

## Edinburgh City Tour

### Reading List

#### **Edinburgh: A History of the City**

by Michael Fry

The late poet laureate, Sir John Betjeman, said that Edinburgh was the most beautiful city in Europe. Like some other great cities it is set on seven hills. But only one of these, Rome, rivals Edinburgh in matching the beauty of its setting with the stateliness of its buildings. A romantic landscape of sea and hills, broad vistas and hidden corners is embellished by a style of architecture combining stern classicism with antiquarian whimsy.

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#### **The Town Below the Ground: Edinburgh's Legendary Underground City**

by Jan-Andrew Henderson

Below Scotland's capital, hidden for almost two centuries, is a metropolis whose very existence was all but forgotten.

For almost 250 years, Edinburgh was surrounded by a giant defensive wall. Unable to expand the city's boundaries, the burgeoning population built over every inch of square space. And when there was no more room, they began to dig down . . .

Trapped in lives of poverty and crime, these subterranean dwellers existed in darkness and misery, ignored by the chroniclers of their time. It is only in the last few years that the shocking truth has begun to emerge about the sinister underground city.

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#### **Lost Edinburgh**

by Hamish Coghill

From mean beginnings – 'wretched accommodation, no comfortable houses, no soft beds', visiting French knights complained in 1341 – the city of Edinburgh went on to become one of the architectural wonders of the world. But over the centuries many of those fine buildings have gone. The buildings which stood in the way of what was deemed progress are the heritage of Lost Edinburgh. Hamish Coghill sets out to trace many of the lost buildings and find out why they were

doomed. Lavishly illustrated, *Lost Edinburgh* is a fascinating insight into an ever-changing cityscape.

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### **Edinburgh in the 1950s: Ten Years that Changed a City**

by Jack Gillon, David McLean, Fraser Parkinson

"Edinburgh in the 1950s: Ten Years that Changed a City" by Jack Gillon, David McLean & Fraser Parkinson looks at the city of [Edinburgh](#) during a decade in which, as the authors note in their introduction, Britain changed definitively and dramatically. This was a decade in which post-war rationing gave way to an economic boom, and a decade in which the problems of Edinburgh's appalling slums were finally addressed, though not always in ways that were welcome at the time or appear wise when viewed with hindsight.

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### **Secret Edinburgh**

by Jack Gillon

Jack Gillon is a long term resident of Edinburgh and has worked as a Town Planner involved in the conservation of the city's heritage of historic buildings for around thirty years and has an extensive knowledge of the city's history and architecture. He writes extensively on the historical heritage of Scotland and has had several books published by Amberley."

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### **A Walk Down Edinburgh's Royal Mile**

by Eric Melvin

Writing in 1824, the author and future publisher Robert Chambers described Edinburgh as "a truly romantic place" and that for visitors it offered "a perfectly unique scene, and one which, once contemplated, was not easily to be forgotten." What the young Robert Chambers wrote some 200 years ago still holds true today for the thousands of local folk and visitors who walk down Edinburgh's historic Royal Mile. There can be few streets anywhere in the world that are so steeped in history. Stretching from the Castlehill lying in the shadow of the majestic Edinburgh Castle, then running down the quaintly named Lawnmarket, the Royal Mile then enters the ancient High Street itself before descending down the Canongate past the Scottish Parliament building and finally ending at the Royal Palace of Holyrood. For well over a 1000 years, the Royal Mile has been at the heart of Scotland's capital city. 'A Walk Down Edinburgh's Royal Mile' is intended both as a guide book for our many visitors and as an informative reference book for those, perhaps living far away as expatriate Scots, who have an interest in Edinburgh's unique story. 'A Walk Down Edinburgh's

Royal Mile' will also take you off the historic street into some of the ancient closes and wynds which run north to the present-day New Town and south to the Grassmarket and the Cowgate. Many visitors on the Royal Mile pass these by unaware of their treasure trove of tales. Here you will find some of the best stories such as the marital problems of Lady Stair, the ill-luck of Deacon Brodie, the unsolved murder of Thomas Begbie the bank messenger and the murderous activities of the villainous Burke and Hare. The book will introduce you to some of the remarkable characters who have made this journey. Here you will meet such Scottish monarchs as Robert Bruce, James IV and Mary, Queen of Scots. They are joined by other iconic Scots such as Bonnie Prince Charlie, Sir Walter Scott, John Knox, Elsie Inglis and Robert Burns. Here too you will find an assortment of characters including a notorious warlock, assassins, murderers, thieves, a servant boy roasted on a spit and a town councillor shot dead by a 10 years' old schoolboy. Your journey will introduce you to some colourful eccentrics including Lord Monboddo who first suggested our descent from apes and Hugo Arnot, the asthmatic lawyer, whose 'History of Edinburgh', published in 1779, gives us an invaluable account of the dramatic changes taking place in the city in the second half of the 18th century. Sharing your journey are some true Edinburgh 'local heroes' - George Drummond, six times elected as Lord Provost who was the driving inspiration behind the planned New Town; John Kay, the caricaturist who during a career that spanned more than 30 years from 1785 to 1807, has left us images and pen portraits of several hundred of his contemporaries who he observed from his little premises nestling behind St Giles Kirk, Sir William Chambers, another reforming Lord Provost and Sir Patrick Geddes the late 19th century conservationist who fought to preserve what little was left of the historic Old Town from civic destruction. Nor must we forget the celebrated 'Golden Age' of the late 18th century when Edinburgh rejoiced in the reputation of such intellectual giants as David Hume, Adam Smith, William Robertson, Adam Ferguson and James Hutton. What a cast of characters! 'A Walk Down Edinburgh's Royal Mile' draws from several contemporary sources in describing such events as the Great Fire of 1824 and the murder of David Rizzio, secretary to Mary, Queen of Scots. The book is generously illustrated with pictures of the Royal Mile as we can enjoy it today as well as contemporary prints and drawings. The book concludes with a bibliography and some suggestions for further reading. If you enjoy this book then why not continue your journey by purchasing the companion title 'A Walk Through Edinburgh's New Town.'