



No. 2

Spring 1992

50p

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Contributions for the Autumn 1992 issue should be sent
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AYRSHIRE NOTES

Published by
AYRSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
in association with
Ayrshire Federation of Historical Societies

AYRSHIRE AND AUSTRIA **The Loudoun Connection**

by John Strawhorn

The Irvine Valley, Ayr, Cumnock, and Mauchline -- how
are they linked with the Baltic Republics, the Vienna
Woods, Haydn, and Mozart? This article will explain
the curious connections.

Last summer an Austrian visitor, Gottfried
Pollhammer, was in Mauchline searching for the origins
of the Loudoun family. In an exchange of
correspondence with him we have worked out the details
of the Austrian connection.

In the 12th century James, son of Lambinus, came
from Loudun in France to the Irvine Valley and brought
that name to this place. His son-in-law, who inherited
the estate, was Sir Hugh Crawford of Loudoun, sheriff
of Ayr. In the 14th century Sir Duncan Campbell by
marriage to a Crawford heiress acquired Loudoun and
also succeeded as hereditary sheriff of Ayr. The tenth
Campbell of Loudoun was Sir Hugh, who sometime about
the year 1530 purchased that house in Ayr which became
known as Loudoun Hall. It was occupied by the next
generations, Sir Hugh followed by Sir Mathew, then by
another Sir Hugh who was created Lord Campbell of
Loudoun in 1601, then by his grand-daughter, whose
husband Sir John Campbell of Lawers became first Earl
of Loudoun in 1633 and sold their town house in Ayr.

Sir Hugh Campbell who acquired Loudoun Hall in Ayr
also obtained possession of lands in Cumnock parish,
including Terrinzean Castle -- whose ruins are now
more easily viewed from the recently-opened by-pass.

His son, Sir Matthew Campbell in 1566 obtained a
charter of the lands and lordship of Mauchline, as is
commemorated by the names of Loudoun Arms and Loudoun
Street.

The next Sir Hugh Campbell, who became Lord Campbell of Loudoun, had a younger brother Matthew who became a soldier of fortune, as noticed in Paterson's History of Ayrshire. He fought in Germany, and presumably served under the Swedish flag, for he eventually settled in Livonia (present-day Estonia). He abandoned the family name of Campbell, preferring the surname of Loudoun.

An 18th century descendant was Gideon Ernst Laudon who was born at Tootzen in Estonia on or about 2 February 1717 and died at Novy Jicin (in present-day Czechoslovakia) on 14 July 1790. He followed the family tradition by entering military service under Frederick II of Prussia, transferred to the Russian army in 1732, then obtained an Austrian commission in 1742, rising to the rank of general during the Seven Years' War (1756-63). He was commander of the Austrian forces which defeated the Prussians at Kundersdorf (1759) and Landshut (1760). He was less successful at Liegnitz (1760) but took the fortress of Swidnica in Poland (1761). In 1779 he was appointed Field Marshal by the Empress Maria Theresa and continued to serve under her successor Joseph II. His last great victory was as commander-in-chief of the Austrian forces which in 1789 captured the city of Belgrade (capital of present-day Yugoslavia) which was then held by the Turks.

The celebrated composer Franz Joseph Haydn dedicated to him his Symphony No. 69 in C, which is known as the "Loudon Symphony", written c. 1775-76. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart in 1788 and 1789 wrote two Contredances (K535, K587) celebrating Laudon's part in the siege of Belgrade.

At some stage of his career, Laudon was created a baron and became Freiherr von Laudon. He acquired an estate in the Vienna Woods with a mansion called Laudonschloss (Loudoun Castle). There he was buried, his tomb surmounted by a striking monument depicting a knight in full armour sitting as in deep thought. The Laudon family continued in the estate till 1925 when the last of the Laudons left for somewhere in America. The mansion passed through various hands and in 1975

became government property as a centre for civil servants.

There is a curious parallel in the family history of the Ayrshire family. John, 4th Earl of Loudoun, was also a distinguished soldier of the Seven Years War. But he never had to encounter his distant relative who was commanding the enemy's Austrian forces. Earl John, who in 1745 had helped subdue the Jacobite rebels, was in 1756 appointed commander in chief of British forces in America (where Fort Loudoun in Tennessee takes his name), and returned to Europe to fight in a campaign in Portugal in 1762. Earl John enhanced his Ayrshire estate, and successors extended Loudoun Castle, which became known as The Windsor of Scotland. Unlike Laudonschloss, it has not survived. It was burned down in 1941. Members of this family also sought a new life overseas, the present earl of Loudoun residing in Australia.

MEGALITHS ON ARRAN

Maths, Myths, and Mysteries

by Aubrey Burl

An audience of three hundred filled the Civic Theatre, Ayr, on 30th October, to hear the Buchan Lecture of 1991, sponsored by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and organised by the Ayrshire Archaeological and Natural History Society. We are privileged to present an abstract of this lecture by Dr Aubrey Burl, the celebrated archaeologist.

The prehistoric archaeology of the islands of Malta and Arran is entirely different. That on Malta is characteristic of an 'island culture' with unique styles of architecture unaffected by outside influences. Arran, despite the splendour of its megaliths, lacks such individuality. Its monuments are those of an external culture. The explanation is

simple. Malta is an isolated island, fifty miles from Sicily and with no attractive local products to encourage trade. Arran is closely surrounded to north, west, and east by the Scottish mainland, and lies at the intersection of several important routes.

Its earliest megalithic sites are chambered tombs of the Clyde-Solway tradition with crescentic forecourts and segmented chambers. Monamore, excavated by Dr Euan MacKie in 1961, yielded calibrated dates ranging from 3900 to 2900 BC. Tragedy attended the robber of the tomb at Torrylin.

In Great Britain most regional groups of tombs display an interest in particular orientations. The entrances of many Clyde-Solway tombs are generally aligned towards the north-east, perhaps towards the midsummer sunrise, and on Arran the remote cairn of Carn Ban is almost perfectly directed towards this solar event. Other Arran tombs, however, do not share this orientation, demonstrating some fragmentation of beliefs.

Carnahome, near Blackwaterfoot, is an oddity on Arran, a circular tomb of the Inverness-shire Clava passage-grave tradition, suggesting Middle or Late Neolithic contacts between Arran and the northern end of the Great Glen.

The stone circles on Arran also share architectural traits with mainland regions. Whereas most megalithic districts in Britain contain unique forms of stone rings those on Arran are reflections of circles in other areas. Perhaps dating from around 2500 BC, the complex on Machrie Moor contains impressive 8-stone rings that are most comfortably compared with the 8-, 6-, and 4-stone circles of central Scotland. Excavations by Bryce in 1861 recovered food-vessels from eccentrically-placed internal cists but these may not have been contemporary with the erection of the surrounding stones.

Circle V, a concentric ring for which there are counterparts in northern Ireland, reveals how folk-stories can become distorted. Today it is said

that a holed stone in the ring was used by the Celtic hero Fhinn Mac-Coull to tie his dog Bran. In 1700 Martin Martin recorded that natives believed that the dog was tethered to the one surviving stone of Circle II some distance away.

There is a possibility that Alexander Thom's 'Megalithic Yard', a unit of measurement 2.72' (0.93m) long, was used in the laying-out of the Machrie Moor rings. In 1978 and 1979 the speaker was invited by the Scottish Development Department to investigate what damage was being inflicted on the rings by cattle. Circles I and XI were examined.

Circle I was an ellipse of six large granite boulders and five smaller sandstone blocks alternating around an oval 48ft 3ins by 42ft, lengths very close to 17¼ and 15½ Megalithic Yards. A survey in the early 1960s by Dr Archibald Roy concluded that the ellipse had been set out from two internal foci. Meticulous inspection of their hypothetical positions failed to detect any sign of these markers. Astronomically the ring was interesting. The long axis was approximately in line with the minor southern moonrise but the short axis was almost exactly aligned on the major northern moonrise. Field analysis by John Barnatt concluded the entire circle complex had been located in a position from which the midsummer sun would have been seen rising in the north-eastern pass of The String between the hills.

Circle XI was a newly-discovered 'circle' of low stones close to Circle I. Continual bad weather prevented the excavation being finished. The ring was not circular but irregular with a best diameter of 40ft 8ins, close to 15 Megalithic Yards. It had been preceded by a timber circle of rather larger dimensions. In 1980 the speaker was unable to continue with the work but succeeding seasons by Alison Haggarty recovered grooved ware and other artefacts of the Late-Neolithic/Early Bronze Age horizon.

Influences from the recumbent stone circle tradition of north-eastern Scotland can be seen on Arran at the Auchagallon circle to the west of Machrie

Moor. Even later developments of diminutive 'Four Poster' rings exist at Aucheleffan and other sites. The greatest concentration of such late rings is in Perthshire, once again attesting to the importance of Arran as an intermediate staging-post in prehistoric Britain.

The erection of megaliths dwindled and disappeared by the Late Bronze Age. Pairs of standing stones such as those near Brodick, counterparts of others in central Scotland, may have been set up as late as 1200 BC. These impressive sandstone pillars are probably the final manifestations of a tradition that had endured for nearly 3,000 years.

THE CUMNOCK CENTENARIAN A Study in Family History

by William M. Roach

It was over fifty years ago that I first heard of my great great grandfather, David Murray of Cumnock. He was remarkable because he had lived to the age of 100, he had fought in the Napoleonic Wars, and he had been an army pensioner for seventy years. It was only recently that I was able to find out more about him.

Information was obtained from the International Genealogical Index, Census Returns, gravestones in Cumnock, War Office records, and from local newspapers. In addition there was a fair amount of family anecdotalage, very little of which could be checked from written records. But my original informant was an uncle, who when a small boy in the 1880s had actually visited his great grandparents; and other members of the family have had information at second hand which may well be accurate.

David Murray was born in Old Cumnock on 6th August 1791 and died there at Skerrington Mains on 17th Septemeber 1891. His parents, Thomas Murray a shoemaker and Jean Kennedy, already had at least two

children, John and Elizabeth, when he was born. John became shoemaker and eventually moved to London where he had a shoemaking business. David, after a brief period of schooling became an apprentice weaver involved in the customer weaving business, i.e weaving homespun woollen yarn into cloth for farmers' and cottars' wives. In 1809 one of his uncles was selected for service in the Militia, but David volunteered to take his place. Then on 10th May 1811 he enlisted at Ayr in the 72nd regiment of Foot (raised in 1778 by the Earl of Seaforth and previously the 78th Regiment of Highland Foot). He was sent first to Hamilton Barracks for squad drill; then he was marched to Ballantrae and on to Portpatrick, from where he sailed to the Curragh in Ireland for training in musketry and drill.

After this, David set sail for India and the East Indies where he had two periods of service -- from 9th September 1812 until 27th June 1814, and from 2nd September 1815 until 17th February 1816. He is said to have landed on Mauritius which had recently been captured from the French and to have been on one occasion a member of a guard of honour in India for the Marquis of Hastings. For the remainder of his time overseas he was in Cape Colony and there, after 1816, he kept goats and supplemented his income by selling milk to the garrison. In 1820 he applied for his discharge from the army on the grounds of impaired vision in both eyes and this was granted in October 1820. He sailed back to Britain and was discharged from Chelsea Hospital in February 1821. Including his time in the Militia he had served for almost eleven years and for this he received a pension for the rest of his life, a period of over seventy years. Initially it was 4½d per day but was increased in 1852 to 9d per day and from 1874 until his death it was 1/3d per day (just over 6p). This pension must have helped him considerably when he returned to Cumnock at a time when weavers' wages were poor. It is said that in their latter years, at least, he and his wife lived in comparative comfort. In the 1880s there was butter to spread on bread, and there were carpets on the floor, although David's wife thought these were an extravagance.

Before he left London, David had visited his brother John in Piccadilly, and then sailed to Leith from where he walked home to Cumnock. For this journey he received an allowance of 10/8d (about 53p). He then settled back to work as a weaver and on 11th June 1822 married Jean McKervail, who like David belonged to Old Cumnock and was probably the grand-daughter of George McKervail who was clerk to the kirk session of Old Cumnock from 1742-54. They were to remain together until Jean's death in 1889.

David and Jean had seven sons -- John (1825-92), James (1827-97), William (1829-92), Patrick (1832-1906), David (1834-1908), Thomas (1838-92), and George (1841-1921). Of these, only James settled in Cumnock, where he farmed Skerrington Mains. William, a draper and tailor, moved to Dalmellington and late in life to Glasgow. George farmed Milreoch and Martnaham Mains near Dalrymple. The others emigrated. John, Patrick, and David moved to New South Wales. Thomas became a merchant in Liverpool, and late in life joined his two sons in San Francisco. With the exception of John and Thomas they had large families. James had eight children, William fourteen from two marriages, Patrick nine, David fourteen from two marriages, and George ten. Late in life, Jean remarked that if all her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren could be assembled, they would fill the Kirk.

When they married, David and Jean lived in a cottage called Humeston on Garallan estate and there they remained for some time. David was a weaver until the middle of the century and was helped by Jean, who on at least one occasion walked to Glasgow to take a web to a relative in Calton. By 1861 they were living at Siverburn and David was farming 33 acres. In 1871 he was described as a Chelsea Pensioner and was living in Tanyard Street. Some time afterwards he was given tenancy of Glaisnock Cottage by Captain Campbell of Auchmannoch, and he and Jean remained there until her death on 16th February 1889. David eventually moved to Skerrington where he was looked after by his son James until his death in November 1891. It was reported that until about a year before his death he still enjoyed a game of draughts, and could remember when it was his

pension day. Laterly however he became senile.

David was only 5ft 3ins tall; he had blue eyes and a dark complexion. A photograph taken probably in the 1880s shows a strong faced, determined looking man, and perhaps this determination contributed to his long life. His seven sons could not match his longevity, but among them they did father a large number of children. As a result, David's descendant must now number several hundred and are to be found in Scotland, England, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, USA, and Canada.

AYRSHIRE'S GREEN AND PLEASANT LAND ?

Pollution is not an innovation of the 20th century. In the Statistical Account, written almost exactly two hundred years ago, it finds mention as affecting local rivers -- one result of industrial development.

The parish minister of Sorn reported: "In the river of Ayr there was abundance of fresh-water trout, and some salmon; but it is here generally believed, that they have, of late, been much diminished in their numbers, by the iron and tar works of Muirkirk, and by the coal and lime works both in that parish and the parish of Sorn."

In Fenwick, "Two considerable rivulets, or waters as they are called here, run through the parish ... Salmon never come this way; which is owing, probably, to the waters being rendered hurtful to them by the works carried on in Kilmarnock."

FINDING OUT ABOUT AYRSHIRE Two Books for Beginners

There are plenty of books on Ayrshire history in the libraries (and we hope to write about some of them in future issues) but few of these remain in print and second-hand copies are scarce and expensive. However, there are two recent books available in the bookshops and both are relatively cheap. These together provide an admirable introduction to local history for those newly interested, as well as supplying the more knowledgeable with some unusual and little known facts about the county.

DISCOVERING AYRSHIRE by John Strawhorn and Ken Andrew
John Donald Publishers, £7.50.

This 249-page illustrated book is in two parts. Eleven chapters by John Strawhorn provide thematic treatment of a wide range of topics: The Ayrshire Scene, Old Forgotten Things, Castles and Cottages, Holy Places, Some Tales and Legends, Getting Around, The Farm Scene, The Burns Trail, Industrial Past and present, Some Ayrshire Worthies, Out and About. The other eleven chapters, by Ken Andrew, tour the county, visiting every town and village, and providing details of places of interest in each: The County Town, The Carrick Coast, Maybole and Inland Carrick, The Doon Valley, The River Ayr, Cumnock and around, the Kyle Coast, Kilmarnock and around, the Irvine Valley, Irvine and the Garnock Valley, The Cunninghame Coast.

AYRSHIRE HERITAGE by Andrew Boyle
Alloway Publishing Limited, £6.25.

144 pages are packed with information about famous people, places, and incidents. Thirty eight illustrated chapters deal with wellknown Ayrshire men like William Wallace and Old King Cole; lesserknown figures like Betsy Miller and James Macrae; Covenanting

tales; Ayrshire tatties and Ayrshire bacon; mining disasters and railway records; burial customs; and an Ayrshire Roll of Honour. In his Introduction the author rightly argues: "Why should Ayrshire children be taught about Agincourt, the Black Hole of Calcutta or the Boxer Rebellion, while they are left ignorant of the importance of Dundonald Castle, the many agricultural advances conceived in the county, or the man and women who have gone forth from our towns and villages to colonise the world." This book is a welcome complement to his other book, Andrew Boyle, The Ayrshire Book of Burns-Lore, Alloway Publishing, £3.95.

NEW BOOKS ABOUT AYRSHIRE

THE HISTORY OF AUCHINLECK by Dane Love
Carn Publishing, Cumnock, printed in Darvel, £15.

It is almost a hundred years since the last history of Auchinleck, and the newcomer is an improvement in all ways. For the early history of the parish, and its landed proprietors, Auchinlecks of Auchinleck followed by the Boswells, the older standard histories have (as the bibliography reveals) been supplemented by use of information from a variety of newer sources. Later chapters dealing with coalmining and the Lugar ironworks should be of interest to readers outwith the area. There is a mass of assorted details concerning social life of the last century and a half -- difficult to digest but much helped by the good index. The author has too much about the lives of ministers and too little about politics. And there are occasional lapses, almost inevitable in a book of this scope. Two examples. "An aged judge" in 'The Vision' was not Lord Auchinleck, but Lord Barskimming, as Burns himself noted. And the Boswell Museum was opened in 1978, not by Lord Ross of Marnock, but by that other Lord Ross who is a judge. But overall the book is reliable, informative, easily read, and a model of what a parish history should be.

AYR COUNTY HOSPITAL by James Moore
SEAFIELD CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL by Dr Ronald B. Lewis
HEATHFIELD HOSPITAL, Dr J.W.N. Duerden and D. McNeill
£3.50 each or £10 for set of three.

Opening of the new Ayr Hospital in November 1991 was accompanied by the closure of these three older institutions. Ayr County Hospital was opened in 1883, Heathfield followed in 1904 for infectious diseases, and Seafield House was converted into a maternity and child welfare hospital in 1920. To commemorate their closure, these accounts of the contribution each made to the community have been timeously published, and available in bookshops or at the Ayr Hospital.

OWNERS AND OCCUPIERS by R.H.Campbell
Aberdeen University Press, £14.95.

Professor Roy Campbell is a historian who is wellknown and respected in his native county of Ayr. His new book outlines the evolution of dairy farming in south-west Scotland. It covers the 19th century when most farms were tenanted, examines the breakup of the great estates, and the new rural society of farmers who are owner-occupiers. It is an important contribution to the history of local agriculture and social change.

LOCATING DIALECT IN DISCOURSE: THE LANGUAGE OF HONEST MEN AND BONNIE LASSIES IN AYR, by Ronald K.S.Macaulay
Oxford University Press, £32.50.

Despite the title, this has nothing to do with the speech of Ayr at the time of Burns. The author describes it as "a study in discourse micro-sociolinguistics." In other words an examination of current speech in one small area. How small we can gauge from the fact that he makes a meticulous study of 12 (yes, twelve!) persons. This learned professor makes the startling discovery that "Middle-Class Respondents" speak differently from "Lower-Class Respondents". We have not read (or bought) this seemingly-pretentious book, but rely on Alan Bold's review (5 Dec. 1991) in the Glasgow Herald.

SCOTTISH LOCAL HISTORY No. 25, February 1992. Three issues annually cost £7 from Scottish Local History Forum, Hon.Secy., Elaine Finnie, Huntly House Museum, 142 Canongate, Edinburgh.

A cover photograph of Troon Swimming Pool appropriately introduces this Scottish Sports Issue, with articles based on lectures at last year's Kilmarnock conference - Dookin and Gowf, Quoits, Lawn Tennis. Another article on Urban Fires includes those at Irvine (1599, 1649) and Kilmarnock (1668).

THE HISTORY OF OLD CUMNOCK
by Rev. John Warrick.

First published in 1899, second-hand copies now cost more than £30. A reprint later this year is proposed by Dane Love, 80 Holland Crescent, Cumnock, at a cost of £24.95 post free, cheques payable to Carn Publishing (Cumnock). For further details, Tel. Cumnock 24805.

CLYDE SHIPWRECKS by Peter Moir and Ian Crawford
Moir Crawford 1988, £8.98.

A fascinating contribution to maritime history. Lists nearly three hundred wrecks, with full details of over a hundred - 5 off Ailsa Craig, 22 around Arran, 16 on the Ayrshire coast - with photographs of the ships, charts of the precise locations, and indication of what can be found in sub-aqua diving.

EXPLORING SCOTTISH HISTORY edited by Michael Cox
Cheques to SLHF, c/o Royal Museums of Scotland, York Buildings, Queen Street, Edinburgh, £6.95.

A directory of 240 libraries and archive collections listing printed, manuscript, visual, and oral records in each.

PLANT LIFE IN AYRSHIRE
AANHS, as advertised on back cover.

Spring flowers are out, and so is this fresh AANHS publication. The Society breaks new ground in providing eight pages IN COLOUR, which together with pen drawings by Margaret Foulds and text by Dr Ralph Kirkwood, provide an indispensable botanical study of the county.

R E P O R T S

THE COUNCIL FOR SCOTTISH ARCHAEOLOGY: NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Aims of the CSA are threefold: to promote public understanding and appreciation of the physical remains of Scotland's past; to encourage the preservation and study of these remains; and to liaise between bodies with similar interests. Long-established activities continue: organising conferences, producing reports and other publications, and providing an independent archaeological voice in Scotland. But there are some new initiatives.

Discovery and Excavation in Scotland, the annual record of fieldwork undertaken in Scotland, has been expanded and improved. Scottish Archaeological News is published three times a year, replacing the previous Gazette, to supply news and information.

An Inventory of the Church Heritage of Scotland was instituted in 1990, served by a part-time research officer. This is a three-year project to provide a computerised data-base, to be deposited for public consultation in the National Monuments Record in Edinburgh.

A Scottish Archaeological Link has been established, convening meetings of representatives of all national archaeological bodies in Scotland.

A scheme is under way to encourage societies to "adopt a monument" and so concentrate attention on archaeological monuments of local importance, helping to preserve them and display them to the public. Training seminars are also being organised for those wishing to become involved in fieldwork.

A major change to CSA over the last year has been in its membership structure. Though institutional and society members still form an important core of support, there is a growing number of individual members with full voting rights. CSA membership forms are available at society meetings or direct from CSA, c/o Royal Museum of Scotland, York Buildings, Queen Street, Edinburgh, EH2 1JD.

The regular winter monthly meetings are well-patronised, and we do not feel it necessary to give full summaries of each lecture. But it is useful to record information which is particularly relevant to Ayrshire.

Professor Christopher Morris, University of Glasgow, spoke (14 November) on **The Vikings in the Northern Isles**. On Shetland where soils were poor, the domestic unit was a simple farmstead, a hall house, expanding into long house shape. On a more fertile area like Orkney, settlements were large and more complex, often centred round a chapel. Many stone chapels were preceded by wooden structures even in areas where timber was virtually non-existent.

Innes Macleod, University of Glasgow, dealt (12 December) with **Early Travellers and Antiquaries**. He warned local historians that while engravings offered an excellent record of buildings and ruins, artists sometimes altered reality, created imaginary views, and added characters and foliage to cater for public taste.

Two lectures of general interest were by Alister Jones of the Forestry Commission (10 October) on **Forestry in the Environment**; and Robert Ferguson of Dalgarven Mill (9 January) whose provocative talk on **Who cares for our Heritage?** stimulated audience participation.

Professor Geoffrey Barrow provided (13 February) an authoritative account of **The Making of Medieval Ayrshire** and has agreed to let us publish it in due course. Professor Louis Cullen's eagerly-awaited lecture on **Smuggling and the Ayrshire Economic Boom of the 1760s and 1780s** (12 March) also deserves a fuller future report.

The Society in 1992 is extending its winter lecture programme from the usual six. Four additional "informal" meetings will be held in Loudoun Hall on the fourth Thursdays of October, November, January, and February. As a trial run two successful meetings of this type have been held - Ellice Miller on **Life in a Tenement** (January) and Roland Golightly on **Serengeti Safari** (February).

ANNIVERSARIES

This year sees international celebration of Christopher Columbus's voyage of 1492; and national commemoration of the death of the celebrated architect Robert Adam in 1792.

Locally, Kilmarnock recalls its erection into a burgh of barony on 12 January 1592. Though a late-developer (this was the thirteenth burgh to be created in Ayrshire) Kilmarnock had a meteoric rise in its first century and with continued expansion it had become the county's largest town by its bicentenary in 1792. On 12 January 1992, on the precise anniversary of the granting of the charter, there was a commemorative service in the Laigh Kirk, and the dedication of two specially commissioned stained glass windows. The District Council has built up a fund of £20,000 for appropriate projects.

Another anniversary this year is that of William Murdoch from Bellow Mill in the parish of Auchinleck, who in 1792 at Redruth in Cornwall successfully completed his experiments in coal-gas illumination. A Biography of Murdoch by John Griffiths is promised this year.

CORRECTION

In our first issue, the entry for Largs and District Historical Society should have read: Dr Owen A. Gurton, 'Cedarwood', Montgomerie Drive, Fairlie,

DIGGING INTO THE PAST

Under this heading the Glasgow Herald (29 October 1991) reported: "A major new project will get under way today at the Scottish Fisheries Museum in Anstruther, Fife -- the construction of a replica of a prehistoric dug-out boat discovered in Ayrshire in 1823. Work on the boat is a joint project between the museum and the Scottish Institute of Maritime Studies based at St Andrews University. It will be built from a 3½ ton oak log using Dark Age tools."

When your editor was recently in Edinburgh, in the National Library of Scotland reading James Bruce's manuscript journals of work (Acc 10108), he discovered that overseer of the Auchinleck estate showing an interest in natural history by recording items, some of which we jotted down.

1 7 8 7

23 April, The Geen trees and Sloa Bushes in the woods in full bloom; 26 April, First Swallows appear; 2 July, This day the Clegs made their first appearance this season; 8-9 August. Exceeding great Lightning as ever I remembered to see; 14-20 October, The fieldfares appeared this week; December. Waters high, worse at Glasgow and Leith.

1 7 8 8

28 January, Mavis's sang for the first time this year; 29 January, Black Birds; 28 April, House swallows first appearance; 5 May, Cuckow; 15 November, Top of Arran and Blackcraig hills topped with snow.

1 7 8 9

18 January, Barometer lowest for many years, 27-29; 5 May, Cuckow; 15 December, Storm, ten ships cast in above Ayr, some of them dashed to pieces.

1 7 9 0

January, Throw this winter the Meveses and Black Birds frequently sang in the mornings and the Grass is looking Spring like in General; 11 May, This day the Cuckow begun singing here; 12 June, Walnut tree half-leaved, flowering.

PUBLICATIONS of the

AYRSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

available from Ronald W Brash MA, Publications Distribution Manager
10 Robsland Avenue, Ayr, KA7 2RW

Round Old Ayr (guided walk)	95p
Roderick Lawson of Maybole 1831-1907 (Douglas)	£1.50
An Ayrshire Family 1526-1900 (Waterson)	£1.50
Rails to Ayr (Broad)	£2.50
Ayrshire Honestones (Tucker)	£1.50
Ayrshire Mining Enterprises 1600-1840 (Whatley)	£1.50
Digging Up Old Ayr (Lindsay)	£1.00
Mauchline Memories of Robert Burns (ed. Strawhorn)	£1.50
Ayrshire Abbeys (Cowan)	£1.25
George Lokert of Ayr (Broadie)	£1.25
The Stone Ages in Ayrshire (Morrison & Hughes)	£2.75
{Excavations in the Citadel (Waite)	
{Referendum on the Sabbath (Brash)	£3.60
{Ancient Fish Traps (Patterson)	
A Scottish Renaissance Household (MacKenzie)	£3.00
The Antiquities of Ayrshire (Grose, ed. Strawhorn)	£3.60
The Shipping Trade of Ayrshire 1689-1791 (Graham)	£3.60
Plant Life in Ayrshire (Kirkwood & Foulds)	£4.20
Armstrong's Maps of Ayrshire (1775: reprint: 6 sheets)	£12.00