



MAYBOLE BOOT AND SHOE INDUSTRY

On the Trail of Tacketties



In the 19th century and within the remarkably short period of just two generations, the townsfolk of Maybole switched from being weavers and became a

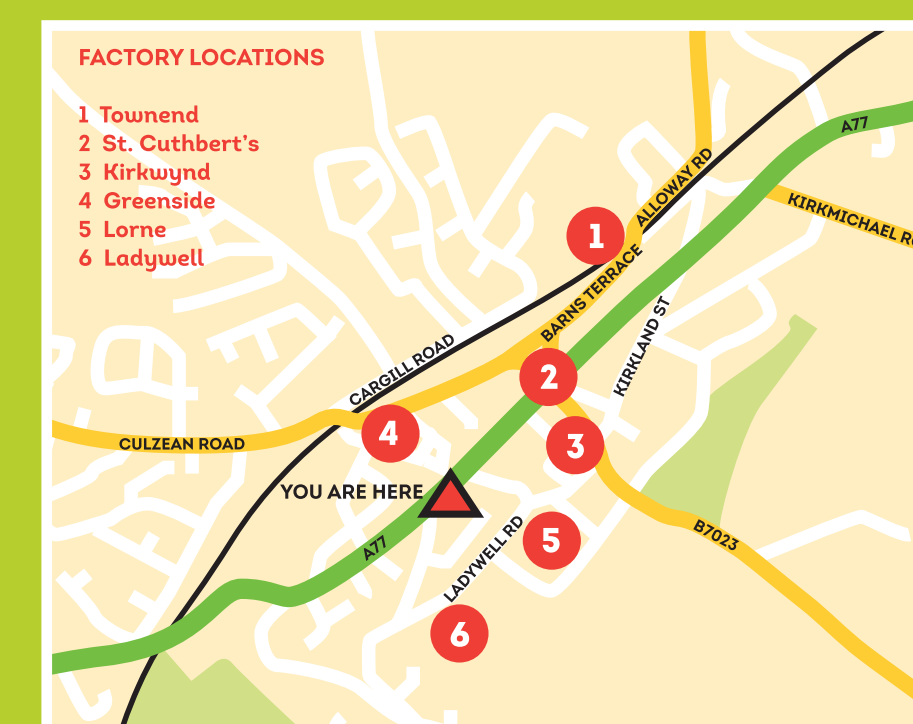
community of shoemakers or souters. At first, much of the work was done by home-workers and in many cottages every night families would cut and sew by candlelight, being paid by every dozen pairs they completed.

Gradually, the industry grew and town factories were established. Maybole became known UK-wide for its fine boots, sales were generated internationally as far afield as Ireland and Egypt and the town prospered on the business of boot and shoe-making. Maybole was famous for its 'Tacketties' - huge boots with hard-wearing studded soles and heels created from metal tackets. Even the town itself was known as 'Auld Tackettie'.

In its boot-making heyday around 1890, Maybole boasted nine factories which employed over 1,600 people. Together, they

produced around one million pairs of boots and shoes every year.

Sadly, the industry declined rapidly in the 1920s, though it was another 70 years before local boot manufacturing died out.



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