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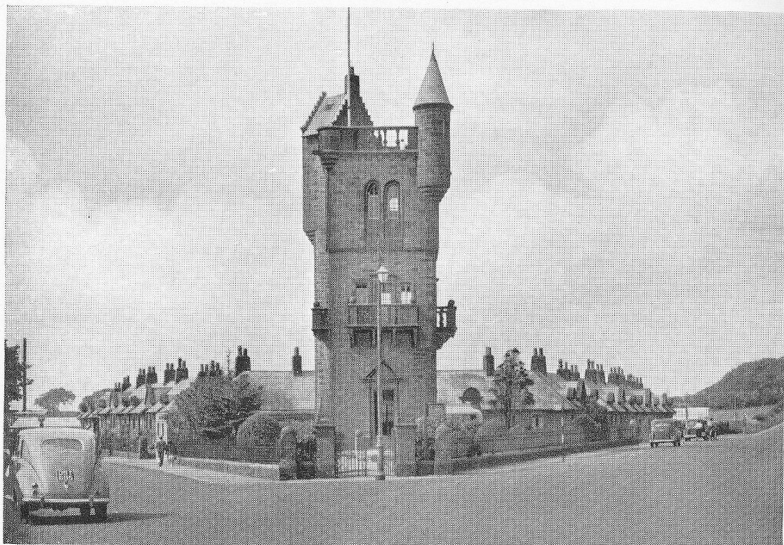
MAUCHLINE

THE OFFICIAL GUIDE

*with illustrations of
Mauchline and Mossgiel by
Wm. S. Thomson*

Issued with the Authority of the
Mauchline Local District Council Committee

Ed. J. Burrow & Co. Ltd., Publishers
Cheltenham and London



**The National Burns Memorial
and Cottage Homes, Mauchline**

MAUCHLINE

In the heart of the Burns country

MAUCHLINE is one of those fortunate places which, while having many of the residential amenities and economic advantages of an urban area, retain their rural character and attractions. As early as 1510, Mauchline was created a burgh of barony and had market and fair rights. Since then the farmlands of the district, originally marginal land, have been much developed and in Mauchline itself considerable industry, some of it allied to agriculture, has been established; but, even now, Mauchline is more often termed a village rather than a town. The nearest towns are Ayr, the county town, eleven miles to the south-west at the mouth of the Ayr on the Firth of Clyde; Kilmarnock, nine miles north-west; and Cumnock, seven miles south-east. Mauchline itself has a population of approximately 3,400, which is nearly double what it was at the beginning of the century. The increase is largely due to the industrial expansion which has taken place in the last two or three decades and which promises still further increase and expansion in the next few years. There has already been considerable housing development and, at the time of writing, a hundred new houses are in course of erection.

In addition to the resident population, large numbers of visitors come to Mauchline each year, for it is situated in the very heart of the Burns country, the local associations with this most famous of all Scottish poets and the personalities of his poems being so important that Mauchline was chosen as the site of the National Burns Memorial.

Visitors will find Mauchline easily accessible as well as a good centre for touring. It is situated on the main road (A 76) from Glasgow to Dumfries, which is joined at the crossroads in the centre of the village by the main road from Ayr (A 758) and the road from Muirkirk and Sorn (B 743). There are also numerous by-roads linking Mauchline conveniently with such interesting places as Ballochmyle and Catrine, Ochiltree, Stair, Tarbolton, Lochlea and Mossiel.

Bus services, operated by the Western S.M.T. Co. Ltd., link Mauchline with Glasgow, Dumfries, Ayr, Kilmarnock, Cumnock, Muirkirk and the intermediate villages.

By rail, Mauchline is easily accessible for it lies on the main London-Carlisle-Dumfries-Glasgow line of British Railways. One of the most striking features in the district is the huge railway viaduct at Ballochmyle, just over a mile south of Mauchline station. This viaduct crosses the River Ayr at a height of 180 feet and has a span of 175 feet for its main arch. The glen below it is a favourable haunt of picnickers.

Royalist writer described Mauchline as "an eminent place because of the battle that was on the moor."

In 1626, at Auchincloich, on the borders of Mauchline parish, was born Alexander Peden, the Covenanting "prophet," and the district has various associations with him. In Mauchline churchyard is the grave of a Covenanting "martyr," James Smith, who in 1684 died in the local prison of wounds received from the Dragoons. Again, on 6th May, 1685, five Covenanters were hanged on the Loan Green at Mauchline; their memorial stone, with its quaint inscription, may be seen built into the wall of the adjoining school. This memorial reads:

Bloody Dumbarton, Douglas and Dundee,
 Moved by the Devil and the Laird of Lee,
 Dragged these five men to death with gun and sword,
 Not suffering them to pray nor read God's word:
 Owing the word of God was all their crime,
 The eighty-five was a saint-killing time.

INDUSTRIAL PROGRESS

FORMERLY, the most characteristic industry of Mauchline was the manufacture of fancy wooden boxes, painted with the tartans of Scottish clans, but this ceased well within the present century. Also of importance were the red sand-stone quarries, which supplied material for some noteworthy buildings in the West of Scotland, but they no longer employ much local labour. The making of curling-stones is still, however, a unique local industry (see page iv of cover).

Closely associated with the highly cultivated farmlands around the town, which support large and, in some cases, famous herds of dairy cattle, are such local industries as agricultural implement works, corn-milling, and the manufacture of milk-powder, but the former creamery has been transformed into a large optical factory. The largest industry, much developed in the last quarter of a century, is now coal-mining.

FOR LEISURE HOURS

IN addition to the many interesting and beautiful walks and excursions which can be made from the village, Mauchline offers a variety of sports facilities, those of most appeal to the visitor being probably golf, tennis and bowls. The Ayr is a good trout river and also has salmon and sea trout, but except at Ayr, where tickets can be obtained from the Town Chamberlain, the Ayr water is generally privately held.

There is the eighteen-hole golf course of the Ballochmyle Golf Club to which visitors are always welcome. Green fees are very moderate and Sunday play is permitted. Visitors are also welcome at the Mauchline Tennis Club and Mauchline Bowling Club.

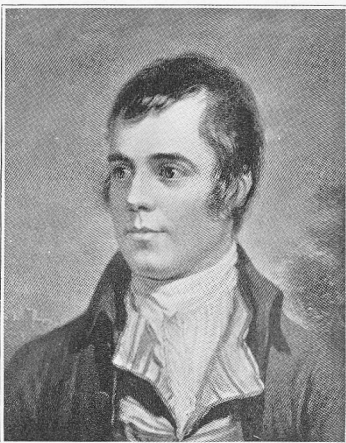
MOSSGIEL AND ROBERT BURNS

MAUCHLINE is chiefly notable for its close associations with Scotland's greatest poet, Robert Burns, who, after having lived on his parents' farm, Lochlea, from 1777, moved in 1784 some two miles nearer to Mauchline to set up farming at Mossgiel with his brother, Gilbert. Mossgiel is about a mile north-west of the village, in an elevated position which makes it easily seen from a good distance around. Here the farmer-poet lived until his marriage in 1788, but his brother stayed on for about ten or twelve years longer.

The period of Burns's residence at Mossgiel was the flowering time of his genius, when much of his greatest work was done; and in Mauchline and its neighbourhood he found most of the scenes and persons immortalised in his writings. Of his poems, *To a Mouse*, *To a Mountain Daisy*, *Holy Willie's Prayer*, *The Holy Fair*, *Address to the Unco Guid*, *The Jolly Beggars* and *The Cottar's Saturday Night* are among the better-known verses composed while he lived at Mossgiel. It was in these years that Burns, already known as a local bard, laid the foundation of his wide and lasting fame by the publication of the "Kilmarnock" edition of his poems. In Mauchline, too, he met Jean Armour to whom, on 3rd August, 1788, he was married in the house of his friend, Gavin Hamilton, the lawyer.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Mauchline was chosen as the site for the National Burns Memorial and that the village is steeped in associations with the poet, even though the appearance of the streets and houses and the church is so radically altered since his day.

Mauchline Parish Church stands on the site of an earlier structure and was erected in 1829. The churchyard was the scene of the open-air preaching, conducted by several ministers in turn, which took place while the communion service was being held in the church and which drew a motley congregation. Such a Holy Fair would continue perhaps for as long as nine hours and has been graphically described by Burns in his poem of that name. The minister was "Daddy Auld" and one of the elders, "Holy Willie," and the character of "Common Sense" in the poem was Dr. John Mackenzie of Castle Street.



It was in No. 2 Castle Street that Burns and his bride, Jean Armour, took rooms in 1788, before removing to the farm at Nithsdale, Ellisland (near Dumfries). The house in Castle Street is now known as Burns' House and is marked by a tablet. Inside is an interesting museum, open on week-days from ten o'clock until seven, admission 3d. Of Jean Armour's girlhood home in Cowgate only the site remains, but the Jean Armour Homes in Castle Street have been founded in her memory.

Also in Castle Street is "Nanse Tinnock's House," dated 1744 and once called "The Sma' Inn."

Another inn of Burns's day was "The Whitefoord Arms"—of which John Dove (or Dow) was landlord. This is in Loudoun Street, but has been converted into a shop.

No. 21 Loudoun Street is another building made famous for its associations with Burns. This is "Poosie Nansie's Hostelry," also called "The Jolly Beggar's Howff" (see page 14), through a window of which Burns saw the scene he afterwards immortalised in *The Jolly Beggars*. It is still a hostelry and is also the headquarters of The Burns' Society. The visitors' book contains autographs of many celebrated people. Of special note is an old eight-day clock made by John Brown, referred to in the couplet:

" If e'er ye gang tae Mauchline toon,
Be sure and call on Clockie Broom."

The old Castle, the only relic of the Middle Ages in Mauchline, and the house adjacent to it formed the residence of Gavin Hamilton, whose friendship was one of the most influential in the poet's early life. Gavin Hamilton is buried in the churchyard next to his house. Here, too, lie four of Burns's children, and the above-mentioned "Daddy Auld," "Holy Willie," Nanse Tinnock, Mrs. Gibson (Poosie Nansie) and many other personalities of the poet's life and poems.

At the top of the village stands the National Burns Memorial, a prominent red tower erected by public subscription, together with the adjacent almshouses, in 1898. Inside is another Burns Museum (open week-days).

JAMES BOSWELL AT MAUCHLINE

Mauchline has some associations with another celebrated literary figure, James Boswell, whose ancestral residence was at Auchinleck House and whose lands lay partly in the parish. In his *Private Papers*, we catch glimpses of the biographer of Dr. Johnson calling at the Castle, Netherplace (a fine mansion opposite the Burns' Memorial Homes and dating from 1620 or thereabouts), Ballochmyle and Mr. Auld's Manse.

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AROUND MAUCLINE

AYRSHIRE is divided into three main areas, Mauchline being situated in the central one, Kyle, with Cunningham to the north and Carrick to the south. The suggestion that Kyle takes its name from an ancient British ruler, Coil, is fanciful. The "Castle of Montgomerie" is called Coilsford and nearby are Coylton and the Water of Coyle. Whether these local names are associated with the ancient British king cannot be proved. In Coilsfield estate is a rill called the "Bloody Burn" and a prehistoric tumulus is said to be the grave of "King Coil," but the story of the King's death in battle in the locality is no more than a legend.

COILSFIELD is now a dignified, Classic-style mansion on the site of an earlier "Castle," rich in associations with Robert Burns and his "sweet Highland Mary." It was in the beautiful grounds of Coilsfield that poet and dairy-maid, "pledging aft to meet again," parted to meet, in fact, no more, for Mary Campbell died shortly afterwards. A monument at Failford commemorates their farewell.

BALLOCHMYLE, already mentioned for its charming glen and huge viaduct, also has an imposing mansion, in Burns' time the property of Mr. Claud Alexander, who had purchased it from Sir John Whitefoord. The most beautiful part of the estate is known as the Braes of Ballochmyle, extending along the north bank of the Ayr between Catrine and Howford Bridge. Here it was that Burns saw Miss Wilhelmina Alexander, whose beauty prompted him to a song in her praise. A fine hospital has been established at Ballochmyle.

CATRINE, two miles from Mauchline, was developed as a cotton milling centre by Claud Alexander of Ballochmyle and David Dale of Stewarton towards the end of the eighteenth century. The huge double water-wheel, which was such a notable feature of Catrine, is no longer in existence. It was built in 1826 to drive the mills and said to be second in size only to the wheel at Laxey in the Isle of Man, which was built to pump water from the mines. A new cotton mill has recently been built. Catrine Farm, formerly called Stewart House, was the home of the popular eighteenth century philosopher, Professor Dugald Stewart. Here Burns met Lord Daer and "dinner'd wi' a lord."

SORN, a short distance up the wooded valley of the Ayr from Catrine, is an interesting old village with a handsome, old restored mansion, Sorn Castle.

TARBOLTON lies in the opposite direction, that is to the west of Mauchline. It is a pleasant little township. Here Burns and his brother Gilbert founded the Bachelors' Club in 1780, which is now the property of the National Trust for Scotland. Here, too, he became a Freemason in 1781.

USEFUL INFORMATION

MAUCHLINE, COUNTY OF AYR: Local Clerk—Thomas A. Lorimer, Esq.,
County of Ayr, Area No. 5 Local Welfare Office, Mauchline.

POPULATION OF VILLAGE: Approximately 3,400.

PLACES OF WORSHIP: Church of Scotland—Mauchline Old Church;
Mauchline North Church. Services: both at 12 noon.

POST OFFICE: Loudoun Street.

BANK : (see page ii of cover) The Commercial Bank of Scotland Ltd.

HOTELS: The Black Bull; Loudoun Arms; Poosie Nansie's (Public
House—see page 14.)

DISTANCES: Kilmarnock 9 miles; Ayr 11; Glasgow 30; Dumfries 56;
Edinburgh 60.

CAFE : A. K. Black (see page 15); Angelo Vanni (see below).

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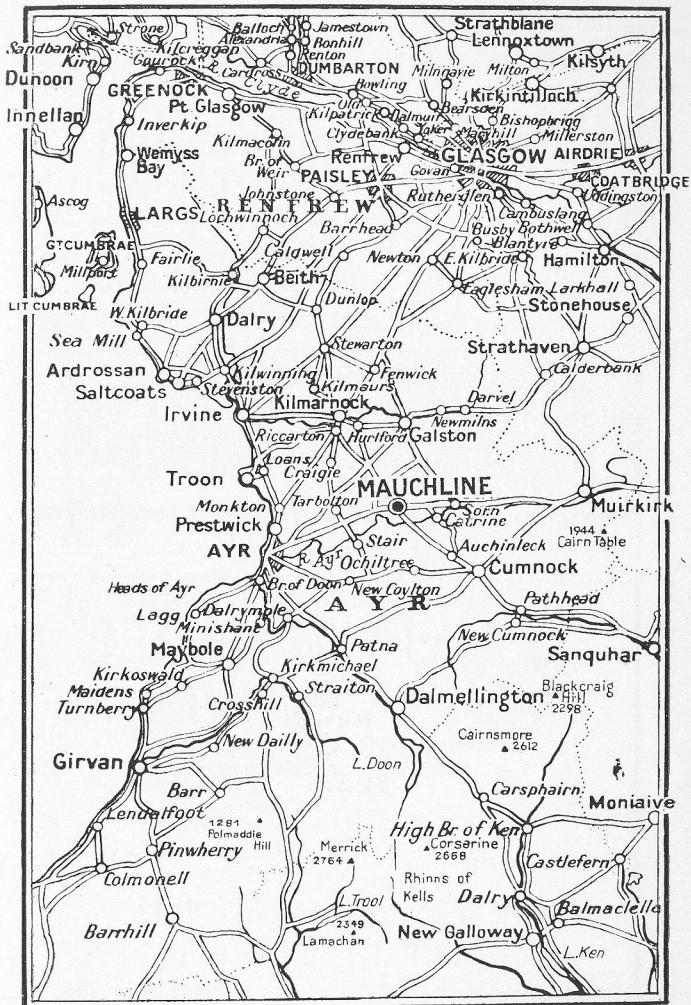
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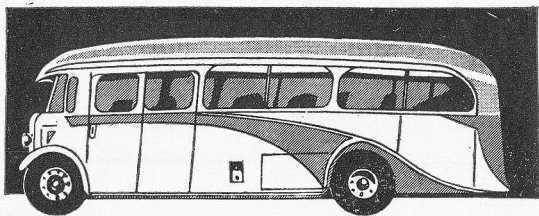
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