



Shield Spotter Trail – Group Leader Notes



Map of Edinburgh Castle with shield spotter trail locations

Pg. 2 – Shield 1: The Lion Rampant

Pg. 3 – Shield 2: Sir Thomas Randolph

Pg. 4 – Shield 3: The Unicorn and the Saltire

Pg. 5 – Shield 4: Mary Queen of Scots and Francis II of France

Pg. 6 – Shield 5: Learners find their favourite in the Great Hall

Each stop includes:

- **Directions** – to help you find each shield
- **Questions for learners** – the questions on the learner trail
- **Answers for learners** – answers for the questions on the learner trail
- **Heraldic code** – information about the rules of shield design
- **Bonus** – extra information you can share with your learners
- **Eye Spy** – something for your learners to spot

Shield 1. The Lion Rampant

Directions: Look up at the Gatehouse before entering the scanning queue. You can also spot this shield above the Portcullis Gate inside the castle.



*Stewart family coat of arms and motto
above the Gatehouse*



*Stewart family coat of arms above
the Portcullis Gate*

Questions for learners:

- As you enter the castle, **look for the shield that belongs to the Scottish royal family.**
- Hint: what does a monarch (king or queen) wear?
- Make the sound of the animal on the **shield** when you see it!

Answers for learners:

- The shields depicting the coat of arms of the Scottish royal family can be seen outside the Gatehouse and above the Portcullis Gate.
- The Stewarts is the name of the Scottish royal family. Their shield, featuring the **Lion Rampant**, is seen throughout the castle to tell us this castle once belonged to them.

Heraldic code: The lion rampant is an example of a **charge**. Charges are an emblem depicted on a shield; they can be an object, shape or animal.

Bonus: If spotting on the Esplanade, look at the blue ribbon beneath the shield. This is the Stewart family motto written in Latin. It translates to “No one shall strike me with impunity” which basically means if you hit me, I will hit you back, but even harder! This tells us along with the fearsome Lion Rampant, the Stewarts were not to be messed with.

Eye spy: Ask learners to keep an eye out for the crown on shields to show connection to royalty.

Shield 2. Sir Thomas Randolph

Directions: Continue your way through the castle, through the Portcullis Gate and stop at the bottom of the Lang Stairs.



Sir Thomas Randolph coat of arms at bottom of Lang Stairs

Questions for learners:

- As you walk toward the Lang Stairs, **look for the coat of arms for Sir Thomas Randolph.**
- A coat of arms is the supporting design around a shield.
- Can you find the **shield** in the **coat of arms**? Draw what you see!

Answers for learners:

- This is the coat of arms of Sir Thomas Randolph, who was a nephew of King Robert the Bruce.
- This coat of arms includes a stag, helmet and crown. **The shield is in the middle and includes three red shapes believed to be cushions.**
- The crown tells us of royal connection. The stag may represent peace and harmony, only attacking when provoked first. The three red cushions may represent wealth and luxury. This tells us Randolph was a brave and smart soldier, who had royal blood and lived a life of luxury and comfort when not on the battlefield.

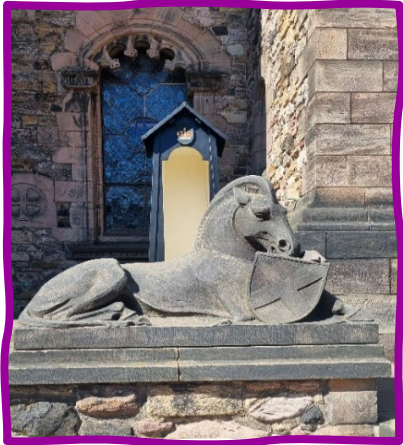
Heraldic code: The red cushions in the shield are another example of a **charge**. The **coat of arms** is the supportive design around the shield, which here includes the stag, helmet and crown.

Bonus: Randolph was tasked by King Robert the Bruce to take back Edinburgh Castle from English rule. He and a division of 30 men secretly scaled the rock in the night to take the English troops by surprise. A daring feat indeed!

Eye spy: Ask learners to keep an eye out for more coat of arms as they go along. What can the design of a coat of arms and shields tell us about the person or family it belongs to?

Shield 3. The Unicorn and the Saltire

Directions: Now make your way up to Crown Square to the Scottish National War Memorial. You can either go up the Lang Stairs or up the slope toward Foog's Gate.



Unicorn outside War Memorial



Scottish flag on Half Moon Battery

Questions for learners:

- **Find the unicorn** outside the War Memorial. Do you recognise the shape on this **shield**? Hint: Look to your right at the flagpole, recognise this shape now?
- It is an example of an **ordinary**, shapes commonly used on **shields**.

Answers for learners:

- This is called **the Saltire**, which is an **ordinary** often used on shields.
- If the flagpole is up, look immediately to your right at the Half Moon Battery. You will see the Scottish flag which depicts the saltire.

Heraldic code: The saltire is a form of an **ordinary**, found on many heraldic shields. Ordinaries are shapes commonly used on shields, they have special heraldic code names. Shields can use one or mix and match different ordinaries on one shield. Here are some more examples:



Cross



Chevron



Pile



Chief

Bonus: The saltire is sometimes called St Andrew's Cross, for the patron saint of Scotland. Use of both the saltire and the unicorn as symbols of Scotland dates back to the 1500s!

Eye spy: Ask learners to look out for more symbols of Scotland like the saltire, unicorn, lion rampant or thistle as they go around the castle.

Shield 4. Mary Queen of Scots and Francis II of France

Directions: Now make your way across Crown Square into the Great Hall.



Shield on the right, Mary and Francis II coat of arms, left side of room as you enter

Questions for learners:

- Mary Queen of Scots first husband was Francis II of France. Their **shield** in the Great Hall includes a pun on Francis' title, the Dauphin.
- What animal sounds like Dauphin? Write or draw it below. Now find the shield!
- This is an example of **marshalling**, when two families come together to create a new heraldic **shield**.

Answers for learners:

- Their shield is depicted with **dolphins**.
- The shield is located in between the last two chandeliers in the Great Hall, on the left side of the room (North wall) before the fireplace.

Heraldic code: This is an example of **marshalling**, when two families come together to create a new heraldic shield. When a shield is in four quarters, this can represent the children of that couple, creating another new shield

Bonus: Mary Queen of Scots is one of Scotland's most famous monarchs and a member of the royal house of Stewart. Francis, Mary's first husband, had the title of Dauphin (pronounced doe-fawn) which is the title given to the next in line for the French throne. The dolphins seen in the shield is a pun on the title Dauphin.

Eye spy: Ask your learners to look for other shields that are examples of marshalling, either in two halves or in quarters. If your learners want to create their own shields, they can use these examples to depict their own families!

Shield 5. Learners find their favourites in the Great Hall

Directions: Stay inside the Great Hall for the last shield!

Question for learners:

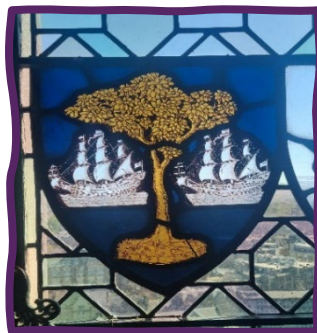
- **Find a shield that has nature depicted**, there are several in the Great Hall. Draw your favourite **shield**.
- What **charges** are on the shield you drew?
- What might these **charges** tell us about the person or family they belong to?

Answers for learners:

- There are several shields (around 10) depicting nature in the Great Hall, mostly on the right-hand side (South wall) of the room.
- If you have specific questions about the shields, you can speak with staff inside the Great Hall, they may be able to give you specific information about shields your learners find interesting!

Heraldic code: **Charges** are any object, shape or animal used to decorate a shield. In addition, colours used in shields may have had specific meanings, connecting the colours with qualities or characteristics such as yellow for happy.

Bonus example: This shield represents the coat of arms of Admiral Sir Andrew Wood of Largo. He began as a merchant sailor in Leith, who often had to fight off pirate attacks from stealing his goods. He was eventually knighted and made High Admiral by King James IV. Later he successfully defended the Firth of Forth from enemy English ships, even when his crews were severely outnumbered! The tree depicted in the shield may represent strength and endurance, which the Admiral certainly had.



Admiral Sir Andrew Wood coat of arms located on the right side of the Great Hall

Eye spy: Ask your learners to think about all the charges, colours and ordinaries they can see on the shields in the Great Hall and how they can use these as inspiration for creating their own heraldic shields!

Well done! You have now completed the Shield Spotter Trail with your learners. You can now continue to explore the castle with your group if you wish.