



# Lauder

*Town Trail*





## INTRODUCTION

*Lauder is situated beside the River Leader on one of the oldest routes between Edinburgh and England. It lies in a lush valley near the foot of the Lammermuir Hills. The earliest mentions of Lauder are when it was known as Lavedir (12-15th century), Loweder (c.1300) and Lawdir (1574). Lauder is in a perfect location for the visitor and local alike to enjoy the peace and beauty of the Borders.*

*This Town Trail has been set up by Scottish Borders Council, Scottish Borders Tourist Board (Land of Creativity), the Heritage Lottery Fund (Awards for All) and the Lauderdale Initiative Group. This trail is just one part of the Land of Creativity programme taking place in the Scottish Borders during 2000 as part of the UK wide Millennium Festival.*

*Land of Creativity celebrates the unique landscape of the Borders and the rich tradition of creativity it has inspired. Its aim is to encourage a further appreciation of the Borders literary and creative heritage, to inspire new talents and to create new interest in the culture and environment, amongst both residents and visitors.*

*Over the last few centuries, many important people have hailed from Lauder and left their mark not only in the town but all over the world. Visitors too have written much about the town including a travelling minstrel who liked the town so much that he wrote the ballad of 'Leader Haughs and Yarrow'. This famous song has been sung for many generations, possibly the most celebrated rendition being by 'Midsie Maggie' outside the Tower of London when she went to visit the Earl of Lauderdale who was imprisoned there in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.*

*The trail is approximately 2km (1.25 miles) long and takes about 1 hour to complete. Those with less time to spare may wish to reduce this by referring to the trail map in the centre pages. The trail starts and finishes at the New Leader Leisure Centre in Mid Row.*

*In order to guide you, numbered plaques are situated along the route at specific points of interest. Information relating to them can be found within this leaflet. Please note that many of the sites on the trail are private houses and we would ask you to respect the privacy of the residents.*

*We hope that you enjoy walking the Town Trail and that you will have a pleasant stay in Lauder.*

*Lauder Seal:*

*The seal of the Burgh represents the Virgin with the Holy Child in her arms. The head of each figure is surrounded by a corona, or halo - thus indicating the pre-Reformation period as the date of origin of the seal.*

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Lauder is an ancient town and was known in the 12<sup>th</sup> century as a 'Kirktown'. The town received several visits from royalty of both Scotland and England. William the Lion granted Lauder a Royal Charter in the late 12<sup>th</sup> / early 13<sup>th</sup> Century, and King James IV, who frequently held court in the town, renewed this in 1502.

In the early 14<sup>th</sup> century, Sir James Douglas, confidant of King Robert I, assumed control of Lauderdale when he was granted the barony (c.1325). By 1455, the Douglas family had grown too powerful for the liking of King James II and consequently they were stripped of their power and the Earl of Douglas charged with treason. It was after this that Lauder became a Royal Burgh.

In 1482, with an army besieging Berwick, Lauder church was the venue of the famous conference that led to the capture and the eventual death of King James III. More interested in the arts and architecture, King James did not pay too much attention to governing Scotland nor to the traditional power structures. This caused his nobles no end of concern and so during this conference six of his favourite courtiers were seized by jealous barons and were hanged "over the bridge of 'Lather' (Leader) before the King's eyes". The siege of Berwick was never lifted and Berwick has been part of England ever since.

An artillery fort was built by the English at Lauder in the late winter and spring of 1548,

during the Rough Wooing. It was constructed to relieve English garrisons that were occupying parts of south-east Scotland. The fort was one of four with Roxburgh, Eyemouth and Dunglass which were all built around the same time.

These forts were still held by the English and included in the Treaty of Bologne (March 1550), by which it was agreed, by France and England, that they should be surrendered, demolished and never again fortified. The fort in Lauder was surrendered as part of the peace treaty on 10 April 1550, having been besieged by Scottish forces from late February of that year onwards.

A contemporary plan of the fort was drawn in October 1549 for the 5th Earl of Rutland. From this it can be seen that the fort was built on the edge of the river terrace, in the space occupied by Thirlestane Castle today.

From 1567, Lauder was regularly represented at Parliament in Edinburgh. Prior to 1707, the burgh was outright in its condemnation of the proposed union of the Parliaments. After the union, the burgh's position on one of the main north-south routes through the Borders led to an increase in trade in Lauder. The burgh subsequently went through a period of expansion as the population increased and by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were over two thousand inhabitants and twenty inns.

In 1745, Prince Charlie lodged at Thirlestane Castle on his way to invade England. In the centre of Lauder there is a house known as Cope's House where Sir John Cope is said to have lodged while fleeing from Prestonpans.

Although there are no records of when it was built, or of any repairs, it is said that Lauder was in the past surrounded by a burgh wall with gates at both the West and East Port. (Unfortunately, all traces of this wall had been removed by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century). The burgh still preserves its original medieval form of a single main street and two back lanes, a layout

at one time typical of many small Scots market towns, which may support the claim of a burgh wall.

Lauder escaped massive expansion during the Industrial revolution. Although most of the houses date from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, extensive backfilling of the back garden areas did not occur. Expansion in Lauder has taken the form of adding more storeys to the buildings. Good examples of this can be seen at 4 The Avenue and 31 East High Street.



### **Leader Leisure Centre (1)**

The start of the Lauder Town Trail is at the new Leisure Centre in Mid Row. This building was formerly an agricultural workshop and then a factory before being converted for leisure use in 1999. The information centre in front of the leisure centre was formerly the smithy. The Leader Leisure centre was officially opened in March 2000 by HRH Princess Anne and is run by the local charitable Trust.

Turn left on leaving the Leisure Centre and follow Mid Row until you reach Mill Wynd on your left hand side.

Corn mills were an important feature of the burgh's medieval economy and it was known that the de Moreville family granted tithes from Lauder mills to Dryburgh Abbey in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Although there is no longer a mill on this site, the name still remains.

### **No 1 Mill Wynd (2)**

This was the police station and cells from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century until the 1950's when it became a private residence.

### **No 3 Mill Wynd – Tower House**

This is reputed to be the site referred to in the sasine of Robert Lauder in 1568 as "*The manor place, tower and fortalice, houses, yards, orchards (etc) bounded by the back of the burgh wall on the south*". This building is thought to have been occupied until about 1649. Lauderdale family accounts record the employment of James Bennet, mason, for 'taking down' the old tower of Lauder (1699-1701) and removing the foundations at a cost of £133 6s 6d.

Tower House was built as a manse for the Free Kirk which stood at the bottom of Kirk Wynd.

Crossing over Mill Wynd you will find Lauder Kirk on your left hand side.

### **Lauder Kirk (3)**



*Lauder Kirk*

The original kirk for Lauder was outside the town boundary, near Thirlestane Castle and was built by Richard de Moreville in the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1617, John, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Lauderdale petitioned the King (James VI) to have the kirk re-located at its present site although it was not until 1673 that work commenced.

The Duke of Lauderdale erected the present church in Lauder in 1673. The church underwent repairs in 1822 and again in 1864. There is an earlier chapel at Thirlestane Castle which was originally the private chapel of the Castle, but was used as the parish church while the new church, (that of 1673), was being built.

The building was designed by Sir William Bruce, master mason for Holyrood House in Edinburgh, whilst he was working on Thirlestane Castle. It takes the form of a Greek cross with all four arms or transepts being of equal length. The central crossing is square until it reaches the ridge; an octagonal spire then

surmounts it. An elegant tripartite window at first floor level lights each transept of the kirk. Notice above the entrance, the castellated parapet; the entrance looks like a fortified building. The two extensions, which house the staircases, were built in 1820. Within the kirk is a Chinese style Chippendale pulpit.

In the turbulent years of the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, there was a struggle for control of Scotland's religion. The minister for Lauder Parish between 1638 and 1649 was James Guthrie. He was known locally as the '*little man that could not bow*'. He was also a fanatical witch hunter and it was said that during his time in office, the Town Hall had a waiting list for women waiting to be tried for witchcraft! Guthrie was vehement in his opposition to the '*Engagement*' where the Church of Scotland sided with King Charles I and in 1638, he signed The Covenant. After the restoration of the monarchy he was tried for high treason and executed (1661). His last words were said to be "*The Covenants, the Covenants shall yet be Scotland's reviving*".



*The vestry with former cart opening for the Hearse*

Within the churchyard (South West wall) a watchtower was erected in 1830 to prevent a repeat of the body snatching raid by the resurrectionists. Unfortunately, all remains of this have recently been removed. The church was refurbished in 1973 for its tercentenary.

Also of interest is the Hearse House and vestry on the corner of Mill Wynd which is accessed from the churchyard. The arch headed opening onto Mid Row was once the housing for the church hearse. This building was built in 1831.

#### **Town Hall (4)**

On exiting the churchyard, you will see Lauder Town Hall in front of you.



*Lauder Town Hall*

Lauder Town Hall was formerly the town Tolbooth. The building that stands today dates from 1735. Typically Scottish in its simplicity of detailing, the doorway is emphasised by the steps, which rise to the entrance of the hall, above which is a clock tower. The original clock from the tower was removed to Mellerstain Castle near Earlston and built into the gable of the stable block there. The stairway was originally walled although iron railings later replaced these.

Originally, the Tolbooth was where traders paid rent for trading in the burgh and where tolls were collected from travellers passing through Lauder. In later years, the ground floor was used as a jail (most notably for the imprisonment of witches), with the upper floor being used as the court. This upper floor still bears the wooden slots in the walls to take the

bar to which the accused was called to receive justice.

The ground floor of the building had three vaulted cells, one of which was below the stairs. This room had no windows to admit light and was known locally as 'the black hole'. The building was last used as a prison in 1840. Today, one of the former cells is used as the Burgh Registrar's Office, and Civil marriages are conducted in the Council Chambers on the first floor.

Many stories are told of old prison days, such as the prisoner who threatened that he would not stay longer unless he got better milk to his porridge.

### **Mercat Cross**

The Mercat Cross of Lauder was originally sited at the bottom of the stairs to the Tolbooth or Town Hall. Unfortunately no trace remains of this cross. However, the War Memorial may have been modelled on the original Cross.

Across the main road from the Town Hall is the Black Bull Hotel. (Take care when crossing the main road as it can often be busy).

### **Black Bull Hotel (5)**



*Black Bull Hotel*

The Black Bull Hotel dates from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The hotel is reputedly the site of a peel<sup>1</sup>, although no trace of such a building exists today. The land was sold in 1721 but the sasine does not mention a peel. The land was sold again in 1737 although this time the sasine does record a '*high house called the peel*'. It seems reasonable to assume therefore that a peel may have been built between 1721 and 1737 but it is strange that a defensive building should be built during a period of peace and prosperity for the burgh.

Whatever it's earlier history, what is certain, is that the Black Bull served as a coaching inn for many years and in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century it was one of the busiest inns in the Borders. After the Treaty of Union in 1707, Lauder was situated on one of the main north-south routes through the Borders providing a convenient stage where the coach horses could be changed.

One tale of the Black Bull refers to the son (Tom) of the head ostler who got into trouble and was sent to the Tolbooth jail. Tom was a post boy at the stables, and during the period of his incarceration, when all the other postboys were out, a post-chaise arrived, drawn by four horses with two postilions<sup>2</sup>. His father was in quite a quandary and eventually decided to run to the jail and plead that Tom be released in order to attend to his duties. He was duly granted his freedom but it was not long before he was imprisoned again for another offence in the town!

<sup>1</sup> Peel: A stone tower house.

<sup>2</sup> Postilions: boys who rode on the rear of stagecoaches to open doors and attend to the needs of the passengers.

The building was enlarged in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to include the section on the left. Here you can see two tripartite windows, the ground floor set have an elegant round headed Palladian

window with Gothic astragals. The earlier part of the building, to the right, is typically Scottish in detailing, notice the dormer windows at the eaves with their pedimented gables. It is conceivable that the Black Bull was once thatched.

To the left of the Black Bull Hotel is Rutherford's general store. Note the distinctive yellow sandstone quoins and dark whinstone walls.



*Rutherford's General Store*

At the top of the Avenue to the left of Rutherford's shop is the Eagle Hotel. In the past this Hotel was known as the Eagle Inn and was one of several inns providing stages for changing horses on the road between Edinburgh and the North of England as well as providing rest on the local routes to Jedburgh, Kelso and Duns.



*The Eagle Hotel*

## The Avenue (6)



*The Avenue*

The Avenue was once the main approach to Thirlestane Castle and was lined with trees. Beyond the gate at the bottom of the Avenue, this tree-lined path has recently been replanted and there are plans to re-open this route to the castle in the future.



*The site of Jonny Cope's*

## Jonny Cope's

Opposite the Avenue is the Flat Cat Gallery on the site of the house where John Cope is said to have made his first stop after the battle of Prestonpans in 1745 where the Government was defeated at the hands of the Jacobites. Cope was not a Jacobite but instead was a supporter of the King and his ideals.

Cope's House was said to have been one of the oldest buildings in the burgh and was a large two storey thatched tenement, with a cart way passing under it. The last known use for the property was an inn known as Jonny Cope's.

This house was demolished in c.1900 and was replaced by the short two and a half storey sandstone terrace that you can see today.

At the bottom of the Avenue on the left hand side there is an attractive two storey house (No 4), possibly a former estate building for Thirlestane Castle. In the past this building has been raised in height, note the line of the old roof on the west gable (side nearest the car park).



*No 4 The Avenue*

Opposite this is Lauder Volunteer Hall, which was built in 1865 as a drill hall for the 5<sup>th</sup> Berwickshire Volunteers. The people of Lauder bought the hall for the use of the town in the 1920s.

At the bottom of the Avenue, turn left and walk along Castle Wynd to The Row.

## Castle Wynd and Crofts Road



*Castle Wynd*

The streets now commonly known as Crofts Road and Castle Wynd were once known as Upper and Lower Backside respectively.

These roads surround Lauder and are believed to have been just outside the boundary of the burgh wall, therefore 'Backside' referring to the 'back' of the wall. These roads allowed passage to places beyond the town when the gates were closed at nightfall. It may also have been used as a medieval cowgate along which cattle were driven to pasture outwith the burgh settlement.

When you reach The Row, turn left in the direction of the main street again.

## The Row (7)



*The Row*



- 1 Leader Leisure Centre
- 2 No1 Mill Wynd
- 3 Lauder Kirk
- 4 Town Hall
- 5 Black Bull Hotel
- 6 The Avenue
- 7 The Row
- 8 No21 The Row
- 9 No4 The Row
- 10 West Port
- 11 48 West High Street
- 12 Symington Place
- 13 22-26 West High Street
- 14 Lauder Primary School
- 15 Lord Lauderdale's School
- 16 Factors House
- 17 East Port
- 18 Kirk Wynd

- i** Information
- P** Parking

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'The Row', was formerly known as 'Rotten Row' and is situated on the east side of Lauder's main street.

'The Row' was, until 1823, part of a road which led through Lord Lauderdale's policy to the Easter Road at Norton.

Two notable houses in The Row are Nos 4 and 21.

Walking up towards the main street, No 21 is on your right hand side.

#### **No 21 The Row (8)**



*No.21 The Row*

No 21 The Row was the home of Dr John Wilson (1804-1875), minister of the West Kirk, who went to India as a missionary and founded Wilson's College. He was held in high esteem throughout India and was a close friend of Dr Livingstone.

Continue on up the street until you reach No 4 on the left hand side.

#### **No 4 The Row (9)**

No 4 The Row was built by the burghers in 1795 as a meeting house and church. It has subsequently been used as a school, joiners shop and more recently a house.



*No 4 The Row*

#### **"Sumer Tree"**

There are two entrances to The Row from the High Street and between these entrances stood in bye-gone days the "Sumer Tree". This "Sumer Tree" was a maypole. A single storey cottage on the High Street now occupies the site of the "Sumer Tree".

At the top of The Row, turn right, this was once the West Port to Lauder burgh.



*West Port*

## West Port (10)

The West Port was renowned for Bailie William Lauder at the West Port who was slain by the Earl of Homes men who had been pursuing him. He took refuge in the Town Hall then the tolbooth and they set fire to it in order to "burn" him out (1606).

In the centre of the road, you will notice Lauder War Memorial.

## War Memorial



*War Memorial*

Lauder war memorial stands at the crossroads of West High Street and The Loan. The memorial is constructed upon a ramped brick base in the middle of the road and consists of a granite shaft topped by a lion rampant. The memorial was erected in 1923.

Not far from the War Memorial on the Edinburgh Road is Waterloo Place.

One of the former residents of Waterloo Place was a man named Thomas Dickson. Thomas was a veteran of the Battle of Waterloo and suggested the name for the area. He is buried in Lauder Churchyard.

Turn now at the war memorial and look over to your left to the row of houses known as The Loan.

## The Loan



*The Loan*

The Loan was originally the ground for communal grazing and the route to Lauder Common.

The road was originally in front of the buildings here and all the land to the right would have been grass.

Tales of the herdsmen are still told in the burgh, the account below tells of the everyday movement of cattle for grazing

*'In early morning, the cowherd starts from the east end of Lauder, blowing a horn, and, from the various byres, the members of his herd troop out, until he has in front of him some eighty beasts at the west end of the town. These he drives to the Common, and tends them there all the day. On the return, the cattle enter*

*through their own gate without any prompting from the herdsman.'*

The building on the right hand side of the war memorial (now a medical centre) was formerly known as 'Loanside', as it was the building 'to the side' of the Loan.

### **Lauderdale Hotel**



*Lauderdale Hotel*

Also in this area is the Lauderdale Hotel. This building was built in c. 1900 as a Temperance Hotel. It is constructed from local stone from Heriotside quarry up Burnhill.

On leaving the War Memorial, turn back towards the main street and this time walk along the main road in the direction of the Market Place.

Directly on your right at the junction of Crofts Road and West High Street is a white house (No 78 West High Street). This property was the Beadle's House (church officer) for the United Presbyterian Church (see Kirk Wynd).

Cross over Crofts Road and look over the High Street towards the large whinstone built structure with blue doors. This is the Masonic Lodge for Lauder.

Carry on down West High Street and again look over to your left to Nos 47-51 West High Street. Note how they are set back from the roadside. This area was once called Dawson's Brae after a local doctor called Dr Dawson who used to live at the centre house, No 49.

To the right hand side of this property, down a short lane, is No 43 West High Street.

### **43 West High Street**

No 43 West High Street is a fine example of a 19<sup>th</sup> century single storey cottage of whinstone rubble, formed by merging two 3 bay cottages. This is a category B listed building with original internal features.

This property was recently featured in the Scottish Civic Trust 'Buildings at Risk' register and was shown on National TV in an attempt to find a restoring owner. The property was purchased in 1999 and work is underway to make the property habitable once again.

On the right hand side of the street opposite No 43 is No 48 West High Street.

### **J Hardie Electrician, 48 West High Street (II)**



*48 West High Street*

In the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century this property became the library where 476 volumes were in stock and evening lectures were held.

Cross over West High Street to Nos 31 and 33 on the left hand side. The National Trust (as part of their Little Houses scheme) restored these properties in 1979. Note the tiny close between these buildings. This leads through to another property behind the main High Street.

Stay on the left hand side of the road until you reach Symington Place.

### Symington Place (12)



*Symington Place*

Symington Place features some interesting architectural features such as the 'cat-hole' at the rear of the houses separating them from the properties in the High Street.

All the houses in Symington Place face east and there is no common gable with the houses in West High Street. At one time this was a common building pattern in the burgh and there are still other examples to be found. This building arrangement facilitated a passage in front of the house to access the barn or byre at the rear of the building plot. Building a house in this manner meant that a space of approximately 12 inches had to be left between the back of the property to allow for a drop from the eaves of the thatch (for water run off) to the back, but kept within the owners limits. This space was often called a "cat-hole".

### "Cat-holes"



*"Cat Hole"*

A "cat-hole" is a small aperture of some 9-12 inches wide, insufficient to allow a person to pass through, but convenient for the accumulation of rubbish! A very small or 'mean' gable might occupy the site of the "cat-

hole", but the houses separated by the "cat-holes" in Lauder have a separate and independent gable.

Cross back over the main road and continue travelling towards the Market Place until you reach Manse Road. Before turning right up this road, note the buildings on the corner facing you.

### **22-26 West High Street (13)**



*22-26 West High Street*

Nos 22-26 West High Street all have 19<sup>th</sup> century frontages including one with an oriel (projecting) window feature. These properties were sensitively repaired and revived by the Scottish Historic Buildings Trust in 1989.

Turn right and continue up Manse Road until it meets with Crofts Road. Crofts Road, as was noted earlier, was once outside the burgh wall and was used as an access road when the burgh gates were locked.

Turn left onto Crofts Road and follow this road until you reach a large stone building with unusual white oriel windows. This property is now a private house but it was once the Relief Church, formed in 1752.

This church joined with other seceders (anti-burghers etc) to form the United Presbyterian Church (now demolished).

Take care when walking along Crofts Road, as there is no defined pedestrian space.

### **Lauder Primary School (14)**

Further along Crofts Road is Lauder Primary School. This was once two schools, the Free Kirk School (1844) and the Parish Church School (prior to 1657). These stood where the two modern additions now stand. The older building in the middle was built to join the two schools after the 1872 Education Act, which promoted free education for all.

Continue along Crofts Road to the junction where Crofts Road meets Mill Wynd.

Cross over Mill Wynd to Factors Park.

### **Factors Park**

The land to your right where the new housing is now situated was once a grassy field known as the 'Factors Park'. This land would have been managed by the factor that lived in the house at the far end of the East Port.

### **Lord Lauderdale's School (15)**



*Lord Lauderdale's School*

Continuing along Factors Park there is an interesting building on the left hand side with diamond paned windows. This was Lord Lauderdale's Industrial School. A report from 1835 tells of 140 children in a room approximately 11m x 5m (36'x16 $\frac{1}{2}$ ').

Continue to follow this road to the junction with East High Street.

### Factors House (16)



*Factors House*

Note the building on your left hand side at the bottom of Factors Park. This was the house and office of the estate factor and it was from here that they would have managed Thirlestane Estate.

*From here, the trail can be extended to take in a visit to Thirlestane Castle. If you wish to extend your walk please refer to the notes on pages 18-19.*



*Maitland Family Arms*

Turn left and walk past the high wall of the Factors House. Note the coat of arms above the gate on your left. This is part of the Maitland family arms from Thirlestane Castle.

### East Port (17)

The narrowest part of the A68 road from Edinburgh to Newcastle is at the former East Port in Lauder. The house that stands on the right hand side of the road (No 49) was rebuilt back from the original building line to help to widen this part of the road to enable the safe passage of two vehicles.

Just before this house, turn right to rejoin Castle Wynd. Follow this road along as far as Kirk Wynd on your left hand side.

### Kirk Wynd (18)

Kirk Wynd once led to the Old Kirk in the grounds of Thirlestane Castle and the name has remained ever since.

Note the building on the corner of Kirk Wynd. This building was formerly known as the Free Church (1842) and was dedicated by Dr Wilson (see The Row) whilst on furlough (holiday) from Bombay. This church was then amalgamated with the United Presbyterian Church to form the United Free Church in 1910. This church was built at the far end of the High Street near the West Port but has subsequently been demolished. This property in Kirk Wynd was gifted to the Parish Church in 1910 from the Earl of Lauderdale. This building is now used for industrial purposes.

Note the interesting arch headed windows in the side gable.

Continue to the top of Kirk Wynd to meet East High Street again. Directly opposite is Mid Row. Cross the road and through the gap in the houses to return to the start point of the Trail.

Being a short walk, not everything in Lauder can be covered but it is hoped that this Trail has given you a flavour of the rich and interesting history of this Border Burgh.

If you have enjoyed this walk, why not try some of the other walks starting from Lauder Market Place. Details of these can be obtained by contacting Scottish Border Paths (01835-824632) or by picking up a leaflet in one of the many Tourist Information Centres throughout the Borders.

Other Town Trail guides have been published for the following areas: Duns, Eyemouth, Galashiels, Hawick, Jedburgh, Melrose, and Peebles.

#### Possible extensions:



*Thirlestane Castle*

It is possible to extend this walk with a visit to Thirlestane Castle. To do this turn right at the bottom of Factors Park when you meet the A68. Cross the road and continue along the road out of town until you reach Wyndhead Lodge on your left. This lodge is distinctive by its large red gate piers. Turn left and follow the path to Thirlestane Castle. Please note that there is a charge for entry to the Castle and grounds. The current opening times (2001) are as follows:  
April to October inclusive  
Daily except Saturdays  
10:30am-4:15pm.

To rejoin the trail, follow this path back to the main road and then to the East Port.

### Thirlestane Castle

Just outside the burgh, on the banks of the River Leader, is Thirlestane Castle, seat of the Earls of Lauderdale. The Earls of Lauderdale are Hereditary Saltire Banner Bearers of Scotland.

The central east-west turreted block of the castle dates from 1590 and is built in the centre of a large English artillery fortification. Sir William Bruce, the Kings master mason, according to the plans of Robert Mylne, transformed it for the Duke of Lauderdale during 1670-7. Robert Mylne also employed several foreign craftsmen to carry out the decorative plastering inside the Castle. Several of these workers had previously worked on Holyrood House in Edinburgh.

The interior plasterwork is of high quality and on the upper stories early 17<sup>th</sup> century plaster can be found. The building was altered again in 1840, particularly at roof level, by William Burn and David Bryce to give the castle its distinctive fairytale skyline.

There is a great debt owed to Sir Walter Scott for the preservation of many of the Border ballads and none more so than 'Auld Maitland'. It is said that Sir Walter rode and tramped through the Borders to collect and write down all the fragments of old stories that he could find. 'Auld Maitland' is interesting as it includes Sir Walter's notes as editor of the piece in 1802.

'Auld Maitland' is thought to have been Sir Richard Maitland of Thirlestane who is said to have been in possession of the estate in 1250.

Further to the east of Thirlestane is Lauder East Mains Farm the childhood home of William Brockie.

William Brockie was born at Lauder East Mains on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 1811 and lived his whole life in the Borders. He was a great scholar and despite his initial employment in law and then teaching, he was a well-respected editor of several Border newspapers, most notably the Border Advertiser.

He also wrote several books about the Borders and was well known for his great knowledge of foreign languages and his great enthusiasm for botany in later life.



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