

Step into the peaceful green oasis of the 'Kirk Below the Castle' and leave the hustle and bustle of the city behind you. A haven for wildlife, you can spot birds, bees, butterflies, mammals and flora thriving in their urban kirkyard home. Take a moment to look at the unusual old Camperdown Elm, a Scottish champion in terms of girth for the species, and find the friendly robin just outside the main church door.



Blackbird



Birch



Blue tit



Robin



Maple



Mason bee

### Warfare in the Kirkyard

1544

Attacked during the "Rough Wooing" when King Henry VIII tried to enforce marriage between his son and Mary, Queen of Scots.

1640

Base for Covenanting batteries during the Second Bishop's war.

1650

A barracks for Cromwell's armies after the battle of Dunbar.

1689

William & Mary's supporters use the church tower to attack the castle.

### Attempts to Stop Bodysnatching

1738

Boundary walls raised to 8 feet high.

1742

Reports of several bodies stolen.

1803

A regular night watch starts to patrol the Kirkyard.

1827

The watchtower is erected.

1832

The Anatomy Act enables a legal supply of dead bodies to medical schools.

### A Crisis in Burial Provision

1832

The Cholera epidemic requires areas to be set aside for 'hazardous interments.'

1833

The Kirkyard's northernmost part acquired by St John's Church.

1841

Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway Company lay a tunnel through the site.

1863

Report describes St Cuthbert's as the worst of the City's overcrowded graveyards.

1875

Closed for new burials.

### Early history

c. 8th century

Possibly when the first church to St Cuthbert was built.

1127

Charter of King David I grants all land below the Castle to St Cuthbert's.

1314

Death at Bannockburn of an English Templar Knight thought to be buried at St Cuthbert's.

Appetite whetted? Why not visit some of the other World Heritage Site graveyards?

Go green and do this on foot instead of taking the car, and you could save some CO2 emissions, too!

Check it out: From St Cuthbert's Kirkyard (5) to:

- > To Canongate (1) – 11 miles: 0.37 kg CO2
- > To New Calton (2) – 1.3 miles: 0.43 kg CO2
- > To Old Calton (3) – 1 miles: 0.31 kg CO2
- > To Greyfriars (4) – 0.9 miles: 0.22 kg CO2



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



Old and New Towns of Edinburgh inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1995



St Cuthbert's Parish Church



Climate Challenge Fund PART OF THE Keep Scotland Beautiful CHARITY

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EDINBURGH WORLD HERITAGE

GRAVEYARDS TRAIL

ST CUTHBERT'S KIRKYARD



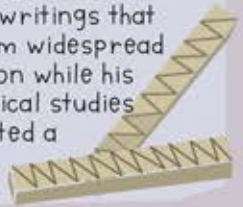
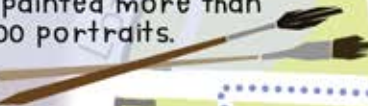
Just to the southwest of the church, you'll find the oldest part of the kirkyard. Here, some burials may be 1,000 years old. Today though, you'll walk amongst 18th century headstones, many finely carved with symbols. Explore the Kirkyard with the trail below and find other treasures within this hidden gem.



**1. A Brush With Fame**  
Sir Henry Raeburn began as a **goldsmith's apprentice** painting miniature portraits. He taught himself to use oil paints and a commission to paint a portrait of Anne Edgar changed his life forever. They married within a month, and Anne's fortune allowed Raeburn to study art seriously. Unlike many Scots artists, Raeburn lived mostly in Edinburgh. Over a career of 50 years, he  **painted more than 1,000 portraits.**

**2. Sculptor With a Heart of Bronze**  
Scots-Canadian doctor **Robert Tait McKenzie** became well known for his rehabilitation of soldiers during WWI. Combining anatomical knowledge with his talent as a sculptor, he created several important artworks. The finest is **"The Call"** in Princes Street Gardens, a tribute from Scottish-Americans to the Scottish soldiers killed in the Great War. McKenzie wished his **heart to be buried** in front of "The Call" in but Edinburgh Council refused and instead it was buried at nearby St. Cuthbert's.

**3. Maths Wizard**  
Best known as the discoverer of logarithms, **John Napier** was also a keen scientist. He had a **reputation as a magician**, and is thought to have dabbled in alchemy. However, Napier was a devoutly religious man, living at the time of the Scottish Reformation in the late 16th century. During his lifetime, it was his religious writings that earned him widespread recognition while his mathematical studies represented a learned hobby.



**4. Gothic Genius**  
The son of a shepherd, **George Meikle Kemp** was a Scottish carpenter and **self-taught architect**. Best known as the designer of Edinburgh's Scott Monument, his design took shape in just five days. Shortly before the monument's completion, Kemp died in a **tragic accident**, falling into the Union Canal one foggy evening on his way home. His young son laid the final stone on the monument.



**5. Campaigner For Equality**  
Before 1928, women couldn't vote in Parliamentary elections. **Priscilla Bright McLaren** was part of a movement that **campaigns to give women the vote**. She was the first president of the Edinburgh National Society for Women's Suffrage. In 1882, Priscilla challenged the illogicality of allowing women to vote for councillors but not MPs. Her husband, Duncan McLaren, was Lord Provost of Edinburgh (1851-4), a Liberal MP and an active supporter of women's suffrage.

**6. Sensational Writer**  
**Thomas De Quincey** specialised in hair-raising journalism tackling subjects such as **murder, suicide, freak accidents and** - most famously in his literary masterpiece **"Confessions of an English Opium-Eater"** - drug use. De Quincey's unhappy early family life sparked his addictive character. At 17 he ran away to London, an experience that inspired the "Confessions". Debt plagued him throughout his life and he sought refuge in Edinburgh's **debtors' sanctuary** at Holyrood Abbey for several years.

Also keep an eye out for:

- A** Campendown Elm tree, an old specimen with probably the greatest in girth for its kind in Scotland.
- B** Jessie MacDonald, granddaughter of Scottish heroine Flora MacDonald who helped Bonnie Prince Charlie to escape.
- C** Glasgow to Edinburgh railway line.
- D** Believed to be oldest area of the graveyard, known as the 'Knowe'.
- E** Watchtower built in 1827 to guard against bodysnatching.

**7. Writer Who Kept People Guessing**

The novelist **Susan Ferrier** excelled in wryly-observed accounts of Scottish social and family life. Like many authors of the day, **her books were published anonymously**. The fee for her first book, "Marriage", was £150. Success ensured the fee for her next, "The Inheritance", was £1,000. **Sir Walter Scott**, a family friend, offered to lead negotiations for her final novel, "Destiny". Sadly, declining eyesight thereafter made writing almost impossible, bringing an end to Susan's successful career.

