**An Extract from Tam o Shanter**

**By Robert Burns**

Weel mounted on his gray mare, Meg

A better never lifted leg

Tam skelpit on thro' dub and mire;

Despisin' wind and rain and fire.

Whiles holding fast his gude blue bonnet;

Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots sonnet;

Whiles glowring round wi' prudent cares,

Lest bogles catch him unawares:

Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,

Whare ghaists and houlets nightly cry.

Before him Doon pours all his floods;

The doubling storm roars thro' the woods;

The lightnings flash from pole to pole;

Near and more near the thunders roll:

When, glimmering thro' the groaning trees,

Kirk-Alloway seem'd in a bleeze;

Thro' ilka bore the beams were glancing;

And loud resounded mirth and dancing.

Warlocks and witches in a dance;

Nae cotillion brent-new frae France,

But hornpipes, jigs strathspeys, and reels,

Put life and mettle in their heels.

As Tammie glowr'd, amaz'd, and curious,

The mirth and fun grew fast and furious;

The piper loud and louder blew;

The dancers quick and quicker flew;

They reel'd, they set, they cross'd, they cleekit,

Till ilka carlin swat and reekit,

And coost her duddies to the wark,

And linket at it in her sark!

Tam tint his reason a' thegither,

And roars out, "Weel done, Cutty-sark!"

And in an instant all was dark:

And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,

When out the hellish legion sallied.

Now, do thy speedy utmost, Meg,

And win the key-stane o' the brig;

There at them thou thy tail may toss,

A running stream they dare na cross.

But ere the key-stane she could make,

The fient a tail she had to shake!

For Nannie, far before the rest,

Hard upon noble Maggie prest,

And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle;

But little wist she Maggie's mettle -

Ae spring brought off her master hale,

But left behind her ain gray tail;

The carlin claught her by the rump,

And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.