

1818

**WRITTEN IN THE COTTAGE WHERE BURNS WAS
BORN**

John Keats

Keats, John (1795-1821) - Widely regarded as the most talented of the English romantic poets, Keats, whose work was poorly received during his lifetime, could not have foreseen his later recognition. Ironically, he wrote for his own epitaph: "Here lies one whose name was writ in water." Written in the Cottage Where Burns Was Born (1818) - Keats destroyed this poem, but it survives through a copy made by a friend. The opening line predicts Keats' own death:

This mortal body of a thousand days ...

THE COTTAGE WHERE BURNS WAS BORN

This mortal body of a thousand days
Now fills, O Burns, a space in thine own room,
Where thou didst dream alone on budded bays,
Happy and thoughtless of thy day of doom!
My pulse is warm with thine old Barley-bree,
My head is light with pledging a great soul,
My eyes are wandering, and I cannot see,
Fancy is dead and drunken at its goal;
Yet can I stamp my foot upon thy floor,
Yet can I ope thy window-sash to find
The meadow thou hast tramped o'er and o'er,
Yet can I think of thee till thought is blind,
Yet can I gulp a bumper to thy name,
O smile among the shades, for this is fame!

THE END