

# Robert Burns' letters on display at National Library



A selection of handwritten poems and letters by Robert Burns has gone on display to the public at the National Library of Scotland (NLS) in Edinburgh.

The writings, which are known as the Glenriddell Manuscripts, feature 27 letters and 50 poems – including well-known works such as Holy Willie's Prayer.

Burns wrote these for his friend and neighbour Captain Robert Riddell of Glenriddell between 1791 and 1793.

Robert Betteridge, the NLS curator who organised the display, said: "This is the single largest collection of Burns' manuscripts in existence and one of the library's greatest treasures. Their journey from Dumfriesshire where Burns wrote out the poems and letters, to Liverpool and then the United States is a fascinating one."

The collection ended up in the possession of the Liverpool Athenaeum, a gentleman's club in the city, which put them up for auction in 1913 for £5000. Despite objections from Burns societies, the sale went ahead, with the manuscripts bought by John Gribbel, a Burns enthusiast from Philadelphia.

The display is on at the NLS until March 30 and entry is free.