

Exeter Cathedral, the Cathedral Church of Saint Peter in Exeter: Building timeline and significant historic events

Pre Conquest

	AD 49	Roman General Vespasian, with 2 nd Augustan Legion, established 42-acre military fortress next to existing iron-age settlement of the Dumnonii tribe.
	55	Roman bath house built in what is now Cathedral Yard, reckoned to be earliest Roman stone building in Britain.
	c. 70	The 2 nd legion leaves for South Wales, leaving the civil-administered town of Isca Dumnoniorum.
	c. 120	First city defences, an earth bank, erected.
	c. 200	Earth bank replaced by stone city walls.
	400s	Town becomes deserted and derelict after the Romans leave. The first Christian burials take place in Cathedral Yard and after 450 town is known as Moncton. Further Christian burials take place here during the 6 th century.
	658	Anglo-Saxons established in Exeter, then called Isca Chester.
	670	Abbey of St Peter and St Mary, later to become the minster, founded in Cathedral Yard by King Cenwealh. 680 St Boniface leaves Crediton for his education in Exeter.
	800s	879, Danes capture Exeter, 877 Danes expelled by King Alfred and city defences improved. C.860 first coins printed in Exeter.
	c.900	The Exeter Book created, oldest known book of English literature.
	928	King Athelstan expels the remaining Celtic people from the British quarter of Exeter and renames the town Exancaester.
	1000s	1002, Exeter raided by Vikings under Sweyn and minster burned down and church records destroyed. 1019, as a penance Sweyn rebuilds the burned-out minster. 1046 Leofric made Bishop of Crediton and Cornwall, then in 1050 he is enthroned as first Bishop of Exeter.
	Post Conquest	
	1068	King William besieges and takes Exeter and begins to build Rougemont Castle.
	1072	Death of Bishop Leofric, he leaves 66 books for the cathedral's library

	1114	Work on new cathedral begins, under Warelwast, a nephew of King William.
	1133	The partially complete Norman cathedral is consecrated, up to the West end of the choir. Cathedral completed and fully consecrated by c. 1160
	1225	Serlo appointed first Dean of Exeter.
	1270	Work started on the cathedral Lady Chapel.
	1280	Work on rebuilding the cathedral in Gothic style began under Bishop Quinel. In 1286 the Cathedral Close was created, surrounded by a 12ft high wall with seven gates.
	1327	Work begins on the cathedral West front. Library collection reaches over 230 volumes.
	1369	The partially rebuilt cathedral dedicated on November 21 st .
	1400	Present cathedral completed, with longest uninterrupted vaulted ceiling in England.
	1412	New reading room built over the cloister.
	1506	Catalogue records over 530 titles in the cathedral library.
	The Reformation	
	1536-41	Not being a monastic institution, the cathedral was relatively unscathed during the period of the dissolution.
	1549	Exeter besieged during the Prayer Book rebellion.
	1602	Cathedral library is diminished as 81 volumes are presented to the Bodleian Library.
	1642	Exeter under siege from royalist forces as the English Civil War breaks out.
	1657	Lady Chapel converted to use as library by Robert Vilvaine, after destruction of the cloisters.
	Modern Times	
	1820	Library moved from the Lady Chapel to the Chapter House.
	1939	Most significant books and documents from the cathedral library are evacuated to a place of safety.
	1942	The Cathedral receives a direct hit during the 4 th May Baedeker Raids on Exeter and other historic centres. The cathedral was relatively unscathed compared to the

		casualties and destruction in the city overall. All bomb damage to the cathedral, centred on St James's Chapel has since been restored
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	Roman
	Saxon
	Norman
	Gothic
	Tudor
	Stuart