

12-28-2021

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Recommended Citation

Scott, Patrick (2022) "'We'll Ne'er Forget the People': The Roy Manuscript of Burns's 'The Dumfries Volunteers,'" *Studies in Scottish Literature*: Vol. 47: Iss. 2, 135–146.

Available at: <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl/vol47/iss2/7>

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**“WE’LL NE’ER FORGET THE PEOPLE”:
THE ROY MANUSCRIPT OF BURNS’S
“THE DUMFRIES VOLUNTEERS”**

Patrick Scott

This short note is to report the recent acquisition for the Roy Collection at the University of South Carolina of an early manuscript of Robert Burns’s song “The Dumfries Volunteers” (“Does haughty Gaul invasion threat”).¹ The Dumfries Volunteers was a local defence unit of just two companies, organized in anticipation of a French invasion. Its formation was first proposed at a public meeting in December 1794, its elected officers were approved by the government on March 24, 1795, and its 57 original members, including Robert Burns, took the oath of allegiance in the Dumfries Assembly Rooms on March 28.² Burns’s song was written only a few weeks later, in April 1795, and printed in multiple newspapers. What is now the Roy manuscript was not available to Kinsley or other modern editors; its provenance connects it with one of those first newspaper printings and shows Burns’s personal involvement in getting the song immediately into print.

It is a song that has drawn divided responses from critics and biographers. The Volunteers represented an uneasy coalition of local

¹ James Kinsley, ed., *Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), II: 764-766. This is one of an ongoing series about the Roy Collection Burns manuscripts. I am grateful to Elizabeth Sudduth, Associate Dean of Special Collections, for facilitating research access soon after the manuscript arrived; to Matt Hodge for making new digital images; to Drs. Ronnie Young and Dr. Craig Lamont, Centre for Robert Burns Studies, University of Glasgow, for advice on watermarks and manuscript scans respectively; to Andrew Calhoun, again for a scan; and to Dr. James Grant for information on Scottish postal markings.

² On Burns’s service, see Robert Weir, “Some of the Military Preparations in Dumfriesshire during the last war with France,” *Transactions ... of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History & Antiquarian Society*, 1st ser., 7 (1891): 86-102 (esp. 88-90); William Will, *Robert Burns as a Volunteer* (Glasgow: John Smith, 1919); James Mackay, *RB: A Biography of Robert Burns* (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1992), 591-597.

landowners and established Dumfries citizens (“gentlemen”), from varying prior political perspectives, and those who initiated its formation were responding as much to the fear of civil unrest as to the military threat of invasion. As first organized, the Volunteers set their own rules, served without pay, bought their own uniforms, and limited their sphere of operation to within five miles of Dumfries.³ The original December resolution calling for a Dumfries regiment gave its purpose as “supporting the Civil Magistrate,” and “making every loyal and constitutional exertion to suppress internal tumult or sedition, and to repel the invasion of our foreign enemies.” The preamble to the “Offer of Service” signed on February 3, 1795, declared:

our sincere attachment to the person and government of His Majesty King George the Third; our respect for the happy constitution of Great Britain; and our firm resolution, on every occasion, to protect the lives and properties of ourselves and our fellow subjects from every attempt of the ambitious and turbulent who threaten to overturn the laws of our country, and who by anarchy, sedition, and bloodshed may endeavour to destroy the sacred bonds of society.⁴

The Volunteers met, not only on the drill park, but for celebratory dinners, where a faction of self-styled Loyal Natives treated enthusiastic participation by those attending as a political litmus-test. Allan Cunningham provides two slightly different accounts of Burns’s response. The first, and longer, told how the Volunteers had expected Burns to write them a regimental song, and when a toast he proposed at one of the first dinners was met with “a murmur of disapprobation,” Burns went home and wrote “that characteristic and truly national song—‘Does haughty Gaul invasion threaten?’”⁵ Cunningham’s second version omits the toast incident:

At a public dinner given to the officers of the corps, the Poet was expected to utter something either in verse or prose—he said nothing, for his health was then failing: but he did not miss that his silence was misinterpreted. On going home he wrote “The Dumfries Volunteers.” The song became popular at once, and was soon to be heard on hill and dale.... The sentiments of the song are understood by all ranks—they echo what every true British bosom feels.⁶

In both accounts, however, Cunningham takes the song as straightforwardly patriotic.

³ See Weir, 89-90; also in Patrick Scott, ed., *Robert Burns: A Documentary Volume* (Farmington Hills, MI: Gale, 2018), 316-318.

⁴ For this and the preceding quotation see Weir, 88, 89; Scott, 316.

⁵ Allan Cunningham, ed., *Works of Robert Burns*, 8 vols (London: Cochrane and McCrone, 1834), I: 319.

⁶ Cunningham, *Works*, V: 272-273.

For some older Burnsians, the poet's enlistment, and the song for the regiment, showed him switching political sides, writing in support of a government he had previously criticized.⁷ Just after the Great War, the venerable Duncan M'Naught used the song as evidence that Burns never had "the slightest sympathy with the doctrines of Bolshevism, Communism, and Socialism": in 1795, "his country was in danger, and he sprang to arms... Thus did his conscientious objections dissolve, if he ever had any."⁸ Others have seen enlistment as betrayal, or as at best morally ambiguous, evidence of Burns cravenly or realistically backtracking after his reputed political views had seemed to endanger his government job or even risk prosecution. More recently, some critics have preferred to argue that Burns was playing a double game, writing a song that the Loyal Natives would find satisfyingly patriotic, while including coded support for revolutionary change.⁹ One song scholar suggested that the song is so ultra-patriotic as to seem like a parody, "a lampoon of a certain type of patriotic versifying, and a brilliant one at that," but then backs away because "in its own right it is so magnificently superior to all of its kind."¹⁰ Many, perhaps most recent, critics, find the song quite explicit in blending patriotic fervor and a pro-reform message; some think the politics of the song to be mixed or even muddled, but they see Burns, not as betraying his previous beliefs, but as redoubling them, still asserting openly that the British constitution, while it must be defended from French interference, needed reform.¹¹ The duality in these varying critical responses, or what

⁷ Auguste Angellier, *Robert Burns*, 2 vols (Paris: Hachette, 1893), II: 114.

⁸ Duncan M'Naught, "The Politics of Burns," *Burns Chronicle*, ser 1, 34 (1925): 61-65 (61, 64), excerpted in *The Canongate Burns*, ed. Andrew Noble and Patrick Scott Hogg (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2001, revd ed., 2003), 420.

⁹ See esp. Robert Crawford, *The Bard: Robert Burns, A Biography* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 384-385; cf. *Canongate Burns*, 419 ("fear-induced political tracks-disguising over-subtlety"); Marilyn Butler, "Burns and Politics," in R. Crawford, ed., *Robert Burns & Cultural Authority* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996), 86-112 (96-97).

¹⁰ Cedric Thorpe Davie, "Robert Burns, Writer of Songs," in Donald A. Low, ed., *Critical Essays on Robert Burns* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), 157-185 (173); Davie suggests that "nowadays " the song can only be sung "with a good deal of tongue-in-cheek humour as a period piece" (*ibid.*).

¹¹ See, e.g., Mackay, *RB*, 591, 593; Liam McIlvanney, *Burns the Radical: Poetry & Politics in Late Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 2002), 235-238; Gerard Carruthers, *Robert Burns* (Tavistock: Northcote House, 2006), 59; Carol McGuirk, "The King and THE PEOPLE in Burns and Lady Nairne, with a Coda ...," *SSL*, 45.1 (2020): 14-22 (16). Thomas Crawford, in *Burns, A Study of the Poems and Songs* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1960), 237, warns against assuming that in 1795 Burns's political views were fixed or final.

Pittock neatly terms Burns's "conditional loyalism," can be seen in the final stanza.¹² The first six lines might seem to show Burns protesting his loyalty to the crown, denouncing the Mob and deflecting the old accusation that in 1792 in the Dumfries Theatre he had refused to join in singing "God Save the King." Yet the most memorable lines in the song, the last two, offer a rousing populist and humanitarian, if not necessarily radical, challenge to conformist politics:

The wretch that would a Tyrant own,
 And the wretch, his true-sworn brother,
 Who'd set the Mob above the Throne,
 May they be damn'd together!
 Who will not sing, GOD SAVE THE KING,
 Shall hang as high 's the steeple;
 But while we sing, GOD SAVE THE KING,
 We'll ne'er forget THE PEOPLE!

In the song's last line Robert Crawford detects Burns's submerged echo of the Scottish lawyer Thomas Muir, convicted of sedition in 1793, who asserted that "he loved his sovereign but could not on that account forget the people."¹³ Yet Burns must have felt that this song unlike his anonymously-published political songs of this period, notably "Is there for honest poverty," was safe enough to send it off for newspaper publication under his own name.

Mackay suggests that the incident over the toast was at a dinner the Volunteers held on or about April 12, the anniversary of Admiral Rodney's victory over the French in the Caribbean in 1782, marking a *terminus a quo* for composition.¹⁴ By the first week of May, Burns had made two fair copies for two different newspaper editors, and the song duly appeared, in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* on May 4, 1795, and in the *Dumfries Journal* on May 5, with reprinting in many other papers and magazines.¹⁵

Burns is also reported to have sent it at the same time to Edinburgh, for it to be printed by Johnson as a separate sheet with music by Stephen Clarke the *Scots Musical Museum's* music editor; in Cunningham's words,

¹² Pittock, *OERB*, III: 199.

¹³ Crawford, *The Bard*, 385. Robert Irvine juxtaposes the Muir quotation with a very similar passage about loyalty and constitutional reform from a public meeting in Perth in 1792: Robert Burns, *Selected Poems & Songs*, ed. Robert P. Irvine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 369.

¹⁴ Mackay, 596. The toast "On the Commemoration of Rodney's Victory" ("Instead of a song, boys": Kinsley, II: 680-681), said to have been proposed extempore by Burns, and later annotated as given at a dinner of the Dumfries Volunteers, had appeared two years earlier, in the *Edinburgh Advertiser* for April 9, 1793.

¹⁵ See, e.g., *Caledonian Mercury* (May 7, 1795), p. 4; *Scots Magazine*, 57 [n.s. 2] (May 1795), 313.

A Ballad — Some — push about the poem.
 Does haughty Gaul invasion threat,
 Then let the bairns beware, &c,
 There's Wooden walls upon our seas,
 And Volunteers on shore, &c:
 The North shall run to Coromoon,
 And Griffell sink in Solway,
 What we allow a Foreign foe
 On British ground to rally.
 O let us not, like snarling curs,
 In wrangling be divided,
 Till, slap! come in an unco loun,
 And wi' a ring decide it!
 Be Britain still to Britain true,
 Among ourselves united:
 For never but by British hands
 Mann British wrongs be righted.
 The kettle o' the Kirk & State
 Perhaps a clout may fail in't
 But deil a foreign tinkler-loun
 Shall ever ca' a nail in't.
 Our Father's Blair the kettle bought,
 And wha wad dare to spoil it,
 By Heavens! the sacreligious dog
 Shall feel be to boil it!
 O the wretch that would a tyrant own,
 And the wretch, his true-sworn brother,
 Who would set the Mob above the Throne,
 May they be damn'd together!
 Who will not sing, god save the king,
 Shall hang as high's the steeple,
 But while we sing, god save the king,
 We'll never forget the people. —

The Roy MS of "The Dumfries Volunteers"
 Courtesy of Irvin Department of Rare Books & Special Collections,
 University of South Carolina Libraries

a “great number of copies were struck off with the music in Edinburgh, and widely circulated by the author.”¹⁶

While Burns refers to this separate broadside (or pre-print) version in a letter to James Johnson usually dated [?March 1796], that date was conjectural, based on J. DeLancey Ferguson’s interpretation of a blurred post-marking on Burns’s previous letter to Johnson. Subsequent research by James Mackay shows that the letters and broadside can now be redated with reasonable confidence as from autumn 1795, not early spring 1796.¹⁷

The newspaper versions and the lost broadside are the only life-time published texts, and the song was first collected in the 1800 Currie edition, when it was placed among “Original Poetical Pieces, not before published”; it was not included in Johnson’s *Scots Musical Museum* till 1803, when it also appeared in George Thomson’s *Select Collection*.¹⁸

¹⁶ Cunningham, I: 319. Cf. James Dick, ed., *The Songs of Robert Burns* (London: Henry Frowde, 1903), 452.

¹⁷ Burns refers to the broadside in writing to Johnson, in the undated letter 692, in G. Ross Roy, ed., *Letters of Robert Burns*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), II: 378, where, following Ferguson (1931), II: 319, the letter is dated [Dumfries, Mar. 1796]. This date rests on it being a follow-up to two previous Burns letters to Johnson (letter 684: 690: Ferguson, 312-314, Roy, II: 369-71; letter 690: Ferguson, II: 318, Roy, II: 376-377). All three letters mention work Burns commissioned from Johnson engraving a bill for Mr. Hyslop of the Globe Inn, and all three are undated. Scott Douglas, the first editor to print letter 692, dated it March 1795, which seems at least a couple of months too early, but then assigns letter 690 to [January 1796]: *Works of Robert Burns*, 6 vols (Edinburgh: William Paterson, 1877-79), VI: 155, 159. Letter 690 has a partially-obliterated post marking (“..E 24”), which Ferguson interpreted as Wednesday, February 24, 1796, with the two-letter abbreviation for the month being FE, though the 24th also fell on a Wednesday in June, 1795, and the Edinburgh post office used the abbreviations JE and JN for June. However, the late James Mackay recognized that the stamp date marked the letter’s arrival in Edinburgh, not the date Burns sent it off. He allowed 24 hours for the letter to get from Dumfries to Edinburgh: if Burns wrote it on Wednesday, then it would reach the Edinburgh post-office for date stamping on Thursday. Mackay found that September 24, 1796 fell on a Thursday; the September abbreviation was SE. Using Mackay’s calculation, letter 690 was written on Wednesday 23 September, 1795, and letter 692, referring to the “Dumfries Volunteers” broadside, should also be redated; given the time needed for engraving a broadside with music, it would date from a few weeks later, in the early autumn of 1795. See James A. Mackay, “‘That cursed tax of postage’: Robert Burns and the Postal System,” *SSL*, 35-36 (2007): 472-479 (478). On the separate printing, cf. also Patrick Scott, in *SSL*, 43.2 (2017): 309-320 (317-318).

¹⁸ James Currie, ed., *Works of Robert Burns*, 4 vols (London: Cadell and Davies, 1800), IV: 384-385; James Johnson, *Scots Musical Museum*, 5 (1803), song 546; George Thomson, *Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs* (1803), song 47.

There are four manuscripts of the song listed in the *Index of English Literary Manuscripts*, namely:¹⁹

BuR 185: **Morgan** or Lochryan MS: sent to Mrs Dunlop [Autumn 1795]; collated by Kinsley as Lochryan; now in the Morgan Library, New York; Pittock in OERB collates as Dunlop; cover-letter but not song-text in Roy, *Letters*, II: 367-368.

BuR 186: **Philadelphia MS**, headed "For the Edinr. Courant"; addressed to "M David Ramsay / Courant Office / Edinr"; in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

BuR 187: **Alloway MS**, in the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum.

BuR 188: formerly owned by John Dick, uncited by Kinsley, unlocated by IELM; now the **Roy MS**, University of South Carolina Libraries.

While the title and the tune differ among the four manuscripts, all four have very similar text. In sending the song to Mrs Dunlop, Burns commented that he had omitted "four lines on the ci-devant Commodore" that had offended "my lovely young friend" Miss Keith, the Commodore's goddaughter, but no such extra lines show up in any of the four known manuscripts.²⁰

The manuscript now in the Roy Collection is headed "A Ballad—Tune—Push about the jorum," and carries the initials "R.B." (which may be in another hand) added sideways alongside the last stanza. The song fills one page of a folded full sheet of ruled paper, the page measuring 33.1 x 20 cm; the outer leaf of the folded sheet carries two small red Excise stamps and is endorsed in another hand "Robert Burns' Hand Writing." It has been preserved together with an engraved portrait of Burns, in a green morocco binding by the Atelier Bindery, New York, with the title in gilt on the front cover, and gilt thistles on the spine.

Because there is no other writing on the outer leaf, the watermark of the Roy manuscript there (Britannia, seated with spear and Union Jack shield, in a round frame, topped with a crown) is clear, despite earlier damage, and a countermark R. REID & CO. is visible on the first leaf. Dr. Ronnie Young confirmed the authenticity of the song manuscript by

¹⁹ Margaret B. Smith, with Penny Boumelha, comp., *Index of English Literary Manuscripts*, vol. 3, pt 1 (London: Mansell, 1986), 114.

²⁰ *Letters*, II: 367-368. While no editor annotates this passage, "Miss Keith" was presumably Miss Keith Dunlop (1772-1858), Mrs. Dunlop's youngest child, mentioned in Burns's poem "Sketch: New Year's Day. To Mrs Dunlop,": Kinsley, *I*: 453. I have not identified her godfather, the ci-devant Commodore. .

matching this paper with two other sheets with Burns's writing in the Glasgow database, both Excise documents dating from late 1794.²¹

The Roy manuscript was used in several nineteenth-century Burns editions, but its whereabouts was unknown to recent editors. It was not cited or collated in Kinsley's edition, and it arrived in South Carolina only in March, 2021, too late to be cited in the Johnson or even the Thomson volumes of the Oxford Edition.²² Its documented provenance begins in 1834, when a Mr. Milligan of Dumfries loaned it to Allan Cunningham, as being "the original manuscript" that Burns sent to "Mr. Jackson of the Dumfries Journal."²³

Later in the century, it was owned by the antiquarian John Dick, Esq., J.P., of Craigengelt, near Stirling.²⁴ In 1865, Dick, then just 30, had inherited the family estate from the uncle for whom he was named, who had been provost and high sheriff of Stirling, and who claimed he had as a schoolboy seen Burns in the Stirling streets.²⁵ The younger John Dick also had a longstanding interest in Burns, got to know Burns's nieces the Misses Begg, at Alloway, and contributed an article about them to the *Burns Chronicle*.²⁶ Surprisingly, he did not lend the manuscript for the 1896 Glasgow Exhibition, but around the same time he made it available to Henley and Henderson, allowing them not only to collate it for their Centenary edition, as MS. (B), but also to include a reduced-scale photographic facsimile.²⁷

After World War I, the manuscript was bought in "an important Edinburgh sale" by a London dealer, Charles J. Sawyer (1876-1931), who

²¹ Emails from Ronnie Young, March 16 and March 19, 2021, using scans in the Burns Paper Database, Centre for Robert Burns Studies, University of Glasgow, Glasgow; see also Ronnie Young, in *Burns Chronicle*, 126 (2017): 46-58.

²² James Kinsley, ed., *Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), II: 764-766 (and III: 1469); Murray Pittock, ed., *The Scots Musical Museum [Oxford Edition of Robert Burns, 3]* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 109; Kirsteen McCue, ed., *Robert Burns's Songs for George Thomson [Oxford Edition of Robert Burns, 4]* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2021), 507-510.

²³ Cunningham, *Works*, V: 271.

²⁴ The first mention I have found of Dick's ownership is *Bridge of Allan Reporter*, May 13, 1876, 2.

²⁵ Edward Walford, *The County Families of the United Kingdom*, 33rd ed. (London: Chatto & Windus, 1893), 291; William Harvey, *Robert Burns in Stirlingshire* (Stirling: Eneas Mackay, 1899), 23-25.

²⁶ J.D., "Reminiscences of the Nieces of Robert Burns," *Burns Chronicle*, 10 (1901): 41-46.

²⁷ William Ernest Henley and T.F. Henderson, eds, *The Poetry of Burns*, 4 vols (Edinburgh: T.C. and E.C. Jack, 1896-98), III: 441, with facsimile facing.

catalogued it in 1922, with a full-page facsimile, at £350.²⁸ Early the following year, Sawyer answered an enquiry about it from Edgar H. Wells (1875-1938), former acting dean of Harvard College, who had just set up as a book dealer in New York City.²⁹ Through Wells, it was sold to a Wall Street lawyer, Dean Sage (1876-1943), who had it put in its present binding.³⁰ It then passed through a succession of private collections for another hundred years, until its purchase for the University of South Carolina in January 2021.

Before discussing the relationships between the early texts of the song, it may be helpful to give at least a selective collation of substantive variants, broadly defined to include spelling variants which indicate Scots rather than English. Punctuation varies a great deal among the texts, and in particular Burns used a variety of ways of showing emphasis in the manuscripts, and the printed texts also vary in emphasizing key nouns by capitalization, italicization, or the use of small capitals (in line 2, for instance, volunteers, *volunteers*, Volunteers, Volunteers with double underlining, and VOLUNTEERS); the collation does, however, include the most significant of such variation, in the capitalization or otherwise of the People. In this collation, the base text is Kinsley, who used (with some significant departures, as in l. 16) the Philadelphia MS:³¹

Title: The Dumfries Volunteers] *Kinsley, Alloway, Cunningham*; For the Edin'. Courant—The Dumfries Volunteers. A Ballad by M' Burns, *Phil*; A Ballad, *Roy*; The Dumfries Volunteers.—A Ballad, *Morgan*; The Dumfries Volunteers.—A Ballad, by Mr Burns, *Cal.Merc., Scots Mag.*; The Dumfries Volunteers ... April, 1795, *Currie*; The Dumfries Volunteers. Written for this work by Robert Burns, *SMM.*; Does haughty Gaul invasion threat, Written in April 1795, By Burns, *SC.* *Alloway has a note in a different hand* vol. VI. Song 545. *though the song number as published in SMM is 546.*

Tune: Tune, Push about the jorum, *Phil., Roy, Morgan, Cal.Merc., Scots Mag., Currie, Cunningham*; Callum Shiarghlas see N.Gow's third Collection, *Alloway, with parentheses and 206 in a different hand*; Air.—Rise Up and Bar the Door, *SC.* *No tune named in the SMM heading; music indexed in SMM as by S. Clarke. Currie has the refrain Fall de rall, &c. at the end of each stanza except the last; Kinsley has*

²⁸ *Sawyer Catalogue of Books and Manuscripts Sale No. LXV* (1922), consulted on Rare Book Hub, January 10, 2021.

²⁹ *New York Times*, July 3, 1938, p. 13. Sawyer's information on provenance, and Well's letter to Sage, are laid in the manuscript binding, not bound in.

³⁰ Senior partner in Sage, Gray, Todd, & Sims, 49 Wall St., president of the Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center, etc: *New York Times*, July 3, 1938, p. 13.

³¹ For the Alloway MS, I am grateful to Andrew Calhoun for sharing a scan of stanzas 1-3; for the last stanza the collation relies on Kinsley, as the scan formerly on the RBBM/NTS website is no longer available there or on BurnsScotland..

- Fal de ral! &c. *only at the end of the last stanza; SMM repeats the last two lines of each stanza as a refrain.*
- 2 bewaure] *Phil., Cal.Merc., Scots Mag.; beware Roy, Alloway, Morgan, Currie, SC, Cunningham.*
- 5 run] *Phil., Morgan, Roy, Cal.Merc., Scots Mag., Currie, SC, Cunningham; omitted Alloway; rin SMM.*
footnote for Corsincon] Phil. (added in margin), Cal.Merc., Scots Mag., Currie, SC; no footnote in Roy, Alloway, Morgan, SMM, Cunningham.
- 6 *footnote for Criffel] Phil. (added in margin), Cal.Merc., Scots Mag., Currie, SC; no footnote in Roy, Alloway, Morgan, SMM, Cunningham.*
- 7 E'er] *Phil., Morgan, Roy, Currie; E're SMM; Ere Alloway, Cal.Merc., Scots Mag., SC, Cunningham.*
 permit] *Phil., Alloway, Morgan, Cal.Merc., Scots Mag., Currie, SMM, SC, Cunningham: allow Roy.*
 E'er we] *We'll ne'er SMM in repeat.*
- 9 tykes] *Phil., Morgan, Cal.Merc., Scots Mag., Currie, Cunningham; curs Roy, Alloway, SMM, SC.*
- 14 amang oursels] *Phil., Roy, Alloway, Cal.Merc., Morgan, Currie, SMM, Cunningham; among ourselves SC.*
- 15 never] *Phil., Roy, Alloway, Cal.Merc., Scots Mag., Currie, SMM, SC, Cunningham; only Morgan.*
- 16 Must] *Kinsley, Cal.Merc., Scots Mag., SC; Maun Phil., Roy, Alloway, Morgan, Alloway, Currie, SMM, Cunningham.*
 wrongs] *Phil., Cal.Merc., Scots Mag., SC; wrangs Roy, Alloway, Morgan, Currie, SMM, Cunningham.*
- 17 and] *Kinsley, Cal.Merc., Scots Mag., Currie, SMM, SC, Cunningham; & Phil., Roy, Morgan*
- 21 FATHERS'] *Kinsley; Fathers' Phil., Morgan; Father's Roy; FATHERS Cal.Merc.; fathers Scots Mag.; fathers Currie, SMM, SC.; fathers' Cunningham.*
- 22 wha wad] *Phil., Morgan, Roy, Cal.Merc., Scots Mag., Currie, SMM, Cunningham; who wou'd SC.*
- 23 Heavens] *Phil., Morgan, Roy, Scots Mag., SMM; Heav'ns Cal.Merc.; heaven, Currie, Cunningham; heav'n SC.*
 Sacreligious] *Phil., Morgan, Roy, Scots Mag.; sacrilegious Cal.Merc., Currie, SMM, SC, Cunningham.*
- 26 the wretch] *Phil., Morgan, Roy, Currie, SMM, SC, Cunningham; th' wretch Cal.Merc., Scots Mag.*
 true-sworn] *Phil., Morgan, Roy, Cal.Merc., Scots Mag., SMM; true-born Currie, SC, Cunningham.*
- 27 Who'd] *Phil., Morgan, Cal.Merc., Scots Mag., SC; Who would Roy, Alloway, Currie, SMM, Cunningham.*³²

³² Kinsley says that *Phil.* has “Who’d” correcting “Whoud,” but no such correction shows up on the scan in the *OERB* files.

Above] *Phil.*, *Roy*, *Morgan*, *Scots Mag.*, *SMM*, *SC*; aboon *Cal.Merc.*, *Currie*, *Cunningham*.

- 32 THE PEOPLE] *Kinsley*, *Cal.Merc.*, *Scots Mag.*; The People *Phil.*, *Morgan*; the People *SMM*; the people *Roy*, *Currie*, *SC*, *Cunningham*.

The variant most frequently noted is the presence or absence of Burns's two footnotes, on place-names from the Dumfries area, Corsincon and Criffel; Kinsley says these are only present in the Philadelphia manuscript, but they also occur in the Edinburgh newspaper text printed from the Philadelphia manuscript, and in other texts dependent on it, as for instance in both the *Caledonian Mercury* and the *Scots Magazine*. It makes perfect sense that Burns would not include such notes for Mrs Dunlop or in the Roy manuscript, written for sending to a Dumfries newspaper.

The presence of the notes in Currie suggests that he may have been working from one of the Edinburgh printed texts, rather than from a manuscript. Similarly, such shared variants as "heaven," not "Heavens," in l. 23, "aboon," not "above," in l. 27, and "true-born," not "true-sworn," in l. 26, suggest that Cunningham was working from Currie, rather than from the *Dumfries Journal* (Roy) manuscript as he implies. Certainly Cunningham does not print the one variant unique to the Roy manuscript, "allow" for "permit," in l. 7, instead following the printed sources, including Currie, and he also follows Currie, not Roy, in printing "tykes," nor "curs," in l. 9. As others have noted, Thomson made several minor changes to standardize or Anglicize for his target audience.³³ The collation shows however that a few of these "English" variants go back to Currie, and before him to the Philadelphia manuscript, intended by Burns for an Edinburgh readership.

The collation also highlights the unanimity among the early texts, including the three dateable manuscripts, as to which tune Burns had in mind when he wrote the song. "Push about the jorum" was a drinking-song that would have been well-known to members of the Volunteers, from masonic dinners and similar social gatherings.³⁴ However, this tune was not used when Burns's song appeared posthumously in Johnson's *Scots*

³³ See the discussion in McCue, *OERB*, IV: 507-510.

³⁴ See, e.g., Joshua Campbell, *A Collection of the Newest and best Reels and Minuets* (Glasgow: Aird, 1778), 33; James Aird, *A Selection of Scotch, English, Irish and Foreign Airs* (Glasgow: Aird, 1782), I: 111; *The Goldfinch, or New Modern Songster* (Edinburgh: A. Brown, [1782]), 7. Dick writes that "Push about the jorum" had been "composed about 1770" for "the opera *The Golden Pippin*" (Dick, 452). He also notes the tune was used for three songs in *The Merry Muses of Caledonia* ([Edinburgh: Alexander Smellie]1799; repr. Columbia, SC: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 1999, ed. G. Ross Roy), 49, 104, 110.

Musical Museum and Thomson's *Select Collection*.³⁵ Both Johnson and Thomson would move a Burns song-text to a different tune when they wanted to avoid duplicating a tune that had already appeared earlier in their series, and the years just before and after Burns's death, differences over who held the rights in Burns's songs remained in dispute.

One question is whether the change of tune for this song was solely the decision of the editors/publishers, or whether Burns himself was uneasy with tying the song to the raffish social connotations of "Push about the jorum." As noted in the collation above, in the Alloway manuscript he specified a different tune, "*Callum Shiarghlas*."³⁶ Perhaps he hoped Clarke could provide a distinctive new tune that would put his work in the emerging canon of patriotic song in a way that providing new words for an already popular song could not. The textual variants in the *Scots Musical Museum* (notably "curs" for "tykes") suggest that the text set there by Stephen Clarke derives from an earlier manuscript that is no longer extant, not from the *Edinburgh Courant* or from Currie; and the second of the three letters from Burns to Johnson in the summer of 1795 tells Johnson that he, Burns, had previously written to Clarke, presumably to make arrangements him to provide music for the song. With no copy of the broadside extant, the evidence is patchy, but it seems possible that Burns had sent his song directly to Clarke to compose a different tune for the broadside version. Why, if Johnson had engraved the song with Clarke's music in the summer of 1795, he did not include it in the next volume of the *Scots Musical Museum* must also remain a matter of speculation. The resurfacing of the Roy manuscript makes available a further piece in this historical jigsaw.

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³⁵ The relevant *OERB* volumes reproduce the music from the posthumous editions, following *OERB* textual policy; the music for "Push about the jorum," while not printed with any of the early printed sources for Burns's song, has been preferred by other modern editors, as in Dick, 236-237; Kinsley, 764; and Donald A. Low, ed., *The Songs of Robert Burns* (London: Routledge, 1993), 278.

³⁶ Neil Gow, *Third Collection of Strathspey Reels ...* (Dunkeld and Edinburgh: for the author [1792]), engraved by James Johnson: see McCue, *OERB*, IV: 508.