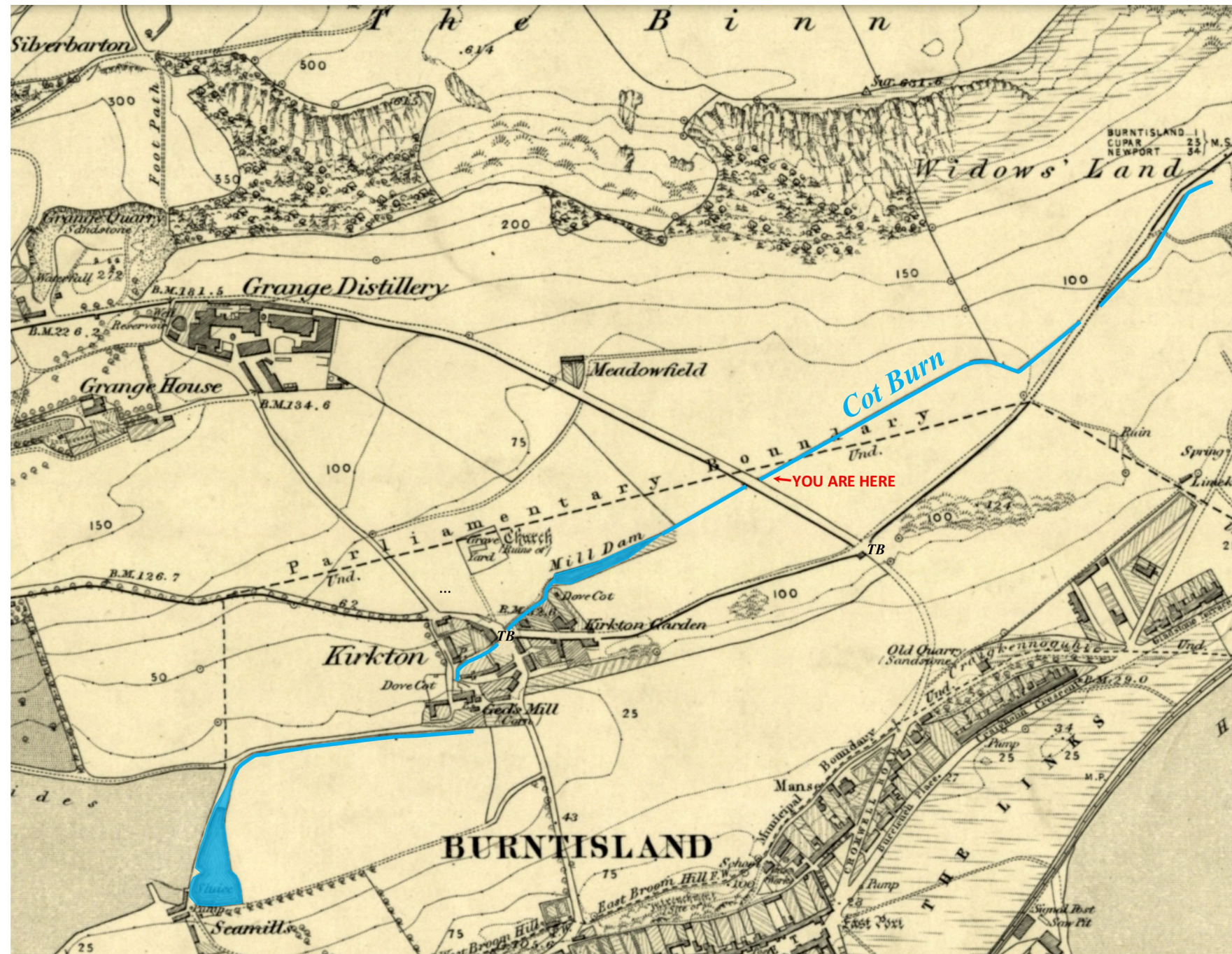


The Cot Burn in the Toll Park: A short history

Earliest times: People have lived in this area for thousands of years. In **medieval times**, a church was built beside the confluence of the **Cot and Kirkton Burns**. This settlement by the church, Kirkton, is the oldest part of our town.

The Royal Burgh: Burntisland developed around the harbour built in 1540. This map from 1856, shows it was still a small town then and the Kirkton looks like a separate village. The **Cot Burn** and **Kirkton Burn** are shown on this map in blue, running south west to the sea.



Mills: Local corn mills were once essential. The **Cot and Kirkton Burns** once powered the water-wheel at **Ged's Mill**. A mill pond near the old Kirkton church controlled the flow. The map also shows a **sea mill** near the Castle. This used the sea flowing in and out of its tidal pond to power its wheel.

Distillery: The old Grange Distillery was built in 1767, originally as a brewery. Its water supply came from the burns from Dunearn and the west side of the Binn. Old Burntisland ('OB') Whisky was made until distillery closure in 1927. Water from the old distillery runs in a culvert and joins the **Cot Burn** near the site of the old mill pond, becoming the **Kirkton Burn**.

Place names change over the years but may give clues to local history.

The **Cot Burn**: Cot means cottage. Burn means a small stream. Perhaps a farm cottage used to stand near the burn where it arises on the east side of the Binn, near the golf course?

The **Toll Park**: Until the agricultural and industrial revolutions, most roads were unpaved dirt tracks. The 1753 Turnpike Act proposed construction of a road between Edinburgh and Perth, via Queensferry: the Great North Road (GNR). A branch road linking Burntisland harbour to the GNR at Cowdenbeath was made. Turnpike roads were funded by tolls (fees) levied on goods carried and paid at **Toll Bars** (TB on the map). Kirkton Toll was on Aberdour Road, and **East Toll** on Cowdenbeath Road. The park was originally East Toll Park.



The above photographs of Greenmount (left) and Binn House (right) are courtesy of Burntisland Heritage Trust.
The OS map of Burntisland in 1856 is reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.

Victorian times: When the railway arrived, the town grew as homes were needed for workers in new industries. The town also attracted wealthier people seeking a better lifestyle. Two new mansions were built on the edge of town: **Greenmount** was built in 1859 on the south side of the **Cot Burn** and **Binn House** was built north side of the **Cot Burn** in 1866. Greenmount later became a hotel but burnt down in 1987 and was eventually demolished. By the 1970s, Binn House was a ruin and demolished to make way for a housing estate.

Modern times: In the 20th century, the fields south of the Binn House and Cot Burn became the **Toll Park**, which was used for cricket, football and athletics. In the 1970s, the Toll Centre (now the Toll Community Centre) was built. In 2014 the Primary School and playing fields were built over most of what was left of the Toll Park.



Use your smart phone camera to focus on the QR code on the far left to access additional information on Burntisland Heritage Trust website.