



A Brief History of Dartmouth

(accompanies the Explorers Trail)



Dartmouth History Research Group, 2025

1049	<p>Earliest historical record of “Dartmouth”</p> <p>Swein Godwinson, brother in law of King Edward the Confessor, has been exiled for abducting and marrying Abbess Eadgifu of Leominster (a nun). His lands have been divided between his brother Harold and his cousin Beorn Estrithson. Swein returns to England and wants his lands back, but Harold and Beorn resist. Swein tricks and captures Beorn in Bosham, Sussex. He is sent by ship to Dartmouth, where he is killed and secretly buried. When the murder is discovered Swein is exiled again. Harold reburies Beorn in Winchester.</p>	<p>Edward (the Confessor) 1042-1066 Harold 1066</p>
1086	<p>Townstal recorded in Domesday Book</p> <p>Estate of “Dunestal” (Townstal) held by “Ralph”, under Walter of Douai, one of King William’s tenants in chief. Neighbouring estate of “Stoc” (Stoke Fleming) held by “Ludo”, also under Walter of Douai. No reference to “Dartmouth” as such.</p>	<p>William I (the Conqueror) 1066-1087</p>
1147	<p>Dartmouth becomes a crusade muster point</p> <p>Dartmouth harbour is the pre-agreed assembly point for 150-200 vessels from the Rhineland, Brabant-Limbourg, Flanders, Boulogne, Normandy, Scotland, and eastern and southern England. The fleet departs on 23 May. Stopping in Portugal, they help King Afonso Henriques take Lisbon, ruled by the Almoravid dynasty of North Africa.</p>	<p>Stephen 1135-1154</p>
1154	<p>Dartmouth begins to grow</p> <p>Due to Henry’s marriage to Eleanor of Aquitaine, England forms part of the cross-Channel “Angevin Empire”, with much of France. With this stimulus, and that of the crusades, Dartmouth begins to grow as a port and commercial centre, around two small settlements, Clifton and Hardness, at the river’s edge where the estates of Townstal and Stoke Fleming meet. In 1166 Townstal is held by William “son of Stephen of Townstal”; Stoke is held by “Richard son of Hlud” (probably descended from Ludo of 1086).</p>	<p>Henry II 1154-1189</p>
1189/90	<p>Further crusade musters</p> <p>Fleets from northern Germany, the Rhineland, Flanders and England assemble in Dartmouth in May 1189 for the Third Crusade, to relieve the Siege of Acre. On coming to the throne Richard I takes over Henry II’s plans. Another large fleet assembles in Dartmouth, leaving in April 1190 to join fleets from western France. King Richard travels via Dover to Calais and then through France to meet the fleets in Sicily.</p>	<p>Richard I (the Lionheart) 1189-1199</p>
1192	<p>Earliest written record of St Petrox church</p> <p>St Petrox is referenced as a landmark in a grant of property from William FitzStephen (of Townstal) to Richard Le Fleming (of Stoke).</p>	
c1200	<p>Townstal Church given to Torre Abbey</p> <p>Torre Abbey (in Torquay) is founded by William Brewer, an important royal administrator under Kings Richard, John and Henry III. Amongst the early foundation grants is the church of Townstal (with its revenues), given by William FitzStephen. Later Torre Abbey acquires more land in Townstal and much influence in Dartmouth’s affairs.</p>	<p>John 1199-1216</p>
1203	<p>Dartmouth taxed on overseas trade</p> <p>To raise money for the war in France, all merchants must pay a 15th of the value of goods imported or exported from abroad. Earliest list of ports where merchants are taxed includes Dartmouth.</p>	<p>John 1199-1216</p>
1205	<p>King John visits Dartmouth</p> <p>Following the loss of Normandy to the King of France in 1204, King John assembles forces at Portsmouth to regain his lost territories, including</p>	

	ships from Dartmouth. But he abandons his plans when the barons refuse to follow him. He orders a force to assemble in Dartmouth to invade Poitou, visiting Dartmouth himself from 18-22 June.	
1205	Market granted in Dartmouth King John grants the right to hold a weekly market “apud Dertemue” (at Dartmouth) on a Wednesday, jointly to William FitzStephen, lord of Townstal, and Richard Le Fleming, lord of Stoke Fleming, for a payment of two palfreys (riding horses).	
c1210	Earliest records of properties in Dartmouth William le Fleming, now lord of Stoke Fleming, grants several properties in “my township of Clifton”. Richard Fitz Stephen, now lord of Townstal, referenced in sale of property in “Dertemue”. Such grants show new plots of land and also houses already in place.	
1214	King John visits Dartmouth again John’s final attempt to win back his lands in France collapses in massive defeat at the Battle of Bouvines. Having agreed a five-year truce, John returns to England via La Rochelle and Dartmouth, around 13-15 October, travelling on via Exeter and Dorchester to Corfe Castle. The party includes the Queen, Isabella of Angouleme.	
1217	Fifth crusade fleet musters Fleets coming from Frisia, the Netherlands and the Rhineland assemble in Dartmouth in May and June to join the Fifth Crusade.	Henry III 1216-1272
1231	New grant of market in Dartmouth New grant of right to hold a weekly market on a Wednesday, this time only to Richard FitzStephen, possibly reflecting a new location. Also granted the right to hold a three-day fair annually on 23-25 June. Leads to dispute with Lords of Totnes who complain their market is being damaged by the growth of Dartmouth’s market; eventual settlement of 1244 gives them the market revenues.	
c1235	Earliest record of property in “Hardenesse” Richard FitzStephen grants property in township of “Hardenesse”, the part of Townstal lying north of a small tidal creek. The township of “Clifton” lies to the south, partly in Townstal and partly in Stoke Fleming.	
1243/44	Earliest record of Foss and Tidal Mill There is no direct record of the date of construction of the dam across the tidal creek for a tidal mill. In 1243 the “foss” is referenced as a landmark in a property transaction; and “Henry the miller” in 1244. Both mill and foss are referenced in 1250.	
1270	First grant of privileges secured from the Crown Burgesses and merchants of Dartmouth granted protection against distraint for debt, costing 20 marks. Refers to their “commune and power” and “the burgesses by whom the town is ruled”.	
1274	“Hundred Rolls” survey of King’s “rights and liberties” Evidence given that the Lords of Totnes claimed ownership of “Water of Dart” from Totnes Bridge to the mouth of the river. Men of Dartmouth complain that Lords of Totnes impose local customs dues on cargoes of wine, wool, corn, beans, iron, fish, eels, timber and “other merchandise” traded through the port, when it was previously free from customs.	Edward I 1272-1307
1281	Earliest surviving town seal Depicts single masted merchant ship at sea with inscription “sigillum de Dertemue” (seal of Dartmouth).	

1293	New lord of the manor of Dartmouth Gilbert FitzStephen sells “all his Manor of Norton, Dartmouth Townstal, Hardness, and Clifton Dartmouth” to Nicholas of Tewkesbury, a royal clerk. In 1306 Nicholas acquires all the rights of the Lords of Totnes in the “Water of Dart”.	
1298	Dartmouth men first summoned to Parliament Two leading men called to the York Parliament, John le Bakere and William atte Vosse. From 1351-1832, Dartmouth sends two representatives to Parliament.	
1311	Dartmouth provides ships in the war against Scotland One of 26 English and Irish towns required to provide three ships, “fully armed and provisioned for seven weeks”, in support of Edward II’s campaign against Robert the Bruce. Ships supplied again in 1318.	Edward II 1307-1327
1318	High altar of St Clement’s Townstal dedicated Bishop of Exeter’s visit probably indicates that an older and smaller building has recently been rebuilt or enlarged.	
1326	Earliest reference to Southtown (“Suthton”) The part of the town of Dartmouth (to the south) falling within the manor of Stoke Fleming – remains separate until 1463 (see later).	
1327	King becomes Lord of Dartmouth Nicholas of Tewkesbury gives the King all rights in market, town and port in exchange for a lifetime office in the Exchequer.	Edward III 1327-1377
1332	Dartmouth the fourth wealthiest town in Devon As shown by the 1332 lay subsidy, a tax on individual wealth (excluding land and buildings). Includes Clifton Dartmouth, Southtown and Norton/Townstal.	
1337	“Water of Dart” included in Duchy of Cornwall King’s eldest son Edward is created Duke of Cornwall; the living eldest son of the monarch is Duke of Cornwall and “Water of Dart” is still owned by the Duchy today.	
1337	Hundred Years War begins Philip VI of France confiscates Aquitaine from Edward III and Edward claims the throne of France. Over the course of the long conflict Dartmouth is an important embarkation point for troops, supplies and naval expeditions, providing more ships for the war than any other port in England.	
1337 (2)	Grant of additional liberties King grants “men of the towns of Clifton Dertemuth and Hardenesse” freedom from paying certain tolls and charges throughout the realm.	
1339	Earliest record of town’s fresh water conduits Streams and springs from the hills are directed to several water conduits in the town by lead or wooden pipes or channels. Later town accounts frequently mention rebuilding and repairing the piping, the conduits, and the paving around them. Washing in the conduits is forbidden!	
1341	Grant of “Borough Charter” to Dartmouth King grants to his “beloved burgesses of Clyfton Dertemouth and Hardenasse” the right to elect a mayor and independence from county authorities. In return Dartmouth provides at no cost to the King two fully manned and equipped warships, whenever required, for 40 days. New town seal shows King in a warship.	

1342	Lordship of Dartmouth granted to Guy de Bryan Guy de Bryan, close friend of Edward III, is concerned that Borough Charter affects his lordship rights. Agreement is reached in 1343 on a split of town revenues. Lordship continues to be owned by Guy's heirs but with little or no involvement. It is bought by the town itself in 1620.	
1344	Earliest record of reclamation of land from the sea Development is already taking place on the eastern side of the street which runs along the water's edge, later called Lower Street	
1346	Battle of Crecy Edward III invades France with a huge army and wins the Battle of Crecy. Guy de Bryan is his standard bearer. 89 ports contribute 747 ships to transport men and supplies. Dartmouth provides 31.	
1348-50	Black Death Lay mortality in Exeter is at least 30%. Devon's ecclesiastical records show clerical mortality of over 60%. No direct records but Vicar of Townstal and Mayor of Dartmouth may have been victims.	
1372	St Saviours Church dedicated on 13 October 1372 A new church in the centre of the growing town had been proposed by leading townsmen in 1331 but was resisted by Torre Abbey. New Bishop of Exeter brokers agreement that it will be entirely funded by the town and a dependent chapel of the mother church of Townstal. Construction underway by 1363 and completed by 1370.	
1373	Geoffrey Chaucer visits Chaucer is sent to Dartmouth by the King to hand over a Genoese ship captured in Dartmouth to its rightful owner. Later he makes a Shipman of Dartmouth a character in "The Canterbury Tales", emphasising both his maritime skills and his lack of conscience.	
1375	John Hawley becomes Mayor for the first time Shipowner and merchant, Hawley is Dartmouth's most prominent medieval citizen, serving frequently as mayor and attending Parliament four times. As war resumes after a truce, harbour defences against raids and invasion become a significant concern. By 1376, a chain is installed across the harbour entrance.	
1377	Population of Dartmouth c1000 As estimated from the poll tax (including Southtown and Norton/Townstal). Dartmouth is the third largest town in Devon.	Richard II 1377-1399
1379	John Hawley licensed to attack and destroy enemy ships Hawley and two other Dartmouth shipowners are licensed by the King to operate a small fleet to attack enemy shipping, paying all costs and keeping any prizes. Hawley and Dartmouth shipmasters become notorious in a role which is sometimes outright piracy.	
1388	First harbour fort under construction King orders Hawley "to compel and if need be to distraint all men and burgesses of the town to contribute to the building of a fortalice". To assist with the costs Dartmouth is granted the monopoly on tin exports for three years.	
1393	King grants extension of the borough's legal jurisdiction Including the right to appoint a coroner	
1404	Battle of Blackpool Sands A French raiding force plans to attack Dartmouth but it is too well defended. When they land at Blackpool Sands they are decisively	Henry IV 1399-1413

	defeated by local people, including women (according to English accounts). Harbour defences kept in commission.	
1408	Death of John Hawley Hawley dies on 30 December and is buried in the new chancel of St Saviours. His fine brass memorial for himself and his two wives records him as “founder of this chancel” indicating he funded its construction.	
1415	Battle of Agincourt A flotilla of armed ships from Dartmouth defends the coast as forces transport forces to France for Henry V’s invasion of France, resulting in victory at Agincourt.	Henry V 1413-1422
1437	Dartmouth petitions for support for harbour defences The harbour fortress “is in need of repair ... it is there to house guns, engines and chains for the salvation of shipping in the haven”.	Henry VI 1422-1461
1462	Grant for harbour defences King grants £30 annually from customs revenues collected in Dartmouth.	Edward IV 1461-1470
1463	Borough extended to include Southtown King grants the right to bring Southtown within the borough, because “the burgesses keep watches against invaders ... at a place called Galions Boure [above the Castle] ... but the inhabitants of the township contribute nothing”. This also allows unimpeded access to the castle. Extent of the Borough remains unchanged until the late 1800s. New town seal produced with two lions in the ship either side of the King.	
1470	Visit of Duke of Clarence In 1470 Clarence and his father in law the Earl of Warwick go into rebellion against Edward IV, Clarence’s brother. In April they leave Dartmouth for France, returning in August to Dartmouth and Plymouth with French support. Henry VI is briefly restored as King. Edward invades with Flemish support. He defeats Lancastrian forces at the Battles of Barnet and Tewkesbury in 1471, and regains the throne.	Henry VI 1470-1471
1481	New harbour defences (1) – harbour mouth “Strong mighty and defensive new tower” is now under construction for “guns artillery and other ordinances” (Dartmouth Castle). Edward IV grants an additional £30 for four years, confirmed by Richard III. Earliest purpose-built coastal artillery tower in England.	Edward IV 1471-1483 Richard III 1483-1485
1486	New harbour defences (2) Annual grant is increased to £40 to complete and maintain defences. From 1491 a “bulwark” is built on the northern side of the harbour entrance (Kingswear Castle).	Henry VII 1485-1509
1505	Grant to town of “bailiwick” of Water of Dart Made by King until Prince Henry becomes Duke of Cornwall. Town is appointed “water bailiff” at an annual rental of 22 marks (£14 13s 4d), with the right to collect all revenues of the “Water of Dart” including local customs dues (called “petty” customs).	
1510	Grant of water bailiwick “for ever” 1505 grant made permanent by Henry VIII. Deed of 1521 says this was because port and town were then in a state of “great ruin and decay” and customs revenues had halved. However, other records show trade was booming at this period, especially cloth and tin.	Henry VIII 1509-1547
1522-36	New harbour defences (3) – Bayards Cove fort Exact date not known. Fort is the last line of harbour defence.	

1530-70	Religious changes of the Reformation Town Council ensures compliance with changes in religious belief and practice but manages to retain most property endowed to St Saviours. Torre Abbey's property in Dartmouth sold/ leased to Nicholas Adams of Combe, leading townsman, in 1545. In 1585 town buys Townstal rectory, enabling some control over religious matters.	Edward VI 1547-1553 Mary I 1553-1558 Elizabeth I 1558-1603
1573	Beginnings of Dartmouth's Newfoundland trade This year three ships return to Dartmouth with Newfoundland fish. Over the next two centuries this becomes the foundation of Dartmouth's prosperity. Most fish is exported to France, Spain or Portugal, and traded for wine, dried fruits and other luxury items.	
1579-90	Town Quays developed Bayards Cove Quay first recorded in 1579; work begins to reclaim land for the New Quay in 1584. Plots for six new houses leased to leading members of the town. New Quay in operation by 1590.	
1578 1583	Sir Humphrey Gilbert's expeditions Sir Humphrey sets out from Dartmouth to find a north-west passage to China. In 1583 he claims Newfoundland for England but is lost at sea on the return voyage to Dartmouth.	
1585-87	John Davis of Sandridge explores the north-west passage Experienced mariner John Davis mounts three expeditions from Dartmouth to continue exploring the north-west passage, reaching further north than any previously recorded European voyage. The Davis Strait between Labrador and Greenland is named for him.	
1588	Spanish Armada Town mans and equips two ships for the English fleet under Lord Howard and Sir Francis Drake. Local gentlemen and merchants contribute several more. Many captured Spanish sailors are held in Dartmouth until they are sent back to Spain in 1590.	
1592	Capture of "great carrack" Madre de Dios Portuguese merchant ship from East Indies is captured by Sir Walter Raleigh's ship the Roebuck, with and other privateers, and brought into Dartmouth. The rich cargo is plundered for days. Raleigh comes to Dartmouth from prison to assist the authorities.	
1602	Bartholomew Gosnold explores Cape Cod, Massachusetts In the Concord of Dartmouth, Gosnold explores the coast of what becomes "New England". Later he obtains the charter for the Virginia Company and the 1607 Jamestown settlement.	
1604	New Borough Charter Borough becomes an independent legal entity. All previous privileges and property confirmed as permanent. This remains the town's governing charter until municipal reform in 1835.	James I 1603-1625
1608- 1640	Extension of New Quay: construction of Butterwalk Increasing prosperity encourages further reclamation to extend New Quay to the north and west to create Duke Street area. Butterwalk houses are built 1628-1640; many other houses are built or rebuilt.	
1616	Duchy of Cornwall takes back "Water of Dart" To maximise revenue, Duchy imposes a renewable long lease on the town, replacing 1510 grant. Apart from the interregnum (see later) this approach remains the practice for over 350 years.	

1619	Merchant shipping and shipbuilding flourishing Maritime survey shows 83 ships have Dartmouth as their home port, including shipowners from Totnes, Dittisham, Kingswear, and Torbay; there are 446 seamen and 40 shipwrights in Dartmouth.	
1620	The “Pilgrim Fathers” visit Dartmouth The Mayflower and Speedwell leave Southampton carrying a party of emigrants to New England. But the Speedwell begins to leak and they put into Dartmouth for repairs. They are delayed for about a week. As they continue the Speedwell continues to leak; she is left in Plymouth and the Mayflower continues alone to found Plymouth Colony near Cape Cod.	
1631-1635	St Saviours enlarged Walls and roofs of side aisles and transepts are raised and a gallery and new larger windows are installed. The height of the tower is raised several feet and new “pinnacles” added. Many people in the town contribute to the cost.	Charles I 1625-1649
1641	St Petrox enlarged Two extra aisles accommodate a growing population in Southtown and Warfleet.	
1642-1646	(First) English Civil War Dartmouth declares for Parliament and the town is fortified at heavy cost. Royalists under Prince Maurice mount a siege beginning September 1643; town falls a month later. Royalist garrison holds Dartmouth and adds fortifications on Gallants Bower, above Dartmouth Castle, and Mount Ridley, above Kingswear. Dartmouth falls to Parliamentarian Army under Sir Thomas Fairfax on 18 January 1646. Substantial costs are incurred in supporting Parliament and defending the town.	
1650	Town purchases “Water of Dart” Assets of Duchy of Cornwall are sold as part of sale of Crown lands to settle arrears of Army pay. Town Council buys waterbailiwick. Leading merchants are strong supporters of Commonwealth and then Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector.	Commonwealth 1649-1653 1659-1660
1656	John Flavel comes to Dartmouth Puritan preacher and writer John Flavel is appointed to St Clement’s Townstal (another minister, Allan Geare, is appointed to St Saviours).	Protectorate 1653-1659
1660	Population of Dartmouth 3,350 Estimated. Dartmouth is fifth largest town in Devon.	
1660	Restoration of monarchy Town supports Charles II’s return but Crown appoints an external “Governor” of Dartmouth Castle with a permanent small garrison. Duchy estates including “Water of Dart” are recovered though town is allowed to lease the waterbailiwick as before. Under 1661 Corporation Act Town Council is “purged” of previous leading members.	Charles II 1660-1685
1662	“Great Ejection” With other ministers in Dartmouth, Flavel is unable to conform to the restored Church of England. Despite harassment and persecution he continues to leads a large congregation, preaching secretly or in country locations.	
1671	Charles II visits Enjoying a pleasure trip on a new yacht, the King puts into Dartmouth due to bad weather, and remains overnight. By tradition he is entertained in the Butterwalk.	

	<p>Reclamation of the “New Ground” An artificial island is formed extending into the river, linked to the New Quay by a bridge, to provide additional quay space.</p>	
1685	<p>Monmouth Rebellion Town Council supports James’ accession but the remains of one rebel (possibly from Dartmouth), are sent from Honiton to be hung up in Dartmouth.</p>	<p>James II 1685-1688</p>
1687	<p>Declaration of Indulgence Under James II’s attempt to achieve “religious toleration” for Catholics by embracing Dissenters, John Flavel is able to preach openly and a meeting house is established in Foss Street by his congregation.</p>	
1688	<p>William of Orange nearly lands in Dartmouth Leading opponents of James II and his pro-Catholic policies invite William of Orange (his son in law) to invade. William plans to land in Dartmouth and Torbay, but weather conditions cause the whole fleet to land in Torbay.</p>	
1689	<p>“Glorious Revolution” The Bill of Rights and Act of Exemption allow freedom of worship for Protestant non-conformists. Flavel dies in 1691 but his congregation grows; there is a Baptist group (established by 1646) and a refugee French Huguenot community.</p>	<p>William & Mary 1689- 1702/1694</p>
1710-12	<p>Thomas Newcomen develops steam engine Born in Dartmouth in 1664, Thomas Newcomen becomes an ironmonger by trade. He is also a Baptist lay preacher. With his friend John Calley, a plumber and glazier, he develops the first successful working atmospheric steam engine. The first engine is installed in 1712 in a coalmine in the West Midlands and many others follow.</p>	<p>Anne 1702-1714</p>
1715-1832	<p>Holdsworth family Successive generations of the Holdsworth family, prominent in the Newfoundland trade, dominate political life in Dartmouth, and thus control the town’s representation in Parliament. MPs largely support successive Government administrations.</p>	<p>George 1 1714-1727</p>
1721	<p>Silver Oar given by Frederick Duke of Cornwall to Dartmouth Ceremonial silver oar representing the authority of the Water Bailiff is added to the town’s regalia.</p>	
1724	<p>Daniel Defoe (author of Robinson Crusoe) visits He reports the town is “large and populous tho’ but meanly built ... yet the Quay is large and the street before spacious ... merchants ... trade very prosperously ... to Spain, Portugal, Italy and the Plantations; but especially they are great traders to Newfoundland and from thence to Spain and Italy with fish”.</p>	
1740	<p>Town buys tidal mill Mills in Foss Street are still operating much as they have for five centuries.</p>	
1750	<p>Population of Dartmouth 2,900 Estimated. Dartmouth remains the fifth largest town in Devon.</p>	
1753	<p>Holdsworths appointed Governor of Dartmouth Castle Successive generations of Holdsworth family become Governor until appointment is abolished as a sinecure in 1857.</p>	<p>George II 1727-1760</p>
1766-1788	<p>Work on St Saviours New windows are installed with heraldic glass for the Holdsworth family and their connections. Organ installed 1784-8.</p>	<p>George III 1760-1820</p>

1782	Methodist community founded Meeting first in a private house, first chapel is built in 1816, replaced by a much larger building overlooking the Market in 1874. Building demolished in 1992.	
1792	Sandquay shipbuilding yards developed John Seale of Mount Boone, owner of the Combe estate at the river's edge north of the Borough, builds a modern Dockyard complex there. Shipbuilding for the Royal Navy in the Napoleonic Wars 1793-1815 partially compensates for decline in Newfoundland trade.	
1805	Population of Dartmouth 3590 Average of censuses of 1801 and 1811. Dartmouth still the fifth largest town in Devon (but much smaller than Exeter and Plymouth).	
c1800	Tidal Mills cease to operate Siltng up progressively reduces tidal flow. Mills are demolished by 1808 releasing Mill Pool area for potential reclamation and development.	
1826	New Road completed Kingsbridge and Dartmouth Turnpike Trust completes the "New Road" across the Mill Pool area connecting the centre of town with the expanding turnpike network by a road suitable for carriage traffic. Sites along New Road are gradually developed for shops, houses and other community uses such as a school and for chapels.	George IV 1820-1830
1828	Visit of Duke of Clarence King's brother William (later William IV) is second Duke of Clarence to visit Dartmouth (see earlier). Unplanned visit while he is en route to Plymouth by royal yacht. Remains two nights. Duke Street and Clarence Street and Clarence Hill are renamed in his honour.	
1828-9	New Market House completed Act of Parliament to build new "Market House, Market Place, Shambles and Conveniences" obtained in 1815, but completion awaits construction of New Road.	
1830	Dartmouth remains a regional port According to Pigot's Directory: "The trade in the Newfoundland fishery has considerably declined [but] the coastal business is extensive ... other [vessels] trade to Spain, Portugal and Italy. [There is] shipbuilding, ropemaking, the manufacture of paper [and] in the vicinity ... limestone and slate quarries ..."	
1832/5	Parliamentary and municipal reform Great Reform Act reduces Dartmouth's MPs to one and extends parliamentary franchise; Municipal Corporations Act extends borough franchise, ending Holdsworth control of Dartmouth politics.	William IV 1830-1837
1834	First official Dartmouth Regatta Yacht racing is growing as a sport and "leading gentlemen" of the town organise the Regatta, which continues today.	
1856	Visit of Queen Victoria; Royal Regatta This is her fourth visit to Dartmouth, in the royal yacht, with her husband and five children, on 11-12 August. After a river trip, an official reception at the New Ground and a carriage sightseeing tour, she donates a prize to the Regatta, which becomes the Royal Regatta.	Victoria 1837-1901
1860	Duchy terminates town's lease of "Water of Dart" Revenues are first leased to a private collector and then collected directly. Eventually the Dartmouth Harbour Commission (see below)	

	buys out the rights to collect “petty customs” in Dartmouth. In 1864 town is required to return the Silver Oar given in 1721.	
1863	Arrival of HMS Britannia Royal Navy’s officer training ship moves from Portland to Dartmouth. She is joined in 1865 by the Hindostan; both ships are anchored in the river above Sandquay. Many members of the British and other Royal Families receive naval officer training in Dartmouth.	
1863-1880	Town and port improvements Dartmouth Harbour Commission is set up to improve port facilities. In 1864 the railway finally reaches a terminus in Kingswear with a ferry connection to Dartmouth, making Dartmouth the only railway station without any trains. From 1864-7 the Newcomen Road is constructed between Higher and Lower Street, demolishing many old houses. New sewers are constructed. Lower Street is widened and new shops and houses are built in Fairfax Place in the style of the 1600s.	
1868	Parliamentary constituency of Dartmouth abolished Dartmouth is one of seven English boroughs with populations under 5000 to be disenfranchised, to give more seats to Scotland. Dartmouth is absorbed within South Devon constituency.	
1882-5	Embankment completed Amidst much controversy the Dartmouth Harbour Commission builds the South Embankment from the Lower Ferry Slip to Vavasour’s Slip to provide for larger ships. The reclaimed land extends the New Ground which is gradually developed as gardens and open space, and the Quay is enclosed to create the Boat Float for small boats. New sites are created for shops, houses and other buildings.	
1890-3	Shipbuilding continues to grow In 1891 Philip & Son of Sandquay acquires remaining yards there. Their rivals Simpson Strickland create a new yard on a greenfield site at Noss Point north of Kingswear.	
1898-1905	Naval College built Work begins in 1898 to build the long-planned shore-based training establishment for naval officer cadets. Edward VII lays the foundation stone in 1902 and the College opens in 1905. The Royal Avenue Gardens is named for his visit and other royal visits.	Edward VII 1901-1910
1911	Silver Oar given back to Dartmouth In his first public engagement, on leaving the Naval College, Prince Edward (later Edward VIII), Duke of Cornwall, as a courtesy returns the Silver Oar to Dartmouth. It still forms part of the town’s regalia today.	
1914-18	First World War Many hundreds of men from Dartmouth serve their country and over 200 who die are commemorated on memorials in the town. Theodore Veale, born in Dartmouth, serving in 8 th Bn Devonshire Regiment, wins the VC. In 1917 Hanover Street is renamed Anzac Street, in honour of the Australia and New Zealand Army Corps.	George V 1910-1936
1918	Philip & Son acquires Noss Shipyard when Simpson Strickland closes With financial assistance from Swan Hunter, Philip & Son survive the downturn in shipbuilding and becomes Devon’s leading producer of new tonnage, operating from both Sandquay and Noss.	
1921	Population of Dartmouth (Borough) 7219 1921 Census records historic highpoint of population.	

1923-1936	Many ships laid up in Dartmouth Harbour Worldwide slump in trade leads to layups, peaking in 1931-2.	
1926	New house building Town Council begins to build new houses with direct labour for rent or purchase in an extension to Victoria Road. In 1929 new house building begins in Townstal to provide for those displaced from old housing demolished in the town centre. It continues until the war.	
1928-1937	Reclamation of North Embankment and Coronation Park Embankment is extended to Floating Bridge and Sandquay. Coombe Mud is reclaimed to create a new recreation park. It is named Coronation Park originally for Edward VIII and then, after his abdication, for George VI.	Edward VIII 1936 George VI 1936-1952
1939	Visit of George VI and Royal Family King and Queen with Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret visit Dartmouth and Royal Naval College. Princess Elizabeth is hosted by Prince Philip of Greece, her future husband.	
1939-45	Second World War In 1940 Dartmouth Castle is fortified with coastal artillery in a reminder of its ancient role of defence against invasion. Dartmouth becomes the location of Commando training, a coastal convoy staging port and from 1941, a Royal Naval Coastal Forces Base. The town suffers two serious air raids in 1942 and 1943 and the Royal Naval College moves north. The buildings become first the location of Combined Operations training and then the headquarters of the American XI Amphibious Force. Thousands of service personnel arrive in the area and hundreds of vessels are based in the harbour in the build-up to D-day. Many men and women from Dartmouth serve their country all over the world. [] service personnel and [] civilians are commemorated on town memorials.	
1947-present	New house building in Townstal continues The post-war housing shortage is acute. Fifty temporary houses are built in Townstal which last 50 years. Housing development continues in Townstal today.	Elizabeth II 1952-2022
1973	Railway closes It is immediately reopened as a heritage line.	
1974	The end of Dartmouth Borough In local government reorganisation Dartmouth loses its six-century-old Borough status but retains a mayor. It forms part of South Hams District.	
1999	End of shipbuilding on the Dart The Sandquay site becomes a marina in 1965. Shipbuilding and repair continues at Noss until it finally ends in 1999.	
2012	Diamond Jubilee Fountain The Old Dartmothians' Association marks Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee with a new fountain in the Royal Avenue Gardens.	
2021	Population of Dartmouth and district: 5300	