



# Robert Burns: The Patriot Bard

*Patrick Scott Hogg*

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Following the 250th anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns (1759-96), Patrick Scott Hogg presents the greatest of Scotland's poets within the true context of his times. Exploding the Burns myth, *Robert Burns: The Patriot Bard* replaces the ram-stam lad of popular cliché with the real, living Burns - a Scottish patriot of the heart, an idealist who wished for 'Freedom and Liberty' for his beloved country, but also a man who was pragmatically a British patriot and risked his life for democratic reform. Here Burns is painted in his native colours as a highly complex, hyper-intelligent writer in both prose and poetry, not the semi-confused, contradictory simpleton of previous biographies. The fascinating legend of Burns as a ladies' man is placed where it should be - as less important than the message of the bard.

The real day-to-day Burns was irascible, stubborn-minded, independent, controversial and opinionated. He detested many of his social superiors within the feudal order and attacked them as hypocrites and oppressors of the common people. The voice of Burns, always in the language of the people, and his idealist vision of a better world endeared him as a poet of humanity 'the world o'er'. Drawing from Burns' existing canon of poetry and letters, plus some newly attributed works suppressed for over two centuries, this life story is a roller-coaster narrative that charts the success and untimely death of the greatest songwriter of all time, the real Robert Burns.

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