



# Duntocher, Hardgate and Failley Heritage Trail



# Duntocher, Hardgate and Faifley Heritage Trail

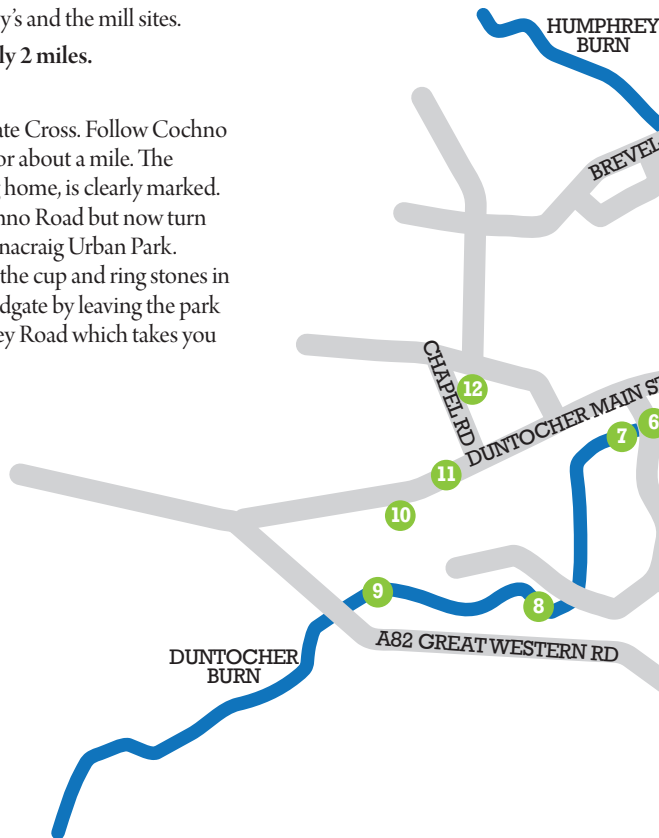
The trail is perhaps best covered in two separate loops.

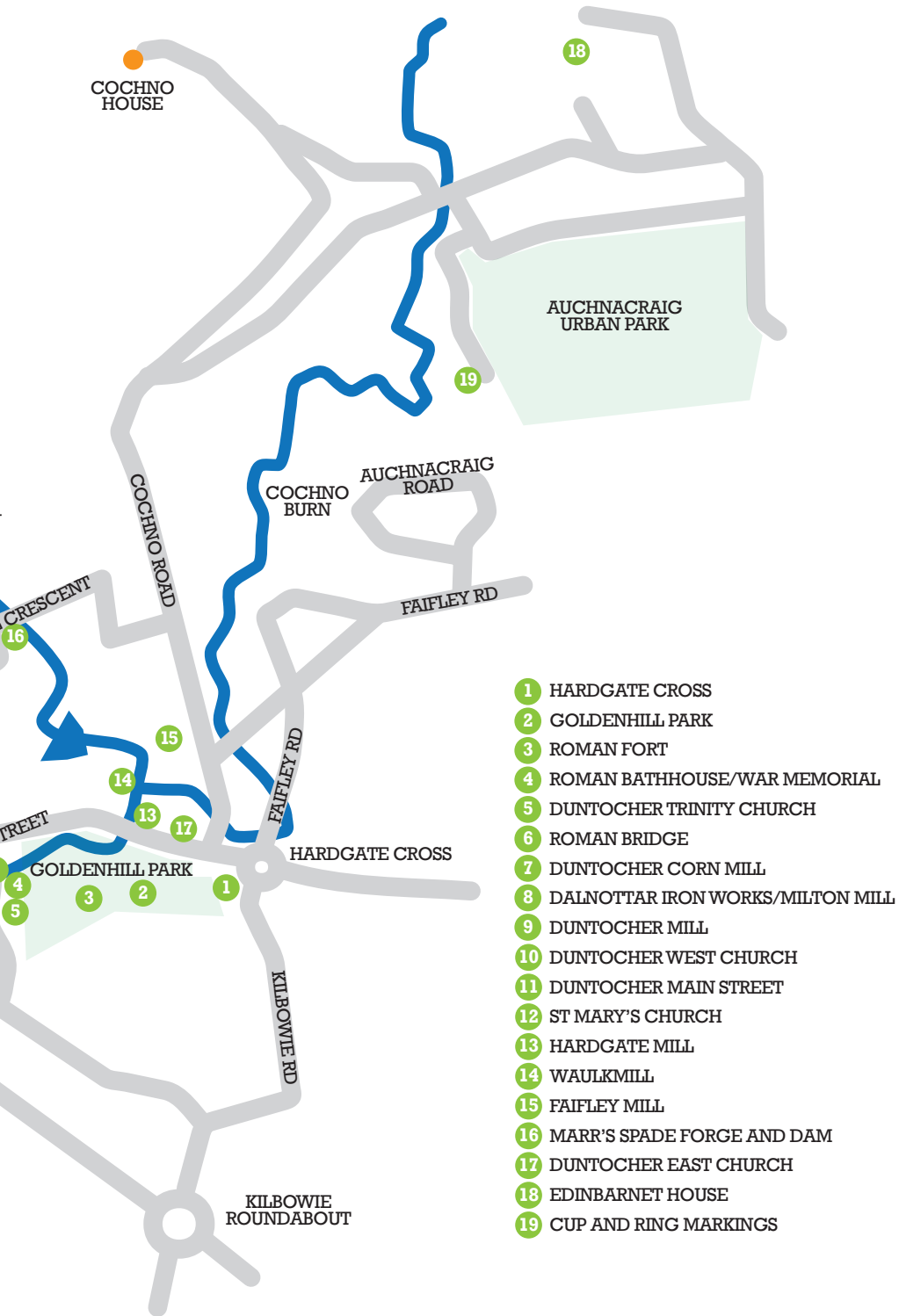
The first one begins at number 1 – Hardgate Cross (now a roundabout) and goes through Goldenhill Park. On exiting the park at the war memorial follow the burn, cross the football park and pick up the footpath along Duntocher Glen, exiting on to Great Western Road. Return to Hardgate Cross via Duntocher Main Street with diversions for St Mary's and the mill sites.

**The distance covered is approximately 2 miles.**

The second loop also begins at Hardgate Cross. Follow Cochno Road (50m west of the roundabout) for about a mile. The entrance to Edinbarnet, now a nursing home, is clearly marked. After visiting the house, return to Cochno Road but now turn left and after 50m turn right into Auchnacraig Urban Park. Follow the pain path and you will find the cup and ring stones in a clearing on your right. Return to Hardgate by leaving the park at Auchnacraig Road and joining Faifley Road which takes you back to Hardgate.

**This loop is approximately 3 miles.**





- 1 HARDGATE CROSS
- 2 GOLDENHILL PARK
- 3 ROMAN FORT
- 4 ROMAN BATHHOUSE/WAR MEMORIAL
- 5 DUNTOCHER TRINITY CHURCH
- 6 ROMAN BRIDGE
- 7 DUNTOCHER CORN MILL
- 8 DALNOTTAR IRON WORKS/MILTON MILL
- 9 DUNTOCHER MILL
- 10 DUNTOCHER WEST CHURCH
- 11 DUNTOCHER MAIN STREET
- 12 ST MARY'S CHURCH
- 13 HARDGATE MILL
- 14 WAULKMILL
- 15 FAIFLEY MILL
- 16 MARR'S SPADE FORGE AND DAM
- 17 DUNTOCHER EAST CHURCH
- 18 EDINBARNET HOUSE
- 19 CUP AND RING MARKINGS



# Origins of Duntocher, Hardgate & Faifley

History often begins with geography and it was the plentiful supply of water from the Kilpatrick Hills via the burns that brought the early settlers to the area. There is evidence of life from prehistoric times. The cup and ring markings north of Faifley are thought to be around 5,000 years old; in fact the local name Cochno is derived from the Gaelic Cauchanach – place of little cups. The Romans were here but not for long. They built the Antonine Wall in 142 AD but retreated to Hadrian's Wall 20 years later. It has been suggested that the villages of Hardgate, Duntocher and Faifley began as farming communities along the line of the Roman Wall. In the late 18th and the 19th century, using water-power from the Cochno and Humphrey burns, the area developed a textile industry which by 1835 employed more than 1400 people in 4 mills.

## 1 *Hardgate Cross*

Hardgate Cross, now a roundabout, has been an important junction for centuries. The main road, running east/west, linked the two ancient capitals of Dumbarton and Stirling. The north/south route was used from the 13th century by the monks of Paisley Abbey to collect taxes in the area, the lands of Kilpatrick Parish having been ceded to the Abbey in 1227 by the Earl of Lennox. Among the many premises located here over the years were the Duntocher and Hardgate Co-operative Society, Filshie's pub, replaced in the sixties by Cameron House and Craigs the blacksmiths. The Hardgate Quoiting Club, which was located just north of the cross, was started in the 1840s and flourished for more than 100 years.





Goldenhill Park

## 2 Goldenhill Park

Known originally as the Gowdenhill this tract of land, crossed by the Antonine Wall, was acquired from William Taylor and curators in 1823 by the mill owner William Dunn. The Duntocher Burn forms part of its northern boundary where the remains of a children's paddling pool are visible. An exposed section of the Roman Wall base can be seen on the north-facing slope near the west gate. It became a public park in 1933 and it has seen numerous archaeological digs, particularly on the crown of the hill where the Roman fort stood.

## 3 Roman Fort

The Romans came to Scotland around 80 AD and ventured as far north as the Tay but they did not stay for long. It was not until 138 AD, when Antoninus Pius was Emperor, that they settled here. They built the Antonine Wall, in 142 AD, from Bo'ness in the east to Old Kilpatrick in the west. There were forts built at short intervals all along the Wall including one in what became Goldenhill Park. Each time a legion completed a section of the Wall they carved a stone known as a distance slab to record the details of who built it and how long the section was. The Romans left Scotland in around 160 AD, retreating to Hadrian's Wall in the north of England.

## 4 Roman Bathhouse/War Memorial

In 1775 the remains of a Roman Bathhouse were uncovered at the west end of Goldenhill Park, near the site now occupied by the war memorial. Several rows of the pillars and a labyrinth of passages were uncovered along with a number of reddish tiles in 7 different sizes. A carved female figure was discovered and this can also be seen in Glasgow University's Hunterian Museum. The First World War memorial was unveiled in 1921 but this was destroyed during the Blitz in March 1941. It was replaced by the current memorial in 1951.

Roman Fort



### 5 Duntocher Trinity Church

On the 15th of June 1834 the Old Kilpatrick Kirk Session consented to the Rev John Pollock preaching in a local school-house. In May the following year a fund to build a church was started, and an arrangement was reached with the mill-owner William Dunn to acquire, for one Scots penny, 1,500 square yards of land on the present site. The church was built over the next 18 months, with most of the money gifted by local landowners and merchants. The first service took place on Sunday September 25th 1836. The Reverend Pollock was succeeded in 1838 by William Alexander who, along with most of the congregation, left to form the Duntocher East Free Church at the time of the Disruption in 1843. The manse was built in the 1890s. The church was destroyed in the Clydebank Blitz of March 1941. The foundation stone of the present church was laid in April 1950 and it was inaugurated by the Moderator, the Reverend W White Anderson, on Saturday May 10th 1952.



Distance Slab

Image courtesy of The Hunterian Museum, University of Glasgow

### 6 Roman Bridge

The Roman Wall crossed the Duntocher Burn at this point, making it certain that there has been a bridge here since at least the second century. In the west parapet, a stone in the style of a Roman distance slab with a Latin inscription explains that the bridge was repaired in 1772 by Lord Blantyre. An addition, in English, informs that the bridge was damaged in the Clydebank Blitz of 1941 and repaired in 1943.

Roman Bridge

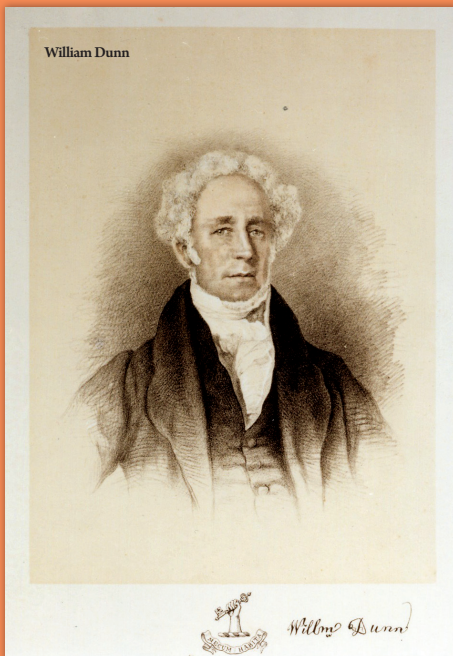




### 7 Duntocher Corn Mill

The first reference to a corn mill in Duntocher is in the Paisley Abbey rental book of 1460 which notes that the Duntocher Burn was used by a mill owned by Thome de Strabrock.

The mill survived at least until 1820 and two of the millstones can be seen in Goldenhill Park close to the west gate. From around 1900 to 1960 the mill site was used by a company of hauliers called Davie. The site is currently home to the Antonine Sports Centre.



### William Dunn

William Dunn was born in 1770 in Kirkintilloch. His first employment was as a cotton spinner in Glasgow, and then he spent four years learning iron-turning and machine making. Around 1800, using a small inheritance, he firstly set up a small machine factory in Glasgow followed by a spinning mill. In 1808 he bought the Duntocher Mill which had been manufacturing coarse woollens since 1786. Over the next 23 years he acquired Faifley Mill, the Dalnottar Iron Works and built Hardgate Mill. At first his mills were powered by water from the Cochno and Loch Humphrey burns but by 1835 they were using steam power. He came to own much of the surrounding land and eventually employed nearly 2000 people in cotton manufacture, agriculture and mining. William Dunn died in 1849.

### 8 *Dalnottar Iron Works/Milton Mill*

The Dalnottar Iron Works was established in Duntocher in 1769 by Glasgow merchants, the name being taken from an earlier works at Dalnottar in Old Kilpatrick. They set up a slit mill in 1771, which used rod iron from the Carron Iron Company of Falkirk. Known as Murdochs Hudson and Company, they made a wide range of agricultural implements and small tools including hammers, chisels, spades and axes, mainly for export to America. Following the American Wars of Independence the company lost much of its market and went into decline. It was bought by William Dunn in 1813 and rebuilt by him as Milton Mill for the production of cotton. It was destroyed in a fire in 1851 and never rebuilt. A block of flats now occupies the site which contrary to advice from local historians has been named Cornmill Court.

### 9 *Duntocher Mill*

Duntocher Mill was built in 1786 for the manufacture of coarse woollens. It soon became capable of preparing and finishing 1,000 yards of cloth every day. However, it went into decline and was unoccupied when it was purchased in 1808 by William Dunn, who installed his own machinery and converted it to process cotton. Like William Dunn's other mills it was converted to steam in the 1830s but ran into trouble in the 1860s when supplies of raw cotton dried up during the American Civil War. It continued under different owners, making yarn and thread until the 1920s. Ruins of the mill and its bridge can still be seen but these are perhaps best viewed from the Great Western Road Bridge. There was a dam upstream and a one time you could take a penny boat trip along the burn.



### 10 *Duntocher West Church*

This United Presbyterian Church is Duntocher's oldest church, the congregation having formed in 1779. There was a split in 1799 with a group moving away to worship in the corn mill. They became known as the 'Meal kirk folk' but were reunited in 1869. The present church was built in 1822. Among several notable ministers the Reverend John Stark, who was minister from 1860 to 1889, was champion of local education.

### 11 *Duntocher Main Street*

In 1808, the population of Duntocher was less than 200 but soon grew dramatically with the demand for labour in William Dunn's operations. By 1835, 1400 were employed in the mills alone. Many of the incomers were from the Highlands seeking work following the Clearances; there was a substantial Irish contingent, escaping the potato famines. Both sides of Main Street were lined with mostly two storey housing and the shops which developed; they included grocers, drapers,



butchers, newsagents, cobblers, a barber, and 3 wine and spirit merchants as well as 2 pubs. Duntocher had a library from at least 1828 and a police station in Chapel Road from the 1840s. The Trades Directory of 1893 records 43 separate businesses including a Post Office and the Duntocher and Hardgate Co-operative Society. Duntocher's first public school was

opened in 1876 where the Glenhead Centre now stands. It was bombed in 1941 and the pupils had to be accommodated in makeshift huts in the playground until Goldenhill School was opened in 1955. Duntocher Hibs, formed in the 1890s, played on various pitches before coming to Glenhead Park in 1926. Starting in 1925, a tram service, using single deck tramcars, ran from Clydebank to Duntocher. It was replaced by a bus service in 1949.

### 12 *St Mary's Church*

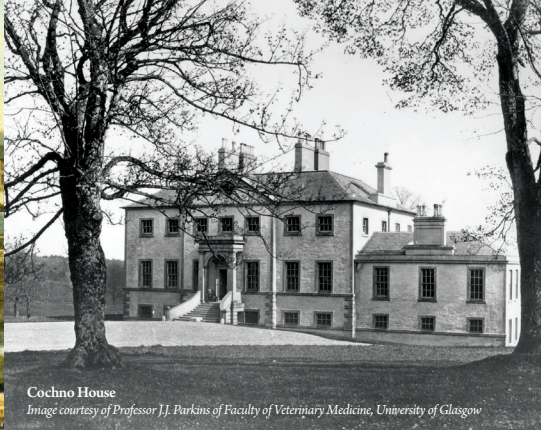
The Irish who came to settle in Duntocher were mainly Roman Catholic, a substantial proportion of them coming from County Donegal. It was principally to serve them that St Mary's was opened in Duntocher in 1841, thanks to the efforts of a pioneering priest called Charles MacKenzie. The church also provided schooling. Within a few years the congregation had grown to around 1400 so a new church and school were built in 1850. This church, like Duntocher Trinity, was destroyed by German bombers in 1941. St. Mary's School sustained severe damage but was able to resume use of part of the building. The present church, erected on the same site, was opened in 1954.



St Mary's Church



Hardgate Mill



Cochno House

Image courtesy of Professor J.J. Parkins of Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Glasgow

### 13 *Hardgate Mill*

Hardgate Mill was built by William Dunn in 1831 on the site now occupied by Sam Kerr's garage. Like his other 3 mills in the area it was set up for spinning and weaving cotton. It was destroyed by fire in 1846 but rebuilt by Alexander Dunn, who had inherited his brother William's estate following his death in 1849. Like the other mills, it declined in the 1860's but continued to make thread and yarn. It became Strathclyde Hosiery and continued in production until destroyed by enemy bombing in 1941.

### 14 *Waulkmill*

About 50 metres up the Loch Humphrey Burn from the main road on the west side of the burn a vestige of a waterwheel arch can be seen on the wall of a house. This is all that remains of the Duntocher Waulkmill (waulk is coarse woollen cloth.)

### 15 *Faifley Mill*

Faifley Mill was established by the Faifley Spinning Company in the 18th century. Used to produce woollen cloth, much of the raw product was brought annually from the West Highlands. The owners of the wool would return the following year to collect the finished product. The mill was bought by William Dunn in 1811 and converted to spinning and weaving cotton. Initially powered by water wheels from the Cochno

and Loch Humphrey Burns, it was converted to steam in 1835. After the cotton trade went into decline in the 1860s the buildings were put to a variety of uses including cabinet marking. Latterly, they housed McKechnie's Bakery but were demolished in the 1990s to make way for housing.

### 16 *Marr's Spade Forge and Dam*

Still indicated on the 1860 map of the area is Marr's spade forge, which was situated on the Loch Humphrey Burn just downstream from what later became Breval Crescent. This was just one of a number of a number of small forges in the area. Just below it was a mill pond known as Marr's Dam which was one of four large dams used to store water for the cotton mills.

### 17 *Duntocher East Church*

At the time of the Disruption in 1843 the Minister of Duntocher Parish Church and most of the congregation broke away to form the Duntocher Free Church. To begin with, they worshipped in a school but in 1845 built the church, which still stands on the main road just west of Hardgate Roundabout. Reunited with the Church of Scotland in 1929, the church was renamed Duntocher East and again as Hardgate Parish Church. It served until 1958 when, with most of the congregation now living in the newly built Faifley housing estate, it was closed.

The church bell, which was cast in 1842, was transferred to a new church built in Faifley. The 1845 church saw many more years of service as Hardgate Public Hall and at the time of writing it is undergoing conversion to housing.

### *Cochno House*

At the time of the Reformation, the lands of the Kilpatrick Parish were handed over to Claud Hamilton. The Hamilton family remained major landowners for 13 generations. The present Cochno House was built in 1757 and is attributed to John Adam. It is a deep-plan, seven bay pavilion-roofed house of classical distinction and it was extended in 1842. It is now part of the University of Glasgow, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine. It is not included in the trail because public access is not encouraged.

### **18** *Edinbarnet House*

The lands around Edinbarnet were acquired by Andrew Stirling in 1569 and the original house was built in 1664 by William Stirling. A new house was constructed in 1882 by the then owner of the estate, Walter MacKenzie. It was destroyed by fire soon after its completion but was quickly rebuilt. It was acquired by a well-known pig-breeder, Mr. William Laird, in 1949, but came on the market again in 1966. The house, which has a fine garden with an ornamental pool, became a nursing home in 1988.



### **19** *Cup and Ring Markings*

In 1887, the Rev Harvey of Duntocher discovered some curious cup and ring markings in rocks to the north of Faifley. Over the next few years others were found. They are thought to be around 5,000 years old and archaeologists are unsure of their purpose. They may have had a religious or astronomical significance or perhaps they had artistic or cultural functions. The photograph shows the biggest of the stones, known locally as the Druid Stone. The markings have been whitened to show them more clearly. Today, because of vandalism, the best of the carvings, including the Druid Stone, have been earthed over for protection by Historic Scotland. One exception is in Auchnacraig Urban Park where an example can still be seen on the site of the former Auchnacraig House.



Cup and Ring Markings



This leaflet is one of a series of six Heritage Trails designed to guide you around some of the most fascinating local areas, and to indicate significant social, historical and architectural features. Each leaflet includes an annotated map, detailed narrative, and a number of images relating to the trail. Each leaflet will be available on the West Dunbartonshire Council website, at:

[www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk](http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk)



West Dunbartonshire Council  
Libraries and Cultural Services  
19 Poplar Road  
Dumbarton

Tel: 01389 608039

West Dunbartonshire Council would like to acknowledge the assistance of many individuals and organisations in compiling these leaflets, and wishes also to acknowledge The Hunterian Museum & Art Gallery, and the following funding organisations: Clydebank Local History Society & Clydebank Re-built.

design by **macfarlane** creative

