

**An Innkeeper of Cupar: The Life of John Buist (1816-1893)**  
**By His Third Great Nephew, Michael T. Tracy**

The future innkeeper and builder of Cupar's largest hotel establishment was born in humble circumstances on Tuesday, 16 April 1816 at Feddinch in Cameron Parish to Thomas Buist and Elizabeth Christie.<sup>1</sup> In his early youth, he relocated to Cunnoquhie, Monimail Parish, Fifeshire where he worked as a butler. He met and later married Boswell Angus on Friday, 27 April 1838 at Cupar.<sup>2</sup> After his marriage, John Buist relocated to Cupar where he began a small grocery business and later began operating the Albert Inn which he would purchase. John Buist would later lease the Royal Hotel and operate this hotel for 22 years. Additionally, Buist would also lease the Tontine Hotel on Catherine Street in which he also was the innkeeper. He was known to supply the best quality and his uniform civility and obliging manner commanded the respect of his customers. The Tontine Hotel was Cupar's largest hotel establishment in the area and Buist would later re-build the hotel and after 20 years he would retire from the hotel business. He had a passion for horses and purchased many breeds as a Fife horse dealer. John Buist would later purchase Tailabout farm outside of Cupar where he raised his horses and where he eventually retired to. This then is the narrative of the life and times of John Buist, an innkeeper of Cupar.



*Fig.1. John & Boswell Buist, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy*

**Early years**

John Buist was born on Tuesday, 16 April 1816 at Feddinch, Cameron Parish, Fifeshire.<sup>3</sup> He was the fourth child of Thomas Buist (1789-1829), Head Gardener of Feddinch, and Elizabeth Christie. He was baptized on Sunday, 21 April 1816 at Cameron Parish Church in Cameron Parish.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Baptismal Record of John Buist, 21 April 1816, Cameron Parish Records, Old Parish Records 412/0010 0273

<sup>2</sup> Marriage Record of John Buist, 27 April 1838, Cupar Parish Records, Old Parish Records 420/0050 0109

<sup>3</sup> Baptismal Record of John Buist, 21 April 1816, Cameron Parish Records, Old Parish Records 412/0010 0273

<sup>4</sup> Baptismal Record of John Buist, 21 April 1816, Cameron Parish Records, Old Parish Records 412/0010 0273

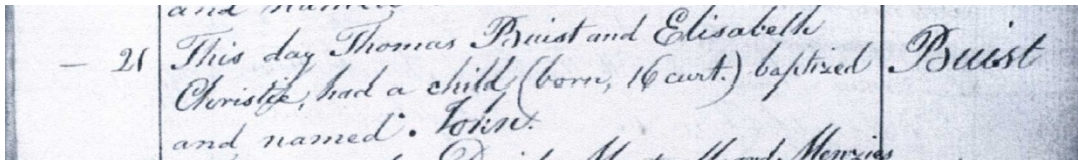


Fig.2. Baptismal Record of John Buist, 21 April 1816, Cameron Parish Records, Crown Copyright



Fig.3. Cameron Parish Church, Cameron Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010  
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Feddinch is located about “one-half a mile east by north from Winthank [and described as] a large farmhouse two stories high with office and thrashing machine all in good repair. There is a garden attached and a farm of about 215 acres of arable land.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ordnance Survey Name Books, *Fife and Kinross-shire OS Name Books, 1853-1855, Volume 62, OS1/13/62/16*

16 Parish of Cameron No. 21. Plan 12. 6. Sheet 5

List of Names to be corrected if necessary	Orthography as recommended to be used in the new Plans	Other modes of Spelling the same Name	Authority for these other modes of Spelling when known	Situation	Descriptive Remarks, or other General Observations which may be considered of Interest
Feddineh	Feddinch	Feddineh Feddineh Feddineh	Alexander Reid Farmer Pinaltham Robert Blodge Farmer Feddinch Sp. Act. Munro's & Co. P.	About 1/2 mile E by N. from Wathank	Large farm house two stories high with offices and thrashing machine and good refuse, there is a garden attached and a farm of about 215 acres of arable land. Tenanted by Robert Blodge. The property of James Lindsay of Hill Merchant Perth.

Fig.4. Ordnance Survey Name Book for Feddinch, Cameron Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of ScotlandsPlaces.gov.uk



Fig.5. Ordnance Survey Map showing Feddinch, Cameron Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of the National Library of Scotland



Fig.6. Cottage at Feddinch where John Buist was born and raised, Feddinch, Cameron Parish, Fife,  
Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

### Marriage

Buist later relocated to Monimail Parish and worked as a butler at Cunnoquhie. It was in Monimail Parish that he met Boswell Angus who was born and raised in Monimail Parish. Boswell Angus was born on Monday, 22 December 1817, the daughter of John Angus.<sup>6</sup> They were married on Friday, 27 April 1838 at Cupar.<sup>7</sup>

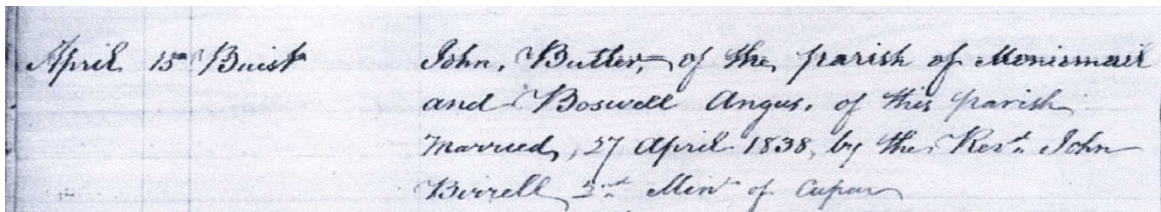


Fig.7. Marriage Record of John Buist, 27 April 1838, Cupar Parish Records, Crown Copyright

Cunnoquhie is located about 5/8 of a mile north-east by north of the village of Letham and is described as being "a neat and well-constructed house three stories high built in the modern style of architecture having suitable offices, large vegetable and flower garden."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Baptismal Record of Boswell Angus, 28 December 1817, Monimail Parish Records, Old Parish Records 448/0020 0121

<sup>7</sup> Marriage Record of John Buist, 27 April 1838, Cupar Parish Records, Old Parish Records 420/0050 0109

<sup>8</sup> Ordnance Survey Name Books, Fife and Kinross-shire OS Name Books, 1853-1855, Volume 53, OS1/13/53/26

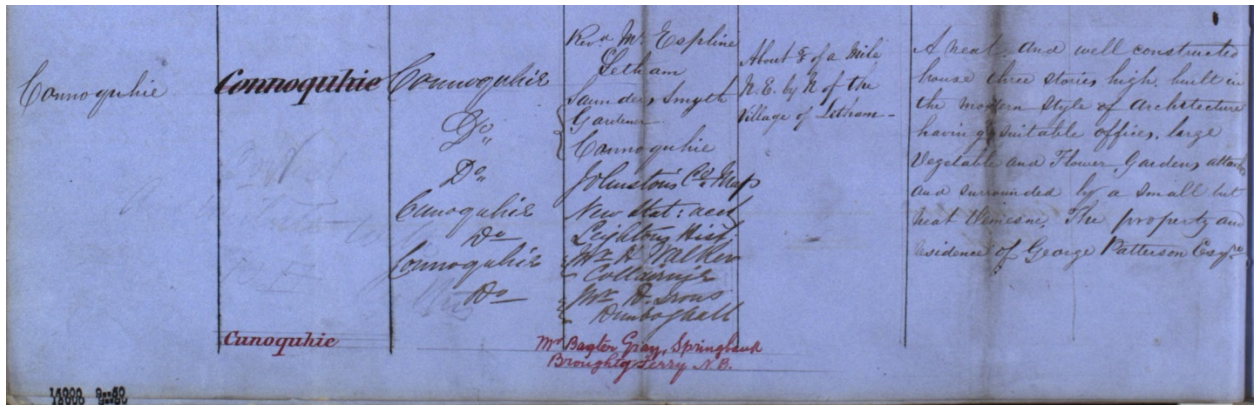


Fig.8. Ordnance Survey Name Book for Cunnoquhie, Monimail Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of ScotlandsPlaces.gov.uk



Fig.9. Ordnance Survey Map showing Cunnoquhie, Monimail Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of the National Library of Scotland



Fig.10. Cunnoquhie House, Monimail Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of James Allen

John and Boswell Buist are listed in the 1841 Scotland Census for Cunnoquhie, Monimail Parish, Fife showing John as being 24 years of age and working as a male servant and his wife, Boswell is 22 years of age.<sup>9</sup>

Parish of Monimail

1		2		3		4	
PLACE Here insert Name of Village, Street, Square, Glass, Court, &c.	HOUSES Unoccupied or Building Inhabited	NAME and SURNAME, SEX and AGE of each Person who abode in each House on the Night of 6th June.		OCCUPATION		WHERE BORN	
		NAME and SURNAME	AGE Male Female	Of what Profession, Trade, Employment, or whether of Independent Means.	[Grid]		
Cunnoquhie Lodge		Euphemia do	19	Wife			
		Barbara do	25	Do			
		Ann Wilson	25	Do			
		Eliza Nicolson	25	Do			
		Maggie Wallace	20	Do			
		John Buist	24	Male	Servant		
		Boswell do	22	Female			

Fig.11. 1841 Scotland Census for Monimail Parish, Fife, listing John and Boswell Buist

### Family Life at Cupar

From Monimail, the Buist family resided in Cupar, Cupar Parish, Fife in about 1843. John Buist opened a grocery business in Bonnygate, Cupar and in March of 1846 he acquired the property to the west of his grocery shop and converted it into a hotel naming it the Albert Hotel in Cupar. According to the *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper* dated Thursday, 26 January 1843 "John Buist, grocer begs leave to return his sincere thanks to the public for the support he has received since he commenced business, and takes this opportunity to inform families in the town and neighborhood, that he continues to receive occasional engagements as Waiter at dinner parties, assemblies and generally where the services of an experienced attendant may be required."<sup>10</sup>

**CARD.**

**JOHN BUIST,**  
**GROCCER, BONNYGATE,**

**B**ECS, leave to return his sincere thanks to the Public for the support he has received since he commenced Business in the above line, and takes this opportunity to inform Families in the Town and Neighbourhood, that he continues to receive occasional engagements as Waiter, &c., at Dinner Parties, Assemblies, and generally where the services of an experienced attendant may be required.

Cupar, West Port, Bonnygate, }  
24th January, 1843. }

Fig.12. *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper*, 26 January 1843, Page 1

<sup>9</sup> 1841 Scotland Census for Monimail Parish, Fife, Scotland; Enumeration District Number 1, Page 27

<sup>10</sup> *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper*, Thursday, 26 January 1843, p. 1

The couple had nine children who were mostly born in Cupar. They were:

John born on Thursday, 2 September 1841<sup>11</sup> and died in 1912;<sup>12</sup>  
Thomas born on Monday, 25 March 1844<sup>13</sup> and died on Monday, 30 November 1891;<sup>14</sup>  
Mary Ann born on Friday, 14 August 1846<sup>15</sup> and died on Friday, 7 May 1852;  
Elizabeth Boswell born on Tuesday, 27 April 1852<sup>16</sup> and died on Friday, 5 June 1920;<sup>17</sup>  
Mary Hay born on Tuesday, 28 June 1853<sup>18</sup> and died on Tuesday, 1 May 1928;<sup>19</sup>  
Robert born in 1854 and died on Friday, 19 May 1933;<sup>20</sup>  
Helen born on Wednesday, 20 May 1857<sup>21</sup> and died on Thursday, 16 February 1928;<sup>22</sup>  
Jessie Lillias born on Thursday, 20 January 1859<sup>23</sup> and died on Thursday, 11 January 1934;<sup>24</sup>  
George Alexander born on Thursday, 20 January 1859<sup>25</sup> and died on Sunday, 23 February 1941.<sup>26</sup>

### **Hotel Keeper of Cupar: The Albert Inn**

In about 1846 John Buist purchased his first hotel in Cupar, Fife. He later that same year added a posting establishment. According to the *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper* dated Thursday, 5 March 1846, John Buist ran the following advertisement, "Albert Inn, Bonnygate, Cupar. John Buist respectfully begs to intimate to farmers, commercial, gentlemen and the public, which he has fitted up the above Inn in the most comfortable manner for their accommodation. John Buist supplies breakfasts, dinners, tea and suppers on the shortest notice and on reasonable terms. The wines, spirits, malt liquors are of the best quality; and the stabling extensive and commodious with lock up coach house."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Baptismal Record of John Buist, 2 September 1841, Monimail Parish Records, Old Parish Records 448/0030 0052

<sup>12</sup> Death Record of John Buist, 1912, England & Wales, Death Registration Index, 1827-1920. Index. Family Search, 2010

<sup>13</sup> Baptismal Record of Thomas Buist, 25 March 1844, Cupar Parish Records, Old Parish Records 420/0040 0313

<sup>14</sup> Death Record of Thomas Buist, 30 November 1891, Auchtermuchty Parish Records, Statutory Deaths 406/0000 0049

<sup>15</sup> Baptismal Record of Mary Ann Buist, 14 August 1846, Cupar Parish Records, Old Parish Records 420/0040 0314

<sup>16</sup> Baptismal Record of Elizabeth Boswell Buist, 27 April 1852, Cupar Parish Records, Old Parish Records 420/0040 0347

<sup>17</sup> Death Record of Elizabeth Boswell Wilson, 5 June 1920, Cupar Parish Records, Statutory Deaths 420/0000 0062

<sup>18</sup> *Fife Herald Newspaper*, Thursday, July 7, 1853, p. 2

<sup>19</sup> Death Record of Mary Hay Buist, 1 May 1928, Cupar Parish Records, Statutory Deaths 420/0000 0069

<sup>20</sup> Burial Record of Robert Buist, 21 May 1933, Central Hawke's Bay District Council Public Cemetery Records, Waipukurau, New Zealand

<sup>21</sup> Birth Record of Helen Buist, 20 May 1857, Cupar Parish Records, Statutory Births 420/0000 0100

<sup>22</sup> Death Record of Helen Buist, 16 February 1928, Dundee Parish Records, Statutory Deaths 282/05 0018

<sup>23</sup> Birth Record of Jessie Lillias Buist, 20 January 1859, Cupar Parish Records, Statutory Births 420/0000 0015

<sup>24</sup> Death Record of Jessie Lillias Buist, 11 January 1934, Australia Death Index, 1787-1985. Ancestry.com. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010

<sup>25</sup> Birth Record of George Alexander Buist, 20 January 1859, Cupar Parish Records, Statutory Births 420/0000 0016

<sup>26</sup> Death Record of George Alexander Buist, 23 February 1941, Australia Death Index, 1787-1985. Ancestry.com. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010

<sup>27</sup> *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper*, Thursday, 5 March 1846, p. 1

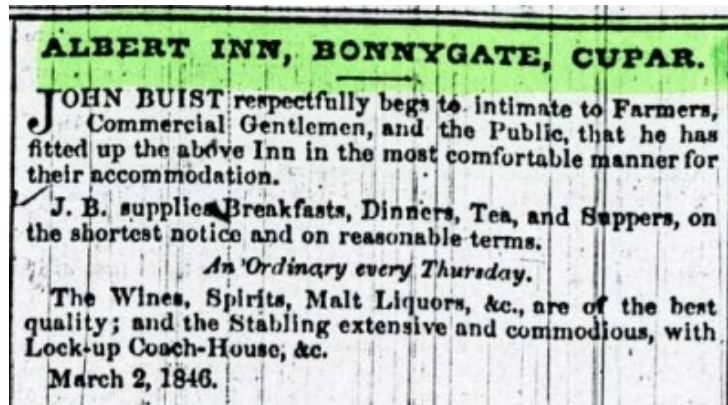


Fig.13. Fifehire Journal Newspaper, 5 March 1846, Page 1

The Albert Inn was located on the south side of Bonnygate presently 102-104 Bonnygate in Cupar and was described as “an inn or public house on the south side of Bonnygate and west of the north end of [Provost] Wynd having good stabling and carriage accommodation it is the property and at present in the occupation of Mr. Buist, innkeeper.”<sup>28</sup>

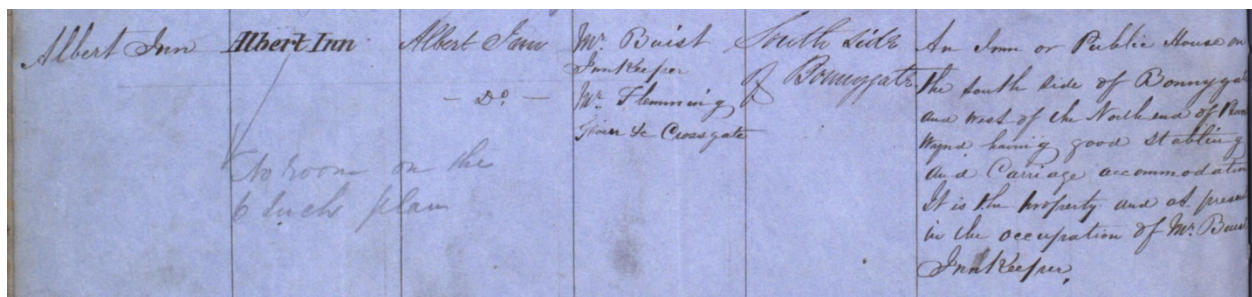


Fig.14. Ordnance Survey Name Book for the Albert Inn, Cupar, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of ScotlandsPlaces.gov.uk

In late 1849, John Buist expanded his business to include funerals. He bought hearses and mourning coaches for the Albert Inn. The *Fife Herald Newspaper* on Thursday, 3 January 1850 stated: “John Buist begs to intimate that he has now got on his Premises, and ready for immediate use, Hearses and Mourning Coaches, suitable for one, two, four, or six horses, at Prices to suit the circumstances of all Parties.”<sup>29</sup>

### Tontine Hotel

Sometime in October of 1850, John Buist acquired a lease on the Tontine Hotel also in Cupar. He formally opened the Tontine Hotel to the public on Monday, 11 November 1850. He continued to operate and manage this hotel until well after his retirement in 1872. The lease of the Tontine Hotel held by John Buist was only for three years. According to the *Fifehire Journal Newspaper* dated Thursday, 5 January 1854: “John Buist, whose lease of the Tontine Hotel, at Cupar expired at Martinmas, respectfully intimates that he has built a new range of stables and coach houses, and is getting a new hotel erected opposite the County Buildings, which will enable him to afford better

<sup>28</sup> Ordnance Survey Name Books, *Fife and Kinross-shire OS Name Books, 1853-1855, Volume 113, OS1/13/113/58*

<sup>29</sup> *Fife Herald Newspaper*, 3 January 1850, p. 2



accommodation..."<sup>30</sup> The Tontine Hotel was located on the east end of St. Catherine Street and was described as "a large and well-constructed building adjoining the east end of the County Building. It has good stabling and carriage accommodation."<sup>31</sup> Eventually, the Tontine Hotel would be demolished in 1925.

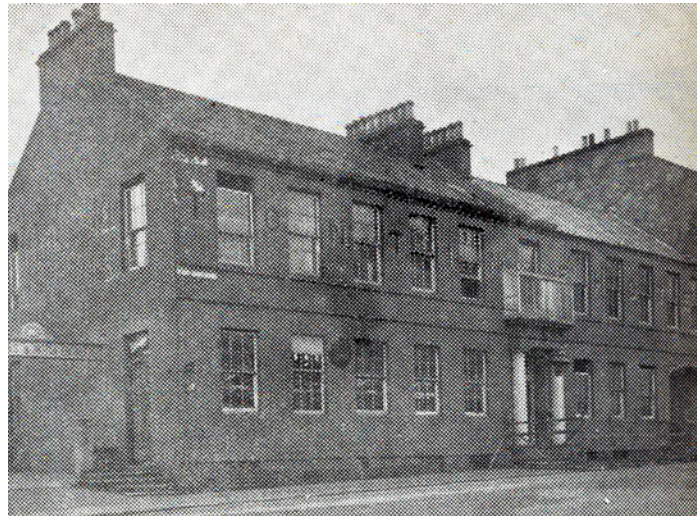


Fig.15. Old Tontine Hotel at Cupar, Photograph Courtesy of Fife Council Libraries & Archives

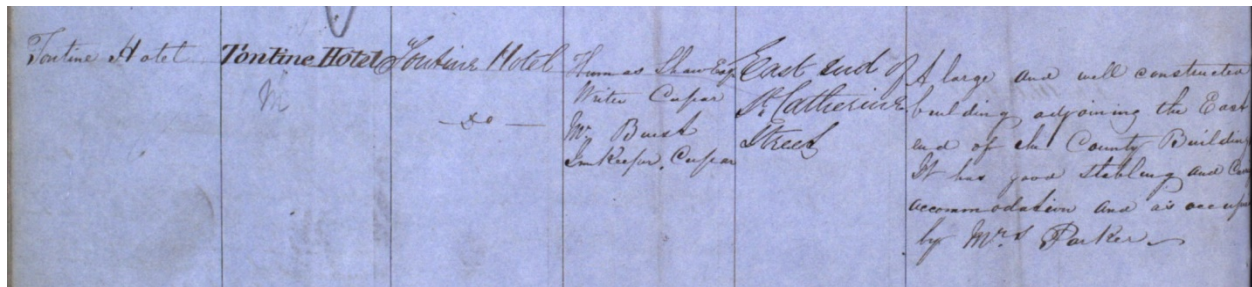


Fig.16. Ordnance Survey Name Book for the Tontine Hotel, Cupar, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of ScotlandsPlaces.gov.uk

<sup>30</sup> Fife Journal Newspaper, 5 January 1854, p. 2

<sup>31</sup> Ordnance Survey Name Books, Fife and Kinross-shire OS Name Books, 1853-1855, Volume 113, OS1/13/113/64



Fig.17. Ordnance Survey Map showing the Tontine Hotel, Cupar, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of the National Library of Scotland

### The Royal Hotel

John Buist planned and built what he named the Royal Hotel in Cupar from about 1853 until 1854. The Royal Hotel was completed on Thursday, 17 November 1853 and opened partially to the public on Tuesday, 16 May 1854 and was in full operation on Thursday, 8 June 1854. The *Fife Herald Newspaper* reported it's opening on Thursday, 29 June 1854 by stating: "Notice of the Opening of the Royal Hotel in Cupar. John Buist has built a large first class Hotel, with an extensive range of Stables and Coach Houses."<sup>32</sup>



Fig.18. St. Catherine Street, Cupar with Royal Hotel on right, Photograph Courtesy of Fife Council Libraries & Archives

<sup>32</sup> *Fife Herald Newspaper*, 29 June 1854, p. 2

He would operate this hotel for the next twenty-two years until he sold it to Mr. John Macqueen on Thursday, 13 April 1876. According to the *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper* of Thursday, 13 April 1876 it reported, "The sale has been made of the Royal Hotel and posting establishment to Mr. Macqueen, his tenant by Mr. John Buist..."<sup>33</sup> The building is still standing today on the north side of St. Catherine Street at the east end of the Episcopal Chapel in Cupar and was described as being "a large commodious inn three stories high with suitable offices attached in St. Catherine Street, the property of Mr. John Buist."<sup>34</sup> It would become the largest hotel and posting establishment in the County of Fife.

ROYAL HOTEL, CUPAR-FIFE.  
JOHN BUIST.  
**P**OST HORSES and CARRIAGES of every description for Hire. Superior Hearses and Plumes, with one, two, or four Black Horses, and real Mourning Coaches for use in all parts of the County on Moderate Terms. Mr Buist's personal attendance free. One Horse Hearse for Town or Country on Moderate Terms for the Working Classes.  
 MR MACQUEEN gives his whole attention to the HOTEL DEPARTMENT. Commercial, Show, and Billiard-Rooms. An Ordinary every Tuesday. This is the Largest Hotel and Posting Establishment in Fife. Established 30 Years.  
*Please note the Address.*

Fig.19. *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper*, Thursday, 13 April 1876, Page 6

Royal Hotel	Royal Hotel	Royal Hotel	Mr. Buist	Owner	On the North side	A large Commodious Inn three stories
					high with suitable offices attached	
					at the East end in St. Catherine Street, the property of	
					of the Episcopal Chapel	Mr. John Buist

Fig.20. Ordnance Survey Name Book for the Royal Inn, Cupar, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of [ScotlandsPlaces.gov.uk](http://ScotlandsPlaces.gov.uk)

<sup>33</sup> *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper*, 13 April 1876, p. 6

<sup>34</sup> Ordnance Survey Name Books, *Fife and Kinross-shire OS Name Books, 1853-1855, Volume 113, OS1/13/113/23*



*Fig.21. Old Royal Hotel Building at Cupar, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy*

### **The Census Records**

The Buist family is listed in the 1851 Scotland Census for Cupar. The family is residing on New Street with John listed as being 35 years of age, occupation is given as an innkeeper; Boswell his wife, as being 33 years of age and the following children: John age 9, Thomas age 6, Mary Ann age 4.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> 1851 Scotland Census for Cupar, Cupar Parish, Fife, Scotland; Enumeration District Number 5, Page 19

No. of Schedule	Parish of	Name and Surname of each Person	Relation to Head of Family	Condition	Age of Person	Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Where Born
1	Cupar	John Buist	Head	Mar	35	Hotel Keeper	Cupar
		Mary	Wife	Mar	33		Cupar
		Elizabeth	Daughter	Mar	4		Cupar
		Thomas	Son	Mar	6		Cupar
		Mary Ann	Son	Mar	4		Cupar
		John Ferguson	Son	Mar	61		Cupar
		John Young	Son	Mar	31	General	Cupar
		James Macintosh	Son	Mar	19	General	Cupar
		Robert Adamson	Waiter	Mar	26	Waiter	Cupar
		Thomas MacLeod	Son	Mar	21	Bank Clerk	Cupar
		Peter Lister	Son	Mar	20	Son	Cupar
		William Russell	Son	Mar	24	Son	Cupar
Total of Persons					11	9	

Fig.22. 1851 Scotland Census for Cupar, Cupar Parish, Fife, listing John Buist and Family

The 1861 Scotland Census for Cupar shows the family residing at 20 St. Catherine Street which is the Royal Hotel. This census shows John Buist age 44 and a hotel keeper and horse hire; Boswell age 43; John age 19 being a bank clerk; Thomas age 17 being a waiter at the hotel; Elizabeth age 8; Mary age 7; Robert age 6; Helen age 3; George and Jessie (twins) both being age 2.<sup>36</sup>

The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the											[Page 1]	
Parish of		Quoad Sacra Parish of		Parliamentary Burgh of		Royal Burgh of		Town of		Village of		
Cupar											Cupar	
No. of Schedule	Road, Street, &c. and No. or Name of House.	No. of Houses	Name and Surname of each Person	Relation to Head of Family	Condition	Age of Person	Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Where Born	Sex	Age	Remarks	
1	20 St. Catherine St.	1	John Buist	Head	Mar	44	Hotel Keeper & horse hire	Perthshire Cupar	♂	44		
			Elizabeth Buist	Wife	Mar	43		Perthshire Cupar	♀	43		
			John	Son	Mar	19	Bank Clerk	Cupar	♂	19		
			Thomas	Son	Mar	17	Waiter	Cupar	♂	17		
			Elizabeth	Daughter	Mar	8	Schooler	Cupar	♀	8		
			Mary	Daughter	Mar	7		Cupar	♀	7		
			Robert	Son	Mar	6		Cupar	♂	6		
			Helen	Daughter	Mar	3		Cupar	♀	3		
			George	Son	Mar	2		Cupar	♂	2		
			Jessie	Daughter	Mar	2		Cupar	♀	2		
			John Boswell	Servant	Wid	61	General Servant	Perthshire Cupar	♂	61		
			Martha Boswell	Son	Mar	53		Perthshire Cupar	♂	53		
			Mary Child	Son	Mar	22	Housemaid	Perthshire Cupar	♀	22		
			Elizabeth	Son	Mar	17	Housemaid	Cupar	♀	17		
			James Macintosh	Son	Mar	17	General Servant	Cupar	♂	17		
			William Macintosh	Son	Mar	13	General Servant	Cupar	♂	13		
			Andrew Bagley	Servant	Mar	43	Bank Agent	Perthshire Cupar	♂	43		
			Elizabeth	Wife	Mar	43		Perthshire Cupar	♀	43		
			Robert	Son	Mar	16		Cupar	♂	16		
			Margaret	Daughter	Mar	13	Schooler	Perthshire Cupar	♀	13		
			Helen	Daughter	Mar	3		Cupar	♀	3		
			George	Son	Mar	2		Cupar	♂	2		
			Jessie	Daughter	Mar	2		Cupar	♀	2		
2	Total of Houses...	2	Total of Males and Females...			1	16	Total of School Children and Windowed Rooms...		7	65	

Fig.23. 1861 Scotland Census for Cupar, Cupar Parish, Fife, listing John Buist & Family

According to the 1871 Scotland Census for Cupar, it listed John Buist as being 54 years of age and again a hotel keeper; Boswell age 53; and the following children: Thomas age 27 a waiter at the hotel; Elizabeth age 18; Mary age 17; Robert age 16; Helen age 13; and George and Jessie ages 12.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>36</sup> 1861 Scotland Census for Cupar, Cupar Parish, Fife, Scotland; Enumeration District Number 2, Page 1

<sup>37</sup> 1871 Scotland Census for Cupar, Cupar Parish, Fife, Scotland; Enumeration District Number 2, Page 1

The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the													
Civil Parish of		Quoad sacra Parish of		Parliamentary Burgh of		Royal Burgh of		Police Burgh of		Town of		Village or Hamlet of	
Cupar						Cupar		Cupar		Cupar			
No. of Schedule	ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES		NAME and Surname of each Person.	RELATION to Head of Family.	CON-DITION	AGE of	Rank, Profession, or OCCUPATION.	WHERE BORN.	Whether 1. Deaf and Dumb. 2. Blind. 3. Imbecile or Idiot. 4. Lunatic.	Number of Children from 5 to 13 attending School or being registered at Home.	Rooms with One or more Windows.	
		Inhabited (A) or not (B)	(C)										
1	St Catherine's			John Buist	Head	Mar	54	Hotel Keeper	Cupar		3	30	
				Boswell Do	Wife	Mar	52		Cupar				
				Thomas Do	Son	Unm	22	Waiter	Cupar				
				Elizabeth B. Do	Daughter	Unm	14		Cupar				
				Mary H. Do	Daughter	Unm	12		Cupar				
				Robert Do	Son	Unm	16		Cupar				
				Helen Do	Daughter	Unm	12	Schooler	Cupar				
				John Do	Daughter	Unm	12		Cupar				
				George Do	Son	Unm	12		Cupar				
				John Lauchlin Do	Son	Unm	53	Co. R.D. Domestic	Cupar				
				Margaret Ferras Do	Servant	Unm	46	Housemaid	Cupar				
				Elizabeth Macgregor Do	Servant	Unm	16	Housemaid	Cupar				
				Elizabeth Do	Servant	Unm	12	Kitchen Housemaid	Cupar				

Fig.24. 1871 Scotland Census for Cupar, Cupar Parish, Fife, listing John Buist and Family

The 1881 Scotland Census for Cupar Parish shows some of the family living outside of the town of Cupar now at Tailabout farm. John Buist is 65 years of age and a farmer of 122 acres of land. His wife, Boswell is listed as being 64 years of age with the following children: Robert age 27 and working as a farm assistant; Helen age 24; Mary age 27 and Jessie age 22.<sup>38</sup>

No. of Schedule	ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES	NAME and Surname of each Person.	RELATION to Head of Family.	CON-DITION	AGE of	Rank, Profession, or OCCUPATION.	WHERE BORN.	Whether 1. Deaf and Dumb. 2. Blind. 3. Imbecile or Idiot. 4. Lunatic.	Number of Children from 5 to 13 attending School or being registered at Home.	Rooms with One or more Windows.
		Inhabited (A) or not (B)				Last Birthday					
1	Tailabout		John Buist	Head	Mar	65	Farmer of 122 Acres of Land	Cupar			
			Boswell Buist	Wife	Mar	64		Cupar			
			Robert Do	Son	Unm	27	Farm Assistant	Cupar			
			Helen Do	Daughter	Unm	24		Cupar			
			Mary Do	Daughter	Unm	27		Cupar			
			Jessie Do	Daughter	Unm	22		Cupar			
6	Total of Houses...	6	Total of Males and Females...			16	9				

Fig.25. 1881 Scotland Census for Cupar, Cupar Parish, Fife, listing John Buist and Family, Page 1

Page 16															
The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the															
Civil Parish of		Quoad sacra Parish of		School Board District of		Parliamentary Burgh of		Royal Burgh of		Police Burgh of		Town of		Village or Hamlet of	
Cupar				Cupar		Cupar		Cupar		Cupar					
No. of Schedule	ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES		NAME and Surname of each Person.	RELATION to Head of Family.	CON-DITION	AGE of	Rank, Profession, or OCCUPATION.	WHERE BORN.	Whether 1. Deaf and Dumb. 2. Blind. 3. Imbecile or Idiot. 4. Lunatic.	Number of Children from 5 to 13 attending School or being registered at Home.	Rooms with One or more Windows.			
		Inhabited (A) or not (B)	(C)												
	Tailabout			Jessie Buist	Daughter	Unm	22		Cupar						
				Boswell Buist	Servant	Unm	12		Cupar						

Fig.26. 1881 Scotland Census for Cupar, Cupar Parish, Fife, listing John Buist and Family, Page 2

The 1891 Scotland Census shows some of the Buist family residing at 86 High Street in Auchtermuchty, Auchtermuchty Parish, Fife. John Buist was shown as being 74 years of age and living on private means; his wife Boswell is 73 years of age and the following children: Thomas age not listed and was a retired cork merchant; Mary Hay age 37 and Helen age 33.<sup>39</sup>

No. of Schedule	ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES	NAME and Surname of each Person.	RELATION to Head of Family.	CON-DITION	AGE of	Rank, Profession, or OCCUPATION.	WHERE BORN.	Whether 1. Deaf and Dumb. 2. Blind. 3. Imbecile or Idiot. 4. Lunatic.	Number of Children from 5 to 13 attending School or being registered at Home.	Rooms with One or more Windows.
		Inhabited (A) or not (B)				Last Birthday					
50	86 High Street		John Buist	Head	Mar	74	Private means	Cupar			
			Boswell Do	Wife	Mar	73		Cupar			
			Thomas Do	Son	Unm	Not listed	Retired Cork Merchant	Cupar			
			Mary Hay Do	Daughter	Unm	37		Cupar			
			Helen Do	Daughter	Unm	33		Cupar			

Fig.27. 1891 Scotland Census for Auchtermuchty, Auchtermuchty Parish, Fife, listing John Buist and Family

<sup>38</sup> 1881 Scotland Census for Cupar, Cupar Parish, Fife, Scotland; Enumeration District Number 9, Pages 15 & 16

<sup>39</sup> 1891 Scotland Census for Auchtermuchty, Auchtermuchty Parish, Fife, Scotland; Enumeration District Number 5, Page 13



*Fig.28. Buist Residence in Auchtermuchty (Right), Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010  
Michael T. Tracy*



Fig.29. Ordnance Survey Map showing Auchtermuchty, Auchtermuchty Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of the National Library of Scotland

### A Fife Horse Dealer

Sometime beginning in the year 1856, John Buist began to deal as a horse dealer. He would buy, sell and train horses. According to the *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper* for Thursday, 29 May 1856 it stated: "John Buist of the Royal Hotel intends in addition to his present business, to commence as a dealer in buying, selling and training horses for harness and saddle; and having engaged an experienced and skillful assistant, he respectfully solicits that patronage and support of the noblemen and gentlemen of Fife."<sup>40</sup> Additionally, he would have horse sales every month at his stables.



Fig.30. *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper*, Thursday, 29 May 1856, Page 3

John Buist was also an insurance agent under his own name and worked out of the Royal Hotel. According to *Westwood's Parochial Directory* for Cupar Parish in 1862, John Buist was listed as an insurance agent in Cupar. The Directory listed him as follows: "Buist, J. Royal Hotel, Fire and Life."<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup> *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper*, 29 May 1856, p. 3

<sup>41</sup> *Westwood's Parochial Directory*. Westwood, A. Edinburgh: John Menzies. 1862. P. 62



## Retirement and Farming

On Tuesday, 12 December 1872 the *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper* reported that John Buist was given a retirement dinner at the Royal Hotel in Cupar. “The customers and friends of Mr. Buist, to the number of about fifty, entertained him to dinner, in the Royal Hotel, on the afternoon of Friday; on the occasion of his retirement of the hotel business...Mr. Buist was noted for his honesty of purpose, integrity of action and thorough straightforwardness. What he supplied was always of the best quality, and his uniform civility and obliging manner commanded the respect of his customers, both rich and poor, whom he treated alike. Mr. Buist was an honest and warm-hearted friend.”<sup>42</sup>

After his retirement from the hotel business, he purchased Tailabout, a farm with about 60 acres in Cupar Parish. Here, he would farm the land along with his son, Robert Buist. The Tailabout farm is located about a quarter of a mile outside of Cupar and is described as being “a large farmhouse two stories high with offices, thrashing machine and a flour mill all in good repair; there is a garden, and a farm of about 60 acres of arable land attached.”<sup>43</sup>



Fig.31. Tailabout Farm taken in the 1890s by Valentine & Sons, Ltd.

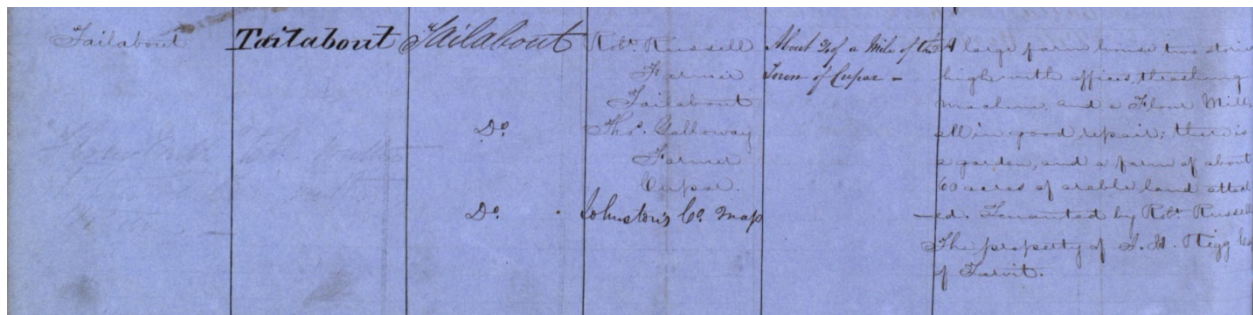


Fig.32. Ordnance Survey Name Book for Tailabout, Cupar Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of ScotlandsPlaces.gov.uk

<sup>42</sup> *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper*, 12 December 1872, p. 2

<sup>43</sup> Ordnance Survey Name Books, *Fife and Kinross-shire OS Name Books, 1853-1855, Volume 56, OS1/13/56/28*



Fig.33. Ordnance Survey Map showing Tailabout Farm, Cupar Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of the National Library of Scotland

In about the same time, he would purchase a residence at Angus Place in Cupar where he would reside at the time of his death. He would make out his Last Will and Testament on Saturday, 29 October 1892.<sup>44</sup>

John Buist and his wife travelled to London to visit with their son, John and his family. They stayed there for a short time. The old former hotel keeper of Cupar died on Sunday, 12 February 1893 at his residence at Angus Place, Cupar at the age of 76 of Apoplexy.<sup>45</sup> According to the *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper* of Thursday, 16 February 1893 "At Angus Place, Cupar, Fife on the 12<sup>th</sup> inst., John Buist, late of the Royal Hotel."<sup>46</sup> John Buist was buried on Tuesday, 14 February 1893 in the Cupar Extension Cemetery on Ashlar Lane in Cupar. His gravestone read "John Buist late of the Royal Hotel, 12 February 1893 aged 76. Boswell Angus died 20 April 1900 aged 81, daughter, Mary Ann died 7 May 1852, and son, Thomas died 30 November 1891 aged 46." The gravestone is no longer standing and the approximate location of the family graves are photographed below.

<sup>44</sup> John Buist Last Will & Testament, 29 October 1892, Cupar Sheriff Court (SC20/50/70), National Records of Scotland

<sup>45</sup> Death Record of John Buist, 12 February 1893, Cupar Parish Records, Statutory Deaths 420/00 0024

<sup>46</sup> *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper*, Thursday, 16 February 1893, p. 3



Fig.34. Approximate Grave location of John Buist and Family, Cupar Extension Cemetery, Cupar, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

		1893	m	24	Thomas Buist Gardener decd.	at present as certified by W. Preston m. of Cupar	Geoffrey son-in-law Headstone (Cupar)	1893 February 13 <sup>th</sup> at Cupar
24	Refused Notice Keefer	9.11. am Cupar			Elizabeth Buist m. of Cupar	no. 02	Cupar	James Mitchell Registrar.
	Consent Cupar	1 Cupar						

Fig.35. Death Record of John Buist, 12 Feb 1893, Cupar Parish Records, Crown Copyright

### The Children of John & Boswell Buist

John Buist (2 September 1841 - 1912): Their eldest son, John would become a successful accountant. He would eventually relocate to London, England where he would marry and raise a family. He had three children: Blanche Flora Buist, Hugo Massac Thomas Buist who would later become an accomplished author writing two books (*Aircraft in the German War*, 1914 and *Rolls-Royce Memories: A Coming of Age*, 1926) and Marguerite Movedas Buist. John Buist would die in London in 1912 at the age of 70.

Thomas Buist (25 March 1844 - 30 November 1891): He would help his father at his hotels and worked as a waiter. Later in life, he worked as a Cork Merchant in and around Cupar. He would never marry and died in 1891 at the age of 47.

Mary Ann Buist (14 August 1846 - 7 May 1852): The eldest daughter, she would die at the age of 5 and is buried with her parents at Cupar.

Elizabeth Boswell Buist (27 April 1852 – 5 June 1920): She would marry George Wilson at Tailabout, Cupar in 1876. They would have one child, Boswell Buist Wilson. Elizabeth Wilson would die at Angus Place, Cupar at her father's former residence in 1920 at the age of 68.



*Fig.36. Elizabeth Boswell Buist, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy*

Mary Hay Buist (28 June 1853 – 1 May 1928): She would live most of her life at Angus Place, Cupar with her sister Elizabeth and her family. She would never marry. She would die at Angus Place in 1928 at the age of 74.

Robert Buist (1854 – 19 May 1933): After leaving Cupar, Fife he would arrive in Queensland, Australia in 1884. He would marry and have three children: Helen Mary Buist, Boswell Angus Buist and Thomas Abernethy Buist. He and his family would later relocate to Waipukurau, New Zealand where he would die in 1933 at the age of 79.

Helen Buist (20 May 1857 – 16 February 1928): After her parent's deaths, Helen would move to Dundee where she lived the rest of her life. She would die in 1928 at the age of 70.

Jessie Lillias Buist (20 January 1859 – 11 January 1934): She was the twin of George Alexander Buist. By 1903 she would relocate to Queensland, Australia. She never married and lived quietly at Nambour, Queensland where she died in 1934 at the age of 74.

George Alexander Buist (20 January 1859 – 24 February 1941): He was the twin of Jessie Lillias Buist. By 1881 the youngest son of John and Boswell Buist, George Alexander Buist would move to London, England like his older brother, John. He was a broker and by 1884 arrived in Queensland, Australia.



*Fig.37. George Alexander Buist, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy*

He settled in Gympie, Queensland, Australia where he would marry and have two daughters: Irene Boswell Adelaide Buist and Martha Latimer Buist. He would later become Mayor of Gympie for one term in the early 1900s. He would remarry after the death of his first wife and would die in 1941 in Gympie at the age of 82.

### **The Innkeeper of Cupar**

John Buist built the largest hotel in the County of Fife of his time. The Royal Hotel is a testament to one man's determination and hard work. He would run this hotel and others in Cupar with honesty and integrity. Furthermore, he treated all guests with the same quiet dignity and straightforwardness no matter what their circumstances in life were. He is commemorated here in grateful esteem and recognition by his third great nephew, Michael T. Tracy. This work is dedicated to the Memory of John Buist.

*Memoratus in aeternum (Forever Remembered)*

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