

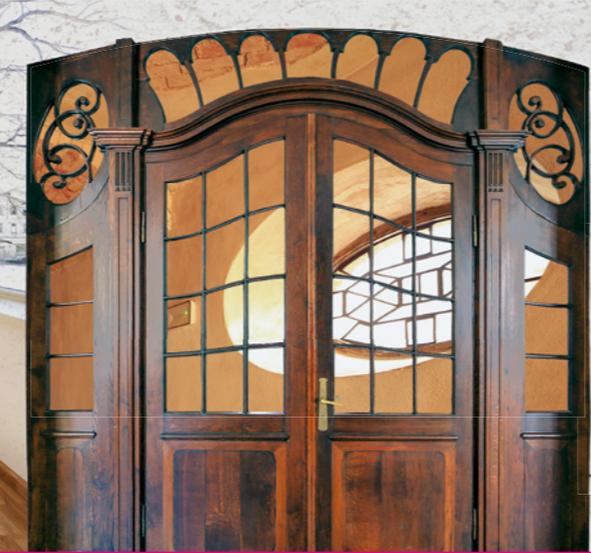
14 th

Being a childless widow, after the death of her husband, Anna Sibylla devised her property to her nephew Ewald von der Osten-Sacken from Bate estate.

Osten-Sacken family managed in Dundaga from 1714 until 1920 when the agrarian reform started.

Around 1785 important reconstruction took place in the castle again. At that time one of the most outstanding members of Osten-Sacken family, Karl von der Osten-Sacken, was managing there. The layout of the castle was changed, the third storey was built and the inner rooms rebuilt. A new stone church was erected in Dundaga in the place of the old wooden church in 1766.

Krišjānis Barons, the famous Latvian father of folksongs, wrote what he learned from his nanny – a resident of Dundaga – “this first Karl Sacken stood in high service at the old Prussian King Friedrich II, where he had also earned the honour of his count and prince. While living abroad, he came every three years to visit his minions. Oh, then there was great joy in Dundaga! The money was scattered by handfuls, which the poor boys pushing each other hurried to pick up, and the white bread buns were also amply distributed (...).”



Dundaga castle caught fire on April 1st 1872, and it burnt down completely, though was soon restored.

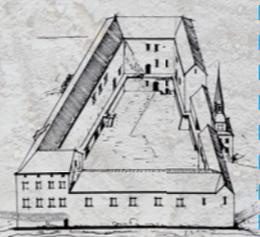
From 1897 until 1919 the castle was run by Christian Theodor Ferdinand von der Osten-Sacken and his wife Louise (Lucie) Jenny Caroline. They had ten children: Charlotte, Benigna, Hildegard, Ulrich, Clara, Ruth, Luise, Agnes, Johanna and Theodor.

In 1919 Christian and also the Dean of Piltene district and the Pastor of Dundaga parish Karl Johan Moltreht were arrested by the Bolsheviks and shot near the town of Tukums.

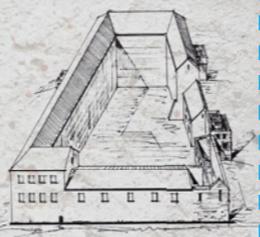
Christian's daughter Ruth wrote in her memoirs, “My mum could paint wonderfully. She used to paint with watercolours, there were a lot of vibes in her pictures. If my mother was sitting on the sofa and doing handicrafts – she used to mend many things herself and so that the patch spots could not be noticed at all – then I stayed with my mother in her sitting room. For the most part, she sat at her desk and wrote letters. Then it was not allowed to disturb her. I think the world could have died while my mum was writing those letters – she wouldn't have noticed (...).”



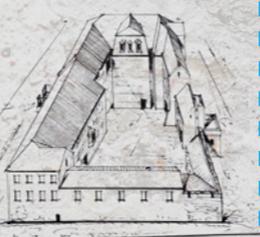
1685



1814 – 1820



1872



1909 – 1914



On beautiful summer evenings my papa often played ‘The Bigbird’ with us, the children, on the terrace. My mum stood guarding with her arms outstretched. She was The Hen who had to protect her chickens, and papa like The Bigbird had to kidnap them. In this game, papa was not allowed to push off mum's hand. It was a very exciting game. Papa was skillful – he pretended to attack and suddenly slipped through under mum's other hand. We found it wonderful that our parents were playing with us that way.”

During the revolution of 1905 on the night of December 1st the castle was burnt down by the revolting peasants. The reconstruction work under the leadership of professor H. Pfeifer from Braunschweig continued until 1914 and was partly completed, when the 1st World War discontinued it.

After the war the castle became a manor-house managed by the state. In 1924 the self-government of Dundaga district became its owner. In 1926, the Town Hall was opened in the castle and the self-government moved from Jaundundaga to the centre.

From 1945 till December 1974 the secondary school was situated in Dundaga castle.

Nowadays the castle is the property of municipality, being one of the largest and most ancient castles in Kurzeme with a closed courtyard, gate tower and thick walls. It is a cultural monument of national significance. Dundaga Art and music school, Culture centre and Tourism information centre are situated there. The castle is a place for comfortable accommodation, a venue for celebrations, seminars, offers of local home-made products and new discoveries. The castle becomes particularly mysterious during the Legend Night celebration at the end of October.

Behind the castle in the continuation of the peninsula, there is an artificial island – Kalnadārzs (The Hill Garden). Judging by the jewelry and shards of pottery found in the excavations, it can be concluded that the island was used as a fortification of the local population in the late Iron Age until the construction of the stone castle was completed.

On the SE side of the castle there is a 21.7 ha park, which was cultivated in the 17th century. 48 different species of trees and 5 big trees grow there.



Dundaga has long been the administrative centre of the two seas' district with the largest castle manor in the Baltics, extending to the port of Sikrags, shipbuilding sites, Kolkasrags (Cape Kolka) lighthouses and more than a dozen half-manors.

THE CASTLE OF DUNDAGA

Dundagas pils



The name of Dundaga has first been mentioned in the historic sources in **1245** when Nicolay, the Bishop of Riga, presented 200 *arkli* (1800 hectares) of land to his Chapter of priests.

It has been mentioned in the research of 1979 (R. Malvess "Materials of historic research") that Riga Chapter of priests was only able to start the construction of the castle in peaceful conditions and at a time when its property rights were fully secured. Thus, it is possible that the beginning of construction can be dated to **1253**, when the Bishop of Kursa had already agreed with the Order to build castles in their counties.

The castle is situated on the peninsula washed by the raised waters of the Pace river. The completely built castle consisted of three living blocks. The middle block faced the land and was secured by an artificially made protecting moat. The side blocks were shorter and the ends of them were connected by a rampart thus forming a close courtyard. Behind the rampart opposite the peninsula there was the front castle with surrounding walls and gate tower.

Initially, the castle mostly served for household needs as a storehouse for agricultural products before they were delivered to the consumers in Riga.

Following numerous arguments between Riga Dome Chapter of priests and Kursa Bishopric the castle was sold to Kursa Bishopric in **1434**. During that time it was rebuilt significantly to strengthen its defence.

In **1559** during the Livonian war the Bishop of Kursa sold Dundaga castle to the King of Denmark who on his part presented it to his brother Magnus, the Duke of Holstein (*Herzog Magnus von Holstein*). Magnus was the last Bishop in Kurzeme (*Courland*).

The castle of Dundaga has twice suffered in warfare. First, it endured the war of Piltene bequest, which started between Denmark and Poland in **1583**. The castle then belonged to the Hungarian magnate, the Sevenhills Chancellor of the Polish King Stephan Báthory, Martin Bersewitz (*Kanzler von Siebenbürgen Martin von Bersewitz*), who had bought it from Duke Magnus in **1582**. In **1588** Bersewitz sold it to the councillor of Brandenburg Markcount, Lewin von Bülow. After the death of Bülow, his son, land counsellor, Fridrich von Bülow married Anna Sibylla von der Osten-Sacken. After the death of her husband Anna became the owner of Dundaga castle and got married with land counsellor Otto Ernst von Maydell.

The castle survived the Polish-Swedish war in **1656** when it was conquered by the Swedes. Ernst von Maydell managed to regain the castle for lots of money by giving the Swedish King Karl X Gustave a vote of loyalty.

The **17th** century in Kurzeme and Dundaga appeared to be not only the time of wars and devastation, but also a very active building period. One of the most remarkable was fon Maydell family. The flourish of Dundaga happened to fall into the years of the energetic leadership of Anna Sibylla, also nicknamed the President. Being courageous and enterprising, she gained the fame of a manly and heroic woman about whom many stories later arose. During the reign of Anna, around **1685** the eastern block, the new chapel and other premises of the castle were built.

It was not Dundaga alone experiencing the transformation. Anna also took care of the lighthouses in Kolkasrags, the establishing of a small port in Sikrags, and shipbuilding in order to deliver Dundaga products to consumers.

## THE GREEN MAIDEN OF DUNDAGA CASTLE

### *Dundagas pils Zaļā jumprava*

At that time the castle of Dundaga belonged to the family of Maydell. Barons had no descendants – potential heirs to the castle and the region, which upset the Baron very much.

Once hunting, the Baron got lost in the Blue Hills. Forcing his way through the wood, the Baron came across the dwarfs who showed him the way to Dundaga. Though, the dwarfs asked to praise their help – they wanted the permission of the Baron to celebrate the wedding party of their King's son in the big hall of the castle. The Baron had to promise that none of the finite beings would see or disturb it, whereas the dwarfs promised happiness, wealth and an heir for the Baron. On the eve of the coming wedding night the Baron issued an order which claimed that all the inhabitants of the castle should go to their rooms before the sunset and stay there until dawn. The order said that disobedience would lead to a punishment – immuring alive in the wall of the castle.

In the castle there used to live a girl, who was a remote relative to the Baron and always wore green clothes. Everybody called her the Green Maiden. The girl was in love with the gardener's son she was not allowed to meet and get married with, therefore the maid dated with her beloved secretly.

On the eve of the wedding night of the dwarfs' prince the Green Maiden had a date in the castle park. Returning back, she saw some light in the windows of the big hall and was taken over by an irresistible desire to peep through the key hole and see what was going on there.

On one side of the hall there were nicely laid tables with comfortable chairs next to them. On the other side of the hall there was a podium where tiny musicians were playing their instruments. The door of the hall opened and solemnly in came strange small smartly-dressed people. The first couple was followed by the bride and the bridegroom in wedding



gowns. All this seemed so beautiful that the Green Maiden laughed and clapped her hands. Then at once everything went dark and silent.

Next morning the Baron went to the dwarfs' King to receive the promised prize, but the dwarf said, "You have broken your promise. One of your people saw our celebration. You have to punish this person. And – you will not have descendants in the future..."

The Baron started looking for the person to be blamed and found a green shoe next to the door of the hall... So, according to the issued order, the Green Maiden was immured in the wall of the castle tower alive. Yet, being very curious, she still sometimes takes part in the pace of the castle inhabitants showing her presence in various ways.