

Tower of London history

Chronology

From AD50	The walls of the Roman city of Londinium are built by the river on the site the Tower now occupies.
1066	William the Conqueror establishes the Tower to keep hostile Londoners at bay.
1080s	Work on the White Tower is under way.
1101	Ranulf Flambard, the first known prisoner at the Tower, makes a daring escape.
1251	A polar bear joins the Tower menagerie.
1275-79	Edward I build St Thomas's Tower and the watergate now known as Traitors' Gate.
1279	The London Mint moves inside the Tower.
1360	John II 'the Good' of France lives in great splendour as a prisoner.
1381	Simon of Sudbury, Archbishop of Canterbury, is dragged out of the Tower and murdered on Tower Hill during the Peasants' Revolt.
1389	Geoffrey Chaucer, clerk of works, oversees completion of Tower Wharf. Chaucer is better known for having written The Canterbury Tales.
1483	The Princes in the Tower disappear, presumed murdered.
1485	Henry VII found the body of Yeoman Warders or 'Beefeaters'.
1533	Anne Boleyn's coronation procession begins from her lavish new rooms in the Tower.
1536	Anne Boleyn is beheaded by a swordsman brought especially from France.
1554	Lady Jane Grey, the 'nine days queen', is executed. Princess Elizabeth, later Elizabeth I, is imprisoned in the Tower.
1605	Guy Fawkes is tortured at the Tower following the failed Gunpowder Plot to assassinate James I and blow up Parliament.
1671	Colonel Blood attempts to steal the Crown Jewels.
1696	Isaac Newton is appointed Warden of the Mint.
1780	The last hanging takes place on Tower Hill.
1812	The Mint moves out of the Tower to a new factory on Tower Hill.

1826	Duke of Wellington becomes Constable of the Tower and appoints Yeoman Warders based on their exemplary military service.
1835	Tower Menagerie closes. The animals are transferred to the new London Zoo.
1841	Crown Jewels are saved from fire.
1850	Koh-i-nûr diamond is presented to Queen Victoria.
1941	Nazi Deputy Fuhrer Rudolph Hess is held at the Tower.
1952	East End London gangsters Ronnie and Reggie Kray are held at the Tower.

What is history?