Eighty Years 'owre the Sea!': Robert Burns and the Early United States of America, c.1786-1866

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Abstract

This thesis represents the first extensive critical study of the relationship between Robert Burns (1759-1796) and the early United States of America. Spanning literature, history and memory studies, the following chapters take an interdisciplinary approach towards investigating the methods by which Burns and his works rose to prominence and came to be of cultural and literary significance in America. Theoretically, these converging disciplines intersect through a transnational, Atlantic Studies perspective that shifts emphasis from Burns as the 'national poet of Scotland' onto the various socio-cultural connections that facilitated the spread of his work and reputation. In addition to Scottish literary studies, the thesis contributes to the broader fields of Transatlantic, Transnational and American Studies.

Building on the foundation of Burns's poetic engagements with American politics in Chapter I, subsequent chapters focus on the publication, dissemination, reception, literary influence, and cultural memory of the poet's life and works up to the end of the American Civil War. Chapters II and III highlight how a thriving transatlantic reprint trade facilitated the spread of Burns's *Poems, Chiefly in The Scottish Dialect*; James Currie's *The Works of Robert Burns*; and an abundance of other pirated biographical editions that were available by the mid-nineteenth century. Discussion of early American 'imitators' of Burns's verse in Chapter IV leads to a broader assessment of Burns in relation to American vernacular poetry, with particular reference to Ulster-Scots-American poets and James Russell Lowell (1819-1891). Employing methodologies derived from memory studies, Chapter V examines how Burns was 'remembered' in America through various nineteenth-century modes of commemoration. In conclusion, it argues that appropriations of Burns varied across and within geo-civic boundaries in America where, by the mid-nineteenth century, the poet had come to embody contested narratives, divergent ideologies, plural identities, and contradictory national histories.

Previous studies have suggested that Burns's popularity in the early United States might be attributed to his kinship with 'national' American ideals of freedom, egalitarianism and individual liberty. While some of the evidence supports this claim, this thesis argues that it also wrongly assumes a spatiotemporal unity for the nineteenth-century American nation. I conclude by suggesting that future critical studies of the poet must heed the multifarious complexities of 'national' paradigms, pointing the way to further work on the reception and influence of Burns in other 'global' or, indeed, transnational contexts.

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Contents

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Declaration

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this thesis is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

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A New Era of Burns Studies

> …one gets the sense of huge hinterlands, largely unexplored…From local sphere to global significance, the study of Burns and his poetry is entering a new era... [1]
>
> ➢Murray Pittock (2011)

The early twenty-first century has seen a revitalised engagement with Robert Burns and his works through the resurgence of both academic and wider popular interest. The 250th anniversary of Burns's birth in 2009 marked a significant moment for both Burns Studies in the academy and also the ongoing importance of the poet as a major cultural icon and touristic commodity. In an effort to encourage the wider Scottish diaspora to visit their ancestral 'homeland', the Scottish Government tied the 2009 Burns celebrations, along with other key 'themes' of the nation's perceived culture and heritage, to the widely publicised 'Year of Homecoming';[2] an incentive that was telling of both the iconic international appeal of Burns and also his economic importance to the tourist sector in Scotland (Burns tourism is worth approximately £160M a year).[3] That the anniversary arrived at a time of 'renewed Scottish political autonomy and cultural self-confidence'[4] was also to be influential on the continuing academic shift towards reconsidering Burns as a serious literary figure whose work is deserving of scholarly investigation.

As Murray Pittock has established, academic study of Burns suffered a steady decline from the 1930s onwards and was largely dismissed by those who set the twentieth-century 'Romantic critical agenda'. Despite his wider appeal (he continued to 'sell on bookstalls to people less well educated than those who claimed his work was sentimental doggerel')[5] and the availability of editions that demonstrated the full range and complexity of his oeuvre,[6] Burns was frequently omitted from literary anthologies and did not even merit a mention in companions devoted to the Romantic period.[7] Even later twentieth-century attempts to include Burns in the reimagined postwar Romantic canon – with its more nuanced approaches towards

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[1] Murray Pittock, 'Introduction: Global Burns', in *Robert Burns in Global Culture*, ed. by Murray Pittock (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2011) 13-25 (23).
[2] See <http://www.eventscotland.org/resources/downloads/get/42.pdf > [accessed 07/09/2015].
[3] Annual figures subject to variability. See Pittock, 'Introduction: Global Burns', 13.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid., 14.
[6] Namely Thomas Crawford, *Burns: A Study of The Poems and Songs* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960) and *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, ed. by James Kinsley, 3 Vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968).
[7] For a contemporary account see Raymond Bentman, 'Robert Burns's Declining Fame', *Studies in Romanticism*, 11:3 (1972) 207-224.

language, class and gender – tended to reduce Burns to a poet of limited linguistic range and geographical significance.[8]

Much has changed, however, in the first two decades of the twenty-first century. Coinciding with the Scottish government's promotion of Burns in the 2009 'Year of Homecoming' campaign was the publication of several reinvigorated critical studies, essay collections and biographies.[9] However, this upsurge in critical attention cannot be wholly attributed to the advent of the poet's anniversary and must be explained in conjunction with wider post-devolutionary shifts in Scottish literary studies. A decade prior to the 250th anniversary celebrations, Burns's 'A Man's a Man for a' That' echoed across the chambers of the newly devolved Scottish parliament as singer Sheena Wellington led opposing politicians (Conservative, Green, Labour, Liberal Democrat, Scottish Socialist Party, SNP and one Independent) in rousing chorus. The incorporation of Burns's most famous egalitarian anthem (which expresses contempt for a class-based society) into the parliamentary opening ceremony might well have nurtured a mythic image of the poet as embodying a selective version of Scottish 'national' virtue; with the evocation being that Scotland is more egalitarian than in other parts of the United Kingdom.

Yet retrospectively, and more concretely, the wider implications that devolution has had on the broad field of Scottish Studies[10] has meant that Burns is finally being considered, at the very least in an academic and specifically literary sense, outside of the limiting parameters of a strictly Scottish 'national' framework. Consequently, this has opened up several new avenues of research and ways of considering the poet and his works.

The Transnational Turn

Writing on the cusp of the twenty-first century, Christopher Whyte suggested that devolution, in inspiring a fresh sense of cultural self-confidence, might 'at last allow Scottish literature to be literature first and foremost, rather than the expression of a nationalist movement'.[11] A few

[8] Pittock, 'Introduction: Global Burns', 13.
[9] *The Edinburgh Companion to Robert Burns*, ed. by Gerard Carruthers (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009); Robert Crawford, *The Bard: Robert Burns, A Biography* (London: Pimlico, 2009); *Revising Robert Burns and Ulster: Literature, Religion and Politics, c. 1770-1920,* ed. by Frank Ferguson and Andrew R. Holmes (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2009); *Fickle Man: Robert Burns in the 21st Century*, ed. by Johnny Rodger and Gerard Carruthers (Dingwall: Sandstone Press, 2009).
[10] For a fuller discussion of Scottish Studies in the 'post-devolutionary decade' see Berthold Schoene, 'Going Cosmopolitan: Reconstituting "Scottishness" in Post-Devolution Criticism' in *The Edinburgh Companion to Contemporary Scottish Literature,* ed. by Schoene (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007).
[11] Christopher Whyte, 'Masculinities in Contemporary Scottish Fiction', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 34:2 (1998) 274-285 (285).

years later into the new century Gavin Wallace stated that post-devolutionary Scottish writing had been nourished by the 'outward reaching international tap-roots of Scottish culture' and insinuated a departure from considering Scottish texts and writers as functioning to shore up a cohesive 'national' identity.[12] In his 2009 critical guide *Scottish Literature* (notably published in the same year as the 250th anniversary), Gerard Carruthers discussed how the discipline was in a period of 'self-reflexive scrutiny' and reflected on how there had been, at times, 'too much emphasis upon nationalism' at the expense of 'detailed analysis of other important contexts within these texts'.[13] It was surely inevitable, then, that Burns, the poet who for so long has been popularly labelled 'The National Bard', would come under fresh academic interrogation in contexts that moved beyond the 'national' paradigm.

While political autonomy might well have galvanised this process in Scotland, the conceptual renegotiation of the 'nation' and 'national literature' was also in line with, and arguably a consequence of, contemporary movements in the wider fields of literary studies, sociology and critical theory.[14] Also writing at the turn of the twenty-first century, for example, Amritjit Singh and Peter Schmidt declared – in a volume centred on postcolonial theory in the United States – a 'transnational moment' in literary studies in which 'local and national narratives' could no longer be conceived apart from 'our shared human histories' and 'global interdependence'.[15] Prominent critics of American literature such as Paul Giles and John Carlos Rowe further expanded on concepts of 'transnationality' by revisiting 'canonical' nineteenth-century American texts and authors that 'often appear in quite a different light' when examined through a 'transnational matrix'.[16] Rowe highlights, for example, the importance of the Pacific islands and Asia in relation to American 'national' identity in the work of Herman Melville.[17]

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[12] Gavin Wallace, 'Voyages of Intent: Literature and Cultural Politics in Post-Devolution Scotland', in *The Edinburgh Companion to Contemporary Scottish Literature* ed. by Gerard Carruthers, 17-28 (27).
[13] Gerard Carruthers, *Scottish Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009) 135.
[14] See for example Tom Nairn, *Faces of Nationalism: Janus Revisited* (London, New York: Verso, 1997); Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* [1983] Revised 2nd Edn. (London, New York: Verso, 1991).
[15] *Postcolonial Theory and the United States: Race, Ethnicity, and Literature,* ed. by Amritjit Singh and Peter Schmidt (Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 2008) 'preface', 8.
[16] Paul Giles, *Virtual Americas: Transnational Fictions and the Transatlantic Imaginary* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002) 16.
[17] See John Carlos Rowe, 'Nineteenth-Century United States Literary Culture and Transnationality' in *Publications of The Modern Language Association of America (PMLA)* 118:1 (2003) 78-89 (87).

Burns and Transnational Literary Studies

The first spring in reconsidering Burns through a transnational framework grew out of 'The Global Burns Network' project, founded in 2007 by Murray Pittock in collaboration with experts spread throughout England, Scotland, Spain, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, the United States and Canada.[18] One of the main incentives of the network was to encourage scholarly publication on Burns that increased awareness of his 'Global' significance and historical reception across cultures and beyond the borders of Scotland. Streams of estuary publications and projects soon followed including 'Robert Burns: Inventing Tradition and Securing Memory, 1796-1909' (which provided an online catalogue of worldwide Burns monuments);[19] the essay collections *Robert Burns in Global Culture* (2011) and *The Reception of Robert Burns in Europe* (2014); and most centrally, as part of the 'Editing Robert Burns For The Twenty-First Century' project, the commissioning of the new Oxford University Press multivolume edition to which the present study is attached.[20]

Laura Doyle proposes that transnational literary studies should consider how literature exists 'within a world of encounters'[21] and reveal layered histories, interactions and transcultural exchanges. Adopting this transnational lens, we can justifiably establish that Burns (the man), his poetry and his subsequent cultural 'afterlives'[22] participated in – and to some extent were a product of – an interconnected 'world of encounters', particularly around the Atlantic periphery. More has recently come to light, for example, about Burns's tentative emigration plans and ambiguous attitude towards transatlantic slavery and abolition;[23] his poetic musings on the after-effects of the American Revolution;[24] his poems and songs that reflected 'global', indeed transcultural, political ideas;[25] and also the swift arrival of his work

[18] <http://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/critical/research/researchcentresandnetworks/globalburnsnetwork/> [accessed 11/09/2015].

[19] <http://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/critical/research/researchcentresandnetworks/robertburnsstudies/ourresearch/burns/> [accessed 11/09/2015].

[20] In January 2011, The Centre For Robert Burns Studies at The University of Glasgow was awarded the equivalent of £1.1 million by the Arts and Humanities Research Council towards producing the first volumes of the edition. This research was supported by the appointment of two PhD students to undertake research on previously unexplored aspects of Burns's life and work. The present study is a result of this broader AHRC-funded project. See <http://burnsc21.glasgow.ac.uk/> [accessed 11/09/2015].

[21] Laura Doyle, 'Notes toward a Dialectical Method: Modernities, Modernisms, and the Crossings of Empire' in *Literature Compass* 7:3 (2010) 195-293 (195).

[22] I borrow the term 'afterlives' here from Ann Rigney to refer to the broader 'cultural memory' of Burns in the United States. I will return to this topic in Chapter V of this thesis. See also Ann Rigney, *The Afterlives of Walter Scott: Memory on the Move* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[23] See Michael Morris, *Scotland and the Caribbean, c. 1740-1833: Atlantic Archipelagos* (London: Routledge, 2015) 128-183. I will also return to this issue in Chapter V.

[24] I will return to this topic in Chapter I.

[25] Leith Davis, 'Burns and Transnational Culture' in *The Edinburgh Companion to Robert Burns* ed. by Gerard Carruthers, 150-163 (151).

in North America where, as we shall see, his poetry and persona would undergo continual processes of remediation.[26] Though the popular tag of 'The National Bard' might remain, this thesis – in reflecting on the relationship(s) between Burns and the early United States of America – participates in the reconfiguration of the poet as a transnational figure who, both in terms of his poetic output and posthumous legacy, transgressed and continues to transgress geographical, indeed 'national', boundaries.

A Brief Critical Overview

Prior to the twenty-first century, relatively little attention had been given to the publication, reception and wider cultural influence of Burns in the United States of America.[27] Perhaps even less had been made of Burns's poems and songs that reflected on American politics, despite the fact that his first overtly 'political' song, 'When Guilford Good' or 'A Fragment' (as it was first titled in the 1787 'Edinburgh edition') was a condensed satire on the American War of Independence and its reverberating effects on the contemporary British political landscape.[28] That said, Burns's popularity on the American side of the Atlantic did not go entirely unnoticed, as outlined in Donald Low's seminal *Robert Burns: The Critical Heritage*.[29] Low drew attention to a relatively obscure 1932 essay by Anna M. Painter that detailed how Burns's *Poems, Chiefly in The Scottish Dialect* was reprinted in New York and Philadelphia as early as 1788, thus drawing attention to the fact that it was being sold and circulated in the United States within the poet's lifetime. Though containing much useful bibliographical evidence, Painter's essay failed to expand on some of the reasons behind (and consequences of) this early dissemination. There is no mention, for example, of the (lack of) post-revolutionary American copyright laws that facilitated these piracies and played a crucial factor in the spread of Burns's work and reputation.[30] Similarly sparse in critical detail, Low's inclusion of poems and speeches about Burns by Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) and Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. (1809-1894) hinted at the idea of literary 'influence' without fully engaging with, or indeed contextualising, their salutary tributes. Despite this lack of rigorous

[26] Chapter V returns to the issue of 'remediation' in specific relation to Burns.
[27] All references to 'America' and 'American' in this thesis denote the United States of America rather than the North American continent. I use the terms 'United States' and 'America' interchangeably unless otherwise stated. Current debates over the 'imperial conflation of the United States with America' are worth noting. However, I have not adhered to their specificity for the present study. See Kirsten Silva Gruesz, *Ambassadors of Culture: The Transamerican Origins of Latino Writing* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002) 10.
[28] I will return to 'When Guilford Good' in Chapter I.
[29] *Robert Burns: The Critical Heritage*, ed. by Donald Low (London : Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974) 44-46.
[30] I will return to this topic in Chapter III.

critical engagement with Burns in relation to America, Low correctly observed that some of the best 'modern critics' of the poet in fact hailed from North America, citing Franklyn Bliss Snyder (whose *Life of Robert Burns*[31] is described as 'the most scholarly biography on a full scale yet') and J. DeLancey Ferguson (whose edited *Letters*[32] are praised for their 'meticulous scholarship').[33]

The twenty-first century 'turn' to reconsidering Burns within an American context has similarly been a product of combined scholarly efforts on both sides of the Atlantic. On July 20, 2001, The Robert Burns World Federation met in Atlanta, Georgia, where a pre-conference symposium and exhibit titled 'Robert Burns and America' was held. Sponsored by the University of South Carolina Libraries, in cooperation with the Department of Special Collections, Robert W. Woodruff Library, Emory University and the Burns Club of Atlanta, the conference resulted in the publication of a pamphlet titled *Robert Burns & America*, edited by the late G. Ross Roy.[34] Though by no means extensive, the five essays (adaptations of papers given on the day) provoked fresh insights into how the life and works of the poet had been variously transmitted in the early United States, particularly through public commemoration – a topic that Murray Pittock and his team would later expand upon for the *Robert Burns: Inventing Tradition and Securing Memory, 1796-1909* project. Of particular note was Thomas Keith's 'survey' of Burns Statues in North America which established that there are more statues of Burns in North America (fourteen in the United States of America and eight in Canada) than there are in Scotland (fifteen);[35] a testament to both the widespread popularity of the poet and also the magnitude of statuary culture and memorial practice in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[36]

As previously noted, however, the main resurgence in critical interest straddled the 250th anniversary of the poet's birth. Robert Crawford's critical biography, *The Bard: Robert Burns, A Biography* (the 2009 Scottish Book of The Year)[37] drew fresh attention to the fact that Burns 'lived through and was fascinated by the American Revolution'[38] and became the

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[31] Franklyn Bliss Snyder, *Life of Robert Burns* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1932).
[32] *The Letters of Robert Burns*, 2 vols., ed. by J. De Lancey Ferguson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1931).
[33] *Robert Burns: The Critical Heritage*, 51.
[34] *Robert Burns & America: A Symposium*, ed. by G. Ross Roy (Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina; Kircaldy, Scotland: Akros Publications, 2001).
[35] This 'survey' was also reprinted in *The Burns Chronicle 2001*. See Thomas Keith, 'Burns Statues – North America' in *The Burns Chronicle 2001* (The Robert Burns World Federation Press, 2001) 71-84.
[36] I will return to this in Chapter V.
[37] See <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/news/archive/2009/title,44218,en.php> [accessed 15/09/15].
[38] *The Bard,* 15.

'the first great Romantic poet to write about America'.[39] Crawford also touched upon how Burns's 'democratic tone' had been 'treasured' by the 'great poets of democratic America'[40] from Whitman, Poe, Dickinson and Longfellow to Whittier and Robert Frost; which is an accurate summation in that the former poets read, and to some extent, admired Burns's work. However, the suggestion that they uniformly responded to his 'democratic tone' also risks an over-simplification of the multifaceted ways in which he was received as both a literary figure and icon. Whittier, for example, was arguably as inspired by Burns's 'rustic simplicity' and 'directness of expression'[41] as he was by any ardent democratic political ethos. That said, these two strands of 'influence' (that is, pastoral simplicity and egalitarian politics) were not entirely disassociated given Whittier's poetic fusing of the pastoral sphere with the political sublime.[42]

Writing on Burns's broader influence outside of the strictly literary sphere in 2008, American historian Ferenc Morton Szasz outlined not only Abraham Lincoln's (1809-1865) fondness for Burns's verse but also the intersecting parallels between the 'lives and the legends' of the two figures. Though, at times, these 'connections' veer towards the tenuous ('Both were born into poor farming families that often barely kept the wolf from the door')[43], the book succeeded in drawing wider attention to both the availability of Burns's work in nineteenth-century America and the broad demographic spectrum of his readership, from newly-arrived Scottish emigrants to influential ex-Presidents. Further attempting to trace the 'routes' of Burns's 'universal appeal' in 2011, Pittock attributed the poet's popularity in America to his image as 'a positive and classless radical voice' and a 'friend to liberty in the United States'.[44] This image, Pittock suggests, was quite different to contemporary significations in Canada and other parts of the British Empire where the poet was cast as a 'national Scottish bard' who upheld a sense of 'Scottishness' within a much wider imperium.[45] Pittock's highlighting of how localised, socio-cultural parameters directly shaped the (highly variable) reception of the poet and his works was pioneering.

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[39] Ibid., 146.
[40] Ibid., 6.
[41] *Encyclopedia of American Poetry: The Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Eric L. Haralson (London: Routledge, 2014) 479.
[42] I return to this topic in Chapter IV.
[43] Ferenc Morton Szasz, *Abraham Lincoln and Robert Burns: Connected Lives and Legends* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008) 1.
[44] Pittock, 'Introduction: Global Burns', 19.
[45] Ibid.

However, as this study hopes to show, it is also important to account for the plurality of civic identities at work when considering the reception of a writer and their works within a single 'nation', in this case the United States of America. That a radical image of Burns, combined with certain egalitarian elements of his poetry, chimed with the founding ideals of the early American Republic is certainly *one* reason that might explain his nineteenth-century popularity. Yet the diverse and portable ways that Burns and his work were (re)appropriated to serve numerous perspectives and ideologies also suggest that we need to consider a wider multiplicity of reasons for his appeal. As transnational approaches to literary studies continue to encourage a theoretical conception of the 'nation' being comprised of a 'plurality' of forms,[46] it is helpful to transport this idea to the context of the nineteenth century and consider the plural nature of American 'nationhood' as the young country attempted to forge, maintain and, indeed, *fight* for a cohesive identity and set of 'national' values.[47]

The advantage of this perspective is that, in extrapolating the reasons for Burns's rise to prominence, appeal and lasting legacy in the United States, we might identify several strains of 'national' appropriation, rather than solely attributing a uniform image of him being a 'friend' to a singular, egalitarian 'American' way of life. As we shall see, Burns's image as a 'radical' figure in the United States did not in fact develop until the later nineteenth century as a result of ideological biographical texts and the surfacing of previously unpublished poems. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that his poems (and image) were simultaneously appropriated by groups and individuals in the broadly 'conservative' Southern states as well as the predominantly abolitionist North in the lead up to the American Civil War; a testament to how civic identities, values and even literary appropriations might differ within the same national boundaries. Thus, the 'transnational' approach here is twofold; not only does this study explore Burns's popularity *beyond* the nation of Scotland, but it also accounts for the plurality of identities existing *across* nineteenth-century America that influenced his reception and subsequent afterlives.

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[46] For a fuller discussion of the 'plurality of forms' of Scottish 'nationhood' in particular see *Scotland in Theory,* ed. by Eleanor Bell and Gavin Miller (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004) and *Beyond Scotland: New Contexts for Twentieth-Century Scottish Literature*, ed. by Gerard Carruthers, David Goldie and Alistair Renfrew (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004).

[47] I will return to the complex issue (and plural nature) of nineteenth century American 'national' identity in Chapters III and IV.

Transatlantic Orientations

The most significant twenty-first century leap towards better understanding the relationship(s) between Burns and the Unites States came through the publication of the 2012 essay collection *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture*[48], edited by Sharon Alker, Leith Davis and Holly Faith Nelson. As the 250th anniversary celebrations inspired a new wave of scholarship, Alker, Davis and Nelson responded to the lack of critical attention given to (the reception and representation of) Burns in the Americas by organising a transatlantic-themed conference in Vancouver that eventually led to a collected volume. [49] Though wide-spanning and ambitious (in its exploration of the variable geo-political contexts of Europe, Canada, the United States and the South American nations), several of the essays touched upon issues relating to Burns and the United States, adding new details to the largely untold story of Burns's connections – personal, poetic and posthumous – with the early American Republic.[50]

While these essays have helpfully informed several elements of the present study, the wide spanning nature of the collection, perhaps both a strength and weakness, also meant that it remains difficult to piece together specific details about Burns and the United States into any coherent whole. There is no overarching and connective critical narrative that explains, for example, Burns's early reception, the subsequent arc of his popularity, the history of his publication, and how his life and works were frequently remediated through forms of objectified commemoration. Yet as stated in the volume's introduction, the primary aim was to suggest 'multiple entryways' into Burns and highlight the 'particularities of transnational exchange' rather than focus on one 'nation'.[51] Though the much narrower scope of this thesis will focus specifically on Burns in relation to the United States, the idea of displacing the poet from his position of Scotland's 'national bard' in favour of considering wider 'transatlantic contexts' that connect 'local and national concerns' with a wider 'circulation of ideas' remains pertinent. [52]

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[48] *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture,* ed. by Sharon Alker, Leith Davis and Holly Faith Nelson (Farnham, Burlington: Ashgate, 2012).
[49] <http://www.scottish.sfu.ca/robert_burns_and_transatlantic_culture> [accessed 16/09/2015].
[50] See in particular Andrew Noble, 'Burns, Scotland, and the American Revolution', 31-55; Rhona Brown, '"Guid black prent": Robert Burns and the Contemporary Scottish and American Periodical Press', 71-87; Gerard Carruthers, 'Burns's Political Reputation in North America', 87-99; Robert Crawford, 'America's Bard', 99-117; and Leith Davis, 'The Robert Burns 1859 Centenary: Mapping Transatlantic (Dis)location', 187-209 all in *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture*, ed. by Sharon Alker, Leith Davis and Holly Faith Nelson.
[51] *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture*, 'introduction', 15.
[52] Ibid., 2.

If the prefix 'trans-' in 'transnational' represents how people, ideas, texts and other entities move 'across, 'through', 'over' and 'beyond'[53] the nation, then a 'transatlantic' perspective narrows this globally-reaching concept to the regions of the 'Atlantic world' in which Scotland and the United States are included. Importantly, however, this turn towards a 'transatlantic perspective viewing' is not a strictly twenty-first century development. Preceding (and influencing) current trends in transatlantic studies, with particular regards to Scotland and America, were several critical studies conducted in the 1970s.[54] Richard B. Sher and Jeffrey R. Smitten have attributed this twentieth-century bloom to contemporary 'bicentennials of the American Revolution, of the publication of the *Wealth of Nations* and the death of Hume.[55] However, these studies were often restricted to Scotland's institutional and philosophical influences on America as opposed to reciprocal relations, leaving 'much work to be done' on fully understanding the fuller complexities of historical cultural relations between the two countries.[56] Arguably the most nuanced, well-balanced and influential work from the period was Andrew Hook's path-breaking 1975 book *Scotland and America*. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the work was reprinted and revised in 2008 amidst an increasing vogue for transatlantic-themed studies.[57] A testament to its enduring quality, Hook's research into the reception of Scottish literature in nineteenth-century America has aided much of the 'recovery work' undertaken in the present study.[58]

Similar to the evolving theoretical debates surrounding 'transnationality', the broad field of transatlantic studies will undoubtedly continue to be surveyed, subdivided, (re)institutionalised and (re)theorised. Regardless, twenty-first century literary scholarship with a particular emphasis on the historical connections between British and American

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[53] <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/204575?rskey=LZAL97&result=3> [accessed 17/09/ 2015].

[54] Douglas Sloan, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the American College Ideal* (New York: Teachers College Press of Columbia University, 1971); Donald H. Meyer, *The Instructed Conscience: The Shaping of the American National Ethic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972); Donald J. D'Elia, *Benjamin Rush: Philosopher of the American Revolution* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1974); Andrew Hook, *Scotland and America: A Study of Cultural Relations, 1750-1835* (Glasgow: Blackie, 1975); T.M. Devine, *The Tobacco Lords: A Study of the Tobacco Merchants of Glasgow and their Trading Activities* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd., 1975); *Scotland, Europe and the American Revolution*, ed. by Owen Dudley Edwards and George Shepperson (London: Polygon, 1976).

[55] *Scotland and America in the age of the enlightenment*, ed. by Richard B. Sher and Jeffrey R Smitten (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990), introduction, 12.

[56] Ibid., 23.

[57] In addition to scholarly publications, the recent institutional advent of the STAR (Scotland's Transatlantic Relations) project at The University of Edinburgh, The Transatlantic Studies Association and several other related research centres and degree programs continues to give rise to fruitful developments in the field. See <http://www.star.ac.uk/> and <http://transatlanticstudies.com/> [accessed 17/09/ 2015].

[58] See also Andrew Hook, *From Goosecreek to Gandercleugh: Studies in Scottish-American Literary and Cultural History* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1999).

literature has benefited greatly from this fresh theoretical orientation.[59] As Eve Taylor Bannet and Susan Manning summarised in their introduction to *Transatlantic Literary Studies, 1660-1830* (2011), transatlantic relations were 'central to Britons' and Americans' everyday lives, literary imaginations, and histories' and thus 'much primary recovery work of sources and contacts remains to be done'.[60]

The study that follows participates in this 'primary recovery work'. Not only did Burns, as demonstrated by his poems and songs about the American Revolution, personally and poetically engage with transatlantic issues 'owre the sea'[61], but his rise to popularity in the early United States was also facilitated by material and institutional links that spanned across and connected peoples on different sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

A Transatlantic Efflorescence

Literary theorists have frequently employed Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's concept of the 'rhizome', outlined in their seminal study *A Thousand Plateaus*,[62] as a conceptual framework for better understanding transatlantic literary relations. Adopting the term from botany (a 'subterranean stem which sends out roots and leafy shoots at intervals along its length'), Deleuze and Guatarri use the 'rhizome' as a metaphor to advocate a form of 'deterritoralised' critical comparison that encourages the recognition of non-linear and non-hierarchal processes of growth and transmission. For Deleuze and Guattari, 'one of the most important characteristics of the rhizome is that it always has multiple entryways'[63] and thus it is not limited by a fixed or 'vertical' pattern of growth, is constantly evolving, adapting and forming new connections with a variety of different multiplicities.

The lack of fixed nation-based assumptions, sequential narratives and prevalence of transitions and transformations involved in cross-cultural literary exchanges have rendered the concept of the 'rhizome' a pertinent metaphorical framework for the field of transatlantic studies; particularly when examining the spatial 'growth' or 'spread' of a single writer and

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[59] See for example *Transatlantic Literary Studies, 1660-1830*, ed. by Eve Tavor Bannet and Susan Manning (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011**);** *Transatlantic Romanticism: British and American art and literature, 1790/1860*, ed. by Andrew Hemingway and Alan Wallach (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2015); Samantha Harvey, *Transatlantic Transcendentalism*: *Coleridge, Emerson and Nature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013).
[60] *Transatlantic Literary Studies, 1660-1830*, 'introduction', 1.
[61] Robert Burns, 'On A Scotch Bard, Gone to the West Indies' in *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, ed. by James Kinsley, 3 Vols., Vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968) 239 (6) (Hereafter referred to as *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*).
[62] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guatarri, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).
[63] Ibid., 12.

their oeuvre across geo-political boundaries. Focusing on the ways in which William Wordsworth's poetry (and popular image) migrated from Britain to North America in the nineteenth century, for example, Susan Manning suggests that the process might best be thought of as a 'rhizomatic transitive organism'[64] in that his poems, reputation and intellectual afterlives were variously transformed by an abundance of 'roots' and 'shoots' that sprouted in new soil, veering into different directions and patterns of 'growth'. Similarly, in the introduction to *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture,* it is suggested that the transmutation of Burns's songs, poetry and identity in the Americas might metaphorically resonate with a rhizomorphic model in that his reputation and work became 'invested with new local and regional meanings, and then dispersed in various directions to ultimately generate in a new form.'[65]

The 'rhizome' is, then, a useful concept to bear in mind when considering the spread of Burns's work and reputation in the United States. The numerous processes involved (individual poems, reprints, divergent political appropriations and statuary tributes to name but a few) largely pertain to an 'acentered' method of 'growth' in which there is not one central root but rather a series of interrelated 'offshoots' that form part of a larger lateral undergrowth. However, the problem with fully adopting this metaphorical gaze for the present study is its implicit discouragement of traditional forms of chronological analysis. The rhizomorphic model elicits a move away from sequential 'tree-like'[66] narratives in favour of what Susan Manning describes as 'thinking across'[67] temporal priorities in order to map wider 'nodes' or connections. Manning's use of the 'rhizome' to argue for an atemporal, 'wider stylistics of comparison' have certainly proven useful for transatlantic literary studies, as demonstrated by her identification of several 'transatlantic dynamics' (linguistic, thematic and poetic) between chronologically-disparate 'pairs and groups of texts'[68] in her methodologically-stimulating *Poetics of Character* (2013).[69] However, for the present study's focus on Burns's engagement with the United States, his subsequent early reception and the resulting nineteenth-century

[64] Susan Manning, '"Grounds for Comparison": The Place of Style in Transatlantic Romanticism' in *Wordsworth in American Literary Culture*, ed. by Joel Pace and Matthew Scott (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) 19-42 (35).
[65] *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture*, 'introduction', 7.
[66] The image of the 'tree', representing hierarchy and binary systems, is Deleuze and Guattari's chief point of contrast against the rhizome.
[67] Manning, '"Grounds for Comparison"', 28.
[68] Susan Manning, *Poetics of Character: Transatlantic Encounters 1700 – 1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013) 'introduction', 12.
[69] See also Susan Manning, *Fragments of Union: Making Connections in Scottish and American Writing* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

remediations of his 'memory', tracing a chronological genealogy (in the eighty years following the first arrival of his work) remains useful.

For example, in adopting the rhizomorphic view of Burns's life and work spreading through mulitple new 'roots' and 'shoots' in America – the temporal significance of *when* they sprouted; *which* nodes were integral to subsequent growth; and *where* (geographically speaking) they primarily sprawled across should not go undocumented. It is for this reason that the following thesis, rather than mapping the full spectrum of a broader 'rhizomatic organism', might be considered more a study on the 'transatlantic efflorescence' of some of the crucial nodes that enabled Burns's life and work to spread throughout the United States. In other words, it will explore the first 'period of flowering', or 'season of ostentatious growth'[70] in which the poet came to be associated with – and indeed rose to prominence in – the country. The analytical magnification of this 'efflorescence' also allows for the sense that these formative 'roots' form part of what Manning describes as a wider 'rhizomatic transitive organism'. The following study does not map the whole 'organism'. That is, it does not, arguably cannot, aim to offer definitive explanations of every single method by which Burns and his work rose to prominence; every instance of where he was appropriated; every recorded adaptation of one of his songs; or indeed, every which way that his cultural memory has been variously preserved, and continues to be preserved in the United States. Rather, it offers a chronological, perspective-viewing of some of the formative patterns of growth that contributed to the wider 'rhizomatic organism' that might conceptually represent Burns's multifarious and ever-evolving connections in, with and throughout the United States of America. Extending the botanical metaphor, an earlier use of the term 'rhizome' by Carl Jung comes to mind:

> The part that appears above the ground lasts only a single summer…Yet I have never lost the sense of something that lives and endures beneath the eternal flux. What we see is blossom, which passes. The rhizome remains.[71]

Applied to the present study, Jung's articulations are pertinent given the decline that Burns scholarship underwent in the twentieth century when the poet's impact and significance in the United States – indeed anywhere beyond the national borders of Scotland – went largely undocumented, though subsisted beneath the spotlight of wider critical attention. As we enter

[70] Definition of 'efflorescence' <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/59765?redirectedFrom=efflorescence#eid> [accessed 19/09/2015].
[71] C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* [1962] ed. by Aniela Jaffe, trans. by Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Pantheon Books, 1973) 4.

a fresh spring of 'blossom', or rather, a 'new era' of Burns Studies, it would serve us well to reconsider the timing and trajectory of some of the first major 'roots', 'shoots' and broader flowering or 'efflorescence' of the poet and his works in the early United States of America, c.1786-1866.

Eighty Years 'Owre the Sea'

Proliferating from the foundations of Burns's own poetic engagements with America towards the end of the eighteenth century (the first instance of a 'transnational' link between the poet and America), the following chapters will chart the subsequent publication, dissemination, reception, possible literary influence and cultural memory of the poet's 'life' and work in the United States up to 1866. The starting date of 1786 corresponds with the publication of Burns's first collection, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*, printed and issued by John Wilson of Kilmarnock and in which evidence of his first poetic engagements with global, specifically transatlantic, affairs can be discerned.

Eighty years later, by 1866, not only were biographies of Burns commonplace on American bookshelves, but he was also being culturally preserved through various methods of commemorative practice such as 'suppers', songs, speeches, political appropriations, rites and material culture. This closing date marks the approximate beginning of (what is commonly referred to as) the Reconstruction Era that followed the American Civil War, making for valuable insights into how fractured 'national' and civic identities were influential on certain cultural reconfigurations of the poet.[72] The centenary of Burns's birth, celebrated at over 60 separate locations on the cusp of Civil War in 1859, also makes for a pertinent concluding marker of how widespread and malleable his work and reputation had become in the United States by the mid-nineteenth century. That said, these dates should not be considered as absolute boundaries. In discussing statuary culture, for example, I have touched upon the significance of later nineteenth-century tributes, and similarly, my concluding discussions touch upon post-Civil War constructions of Burns with a final look forward to the current trajectory of Burns Studies in America.

In the first chapter, a critical re-examination and case study of three works in particular, 'When Guilford Good' (1784), 'Address of Beelzebub' (1786) and 'Ode For General Washington's Birthday' (1794) will provide a sense of the complexity of Burns's

[72] As will be discussed in Chapter V, Burns was simultaneously appropriated by individuals and groups from the Unionist North and the slave-holding confederate states of the South.

'poetic views' of America over the course of a decade. The term 'poetic views' is employed in acknowledgement of Burns's range of poetic personae and heteroglossic variety, particularly when writing on contentious issues such as revolutionary politics. Rather than taken as unflinching biographical truths, then, the 'views' extrapolated from these works should be considered more as indicators of what ideas, individuals and events relating to America had clearly stimulated or inspired the poet, whether politically, poetically or otherwise. To gain a tempering sense of contextualisation, parallel treatments of America by contemporary poets, writers and activists will be occasionally acknowledged in order to provide some perspective on the nature of Burns's opinions, or rather 'poetic views'.

Chapters II and III shift attention from Burns's poetic gaze to how the American reading public would, in turn, come to know and view the Scottish poet and his works (primarily through a thriving print culture on the Eastern seaboard). Chapter II discusses the initial reprinting and reception of individual poems in Philadelphia dailies such as the *Pennsylvania Packet*, before expanding on how entrepreneurial printers – often of Scottish or Irish heritage – capitalised on an absence of international copyright laws by swiftly reproducing and distributing Burns's *Poems, Chiefly in The Scottish Dialect* before the turn of the nineteenth century. Chapter III focuses on the significant impact that James Currie's (frequently reprinted) *The Works of Robert Burns* had on Burns's American reception through its ideologically-tinted biographical narrative. If the last decade of the eighteenth century marked the first appearances of Burns's poems in America (outlined in Chapter II), then the turn of the nineteenth century saw the dawn of multiple biographies that reprinted or repackaged biographical epithets originally written by Currie, Robert Cromek and John Gibson Lockhart among others (detailed in Chapter III).[73] Key biographical editions are discussed alongside a selection of critical reviews taken from pioneering American literary periodicals such as *The Literary Magazine and American Register*, which was edited by the novelist Charles Brockden Brown (1771-1810). Brown's early commentaries on Burns, hitherto ignored in scholarship, are one of the first instances of a noted American literary figure engaging with the poet. Given scholarship on Brown has, somewhat like Burns Studies, seen a period of revitalisation in recent years,[74] it seems a pertinent time to revisit these articles, bringing to mind the 'primary recovery work' that remains to be done in fully excavating historical transatlantic links between British and American Literature.

[73] Appendix I lists the full title and publication date of 'American editions' up to 1866.
[74] Bryan Waterman, 'Charles Brockden Brown, Revised and Expanded' in *Early American Literature* 40:1 (2005) 173-191.

Having established some of the methods by which Burns's work became available, Chapter IV turns attention to his influence on American poets. It begins with a broad discussion of what I have described as the effects of British 'poetic imperialism'. With Britain as the most relevant comparative model, nineteenth-century American poets faced the difficult task of attempting to set themselves apart from their transatlantic contemporaries within the boundaries of poetic convention. Yet, interestingly, Burns provided a subversive model to 'classical' or hegemonic European poetry through his emphasis on locality, thematic rejection of hierarchy and fluid linguistic range. Early American 'imitators' of Burns's verse such as Robert Dinsmoor (1757-1836) and David Bruce (c.1760-1830) are addressed due to their aesthetic choice to employ the Scots idiom and Standard Habbie to various ends. Leading on from this, a broader assessment of Burns in relation to American vernacular poetry is put forth with particular reference to James Russell Lowell (1819-1891). One of Lowell's earliest poems was his 1837 composition, 'Imitation of Burns' which was also written in Scots. Like John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892) before him, it seems that Lowell's poetic apprenticeship included a playful engagement with (and imitation of) Burns's Scots language poetry. While Whittier's foray into Scots was brief, Lowell remained a proponent of vernacular poetry and a scholar of linguistics throughout his life, eventually co-founding the American Dialect Society.[75] Whittier and Lowell, of course, formed part of a wider group of New England-based poets around which a canonical coalescence began to form by the 1840s. Known variously as the 'Fireside Poets', 'Schoolroom Poets' and, less commonly, the 'Household Poets', this group achieved a level of fame and popularity to rival that of any British or international literary figure, unofficially constituting the first 'canon' of 'national' American poets. The significance and possible influence of Burns on the group will be touched upon, culminating in a discussion of Emerson's commemorative 'tribute' to the Scottish poet at the Parker House Hotel, Boston, during the 1859 centenary celebrations.

Expanding on Emerson's ceremonial upholding of 'The memory of Burns'[76] in 1859, the concluding chapter seeks to address what might have variously constituted a 'memory of Burns' not only in the context of the 1859 centenary, but throughout early to mid-nineteenth century America. Having traced the initial appearances, widespread reprinting and consequential literary influence of Burns's poetry, the slightly more conceptual issue of how Burns was 'remembered' through nineteenth-century modes of public commemoration is

[75] <http://www.americandialect.org/ > [accessed 20/09/2015].
[76] *Chronicle of the hundredth birthday of Robert Burns*, ed. by James Ballantine (Edinburgh and London: A. Fullarton & Co., 1859) 551.

explored through frameworks derived from memory studies. The chapter begins with a broad discussion of how the popular legacy of Burns has continually straddled the blurry boundaries between myth, 'memory'[77] and history, before establishing that the 'memory of Burns' in the nineteenth-century United States was particularly multiflorous and complex. Framed by Jan Assmann's assertion that 'cultural memory' requires objectified 'institutions of preservation'[78] (relics, books, anniversaries, statues and several other modes of objectification) in order for past experience to be conveyed, the chapter proceeds to discuss the inception and effects of several 'institutions of preservation' that upheld, or rather remediated, the poet and his works in the nineteenth-century United States. In addition to readdressing key biographical texts, the discussion spans across a variety of material and memorial culture, ranging from the establishment of the first American 'Burns Clubs' (in the early-nineteenth century) to the beginnings of the transatlantic vogue for erecting statues in the poet's honour (the latter half of the century). The chapter closes by addressing the complex issue of whether these different modes of remembrance and appropriations might legitimately be grouped together and viewed as instances of 'national' cultural remembrance unique to America. Though the commemorative practices outlined are inherently bound together by both the memory source (Burns) and a specific geographical location and period (the United States of America, 1786-1866), the intricacies of assessing the cultural memory of Burns through a 'transnational' lens are fleshed out with an aim towards avoiding restrictive (both Scottish and American) national frameworks whilst maintaining the relevance of the 'nation' (in a wide plurality of forms) as an analytical category.

This introduction opened with a quote from Murray Pittock expressing a sense of unexplored 'hinterlands' that are yet to be discovered in Burns Studies. It is hoped the following thesis will better orientate readers in a largely unexplored transnational, indeed transatlantic plain, where fresh insights into the poet's connections with the United States of America will be discovered, mapped and perhaps even provide guidance for future studies of the poet's appeal and transmission beyond the borders of Scotland. In recognition of how Burns and his works spread fluidly across and within different cultures, then, we might

[77] A fuller theoretical contextualization and definition of what is meant here by 'cultural memory' will be expanded upon in Chapter V.
[78] Jan Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory' in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, ed. by Astrid Erill and Angsar Hunning (Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 2008) 109-118 (111).

facetiously push for a reconsidered twenty-first century baptism: Robert Burns, The (Trans)National Poet of Scotland.

Chapter I

'Thy harp, Columbia, let me take!': Burns's American Works, c. 1784-1794

Thus in the beginning all the World was America, and more so than that is now….[1]

➢John Locke (1689)

In his influential work of political philosophy *Two Treatises of Government*, first published in 1689, John Locke employed 'America' as a metaphor when deliberating over the 'use and value of money' in society.[2] For Locke, America was not only a geographical space but also an imaginative frame through which man's 'natural rights' (to 'life, liberty and estate') could be identified in the face of increasing political, economic and constitutional change.[3] Locke's metaphorical flourish is revealing of how, by the seventeenth century, the very *idea* of America had become an integral part of self-enquiry and self-definition in Europe.[4]

Wil Verhoven has recently traced how the 'evolving idea of "America" changed and shaped British society' as much as 'it changed and shaped the colonies'[5] by discussing a range of responses (literary, political and geographical) from the 1600s right through to the mid-nineteenth century. Spanning several notable periods, Verhoven's discussion demonstrates how America was variously and symbolically represented as an egalitarian utopia; a Jacobin Republic; an original state of 'Nature'; and even as an example of evolutionary decline. Naturally, the onset of American revolutionary debates between the 1760s and 1780s caused a 'systematic shift' in the way it was portrayed in Britain. For opponents of British colonial rule and political reformists, the mere mention of America was to become loaded with connotations of liberty, freedom and progressive constitutional reform. In this account, symbolic depictions of America were regularly woven into narratives that highlighted how Britain's core political values were being dissipated by the government.

For many late-eighteenth-century writers, philosophers, poets and politicians, then, America provided an imaginative space where alternative ideological narratives might be

[1] John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* [1689], ed. by Peter Laslett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 301.
[2] It should be noted that the original title page was marked 1690 despite being published in December 1689.
[3] Ibid.
[4] For a fascinating overview of the Enlightenment polemic on America see Antonello Gerbi, *The Dispute of the New World: The History of a Polemic, 1750 -1900* [1973], trans. Jeremy Moyle (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2010).
[5] Wil Verhoven, 'Transatlantic Utopianism' in *Transatlantic Literary Studies 1660-1830* ed. by Eve Taylor Bannet and Susan Manning, 28-46 (33).

creatively discussed and put forth. That is, America became intertwined in personal, political and, most importantly for this study, *poetic* processes of self-inquiry and disquisition.

Robert Burns and America

This contextual, dual consideration of America as both a metaphorical and geo-physical space is important when approaching Robert Burns's engagements with the emergent Republic in the 1780s and 1790s. Burns wrote two poems, one song and a handful of letters that directly engaged with America and its politics during this period. Though briefly touching upon Burns's epistolary allusions, this chapter will predominantly offer a critical reassessment of (what will subsequently referred to as) the poet's 'American works': 'When Guilford Good' (1784); 'Address of Beelzebub' (1786) and 'Ode For General Washington's Birthday' (1794).

While considering the contextual, metaphorical power of 'America' is certainly useful for this chapter's analysis, it is equally important to acknowledge that, particularly in the window that Burns was writing, the country was also a familiar geographical space that offered political asylum for radical poets, activists and reformers. There remains an instinctive, somewhat inflexible, popular tendency to consider Burns as an anti-establishment, revolutionary poet. Yet a brief comparison of Burns's American works with contemporary writings by fellow Scottish poets such as Alexander Wilson (1766-1813) and James 'Balloon' Tytler (1745-1804) – both of whom were forced to seek exile in America on account of their dissenting works – offers a tempering sense of contextualisation. Though the following analysis is primarily concerned with Burns's poetry and songs, these contextual comparisons, which effectively place his American works on a wider (poetical and political) spectrum, will be alluded to where relevant or necessary.

Burns was also a master of adopting multiple poetic personae, particularly when writing on socially contentious issues such as religion and revolutionary politics. There has been a longstanding tendency, inaugurated by James Currie's influential *The Works of Robert Burns* (1800), to read Burns's poetry 'through the projected "life" of its author'.[6] This is often detrimental to our understanding of the full range and complexity of Burns's poetic craft and rhetorical reformulations. Rather than taken as unflinching biographical truths, then, the 'poetic views' extrapolated from these works should be considered more as indicators of what ideas, individuals and events relating to America had clearly stimulated or inspired the poet, whether politically, poetically or otherwise.

[6] *Poetics of Character*, 240.

Furthermore, these 'poetic views' should not be placed in binary opposition to his epistolary sentiments, whereby the latter would be rendered more reliable sources of information. Even in his signed letters, Burns frequently adopted different rhetorical personae and changed the way he wrote depending on the recipient. Susan Manning notes that (both) Burns's poems and letters have an 'extraordinarily powerful capacity' to evoke what it might be like '*to believe something at a particular moment*'; before qualifying that it is 'the immediacy rather than the immutability of such utterances that commands assent',[7] and thus we must avoid generalization.

Epistolary Reflections

Burns's first brief mention of America comes in a 1783 letter to his cousin James Burness. In a paragraph largely concerned with the local economy, trade, industry and market valuation (he describes the current value of 'Oatmeal', 'white pease' and 'Silk' among other goods), Burns concludes:

> In short[…]since the unfortunate beginning of this American war, & its as unfortunate conclusion, this country has been, & still is decaying very fast.[8]

Here, American victory is deemed 'unfortunate' due to its impact on the Ayrshire economy. There is little sense here of America being a symbolic beacon of progressive politics, or even a geographical refuge for political activists. Nonethless, just one year later Burns was to write 'When Guilford Good'; his first overtly political song that, as we shall see, depicted American victory as far from being 'unfortunate'. Roger Fechner has attributed this swift change in Burns's attitude to his progressive 'evolution toward maturity as an artist and intellectual.'[9] There is no doubt some truth to Fechner's statement, yet it must also be qualified by other factors. Burns's ability to craft, invent and switch between rhetorical personae is surely of relevance here, as is the fact that the decline in trade he refers to did not endure. As an article in the *Glasgow Advertiser* concluded a few years later, 'the export of English and Scotch goods from Clyde to America, has increased every year since the end of the war'.[10]

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[7] Ibid., 257.
[8] *The Letters of Robert Burns,* ed. by J. De Lancey Ferguson and G. Ross Roy, 2 Vols., Vol. 1, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985) 19. Hereafter referred to as *The Letters of Robert Burns.*
[9] Roger Fechner, 'Burns and American Liberty' in *Love and Liberty: Robert Burns; a bicentenary celebration*, ed. by Kenneth Simpson (East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 1997) 274-288 (278).
[10] *Glasgow Advertiser and Evening Intelligencer*, 23 April (1792).

Burns's letters towards the end of the decade are more revealing of how socio-political discourse in Britain often referred back to the dialectical example of America (as a transatlantic 'other' against which Britain might define itself) when embarking on processes of self-enquiry and self-reflection. In an open letter to the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* printed 22 November, 1788, Burns, or least in the personae of his letter – 'A. BRITON' – displays sympathy with American revolutionary Republicanism by describing it as 'enlightened' and 'honest':

> I will not, I cannot, enter into the merits of the cause; but I dare say, the American Congress, in 1776, will be allowed to have been as able and as enlightened, and, a whole empire will say, as honest, as the English Convention in 1688; and that the fourth of July will be as sacred to their posterity as the fifth of November is to us.[11]

The full letter, which delicately supports the 'Glorious Revolution' whilst mounting a public defence of the Stuarts, was partly a reaction to an anti-Jacobite sermon (to celebrate the centenary of the 1688 'Glorious Revolution') Burns had attended by the Reverend Joseph Kirkpatrick in the local church of Dunscore parish.[12] Burns attacks Kirkpatrick for describing the Stuarts as 'bloody and tyrannical' and insists that his sermon was bent on 'raking up the ashes'[13] of a misfortunate dynasty. Robert Crawford has shrewdly noted that this letter provides a good example of where Burns appears ('on the surface') to be a 'patriotic Brit' and supporter of the royal House of Hanover, but 'slyly reveals that underneath not all is as it seems.'[14] Burns's ability to subtly balance political sentiments to the point of ambiguity is, unsurprisingly, also prevalent throughout his three main American Works.

In the same month that the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* letter appeared, Burns also wrote to his trusted correspondent Mrs. Dunlop (in a letter dated 13th November 1788) expressing similar sentiments. Evidently frustrated by the tyrannical and 'bloody' depiction of the Stuarts, Burns again turns to the American Revolution to reflect:

> Is it not remarkable, odiously remarkable, that tho' manners are more civilized, & the rights of mankind better understood, by an Augustan's Century's improvement [...] an empire beyond the Atlantic has had its REVOLUTION too, & for the very same

[11] *The Oxford Edition of The Works of Robert Burns, Volume I: Commonplace Books, Tour Journals, And Miscellaneous Prose*, ed. by Nigel Leask (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014) 288.
[12] Ibid., 287.
[13] Ibid., 288.
[14] *The Bard,* 307.

> maladministration & legislative misdemeanors in the illustrious & sapientipotent Family of H – as was complained in the "tyranical & bloody house of STUART"'.[15]

In defending the 'illustrious' House of Stuart, Burns seems to suggest that it is not always tyrannical regimes (as implied by Kirkpatrick) that cause rupture, dissent and warfare but also 'maladministration & legislative misdemeanors'. This subtly implies that the recent American Revolution was justified and partly a consequence of Hanoverian 'misdemeanors' and legislative errors.

That the American Revolution continued to be an intriguing topic for Burns is further evidenced in a letter written to Robert Graham, dated 13th May 1789. Burns, who would have known to exercise epistolary caution given Graham's position as Commissioner of The Scottish Board of Excise, describes his sincere admiration for Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* ('I could not have given any mere *man*, credit for half the intelligence Mr Smith discovers in his book') before stating:

> I would covet much to have his ideas respecting the present state of some quarters of the world that are or have been the scenes of considerable revolutions since his book was written.[16]

Here, Burns clearly alludes to the American Revolution as well as events in France ('are or have been'). In *Wealth of Nations*, Smith had predicted an inevitable change in the political and economic relationship between Britain and America.[17] Displaying some sympathy for North American independence movements, Smith suggested that it would be a 'violation of the most sacred rights of mankind' to 'prohibit a great people' from managing their stock and industry so that it is 'most advantageous to themselves'.[18] Thus, Burns would have had a fair estimation, through his reading of the book, what Smith's 'ideas' on the American Revolution might have been like. Crawford also suggests that this letter indicates that Burns was likely reading newspaper reports from France prior to the fall of Bastille, which further explains his plural reflection on 'revolutions' in 'some quarters of the world'.[19] Of course, the full fervour of the French Revolution in the 1790s had reignited debates over the outcome of the American Revolution, with the example of the young Republic being variously used to bolster both

[15] *The Letters of Robert Burns,* Vol. 1., 337.
[16] *The Letters of Robert Burns,* Vol 1., 410.
[17] See Andrew S. Skinner, 'Adam Smith and the American Revolution' in *Presidential Studies Quarterly,* 7:2/3 (1977) 75-87.
[18] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* [1776], ed. by Kathryn Sutherland (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) 346.
[19] *The Bard,* 315.

Jacobin and anti-Jacobin arguments. Verhoven calls this 'the American front of the French Revolution debate' in Britain,[20] an assertion justified by his tracing of the upsurge in printed documents relating to America in Britain between 1792 and 1795 ('the number of novels dealing with American content rose in those years, to over 60 percent').[21] Written in 1794, Burns's 'Ode for General Washington's Birthday' might easily be considered within the context of this 'American front' of the French debate.

Another letter to George Thomson, dated August 28th, 1793, provides further evidence of Burns being engaged in conceptual revolutionary debates. Reflecting on his recent composition of 'Robert Bruce's March to Bannockburn' ('Scots, wha hae'), Burns states:

> …I had no idea of giving myself any trouble on the Subject, till the accidental recollection of that glorious struggle for Freedom, associated with the glowing ideas of some other struggles of the same nature, *not quite so ancient*.[22]

With a final verse that famously commands to 'Lay the proud usurpers low!' in the cause of liberty, the 'not quite so ancient' struggles he had in mind were clearly revolutionary in nature. By writing in the context of the medieval Scottish Wars of Independence, however, Burns slyly escapes culpability in the same year that had seen the likes of Thomas Muir and James 'Balloon' Tytler face the consequences of perceived sedition and Republicanism.

What is perhaps most remarkable about juxtaposing Burns's epistolary reflections on America is the overall sense that (as Andrew Hook, Andrew Noble and Bruce P. Lenman have established elsewhere) the American Revolution and its aftermath remained of profound importance to Scotland in the late-eighteenth century on a variety of levels; whether commercial, political, intellectual, geographical or otherwise.[23] In reconsidering Laura Doyle's suggestion that transnational literary studies should acknowledge how literature is formed and circulates 'within a world of encounters',[24] then, it is clear that Burns lived and participated in a society which continued to be shaped by transatlantic encounters of various kinds, particularly between Scotland and America.

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[20] See Wil Verhoven, *Americomania and the French Revolution Debate in Britain, 1789-1802* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
[21] *Americomania and the French Revolution Debate in Britain*, 247.
[22] *The Letters of Robert Burns,* Vol. 2, 236.
[23] See Bruce, P. Lenman, 'Aristocratic "Country" Whiggery in Scotland and The American Revolution' in *Scotland and America in The Age of Enlightenment* ed. by Richard B. Sher and Jeffrey R. Smitten (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990) 180-192 and Andrew Noble, 'Burns, Scotland, and the American Revolution' in *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture* ed. by Sharon Alker, Leith Davis and Holly Faith Nelson, 31-55.
[24] Doyle, 'Notes toward a Dialectical Method: Modernities, Modernisms', 195.

The American Works

As stated above, this chapter will offer a thorough critical reassessment of 'When Guilford Good' (1784); 'Address of Beelzebub' (1786) and 'Ode For General Washington's Birthday' (1794). That is not to say that these were the only poems and song(s) in which Burns referred, alluded to, or was in some way inspired by America or its politics. In situating Burns in the wider context of a nation (Scotland) grappling with contentious American revolutionary ideals, Andrew Noble, for example, cites the 'Tree of Liberty' as revealing of Burns's American sympathies, and in particular the 'equally America-devoted' Thomas Paine.[25] However, as Gerard Carruthers and Norman R. Paton have recently argued, there is no conclusive evidence that Burns was in fact the author.[26] This does not change the fact that, by the later half of the nineteenth century, the poem was attributed to Burns in several American editions and thus had some impact on his continuing transatlantic reception and legacy (regardless of the poem's true author). For this reason, I will return to the 'Tree of Liberty' in Chapter III, which focuses more specifically on American print editions of Burns and details the first appearance of the poem in the United States.

Another Burns song, equally contested in regards to authorship, that might be considered under the umbrella of his American works is 'The Slaves Lament'; first published as part of James Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum* in 1792 (which was subsequently reprinted in America in 1797). The song's speaker mourns his own trafficking across the Atlantic to 'the land's of Virginia-O' and depicts America as an oppressive destination of 'bitter snow and frost' in contrast to pastoral Senegal, where 'streams for ever flow, and flowers for ever blow'.[27] This particularly harsh description of America appears to be at odds with the majority of Burns's other poetic visions of the country, which might well add to the idea that the poet did not write the song. As Michael Morris suggests, the balance of evidence points towards it being 'an older song circulating in 1792' that 'Burns collected, rather than an original composition.'[28] Nonetheless, as with the 'Tree of Liberty', such inconclusive authorial evidence did not stop the song from having a lasting influence on the reception and memory of Burns, particularly in regards to the poet's perceived sympathy for enslaved African-Americans. I will return to this complex posthumous appropriation of Burns in

[25] Noble, 'Burns, Scotland, and the American Revolution', p. 32. Noble relies on the textual authority of *The Canongate Burns: The Complete Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, ed. by Andrew Noble and Patrick Scott Hogg (Edinburgh: Canongate Books Limited, 2001).
[26] See Gerard Carruthers and Norman R. Paton, 'Did Robert Burns Write The Tree of Liberty' in *Fickle Man* ed. by Johnny Rodger and Gerard Carruthers, 242-257.
[27] Robert Burns, 'The Slave's Lament' in *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, Vol. 2, 647 (6-10).
[28] *Scotland and the Caribbean*, 115.

Chapter V, which deals specifically with the cultural memory of Burns in the nineteenth-century United States.

Finally, another poem worth mentioning before embarking on a full examination of Burns's three major American works is his 'Epistle to John Ranken', first printed in the Kilmarnock edition of 1787. Based on Burns's impregnation of Elizabeth Paton in 1784, the speaker of the poem describes events through a series of comical metaphors that, at least to a twenty-first century reader, veer towards the misogynistic ('I straiket a wee for sport').[29] Attempting to escape humiliation at the hands of the 'poacher's court' (47) (a reference to the consequential clerical fury directed towards Burns) the speaker suggests they 'better gaen an sair't the King/ At Bunker's Hill' (35-36). This historical reference, laced with sarcasm, implies that joining the British Army at the Battle of Bunker Hill (where the British suffered huge losses during the American War) would have been less humiliating than the speaker's present ordeal. More complex and potentially troubling, however, is Burns's second American allusion:

> As soon's the clockin-time is by,
> An' the wee powts begun to cry,
> Lord, I'se hae sportin by an' by,
> For my gowd guinea;
> Tho' I should herd the buckskin kye
> For't, in Virginia! (61-66)

Here, the speaker wryly vows to continue the practice of fornication even though it might result in emigration and having to 'herd the buckskin kye' in 'Virginia'. The term 'buckskin kye' (black cattle) is clearly a reference to African-Americans, chattel slavery and plantation life. Andrew Noble takes an optimistic approach towards this troublesome verse, suggesting that Burns is not 'belittling the slaves but seeing in the mirror a hellish image of what these positions would reduce him to'.[30] Indeed, such a brash allusion to slavery does not appear to match the body of Burns's creative output, which primarily lends itself to liberally progressive, egalitarian points of view that defend oppressed minorities.

However, particularly in Scotland, there is perhaps an over-eagerness to defend Burns against any evidence that might dare depict him as less than progressive, radical and liberally

[29] *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, Vol. 1, 61 (44).
[30] Andrew Noble, 'Burns, Scotland and The American Revolution', in *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture*, 39.

minded. As more evidence continues to be rooted out, though, he certainly cannot be praised (as several other late-eighteenth century Scottish poets and activists might be) for championing the cause of one of the most humane protest movements on the Atlantic periphery during the period.[31]

Perhaps Gerard Carruthers strikes the right note in suggesting that Burns's apparent ambivalence towards slavery and abolition might be a 'sober lesson' of how we can often lose sight of the 'big socio-moral questions that face us.'[32] Burns's lack of engagement with abolition might indeed lead us to question what continuing transnational causes we might be culpable of being too passive towards in the twenty-first century. This is particularly resonant in the wake of a string of high-profile recent cases where trafficked migrants have been forcibly 'enslaved' in 'inhuman' working conditions across Europe.[33] While the case of Burns and eighteenth-century slavery remains difficult (given all other evidence points towards him being a man of genuine humanitarian spirit and empathy), it would perhaps serve us well to look at the humanitarian cruelties that persist in our own century. In doing so, we might recognise that even the most 'liberally-minded' of us can also be passively ignorant in the face of practical activism and transnational human-rights movements.

'When Guilford Good'

'When Guilford Good' or 'Ballad on the American War' first appeared titled as 'A Fragment' in the Edinburgh edition of 1787. A highly nuanced political song known, rather confusingly, by three different titles, it became most commonly referred to as 'When Guilford Good' after appearing under that name in James Johnson's 1788 *Scots Musical Museum* and George Thomson's 1793 publication of *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs for the Voice*. Composed much earlier than Burns's other American works (written in 1784), it was also the only one that was made available to the public in his own lifetime. Of the poems, 'Address to Beelzebub' was written in 1786 and 'Ode For General Washington's Birthday' in 1794, yet neither was actually published, quite remarkably, until the mid-nineteenth century. That Burns's later American works did not surface within his own lifetime is telling of the hostile

[31] See *Scotland and the Caribbean,* 128-183; and *Recovering Scotland's Slavery Past*, ed. by Tom M. Devine (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015).
[32] Gerard Carruthers, 'Robert Burns and Slavery' in *Fickle Man*, 174.
[33] See 'Modern Day Slavery in Focus', <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/series/modern-day-slavery-in-focus> [accessed 04/01/2016].

environment in which Burns was writing, where challenges to the political hegemony (even in the form of poetry) would not go unpunished.[34]

In line with this, the publication of 'When Guilford Good' was not without weary hesitation, as demonstrated by Burns's letter to Henry Erskine, in December 1786:

> I showed the enclosed political ballad to my Lord Glencairn, to have his opinion whether I should publish it; as I suspect my political tenets, such as they are, may be rather heretical in the opinion of my best Friends[…]His Lordship seems to think the piece may appear in print, but desired me to send you a copy for your suffrage.[35]

In asking for advice from both Lord Glencairn and Henry Erskine, it seems Burns was well aware of the inflammatory political charge running through the song. In the first verse, Burns alludes to *'Guilford'*[36] – perhaps better known as former Prime Minister Frederick, Lord North (1732-1792):

When *Guilford* good our Pilot stood,
An' did our hellim thraw, man,
Ae night, at tea, began a plea,
Within *America*, man:
Then up they gat the maskin-pat,
And in the sea did jaw, man;
An' did nae less, in full Congress,
Than quite refuse our law, man. (1-8)

Frederick, Lord North served as prime minister from 1770 and was in power during the period leading up to the American War, which explains why Burns refers to him as 'our Pilot' at the head of state. In the years that followed the American War, Peter D. G. Thomas notes that there was a historical condemnation of Lord North as 'the minister who lost America',[37] thus, the term 'pilot' was employed here with a strong hint of irony. The following lines in which the Americans 'did nae less, in full congress'/Than quite refuse our law, man' not only suggests American resistance, but also alludes to the Declaration of Independence which begins with

[34] For a further discussion of this context see Emma Macleod, *British Visions of America, 1775-1820* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2013).
[35] *The Letters of Robert Burns,* Vol. 1, 77.
[36] *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns,* Vol. 1, 49 (1).
[37] Peter D. G. Thomas, 'North, Frederick, second earl of Guilford [Lord North] (1732–1792)' cited at <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2034> [accessed 17/01/2013].

the words 'IN CONGRESS'.[38] However, there is no real sense of the song being overtly pro-American in the first verse. On the contrary, *'Guilford'* is portrayed as *our* pilot (though perhaps with noted irony) and the Americans reject *our* laws, almost suggesting a unity between Britain and the speaker.

While Burns, drawing on the conventions of lyrical satire, chose to use a subsidiary name for Lord North by referring to him as *'Guilford'* (after his father, the first Earl of Guilford), he included the real names Richard Montgomery (1738-1775) and Sir Guy Carleton (1724-1808) in verse two:

Then thro' the lakes *Montgomery* takes,
I wat he was na slaw, man;
Down *Lowrie's Burn* he took a turn,
And *Carelton* did ca', man:
But yet, whatreck, he at *Quebec*
Montgomery-like did fa',man,
Wi' sword in hand, before his band,
Amang his en'mies a', man. (9-16)

Following America's rejection of British rule in the first verse, Burns goes onto depict the ambitious attempts of Richard Montgomery to invade Canada under the orders of George Washington in 1775. Burns conveys the building momentum of a resistant and ambitious America, by describing Montgomery as 'na slaw, man'. The image is enhanced by the repetitive and warlike alternate line repetition of 'man' that beats throughout the song, creating a crescendo of events. Montgomery is further described in an ambitious, honourable and courageous manner, ultimately meeting his demise 'Wi' sword in hand, before his band'. An Irishman who mixed with 'men of liberal views who were friends of the Americans'[39], the speaker's admiration for Montgomery is telling and also the first sign of a pro-American view in the song. The description of Sir Guy Carleton, the Governor of Quebec, who was instrumental in capturing many Americans, is far less venerable.

The third verse refers to, 'Tammy Gage', or British commander General Thomas Gage (1718-1787) who, despite being Governor of Massachusetts, was allegedly kept under constant siege by the Continental Army in his Boston mansion and is thus depicted as a

[38] 'The Declaration of Independence' cited in *The Debate on the Constitution: Federalist and Antifederalist Speeches, Articles, and Letters During the Struggle over Ratification, Part one: september 1787 to February 1788,* ed. by Bernard Bailyn, (New York: The Library of America, 1993) 949.
[39] H. M. Chichester, 'Montgomery, Richard (1738–1775)' cited at <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19072> [accessed 18/01/2013].

coward ('Was kept at Boston-ha, man'). Gage was succeeded by Sir William Howe (1729-1814) who became commander in chief of land forces in North America:

Poor *Tammy Gage* within a cage
Was kept at *Boston-ha*', man
Till *Willie Howe* took o'er the knowe
For *Philadelphia,* man:
Wi' sword an' gun he thought a sin
Guid Christian bluid to draw, man;
But at *New York* wi' knife an' fork
Sir loin he hacked sma', man. (17-24)

Here, Burns firstly recognises Howe's pious apprehensions towards violence (Wi' sword an' gun he thought a sin'), but then goes onto describe his subsequent brutal attacks in New York, where three thousand Americans were killed and many cattle seized on the Hudson in November 1776. The ruthless language ('bluid', 'knife', 'fork' and 'hacked sma') not only refers to the literal seizure and consumption of cattle, but also to the bloody slaughter of American lives. Once again, it seems, the British Commanders are portrayed in less than heroic terms. Thomas Gage is depicted as passive, useless and confined to a 'cage', while William Howe ignores his religious convictions and proceeds into acts of brutality; with the colloquial, subsidiary titles of 'Tammy' and 'Willie' stripping them of conviction and integrity. The following verse continues to hail the triumph of American arms:

Burgoyne gaed up, like spur an' whip,
Till *Fraser* brave did fa', man;
Then lost his way, ae misty day,
In *Saratoga* shaw, man.
Cornwallis fought as lang's he dought,
An' did the Buckskins claw, man;
But *Clinton's* glaive frae rust to save,
He hung it to the wa' man. (25-32)

The speaker alludes to Sir John Burgoyne's (1722-1792) surrender to the American army at Saratoga, where he 'lost his way, ae misty day' on the 17th October 1777. It is, however, notable that Burns chose to portray '*Fraser'* as 'brave', which is the only point where a British military figure is described in an honourable light. Brigaider Simon Fraser (1726-1782) was the son of Hugh Fraser of Balnain, and thus descended from a brave and noble Jacobite

family.[40] That Burns portrays the bravery of '*Fraser*' is perhaps revealing of his own patriotic empathy with past Scottish heroes and Jacobite clans, rather than an admiration for the British army in America. The last four lines of the verse further glorify American victory, as Marquess Cornwallis' (1738-1805) surrender at Yorkton is alluded to while the 'Buckskins' (denoting the American Army) seize every opportunity and courageously 'claw' their way to freedom. The reference to '*Clinton'* refers to Sir Henry Clinton (1730-1795) who, as the war drew to a close, was forced to retreat to New York after American victories in the North and South, hence the reason Burns describes him as hanging up his sword. This is a powerful and resonating image to end the verse with. Sir Henry Clinton was 'widely seen to share the blame for the defeat'[41] in the American War, and he thus symbolises the failure of the whole campaign. With the image of Clinton hanging up his sword, Burns concludes his condensed summary of the American War, by highlighting British failure and American triumph.

While the first four verses of 'When Guilford Good' selectively deal with key events from the beginning of the American War to its eventual conclusion, the final five verses go onto address the political fallout from it in Britain. In verses five and six, Burns depicts several bumbling British politicians in caricature form, as they are thrown into chaos after the war:

Then *Montague*, an' *Guilford* too,
Began to fear a fa', man;
And *Sackville* doure, wha stood the stoure
The German Chief to thraw, man:
For Paddy *Burke*, like ony Turk.
Nae mercy had at a', man;
An' *Charlie Fox* threw by the box,
An' lows'd his tinkler jaw, man.

Then *Rockingham* took up the game;
Till Death did on him ca', man;
When *Shelburne* meek held up his cheek,
Conform to Gospel law, man:
Saint Stephen's boys, wi' jarring noise,
They did his measures thaw, man;
For *North* an' *Fox* united stocks,
An' bore him to the wa,' man. (33-48)

[40] Stuart Reid, 'Fraser, Simon, master of Lovat (1726–1782)' cited at <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10124/2006-05> [accessed 19/01/2013].
[41] Ira D. Gruber, 'Clinton, Sir Henry (1730–1795)' cited at <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5681> [accessed 19/01/2013].

None of the politicians here are described in terms of strength or conviction and, on the contrary, are subtly ridiculed. By drawing these figures together in two compressed verses and highlighting their shortcomings, Burns makes a complete mockery of British politics; *'Guilford*' contributed towards causing the war; '*Montague'* (John Montague, Earl of Sandwich, 1718-1792) was regarded by many as a poor 'strategist and wartime minister';[42] and the 'doure' *'Sackville'* (Lord George Sackville, 1716-1785) was regularly used as a 'scapegoat for the loss of America'.[43] Burns's subsequent references to Edmund Burke (1729-1797) and Charles James Fox (1749-1806), both of whom opposed the American War and led a cunning campaign to topple the North administration, further portrays the increasing factionalism of British politics in the aftermath of the war.

Burke had 'Nae mercy' in turning on political opponents, while Fox, rather comically, 'lows'd his tinkler jaw', possibly alluding to the idea that North's failure in America was 'a great cause of amusement to Charles'[44], although it could also refer to his increasingly 'loose' political beliefs, as he would, as the song later depicts, go onto form a surprising alliance with Lord North. Burns is notably anti-Fox here which adds further complexity to his epistolary exchanges with Henry Erskine prior to the song's publication (given Erskine adhered to Fox and the Rockingham Whigs).[45] That Erskine was known for his 'universal requisition' and 'reasoned wit'[46] might be one reason Burns would rely on his advice, regardless of which party he was aligned with. More importantly, however, was the fact that Burns's patron at this time was the Earl of Glencairn who was also a notable Whig. Burns may have been concerned about offending Glencairn and other Edinburgh Whigs, which would explain why he needed 'permission', as it were, from Erskine before publishing the poem. Here, Burns cautiously straddles the delicate line between not offending the Whigs (to the point where he could risk losing patronage) yet still managing to portray Fox in rather mocking fashion.

In referring to the complex relationship between Burns's politics and his bids for patronage, Nigel Leask has stated that the poet was often able to solicit patronage from upper-class sponsors while at the same time 'insisting on his 'independence'.[47] Of course, there were

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[42] N. A. M. Rodger, 'Montagu, John, fourth earl of Sandwich (1718–1792)' cited at <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19026> [accessed 19/01/2013].
[43] Piers Mackesy, 'Germain, George Sackville , first Viscount Sackville (1716–1785)' cited at <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10566> [accessed 21/01/2013].
[44] L. G. Mitchell, *Charles James Fox* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992) 27.
[45]Michael Fry, 'Erskine, Henry (1746–1817)' cited at <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8858> [accessed 20/05/2013].
[46] Ibid.
[47] Nigel Leask, *Robert Burns and Pastoral*: *Poetry and Improvement in Late Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) 188.

limits to how 'independent' Burns could be when it came to the volatile issue of political reform in the decade following the American Revolution. To illustrate the point further, it might be useful, before continuing with the analysis of 'When Guilford Good', to take the fate of Paisley poet Alexander Wilson (1766-1813) as a point of comparison. Wilson faced a series of fines, imprisonments and cautions after the publication of his poem 'The Shark; or Lang Mills Detected',[48] which openly criticised the government and the processes of the industrial revolution:

A higher aim gars Willy think,
And deeper schemes he's brewin';
Ten thoussan' fouk at ance to sink
To poverty and ruin!
Hail mighty patriot! Noble soul!
Sae generous, and sae civil,
Sic vast designs deserve the whole
Applauses of the devil
On ony day. (19-27)

Particularly against the backdrop of revolutionary events, it is understandable why Wilson's poem was seen as inflammatory, and – along with his controversial letter to William Sharp – it led to a series of court appearances and prosecutions.[49] Eventually, Wilson was forced to flee across the Atlantic, knowing there was little safety or future for him as a poet in Scotland. While Wilson did not so much engage with America in his poetry, it is telling that the Republic was his chosen geographical refuge when he was oppressed for holding certain political views. The example of Wilson's exile also further illustrates the caution Burns had to exercise in regards to rebellious political subject matter. With this in mind, his ability to delicately straddle sensitive political boundaries in 'When Guilford Good' is, in many ways, an admirable feat in itself.

The folly and instability of British politicians is further emphasised in the sixth verse of the song. *Rockingham* (Charles Watson Wentworth, 1730-1782) does not last long as he takes up the 'game' of being prime minister ('death did on him ca'), while *Shelburne* (William Petty, 1737-1805) is 'meek' and faces stiff opposition from both the House of Commons ('Saint Stephen's Boys') and also from the coalition between North and Fox who 'bore him to the wa, ' man.' The quarrelling between Fox and Shelburne was famously advantageous to

[48] *The Life and Letters of Alexander Wilson*, ed. by Clark Hunter (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1983) 48.
[49] Ibid., 47. Wilson sent a letter to William Sharp on Tuesday 22 May 1792 demanding money by threats and blackmail.

William Pitt (1759-1806), who resisted both Shelburne and the North-Fox coalition, eventually becoming Prime Minister at the age of twenty-four. Burns evokes the rising ambitions of Pitt, after summarising the short-lived victory and subsequent demise of Fox's ministry:

> Then Clubs an' Hearts were Chatlie's cartes,
> He swept the stakes awa', man,
> Till the Diamond's Ace, of *Indian* race
> Led him a sair *faux pas*, man:
> The Saxon lads, wi loud placads,
> On *Chatham's Boy* did ca', man;
> An' Scotland drew her pipe an' blew;
> 'Up, Willie, waur them a', man!' (49-56)

Here, Burns makes a mockery of political moves by comparing them to 'Clubs', 'Hearts' and 'Diamonds', as if suggesting both a lack of sincerity and concern from those playing 'the game'. The card game imagery might also have been a clever allusion to the fact that Fox was a known gambler whose 'losses were on a heroic scale',[50] with Burns implying that he was as careless a gambler as he was a leader. The song then describes how the English ('Saxon lads') called on '*Chatham's boy'* William Pitt, at which point Scotland 'drew her pipe an' blew'. This line, which precedes the final two verses in the song, is significant in that it draws Scotland into the realm of British politics for the first time. This is an incredibly astute and timely insertion by Burns, given that Scotland's involvement in British party politics greatly increased in the period that followed the American Revolution. As Colin Kidd has noted, before 1782 'party politics scarcely impinged on Scottish affairs' and it was not until competing factions formed in the late-eighteenth century (namely the Fox-Northites and Pittites) that 'party began to take a firmer hold in Scottish politics.' [51]

While the infamous 'Reign of Terror' in the 1790s unsurprisingly caused Burns to have a less favourable view of Pitt the Younger, 'When Guilford Good' clearly unveils positive ideas about the young politician.[52] At least in his early career, Pitt did champion various liberal and reformist causes (as did his father Lord Chatham 'the Great Commoner') such as the American Revolution and Catholic emancipation. Two of the most striking images in the final two verses are indeed the 'kindling eyes' of William Pitt's encouraging father, and

[50] L. G. Mitchell, 'Fox, Charles James (1749–1806)' cited at <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10024> [accessed 21/01/2013].
[51] Colin Kidd, 'Burns and Politics' in *The Edinburgh Companion to Robert Burns*, 61.
[52] *Robert Burns and Pastoral*, 142.

the cunningness of the North-Fox alliance to have 'Gowff'd *Willie* like a ba' (once again evoking the image of a careless 'game'):

Behind the throne then *Grenville's* gone,
A secret word or twa, man;
While slee *Dundas* arous'd the class
Be-north the Roman wa', man:
An' *Chatham's* wraith, in heav'nly graith,
(Inspired Bardies saw, man),
Wi' kindling eyes, cry'd, 'Willie , rise!
Would I hae fear'd them a', man!'

But, word an' blow, *North, Fox, and Co.*
Gowff'd *Willie* like a ba', man,
Till *Suthron* raise an' coost their claise
Behind him in a raw, man:
An' *Caledon* threw by the drone,
An' did her whittle draw, man;
An' swoor fu' rude, thro' dirt an' bluid,
To mak it guid in law, man. (57-72)

The reference to 'slee Dundas' is also encapsulates the ambiguity surrounding the legacy of Henry Dundas (1742-1811). While Dundas was unquestionably the political strongman of Scotland after the American War, his rule was often considered despotic, despite some of the benefits he conferred on the country. Burns's use of 'slee' might initially seem, particularly to the modern reader, to suggest a negative and manipulative description of Dundas. However, the *Historical Thesaurus of English* reveals that in the late-eighteenth century, 'slee' usually connoted 'skilfulness' and 'proficiency'[53], while the *Dictionary of the Scots Language* has it defined as 'smooth-spoken, oily, wily and persuasive in speech'[54]. Therefore, the depiction of 'slee Dundas' is not necessarily a negative one, but does emphasise his persuasive powers over the Scottish people ('north the Roman wa', man;'). Dundas was, after all, the most influential Scottish statesman in the London parliament for many decades, and despite many political controversies, nobody could question his longevity and persuasiveness.

The final four lines of the song are packed with patriotic, war-like imagery. The 'drone' of bagpipes is dramatically interspersed with the beating repetition of 'man', as *Caledon* draws out her 'whittle', and swears 'To make it guid in law'. While one reading of this might be that *'Caledon'* should, along with the *'Suthron'* (English), help Pitt to remain

[53] <http://historicalthesaurus.arts.gla.ac.uk/category-selection/?qsearch=slee> [accessed 27/12/2015].
[54] <http://www.dsl.ac.uk/entry/snd/slee> [accessed 27/12/1015].

and prosper in power, the evocation of Scotland rising up, 'whittle' in hand has broader resonances in that Scotland is urged to emulate America's successful democratic model ('mak it guid'). This stirring sense of Scottish empowerment was subtly bolstered by the song being set to the tune of 'Gillecrankie' in the Edinburgh edition of 1787. The tune (better known as 'Killiecrankie') had a long association with several Jacobite songs and it was also later used for Mrs Grant of Laggan's (1755-1838) song 'When Willy Pitt' in George Thomson's *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs for the Voice*; an appropriate choice given Burns's previous waxing lyrical on the former prime minister to the same tune. In James Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum*, however, 'When Guilford Good' was set to the tune known as the 'The Black Watch' (also known as 'The Earl of Glencairn's') deriving from McGlashan's *Strathspey Reels* (1780). Accordingly, this tune also held strong Highland connotations.[55]

However, despite these formal and thematic evocations of rebellion, it would be a stretch to suggest that the song suggests Scotland's secession from a unionist government. The depiction of Pitt, after all, is an overwhelmingly positive one and '*Caledon'* and '*Suthron'* are urged to get behind him as one. Though internal divisions are duly noted in the song, there is a sense that both the 'saxon lads' and those 'north the Roman wa' must unite and rally behind Pitt's opposition to the Fox-North coalition. To over-emphasise a Scottish 'nationalist' reading, then, would be limiting, particularly given the song reflects on the complexity of multiple transnational relationships: Scotland must negotiate its (potentially) reinvigorated prospects within the Union ('mak it guid in law, man'); Britain must reassess its imperial future after the loss of America ('quite refuse our law, man'); and Scotland and England must find common reformist hope in Pitt The Younger ('Up, Willie, waur them a', man!').[56]

'When Guilford Good': Transnational Awareness

Arguably more so than any other of his poems or songs from the period, 'When Guilford Good' reveals the extent of Burns's engagement with transnational affairs and politics. Evidently, Burns had access to several newspapers and pamphlets that detailed revolutionary events and provided commentary on their consequences for Britain and, more specifically, Scotland. Recent studies on late-eighteenth century print culture, with particular reference to

[55] James Kinsley gives the name of the tune as 'The Earl of Glencairns's'. See *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, Vol. 3, 1026-1027. For a fuller discussion of Burns's association with the tune 'Killiecrankie', see James Hogg, *The Forest Minstrel* [1810], ed. by Peter Garside, Peter Horfsall, and Richard D. Jackson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006) 338-339.

[56] This is also an allusion to the Jacobite song 'Up and Warn A', Wullie'. See *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, Vol. 3, 1026-1027.

the American Revolution, have revealed the influence of both pamphleteering and the periodical press on shaping public opinion and we can clearly see the effects of this on Burns through the above song.[57] In addition to pamphlets, it is fairly certain that Burns was an avid reader of periodicals such as *The Edinburgh Evening Courant, The Gazetteer*, *Edinburgh Herald, The Mirror*, *The Observer* and the *Morning Chronicle*.[58] More speculatively, considering the caricature-like representations of politicians in 'When Guilford Good', another possible source of information for Burns might have been the political cartoons of the period.[59] The portrayal of Fox, for example, with his 'tinkler jaw' playing the 'Diamond's Ace, of *Indian* race' is resonant with several contemporary caricatures of the politician, and work remains to be done to uncover Burns's familiarity with these satirical illustrations.

From the satirical portrayal of political figures to the very tune the lyrics were written for, Burns makes his political points, but does so with a guarded sense of awareness through several subtle inflections. That he manages to strike this balance so delicately is surely one of his main strengths as a political poet in the period; controversial enough to provoke thought and debate, yet equally cautious not to personally endanger his livelihood and escape prosecution. Burns, yielding the impressive power of compressed narrative, managed to write a song that covers the course of the American War and its subsequent consequences in just nine satirical verses. Unlike his later (re)writing of Jacobite songs that romantically lamented distant battles, the ballad is notably contemporary in its response to the aftermath of revolutionary events. That said, stirring Jacobite associations are maintained through both subtle poetic allusions and the choice(s) of tune. Written in 1784, 'When Guilford Good' most certainly marks the point where Burns first engages with America (to any great extent) in his artistic output, and a close analysis reveals a gentle sympathy and admiration for American politics; or, at the very least, the metaphorical *idea* of America in relation to eighteenth-century politics.

'Address of Beelzebub'

If 'When Guilford Good' reveals subtle pro-American inflections, then Burns's later poem, 'Address of Beelzebub', is a far more intense and scathing reprise of the American War and

[57] *British Pamphlets on The American Revolution, 1763-1785*, ed. by Harry T. Dickinson (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2008).
[58] John Robotham, 'The Reading of Robert Burns' in *Bulletin of the New York Public Library,* 74:9 (1970) 561-576.
[59] For a selection of political cartoons featuring Fox, North and other notable politicians of the period, see *The Satirical Etchings of James Gillray*, ed. by Darper Hill (Mineola: Dover, 1976).

the turbulent state of British politics in the post-revolutionary period. Written in 1786, just two years after Burns penned 'When Guilford Good', the poem did not appear in print until 1818 and it is easily seen why it would have proved controversial given the heated anti-aristocratic resentment that resonates throughout. Moreover, Burns's patronage might also have been at risk due to its satirical attack on the Earl of Breadalbane, as made explicit in the poem's introductory dedication:

> To the Rt. Honble John, Earl of Breadalbane, President of the Rt Honble the Highland Society, which met, on the 23rd of May last, at the Shakespeare, Covent Garden, to concert ways and means frustrate the designs of FIVE HUNDRED HIGHLANDERS who, as the society were informed by Mr McKenzie of Applecross, were so audacious as to attempt an escape from their lawful lords and masters whose property they are emigrating from the lands of Mr McDonald of Glengary to the wilds of CANADA, in search of that fantastic thing –LIBERTY-[60]

As James Kinsley has previously noted, Burns was clearly unimpressed by 'aristocratic (and patriotic) anxiety' and the 'belated attempts to prevent emigration', particularly among Scotland's Highland population.[61] This opposes the popular notion of Highlanders being 'cleared' and forced to flee later in the nineteenth century; thus serving as a useful reminder of the complex historiography of Highland emigration. Burns explicitly pairs the prospect of emigration with 'LIBERTY', further demonstrating a vision of North America as being a promised land of freedom and democracy. Though considered here under the umbrella of Burns's American works, it is worth mentioning that the Highland Society meeting in question was a reaction, as Burns noted in his introduction, to proposed emigration to 'CANADA'. However, while Canada was a particularly popular destination for post-Culloden Scottish Catholics ('The Quebec Act of 1774 extended statutory protection to the Roman Catholic church'),[62] the remainder of the poem deals predominantly with the American War and the same military figures that appeared in 'When Guilford Good'. Thus, in many ways the poem, written just two years later, is in continuing dialogue with Burns's earlier song.

Taking on the Devil's persona[63] to espouse venomous political ideas, the speaker strongly derides underprivileged Highlanders in the opening two stanzas. By adopting the

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[60] *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns,* Vol. 1, 254.
[61] *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns,* Vol. 3, 1184.
[62] David Dobson, *Scottish Emigration to Colonial America, 1607-1785* (Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2004) 182.
[63] The source for the name 'Beelzebub' in the Hebrew Bible is variously understood to mean 'lord of the flies'. It is clear that Burns uses the term more broadly to represent the devil. For more on the semantic evolution and origns of 'Beelzebub', see *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, ed. by Karel van der Toorn, Bob

voice of evil itself and having him side with the aristocratic Highland Society, Burns ironically exposes their brutal, repressive and ultimately sinful attitude:

> LONG LIFE, My Lord, an' health be yours,
> Unskaith'd by hunger'd HIGHLAN BOORS!
> Lord Grant, nae duddie, desp'rate beggar,
> Wi' durk, claymore, or rusty trigger
> May twin auld Scotland o' a LIFE,
> She likes – as BUTCHERS like a KNIFE!
>
> Faith, you and Applecross were right
> To keep the highlan hounds in sight!
> I doubt na! they wad bid nae better
> Than let them ance out owre the water;
> Then up amang thae lakes an' seas
> They'll mak what rules an' laws they please. (1-12)

Here, the Devil toasts the Earl of Breadalbane, President of the Highland Society and ironically exposes his selfish disregard for starving Highlanders ('hunger'd HIGHLAN BOORS!'). The subsequent language used to describe the Highlanders is equally scathing, as the Devil dismisses 'nae duddie', 'desp'rate beggar' and the 'highlan hounds', with connotations of them being little else but hungry wild animals. While the crude actions of the Earl of Breadalbane and other Lairds are exposed, it is worth noting that Burns did write a complimentary verse to Breadalbane in 'Admiring Nature in her Wildest Grace', which he wrote in pencil over the chimney piece at the Kenmore Inn during his Highland tour of 1787, just a year after the 'Address' was written.[64] This is yet another example of how fluidly Burns could adapt his poetic personae and assume ambiguity, albeit in the name of patronage. This further qualifies Manning's assertion that Burns was a master of evoking what it is like '*to believe something at a particular moment*'[65] and reminds us of the artistic fluidity of the poet's 'beliefs', or rather, 'poetic views.'

The final lines of the second stanza echo the language of 'When Guilford Good'. In Burns's earlier song, the speaker describes Richard Montgomery as going 'thro' the lakes', while here the Devil also depicts the Highlanders as going 'amang thae lakes an' seas' in search of liberty. Similarly, the speaker in 'When Guilford Good' describes how the Americans did 'quite refuse our law, man', which mirrors the Devil's assertion that the

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Becking and Pieter Willem van der Horst (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999) 154-156.
[64] For a full account of the episode see *The Oxford Edition of The Works of Robert Burns,* 142, 358n.
[65] *Poetics of Character*, 240.

Highlanders will also 'mak what rules an' laws they please'. The American forces are thus depicted as inspirational for the Highlanders, who continue to seek liberty, and free themselves from oppressive British rule:

> Some daring Hancocke, or a Frankline,
> May set their HIGHLAN bluid a ranklin;
> Some Washington again may head them,
> Or some, MONTGOMERY, fearless, lead them;
> Till, God knows what may be effected,
> When by such HEADS an' HEARTS directed:
> Poor, dunghill sons of dirt an' mire,
> May to PATRICIAN RIGHTS ASPIRE; (13-20)

The bold American figures of John Hancock, first signatory of the Declaration of Independence (1737-1793); Benjamin Franklin, author of the constitution of Pennsylvania (1706-1790) and George Washington, the first President (1732-1799) are deemed to have set 'Highlan bluid a ranklin', which is ironic given that several Highland regiments fought against the Americans in the revolutionary war.[66] Yet Burns selectively chooses to focus on the inspirational power of these leading revolutionaries. The 'fearless' description of Montgomery once again echoes 'When Guilford Good' (where he is described as bravely falling 'wi sword in hand') and the Devil makes clear that these men have big 'HEADS' and 'HEARTS'; suggesting they might even inspire the degenerate Highlanders ('dunghill sons of dirt an' mire') to 'PATRICIAN RIGHTS ASPIRE'.

Nigel Leask has suggested that the devil persona in 'Address of Beelzebub' is quite different to the 'folk trickster' of popular tradition in Scotland (as appears in Burns's 'Address to the Deil' for example).[67] Indeed, there is a vindictive streak in Burns's 'Beelzebub' in that he, if one is to take his narration quite literally, wants to see Highlanders suffer and kept in their 'lowly' stations. The rhetorical brilliance lies in the fact that in siding with the aristocracy, Burns's speaker (the Devil) simultaneously exposes their discriminatory attitude. As the third stanza continues, the bumbling British political figures of 'When Guilford Good' are revisited:

> Nae sage North, now, nor sager Sackville,
> To watch an' premier owre the pack vile!

[66] See for example J. P. Maclean, *An Historical Account of The Settlements of Scotch Highlanders in America Prior to the Peace of Paris in 1783 together with notices of Highland Regiments and Biographical Sketches* (Glasgow: John Mackay, 1900).
[67] *Robert Burns and Pastoral*, 197-198.

An' whare will ye get Howes an' Clintons
To bring them to a right repentance,
To cowe the rebel generation
An' save the honour o' the NATION? (21-26)

In Burns's earlier song, Lord North, George Sackville, Sir William Howe and Sir Henry Clinton were depicted in less than heroic terms, and thus the Devil's assertion here that they should 'watch an' premier owre the pack vile!' and 'bring them to a right repentance' takes on added irony. Even without prior knowledge of Burns's song, it was well known that these men had failed to 'save the honor o' the nation', and were used as scapegoats for the loss of America. That *they*, of all people, should curb the aspirations of the Highlanders consequently seems ludicrous. In the lines that follow, the Devil proclaims that the Highlanders should never be granted universal rights or freedom:

THEY! an' be d-mn'd ! what right hae they
To Meat, or Sleep, or light o' day,
Far less to riches, pow'r, or freedom,
But what your lordships PLEASE TO GIE THEM? (27-30)

As P.J. Marshall has recently noted, 'Britain's rulers felt that they needed to assert their legitimacy against the universal rights of humanity which the Americans claimed to be championing' and thus 'strenuous efforts' were made to reduce the claims of American democracy as 'the tyranny of the mob.[68] The lines above allude to the contemporary idea that Britain's 'lordships' must maintain a sense of justified superiority over the rowdy 'pack-vile!' In one of the most powerful stanzas of the poem, the Devil then suggests that the empowered aristocrats are in fact too soft on the Highlanders:

But, hear me, my Lord! Glengary, hear!
Your HAND'S OWRE LIGHT ON THEM, I fear:
Your FACTORS, GREIVES, TRUSTEES an' BAILIES,
I CANNA SAY BUT THEY DO GAILIES;
They lay aside a' tender mercies
An' tirl the HALLIONS to the BIRSIES;
Yet, while they're only poin'd, and herriet,
They'll keep their stubborn Highlan spirit.
But smash them! Crush them a' to spails!
An' rot the DYVORS I' the JAILS!
The young dogs, swinge them to labour,

[68] P.J. Marshall, *Remaking The British Atlantic: The United States and the British Empire After American Independence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) 137.

Let WARK an' HUNGER mak them sober!
The HIZZIES, if they're oughtlins fuasont,
Let them in DRURY LANE be lesson'd!
An' if the wives, an' dirty brats,
Come thigganat your doors an' yets,
Flaffan wi' duds, an' grey wi' beese,
Frightam awa your deucks an' geese;
Get out a HORSE-WHIP, or a JOWLER
The langest thong, the fiercest growler,
An' gar the tatter'd gipseys pack
Wi a' their bastarts on their back! (31-52)

The Devil's claim that the Lords 'HAND'S OWRE LIGHT ON THEM' is deeply satirical. As Kinsley has noted, Highland proprietors were renowned for their increasingly harsh actions in the late-eighteenth century, consequently meaning 'the ancient confidence and affection subsisting between chiefs and their clans' was 'greatly weakened' and sometimes 'totally annihilated'.[69] As the stanza continues, the Devil unleashes an array of derogatory insults aimed at the Highlanders. He describes their insolent attitude ('stubborn Highlan spirit'); portrays them as untamed animals ('The young dogs'); and hints at their drunken idleness ('Let WARK an' HUNGER mak them sober!'). The Devil then asserts that the only solution is to 'Crush them a' to spails!' and beat them with a 'HORSE-WHIP, or a 'JOWLER'. While the Highland men are depicted as wild, unkempt animals, the Devil, in one of the most degrading lines of the poem, also suggests confining Highland girls to a life of prostitution ('Let them in DRURY LANE be lesson'd!').

By using the Devil's scathing rhetoric to expose underlying prejudices in eighteenth-century Britain, Burns evokes sympathy for the apparently victimised Highlanders rather than portray them as fearsome or uncouth. Though Burns clearly sympathises with Highlanders in the poem, there are instances elsewhere, however, where he makes references to such negative Highland stereotypes himself, such as his 1787 'Inveraray Epigram'[70] which he wrote on his 1787 West Highland Tour:

There's naething here but Highland pride,
And Highland scab and hunger,
If Providence has sent me here,
'Twas surely in Anger (6-9)

[69] *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns,* Vol. 3, 1185.
[70] *The Oxford Edition of The Works of Robert Burns,* Vol. 1, 136.

Here, Burns is clearly not enamoured by 'Highland pride' nor sympathetic towards 'Highland scab and hunger'. In addition to highlighting how rife the stereotyped Highlander was (in this case proud but hungry), we might view this as yet another example of his extremely adaptable poetic voice and 'opinions'. Though given Burns wrote this when he found 'himself and his companion entirely neglected by the Inn-keeper'[71] at Inverary, the derogatory sentiments were perhaps more a product of (thirsty) circumstance rather than any deep-rooted disdain or ingrained Lowland prejudice.

In the 'Address', however, there is no question where the poet's sympathies lie. The final stanza depicts the lairds meeting once again, only instead of the setting being the Shakespeare in Covent Garden, they are now in Hell with the Devil. Rather tellingly, the Earl of Breadalbane is promised the 'benmost newk' beside the fireplace:

> Go on, my lord! I lang to meet you
> An' in my HOUSE BAT HAME to greet you;
> Wi' COMMON LORDS ye shanna mingle,
> The benmost newk, beside the ingle
> At my right hand, assign'd your seat
> 'Tween HEROD's hip, an' POLYCRATE;
> Or, if ye on your station tarrow,
> Between ALMAGRO and PIZARRO;
> A seat, I'm sure ye're weel deservin't;
> An' till ye come – your humble servant
>
> BEELZEBUB
> HELL 1st June Anno Mundi 5790 (53-62)

The satirical power of the poem peaks with the evocation that the lairds' actions have guaranteed them a place in hell, not only alongside the Devil but with various other tyrants and oppressive rulers. The Highland chiefs are joined by 'HEROD' (who executed John The Baptist and mocked Jesus); 'POLYCRATE' (the ruthless and oppressive 'tyrant of Samos'); and 'ALMAGRO and PIZARRO', colonial oppressors who selfishly quarrelled over Peruvian territory, eventually resulting in Diego D'Almargo's death.[72] In a final smack of malevolent irony, the Devil asserts that the Highland Lords are 'weel deservin't' to be among such murderous and oppressive figures. While the Devil's manic, hyperbolic narration may not, as Thomas Crawford notes, be wholly 'politically or historically accurate' and might have done

[71] Ibid.
[72] *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, Vol. 1, 1185-1186.

'less than justice to the Highland society'[73], Burns successfully makes a strong point about the gentry's oppression of the poor.

In 'Address of Beelzebub', then, America is depicted as the hallowed land where liberty is attainable regardless of rank or position. The focal point of the poem - emigration - perfectly encapsulates both the metaphorical and geographical significance of America in that it figures as both an ideological concept and real-life choice (or lack of). That the Highlanders are prevented from departing for the more socially-just American continent not only highlights political oppression but also, on a physical level, their very lack of individual freedom to move or migrate. While, historically, most emigrant Gaels in America were loyal to Britain (most notably in the revolutionary years), Burns dismisses nuanced historical fact in favour of purposeful metaphorical power.[74] Accordingly, the positive flourishes of hope in the poem remain attached to *ideas* about America and its political heroes. There is ultimately a suggestion that, just as John Hancock and Benjamin Franklin did before them, the Highlanders might still 'to PATRICIAN RIGHTS ASPIRE' and strive for justice and equality.

'Ode for General Washington's Birthday': Background

Written almost a decade after 'When Guilford Good' and eight years after 'Address of Beelzebub', 'Ode for General Washington's Birthday' demonstrates Burns's continuing engagement with American politics and revolutionary sensibilities. Composed in 1794, the poem, quite remarkably, did not appear in its entirety until 1873 when American bookseller Robert Clarke purchased a manuscript in London and subsequently transported it to Ohio.[75] That it first appeared across the Atlantic might seem like a fitting twist of fate given the poem extols the first US president; however, the delayed publication in Britain was more likely due to the careful censorship of Burns himself and the subsequent editors of his work. Even in his private correspondence with Frances Anna Dunlop in 1794, Burns chose to omit the first three stanzas that evoke British tyranny in America and the consequential revolution. Instead, he sent only the last nineteen lines that deal with the Scottish Wars of Independence. That Burns self-censored his more revolutionary sentiments in the letter is not entirely surprising, given Dunlop was previously displeased about him expressing provocative politics 'even to an

[73] *Burns: A Study of The Poems and Songs*, 162.
[74] See Matthew P. Dziennik, *The Fatal Land: War, Empire and the Highland Soldier in British America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015).
[75] Carruthers' 'Burns's Political Reputation in North America', 91.

intimate'.[76] Considered next to Burns's similar letter to George Thomson (discussed above) where he drew a parallel between 'Scots wha hae' and 'not quite so ancient' struggles, it seems the poet was adept at cloaking commentary on recent events in historical Scottish imagery.

In his book *Transatlantic Radicals and the Early American Republic*, Michael Durey has outlined how George Washington was often idealised by men of radical, dissenting beliefs, particularly in Scotland and Ireland, where to some he was a 'living legend, whose lengthy shadow blanketed national politics'.[77] One such individual was Irish Presbyterian minister Thomas Ledlie Birch (1754-1828) who declared in a 1784 speech that Washington's political efforts had 'shed their benign influence over the distressed kingdom of Ireland.'[78] Significantly, Birch's full address and Washington's reply were published in the *Belfast Mercury*, before the dissenter was subsequently arrested and put on board a 'prison ship on Belfast Lough, in company with a number of other arrested United Irishmen'.[79] He was eventually exiled to America, arriving in New York in September 1798.

While this was a fate that Burns was trying to avoid, Birch's emphasis on Washington's influence over Ireland is not without some relevance to 'Ode for General Washington's Birthday'. A sales catalogue for the London auction-house of Puttock and Simpson for May 1861 reveals a description of an 'Ode' manuscript where 'Hibernia' is substituted for 'Columbia'[80], suggesting that Burns may have written an earlier draft of the poem that lauded the endeavours of Irish reformers. However, that this appears to be a cancelled text is evidence, as Gerard Carruthers has suggested, that 'Burns was simply more interested, or at least thought his material worked better, in the context of American revolutionary republicanism'.[81] Furthermore, it may well be that Burns, as in his works that dealt with the Scottish Wars of Independence, chose to focus on a past revolutionary conflict (as a means of stealthily provoking thought on current affairs) rather than directly reflect on pressing struggles closer to home.

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[76] J. DeLancey Ferguson, 'New Light on the Burns-Dunlop Estrangement' in *Publication of the Modern Language Association (PMLA)* 44:4 (1929) 1106-1115 (1144). As Ferguson argues, Burns's political sentiments caused offence to Dunlop and would eventually lead to their epistolary 'estrangement'.
[77] Michael Durey, *Transatlantic Radicals and the Early American Republic* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997) 84-85.
[78] Ibid., 85.
[79] W. D. Bailie, 'Birch, Thomas Ledlie (1754–1828)' cited at http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2437 [accessed 20/11/2015].
[80] 'First Day's Sale' in *Sales Catalogue for Puttock and Simpson* (May 1861) 24.
[81] Gerard Carruthers, 'Burns and Ireland' in *International journal of Scottish Literature* 6 (Spring/Summer, 2010) 1-8 (4).

Either way, Burns would have been well aware that events in France had 'reactivated Britain's unresolved collective trauma over the loss of the American colonies'.[82] While 'Jay's Treaty' of 1794 averted further conflict between the United States and Britain, allowing for largely peaceful trade in the midst of the French Revolutionary War, the earlier friction between the two nations combined with the continuing metaphorical power of America in the 1790s meant that writing about the American Revolution was no less of a risk.

As demonstrated by the case of Thomas Ledlie Birch, Burns was by no means the only figure to draw on the symbolic power of Washington during this period. One other early supporter of the French Revolution that also heralded Washington was the poet and physician Dr John Aikin (1747-1822); a figure who Burns incidentally admired for his 'use of natural history in poetry'.[83] In his own 'Ode'[84] to Washington, Aikin espoused bold Republican sentiments, depicting Washington as being 'greater far' than those who are merely born into power and Royalty:

> Elected chief of freemen! – greater far
> Than Kings, whose glittering parts are fix'd by birth;
> Nam'd by thy country's voice for long try'd worth ,
> Her crown in peace, as once her shield in war!
>
> Deign, WASHINGTON, to hear a British lyre,
> That ardent greets thee with applausive lays,
> And to the patriot hero homage pays.
> O, would the muse immortal strains inspire,
> That high beyond all Greek and Roman fame,
> Might soar to times unborn, thy purer, nobler name! (5-14)

Here, Aikin suggests Washington's 'nobler name' will become immortal and 'high beyond Greek and Roman fame'. The rejection of grandiose classical tradition in favour of a more 'noble', democratic 'hero' is a trope that, as we shall see, is also present in Burns's depiction of the American president. However, Aikin's poem is far more explicit in its heralding of Republicanism and criticism of the extant monarchy. Unsurprisingly, this led to 'the virtual

[82] *Americomania and the French Revolution Debate in Britain*, 5.
[83] *The Bard*, 233.
[84] 'Tribute by Dr Aiken [sic]' in *The Washingtoniana: containing a sketch of the life and death of the late Gen. George Washington, with a collection of elegant eulogies, orations, poems, &c., sacred to his memory*, ed. by Francis Johnston & William Hamilton (Lancaster: William Hamilton, 1802) 25.

ruin of his professional prospects',[85] and he was dismissed from his position as a physician at Yarmouth and forced to move to London.

Another contemporary poet who found inspiration in both Washington and America was William Blake (1757-1827). Blake's 'America a Prophecy' was written just one year prior to Burns's poem. Laced with typically Blakean imagery and based in a mythical setting where time is rendered obsolete, 'America a Prophecy'[86] tells the story of the American Revolution in manner very different to Burns.[87] True to his visionary style, Blake evokes the cosmic significance of the American Revolution, suggesting that it had enabled man to break free from oppression and experience a spiritual rebirth. Preoccupied with the metaphorical significance of America rather than its tangibility as a geographical refuge, Blake adds flourishes of political reality throughout by referencing Washington and other key figures of the revolution:

> Washington spoke: Friends of America look over the Atlantic Sea;
> A bended bow is lifted in heaven, & a heavy iron chain
> Descends link by link from Albions cliffs across the sea to bind
> Brothers and & sons of America, till our faces pale and yellow;
>
> (Plate 1, 6-9)

Once again, Washington is depicted as the symbolic figure who leads America to its liberation from the 'heavy iron chain' that binds them to 'Albion'. Later in the poem, when 'thirteen angels' descend from the heavens to defend America, they stand strong with 'Washington, Franklin, Paine & Warren Allen Gates' (Plate 12, 7). That Blake includes Thomas Paine (1736-1809) among these American political figures is also telling of the poet's engagement with the political activist and revolutionary, particularly in the 1790s when Paine was arguably at his most influential in Britain.

However, Blake's vision of America and Washington also suggests the possibility for mankind to fall into further corruption in spite of its apparent rebirth. At one point, the Daughter of Urthona states: 'On my American plains I feel the struggling afflictions/Endured by roots that wrathe their arms into the nether deep' (Plate 2, 10). Here, the 'roots that wrathe

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[85] Marilyn L. Brooks, 'Aikin, John (1747–1822)'cited at <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/230> [accessed 15/11/2013].
[86] William Blake, 'A Prophecy' in *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, ed. by David V. Erdman (Oakland: University of California Press, 2008) 51-59.
[87] See Clare Elliot, 'William Blake and America: Freedom and Violence in the Atlantic World' in *Comparative American Studies* 7:3 (2009) 209-224.

their arms into nether deep' suggest that, regardless of being on fresh, 'American plains', mankind will always be afflicted with tendencies towards greed, corruption and tyranny since these traits run deep into the human condition. Blake's depiction of the Orc as the 'spirit' of the revolution is also ambiguous. Even when freedom is achieved and the Orc is embraced, there are still elements of darkness that continue to haunt:

> The plagues creep on the burning winds driven by the flames of Orc.
> And by the Fierce Americans rushing together in the night
>
> (Plate 15, 11-12)

Thus, Blake's poetic vision is laced with dark imagery that corrupts any wholly positive view of the new Republic. As we shall see, while Burns's 'Ode' conveys the corruption and failure of *British* politics, his vision of America tends to remain, on the whole, much more idealistic and one-dimensional.

One of the most striking differences between Burns's earlier American works and the 'Ode' is his use of language and form. Burns writes his later poem in a lofty 'standard English' and adopts the Pindaric ode, established in English by Milton, Cowley and Dryden. Carruthers has noted that in the late-eighteenth century 'the Scots idiom' was not 'all that amenable so far as Scottish reformist poets were concerned', justifying his assertion by referencing the more radically Republican poetry of contemporaries such as James Thomson Callender (1758-1803) and James 'Balloon' Tytler (1745-1804) who wrote in English.[88] This would align with Michael Morris's recent underlining of how eighteenth-century abolitionist poetry was 'rarely written in Scots, even by Scottish poets' which suggests that 'English was the *lingua franca* with which to influence the public sphere.'[89] However, it should be noted that Alexander Wilson did write dissenting poetry in Scots (as discussed above). Rather than being perceived as inept for radical political sentiments, then, it may well be that Scots was rarely used by reformist poets because it would have been less accessible to broader audiences.

On one hand, Burns's 'Ode' might be seen as his succumbing to the likes of the Earl of Buchan, David Steuart Erskine (1742-1829) - one of many genteel figures who urged Burns to swap his 'provincial dialect' for English in order to compose works of 'greater magnitude,

[88] Carruthers, 'Burns's Political Reputation in North America', 90.
[89] *Scotland and the Caribbean*, 112.

variety and importance'.[90] It is highly unlikely that this is the true reason Burns adopted English for the poem, with the more obvious answer lying in the poet's intent on subverting the Pindaric ode. Nigel Leask has recently noted that Burns's 'Ode', along with his earlier poem 'A Dream', both parody Thomas Warton's 'Birthday Odes' through the adoption of the Pindaric stanza and the 'sublime' idiom of the originals.[91] Given Warton popularly used the form to celebrate monarchs (most notably George III), Burns's deliberate subversion of the form to toast a Republican president smacks of purposeful irony. The negation of classical tradition in the first verse reinforces the point:

No Spartan tube, no Attic shell,
No lyre Eolian I awake;
'Tis Liberty's bold note I swell,
Thy harp, Columbia, let me take.
See gathering thousands, while I sing,
A broken chain, exulting, bring,
And dash it in a tyrant's face!
And dare him to his very beard,
And tell him, he no more is feared,
No more the Despot of Columbia's race.
A tyrant's proudest insults braved,
They shout, a People freed! They hail an Empire saved.[92]

Here, the speaker is not inspired by the grandiosity and might of a Spartan army, 'Attic shell' (an Athenian lyre made by stringing tortoise shells) and 'lyre Eolian', but instead seeks the 'bold note' of 'Liberty'. Rather than epic Greek tradition, it is Columbia's 'harp' that inspires the speaker to sing about resistance to tyranny. Katie Trumpener has discussed how, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the harp was variously used as both an 'emblem of a nationalist republicanism' (in Scotland, Ireland and England) and as a symbol of the relationship between 'a land, their people' and their culture'. Burns's adoption of 'Columbia's harp', then, appears all the more purposeful and laced with ideological intent.[93] From the beginning, the reader is aware that the 'tyrant' is Britain, and that 'Columbia', the name favoured by those anxious to assert American independence from Britain, must heroically brave insults before winning its freedom and liberation. The culminative suggestion that

[90] The Earl of Buchan quoted from David Craig, *Scottish Literature and the Scottish People* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1961) p. 105. For the full epistolary exchange see the digitised MS. at <http://www.burnsscotland.com/items/l/letter-addressed-to-robert-burns.aspx> [accessed 20/11/2015] .
[91] *Robert Burns and Pastoral,* 137.
[92] *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns* Vol. 2, 732 (1-12).
[93] See Katie Trumpener, *Bardic Nationalism: the Romantic novel and the British Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997) 19.

America is an 'Empire saved' seemingly negates the idea of an independent Republic being free from a monarch or any form of oligarchy (due to the imperial inflections). However, that America is later portrayed as maintaining the 'Royalty of Man' suggests that the 'Empire' in question has been saved due to the democratic inclusion of the people, rather than referring to one ruling power as might be also be connoted.

In the second and third stanzas, lofty, royal language is employed again to highlight the loss of democratic dignity in Britain:

> Where is Man's godlike form?
> Where is that brow erect and bold,
> That eye that can, unmoved, behold
> The wildest rage, the loudest storm,
> That e'er created fury dared to raise! (13-17)
>
> Art thou of man's imperial line?
> Dost boast that countenance divine?
> Each sculking feature answers, No!
> But come, ye sons of Liberty,
> Columbia's offspring, brave as free,
> In danger's hour still flaming in the van:
> Ye know, and dare maintain, The Royalty of Man. (23-28)

Burns's use of 'countenance divine' here also feeds into the parodying of high literary conventions given, as Robert Crawford notes, it was most probably taken from Mark Akenside's *Pleasures of the Imagination* or John Glover's *Leonidas*.[94] Classical culture, however, is rejected in favour of 'The Royalty of Man', a powerful phrase that simultaneously rejects the British monarchy and heralds the worth of the individual regardless of class.

While the opening stanzas depict America's heroic resistance to tyranny and successful liberation, the latter half of the poem deals with both England and Scotland's degeneration and failure to live up to their democratic origins. Burns harnesses the metaphorical power of America to embark on an enquiry into the complex and multifaceted origins of British democratic values. Two heroic figures (one Scottish, one English) are, like Washington, used as symbols of 'liberty'; yet they are mournfully lamented as being dead and buried. The penultimate stanza, which deals with England, begins with the speaker recalling Alfred, King of Wessex from 871 to 899:

[94] Crawford, 'America's Bard', 100.

Alfred, on thy starry throne,
Surrounded by the tuneful choir
The Bards that erst have struck the patriot lyre,
And roused the freeborn Briton's soul of fire,
No more thy England own. (29-33)

By the eighteenth century, King Alfred (c.848-899) had been eulogised as the founder of English law and the freedom and liberalism associated with it.[95] However, Burns's speaker laments how these democratic founding principles no longer hold sway over England. In contrast with 'Columbia' maintaining 'The Royalty of Man', England has lost 'the freeborn Briton's soul of fire'. Once again, musical imagery is used to convey freedom and liberation (the 'tuneful choir' and the 'patriot lyre'), resonating with the earlier depiction of Columbia's 'harp' and 'bold note'. The speaker further describes England's degeneration into tyranny and 'deeds of everlasting shame':

England in thunder calls – 'The Tyrant's cause is mine!'
That hour accurst, how did the fiends rejoice,
And hell thro' all her confines raise th' exulting voice,
That hour which saw the generous English name
Linkt with such damned deeds of everlasting shame! (39-43)

Rather than being anti-English, what essentially prevails is the sense that the country has failed to live up to its potential; a sentiment that would have resonated strongly with some of the more radical factions of the Whig party who called for a 'backward-looking' form of reconstitution inspired by historical, specifically English incarnations of liberty.

One early proponent of this type of retrospective reform was Catherine Macaulay (1731-1791) who published the radically Whig *History of England from the Revolution to the Present Time* in 1788; an ideological book that set out to highlight the 'grand areas in our history'[96] in the hope of inspiring political change. Often dismissed as a scandalous woman infringing upon male affairs, Macaulay's polemical pamphlets, books and direct links with reformist movements (which eventually led to her being received by George Washington for ten days at Mount Vernon in 1784) certainly deserve further scholarly attention, particularly in regards to radical Whig movements of the late-eighteenth century.

[95] Patrick Wormald, 'Alfred (848/9–899)' cited at <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/183> [accessed 27/12/2015].
[96] Catherine Macaulay, *History of England from the Revolution to the Present Time* (London: T. Cadell and J. Walter, 1778) 2.

Having used King Alfred to symbolise England's democratic past, Burns's speaker evokes Wallace to convey Scotland's loss of freedom:

> Thee, Caledonia, thy wild heaths among,
> Famed for the martial deed, the heaven-taught song,
> To thee, I turn with swimming eyes. –
> Where is that soul of freedom fled?
> Immingled with the mighty Dead!
> Beneath that hallowed turf where WALLACE lies!
> Hear it not, Wallace, in thy bed of death!
> Ye babbling winds in silence sweep,
> Disturb not ye the hero's sleep,
> Nor give the coward secret breath. (44-53)

With a sense of despair, the speaker turns to Scotland with 'swimming eyes' and declares that the country's 'soul of freedom' is gone, dead and buried in the past. Caledonia's 'heaven-taught song' has been reduced to 'babbling winds in silence'; a dramatic and Ossianic metaphor that suggests Scotland's political values have been lost and can only be lamented:

> Shew me that eye which shot immortal hate,
> Blasting the Despot's proudest bearing:
> Shew me that arm which, nerved with thundering fate,
> Braved Usurpation's boldest daring! (56-59

Echoing 'Scots Wha Hae' ('Lay the proud usurper's low')[97], the speaker yearns for a time when Scotland 'Braved Usurpation's boldest daring!' Here, the purposeful dialectical parallels in the poem become clear. Scotland's weakened 'eye' is directly in contrast with Washington's 'eye' (in the second stanza) that could behold 'The wildest rage', with the slight sound parallels between 'Columbia' and 'Caledonia' reinforcing the comparative frame. The tragedy for Burns's speaker is that Scotland has not lived up to its democratic origins and failed to embrace its own liberty. The closing lines of the poem reinforce this tone of disappointment, with the repetition of 'no more' emphasising a lack of future hope:

> Dark-quenched as yonder sinking star,
> No more that glance lightens afar;
> That palsied arm no more whirls on the waste of war. (57-59)

[97] *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns,* 2, 708 (21).

Shrouded in metaphorical darkness, the 'palsied arm' conveys the sorry image of Scotland being of a tottering, powerless age. There are hints here of the trope of 'Westering liberty'[98]; whereby liberty was considered to have moved westwards (Athens, Rome, Florence, Venice and Britain) and culminated in America, leaving many Whigs in the period to quite literally wonder where had that 'soul of freedom fled'? Burns's speaker appears to answer this rhetorical question by lavishing praise on Washington and America. The vibrant, musical and triumphant depiction of 'Columbia' at the beginning of the poem is in stark contrast to the 'babbling', 'Dark-quenched' vision of Scotland at the end. For Burns's speaker, the message is clear: the people of both Scotland and England must take inspiration from America and reaffirm their democratic origins.

The American Works: Postscript

This chapter opened with a discussion of how America, and in particular the American Revolution, served to inform various political debates (both as a metaphor and geographical space) in late-eighteenth century Britain. From the three main works discussed, it is evident that Burns, like several of his contemporaries, poetically engaged with the *idea* of what America stood for and used it as a point of inspiration for selected poems and songs.

While the comic, satirical portrayal of British military figures in 'When Guilford Good' (in opposition to successful American leaders) hinted at the idea that Britain might progress towards political reform (led by William Pitt The Younger), both 'Address of Beelzebub' and 'Ode For General Washington's Birthday' reflected, while still framing America as a successful dialectical 'other', on continuing democratic failure. In chronologically juxtaposing the three works, then, a trajectory of political ideas begins to emerge. The most consistent idea in all three, however, is that America, whether as a metaphorical reference point or geo-physical location, is the successful example where liberty and democracy prevails.

Equally important to bear in mind, however, is the contemporary ideological treatment of America by more radical poets and activists in the late-eighteenth century. Recent recovery work, symposiums and forthcoming edited collections on the likes of Thomas Muir and James 'Balloon' Tytler will continue to serve as a pertinent reminder that Burns, through his reluctance to publish certain works and political ambiguity, was not among this group of pro-

[98] See J.G.A Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975) 3-49.

revolutionary 'transatlantic radicals' who were forced to flee oppression in the period.[99] Though Burns most certainly took risks, he was much more careful to (as he confided to Mrs Dunlop) 'set a seal on my lips, as to these unlucky politics'.[100] This 'seal' was further cemented in 1792 when the Board of Excise investigated Burns in light of seditious accusations; an incident that would have undoubtedly affected any further poetic treatments of America (and also influenced the much delayed posthumous appearance of his two later American Works).

Such a cautious approach was not adopted, for example, by Tytler, whose 1795 poem 'The Rising of the Sun in the West, or The Origin and Progress of Liberty' was prefaced by a stern 'Argument' about how America had been appointed by God to 'break this dreadful Enchantment' of British tyranny.[101] The Scottish radical was, of course, already exiled in Salem, Massachusetts by the time of its publication. Particularly when considered next to Tytler, however, we cannot lay claim to Burns's overtly radical support for American-inspired Republicanism. Nonetheless, the American works discussed above do provide concrete evidence that he was certainly inspired, at the very least in an artistic sense, by America and its relatively recent revolution; thus shedding further light on the complex, transnational intricacies of Burns's creative practice.

If, as suggested in the introduction, the relationship between Burns and the early United States of America might be thought of as a multiflorous, 'rhizomatic organism'; then these early poetic engagements surely constitute the initial blooming of crucial and formative nodes. However, in order to track the subsequent growth of these early connections, we must turn to examine the processes by which Burns's poetry and songs began to surface in New York and Philadelphia during the final two decades of the eighteenth century.

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[99] See <http://www.thomasmuir.co.uk/thomasmuir250.html> [accessed 19/11/2015]. On Friday 30th October, 2015, a symposium was held at the University of Glasgow to honour the 250th anniversary of Muir's birth with an edited essay collection to follow. Incidentally, the event was co-organised by The Centre For Robert Burns Studies.

[100] Burns wrote to Mrs Dunlop on 2 January 1793 though a large section of the manuscript was later cut away – 'presumably by someone fearful for Burns's political reputation,' See *The Bard,* 361-362.

[101] James Tytler, *The Rising of the sun in the West, or The origin and progress of Liberty* (Salem: William Carlton, 1795) 'preface'.

Chapter II

'Tho I to foreign lands must hie': Burns's Poetry in America, c.1786 -1799

One Burns a Plowman near Kilmarnock has lately published a volume of Poems that draw much attention…[1]

➢ William Richardson (1787)

While Robert Burns never actually made passage across the Atlantic 'to foreign lands'[2], his poems and songs spread to America swiftly after the success of his first published volume(s) in Britain. The popularity and success of the 1786 Kilmarnock edition (*Poems, Chiefly in The Scottish Dialect)*[3] provided further prospects for Burns at home, meaning that any tentative emigration plans were to be put on hold. Partly a consequence of the twenty-first century 'transnational turn' in Scottish Studies, much recent attention has been given to the wider implications of Burns's proposed voyage to Jamaica and his possible future vocation as a 'negro driver' or 'book keeper'.[4] Yet within weeks of the publication of the Kilmarnock edition, Burns wrote to John Richmond with the intention 'to try a second edition of my book' which would detain him 'a little longer in the country'.[5] The second appearance of Burns's poetry 'in guid black prent'[6], sold by William Creech in Edinburgh on 21 April, 1787, famously catapulted the poet into the cultural sphere of Scotland's most eminent literati. In the same year, a third 'London edition' was published and sold by Andrew Strahan and Thomas Cadell in collaboration with Creech.[7]

While Burns entertained possible future patrons in the months following the Edinburgh and London editions, his volume, quite remarkably, was already being reprinted and sold in America as early as July 1788. Largely unbeknown to Burns, individual poems, songs and

[1] 'Letter from W. Richardson to S. Rose, 1 Jan, 1787' cited at University of Glasgow Special Collections, MS Gen 520/2. Thanks to Stephen Mullen for this reference.
[2] Robert Burns, 'Farewell to the Brethren of St James's Lodge' in *The Poems and Songs of Robert* Burns, Vol. 1, 271 (5).
[3] Hereafter generally referred to as *Poems* unless specified otherwise to account for reprinted editions of the same title.
[4] See for example *The Bard,* 223; *Scotland and the Caribbean*, 128-183; Gerard Carruthers, 'Robert Burns and Slavery' in *Fickle Man* ed. by Johnny Rodger and Gerard Carruthers, 163-176; Nigel Leask, 'Burns and the Poetics of Abolition' in *The Edinburgh Companion to Robert Burns* ed. by Gerard Carruthers, 47-61; Murray Pittock, 'Slavery as Political Metaphor in Scotland and Ireland in the age of Burns' in *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture* ed. by Sharon Alker, Leith Davis and Holly Faith Nelson, 19-31; Corey E. Andrews, '"Ev'ry Heart Can Feel": Scottish Poetic Responses to Slavery in the West Indies, from Blair to Burns' in *International Journal of Scottish Literature* 4 (spring/summer, 2008) cited at <http://www.ijsl.stir.ac.uk/issue4/andrews.htm> [accessed 07/01/2016]; and Andrew O. Lindsay, '"Negro-driver" or "Illustrious Exile": Revisiting Illustrious Exile: Journal of my Sojourn in the West Indies' 4 (spring/summer, 2006) cited at <http://www.ijsl.stir.ac.uk/issue4/lindsayOP.htm> [accessed 07/01/2016].
[5] *The Letters of Robert Burns*, Vol. 1, 54-55.
[6] Ibid. 96.
[7] It should be noted that Creech did not inform Burns about the 'third edition' nor his arrangement with Strahan and Cadell. See *The Critical Heritage*, 11.

pirated American editions were in circulation just months after first appearing in Britain. Touching upon the American periodical press before discussing the first American editions (of *Poems*) in New York and Philadelphia, this chapter will outline several transatlantic convergences (in print culture, emigration, trade and intellectual property law) that facilitated Burns's rise to popularity in the United States before the turn of the nineteenth century.

The Atlantic Crossing

There remains a somewhat romantic idea that Burns's work arrived in North America on 'the lips and fiddles of immigrants' as they poignantly played songs and clutched books from the old country while embarking on a new life in a *new world*.[8] Though processes of dissemination were in fact more complex and multifactorial, there is no disputing that Burns's poetry arrived in America via trading ships and emigrant travellers.

Trading links in the late-eighteenth century meant that Scottish merchants were regularly in contact with North American seaports, particularly Philadelphia and New York, the main trading hubs on the Eastern seaboard. These links naturally extended beyond commerce in that news, books and political ideas were regularly exchanged back and forth across the Atlantic. As an article in the first *Glasgow Magazine and Review* suggested (rather hyperbolically) in 1783, without such a strong 'connection between Commerce and the Liberal Arts' the 'western part of the world' might not have emerged from 'profound ignorance and barbarism.'[9] Just six months after the publication of the Kilmarnock edition, William Richardson (1743-1814), then Professor of Humanity at The University of Glasgow, wrote a letter to his friend S. Rose revealing that Burns's volume had proved popular among travelling merchants, many of whom were trading in North America:

> One Burns a Plowman near Kilmarnock has lately published a volume of Poems that draw much attention. They are wonderful from a mere Plowman - and some of them pretty…For the members of the Caledonian Hunt & the Glasgow Manufacturers & Merchants, [illegible] who never read a verse before in their days are all furiously fond of them...[10]

[8] Esther Hovey, 'Burns' Songs American Connection' in *The Burns Chronicle 2001* (The Robert Burns World Federation press, 2001) 13-21 (17).
[9] J. Mennons, 'Dedication', *The Glasgow Magazine and Review* 1 (1783) 1-2.
[10] 'W. Richardson to S. Rose' cited at University of Glasgow Special Collections, MS Gen 520/2. Thanks to Stephen Mullen for this reference.

That these merchants had 'never read a verse before' yet were 'furiously fond' of Burns is an early indicator of the poet's wide reach; his volume proving popular with individuals who were (usually) less concerned with the Arts and more focused on commercial pursuits.

Yet it was not the travelling 'manufacturers and merchants' who occasionally 'read a verse' that facilitated the dissemination of Burns's work in the United States, but rather the entrepreneurial emigrant booksellers and printers who sold and pirated *Poems* for profit. The first record of *Poems* being available in America (though not an 'American Edition' or reprint) can be found in an advert announcing the opening of a bookstore owned by John Reid, a Glasgow-born emigrant who had recently set up shop in New York.[11] The advert, placed in the New York-based *Independent Journal* of 7 July, 1787, introduced the new bookseller before printing a considerable list of available titles among which *Poems* was included. Given the proximity of the advert to Creech's recently published Edinburgh edition, it is likely that Reid had purchased the volume in Scotland before transporting it to America along with a stock of other books.[12] The *Independent Journal* (in which Reid's advert was placed) was printed and edited by John and Archibald Mclean; also natives of Glasgow who moved to New York in 1783 and, as will subsequently be discussed, published the second (New York) American Edition of Burns's *Poems* in 1788.

Here, we can already begin to see how a loosely connected network of Scots-born printers and booksellers - John Reid, Peter Stewart, John and Archibald Maclean - were to be influential on the spread and accessibility of Burns's work in America before the turn of the nineteenth century. In addition to newly arrived Scots emigrants, the possible influence of Ulster-Scots migrants must also be tentatively noted. As early as September 1787, Belfast publisher and bookseller James Magee advertised a pirated edition of *Poems,* which was followed by a succession of reprints in the decades that followed. Though the majority of Ulster-Scots migrations to America occurred earlier in the eighteenth century, continuing transatlantic cultural links remained impactful on the dissemination and reception of new literary works; with the Scots language poetry of Burns likely being of particular interest.[13] I will return to this issue in Chapter IV when discussing Burns's poetic influence on Ulster-Scots-American poets such as David Bruce and Robert Dinsmoor.

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[11] Anna M. Painter, 'American Editions of The *Poems* of Burns Before 1800' in *The Library*, 4:12 (1932) (435)
[12] Ibid., 436. Painter speculates that Reid may have sailed on the ship *George* which arrived in New York on June 26th.
[13] See Patrick Griffin, 'The People with No Name: Ulster's Migrants and Identity in Formation in Eighteenth-Century Pennsylvania' in *The William and Mary Quarterly* 58:3 (2001) 587-614.

Early Newspaper Printings, c. 1787-1788

The same month that the New York-based *Independent Journal* printed John Reid's advert in New York, the *Pennsylvania Packet, and Daily Advertiser* printed the 'The Rigs o Barley' on 24 July 1787. As Rhona Brown has documented, the Philadelphian daily continued to print individual poems and songs by Burns in the months that followed.[14] In addition to Brown's illuminating essay, the National Library of Scotland has recently collected and catalogued issues of the *Pennsylvania Packet* that contain 'poems or songs by Robert Burns' from '24 July 1787 through 27 November 1788'; thus making the first appearance(s) of Burns in American print more accessible than ever.[15] Before discussing the significance of which particular poems featured, however, it is worth briefly touching upon the origins of the Philadelphian newspaper.

The *Pennsylvania Packet* was founded in 1771 by John Dunlap (1747-1812). Born in Strabane, Northern Ireland, Dunlap emigrated to Philadelphia in 1757 to work as an apprentice bookseller and quickly progressed to become one the most eminent printers in late-eighteenth century America. Under the orders of John Hancock (the same man praised by Burns in 'Address of Beelzebub'), Dunlap produced the first copies of the 'Declaration of Independence' whilst under contract to the Continental Congress in 1776. An Irishman turned American patriot, he also fought extensively in the Revolutionary War, seeing combat at the battles of Princeton and Trenton, and later rising to the rank of major in the First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry. In his position as 'Printer of The Journals of the Continental Congress', Dunlap was succeeded by David C. Claypoole (1757-1849) who would subsequently become his business partner at the *Pennsylvania Packet*.[16] During this period, Claypoole regularly exchanged letters with George Washington who requested that the Philadelphian newspaper be sent directly to his home in Mount Vernon.[17] That the paper's editors were inherently tied to America's political landscape (in both professional and personal capacities) is further demonstrated by the fact they also printed several of the Federalist and Anti-Federalist essays, letters and debates between 1787 and 1789.[18]

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[14] The 'Rigs o' Barley' also appeared in the Philadelphia-based *Independent Gazetteer* in the same month. See Rhona Brown, '"Guid black prent": Robert Burns and the Contemporary Scottish and American Periodical Press' in *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture*, 71-87.

[15] See <http://www.nls.uk/collections/rarebooks/acquisitions/singlebook.cfm/idfind/870> [accessed 26/09/2015]

[16] Dunlap lost his contract after printing a letter that leaked information about French aid to the Americans during the War. The letter was authored by Thomas Paine and signed off as 'Common Sense',

[17] For transcriptions of letters in full, see <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-09057> [accessed 26/11/15].

[18] In a series of eight-five essays, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay (publishing anonymously under the name 'Publius') argued for the creation of a strong federal government in order to unite and preserve

In spite of the newspaper's political tenor, Brown notes that when it came to printing Burns's work the editorial choices of the paper demonstrated an 'appetite for the sentimental, pious Heaven-taught ploughman', suggesting that the poet's early appeal may have been 'simply human' rather than political.[19] Indeed, the appearance of 'The Rigs o' Barley' in July 1787 was attributed to 'ROBERT BURNS, the celebrated Ayrshire Ploughman'[20] and the paper's subsequent printing of the 'Banks of Ayr' and 'Behind yon hills where Stinchar flows' the following November is consistent with the image of a rustic poet concerned with rural, nostalgic themes set in the Scottish countryside. Similarly, the appearances of 'Prayer in the Prospect of Death', 'A Prayer under the Pressure of violent anguish' and 'The First Six verses of the nineteenth Psalm' provides further evidence of an 'appetite' for Burns's (now relatively obscure) pious works and nostalgic constructions of the 'home country.'[21]

However, the *Pennsylvania Packet* also printed some of Burns's more socio-politically biting works such as 'Man Was Made to Mourn', 'The Cotter's Saturday Night' and most notably, 'A Fragment' (later known as 'When Guilford Good').[22] While no commentary or introduction to Burns's political song was provided, the satirical portrayal of bumbling British figures and praise of revolutionary heroes would surely not have escaped the newspaper's readership nor its editors; particularly given Dunlap had fought in the war himself and later printed broadside copies of the Declaration of Independence. Moreover, the pastoral politics of both 'Man Was Made to Mourn' and 'The Cotter's Saturday Night' might well have taken on new resonances in the context of late-eighteenth century Philadelphia, bringing to mind Colleen Glenney Boggs' assertion that texts and authors can often 'take on different meanings in transatlantic contexts'.[23]

In a recent study on the transatlantic circulation of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Elizabeth Young has suggested how the English novel could be variously reinterpreted in nineteenth-century America. For Young, *Frankenstein* spoke directly to 'specific questions of national and racial formation in the nineteenth-century U.S. body politic'[24] and thus its arrival in America gave birth to several new frames of analysis and interpretation. Similarly, we

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the liberties of individual States. These essays formed an integral part of the debate between the Federalists and Anti-Federalists, who were strongly divided over the ratification of the Constitution.

[19] Brown, '"Guid Black Prent"', 83.

[20] *Pennsylvania Packet*, 24 July (1787).

[21] '"Guid Black Prent"', 79-81.

[22] *Pennsylvania Packet*, 14 March (1788).

[23] Colleen Glenney Boggs, 'Transatlantic Romanticisms' in *Transatlantic Literary Studies 1660-1830* ed. by Eve Tavor Bannet and Susan Manning, 219-238 (232)

[24] Elizabeth Young, *Black Frankenstein: The Making of an American Metaphor* (New York: New York University Press, 2008) 250.

might venture to suggest how fresh socio-political contexts (namely late-eighteenth century Philadelphia) might have impacted upon the initial printing and reception of some of Burns's poems in the *Pennsylvania Packet*.

'Man Was Made to Mourn', 'The Cotter's' & 'To Ruin'

Nigel Leask has recently outlined how the pastoral politics of 'Man Was Made to Mourn' can be linked to the contemporary issue of 'agricultural improvement' and its relation to commercial society in Scotland, as theorised by philosophers such as Adam Fergusson (1723-1816) and Adam Smith (1723-1790).[25] Particularly in late-eighteenth century Pennsylvania, where rapid urbanisation and the rise of commercial industries began to threaten traditional agrarianism, similar debates over the future of commerce, industry and agriculture emerged. These issues were raised in the Federalist and Anti-Federalist papers that appeared - primarily in New York and Philadelphian newspapers - between 1787 and 1789.[26] That Burns, with his rural, agricultural associations ('Ayrshire Ploughman'), began to be regularly printed in the same period that saw national divisions over, among other issues relating to the ratification of the Constitution, commerce and agriculture, is surely of some significance.

On one hand, the speaker of Burns's 'Man Was Made to Mourn' might be seen to align with the Anti-Federalists who, largely comprised of farmers and tradesmen, opposed centralised, hierarchal systems of governance that infringed upon the rights of landowning, self-sufficient agrarians. Resonantly, the speaker of Burns's poem has become entrapped (a 'lordling's slave')[27] by the capitalisation of agriculture ('Where hundreds labour to support/A haughty lordling's pride') (19-20) and laments over losing both self-sufficiency and self-governance ('Man then is useful to his kind/Supported in his right') (35-36). However, it should be noted that the *Pennsylvania Packet* was considered a 'Federalist newspaper' due to its (printed) calls for state delegates to ratify the constitution.[28] While this would seemingly be at odds with the above Anti-Federalist reading of Burns's poem, the paper did also - albeit more sporadically - publish Anti-Federalist sentiments. For example, even after the Pennsylvania Convention ratified on December 12, 1787, a dissenting statement of Anti-Federalist objections titled 'The Address and Reasons of Dissent of the Minority of the

[25] *Robert Burns & Pastoral,* 23-24..
[26] For a recently edited collection of all the 'Federalist Papers' complete with 'Anti-Federalist' responses see *The Federalist: With Letters of Brutus*, ed. by Terence Ball (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
[27] *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, Vol. 1, 116-119 (65).
[28] Craig R. Smith and David M. Hunsaker, *The Four Freedoms of the First Amendment* (Longrove: Waveland Press, 2003) 23.

Convention of Pennsylvania to their Constituents' appeared just two weeks later.[29] Moreover, many of the Federalists (such as James Madison who would later become a member of Thomas Jefferson's Democratic Republican party) were also agrarians who advocated that democratic freedom was best achieved in an agricultural society.[30] Here, the complexity and scope of the Federalist and Anti-Federalist ideologies - particularly when it came to agriculture and commerce - increases rather than impedes the possibility that Burns's poems might have taken on added resonances in this new socio-political context.

Just a few months after 'Man Was Made to Mourn' appeared, the *Pennsylvania Packet* printed 'The Cotter's Saturday Night' in its entirety; a politicised, pastoral poem that also touched upon several themes pertinent to the context of agrarian debates in late-eighteenth-century Philadelphia. Burns's speaker, advocating agrarian self-sufficiency, envisions a virtuous population comprised of 'thy hardy sons of *rustic toil'*[31] and dismisses 'Princes and lords' (165) who have been tainted by 'luxury's contagion' (177). For the speaker, the pastoral *'cottage'* is equal to, or even mightier than, the *'Palace'* while 'An honest man's the noble work of GOD' (166-168). The former line is strikingly congruous with early nineteenth-century Jeffersonian ideals of 'Agrarian Republicanism',[32] whereby a virtuous, moral superiority was inherently placed upon (in Jefferson's own words) 'those who labor in the earth' since they are 'the chosen people of God.'[33] Similarly, the speaker's hope that 'may heaven their simple lives prevent' (176) aligns with Jefferson's spiritually infused political hope that a largely agrarian society might avoid a 'corruption of morals' and maintain 'genuine virtue': 'While we have land to labour then, let us never wish to see our citizens occupied at a work bench, or twirling a distaff'.[34] Here, Jefferson blatantly advocates refraining from industrial commerce to avoid moral corruption and degeneration.

A testament to the transatlantic 'world of encounters' discussed previously, Jefferson had partly formed his ideas on agricultural virtue and improvement through his own engagement with Scottish philosophers such as Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696-1782),

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[29] See also *The Pennsylvania Packet* of Friday, October 26 (1787) that printed both the first of the Anti-Federalist Papers written by 'Brutus' and also a public call for state delegates to come forward to join the state's ratifying convention.

[30] For example, in 'Federalist Paper No. 12' Alexander Hamilton argues that agriculture and commerce need not be opposed.

[31] *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, Vol. 1, 145-152 (174).

[32] For a recent discussion of the 'republic-democracy-agriculture correlation' on both sides of the Atlantic see Manuela Albertone, *National Identity and the Agrarian Republic: The Transatlantic Commerce of Ideas between America and France (1750-1830)* (Surrey and Burlington: Ashgate, 2014) 7.

[33] Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, ed. by Frank Shuffelton (New York: Penguin, 1998) 170.

[34] Ibid.

whose 1776 work *The Gentleman Farmer* suggested that agricultural improvement might bring man closer to a 'natural', virtuous state.[35] We also know from both Jefferson's personal library and an 1813 letter to John Waldo that he was an admirer of Burns, with the President describing his as poetry 'beautiful'.[36] Whether or not he read and identified strains of Agrarian politics similar to his own in 'The Cotter's Saturday Night' is a matter of conjecture. Regardless, on the basis of 'When Man Was Made to Mourn' and 'The Cotter's Saturday Night' at least, it seems highly plausible that Burns's pastoral poetry would have been open to fresh frames of interpretation in the early United States.[37]

When speculating on an eighteenth-century Philadelphian readership, one other contextual factor to consider is the - admittedly complex - contemporary religious landscape. As noted, the *Pennsylvania Packet* printed a succession of Burns's 'religious' poems such as 'Prayer in the Prospect of Death', 'A Prayer under the Pressure of violent anguish', 'The First Six verses of the nineteenth Psalm' and 'To Ruin'. Even a brief contextual reflection on the theological climate of Philadelphia suggests that these 'religious' poems may have been interpreted (and thus chosen by the editors) for reasons other than their apparent espousal of Presbyterian piety and religious devotion. By the eighteenth century, the old 'Quaker hegemony over most aspects of Philadelphia's political and social life had broken down'[38] and the Presbyterian element in the city had become increasingly powerful. It was in Philadelphia that the first American Presbytery was assembled in 1706, and by 1789, just after the first appearances of Burns's poems, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America was formed and led by John Witherspoon (1723-1794). During the Revolutionary years, Philadelphia was a magnet for radical Irish Presbyterian ministers such as Thomas Ledlie Birch who, as discussed in Chapter I (p.51), supported the American cause from its early stages and interpreted it as 'the unfolding of Divine Destiny.'[39] Birch, who had studied under the radical social philosopher John Millar at the University of Glasgow in 1770, embraced a complex form of revolutionary liberalism that conflated radical political thought with religious

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[35] See Richard B. Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book: Scottish Authors and Their Publishers in Eighteenth-Century Britain, Ireland and America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008) 504 and Christopher Alan Bayly, *Imperial meridian: the British empire and the world, 1780-1830* (London: Longman, 1989) 84-85.
[36] *Thomas Jefferson: Writings,* ed. by Merrill D. Peterson (New York: Library of America, 1984) 1296.
[37] A further point of comparison might be George Crabbe's 1783 'Anti-Pastoral' poem 'The Village', which was widely reprinted and sold in America some seven years before 'The Cotter's Saturday Night' first appeared. An advertisement in the *New York Daily Gazette* of 11 November (1791) advertised the 'fourth' American edition of the poem.
[38] Andrew Hook, 'Philadelphia, Edinburgh and the Scottish Enlightenment' in *Scotland and America in the Age of the Enlightenment* ed. by Richard B. Sher and Jeffrey R. Smitten, 230-236 (233).
[39] David A. Wilson, *United Irishmen, Unites States: immigrant Radicals in the Early Republic* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998) 123.

conservatism. Despite being attached to a somewhat repressive theology, the radical spirit of Presbyterians such as Birch often manifested in sympathy for the American cause; thus leading to the spread of strains of this 'radical Presbyterianism' in Philadelphia (often through emigration and exile).

As Liam Mcllvanney has noted, radical Presbyterians often had a 'hostile relationship with the crown'; pushed for a more 'democratic system of government'; and strongly opposed 'monarchical absolutism'.[40] Reconsidering Burns's 'To Ruin'[41] (which appeared in the *Pennsylvania Packet* in May 1788) we might easily draw out such liberal, political inflections amidst the sternly Calvinist rhetoric:

> All hail! Inexorable lord!
> At whose destruction-breathing word,
> The mightiest empires fall!
> Thy cruel, woe-delighted train,
> The ministers of grief and pain,
> A sullen welcome, all! (1-6)

The message here is at once religious and political; no government, monarchy or man is greater than the 'Inexorable lord!' whose 'breathing word' could destruct the 'mightiest empire'. The humbling tone of the poem is most certainly God-fearing, yet the rejection of 'empire' would surely strike a reverberating political chord in the context of an early Republic that had recently won independence from a ruling monarch. After all, there was a long established, if complex, interrelationship between Christianity and the American revolutionary spirit.[42]

That said, Presbyterianism in late-eighteenth century Philadelphia was itself factional and divided (particularly over issues that arose from the 'Great Awakening') and it is therefore equally important not to force contextual interpretations without further qualification.[43] Yet, rooting out the possibilities of how Burns's poems *might* have taken on different inflections in fresh socio-political contexts remains a useful exercise and one which seems especially fruitful for considering past transatlantic literary relations.

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[40] Liam Mcllvanney, *Burns the Radical: poetry and Politics in Late Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Edinburgh: Tuckwell Press, 2002) 18.
[41] *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns,* Vol. 1, 19.
[42] See Robert M. Calhoun, 'Religion, Moderation and Regime Building in Post-Revolutionary America' in *Empire and Nation: The American Revolution in the Atlantic World* ed. by Eliga H. Gould and Peter S. Onuf (Baltimore: John Hopkin University Press, 2005) 217-239.
[43] See Henry F. May, *The Enlightenment in America*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976) 209.

Swift Piracies: The New York and Philadelphia Editions, c. 1787-1788

As interest in Burns increased through the circulation of his poems in the New York and Philadelphian press, proposals began to appear for an American reprinting of *Poems*. These proposals marked the beginning of critical reviews and short biographical anecdotes about the 'Ayrshire Ploughman' in the American press. On August 29, 1787, the *Independent Journal* called on readers to subscribe for copies of a forthcoming American edition, stating that the 'fame of this Author is spreading rapidly' and 'the Merit of his Works is acknowledged by all who have had an opportunity of seeing them'.[44] In line with the political ties of fellow emigrant editors' John Dunlap and David C. Claypoole, J and A Maclean's *Independent Journal* had serially published the Federalist Papers between October 1787 and 1788.

J & A Maclean's proposal is a fine example of entrepreneurial book advertising from the period, having promised potential subscribers that the 'work will be printed on a new Type and good paper, in one handsome Volume Octavo' and that 'Those who subscribe for twelve Copies, will have a thirteenth gratis.[45] Piracies of popular books were common in late-eighteenth century America where, as Colleen Glenney Boggs notes, 'publishers were not required to pay royalties to foreign authors, making it very attractive for American publishers to republish British works'.[46] This vibrant reprint culture continued right up until the later nineteenth century when copyright laws began to be tightened. It is only recently, however, that scholars have come to recognise the magnitude of its impact on the transatlantic dissemination of literature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. British and Irish emigrants with professional backgrounds swiftly capitalised on both the (absence of) copyright laws and the advent of a burgeoning American periodical press, as demonstrated by the fact that eighteen individuals of British or Irish descent edited no fewer than forty-nine newspapers and magazines in America between 1783 and 1800.[47]

Included in J & A Maclean's advert were selected extracts from Henry Mackenzie's 1786 unsigned essay in the Edinburgh-based *Lounger,* which became 'the most influential contemporary account of Burns's poetry'.[48] The editors, undoubtedly with good commerce in mind, selected the parts of Mackenzie's review (evidently circulating in America) that seemed

[44] *The Independent Journal*, 29 August (1787).
[45] Ibid.
[46] Boggs, 'Transatlantic Romanticisms', 230.
[47] Nigel Leask, 'Irish Republicans and Gothic Eleutherarchs: Pacific Utopias in the Writings of Theobald Wolfe Tone and Charles Brocken Brown' in *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 63:3 (2000) 347-367 (366).
[48] *The Critical Heritage*, 67.

most appropriate for their book proposal. There is an emphasis on Burns's 'Genius'[49] followed by a flattering description of poems including 'The Vision', 'Invocation to Ruin' and his 'Dialogue of the Dogs' (most obviously a reference to 'The Twa Dogs'). Burns's poetic abilities, though praised, were underlined by the now-famous remark that he was a 'Heaven-taught Ploughman' from a 'humble and unlettered station'. While this remark caused lasting confusion (on both sides of the Atlantic) through its evocation of Burns as untutored, J & A Maclean appropriate Mackenzie's expression into their intriguing call for proposals. To borrow a term from modern day marketing, it provided the publishers with a USP ('unique selling proposition') for their latest book proposal.

Though the proposal appeared as early as August 1787, the actual reprinting was delayed for over a year, most likely due to a lack of subscribers. This does not necessarily correlate with a lack of interest since matters may have been complicated by the increasing availability of the original London and Edinburgh editions that continued to be imported from Britain to America. Undeterred, the editors continued to attract interest by reprinting the same advert in the New York-based *Daily Advertiser* and *Morning Post* between August and October 1787, with the publication finally appearing in December 1788. However, while J & A Maclean were busy gathering subscriptions over the course of a year in New York, Peter Stewart and George Hyde had already started printing an edition of Burns's *Poems* in Philadelphia.

Also Scots emigrants who worked in the book trade, the Philadelphian partners produced a small-scale, cheap printing in July 1788 (thus recognised as the first ever American Edition of Burns's poetry). Incidentally, the first advert for the edition came in the *Pennsylvania Packet* and made references to the poems that had previously appeared in the newspaper including 'Man was made to mourn', 'The Cotter's Saturday Night' and 'Invocation to Ruin'.[50] While J & A Maclean's proposals contained extracts from Mackenzie's unsigned review in *The Lounger*, the advert for the Philadelphia edition quoted from James Anderson's appraisal, originally published in London's *Monthly Review* in December 1786. The Anderson excerpt largely corresponded with Mackenzie's image of Burns as an untutored ploughman through its description of the poet's 'simple' and 'artless'

[49] I will return to critical descriptions of Burns as 'Genius' in Chapter III. For further discussion of Burns in relation to evolving theories of 'genius' see Corey Andrews, *The Genius of Scotland: The Cultural Production of Robert Burns, 1785-1834* (Leiden and Boston: Brill;Rodopi, 2015) 11-35; Tim Burke, 'Labour, Education and Genius' in *Fickle Man* ed. by Johnny Rodger and Gerard Carruthers, 13-24; Ronnie Young, 'Genius, Men, and Manners: Burns and Eighteenth- Century Scottish Criticism' in *Scottish Studies Review* 9 (2008) 129-47 and Thomas Crawford, 'Burns, Genius, and Major Poetry' in *Love and Liberty* ed. by Kenneth Simpson, 341-53.
[50] *Pennsylvania Packet*, 16 July (1788).

strains, although Anderson did obscure a completely rustic view of the poet by commenting on his 'delicacy'.[51]

While the New York and Philadelphia editions appeared within months of each other and were both copied from the Edinburgh edition, there were some significant differences between the two printings. As we shall see, this would become a recurring trend in the decades that followed as non-standardised American editions differed greatly in style, content and presentation. Perhaps the most striking textual variation in the New York edition was its inclusion of the full names of satirised politicians in Burns's 'A Fragment', or 'When Guilford Good'. As discussed in Chapter I, Burns omitted the full names of political figures (with both the Edinburgh and Philadelphia editions obscuring letters from their full titles as he had seemingly intended). However, in the New York edition, the sixteen names of prominent political figures from the American War were printed in full.[52] While the idea that J & A Maclean did this – bearing in mind the political inflection of the *Independent Journal* – with purposeful intent might be feasible, it is more likely that the full names appeared due to careless editorial adherence.

Another addition to the New York printing was the inclusion of nine Robert Fergusson poems (including 'The Farmer's Ingle', Braid Claith', 'Hallow Fair', Ode to the Bee', 'On Seeing a Butterfly in the Street', 'Ode to Gowdspink', 'Caller Water' and 'Epilogue Spoken by Mr. Wilson'). Though haphazardly tacked onto the final pages of the book, an advert in the *Independent Journal* of 12 July, 1788, stated that the addition of Fergusson's poems 'without any additional Expence [sic]' made the 'Work more worthy of public patronage'.[53] This was, perhaps, J & A Maclean's attempt at compensating subscribers who were still waiting for their copy after some months (blaming the 'extream scarcity' [sic] of fine printing paper)[54], and assuring them that it would surpass the earlier Philadelphia volume. While the advert's description of Fergusson as 'celebrated' connotes some sense of local familiarity, it is also notable that there were no American piracies of *Poems on Various Subjects* or any other collected edition. However, given Fergusson's work was a fixture in the Scottish periodical press (particularly in Walter Ruddiman's *Weekly Magazine*), it is likely that pamphlets and periodicals containing his poems were circulating in America on some small scale. Moreover, enthusiasm for Burns's poetry also caused a rejuvenated interest in his

[51] Ibid.
[52] See Robert Burns, *Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*, *to which are added Scots Poems selected from the works of Robert Fergusson* (New York: J & A Maclean, 1788) (41-43) 225.
[53] Painter, 'American Editions', 447.
[54] Ibid.

'elder brother in Misfortune',[55] with Rhona Brown noting that 'the construction of Robert Fergusson grew and mutated with the advent of Burns'.[56] Susan Manning states that the bibliographic conflation of the two poets was evident in Scotland from 1787 onwards when booksellers, 'riding on the current vogue for Burns', began to re-advertise Fergusson's works.[57] However, little further commentary on Fergusson can be found in American periodicals from the period, not to mention that his poems appeared back to back with Burns's (without any indication of a change of authorship) in the edition.

With both the Philadelphia and New York editions in circulation by the end of 1788, the two volumes gradually became available in other states. Between 1789 and 1796, adverts for *Poems* had appeared in Virginia, North Carolina, Massachusetts, Maryland and Rhode Island, primarily in daily newspapers such as the *Herald of Freedom* (Boston), *New York Daily Gazette, Salem Gazette* and *State Gazette of North Carolina*. Though both editions were widely available, there would not be another reprinting of *Poems* until after the poet's death when Philadelphia printers Patterson and Cochran reprinted the volume in 1798. One other notable Burns-related piracy that occurred in the period was an American edition of James Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum,* edited by John Aitken and printed in Philadelphia, 1797. Of course, the popularity of Scots songs in America had preceded Burns. A year before the first American editions of *Poems* appeared, for example, a work by Alexander Reinagle (1756-1809) titled *A Select Collection of the most favourite Scots Tunes. With variations for the piano forte or harpsichord* was being printed and sold in Philadelphia.[58] As Serge Hovey has noted, by the late-eighteenth century Scottish ballads had long travelled to America anonymously, transforming and assimilating into American culture through oral and musical means. In the first volume of *The Robert Burns Song Book*, Hovey notes that Scots songs often 'settled and evolved new variants' particularly 'in the Appalachians', further citing the example of the 'Soldier's Joy' which came to be regarded as a classic of the American fiddle canon, but was previously used by Burns for his cantata 'The Jolly Beggars'.[59]

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[55] Robert Burns, '[On Ferguson]' in *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, Vol. 1, 323 (3).
[56] See Rhona Brown, *Robert Fergusson and The Scottish Periodical Press* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012) 257.
[57] Susan Manning, 'Robert Burns's Transatlantic Afterlives' in *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture* ed. by Sharon Alker, Leith Davis and Holly Faith Nelson, 149-169.
[58] Advertised in *The Pennsylvania Packet* of 28 August (1787)
[59] Serge Hovey, 'The Retrieval and Performance of The Songs of Robert Burns', 15. Thanks to Kirsteen McCue for this reference. This is an undated typewritten document retrieved from The University of Mississippi. See also Kirsteen McCue, '"Magnetic Attraction": The Transatlantic Songs of Robert Burns and Serge Hovey' in *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture* ed. by Sharon Alker, Leith Davis and Holly Fiath Nelson, 233-247.

As such, a portion of Burns's songs (particularly those he collected rather than authored) would have had slightly different processes of transmission and influence (oral and musical). Questions over how anonymous Scots songs fit into the genealogy of 'traditional' American music remain, and this broad and fascinating topic deserves continuing attention from literary scholars, historians and musicologists.[60] Yet even if some of the songs (or melodies) in Aitken's volume were already familiar to Scots emigrants, its publication would have surely increased awareness of Burns's hand in writing, collecting and reworking Scottish ballads. Aitken prefaced his edition with William Tytler's essay 'On the Origins of Scottish Music', first published in Hugo Arnot's *The History of Edinburgh* (1779), which was perhaps deemed an appropriate inclusion for transnational American audiences. He also added fully realised accompaniments instead of figured basses.[61] However, given there are few surviving copies of the edition, it probably had a relatively small print-run and, unlike the New York and Philadelphia editions of *Poems*, it does not appear to have been advertised or sold in other states beyond Philadelphia.[62] The timely piracy of the Philadelphia *Scots Musical Museum* might also be attributed to the upsurge of attention that the poet's life and work received (on both sides of the Atlantic) in the immediate period following his death.

Biographical Interest

In 1793, *The New York Magazine, or Literary Repository* - a publication that counted William Dunlap (1766-1839), Charles Brockden Brown (1771-1810) and Joel Barlow (1754-1812) among its regular contributors - printed an article reflecting on the increasing fame of Burns ('The Poems of Robert Burns[…]are in every person's hands') and quoted passages from Robert Heron's *Observations made in a journey through the Western Counties of Scotland*. Heron's *Observations* reads, in parts, like an initial draft of his later biography of the poet, published in 1797. Notably, his reflections on Burns's parish education and honed poetic craft veered away from a wholly 'rustic' image of the 'Heaven-taught ploughman'; with the poet

[60] For example Carol McGuirk notes: 'In a survey conducted between 1938 and 1942, the Writer's Project of Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration collected texts of 'American' songs for deposit in the archives of the University of Virginia: among these songs, folk-collected as 'Virginian', are 'Banks o' Doon', 'Banks of Allan Water', 'Bonnie jean', etc.' See Carol McGuirk, 'Haunted By Authority: Nineteenth-Century American Constructions of Robert Burns and Scotland' in *Robert Burns and Cultural Authority,* ed. by Robert Crawford, (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1997) 136-159 (147).

[61] G. Ross Roy, 'Robert Burns' in *The Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland,* ed. by Stephen Brown and Warren McDougall, Vol. 2 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007) 592.

[62] Though few surviving copies of Aitken's edition remain, it has been recently uploaded to the database *America's Historical Imprints*. See <http://www.readex.com/content/early-american-imprints-series-i-evans-1639-1800 > [accessed 29/11/2015].

being praised for his 'prudence and propriety' and ability to write 'elevated' pastoral poetry.[63] However, in the year following Burns's death, the same publication (*The New York Magazine)* printed an article titled 'Some of Account of Robert Burns' which was to significantly taint and complicate Burn's reputation. The article contained extracts from an obituary that had originally appeared in the *The London Chronicle* of July 1796, apparently written by George Thomson.[64] With an emphasis on the 'failings' of Burns's genius, Thomson reflects on how the poet wasted his time 'in those haunts of village festivity' to which he 'was but too immoderately attached', before declaring that he 'was not qualified to fill a superior station to that which was assigned him' due to his 'distempered imagination'.[65] Juxtaposed with (selected extracts of) Heron's depiction of Burns conducting himself with 'wonderful prudence and propriety', the poet's biographical image had evidently become malleable, with different accounts reflecting the interests and prejudices of those writing and re-writing his life story.[66] Further complicating these variable 'interests' in America, however, was the fact that newspaper editors (and subsequently book publishers) had the power to select which reviews, obituaries or biographical accounts to clip and draw upon in their *own* interests, adding yet another layer of complexity to competing representations of Burns in the period following his death.

In his recent book *The Genius of Scotland* (2015), Corey Andrews has mapped the mechanisms of 'cultural production' that shaped, altered and continually revised Burns's posthumous reputation. Andrews draws on theory by Pierre Bourdieu to establish how 'artistic mediators'[67] (publishers, critics, biographers and so forth) reworked and commodified Burns's life-story by crafting the image of a 'brilliant but deeply flawed genius of Scotland'.[68] Andrews describes Thomson's obituary as a 'thinly-veiled disapproval' of the poet's lifestyle that focused on his moral 'failings', further suggesting that the prickly (epistolary) relationship between the two might have affected Thomson's portrayal of Burns ('the two never met and

[63] *The New York Magazine, or Literary Repository,* Vol. 4 (1793) 680.
[64] Though the obituary was published anonymously, critics have generally concurred with J. De Lancey Ferguson who first claimed Thomson as author. However, the editors of the forthcoming OUP edition of Burns's *Songs For George Thomson*, led by Kirsteen McCue, continue to seek concrete evidence. In the interest of consistency, the remainder of my discussion refers to Thomson as the author. See J. DeLancey Ferguson, 'The Earliest Obituary of Burns: Its Authorship and Influence' in *Modern Philology* 32:2 (1934) 179-184.
[65] *The New York Magazine, or Literary Repository,* New Series (1796) 118-119.
[66] The ideological nature of Burns biographies will be returned to in Chapters III and IV of this thesis.
[67] See Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, ed. by Randal Johnson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).
[68] *The Genius of Scotland*, 149.

frequently did not see eye to eye').[69] Regardless of Thomson's personal agenda, the swift publication of the obituary in New York, just months after appearing in London, is a testament to how rapidly these processes of 'cultural production' had begun to transform the posthumous reputation of Burns in America as well as in Britain. After its initial (American) appearance in *The New York Magazine*, the obituary was subsequently reprinted in *The American Universal Magazine* and *The Philadelphia Magazine* in the same year.[70]

In addition to the circulation of Thomson's obituary, excerpts from Heron's full biography *A Memoir of the Life of the Late Robert Burns* began to appear, initially in *The Philadelphia Magazine* in 1798. While the full *Memoir* also suggests that Burns was prey to 'moral failings' and imbecility, the extracts printed in the Philadelphian publication were generally a positive overview of the poet's character and abilities. Heron's biography has been widely derided by critics for its misrepresentations and errors, yet the *Philadelphia Magazine* extract provides valuable insights into Burns's development as a poet. Eschewing the 'Heaven-taught' myth, the *Philadelphia Magazine* article lavishes praise on the Scottish Parish School education system ('the most beneficial that have been ever instituted in any country') and attributes it for nurturing the 'infant energies' of Burns before tracing his intellectual development from 'labour to learning'. Furthermore, Burns is portrayed as an ardent scholar; having read the likes of Blair, Beattie and 'the wild strains of *Ossian*'.[71] Here, we can again see how American editors (as 'artistic mediators') could prune source texts to fit their own agenda or interests.[72]

Another notable aspect of the article is its implicit association of Burns with Freemasonary ('He eagerly sought admission into the brotherhood of *Free masons').* Burns would famously become the toast of Masonic clubs on both sides of the Atlantic, and, as will be discussed in Chapter V, one of the largest Burns collections in North America remains in the Library of the Supreme Council, 33º, Washington, D.C.[73] This early Masonic association was bolstered by a subsequent issue of *The Philadelphia Magazine* the same year where the

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[69] Ibid. For a further discussion of Thomson's relationship to Burns, see Carol McGuirk, 'George Thomson and Robert Burns: With Friends Like These' in *Eighteenth Century Scotland* 9 (1995) 16-20.

[70] Lucyle Werkmeister has highlighted how Thomson's obituary was selectively edited in the London press to reflect Opposition and Ministerial positions. There appears to be no consistent pattern that suggests a political bias in the American press. See Lucyle Werkmesiter, 'Robert Burns and the Daily Press' in *Modern Philology* 63:4 (1966) 322-335.

[71] *The Philadelphia Monthly Magazine; or, Universal Repository of Knowledge and Entertainment* , 1:2 (1798) 83.

[72] This 'ideological clipping' would be a frequently occurring pattern in nineteenth century 'American editions' and will be discussed further in the following chapter.

[73] See my article 'An American Trove of Burnsiana: The William R. Smith Collection' in *The Burns Chronicle 2015* (Kilmarnock: The Robert Burns World Federation Press, 2015) 39-47.

opening verses of 'Farewell to the Brethren of St James's Lodge, Tarbolton' were printed under the bold title 'MASONIC SONG'.[74] Unlike his earlier *Observations***,** Heron's full *Memoir* does not appear to have been reprinted in America. Consequently, these selective and shortened extracts suggest that the early biographer's influence may have been minimal.

Rather than his songs and poetry, then, it was Burns's life that became the staple of interest in the American press towards the end of the eighteenth century. Even the poetic elegies that appeared reflected heavily on Burns's intriguing and contested life-story. In 1797, a poetic tribute by Edward Rushton (1756-1814) appeared in the New York-based *Time-Piece.* It was reprinted in several American newspapers and literary periodicals the same year including *The Medley* (20 October) and *New York Gazette* (2 October). The *American Daily Advertiser* later printed and attributed the song to William Roscoe (1753-1831) under the title of the 'Helpless Swallow' in April 1803; thus causing several other newspapers to follow suit and reprint the mistake.[75] Adding to the confusion, Rushton's early poetic tribute to Burns is not the same as his later, more expansive 'To The Memory of Robert Burns', which appeared in his collected *Poems* (1806) alongside the initial tributary effort (though the former was slightly modified and titled 'The Swallow'). Both poems, which were sporadically reprinted in the American press between 1797-1815, cast Burns as a tragic victim who had been failed by the Scottish gentry. In 'The Swallow',[76] Rushton's speaker laments how 'ye affluent!'(13) could have transformed Burns's 'anguish to delight' (12); while in 'To The Memory of Robert Burns' the speaker ponders whether Burns might have found some shelter 'on this side Tweed'.[77] This not only propagates the idea that that the Scottish gentry were partially responsible for Burns's demise, but also pertains to Nigel Leask's assertion that the fate of Burns became something of a *cause célèbre* in Liberal English circles, particularly in Liverpool.[78]

In a prophetic, often-neglected verse, Rushton's speaker later suggests that the Scots diaspora, whether in India or America, will continue to remember and recite Burns's 'witching' verse with 'pride':

Where Ganges rolls his yellow tide,

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[74] *The Philadelphia Monthly Magazine; or, Universal Repository of Knowledge and Entertainment*, 2:7 (1798) 47.
[75] <http://manuscriptsandmore.liv.ac.uk/?tag=edward-rushton%3E> [accessed 28/12/2015].
[76] Edward Rushton, 'The Swallow' in Edward Rushton, *Poems* (London: J.M'creery, 1806) 83.
[77] Edward Rushton, 'To the Memory of Robert Burns' in Rushton, *Poems* 75-82 (58).
[78] Rushton's poem was part of a larger collection of tributes by William Roscoe and other Liverpool poets, originally published individually in the *Liverpool Phoenix*, but later collected into one volume in 1800 titled *Liverpool Testimonials to the departed Genius of Robert Burns*. See *Robert Burns and Pastoral*, 279.

Where blest Columbia's waters glide,
Old Scotia's sons, spread far and wide,
Shall oft rehearse,
With sorrow some, but all with pride,
Thy witching verse. (85-90)

It is notable that Rushton, a supporter of the American Revolution (though heavily critical of the transatlantic slave-trade), evokes 'blest Columbia', alluding to an idyllic vision of the country, which might partly explain why his poem was repeatedly reprinted in New York and Philadelphia. Given the contemporary appearances of Thomson's obituary, Rushton's sentiments provided a compelling counter-argument for American readers through their deflection of blame onto hierarchical British structures:

While darkness reigns, should bigotry,
With boiling blood and bended knee,
Scatter the weeds of infamy
O'er thy cold clay
Those weeds, at light's first blush, shall be
Soon swept away. (97-102)

Rushton's suggestion that 'darkness reigns' in a society where 'bended knee' has scattered Burns's 'weeds of infamy' depicts 1790s Britain as hierarchal and corrupt. This depiction of Britain was, incidentally, in line with several contemporary accounts in the American press. An article on the front page of the *Republican Journal* also printed in 1797, for example, described 'the horrible scenes of misery' in Britain in comparison to the 'inestimable blessings of liberty and independence' that Americans enjoyed.[79] This was a highly selective appraisal of political circumstances given that just one year later the 'Alien and Sedition Acts' were passed by the Federalists in the 5th United States Congress. As the popular song 'Jefferson and Liberty' would famously suggest at the turn of the nineteenth century, many felt the Acts were indicative of America's very own 'reign of terror'.[80] Nonetheless, that Rushton depicted Burns as a tragic victim provided a compelling counter-argument to Thomson's biographical claims - which continued to be repeatedly 'scattered' over the poet's 'cold clay' in America through the periodical press. As Corey Andrews notes, Rushton's extended tributary poem

[79] *The Republican Journal*, August 14 (1797) 1.
[80] The song was first published the Philadelphia-based *Aurora* of January 24 (1801). It is regularly cited as one of the first Presidential 'Campaign Anthems'. See <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=95408459> and http://www.folkways.si.edu/oscar-brand/for-jefferson-and-liberty-thomas-jefferson/childrens-historical-song/music/track/smithsonian [both accessed 06/12/15].

was also revised and included in selected editions of James Currie's *The Works of Robert Burns*. Consequently, it would have reached a wide American readership.[81]

Formative Roots: Postscript

While the publication of these biographical excerpts undoubtedly had some impact on Burns's burgeoning fame in America, it is also vital to remember that, pertaining to the idea of a 'rhizomorphic organism', the chronological excavation of print sources does not necessarily suggest a linear trajectory of the poet's reputational development. It would be an over-simplification to suggest that Burns arrived as the 'Ayrshire Ploughman' (in the *Pennsylvania Packet*) and subsequently evolved into the parish-educated poet (Heron), flawed debauchee (Thomson) or victim of a tyrannical society (Rushton). These varying representations would have functioned simultaneously; often dependent on what sources or periodicals were available to readers. Prior to James Currie's 1800 edition, which, as we shall see, was to become the most influential factor in narrating Burns's life and work, it is therefore difficult to fully ascertain a dominant biographical image or 'cultural production' of the poet in late-eighteenth century America.

Moreover, extrapolating facts about newspaper articles and processes of dissemination does not fully determine the cultural or literary legacy of Burns in America before the turn of the nineteenth century. Susan Manning makes the valuable point that tracing transatlantic editions does not tell us much about '*affect*', but rather enables us to infer quite a lot about 'migration patterns, the reading habits of emigrants, the material forms of tradition and transmission, and many other things'.[82] Yet, as stated in the introduction, it remains important to provide an analytical magnification of the formative 'roots' that led to the spread of Burns's popularity in the United States, including outlining material forms of transmission. As the above discussion illustrates, fleshing out the socio-political contexts that these processes occurred in *does* provide conjectural insights into the *'affect'* that Manning describes as so elusive to bibliographic-based studies. It is surely relevant, for example, that Burns's initial introduction (in the *Pennsylvania Packet*) as a virtuous 'Ayrshire Ploughman' aligned with contemporary streams of agrarian thought and that his poems first appeared in the same

[81] *The Genius of Scotland,* 200. I will return to the significance and reach of the Currie edition(s) in the following chapter.
[82] Manning, 'Robert Burns's Transatlantic Afterlives', 150.

publications that printed debates relating to agriculture, commerce and 'virtue'.[83] The same might be said of the poet's mediations on religion that spoke to the complex interrelationships between eighteenth-century revolutionary politics, reform and Presbyterianism. These nuanced observations, though admittedly conjectural, most certainly reveal how the transatlantic dissemination of a single poet's work might form variant 'offshoots' in fertile new plains and impact upon '*affect'*. More concretely, the (lack of) copyright laws that allowed for several editions of Burns's *Poems* and the *Scots Musical Museum* to be reprinted in America before the turn of the nineteenth century had wider implications that may have impacted upon readership demographics.

William St. Clair has outlined how the price of pirated British books were considerably lower than locally produced texts, meaning that Americans, in opting for pirated books, had easier access to the literature being written in Great Britain than most of their contemporaries across the Ocean. St. Clair goes as far to call the late-eighteenth century American copyright regime as 'the single most important structural determinant of American reading for nearly a century'.[84] These assertions ring true when mapping Burns's early American publication history. Indeed, *Poems* was 'reprinted at once in the United States', and by 'more than one publisher simultaneously'.[85] Moreover, these editions were arguably more affordable (comparatively speaking) than in Britain and thus more accessible to a wider range of potential American readers (fitting with much of the poet's egalitarian themes).[86]

Yet, judging by the volume of biographical press extracts, reprinted obituaries, tributary poems and elegies that appeared at the turn of the nineteenth century, it was no longer only Burns's poetry and songs that captivated Americans. This biographical fascination would come to full fruition with the repeated piracies of James Currie's four-volume edition *The Works Of Robert Burns*, which, as its subtitle suggests ('with an account of his life and a criticism on his writings') provided a full cultural, biographical and literary context for the nineteenth-century reader. If the last decade of the eighteenth century marked the first appearance of Burns's poems in America, then the turn of the nineteenth century saw

[83] For more on the Federalist and Anti-Federalist approaches to agriculture and commerce, see *The Machiavellian Moment* 506-553.
[84] William St. Clair, 'Publishing, Authorship and Reading' in *The Cambridge Companion to Fiction in the Romantic Period*, ed. by Richard Maxwell and Katie Trumpener (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) 23-46 (44-45).
[85] Ibid.
[86] The advertised prices of American editions of Burns's *Poems* fluctuated and were often advertised as lower priced than other 'English books'. In the *Virginia Independent Chronicle*, for example, the price of the same volume fluctuated between 4 and 6 shillings. See the *Virginia Independent Chronicle* 11 February (1789) and 11 October (1789).

the dawn of multiple pirated biographies. This rapid biographical efflorescence will form the basis of the chapter that follows.

Chapter III

'On Western Ground': James Currie's *Works* and American Print Editions, c.1800-1866

It seems proper therefore to write the memoirs of his life, not with the view of their being read by Scotchmen only…[1]

➢James Currie (1800)

First printed in 1800, James Currie's *The Works of Robert Burns*[2] was hugely popular in Britain, going through approximately five editions and ten-thousand copies by 1805 and an estimated twenty editions by 1820.[3] Just one year after it appeared in Britain, Thomas Dobson of Philadelphia produced the first American edition in 1801. Three years later, a second edition was printed by William Fairbairn and by 1815 there were four available editions of the *Works* in Philadelphia alone.[4] In addition to American piracies, the frequency with which Currie's edition was being printed in Britain meant that originals also regularly made their way into the hands of American booksellers and readers.

Nigel Leask has stated that the Currie edition was 'the main portal through which Burns's life and poetry reached the Romantic and nineteenth century reader'[5], and it seems this was not exclusive to Britain, with Carol McGuirk concluding that the edition was 'the most popular in the USA' due to the fact that Currie is 'often echoed by nineteenth century Americans'.[6] McGuirk's assertion is bolstered when examining the bibliography of American editions up to 1866, which can be viewed in Appendix I (p.221). Peppered amongst Currie's dominant edition were American reprints of R.H. Cromek's *Reliques of Robert Burns* (first printed in America in 1809), and both John Gibson Lockhart and Allan Cunningham's versions of *The Works* (1832 and 1834 respectively). While Lockhart and Cunningham (whose questionable editorial insertions will be scrutinised below) added their own ideological flourishes, they also relied heavily on Currie's edition as a source text from which to diverge.

Consequently, most nineteenth-century American critical reviews and biographies of Burns, for better or worse, reveal some influence of Currie's moralising edition. A divisive

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[1] *The Works of Robert Burns; with an account of his life, and a criticism on his writings. To which are prefixed some observations on the character and condition of the Scottish peasantry*, ed. by James Currie, 4 Vols., Vol. 1 (Liverpool: J.M'creery, 1800) 2. Hereafter generally referred to as *The Works* unless specified otherwise to account for reprinted editions of the same title.

[2] Hereafter generally referred to as *The Works*. Variable editions are specified in footnotes.

[3] *Robert Burns and Pastoral,* 266.

[4] See Appendix I.

[5] *Robert Burns and Pastoral,* 266.

[6] McGuirk, 'Haunted By Authority', 144.

and highly selective biographical text, much criticism has been directed towards both Currie and the edition.[7] Rather than further highlight editorial flaws, inaccuracies and ideological shortcomings, however, it is hoped that a brief overview of previous criticism combined with a reinterpretation of Currie's 'prefatory remarks' will offer up fresh perspectives on how *The Works* was partially crafted with a transnational (at times specifically American) readership in mind.

A Transnational Agenda

In 1831, William Wallace Currie[8], son of James Currie, published a biography of his father's life, work and achievements. In a chapter outlining Currie's involvement with the Burns edition, Wallace states:

> …various admirers and biographers of Burns (and amongst others, Gilbert Burns himself) have appeared before the public, whose declared object has been to vindicate his memory from the exaggerations and misrepresentations affecting his character, which Dr. Currie is charged by them with having admitted into his Life.[9]

As early as 1831, then, Currie was already being accused of 'exaggerations and misrepresentations' causing his son to go on the defensive. Though Gilbert Burns had corresponded extensively with Currie during the edition's inception, he eventually took issue with the way his brother's character was portrayed in 'Life of Burns'. In 1820, an eighth edition published by Cadell and Davies (London) even contained 'Some further particulars of the Poet's Family' by Gilbert Burns (later reprinted in Philadelphia as discussed below). Despite widespread sales and popularity, fierce criticism has continued to plague Currie's edition, with twenty-first century critics quick to point out the editor's habit of 'inventing tragic motifs'[10] and highlighting the 'rhetoric of moral blame'[11] attached to the narrative. While there is no defending the flawed exaggerations and selective omissions from Currie's biography, it is perhaps unfortunate that he has become the scapegoat for such prolonged criticism. After all, Currie agreed to undertake the edition in order create sympathy (and raise

[7] For a recent account of the exaggerations and moral fabrications of the Currie edition see Gerard Carruthers and Pauline Mackay, 'Re-reading James Currie; Robert Burns's First Editor' in *John Clare Society Journal* 32 (2013) 73-84.
[8] Hereafter referred to as Wallace.
[9] *Memoir of The Life and Writings, and Correspondence of James Currie*, *M.D. F.R.S. of Liverpool,* ed. by William Wallace, Currie 2 Vols., Vol. 1 (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green, 1831) 308.
[10] McGuirk, 'Haunted By Authority', 144.
[11] *Robert Burns and Pastoral,* 281.

funds) for Burns's surviving wife and children, who reaped the financial benefits of widespread sales. Currie's initial motivations for the edition can be found in a series of letters sent to publishers Cadell and Davies between 1797 and 1799.[12] Reflecting on the 'circumstances that led me to take a share in it', Currie explains his 'original connections' to Dumfriesshire -'The County in which Burns died, is that in which I was born' - before turning to the more pressing concern of providing 'immediate subsistence' for Burns's family.[13] This gesture was seemingly typical of an individual who was known for his charitable nature, medical prowess, progressive politics and deep abhorrence of slavery. Yet even in these early epistolary exchanges, Currie's misjudged preoccupation with Burns's 'excentricities, wanderings & errors'[14] is prevalent. In Nigel Leask's view, Currie's biography was partly motivated by 'a desire to exonerate his country from blame in precipitating Burns's (highly publicised) premature sickness and death'.[15] In dialogue with Edward Rushton's elegiac assertion that Scotland's genteel classes had failed Burns by offering him little financial support or patronage, it seems that Currie, anxious to defend his proud, enlightened heritage, needed to somehow blame Burns in order to exonerate Scotland. In doing so, he not only produced an inaccurate account of Burns's life but also tarnished his own reputation in that the edition has long been remembered for its inaccuracies and agenda of moral blame.

However, there are important aspects of Currie's edition that remain relatively overlooked. Due to his own extensive transatlantic travels, Currie was in a better position than most to fully understand the potential reach of Burns beyond the borders of Scotland; and within a 'world of encounters' that he had personally experienced. As twenty-first century Burns criticism turns to transnational frames of consideration, it is unsurprising that Currie should come back under the critical microscope. Moreover, as Gerard Carruthers and Pauline Mackay have pointed out, 'the history of Burns editing has not been properly narrated'[16] and thus it makes sense to return to the first and, arguably, most influential editor of the poet.

Born in Dumfriesshire, Currie later spent a considerable amount of time in America during the revolutionary years, moving to Virginia in 1771 to begin an apprenticeship for Glasgow tobacco merchants William Cunninghame and Company. There is little in Currie's correspondence to suggest he strongly opposed the American Revolution, yet with tensions

[12] See <http://jamescurrie.gla.ac.uk/search.php> [accessed 05/-4/16].
[13] 'James Currie to Cadell and Davies, 7 Dec, 1797' cited at <http://jamescurrie.gla.ac.uk/details.php?id=55> [accessed 05/-4/16].
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid., 279.
[16] Carruthers and Mackay, 'Re-reading James Currie; Robert Burns's First Editor', 83.

turning increasingly violent he became aware that it was difficult to remain in the country whilst maintaining any sympathy for Britain. In a letter to his aunt, Miss Christian Duncan dated 14th September 1774, Currie expressed his admiration for the 'spirit of enthusiasm' shown by the revolutionaries, but was more concerned about how events might 'distress the merchants with you greatly, particularly the Glasgow merchants'.[17] A year later in Pinckney's *Virginia Gazette* of 23 March 1775, Currie published a letter defending the Scottish tobacco merchants in Colonial Virginia (who were accused of unfair business practice) whilst remaining diplomatic in regards to American independence.[18] Wallace seems to provide an apt summary of his father's delicate position:

> Although he regarded the noble spectacle of an infant nation starting forth into independence with that strong interest which is congenial to every generous breast, the youthful attachments and prejudices of Mr. Currie, as he writes, were entirely British.[19]

While Currie might have admired the 'noble spectacle' of independence on some level, he ultimately saw little future for himself in America on a long-term basis. It seems any political enthusiasm (for the revolutionaries) was overshadowed by patriotic 'attachments'. His commercial (rather than political) mind, it seems, worried more for the catastrophic impact that widespread conflict might have on transatlantic commerce.

After two failed attempts to leave America, a short (forced) stint in the colonial army and a volatile period trading between Antigua and St Eustatius, Currie eventually fulfilled his ambition of enrolling in medical school: obtaining his degree from Glasgow University (after training at Edinburgh) on 30 March 1780, before moving to Liverpool where he would establish his reputation as a physician. Though living in England and maintaining Unionist sympathies, Currie was fiercely proud of his Scottish heritage. More significantly, he understood, first-hand, what it was to be part of the global Scots diaspora; an important point that has been too overlooked in Burns Studies.

When it came to editing and 'repackaging' the work of Scotland's most renowned contemporary poet, then, the editor would have surely known that his audience was not confined within British national borders. Leith Davis has touched upon this in her essay

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[17] James Currie, 'Letter to his aunt, Miss Christian Duncan, 14th September, 1774' in *Memoir of The Life and Writings,* 17-18.

[18] During this period Scots were often depicted as villainous traders and enthusiastic British Army recruits in the American press. See for example *The Connecticut Gazette*, April 28 (1775) and *The Pennsylvania Packet*, September 25 (1775).

[19] *Memoir of The Life and Writings,* 26-27.

'Negotiating Cultural Memory: James Currie's *Works of Robert Burns*', in which she identifies Currie's positioning of Burns as 'a symbol who unites Scots around the globe'.[20] Drawing on theory by Jan Assmann, John Czaplicka and Ann Rigney, Davis sees the Currie edition as effecting 'a crucial transformation of Burns that prepared the way for his reception as an iconic figure of Scottish cultural memory'.[21] Chapter V of this thesis returns to the role of biography in influencing other nineteenth-century modes of objectified commemoration such as Burns Clubs, Suppers and statues. However, it is first important to reconsider Currie's biographical edition in order to understand how the poet's place in 'cultural memory'[22] initially began to be etched.

Pertaining to a transnational reading of *The Works,* the first passage in Currie's four-volume edition begins by highlighting the reach and potential of Burns's poetry outside of Scotland:

> Though the dialect in which many of the happiest effusions of Robert Burns are composed be peculiar to Scotland, yet his reputation has extended itself beyond the limits of that country, and his poetry has been admired as the offspring of original genius by persons of taste in every part of the sister islands.[23]

Currie firmly establishes that Burns's poetry is read and admired 'in every part of the sister islands', revealing that he was well aware that his edition too might well go 'beyond the limits' of Scotland. Currie reinforces the point:

> It seems proper therefore to write the memoirs of his life, not with the view of their being read by Scotchmen only, but also by natives of England, and of other countries where the language is spoken or understood. [24]

A following footnote in Currie's 'Life' follows suit. Describing 'Their Groves of Sweet Myrtle' as a 'beautiful strain', the editor claims that it may be 'confidently predicted' that the song 'will be sung with equal or superior interest on the banks of the Ganges or on the Mississippi, as on those of the Tay or the Tweed'.[25] From the onset, then, Currie's edition has - what might be referred to as - a 'transnational agenda'. He even dedicated *The Works* to

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[20] Leith Davis, 'Negotiating Cultural Memory: James Currie's *Works of Robert Burns'* in *International Journal of Scottish Literature* 6 (Spring/Summer 2010) cited at< http://www.ijsl.stir.ac.uk/issue6/davis.htm> [accessed 01/05/16].
[21] Ibid., 2.
[22] The term 'cultural memory' will also be discussed further in Chapter V.
[23] *The Works of Robert Burns*, Vol. 1, 1.
[24] Ibid. 2.
[25] Ibid.., 333-334.

another wandering Scot in 'a distant region of the world' by thanking Captain Graham Moore, a Royal Navy commander, who first recommended the poems of Burns to him.[26] With a fuller recognition of Currie's transnational agenda, then, we might consider the edition as being partially framed to the suit the needs of a wider readership that were less acquainted with the daily realities of Scottish life.

Currie's further 'Prefatory remarks' support the idea, with much of the content reading like a 'Guide To Scotland's Education System' for transnational audiences. In praising the egalitarian aspects of Scotland's parish schools, Currie, in keeping with Leask's theory, seems to exonerate Scotland in conveying how civic structures played a large part in the poet's growth:

> In the very humblest condition of the Scottish peasants every one can read, and most persons are more or less skilled in writing and arithmetic; and under the disguise of their uncouth appearance, and of their peculiar manner and dialect, a stranger will discover that they possess a curiosity, and have obtained a degree of information corresponding to these requirements. These advantages they owe to the legal provisions made by the parliament of Scotland in 1646[…]It is common for the established schools even in the country parishes of Scotland, to enjoy the means of classical instruction, and many of the farmers, and some even of the cottagers, submit to much privation, that they may obtain for one of their sons at least, the precarious advantage of a learned education.[27]

By 1800, extracts of Heron's *Memoir*s had already - through highlighting Burns's formal education - offered an alternative to the myth of the 'Heaven-taught ploughman'. Yet Currie, with his extended explanation, respectable endorsement and much larger print outreach, expands greatly on the idea and in doing so extols the civic virtues of Scotland, portraying the education system as a successful model:

> That it is on the whole favourable to industry [...] seems to be proved by the most striking and decisive experience; and it is equally clear, that it is the cause of that spirit of emigration and of adventure so prevalent among the Scotch.[28]

Here Currie portrays Scotland as developing, through its education system, into an industrial nation pertaining to a stadial theory of socio-cultural evolution. The extent to which Currie was infused in Enlightenment debate becomes apparent as he seemingly subscribes to a

[26] Ibid. 'Dedication'.
[27] Ibid., 3-4.
[28] Ibid., 6.

fruitful interrelationship between commercial and moral progress. Currie's assertion that civic education is 'favourable to industry', of course, opposes the associations of Burns (and his works) with 'virtuous agrarianism' as discussed in the previous chapter. Currie also attributes education as being a catalyst for emigration and 'adventure', suggesting that educated Scots have had to seek new frontiers in order to fulfil their potential. In Currie's view, 'knowledge and poverty poured the adventurous natives of the north over the fertile plains of England, and more especially, over the colonies which she had settled in the east and west'.[29] Currie, a proud Scot but also a Unionist, alludes to prosperous opportunities in England ('fertile plains'), which might have reflected his own position as a Scots physician in Liverpool, before suggesting that the most ample opportunities were to be found in 'the colonies'. In a slightly curious passage, Currie then turns to reflect on national patriotism:

> In free governments it is found more active than in despotic ones, because, as the individual becomes of more consequence in the community, the community becomes of more consequence to him. [30]

Currie's reference here to 'free governments' is ambiguous. The description of the individual being of 'more consequence' certainly chimes with the liberty-seeking revolutionary rhetoric of the late-eighteenth century. However, despite his opposition to the war in France; sympathetic treatment of French prisoners; and co-founding of the socially progressive 'Liverpool Literary Society', Currie insisted to 'the very end of his life' that he was always a 'loyal monarchist'.[31] Regardless, the evocation of 'free governments' would have surely stoked glowing embers in post-revolutionary America, while the discussion of civic education responded to on-going contemporary debates. Most famously, Thomas Jefferson argued, in his *Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge* (1779), that accessible, civic education would result in a more prosperous future.

Yet for all these transnational inflections, imposing these contextual 'American' readings of Currie's 'prefatory remarks' is redundant without actually discussing contemporary critical responses. Thus, we must turn to how the edition was received in prominent American literary journals, periodicals and newspapers of the period.

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[29] Ibid., 7.
[30] Ibid., 29.
[31] Margaret DeLacy, 'Currie, James (1756–1805)' cited at <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6954, accessed8 Dec 2015> [accessed 28/12/2015].

American Critical Responses

Even before the first American edition of Currie's *Works* was published in Philadelphia, extracts of the original had appeared in the periodical press, further suggesting an anticipated interest in the poet's life story. Just months after the edition was published in Britain, the New Hampshire based *Farmer's Museum* reprinted the beginning of Currie's 'Life of Burns'. Despite the agricultural title of the weekly tabloid, the paper's primary focus was literature and it was also renowned for being 'friendly to Great Britain, which was deemed the bulwark of civilization' and 'hostile to France, which was considered the center of disorder.' However, specifically *American* revolutionary sensibilities could still be discerned from the paper's two masthead epigrams: 'Where Liberty is, there is my country' and 'The Liberty of the Press is essential to THE RIGHTS OF MAN'.[32] Introducing Currie's *Works*, the *Farmer's Museum* article reflected on the 'small part' of the poet's biography that readers might be familiar with, before describing how the new edition was a 'more complete dress'. An excerpt from Currie's 'Life' was then printed with an editorial note that it would be 'novel to most of our readers'. [33]

One of the most nuanced early-American assessments of Currie's edition appeared one year later in *The American Review and Literary Journal* (the short-lived successor to the *Monthly Magazine and American Review*). Though unsigned, the article was most probably written by America's 'first professional writer', Charles Brockden Brown (1771-1810).[34] Having previously co-founded the *Monthly Magazine and American Review* with fellow 'Friendly Club' members (Charles Adams, Timothy Dwight and Samuel Miller), Brown subsequently became primary editor and contributor to *The American Review and Literary Journal* and later *The Literary Magazine and American Register* (in which appeared another 1803 article on Burns as discussed below). That these publications provided strikingly similar commentaries on Burns - combined with the fact that journal editors usually multitasked as chief writers - further suggests Brown as the author. Though Burns scholars are quick to cite later nineteenth-century commentators such as John Greenleaf Whittier, Walt Whitman and Ralph Waldo Emerson (all to be discussed in Chapter IV of this thesis), it seems Brown was in fact the first major American literary figure to engage with Burns in any great detail. Brian Waterman has noted that the twenty-first century has seen an increasing amount of 'scholarly and classroom' attention given to Brown, marking his transition from 'margin to mainstream';

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[32] 'Farmer's Weekly Museum, 1793-1810' in *The Conservative press in Eighteenth-and-Nineteenth-Century America*, ed. by Ronald Lora and William Henry (Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1999) 103-11.
[33] *Farmer's Museum, or, Literary gazette* 8:400 (1800) cited at <http://www.sc.edu/library/digital/collections/cbook0.html> [accessed 08/12/15].
[34] <http://www.neh.gov/humanities/2010/januaryfebruary/feature/our-founding-novelist> [accessed 08/12/2015].

a claim backed up by an abundance of new monographs and articles on the writer.[35] With this in mind, it seems a pertinent time to give due attention to the writer's early reviews of Burns.

Before exploring the 1801 *American Review*'s article however, it is worth considering the magazine's introductory preface. Emphasising the importance of periodicals for cultivating literature, it states:

> When, now, that our population is increased, our national independence secure, and our governments established, and we are relieved from the necessities of colonists[…]Nothing, it is thought, will tend more to excite this attention, and to render the pursuits of knowledge more compatible with those of business, than those periodical publications which impart information in small portions; by which, men engaged in active occupations, may gradually acquire a degree of intellectual cultivation and improvement, without any infringement of the time allotted to their customary and necessary concerns.[36]

Chapter I touched upon the profound importance of periodical literature for Burns's own educational development and awareness of transnational affairs. Similarly, the above statement directly links America's intellectual and cultural 'improvement' to the periodical press. It is telling that the editor chose to include an extensive article on Burns in a publication devoted to the 'cultivation' of *American* literature. Here marks a transition from the adverts placed by Scots emigrant printers and editors such as Peter Stewart, George Hyde and J & A Maclean. The inclusion of Burns in such a focused, literary-specific journal is the first instance of the Scottish poet being written about in relation to his significance for American literature, rather than as a commodity being sold to the reading public by emigrant printers. The rhetorical concern with America's literary-cultural development also supports the idea that Brown authored the preface given his early novels, in particular *Wieland*, deal extensively with issues of representation, socio-cultural development and voice in the early American republic. There are even echoes of Currie's 'prefatory remarks' (in regards to a literate 'Scottish peasantry') in Brown's own writing. In his lesser-known novel *Clara Howard* (also appearing in 1801), the protagonist Philip Stanley regards himself as 'American Peasantry' since 'our notions are more the offsprings of the books we read than of external circumstances'.[37] Brown's use of the phrase 'American Peasantry' – chronologically

[35] Waterman, 'Charles Brockden Brown, Revised and Expanded', 173-191.
[36] *The American Review and Literary Journal* 1 (1801) 'preface'.
[37] *Memoirs of Charles Brockden Brown, the American Novelist, Author of Weiland* , ed. by William Dunlap (London: Henry Colburn, 1822) 147.

congruent with Currie's reflections on the 'Scottish Peasantry' – was uncommon during the period, suggesting a possible influence.

The beginning of the review first heralds the 'neatness and accuracy' of Philadelphia publisher Thomas Dobson, who had chosen to print Currie's work from a 'mass of British publications'. Dobson's choice is commended and described as 'deserving' since it will afford not just 'amusement' but also 'instruction to his countrymen'. After lavishing praise on the 'distinguished' Dr Currie for his 'elegant piece of biography and criticism', the reviewer turns to why the work might be of particular interest to 'the American reader':

> The *prefatory remarks*, concerning the character and conduct of the Scottish peasantry, which in some respects, may be applied to the people of *New-England*, will be interesting to the American reader, and throw light on those circumstances which contributed to form the early character of Burns.[38]

Responding to Currie's transnational agenda, the reviewer goes as far as to suggest a commonality between the 'Scottish peasantry' and the 'people of New England'. After quoting Currie's passage on Scotland's legal provisions for 'educating the poor', similar 'provisions made in New England' are described:

> It is with pleasure and pride that we can cite the laws of a considerable portion of our country, which may vie with those of Scotland, so justly applauded by Dr Currie. But we cannot, at the same time, but express our surprise and regret, that the legal provisions made in New England, for the education of children, and the establishment of parish schools, so universally approved and admired, have never been adopted with any effect in other states of America.[39]

Indeed, early settlers in New England modified laws from Britain to develop one of the first systems of accessible education in the American colonies. In an early twentieth-century essay titled 'Compulsory Education in the American Colonies', Marcus W. Jernegan states that by 1771, 'all of the territory of New England, with the exception of Rhode Island, was under a system of compulsory education', which he attributes to the avoidance of conflicting legislations between 'state, county and district' by the implementation of a uniform 'general compulsory law'.[40] As was the case in Scotland, eighteenth-century education was directly linked to religion, with a Puritan moral code at the root of an early New England emphasis on

[38] *The American Review and Literary Journal,* 255.
[39] Ibid., 256.
[40] Marcus W. Jernegan, 'Compulsory Education in the American Colonies: I. New England' in *The School Review* 26:10 (1918) 732-733 (749).

enlightening the wider populace. Consequently, by the turn of the nineteenth century access to higher education was widely available in New England, with David F. Allmendinger pointing out that 'a flood of students from poor families' and 'rural and hill communities' populated New England Colleges from 1800 onwards ('never before had these families sent sons to college').[41] It is pertinent that Currie's narrative of Burns - outlining both his rural origins and civic education - was appearing in the same period that rural 'sons were abandoning farms' in favour of educational institutions in New England.[42] This certainly qualifies the reviewer's comparison of 'legal provisions made in New England' with civic structures in Scotland. Reaching a conclusion, the reviewer reaffirms the importance of the edition in America:

> We shall conclude our brief account of these volumes, by wishing that our readers may feel as much satisfaction in their perusal, and derive as much and as various pleasure and instruction from them, as we have done.[43]

The ultimate hope here is that readers do not just derive 'pleasure', but also 'instruction' from Currie's *Works*, providing an insight into the edition's warm reception in an influential American literary magazine. In 1804, responses to the second Philadelphia edition of Currie's *Works* appeared in *The Literary Magazine, and American Register*. Modelled on British literary journals and subsequently becoming 'the most imposing' American literary review of the period, Brown was sole editor and main contributor along with publishers C and A Conrad.[44] Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the earlier 1801 review, Burns featured regularly within the magazine. In the pages preceding Brown's article, the 'Banks of Cree' and 'Address to The Wood-Lark' were printed as individual poems with the following notice:

> Some of the most beautiful poems of Burns are to be found among his lyrics, contained in the fourth volume of Currie's edition of his works. He wrote the most of these after he had been to Edinburgh, after his taste had been more cultivated, and his reputation established. The two following pieces, extracted from these, cannot fail of meeting with a cordial reception from our readers.[45]

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[41] David F. Allmendinger Jr., 'New England Students and the Revolution in Higher Education, 1800-1900' in *History of Education Quarterly* 11:4 (1971) 381-389 (382).
[42] Ibid.
[43] *The American Review and Literary Journal,* 259.
[44] David Lee Clark*, Charles Brockden Brown: Pioneer Voice of America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1952) 218.
[45] *The Literary Magazine, and American Register* 2 (1804) 20.

The 'two beautiful' pastoral poems concerned are attributed to a more 'cultivated' period of Burns's life; a sentiment that echoes Currie's account of poet's time in Edinburgh. A further reference to the Currie edition appears in the journal's 'List of new publications in November', where W. Fairbairn's 1804 Philadelphia edition (the second American edition of the *Works*) is advertised for '3 dollars'.[46] Finally, Brown's most extensive appraisal appears in a later section of the journal titled 'Adversaria'.

Simply titled 'Burns', Brown begins with a brief overview of the poet's humble beginnings and a sweeping commentary on how his 'ardent sensibility' swelled to 'an overflowing height by the first books put into his hands'. As in the 1801 review, Brown emphasises the poet's civic education before focusing the rest of his article on language:

> His versification, no less than his thoughts, is sometimes rude even to coarseness[…]with a taste which is not the least circumstance of wonder of his life, he not only avoids the coarser part of the phraseology of his country, and selects the better, but attains to an elegance of the English language, which can be rivalled by few of our modern poets.[47]

Here, the treatment of Burns's language is not entirely definitive. Scots language is described as 'rude to coarseness' yet it still manages to attain 'an elegance of the English language'; allowing Burns to produce poetry 'which can be rivalled by few of our modern poets'. The further emphasis on poetic language appears, to use a term from the 1801 essay, to be 'instructive' to the American reader:

> He has nothing of that extravagance which we may justly call the *chivalry of poets*; he never labours to celebrate a Chloe or a Phyllis […] His scene of action is never the "Velvet Green of Idalia", the "impurpled margin of Helycon" or the "clouded summit of Parnassus"; his lovers never converse but by the "*burn side*"; they never wander but through "*corn riggs*" nor make their mutual confessions but on "*the braes of Ballochmyle*", The Tweed or Yarrow.[48]

Brown praises Burns's use of locale and linguistic register, suggesting that poetry can concern locality, employ elements of dialect yet still be equal in merit to works written in 'standard English' concerning classical subject matter. Accordingly, in his biography of Charles Brockden Brown, David Lee Clark notes that Brown regularly questioned the merits of ancient Classics in his literary criticism:

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[46] Ibid., 648.
[47] Ibid., 594.
[48] Ibid., 595.

> A natural result of his insistence on "moral tendency" was Brown's reaction against the sensuality characterizing many of the ancient Classics[…] Although, like all educated young men of his time, Brown had received thorough training in the classics, he shared the moralistic view that they were as a whole unfit for fastidious tastes.[49]

Ernest Marchand, in an early twentieth-century article on Brown, went further to suggest that Brown was characteristic of the 'rise of a middle class morality' that questioned the moral rhetoric of Classics that had hitherto been 'accepted in their entirety by an aristocratic society'.[50] This provides further reasoning as to why Brown might have deeply valued Burns's use of language, and perhaps even viewed it as being potentially influential on contemporary American poets.[51]

The Literary Magazine and American Register was not only consistent in its praise for Burns, but also for repeatedly asserting the editorial merit of James Currie. In 1806, for example, the magazine printed a 'Biographical sketch of the Late Dr Currie', which appears to have been a reprint of an obituary written by fellow physician, writer and associate Dr John Aikin (See Chapter I, p.52). The article praises Currie for his editorial approach in the *Works*, rendering the edition successful in both philanthropic ('Repeated editions produced a small balance for profit') and literary ('a rich treat to the lovers of poetry and elegant literature') capacities.[52] That Brown and his editorial collaborators reprinted the full obituary reveals the relative familiarity that readers must have had with Currie through the widely available reprinted American editions. When compared with any subsequent editor or biographer of Burns, then, it remains clear who garnered the highest amount of exposure in early to mid-nineteenth century America.

Subsequent American Editions: *The Poetical Works* and Cromek

While Currie's *Works* was the most influential edition of Burns's poetry in nineteenth-century America, it was no by means the exclusive biographical portal through which Americans had access to information about the poet's life. Though differing by minor deviations in their subtitles, several books titled *The Poetical Works of Robert Burns* began to be published from 1804 onwards at an almost annual rate across several states (See Appendix I, p.220). With the

[49] *Pioneer Voice of America,* 252.
[50] Ernest Marchand, 'Literary Opinions of Charles Brockden Brown' in *Studies in Philology* 31:4 (1934) 541-566.
[51] I will return to this topic in Chapter IV.
[52] *The Literary Magazine, and American Register* 5 (1806) 84.

legal freedom to print, edit, and repackage British books, American publishers constructed their own idiosyncratic editions, often with new subtitles that offered up some original epithet or fresh piece of information about Burns (such as Benjamin Johnson's 'With the Author's Life Written by Himself'[53] (in Philadelphia 1804) or Peter Stewart's 'Together with a new Appendix, and a Concise History of his Life'[54] (also in Philadelphia, 1807). Though, as stated, Currie's narrative continued to pervade these editions, they were not always pirated directly from the *Works*, suggesting that new editions from London were continuing to be carried (and subsequently copied) across the Atlantic. The multiple American variants of *The Poetical Works of Robert Burns,* for example, mirrored contemporary London editions. Benjamin Johnson's *Poetical Works* appeared in the same year that Cadell and Davies printed their London edition of the same name. Though differing in content and layout, both contained extensive excerpts from Currie's 'Life' as outlined acknowledged by Cadell and Davies's preface ('all who hereafter write or think of Burns, must necessarily consult').[55]

By 1808, there were ten separately printed and distributed American editions of Burns's poetry (and 'songs' if we include John Aitken's 1797 *Scots Musical Museum*). This number would increase at a rapid rate as new materials – in the form of letters, poems and songs – continued to surface in Britain. In 1808, R.H. Cromek's *Reliques of Robert Burns; Consisting Chiefly of Original Letters, Poems, and Critical Observations on Scottish Songs* was published in London, also by Cadell and Davies. As with the Currie edition, it took just a year for it to be reprinted in America. In a joint publishing venture, the American edition was simultaneously printed in Philadelphia and New York by Bradford and Inskeep; Coale and Thomas in Baltimore; and Oliver C. Greenleaf in Boston. Though twentieth-century critics lambasted Cromek's claims of originality as entirely fraudulent, his edition did in fact contain some genuine materials that were absent in Currie's edition; specifically in the form of new letters and information gathered directly from Burns's family.[56]

Having seemingly gone to great lengths to collect and publish this new information, Cromek's legacy has nevertheless been that of a fraudster which is largely due to his bowdlerized version of certain texts (such as the first 'Commonplace Book');[57] his later

[53] *The Poetical Works of Robert Burns* (Philadelphia: Benjamin Johnson, Jacob Johnson, & Robert Johnson, 1804) This was a reprint of the 'history of myself' letter written to Dr. Moore, dated 2 August, 1787.
[54] *The Poetical Works of Robert Burns* (Philadelphia: Peter Stewart, 1807).
[55] *The Poetical Works of Robert Burns* (London: T.Cadell and W. Davies, 1804) 'preface'.
[56] J. DeLancey Ferguson 'In Defense of R.H. Cromek' in *Philological Quarterly* 9 (1930) 239-248 (239)
[57] *The Oxford Edition of the Works of Robert Burns: Commonplace books*, 38.

associations with 'Honest' Allan Cunningham;[58] and his habit of introducing poems with overly-elaborate descriptions ('he threw himself on the side of a corn stack, and there conceived his sublime and tender elegy').[59] Yet by 1809, Cromek had added a considerable amount of new biographical information – whether reliable or not – about Burns which subsequently became available in several states. Significantly, *Reliques* was the first edition to reveal details about Burns's 'Ode' to the first president of the United States through the inclusion of his 1794 letter to Frances Anna Dunlop ('I design it as an irregular Ode for General Washington's birthday'). However, as noted in Chapter I, Burns's letter (and thus Cromek's *Reliques*) omitted the first three stanzas that focused on the American Revolution and British tyranny in the Atlantic world.

Cromek's edition did also attract attention in American periodicals and literary journals, though it was not always positive. The same year that *Reliques* was first reprinted in America, a small reference to it appeared in a list of new publications in *The American Register: Or General Repository of History, Politics and Science*:

> Some reliques of Burns have come to light this year, but their title to veneration is small. Cumberland, without regret be it spoken, will write no more epic poems. Wolcott, who will not be sorry to say, is probably forever silent.[60]

The magazine, co-edited by Charles Brockden Brown, pays comparatively little attention to the edition despite its new materials. In juxtaposing Cromek's *Reliques* with Wolcott who is 'forever silent' and Cumberland who will 'write no more epic poems', the edition is rendered obsolete. This sentiment probably owed more to the sheer success, dissemination and level of literary engagement that Currie's edition had attracted, rather than reflecting on the credibility of Cromek's editorial efforts and additions.

Moreover, the nonchalance with which *The American Register* treated Cromek's *Reliques* is not necessarily a fair and widespread summation of how the edition was received. The same year, Francis Jeffrey's influential review of *Reliques*, originally published in the *Edinburgh Review*, was reprinted in several Philadelphian newspapers including an 1809 edition of *Select Reviews, and Spirit of the Foreign Magazines*. Jeffrey begins by dismissing the comparisons between Burns and dialect poets such as the Wiltshire-born Stephen Duck (1705-1756) and Irish poet-prodigy Thomas Dermody (1772-1802). According to Jeffrey,

[58] Dennis M. Read, *R.H. Cromek, Engraver, Editor and Entrepreneur* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2011) 4.
[59] *Reliques of Robert Burns,* ed. by R. H. Cromek (London: Cadell and Davies,1808) 238.
[60] *The American Register: Or General Repository of History, Politics and Science* 4 (1809) 117.

Burns could never 'rightly be estimated as a poet, till that vulgar wonder be entirely repressed which was raised on his having been a ploughman.'[61] Jeffrey's disavowal both expands and alters an image of Burns that had been depicted in the American press. Though both Currie and Heron had highlighted Burns's early civic education, Jeffrey's statement is considerably more bold and conclusive regarding the myth of Burns being an uneducated 'Heaven-Taught Ploughman'. In line with Brown's commentary on Burns's language, Jeffrey also describes Scots as an effective literary language and, crucially, chosen aesthetic device:

> Scotch is, in reality, a highly poetical language; and that it is an ignorant, as well as an illiberal prejudice, which would seek to confound it with the barbarous dialects of Yorkshire or Devon. In composing his Scottish poems, therefore, Burns did not make an instinctive and necessary use of the only dialect he could employ[…] he could write in the dialect of England with far greater purity and propriety than nine tenths of those who are educated in that country.[62]

However, to suggest that the reprinting of Jeffrey's review drastically changed American perceptions of Burns – and more specifically 'dialect' poetry – would be a gross over-estimation. As Nigel Leask has argued, the image of the humble Scots 'ploughman' was key to Burns's 'meteoric rise' and continued to prosper right through the nineteenth century.[63] Moreover, the review does not seem to reappear in America beyond 1809.

While Cromek's *Reliques* was never pirated on the same scale as Currie's edition, certain aspects of it remained influential in America. The *Salem Gazette* of February 25, 1823 rightly drew attention to Cromek's recovery of Burns's 'Elegy to Highland Mary', which the editor credits as being the most 'moving' and 'tender' works 'of all the productions of his great and original genius'.[64] Despite the hyperbolic introduction, the writer is correct to highlight Cromek's 'discovery'[65] of 'Highland' Mary Campbell (c.1766-1786) who, as will later be discussed in Chapter V, garnered a cult-like fascination in the United States. However, in spite of this influential editorial addition, it seems the shadow of Currie's edition was long cast by the time that Cromek's *Reliques* appeared in America.

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[61] *Select Reviews, and Spirit of the Foreign Magazines* 2 (1809) 10.
[62] *Select Reviews, and Spirit of the Foreign Magazines*, 17-18.
[63] Nigel Leask, 'Was Burns a Labouring Class Poet?' in *Class and the Canon: Constructing Labouring-Class Poetry and Poetics, 1780-1900,* ed. by Kirsty Blair and Mina Gorji (London: Palgrave Macmillian, 2012) 16-33 (16).
[64] *The Salem Gazette* 1:16 (1823) 1.
[65] See Gerard Carruthers, 'In Search of Highland Mary' cited at <http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burns_lives128.htm> [accessed 07/01/2016].

Letters Addressed to Clarinda and Other Editions

In July 1809, the Philadelphia-based *Select Reviews, and Spirit of the Foreign Magazines* not only contained a review of Cromek's *Reliques,* but also advertised the first American edition of *Letters Addressed to Clarinda, &c*, which was printed by John B. Austin in Philadelphia. With the addition of the bold subtitle 'Never before published in America', the edition was a copy of the first publication of the letters by Thomas Stewart in Glasgow, 1802; an endeavour he controversially undertook without Mrs. M'Lehose's permission.[66] Though the correspondence between Burns and Mrs. Agnes M'Lehose, disguised by the *noms d'amour* 'Sylvander' and 'Clarinda', continues to fascinate and intrigue, there appears to have been little written about the revelation of Burns's private correspondence in American literary journals and periodicals suggesting that the ardent fascination for Burns's most famous 'love letters' is a more recent phenomenon.[67] That the letters were printed twice in Philadelphia and subsequently reproduced again in Washington (1818) does give some indication, however, that there was a market for, or at least an interest in, printing and revealing material about Burns's personal life.

Various pirated copies of both *The Works of Robert Burns* and *The Poetical Works of Robert Burns* continued to be published at a steady annual rate in the early nineteenth century. Some publishers, such as F. Lucas and J. Cushing of Baltimore, reproduced the exact same edition in consecutive years (the same version of the *Works* was reprinted in 1814, 1815 and 1816) suggesting that publishing Burns was a profitable venture due to consistent demand. In 1818, Philadelphia publisher Benjamin Warner produced a version of *The Poetical Works of Robert Burns*[68] that highlighted, in its subtitle, Burns's 'Correspondence with Mr. Thomson.' While the Burns-Thomson correspondence had, albeit doctored by Thomson, originally appeared in the Currie edition, it took until some years later that a publisher highlighted it specifically.

One possibility is that, as knowledge about Burns continued to spread, his reputation as a songwriter and collector was coming to light. The same year, Warner separately printed and sold a book titled *The Scottish Minstrel: being a complete Collection of Burns' Songs*. Warner's volume is not to be confused with Robert Archibald Smith's (1780-1829) collection

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[66] *Letters addressed to Clarinda, etc., by Robert Burns, the Ayrshire Poet, never before published* (Glasgow: Thomas Stewart, 1802). See also Pauline Anne Gray, 'Prudes, Pirates and Bills of Suspension: The Correspondence of Burns and Clarinda' in *Burns Chronicle,* (Spring, 2005) 9-13.

[67] In 2000 Donny O' Rourke edited a collection of the letters aimed at a broader readership titled *Ae Fond Kiss: The Love Letters of Robert Burns and Clarinda: Love Letters of Burns and Clarinda*, ed. by Donny O' Rourke (Edinburgh: Mercat Press, 2000).

[68] *The Poetical Works of Robert Burns* (Philadelphia: Benjamin Warner, 1818).

of the same name, which was published in six volumes in Scotland between 1821 and 1824. Rather, the American printing was solely focused on Burns's songwriting pursuits and correspondence with Thomson rather than a broad, sweeping collection of Scottish song (thus testifying to the contemporary vogue for the poet). Not only did the book feature songs from 'the beautiful work projected and executed' by George Thomson (*A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs for The Voice*) but it also included the Burns-Thomson correspondence which promised to exhibit 'Burns's 'notion of song-writing, and his opinions on various subjects of taste and criticism'.[69] While James Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum* was reprinted in Philadelphia in 1797, George Thomson's *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs for The Voice* does not appear to have been reprinted - individually or in multi-volume format - in its entirety in nineteenth-century America.[70] However, many subsequent editions of *The Poetical Works of Robert Burns* feature and advertise, usually in their subtitles, the 'Correspondence of Mr. Thomson'.

It was not only Burns's letters to Thomson and Mrs. Agnes M'Lehose that were seemingly of interest to American readers, with Wells and Lily of Boston printing *The Letters of Robert Burns* in 1820; a collection of letters that had been extracted from the Currie edition, chronologically arranged and repackaged into one volume. Burns's poetry was completely absent from the book, suggesting that the letters alone were worthy of public interest. However, the 1820 Boston printing of *The Letters* appears to have been a one-off and another publication of Burns's epistolary correspondence (as a stand-alone work) did not occur again until 1843, when Robert P. Bixby of New York reprinted W.C. M'Lehose's *Correspondence between Burns and Clarinda* (an edition that corrected and improved upon Thomas Stewart's 1802 collection). That Burns's letters and correspondence were usually attached to all-encompassing editions of his poetry might explain the absence of such exclusively edited letter collections.

In 1823, Philadelphia publisher B. Chapman reproduced a copy of the eighth edition of Currie's *Works*, originally published by Cadell and Davies in London (1820) and containing 'Some further particulars of the Poet's Family' written by Gilbert Burns. One notable editorial addition, particularly pertinent to a New England readership, was Gilbert's remarks on 'the effects of refinement of taste on the laboring classes of men'. Attached as Appendix

[69] *The Scottish Minstrel: being a complete Collection of Burns' Songs* (Philadelphia: Benjamin Warner, 1818) 3.
[70] Though no full editions have been traced, it should be noted that Kirsteen McCue, chief editor of the forthcoming OUP edition *Burns's Songs for George Thomson*, is currently searching for Philadelphia reprints of Thomson.

'No. III' and 'No. IV' were Gilbert's epistolary exchanges with Currie regarding 'labouring class education' as well as his (as a follow up to Currie's initial essay) 'additional remarks on the causes which contributed to the formation of the peculiar Character of the Peasantry of Scotland.'

Where Currie was sceptical that literature was appropriate for 'Scottish Peasants' who (he felt) might benefit more from commercial training, Gilbert, perhaps in a sleight defence of his brother, argued that literature and 'delicacy of sentiment' were the 'surest foundation of morality and virtue'.[71] Viewed through a transnational, specifically American lens, these printed philosophical exchanges were of high relevance at a time when the New England rural poor were 'abandoning farms' in favour of college and consequently igniting similar debates over whether or not civic education would be economically beneficial and contribute to the advancement of 'liberty' in America.[72] Gilbert's editorial additions and reflections on education were included in several subsequent American editions, perhaps most notably in William Pearson's frequently reprinted 1832 New York edition (discussed further below).

Lockhart & Carlyle

The fragmentary processes by which Burns's reputation and work were materially unfolding in America took a significant turn in 1828, when the *New York American* of June 27, 1828, reprinted extracts from J.G. Lockhart's 'Life of Burns' (originally written as a contribution to Volume XXIII of the series *Constable's Miscellany*). A year later in 1829, the same magazine reprinted Thomas Carlyle's unsigned review of Lockhart's 'Life', originally printed in the *Edinburgh Review* (December, 1828) and later considered by some as 'the most influential critical essay on Burns of its period.'[73] As much of a stand-alone biographical piece as it is a review, Carlyle's essay offers a highly contextual, 'Romantic' revision of Currie's 'Enlightenment'-infused account of the poet. Where Currie emphasised the benefits of parish schooling and civic structures on Burns's intellectual development, Carlyle describes the poet as a natural 'prodigy' who rose from the 'deepest obscurity, without help, without instruction, without model'.[74] Replacing Currie's empirical biographical approach with a flamboyant,

[71] See *The Works of Robert Burns, with An Account of His Life and a Criticism on his Writings*, *The Eighth Edition,* Vol. 1 (T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1820) 381-402. For a fuller account of the exchanges, see *The Oxford Edition of the Works of Robert Burns: Commonplace books*, 20-21.
[72] See Carl F. Kaestle, 'The History of Literacy and The History of Reading' in *Perspectives on Literacy: Civic engagement and service learning collection*, ed. by Eugene R. Kingten, Barry M. Kroll and Mike Rose (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988) 95-126 (110).
[73] *The Critical Heritage,* 351.
[74] *The New York American* 9:857 (1829) 2.

visionary narrative, Carlyle does not so much prescribe to Mackenzie's 'Heaven-Taught' myth but rather revises it for the Romantic-era by depicting Burns as a transcendental 'genius':

> Alas, his Sun shone as through a tropical tornado; and the pale Shadow of Death eclipsed it at noon! Shrouded in such baleful vapours, the genius of Burns was never seen in clear azure splendour [sic], enlightening the world: but some beams from it did, by fits, pierce through; and it tinted those clouds with rainbow and orient colours, into a glory and stern grandeur, which men silently gazed on with wonder and tears![75]

While Currie (among many others) had previously described Burns's work as 'the offspring of original genius'[76], Carlyle's account is far less concerned with engaging with empirical priorities (civic education and the supposed 'conditions' of the 'Scottish Peasantry'), instead depicting Burns as a seer to his generation ('enlightening the world') whose life and work was intertwined in transcendental unity. Corey Andrews has recently discussed the 'origins' and evolution of notions of 'genius' in relation to Burns and late-eighteenth century Scotland.[77] Similarly, though too expansive a task to fully conduct here, a contextual comparison of Currie and Carlyle's use of 'genius' would surely reveal (short of a vast semantic shift) differences in delivery and contemporary evocation; with Carlyle straying from Currie's Enlightenment-infused empiricism (though recovering the rubric of Mackenzie's 'Heaven-Taught Myth') and focused on the organic 'genius' of Burns's 'clear azure splendour'.

Excerpts from both Carlyle's review and Lockhart's 'Life' were, unsurprisingly, swiftly inserted into American editions of Burns's poetry. Consequently, Carlyle's Romantic revision of Burns's life was, as we shall see, to be influential on subsequent American biographers and intellectuals (namely Samuel Tyler and Ralph Waldo Emerson). In 1831 New York publisher W. Stodart printed, on its own and entirely separate from Burns's poetry, Lockhart's 'Life'. The pirated biography is arguably more interesting for its preface, 'An Essay on The Writings of Burns For The American Edition'[78], than anything else. Making reference to 'Gilbert Burns, Thomson, Dr. Currie, Cromek, Walker, Peterkin, Heron, Scott, Jeffrey, Wordsworth, Campbell, and Wilson' (the list in itself reveals the array of Burns sources widely available to American readers), the preface initially suggests that 'hitherto, almost to a man, his biographers, critics, and reviewers, have been either his relations, personal friends, or Scotsmen' who were negatively affected by 'consanguinity, intimacy or

[75] Ibid.
[76] *The Works of Robert Burns*, Vol. 1, 1.
[77] *The Genius of Scotland*, 11.
[78] *Life of Robert Burns*, *by J. G. Lockhart* (New York: W. Stodart, 1831) 3.

nativity'.[79] The preface goes onto suggest that American readers bear the advantage of impartiality:

> Perhaps there could not exist a more fit place to discuss the nature and extent of the poetical claims of Burns, than on western ground, standing here, as we do, uninfluenced by the strong biases so well known to exist, on behalf of illustrious names, in all large and old societies.[80]

Foreshadowing Deleuze and Guattari's 'rhizomatic' theory' and revealing a nuanced awareness of the transatlantic dissemination of literature, the writer further suggests that:

> A cause, argued in the same manner, sometimes issues in a different result when carried into another court. A change of air sometimes effects in the constitution of a patient, and *pari passu* in a creed, what no
>
> "poppies, mandragoras,
> Or drowsy syrups,"
>
> could[…]prepare the mind of the reader for the *discussion* of the *con* as well as the *pro* on the subject of the poetical merits of Robert Burns, which has at least the promise of novelty.[81]

This relatively equivocal introduction quickly turns into an attack on the 'pretensions' surrounding the merit of Burns as both a poet and man. The writer, whose identity remains unclear (though it appears he is American) asserts that while Burns might be a 'a good Scottish poet' he is 'disqualified from arriving at the same felicity and skill in the use of English, and more especially when it is considered that the *copia verborum* is one of the essential qualities of a great poet'.[82] Refusing to bow to Burns's 'admirers and eulogists', the preface highlights that, unlike the works of Scott and Byron, 'foreign translations of his works have not yet appeared' and that they are generally 'not pleasing to the English reader without a glossary'.[83]

Continuing in this tone, the writer reflects on Burns's fame being a product of 'patriotic tendencies', scathingly suggesting that 'one must have been born a Scotsman to

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[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid., 3-4.
[81] Ibid., 4. Jeremy Smith has deconstructed such arguments against Burns's 'limited' linguistic range and register. See Jeremy J. Smith, 'Copia Verborum: The Linguistic Choices of Robert Burns' in *Review of English Studies* 58:233 (2007) 73-88.
[82] Ibid., 4-5.
[83] Ibid., 5.

relish with *goût* the writings of Burns'.[84] Despite being written on 'western ground' and thus apparently uninfluenced by 'strong biases', undertones of Lockhart's 'Life' are present throughout, particularly in the assertion that 'the public voice of Scotland had unanimously been raised on behalf of the poet'.[85] Thomas C. Richardson has made a credible case for 'national enthusiasm' being 'central to Lockhart's writing about Burns', situating his 'Life' as being a factor in the development of 'Burns and Scottish nationalism'.[86] Indeed, this preface seems to react to Lockhart's pairing of Burns with 'national enthusiasm', particularly in its criticism of the 'unequivocal eulogy' expressed by Scottish Burns critics and publishers. The preface also seems to be informed by the way Lockhart – as Sir Walter Scott described it – 'judiciously slurred over' Burns's 'vices and follies'.[87] Reflecting on the hypothetical longevity of Burns's poetry had he lived longer, the reviewer rhetorically remarks:

> But who can truly desire that the poet of nature should have continued to write until he had no readers for his last production? […] Would it have been desirable to have found him throwing crude, diluted water-gruel stuff of poetry, generated by the lees of Port, Burgundy, Champagne, late hours, and the carbon of sea coal, by the side of that balsamic nectar-like menstrum, which the green fields, the genial warmth of the blessed sun, and the pure air, teeming form the fresh earth, concocted in a genial brain, in the kail-yard, or behind the plough at Mossgiel?[88]

Aside from showcasing the writer's cathartic flair, the image of Burns 'generated by the lees of Port, Burgundy, Champagne' in the 'late hours' smacks of Lockhart's narrative expansion on Heron's suggestion that too many of Burns's hours 'were spent at the tables of persons who delighted to urge in conviviality to drunkness – in the tavern – and in the brothel.'[89] Lavishing flamboyant praise on Milton ('His personages are nothing less than the Godhead, the Savior, archangels, burning seraphims, myriads of angels'[90]) and Shakespeare (who 'fills the mind of man with sage aphorisms drawn from the conduct of airy nothings'[91]), the reviewer sets them apart from Burns in their ability to 'intensely *elevate* what we see around us', declaring that the Scottish poet must be 'content to be established' in the 'second' rank of

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[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid., 8.
[86] Thomas C. Richardson, 'John Lockhart's Burns: Stirring "National Enthusiasm"' in *Studies in Scottish Literature* 30:1(1998) 157-166 (159).
[87] *The Journal of Sir Walter Scott*. 2 vols., Vol. 2, (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1890) 195.
[88] *Life of Robert Burns,* 9.
[89] Ibid., 144.
[90] Ibid.,17.
[91] Ibid.

poets.[92] Unlike Walt Whitman's much later declaration of Burns as a 'third, perhaps fourth class'[93] poet which, as Robert Crawford and I have argued elsewhere, might be attributed to a 'persistent anxiety of influence', the writer here unabashedly derides Burns's poetic ignorance of lofty literary convention.[94]

Where Charles Brockden Brown praised Burns for straying from the classical 'chivalry of poets', the reviewer above – perhaps influenced by Lockhart's more conservative narrative – derides the poet for both his versification and character. In a preface that is fiercely critical in tone, it is remarkable how positive the writer remains towards Lockhart ('in the advanced pages, the freshness and excellent quality of the *materiel* are every where discernible'[95]). Carruthers and Mackay have suggested that Lockhart was 'a key player in Britain's powerfully conservative Romantic culture' which is why he portrayed Burns as 'impulsive and ungentlemanly'; in stark contrast to the way the same author depicted Scott as 'the great Romantic gentleman' (celebrated in five biographical volumes in 1838).[96] It is clearly Lockhart's 'impulsive and ungentlemanly' account of Burns that the reviewer seems to react to. However, it must be noted that this somewhat isolated critical take on Burns is blatantly reactionary in tone. In his aggressive derision of Burns, the writer appears to be reacting against a wider hegemonic appreciation. Regardless, the preface serves as a pertinent reminder of how crucial editors, biographers and repackaged editions were on the frequent (re)shaping of Burns's image and reputation.

The Pearson Edition and Allan Cunningham

In 1832, New York printer William Pearson published a comprehensive edition of *The Works of Robert Burns* that was advertised as not only the 'Truest Exhibition of the Man and the Poet' but the 'Fullest Edition of His Poetry and Prose Hitherto Published.[97] The edition included Lockhart's recently printed 'Life'; 'Correspondence from Dr. Currie's Edition; Sketches of the poet by Himself, Gilbert Burns, Professor Stewart and Others'; as well as

[92] Ibid.,18.
[93] Gary Scharnhorst, 'Whitman on Robert Burns: An Early Essay Recovered' in *The Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 13:3 (1996) 217-220 (218).
[94] Crawford, 'America's Bard', 110 and Arun Sood, '"A Modern Poet on the Scotch Bard": Walt Whitman's 1875 Essay on Robert Burns' in *The Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 32:4 (2015) 230-236.
[95] *Life of Robert Burns*, 18.
[96] Gerard Carruthers and Pauline Mackay, 'Re-reading James Currie; Robert Burns's First Editor' in *John Clare Society Journal,* 74.
[97] *The Works of Robert Burns*, (New York: William Pearson, 1832) Another edition which appeared the same year, printed by Leavitt and Allan, included much of the same content. See Appendix I.

songs from both James Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum* and George Thomson's *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs for The Voice*. Essentially a comprehensive amalgamation of available materials, Pearson's edition was reprinted more frequently than any other edition in the decade that followed, often by different publishers who pirated their own version of the work (Judd Loomis and Co. in Hartford 1836 and Robinson and Franklin in New York, 1839).

A reactionary response to the Pearson edition can be found in the New York-based *Knickerbocker* of August 1833. It should be noted that the magazine's cultural milieu, known as the 'Knickerbocker Group', included William Cullen Bryant, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. and James Russell Lowell; all of whom, as we shall see in Chapter IV, either wrote about or were partly influenced by Burns. The *Knickerbocker* review portrays a far more 'revolutionary' account of Burns than previously described. The anonymous reviewer begins by declaring that 'Burns was emphatically the poet of the people' before describing an alleged meeting between Burns's eldest son and George IV:

> Did bold uncowering independence ever burst forth in more elevated strains, than in those glowing lines, "A man's a man for a' that?" That they were highly esteemed by the poet himself, may be ascertained from the fact, that these were the lines selected by the eldest of Burns' sons to repeat for George the Fourth, when introduced to the royal presence. And how did the heartless despot treat the orphan-boy of the immortal bard, who left these manly lines as a precious deposit[…] dismissed him from his presence![98]

Given Robert Burns II (1786-1857) had worked in the London Stamp Office under the invitation of the British Prime Minister while his younger brother, Colonel James Glencairn (1794-1865) was an imperial loyalist working for the East India Company, the newspaper's emphasis on a despotic British monarch is clearly laced with ideological bias. One notable inclusion in the edition (that might have bolstered this 'revolutionary' image) was the last few stanzas of 'Ode For General Washington's Birthday', which was reprinted under the bold new title: 'ODE TO LIBERTY'[99]. Such textual nuances might well have partially framed the *The Knickerbocker* reviewer's empowered, anti-aristocratic tone:

> But Burns has had his revenge. The more he is known the better his sterling merit is appreciated; the more deeply we dive into his character, the richer mines do we discover; and he has long since taken his niche among the great and glorious names that will descend to the end of time, as the best benefactors of the humans race: while

[98] *The Knickerbocker* 2 (1833) 148.
[99] *The Works of Robert Burns* (New York: William Pearson, 1832) 77.

> the memory of "the finest gentleman in Europe," is, like that of a Sardanapalus, "damned to everlasting fame."[100]

The language here ('the more he is known', 'the more deeply we dive into his character') suggests an evolving fascination and understanding of Burns's life and poetry. The classical allusion to the destructive decadence of the Greek king 'Sardanapalus' further derides hierarchal structures, and places Burns as the antithesis to them; the truly democratic 'poet of the people'. Ultimately, however, the review concludes with a sentimental depiction of the poet that overrides any political associations:

> We are confident, that no true son of "Auld Caledonia;" no lover of the plaid and the tartan, who loves to think on days "of auld lang syne," will neglect to procure a copy of this imperishable monument of his country's fame. [101]

The reference to the 'plaid and the tartan', far from promoting Burns as a beacon of revolutionary fervour and global appeal, adheres to a twee and nostalgic association of the poet with Scotland, the 'Land of Romance'.[102] Echoing the sentiments in the preface to W. Stodart's *Life of Robert Burns* ('one must have been born a Scotsman to relish with *goût* the writings of Burns'),[103] the review ends by suggesting that it is the sons and admirers of 'Auld Caledonia' that will find enjoyment in Pearson's edition ('the 'imperishable monument'). While the political and revolutionary traits of Burns might be hinted at, it would be a stretch to suggest that this was a widely recognised association or perception of the poet. Rather, the Pearson edition, with its comprehensive, patchwork-like inclusion of various sources, provided an amalgamated accessibility for American readers and critics who would subsequently adopt and perceive the poet to their own, often conflicting, ends.

One important (though highly questionable) biographical insertion that the Pearson edition did not include was Allan Cunningham's 'Life', which was published in London between January and December 1834. A pirated American edition appeared swiftly on the heels of the original, when Hilliard, Gray and Company printed a version of *The Works* in Boston, complete 'With His Life by Allan Cunningham'.[104] The unreliable nature of 'Honest'

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[100] *The Knickerbocker*, 148-149.
[101] Ibid. 149.
[102] See Andrew Hook's discussion of nineteenth century American perceptions of Scotland as a 'Land of Romance' in *Scotland and America*, 116-174.
[103] *Life of Robert Burns*, 4.
[104] *The Works of Robert Burns, by Allan Cunningham*, 4 Vols., (Boston: Hilliard, Gray & Co., 1834).

Allan Cunningham's account of Burns has been subject to, justifiably, much ridicule in Burns scholarship. Indeed, the abundance of falsifications and fantastic nature of his 'facts' can verge on comical farce, particularly to the twenty-first century reader. Rather than further dissect Cunningham's 'Life' to highlight the editor's fraudulent approach (which is frankly rather obvious), it is more useful here to consider how Cunningham's editorial insertions, particularly when taken as fact, might have contributed towards Burns's reputational development in America.

After the initial printing in Boston, Cunningham's 'Life' was reprinted at a steady rate. By the 1860s there had been, at the very least, thirty separately printed and distributed editions that contained (variable) materials from Cunningham's frequently revised edition. If the Pearson edition and its reviews had hinted towards depicting a more revolutionary and politically engaged Burns, then some elements of Cunningham's 'Life' bolstered the idea of Burns as an ardent revolutionary. Lockhart's biography famously gave credence to the story of Burns sending carronades to French Revolutionaries, a purported incident that Gerard Carruthers and Pauline Mackay have described as a 'conservative myth' that 'would eventually become a favourite story for left-wing fans of the bard'.[105] In an expanded version of his 'Life of Burns', Cunningham alluded to the *Rosamund* incident in a typically dramatic account of the poet's final hours:

> To the poet himself, death, which he now knew was at hand, brought with it no fear[…]He was poor – he gave his pistols, which he had used against the smugglers on the Solway, to his physician, adding with a smile, that he had tried them and found them an honour to their maker, which was more than he could say to the bulk of mankind![106]

In an 1841 New York edition titled *The Life and Land of Burns*, Cunningham's account of how he could 'well remember' the poet's Republican ethos was also reprinted:

> That Burns was numbered among the republicans of Dumfries I well remember: but then those who held different sentiments from the men in power, were all, in that loyal town, stigmatized as democrats: that he either desired to see the constitution changed, or his country invaded by the liberal French, who proposed to set us free with the

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[105] Carruthers and Mackay, 'Re-reading James Currie; Robert Burns's First Editor', 74. For more on this 'conservative myth' see also Gerard Carruthers and Jennifer Orr, '" The Diel's Awa Wi' The Exciseman": Robert Burns the Giver of Guns to Revolutionary France?' in *Fickle Man* ed. by Johnny Rodgers and Gerard Carruthers, 257-266.

[106] Allan Cunningham, 'Life of Burns' in *The Complete Works of Robert Burns, by Alan Cunningham* (Boston: Phillips, Sampson, and Company, 1857) 54.

> bayonet, and then admit us to the "fraternal embrace", no one ever believed. It is true that he spoke of premiers and peers with contempt; that he hesitated to take off his hat in the theatre, to the air of "God save the King;" that he refused to drink to the health of Pitt, saying he preferred that of Washington – a far greater man…[107]

Cunningham's assertion here is powerful. Burns is depicted as a democratic rebel in the face of British oppression and a symbolic martyr for repressed revolutionary politics. Another article by Cunningham that also featured in the American press was 'Robert Burns and Lord Byron', originally printed in the *London Magazine* in August 1824. Just two months later, the article appeared in the Boston-based *New-England Galaxy* and was later reprinted in *The New York Literary Gazette* and *Phi Betta Kappa Repository.* Though Cunningham's 'first hand' account ('I knew one, and I have seen both') is not to be taken as reliable, his juxtaposition of the poets' 'fame' and 'reputation' nevertheless highlights a mid-nineteenth century fascination for 'literary celebrities', as recently documented by scholars such as Eric Eisner and Tom Mole.[108] While Byron is usually the focal point of research into the culture of nineteenth-century 'literary celebrity', Burns might equally be a worthy subject of enquiry given his own 'self- marketing' and the magnitude of his posthumous fame.

Ghislaine McDayter has suggested that Byron was the first poet 'in the business of selling not just poetry but himself' and thus 'his fame depended as much on his personal as on his poetic charms'.[109] Through his rustic self-fashioning (as in the preface to the Kilmarnock edition), social cavorting and adept ability to switch between personae, it might be argued that Burns's fame also depended upon his 'personal' charms and self-marketing abilities. As Corey Andrew summarises, critical enquiry has revealed Burns to be 'well aware of the marketing value' of his various personae (in particular the 'heaven-taught ploughman') and he almost certainly 'manipulated the facts of his life to match the contours of his celebrity.'[110] This made Burns, as Andrews further suggests, a 'particularly modern writer' who had the ability (and shrewd awareness) to 'inhabit various selves for specific purposes' – including self-commodification. In this way, future critical investigations into the origins and trajectory of 'literary celebrity' would do well to include Burns. On a more material (specifically

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[107] *The Life and Land of Burns by Allan Cunningham* (New York: J. & H. G. Langely, 1841) 147-148.
[108] *Romanticism and Celebrity Culture* ed. by Tom Mole (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) and Eric Eisner, *Nineteenth-Century Poetry and Literary Celebrity* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).
[109] Ghislaine McDayter, ' Conjuring Byron: Byromania, Literary Commodification and the Birth of Celebrity' in *Byromania: Portraits of the Artist in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Culture*, ed. by Frances Wilson (London: Macmillan Press, 1999) 43-63 (46).
[110] Corey Andrews, '"Far-fam'd RAB": Scottish Labouring-Class Poets Writing in the Shadow of Robert Burns, 1785-1792' in *Studies in Hogg and His World* 23 (2013) 41-67 (41).

bibliographic) level, McDayter suggests that competing nineteenth-century publishing houses continually produced a steady flow of Byron editions to satisfy the market's 'voracious appetite' no matter whether the text was 'Byron's, was about Byron, or was merely thought to be about him'.[111] Even a quick glance of the chronological bibliography of Burns print editions in America (See Appendix I) reveals a similarly intense appetite for the poet's work, life, songs, letters and anything else associated with him.[112]

Clearly, then, Burns was a literary commodity as well as a poet; evidenced by the steady stream of pirated American publications that not only contained his poetry, but also packed in as much 'original' biographical material as possible. Here, we might again refer back to the idea that the legacy of Burns was both maintained and reinvented by mechanisms of 'cultural production'.[113] In the cases of both Burns and Byron, 'artistic mediators' – namely publishers and editors – not only appeased a public appetite for materials about the poets', but also intensified it. While the advent of Burns Clubs, Suppers and fraternal societies may embody the lasting manifestation of an American fascination for the poet, the sheer abundance of material publications in the nineteenth century (from Currie onwards) were surely the root that allowed such widespread public interest to spread and flourish through other (offshoot) forms.

An American Biography

In 1848 Samuel Tyler, a Scottish-born Baltimore-based lawyer, wrote and published the first full-length American biography of Burns. In addition to his occupational commitments to the 'Maryland Bar', Tyler considered himself an 'amateur philosopher' and was a regular contributor to literary periodicals. His first publication was an 1844 book titled *Discourse of the Baconian Philosophy*, which, in the broadest terms, argued that Anglo-American periodicals were 'teeming with expositions and commentaries of the Baconian philosophy'.[114] His later biography of Burns similarly veers towards pseudo-philosophy. In his preface, Tyler whimsically attempts to describe 'the spirit of Romance in the heart of man' before identifying that 'love is the best preservative' for 'all the affections'. It is 'love', according to Tyler, that is the best and least acknowledged aspect of Burns's poetry:

[111] Ibid., 53.
[112] Correspondingly, Chapter V will outline a 'material' fascination for Burns 'beyond text'.
[113] *The Genius of Scotland*, 149.
[114] Samuel Tyler, *Discourse of the Baconian Philosophy* [1844] (London: Forgotten Books, 2013) 16.

> If, therefore, I have succeeded in drawing attention to this peculiar feature of Burns's poetry, while I have given due consideration to others, I have done what I designed to do, and deem it sufficient apology for having written another work on Burns, when so many abler minds have done so, but have not given so much prominence to this peculiar feature, which is so characteristic of the poet. And I have further endeavoured to defend Burns, as a man, from false opinions of him.[115]

Tyler's mission to 'defend Burns' from 'false opinions' clearly outlines his objection to extant biographical portrayals of Burns. It is not clear whether his idea of 'false portrayals' alludes to the politically subversive, temperamental poet or the over-indulgent peasant Scot who met his demise due to 'rank appetites'. Either way, Tyler's attempted defence transpires into a thoroughly banal, even pious depiction of the poet. If Currie had attempted to make Burns more palatable to a wider reading public, then it seems Tyler, writing decades later, went a step further in attempting to present an almost angelic figure of both 'Burns as a Poet' and 'Burns as a man'. Tyler's first chapter, titled the 'Theory of the Beautiful', immediately links the beauty in Burns's poetry to the 'Creator':

> For he was emphatically the poet of the Beautiful. The world was evidently designed as the dwelling place of a being who delights in scenes of beauty. For the Creator has taken as much care to make everything beautiful, as he has to make every thing useful.[116]

Though, as previously discussed, Burns's early access to education was documented by the turn of the nineteenth century, Tyler does his best to drive home the image of Burns as the divinely-inspired poet of nature and love, further stating that he was 'educated in no school, trammelled by no master' and thus he 'caught his inspiration on from nature herself'.[117] Ultimately for Tyler, it was 'God who made him the ennobling genius'.[118] Despite the widespread reprinting of Currie's essay on the 'Scotch Peasantry', Tyler does his best to describe the dreary 'prosaic condition' from which Burns rose:

> For no man was ever born in a more prosaic condition of life. Everything near him, and everything around him, was as dull as human life ever furnishes[…]his condition seemed to be the very one where thought ad feeling must languish and expire. But the irrepressible energies of genius can conquer even these difficulties.[119]

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[115] Samuel Tyler, *Robert Burns, As a Poet, And as a Man* (New York: Baker & Scribner, 1848) 5.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid.,57.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid., 34.

As noted, however, Carlyle's Romantic revision of Burns (as put forth in his review of Lockhart) was in wide circulation by this point and was evidently echoed, to base degree, in the fantastical claims of Tyler. Tyler's description of the poet's 'irrepressible energies' despite his 'dull' surroundings seems to derive from Carlyle's declaration that Burns's 'genius' could 'pierce' through and 'tint clouds with rainbow and orient colours, into a glory and stern grandeur![120] However, void of Carlyle's transcendental charisma, Tyler's account foreshadows the 'stale appreciation' of Burns as an inconsequential love poet prominent in twentieth-century criticism, as outlined by Murray Pittock in *Robert Burns in Global Culture*.[121] Tyler's biography does not appear to have been reprinted beyond the initial 1848 edition. Thus, in comparison to the wider availability of Lockhart, Currie and Cunningham, we might render it as having minimal influence. Yet the first (and only) full-length American biography of Burns still serves to remind us that the myth of the 'heaven-taught' ploughman was not only present in mid-nineteenth century America, but also being expanded upon and promoted through print culture.

In the decade that followed Tyler's biography, American editions of Burns's poetry continued to be published at a rapid rate, each with their own version - or amalgamated version(s) - of Burns's 'Life' attached. In some cases, the same publisher printed different editions in the same year. For example in 1852, publishers Leavitt & Allen, founded by George A. Leavitt, simultaneously printed *The Poetical Works of Robert Burns* which contained a 'Sketch of his Life, by James Currie'[122] and *The Works of Robert Burns*, 'Containing his "Life" by John Lockhart.'[123] This not only suggests that printing Burns was a profitable enterprise, but also hints towards there being a collectors' market eager to obtain as many editions (or as much information about Burns) as possible. As was the case with the early printers of *Poems,* connections can here be drawn between many of the publishers who were simultaneously printing Burns.

Two years prior to Leavitt & Allen's editions' in 1852, George A. Leavitt's father, Jonathan Leavitt, printed his own version of William Pearson's *The Works* via his renowned New York publishing house Leavitt, Trow & Co. A year later in 1851, George S. Appleton,

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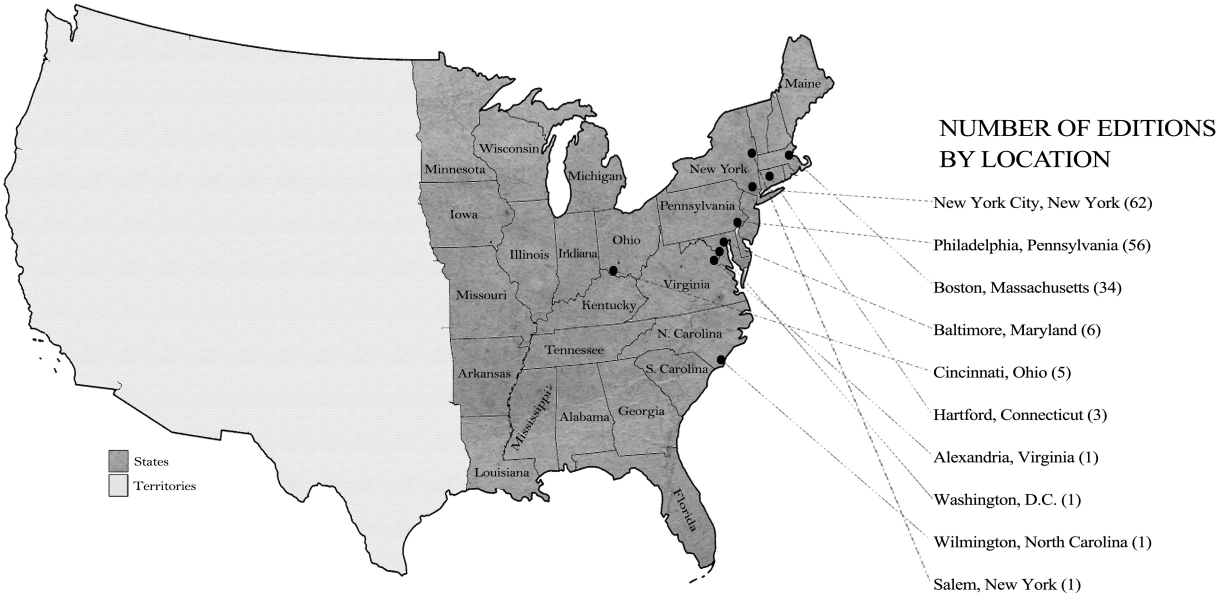
[120] Ibid.
[121] Murray Pittock, '"A Long Farewell to All My Greatness": The History of The Reputation of Robert Burns' in *Robert Burns in Global Culture* ed. by Murray Pittock, 25-46 (34).
[122] *The Poetical Works of Robert Burns* (New York: Leavitt & Allen, 1852).
[123] *The Works of Robert Burns* (New York: Leavitt & Allen, 1852).

who was Jonathan Leavitt's brother-in-law, printed an edition titled *The Complete Works of Robert Burns* in Philadelphia, which included Allan Cunningham's biography. That same year, his own brother Daniel Appleton printed the edition in New York under the company name D. Appleton & Co. All of the aforementioned publishers would go on reproducing, separately and in different States, editions of Burns's poetry throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century. While this might suggest there was, to some extent, an interconnected monopoly on publishing Burns in America, the evidence more importantly reveals the extent to which Burns was deemed a literary commodity; evidenced by the fact that over 170 different pirated American editions of his 'life' and works were available across different states by 1866 [See Fig. I].



[Fig I.] 'American Burns Editions by Location, 1788-1866'. Created by the author. Based on the verified editions listed in Appendix I.

Robert Chambers and 'The Tree of Liberty'

It was not, however, any of the interconnected printers mentioned above that presented the first American edition of Robert Chambers's *The Life and Works of Robert Burns* in 1852; which was produced by Harper & Brothers of New York (another colossal nineteenth-century printing firm that eventually evolved into present day Harper-Collins). Curiously, the Chambers edition was first printed in Britain in 1838 - an anomaly in that the majority of

American editions were usually copied from Britain within a year. While a portion of the original 1838 Chambers editions would have made their way to America, it is unclear why it took so long for an American reprinting to occur. Similar to William Pearson's earlier New York edition, Chambers amalgamated a wide array of previous biographical sources.

The preface acknowledges how Currie had previously gathered biographical materials 'from the poet himself, his brother Gilbert, Professor Stewart, Mr Syme, and others', yet Chambers hastens to add that Burns's first editor ultimately 'tried to avoid provoking any loud demonstration from those who took unfavourable views of the life and conversation of Burns'.[124] Summarising 'other biographies of the poet', Chambers notes that only 'two deserve particular notice', pointing to Lockhart (who 'adds little to the details previously known') and Cunningham (who 'gives a greater amount of fresh anecdote'). While Chambers seems to praise the former to a higher degree, he concludes that Cunningham still 'failed to produce a work which could leave nothing to be desired'.[125] All of the biographers and works that Chambers references, of course, were readily available and accessible in America at the time. Even in the same year that the Chambers edition appeared, for example, D. Appleton of New York offered *The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Burns* with a biography by Allan Cunningham, while Leavitt & Allen produced *The Works* containing Lockhart's 'Life'.

What the Chambers edition did offer American readers - to an even larger extent than Pearson - was the bolder image of a more politically subversive, 'revolutionary' Burns. Later in his preface, Chambers depicts Burns as an 'Undying Voice' for 'mankind', who was dedicated to espousing the 'equality of consideration due to all men'.[126] Short of calling Burns a revolutionary Republican, Chambers depicts Burns as more radically democratic and egalitarian than ever before. The most significant aspect of the edition, particularly in regards to its appearance on the American side of the Atlantic, was Chamber's introduction to 'The Tree of Liberty'; a poem he obtained from a manuscript given to him by James Duncan of Mosesfield, Glasgow. However, as will be discussed shortly, the poem had already appeared in America in an earlier Cunningham edition (though it was Chambers who was first to highlight the significance of its revolutionary rhetoric).

Perhaps the most contested text associated with Burns, there remains a great deal of scepticism as to whether Burns actually wrote 'The Tree of Liberty', and work continues to be carried out on the matter. Gerard Carruthers and Norman R. Paton have recently suggested

[124] *The Life and Works of Robert Burns*, *by Robert Chambers* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1852) 'preface'.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid., 8.

Alexander Geddes (1737-1802) as being a possible alternative author, but with no affirmative evidence, the jury remains out.[127] Though the topic merits further research, the purpose here is to highlight the significance of the poem's appearance in America rather than add weight to debates on authorship. Nonetheless, it might be worth comparing the previous formal analysis of 'When Guilford Good' in Chapter I with 'The Tree of Liberty. The similarity in metre and measure between the two poems is striking, with both poems conveying themes of liberation amidst the beating repetition of 'man', set to the tune of Killiecrankie. Yet, as Carruthers and Paton have noted, there remains a great deal of other 'unanswered questions' regarding its provenance and transmission, and this formal similarity alone is far from sufficient in declaring authorship.

Let us, then, get back to the issue of why 'The Tree of Liberty' might have been a significant addition (rightly or wrongly) to the Burns canon in post-revolutionary America. In the years leading up to the Revolution, 'people planted poplars to signify their growing demands to obtain freedom from the yoke of British rule,' with a famous Elm tree near Boston Common becoming a symbolic rallying point for revolutionaries until it was felled by British soldiers in 1775. Just over a decade later, Thomas Jefferson, in a letter teeming with patriotic rhetoric, wrote to W.S. Smith referring back to the symbolic motif:

> And what country can preserve its liberties if their rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms. The remedy is to set them right as to facts, pardon and pacify them. What signify a few lives lost in a century or two? The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is it's [sic] natural manure.[128]

During the French Revolution the symbolic power of 'trees of liberty' hit new precedents as Jacobins adopted the motif, shortly followed by radical groups in Scotland and Ireland. Later on, the United Irishmen similarly adopted the Tree of Liberty as a populist cultural emblem. A quick reference to a 'catechism' used by the United Irishmen articulates, albeit in simplified terms, the growing revolutionary fervour that was circulating around the Atlantic world:

> What is in your hand?
> It is a branch.
> Of what?

[127] Carruthers and Paton, 'Did Robert Burns Write The Tree of Liberty', 242-257.
[128] 'Thomas Jefferson to W. S. Smith', 13th November 1787, cited at <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/jefferson/105.html> [accessed 29/12/2015].

Of the tree of liberty.
Where did it first grow?
In America.
Where does it bloom?
In France.
Where did the seeds fall?
In Ireland.[129]

The point here is to establish that, while the poem in Chambers's edition begins by referencing the 'tree o France'[130], the very notion of the 'Tree of Liberty' was rooted in revolutionary American Republicanism and reformist politics. Complicating matters even more is the fact that (by the time the poem appeared in Chambers's edition), 'Liberty Trees' were being adopted by several other movements during the European 'Revolutions of 1848'. In Italy, for example, republican Florentines 'erected liberty trees and liberty poles' in a bid to encourage the city to 'unite with the Republicans of Rome'.[131] Regardless of these transatlantic complexities, the reprint of Chambers's edition depicted Burns as directly engaging with American revolutionary rhetoric. Even in his introduction to the poem, Chambers depicts Burns as the 'poor bard' whose 'democratic effusions' had been suppressed by others:

> It is far from likely that the whole of the democratic effusions of Burns have come down to us. For many years, that kind of authorship was attended with so much reproach, that men of humanity studied to conceal rather than to expose the evidence by which it could be proved against him. And even after the poor bard's death, the interests of his young family demanded of all the admirers of his name, that nothing should be brought forward which was calculated to excite a political jealousy regarding him.[132]

Chambers makes a valid point in that - as previously discussed - Burns's 'Ode for General Washington's Birthday' and 'Address of Beelzebub' were indeed concealed until long after the poet's death, and the 'terror' of the revolutionary years had subsided. However, to state that this was the case for the even more radical 'Tree of Liberty' further propagates the image of Burns as a late-eighteenth century 'repressed Republican', which undoubtedly had some influence on the way he was to be received by some as a Republican icon. Once again, here lies the power and influence of Burns's editors and biographers in shaping his identity. With

[129] 'United Irish Catechism,' (Cork, December 1797) cited from Kevin Whelan, *The Tree of Liberty: Radicalism, Catholicism, and the Construction of Irish Identity 1760 – 1830* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996) 57.
[130] *The Life and Works of Robert Burns*, 87.
[131] Timothy Mason Roberts, *Distant Revolutions: 1848 and the Challenge to American Except* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009) 100.
[132] *The Life and Works of Robert Burns*, 87.

the inclusion of one new poem (not even proven to be his own) and an added editorial epithet, Burns is cast as an ardent friend to America's founding principles through his staunch, Republican ethos.

While the Chambers edition was reprinted twice again the following year (Harper & Brothers in New York and Lippincott, Grambo & Co. in Philadelphia, 1854), the authorship of the 'Tree of Liberty' had already been called into question by Chambers's editorial rival Allan Cunningham. This is where the intricate inconsistencies between printed editions on different sides of the Atlantic become particularly complex. Cunningham initially included the poem in the 1840 London edition of *The Works*, published by T. Tegg, with the poem appearing in its entirety along with a footnote acknowledging that it had first 'appeared in Chambers 1838 edition, having been taken from an MS in the poet's hand writing in the possession of Mr James Duncan, Mosesfield, near Glasgow'.[133] Crucially, though, the poem did not appear in the Cunningham edition reprinted by J. Crissy of Philadelphia in the same year. Just two years after the 1840 London edition (in which Cunningham *did* include the poem), the editor had seemingly changed his mind, deciding to omit it and emphatically declare in his preface that 'There are eleven stanzas in the *Tree of Liberty* of which the *best* compared with 'A man's a man for a' that' of Burns, sounds like a cracked pipkin, against the heroic clang of a Damascus blade'.[134] However, in America, several Cunningham editions still contained the poem, including the 1851 New York edition of *The Complete Works of Robert Burns* (published by D. Appleton & Co.). Thus, 'The Tree of Liberty' in fact first appeared - in America but not Britain - in an edition edited by Allan Cunningham, rather than Chambers. It was the Chambers edition, nonetheless, that added the editorial emphasis on its 'revolutionary' importance. Complicating matters further, by 1855, the 'Tree of Liberty' not only featured in American reprints of both Chambers and Cunningham but, as in the Boston edition of *The Complete Works of Robert Burns*, was simultaneously being derided and refuted in works also edited by Cunningham.

American Editions: Postscript

We might view the conflicting, simultaneous accounts of 'The Tree of Liberty' discussed above as a microcosm of how the broader reputation of Burns in nineteenth-century America

[133] *The Works of Robert Burns, With life by Allan Cunningham, and notes by Gilbert Burns* (London: T. Tegg, 1840) 292.
[134] *The Works of Robert Burns*, ed. by Allan Cunningham (London: George Virtue, 1842) 'preface'.

was continually affected by inconsistent pirated editions and contrasting fragmentary narratives.

As this chapter has demonstrated, the reception and reputational development of Burns was both shaped and complicated by an intricate interplay between literary accomplishment, eulogy and multiple pirated biographical texts; each containing slightly altered narratives of the poet's life. Most notable, perhaps, is the sheer extent to which Burns's poetry and 'life' were reprinted and thus repackaged. Even a brief glance at the American print bibliography provides compelling evidence of both the poet's popularity and the vibrant American print culture that helped to facilitate his literary celebrity.

However, it is equally vital to acknowledge that in addition to, or beyond, this biographical fascination, Burns's poetry – so readily available in the nineteenth century – was to have a considerable literary, or more specifically *poetic*, influence in America. Charles Brockden Brown had hinted at this in his *Literary Magazine and American Register* as early as 1804, and Robert Walsh went a step further in 1811:

> We have often been asked in the country of Mr. Scott, whether the people of the United States were generally acquainted with the poetry of Burns and Beattie. The answer, which we have given, and which we still give, to this query, is calculated to startle the credulity of those, who see us in a more tilling and shopkeeping race. We are quite satisfied that – proportionably [sic] to the difference of the population in the two countries – the works of the two poets we have cited and even of Mr Scott, are here more widely circulated, more generally read, and perhaps better understood than in England taken separately from Scotland. The dialect of the latter is more familiar and more grateful to us than to the inhabitants of her sister kingdom. [135]

Here, Burns appears to offer an alternative to the hegemony of a cultivated, European literary establishment. In resisting the elitist conventions of 'classical' Anglophone literature (particularly in regards to poetic form, place and vernacular language), American poets may have found a common ally, or indeed inspiration, in Burns. However, speculative prose articles in literary journals edited by the likes of Brown and Walsh hardly amount to proof of such a claim. The best way to measure the latter, naturally, is to trace and explore the influence of Burns's poetics on early to mid-nineteenth century American poets.

[135] *The American Review of History and Politics, and General Repository of State Papers*, Vol. 1 (1811) 166-167.

Chapter IV

'Bob'o'lincoms of our own': Burns and American Poets, c. 1800-1859

> We rejoice to meet with an author national enough to break away from the slavish deference, too common among us, to English grammar and orthography…[1]
>
> ➢James Russell Lowell (1892)

The preceding chapters have touched upon some of the literary apprehensions voiced by early nineteenth-century American critics and writers in regards to both the need for a 'national' American literature and the problem of an imposing, often stifling, British influence. Yet Burns, through his concern with locality and, as Charles Brockden Brown noted, the masterful use of 'the phraseology of his country'[2], was often considered apart from other majors figures of the Anglophone literary establishment; hinting towards the idea that the Scottish poet was, as Robert Walsh stated in 1812, 'perhaps better understood'[3] or at least less poetically stifling than other transatlantic literary imports.

Whether adhering to the idea that British literature stifled American thought, or adopting the more sanguine attitude that classical literary models had to be followed, British literary imperialism continued to plague American intellectuals long after the revolution. In 1788 (incidentally the same year that Burns's *Poems* appeared), American poet Philip Frenau (1752-1832) wrote the following verse under the title 'Literary Importation'[4]:

> Can we never be thought to have learning or grace
> Unless it be brought from that damnable place
> Where tyranny reigns with her impudent face? (23-25)

Frenau's verse is an adequate summation of the on-going struggle to assert American intellectual credibility and literary worth. While Britain ('that damnable place') is paired with 'tyranny', a perceived lack of American 'learning or grace' prevails.

Articles in the British periodical press continued to deride American literature well into the nineteenth century. Sydney Smith's (1771-1845) frequently quoted piece in the 1820 *Edinburgh Review* suggests the extremity of British attitudes, with its rhetorical sneering that

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[1] James Russell Lowell, *The Biglow Papers*, ed. by Ernest Rhys (London: The Walter Scott Publishing Company, 1892) 5.
[2] *The Literary Magazine, and American Register* 2 (1804) 594.
[3] *The American Review of History and Politics, and General Repository of State Papers* 1 (1811) 166-167.
[4] Philip Freneau, 'Literary Importation' quoted from Sarah M. Corse, *Nationalism and Literature: The Politics of Culture in Canada and the United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 18.

questioned: 'In four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book? Or goes to an American play?'[5] Smith was by no means a lone voice and such derision was evident in the British press from the Revolution right through the nineteenth century.[6] This naturally led to reactionary responses on the American side of the Atlantic.

In 1783, the prolific American writer and orator Noah Webster (1758-1843) bellowed a literary battle cry that declared 'America must be as independent in literature as she is in politics' and as 'famous for arts as for arms'. Webster's primary goal was to 'have some influence in exciting a spirit of literary industry'[7] among young American writers. This incentive, however, was often hard to nurture. For American poets, broaching the conventions of standardised English and poetic form proved particularly troublesome and, at times, constraining.[8] In an article titled 'Essay on American Poetry' in the 1818 *North American Review*, pioneer-poet William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878) complained:

> With respect to the prevailing style of poetry, at the present day, in our country, we apprehend that it will be found, in too many instances, tinged a sickly and affected imitation of the peculiar manner of some of the late popular poets of England.[9]

Several years later in 1869, Bryant praised Burns for succeeding 'in an age of formalism in poetry, of cold and feeble imitation and parrot-like repetition'.[10] Bryant does not clarify or further allude to which English poets he felt were being 'sickly' imitated in America. Rather than contemporary British Romantics (Bryant publicly esteemed the poetics of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey),[11] his attack on 'imitation' more likely referred to Augustan or neoclassical traditions; given the likes of Pope, Milton and Dryden continued to be emulated by Americans attempting to produce their own version of British *belles lettres*.[12] Yet for Bryant, it seems Burns was considered within different parameters (having succeeded in 'an

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[5] Sydney Smith, 'Review of Statistical Annals of the United States, by Adam Seybert' in The *Edinburgh Review* 33 (1820) 69-80.
[6] See also *The British Critic* 10 (1818) 497 – 'The Americans have no national literature, and no learned men' and *The Athenaeum* 173 (1831) 115 – 'this want of originality in American literature is, we think, likely long to continue…'.
[7] Alan. K. Snyder, *Defining Noah Webster: A Spiritual Biography* (Fairfax: Allegiance Press, 2002) 49.
[8] See David Simpson, *The Politics of American English, 1776-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986) 92-118.
[9] *The North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal* 7*(*1818) 206.
[10] William Cullen Bryant, *A History of the Celebration of Robert Burns's 110th Natal Day, at the Metropolitan Hotel, New York* (John H. Lyon: Jersey City, 1869) 31.
[11] Gilbert. H. Muller, *William Cullen Bryant: Author of America* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010) 185-186.
[12] Chris Bryers, 'Augustan American Verse' in *The Oxford Handbook of Early American Literature*, ed. by Kevin J. Hayes (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2008) 189-215.

age of formalism') to earlier eighteenth-century British poets and praised for his poetic innovation. Similarly, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) called for a 'new and delightful expression' that strayed from the imitation of 'indifferent models' and offered an alternative to 'the degenerate spirit' of 'English poetry',[13] while Thomas Jefferson praised Burns for his 'beautiful' dialect in an 1813 letter that Robert Crawford has described as a 'manifesto for American language'.[14]

In the preface to his 1848 *Biglow Papers*, James Russell Lowell (1819-1891), in a self-referential mock review, praised (himself as) an 'author national enough to break away' from the 'slavish deference' to 'English grammar and orthography'.[15] Here, it seems adopting a local, vernacular orthography was considered one way of asserting 'national' American resistance to a standardised English hegemony; thus making explicit why Burns's Scots-language poetry might have been particularly well-received or inspirational. In juxtaposing the sentiments of Longfellow, Bryant, Webster and Lowell, the repeated emphasis on 'national' credibility suggests that these early to mid-nineteenth century poets were consciously engaged in a 'constructivist' bid to contribute towards a burgeoning American national (at least literary) identity. Whether or not the formation of an American poetic 'canon' was integral to contemporary process of 'nation-building' in the nineteenth century is a question that continues to divide.[16] Less debatable, however, is the fact that Burns, through his linguistic fluency and poetic form, was regularly looked upon more favourably than other eighteenth-century British poets and transatlantic literary imports.

Poems, Chiefly In The Scots-American Dialect

Despite Bryant and Longfellow's simultaneous praise for Burns and derision of poetic 'imitators', it was, ironically, the advent of 'Scots mimicry' that was the first manifestation of Burns having any 'poetic influence' in America. Shortly after the first American editions of *Poems* appeared, a steady stream of Scots-language imitation poems began to be printed in the periodical press. Andrew Hook must be credited with excavating the majority of these 'imitation poems' in his excellent 1975 book *Scotland and America: A Study of Cultural Relations, 1750-1835.* However, very little appears to have been written about the poems

[13] *The North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal* 34 (1832) 75.
[14] Crawford, 'America's Bard', 104-105.
[15] *The Biglow Papers*, 5.
[16] For a discussion of the debate between 'primordial' and 'constructivist' approaches to nineteenth century American 'national identity' see Anatol Lieven, *America Right or Wrong: An Anatomy of American Nationalism* (London: Harper Perennial, 2005) 108.

since. This is somewhat surprising given the extent to which transatlantic literary studies has encouraged scholars to move beyond Anglophone frames of reference to consider more nuanced, transnational linguistic and literary intersections. Colleen Glenney Boggs, for example, suggests that the most interesting developments in the field 'challenge the associations of nation and language as epistemological hegemons that structure literary studies.'[17] The Burns 'imitation poems' are a fine example of the complex processes by which vernacular traditions, originating within one nation, can form new offshoots and evolve in fresh geo-cultural contexts.

Though American literary historiography might reduce these 'imitations poems' to a footnote, their regular appearance(s) still hints at the (albeit small-scale) acceptance and taste for Scots as a viable literary language in America. Up until the reprinting of Burns's poetry, it was extremely rare for Scots-language poems to feature in the American dailies or literary periodicals. From 1790 right through to the turn of the nineteenth century, however, a flurry of Scots poems appeared, primarily in the *New York Magazine* and *Port Folio*. The majority of unsigned poems adopted the Standard Habbie and functioned as elegiac tributes to Burns and, in some cases, his Scots-language predecessors:

> Fair fa' ye Robie, canty callan,
> Wha rhym'st amaist as weel as Allan,
> An pleasant highlan' lads an' lawlan,
> Wi your auld gab,
> May never wae come near your dwallin,
> Nor scaith nor scab.[18]

Though Allan Ramsay's poetry was not reproduced in America until later in the nineteenth century, his pastoral comedy *The Gentle Shepherd* was pirated as early as 1750, and was reprinted well into the 1790s.[19] The appearance and popularity of Burns's vernacular effusions may well have, as was the case with Macpherson's *Ossian* and Robert Fergusson, maintained or reignited interest in his predecessors' literary works.[20] While not providing conclusive

[17] Boggs, 'Transatlantic Romanticisms', 226.
[18] *The New York Magazine: or, Literary Repository* 1 (1790) 668 (1-6)
[19] *Scotland and America*, 128. See also Rhona Brown, 'Allan Ramsay, Robert Fergusson and Robert Burns' in *Burns and Other Poets*, ed. by Fiona Stafford and David Sergeant (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012) 23-38 and Brown, 'Robert Burns and Robert Fergusson' in *The Edinburgh Companion to Robert Burns* ed. by Gerard Carruthers (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009) 86-97.
[20] For discussion of Burns's poetic relationship to his Scots predecessors see Kenneth Simpson, 'Poetic Genre and National Identity: Ramsay, Fergusson, and Burns' in *Studies in Scottish Literature* 30 (1998) 31-42 and Douglas Dunn, '"A Very Scottish Kind of Dash": Burns's Native Metric' in *Robert Burns and Cultural Authority* ed. by Robert Crawford, 58-85.

proof of the former assumption, this early 'imitation poem' still outlines how the two Scots-language poets' - generations apart - were being conflated by late-eighteenth century American readers (Burns was thought to 'rhym'st amaist as well as Allan'). In addition to elegiac verses, several of the poems directly mimicked, to varying effect, Burns's own poetry, such as 'To the Blackbird in Winter'[21] which was printed in the *Port Folio* of 1806:

Poor bird! My heart is truly wae,
Forlorn to see thee, wand'rin sae,
E'en heav'n vicegerent –
Unfeelin' man – he waits to slay
Thee like a tyrant. (1-5)

Minus the artful and deeply philosophical imagery of Burns's 'To a Mouse' and 'To a Mountain-Daisy', the remainder of the 'imitation poem' mirrors the two former compositions in tone and sentiment. Arguably the most inventive of the poems, however, were those that transposed Burns's form and language onto topics of locality. In a section titled 'Original Poetry' in *Port Folio*, a poem titled 'Scotch Verses' appeared that narrated the journey of a Scots emigrant who had left their 'native isle' for 'Columbia's clime'. In a humorous touch the speaker proceeds to discuss the 'bonny lasses o' this place':

I dinna like ye're fauts to tell,
For ilka ane has fauts himsel'.
Tho' faith there's some can scarcely spell
Yet think they've knowledge.
An' like to chat wi' chiels that dwell
At Princeton college. [22]

Though unsigned, Andrew Hook has suggested that this poem was by Henry Clow, an emigrant Scot who worked as a baker at Nassau Hall. In addition to baking bread for budding intellectuals, it seems he also had a penchant for writing Scots poetry (in this case regarding the 'chiels' at 'Princeton College').[23] Though worth noting from a historical perspective, these poems were to be of relatively little consequence given their brief and isolated appearances in the periodical press. The majority of the compositions were either mediocre reproductions of Burns's best-known poems, panegyric verses or comic observations, partly

[21] *Port Folio,* New Series, Vol. 1, (1806) 196.
[22] *Port Folio,* Vol. 5, (1805) 24 (19-24).
[23] *Scotland and America*, 135.

suggesting that the Scots idiom was limited in its use. As discussed in Chapter I, the more radical pro-revolutionary poets of the late eighteenth century such as James Thomson Callendar and James "Balloon" Tytler consistently wrote their Republican effusions in 'standard English'. While reformist works in Scots were still being produced, namely by the London-based Alexander Geddes who argued that 'Scots was a forward looking language' with 'expanding rather than contracting possibilities'[24], it is unlikely that there was a strong transatlantic awareness of Scots being used for politically-subversive purposes. While the comic and sentimental strains of the 'imitation poems' may support this idea, a further examination of some of the more prominent (published) poets who were writing in Scots does, as we shall see, provide some evidence to the contrary.

Robert Dinsmoor

However intriguing, at times entertaining, the early 'imitation poems' may be, the fact they were (as was the case with Henry Clow) often written by first-generation Scottish emigrants and limited to the periodical press does not exactly provide an example of Burns being a strong influence on early American poets. To further our understanding of the subject, then, we must look to some of the earliest American-born *published* (in collected form) poets who were reading Burns. One of the most obvious candidates in this regard has been largely ignored in Burns scholarship, perhaps owing to his menial poetic output and, until recently, a general lack of attention given to Ulster-Scots writing in America. Robert Dinsmoor (1757-1836) was an American-born poet of Ulster-Scots descent who, in his first published volume in 1828, declared himself the 'Rustic Bard' of New Hampshire. As scholarship on Ulster-Scots language, culture and literature continues to flourish (the formation of the Ulster-Scots Language Society has been credited as 'the principal agent sparking the revival')[25] it seems a pertinent time to revisit the work of Dinsmoor, whose work continues to remain absent from both Ulster-Scots writing anthologies and historical works focused on Ulster-Scots (or 'Scotch-Irish') cultural influences in America.[26]

In 2012, the Ulster Historical Foundation published *Robert Dinsmoor's Scotch-Irish Poems*, edited by Frank Ferguson and Alister McReynolds. The recovery of Dinsmoor's work is, as Ferguson and McReynolds point out, important for the development of Ulster-Scots

[24] 'Burns's Political Reputation in North America', 90.
[25] Michael Montgomery, 'The Rediscovery of The Ulster Scots Language' in *Englishes Around the World: General Studies, British Isles, North America* ed. by Edgar Werner Schneider (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Press, 1997) 211-266 (215).
[26] See for example *Ulster-Scots Writing: An Anthology*, ed. by Frank Ferguson (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2008).

scholarship in that it ties together the language, culture and experiences of the torrent of Ulster-Scots who emigrated to America almost a century after leaving the Lowlands of Scotland.[27] Dinsmoor's great-grandfather had originally moved from the Tweed area of Scotland to the plantations of Ulster in the early eighteenth century, and a few decades later his own grandfather crossed the Atlantic, building a house in Fort George, Brunswick between 1718 and 1720. It is widely known that a large portion Ulster-Scots emigrants appeared in the forefront of the American Revolution,[28] and Robert Dinsmoor was no exception, having fought against the British during the Revolutionary War and notably being present during the surrender of Sir John Burgoyne at Saratoga; an episode that Burns himself wrote about in 'When Guilford Good' ('Burgoyne gaed up, like spur an' whip') .

In 1828 Massachusetts publisher A.W. Thayer published a collection by Dinsmoor titled *Incidental Poems: accompanied with letters…Together with a preface, and sketch of the author's life (written by himself).* Even a quick glance at the title page bares resemblance to the editions of Burns's poetry that were simultaneously circulating in America. Not only was this a collection of poetry, but there was added emphasis on 'letters' and 'a sketch of the author's life'. The title page also attributes the work to 'Robert Dinsmoor, "Rustic Bard"; a term that echoes Burns's own self-presentation as 'a Bard of rustic song' in 'The Bard's Epitaph'. The book's preface might easily be mistaken for some of the early descriptions of Burns as the untutored, 'heaven-taught' ploughman. The author is described as having composed his poems 'from the untutored impulses of his own mind' due to the fact that 'his right to poetry was derived from the God that made him'.[29] Yet much like the emergence of Burns's Scottish parish schooling in the American press, Dinsmoor's 'heaven-taught' talents are later qualified by 'New England customs':

> Every one acquainted with New England customs, knows, that in a farmer's house, you commonly see, a Bible and Watt' Psalm-Book, his Lyric Poems, Pope's Essay on Man, Pilgrim's Progress, and an Almanac. This constitutes their library; and from sources like these, our author probably derived all his juvenile literature.[30]

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[27] See *Robert Dinsmoor's Scotch-Irish Poems* ed. by Frank Ferguson & Alister McReynolds (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2012) 'introduction'.
[28] See for example T. W. Moody, 'The Ulster Scots in Colonial and Revolutionary America: Part II' in *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 34:134 (1945) 85-94.
[29] Robert Dinsmoor, *Incidental Poems: accompanied with letters…Together with a preface, and sketch of the author's life (written by himself)* (Haverhill: A. W. Thayer, 1828) 'preface'.
[30] Ibid.

After discussing the merits of Shakespeare's and Addison's treatment of 'nature', the preface then extols the virtues of Dinsmoor's approach while acknowledging his literary limitations. While 'there is no art, no refinement, no sublimity' in his lines, there is a 'fresh importation of images from the living world'; his 'homely and rustic air' is described as 'profoundly original'.[31] The claims for Dinsmoor's 'originality' are on the basis of him being the first 'poet of domestic life as it is exhibited in New England'.[32] The preface goes onto describe the poet's close proximity to his 'muse':

> She is a nymph, dressed not in the classic wreaths of Greece and Rome; nor does she wear the roses and lilies of Italy or England. Her garland is white-weed, a less fanciful plant, but the production of our own soil. We hear, not the nightingales of a foreign grove, but the Bob'o'lincoms of our own'. [33]

Here, Dinsmoor rejects 'nightingales' (used as a motif by Roman, Greek and English poets ranging from Sappho to Keats) in favour of 'Bob' o' lincoms'; a loaded reference to both a species of bird unique to North America (the bobolink) and also William Cullen Bryant's corresponding poem 'Robert of Lincoln'.[34] Accordingly, Dinsmoor's 'muse' is described as entirely 'the production of our own soil'. The claim is a disputable one in that Dinsmoor borrows directly from Burns, but once again it seems the obvious influence of the Scottish poet was regarded as something entirely different from the 'classic wreaths of Greece and Rome' and the 'roses and lilies of Italy or England'. For all this, there remains a hint of American poetic inferiority; the muse's garland is depicted as being 'a less fanciful plant'.[35]

Acknowledging the ambitious claims of originality, the writer of the preface comes to admit that: 'It may be said that he writes in the Scotch dialect, and with manifest reference to Burns'. A defence of Dinsmoor is then put forward; firstly on the basis of his emigrant heritage ('respecting his using the Scotch dialect, we would remark, that he is really of Scotch descent, though of American birth') and finally on his adherence to scenes of locality ('whatever similitude there may be between them, he shews [sic] peculiar judgment in not transfusing, a single sample of foreign scenery into his native land'). In a more disputable statement, the writer then states that Dinsmoor 'began to write poetry probably before he knew

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[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Another poem titled 'The Bobolink' by Thomas Hill appeared in a bird-themed American poetry collection *Among the Birds: Selections from the Standard Poets*, ed. by Dana Estes (Boston: Dana Estes, 2009) 33. Bryant's 'Robert of Lincoln' appears on 40.
[35] *Incidental Poems*, 'preface'.

that Burns existed' and it was not until a friend gave him a copy of Burns's poetry that he realised that they 'were congenial spirits'.[36] There might well be some truth in Dinsmoor having experimented with poetry at a young age (he was two years older than Burns), yet it is hard to imagine that the Scots language effusions included in *Incidental Poems* were written before the New England poet had read Burns (though Allan Ramsay's Scots pastoral comedy *The Gentle Shepherd* might have been another formative influence given its popularity in America).[37]

It is also curious that Dinsmoor's use of dialect is wholly attributed to his 'Scotch-descent' rather than it being recognised as an aesthetic device. This was, perhaps, an attempt to answer the admittedly complex question of why Dinsmoor, born and bred in America, often chose to write in Scots as well as English. A useful comparison might here be drawn with contemporary 'labouring-class poets' across the Atlantic such as John Clare (1793-1864) in England and Samuel Thomson (1766-1816) in Ulster. Despite not hailing from Scotland, both poets produced works that adopted a 'heavily stylized, literary version of the Scots tongue' to various ends; whether political, regional or to express 'labouring-class' experience.[38]

Pertinently, Corey Andrews has recently recovered the connections between Burns and contemporary 'labouring-class' Scottish poets who were 'writing in his shadow' such as John Lapraik (1727-1807), David Sillar (1760-1830) and Janet Little (1759-1813).[39] While these poets were 'less admiring' (of Burns) than 'it appears on the surface', Andrews highlights a perceived affinity based on a 'shared nationality' and 'shared class status'. More explicitly, their 'strong feelings of kinship' with Burns were 'based upon the common experiences of living and working in rural Scotland.'[40] While Dinsmoor could claim little kinship with Burns on the basis of 'nationality' or 'working in rural Scotland', his desire to write a communal poetics that articulated New England characters, places and local habitation seems to have derived, to some extent, from a 'labouring-class' tradition that repelled the upper-class hegemony of English poetry (which might partly explain his decision to employ Scots).[41] However, rather than acknowledge direct kinship with Burns as a 'peasant' or

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[36] Ibid.
[37] *Scotland and America*, 127-129.
[38] Orr, 'Constructing the Ulster Labouring-Class Poet: The Case of Samuel Thomson', 37. See also Carol Baranuik, *James Orr: Poet and Irish Radical* (London: Routledge, 2014) and Valentina Bold, 'Janet Little "the Scotch Milkmaid" and "Peasant Poetry"' in *Scottish Literary Journal* 20:2 (1993) 21-30.
[39] Andrews, '"Far-fam'd RAB": Scottish Labouring-Class Poets', 41-67.
[40] Ibid., 42.
[41] The possible significance of this 'labouring-class' mould (for Dinsmoor and others) is discussed later in this chapter.

'labouring-class' poet, Dinsmoor's preface is more concerned with distinguishing his own 'originality' and use of the locale:

> If he resembles Burns, it is with all the diversity of the two countries in which each were born. Burns is the bonny Doon flowing through the banks and braes of Scotland; and Dinsmoor, is the Merrimack, passing through our western soil and reflecting from its crystal bed the western scenery through which it passes.[42]

In addition to depicting 'western scenery' such as the Merrimack River (which rises at the confluence of the Pemigewasset and Winnipesaukeer rivers in New Hampshire), many of Dinsmoor's poems specifically describe the Ulster-Scots emigrant experience in America. Writing in 'standard English' this time yet still employing Burns's favoured Habbie stanza, the poet remarks on the long journey made by Ulster-scots to America, 'this bless'd land':

Let us that Providence adore,
Though loud Atlantic billows roar,
Which took our sires from Albion's shore,
Or Scotia's strand,
And brought their offspring safely o'er
To this bless'd land.[43]

The positive depiction of America in the final line is reminiscent of Burns's own frequent association of the country with liberty. Where Burns was both empathetic and proleptic to the emigrant experience ('Tho' I to foreign lands must hie'[44]), Dinsmoor's poems directly narrate not just the anticipation and process of emigration but also the experiences of life in a newly settled 'bless'd land'. In a poem titled 'Thanksgiving Day'[45], the speaker delights at a family celebration beside a 'rousing fire' with 'wholesome fare', before turning to the wider issue of national politics and in particular the contentious rise of American Unitarianism:

Perhaps in leisure hours you choose
To pass the time, and to amuse,
The Unitarian scheme peruse;
But, sir, take heed,
Their subtle reasoning may confuse,
And wreck your creed. (19-24)

[42] *Incidental Poems*, 'preface'.
[43] Robert Dinsmoor, 'To Mrs. Agnes Park, On Receiving From Her a Copy of "Waverly"' [sic] in *Incidental Poems*, 13 (31-36).
[44] Robert Burns, 'Farewell To The Brethren of St James's Lodge, Tarbolton' in *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns,* Vol. 1, 49 (5)
[45] Robert Dinsmoor, 'Thanksgiving Day' in *Incidental Poems*, 102.

Lowell and Channing may debate,
As politicians, wise and great,
Predict their country's future fate,
By reasoning clear;
And shew blind rulers of the State,
What courses to steer; (25-30)

The references here to William Ellery Channing (1780-1842) and Reverend Charles Russell Lowell Sr. (1782-1861) are notable for a variety of reasons. Channing was a leading proponent of Unitarianism in America, arguing for the importance of human nature in discovering religious truths in his widely disseminated essays *The System of Exclusion and Denunciation in Religion* (1815) and *Objections to Unitarian Christianity Considered* (1819). His essays and sermons would come to be influential on the transcendentalist movement led by Ralph Waldo Emerson who, as will be discussed in some detail, recited a monumental tribute to Burns in Boston in 1859. Reverend Charles Russell Lowell, also a prominent Unitarian pastor at the West Congregational church in Boston, was the father of poet James Russell Lowell. Lowell not only met and corresponded with Emerson, but also formed part of the influential New England 'Fireside Poets'; many of whom cited Burns as an inspiring influence. While the oblique interconnectedness of American literary figures who all read and admired Burns is mildly fascinating in itself, a more interesting point begins to emerge when reading the subsequent verses of Dinsmoor's poem:

But shall they teach us to degrade
Him, who is all creation's Head?
The mighty God, who all things made,
Call him a creature?
Say Godhead never was display'd
In human nature! (31-36)

Ferociously renouncing the Unitarianism of Lowell and Channing, Dinsmoor, an elder at a Presbyterian church, upholds a strict Calvinist orthodoxy. For Dinsmoor, it is an insult that 'The mighty God, who all things made' could ever be considered as being present 'In human nature'. The main point here is that - despite their widely conflicting religious and philosophical outlooks - Dinsmoor, Lowell and Emerson all either praised or, to some extent, copied Burns. This observation admittedly needs to be qualified by vast and important differences in historical context, yet it still provides a valuable example of how Burns's poetry

was to be adopted and appropriated by divergent American theological groups and individuals; whether it be conservative Calvinists or progressive transcendentalists.

Dinsmoor's Scots-Language poems and David Bruce

If, as Susan Manning has suggested, Burns's musings on religion are particularly difficult to pigeonhole, (for all 'the poetic ridicule' he 'remained a churchgoer all his life'[46]), the strict Calvinist currents running through Robert Dinsmoor's poems are far less ambiguous. That is not to say Dinsmoor necessarily read and regarded Burns as a deeply religious poet. Yet it is also unlikely that he would have imitated - to any great extent - a poet that he deemed 'ungodly' or offensive. Dinsmoor wrote his religious effusions in both Scots and English, adding complexity to the question of why the poet seemed to seamlessly switch registers. As previously discussed, Dinsmoor's English verses often hailed 'The mighty God, who all things made', but equally his Scots verses depict a fearful, Calvinistic relationship with God:

> If we can trust what Scripture saith,
> Christ is our God, an' Saviour baith,
> Then let us fix our hope an' faith
> On that foundation;
> Wha trusts aught else, maun sink in death
> An' deep damnation![47]

There are other occasions where Dinsmoor's Scots-verse achieves a typically Burnsian dramatic tone or comic effect. In 'Spring's Lamentation and Confession'[48], for example, Dinsmoor begins his verses about a dog with familiar comic irony:

> Long hae I liv'd wi' kind Miss Bessy,
> Wha kept me cozie, warm an' fleshy;
> In lanely hours she would caress me,
> An' mak' me fain,
> Baith e'en an' morn I gat a messy,
> As though her wean. (7-12)

[46] Susan Manning, 'Burns and God' in *Robert Burns and Cultural Authority* ed. by Robert Crawford, 113-136 (129).
[47] Robert Dinsmoor, 'Answer To The Rev. David M'Gregore' in *Incidental Poems*, 110 (27-30).
[48] Robert Dinsmoor, 'Spring's Lamentation and Confession' in *Incidental Poems*, 49.

Dinsmoor similarly uses Scots to channel Burns's egalitarian vernacular energy. For example, in a poetic response to a letter received from Silas Beton, who had complained of her poverty and lack of corn, Dinsmoor wrote:

> I aye was free wi' a' my might,
> To help the poor dependant wight,
> Nor wad I drive him out at night,
> Amang the snaw;
> To warm his bluid, I took delight
> An' fill his maw.[49]

The language here takes on added resonance and associational power given the familiarity readers might have had with Burns's common poetic reverence for those 'constantly on poortith's brink'.[50] Dinsmoor's volume also included a small miscellaneous collection of poems written by other New-Englanders who were writing in Scots. These poems are largely similar to the early 'imitation poems' that appeared in the American dailies, and it is likely that many of them had in fact been collected and reprinted from the periodical press. While the majority remained unsigned, others are attributed to authors, with a Revd. David M'Gregore being the most frequent contributor (whose verses are largely similar to Dinsmoor's own) and most notably a Scots poem by a young 'J.G. Whittier', which will be discussed later in this chapter.

One poet not included in the volume, and who Dinsmoor might be best compared with, is David Bruce (c.1760-1830). With no attempt at concealing where his inspiration lay, Bruce wrote his own *Poems Chiefly in The Scottish Dialect,* printed by John Colerick in the Pittsburgh town of Washington in 1801. Though preceding Dinsmoor, Bruce cannot be counted among the 'American-born' poets who reveal the poetic influence of Burns given he emigrated from Caithness to Maryland in 1784. Nonetheless, his poems, arguably more so than Dinsmoor, reflected on distinctly local themes, with many referencing national and state politics such as his fervent satires on the Pennsylvania State officials. Bruce's poems originally appeared in the *Western Telegraphe* or *Washington Advertiser* signed under the pseudonym of the 'The Scots-Irishman', and it was not until Colerick printed the full volume that the poet's true identity was revealed.

Hailing from Caithness, Scotland, Bruce's self-presentation as 'The Scots Irishman' could, rather tentatively, be linked to the possibility he spent a portion of his formative years

[49] Robert Dinsmoor, 'To Silas Betton' in *Incidental Poems*, 123 (13-18).
[50] Robert Burns, 'The Twa Dogs' in *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, Vol. 1, 141 (104).

in County Londonderry.[51] Yet his 'Scots-Irish' personae might also have fitted with an overtly political intent to comment on national topics whilst maintaining an egalitarian, 'everyman' status in his Pittsburgh locale. As Anatol Lieven has commented, the Scots-Irish (or Ulster-Scots) were renowned for their critical attitudes towards 'educated elites' and thus Bruce's persona and linguistic register might well have been fraught with subtle implications.[52] This would negate David Simpson's claim that early American dialect poetry avoided 'confrontations or polemical positions' with 'good humor'; citing the example of John Adams's 'Ploughjogger' persona that, despite chastising 'the learned and political class', was far from being the 'conscious voice of an oppressed or misunderstood class of Americans.'[53]

A note attached to Bruce's poem, 'To Whiskey'[54], offers another clue to his choice of pseudonym, citing both the large population of Ulster-Scots in America and also their 'attachments' (whether economic or recreational) to Whiskey:

> The Author thought too, as the people, who are distinguished by the name of *Scots-Irish*, were the most numerous in the country, and were remarkable for their attachment to the subject of this Poem, to assume the language and appellation of a Scots-Irishman, would add to his celebrity.[55]

While retaining the comic strains of the preface, the poem itself is also extremely political, and strongly derivative of Burns's language, form and biting satirical power:

> Great Pow'r, that warms the heart and liver,
> And puts the bluid a' in a fever,
> If dull and heartless I am ever,
> A Blast o' thee
> Maks me as blyth, and brisk and clever
> As ony bee. (1-6)

Over eight verses, Bruce's speaker responds to the 'Whiskey Rebellion' of 1794, an organised social movement that resisted the 'Whiskey tax 'imposed by treasury secretary Alexander

[51] See <http://www.ulsterscotslanguage.com/en/texts/biography/david-bruce-ulster-scot-american-poet/> [accessed 29/12/15].
[52] *America Right or Wrong*, 96.
[53] *The Politics of American English*, 109.
[54] David Bruce, 'To Whiskey' in David Bruce, *Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect, originally written under the Signature of the Scots-Irishman, by a Native of Scotland. With Notes and Illustrations* (Washington: John Colerick, 1801) 11.
[55] Ibid.

Hamilton; a measure the politician imposed to tackle the national debt incurred during the revolutionary war. Here, Burns's poetic reactions (namely 'Scotch Drink' and 'The Author's Earnest Cry and Prayer') to the Westminster Wash Act of 1784 more than likely offered Bruce inspiration for his own (strikingly similar) campaign on the opposite side of the Atlantic.[56] Though protestors in Western Pennsylvania – many of Ulster-Scots descent – frequently used violence and intimidation to oppose the tax, Bruce's speaker in fact shows unity with the federal government whilst maintaining his 'everyman' Scots-Irish persona:

> Then foul befa' the ungratefu' deil
> That wou'd begrudge to pay right weel,
> For a' the blessings that ye yiel
> In sic a Store;
> I'd nae turn round upo' my heel
> For sixpence more. (49-54)

This is not the only poem in which Bruce employs Scots to comment on local and national politics, suggesting he deemed the idiom appropriate for both serious and comic purpose in the United States (or at the very least appropriate for an audience of Ulster-Scots settlers *within* the United States). Unlike the preface to Dinsmoor's volume, which discussed and dispelled accusations of Burns mimicry, the introduction to Bruce's *Poems* is focued on establishing the poet's own political intentions. Citing a comparison to Peter Pindar's poetry that 'gibed and ridiculed the sovereign of Britain', the preface, apparently written by Bruce himself, rhetorically states: 'and why may not I pass a few jokes on the Sovereign of America for the like *royal* qualities, not to say for worse?'[57] Over twenty of the poems included were written in Scots, including political effusions such as 'The Author's Political Opinion' ('Whether Patricians rule the state/An' mak the laws wi' grave debate')[58] and 'A Canny Word to the Democrats of the West' ('Is there ony proud Laird/ To mak ye afeard').[59] While there is no mention of Burns in the preface, Bruce does include his own 'Verses to the memory of Robert

[56] The Wash Act of 1784 'cracked down on illegal Scottish distilleries and taxed the legal ones more heavily than before'. See Marilyn Butler, 'Burns and Politics' in *Robert Burns and Cultural Authority* ed. by Robert Crawford, 86-113 (93).
[57] *Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect, originally written under the Signature of the Scots-Irishman,* 6.
[58] David Bruce, 'The Author's Political Opinion' in *Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect,* 34 (18-19).
[59] David Bruce, 'A Canny Word to the Democrats of the West' in *Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*, 44 (13-14).

Burns the Scottish poet'.[60] Written in 'standard English', the poem celebrates the 'enchanting power' of the 'sweet poet of the plain' and is also suggestive of Burns's poetic versatility:

> Whether thy genius chose to paint
> The grave or comic scene,
> Our ravish'd souls still bless's the Bard,
> In ev'ry varying strain. (20-24)

Though addressed to Burns, the lines might easily have referred to Allan Ramsay's earlier reaction against 'affected Delicacies' and 'studied Refinements' in *The Evergreen*.[61] Clearly viewing Scots as far from limiting, both Bruce and Dinsmoor successfully adopt the language, appropriating it to their own, localised ends. This indicates that Scots – as a poetic language – had not only been transported to America through Burns and his predecessors, but that it was continuing to, on some scale, evolve in the United States through Ulster-Scots-American poets. While their poetics, language and form might have harked back to the 'old world', the content of both Bruce and Dinsmoor's poetry, whether political, religious or sentimental, was very much concerned with the 'new'.

Dinsmoor and Bruce appear to have had different interpretations of, and uses for, Burns's poetics. Where Dinsmoor's poetic orthodoxy derives directly from the image of a 'bard' concerned with upholding and narrating their immediate locale, Bruce invokes a different aspect of Burns's poetic consciousness through his use of Scots to express widespread political discontent. For Bruce, writing in the Scots vernacular of the 'old world' while commenting on contemporary issues was a powerful and satirical poetic tool that simultaneously highlighted and castigated hierarchal class structures. Dinsmoor, channelling the emotive and nostalgic power of Burns, used vernacular language and form to set himself into the mould of a 'Rustic Bard' who, as Burns was deemed to have done in Ayrshire, had organically sprung from the roots of 'Western Soil' in New England; with the parallels further demonstrating the lasting influence of Burns's 'heaven-taught ploughman' persona.[62]

Considering this prominent and dualistic influence, it might well be argued that Bruce and Dinsmoor were the first published poets in America to produce entire volumes that owed directly to the Scottish poet. However, given American literary historiography has largely

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[60] David Bruce, 'Verses to the memory of Robert Burns the Scottish poet' in *Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*, 28.
[61] Allan Ramsay, *The ever green, being a collection of Scots poems* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1724) 'preface'
[62] For a stimulating summary of the 'Decline and Fall' of the 'heaven-taught ploughman' see *The Genius of Scotland*, 109-145.

ignored both poets, it is clear why Burns's influence here has gone undocumented. The same might be said for possible connections with later poets such as Frank Lebby Stanton (1857-1927) or Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906); both of whom wrote dialect poetry that echoed, if not derived from, some of Burns's widely available Scots-language effusions. However, as conceptions of America's poetic 'canon' continue to evolve and reformulate around wider linguistic, ethnic and 'national' parameters, these minor dialect poets might certainly be granted further attention in future. As Christopher Beach summarises, when considering the literary historiography of canonical American literature in the present day, there is now 'far less consensus' about which poets might be included.[63] That said, in the context of the nineteenth century, it remains important to explore the possibility that Burns, in addition to influencing minor dialect poets, might have been of some importance to (contemporarily considered) mainstream American poets. Thus, we must turn to a group who were instrumental in the formation and construction of what came to be regarded as the first major American poetic 'canon'; the New England-based 'Fireside Poets'.

The Fireside Poets

As opinions and anxieties over the status of American literature continued to be debated throughout the early decades of the nineteenth century, a canonical coalescence began to emerge around a group of New England-based poets by the 1840s. Known variously as the 'Fireside Poets', 'Schoolroom Poets' and, less commonly, the 'Household Poets', this group consisted of William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878), Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)[64], Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882), John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892), Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. (1809-1894), and James Russell Lowell (1819-1891.[65] Though these individuals knew each other and, in some instances, regularly corresponded, they did not self-identify as a contemporary literary circle. It was, initially at least, their shared models of poetic value that focused on domestic ('Fireside') and pedagogical ('Schoolroom') spheres that drew them together and conferred a canonical status that was unprecedented in American literature.[66]

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[63] Christopher Beach, *The Cambridge Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 6.

[64] Having pioneered the later Transcendentalist movement of the mid-nineteenth century, it is uncommon for Emerson to be referred to as a Fireside writer. However, for the purpose of this chapter, which focuses on the collective significance of Burns to these six writers, I have adhered to John Timberman Newcomb's situating of Emerson within the 'Fireside canon'.

[65] John Timberman Newcomb, *Would Poetry Disappear?: American Verse and the Crisis of Modernity* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2004) 4.

[66] 'Fireside Poets' in *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics,* 4th edn, ed. by Stephen Cushman, Clare Cavanagh, Jahan Ramazani & Paul Rouzer (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012) 491.

The call for America to produce its own 'canon' of great poets, so widely argued in the periodical press of the early nineteenth century, had been answered by this group of writers who achieved a level of fame and popularity to rival that of any British or European literary figure.

Few would contest that the half-dozen Fireside Poets were among the first inductees to a national poetic canon in the Unites States. However, as Josh Timberman Newcomb argues, recent scholarship has demonstrated that 'American verse was a much richer and more varied discourse than most histories have admitted' and it has been a disservice to reduce nineteenth-century (American) literary history to 'a single canonical narrative focused upon them'.[67] While figures like Robert Dinsmoor, David Bruce and Paul Laurence Dunbar provide examples of the great tonal, stylistic and ideological variety of American verse in the period, the sheer dominance of the Fireside canon meant that, by the turn of the twentieth century, the New England poets were collectively the best known literary figures in the nation; with their popularity being supported and maintained by educational institutions across the country.

In her book *Schoolroom Poets*, Angela Sorby has mapped out how the poems of Longfellow and Whittier in particular formed 'an archive of popular memory' through dissemination and repetition not just in schools, but also 'museums, lyceums, theaters, newspapers, and children's magazines, and clubs'.[68] Not only did these poets become beacons of the nation's literary culture, but they also evolved into 'icons of middle class taste' with various 'Household editions' and textbooks such as 'the multimillion selling *McGuffrey's Reader*' regularly being present in homes across the country.[69] Beyond literature, the Fireside writers were influential in socio-political spheres; with many of them leading abolitionist movements and contributing towards the establishment of the highly successful *Atlantic Monthly* magazine in Boston.

The Fireside group's rise to prominence as the first great 'canonical poets' of America holds a certain irony in that, rather than promoting a 'progressive' image of identity, they often espoused nostalgic virtues of childhood, small-town life and pastoral settings (in their poetry if not prose and political writings). Even their poetic form often adhered to classical convention, predominantly consisting of regular meters, full rhymes and accessible sentiments that, pertaining to a pedagogical function, could easily be remembered and recited. It was

[67] *Would Poetry Disappear?*, 4.
[68] Angela Sorby, *Schoolroom Poets: Childhood, Performance and the Place of American Poetry, 1865-1917*, (Durham: University of New Hampshire Press, 2005) 'introduction'.
[69] *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, 491.

these conventions that early twentieth century modernists would later define themselves against, given the Fireside canon's dominance left them 'with virtually no reservoir of imagery, voice, or subject matter'[70] through which they could articulate themselves. The purpose here is not to further narrate the trajectory of American literary history, but to highlight the sheer presence and pervasive influence that this group of poets had from the 1840s right through to the end of the century. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the widespread availability of Burns's poetry coupled with his reputation for depicting the 'manners of our rustics'[71], it so happened that many of the Fireside writers read and, to some extent, found inspiration in the Scottish poet. In considering whether Burns's 'wee-bit ingle, blinkan bonilie'[72] did indeed ignite Fireside imaginations, it is important, first of all, to consider the poetry of an individual who, in his rural self-fashioning and liberal political leanings, would come to be considered by some critics as the 'American Burns'. [73]

John Greenleaf Whittier

Born and raised at a rural homestead in Haverhill, Massachusetts (the same town in which Robert Dinsmoor resided) it is unsurprising that the young John Greenleaf Whittier was to become aware of Scots verse as his poetic sensibilities began to develop and mature in the 1820s. Among the miscellaneous section in Dinsmoor's *Incidental Poems*, a Scots poem titled 'To The Rustic Bard' was printed and attributed to 'J.G. Whittier'. Whittier critics have concurred that this was 'the first printing of one of Whittier's poems in book form'[74], significant in that it - notwithstanding the significance of Dinsmoor's own verse - not only confirms the importance of recovering the volume, but also reveals Whittier's playful adoption of Scots language poetry in his formative years. In critical editions and biographical accounts, Burns has frequently been cited as being 'one of Whittier's important early influences' and it has been suggested that the Scottish poet's 'rustic simplicity' and 'directness of expression'[75] were inspirational for Whittier (to the point where he was labelled 'the American Burns').[76] The conflation of Burns and Whittier partly stems from the American poet's 1840 composition 'Burns. On receiving a Sprig of Heather in Blossom', a poem that will be examined in more

[70] *Would Poetry Disappear?*, 4.
[71] Robert Heron, *Observations* [1793] quoted from *The Critical Heritage,* 97.
[72] Robert Burns, 'The Cotter's Saturday Night' in *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns,* Vol. 1, 146 (23).
[73] *The Critical Heritage,* 432.
[74] *The Letters of John Greenleaf Whittier: 1828-1845*, ed. by John B. Pickard, Vol. 1 (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1975) 8.
[75] 'John Greenleaf Whittier' in *Encyclopedia of American Poetry: The Nineteenth Century*, 479.
[76] *The Critical Heritage,* 432.

detail shortly. In Whittier's much earlier 'To The Rustic Bard', however, the bard in question is not Burns, but – in an intriguing example of 'rhizomatic' transatlantic influence - the Ulster-Scots-American poet Robert Dinsmoor. An early catalogue of Whittier's personal library reveals that Whittier, who was twenty-one when *Incidental Poems* first appeared, owned both Dinsmoor's volume and also the 1828 Philadelphia edition of *The Works of Robert Burns* (printed by J. Crissy and J. Grigg). According to a note in the catalogue, the *Works* contained numerous 'pencil markings by him' and it was the 'first copy of Burns's poems ever owned by Mr Whittier'.[77] This might suggest that Whittier was reading the work of both poets (at least in full book form) in the same year. However, biographies of Whittier have claimed that it was his childhood teacher Joshua Coffin who should be first credited with 'introducing him to a knowledge of Burns, whose poems he read aloud once as the family sat by the fireside in the evening'.[78] Nevertheless, Whittier's early verses to New Hampshire's own 'Rustic Bard' remain fascinating for their use and appropriation of Scots as a poetic language.

The Scots verses addressed to Dinsmoor are revealing of both Whittier's early humility and ambitions in regards to becoming a poet. The speaker deems it an 'honor to be ca'd/ Yere rhymin' brither,'[79] while acknowledging that his young muse 'Is na possessor' of skill compared with Dinsmoor's ('But yours has been a lang time busy - /An auld transgressor') (10-12). The speaker then turns to dismiss the 'heartless sneer' of critics who 'urge their wordy weir' (19-20), suggesting that Dinsmoor's self-fashioning as a 'rustic' writing in Scots) had been subject to much 'taunt an' jeer' (21). Yet for Whittier's speaker, critical jibes 'canna mak' the muse less dear,' (23) and poets must ignore 'What fools may chance to say' in the knowledge that 'wise men roose us' (35-39). Whittier implies that to 'wear the garb' (34) of a rustic is not a regressive tendency but a pertinent aesthetic device that only 'wise men' could understand. The verses that follow convey a typically Burnsian dismissal of the hypocrisy of those in 'name, rank, or station':

> But whyles they need a castigation,
> Shall either name, or rank, or station,
> Protect them frae the flagellation,
> Sae muckle needed?

[77] *Catalogue of manuscripts, books and autographs from the library of the late John Greenleaf Whittier, comprising original manuscripts…autograph letters of the highest literary interest; works hitherto undescribed. Mr. Whittier's own copies; author's presentation copies, etc., etc., To be sold at auction … February 6th, 1903 … John Anderson, jr. auctioneer,* (New York: Taylor, 1903) 4.
[78] 'Biographical Sketch' in *The Complete Poetical Works of Whittier* ed. by H.E Scudder (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1894) 12.
[79] 'J.G. Whittier To The "Rustic Bard"' in *Incidental Poems*, 243 (4-5).

Shall vice an' crimes that "taint the nation"
Pass on unheeded?

No! let the muse her trumpet take,
'Till auld offenders learn to shake,
An' tremble when they hear her wake
Her tones o' thunder;
'Till pride, an' bloated ignorance quake,
An' gawkies wonder. (36-47)

The nationalist tone here is significant and, as was the case with Bruce and Dinsmoor, Whittier's use of Scots language while commenting on American affairs effects added satirical bite. It is not entirely clear what specific 'crimes' '"taint the nation"', but given the literary subject matter it would seem that the speaker is referring to the pomp of critics who, in their 'pride an' bloated ignorance', are dismissive of the Scots pastoral effusions of Dinsmoor and like-minded poets. Whittier's speaker concludes with a powerful statement of resistance:

Farewell! The poet's hopes an' fears
May vanish frae this vale o' tears;
An' curtain'd wi forgotten years,
His muse may lie;
But virtue's form, unscaith'd appears –
It canna die! (54-59)

The speaker extols the 'virtue' in Dinsmoor's poetics, further inflected by Whittier's own adoption of Scots language and the Standard Habbie throughout the poem. Whittier suggests that such criticism is finite; over time it will be 'curtain'd wi forgotten years,'. Though this early poem cannot be counted among the poet's significant compositions and does not – directly at least – reference Burns, it is still highly evocative of the poet's acceptance and approval of Scots as a viable language for poetry. Indeed, Whittier's use of Scots appears to have formed part of his development as a poet through his experimentations with different verse forms and vernacular language. In addition to 'J.G. Whittier to the Rustic Bard', Whittier also contributed a Scots poem to a local Haverhill newspaper which he signed under the pseudonym 'Donald'.[80] More significantly, he wrote and signed 'The Drunkard to his Bottle' in 1829, a poem which was preceded by a note that referenced Burns:

[80] *Catalogue of manuscripts, books and autographs*, 8.

> I was thinking of the temperance lyrics the great poet of Scotland might have written had he put his name to a pledge of abstinence, a thing unhappily known in his day. The result of my cogitation was this poor imitation of dialect.[81]

The poem is largely comic in tone with a rejuvenated speaker celebrating his 'weel-spent day' (35) after refraining from the 'witches' broo' (32). Though easily dismissed as a trivial, at best playfully comic, Scots poem, the preceding note reveals the influence of Currie's frequently reprinted moralising depiction of Burns having been a victim to the 'pollution of inebriation'. For Whittier, it was unfortunate that such temperance was 'unhappily known' to Burns, foreshadowing later celebrations of the poet that lamented his bacchanalian persuasions.[82] While Whittier's experimentations with Scots account for very little in the grand scheme of his prolific writing career, these poems, at the very least, reveal that Burns was a formative influence.

Unsurprisingly, the one poem critics have commonly referenced when suggesting Burns's influence is 'Burns. On a receiving a sprig of heather in blossom'[83], which was written in 1840 - almost three decades after Whittier's early Scots poems. Burns critics have predominantly cited the version of the poem found in Donald. A Low's *The Critical Heritage*, which omits several stanzas of the original version. The first stanza of the full-length version is in fact one of the most interesting for its image of Burns's poetry 'blooming' in New England soil and beyond. The image is particularly pertinent to the idea that the temporal spread of Burns's work and reputation might be thought of as a 'rhizomatic efflorescence':

> No more these simple flowers belong
> To Scottish maid and lover:
> Sown in the common soil of song,
> They bloom the wide world over. (1-4)

As was the case in 'The Drunkard to his Bottle', there are echoes of Currie's 'prefatory remarks' in Whittier's appreciation for Burns, given the biographer's emphasis on how Burns and his poetry might be influential 'beyond the limits' of Scotland, as outlined in the previous

[81] 'The Drunkard to His Bottle' in *The Complete Poetical Works of John Greenleaf Whittier*, 490.
[82] Whittier was not alone in his sober lamentation. In 1859, Edinburgh's Total Abstinence Society attracted over 2,500 guests to its Burns centenary celebration. See Murray Pittock and Christopher A. Whatley, 'Poems and Festivals, Art and Artefact' in *The Scottish Historical Review*, 93:236 (2014) 56-79 (72).
[83] 'Burns. On a receiving a sprig of heather in blossom' in *The Complete Poetical Works of John Greenleaf Whittier*, 196 (1-4).

chapter. In the verses that follow, the speaker channels the 'old tunes' of Burns in order to appreciate the nature that pervades their own locality:

> I hear the blackbird in the corn,
> The locust in the haying;
> And like the fabled hunter's horn,
> Old tunes my heart is playing. (23-26)

Whittier suggests that 'Scotland's heathery hills' have been matched by his own 'native rills' that echo 'wood hymns chanting over' (44-47). In addition to Burns's treatment of nature, the egalitarian language of the poet was also clearly inspirational for Whittier; most evident in his description of 'Man Uprising' against 'rank and pomp' (49-50) and the sense of virtue to be found 'among the lowly':

> With clearer eyes I saw the worth
> Of life among the lowly;
> The Bible at his Cotter's hearth
> Had made my own more holy. (49-55)

While Whittier identifies a sense of pious 'worth' in Burns's poetry, he also acknowledges the supposed flaws of the man. In a stanza that has previously been neglected by critics (owing to its omission from Donald A. Low's *The Critical Heritage*) the influence of ideological biographical accounts is obvious:

> Lament who will the ribald line
> Which tells his lapse from duty,
> How kissed the maddening lips of wine
> Or wanton ones of beauty; (95-98)

Here, Burns's supposed tendencies towards 'the ribald line', inebriation and fondness for 'wanton' women is considered a 'lapse of duty' and, following Currie's lead, Whittier appears almost apologetic, suggesting that Burns should, 'like Magdalen', be 'forgiven'. (95-102). Towards the end of the poem, Whittier refers back to the aforementioned trope of setting Burns apart from the European literary establishment:

> Not his the song whose thunderous chime
> Eternal echoes render;
> The mournful Tuscan's haunted rhyme,

And Milton's starry splendor! (100-105)

Contrasting the 'lettered pomp' (115) of 'Tuscan's haunted rhyme' (Dante) and 'Milton's starry splendor', Whittier conveys an enthusiasm for the successful humility of Burns's pastoral poetry. For Whittier, the 'Epic's stately rhyme' (117) cannot rival Burns's poetic appreciation of nature ('But who his human heart has laid/ To Nature's bosom nearer'.) (105-106)

Despite Whittier's unbounded poetic praise, Gerard Carruthers suggests that Burns is ultimately reduced 'in his literary amplitude'; Whittier's perception of Burns as a primitive bard of nature is, Carruthers argues, a 'precisely conservative' reading of the poet and verges on being 'evasively anti-intellectual'.[84] We know, from both the aforementioned poetic allusions and later bibliographical catalogues, that Whittier read Burns through the biographical gaze of Currie, which might help to explain the absence of any political (or radical) associations in his poetical tribute. However, Carruthers also suggests that, elsewhere in his poetry, 'Whittier finds Burns an altogether more actively political influence', stating that the American poet's anti-slavery poems, in particular 'To W.L.G' (1833), owes much to 'the sentiment of outraged universal and national sensibility'[85] present in 'Robert Bruce's March to Bannockburn' and 'Is there for honest poverty'. This serves as a reminder of an important, under-acknowledged element of Whittier's poetry and political writings. Frequently in Whittier's poetry, progressive undercurrents and abolitionist sensibilities are intertwined with homely, pastoral themes. By acknowledging this dualistic aspect of Whittier's craft, we might better gauge both the influence of Burns and the parallels between the two poets. Whittier was not a 'primitive bard' *per se*, but, like Burns, frequently alluded to the pastoral realm to reflect on universal themes.

In concluding on the importance of Burns's poetry for Whittier, let us turn to 1866; the approximate end date of this study and also the year that the American poet published, arguably, his best known narrative poem, 'Snow-bound'.[86] Set in a rural Haverhill Homestead over three days as a snowstorm rages outside, the poem's chronicling of sublime domesticity is unequivocally resonant of Burns's 'The Cotter's Saturday Night'. Even the dreary opening scenes of the poems' are strikingly similar, with Burns's speaker depicting how 'November chill blaws loud wi' angry sugh;/The short'ning winter-day is near a close (10-11); and the

[84] Carruthers, 'Burns's Political Reputation in North America', 92-93.
[85] Ibid.
[86] John Greenleaf Whittier, 'Snowbound' in *The Poetical Works of John Greenleaf Whittier* (London: Macmillan and co. 1874) 351.

narrator in 'Snowbound' describing how 'The sun that brief December day/ Rose cheerless over hills of gray' (1-2). Though both poems begin with simple scenes of pastoral domesticity, the respective verses that follow are densely packed with imagery, metaphor and socio-historical references. Nigel Leask has recently drawn attention to the socio-political relevance of Burns's pastoral poem, which twentieth-century critics often missed (David Daiches, for example, called it a 'very imperfect' poem and Burns's most 'imitative and artificial' work).[87] Referring to the concluding stanzas, Leask points to the political language of the poem which 'breathes radical energy into the quiescent genre of cottage pastoral'[88] through its attack on luxury and aristocratic privilege ('The *Cottage* leaves the *Palace* far behind:/What is a lordling's pomp? a cumbrous load) (168-169). Similarly, Whittier's 'Snow-Bound' - also previously considered a backward-looking lamentation - has received a revitalised sense of attention in the past few decades, with James E. Rocks asserting the poem's relevance to 'the post-Civil War period of anticipated reconciliation and the reuniting of the "house divided"':

> It is not ours to separate
> The tangled skein of will and fate,
> To show what metes and bounds should
> Stand
> Upon the soul's debatable land, (579-582)

Rocks goes further to suggest that 'the poem's rhetoric of reconciliation and consolation' points towards 'a future in which all wrongs will be righted and freedom will replace slavery'[89]; a reading that differs widely from earlier responses that reductively labelled the poem as a mere representation of the simplicity of 'New England Country life'.[90] The dualistic evolution of criticism towards both poems is, perhaps inadvertently, revealing of a uniting parallel that adds much to our understanding of the interrelationship between Burns and Whittier. In their fusion of the domestic, pastoral sphere with the political sublime, both poets unite the various discourses of their ages to present deceivingly complex compositions. This observation, in addition to his much earlier experiments with language, form and the vernacular, might give further credence to the idea that John Greenleaf Whittier was, more so than any other poet at least, closest to being the 'American Burns' of the nineteenth century.

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[87] David Daiches, *Robert Burns* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1951) 151.
[88] *Robert Burns and Pastoral*, 231.
[89] James E. Rocks, 'Whittier's "Snow-Bound": "The Circle of Our Hearth" and the Discourse on Domesticity' in *Studies in the American Renaissance* (1993) 339-353 (343).
[90] 'Biographical Sketch' in The *Complete Poetical Works of Whittier*, 17.

James Russell Lowell and American Vernacular Verse

One Fireside poet who has been slightly neglected in Burns criticism (though not entirely ignored) is James Russell Lowell.[91] While there is a growing critical awareness of Burns in relation to the Fireside poets - spearheaded by Robert Crawford and Carol McGuirk who both comment on Burns's stylistic influence on Bryant, Holmes and Longfellow[92] - little has been said about Lowell, which is surprising given he was an early advocate of promoting and experimenting with American vernacular poetry. One of Lowell's earliest poems was his 1837 composition, 'Imitation of Burns' which was first published in the Harvard 'college periodical' *Harvardinia,*[93] though it did not make the cut for his first collected edition.[94] Like Whittier, it seems that Lowell's poetic apprenticeship included a playful engagement with (and imitation of) Burns's Scots language poetry. While Whittier's foray into the vernacular was brief, Lowell remained a proponent of vernacular poetry and a scholar of linguistics throughout his life, eventually co-founding the American Dialect Society in 1898, just two years prior to his death.[95] Arguing that formal poetic language ('standard English') was insufficient for depicting 'American' customs, Lowell's early engagement with Burns must surely have shaped his views on dialect poetry.[96] Without exaggerating their transatlantic interconnectedness, it is worth remembering that Lowell's vernacular effusions appeared shortly after he (and Whittier) had experimented with Scots language poetry; both poets seemingly receptive to a linguistic 'variant' of Standard English for poetic purposes.

In the 1840s, Lowell, also an ardent abolitionist, was increasingly involved in reformist politics and anti-slavery movements, rising to become chief editorial writer of *The Pennsylvania Freeman* and *The National Anti-Slavery Standard* between 1846 and 1848. It was during this period - and in these newspapers - that the poet first began to publish his American vernacular verses under the pseudonym 'Hosea Biglow'.[97] By the end of 1848, the first series of *The Biglow Papers* were published in book form and edited by Lowell under the

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[91] In 'Haunted By Authority' Carol McGuirk makes brief reference to Lowell.
[92] See McGuirk,'Haunted By Authority', 136-157 and Crawford, 'America's Bard', 99-106.
[93] *Harvardinia* 4 (Cambridge: John Owen, 1838) 31.
[94] For a full list of early Lowell poems published in *Harvardinia*, see *A bibliography of the first editions in book form of the writings of James Russell Lowell, compiled largely from the collection formed by the late Jacob Chester Chamberlain, with assistance from his notes and memoranda,* ed. by Luther Samuel Livingston and Jacob Chester Chamberlain (New York: The De Vinne Press, 1914) 3.
[95] See Jayne Crane Harder, 'James Russell Lowell: Linguistic Patriot' in *American Speech* 29:3 (1954) 181-186.
[96] Ibid., 181.
[97] See Todd N. Thompson, 'From Brahmin to Biglow (and Back Again): James Russell Lowell as Temporary Satirist' in *A Journal of the American Renaissance* 58:2 (2012) 154-184.

persona of 'Rev. Mr Homer Wilbur'. Largely abolitionist and anti-war (the poet opposed the Mexican-American War of the same decade) in thematic content, *The Biglow Papers* are a formal and linguistic medley of prose, satirical verse, 'Yankee' dialect, 'standard English' and Latin. Annotated with an array of bemusing referential notes and self-reflexive intrusions, the book almost appears – through the gaze of the twenty first century reader at least – as an experiment in proto-postmodernism. Reviewing one of the last scholarly editions of *The Biglow Papers* in 1978, John W. Crowley highlighted the immediate and widespread success of *The Biglow Papers* upon publication in 1848, stating that the vernacular verses 'were copied everywhere' and that their popularity extended to Britain. Yet Crowley further notes that Lowell's 'literary reputation has plummeted in the twentieth century',[98] and it seems this trend has continued with little commentary on (or revised editions of) *The Biglow Papers* to date.[99] For its ambitious, if playful, approach towards vernacular language and its contextual backdrop of the Mexican-American War, the literary-historical value of the work alone might justify a revival of interest in the twenty first century.

The Biglow Papers begins with a series of hyperbolic mock-reviews that convey the divisive nature of Lowell's use of vernacular language. Evoking Burnsian 'rustic garb' that impacts 'on the heart', a quote from the grandiosely named 'Universal Literary Universe' suggests that the following poems point towards an 'indigenous' American literature:

> We hail the appearance of this work as a long stride toward the formation of a purely aboriginal, indigenous, native, and American literature. We rejoice to meet with an author national enough to break away from the slavish deference, too common among us, to English grammar and orthography.[100]

In contrast, a subsequent 'extract' from the 'Saltriver Pilot and Flag of Freedom' suggests that the writer has 'raked all the gutters of our language'; with another review stating that 'the general style of diction was susceptible of a higher polish'.[101] In what appears to be an irreverent elevation of the work into the realms of high literary appraisal, what follows is a series of Latin reviews. Here, Lowell simultaneously derides criticisms aimed at the poetic vernacular, yet refrains from rendering it a serious literary device through his use of comic

[98] John W. Crowley, '*James Russell Lowell's The Biglow Papers [First Series]: A Critical Edition* (review)*'* in *The New England Quarterly,* 51:2 (1978) 279-281.
[99] See also Nils Erik Enkvist, 'The Biglow Papers in Nineteenth-Century England' in *The New England Quarterly*, 26:2 (1953) 219-236.
[100] *The Biglow Papers,* 5.
[101] Ibid., 5-7.

hyperbole. On the title page that follows, a bold epigraph once again evokes and lavishes praise on 'rustic' simplicity:

> "The Ploughman's whistle, or the trivial flute,
> Finds more respect than great Apollo's lute"
> *Quarles's Emblems*, B. ii. E. 8.[102]

The image of a poetic 'ploughman's whistle' smacks of a 'rustic' literary figure in the vein of Burns or Whittier. Even in this brief but powerful epigraph, there remains a suggestion that vernacular language contains an egalitarian sense of virtue in its rejection of hierarchal form (symbolised by 'Apollo's lute') and promotion of rural literacy. What follows is a description of 'Yankee' dialect by 'Homer Wilbur' that fluctuates between the comic and sincere. In the more eloquent and serious passages, 'Wilbur' defends the use of American vernacular ('Undoubtedly we have a right to make new words, as they are needed by the fresh aspects under which life presents itself here in the New World'), suggesting - pertaining to the idea of a linguistic rhizome - that 'wherever a language is alive it grows'.[103]

For all the comic inflections of the introductory notices and preface, the dialect poems that follow are altogether more serious. In 'A Letter from Mr. Ezekiel Biglow', for example, the speaker attacks proponents of slavery in both the North and South:

> They may talk o' Freedom's airy
> Tell they're pupple in the face, -
> It's a grand gret cemetary
> Fer the barthrights of our race;
> They jest want this Californy
> So's to lug new slave-states in
> To abuse ye, an' to scorn ye,
> An' to plunder ye like sin.
>
> Aint it cute to see a Yankee
> Take such everlastin' pains,
> All to git the Devil's thankee,
> Helpin' on em weld their chains?
> Wy, it's jest ez clear ez figgers,
> Clear ez one an' one make two,
> Chaps thet make black slaves o' niggers
> Want to make wite slaves o' you. (64 -79)

[102] Ibid. 'title page'.
[103] Ibid., 36.

The phonetic spelling here is clearly employed to imitate the speech of, in this case, a Northern farmer. Thus, vernacular language is employed to give fairer representation to the 'lowly' or rustic voices in rural America as demonstrated by the evocation of 'we farmers' earlier in the poem:

> Fact! It takes a sight o' cotton
> To stuff out a soger's chest:
> Sence we farmers hev to pay fer't,
> Ef you must wear humps like these,
> Sposin' you should try salt hay fer't,
> It would du ez slick ez grease. (11-16)

Quantifying the association of the vernacular with 'rustic' personae, the editorial intrusions of 'Homer Wilbur' frequently seek to legitimise 'Yankee' as a credible, even lofty, poetic language, which might be compared to similar debates over whether or not Scots might be used for 'intellectual' subjects. Though 'Yankee' was predominantly employed for comic effusions, Lowell was not the first writer to use the dialect for political purpose.[104] Yet, the 'editor' Homer Wilbur - through a series of prosaic intrusions – is compelled to defensively assert the political and literary virtue of 'Yankee' throughout the *Biglow Papers*. At one point Wilbur even goes as far to fully translate Shakespeare's opening soliloquy from *Richard III* into 'Yankee'. The effect is at once humorous and intriguing. Undercutting the obvious comic intent of translating Shakespeare into a dialect of 'the country bumpkin of New England'[105], there is a more serious statement; Lowell hints that American vernacular might flourish as a literary language. In hindsight, Lowell was right given his use of language would later inspire writers of the 'national' American canon such as Walt Whitman (1819-1892), Mark Twain (1835-1910) and William Dean Howells (1837-1920).

However due a twenty-first century re-examination of *The Biglow Papers* may be, it is important not to over-emphasise Burns's influence on Lowell's linguistic experimentations (which is not to say that he had no influence at all). As I have argued in a recent essay on Walt Whitman, literary critics and the wider reading public, ever eager to find connections, are often quick to pick up on complimentary links between Burns and American poets, without

[104] See for example John Adams' 1763 'Humphrey Ploughjogger Letters' and Royall Tyler's 1787 play *The Contrast*; both of which occasionally use 'Yankee' as a voice of political and moral reason.
[105] Marie Killheffer, 'A Comparison of the Dialect of "The Biglow Papers" with the Dialect of Four Yankee Plays' in *American Speech,* 3:3 (Duke University Press, 1928) 222-236 (222).

providing a fully balanced literary and historical context.[106] Though Lowell's vernacular verse might be traced to his engagement with Scots, the American vernacular tradition had multiple roots that stemmed back well beyond the widespread circulation of Burns's poetry in America. Early studies on American dialect have revealed that, by the end of the nineteenth century, several literary variants of English had developed in America including 'the Negro, the Southern, the Western, the Hoosier, in addition to the Yankee.'[107] Nevertheless, Lowell's use of 'Yankee' does resemble Scots in some regards. In the verses quoted above, for example, note the frequent use of 'o'', 'an' and 'fer't' that would not be entirely out of place in a Scots-language poem. Though Lowell's 'editor' Homer Wilbur makes numerous citations of where 'Yankee' words had been previously used in accepted forms (Chaucer's use of '*darst'* and Sir Phillip Sidney's use of '*furr'* for far'[108]) there is no mention of Scots as being one of these sanctioned contexts. This, perhaps, owes to the idiom not having attained the same level of exposure and legitimacy as, for example, the Middle English of Chaucer.

Nonetheless, Wilbur's annotations highlight that 'Yankee', at least as a literary language, had evolved from variants of English and its related dialects, of which Scots might be included. The same might be said for some of the other widely recognised dialects in nineteenth century America. Even the early use of 'Negro Dialect' caused William Dean Howells to remark that the language was 'of like impulse and inspiration with the work of Burns when he was most Burns, when he was most Scotch, when he was most peasant'.[109] Here, there is a potentially reductive conflation between Burns's Scots verse and a form of 'peasant' or 'labouring class' poetry ('most Scotch'/'most peasant'). Such an association would have likely displeased Burns given he was, as Corey Andrews notes, 'frequently at pains to distinguish himself in direct opposition to other labouring-class poets in Scotland'.[110] Burns's derision of a 'shoal of ill-spawned monsters'[111] (or rather his Scots-language imitators) was, perhaps, an attempt to distinguish his talents in the hope of transcending the socio-economic impasse of his agricultural status or roots. This was, after all, an era marked by the unprecedented modernising impetus of 'improvement' and socio-economic progression.[112] Moreover, as Andrews provocatively concludes, Burns's apparent wilful disassociation from

[106] Sood, '"A Modern Poet on The Scotch Bard"', 230-236.
[107] Killheffer, 'A Comparison of the Dialect of "The Biglow Papers"', 225.
[108] Ibid.
[109] William Dean Howells quoted from Paul Laurence Dunbar, *The Complete Stories of Paul Laurence Dunbar,* ed. by Gene Andrew Jarrett & Thomas Lewis Morgan (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2005) 15.
[110]Andrews, '"Far-fam'd RAB": Scottish Labouring-Class Poets', 59.
[111] *Letters of Robert Burns*, Vol. 1, 382.
[112] *Robert Burns and Pastoral*, 4.

these poets raises difficult questions about his complex attitude to class or 'rank' - beyond what some of his most famous egalitarian poems and songs might suggest.[113]

In an illuminating essay, Nigel Leask has explored 'the complex interrelationship' between language, class, region, and nationality that underpinned Burns's links with 'labouring-class' poets such as Stephen Duck (c. 1705-1756), John Clare (1772-1802) and Robert Bloomfield (1776-1823).[114] Currently, an online database of 'British and Irish labouring-class poets who wrote between 1700-1900' is being compiled under the general editorship of John Goodridge at Nottingham Trent University.[115] While the reach of these poets in America was (in comparison to Burns) limited, editions of their work were still available; with Bloomfield's *The Farmer's Boy* being reprinted in New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore several times in the first decade of the nineteenth century.[116] Moreover, around fifty of the 'labouring-class' poets listed in the database are noted to have spent time or emigrated to America, with the vast majority of them being from Scotland.[117] Notably, Paisley poet Alexander Wilson (discussed in Chapter I) is included among this group of poets.

In writing about the inception of American literary dialects, David Simpson states that Burns and John Clare were the 'prototypes of which American writers must have been conscious as they mediated the question of dialect'.[118] Simpson's speculative suggestion conflates Burns with a renowned 'labouring-class poet' in Clare (though from bibliographic records Bloomsfield was more widely read in America). Regardless of Burns's considered, aesthetic choice of linguistic register(s) and personal opinions on class identity, the fact remains that many American readers would have viewed him as a 'ploughman' who, as a consequence of his 'rank' and vocation, wrote poetry in Scots. For the likes of William Dean Howells, it was clear Burns wrote poetry using the language of 'peasants'.[119] While potential 'labouring class' (or whichever contemporary cognate might be deemed appropriate) poets in nineteenth-century America deserve much further attention, it is also important to note that Lowell, despite his use of the vernacular, was certainly not among them. Lowell belonged to

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[113] For more on Burns and class-identity, see *Robert Burns and Pastoral,* 15-23 and Valentina Bold, 'Inmate of the Hamlet: Burns as Peasant Poet' in *Love and Liberty* ed. by Kenneth Simpson, 43-52.
[114] Leask, 'Was Burns a Labouring-Class Poet?', 17.
[115] <https://laboringclasspoetsonline.omeka.net/>;<http://www.ntu.ac.uk/apps/research/groups/2/home.aspx/project/148221/overview/labouring-class_poets_online> ;https://lcpoets.wordpress.com/ [accessed 15/12/15].
[116] See for example *The Farmer's Boy, A Rural Poem by Robert Bloomfield, Fourth American Edition* (Baltimore: Thomas, Andrews & Butler, 1803).
[117] See <https://lcpoets.wordpress.com/> [accessed 15/12/15].
[118] *The Politics of American English,* 109.
[119] William Dean Howells quoted from Paul Laurence Dunbar, *The Complete Stories of Paul Laurence Dunbar*, 15.

the elite caste of 'Boston Brahmins' in New England, graduating from Harvard college in 1838 and later obtaining a law degree from Harvard Law School. Thus, if he owed any debt to Burns for his experimentation with dialects, then it was a purely aesthetic one. The earlier appropriation of Scots by the likes of David Bruce and Robert Dinsmoor, on the other hand, might well have owed more to a 'labouring-class' tradition or 'experience' that gave poetic voice to actualised regional subjects and experience. Still, the two former poets used Scots to purposeful dramatic effect (as opposed to lyrical transcription) and were also well aware of its aesthetic (even political) power.

It is also crucial to note that Lowell (and some of the other Fireside poets) simultaneously drew on 'high' European poetic trends. While, as previously discussed, there was a consciousness to avoid the 'sickly and affected imitation'[120] of certain British poets, the Fireside writers were nevertheless openly enamoured with a number of them. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Lowell published a collection of 'Literary Essays and Addresses', one of which reads like a sweeping appraisal of the previous century's best European poets. It is worth quoting a substantial passage in order to fully grasp the sheer variety of Lowell's critical summary:

> Whatever the eighteenth century was, there was a great deal of stout fighting and work done in it, both physical and intellectual, and we owe it a great debt[…]In what is called the elegant literature of our own tongue (to speak only of the most eminent), it gave us Addison and Steele, who together made a man of genius; Pope, whose vivid genius almost persuaded wit to renounce its proper nature and become poetry; Thomson, who sought inspiration in nature, though in her least imaginative side; Fielding, still in some respects our greatest novelist; Richardson, the only author who ever made long-windedness seem a benefaction; Sterne, the most subtle humorist since Shakespeare; Goldsmith, in whom the sweet humanity of Chaucer finds its nearest parallel; Cowper, the poet of Nature in her more domestic and familiar moods; Johnson, whose brawny rectitude of mind more than atones for coarseness of fibre.[121]

Surprisingly, there is no mention of Burns throughout the entirety of a substantial overview of the 'elegant literature of our own tongue'. Cowper is deemed the poet of 'Nature in her more domestic and familiar moods'; Pope as a 'vivid genius'; while Goldsmith is credited for his 'sweet humanity'. Yet Burns, who might have easily vied for similar distinctions, remains notably excluded from the eighteenth century British canon. This omission might indeed hint at the idea that Burns was considered within a coarser 'labouring-class' tradition. At the very

[120] *The North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal* 7 *(*1818) 206.
[121] James Russell Lowell, *Latest Literary Essays And Addresses* (London, Macmillan & Co., 1891) 12.

least it highlights the Scottish poet's dislocation from the esteemed, 'elegant literature' of the previous century.

Lowell's appraisal is also revealing of the scope of his, and more broadly the other Fireside writers', poetic influences. While Burns's Scots verse, egalitarian ethos and intriguing biographical narrative (in its variously published fragmentary forms) were certainly of interest and occasional inspiration to the Fireside group; the extent of his poetic influence needs to be appropriately tempered. Though Lowell wrote a poem on Burns, for example, he also wrote extensively about Keats;[122] and Longfellow arguably owed more to Tennyson than Burns, as one Edgar Allen Poe (1809-1849) was quick to point out during the 'Poe-Longfellow War' of the 1840s.[123] Similarly, while Oliver Wendell Holmes's pastoral poetry, namely 'The Ploughman', might have hailed 'The Lord of the Earth, the hero of the Plough!', conjuring up obvious associations with Burns, his wider poetic oeuvre hardly amounts to conclusive proof of Burns's influence. Carol McGuirk has made a parallel between the 'morbidity and mortality' of Burns's 'Highland Mary songs – widely reprinted in the United States – and William Cullen Bryant's precocious 1811 meditation on death, 'Thanatopsis'.[124] Though there are certainly echoes of Burns's lamentation of a loved one 'moldering now in silent dust',[125] Bryant's poem, in tone, imagery and form, owes equally as much if not more to Henry Kirk White (1785-1806) and Burns's Scottish predecessor Robert Blair (1699-1746) in his poem 'The Grave'.[126]

Yet crucially, in 1859, the majority of these renowned and revered American poets (the first American 'national canon') came together one evening, fresh compositions in hand, not to celebrate the life of Keats, Tennyson or any American poet, but Robert Burns. The wider cultural significance and processes behind the 1859 Burns centenary in America will be discussed in the following chapter.[127] However, in order to edge towards a conclusion regarding the significance of Burns for major mid-nineteenth century American poets, it is

[122] See 'To The Spirit of Keats' in James Russell Lowell, *Poems* (London: C. E. Mudie, 1844) 245 and *The Poetical works of John Keats with a memoir by James Russell Lowell,* ed. by James Russell Lowell (New York: J. Miller, 1873).
[123] See Kent Ljungquist & Buford Jones, 'The Identity of "Outis": A Further Chapter in the Poe-Longfellow War' in *American Literature*, 60:3 (1988) 404-415.
[124] See McGuirk, 'Haunted By Authority', 146.
[125] Robert Burns, 'Highland Mary' in *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns,* Vol. 2, 660 (29).
[126] See William Cullen Bryant II, 'The Genesis of "Thanatopsis"' in *The New England Quarterly,* 21:2 (1948) 163-184.
[127] See also Ann Rigney, 'Embodied Communities: Commemorating Robert Burns, 1859' in *Representations* 115:1 (2011) 71-101.

important to recover the poetic works composed for The Parker House Hotel Centenary Dinner on 25 January, 1859.

The Parker House Hotel Centenary Dinner, Boston, 25 January 1859

In his contemporary recording of 'a spectacle unprecedented in the history of the world'[128], James Ballantine's *Chronicle of the Hundredth Birthday of Robert Burns,* published in May 1859, notes that 61 celebratory events took place across the United States to commemorate the birth of Robert Burns. In the following chapter, I will consider, through comparison, how these events were notably diverse in their scale, location and appropriations of the poet. However, for the purpose of the present focus on Burns and nineteenth-century poets, The Parker House Hotel Centenary Dinner, organised by the Boston Burns Club, emerges as the most significant single event in regard to poet's (on-going) association with the renowned American literati of the period. Having established the widespread national recognition, reach and literary fame of the Fireside poets – 'among the chief cultural powers of our nineteenth century: they stood for poetry'[129] – the spectacle of these individuals gathering together in a Boston hotel function room one evening, for the sole purpose of paying homage to an eighteenth-century Scottish poet, becomes all the more striking.

The transcript of the evening's speeches and recitations, first published in Boston by H. W. Dutton and Son in 1859, is prefaced by a description of the 'Origin Of The Club'. Having grown to foster a 'reputation far beyond what its originators had ever contemplated', the club's success is attributed to a 'unique feature of our Republicanism' that promotes encouragement in 'men whose approbation is a safe endorsement of true value'. Here, we can begin to see a distinct association between the club's constitution and the recently formed Republican party of the 1850s. Founded in 1854 by Northern abolitionists, the main catalyst in the party's formation was its opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act that repealed the Missouri Compromise by which slavery was restricted in Western territories. Viewing the Act as an expansionist move by slave-owning states, the Republican party (like its predecessor the Free Soil party) 'condemned slavery as an evil, attempted to restrict its expansion, and sought to eventually abolish it according to some long and imprecise time frame.'[130] Notably, several members and attendees at the Parker House Hotel were also active Republicans and

[128] *Chronicle of the Hundredth Birthday of Robert Burns*, 'introduction'.
[129] Frank Lentricchia, *Modernist Quartet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 2.
[130] James H. Read, 'The Limits of Self Reliance: Emerson, Slavery and Abolition' in *A Political Companion to Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. by Alan Levine (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2011) 152-184 (163).

abolitionists. Edward Everett (1794-1865), for example, was partly responsible for the nomination of Abraham Lincoln at the 1860 Republican Party Convention;[131] while during the centenary celebrations he celebrated the 'truer Republicanism' of Burns's 'A man's a man for a' That.'[132] Similarly, Holmes, Bryant and Emerson all supported the Republican stance on abolition although, as James H. Read astutely notes, Emerson later 'drifted away from the Republican insistence on the constitutional right and moral duty of Congress' through his attachment to 'the philosophy of self-reliance.'[133]

Appropriating Burns into this Republican context, the Boston Burns Club preface further notes how Burns might act as a democratic conductor between men from 'learned professions' and 'humbler walks of life'. The preface subsequently alludes to 'the little Fireside association' that has 'sprung into enviable repute'; further noting the Club's association with 'some of the greatest minds which adorn the literature of the day', whose 'patronage was true encouragement' to on-going celebrations of 'patriotic independence'. Rather than being strictly symbolic of Scotland, then, Burns is adopted as a democratic conductor between 'nearly two hundred and fifty men'[134] in Boston. This idea is made explicit in the club's constitution:

> We admire the honest independence of BURNS. Liberty - American liberty! – fought side by side with his sentiments of freedom and manly self-respect, and found in them a powerful ally. [135]

The poet's own engagement with America, outlined in chapter I of this thesis, is further used as justification for the club's heralding of the poet, with one club member celebrating his 'glowing language' that extolled the 'virtues of the American Congress' and 'the glorious results of the Revolution'.[136] Absent from earlier American critical responses to the poet, it seems the comprehensive list of biographical epithets, poems and editions (in particular William Pearson's 1832 collected edition and the appearance of Cunningham's 'Life' two years later in 1834) that had amalgamated by 1859 had provided much fodder for those

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[131] Richard A. Katula, *The Eloquence of Edward Everett: America's Greatest Orator* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2010) 110.
[132] *Celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, by the Boston Burns club. January 25th, 1859* (Boston: H.W. Dutton and son, 1859) 3. I will return to the use of 'A man's a man for a' That' by US abolitionists in the following chapter.
[133] Read, 'The Limits of Self Reliance', 165.
[134] *Celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, by the Boston Burns club. January 25th, 1859,* 3.
[135] Ibid., 6.
[136] Ibid., 40.

seeking to appropriate Burns as kin to distinctly ideological version of American political ideals. Here, the idea of a continual 'rhizomatic' spread becomes particularly useful. The 'roots' of Burns's relationship with America (his poetic engagement with the country) would later sprout variant 'offshoots' (in this case a Republican Party appropriation) with temporally significant biographical editions facilitating and shaping the direction(s) of growth.

The extent to which Burns is adopted by the Boston Burns Club as a decidedly masculine figure of political dignity is also notable. The repetition of 'men' beats throughout the all-male club's constitution, and the poet's own political leanings are described as stemming from a sense of 'manly self-respect'. A list of the names, nationality and birthplace of 177 club members follows, providing contrary evidence to the idea that Burns Clubs in the Unites States were solely formed and populated by first generation Scottish émigrés in order to keep their 'Scottish connections alive'.[137] Of the 177 members, 123 were born in America, 28 from Scotland and the remainder comprised of a mixed minority from England, Ireland, Canada and Spain. Though a portion of the 123 Americans might have descended from Scottish heritage (surnames included McGregor, Mitchell and Brown), this was not exclusively a club for expats keen to connect back to their ancestral homeland (though it would appear that women were indeed the victims of exclusivity). While the full effects of civic, geopolitical boundaries on divergent American appropriations of Burns will be discussed in the following chapter, it is clear, from the members list, constitution and attendees, that the Boston Burns Club was an organisation laced with Northern, Republican undertones.

Poetic Commemoration: Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr.

Returning to Burns in specific relation to the Fireside poets, then, it is worth considering how Emerson, Lowell, Holmes and Whittier (the latter *in absentia*) paid tribute to the poet at the 1859 Centenary Dinner. The appearance of Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. at The Parker House Hotel was just one of many instances of him offering up 'occasional' verse to commemorate or celebrate a given cause. Particularly between 1836 and 1857, when Holmes was more (professionally) focused on medical endeavours, the majority of his poems were written for public events and observances. It was, in fact, through his commemorative and 'occasional' verse that Lowell built his reputation as a wordsmith; fast becoming the 'unofficial laureate' to select fraternities and clubs such as the 'Harvard Class of 1829, the Saturday Club, or the

[137] Jenni Calder, *Scots in the USA* (Edinburgh: Luath Press ltd, 2014) 193-194.

Boston Medical Society'.[138] As Holmes himself acknowledged at Whittier's seventieth birthday celebration: 'I'm a florist in verse, and what *would* people say / If I came to a banquet without my bouquet?'[139] Taking his poetic reputation into account, then, there was obviously an expectation of Holmes to bring a fitting 'bouquet' to the Boston Burns Club on January 25, 1859.

In his 2002 book *Democratic Voices and Vistas*, Darrell Abel notes that 'occasional' verse rarely offers a 'confessional revelation' of the poet's 'private and natural self' but rather presents a 'social display' for 'an audience of persons who hear rather than read his poetry'.[140] It is worth considering this before pitching Holmes's 1859 commemorative poem as evidence for his unabashed personal admiration for Burns. Undoubtedly dictated by audience, occasion and following the tropes of *vers de société*, his poem is strewn with laudatory allusions inviting stock responses from his intended audience, in this case the Boston Burns Club. However, to render Holmes as being limited to prescribed 'occasional' verse would, by 1859 at least, also be a great disservice. In the year preceding the Burns centenary, Holmes had published *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*, which had catapulted his literary reputation to new heights. Originally published serially in - and contributing towards the success of - *The Atlantic Monthly,* Holmes's philosophical essays and poems showcased his flair for thought-provoking poetic and prosaic compositions. After the success of *The Autocrat,* Holmes's poetry 'took a somewhat higher and wider flight' and he finally began to 'consider himself a professional author'.[141] Regardless of whether his sentiments were designed specifically for the occasion or not, then, Holmes's praise for Burns would have undoubtedly been impactful on wider public perception and opinion.

In the opening of his 1859 poem, Holmes uses grand, sweeping imagery to describe how the 'tumultuous tide' of Burns's 'wild emotion' has been swept across the Atlantic through 'Rolls in the western Ocean'.[142] Echoing Burns's hailing of 'The Royalty of Man' in 'Ode For General Washington's Birthday', the speaker encourages all to 'greet the monarch-peasant' as 'The Past becomes present'. Once again, it seems, Burns is used to bolster a form of democratic Republicanism. The image of Burns the debauchee also features heavily in the

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[138] Darren Abel, *Democratic Voices and Vistas: American Literature from Emerson to Lanier* (Lincoln: iUniverse, 2002) 283.
[139] Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. quoted from Susan Goodman, *Republic of Words: The Atlantic Monthly and Its Writers, 1857-1925* (Hanover & London: University Press of New England, 2011) 102.
[140] *Democratic Voices and Vistas,* 284.
[141] Ibid., 283.
[142] Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr., 'Poem of Oliver Wendell Holmes' in *Celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, by the Boston Burns club,* 44 (4-8).

remainder of the verses; perhaps both a reflection and reaction against the more conservative biographical narratives – namely by Heron and Lockhart – that highlighted the poet's supposed penchant for 'drunkness – in the tavern – and in the brothel'.[143] Holmes appears to go on the defensive while somewhat begrudgingly acknowledging Burns's vices. For Holmes, no amount of 'faults' can tarnish nature's 'bonniest bairn'. Urging the audience to join in adoration with the repetition of 'we love', the speaker states:

> We love him, not for sweetest song,
> Though never tone so tender;
> We love him, even in his wrong –
> His wasteful self-surrender. (39-32)

It is notable that Burns's poetic abilities are downplayed here. He is not loved for the 'sweetest song' or 'tone so tender', but rather for his sheer humanity. Holmes is almost apologetic in his suggestion that 'even in his wrong', Burns must be 'loved' and understood for his humanity rather than condemned ('His manhood breathes in every line, - / was ever heart more human?') (33-36). Throughout the poem, it is Burns 'the man' who is praised and defended rather than his poetry; not only reflecting the considerable influence of biographical narratives but also rendering the idea of a stylistic or 'poetic' influence on Holmes rather obsolete. As stated in the final lines, it is the biographical 'minstrel's story' that will live on through 'The mountain-mist of glory!' (49-56), manifested by the very fact that Holmes commemorates the 'virtues' and 'frailties' of Burns's supposed character rather than reflecting on his verse, form or possible linguistic influence.

Poetic Commemoration: James Russell Lowell

Offering by far the most imaginative tribute to Burns at the Boston centenary dinner, James Russell Lowell arrived at the Parker House Hotel 'double-barreled, with a piece about seven minutes long and one about two minutes and a half long'.[144] Critics have missed the literary nuances of Lowell's longer poem, which appears to be an adaptation of the medieval French *fabliau* 'Le villain qui Conquest Paradis par Plait' or 'The Peasant who Plead his Way into Heaven'; a tale that recounts the trials of a peasant who avoids ejectment from Heaven

[143] *The Works of Robert Burns, containing his Life by John Lockhart Esq* (Hartford: Judd, Loomis & Co.) 144.
[144] *Celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, by the Boston Burns club*, 44.

through his superior wit, culminating in God conceding his rightful place in paradise.[145] Lowell's poem, over the course of eighteen verses, depicts Burns appearing at the gates of Heaven only to find that 'Holy Willie' has taken guard and relieved the apostles of their duties for the day. It is unsurprising that Lowell might have drawn on medieval French *fabliaux* given, in the years preceding the Centenary, he was awarded the title of Smith Professor of French & Spanish at Harvard, where he helped to 'introduce a course in medieval French literature.'[146] Moreover there is evidence to suggest that Lowell's literary allusion was indicative of the wider perception of Burns as a 'peasant' who rose above his class; thus fitting with the above suggestion of Burns as a 'labouring-class' or 'peasant' poet. Sarah Gordon's study of the medieval French genre points towards the 'interaction between rural and urban at the center of the fabliaux'; with 'farmers', 'clergy', merchants' and 'rural poor' often containing strong 'aspirations of social mobility'.[147] As we shall see, Emerson's appraisal of Burns also partly reflects Burns's social mobility and thus Lowell's adaptation was, perhaps, conceived with a similar sense of the poet having successfully risen from a 'claybuilt hovel' in the 'humblest society'.[148]

Adopting the role of *jongleur,* Lowell introduced his poem with a witty religious quip that simultaneously paid homage to his Scottish heritage ('I am a son of a clergyman who was educated in Edinburgh, and from whose principles I hope I have not departed'[149]) before reflecting on how 'Burns's memory' had become common topos among America's most renowned poets:

> A theme like this would Bryant choose,
> Longfellow, Holmes or Whittier;
> If my poor muse can't fill their shoes,
> Pray pardon her and pity her.[150]

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[145] Scott L. Taylor, '*Judicium Dei, vulgaris popularisque sensus:* Survival of Customary Justice and Resistance to its Displacement by the "New" *Ordines iudiciorum* as Evidenced by Francophonic Literature of the High Middle Ages' in *Crime and Punishment in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age: Mental-Historical Investigations of Basic Human Problems and Social Responses,* ed. by Albrecht Classen and Connie Scrarborough (Berlin & Boston: De Gruyter, 2012) 109-130 (122).
[146] Kim Ileen Moreland, *The Medievalist Impulse in American Literature: Twain, Adams, Fitzgerald, and Hemingway* (Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 1996) 99.
[147] Sarah Gordon, 'Rural and Agricultural Space in the Old French *Fabliaux* and the *Roman de Renart*' in *Rural Space in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age: The Spatial Turn in Premodern Studies,* ed. by Albert Classen (Berlin & Boston: De Gruyter, 2012) 281-295 (290).
[148] 'Parallel Between Cowper and Burns' in *The Monthly Anthology and Boston Review* 3 (1806) 68.
[149] *Celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, by the Boston Burns club*, 55.
[150] James Russell Lowell, 'Poem of James Russell Lowell, Esq' in *Celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, by the Boston Burns club*, 55 (20-24).

Lowell's speaker, while 'musing on what to say' then experiences a 'vision' of 'Burns's soul/at the wicket-hole/where sits the good St. Peter' (27-32), but crucially, 'The Saint, methought, had left his post/ That day to Holy Willie' (33-34). What follows is a verse-by-verse account and rebuttal of the various sinful accusations levelled against Burns, beginning with his irresponsible fondness for 'the water o' life' (82). After demanding Burns should '"Go rouse the other house"'(52):

Old Willie's tone grew sharp's a knife;
"*Imprimis,* I indict ye
For makin' strife wi' the water o' life
And preferrin' *aqua vitae*.'
Then roared a voice with lusty din,
Like a skipper's when tis' blowy,
"If *that's* a sin, *I'd* ne'er ha' got in,
As sure's as my name is Noah!" (80-87)

Alluding to the biblical passage (Genesis 9:21) in which Noah 'lay in a drunken stupor',[151] the hypocrisy of those fiercely critical and unforgiving of Burns's supposed drunken pursuits is exposed. Maintaining its theological undertones, the poem then turns to address the idea of Burns as an irreligious blasphemer, with Holy Willie this time refusing Burns entry to heaven on account of him saying 'hard things o' the clergy':

Sly Willie turned another leaf, -
"There's many here ha'e heard ye,
To the pain and grief o' true belief,
Say hard things o' the clergy!"
Then rang a clear tone over all, -
"One plea for him allow me,
I once heard call from o'er me, 'Saul,
Why persecutes thou me?" (90-95)

The reference to Saul the blasphemer of Christ and persecutor of Saints, who, despite his sin, found a place in Heaven, once again provides a rebuttal to the charges levelled at Burns by Holy Willie. In a final attempt to condemn the poet, Holy Willie turns to accusations of philandering and adultery:

[151] Paul Haupt, 'Alcohol In The Bible' in *Journal of Biblical Literature* 36:1/2 (1917) 75-83 (75).

To the next charge vexed Willie turned
And, sighing, wiped his glasses, -
"I'm much concerned to find ye yearned
O'er warmly tow'rd the lasses!"
But David cried, "Your ledger shut,
E'en Adam fell by woman,
And hearts close shut with if and but,
If safe, are not so human!" (96-103)

Similar to the pervading theme in Oliver Wendell Holmes's commemorative poem, it is Burns's tender humanity that we are urged to acknowledge and admire, despite any supposed flaws and sinful tendencies. Significantly, despite its frequent biblical allusions to reformed sinners, Lowell's poem does not plead forgiveness for Burns on the grounds of religious absolution. Rather, his treatment of the poet's flaws align with Thomas Carlyle's concept of the heroic struggle 'all great men' face through their 'wild, wrestling naked with the truth of things'.[152] Furthermore, both Holmes and Lowell's emphasis on the sincere humanity of Burns resonates with Carlyle's idea that 'the chief quality of Burns is the *sincerity* of him' even if he was flawed through such 'great tragic sincerity'.[153] By 1859, of course, Carlyle's influential collection of essays *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and The Heroic in History* was also widely available in the United States, in addition to the 1829 appraisal outlined in the previous chapter. The influence of Carlyle's thought on Emerson in particular (and more broadly the New England Transcendentalists) is discussed below when considering the former's keynote speech at the Centenary dinner. However, in returning to the conclusion of Lowell's adapted *fabliau,* echoes of Carlyle can once again be heard:

The earth must richer sap secrete
(In time, could ye but know it!)
Must juice concrete with fiercer heat
Ere she can make her poet;
These larger hearts must feel the rolls,
Of stormier-waved temptation,
These star-wide souls between their poles
Bear zones of tropic passion. (136-143)

Here, it is the 'richer sap' and 'fiercer heat' of Burns that results in his 'stormier-waved temptations'. The 'star-wide souls' and 'tropic passion' that Lowell refers to is reminiscent of

[152] Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes*, *Hero-worship and the Heroic in History* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1840) 226.
[153] Ibid.

Carlyle's idea that 'great men' are swept up in 'a whirl of distracted atoms',[154] that sometimes results in flawed, detrimental attributes. While Emerson's acquaintance with Carlyle has been widely documented, Lowell too was 'an avid reader of Carlyle' and, according to Sharon Gravett, was 'especially attracted to his essay on Robert Burns.'[155] In a final defence and rebuttal of Burns's flaws, Lowell's speaker, adhering to the idea Burns as a 'genius' (thus natively flawed) poet, triumphantly praises 'nature strong' and dismisses all who 'Against thy faults be railing!'(144-151).

One the most striking elements of both Lowell and Holmes's poems is the apparent need to defend Burns, suggesting that negative portrayals of the poet, variously transmitted by fragmentary biographical accounts, remained influential in the period leading up to the 1859 Centenary Dinner. John Greenleaf Whittier's centenary poem (sent by letter and read aloud by Emerson directly after Lowell's poem) also took on a defensive, partly apologetic stance. The Haverhill poet pleaded 'To-day be every fault forgiven/Of him in whom we joy;' (25-26). Whittier's full poem, perhaps the most arbitrary tribute of the evening, offers little more to his earlier compositions about Burns, unsurprisingly focusing on his admiration for the Scottish poet's treatment of nature which, as previously discussed, he drew heavily upon in his own poems. 'The pastoral pipe of Burns' is praised for singing the 'love of man' while 'Whittier's prefatory letter declared Burns 'the sweetest of all who have ever sung of home, and love, and humanity.'[156] Rather than Whittier's epistolary tribute, however, it was to be the orator of the poem, Ralph Waldo Emerson, that would make the biggest impression on the audience at The Parker House Hotel.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Billed as the keynote speaker of the evening, Ralph Waldo Emerson conceded to being 'the worst Scotsman of all' before going onto to identify Burns as a transnational beacon for social mobility, echoing Lowell's previous allusion to the upwardly-mobile 'peasant' in (his adaption of) 'Le villain qui Conquest Paradis par Plait'. For Emerson, Burns represented that 'great uprising of the middle class against the armed and privileged minorities' that 'worked politically in the American and French Revolutions'.[157] Carol McGuirk has suggested that Emerson's reference to 'middle-class' here might have been directed towards the 'inheritors of

[154] Ibid., 198.
[155] Sharon Gravett, 'James Russell Lowell' in *The Carlyle Encyclopedia,* ed. by Mark Cumming (Madison: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 2004) 297.
[156] *Celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, by the Boston Burns club*, 61-62.
[157] Ibid., 35-37.

upwardly mobile American ideology'.[158] Even in the twenty-first century, ambiguities continue to plague the concept (and term) of an American 'middle class', partly resulting in the US Department of Commerce, Economics And Statistics Administration to publish a 2010 open-access report on 'Middle Class America' ('Middle class families are defined by their aspirations more than their income').[159] In a recent study, Linda Young has suggested the rise of a nineteenth-century Anglophone 'middle class' (in Britain, the United States and Australia); attributing the transnational development to the 'culture of gentility'.[160] Emerson's description of revolutionary, 'middle-class' rebellions against the 'privileged', however, negates any sense of polished refinement. Cindy S. Aron notes that the term 'middle-class' did not appear in American dictionaries up until 1889, thus Emerson's use of the term might loosely have referred to a 'middling sort' of men characterised by ambition and social mobility rather than a definitive and well-defined socio-cultural status.[161] Emerson's subsequent description of Burns's rise from humble ploughman to political agitator further supports the former reading:

> The "Confession of Augsburg." the "Declaration of Independence," the French "Rights of Man," and the "Marseillaise," are not more weighty documents in the history of freedom than the songs of Burns[…]He is so substantially a reformer, that I find his grand plain sense in close chain with the greatest masters – Rabelais, Shakespeare in comedy, Cervantes, Butler, and Burns. [162]

Here, Emerson's rhetorical flamboyance must (like Holmes above) be considered within the parameters of contemporary American oratory trends that, particularly in political spheres, often veered towards the 'bombastic' through conventions of 'wild hyperbole' and 'fantastic simile and metaphor'.[163] It should also not go unnoticed that Emerson was being paid considerable amounts of money for his increasingly renowned oratory appearances, and would have wanted to avoid disappointing a room full of American-based Burns enthusiasts. In the months preceding the centenary dinner, for example, 'Emerson the lecturer had success after success' following his 1858 December tour of New York, Philadelphia, Hamilton and

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[158] McGuirk, 'Haunted by Authority', 145.
[159] <http://www.esa.doc.gov/sites/default/files/middleclassreport.pdf> [accessed 15/12/15].
[160] Linda Young, *Middle-Class Culture in the Nineteenth Century: America, Australia* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002) 33.
[161] Cindy S. Aron, 'The Evolution of The Middle Class' in *A Companion to 19th – Century America,* ed. by William Barney (Malden & Oxford: Blackwell, 2008) 178-195 (179).
[162] *Celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, by the Boston Burns club,* 36.
[163] See Zoltan Kovecses, *American English: An Introduction* (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2000) 261 and James Darsey, *Prophetic Tradition and Radical Rhetoric in America*, (New York: New York University Press, 1999) 160.

Toronto. His impressive delivery at the Burns centenary itself, praised by Lowell, Holmes and widely reprinted in the European press, reportedly earned him a another course of Boston-based 'lectures which brought him nearly $700 above expenses'.[164] That Emerson might have been showcasing his oratory charisma in a bid to increase his reputation surely had some influence on his grandiose opening sentiments.

Less speculatively, Emerson's personal journals suggest that he was not quite as enamoured by Burns's poetry as the Boston centenary transcription would have us believe. While Emerson's public appraisal of Burns ranks the poet alongside 'the greatest masters' ('Rabelais, Shakespeare[…]Cervantes, Butler'), his private correspondence reveals a far less enthusiastic critical approach. Musing on famous literary figures almost two decades before the centenary, Emerson noted in his journal that some men 'do not in the record of the facts equal their own fame'. Sir Philip Sidney is described as having 'accomplished very little to have made so profound an impression in Europe'; The Earl of Essex and Sir Walter Raleigh are 'men of great figure, but of few deeds'; while 'the fame of Burns also is too great for the facts.' Emerson goes onto suggest that while these men certainly had the 'power to impress' through strength of *'character',* their talents can no longer be discerned through 'visible or analysable' methods.[165] On the basis of this journal entry, it seems that Emerson believed Burns's widespread fame to be disproportionate to the quality of his poetic output; a sentiment that opposes his later conflation of Burns's songs with the 'Declaration of Independence' and the 'Confession of Augsburg'. The idea that Emerson was not particularly enthused by Burns - until asked to appear at the centenary - is backed up by an anecdote in Franklin B. Sanborn's 1971 book *The Personality of Emerson*. Prior to the centenary dinner, Emerson allegedly stated he did not have 'a very good opinion of the Scottish songster' and thus he had to renew his 'acquaintance with him by a fresh reading'[166] in preparation for his speech. It must be noted, however, that the source of this anecdote is not referenced and does not appear to be included in any other editions of Emerson's collected correspondence. Regardless of its validity, an alertness to the oratory expectations placed on Emerson, coupled with the heightened sense of occasion helps to better contextualise – perhaps curtail – any grand assumptions one might have regarding the American writer's debt to Burns.

[164] Ralph L. Rusk, *The Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1957) 440.
[165] *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson,* ed. by William H. Gilman and J. E. Parsons, Vol. 8 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970) 46.
[166] Franklin B. Sanborn, *The Personality of Emerson* (New York: Hasker House Publishers, 1971) 121.

Another aspect of Emerson's speech that appears to have gone unnoticed is its adherence to Thomas Carlyle's visionary account of Burns. Just as Carlyle's 1828 essay depicted Burns as 'a seer' who was born with a 'gift of vision'[167], Emerson too draws on Burns's 'secret of genius'; lavishing praise on his ability to 'draw from the bottom of society the strength of its speech' through a transcending 'beauty' that was 'better than art'.[168] Carlyle, of course, was a hugely important figure for Emerson, the two having struck up 'a lifelong friendship' after the American writer's 1833 trip to Carlyle's residence in Scotland; a visit that occurred exactly a day after Emerson had visited 'Burns's tomb'.[169] Though Emerson's visit to Dumfries, where he allegedly saw a 'son of Robert Burns standing on the doorstep' of the King's Arms, made for a footnote in most accounts of his European travels, his meeting and subsequent correspondence with Carlyle garnered much contemporary interest.[170] As early as 1848, James Russell Lowell parodied their epistolary exchanges in his book length poem *A Fable for Critics* ('If C.'s an original, E'.s more peculiar;').[171] Even in his centenary tribute, Emerson subtly made reference to Carlyle by suggesting that if another name should be added to his list of the 'greatest masters' then it would be 'in a living countryman' of Burns who is 'an exceptional genius'.[172] Though Emerson situates Burns as being on an even intellectual plain with Carlyle, there is little doubt, when considering all evidence, which one of the two Scots was more influential on him.

The considerable influence of Carlyle is thus inherently woven into Emerson's appreciation for Burns in his 1859 speech. His statements on how Burns's 'genius' had the ability to depict 'the homely landscape which the poor see around them' [173] adheres to his broader philosophical belief that the 'elevation of soul' could determine 'power over language'.[174] It was this belief that saw him similarly praise the likes of innovative French essayist Michel de Montaigne for his natural 'robustness of sentiments' over what one might derive from 'an evening lecture or a young men's debate.'[175] For Emerson, both Burns and

[167] *The Edinburgh Review* 96 (1828) 278.
[168] *Celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, by the Boston Burns club*, 37.
[169] *The Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 194.
[170] Ibid.
[171] James Russell Lowell, 'A Fable for Critics' quoted from Alexander Ireland, *Ralph Waldo Emerson: His Life, Genius, And Writings to which are added personal recollections of his visits to England, Extracts from Unpublished Letters And Miscellaneous Characteristic Records* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, & Co., 1882) 333.
[172] *Celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, by the Boston Burns club*, 36.
[173] Ibid.
[174] *The Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 156-157.
[175] Ibid.

Montaigne's 'genius' was as 'native and intuitive' as - in typically Emersonian terms - the 'orbit of stars', 'the growth of grass' and 'the angles of crystals'.[176]

Burns and American Poets: Postscript

Concluding with a prophetic statement on how the 'memory of Burns' was no longer learned 'from a book' but passed on 'from mouth to mouth',[177] Emerson's speech was to (somewhat ironically) become a major factor in the way Burns has been remembered, appropriated and considered as being an important figure for nineteenth-century American poets and writers. The enduring significance of the speech seemingly did not escape his contemporaries. U.S. Attorney journal E. R. Hoar (1816-1895) later recalled that he had 'never witnessed such an effect of speech upon men';[178] James Russell Lowell reminisced that his (Emerson's) words seemed to have 'dropped down to him from the clouds';[179] while Emerson's friend and epistolary muse Thomas Carlyle clipped a transcription 'from his journals' having been completely 'charmed by it'.[180] Moreover, modern scholarly references to the speech continue to pollinate discussions about the connections between Burns and American poets. Carol McGuirk, for example, has called the speech 'the warmest and most perspicuous of nineteenth century American appreciations'[181] while Robert Crawford has noted the significance of Emerson's speech in rendering the image of Burns as 'rebelliously political' in North America.[182]

Crucially, however, it must not go unnoticed that Emerson's engagement with Burns prior to the centenary speech was minimal in comparison to his reading of other European writers and philosophers; which might also be said for Lowell, Holmes, Bryant and to a lesser extent, Whittier (the former owing the most to Burns as previously illustrated). In regards to Emerson specifically, Susan Manning has argued that a certain 'Burnsian Romanticism' can be identified in the American's 'poetic' and 'philosophic' self-presentation and received character as 'Transcendentalism personified'. In challenging the parameters of literary 'influence', Manning's study of the relationship between 'poetic character', biography and

[176] *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson* 14, 180.
[177] *Celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, by the Boston Burns club*, 37.
[178] E. R. Hoar quoted from *Estimating Emerson: An Anthology of Criticism from Carlyle to Cavell* ed. by David LaRocca (New York and London: Bloomsbury, 2013) 191.
[179] Ibid.
[180] John McAleer, *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Days of Encounter* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1984) 564.
[181] McGuirk, 'Haunted By Authority', 150.
[182] Crawford, 'America's Bard', 111.

performance is certainly illuminating.[183] Indeed, the 'character' of Emerson might well have owed more to Burns than an analysis of his writings can suggest. This idea is bolstered when reconsidering Emerson's appreciation (in his personal journal) of Burns's strength of 'character' - but not his 'talents'.[184] On the basis of the above discussion, then, it could even be argued that Burns's literary output was less of an obvious 'influence' than his perceived 'poetic character' and biography. That is to take nothing away from the fact that Burns's play with register prefaced, directly or indirectly, the vernacular experimentations of the Fireside group, Walt Whitman, then later William Carlos Williams, Robert Frost and Robert Creeley.[185]

Yet when held as evidence for Burns's strong impact and influence on American poets, the Boston Centenary Dinner has, to some extent, served to exaggerate his strictly poetic or literary influence. Rigorous scholarly insight, it seems, dilutes the appealing notion that Burns was a crucial and formative figure in the development of America's first group of major poets. While traces of Burns's formal and thematic influence can be carefully excavated from the collective poetic oeuvre of the Fireside writers, it was in fact their performed 'memory of Burns' that maintained a strong association between the Scottish poet and prominent figures of the American literati. The public lauding of Burns by Emerson (and the first major group of 'canonised' American writers) not only served to preserve his literary output, but also altered the broader 'cultural memory' of the man and his perceived literary influence. However, as the following chapter will go onto discuss, several other factors were equally crucial to this process of remediated commemoration and cultural preservation.

[183] *Poetics of Character*, 244-267.
[184] *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson,* 46.
[185] See Crawford, 'America's Bard', 105-106. Crawford also links the 'sentimental tears and depressive plunges' of Edgar Allan Poe to the formative of influence of Burns.

Chapter V

'The West winds are murmuring it': Burns and Cultural Memory in America, c.1800-1866

The memory of Burns…The west winds are murmuring it…[1]

➢Ralph Waldo Emerson (1859)

~

Cultural memory reaches back into the past only so far as the past can be reclaimed as "ours"… [2]

➢Jan Assmann (2008)

Rising to the emphatic crest of his 1859 Centenary speech at The Parker House Hotel, Ralph Waldo Emerson twice evoked 'The memory of Burns' in a flurry of concluding remarks that were met with rapturous applause from his Boston audience. In line with the continuing, fruitful trend of using theoretical frameworks derived from memory studies to enhance our understanding of literary reception,[3] it is worth further considering the grounds on which Emerson's perceived 'memory' was formed and, indeed, better defining what might have constituted a 'memory of Burns' not only in the context of the 1859 centenary, but throughout early to mid-nineteenth century America.

Contested Memories

Christopher A. Whatley has recently discussed how Burns was claimed by both Radicals and Scottish conservatives between 1796-1859; citing the Ayr Festival of 1844 and the 1859 Centenary as instances of where Burns was simultaneously appropriated by Scotland's Whigs and Tories among other groups.[4] The 'memory of Burns' in the nineteenth-century United States was equally multiflorous and complex. The idea that Burns was 'a friend to liberty in the United States'[5] has been both popular and enduring, partly due to the frequency with which he has been yoked with ideological praise from influential nineteenth-century Americans such as Whitman, Emerson and Abraham Lincoln. However, as the previous chapter discussed, Emerson's praise for Burns was more occasional than innate while Whitman was by no means wholly enamoured as I have argued elsewhere.[6] Similarly, Ferenc Morton Szasz's study of

[1] *Celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, by the Boston Burns club*, 37.
[2] Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory', 111.
[3] See Ann Rigney, *The Afterlives of Walter Scott: Memory on the Move* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
[4] Christopher A. Whatley, '"It Is Said That Burns Was a Radical" Contest, Concession, and the Political Legacy of Robert Burns, ca. 1796-1859' in *The Journal of British Studies* 50:3 (2011) 639-666.
[5] Pittock, 'Introduction, Global Burns', 19.
[6] Sood, '"A Modern Poet on The Scotch Bard"', 230-236.

Lincoln and Burns focused as much on their similar socio-economic and posthumous cultural status as it did on the president's perceived memory of the poet (to take nothing away from the fact the 16th President of the United States undoubtedly admired Burns's poetry.)[7] There is, of course, no doubting the significance of these figures having read and, to some extent, praised Burns. Yet the conflation of these - albeit important - individual 'memories' should not be mistaken for proof that Burns was cohesively and unanimously remembered as a beacon of democracy and egalitarianism in the early United States; however appealing the notion may be. Such a sweeping assertion would, in fact, blight the complexity of the multiple, at times competing, layers of memory that diversely preserved and promoted the poet and his works between 1800 and 1866.

As we shall see, groups and individuals divergent as Frederick Douglass (1818-1895), the Freemasons and The Ku Klux Klan also held their own, often idiosyncratic, 'memories' of Burns that were variously articulated through speeches, essays, dinners and other forms of objectified culture. Regularly implicit in these articulations of remembrance, however, was the subjective promotion of group and individual values. Where Frederick Douglass remembered Burns as being kin to an African-American slave who had 'broke loose from the moorings which society had thrown around him'[8], the first Ku Klux Klan used 'To a Louse' as a rite of initiation; seemingly drawing on the fact that all six founding members were of white Scottish descent and thus should have knowledge of the poem.[9] The examples here are, admittedly, purposefully polarising and require much further analysis. Nonetheless, pointing out such deviations in appropriation and memory (who else might connect UKIP, SNP, Frederick Douglass and the KKK?) unquestionably renders Burns a worthy subject when discussing the complex interrelationships between memory, history and identity.

It is unsurprising, then, that Burns has attracted the attention of leading twenty-first century cultural theorists and proponents of memory studies. Scholars such as Ann Rigney, Leith Davis, Murray Pittock and Susan Manning have applied and advanced the foundational work of Maurice Halbwachs (1877-1945) and Pierre Nora among others (the former most prominently known for his model of 'collective memory'[10] and the latter for the monumental seven-work volume *Les Lieux de mémoire*) providing new frameworks with which to

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[7] *Abraham Lincoln and Robert Burns*: *Connected Lives and Legends,* 140.
[8] Frederick Douglass, 'A Fugitive Slave Visiting the Birth-Place of Robert Burns' in *New York Weekly Tribune,* 5:45 (1846) cited at <http://library.sc.edu/spcoll/douglass/fugitive.pdf> [accessed 30/12/2015].
[9] Wyn Craig Wade, *The Fiery Cross: The Ku Klux Klan in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) 34-35.
[10] Maurice Halbwachs, *La mémoire collective* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950).

comprehend both the legacy and reception of Burns and his works. While Davis and Rigney have effectively employed cultural theory to reflect on the wider implications of the Burns Centenary in both Britain and North America, there has not, hitherto, been a focused study of the 'cultural memory' of Burns in the nineteenth century United States.[11] Having traced the initial appearances, widespread reprinting and consequential literary influence of Burns's poetry, it seems an apt moment to turn to the slightly more conceptual issue of how Burns was 'remembered' in the United States and, in doing so, highlight the significance of various nineteenth century modes of remembrance and commemoration.

The Evolution of Cultural Memory Theory

Employed and appropriated across disciplines as diverse as literature, neuroscience and philosophy, the term 'cultural memory' has become academically convoluted over the past few decades. In literary studies, it tends to be used broadly to refer to how 'memory', or knowledge about past events, people or things, is preserved through 'cultural' means in any given space or place. In referring to the 'cultural memory' of Burns in the United States, then, one might think of the term as an umbrella for considering the ways in which American society – through, festivals, songs, rituals, text, rites, objects or otherwise – 'remembered' the poet and his works. In order to further clarify what is meant by 'cultural memory' in this specific context, however, it is worth briefly going back to explore the roots of Cultural Memory Studies (now a subject area in its own right[12]).

The idea of there being a complex interrelationship between memory and history, or rather, that there is a connection 'between the act of memorisation and the writing of history'[13] is not a new one, and can be traced through several works from Classical Greece to Renaissance Europe.[14] Our current understanding and use of the term 'cultural memory', however, broadly derives from a reinvigorated interest in, and response to, Maurice Halbwach's twentieth-century concept of 'collective memory' (*mémoire collective)*; a phrase

[11] It should be noted that there is a sub-chapter section entitled 'Robert Burns and Transatlantic Cultural Memory ' in *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture* ed. by Sharon Alker, Leith Davis and Holly Faith Helson, 149-187. However, they are not specifically concerned with the United States nor the nineteenth century.

[12] See *A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies* ed. by Astril Erll and Ansgar Nünning (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010).

[13] Matthew Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011) 456.

[14] As Matthew Kempshall outlines in *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, the availability of Aristotle's work in the twelfth and thirteen centuries had a dramatic impact on the conception of memory and influenced historiography up to the fifteenth century. See also Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) and Francis Yates, *The Art of Memory* (London: The Bodley Head, 2014).

first coined in his 1925 book *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* and later advanced in the posthumously published *La mémoire collective* (1950). Formulated in the same period that Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) famously began to introduce memory theory through his development of metapsychology, it is only in recent decades that Halbwach has received a rejuvenated sense of attention and engagement as contemporary historians continue to grapple with 'the politics of memory in the waning or abandoned traditions of the modern age.'[15] Halbwach challenged Freud's view of memory being a resource of the individual psyche, arguing that it operates according to a social rather than a psychological dynamic. Where Freud believed that memory was something inherent in the individual, hidden but always recoverable, Halbwach proposed that recollected memories are constructed 'within social contexts'; that is, he believed that memories could 'become whole only when they are located within the social framework of our present lives'.[16]

Building on this principle, Halbwach suggested that perceptions of the past are continually revised by 'social forces' that act upon us and moderate our present conceptions. It is these 'social forces', Halbwach argued, that bind and form the 'collective memory' of both groups and individuals in any given context. The dynamics of social structures – families, demographics, social classes and religious sects for example – determine the ways in which we 'remember' the past, creating a shared memory and identity that might differ from the 'collective memory' of other groups. For Halbwach, our conception of the past is not fixed, hidden and in need of 'recovery' (as Freud suggested), but malleable to the point where the original memory source might be reconstituted. It is this idea that led Halbwach to distinguish between 'memory' and 'history'. Where history, or historical knowledge about the past, is a set of generalised facts that follows some form of fixed standardisation (such as the remembering and recitation of a specific set of dates), 'collective memory' contains a 'subjective dimension' and promotes a sense of identity which is 'intimately tied to a particular group' and its values.[17]

Returning to Emerson's 1859 speech and reconsidering it within the parameters of Halbwach's theory of *mémoire collective*, then, we might consider the American writer's 'memory of Burns' with renewed interest. The previous chapter outlined how Emerson and his fellow speakers at the Parker House Hotel described Burns as being kin to the 'armed and

[15] Patrick H. Hutton, 'Sigmund Freud and Maurice Halbwachs: The Problem of Memory in Historical Psychology' in *The History Teacher* 27:2 (1994) 148-149.
[16] Ibid., 149.
[17] Nicolas Russell, 'Collective Memory before and after Halbwachs' in *The French Review* 79:4 (2006) 792-804 (797).

privileged minorities' who 'worked politically'[18] in the American Revolution. Here, Emerson's individual 'memory' clearly reflects the influence of wider social structures; namely the Boston Burns Club which, as discussed, prided itself on the newly formed Republican party's political idealism. Though Burns made subtle, favourable references towards the outcome of the American Revolution (See Chapter I), the manner in which he is fervently remembered and likened to American Revolutionaries at The Parker House Hotel clearly smacks – in line with Halbwach's theory – of a memory source being re- modified into a 'idealized image, or imago'.[19] Thus, even a brief *précis* of Halbwach's idea of 'collective memory' offers up several intriguing points of consideration when discussing the ways in which Burns was 'remembered' in the nineteenth century United States.

While Halbwach's concept of 'collective memory' might aid us in better understanding why Burns was 'remembered' and variously appropriated by groups and individuals as diverse as, for example, the Freemasons, Frederick Douglass and the Ku Klux Klan (to be discussed in more detail below), questions remain over the types of commemorative practices that led to the reconstitution of these memories. We might consider, for example, the differing yet interrelated effects of print media (James Currie's *The Works*), memorial architecture (the erection of statues) and festivals (Burns Suppers and the 1859 Centenary itself) on preserving and influencing the memory of the poet. Moreover, the question of whether such diverse methods of remembrance (and divergent appropriations) can be legitimately grouped together and considered as forms of 'national' collective remembrance, unique to the United States, is also open to debate. To use the 'nation' in such a way (as a binding parameter) would require much further discussion about the evolution of American nationalism in the nineteenth century, and how it might have affected Burns commemorations. It is these overriding questions, among others, that render the issue of Burns and 'cultural memory' in the nineteenth-century United States both complex and problematic. In order to approach this topic with greater clarity, then, we must first consider the more recent twenty-first century advancements on Halbwach's theory and corresponding scholarly articulations on Burns and 'cultural memory'.

[18] *Celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, by the Boston Burns club*, 35-37.
[19] Patrick Hutton, *History as An Art of Memory* (Hanover & London: University Press of New England, 1993) 7.

Cultural and Communicative Memory

Expanding on Maurice Halbwach's model, Jan Assmann and John Czaplinka put forth the idea that collective memory might be split into two further, interrelated categories: 'Communicative memory' ('based on everyday oral communications') and 'Cultural memory' (formed when 'living communication crystalliz[es] in the forms of objectivized culture – whether in texts, images, rites, buildings, monuments, cities or even landscapes').[20] In other words, where 'communicative memory' is oral and comprised of multiple narratives articulated by active participants,[21] 'cultural memory' relies on symbolisation and requires 'institutions of preservation'[22] (relics, books and other modes of objectification) in order for past experience to be conveyed or reconfigured.

Admittedly, the incisive categorical tagging here of 'communicative memory' being primarily transmitted through oral means and 'cultural memory' as stemming from 'objectified' culture can be misleading, due to the fact 'cultural memory' is often preserved or inscribed orally. Returning, once again, to Emerson and his (orally transmitted) 1859 speech, for example, his 'memory of Burns' was not – as would be the case for a 'communicative memory' – a living, autobiographical 'embodied memory', but in fact both a response to and result of extant objectified commemorative forces (such as the centenary itself, the Boston Burns Club or biographical texts on Burns). Moreover, through his 'ceremonial communication'[23] at The Parker House Hotel, Emerson was functioning as, what Assmann calls, an 'institution of preservation'; not only in the form of his ceremonial delivery but also by the fact his speech was later transcribed and disseminated widely. Thus, the processes by which Emerson's 1859 speech (and its subsequent circulation in print form) 're-embodied' the memory of Burns are clear. There were, of course, several other 'institutions of preservation' that functioned to 're-embody' the memory of the poet in the nineteenth century.

Beyond Biographical Re-embodiment

Drawing on Jan Assmann and John Czaplinka, Leith Davis has convincingly demonstrated how James Currie's *The Works of Robert Burns* embodies 'the process by which

[20] Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka, 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity' in *New German Critique*, 65 (1995) 125-133 (126).
[21] See also Ann Rigney, 'Plenitude, Scarcity and the Circulation of Cultural Memory' in *Journal of European Studies* 35:1 (2005) 11-28 (14).
[22] Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory', 111.
[23] Ibid., 117.

communicative memory becomes objectified into the printed medium of cultural memory'.[24] Davis cites examples of where Currie exercised his editorial authority over the verbal accounts of people who knew Burns (such as Gilbert Burns and Mrs Frances Anna Dunlop) and converted their narratives of the poet 'into mediated 'relics and stories'. In doing so, Davis argues, Currie commemorated 'Burns's "character and conduct" in such a way as to make him a symbol of memory that could be resignified as necessary in subsequent chronological and geographical sites.' [25]

Chapter III of this thesis has demonstrated the extent to which Currie's edition and several other biographical accounts were reprinted in the United States between 1801 and 1866. Having documented the empirical methods by which the poetry of Burns was reprinted and distributed, we might now turn to think more critically about the repercussions of such a vast dissemination in light of the theoretical discussion above. The widely available American editions of Burns's poetry might easily be considered as what Assmann calls 'institutions of preservation'[26]; each one an 'objectified memory' serving to reconstitute remembrance in the absence of any communicative memory and further complicated by a multiplicity print-forms that circulated information about the poet (anthologies, newspapers and periodicals). That the biographies contained vast ideological differences is also demonstrative of Assmann's assertion that cultural memory undergoes repeated, subjective 'revisions' that often reflect back on those doing the 'remembering'. A microcosmic example, when specifically considering the pirated editions as 'institutions of preservation', is the contrasting differences (also discussed in Chapter III) between James Currie's Enlightenment-inspired 'remembering' of Burns as a product of civic educational structures, and Thomas Carlyle's Romantic revision of the poet's legacy. Here, in terms of the way Burns is 'remembered', 'the distinction between myth and history vanishes' [27] as objectified memories (in this case in the form of biographical text) are reconstructed to reflect a changing present (the obvious variation here is from an Enlightenment-era reading of Burns to an overtly Romantic one).

The abundance of pirated biographical editions, each transmitting their own ideological 'memory' of the poet, was certainly one method by which Burns was continually and variously 'remembered'. However, having devoted Chapters II and III of to print culture, it is more useful here to discuss other modes of commemoration or 'institutions of

[24] Davis, 'Negotiating Cultural Memory', 2.
[25] Ibid., 13-14.
[26] Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory', 111.
[27] Ibid., 113.

preservation' within these specific geo-cultural and chronological parameters. Books, postcards, ceramic ware, snuff boxes and statues might be the most tangible examples of how material 'objects' can preserve the cultural memory of significant events, experiences and literary or historical figures. Equally, but perhaps less obviously in relation to the noun 'object', associational clubs, fraternities, rites, landscapes and sites of tourism must also be counted among mediated forms of memory preservation. Spanning over a wide expanse of material and memorial culture, the following discussion will address several of the above, ranging from the establishment of the first 'Burns Clubs' (in the early nineteenth century) to the beginnings of the transatlantic vogue for erecting statues in the poet's honour (the mid to latter half of the century).

This task has been made considerably easier thanks to a reinvigorated academic interest in Robert Burns 'beyond text' in the twenty-first century. In particular, the Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project 'Robert Burns: Inventing Tradition and Securing Memory, 1796-1909' (led by Murray Pittock and comprised of researchers from The Universities of Glasgow and Dundee) has opened up several new insights through its interdisciplinary approach towards studying 'the effects of cultural environment on memory'[28] with specific reference to material culture and memorabilia relating to Burns. The primary output of the project, undertaken between 2009 and 2011, was the production and publication of two web-based resources;[29] one which provides an online catalogue of Burns statues and major public memorials erected prior to 1909, and another which lists a taxonomy of Burns related objects and memorabilia – commonly referred to as 'Burnsiana' – in the same period. In addition to the former AHRC project and its related database(s), the recent doctoral work of Clark McGinn has explored the origins, conception and global development of the 'Burns Supper'; resulting in fresh and unprecedented insights into the inception and enduring legacy of the convivial occasions in various locations, including North America.[30] Through this surge of academic interest in Robert Burns 'beyond text', the empirical foundations have been laid for a more expansive and dedicated discussion of how the poet was remembered and 'preserved' in the 'cultural memory' of the early United States.

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[28] Pauline Mackay and Murray Pittock, 'Beyond Text: Burns, Byron and Their Material Culture Afterlife' in *The Byron Journal,* 39:2 (2011) 149-162 (149).
[29] <See www.gla.ac.uk/robertburnsbeyondtext> [accessed 30/12/2015].
[30] See Clark McGinn, '"Every honour except canonisation": the global development of the Burns Supper, 1801 to 2009' Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Glasgow (2013).

Suppers and Fraternal Societies

The coming together of migrants with the same ethnic background is a widely documented and common sociological occurrence,[31] and thus it comes as no surprise that several Scottish clubs, associations and kinship networks had formed by the time that Burns's poetry first arrived in North America at the end of the eighteenth century. As early as 1657, when the Scots Charitable Society of Boston was established, Scots emigrants came together to promote fraternal bonds and offer charitable aid to one another.[32] Similar clubs continued to be formed in the following century, predominantly adopting the name of Scotland's patron saint to unify emigrants seeking fraternal kinship. In the years preceding the arrival of Burns's poetry in the United States, 'St Andrew's Societies' had been established in New York (1756), Philadelphia (1749), Baltimore (1750) and South Carolina (1729).[33] Naturally, as the reputation of Burns increased through the periodical press and pirated editions, these Scoto-centric groups were swift to recognise, celebrate and subsequently memorialise a poet they could claim as their own.

It is stated in the *The History of Saint Andrew's Society of The State of New York,* compiled and edited by Harlan Douglas Whatley in 2008, that the one annual occasion that 'was never allowed to pass without due celebration'[34] by the organisation and its sister societies was a grand feast in honour of the patron saint's birthday (30th November) each year. Used to promote 'conviviality and friendship', celebrations included, among festive eating and drinking, the performance and recitation of Scottish poetry and song. Clark McGinn has recorded how Burns's poems were recited at these North American events as early as 1790 (at the St. Andrew's Night Dinner in Pittsburgh).[35] The incorporation of Scottish songs also draws attention to the performative elements of memory transfer in relation to Burns. The formal 'suppers' provided a wider platform for the performance of his songs outside of the domestic sphere. If Burns's songs had indeed travelled to the New World informally on the 'lips and fiddles' of Scots emigrants, then these social gatherings allowed for a wider network

[31] See for example Angela McCarthy, *Irish Migrants in New Zealand, 1840-1937: 'The Desired Haven'* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005) and William E. Van Kugt, *British Buckeyes: The English, Scots and Welsh in Ohio, 1700-1900* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2006).
[32] Carol Thomson Gallagher*, The Scots Who Built New York* (New York: St Andrew's Society of the State of New York, 2006) 19.
[33] Ibid. See also Tanja Bueltmann, *Clubbing Together: Ethnicity, Civility and Formal Sociability in the Scottish Diaspora to 1930* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2014).
[34] *Two Hundred Fifty Years 1756-2006: The History of Saint Andrew's Society of The State of New York*, ed. by Harlan Douglas Whatley, Duncan A. Bruce and Randall Lenox Taylor (New York: Saint Andrew's Society of The State of New York, 2008) 21.
[35] Clark McGinn, 'The First American Burns Suppers' in *The Burns Chronicle 2015,* 47-59 (48).

of performative communication and preservation.[36] From the initial inclusion of selected poems and songs at annual feasts, toasting the poet swiftly became a customary gesture after his death in 1796. Several transcripts of separate St Andrews Society proceedings in different states reveal similar tributes and toasts to 'The Memory of Robert Burns, The Ayrshire Poet'.[37] Rather than just the recitation of his poetry and songs, then, the very act of commemorating Burns - at least at these early celebrations - became a way of asserting and maintaining Scottish cultural value in the far removed context of the United States.

Though these early festive toasts were woven into extant celebrations of St Andrew's birth, it was not long before autonomous 'Burns Suppers' – solely concerned with commemorating the life and works of the poet – were established. The phenomenon of the 'Burns Supper', of course, was not exclusive to the United States and was catalysed by the widely publicised inception of organised feasts in Ayrshire, first arranged by Reverend Hamilton Paul in 1801. Clark McGinn has noted that, as early as 1803, articles documenting these events were printed in newspapers across several American States, consequently 'opening the concept of dining in memory of Burns around his birthday to the American market.'[38] That the nature of these 'Suppers' were based 'on Masonic Lines'[39] – somewhat resembling lodge ceremonials – naturally meant that several lodges were active in organising annual Suppers in honour of the poet. Yet the Freemasons were not the only associational society involved in organising such events and, as we shall see, by the 1859 centenary, there were multiples of Burns Suppers organised by different clubs and social groups; all of which functioned as separate 'institutions of preservation' that promoted a memory of the poet that was infused with a slightly altered 'subjective dimension'[40]. That 'social forces'[41], and in particular geopolitical circumstances, dictated the (sometimes contrasting) ways in which Burns was 'remembered' at contemporary Burns Suppers has previously been discussed by Murray Pittock and Leith Davis. With imperial synchronicity, by the mid-nineteenth century events celebrating the birth of Burns had been marked on social calendars across locations as diverse as India, Jamaica and Australia. In noting the subjective nature of these occasions Nigel Leask has noted how the 1812 Calcutta Burns Supper 'buttressed Scottish identity in the

[36] There is evidence that Burns's songs were played as entertainment at these social gatherings. See for example John Melish *Travels in the United States of America* (Philadelphia: Thomas & George Palmer, 1812) 284-285.
[37] See for example *The Pennsylvania Packet,* 25 December (1790), *Albany Spectator*, 12 December (1804), *Commercial Advertiser,* 8 December (1804).
[38] McGinn, 'The First American Burns Suppers' in *The Burns Chronicle 2015*, 50.
[39] Pittock and Whatley, 'Poems and Festivals, Art and Artefact', 60-61.
[40] Russell, 'Collective Memory before and after Halbwachs', 799.
[41] Hutton, 'Sigmund Freud and Maurice Halbwachs', 149.

British Empire';[42] a purpose quite different to some of the American commemorations that featured songs dedicated to those who 'fought and bled' against the British in the Revolutionary War.

Yet even within the United States, the memory of the poet being toasted was far from uniform and variously shaped by differing 'social forces' (variable by associational groups, regional interests or otherwise). An interesting convergence of Scottish and American patriotism, for example, can be found at the first American (free-standing) 'Burns Supper' held by the Philadelphia Burns Club in 1817. Beginning with tributes and toasts to (in addition to Burns) 'Scotland's Daughters!', 'The memory of Buchanan, Lindsay, Ramsay and Ferguson' and 'The immortal memory of Bruce and Wallace'; the format initially appears similar to the Scoto-centric agenda of the earlier St Andrews Society events. A notable addition to the proceedings, however, was a tribute to 'the immortal memory of General Washington' followed by the performance of 'Hail Columbia'.[43] Used as the *de facto* national anthem of the United States up to the turn of the twentieth century, the song, composed by Philip Phile (1734-1793) with lyrics added by Joseph Hopkinson (1770-1842), extols those 'who fought and bled in Freedom's cause' and celebrates 'Rallying round our Liberty'.[44]

Hopkinson, who became a member of the House of Representatives in 1816, wrote his lyrics and sent them to George Washington just four years after Burns had penned his own 'Ode' to the first President, further revealing the symbolic and inspirational power of Washington in the 'revolutionary' 1790s, as discussed in Chapter I. 'Hail Columbia' was to be a regular feature at Burns Suppers and an introduction to the song can be found in a transcript of the 1822 celebration held at Harmony Hall, New York. Commenting on Burns's love for his 'native country, his patriotism and independence of spirit', the speaker, Mr William Orr, observed how 'love of country is a passion pretty generally diffused among mankind'. Expanding further, Orr explained that while Americans should 'indulge our own patriotism' they might also admire those 'who cherish the same principle with regard to their countries, even although these countries be at war with our own'.[45] Here, rather than Burns being directly praised for his supposed political kinship with American ideals (as he was at the

[42] Nigel Leask '"Their Grove o' Sweet Myrtles': Robert Burns and the Scottish Colonial Experience' in *Robert Burns in Global Culture* ed. by Murray Pittock 172-189 (181).
[43] *New-York Daily Advertiser*, 3 February (1818).
[44] 'Hail, Columbia!' quoted from 'An American Time Capsule: Three Centuries of Broadsides and Other Printed Ephemera' <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=rbpe&fileName=rbpe07/rbpe077/07701000/rbpe07701000.db&recNum=1&itemLink=r?ammem/rbpebib:@field(NUMBER+@band(rbpe+07701000))&linkText=0> [accessed 31/01/2015].
[45] *The New-York American,* 2:588 (1822) 3.

1859 Boston Centenary), Orr channels his 'memory' of the poet's relationship to Scotland to promote his *own* values. In recognising the subjective, at times ideological, nature of these commemorative occasions, then, we might consider once again consider Jan Assmann's assertion that 'cultural memory reaches back into the past only so far as the past can be reclaimed as "ours"'.[46] While shedding light on the diverse nature of Burns Suppers in nineteenth-century America, this also makes for insights into how these events and related associational clubs continue to promote subjectively constructed 'memories' of the poet in the present day.

Statues and Memorials

While Burns Clubs and Suppers were established in America in the early decades of the nineteenth century, it was not until later that statues and memorials of the poet appeared. This can be attributed to a much wider (late-nineteenth century) vogue for erecting public memorials of literary figures; evidenced by the statues of Burns, Dante, Goethe and Shakespeare that were commissioned within years of each other across several states from 1860 onwards.[47] Though the present discussion is concerned with Burns and cultural memory in the United States up to 1866, it remains useful to briefly touch upon the circumstances from which some of the later monuments to the Scottish poet arose; particularly having acknowledged the interrelationship(s) between different forms of objectified culture in the context of cultural memory. As Jan Assmann notes, 'transitions and transformations account for the dynamics of cultural memory'[48]; a process marked here by the intersecting re-mediations of the memory of Burns (from texts and suppers to statues and other forms of objectified culture).

The first detailed study of worldwide Burns statues, titled *The World's Memorials of Robert Burns,* was, incidentally, published in the United States (Detroit) by Edward Goodwillie in 1911. James Mackay also devoted a significant chapter of his book *Burnsiana* (1986) to the subject and, as previously noted, the twenty-first century has seen the comprehensive listing and digitisation of Burns monuments, memorials and memorabilia as a result of the 'Robert Burns: Inventing Tradition and Securing Memory, 1796-1909' project conducted by the Universities of Glasgow and Dundee. In specific relation to North America,

[46] Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory', 111.
[47] See 'Smithsonian Institution, Inventory of American Art' cited at <www.AmericanArt.si.edu> [accessed 31/01/2015].
[48] Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory', 117.

Thomas Keith has provided an informative survey of monuments in a paper first given as part of the pre-conference symposium and exhibit, "Robert Burns and America," organised for the Robert Burns World Federation Limited meeting in Atlanta, Georgia July 20, 2001. Elucidating the number of statues in North America, Keith notes that there are now a total of fourteen in the United States and eight in Canada, pointing to the fact that there are more statues of Burns in North America (22) than there are in Scotland (15).[49] Perhaps the most pertinent aspect of Keith's survey (and the digital database) to the present discussion, however, is the extent to which Burns Clubs, and Caledonian/St Andrews Societies were involved in raising capital for the erection of statues. The link here is revealing of the 'transitions and transformations' that allowed for the cultural memory of the poet to be continually reconfigured and preserved; a point worth emphasising given that most discussions of cultural memory tend to focus on 'isolated acts of remembrance rather than on the processes by which one type of remembrance feeds into another'.[50]

The first statue of Burns in the United States was unveiled in New York's Central Park in 1880, and was predominantly sponsored by members of the New York Caledonian Club and St Andrews Society. Revered Scottish sculptor Sir John Steele (1804-1891) was commissioned for the job and depicted Burns on the stump of an elm tree (which Sir Walter Scott linked with the harp of Caledonia in the opening lines of his poem 'The Lady of the Lake').[51] The unveiling of the New York statue, featuring 'speeches, poems, songs and bagpipes'[52] was not dissimilar to previous convivial St. Andrews Day celebrations in its heralding of perceived 'Scottishness' or Scottish heritage. Clark McGinn and Murray Pittock have both touched on how American Scottish Societies were influential on the increasing 'tartan-isation' of the Burns Supper as the poet became, arguably to a greater degree in the far-removed context of the United States, a symbolic and unifying figure for Scottish culture in representing both Highland and Lowland identities. The ceremonial unveiling of the early Burns statues in the United States reveal similar associational appropriations, with the 1888 event in Albany 'organised to coincide with the annual gathering of the North American Caledonian Association'. This meant that 'Caledonian Societies, St Andrew Societies and

[49] Keith gives fifteen statues for Scotland based on James Mackay's list which does not include the statue of Burns unveiled in Dumfries in 1882. See Keith, 'Burns Statues – North America', 71.
[50] Rigney, 'Plentitude, scarcity and the circulation of cultural memory', 20.
[51] <http://www.robertburnsmemorials.arts.gla.ac.uk/details.php?ID=8> [accessed 30/12/2015].
[52] Keith, 'Burns Statues – North America', 74.

other Scots charitable societies gathered together from cities such as 'Boston, Milwaukee, New York, Buffalo and from as far as Montreal and Toronto.' [53]

On this evidence, the 'memory' of Burns, as it was initially objectified into statuary medium in the United States, was seemingly a way of maintaining a sense of Scottish identity or heritage, bringing to mind Assmann's idea of 'remembering' being 'a realization of belonging, even a social obligation.'[54] Yet, as was the case with Suppers, even the (literally static) medium of statues would, at times, take on subjective inflections. The Scoto-centric elements of the earliest statues discussed above, for example, might be considered apart from some of the later tributes, such as John Horrigan's twentieth century statue in Massachusetts which is inscribed with a long excerpt from 'Ode for General Washington's Birthday'; or the 1928 monument erected by the St Louis Burns Club that depicts Burns with a sheaf of wheat and a scythe; closely resembling a 'minute-man from the American Revolution'.[55] Both the Massachusetts and St Louis statues clearly promote a localised sense of identity transposed through a form of objectified culture.

Though the transatlantic vogue for Burns statues began after the 1859 centenary (and thus beyond the current study's parameters) it is hoped that this brief outline of its inception provides a clear example of how cultural memory undergoes frequent processes of remediation whilst retaining traces of the source memory (Burns). Ann Rigney has pioneered this media-based approach towards considering cultural memory by emphasising how investigations into 'the way memories are communicated, circulated and exchanged' allows us to see the way collective identities are 'redefined through memorial practices, and not merely reflected in them'.[56] In considering this idea further, it is useful to turn to another process of mediation that rose to particular prominence in the nineteenth century and, as we shall see, played a significant role in preserving the cultural memory of the poet; the practice of literary tourism and its associated material culture.

Literary Tourism and Material Culture

In her comprehensive study of American tourists in nineteenth-century Britain, Allison Lockwood notes that the birthplace of Burns became 'all but an obligatory stop for the

[53] <http://www.robertburnsmemorials.arts.gla.ac.uk/details.php?ID=1> [accessed 30/12/2015].
[54] Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory', 114.
[55] Keith, 'Burns Statues -North America', 81.
[56] Rigney, 'Plentitude, scarcity and the circulation of cultural memory', 11.

American tourist', citing a visit by Andrew Bigelow in 1817 as an early example.[57] Several written accounts of these visits were reproduced across the Atlantic, further contributing to the cultural preservation of the poet in American print culture. In 1829, New York publishers G & C. & H. Carvill published Nathaniel Carter's tour journal, which contained a detailed account of his visit to the cottage, in full book form.[58] Perhaps the most famous American visitor in the period was prominent African-American abolitionist Frederick Douglass whose written account, titled 'A Fugitive Slave Visiting the Birth-Place of Robert Burns' was repeatedly reprinted in the United States; first in *The New York Tribune* of 9 July 1846 and subsequently in other (predominantly abolitionist) newspapers, such as the *Albany Evening Journal* and the Ohio-based *Anti-Slavery Bugle*, which was widely distributed across Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin and Indiana.[59]

The fuller significance of Douglass's 'memory' of Burns in relation to US abolitionism will be discussed later in this chapter. However, when considering literary tourism as a form of Burns commemoration it is more useful to first touch upon an anecdote from his written account. In describing meeting Mrs. Begg (the poet's sister) and two nieces of Burns, Douglass noted how one of the latter individuals remarked that her 'uncle was more highly esteemed in America than in Scotland'.[60] This curious remark was likely a reflection of the frequency with which enthusiastic American tourists had visited the Burns Cottage, given it was promoted as a site of tourism as early as 1801.[61] Some decades later, an article specifically about Mrs. Begg and the cottage appeared in the Virginia-based *Daily Dispatch* stating, in line with this idea, how she had received more visitors from 'the States than any other part of the world'.[62] Later in the nineteenth century, as literary tourism continued to boom, American traveller Leonard A. Morrison noted in his published memoir how Miss. Begg (by then Burns's only remaining niece) once again spoke highly of the large amounts of American visitors she had received.[63]

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[57] Allison Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims: The American Traveler in Great Britain, 1800-1914* (New York: Cornwall Books, 1981) 78.
[58] Nathaniel Hazeltine Carter, *Letters from Europe, comprising the journal of a tour through Ireland, England, Scotland, France, Italy, and Switzerland in the years 1825, '26,and '27*, Vol. 1 (New York: G & C. & H. Carvill, 1829).
[59] <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83035487/> [accessed 31/12/2015].
[60] Frederick Douglass, 'A Fugitive Slave Visiting the Birth-Place of Robert Burns' quoted from <http://library.sc.edu/spcoll/douglass/fugitive.pdf > [accessed 31/12/2015].
[61] Pittock and Whatley, 'Poems and Festivals, Art and Artefact', 60.
[62] *The Daily Dispatch*, 15 Oct (1856).
[63] Leonard A. Morrison, *Rambles in Europe: In Ireland, Scotland, England, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, and France* (Boston: Cupples, Upham & Co., 1887) 104.

In another telling anecdote, nineteenth-century American traveller Loretta J. Post commented that 'hawkers quite disturb the poetic spell'[64] of the cottage; suggesting that the capitalistic rise of material culture was, to some extent, interwoven into the practice of literary tourism. Murray Pittock and Pauline Mackay have touched upon the connection in describing how nineteenth-century tourists sought to reify memories - of both their visit and the poet - through 'a wealth of objects' that were 'claimed to be relics[…]of particular locations associated with Burns's poetry and life'.[65] Objects and tourist merchandise such as jewellery and snuff boxes were adorned with multiple Burns-related locations (Alloway Kirk and The Braes of Ballochmyle for example) while some objects were allegedly made from wood extracted from the rafters of Alloway Kirk or the cottage floorboards; thus allowing literary pilgrims to maximise their memorial experience and proximity to the poet. Though the mass production of Mauchline ware did not occur until the later decades of the nineteenth century (partly in response to the growing literary tourist market), evidence of a desire to participate in this objective form of commemoration can be found in the accounts of early American travellers, including Nathaniel Carter and Frederick Douglass.

In 1827 Nathaniel Carter observed how parts of the grave of Burns's father had 'been broken off for relics' by 'the curiosity of strangers who, in some instances have carried fragments of it to the banks of the Ganges, or to the shores of Ontario and Huron.' Displeased at the mutilation of the grave, Carter obtained his own 'highly prized' relic in the form of a walking stick 'cut from the site of the monument' before filling a 'cup from the cottage' and drinking to 'the memory of Robert Burns'.[66] Frederick Douglass also made reference to material culture on his visit, admiring a 'finely executed marble bust of Burns' and 'two statues carved out of free stone' of Souter Johnny and Tam o' Shanter, which can still be seen in the Alloway monument today. Douglass further described a Bible 'given by Burns to his sweet Highland Mary', which was displayed in a glass case along with 'a lock of her hair neatly fastened to a cord'. Constructing a melancholic memory from these objects Douglass remarked:

> As I gazed on the hair of her he so dearly loved, and who by death was snatched from his bosom, and up to his bust glowing with expression, I received a vivid impression'.[67]

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[64] Loretta J. Post, *Scenes in Europe; or, Observations by an Amateur Artist* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Hitchcock & Walden, 1874) 111.
[65] Mackay and Pittock, 'Beyond Text: Burns, Byron and Their Material Culture Afterlife', 150-151.
[66] *Letters from Europe,* 312.
[67] Frederick Douglass, 'A Fugitive Slave Visiting the Birth-Place of Robert Burns' quoted from <http://library.sc.edu/spcoll/douglass/fugitive.pdf > [accessed 31/12/2015].

In an a fascinating transatlantic exchange, the bible (and accompanying 'lock of hair') that Douglass responded to had initially been transported to Canada by William Anderson in 1832, before being purchased for 100 dollars by 'seventy Scotsmen living in Canada' who then forwarded it to the Provost of Ayr to be displayed to reflect 'great credit and honour on those seventy exiled Scots'.[68] Though, as the online taxonomy suggests,[69] Burns-related merchandise does not appear to have been produced, to any notable extent, in the United States prior to 1859, it was most certainly in circulation as a result of the frequency with which American travellers returned home from Scotland with 'relics'. This process is evidenced by Nathaniel Carter and later on (and to a far greater degree) by William R. Smith who, while visiting Scotland, went to the effort of obtaining everything from manuscripts, stamps, pins and postcards to a fragment of curtain thought to belong to Jean Armour. In one of his 'scrapbooks', Smith also claimed that a square of the same curtain was made into a sofa-cushion for one John Greenleaf Whittier.[70]

Burns-related relics were also on display at multiple nineteenth-century Burns Suppers, usually having been shipped from Scotland specifically for the event. Memorabilia and objects associated with Highland Mary proved particularly popular including items as tenuous as 'wild flowers from the banks of the Fayle, the scene of the parting of Burns and Highland Mary' and a 'branch of Highland Mary's Thorn'.[71] Pittock and Mackay have convincingly demonstrated how the popularity of 'Highland Mary' was 'due not so much to the archival record' but rather to 'the images, objects and memorialisation through which her relationship with the poet was constructed as an act of public memory in the nineteenth century'.[72] There is, however, also evidence to suggest that the popularity of the 'Highland Mary' songs in the United States preceded the full blooming of postcards, statues, plaques and other objects that would cement her iconic reputation as Burns's tragically lost muse. As touched upon in Chapter III of this thesis, several newspapers specifically alluded to the 'Highland Mary' songs as the poet's most 'moving' and 'tender'[73] works, particularly after the reprinting of Cromek's *Reliques* which boasted the editor's 'discovery' of Mary Campbell.

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[68] Pittock and Mackay, 'Highland Mary: Objects and Memories' in *Romanticism* 18:2 (2012) 191-203 (194).
[69] See <www.gla.ac.uk/robertburnsbeyondtext> [accessed 31/12/2015].
[70] Arun Sood, 'An American Trove of Burnsiana: The William R. Smith Collection' in *The Burns Chronicle 2015*, 39-46 (44).
[71] *Celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, January 25th, 1859,* 27.
[72] Pittock and Mackay, 'Highland Mary: Objects and Memories' in *Romanticism*, 194.
[73] *Salem Gazette,* 1, N16 (1823) 1.

Commenting on the US 'enshrinement' of Burns's 'sentimental songs to Highland Mary as his finest works', Carol McGuirk has suggested that the 'urgent addresses to a dead girl' achieved the 'focus on morbidity and mortality that nineteenth-century Americans found so perversely attractive'. McGuirk's suggestion is fascinating in that it weaves 'the cult' of Highland Mary into the thematic oeuvre of American Gothic or 'Dark Romanticism'; a movement that found expression in a literary sense through Poe, Hawthorne and Melville, but extended to broader manners of taste such as the rise in popularity of pre-interment photographs of dead children.[74] Fascinating though the suggestion may be, considering the poems as gothic 'addresses to a dead girl' is a slightly obscure reading given it was never really a live theme in Burns's poems. Thus, the idea is best read in conjunction with Pittock's explanation that the popularity of 'Highland Mary' in the United States might also be linked with her 'image as a potential emigrant to the New World who died before she could take the opportunity to leave with her beloved.[75]

Regardless, the case of 'Highland Mary' serves as a useful microcosmic example of the processes by which modes of cultural remembrance can feed into one another and preserve reconstituted memories. In adopting Rigney's 'media-based approach' that focuses on the 'way memories are communicated, circulated and exchanged' and applying it to the 'cult of Highland Mary' in the nineteenth-century United States, we begin to see a full range of interrelated mechanisms at work as memories were continually (re)communicated through songs, 'relics', statues and even landscapes and dances (the 'Highland Mary' Mine and Lakes in Colorado and the 'Highland Mary' Morris Dance.).[76] When outlining these multiple forms of memorial practice, it is crucial to note that, while remaining connected by the source, they all preserved slightly altered 'memories'. The singular question of how Burns was 'remembered' in the United States (through the processes of cultural memory) thus demands a pluralistic answer in that we must consider not only several forms of mediation, but also the wide array of separate communities, individuals and groups that variously reconstituted the memory of the poet. In line with Halbwach's foundational idea that 'every group has its own collective memory and that collective memory differs from the collective memory of other groups'[77], we might then begin to address how diversely the cultural memory of Burns was

[74] McGuirk, 'Haunted By Authority', 146.
[75] Pittock and Whatley, 'Poems and Festivals, Art and Artefact', 65-67.
[76] Pittock and Mackay, 'Highland Mary: Objects and Memories', 194.
[77] Russell, 'Collective Memory before and after Halbwachs' in *The French Review,* 796.

appropriated in the period to articulate and promote, often conflicting, group and individual identities.

Civil Divisions of Memory: Frederick Douglass & US Abolitionism

In his exploration of how Burns was remembered and appropriated in Scotland between 1796-1859, Christopher Whatley has highlighted how both Chartists (along with their successors the Radical Liberals) and the Scottish Tories drew on selective interpretations of Burns's life to bolster divergent political values and principles. Implicit in Whatley's discussion, then, is how tensions in the socio-political climate of early to mid-nineteenth century Scotland shaped the disputed legacy or 'memory' of Burns. While Scottish conservatives aimed to counter social unrest caused by the linked processes of rampant industrialisation and rapid urbanisation, liberals argued for justice and reform; with both groups commandeering and shaping in their own interests the memory of Burns.[78] Unsurprisingly, in light of Assmann's articulations on the dynamics of cultural memory, similar patterns of social and political appropriation emerged in the United States. In unpacking (divergent) group and individual memories of Burns, it is possible to see how the foremost socio-political issues of the period were interwoven into articulations of remembrance, particularly in the decades that straddled the 1859 Centenary.

As territorial expansion reached a peak of intensity in the 1840s, American political life faced an increasing sense of destabilisation as debates over industry, agriculture and, most famously, slavery came to the fore, causing the severely damaging sectional conflicts that would spark the beginning of the American Civil War. It would be grandiose to suggest that the poetry (or indeed legacy) of Burns was highly influential on shaping political opinion given the multitude of socio-political factors that contributed towards rising tensions, territorial divisions and unrest. However, in highlighting how commemorations of the poet variously served to bolster extant identities, beliefs and values, we might further demonstrate how cultural memory is frequently an expression of 'one's own diachronic identity'[79]; thus underpinning the important point that there was never a cohesive, singular 'cultural memory' of the poet or his works in the United States due to a constant flux of subjective dimensions and circumstances.

[78] Whatley, '"It Is Said That Burns Was a Radical"', 640-641.
[79] Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory', 113-114.

Perhaps the most striking posthumous competition over the memory of Burns was between African-American abolitionist Frederick Douglass and opposing groups and individuals from the slave-holding states of the American South. There has been a recent surge of interest in the speeches that Douglass delivered in Scotland during his anti-slavery tour of Britain and Ireland, primarily due to the continuing scholarly attempts to 'recover' the memory of Scottish connections with slavery and the black Atlantic.[80] It was during this tour that Douglass visited the birthplace of Burns in 1846, as touched upon above. A fuller examination of Douglass's account reveals the extent to which his individual 'memory' was shaped by socio-political tensions and, in particular, abolitionist discourses. It would be a stretch, even an injustice, to suggest that Douglass systematically constructed his written 'memory' of Burns to bolster white Scottish support for the movement. Douglass was long acquainted with Burns's poetry, having purchased the 1833 Philadelphia edition, printed by J. Crissy, as his 'first book' after his 'escape from slavery', and later gifting it to his son as a 'keepsake' over three decades later in 1867.[81] Yet, the rhetorical and thematic parallels between 'A Fugitive Slave Visiting the Birth-Place of Robert Burns' and his contemporary oratory proclamations in 1846 still serve to highlight a distinct correlation between Douglass's individual memory and the socio-political discourses that surrounded him.

A brief consideration of Douglass's 1846 speech in Paisley, delivered just weeks before his visit to Ayr, alongside his letter about Burns drives home the point. Where Burns had been trapped 'in the moorings which society had thrown around him'[82], African-Americans were described (in Paisley) as 'clanking their chains, and calling upon Britons to aid them'.[83] Where 'Burns lived in the midst of a bigoted and besotted clergy'[84], the Paisley speech condemned the bigotry of a church (the Free Church of Scotland) that 'comes forward

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[80] See Michael Morris, *Scotland and the Caribbean,* 128-177. In 2015 The University of Glasgow 's History Department launched 'Runaway Slaves in Britain: bondage, freedom and race in the eighteenth century'. The project aims to provide a database of information related to the enslaved in eighteenth century Britain. See also Nikki Brown, '"Send back the money!" Frederick Douglass's Anti-Slavery Speeches in Scotland and the Emergence of African American Internationalism' in *Scotland's Transatlantic Relations Project Archive* (April 2004) cited at <http://www.iash.ed.ac.uk/star/archive/Papers/Brown_Douglass.in.Scotland.pdf> [accessed 02/01/2016].

[81] 'Collection Highlight: Robert Burns and Frederick Douglass' quoted from University of Rochester Rare Books, Special Collections Webpage. See <https://www.lib.rochester.edu/index.cfm?PAGE=4646> [accessed 02/01/2016].

[82] Frederick Douglass, 'A Fugitive Slave Visiting the Birth-Place of Robert Burns' quoted from <http://library.sc.edu/spcoll/douglass/fugitive.pdf > [accessed 31/12/2015].

[83] Frederick Douglass, 'Send Back the Blood-Stained Money: An Address Delivered in Paisley, Scotland, on April 25, 1846' in *The Frederick Douglass Papers*, ed. by John Blassingame, Vol. 1 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979) 240.

[84] Frederick Douglass, 'A Fugitive Slave Visiting the Birth-Place of Robert Burns' quoted from <http://library.sc.edu/spcoll/douglass/fugitive.pdf > [accessed 31/12/2015].

and holds up the slaveholder as being Christian'.[85] Douglass's description of how Burns battled a 'corrupt generation' plagued by 'a shallow brained aristocracy'[86] also resonates with his protests in Paisley against 'the man whose pockets are lined with the gold with which I ought to have been educated'.[87] The theme of pious hypocrisy is also implicit throughout. Acknowledging the poet's alleged misgivings, Douglass maintained that Burns was 'yet more faultless than many who have come down to us in the pages of history as saints'.[88] In a similar condemnation in Paisley he remarked: 'The Free Church is doing more for infidelity and atheism than all the infidels in Scotland combined'.[89] Douglass's targeted attack on the Free Church of Scotland, founded in 1843 after the Great Disruption, was the result of Free Church missionaries accepting monetary donations from American slaveholders; thus partly inspiring Douglass's 'Send Back the Money!' campaign and tour in Scotland.

In order to acquire the fullest understanding of Douglass's memory of Burns (and the social discourses which shaped it), then, it is crucial to acknowledge that 'A Fugitive Slave Visiting the Birth-Place of Robert Burns' was written at the height of his mission to exert pressure on the United States by increasing international sympathy and support for abolition. In his own emphatic words, he was intent on uniting the people of 'Scotland, England, Ireland, Canada, Mexico, and even the red Indians [to join] with us and against slavery'.[90] This ardent concern and socio-political factor lingers throughout his 'memory' of Burns, as the poet is symbolically enlisted into Douglass's discourse on slavery and abolition.

That the reprinting of Douglass's letter functioned, and continues to function, as an 'institution of preservation' is clear in that it has influenced several transatlantic constructions of the poet; specifically among African-Americans who came to regard Burns as a voice of liberty, equality and brotherhood. As Alan Rice astutely points out, Douglass ignited a 'strategic Celto-philia'[91] for African-American writers, perhaps most famously iterated in recent years by the late Maya Angelou who, like Douglass before her, made 'a pilgrimage to "Burns Country"' and identified the poet as the 'first white man' who understood that 'a

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[85] Frederick Douglass, 'Send Back the Blood-Stained Money' in *The Frederick Douglass Papers* ,240.
[86] Frederick Douglass, 'A Fugitive Slave Visiting the Birth-Place of Robert Burns' quoted from <http://library.sc.edu/spcoll/douglass/fugitive.pdf > [accessed 31/12/2015].
[87] *The Frederick Douglass Papers*, 240.
[88] Frederick Douglass, 'A Fugitive Slave Visiting the Birth-Place of Robert Burns' quoted from <http://library.sc.edu/spcoll/douglass/fugitive.pdf > [accessed 31/12/2015].
[89] Frederick Douglass, 'Send Back the Blood-Stained Money' in *The Frederick Douglass Papers*, 240.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Alan Rice, *Radical Narratives of the Black Atlantic* (London: Continuum, 2003) 213.

human being was a human being and we are more alike than unalike'.[92] Specifically in regards to nineteenth century abolitionism in the United States, Thomas Keith has traced instances of where 'Man was made to mourn' and 'Is there for honest poverty' was used to rouse public support;[93] with the former song being simultaneously claimed as a 'Masonic Anthem' on both sides of the Atlantic. Similarly, Clark McGinn has provided an informative list of quotes in which Burns was invoked by prominent black and white nineteenth century abolitionists, including Samuel Ringgold Ward (1817-1866); Gerrit Smith (1797-1874); Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887); and William Lloyd Garrison (1805-1879); with the former even writing an anti-slavery anthem set to the tune of 'Auld Lang Syne.'[94]

In the build up to – and during – the American Civil War, pro-Union writers and orators regularly drew on the memory of Burns and specifically the phrase 'a man's a man for a that' to win support for the abolitionist cause and promote messages of equality and brotherhood beyond the boundaries of racial confines. Also referencing 'Scots Wha Hae', William Lloyd Garrison rhetorically questioned 'Who would be a traitor knave? Who so base as be a slave?' before declaring that 'a man's a man for a that'.[95] An article in the *National anti-slavery Standard* also urged Americans to recognise that regardless of 'complexion [sic] a man's a man for a that' while Frederick Douglass, in encouraging 'colored' men to enlist in the Union Army, powerfully suggested that the 'self-evident truths' contained in the Declaration of Independence ought to be reduced to practice, and that, whatever may be the color of his skin, 'a man's a man for a' that'.[96] Though these examples are centred on the aphorismic adoption and appropriation of one specific line (a man's a man's for a that'), the cultural preservation of Burns (or rather a line of his poetry in this case) through public speeches and text remained clearly linked to contemporary socio-political discourses or values.

Of course, the posthumous use of Burns by abolitionists remains an uncomfortable topic given the poet's increasingly debated and somewhat ambiguous attitudes towards slavery and abolition. Yet the wider discussion of Burns and slavery itself reveals much about the

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[92] Maya Angelou cited from the 1996 documentary *Angelou on Burns* by Elly M. Taylor. See <http://ssa.nls.uk/film/7076> [accessed 02/01/2016].
[93] Thomas Keith, 'Burns in the Abolitionist's Arsenal', Robert Burns Conference, University of Glasgow (2009) See <http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_105067_en.pdf> [accessed 02/01/2016].
[94] Clark McGinn 'Burns and Slavery' cited at <http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burns_lives92.htm#sdendnote43anc> [accessed 02/01/2015].
[95] *The New York Times*, 15 Feb (1854).
[96] Frederick Douglass, 'Why Should A Colored Man Enlist?' [1863] cited at <http://rbscp.lib.rochester.edu/4396> [accessed 02/01/2016] .

selective dynamics of cultural memory and collective remembrance, as Michael Morris has outlined in a chapter of his recent study *Scotland and the Caribbean, c. 1740-1833: Atlantic Archipelagos.*[97] Where Morris, responding to Pierre Nora's concept of *Les Lieux de mémoire*,[98] unpacks the memory of Burns in its relation to Scottish 'national' remembrance and identity ('the failure to recognise the wider significance of Burns' planned emigration to Jamaica' mirrors 'the marginalisation of the Caribbean plantations in Scottish national historiography'),[99] we might here note the vicarious nature of cultural memory on an individual level through Douglass's memorialisation of Burns as an enslaved underdog who broke through his 'moorings'; ultimately an ironic 'memory' and appropriation given the facts of history and Burns's tentative emigration plans.

Reflecting on the circulation of memories in mediated form (whereby text, objects, public speeches or other media are the 'carriers'[100] of the memory) Rigney further notes that individuals and groups who have 'no actual connection in any biological sense with the events in question' may 'learn to identify with certain vicarious recollections'.[101] Regardless of the uneasy ambiguity that continues to pervade the issue of Burns in relation to slavery and abolition, the (mediated) memorialisation of the poet by Douglass and other prominent abolitionists in the nineteenth-century United States unquestionably generated a 'working memory'[102] that could be (re)constructed and (re)constituted through future acts of public commemoration and remembrance. Even in the twenty-first century, we might then view, for example, Kofi Annan's (then secretary general of the United Nations) enlistment of Burns into a global canon of humanitarianism with renewed interest. Speaking in 2004 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, Annan described Burns as 'an opponent of slavery, pomposity and greed'.[103] Rather than doggedly attempt to defend, condemn or verify such a statement, it might serve us well, in terms of historical understanding, to consider more fully the cultural mechanisms at work behind the construction of such a 'memory'.

In concluding on Burns in relation to nineteenth-century American abolitionism and the North, it is worth briefly reflecting on the popularly-known association between Burns and

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[97] *Scotland and the Caribbean,* 128-176.
[98] Morris's suggestion that Burns might function as a *lieu de mémoire* for Scottish-Caribbean relations will be subsequently discussed.
[99] *Scotland and the Caribbean,* 99.
[100] Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory', 118.
[101] Rigney, 'Plentitude, scarcity and the circulation of cultural memory', 16.
[102] Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory', 118.
[103] Kofi Annan, 'Inaugural Robert Burns Memorial Lecture of 13 January 2004' cited at <http://www.un.org/press/en/2004/sgsm9112.doc.htm> [accessed 02/01/2016].

the 16th president of the United States, one Abraham Lincoln. What is perhaps most thought-provoling is the extent to which 'artistic mediators' – editors, biographers and cultural critics – have influenced the conflation of the two figures on the grounds of democarcy and egalitariansim. While Lincoln quoted Burns only once, in a rather inconsequential 1837 letter[104] to James Adams, there is, admittedly, evidence to suggest that he owned, read and occasionally recited Burns's work (among other 'large swaths' of poetry that he shared with friends).[105] However, it has been biographers and critics that have emphasised, arguably created, the poet's profound 'influence' on Lincoln. In 1928, for example, Lincoln biographer Albert J. Beveridge described how the writings of Burns had shaped the president's views on 'religious conceit' and political hypocrisy;[106] while just over a century later Fred Kaplan, in his 2008 *Lincoln: The Biogrpahy of a Writer*, argued that Burns's egalitarian themes had strongly inspired Lincoln's own political and moral vision.[107] Adopting a more scaled approach, Ferenc Morton Szasz has recently highlighted some of the 'overstatements' regarding the influence that Burns's poetry had on Lincoln, whilst maintaining that his verses did help to '*reinforce* many of the ideas that Lincoln absorbed growing up.'[108]

Szasz subsequenty touches on the comparable malleability of posthumous constructions of Burns and Lincoln, drawing attention to how the 'memory' of both men (individually or conflated) has been used to bolster various political causes; is often contested; argued over; and is frequently (re)mediated through biography, statuary culture and other modes of objectified commemoration.[109] Rather than Lincoln's actual reading and absorption of Burns's poetry, then, it is the very processes (and consequences of) cultural memory that continue to bind the two individuals together; with their posthumous reputations intertwined in that most influential of spaces – the space 'between memory and history'.[110]

Civil Divisions of Memory: Burns and The South

The appropriation of Burns and his poems by Frederick Douglass and other prominent abolitionists has been established, yet equally important, if somewhat less palatable, is to

[104] Lincoln quoted lines from 'Address to the Deil'. See *Abraham Lincoln and Robert Burns*, 76-77.
[105] See Peter Armenti, 'Abraham Lincoln and Poetry' cited at <http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/lincolnpoetry/> [accessed 24/01/2016].
[106] Albert J. Beveridge, *Abraham Lincoln*, 2 Vols., Vol. 1 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1928) 300.
[107] Fred, Kaplan, *Lincoln: The Biography of a Writer* (New York: Harper Collins, 2008) 49-86.
[108] *Abraham Lincoln and Robert Burns*, 77.
[109] Ibid., 7-122.
[110] See Pierre Nora, 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire' in *Representations* 26 (California: University of California Press, 1989) 7-24.

recognise that the poet was also adopted by opposing groups and individuals in the Southern slave-holding States. In addressing how one source of remembrance can become invested with multiple, at times conflicting historical 'memories', Rigney, following Michel Foucault's dictum of *loi de rareté*, has outlined how the 'principle of scarcity' affects memory through processes of 'selectivity, convergence, recycling and transference.'[111] In juxtaposing two broadly opposing 'memories' of Burns formed within the same geo-cultural and (and chronological) parameters, Rigney's 'principle of scarcity' might be demonstrated to some effect in that the poet's persona and works were selectively recycled to articulate and inform conflicting identities, values and experiences.

Partly due to long and continuing associations between Burns and humanitarianism, the appropriation of the poet by prominent US abolitionists in the Civil War-era comes as relatively unsurprising. Conservative constructions of Burns, on the other hand, tend to brush against the grain of the more popular perception of Burns as a beacon of liberal egalitarianism (thus making his attitudes to slavery and abolitionism a particularly thorny issue). However, as was the case in the Northern States, 'memories' of Burns in the South correlated directly with localised values. When addressing the issue of how Burns was 'remembered' in the South, it is first important to consider contemporary discourses of masculinity, pastoral ideology and the resistance to the urban capitalism of the Northern States.

That the Southern, agrarian male planter class prided themselves on ideals of honour, loyalty and integrity is a popular notion verging on stereotype that, arguably, remains powerful today judging by the Republican party's (GOP) emphasis on restoring 'honour' and 'integrity' to 'a federal system of government'[112] in the lead up to the Southern Republican Leadership Conference, held at Oklahoma City in 2015.[113] More detailed studies have, of course, challenged this monolithic view of Southern masculinity; highlighting the complexity and variety of male experience in in the nineteenth century American South. In an excellent 2004 volume titled *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South*, editors Craig Thompson Friend and Lorri Glover compiled a provocative collection of essays that map some of the intricate and shifting frameworks – variable by class, religion, race and era – that shaped male identities before, during and after the American Civil War.

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[111] Rigney, 'Plentitude, scarcity and the circulation of cultural memory' in *Journal of European Studies*, 11.
[112] See 'Federalism and The Tenth Amendment' at <https://www.gop.com/platform/we-the-people/> [accessed 02/01/2016].
[113] <http://www.srlc.gop/events/southern-republican-leadership-conference/event-summary-c98988953d0f406c8aedc02da46c0a7e.aspx> [accessed 02/01/2016].

Notably, the opening essay by Harry S. Laver documents how eighteenth century masculine ideals of civic virtue (whereby Southern manhood was identified with being 'head of household' and placing the good of the community and nation 'above individual desires') were swept aside in the early nineteenth century by a renewed sense of individualism (spurred on by a growing market economy) that promoted the unapologetic pursuit of 'wealth, power and self-advancement.'[114] Laver further argues that the American Civil War provided a new opportunity for men to demonstrate their manhood. Enlisting could, Laver suggests, 'authenticate the civic virtue of those who embraced the competition and selfishness of the market economy'.[115] Here, the complex interrelationships between agriculture, commerce and conceptions of 'virtue' in post-revolutionary America, as outlined by J.G.A Pocock in his seminal *The Machiavellian Moment*, is implicit.[116] Moreover, if Southern strains of traditional 'civic virtue' comprised of 'manly' pride; fierce patriotism; expressions of military competence; independence; a humble agrarian 'work ethic' and success in the domestic sphere; then the poetry and persona of Burns was ripe for appropriation.

Evidence of the memory of Burns functioning to articulate Southern ideals of masculinity can be found in a recent biography of Confederate colonel William Calvin Oates (1835-1910), largely remembered as the officer defeated at Little Round Top during the Battle of Gettysburg. The biography, written by Glenn W. LaFantasie and published by Oxford University Press in 2006, was based on the 'exclusive access of family papers' and 'archives' and thus delved into the previously unexplored personal life of the confederate soldier. LaFantasie notes how Oates regularly 'called to mind some lines written by his favourite poet, Robert Burns' whenever 'the romance of war flooded his emotions';[117] thus demonstrating the memory of Burns being tied to a heavily romanticised 'masculine' military experience. LaFantasie also suggests that Oates 'manufactured and crafted' his identity in later life in accordance with 'Southern manly ideals' which explained his frequent 'waxing romantic by quoting Burns' whenever he was 'inspired by the Shenandoah women'.[118] An 1852 article in the Virginia-based *Daily Dispatch* similarly described Burns as 'extremely gallant, always in love, and a great favourite with the ladies' while acknowledging – notably without any trace of

[114] Harry S. Laver, 'Refuge of Manhood: Masculinity and the Militia Experience' in *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South*, ed. by Craig Thompson Friend and Lorri Glover (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004) 1-21 (1).
[115] Ibid., 15.
[116] See *The Machiavellian Moment*, 506-553.
[117] Glenn W. LaFantasie, *Gettysburg Requiem: The Life and Lost causes of Confederate Colonel William C. Oates* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006) 75.
[118] *Gettysburg Requiem*, 40.

moral judgement – how 'the susceptible heart of the poet was bandied from one to the other'.[119]

That Burns, and in particular the phrase 'A man's a man for a' that', featured regularly in Northern abolitionist newspapers has been established above. However, the poet was also a frequent fixture in newspapers that openly promoted the preservation of slavery. In an article yet to be published, Joseph Du Rant of The University of Glasgow has undertaken a useful comparative study of the way Burns was portrayed in Northern and Southern Antebellum newspapers. Most powerfully, Du Rant notes that articles on Burns regularly appear within pages – at times on the same page – as advertisements selling 'Negroes' and notices of 'captured' slaves. Du Rant makes the point that Burns as a symbol of universal equality – so widely remembered by Douglass and the Northern abolitionists – does not seem to have any presence in the Southern newspapers.[120] Rather, Burns is portrayed akin to a charismatic Southern white male complete with all the admirable trappings of idealised masculinity. In a slightly absurd parable in the pro-slavery *Daily Dispatch*, this selective Southern commemoration of Burns appears explicit:

> Robert Burns, on his way to Leith one morning met a country farmer: he shook him earnestly by the hand and stopped to converse a while. A young Edinburgh blood took the poet to task for this defect of taste. 'Why, you fantastic,' said Burns, 'it was not the great coat, the scone bonnet, and the saundaer boot hose, I spoke to, but the man that was in them; and the man, sir, for worth would weigh down you and me, and ten more any such day.[121]

Though Burns's egalitarian virtues are hinted at here, the parable also smacks of traditional Southern discourses of masculinity. It is not the city-dwelling 'blood', tainted by individualism, materialism and a market economy that reigns supreme, but rather the honourable agrarian concerned with community and honour. The fact of him being a 'country farmer' is also notable. Though farming, in particular manual labour, was predominantly undertaken by slaves in the period, they were rarely referred to as 'farmers'. Thus, the 'country farmer' that the imagined Burns speaks highly of seems to resemble a Southern white plantation overseer; a darkly ironic posthumous cultural appropriation given the poet's early intentions to emigrate to Jamaica.

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[119] *The Daily Dispatch,* 4th November (1852*)*.
[120] Article forthcoming in *The Burns Chronicle* (2016). Many thanks to Joseph for providing me with this information.
[121] *The Daily Dispatch*, 4th February (1853).

By far the least palatable form of Southern Burns commemoration, however, came in Pulaski, Tennessee after the defeat of the confederacy in 1865. In his empirical outlining of how cultural memories are articulated, Jan Assmann cites 'rites' and 'rituals' as being a primary method of preservation.[122] In a ceremonial induction lacking in any true sense of 'honour' or 'integrity', Burns's 'To a Louse' was incorporated into being a rite of initiation for potential new members of the freshly formed white supremacist fraternity, the Ku Klux Klan:

> A skullcap with donkey's ears sewn on it was placed on the head of a candidate, who was then escorted to a large dressing mirror the Klan dubbed as "the royal altar" and ordered to recite a poem written by Scotsman Robert Burns. The blindfold was then removed to reveal to the candidate that he'd literally been dressed up as an ass, much to the amusement of the Klansmen. The embarrassed man could then accept or deny membership. Most agreed to join with those in the financially depressed rural areas showing a particular interest.[123]

The question of why two lines from Burns's 'To A Louse' was adopted as the initiation rite of an extremist movement spawned by vengeful Confederate veterans, intent on venting their frustrations on African-Americans, merits further discussion.

On one hand, the first Ku Klux Klan 'initiation ceremony' might be viewed as mere comical farce in its primary purpose of entertaining existing members of the organisation. In this view, Burns (and his poem) may not have been considered as holding any major thematic or political significance in relation to white supremacist ideals. The recitation of the lines ('O wad some Power the giftie gie us/To see oursels as ithers see us!') complied perfectly with the 'light-hearted' prank which culminated in the potential new member finally seeing himself (humiliated) in a large dressing mirror 'as ithers' did: literally dressed up as an ass. This base appropriation is highly ironic given Burns was partly glossing Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* in verse form.[124] Furthermore, the founding members did not necessarily need to have a great deal of familiarity with Burns's wider oeuvre and poetic sensibilities to include the poem whilst devising their 'comical' initiation rite. The two lines, taken from the final stanza of the poem, had by this period long evolved into a popular proverb with evidence of it being used in other humorous contexts in the American South. An 1859 advertisement in the *Daily Dispatch*, for example, quoted the lines before promoting 'photographs', 'pearl

[122] Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory', 118.
[123] Martin Gitlin, *The Ku Klux Klan: A Guide to an American Sub-culture* (California: ABC-CLIO, 2009) 52.
[124] *The Poetics of Character*, 251.

ambrotypes' and 'patent leather pictures' by an artist who 'paints the face to-day',[125] with the comical emphasis being on how technological advances in photography (the daguerreotype)[126] meant that individuals might now see themselves as 'ithers' did ('The gift is made that Burns was wont to find').[127]

Yet wholly reducing the Ku Klux Klan 'rite' to mere farce would also be ignorant of the extent to which Scottish writers, images and icons played an in important part in shaping the identity of Southern extremists who promoted racism and, in some cases, separatism. A revealing 2005 essay by Andrew Hook discusses how ex-confederate soldiers often drew on parallels between the loss of 'Highland' culture in eighteenth-century Scotland and the loss of Southern independence after the Civil War.[128] This formed a mould for the foundational identity of various Southern far-right groups such as the League of the South, the John Birch Society and the anti-semitic Christian Identity; all of whom drew on selective interpretations of Scottish history to justify their defence of what they see as their threatened white Anglo-Celtic culture. Particularly resonant in light of the recent debates over the origins and continued use of the Confederate Flag - ignited by the racially-motivated 2015 shooting at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina - Hook has elsewhere summarised that there is 'general agreement' that the final version of the flag 'was meant to be seen as incorporating the blue St Andrews cross of the Scottish Saltire.'[129] Another fact relating to Burns and Southern white extremism is that the first president of the Burns Club of Atlanta (Hamilton Douglas) was 'a staunch advocate of both white supremacy and the Democratic Party's white primary'.[130] While the club's only qualification for membership upon its inception was 'good citizenship and 'admiration and love for the great poet',[131] it is highly doubtful that such citizenship extended to the 'negroes' that Douglas was actively attempting to disenfranchise.

Returning to the first incarnation of the Ku Klux Klan (1865-1874), it is also notable that all six founding members were of Scottish descent, partly explaining their employment of

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[125] *The Daily Dispatch*, 24th December (1859).
[126] See for example M. Susan Barger and William B. White, *The Daguerreotype: Nineteenth Century Technology and Modern Science* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2000).
[127] *The Daily Dispatch*, 24th December (1859).
[128] Andrew Hook, 'Troubling Times in the Scottish-American Relationship' in *Transatlantic Scots*, ed. by Celeste Ray (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005) 215-231 (217).
[129] Andrew Hook, 'Down With That Flag' in *Scottish Review* [2009] cited at <http://www.scottishreview.net/AHook148.html> [accessed 02/01/2016].
[130] Lorraine Nelson Spritzer, *The Belle of Ashby Street: Helen Douglas Mankin and Georgia Politics* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2008) 5.
[131] Franklin M Garrett, *Atlanta and Environs: A Chronicle of Its People and Events, 1880s-1930s* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010) 340-341.

the word 'clan' with its dualistic connotations of both a sense of 'lost' (Highland and Southern) society whilst simultaneously emphasising menacing solidarity. As Michael Morris notes, the 'second' Klan (1915-1944) also 'adopted its gruesome icon of the burning cross from the third canto of Walter Scott's *The Lady of the Lake*[…]in which Highland clans are summoned by a 'Fiery Cross'.[132] In her insightful articulations on 'the principle of scarcity' and cultural memory, Ann Rigney states that one of the ways 'emergent groups' confirm their identity '*as* group is by celebrating and reinforcing their sense of a common past'. Rigney goes further to suggest that 'the sense of sharing memories, of having a past in common, is arguably a precondition for the emergence of such groups in the first place'.[133] Taken as an 'emergent group' formed from the ashes of the Civil War, then, we might see why the six founding members of the Ku Klux Klan would draw upon their perceived sense of shared heritage. Southern historian Grady McWhiney as gone so far as to (perhaps questionably) suggest that the cultural difference between the South and the rest of the United States is predominantly due to the South's Celtic cultural heritage.[134] Even if McWhiney's argument is only partially true, the incorporation of 'To A Louse' in the KKK initiation ceremony was clearly embedded within a much wider, Southern tradition, fully developing after the Civil War, of drawing on Scottish or Celtic iconography and culture to articulate and maintain a distinctly white, often supremacist, identity.

Civil Appropriations: The 1859 Centenary

It is clear from the discussion above that the 'memory of Burns' in the mid-nineteenth century United States, far from being singular, was subject to numerous ideological appropriations and shaped by shifting socio-political frameworks. This chapter hopes to have outlined not only the differing (at times conflicting) nature of some of these memories, but also the methods, or 'institutions of preservation'[135], by which the cultural memory of the poet was circulated and exchanged; consequently allowing for various group and individual identities to be frequently (re)defined through memorial practice.[136]

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[132] *Scotland and the Caribbean,* 172. Morris further highlights that, rather ironically, Frederick Douglass (born into slavery as Frederick Bailey) had also adapted his name from the hero of *The Lady of the Lake* (the leader of 'Clan Douglas') on the advice of his friend Nathan Johnson who was reading Scott at the time. Similar to the multifarious nature of remembrance surrounding Burns, the memory of Scott – and his hugely popular narrative poem - was also evidently subject to various modes of selective remembrance.

[133] Rigney, 'Plentitude, scarcity and the circulation of cultural memory', 23.

[134] See Grady McWhiney, *Cracker Culture: Celtic Ways in the Old South* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1998).

[135] Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory', 111.

[136] Rigney, 'Plentitude, scarcity and the circulation of cultural memory', 11.

Drawing on Benedict Anderson's now famous concept of 'imagined communities',[137] Rigney has suggested that the 1859 Burns Centenary provided 'a way of briefly turning imagined communities (usually seen as the key to modern identities) into actual embodied communities, and vice versa.'[138] Broadly considering 'imagined' communities as differing from actualised ones in existing through processes of imaginative cohesion rather than face-to-face interaction, we might consider Rigney's idea in the specific context of the United States. That the 1859 centenary united prominent but (geographically) far-removed US abolitionists across several states, for example, might be considered as an 'imagined community' becoming 'embodied'; while the previous chapter has already discussed how the Boston Burns Club's – taking it as an actualised 'community' – celebrations bolstered group identity and cohesion. In cultivating the public memory of Burns then, different 'communities', both real and 'imagined' (from abolitionists to Freemasons to Southern planters among others) used the centenary celebrations to articulate a sense of identity and thus became 'embodied' through the process of commemoration.

Following Rigney's study, Leith Davis has explored the centenary in relation to the 'connections and disjunctions involved in the transatlantic circulation of the poet's memory.' Davis not only maps how Burns was remembered differently 'depending on which side of the Atlantic he was being toasted' but also explores some of the more nuanced differences between North American celebrations, noting, for example, how commemorations in the 'British provinces in North America' frequently acknowledged connections to the 'Mother Nation'; while the United States celebrations' predominantly staked out 'their singular position in relation to their British predecessors.' However, it is equally important to avoid the binary idea that Canadian, or British North American, celebrations heralded a poet who represented the wider imperium while the United States reformulated him to embody Republican ideals. This would miss the deeply layered complexity of the memory of Burns in America. Indeed, Davis does partly acknowledge how celebrations in the United States were also indicative of subtle 'regional interests beneath the surface' that would 'erupt in in a bloody civil war two years later'.[139] In returning to the US centenary celebrations and taking a comparative approach, then, it is hoped that some of these 'regional interests' might be underlined and expanded upon. As we shall see, a closer inspection of selected events

[137] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* [1983] Revised Edition. (London and New York: Verso. 1991).
[138] Rigney, 'Embodied Communities', 94-95.
[139] Davis, 'The Robert Burns 1859 Centenary', 200.

provides a useful overarching and summarising perspective on how, by the latter half of the nineteenth century, the memory of Burns was not only upheld by multiple 'memory communities' in the United States, but also communicated through a wide range of media.

On the 25 January, 1859, toasts to 'The Memory of Robert Burns' were heard at over 60 separate locations spread across different regions of the United States. Yet even within the 'national' parameters of the supposedly 'united' States, the (re)constitution of these memories and the ways in which they were communicated differed greatly as the following empirical breakdown will reveal. In Adrian, Michigan, for example, celebrations were firmly focused on preserving a sense of Scottish identity akin to the early St Andrews Society dinners discussed above. The event was attended exclusively by 'Scotchmen' who 'spent the evening 'recurring to the days of "Auld Langsyne"' and who, by the end of the evening, had formed a committee 'for the purpose of organizing a St. Andrew's Society for this county';[140] providing another example of how one mode of remembrance (the centenary), or 'institution of preservation', can feed into another (the establishment of a new St. Andrew's Club). Just as earlier 'Suppers' had provided a platform for the performance of Burns's songs (as opposed to just their recitation), several of the centenary events also featured 'songs, instrumental music, and social chat' between speeches. Rather unsurprisingly, 'Auld lang syne' was one of the most common inclusions.[141] In Detroit, Michigan, preserving a version of Scottish identity was also at the forefront of the evening, with the orator claiming that 'the oblation at the shrine of genius' will 'do more to arouse and preserve the nationality of Scotland than a thousand monuments to Wallace or Bruce'. Celebrations in Cleveland, Ohio, were similarly Scoto-centric with an added touch of locality evidenced by both 'Scotch and American flags'. Special mention was also given to – as one of the few exceptions amidst a majority of homosocial events – the presence of Scottish women, albeit in slightly subjective terms: 'The Scots lads and lasses gathered in great numbers[…]The bonnie lasses with their soncey faces, were crowded thick through the hall, while "every lassie had her laddie", and good "braw lads they were too"'.[142]

Of course, 'the memory of Burns' was not solely used to bolster a specifically 'Scottish' sense of identity at centenary events. In some instances, the commemorations were used to symbolically maintain diplomatic relations between the United States and Great

[140] *Chronicle of the Hundredth Birthday of Robert Burns,* 549.
[141] For an account of the popularity of this song in America see Stephen Winick, 'Auld Acquaintance for the New Year: Burns's Auld Lang Syne' cited at <http://blogs.loc.gov/folklife/2013/12/auld-acquaintance-for-the-new-year-burnss-auld-lang-syne/> accessed [16/12/15].
[142] *Chronicle of the Hundredth Birthday of Robert Burns*, 568.

Britain. In Cincinnati, 'the American and British colours were tastefully displayed forming an arch above the presiding host';[143] In Jersey, '"The Queen of England"' was toasted to 'enthusiastic cheers'; while in in Brooklyn 'the stars and stripes and the union jack' were 'blended in harmonious union around a life size bust of Burns'. [144] These events bring to mind Robert Crawford's acute observations about the 'bicultural appeal of Burns as both a Scottish and British poet; only here a further transnational complication arises through the presence of Saltires, Union Jacks and Stars and Stripes (at different venues) over the course of one evening.[145]

The 'life size bust' in Brooklyn also serves as a reminder of the role of material culture at the centenary. In Boston, 'a mass of Burns related relics' had been 'shipped from Scotland' for the event[146] while in Albany, New York, the 'chief feature of the evening was the exhibition of the autograph copy of "Auld Langsyne"', which had been bought for the occasion by club member J.V.L Pruyn. Even the smaller-scale celebrations contained forms of material culture such as locally drawn 'illustrations' of 'Highland Mary'.[147] In Mobile, Alabama, a Rev. H.N. Pierce presented a 'graphic sketch' of 'the road which Tam o' Shanter travelled' that was composed 'from personal recollection';[148] further evidencing the influence of literary tourism and, in particular, the Burns Cottage as a point of pilgrimage for American tourists.

The previous chapter of this thesis has a highlighted the significance of three of America's most prominent (Fireside) poets – Holmes, Lowell and Whittier – composing new poems especially for the 1859 centenary at The Parker House Hotel in Boston. Yet the promotion of American Literature at the centenary was not unique to Boston. Other renowned writers, namely Washington Irving (1783-1859) and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882), sent messages to be read out at selected events'[149] while William Cullen Bryant celebrated 'The Poets and Poetry of America' ('loved at home, revered abroad')[150] in his toast at Astor House, New York. In Baltimore, Irving was celebrated as 'the Patriarch of American Literature' while 'In Newhaven, Connecticut, a toast to 'The Literature of America' was met

[143] Ibid., 567.
[144] Ibid., 559.
[145] For an excellent discussion of the 'British Burns' see Robert Crawford, *Devolving English Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000) 88.
[146] Pittock and Whatley, 'Poems and Festivals, Art and Artefact', 65-67.
[147] *Chronicle of the Hundredth Birthday of Robert Burns*, 584.
[148] Ibid., 571.
[149] Davis, 'The Robert Burns 1859 Centenary', 201.
[150] *Chronicle of the Hundredth Birthday of Robert Burns*, 590.

with 'admiration' and applause from the crowd.[151] That the centenary inspired a sense of unity among American writers might be seen, to follow Rigney's line of theory, as the 'embodiment' of an 'imagined community' through the physical process of commemoration. The promotion of an American literary 'canon' was, of course, one of many instances of group or 'community' values being articulated. In Chicago, the centenary was marked by a procession which saw several of these 'memory communities' come together. Marching alongside each other were the 'Chicago Dragoons', 'Highland Guard', 'Knights Templars', 'Masonic Lodges', 'Odd Fellows', 'St Andrew's Society' and 'The Citizen's Fire Brigade'.[152] Not only did the celebrations serve to 'embody' and articulate the respective identities of these groups but – in paying tribute to the memory of the Scottish poet – they were also, albeit briefly, united in one procession.

One of the most telling comparative observations can be found in noting the broad differences between some of the Northern celebrations (often focused on tying the memory of the poet to abolitionism) and Southern events (which usually commemorated a 'rural' and masculinised Burns). At Rockford, Illinois, a city known for its abolitionist leanings and support of the Free Soil Party, orator Anson S. Miller described Burns as 'prophetically sounding the key-note of the popular sentiments of our country and our age' through 'his uniform affection for man, irrespective of external conditions' and his 'hatred of oppression in every form.'[153] His references to 'external conditions' and 'popular sentiments' clearly allude to the contemporary battle for racial equality and abolition. Even more explicitly, a speaker in Boston profoundly claimed that Burns was not the type of man to 'laud a declaration of independence, without applying its ground truths to all - irrespective of their condition, their colour, or their clime.[154]

At the New York Cooper Institute, a remarkable 3000 people were in attendance to hear prominent abolitionist Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887) deliver a keynote speech. In what reads like a condensed, narrative biography of the poet, Beecher unsurprisingly emphasised the 'universal sympathy' of Burns and his 'love for man in all his moods'.[155] In one of the most pertinent remarks of all the centenary speeches, particularly in light of recent studies on Burns and slavery, Beecher refuted the idea that Burns came close to being an 'overseer of a plantation' in stating 'I think I see Robert Burns following a gang of slaves, and

[151] Ibid., 573.
[152] Ibid., 564.
[153] Ibid., 597.
[154] Ibid., 556.
[155] Ibid., 583.

chanting "A man's a man for a' that".[156] Here, Beecher, daring to answer the question that still plagues twenty-first century critics, speculates that if Burns had sailed for Jamaica and personally encountered slavery then he would have 'chanted' for their liberation. That Beecher commented on the issue also hints that there was a wider contemporary awareness of the fuller implications of Burns's tentative emigration plans. Regardless, the possibilities of what the poet 'might have been' (that is, complicit in the transatlantic slave trade) were clearly not an issue for the abolitionists who chose to commemorate him, bringing to mind Rigney's 'scarcity principle' whereby cultural memory is subjectively recycled through 'selectivity' 'convergence' and 'transference.'[157] In a concluding flurry of metaphorical hyperbole, Beecher, renowned for his charismatic prowess, suggested that if every living memory of Burns within these twenty-four hours 'could each be changed into a flower' then 'a mountain would arise, and he would sit upon a rose blossoms now at length without a thorn'.[158] To playfully extend Beecher's curious metaphor, each memory, or rather flower, would also have to be a different hue given the divergent, at times conflicting, nature of memories evident at the US centenary celebrations.

In St. Louis, Missouri, Burns was not so much remembered as a 'universal' upholder of rights but commemorated more, pertaining to the traditional discourses of Southern masculinity discussed above, as a hard-working 'Poet Ploughman' concerned with providing for his family. The orator described how 'that family of Burns' were 'all hard workers', even converting (albeit questionably) the equivalent of what Burns earned for his 'labours' into dollars ('thirty-five dollars for one year's labour of the poet Burns.') In the orator's words, 'Not only were they celebrating the memory of the hale fellow, but of manhood in its most glorious personification'; a striking irony given Burns was never particularly fond of laborious agriculture.[159] Similarly in Milwaukee, the orator emphasised how Burns was 'not only a poet, but a man, in every sense of the word' and thus he (Burns) 'could not look back and recall a single violation of his truth or honesty'.[160] In Charleston, South Carolina, one of the speakers, J.L. Petigru, rather tenuously conflated Burns's 'moral and intellectual renown' with Scotland's 'martial powers'. In a statement that foreshadowed elements of Civil War-era Confederate rhetoric (as the Confederacy fought to maintain troop morale against a better-equipped enemy) Petigru described how 'Scotland had asserted a rank far beyond mere

[156] Ibid., 580.
[157] Rigney, 'Plentitude, scarcity and the circulation of cultural memory', 11.
[158] *Chronicle of the Hundredth Birthday of Robert Burns*, 583.
[159] Ibid., 604.
[160] Ibid., 571.

members, or physical advantages and resources' and further emphasised the nation's 'historic prestige of successful opposition against both Romans and Englishmen'.[161] The statement appears to exert sympathy for Scotland as a smaller, threatened entity in a wider ruling imperium; a political feeling that was resonant, of course, in the Secessionist States of the South. In contrast to the sentimental, romanticised version of Scottish identity evident at some of the Northern celebrations, where Wallace and Bruce were evoked in ways that were 'safely remote both in space and time';[162] the martial evocations of Scottish valour in Charleston were, arguably, more closely aligned with contemporary secessionism.[163]

In the concluding speech of the evening at Charleston, W.D. Porter, President of The South Carolina Senate, first toasted 'The State of South Carolina' before praising the event for bringing together 'native sons' with 'those of Scottish birth'; for 'South Carolina has no jealousies of foreign birth or national feeling'. Porter further emphasised how the centenary had created a 'harmonizing feeling' and established 'our unity as a people' by 'assimilating our sympathies and enjoyments'.[164] Clearly, commemorating Burns had served to unite a portion of the local Charleston community and promote common values. Despite Porter's harmonious effusions, however, it is unlikely that his sympathies would have extended towards enslaved African-Americans. Shortly after the centenary celebrations, Porter, writing in the *Charleston Mercury*, expressed his distaste for anti-slavery organisations describing them as a threat to the 'institutions of the South'. For Porter 'this whole anti-slavery agitation' was against the 'the well-being, the peace, nay the very lives of millions of human beings, white or black![165] While the Charleston celebrations may well have 'assimilated' the 'sympathies and enjoyments' of select Southern admirers of Burns, it is hard to imagine that the likes of Henry Ward Beecher, Frederick Douglass and other prominent abolitionists would have been met with the same sense of sympathy for articulating their own memories of the poet; a testament to how civic, local and regionally-specific frameworks (rather than broader 'national' ones) shaped American commemorations of the poet.

While toasts to 'The Memory of Robert Burns' simultaneously rang out across several States in over 60 different locations on 25 January, 1859, these respective 'memories' were, evidently, invested with complex, often conflicting, layers of meaning and, moreover,

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[161] Ibid., 560.
[162] Andrew Hook, 'Scotland and America revisited', in Owen Dudley Edwards and George Shepperson eds. *Scotland, Europe and the American Revolution* 83-88 (88).
[163] For an excellent discussion of Scottish identity in relation to martial symbolism and 'patriot valour' see also Murray G.H Pittock, *Scottish Nationality* (Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001) 77-80.
[164] *Chronicle of the Hundredth Birthday of Robert Burns*, 564.
[165] *Charleston Mercury*, 30th October (1860).

communicated through multiple ways and means. As the above discussion hopes to have illustrated, a comparative treatment of the US centenary celebrations serves to highlight the multifarious ways in which the poet was remembered and 'preserved'; be it through songs, paintings, material culture, busts, texts, marches, rites or otherwise. At the dawn of the nineteenth century, during the formative years of Burns's transatlantic popularity, 'memories' of the poet were circulated through newspaper clippings, songs, pirated editions and perhaps even a minority of 'communicative memories'. Just under sixty years later, by 1859, the ways in which Burns and his works were remembered had been transformed by multiple processes of remediation that, as has been demonstrated, led to multiple, often divergent, appropriations across and within the United States.

Palimpsests: Burns, Between American Memory and History

I will close by repeating the sentiment I started with, "The Memory of Burns".[166]

To bring this chapter to a close, let us consider the complex issue of whether these different modes of remembrance and appropriation might be legitimately grouped together and viewed as instances of 'national' cultural remembrance unique to the nineteenth-century United States. The commemorative practices outlined above are inherently bound together by both the memory source (Burns) and a specific geographical location and period (The United States, 1800-1866). Yet the intricacies and ambiguities of broadly assessing the cultural memory of the poet in this transnational context merits further discussion and theoretical analysis.

Studies on cultures of 'national' remembrance have continued to boom in recent decades, partly catalysed by a rejuvenated sense of engagement with Pierre Nora's monumental seven-work volume, *Les lieux de mémoire*. Nora pointed to how, as a by-product of modernisation, 'national' feeling is actively cultivated and maintained through forms of objectified culture. For Nora, 'national' memories of the past could no longer be communicated through spontaneous, or 'lived', experience. Consequently, Nora argued, national communities had to construct and draw upon forms of objectified culture, or rather, *lieux de mémoire* (which translates as 'sites' or 'realms' of memory) in order to establish and maintain meaningful relationships with the past (and thus harmonise feeling). These *lieux,* or

[166] *Chronicle of the Hundredth Birthday of Robert Burns*, 571.

'sites', might range from ceremonies, statues, museums, anniversaries, flags, buildings to outstanding individuals and myths; with the binding principle that they, whether physically or spiritually, uphold shared memories of the past that are consecrated as the quintessence of the nation.[167] Nora based his project on French national identity, pointing to 'sites' of memory such as the Court of Versailles, the Eiffel Tower and Joan of Arc and articulating their interdependent relationship(s) with French nationhood. However, Nora also suggested that his project might easily be used to establish the 'typical style of relating to the past in each country'; which consequently led to similar undertakings in the Netherlands, Germany, Russia, Italy and elsewhere.[168]

Alex Tyrell has suggested that in nineteenth century Scotland 'Burns had become what Pierre Nora has called a "lieu de mémoire"' in that the public celebration and commemoration of the poet (as well as other heroic figures such as Wallace and Bruce) 'helped to give Scots a notion of the past' and shaped 'forms of Scottish national identity'. Tyrell observes, however, the ideological elements implicit in the construction of 'national' memory sites, pointing to how the Robert Burns Festival at Ayr in 1844 interlocked with other events – such as Queen Victoria's first visit to Scotland – to promote an ideological identity that asserted 'aristocratic paternalism in Scotland'.[169] Leith Davis has also commented on Burns as a nineteenth century *lieu de mémoire*; further outlining the multi-faceted processes by which this was achieved. Davis points to the evolution of Burns Clubs from local gatherings to 'international sites where ex-patriot Scots joined together' and the effects of 'international print networks' that, through the circulation of biographies, 'helped make Burns and Scotland synonymous'.[170] In accordance with this, Murray Pittock and Christopher A. Whatley, with a particular emphasis on 'space, gesture, image and object', have described the nineteenth century 'Burns phenomenon' as being a 'complex and multi-dimensional' *lieu de mémoire* in that a 'complex realm of memorialisation' – celebratory events, images, objects, texts among others – combined to reinforce certain 'dimensions of Scottish national memory.'[171]

However, the issue of Burns functioning as a *lieu de mémoire* for Scotland in the

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[167] Alex Tyrrell, 'Paternalism, Public Memory and National Identity in Early Victorian Scotland: The Robert Burns Festival at Ayr in 1844' in *History* 90:297 (2005) 42-61 (43).
[168] Hagen Schulze, 'Foreword' in *Memory, History, and Colonialism: Engaging with Pierre Nora in Colonial and Postcolonial Contexts*, ed. by Indra Sengupta and Hagen Schulze (London: German Historical Institute, 2009) foreword.
[169] Tyrrell, 'Paternalism, Public Memory and National Identity in Early Victorian Scotland: The Robert Burns Festival at Ayr in 1844' in *History,* 43.
[170] Davis, 'The Robert Burns 1859 Centenary', 188.
[171] Pittock and Whatley, 'Poems and Festivals, Art and Artefact', 58.

United States is more complex and problematic. On one hand, we must acknowledge how Burns and his works helped to cement and articulate the identity of expatriate Scots in America (or their descendants). From the early 1800s onwards, expatriate Scots attended St Andrew's Society dinners to toast the poet and their country; local poets preserved and adapted Scots language verse and songs inspired by Burns; tartan and other Scottish imagery often adorned commemorative events; and biographical texts provided (and thus preserved) detailed (subjective) accounts of the 'Scotch character' of Burns (namely James Currie's *The Works*). However, that Burns was simultaneously symbolic for a number of other reasons also renders the idea of him as the figuration of a Scottish *lieu de mémoire* in the United States far too limiting.

To another extreme, the prevalence of American flags at the centenary, toasts to the President and assertions that Burns 'fought side by side' with the 'sentiments of freedom' and 'Liberty – American Liberty!' [172] might even suggest a (rather fragile) case for him representing a *lieu de mémoire* for nineteenth-century American national identity. However, as the above discussion illustrates, nineteenth century American 'national identity' was barely uniform and comprised of a plurality of forms.[173] Indeed, the widely differing sectional appropriations of Burns (simultaneously a symbolic figure for the Northern abolitionist and the Southern planter, for example) within the United States make it problematic to consider the poet as a signifier of a unifying 'national' narrative, whether Scottish *or* American. It is thus the very ambivalence of a singular 'collective' or 'national' identity (in the context of Burns commemoration) that makes considering Burns as a *lieu de mémoire* in the United States so complex.

One of the major discrepancies that twenty-first century scholars have raised with Nora's concept is its limiting and restrictive emphasis on 'national' frameworks.[174] In a 2009 collection titled *Memory, History, and Colonialism: Engaging with Pierre Nora in Colonial and Postcolonial Contexts* (edited by Indra Sengupta and Hagen Schulze), an interlinking series of essays argued for the extended and adapted use of Nora's *lieux de mémoire* through a theoretical revision that *'*could fit the contours of colonial and postcolonial societies, which were and remain transnational in character.' [175] Focused on imperial history, the collection

[172] *Celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns*, 3.
[173] See David Waldstreicher, *In The Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820* (Virginia: University of North Carolina Press, 1997) 1-14.
[174] Schulze, 'Foreword'.
[175] Jay M. Winter, 'Palimpsests' in *Memory, History, and Colonialism* ed.by Indra Sengupta and Hagen Schulze, 167-175 (167).

widens the concept to better address the 'conflicting nature of collective memory' that is characteristic of colonial and postcolonial contexts.'[176] Several examples of *lieux de mémoire* are given that - rather than asserting and maintaining a cohesive feeling of 'national' continuity - capture the pluralistic and subjective nature of remembrance and identity. One case study, for example, is focused on war memorials to Indian troops (both on the Western front and in India) that emanate inherent ambiguities. Questions over 'Why did the men buried there die? Did they help liberate India or renew its oppression?' riddle the same memory site as multiple conflicting, yet inseparable, narratives are embedded within the same memory site.[177] Sir Edwin Lutyen's India Gate or All India War Memorial in New Delhi, for example, do not stabilise national identity but instead reflects plural identities, contradictory histories and contested 'national' narratives. To return, then, to the similarly complex idea of Burns as a figurative *lieu de mémoire* in the nineteenth-century United States, we might also identify, within one 'nation', multiple and at times competing layers of memory. The complex and multi-dimensional realm of memorialisation – celebratory events, images, objects, texts among others – that variously (re)constituted Burns as a 'site of memory' were not assigned with fixed meanings and symbols pertaining to a 'national' population. Rather, 'the memory of Burns' was fluid, repeatedly reshaped, and reflective of multiple identities.

In the final essay of *Engaging with Pierre Nora in Colonial and Postcolonial Contexts,* Jay. M Winter argues that we must adopt a more 'dynamic approach' to cultures of remembrance and to 'the interpretation of *lieux de mémoire* in particular.'[178] Winter insists that 'in a transnational age, it is important for us to develop a wider vocabulary to explore the sphere of signifying practices in the contemporary world.'[179] For the purpose of this chapter's conclusion, it is useful to briefly deconstruct the term 'transnational' and reinforce why it might be employed when considering nineteenth-century American Burns commemoration. In the *OED* the prefix 'trans-' is variously defined as 'across', 'through', 'over', 'to or on the other side of', 'beyond', 'outside of', 'from one place, person, thing, or state to another'.[180] If we broadly consider 'the memory of Burns' in the United States, it is clear that it stretched 'across' (national) borders; was remediated 'outside of' singular (national) frameworks; and was frequently reconstituted from one (national) 'state to another'. By its very definition,

[176] Indra Sengupta, 'Locating *lieux de memoire*: A (Post)colonial Perspective' in *Memory, History, and Colonialism* ed.by Indra Sengupta and Hagen Schulze, 1-11 (4).
[177] Winter, 'Palimpsests', 168-169.
[178] Ibid., 170.
[179] Ibid., 172.
[180] <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/204575?rskey=sKpJJZ&result=3&isAdvanced=false#eid> [accessed 02/01/2016].

then, the cultural memory of Burns in nineteenth century America must be considered within a 'transnational' context. Equally, important, however, is not to ignore the issue of American (or Scottish) nationalism within this context. As John Carlos Rowe notes, 'postnational and transnational phenomena deserve to be understood in the historical contexts of nationalism'.[181] Among other frames of interpretation, Burns's reception in the nineteenth century United States was variously affected by neo and post-nationalisms, of various sorts (themselves products of 'transnational phenomena') such as the fulfilment of 'manifest destiny' through agrarian expansion; the secessionism of the South; or Northern discourses on abolition pitched as the way forward for the nation.

In developing a 'wider vocabulary' for a 'transnational' age and advancing the foundational principles of Nora's *Les Lieux de mémoire*, Winter has introduced the conceptual term 'palimpsest'; connoting a repeated overlay of memories that transmit variable messages but are bound together by an original source. Due to the hybrid, conflicting nature of cultural memory in transnational contexts, Winter suggests that 'colonial and postcolonial sites of memory', or *lieux de mémoire*, might each be considered as a 'palimpsest, an overwritten text[…]something that is reused or altered but still bears visible traces of its earlier form.' For Winter, 'memories are overwritten time and again' and even when 'considering the same event or object, each memory is unique.'[182] Thus, conceiving of memory sites as 'palimpsests' is more appropriately fluid than retorting to more rigid, inflexible terms or metaphors that fail to reflect on the layered, multi-dimensional nature of cultural memory.[183]

With these theoretical articulations in mind, let us return once again to the cultural memory of Burns. It is clear from the above discussion that it is near impossible to find one 'shared' or 'national' story when unpacking the poet as a multi-dimensional *lieu de mémoire* or 'site of memory' in the United States. Yet equally, these multi-dimensional 'memories', or remediations, should not be considered as entirely separate or isolated acts; given they stem from the same source, espouse various conceptions of the American 'nation', and are bound together by specific geo-chronological parameters. It seems apt, then, to borrow from Jay M. Winter's theoretical observations. It is useful to consider the multiple modes of commemoration outlined in this chapter as 'Palimpsests'; each one replete with visible but 'overwritten' layers of memory relating to Burns. The above discussion has, of course, merely

[181] Rowe, 'Nineteenth-Century United States Literary Culture', 80.
[182] Winter, 'Palimpsests' in *Memory, History, and Colonialism,* 176-170.
[183] See also Sarah Dillon, *The Palimpsest: Literature, Criticism, Theory* (London: Continuum, 2007) Dillon traces the initial metaphorical use to Thomas De Quincy's essay 'The Palimpsest', first published in Blackwood's Magazine (1845) as part of his *Suspiria De Profundis*.

touched upon a small portion of these 'palimpsests' of memory; from biographical texts to suppers to vastly contrasting individual - written and oral - accounts. As the century progressed, new 'sites', or 'palimpsests', would add further layers of complexity to extant memories, such as the continuing erection of statues, adoption and appropriation of songs or widely publicised commentaries by influential figures such as Walt Whitman, John Muir and Andrew Carnegie. Pertaining to Winter's sense of a palimpsest being 'reused or altered' but not erasing earlier inscriptions, these instances of commemoration allowed for a diversity of interpretations that underlined simultaneous, polyphonic meanings whilst preserving the 'memory of Burns'. Where the naturalist, philosopher and saviour of 'America's wild places' John Muir (1838-1914) inscribed a memory of Burns as a most ecologically sensitive poet;[184] Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919), particularly through his philanthropic contributions, promoted the poet as a symbol of egalitarian learning by insisting that every one of his libraries should contain a Burns bust.[185]

Consistently, these nineteenth-century 'palimpsests' would, in accordance with the fluid nature of 'transnational' sites of cultural memory, variously preserve contested narratives; divergent ideologies; plural identities; multiple appropriations and contradictory 'national' histories; whilst, all the while, retaining a trace of the original memory source – Robert Burns.

[184] Mary Colwell, *John Muir: The Scotsman who saved America's wild places* (Oxford: Lion Books, 2014) 128-129.
[185] Clark McGinn, 'Vehement Celebrations: The Global Celebration of the Burns Supper since 1801' in *Robert Burns and Global Culture* ed. by Murray Pittock, 189-203 (191).

The (Trans)National Poet

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. [1]

➢Robert Burns (1788)

Every year as the clock turns midnight on 31 December in Times Square, New York, 'Auld lang Syne' bellows across the symbolic centre of the city as an estimated one million people, in addition to billions of others celebrating worldwide, bid a collective farewell to the departing year by attempting to sing (or at least hum along to) Burns's version of, in his own words, an 'exceedingly expressive'[2] old Scottish song. Even among those who might associate the song with the poet, Burns's inspired lyrical adaptations and additions remain largely overlooked and forgotten. Yet as this thesis reaches its conclusion, a brief reference to a neglected verse of Burns's best-known song serves as a fitting reminder of why we must continue to reconsider the poet and his works in transnational contexts.

Lamenting on an old friendship affected by migration, space, time and geo-physical separation in verses three and four, Burns's description of how 'seas between us braid hae roar'd' is one of many reminders that the poet lived in and responded to a transnational 'world of encounters'[3], particularly on the Atlantic periphery (as also demonstrated by the 'American' works addressed in Chapter I and several other proleptic emigration poems discussed elsewhere).[4] A 'transnational' perspective, then, need not merely be considered a compound product of modern scholarship but also as an articulation of how the world was perceived and delineated in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; a period particularly abundant in material, institutional, intellectual and literary connections as well as, pertinently for the present study, a lively transatlantic print culture. To ignore these connections when considering the life, work and broader reception of Burns would involve - to borrow a term from Paul Giles - a process of 'radical dehistoricization'[5] that overlooks our overlapping cultural cross-currents.

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[1] *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, Vol. 1, 443 (17-20).
[2] 'Robert Burns to Mrs Dunlop at Stewarton, Ellisland 7th Dec. 1788' in *The Letters of Robert Burns*, Vol. 1, 342.
[3] Doyle, 'Notes toward a Dialectical Method', 195.
[4] See also Liam McIlvanney, 'Editorial: Burns and The World' in *International Journal of Scottish Literature,* 6, (Spring/Summer 2010) 1-16 and Manning, 'Robert Burns's Transatlantic Afterlives', 149-169.
[5] Paul Giles, '"To gird this watery globe": Freneau, Barlow and American neoclassical poetry' in *Transatlantic Literary Studies, 1660-1830* ed. by Eve Tavor Bannet and Susan Manning, 139-153 (140).

Displacing Burns from his status as the 'National Bard' of Scotland has not only provided fresh insights into his poetry, but also revealed much about the socio-cultural interconnections that facilitated his relationship with – and rise to prominence in – in the United States, c. 1786-1866. Indeed, instances of transnational 'encounters' and exchange have permeated the chapters of this thesis. Though the Revolutionary events that Burns wrote about in 'When Guilford Good' may have severed parliamentary ties, lines of cultural, intellectual and literary exchange continued to evolve and flourish throughout the nineteenth century, as evidenced in Chapters II and III by the discussion of how a thriving transatlantic reprint trade facilitated the spread of *Poems, Chiefly in The Scottish Dialect*, James Currie's *Works* and the abundance of other biographical 'American' editions detailed in Appendix I. However, Burns's American works appeared to have played little part in his initial American popularity; the former owing more to emigration and timely (transatlantic) convergences in print culture.

The consideration of how American poets responded to Burns in Chapter IV similarly revealed a strong sense of cultural, specifically literary, interdependence. Even as a 'national' canonical coalescence began to form around the New England 'Fireside' group, several poets continued to grapple with - what William Cullen Bryant described as - the 'sickly and affected imitation'[6] of British poets. While Burns's poetic form and linguistic register(s) provided, to some extent, an alternative to hegemonic Anglophone models, a Bloomian-esque 'anxiety of influence'[7] would continue to plague American poets beyond the chronological parameters of this thesis and is even evident in Walt Whitman's 1875 appraisal of Burns.[8] Though praising the 'character' of Burns, Whitman declared him 'a poet of the third, perhaps fourth class'[9], deriding his provincial subject matter as backwards and lacking in literary merit. However, as both Robert Crawford and I have argued elsewhere, Whitman's repeated revisions and intent to declare his 'modern' superiority reads more like a strained attempt to come to terms with a partial 'anxiety of influence' rather than a fully formed literary appraisal; thus further revealing the persistently complex transatlantic literary interrelationships that ran later into the century.[10]

Similarly, the overview of nineteenth-century commemorative practice(s) in Chapter V was equally abundant with an overlay of transatlantic encounters. American literary tourists

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[6] *The North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal* 7 *(*1818) 206.
[7] Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973).
[8] See Sood, '"A Modern Poet on The Scotch Bard", 230-236.
[9] Scharnhorst, 'Whitman on Robert Burns: An Early Essay Recovered',219.
[10] Crawford, 'America's Bard', 99-117.

visited Ayrshire and took home relics; a statue of Burns designed by a Scottish sculptor (Sir John Steele) was erected in New York; and largely divergent appropriations of the poet by Scottish expatriates, Northern abolitionists and groups from the Southern Confederate States demonstrated how the 'memory of Burns' had transcended civil divisions and disparate 'memory communities', both beyond the borders of Scotland, and also within and across the United States. Where Chapter III partly reflected on Currie's suggestion that Burns's poetry 'embalms' the 'peculiar manners of his country'; Chapter V highlighted the extent to which Burns (and his works) had transcended any singular ideology in America, whether 'national' or otherwise.

The introduction to this thesis playfully gestured towards a subtle permutation of Burns's sobriquet from 'Scotland's National Bard' to 'The (Trans)National Poet of Scotland'. Though this fresh theoretical baptism might not displace long-established popular monikers, the present study's magnification of the complex and multifarious connections between Burns and the United States surely suggests that future critical studies of the poet should not be restricted by singular 'national' paradigms, leaving much work to be done on the reception and influence of Burns in other 'global' or, indeed, transnational contexts.

A Poetic Efflorescence

Though most obviously participating in a revitalised 'new era' of Burns Studies, I propose that this thesis might also be useful for literary scholars and cultural historians working in the broader fields of Transatlantic, Transnational and American Studies. Developing Susan Manning's idea that the spatial 'spread' of a single writer's oeuvre might be likened to a 'rhizomatic transitive organism'[11], my introduction declared its objective of pinpoinitng and discussing some of the most crucial nodes, 'roots' and 'shoots' that led to Burns's boader 'growth' and popularity in (and associations with) the early United States.

Rather than comprehensively mapping an atemporal 'rhizomatic organism' (though it should be noted that the annual New York rendion of 'Auld Lang Syne' would hypothetically form a part of this), the stated intention was to consider the eighty years following Burns's first publication as a period of 'effloresescne' in the United States; that is, a 'period of flowering', or season of 'ostentatious growth'.[12] Over the course of five chapters, some of these formative and interrelated 'roots' and 'offshoots' have been identified and described;

[11] Manning, '"Grounds for Comparison", 35.
[12] <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/59765?redirectedFrom=efflorescence#eid> [accessed 19/09/15].

From the initial reprinting of individual poems; to the arrival of influential biographical editions; to later statuary tributes and (re)mediated commemorations of the poet.

While focusing on this period of 'efflorescence' has required a chronological frame, the main body of this thesis has also demonstrated that Burns's popularity in the United States cannot be explained by a rigid, sequential pattern of events but rather by acknowledging multifarious proccesses that occurred within the spatial and temporal coordinates of the study. This 'acentred' model of transmission and development, in which there is not one central 'tree-like' structure but rather a series of interrelated 'offshoots' that form part of a wider lateral 'growth', should be kept in mind when considering other writers and poets across geo-political boundaries in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, particularly on the Anglophone Atlantic rim. As we continue to recover transatlantic literary relations, scholars have increasing access to a growing body of empirical and critical reference points when considering how the work, 'life' and legacy of writers and poets traverse space and spread to new lands and 'nations' in a multiplicity of forms.[13] In conclusion, it is hoped that this study's discussion of Burns's 'effloresence' in the United States might add depth to our understanding of these processes and, indeed, might inspire similar undertakings in other areas of literary studies where hegemonic 'national' frameworks contine to be renegotiated.

Theoretical Reflections

That this thesis participates in the wider recovery of nineteenth-century transatlantic literary relations is implicit, yet it should equally serve to inform, as hinted above, specifically 'transnational' approaches towards authors, poets and their oeuvres. The interchangeability with which the terms 'transatlantic' and 'transnational' have been used in the academy has been criticised by scholars such as Trevor Burnard who suggests that the 'relentless search for connections' by transatlantic scholars has resulted in the neglect of how those very connections affected 'the internal histories of nations'.[14] In this revitalised era of 'transnational' enquiry, it seems that the question of how much emphasis should be placed on the 'nation' or 'nation-states' in historical, literary and transatlantic studies remains a thorny issue.

One resolute approach has been offered by David Armitage who insists on subdividing Atlantic studies into three differential areas: *Circum*-Atlanticism - the transnational history of

[13] As suggested previously, see *Wordsworth in American Literary* and *The Afterlives of Walter Scott*.
[14] Trevor Burnard, 'The British Atlantic' in *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal*, ed. by Jack P. Greene and Philip D. Morgan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) 111-136 (127-128).

the Atlantic world; *Trans*-Atlantcism - the international history of the Atlantic world; and *Cis*-Atlanticsm - national or regional history within an Atlantic context.[15] Though such organisation is useful in certain contexts, the problem of applying it to the present study, and perhaps other literary-specific topics, is that these different strands greatly intersect and infringe upon each other. For example, the trading links that facilitated the first arrival of Burns's *Poems* on the Eastern American seaboard might be considered a *Circum*-Atlantic phenomenon; the interdependent literary sphere that British and American poets found themselves writing in was surely *Trans*-atlantic; while the 'civil divisions' that influenced apporprations of Burns within the United States would almost certainly fall under the *Cis*-Atlantic sub-category.

Rather than being overly-cautious about the use of such loaded terms as 'transatlantic' and 'transnational', however, the present study has attempted to root out and discuss peripheral complexities when employing any such theoretical perspective. While it is important to avoid (what Burnard describes as) a 'relentless search for connections', we must, nevertheless, continue to extrapolate and discuss past 'transatlantic' and 'transnational' encounters in literary studies, and furthermore, suggest how they might develop and inform our critical gaze. It remains crucial, to extend the optical metaphor, to avoid scrutinising the lens to the point where the subject matter under inspection becomes secondary and bound by overly- prescriptive parameters. Rather, the nature of the subject matter in hand should surely shape and influence the (re)formation of such theoretical perspectives. As discussed below, addressing some of the primary connections between Burns and the United States (personal, poetic and posthumous) has organically upturned several issues that might influence future considerations of both 'transatlantic' and 'transnational' frameworks and perspectives.

Transatlantic Perspectives

While a 'transatlantic' perspective provides a way of considering space in a relational sense, several scholars have flagged that, conceptually, it has also framed relationships unevenly, resulting in a heightened emphasis on literary connections on the Anglophone Atlantic rim, where the fluidity of language allowed for 'multiple points' of entry and departure for texts and authors.[16] Colleen Glenney Boggs has astutely observed how even in an etymological sense, the term 'transatlantic' has privileged European–American connections over African–

[15] David Armitage, 'Three Concepts of Atlantic History' in *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800* ed. by David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009) 11-27 (12).
[16] Boggs, 'Transatlantic Romanticisms', 226.

American and African–European contexts, partially reflecting 'slavery's violent displacements'.[17] This inherent privilege, many would argue, has continued in transatlantic literary studies where a focus on European-American connections has been most dominant.

Though this study, through its predominant focus on the United States, cannot claim to offer large points of intersection with the wider Atlantic rim, it does, nevertheless, offer several nuanced insights into how differing associations of nation, language and identity helped to facilitate these 'entry points' across widely disparate regions. The discussion of American variants of Scots vernacular in Chapter IV, for example, challenges the presumption that an Anglophone literary sphere existed through an equitable approach towards the English language. That a common literary language was an integral factor in facilitating reciprocal literary relationships cannot be denied; just as Burns and other British writers were printed in the United States, so too were the likes of Charles Brockden Brown, James Fenimore Cooper, and Washington Irving reprinted in Britain. Yet American responses to Burns and the Scots idiom also suggest that we might pay closer attention towards how relations were shaped by more nuanced approaches towards language and dialect. As Robert Walsh said of Burns's language in 1812, the 'dialect of the latter is more familiar and more grateful to us than to the inhabitants of her sister kingdom,[18] and Whittier and Lowell's later experiments with Scots (and other dialects) similarly revealed that 'Anglophone' poets were not necessarily united by an unchallenged, hegemonic approach towards English as a standardized literary language.

This surely brings into question the broader role of dialects, creolisations and other languages that traversed and refracted around the wider Atlantic rim. The recent attention given to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's gargantuan translation project *The Poems and Poetry of Europe* - in which he translated and commented upon poems from eight different languages - might also add to this reconsideration of what might have constituted, shaped and influenced the 'Anglophone' literary sphere.[19] Foreshadowing the botanical metaphors above, an 1839 reviewer in *The New York Review* encapsulated this specifically poetic, world of 'encounters' by describing a global ecology of poetry:

> Poetry fills in the world of thought the same place as flowers in the physical universe. Every clime has its own peculiar plants…The universal mind has likewise its clime

[17] Ibid., 223.
[18] *The American Review of History and Politics, and General Repository of State Papers,* 166-167.
[19] Boggs, 'Transatlantic Romanticisms', 226.

> and soil…but in the same manner their thoughts, originally molded in different languages, may be made known to each other…[20]

The full review, incidentally, was of Boston transcendentalist John S. Dwight's translations of Goethe and Schiller's poetry.[21] While Goethe's claim that the nineteenth century had witnessed the dawn of *Weltliteratur*[22] ('world literature') might have been partially overstated, the above examples certainly provide evidence of how our shared literary histories must continue to be acknowledged and recovered where necessary, with much work remaining to be done on the wider Atlantic rim

(Trans)National Pluralities

One of the most interesting observations to be made from this study, is that concepts of the 'nation', in a wide plurality of forms, pervaded Burns's nineteenth-century ('transnational) American reception. While the twenty-first century 'transnational turn' has encouraged a departure from strictly nation-based approaches towards literature, I have argued that it is equally important to refrain from wholly discarding the relevance of the 'nation', both as a nineteenth-century political unit and a theoretical frame of reference; particularly when examining transatlantic literary relations between Britain and America. In magnifying the connections between a relatively new 'nation' (America) and a poet self-described as the national 'Scotch Bard'[23] (one of many poetic personae), the object of the present study has been particularly apt for assessing concepts of the 'nation' in a 'transnational', cross-border literary context.

Prior to this thesis, Burns's popularity in the United States has most commonly been attributed to his kinship with 'national' American ideals of freedom, egalitarianism and individual liberty. This common claim, bolstered by notable writers, poets, critics and biographers, has persisted from the mid-nineteenth century right through to the present day. As noted in Chapter IV, Ralph Waldo Emerson, speaking in 1859, emphatically conflated Burns's songs with the 'Declaration of Independence';[24] A few decades later Walt Whitman

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[20] *The New York Review*, Vol. 4 (1839).
[21] *Select Minor Poems: Translated from the German of Goethe and Schiller,* ed. by John Sullivan Dwight (Boston: Hilliard, Gray, and Company, 1839).
[22] The term achieved wider currency after the publication of Johan Peter Eckermann's *Gespräche mit Goethe* ('Conversations With Goethe') between 1836 and 1848. For a more recent discussion of Goethe's concept of *Weltliteratur* see *Poetics of Character*, 49.
[23] For a recent discussion of the 'Heaven-Taught Ploughman' and 'Scotch Bard' personae, see *The Genius of Scotland*, 35-37.
[24] *Celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns,* 36.

described Burns as 'essentially a Republican' who would have been at home in the Western United States'[25]; In 1974 critic Donald. A. Low suggested that 'Fellow-feeling with Burns was instinctive' for Americans as his 'praise of independence vindicated their own recent historic choice';[26] and even the groundbreaking twenty-first century work of Murray Pittock and Robert Crawford frequently refers back to the idea that Burns was broadly considered to be a friend to 'democratic America'[27] and 'liberty in the United States'.[28]

While there is much evidence to substantiate this common conflation, it also wrongly assumes, when stated without qualification, a 'spatiotemporal unity'[29] for nineteenth-century American nationhood. That is, in stating that Burns was popularly received due to his kinship with the perceived ideals of the American 'nation', there lies an implicit, inaccurate suggestion of the 'nation' as a unified, all-containing entity and central frame of reference. Saskia Sassen suggests that 'nation-states' have rarely achieved 'spatiotemporal unity' and thus the 'national', upon closer inspection, reveals itself to be composed of 'multiple spatialities and temporalities' that might be, at best, composed into some form of comprehensible order.[30] When applied to the case of America, Sassen's observations are further complicated by the fact that the country, by its very constitution, was (and still is) a federal republic of semi-autonomous states rather than a singular 'nation-state'; arguably making a 'national' spatiotemporal unity even more 'rare'. This idea has pervaded the present study in that 'multiple spatialities and temporalities' enabled variant conceptions of the 'nation' or 'nation-state' that, as has been demonstrated throughout these chapters, shaped Burns's reception and cultural afterlives between 1786 and 1866.

This process was perhaps most obvious in the previous chapter where centenary commemorations of Burns differed between Southern confederate states and the largely abolitionist North, thus demonstrating a plurality of spatially disparate 'national' values and civic identities that indirectly impacted upon the preservation of a literary figure. As twenty-first century studies of American nationalism continue to evolve, so too will our understanding of Burns's American reception and nineteenth-century legacy. Anatol Lieven has recently suggested, for example, that students of American nationalism 'have never properly addressed the development of Southern identity before 1865' or before the region's 'particular

[25] Walt Whitman, *November Boughs* (Philadelphia: David McKay, 1888) 57.
[26] *The Critical Heritage*, 44.
[27] *The Bard*, 6.
[28] Pittock, 'Introduction: Global Burns', 19.
[29] Saskia Sassen, 'Spatialities and Temporalities of the Global: Elements for a Theorization' in *Public Culture* 12:1 (2000) 215-232 (215).
[30] Ibid.., 215-216.

nationalism' was 'reincorporated into that of the United States as a whole' after the Civil War.[31] Similarly, Paul Quigley's recent study, *Shifting Grounds: Nationalism and the American South, 1848-1865*, discusses white Southern identity and its (dis)connections with a broader nineteenth-century American national identity.[32] Even a brief consideration of the Southern centenary celebrations; masculine appropriations of Burns as the 'Southern Gentleman'; and Southern white appropriations of the poet reveals the shaping influence of a 'particular nationalism'; thus further emphasising the plurality of the nineteenth-century American 'nation'.

Though this specific lack of 'spatiotemporal unity' might be attributed to the multiple social, political (indeed geographical) fractures that straddled the Civil War, Burns's earlier American reception was equally affected by complex and multifarious conceptions of the 'nation'. As discussed in Chapter II, for example, the contextual suggestion of Burns as the 'Heaven-Taught ploughman' in the early nineteenth century periodical press chimed with streams of Anti-Federalist, agrarian thought, whereby 'national' progress could only be achieved by avoiding the corruption of hierarchal governance and an urban market economy. This view of progress was, of course, quite different to contemporary Federalist challenges that sought to develop commerce in order for civic advancement. This provides yet another example of where national 'spatiotemporal unity' was notably absent and, crucially, impacted upon the early appearance and reception of Burns's poems.[33]

Further complicating the significance of the 'nation' in regards to Burns's American reception were the (predominantly diasporic) associations of Burns with perceived Scottish or British nationalism. The selective associations of Burns with 'plaid and the tartan',[34] or the Union Jack for example, hardly framed the poet (or his works) as a beacon of American revolutionary fervour or Republican ideals. Even more convoluted, in terms of contemporary conceptions of the 'nation', were Robert Dinsmoor and David Bruce's poetic articulations of the Ulster-Scots-American experience. Writing in 'standard English' and employing Burns's favoured Habbie Stanza, Dinsmoor espoused a sense of patriotism towards 'this bless'd land' (America) whilst simultaneously evoking his Ulster-Scots heritage.[35] Here, a more literal

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[31] *America Right or Wrong: An Anatomy of American Nationalism*, 108.
[32] Paul Quigley, *Shifting Grounds: Nationalism and the American South, 1848-1865* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
[33] For an excellent discussion of the complex interrelationship between commerce, agriculture and 'virtue' in post-revolutionary America, see *The Machiavellian Moment*, 506-553.
[34] *The Knickerbocker*, August 2 (1833) 148-149.
[35] Robert Dinsmoor, 'To Mrs. Agnes Park, On Receiving From Her a Copy of "Waverly" in *Incidental Poems*, 13 (31-36).

sense of 'transnational' relations – entwining Scotland, Ulster and America – are deeply embedded within literary reception, yet the heightened emphasis on 'this bless'd land' renders a 'national' reading as equally viable.

The underlying point here is that any conceptual 'national', or indeed 'transnational', perspective must be considered as partial rather than central and definitive. A 'transnational' approach, then, should not result in the negation of 'national' perspectives; nor should it overshadow the relevance of other cultural contexts (not necessarily aligned with the 'nation') such as - in the specific case of Burns in the nineteenth-century United States – Masonic, abolitionist or agrarian frames of reference. Though the late Benedict Anderson's influential *Imagined Communities* (revised as recently as 2006) helped to inaugurate a fruitful re-evaluation of the relationship(s) between literature and nation, it is surely time to adopt a more scaled approach towards how we heed 'national' theoretical viewpoints. The validity of the 'nation' as an analytical tool should not so much be displaced by 'transnational' approaches; but rather be encompassed *within* them along with other equally valid frames of reference useful for literary scholars and cultural historians.

Opposing Anderson's suggestion that literature is integral to both nation-formation and sustenance, Wai-Chee Dimock insists that literature 'outlives the scope of the nation' and thus unsettles, rather than upholds 'territorial sovereignty' and regimes of simultaneity.[36] One example of this might be the critical backlash directed towards Scottish 'national' readings of Burns in the nineteenth-century United States. There was, at times, a perceived distaste for the 'unequivocal eulogy' and 'strong biases' expressed by Scottish readers and critics ('one must have been born a Scotsman to relish with *goût* the writings of Burns');[37] thus both disrupting Burns's 'territorial sovereignty' as a Scottish poet whilst also prompting fresh frames of analysis in a new space. Dimock's conception of 'Deep Time' (literature as circulating in 'denationalized space')[38] certainly allows for fresh insights when considering a poet such as Burns who, as evidenced, occupied several cultural frames over eighty years within a single 'nation-state'. Yet wholly adopting the concept of 'Deep Time', or 'denationalized space', also misses the significance of, for example, Burns being considered a 'friend' to 'national' American ideals or as a uniting 'national' symbol for the Scottish diaspora. We might, then, adjust Dimock's phrasing accordingly. Literature does not so much 'outlive the scope of the

[36] Wai Chee Dimock, 'Literature and The Planet' in *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 116:1 (2001) 173-188 (175).
[37] *Life of Robert Burns by J. G. Lockhart,* 5.
[38] See Wai Chee Dimock, *Through Other Continents: American Literature Across Deep Time* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

nation', but rather outlives 'the scope of nations' in the plural; whereby fluid and multifarious reincarnations of 'national' identities (within and across geo-political boundaries) might be included as credible, but not dominant, units of analysis among many others. The case of Burns, a self-described national (often poetically patriotic) 'Scotch-Bard', is arguably unique in its susceptibility to repeated (trans)national appropriations. Yet even the enormous popularity of Walter Scott's novels in nineteenth-century America had the potential to influence pluralistic conceptions of the American 'nation' or nationhood;[39] as evidenced by Mark Twain's now famous, if hyperbolic, remark that Scott was 'in great measure responsible' for the Civil War.[40] Furthermore, John D. Kerkering has recently suggested how elements of Wordsworth's poetics (notably his 'dislodging the *genius loci* from points on a map and appropriating it to his own identity') helped to redefine perceptions of national identity in the nineteenth century United States.[41] All of these examples point to the conclusion that the 'nation' might (and should) remain a useful analytical concept *within* transnational and transatlantic approaches, especially when considering the circulation of literature.

Postscript: An' Owre the Sea'!

Whether through echoes of New Year songs, annual suppers, statues, lakes or the advent of new editions, fresh 'sites' of memory, or indeed 'palimpsests', continue to invoke and commemorate Robert Burns and his works in the United States today. New, web-based umbrella platforms such as the 'Robert Burns Association of North America' remain dedicated to 'the preservation and appreciation of the life, works and philosophy' of Burns;[42] while celebratory events and conferences continue to be held across the country, with promotion, membership and cohesion more accessible than ever before in a digital age of instantaneous interconnectivity.[43] Arguably more so than any other eighteenth-century British writer, Burns's memory continues to be remediated across and beyond academic circuits in America. The multi-media convergences that led to Burns's transatlantic 'efflorescence', it seems,

[39] See *Scotland and America*, 145-152.
[40] Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi* [1883] (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) 390.
[41] John D. Kerkering, *The Poetics of National and Racial Identity in Nineteenth- Century American Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 74.
[42] <http://www.rbana.com/> [accessed 18/10/2015].
[43] See Sharon Alker and Holly Faith Nelson, 'Transatlanticism and Beyond: Robert Burns and the World Wide Web' in *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture* ed. by Sharon Alker, Leith Davis and Holly Faith Nelson, 247-261.

continue to evolve, overlap, (re)develop and preserve the poet and his works through a multiplicity of methods.

Pertinently, much fruitful twenty-first century scholarship also continues to emanate from the United States. Coinciding with the Scottish Government's 2009 'Year of Homecoming' campaign (for which the bicentenary of Burns' birth was the focal point), the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, Washington, DC, presented a free public symposium on Burns's life and work, which included talks on his 'impact on America and American culture'.[44] Picking up the baton from the likes of J. DeLancey Ferguson, Franklyn Bliss Snyder and G. Ross Roy, North American scholars such as Leith Davis, Carol McGuirk and Corey Andrews continue to be counted among the world's most prominent contemporary Burns critics. As a recently as 2014, for example, McGuirk added to a considerable body of Burns scholarship with her latest book *Reading Robert Burns: Texts, Contexts, Transformations*, while just months later Corey Andrews published *The Genius of Scotland: The Cultural Production of Robert Burns, 1785-1834* (2015). Going by current publication rates, then, the tradition of much fruitful Burns scholarship being written and researched in America (and by American scholars) remains strong.

On an institutional level, The University of South Carolina continues to be a vital organ in Burns scholarship. The 5000+ Burns materials held at the university's Thomas Cooper Library, first collected by W. Ormiston Roy and inherited by his grandson G. Ross Roy (whom the collection is named after) remains an invaluable resource for scholars, evidenced most recently by the music holdings being of substantial aid to the upcoming Oxford University Press edition of *The Scots Musical Museum*, edited by Murray Pittock. Thanks to the rigorous work of Elizabeth Sudduth, the collection is now catalogued and divided into 'Typescripts'; 'Printed Materials'; 'Burnsiana'; 'Art, Prints, Posters and Photographs'; 'Sound, Film and Video Recordings'; and 'Realia and Cultural Objects'; thus further illustrating the importance of mixed-media convergences in relation to both the poet's reception and on-going cultural memory. Significantly, the majority of 'American editions' listed in Appendix I can also be found in the collection, with most others catalogued in the equally rich William R. Smith Collection, based at the Library of the Supreme Council, 33. S. J., Washington, D.C.[45]

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[44] < http://www.loc.gov/folklife/Symposia/Burns/ > [accessed 18/10/2015].

[45] See *Burnsiana: A Bibliography of the William R. Smith Collection in the Library of the Supreme Council, 33°, S.J.*, ed. by Larissa P. Watkins (Delaware and Washington: Oak Knoll Press & Library of the Supreme Council, 2008).

With an abundance of fresh resources and the dawn of several reinvigorated critical studies, it seems the 'new era' of Burns Studies is well and truly underway in the United States. It is surely, then, the most apt of times to reconsider the poet's initial rise to fame, reception and cultural influence there, with one eye cast towards how we might approach other 'transnational' contexts in this fertile new plain of research, where other large hinterlands lay yet to be discovered. With that, I shall leave the final words to one of America's first great 'canonical poets', or, as some would have it, the 'American Burns' himself:

No more these simple flowers belong
To Scottish maid and lover:
Sown in the common soil of song,
They bloom the wide world over.

➢John Greenleaf Whittier[46]

[46] John Greenleaf Whittier, 'Burns. On a receiving a sprig of heather in blossom' in *The Complete Poetical Works of John Greenleaf Whittier*, 196 (1-4).

Appendix I

A Chronological Bibliography of Burns Print Editions in The United States of America: 1788-1866

Chronological list of known American editions (Poems, Songs & Biographies in book-form) as verified by the Author. Extended sub-titles given for reference purposes.

1788

Poems, Chiefly in The Scottish Dialect. By Robert Burns. (Philadelphia: Peter Stewart and George Hyde, 1788)

Poems, Chiefly in The Scottish Dialect. By Robert Burns. To which are Added, Scots Poems, Selected from the Works of Robert Fergusson. (New York: J. and A. M'Lean, 1788)

1797

The Scots, Musical Museum. Being a Collection of the Most Favorite Scots Tunes Adapted to the Voice, Harpsicord, and Piano-Forte. Edited by John Aitken. (Philadelphia: John Aitken, 1797)

1798

Poems, Chiefly in The Scottish Dialect. By Robert Burns. From the latest European Edition. Two Volumes in One. (Philadelphia: Patterson & Cochran, 1798)

1799

Poems, Chiefly in The Scottish Dialect. By Robert Burns. To which are Added, Scots Poems, Selected from the Works of Robert Fergusson. (New York: John Tiebout, 1799)

1801

Poems, Chiefly in The Scottish Dialect. A New Edition, which Includes All the Poems and Songs in that Printed at Edinburgh in 1787 Under the Authors Own Inspection; Also his Life Appendix, Containing his Other Select Pieces. (Boston: H. Richardson, 1801)

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings. In Four Volumes. To which are Prefixed, Some Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry. (Philadelphia: Thomas Dobson, 1801)

1804

Poems, Chiefly in The Scottish Dialect. By Robert Burns. (Wilmington: Bonsal and Niles, 1804)

The Poetical Works of Robert Burns. With the Author's Life Written by Himself. (Philadelphia: Benjamin Johnson, Jacob Johnson, & Robert Johnson, 1804)

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings. In Three Volumes. To which are Prefixed, Some Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry. (Philadelphia: William Fairbairn, 1804)

1807

The Poetical Works of Robert Burns. Together with an Appendix, and a Concise History of his Life. (Philadelphia: Peter Stewart, 1807)

1809

Letters Addressed to Clarinda, &c. Never before Published in America; with a Choice Selection of Poems and Songs. By Robert Burns. (Philadelphia: John B. Austin, 1809)

Reliques of Robert Burns. Consisting Chiefly of Original, Letters, Poems, and Critical Observations on Scottish Songs. Collected and published by R.H. Cromek. (Philadelphia and New York: Bradsford and Inskeep, Baltimore: Coale and Thomas, Boston: Oliver C. Greenleaf, 1809)

1811

The Poetical Works of Robert Burns. To which is Prefixed his Life, as Written by Himself, and Continued or Commented on by Others. (Philadelphia: Benjamin Chapman. 1811)

1812

Poems, Chiefly in The Scottish Dialect. By Robert Burns. (Baltimore: A. Miltenberger, 1812)

1813

The Poetical Works of Robert Burns. A New Edition. (Alexandria: John A. Stewart, 1813)

1814

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings. In Four Volumes. To which are Prefixed, Some Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry. (Baltimore: F. Lucas, Jun, and J. Cushing, 1814)

1815

Poems, Chiefly in The Scottish Dialect. By Robert Burns. (Baltimore: F. Lucas, Jun, and J. Cushing, 1815)

The Poetical Works of Robert Burns. Including Several Poems not to be Found in any Other Edition. Also, the Author's Life, Written by Himself, and Extracts from Some of his Letters. In Two Volumes. (Salem, N.Y. J.P Reynolds, 1815)

The Poetical Works of Robert Burns. To which is Prefixed his Life, as Written by Himself, and Continued or Commented on by Others. (Philadelphia: Benjamin Chapman. 1815)

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings. In Four Volumes. To which are Prefixed, Some Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry. (Baltimore: F. Lucas, Jun, and J. Cushing, 1815)

1816

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings. In Four Volumes. To which are Prefixed, Some Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry. (Baltimore: F. Lucas, Jun, and J. Cushing, 1816)

1818

Letters Addressed to Clarinda, Etc. By Robert Burns. First American Edition. (Washington City: J. M'Laughlin, 1818)

The Poetical Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life and Correspondence with Mr. Thomson. In Two Volumes. To which is Added a New and Complete Glossary. Printed by Thomas H. Palmer. (Philadelphia: Benjamin Warner, 1818)

The Scottish Minstrel: being a complete Collection of Burns' Songs. Together with his Correspondence with Mr. Thomson, To which is Added a New and Complete Glossary. (Philadelphia: Benjamin Warner, 1818)

1820

Burns' Select Works, Prose. Volume One. (New York: R. & W. A. Bartow, 1820)

The Letters of Robert Burns. Chronologically Arranged from Dr. Currie's Collection. Two Volumes in One. (Boston: Wells and Lily, 1820)

1821

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life. (New York: R. & W. A. Bartow, 1821)

1822

The Poetical Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life and Correspondence with Mr. Thomson. In Two Volumes. (Philadelphia: M'Carty & Davis, 1822)

The Works of the British Poets Edited by Robert Walsh, Jr. Vol. XXVIII. Robert Burns. (Boston: Charles Ewer and Timothy Bedlington, 1822)

1823

The Poetical Works of Robert Burns. With Several Pieces Never before Published, Notes Illustrative of his Poems, and Definitions of all the Scottish Words and Phrases. To which is Prefixed, an Account of his Life: and also a View of his Character, by Gilbert Burns. (Philadelphia: B. Chapman, 1823)

1824

The Life and Works of Robert Burns. As Originally Edited by James Currie, M.D. To which is Prefixed a Review of the Life of Burns and of Various Criticisms on his Character and Writings. (New York: S. King, 1824)

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life. In Four Volumes. (New York: W. A Bartow, 1824)

1825

The Poetical Works of Robert Burns. In Two Volumes. (New York: D. Mallon, 1825)

1826

The Poetical Works of Robert Burns. Including Several Pieces not Inserted in Dr. Currie's Edition, Exhibited under a New Plan of Arrangement, and Preceded by a Life of the Author, and a Complete Glossary. In Two Volumes. (New York: William Borradaile, 1826)

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings, To which are Prefixed, Some Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry, by James Currie, M.D. A New Edition, with Many Additional Poems and Songs, and an Enlarged and Corrected Glossary. (New York: William Borradaile, 1826)

1828

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings, To which are Prefixed, Some Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry, by James Currie, M.D. A New Edition, with Many Additional Poems and Songs, and an Enlarged and Corrected Glossary, from the Last London Edition of 1825. (Philadelphia: J. Crissy and J. Grigg, 1828)

1829

The Poetical Works of Robert Burns. Including Several Pieces not Inserted in Dr. Currie's Edition, Exhibited under a New Plan of Arrangement, and Preceded by a Life of the Author, and a Complete Glossary. In Two Volumes. (Philadelphia: J. Yarding, 1829)

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings, To which are Prefixed, Some Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry, by James Currie, M.D. A New Edition, with Many Additional Poems and Songs, and an Enlarged and Corrected Glossary, from the last London edition of 1825. (Philadelphia: J. Crissy and J. Grigg, 1829)

1830

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings, To which are Prefixed, Some Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry, by James Currie, M.D. A New Edition, Four Volumes Complete in One, with Many

Additional Poems and Songs, and an Enlarged Corrected Glossary. (New York: S. & D.A. Forbes, 1830)

1831

The Complete Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings, with Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry, and a Copious Glossary, by James Currie, M.D. Four Volumes in One. (New York: S. King, 1831)

Life of Robert Burns by J. G. Lockhart. With an Essay on his Writings, Prepared for this Edition. (New York: W. Stodart, 1831)

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings, To which are Prefixed, Some Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry, by James Currie, M.D. A New Edition, with Many Additional Poems and Songs, and an Enlarged and Corrected Glossary, from the Last London edition of 1825. (Philadelphia: J. Crissy and J. Grigg, 1831)

1832

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings, To which are Prefixed, Some Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry, by James Currie. A New Edition, with Many Additional Poems and Songs, from the Latest London Editions, Embellished with Thirty-three Engravings on Wood. (New York: J. Booth and Sons, 1832)

The Works of Robert Burns. Containing his Life by John Lockhart, the Poetry and Correspondence of Dr, Currie's Edition, Biographical Sketches of the Poet by Himself, Gilbert Burns, Professor Stewart, and Others, Essay on Scottish Poetry, Including the Poetry of Burns, by Dr Currie, Burns's Songs, from Johnson's "Musical Museum, and "Thomson's Select Melodies", Select Scottish Songs of the Other Poets, from the Best Collections, with Burns's Remarks. Forming, in One Work, the Truest Exhibition of the Man and the Poet, and the Fullest Edition of his Poetry and Prose Writing Hithereto Published. (New York: William Pearson, 1832)

The Works of Robert Burns. Containing his Life by John Lockhart, the Poetry and Correspondence of Dr, Currie's Edition, Biographical Sketches of the Poet by Himself, Gilbert Burns, Professor Stewart, and Others, Essay on Scottish Poetry, Including the Poetry of Burns, by Dr Currie, Burns's Songs, from Johnson's "Musical Museum, and "Thomson's Select Melodies", Select Scottish Songs of the Other Poets, from the Best Collections, with Burns's Remarks. (New York: Leavitt & Allen Bros, 1832)

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings, To which are Prefixed, Some Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry, by James Currie, M.D. A New Edition, with Many Additional Poems and Songs, and an Enlarged and Corrected Glossary, from the Last London edition of 1825. (Philadelphia: J. Crissy and J. Grigg, 1832)

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings, To which are Prefixed, Some Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry, by James Currie, M.D. A New Edition, Four Volumes Complete in One, With Many Additional Poems and Songs, from the Latest London of 1829. (Philadelphia: James Locken, 1832)

1833

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings, To which are Prefixed, Some Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry, by James Currie, M.D. A New Edition, Four Volumes Complete in One, With Many Additional Poems and Songs, and an Enlarged and Corrected Glossary. (Philadelphia: J. Crissy and J. Grigg, 1833)

1834

The Poetical Works of Robert Burns. Including Several Pieces not Inserted in Dr. Currie's Edition, Exhibited under a New Plan of Arrangement, and Preceded by a Life of the Author, and a Complete Glossary. In Two Volumes. [In One] (Boston: James B. Dow, 1834)

The Works of Robert Burns. With His Life by Allan Cunningham. In Four Volumes. (Boston: Hilliard, Gray, and Company 1834)

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings, To which are Prefixed, Some Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry, by James Currie, M.D. A New Edition, Four Volumes Complete in One, With Many Additional Poems and Songs, and an Enlarged and Corrected Glossary. (Philadelphia: J. Crissy and J. Grigg, 1834)

1835

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings, To which are Prefixed, Some Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry, by James Currie, M.D. (Philadelphia: J. Locken, 1835)

The Works of Robert Burns. Containing his Life by John Lockhart, the Poetry and Correspondence of Dr, Currie's Edition, Biographical Sketches of the Poet by Himself, Gilbert Burns, Professor Stewart, and Others, Essay on Scottish Poetry, Including the Poetry of Burns, by Dr Currie, Burns's Songs, from Johnson's "Musical Museum, and "Thomson's Select Melodies", Select Scottish Songs of the Other Poets, from the Best Collections, with Burns's Remarks. Forming, in One Work, the Truest Exhibition of the Man and the Poet, and the Fullest Edition of his Poetry and Prose Writing Hitherto Published. (New York: William Pearson, 1835)

The Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings, To which are Prefixed, Some Observations on the Character and Conditions of the Scottish Peasantry, by James Currie, M.D. Including Additional Poems, Extracted from the Late Edition Edited by Allan Cunningham. (Philadelphia: J. Crissy and Charles Desilver, 1835)

1836

The Poetical Works of Robert Burns. With a Sketch of his Life, by James Currie, M.D, with Many Additional Poems and Songs, and an Enlarged and Corrected Glossary. In Two Volumes. (New York: C. Wells, 1836)

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