

# Burns and His Times

1.- CHRONOLOGY OF BURNS'S LIFE

**BY PROFESSOR DR LANCEY FERGUSON.**

Reprinted from his life of Burns entitled *Pride and Passion*, 1939.

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IL-CHRONOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY EVENTS.

Sources : S. H. Steinberg, *Historical Tables* 1939; Haydn's *Dictionary of Dates; Annual Register; Dictionary of National Biography; Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen*; etc.

(Ayrshire Events are printed in **SMALL CAPITALS**).

1759. For three years Britain had been at war with France, with fighting in America, India, at sea, and (with Prussia as an ally) in Europe. After a period of reverses, 1759 came as a year of victories: 'We are forced to ask every morning what victory there is for fear of missing one.'

(Horace Walpole.)

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*Jan. 15.* Opening of British Museum.

*Mar. 2.* British capture Surat in India.

*Mar. 13.* Halley's Comet at perihelion, having appeared as predicted by Halley, who died 1742.

*April 14.* Death of Handel.

*Aug. 1.* Battle of Minden: Anglo-Hanoverian army defeats French.

*Aug. 18.* Boscawen defeats French fleet off Lagos.

*Aug. 24.* Birth of William Wilberforce.

*Sept. 13.* Capture of Quebec by General Wolfe; death of Wolfe.

*Oct. 9.* Eddystone Lighthouse completed by Smeaton.

*Oct. 30.* Syrian earthquake, 20,000 perish.

*Nov. 10.* Birth of Schiller, German poet and dramatist.

*Nov. 20.* Hawke defeats French in Quiberon Bay.

*Nov. 24.* Eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

James Brindley commences work on Bridgewater Canal. Voltaire, *Candide*.

Samuel Johnson, *Rasselas*.

Adam Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*.

W. Robertson, *History of Scotland*.

Haydn, *1st Symphony*.

1760. *Sept.* 28. Gilbert Burns born at Alloway.

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1760. *Jan.* 1. Carron Iron Works, first furnace blown.

*Feb.* 10. Eyre Coote captures Arcot in India.

*Oct.* 25, Death of George II; George III, aged 22, succeeds.  
Duke of Newcastle's Ministry continues.

Foundation of Perth Academy, first Academy in Scotland, with rector from Ayr Grammar School.

Wedgwood establishes pottery works.

James Macpherson, *Fragments of Ancient Poetry*, reputedly by Ossian.

Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*.

1761. *Jan.* 16. Eyre Coote captures Pondicherry in India.

*April* General Election.

*July* 4. ' Death of Samuel Richardson, the novelist.

*July* 17. Opening of Bridgewater Canal.

*Aug.* 15. Alliance between France and Spain.

*Sept.* 8. Marriage of King George III and Charlotte Sophia of Mecklenburg-Strelitz.  
Buckingham Palace purchased this year.

*Sept.* 22. Coronation.

*Oct.* 5. Pitt resigns from the Government over conduct of the war.

*Oct.* 22. Relief Church established following secession from Church of Scotland.

Rousseau, *La Nouvelle Heloise*.

Macpherson, *Fingal*.

David Hume, *History of England*.

1762. *Sept.* 30. Agnes Burns born at Alloway.

1764. *Nov.* 14. Anabella Burns born at Alloway.

1762. *Jan.* 4. Britain declares war on Spain.

*Jan.* 5. Peter III succeeds Czarina Elizabeth.

*Mar.* 9. Birth of William Cobbett.

*April* Britain ceases subsidies to ally, Prussia.

*May* Prussia makes peace with Russia and Sweden, continues war with Austria.

*May* 29. Earl of Bute becomes Prime Minister.

*May* 29. *North Briton* newspaper commences publication with support of John Wilkes.

*July* 17. Czar Peter III deposed and strangled, succeeded by his consort Catherine II.

*Aug.* 21. Death of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, writer, wit, and beauty.

Work starts on Forth-Clyde Canal.

Rousseau, *Emile*, and *Contrat Social*.

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1763. *Feb.* 10. Treaty of Paris signed by Britain, France, Spain, and Portugal, ending the Seven Years' War. Later in the month by the Treaty of Hubertusburg, Prussia and Austria make peace.

*Apr.* 7. George Grenville becomes Prime Minister.

*Nov.* 15. No. 45 of the *North Briton* declared to be 'scandalous and seditious,' but John Wilkes claims Parliamentary privilege and later compensated for illegal arrest.

Rising of the Iroquois tribe in North America.

Six-year-old W. A. Mozart visits England on first professional tour.

Nor' Loch, Edinburgh, drained.

JOHN McADAM & CO., AYR BANK, FOUNDED.

1764. *July* 12. ORDINATION IN KILMARNOCK IN PUBLIC HOUSE, BECAUSE OF RIOT.

*Sept.* 7. Stanislaus Poniatowski elected King of Poland.

*Oct.* 25. Death of William Hogarth, the artist.

Hargreave's spinning-jenny.

Theatre opened in Glasgow.

Horace Walpole, *Castle of Otranto*.

Thomas Reid, *Enquiry into the Human Mind*.

1765. Robert and Gilbert sent to school to John Murdoch.  
 1766. William Burnes rents Mt. Oliphant farm  
 1767. *July 30.* William Burns born.

1765. *May. 23.* Stamp Act, relating to Colonies.  
*Apr. 12.* Death of Edward Young, poet.  
*July. 16.* Marquis of Rockingham becomes Prime Minister.  
*Aug. 18.* Emperor Joseph II succeeds Francis I, joint rule with mother, Maria Theresa, till her death in 1780.  
*Dec. 20.* Death of James Francis Edward Stewart, the Old Pretender, in Rome.  
 Isle of Man brought under the authority of the U.K Parliament.  
 James Watt conceives idea of separate condenser steam engine.  
 George III 's two-month illness, in which his reason is affected.  
 MORAVIAN CONGREGATION FORMED IN AYR.  
 Thomas Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry.*  
 W. Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England.*  
 Adam Fergusson, *Essay on the History of Civil Society.*
1766. *Feb. 23.* Lorraine incorporated in France.  
*Mar. 11.* Stamp Act repealed; Declaratory Act asserts British Government's authority to tax Colonies.  
*Apr. 7.* Birth of Henry Bell.  
*July. 12.* Earl of Chatham becomes Prime Minister.  
*Nov. 16.* British occupy Falkland Islands.  
 Cavendish discovers hydrogen.  
 Goldsmith, *The Vicar of Wakefield.*
1767. *May* Townshend imposes duties on American imports of tea, etc.  
*Aug. 8.* Eruption of Mount Vesuvius.  
*Dec.* Duke of Grafton becomes Prime Minister.  
 Clive returns to England from India.  
 FIRST TURNPIKE ACT FOR AYRSHIRE.  
 ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF AYR SURVEYOR OF CUSTOMS.

1768. Murdoch gives up Alloway school. The *Titus Andronicus* incident.

1769. *July 10.* John Burns born at Mount Oliphant.

1768. *Mar. 18.* Death of Laurence Sterne, novelist.

*April* General Election.

*May 15.* France buys Corsica from Genoa.

*June* James Bruce sets out to discover source of Nile.

*Dec. 10.* Royal Academy instituted, with Joshua Reynolds appointed first President and knighted.

Captain Cook sets out on first voyage of survey. Sterne, *Sentimental Journey*.

Francis Grose, *Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue*.

James Boswell, *Journal of a Tour to Corsica*.

Arthur Young, *A Tour through the Southern Counties*.

1769. *Jan. 21.* First letter of ' Junius ' appeared in the *Public Advertiser*.

*Feb. 27.* Court case, Hamilton v. Douglas.

*Mar. 10.* FENWICK WEAVERS' SOCIETY FORMED, THE FIRST CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY.

*Apr. 26.* First exhibition at Royal Academy.

*Apr. 29.* Birth of Arthur Wellesley, later Duke of Wellington.

*Aug. 15.* Napoleon Bonaparte born at Ajaccio.

*Sept. 6-8.* Shakespeare's Jubilee, projected by David Garrick, celebrated at Stratford-on-Avon.

*Oct. 24.* MURDER OF 10TH EARL OF EGLINTON.

Arkwright's water frame, improved in 1775. Watt's patent for his steam engine.

Paoli flees to Britain from Corsica. Cook sails round New Zealand,

Building of New Town of Edinburgh begun. DOUGLAS, HERON & CO., AYR BANK, FOUNDED.

PASCAL PAOLI, CORSICAN PATRIOT, VISITS AYRSHIRE AS GUEST OF JAMES BOSWELL. RECEIVES FREEDOM OF THE BURGH OF KILM.A.RNOCK.

Pennant 's Tour of Scotland.

1771. *June 27.* Isabella Burns born at Mount Oliphant.

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1770. *Jan. 28.* Lord North becomes Prime Minister.  
*Mar. 5.* Boston Massacre. American duties all repealed except tea.  
*Apr. 7.* Birth of William Wordsworth.  
*Apr. 28.* Cook lands at Botany Bay and names New South Wales.  
*May 16.* Marriage of Dauphin and Marie Antoinette.  
*May 31.* Fireworks display at Versailles; nearly 1,000 killed in panic.  
*June 23.* Death of Mark Akenside, poet and physician.  
*Aug. 25.* Suicide of William Chatterton, the poet.  
*Nov. 14.* Bruce reaches source of Blue Nile.  
*Dec.* James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, born.  
*Dec. 16.* Birth of Ludwig van Beethoven.

First public restaurant opened, in Paris.

Public exhibition of lunatics in London ceases.

Goldsmith, *The Deserted Village*.

Dredging of Clyde begun.

EXTENSIVE COALMINING BEGINS AT STEVENSON.

AGRARIAN IMPROVEMENTS ON A LARGE-SCALE BEGINNING IN AYRSHIRE; AYRSHIRE CATTLE BECOMING COMMON. AYR RACE COURSE OPENED.

1771. *July 30.* Death of Thomas Gray, the poet.  
*Aug. 15.* Birth of Walter Scott.  
*Sept. 10.* Birth of Mungo Park.  
*Sept. 17.* Death of Tobias Smollett, novelist, at Leghorn.

Arkwright establishes first spinning-mill in England.

ST. JAMES KILWINNING LODGE, TARBOLTON, CHARTERED.

JAMES MONTGOMERY, POET AND HYMN WRITER, BORN IN IRVINE.

Smollett, *Humphrey Clinker*.

Henry Mackenzie, *The Man of Feeling*, issued anonymously.

First edition of *Encyclopedia Britannica*, published in Edinburgh, compiled by William Smellie.

1772. Robert and Gilbert attend Dalrymple parish school week about during summer quarter.
1773. Robert studies grammar and French with Murdoch for three weeks, writes his first song, 'Handsome Nell' for Nellie Kilpatrick.

1772. *Mar. 29.* Death in London of Emmanuel Swedenborg, founder of the New Jerusalem Church.
- Apr. 13.* Warren Hastings appointed Governor of Bengal. May. The Shakers sect emigrate to America and settle in Albany, 1774.
- June 12.* BLACK MONDAY: COLLAPSE OF THE AYR BANK OF DOUGLAS, HERON & CO.
- June 22.* Decision of Court of King's Bench that slavery cannot exist in 'England.
- Aug. 5.* First partition of Poland between Russia, Prussia, and Austria.
- Sept. 19.* OPENING OF SALTCOATS CANAL.
- Oct. 21.* Birth of S. T. Coleridge.

Joseph Priestley's researches on composition of air. Royal Marriage Act.

Opening of North Bridge, Edinburgh.

ACT FOR IMPROVING AYR HARBOUR.

DOONFOOT BRIDGE BUILT.

Dearth of meal.

1773. *May 21.* Parliamentary enquiry on Clive's conduct in India completed.
- July 21.* Society of Jesus (Jesuits) proscribed by Pope Clement XIV.
- Aug.-Nov.* Dr. Samuel Johnson and James Boswell's tour of Scotland.
- Oct. 30. Nov. 8.* IN AYRSHIRE DR. JOHNSON VISITS LOUDOUN, TREESBANK, AUOHANS, AND AUOHINLECK.
- Dec. 16.* Boston Tea Party.
- Pugachoff's rebellion in South Russia.
- Academy for deaf and dumb, the first in Britain, opened in Edinburgh.
- SCHISM IN LODGE ST. JAMES, TARBOLTON.
- Robert Fergusson, *Poems*.

1774. Hard times begin at Mt. Oliphant  
 1775. Burns attends Hugh Rodger's school at Kirkoswald.
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1774. *Apr.* 4. Death of Oliver Goldsmith.  
*May* 10. Death, from smallpox, of Louis XV, succeeded by grandson, Louis XVI.  
*June* 3. Robert Tannahill, poet, born at Paisley.  
*July* 14. Outbreak of war with American colonists.  
*Sept.* 21. Opening of First Congress of 13 Colonies at Philadelphia.  
*Aug.* 2. First mail coach, from London to Bristol.  
*Aug.* 12. Birth of Robert Southey.  
*Aug.* 20. JOHN WILSON, ARTIST, BORN AT AYR.  
*Oct.* General Election.  
*Oct.* 16. Death of Robert Fergusson, the poet, aged 24.  
*Nov.* 22. Death of Robert Clive.  
 Priestley discovers oxygen.  
 Rules of cricket drawn up by a committee of noblemen and gentlemen.  
 Register House, Edinburgh, built.  
 James Bruce returns home from travels in Egypt, Sudan, and Abyssinia.  
 MESSRS. HUNTER & CO, AYR BANK, FORMED AS SUCCESSOR TO BANKRUPT DOUGLAS, HERON & CO.  
 SECOND TURNPIKE ACT FOR AYRSHIRE.  
 Goethe, *Sorrows of Werther*.
1775. *Feb.* 10. Birth of Charles Lamb.  
*Apr.* 19. Battles of Lexington and Concord.  
*Apr.* 23. Birth of J. M. W. Turner.  
*May* Famine riots at Versailles.  
*June* 15. George Washington becomes Commander of American Continental Army.  
*June* 17. Battle of Bunker's Hill.  
*Sept.* 18. Death of Andrew Foulis, younger of the Foulis brothers, and sale thereafter of their celebrated Glasgow printing works.  
*Oct.* 29. Awful storm in the North of England.  
 Bohemian peasant revolt.  
 Appointment of Henry Dundas as Lord Advocate.  
 Act to relieve colliers and salters. (Serfdom finally abolished, 1799).  
 BANK OF SCOTLAND OPENS BRANCHES IN AYR AND KILMARNOCK.  
 JOHN HOWIE, 'SCOTS WORTHIES.'  
 CULZEAN CASTLE BEING BUILT TO ROBERT ADAM'S DESIGNS.

1777. At Whitsun William Burnes moves from Mt. Oliphant to Lochlie.

1776. *Apr. 15.* Duchess of Kingston found guilty of bigamy, but pleading privilege of peerage, excused penalty of burning of the hand.

*June 10.* Garrick's farewell at Drury Lane.

*July 4.* Declaration of American Independence.

*July 25.* Calton Hill Observatory, Edinburgh, founded.

*Aug. 25.* Death of David Hume, philosopher and historian.

Meikle's threshing-machine.

Adam Smith, *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*.

Edward Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 1st volume.

David Herd, *Ancient Scottish Ballads*.

1777. *Feb.* Habeas Corpus suspended. for duration of American War.

*June 27.* Execution at Tyburn for forgery of Rev. Dr. Dodd.

*July 27.* Birth of Thomas Campbell in Glasgow.

*Oct. 9.* Luddite riots in Manchester.

*Oct. 17.* Burgoyne and British Army surrender after Battle of Saratoga.

Royal Caledonian Hunt instituted.

ANDREW WIGHT'S FIRST TOUR IN AYRSHIRE TO REPORT ON AGRICULTURE.

R. B. Sheridan, *School for Scandal*.

1778. *Jan. 10.* Death of Carl Linnaeus, the botanist.

*Feb. 6.* France recognises U.S.A. and declares war on Britain.

*May 11.* Death of Lord Chatham.

*May 30.* Death of Voltaire.

*July 2.* Death of Rousseau.

*Sept. 1.* JOHN THOMSON, ARTIST, BORN AT DAILLY.

Relief Act for English Roman Catholics.

PAUL JONES, SCOTS-AMERICAN PRIVATEER, THREATENING FIRTH OF CLYDE.

1779. Burns joined a dancing class ' in absolute defiance' of his father's commands.

1780. The Tarbolton Bachelors' Club organized.

1779. *Feb.2.* Anti-popery riots in Edinburgh.

*Feb. 14.* Captain Cook killed on Hawaii.

*April 3.* DOWAGER COUNTESS OF LOUDOUN DIES AT SORN CASTLE, AGED 99.

*Apr. 19.* William Herschel measures two sunspots.

*May 2.* BIRTH OF JOHN GALT IN IRVINE.

*June 16.* Spain declares war on Britain.

Crompton's mule for spinning.

First cotton mill in Scotland established at Rothesay.

Siege of Gibraltar.

1780. *Jan. 16.* Rodney defeats Spanish fleet off Cape St. Vincent.

*Mar. 22.* Duel in Hyde Park between Lord Shelburne and Col. Fullarton of Fullarton.

*Mar. 26.* *British Gazette and Sunday Monitor*, first Sunday newspaper, begins.

*May.* The Derby horse-race instituted by Lord Derby.

*June 2-9.* Gordon riots against Popery, in London.

*Sept. 20.* RIOT IN FENWICK AGAINST UNPOPULAR PRESENTATION TO PARISH KIRK.

*Oct. 13.* EXECUTION AT AYR OF MATTHEW HAY.

*Oct. 15* British ships lost in West Indies hurricane.

*Oct.* General Election.

*Nov. 20.* Britain declares war on Netherlands.

*Nov. 20.* Death of Maria Theresa; Joseph II rules alone thereafter.

Great fire in St. Petersburg.

Galvani's discoveries in electricity.

Society of Antiquaries formed in Edinburgh.

Death of Alisdair MacMhaigster Alasdair, Gaelic poet.

1781. Burns courts Alison Begbie. His father's dispute with David McLure, his landlord, begins. Burns joins the Freemasons, and about mid-summer goes to Irvine as a flax-dresser.
1782. *Jan. 1.* The Irvine shop burnt out; soon after, Burns returns to Lochlie.  
*Sept. 24.* William Burnes's dispute referred to arbiters.

1781. *Mar. 13.* William Herschel discovers Uranus and its satellites.  
*Oct. 19.* Lord Cornwallis surrenders to General Washington at Yorktown.
- SMALLPOX IN IRVINE.  
 UNION OF TWO MASONIC LODGES IN TARBOLTON.  
 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*.
1782. *Mar. 19.* Marquis of Rockingham becomes Prime Minister.  
*Apr. 27.* DEATH OF 4TH EARL OF LOUDOUN, PIONEER OF AGRICULTURE.  
*May 7.* Pitt's motion for Parliamentary reform defeated. *May.* Irish Parliament declared independent legislature. *July.* Earl of Shelburne becomes Prime Minister.  
*Aug. 29.* Loss of the *Royal George*, over 600 perish  
*Oct. 10.* Mrs. Siddons' debut as a star at Drury Lane.  
*Nov. 30.* Britain recognises American independence.
- Princes of Wales visits Brighton for the first time.  
 Luigi Ruffini brings technique of tambouring muslin to Scotland.  
 Thomas Telford goes to London. Repeal of Act against Highland dress.  
 LIFTING CONTROVERSY BEGINS IN KILMAURS ANTI-BURGHIER KIRK.  
 SECESSION FROM UNITED MASONIC LODGE, TARBOLTON.  
 LATE HARVEST, SNOW FELL BEFORE REAPING.

1783. *Jan.* Burns wins a £3 prize for flax-seed.  
*April.* Burns begins his *Commonplace Book*.  
*May 17.* McLure gets a writ of sequestration against William Burnes.  
*Aug. 18.* The 'Oversman' reports in Burnes's favour.  
*Aug. 25.* Burnes makes first appeal to Court of Session.  
*Autumn.* Robert and Gilbert secretly arrange to rent Mossgiel.
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1783. *Mar. 30.* Death of William Hunter, anatomist, obstetrician, collector.  
*Apr. 24.* Duke of Portland becomes Prime Minister.  
*June 5. J* Joseph and Stephen Montgolfier's ascent in fire balloon.  
*Sept. 3.* Treaty of Versailles ending war signed by Britain, France and Spain.  
*Oct. 8* REV. HUGH WHITE DEPOSED FROM IRVINE RELIEF KIRK FOR BUCHANITE HERESIES.  
*Dec. 13.* Death of Dr. Samuel Johnson.  
*Dec. 19.* William Pitt becomes Prime Minister, continues till 1801.
- Earthquake in Sicily, 40,000 deaths.  
Lavoisier decomposes water into hydrogen and oxygen.  
Cort's puddling-furnace for iron-making.  
Royal Society of Edinburgh incorporated.  
Glasgow Chamber of Commerce formed.  
*Glasgow Advertiser* (later the *Glasgow Herald*) first published.  
JOHN LOUDON MCADAM RETURNS FROM AMERICA TO HIS NATIVE AYRSHIRE.

1784. *Jan. 27.* The Court of Session upholds William Burnes.  
*Feb. 13.* Death of William Burnes. The family moves to Mossgiel.
1785. *May 22.* Birth of Elizabeth, the poet's daughter by Elizabeth Paton.  
*Nov. 1.* Burial of John Burns, the poet's youngest brother. During this year Burns began to write his satires, composed 'The Jolly Beggars,' and in Oct. finished his first Commonplace Book. He also met Jean Armour.

1784. *Jan.* Crimea acquired by Russia.  
*Feb 28.* Methodist Conference instituted by John Wesley.  
*Mar.* Royal Burghs propose reform.  
*Apr.* General Election.  
*May 20.* Peace between Britain and Netherlands.  
*Aug.* Pitt's India Act.  
*Aug. 10.* Death of Allan Ramsay, the artist, son of the poet Allan Ramsay (1686-1758).  
*Aug. 27.* Mr. Tytler's ascent in Montgolfier balloon at Edinburgh.  
*Nov. 14.* Samuel Seabury, of the Episcopal Church of Connecticut, consecrated bishop at Aberdeen.

Establishment of Highland and Agricultural Society.

General Roy commences trigonometrical survey of England. Forfeited estates restored.

Mrs. Siddons plays in Edinburgh; General Assembly adjourned through lack of quorum.

SMALLPOX IN IRVINE: 54 DEATHS.

1785. *Apr. 14.* Death of William Whitehead, poet laureate since 1757; succeeded by Rev. Dr. Thomas Warton.  
*Nov. 18.* David Wilkie, artist, born.

Holstein Canal opened.

Rev. Dr. Cartwright's power loom.

MUIRKIRK TAR WORKS ESTABLISHED BY EARL OF DUNDONALD, ADMIRAL STEWART, AND JOHN LOUDON MCADAM.

COTTON WEAVING IN AYRSHIRE BEGINS ABOUT THIS TIME.

Mozart, *Marriage of Figaro*.

James Hutton, *A Theory of the Earth*.

James Bruce, *Travels*.

Thomas Reid, *Essays on Intellectual Powers*.

1786. *Jan. (?)*. Burns plans migration to Jamaica.
- April 3*. 'Proposals' for the Kilmarnock *Poems* sent to press.
- c. April 23*. James Armour repudiates Burns as a son-in-law.
- May 12*. Supposed date of composing 'The Court of Equity.'
- May 14*. Supposed date of farewell to Highland Mary.
- July 9*. Burns's first penitential appearance in church.
- July 22*. Burns transfers his share in Mossgiel to Gilbert.
- July 30*. Burns in hiding from James Armour's writ.
- July 31*. The Kilmarnock *Poems* published.
- c. Sept. 1*. First postponement of Jamaica voyage.
- Sept. 3*. Jean Armour bears twins, who are christened Robert and Jean.
- c. Sept. 27*. Second postponement of Jamaica voyage.
- Oct. 23*. Burns dines at Catrine House.
- End of Oct.* Abandonment of Jamaica plans.
- Nov. 27*. Burns sets out for Edinburgh.
- Nov. 29*. Burns arrives in Edinburgh.
- Dec. 1*. Elizabeth Paton accepts Burns's settlement of her claim.
- Dec. 9*. Henry Mackenzie praises the Kilmarnock *Poems* in *The Lounger*.
- Dec. 14*. William Creech issues subscription bills for the Edinburgh edition of the *Poems*.
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1786. *Mar. 4*. Birth of Henry Raeburn, the artist.
- June*. Mont Blanc climbed for the first time.
- Aug. 2*. Attempt on the life of George III by Margaret Nicolson.
- Aug. 17*. Death of Frederick the Great of Prussia; his nephew succeeds as Frederick William II.
- Sept. 5*. Death of Jonas Hanway, traveller, author, humanitarian, and the first man to use an umbrella generally.
- Transportation to Australia begun.
- W. H. Ireland issues his forged Shakespeare manuscripts.
- KILMARNOOK AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY FORMED.
- REV. WM. MCGILL, ' PRACTICAL ESSAY ON THE DEATH OF CHRIST', PUBLISHED AND FOLLOWED BY CONTROVERSY AS TO WHETHER IT IS HERETICAL.

1787. *Jan. 13.* The Grand Lodge of Scotland toasts Burns as 'Caledonia's Bard.'
- April 21.* Edinburgh *Poems* published.
- April 21.* Burns sells his copyright for 100 guineas.
- May 5 - June 1.* Burns tours the Border.
- End of May.* Vol. I of *Scots Musical Museum* published.
- June 2.* Burns receives Meg Cameron's appeal.
- June 8.* Burns's '*eclatant* return to Mauchline.'
- End of June.* Burns tours West Highlands as far as Inveraray.
- July 29.* Jean Armour 'in for it again.'
- Aug. 2.* Burns completes his autobiographical letter to Dr. John Moore.
- Aug. 8.* Burns returns to Edinburgh.
- Aug. 15.* Burns freed of Meg Cameron's writ.
- Aug. 25 - Sept. 16.* Highland tour with William Nicol.
- Oct. 4 - 20.* Tour in Stirlingshire.
- Oct.* Death of poet's daughter, Jean.
- Nov.* Burns begins active work for the *Museum*.
- Dec. 4.* Burns meets Agnes McLehose.
- Dec. 7.* Burns dislocates his knee.
- Dec. 8.* The *Clarinda* correspondence begins.
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1787. *Sept. 17.* American Constitution passed.
- Sept.* 2,000 lose lives in floods in Navarre.
- Formation of Society for Suppressing the Slave Trade.
- Settlement of Sierra Leone as asylum for Negroes.
- First Savings Bank established in Berne, Switzerland. Cavendish 's electrical experiments.
- CATRINE COTTON WORKS ESTABLISHED.
- MUIRKIRK IRON WORKS ESTABLISHED.
- Schiller, *Don Carlos*.
- Mozart, *Don Giovanni*.

1788. *Jan. 4.* Burns's first visit to Clarinda.  
*Feb. 13 - 14.* Peak of the Clarinda correspondence: four letters in two days.  
*Feb. 18.* Burns leaves Edinburgh.  
*Feb. 23.* Burns returns to Mauchline, is 'disgusted' by Jean.  
*Feb. 27 Mar. 2.* Burns visits Ellisland with John Tennant.  
*Mar. 3.* Jean bears twin girls, of whom one dies on Mar. 10 and the other on Mar. 22.  
*c. Mar. 13.* Burns returns to Edinburgh.  
*Mar. 18.* Burns signs lease of Ellisland.  
*Mar. 24.* Burns leaves Edinburgh.  
*Mar.* Vol. II. of *Scots Musical Museum* published.  
*Late April.* Burns acknowledges Jean Armour as his wife.  
*April-May.* Burns receives Excise instructions at Mauchline.  
*June 11.* Burns settles at Ellisland.  
*July 14.* Burns's Excise commission issued.  
*Nov. 5.* Centenary of the 'Glorious Revolution.'  
*Nov.* Jenny Clow bears Burns a son.  
*Dec.* Jean joins Burns in borrowed quarters at the Isle.
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1788. *Jan.* I. First issue of the London *Times*.  
*Jan. 22.* Birth of George Gordon, Lord Byron.  
*Jan. 26.* Penal settlement established near Sydney, Australia.  
*Jan. 30.* Death of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, the Young Pretender, in Rome.  
*Feb. 13.* Impeachment of Warren Hastings and beginning of seven years' trial.  
*Mar. 29.* Death of Charles Wesley.  
*Aug. 21.* Death of Thomas Gainsborough.  
*Oct. 1.* Deacon Brodie of Edinburgh executed.  
*Oct. 12.* George III 's mental illness made public.  
*Oct. 14.* Patrick Miller's steam boat experiments on Dalswinton Loch, Dumfriesshire.
- AYR NEW BRIG, DESIGNED BY ROBERT ADAM, COMPLETED.  
 Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, incorporated.  
 Goethe, *Egmont*.  
 Bentham, *Principles of Morals and Legislation*.

1789. *Feb.* 16. Burns goes to Edinburgh to close accounts with Creech and to settle Jenny Clow's suit.
- Feb.* 28. Burns returns to Ellisland. *Summer.* Burns meets Francis Grose.
- Aug.* 18. Francis Wallace Burns born.
- Sept.* 1. Burns begins duty as Excise officer.
- Nov.* Burns ill with ' malignant squinancy and low fever.'
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1789. *Jan.* 31. Prince of Wales accepts the Regency on Government's terms.
- Apr.* 23. George III's apparent recovery from illness (see 1765 and 1788) and thanksgiving service in St. Paul's.
- Apr.* 28. Mutiny on the *Bounty*.
- Apr.* 30. George Washington becomes first President of the U.S.
- May* 5. Meeting of the States-General at Versailles.
- " *July* 14. Storming of the Bastille, in Paris.
- Aug.* 4. French National Assembly issues the Declaration of the Rights of Man.
- Oct.* 6. Louis XVI moved from Versailles to Paris.
- Dec.* 13. Belgians revolt against Austrian rule.
- Dec* SEVERE STORM: 12 VESSELS STRANDED AT AYR HARBOUR, WITH CONSIDERABLE LOSS OF LIVES.

Scottish Episcopal Church acknowledges House of Hanover and petitions for relief from penal laws.

William Herschel constructs 40 ft. telescope.

Alexander Mackenzie's first journey across Canada, reaches the Arctic Ocean.

FIRST FURNACE BLOWN AT MUIKIRK IRON WORKS.

William Blake, *Songs of Innocence*.

1790. *Jan. 27.* Burns's name placed on list of those eligible for promotion as Examiners and Supervisors.
- Feb.* Vol. III. of *Scots Musical Museum* published. *July.* Burns transferred to Dumfries 3d Division.
- July 24.* Death of William Burns:in London.
- Dec. 1.* MS. of ' Tam o' Shanter ' sent to Grose.

1790. *Feb.3.* Printer of the *Times* for libels on the royal family fined £200 and imprisoned for one year.
- Feb. 20.* Death of Emperor Joseph II, succeeded by Leopold II.
- Apr. 17.* Death of Benjamin Franklin.
- May 21.* Death of Thomas Warton, poet laureate; succeeded by Henry James Pye.
- July 1.* Death of General William Roy, Cartographer.
- July 17.* Death of Adam Smith, the economist.
- July.* General Election.
- Dec. 2.* Belgian revolt suppressed by Austria.

SMALLPOX IN IRVINE: 57 DEATHS.

IRONWORKS ESTABLISHED AT GLENBUCK.

Forth-Clyde Canal completed. Haydn comes to Britain.

Thomas Saint patents first sewing machine.

Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution.*

Goethe, *Faust.*

1791. *Mar. 31.* Anne Park bears Burns a daughter, Elizabeth.  
*April 9.* William Nicol Burns born.  
*April* 'Tam o' Shanter' published in Grose's *Antiquities of Scotland* and in the *March Edinburgh Magazine*.  
*June 19 - 22.* Burns in Ayrshire to attend Gilbert's wedding.  
*Aug. 25.* Auction of crops at Ellisland.  
*Sept. 10.* Formal renunciation of Ellisland lease signed.  
*Nov. 11.* Burns moves into Dumfries.  
*Nov. 29 - Dec. 11.* Burns in Edinburgh. Farewell again to Agnes McLehose.
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1791. *Jan. 30.* DEATH OF 13<sup>TH</sup> EARL OF GLENCAIRN AT FALMOUTH.  
*Mar. 2.* Death of John Wesley.  
*Apr. 4.* Death of Mirabeau.  
*May 6.* Canada Constitution Act.  
*June 20.* Flight of Louis XVI stopped at Varennes.  
*Aug. 22.* Revolt against France of Negroes in Haiti.  
*Sept. 3.* French Constitution passed.  
*Dec. 4.* Death of Mozart.  
*Dec. 12.* DEATH OF REV. WILLIAM AULD, MAUCHLINE.

SMALLPOX AT KILWINNING: ABOUT 50 DEATHS.

AYRSHIRE HUNT FORMED.

United Irishmen founded by Theobald Wolfe Tone. Various enactments against Roman Catholics repealed.

Mozart, *The Magic Flute*.

Boswell, *Life of Johnson*.

Thomas Paine, *The Rights of Man*.

Mary Wollstonecroft, *Vindication of the Rights of Women*.

Ed. Sir John Sinclair, *The Statistical Account of Scotland, first of the 21 volumes*.

1792. *Feb.* Burns promoted to Dumfries Port Division.
- Feb. 29.* Capture of schooner *Rosamond*.
- April 10.* Burns made honorary member of Royal Company of Archers, Edinburgh.
- April 19.* Sale of the *Rosamond's* carronades.
- Aug.* Vol. IV. of *Scots Musical Museum* published.
- Sept. 16.* Burns begins work for Thomson's *Select Collection*. *Nov. 13.* Burns subscribes for Edinburgh *Gazetteer*.
- Nov. 21.* Birth of Elizabeth Riddell Burns.
- Mid-Dec.* Burns's last visit to Dunlop House.
- Dec. 31.* Inquiry into Burns's loyalty.
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1792. *Feb. 23.* Death of Sir Joshua Reynolds.
- Mar. 3.* Death of Robert Adam, the architect.
- Mar. 16.* Assassination of Gustavus III of Sweden by Count Ankerstrom, who was scourged with whips of iron thongs, had his right hand cut off, then his head, then was impaled.
- Apr. 20.* France declares war on Austria.
- June 1.* Kentucky becomes a state.
- June 15.* Repeal of penal laws against Scottish Episcopalians.
- June 20.* March to the Tuileries.
- June 24.* Prussia declares war on France.
- Aug. 4.* Birth of Percy Bysshe Shelley.
- Aug. 13.* French royal family imprisoned.
- Sept. 2-5.* September massacres in Paris.
- Sept. 20.* Battle of Valmy, French repel invasion.
- Sept. 22.* France declared a Republic.
- Nov. 6.* Battle of Jemappes, French conquer Austrian Netherlands.
- Dec. 18.* Thomas Paine found guilty of libels in *The Rights of Man*.

School for blind opened in Edinburgh.

Riots against evictions in Ross and Sutherland.

William Murdoch applies coal gas for illumination at Redruth, Cornwall.

Galvani, *De Viribus Electricitatis*.

1793. *Jan. 5.* Burns defends himself to Graham of Fintry.  
*Feb. 1.* France declares war against England.  
*Feb.* Second Edinburgh edition of *Poems* published.  
*March.* Burns asks, and receives, burgess privileges in the Dumfries schools.  
*May 19.* Burns moves to house in Mill Vennel.  
*June.* First number of Thomson's *Select Collection* published.  
*c. July 30 - Aug. 2.* First Galloway tour with Syme.  
*Aug.* The Edinburgh sedition trials.  
*c. Aug. 30.* 'Bannockburn' sent to Thomson.  
*c. Dec. 31.* Beginning of the Riddell quarrel.
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1793. *Jan. 21.* Execution of Louis XVI.  
*Feb.* First Coalition against France of Britain, Austria, Prussia, Netherlands, Spain, Sardinia, Tuscany, Naples.  
*Apr. 6.* *Committee of Public Safety established and takes control in France.*  
*May 7.* *2nd Partition of Poland, between Russia and Prussia.*  
*June 11.* Death of William Robertson, the historian.  
*July 13.* Assassination of Marat.  
*Aug.* Trial of Thomas Muir, Scottish reformer, followed by his transportation.  
*Sept. 7-8.* Battle of Dunkirk; defeat of 'the Grand Old Duke of York.'  
*Oct. 16.* Execution of Marie Antoinette.
- Eli Whitney invents saw-gin for cleaning seeds from raw cotton.  
Earl Macartney's embassy arrives in Peking.  
Board of Agriculture, proposed by Sir John Sinclair, established with Arthur Young as Secretary.  
Washington founded as Capital of the U.S.A.  
Alexander Mackenzie reaches Pacific after second journey across Canada.  
Alessandro Volta announces principle of Voltaic battery to the Royal Society in London.  
COL. WILLIAM FULLARTON, 'GENERAL VIEW OF THE AGRICULTURE OF THE COUNTY OF AYR.'  
AYRSHIRE FENCIBLE CAVALRY RAISED.

1794. *Jan. 12.* Final breach with Maria Riddell.  
*April 21.* Death of Robert Riddell.  
*c. May 1.* Burns declines a post on *Morning Chronicle*, London.  
*c. June 25 - 28.* Second Galloway tour with Syme.  
*Aug. 12.* Birth of James Glencairn Burns.  
*c. Dec. 22.* Burns appointed Acting Supervisor at Dumfries.
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1794. *Jan. 16.* Death of Edward Gibbon, the historian.  
*Mar.* Polish rising under Kosciusko  
*Apr. 27.* Death of James Bruce, the explorer.  
*May .8* Lavoisier, the French scientist, guillotined.  
*May 23.* Habeas Corpus Act suspended.  
*June 1.* Howe defeats French fleet off Ushant.  
*June 25.* Battle of Fleurus, French defeat Austrians.  
*June* *Mount Vesuvius erupts.*  
*July 28.* Robespierre executed; end of the Reign of Terror.  
*Sept. 3.* Robert Watt and Samuel Downie found guilty of treason in Edinburgh.  
*Sept. 24.* Captain Vancouver returns from exploration of the west coast of North America.  
*Oct. 6.* Great storm.  
*Oct.10.* Suppression of Polish revolt.  
*Nov. 4.* London Missionary Society formed.

Lord Lieutenants appointed to Scottish Counties for the first time since 1714.

Mrs. Radcliffe, *Mysteries of Udolpho*..

1795. *Jan. 12.* Burns posts the letter which estranges Mrs. Dunlop. *Jan. 31.* Burns joins in organizing the Dumfries Volunteers.
- Feb.* Reconciliation with Maria Riddell.
- April.* The Reid miniature painted. Alexander Findlater resumes his duties as Supervisor at Dumfries.
- Sept.* Death of Elizabeth Riddell Burns.
- Dec. -Jan.* Burns ill with rheumatic fever.
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1795. *Apr. 8.* Marriage of Prince of Wales to Princess Caroline of Brunswick.
- Apr. 23.* Warren Hastings acquitted after seven years' Parliamentary Enquiry.
- May 7.* Anderson's College, Glasgow, opened.
- May 17.* Death of James Boswell.
- May 22.* Mungo Park sets out on Niger expedition.
- June* Maroons rise against British in Jamaica.
- Sept.* Orange Clubs formed in Northern Ireland.
- Oct. 4.* Bonaparte saves French Government by "a whiff of grapeshot."
- Oct. 24.* Third and final Partition of Poland between Austria, Prussia and Russia.
- Oct. 31.* Birth of John Keats.
- Nov. 3.* Directory established in France.
- Dec. 4.* Birth of Thomas Carlyle.

Louis XVIII of France, in exile, lives in Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh, from 1795 to 1799.

Break-up of First Coalition against France; Prussia, Netherlands and Spain make peace.

1796. *Mar.* 12 -14. Food riots in Dumfries.  
*July* 3 -16. Burns at the Brow Well.  
*July* 18. Burns writes his last letter.  
*July* 21. Death of Burns.  
*July* 25. Funeral of Burns and birth of his son Maxwell.  
*Dec.* Vol. V. of *Scots Musical Museum* published.
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1796. *Feb.* General Bonaparte appointed to command Army of Italy.  
*Feb.* 11. Thomas Muir, Scots reformer, escapes from Botany Bay.  
*Mar.* 15. French armies enter Milan.  
*May* 14. Dr. Edward Jenner's first experiment in vaccination for smallpox.  
*June* 1. Tennessee becomes a State.  
*June.* General Election.  
*Aug.* 5. Peace between France and Prussia.  
*Aug.* 19. Spain declares war on Britain.  
*Oct.* 7. Death of Thomas Reid, Scottish philosopher.  
*Nov.* 16. Death of Czarina Catherine II; succeeded by Paul I.  
*Dec.* Failure of French attack on Ireland.



