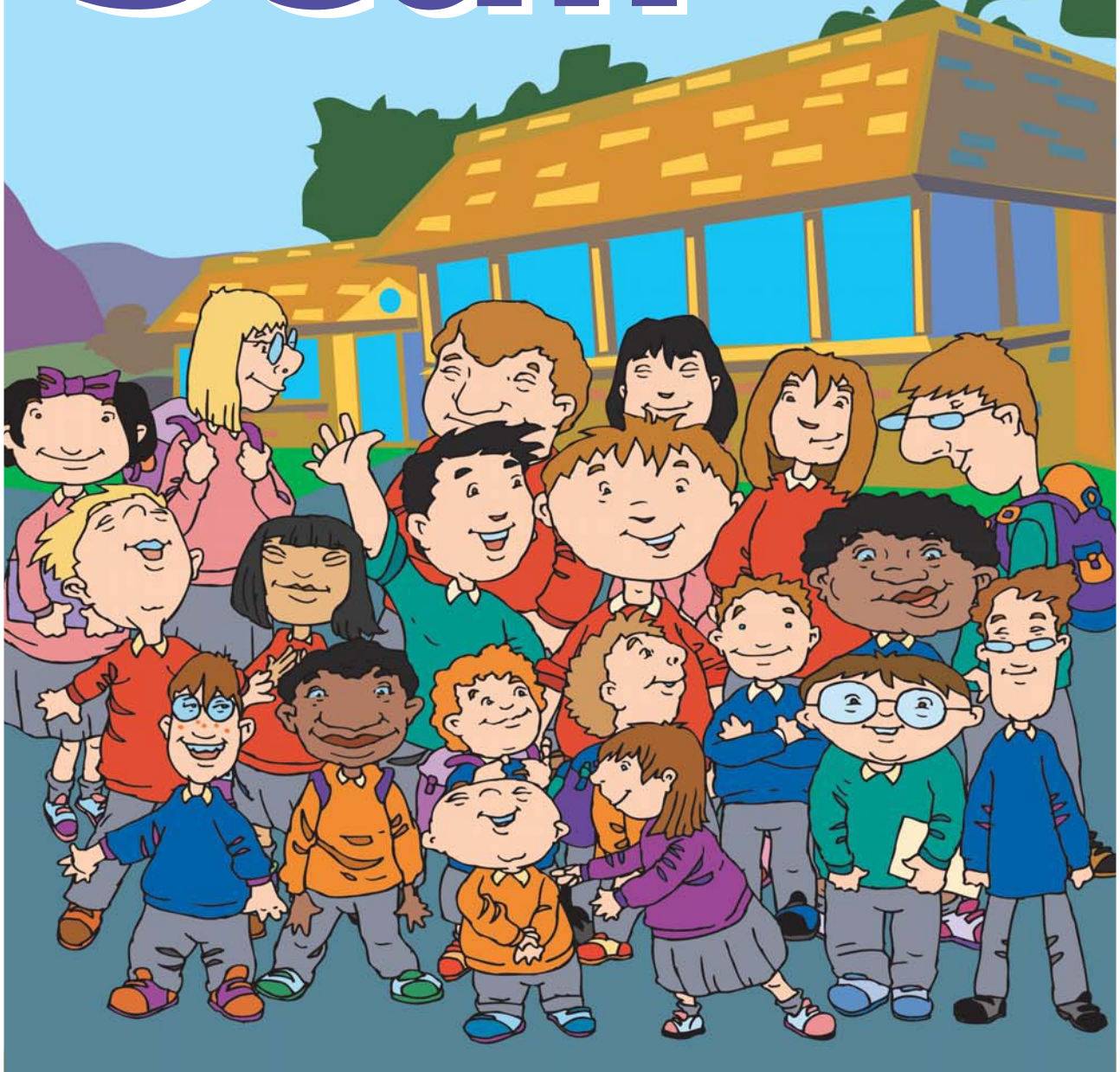


Oor Wee Scuil



**Ulster-Scots poems
for weans!**

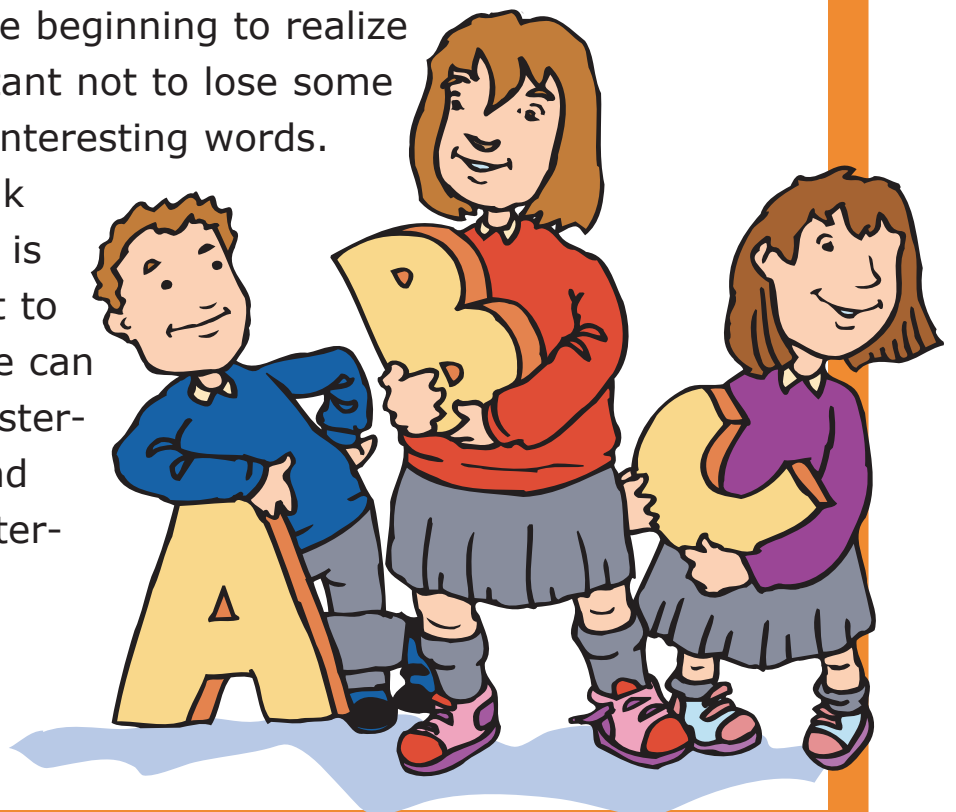
Some information about **Ulster-Scots....**

Why are there so many different ways of spelling the same words? Why are some words so like English but others are so different?

Many Scots people moved to Ulster in the 17th century and brought their language with them. We now call this language Ulster-Scots. Some of the words are very close to English because both Scots and English came from Anglo-Saxon hundreds of years earlier. Both Scots and English were sister languages in the same way that Gaelic in Ireland and Gaelic in Scotland are closely related.

People today are beginning to realize that it is important not to lose some of these really interesting words.

People also think that although it is really important to learn English we can also listen to Ulster-Scots poems and enjoy using Ulster-Scots words when they are appropriate.



Vocabulary and dialect

There are different Ulster-Scots words used in different parts of the country. A person from one area might not always know the words used in another area. You might hear words that you are very familiar with and others which you have never heard before.

Spelling

There is no strongly agreed method of spelling for many Ulster-Scots words. Some people think it is best to look to the way words were spelled in the past, others think we should spell them the way they sound.



Oor Wee Scuil Poems

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Yin Tae A Hunner

by Willie Drennan

Yin twa an three
Coontins nae bother tae me
Fower, five an sax
A'll coont ocht at ye a
Seiven echt an nine
Aa the nummers A hae mine
Ten, eleiven, twal
Cud coont fae a cud cral
There's thirteen, fowerteen an fifteen
Saxteen, seiventeen an echteen
There's nineteen, twonty an mair
But shair A dinnae care
Thurty, fowerty an fifty
Hi, am I naw quare an nifty
But at saxty, seiventy an echty
It's getting a weethin wechtie
At ninety an a hunner
A'll stap-afore A scunner.

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*Wee Book: Stories, Poems and Songs of a Wandering
Ulster-Scot*, (Ullans Press, 2004)



The Proota Gaitherin

By William Livingstone

Dae ye mine the times in hairvest climes
When we gaed gaitherin prootas
Me, mae ma an whiles mae da
An the neighbours roon about us

Ben yer bak an dinnae slak
Heid doon an dinnae stap
The wunter's naw sae far awa
An we cannae loas the crap

Then pert o yer wage at the bak o a hedge
Was yer tay frae a gellon can
A loaf o breid wae butter weel spread
An a coatin o hame-made jam

An thon coul sits by the proota pits
As they thatched an shovelled soil
Then a fire o peat, an a bite tae eat
At the enn o hard days toil.

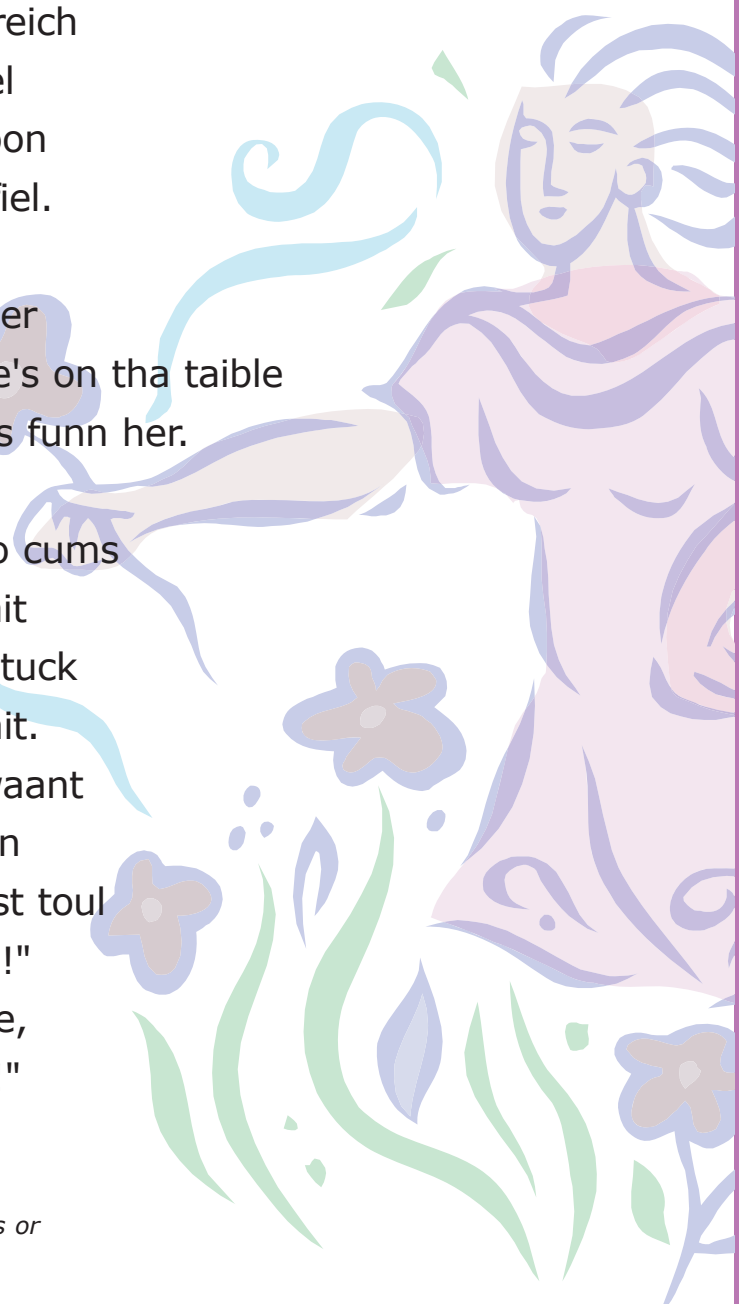
Tha Scunger

by Richard Archibald

Up fae tha screich
an oot as weel
Scho runs aroon
tha moss an fiel.
Her Ma an Da
the gie a gulder
Quhan her tae's on tha taible
bot naeb' die's funn her.

Quhan in scho cums
it's aye gan lait
Her tae 'aes stuck
on tae tha plait.
Scho then'll waant
tae g'oot again
Bot scho's juist toul
"Git up abain !"
"Tae bed wi ye,
wee scunger !"

Scunger—
*someone who prowls or
rummages about...*



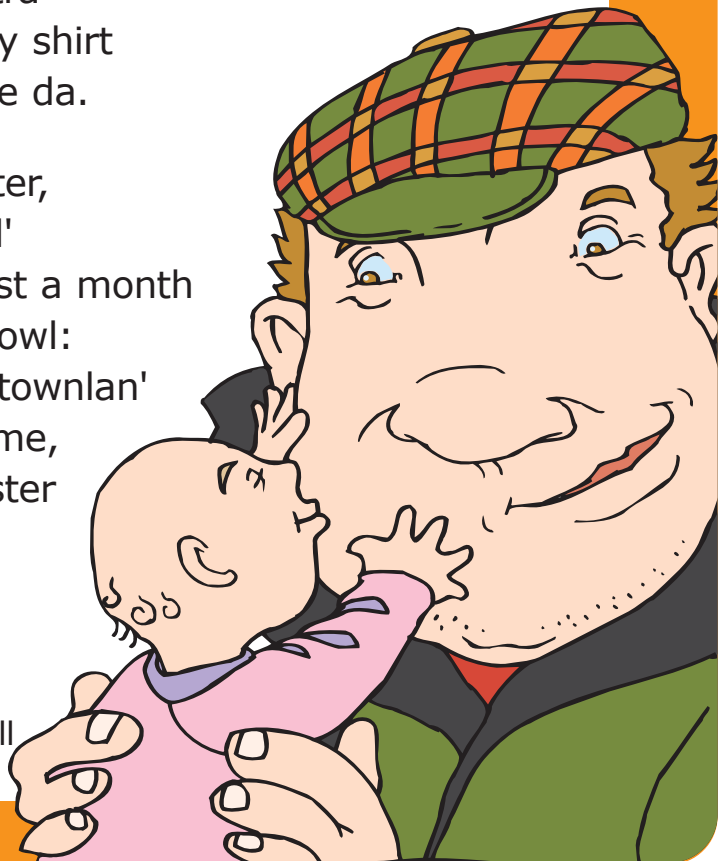
Me an Me Da

I'm livin in Drumlister,
An' I'm gettin' very oul'
I have to wear an Indian bag
To save me from the coul'.
The deil a man in this townlan'
Wos claner raired nor me,
But I'm livin' in Drumlister
In clabber to the knee.

Me da lived up in Carmin
An kep' a sarvint boy
His second wife wos very sharp
He birried her with joy
Now she wos thin, her name was Flynn
She come from Cullentra
An' if me shirt's a clatty shirt
The man to blame's me da.

So I'm livin in Drumlister,
An' I'm gettin' very oul'
I creep to Carmin wanst a month
To thry an' make me sowl:
The deil a man in this townlan'
Wos claner raired nor me,
An I'm dyin' in Drumlister
In clabber to the knee.

By "The Bard of Tyrone"
The Reverend W.F. Marshall

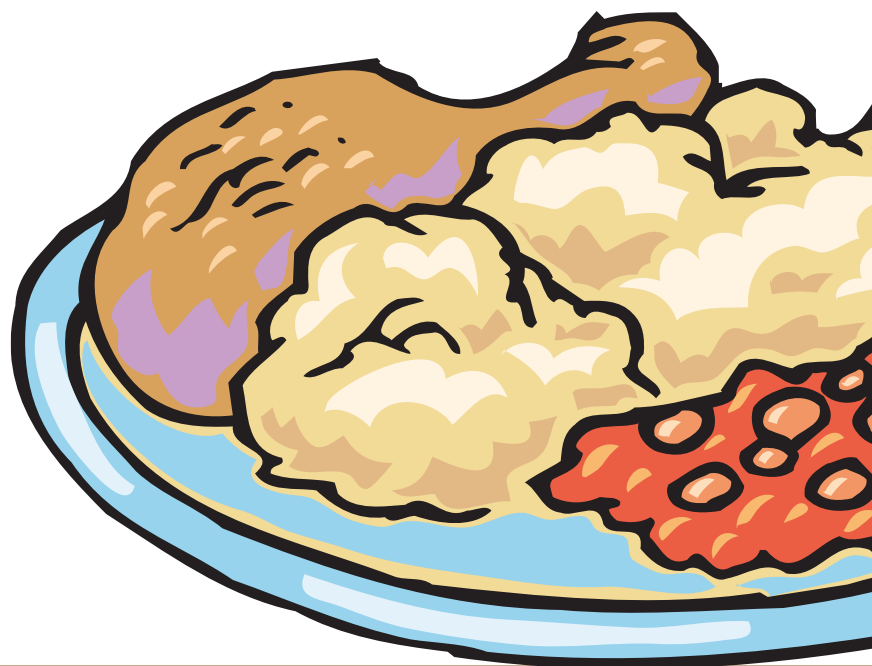


Medley O Burns:

Selkirk Grace

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

Robert Burns



Medley O Burns:

from **Address 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.

by **Robert Burns**



Medley O Burns:

Tae A Louse

Ha! Whare ye gaun, ye crowlin ferlie?
Your impudence protects you sairly,
I canna say but ye strut rarely
Owre gauze and lace,
Tho' fiath! I fear ye dine but sparely
On sic a place.

Ye ugly, creppin, blastit wonner,
Detested, shunn'd by saunt an' sinner,
How daur ye set your fit upon her—
Sae fine a lady!
Gae somewhere else and seek your dinner
On some poor body.

O Jenny, dinna toss your head,
An' set your beauties a' abread!
Ye little ken what cursed speed
The blastie's makin!
Thae winks an' finger-ends, I dread,
Are notice takin!

O wad some Power the giftie gie us
To see oursels as ithers see us!
It wad frae monie a blunder free us,
An' foolish notion:
What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,
An' ev'n devotion!

*an extract from "Tae a Louse" by
Robert Burns*

Note: Not all of the verses in this piece feature on the CD



Medley O Burns:

Tae A Mouse

Wee, sleekit, cowrin, 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!

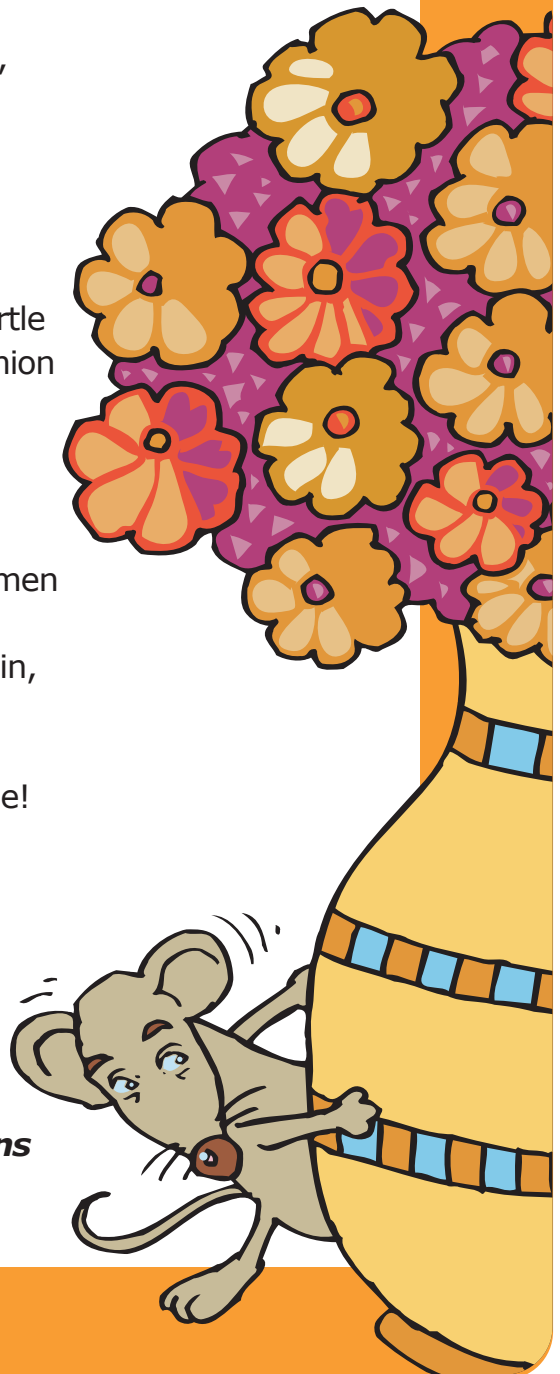
I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion
 Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor earth-born companion
 An' fellow mortal!

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, 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!

an extract from
"Tae a Mouse" by Robert Burns

*Note: Not all of the verses in this piece
feature on the CD*

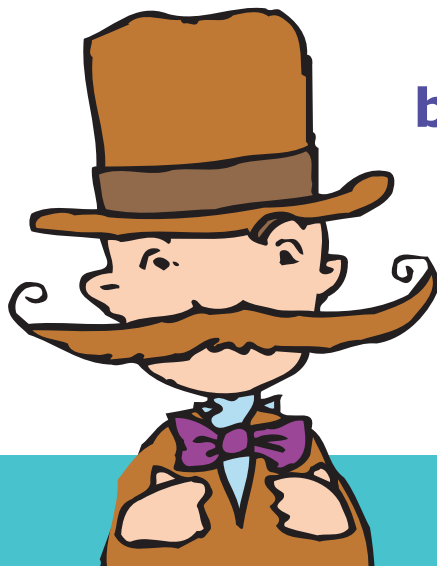


Medley O Burns:

from 'Epistle To Davie, A Brother Poet'.

It's no in titles nor in rank;
It's no in wealth like Lon'on bank,
To purchase peace and rest;
It's no in makin' muckle, mair:
It's no in books, it's no in lear,
To make us truly blest:
If happiness hae not her seat
And centre in the breast,
We may be wise, or rich, or great,
But never can be blest:
Nae treasures, nor pleasures,
Could make us happy lang;
The heart aye's the part aye
That makes us right or wrang.

by Robert Burns



Medley O Burns:

Ye Banks and Braes (O' Bonnie Doon)

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'lt break my heart, thou warbling bird,
That wantons thro' the flowering thorn:
Thou minds me o' departed joys,
Departed never to return.

Aft hae I rov'd 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 stole my rose,
But ah! He left the thorn wi' me.

by Robert Burns

Note: Not all of the verses in this piece feature on the CD

Whun A' The Kye Had Names

by Charlie Gillen

Whut heppin't tae the countryside, since you an' me wus wains,
Whun folk had time tae tak' tae ye an' al' the kye had names,
The Clydesdales stud abane the men, as gentle as a lamb,
The oul' men proud o' whut they dane, they know'd about the lan.

The wather it wus better then, och! Mebbe that's joost me,
An' burds noo naw as plentiful, they sung fae ivery tree,
Spring rowl't intae simmer an' it seem't tae g'on for iver,
An' nae sich thing as silage seep polluted ony river.

Wee yella fleurs that hugg't the grun, an' grew wile up the rodden
Wur guid for soos that wur in pig an' min' ye I'm naw coddin'
I hae mine o' ginger mix't wae stuff an' doses geen tae coos,
I cannae min' whut it wus for but I think it wus the hoowse.

An' weeds that luk't lake churnstuffs, an' grew on heidrigs wile,
They cure't the warts ye got fae kye, on wummin man or chile,
Ye only got the warts of coorse whun milkin' wae yer'e han,
It wus odd the wye that Flossie an' oul' Daisy knowed thoor stan'.

All coorse machines dae al' that noo, an' cans nae langer clink,
I lake't the blue rimm't buckets an' the strainers mair, I think,
Och! The wools in sich a hurry noo, its chane't since we wur wains,
Och! Al' the sime I lake't it whun al' the kye had names.

An' they say tabacca's bad for ye, och! I'm sure they lakely know
But boys the pipe wus pairt o' them, them oul' boys lang ago,
Noo I'm naw on for smokin' but tae mae min' a vision creeps,
O' Jamie sittin' on the dake in a cloud o' blue pipe reek.



Whun A' The Kye Had Names

Continued

A gentle dacent quate wee man, wae thrupp'ny bits for wains,
A man wha knowed the fermin' trade, an' al' his kye had names,
He dinnae need a helter for his geldin' or his mere,
He set his han' on the oul' gate post an said as quate "c'mere",

He swung the gate an' danner't on at his leisure up the trak',
An, big Darkie he catch't up wae him an dunch't him on the bak,
Joost a dunt tae let him know, that him an hir wus comin'
He had a wye wae bastes an' things, but ye niver hard him bummin'.

Noo life slips by for all o' is, gye quick, I'll hae ye know,
But always theres a crocus kookin' through the snow,
What I mane bae that is simple for I am far fae smert,
The fermers noo al'rip an' tear I think they loast the airt.

Ye shud be mair lake Jamie, an' love the lan' that's lent ye,
An' keep it richt for yer'e ain wains the Lord in wisdom sent ye,
An think o' that wee crocus, an she'll mine ye o' the Spring,
An life anew anither time, an' life's a precious thing.

Noo if ye'd ax me whut I'd lake, if ye only had the power,
Cud I go bak an' tak' tae Jamie, if only for an hour,
For I dinnae lissen first time roon, well naw as weel's I shud,
But noo I'm ouler, wiser an' as sure as God I wud.

For I hae waste't mony years on things that daenae metter,
There is nae price I wudnae pye for a chance tae dae it better,
But Jamie dee't lang years ago, an' if richt is richt I mane,
He's fermin' up in Heaven whur al' his kye has names.

Note: Not all of the verses in this piece feature on the CD

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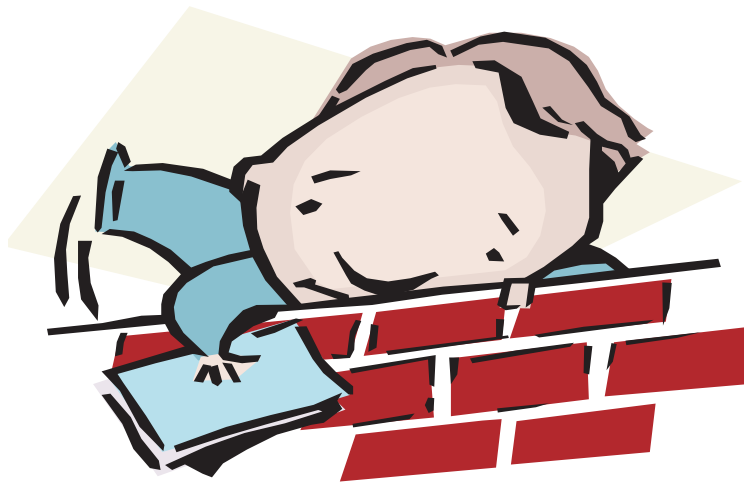
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Rabbie

By John Erskine

Yin an twa
Rab's on the waa
Thrie an fower
Rab's gan owre!
Five an sax
Rab's in a fax
Sevin an echt
Wull Rabbie fecht?
Nine an ten
Na.
Tha enn!



To The Potatoe

(Tae the Proota)

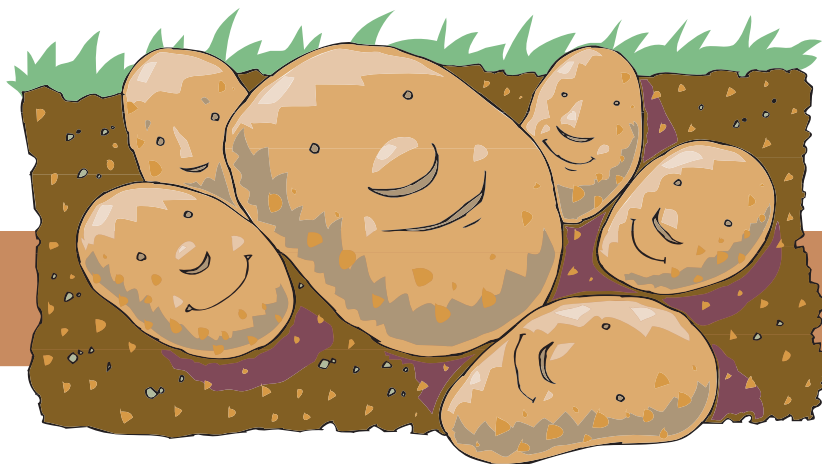
By James Orr (1770—1816)

I ledge we'd fen gif fairly quat o'
The weed we smoke, an' chow the fat o';
An' wadna grudge to want the wat o'
Wealth-wastin' Tea;
But leeze me on the precious Pratoe,
My country's stay!

Bright blooms the Bean that scents the valley,
An' bright the Pea, that speels the salie,
An' bright the Plumb tree, blossom't brawley,
An' blue-bow't lint;
But what we' straught rais't raws can tally,
That sunbeams tint.

Thou feeds our beasts o' ilka kin',
The gen'rous steed, and grov'lin' swine;
An' poultry tribes; the doves ay fine,
An' ducks besmear'd ay.
Dear was the man, an' half divine,
Wha here first rear'd ye.

I ledge we'd fen gif fairly quat o'
The weed we smoke, an' chow the fat o';
An' wadna grudge to want the wat o'
Wealth-wastin' Tea;
But leeze me on the precious Pratoe,
My country's stay!





A' it taks

By James Fenton

A whap's far, half-hard ca'in
 ower Strangford;
A stane-daked fiel o hutted coarn
 in Derry;
The rugh face o a hannled peat
 on Vogey;
The wat-lint hoag frae a seeplin bing
 at Doagh;
The teng o pakaged soordook bocht
 in Tesco's:
Thon's a' it taks.

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Fifty Nine

by Charlie Gillen

Bak in fifty echt or nine,
I milk't kye wae a sister o' mine,
Rid Roan, Blue Roan Ayrshire
maybe,
Polly Meg an the Bridgit lady.

Polly stud weel Meg wud fidgit,
Only Mae cud milk oul Bridget,
Somethin in mae sisters manner,
Soothed an made oul Bridgit
calmer.

In the byre lang afore seven,
Bed at six had seem't like heaven,
All the same the best o times,
Bak in fifty echt or nine.

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Oor Wee Scuil Glossary

Ulster-Scots

Aa

Athort

Bawbee a coin,

Ben

Banes

Breekies

Een

Fecht

Gird

Greetin

Hunkers

Kail

Ken

Kittle

Lowps

Mair

Rugs

Scunthered

Skelp

Sole

Soople Tam

Tirlin'

Wa

Whalin

English

all

across

a halfpenny

in

bones

trousers

eyes

fight

hoop

crying

haunches

broth, cabbage

know

tickle

leaps

more

tugs

disgusted, full of loathing

smack

lower part

a top (toy)

knocking, rattling

wall

beating



Oor Wee Scuil

References



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The Scunger: By Richard Archibald

Me an Me Da: By W.F. Marshall

Medley O Burns: Robert Burns: Traditional

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Rabbie: John Erskine

To the Potatoe: James Orr: Traditional

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