

The
Albany Burns
Club

By David M. Kinnear

1919

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AULD LANG SYNE


Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to min',
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And the days of Auld Lang Syne.

Those sturdy souls of by-gone years,
Have made a record fine,
And we must keep that record up,
For the sake of Auld Lang Syne.

What pleasure's in that life of yours,
Or joy in life of mine,
Without the memories hallowed by
The days of Auld Lang Syne.

Though each may have a different thought,
Or carve a different line,
One song is filling every heart,
The song of Auld Lang Syne.

So, let us lift our glasses up,
With rim of mine to thine,
And drink a toast to those who've gone,
The men of Auld Lang Syne.





ROBERT BURNS

The World's Best Beloved Poet

Born January 25th, 1759

Died July 21st, 1796

ALBANY BURNS CLUB

OFFICERS 1919

<i>President</i>	JOHN M. CLARKE
<i>Vice-President</i>	CHARLES F. WHEELOCK
<i>Treasurer</i>	DAVID M. KINNEAR
<i>Secretary</i>	WILLIAM A. GLENN.

BANQUET COMMITTEE

THOMAS H. CLEMISHIRE	WILLARD M. DOUGLAS
DAVID M. KINNEAR	WILLIAM A. GLENN.

PRESIDENTS OF THE ALBANY BURNS CLUB

1854 to 1863	James Dickson (deceased)
1893-1894	Neil Gilmour (deceased)
1895-1896	Charles J. Buchanan (deceased)
1897-1898	Eugene Burlingame (deceased)
1899	James F. McElroy (deceased)
1900	
1901-1902	Frederick W. Cameron (deceased)
1903-1904	Curtis N. Douglas
1905	John W. McHarg
1906	Charles H. Turner
1907	Horace G. Young
1908	James H. Manning
1909	Charles A. Richmond
1910	Willis G. Nash
1911-1912	Alden Chester
1913-1914	Danforth E. Ainsworth
1915 to 1919	John M. Clarke

List of Members

D. E. Ainsworth
Arthur L. Andrews
Alex Anderson
H. Leroy Austin
Harold D. Alexander
George Addington
Buel C. Andrews

John T. D. Blackburn
Thomas H. Blocksidge
Barnard S. Bronson
Rev. Roelif H. Brooks
A. R. Brubacher
John J. Brady
James Blocksidge
Benjamin Boss

Alden Chester
Robert M. Chalmers
John M. Clarke
Thomas H. Clemishire
Jas. Fenimore Cooper
Frederick T. Cardoze

Curtis N. Douglas
Willard M. Douglas
Frank W. Douglas
Rev. George Dugan
Patrick C. Dugan
John A. Delehanly
John Dick
C. H. Davenport
Martin S. Decker
John E. Dugan

William A. Findlay
Thomas E. Finegan
John H. Finley
Harlan P. French
J. Sheldon Frost
Malcolm S. Fearey

Allan A. Gilmour
William A. Glenn
Martin H. Glynn
Rev. John Giffen
Charles Gibson
Frank B. Graves
John L. Godley
Frank B. Gilbert

Rev. Alfred J. Higgins
Rev. Wm. H. Hopkins
Rev. David Hutchinson
William S. Hackett
Edmund N. Huyek

Harold J. Hinman
Rev. Charles S. Hager
James B. Horton

Thomas D. James
C. Edward Jones
Charles H. Johnson

David M. Kinnear
Ronald Kinnear

Joseph A. Lawson
David C. Lithgow
Randall J. LeBouef

John S. McEwan
Donald McCredie
James McCredie
John W. McHarg
Edward N. McKinney
Hugh B. McLean
Ewen McIntyre
John H. McElroy
A. R. McKenzie, Jr.
John V. McHarg
Walter S. McEwan
Dr. Martin McHarg
Dr. Andrew Macfarlane
James MacMartin
Joseph McDowell
Andrew P. McMath

James H. Manning
Dr. Fred G. Michel
William S. Mitchell
Dr. George S. Munson
Dr. H. E. Mereness
Charles V. Merrick
Albert P. Mills
Borden H. Mills
James Malcolm
Rev. J. V. Moldenhawer
William Maxwell
Alden March
Robert Money

Willis G. Nash
Grant Newcomb

Charles G. Ogden
Robert Olcott
Dudley Olcott
John F. O'Brien

Amasa J. Parker
Rev. Jas. K. Phillips
F. McEwan Pruyn

Lewis R. Parker
Harry E. Pratt
Francis B. Purdie

William G. Rice
William P. Rudd
Rev. Chas. A. Richmond
James A. Reynolds
William Reid
William S. Robertson
Cuyler Reynolds
Edward W. Rankin
William Robertson

Jacob C. E. Scott
Samuel Shaw
Charles S. Shanks
Thomas Stephens
Dr. W. O. Stillman
John E. Sherwood
Charles M. Stern
Dr. James Sullivan
Frederick B. Stevens
Clarence W. Stevens
Fred B. Simons
John I. Spencer
Ellis J. Staley

George H. Thacher
David A. Thompson
Luther H. Tucker
Harold W. Thompson

Dr. Albert Vander Veer
Dr. E. A. Vander Veer
Edward W. Visscher
William L. Visscher

Matthew J. Wallace
Henry S. Walsh
George Welsh
George Welsh, Jr.
Adam A. Walker
Dr. Bela J. Ward
Fred E. Wadhams
George M. Wiley
Charles F. Wheelock
Richard P. White
Robert E. Whalen
James R. Watt
H. B. Weatherwax

Horace G. Young

THE ALBANY BURNS CLUB

The Beginnings

IN the years just previous to the Civil War there were quite a number of very prominent, well known and well-to-do Scotchmen in Albany, and they were a factor in the life of the City at that time. St. Andrew's Society had been in existence since 1803, but there seemed to have been no effort to form a club to perpetuate the memory of Robert Burns until 1853, when a number of these prominent Scotchmen began to talk it up and we find that it was decided to form a Burns Club. The original minute book is in the possession of the present Albany Burns Club and it evidently was started in 1854.

Burns died in 1796 and it is possible there were other Burns Clubs in the United States previous to the formation of the Albany Burns Club but, as far as we can find out, our Club is now the oldest Burns Club in this country. The old minute book is a very entertaining work, quite instructive to look over and, from it, we find the originators took great pains with the minutes and records of the club. The title page of this minute book is a work of art, evidently done by a well known penman of that time, who signs himself David Vaughan. It is very elaborate and, among other embellishments, he shows sketches of Loch Katrine, the hills of Scotland with their growths of firs and The Banks and Braes of Bonnie Doon. He also shows two old castles, or forts, on impregnable hills and figures representing all of the various activities of Scotland. There is also a drawing of a piper, clad in his full regalia and playing "Auld Lang Syne," and, as a finishing touch, the following lines of poetry:

Rear high thy bleak majestic hills,
Thy sheltered valleys proudly spread,
And Scotia pour thy thousand rills,
And wave thy heaths with blossoms red;
But never more shall Poet tread,
Thy airy heights, thy woodland reign,
Since he, the sweetest Bard is dead,
That ever breathed the soothing strain.

These men of the olden days formulated a constitution and by-laws for their guidance, and the initial sentence of this constitution gives the very best reasons, not only for forming, but keeping in existence, a club of this character. It is a long, complicated sentence, but it tells the purpose of the club in an admirable way. Here it is:

"Inasmuch as the memory of Robert Burns, the Ayrshire Poet, must be held dear by every native of Scotland and every admirer of

true genius and, as national feeling cannot be more effectively kept alive than by the full interchange of social intercourse on such occasions as are calculated to arouse the recollections of those men whose lives furnish the brightest examples of talent, especially where displayed without the aid of the fostering care of education or patronage, the undersigned have agreed to associate themselves under the appellation of THE BURNS CLUB for the purpose of commemorating, in a becoming way, the day that gave birth to Burns, the child of Scotland, whose fame fills the world, and have consented to be governed by the following articles:”

We find that the constitution provides for the election of a president, two vice-presidents, a secretary and treasurer, also a standing committee of six, who are to have full charge of the anniversary meeting. They also have the power to fix the price of the tickets of admission to the anniversary supper. The constitution also provides that each member shall pay, on signing his name to the by-laws, the sum of TWENTY-FIVE CENTS, which is to be applied to paying for printing the tickets and other incidental expenses. The constitution further provides that any member absenting himself from two successive anniversary meetings without a proper excuse, such as sickness or absence from the City, shall cease to be a member and his name shall be stricken from the roll.

Article I of the by-laws says that the duties of the president and the VICE-PRESIDENTS shall be to preside and keep order at all meetings, supported by the standing committee. The standing committee have power to elect, or reject, any person proposed for membership and they shall do this by ballot. “The vote must be unanimous, otherwise no election.” The by-laws also provide that, when the 25th of January shall fall on Sunday, the Club shall hold the Anniversary meeting the next day.

Following the constitution and by-laws are the signatures of 101 members. Probably they did not all sign upon the forming of the Club. In looking over these signatures we find a number of old Albanians. Most of the names are unfamiliar, but some are those whom Albanians of today will either remember, or have heard of, and among others we find: James Dickson, David W. Shanks, Benjamin Lodge, James Duncan, Peter Smith, Sr., and Peter Smith, Jr., William Gray, William Orr, George Dawson, Alfred B. Street, David S. Blair, A. B. Voorhees, Andrew Kirk, William Manson, W. Frothingham, Harry E. Pohlman, Henry P. Nugent, Eli Perry and James Roy.

The first meeting, of which any minutes were kept, was evidently held on January 13th, 1854, and it was held in “Mr. Scobie’s Union Hotel.” Mr. Scobie was evidently a member, as his name appears among the signatures. Some antiquary will probably tell us where Mr. Scobie’s Union Hotel was located. At this meeting the following were present: James Dickson, David D. Ramsay, William Scobie, Alexander Deuchar, William Ballantine, and J. Osmond Montignani. The minutes also state that William Ellis and John McGown were present BY



JAMES DICKSON

Founder and First President of the
Albany Burns Club

PROXY. James Dickson was called to the chair and J. O. Montignani was appointed secretary of the meeting. The chairman stated the object of the meeting was to organize a Burns Club to gather together the lovers and admirers of the great Poet of Scotland and to make arrangements for the celebration of his birthday on the 25th day of January, annually.

The meeting proceeded to elect the following officers and managers and these, evidently, were the very first officers of the Albany Burns Club: James Dickson, President; Alex Deuchar, 1st Vice-President; D. D. Ramsay, 2d Vice-President; William Ellis, Treasurer, and J. O. Montignani, Secretary, also the following standing committee, or managers: William Scobie, William Ballantine, John McGown, Lithian Algie, Thomas McCredie and Benjamin Lodge. It is very evident from this that Thomas McCredie must have been one of the charter members, although his name does not appear among the signatures, but neither does the name of J. O. Montignani. The minutes then say that the Chairman, having procured from John Boyd, President of the Burns Club of Baltimore, Maryland, a copy of the by-laws and constitution of that Club, the same was read at the meeting and submitted for consideration, and it was moved, and unanimously resolved, that the said constitution and by-laws be adopted by the Albany Burns Club and engrossed on the minutes of the Club. From this, it would appear that there must have been a Burns Club in Baltimore previous to the forming of the Albany Burns Club. These minutes, and those of subsequent meetings in the year 1854, are all signed by J. O. Montignani, Secretary. He did not write the minutes, as they were evidently written by the same penman who engrossed the by-laws, but they were signed by Mr. Montignani.

In the year 1854 we note that they held a meeting on January 13th, one on January 20th, previous to the dinner, one on January 31st and another on February 14th. At the meeting held on January 20th, for the purpose of electing members and preparing for the first dinner, we find that a number of new members were elected, and among them were: James Dodds, William Gray, Peter Smith, Sr. and Jr.

The Dinner of 1854

THE first anniversary meeting and dinner is noted in the minutes as being held at the Union Hotel, Albany, January 25th, 1854, and, at that meeting, it would appear that other new members were elected and, among them, David M. Barnes, who evidently was Editor of the Albany Morning Express at that time.

The minutes of this meeting naively state that, after business was disposed of, Manager Scobie announced that "supper was ready in the supper room," and to that room the meeting adjourned. The minutes then state as follows: "The following report is taken from

the Albany Morning Express of January 31st, 1854," and the Secretary, or his clerk, has copied the full article from the paper in the minutes, *taking up nine pages.*

To read this minute book is an inspiration and brings forth many pleasant reflections. Evidently things were different in 1854 from what they are in 1919. That was 65 years ago and times have changed. Where would you find a secretary, or his clerk now, who would copy, in long hand, in a minute book, nine pages of an article from a newspaper, and it is quite evident also that the newspaper must have given a great amount of space to this article. Not only is everything copied, word for word, but the writing is excellent, in fact almost like copper plate and the names of individuals and toasts, together with the prominent parts, are all RULED WITH RED INK.

The article says at 8 o'clock sharp the company entered the supper room and the ending of the article says that the company some "wee short hour ayont the twal" arose, joined hands, sang Auld Lang Syne and broke up,

When each took off his several way
Resolved to meet another day.

It must have been some supper that they could sit down to at 8 o'clock and, quite probably, did not break up until 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning. Those were certainly the good old days. We find that the company ranged around the supper table and the worthy President, occupying the head seat, remained standing while Mr. D. D. Ramsay delivered "Burns' Address to the Haggis." The article says this was done finely and then seats were taken and the "CEREMONIES OF SUPPER commenced." The article then says: "We need hardly say that Scobie had previously called upon Lake Piseco and the wilds of Hamilton County to give up their luxuries of fish, flesh and fowl for the occasion, and that the handsome and inviting feast evinced the skill of a practiced caterer." It hardly seems possible that anyone would go as far as Lake Piseco and the wilds of Hamilton County in those early days, long before state roads and when the going must have been quite rough at that season of the year. It seems, also that, before the regular dinner, a huge plate of Scotland's native dish of Haggis was brought in and the article says: "We have not time to tell what Haggis is but only to say that it is an odd dish of hash and one which *to a Yankee appetite is grateful.*"

After the dinner was over the President, Mr. Dickson, read a brief sketch of the life of Burns and delivered a beautiful eulogy upon his character, and then came another song, "There was a lad was born in Kyle." Then came the REGULAR TOASTS and there were fifteen of them. It could not have been possible that there were speeches after each of these toasts, and it would seem that the President must have simply announced each toast and probably requested all to lift their glasses and drink, so that there must have been at least fifteen drinks, one for each of the regular toasts. We find that songs were

sung after seven of these toasts. It is instructive to give the names of these toasts as they are noted on the minutes. They are as follows:

- 1st — The Memory of Robert Burns.
- 2nd — Scotland.
- 3rd — The President of the United States.
- 4th — The Queen of Great Britain and Ireland.
- 5th — The Memory of Washington.
- 6th — The Memories of Wallace and Bruce.
- 7th — The Memory of Shakespeare.
- 8th — The Memory of Sir Walter Scott.
- 9th — The Memory of Allan Ramsay and Robert Ferguson.
- 10th — The Memory of Thomas Moore.
- 11th — The Memory of Robert Tannahill and Thomas Campbell.
- 12th — The Memory of Jean Armour, the late Mrs. Robert Burns.
- 13th — The Memory of James Hogg, the Ettrick shepherd.
- 14 — Albany.
- 15th — The ladies of Albany.

Under some of these there were sentiments and the sentiments have been copied out in full in the minutes. One or two are here appended. Under the toast entitled, "The memory of Washington," the sentiment is "As a statesman, soldier and patriot the world approves. A character of virtues so perfectly balanced and so entirely unmingled with any vices, never arose in any age or any nation." After the toast entitled, "The memory of Shakespeare" the sentiment is as follows:

A man in whose gigantic grasp,
All nature was enrolled;
A memory whose tenacious clasp,
Could all the past unfold.

Under the toast entitled, "Albany," the sentiment is "Famed for its Dutch hospitality and the integrity of its citizens."

After the *regular toasts* had been disposed of A. Deuchar, Vice-President, was called upon and responded in a happy manner, paying a handsome tribute to the memory of Burns, and then comes a long list of songs and impromptu toasts, and it seems quite evident that every man around the table must have been called upon. Some would sing songs and some would give toasts and some of the members were called upon at least twice to give a toast or sing a song. There were *seventeen* of these impromptu toasts, and I am sure we would all be curious to know whether they drank to each one of them. Probably they did, as that was the fashion of that time.

Right after the regular toasts and after the Vice-President had made his remarks, the next man called upon was D. D. Ramsay, who stated that he preferred a song to a speech and the title of his song seems curious. The song he sang was "The gloomy night is gathering fast," and the minutes say it was received with great applause.

In looking over the impromptu toasts it is quite interesting to note that the first one was given by Mr. Thomas McCredie. The secretary has his name spelled with an A, so that it reads "McCredie." He gave, in answer to the call, the following sentiment: "Scotland, the land of my birth, America, the land of my adoption. The former broke the chains of tyranny and the latter never would wear them." After this some songs were sung by the different members and it especially says that "Mr. Scobie gave, in fine style, a song with a hard name and hence we have not got it." The next party called upon was David M. Barnes of the Express, who responded stating that he did not expect to make a speech but had come to listen, but that he would take the opportunity offered him to notify the company that "A child's amang ye takin' notes and faith, he'll print them," and it is very evident he did print them in full.

The next noticeable sentiment, or impromptu toast, that is interesting, is one by Benjamin Lodge, whom many present Albanians remember. His toast, or sentiment, was as follows: "Our young society; may it, in its ups and downs, never lose sight of the large heart and honest soul of the Poet whose birthday we are now celebrating."

Following his toast is one by Robert Smith whose name is strange to us but who gave this toast: "Scots wha hae and Yankee Doodle, may they be sung in unison and with the same patriotic feeling."

The next sentiment we notice is one by a Mr. Penny, who is mentioned as Superintendent of the HOUSE TELEGRAPH OFFICE and his sentiment is very clever. Here it is:

"The thistle of Scotland and Scotchmen, both clothed by nature with a touch-me-not exterior which warns the crushing hand of tyranny to handle carefully."

The next impromptu toast that is interesting is one by J. Osmond Montignani, and his toast is as follows: "Scotland and America, one in heart and feeling; may the latter's enthusiastic appreciation of the Immortal Burns render the ties still stronger."

I have said that there were fifteen regular and seventeen impromptu toasts. Upon looking carefully over the minutes again I find there were also two recitations and TWENTY-EIGHT songs given by various members and the minutes state that "several OTHER SONGS were given by the Club." How long it took to go through that program is a question I would not dare to answer.

Two other things stand out quite unique in these wonderful "minutes." First, the Vice-President, at a certain stage of the proceedings, gives a toast to the President and, later in the evening, the President gives a toast to the Vice-President. Each of these worthies had to respond, of course, when their healths were drunk and the Vice-President closed his remarks with a toast to the 2d Vice-President who had to respond and whose health was, also, properly "put under the belt." This is certainly a very unique proceeding and it seems



JOHN O. MONTIGNANI
First Secretary of the Albany
Burns Club

strange the compliment was not extended further to the Treasurer and the Secretary, as well as the Chairman of the Board of Managers. Perhaps it was but it does not so state on the minutes. The second clever arrangement was the carrying out of the "greetings" to the other Burns Club, evidently the only other one in existence at that time, the Burns Club of Baltimore, Md. The President announced that, at 8 P. M., he had telegraphed to the Burns Club of Baltimore as follows: "John Boyd, Esq., President, Burns Club, Baltimore. The Burns Club of Albany will toast your Club at 10 o'clock. James Dickson, President." In forty minutes after sending the message he received the following answer: "James Dickson, Esq., President, Burns Club, Albany. The Burns Club of Baltimore will respond at 10 o'clock. May joy and wit be wi' you a'. John Boyd, President." Then the minutes say "The hour of 10 having arrived, the President proposed the Health of the President and Members of the Burns Club of Baltimore which was DRUNK IN BUMPERS and with much enthusiasm. Both of these messages were sent by the "House Telegraph Line" and both were handled by a Mr. Penny, who is referred to here, and at another place in the minutes, as "the gentlemanly superintendent of the House Telegraph office." When our grandfathers wanted to say anything nice about a man they certainly found a way to say it.

After the BUMPER to Baltimore, three of the members, Messrs. Dodds, Ellis and Muir, sang "Willie brewed a peck o' maut" and the minutes say "if he brewed it one-half so well as they sang of it Willie ought to have done a lucrative business." Then came two of the POPULAR SONGS of the day, which it is stated "everybody knows." One was "The spot where we were born" and the other "I knew by the smoke that so gracefully curled." No doubt these were "The long, long trail" and "Keep the home fires burning" of 1854. And last, but not least, David M. Barnes was called on for a song and here is what the minutes say: "He gave one accordingly and, as the writer had to join him in the perpetration of it, he is not prepared to say whether it was good, bad or indifferent, but thinks it was ALL THREE."

Before leaving these interesting minutes of the first dinner of the Albany Burns Club, I want to quote two more of the impromptu toasts, both of which are exceedingly clever and the last of which shows how our grandfathers stood on a question which has only recently been thrashed out, let us hope to the satisfaction of all. The first is by a man named William T. Muir "Scotch iron, the stern stuff of which are made some of the strongest links which bind Scotland and America in the everlasting bonds of brotherhood." And the other is by a Mr. McGown, "Woman's rights, the broom, the needle, the saucepan and the cradle."

The next meeting was held on January 31st, 1854, presumably for the purpose of settling up matters and it seems that three of the Board of Managers refused to serve, reasons not given. Those three

were Thomas McCredie, William Ballantine and Benjamin Lodge. Three others were appointed in their places and things went merrily on. Bills were paid and the minutes state there remained in the hands of the Treasurer NOTHING. Another meeting was held on February 14th and Thomas McCredie was present at that meeting. At this meeting, among others, David W. Shanks and Andrew Kirk were elected members. At this meeting William T. Muir was elected Assistant Secretary and he was evidently the one who so neatly and fully transcribed the minutes. Also a gold pen and pencil was presented to Mr. David M. Barnes and a page is left blank in the minutes, probably for the speech of Barnes but same was never inserted.

Another meeting was held on July 7th, 1854, for the purpose of having the Constitution and By-Laws which, the minutes say, "are now beautifully engrossed on the minute book," properly signed by all the members. Also to hear ALL THE MINUTES read by the Secretary, from the minute book. Some job for July 7th but evidently it was done. At this meeting a letter was read from David M. Barnes, who regretted his inability to be present because the sun had knocked him out on July 4th and rendered him unfit for business, CONVIVIAL OR OTHERWISE. Also the thanks of the Club are tendered to David Vaughan for embellishing the title page of the minute book and the Treasurer was instructed to present him with A SMALL GRATUITY for his trouble. It must have been small indeed for the Treasurer reported that he on hand ONE DOLLAR AND TWENTY-FIVE CENTS.

Another meeting was held on November 3d, 1854. and it was reported that the Secretary and Assistant Secretary had BOTH REMOVED FROM THE CITY and William B. Deming was appointed Secretary, pro tem. At this meeting three persons were proposed for membership, namely:

Angus Campbell — Gentleman.

Peter Benedict — Lumber Dealer.

Peter Burnet — Carver.

and all were duly elected. The receipts were SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS. SIX MORE MEETINGS were held before the dinner came along, one on December 9th, 1854, and one each on January 11th, 19th, 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1855. The first two of these were held at our old friend Scobie's Union Hotel but the last four were held at John McGowan's, 50 State Street, and John signs himself as Secretary pro tem. of one of these meetings, the other three being signed by JOHN SMITH, also Secretary, pro tem. At all these meetings members were elected and, among them, the familiar name of James Duncan, who for so many years kept a tailor shop at 54 State Street, which old Albanians will remember and also William Orr and David S. Blair.

At every one of these meetings, also James Dickson WAS PRESENT AND PRESIDED. HE was a punctual, present and persistent President of the Albany Burns Club. At one of these meetings a Committee of four was appointed to prepare the REGULAR TOASTS for the forthcoming dinner and they did it all right, never fear. Also David W. Shanks was made one of the Managers.

'55, '56, '57 and '58

NOW we come to the Annual Meeting and Dinner (or rather Supper) of January 25th, 1855, and the same was held at our old friend Scobie's Union Hotel which, we are now informed, was on BROADWAY. At this meeting amendments were made to the By-Laws, the principal one of which was an initiation fee of \$1.00, on signing the By Laws and Annual dues of 50 cents, to be collected in November BY THE SECRETARY and paid over, by him, to the Treasurer. There was also an amendment that all officers must be CHOSEN BY WRITTEN BALLOT. At that meeting eight gentlemen were appointed to act as STEWARDS FOR THE EVENING. Their duties are not defined but we can readily imagine what those duties were. SUPPER was then announced and the names of all who partook are entered in the minutes. We find there were forty-two of them. John Smith was Secretary and he has also entered everything in full on his minutes, taking up NINE PAGES.

David M. Barnes was again present and "on his job," as certified by a long article in the Albany Morning Express, EVERY WORD OF WHICH has been copied in full in the minutes by the painstaking Secretary, John Smith. Not only all the toasts, but all the SPEECHES, are copied in full and it is quite evident all speeches were written out previously and handed over to the Secretary, or the reporter. They again had the HAGGIS to lead off with and, after some one had recited the poem, the Club COMMENCED ITS DEMOLITION. If they commenced it they most certainly *finished* it.

At this dinner there were SIXTEEN REGULAR TOASTS, the titles of which are about the same as those of the dinner before and many of which have sentiments written under them. The sentiment under the toast "The City of Albany" is clever. Here it is: "Once a frontier garrison, now a proud capitol; in both its humbler and its higher condition never forgetting to welcome the men of the land of Wallace and Bruce." That, surely, is mighty handsome about our good old Albany. In addition to the REGULAR TOASTS there were TWENTY-FIVE SPECIAL, OR IMPROMPTU TOASTS, many of which are very good and the minutes say "want of space compels us to omit many apposite and beautiful sentiments delivered during the evening." What a pity overworked John Smith did not catch and record some of those APPPOSITE sentiments.

I find that FOURTEEN SONGS were sung, during the evening,

by various members, as mentioned on the minutes and good old John Smith says " Many of the songs of the great poet were ALSO SUNG in a style that would do discredit to professed artists." In a burst of enthusiasm John ends up his minutes with the following language: " The whole company then rose and sang AULD LANG SYNE and separated, well pleased with themselves and their friends. The occasion was one that will not soon be forgotten by those who participated therein and we are quite sure the affair was not excelled by any similar club in this country or abroad." From what we know of those old fellows of sixty years ago I believe we can fully subscribe to that.

At this dinner they again sent greetings to the Baltimore Club and received greetings from them and their health was again drowned IN BUMPERs, at sharp 10 o'clock. It is also mentioned, on the minutes, that the Albany greeting was sent by the House Telegraph Line and the answer was received in the SHORT SPACE OF TWENTY-FOUR MINUTES. Not even the Western Union could beat that. Among the impromptu toasts is one " The Memory of the Heroines of Robert Burns " and the man giving it uttered this sentiment which might well be used today. Listen :

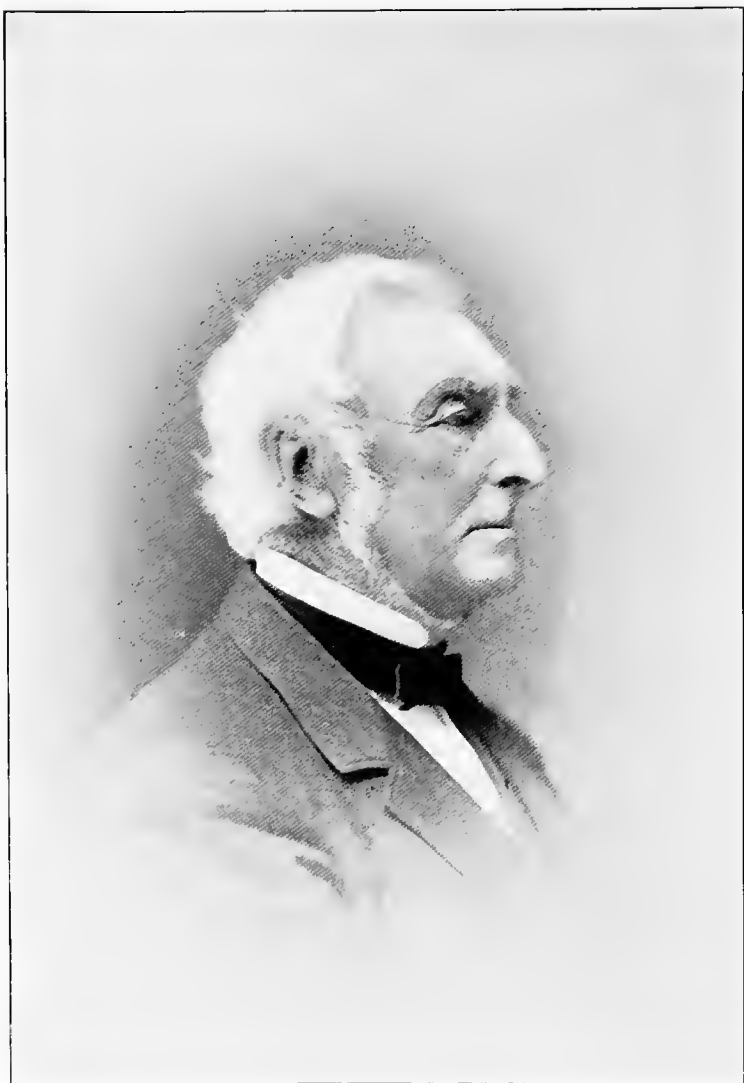
While Europe's eye is fixed on mighty things,
The fate of Empires and the fall of Kings,
While quacks of State must each produce his plan,
And even children lisp " The Rights of Man,"
Amid the mighty fuss just let me mention,
The Rights of Women merit some attention.

Evidently our grandfathers had experienced a change of heart from the year before and were waking up to the inevitable.

Among the sentiments was one by a man named ALEXANDER AUTY and he prefaced it with the following remarks: "It is with great pleasure that I rise to say I feel proud that I came from the land of Burns and that, for nearly thirty years, my life was spent under the roof of the house in which Robert Burns was born. Many are the happy days I have enjoyed there. I am proud to say, also, that my mother and bonny Jean Armour were serving lasses together in Sir John Whiteford's of Ballochmyle, near Mauchlin, of which Burns in his writings speaks so much about." The Burns Club of today should feel a pardonable pride in the fact that one of its old members was so close to the bard.

One toast by William Ellis is very happy. Here it is: " The Star spangled banner, may its stars light to the goal of happiness and its stripes lash its enemies into proper respect for us." No more elevating sentiment could be offered even today and if Mr. Ellis were alive, he would certainly see the fruition of his expressed hope in 1918.

On January 30th, 1855, the Club was presented with a FEATHER taken from the house in which Robert Burns was born and, it seems, the feather was presented through Mrs. Begg, who was the youngest



THOMAS McCREDIE

One of the Charter Members of the
Albany Burns Club

sister of Burns. The Club thankfully received it and agreed to have it on exhibition at every dinner but, alas, some cruel blast must have "blawn it awa" for we can "find no feather noo." Various other meetings were held, previous to the dinner of 1856 and, at one held on January 21st, Alfred B. Street, Albany's well known poet, was elected an Honorary Member. These previous meetings were held on January 3d, 10th, 18th, 21st, 22nd, 23d and *two on the 25th*, one at 3 P. M. and another at 7 P. M. and James Dickson, President, was present at every one of these meetings. The principal business at each seems to have been the election of new members.

On January 25th, 1856 was held the **THIRD ANNUAL DINNER**, or rather **SUPPER**, for that is what they call it and, this time, they seem to have abandoned our old friend Scobie of the Union Hotel and held forth in the **SUPPER ROOM** of mine host H. Livingston of the **COMMERCIAL HOTEL** who, the minutes say, "had made bounteous and luxurious accommodations for the comfort of the inner man of the votaries of Scotia's noblest poet, the immortal Robbie Burns." At this dinner there were fifty-eight present, evidently a goodly company and, among others, I notice the names of Alfred B. Street, George Dawson, Thomas McCredie, D. W. Shanks, Benjamin Lodge and David S. Blair, as familiar names to many Albanians of today. It is apparent that mine host, Livingston, **HAD MADE BOUNTEOUS ACCOMMODATIONS** for the minutes give the "Bill of Fare" in full and I copy it here to show the dillettante of the present day that "the men of '56" had no compunctions as to their duty to the "inner man." What would the Burns Club of today think of this for a —

BILL OF FARE.

First — The Haggis.

Fish — Raw oysters, stewed oysters.

Boiled Dishes — Turkey, oyster sauce; Leg of Mutton, caper sauce; Ham, garnished; Chicken; Tongue glace.

Roast — Turkey, cranberry sauce; Venison, cranberry sauce; Beef a la Mode; Mutton, jelly sauce; Pig, garnished.

Entrees — Chicken salad; Turkey wings, fricasseed; Oyster pie; Oyster Fritters; Lobster Salad.

Dessert — Fruit cake, Delicate cake, Pound cake, Mince pie, Cranberry pie, Apple pie, Crullers, Tarts.

Fruit — Almonds, Raisins, Pecan nuts.

A new Secretary appears on the scene in the person of one, James M. Baker and he has excelled his predecessors by occupying no less than **TWENTY-ONE PAGES** with his minutes of this wonderful dinner. At the beginning he says that, after the Haggis was disposed of, "the clatter of knives and forks and the hum of conversation occupied about one hour and a half and the cloth was removed." Undoubtedly there was **SOME CLATTER** to go through that bill of fare. There were again regular toasts and **SPECIALS**. Of the regulars there were no less than eighteen, nearly every one of which was followed by a song. To be exact there were fourteen songs.

To one of these regular toasts "The City of Albany," Alfred B. Street made a long response and his speech is copied in full in the minutes. He says nothing at all about Albany, but does pay a remarkable tribute to Robert Burns. It is a beautiful and eloquent oration and might well be read at any meeting of the Burns Club for it is well worth listening to. Greetings were sent to and received from the Burns Club of Baltimore and also the Burns Club of New York, and the one to New York is addressed to "New York Burns Club, Tammany Hall, New York." At this dinner W. S. Hevenor also delivered a long speech which is copied in full on the minutes. A large number of impromptu toasts were given and every man either made a short speech or sang a song. The impromptu toast given by Thomas McCredie was "America, great because her common schools are the imported parish schools of Scotland." A man by the name of Robert C. Smith gave this "Scottish notions; free church, free schools and FREE TRADE; Scotland invented them, America adopts them." Another noticeable thing about this dinner was the fact that men of all nationalities were present. The gathering was, by no means, confined to Scotchmen. The only qualifications were "to be of good character and a lover of Burns." **THOSE ARE THE ONLY QUALIFICATIONS TODAY.**

After the usual seven or eight preliminary meetings (those old fellows were great on meetings) along came the dinner of 1857, which is now called "Anniversary Festival," and we also have a new Secretary by the name of John McGown. John improved on his predecessors by only using **THIRTEEN PAGES** for his minutes, probably because he balked at copying all the speeches in full. They again held forth in the Commercial Hotel, which was located, we are now informed, on **HUDSON STREET**. John says that "a sumptuous entertainment was in readiness to gratify the appetite of the most fastidious epicure so that the admirers of Robert Burns had everything the heart could desire or **THE STOMACH CRAVE** to satisfy or strengthen the inner man." That's good enough for anybody isn't it?

As they sat down at table, at the right of the President was the worthy and honored President of St. Andrew's Society and the poet of Albany, Alfred B. Street, while at his left was George Dawson, editor of the Evening Journal and in front was **THE HAGGIS**. They had the same old **REGULAR TOASTS**, although now cut down to thirteen and, after the seventh, Alfred B. Street again made a long address which is copied in full on the minutes. Then came the usual long list of impromptu toasts. Evidently every man came prepared to do his part and say "something." There were no **WALL FLOWERS**. They also listened to the singing of a song entitled "Our Own Robbie Burns," words by Alfred B. Street, music by Henry Tucker and **DEDICATED TO THE ALBANY BURNS CLUB**. I am sure we would like to find that song now if we could only do so.

Among the best of the impromptu toasts are these: By J. Brockway, "The United States, with a heart ever open to charity and ever

shut to oppression; may the God of Liberty watch over her, the fire of poetry and genius illuminate her and God Almighty protect and preserve her." As the Scotchmen would say "that's no half bad." By A. Sinclair, "The true Scotchman — who never turns the back of his hand to a friend or the back of his coat to an enemy." By Michael Clark, evidently a good old Irishman, "Erin and Scotland — may they unite in matrimony and may their progeny unite with the Burns Club." By James M. Baker, "Scotland, the only country on earth where ignorance is the exception and learning the general rule; her literature has been the vernacular of her children." By Peter Smith, Jr., "Burns' political principles; the man who deemed the best title of nobility came from a higher power than earthly kings would have been at home in this land of Liberty."

About fifteen or sixteen songs were sung in between toasts and again, in the "wee short hours," they arose and sang Auld Lang Syne which, the Secretary says, was sung in a very enthusiastic and EXCITING manner and they parted. Mayhap some of our members of today can say what it was they got EXCITED about.

Again, in 1858, they had the usual number of preliminary meetings and, at one of them, Eli Perry, Mayor of the City, was elected a member. The dinner of this year was held at JAMES JENKINSON'S VAN RENSSELAER HOUSE ON SOUTH PEARL STREET. Scobie and Livingston both went in the discard, so it seems. At this dinner there were only twenty-nine members present but FIVE INVITED GUESTS are also mentioned. Among the members we find the name of William Manson, whom many present day Albanians will remember and, among the invited guests, appears the name of PETER KINNEAR. Another familiar name this year is that of Jacob C. Cuyler who was duly elected a member. John McGown is still Secretary and he has boiled down his minutes to twelve pages, three of them being taken up by a long poem by Alfred B. Street, entitled "The Lays of Old Scotia." This time they got down to TWELVE REGULAR TOASTS and the sentiments under at least two of them are worth repeating. Here they are: "The President of the United States; he holds his place by the Divine Right of the popular will and is the honored chief of a Nation of Sovereigns." And the other, "The Governor of the State of New York — every inch a King." Governor King was the Governor in 1858. I suppose if those old fellows were here today and preparing a toast list for the Burns Club they would, probably, have that toast read, "The Governor of the State of New York — Alfred the Great." Among the best of the IMPROMPTU TOASTS, of which there were again a number, were the following: By William Grey, "Ourselves by the Grace of God and not by the Divine Right of Kings." By George Young, "Peace at home, pleasure abroad, love your wife and serve the Lord." By John Gilmour, "The mechanic, the bone and sinew of our Country." By William Manson, "The three greatest generals, General Peace, General Plenty and General Satisfaction." And this was just before the civil war, when days were indeed dark

and foreboding and just after the greatest of all panics, that of 1857. Those old fellows were optimists for fair. By Alexander Sinclair, "May the present company feel no worse than Robbie Burns did when he said 'we are na fou.'" At all of the meetings this year and the previous year David W. Shanks seems to have been very prominent. He attended all meetings and proposed more new members than any other individual, and he also held the office of Treasurer and also one of the Board of Managers.

The long poem by Alfred B. Street, which is copied in full on the minutes, has some very good verses in it. Probably members of the Club today can remember my father quoting from this at some of the dinners, and it seems to have caught the fancy of the old members of the Club. The title of it is, "The Lays of Old Scotia," and the first verse reads as follows:

"The Lays of Old Scotia, how grandly they ring,
From the harp of the heather's bright, time honored string;
That harp which has borne down the vista of time,
The glories that beam on the brow of its clime."

One of the other verses and near the last, after speaking of many other poets of Scotland, refers particularly to Robert Burns, and this is the verse that my father so often quoted. It is as follows:

"But the King, the grand king of them all, Robbie Burns,
To him every heart in wild ecstasy turns;
In its ecstasy turns, lowly kneels at his shrine,
To yield a fit tribute to genius divine."

Alfred B. Street was the best known poet who ever lived in Albany and wrote many beautiful sonnets, and he seems to have been a very active member of the Burns Club in its early days, although not a Scotchman, nor of Scottish descent.

The annual meeting for that year was held in November and again at James Jenkinson's, but this time it is the Adams' House on Steuben Street, and it must be that Jenkinson took up a new hotel and the Club evidently followed him. At this meeting a committee was appointed to send greetings on Burns' birthday to all the Burns Clubs in the Country, and that Committee was a notable one, consisting of the Mayor, Eli Perry, the poet, Alfred B. Street and the editor, George Dawson. On December 23d of that year the Club had a meeting at James Weldon's restaurant, and it looks as if they were making the rounds of all the different eating houses. At this meeting Theodore M. Amsdell and Richard C. Bently were elected members. A number of preliminary meetings were held previous to the annual dinner and a large number of new members elected. It seems a committee was appointed to engage a reporter to write an account of the dinner for the newspapers, but the committee made a report that it was inexpedient to do so. It was also decided to present a complimentary ticket for the coming dinner to Rev. Patrick McCloskey.



DAVID W. SHANKS
A Very Active Member of the
Old Albany Burns Club

The Centenary Dinner of 1859

NOW we come to the dinner of January 25th, 1859, and this was a *red letter night*. This dinner commemorated the One Hundredth Anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, and great pains were taken to make it a big success. The Secretary is still John McGown and he has used *twenty-two pages* in the minute book to describe this meeting. This dinner was held at James Weldon's restaurant on State Street and there were present fifty-five members. James Dickson, President, in his opening speech, uses the following language: "One hundred years ago today, in a very humble cottage on the banks of the Doon, Robert Burns was ushered into the world. Secluded as that thatched cottage was, beneath its blackened roof tree, there nestled the prattling child whose future inspirations, as if by magic, were to dazzle and charm the whole world." He also says: "Let us do honor to so distinguished an event by a celebration replete with flowing sentiments and stirring songs, so that posterity may peruse, with pleasure, the proceedings of the Burns Club of the good old City of Albany," and I believe that posterity will, undoubtedly, peruse these proceedings with much pleasure. There were thirteen regular toasts. The first is, "The Centenary of Robert Burns," and a most beautiful sentiment is appended as follows: "From the height of a century we celebrate the dawning of a dot of light which rose at its feet, but now shines, like a radiant planet, drawing to its lustre the admiration of the world." This toast was responded to by Alfred B. Street with a long discourse, all of which is copied in full on the minutes. Following this came a song written, for the occasion, by a Clergyman of Albany, but it does not give his name. The chorus of this song is as follows:

Then let us sing with joyful glee,
'Mid cups of ruby wine,
A song to him who still must be
The Bard of Auld Lang Syne.

The minutes say that the song was completed amidst rapturous applause and was loudly encored. Among the regular toasts was one to "Albany, the birth place and home of many of America's most notable and talented sons." This was responded to by the Mayor of the City, the honorable Eli Perry, who gave a very beautiful sentiment on the "Memory of Robert Burns." The regular toast called "The Press" was responded to by George Dawson, who was Editor of the Albany Evening Journal, and who exhibited to the Club the original manuscript of Auld Lang Syne, in the hand writing of Robert Burns, which was loaned for the occasion by the owner of it, the Hon. J. V. L. Pruyn of Albany. In looking over these minutes more carefully, we find that the Author of the song sung at this dinner was the Rev. Patrick McCloskey. He does not seem to have been able to attend the dinner, but he sent the song. A large number of impromptu toasts were given, and among others one by Walter Dickson, which reads as follows:

“ Crinolines — fashionable hoops for intoxicating spirits;
The greater their expansion the more extravagant their contents.”

Mr. Dickson stated in giving this toast that so many had spoken of the sublime he, for the sake of variety, would broach the ridiculous. Walter Dickson was the son of James Dickson and a very well known Albanian. The toast by Thomas McCredie is very good. This is it: “Great Britain and the United States; may the blossoms of their friendship never be nipped by the frost of contention.” These toasts were interspersed with about thirty songs sung by the different members, and the gathering, at last, closed with the usual singing of Auld Lang Syne, which this time they sang from the original manuscript.

I have heard that it has been said, probably by envious spirits, that this was the dinner where some of the members did not reach home for three days. I do not know whether this is true or not, neither does anyone else who is alive today but, even if it were true, is there anyone who will criticize those delightful old fellows of a past generation for doing no more or less than Burns himself would have done had he been present. Besides, we should remember that manners and customs are changed and what would be thought disgraceful today would have been looked upon with charitable compassion in the days before the Civil War.

During 1859 and 1860, previous to the next dinner, a number of meetings were held at various places, among which were the Weldon House, the American Hotel, the office of David W. Shanks at No. 32 Green Street and the residence of William Manson. The old standbys, who seem to have been at all of these meetings, were James Dickson, James Dodds, David W. Shanks, William Manson and John McGown. The hard working Secretary, John McGown, was presented with fifteen dollars by the Club for his excellent work. A very handsome thing for the Club to do. At the meeting in November, 1859, John O. Montignani was present, having returned to the City and the Club, and was duly elected Secretary for the second time. At this meeting also, David W. Shanks was again elected Treasurer and William Manson Chairman of the Board of Managers.

At one of these preliminary meetings, held on January 10th, 1860, it was agreed that the next SUPPER should be held at The American Hotel which, it seems, was now run by our old friend Scobie. Also that the tickets should be \$2.00 each and the Managers MUST GUARANTEE that it should be a FIRST CLASS SUPPER and that WINES AND LIQUORS MUST BE INCLUDED. The Managers of those days must have had “troubles of their own.”

'60 to '63 inclusive

NOW comes the dinner of 1860 which the minutes call “The Anniversary Festival” and which was held at the American House. The minutes also say that the Club proceeded to the supper room “where awaited a repast sumptuous enough to sooth the

craving appetite of an epicure so that the admirers of Scotia's immortal bard had everything the heart could desire." They certainly had, at all of their dinners, everything that the STOMACH COULD DESIRE and they seem to have tackled it all right for the minutes say "the company then seated themselves for the evening's repast which was DISCUSSED HANDSOMELY AND WITH GREAT RELISH." On this occasion the Haggis was made, and presented to the Club, by Mrs. William Manson.

Thirteen regular toasts comprised the standard program and the usual number of volunteer, or special, toasts. Among the regular toasts the second one is "The memory of Robert Burns" and it has this most beautiful sentiment appended: "That spirit who found, in nature's simple city, those tender inspirations which touched the finest sensibilities of the heart and sung, in response to its honest beatings, that noble sentiment.

The rank is but the guinea's stamp
The man's the gowd for a' that."

That certainly is very pretty and our grandfathers always knew how to express themselves in a compelling way. Here are some more of the regular toasts: "Scotland, land of intelligence, independence and social feeling, whose heart stirring music on the battlefields, or in the cottage, never fails to move her sons to sorrow, to joy or to deeds of glory." "The President of the United States, The sovereign of a free people, whose crown is Liberty's cap and whose sceptre Liberty's pole." "The Press, the avoucher of human rights, the vehicle of knowledge and the terror of tyranny." "The City of Albany. The old ground for beavers, forts and Dutch gables; first in war and last in panic." "Woman, God's masterpiece and man's idol; first at the cradle and last at the grave."

A letter was read from the Mayor, Eli Perry, a member of the Club, regretting his inability to be present because he had made a previous engagement on the same evening, which only strengthens the admonition, so often given to members of the Burns Club, to remember the date of the birthday of Robert Burns — JANUARY 25th. An anonymous letter was also read, enclosing an original poem on Burns and signed "An Irishman." At this meeting also, a notable event was the singing of a song entitled "O faith and I love thee," by John F. Smyth, who, not famous then, afterwards became one of Albany's most famous citizens. A song was also sung by William Manson and, the minutes say, WITH GREAT ENTHUSIASM, entitled "The Tinker's Wedding." The toast by John Oswald Montignani on this occasion was "May the moments of mirth be regulated by reason and may we never break a joke to crack a reputation." Arthur Boyle gave this as his toast: "Robert Burns. His plow has ceased to cultivate the soil but his songs will never cease to cultivate the human mind."

And again they toasted all the officers of the Club and, I have no doubt, drank to all of them and here is the way they did it, according to the minutes:

By the Club — Our President, with all the honors. By the Club — Our First Vice-President, with all the honors. By the Club — Our Second Vice-President, with all the honors. By the Club — Our Treasurer, with all the honors. By the Club — Our Secretary, with all the honors. By the Club — Our Managers, with all the honors.

In those days officers got all the honors coming to them and their healths were probably drunk in BUMPERS.

On January 25th, 1861, the next dinner was held at the METROPOLITAN HOTEL, 15 and 17 BEAVER STREET, and a large number sat down, the minutes say, "to a table literally groaning beneath the delectable viands prepared by its excellent proprietor, James Smith." At this dinner they had IMPORTED SCOTCH HARES, RABBITS AND HAM, together with a plum pudding of GIGANTIC DIMENSIONS. The minutes also say "every dainty with the ruby and sparkling wine was there." Among the REGULAR TOASTS was this, which shows how near they were to the conflict soon to take place. "The United States. May the scream of her eagle strike remorse into the heart of secession and its broad talons rear, in its midst, the laurel symbol of Peace, whose blossoms may spread and bring about quiet and harmony once more throughout our land."

At this dinner a notable event was the singing of an ORIGINAL SONG entitled "He sleeps beneath the heather," sung by James M. Watkins, who stated that the words and music were both written by John O. Montignani, the Secretary of the Club. It was enthusiastically received. Another notable toast was by James Dodds, who gave this, "The Stars and Stripes. Tyranny's whip and glory's gain; may they ever rule supreme and quell the discordant sound of secession." By David W. Shanks, "Liberty to all men who know how to use it." By another member, "The City of Albany. Noted for its hospitality and true to the core on the Union." By George Mascord, "Here's to the American Union. May it never be broken while we have a SCOTT to defend it." And we all know that Scott did his duty until the task became too great for his declining years. It is very evident that the Burns Club, like all other organizations of the time, was thoroughly imbued with patriotic sentiments then so prevalent in the country, just previous to the breaking out of the Civil War.

At a subsequent meeting in the fall of that year, for the election of officers, James Dickson was still continued as President, but William Manson was made Second Vice-President, which office he continued to hold. The dinner was held in 1862 and we find now that the Secretary, John O. Montignani, inaugurated a new departure, later brought to such perfection by his son, our late Secretary, John F. Montignani, the pasting in the minute book of an account of the dinner, cut from one of the daily papers, rather than write out the minutes in full. The dinner of 1862 was evidently well attended, and it is followed again with the usual number of regular toasts and a large number of volunteer toasts, together with many songs. James Dickson, the President, was unable to attend, on account of a severe



THE BURNS MONUMENT

In Washington Park, Albany, N. Y.

Dedicated August 30th, 1888

cold, and the First Vice-President sat at the head of the table, while the Second Vice-President graced the foot, and the account says both of them presided with the dignity and grace befitting the occasion.

This dinner was notable from the fact that two of the greatest American poets were there, namely, Alfred B. Street and John G. Saxe. The dinner was held at the Metropolitan Hotel and was kept as private as possible on account of the unsettled state of the times. The First Vice-President made a very beautiful introductory address, and the first sentence of the same emphasizes the feelings which must have been in all hearts, for he says: "Tonight, while discord stalks about the land and civil strife is aroused by traitorous hordes, we will diverge from its excitements and the monotony of every day life, to do homage to the great and immortal Burns." The second of the regular toasts was as follows: "The President of the United States; Abe in the political world and able in the vindication of the Nation's laws and honor." To the fourth regular toast, which was called "The Poets," it seems that Alfred B. Street responded with another ode on Burns, which it says, is shortly to be published. The former Mayor, Eli Perry, responded to the toast "The City of Albany."

Evidently their feeling for England, at that particular time, was not very strong from the reading of the regular toast called "The Stars and Stripes," as this is followed by these words, "Entwined by the rose, the shamrock and the thistle, but, unhappily, the rose ceased to lend its fragrance. The shamrock and the thistle have attested their love for the Union, as witness the deeds of the brave 69th and 79th on the bloody field of Manassas." The sentiment after the toast called "The United States of America" is as follows: "Although assailed by perfidious foes in our midst and occasional growls from the other side, still we move on, strong in our own resources and abundantly able to crush out rebellion. All that we ask is to be let alone."

Among the volunteer toasts is one by William Orr which is very good, namely, "The Memories of Wallace and Bruce. May we take them as our models and achieve as great a victory over our Southern enemies as the Scots did over theirs at Bannockburn." At this dinner John G. Saxe read one of his own poems in his own humorous style. Walter Dickson gave two or three toasts and among them this, "Girls, nature's happiest creatures, the tighter we squeeze them, the better we please them." John F. Smyth sang at least three songs at this banquet.

At the meeting of the Club held in November, 1862, the following resolution was passed, "Resolved that, owing to the present agitated state of our Country and the absence of so many of our members doing military duty, the annual election of officers be indefinitely postponed and the present officers act for another year." Notwithstanding this, they seem to have held their dinner in 1863 and this was the last dinner held by the old Club. It was very evident that

this dinner was of a sad nature, on account of the state of affairs in the Country and nearly all of the toasts refer to the war and things connected with the war. One of the volunteer toasts was this, "May the sword of freedom never be sheathed until the Stars and Stripes float proudly over every inch of ground of our once happy Country." At this dinner also we see mention of the attendance of Peter Kinnear, although there is no record in the minutes of him ever being elected a member. He must have been there, as this is the toast that he gave, "Three of nature's noblemen, Robert Burns, the plowman poet; Hugh Miller, the Cromarty stone mason and David Livingston, the Glasgow cotton spinner, a trio of which any nation may well feel proud. They have not only embalmed their country's history but have earned for themselves a niche in the world's temple of fame."

The Reorganization and Dinner of 1893

AFTER the dinner of 1863 no more meetings of the original old Burns Club were held. The war went its course and left, in its train, many sad memories. Some of the old members were dead, and those who remained had no heart for reviving the festivities. So matters went, through the balance of the sixties, through the seventies and the eighties, but, in 1888, through the munificence of an old Scotch lady, Mary McPherson, the beautiful monument of Robert Burns was erected in Washington Park and its erection seemed to create, anew, an interest in Burns and in the Burns Club. We find, therefore that, on JANUARY 13th, 1892, a notice was sent to a number of well known Albanians, who were supposed to be lovers of Burns, asking them to attend a meeting, on January 18th, at Room 12, Tweddle Bldg., "to take steps to re-organize the Burns Club." This notice was signed THE OLD COMMITTEE. That, of course, meant nothing, as there was no old committee, but every one understood, I think, that the notice was sent out by my father, Peter Kinnear, who had become one of the prominent Scotchmen of Albany by that time and by John F. Montignani, son of the original Secretary of the Burns Club and, also very prominent, at that time, in all Scottish matters.

The meeting was accordingly held and those who attended, and who might be called the REVIVERS OF THE ALBANY BURNS CLUB, were Peter Kinnear, James Lawrence, Neil Gilmour, Samuel Shaw, William S. Mitchell and John F. Montignani. Neil Gilmour was made Chairman and John F. Montignani Secretary. Of those gentlemen only two are alive today and both are active and honored members of the Burns Club namely, Samuel Shaw and William S. Mitchell. The minutes of the old Burns Club were looked over and it was noted that, of the original charter members, only one was alive, the first Secretary, John O. Montignani. It was moved by Mr. Kinnear and seconded by Mr. Lawrence that "The Burns Club of the city of Albany, as formerly here and existing, be and hereby is re-

vived." Neil Gilmour was then unanimously elected President and John F. Montignani Secretary of the Club thus revived and reorganized. It was also stated that a number of gentlemen desired to join, as soon as arrangements were perfected and, among others mentioned, were Andrew McMurray, Allan Gilmour, Walter Quincy Scott, Charles J. Buchanan, Francis H. Woods, John N. Foster, William J. Milne and Willis G. Nash. Arrangements were going on for a dinner to be held that year when a distressing accident in the family of Peter Kinnear, resulting in the death of his son, Henry, decided the promoters to abandon the project for that year. In an article from the Times Union, speaking of this meeting, those desirous of joining are requested to communicate with the Secretary and this language is used "Membership is not limited to any nationality but any admirer of Burns or of Scottish literature will be heartily welcomed." Then comes this stanza from a poem read at the first meeting in 1854:

Praise to his name, old Scotia's bard,
Who, poor in wealth, obscure in birth,
Yet won, through song, his proud reward,
A fame eternal as the earth.

The next meeting was held on November 10th, 1892 and there were then elected as members William Grey, Andrew McMurray, Charles Brooksby, John W. McHarg, William H. Brainerd, Harry W. Smith, Ralph W. Thomas, Francis H. Woods, Charles J. Buchanan, Rev. James McLeod, Rev. Walter Q. Scott, William J. Milne, Abraham Lansing, Allan Gilmour, John N. Foster, Wm. D. Macfarlane and James A. Scott. All of these gentlemen were very active members but all are now dead but two, John W. McHarg and Ralph W. Thomas. At this meeting, also, the Secretary was directed to formulate a new Constitution and By Laws, which he did and which is written by him in the minute book. He also started a ROSTER OF MEMBERS, for each member is supposed to sign his name in the minute book. It would be a very good idea to complete that roster and all present members of the Burns Club will be given the privilege of signing this valuable old minute book at the earliest opportunity.

The first dinner of the revived Burns Club was held on January 25th, 1893, at the DELAVAN HOUSE, and is called, on our minutes, the 40th Anniversary. It was a good one, as the bill of fare shows, and how the DELAVAN ever put up such a bill for the price of \$3.00 is a mystery. The painstaking Secretary, at that and subsequent meetings during his incumbency, has drawn a diagram of the table showing where each one sat and has had each participant sign his name. From this we find that Alden Chester and John W. McHarg were in attendance and I believe that they have attended every dinner since that time (now 26 years) and may fairly be called FATHERS OF THE BURNS CLUB. Many who signed that first roll are dead.

At that meeting Neil Gilmour presided and said, when the Haggis was brought in, "The haggis of the North is the mince pie of the South; the haggis is the triumph of poverty while the mince pie is the triumph of wealth." At that meeting also, the "boy Mayor" James

H. Manning, was present and responded to the toast "The City of Albany," while other toasts were responded to by Charles J. Buchanan, Peter Kinnear, William J. Milne and Joseph A. Lawson. Our good old friend and fellow member, Fred E. Wadhams sang "Burns and Scotland yet."

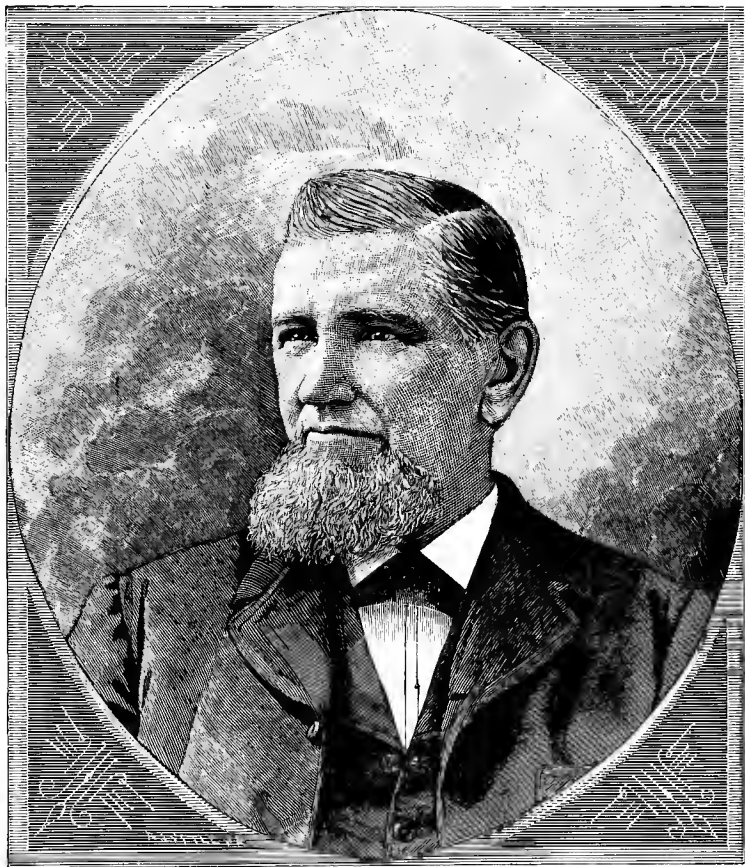
1894 to 1907, inclusive

IN 1894 they again went to the Delavan House and we find two or three of the younger element present, including Donald McCredie, John S. McEwan, Jr., Allan A. Gilmour and David M. Kinnear, although "the boy mayor" does not seem to have been with us. In 1895 Charles J. Buchanan was elected President of the Club and they omitted the dinner but had an entertainment in old Bleecker Hall on Broadway, which was addressed by a Minister from New York, his subject being "Scotland and Return." In 1896 the dinner was held at the Fort Orange Club with Charles J. Buchanan presiding and the principal addresses seem to have been "Scotland" by Neil Gilmour and "America" by Oscar D. Robinson. In that year the Burns Club designed and executed a very beautiful Greeting, which they sent to the Dumfries Burns Club in Dumfries, Scotland, as this was the centenary of the death of Robert Burns, who died on July 21st, 1796, at Dumfries, Scotland. It seems that a celebration was held at Dumfries on July 21st, 1896, in commemoration of the Name, Genius and Deeds of Robert Burns. The Greeting sent from Albany is signed, not only by the President of the Albany Burns Club, but also by the Presidents, respectively, of St. Andrew's Society, Albany Caledonian Club, Troy Caledonian Club and the Cohoes Sons of Scotia. They also received a circular, as well as an acknowledgement, from the Secretary of the Dumfries Burns Club and it appears that the celebration was held there on the 21st day of July and many wreaths were deposited on the mausoleum of Burns.

In 1897 the 44th Anniversary Dinner was held at the Kenmore Hotel and Eugene Burlingame was President. At this celebration we first notice the name of D. E. Ainsworth as a member of the Club and we also find that he responded to a toast entitled, "Scottish Character." Mr. Michael Monahan was present at this meeting and responded to a toast entitled, "The Message of Burns."

In 1898 they were again at the Kenmore with Eugene Burlingame as President, and Michael Monahan responded to a toast entitled, "The Scot in Albany." Another curious thing on that program is No. 12 on the list, which is entitled "a song" by Mr. David M. Kinnear. We will draw the veil of obscurity over that effort. At that dinner the original manuscript of "Auld Lang Syne" was again exhibited and it was loaned, this time, through the kindness of Mrs. J. V. L. Pruyn. It was received with as much gratitude, if not as much enthusiasm, as when originally presented at the dinner in 1859.

In 1899 the dinner was held at the Kenmore Hotel and the meeting elected James F. McElroy President of the Club. It was a very



Peter Kinnear

As He Looked in 1893 When He Reorganized
the Albany Burns Club

successful dinner and was addressed by Ralph W. Thomas, James H. Potts and Michael Monahan, and there were songs by Rev. C. A. Richmond and a poem by George R. Howell.

In 1901 Frederick W. Cameron was President of the Club and the dinner was held at the Albany Club. The principal address was by Rev. A. V. V. Raymond, who was President of Union College and delivered an address on "Robert Burns." Lewis E. Carr delivered an address entitled, "An American View of Scotland," and Dr. W. J. Milne delivered an address entitled "A Scotch View of America." In this year also, Neil Gilmour, the first President of the re-organized Club, passed away and resolutions on his death were adopted. We also find mention, in the minutes of this year, of Joseph Calhoun who sang two or three solos and, from that time, he has been a fixture at the dinners of the Burns Club.

The year 1902 finds the Club at the Fort Orange Club where fifty were present for the 49th annual dinner and Frederick W. Cameron was President. President Cameron had just returned from a visit to Scotland and gave a very interesting description of the birth-place and tomb of Burns saying that many more people now visited these places than either Stratford-on-Avon or Abbotsford, showing the hold that Burns had on all hearts. The toasts responded to were "Robert Burns the Man" by Rev. Andrew Gillies, "A Little Scotch" by Lewis B. Hall, "Scotch Preservatives" by James H. Potts and "Jargon of the Schools" by John F. Montignani. Songs were sung by Fred E. Wadhams, Rev. Charles A. Richmond and Samuel Shaw. At this dinner, also, the song entitled "Our Own Robbie Burns" was sung, Mr. Wadhams leading and singing the verses while the Club joined in the chorus. This is the song that was written many years ago and dedicated to the Albany Burns Club, the words by Alfred B. Street and the music by Henry Tucker, spoken of in the record of the dinner of 1859. The chorus reads as follows:

Enraptured, each bosom false dignity spurns,
As we sing the sweet songs of our own Robbie Burns.

In 1903 the dinner was again held at the Fort Orange Club and Curtis N. Douglas was President. The speakers were Peter Kinnear, John F. Montignani, Dr. William J. Milne and Charles J. Buchanan, but no record is at hand on the subjects of their addresses. Recitations were given by Eugene Brumaghim, J. B. MacFarlane and Samuel Shaw and the good old Scotch songs were sung by the Club.

In 1904 was held the fiftieth anniversary and the place was the New Kenmore Hotel. Curtis N. Douglas was again President and over sixty-five attended this dinner. Three bagpipers led the way to the banquet room, followed by Adam Ross and William S. Mitchell in full Highland costume, carrying THE HAGGIS, which Adam Ross cut with his Claymore, after he had delivered Burns' "Address to the Haggis" in such broad Scotch that none but the native born could follow him. But the fire and enthusiasm of his impassioned delivery was so great that the whole company roared its unqualified approval.

The toasts responded to were "The Women of Burns' Poetry" by Hon. Thomas F. Grady, "Scotch Hospitality" by Dr. W. O. Stillman, "The Mementoes of Burns" by Col. William G. Rice, "Saint Andrew's Society" by Peter Kinnear and "Burns as a Sweet Singer," by Rev. Charles A. Richmond. At this dinner Col. Rice again displayed the ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF AULD LANG SYNE and read the song from it. He also displayed the punch ladle or famous "toddy ladle" once the property of Robert Burns himself and duly authenticated as "The original."

In 1905 the dinner was held at Keeler's Hotel on Broadway and John W. McHarg was President. Lieutenant Governor M. Linn Bruce was the honor guest and made some pleasing remarks greatly enjoyed by all present. Being a Bruce himself he felt very much at home among the countrymen of Wallace and Bruce and their friends. The toasts responded to were "Poets and People" by George Lawyer, "Literary Genius" by Joseph A. Lawson, "Scotch Songs" by Rev. Charles A. Richmond and "Notes from Burns Home" by Peter Kinnear, who, at this time, presented the picture of Burns' granddaughter and great-granddaughter, now so often used as a cut on our letter-heads and toast lists.

In 1906 the dinner was held at the Flemish Tavern of the Keeler boys on State Street and Charles H. Turner was President. The program was a long one, consisting of no less than five addresses, eight songs by Calhoun and Mattocks and a "poem" by David M. Kinnear. The addresses were "Scottish Bards" by Dr. Richardson, "Robert Burns" by Dr. Fitch, "Scottish Minstrelsy" by Dr. Richmond, "Whittier and Burns" by William H. Coleman and "The Scot in America" by D. E. Ainsworth. That was certainly some galaxy of renowned entertainers and must have been a "hummer." Those who were present will also remember that OTHER ENTERTAINER of the evening, THE PIPER, who provided an entertainment not down on the program and came perilously near wrecking the whole thing on the rocks of "Haig and Haig." From the reorganizing of the Club Willis G. Nash had been Treasurer but we find, this year, the name of David M. Kinnear as Treasurer and he has filled that office ever since.

The year 1907 was celebrated with, perhaps, the most elaborate dinner of recent years held at the Hampton and the President was Horace G. Young. Mr. Young contributed liberally to make this dinner a gastronomic feast, featured with ornate and beautiful decorations and every one expressed great satisfaction with the event. Unfortunately the toast list cannot be found but several toasts were responded to by eminent speakers and the singing was an especial feature. This was one of the most successful of our dinners and the memory of it is still vivid with all who participated.

1908 to 1918, inclusive

IN 1908 the 55th Annual dinner was held at the Fort Orange Club with James H. Manning as President. No less than SEVEN TOASTS were responded to at this dinner and the company, naturally, "broke up late." The toasts were as follows: "Burns the Man" by William P. Rudd, "Fraternity and Burns" by Rev. Charles A. Richmond, "Scots in America" by Alden Chester, "The Poetry of Burns" by Dr. William J. Milne, "Burns and Tom Moore" by Martin H. Glynn, "The Genius of Burns" by J. Addison Jones, "Retrospection" by Peter Kinnear. In addition to this solos were sung by John Dick, Samuel Currie and James Findlayson and the Club sang a chorus entitled "Burns Day" to the tune of "School Days." The Club having started in '54 and this being just 54 years from that date and the President having just turned 54, all things worked together to rival the first dinner in length, no doubt, and success attended that effort.

In 1909 the dinner was held at the New Kenmore and Rev. Charles A. Richmond was President. The invitation to the dinner was sent in rhyme and signed by the officers. Here it is:

Hoot man, come awa, put the burr on your tongue,
And get ready to celebrate Robbie,
If ye dinna come doon, we may ha'e to send
And fetch ye — by means o' a 'bobby';
It's the birthday of BURNS — Caledonia's bard,
Twenty-fifth day o' Janwar the date,
The place THE NEW KENMORE — the hour eight o'clock,
Noo dinna be comin' doon late;
We'll ha'e a few speeches, we'll ha'e a few sangs,
We may ha'e a HAGGIS — wha kens?
We'll surely ha'e a' wha love Robbie Burns
An' a' o' the guid Scottish Clans;
The dinner's twa-fifty, dues ae dollar mair,
Send the Treasurer check for three-fifty,
And send your acceptance as soon as you can,
The Scots are aye prompt, keen and thrifty;
Ha'e ye ony suggestions? If so, send them on,
Ye'll find our Committee's names prented,
Ance mair, let our BURNS DINNER be a success,
An' a' will be pleased and contented.

Charles A. Richmond, *President*,
Willis G. Nash, *Vice-President*,
David M. Kinnear, *Treasurer*,
John F. Montignani, *Secretary*.

In 1910 the dinner was held at the Ten Eyck with over 50 present and the President was Willis G. Nash. C. B. Race and John Dick entertained with solos and the Club sang their favorite choruses. The toasts responded to were "Robert Burns" by Rt. Rev. R. H. Nelson, "Scoti" by Verplanck Colvin, "America and Caledonia" by Rev. Alex Jackson and "Some Burnsiana" by William H. Coleman. No one who was present will ever forget the marvelous talk given that evening on the subject entitled "Scoti." It was a masterpiece.

In 1911 the dinner was held at the Albany Club and Alden Chester was President. At the end of the menu appear the words "Tribute to our Chief by David M. Kinnear." This, was no doubt, some rhyme (or so-called rhyme) inflicted on the Club at a time when they had no chance of getting back. The principal addresses were "Robert Burns" by Rev. Alfred J. Higgins, "Hot Scotch" by Hon. William P. Rudd, "Our Poet" by Rev. James S. Kittell and "The Reason of It" by John T. D. Blackburn. The names of the members are printed on the menu card and we find the Club now numbers 75 members

In 1912 the dinner was again held at the Albany Club with 50 present and Alden Chester was President. Beautiful copies of Burns' poems (in miniature) were presented, by the President, to every member of the Club. The toasts were "Robert Burns" by Rev. George Dugan, "Songs of Scotland" by Rev. Charles A. Richmond and "The Scotchman in American History" by Danforth E. Ainsworth.

In 1913 they again went to the Albany Club and Danforth E. Ainsworth was President. The names of the members are again printed. We find the Club has now attained a membership of 86. This was the last dinner that my father, Peter Kinnear, attended, as he died on May 16th, 1913. The records show that he had been present at every dinner from 1893 to 1913, inclusive. The principal addresses were "Burns and Albany" by Rev. James S. Kittell, "Reminiscences" by Hon. Theodore H. Swift, and "Views of the Burns Country" by Hon. Alden Chester, who had just returned from a visit to Scotland and whose talk was, indeed, very interesting. There was also a poem by Eugene Brumaghim.

The year 1914 again saw them at the Albany Club, where they have been ever since, and Danforth E. Ainsworth is again President. Two honorary members now appear on the roll, namely, Andrew Carnegie and Viscount Bryce. The three principal address are "The Human element in the poetry of Burns" by Rev. J. A. Jones, "Robert Burns" by Rev. A. J. Higgins and "The Touch of Nature" by Joseph A. Lawson.

The 62nd Anniversary dinner (in 1915) was held at the Albany Club and John M. Clarke was President. The toasts responded to were "Songs of Burns" by Rev. Charles A. Richmond, "Oor auld respectit mither" by Dr. John H. Finley and "The Bards of Gael" by Hon. John Jerome Rooney.

In 1916 John M. Clarke is again President and toasts are drunk (standing and in silence) to deceased members and to Robert Burns. The Club has now become thoroughly proficient in the singing of the choruses, which they sing each year with a VIM, namely:

Ye Banks and Braes
Bonnie Dundee
Flow gently Sweet Afton.
Scots Wha Hae
A man's a man for a' that.



JOHN F. MONTIGNANI

First Secretary of the Reorganized
Albany Burns Club

He was Secretary from 1893 to His Death in 1912.

The principal addresses this year are "The Land of the Leal" by Dr. John H. Finley, "The Ideal Citizen" by Hon. Martin H. Glynn and "He who loves not his country loves nothing" by Rev. Roelif H. Brooks.

In the year 1917 John M. Clarke is still President and a number of new members are introduced. The Club sing the same rousing choruses and Joseph Calhoun delights with his rendering of the solos, which he has sung now for nearly twenty years, and of which the Club never tires. May his sweet voice charm us for many more years to come with his exquisite rendition of the songs that will never die. The principal addresses this year are "Robert Burns" by Rev. George Dugan, "Scotch in America" by Dr. A. R. Brubacher and "Bonnie Scotland" by Rev. Alfred J. Higgins.

The last dinner, and the 65th Anniversary of the Albany Burns Club, was held at the Albany Club on January 25th, 1918, and was not excelled by any that had gone before in either quality or quantity. John M. Clarke is still presiding with a grace and dignity that charms all beholders and the Club has attained a membership of over 125 members. On the front page of the menu card is printed this verse:

Then here's to rhyming Robbie Burns,
Whose sun of fame shall never set,
And ever as this day returns,
The cry be "Burns and Scotland yet."

And on the last page of the same card this sentiment from Burns himself:

For thus the royal mandate ran,
Since first the human race began,
The social, friendly, honest man,
Where'er he be,
'Tis he fulfills great Nature's plan,
And none but he.

The Future of the Burns Club

THE Albany Burns Club is one of the oldest institutions in the City of Albany and one of the oldest, if not the oldest, of its kind in the United States. In former years it contained among its members many of the solid and substantial citizens of old Albany and, today, its roll of members carries on it the names of some of the best known citizens of Albany. It has been a feature in the social life of this old city and its annual dinners are looked forward to, with pleasant anticipation, by all of its members. The particular feature of the dinners of this Club is, that they are entirely literary in their essence and partake, vividly, of the atmosphere of intelligence and a high order of excellence. In this particular these dinners are unique and none excel them in the friendship and comradeship manifested by the members on the occasion of each gathering of the Burns Club.

Of course the dinners partake, largely, of a Scottish atmosphere, but never has the membership been limited to Scotchmen or men of Scottish descent. The only qualifications for membership in this organization are to be of good character and a lover of Burns and Scottish literature. This Club has, therefore, gathered within its folds, men of all nationalities but all of them thoroughly in love with the poetry of the Scottish Bard and filled with admiration for the songs of old Scotland, as they are rendered by the soloists and by the Club itself, in the choruses.

It is interesting to speculate upon what might be the future of the Albany Burns Club. Those who are now active are the sons and grandsons of men who have been interested in the Club in previous years or men who are thoroughly interested in the objects for which the Club was formed and is still kept in existence. In the course of time many of these men will have passed away. In ten years time, or at the very outside 20 years, most of these men will have gone to their final reward. Will the younger men keep up this organization? Some of them are coming in but not so many as would seem desirable.

It goes without saying that the poetry of Robert Burns will always be admired and, as the years roll on, new men will come along who will be just as enthusiastic over his songs and poems as those who have gone before. No generation has a patent on the love for the songs of Burns and for Scottish literature in general and, it is to be hoped, that younger men will seek admission into this Club and become as much interested as those who now are at the helm and thus keep up a lively interest in this unique organization which has such a wonderful history.

A perusal of the history of the Burns Club, as set forth in this booklet, should be interesting to anyone who has any love for poetry and a particular admiration for the life and writings of Robert Burns. The old Burns Club made quite a feature of the centenary celebration in 1859. None of those who now belong to this Club, probably, will be here in 1959, when the bi-centenary of the birth of Robert Burns will come. But, let us hope that the interest will be kept up and the organization continued, year after year, with new members coming in and that, when the Two Hundredth Anniversary of the birth of the Plowman Poet arrives, there will be a Burns Club in Albany and that it will celebrate that event in a manner befitting the occasion and rival the celebration of the old Burns Club in 1859. Burns, himself, in one of his beautiful poems, made use of the following hearty wish to an old comrade:

Hale be your heart, hale be your fiddle,
Lang may your elbow jink and diddle,
To cheer you thro' the weary widdle
O' worldly cares;
Till bairns' bairns kindly cuddle
Your auld gray hairs.

And if there are any of the members of the Burns Club of today, who are here in 1959, I am sure they will be more than pleased to have the Burns Club of that day repeat the above stanza, while their thoughts harken back to the days of 1919, which will then be the "Old Days."

Burns, and Burns Clubs

Read at the Dinner of the Albany Burns Club in 1906

When Burns, of Scotland, hard we're told,
Lived, worked and wrote in days of old,
Burned midnight oil in poet's way,
To write some rhymes which didn't pay;
When all the things that Robert saw,
Filled him with wonder, love and awe,
And Nature, in that rugged clime,
Compelled him to break out in rhyme;
I think it safely can be said,
It never entered Robert's head,
That after he was dead and gone,
They'd feast the day that he was born;
On each recurrent natal day,
Scotch, Dutch and Dagoes all would pay,
To eat French dishes off the reel,
And call them haggis and oatmeal;
While orators in spike-tailed coat,
Would try to quote what Robert wrote.

Now, Robert was a farmer lad,
He had his points, some good, some bad;
He loved his father — as tales ran,
An honest, good, God-fearing man;
He loved his mother, and 'tis said,
Her good wise counsel kept his head;
He loved his Bible — so do we,
That is, as far as I can see;
He loved his wife when wife he gat,
For Robert knew where he was at;
He loved his children and would slice,
E'en now and then some good advice;
He loved his home, a place supposed,
To go when other places closed;
He loved old Scotland, loved it dear,
We love it too — just once a year;
And more than all he loved to spare,
A jingle here — a jingle there.

'Tis thus his good points can be seen,
But Rob. had bad ones too, I ween;
He loved the girls and e'en by spurts,
Rob. tackled everything in skirts;
A very connoisseur was he,
Of feminine divinity;
He loved good whisky — so might we
If we could but *good whisky* see;
But Lord, it takes most awful gall
To drink the stuff we get — "that's all";
He loved to stay out late at night,
Now you and I know that's not right,
In these days we keep better hours,
It's usually early morn for ours;
And thus you see, by any plan,
Rob. was a many-sided man,
And one can hardly think it single,
That such a man should rhyme and jingle.

Now, giving Robert all his due,
He sang for many, not for few;
He clothed his thoughts in homely guise,
And didn't soar beyond the skies;
His verses bear the honest ring,

Of Manhood — earth's most precious thing;
 His subjects — strange indeed we feel,
 To read that " Address to the De'il ";
 Who else but Rob. sang " To a Mouse ";
 Or wrote heroics " To a Louse ";
 'Tis true, some good admirers here,
 May find his language strange and queer,
 And really, I'm constrained to say,
 Burns Clubs might stick on " Scots wha ha'e "
 And Burns himself would sure say " scat ",
 If you could not pronounce " a' that ";
 Lord knows how Rob. would gi'e us rubs,
 Had he but written on " Burns Clubs ".

We bards — we're only just a few,
 Are sometimes stumped just what to do;
 We get a thought — there you'll agree,
 We even might get two or three;
 These thoughts we must jot down in rhyme,
 " Make good " and " get there " every time;
 We must make rhyme, that's very sure,
 Our diction must be choice and pure,
 Our meter straight, our syntax strong,
 No line too short, no line too long;
 Then, when our song roll is unfurled
 And cast upon a cruel, cold world,
 It often happens years will pass,
 Before we're placed in proper class;
 Until at last, when we are gone,
 They raise a monument of stone,
 Carve our poor features on a bust,
 And dig our verses from the dust,
 Read, scan and pick with great endeavor,
 And then pronounce us " greatest ever ".

'Twas thus with Milton, Shakspeare, Scott,
 'Twas thus with Burns — that's all he got;
 Thus with all bards you ever knew,
 So I'm resigned to my fate too;
 But being thus, you all can see,
 I give these bards my sympathy,
 And more than all my sorrow turns,
 To poor, misquoted Robert Burns;
 So, as befits one in the trade,
 I'll call poor Robert from the shade,
 To show him all the dubious dubs,
 Who call themselves the real " Burns Clubs ";
 Come, Robert, now come " doon wi' me ",
 To real old good Dutch Albany,
 And I will show thee, with a touch,
 Scotch, English, Irish, Dagos, Dutch,
 All eating Scotch broth with a spoon,
 By " banks and braes o' Bonnie Doon ",
 All praising thee wi' mony a canter,
 And all as fu' as " Tam o' Shanter ".

Now first and foremost you will find,
 A " chiel " you'd think was your own kind,
 His " brow is brent ", his face is bonnie,
 He'd make a real good " Souther Johnny ",
 You'd take him Rob. for Scotchman canny,
 But Lord — his name is Montignani;
 Now, dinna turn awa sae glum,
 I know that pricks and rankles some,
 But turn again your sonsie face,
 And you'll see one of your own race,
 He'll fill your good Scotch heart with cheer,



WILLIAM GREY, WILLIAM MANSON AND
ANDREW McMURRAY

Old Time Members of the Albany Burns Club

A grand old Scotchman named Kinnear;
That warms the cockles of your heart,
And now, that we have got a start,
I'll tell you Rob. between us two,
We've got the Camerons with us too;
Sax times removed though they may be,
And with your Scotch they're up a tree,
Yet still, that grand old Cameron name,
Makes you feel happy just the same.

Now, having brought your smiles all back,
We'll veer and take another tack;
Remember now, we're all true blue,
Tonight we think a heap of you;
But Lord, what tender chords I touch,
When I tell you we've got the Dutch;
'Tis true, oh, Robbie, Robbie dear,
I plainly see you shed a tear,
But wipe your eyes, come back, come back,
They've all prefixed it with a Mac;
Mac Visschers, Mac Lansings and Mac Pruyns,
Why they would sound well in your lines;
Say thou the word, they'll wear the Kilts,
And fight for Scotland to the hilts,
E'en more, they'll twist their tongues to hum,
" Glour at the reek gaun up the lum ";
Man, man, ye dinna ken these chields,
Nor how true Scotch a Dutchman feels,
When Burns day comes and he can learn,
" We twa ha'e paid 't i' the burn ".

Dear Rob. you may think that's enough,
But yet there's one thing still more tough,
'Twas you, yourself, who said one day,
" Then let us pray that come it may ";
You wanted men in all the earth,
To be good brothers from their birth,
And so to-night, to honor you,
We've even got the Irish too;
Their names, I'll give you straight, my boy,
Mick Kinney, Mick Garr, and Mick Elroy,
And also Mick Namara true,
They honor us, they honor you,
For whether they be Micks or Macs,
Tonight their tongue of Scotland smacks,
A pack o' wheen braw chields thegither,
A' frae the bonnie lan' o' heather;
So, Rob. these mixtures you'll forgive,
While we in truest friendship live,
For though the Scotch all truth instil,
" A man's a man for a' that " still.

Scotch, Dagos, Irish, Dutch, so far,
But I'll show more, for more there are,
To-night, to join our Scottish clan,
We've captured e'en the Isle of Man,
That little isle has done the trick,
And sent us Stephens, Sayles and Gick;
And even England — Rob., you divil,
You never could treat England civil,
You know you made them twist and turn,
When you wrote " Bruce at Bannockburn ";
But they forgive you now and cry
You knock their own bards way sky high,
They screw their tongues while they explain,
" Oor Robbie, aye he's a' oor ain ";
You'd laught to hear them try it Rob.,

They truly make a frightful job,
But Ogden, Annesley, Parker, Nash,
And Blocksidge too, with awful crash,
Contort and twist, gyrate and screw,
To speak the Scotch as glib as you.

Rob. you were always in the van,
In fighting for the rights of man,
You wrote some caustic rhymes and things,
And flung them at the heads of Kings;
Since then, thro' dint of evolution,
We've fought a great big Revolution;
That Revolution left us " Sons ",
They're thick as bees, these sons o' guns;
You know we have no " classes " here,
No Lords and Dukes, no Prince or Peer,
So whiles these " Sons " can wear no crest,
They're just a peg above the rest;
To-night with you they plough and till man,
Rudd, Chester, Leonard, Howe and Stillman;
That's great distinction shown to you,
But Rob., we have the Yankees too,
The men whose forbears came in plenty,
In good ship Mayflower, Sixteen-twenty,
All eating haggis with a churner,
Young, Hastings, Mather, Rice and Turner.

Now Rob. I know you feel quite lonely,
And think Burns Clubs should be Scotch only,
You're wrong on that, for all these others,
Are your good friends and our good brothers;
But just to make you feel quite happy,
I'll name some Scotch names good and snappy;
We have a Richmond and a Gilmour,
The Douglas comes and brings his claymore,
We have a Graham, always ready,
MacHarg, MacDonald and McCredie,
Bnehanan, Bancroft, Guthrie, Shaw,
Milne, Scott and Wallace, best of a';
So you can see these Scotch names make,
The proper leaven for our cake,
And with some others none can place,
Of mixed up tribe and doubtful race,
Like Manning, Brainerd, Jackson, Smith,
And big Joe Lawson, who's a myth,
You needn't turn away and weep,
For Scotland's still top of the heap.

So, fare you weel, you bard of Doon,
You lived a hundred years too soon,
Were you here now what things you'd see,
And how your pen would fly with glee;
The race for gold, the grab for wealth,
Our morals, politics and health,
Our girls, our men, our sports, our plays,
Would all be subjects of your lays;
And honest, Rob. I'd like to know,
Your own opinion of this show,
What digs you'd give, what good Scotch rubs,
If you were writing of Burns Clubs,
What you would say if you were here,
And I was Burns and you Kinnear;
That cannot be, so here's a toast:
" To Burns — The Scotchman's proudest boast,
" May his name draw all men of worth,
" From all the nations of the earth,
" And may they read his every line,
" And part by singing " Auld Lang Syne ".