitallers and the Preceptor of the Templars in Scotland did likewise.

The reign of John Balliol was short and disastrous: in 1296 the King of England advanced upon Scotland, meeting with little resistance after the capture and sack of Berwick-on-Tweed. When, in the spring of 1296, he besieged the Castle with "engines which cast stones over the walls, sore beating and bruising the buildings within," it surrendered after eight days. It remained in English hands till 1313, and considerable pains were taken to garrison and provision it. In 1300 there was a garrison of 347 persons, including knights and their attendants, priests, clerks, household servants and soldiers.

A surprise attack by Sir Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray, nephew of Robert the Bruce, recaptured the fortress in 1313. Led by a certain William Francis, formerly of the garrison, a party of about thirty men climbed the rock, probably on the west side, and surprised the defenders. According to a legend of the day, this fulfilled a prophecy of St. Margaret. By the King's command the buildings and fortifications were utterly destroyed, except the sainted Queen's chapel. That this was intentionally spared is proved by the instructions given by him on his deathbed for the repair of the chapel, and for the endow-

CASTLE AND ESPLANADE

*From a drawing in the King's Library, British Museum*]

THE BUILDINGS ON

As they appeared at the end of the 17th Century, and

[*By permission of the Trustees of the British Museum*

THE CASTLE ROCK

a proposed "forework" which was never constructed,

THE CASTLE FROM JOHNSTONE TERRACE

ment of a light in its shrine with the proceeds of the patronage of the church of Inverkeithing.

The Castle was occupied by the English again during the minority of David II and till 1341. During this time the garrison restored part of the ruins. The old church of St. Mary was rebuilt as a granary, four glass windows were made for St. Margaret's Chapel, and the great stables to the south of the Castle rock, which give the name to King's Stables Road, were begun. They were finished by David II, a great lover of horses. The English knights began the construction of the Barras or tilting ground below the south-west corner of the rock. Even the gardens and the orchard were restored to cultivation, at least in part.

### *Recapture by the Scots*

A stratagem on which old chroniclers love to dwell regained the Castle in 1341. The story is too well known to be told in detail. The plan was devised by William of Douglas and others. Disguised as merchants bringing corn and wine to the garrison, a party contrived to drop their loads in such a way as to prevent the closing of the gates. Joined by others, who lay concealed close at hand, they attacked the garrison and captured the fortress.

David II, returning from long captivity in England after the battle of Neville's Cross, added greatly to the strength of the Castle by building the great tower known by his name. Begun in 1367, it took more than ten years to build. The remains of the tower are covered now by the Half Moon Battery. It was connected with the Constable's Tower, lying to the north, by a "curtain wall." A new well was made in 1361 around which the Wellhouse Tower was built later. Certain apartments in the tower were used by him as a residence, and he died there in 1371.

Though the English invaded Scotland again in the reign of his successor, Robert II, and advanced so far as Edinburgh, there was no siege of the Castle. But the King's son, John, Earl of Carrick, possibly considering the threatened danger to the town, by a charter gave permission to the burgesses of Edinburgh to build houses for themselves in the Castle itself. Whether they availed themselves of the permission is not known.

Robert III, as John of Carrick called himself after his accession, inhabited the Castle with his Court, and sealed there a treaty of alliance with France, in accordance with the policy begun by Balliol. His Queen, Annabella, in 1398 held a tournament in the Barras in which twelve knights took part, among them her

son, David, Duke of Rothesay. David was governor of the Castle when Henry IV invaded Scotland and encamped at Leith, and, in a manner worthy of the romances of chivalry, he offered to settle the old English claim of supremacy by a combat between a hundred knights of each side. The King of England refused and laid siege to the Castle, but was driven back by the proverbial weather of Edinburgh, for cold, rain and famine made him retreat.

### *A Place of Safety for Kings*

During the frequent minorities of the ill-fated house of Stewart the Castle was used as their dwelling, part refuge, part prison, for the quarrels of the nobles for the possession of the King's person were recurrent. An old chronicler, telling of the stay of the young James II in the place, dwells with relish on the way in which his mother, Queen Johanna, took him away. Allowed to visit him, at her departure she asked permission to carry away two coffers with "hir claithes and ornamentis." But "scho inclossit the young king in ane of the said cofferis and hir claithis in ane uthir," and succeeded in carrying the child to a ship at Leith and thence to Stirling.

### *The Black Dinner*

It was not long till the young King was again in the Castle, and then occurred the execution of the young Earl of Douglas and the Earl's brother on the Castlehill, dragged from the presence of James II. The story of the production of the bull's head at the banquet rests on the authority of Boece, who is unreliable as a historian, while Sir Walter Scott added the word "black." It is certain that the presentation of the head of a bull, whether white or black, was never treated in this country as a signal for death. The Earl may have been and probably was dangerous because of his ambition, but the treacherous manner of his death left a feeling of disgust in popular opinion, commemorated by a doggerel rhyme:

> "Edinburgh Castle, toun and toure
> God grant thou sink for sinne
> An' that even for the black dinner
> Earl Douglas gat therein."

For he was received with great appearance of gladness and "banquetted royally with all delicates which could be got," and then dragged to death in spite of the tears and protestations

of the King. After this murder the Castle was besieged by the Douglas party, whom the King had contrived to join. The siege lasted for nine months and the Castle then surrendered. The damages of the siege were then repaired till it was "new better than befoir."

### *Escape of the Duke of Albany*

David's Tower was the prison of Alexander, Duke of Albany, in 1479. Popular tradition makes the duke the injured party, but his frequent intrigues with England and his popularity in Scotland afford a probable reason for suspicion on the King's part. The story of his escape is told most dramatically by a chronicler. Messages were sent to him, concealed in "tua bossis of malvasie" from a French ship at Newhaven, that the King intended his death. Albany lost no time. He invited the Captain of the Castle and his officers to supper. "The fyre was hott and the wyne was stark and the captane and his men became merie." Then the duke and his "chamber child" leaped upon them, killed them and threw their bodies in the fire. The barrels had also concealed a rope: with this the chamber child was lowered from the tower. But the rope was short and the man fell and broke his thigh. "Then the Duik raif the scheittis of his bed and maid the rope langer," reached the ground in safety, and carried his servant to a place of safety. He boarded the ship at Newhaven and sailed for France.

Not long after the tables were turned on James III, who for two months in 1482 found himself a prisoner in this very tower. The same chronicler was not willing to admit that he was a captive, for his keepers "servit and honorit him as ane prince aucht to be, for he was not put there as ane presonar bot for the commoun weill." It is told that James tried to make friends with the Earl of Douglas, also a prisoner, but that the Earl repulsed all approaches with high and presumptuous words, and that the King vowed never to release him if he could help it.

For various political reasons Albany soon found good cause to take his brother's part and, with the help of the burgh, rescued James from his honourable confinement. The King, in gratitude to the burgesses, granted to them in 1482 the office of sheriff within the burgh and other favours. The charter implies that an attack on the Castle took place in which the burgesses distinguished themselves, though no details are known of the event.

*Tournaments and Cannon*

By the time of his son, James IV, the Castle was no longer considered fit for a royal residence and other palaces took its place. Yet the King was there frequently enough. He attended Mass in the royal chapel on St. Margaret's day. A great attraction was that his master-gunner, James Borthwick, worked within the Castle, for the King was often present at the casting of his cannon. The famous guns known as the Seven Sisters of Borthwick were cast there. Among other diversions, James IV delighted in tournaments, and there are records of several which took place in the Barras. It was the King who built the chapel near the Barras and provided for a chaplain to shrive the contestants in the tournaments and to offer daily prayers for himself and for the soul's health of his predecessors. Among these tournaments was one, before 1501, when a German knight, Sir John Clokbuis or Coupance, was met and vanquished by Sir Patrick Hamilton. In others the King himself took part, notably the "Black Lady" tournament, when he, disguised as a black knight, upheld the sable charms of a Mooress. It was from the Castle, that the Queen, Margaret Tudor, watched the sport.

As the tournaments make an interlude in the grim history of the fortress, so do some entries in the accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland. These tell how, between 1504 and 1507, there lived in the Castle a little natural daughter of the King, the Lady Margaret. She seems to have been well cared-for—as the accounts tell of clothes, gold beads, a service book, and dancing lessons. She had three attendants about her own age, Marjorie Lindesay and two Moorish girls, for whom clothes were provided, the latter being dressed in gay colours, red, green, and yellow.

But the warlike plans of France brought an end to pleasant things. The Castle became a centre of preparations for war. In spite of warnings, supernatural and other, the host mustered on the Boroughmuir: the guns, including the Seven Sisters, were dragged from the fortress; and the King with his great army marched for the Border. There on the three low hills of Flodden where the King, surrounded by the flower of the nation, lay dead, vanished the prosperity of the kingdom. And the desolate burgesses of Edinburgh set about building the Flodden Wall which started from David's Tower down to and across the Grassmarket.

### *Repairs to the Castle*

The Captain of the Castle after the death of the King seems to have given much thought to the defences. He wrote in 1514 to the Queen Dowager and the Lords of Council about a design for fortifications made by Sir Anthony d'Arcy, the Sieur de la Bawty, and John Borthwick. He also repaired the walls near the Well House and had a bakehouse and a brewhouse built.

In the spring of 1517 the young James V was brought for safety to the "wyndy and richt unpleasand castell and royk of Edinburgh." The Captain had the keeping of the whole fortress except the great tower where the King was lodged, attended by one out of four chosen nobles in turn. Robert Borthwick and six gunners remained constantly in the Castle, and twelve footmen with halbards and a captain to guard the King's chamber. The King was removed to Craigmillar a few months after his arrival because of a suspicion that a child with an infectious disease had been in the place, but he returned after about ten days. His life in the Castle seems to have been a neglected one. Little money was provided for his wants and his tutor, Gavin Dunbar, had to pay out of his own pocket for repairs to their dwelling, while James was indebted to his natural sister, the Countess of Morton, for clothes.

After his assumption of the government, James V took less interest in the Castle as a personal residence. Additions seem to have been made to it at intervals before his reign, for the Great Hall was built in 1483. Different Treasurers' Accounts give details as to repairs, such as locks for the rooms where the Charters and Exchequer Rolls were kept. This was probably necessary as, after 1508, the Exchequer audits were kept there permanently. King James's architect, Sir James Hamilton of Finnart, is supposed to have designed the royal apartments, which form the lower part of the east block of the Crown Square. The design was good, and the windows, with their oriels, were beautiful. This building was connected by a passage with David's Tower. That the King ever lived there is not known, but, apparently, a large number of royal officials had rooms in the Castle for themselves and their households. During his reign a constant stream of recalcitrant nobles were confined there for periods of different length.

### *Mary of Lorraine*

With the first wife of the King, Madeleine of Valois, the Castle has no associations. Her short life in Scotland was bounded by

Holyroodhouse, where she lies buried. But her successor, Mary of Lorraine, was greeted at her arrival by the guns of the Castle. Possibly after the burning of Holyrood by the English, the fortress was one of the places where the Queen Dowager stayed and where she left her decorous household of ladies while absent on her many journeys in Scotland. It must have been there, or else in the house, supposed to have been hers, once seen on the Castle Hill. The years of her widowhood were one long struggle. For from the death of the King in 1542, after the disaster of Solway Moss, she lived only to rule Scotland for her daughter, Mary, Queen of Scots, then in France, to maintain the French alliance and to combat the rising forces of the Reformation. At one time the Queen may well have thought she was gaining her ends. She was Regent of Scotland and, in the spring of 1558, her daughter married the Dauphin Francis, and Mons Meg fired a salute in honour of the event. But her opponents were too strong, and worn out with the struggle and with sickness, she betook herself to the Castle. In the royal apartments built by her husband, she "ended her life most christianly," as even her enemies admitted, on the 10th June 1560. Her body lay in St. Margaret's Chapel under a pall with a great cross of white silk until September, when permission was granted to carry it to France to be buried in her sister's Abbey of St. Pierre at Rheims.

### *Queen Mary's Visits*

It was about a month after her return in 1561 that Queen Mary first visited the Castle. She rode from Holyroodhouse by the "Lang Gait" and St. Cuthbert's to the south side of the rock and thence up the Castle Bank. Many of her nobles rode with her, but a chronicler notes, significantly, the absence of the former Governor of Scotland, the Duke of Chatelherault and his son, the Earl of Arran, heirs, after the Queen, to the throne. As the company left to ride through the town the guns fired a salute. In August 1565, when the Protestant Lords, headed by Chatelherault and the Queen's half-brother, the Earl of Moray, rode into the town, Mary had already left. The lords met with a cold reception from Lord Erskine, Governor of the Castle, who invited them to leave the town within two hours, otherwise he would fire upon them. "And because the lordis departit nocht so haistilie he causit the gunnaris schote thre pece of ordinance doun in the toun," a proceeding which made the Lords most unpopular with the townsfolk.

In the following year, a few months after the murder of Riccio, Mary and her husband were in the Castle, apparently reconciled. The Privy Council had begged her to stay till the birth of her child, "gif it may stand with the Queenis Majesteis plesour and the belth of hir body." Upon St. Margaret's day, the 19th June 1566, her son, Prince James, was born in the little irregular room which is still shown. Salutes were fired from the Castle, and Edinburgh set out five hundred bonfires.

There is a story that Queen Mary, anxious to have her son baptized in the old Faith, lowered him in a basket from a window to retainers waiting to carry him to Stirling. For this there is no foundation: the Prince was taken to Stirling, but at a time when the Queen was absent on the Borders. Also there was no recorded opposition, though the King, the English Ambassador and others with tender consciences were not present with her at the ceremony.

### *The Queen's Prisoner*

Shortly before the birth of the Prince there had been released from the Castle the Earl of Arran, who had been prisoner since April 1562, by the command of the Queen. There were various causes which might be assigned for his imprisonment. His father, the Duke of Chatelherault, was heir presumptive to the Crown, a fact which the ambition of his house never forgot. His attitude towards the Queen was at all times uncertain, he had been a lukewarm supporter of the Reformation, and it has been suggested that the Earl of Moray might have considered the imprisonment of his son as surety for his behaviour. Also, soon after the birth of Mary Stuart, the marriage of young James Hamilton with the Queen had been schemed. Arran himself had known Mary in France, for he was brought up there. Knox suggests that he loved her and hinted that the Queen encouraged him. Between him and the Earl of Bothwell there was a violent jealousy in spite of outward reconciliation. So, when he came one day babbling stories of vague plots against the Queen, it is not strange that the evident derangement of his mind was made an excuse for his confinement, from which he was released, broken in mind and body, a man from whom nothing need be feared.

### *The Misfortunes of the Queen*

Between the time of her son's birth and the Queen's next visit to the Castle came the two great calamities of her reign, the murder of Darnley and her abduction by Bothwell. On the 6th

May, the day before Bothwell's divorce was pronounced, they rode up the Bow to the Castle, the Earl leading the Queen's horse by the bridle as "ane captyve." She stayed there till her marriage on the 11th in the Hall of Holyrood, by Protestant rites, Bothwell being, for a man not otherwise scrupulous, particular in matters of religion. Thenceforward the Castle knew her no more, though it was from apartments there that the Earl of Morton claimed to have produced the famous casket with the letters accepted by many as proving her complicity in her husband's murder, of which the originals were never forthcoming.

The attitude of the Captain of the Castle to the fugitive Queen was not at first decided. He was James Balfour of Burlie, supposed to be the confederate of the Earl of Bothwell in the murder of Darnley and certainly deeply implicated in that tragedy. The proclamation of the Lords for the punishment of the King's murderers was made "without impediment of the castell," and the inhabitants of Edinburgh made a bond with the Captain to defend themselves against any who would attack the Castle or Town, regardless of party. But after the battle of Carberry Hill, Balfour supplied the Confederated Lords with artillery, contrary to his promise to the Queen, and allowed the Honours to be taken to Stirling for the coronation of her son, James VI, on the 29th July 1567.

### *Kirkcaldy of Grange*

The Captain having sold his office to James, Earl of Moray, for £5,000 Scots in hand and other benefits, the Regent dined in the Castle and appointed Sir William Kirkcaldy of Grange in his place. Grange has been accused of playing traitor to his party, but he remained on the whole faithful to Moray. True, he rescued Maitland of Lethington from his imprisonment in the Town, and the Regent understood the meaning of his action and showed it by his invitation to the Town Council to elect a new provost in Grange's place. They paid no attention to the request, preferring to keep on friendly terms with the Castle. But, during the Regent's life, Grange abstained from overt acts of disloyalty and rode in mourning at the head of the Earl's funeral procession on the 14th February 1570.

### *The Long Siege*

His attitude towards affairs in Scotland changed gradually during the years he held the Castle, culminating in avowed

friendship for the Queen's party, due in part to his distrust of the Regent Morton. In May 1570 the Town Council, having regard to his expenditure on fortifying the Castle before the threatened arrival of the English, and to the fact that the place had always been regarded as the defence of the Town, voted to him £200 Scots. By February 1571 they found reason to doubt his attachment to the good cause, probably moved by the fact that he had transformed a merchant's house in the Castlehill into a guardhouse. They sent some of their number to him to enquire what his attitude would be if the lords of the Queen's party, or others who bore no good will to the Town should come in force. Grange's answer was cryptic. So long, he said, as the Town committed no offence against the King's house, him and his who had the keeping thereof, they might assure themselves of his favour, good will and assistance. This protestation did not prevent him seizing all the munitions in the Town in April and in the following month building another blockhouse just above the Over Bow. The alarmed burgesses reported this to the Regent. In June Grange showed his hand even more clearly. When the rival parliaments of the King's and Queen's parties met in the Canongate and Edinburgh respectively, he sent to the latter the Honours from the Castle. Money and munitions came to him from France and the siege was well begun.

At last the Confederate Lords obtained help from Queen Elizabeth. In April 1573, English ships arrived in the roads of Leith with troops and ordnance under the command of Sir William Drury. A writer of the day notes among the cannon one of the Seven Sisters, captured at Flodden, now turned against the place where it was made. Five batteries bombarded the Castle night and day. The positions of these are interesting, since in future sieges other commanders adopted them too. One was at the head of the Castle Hill, another near the Greyfriars, the third on the high ground near St. Cuthbert's Church, the fourth and fifth on the north side near the present lines of Lothian Road and Princes Street. Grange seems to have been well provided for defence, for David's Tower, and the Constable's Tower appear to have been connected with a double row of batteries, but the weakness of the Castle was the water supply. There were, it is true, two wells on the rock, the great well near David's Tower and another near the Hawk Hill. The well at the Wellhouse Tower could also be reached, and there was another, St. Margaret's on the west, near St. Cuthbert's, reached by the old path down the rock. This seems to have been used till the besiegers blocked it with lime and wheat and guarded it by an outpost at St. Cuthbert's.

On the 22nd May a part of David's Tower fell under bombardment. Two days later another part fell, choking the great well. Still the garrison held out, in spite of drought, till an English attack captured the Spur, the outworks defending the eastern approach to the Castle, and on the 29th, Grange surrendered to the English commander. In spite of the terms of surrender, the principal members of the garrison were given up to the Earl of Morton, among them Grange and his brother, Maitland of Lethington and two Edinburgh goldsmiths, John Mossman and James Cockie. Lethington escaped public execution, dying, as was suspected, by his own hand; Grange and his brother and the two goldsmiths were hanged at the Market Cross and their heads placed on the "maist eminent places of the castell wall." Even the Earl of Morton thought expedient to excuse the executions to the English commander. He threw the blame for the breach of the terms of surrender upon the ministers.

### *The Building of the Half Moon Battery and Royal Apartments*

The Castle had suffered severely by the siege, and the Regent Morton started at once to rebuild it. On the place where David's Tower bad stood, over what was left of the building, rose the Half Moon Battery. George Douglas of Parkhead, a relation of the Regent, was made Captain and, like Grange, was, for a time, provost of Edinburgh. Having been guilty of an attack on the townsfolk, it was suggested by Morton that he should be removed because of the "grudge and misliking" likely to ensue. The Town Council were curiously reluctant to part with their Provost, but yielded to the persuasions of the Privy Council. An explanation of their position may be that the emplacement of the guns in the new battery commanded the Lawnmarket. Douglas was succeeded in 1585 by Sir James Home of Cowdenknowes, whose appointment was ratified by Parliament. He is called Keeper of the King's munitions and artillery as well as of the Honours and was granted £800 from the great customs of Edinburgb and from the King's thirds of benefices.

From this time the Castle ceases to be more than a fortress occasionally visited by the Kings of Scotland. Indeed, less than thirty years later the Kings were no more than rare visitors to their ancient kingdom.

Thougb James VI had few personal relations with the Castle, during his reign much was done for it. In 1584 he assigned certain sums for its upkeep. The accounts of the King's Masters of Work for 1615 to 1617 sbow considerable activity in building

there, possibly with a view to the King's return, "salmond like" as he said, to his own country. Besides building, there were other preparations to welcome James VI. One entry mentions "the Frenchman that makes the sweetmeiths," for whom a store of planks was brought from Leith, presumably to make a place for his activities. Two men were hired to load and fire a salute at His Majesty's arrival. A load of coals was provided for the Englishmen in charge of the "fyreworks," at a cost of 40s., which was dear for a horseload. Several entries are concerned with the making of a "dragon and St. George," and the providing of a pair of gloves for the saint. The dragon and St. George were apparently drawn in procession, for "sex lynis" were provided for the purpose. The maker was Ralf Ralinsone, carver, who must have been an Englishman, and received £1 for his labours. A delicate touch is the provision of "blew ribbenis for the keyis of the gaittes." Among other preparations, eight porters carried three cannon to the high platform and helped to lift "Mons Meg" out of the ground. They were not enough, for later thirteen men were required to raise her. In spite of unwieldiness the cannon had been taken by James IV to the siege of Norham, and, once at least, removed to Holyrood and back again. In the inventory, taken after the siege of 1650, Mons or Muckle Meg is mentioned.

Charles I, during his visit to Edinburgh in 1633, feasted in the Banquetting Hall of the Castle and spent there the night before his coronation. The Honours were carried in solemn procession to Holyrood where the ceremony took place. It is nowhere stated that he visited the Castle on his second hurried visit in 1641. In 1650 Charles II rode up the town to the fortress. His stay in the neighbourhood was short. Although welcomed by the army, his presence was acceptable neither to the Committee of Estates nor to the Church and, upon the pretext of danger to himself, he was compelled to retire. But between these two dates lay the Covenants and the Civil War: Charles I had died on the scaffold and his son was King in little more than name. And after his visit no King entered the Castle till George IV in the nineteenth century.

### *The Castle and the Covenant*

Causes ecclesiastical, political, and financial, brought about the National Covenant and the first Bishops' War. The Covenanted leaders were better prepared than the King, and at the opening of hostilities the advantage fell to them. Alexander Leslie, who

had learned his trade in the Thirty Years' War, laid siege to the Castle in March 1639. The garrison was unprepared and surrendered almost without a show of resistance. The fortress was provisioned and garrisoned, but the Pacification of Berwick, four months later, restored it to the King, who appointed as Governor Sir Patrick Ruthven, Lord Ettrick. By June, 1640, the country was again at war and Leslie again invested the Castle. It was better prepared for defence, and munitions had been brought from Leith under a guard furnished by the Town Council, who in doing so obeyed under protest two letters from Charles I. In expectation of a siege they also fortified the houses on the Castlehill. The importance attached to the Castle is shown by an Act of the Committee of Estates dated 29th July 1640, ordering that 600 men with officers were to remain in the town for blockading the Castle. The Town Council were ordered to borrow 40,000 merks for their support. Leslie placed his batteries much as Drury had done in 1573, and his bombardment was heavy. Ruthven attempted to retaliate, but ceased because of the damage done to the town. He held out for three months, being compelled by famine to surrender and march out with the honours of war on 15th September 1640.

*Montrose*

From May till October, 1641, the Castle was the prison of James Graham, Earl, and later Marquis of Montrose. The cause of his imprisonment belongs to an obscure part of history, which does not concern the Castle, but the fact is worth noting since the same place was prison to his rival the Marquis of Argyll. During his confinement there occurred the brief visit of Charles I, cut short by the news of the Irish Rebellion. Allusion is made to the Castle in an act of the Town Council of August 1645. They were seeking to justify to themselves and to the Committee of Estates, their action in releasing the prisoners of Montrose's army, captured by the Covenanters, and alleged, among other reasons, the condition of the fortress "where the plage of pestilence was raging," as in the town, and where, as a consequence of their isolation, there was great scarcity of food. They feared a rising of the starving prisoners and stressed the importance of saving the Castle at all costs because of the "evidents, writts and registers of the Kingdom" stored there. So they released the prisoners, but Montrose's young son, Lord Graham, a prisoner in the Castle, refused to allow himself to be exchanged for an officer of the other side, as not being valuable enough to the King's Lieutenant-General, his father.

*Oliver Cromwell's Two Visits*

In October, 1648, after defeating the Scottish army at Preston, Oliver Cromwell met the Marquis of Argyll and other leaders in Edinburgh and was entertained by the Marquis in a place variously given as the Great Hall in the Castle and Moray House in the Canongate. It was one of the things laid to Argyll's charge in later days. But the next time Cromwell came it was as an enemy.

Between the two visits lay a considerable change in Scottish feeling. The nation, as a whole, resented the execution of Charles I and had proclaimed Charles II at the Market Cross of Edinburgh. He had been received in the town, accepting the homage of a party guilty a few months before of the death of his great servant, Montrose. This recognition of the King was construed by England as an act of war, and Cromwell invaded Scotland. After his overwhelming victory at Dunbar on 2nd September 1650, he took the road for Edinburgh and besieged the Castle. Since Leslie's attack, attempts had been made to improve the defences and the Spur had been dismantled as useless. Cromwell placed his batteries much as Leslie had done, and the damage inflicted is still visible on the eastern block of the buildings. The siege lasted three months, towards the end of which the Protector had almost completed a mine under the Castle, but, on the 24th December, the Governor, Colonel Walter Dundas, surrendered. Almost immediately afterwards he joined the Protector, thus giving rise to a suspicion that he had betrayed the place. The suspicion is further confirmed by the fact that the Castle had an ample supply of cannon, ammunition and provisions at the time of the surrender, and the damage done to the fortress does not seem to have been sufficient to justify his surrender. It was during this siege that the Governor forbade shooting the cannon at the town. One gunner, Captain Walter Binning, in defiance of the order, attempted to shoot down the head of the Marquess of Montrose from the spike on the Tolbooth. He did not succeed and commented that it was reserved for a worthier fate. He noted that from the Half Moon battery to the Tolbooth gable was a quarter of a mile on the level.

Thenceforward, till the Restoration, the Castle remained under an English garrison, but the English were more concerned with the possibilities of Leith as a strategical position and built there the Citadel, the strongest fort in Scotland.

*The Restoration*

The guns of the Castle welcomed the Restoration of Charles II, and the envoy of the Council extolled the "mirror of all princes for justice and piety." A Scottish garrison under the Earl of Middleton occupied the fortress in 1661.

Reprisals were not many after the Restoration in Scotland, yet Argyll's turn came, and he was imprisoned, according to tradition, in one of the prisons under the Great Hall. Tradition also has placed in the Constable's, now the Argyll Tower the spot where he spent his last night. There is, however, evidence that the Marquess, like the Marquess of Montrose, was imprisoned in the Tolbooth prior to his execution. It was not for long, as in May, 1661, he was executed at the Market Cross. What obligations Charles II might have had towards him were outweighed by his association with Cromwell and the Commonwealth Government, and evidence of that was produced by General Monk, formerly that government's representative in Scotland.

His son, Archibald, Earl of Argyll, was to follow his father some twenty years later. He was a prisoner there, in 1681, for refusing to take the Test save with his own reservation. A contributory cause for his imprisonment may have been his opinion that the Test should be taken by the Royal Family as well, a suggestion not likely to be popular with the King or with his brother James, Duke of Albany and York, commissioner in Scotland. He escaped, disguised as a footman in attendance on his sister. Four years later, having attempted a rising in favour of the Duke of Monmouth and in conjunction with his landing in the West of England, Argyll was captured, brought to the Castle and executed on the old charge of treason. While the proceedings were of doubtful legality the sentence in itself was justified. The Earl's attempted rising was undoubtedly treason, as Monmouth's was.

For some years war passed the Castle by. The alarm due to the Covenanters' risings in 1665 and 1679 caused some preparations for defence, but the forces of the insurgents were broken long before they approached the town.

The Duke of Albany and York was the last of the old line of Stewart to visit the Castle. The accounts of the Masters of Work give evidence of preparations for his reception, chiefly minor repairs, glaziers' work, and a vast amount of whitewashing. It is recorded that at his departure a salute was fired and that Mons Meg burst while firing, an occurrence which subsequent events justified as an evil omen.

*The Fortifications of the Castle*

Though Charles II did not return to Scotland, having doubtless had enough of it in earlier days, he paid considerable attention to the fortification of the Castle. A contract was made in 1677 between the Lyon King-at-Arms, John Slezer, King's Engineer, and Sir William Sharp of Staneyhill, King's Cash Keeper, and Robert Milne, King's Master Mason. This included repairs of damage done in 1650 and a considerable amount of construction. Much was done to strengthen the eastern approach to the Castle, as the most vulnerable part, but there is also mention of the "great barmkin wall" on the west, built to the height of 16 ft. and 6 ft. thick. The "towers" of the Castle also were repaired: the "middle Tower" bad a new turnpike stair with a door opening on the roof: the "great south tower" nearest the gate was also provided with a new stair: the damages by cannon on the south side were to be repaired and a fourth storey to be superimposed with five new windows. Among repairs may be noted some to the Church, the Register's Chamber, the Magazine, and Engineer's Room.

A report of 1679 found much to criticise in the condition of the Castle. The arms and ammunition in the charge of Mr. John Drummond of Lundy appeared not to be in the best possible condition, though there were 406 barrels of powder in the Magazine. The stone work of the batteries was in bad repair. A new wall was suggested on the top of the rock, west of the Magazine, and a low wall on the south-west, near the new brewery. Near the Great Hall a bouse, three storeys high, had been burned by the usurper's troops and was being repaired for the accommodation of the ensigns, but, as the report adds, "by what order I know not." At Leith and Dumbarton were cannon destined for the Castle.

A letter of 1683 reported an inspection of the soldiers' quarters. They were lacking in beds and bedding, the men having to hire what they needed in the town. It was proposed to supply sixty beds at a cost of £1,020 Scots. Fires were to be allowed in their great room, "whereby the sogers will have opportunytie to make meat some tymes, and also to be comfortable to them wben the evenings are long in the winter season," for the cost of £50 a year.

The last accounts before the next siege are interesting chiefly as giving a list of the persons wbo bad quarters in the Castle. These included the Earls of Oxford, Lauderdale, Balcarres, and Leven, the Lord Register and Lieut.-Colonel Winram.

*The Duke of Gordon's Defence*

The "Glorious Revolution," which estahlished William III and Mary in England with a resistance that was nominal, was not accomplished in Scotland without war, and the Castle stood its last long siege. The governor was the Duke of Gordon, appointed hy James VII and II,* and he held the Castle for his King.

A diary of the siege, written hy a nameless defender, possihly the chaplain, is a vivid document. The Duke found himself on the 9th December, 1688, with a garrison of less than two hundred men and scanty provisions and ammunition. He seems to have hesitated to undertake the defence, thinking he might he more useful elsewhere, hut concluded that it was not "suteahle and consistent with his duty and loyalty to his prince . . . to he wilfull in giving over his charge . . . in a tyme when His Majesty might have more use for his faithfull servants." Having made his decision, he found that a part of his men were disloyal, "touched with the humour of the tymes." He dismissed irreconcilahles and made the others take the oath to King James. Some did so for a month, others till orders should come from the King. He was twice summoned hy the Privy Council to surrender. Refusing for the second time, he asked their authority; "if hy the King's he desired to sie it. If they had a mynde to complement the Prince of Orange, he could doe that as well as they."

After a long while he received an oral message from King James bidding him leave the Castle under his lieutenant and retire to the north, hut he decided not to ohey a command sent in such a manner. Viscount Dundee, who was still attending the Convention, sent a message that the Duke was to be summoned again to surrender. Gordon replied that he "keept the Castle by commission from their common master, and was resolved to defend it to the last extreamitie." He made preparations for defence, and received a letter from the Earl of Tyrconnell in Ireland, saying that, if he could hold out for six weeks, he should have 20,000 men.

On the 18th March, 1689, the Convention placed guards round the Castle and the Cameronians mustered in the streets of Edinhurgh. The following day Dundee, having left the Convention, was met by the Governor at the west postern. After some talk together Dundee, with his thirty or forty horsemen, rode for the north and the victory of Killiecrankie, rendered

* James VII was the II of England and Ireland.

ST. MARGARET'S CHAPEL—INTERIOR

MONS MEG

futile by his death. That day the blockade began, and on the 25th, Major General Mackay took command of the besiegers and opened the bombardment.

The siege dragged on through April into May. The Duke wrote to the army in the north that he must have help before the 1st June. The water supply ran very low, since the high well alone had water, and that only ten feet in depth. The bombardment was severe, particularly on Sundays; a Highlander was heard to say that he "well knew Sunday by some mischief or other begun or hotly carried on by our reformers." The cannonade from the Castle towards the town had been forbidden by the Duke, but they were compelled to answer to the guns at the West Port and Castle Hill. To the privations of the garrison disease was added. In spite of it they made a successful sally on the 10th June, but on the following day received a signal from friends outside that there was no hope of relief. There were sufficient reasons why the defence could not be prolonged: desertions, sickness, bad water, bread with salt herrings "for kitchen" for a bare ten days, and little ammunition: yet some blamed the Duke for his surrender. A contemporary letter writer on 12th June stated that on the previous day the Duke had hung out a white flag, beat a parley and had written to the King's Commissioner, the Duke of Hamilton, offering to surrender if the lives and fortunes of himself and his men were secured. The writer commented that such terms might not be granted because of the prolonged resistance and that the Duke would be wise to throw himself on the King's mercy. On the 12th he again asked for terms, but uselessly and firing began again on both sides. It is said that Gordon then contemplated fighting his way out, seizing a ship and joining Dundee. Such a plan, with his weakened forces, would have been impossible and a capitulation was signed. On 14th June, three months after the beginning of the siege, the remnant of the garrison marched out, some of them being ill-used by the Edinburgh rabble. The Castle was not the last to hold out for James VII, but the end was very near. On 27th July Dundee was killed at the battle of Killiecrankie, his victory being thus in vain. A few months later the exiled King ordered his officers in the north to cease a useless resistance.

This was the last of the great sieges of the Castle, all remarkable for one thing, that the fortress was never taken by open assault. It was surprised, bombarded into surrender, starved out and, as some say, betrayed, but, thanks to its situation, was never, except by two Scottish surprise attacks, actually captured.

### *Repairs After the Last Great Siege*

That the Castle suffered severely from Mackay's bombardment is seen by the very extensive repairs carried out after its surrender. There is also a suggestion that it was modernised in part in 1692–3. A report of January, 1695, gives details of the repairs done by the King's Master Mason, Robert Milne. One entry refers to the repair of the place where the flag was fixed. The flag must have served as a target for the besiegers, and the spot damaged in consequence. Part of the magazine had been battered down, there was a great breach at the west sallyport, and one of the guard-rooms had been partially destroyed. Yet it is curious that the damage in no way equalled that done in 1573.

The Honours of Scotland were placed in the Castle after the last meeting of the Scots Parliament, to be lost to sight for many years. The Equivalent, the money paid to Scotland in compensation for the increased scale of taxation due to the Union, was brought to the Castle for safe-keeping. It arrived in safety, but the returning wagons were smashed by an angry mob, for with the common people the Union was far from popular.

### *Jacobite Plots*

Though the Castle had been repaired at the expense of the Scots Exchequer, the defences were not adequate, the provision of arms and ammunition was imperfect and the garrison small, numbering about thirty in the summer of 1706. Had the Jacobite plots of the time been more effective, the capture of the fortress with the Equivalent might have changed the history of Scotland, for many of the men of the day had been shown to have their price. But nothing was done; and when, in 1708, a French fleet with the Chevalier de St. Georges, son of James VII and II, sailed into the Forth, a landing was prevented by Sir George Byng's fleet.

The death of Queen Anne and the accession of George I gave fresh impetus to the Jacobite plans. The rising of the '15 was the occasion for another attempt to seize the Castle. Poorly conceived, and badly carried out, especially by the Edinburgh conspirators, its repulse was a matter of no difficulty. The town took to itself great credit for its action in the matter, but, upon examination, this resolves itself into the capture of a few stragglers by the Town Guard. Alarmed by the attempt, the Town Council begged for reinforcements, but these were not required, for though Mackintosh of Borlum had approached the capital, he was forced to throw himself into the Citadel of Leith and to retire

thence by night to join the march which ended in defeat at Preston. A manuscript in the City Chambers contains an order by one of the Secretaries of State to the Lord Provost to examine the rebels of the common sort, imprisoned in the Castle and elsewhere in the Town, to find which of them had deserted from Borlum before the battle. On 23rd May 1716 the Provost and one of the bailies went to the Castle and called before them the ninety-two prisoners there. It was found that some of them had been captured as stragglers near Calder Moss, others near Edinburgh and others on the Border. It was declared by them that none had ever received money from the Earl of Mar.

In 1728 General Wade reported on the fortifications in Scotland. In his opinion "nothing had been effectually done to secure them from the danger of a surprise to which they have been exposed these many years past." He named particularly the Castle, "which I humbly conceive is a place of the greatest importance to the safety of that part of your Majesty's Dominions." He went on to describe how the walls were so ruinous, after the shutting of the gates, soldiers could easily find a way into the town. To prove his point four soldiers, some with full equipment, were ordered to try to climb the rock and get over the wall. So simple did this prove that "from the common road they mounted into the Castle in less than five minutes."

### *Prince Charlie in Edinburgh*

The last defence of the Castle was in 1745. Upon the alarm of the approach of Prince Charles Edward and his Highlanders, the city endeavoured to prepare for defence. Nothing was in any state of preparedness but the Castle. There the citizens sent their valuables and the banks their money and papers. Arms were issued by the Governor to the hastily-formed regiments of volunteers, but, at the news of the Prince's approach to Kirkliston, enthusiasm for battle waned, and most of the weapons found their way back mysteriously to the Castle store. The Highlanders of Lochiel having forced an entrance at the Netherbow, the Prince's troops occupied the city from the 22nd September to the 31st October. A contemporary newspaper remarked that: "the Highlanders behave civilly and pay cheerfully for what they get." A blockade of the Castle was begun, but after a false alarm of an attack, General Preston, who had taken over the command from General Guest, began a bombardment of the city. The inhabitants, alarmed at the prospect, begged the Prince to remove his picket at the Castle Hill. He refused, but

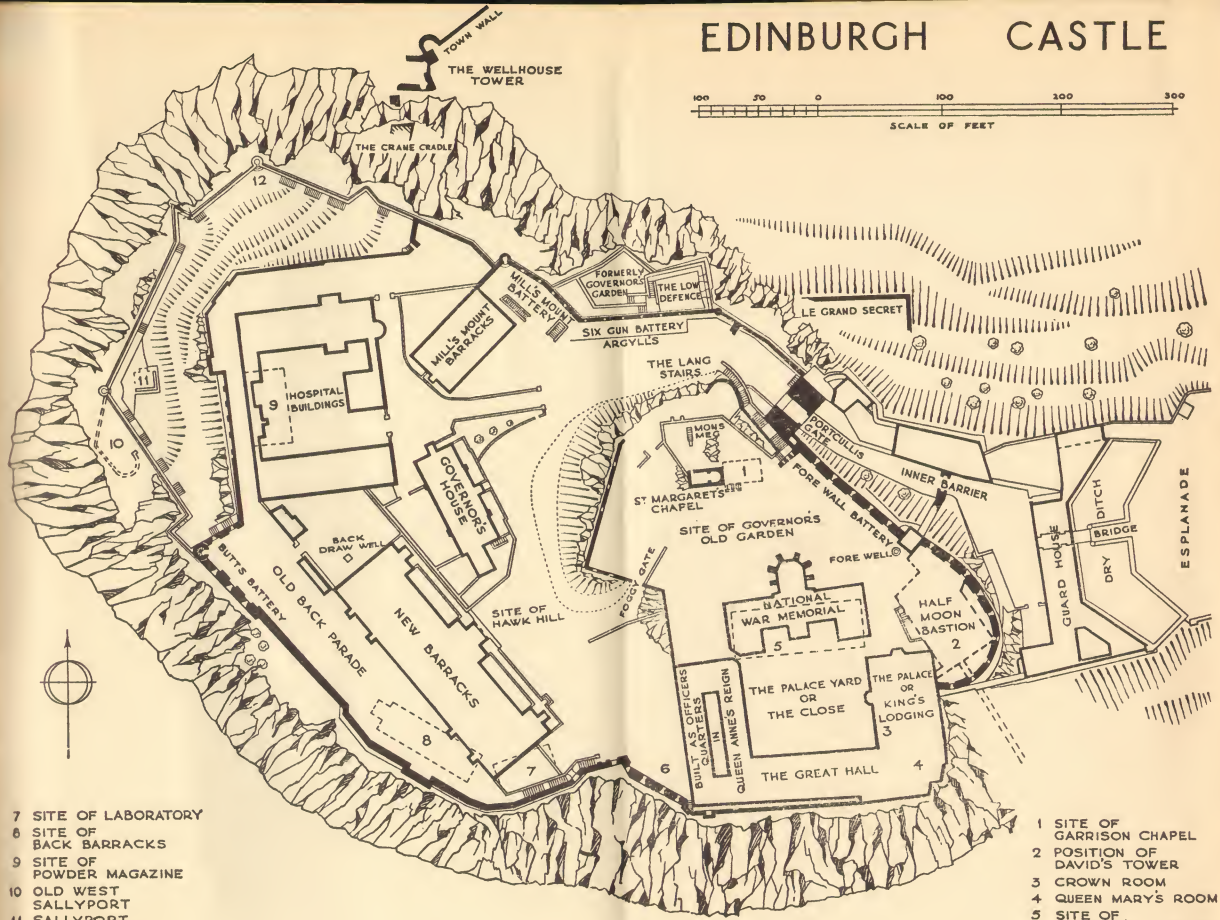
consented to a truce of six days during which communications between the Town and Castle might be kept open. The truce was broken and the Governor, after a warning to the inhabitants of the Lawnmarket, opened fire on the town. Messages were sent to the Prince praying him to raise the blockade. He sent to General Preston to threaten reprisals if the bombardment were continued. Yet the next day the firing continued and, according to Lord Elcho, one of the Prince's followers, much damage was done, "the bullets going everywhere very thick." In the afternoon the blockade was raised and the firing ceased. Lord Elcho adds that the Prince found that "he could not think of getting possession of the Castle without Battering Cannon and Bombs." But possible feelings of humanity towards the city played a part in his decision. In any case the attempt to secure the fortress before marching south was given up and the army on its retreat from Derby followed a more westerly route, while Edinburgh was made secure by the presence of General Hawley's troops.

Thus the last siege of the Castle ended, if, indeed, it be worthy of the name. The subsequent history is that of a garrison and a prison. The prisoners of the '45 were lodged there, not only rank and file, but some whose names are known, as Glengarry, McDonald of Kingsburgh, McDonald of Glencoe and the Earl of Kellie.

After the outbreak of war with France in 1756 till the close of the Napoleonic wars there was an almost continuous stream of French prisoners. They were confined in the casemates under the Great Hall, and at the entrance to their abode may still be seen carved the names of otherwise forgotten men. Whatever may be thought of the place of their imprisonment now, it appears that the prisoners did not complain of their treatment. Indeed when the 3rd Battalion of the Scots Brigade left the Castle the Frenchmen presented an address to General Dundas, thanking him for the attention and good treatment they had received from him and his officers. It was in July 1795 that the address was presented. In December of that year that same batch of prisoners were embarked on a cartel ship for exchange with a like number of British. During the protracted war others succeeded them, who, it may be hoped, had as much ground for gratitude.

But with the close of the '45 the history of the Castle of Edinburgh comes really to an end. Little incident attaches to its history as a garrison, and though, since the time of George IV, Kings and Queens have visited it, the greatness of the Castle lies in its reminder of a great and heroic past.

# EDINBURGH CASTLE

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