

IMMORTAL WORKS OF
ROBERT BURNS

1759–1796



TO A HAGGIS

Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face,
Great chieftain o' the Puddin'-race!
Aboon them a' ye tak your place,
 Painch, tripe, or thairm:
Weel are ye wordy of a *grace*
 As lang's my arm.

The groaning trencher there ye fill,
Your hurdies like a distant hill,
Your *pin* wad help to mend a mill
 In time o' need,
While thro' your pores the dewes distil
 Like amber bead.

His knife see Rustic labour dight,
An' cut you up wi' ready slight,
Trenching your gushing entrails bright
 Like onie ditch;
And then, O what a glorious sight,
 Warm-reekin, rich!

Then, horn for horn they stretch an' strive,
Deil tak the hindmost, on they drive,
Till all their weel-swallow'd kytes belyve
 Are bent like drums;
Then auld Guidman maist like to rive,
 'Bethankit!' hums.

Is there that owre his French *ragout*,
Or *olio* that wad staw a sow,
Or *fricassee* wad mak her spew
 Wi' perfect sconner,
Looks down wi' sneering, scornfu' view
 On sic a dinner?

Poor devil! see him owre his trash,
As feckless as a wither'd rash,
His spindle shank a guid whip-lash,
His nieve a nit;
Thro' bloody flood or field to dash,
O how unfit!

But mark the Rustic, *haggis-fed*
The trembling earth resounds his tread,
Clap in his walie nieve a blade,
He'll mak it whistle;
An' legs, an' arms, an' heads will sned,
Like taps o' thrissle.

Ye Pow'rs wha mak mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill o' fare,
Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware
That jaups in luggies;
But, if ye wish her gratefu' pray'r,
Gie her a *Haggis!*

1

A GRACE BEFORE DINNER

O, Thou, who kindly dost provide
For every creature's want!
We bless Thee, God of nature wide,
For all thy goodness lent:
And, if it please thee, heav'nly guide,
May never worse be sent:
But, whether granted, or denied,
Lord bless us with content! – Amen.

2

THE SELKIRK GRACE

Some hae meat, and canna eat,
And some wad eat that want it;
But we hae meat and we can eat,
And sae the Lord be thankit.

3

SCOTS, WHA HAE

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,
Welcome to your gory bed
Or to victorie!

Now's the day, and now's the hour;
See the front o' battle lour,
See approach proud Edward's power,
Chains and slaverie!

Wha will be a traitor-knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a Slave?
Let him turn and flee!

Wha for Scotland's king and law,
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand or freeman fa',
Let him follow me!

By Oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they *shall* be free!

Lay the proud Usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!
Let us do – or die!

4

RANTIN ROBIN

There was a lad was born in Kyle,
But what na day o' what na style,
I doubt it's hardly worth the while
To be sae nice wi' Robin.

CHORUS

*Robin was a rovin' Boy,
Rantin', rovin', rantin', rovin';
Robin was a rovin' Boy,
Rantin' rovin', Robin!*

Our monarch's hindmost year but ane
Was five-and-twenty days begun,
'Twas then a blast o' Janwar Win'
Blew hansel in on Robin.

The Gossip keekit in his loof,
Quo' scho' wha lives will see the proof,
This waly boy will be nae coof;
I think we'll ca' him Robin

He'll hae misfortunes great an' sma'
But ay a heart aboon them a';
He'll be a credit till us a',
We'll a' be proud o' Robin.

'But sure as three times three mak nine,
I see by ilka score and line,
This chap will dearly like our kin',
So leeze me on thee, Robin.'

5

THE HENPECKED HUSBAND

Curs'd be the man, the poorest wretch in life
The crouching vassal to the tyrant wife,
Who has no will but by her high permission;
Who has not sixpence but in her possession;
Who must to her his dear friend's secret tell;
Who dreads a curtain-lecture worse than hell.
Were such the wife had fallen to my part,
I'd break her spirit, or I'd break her heart;
I'd charm her with the magic of a switch,
I'd kiss her maids, and kick the perverse bitch.

6

TO A MOUSE

*On Turning Her Up In Her Nest With
The Plough, November 1785*

Wee, sleeket, cow'rin, tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
 Wi' bickering brattle!
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,
 Wi' murd'ring pattle!

I'm truly sorry Man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion
 Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor earth-born companion,
 An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whyles, but thou mayst thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen-icker in a thrave
 'S a sma' request:
I'll get a blessin' wi' the lave,
 And never miss't!

Thy wee-bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin'!
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,
 O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin,
 Baith snell an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' wast,
An' weary Winter comin fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
 Thou thought to dwell,
Till crash! the cruel coulter past
 Out thro' thy cell.

That wee-bit heap o' leaves an' stibble
Has cost thee monie a weary nibble!
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble
 But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
 An' cranreuch cauld!

But, Mousie, thou art no thy-lane,
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best laid schemes o' mice an' men,
 Gang aft agley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain
 For promis'd joy!

Still, thou art blest, compar'd wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But, Och! I backward cast me e'e,
 On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
 I guess an' fear!

7

LASS O' BALLOCHMYLE

Fair is the morn in flowery May,
 And sweet is night in autumn mild,
When roving thro' the garden gay,
 Or wand'ring in the lonely wild;
But woman, Nature's darling child
 There all her charms she does compile;
Even there her other works are foil'd
 By the bonnie lass o'Ballochmyle.

O' had she been a country maid,
 And I the happy country swain,
Tho' shelter'd in the lowest shed
 That ever rose on Scotia's plain!
Thro' weary winter's wind, and rain
 With joy, with rapture, I will toil,
And nightly to my bosom strain
 The bonnie lass o'Ballochmyle!

cont...

Then pride might climb the slip'ry steep,
Where fame and honours lofty shine;
And thirst of gold might tempt the deep,
Or downward seek the Indian mine;
Give me the cot below the pine,
To tend the flocks or till the soil,
And ev'ry day have joys divine
With the bonnie lass o'Ballochmyle.

8

WILLIE BREW'D

O, Willie brew'd a peck o' maut,
And Rob and Allan cam to see;
Three blyther hearts that lee lang night,
Ye wad na found in Christendie.

CHORUS

*We are no fou, we're nae that fou,
But just a drappie in our e'e;
The cock, may craw, the day may daw,
And aye we'll tase the barley bree.*

Here are we met three merry boys,
Three merry boys I trow are we;
And mony a night we've merry been,
And mony may we hope to be!

It is the moon, I ken her horn,
That's blinkin' in the lift sae hie;
She shines sae bright to wyle us hame,
But, by my sooth she'll wait a wee!

Wha first shall rise to gang awa,
A cuckold coward loun is he!
Wha last beside his chair shall fa',
He is the king amang us three!

9

AFTON WATER

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,
Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise;
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

Thou stock dove whose echo resounds thro' the glen,
Ye wild whistling blackbirds in yon thorny den,
Thou green crested lapwing, thy screaming forbear,
I charge you disturb not my slumbering fair.

How lofty, sweet Afton, thy neighbouring hills,
Far mark'd with the courses of clear, winding rills;
There daily I wander as noon rises high,
My flocks and my Mary's sweet Cot in my eye.

How pleasant thy banks and green vallies below,
Where wild in the woodlands the primroses blow,
There oft, as mild ev'ning weeps over the lea,
The sweet scented birk shades my Mary and me.

The crystal stream, Afton, how lovely it glides,
And winds by the cot where my Mary resides;
How wanton thy waters her snowy feet lave,
As, gathering sweet flowers, she stems thy clear wave.

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,
Flow gently, sweet river, the theme of my lays;
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

10

AE FOND KISS

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, and then forever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.

cont...

Had we never lov'd sae kindly,
Had we never lov'd sae blindly!
Never met – or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Who shall say that Fortune grieves him,
While the star of hope she leaves him:
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me;
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
Naething could resist my Nancy!
But to see her was to love her;
Love but her, and love for ever.

Fare-thee-weel thou first and fairest!
Fare-thee-weel thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, Enjoyment, Love and Pleasure!

Ae fond kiss and then we sever!
Ae farewell, alas, forever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.

11

A MAN'S A MAN

Is there for honest poverty
That hings his head, an' a' that?
The coward slave, we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, an' a' that,
Our toils obscure, an' a' that,
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.

What tho' on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hodden grey, an' a' that?
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that!
For a' that, an' a' that,
Their tinsel show, an' a' that;
The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie ca'd a lord,
Wha struts and stares, an' a' that,
Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof for a' that.
For a' that, an' a' that,
His ribband, star, an' a' that,
The man o' independent mind,
He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke an' a' that,
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Gude faith, he mauna fa' that!
For a' that, an' a' that,
Their dignities, an' a' that,
The pith o' sense, an' pride o' worth,
Are higher rank than' a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will, for a' that,
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth
Shall bear the gree, an' a' that.
For a' that, an' a' that,
It's comin' yet, for a' that,
That man to man the world o'er
Shall brothers be for a' that.

12

YE BANKS AND BRAES

Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair;
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae weary fu' o' care!
Thou'll break my heart, thou warbling bird,
That wantons thro' the flowering thorn:
Thou minds me o' departed joys,
Departed, never to return.

Oft ha'e I roved by bonnie Doon,
To see the rose and woodbine twine;
And ilka bird sang o' its love,
And fondly sae did I o' mine.
Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree;
And my fause lover stow my rose,
But, ah! he left the thorn wi' me.

13

OF A' THE AIRTS'

Of a' the airts the wind can blow,
I dearly like the west;
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
The lassie I lo'e best:
There's wild woods grow, and rivers flow,
And many a hill between:
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
I see her sweet and fair;
I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
I hear her charm the air:
There's not a bonnie flower that springs
By fountain, shaw or green;
There's not a bonnie bird that sings
But minds me o' my Jean.

14

MY LOVE IS LIKE A RED, RED ROSE

O my love is like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June;
O my love is like the melodie
That's sweetly played in tune

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in love am I,
And I will love thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun
And I will love thee still, my dear,
While the sand o' life shall run.

And fare-thee-weel, my only love,
And fare-thee-weel, a while!
And I will come again, my love,
Tho, it were ten thousand mile.

15

A BOTTLE AND AN HONEST FRIEND

Here's a bottle and an honest friend!
What wad you wish for mair, man?
Wha kens, before his life may end,
What his share may be of care, man?

Then catch the moments as they fly,
And use them as ye ought, man:
Believe me, happiness is shy,
And comes not aye when sought, man.

16

GREEN GROW THE RASHES

There's nought but care on ev'ry han',
In every hour that passes, O:
What signifies the life o' man,
An 'twere na for the lasses, O?

CHORUS

*Green grow the rashies, O;
Green grow the rashies, O;
The sweetest hours that e'er I spend
Are spent among the lasses, O!*

The wari'ly race may riches chase,
And riches still may fly them, O;
An' tho' at last they catch them fast,
Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them, O.

But gie me a cannie hour at e'en,
My arms about my dearie, O;
An' wari'ly cares an wari'ly men,
May a' gae tapsalteerie, O!

For you sae douse, ye sneer at this,
Ye're nought but senseless asses, O:
The wisest man the warl' saw,
He dearly lov'd the lasses, O!

Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears
Her noblest works she classes, O:
Her prentice han' she tried on man,
An' then she made the lasses, O.

17

CA' THE YOWES

Hark, the mavis e'ening sang
Sounding Clouden's woods amang.
Then a-faulding let us gang.
My bonnie dearie.

CHORUS

*Ca' the yowes to the knowes,
Ca' them where the heather grows,
Ca' them where the burnie rowes,
My bonnie dearie*

We'll gae down by Clouden side,
Thro' the hazels spreading wide
O'er the waves that sweetly glide
To the moon sae clearly

Yonder Clouden's silent towers
Where, at moonshine's midnight hours,
O'er the dewy bending flowers
Fairies dance sae cheery.

Ghaist nor bogle shalt thou fear,
Thou'rt to love and Heav'n sae dear,
Nacht of ill may come thee near,
My bonnie dearie.

Fair and lovely as thou art,
Thou has stown my very heart;
I can die – but canna part,
My bonnie dearie.

18

GRACE AFTER DINNER

O Thou, in whom we live and move,
Who mad'st the sea and shore,
Thy goodness constantly we prove,
And, grateful, would adore.

And if it please Thee, Pow'r above,
Still grant us, with such store;
The friend we trust, the fair we love,
And we desire no more.

AULD LANG SYNE

Should auld acquaintance be forgot
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And days a' lang syne?

CHORUS

*For auld lang syne, my lo,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.*

And surely ye'll be your pint stowp!
And surely I'll be mine!
And we'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

We twa ha'e run about the braes,
And pou'd the gowans fine;
But we've wander'd mony a weary fit
Sin' auld lang syne.

We two ha'e paidl'd in the burn
Frae morning sun till dine,
But seas between us braid ha'e rear'd
Sin' auld lang syne.

And there's a hand my trusty fiere!
And gie's a hand o' thine!
And we'll tak a right gude willy waught
For auld lang syne.

A FAREWELL

Farewell, dear friend! may guid luck hit you,
And, 'mang her favourites admit you!
If e'er Detraction shore to smit you,
May nane believe him!
And ony Deil that thinks to get you,
Good Lord Deceive him!!!