

### In Burns' Country.

In two years more a century and a half will have passed since the birth of Scotland's immortal bard, Robert Burns. It was on Jan. 25, 1759, that "Bobbie" Burns was born, in a humble cottage at Alloway, a place probably not large enough to be marked on the map of Ayrshire, Scotland. There he spent childhood's days, and along the same rippling, sparkling Doon he spent some of his sparkling years. Then he belonged to Alloway and Ayrshire; nobody else wanted him. To-day he belongs to the world; and the world is proud of him. In like manner the big world is pleased to recognize the claims of little Alloway, writes W. Bert Roadhouse in the *Toronto Globe*. Universal fame magnifies rather than swallows up local interest. The little cottage, the auld kirk and the auld brig of Doon are sacred not only in the Scottish heart, but also in the history of literature.

From Ayr to Alloway is scant two miles. It is a beautiful country road, with tall, mighty trees on either side. Every little while electric cars pass too and fro; every little while the whizz and rush of the merry auto is heard. These inroads of modern civilization are strangely out of keeping with the thoughts of the tourists as his eye falls upon the long, low cottage, with its clay walls and thickly thatched roof. Close to the roadside, it stands out apparently just as it did in 1756, when it was built by the hands of William Burns, father-to-be of the great genius. Bicycles may give way to automobiles and automobiles to flying machines, but the cottage remains the same yesterday, to-day and to-morrow. But it has had its vicissitudes. For over a century it has served as a public house wherein to dispense intoxicating liquids. It was not till May, 1881, that it was purchased by the Burns monument trust-

tees for £4,000. Then it was restored to as near its original shape as possible, and another small building erected on one corner of the beautiful lawn. In this building are displayed dozens of interesting and valuable Burns relics. Over 50,000 people each year make a personal pilgrimage to this spot and sign their names in the big book. No twentieth-century tourist would miss an opportunity presented to sign his name.

But it is not such cold facts and figures which fill the mind of the visitor as he enters. A strange feeling of awe, even reverence comes over him. There are but two rooms to see, aside from the byre and barn, which are under the same roof. In the kitchen is the bed on which the poet was born. The visitor is impressed with the humility of it all. He fain would forget the rough stones which serve as a floor in the smoothness of his own poetic thoughts; he fain would adorn the bare, cheerless walls with the romantic pictures which his fancy paints. But he sees a deeper, sterner meaning. The cottage is emblematic of the time in which it flourished. In such as this lived the ancestors of many a sturdy Canadian pioneer. In such as this the strong qualities of Scottish character, which are the admiration of the world, were developed and the simple joys of family took place. Had he not been a cottar's son, Burns would probably never have given to mankind that magnificent picture in which he truly says:

"From scenes like this old Scotia's grandeur  
springs,  
That makes her loved at home, revered abroad;  
Princes and lords are but the breath of Kings,  
An honest man's the noblest work of God."

It is perhaps a quarter of a mile farther down the road before the auld kirk is reached. The roof is gone, but the walls still stand with their thick mantle of clinging ivy. Especially silhouetted

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THE BURNS & BRIDE OF NORWICH  
"THE BURNS AND BRIDE OF BONNIE DOON"