

The Royal Mile – 26 July 2022 – Edinburgh, Scotland, United Kingdom

Yesterday was a Rest Day – I went to the grocery store and Nancy did laundry and we both caught up on emails, reading and resting. Our one-bedroom apartment is large, contemporary in furnishings, and comfortable with lots of windows.

Today we have decided to tackle the Royal Mile using Rick Steves as our guide or at least his tour outlined in his guidebook. We Uber'ed to Edinburgh Castle to save our legs for a long day of walking.



Edinburg Castle in background and performance space and seating in foreground.

Mistake on my part was I didn't make a ticket reservation for Edinburg Castle and no tickets were available for the following three days we would be here. Reservations is a way of travel in the UK – damn.

THIS FOUNTAIN DESIGNED BY JOHN DUNCAN, R.S.A.
IS NEAR THE SITE ON WHICH MANY WITCHES WERE
BURNED AT THE STAKE THE WICKED HEAD AND SERPENT
HEAD SIGNIFY THAT SOME USED THEIR EXCEPTIONAL
KNOWLEDGE FOR EVIL PURPOSES WHILE OTHERS WERE
MISUNDERSTOOD AND WISHED THEIR KIND NOTHING
BUT GOOD. THE SERPENT HAS THE DUAL SIGNIFICANCE
OF EVIL AND WISDOM. THE BONGLOVE SPRAU FURTHER
EMPHASIZES THE DUAL PURPOSE OF MANY COMMON OBJECTS.



The above photograph is the previous witches well and now a planter. The plaque memorializes 300 women who were burned at the stake for being witches.

I like the justice system for determining witches. If accused, you were tied up and thrown into a swampy lake. If you sank (and drowned) you were innocent. If you floated, you were guilty of being a witch and burned at the stake.



Looking down the street. The street name changes four times but is the same relatively straight downhill street.



We made an early start so for the early part of the walk the street wasn't crowded.

The walk is only a mile and downhill. However, with stops we were able to complete the walk in just under six hours. I think we could do the walk again and most likely spend another six hours without repeating anything we did today.

As the above photograph shows, the buildings provide a number of spires, gothic architecture, carvings and multiple story buildings.

Next photograph's middle building is Gladstone's Land – an original tenement building and today a museum. The building dates back to 1617. We paid the entrance fee and spent 30 minutes or more on three floors above street level. Each floor had a guide to tell you what you were looking at: a room for three gentlemen to share, the owner's space, and a women's shop.

The building is six stories which is only half as high as the highest tenement building in the area. Great exercise for those living on the 12th floor.





As a come on for higher rent, the Gladstone's Land's ceilings were painted. As the day got older the street got more crowded.





On a side street is the Writer's Museum – great find, it's free.

The Writer's Museum is housed in a house built in 1622. It houses books and artifacts of Scotland's three greatest writers: Robert Burns, Robert Louis Stevenson and Sir Walter Scott.

Nancy and I had fun discussing the writers and their books. I still have my copy of Stevenson's *Kidnapped* – a favorite of mine when I read it at about age 10 or 11. What an adventure! It was books like *Kidnapped* that required my Dad to come into the boys bedroom about 30 minutes after we had gone to bed to tell me it was time to put the book down, turn the flashlight off, and go to sleep.



A quick stop for a shot of tequila for Nancy and a pint for me. Purely medicinal for pain relief in the backs and legs. Below is St. Giles' Cathedral. Note: that is the ocean at the bottom of the street not the sky.



St. Giles' Cathedral is known as the "Mother Church of Presbyterianism".



David Hume, one of the world's most influential thinkers and his lucky toe.





Rick Steves' tours don't want you to miss anything of importance.



You don't have to be young to want to stand or in this case "sit out".



Adam Smith whose *Wealth of Nations* laid out economics of free market capitalism. Think “the invisible hand”.



Buildings to be seen on the Royal Mile walk.





No it's not a photograph of someone texting in front of St Giles' Cathedral. It's a photograph of a scotch bottle – far left. After all we are in Scotland.