

THE HEART OF THE BRUCE

After the death of Bruce, his heart was taken from his body and entrusted to the care of the Earl of Douglas to carry it to the Holy Land, where it was to be buried. Douglas set out accompanied by Sir Simon Lockhart of Lee and a party of knights. On the way Douglas took part in a conflict with the Moors in Spain, and in the effort to save one of his companions, Sir William St. Clair of Roslin, he was killed. The heart of Bruce was brought back to Scotland and buried in Melrose Abbey.

It was upon an April morn,
While yet the frost lay hoar,
We heard Lord James's bugle-horn
Sound by the rocky shore.

Then down we went, a hundred knights,
All in our dark array,
And flung our armour in the ships
That rode within the bay.

We spoke not as the shore grew less,
But gazed in silence back,
Where the long billows swept away
The foam behind our track.

And aye the purple hues decayed
Upon the fading hill,
And but one heart in all that ship
Was tranquil, cold, and still.

The good Lord Douglas paced the deck,
And oh, his face was wan!
Unlike the flush it used to wear
When in the battle-van.—