

WELCOME TO EXETER

Some facts about Exeter

- The name Exeter originates from the Anglo-Saxon name ***Escanceaster***, which combined the river name ***Exe*** with the Old English suffix "**-ceaster**," meaning a fortified town or Roman fortress.
- The river ***Exe*** itself is a development of the Celtic word "***Isca***," meaning "***the water***". The Romans had previously called the settlement ***Isca Dumnoniorum***, or "the fortified town on the river Isca," a name that was later anglicised into Exeter.

Some facts about Exeter

- Population is ~130,000, with around 30,000 students at the University of Exeter.
- Chris Martin (Coldplay) – (one of) the greatest artists is from Exeter.
- The Wyvern is the Exeter's mythical dragon symbol. You can spot it on coats of arms and plaques around the city.



Exeter Cathedral

- Began in 1050 when the bishop's seat moved from Crediton to Exeter.
- Mostly constructed between 1112–1400 (Norman and Gothic styles).
- Holds the longest uninterrupted Gothic vaulted ceiling in the world (96m / 315ft).





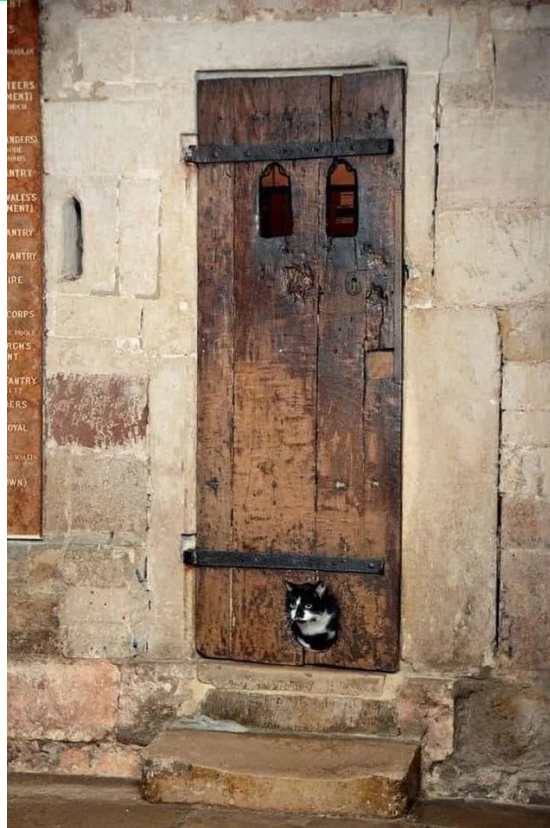


Exeter Cathedral



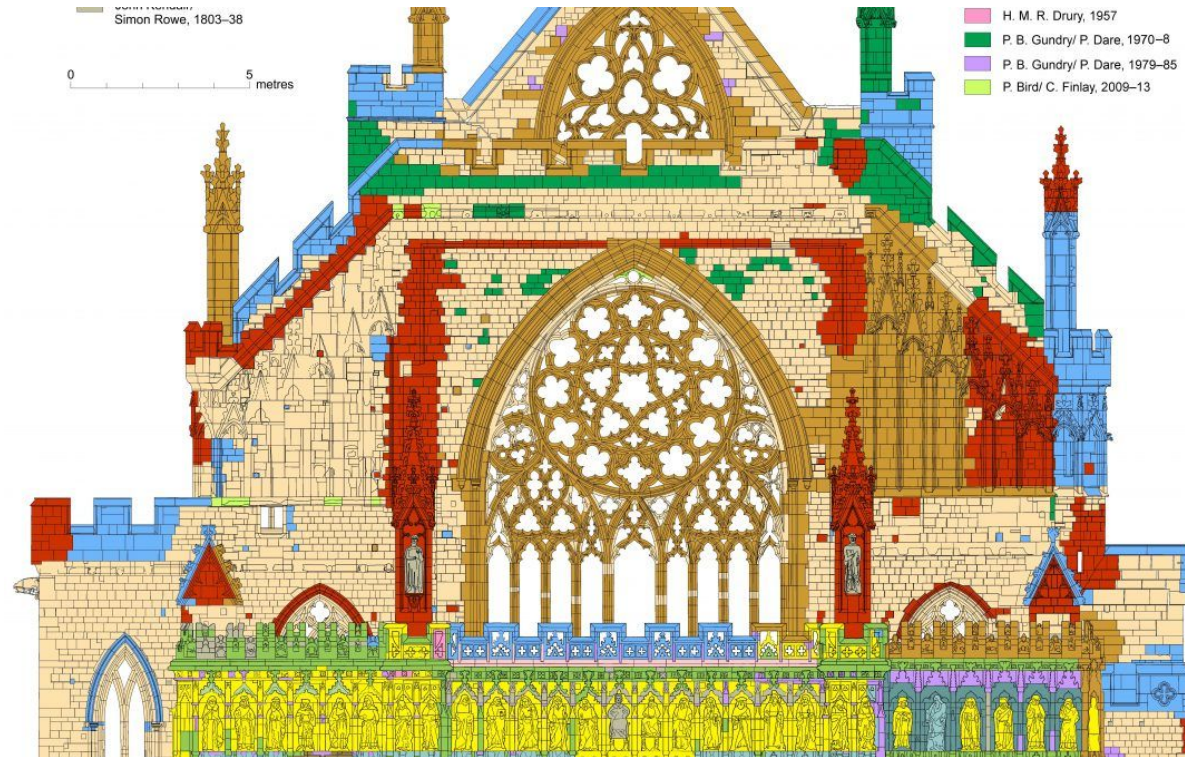
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Exeter Cathedral



The 14th-century door, likely the world's oldest cat flap

Exeter Cathedral



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Exeter Cathedral



Richard Hooker (1554–1600)

Born in Exeter, he became one of England's greatest theologians, called the "Father of Anglicanism."



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The Baedeker Raids (1942)

- After the RAF bombing of Lübeck (March 1942), Germany retaliated.
- Nazi leaders ordered raids on cities chosen for their **cultural and historic value**, not military targets.
- Selection came from the **Baedeker travel guides**, which rated cities by beauty and heritage.
- Targets included Exeter, Bath, Norwich, York.



The Exeter Blitz – 4 May 1942

- Exeter attacked several times; the worst raid was 4 May 1942.
- 40 acres of the city centre destroyed.
- Thousands made homeless.
- Medieval High Street, churches, and historic buildings lost.

https://www.exetermemories.co.uk/em/_events/blitzphotos.php



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Exeter Riddle Sculpture

- Created in 2005 by artist Michael Fairfax.
- Inspired by the **Exeter Book – a 10th-century manuscript of Old English poetry and riddles**, once kept in the Cathedral library.
- The sculpture's text is carved in both Old English and modern translation.
- Try to “solve” the riddles

<https://oldenglishpoetry.camden.rutgers.edu/exeter-book-riddles/>

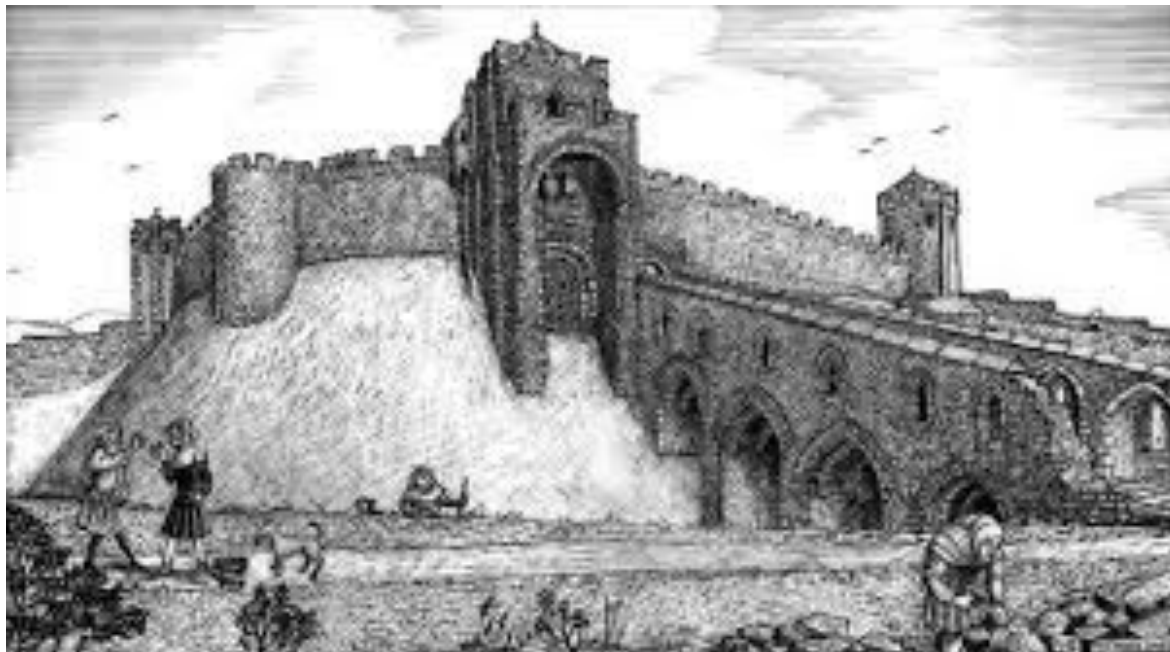


Rougemont Castle

- The first building worthy of the name of castle was built by King Athelstan, and then destroyed by the Danes in 1003.
- The current castle is built by William the Conqueror after the city's rebellion in 1068.
- Named Rougemont ("red hill") after the local red sandstone used.



Rougemont Castle



<https://www.exetercastle.uk/history/>

The Last Witches in England

- In 1682, three women were accused of witchcraft.
- They were said to have bewitched local villagers.
- Despite flimsy evidence (mainly gossips), they were found guilty.
- All three were hanged at Heavitree



The Last Witches in England

- In 1685, a woman named Alice Molland was executed at Heavitree for witchcraft.
- Very little is known about her trial or the accusations.
- She is generally regarded as the last person executed for witchcraft in England.



Gandy Street

- Part of the city's Roman and medieval street plan.
- J.K. Rowling, who studied at Exeter, is thought to have drawn inspiration from Gandy Street for **Diagon Alley** in Harry Potter.



Inclusive Professionals
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Royal Albert Memorial Museum

- Founded in 1868 as Exeter's main museum and art gallery.
- Awarded UK Museum of the Year (2012) after major refurbishment.
- Admission is free



Guildhall Shopping Centre

- Site was originally the Higher Market, built in the 19th century as part of Exeter's market quarter.
- In the 1920s, part of the Higher Market became the Civic Hall, after the Victoria Hall burned down in 1919.

Short video from 1936

<https://www.exetermemories.co.uk/em/video/exeter36.php>



Guildhall Shopping Centre

- Redeveloped in the 1970s under the Golden Heart Project → demolition of many historic buildings.
- Preserved original elements of Exeter's history:
 - Higher Market façade (Queen Street) retained as main entrance
 - St Pancras Church (11th century) inside the precinct
 - Roman city wall and medieval remains integrated into the site



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https://www.exetermemories.co.uk/em/_places/guildhallcentre.php

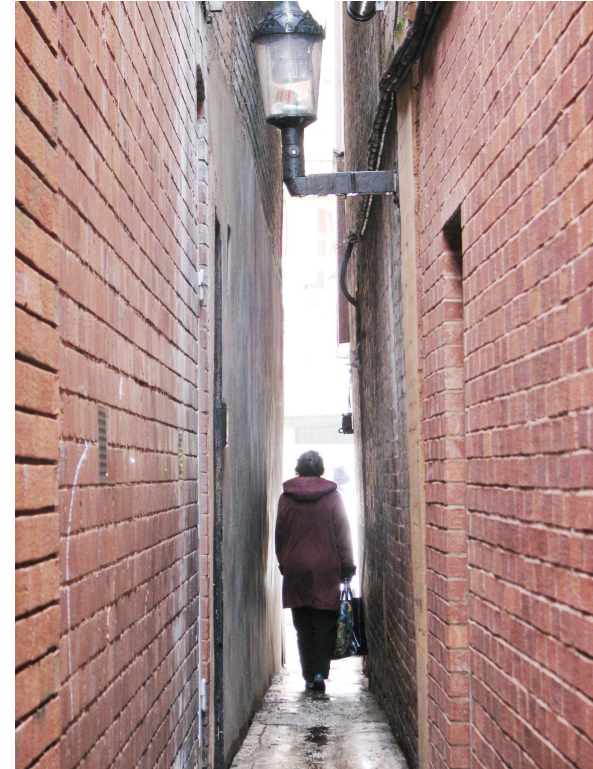
Exeter Guildhall

- The oldest municipal building in England still in use.
- Current building dates mainly from the 15th century (though civic use here goes back to at least the 12th century).
- Served as the centre of Exeter's civic government, law courts, and prison.



Parliament Street

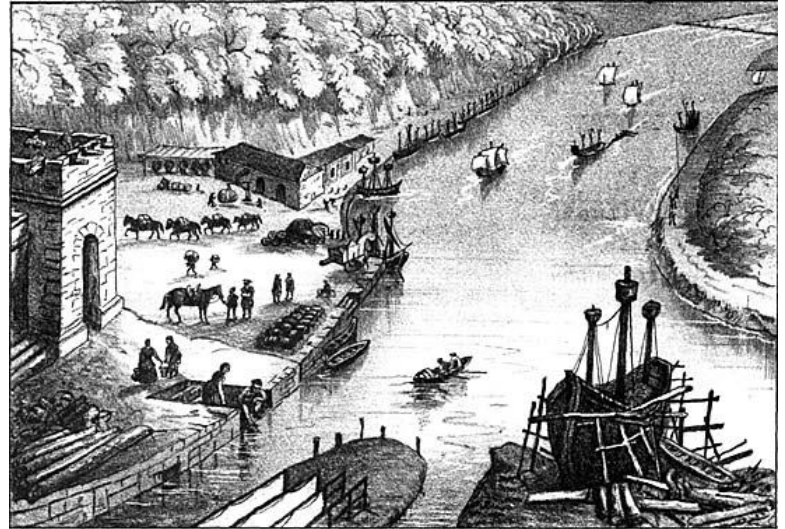
- (One of) the narrowest streets in the world: 64 cm at narrowest
- Built in the 14th century, originally called Small Lane
- Renamed Parliament Street in 1832 as a local joke, mocking the “narrowness” of the parliamentary Reform Act
- “Classified” as a street because it has both street lighting and at least one front door opening onto it



Quay

- Historically Exeter's commercial heart: trade recorded here since Roman times.
- Wool and cloth trade made the city wealthy in the Middle Ages.
- In the 1560s, Exeter citizens built one of England's first ship canals to bypass Topsham, which controlled river access.
- Warehouses and cellars stored goods from across Europe and beyond.

<https://www.exetermemories.co.uk/em/quay.php>



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Quay

Redeveloped as a leisure and cultural quarter, with cafés, antique shops, crafts, and watersports.



Exe Bridge

- Built around 1200 across the River Exe, one of the earliest stone arch bridges in England.
- Originally nearly 600 feet (180 m) long.
- Lined with chapels and houses, making it feel like a street over the river.
- Served as the main western approach into Exeter for centuries, remained in use until the 1770s.



Exe Bridge



<https://www.exetermemories.co.uk/em/bridges/exebridge.php>

The House That Moved

- Timber-framed Tudor house, built around 1450.
- In 1961, road widening for a new inner bypass threatened it with demolition.
- Instead, the entire building was moved 70 metres on rollers to its current site on West Street.

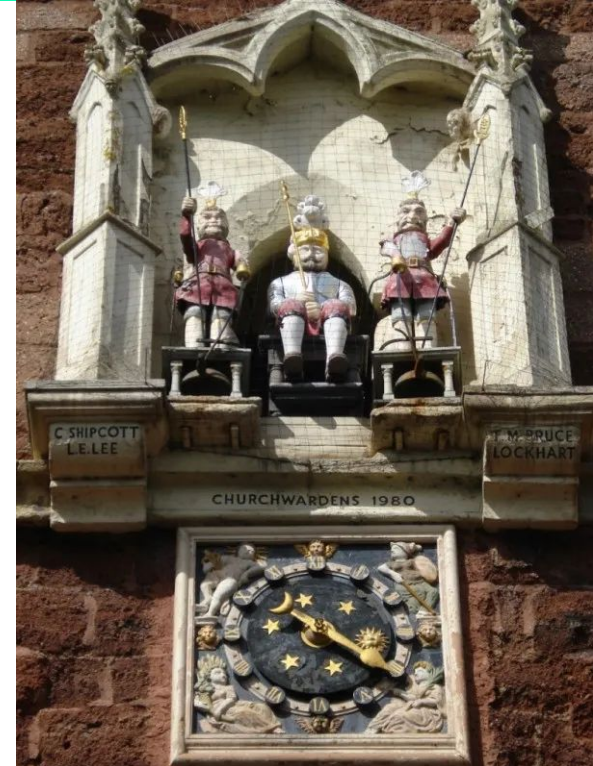
<https://www.exetermemories.co.uk/em/housethatmoved.php>



Matthew the Miller Clock

- Installed in the early 1600s on Exeter Guildhall, moved to St Mary Steps later in the 17th century.
- Three painted figures strike the quarter hours with hammers.
- Central figure known as Matthew the Miller, flanked by two guards.

<https://exetercivicsociety.org.uk/about-us/exeter-history/the-matthew-the-miller-clock/>



Stepcote Hill

- One of Exeter's oldest surviving streets.
- Steep, cobbled lane dating back to the medieval period.
- Lined with timber-framed houses from the 15th–17th centuries.

<https://www.exetermemories.co.uk/em/streets/stepcotehill.php>



The Ship Inn

- Dates from the 16th century; timber-framed Tudor building.
- One of Exeter's oldest pubs
- Sir Francis Drake is said to have drunk here in the late 1500s while planning voyages.

https://www.exetermemories.co.uk/em/pubs/ship_inn.php



The Imperial – Wetherspoon

- Originally built in **1810** as the Imperial Hotel.
- Converted into a Wetherspoon pub in 1994, retaining its ornate **Victorian orangery and grand glass dome**.
- Named CAMRA Exeter & East Devon **“Urban Pub of the Year, 2024”**
- One of the “fanciest” Wetherspoon pubs in the UK.



**Thank you for being
with us!**