

ROSSLYN
CHAPEL 1446

FROM SOURCE TO SACRED

A Pilgrimage to Rosslyn Chapel

Route length: 20.9 km / 13 miles

Elevation: 668 ft

INTRODUCTION

This pilgrimage follows the route of the stone that was used to build Rosslyn Chapel, from its source in the earth into a sacred building of extraordinary beauty and mystery. The ancient landscape has been used and inhabited by people from pre-history yet it retains a wildness and vigour that lends itself to a journey of prayer and contemplation.

The route starts in the village of Carlops, and **Part 1**, an upland walk, along country roads through moorland with stunning views of the Pentland Hills, ends in Penicuik, where you can find local shops and cafés. **Part 2** takes you along footpath and cycleway through woodland and gentle riverside, till you reach the dramatic gorge of Roslin Glen and the last ascent to Rosslyn Chapel.

You can start your pilgrimage at any point; Carlops, Penicuik and Roslin all have public transport links. If you wish to visit Rosslyn Chapel at the end of your journey, please check www.rosslynchapel.com for opening times.

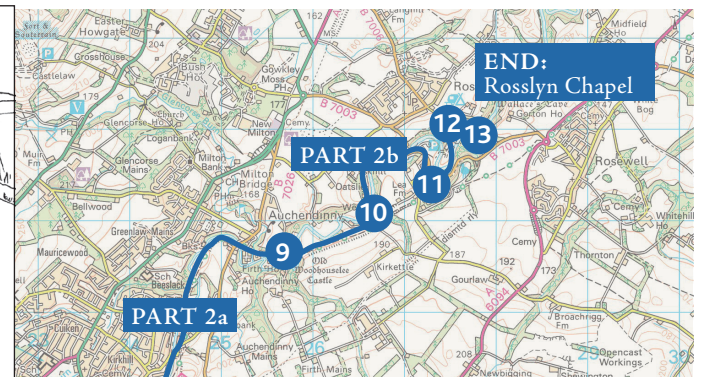
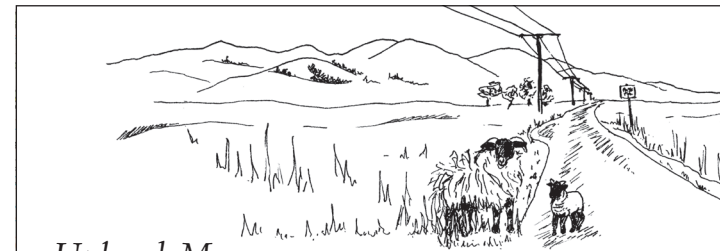


"Come wind, come weather
There's no discouragement
Shall make him once relent
His first avowed intent
To be a pilgrim"

John Bunyan, 1628-1688

Upland Moors

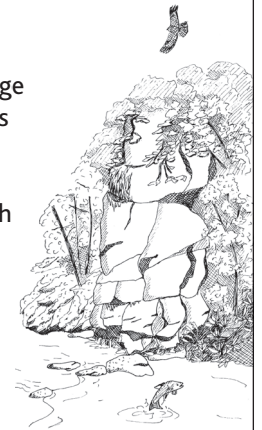
The landscape of this first section of the route is thought to have ancient associations with the church. Its history lives on in names such as Monk's Rigg, Monk's Burn and Spittal Hill. There was a "spittal" or hospital in the hills above Carlops where travellers could claim a night's rest. In medieval times hospitals were established and run by the church.



Roslin Glen

The dramatic gorge of Roslin Glen has inspired artists and writers over the centuries with its cliffs, rushing waters and verdant plant life.

It has also inspired mystical and spiritual associations through the ages and there are mysterious rock carvings that are thought to date to the Neolithic era or even earlier. The Glen provides a perfect setting for contemplation before you reach the Chapel.

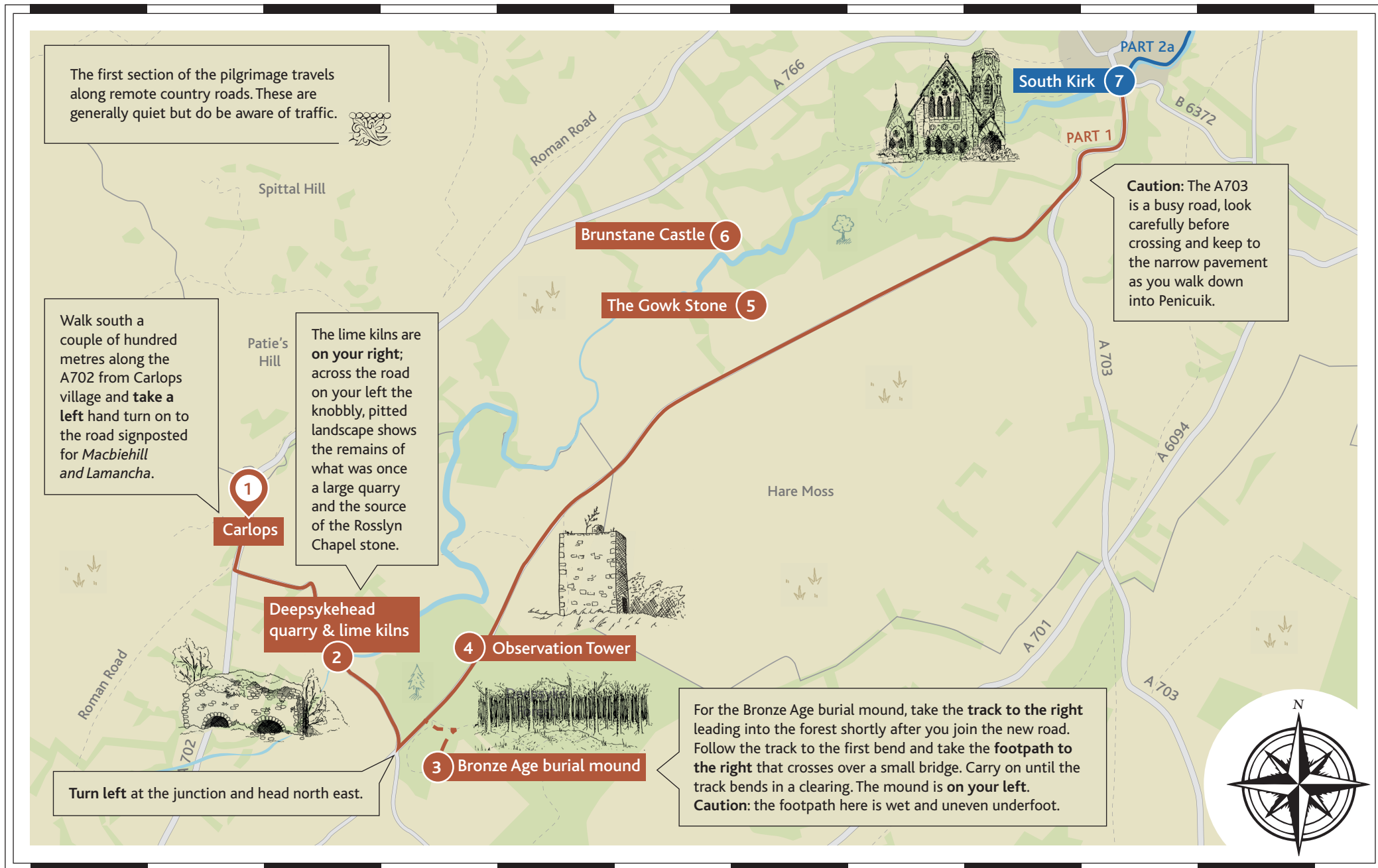


Part 1

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ROSSLYN CHAPEL 1446



Part 1

FROM SOURCE TO SACRED

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You should assess whether or not completing the pilgrimage is within your capability, and if you carry out the pilgrimage you should wear suitable footwear and clothing. Descriptions of the route in this leaflet are for guidance only and may become obsolete. Rosslyn Chapel Trust does not accept public liability in respect of injury, damage or loss sustained by anyone making use of the route shown and described in this leaflet.

1

CARLOPS

The name Carlops derives from "Carline's Loup" or witch's leap. Hundreds of years ago it was said that a witch lived here and could be seen flying on her broomstick at night. In the hills and countryside around Carlops are many springs, including a petrifying spring and a Chalybeate well. The area around Carlops is also the setting for Allan Ramsay's famous pastoral comedy "The Gentle Shepherd", first published in 1725.



3

BRONZE AGE BURIAL MOUND

(optional detour – dotted line)

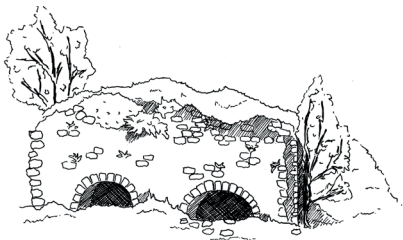
Although the landscape here looks bleak and lonely, it has been inhabited by people for thousands of years. A Bronze Age sword and axehead were found in the vicinity. Nearby in the forest is the site of a Bronze Age Cemetery – you can see the circular mound in the grass.

5

THE GOWK STONE

(seen in the distance)

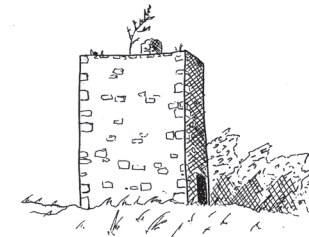
At a distance from the road you can see an ancient standing stone. It is named the "Gowk stone" – *gowk* being the Scots word for cuckoo. It seems that in ancient times cuckoos were plentiful in the Penicuik area, as several placenames derive from the word *gowk*. The sandstone monolith stands 2m high.



2

DEEPSYKEHEAD QUARRY & LIME KILNS

It is believed that the sandstone for Rosslyn Chapel came from this quarry site. Limestone for lime mortar was also excavated here – you can see the remains of lime kilns. The quarry was used until the late 1800s.



4

OBSERVATION TOWER

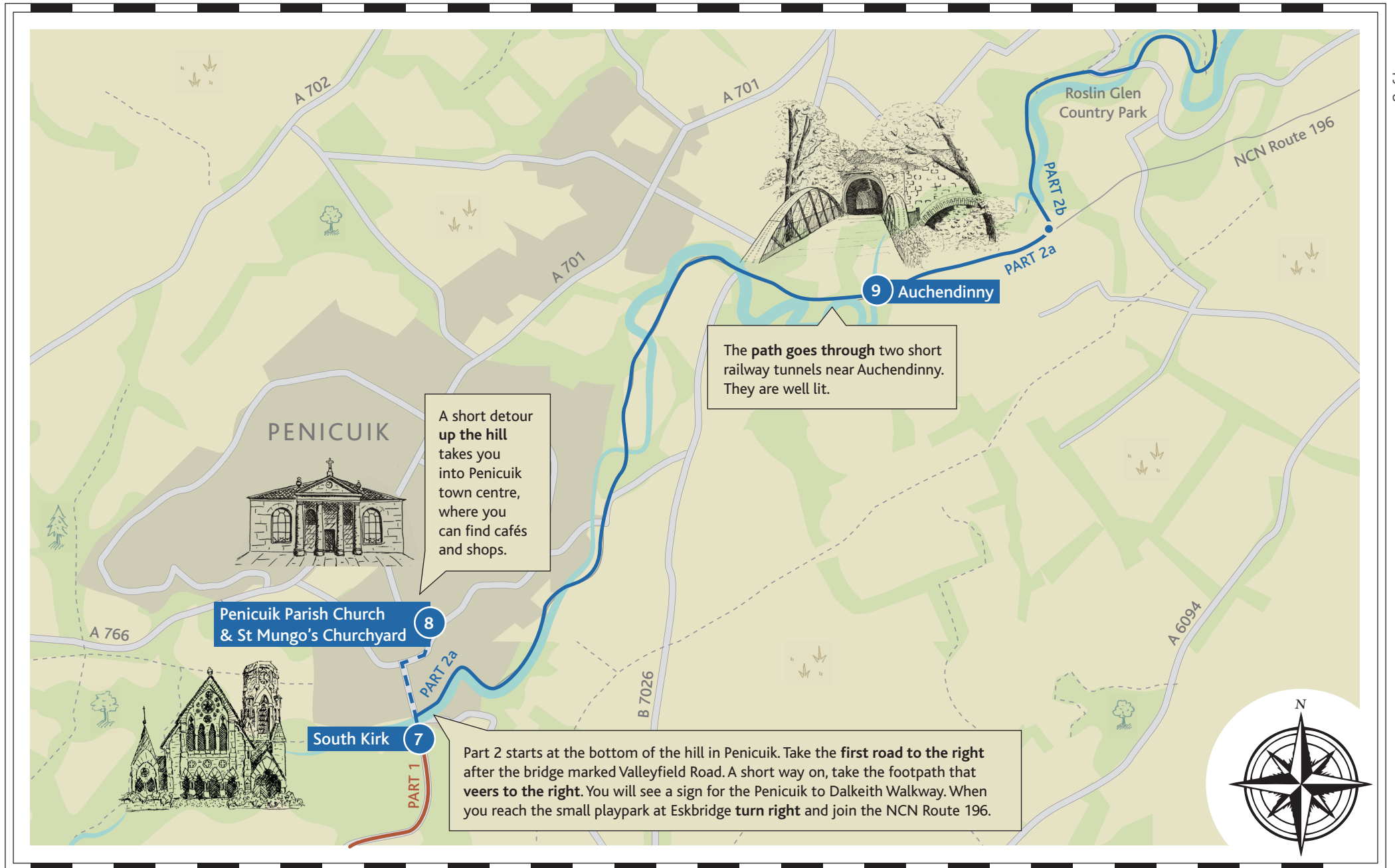
This tower dates from the 19th century and was an observation point for the building of the pipeline bringing water from Talla Reservoir to Edinburgh. You will also pass two observation pillars spread out along the pipeline on your left as you walk this stretch of road.

6

BRUNSTANE CASTLE

(seen in the distance)

Across the river North Esk you can see the ruins of Brunstane castle, a 16th century tower house. There are a number of ruined tower houses along this stretch of the river, which was once populated by a number of wealthy families.





7

SOUTH KIRK

On your left as you come into Penicuik is the "South Kirk", a Gothic-inspired church designed by Frederick Thomas Pilkington in 1863. The church is very unusual with its rugged stone finish and there are many beautiful details of foliage crowning the columns in the façade.

Pilkington also designed the two-storey complex of shop fronts and dwellings "Park End" that stand on the other side of the road as you walk into Penicuik centre.



8

PENICUIK PARISH CHURCH & ST MUNGO'S CHURCHYARD

(optional detour – dotted line)

The present church was built in 1773 by Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, 2nd baronet, who was a local landowner, politician, patron of the arts and an intellectual figure of the Scottish Enlightenment. Behind this little neo-classical building is the remains of an older church, which in its turn has remnants of a much older Romanesque building incorporated into it. This earlier Romanesque church may have been built in the 12th century.

On the steep bank behind the churchyard is a spring called St Mungo's Well (inaccessible). Mungo was a 'pet name' for St Kentigern, a 6th century missionary in the Kingdom of Strathclyde and the founder and patron saint of Glasgow.

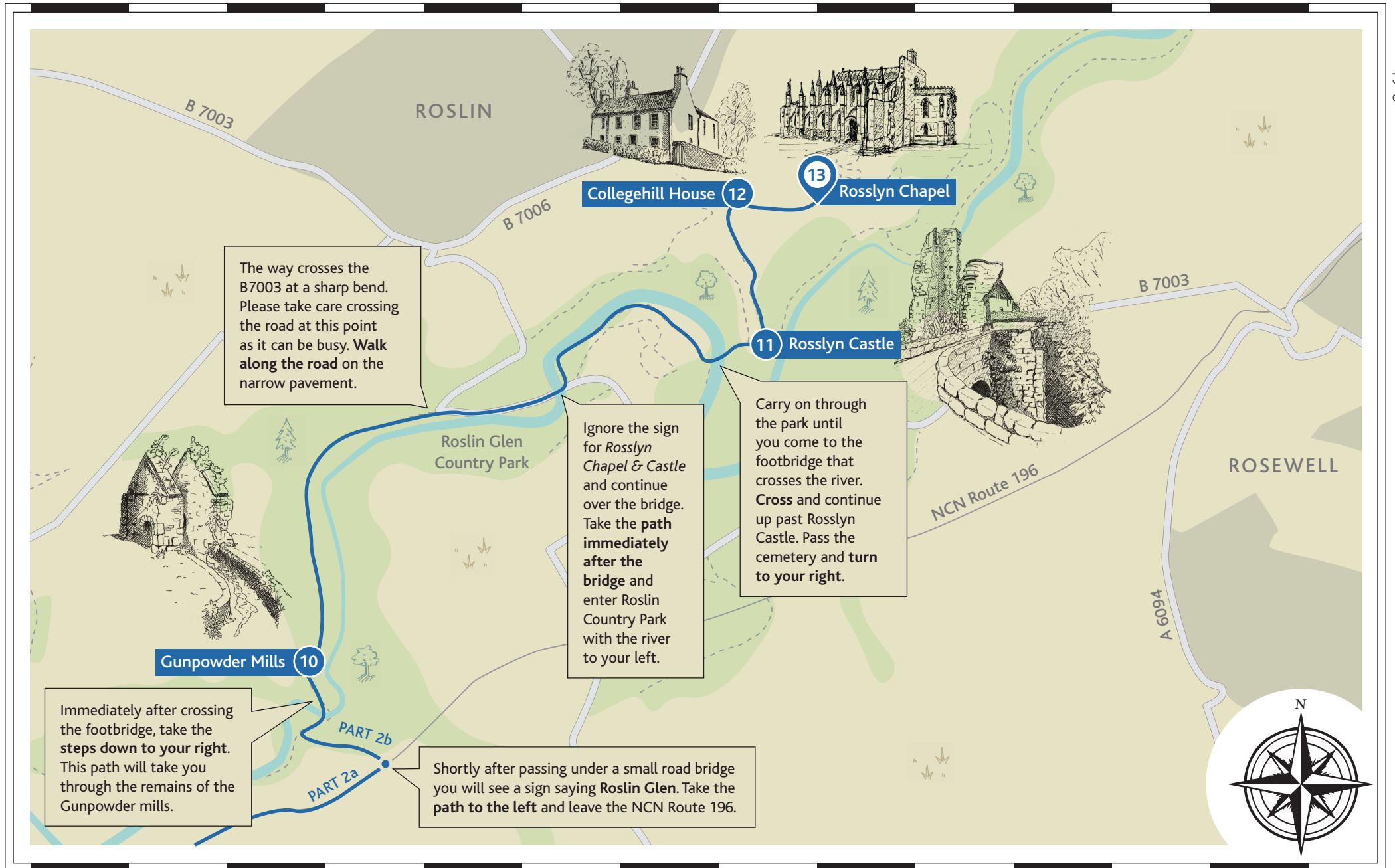


9

AUCHENDINNY BRIDGES

As you come into the quiet village of Auchendinny, you enter what was once a place of busy industry. Auchendinny was the site of Midlothian's last paper mill, which operated until 2004.

The approach is unusual, with the former railway bridge crossing the river and the road bridge crossing the railway.



Part 2b

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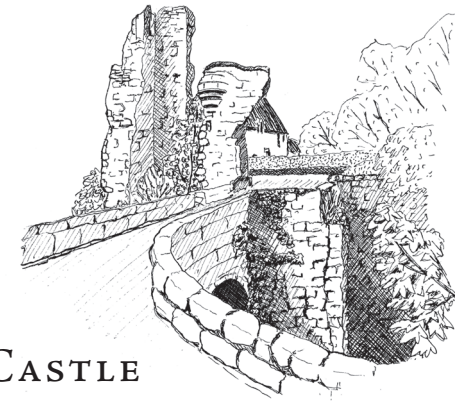
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10

GUNPOWDER MILLS

Roslin Glen is now a refuge for wildlife and contains a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However from 1804 to 1954 it was home to what was once the largest gunpowder factory in Scotland. The remains of the mills can still be seen and today look deceptively rustic.



11

ROSSLYN CASTLE

The last stretch of the pilgrimage takes a steep uphill route past Rosslyn Castle, the ancient seat of the Barons of Rosslyn. Rosslyn Castle has evolved over centuries and this castle probably replaced an even earlier one, situated nearby. The oldest part is the remains of the lamp tower by the bridge and this was probably built in 1304 after the Battle of Roslin. Most of the building that stands today dates from the 16th and 17th centuries, including the East Range which was remodelled in 1622 and now provides holiday accommodation.

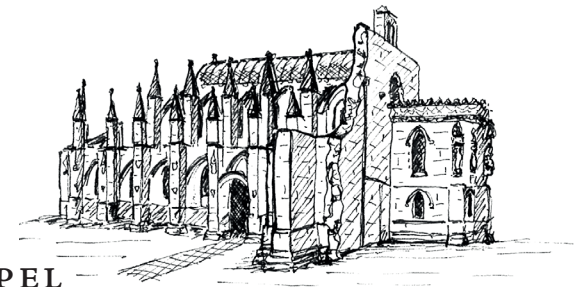
Note on spelling discrepancies: both the castle and the Chapel retain the old baronial spelling of "Rosslyn" while the spelling of the village and Glen have evolved into Roslin.



12

COLLEGEHILL HOUSE

As you approach the Visitor Centre you will pass Collegehill House. Taking its name from the "collegiate" status of the Chapel, it was built in 1660 to accommodate visitors and was in operation as an inn until 1866. Among its guests were Robert Burns, James Boswell and JMW Turner. Today it provides holiday accommodation.



13

ROSSLYN CHAPEL

At last you have arrived at Rosslyn Chapel! The Chapel was founded in 1446 by Sir William St Clair, 11th Baron, who originally envisaged an entire cathedral – the building you see today was originally intended to be the cathedral choir. The Chapel is a unique gem of gothic architecture covered in mysterious and intricate stone carvings inside and out. There is a path around the perimeter of the Chapel precinct which gives good views to the south side of the Chapel.