

CASTLES

Early Castles

The first castles were built in Scotland from the 12th century. They were part of a movement in Europe where warfare became more sophisticated. As well as castles being built, a class of high-ranking men began to be trained as **knights** - professional soldiers who rode on horseback. These came into Britain with the Norman Conquest of England in 1066 and later spread to Scotland.

The castles that were built in this early stage were called **Mottes**. A motte was a large mound of earth on which a timber structure was built. A good example is the Motte of Urr (Kirkcudbrightshire). Sometimes these mottes had a yard next to them called a **Bailey**. The bailey was an enclosed area where animals were kept and servants could live. A good example of a motte with a bailey attached is Duffus Castle (Moray).

Timber vs. Stone

Timber was a good material to use because it was a quick, easy and cheap way to build a castle. However, the disadvantage was that it could easily burn down.

In the 13th century, castles began to be built of stone rather than timber. At first, stone castles had a basic design: four walls around a courtyard with a simple door. Over time the design became more complex: towers were added to the wall, and the doorway became an elaborate gatehouse. Good examples of complex stone castles are Dirleton Castle (East Lothian) and Kildrummy Castle (Aberdeenshire). These large stone buildings were symbols of power because they were very expensive to build and maintain.

Location

Castles would be built in spots which were easy to defend, such as on islands or on rocky crags. Good examples are Castle Tioram (Inverness-shire) and Loch an Eilean (Inverness-shire). While they were difficult to attack, they were also placed on a major route-way.

Function

Castles had a few different uses: they provided protection against enemies (defensive function); they could be used as the base for an attack (offensive function); they were the homes of rich nobles who used their position to control the land and people around them; they were an administrative base for governing the country.

People

The person in charge of running the castle was called the **castle keeper** (or constable). Other people living in the castle would be the knights, soldiers, cooks, carpenters, stonemasons and prisoners. The castle needed lots of food to be brought in to feed everyone, and weapons to defend them.

Destruction

Not much remains of the original medieval buildings in Scotland because time and wars have worn them down, but also because castles were added to by new generations of kings and nobles all the time so a lot of what is left is from a more recent time. During the War of Independence, control of the Scottish castles was a key element in King Edward I's control over the people, so the castle keepers would usually be his loyal men.

Common features of castle buildings are:

Moat: a man-made ditch sometimes filled with water which encircles the castle making it difficult for enemies to get close to the castle walls. A drawbridge was the usual way of crossing the moat but could be raised when enemies came. A good example is Caerlaverock Castle.

Keep: a tall rectangular tower in the middle of the castle where the nobles lived and which was the safest place for protection if the castle was attacked. A good example is Norham Castle (just south of the Scotland-England border).

Curtainwall: thick, tall, stone walls that surrounded the keep to stop enemies getting in. They might have had battlements (squares gaps cut into the top) or arrowslits (thin windows) to allow people to attack enemies from above. A good example of a stone curtainwall is Rothesay. A 'palisade' was a curtainwall made from wooden stakes.

Gatehouse: the entrance to the castle, a stone building usually with a portcullis (a metal gate that could be wound up and down). A good example is Caerlaverock Castle.

Donjon: a huge round tower where the nobles lived. A good example is Bothwell Castle.

Below are sources for the following important Scottish castles: Aberdeen, Berwick, Bothwell, Caerlaverock, Dumbarton, Dumfries, Edinburgh, Roxburgh, Stirling, Turnberry and Urquhart.

ABERDEEN CASTLE



Berwick: 18 November 1292

Edward I writes to the keeper of Aberdeen Castle, telling him to hand over the castle to the new king of Scots, John Balliol.

King Edward, superior lord of the kingdom of Scotland, to John of Guildford, keeper of the castles of Aberdeen and Kincardine: greeting.

John Balliol recently appeared before me in my Parliament at Berwick-upon-Tweed, and argued in court that the kingdom of Scotland should be awarded to him, and that possession of it should be given, by right of succession, to him as next heir of Margaret, daughter of the king of Norway, queen of Scotland, and granddaughter of the late Alexander III, the last king of Scotland.

I have heard and understood the petitions and pleas both of John Balliol and of other claimants to the kingdom, and have carefully examined those petitions and arguments, and I have found John Balliol to be the next heir of Margaret with regard to the succession of the kingdom of Scotland.

For this reason, I have handed over the kingdom of Scotland and possession of it to John Balliol, while retaining my own rights and the rights of my heirs.

I therefore command you to give to John Balliol, without delay, possession of the castles of Aberdeen and Kincardine, with all that goes with them, together with all other things entrusted to you by my signature.

1304

The earl of Atholl sends a petition to Edward I asking him not to give control over Aboyne Castle (near Aberdeen) to Sir Alexander Comyn of Buchan.

John, earl of Atholl, to my lord King Edward: greeting.

I beg that you change your order to hand over the castle of Aboyne to Sir Alexander Comyn until you are better advised. For the land around it is savage and full of evil-doers, and you have no other fortress in that area where your servants may stay in safety to keep the peace.

And Sir Alexander has two of the strongest castles in the country already, that is those of Urquhart and Tarradale, and may also commit his prisoners to the castle of Aberdeen at his pleasure.

Furthermore, the earl of Ross and the bishop of Ross have informed me that Lachlan [MacRuairidh] and his friends have ordered that each davoch [small unit] of land under his control shall supply a galley of 20 oars to him. Therefore it appears to me and to others that it will not be good to hand over Aboyne Castle to anyone until we see what Lachlan and his friends will do, the other castles named above being enough for Sir Alexander.

July 1307

Receipts of payments to knights, servants and archers sent to Aberdeen Castle.

From the account books of John Sandale, chamberlain of Scotland.

Payments to Gilbert Pecche, knight banneret, keeper of Aberdeen Castle, for 3 knights, 20 esquires, 12 crossbowmen and 20 archers, from 30 November 1306 to 7 July 1307: £382 18s. 8d [about £200,000 today].

BERWICK CASTLE



Norham (Northern England): 13 June 1291

Edward I commands control of Berwick Castle be given to his steward.

King Edward, writing from Norham, to John Soules, keeper of Berwick castle: greeting.

With the common agreement of William, bishop of St Andrews, Robert, bishop of Glasgow, John Comyn of Badenoch, and James, steward of Scotland, Guardians of the kingdom of Scotland, and nine named claimants to the throne, I command you to hand over Berwick Castle to Walter Beauchamp, my steward.

Berwick: 16 August 1292

List of stores found in Berwick Castle when it was handed over to Edward I's officer.

These are the things found in the castle of Berwick-upon-Tweed, in the keeping of Sir John Potthow, handed over to Sir John Burdon, sheriff of Berwick, by the officers of Sir John Potthow, in the presence of Sir Walter of Amersham [the king's chancellor in Scotland] and Sir Richard of Bromsgrove [the king's clerk] by the king's command.

That is:

in the hall, a very large table.

in the sheriff's room, 3 tables, 2 pairs of trestles

in the larder, 3 worn-out napkins, 3 old towels, 2 old pieces of canvas, one stone basin and two tin pitchers, each of one quart.

in the kitchen, one great cauldron, one pot of brass of two gallons, and one boiling-pot of half a gallon, and two grates.

in the butlery, the third part of a cask of Rhenish wine, putrid.

In the wardrobe, five iron dish-covers, some light chain-mail coats without hoods, three heavy chain-mail coats without hoods, two pairs of iron leg-armour, one iron cap, two pairs of firepans, five sacks for armour, three bench-covers, old and torn, one green carpet with a red border, much worn, two boxes, one chest, six old bucklers [small round shields], one old buckler, one leather buckler, a chess board, three crooks and four bars of iron for the gates,

five baskets full of iron.

In the smith's forge, four large anvils and one little anvil, and four anvils with a pickaxe, three large hammers and three small, five pairs of tongs and two pairs of bellows and two hammers, and an iron for forging nails, and one pair of wheels bound with iron.

They also found seven crossbows with winches, and three winches, and six crossbows for two feet, and eight for one foot, and eight belts, and five hundred quarrels [crossbow bolts], and a chest in which the crossbows are kept.

In the chapel they found one chalice [cup] of silver gilt; one chasuble, one alb, one amice, one stole, one fanon [all priestly robes], two towels, three crosses, an image of Our Lady [the Virgin Mary, mother of Christ], and two little images [probably pictures of saints].

Afterwards they found four siege-engines, each of which is lacking a cord for drawing it. Afterwards they found four springalds [catapults], three of which are fit for service; for these springalds there are one hundred quarrels and bullets.

In the bakehouse and around the court, six lead cisterns, one great vat and eight smaller ones, one trough, two tubs, two tuns.

In the larder they found 300 quarters of beef, of the new stores, and six of the old stores; nineteen bacons of the new store, and five hams of the old store; and three sheep's carcasses, and nineteen lines of herrings from the new store, and 700 fish from the new store, and three of the old store, 80 dried fish of the old store, and 44 fish of Aberdeen of the old store, and eighteen salmon of the old store, and thirty-six lampreys in a salt vat.

In the granary they found eighty-three and a half quarters of wheat, and sixty-four quarters and a half of peas, and fifteen quarters and one boll and a half of barley-malt, and thirty-six quarters of salt. And in a chamber near the postern gate are eight hundred and seventy-two pieces of iron, and four heads for pickaxes, eleven iron hammers, one large hammer, six iron bars for windows. And in the bottom of an engine they found three hundred pieces of iron. Also they found thirty chalders of sea coal.

Also they found one live pig.

Berwick: Wednesday 22 October 1298

List of supplies found at Berwick Castle on this date.

Grain from the old garrison: 4 quarters

Grain and wheat in sheaves remaining in the chapel, from the provisions of John Burdon, from the king's estates: estimated at 12 quarters

Grain delivered by Richard Bromsgrove from the store remaining in the town of Berwick: 94 quarters

Malt and mixed grain to make beer, delivered by Richard Bromsgrove from the aforesaid store: 200 quarters

Oats delivered by Richard Bromsgrove for his horses: 100 quarters

Black peas from the old garrison: 64 quarters

Delivered for the castle to John Burdon: 6 large jars of wine

Salted meat: 77 beef carcasses from the old garrison, 16 bacons from the old garrison

100 muttons from the king's store (bought for 100s. by the said Sir John Burdon)
Salted fish from the old garrison: 1000
Salted fish from the king's store: 500
Herring from the old garrison
Herring from the supplies of Master Nicholas of Carlisle
Salt from the old garrison: 35 quarters
Sea coal: 100 quarters
Tallow [animal fat, used for candles]: 12 stones
Oil: 6 flagons
Iron: 20 stones
Arrows: 16 sheaves

Berwick: 14 September 1301

The keeper of Berwick castle tells Edward I of a mutiny which occurred in his castle by foot-soldiers who had not been paid. When he finally received money to pay them, a knight called Sir Walter took more money than he was due.

The keeper of Berwick Castle to my lord king Edward: greeting.

As the £200 which I ordered did not reach me until 28 August, a mutiny arose among the foot-soldiers and archers in the garrison of Berwick, joined by some of the men-at-arms of Sir Ralph, who is their leader in all riots. Though they swore that if any man-at-arms approached the castle walls they would kill his horse and cut off his head, I armed and mounted my people and rode up the great street, which they were blocking. When they saw me, they let me pass, but they returned and molested my people vilely. I placed two men-at-arms at each post of the castle.

When I consulted the knight Sir Walter de Teye, he said that he could not blame the mutineers, for when the earls of England were in town, they had only received 3 days' pay and were now overdue a month's pay. So my people and I remained on guard at the castle walls all night, and before sunrise Sir John Seton came with 4 valets to my aid. That morning I told Sir Walter to gather all the men-at-arms who had rebelled to meet me at St Nicholas' church. And there, in the presence of Sir Peter Maulee, Sir Robert his brother, and Sir Walter, I asked each gentleman by name, whether knight or esquire, if he would mount his horse and guard the castle with me. All of them replied that they would willingly, and that they had no reason to join in the munity of the foot-soldiers. They then agreed to mount their horses and guard the castle until Friday, but if they received no money by then they would leave the town.

That day the £200 arrived and, on the Thursday morning, I counted it before the sheriff of Northumberland, who had brought it, and paid a share to the garrisons of Roxburgh and Jedburgh. On Friday, I mustered my garrison and paid them. But Sir Walter commanded me to pay the whole sum to the garrison of Berwick and none other, because the letter from you says 'We send you £200 for your garrison' and as the men from Roxburgh and Jedburgh were not in Berwick they should not have a penny of what was sent for me and my men. I replied that you always treated Roxburgh, Jedburgh and Berwick as one, and I showed him your letters from earlier this year. Sir Walter replied that you had done ill in sending me such letters. Therefore I beg you to send me nothing unless it distinctly shows what I am to do.

I have suffered evil and annoyance through this, for in place of Sir Walter getting only £14 14s. he has taken £36 from me, so I have nothing to pay my own people.

BOTHWELL CASTLE



23 September 1299

Edward I commands an exchange of prisoners to happen.

King Edward to Robert of Clifford, the constable of Nottingham Castle: greeting

Instead of paying the ransom for James of Lindsay, my loyal man who has recently been taken prisoner by the Scots in Bothwell Castle, I have consented to exchange this James for Michael of Meigle, a Scottish prisoner who you hold in Nottingham Castle. I therefore command you to carry this out.

Edinburgh: 29 August 1301

Receipt of payment for transporting siege-engines to Bothwell Castle for the English siege.

Payment made to Robert Farnham for the transport of siege-engines from Edinburgh for the assault of Bothwell Castle in August 1301.

2 October 1301

An English earl writes to Edward I to congratulate him on the successful siege of Bothwell Castle.

Henry, earl of Lincoln, to my lord King Edward: greeting.

I write to congratulate you on the good news of the surrender of Bothwell Castle.

CAERLAVEROCK CASTLE



1303

Money paid to the sheriff of Cumberland (NW England) for the costs of 32 Scots captured in Caerlaverock Castle and taken as prisoners to England.

Payment made to William Mulcaster, sheriff of Cumberland, for the expenses of 32 Scots captured in Caerlaverock Castle and taken to Carlisle, of whom 10 were then taken to Appleby [NW England], 10 to Skipton [N Yorkshire] and 12 to Newcastle [NE England].

Between July and November 1306

Records of wages for men living in and defending Caerlaverock Castle: captains and their servants, squires, archers and a commander.

Account of the wages for horses and arms within the walls of Caerlaverock Castle.

William Percy, John of Gaveston, and six of their company, their scutifers [squires], 20 archers of foot, and their one vintemar [commander of 20 men], residing within the castle walls of Caerlaverock by Sir Henry Percy's instruction and direction, then the king's lieutenant in Scotland, from 29 May to 17 July.

For each scutifer [squire] per day: 12d. [about £26 today]

For the vintemar: 4d. per day [about £9 today]

For each archer of foot: 2d. per day. [about £4 today]

Total wages £28 15s. [about £15,500 today].

14 July 1312

An English spy writes to Edward II telling him about Robert the Bruce's Parliament at Ayr and plans to attack England and castles.

My lord, since I left you at York, Sir Robert Bruce has held a Parliament at Ayr and intends to send Sir Edward, his brother, with the greater part of his forces, into England, while he himself attacks the castles of Dumfries, Buittle and Caerlaverock, remaining there and sending his light troops to plunder the North for their support.

DUMBARTON CASTLE



Norham (Northern England): 13 June 1291

Edward I commands the Steward of Scotland to give control of castles over to his knight.

King Edward, writing from Norham, to James, the steward of Scotland: greeting.

With the common agreement of William, bishop of St Andrews, Robert, bishop of Glasgow, John Comyn of Badenoch, and James, steward of Scotland, Guardians of the kingdom of Scotland, and nine named claimants to the throne, I command you to hand over the castles of Dumbarton and Ayr to Sir Nicholas Seagrave.

20 March 1304

Edward I orders the people of Dumbarton to obey their new sheriff, one of Edward's trusted servants.

Edward, king of England, lord of Ireland, and duke of Aquitaine, to the people of the castle, town, and sherifffdom of Dumbarton: greeting.

I have appointed my sworn-man, John of Menteith, as keeper of the castle, town, and sherifffdom. I therefore command that you obey him in everything.

DUMFRIES CASTLE



20 November 1298

Record of the 76 men sent to Dumfries Castle.

Let it be recorded that King Edward has commanded 12 men with armoured horses to stay at Dumfries Castle, and that they shall have among them all 24 of the foot-soldiers at Sir Robert de Clifford's disposal.

Also the 20 crossbowmen that were at Berwick, who were assigned to the said Sir Robert at Durham, and the 6 crossbowmen that the said Sir Robert de Clifford shall place there, whom he took from Lochmaben Castle, and 4 foot soldiers of his own.

Also a master engineer and 4 carpenters. Also a smith and his lad, an engineer and 2 masons.

The total amount shall be 76 persons. Specific provisions are provided to last from now until 30 June next year.

20 November 1298

Record of the weapons sent to Dumfries Castle.

Let it be recorded that Sir Robert shall place 2 siege-engines in Dumfries Castle, 2 catapults, 2 windlass crossbows, and 2 two-foot crossbows. Also, from the bishop of Carlisle, 1 windlass crossbow, 2 two-foot crossbows, and as many quarrels [crossbow bolts] as possible.

31 July 1300

Record of the food sent to Dumfries Castle as supplies.

Let it be recorded that Ralph of Manton, keeper of King Edward's Wardrobe, released to Sir Arnold Guille of Pugey, constable of Dumfries Castle, for the fortification of the castle at Dumfries, these provisions:

- 6 loaves of bread
- 2 casks of flour
- 1½ casks of wine
- 2 bushels of salt
- 2940 pounds of onions
- 150 salted fish, which are called Hakes
- 4 bushels of hay
- 6 pounds of wax
- 20 beef cattle
- 5 quarts of malted barley
- 2 quarts of beans
- 6 quarts of oats
- 2 quarts of salt
- 30 bacons
- 2900 herring
- 200 salted fish

28 August 1300

Record of the food sent to Dumfries Castle as supplies.

Let it be recorded that John of Droxford, keeper of the King's Wardrobe, delivered at Dumfries to Sir Arnold Guille de Pogey, constable of Dumfries Castle, for the fortification of that castle, through Sir John of Merk, these provisions:

- 10 casks of flour
- 5 casks of wine
- 30 beef-cattle
- 80 mutton-sheep
- 6 deer
- 1000 herring
- 22 salmon

October 1300

A letter telling the keeper of Berwick castle that Edward I and his son, Prince Edward, have gone to Dumfries Castle to build a fence round the castle to protect it.

Henry of Empingham and John of Carleton, clerks, to Richard of Bromsgrove, the keeper of Berwick Castle: greeting.

We write to inform you that the king has gone to Dumfries to build his peel [a palisade or fence formed of stakes] and to reinforce the castle. And his son has gone with him.

1 May 1303

The keeper of Dumfries and Lochmaben Castles writes to the king's clerk ordering him to pay wages of the men in the castles.

John de Botecourt, keeper of Lochmaben and Dumfries castles, to James of Dalilegh, the king's clerk in that area: greeting.

I write to you on the king's behalf, ordering you to pay the wages of 50 men-at-arms (of which 6 are knights, 26 crossbowmen, 80 archers, 2 workmen, 2 porters, 2 carpenters and 2 artillery surveyors) from 1 May 1303 for as long as they stay in the castles of Dumfries and Lochmaben, where they have been ordered to remain.

13 January 1304

Receipt for payment of crossbows and bolts for Dumfries Castle.

Receipt by John de Botecourt, keeper of the castles of Lochmaben and Dumfries, for £10 [about £5,000 today] received through his representative, John de Bry, from James of Dalilegh, the king's clerk, as payment for crossbows and bolts sold to James for replenishing the castle of Dumfries.

EDINBURGH CASTLE



Norham (Northern England): 13 June 1291

Edward I tells the keeper of Edinburgh Castle to give control of the castle over to Edward's appointed official.

King Edward, writing from Norham, to William Sinclair, keeper of Edinburgh Castle: greeting.

With the common agreement of William, bishop of St Andrews, Robert, bishop of Glasgow, John Comyn of Badenoch, and James, steward of Scotland, Guardians of the kingdom of Scotland, and nine named claimants to the throne, I command you to hand over custody of Maidens' Castle [Edinburgh Castle] to Ralph Basset.

25 November 1298

Edward I puts one of his knights in charge of Edinburgh Castle and county.

I, King Edward, have granted to my sworn-man, John of Kingston, knight, my castle and the county of Edinburgh, to keep as long as it shall please me.

And Walter of Huntercombe is ordered to make sure that the castle, with its armaments and provisions, and the county, with rolls and writs and all other things, is handed over to the keeping of Sir John.

And the bishops, abbots, priors, earl, barons, knights, and all other tenants of the castle and county of Edinburgh are ordered to be attentive and obedient to Sir John.

25 November 1298

Edward I writes to one of his officials telling him that he has ordered the keeper of Edinburgh Castle to attack the Scots. Edward orders Simon to help the keeper in his attack by going to him with 20 soldiers on horses and obeying his orders.

King Edward to his loyal man, Simon Fraser: greeting.

I write to inform you that I have entrusted my loyal man, John of Kingston, constable of Edinburgh Castle and sheriff of Edinburgh, to make a raid in Edinburgh upon the Scots, which he cannot do simply with his own company of men without more help.

I therefore command that when the constable sends word to you, you should go to him with 20 armed horses, and do whatever he tells you, for my own sake.

**Between November and December 1302
Records of the soldiers and staff staying in Edinburgh Castle.**

In the garrison of Edinburgh:

Sir John of Kingston, constable of Edinburgh: 1 knight and 9 other men-at-arms, for whom he is allowed a fixed sum of money by the king.

12 other named soldiers at 10d. each daily [about £22 today]

2 named sergeants at arms at 12d. [about £26 today]

Those who are performing service in return for the lands they hold in Scotland, providing men at their own cost:

Robert fitz Walter, plus 2 men-at-arms

Sir John of Kingston, plus 3 men-at-arms

Sir Robert de Thony, plus 2 men-at-arms

Sir Peter de Malo Lacu, plus 3 men-at-arms

Sir William de Cantilupe, plus 2 men-at-arms (but they have not come)

Sir Robert de Scales,

Sir Walter de Mouncy, plus 1 man-at-arms

Sir John Merk, plus 1 man-at-arms

Also 2 men-at-arms from Sir Adam de Welle, who stay in the castle of Yester and will ride in Sir John of Kingston's company under his command.

Also, an attillator [maker of arrowheads], a carpenter, a smith and his lad, a watchman, 20 crossbowmen, and 20 foot-soldiers, taking daily wages as before at the time of the truce.

ROXBURGH CASTLE



Norham (Northern England): 13 June 1291

Edward I commands control of Berwick Castle be given to his steward.

King Edward, writing from Norham, to William Soules, keeper of Roxburgh Castle: greeting.

With the common agreement of William, bishop of St Andrews, Robert, bishop of Glasgow, John Comyn of Badenoch, and James, steward of Scotland, Guardians of the kingdom of Scotland, and nine named claimants to the throne, I command you to hand over Roxburgh Castle to William Grandson.

Berwick: 18 November 1292

Edward I writes to the keeper of Roxburgh and other Castles, telling him to hand over his castles to the new king of Scots, John Balliol.

Edward, king of England, lord of Ireland, duke of Aquitaine, and lord-superior of the kingdom of Scotland, to Brian fitz Alan, governor of the castles of Forfar, Dundee, Jedburgh, and Roxburgh: greeting.

John Balliol recently appeared before me in my Parliament at Berwick-upon-Tweed, and argued in court that the kingdom of Scotland should be awarded to him, and that possession of it should be given, by right of succession, to him as next heir of Margaret, daughter of the king of Norway, princess of Scotland, and deceased granddaughter of the late Alexander III, the last king of Scotland.

I have heard and understood the petitions and pleas both of John Balliol and of other claimants to the kingdom, and have carefully examined those petitions and arguments. And I have found John Balliol to be the next heir of Margaret with regard to the succession of the kingdom of Scotland.

For this reason, I have handed over the kingdom of Scotland and possession of it to John Balliol, while retaining my own rights and the rights of my heirs.

I therefore command you to give to John Balliol or his representatives, without delay, possession of the castles of Forfar, Dundee, Jedburgh, and Roxburgh, with all that goes with them, together with all other things entrusted to you by my signature.

About 12 October 1295

Edward I lets the bishop of Carlisle take possession of Berwick, Roxburgh and Jedburgh from the king of Scots.

I, Edward, king of England, authorise John, bishop of Carlisle, to receive from John, king of Scots, the castles and towns of Berwick, Roxburgh and Jedburgh, for the security of myself, my realm and my other lands.

About 16 October 1295

Edward I promises to return Berwick, Roxburgh and Jedburgh to John Balliol once his war with France is over.

I, Edward, king of England, promise to return the towns and castles of Berwick, Roxburgh and Jedburgh to the king of Scots, John Balliol, as soon as my war with France is over.

Tuesday 21 October 1298

List of men based in Roxburgh Castle.

Record of the men assigned to stay in Roxburgh castle: 44 men at arms, each with two grooms, 20 crossbowmen and 92 archers, 4 carpenters, 2 smiths, and 1 supervisor of weapons, and any remaining officers according to the keeper's needs.

Tuesday 21 October 1298

List of supplies found in Roxburgh Castle on this date.

Grain in the granary: 2 quarters

Grain from the county of Northumbria: 60 quarters

Sheaves of corn in the castle: estimated at 9 quarters

Wheat in the granary: 9 quarters

Wheat in sheaves: estimated at 47 quarters

Grain from the monastery of Kelso: 1 quarter

Wheat from the monastery of Kelso: 17 quarters

Grain and wheat from the lady de Vescy at Sprouston: 80 quarters

Oats in the castle granary: 60 quarters

Oats in sheaves in the castle: estimated at 70 quarters

Oats from the monastery of Kelso in sheaves: estimated at 14 quarters

Oats from Berwick, transported by the king's horses and carts: 25 quarters

Mixed-grain from Berwick: 100 quarters

Beans and peas from Berwick: 30 quarters

The sum total both of the grain and the other cereals for the provisioning of the castle (both those which were threshed already and those found in un-threshed sheaves within the castle): 534 quarters

6 casks of wine were delivered for the provisioning of the castle.

100 oxen and cows were delivered for the provisioning of the castle, of which 15 were delivered to the garrison of Jedburgh on Roxburgh castle keeper's instruction.

Also in the castle:

Herring from the old supplies

Herring from Berwick

Stock-fish from Aberdeen

Salt from the old supplies

Iron from the old supplies

Iron from Berwick

Sea-coal from Berwick

36 bolts for crossbows, priced 14s. 2d. in total [about £380 today]

1 September 1302

List of soldiers based at Roxburgh Castle.

Sir William Latimer records that he and 20 men-at-arms are ready to ride out from Roxburgh Castle when necessary to various parts of Scotland. These men are:

Sir William himself and 3 men for his own lands in Scotland,

3 men from Sir Hugh Despenser for his lands in Scotland,

3 men from Sir Robert Hastings for his lands in Scotland,

2 men from Edmund Deyncourt for his lands in Scotland,

2 men from Sir William le Vavasour for his lands in Scotland,

1 man from Sir John Latimer for his lands in Scotland,

2 men from Richard Lovell for his lands in Scotland,

1 man from Sir Stephen Depham for his lands in Scotland.

Westminster: 10 April 1305

Record of money owed to the keeper of Roxburgh Castle.

Record that £130 9s. 10½d. [about £79,500 today] is owed to Sir Robert Hastings, banneret and keeper of Roxburgh Castle, for debts of wages for his knights and squires, and for the restoration of his horses lost in battle.

Roxburgh: January 1307

The sheriff of Roxburgh is given money to repair Roxburgh Castle and town.

The sheriff of Roxburgh acknowledges a receipt from the chamberlain of £30 [about £18,000 today] to supply the castle and repair the ruined houses.

Westminster: 21 March 1310

Edward II makes Henry Beaumont keeper of Roxburgh Castle for life.

King Edward has drawn up an official document, committing the castle and county of Roxburgh to Henry Beaumont for life.

Westminster: 30 March 1310

Edward II commands the keeper of Roxburgh Castle to exchange Robert Bruce's sister, Mary, a prisoner in the castle, for Walter Comyn, who has been captured by the Scots.

Edward, king of England, to Henry Beaumont, keeper of Roxburgh castle: greeting.

At the request of Geoffrey Moubray and other friends of Walter Comyn, who is a prisoner with the Scots, I command you to exchange Mary Bruce [sister of Robert the Bruce], a Scottish prisoner in your keeping, for Walter.

Windsor: 16 November 1312

Edward II makes William de Betoigne Gatekeeper of Roxburgh Castle for life.

Edward, king of England, to my chancellor: greeting.

I write to inform you that I have appointed William de Betoigne, in return for his good service to me, Gatekeeper of Roxburgh Castle for life. I order you to issue letters under my Great Seal in William's favour.

STIRLING CASTLE



11 February 1290

The Guardians of Scotland tell the royal finance department to pay the sheriff of Stirling what he is owed for being sheriff and also money for a stonemason to work on restoring Stirling Castle.

William and Robert, bishops of St Andrews and Glasgow, John Comyn, and James the Steward of Scotland, Guardians of the Realm of Scotland, to the chancellor of Scotland and the other keepers of the royal accounts: greeting.

We command you to allow expenses to be paid to a stonemason for the new building works at Stirling Castle.

Norham (Northern England): 13 June 1291

Edward I commands control of Berwick Castle be given to his steward.

King Edward, writing from Norham, to Patrick Graham, the sheriff of Stirling: greeting.

With the common agreement of William, bishop of St Andrews, Robert, bishop of Glasgow, John Comyn of Badenoch, and James, steward of Scotland, Guardians of the kingdom of Scotland, and nine named claimants to the throne, I command you to hand over Stirling Castle to Norman Darcy.

Between May and October 1301

Record of payment to a surgeon.

Payment made to master Roger Causcy, surgeon, for healing foot-soldiers of the garrison of Stirling fighting for the king and recently wounded.

Between 1304 and 1306

The keeper of Stirling Castle asks Edward I for money to repair the castle gate.

William Bisset, keeper of Stirling Castle, to my lord king, Edward, and his council: greeting.

I inform you that the gate of Stirling Castle is a great deal broken. I therefore ask for some money to repair it.

Between January and April 1308

Receipt of payment to a carpenter, mason, engineer, a bow-maker, a smith and a watchman going to Stirling Castle. (From the accounts of the sheriff of Northumberland)

Payment made to the following men going from Northumberland to the garrison of Stirling Castle in the October past [1307]:

a carpenter

a mason

an engineer

a bowyer [someone who makes bows]

a smith

a watchman

Total paid: 29 shillings, 6 pence [about £660 today]

TURNBERRY CASTLE



Ayr: October 1301

The keeper of Ayr Castle and the sheriff of Ayr beg Edward I for protection against the Scots.

Montesin de Noielan, constable of Ayr Castle, and Edmund of Mauley, sheriff of Ayr, to our lord king Edward of England: greeting.

We inform you that on Tuesday 3 October the Scots were in Carrick at the castle of Turnberry with 400 soldiers. And within these eight days they wished to attack Ayr Castle and injure the country against your peace.

We therefore beg you to send aid to us quickly!

URQUHART CASTLE



25 July 1297

The keeper of Urquhart Castle tells Edward I of Andrew Murray's siege of Urquhart Castle. He also praises the Countess of Ross for her support.

The constable of Urquhart to my lord, King Edward: greeting.

Since some evil-minded people had joined Andrew Murray and Alexander Pilchys at the castle of Avoch in Ross, Sir Reginald le Cheyne wrote asking me to meet him at Inverness on the king's business on the Sunday after Ascension Day.

As I was returning to Urquhart Castle after the day's business, Andrew Murray and Alexander Pilchys with their accomplices wounded and took me prisoner and also another man from Lovat, together with 18 horses.

On the Monday morning, Andrew and Alexander besieged Urquhart castle, and the Countess of Ross sent a squire to me to say this was not her doing, offering assistance but also advising me to surrender, which I refused to do.

The squire departed, leaving Andrew and his army, which included the burgesses of Inverness. I then saw the Countess's army, which she had sent to my aid under her son's command. I met and dismissed a messenger from the besiegers, and I received help from the Countess's son in provisioning the castle.

In a night assault William Puer and Richard, my son, were killed, as well as Sir Alan. The besiegers then drew away and went to the castles of Avoch and Balvenie and the woods there.

I praise the Countess highly for her assistance, and beg that you will release her husband, and her son joins her in this request.

25 July 1297

The keeper of Urquhart castle begs Edward I to release a man called Cristin from prison.

The constable of Urquhart castle to my lord, King Edward: greeting.

I inform you that a noble called John del Ard (who I am indebted to for his actions in protecting my own safety and the lives of my children) has a son called Cristin at Corffe Castle who was put in prison there because he was one of the earl of Ross's followers.

I beg the king to send this son, Cristin, to my assistance at Urquhart Castle, as his appearance there will help win the country to your side and gain your favour with the local Scots.

If this does not please you, I beg you to keep Cristin in your court for his safety.