



CICERONI
T R A V E L

A SCOTTISH SURPRISE TREASURE HOUSES OF THE TWEED VALLEY

SUNDAY 21 – FRIDAY 26 JULY 2019 (6 DAYS)

LECTURER: TOM DUNCAN

£1685

- **Wonderful opportunity to visit one of Scotland's most picturesque regions**
- **The Tweed Valley has a remarkable selection of castles & country houses**
- **Private visits to houses normally not available to groups including the Duke of Sutherland's Mertoun**
- **Gardens will be at their mid-Summer best (always later up there!)**
- **Quiet hotel set in idyllic position above the River Tweed**



Traquair House, Tweed Valley

OVERVIEW

The River Tweed lies amidst spectacular scenery that has seen remarkable events in the shared history of Scotland and England. Consequently, this 'Border' country has long been fought over by the two kingdoms. Its castles and houses bear testimony not only to the tenacity of the great local families but also to their wide use of architectural styles. These mark the transition from a period of intense strife to one of peace and prosperity. Indeed, as most non-Scots when travelling north tend to bypass this marvellous part of the United Kingdom, its architecture, art collections and wonderful gardens are not that widely known.

The architectural styles range from the truly defensive castles of the Medieval period to the first hesitant introduction of classical motifs in the seventeenth century. After the Act of Union under Queen Anne, the usual procession of Palladian, Rococo and Neo-classical vocabularies all found their way north. In the nineteenth century, the influence of Sir Walter Scott led to great enthusiasm for a more 'eclectic' approach to using the past, culminating in the Scots 'Baronial' style of the Victorian period.

These houses were filled with remarkable collections of paintings and works of art. In truth, there is probably not in these islands such a concentration of masterpieces in so small an area as can be found in the Tweed Valley, and almost all are still in private hands. Of these collections, those held by the Duke of Buccleuch & Queensbury and the Duke of Sutherland stand apart in terms of their extraordinary range and quality. We shall have private access to both collections under 'connoisseur' viewing arrangements.

Traquair Castle represents a different aspect of the area's varied history, reflected in its wide range of historic contents. Paxton and Mellerstain retain their remarkable collections of furniture by Chippendale and paintings by Alan Ramsay. Monteviot presents different solutions to the problems of family life in historic interiors. The great 'unknown' house of the Borders, Marchmont, has just been spectacularly restored and we shall have a private visit, guided by the curator.

Equally fascinating will be the wonderful gardens and landscapes. Given that the seasons are a few weeks behind those of central and southern England, the dates should ensure a delayed 'flush' of Scottish abundance. Of these, the gardens at Kalzie, Monteviot and Carolside should be particularly splendid in late July.

This tour has been specially organised for the Patrons and Friends of the Banbury Museum and we shall be warmly welcomed by the owners, some of whom will host us with typical Scottish hospitality. The tour will be an unrivalled introduction to magnificent treasures, many of which are not seen by the public. If not a Patron or Friend of the Banbury Museum, please advise the CICERONI office that you would like to join the tour should there be space available.

We shall stay at the modestly comfortable and quiet 4* **Dryburgh Abbey Hotel**. The surrounding grounds sit next to the spectacular ruins of medieval Dryburgh Abbey, where both Sir Walter Scott and Field Marshall Lord Haig are buried.

ITINERARY OUTLINE

Day 1: Sunday 21 July - Participants should arrive independently at Dryburgh by late afternoon. A welcome drink will be followed by a group dinner in the hotel. Wine, water and coffee will accompany group lunches and dinners.

Day 2: Monday 22 July - Our morning will begin with a drive up the Tweed Valley to **Traquair**, surely one of the most romantic of houses? It has remained mostly unchanged since the eighteenth century and remains in family ownership. We then follow the Tweed upriver towards Peebles near where we shall visit **Kailzie** for a light group lunch, followed by a guided tour of its garden. This has been created by Lady Buchan-Hepburn and is an oasis of horticultural inventiveness. We return to the hotel and the evening will be free.

Day 3: Tuesday 23 July - Today we drive down the Tweed Valley to **Paxton**, a Palladian house by the Adam brothers, built for a branch of the Hume family. Hardly touched since built, it is full of fine furniture supplied directly by Thomas Chippendale with a good collection of family portraits. Throughout the house we shall find excellent Rococo and Neo-classical plasterwork. After a group lunch we travel to nearby **Marchmont House** for a private visit. Built for the Earl of Marchmont in the mid eighteenth century and long neglected, it has recently returned to private ownership and has been magnificently restored. We return to the hotel and the evening will be free.

Day 4: Wednesday 24 July - Our day will begin with a private visit to **Bowhill**, one of the Scottish seats of the Dukes of Buccleuch and Queensbury. The collections of the Montagu-Douglas-Scott family encompass three great ducal collections: those of the Montagu Dukes of Montagu from Boughton in Northamptonshire, the Douglas Dukes of Queensbury from Drumlanrig and the Scott Dukes of Buccleuch from Bowhill. Today, the contents of several of their London and country houses are divided between Bowhill, Boughton and Drumlanrig, so we shall have a busy morning as we trace our way through some of this amazing collection! The paintings include great masterpieces by Van Dyck, Claude, Canaletto and Raeburn, amongst others. The Mortlake and other tapestries are of museum quality, whilst the exquisite French and English furniture and porcelain complete the ensemble. There will be some free time in **Melrose** for lunch (not included) after which we drive the short distance to **Carolside Gardens**, famed for its roses, all of which surround a fine late Georgian House. We have a group dinner at our hotel.

Day 5: Thursday 25 July - We are lucky to have secured permission to visit **Mertoun**, the home of the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland. The fabled Sutherland collection is made up of extraordinary masterpieces and whilst the rarest pictures are on loan to the National Gallery of Scotland (Raphael, Titian, Rembrandt and Poussin), this private house has pictures of spectacular quality, including magical Claudes, one of the finest groups of Dutch paintings in private hands in Britain and furniture and decorative arts of majestic splendour. Lunch (not included) will be in **Melrose**. We continue to **Monteviot**, the home of the Marquess of Lothian. The house has been tactfully restored and remodelled in recent years to provide a splendid family home. There are fine paintings by, amongst others, Van Dyck and Daniel Mytens, and the gardens are particularly handsome. We return to the hotel and in the early evening drive over towards Melrose for dinner in a local restaurant, the **Hoebriidge**.

Day 6: Friday 26 July - This morning we depart the hotel in our own cars to visit privately **Mellerstain**, the magnificent house designed for the Earls of Haddington in two stages by William Adam and his son, Robert. For some, the house contains the best Adam interiors in Scotland - the Library *is* indeed one of his greatest creations while the other staterooms are almost as good. These hold a series of fine portraits by Allan Ramsay, Scotland's premier portraitist of the eighteenth century and some excellent furniture. We have our final group lunch in the house, after which we disperse.

PRACTICALITIES

Price £1685 (Based on 20-25 participants) **Deposit** £250

Single Supplement £75 (Dryburgh Double/Twin for Sole Use) £255 (Abbey Double/Twin for Sole Use)
Couples, or two sharing, to be in Abbey Rooms

Room Upgrade Deluxe Room £150 (per room, subject to availability)

Hotel 5 nights with breakfast at the 4* Dryburgh Abbey Hotel

Price includes 3 dinners & 3 lunches with wine, water & coffee, all local transfers (Days 2 – 5), entry fees & gratuities

Not included Travel to from Dryburgh Abbey Hotel, 2 dinners & 2 lunches



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