

There are two men whose names and memory are more deeply shrouded in the Scottish heart than any others—Robert Burns and Walter Scott. The genius of Scotland has crowned these two with the wreath of the immortals, and the world has approved the consecration. Both of them loved Scotland with an intense affection; and both have flung the light of their wonderful genius over the hills and vales of “the land of mountain and of flood.” Burns has made Ayrshire all hallowed ground; and there is hardly a loch, tarn, glen, mountain, castle or town that Scott has not woven its name into his wondrous tales, and wrapped a supernatural beauty around it by the magic of his pen. It was with somewhat of the feelings of a devotee approaching the shrine of his favourite saint, that I found myself, one summer’s day, in the region of the Ettrick, the Yarrow and Tweed, rounding the graceful sweep of the Eildon Hills, and approaching Abbotsford, once the residence of Sir Walter Scott. Here every locality is identified with his name. Melrose Abbey, for ever interwoven in immortal song in his *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, is a magnificent ruin over which the traveller may linger many an hour. A short drive from the Abbey takes the traveller to Abbotsford, whose castellated walls and pointed gables shoot up from a sylvan declivity on the banks of the silvery Tweed, which almost encircles the place with its graceful sweep. I am not so unwise as to attempt a description of Abbotsford, which has been so often described by travellers of all nationalities. The memorials with which its halls are filled are of the highest interest—rare and ancient relics,—piles of broad-swords, battle-axes, coats of armour. The Library contains 20,000 volumes, many of them rare and valuable. More deeply interesting than all to me were the personal memorials of the poet and novelist,—the last suit he wore which is carefully preserved in a glass-case: the study in which many of his immortal works were written; the desk at which he wrote and the chair in which he sat. Here are the very objects on which his eye must have rested, when those visions, strange and wild, of Kings and Earls, Knights and Dames, battles and tournaments were floating before him. Here *Rob Roy*, *The Heart of Midlothian*, *Ivanhoe*, and many others of his deathless family, first saw the light. I tried to picture the mighty magician here, seated in his leather-covered arm-chair, pen in hand, the deep-set gray eyes lighted up with poetic fire, or twinkling with humour from under the pent-house brows, as he went on painting his Antiquary or his inimitable Bailie Nicol Jarvie. I thought too of the days when Scott was lord of this splendid mansion, in the flush of his proud triumphs, when fame and wealth were showered upon him and the civilized world was ringing with his name, and the noblest in the land were flocking to Abbotsford to do homage to his genius in those halls which his own labours had erected, and where he fondly hoped that a long line of descendants would flourish. And then I thought how all these bright visions faded—how, in one day, he found himself ruined and beggared, and liable, by the failure of an Edinburgh publishing firm, for a debt of £150,000; and, then, how nobly he faced the storm, and his proud chivalrous spirit, not brooking that any one should lose a shilling by him, he refused to be made a bankrupt, and sat down determined to wipe away this enormous debt by