



## Collected Poems of Robert Burns

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With an Introduction by Donald McFarlan.

Robert Burns, the most celebrated of all Scottish poets, is remembered with great devotion - his birthday on 25th January provokes fervour and festivity among Scots and many others the world over. Born in 1759 into miserable rustic poverty, by the age of eighteen Burns had acquired a good knowledge of both classical and English literature.

In June 1786 his first collection of verse, *Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*, which included 'To a Mouse' and 'The Cotter's Saturday Night', was greeted with huge acclaim by all classes of society. His later poems and ballads include 'Auld Lang Syne', the beautiful song 'My Love is like a Red Red Rose', 'Highland Mary', 'Scots Wha Hae' and his masterpiece, 'Tam o'Shanter'.

## Collected Poems of Robert Burns Details

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## From Reader Review Collected Poems of Robert Burns for online ebook

### Manny says

#### To a Mouse, on Turning Her Up in Her Nest with the Plough

Wee, sleekit, 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' murdering 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 may 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,  
An' never miss't.

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

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,  
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 turned 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 are blest, compared wi' me!  
The present only toucheth thee:  
But och! I backward cast my e'e,  
On prospects drear!  
An' forward, tho' I canna see,  
I guess an' fear!

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### **John Burns says**

I wouldn't class Burns as a "great poet" but he's certainly an able poet and a very likeable old chap to boot. I don't think you will get a great deal out of reading his poems, but his company is pleasant enough.

I wouldn't recommend this book to anyone really, but I didn't dislike it either.

In conclusion: bluh.

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### **Victoria Nicholson says**

Burns imagery is cliché. His musical language is in an archaic dialect that is only spoken well by a small number of people. To appreciate freedom I'd read Irish lit, French lit, the Mayflower Compact, U.S.A lit, etc. Unless you are a Scottish person yourself I consider this a utter waste of the most valuable commodity : TIME.

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### **Anant says**

A charismatic poet whose every creation was full of reality and gift of nature.

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### **Luke says**

Have read a little, would like to read more more, don't know if I ever will. I guess I just like knowing that I could if I feel like it. I like Scotland, that's a big part of why I like Burns and Scott.

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## Lady Dixie says

There's a charm and ease to Burns's poetry, perhaps because he wrote in dialect. Makes you want to throw back a pint with him.

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## MacK says

Burns can block a lot of readers: set aside the frequent dismissals of poetry (which I often hear from students, peers, even my elders and reading mentors), set aside the Scots language (slipped into a glossary at the back--a tutorial on some basic poems before launching into the classics would be nice to see), and still you have a poet very much of his time.

Poems are dedicated to friends, colleagues, politicians he hates, and half a dozen "braw" women (only one of them his wife). Centuries on it's hard to fully grasp the message, unless you are a true Burns scholar.

Still the inversion of rustic poetry, placing Scottish settings, food and language in poetic settings is a startling way to revisit history from an outsiders perspective (even if some of the more masculine poems are disappointingly dismissive of female empowerment). It's a great way to challenge what you think you know about poetry, British literature and class.

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## Claire Gordon-Bouvier says

Happy Burns Night! I'm just going to leave this here, because it's absolutely beautiful, and one of his most underappreciated works in my opinion.

When o'er the hill the eastern star  
Tells bughtin-time is near, my jo;  
And owsen frae the furrow'd field  
Return sae dowf and wearie O;  
Down by the burn, where scented birks  
Wi' dew are hanging clear, my jo,  
I'll meet thee on the lea-rig,  
My ain kind dearie O.

In mirkest glen, at midnight hour,  
I'd rove, and ne'er be eerie, O,  
If thro' that glen I gaed to thee,  
My ain kind dearie O.  
Altho' the night were ne'er sae wild,  
And I were ne'er sae weary O,  
I'd meet thee on the lea-rig,  
My ain kind dearie O.

The hunter lo'es the morning sun,  
To rouse the mountain deer, my jo;

At noon the fisher seeks the glen,  
Along the burn to steer, my jo:  
Gie me the hour o' gloamin grey,  
It maks my heart sae cheery O,  
To meet thee on the lea-rig,  
My ain kind dearie O.

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### **Ravanagh Allan says**

Displays the spiritual depth you would expect from Scotland's national bard!

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### **Mike Lemon says**

Burns is a good poet, but it is hard for me, the reader, to get into the Scottish lyrics.

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### **Michele Yount says**

Gah. I'll probably get flack for this, but, I don't care for most of Burns' poetry. He seems like a charming, uhm, interesting fellow, and I hold a few of his poetry works dearly (A Red, Red Rose), and his work is well-crafted, but, I found the majority of his work to be the uninteresting ramblings of a colorful old man.

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### **Theresa says**

Aiming to read one poem a day. It may take me a while, but I love this book, as I am reading from a leatherbound copy my father gifted me with in 1993. I like to read it while drinking some Cao Ila.

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### **Markus says**

It is a problem for me to understand many of the poems in their Scottish version, it is a pity, as otherwise I really love poetry.

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### **Lisa (Harmonybites) says**

I feel abashed to admit I don't much like the poetry of Robert Burns. I'm in a decided minority on GoodReads. Only one member gave this one star and eight gave it two stars--versus 71 who gave it five stars. Robert Burns is a major poet; I tried this book of his poetry because it was on *Good Reading's* "100 Significant Books." I've found reading through that list quite an education that has illuminated Western culture every time I've read one of those books listed. Even those I despised, such as Joyce's *Ulysses*, I've found well worth reading because you then recognize how it has influenced the literary landscape and

culture. Burns is no exception. He is Scotland's favorite son, and I imagine his use of Scots dialect and the vernacular was revolutionary. He is also considered a forerunner of the Romantic Movement and I can see that, especially in his extolling of nature--he has some of the most famous poems about animals in the English Language. Particularly "To a Mouse," a line of which was used as the title *Of Mice and Men* by Steinbeck.

I guess I can blame my reaction on the Scots dialect. I have to admit that to see words like "beastie" and "mousie" seemed very nursery rhyme to me, and often the use of the dialect was so thick as to be impenetrable. Take for instance this opening stanza of "Address to a Haggis:"

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

So no, not for me--and yes, there are poets I've loved: Sappho, Omar Khayyam, Shakespeare, Donne, Keats, Dickinson, T.S. Eliot, Frost among others. For what it's worth, I may try Burns again someday. There are two things I think I could do to make him more accessible--and that might be true for other readers as well too embarrassed to admit this didn't enthrall them. For one, the edition I read was downloaded for free from Project Gutenberg--a very old edition beyond copyright. A more annotated edition, that gave explanations for the various unfamiliar words might have made a great difference. So even if the content might deserve a better rating, well, I think this edition is not a good introduction. And poetry especially benefits from being read aloud. This might be a case where a talking or audio book might have been a superior experience to the written word.

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### **G.K. McGilvary says**

Without peer for his humanity, understanding of man's predicament and his own strengths and weaknesses. Seen in his poems, the songs he created, adds words to, and in many cases rescued; and also in his writings (Seen in the National Library of Scotland, in Edinburgh).

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