

MUSES

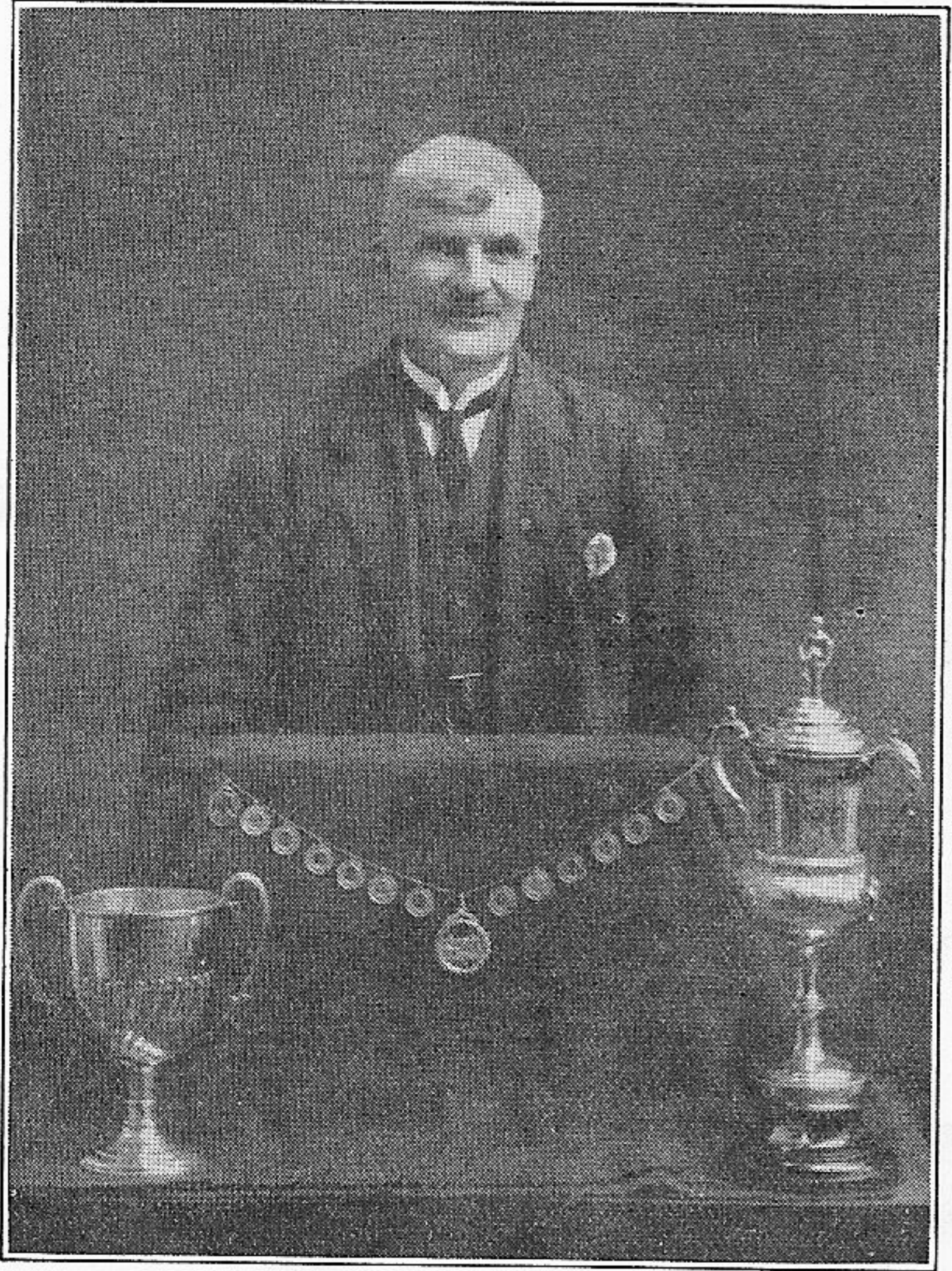
Behind the Plough

By

JOHN S. GALL

Stonebriggs, Cumnock





FOREWORD.

JOHN S. GALL, the author of these verses, was born at East Montgarswood Farm, in the Parish of Sorn, on the 30th day of September, 1875.

Being a "son of the soil" he was taken from school at an early age and put to Dairy Farming, in all branches of which he soon acquired a practical knowledge, and, along with his brothers, became famous as a breeder of Ayrshire Cattle.

Up till a few years ago the name of Gall was almost a household word where Ploughing was concerned, and, true to family tradition, John attained skill as a ploughman that made him famous throughout Ayrshire and the West of Scotland. He was undoubtedly one of the most successful ploughmen of his time, winning premier honours at all the principal Ploughing Matches in the West of Scotland. His array of cups and medals gained in these contests would be hard to surpass, while his services as Judge at Ploughing Matches were in great demand.

It is not these qualities alone that have made him an outstanding personality in his own sphere, but he possesses Social accomplishments that make him an acquisition to any company he is among. It has been suggested that in many ways he resembles our own Scottish Bard, Robert Burns, being a first-class singer and fiddler, and he has always been, and still is, a great asset to the musical side of Church and Social affairs.

His poems are mostly the results of his musings while following the plough and were often jotted down

with his pipe-stem on the beam and stilts of his plough and transferred to paper by the fireside in the evenings when the day's toil was over.

He was a keen curler and quoiter and his many activities gained for him a wide circle of friends and admirers who will derive much pleasure in possessing a copy of his works. It is for this reason, and not for pecuniary gain, that the "POEMS OF JOHN S. GALL" have been published in their present form by a few of his more intimate friends and well-wishers.



In Memoriam.

*In loving memory of my sister Bessie, who died at
Bankhead, Thornhill, on January 30th, 1910.*

We mourn for you, Bessie, sister dear,
The youngest of the lot ;
But now we know that you are near
Your Heavenly Father's flock.

We did not hear you bleat through the night
When the Saviour took you away
And carried you up to the beautiful light
Of an everlasting day.

He didn't take you away by the light of the day
But in the quiet still hours of the night ;
And there you awoke in the glorious rays
Of an everlasting light.

Now, farewell Bessie, for a little while,
Till our sins, like yours, are forgiven ;
We will meet again your loving smile
In our Father's home in Heaven.

In Memoriam.

In loving memory of a Friend.

If we believe in fore-ordination
It will give our hearts relief ;
He is away from this place of temptation,
Away from this world of grief.

Sure was the fatal collision
That ended his life upon earth,
We hope to a high elevation
Above this kindred of dust,

If on earth he had some bitter hardships
In following his daily toil,
We hope he had better prospects
Before leaving this earthly soil.

It would be hard to part from his brother,
And hard, from his sister dear,
But harder to part from another
Whom his love has been fixed for some years.

We all here lament his sad ending,
It came like a crash to us all ;
But we are not for ever suspended
From those who get the first call.

Now fare ye well, Bob, not for ever,
I hope we will all meet again
In the Home where we never shall sever,
Neither sin, suffer death nor pain.

POEMS BY JOHN S. GALL.

ooooOoooo

THE NEW COO.

Chorus : Breed a coo that can fill the pail ;
Breed a coo that can tap the sale ;
Breed a coo that can breed a male
Worth seventeen hunner guineas.

A big commercial coo will aye fin' a place,
Nae maitter where ye tak' her tae, she'll never ye disgrace ;
A nice saft skin, an' no ower thick a tail,
That's the kin' o' Ayrshire coo, the coo that fills the pail.

A big spacious vessel, wi' teats three inches lang,
Nae skiddlin' wi' yer fingers, ye can catch them wi' yer han',
A strong constitution tae stan' the winter's gale,
That's the kin' o' Ayrshire coo, the coo that taps the sale.

Clean o' her neck, deep o' her rib, an' no ower strong a horn,
These three essentials she maun ha'e her body tae adorn,
Thick o' her thighs, clear o' her e'e, her back as straucht's a rail ;
That's the kin' o' Ayrshire coo, the coo tae breed a male.

Blend these three points, an' then we'll ha'e a model Ayrshire coo,
Wi' size an' style an' substance, tae wee teats bid adieu ;
She'll haud her ain in ony clime, if ower the sea she sail ;
That's the kin' the foreigner wants, the coo that fills the pail.

ROS-A-LIN.

On seeing the Champion Mare at Kilmarnock Show, 1919.

Sweet Ros-a-lin you're bonnie, an' wi' quality you're fou,
There's nae ane fit tae bate ye, in this worl' the noo,
If you're no perfection there never will be ane,
For you're baith size an' quality, Sweet Ros-a-lin.

Wi' yer bonnie, bausy face, an' yer weel turned neck,
Yer glossy, silky skin and yer hair as black as jet ;
A model when yer walkin', an' the same when ye rin,
The image o' yer faither, Sweet Ros-a-lin.

Wi' Foot-Print for a faither nae wonner ye are guid,
For through yer very veins there rins the best o' bluid ;
The croods o' folks that saw ye gang roun' the Killie
ring

Did say they never saw the like o' Sweet Ros-a-lin.

Ye min' me o' some picture drawn by an artist's han',
Sae perfect is yer body, yer actions are sae gran' ;
We'll wale the worl' thro' an' thro' an' no a better fin'
Than you, ye great big gausy mare, Sweet, Sweet
Ros-a-lin.

I didna ken yer mither but I kent yer gran'-dad fine,
He was a perfect beauty, an' thousan's he made nine ;
Sae come awa', ye bonnie lass, an' I'll yer praises sing
On seein' ye at Killie Show, Sweet, Sweet Ros-a-lin.

TO WEE PRINCE.

On seeing my favourite horse ploughing at Sorn Ploughing Match, 1924, with Mr. John Ferguson, winner.

Man, Princey, I was prood tae see ye
Gaun sae straucht an' pooin' easy ;
Some may think ye a wee bit slow,
But ye ken the pace that ye should go
When the Plewin' Match comes roun'.

For Johnnie never lifts a rein
Tae mak' ye hup or mak ye vane,
For ye ken as weel as ony man
The very place that ye should gang
When the Plewin' Match comes roun'.

When the Judge comes roun' ye cock yer heid,
Ye hear them talk aboot yer speed ;
But when they see the wark ahint ye
They ken that you're no pooin' jinky
When the Plewin' Match comes roun'.

For Johnnie's haudin' weel, the boy
Is fairly makin' corduroy ;
He tak's ye the nearest road tae the end,
Wi' never a wimple, never a bend,
When the Plewin' Match comes roun'.

Frae beginning tae end yer wark's weel dune,
A' the first prizes you've help'd tae win,
Sae keep yersel fresh for anither time,
You'll yet draw furrows as straucht as a line
When the Plewin' Match comes roun'.

Ye hear Johnnie's Uncle Sanny shoutin'
"Yer plewin' micht ha'e won Tarbouton ;"
I hope you're spared for anither year,
Tell Johnnie the loan o' ye for tae speir
When that Plewin' Match comes roun'.

You're no very big for a' ye ha'e dune ;
The medals you've won I can count twenty-ane,
A record for ony wee horse in the pairish :
Yer memory I forever will cherish
When yer Plewin' days are dune.

THE BRAIDLEY COUT.

Bought as a foal at Lanark Horse Sale by John Shearer, Longgreen, Darvel. Mrs. Wm. Caulfield, Braidley, seeing the foal being led past to the Smithy was impressed by it and advised her husband to try and buy it.

A wee bit cout tae Longgreen came,
The Braidley Talent's noo its name,
For Johnnie didna own it lang
Before a tempting offer cam'.
The Braidley wife when lookin' oot
She sees it's guid, withoot a doot,
An' tell't her man tae gang an' try
The wee bit coutie for tae buy.
But Braidley kens them tae gey weel
So ower he gaed tae mak' a deal,
He bade Longgreen a temptin' profit,
Three times mair than he'd peyed for it,
So a'e Friday comin' aff the train
The wee bit coutie changed its hame.
Time rolls on, the Show comes roun',
A cout comes clampin' thro' the toon
Makin' for the Lanfine Holm
Where the cattle's tae be shown.
The class for this wee cout comes on
An' roun' the ring the people throng:
Strongly built an' movin' true—
Sensation roun' the ringside grew—
A stronger type than ony there,
The judges looked it fair an' square.
The Clydesdale men, noo at fever-heat,
Wonnors if Braidley's tae be beat.
At last the tickets are gi'en oot,
First Prize tae the Braidley cout.
Efter this it never stopped
Till a' the Medals it had got,
Champion o' the Clydesdale breed:
Noot his at present ends my screed.

TO THE BARON O' BUCKLYVIE

When its case went through the Court of Session.

Baron o' Bucklyvie is a name
That ower a' the worl' has fame,
An' mony a man has filled his wame
In drucken babble,
Discussin' wha's tae tak' the blame
O' your great squabble.

For up before the Lords ye've been,
An' mony a droll face ye ha'e seen
Wi' great white wigs an' squintin' e'en
A' glowerin' at ye ;
Their Honours had tae tak' this scheme
Juist tae protect ye.

Mony a fairmer you've made glad,
Withoot ye this day he'd be sad,
For reamin' ower his wee roon bag's
Wi' glorious gold,
Wi' sellin' ane o' your wee nags
As sune's its foaled.

Lang, lang may ye be spared tae stan'
An' serve the mares oot ower the lan',
Aye fillin' fou your maister's han',
An' he deserves ye ;
He's fed ye weel on corn an' bran
Juist tae preserve ye.

Lang may ye stan' an' wag your heid
Improver o' the Clydesdale breed,
For never was there sic a steed
For breedin' guid anes,
You've gi'en the Clydesdales whit they need,
Baith feet an' pasterns.

Lang may ye stan' an' wag yer tail
An' never mair be up for sale,
But stan'in' there as fresh an' hale
 As lang's yer able,
Great monarch o' the Clydesdale male,
 In Dunure stable.

An' noo at last you've found a hame
Never gang far frae it yer 'lane,
For fear that something micht ye lame
 An' sair torment ye,
For every one that kens yer fame
 Wad sair lament ye.

An' when your day on earth is o'er
You'll leave some stock on Carrick shore,
An' Clydesdale men will loudly splore
 O' thy great fame,
A credit tae the lips that bore
 Bucklyvie's name.

ON THE DEATH OF BARON O' BUCKLYVIE.

Come a' ye Clydesdale men an' mourn
The greatest horse that e'er was born,
For in an instant he was torn
 Wi' lichtnin' speed,
Juist wi' a kick that brak a bane :
 Bucklyvie's deid.

Deid, but his mem'ry ne'er will fade,
A matchless record he has made,
His was the highest price e'er paid
 For ony steed
O' a' the race that's Clydesdale bred ;
 But noo he's deid.

His quality was something rare
That scarce anither could compare,
Wi' fine flat banes an' silky hair,
He took the lead ;
Wae's me, wha's worthy tae be heir
Tae him that's deid ?

Is Footprint fit tae fill his shin,
An' sire the first in every ring ;
Or Keynote, can he laurels bring
Upon his heid,
That a' men may his praises sing
Like him that's deid ?

O Mains ye ha'e the best bluid breathin' ;
Dunure, Kaleidoscope an' Stephen,
There's no a better trio leevin'
O' ony breed ;
You'll keep the Clydesdale's banner wavin'
Tho' the Auld Ane's deid.

But, Wullie, while it was a pity
Tae lose your auld an' famous beauty,
Tae buy Apakwa's noo your duty,
An' own them a'
That's fit tae follow Auld Bucklyvie
That's noo awa'.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MR. JACOB MURRAY

On winning the Ayr Derby three years in succession.

Congratulations here I send
Tae you the king o' Ayrshire men.
It's no the first time you an' yours
Champion Honours ha'e secured ;
The blue ribbon o' the Ayrshire breed
Ha'e safely landed at Dalgig.

But mind ye, there's a class o' men
 That wad the milk coo fair condemn,
 It's maybe if they bred for bulk
 They wad bring doon the price o' milk ;
 Or is't the price o' banes an' skin
 That mak's them tae the yeld anes cling?
 Gang on, an' dinna change your wey,
 Juist breed them like your Derby quey ;
 Be "her" the auld, or "her" the new,
 She's awfu' near a model coo.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MR. JAMES MILROY

On winning the Loudoun Parish Ploughing Match.

Congratulations here I send
 Tae you, a king 'mong plewin' men,
 Your juist as guid as days of yore—
 I've seen ye win a match before—
 The blue ribbon (the Loudoun medal)
 Is safely lying on your table.
 The young anes ha'e a lot tae learn
 O' haudin' ticht frae end tae end,
 A guid bit through it here an' there
 Is no what judges skilled compare,
 But straucht an' clean frae morn till nicht,
 The grass weel twin'd an' oot o' sicht,
 The sock-face stey, withoot a glitter,
 Lyin' sweet withoot a flitter,
 A nice clean seam tae haud the seed
 Will grow a crap withoot a weed,
 A shallow hint tae suit the binder,
 An' feenish aff withoot a blunder ;
 Plewin' like that is worth the seein'
 An' that's the kind that you did gi'e them.
 Excuse this wee bit past time blethers
 Frae ane o' your auld plewin' brithers.

A SEASON AT PLOUGHING MATCHES.

Awa' doon tae Tarboutin, where guid plewmen are
born,

I went tae the Match frae puir auld Sorn,
The laurels tae wrest frae the champions there;
When my name was cried oot first it made some o'
them stare.

I was first for the plewin', first for the straight,
First for finish an' second for the break,
First for ower the croon, the best point ava;
So I think it wasna bad for puir Jock Gaw.

The next that cam' was Mauchline, I had an ther win
there,

The soil it was stiff it made me haud sair,
But if haudin' was tae dae it, I was determined for tae
try,

Tae regain the laurels that I lost in the year gane bye.

Then awa' tae Loudoun, a lang an' weary road,
I went awa' the nicht before wi' my precious load,
I put it under lock an' key tae keep it safe frae herm,
For mony a dirty trick's been played on plewmen's
plewin' airns.

I wasna juist sae lucky there, third place I had tae tak',
An' mony a time in my life I've made far better wark,
The grun it was stiff abune an' awfu' dry below;
I hope the next time I gang back I'll mak' a better
show.

The next ane was at Minishant, the biggest match o' a',
It was a splendid sicht tae see the steady horses draw,
Forty-fower plews a' abreist daein' what they could;
An' when the names were cried at nicht first in the list
I stood.

The last ane o' them a' was oor ain match at Sorn,
 The first scrape that I drew I felt I was in form;
 I was handed weel by Pate an' White, Dowie, Alston
 an' C. Shaw,
 An', no the least o' a' my help was Jamie an' Archie
 Gaw.

I was first for the plewin', first for the straight,
 First for the finish an' first for the break,
 First for ower the croon, the best point ava;
 So I think it wasna bad for puir Jock Gaw.

THE AYRSHIRE YEOMANRY CAMP

On Dam Park, Ayr, 1901.

When first we get down on the Camping field
 On the banks of the River Ayr,
 The tents in a row make a splendid scene
 For all who are present there.

The first thing we do is to tie up our horse
 Both by the head and the heel—
 Some of them kick with a terrible force
 But the pin's too firm in to yield.

When night comes on, and the horses all fed,
 And everything made tidy and clean,
 Some of the yeomen prepare for their bed,
 While others go to the canteen.

When the bugler comes round with his mornin',
 To wake us up out of our bed, [sound]
 We go to the foot of the lines with a bound,
 To hear the day's orders read.

Sometimes to the Racecourse we go for our drill,
 And the movements of battle go through;
 We crawl up so cute, to the top of the hill
 To see if the "foe" is in view.

Often we got Outpost duty to do
On the roads all round about Ayr ;
With Officers leading we very soon knew
How to lead our foes into a snare.

The Sergeants are men well up to the mark,
For everything about warfare they know ;
Whether 'tis drilling on foot or on horse-back,
The tactics of fighting they show.

On Sunday, to Church, we marched down the street,
Where the unveiling ceremony was gone through
Of the tablet in mem'ry of those who now sleep ;
For in war-fare their last breath they drew.

The minister preached with eloquent speech,
And the band played the "Dead March in Saul,"
I think to the hardest of hearts it would reach,
Even your poor, humble servant's, John Gall.

LINES ON THE DEATH OF MAJOR BELL OF ENTERKINE.

2/1 Ayrshire Yeomanry, 1915.

Weep for the brave ! for brave was he
On battle-fields across the sea :
But look at him now, as now he stands,
A soldier elect, at God's right hand.

He fought for his Country, fought for his King,
And many a blood-thirsty battle has seen ;
But now he has conquered his last earthly strife,
His pension is now an Eternal Life.

All in an instant he tottered and fell
In front of the men he loved so well ;
When Britain, all over, was plunged into strife
He passed to the realms of Eternal Life.

Away where battle an' war's known no more
No standing knee-deep in mud, nor in gore ;
His uniform now is pure and white
And forever will shine in Eternal Light.

Weep for the Major who is with us no more !
He has pierced the strong bulwarks of Satan's
dark shore ;
He is landed safe now on the other side,
There with his Captain for aye to abide.

A FEW LINES TO COMMEMORATE THE
SORN LADS KILLED IN THE GREAT WAR.

Written by request of Mr. John Thomson, Schoolmaster, Sorn.

Hing up a wee bit tablet on the auld kirk wa'
Wi' the names o' the heroes who for us did fa',
'Twill show tae generations, that are yet unborn,
The sacrifices made by the lads frae Sorn.

Every Sunday mornin' while you worship there,
Remember them in your silent prayer ;
Although their ashes are lyin' far awa'
Their names we aye will cherish on the auld kirk
wa'.

Never let their memory fade, who gave their lives
to save
Their country in the time of need, the bravest of
the brave ;
Nae khaki noo they're wearin', their robes are white
as snaw :
We'll keep their names aye hingin' on the auld
kirk wa'.

There's some wee toddlin' bairnies, when they
grow up tae be men,
Will scan the tablet eagerly for names they weel
will ken ;
Young generations will grow up, the auld anes
pass awa',
But aye THEIR names will hing upon the auld
kirk wa'.

KEEP THE BAIRNIES FOU.

*A call to the Government, written six years after the
Government had made its call for men in 1914.*

"Come, your Country needs you!" was the urgent call
for men ;

"Come and join the Army! your Country to defend:"
So went forth our manhood their duty for tae do,
Noo keep your promise, Government, an' keep their
bairnies fou.

For fower lang years an' mair they focht, their courage
never failed,

Tae every theatre o' war the British soldiers sailed,
Wi' dour determination the foe they did subdue ;
So keep your promise, Government, an' keep their
bairnies fou.

It's twa years noo since Armistice, the battle then was
over,

'Twas then oor gallant troops sailed hame tae the dear
white cliffs o' Dover ;

But mony did they leave behin' that need nae feedin'
noo,

So keep your promise, Government, an' keep their
bairnies fou.

Come noo an' gi'e them something tae recompense
 their gain
 In beating back the Germans, who expected here to
 reign ;
 The promised Home for Heroes brave is lang since
 overdue,
 So keep your promise, Government, an' big them
 hooses noo.

If A1 men you want tae ha'e they must be fed when
 young ;
 Wi' foodstuffs noo at sic a price it simply can't be done ;
 Stop the profiteerin', nae mair we want 'buroos,'
 It's work an' wages that we want tae keep the bairnies
 fou.

Noo, mony bairns are faitherless, wi' juist a mither's
 care,
 Nae clamourin' on their daddy's knee or pu'in' at his
 hair ;
 Every year they're growin' up, mair food they're need-
 in' noo,
 So keep your promise, Government, an' keep their
 wee mooths fou.

THE BOYS THAT ARE NO HERE NOO.

*After being transferred from: the 2/1 Ayrshire Yeomanry,
 at Dunbar, to a Labour Corps.*

My thochts this mornin' wander far,
 I'm thinkin' o' ye at Dunbar ;
 An' when I'm busy at the plew
 I think o' them that are no here noo.

It's years noo since they gaed away,
An' weel I min' that fateful day,
It broke my he'rt tae bid adieu
Tae the gallant lads that are no here noo.

For months an' months we trained thegither,
An' oh, it made it hard tae sever,
But the happy days I'll never rue
I spent wi' the boys that are no here noo.

Picture a mither strivin' hard
Tae bring up weel her a'e wee lad,
Workin' tae keep his wee mooth fou,
Where, oh where is her a'e callan noo?

Look at the widow wi' her tear-stained eyes,
The wee toddlin' bairnies for their daddy cries ;
But daddy gaed awa' when the trumpet blew
An' left a vacant place for he's no here noo.

They gaed awa' an' fought an' died,
Their life's bluid they ha'e sacrificed ;
They're noo up abune, an' born anew,
An' their Saviour is callin', "They're a' here
noo."

TO ALEX. M'HARG. Q.M., 2/1 AYRS. YEOMANRY

*When I was out Ploughing among the farmers. Prior to
this I was serving in the Sergeants' Mess.*

Dear Alex, juist a line tae you
Tae let ye ken hoo I am noo ;
I'm juist as weel's when sellin' whisky
Tae Sergeants when they're feelin' thirsty.
Altho' the weather has been backward,
We'll ha'e tae try an' fill the stack-yard,

An' try an' please the Food Dictator
 If every day we plew an acre.
 But I'm missin' whiles yer auld black heid
 Tae spier ye if ye'll ha'e a bead
 Or' play a game o' twenty-five,
 At nichts when we are feelin' dry,
 Or bother ye for some new claes
 Tae keep me warm these cauld, cauld days.
 But noo the time is wearin' on
 When again I'll ha'e tae leeve the Sorn,
 An' come richt back tae East Dunbar
 Tae practise in the airts o' war:
 Sae, hopin' that you're feelin' richt,
 I bid ye, frien', Guid-nicht, Guid-nicht!

TO THE SUFFRAGETTES

Who tried to burn down Burns' Cottage, Alloway, Ayr.

Whit spite ha'e ye ta'en tae Burns' auld hame
 Tae try an' burn doon the wee hoose
 O' the man who has sang the praises o' man,
 Even ane tae a tiny wee moose.

Ye Suffragette crew, try some ither clue
 In gettin' your women a vote,
 But dinna disgrace that sacred wee place,
 That ancient an' humble wee cot.

Whit guid wad it dae tho' in ruins it lay
 At the feet o' your co'ardly abuse;
 It wadna further your scheme tho' ye burned
 every beam
 O' that time-honoured, cosy wee hoose.

Tae gain your ambition try some ither mission
Than burnin' that wee thackit biggin,
That's famed thro' an' thro', frae the grun tae the skew,
Frae the rhone tae the tap o' the riggin.

Gang awa' hame an' forever think shame
That sic a thocht entered your brain,
The witches will watch ye, the de'il he will catch ye,
If ever ye come back again.

Noo it's no my intention your names for tae mention
Who lifted a han' tae destroy,
But don't dae it again—or you're surely insane—
It's the birth-place o' Oor Poet Boy.

ON A PRESENTATION TO MR. TOM M'KERROW

On the occasion of his leaving Sorn to take up farming in Cumnock district. These lines were written at the request of Mr. Charles Sloan, who was making the presentation.

An' this my frien' is a wee bit token
Tae show that you are no forgotten.
I've kent ye since you were a boy,
An' aye your frien'ship did enjoy,
An' since tae manhood you ha'e grown
A credit tae your country's shown.
You help't tae stem the German wave,
An' focht your country for tae save ;
Your duty you ha'e nobly done,
An' honours you ha'e bravely won.
Although you're no gaun far frae hame
Your loss tae Sorn is Cumnock's gain.
The Plewin' Match will miss ye sair,
Your wark for it you didna spare ;
When frost is keen an' ice is strong,
Upon the Loch we'll miss your form,

But we'll meet again some ither day
When Sorn the Cumnock curlers play.
I ken the place on Lugar braes
Where I hope you'll spend lang happy days.
Success tae you, my auld frien' Tom,
Is the wish o' every ane frae Sorn.

TAM AND JOCK.

TAM—Thomas M'Kerrow, Croftfoot. JOCK—The Author.

JOCK—Man Tam, you are a silly body,
Whit mak's you drink sae muckle toddy?
I'm sure it's no the least guid tastit,
Tae buy it's juist guid money wastit;
It ruins your health, ruins your hame,
In fact it mak's you near insane.

TAM—But, Jock, you used tae tak' a dram,
Since ever you became a man,
I've lain a' nicht wi' you oot-bye,
An' triped Auld Jen bringin' in the kye;
But noo I think you're fair reformed
Since yon nicht comin' frae the Sorn.

JOCK—That's quite true, Tam. I ha'e nae doot
I used tae be a drucken brute,
But noo I've got a wife an' weans
That keep me a' my time at hame;
A hair o' their heids I wadna gi'e
For a' yon silly, drucken sprees.

TAM—Begorrah, Jock, I think your richt,
Although we've spent some happy nichts—
But withoot the dram it couldna be
The same as in sobriety—
But efter a' it is a fable
Sittin' roon the boosin' table.

JOCK—Man, Tam, I'm gled tae hear ye talk like that,
There's something yet below your hat ;
I don't want tae see you a Pussy-foot,
If you feel inclined tak' a wee bit toot,
But dinna mislippen your wark at hame
Or tak' onything frae your wife an' wean.

TAM—Your hittin' me noo, you twisted auld devil,
Your language tae me 'tis scarcely civil,
For a' that it's true, every word that you say,
An' I'll ha'e tae try an' redeem my way ;
'Twill be hard at first, but I'll persevere,
An' hope for mony a prosperous year.

JOCK—I'm no the least twisted, Tammie, my man,
I'm tryin' tae stop ye frae takin' the dram ;
Onything said is said in guid grace,
An' I'll juist say the very same thing tae your
face,
You'll feel far better if you leave it alane,
You'll ha'e pleasure ootside an' comfort at
hame.

Noo Tammie an' Jock your lives are "half ran,"
Supposin' you leeve the allotted span ;
There's room for improvement, an' that we will see
If we don't gang often on tae the spree :
Noo gi'e me your han', my trusty auld brither,
Oor frien'ship will last for ever an' ever.

TO MY FAVOURITE WEE HORSE, PRINCE.

Ploughing at Sorn Match, 1925.

Man, Princey, I was prood tae hear
You were first again anither year ;
That's twa men noo you ha'e pu'ed oot,
A record noo, withoot a doot.

You aye belanged tae puir auld Sorn
For in its pairish you were born,
For juist in Wee Montgarswood stable
I've min' the nicht I tied your navel
We watched you weel as you grew up,
But never thocht you'd win a cup;
It's a guid thing that we dinna ken
Whit's in front o' horse, an' men.

Lang syne, I've min', when you were young,
Tae pu' the plew you first begun,
No in the fur',—as was the custom
Tae yoke a coutie for the first time—
You staired aff upon the green,
In a day or twa 'twas easy seen
That you wad fairly mak' your mark
At daein' richt your daily wark.
Whiles a swearin' you wad get,
But you kent it cam' na frae the he'rt,
You only gied your tail a wallop,
Then up the rig as straucht's a bullet,
I've seen your footprints in the snaw
Strachter than ocht that I could draw;
You drew, I think, a dizzen medals
Before you left Montgarswood stables.

But whiles we had a wee bit spree:
I min' a'e day wi' *Pate an' me,
We gaed tae Sorn tae lift the Plew,
'Twas gettin' something on it new.
We hadna the plew richt in the cairt
When oh, you got an awfu' stairt;
I was juist gaun awa tae put on the door
When oot you gied a great big snore,
Then roon the smiddy corner squealin',
You sent the plew an' Peter reelin'.

†Mag comes oot, as white's a ghost,
Says she tae Pate, "the horse you've lost,
I hope that you are no sair hurt ;"
Crys Pate, "I've only torn my shirt ;"
Says Mag, "Come in for hauf-a-meenit,
I'll put a wee bit steekie in it,"
Sae in we gaed, baith Pate an' me,
An, truth tae tell, fell on the spree,
By this time Prince was safely hame
An' left us tae come hame oor lane.
An' noo the nicht was gettin' late,
"Are you gaun hame?" says I tae Pate,
"We'll ha'e anither dram, or twa,
An' licht the pipes an' ha'e a blaw."
But the road was braider than 'twas lang,
An' whiles we had a wee bit sang ;
But the plew it wasna hame that nicht,
For Pate an' me got sic a fricht,
We thocht the plew it micht be broken
An' spile oor chances at Tarboutin ;
But when the next day we gaed in
The plew was richt in everything,
So we werena nane the waur o' the spree,
Wee Princey, Pate, the plew, nor me.

But as things wad be we had tae pairt,
An' oh, it nearly broke my hert ;
But then you got a gey guid hame
Ye added laurels tae your fame,
The ‡Boys bocht ye for tae plew,
Tae them ye a dizzen medals drew ;
An' then I thocht ye wad be pensioned
An' nae mair in the plew be mentioned,
When oot ye cam wi' §Brocklar son,
Twa years hard rinnin' ye did win ;

You'll ne'er disgrace a plew nor man
 As lang as you can crawl alang ;
 So hopin' noo your feelin' richt
 I bid ye, Prince, Guid-nicht, Guid-nicht.

* Peter Johnstone.

† Miss M'Kie, Greyhound Inn, Sorn.

‡ The Templetons, Willoxton, Mauchline.

§ John Ferguson, Auchinlongford, Sorn.

GOING TO GALSTON SHOW.

*On going to see Jamie Montgomerie, Mid Montgarswood,
 about going over to Galston Show.*

I juist came daunerin' alang the way
 Tae hear whit you had got tae say
 Aboot the wey that we should go
 Ower tae see the Galston Show.

A more beautiful place there couldna be found
 Than ower at Cessnock, in the Show ground :
 A better trip a man couldna take
 Than go ower frae Sorn in Anderson's brake.

Some splendid sights on the wey's tae be seen,
 The lambs in the fields that are noo gettin' green,
 The corn an' the hay ha'e got a guid start,
 Giving cover to cuckoo, the corn craik and lark.

It's nice for tae see the horse bein' shown ;
 Some o' them black, some broon, an' some roan,
 Some o' them big an' some undersize,
 But a' o' them trying tae gain the first prize.

The Hielan' Sports, tae, is a scene that's sae gran'
 Wi' the folk throngin' roun' as thick's they can stan',
 Watchin' intently tae see each contest
 O' the men that are strivin tae gi'e o' their best.

The rinnin' an' vaultin' are practical sport,
Tae see them waitin' an' watchin' for the gun shot,
Then aff they set as fast's they can go
Tae show aff their talent at the Galston Show.

The jumpin' was guid, an' so was the dancin'
Wi' the dancers a' decket wi' gold medals glancin';
The Bag pipers played their tunes tae perfection,
Giein' folks at the Show a splendid selection.

Noo throwin' the hammer an' puttin' the ba'
Tae ane they ca'ed Cameron was nae faucht at a'
A big hefty chiel, the picture o' strength,
Flung the sixteen pun' hammer a record for length.

When a' was ower an' the Show was a' past
We landed safe hame tae the Sorn at last,
A gey lot the better o' seein' the stock
That could prize frae Land's End tae far John o'
Groats.

A FEW LINES TO COMMEMORATE THE IMMORTAL
MEMORY OF OUR NATIONAL POET.

We're a' met here again the nicht
Tae celebrate the twenty-fifth,
The month o' January,
Tae commemorate the Poet's birth,
Tae sing his praise o'er a' the earth—
His Immortal Memory.

Hoo often dae we stop an' think,
Hoo he could get the words tae clink
Wi' sic guid rhyme;

His tongue it never waggled bluff,
Every word was priceless worth
Tae human kind.

Tae them that criticise his name :
Are they themselves quite free frae blame
O' things that's evil ?
He didna like the hypocrite,
He tell't them they were scarcely fit,
E'en for the devil.

But see him in his tender vein,
Turnin' the wee moose oot its hame
O' leaves an' stibble ;
He didna rin an' try tae kill't,
His tender he'rt was nearly fill't ;
O, let it nibble !

The cottar, wi' his week's wark dune :
Can ony book sic lesson bring
Tae human life ?

Wee toddlers rin tae meet their faither,
Linking hame wi' ane anither,
Tae hame an' wife.

His epistle tae a brither poet—
Read it weel until you know it—
An' there you'll find
The greatest verse e'er cam' frae pen
O' either past or present men,
Frae time tae time.

I've read his poems through an' through,
An' fin' that every word is true,
An' unco real :

Noo toast his memory every one—
"To the world's greatest Poet son,
Oor Rab, Mossiel"

TO OUR NATIONAL POET.

To suit a Haggis eating.

We honour ye, Rab, frae far an' near,
On the twenty-fifth o' every year

We keep your birth refreshed ;
Frae every clime, frae every nation,
Frae every rank an' every station,
O' poets you're the best.

Your works they'll never fade away,
They'll shine the brighter every day
As long's the years roll on,
Where'er the Scottish tongue is spoken
You'll never, never be forgotten
As chief o' Scottish song.

The wee sleekit mousie adores your name,
The crawlin' louse proclaims your fame,
Sae sweet you sang their praise ;
The river's murmuring tae the seas,
The sheuchs an' brooks, an' leafy trees
Sing forth your glorious lays.

We've poets o' the present time
Who muse an' mak' their wee bit rhyme,
But oh, they canna sing ;
They've only got tae copy you,
You've left them nothing else to do
But hear your echoes ring.

The illustrations that you gave us,
Frae mice an' lice an' wee white daisies,
Will last for ages ;
You never tried tae hide your faut,
Hypocrisy ne'er got a thought
Tae fill your pages.

Oh, Rab, if you were leevin' noo
 You wadna need tae haud the plew
 An' turn the daisies doon,
 You wad be fleein' through the air
 A' roon the warld everywhere,
 Your heid wad wear a croon.

An' when we cut this muckle baggie
 Inside we'll find the groanin' haggis
 A' steamin' warm ;
 Dinna be blate, eat plenty o' it
 In memory of sweet nature's poet,
 Immortal Rabbie Burns.

LINES IN ANSWER TO ROBERT BRYAN'S POEM

Appearing in the "Kilmarnock Standard."

Sing on, dear Rab, you'll mak' a poet,
 Your early stairt is proof tae show it,
 Portraying Nature's lovely Spring,
 The flo'ers, the brooks, the birds that sing.
 The fragrance wafted tae your nose
 Is no frae flo'ers nursed wi' a stove,
 But sprung frae Nature's grassy dell,
 Nae wunner that they're sweet tae smell.

Sing on aboot the murmuring river
 Awa' up here amang the heather,
 Amang the hags an' peaty moss,
 A wee bit sheuchie for a source ;
 Getherin' water at every turn
 No faur doon it's ca'ed a burn,

An' further doon, whaur fields are green,
It's then it gets the name o' stream ;
Still rollin' on, mair waters gether,
It's then it gets the name o' river.
Noo sing its praises sweet an' fair,
For bonnie is the River Ayr.

ARMISTICE DAY.

Whit mak's the people a' assemble
On this, the eleventh day o' November ;
Whit mak's them bare an' bow their heid ?
It's the memory o' their "glorious deid."

Whit is it mak's the pipers play
"The forest flo'ers a' wede awa' ?"
It's lamentin' for their lang lost chums
Who gave their lives, their lives sae young.

And, hark ! I hear the Kirk bells chime,
Telling us that now's the time
For two short silent minutes to stand
In reverence, over all the land.

And low, I hear the bugles blowing,
The Last Post sounds, the tears are flowing
From parents, brothers, sisters, wives,
Of those who sacrificed their lives.

Then loud I hear the great Reveille
Sounding clear, through hill and valley,
Telling us their morn has come,
Their lives in Heaven have now begun.

THE MINERS' STRIKE.

Those few lines I write to you to wish you all "Good Luck,"

Honour's rights you're fighting for, no wonder you have struck ;

Effect a sure foundation before resuming work.

Man to man the world o'er should aye full brithers be,
In every clime and country, to this we should agree ;
No need for strikes or quarrels, if to the Fourth Line
we appeal

Evil thoughts will vanish and success it will reveal,
Remember once on Calvary, when thieves hung from
the cross,

Salvation was secured through Him when other hopes
were lost.

Stand firm ! as loyal brothers, till you attain that end,
Triumphant o'er the tyranny the rich would on you
send,

Right will surely conquer, as on the battle field ;
Inspired by this, just carry on, rich harvests yet you'll
yield,

Keep cool ! and let the Country be the final arbitration,
Elect the men to govern right—the workmen of the
nation.

TO MR. WM. MITCHELL, HAZELSIDE

On his buying a Shearling Black-faced Ram at £400. The bargain here being that on the first £100 Shearling being sold off Boghead he would put up a hay shed at Stonebriggs.

Lod bless me ! noo whit's this I'm hearin',
Fower hunner for a Blackfaced shearlin' ?
Though big the price he micht be cheap
When mated tae the best o' sheep;

The ewes he'll get are nae disgrace,
As braw as ever trod hill face,
An' hardy tae, tae stan' the weather
An' roam about amang the Heather.

I don't profess tae ken the ewes
That graze upon the Hazel knowes,
But judging by the price they mak'
They're unco near the very tap.

There's aye a something we can learn,
Something that we didna ken ;
But seein' a guid ane gi'es us knowledge
Far better than a schule, or college.

The price that's peyed for you, my man,
You'll ha'e tae breed us something gran'
An' let us see what tups should be
Tae average in the figures three.

I've nae doot but you're gey bonnie
Tae cost your maister sic big money ;
It's nature's gift that guides the e'e
Tae look into your pedigree.

Noo we'll send you up a ewe or twa,
An' sure's my name is Johnnie Gaw,
We'll get a hunner for a shearlin'
An' then a shed tae store the hay in.

An' lang's I'm here I'll sing your praise,
An' trust you'll gang on Hazel braes
Until you are an auld, auld sheep,
Before you tak' your last, lang sleep.

TO HUGH FERGUSON, ROADMAN, DARVEL

After leaving his employment.

Man, Hughie, I've expected lang
 Tae write you twa-three lines,
 Since comin' here I've been gey thrang
 I scarce could fin' the time;
 But noo the craps are gethered in
 Safe for anither year,
 The time tae write I noo can fin'
 An' for your welfare speir.
 I hope that you are keepin' weel,
 The wife an' weans an' a',
 An' keepin' fit the braes tae spiel
 For years still far awa'.
 An' may you leeve tae see the time,
 Years coonted by the dizen,
 Till a' your roads are juist as fine
 As Darvel's Winny Wizen.

LINES ON PLOUGHING STONEBRIGGS MEADOW

This meadow being very stoney.

The name o' Stanebriggs is frae stanes derived,
 An' some o' the stanes are a terrible size;
 When plewin' the meadow, eicht bouts a day,
 The rest o' the time's haulin' big stanes away.
 We yoke in the mornin' wi' plew an' a spade.
 A pick an' a pinch, an' a chain, strongly made;
 We're no richt staired when bang goes a sock,
 Jamie cries, "Fetch the chain an' haul oot this rock."
 The maist o' the stanes we've gi'en them a name,
 Some we ca' Cunningham, some Adam M'Lean,
 Some M'Atee an' some Ballantyne,
 But the maist o' them couldna appear in this rhyme.

Noo the meadow's quite capable o' growin' a crap,
If we juist get the weather tae secure't in a stack
It wad be a big boon tae the sheep an' the cattle,
We'd forget a' aboot this awfu' stane battle.

If juist spared tae see it sown doon into hey
It's then that oor labour wad begin for tae pey ;
An awfu' improvement frae the weeds an the sprit
Wad be Timothy growin' between five an' six fit

We're no like the sower that gaed forth tae sow
His seed 'mang the stanes, but the seed didna grow ;
We severed the stanes frae the rich loamy field,
Not till then did the meadow a heavy crap yield.

Noo the stanes were put there for some purpose, nae
doot,

Though juist tae cause wark, for men tae howk oot ;
An' I was juist thinking, although they were cheugh,
They'll dae fine tae bottom the mossy sheep beuch.

So we'll cairt them tae boggies an' causey them in,
When clippin' time comes they'll keep the sheep clean,
Wi' a guid coat o' shiners we'll hap them weel o'er—
Then fareweel tae the stanes o' Stanebriggs evermore.

TO HUGH LOGAN, SMALLHOLDER, MAXWOOD,
GALSTON

On the occasion of Officialdom trying to eject him. The house being too small for his family Mr Fairlie, Hillhouse Lodge, Kilmarnock, came to his aid and many letters appeared thereanent in the "Kilmarnock Standard."

Man Hughie, I ha'e read your letter,
I dinna think it could be better,
You fairly closed yon Factor chiels,
I think you fairly made them reel,

At least they hivna come again
Your wee bit holding tae defame.
Nine bonnie, healthy, sturdy weans
Sleep snug at nichts frae winds an' rains ;
An' yet they talk o' space for breathin',
I won'er Hugh that you are leevin'.
'Twas juist for them you huddled up
In tent or dug-oot, or in hut,
An' when the cannon's roar did cease
Yer back again tae leeve in peace
In the promised hame fit for heroes brave
Who fought their country for tae save :
Yon factor trash wad raise obstructions !
Man Hugh, it's enuch tae cause disruptions ;
If it wisna for men like Mr. Fairlie
The ex-service men wad fare but pairly,
If men like him were no sae scarce
The fechtin' men wad get their place.
But never min', juist cairry on,
We'll see them frae their castles torn ;
What need ha'e they for fifty rooms
While ithers ha'e tae leeve in slums ?
It minds me o' whit oor Poet said,
That things were awfu badly shared,
An' hardly in a body's pow'r
Tae keep at times frae bein' sour ;
But hopin' noo they'll leeve alane
Yoursel', your wife, an' ilka wean.

TO SERGEANT ALSTON AND SORN BOYS.

*A letter from Mr. Arch. Muir, Sorn, to the Sorn Boys
serving with the Troops in Gallipoli.*

SORN,
Saturday, 13th Novr., 1916.

DEAR FRIENDS IN GALLIPOLI,

Having had letters from several Sorn lads in the Peninsula of a most interesting nature, I have decided to send you a screed, to be read in Tam's trench, just to cheer you all up a bit. To begin with, I may tell you I am very proud of you all, every mother's son of you. I am also proud of having the honour of being born and reared in the same old parish, in which most of you first saw the light. And *you*, my lads, are the cause of that pride. You have voluntarily and willingly answered your Country's call, and gone forth to do her battles, and you have done it in no unstinted measure, as the deserted village and district bears ample testimony. When the records of this war are made up, Sorn will have to get her place in the Sun, as one of the rural districts, which in proportion to her inhabitants, deserves a place at the top of the class. And that day, lads, will be a happy day for me, and if I live to see it and have the pleasure of attending your meeting on the Castle Brae, hoping that *that* day there may be a full turn out, with Tam in the chair, ably supported by oor Frien', Jock Gall, the poet. We would be sure to spend a royal time fighting the battles over again. Nae doot we wad tak' a trench or twa and fill the Cleugh wi' deid Turks. Eh boys, they'd be the grand auld days. Of course, boys, we can't shut our eyes to the fact that the game of War is a dangerous game in which some must fall, and while I hope and pray to meet you all again, still I can't shut my eyes to the fact that some may go down. We can't do better than leave it in the hands of the Great Ruler of all things to give us might to the Right, and victory to the sons of Freedom who are fighting in the cause of liberty. And my boys, we know that stand or fall you will all do your duty nobly and well, and Auld Sorn wishes you success.

Now boys, I want a few words with you in detail before we part. If I forget anyone just tell me and I'll remember next time :—

First we have three Harrisons, whole three out of one house, and one of them saw his 17th birthday dawn facing the Turks, good stuff and no mistake. Many a time your auld father and I fought with hazel sticks on the Pottery knowes pretending we were Robin Hood and Littlejohn, and pelted each other soundly. But you lads have gone one better, and went in for the real thing. I know you won't forget to give Mr. Turk, "Sammy" when you get the chance.

Next, we have three Piper lads, athletes all of them. I guess you won't forget when you grapple with Sambo to put him off the map instead of on the mat. Go it my boys, and get the drop on them.

Next, we have two other Harrison boys, one of them from far away Vancouver was game enough to hurry home to the auld mother country, and is now in France fighting side by side with his brother Canadians. The other, a stalwart lad, was unfortunate enough to contract fever and dysentery and had to be invalided home, but will soon be all right again and ready for the fray.

Next we have two Davidsons, one a full fledged Bishop, both horny handed, hardy sons of the mine, whose father and I played hot burn in days of yore on Coleshaw braes, they also will give a good account of themselves when required.

Next we have Hughie Brown, a fine specimen of a soldier when he went away, but unfortunately he too contracted sickness in the form of Jaundice, a very nasty ailment, necessitating his removal home for a time, but I venture to predict with the tender, loving care of a young wife he will soon be as fit as a fiddle.

Next we come to yourself, Sergeant Alston. We all know what training you have had facing the fire all your life, making the hammer clang while sparks fly far and wide, we can't do better than quote two lines from the old song and say:—

"The smith a mighty man is he, with large and sinewy hands,

"And the muscles of your brawny arms are strong as iron bands."

Verily you will make Mahomet shout "Allah, Allah," that is if he gets time to shout.

My next is the last village lad but one—John Murdoch. He had it rough enough in getting buried from the effects of a Jack Johnstone, and lucky to get off with that, as he

told me the comrade on either side was blown up. He is presently in Stobhill, and is of the opinion that as they shelled him out of the trenches, he will wait till they shell him back in. Good old Jock, he has seen some fighting too in his lifetime, between Boers and Turks.

I now come to the last village brave lad, John Gordon, who, like his namesake General Gordon, like a hero fell and died, with his face to the foe, for the honour and glory of old Scotland, in the cause of liberty and freedom.

Now we come to the farmer lads. What about Sergeant Sandy? Six feet of solid bone and muscle, as old M'Gregor said to Bailie Nicol Jarvie, "Man Bailie, a ha'e yae son ran his dirk through fower Sassenachs afore you could say 'Jack Robeson.' ha, ha! They's the sons fur the Bauld Rab Roy." So ma fetti, if Sergeant Sandy gets loused oot, Guid help puir Turkey, but tell him tae throw on a bag or twa o' saun extra on the tap, and min' the sniper.

We'll jist gang doon across the burn an up tae Burley. Burley jist pits me in min' o' readin' in the Scots Worthies o' an auld namesake o' his at Drumclog that charged hard at Claverhouse, and only that his guid auld braidsword brak aff by the hilt, Claverhouse wad ha'e dee'd afore Killiecrankie. Tell him no tae prog that hard as breck his big nut.

Noo for yoursel', "Tam, oh Tam, ye'll get yer—" no, no that, we'll raither say, "Tam, oh Tam, had they been queens, etc.," and the fun o' a harem o' them, ye wad be busy, but it's a lang, lang wey tae Constantinople, sae jist ha'e patience, but when ye get there, dinna forget them, I mean the ladies, the dears. Of course gin ye kill the auld Turkey Cock, never heed, a wull pit ye in for a D.S.O. at the verra least. Seriously, Tam ma boy, I wad like to see you and all the Sorn boys safely through this habble, sae I wull jist say as Cromwell said tae his men, "Ser' the Lord wi' a' your birk, but for Heaven's sake keep your poother dry." So trust in Providence absolutely, but dinna forget to fill the Magazine, keep yer big nut sherp, an' for Heaven's sake keep doon yer heid.

We are having a game of Summer-ice with the Meadowside boys this evening. I doubt we will lose, however, we are sure of a good sociable evening, which after all is the principal point in the game. And by the bye, that reminds me of three other lads we claim from there, two sons of James Steven are serving at the front, one in

Flanders and one in Gallipoli, hardy lads both ; also Hugh Turner's son has recently joined. He is a very clever chap, and likely to win promotion. We have also three other lads coming out to you from Sorn, little Foster, Alec. Leggat, and my nephew Hughie. For God's sake keep a Turk or two for Foster, else he will break his heart. I fancy if he were out he could teach K. of K. a wrinkle or two. I wired the Kaiser to keep his submarine at a respectable distance until Foster got oot. He wired back "Certainly."

Ta ta for the present, continued next month.

Yours,

ARCHIE MUIR.

ON THE SORN SOLDIERS.

A reply to Mr. Muir's letter.

Weel Baldie, in answer tae your letter
 About the Sorn chaps noo oot fightin' :
 Altho' there's plenty hav'na gane
 I'm sure it's no theirsels tae blame,
 For here we're trainin' every day
 The treacherous Germans for to slay ;
 But plenty o' oor kind ha'e gane
 An' steeped their bluid on foreign plain.
 There's Sanny Watson frae Barboigh,
 He mourns a gallant nephew twice ;
 An' Gordon, gairdener frae the Castle,
 Lost a brave son in the battle.
 An' Sanny frae the Brocklar ferm
 A better never lifted airms ;
 An' Sergeant Clark frae Nether Shiel',
 A truer never pointed steel ;
 An' Louie, whom we kent gey weel,
 Five big Turks he made them squeal,
 But a sniper got him on the heid,
 Alas ! puir Louie noo is deid.
 The Bishop, tae, altho' short-sichtit,
 He showed us a' he wasna frichtit ;

There's Willie, Andy an' Jock Piper,
I'm sure they'll a' mak' richt guid fighters ;
The Harrisons, a' are guid cheugh stuff,
They'll show their country what they're worth.
The Tamsons, tae, they a' ha'e gane,
Scarce ane o' them is left at hame,
Jamie, he has done his bit
Lang syne, when he was feelin' fit,
But noo rheumatic pains he's ta'en—
I hope he'll sune be richt again.
An' Johnnie Harper frae West-toun,
He'll mak' a richt guid sodger sune ;
An' Jock, the plumber, frae Coal Ford,
He wasna sweart tae draw his sword.
Then Burkie, Rab the grocer's son,
I'm sure some laurels he will win ;
The twa wee Wolfs, scarce left the schule,
They're awa' some Germans for tae kill ;
An' Tam M'Kerrow frae Croftfoot
He's awa' again some mair tae shoot ;
An' Andra Alston the sturdy blacksmith ;
An' Burley Sloan, juist scarcely age yet.
Amang them a' the young Sorn laird,
The woes o' battle he has shared,
May he guide them safely back again
Tae Sorn, their guid auld ancient hame.
An' plenty mair I'll ha'e omitted ;
But some ither time, if I'm permitted,
I'll write tae them a line or twa,
Tae show they're freens o' Johnnie Gaw.
An' before I close my wee bit rhyme,
I want you juist tae bear in min',
That, when oor fecht on earth is dune,
I hope we'll a' meet up abune.

A WET HARVEST.

During a very wet harvest some 20 years ago Mr. Lee, Baker, Galston, had a poem in the "Kilmarnock Standard" sympathising with the farmers on loss of their crops, the following week someone signed W.F.V. had one in the reverse saying "farmers were better at drinking whisky on a Friday than attending to their crops."

O Willie Lee your answer's guid
Tae a puir he'rt-broken fermer ;
Yer near aboot a poet bred,
And no nae comin' rhymmer.
The sprootin' corn, ye know it well,
It wadna fit a baker,
And if bad cakes ye tried tae sell
They'd blame them on the maker.
I wish I had ye for a laird
In such a year as now ;
Next year with joy I'd watch it braird,
And proodly watch it grow,
And, "Thanks tae Willie Lee," I'd say,
"He's crossed me ower the ford,
The arrears again I'll try tae pay
And stoutly bear my load."
Awa', ye high-born W.F.V.,
You're never in a guddle,
Ye never show yer white shirt sleeve
Lest in a motor hubble.
Your sheuchs and brooks are in yer pooch
In some big five gill bottle ;
And a' the things ye read in books
Wad ne'er mak' you teetotal.
The plewin' ye ken ocht aboot
Is in some auld dyke-back,
Wi' a fermer's beast tae haul ye oot
When you ha'e lost yer track.

Yer Maker's praise that you would sing
Wad be in awfu' language—
Up an' gi'e the bell a ring
For a bottle and a sandwich.

THE HORNLESS COO.

Written at the Plough, 29/11/28.

I'm gaun tae rhyme aboot twa kye,
At least I'm gaun tae ha'e a try:
The twa was o' the Ayrshire breed,
Juist ane had horns upon her heid;
The ither hadna nane ava,
She lost them through an act o' law.
But, Jen, you've been an ill-set jade,
Aye settin', scrapin', near half mad,
Progin', dunchin' and sic like,
Aye lookin' for anither fight,
Or else yer owners wadna herm ye,
Far less tak' measures tae dis-horn ye.
But, Jean, they've juist made me an ill set coo,
For I had crummy horns like you,
But before that I was one year auld
They tied me up intae a stall
And yokit tae wi' weights and pulleys,
They've made my horns as shairp as gulleys.
Weel, Jen, they've juist themsel's tae blame,
I think it's juist a doonricht shame,
If you had crummy horns like me
You never could prog oot an e'e
Or tear your neighbour on the udder,
The thocht o't nearly mak's me shudder.
Weel, Jean, we'll juist put in a strong complaint
That horns like mine were never meant;

We'll pu' them in till nearly roon
 And no ha'e weapons on oor croon,
 I ken they'll no be near sae braw
 But better far than nane ava.

A HINT TO GOVERNMENT.

On being told by the Boys their Ploughs were ketting badly.

Kett* on the coulter, kett on the sock,
 That's whit we get in the mornin' when we yoke,
 Water splashin' in oor face nearly a' the time,
 O for a drainer noo at twa feet nine.
 Kett on the coulter, it's far waur tae pu',
 Kett on the sock, it's far waur tae do,
 Sourin' the horses, sourin' the men;
 O for a drainer noo at twa feet nine.
 Stairt wi' the arable, leave moss alane,
 Thoosans o' acres wat, O whit a shame!
 Millions o' idle men wastin' a' their time
 Wad tak' a job at cuttin' drains at twa feet nine.
 Tae break up the mossy hags wad never pey ava,
 The sheep can eat the heather fine among deep snaw.
 It's the only thing tae feed them when we ha'e a hard
 But drain whit is plewable at twa feet nine. [time,
 The drains that noo are in the grun are far too deep,
 There's no a drap o' water can ever tae them seep,
 But I ken that we are leevin' noo on progressive lines,
 So drain the wet land up-to-date at twa feet nine,
 If ye want tae mak' improvements, stairt when ye like
 An' send in yer orders tae the men that mak' the pipes,
 An' never let yer scheme fa' thro' wi' either drains or lime
 Till every rig in Britain's drained at twa feet nine.

*Weeds—unknown on dry soil—that stick on coulter
 and sock of Plough on wet ground.

