

astounding sum of £2,500 was found to be at his disposal.

Then came the brief, bright days. Magnanimously generous always, much of this sum, the first and last good fortune Burns ever knew, went to Jean's parents, and to assist his brother, Gilbert Burns, in averting disaster in the latter's farm life efforts. His lucky meeting with the ingenious and kindly Patrick Miller, of Dalswinton hall, had occurred. It had been settled that the poet, who hated the city with a royal hatred, should return to the plow. The nobility of the day never quite forgave this plebeian longing and love, the source of his grandest inspirations. This beautiful farm of Ellisland, five miles above Dumfries, was taken at a rental of fifty pounds per year. Burns, unaided, began his farm labors the first Monday after Whitsunday, 1788. He toiled manfully until the autumn of that year, meantime singing many a lusty song to his absent wife, and built the lovely cottage which stands here embowered in roses to this day. And then was celebrated the simple but glorious home coming, when, with rustic rites, and his bouny Jean upon his arm, "preceded by a peasant girl carrying the family Bible and a bowl of salt," he marched proudly into his little home heaven beside the winding Nith.

All evidences agree that in the brief period of a trifle over two years, between Whitsunday, 1788, and Martinmas, 1791, Burns and his good Jean experienced an Eden of labor and love, despite their final enforced departure. It was also, the period of Burns' best and greatest poetic fecundity. But more children came to them. These must be supported. The crops failed, and inevitable ruin was approaching. It was then that, to save his wife and children from actual want, he was forced to accept the government position of excise-man, at the beggarly pittance of £50 per year! The five remaining years of his life—after the poet, his Jean and their three children, Robert, Francis Wallace and William Nicol, removed to the humble lodgings, their first home in Dumfries—checked, sad, pathetic beyond comprehension, are known to all.

Leaving the quaint old city of Dumfries, you cross the "new brig" to the west, and are at once in the pretty braeside hamlet of Maxwelltown, famous wherever heart songs are sung for that one inexpressibly tender ballad, equal to any that Burns himself gave the world, matchless "Annie Laurie." Then the highway—the ancient coach road between Dumfries and Glasgow—winds over brae and hill, through dale and dingle, over beck and burn, through shadowy avenues and patches of sunshine, past deserted clachans and now silent olden inns of call, with the songs of streams and birds ever in your ears, all the distance to Ellisland. Once past the outlying habitations of Maxwelltown you will see down there to the right the picturesque ruins of Lincluden abbey, but a few moments' walk from the highway. Beneath the shadows of its majestic walls lies Margaret, daughter of Robert III, king of Scotland.

If you will wander but a little distance around the ancient abbey walls, and, entering the Nith, broadens into a deep pool or linn. Hence linn-Cluden, "the Cluden pool," and the name of the grand old monastic pile, Lincluden Abbey, which towers at its edge above.

You finally come to a bit of almost champaign country. Comfortable standings with snug stone cottages lie on either side of the highway. To the right is an ancient gate, opening to a long lane, hedge bordered, between

well kept fields, where the young grain is already rich and green. The wagonway is thick with the falling blossoms of the hawthorn. The hedge banks are a mass of gladsome daisies. A tiny burn, having its source in springs above, wimples at one side, half hidden in the grass and daisies. And at the end of this lane, just over a ridge of warm and yellowy loam, are seen the low roofs of a cottage and its humble outbuildings, here and there half hidden in the foliage of surrounding trees. This is Ellisland, for four years the farm home and home heaven of Robert Burns, the only spot on all this earth where comfort and happiness were his.

From the highway Ellisland is disappointing. The ridge of the standing fields forms a monotonous horizon line. But Burns knew where to build his Nithside nest. From any point in the vicinity of the *onstead* or farm buildings there is a glorious view of the valley of the Nith. The house faces to the east and north a gentle bend in the Nith, which murmurs here over the shining shallows not a hundred yards distant. With the outbuildings and their connecting rubble walls a sunny, nearly inclosed quadrangle is formed. The side next the distant highway to the west has to the right, as you enter the inclosure, a stable and cowhouse, and a byre or feeding and straw yard behind. To the left is a mill shed, a modern structure, a tiny barn, and behind the latter (which, with the stable and cowhouse, stand precisely as Burns built them) is the inclosed stack-yard where bonnie Jean found her husband in that great agony of dejection which gave the world the matchless hymn to Mary in heaven.

The house itself, into the construction of which the poet put months of his own labor, working alongside the rustic stone-masons of the time, remains to this day exactly as he built it. A small kitchen has been added on the side next the river, which now, as then, is the front of the house. The portion built by Burns is of rubble, about 55 feet long and nearly 20 in width. It is one story in height, with an ample attic. There is a large room about 18 feet square at each end. The entrance from the Nithside was into a hallway, from which these two large rooms were reached. Out of this one could also pass to the attic above, and to a small kitchen which, with a little bedroom, stands between the two larger rooms. Of the latter, the one at the left or north end, which communicates with the little bedroom, was used by Burns for the ceremonious entertainment of distinguished guests.

The other, at the south end, was the real heart of the home—the "spence" or living room of the poet, his wife and bairns. The family provisions were kept here. In one end stood the bed. The meals were eaten here. And here the companions that Burns loved came into the ingle-nook glow. Beside the fireplace is a broad, low window. Against the side wall stood an oaken table, and here the poet in this sunny corner could feast his eyes upon the flowers and vines of his own little garden, let them dwell fondly upon his cattle and pet sheep in the billowy field beyond, or conjure glorious fancies from the noble sweeps of Nithsdale's broad southern expanse, crowded at its eastern edge with noble forests and the huge gables of Dalswinton hall. By this little window Burns either composed or put into completed manuscript form the greatest amount of the greatest work of his life. How we prize the least reminder of these royal fellows when they are gone!

There are those who would pay \$1,000 each for two of the tiny panes in that one

sunny window. On one Burns wrote with a diamond and afterward partially erased, "Home he had not—home is the resort;" on the other he inscribed his favorite maxim, "An honest man's the noblest work of God." These inscriptions, the house and outbuildings and a few sturdy trees the poet planted are the only visible relics of the hard's life at Ellisland, for the spot is one of the few in Britain, more grace to it, that is not a show place where the insistent reminder of the endlessness of fees merges reverence and emotion into ridicule and contempt.

The almost exclusive haunt of Burns at Ellisland was within call of his bonnie Jean just below the high bank or scaur, upon the edge of which the cottage stands. Between this and the Nith for a long distance to the north and south runs a lovely river road. Out of the cottage inclosure a shaded path and wagon way descends to join the river road. Half way down this almost sylvan way is a copious spring. The bank of the scaur side in the shade is a mass of ferns and violets, and in the sun shine a wondrous constellation of "wee crimson tippet flowers," the daisies of Scotland, for which Burns felt something akin to adoration. Then came the silvery shallows of the Nith. Beyond its stream, leading to the meadow lands above, is a haugh, a golden mass of waving broom. Along this dreamful way, and up and down the river road, Burns sauntered and dreamed. It was the scene of his most ecstatic achievement, "Tam o' Shanter," which the celebrated Alexander Smith thought, as it was written in a day, the best single day's work done in Scotland since Bruce fought at Bannockburn.

Ellisland originally comprised 170 acres of land. The lease to the poet was for four terms of nineteen years. It was executed in March, 1788, and would have expired by limitation in 1854. Burns was to pay £50 per year for the first three years, and £70 thereafter, and the owner allowed the poet £300 toward the erection of the cottage and outbuildings. I find the present owner to be one Dr. J. M. Taylor, of Spittlesfield, Dunkeld. The standing has been reduced from 170 acres to 100 acres, and it is now leased for the usual nineteen years' term, fifteen of which have expired, to a family of hard working and intelligent Scotch farmers named Grierson, at a rental of £150 per year. The old goldwife, Dame Grierson, seems to live in a sort of halo of reverential grief for him who made her farmstead hallowed ground. "Puir body! puir body!" she is constantly moaning beside you: "puir body, he was dwanged (harassed) to his dede-ill (mortal sickness)!"

EDGAR L. WAKEMAN.

DEMOCRATIC PRIMARIES.

The following important resolution was adopted Tuesday eve, at the Democratic primaries held in this city for the election of delegates to the county convention to be held on the 6th inst.

Whereas the executive committee of the county Democratic committee have adopted the following resolution, viz.: Whereas it is the opinion of the executive committee of the Democratic party of Salt Lake county, that the best interests of our public schools are subserved by removing the school system far above and away from the influence of political strife. Resolved That we, the executive committee of the Democratic party of Salt Lake county, recommend to the Democrats of Salt Lake county that they unite with all good citizens in the formation of a citizens' ticket in which the best men shall