

Auld Lang Syne

TRADITIONAL SCOTTISH (BURNS) ARR. HUGH LEVEY



CLARINET QUARTET

SCORE & PARTS

Auld Lang Syne

TRADITIONAL SCOTTISH (BURNS)

Since Robert Burns wrote the words of Auld Lang Syne in 1788, it has become a standard feature of New Year celebrations, Burns nights, and the closing stages of almost every ceilidh dance and wedding in Burns' native Scotland. Some of the words and phrases already existed before he crafted them into this simple masterpiece, as he himself acknowledged. Auld Lang Syne has been sung to different melodies over the years, but the one used for this arrangement is the most common and well-known. It first appeared associated with Burns' lyrics in the last few years of the 18th Century.

Duration - 1' 48" for 2 verses. Approximately 5' for all five verses

PERFORMANCE NOTES

This arrangement by Scottish clarinettist and arranger, Hugh Levey, can be played by 3 Bb clarinets and bass clarinet or by 4 Bb clarinets. It is in a suitable key for playing as a short recital piece or to accompany community or solo singing. For most occasions the arranger suggests playing it without any repeats, so that 2 differently arranged verses are performed. This works for a recital piece or as accompaniment to how it is typically sung. In Scotland it would be verses 1 and 5, in other parts of the world verse 1 is often sung twice. If all 5 verses are sung, then bars 11 to 26 should be played 4 times. Note that there is a short introduction and voices should enter at the end of bar 10.

The work opens with 'bagpipe' drones played by the second clarinet and bass clarinet (or clarinet 4), which accompany a short introduction by clarinet 3. This is followed by clarinets 1 and 2 playing the first verse and chorus, still accompanied by the bagpipe drones. The final verse and chorus are written in four part harmony to give a majestic ending to the piece.

Cover images: (1) *Two Scotsmen clasping hands while drinking at a table. c.1839, British Museum, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons*, (2) *Clarinet, Yamaha Corporation, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons*

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Auld Lang Syne

LYRICS BY ROBERT BURNS

(Verse 1)

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne?

(Chorus)

For auld lang syne, my jo,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

(Verse 2)

And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp!
And surely I'll be mine!
And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

(Chorus)

For auld lang syne, my jo,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

(Verse 3)

We twa hae run about the braes
And pu'd the gowans fine;
But we've wander'd mony a weary foot
Sin auld lang syne.

(Chorus)

For auld lang syne, my jo,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

(Verse 4)

We twa hae paid'd i' the burn,
Frae mornin' sun till dine;
But seas between us braid hae roar'd
Sin auld lang syne.

(Chorus)

For auld lang syne, my jo,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

(Verse 5)

And there's a hand, my trusty fiere!
And gie's a hand o' thine!
And we'll tak a right guid willy waught,
For auld lang syne.

(Chorus)

For auld lang syne, my jo,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

The poem is written in the Scots language, which was Robert Burns' native tongue. "Auld Lang Syne" can be translated literally as "old long since" but really means "times gone by". It recalls a time of friendship, kindness, and shared experiences with an old friend, as they raise a glass to each other in celebration of the fond memories. "My jo" in the chorus is sometimes sung as "my dear". It is a wistful song, which is why it is sung widely at New Year celebrations in many parts of the English (and Scottish) speaking world. Detailed translations of each verse can be found on the Internet.

Auld Lang Syne

Robert Burns

Instrumental or to accompany singing

Traditional arr. H. Levey

Andante Moderato

The musical score is arranged in two systems. The first system (measures 1-6) features four staves: three for Bb Clarinet and one for Bb Bass Clarinet. The Bb Bass Clarinet part consists of a single line of whole notes (F, C, F, C, F, C) with a dynamic marking of *mf* and a crescendo hairpin leading to *mp* at the end. The three Bb Clarinet parts have various dynamics and articulations: the top two parts have whole notes with *mf* and *mp* markings, and the middle part has a melodic line starting at measure 2 with a *mf* marking. A 'Solo' marking is placed above the middle staff in measure 3. The second system (measures 7-9) features four staves: Bb Cl., Bb Cl., Bb Cl., and Bb B. Cl. The Bb B. Cl. part continues with whole notes (F, C, F, C) and a *mf* marking. The other three staves have various note values and dynamics, including a melodic line in the middle Bb Cl. part.

Optional repeat (if more than 2 verses required)

11

B \flat Cl.
B \flat Cl.
B \flat Cl.
B \flat B. Cl.

mp

mp

15

B \flat Cl.
B \flat Cl.
B \flat Cl.
B \flat B. Cl.