

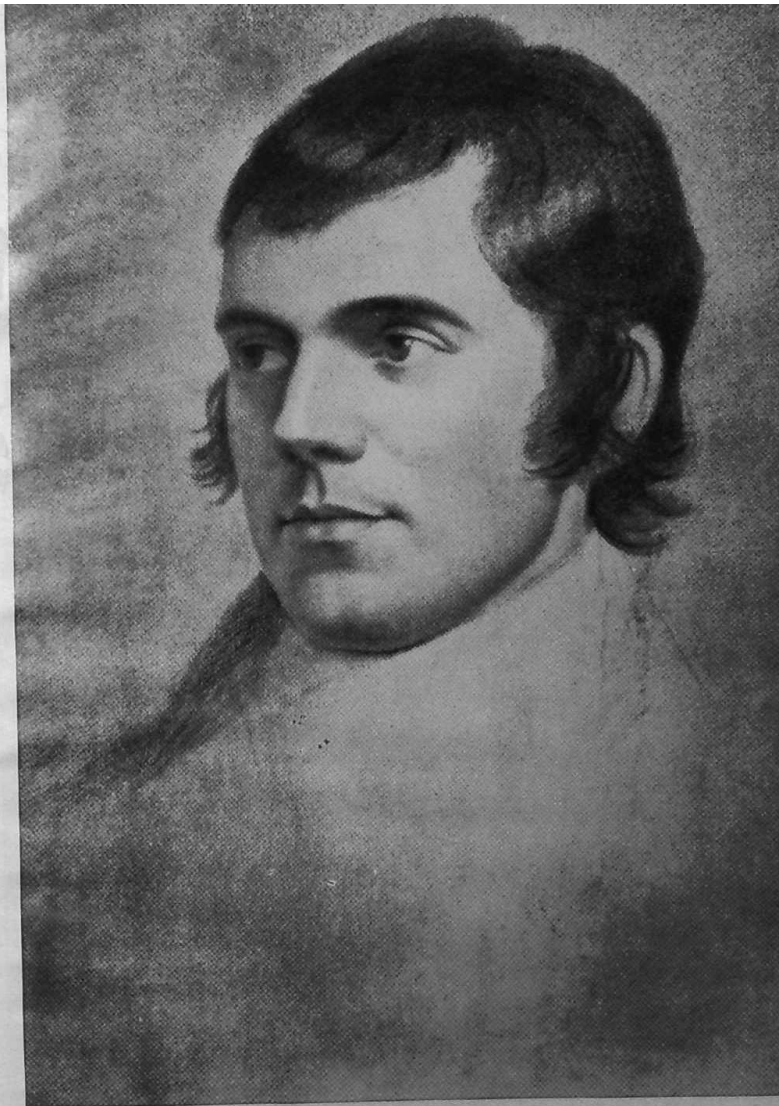
ROBERT BURNS

*From the painting by Alexander Nasmyth in the Scottish National
Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh.*

Homes and Haunts

THIS EDITION 1963

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ROBERT BURNS
Drawing by Archibald Skirving

THE HOMES AND HAUNTS OF ROBERT BURNS

by
JAMES MACKENNA

With 30 illustrations



COLLINS
LONDON AND GLASGOW

William Burnes was born 11th Decr 1721
 Agnes Brown was born 17th Decr 1752
 was married together 15th Decr 1777
 had a son Robert 25th Janr 1780
 had a son Gilbert 20th Sept^r 1781
 had a daughter Agnes 30th Janr 1782
 had a daughter Annabella 19th Decr 1783
 had a son William 30th July 1784
 had a son John 12th July 1785
 had a daughter Robert 27th June 1786
 William Burnes reports this list of his children
 Agnes 6 years 2 months and 22 days
 Agnes Brown departed this life on Sunday 10th Decr 1787
 aged 35 years 10 months and was buried in the Church
 Yard of the Parish of Beller East Lothian

FAMILY REGISTER OF WILLIAM BURNES

HOMES AND HAUNTS OF ROBERT BURNS

SINCE Robert Burns set out on a borrowed nag from Moss-giel to Edinburgh, methods of locomotion have been revolutionised, and to-day the automobile has made it possible for the tourist to cover great distances in a short space of time. The poet spent twenty-two days in traversing the highways enclosed in the square Stirling, Inverness, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, and the same area can be covered in a leisurely fashion now in three days.

The Burns country may be said to be embraced in a triangle with the out-points at Ayr, Edinburgh, and Dumfries, and the tourist may compass this in two or three days' time. An attempt is made in this little work to retell the story of the poet's life, giving the salient facts only, and avoiding anything in the nature of criticism. The aim is to provide a guide to the homes and haunts of the poet and to indicate everything of historical interest, be it a building, a household relic, or a MSS., that has survived the passage of time.

The scheme is literally to follow the poet "from the cradle to the grave," providing in concise form a complete guide to the Burns country and Burnsiana for the tens of thousands who seek annually to pay homage to the memory of the greatest lyric poet of all time.

THE POET'S PARENTAGE

In 1748, Robert and William Burness, sons of Robert Burness, tenant of Clochnahill, Kincardineshire, left their home to seek their fortunes in the south. Robert, the elder of the two, went to England, and William, after a short stay in Edinburgh and Fairlie, secured in 1752 a situation as gardener to Mr. Crawford of Doonside, near the town of Ayr. In 1756, William Burness leased $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land at Alloway from Dr. Campbell of Ayr. He laid out this ground as a market-garden, and in a corner of it he built the clay cottage consisting of a "but and ben," with byre and barn all under one thatched roof, which is known to-day as Burns's Cottage. To this humble home on 15th December, 1757, William Burness brought his bride, Agnes Brown, the merry-hearted daughter of a Kirkoswald farmer, whom he had met at Maybole Fair.

ALLOWAY, 1759-1766

The poet was born on 25th January, 1759, and lived in the cottage until his eighth year. From his sixth year he attended school at Alloway Mill under Campbell, on whose retiral the school was closed when the poet's father and four of his neighbours started a school (1765) and selected John Murdoch as tutor. Murdoch was possessed of "linguistic and literary talent" and has put it on record that the future poet as a tiny pupil of six "was grounded a little in English grammar." The poet's first school books were the Bible and Masson's *English Grammar* and *Collection of Prose and Verse* (c. 1755). In 1766

the poet's father moved to Mount Oliphant, but the distance proved too great for Robert and his brother Gilbert and the father was compelled to continue the education of his boys at home. Robert went to Dalrymple School for a period and had further tuition from Murdoch in Ayr in English and French and from Robinson of Ayr Grammar School in Latin. His general reading expanded with his years. In the end Burns, the youth of fourteen, with a summer three years later at Kirkoswald school under Hugh Rodger, a master mind on mathematics, entered the years of manhood well grounded in religious doctrine and with a fair education and an awakening ambition.

BURNS'S COTTAGE

The cottage, with the land surrounding it, was sold by William Burness in 1781 to the Incorporation of Shoemakers in Ayr, for the sum of £160. It was converted into an alehouse sometime before 1800 by the tenants. After 100 years' ownership by the Incorporation, it was purchased in 1881 for the sum of £4000 by the Alloway Burns Monument Trustees, who set about transforming it into a memorial worthy of the poet. The sale of liquor was discontinued, and a restoration as near as possible to the original condition was commenced. The "but" and the "ben" with the byre and the barn communicating as we now see it, is actually the building as planned and erected by the poet's father.

On the word of the Hon. Secretary to the Trustees, Mr. Dunlop, we may take it for granted that except for the fixtures of strong, sound workmanship, none of the original furniture exists. Old

furniture of the period has been installed, giving a sense of authenticity to the home. Even the bed where in all probability the poet was born has a genuine eighteenth century appearance. The humble cottage has a sweet savour of homely reality.

The description in *The Cottar's Saturday Night*, inscribed by the poet to Robert Aiken, writer in Ayr, may be visualised without effort :

"His wee-bit ingle, blinkan bonilie,
His clean hearth-stane, his thriftie wifie's smile,
The lisping infant, prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary kiaugh and care beguile,
An' makes him quite forget his labour and his
toil."

RELICS IN THE COTTAGE AND MUSEUM

These number over 400 exclusive of the Bennett and Henderson libraries, but only the more valuable and noteworthy are recorded here. A complete catalogue with historical notes may be purchased at the cottage.

The cottage catalogue number of each item is given to assist identification by the tourist.

IN THE COTTAGE (KITCHEN)

- Bed in which the poet was born (2).
- Dresser and plate rack probably made for William Burness (3).
- Stool for washing tub which belonged to Mrs. Burns (7).
- Milking stool from Mossgiel (12).
- Chair which belonged to William Burness (12A).

IN THE COTTAGE (ROOM)

Two chairs said to have been used by Tam o' Shanter and Souter Johnnie (15-16).

Table which belonged to Burns when at Dumfries (17).

Sign board fixed outside the cottage when it became an inn (25).

Grate from Ellisland Farm (32).

Trunk which belonged to Betty Burns, daughter of the poet (34).

Copestone of the auld Brig of Ayr (34A).

IN THE MUSEUM

(in safe, centre of East Room)

Holy Bible. Edinburgh, printed by John Reid, 1766, folio (66).

The poet's family Bible, with the following entries :—
In the handwriting of the poet :

"Robt. Burns was born at Alloway in the Parish of Ayr—Janry. 25th, 1759."

"Jean Armour, his wife, was born at Mauchline—Febry. 27th, 1767."

"Septr. 3d, 1786, were born to them twins, Robert, their eldest Son, at a quarter past Noon : & Jean, since dead at fourteen months old :—March 3d, 1788, were born to them twins again, two daughters, who died within a few days after their birth.—August 18th, 1789, was born to them Francis Wallace, so named after Mrs. Dunlop of Dunlop ; he was born a quarter before seven, forenoon.—April 9th, 1791, between three & four in the morning was born to them William Nicol, so named after Willm. Nicol of the High School, Edinr.—November 21st, 1792, at a quarter past Noon, was born to them Elizabeth Riddel, so named after Mrs. Robt. Riddel of Glenriddel."

In the handwriting of James Glencairn Burns :

"James Glencairn, born 12th Augt., 1794, named after the late Earl of Glencairn."

In the handwriting of William Nicol Burns :

"Maxwell. Born 26th July, 1796, the day of his father's Funeral. So named after Dr. Maxwell, the Physician who attended the Poet in his last illness.

"Inserted by W. N. Burns, 9th April, 1867."

The Bible, which cost the poet £2, was bequeathed by Jean Armour Burns to her eldest son, Robert.

As the property of Mrs. Burns Hutchison, niece of the poet, the Bible was offered at auction in 1904, and was purchased for £1560 by Mr. Bernard Quaritch, bookseller in London. Eventually it was acquired by the trustees for £1700.

Robert Burns : copy of the bust by Sir John Steell, R.S.A., for the poets' corner in Westminster Abbey (51).

Eight-day clock which belonged to Isabella Burns Begg, youngest sister of the poet (53).

Three panes of glass from the Globe Inn, Dumfries, 18 lines of poetry, written with a diamond by the poet (56).

Shelved press and cupboard, used as a bookcase by the poet (59).

Mahogany writing desk belonging to Burns, purchased for £600 (60).

Chair on which the poet's mother nursed her children (62).

Chair which belonged to the poet (63).

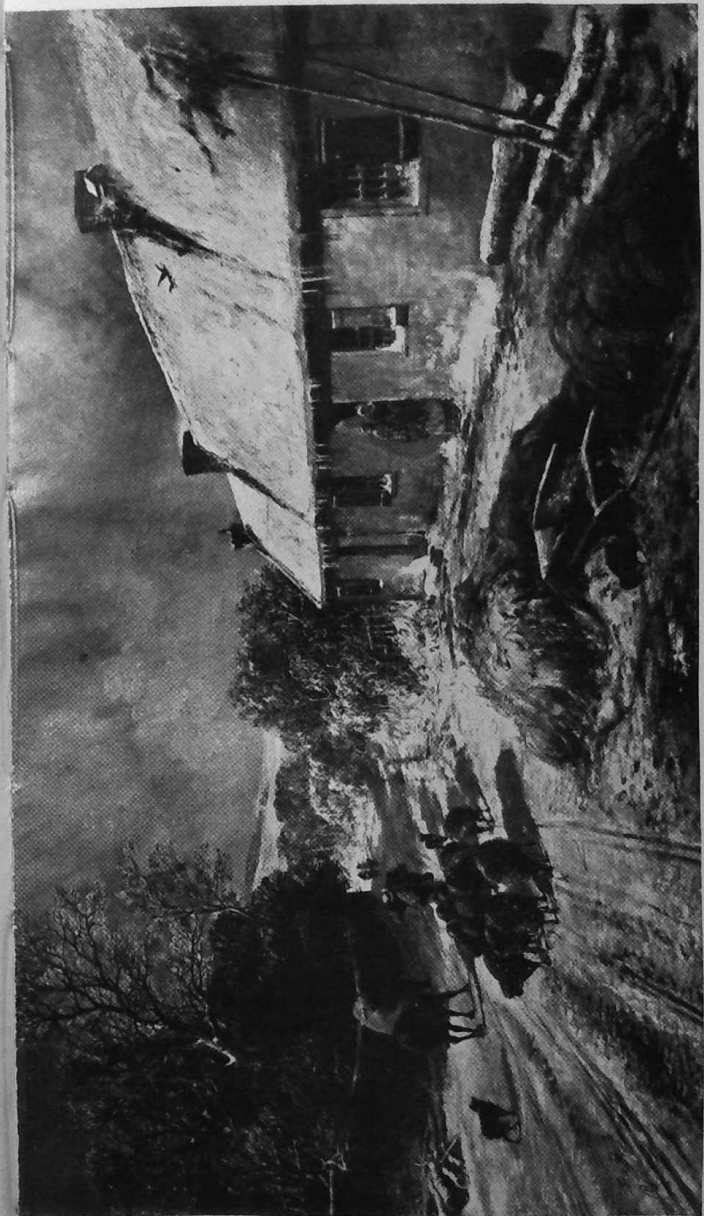
Oak chair made from the printing press on which the first Kilmarnock Edition of Burns's poems was printed, 1786 (64).

CASE A

Alloway : The Burness Family.

Contract of feu betwixt Alexander Campbell, physician in Ayr, and William Burness, gardener for present at Doo'side-Miln, 22nd June, 1756, concerning the land on which "the auld clay biggin" was erected by the poet's father and to which he brought his bride, Agnes Brown, in 1757 (67).

Silver watch which belonged to William Burness and afterwards to his son, the poet (69).



[Annan]

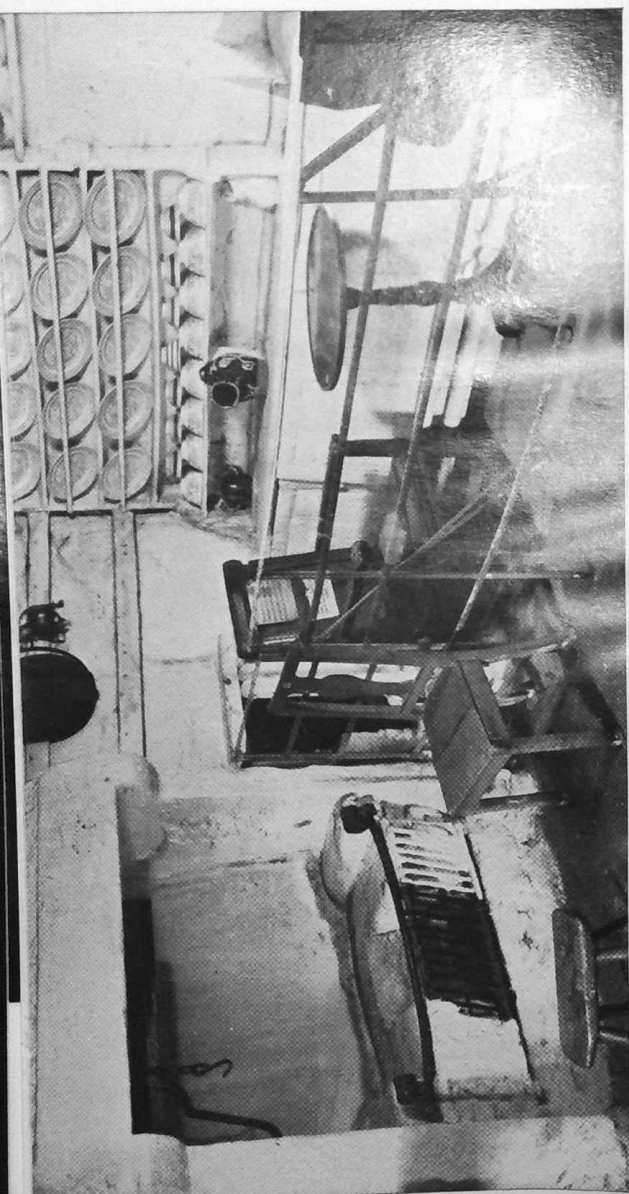
BURNS COTTAGE, ALLOWAY
Painting by Sam Bough, R.S.A.



BURNS COTTAGE, ALLOWAY



BURNS COTTAGE: INTERIOR



BURNS COTTAGE: KITCHEN

Holy Bible. Edinburgh: printed by Alexander Kincaid, 1762, 4to. The family Bible of William Burness, father of the poet, containing the register of his family. The date of birth of himself, and of his wife, of their marriage, and of the births of their seven sons and daughters, are entered in the hand of William Burness; the date when his father "departed this life" at Lochlea, is entered by the poet; and that of Agnes Brown's death at Grant's Braes, by James Burns, second son of Gilbert.

The Bible is doubly interesting on account of the poet's reference to it as "the big ha'-Bible, ance his father's pride" in *The Cottar's Saturday Night*. Purchased by the Trustees for £450 (72).

Tack between William Fergusson of Doonholm and William Burness, of lands of Mount Oliphant: dated 11th Dec., 1765 (73).

Collection of documents (seven in all) relating to William Burness (74).

A manual of religious belief composed by William Burness for the instruction of his children. MSS. 11 pp., printed 1875 (76).

CASE B

Holograph letter from Robert Burns to his brother Mr. William Burns, Saddler, Middle Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 1790 (83).

Jean Armour—Hair bracelet with lock of Mrs. Burns's hair (85).

Gold brooch belonging to Jean Armour, with lock of her hair (86).

Eighteen silver spoons and two sauce ladles presented to the poet's wife by her son James Glencairn Burns, 1824 (87).

Psalms of David in metre, 1796, with Mrs. Burns's name inscribed (90).

Seal which belonged to the poet (98).

Six buttons which belonged to the poet (100).

Cast in plaster of the skull of the poet, taken on 31st Mar., 1834 (101).

One guinea note of Bank of Scotland, 1st Mar., 1780, with 12 lines of poetry by Burns on reverse side (102).

CASE C

Many holograph letters from Burns, including one to the Bailies of the Canongate, Edinburgh, asking permission "to lay a simple stone over the revered ashes" of Robert Fergusson, the poet (110).

Burns's second commonplace book, in manuscript, 1787-90 (111).

Burns's Journal of his tour in the Highlands, 1787 (116).

CASES D AND E

A collection of Holograph Letters from Burns to correspondents, numbering 38 in all, including 5 to Mrs. Dunlop and 5 to Mrs. McLehose (Clarinda) (123-157).

CASE F

The Cunningham Collection of Holograph Letters (158).

Punch-bowl of Inverary marble presented to the poet by James Armour, his father-in-law (copy) (159).

CASES G AND H

The Graham of Fintry Collection of holograph letters and poems of Burns, 22 in all (161).

ON PEDESTAL BESIDE CASE K

Poems, chiefly in the Scottish dialect, by Robert Burns, Kilmarnock : printed by John Wilson, 1786, 8vo. (162).

The first edition of the *Poems* published on 31st July, 1786, price three shillings. Only a very few copies in uncut condition and with the original blue-paper wrapper are known to be in existence. This is one of those few copies—probably the finest of all—and was acquired in 1908 from Mr. George Seton Veitch of Paisley for £1000.

CASE K

Proposals for publishing by subscription Scotch poems by Robert Burns. The work to be elegantly printed in One Volume Octavo. Price stitched Three Shillings (163).

The only known copy of the prospectus of the world-famous Kilmarnock Edition.

Poems, chiefly in the Scottish dialect. By Robert Burns. The second edition considerably enlarged. Edinburgh, 1793, 2 vols., 12mo. (164).

The Stair Manuscripts. Poems and songs (eight in number) sent to Mrs. Stewart of Stair, 1786 (166).

The Afton Manuscripts (fourteen in number) with inscriptions by the poet (168).

A collection of books from Burns's library, including Shakespeare, 20 vols., 12mo, Moliere's works, 8 vols., Life of Wallace, Sterne's works, English Songs, 3 vols. (170-177).

Stirrup-cup or caup from the Tam o' Shanter Inn, Ayr (178).

CASE L

A collection of over 50 holograph verses and songs by the poet and a selection of Excise documents and books relating to the poet's service as an Excise Officer (179-219).

CASE M

Agreement between William Creech, publisher, Edinburgh, and Mr. Burns, respecting the property of Mr. Burns's poems, 17th April, 1787 (220).

Promissory notes for 100 guineas granted by William Creech to Robert Burns, 23rd Oct., 1787 (221).

Various editions of the poet's works including :

2nd Edinburgh Edition, 1787 (222).

3rd London Edition, 1787 (225).

Belfast, 1787 (226).

Dublin, 1787 (227).

Philadelphia, 1788 (228).

New York, 1788 (229).

The Jolly Beggars—a cantata, by Robert Burns, first published Glasgow, 1799 (235).

Letters addressed to Clarinda, etc., by the poet, published surreptitiously and interdicted by Court of Session, 1802 (237).

Holograph letter from Thomas Carlyle to Mrs. Isabella Burns Begg, sister of the poet, intimating that the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, had agreed to bestow on her a small pension of twenty pounds a year (242).

EAST AND WEST ROOMS

On the walls of both rooms are displayed over 100 paintings and etchings of the poet, his relatives, friends, patrons and correspondents.

No. 301 is a copy in oils made from the original pencil sketch of the poet by Alexander Naysmith in 1787. On the walls are 20 portraits reproduced by many processes, based on the Naysmith.

Among the famous reproductions are:

“The meeting of Burns and Scott in Sciennes Hill House, Edinburgh, the residence of Professor Adam Ferguson in 1787. Engraving by Chas. Martin Hardie, R.S.A. (392).

Inauguration of Robert Burns as poet laureate of Lodge Canongate Kilwinning, Edinburgh, 1787 (393).

Burns in Edinburgh—1787, reading his poem of the “Winter Night” before a literary gathering at the Duchess of Gordon’s. Gravure after C. M. Hardie, R.S.A. (394).

Collection of editions of the poetical and prose writings of Robert Burns, and of books relating to his life and work. The library contains over 1300 volumes and of these Col. Robert James Bennett bequeathed in 1916, 523 volumes. A handsome collection of books and portraits were acquired in 1935 from Mr. Henderson, Dumfries, for £450 (408).

The most notable Burns manuscripts, letters and relics acquired within recent years are here recorded together with the prices paid by the trustees. The latter are evidence of the enhanced value of the poet’s work and property:

1933

“The Vision,” a very fine autographed MSS. of 7 verses, price paid, £450.

Volume of English Songs which belonged to the poet, price paid, £150.

Letter to James Hamilton, dated from Ellisland, 27th April, 1789, price paid, £210.

1934

First edition (Edinburgh) *Shakespeare*, 18 vols. and other relics, property of Burns—price paid, £150.

A letter to Mr. R. Cleghorn, Saughton Mills, dated 29-8-1790, price paid, £245.

Manuscript of Heron Election Ballad No. 1, price paid, £385.

1935

Collection of editions of Burns, works and books about his life, and portraits, price paid, £450.

Holograph letter from Burns to Richard Brown, price paid, £170 10s.

1937

Poetical epistle from Burns to Robert Graham (1791), price paid, £380.

1939

Letter from Burns to Capt. Johnston with poem, price paid, £130.

1941

Manuscript of Burns a Birthday Ode, price paid, £105.

ALLOWAY KIRK

A pre-Reformation sanctuary, now scheduled as an Ancient Monument, it stands to the south of the cottage, roofless and ivy grown, its belfry still crowning the eastern gable. Even in Burns's day the church was a ruin, and interments took place within its walls. Here is interred William Burness, the father of the poet, and on the back of the memorial stone may be read the epitaph composed by the poet and read with reverence by the countless thousands who visit the kirkyard :

"Here lie the loving husband's dear remains,
The tender father, and the gen'rous friend.

The friend of man, to vice alone a foe,
For even "his failings leaned to virtue's side."

Burns, when later he met Captain Grose, who was at work on his *Antiquities of Scotland*, urged him to include Alloway Kirk, and this led to the production of that masterpiece *Tam o' Shanter*, with which Alloway Kirk is associated in a vivid scene of weirdest revelry. First there is the prophecy of his "ain wife Kate," that Tam, forgetful of "time or tide,"

"——wad be found, deep drowned in Doon,
Or catch'd wi' warlocks in the mirk,
By Alloway's auld haunted kirk."

Then the tale proceeds to tell of Tam rising from his carousal with the Souter and setting forth, "well-mounted on his grey mare, Meg" on his adventurous ride into Carrick :

"Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh
Where ghaists and houlets nightly cry."

Then, after passing the ford, and "thro' the whins" and "by the cairn," Tam beholds a wondrous sight :

"When glimmering thro' the groaning trees
Kirk-Alloway seem'd in a bleeze
Thro' ilka bore the beams were glancing,
And loud resounded mirth and dancing."

Everyone has read of that "unco sight" at which Tam o' Shanter "glowr'd amaz'd, and curious" and of how, chased by Nannie and the hellish legions, Tam's grey mare Meg did her "speedy utmost" and won "the Keystane o' the brig."

BURNS MONUMENT

On the 17th March, 1814, on the initiative of Sir Alexander Boswell of Auchinleck, a meeting was called in the town of Ayr "to commence a subscription" for the erection of a monument to Robert Burns within his native county. After varying fortune, the sum of £800 having been raised by subscription, and a design by Thomas Hamilton, architect, approved by the committee, it was decided that "the sum of £1200 shall be expended in erecting and finishing the proposed monument."

The choice of a site was a matter of grave concern to the committee, but eventually it was agreed that on the banks of the Doon, between the Auld Brig and Alloway's Auld Haunted Kirk was the most appropriate position, and posterity has pronounced favourably on the choice of site.

The total number of subscribers was 700, and the sum raised was £2611, which included a donation

of fifty guineas from the Prince Regent, afterwards George IV.

The next step was to raise money "for enclosing the monument in a handsome manner and ornamenting the grounds round the building." The total cost of the monument, including the buying and enclosing of the extra acre of ground, was £3247.

On the top of the triangular building each of the sides of which faces approximately the three divisions of Ayrshire—Carrick, Kyle and Cunningham—is the circular base of the monument from which gracefully rise nine fluted Corinthian columns thirty feet high, with elaborate capitals. Surmounting the columns is the dome carrying a sculptured vase and tripod, the whole from base to tripod measuring 70 feet in height. A circular staircase within gives access to the base of the temple, and from this platform a delightful prospect is unfolded to the view.

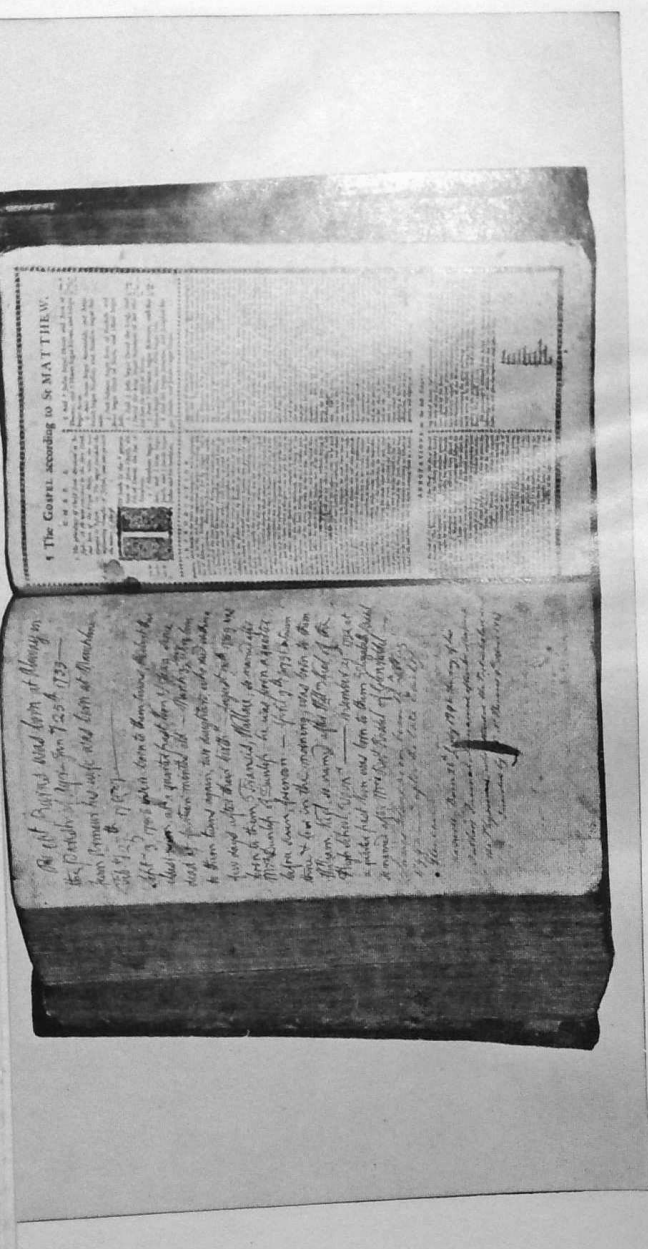
As showing the universal interest in all things pertaining to the National Poet, it is worthy of note that the yearly number of visitors from all parts of the world to the monument and cottage exceeds 130,000. Within the monument may be seen a wonderful collection of very precious relics of the poet and his friends. The following are worthy of attention :

BIBLES which belonged to Highland Mary. These Bibles were presented by the poet to Mary Campbell on the eve of her setting out to visit her relatives. After her death they were taken out to Canada, and in 1840 were purchased by admirers of the poet and handed over to the Trustees of Burns Monument (2).

Lock of Highland Mary's hair, which was preserved in the Bibles (4).



BURNS COTTAGE: INTERIOR



BURNS FAMILY BIBLE

OF ROBERT BURNS

17

Case containing Bonnie Jean's Wedding Ring ; Ring containing portion of Burns's hair ; and Ring containing lock of Burns's wife's hair (5).

The poet's seal, which was designed by Robert Burns, purchased in 1907 for £210 (7).

Cairngorm brooch, presented to Robert Burns by the Dumfries Volunteers (8).

Snuff-box which belonged to the poet (9).

Pair of glasses given by Burns to Clarinda (10).

Nanse Tinnock's quaich (12).

Kilmarnock Edition of Burns, 1786 (13).

First Edinburgh Edition, 1787 (17).

Copies of Edinburgh *Evening Courant* of 23rd, and 28th July, 1796, giving first public account of the poet's death and funeral, also the response made to the appeal on behalf of the poet's wife and family (26).

Bust of Burns by Patrick Park (32).

IN THE STATUE HOUSE

While in the garden may be seen the slightly defaced statue of Nanse Tinnock, by the sculptor Thom, attention will at once be directed to the masterpieces of the self-taught artist in stone, as seen in the Statue House.

TAM O' SHANTER and SOUTER JOHNNIE, the two drouthy cronies of Burns's great poem, have celebrated their centenary, having been fashioned in rough grained sandstone in the year 1828 by James Thom, a native of Tarbolton parish. Startlingly lifelike and represented in the garb of the period, the pose of the figures is so natural and true to type that it requires little imagination to conjure up a vision of the scene described by the poet in the lines :

"... Ae market night
Tam had got planted unco right,
Fast by an ingle, bleezing finely
Wi' reaming swats, that drank divinely ;
And at his elbow, Souter Johnnie,
His ancient, trusty, drouthy crony."

B

It is an interesting fact that these realistic figures were exhibited throughout the British Isles, and the admission fees amounted to £3600 before the statues were returned to Ayr.

AULD BRIG O' DOON

Four centuries have passed since this fine single arched bridge, steep and narrow, was built. It was the only bridge across the Doon linking Kyle with Carrick and its causeway has rung with the clatter of mail-clad warriors and plundering raiders as well as staid travellers and benighted roysterers. In 1813, when the new bridge was built, the auld brig was doomed to destruction. Burns's admirers protested, and for a time it was saved, but through neglect its disappearance was only a matter of time. To Hamilton Paul, preacher, poet, and editor, its final salvation is due for his petition to the Trustees of the Roads in the county of Ayr stirred up an enthusiasm which ensured its preservation for all time. The appeal began as follows :

" Must I, like modern fabrics of a day
Decline unwept, the victim of decay.
Shall my bold arch that proudly stretches o'er
Doon's classic stream, from Kyle to Carrick's
shore,
Be suffered in oblivion's gulf to fall,
And hurl to wreck my venerable wall ?
Forbid it every tutelary power
That guards my *Keystane* at the midnight hour."

The Auld Brig stands as it did in Burns's day, but strengthened, and it is now scheduled as an Ancient Monument. It is visited by thousands who with knife and chisel incise their name or initials on the

unprotesting parapets. Standing on the crown of the bridge, and gazing on the beautiful gardens to the west, it is difficult to realise that here is the veritable scene of that weird chase when Nannie and her fiendish followers sallied forth determined on the capture of Tam, the disturber of their revels :

" Now do thy speedy utmost, Meg,
And win the keystone o' the brig ;
There at them thou thy tail may toss
A running stream they daurna cross,
But ere the keystone she could make
The fient a tail she had to shake

Ae spring brought off her master hale
But left behind her ain grey tail ;
The carlin caught her by the rump,
And left poor Maggie scarce a stump."

AYR

As boy and man Burns must have been familiar with every nook and corner of the county town. Baptized in the Auld Kirk by Dr. William Dalrymple of "*The Kirk's Alarm*," Burns attended worship there with his parents while they resided at Alloway. In 1773, as Murdoch his teacher relates, "Robert Burns came to board and lodge with me (Ayr) for the purpose of revising English Grammar." From Mount Oliphant, Lochlea, and Mossiel, he visited Ayr for pleasure or for business at the Mealmarket, and he reports : "My vicinity to Ayr was a great advantage to me."

Of the friendships formed in Ayr much might be written, but for all time he has endowed the natives with the greatest of the virtues, according to Carlyle :

"Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a town surpasses
For honest men and bonie lassies."

Of honest men there was Robert Aiken, his patron, whom he addressed as "My lov'd, my honour'd, much respected friend;" Provost Ballantine, to whom was inscribed "The Brigs o' Ayr"; Major Logan of Parkhouse, "the thairm-inspiring rattling Willie," and lawyer Willie Chalmers, an adviser and correspondent of the poet. Then there was his minister, Dr. Dalrymple, for whom the poet's father also had a deep regard:

"D'rymple mild! D'rymple mild!
Though your heart's like a child,
And your life like the new-driven snaw."

Dr. McGill, the minister of the second charge, denounced as a heretic and referred to in *The Kirk's Alarm* as Doctor Mac, and Dr. Peebles of Newton-on-Ayr, "frae the water fit" church, whose criticism of Doctor Mac induced Burns to place him in the pillory in two satires, were both a source of inspiration to the poet.

THE AULD KIRK is situated between High Street and the river. Although reconstructed internally it is much in the same condition as in Burns's day. The Rev. Dr. Dalrymple, "D'rymple mild" of *The Kirk's Alarm*, Robert Aiken, to whom *The Cotters Saturday Night* was dedicated, and Provost Ballantyne, of Ayr, all friends of the poet's, are interred in the churchyard.

TAM O' SHANTER INN.—In the High Street. This old thatched inn with its pictorial signboard is the same hostelry from which Tam, "weel mounted on his grey mare, Meg," set off by way of the Carrick Vennel on his famous ride. Several Burns

relics may be seen within. The Town Council of Ayr purchased the Tam o' Shanter Inn for the sum of £4000 in September, 1943.

THE BRIGS O' AYR.—By a strange coincidence the three rivers round which Burns has cast his lyric spell, the Doon, the Nith, and the Ayr, are spanned by old and new bridges. The Auld Brig of Ayr, dating from the middle of the fifteenth century, was erected by two sisters named Lowe, and is now as it was in Burns's day, but renovated and strengthened. The bridge was closed for traffic from 1907-10 while undergoing restoration under the superintendence of James A. Morris, R.S.A., distinguished architect and Burns enthusiast. It is now scheduled as an Ancient Monument:

"Auld Brig appear'd of ancient Pictish race,
The very wrinkles Gothic in his face."

The new bridge referred to by the poet in the lines:

"'New Brig' was busket in a braw new coat
That he at Lon'on frae ane Adams got";

met the fate predicted by the Auld Brig, in 1877.

"Then down ye'll hurl (deil nor ye never rise)
And dash the gumlie jaups up to the pouring
skies."

The Auld Brig is surveyed periodically, and this venerable relic of medieval times should withstand flood and tide for many years to come.

SIMPSON'S INN, mentioned by the poet, stood at the Brig End, and near the Fishmarket.

DUNGEON-CLOCK.—This was one of the two steeples in Ayr and was situated in the Sandgate.

"The drowsy Dungeon clock had numbered two."

WALLACE TOWER.—The present tower was built on the site of the original tower, in 1834, the clock and bells having been transferred :

"And Wallace Tower had sworn the fact was true."

The exploits of Wallace in and around Ayr were the inspiring source of the "patriotic" tide which coursed in the veins of the poet. The Burning of the Barns (Barns Street is suggested as the scene of the gruesome incident), and Wallace's retreat in Leglen Wood, Auchincruive, historically examined by the late Marquis of Bute, were both familiar scenes to the poet. A memorial was erected at Leglen recently by the Rev. J. C. Higgins of Tarbolton, to commemorate the association of the two great Scotsmen.

BURNS STATUE. Beautifully located in Station Square, this fine piece of sculpture is the work of John Lawson. The handsome decorative railings were the gift of the late Sir William Arrol of Forth Bridge fame.

MOUNT OLIPHANT, 1766-77

(4 miles from Ayr)

"But now the plains of Mount Oliphant began to whiten and Robert was summoned to signalise himself in the fields of Ceres."—So runs Murdoch's narrative. William Burness, the poet's father, was ambitious, and sought larger scope for his energy. The other motive was worthy of his good heart, the provision of means to retain his growing family around him until they were fitted to take their place in the world.

In 1766 he obtained a lease of Mount Oliphant, a farm of about 70 acres, at an annual rent of £40, and there the poet's boyhood years were spent. "The farm proved a ruinous bargain," as according to Gilbert's narrative, "Mount Oliphant is almost the very poorest soil I know of in a state of cultivation. To the buffetings of misfortune we could only oppose hard labour and the most rigid economy. My brother (the poet) at the age of thirteen, assisted in threshing the crop of corn, and at fifteen was the principal labourer on the farm, for we had no hired servant. I doubt not but that the hard labour and sorrow of this period of his life was in a great measure the cause of that depression of spirits with which Robert was so often afflicted through his whole life afterwards."

Burns's first songs were composed from 1773 onwards at Mount Oliphant—among them *Handsome Nell*, beginning : "O once I loved a bonie lass," and *The Ruined Farmer*, recounting in song his father's brave struggle with the barren soil, and a "factor's snash." The bitter memories of hardships endured by Burns and his parents at Mount Oliphant are set forth in *The Twa Dogs*.

KIRKOSWALD, 1775

(12 miles south of Ayr)

Before leaving Mount Oliphant William Burness desired to advance the education of his son Robert, and sent him to a noted school—at Kirkoswald in Carrick—there to benefit by Dominie Rodgers's tuition in mensuration, surveying, dialling, etc. In the neighbourhood at Craighton his mother's kinsfolk resided, and for three summer months Burns shared an attic with his friend, John Niven

of Maybole, in the farmhouse of Ballochniel. The schoolroom in which Rodger taught was at first in a portion of the church, vacated since 1777, but it was transferred to a dwelling-house opposite the churchyard, now marked by a commemorative tablet. These were eventful days for the young poet. Besides his study of the dry sciences, he cultivated an intimate knowledge of good prose and poetry, and became crazed with love for "Peggy Thomson," the charming *fillette* who lived next door to the school. From this episode sprung that tender early "song composed in August," beginning:

"Now westlin' winds and slaught'ring guns
Bring Autumn's pleasant weather."

Ten years after, when Peggy Thomson was quietly settled as Mrs. Neilson, at Minnybae Farm, Kirkoswald, Burns presented her with a copy of his poems inscribed on the fly leaf:

"Once fondly lov'd, and still remembered dear

Accept this mark of friendship, warm, sincere."

Two of Burns's best known poems are definitely associated with Kirkoswald, *Tam o' Shanter*, completed during the Ellisland period, and *Hallowe'en*, written during the Mossiel tenancy.

TAM O' SHANTER. Founded on incidents of his Kirkoswald days, the poem was completed in 1791 and regarded by Burns as his *chef d'œuvre*. It has been suggested that the early drafts of the poem were made at Ballochniel when he resided with his uncle in 1775. At anyrate the characters have all been identified, and their resting places in Kirkoswald churchyard are now clearly marked for the guidance of visitors.



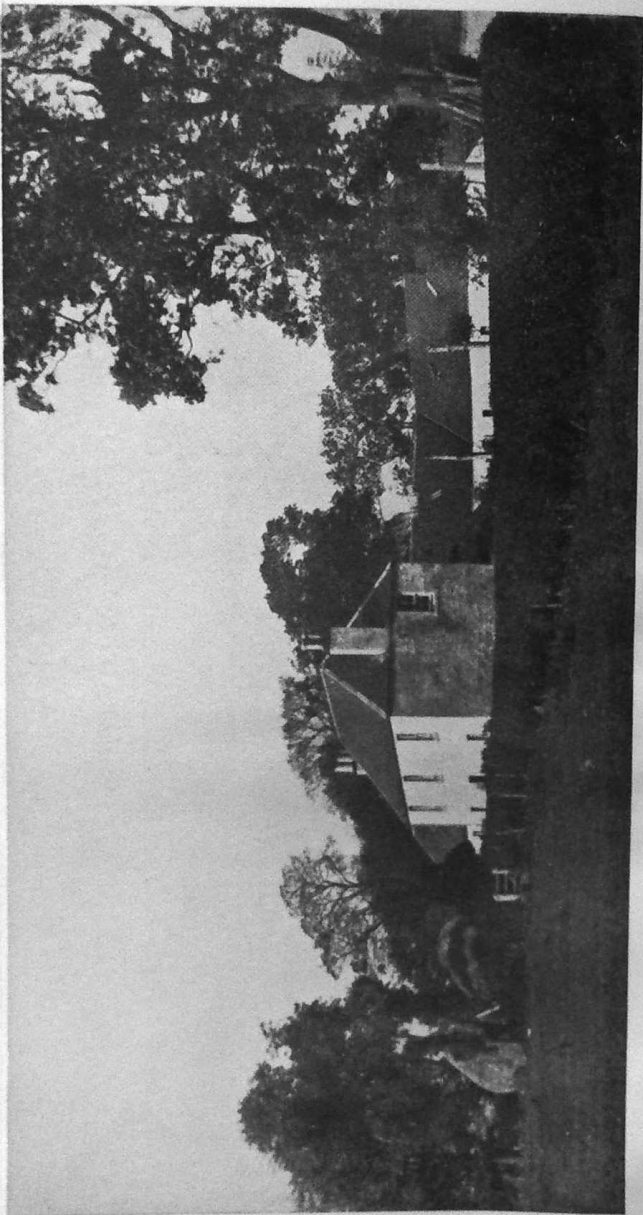
THE AULD BRIG O' DOON



MOUNT OLIPHANT FARM (1766-77)



LOCHLEA FARM (1777-84)



MOSSIEL FARM (1784-86)

DOUGLAS GRAHAM, tenant of Shanter Farm (now demolished) was the original Tam o' Shanter, possessed of a rustic ready wit and reputedly convivial in his habits. Kate, his wife, was Helen McTaggart, "queer and abnormally superstitious."

JOHN DAVIDSON, the Souter Johnnie of the poem was a shoemaker of skill, with a ready wit and famous for his "jests and smart sayings." When Burns first knew him in 1775, he dwelt at Glenfoot in the neighbourhood of Shanter Farm. Farmer and Souter were cronies and periodic visits to Ayr on business were occasions for celebration.

Davidson built himself a house in Kirkoswald which he occupied in 1785 and therein lived his descendants until the year 1893. The Rev. Mr. Muir of Kirkoswald set out to acquire the property and to him and his committee is due all credit for the restoration and preservation of this house of historic interest.

KIRKTON JEAN (Kennedy) and her sister kept the hostelry next to the church. It was known as The Leddies' House. The traditional site is occupied by the Smithy.

THE MILLER, Hugh Brown, and THE SMITH, John Niven, companions of Tam o' Shanter, came from Ardlochan, which stands near Maidens village by the seaside.

THE WITCH, "lang after kenn'd on Carrick shore," is said to have been Julia Robinson, a receiver of contraband stores.

THE SOUTER'S HOUSE is open to the public and contains an important collection of relics of which the following is representative :

The Souter's Bible—printed by Alexander Kincaid, Edinburgh, 1762, with family register on leaf preceding

the Apocrypha. The leather cover was tanned by the Souter.

Hugh Rodger's Family Bible (Burns's schoolmaster at Kirkoswald).

A small jug which belonged to the poet's wife.

Missive of Lease : The Earl of Cassillis to John Davidson (Souter), 1786.

A "Manual of Religious Belief" compiled by William Burness, the poet's father, for the use of his children.

The old tongue of the bell in Alloway Kirk.

Latter Will and Testament of Samuel Brown, Balloch-
niel, Burns's maternal uncle, 1811.

Souter's set of china.

Two Vol. Bible (1743) gifted by Hugh Rodger to his wife on 21st July, 1757, the date of their marriage in Ardmillan Castle, near Girvan.

Souter Johnnie's Will—6th April, 1806.

A framed pane of glass from the Globe Inn, Dumfries, which bears upon it four lines of poetry inscribed with a diamond by Burns.

Armchair stated by grandsons William and Matthew Davidson to have "belonged to their grandfather," the Souter.

Souter Johnnie's chest.

Among other holograph papers are two very interesting letters :

(1) Letter from William Burness to Thomas Orr at park, Kirkoswald, of date 8th September, 1780, requesting Orr to go to Lochlie to help in shearing corn.

(2) Letter from Robert Burns to Thomas Orr, at Park, dated Lochlie, 17th November, 1782, in which the poet indulges in a homily on life.

OUTSIDE THE HOUSE may be seen Four life-size Stone Figures representing, "Tam o' Shanter," "Souter Johnnie," the Innkeeper of the Tam o' Shanter Inn, Ayr, and his wife. These were sculptured by James Thom of Tarbolton and after being exhibited in many cities in England and

Scotland found an appropriate resting place in Kirkoswald. Two other items should be noted—Souter Johnnie's Sundial, and an ancient Louping-on-Stone.

HALLOWE'EN

This descriptive poem was the product of the Mossgiel period, but is definitely associated through the characters with Kirkoswald. Cassillis Downans, the fairy haunt, is fast by Cassillis Castle, two miles from Maybole. "Or for Colean the rout is taen" refers to the seat of the Marquis of Ailsa. The allusion to Bruce proclaims the proximity of Turnberry Castle, the patriot's birthplace :

"Where Bruce ance ruled the martial ranks,
An' shook his Carrick spear."

There are many references in Burns's and Scott's poems to Bruce and the Men of Carrick, who are reputed to have formed his bodyguard. The remains of this great stronghold are to be seen at Turnberry Point, now surmounted by a lighthouse and overlooked by a sumptuous hotel.

The persons mentioned in *Hallowe'en* have been identified as neighbours and friends of the poet during his Kirkoswald residence. His visits to the district continued, and Craigenton, his mother's birthplace, and Ballochniel, his uncle's home, were not forgotten after he had left the district. No doubt the quaint rustic games and the invocation by charm and spell so prevalent amongst the peasantry of Scotland in the eighteenth century were much practised in Kirkoswald district and Burns, the growing man, some years later, when his genius had flowered, endowed those scenes with a permanence that he alone could give them.

CHURCHYARD AT KIRKOSWALD. Here lie buried the Browns, Burns's maternal relations, Hugh Rodger, Burns's teacher at Kirkoswald; Douglas Graham, "Tam o' Shanter"; Helen McTaggart, "Kate" of the poem; John Davidson, "Souter Johnnie"; and many of the persons named in the poem *Hallowe'en*. Each memorial stone is clearly marked by a metal tablet.

LOCHLEA, 1777-84

(10 miles from Mt. Oliphant, 2½ miles from Tarbolton)

The farm of Lochlea, extending to 130 acres, in Tarbolton parish, was, with the exception of a short interval at Irvine, Burns's home for seven years. An interesting period in the poet's life was now opening up. His muse became more active, and experience of social life on a wider scale ripened his genius. In 1780 he helped to found the Bachelor's Club at Tarbolton. In 1781 Burns was entered as an apprentice of Lodge St. David's at Tarbolton, and in 1784, he was appointed Deputemaster of Lodge St. James. He is regarded as the Bard of Freemasonry.

Sickness and differences with his landlord resulting in litigation in which he was worsted, undermined the health of the poet's father, and in February, 1784, he passed away, a worthy and much respected parent. Many songs and poems were composed by the poet during his residence at Lochlea, and among others the following are popular to this day:

O Tibbie I hae see the day.	The Lass of Cessnock
The Tarbolton Lasses.	Banks.
Mary Morrison.	The Rigs o' Barley.
Montgomerie's Peggy.	My Nanie O.

TARBOLTON

The site of the house where John Wilson, "Doctor Hornbook," lived may be seen in Cunningham Street:

"That's just a swatch o' Hornbook's way
Thus goes he on from day to day,
Thus does he poison kill and slay,
An's weel paid for 't."

THE BACHELOR'S CLUB. Founded by Burns and his brother, was in the Sandgate, and the house where he was made a mason, situated in Burns Street, may still be seen. The old minute book records "Robert Burns in Lochly was passed and raised." This minute book may be seen in the Burns Tavern.

NEW MASONIC TEMPLE. Rebuilt on the site of the old Lodge St. James Tarbolton Kilwinning, there are housed within the following interesting Burns relics, which are shown to visitors on request:

Chair and footstool used by the poet when Deputemaster.

The mallet used by the poet.

The poet's apron.

The jewels which the poet wore.

The Bible presented by the poet.

The old minute book in which his name is inscribed many times.

WILLIE'S MILL.—This famous place lies between Tarbolton and Mauchline. Tradition affirms that here at honest William Muir's house the poet used to meet "Montgomery's Peggy." Of more human

interest is the fact that here Jean Armour in her distress found shelter and kindness. On the miller the poet penned a beautiful epitaph, beginning :

"An honest man here lies at rest,
As e'er God with his image blest."

The stone on which Death and the poet rested while they held their weird conversation is pointed out on the road to the village of Tarbolton :

"We'll ease our shanks and tak a seat—
Come, gie's your news."

IRVINE, 1781-2

Burns, in his autobiography, has written, "My twenty-third year was to me an important era. Partly through whim, and partly that I wished to set about doing something in life, I joined a flax-dresser in a neighbouring town, to learn his trade." Burns came to Irvine in the autumn of 1781, and remained until the spring of 1782. He set himself to learn the business of flax-dressing or heckling with one Peacock, a distant relative and a "rogue," but the venture came to an untimely end, for, in his own words, "the shop took fire, and burnt to ashes, and I was left like a true poet, not worth a sixpence."

A friendship formed in Irvine with Richard Brown, a sailor, who rose to be shipmaster, although it may not have had beneficial moral results, at the very least gave a stimulus to the poet's ambition. Burns refers in a letter to a Sunday they spent together in Eglinton Woods, and credits Brown with having "encouraged me to endeavour at the character of a poet." Another

source of inspiration for the poet was found in the perusal of Fergusson's poems, to which he was led by Provost Hamilton, and Burns confesses the effect on him was such "I strung anew my wildly-sounding lyre with emulating vigour." Fergusson emphasised to Burns the beauty and virility of the vernacular, and as Henley has expressed it, "when he used the language which he had babbled in babyhood, and spoken as boy and youth and man, he at once revealed himself for its greatest master since Dunbar."

PARISH CHURCH. The original church, founded in the tenth century, was rebuilt in 1774. The minister during Burns's residence in Irvine was Dr. Richmond, and the poet was admitted to membership in 1781. The pew where the poet sat is still pointed out. In the churchyard are two memorial stones of interest. One indicates the resting place of David Sillar, born near Tarbolton, and for a time in business in Irvine as a grocer. Two very fine "epistles" to Davie, a brother poet, were addressed to this great friend by Burns, the second of which ends as follows :

"Haud to the muse, my dainty Davie :
The Warl' may play you monie a shavie :
But for the muse, she'll never leave ye
Tho' e'er sae puir,
Na, even tho' limpin' wi' the spavie
Frae door to door."

The other tribute stone is to the memory of the wife of Dr. Mackenzie, who was the Miss Miller of the *Belles of Mauchline*.

KING ARMS HOTEL, High Street.—For many years the landlord was Samuel Dunlop of Tarbolton, whose wife was one of *The Ronalds of the*

Bennals. This song was one of the poet's early productions, and has associations with the Bachelor's Club in Tarbolton :

"In Tarbolton, ye ken, there are proper young men
And proper young lasses and a', man,
But ken ye the Ronalds that live in the Bennals?—
They carry the gree frae them a', man."

It is noteworthy that the Irvine Burns Club has met here for over one hundred years, and the present landlord has many interesting relics on view.

TEMPLETON'S BOOKSHOP (High Street).—Regularly frequented by Burns, where in 1781-82 he conned old ballads and chap books, and extended his knowledge of the English novel.

WHEAT SHEAF HALL (High Street), where Burns attended Masonic meetings.

DAVID SILLAR'S SCHOOL.—Unsuccessful as a grocer, "Dainty Davie" took to teaching, and the old school (now a dwelling-house) still stands in East Road.

PORT HEAD INN (High Street).—In Burns's day this house was occupied by Provost Hamilton, who was a nephew of Hamilton of Gilbertfield, a poet greatly admired by Burns.

"My senses wad be in a creel
Should I but dare a hope to speal
Wi' Allan, or wi' Gilbertfield,
The braes o' fame."

Burns was a frequent visitor, and the provost's son, Dr. Hamilton, was one of those who stood surety for the publication of the Kilmarnock Edition of 1786.



ALLOWAY KIRK AND GRAVEYARD



BURNS MONUMENT, ALLOWAY



ELLISLAND FARM (1788-91)



CLARINDA
Silhouette by Miers

HECKLING SHOP AND LODGINGS.—Both were situated in the Glasgow Vennel and have been marked by a commemoration tablet.

BURNS STATUE.—Erected on the banks of the River Irvine on the town moor, this handsome statue of the poet was the gift of Mr. John Spiers of Glasgow. The work of Dr. Pittendreich McGillvray, the memorial was unveiled by the Poet Laureate Alfred Austin in 1896.

EGLINTON WOODS.—The friendship between Burns and Richard Brown produced at least seven letters, still extant, from the poet. In one of these he refers to "A Sunday we spent together in Eglinton Woods." A memorial tablet on the Drukken Steps (St. Bride's Well) on the edge of the woods commemorates this meeting.

BURNS CLUB AND RELICS.—The club is one of the oldest, having been founded in 1826, and it holds an unbroken record. The Dr. McKenzie mentioned before was the first president, and David Sillars, the poet's friend, the first vice-president.

The club possesses some of the most interesting and valuable Burns MSS. Chief of these is the printer's copy for the first edition published in Kilmarnock in 1786 containing the following poems :

The Cottar's Saturday Night.
The Twa Dogs.
The Holy Fair.
The Author's Earnest Cry and Prayer.
Address to the Deil.
Scotch Drink.

Originally in the possession of Gavin Hamilton of Mauchline, to whom the poet dedicated his first volume of poems, the MSS. have been carefully

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treasured for over one hundred years. They may be seen on application to the Hon. Secretary of the club.

MOSSGIEL, 1784-8

(1 mile north of Mauchline)

Three months before the death of William Burness, Robert and his brother Gilbert leased the farm of Mossgiel, extending to 118 acres, at a rental of £90. It was a joint concern, and every member of the family was allowed ordinary wages for their labours. The brothers' allowance was £7 each per annum. "I entered on this farm," says the poet, "with a full resolution, come, go to, I will be wise! I read farming books—I calculated crops—I attended markets—and, in short, in spite of 'the devil, and the world and the flesh,' I believe I should have been a wise man; but the first year from unfortunately buying bad seed, and the second, from a late harvest, we lost half our crops. This overset all my wisdom."

The four years during which Burns resided on the cold and unfruitful farm of Mossgiel were the most important of his life. It was there his genius developed its highest energies, and as Henley has said, "at Mossgiel he did nearly all his best and strongest work." Local fame, he reports, was already his, for "I now began to be known in the neighbourhood as a maker of rhymes." Songs, epistles, satires and homely descriptive poems came from the poet's pen, and when his first volume, the priceless Kilmarnock Edition of 1786 was published, it contained no fewer than forty-five poems, the product of his early years. Although many of the poems in that volume, such as *The Two Dogs*,

The Holy Fair, *The Cottar's Saturday Night*, *Hallowe'en*, and the *Vision* may be regarded in a sense as autobiographical, it may be said of all Burns's poetry that it is intensely realistic in that he finds his theme and his inspiration in nature, and the folk among whom he lived.

Mossgiel, and the little town of Mauchline, a mile or so to the south, are linked closely in Burns's career for a period of four years. The poet frequented church, hostel, and Masonic lodge in Mauchline, and found in his everyday life the subjects for many of his brilliant satires, songs, and poems. *The Jolly Beggars*, *Holy Willie's Prayer*, and *The Holy Fair* are vivid word pictures of Mauchline life at the end of the eighteenth century. One of the far-reaching episodes in the poet's life was his wooing of Jean Armour, the master mason's daughter, and one of the Belles of Mauchline of whom he sang:

"There's beauty and fortune to get wi' Miss Morton,
But Armour's the jewel for me o' them a'."

Burns's pledge to Jean Armour, her father's persecution, his public appearance for reproof at the hands of "Daddy Auld" in Mauchline Church are facts known to every reader of Burns's life.

The poet's adoration of the Highland maid, Mary Campbell, object and inspirer of many beautiful songs, is an incident of the Mossgiel period that has appealed to the sentiment of the nation. Crushed by the stern attitude of mason Armour, forsaken by his Jean, Burns formed an ardent attachment with Mary Campbell, and, on his own avowal, marriage was arranged between them. They met on a Sunday in May, 1786, on the

banks of the Fail, and pledged their troth, when Burns presented Mary Campbell with a Bible. Thereafter she embarked for her home in the West Highlands, and on her return voyage died of a malignant fever at Greenock. That this *affaire de cœur* made a lasting impression on the poet's mind is evidenced by the number of beautiful songs such as *Flow Gently, Sweet Afton*, of which she was the inspiration. Many years after at Ellisland on the anniversary of her death, he composed the beautiful poem, *To Mary in Heaven*.

Mention has been made of the chief poems of the Mossgiel period, but the songs were many in number and of great variety and all of them lyrical gems. *Corn Rigs*, *Green Grow the Rashes*, *The Braes of Ballochmyle*, *Will ye go to the Indies*, *Mary*, *Farewell the bonie banks o' Ayr*, are all worthy of first place in the long line of Scots minstrelsy.

MAUCHLINE

MAUCHLINE CROSS.—The epistle to John Kennedy, factor to the last Earl of Dumfries, and an early friend of the poet, begins :

"Now Kennedy, if foot or horse
E'er bring you in by Mauchline Cross."

In HIGH STREET, nearby, resided John Richmond, the writer, with whom Burns stopped on his first visit to Edinburgh. Close at hand is the New Road, where stood the shop of James Smith, "the sleest pawky thief," a great friend of the poet, and whose sister was one of the Mauchline belles of which Burns sang : "Miss Smith she has wit, and Miss Betty is braw . . ."

NANSE TINNOCK'S HOUSE, fast by the cross, is identified as the change-house of *The Holy Fair*.

"Now butt an' ben the change-house fills
Wi' yill-caup commentators."

JEAN ARMOUR BURNS HOUSES.—Situated in Castle Street and marked by a marble tablet, is the house where Burns and Jean Armour began their married life in 1788. In the adjoining property lived Dr. McKenzie, friend and brother mason of the poet, and these houses and Nanse Tinnocks change-house were purchased, repaired and gifted by Charles R. Cowie of Glasgow to the Glasgow and District Burns Association, 1915. Burns's first home has been furnished in period fashion, and a museum of Burns relics incorporated in the building. But what must give great joy to all lovers of Burns is the knowledge that the greater part of the three properties is occupied by elderly ladies, who not only sit rent free but are in receipt of annual grants of money from the Association and the Little Bequest. In the Museum may be seen the Armour Family Bible and several Burns Manuscripts.

THE CHURCHYARD.—The scene of *The Holy Fair*, written by Burns in 1786 and appearing in the first or Kilmarnock Edition of his poems, is a place of deep interest to the visitor. Here lie Burns's contemporaries, some of them his dearest friends, many of them endowed with that immortality the pen of a genius alone can give.

The more noteworthy places of sepulture are : the burial place of the Armour family, Rev. William Auld, the "Daddy Auld" of *The Kirk's Alarm*, John Richmond, the poet's friend and host, the Alexanders of Ballochmyle, Auld Nanse Tinnock, George Gibson and his spouse Agnes Ronald, and their daughter, "Racer Jess," all of

the Poosie Nansie hostelry, the Fisher family, of whom "Holy Willie" is the most notable member, and Gavin Hamilton, the bosom friend of Burns (no tombstone marks this grave).

MAUCHLINE CASTLE.—Adjacent to this ancient building stands the house where Gavin Hamilton, the poet's patron and friend, resided. Here the poet spent many of his happiest evenings, and amongst others he met there Miss Kennedy whose ill-fated love affair prompted the composition of the world-famous lyric, *Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon*.

POOSIE NANSIE'S HOSTELRY.—Opposite the churchyard gate was in Burns's day a common lodging house kept by George Gibson, his wife, and their daughter "Racer Jess." The howf of "The Jolly Beggars" is changed little since that night when Burns saw the motley gathering and transmuted their song revelry through the alchemy of his genius.

"Ae night at e'en, a merry core
O' randie, gangrel bodies,
In Poosie Nansie's held the splore
To drink their orra duddies."

BURNS NATIONAL MEMORIAL AND COTTAGE HOMES.—Situating at the junction of the Kilmarnock and Tarbolton roads, this practical memorial of the poet of humanity for which the Glasgow Mauchline Society is to be credited, was opened in May, 1898, and commemorates the centenary of the poet's death. The sum originally collected by the Society for their noble scheme was £8751. A square baronial tower, 67 feet in height, wherein is a museum containing many interesting Burns relics, it is flanked by twenty substantial and

artistic cottage homes, where many deserving old folk find a quiet anchorage for life. Each occupant of these pleasant little homes sits rent free and receives annually a monetary grant from the Trustees. Here is a fulfilment of the poet's social programme, "A brother to relieve, how exquisite the bliss."

MAUCHLINE HILL TOP.—The ascent of this slight hill brings into view many places associated in the poet's life. The groves of Barskimming, the River Lugar, Montgomery Woods and Castle, Ochiltree where dwelt his brother bard, "winsome Willie" Simpson, and Catrine House, the home of Professor Dugald Stewart, are in the vicinity. It was at Prof. Stewart's house that the poet met Sir John Whitefoord and Lord Daer (both of Edinburgh):

"Ne're-to-be-forgotten day,
Sae far I sprachled up the brae
I dinner'd wi' a Lord."

Ballochmyle, the home of the Miss Alexander whom the poet saw, admired, and celebrated in the song, *The Lass o' Ballochmyle*, and Failford, the scene of Burns's parting with "Highland Mary," now marked by a commemorative stone, may be observed from the hill. Glenconner, the home of the Tennant family, much respected by the poet, and the subject of an epistle beginning, "Auld comrade dear, and brother sinner," is also in the vicinity.

KILMARNOCK, 1786

While resident at Mossiel, the poet, disappointed in the farm, and under the ban of the Armour family and the church, resolved to

emigrate to Jamaica. His first act was to give up his share in the farm to his brother Gilbert, and his next, to decide on the publication of his poems. To Kilmarnock, some seven miles north of Moss-giel, his eyes were bent, and encouraged by Gavin Hamilton, his landlord, and R. Aiken, "my lov'd, my honor'd, much respected friend," he entered into negotiations with John Wilson, printer, for an edition of 600 copies. Published at three shillings per copy, the thin octavo volume in blue boards, when offered for sale in these days, realises many thousands of pounds.

It is of interest to know that some of the poems were written while the printing was in progress, and *The Twa Dogs*, with which the Kilmarnock Edition opens, was one of them.

The profits of the edition, twenty pounds, in his pocket, and having failed to affect a reconciliation with the Armours, the poet, "skulking from covert to covert, under all the terrors of a jail," secured a passage in a ship that was to sail from the Clyde to Jamaica. "I had taken the last farewell of my few friends; my chest was on the way to Greenock; I had composed the last song; I should ever measure in Caledonia, *The gloomy night is gathering fast*, when a letter from Dr. Blacklock to a friend of mine overthrew all my schemes, by opening new prospects to my poetic ambition."

So writes Burns in his autobiography, but there were interesting events worthy of record ere the fateful letter arrived. The slender volume brought him the friendship of many good neighbours of high social standing. Professor Dugald Stewart of Edinburgh, then residing in Catrine, Dr. Hugh Blair, a leading literary light, Mrs. Dunlop of Dunlop, an unfailing friend, and the beautiful Mrs.



ROBERT BURNS
Silhouette by Miers



POOSIE NANSIE'S HOSTELRY, MAUCHLINE



THE AULD AND NEW BRIGS, AYR

Men & Brethren,

I am truly sorry it is not
my power to be at your quarterly meeting. — If I must
be absent in body, believe me I shall be present in spirit.
I suppose those who owe us monies by bill or otherwise will ap-
pear; I mean those we summoned. — If you please, I will
not delay prosecuting defaulters till I come home.
The Court is up, and I will be home before it sits down.
In the mean time ^{to take a note} of who appear and who do not.
Our faulty debtors, will be right in my humble opi-
nion; and those who confess debt and waste days, I
think we should spare them. — Farewell.

Within your dear Mansion may wayward Content
Or withered Gowny need enter
May secrecy round be the mystical bound
And brotherly love be the center !!!

23 Aug. 1786

Robt Burns

LETTER TO BRETHREN OF LODGE
ST. JAMES TARBOLTON KILWINNING

Stewart of Stair, celebrated in several songs, all paid tribute to his genius and extended to the poet a warm and friendly welcome. To Dr. Lawrie of Loudon House, a wise counsellor, is to be credited the change in the plan which a desperate situation had thrust on the poet. Forwarding a copy of the poems with a sketch of the poet's life, to Dr. Blacklock of Edinburgh, and a request that he should invite the interest of the prominent literary men in that city, a reply was received by Dr. Lawrie, urging the poet to visit the capital with a view to preparing a second edition of his poems. This was an invitation which could not be resisted, and having failed to persuade "Wee Johnnie" Wilson of Kilmarnock to print a second edition unless he advanced the cost of the paper, Burns set out at the close of November, 1786, for "fair Edina" on a pony borrowed from his patron, Dalrymple of Orangefield.

THE MONUMENT AND STATUE, situated in Kay Park, are of comparatively recent date. The erection of a statue in Glasgow by shilling subscriptions gave an impetus to similar schemes throughout Scotland. Gothic in design, the memorial building, consisting of two storeys and a tower, rises to a height of 75 feet, and is the conception of a local architect, Mr. R. S. Ingram. The statue of the poet, sculptured in Sicilian marble, and modelled on the Nasmyth portrait, is the work of Mr. W. G. Stevenson, Edinburgh. Altogether the memorial cost £2000, and it was declared open to the public on 9th August, 1879, by Col. Alexander of Ballochmyle, before a vast assembly of people.

THE MUSEUM, within the monument, is the richest in the world in respect of Burns MSS., and besides possesses the wonderful collection of Burns's

Works made by the late James McKie, publisher, Kilmarnock. The catalogue of the McKie Burnsiana Library, prepared by Mr. David Sneddon, runs to 160 pages, and contains over 1300 items, consisting of holograph MSS. by Burns, editions of the poet's works, foreign editions, Clarinda letters, chapbooks, pamphlets, relics, paintings and etchings.

The following is a list of the Burns Holograph Manuscripts in the museum :

BURNS'S HOLOGRAPH MANUSCRIPTS

1. *The Holy Fair*—composed in Autumn, 1785.
2. *Hallowe'en*.
3. *Address to the Deil*.
4. *The Auld Farmer's New Year Morning Salutation* to his auld meere, on givin' her the accustom'd ripp o' corn to hansel in the New Year.
5. *John Barleycorn*—a ballad.
6. *Scotch Drink*.
7. *Man was made to Mourn*—a ballad.
8. *The Twa Dogs*—a tale.
9. *The Cottar's Saturday E'en*.
10. *The Author's Earnest Cry and Prayer* to the Rt. Honble. The Scotch Representatives in the House of Commons.
11. *Address to J. Smith*.
12. *Winter*—a dirge.
13. *An Epistle to Davy*, a brother poet.
14. *The Death an' Dyin' Words o' Poor Mailie*—my ain pet yowe. An unco mournfu' tale.
15. *Poor Mailie's Elegy*.
16. A Letter from Burns to Mr. Wm. Stewart, Closeburn, dated Glencairn Kirk, Thursday Even.
17. A Letter from Burns to David Staig, Esq., Dumfries, dated Friday noon.
18. *Lassie wi' the lint white locks*.

19. A ballad—*Last May a braw wooer cam down the Lang Glen*.
20. *Tam o' Shanter*—a tale.
21. *Lament of Mary Queen of Scots*.
22. Letter to Robert Muir, Merchant, Kilmarnock, dated Mossiel, Friday Morn, 1786.
23. *Holy Willie's Prayer*.
24. Letter to Robert Ainslie, dated Ellisland, 30th June, 1788.
25. *Occasional Address*, spoken by Miss Fontonelle on her benefit night, December 4th, 1793, at Dumfries Theatre.
26. *Epistle to a Young Friend*, dated Mossiel, 15th May, 1786.
27. Letter to Gavin Hamilton, dated Mauchline, August 18th, 1783.
28. Letter to Gavin Hamilton, Writer, Mauchline, dated Stirling, 28th Augt., 1787.

EDITIONS OF THE POET'S WORKS

There are over 400 editions in the McKie Collection, and these include the Kilmarnock or First Edition.

1786. *Poems*, chiefly in the Scottish dialect, by Robert Burns. Kilmarnock, printed by John Wilson. (Presented by Dr. A. C. MacLaren, London).

The First Edinburgh Edition—

1787. *Poems*, chiefly in the Scottish Dialect, by Robert Burns. Edinburgh, printed for the author and sold by William Creech.

1787. The Second Edinburgh Edition (Creech).

1787. The Third Edition. London, printed for A. Strahan; T. Cadell in the Strand, and W. Creech, Edinburgh.

1787. The Dublin Edition (Gilbert).

1788. The American Edition (Stewart and Hyde).

RELICS

Among the most interesting relics of the poet to be seen in the Museum are the following :

Draught-board, used by Robert and Gilbert Burns at Lochlea.

Tam Samson's gun and dram glass.

"That woefu' morn be ever mourned,
Saw him in shootin' graith adorned."

The Earl of Glencairn's sword.

Old Piano (Mrs. Gregory's) of date 1786. Burns greatly enjoyed Mrs. Gregory's playing on this piano.

Frying pan which belonged to Burns, at Ellisland.

Chair and dram glass which belonged to Burns.

Plate and silver teaspoons which belonged to Mrs. Burns.

Two cups and saucers and three jugs which belonged to the poet's mother.

TAM SAMSON'S HOUSE.—One of Burns's great friends, Thomas Samson, the subject of an elegy, a flattering epitaph, and a glorious resurgence, lived in Rosebank, Braehead, and the house still stands little altered from the poet's time, opposite the entrance to Kay Park. The elegy begins thus :

"Has Auld Kilmarnock seen the Deil
Or great McKinlay thravn his heel?
Or Robinson again grown weel
To preach an' read?
Na, waur than a' ! cries ilka chiel,
'Tam Samson's dead.'"

Tam Samson, a fine old sportsman, lies in the Laigh Church burying ground, close beside the two reverend preachers mentioned in the first stanza of

the elegy. The words of the epitaph are inscribed on Mr. Samson's headstone.

BEGBIE'S INN (now the Angel Hotel) still stands in Market Lane. The place is mentioned in the poet's daring satire, *The Ordination* :

"Swith ! to the Laigh Kirk, ane an' a',
An' there tak up your stations ;
Then aff to Begbie's in a raw,
An' pour divine libations,
For joy this day."

JOHN WILSON'S SHOP.—"John Wilson," the printer and publisher of the world-famous Kilmarnock Edition of the poet's works, had his shop at the corner of King Street and Waterloo Street, now occupied by D. Brown & Co., Publishers. The printing office was on the third flat of a tenement in Waterloo Street. The printer is interred in the burial ground of the High Church, where John Russell, the "Rumble John" of the satire, "his piercin' words like Highlan' swords," preached strong Calvinistic doctrine.

THE LAIGH KIRK.—Apart from its Burns associations, the Laigh Kirk situated in Bank Street near the Cross, marks the site of the ancient shrine of St. Marnock. The many references made by the poet in *The Ordination* and other satires, have made the old church and burying ground places of abiding interest to all students of the poet's life.

Burns had many friends in Kilmarnock, whose homes have disappeared with the rebuilding of the town. John Goldie, "Goudie, terror o' the whigs," Robert Muir, who subscribed for seventy-two copies of the First Edition, Bailie Gregory, at whose home Burns heard the piano now in the museum played by Mrs. Gregory, are worthy of mention.

EDINBURGH, 1786

Burns, hospitably entertained by farmers *en route*, on arrival at the capital took up quarters on 28th November, 1786, in Baxter's Close in the Lawnmarket with John Richmond, a clerk of his acquaintance hailing from Ayrshire. It was the Edinburgh of Sir Walter Scott's day, gay, squalid, venerable, literary, with its "season" when every family of quality in Scotland was in residence. The brilliant society of the capital welcomed the rustic poet, introduced as he was by noblemen and learned professors, and Henry MacKenzie, in the *Lounger*, wrote so glowingly of his poetic genius that the doors of Edinburgh were flung open to him. Dalrymple of Orangefield introduced him to the Earl of Glencairn, and as friends and patrons Burns reckoned the Duke and Duchess of Gordon, Lord Eglinton, Lord Daer, Lord Monboddo, Henry Erskine, Dr. Blacklock, and Professor Dugald Stewart. The first few weeks in Edinburgh seemed to the poet a realisation of the prophecy contained in the quaint lines of an old ballad he hummed to himself many times :

"As I cam o'er by Glenap
I met an aged woman
Who bade me keep up my heart,
For the best of my days were coming."

"The attention he received," says Professor Dugald Stewart, "from all ranks and description of persons, were such as would have turned any head but his own." Burns was too big to be spoiled, and his independent spirit and strong intellect carried him safely through the Edinburgh period.

Yet, as Henley has said, "Edinburgh was a triumph for Burns ; but it was also a misfortune. It was a centre of conviviality and a dangerous place for a peasant to be at large in, especially a peasant of the conditions and stamp of Burns." Freemasons welcomed him, the Caledonian Hunt assumed him, and the Crochallan Fencibles enrolled him, but withal he did not forget the purpose of his visit to the capital.

The second edition of Burns's poems advertised on the 14th December was published on 21st April, 1787, by Creech. It was dedicated to the Noblemen and Gentlemen of the Caledonian Hunt, and there were 1500 subscribers, who called for 2800 copies.

No. 447 LAWNMARKET, Baxter's Close, (now demolished), was the residence of Burns on his first visit in November, 1786. Here dwelt his friend John Richmond of Mauchline.

THE NEW COUNTY BUILDINGS mark the line of Liberton's Wynd where stood JOHNNIE DOWIE'S TAVERN, patronised by Fergusson the poet, and a resort of Burns where he met frequently Willie Nicol and Allan Masterton and other convivial friends.

GENERAL'S ENTRY (called after General Monk), in the Potterow, was the residence of Mrs. MacLehose (Clarinda). The house stood on the site of Marshall Street School. Better known as Clarinda's home is 14 Calton Hill (with tablet) where she lived for 25 years and died on October 22, 1841.

ANCHOR CLOSE (243 High Street), contained Dawny Douglas's Tavern, the meeting place of the famous Crochallan Club. In this close was William Smellie's printing office, where Burns read the proofs of his poems.

BELL'S WYND (146 High Street), where James

Johnson, engraver, produced the *Scot's Musical Museum*, to which Burns contributed nearly 200 songs without fee or reward.

STEVENLAWS CLOSE (No. 132 High Street), where Allan Masterton, of the High School, one of the heroes of *O Willie Brewed a Peck o' Maut*, dwelt.

AULD GREYFRIARS. In this ancient and famous God's acre lies "Patrick Miller, Esq., of Dalswinton," laird of Ellisland, a friend in need and indeed to the poet, as he was also to Alexander Nasmyth, the painter of the Bard.

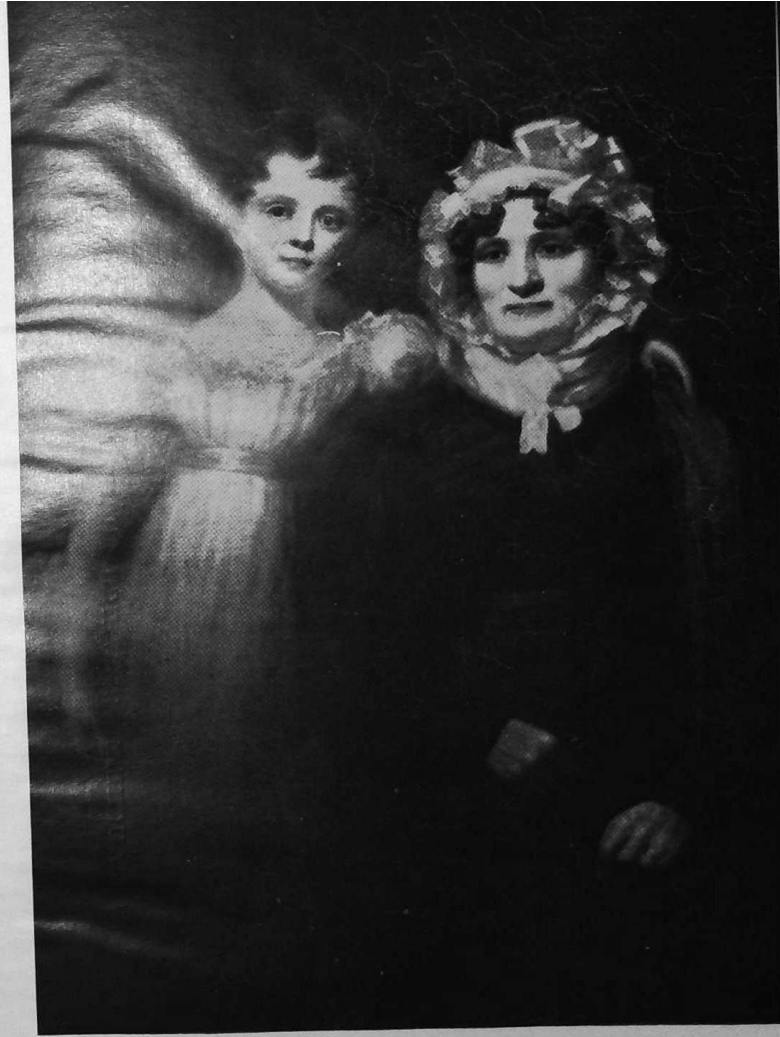
CANONGATE CHURCHYARD. In the graveyard may be seen the simple monument Burns erected to the memory of Fergusson, the poet. Here also are interred "Clarinda" and Professor Dugald Stewart, associates of the poet.

ST. JOHN STREET (N. 182 Canongate). The Canongate Kilwinning Lodge of Freemasons, of which Burns was Poet-Laureate, met in the turreted building on the right through the arch.

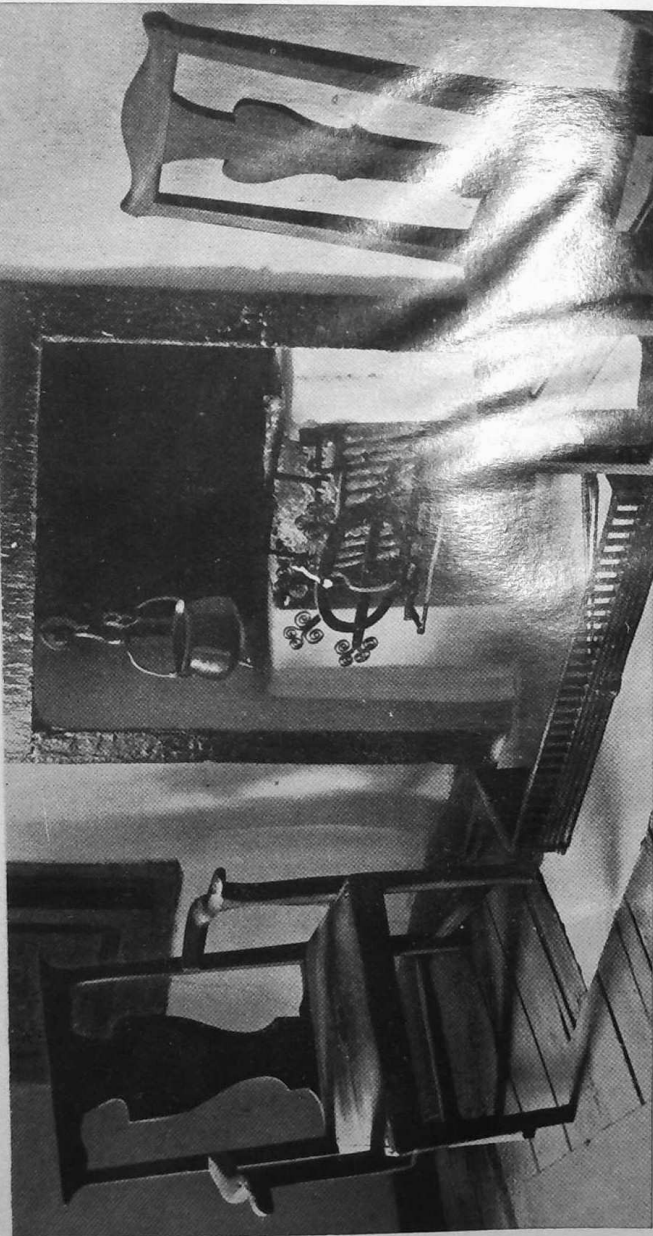
ST. JAMES SQUARE (off Princes Street), where Burns lived for several months in 1787.

SCIENNES HILL HOUSE (Braid Place, Causeway-side), was the residence of Professor Adam Ferguson, and here the historic meeting of the two great Scotsmen, Burns and Scott, took place. It was early in 1787 and the incident of Scott receiving his literary baptism at the hands of the Ayrshire poet has been permanently portrayed on canvas by Hardie the artist. The picture is now in the Chambers's Institute, Peebles.

OLD CALTON BURYING-GROUND. This interesting God's acre contains the unmarked grave of Willie Nicol, companion and fellow-lodger of the poet, and also that of the mother of Dr. Candlish, one of the five "Belles of Mauchline."



JEAN ARMOUR AND GRANDDAUGHTER



THE ROOM IN MAUCHLINE IN WHICH BURNS AND JEAN ARMOUR
BEGAN THEIR MARRIED LIFE

OF ROBERT BURNS

49

CALTON HILL. One of the view points of the city has many monuments of national interest. Professor Dugald Stewart, Burns's warm friend, is commemorated in stone and on a lower spur of the hill stands one of Edinburgh's memorials to the poet she honoured in his day. Burns's monument, imposing yet graceful, is Grecian in character and consists of twelve Corinthian pillars on a circular foundation supporting a cupola surmounted by griffins. It was erected in 1831 from the designs of Thomas Hamilton.

GEORGE SQUARE. This famous residential quarter has at least two dwellings associated with the poet. In No. 55 Henry MacKenzie, editor of the *Lounger*, whose bold recognition of the Poet's genius paved the way for Burns's welcome by literary circles in Edinburgh, lived and entertained for many years. In No. 23 Lord Craig, a distinguished judge and relative of Burns's "Clarinda" had his home.

BURNS STATUE. The last work of Flaxman, the sculptor, who did not live to finish it. This statue of white marble representing the poet contemplating the daisy's fate, may be seen in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

BURNS STATUE (Leith). Not to be outdone by its great neighbour, Leith has a very fine statue of the poet, the work of D. W. Stevenson.

GLASGOW

The poet's association with the city of the West has been the source of much speculation. Recent research has revealed that only on five occasions did Burns visit Glasgow. In his day the population did not exceed 45,000 whereas Edinburgh, with almost double the population, was not only the

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Capital, but, the literary centre of Scotland. It does not appear that the poet made contacts with the nobility, professors, or literary circles and his correspondence, with natives mainly, consisted of letters to a few business friends. And yet two Glasgow people very closely identified with the poet in his later years were productive of much letter writing. The "Clarinda" of the world famous correspondence with "Sylvander" was a daughter of Surgeon Wm. Craig of Glasgow, whom Burns first met in Edinburgh, and one of the poet's most notable friends, also of Glasgow, was Dr. John Moore, author of *Zeluca* and other works, who was the recipient of that most valuable autobiographical letter written to him by the poet from Mossiel in August, 1787.

Burns's visits to Glasgow were as follows :

In June, 1787, shortly after the issue of the Edinburgh edition of his poems, he wrote from Glasgow to Creech, his publisher, asking him to "send fifty copies to Mr. Smith, Bookseller, here." In August he was again in the city for he reported to Dr. John Moore that the "history of myself was unluckily forgot among other papers at Glasgow." On 18th February, 1788, Burns arranged to meet his friend, Richard Brown, and his own brother William at Durie's Black Bull Inn, Argyle Street, north side of the street (now marked with a tablet), and three weeks later in a letter to Robert Muir, the poet intimated he was going to Glasgow via Galston and Newmilns to collect "small sums owing to me for my first Edition." And finally having settled his affairs with Creech, his publisher, Burns travelled via Glasgow to Dumfries and may have

spent a day or two in the city. Burns has nowhere in his poems or letters commented on the city of St. Mungo and its inhabitants but it is fact and not tradition that he found one very good friend in John Smith, bookseller, for he thanked him personally for disposing of so large a number of his poems on such a low commission as five per cent. In no city in the world has there been such appraisal of Burns's genius. To-day the city has 25 Burns Clubs with a membership exceeding 4,000

THE BURNS HOUSE CLUB. A central meeting place for members of Burns Societies was inaugurated in the city in 1920. The Burns Club House Chambers at 27 India Street, are available for ordinary and committee meetings and social and literary functions. The quarterly meetings of the Burns Federation are held there.

MITCHELL LIBRARY. In the Mitchell Library, North Street, is to be found the largest collection of Burns literature in the world, consisting of 3000 volumes including 700 editions gathered over a period of 62 years. A unique feature of the Library is that it contains two copies of the priceless first Kilmarnock edition of 1786 and of the second or Edinburgh edition of 1787 and the third or London edition of 1787. The "Burnsiana" has been subdivided into 26 sections and full indexes provide easy references for students.

BURNS EXHIBITION. One outstanding tribute to Scotland's greatest poet was "The Burns Exhibition" held in Glasgow to commemorate the centenary of the death of the poet. The Exhibition was opened on 15th July, 1896, by Lord Rosebery who delivered an eulogy on the occasion that has passed into the literature of the nation. The number of items exhibited was 2994.

BURNS STATUE. Glasgow's statue of Burns, sculptor C. E. Ewing, stands in George Square and is noteworthy for the four fine panels in bronze also designed by Ewing. It was unveiled by Lord Houghton on 25th January, 1877. An interesting fact is that the funds required were raised by a shilling subscription—an example followed by other cities and towns.

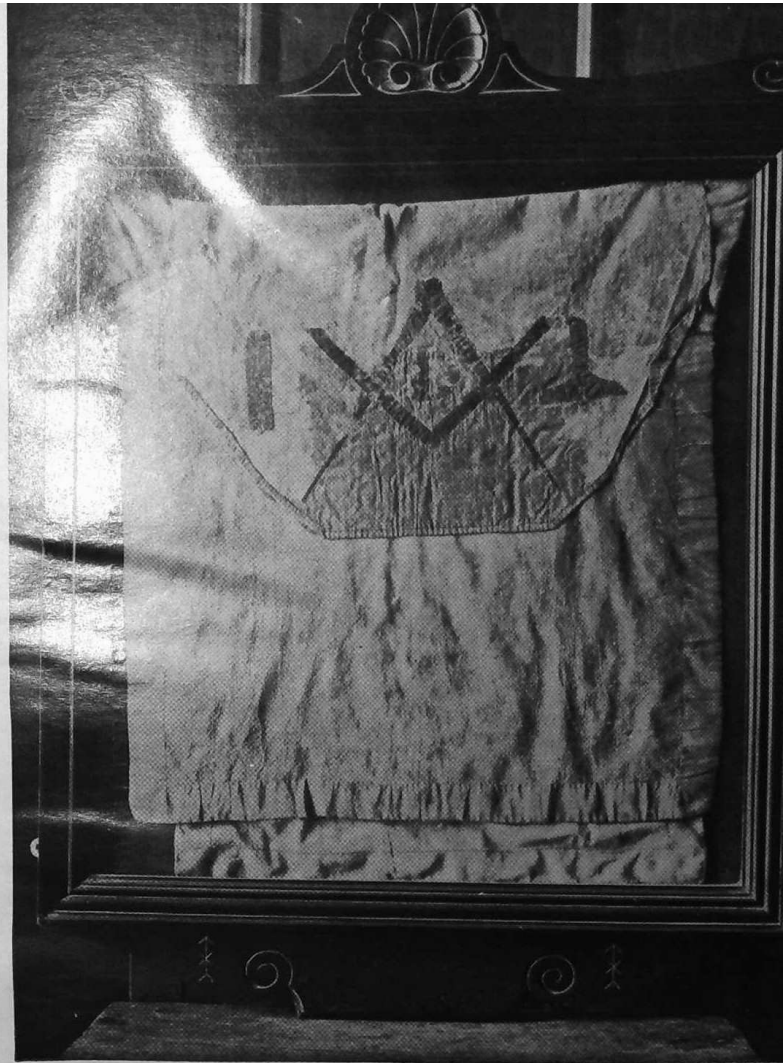
BURNS'S TOURS, 1787

The Edinburgh edition published, Burns set out on a tour of the border counties with his friend Robert Ainslie. After visiting Ainslie's home at Berrywell in Berwickshire, they passed through the romantic Scott country (as it is now known), to Newcastle, returning by Carlisle and Dumfries to Dalswinton, when the poet looked over Mr. Miller's property which he was soon to lease and make a home for Jean Armour. It was a triumphal tour for his fame had preceded him, and entertainment and honours were thrust on him wherever he halted.

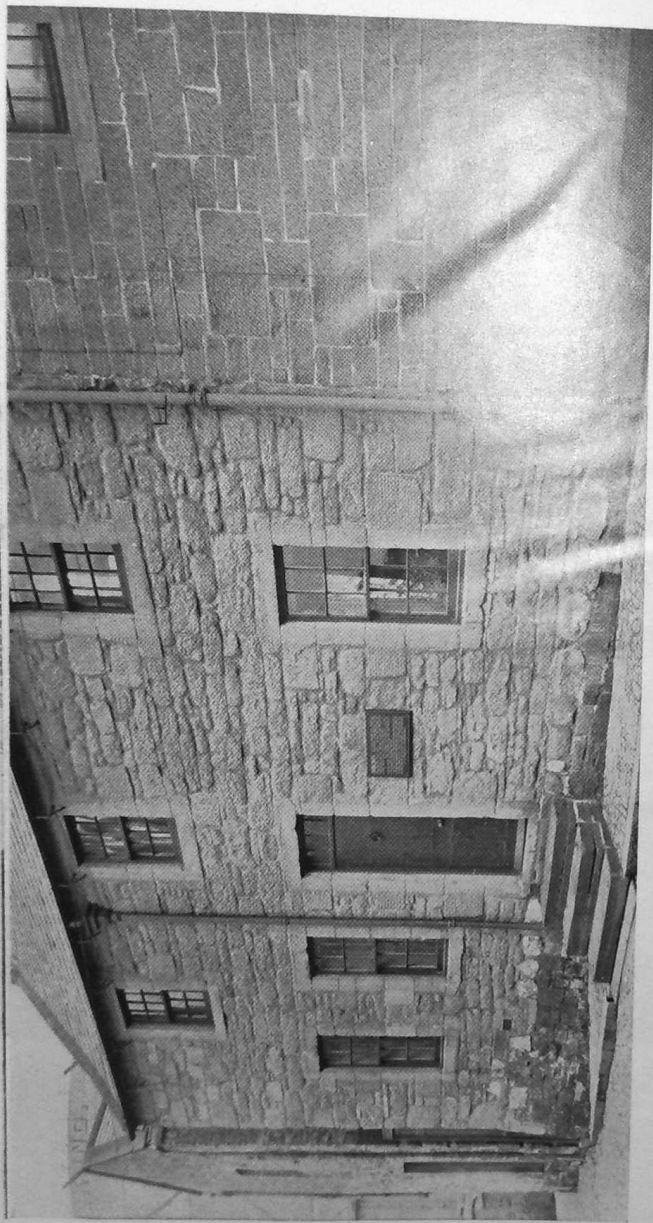
Arriving at Mauchline on the 8th of June, he set out shortly for a solitary journey to the West Highlands by way of Greenock to Inveraray, returning by Loch Lomond to Glasgow and Mauchline.

After a period at Mossgiel he again visited Edinburgh, residing with his friend Nicol in Buccleuch Street.

On 25th August, 1787, Burns set off with his friend William Nicol in a chaise for the Highlands travelling as far north as Inverness. The route taken was through Linlithgow, Bannockburn and Stirling, by Strathallan and Killiecrankie, to Blair



DEPUTY MASTER'S APRON WORN
BY BURNS



BURNS LAST HOME, DUMFRIES

Atholl. Culloden Moor was visited as well as Falls of Foyers, Nairn, Forres, Elgin, and many other places, and the return journey was made along the coast by way of Aberdeen and Montrose, in which town he made the acquaintance of his paternal kindred. This journey was an interesting one for the poet, for besides stimulating his muse to sing of the natural beauty and romance of the country, he was entertained royally by the Duke of Athole, the Duke of Gordon, Sir William Murray of Ochertyre, and many others. Of more importance to Burns was his meeting with Mr. Graham of Fintry, a friend to him on many occasions, and Neil Gow, who played old Scots music to him and no doubt stirred within him a thrill of patriotic fervour. His visit to the battlefields of Bannockburn, Killiecrankie and Culloden Moor were fruitful, and later he embedded in imperishable songs the surging sentiment aroused on the occasion.

A further excursion in the company of Dr. Adair was made a month later. Starting from Edinburgh, Burns and his friend went to Stirling, thence up the River Devon to Harviestoun where they found friends, proceeding by Clackmannan and Kinross to Dunfermline, where the poet visited the grave of the Bruce. Some beautiful lyrics were composed by Burns during this tour.

After a period at Mossgiel, interrupted with a visit to Ellisland, Burns returned to Edinburgh, presumably to complete his business with his publisher, and to discuss with Johnson the Museum of Scottish Songs, to which he had become an enthusiastic contributor. To this period also belongs the acquaintance and correspondence with "Clarinda."

Burns, confined to his room as the result of an accident, took counsel with himself, and as a provision for the future, applied for an Excise appointment. Through the influence of his good friend, Mr. Graham of Fintry, his name was placed on the roll. Eventually he secured a settlement with his publisher, Creech, and found himself the possessor of £500 capital, with which sum he turned his back on Edinburgh and retraced his steps to Mossgiel. There he disbursed £200 to his brother Gilbert to help him to retrieve the position at the farm, and sought to fulfil his own ideal "to make a happy fireside clime for weans and wife," by taking Jean Armour to wife in August, 1788, in the chambers of his friend Gavin Hamilton.

ELLISLAND, 1788-1791

(6 miles from Dumfries)

Burns entered on possession of the farm of Ellisland with its hundred acres, six miles north of the town of Dumfries, at Whitsuntide, 1788. A generous landlord, Mr. Miller of Dalswinton, made the terms easy for the poet farmer, and granted £300 for the erection of suitable buildings. As Mrs. Burns could not join her husband until the house was habitable, he journeyed many times between Dumfries and Mauchline. The farmhouse was not ready for occupation until August, 1789, and in the interval the Burns family resided at a place called "The Isle," half a mile to the south.

Installed in their home, which consisted of one storey of four apartments, with garrets for the servants, Burns and his "Bonnie Jean" settled down to the busy domestic life of a farmhouse. It may be remarked here that although alterations

have been made, the plan of the house remains very much as it was in the poet's day. Very early it dawned on Burns that happy as was his life at the farm, his success as a farmer was doubtful. In July, 1789, he applied to his patron, Graham of Fintry, urging that he be appointed Excise officer for the district. His application was successful and for two years he combined the duties of farmer at Ellisland and Exciseman for ten parishes at a salary of fifty pounds.

The reason given in rhyme to Dr. Blacklock for taking this step was an eminently practical one :

"I hae a wife and twa wee laddies
They maun hae brose and brats o' duddies ;
Ye ken yoursels my heart right proud is,
I need na vaunt,
But I'll sned besoms, thraw sauch woodies
Before they want."

The poet's survey covered a tract full fifty miles each way, and his excise duties necessitated two hundred miles journeying each week. The farm was wrought by his wife and the servants in the poet's absence, but bad crops and unfavourable seasons augured disaster. Meanwhile the poet sang, sometimes on a note of great uplift, not seldom in a burdened and sorrowing strain. When his Jean was at Mauchline and he was lonely at Ellisland, he penned to her the beautiful song, *Of a' the airts the wind can blaw*. A few months later, in a mood of deepest despondency and unrest, casting the eye backward to one of the sacred memories of his life, he wrote that beautiful lyric :

"Thou ling'ring star, with less'ning ray
That lov'st to greet the early morn,

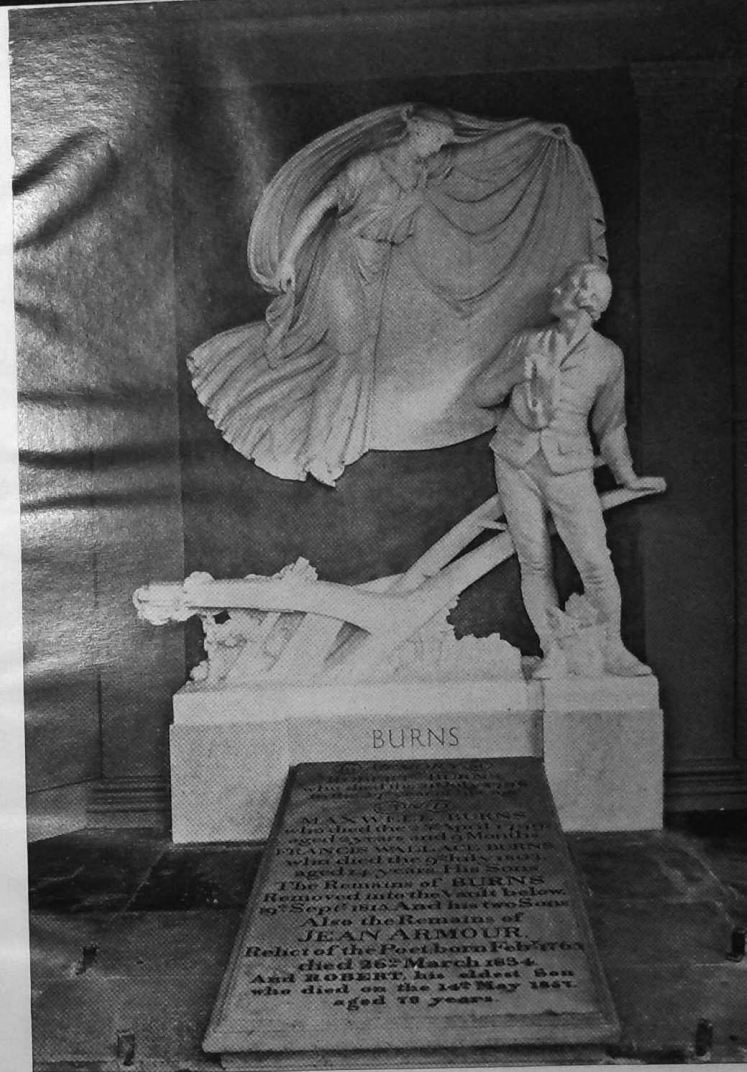
Again thou usher'st in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn."

Burns carried through his duties as Exciseman with faithfulness and humanity, and in his wanderings made many friends. It is said that he knew the River Nith better than his Ayrshire rivers, and he certainly found inspiration in the beautiful country surrounding Ellisland. Friars Carse and Dalswinton, Maxwellton and Glenriddel, Craigdarroch and Woodley Park, were visited by the poet, who was entertained hospitably, and his muse cast its mantle generously alike over scenes of tender and humorous experience. Northward, where flows "Sweet Afton Water," the poet found friends and cronies from New Cumnock, through Sanquhar, where he encountered the funeral of Mrs. Oswald, on a stormy night to his discomfiture, to Thornhill, Drumlanrig, Wanlockhead, Dalgarnock and Closeburn. Even as far as Moffat the poet wandered to spend a night with his old friend Nicol and celebrate the event in his famous bacchanalian song :

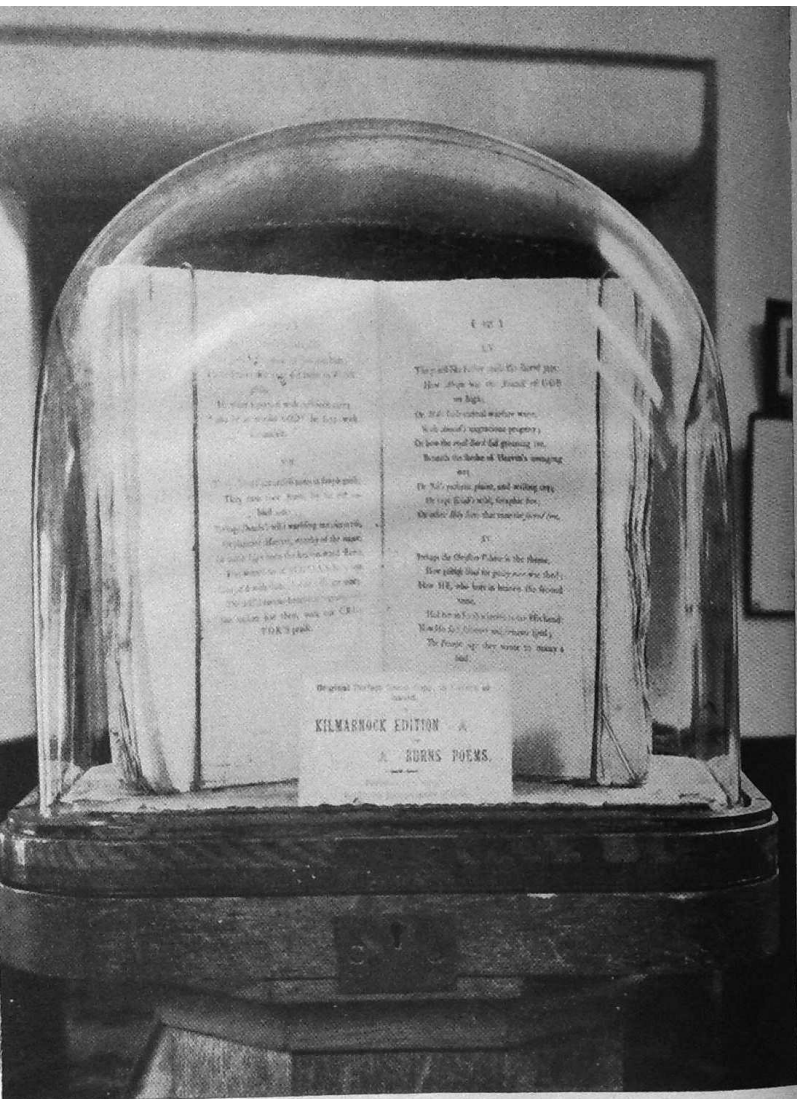
"O Willie brewed a peck o' maut
And Rob and Allan cam to pree."

This song was followed by another effusion of the same character, when three lairds, neighbours of Burns, met at Friars Carse to contend for the prize of an ancient whistle, which was won by a former laird of Maxwellton from a Dane who came to Scotland in the train of Anne of Denmark :

"Three joyous good fellows, with hearts clear of
flaw ;
Craigdarroch, so famous for wit, worth, and law ;



BURNS MONUMENT, DUMFRIES:
INTERIOR



KILMARNOCK EDITION OF
BURNS POEMS

And trusty Glenriddel, so skill'd in old coins ;
And gallant Sir Robert, deep-read in old wines."

At Friars Carse the poet made the acquaintance of Mrs. Riddel of Woodley Park, a good friend to the poet in Dumfries, Miss Davies, immortalised in that tenderest of love songs, *Bonnie wee thing, cannie wee thing*, and most noteworthy of all Captain Francis Grose, author of the *Antiquities of Scotland*, for whom Burns composed that masterpiece, *Tam o' Shanter*. It is recorded and not doubted that the poet composed this matchless poem in one day in the autumn of 1790 as he paced by the side of the River Nith. To this period belong such songs as *Auld Lang Syne*, *John Anderson my Jo*, *The Silver Tassie*, *The Banks o' Doon* and the beautiful lament over the death of the poet's first friend and patron, the Earl of Glencairn :

"The bridegroom may forget the bride
Was made his wedded wife yestreen ;
The monarch may forget the crown
That on his head an hour has been ;
The mother may forget the child
That smiles sae sweetly on her knee ;
But I'll remember thee, Glencairn,
And a' that thou has done for me."

But Ellisland as a farm was a failure, and Burns decided to throw up his lease. Mr. Miller, his laird, agreed, and in August, 1791, the auctioneer appeared, and the crop and stock was disposed of. Mrs. Burns and family had gone to Ayrshire for a few weeks, and Burns passed from the pleasant holms of Ellisland to a house in the Wee Vennel of Dumfries.

The final disposal of Ellisland and its lands is of

interest to all Burns lovers. In 1921 they were offered for sale but failed to find a purchaser. George Williamson of West Quarter, Lanarkshire, had vowed once that if it ever came into the market he would purchase it. This admirer of the poet negotiated and secured it and in due course through his brother it was bequeathed to the nation for all time.

DUMFRIES, 1791-1796

Burns removed from Ellisland to Dumfries in December, 1791, and settled down in his modest home of three apartments in the Wee Vennel, now Bank Street. Prior to this the poet, hearing that "Clarinda" was about to sail for the West Indies, paid a visit to Edinburgh and renewed the platonic friendship of an earlier date. Of the many songs he wrote at this time one may be singled out as a beautiful example of his lyrical genius. One of the stanzas of the *Parting Song to Clarinda* was declared by both Scott and Byron to contain "the essence of a thousand love-tales":

"Had we never lov'd sae kindly,
Had we never lov'd sae blindly;
Never met—or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted."

Much foolishness has been perpetrated by biographers when dealing with the closing years of the poet's life in Dumfries. A closer study of the social habits of the worthy townspeople of this and other county towns in Scotland at the close of the eighteenth century would have resulted in a juster appraisal of Burns as a citizen and husband. In the prime of life Burns carried through his duties

as exciseman, distasteful though they were, with faithfulness and zeal. He worked hard for promotion, and was on the list for a Supervisor, notwithstanding his unfortunate entrance into politics, when he purchased four carronades and sent them with his compliments to the French convention.

The French Revolution exercised a sinister influence on his mind and estranged him from many friends, yet when his country was involved in conflict with Napoleon he joined the volunteer corps and hurled defiance in songs that flew throughout the land. This was the period that gave birth also to two songs widely different in sentiment, but produced in the white heat of tempestuous feeling. *A man's a man for a' that* and Robert Bruce's march *Scots wha hae* are among the best known songs of the poet.

During the Ellisland-Dumfries period Burns contributed gratuitously almost two hundred songs, original or amended, to James Johnson's *Museum*. Following on this he engaged to lend his lyrical genius to the collecting of Scottish melodies and words for George Thomson of Edinburgh, and in regard to remuneration for this work it is interesting to quote the poet's own words:

"In the honest enthusiasm with which I embark in your undertaking, to talk of money wages, fee or hire, would be downright prostitution of soul."

In this spirit he worked almost to his dying day, singing with gay abandon or with a native tinge of gloom, and the letters with critical notes which he sent to Thomson with wondrous regularity exhibited a judgment and knowledge of minstrelsy rarely if ever surpassed. His contributions to Thomson exceeded sixty songs.

Besides the songs, Burns threw off political

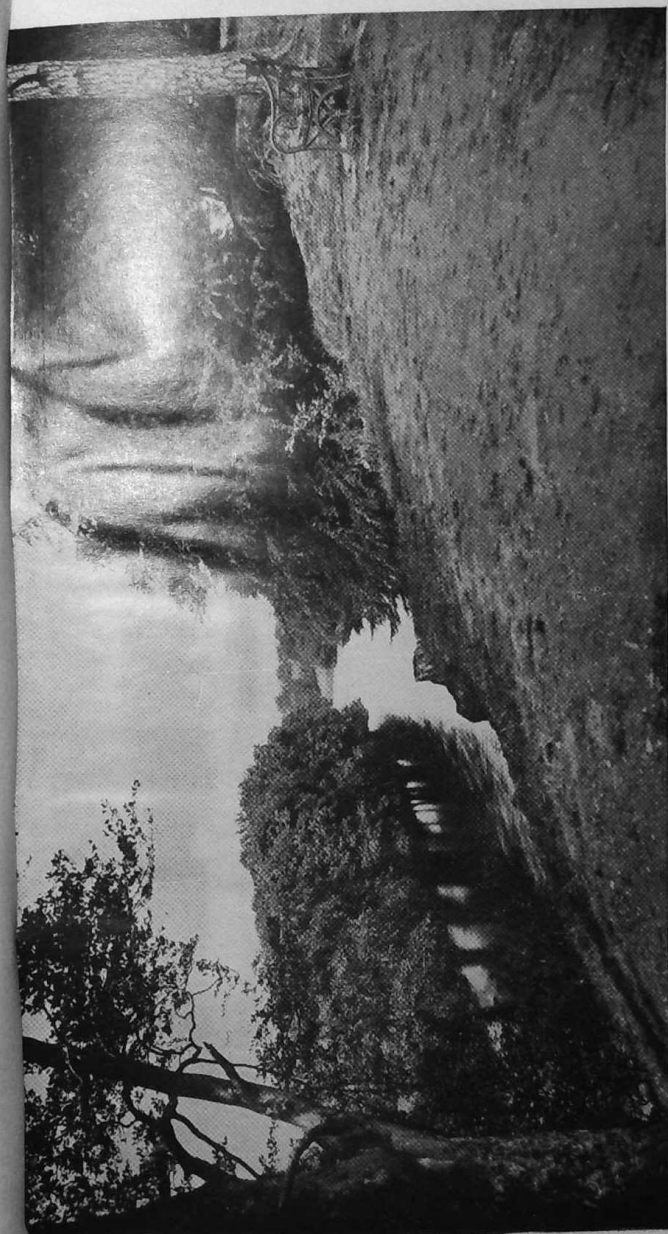
ballads, epistles, toasts and epigrams in great numbers, and the Dumfries period was prolific of much fine if minor work. He maintained a great correspondence with George Thomson, almost ninety letters being extant, and with Mrs. Dunlop, William Nicol, Robert Ainslie, Francis Grose, and A. Cunningham.

With the exception of a short tour in Galloway with his friend John Syme, the poet seldom left Dumfries except when on duty or to visit his friend Mrs. Ridley of Woodley Park. He walked much in the early evening, when the urge of composition flowed in his veins, and a favourite resort was by the Nith towards the ruined abbey of Lincluden.

Towards the close of 1794 Burns was an acting Supervisor of Excise and there was a possibility of his being moved to another centre, but his health was poor and by the end of 1795 serious illness had attacked him. The death of an only daughter in the autumn filled the cup of affliction. His days were numbered, and full well the poet knew it. A brief stay at Brow, on the Solway Firth, brought no relief. On the 7th July, 1796, he is writing his friend Cunningham, "I fear the voice of the bard will be heard among you no more." About the same date he is writing his wife, addressing her as "My dearest love," and to his brother Gilbert he writes, "I am dangerously ill and not likely to get better. God keep my wife and children."

Home to Dumfries to die! Nursed tenderly by Jessie Lewars, to whom the poet addressed the beautiful song, *O wert thou in the cauld blast*, the waiting was not long. On the 21st July, 1796, Burns died. His kinsman Carlyle, in a glowing panegyric, has written:

"And thus he passed, not softly, yet speedily,



BURNS WALK BY THE NITH, DUMFRIES



BURNS MONUMENT, DUMFRIES



BURNS MONUMENT, KILMARNOCK

Dear Brother

It will be no very pleasing news to you to be told that I am dangerously ill, & not likely to get better. An insatiable rheumatism has reduced me to such a state of debility, & my appetite is totally gone so that I can scarce stand on my legs. - I have been a week at sea-bathing, & I will continue there or in a friend's house in ^{the} country all the summer. God help my wife & children, if I am taken from their head! They will be poor indeed. - I have contracted one or two serious debts, partly from my illness these many months & partly from too much thoughtlessness as to expense when I came to town that will cut in too much on the little I leave them in your hands.

Remember me to my Mother

Yours

July 10th

1796.

R Burns

OF ROBERT BURNS

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into that still country, where the hail storms and fire-showers do not reach, and the heaviest-laden wayfarer at length lays down his load."

Four days later the remains of the poet were interred with military honours in St. Michael's Churchyard.

BURNS'S FIRST HOME IN DUMFRIES. At the foot of Bank Street (originally called the Wee Vennel), left-hand side, will be found a house bearing a tablet which reads:

"Robert Burns, the national poet, lived in this house with his family on coming to Dumfries from Ellisland, 1791."

BURNS'S HOUSE, in Burns Street, off St. Michael Street, the home of the poet for three years, is now under the care of Dumfries Burns Club. In a niche may be seen a bust of the bard gifted by the late William Smart, M.P. There is little change since the poet occupied it, and the apartment in which Burns breathed his last is much as it was during his life. The poet's youngest son, Colonel William Nicol Burns, purchased the property on his return from India. The poet's widow and family resided in this house until her death in 1834.

Although more Burns relics are to be found in the private homes of Dumfries than anywhere, a very interesting collection may be seen in Burns's House. The original fireplace and breakfast table remain, while a blue punchbowl, a copper toddy kettle, and the bread basket of "Bonnie Jean," are domestic articles carefully preserved. A silver snuff-box gifted to the poet by the Earl of Glencairn, on whom he penned an imperishable lament, a masonic apron gifted by Burns to Gordon of Kenmuir, and several scripts are relics worthy of

more than a passing interest. One pathetic exhibit which arrests attention is the cast of the poet's skull obtained for phrenological purposes on the eve of the interment of the poet's widow in 1834.

THE MIDSTEEPLE, built 1705, was, until 1867, Courthouse, Municipal Buildings, Prison, and Storehouse for the town's arms and ammunition. Burns's funeral took place from the Midsteeple on 25th July, 1796, the remains having been removed overnight from his house in Mill Street (now Burns Street).

THE GLOBE INN (High Street, known as Burns's Howff). His punchbowl and toddy ladle are still preserved, and the chair he occupied when a visitor. In a room upstairs a pane of glass with two verses of poetry inscribed by the poet may be seen.

BURNS MAUSOLEUM. The place of pilgrimage in Dumfries is the Mausoleum in the ancient churchyard of St. Michael's which was erected in 1815. Designed in the form of a Grecian temple by T. F. Hunt of London, the original relief sculpture by Turnerelli depicting the genius of Coila finding Burns at the plough was replaced in 1936 by a new panel designed by Hermon Cawthra, R.B.S. The unveiling of the new statuary was performed by the Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald in the presence of a large assembly. The cost of the renewal was £3000, contributed by admirers from all over the world. The preservation of the grave is in the charge of the Dumfries Burns Club, and annually, on the 25th of January, a floral tribute is laid on the poet's tomb by the Provost, magistrates, and members of the club. Burns's "Bonnie Jean" is interred in the same grave, and nearby rests in her long sleep the Jessie Lewars who nursed the poet tenderly to the end.

THE BURNS FEDERATION

The anniversary of Robert Burns's birthday, the 25th of January, is celebrated throughout the civilised world. This form of hero-worship as Carlyle expresses it, has been fostered mainly by the founding of Burns Clubs in Scotland which began within five years of the poet's death in 1796. It was a natural corollary that a co-ordinating institution would arise and this took form in The Burns Federation which was founded in Kilmarnock in 1885, the first president being Peter Sturrock, provost of that famous town. Stretching out a beneficent and guiding hand to Burns Clubs far and near, the objects of the Federation may be summarised thus:

To achieve by universal affiliation a bond of fellowship among members of Burns Clubs and kindred Societies. To secure and preserve manuscripts and other Burns relics. To mark with suitable inscriptions the locale of incidents associated with Burns in his lifetime. To encourage all movements and institutions in honour of Burns, and in general of Scottish literature, Art and Music.

There are over 300 clubs and societies on the roll of the Burns Federation and at the annual conference reports are submitted to the delegates who represent the various clubs, both at home and overseas. The first conferences were held at Kilmarnock (1885-93) but since that time the annual meeting has been held alternately in Aberdeen and London. The scope of the work of the Federation is extensive and is set forth in excellent form in the *Burns*

Chronicle, published annually by the Burns Federation, Kilmarnock, under the editorship of Mr. J. C. Ewing, of Glasgow. It is a scholarly and authoritative magazine with a wide world circulation.

J. MACKENNA.

