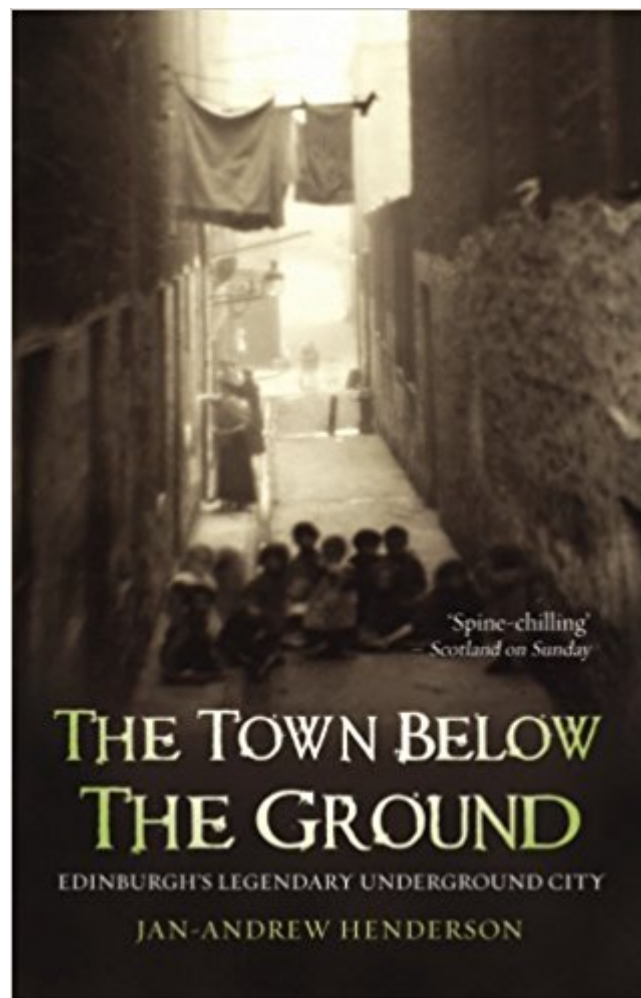




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The Town Below The Ground: Edinburgh's Legendary Underground City



Synopsis

The story of the Town Below the Ground is one of the most disturbing in the annals of Scottish history. For almost 250 years, Edinburgh was surrounded by a giant defensive wall and, unable to expand its boundaries, it became the most densely populated city in Europe. When buildings could go no higher, people were forced to construct new edifices over the existing structures. An underground slum developed, where subterranean dwellers lived in darkness and abject poverty, ignored by chroniclers of the time. Edinburgh's population eventually came to believe that the city's out of sight and out of mind since its abandonment in the mid-19th century had never been there at all. This is the first book to fully chronicle Edinburgh's Town Below the Ground's history and structure, its inhabitants and the lives they led, the story of its rediscovery, the parts that still remain, and the tales that made it legendary.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I wish I had read this book prior to my last trip to Edinburgh! Even though I knew a bit about the history of the city and the underground vaults and such, it would have been a treat to have this book with me on the trip. That being said - it is definitely going with me on my return vacation this year. The book is a very easy and entertaining read giving you the behind the scenes info about one of the most wonderful cities to sight see. From the underground passages and vaults to the many ghost stories associated with them, I read this book from cover to cover trying to soak up every detail. If you are planning to go, or went to Edinburgh without knowing the history of the city below, this book will not disappoint.

Fascinating description of Edinburgh's medieval underground living spaces!

I only gave this book 4 stars because I felt that it was too short and abbreviated. Then again, I'm the type of person who likes rich historical details. The author doesn't bore you with dates or technical details, the story of the origins of Edinburgh's underground city are told with a marvelous gift of oratory, making you feel like you're hearing a story told in front of a fire, a story that grows more and more chilling. The story is simple, due to overpopulation, numerous underground chambers and vaults were built to accommodate the fast growth of Edinburgh's Old Town. The poorest of the poor lived in these dark cramped vaults and more often than not died there too, having never known anything but poverty and misery. You are told of the kinds of people who lived there: villains and widows, families and loners. You hear of how they lived, from the people too sickly to work to the poor children forced to climb inside chimneys to clean them. Full of misery, disease and hopelessness, it's no wonder the underground city has gained a reputation for being haunted. Tales of the supernatural happenings are also found in this book, tales of a mischievous yet harmless ghost who haunts a pub to the frightening stories of tourists and tour guides alike being assaulted by unseen hands and claws. Whether a history buff or a fan of ghosts stories, you're sure to enjoy this book. It's easy reading, educational AND entertaining.

Unique stories about the ghosts of the Edinburgh vaults. I mostly bought this book for the history of how they came to be. This book has a good summary of Edinburgh's unique architectural history.

This is a fascinating book, especially if history is your thing or your ancestors lived in Edinburgh. Both of these are true in my case. It's given me an insight into the way they lived.

Sixty three pages of a vague history of Edinburgh. I had finished the book in less than an hour. The rest of the book is just recycled ghost stories. a waste of time and money. Did the writer do any research at all? I'm generally loathe to pan a book completely but I really am greatly disappointed with this effort. Don't waste your time nor money on this one.

I found this book to be very entertaining and interesting! I don't usually like "ghost stories", and do not believe in ghosts (though I don't want to go looking for them in case I'm wrong...ha, ha); however, having been in Edinburgh 5 months ago, the underground city fascinated me. Though the

book can often only reference "stories" and can not be factual, since most of the items in this book are impossible to verify, the author includes a lot of accurate historical information too. I took a tour of South Bridge when I was visiting Edinburgh, and fortunately, did not encounter any ghosts or strange occurrences. After reading the section on South Bridge, I was even more glad that I didn't encounter any strange incidences (ha, ha). The author does not try to sell you anything and doesn't use his book as a publicity plug, which is nice. I recommend this book for its entertaining and interesting information!

Very interesting book!

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