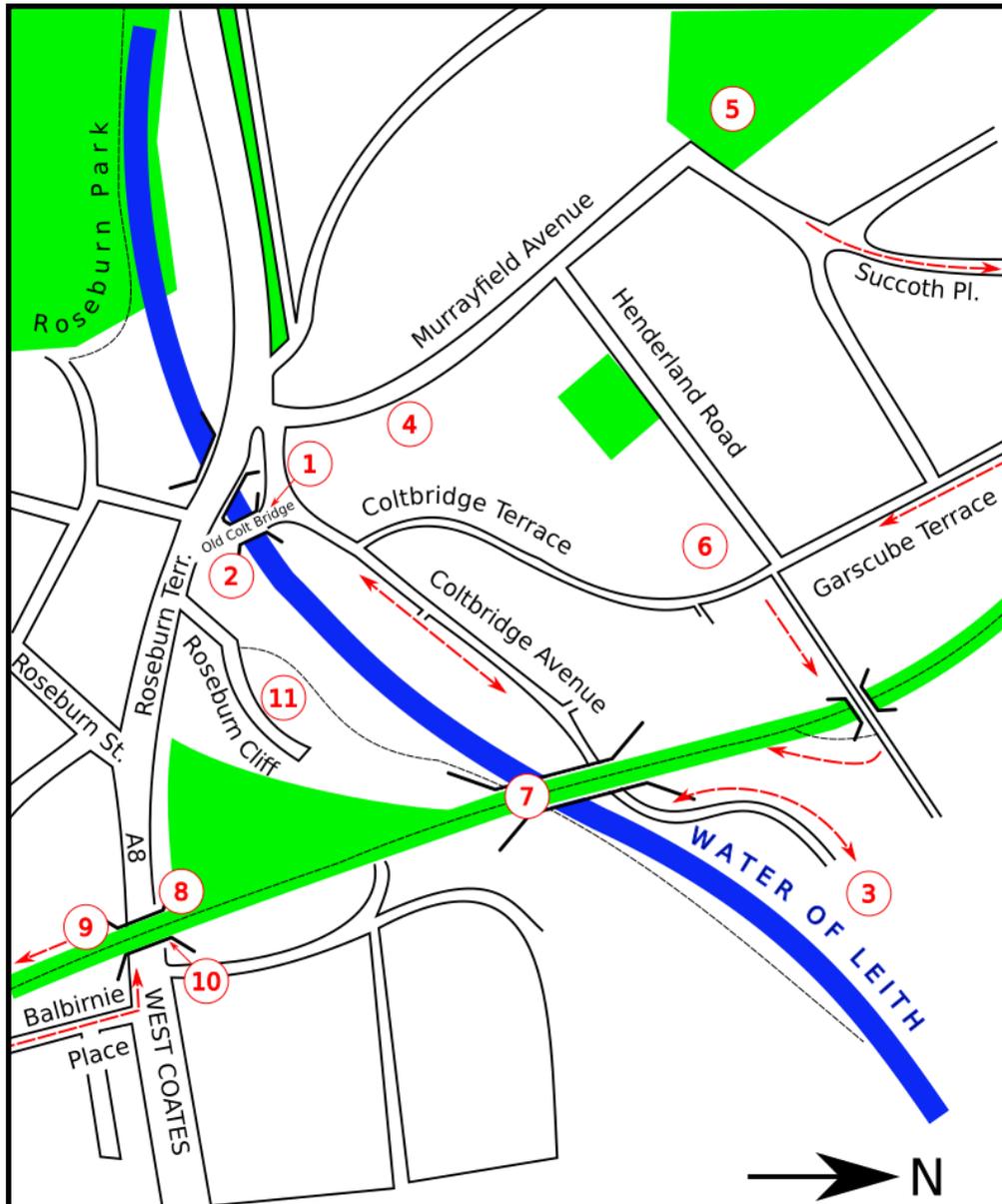


Roseburn/Murrayfield/Coltbridge Walk

Time: approximately 1 hour



Text/photos Rosie Bell

1. Old Colt Bridge Begin at the pedestrianised **Old Colt Bridge** (1766) at the west end of Roseburn Terrace opposite the Murrayfield Bar and running at an angle to the road bridge (with plaques commemorating its construction in 1841 and widening in 1930). The Old Colt Bridge dates back to the first turnpike road. On the east side is a plaque commemorating the “**Canter o’ Coltbridge**”.



In 1745 **Prince Charles Edward Stewart** and his **Jacobite** army were advancing towards Edinburgh from the west, while a detachment of dragoons was left in Corstorphine, about 1 mile west. Jacobite scouts advanced to check the strength of the enemy, and on seeing them, fired their pistols. The dragoons fled and later the Government army was seen retreating eastwards. The **Canter o’ Coltbridge** stuck in folk memory because thereafter it was obvious that Edinburgh would not be defended against the Jacobites.

2. Pape’s Cottages Stand by the plaque and look across the Water of Leith to Pape’s Cottages, distinctive in their white harling and red sandstone. They were built in 1894 for poor widows, funded by George Pape’s widow Jessie Paterson. The red sandstone plaque on the cottages reads: - 'In accordance with the will of George Pape of Coltbridge House these cottages were built for the use of three poor widows in all time coming'.



3. Caledonian Railway Viaduct At the north end of the bridge, turn right along Coltbridge Avenue. No. 48 was the old Granary and no. 50 was the old Mill, one of the many mills along the Water of Leith. The old mill-lade is culverted underground. Walk for another minute under the **Caledonian Railway** viaduct (1860) to Coltbridge Bowling Green. Stop and look back at the viaduct’s three spans, now supporting a cycle/walking path.



4. Murrayfield Avenue Retrace your steps and walk past **Old Colt Bridge** to continue along Murrayfield Place. Look up to your right for the striking facades on **Coltbridge Terrace** (1869). At the end take a sharp right into **Murrayfield Avenue**. Here are handsome terraced town houses built for the bankers and lawyers who moved into the area with the trains and the tram. On the east side at **11 Murrayfield Avenue** is **Coltbridge House**, originally the home of the Colt Mills owners. Dating from the eighteenth century, it was later lived in by

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George Pape, a former Receiver of Revenue in Dublin whose widow Jessie endowed **Pape's Cottages**.

5. Murrayfield House Walk to the top of the hill. On the bend you can see the grounds of **Murrayfield House**, (grade A listed) now a care home. It is an early Georgian house built by Archibald Murray, Sheriff Depute of Peeblesshire in 1734 with a later wing added in 1773. It was the home of various grand families who have given their names to the surrounding streets – the Henderlands, the Succoths. George Saintsbury, a notable literary critic, who held the Chair of English Literature at Edinburgh University, lived here from 1895-1899. His wine cellar was famous, as were his writings on wine.

6. St George's School Continue as the road bends right into **Succoth Place** and carry on beside the Victorian villas. At the end turn right into **Garscube Terrace** and walk for a minute. At the corner of **Garscube Terrace** and **Henderland Road** you can see an Italianate tower, formerly part of a private mansion built in 1885 and now a part of **St George's School**, an independent school for girls founded in 1888, which moved to this location in 1914. Cross over the street and walk towards the main entrance of **St George's School**, over the red metal bridge. At the end of the bridge turn right down the steps with the cycle routes signpost to get on to the old Caledonian railway line, now a walking/cycle path. Turn left along the path.



7. Viaduct/Water of Leith A few minutes brings you onto the viaduct over the Water of Leith. On the left side of the viaduct look downstream for the views to the Cauldron Weir, which powered ancient **Bell's Mills**

8. Murrayfield Railway Station Continue along the walking/cycle path for a couple of minutes until you arrive at the old platforms of **Murrayfield Railway Station** (1879-1962). The iron bridge



(1861) has the remains of a platform and a crest of the lion and the unicorn, and thistle, rose and shamrock.

9. Railway/Tram Continue until the T-junction at the end. Look to the right for a view of **Murrayfield Stadium** and the **Pentland Hills**, also the tram line and ScotRail's Haymarket Depot. Turn left down the ramp and left again into **Balbirnie Place**, keeping the old railway embankment on your left. At the end turn left on to the main road/A8/West Coates.

10. Milestone As you walk under the metal railway bridge, look across to the other side of the road, and against the wall you can see a milestone – 1 mile to Edinburgh on the left, 41 to Glasgow on the right. This road used to be the old turnpike road. The Toll House was one mile east at Haymarket.



11. Roseburn Cliff Continue along the street, past Tesco's which is built into an old coach hirers. Cross **Roseburn Street** onto **Roseburn Terrace** and walk about 100 metres by the shops then cross at the pedestrian crossing just before the Murrayfield Bar and then go up between the red pillars to **Roseburn Cliff**. This area is part of a Garden Village planned by **Patrick Geddes**, a pioneer of urban design and environmentalism. To the right is the back of the red sandstone tenements, inspired by Geddes and superior in their day for having access from the back instead of through the shops at the front. Further up are the **Cottage Villas** (1911) a row of red sandstone and white harling houses, part of Geddes' design. Return through the red pillars, turn right and you will be back at **Old Colt Bridge**.

FURTHER WALKS

Downstream by the Water of Leith

From **Old Colt Bridge** return to **Roseburn Cliff** and

descend the steps to the **Water of Leith Walkway**. The walk along the river is very attractive and wooded, and is also a route to the **Modern Art Galleries 1 and 2**, **Dean Village** and **Stockbridge**.

Upstream by the Water of Leith

From **Old Colt Bridge** cross the road at the crossing in front of Murrayfield Bar, turn right and then left into **Roseburn Gardens**, right into **Roseburn Crescent** and then into **Roseburn Park**. There is a children's play area by the entrance to the park and pitches for football

and cricket. **Roseburn Park** is dominated by **Murrayfield Stadium**. In 1922 the Scottish Rugby Union bought 19 acres of polo grounds and in 1925 the stadium was opened for its first game, against England (score 14-11 to Scotland). **Murrayfield Stadium** was rebuilt in 1994. As well as being the home for international rugby it holds big-name rock concerts. Its capacity is 67,000 spectators.



Walk upstream by the **Water of Leith** and you can see the flood defences (completed 2018) built after a serious flood in April 2000 when the river broke its banks. Many people were evacuated and houses in the surrounding area were seriously damaged. The low building at the junction of paths was an Air Raid Precautions Report Centre and a rare surviving example of a Second World War civil defence building. A mural commemorates the bicycle messengers who carried signals.

On the right is a seat carved out of an ash tree by Andy McFeters which was commissioned by Friends of Roseburn Park and commemorates the trees removed for the flood defences.



You can continue upstream along the **Water of Leith Walkway** to **Saughton Park**, with its splendid gardens and play and skateboard/cycle park. The walkway heads south west 7 miles to **Balerno** and the **Pentlands**.