

AYRSHIRE
§ NOTES §
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SUFFRAGETTES AND BURNS' COTTAGE

from *The Scotsman*, 9 July 1914

- Fanny Parker, which was the real name of the suffragette involved in this incident, was sent to prison on remand and was forcibly fed there. She was released from Perth Prison into the custody of a doctor on 16 July 1914.

SUFFRAGETTE OUTRAGES

Attempt to destroy Burns' Cottage

A deliberate attempt to destroy Burns' Cottage, the birthplace of the poet at Alloway, near Ayr, was made by two women at an early hour yesterday morning. But for the fortunate circumstance that there was a watchman on the premises, the attempts would in all likelihood have succeeded.

It appears that about half-past two o'clock, in the dark grey of the morning, the watchman, Robert Wyllie, who has been on duty for more than a year to frustrate such an attempt, in the course of his rounds, on emerging from the public entrance at the back of the cottage, noticed two women stooping down at the back of the cottage between the windows of the room and those of the kitchen. Suspecting that they were there for no good purpose, he made to run forward, but the noise he made attracted the attention of the two women, who rushed away across the green in the direction of the back fence.

STRUGGLE WITH WATCHMAN

The watchman was quickly after them, and seized both of them. One he held, but the other got free and vaulted across the fence, leaving her companion in the hands of the watchman. The woman made desperate attempts to get away, but the watchman held her and shouted for assistance. The first to answer the summons was Mr Scott, of the adjacent nursery and latterly the keeper of the cottage came up. To them the watchman handed over the woman, and went for the police. They took the woman in charge, and conveyed her in a motor car to the County Police Office, Charlotte Street, Ayr. A search was for some time afterwards made by motor car and by cyclists for the missing woman, but she had got a good start, and was presumably on a bicycle.

TWO BOMBS FOUND

On examining the spot at which the two women had been seen to stoop, two bomb-like objects were discovered side by side. They are identical in size and shape, cylindrical in form, about 15 inches long, and about 7 inches in diameter. They are apparently made of metal, were wrapped up in soft felt, and had fuses wrapped many times round them so that a considerable interval would elapse before the fire reached the bomb. It has not been ascertained what are the contents.

BEFORE THE SHERIFF

QUOTATIONS FROM 'SCOTS WHA HAE'

The woman was taken from the police headquarters in Ayr to the Sheriff Court in a cab, and came up for declaration before Sheriff-Substitute Brown. She refused to enter the dock, and clung to the sides until forced into her seat by two policemen. The charge against her is of attempting maliciously to destroy Burns' Cottage at Alloway. During the brief proceedings the court was cleared.

She refused to make a declaration, and denied that the court had any jurisdiction over her. She talked and shouted continually, quoting passages from 'Scots Wha Hae' at one moment, and then denouncing the authorities for the treatment of women.

'You Scotsmen', she exclaimed, 'used to be proud of Bruce. Now you have taken to torturing women'. Accused, who is a woman of about forty years of age, wore a light-coloured waterproof coat, and a light blue turban-shape cap enveloping her hair.

She was committed to prison pending further inquiries.

Some minutes before she was removed from the dock a woman who had been sentenced to pay a fine of £1, or ten days, was brought into the dock to await removal to prison, and Arthur showed her sympathy by talking to her in soothing tones, and endeavouring to allay her fears about the prospect of going to prison. Her sympathy took practical form in the end, for she asked that the woman's fine be paid from the considerable sum found in her possession when arrested. A document was drawn up and signed by Arthur, and the money having been paid, the woman, who had admitted a charge of reset, was released.

Both when going to and leaving the Court the suffragette was the subject of a hostile demonstration from the crowd.

DRONGAN POTTERY

by James Mair

- Following publication of Gerard Quail's *The Cumnock Pottery* last autumn, a project in industrial archaeology has been undertaken at the old Drongan Pottery, and this is a preliminary report.

A small group organised by the Secretary of the AANHS carried out an initial survey of the old Drongan Pottery on the 5th July at the invitation of Mr Kennedy, owner of the house on the site at Coalhall near Drongan, and of Mr Lang who owns most of the remainder of the site. It was in operation in various forms and under different owners from around 1785 to 1852. The survey hoped to recover enough samples from possible waste tips to be able to describe and evaluate the range and quality of the goods produced during the lifetime of the company.

The afternoon was spent mostly on a field survey and the collection of sherds still lying around on the land surface, and where undersoil was exposed around foundations of a new house being built on the site. From the evidence of the Ordnance Survey maps the group was able to measure the old pottery buildings still in existence. These appeared to be the workers' cottages. The bottle kiln with adjacent work and storage rooms, recorded on the early maps, no longer survived, though a number of firebricks from the long-demolished kiln turned up in the neighbourhood.

Not enough time was available to locate more promising waste-heaps, although the nearby clay pit, partly infilled, can be clearly seen. A copious number and variety of sherds large and small were collected to make further investigation a prospect both exciting and illuminating. What was found seemed to corroborate the little that is known of the pottery's establishment and development.

It might have begun in combination with a tilework of the kind proliferating in the Ayrshire countryside near suitable deposits of clay and coal for the needs of the agricultural improvements of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Up until a few years ago a firm made drain tiles nearby at Ochiltree. An excellent example of a socketed, tapered water pipe and of an early field drain were picked up on site, of the types reputed to be a product of the Drongan Pottery.

Many pieces of fine-grained unglazed flower pots surfaced among numerous pieces of red earthenware pots, crocks, flagons and bowls, mostly black and brown glazed with cream slip on some of the latter. One piece had a pleasing marled decoration. Some of the finer tableware pieces had a preponderance of cream and white slips on the brown glaze, while most of the larger items were black or brown internally only, or also partially dipped on the outside. A number of kiln stilts and earthenware marbles have been reported and what appears to be some discarded batches of worked clay.

With the owners' permission, a complete survey of the site is intended at the next visit and thereafter the difficult task of excavating and dating a waste tip or pit. Many sherds have been promiscuously dumped along the banks of the burn which runs through the site. Masses lie within a large heap deposited by earth-moving equipment from the foundations and environs of the new house under construction. Only the excavation of an undisturbed waste-tip will allow an accurate investigation of the stratigraphy and for the proper evaluation and interpretation of the produce and history of the pottery.

Much work has been carried out in recent times on what was a large and important Scottish pottery industry. Further effort by members of the Society will add to the fund of information which is gradually accumulating.

AYRSHIRE FEDERATION OF HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

ANNUAL SWAP SHOP

FRIDAY 14 OCTOBER 1994 at 7-30

BAIRD INSTITUTE

LUGAR STREET, CUMNOCK

ALL WELCOME

LET THEM HAE BEEF

by David McClure

Smout¹ records that 1799 was a year of crop failure. As in other such years, the consequent risk of famine was a matter for discussion at County meetings in Ayr. On 16th January 1800 there was a meeting called by the Lord Lieutenant, Hugh Montgomerie, 12th Earl of Eglinton (better known in Burns' circles as Sodger Hugh). The record of the meeting is in the minute book of the Commissioners of Supply².

To begin, the clerk read to the assembled landowners a letter which the earl had received from the Duke of Portland. The duke recommended certain measures which had been taken in the *Metropolis, for the purpose of obviating the distress, which the industrious poor are likely to suffer from the effects of the late unfavourable season in raising the price of wheat and other grain...*, and requested the earl's best endeavours to secure the adoption of these, or other effective stratagems in Ayrshire. He also recommended that charitable donations to the poor should be made in such a manner, as to prevent as much as possible the consumption of bread corn, as it is only by a diminished consumption, aided by such supplies as may be imported from abroad, that any effectual and permanent relief can be expected in the interval, till the next harvest;... and he requested the use of whatever substitutes could be found. Finally Portland alerted Eglinton to the act 13 Geo III c. 62, which empowered JP's to direct that no finer bread shall be made than such as is called by the name of "Standard wheaten bread" by which, regulating both the manner of milling and of baking, the optimum conversion of grain into bread was achieved.

The meeting naturally engaged to adopt all the measures proposed.

Dr Ritchie (the minister of Kilwinning) then reported the results of an experiment which he had conducted for Eglinton. He had for the purpose of saving meal, made trial of Killing a Beeve, which was distributed among Sixty seven poor families of the Parish of Kilwinning, and that this measure had been found very effectual in saving meal, the whole of these families being to require no other assistance of the Parish for fourteen days.

No resolution to follow up this experiment was recorded, but it may have influenced the committees of relief which were to be set up in each parish. The meat would have been a novelty to those 67 poor families, for their diet consisted almost exclusively of root crops, the other staple, oats, being in short supply.

1. T C Smout, *A History of the Scottish People 1560-1830*, 1969; p 251.

2. Commissioners of Supply Minute Book ref. CO3/1/5 (Strathclyde Regional Archives, County Buildings, Ayr).

FINDING OUT ABOUT AYRSHIRE

(6) AGRICULTURAL REPORTS

In 1793 Sir John Sinclair, promoter of the Statistical Account of Scotland, persuaded the prime minister William Pitt to establish a Board of Agriculture under government auspices. The Board instituted a series of county reports, and one of the first to appear was *A General View of the Agriculture of the County of Ayr*, by William Fullarton, published in 1793. William Fullarton, still in his twenties, was already known as a traveller, soldier, politician and improver of his Fullarton estate in Dundonald parish. Colonel Fullarton's report is a basic source for Ayrshire farming in the 18th century and earlier. He was extremely critical of the "barbarous mismanagement from which this county has emerged." His description of the "antient state" is useful in describing the old un-enclosed farms divided into infield and outfield. But modern historians tend to regard improving lairds like Fullarton as too critical of earlier agricultural practices. There are few contemporary local accounts of earlier times, but it is clear that Ayrshire farming before the 18th century improvements was not so primitive as Fullarton alleged -- see for example AANH monographs by Margaret Sanderson (*The Mauchline Account Books*, 1975, and *The People of 16th Century Ayrshire*, 1987) and by Alastair Hendry (*The Barony of Alloway*, 1992). On the improvements made by 18th century Ayrshire lairds, Fullarton had however first-hand acquaintance, and paid special tribute to Alexander Fairlie of Fairlie for introducing a rotation of crops which proved eminently suitable for successive generations of Ayrshire dairy farmers. Fullarton provides details of such innovations as turnips, potatoes, threshing machines, fencing; new breeds of cattle, horses and sheep; methods of cheese making, etc. He has sections dealing also with roads, manufacturing, prices; and comments on other items of interest -- "dangerous principles" derived from the French Revolution -- and offers a high opinion of Robert Burns's farming abilities. Original copies of Fullarton's report as issued to interested parties, with wide margins for their comments, are found in several libraries. Otherwise it may be found reprinted in William Robertson's *Historic Ayrshire*, Volume 1, 1981 -- a book which also includes accounts of five Ayrshire estates copied from that very rare series, *The Present State of Husbandry in Scotland*, 4 vols, 1778-84 -- the Mitchell Library, Glasgow, has (probably) the only copy in the west of Scotland.

A second *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Ayr* was prepared for the Board of Agriculture by William Aiton and published in 1811. William Aiton, who was born in Silverwood Farm, Kilmarnock, tells us that he was "bred a Practical Farmer in Ayrshire", and turned to the law, to become

“Writer, Strathaven”. This is a massive work, of nearly 800 pages, and covers a much wider field than Fullarton. For example, in the chapter on Livestock he deals not only with cows, sheep and horses, but takes in asses, mules, hogs, rabbits, poultry, pigeons and bees. The book is indeed quite entertaining at times, for the author was a man of strong views and prejudices, and does not hesitate to elaborate at length. Under Political Economy, he discourses on the poor: “The streets of the towns and villages, and public and private roads, are occasionally infested with vagrant beggars, and sometimes with tinkers and gypsies, who sorn and thieve, and pilfer and extort alms, from the weak and timid, to the disgrace of the police, the terror of the inhabitants, and discredit of humanity.” He proceeds to quote almost all of Burns’s “Jolly Beggars” in a footnote which takes up almost ten pages. He has most informative sections on coal and other minerals, roads, iron railways, canals, manufactures, fairs and markets. His section on “Religious Character” provides a historical survey which includes archaeological snippets, references to pagan survivals, criticisms of kirk sessions, and there is (pp 165-166) a vivid description of a church service when “cats, hens, chickens etc., enter and disturb the worship”. He is anti-clerical enough to object to elders praying at the beds of sick parishioners, “highly commendable, but when epidemical diseases prevail, these praying men carry the infection from one family to another.” Aiton has provided us with everything from details of food (including a recipe for sowens on page 655) to a glossary (by “my friend Mr William Simson, school-master in Cumnock”) of the Kyle dialect, noting some resemblances not only to French but to ancient Greek! At the end there are statistical tables giving for each parish the population, rent, stipends, numbers of livestock, farmers, weavers, scholars, paupers etc. And the book is illustrated with a map of Ayrshire; plans of towns (Ardrossan, Troon), a village (Dreghorn), the partly-constructed Glasgow-Ardrossan canal, the Kilmarnock-Troon railway; pictures of mansions, ploughs, and cattle. Perhaps the most fascinating book about Ayrshire ever published.

The Land of Britain, Part 1, Ayrshire by John H Lebon, published in 1937, incorporates the result of a National Land Utilisation Survey undertaken a few years earlier. This is a study of arable, grass, pasture, and woodland, with information on crops and animal husbandry, and a series of distribution maps. There is a section on livestock markets and milk production. There was an annual output of nearly 27 million gallons of milk; twelve creameries manufactured cheese, butter and tinned milk; and more than a hundred farmers were still making cheese for sale. There is much more background material - a geographic study of Ayrshire’s relief, geology, soils, and climate; a history of Ayrshire farming (with useful footnotes); land utilisation statistics for Ayrshire 1866-1935, and for five parishes 1791, 1836 and 1927 compared. A more recent study of agriculture, also

with historical material, is contained in *The Third Statistical Account of Ayrshire*, 1951.

Contributions to history of local farming are to be found in the *Ayrshire Collections* published by AANHs: Hugh Bone, “The Ayrshire Breed of Cattle” (Vol. 1, 1949); John Strawhorn “Farming in 18th Century Ayrshire” (Vol. 3, 1954) and “On an Ayrshire Farm 1823-24” (Vol. 11, 1976); and John H G Lebon, “The Beginnings of the Agrarian and Industrial Revolution in Ayrshire” (Vol. 5, 1959. *Ayrshire at the Time of Burns*).

PRESTWICK HISTORY GROUP LECTURE PROGRAMME 1994-95

6 October	Kings of Carrick	George Kilmurry
3 November	Sources for Prestwick History	Sheena Andrew
1 December	Liber Communitatis: Prestwick Burgh Court Book 1470-1782	David W Rowan
2 February	Writing Prestwick History	John Strawhorn
2 March	Burns’ Cottage: a Balanced Approach to Enhancement	Douglas Hemmings
6 April	to be arranged	
4 May	Memories of VE Day	Panel Discussion

Meetings at 7-30 pm in 65 Club, 65 Main Street, Prestwick

NEW BOOKS ABOUT AYRSHIRE

TOLLS AND TACKSMEN

by David McClure

AANHS £3.60

An impressive study of "Eighteenth Century Roads in the County of John Loudon McAdam" based largely on Minutes of the Ayr Road Trustees and the County Commissioners of Supply. The Ayrshire Road Acts of 1767 and 1774 were followed by construction of a network of roads (detailed by the author on a clear and well-designed map). The method by which these projects were financed is meticulously examined. Unfortunately the records contain little about the techniques of road building. However, David McClure finds no evidence that McAdam made any innovations whilst in Ayrshire, and concludes that the state of Ayrshire roads when he left for the south did not inspire him. Readers from different parts of Ayrshire will find of particular interest the information on turnpike roads and tolls in their own localities. Of special value is a table listing attendances of the most active road trustees. Two pages from the trustees' accounts should encourage others to make a more extensive investigation of these in the Regional archives, for lesser figures are also featured. For example, "Paid James Armour for repairs made to the Howfoord Bridge per receipt 3 March 1781, 7s 6d."

AYR MEMORIES

by Jeanette Castle

Kyle & Carrick District Council, £4.95

Second in the series of photographic histories sponsored by the District Council. Jeanette Castle with assistance from other members of the Carnegie Library staff has assembled over a hundred pictures from the Library's collection and annotated each with accurate and informative captions. Everything from a class in the Academy (c. 1890) to the Flying Flea on Ayr beach (c. 1930).

CATALOGUE OF THE PAPERS OF JAMES BOSWELL AT YALE UNIVERSITY

ed. Marion S Pottle, 3 vols.

THE GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE OF JAMES BOSWELL 1766-1769

ed. Richard C Cole

Published jointly by Yale University Press and Edinburgh University Press

At New Haven, Connecticut, in the Sterling Memorial Library of Yale University there is a room known as the Boswell Factory. It is so-called because in 1950 Professor F A Pottle and his associates there began churning out volumes of Boswell's journals, the thirteenth and last appearing in 1989. Concurrently work was commenced in publishing other volumes containing Boswell's correspondence, which it is estimated will require some further forty volumes to cover. During all this time Mrs Pottle was engaged in cataloguing the ten thousand items in the Boswell papers, and these now appear (posthumously) in three massive volumes (costing £150). For students of 18th century Ayrshire there are some things of interest, for each item listed is accompanied by a summary of contents. There is a letter from Robert Burns endorsed by Boswell: "Mr Robert Burns the poet expressing very high sentiments of me". Boswell exchanged letters with John Ballantine of Ayr, but refused to donate towards the new Ayr Academy. Alexander Fairlie of Fairlie, concerned at the influence of the French Revolution complains of "the bad spirit which possesses the people in spite of the prosperous times." The volume of *General Correspondence* contains several letters of special interest. There is one from Mungo Smith of Drongan seeking permission to work coal at Trabboch. There is a letter to Boswell who was (in 1767) defending Matthew Hay and John McClure who were charged at Ayr with smuggling. In the same year he was defending a group of Stewarton men who had led a riot because of meal shortage, and two letters concern this case. Among future volumes, Boswell's *Estate Correspondence* is now in the hands of the printers.

FAIRS AND FROLICS

Scottish Communities at Work and Play

by D B Cowan

James McCowan Memorial Social History Society, \$6

James McCowan (1773-1834) from Cumnock moved to Lanarkshire then to Canada and his descendant has extended a previous investigation of family history towards examining the Scotland his ancestors left and the Canada in which they settled. As one Canadian historian writes in a preface to this 64-page booklet: "Much has been written about the lives of outstanding immigrants and their achievements as entrepreneurs, scholars, politicians and soldiers. Little attention has been paid until recently to the lives of the bulk of immigrants, working class men and women. Now it is recognised that to understand immigration it is necessary to engage in history 'from the bottom up'." This is a task which David McCowan has enthusiastically undertaken. From Scottish records and drawing heavily on Ayrshire sources, he depicts 18th century life and occasions such as weddings, fairs and funerals (he plans a future booklet on "Feeding the Family"). The greater part of the booklet concerns the Canadian scene and the author seeks to answer the question "What values did the Scots bring to Canada and how did these values evolve?" So we have, from newspapers, scrapbooks and memoirs (all carefully referenced) descriptions of social occasions in 19th century Canada. Thus from *The British Colonist* 14 Dec. 1842 on "the festival of St Andrew, the County Glengarry St Andrew's Society dined together", with toasts, songs, and "social harmony". Any readers who wish to purchase a copy of this interesting little volume should contact Dr Trevor Mathews.

DISCOVERING AYRSHIRE

by John Strawhorn and Ken Andrew

John Donald, £8.95

This up-dated new edition is now available.

SCOTTISH WOMEN AND THE VOTE

S.R.C. Museum Education Service, £9.95

Requests for records of the suffragette movement, particularly from Standard Grade History students, have increased in frequency at the Ayr Archive Office in recent years. These were not easily answered, as little academic research had been done on the subject, and likely historical sources had not been identified.

Matters have improved tremendously with the publication of Leah Leneman's *A Guid Cause*, Aberdeen University Press, 1991, and the compilation of a resource pack entitled *Scottish Women and the Vote*, by Strathclyde Regional Council's Museum Education Service, which reproduces documentary evidence from Strathclyde Regional Archives, the Scottish Records Office, the National Library and local newspapers. The pack includes a chapter on the attempted arson at Burns' Cottage in 1914, an extract from which appears in this issue of *Ayrshire Notes*. The pack has been circulated to Strathclyde secondary schools, but a few remaining copies are available for sale to the general public via Strathclyde Regional Archives, Mitchell Library, North Street, Glasgow, G3 7DN. The price of £9.95 includes postage.

SCOTTISH LOCAL HISTORY, Vol. 13, June 1994

Scottish Local History Forum

£3, or annual subscription of £10

This issue contains several articles on the use of photographs in local history.

SCOTTISH HANDWRITING 1500-1700

A Self-help Pack

Published by the Scottish Records Association

Alastair Hendry writes: The last decade has seen a vast increase in the number of individuals and groups engaged in local and family history research. Among the difficulties experienced by the researchers are those which arise from the form of script they encounter in the records, as well as from unfamiliar Scots words and legal terminology. The Scottish Records Association is therefore to be commended for the production of this pack to alleviate some of these problems. Sound practical guidance is given on the language and spelling of the documents,

common problems and sources of confusion, numerals and dates, and the tricky contractions, abbreviations and suspensions.

The twelve texts have been selected from a variety of contexts - tack, testament, bond, kirk sessions record etc. - and transcriptions of each are available for checking progress and resolving difficulties. Researchers will find the pack very helpful, but demanding. Some beginners will certainly get most out of it from its use within a group or palaeography class.

A later edition will enable the removal of small inaccuracies, e.g. the confusion over the Document numbers in the Foreword, and the bibliographical details of Jean F Preston and Laelitia Yeandle's very useful "English Handwriting 1500-1650".

Copies of the Pack may be obtained by writing to Robin Urquhart, Scottish Records Association, Strathclyde Regional Archives, Mitchell Library, North Street, Glasgow, G3 7DN enclosing a cheque to cover cost (£7.50) and postage (£1). A special offer is available at the moment of membership of S.R.A. plus a Pack for £11.50 (including postage and saving £2).

A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

(Forthcoming) Scottish Records Association

Papers from the conference at Craigie College last spring, including those by Roy Campbell and Alastair Hendry, are to be included in the first edition of the new Scottish Records Association journal, due to be published in the autumn. The journal is free to members, but non-members may be able to obtain a copy from Dr T Clarke, Honorary Secretary, Scottish Records Association, H M General Register House, Edinburgh, EH2 3YY.

THE HISTORY OF THE KENNEDYS

Typescript prepared for the use of Culzean staff

by Deborah Camp

The Reference Department of the Carnegie Library in Ayr holds a number of scripts which are unpublished but can be consulted by serious inquirers. One such recently deposited is this fully-researched 175-page *History of the Kennedys*. The author wisely reminds us that sources frequently contradict each other, and contain much that is dubious about early generations. Perhaps the Kennedys came from

the Western Isles to Ayrshire after the Battle of Largs; perhaps they were descended from the original Earls of Carrick. Certainly the first proven ancestor was John Kennedy who in 1357 obtained a charter confirming his possession of the lands of Dunure. We follow the fortunes of the family, with Gilbert created first Lord Kennedy in 1485, his son David becoming first Earl of Cassilis in 1509, and Archibald, 12th earl, made first Marquis of Ailsa in 1831. We are introduced to episodes like the roasting of Allan Stewart at Dunure, the Bargany-Cassilis feud, the legend of Johnny Faa, and learn of involvement of Kennedys in Scottish politics, wars with England, and fighting in France with Joan of Arc. We learn of the acquisition of Cassilis then Culzean, and the development of the estate. Robert Adam's part in redesigning Culzean Castle is covered; there is much interesting detail about improvements in the policies in the 19th century; and the Kennedys' involvement in such diverse aspects as an Ayrshire Yeomanry, yacht-building, horse-racing; the story is continued right into the present century; and there are useful appendixes. The bibliography reveals how detailed the research has been, listing books and articles relating to the estate, the family and its more prominent members (but oddly overlooking Annie I Dunlop's *Life and Times of Bishop James Kennedy*, 1950); and, importantly, drawing attention to documentary sources held in Edinburgh and at Culzean.

A HISTORY OF THE GARDENS OF CULZEAN

Typescript prepared for the use of Culzean staff

by Deborah Camp

In a smaller, 36-page companion to the *History of the Kennedys* above, Deborah Camp brings together a wealth of detailed information on the development of the gardens surrounding Culzean Castle. She draws on the Ailsa Muniments, books by travellers and writers on gardening and husbandry in general, magazines and the reminiscences of gardeners not long retired. We are led from 1597, when a 50-acre Cow-park was created near the cliff-top beside Korf Castle, Culzean's predecessor, through 1660 when "very pretty gardens and orchards" are reported and the mid-18th century when a wide variety of fruit trees were cultivated and numerous forest trees were planted. A planting diary and accounts for the supply of trees provide interesting details of the varieties cultivated. Landscaping late in the 18th century and the creation of artificial ponds early in the 19th bring us to a layout not unlike that of today, as shown in the Ordnance Survey map of 1859. Information is provided on such matters as the number of gardeners employed, their wage rates and duties.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

AFHS NEWS: Rob Close, who was elected Secretary/Treasurer at the 1994 AGM, has contributed this item. Sheena Andrew was elected Chairman, and Ann Bontke, Alisdair Cochrane, Louise Ruthven, Stanley Sarsfield, John Strawhorn and Stuart Wilson comprise the Committee.

One of the Federation's main projects over a number of years has been the Ayrshire Sound Archive, a collection of oral history tapes from throughout the county dealing with a wide variety of topics. A catalogue of the first 140 or so tapes is now being prepared, and should be available to schools, libraries etc. before the end of this year. A reference set of the tapes is kept at the Craigie Campus of Paisley University (in Ayr: the former Craigie College of Education). Anyone wishing further details of how to access this collection should contact Rob Close.

We would be pleased to hear from any individuals or societies who have additional tapes, or may be interested in becoming involved in oral history. Also, anyone who feels they might have a use for a copy of the catalogue should get in touch, so that we can estimate the number of copies required.

One of the ways in which the Federation has spread its message in previous years has been through a series of conferences, and we propose to re-establish these, and are making provisional arrangements for a Conference in autumn 1995. Prospective themes include Municipal Enterprise - 1995 is, for instance, the 100th anniversary of Ayr's Municipal Electricity Works - but we are always willing to listen to suggestions from our members and others.

We also hope to continue our workshops on family history, held in conjunction with the Kilmarnock Family History Centre. These are usually on Saturdays: again, anyone who may be interested in having their name put on a waiting list should contact Rob Close.

The Federation's annual Swap Shops continue and details of the next are given on p5. These are wonderful opportunities for members of the various societies to meet, and to exchange information on future events, and experience of past events. They are an excellent way of picking up ideas for your next outing, your next winter programme. All are welcome, and this year's venue, the Baird Institute, Cumnock, is being developed into a model local history resource centre, and is in the capable hands of John Laurenson and Charlie Woodward. This year's Swap Shop promises to be an interesting and entertaining evening.

SCOTTISH HANDWRITING. The evening class in palaeography (run by Glasgow University Adult Education Department and Strathclyde Regional Archives), which has previously been held in Ayr, Troon, Kilwinning and Glasgow, will be held this year in Largs. The course runs for 8 weeks, and is aimed at local historians and genealogists who wish to extend their studies into the 16th and 17th centuries. Documents from local archive sources form most of the study texts and guidance is given in standard forms of legal and technical documents, such as title deeds, court records and kirk session minutes. For further information contact the tutor, Robin Urquhart, at Strathclyde Regional Archives, Mitchell Library, North Street, Glasgow, G3 7DN (tel. 041 227 2733)

WORKMEN'S HISTORIC FIND. The *Herald* recently reported that "workmen building a road for a sewage works outside Girvan have unearthed one of the earliest signs of mankind in Scotland. The pre-Stone Age find at Girvan Mains Farm has excited archaeologists who have estimated the age of the flint remains as around 7,000 BC. Work was halted at the site off the A77 when a digger uncovered flint chippings close to the surface. Strathclyde regional archaeologists identified the flints as fragments from the manufacture of weapons and tools."

WHERE ROMANS TROD. Another heading from the *Herald*, this time from one of their "Scotland's Homes" supplements advertising a new housing development in Ayr. "The latest Miller Homes showhouse in Ayr is not the first occupant to arrive on the site -- a Viking camp, a Roman road and an eleventh-century castle were all previous visitors, say the historians. ...The development occupies the site of Ayr Castle, of which no trace has existed for many years. It is also claimed that the Vikings camped here before going on to fight the Battle of Largs in 1296, and local historians have confirmed that the remains of a former Roman road lead to the Cedar Grove development." We do not know which "historians" supplied the information, but they got the date of the Battle of Largs wrong and practically everything else! Does the Trades Description Act cover such fabrication of falsehoods?

The Ayrshire Post of 19 August reports that the District Council has called the builder's bluff: it is investigating these claims and if they are justified, building work will have to stop!

MUIRKIRK FIELD SURVEY. In the course of 1990, the Afforestation Land Survey team of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland conducted a rapid survey of 100 sq km of the landscape

to the west of the village of Muirkirk in Ayrshire. As a result, the full extent of the mining remains was revealed, and a detailed survey of part of the Muirkirk mineral field was initiated the following year. This field-survey covered an area of 9 sq km in extent, and involved the mapping by Electronic Distance Measurer of all the mining remains at a scale of 1:2500. The field-survey concentrated on the mining remains on the south side of the River Ayr and included the Tarworks at Kames, founded in 1786, and the site of the Ironworks, established a year later in 1787. To enhance the archaeological evidence recorded in the field-survey, additional reference material was used in the analysis and writing of a report, most notably the first and second editions of the Ordnance Survey 25-inch maps and the NMRS aerial photographic collection. The report is divided into a series of descriptive site-entries, whose reference numbers are those contained in the NMRS Oracle database. This report, together with the field-survey drawings, are available for public consultation in the NMRS, and an exhibition highlighting this work is currently touring Ayrshire.

This note, by A Wardell of RCAHMS, appeared in the Newsletter of the Scottish Industrial Heritage Society, No. 30, April 1994.

KILMARNOCK AND DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY GROUP continues to issue informative newsletters. No. 101 (March 1994) has interesting articles on a milking machine invented by a local plumber in 1890; the Ayrshire Rifle Volunteers; Women in World War Two; and Kilmarnock's accession to the Premier League inspired a reprint of verses composed on Kilmarnock's winning of the Scottish Cup in 1929. Newsletter No. 102 (May 1994) contains, appropriately, several memories of D-Day. The Editor, Stuart J Wilson, 34 Glebe Road, Kilmarnock, would welcome articles relating to Kilmarnock's past.

LARGS HISTORY SOCIETY, we are delighted to hear, is planning to extend its activities into publishing, and we eagerly await its forthcoming productions.

- Contributions for the Spring 1995 issue of *Ayrshire Notes* should be sent before the end of July to Dr John Strawhorn, 51 Connell 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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AANHS President	Miss Sally Dickie
AANHS Secretary	Dr Trevor Mathews 10 Longlands Park, Ayr KA7 4RJ Tel. (0292) 441915
AFHS Chairman	Mrs Sheena Andrew
AFHS Secretary/ Treasurer	Mr Rob Close 1, Craigbrae Cottages Drongan, Ayr, KA6 7EN Tel. (0292) 590273

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