

Scotland/England 2019

Sat Nov 23

Woke up really early and flew to JFK. Huge line to get through security. Spent some time looking for a Garmin watch charger. In New York, Dad and I ate at a Shake Shack while Mom and Kaylynn ate at some burrito place. Saw Wallace Shawn walking through the airport while we waited.

Sun Nov 24

Landed in Edinburgh. Checked in at the hotel and went to find the Harry Potter tour start point. It was easy to find, so we wandered a bit and went through some “closes” and ate at a cafe in “The Hub”, formerly a huge church in the middle of the Royal Mile. We ran into Ryan and continued walking down the Royal Mile. Mom left us and went to see the Holyrood Palace. We went on the unofficial Edinburgh Harry Potter tour, seeing Tom Riddell’s grave, some castles Hogwarts was based on, the inspiration for Diagon Alley and the cafes where JK Rowling wrote her books. It was a good tour. Continued looking for Garmin charger after the tour with Ryan.

We went back and took a nap, and had Subway for dinner, a Byers tradition in Europe. Opened

some Duel Masters packs and Kaylynn got a Bolshack Dragon in one. Later that night I went out and wandered around town with Ryan and Dad. Walked through a winter carnival too.



Mon Nov 25

Woke up early and had breakfast at the bottom of a close near Edinburgh Castle. Ryan had Scottish breakfast. We went and explored the castle afterward. There was a wedding going on at the very top, in the oldest building in Edinburgh (12th century). Kaylynn and I can’t believe we didn’t think to have our wedding there. The building was tiny though, hardly enough room for more than 4 or 5 people.

It was already a big day of walking, so we went back to the hotel to take a nap, but the room wasn’t ready. So we hung out in the lounge area, waiting for Ryan and my parents to go to his AirBnB to get something. By the time they got back, my dad was tired from walking. The plan was to hike to the top of Arthur’s Seat, but there is no way he would have made it. So me and Ryan went out and found a grocery store and loaded up on Coke, Cadbury chocolate, and baby bell cheese. We ate those and got enough energy for the hike.



It rained on us on the way to the huge park the mountain is in. The trail started off ok, and quickly turned into a muddy mess, but we pressed on. We got some pictures next to some ruins on our way up. Mom and Dad both made it to the top, which was really rocky. Mom fell once but was fine. Our shoes did great in the mud.

When we got back to the hotel, Mom made friends at the hotel bar talking about soccer and colleges in the US. We ate dinner there, and just wore our regular clothes because nobody cared, but Kaylynn was embarrassed that we weren't dressed fancy enough to be there. Played some Duel Masters that night.

Tues Nov 26

Woke up and had breakfast a block or two down the road from our hotel in a tiny place. Ryan showed up halfway through, finally having found his Garmin charger and went on a run. Then we went to see Calton Hill in

the rain. It was a fun walk to the top. Went souvenir shopping with Kaylynn afterward. We stopped in a cool Warhammer store, turns out Warhammer is really big in the UK. We wandered back through some more Harry Potter sights on our way back to the hotel. I dropped Kaylynn off at the hotel and went to Scotland's museum with my dad, where we saw the Lewis Chessmen. On the way back we found a good Harry Potter store, and Kaylynn picked out a Hufflepuff sweatshirt later that night. I can't believe she didn't want a Dragon Ball Z wallet they had.



Wed Nov 27

Woke up and checked out of the hotel. We walked to Edinburgh Waverly station with Ryan, who was cutting it close to making his train. Had a very good breakfast at McDonald's at the train station. Found our awesome train seats. Kaylynn slept almost the whole time. Mom was absolutely loving it, eating cheese, drinking tea, and eating weird "crisps" and sandwiches they kept bringing by. Saw a ton of sheep in green fields out the window.

Finally made it to London around 3:00. Found our hotel, dropped off our stuff and rushed to the British Museum. It was fairly packed, but we quickly hit the highlights, which was fine because Kaylynn isn't a museum gal and we had already seen the museum before. Dad was excited to see rooms 55/56 or whichever the early Mesopotamian rooms were. Saw some really early cuneiform "books" in there. Saw the Rosetta Stone, the Bogman, and some other neat stuff. Found Ryan in there eventually.

Ryan, Kaylynn, and I left and ate dinner at an Italian place on the way back to our hotel. Ate some good chocolate chunk cookies from Pret a Manger. Saw platform 9 and 3 quarters on the way back, and the huge line there. Kaylynn had already had her fill of Harry Potter stuff in

Scotland, so she didn't need to stand in the line. We didn't have much time left, but met up with my dad and decided to walk through Harrod's department store which was closing. They had huge meat rooms, candy rooms, bakery rooms. We saw some fancy watches for over \$100,000. Sadly we didn't find the electronics section until the last minute, which was great. There was a 90-something inch 8K TV Dad was obsessing over because he thinks it would help him play better at Blackout.

Thurs Nov 28

We woke up and ate breakfast at our Kings Cross Burger King. Then we got on the tube and went to Victoria station and went to Westminster Abbey. It was pretty weird seeing all the



graves and walking over them. Afterward we walked across the bridge toward the London Eye. Big Ben was under construction and covered, so we couldn't get a good look at it. Near the London Eye we saw the "Shrek Experience", pretty cool gift store. Ryan was loving it. We decided to go see Piccadilly Circus next. On the way Kaylynn said she was craving a Cafe Rio burrito. Since we were in London I thought there was no chance of that, but then we turned the corner and found a similar burrito place. So we had lunch there in the basement, it was perfect. After lunch we wandered Piccadilly Circus, looking at sights we recognized from Call of Duty Modern Warfare. My parents wanted to go to the art museum, so me, Ryan, and Kaylynn headed back, stopping at 5 Guys for a milkshake on the way. (London's 5 Guys are so much better than Paris's, night and day difference).

That night for dinner we ate at Pizza Express near the hotel, the waiter liked my David Luiz jersey. Me, Ryan, and Dad left quickly to go on a Jack the Ripper tour. It rained on us a bit at first, but it was a great tour. It was very different from the last one we had done, but still very good. I liked walking around the Gherkin skyscraper so close. "Rippervision" turned out to be not that cool. Mick, the tour guide kept asking tough questions, and of course my dad knew all

the answers about Jack the Ripper trivia. Ryan ended up buying Mick's Jack the Ripper book after the tour. Played Duel Masters that night.



Fri Nov 29

We woke up and had McDonald's near Kings Cross for breakfast. I thought it was perfect. Then we rode the tube to the Tower of London. We weren't there as soon as it opened, but it was not crowded at all. We cruised through the crown jewels and saw the old rooms, armor, everything. Kaylynn and Ryan seemed to really get a kick out of the old holes in the tower used as a bathroom. After the tower, we crossed the Tower Bridge. Kaylynn was loving it. We walked along the river on the other side now. We took a picture with "The Snowman" from the animated movie. It started getting pretty touristy and we were hungry so we stopped and ate burgers at "The Clink". After lunch we continued along the river and crossed over the Millennium Bridge to St. Paul's Cathedral. St. Paul's was great, we let Kaylynn hang out in the chairs and me and my mom and dad climbed to the very top of the church building. It wasn't very crowded at the top which was nice. We headed down and I did some of the audio tour. We cruised through the crypt and me and Kaylynn decided to head back toward the hotel. We walked along the river as the sun set which was cool. We tried to stop at the Shrek Experience and get Ryan a creepy Shrek mug, but they were closing right as we got there.

The London Eye area was insanely crowded that evening, and we didn't want to have to cross through the busy tourists toward Victoria station, so

we went to find Waterloo station. Our GPSs were no help, and the signs said we were at the station, but we couldn't find it. Oh well, we were incredibly tired by this point and decided to walk back to Victoria station. It was super crowded, it turned out that a terrorist had stabbed some people nearby and some of the tube stations were closed, making the rest of the tube super crowded. We finally made it back to the hotel.

That night, Ryan, my Dad, and I went out to eat on our own. My mom went to see a concert somewhere and Kaylynn wasn't feeling good enough to go out again. We went to a fancy Indian restaurant a few blocks away from St. Pancras.

Sat Nov 30

We were mostly loving McDonalds breakfast by this point, so we went again on Saturday. Then, we went into Kings Cross St Pancras station to find the train to Greenwich. It was some special train, not your regular tube, and we eventually found it with some help. It was fun riding a train above ground. We got off at the National Maritime Museum and crossed the street into Greenwich park. There was some sort of race going on in the park, but we made it past them

towards the observatory. I was stressing out the whole morning, because I was worried about being late to the soccer game later. But despite the stress, I still had fun at the observatory learning about telescopes, time, and coordinates. We got to stand on the Prime Meridian which was cool. We got our picture taken by a green screen and wanted to see what the end result would be, but didn't have time to wait in line to see. We had to hurry to Charlton.

We caught a double-decker bus at the National Maritime Museum and rode at the top. Kaylynn said it made her feel sick, but those were the only seats and I thought it was fun getting a good view from above. We got off near Charlton and walked with the fans to The Valley, where Charlton Athletic play. We had great seats at the back of the lower level. We had weird hot dogs, chips, and strange gummy candy while we watched the game. Sheffield Wednesday won, 3-1, but it was still really fun. After the game, we got some Charlton Athletic souvenirs at their team store.



That night we went to Pizza Express again for dinner. Mom made a fuss trying to get the same Brazilian waiter from the last time. We got him again. It was another good Pizza Express meal.

Sun Dec 1

We woke up and got Mom and Kaylynn something from Pret a Manger. Me and my dad went to McDonalds. We checked out (though it took a lot longer than it should have) and rode the Picadilly line all the way to Heathrow. It was really crowded at

first, but cleared out after a while. I enjoyed the ride and was sad that we were leaving after such a great trip. Landed in Detroit on the way home. Overall a great trip.