



The Immortal Rab

An Electronic Engineer's Tribute To Robert Burns

ROBERT BURNS was born in Ayrshire on January 25, 1759 during the reign of George II and over half a century before Faraday conducted his experiments. In his colourful career he poured forth all manner of ode and lyric, the content of which was adequate in comradeship to give birth to Burns societies in Russia, sufficiently tender to become classics among the love songs of the world, and diverse enough to display the fears, hopes, and grief in every walk of society from royalty right down the line to the lowly "louse".

It is highly unlikely, however, that he could have foreseen their following application, in which excerpts from his more popular works (and others) have been minimally re-arranged to bring out their affinity with our electronic world. The author, a fellow Scot, presents them in this light with all due respect to the poet's immortal memory.

English readers with computer access should resist the temptation to process the following into it for decoding. ICL, IBM and the like would never forgive you. Any self-respecting library will provide a glossary of terms

ADDRESS TO THE DE'IL (Verse 3)

To those with transmitters and morse keys

Great is thy power and e.r.p.
Far kenn'd and noted for f_c
Makes spots and splurges on tv
Stops housey housey
But faith thou are baith lag and lame
Your morse is lousy



UP IN THE MORNING EARLY

and again

Up in the mornin's no for me
This field day stunt's too early
Who plugged my transformers into d.c.
And tried my patience sairly

THE EXCISEMAN (To the tune)

To the hams among us

CQ among the QRM
Captured by the DX man
His XYL cried "its only a 'G'"
Why don't you sell your TX, man

You M.O's off tune, your aerial's doon
Your feeder's mis-matched, DX man
Why don't you sign off, you muckle great loon
And try out a new CX, man

HOLY WILLIE'S PRAYER (Verse 1)

For those who replace aviation warning lights
on masts (and oil rigs) and a plea from our storeman

O thou who up the mast doth dwell
Wha as it pleases best thysel'
Tak a' oor mast lamps, ten or twel'
And cock your snoot
I must confess I wish tae hell
Ye'd sign them oot

DUNCAN GRAY (Verse 1)(To the tune of.....)

To the television broadcasting engineers among us

The S.S.E's (or S.M.E's) cam here tae tweek
Ha, ha, the tweekin' o't
With S.B.A. he looked real chic,
Ha ha, the tweekin' o't.
With pulse and bar, and staircase too,
We'll soon be on full power the noo,
Ye've never sung a song more true,
Ha, ha, the tweekin' o't.

TO A MOUSE

Valves (No 1)

Wee sleekit 4CX250
Oh what a panic's in thy breastie
Don't go into self-osc. sae hasty
Wi' parasitics
I wad be laith tae hae tae 'neut' ye
Wi' electrolytics

ON A SUICIDE

In memory of valves (No 2)

Earthed up here lies an imp o' hell
A parasitic 807
Poor silly tetrode's damn'd himsel'
And missed the gates o' heaven



TO A HAGGIS (Verse 1)

In a moment of huff towards chief engineers
with parallel operated transmitters

Great puddin' o' the chieftain race
O' what a frown is on thy face
Man, dinna glower
Tae save ye frae complete disgrace
There's aye half power

FIRST BALLAD ON MR HERON'S ELECTION (Verse 1)

Dedicated to the P.O. engineers among us

Whom will you send to London town
To Gresham Street, and a' that
Wha in a' the country round
Will get 'exec' and a' that
For a' that and a' that
We upward grind and a' that
Where is the laird or belted knight
Who'll make H.Q. and a' that

A BOTTLE AND AN HONEST FRIEND

Valves (No 3) and hams

Here's a bottle, an honest friend

A 4CX250

Wha' ken's before its life may end

My share o' CQ's nifty

THE HENPECKED HUSBAND

Some sympathy for those among us whose DIY efforts
are denied free rein on the living room table

Cursed be the ham, the poorest wretch in life

The crouching vassal to the tyrant wife

Who without her say has no transmission

Who has no 807 but in her possession.

And if a junk sales dare buy or sell

Suffers domestic ragchew from his XYL

Were such the wife had fallen to my part

I'd break her spirit or I'd break her heart

I'd charm her with the magic of a switch

And some kV's, and electrocute the bitch!



TO A LOUSE (2nd and last verse)

Speaking generally

Ye ugly creepin' blastit sneaker
Detested, shunned by true fault seeker
Ye electronic duff gen reeker
O' simple brain
Awa and plop that itch in' tweeker
And Pu' the chain

Oh wad some power the giftie gie us
Tse see oorsel's as ithers see us
It wad frae mony a blunder free us
And foolish notion
Technical incompetence will lea'e us
Nae promotion

ADDRESS TO THE TOOTHACHE

(Verse 3)

For union members and productivity deal enthusiasts,
and those who like their annual 'flu jab'

When temper burns and goodwill freezes
Well injected 'gin the sneezes
Instead o' workin in their threeses
Staff outwards drift
Comes then the hell o' a' diseases
The two man shift



TAM O'SHANTER(Verses near the end)
For those of us with unattended stations to
maintain by mobile maintenance teams

The station had barely made its mark,
When in an instant all was dark,
And scarce the teledac had rallied,
When out the hellish legion sallied.

Like bees wi' low intent they thundered,
In their Austin 1800,
Along the roads, ower field and dyke,
Assail'd the gremlin in their byke.

Once more translators wail and banter,
Like Tam, playin' dirges on his 'shanter'.

AND FINALLY...

Needing no introduction

Should auld acquaintance be forgot
When gaun to ither station
Should auld acquaintance be forgot
When spread throughout the nation
With you I've climbed promotion's ladder
An' pu'd the switches fine
But we've wandered many a weary shift
And separated syne

