

# TO A HAGGIS

by Robert Burns

Dunblane's historic Leighton Library has an Edinburgh First Edition of 1787 of "Poems, chiefly in the Scottish dialect" by Robert Burns, who visited Dunblane that year.

This edition saw the first publication of a number of poems and songs. The famous address "To a Haggis" was one poem which didn't appear in the Kilmarnock edition of the previous year.

This image (showing the first page of the poem "To a Haggis") is from the Leighton Library's Edinburgh First Edition of 1787 of "Poems, chiefly in the Scottish dialect" by Robert Burns.



This image (showing the second and third page of the poem "To a Haggis") is from the Leighton Library's Edinburgh First Edition of 1787 of "Poems, chiefly in the Scottish dialect" by Robert Burns

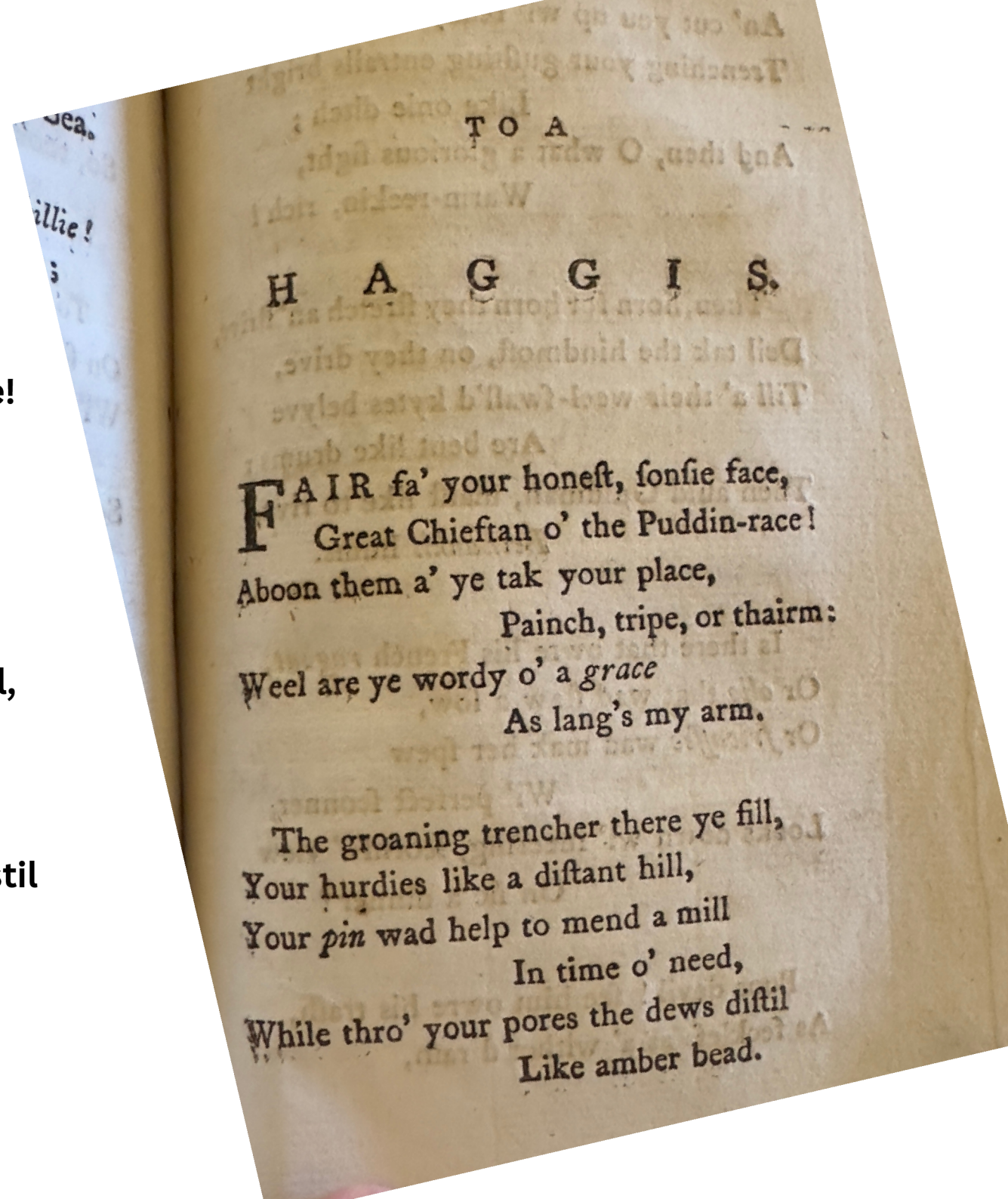
( 262 )  
His knife see Rustic-labour dight,  
An' cut you up wi' ready flight,  
Trenching your gushing entrails bright  
Like onie ditch ;  
And then, O what a glorious fight,  
Warm-reekin, rich !  
Then, horn for horn they stretch an' strive,  
Deil tak the hindmost, on they drive,  
Till a' their weel-swall'd kytes belyve  
Are bent like drums ;  
Then auld Guidman, maist like to rive,  
*Bethankit hums.*  
Is there that owre his French *ragout*,  
Or *olio* that wad staw a fow,  
Or *fricassée* wad mak her spew  
Wi' perfect sconner,  
Looks down wi' incering, scornfu' view  
On sic a dinner ?  
Poor devil ! see him owre his trash,  
As feckless as a' wither'd rafh,

( 263 )  
His spindie shank a guid whip-lash,  
His nieve a nit ;  
Thro' bluidy flood or field to dash,  
O how unfit !  
But mark the Rustic, *haggis-fed*,  
The trembling earth resounds his tread,  
Clap in his walie nieve a blade,  
He'll mak it whistle ;  
An' legs, an' arms, an' heads will fued,  
Like taps o' thriisle.  
Ye Pow'rs wha mak mankind your care,  
And dish them out their bill o' fare,  
Auld Scotland wants nae stinking ware  
That jaups in luggies ;  
But, if ye wish her gratefu' pray'r,  
Gie her a *haggis* !

## TO A HAGGIS

Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face,  
Great chieftain o' the Puddin-race!  
Aboon them a' ye tak your place,  
Painch, tripe, or thairm:  
Weel are ye wordy o' a *grace*  
As lang's my arm.

The groaning trencher there ye fill,  
Your hurdies like a distant hill,  
Your *pin* wad help to mend a mill  
In time o' need,  
While thro' your pores the dews distil  
Like amber bead.



( 262 )  
His knife see Rustic-labour dight,  
An' cut you up wi' ready slight,  
Trenching your gushing entrails bright  
Like onie ditch;  
And then, O what a glorious sight,  
Warm-reekin', rich!  
Then, horn for horn they stretch an' strive  
Deil tak the hindmost, on they drive,  
Till a' their weel-fwall'd kytes belyve  
Are bent like drums;  
Then auld Guidman, maist like to rive,  
*Bethankit* hums.  
Is there that owre his French *ragout*,  
Or *olio* that wad staw a sow,  
Or *fricassée* wad mak her spew  
Wi' perfect sconner,  
Looks down wi' sneering, scornfu' view  
On sic a dinner?  
Poor devil! see him owre his trash,  
As feckless as a' wither'd rash,

His knife see Rustic-labour dight,  
An' cut you up wi' ready sleight,  
Trenching your gushing entrails bright,  
Like onie ditch;  
And then, O what a glorious sight,  
Warm-reekin', rich!

Then, horn for horn, they stretch an' strive:  
Deil tak the hindmost, on they drive,  
Till a' their weel-swallow'd kytes belyve  
Are bent like drums;  
Then auld Guidman, maist like to rive,  
*Bethankit* hums.

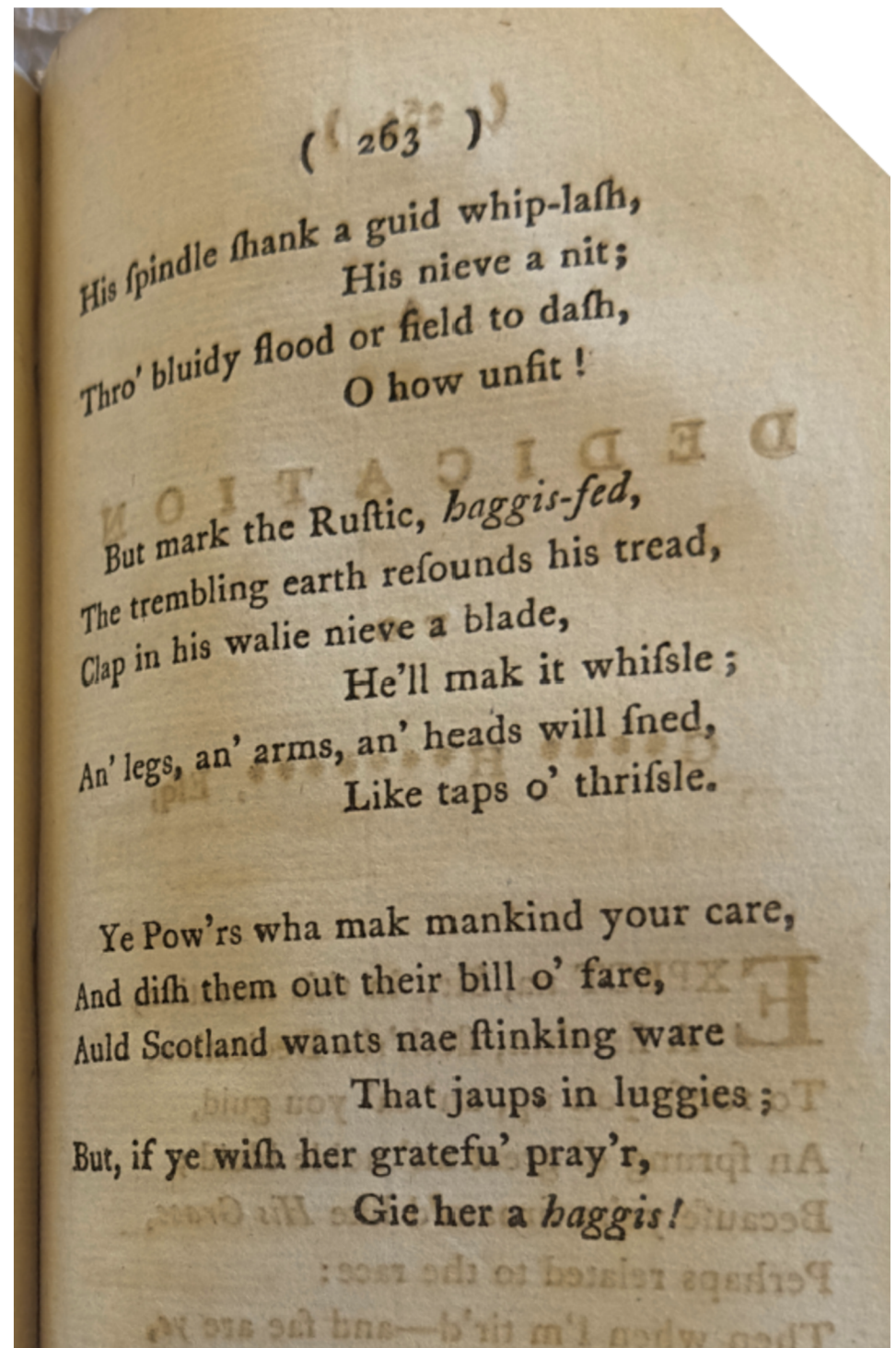
Is there that owre his French *ragout*  
Or *olio* that wad staw a sow,  
Or *fricassée* wad make her spew  
Wi' perfect sconner,  
Looks down wi' sneering, scornfu' view  
On sic a dinner?

Poor devil! see him owre his trash,  
As feckless as a' wither'd rash,

His *spindle* shank, a guid whip-lash;  
His nieve a nit;  
Thro' bloody flood or field to dash,  
O how unfit!

But mark the Rustic, *haggis-fed*,  
The trembling earth resounds his tread.  
Clap in his walie nieve a blade,  
He'll mak it whistle;  
An' legs an' arms, an' heads will sned,  
Like taps o' thrissle.

Ye Pow'rs, wha mak mankind your care,  
And dish them out their bill o' fare,  
Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware  
That jaups in luggies;  
But, if ye wish her gratefu' prayer  
Gie her a *haggis*!



# English Translation

Good luck to you and your honest, plump face,  
Great chieftain of the sausage race!  
Above them all you take your place,  
Stomach, tripe, or intestines  
Well are you worthy of a grace  
As long as my arm.

The groaning wooden plate you fill,  
Your hips are like a distant hill,  
Your pin would help to mend a mill  
In time of need,  
While through your pores the dews distill  
Like amber bead.

His knife see Rustic-labour wipe,  
And cut you up with ready slight,  
Trenching your gushing entrails bright,  
Like any ditch;  
And then, O what a glorious sight,  
Warm steaming, rich!

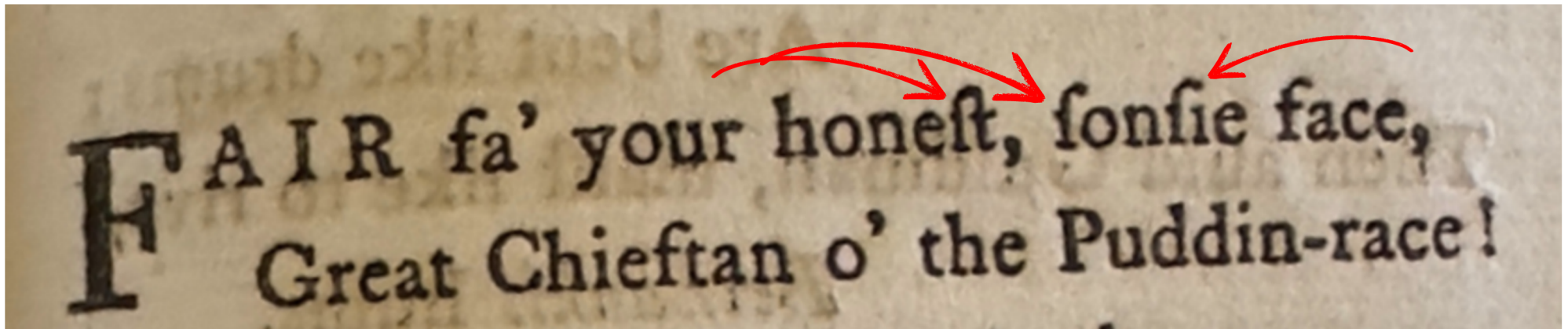
Then spoon for spoon, the stretch and strive:  
Devil take the hindmost, on they drive,  
Till all their well swollen bellies by and by  
Are bent like drums;  
Then old head of the table, most like to burst,  
'The grace!' hums.

Is there that over his French ragout,  
Or olio that would sicken a sow,  
Or fricassee would make her vomit  
With perfect disgust,  
Looks down with sneering, scornful view  
On such a dinner?

Poor devil! see him over his trash,  
As feeble as a withered rush,  
His thin legs a good whip-lash,  
His fist a nut;  
Through bloody flood or field to dash,  
O how unfit.

But note the Rustic, haggis-fed,  
The trembling earth resounds his tread,  
Clap in his ample fist a blade,  
He'll make it whistle;  
And legs, and arms, and heads will cut off  
Like the heads of thistles.

You powers, who make mankind your care,  
And dish them out their bill of fare,  
Old Scotland wants no watery stuff,  
That splashes in small wooden dishes;  
But if you wish her grateful prayer,  
Give her a Haggis!



Like many books printed hundreds of years ago, it can be hard to read this book printed in 1787. The last three words of the first line should be read as “**honest, sonsie face**”. But it looks like the second last letter of the word **honest**, and the first and fourth letter of the word **sonsie** are the letter **f** and not letter **s** as we would read them today.

Look closely at the first and fourth letters in **sonsie** in the picture. Compare these to the first letter of the word **face**. You'll see that the letter which looks like **f** does not have the the right-hand part of its crossbar.

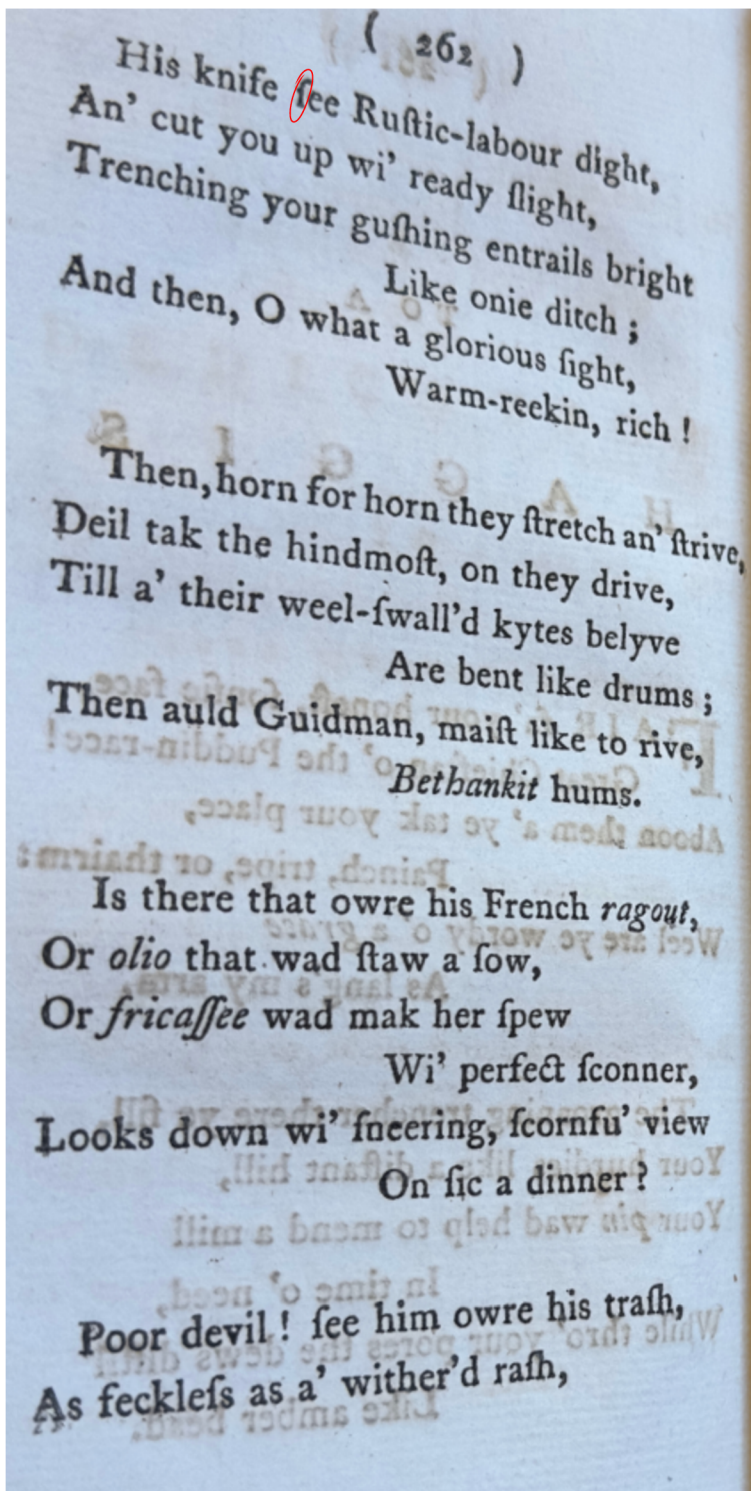
The letter was known as a **long s**. The **s** we know today was then known as a **short s** or **round s**.



**Long s** (which **does not**  
have the right-hand part  
of the crossbar)



**Letter f** (which  
**does** have the  
right-hand part of  
the crossbar)



The use of the **long s** was common in books printed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There were rules for when a **long s** was used. You can find out more about the **long s** at this link:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Long\\_s](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Long_s)



Find all long s letters in the photograph of the page from the poem from this 1787 edition, and circle them in red.

Even if the book has lost the page with a date on it, early editions of books of poems by Robert Burns can be dated by their use of the **long s**. Books of his poems printed after the year 1800 do not use the **long s**, while editions from the 1780s and early 1790s do (such as the Edinburgh First Edition of 1787, which is the edition Dunblane's historic Leighton Library has in its collection).

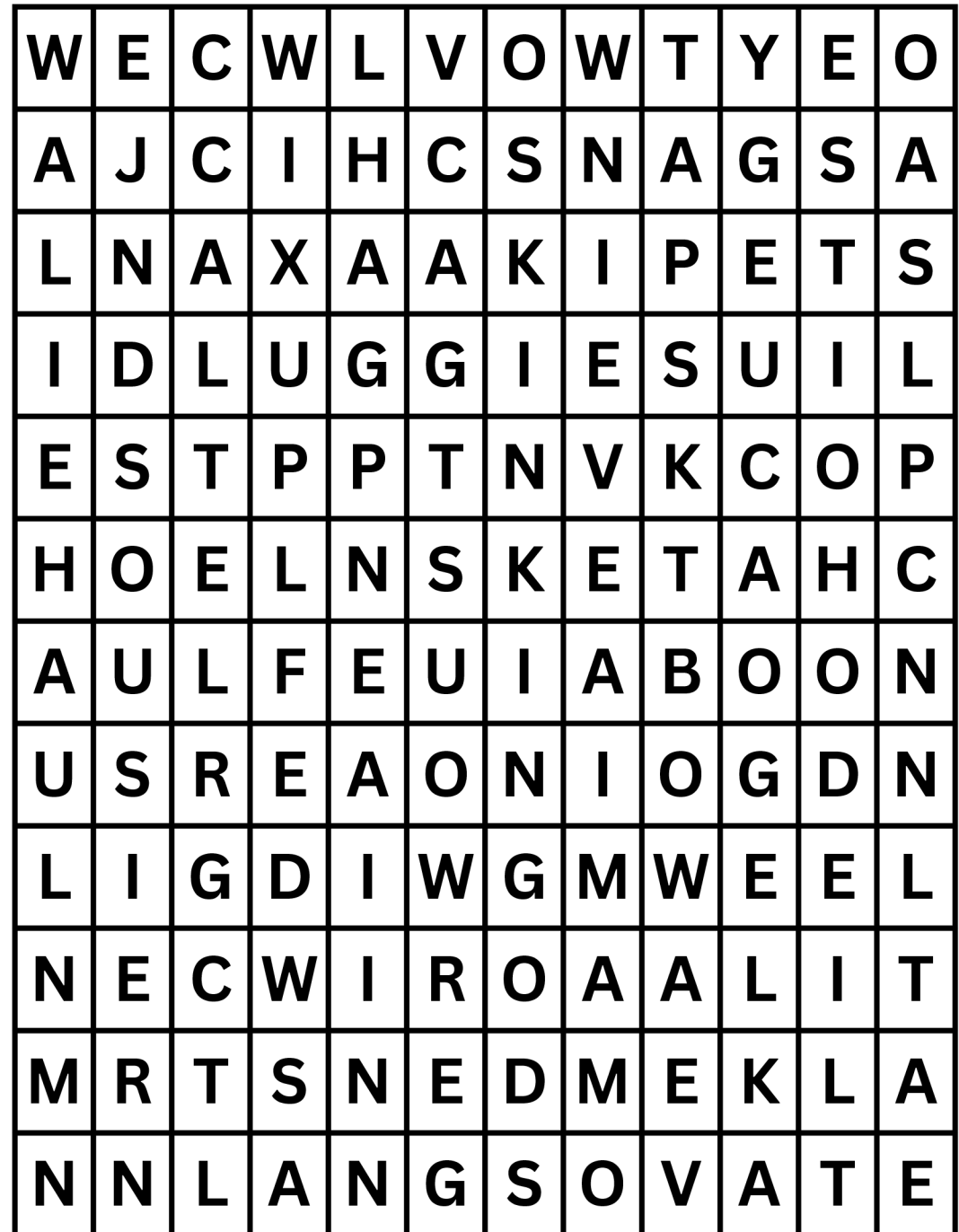




# To a Haggis - Wordsearch

Find all of the words below (taken from the poem "To a Haggis" by Robert Burns) hidden in this wordsearch, across, down, and diagonally

ABOON	LUGGIES	SKINKING	WALIE
DEIL	MAK	SNED	WEEL
HURDIES	NIEVE	SOUSIE	WHA
JAUPS	OWRE	TAPS	
LANG	SIC	WAD	



# To a Haggis - Jumbled Words

Unjumble the letters of the words below (taken from the poem "To a Haggis" by Robert Burns). There are clues beside each jumbled word

**ONBOA**

Above, higher than something else

**ELEW**

Well, fully

**DURHISE**

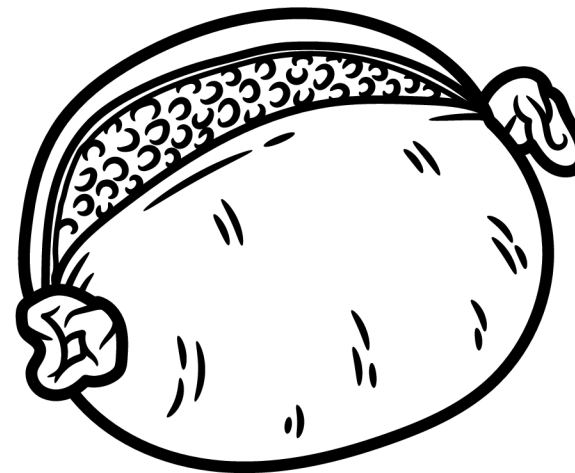
Hips, haunches

**PAJUS**

Splashes

**REWO**

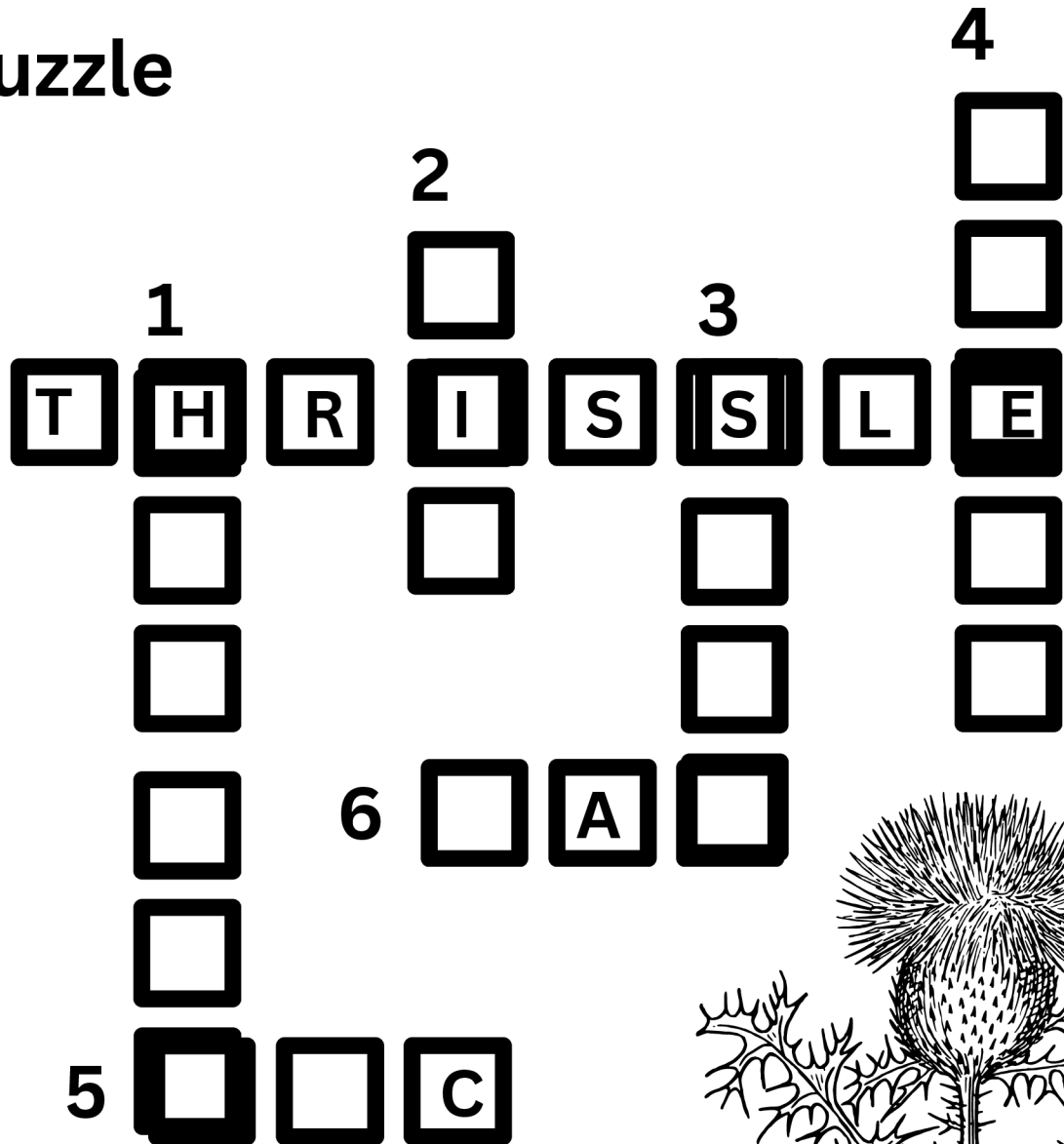
Over



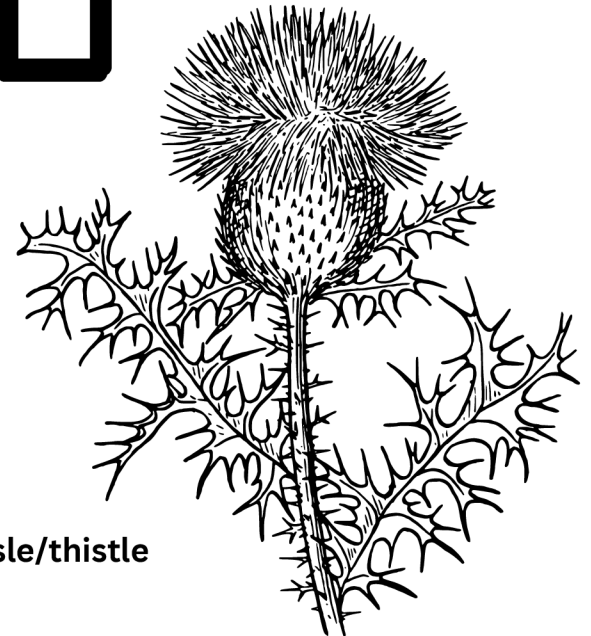
Colour in this drawing of a haggis

# To a Haggis - word puzzle

Complete this puzzle of words taken from the poem "To a Haggis" by Robert Burns)



1. National dish of Scotland usually served with neeps and tatties
2. Hand something to someone else
3. Prune or trim off parts
4. Clenched fist
5. Of a similar type
6. An intention for the future



Colour in this drawing of a thistle/thistle

# To a Haggis

Fill in the blanks using the words at the foot of the page

The address to a haggis is an \_\_\_\_\_ part of a traditional Burns Supper. Bagpipes are played as the haggis is carried behind the \_\_\_\_\_. Then the haggis is placed on the table where someone will \_\_\_\_\_ the address to a haggis. During the recitation a \_\_\_\_\_ will be brandished in a theatrical way before using it to cut into the haggis during part of the poem. At the end of the poem, a \_\_\_\_\_ with a drink will be raised by the speaker. Then everyone will be asked to stand up, raise their glass, and toast the \_\_\_\_\_ by all saying together, "To the haggis!" Then the piper plays again as the haggis is carried out, to get dished up with \_\_\_\_\_ and tatties, for everyone to enjoy eating.



Colour in this image of a piper



# Write a poem about what you like to eat

Have some fun writing a poem about something you really enjoy eating. Write your poem in the same style as the poem “To a Haggis” by Robert Burns, by using the hints here to help you. Try to write a few verses or stanzas (Robert Burns wrote 8 for “To a Haggis”).

To get the same sound rhythm of the poem by Robert Burns, make each verse or stanza have the same pattern of syllables as “To a Haggis”. The last word in each of the lines **1,2, 3 and 5** rhyme with each other. The last word in each of the lines **4 and 6** rhyme with each other.

(line 1 - 8 syllables) \_\_\_\_\_

(line 2 - 8 syllables) \_\_\_\_\_

(line 3 - 8 syllables) \_\_\_\_\_

(line 4 - 4 syllables) \_\_\_\_\_

(line 5 - 8 syllables) \_\_\_\_\_

(line 6 - 4 syllables) \_\_\_\_\_

Choose words to describe the food you like to eat:

What it looks like, its shape, its texture, its colour

What it smells like

What it feels like in your mouth

What it makes you feel like

What other things do you think about when eating this?

What special times do you eat it?

What do you know about where it comes from, or how its made?

Compare it to something else that is not food

Say something about who else would eat this

Describe how it comes to you - is it in a wrapper, a bag a tub? Is it cold, or does it need cooked to eat?

