The Uncensured Burns: Two Editions of The Merry Muses of Caledonia

Mary M. Husemann
The Uncensured Burns: Two Editions of
*The Merry Muses of Caledonia*

The following is a comparison of two versions of *The Merry Muses of Caledonia*: the 1999 type-facsimile edition of the original published version, edited by G. Ross Roy, and the 1904 Manuscript copy. This 1904 edition claims to be one of fifty handwritten manuscript copies annotated by W. Scott Douglas (former owner of the 1799 edition) and W. E. Henley; however, only three copies are known to be in existence: one at the University of South Carolina, one at Dartmouth University and one in the National Library of Scotland. There does not appear to be a copy in the British Library. The presence of only these three copies and the original selling price of the volume (10 guineas) suggest that the volumes were produced only for ready money.

The annotations range from single words to entire paragraphs on the history of a particular poem or song. This comparison pays close attention to changes in spelling, indicated with an asterisk (*) the poems in which the facsimile edition omits quotation marks and with a cross (†) the poems in which the facsimile edition lists first the chorus and not the stanza. Titles are keyed to the 1904 edition; changes beyond capitalization are marked. As regards choruses, the facsimile edition shortens them to the first two or three words of the first line, whereas the manuscript edition either continues with the chorus in its entirety or shortens the chorus to its first line. This has not been indicated below. For ease, changes have been indicated by stanza and then by line (e.g., 1.1) and have been keyed to the manuscript edition. I have also indicated any changes in title (T), chorus (C), and tune.

Following the comparison chart are three additional items: a paragraph of "warning" that prefaced "The Patriarch" in the manuscript copy, a second
version of "Ellibanks" included in the manuscript copy, and the entire texts of both versions of "John Anderson, My Jo." These differed so widely as to make republishing the texts in their entirety more expedient than a line-by-line comparison.

The Uncensored Burns: The Merry Muses... 455

The Merry Muses of Caledonia

A collection of favorite Scots songs
Ancient and Modern
Selected for the use of the Crochallan Fencibles

Say, Sutan, can it be wrong,
To dress plain truth in witty song?
What honest Nature says, or should do;
What every lady does,—or would do!

[circa 1800]

From the G. Ross Roy Collection
Courtesy Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>daintless</td>
<td>dauntless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>An'</td>
<td>An[d]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Fornicator**

**I rede you beware o' the ripples**

| 4.4 | a--e | arse |

**She's hoyed me out o' Lauderdale**

| 1.5 | bed-stock | bedstock |
| 1.6 | She said   | An' said  |
| 1.7, 2.7, 3.7 | hoy'd   | hoyd     |
| 3.1 | came       | cam      |

**Anna**

| 5.1, 5.2 | Awa | Awa' |
| 6.1       | right | Night |
| 7.3 (in Postscript) | h---ll | hell |

**Erroch Brae**

| T, 1.1 | Errock | Erroch |
| 1.5    | And    | An'    |
| 1.5    | tellin' | An'    |
| 1.6, 1.7 | An   | An'    |
| 1.6     | telling |        |
| C.1, C.2, C.4, 2.1, 3.1 | Errock | Erroch |
| 3.3     | solemn league and covenant | Solemn League and Covenant |
| 3.4     | a--se | arse |
| 5.1     | p-----e | pintle |
| 5.2     | b------s | b------ |
| 5.3     | a--e | arse |
| 6.4     | m-w | maw |

**Our gudewife's sae modest**

| 1.8 | c--s | cods |

**Wad ye do that?**

| 2.1 | an | an' |
| 2.5 | stead, | stead, —— |
| 2.7 | f--s | fucks |

**For a' that an a' that.**

| 1.4 | a--e | arse |
| 3.1 | b------s | balls |
| 3.3 | p-----e | pintle |
| 4.1 | c--t | cunt |

**Muirland Meg**

| 1.1 | muirlan' | muirland |
| C.3  | morn | man |
2.1 thru' through
3.1 An Her
4.2 an an'

Ye hae lien wrang, lassie.†
The Patriarch

C.
2.1 "How lang, she says, ye "How lang," she says, "ye"
2.2 f----g fucking
2.3 unco unco'
2.4 ly lie
4.1 graith graith
4.3 m-w (2x) maw (2x)
4.4 bisy brisy
5.1 bairn'd bairned
6.1 m-w maw
6.3 d--n'd damn'd
6.4 c--t cunt
7.3 ne' er Ne' er
7.4, 8.1 m-w maw

Will ye na, can ye na, let me be?*

T
Na (2x) na (2x)
T Be. be?
2.3 sleep sheep

The Case of Conscience*

1.4, 2.4, 3.4, 4.4.
5.4, 6.4, 7.4, 8.4 c--t cunt
2.2 complaint; complaint__
3.3 haly holy
5.1 called calle'd

The Trogger

2.1 say, say?
2.1 do dae?
2.3 a--e arse
2.5 stell'd stelled
3.7 c--t cunt
3.7 synsine sinsyne

The reel o' stumpie.†
Godly Girzie

1.1, 1.2, 1.6, 2.3 haly holy
1.8 Cragie Craigie
2.1 chiel' chiel (2x)
2.6 piouslie piouslie__
2.8 p---- e pintle
| 1.2, 3.2, 4.2 | Green grow the rashes' |
| 1.3, 3.3 | O, |
| 1.4 | c--t |
| 2.4 | labster |
| 2.4 | Highland |
| 3.4 | ready |
| 4.3 | m--s |
| 4.4 | finger f--s |
| 5.4 (older version) | p----e |
| 6.4 | c----e |

| Cuddie the Cooper |
| T |
| 1.1 | Cooper |
| coopier |

| The jolly gauger |
| 1.3 | An |
| 1.3 | weel |

| Nine inch will please a lady* |
| 1.1 | rede me dame, |
| 2.1 | c--t |
| 2.3 | thumb-bread |
| 2.4 | p----e |
| 2.5 | Charlie-lad! |
| 2.7 | roarin handfu' |
| 2.7 | daud, |
| 3.5 | nodge |
| 3.6 | nyvle; |

| Had I the wyte she bade me |
| 1.4 | fit-man laddie; |
| 1.5 | wadna' |
| 1.8, 3.4 | bad |
| 2.2 | deny |
| 2.4 | lye |
| 2.7 | ca'd |
| 3.7 | a--e |

| Elibanks |
| T, 1.1 |
| 1.1, 4.1 | Ellibanks |
| 1.2 | Ellibraes |
| 1.6 | aye |
| 1.8 | damn |
| 2.2 | man. |
| 2.6 | f--k |
| 2.7 | loes |
| 2.8 | c--t |
| 3.3 | Gi'f |
| a--e | Elibanks |
| Ellibraes | aye |
| damn | man. |
| f--k | lo'es |
| c--t | Elibanks |
| a--e | Ellibraes |

---

*nine inch will please a lady*
The Uncensured Burns: The Merry Muses... 459

4.5  glowran  glowin'
4.8  panting  pantin'

[This is followed in the MS version on an additional leaf [36a] by "Burns's version." See text at end of collation.]

Comin’ o’er the hills o’ Coupar*

1.3  hand  wand
1.4  Graipit  Grippet
C.4  durk  dirk

Brose and Butter

C.4  c--t  cunt
2.2  paetrick  paitrick
2.3  gardiner  gardener
4.1  wi’  wee

Comin’ through the rye†

1.3, 2.3, 3.3, 4.3, 5.3  f--k/f--s  fuck/fucks
3.4  C---s  Cunt’s

The Bower of Bliss

1.3  Or  Or,
3.6  Venus’  Venus’s
4.2  wond’rous  wondrous
5.1  embrown’d  embow’rd
5.8  thine.  thine!
*7.1  tender trembling  tender trembling
7.3  sight;  sight —

As I cam o’er the cairney mount

1.3  durk  dirk
C.4  plaiddie  plaidie

Supper isna ready

T  Is na  isna
C  “Fa lal &c.  none

Yon, Yon, Yon, Lassie‡

2.1  me, o’ Meg my wife,  me o’ Meg my wife _
2.2  favour  flavour. —
3.3  c--t  cunt

The yellow, yellow yorlin’

1.4, 2.4, 3.4, 4.4, 5.4  yellow yellow yorlin’  yellow, yellow, yorlin’

The summer morn

1.1  f--ks  fucks
1.8  r-ger  roger
2.1  Yon’  Yon
2.8  a--e  arse
3.7  a--e  arse
3.8  f--k’d  fuck’d
She gripet at the girtest o’tt’

| 2.3 | b----ks | ballocks |

Wha’ll maw me now?

<table>
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<th>Wha’ll M-w Me Now.</th>
<th>Wha’ll maw me now?</th>
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<tr>
<td>C.1, C.2</td>
<td>m-w</td>
<td>maw</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>O’</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>lohn</td>
<td>loon</td>
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<td>2.4</td>
<td>c----t’s</td>
<td>cunt’s</td>
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<tr>
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<td>m-w</td>
<td>maw</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>m---n’</td>
<td>mawin’</td>
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<td>5.1, 5.3</td>
<td>Alake</td>
<td>Alack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>a--e</td>
<td>arse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>loun</td>
<td>loon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>a--e</td>
<td>arse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"John Anderson, my jo," is printed here. For convenience, a comparison of the two texts in their entirety is printed on pages 467 and 468.

Ye’se get a hole to hide it in.

| 3.2 | rivt | reft |
| 5.1, 5.5 | had | haud |

Duncan MacCleerie*

| 2.3 | cheary | cheery |
| 4.3 | c--t | cunt |

Duncan Davidson*

| C | Fal, Ial, &c. | [none] |
| 2.2 | without | without, |
| 2.3 | case | ca’se |
| 2.4 | p----e | pintle |
| 3.4 | Yerk | Jerk |
| 4.2 | Highland | highland |

O saw ye my Maggy

| 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 | Wry-c----d | Wry-c |
| 3.4 | gain’ | ’gain’ |
| 9.1, 9.2, 9.3 | loe | lo’d |
| 10.3 | Maggie | Maggie, |

They took me to the haly band

| 2.2 | deel | deil |
| 2.4 | m----g | mawing |

The ploughman*

| 1.1 | bonnie | bonny |
| 2.3 | tald | tauld |
| 7.1 | sykie | fykie |
| C.3 | O’ a the trades that I do ken, | O’a’ the trades that I do ken |
| C.3 final | O a’ the trades, and crafts I ken |
"Dainty Davie"¹

T
1.4
Daivy
dear dainty
dear, dainty

The Modiewark

Tune
C.2
O for ané an’ twenty Tam
weary wanton
O for ané and twenty, Tam.
weary, wanton

Andrew an’ his cutty gun"¹

T, 1.4, 3.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4
Cuttie
a--e
a--elins
cutty
arse
arselins

The mill, mill—o—*

T
mill—o
2.5
years
2.6
Tald me with
2.8
kend
4.3
amen’s
mill—o—
year
Tauld me, with
ken’nd
amends

Original Set of The mill, mill—o—*

1.4
loed
miller’s
C.4, 3.2
millars
was nae
lo’ed
millars
wasna

O gat ye me wi’ naething?
1.4
c--t
far gudewife
cunt
far, gude wife,

1.7
O can ye labor lee, young man?"¹

Wi
Wi’

Our John’s brak yestreen

1.4
c--ks
tail;
cocks
tail _

1.3
She rose and let me in
no more appear’d
appeared no more

gie the lass her fairin’
taen
ta’ en

Poor bodies do naething but mow

T
m-w
zealates
m-w
m-w
m-w
m-w
zealots
mow
mow
mow
Brunswick’s
princess
Emperor
row, row, row
mow (3x)

1.2
1.6 (2x)
C.1 (3x)
C.2, C.4
2.1, 2.4
2.6
3.1
3.3
3.6

1.4
3.3
B---s---k’s
prin--ss
E-p---r
a row, a row
m-w (3x)
Brunswick’s
princess
Emperor
row, row, row
mow (3x)
<table>
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<th>Word</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<td>4.1</td>
<td>Y--k</td>
<td>York</td>
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<td>4.5</td>
<td>p--s-n</td>
<td>Prussian</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>an' m-w, a m-w</td>
<td>and a mow, mow, mow</td>
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<td>5.2</td>
<td>P--ss-a</td>
<td>Prussia</td>
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<td>F--d--k</td>
<td>Frederick</td>
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<td>5.6</td>
<td>m-w (2x)</td>
<td>mow (2x)</td>
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<td>6.5</td>
<td>trap.</td>
<td>trap _</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>dow.</td>
<td>dow _</td>
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<td>7.2</td>
<td>St----l--s</td>
<td>Stan'l's laws</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>diei</td>
<td>diei</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>a--e</td>
<td>arse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>p--k</td>
<td>prick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>d--n</td>
<td>damn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>h-lI</td>
<td>hell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>wi' a m-w</td>
<td>with a mow, a mow</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**The Cooper o' Cuddy'**

<table>
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<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<td>2.1</td>
<td>sought</td>
<td>sought</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>diei (2x)</td>
<td>diei (2x)</td>
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**There cam a cadger**

<table>
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<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Fal lai, &amp;c.</td>
<td>[none]</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>lang</td>
<td>long</td>
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**Ken ye na our lass, Bess?**

<table>
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<th>Meaning</th>
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<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>lass Bess</td>
<td>lass, Bess</td>
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**Wha the deil can hinder the wind to blaw?**

<table>
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<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<td>new-year</td>
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<td>lang.</td>
<td>lang ___</td>
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<td>1.5</td>
<td>&quot;relief!&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Relief!&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>wan</td>
<td>wa'n't</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>gae.</td>
<td>gae</td>
<td></td>
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<td>2.3</td>
<td>f-t</td>
<td>fart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>fill'd</td>
<td>filled</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>fou:</td>
<td>fu';</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>blaw.</td>
<td>blaw?</td>
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**Nae hair on't**

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<td>c--t</td>
<td>cunt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>vex'd</td>
<td>vexed</td>
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**We're a' gaun southie O.**

<table>
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<th>Meaning</th>
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<td>c--t</td>
<td>cunt</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>of</td>
<td>off</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>soger</td>
<td>sodger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>Roger</td>
<td>roger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>loe</td>
<td>lo'e</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>O',</td>
<td>O;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>p----s</td>
<td>pricks</td>
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</table>
The Uncensured Burns: The Merry Muses... 463

1.3  
1.8  
2.8  

T, 1.2, 1.4, 1.8  
1.1, 1.3, 1.7  
2.1  

My ain kind deary  
deary  
dearie  
lee  
lea  
gods  
gods,  

Here's his health in water  
brawly's  
brawlie's  
drees  
dree  
p-liie  
p___  
But when he gat atween my  
He made an unco' splatter,  
legs,  
We made an unco splatter;  
When 'tweesh my legs he gat  

Act sederunt o' the Court o' Session  
Embrugh  
Edinburgh  
p--ks  
pricks  
court o' session  
Court o' Session  
session  
Session  
2.6, 8  

Blyth Will an' Bessie's wedding  
naithing  
aething  
Jeamie's  
Jamie's  
twixt  
'twixt  
Highland  
highland  
When e'er  
Whene'er  
the gither  
thegether  

As I look'd o'er yon castle wa''  
m-w  
mow  
Its  
It's  
a--e  
arse  
c--t  
cunt  
b------s  
balls  
a--e  
arse  
c--t  
cunt  

The rantin' dog the daddie o't  
faut  
fa'ut  
Rab  
Rob  
mair  
mair ___  

Jenny Macraw*  

taen  
ta'en  
quo'  
quo  
c--t  
cunt
There's hair on't
O ERE
rase
Sodger laddie
Sing, lal de lal, &c.
swagg'rin
sodger
sodger
[none]

O gin I had her
Ae
soud
ee
c-k
slocken

Whistle o'er the lave o't
whistle o'er the lave o't.
about,
oursells

The Lassie gatherin' nits
Gath'ring
gath'ring
Is

The linkin' laddie
Waes
kend

Tail Todle'
a--e
dead
dsick
weel

Johnnie Scot
mak
c--t-hair (2x)
a---e

Duncan Grey
awa
anither

I am a bard
an
glowran

There's hair on't
O, ere
rose
swagg'rin'
soldier

O gin I had her
Yea,
s'oud
e'e
cock
flocken

Whistle o'er the lave o't.
"Whistle o'er the lave o't."
about
oursels

The Lassie gatherin' nits
gatherin'
gath'rin'
I'se

The linkin' laddie
Waes'
ken'd

Tail Todle'
arse
dead,
sick,
weel,

Johnnie Scot
make
cunt hair (2x)
arse

Duncan Grey
awa'
ether

I am a bard
an'
glowin'
and
The Uncensured Burns: The Merry Muses...

He till't and she till't
bor'd
bor'd,

Madgie cam to my bedstock
waukin
waukin'
Fal, lal, &c.
[none]
C---t
Cunt
p---e
pintle
B----ks
Balloeks

Tweedmouth Town*
wagged
wagg'd
tale
tail
an'
and
when
When
again,
again?
used
us'd
wagged
wagg'd
play,
play?
again.
again?
agreed,
agreed
f--k'd
fuck'd

Wha is that at my bower door?*
Door.
door?
bower door
bower-door
nae
nay
waukin'
waukin
stay,
stay?

Come cow me minnie†
c--t
cunt
a--e
arse
me minnie,
me, minnie,
me;
me, (second in line)
a--e
arse
c--t
cunt
beggit
biggit
blinker,
blinker?
m-w'd
mow'd
Mary,
Mary!
fine
fine,
c--t
cunt

*   *   *

* * *
Preface to “The Patriarch”:

A Wicked Song
Author's name unknown
Tune – The waukin' o' a winter's night.

The publisher to the Reader: Courteous Reader –
The following is certainly the production of one of those licentious ungodly (too much abounding in this our day) wretches, who take it as a compliment to be called wicked, provided you allow them to be witty. Pity it is that while so many tar-barrels in the country are empty, and so many gibbets untenanted, some example is not made of these profligates

* * *

Burns Version of “Elibanks”:

O Elibanks and Elibraes,
    May blessin' aye befa' them;
They mind me o' the sunny days
    When first with thee I saw them!
Your succar kisses were sae sweet,
    Deil ha'et if I can tell, man,
What gart me lay my legs abreed,
    And lift my sark mysel', man.

I clasp'd my arms about your neck
    As I were gawn to speel, jo;
An' cleeked my houghs about your thies,
    As souple as an eel, jo!
Your manly pintle felt my grip,
    And made my senses reel, jo;
And when Jock thiefinclin'd to slip,
    I dang him with my heel, jo.

Ow're Elibanks and Elibraes
    We wandered at our will, jo;
Till tir'd o'pu'in nits an' slaes,
    We drank of love our fill, jo!
My shepherd laddie, bless his breeks!
    Kens when a lassie lo'es him,
Deil rive my cunt to candlewicks
    Gif ever I refuse him.
Bright be the broom on Elibraes,
    And yellow be the gowan!
My wyme it fistles ay like flaes
    As I come o'er the knowe, man!
And aye I bless that bonie knowe —
    Our bed amang the heather —
Where sic a trip to sic a yowe,
    Till then ne'er yoked thegither
"John Anderson, my jo":

1799 Edition

John Anderson, my jo, John
I wonder what ye mean,
To lie sae long i' the mornin'
And sit sae late at een?
Ye'll bleer a' your een, John,
And why do ye so?
Come sooner to your bed at een,
John Anderson, my jo.

When first that ye began,
Ye had as good a tail-tree
As ony ither man;
But now its waxen wan, John,
And wrinkles too and fro,
I've twa gae-ups for ae gae-down,
John Anderson, my jo.

I'm backit like a salmon,
I'm breastit like a swan:
My wame it is a donw-cod,
My middle ye may span:
Frae my tap-knot to my tae, John,
I'm like the new-fa'n snow;
And it's a' for your convenience,
John Anderson, my jo.

O it is a fine thing,
To keep out o'er the dyke;
But its a meikle finer thing,
To see your hurdies fyke;
To see your hurdies fyke, John,
And hit the rising blow;
It's then I like your chanter-pipe,
John Anderson, my jo.

When ye come on before, John,
See that ye do your best;
When ye begin to haud me,
See that ye grip me fast;
See that ye grip me fast, John,

1904 Manuscript Edition

John Anderson, my jo, John,
I wonder what ye mean,
To lie sae long i' the mornin',
And sit sae late at e'en?
Ye'll bleer a' your een, John,
And why do ye so?
Come sooner at your bed at e'en,
John Anderson, my jo.

When first that ye began,
Ye had as good a tail-tree
As ony ither man;
But now it's waxen wan, John,
And wrinkles too and fro,
And aft requires my helpin' hand,
John Anderson, my jo.

When we were young and yauld, John,
We've lain out ower the dyke,
And O! it was a fine thing
To see your hurdies fyke —
To see your hurdies fyke, John, —
And strike the risin' blow;
'Twas then I lik'd your chanter-pipe,
John Anderson, my jo.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
You're welcome when you please;
It's either in the warm bed,
Or else aboon the claes.
Do ye part aboon, John,
And trust to me below;
I've two gae-ups for your gae-down,
John Anderson, my jo.

When ye come on before, John,
See that ye do your best;
When I begin to haud ye,
See that ye grip me fast;
Se that ye grip me fast John,
Until I cry, "Oh!"
Your back shall crack or I do that,
John Anderson, my jo.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
Ye're welcome when ye please;
It's either in the warm bed,
Or else aboon the claes:
Or ye shall hae the horns, John,
Upon your head to grow:
An' that's the cuckold's mallison,
John Anderson, my jo.

Until that I cry "Oh!"
Your back shall crack or I do that,
John Anderson, my jo.

I'm backit like a salmon,
I'm breastit like a swan;
My wyme is like a down-cod,
My waist ye weel may span;
My skin frae tap to tae, John,
is like the new fa' n snow,
And it's a' for your conveniency,
John Anderson, my jo.