

## 修士，屠杀，谋杀，神话与传奇

罗斯林村位于爱丁堡的最南端。尽管它在近代史上以煤矿和火药制造闻名，但是它在历史上重要性，却来自于它的城堡，教堂和峡谷。

现已荒废的罗斯林城堡屹立于一块岩石的海岬上，俯视北爱斯克河从城堡的三面流过。城堡保留完好的最古老的部分是14世纪末由亨利·辛克莱尔——奥克尼的第2位王子(伯爵)所建造。后来他的儿子威廉(也是罗斯林教堂的建筑者)在15世纪时对城堡进行了扩建，增进了城堡的防御性能，并在通往城堡的路上挖掘了一个深深的峡谷，两岸只用吊桥连接(后改为木桥)。在亨利八世统治期间的1544年，英国发生了“争夺苏格兰女王玛丽之战”(rough wooing)，城堡被赫特福德率领的部队严重损坏。直到1580年才被重新修复，并在16到17世纪时增添了居住面积。

城堡附近的罗斯林教堂又被称作“密码教堂”。它极具传奇色彩，在无数的传记和作品中被提及(最近的作品当属丹布朗的流行小说——《达·芬奇密码》)。该教堂是1447年由威廉·辛克莱尔所建，作为圣迈克尔学院教堂。虽然教堂从真正意义上来说，从未彻底完工，但是从已建成的用于唱诗班表演的场所以及教堂东侧十字型翼的建筑和一个圣器室来看，教堂已经算得上是石建筑艺术中的珍品。从地板到穹顶，整个礼堂都被大量雕刻所装饰，其中最为著名的是“普伦蒂斯支柱”(Prentice Pillar)以及它所涉及到的妒忌，忿怒和谋杀的传说。在克伦威尔围攻城堡期间，该教堂曾被当做马厩使用。1688年，教堂被爱丁堡暴民损坏。1862年教堂由罗斯林伯爵做了一次完整修复，作为主教礼拜之用。

从城堡和教堂一路下来，我们来到了位于附近的山谷。该山谷一直被人们认为是一片圣地，长满了郁郁葱葱的树木，分布着奇形怪状的洞穴和岩石。传说威廉·华莱士和其后的美王子查理都在此地隐匿过。关于这个地区还有很多传说：圣殿骑士传奇，圣杯传奇，前基督教神秘主义与崇拜，共济会传说，玄学和力量的传说等等，不一而足。

1303年2月在罗斯林村和它附近的山谷（Glen），一支只由8,000苏格兰人组成的军队，赢得了对三万英格兰人的三场战斗。苏格兰联军是由约翰·康明(John Comyn)的军队，威廉·华莱士(Sir William Wallace)的军队，奈德帕思的西蒙·弗雷泽爵士(Sir Symon Fraser of Niedpath)的军队，克恩沃斯的撒姆菲尔德(Somerfield of Carnwarth)的军队，李·西蒙(Simon of the Lee)的军队，Cumbernauld的佛兰芒的军队和托菲肯的Hospitallers爵士(Hospitallers of Torphichen)的军队以及亨利爵士圣·克莱尔(Sir Henry St. Clair)的军队组成。而英格兰的军队由三支一万人的士兵组成。苏格兰人之所以一天赢得三场战役，据说是在那一天，他们得到了罗斯林村附近、寺庙“西大门”的洛锡安区的西多会修道院的僧侣们的及时消息通报（修道院位于穿过Cauldhall荒野的B 6372主路的右边）。修道院院长爱博尼斯(Abernethy)可能以前曾是圣殿武士，肯定对这三场战争的胜利起到了决定性的作用。英格兰此次战争的意图是在博思威克堡（Borthwick castle）攻击海伊(Hays)的部队，在罗斯林城堡攻击圣·克莱尔的军队，并且在戴尔豪斯(Dalhousie))堡‘保护’玛格丽特·拉姆齐女士。在这场战斗中，他们兵分几路，结果却被人数较少的苏格兰部队运用有利的地形打的他们落花流水。村庄边上的一个小石碑标志了这一重要却又被忽略的胜利。在追求苏格兰国王宝座的竞争者中康明后来被他的对手布鲁斯所谋杀。在罗斯林的战斗开始之前，布鲁斯实际上已经在爱尔兰了。战争自然宣传获胜者的故事（胜利者是布鲁斯）。而苏格兰人在罗斯林村在康明的带领下所取得的难以置信的成就在历史书中几乎没有什么记载。

之后，我们经过卡拉号(Caulahall)荒野，观赏了保德斯(Borders)一带的美丽景色。这儿以前曾是洛锡安山(Mount Lothian)修道院的所在地，是圣殿骑士在西部领地的前哨或守门人。该修道院的修士并不是普通的西多会修士，有充分的理由相信他们大多数是圣殿骑士，担任着军事神职。他们的首领修道院的院长爱博尼斯在苏格兰人对抗英格兰人的罗斯林峡谷之战中取得绝对性的胜利起了关键作用。

据说，他吩咐修士骑马通知四处分散的苏格兰首领和他们的追随者英格兰士兵的进军情况，并让他们在比格（Biggar）集合，然后又带领他们在夜幕的掩护下穿过荒野对在计划拂晓攻击罗斯林村的英格

兰分队发动突然袭击。他指挥修士激励那些在一天两场战役以后变的疲惫不堪的苏格兰士兵的士气。他让修士在盆特兰（Pentlands）一带的卡内西（Carnethy）山的西山坡上支起了一个巨大的十字架，而阳光恰好照在这个十字架上，象征着‘上帝的印记’，这激励着苏格兰士兵在战场上取得更大的辉煌和荣耀！巧合的是，修士的这一举动使第三批进军苏格兰的英格兰援军困惑不已，误以为上帝在帮助苏格兰人，从而使他们的士气更为低落。

但是现在让我们暂时忘掉基督教的仁慈和中世纪的骑士精神吧。那些年代的事件对于苏格兰人来说事关生死：他们个人能否生存下去以及从英格兰独立出来的梦想能否实现。敌我比率如此悬殊，他们不可能因为后方犯人的存在而再冒险。既然没有足够的人手来看管犯人，简单可行的方法就显得极为残暴：除了少数能有赎金得到获救以外，其余的犯人全部遭到屠杀。

从卡拉号（Caulahall）荒野那一带再往下行，我们进入了树木繁茂的南爱斯克河峡谷以及殿堂村（Temple）。殿堂村这个名字源自圣殿骑士的军事宗教神职。他们在苏格兰的总部成立于1153年，大维一世授给他们“巴兰特拉（Balantrevach）的领地与教堂”。1312年，他们遭到教皇克莱门特五世的镇压，圣殿骑士团的领地给了医院牧师骑士（knights Hospitallers）或者叫托菲肯的圣约翰骑士（St John at Torphichen）。

苏格兰教堂遭到破坏的时间要晚一些，可能是在十四世纪中叶就开始了。旧的“圣殿骑士勋章”采用三角形饰物，而钟楼下面的题字“VAESACMHIM”却让古文物研究者大伤脑筋。教会四周的墓地有很多坟墓带有圣殿骑士和共济会会员的徽章。有些圣殿骑士墓地是中世纪的，但其他就晚一些，有些甚至是20世纪的。

从殿堂村，我们踏上了回爱丁堡的路。在爱丁堡郊外我们来到了一个被称为小法国（Little France）的地方，据说是对那些讲法语的、支持苏格兰女王玛丽·斯图特的廷臣表示感谢而得名的。当时他们居住在这一地区，而他们的女王则居住附近的、在今天已经成为废墟的克雷格米勒（Craigmillar）城堡。有关该城堡的记载最早见于1212年。现

存塔楼的L形平面图不早于十五世纪中晚期。庭院内墙的建造可以追溯到1508年，而外墙的图纸是城堡已建成后才绘制出来的。在1544年，赫特福德伯爵率领英格兰入侵苏格兰时，城堡的外墙得到了加固重建！

通过达丁斯顿（Duddingston）村（该村名源自一个诺曼底骑士的名字多登（Dodin），12世纪时他从柯索（Kelso）修道院院长那里租赁了这片教区），我们进入了皇家花园，又称好莱罗（Holyrood）公园。

在公园门口的左边，紧靠教堂，是达丁斯顿（Duddingston）湖。该湖以前曾是一个很大的冰川湖，达丁斯顿（Duddingston）村的最初居民可能就住在湖中央的房子里。

向上看，你会看见山坡上亚瑟王的宝座，以及青铜时代开发的梯田，说明这一带的古老文明比它周遍的爱丁堡市更为悠久。

如果公园开放我们会去转转，观看以下几个主要景点：

### ***好莱罗（Holyrood） 宫殿和修道院***

好莱罗（Holyrood） 宫殿和修道院是英王在苏格兰的官方住所。好莱罗（Holyrood）house 宫殿由好莱罗（Holyrood）修道院的附属建筑古老的皇家客舍演变而来。该修道院是1141年大卫一世为奥古斯丁教团教士所建。从詹姆士四世开始，它被正式作为皇家在爱丁堡市的官方住所，之后由历代的君主对之进行了进一步的扩建和修缮。1603年詹姆士四世前往英格兰后这里就不再是皇家居所，但1633年查理一世加冕后这里又重新恢复为皇家住所。1650年宫殿被大火严重烧毁后，后来的君王几乎把这一住所置之一边。后来，由于维多利亚女王在去巴莫罗（Balmoral）的旅途中，重新开始在此居住，好莱罗（Holyrood）house 宫殿才开始恢复了今天我们所见到的皇家气派。

岁月沧桑，这个宫殿见证了查尔斯·爱德华·斯图特王子对爱丁堡支持者的接见以及他在普雷斯顿潘（Prestonpans）获胜后的庆祝场面；见证了年轻的苏格兰女王玛丽·斯图特与约翰·诺克斯（John Knox）之间的激烈冲突；见证了玛丽的心腹大臣大卫（David Rizzio）在当时身怀六甲的女王面前被杀的残酷场面。

### ***圣安东尼教堂***

圣安东尼教堂是建在低坡上的两层建筑遗迹。教堂建于1450年，当时主要用作福斯港湾的灯塔，为水手指引方向。据说教堂和位于利斯路上的圣安东尼教堂医院有密切关系。医院是圣殿骑士团的领地（圣殿骑士是这块土地与房产的继承人），由詹姆士一世1430所建立，主要是为那些遭受圣安东尼火灾或丹毒的患者服务。安东尼洞穴附近的 贺米达几（‘Hermitage’）当时可能是教堂的储藏室。

### **圣玛格丽特井**

圣玛格丽特井被看作是中世纪（15世纪中叶）哥特式建筑杰作的缩影。它原先位于瑞斯达（Restalrig）与 米豆班（Meadowbank）之间，1860年英国北方铁路公司开发铁路时，被迁移到了现在的位置，离好莱罗（Holyrood）宫非常近。这口井现在的水源和供给圣大卫井的水源一致。圣大卫井位于现在 好莱罗（Holyrood）修道院遗迹所在的地方。圣玛格丽特井有时被错误的称为 圣垂多娜（Triduana）井，该井位于瑞斯达（Restalrig）教堂附近，挖掘的时间和井的构造都与圣玛格丽特井极为相似。圣垂多娜 是圣卢乐的伙伴（四世纪时圣安德鲁（Andrew）的骨骸就是由圣卢乐带回到苏格兰的）。据说，皮克特族的国王尼可坦（Nechtan）一直在追求圣垂多娜，因为他迷恋她那双“美丽的眼睛”。为了不背离她对宗教的虔诚，圣垂多娜最后送给国王的是一双串在荆棘上的眼睛！ 据说，用圣垂多娜 井里的水沐浴，可以治愈眼疾。

我们走出公园的大门，沿着考盖特（Cowgate）前往爱丁堡的老城区中心。考盖特（Cowgate）本来不过是从城区驱赶牲畜前往Burgh Muir牧场的后街，然而到1500年时它已经发展成为城市最为时髦的郊区。后来，随着南北两座大桥的建成，它逐渐失去了在峡谷中的重要地理作用，变成了一个落后的萧条的房屋破败不堪的贫民窟。目前，考盖特（Cowgate）焕发出新的青春，但依然保留了那些颇具历史特色的古老建筑风格和传统。

在这儿，值得一看的建筑和街区包括：

### **圣约翰街道与小巷：**

圣约翰小巷里的2号康格（Cnongate Kilwinning）小屋是世界上现存的最古老的共济会会员的房产，据说1787年苏格兰著名的诗人罗伯特·彭斯就是在这儿接受的“桂冠诗人”称号。和苏格兰最值得尊敬的圣约翰神职修道院毗邻，修道院所在的这片土地属于中世纪耶路撒冷的圣约翰

骑士，当时圣殿骑士的地方分团就建在这儿，以前是圣殿骑士的财产。

### **圣塞西莉亚 (Cecilia) 厅**

圣塞西莉亚厅是一个美丽的音乐厅，从外边看该建筑却很不显眼。它是罗伯特 (Robert Milne) 1763年为爱丁堡音乐协会所建的音乐厅，建筑风格模仿了位于帕尔马 (Parma) 的法奈斯 (Farnese) 剧院，该剧院 (1809-44) 后来被改造为苏格兰大宅的共济会会员会所。现为爱丁堡大学所有，其内部近来一直在谨慎地被重建。

### **裁缝会所**

除了麦格达莱教堂和圣吉尔斯大教堂，裁缝会所是爱丁堡现存的中世纪最重要的商会所在地。它建立于1621年，当时是裁缝商会的所在地。在这里，1638年批准通过了国家协议草稿。也是在这里，颁布了克伦威尔执政时期管理没收保皇派财产的1656年苏格兰委任书。裁缝会所历经多年沧桑，起过重要作用，也曾被废弃和忽视。现在已经被复建，成为当今的裁缝会所旅馆。

### **麦格达莱教堂**

麦格达莱教堂耸立在乔治八世桥昏暗的阴影下。前面我们已说过，该教堂象裁缝会所和圣吉尔斯大教堂一样，同中世纪的城市商会紧密相联。教堂建于 1541至1545年，包括一个救济院和医院，是对七个“乞丐”实施救济的产物，后来献给了圣玛丽·麦格达莱。1553年教堂的所有权归强大的铁匠协会所有。在宗教改革运动中，教堂的室内陈设遭到了破坏。1578年在此举办了大家普遍认为的苏格兰教会第一次大会，实际上则是长老派教的诞生。

在1614至1615年，教堂改为铁匠协会召集会议的场所。至今，在入口处，仍然有该协会的徽标。绞刑架曾立在附近的干草市场的伏特 (Bowfoot)。另外，附近还有殉道者纪念碑，曾经有许多殉道者在干草市场为了荣耀主而殉身。死后，他们的尸体陈列在麦格达莱教堂。

## 南桥

南桥于1788年开放通行。桥有19个桥拱之多，但有一个桥拱只有在考盖特（Cowgate）上才可以看得见。精明的爱丁堡市民，尤其是那些房产与桥紧临的房主，很快就开发起这些暗藏桥拱的潜能来。桥拱很快被“占有”，用作各种用途，很多用途是合法的，但也有不合法的。近来这一带发掘的出土文物证明了有关“地狱烈火俱乐部”曾多次集会的传说。在这儿的牡蛎酒吧，朗姆酒潘趣酒、黑啤酒就着贝类喝，甚至有时还有非法酿造的威士忌！

## 干草市场

干草市场是一个宽约230码（212米）的场地，位于岩石城堡下面。该市场可能是1363年提到的城堡下面的纽壁坚（‘newbigging’）的所在地，过去一直作为城市的玉米和牲口市场来使用。在它东端立着绞刑架、Porteous Riot（1736）的所在地以及其他一些有名的（以及无名的）公众绞刑（见上文的麦格达莱教堂介绍）。现今它是有名的娱乐中心，拥有众多的酒吧和旅馆；有些酒吧和旅馆还颇有历史意义和文学典故。

从干草市场往上，车行不多久，我们就又会回到了城堡的出发点。

# MONKS, MASSACRES, MURDERS, MYTHS & MYSTERIES

On the southern edge of **Edinburgh** is the village of **Roslin**. Despite its recent history of coal-mining and gunpowder manufacture, its real historical importance derives from its **Castle**, **Chapel**, and **Glen**.

Now ruinous, the **Roslin Castle** stands on a rocky promontory with the River North Esk below it on three sides. The oldest part, the keep, dates from the end of the 14thC and was built by **Henry Sinclair<sup>1</sup>, 2nd Prince (Earl) of Orkney**. Extended in the 15thC by his son, **William**, the builder of **Rossllyn Chapel** nearby, he improved its defences by cutting a deep gorge across the access on the fourth side and spanning it with a drawbridge (later replaced by a bridge). Seriously damaged by **Hertford** in 1544 during **Henry VIII** of England's '**Rough wooing**', the **Castle** was restored c1580 with a domestic range being added in the 16th/17thC.

Close by the **Castle**, stands **Rossllyn Chapel**; the '**Chapel of Codes**'; subject of intense speculation, wrapped in legends, and featured in innumerable works of fact and fiction (most recently Dan Brown's blockbusting novel, **The Da Vinci Code**). Established by **William Sinclair\*** in 1447 as the **Collegiate Church of St Michael**, it was never finished, but what was

built, a choir, parts of the east transept walls and a sacristy, is an amazing testament to the stonemasons' art; from floor to tunnel-vaulted roof, the whole chapel is profusely decorated with sculpture and carvings; the most famous feature being the '**Prentice Pillar**' and its legend of jealousy, rage, and murder! Used by **Cromwell** to stable his horses during his siege of the **Castle** and damaged by an **Edinburgh** mob in 1688, the **Chapel** was fully restored in 1862 by the **Earl of Rosslyn** for **Episcopalian** worship.

From **Castle** and **Chapel** we descend into the **Glen**; long regarded by some as a sacred grove, it is full of trees, caves, and interesting rock formations. Legends of both **William Wallace** and, much later, **Bonnie Prince Charlie**, hiding in caves here sit easily with the other legends with which the area abounds: legends of **Knights Templar**, of the **Holy Grail**, of **pre-Christian mysticism** and **worship**, of **Masonic** connections, of **hidden secrets**, **secret knowledge**, and **power**.

It was at **Roslin** and along its **Glen** that, in February 1303, an army of **just 8,000 Scots** - the combined forces of **John Comyn**, **Sir William Wallace**, **Sir Symon Fraser of Neidpath**, **Somerfield of Carnwarth**, **Simon of the Lee**, **Fleming of Cumbernauld** and the **Knights Hospitallers** of **Torphichen**, along with **Sir Henry St. Clair** - successfully fought and won **three** separate engagements against **three** English armies, **each of 10,000 men, in the same day**, having been alerted of their advance by monks from the **Cistercian Mount Lothian Priory** close to **Roslyn** and the western 'gate' of **Temple** (to the right off the B6372 across Cauldhall Moor); whose Prior, **Abernethy**, may have previously been a **Templar** knight and who certainly played a crucial role in the days victories. The English intention had been to attack the **Hays** at **Borthwick Castle**, the **St Clairs** at **Roslin Castle**, and to 'protect' **Lady Margaret Ramsay** at **Dalhousie Castle**. In the event all they achieved was to divide their forces and individually suffer defeat at the hands of a smaller Scottish force that made best use of knowledge of the terrain. A small cairn at the edge of the village is all that marks this remarkable but sadly overlooked victory. **Comyn**, a claimant of the Scottish Throne, and his bitter rival, was later murdered by **Bruce**. **Bruce** had been in Ireland at the time of the **Battle of Roslyn** and as the propaganda war will tell the story of the winner (in this case '**The Bruce**'), the Scots incredible achievement under **Comyn** at **Roslyn** has been all but expunged from the history books.

Climbing up out of the **Glen** to the South our road affords a wonderful view back across to the **Castle** and the **Chapel**.

A brief journey over **Cauldhall Moor**, with its wonderful views over the **Borders**; it was here that **Mount Lothian Priory** once stood, acting as the western guardian or outpost to the domain of the **Knights Templar**. No simple **Cistercian** monks these; there is every reason to believe they were, or most had been, **Knights Templar**, a military order closely aligned to the **Cistercians**, and its leader, **Prior Abernethy** a central, and critical figure in the victory over the English at **Roslin Glen**. He, it was, that sent mounted monks to warn the widely dispersed Scottish leaders and their followers of the English approach and had them gather at **Biggar** before leading them, during darkness, across these moors to surprise the first element besieging **Roslyn** at dawn. He also had some of his monks play a crucial role in rousing the desperately tired Scots after their second battle in one day. **Carnethy Hill**, to the West, in the **Pentlands** was where he had them erect a huge sign of a cross on the hillside where the sun would catch it and act as a 'sign from God' to stir them to even greater feats of glory! Coincidentally, the movement of this group of monks was misinterpreted by the already confused third English army as approaching Scots reinforcements, adding further fuel to their rapidly waning confidence!

But forget any ideas of Christian mercy or medieval chivalry! The days events were a battle for survival for the Scots: their personal survival and the survival of any dreams they held of independence from England. Out numbered on such a scale they could not risk prisoners at

their rear, nor could they spare the men to guard them anyway. The practical solution was as simple as it was savage: all prisoners except the handful likely to command a ransom were massacred!

From the Moor our road descends once again; this time into the deep-set, wooded valley of the River South Esk, and the hamlet of **Temple**. **Temple** takes its present name from the military religious order of the **Knights Templar** whose Scottish headquarters were established here in 1153 after **David I** granted them 'the manor and chapel of Balantravach'. Following their suppression in 1312 by **Pope Clement V**, the preceptory was given to the **Knights Hospitallers** or **Knights of St John** at Torphichen.

The **ruined parish kirk** is of a later date although it is possible it existed as early as the mid-14th century; the old '**Templars' Cross**' adorned the gable but the inscription - '**VAESACMHIM**' - below the belfry baffles antiquarians. The graveyard surrounding the church contains many graves bearing **Templar** and **Masonic** symbolism. Some of the **Templar** graves are medieval but others date from later times, up to and including the 20th century.

From **Temple** we now head back towards **Edinburgh** on the outskirts of which we encounter an area referred to as **Little France**, said to be in recognition of the French speaking courtiers and supporters of **Mary Stuart - Mary Queen of Scots** – who populated this area whilst their queen lived in the now ruinous **Craigmillar Castle** nearby. First mentioned in 1212, the present L-plan tower is not earlier than mid to late 15<sup>th</sup> C, whilst the curtain wall of the courtyard dates from c.1508, and the outer wall was drawn around the castle when it was being rebuilt after the visit of the English under the **Earl of Hertford** in 1544!

We enter the **Royal Park, Holyrood Park**, through the village of **Duddingston** ('Dodynstane' after Dodin, a Norman knight who leased the parish from the Abbot of Kelso in 12thC).

To the left of the Park gate, close by the church, is **Duddingston Loch**, once a much larger glacial lake wherein **Duddingston's** first inhabitants probably lived on **crannogs**.

Looking up, to the right are the slopes of **Arthur's Seat** with **Bronze Age** cultivation terraces indicating an antiquity of occupation greater than the City that now surrounds it!

If the Park is open we will make a circuit of it. If we do, some of the key features to look for are:

**Holyrood Palace & Abbey** – the official residence of the British monarch in Scotland, the **Palace of Holyroodhouse** evolved from the old royal guesthouse attached to the adjacent **Holyrood Abbey** (1141) founded for **Augustinian (White) Friars** by **David I**. Finally formally taken over as the royal residence in the city by **James IV** it has been continually added to and developed by succeeding monarchs. It ceased to be the royal residence with **James VI's** departure for England (1603) but was restored for **Charles I's** coronation (1633). Severely damaged by fire in 1650 and somewhat overlooked by subsequent monarch's, its present status was ensured after **Queen Victoria** began to use it en route to **Balmoral** and re-established the pattern of royal occupation which continues today. Over the years the Palace has witnessed many joyous moments like **Prince Charles Edward Stuart's** levees for his Edinburgh supporters and celebrations of his victory at **Prestonpans**, momentous moments in history like the confrontations between the young **Queen of Scots, Mary Stuart**, and **John Knox**, and horrific moments like the brutal slaying of Mary's Secretary and confidant, **David Rizzio**, in front of the heavily pregnant Mary.

**St Anthony's Chapel** – a two-storey ruin on the lower slopes. Erected c.1450 as a beacon for mariners on the Firth of Forth, the chapel is believed to have been connected with **St Anthony's Hospital** in Leith; a preceptory of the **Knights Hospitallers** (successors to the lands and properties of the **Knights Templar**) founded by **James I** (c.1430) for sufferers of **St Anthony's Fire** or erysipelas. The '**Hermitage**' near **St Anthony's Cave** was probably a

storehouse for the chapel.

**St Margaret's Well** – Described as a miniature medieval (mid 15<sup>th</sup> C) Gothic masterpiece it was removed to its present site hard by **Holyrood Palace** in 1860 when its original site between **Restalrig** and **Meadowbank** was redeveloped by the North British Railway. In its present location it is fed from the spring that served **St David's Well**, where the ruins of **Holyrood Abbey** now stand. Sometimes wrongly referred to as **St Triduana's Well**, that well is actually to be found at **Restalrig Kirk** nearby and is roughly the same date and very similar design. **St Triduana** was a companion of **St Rule** (who brought the bones of **St Andrew** to Scotland in the 4<sup>th</sup> C) who, it is said, when pursued by the **Pictish** King, **Nechtan**, because he desired 'the beauty of her eyes' accordingly delivered them to him skewered on a thorn rather than be further deflected from her religious duties! Bathing in the waters of her well is said to be good for ailments of the eyes!

Immediately outside the gates of the Park we head into the centre of the Old Town of **Edinburgh** along the **Cowgate**. Originally little more than a back lane for driving cattle from the City out to pasture on the **Burgh Muir**, by c. 1500 it had become the City's first fashionable suburb. In later years, as the two major bridges carrying traffic across it north and south left it marooned in its valley, it descended into a gloomy backwater of run-down housing. Now enjoying something of a renaissance it still retains many of the oldest and most historically interesting features.

Buildings and street names you should look out for include:

**St John's Street & Close** – the Close contains **Lodge Canongate Kilwinning No 2** (1736), held to be the world's oldest existing **Masonic** premises, where **Robert Burns** was reputedly installed as its 'Poet Laureate' in 1787. Immediately adjacent stands the **Priory of the Most Venerable Order of St John in Scotland** on lands owned by the medieval **Knights of St John of Jerusalem**, who had their preceptory there; previously the property of the **Knights Templar**.

**St Cecilia's Hall** – a beautiful concert hall hidden behind an unprepossessing façade, it was completed by **Robert Milne** (1763) for the Edinburgh Musical Society as a much reduced model of the Farnese Theatre in Parma before being altered to become the '**Freemasons' Hall**' of the **Grand Lodge of Scotland** (1809-44). It is now owned by the **University of Edinburgh** and has been much sympathetically restored internally.

**Tailors' Hall** – apart from **Magdalen Chapel** and **St Giles Cathedral**, the **Tailors' Hall** is the most important survivor of the medieval trades' incorporations of Edinburgh. Built by 1621, the seat of the **Incorporation of Tailors**, the hall was where the draft of the **National Covenant** was approved in 1638 and was also used in 1656 by the **Scottish Commission of the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell** for the administration of forfeited Royalist estates. After many uses, misuse, and neglect, it has been restored and is now the **Tailors' Hall Hotel**.

**Magdalen Chapel** – now left in the gloomy shadow of **George IV Bridge**, as has been already said, the **Magdalen Chapel** was, like the **Tailors' Hall** and **St Giles**, intimately connected with the city's medieval trade's incorporations. Erected in 1541-5 as a bequest to include an almshouse or hospital for seven 'bedemen' and dedicated to **St Mary Magdalene**, ownership passed to the powerful **Incorporation of Hammermen** in 1553. Its furnishings destroyed in the **Reformation**; in 1578 it hosted what is often erroneously referred to as the first meeting of the **General Assembly of the Church of Scotland** – becoming in effect the birthplace of **Presbyterianism**. Converted for the **Convening Hall of the Hammermen** in 1614-15 it still bears the heraldic insignia of the **Hammermen** over the entrance. The public gallows once stood nearby, at the Bowfoot in the Grassmarket, as still does the **Martyrs' or Covenanters'** memorial, where so many martyrs 'went to glorify God in the Grassmarket'; their corpses being laid out in the **Magdalen Chapel** after their execution.

**South Bridge** – opened in 1788, the **South Bridge** actually consists of no less than 19 arches although only one, that over the **Cowgate**, is visible. The ever astute Edinburgh inhabitants, especially those whose properties directly abutted onto the bridge, were not slow in exploiting the potential of these ‘hidden’ arches. They were quickly ‘adopted’ and put to a variety of uses, many legitimate but some definitely less than so! Recent excavations have supported tales of ‘**Hellfire Club**’ convocations, oyster bars where rum punch and porter would be drunk to excess as accompaniment to vast quantities of shellfish, and even **illicit whisky distillation!**

**The Grassmarket** – a broad campus 230 yds (212m) long lying below the **Castle Rock** it is probably the ‘**newbigging**’ beneath the Castle mentioned in 1363 and long served as the corn and livestock market of the city. At its east end used to stand the common gibbet, site of the **Porteous Riot** (1736) and of many other famous (and infamous) public hangings (see **Magdalen Chapel** above). It remains a centre for entertainment with its many bars and hotels; some boasting significant historical and literary connections.

A short drive up from the Grassmarket will rapidly bring us back to our point of departure at the Castle.

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Notes:

<sup>1</sup> The **St Clairs** arrived with **William the Conqueror**, and the barony of **Rosslyn** was granted to them in the 12th century.

Sir William's grandfather was **Henry, first Prince of Orkney**, who is said to have sailed to **Nova Scotia** and **Massachusetts** in 1398, almost a century before Columbus. The evidence for this lies both in the folklore of the Micmac Indians and in carvings of maize, then unknown in Europe, surrounding a window in **Rosslyn Chapel**.

The **Chapel** also contains a tomb ascribed (dubiously) to an earlier William, killed by the Moors while escorting Robert the Bruce's heart to the Holy Land in 1330. Twenty-eight years earlier, incidentally, William Wallace fought a battle thereabouts, and hid in a nearby cave; more than four hundred years later, Bonnie Prince Charlie was rumoured to have done likewise.

What is most interesting about the **St Clairs** is their centuries-old affiliation to two of the most potent and secretive organisations in history, the **Knights Templar** and the **Freemasons**. Both orders have left their mark, and their mysteries, at **Rosslyn**, in a collection of peculiar devices and still more peculiar legends.

The **St Clairs'** alleged connections to the **Templars**; guardians of the treasures from the **Temple of Solomon**; inventors of modern banking; financiers to many of Europe's mediaeval thrones; and the most powerful order in pre-Reformation Europe; are said to have been established by marriage in the 12th century, and to have remained close.

When the **Templars** faced persecution in the 14th century, many fled to Scotland. **Freemasons**, of which the **St Clairs** were **hereditary Grand Masters**, are said to have abetted their escapes (**Freemasonry** is also supposed later to have spared the **Chapel** from destruction by **Cromwell, a brother mason**, though his troops rather disrespectfully stabled their horses there).

Thus has arisen a lively speculation as to what holy booty the **Templars** might have secreted in the **Chapel**. There is certainly documentation suggesting that, at various points in history, the **St Clairs** were said to be in possession of great and secret treasures; the current generation declines comment.

Ever more extravagant theories have arisen about artifacts rumoured to lie in sealed vaults below the **Chapel**: the **True Cross** (or **Holy Rood**, from which Edinburgh's Holyrood Palace takes its name), the **Ark of the Covenant**, the **Holy Grail**, a lost **Gospel** or even the original **Stone of Destiny** and, most incredibly and most extravagant of all, **the mummified head of Jesus!**