

Foreword

By Akram Elias

Grand Master to Free and Accepted Masons, Washington, D.C.

THE LIBRARY OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE ANCIENT & ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE, Southern Jurisdiction, U.S.A., is the repository of the most complete collection of the literary works of Robert Burns and Burnsiana in America. It is also important to note that this collection, known as the William Robertson Smith Collection, is the second largest compilation of Burns materials in the world, ranking only behind the collection maintained in The Mitchell Library in Glasgow, Scotland. This fact is generally known only to a very narrow circle of bibliophiles acquainted with the history of acquisitions of the works of Robert Burns and literature about him.

The Mitchell Library, in response to continuing interest among general readers and specialists in the life and works of Robert Burns, has published two catalogs of their collection. The first was issued in 1959 and the second, a revised and updated catalog, was published in 1966 on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the death of the poet. Until 2008, no catalog of the House of the Temple's collection existed. But now, thanks to the generous support of a benefactor of the library, the first catalog of the Burnsiana Collection maintained in the House of the Temple Library has been published. The contents of this major collection, compiled over a lifetime by Brother William Robertson Smith, a Scottish Rite Mason, are now available to the widest range of American and international scholars, historians, literary critics, linguists, and students specializing in this subject matter.

Publication of the House of the Temple's Burnsiana catalog now provides researchers a more complete appreciation of the totality of works by and about this important literary figure contained in the world's two most important collections. The availability of these two catalogs makes possible some fascinating contrasts and evaluations between the American and Scottish collections. Based on a recently completed comparative analysis of the bibliographies of both collections, we now know that the Smith Collection contains several times more volumes published in the United States than does the Mitchell Collection. This means that the Mitchell library in Glasgow, as concerns American literature published about Burns, is less complete of American Burnsiana than the Smith Collection in House of the Temple.

The Scottish people revere the memory not only of their own national poet, but also that of his fellow countryman William Robertson Smith. His name is enshrined along with other famous individuals of Scottish extraction such as Alexander Graham Bell and Andrew Carnegie who im-

migrated to America in the nineteenth century. These individuals are noted with great reverence in the pages of “Scottish-American Links.” This website lists William Robertson Smith not only as a talented botanist, who for more than half a century served as “Superintendent of the Botanic Garden in Washington and attracted visitors to the Garden from all parts of the USA”, but also as a collector who, with Carnegie’s assistance, assembled the most extensive and complete collection in America. The estate of Brother Smith bequeathed this important cultural and literary asset to the Supreme Council Library in the beginning of the twentieth century.

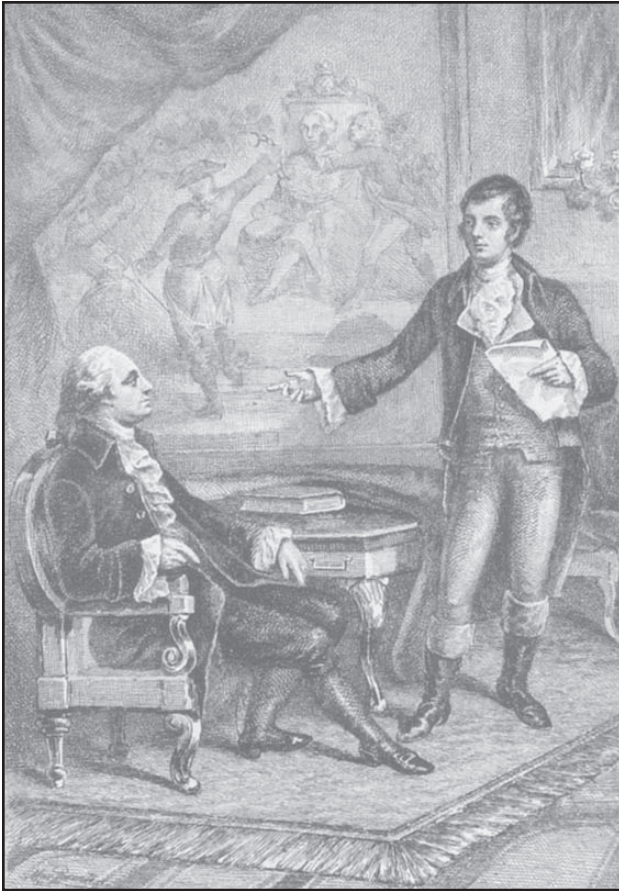
The 250th anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns in 2009 will doubtless be as “an international beacon of Scotland’s cultural life..., [and] international icon for Scotland’s creative and literary tradition.” As such, it affords a unique rationale and opportunity to present the catalog of the House of the Temple Library’s important Burnsiana Collection to a large and interested readership. A literary achievement of this magnitude with its connection to Freemasonry brings international attention and notice to the House of the Temple Library. It also elevates the authority of the Supreme Council, Southern Jurisdiction, the Mother Council of the World, as an organization which asserts principles and ideas rooted in the universal historical and cultural inheritance of all civilizations of the world. In light of the fact that Robert Burns was a Brother and Masonic Poet associated with the celebrated Lodge Canongate Kilwinning, and that William Robertson Smith was also a Masonic Brother and 32nd degree Scottish Rite Mason, this catalog acquires even more meaning as a living memorial to international Masonic fraternal and literary traditions.

From a historical, bibliographical, informational, and esthetic perspective, the Burnsiana catalog published by the Library of the Supreme Council of the Southern Jurisdiction, U.S.A., due to its unique content and copious illustrations, has no analog among currently existing bibliographies. This bibliography stands alone as one of the most distinguished gifts that the Fraternity of Freemasons could make to the 250th anniversary of the birth of this distinguished Scottish poet and Brother Mason—Robert Burns.

“A man’s a man for a’that” was the coming prophecy of the great brotherhood of the world, and it is today the tie of our social life, the very bound of fraternity which Robert Burns so well expressed... He is indeed the bard of Scotland, the skylark poet of Britain, the prophet of America, with ringing words of freedom and manhood.”¹

News about the American people’s conquest of independence found a warm response in the freedom-loving heart of Burns which he poured out in his patriotic masterpieces *Ode to Liberty* and *An Ode for General Washington’s Birthday*.

No Spartan tube, no Attic shell,
No Lyre Aeolian I awake;
‘Tis Liberty’s bold note I swell,
Thy harp, Columbia, let me take!²



George Washington and Robert Burns.
The etching by Max Rosenthal.

The fervent and beckoning, tender and sad melodies of Burns swept wave after wave upon the continent of Columbia. They inundated the hearts of people with joy-of-life, love, and freedom. And the hearts of the Freemasons of Columbia took pride in their Brother-Poet who with such ardent inspiration lauded the sacred and mystic ties of the Fraternity. Undated newspaper clippings from that period confirm that Brother George Washington, when he was Worshipful Master of Alexandria Lodge No. 22, subscribed to the second American edition of the poetry of Robert Burns.

Artistic success followed artistic success. *The Ode for General Washington's Birthday* created an environment of inspiration for artist Max Rosenthal, who fashioned the graphic depiction of this event on canvas.³ There are no secret Masonic signs or symbols, but there is something that captures the

spirit and philosophy of the Fraternity—the canvas exudes an air of harmony and agreement and a dignified deference to the accomplishments of age and a prudent understanding of the passions of youth. In this work, the artist visually conveys ideas written in the tenets of the Order—“Master Masons meet upon the level, act by the plumb, and part upon the square.”

The poet's birthday, 25 January, at first began to be observed spontaneously, but later with the formation in America of numerous Burns Clubs and St. Andrews Societies these celebrations became widespread and customary. Among the toasts, which resounded at these jubilee evenings, the American brethren, who were members of the clubs, frequently proposed a toast “To the Memory of Washington, the ‘Mystic’ Brother of Scotland's Bard.”

All across America the country greeted the 100th anniversary of the birthday of Robert Burns. On the 25th of January 1859 the Burns Club of Washington held a festive celebration of that event in the National Hotel. Most Worshipful Benjamin B. French, Past Grand Master of Masons of the District of Columbia was among those present. Brother French, “being especially called by the President” recited a poem of his own composition written especially for the birthday celebration of his brother-poet and it was met with thunderous applause from guests and members of the club.

One hundred years ha' ta'en thier flight
Since, upon Scottish earth,
A son o' song first saw the light –
The Muses hailed its burth.

In auld lang syne, my dear,
In auld lang syne,
His name, they ca'd it Robbie Burns,
In auld land syne.

He grew a winsome youth, and fair,
An' as Time wagged along,
His cantie mind, so rich and rare,
Poured out itself in song.

In auld lang syne, my dear,
In auld lang syne,
Sang glorious, gifted Robbie Burns,
In auld land syne.

.....

And as “A heart's warm, fond adieu”
Falls sweetly on the ear,
The “favored – the enlightened few”
Give what he asked – “a tear.”

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
In memory of their Brother Burns,
For auld land syne.

For, without tears within his eye –
Blood tingling through his veins –
What Brother of the Mystic Tie
Can sing those soul-born strains?

Of auld lang syne, my dear,
Of auld lang syne,
Glowing from his fraternal heart,
In auld land syne.⁴

And with the unveiling in 1888 of the monument to Robert Burns in Albany, the capital of the state of New York, this sculpture became the “apotheosis” of mystic ties of Masonic fraternity in America and Scotland. Every fact and detail of this event is emblematic of the historic and cultural bonds connecting the two nations. The city where the monument was erected, Albany, is the Scots and Irish Gaelic name for Scotland, the country dearly loved by Burns. A cornerstone laying ceremony was conducted by the Grand Lodge of the State of New York in an elegant and lavish ceremony. But most symbolic of all was the fact that the park selected for location of the monument bore the name of Washington. Thus, the words from the toast “Washington, the “Mystic” Brother of Scotland’s Bard” were embodied in reality. This monument, created by the genius of sculptor Charles Calverly and inspired by the figure of the Bard of Caledonia, found sanctuary on the soil of Columbia which he had praised in earlier days and to which was eternally bound the name of his mystic brother—the monument to Burns in Washington Park.

The name of Burns in the history of America, along with that of Washington, is united with yet another American president who was also deeply loved by the people—President Abraham Lincoln.⁵ And although the sixteenth President of the United States was not a member of the Masonic Fraternity, many writers have noted that he “embodied many of the moral and Masonic characteristics which every worthy brother should strive to emulate. These are the identical principles and ideals that form the pillars of Masonry and support the government of our country.”⁶

As documented by multiple sources of his contemporaries, we know that from his earliest years to the final days of his tragic demise, Lincoln maintained a lifelong interest in the subtle poetry of Burns and considered the Bard of Caledonia, second only to Shakespeare, to be the world’s greatest bard. American Freemasons saw a deep meaning in that fact. For if Lincoln so loved the poetry of Burns, then he certainly accepted and shared the ideas of the fraternity. The tragedy which occurred in Ford’s Theatre on 14 April 1865 and the response to it by numerous Grand Lodges became its own form of “initiation” of President Lincoln into the Fraternity. In the resolution of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia written on 2 May 1865 we note the following words: “...Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America, was not a member of our order, nonetheless by his pure, and honest, and upright life, every act of which was marked by charity, brotherly love, relief and truth, he illustrated all the attributes that should beautify the life of Free and Accepted Masons.”⁷

Almost thirty years after the Civil War and on another shore of the Atlantic Ocean in a geographically remote, but close in spirit, Scotland, a chain of events occurred which resulted in the erection of a monument known as The Emancipation Monument. Its appearance in the capitol of Scotland and location on the prestigious Calton Burial Ground, was a consequence of the deliberate and determined efforts initiate by Wallace Bruce who was U.S.

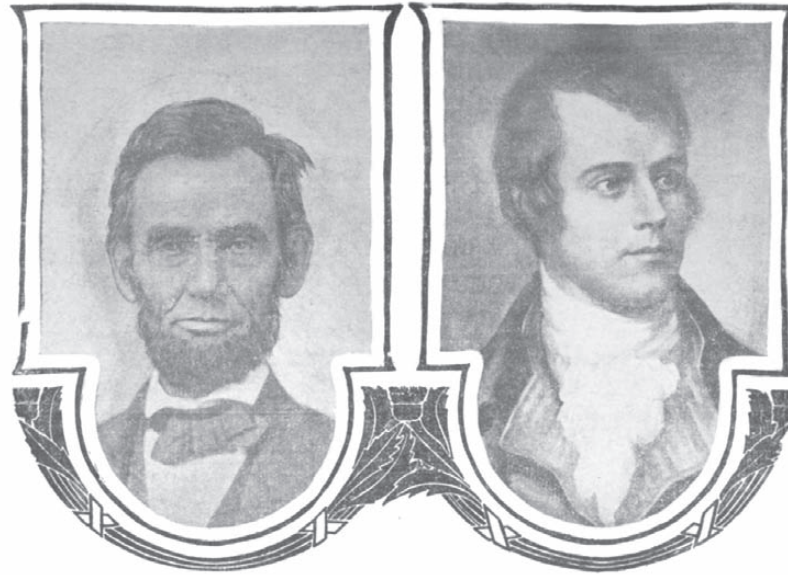
Consul at Edinburgh and Master Mason in Hudson Lodge No. 7 in New York. Brother Bruce was not only a patriot of his nation, and not only man who deeply respected the history and culture of Scotland, but also an adherent and connoisseur of the works of the Bard of Caledonia. Bruce frequently delivered lectures at anniversary celebrations and cultural evenings in cities and towns where the poet lived and worked. Moreover, he himself wrote poetry. It is evident that the scenario of the opening of The Emancipation Monument also was a product of the pen of this talented Masonic Brother.

On 21 August 1893 a “young Columbia” (the daughter of Wallace Bruce) clothed in white robes, released the shroud from the monument, thus revealing the bronze figure of President Abraham Lincoln guarding the eternal rest and sleep of four Scottish soldiers, rifles in hand, volunteers who had gone to serve in America for the unity and fraternity of peoples. The pedestal was engraved with one of the most eloquent and inspiring quotes from Abraham Lincoln—“To preserve the jewel of liberty in the framework of peace.” And as a special tribute to the occasion, Brother Bruce composed the following poem *Columbia’s Garland*:

Another clasp of loving hands,
Another link across the sea,
A living word from distant lands
To grace the soldiers of the free;
Columbia, at her Mother’s knee,
Unfolds the scroll of Liberty. ⁸

And in immediate proximity with the ceremony being conducted in Calton Road stood the monument to Robert Burns, erected a half century earlier, with assistance and participation of the Brethren, stood grandly, and, as if symbolically, participated in majestic silence. “Robert Burns and Abraham Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln and Robert Burns: They are the two men who have done more than any others for the soul-elevation of the industrial people; the one by the proclamation that “every honest man’s a king,” and the other by his immortal doctrine of “charity for all and malice toward none.”⁹

The history of the association between Abraham Lincoln and Robert Burns has a beautiful continuation. On the 26th of August 1906, statue of the Caledonia Bard was unveiled in Chicago. Wallace Bruce had been scheduled to deliver the oration, but due to sudden illness he was not be able to present on this historical event. Following in his own tradition for such occasions, Brother Bruce had written a poem entitled “Lincoln to Burns” (From Lincoln’s Statue, Edinburgh, to Burns’ Statue, Chicago.)



Abraham Lincoln and Robert Burns. A photo composition from unidentified newspaper.

A well known voice rings far and free
 From Calton Hill ayont the sea;
 A listening people fondly turns
 As Lincoln speaks to Robert Burns.

“Auld Reekie” asks me to convey
 Her love with mine across the way,
 And decks me weel wi’ mony a flower,
 For “now’s the day and now’s the hour.”

When you shall stand uncovered there,
 With manly heart and forehead bare,
 Beside the breezy northern lakes
 And feel the pulse the century wakes.

It minds me of that glorious day
 When I to Scotland found my way,
 On August morn in Ninety-three,
 To speak the message of the free;
 And learn what narrow waters part

Columbia’s sons from Scotia’s heart;
 Ay Robbie, I remember still
 My greeting on old Calton Hill.

So take to-day with worthy pride
 You welcome as yon prairies wide;
 The fertile valleys of the west
 Bloom fairer for the Scottish guest.

O Robbie, you can never know
 How great the debt to you I owe;
 In many a darksome hour of care
 Your tender words I used to share.

.....

So, as the centuries glide away,
 And bring you many a festal day,
 You’ll think betimes, as memory turns,
 “Here Lincoln spoke to Robbie Burns.”¹⁰

Toward the second half of the nineteenth century, the fame and glory of Robert Burns was widespread in America, especially in Masonic circles. During this period William Robertson Smith, a member of Washington Centennial Lodge, No. 14 and Scottish Rite Mason, lived and worked in the District of Columbia residing in a modest cottage at the foot of Capitol Hill. It was in this surrounding, that Brother Smith compiled, expanded and preserved the unique Burns collection. And by the beginning of the twentieth century this important library had become the second largest Burnsiana collection in the world.

As a young man, William Robertson Smith brought with him to America a love of his native Caledonia and of her Poet Robert Burns. And for the remainder of his life, he cultivated a feeling of awe and affectionate esteem for the works of Burns as though it were an exotic plant in his botanic garden. And day after day, month after month, year after year, he erected his “paper monument to Robert Burns.” And with his selfless labor he ignited affection for the Scottish poet in the heart of every person who happened into the circle of his acquaintance. Thus, the celebrity and eminence of Burns in America is due, in large degree, to the efforts of his Masonic brother Smith. The Superintendent of the National Botanic Garden not only took a direct part in the establishment and expansion of Burns Clubs which, by the way, not infrequently met in Masonic facilities, but he also spoke at public meetings with an enlightening word about the poet.

“Burns is the poet of America. He is more at home under the shadow of the Goddess of Liberty than near the bare hills of Edinburgh. He is a poet of Masonic Order; for he, himself, was a Mason, and his writings are full of allusions to the brotherhood of man,—the solid foundation on which Masonry is built.”¹¹ Such was Brother Smith’s profound conviction about Burns.

William Robertson Smith was “a scholar, scientist, and philosopher, a man of gigantic stature, and gigantic soul”¹², who understood mankind better than most men because of “his affinity with the soul of “The Poet of Humanity,” Robert Burns.”¹³ He was motivated by the idea of “increasing Burns’ bibliography in this country.” and achieved this objective with the crowning jewel of his life’s work, the compilation of the largest collection of Burnsiana in America and second largest in the world. Today this collection is reverentially maintained and displayed in Washington D.C. in the Library of the Supreme Council of the Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction, U.S.A. And it is noteworthy that both the House of the Temple Library and the Botanic Garden are located only a few blocks from Rock Creek Cemetery where Brother William Robertson Smith now rests from his labors in a place of solitude where every Freemason can “bow his head in silent reverence to the memory of a distinguished departed Brother.”

NOTES

1. Bruce, Wallace. *Wallace Bruce (at Ayr) on Robert Burns*. Reprinted from Volume 'Here's a Hand'. Contents: Robert Burns: His Genius and Poetry. The Auld Brig's Welcome. Delivered on the Occasion of Unveiling the Burns Statue at Ayr, July 8, 1891. Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1893, p. 110.

2. *The Complete Illustrated Poems, Songs & Ballads of Robert Burns*. With 80 Black and White Illustrations. London: Lomond Books, 1992, pp. 257–258. This book was purchased at Burns Cottage, Alloway on the 30th of April, 1993 by Brother Robert Hyslop a member of Halifax No. 81 and Scottish Rite Mason in the Valley of Orlando. Brother Hyslop, born in Glasgow, Scotland, was a lifelong admirer of the literary works of Robert Burns and maintained his own personal collection. Being aware of the Burns Collection in the House of the Temple in Washington D.C., Brother Hyslop planned to visit the Temple and see the collection personally. However, the condition of his health did not permit such a visit. After his death, his wife Mrs. Maureen Hyslop brought this volume, along with several others to Washington, D.C. and in April of 2008, donated them to the Burns Collection in the House of the Temple in the name and memory of her husband Brother Robert Hyslop.

3. *The Complete Works of Robert Burns*. (Self-Interpreting), Illustrated with Sixty Etchings, and Woodcuts, Maps and Facsimiles. In Six Volumes.

Philadelphia: Gebbie & Co., 1886. Vol. IV, p. 4. [The etching by Max Rosenthal, artist of the Philadelphia Lithographers Company: Louis N. and Max Rosenthal.]

4. Burns Club of Washington City. *Celebration of the Centennial Anniversary of the Birth of Robert Burns, by the Burns Club, of Washington City, D. C., at the National Hotel, January 25, 1859*. Published by the Order of the Society, W. H. Moore, Printer.

Washington: Joseph Shillington, 1859, p. 12.

5. The illustration taken from the Scrapbook with the title on the spine: "Burns: The Poet of Sincerity." The clipping has no indication about the title of the newspaper and date of publication.

6. Larissa P. Watkins. *Our Very Illustrious Brother, Abraham Lincoln: A Bibliography of the Louis D. Carman Lincolniana Collection in the Library of the Supreme Council, 33rd, S.J.* With a Facsimile of *Abraham Lincoln Freemason*, by Dr. I. D. Carman, P.M. New Castle: Oak Knoll Press & Library of the Supreme Council, 33rd, S.J., 2007, p. xii.

7. Louis Dale Carman. *Abraham Lincoln Freemason: An Address Delivered before Lodge No. 17, F.A.A.M. Washington, D.C., January 28, 1914*. With an Appendix Containing the Actions Taken by the Masonic Grand Lodges of the United States on Lincoln's Death. [Washington, D.C.]: 1914, p. 15.

8. Michael Aidin. "Edinburgh's Civil War Memorial," *The American Civil War Round Table, UK*, 2008. http://www.americancivilwar.org.uk/news_edinburghs-civil-war-memorial_12.htm The full text of "Columbia's Garland" was published in *The New York Times*, September 11, 1893.

9. Part of the speech by Brother Porter J. MacCumber, Senator from North Dakota, Member of Wahpeton Lodge No. 15, which he delivered at banquet of St. Andrew's Society of Washington, D.C. on February 12, 1907.

10. This quotation is from a newspaper clipping which gives no attribution about the title of the newspaper or its date of publication. In 2009 the world is going to celebrate two birthday anniversaries related to the lives of Abraham Lincoln and Robert Burns. The first is the bicentenary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln. The second is the 250th anniversary of the birthday of Robert Burns. The names of these esteemed humanitarians will again be associated with the heartfelt inspirational message which their lives and words embodied concerning the Brotherhood of Man. And in another laudable continuation of the historical association between these two Apostles of Humanity we note that in September 2008 the book *Abraham Lincoln and Robert Burns: Connected Lives and Legends* by Ferenc Morton Szasz will be released.

11. Catherine Frances Cavanagh, "A Great Champion of Burns and Masonry," *The New Age*, January, 1911.

12. James MacPherson Jarrett, "William Robertson Smith," *Newsletter of the Saint Andrew's Society of Washington, D.C.*, July, 1974.

13. Cavanagh, "A Great Champion of Burns and Masonry."

Acknowledgements

THE BURNSIANA COLLECTION OF WILLIAM R. SMITH WHICH WAS ACCOMMODATED IN THE Library of the Supreme Council Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction, U.S.A. in the beginning of the 20th century slowly entered a lethargic slumber as, little by little, it was pressed out of view by more essential library tasks. But the advent of the 21st century brought to mind the year 2009 and accelerated a decision about how to develop and employ the Collection in the approaching 250th anniversary celebration of the birthday of Robert Burns the famous Bard of Caledonia. And, as if it was the will of the Great Architect of the Universe, a gifted group of enthusiasts materialized around the author, for each of whom the name of Burns was synonymous with the name of the Fraternity. And where one finds an atmosphere of Masonic unity, any project is “fated” to succeed.

In substantial measure, the happy fate of this bibliography of the Burnsiana Collection is indebted to Librarian/Curator **Joan Sansbury** for her constant support and participation not only in this but every project which enhances the reputation and honor of the Library of the House of the Temple and to the efforts of four Freemasons: **Akram R. Elias, Robert L. D. Cooper, Kevin Fries, and Robert Watkins.**

Akram R. Elias, 33°, Grand Master of Free and Accepted Masons, Washington, D.C. Upon learning about the plans to publish the bibliography of the Burnsiana Collection of William R. Smith, Akram immediately expressed his desire to fully finance the publication and assume the duties and responsibilities of Editor-in-Chief, which made him a frequent visitor to the House of the Temple while the project was in progress. And each visit included an obligatory stop in the library to get a situation update and provide his energetic and optimistic input. As the current Grand Master, Akram’s motto is: “Energize, Engage, Enlighten.” He has applied this design with great success outside the confines of the Grand Lodge to both renew and strengthen the indissoluble fraternal ties of “Masonry Universal.”

Robert L. D. Cooper, the Curator of the Grand Lodge of Scotland Library and Museum. Robert made a decision about participation in the project with the deliberative approach of an experienced researcher and writer. Possessing the cultural and historical genetic code of his nation, Robert brought to his labors on this project a reserved Scottish character and a fully professional reverence and pride in his national poet. From the pages of his writing we perceive the refrain of a distant, and yet nearby, “Auld Lang Syne,” given to the world by the Bard of Caledonia, a melody, which has united and will continue to unite all hearts that value the cordiality and enchantment of eternal, indestructible friendship.

Kevin Fries, 32°, Junior Deacon of Federal Lodge, No. 1, Washington, D.C. Kevin is a young Masonic writer now establishing his professional reputation as a biographer. He responded with enthusiasm and excitement to the invitation to participate in this endeavor. Fate dealt Kevin the most challenging task of the project by placing him in the front line of the search for and selection of materials about William Robertson Smith scattered in the many government and private archives around Washington. Kevin distinguished himself in this task by worthily constructing and presenting an image of scientist and collector William R. Smith which gave the catalog an essential dimension.

Robert Watkins, 33°, Past Master of the Washington Lodge, No. 22, Alexandria, Virginia. By ancestry Robert is from foggy Albion, but sixteen generations removed. And as a man who had not lost interest in his historical homeland and its cultural inheritance, (although he does delight in reading the rhythmic verses of Burns translated into Russian) he, nonetheless, obligingly responded to the invitation to consult on problematic research issues in the project. Robert brought to the effort an appreciation for the complexities and responsibilities of the various tasks as well as a tempered and balanced approach, stability of course, and unfailing, friendly support at difficult spots in the work on the catalog.

Brother Robert Burns (1759–1796)

By Robert L. D. Cooper

Curator of the Grand Lodge of Scotland Museum and Library, May 2008

WHEN YOU FIRST HEAR THE MELODIC NOTES OF *AULD LANG SYNE* AS YOU WALK THROUGH one or other of the most prestigious Department Stores in Chuo-dori, Tokyo's main shopping street, it is not the beginning of a promotion of Scottish goods. Instead this is the polite Japanese way of letting you know the store is about to close and that you must leave.¹

Auld Lang Syne is, of course, the International song of farewell, of saying goodbye. It is used at the end of all kinds of social events, conventions, Masonic meetings and, needless to say, at the end of the old year and the beginning of the new. Yet many, except the Scots, are unaware that this song was penned by a Scotsman and a Freemason—Robert Burns in 1788.² The time that has elapsed since Burns wrote the song means that many Japanese consider it to be a traditional Japanese song the words of which are:

Light of fireflies, snow by the window,
Many suns and moons spent reading
Years have gone by without notice
Day has dawned; this morning, we part.

Stay or leave, either an end
Think as mementos; so many
Corners of my heart, in one word
Sing for peace.

Far reaches of Kyushu, far along roads
Though separated by seas and mountains
Its sincere heart is not.
Serve single-mindedly for our country.

From the ends of Chishima to Okinawa,
All part of Japan.
Contribute to our great country.
I'll faithfully devote my life.

This is by no means a criticism and is merely an example of the way human beings adapt and change aspects of their culture over time. This is often done with the best of intentions. The original words would have been difficult at best for a native Japanese speaker.

For the record the original words of the poem are:

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne!

Chorus:-

For auld lang syne, my dear,
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.
For auld, &c.

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

We twa hae paidl'd in the burn,
Frae morning sun till dine;
But seas between us braid hae roar'd
Sin' auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

And there's a hand, my trusty fere!