

# Robert Burns

(25 January 1759 — 21 July 1796)

Robert Burns, Scotland's national poet, was born on January 25, 1759 in Scotland. His father, William Burns, was a poor farmer, There were seven children in the family, and Robert was the eldest.



Robert was sent to school at the age of six, but he attended school in turn with his brother.

Later Robert's father taught him reading and writing, arithmetic, English grammar, history, literature, even Latin - that was Robert Burns's education.



Robert Burns became fond of reading. He read whatever he could lay his hands on. His favourite writers were Shakespeare, Smolett, Robert Fergusson, a talented Scottish poet (1750—1774).



Robert's mother knew many Scottish songs and ballads and often sang them to her son.

Burns began to write poetry when he was fourteen. He composed verses to the melodies of old folk-songs, which he had admired from his early childhood.

This is the first poem of Robert Burns.

*Once I lov'd a bonnie lass.  
An' aye I love her still,  
An' whilst that virtue warms my breast  
I'll love my handsome Nell.  
As bonnie lasses I have seen,  
And mair full as the awn,  
But for a modest gracefu' mein  
The like I never saw. . .*





But soon Edinburgh society grew tired of him and forgot about the poet.

Robert Burns left Edinburgh and returned to his native village and married Jean Armour. Burns devoted to Jean many beautiful poems, such as "I love my Jean", "Bonnie Jean" and many others.



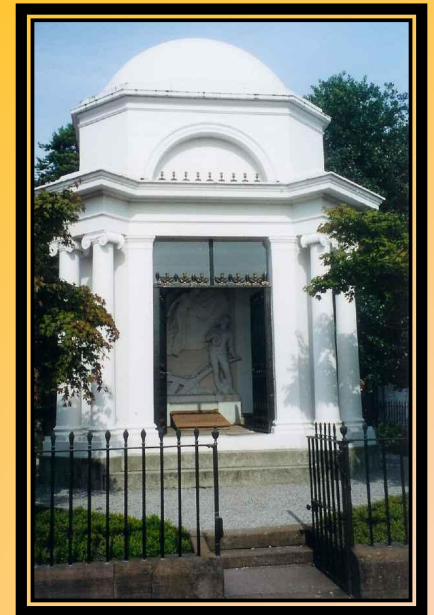
# *I Love My Jean*

*Of a' the airts the wind can blaw,  
I dearly like the West;  
For there the bonny Lassie lives,  
The Lassie I lo'e best:  
There 's wild-woods grow, and rivers  
And mony a hill between;  
But day and night my fancy 's fligh  
Is ever wi' my Jean.*



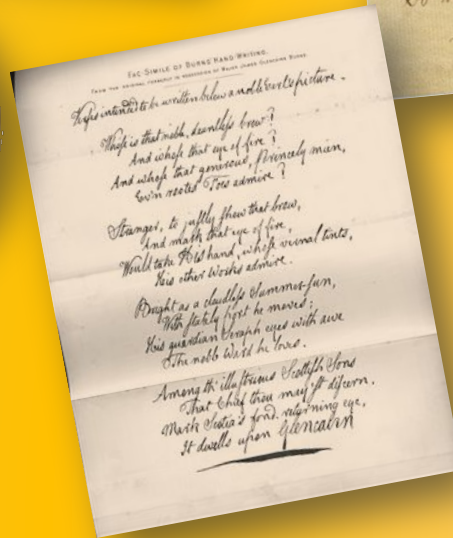
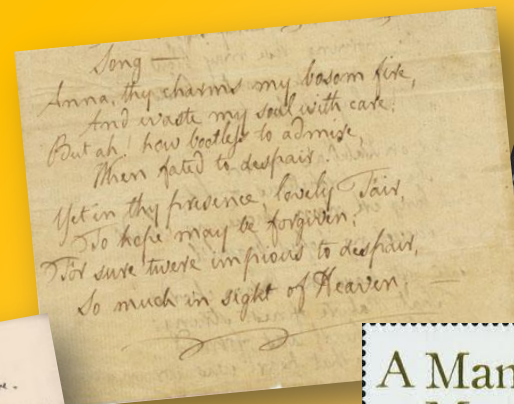
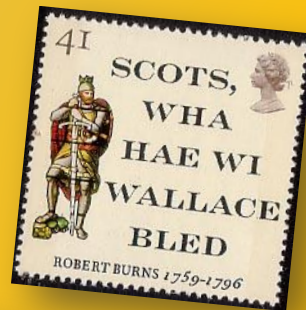
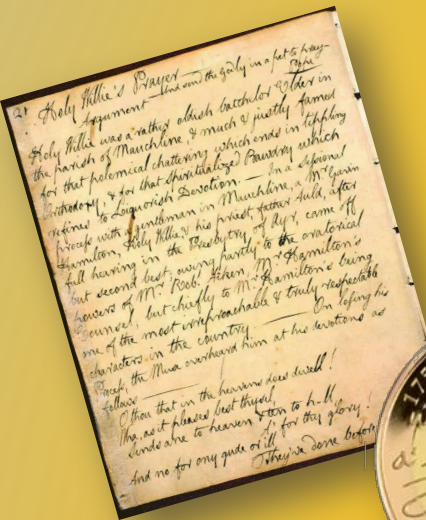


Robert Burns's poems were very popular but he always remained poor. He worked hard and ruined his health. He died in poverty at the age of thirty seven in 1796.





The poetry and songs of **Robert Burns** are famous all over the world.



- Роберт Бёрнс родился 25 января 1759 года в селе Аллоуэй (три километра к югу от города Эр, графство Эйршир), в семье крестьянина Уильяма Бёрнесса (William Burness, 1721—1784). В 1765 году его отец взял в аренду хозяйство Маунт-Олифант, и мальчику пришлось работать наравне со взрослыми, терпя голод и другие лишения. В 1781 году Бёрнс вступил в масонскую ложу; масонство достаточно сильно повлияло на его творчество. С 1783 года Роберт начинает сочинять стихи на эйширском диалекте. В 1784 году умирает отец, и после ряда неудачных попыток заняться сельским хозяйством Роберт с братом Гилбертом переезжает в Моссгил. В 1786 году выходит первая книга Бёрнса, Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish dialect («Стихотворения преимущественно на шотландском диалекте»). К начальному периоду творчества также относятся: «Джон Ячменное Зерно» (John Barleycorn, 1782), «Весёлые нищие» («The Jolly Beggars», 1785), «Молитва святоши Вилли» («Holy Willie's Prayer»), «Святая ярмарка» («The Holy Fair», 1786). Поэт быстро становится известен по всей Шотландии.