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25

The Kilmarnock Monument (and haggis) on film

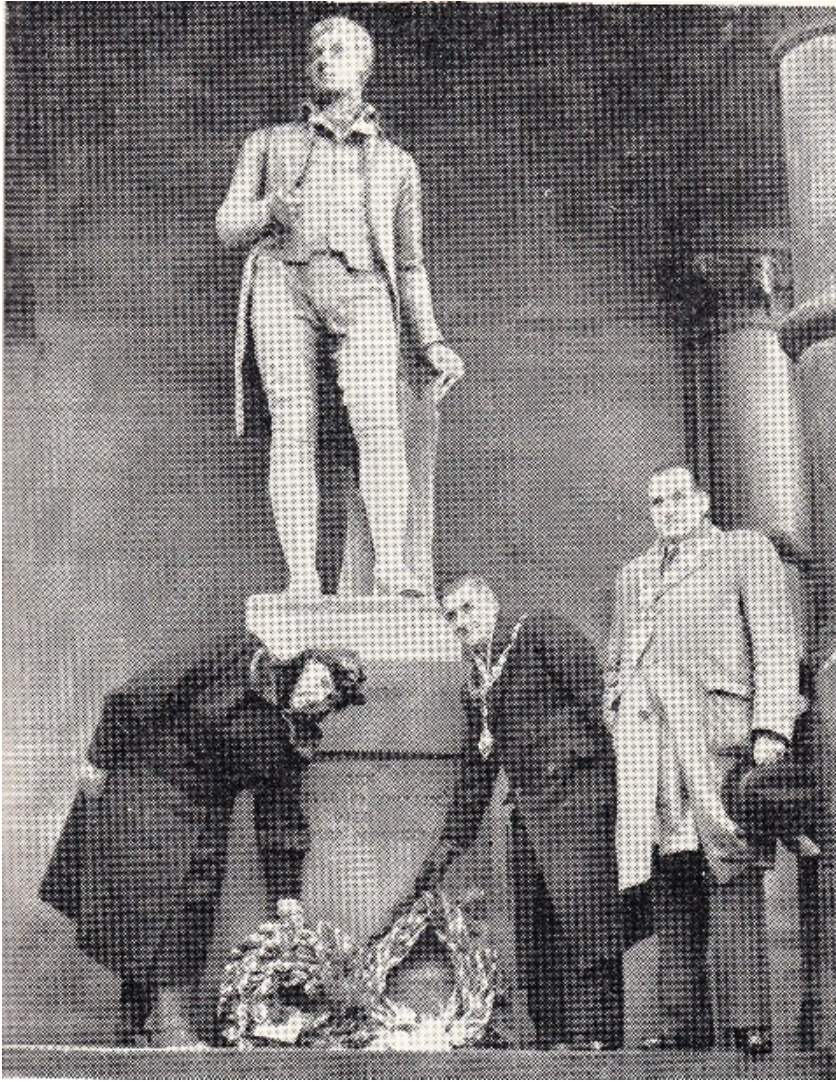
by bmcuser

When every day is Burns Day, January 25th can be an opportunity to look at things differently. We were delighted to find the wee film below from **British Pathe**, featuring the old Burns Monument in Kilmarnock in 1959. The lasting memory of the film isn't the rich poetic legacy, or the beautiful songs, or even the finely chiselled statue. It is, inevitably, haggis.

ROBERT BURNS BI-CENTENARY [sic]

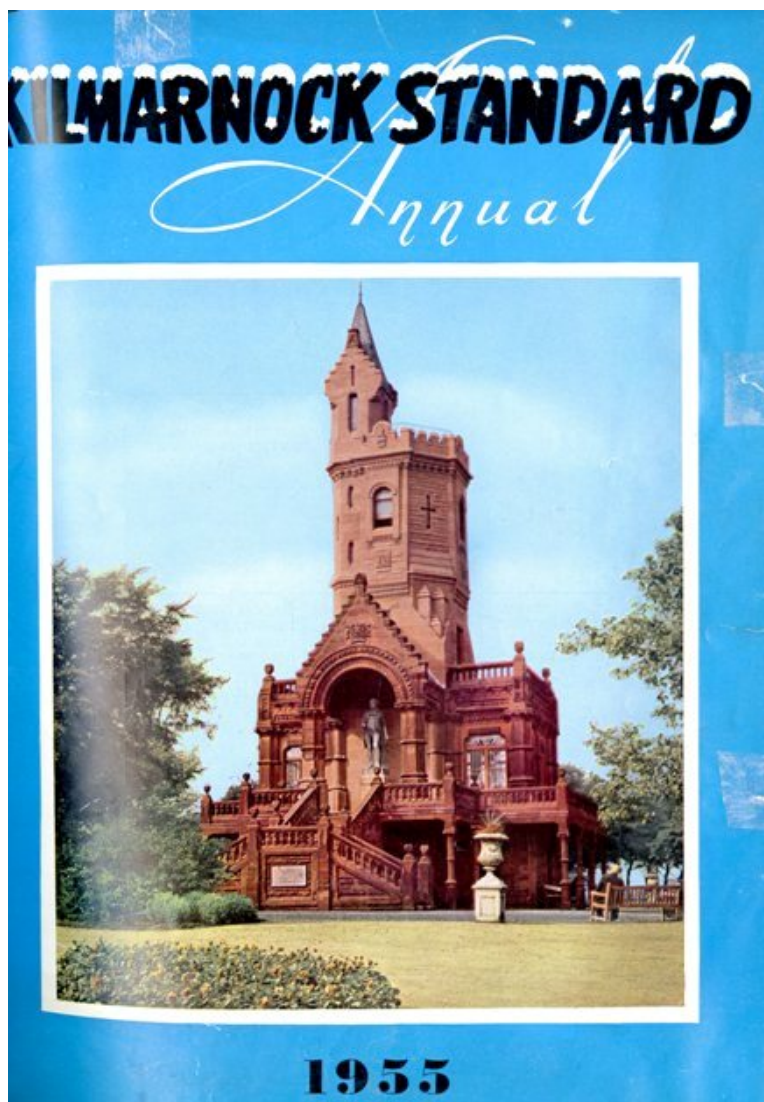


A few years earlier, in January 1955, the cameras were on hand to capture the International Burns Festival. Part of the international delegation visited the Kilmarnock Monument, including Anna Elistratova, who wrote the first biographical study of Burns to be published in the Soviet Union. We don't have footage of this, but the story was captured in the *Kilmarnock Standard* (and the *Kilmarnock Standard Annual*, image reproduced below).



From the *Kilmarnock Standard Annual*, 1955 -

“During their Kilmarnock visit, the delegates went to the monument in the Kay Park where Mme. Elistratova of the Soviet Union assisted Provost W. B. Gilmour to lay a wreath in the poet’s memory. At the civic reception in the Grand Hall, Mr. Leonard W. Brockington proposed a toast to ‘Auld Killie’ – a friendly, neighbourly and brotherly town,’ he called it.”



Coincidentally, this issue of the *Annual* also contains a very early poem by William McIlvanney in Poets' Corner!

There is also a lovely film of 1920s Kilmarnock on the Scotland on Screen website, featuring the Monument as one of the landmarks of the town.

In January 2013 we have a busy schedule of school visits, learning about Burns and his Kilmarnock connections in particular. More posts showcasing these visits will follow soon. On the 25th we have Hopscotch Theatre Company performing Tam O' Shanter for primary schools, and tonight we have **The Songs of Burns** performed by Anne Lewis and Bill Taylor.

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