

Winchester Castle

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Winchester Castle, is a castle in England in the city of Winchester, in the county of Hampshire, built in 1067. Only the Great Hall exists now; it houses a museum of the history of Winchester.

Contents

- 1 The Great Hall
- 2 The Castle in history
- 3 The Castle today
- 4 See also
- 5 Sources

The Great Hall

Between 1222–1235, Henry III added the Great Hall, built to a "double cube" design, measuring 110' by 55' by 55'. The Great Hall is built of flint with stone dressings; originally it had lower walls and a roof with dormer windows. In their place were added the tall two-light windows with early plate tracery. Extensions to the castle were made by Edward II. In 1873 the roof of the Great hall was renewed.

An imitation Arthurian Round Table hangs in the Great Hall. The table was originally constructed in the 13th century, and repainted in its present form for Henry VIII, around the edge of the table are the names of King Arthur's knights.

Behind the Great Hall is a re-creation of a medieval garden called Queen Eleanor's Garden.

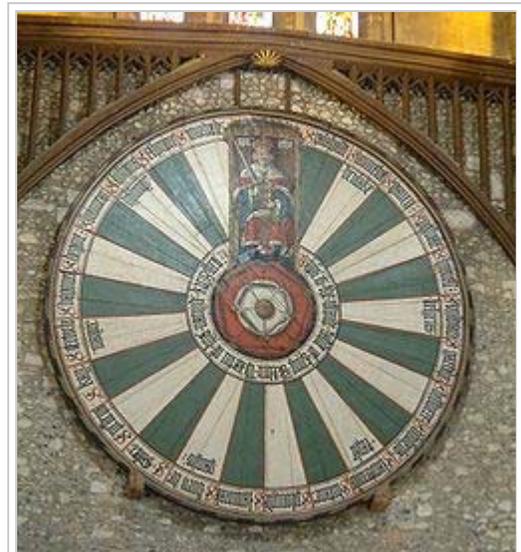
The Castle in history

In 1302, Edward I and his second wife, Margaret of France, narrowly escaped death when the royal apartments of the castle were destroyed by fire.

Margaret of York, daughter of King Edward IV, was born here on 10 April 1472.

On November 17, 1603 Sir Walter Raleigh went on trial for treason for his supposed part in the Main Plot in the converted Great Hall.

The castle was used by the Royalist Cavaliers in the English Civil War, eventually falling to Parliamentary Roundheads in 1646. Oliver Cromwell then ordered the castle's destruction.



The "Winchester Round Table" in the Great Hall, dendrochronology dating has placed it at 1275.

In the 17th century, Charles II planned to build King's House adjoining the site, commissioning Christopher Wren to design a royal palace to rival the Palace of Versailles. The project was abandoned by James II.

Another notorious trial took place in the Great Hall, on 15 March 1953; the 3rd Baron Montagu of Beaulieu Edward Montagu along with Michael Pitt-Rivers and Peter Wildeblood went on trial on charges of having committed specific acts of indecency.

The Castle today

Since 1889 Winchester Castle has been the seat of Hampshire County Council whose offices neighbour the Great Hall. Nearby, the excavated remains of the round tower with Sally ports and Guardrobes in the medieval city wall can also be seen.

Winchester Castle was also the name of a local football team before merging with Winchester City F.C. in 2002.

See also

- Three Castles Path

Sources

- History of the Castle on Britain Express

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