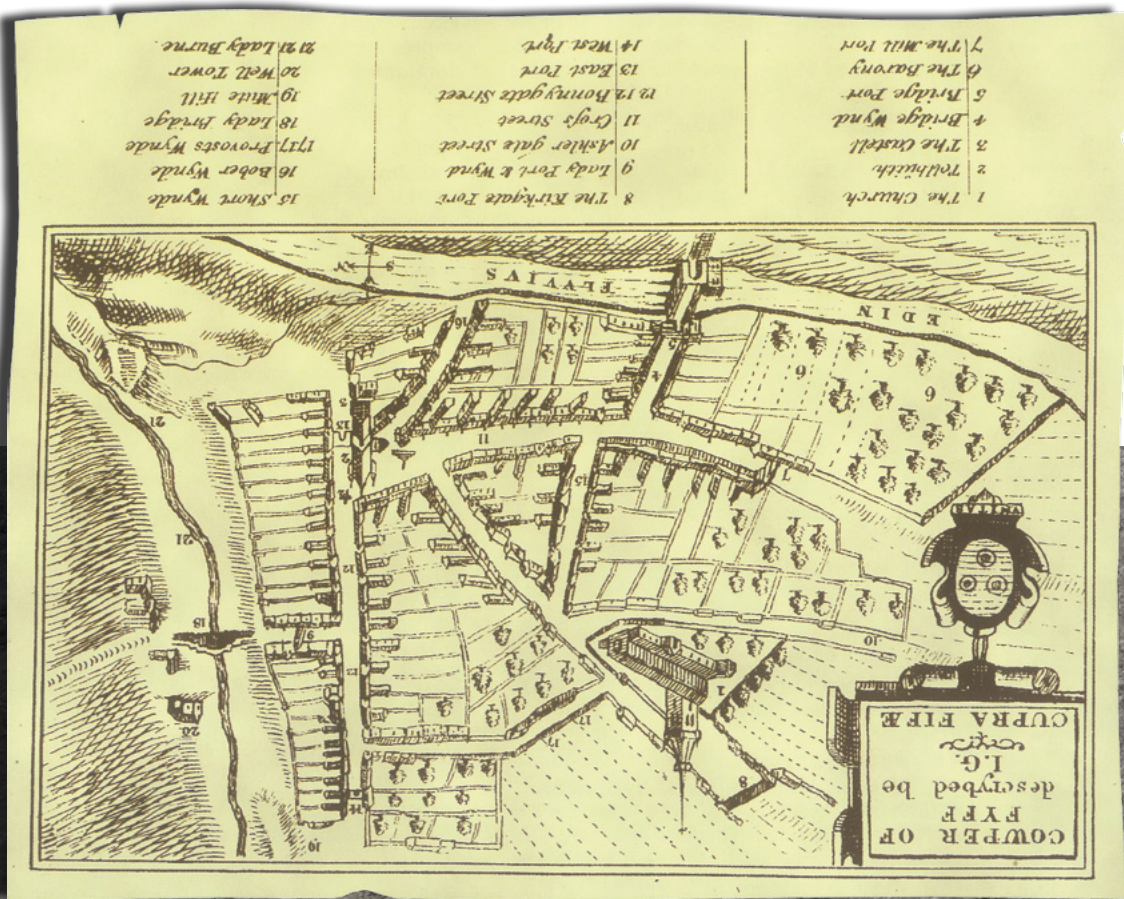




CUPAR was the home of the sheriff court from 1213, and the county town of Fife until 1975. Weekly markets were held, as well as other markets such as the horse market and the lint-seed market at specific times of year, and eight annual fairs, to which people came from a wide area to buy, sell, meet friends and conduct other business in the town. Before the draining of the Howe of Fife, which began in the 18th century, Cupar lay on the main road from Edinburgh to Dundee and Aberdeen, as well as being at the hub of a local network of roads.



First town plan of Cupar, published 1642



CUPAR HERITAGE TRAIL



This leaflet was first published as a joint venture between the Millennium Committee of the Royal Burgh of Cupar and District Community Council, and Fife Council's Planning and Building Control Service (later Development Services), whose Graphics Unit also designed the leaflet. It was reprinted in 2005. Reproduction of the coat-of-arms was by kind permission of the Community Council and the town map by the Kingdom of Fife Tourist Board. The text was researched and written by Dr. Paula Martin whose other publications include Cupar – a Short History and Guide (2001) and Cupar: The History of a Small Scottish Town (2006).

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1381 it was granted rights over a port at the mouth of the Motray Burn (where the former Guardbridge paper mill now stands). Cupar-owned ships traded with the Baltic, exporting mainly wool, but the port was small and unsatisfactory, and as road transport improved it went out of use.



THE NAME CUPAR is Pictish, and means the place where two rivers meet. The fact that its Pictish name survives is an indicator that the settlement was important at an early date, probably from the 7th or 8th century. Cupar was created a royal burgh in 1328, one of six mediaeval royal burghs in Fife. This meant that it was self-governing, and until 1672 had a monopoly of foreign trade within its large hinterland. It was at one time the tenth richest town in Scotland. In

The Place Where Two Rivers Meet

CUPAR HERITAGE TRAIL



CUPAR HERITAGE TRAIL



1. Fluthers

Once called Fluthers Bog, this area could be flooded by the Lady Burn. It has always been a public open space belonging to the town, with various uses including a cattle market and fairground.

2. East Toll House

Built c. 1825, to collect tolls on the turnpike roads to St Andrews and Pitscottie. In the wall opposite on East Road can be seen one of the tollgate-posts. Tolls were charged from 1791 until 1878 and there were originally five toll houses on the town's main approaches.



3. Cart Haugh

This has long been a public open space protected by the town from development. The bandstand was built in 1924.

4. Old Gaol

Opened in 1814 as a prison for both town and county, it replaced the damp and dark cells in the old tolbooth. After a new prison was built in 1842, this building was used by the militia, and from 1895 by William Watt, seedsman.

5. War Memorial

The impressive bronze winged victory is by H S Gamley of Edinburgh. The memorial, which was expensive and stands in a very dominant position, says much about Cupar's view of its own importance.

6. County Buildings

Designed by James Gillespie Graham, built in 1812 as the

centrepiece of a new street created by Provost John Ferguson by demolishing the old tolbooth and Bargarvie House, and diverting the Eden. The balcony is for making proclamations, previously made from the old tolbooth. The east wing was the Tontine Hotel, and in 1836 it was converted for the sheriff court. A new Tontine Hotel built to the east was replaced in the 1920s by an extension to County Buildings.

7. St James Episcopal Church

Built in 1866 by R Rowand Anderson, with a rood screen by Sir Robert Lorimer (c. 1920). It replaced a smaller chapel built in 1819-20, possibly by William Burn.

8. Castle

Cupar castle, a seat of the earls of Fife, once stood on top of this impressive motte. Probably built of wood, it may have been deliberately destroyed after a siege in the 1330s.

After this the hill became a public open space where morality plays were performed, including in 1535 the first performance of Sir David Lindsay's "Ane Pleasant Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis" (the earliest satire in Scottish literature). The river once ran close under the Castle Hill. It was diverted to its present course when St Catherine Street was laid out.

9. Castlehill Schools

The building facing you was built in 1806, with the Latin School of the Grammar School on the ground floor and a public theatre above. The coat of arms over the door may come from the old tolbooth or from one of the town gates. Cupar Academy took over the whole building in 1825. The south block, on the right, was built in 1844-6, by which time the Academy had become the Madras Academy, with a legacy from Dr Andrew Bell of Madras.



12. Cross

An hexagonal patch of cobbles marks the former position of the Mercat Cross, the symbol of the burgh's right to hold markets. The shaft is dated 1683, and the original unicorn survived until the 1980s. The cross was removed in the early 19th century, and found its way to the top of Tarvit Hill. It was returned and set on a new plinth in 1897 to celebrate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee.

13. Crossgate House

Most of the early 19th century elite who built detached villas had to find plots on the edge of or outside the town, but Thomas Horsburgh, the sheriff clerk, managed to build this fine house right in the town centre c. 1814. The architect has not been identified. Only the façade now survives.

14. Chancellor's House

Probably late 17th century, though much altered. In the 18th century it was the residence of the minister, Thomas Campbell and the birthplace of his son John, who became Lord Chancellor of Great Britain.

15. Duncan Institute

Designed by John Milne, built in 1870 with a legacy from Miss Duncan of Edengrove for the working class of Cupar, Dairsie and Kilconquhar parishes, it originally housed a library, a lecture hall and the museum of the Fifeshire Literary and Antiquarian Society.

16. Parish Church

The tower survives from St Christopher's church, built in 1415. The spire was added in 1620 by the minister, William Scott, after the parish was merged with the smaller parish of St Michael of Tarvit. The only surviving picture of the old church is on the town plan of 1642. The body of the church was rebuilt in 1785, by local architect Hay Bell.

17. Churchyard

The old kirkyard, and its extension across the road, contain many interesting gravestones. The best-known is that marking the burial place of the heads of Laurence Hay and Andrew Pitulloch, and the hands of David Hackston, all executed for their Covenanting activities.

10. Corn Exchange

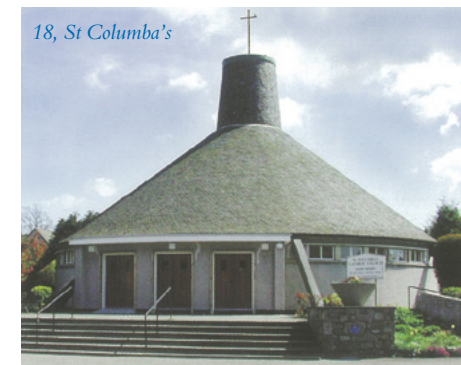
Built 1861-2 by Campbell Douglas & Stevenson, to provide a covered corn market and a large public hall. Major alterations were made in 1964, creating two halls within the original high-ceilinged one.

11. Burgh Chambers

Built 1815-17 by local builder Robert Hutchison, to replace the council room in the old tolbooth. This was not part of the overall design for St Catherine Street, but an afterthought. The belfry, paid for by subscription, was an addition to the original design, and the clock was added, also by subscription, in 1821.



10, Corn Exchange



18, St Columba's

18. St Columba's Roman Catholic Church

Built in 1964 to a design by Peter Whiston, in the circular style used for Liverpool Cathedral. The Catholic congregation in Cupar was formed in the first half of the 20th century, comprising immigrants who came to work from the west of Scotland and Ireland to work in agriculture and mining.

19. Preston Lodge

The main surviving example of the town houses which the country gentry once maintained in Cupar. Started in 1623, the house was enlarged after 1690 by the Prestons of Denbrae. The doorpiece is early 19th century. If you look around the town you can spot other doorpieces added at this period.

20. Baptist Church

Cupar's Baptist congregation built Kirkgate chapel in 1821, moved to Provost Wynd in 1849, then took over this church, built for the United Presbyterian Church by Peddie & Kinnear in 1865-6.

21. St John's Church

Built for the growing congregation of Cupar Free Church by Campbell Douglas & Sellars in 1875-8 at a cost of £10,000, mainly a legacy from Sir David Baxter of Kilmarnock. The impressive steeple is 160 feet high and dominates the townscape.

22. Masonic Hall

Built in 1811 for one of several masonic lodges and similar societies which flourished in the town in the 18th and 19th centuries. One Cuparian in 1911 remembered the masons' processions having bright costumes and accompanied by 'the gay lilt of "Hey, the merry masons, Ho, the merry masons, Go prancing along" '.



23, Mote Hill

23. Mote Hill

A natural glacial feature running north west from the Castle Hill, it was planted with trees from 1776, and walks laid out. For those who had no garden, public areas in which they could 'promenade' were an important feature of town life in the later 18th and early 19th centuries.

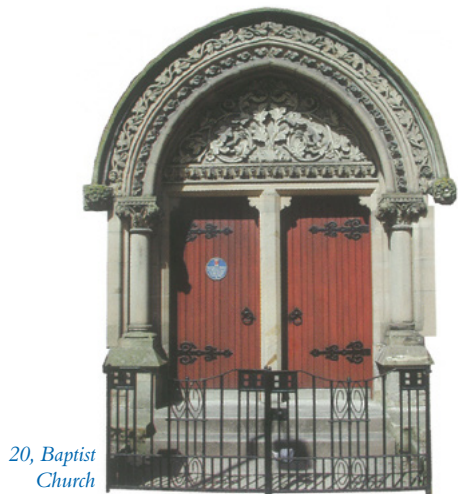
24. Newtown

Cupar remained within its mediaeval boundaries until the 1780s, when suburban expansion started with 'Newtown'. Although no house survives unaltered, it is clear that they were originally single-storey thatched cottages, though each had a garden and workshop space providing housing for self-employed tradesmen, particularly weavers.

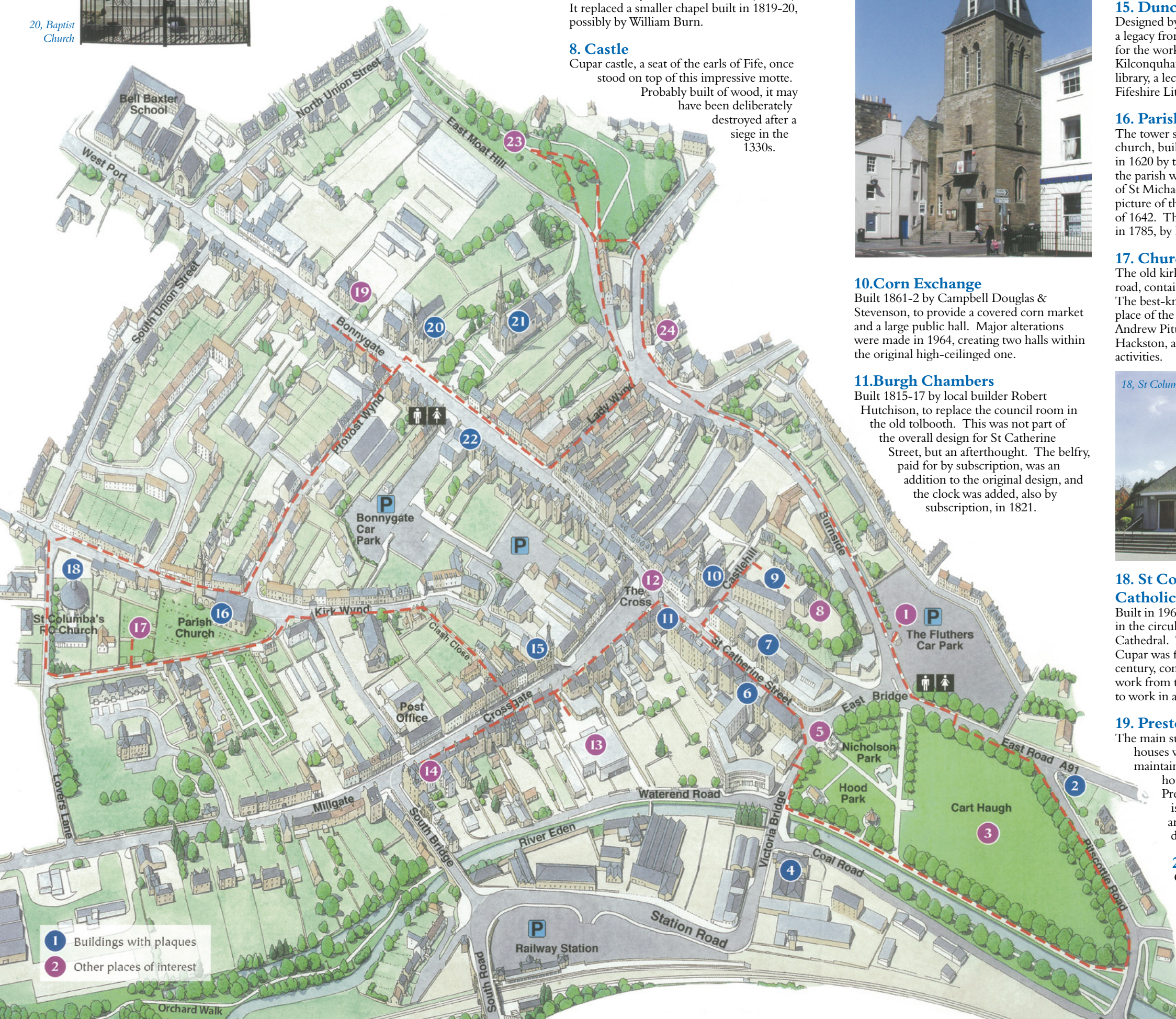
It was followed by Well Street and Castlefield, Front Lebanon, and ribbon development along Railway Place, Riggs Place and South Road.



5, War Memorial



20, Baptist Church



- 1 Buildings with plaques
- 2 Other places of interest