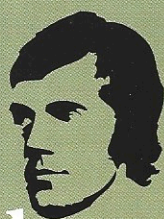


presented by THE MAUCHLINE BURNS CLUB

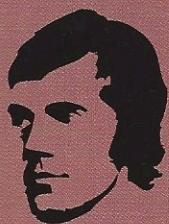


A Guide to Mauchline Kirkyard



The Parish Church, gothic in style, dates from 1829.

Gavin Hamilton's son, Alexander, laid the copestone. On this site stood the Old Church of St Michael's, dating to the 12th century, when the monks of Melrose planted their colony in 1165. This was the church Robert Burns attended and quarrelled with. It was described as being "as ugly a lump of consecrated stone as ever cumbered the earth". The village's school was also held there.



Around the Old Church was held the twice-yearly Holy Fair, immortalised in Burns' poem. In August 1786, 1400 people gathered for the 16 services, 80 Communicants at a time. It was not only a religious festival, but also a good day out with Mauchline's eleven inns well patronised.

BURGHIER KIRK STONE

A This stone was part of the original Secession or Burghier Kirk opened in 1796, with the Rev. John Walker as its minister. The Walker Memorial Kirk replaced it in 1884 with the Rev. Wilson Baird. The stone came from the hearth of a Catrine widow, unable to make a financial contribution.

WALKER MEMORIAL

B This stone came from the Walker Memorial Kirk mentioned above. In 1925, it joined up with the Abbey Church to form the North Church. In 1975, this in turn united with the parish Church. On its demolition in 1983 the two stones were removed to their present location.

WILLIE PATRICK

C The herd boy and outdoor servant to the Burns family at Mossgiel. He died in Loudoun Street in 1864, at the age of 88. He was sought out by many researchers into Burns' life. He also claimed to have slept in the same room as the poet in Mossgiel and frequently heard him reciting newly composed verses "in the wee sma' hours yont twal". His reminiscences were published in a booklet in 1881.

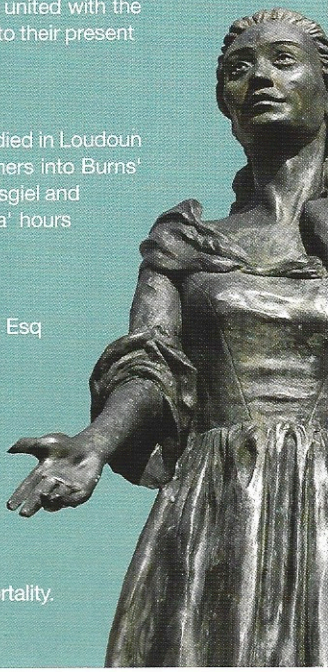
MASTER TOOTIE

D Alias Laird McGaun, he is referred to in the poem To Gavin Hamilton Esq recommending a boy. He is also referred to as a knavish cattle dealer.

JAMES SMITH

E This white stone commemorates the death of the Covenanter in 1685, near Galston, after aiding the escape of other Covenanters. He died of his wounds in Mauchline Prison. The date on the stone is wrong.

Another Covenanter memorial is to be found outside the school. It marks the hanging and burial there, of five men on 6th May 1685. The original stone is inserted in the wall with a poem said to be by old Mortality. The obelisk itself was erected in 1885.



F**ANDREW & WILLIAM SMITH**

The owners of the Mauchline Boxware factory manufactured wooden souvenir goods, decorated with ferns, photographs and tartan. An exhibition of these is in the Burns' House Museum, while a plaque in Kilmarnock Road marks the site.

G**THE ARMOUR BURIAL GROUND**

Four of Burns' children are buried here: the daughter of the first set of twins, Jean and Robert, and both of the second set, unnamed. All were born before their parents' officially acknowledged marriage. The fourth is Elizabeth Riddell Burns born in Dumfries in 1792 and died at Mossgiel in 1795. Burns was too ill to attend the funeral.

H**JAMES HUMPHREY**

The subject of Burns' poem 'The Noisy Polemic', he used to introduce himself to visitors from whom he hoped for a tip, with "Please, sir, I'm the bletherin' bitch". He was a stonemason and did work at Mossgiel and Lochlea. Later in life he was a toll keeper between Mauchline and Tarbolton. He spent most of his life round Failford.

I**ANDREW NOBLE**

The Greek inscription reads "The best things are laid up in Heaven". The names on the stone are of his two daughters and son. He was the parish schoolmaster and Session Clerk, when Burns was appearing in front of the Kirk for his misdemeanours with Jean Armour.

J**JAMES WHITEFOORD**

The infant son of Sir John and Lady Whitefoord of Ballochmyle. Sir John was a patron of Burns and a keen Freemason. His daughter Mary Jane was the heroine of Burns' song 'Farewell to Ballochmyle'.

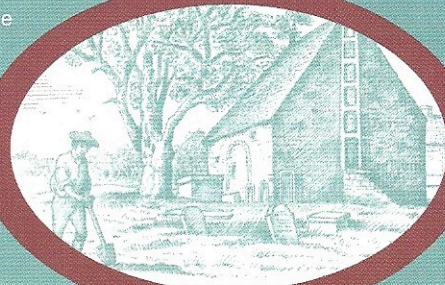
K**JOHN RICHMOND**

He was born in 1765, and was a clerk in Gavin Hamilton's office, and an early friend of Burns. He moved to Edinburgh in 1785 to study law, and when Burns arrived a year later, he lodged with him. In 1789, Richmond returned to Mauchline as a fully qualified solicitor.

His father owned Montgarswood Farm, which Holy Willie leased for a few years. He was a member of the bachelor group the Court of Equity and was with Burns on the evening, which inspired the Jolly Beggars across at Poosie Nansie's. He died at the age of 81 in 1846. His house at No. 3 High Street is still standing.

L**JAMES LAMIE**

Lamie was a member of the Kirk Session. He and Willie Fisher (Holy Willie) visited the Armours to enquire into Jean's first pregnancy. Mrs Armour refused to cooperate. He was the strict stepfather of Burns' young friend, James Smith. Their relationship was strained. His house still stands at the entrance to Castle Street.

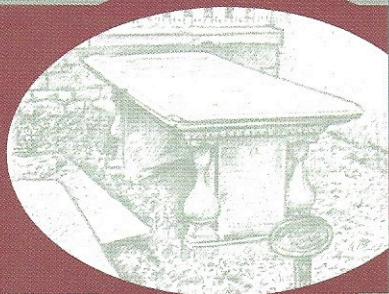


Jean Armour
her children are buried here

M

DADDY AULD

The Rev. William Auld was the respected minister of the Parish Church for 50 years. Born in 1709, near Symington, he was educated at Leyden, Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities. He died in 1791 at the age of 81. The tomb decoration is possibly by a predecessor of the Smith Boxware family. There is no evidence of personal animosity between Burns and the minister, as there was with Fisher.



N

CLOCKIE BROWN

John Brown is mentioned in the poem 'The Court of Equity'. He was a watch and clock maker particularly of grandfather clocks.

O

THE BALLOCHMYLE GRAVES

The Alexander family bought Ballochmyle on the bankruptcy of the Whitefoords in 1785. The Bonnie Lass, Wilhelmina is not buried here but in the Glasgow Necropolis in 1848.

P

POOSIE NANSIE'S GRAVES

Black Geordie Gibson, his wife Agnes Ronald, Poosie Nansie and their daughter Race Jess. Their inn across the road was the scene of The Jolly Beggars. Jess is mentioned in The Holy Fair. Her nickname indicated her speed at running, as shown in her employment as an errand runner and willingness to accept bets on her speed. Her mother, the source of whose own name Poosie is unknown, on being accused by the Kirk Session of running an unruly house, scorned the Kirk and indicated she had no intention of reforming.

Q

GODLY BRYDAN

James Brydan was a farmer at Welton and is mentioned in "The Court of Equity", probably on account of his appearance in front of the Kirk of Session for irregularities with girls.

R

Dr. MATTHEW STEWART

Dr Stewart was born in 1717, and was an eminent geometrician at Edinburgh University. His son Dugald was professor of Moral Philosophy and Physics, also at Edinburgh. It was in their home at Catrine, that Burns dinner'd wi' a lord - Lord Daer. When Burns visited the capital, the professor was his passport into the city's intellectual society.

S

NANSE TINNOCK

Nanse kept the Sma', Inn in Castle Street. Her married name was Agnes Weir. The inn is now part of the Burns House Museum complex. The ale house was popular at the Holy Fair, as it gave direct access to and from the Kirkyard. Although Nanse claimed Burns was a rare customer, he stated the poem To Mr. McAdam of Craigengillan, was composed there.



T

MARY MORISON

It is very doubtful that this is the girl in the song, as she was only fourteen when it was written. Her father was a retired army officer. She died as the result of an amputation of a foot, injured in an accident.

WILLIE FISHER (HOLY WILLIE)

He was ordained an Elder of Mauchline Kirk in 1782. He is the subject of two of Burns' poems: Holy Willie's Prayer and Epitaph on Holy Willie. The first arose as a result of the feud between Gavin Hamilton and the Kirk Session, which the latter lost. From the attitudes revealed in the poem by Willie, he is, as Holy Willie, renowned as the arch hypocrite in literature. Befitting this title, he was found dead drunk and frozen in a ditch on his way to his farm, East Montgarswood, on the Sorri Road.



U

ROBERT WILSON

The Gallant Weaver was a native of Mauchline but moved to Paisley. It was there that her parents sent Jean Armour when she was pregnant for the first time. This visit gave rise to the rumour that she and Wilson were to be married, which made Burns resentful of Wilson.

V

GAVIN HAMILTON

He was a lawyer and friend of Burns. Both belonged to the New Lights, more liberal thinkers in the Scottish Kirk. Mossiel farm was leased by Hamilton from the Earl of Loudoun and sub-leased to Burns. Burns supported Hamilton in his dispute with the Session over petty misdemeanours, the result of which was the composition of the satirical poem 'Holy Willie's Prayer'. Burns met Highland Mary Campbell while she was nursemaid to the Hamilton family. The marriage of Burns and Jean Armour may have taken place in Hamilton's office or home. The Kilmarnock Edition of Burns poems was dedicated to Hamilton. The lines on the stone are from the poem 'A Dedication to Gavin Hamilton Esq.'

W

Originally, at Hamilton's request, no stone marked the grave. The one erected last century was replaced in 2003.

WIFE OF JULIAN HARNEY

This stone commemorates the wife of the leader of the Chartist Movement – a powerful force for electoral and social reform in the 19th century.

X

JAMES HAMILTON

He was employed at Mossiel as a message boy. He was once sent by Burns with a letter to Jean Armour with the instructions to "give it to no one but herself".

Y

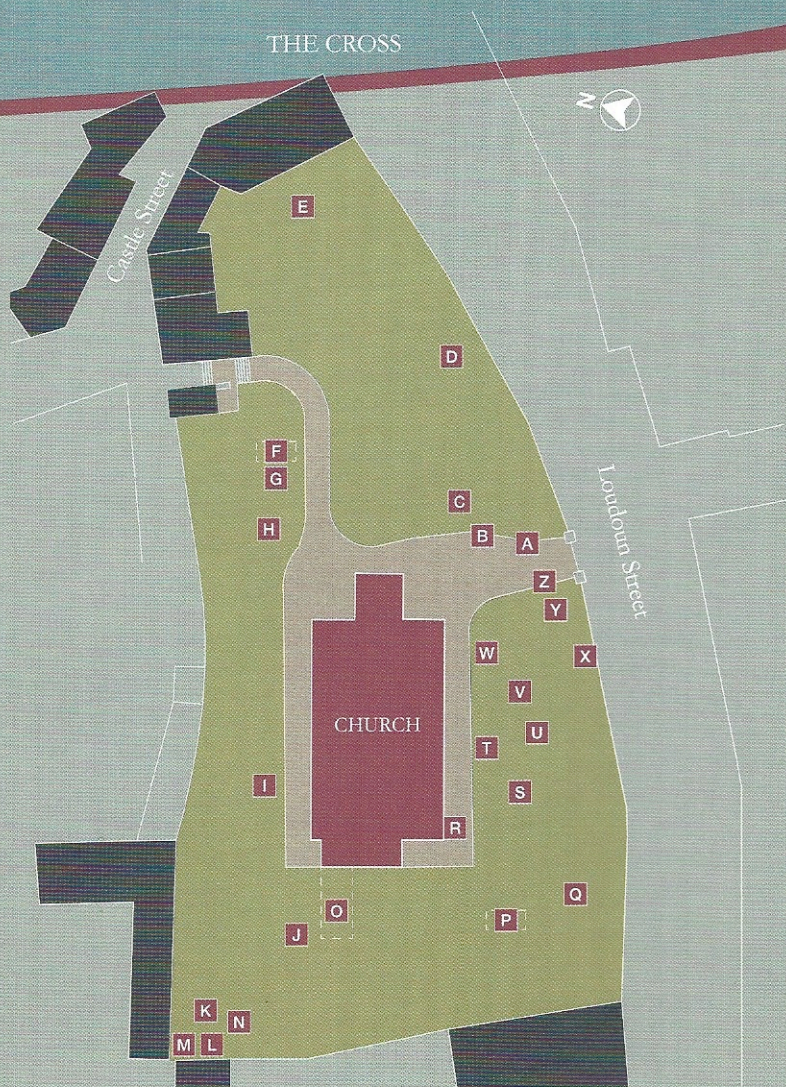
JOHN BURNS

Recent research has shown the youngest brother of Burns, who died in 1785, aged 16 years, was buried in an unmarked grave in this kirkyard.

Z

At the church hall entrance to the kirkyard, the small structure below ground level, served as a jail.

Mauchline Kirkyard Layout Plan



with assistance to THE MAUCHLINE BURNS CLUB by



Illustrations supplied by Colin Hunter McQueen
Cover photograph by Gavin Lyell
Research Ian Lyell, Hon. President