



THE ROYAL BURGH

# LANARK

EST 1140

## In the Footsteps of William Wallace



## 1 St Kentigerns Church

**St Kentigerns Church** surrounded by St Kentigerns Graveyard, dates back to the 13th century, but it is thought to be on a site dating as far back as the 6th century, being founded by St Kentigern himself. It appears that this is the only church in Scotland named St Kentigern, but many others are dedicated to him by the name of St Mungo.

There seems to be records within Dryburgh Abbey of plans set out by an architect, John Murdoch, for the current Lanark Church, which was built in the early 12th century, the ruins still remaining.

It is here, in this Church, named the 'Oot Church' (it lay just outside Lanark town), that **William Wallace**, first laid eyes on the young **Marion Cornelia Braidfute**, as they would have worshipped here when in Lanark. She was about 18 years of age, and the daughter of the Laird of Lamington, Sir Hugh Braidfute, and heiress to the estate. William was the younger son of Sir Malcolm Wallace, from Ayrshire.

Whilst the Braidfute family were in Lanark, they lived in their house at the top of Castlegate, and would worship at St Kentigerns Church. They met often whilst attending this church, falling in love, and eventually marrying within St Kentigerns, in 1297.

It is possible that, indeed, **William Wallace and Marion Braidfute Wallace** walked through these arches, 8 centuries ago.



## 2 St Nicholas Church

The church was built in 1774 on the site of an earlier 12th century chapel, so William Wallace would have been familiar with a chapel at this location. Within the steeple is the **'Toun's great bell'**, which was previously housed in the **Old St Kentigern Church**. It is believed to be the oldest bell in Europe, dating back to 1110. There were inscriptions on the bell from 1659 and 1740 which read:-

Date Anno 1110

I did for twice thrice centuries hing, And unto Lanark City ring,  
Three times I Phoenix-like have past, Thro' fiery furnace, till at last . . .

Date Anno 1740

Refounded at Edinburgh by Ormiston and Cunningham

In 1838 the bell was accidentally broken and recast. It was then presented by James Murray Esq, Cornhill, London, chronometer-maker to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty and the Hon. East India Company, 'as a token of regard for the burgh of Lanark, where he spent his early days.' It was recast again in 1983.

When the Church was refurbished within the last few years, skeletons were found possibly dating back to William Wallace's era. The 8 foot (2.45m) statue of William Wallace stands above St Nicholas Church door, a gift to the town in 1822. It was sculpted by Robert Forrest, a local man, from an ancient drawing of William Wallace.



## 2 Wallace/Braidfute House

**Wallace/Braidfute House** situated at the top of the Castlegate, was the town house of the Braidfute family from Lamington.

Castlegate, as the name implies, was the road to access Lanark castle, and therefore was an impressive address to have in 13th century! The Braidfutes, it appears were an upstanding, prosperous family in the area and would be well respected.

William, it is said, was astute, well-educated and an outstanding military individual. He and his friends used to get into trouble with the English soldiers who looked after Lanark for King Edward 1, under the jurisdiction of William Hesselrigg, the English Sheriff. For William and his friends, it was a bit of sport, skirmishing with a few English soldiers, but very often they had to go into hiding, and it was then that William would discreetly sneak into Lanark to see Marion in the Castlegate house.

A further complication to their relationship was that Hesselrigg had desires on Marion for himself or his son, so he could access her fortune.



William tried to avoid trouble until some English soldiers taunted him as he was leaving the Church, by suggesting that his baby daughter was not his. He lost his temper, and killed a soldier. And this is when and where it all began . . .

After a skirmish in the High Street, legend has it that, in May 1297, after being insulted at the OOT Church by some English soldiers, William Wallace and his friend Sir John Graham Junior, sensed an ambush as they walked back down the High Street. They quickly fled into one of the 'closes' (alley off High Street), and because of the of the width, stood back to back and fought off the English soldiers, leaving around 50 dead or dying. He fled to this house pursued by the English.



Marion tried to delay the English from entering to give William time to escape through the back. When Marion refused to tell Hesselrigg where William was hiding, he callously murdered her. William and his followers went into hiding at Cartland Crag, but when he heard the English governor had killed Marion, William Wallace was incensed.

The same night, he and his men crept into Lanark Castle, Wallace killing Hesselrigg in his bed and giving the order to slaughter the whole garrison. This was the spark that led to the revolt and the victory of the Battle of Stirling Bridge in September 1297.

King Edward's attitude to Wallace is best summed up in the following statement:

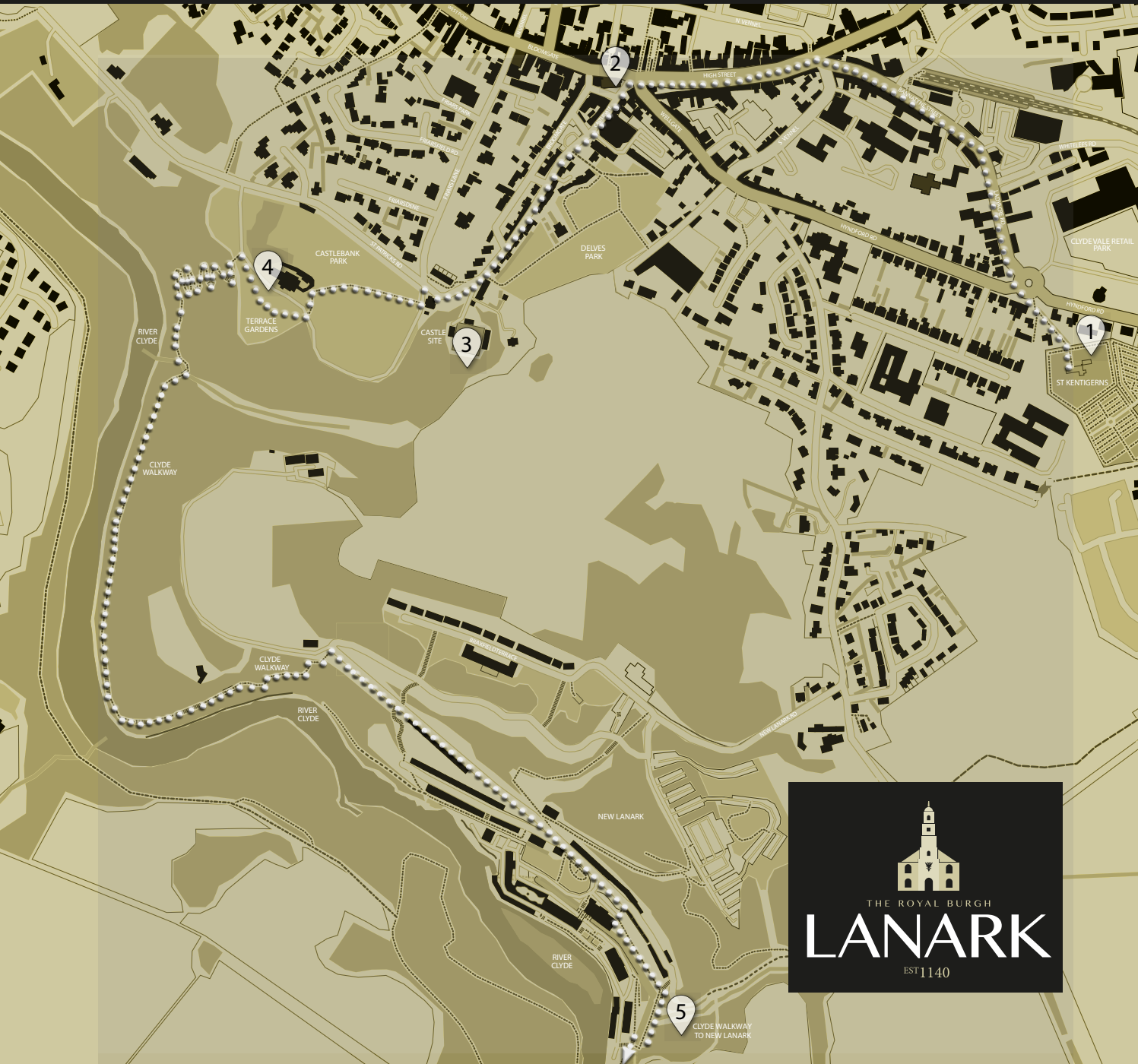
'No words of peace are to be held out to William Wallace in any circumstance whatsoever unless he places himself utterly and absolutely in our will.'

Sir John Mentieth betrayed William Wallace to the English who hung, drew and quartered him at Smithfield, London on Monday August 23rd 1305.

There is a wreath laying ceremony here annually.

# William Wallace - so what do you know about him?

If you follow in his footsteps you will experience a wonderful walk through our town and discover the legend of Wallace's Lanark!





### 3 Lanark Castle

The bowling green at the bottom of the Castlegate is on the site of **Lanark Castle** which dates back to King David I (1124 to 1153).

The natural earth mound was surrounded by a timber structure, forming a defensive fortress. The castle was regularly used as the King's residence during the medieval period. Robert the Bruce held a court in the castle in 1321. The mound was used for military drills and grazing until the 18th century when it was reduced in height and by 1760 a bowling green was established.

This is the site where William Wallace killed the English sheriff, Hesselrigg, after the death of his family. He split his skull to the collar bone with his massive 2 handed sword!

This is where William Wallace first drew his sword to free his native land.

## 4 The Escape and The William Wallace Memorial Garden

In the 13th Century, the lands surrounding Lanark castle would be rich forests, meadows and rivers - a rich hunting ground - and ideal cover for William Wallace and his followers to escape after the carnage and ravaging of the castle.

We can imagine them escaping through the lush vegetation to the river Clyde, making their way through this area after his exploits at Lanark Castle.

The Wallace Memorial Rose Garden has been created through the generosity of Border Biscuits Community Trust which has funded the purchase of 100 'Freedom' Roses and 100 'Braveheart' Roses as a permanent memorial to Wallace .

The roses are planted inside the shape of a giant shield, and at its centre you will find an awesome 6 foot wood carving of Sir William Wallace.





## 5 The Hiding Place - The Cave



Around the Royal and ancient town of Lanark there are numerous caves reputed to be 'Wallace's Cave', in fact we even have a local pub called 'The Wallace Cave'!

After the onslaught at Lanark Castle, William Wallace and his followers escaped to take cover and lie low in a cave just off the river Clyde at New Lanark.

After leaving the Wallace Rose Garden, follow the Clyde Walkway to the river and then go upstream to New Lanark.

When you reach New Lanark follow the Badger signs which will take you to the Falls of Clyde. The last stop on the Wallace Trail is at the Corra Linn (Falls of Clyde) viewpoint. This is close to the cave where Wallace is reputed to have hidden after slaughtering the English Governor at Lanark Castle.

Unfortunately it is not possible to visit the actual cave as it is too dangerous but you will see a picture of it on the last Trail sign.

# Lanark Coat of Arms



Lanark's Coat of Arms, is mostly described as a double headed eagle.

It now seems that the double headed eagle, probably replaced a bird of prey, a falcon of some sort, perhaps a peregrine, with a bell in its claw. This was around 17th century.

Lanark was a popular place for Scottish Kings to hunt, especially William the Lion, King James 2nd and King James 3rd. In 1488 the young King James 4th, visited Lanark just after his crowning in June of that year. He was presented with a horse from the town and amusements were provided during his visit. The story is that he was entertained by Besse Bertram during his stay, but was she a dancer, an innkeeper or a 'mistress'? Who knows! But Back to the Coat of Arms!

All the images on the coat of arms perhaps pointed to a hunting theme:

- The bird of prey
- The hounds
- The fish

The fish, a trout or salmon, with a ring, perhaps relates to the legend of St Kentigern, when the ring of a King's wife was found in the belly of a fish. The coronet at the top depicts that Lanark is a Royal Burgh, a status we know since 1140.

There are 17 March Stones (boundary stones) which are inspected annually, mostly on horseback, during Lanark's Lanimer Week celebrations in June.

This is carried out by a Lord Cornet, chosen yearly, accompanied by Cornets from previous years. This annual perambulation, allows Lanark to retain its Royal Burgh status.

## Where is Lanark?

Lanark is 25 miles southeast of Glasgow and 28 miles southwest of Edinburgh. From Glasgow and Edinburgh follow the M8 to junction 6 and then the A73 via Newmains and Carluke. Alternatively follow the M74 south to junction 7 and then the A72 to Lanark by the Clyde Valley tourist route.

## By train

From Glasgow Central via Motherwell. From Edinburgh Waverley to nearest town, Carluke or Carstairs, then bus link to Lanark. More details: [www.scotrail.co.uk](http://www.scotrail.co.uk) and [www.travelinescotland.com](http://www.travelinescotland.com)

## By bus

Lanark is connected to other Lanarkshire towns and Glasgow by an excellent bus network. More details: [www.travelinescotland.com](http://www.travelinescotland.com)

## Toilets available for use by the public

- South Lanarkshire Council offices, South Vennel.
- South Lanarkshire Leisure Harry Smith Centre, South Lanarkshire Leisure Swimming Pool, both in Thomas Taylor Avenue, behind Rail and Bus Station.
- Lanark Library, Hope Street.
- Tesco, Gallowhill.
- Memorial Hall, St Leonards Street.

## Tourist Information

Lanark Tourist Information Centre, Horsemarket, Ladyacre Road. Phone: 01555 661661. Or alternatively visit: [www.visitlanarkshire.com](http://www.visitlanarkshire.com) or [www.lanark.co.uk](http://www.lanark.co.uk)

Thanks to Eleanor McLean



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