

North Wales and Chester

October 2016: Wales once had over 400 castles. On a four-day road trip along the north coast I was able to visit some of the 100 castles still standing and the English border town of Chester.

Setting an hour south west of Liverpool are the ruins of Rhuddlan Castle. Built in the 13th century by King Edward I, it was the birthplace of his daughter Elizabeth.

Continuing west is Beaumaris Castle. Said to be the perfect castle with a wall within wall design, classic proportions and perfect symmetry. However, problems with the Scots caused Edward I to reallocate his finances and the castle was never finished.

On 1 July 1969 the investiture ceremony for Charles, Prince of Wales was held at Caernarfon Castle. My residence in town was the 16th century, Black Boy Inn. There are at least 3 theories for the origins of its name. One it was named for a black boy who came into the country on a ship, another says it is a reference to a navigational harbor buoy and the third claims it was the nickname given to Charles II by his mother.

Penrhyn Castle dates from the 1400's and is a mock castle, a country house, built by a Jamaican sugar trader.

In 1645 along the city walls of Chester, King Charles I watched as his army was being slaughtered. In his retreat, Charles fled taking all the horses and his best soldiers telling the others to continue fighting for at least 15 days so he could make a safe retreat, then they could surrender.



Rhuddlan



Beaumaris



Black Boy Inn



Caernarfon



Caernarfon Eagle Tower



Penrhyn Castle



Penrhyn Bedroom



Penrhyn Dining Room



Chester Tour Bus



Chester East Gate Clock



Chester