

District AYRSHIRE

Gaelic Name

A' Chomraich

Tartan Designer Dr. Philip D. Smith F.S.T.S.

Date 1988

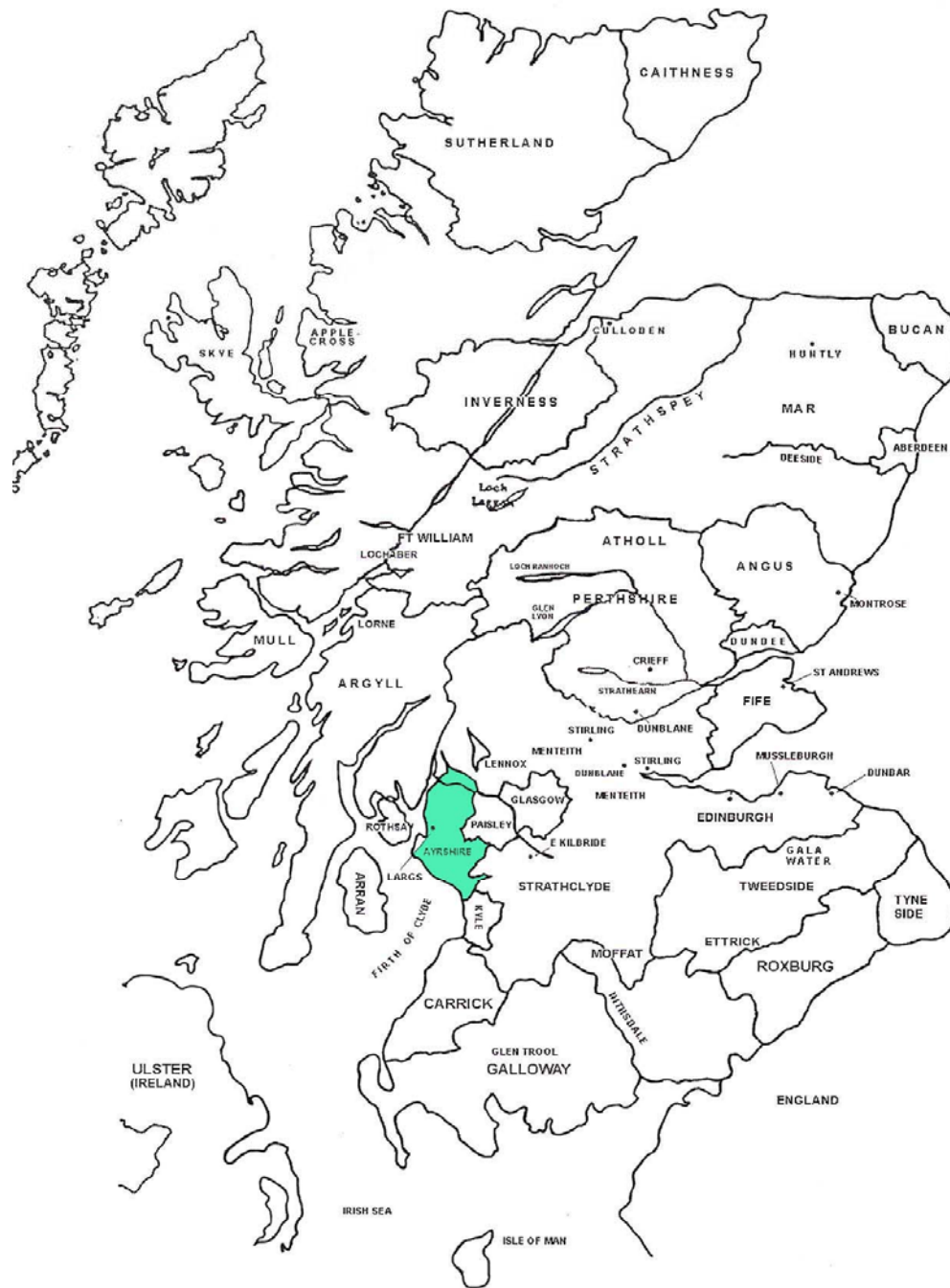
AYRSHIRE, on the west coast of mainland Scotland, stretches for 80 miles from the Firth of Clyde to the mouth of Loch Ryan at its southernmost tip but is only 30 miles across at its widest. In 1975, with the reorganization of Local Government, it was absorbed into Strathclyde Region but before that it was the largest shire in southern Scotland and is known to have been inhabited for fully 11th Century it was frequently attacked by the Vikings but they were defeated for the last time in 1263 at Largs which, interestingly, became the base from whence Bruce and Wallace launched their campaigns. Ayrshire was divided naturally, by rivers, into three old provinces; Cunningham in the north (river Irvine), Carrick in the south (river Doon - spanned by the old Brig o' Doon) and, centrally, Kyle where the "county town" of Ayr saw, on 26th April 1315, the first meeting of a Scottish Parliament since the battle of Bannockburn in 1314. The rich history of Ayrshire is closely bound to that of the four main clans i.e. Stewarts, Cunninghams, Hamiltons and Boyds. However, several other clans are also associated with the surrounding District; Wallace, Bruce, Campbell of Loudoun, Kennedy & etc.. Ayrshire is famous for its Dairy Cattle which developed from specialized cross-breeding started in the 18th century and is now well established in many other parts of the world e.g. Canada, Kenya, USSR and especially Finland where there are over 500,000 cows. With 80 miles of coastline, mostly with beautiful sandy beaches, other Ayrshire towns are known to every golfer; Troon itself has no fewer than five courses the most famous being Royal Troon with its intimidating short hole, The Postage Stamp. A few miles down the coast is Turnberry which with Troon host "The Open" regularly. The name of Prestwick is also well known for golf but it is also known as an International Airport which because of its favorable weather conditions is often the only Airport in the U.K. not closed by fog. Other Ayrshire names, such as Alloway, Kirkoswald, Tarbolton, Mauchline and Mossgiel may not mean much to the uninitiated but to devotees of the works of Scotland's Bard, Robert Burns, they conjure up pictures of Tom O'Shanter, Souter Johnnie's Cottage, The Bachelors' Club (where Burns became a freemason), Mauchline is where Jean Armour was born and married Burns, not in the church, because his life style was rather frowned upon, but in a house beside the castle. A mile further north is Mossgiel where Burns was the tenant farmer and wrote his best works.

The Ayrshire Tartan was designed by Dr. Philip Smith PhD, of PA, USA at the request of Clan Boyd and Clan Cunninghame who wanted an alternative tartan for the people of Ayrshire. The colors represent the Gold of the rising sun, the Green of the land, the Brown of the coastline, the Blue of the sea and the Red of the setting sun.

This clan information sheet has been prepared by
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