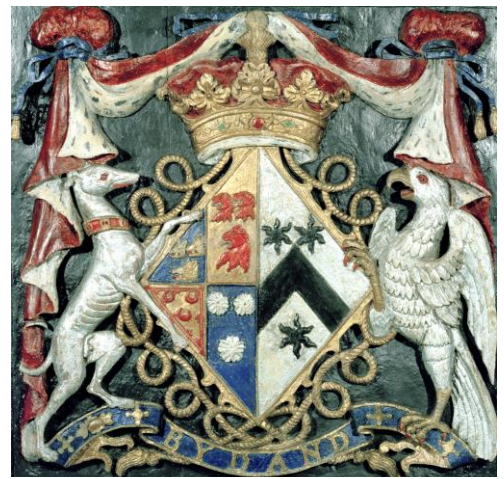


The Archway to St Paul's Chapel, Aberdeen



Heraldic Arms of Henrietta, Duchess of Gordon erected in St Paul's Chapel, Aberdeen below: Jaffrey's 'preaching box' plan

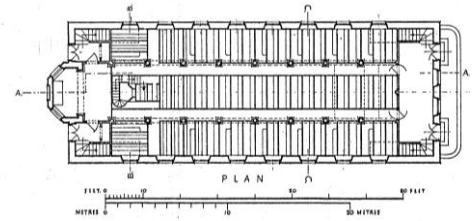


FIG 1 St Paul's Chapel, Aberdeen: plan, longitudinal section and location map

Just across from the street at the back of John Lewis department store on land now called Berry Street, there stands an archway without any notification of its history or purpose. In fact the rebuilt gateway was the only access to the Episcopal Meetinghouse built in 1721, dedicated to St Paul, the foundations, now hidden forever from sight, buried amongst the Bon-Accord Centre opened in 1985. The archway stood originally on the Gallowgate and was the only entrance to the church as Loch Street was not built until 1840. The architect of the original St Paul's Church was Alexander Jaffray the 4th Laird of Kingswells who interestingly was married to Christine, daughter of the Quaker apologist, Robert Barclay. The Archway is the sole remaining example of Alexander Jaffray's work in the city.

Many famous people have passed through this dignified gateway to the pend off the Gallowgate, leading to Jaffray's '*handsome and commodious*' chapel, including the famous preacher, John Wesley; On the Sunday before being accorded the Freedom of the City of Aberdeen, Dr Samuel Johnson, the diarist, visited the chapel along with his travelling companion, James Boswell. In their comments on their visit they remarked on the large congregation and the competent playing of the organist, Andrew Tait. Another regular visitor was Francis Peacock the father of Scottish Country Dancing and his family; Regular worshippers such as the Gregory family of Drumoak; the Bannermans of Elsick House; the Gordons

of Haddo; the Buchans of Auchmacoy; and the Innesses of Learney attended Sunday by Sunday.

The ardent Jacobite supporter, Henrietta, Duchess of Gordon was also a regular worshipper and her third son Lord Lewis Gordon, about whom the Jacobite lament, '*O send Lewis Gordon Home*' had attended St Paul's since a babe in arms until he had to flee after involvement in the '45 Rebellion, leaving Scotland to die in exile.

Striding through the archway walked another youth destined to become famous, namely, George Gordon Byron, (later Lord Byron), pupil at Aberdeen Grammar School, who lived with his Mother at 64 Broad Street. According to architect and antiquarian, Edward Meldrum, the archway now with modern iron gates, was part of an early 18th century tenement in the Gallowgate and dates from 1721. Meldrum describes the gateway as built in the Renaissance-style with rusticated Roman Doric Pilasters topped by a bold cornice.

The 1721 chapel was replaced by Aberdeen architect, J. Russell Mackenzie in 1865 and the church finally closed for worship on Sunday 30th January 1966, almost all the indigenous congregation of over 100 worshippers transferring to St Andrew's Cathedral, the first combined service taking place on the Sunday following, the 7th February.

Stuart Donald

Acknowledgment to the following authors and publications for information on this subject:
Kenneth Chillies' article in *Aberdeen & Buchan Churchman*; the *Scottish Dictionary of Architects*;
Edward Meldrum D Arch FSA Scot (1986) *Old Aberdeen*; Scan [*Scottish Episcopal Church newspaper*]
Stuart Donald (2012) *Incumbents of St Andrew's Cathedral Vol III part two*
further information from
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Aberdeen Diocesan Library & Archives