

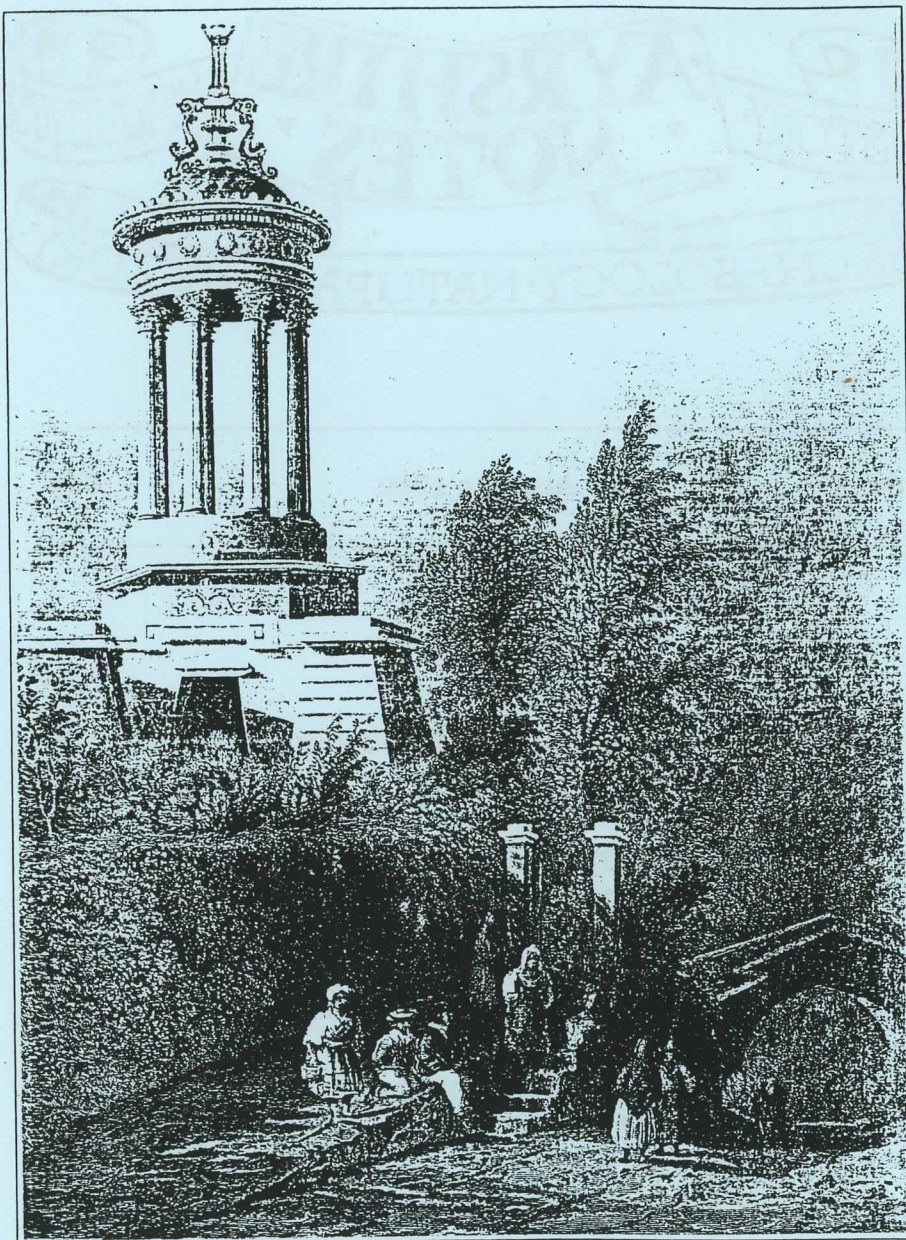
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The Burns Monument, Alloway, sponsored by Sir Alexander Boswell, who died before its opening on 4 July 1823

SIR ALEXANDER BOSWELL

DEATH BY DUEL

by William M Roach

Alexander Boswell, the eldest son of Dr Johnson's biographer, was born in 1775 and succeeded his father as laird of Auchinleck in 1795. Though schooled at Eton, he developed a strong interest in local affairs and in Scots poetry and songs, notably those of Robert Burns. In 1803 he collected some of his own compositions into a volume of "Songs chiefly in the Scottish Dialect", and further publications followed. He was also an avid collector of books. Of particular note were the rare reprints, mainly of works dating from the 16th century, which he produced at his printing press at Auchinleck House. He was a well-educated, cultured man, well-versed in vernacular and antiquarian writing.

Alexander Boswell was also much involved in politics and from 1816-21 was member of parliament for the Devonshire seat of Plympton Earle, supporting the reactionary government of Lord Liverpool. His strong Toryism was evident from his maiden speech in 1817 against parliamentary reform and the badly-needed reform of burgh administration in Scotland. His most significant parliamentary achievement was to bring about in 1817 abolition of two old Scottish statutes against duelling, thus unwittingly preparing for his own death in a duel.

Despite membership of the House of Commons, Boswell remained active in Ayrshire and led a campaign to erect a monument to Robert Burns. In 1814 he called a meeting to raise money for this, and pressed ahead though only one other person attended the meeting. Eventually over £3,000 was raised by public subscription. In Alloway on 25 January 1820 the foundation stone was laid, with an "incalculable multitude" attending the ceremony, with twenty-four masonic lodges represented, perhaps because Boswell was Deputy Grand Master of the Mother Lodge, Kilwinning.

In the years 1816-20 there was considerable industrial unrest and many public meetings were held in the west of Scotland. One such meeting in Mauchline brought from Boswell an "Address to the deluded Operatives" which criticised those who provoked disaffection, yet "to the unhappy victims of their diabolical machinations forbearance and forgiveness ought to be extended. Much has been done to alleviate distress by the sympathy of those who have inherited wealth or have acquired it by honest industry. Ingratitude has too often been their requital". Boswell urged "submission to the laws".

It was believed that armed rising was imminent and towards the end of 1819 regular soldiers were moved into Glasgow and other towns in the west of Scotland. Boswell, as colonel of the Ayrshire Yeoman Cavalry, was in April 1820 ordered to lead them to Glasgow to deal with a threatened uprising. As they passed through Stewarton, Boswell was so incensed by the jibes of "sour milk Jockies" that he chased one of the more vociferous onlookers into the back streets. Otherwise, they were not involved in any action during the Radical Rising. For his loyalty, he was in 1821 created a baronet and became Sir Alexander Boswell.

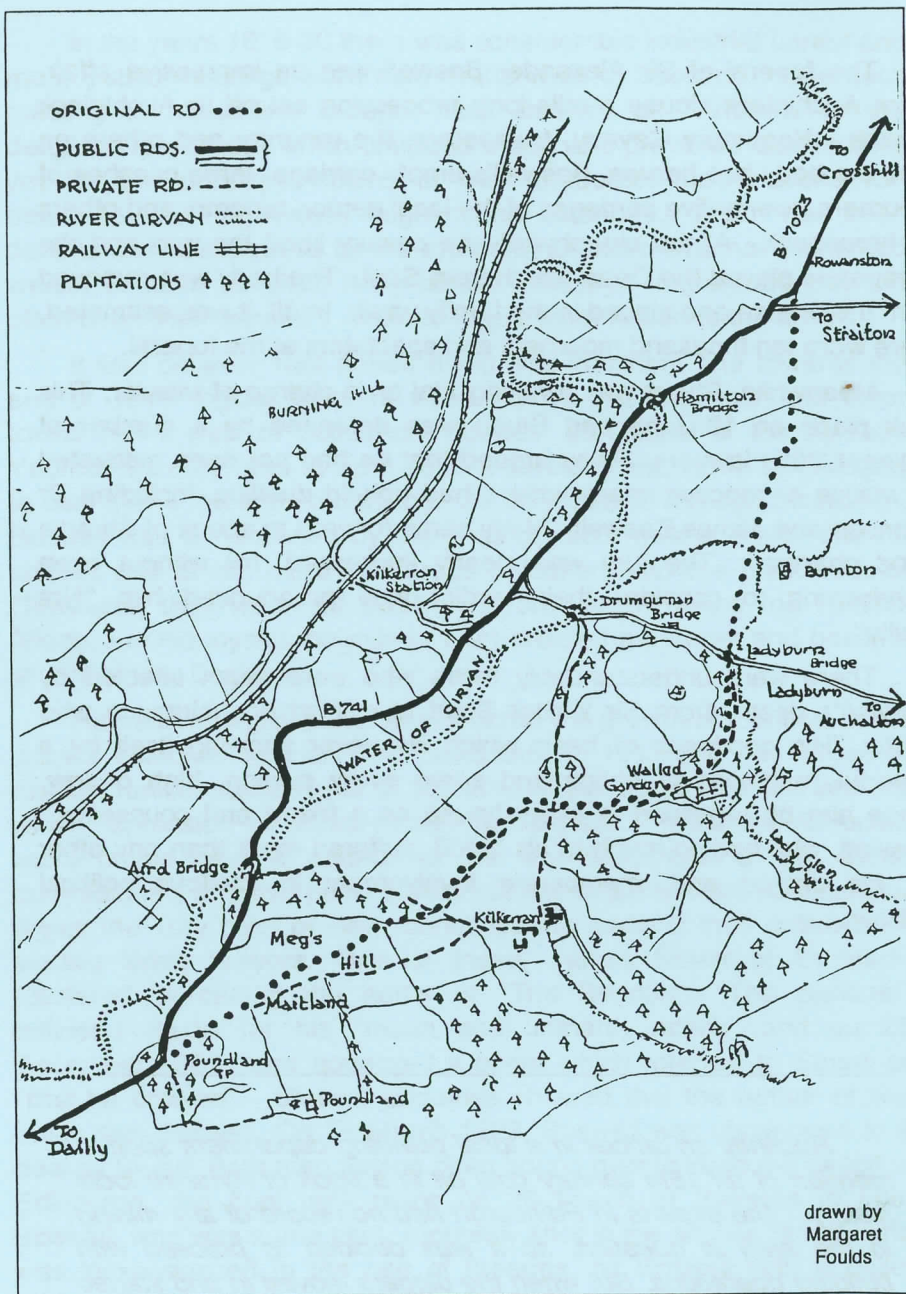
Repressive legislation had prevented the growth of a critical press but the establishment of "The Scotsman" in 1817 and the spread of English radical publications in Scotland at the same time allowed the wider expression of views hostile to Toryism. The Lord Advocate wrote of the need to counteract the "evil tendencies of the cheap publications", and two papers were started to put forward with greater vigour the Tory point of view, concentrating much of their criticism on leading Whig lawyers. One of these, James Stuart of Dunearn, retaliated by caning the editor of "The Beacon". "The Sentinel" criticised Stuart for his "mean and unmanly attack" and on 26 December 1821 there appeared a poem which referred to Stuart as "that fat cow-art". Stuart's enquiries showed that the author of this poem was Boswell. On 25 March 1822, Boswell was challenged to a duel by Stuart. Both men having been bound over to keep the peace in Edinburgh, the duel took place on 26 March at Balmuto in Fife. Boswell, who was a fine shot, reputedly shot in the air, but Stuart, who was inexperienced in the use of firearms, hit Boswell with a bullet which penetrated his shoulder and lodged in his spine. He was paralysed and died the following day.

The funeral of Sir Alexander Boswell was an impressive affair. From Auchinleck House a mile-long procession set off to Auchinleck Church - Yeomanry Cavalry, trumpeters, the tenantry and others on foot, the body in a hearse, Boswell's empty carriage, three coaches of mourners, twenty-five carriages of the local gentry, tenantry and others on horseback. At the churchyard, the cavalry lined the way and the trumpeters played the Dead March from Saul. The body was removed from the hearse and placed in the family vault. In all, it was estimated, there were ten thousand mourners and spectators at the funeral.

Meanwhile, Stuart was awaiting trial on a charge of murder. This took place on 10 June and Stuart was defended by a number of eminent Whig lawyers. They argued that he had not been motivated by malice or rancour; many writers had upheld duelling, including Dr Johnson and James Boswell. Many came forward to speak of Stuart's good character. The jury was clearly impressed, for without even withdrawing to consider their verdict they pronounced him "Not Guilty".

There were understandably those who were much affected by Boswell's death, from Sir Walter Scott to a local acquaintance who wrote: "His goodness of heart which was ever showing itself by a cheerful readiness to oblige and serve every person, high or low, made him be regarded in every house as a friend and counsellor." Boswell, who had so much to his credit, suffered more than any other for his unwise and intemperate involvement in libellous political activity.

Recently an official in a local planning department spotted mention of an 18th century coal pit in a book of Ayrshire local history. The experts in Edinburgh had no record of any mining in the area in question, so it was decided to proceed with building operations. But when the diggers moved in and started to excavate, an underground cavity was revealed, to their surprise and discomfiture, but exactly as the local historian had recorded. Local history can be useful as well as entertaining.



Map of Kilkerran Bypass

AN EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY AYRSHIRE BYPASS

by Ronald W Brash

Comparing the line of the present B 741 road from Crosshill to Dailly with that of the original road as shown on the Armstrong Map of 1775, one notices immediately that while the present road crosses and recrosses the River Girvan in the vicinity of Kilkerran, the old road lay entirely south of the river, and traversed a large portion of the present Kilkerran policies. The course of that road can be traced on the first edition of the Ordnance Survey Six Inch Map made in 1857, and it still survives in great part today, though only the northern portion is now a public highway.

Coming from Crosshill on the present road, after Rowanston (at the junction of the B 741 and the B 7023) the old route followed the narrow side road past Burnton to Ladyburn. It continued along the estate road past the Walled Garden (now a Caravan Park), crossed the main drive which leads to the mansion house, and passed along the edge of a field to cross another estate road before ascending a steep incline, Meg's Hill. At this point all trace of the old road disappears until you reach the estate road near Maitland Lodge where its course is obvious until it rejoins the present public road at Poundland road end.

The large diversion which forms the present highway was the creation of Sir James Fergusson, 4th Baronet of Kilkerran who in 1813 succeeded his uncle, the 3rd Baronet, Sir Adam Fergusson. Sir Adam, a noted 'Improver', had already introduced better farming procedures, tree planting, and the first 'pleasure paths' within the estate. His nephew embarked on grandiose schemes, including the replanning of Kilkerran House, and the straightening and embanking of the River Girvan to alleviate flooding, for which he was to suffer severe financial embarrassment. However, it was the new road, constructed as a cooperative undertaking with his neighbours Sir Hew Hamilton of Bargany, Quintin Kennedy of Drumellan, and James Fergusson of Crosshill (no relative) that set the seal on the creation of Kilkerran as it is today.

Starting from the southerly point, the new road followed a generally winding course, crossing the River Girvan near Drumburle by Airds Bridge, constructed in 1817, and continuing along an even contour to Drumgirnán, recrossing the river by the elegant bridge which Sir Adam had earlier built in 1799, and rejoining the original road at Ladyburn. When this first phase was completed in 1817, Sir James then requested permission from the Ayrshire Road Trustees to close the old road between Ladyburn and Poundland, which would allow him to extend the private policies around his house. In justification of this closure of a long-existing right of way, he had already stated the advantages to all road users of a superior new highway whose "intended line will be mostly quite flat instead of going over the top of every hill as at present".

The final stage of the new road alignment came in 1825 when a third bridge was built over the River Girvan at Barcully Holm at a cost of £597 and named Hamilton Bridge (after Sir Hew Hamilton of Bargany). The road now ran direct to Crosshill from the Drumgirnán road end on a gradual if winding gradient along its present course. This accounts for the triangular junction between the B 741 and the side road leading over Drumgirnán Bridge towards Auchalton, where a T-junction might have been expected, as the latter was part of the original detour.

The prospect of the Kilkerran estate and the Girvan valley at this point, which has become so familiar and well-loved over many years, is the direct consequence of this road diversion. It is true that Sir James secured for himself and his descendants a degree of privacy compared with the time when the public highway passed within hailing distance of his front door. But when one considers the advantages of a comparatively level road for horse-drawn vehicles, and later for cyclists and motor cars, as compared with what they would have had to encounter on Meg's Hill and other portions of the old road, this early nineteenth century laird can claim to be an 'Improver' in more than agricultural terms.

The author is much indebted to the late Sir James Fergusson, 8th Baronet of Kilkerran, for most of the information, including documentary evidence, relating to the new road system; and to his successor, Sir Charles Fergusson, for allowing investigation of all traces of the old road within the Kilkerran policies.

FINDING OUT ABOUT AYRSHIRE

(2) Histories of the County

In our last issue we noticed two books which provide an introduction to local history, both still in print (*Discovering Ayrshire* by J Strawhorn and K Andrew, John Donald Publishers, £7.50; *Ayrshire Heritage* by A Boyle, Alloway Publishing, £6.25).

The serious enquirer who wishes to investigate further the history of Ayrshire or any place within Ayrshire will have to resort to the public library, for all the standard works are out of print and second-hand copies rare and expensive. Each of the four districts has library headquarters (at Ayr, Kilmarnock, Lugar, Ardrossan) with local collections, and branch libraries can supply particulars of what resources are available. Whatever one's subject of local study, the several books which cover the county's history must be looked at.

A pioneer of local history was George Chalmers (1742-1825), a native of Morayshire who devoted nearly twenty years to collect information relating to all parts of Scotland. **George Chalmers, CALEDONIA** was published in 4 volumes, 1807-24, reprinted in 8 volumes 1887-1902. His long part devoted to Ayrshire forms our first county history. It includes sections on Its Situation and Extent; Natural Objects; Antiquities; Civil History; Agriculture; Manufactures and Trade; Ecclesiastical History. So detailed were Chalmers' researches, that his accounts of the Ayrshire feuds and of the monastic establishments in the county have been little augmented by later writers. Chalmers supplemented his county section with items on all of Ayrshire's forty-six parishes, and here again the documentary evidence he presented has proved invaluable material for later local historians. For example it was Chalmers who first dated Ayr's charter as being drawn up sometime between the years 1202 and 1207, who noted that the church in the burgh was dedicated to St John the Baptist, and that there was a school here quite soon afterwards.

Ayrshire's first and best-known local historian was James Pater-son. He was born in 1805 at Struthers farm (where the Kilmarnock bypass crosses the River Irvine). At the age of eleven he started work

as a stable boy but found more congenial work as a journalist. In Edinburgh he began writing history, and was the ghost-writer who provided a text for *Kay's Edinburgh Portraits*. Though with little formal education, he worked on the basic Latin he had acquired as a boy in Kilmarnock, and learned to decipher medieval texts. **James Paterson, *HISTORY OF THE COUNTIES OF AYR AND WIGTON*** was published in two volumes, 1847, 1852 (a projected third volume on Wigtownshire never appeared). This history of his native county proved so popular as to be reissued in five volumes (1863-66); and again in two volumes with addenda in 1871, not long before his death in 1876. Paterson's History treats of Cunninghame, Kyle and Carrick separately, with historical accounts of each of these old divisions of the county, and sections devoted to each parish. Conveniently, he includes most of what Chalmers had already discovered. And most Valuable, he includes for every sizeable estate (and even some of the smaller ones) an account of the landowning families, the result of his painstaking genealogical studies. Few counties are as well provided as we are with Paterson's History.

Ayrshire's other most notable historian was William Robertson (1848-1924). The son of an Ayr minister, he was a sailor on windjammers before turning to local journalism and politics, editing the *Ayrshire Post* as a Liberal organ. He produced a series of popular books on local lore, *Historical Tales and Legends of Ayrshire* followed by *The Kings of Carrick* and similar romances. **William Robertson, *AYRSHIRE, ITS HISTORY AND HISTORIC FAMILIES***, 2 volumes, 1908, is a most readable book. The first volume sweeps through the centuries from Early Ayrshire until The Coming of the Locomotive, stopping on the way with chapters on the Battle of Largs, Wallace, Bruce, the Ayrshire Vendetta, the First Reformation, and -- the time of the Covenanters -- from Highland Host to Revolution. Three chapters are specially devoted to The Social March of the Shire. The second volume presents the histories of the twelve leading Ayrshire families. He adds to the material previously gathered by Paterson and presents it, not as a bare genealogy, but as a series of lucidly-written biographies.

One weakness of Paterson's History is his belief, as stated in the Historical Sketch of Kyle, that "With the rebellion of 1745 may be said to have ceased all that is interesting in the history of Scotland, generally or locally." Robertson was able to include some later

information; but he stopped at 1840; he apparently did not feel it necessary or desirable to record anything that had occurred in his own lifetime. An attempt to update Paterson was made, not too successfully, in **James Shaw, *AYRSHIRE, 1745-1950***, which was published in 1953. The first part of this book provided some interesting but scrappy notes on the parishes. The remainder failed to provide a comprehensive account of the county during the period stated. Instead there appeared a series of chapters on particular aspects, some very useful but quite unbalanced in scope. For example, the Presbyterian churches got 6 pages, compared with 16 pages on the R.C. and 14 pages on the Scottish Episcopalian. The chapter on Sports and Pastimes was almost exclusively devoted to hunting, shooting and horse racing, with paragraphs on yachting, golf, cricket, tennis, bowls and curling, while football got only a passing mention.

An opportunity was taken to provide a new history when reorganisation of local government involved the disappearance of Ayrshire as an administrative unit. **John Strawhorn, *AYRSHIRE, THE STORY OF A COUNTY***, 1975, was sponsored by Ayr County Council and published by the Ayrshire Archaeological and Natural History Society. In no way does this supersede its distinguished predecessors. For one thing, it is too short to include the wealth of information included in Paterson's and Robertson's histories. But it does provide a general survey, "one man's interpretation of ... how the community originated, evolved, and developed." By incorporating the results of recent research by Scottish historians, it supplements Paterson and Robertson. And, with a third of the book devoted to the 18th and 19th centuries, and another quarter to the 20th century, this provides an outline of recent and contemporary local developments, and the basis for future study.

THE THIRD MAN

A New Biography of William Murdoch

John Griffiths, *THE THIRD MAN, THE LIFE AND TIMES OF WILLIAM MURDOCH*, Andre Deutsch, £20.

William Murdoch (1754-1839) who was born at Bellow Mill in the parish of Auchinleck, is known as the inventor of gas lighting; but two hundred years have passed since that discovery for his biography to be written and published, to celebrate the bicentenary this year. The unusual title hints at the reason why Murdoch has been neglected. Murdoch spent his working life in the employ of the famous partnership of Boulton and Watt, and this book describes a whole series of inventions for which Murdoch was responsible but for which he has hitherto been given little or no credit. He was content to devote his technical expertise to the firm for which he worked, and was too modest to seek acclaim, so that he worked with Boulton and Watt as an influential but little-known 'Third Man'. Indeed, the author of this book suggests a conspiracy by James Watt's son to exaggerate his own father's undoubted achievements by denigrating Murdoch, whose reputation as a result has never been fully appreciated.

John Griffiths has produced a most impressive biography, unearthing a great deal of new information about this Ayrshire-born inventor, and skilfully filling in gaps where details are lacking. Readers of *Ayrshire Notes* will be particularly impressed by his treatment of Murdoch's Ayrshire background. Among events given passing mention are the collapse of the Ayr Bank in 1772, the execution of the Earl of Kilmarnock after the 1745 rebellion, and further back the killing at Airdmoss of the Covenanter Richard Cameron -- misnamed on page 8 as Richard Campbell, a solitary slip.

Murdoch inherited his inventive genius from his father, who had the tenancy of Bellow Mill from Lord Auchinleck, and made innovations there which made it "technically the most advanced mill in Britain". John Murdoch and his son William were involved installing pumps, some driven by water and others by steam, at Lord Auchinleck's coal mines at Birnieknowe and Gasswater. Together they constructed a

mechanically-propelled cycle which antedated Kirkpatrick Macmillan's bicycle by sixty years. John Griffiths speculates that this and other skills of Murdoch father and son were known to James Boswell and possibly communicated to Boulton and Watt when Boswell and Dr Johnson visited their Soho engineering works in 1776. This would explain why just a year later William Murdoch at the age of twenty three set off to walk 250 miles to Birmingham, where he was immediately given employment. Boswell carried on a regular correspondence with William's uncle (who was the Auchinleck estate overseer) from 1762 until 1790, but none of their letters from this period survives to prove if indeed William Murdoch was inspired to go south on James Boswell's recommendation.

Years later in 1792, when Murdoch was living in Cornwall as Boulton and Watt's representative, he was visited by James Boswell, who recorded in his journal (rather snobbishly) that "it was a curious sensation to me to find a tenant's son in so good a state." John Griffiths notes that on that occasion Murdoch's house was obviously not yet lit by gas, though the invention is credited to that year. He concludes that in 1792 Murdoch conceived the idea of gas lighting, which he had installed in his home by 1794.

Claims that Murdoch as a boy experimented with coal gas in a cave at Lugar are probably fictional. But 'Murdoch's Horse', the cycle that he rode into Cumnock, anticipated the steam carriage which he constructed in 1784, which entitles him to be regarded as inventor of the steam locomotive as well as of gas lighting.

This book is an important contribution to the history of technology. John Griffiths has also supplied us with a valuable addition to our local history. Murdoch, who was schooled in Cumnock and Auchinleck, was apparently proud of the Scottish tradition of education. At least, as Griffiths reveals, Murdoch brought his two sons north in 1800 to be enrolled as pupils at Ayr Academy.

This book is most reasonably priced. It has been published with the support of British Gas, which has otherwise commemorated Murdoch this year by financing restoration of the Gas House at Culzean.

OTHER NEW BOOKS ABOUT AYRSHIRE

THE CASTLES AND MANSIONS OF AYRSHIRE by Michael Davis, 1991, £65 including postage from the author, Spindrift, Ardrishaig, Argyll, PA30 8EP.

243 persons subscribed in advance for this limited edition of 500 copies, and another hundred have since placed orders for what has turned out to be a quite impressive well-bound volume of over 400 pages of A4 size quality paper. There is a catalogue of more than 400 buildings, some of them now reduced to ruin, some still occupied, some grandiose structures like the castles of Eglinton and Culzean, some more modest like the old post office in Ayr Sandgate, and including quite recent country houses like Broadmeadows which is now centre of the Hansel Village. There are illustrations on every page; inevitably those of houses which have disappeared may be of poorer quality; but altogether they provide a remarkable display of Ayrshire's architectural heritage. The first part of the book offers an illustrated chronology of local buildings - 'Strong Toures and Castells', 17th century Transition, Classicism, Georgian Castles, Manorial and Baronial Styles, Turn of the Century, Interwar Years, Modern Years 1940-1989. Michael Davis has provided a comprehensive reference book, which conveniently provides details not only of wellknown places but of equally-interesting lesser buildings which are nowhere else easily accessible.

PLANT LIFE IN AYRSHIRE by Dr Ralph Kirkwood, illustrated by Margaret Foulds, AANHS, 1991, £4.20.

This eagerly-awaited booklet should have a wide and continuing sale. It provides a handy guide to the county's botanical wealth, which must appeal to residents as well as visitors. Conveniently, Dr Kirkwood has chapters on plants of the Woodlands, the Wayside, the Coast, and the Upland hinterland. He not only lists plants throughout the growing season, but explains the habitat where they flourish. All are beautifully illustrated by Margaret Foulds in ten pages of black-and-white drawings and eight more in full colour. When a second edition of this invaluable publication is inevitably required, could we have an index? And one nit-picking historian would like page 8 briefly amended, for

Enclosure Acts were not required here, and McAdam never used tar on his roads.

PRESTWICK IN THE FORTIES by Ian Welsh, Kyle & Carrick Leisure Services, £5. A useful reprint of articles in the *Ayrshire Post*, covering the war and postwar years.

LARGS AND DISTRICT IN OLD PICTURE POSTCARDS by A M Brown, Biblos Publishers Distribution Service, £6.96. Another of the popular pictorial histories, this one recording changes in the holiday resort since Victorian times.

AYRSHIRE BIRD REPORT FOR 1991 by Angus Hogg, £2.20 from booksellers or the author, Kirklea, Crosshill, Maybole. Details of more than two hundred different birds spotted in the county last year.

UNFAMILIAR QUOTATIONS

Can you guess who wrote so knowledgeably about our local history? He described "the ancient Baileries of Carrick, Kyle and Cunningham, famous both in ancient and modern times for a gallant and warlike race of inhabitants; a country where civil, and particularly religious liberty have ever found their first support, and their last asylum; a country, the birthplace of many famous Philosophers, Soldiers, and Statesmen, and the scene of many important events recorded in Scottish history." This, in fact, was written by Robert Burns in his *Commonplace Book*, August 1785.

From time to time Ayrshire, like other counties, suffers the loss of ancient monuments at the hands of landowners. Such destruction is nothing new, and Dr Trevor Mathews has noted an earlier instance in England as described by a famous Scottish writer: "I suppose you

have long since heard the news, that a sulky churlish boor has destroyed the ancient statue, or rather bas-relief, popularly called Robin of Redesdale. It seems Robin's fame attracted more visitants than was consistent with the growth of the heather, upon a moor worth a shilling an acre. Reverend as you write yourself, be revengeful for once, and pray with me that he may be visited with such a fit of the stone, as if he had all the fragments of poor Robin in that region of his viscera where the disease holds its seat. Tell it not in Gath, lest the Scots rejoice that they have at length found a parallel instance amongst their neighbours, to that barbarous deed which demolished Arthur's Oven." This extract comes from the Dedicatory Epistle to *Ivanhoe* by Walter Scott.

In R L Stevenson's *Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes*, the French town of Le Monastier reminded him of Maybole. "The road...passes through the town from end to end in a single narrow street; there you may see the fountain where women fill their pitchers; there are also some old houses with carved doors and pediments and ornamental work in iron. For Monastier, like Maybole in Ayrshire, was a sort of country capital, where the local aristocracy had their town mansions for the winter. ... On the whole, this is a Scottish landscape, although not so noble as the best in Scotland; and by an odd coincidence, the population is, in its way, as Scottish as the country. They have abrupt, uncouth Fifeshire manners, and accost you, as if you were trespassing, with an "Ou'st-ce que vous allez?" only translatable as "Whau'r ye gaun?" They keep the Scottish sabbath. ... Here as in Scotland, many peasant families boast a son in holy orders. And here also, the young men have a tendency to emigrate."

Your editor was recently presented as a birthday gift with a copy of the *Glasgow Herald* for Monday 15 May 1922. Among so many fascinating items (we were tempted by a conducted tour from Glasgow to Paris at £7 19s 6d!) there were reports of cattle shows at Ardrossan and Catrine. Something not of local relevance but nevertheless of literary interest was a letter to the editor announcing "that something in the nature of a revival of Scottish poetry is at last manifesting itself". It came from C M Grieve -- who would later become famous as Hugh MacDiarmid.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Dr Margaret Sanderson presents the opening **AANHS** lecture on "**Robert Adam in Ayrshire**" in Ayr Academy Memorial Hall on Thursday 8 October at 7-30 pm. This, commemorating the bicentenary of the celebrated architect's death, will form the basis of a future publication. Dr Sanderson has already favoured and informed us with contributions to our *Ayrshire Collections*: "Kilwinning at the Time of the Reformation" (Vol 10, 1972), The Mauchline Account Books of Melrose Abbey" (Vol 11, 1975), and "The People of 16th Century Ayrshire" (Vol 14, 1987).

"**Farm History**" is the subject at the first of the **AANHS** "informal" meetings, in Loudoun Hall on Thursday 22 October at 7-30 pm. The speaker is Tom McLatchie, a working farmer who collects old farm implements -- and prizes at Ayr Flower Show! You can expect an interesting talk and fine illustrations.

Visitors are welcome to attend AANHS meetings.

The **Ayrshire Federation of Historical Societies** opens the new session in Loudoun Hall, Ayr on Sunday 11 October at 2 pm. This is the annual **Swap Shop**, when representatives of member societies report on activities. 25 societies and 33 individuals are now affiliated to the AFHS, and any interested persons will of course be welcome at this and later meetings.

Largs and North Ayrshire Family History Society meets in the Largs Library on the second Tuesday of the month at 7-30 pm. Further details from Mr S Gillan, 28 Walkerston Avenue, Largs, KA30 8FR.

The **1992 Buchan Lecture** is being arranged by the Dumfries and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society, in the Royal Hotel, Kirkcudbright, on Saturday 24 October at 1-30 pm. It is financed by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, and there is no

admission charge. Dr Keith Stringer of Lancaster University will speak on "Lordship, prestige and piety: the monastic endowments of the Lords of Galloway circa 1140-1234". Guided tours of Glenluce and Dundrennan Abbeys have been arranged on the same day at a charge of £1 each, and a buffet lunch can be booked at £5. Further details can be had from the Secretaries of AANHS and AFHS.

The first of the Whithorn Trust's series of **Whithorn Lectures** will take place on Saturday 19 September at 7-45 pm, at St Ninian's Priory Church, Whithorn. Professor Charles Thomas will speak on "Whithorn's Christian Beginnings: What? Where? Whence and by Whom?" Those of us who have visited the Whithorn excavations or heard Peter Hill's two lectures on them should find this particularly interesting. There is no charge.

Further details of the two lectures above can be had from the Secretaries of the AFHS and AANHS.

"When Finnick parish did untae
Kilmarnock yince belong,
They seldom gaed untae the Kirk
Because the road was long."

Fenwick Parish Church, one of the most interesting places of worship in Ayrshire, was erected in 1643 when the parish was disjoined from Kilmarnock. To celebrate its three and a half centuries, a most attractive commemorative calendar for 1993 has been produced, with illustrations by local artists, Marjorie and Jim Faulds, Jim Wylie, and that inimitable cartoonist Malky McCormick. Copies are obtainable from Mrs M. Baird, 9A Mansheugh Road, Fenwick, KA3 6AN, costing £3.50 + 34p postage, cheques to Fenwick Church 1993 Committee.

- Contributions for the Spring 1993 issue of *Ayrshire Notes* should be sent before the end of February to Dr John Strawhorn, 51 Connel Crescent, Mauchline, KA5 5BN

- Local societies may obtain additional copies of *Ayrshire Notes* for their members at reduced rates by prior arrangement with Dr Trevor Mathews, 10 Longlands Park, Ayr, KA7 4RJ.

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