# ABBOTSFORD

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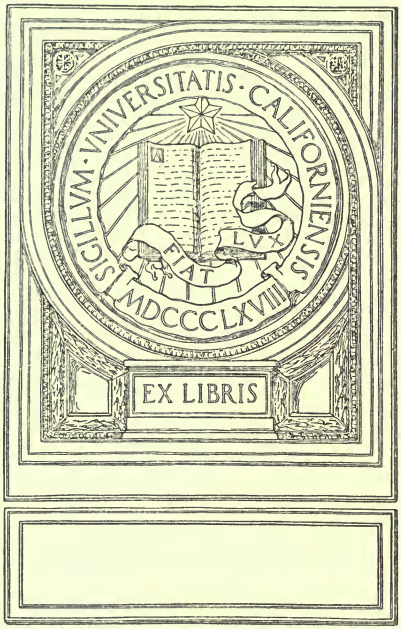
W. S. CROCKETT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# ABBOTSFORD

'O bear me back to all to Memory dear,
'Twill to my faded brow be health restored
To feel the breeze that waves the woods of Abbotsford.'

# ABBOTSFORD

PAINTED BY

WILLIAM SMITH, JR.

DESCRIBED BY

W. S. CROCKETT

MINISTER OF TWEEDSMUIR; AUTHOR OF 'THE SCOTT COUNTRY,' ETC.

WITH

TWENTY FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS
IN COLOUR

LONDON
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK
1905

TO

SIR WALTER'S SUCCESSORS

AT

ABBOTSFORD,

THE HON. MRS. MAXWELL SCOTT,

HIS GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER,

AND

WALTER MAXWELL SCOTT,

GREAT-GREAT-GRANDSON,

THESE CHAPTERS ARE DEDICATED.

# Preface

THAT Abbotsford merits a volume in the present series will be readily conceded. In preparing the letterpress I have found myself, not unnaturally, playing to some extent the part of a biographer, and in this I have generally followed Lockhart, always the ultimate authority on Sir Walter. A number of fresh facts, however, will be found here and there throughout the work. Mrs. Maxwell Scott has kindly read the proof of 'The Later Abbotsford,' and for the 'Treasures' chapter I am indebted somewhat to her admirable little 'Catalogue,' which no visitor to Scott's home should miss.

W. S. CROCKETT.

THE MANSE,
TWEEDSMUIR,
*June* 15, 1905.

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# INTRODUCTORY

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTORY

Last year (1904) no fewer than seven thousand persons from all parts of the world visited Abbotsford.* There is no diminution in the annual pilgrimage to this chief shrine of the Border Country, nor is there likely to be. Scott's name, and that of Abbotsford, are secure enough in the affections of men everywhere. Whilst many would rejoice to see Sir Walter's home on a different footing from a patriotic point of view—less of a shilling show-house for one thing—there is no reason to quarrel with the present arrangements, which, likely enough, are the best under existing conditions. The order of viewing the various rooms, however, might well be improved, the public permitted to linger over them a little more leisurely, and also to see something of the exterior of the building. That many ardent

* Abbotsford, with the accent on the 'ford.' A modern pronunciation accentuates the first syllable. This is wrong. Scott himself said Abbotsfōrd.

Scott worshippers who flock yearly to Abbotsford would welcome a more ample opportunity for study and reflection within its charmed enclosure goes without saying. Of course, as being still a private residence, there are obvious difficulties in the way of such easier access. But probably that may come by-and-by.

The best preparation for a visit to Abbotsford is a course of Lockhart. There is no more faithful account of the place, from its purchase to the high-water mark of Scott's happiness there and the troubled years preceding the end. From at least 1820, and irrespective of his London life, Lockhart was Scott's companion and confidant at Abbotsford. Seldom has the fellowship of letters shown a friendship so strong and true. It was sympathy other than that of a son-in-law which Lockhart brought to the writing of his great Biography, and which has made it one of the masterpieces of literature. Never, surely, was a great man more fortunate in his life-story than Scott at the hands of Lockhart, one of the most maligned and misunderstood men of his day, indeed, but a kindly, lovable soul withal. To understand Abbotsford, it is a necessity that one should study the life of its originator and owner, with whose name, notwithstanding any subsequent

occupation, the 'romance in stone and lime' is indissolubly connected.

In Scott's earliest association with Abbotsford, or, rather, with the site on which Abbotsford stands, is there not theme alike for painter and poet? Lockhart tells how Scott used to relate that, travelling in boyhood with his father from Selkirk to Melrose, the old man desired the carriage to halt at the foot of an eminence, and said: 'We must get out here, Walter, and see a thing quite in your line.' His father then conducted him to a rude stone* on the edge of an acclivity about half a mile from the Tweed, at which spot the last great clan-battle of the Borders was fought between Scotts and Kers for the possession of King James V., the young Prince himself being a spectator of the contest. From a child Scott had exhibited a marked precocity for Border history and Border lore in general, and even then, as a boy, there were few to excel him as a story-teller. The printed page was in the dim

* Turn-Again, where Ker of Cessford was slain and the victorious party turned from the pursuit. Skirmish Hill, Charge Law, and Cock-a-Pistol are other landmarks of the fight. The Waverley Hydropathic is said to mark the immediate scene of the struggle.

distance, but already he could command an audience no less wonder-struck with that fair silver tongue of his, which in the budding Edinburgh days won him the heart of Mrs. Alison Cockburn and her coterie. We may be sure that the elder Walter had a more than average pride in the boy's tastes and promise for the future, nor would the opportunity be lacking by which these were encouraged and enriched. The road between Selkirk and Melrose has other memories, recalled, doubtless, that day as they drove along, but to a boy whose mind seemed ever bent on

> 'Old, unhappy, far-off things,
> And battles long ago,'

the near neighbourhood of a Border battle-field was quite an event. Hence the picture of Scott and his father surveying the spot where, in the year 1526,

> 'gallant Cessford's heart-blood dear
> Reeked on dark Elliot's Border spear,'

might well lend inspiration for some artist's canvas. For there is more in the subject than the mere suggestion of a future great author touching for the first time the land to be immortalized by his genius. Were it that only, we should have an

endless succession of canvases; but it is the suggestiveness of strongest personal association rather. Comparatively few recollect the incident which appealed so to Scott, both in his boyhood and later life. But everybody knows that practically all the arena of that fateful struggle—most of the landscape on which his youthful vision long and rapturously rested — by-and-by became his own possession. We may suppose that at least a quarter of a century lay between that day and the purchase of his first hundred acres as Laird of Abbotsford, and the gradual growth, almost year by year, of the lands of Abbotsford, still holds a big place in the popular imagination. As a battle scene, it was significant of his own career. What conquests were these fields not again to witness—and what defeats! What heroism of the pen, no less noble than that of the sword! What determination in the face of fearful odds to do his best at Duty's call, no less honoured and no less magnificent in achievement than the doughtiest deed of arms in ancient or modern days! That Abbotsford should attract its tens of thousands from all ends of the earth was to be expected after such a strenuous life as Scott's. Human nature must always pay homage at the shrine of the truly great, and if it be true that no

writer has given pleasure to vaster multitudes, and that never has the life of his country been so well limned as by this master-hand, it will be equally true of Abbotsford that it will never want those to whom everything about it and its very dust is dear.

# FROM CARTLEYHOLE TO ABBOTSFORD

## CHAPTER II

### FROM CARTLEYHOLE TO ABBOTSFORD

It is scarcely necessary to recall that Scott on both sides of his house was connected with the Border Country—the 'bold bad Border' of a day happily long dead. He would have been a reiver himself, more than likely, and one of its nameless bards to boot, had he lived before the Border felt the subdued spirit of modern times. In the many-sided story of the Border, however, with its rare wealth of romanticism, Scott found his life-work. So that it was the Border which made him the force he is in the world of letters. No Borderer—no Scotsman, indeed, has taken truer and firmer hold of his countrymen. A descendant of Wat of Harden, linked to the best blood of the Border, and with every phase of his life redolent of the Border feeling, history has had no difficulty in claiming Sir Walter Scott as the most representative Border man the world has seen. He was not born in the Border Country, but practically all his life was

spent there. His environment throughout was that of a Borderer. He belongs, to be sure, to every country. Like Shakespeare and Burns, Scott is one of the cosmopolitan heroes of literature, whose works are as widely cherished abroad as at home. Not a summer in the Border Country—the true 'Scott Country'—but is evidence of his universality. Scott gloried in the heritage that came to him from generations of Border ancestors, their cattle-lifting propensities notwithstanding. To belong to the Border—to Tweedside, to use his pet phrase—was never a superficial boast. It was because his most personal interests were bound up therein, and because he clung with a whole-hearted passion to the Border and to the Tweed, that these are to-day the most familiar of Scottish names. 'It is part of my creed,' he writes in an early letter to Patrick Murray, 'that the Tweed and Teviot yield to none in the world; nor do I fear that even in your eyes, which have been feasted on classic ground, they will greatly sink in comparison with the Tiber or Po!' Calais was not more indelible on Mary's heart than the Tweed was on Scott's. All the joyful strength of his life, says Ruskin, was spent in the Tweed valley. He came to the Border a sickly, delicate child, between his third and fourth

year, and for threescore years and one he seldom left it for any lengthened interval. Edinburgh was his school, and his office, and the arena of much of his professional career. At a later period it was crowded with many painful memories. But he was happiest, even amid the most crushing sorrows of his life, when within earshot of the Tweed. There was not a blither or sunnier boyhood than Scott's at Rosebank, where even then he was 'making' himself, and dreaming of the days that were to be. At Ashestiel, the birthplace of the most popular poetry of the century before Byron blazed upon the literary horizon, his life was singularly untrammelled. Ashestiel, from being off the beaten track perhaps, seems to have lost favour somewhat with the Scott student. At any rate, it is not the shrine it should be, although in several respects it is more interesting to lovers of Scott than even Abbotsford itself. As for Abbotsford, may we not say that it is at once the proudest, and the most stimulating, and the saddest memorial ever associated with a man of letters? All these, comprising the three periods of Scott's life—Rosebank, Ashestiel, Abbotsford—lie as close to the Tweed as can be—none of them more than a few hundred paces from it at the outset. And when the great

Borderer's task was accomplished, where more fitly could he have rested than with the river of his love and of his dreams singing ceaseless requiem around his last low bed?

It will be interesting to have a glimpse of Tweedside just as Scott appeared upon the scene. Since his day the valley in many of its aspects has not been without change. Even the remote uplands, long untouched by outside influences, have not escaped the modern spirit. The river must needs remain *in statu quo*, but the contrast between Sir Walter's Tweedside and ours is considerable. A century of commerce and agriculture has wrought marvels on the once bare and featureless and uncultivated banks of the Tweed. And none would have rejoiced at its present picturesque and prosperous condition more than Scott himself. Of the valley as it was a hundred years since, some early travellers give their impressions. There is the following from a Londoner's point of view, for instance—a somewhat sombre picture, true enough, however, of *the upper reaches* at the time: 'About four in the afternoon we were obliged to proceed on our journey to Moffat, a market town, where we were informed we should meet with good lodging, which made us ride on the more briskly,

but notwithstanding all our speed, we had such terrible stony ways and tedious miles, that when we thought we had been near the place, we met a Scotchman, who told us we were not got half way; this put us almost into the spleen, for we could see nothing about us but barren mountains on the right and the River Tweed on the left, which, running thro' the stones and rocks with a terrible noise, seemed to us like the croaking of a Raven, or the tone of a Screitch Owle to a dying man, so we were forced to ride on by guesse, knowing not a step of the way, and meeting none to direct us, till at last, coming up a hill, we spyed some waggons going over another mountain before us, and resolving to press somebody into our service, we rode on as fast as we could to overtake them, and then we were told we had still twelve long miles to Moffat.'

Dorothy Wordsworth's diary (1803) of a day by the Tweed below Peebles—*the middle portion* of the stream—is a pleasanter memory: 'We had a day's journey before us along the banks of the Tweed, a name which has been sweet to my ears almost as far back as I can remember. After the first mile or two our road was seldom far from the river, which flowed in gentleness, though perhaps

never silent; the hills on either side high, and sometimes stony, but excellent pasture for sheep. . . . In one very sweet part of the vale a gate crossed the road, which was opened by an old woman who lived in a cottage close to it. I said to her, "You live in a very pretty place!" "Yes," she replied, "the water of Tweed is a bonny water." The lines of the hills are flowing and beautiful, the reaches of the vale long; in some places appear the remains of a forest, in others you will see as lovely a combination of forms as any traveller who goes in search of the picturesque need desire, and yet perhaps without a single tree; or, at least, if trees there are, they shall be very few.' And writing about the same time the Rev. Richard Warner—afterwards the author of a work on the Waverley Novels—describes *the lower half* of the river between Berwick and Kelso: 'The country around Berwick, though swelling into hills and sinking into vales, has neither beauty nor variety, the one being uniform and lumpish, the other wide and unwooded. A naked surface everywhere presents itself, unadorned with those indispensable features in agreeable landscape, lofty trees and spreading shrubs. The river Tweed, also, disappointed our expectations of picturesque beauty. Associated as the name of

this river had hitherto been in our minds with poetical and pastoral ideas, we were prepared to admire its fringed banks and sacred shades, the haunt of many a water-nymph and sylvan deity; but alas! no solemn woods lifted their lofty heads over these celebrated waters. All was original nakedness. . . . The scenery is more animated and cheerful in the neighbourhood of Kelso, where wood is more frequent. Tweed's velvet banks were here and there spotted with little clumps of trees, presenting a fairer subject for tender and elegiac poetry than it had before done.'

At Scott's day the Tweed valley, in what are now its most luxuriant reaches, exhibited a markedly naked and treeless character. From Abbotsford to Norham Castle the scenery was of the openest. Here and there 'ancestral oaks' still clumped themselves about the great houses, with perhaps some further attempt at decorating the landscape. But that was rare enough. Landlords had not learned the art, not to speak of the wisdom, of tree-planting. It is only within the past hundred years that planting has become frequent, and the modern beauty of Tweedside emerged into being. It is said that Scott was one of the first to popularize the planting spirit. His operations at

Abbotsford certainly induced the neighbouring proprietors to follow suit. Scott of Gala, and the lairds of Ravenswood, Drygrange, Cowdenknowes, Gladswood, Bemersyde, Mertoun, Eildon Hall, and Floors, all took their lead, more or less, from Abbotsford. Arboriculture was Scott's most passionate hobby. At least two long articles were penned by him on the subject, and he practised the art with extraordinary diligence and foresight. Of botany he knew little, but of trees everything. As we shall see, not the least important part of Abbotsford's creation was planning and perfecting that wondrous wealth of woodland—a very network about the place, on whose full growth his eyes, alas! were not destined to feast. 'Somebody,' he said, 'will look at them, however, though I question that they will have the same pleasure in gazing on the full-grown oaks that I have had in nursing the saplings.'

A fourth impression of Tweedside comes to us from the pages of Lockhart. We are dealing now with *the site of Abbotsford* as it was about the year 1811. Scott was tenant of Ashestiel. Here he had spent eight of the pleasantest years of his life. But his lease was out, and the laird himself—his cousin, General Russell—was returning from India.

In casting about for a new abode, Scott seems at first to have thought of Broadmeadows, on the Yarrow, then in the market, a compact little domain which would have suited him well. Lockhart's one regret was that Scott did not purchase Broadmeadows. Here, surrounded by large landed proprietors, instead of a few bonnet-lairds, he would certainly have escaped the Abbotsford 'yerd-hunger,' and changed, possibly, the whole of his career. But the Broadmeadows Scott might have been very different from *our Sir Walter*. Of Newark, also, close by, the scene of the 'Lay,' he had some fancy, and would fain have fitted it up as a residence. The ancestral home of Harden itself was proposed to him, and indeed offered, and he would have removed thither but for its inconvenience for shrieval duties. After all, however, there was uppermost in Scott's mind the wish to have a house and land of his own—to be 'laird of the cairn and the scaur,' as in the case of Broadmeadows, or 'a Tweedside laird' at best, and later on, perhaps, to 'play the grand old feudal lord again.' Lockhart assures us that Scott was really aiming at higher game. His ambition was to found a new Border family, and to become head of a new branch of the Scotts, already so dominant. And did he not succeed? It is not strictly true to

say that he failed. He realized his ambition, and he died in that belief. He built his 'castle,' as he playfully calls it, with more grandeur about it than he had, mayhap, dreamed of. Honours of the highest were heaped upon him. And at his death, at any rate, there was a prospect of his line being continued. Only one ugly shadow stood between —his monetary troubles. It is easy to say at this time of day that Scott was defeated in his most cherished hopes. He was defeated, as hundreds are, through the accidents of history. But in himself he was surely a noble success, and at his passing most of his plans had prospered. Scott towered so much above his fellows in intellectual strength, and he had such perfect faith in himself and the power of his own transcendent capabilities, that it is scarcely fair to pass censure on the ambitions and ideals which governed him, and the steady purpose that made him one of the truest and best of men—one of the world's greatest men. There is no occasion to bemoan Scott's career, no need to reflect on its 'might-have-beens.' His course he had mapped out for himself, and it was the only course destined to give us Scott as he wished to be, and as the generations should best remember him.

About to quit Ashestiel, therefore, his attention was directed to a small farm-holding not far distant, on the south bank of the Tweed, some two miles from Galashiels, and about three from Melrose. Scott knew the spot well. It had 'long been one of peculiar interest for him,' from the incident mentioned in the foregoing chapter. By name Newarthaugh—a name almost forgotten in the story of Abbotsford—it was also known as Cartleyhole, or Cartlawhole, and Cartlihole, according to the Melrose Session Records, in which parish it was situated. The place was tenanted for a time by Taits and Dicksons. Then it seems to have passed into the family of Walter Turnbull, schoolmaster of Melrose, who disposed of it, in the year 1797, to Dr. Robert Douglas, the enterprising and philanthropic minister of Galashiels. Why Dr. Douglas purchased this property nobody has been able to understand. It lay outside his parish, and was never regarded as a desirable or dignified possession. A shrewd man of business, however, he may, like Scott, have judged it capable of results, speculating accordingly. He had never lived at Cartleyhole. The place was laid out in parks, and the house, of which, curiously, Scott speaks in a recently recovered letter as 'new and substantial,'

was in occupation. The surroundings were certainly in a deplorably neglected condition. The sole attempt at embellishment had been limited to a strip of firs so long and so narrow that Scott likened it to a black hair-comb. 'The farm,' according to Lockhart, 'consisted of a rich meadow or haugh along the banks of the river, and about a hundred acres of undulated ground behind, all in a neglected state, undrained, wretchedly enclosed, much of it covered with nothing better than the native heath. The farmhouse itself was small and poor, with a common kailyard on one flank and a staring barn on the other; while in front appeared a filthy pond covered with ducks and duckweed, from which the whole tenement had derived the unharmonious designation of Clarty Hole.'* A local reminiscence emphasizes Lockhart's description: 'The first time I saw Cartley Hole, or, as it is more appropriately called, Clarty Hole, which you are probably aware is the Scotch term for dirty, was in 1807 or 1808. I was on my first holiday visit to an uncle in Darnick. It was a

* Lockhart and others have fallen (not unnaturally perhaps) into the error of supposing that 'Clarty Hole' was the real designation. Cartleyhole, however, was a very old name. Some wag possibly nicknamed the place 'the Clarty Hole,' which seems to have stuck to it.

low-built, one-story house, standing in what was literally a *hole*, and it had anything but a prepossessing appearance. It may have had attics, but of this I am not quite sure. It had nothing to recommend it as a site for a stately mansion, save its proximity to the Tweed. The scenery around was bare, and did not boast of a single natural beauty.' But to Scott's far-seeing eye matters were not so hopeless. There were, he felt, possibilities in the place. Moreover, it was his wish to *create*, as far as he could, the home that was to be his own. Cartleyhole offered in many respects an ideal site for the purpose he had in prospect. It lay at almost the centre of the Border district. All around were the grand historic and romantic associations of the Border, the subjects in which Scott revelled. Melrose Abbey, the most graceful and picturesque ruin in Scotland, already so celebrated in his verse, was visible from many points in the neighbourhood. Dryburgh was not far distant. Yonder Eildon's triple height, sacred to so much of the supernatural in Border lore, reared his grey crown to the skies. There, the Tweed, 'a beautiful river even here,' flowed in front, broad and bright over a bed of milk-white pebbles. Selkirk, his Sheriff's headquarters, was within easy reach. He

was interested in the Catrail, or Picts' Work Ditch, on the opposite hillside, so often alluded to in his letters to Ellis; and on his own ground were fields, and mounds, and standing-stones, whose place-names recalled the struggle of 1526. A Roman road running down from the Eildons to a ford on the Tweed, long used by the Abbots, the erstwhile lords of the locality, furnished a new designation for the acres of hungry haugh-land—'as poor and bare as Sir John Falstaff's regiment'—upon which was destined to be reared the most venerated, and probably the most visited shrine in the kingdom.

On May 12, 1811, we find Scott writing to James Ballantyne: 'I have resolved to purchase a piece of ground sufficient for a cottage and a few fields. There are two pieces, either of which would suit me, but both would make a very desirable property indeed, and could be had for between £7,000 and £8,000—or either separate for about half the sum. I have serious thoughts of one or both, and must have recourse to my pen to make the matter easy.' By the end of June one of the pieces passed into his hands for the sum mentioned —£4,000, half of which, according to Scott's bad and sanguine habit, he borrowed from his brother John, raising the remainder on the security of


W. Smith
Melrose

'Rokeby,' as yet unwritten. The letter to Dr. Douglas acknowledging his receipt for the last instalment of the purchase-money has been preserved: 'I received the discharged bill safe, which puts an end to our relation of debtor and creditor:

> 'Now the gowd's thine,
> And the land's mine.

I am glad you have been satisfied with my manner of transacting business, and have equal reason at least to thank you for your kindly accommodation as to time and manner of payment. In short, I hope our temporary connection forms a happy contradiction to the proverb, "I lent my money to my friend; I lost my money and my friend." A figure of note in his day, Dr. Douglas was born at the manse of Kenmore, in 1747, and in his twenty-third year was presented to the parish of Galashiels, where he laboured till his death in 1820. He has been styled the Father of Galashiels. Much of his money—he inherited a fortune from his brother, a Captain in the Indian Army—was lent without stint to the manufacturers of that period, who were struggling out of their old-time condition as country weavers, and endeavouring to establish the woollen trade as a staple industry in the town. Galashiels, when Abbotsford came into being, was

a mere thatched hamlet. Then it could boast of not more than a dozen slated houses. To-day there is a population of over 13,000. Dr. Douglas's friendship with Scott continued for many years. He was the 'reverend and unbigoted' clergyman to whom Scott addressed 'Paul's Letter' on Religion in France, and was himself the author of a carefully compiled essay on 'Agriculture in the Counties of Roxburgh and Selkirk.' Perhaps most interesting to recall, it was to Dr. Douglas that Mrs. Cockburn of Fairnalee penned her epistle wherein mention is made of Scott in his seventh year as 'the most extraordinary genius of a boy I ever saw.' Four-and-thirty years lay between that evening and the purchase of Cartleyhole—'a poor thing, but mine own.' Scott had taken a further, and as yet the most important, step up the ladder of his ambition. Things were going well with him, and it was a joy to send such welcome news to his brother-in-law on the other side of the world :* 'This is the greatest incident which has lately taken place in our domestic concerns, and I assure you we are not a little proud of being greeted as Laird and Lady of Abbotsford.'

* Charles Carpenter, in the Indian Civil Service at Salem, Madras.

# THE CREATION OF ABBOTSFORD

## CHAPTER III

### THE CREATION OF ABBOTSFORD

THE first purchase of land was close on a hundred and ten acres, half of which were to be planted, and the remainder kept in pasture and tillage. An ornamental cottage with a pillared porch—a print of which is still preserved—after the style of an English vicarage, was agreed upon, and it was here that Scott passed the first years of his Abbotsford life. He had many correspondents during this period. Daniel Terry, an architect turned actor, was probably his chief adviser as to Abbotsford and its furnishings, no end of letters passing between them. Morritt of Rokeby was much in his confidence, and Joanna Baillie, 'our immortal Joanna,' whose 'Family Legend,' had been produced at Edinburgh the previous year under Scott's auspices. The plans for his house were at first of the simplest. He thus describes them to Miss Baillie: 'My dreams about my cottage go on. My present intention is to have

only two spare bedrooms, with dressing-rooms, each of which on a pinch will have a couch-bed; but I cannot relinquish my Border principle of accommodating all the cousins and *duniwastles*, who will rather sleep on chairs, and on the floor, and in the hayloft, than be absent when folks are gathered together.'

To Morritt we find him writing: 'I have fixed only two points respecting my intended cottage—one is that it shall be *in* my garden, or rather kailyard; the other, that the little drawing-room shall open into a little conservatory, in which conservatory there shall be a fountain. These are articles of taste which I have long since determined upon; but I hope before a stone of my paradise is begun we shall meet and collogue upon it'; but soon after, as an excuse for beginning 'Rokeby,' his fourth verse romance, he says: 'I want to build my cottage a little better than my limited finances will permit out of my ordinary income.' Later on he tells Lord Byron that 'he is labouring to contradict an old proverb, and make a silk purse out of a sow's ear—namely, to convert a bare haugh and brae into a comfortable farm'; and to Sarah Smith, a London tragic actress, he writes: 'Everybody, after abusing me for buying the ugliest place on

Tweedside, begins now to come over to my side. I think it will be pretty six or seven years hence, whoever may come to see and enjoy, for the sweep of the river is a very fine one of almost a mile in length, and the ground is very unequal, and therefore well adapted for showing off trees.' Scott, as was said, took a profound interest in tree-planting. Had he not been able to add by purchase the neighbouring hills to his original lands, it was said that he would have requested permission of the owners to plant the grounds, for the mere pleasure of the occupation, and to beautify the landscape. 'I saunter about,' he said to Lady Abercorn, 'from nine in the morning till five at night with a plaid about my shoulders and an immense bloodhound at my heels, and stick in sprigs which are to become trees when I shall have no eyes to look at them! He had a painter's as well as a poet's eye for scenery: 'You can have no idea of the exquisite delight of a planter,' he said; 'he is like a painter laying on his colours—at every moment he sees his effects coming out. There is no art or occupation comparable to this; it is full of past, present, and future enjoyment. I look back to the time when there was not a tree here, only bare heath; I look round and see thousands of trees growing up,

all of which—I may say almost each of which—have received my personal attention. I remember five years ago looking forward, with the most delighted expectation, to this very hour, and as each year has passed the expectation has gone on increasing. I do the same now; I anticipate what this plantation and that one will presently be, if only taken care of, and there is not a spot of which I do not watch the progress. Unlike building, or even painting, or indeed any other kind of pursuit, this has no end, and is never interrupted, but goes on from day to day and from year to year with a perpetually augmenting interest. Farming I hate; what have I to do with fattening and killing beasts, or raising corn only to cut it down, and to wrangle with farmers about prices, and to be constantly at the mercy of the seasons? There can be no such disappointments or annoyances in planting trees.'

Scott left Ashestiel at Whitsunday, 1812—a rather comical 'flitting,' according to his own account of it. 'The neighbours,' he writes to Lady Alvanley, 'have been much delighted with the procession of my furniture, in which old swords, bows, targets, and lances made a very conspicuous show. A family of turkeys was accommodated within the helmet of some *preux* chevalier

of ancient Border fame; and the very cows, for aught I know, were bearing banners and muskets. I assure your ladyship that this caravan, attended by a dozen of ragged, rosy peasant children, carrying fishing-rods and spears, and leading ponies, greyhounds, and spaniels, would, as it crossed the Tweed, have furnished no bad subject for the pencil, and really reminded me of one of the gypsy groups of Callot upon their march.' The year 1812 was one of his busiest. Five days every week until the middle of July he did Court duty at Edinburgh. Saturday evening saw him at Abbotsford. On Monday he superintended the licking into shape of his new domicile, and at night he was coaching it to the city. During the Court recess he pegged away at 'Rokeby' and other work under circumstances that must have been trying enough. 'As for the house and the poem,' he writes to Morritt, 'there are twelve masons hammering at the one and one poor noddle at the other.' He did not then know the luxury of a private 'den' as at Castle Street. A window corner, curtained off in the one habitable room which served for dining-room, drawing-room, and school-room, constituted his earliest Abbotsford study. There, amid the hammer's incessant fall,

and the hum of many voices, and constant interruptions, he plodded on, and got through a fair amount. The letters to Terry commence in September, 1812, and show that some little progress had been made: 'We have got up a good garden-wall, complete stables in the haugh, and the old farm-yard enclosed with a wall, with some little picturesque additions in front. The new plantations have thriven amazingly well, the acorns are coming up fast, and Tom Purdie is the happiest and most consequential person in the world.' To Joanna Baillie he sends this characteristic note, in the beginning of 1813: 'No sooner had I corrected the last sheet of 'Rokeby' than I escaped to this Patmos as blithe as bird on tree, and have been ever since most decidedly idle—that is to say with busy idleness. I have been banking, and securing, and dyking against the river, and planting willows, and aspens, and weeping birches. I have now laid the foundations of a famous background of copse, with pendent trees in front; and I have only to beg a few years to see how my colours will come out of the canvas. Alas! who can promise that? But somebody will take my place—and enjoy them, whether I do or no'; and in March he adds: 'What I shall finally make of

this villa work I don't know, but in the meantime it is very entertaining'; and again: 'This little place comes on as fast as can be reasonably hoped.' To Lady Louisa Stuart he writes: 'We are realizing the nursery tale of the man and his wife who lived in a vinegar bottle, for our only sitting-room is just 12 feet square, and my Eve alleges that I am too big for our paradise.' In October, 1813, Terry is told that 'these are no times for building,' but in the following spring, pressing the Morritts to visit him, he says: 'I am arranging this cottage a little more conveniently, to put off the plague and expense of building another year, and I assure you I expect to spare you and Mrs. Morritt a chamber in the wall, with a dressing-room and everything handsome about you. You will not stipulate, of course, for many square feet.' In a letter to Terry, dated November 10, 1814—the year of 'Waverley'—further progress is reported: 'I wish you saw Abbotsford, which begins this season to look the whimsical, gay, odd cabin that we had chalked out. I have been obliged to relinquish Stark's (the Edinburgh architect, who died before the building was well begun) plan, which was greatly too expensive. So I have made the old farm-house

my *corps de logis* with some outlying places for kitchen, laundry, and two spare bedrooms, which run along the east wall of the farm-court, not without some picturesque effect. A perforated cross, the spoils of the old kirk of Galashiels, decorates an advanced door, and looks very well.' Not much was done during the next two years, but in November, 1816, a new set of improvements was under consideration. Abbotsford was rapidly losing its cottage character. The 'romance' period was begun. A notable addition—connecting the farm-house with the line of buildings on the right—was then agreed upon, on which Scott communicates with Terry: 'Bullock* will show you the plan, which I think is very ingenious, and Blore has drawn me a very handsome elevation, both to the road and to the river. This addition will give me a handsome boudoir opening into the little drawing-room, and on the other side to a handsome dining-parlour of 27 feet by 18, with three windows to the north and one to the south, the last to be Gothic and filled with stained glass. Besides these com-

* George Bullock and Edward Blore, London architects and furnishers. Atkinson was the artist who arranged the interior of Abbotsford.

modities there is a small conservatory, and a study for myself, which we design to fit up with ornaments from Melrose Abbey.' In the same letter he says: 'I expect to get some decorations from the old Tolbooth of Edinburgh, particularly the copestones of the doorway, and a niche or two. Better get a niche *from* the Tolbooth than a niche *in* it to which such building operations are apt to bring the projectors.'

By July, 1817, the foundation of the existing house, which extends from the hall westwards to the original courtyard, had been laid, and Scott found a new source of constant occupation in watching the proceedings of his masons. In consequence of a blunder or two during his absence, 'I perceive the necessity,' he said, 'of remaining at the helm.' To Joanna Baillie he writes n September: 'I get on with my labours here; my house is about to be roofed in, and a comical concern it is.' There is some correspondence in October between Scott and Terry relative to the tower, a leading feature of the building. Scott mentions that (Sir) David Wilkie, who had just been his guest, 'admires the whole as a composition, and that is high authority.' 'I agree with you that the tower will look rather rich for the

rest of the building, yet you may be assured that, with diagonal chimneys and notched gables, it will have a very fine effect, and is in Scotch architecture by no means incompatible.' In the beginning of 1818, he again writes to Terry: 'I am now anxious to complete Abbotsford. I have reason to be proud of the finishing of my castle, for even of the tower, for which I trembled, not a stone has been shaken by the late terrific gale which blew a roof clean off in the neighbourhood.' Lockhart, who saw Abbotsford for the first time in 1818, confesses that the building presented a somewhat 'fantastic appearance,' the new and old by no means harmonizing (see the chapter on Lockhart for a further account of his visit). In the spring of 1820 Scott writes to his wife from London, whither he had gone to receive his baronetcy: 'I have got a delightful plan for the addition at Abbotsford, which, I think, will make it quite complete, and furnish me with a handsome library, and you with a drawing-room and better bedroom. It will cost me a little hard work to meet the expense, but I have been a good while idle.' The plans for these new buildings, including the wall and gateway of the courtyard and the graceful stone screen which divides it from the garden,


Wm Smith
Abbotsford, 1904.

were made by Blore, although the screen—with its carvings taken from details of stone-work at Melrose Abbey—was originally devised by Sir Walter himself. During the winter of 1821 the new operations were commenced. By the spring of 1822 they were in full swing. 'It is worth while to come,' he writes to Lord Montagu, 'were it but to see what a romance of a house I am making'; and to Terry later on: 'The new castle is now roofing, and looks superb—in fact, a little too good for the estate; but we must work the harder to make the land suitable.' That same summer the place was besieged by visitors from the South, who, after witnessing the King's reception at Edinburgh, hastened out to see Abbotsford. In October, 1822, he writes to his son Walter: 'My new house is quite finished as to masonry, and we are now getting on the roof just in time to face the bad weather.' In November, 1822, and January, 1823, there are long letters to Terry: 'The house is completely roofed. I never saw anything handsomer than the grouping of towers, chimneys, etc., when seen at a proper distance.' With Terry all sorts of subjects were discussed—bells, and a projected gas installation, along with a constant enumeration of curios and relics, on which he is urged to spare

no expense. 'About July,' Scott writes at the beginning of 1824, 'Abbotsford will, I think, be finished, when I shall, like the old Duke of Queensberry who built Drumlanrig, fold up the accounts in a sealed parcel, with a label bidding "the deil pike out the een" of any of my successors that shall open it.' By Christmas, it was completed, and with the New Year's festivities a large and gay party celebrated the 'house-warming,' of which Basil Hall's sprightly 'Journal,' incorporated in the 'Life,' supplies a singularly agreeable account. But there is no room to quote. It was a doubly joyous occasion, marking not only the realization of Scott's long-cherished scheme as to his 'castle,' but the engagement of his eldest son, with whom, as he must have felt at the time, were the fortunes of the future Abbotsford. Of the year entered so auspiciously, none dreamt what the end was to be.

In the creation of Abbotsford not only was the cottage of 1812 transformed to the castle of 1824, but the estate itself was continually enlarging. Possession of land was a crowning passion with Scott. He was always driving bargains, as he declared—on the wrong side of his purse, however—with the needy, greedy cock-lairds of the locality.

'It rounds off the property so handsomely,' he says in one of his letters. Once, on his friend Ferguson remarking that he had paid what appeared to be one of his usual fabulous prices for a particular stretch, Scott answered quite good-humouredly, 'Well, well, it is only to me the scribbling of another volume more of nonsense.' The first purchase was, as we have seen, the hundred odd acres of Clarty Hole. In 1813 he made his second purchase, which consisted of the hilly tract stretching from the Roman road near Turn-Again towards Cauldshiels Loch, then a desolate and naked mountain mere. To have this at one end of his property as a contrast to the Tweed at the other 'was a prospect for which hardly any sacrifice would have appeared too much.' It cost him about £4,000. In 1815, Kaeside—Laidlaw's home —on the heights between Abbotsford and Melrose, passed into his hands for another £4,000, and more than doubled the domain. The house has changed considerably since Laidlaw's halcyon days. By 1816 the estate had grown to about 1,000 acres. In 1816 and 1817 he paid £16,000 for the two Toftfields, altering the name of the new and unfinished mansion to Huntlyburn, from a supposed but absolutely erroneous association with

the 'Huntlee Bankis'* of the Thomas the Rhymer romance. In 1820, Burnfoot, afterwards Chiefswood, and Harleyburn fell to his hands for £2,300, and there were many minor purchases of which Lockhart takes no notice. Scott was very anxious to acquire the estate of Faldonside,† adjoining Abbotsford to the west, and actually offered £30,000 for it, but without success. He was similarly unsuccessful with Darnick Tower, which lay into his lands on the east, and which he was extremely desirous of including in Abbotsford. Scott's suggestion rather spurred the owner, John Heiton, to restore the ancient peel-house as a retreat for his own declining days, and it is still in excellent preservation—one of the best-preserved peels on the Border—and a veritable museum, crammed from floor to ceiling with curios, relics, and mementos both of the past and present.

* The 'Huntlee Bankis' lie between Melrose and Newtown, on the eastern slope of the Eildons, on the left side of the highway as it bends round to the west, going towards, and within about two miles of, Melrose. The spot is indicated by the famous Eildon Tree Stone.

† The place belonged in 1566 to Andrew Ker, one of the murderers of Rizzio. In 1574 Ker married the widow of John Knox, the Reformer. Nicol Milne was proprietor in Scott's day.

But even 'yerd-hunger' must be satisfied, and in Scott's case there was nothing for it save to steel the flesh against further desire. In November, 1825, there is the following entry in his diary: 'Abbotsford is all I can make it, so I resolve on no more building and no purchases of land till times are quite safe.' But times were never safe again. Abbotsford was all but within sound of the 'muffled drum.' Very soon—December 18, 1825—Scott was to write these words: 'Sad hearts at Darnick and in the cottages of Abbotsford. I have half resolved never to see the place again. How could I tread my hall with such a diminished crest! How live a poor, indebted man where I was once the wealthy, the honoured!' And again on January 26, 1826: 'I have walked my last on the domains I have planted, sat the last time in the halls I have built'—reflections happily unrealized, though, as a matter of fact, Scott was then the laird of Abbotsford in name only, and nothing more.

The building and furnishing of Abbotsford are estimated to have cost over £25,000. The contract for the 1824 edifice was in the capable hands of the Smiths of Darnick, with whom Scott was on the most cordial terms. John Smith (the sculptor

of the Wallace statue at Bemersyde) was a singularly able craftsman, and his staff of workmen, with Adam Paterson for foreman, were known all over the Border. For the interior decorations—painting, papering, etc., and even for some of the carvings and casts—Scott generally gave employment to local labour. Much of the costlier furniture was shipped from London, but the great bulk of the work was carried through by tradesmen in the district, selected by Scott himself, and in whom he placed implicit confidence. The estate, all told, must have cost at least £60,000. It extended to 1,500 acres, and the annual rental in Scott's day was only about £350.

Such was the creation of Scott's Abbotsford, a real 'romance in stone and lime,' to use the Frenchman's hackneyed phrase. Never had Sir Walter deeper delight than when its walls were rising skywards, and the dream of his youth taking steady shape by the silvery side of the Tweed. But for Abbotsford he would not have been *our* Scott—our man among men—our Immortal. If Abbotsford was his dream, it was also his Delilah. It is at once a reminder of his success, and of the most gigantic literary collapse of the century. So far as monuments to Scott go, there is none to

equal it, not even the most splendid and costly pile which is one of Edinburgh's proudest adornments. Yet of all his creations, Abbotsford will be the soonest to perish, for 'Waverley' and its fellows are imperishable. Still, so long as it lasts, it will be the memorial of a pride, unjustifiable in many respects, but chivalrous withal, and of a fall to depths seldom touched, but. best of all, of a restoration than which there has been none more illustrious —none more heroic in literary craftsmanship. 'I have seen much, but nothing like my ain house,' he cried—a broken, dying man returned to Abbotsford, only to be borne forth again. Nor has history been slow to add its Amen.

# SCOTT AT ABBOTSFORD

## CHAPTER IV

### SCOTT AT ABBOTSFORD

Of the Abbotsford life in the seven or eight brilliant seasons preceding the disaster of 1826 Lockhart's exquisite word-pictures are far the finest things in the Biography. Scott's dream was now fairly realized. He was not only a lord of acres, but a kind of mediæval chieftain as well. His cottage was transformed to a superb mansion, like some creation of the 'Arabian Nights,' and the whole estate, acquired at a cost far exceeding its real value, had grown to one of the trimmest and snuggest on Tweedside. A comparative failure at the Bar, Scott succeeded well otherwise in his professional career. His income from the Court Clerkship and Sheriffdom totalled £1,600, and from other sources he had an additional £400 a year. As the most prosperous book-producer of the period, he was netting an annual profit of no less than £10,000. His family was grown up, and his home life, notwithstanding

some harsh things said about Lady Scott, was of the happiest. Unliterary, and Frenchified to a degree, Charlotte Carpenter was not the ideal helpmeet, perhaps, for a man of Scott's calibre and temperament. But that they lived comfortably together, that she made him an excellent wife, and that Scott was much attached to her, must be taken for granted, else Lockhart and the others are equivocating. There is at least one glimpse into Scott's heart which cannot savour of hypocrisy—the occasion of her death. Some of the most touching passages in the Diary belong to that event. As lover, husband, father, there is no question of the acuteness with which he felt her loss who had been his 'thirty years' companion.' Within less than six months the two biggest blows of his life fell upon Scott. Ruined, then widowed, his cup of grief was drained to the utmost. But before the fatal '26 Scott's life was an eminently ideal one. Abbotsford was all he could make it. He had reached the loftiest rung of the ladder. Long had he been the celebrity of the hour, not in Britain only, but throughout Europe itself. Probably no British author of his time was more widely known, and none, it is certain, was surrounded with so many of

the material comforts. It was truly a summer fulness for Scott at Abbotsford ere the autumn winds or the biting breath of winter had begun to chill his cheek.

A glance at the Abbotsford life will bring us nearer Scott as a man—and as the most lovable of men. Treading, as one does to-day, in his very footsteps, we shall want to know how he lived there, and in what manner the pleasant days were spent. Scott's habits at Abbotsford, as at Ashestiel, were delightfully simple. In the country he was a rustic of the rustics. Formality vanished to a considerable extent when he changed his town-house for the bracing atmosphere of the Tweed. But always methodical in his literary operations, he never allowed the freer life of Abbotsford to interfere with whatever tasks he had on hand. He did not sit late into the night. As a rule, the Abbotsford day ended for Scott by ten o'clock. He rose at five, lit his own fire in the season, shaving and dressing with precision. Attired generally in his green shooting-jacket, he was at his desk by six, and hard at work till nine. About half-past nine, when the family met for breakfast, he would enter the room 'rubbing his hands for glee,' for by that time he had done

enough, as he said, 'to break the neck of the day's work.' After breakfast, he allowed his guests to fill in the next couple of hours or so for themselves—fishing, shooting, driving, or riding, with a retinue of keepers and grooms at command. Meantime he was busy with his correspondence, or a chapter for Ballantyne to be dispatched by the 'Blucher,' the Edinburgh and Melrose coach, by which he himself frequently travelled to and from Abbotsford. At noon he was 'his own man,' and among his visitors, or felling trees with the workmen on the estate, laying wagers, and competing with the best of them. When the weather was wet and stormy he kept to his study for several hours during the day, that he might have a reserve fund to draw from on good days. To his visitors he appeared more the man of leisure than the indefatigable author conferring pleasure on thousands. Only a careful husbanding of the moments could have enabled him to give the greater part of afternoon and evening to his guests. 'I know,' said Cadell, the publisher, once to him, 'that you contrive to get a few hours in your own room, and that may do for the mere pen-work, but when is it that you think?' 'Oh,' said Scott, 'I lie simmering over things for an hour or so before I get up, and

there's the time I am dressing to overhaul my half-sleeping, half-waking *projet de chapitre*, and when I get the paper before me it commonly runs off pretty easily. Besides, I often take a dose in the plantations, and while Tom marks out a dyke or a drain as I have directed, one's fancy may be running its ain riggs in some other world.' His maxim was never to be doing nothing, and in making the most of the opportunities, he served both himself and his friends. Several of Lockhart's reminiscences of the Abbotsford life are so delightfully vivid, conveying probably better than anything else something of the ideal charm of Scott and his circle, that the following may well be printed in full:

'I remember saying to (Sir) William Allan one morning, as the whole party mustered before the porch after breakfast, "A faithful sketch of what you at this moment see would be more interesting a hundred years hence than the grandest so-called historical picture that you will ever exhibit in Somerset House"; and my friend agreed with me so cordially that I often wondered afterwards he had not attempted to realize the suggestion.*

* See, however, facsimile of Allan's 'Gala Day at Abbotsford' — a sepia sketch — in Scott Centenary Exhibition Catalogue.

The subject ought, however, to have been treated conjointly by him (or Wilkie) and Edwin Landseer.

'It was a clear, bright September morning, with a sharpness in the air that doubled the animating influence of the sunshine, and all was in readiness for a grand coursing match on Newark Hill. The only guest who had chalked out other sport for himself was the staunchest of anglers, Mr. Rose; but he, too, was there on his *shelty*, armed with his salmon-rod and landing-net, and attended by his humorous squire, Hinves, and Charlie Purdie, a brother of Tom, in those days the most celebrated fisherman of the district. This little group of Waltonians, bound for Lord Somerville's preserve, remained lounging about to witness the start of the main cavalcade. Sir Walter, mounted on Sybil, was marshalling the order of procession with a huge hunting-whip; and among a dozen frolicsome youths and maidens, who seemed disposed to laugh at all discipline, appeared, each on horseback, each as eager as the youngest sportsman in the troop, Sir Humphry Davy, Dr. Wollaston, and the patriarch of Scottish belles-lettres, Henry Mackenzie. The Man of Feeling, however, was persuaded with some difficulty to resign his steed for the present to his faithful negro follower, and to join Lady Scott in the sociable, until we should reach the ground of our battue. Laidlaw, on a long-tailed, wiry Highlander, yclept Hoddin Grey, which carried him nimbly and stoutly, although

his feet almost touched the ground as he sat, was the adjutant. But the most picturesque figure was the illustrious inventor of the safety-lamp. He had come for his favourite sport of angling, and had been practising it successfully with Rose, his travelling companion, for two or three days preceding this, but he had not prepared for coursing fields, and had left Charlie Purdie's troop for Sir Walter's on a sudden thought; and his fisherman's costume—a brown hat with flexible brim, surrounded with line upon line, and innumerable fly-hooks, jack-boots worthy of a Dutch smuggler, and a fustian surtout dabbled with the blood of salmon—made a fine contrast with the smart jackets, white-cord breeches, and well-polished jockey-boots of the less distinguished cavaliers about him. Dr. Wollaston was in black, and, with his noble, serene dignity of countenance, might have passed for a sporting archbishop. Mr. Mackenzie, at this time in the seventy-sixth year of his age, with a white hat turned up with green, green spectacles, green jacket, and long brown leathern gaiters buttoned upon his nether anatomy, wore a dog-whistle round his neck, and had all over the air of as resolute a devotee as the gay Captain of Huntly-burn. Tom Purdie and his subalterns had preceded us by a few hours with all the greyhounds that could be collected at Abbotsford, Darnick, and Melrose; but the giant Maida had remained as

his master's orderly, and now gambolled about Sybil Grey, barking for mere joy, like a spaniel puppy.

'The order of march had been all settled, and the sociable was just getting under weigh, when *the Lady Anne* broke from the line, screaming with laughter, and exclaimed, "Papa! papa! I knew you could never think of going without your pet." Scott looked round, and I rather think there was a blush as well as a smile upon his face, when he perceived a little black pig frisking about his pony, and evidently a self-elected addition to the party of the day. He tried to look stern, and cracked his whip at the creature, but was in a moment obliged to join in the general cheers. Poor piggy soon found a strap round his neck, and was dragged into the background. Scott, watching the retreat, repeated with mock pathos the first verse of an old pastoral song:

> 'What will I do gin my hoggie die?
> My joy, my pride, my hoggie!
> My only beast, I had nae mae,
> And wow! but I was vogie!'

The cheers were redoubled, and the squadron moved on. This pig had taken, nobody could tell how, a most sentimental attachment to Scott, and was constantly urging its pretension to be admitted a regular member of his *tail*, along with the greyhounds and terriers; but, indeed, I remember him

suffering another summer under the same sort of pertinacity on the part of an affectionate hen. I leave the explanation for philosophers; but such were the facts. I have too much respect for the vulgarly calumniated donkey to name him in the same category of pets with the pig and the hen; but, a year or two after this time, my wife used to drive a couple of these animals in a little garden chair, and whenever her father appeared at the door of our cottage, we were sure to see Hannah More and Lady Morgan (as Anne Scott had wickedly christened them) trotting from their pasture to lay their noses over the paling, and, as Washington Irving says of the old white-haired hedger with the Parisian snuff-box, "to have a pleasant crack with the laird."'

The Abbotsford Hunt, another of the great annual outings—a coursing match on an extensive scale—affords material for Lockhart's best vein, especially the Hunt dinner, which for many of the neighbouring yeomen and farmers was *the* event of the year. 'The company were seldom under thirty in number, and sometimes they exceeded forty. The feast was such as suited the occasion —a baron of beef, roasted, at the foot of the table, a salted round at the head, while tureens of hare-soup, hotchpotch, and cockieleekie extended

down the centre, and such light articles as geese, turkeys, an entire sucking-pig, a singed sheep's head, and the unfailing haggis were set forth by way of side-dishes. Black-cock and moor-fowl, snipe, black and white puddings, and pyramids of pancakes, formed the second course. Ale was the favourite beverage during dinner, but there was plenty of port and sherry for those whose stomachs they suited. The quaighs of Glenlivet were filled brimful, and tossed off as if they held water. The wine decanters made a few rounds of the table, but the hints for hot punch and toddy soon became clamorous. Two or three bowls were introduced and placed under the supervision of experienced manufacturers—one of these being usually the Ettrick Shepherd—and then the business of the evening commenced in good earnest. The faces shone and glowed like those at Camacho's wedding; the chairman told his richest stories of old rural life, Lowland or Highland; Ferguson and humbler heroes fought their Peninsular battles o'er again; the stalwart Dandie Dinmonts lugged out their last winter's snow-storm, the parish scandal, perhaps, or the dexterous bargain of the Northumberland tryst. Every man was knocked down for the song that he sung best, or took most pleasure in singing.

Shortreed gave "Dick o' the Cow," or "Now Liddesdale has ridden a raid"; his son Thomas shone without a rival in the "Douglas Tragedy" and the "Twa Corbies"; a weather-beaten, stiff-bearded veteran, "Captain" Ormiston, had the primitive pastoral of "Cowdenknowes" in sweet perfection. Hogg produced the "Women Folk," or "The Kye comes Hame," and, in spite of many grinding notes, contrived to make everybody delighted, whether with the fun or the pathos of his ballad. The Melrose doctor sang in spirited style some of Moore's masterpieces. A couple of retired sailors joined in "Bold Admiral Duncan," and the gallant croupier crowned the last bowl with "Ale, good ale, thou art my darling." And so it proceeded until some worthy, who had fifteen or twenty miles to ride, began to insinuate that his wife and bairns would be getting sorely anxious about the fords, and the Dumples and Hoddins were at last heard neighing at the gate, and it was voted that the hour had come for *doch an dorrach*, the stirrup-cup, a bumper all round of the unmitigated mountain dew. How they all contrived to get home in safety Heaven only knows, but I never heard of any serious accident except upon one occasion, when James Hogg made a bet

at starting that he would leap over his wall-eyed pony as she stood, and broke his nose in this experiment of o'ervaulting ambition. One comely good-wife, far off among the hills, amused Sir Walter by telling him the next time he passed her homestead after one of these jolly doings, what her husband's first words were when he alighted at his own door—"Ailie, my woman, I'm ready for my bed; and oh, lass, I wish I could sleep for a towmont, for there's only ae thing in this warld worth living for, and that's the Abbotsford Hunt."'

Nor was the good old custom of the Kirn omitted at Abbotsford. Every autumn, before proceeding to Edinburgh, Scott gave a 'Harvest Home,' to which all the tenantry and their friends —as many as the barn could hold—were invited. Sir Walter and his family were present during the first part of the evening, to dispense the good things and say a few words of farewell. Old and young danced from sunset to sunrise, to the skirling of John o' Skye's pipes, or the strains of some 'Wandering Willie's' fiddle, the laird having his private joke for every old wife or 'gausie carle,' his arch compliment for the ear of every bonnie lass, and his hand and his blessing for the head of every little Eppie Daidle from Abbotstown or Broomielees.

Hogmanay, and the immemorial customs of the New Year, as celebrated in Scotland—now fast dying out—obtained full respect at Abbotsford. Scott said it was uncanny, and would certainly have felt it very uncomfortable not to welcome the New Year in the midst of his family and a few cronies in the orthodox fashion. But nothing gave him such delight as the visit which he received as laird from all the children on his estate on the last morning of the year, when, as he was fond of quoting :

> 'The cottage bairns sing blythe and gay
> At the ha' door for hogmanay.'

'Yesterday (December 31, 1825) being Hogmanay,' says Basil Hall's 'Journal'—the clearest, cleverest, most picturesque sketch of the Abbotsford life from an outsider's point of view—'there was a constant succession of guizards—boys dressed up in fantastic caps, with their shirts over their jackets, and with wooden swords in their hands. These players acted a sort of scene before us, of which the hero was one Goloshin, who gets killed in a battle for love, but is presently brought to life again by a doctor of the party. As may be imagined, the taste of our host is to keep up these

old ceremonies. Thus, in the morning, I observed crowds of boys and girls coming to the back-door, where each got a penny and an oaten-cake. No less than seventy pennies were thus distributed—and very happy the little bodies looked with their well-stored bags.' Guizarding—that is, masquerading, guising—has lost practically all the scope and popularity it once had in the South of Scotland. The present writer well remembers how, as a boy, he took part scores of times during Christmas and New Year weeks in the grotesque but picturesque play referred to. The words and form of the drama exist in various versions in every part of the Border Country, almost every parish possessing its own rendering. The *dramatis personæ*, three or four in number, sometimes five, arrayed in the fashion described above, proceeded from house to house, generally contenting themselves with the kitchen for an arena, where the performance was carried through in presence of the entire household. Galations (not Goloshin) is the title of the play. Some account of it will be found in Chambers' 'Popular Rhymes of Scotland' and in Maidment's scarce pamphlet on the subject (1835).

From what has been said, it is not difficult to imagine the ideal relationship existing between Scott

and his dependents at Abbotsford. They were surely the happiest retainers and domestics in the world. How considerate he was in the matter of dwellings, for instance! He realized that he owed them a distinct duty in diffusing as much comfort and security into their lives as possible. They were not mere goods and chattels, but beings of flesh and blood, with human sympathies like himself. And he treated them as such. Amid the severities of winter, some of his Edinburgh notes to Laidlaw are perfect little gems of their kind: 'This dreadful weather will probably stop Mercer (the weekly carrier). It makes me shiver in the midst of superfluous comforts to think of the distress of others. I wish you to distribute £10 amongst our poorer neighbours so as may best aid them. I mean not only the actually indigent, but those who are, in our phrase, *ill off*. I am sure Dr. Scott (of Darnlee) will assist you with his advice in this labour of love. I think part of the wood-money, too, should be given among the Abbotstown folks if the storm keeps them off work, as is like.' And again: 'If you can devise any means by which hands can be beneficially employed at Abbotsford, I could turn £50 or £100 extra into service. If it made the poor and industrious people a little easier, I should have

more pleasure in it than any money I ever spent in my life.' 'I think of my rooks amongst this snow-storm, also of the birds, and not a little of the poor. For benefit of the former, I hope Peggy throws out the crumbs, and a cornsheaf or two for the game, if placed where poachers could not come at them. For the poor people I wish you to distribute £5 or so among the neighbouring poor who may be in distress, and see that our own folks are tolerably well off.' 'Do not let the poor bodies want for a £5, or even a £10, more or less'—

> 'We'll get a blessing wi' the lave,
> And never miss 't.'

Socially, the bond between Scott and his servants was a characteristic object-lesson. 'He speaks to us,' said one, 'as if we were blood relations.' Like Swift, he maintained that an affectionate and faithful servant should always be considered in the character of a humble friend. Even the household domestics 'stayed on' year after year. Some of them grew grey in his service. One or two died. He had always several pensioners beside him. Abbotsford was like a little happy world of its own—the most emphatic exception to the cynic's rule. Scott was 'a hero and a gentleman' to those

who knew him most intimately in the common and disillusionizing routine of domestic life.

In reading Lockhart, one feels that, aristocrat as Scott was, familiar with the nobility and literary lions of the time, he was most at home, and happiest, perhaps, in the fellowship of commoner men, such as Laidlaw, and Purdie, and John Usher, and James Hogg, who were knit to him as soul to soul. Of some of these he declared that they had become almost an integral part of his existence. We know how life was inexpressibly changed for Scott minus Tom Purdie, and to dispense with Laidlaw, when that had become absolutely necessary, was as the iron entering his soul. The most perfect pen-portraits in Lockhart are those of Purdie (the Cristal Nixon of 'Redgauntlet'), that faithful factotum and friend for whom he mourned as a brother; and 'dear Willie' Laidlaw, betwixt whom and Scott the most charming of all master and servant correspondence passed; and 'auld Pepe'— Peter Mathieson, his coachman, a wondrously devoted soul, content to set himself in the plough-stilts, and do the most menial duties, rather than quit Abbotsford at its darkest. John Swanston, too, Purdie's successor, and Dalgleish, the butler, occupy exalted niches in the

temple of humble and honest worth and sweet sacrificing service for a dear master's sake who was much more than master to them all. Purdie's grave, close to Melrose Abbey, with a modest stone erected by Scott (see closing chapter), is probably the most visited of the 'graves of the common people' almost anywhere. It is seventy-six years, since, apparently in the fullest enjoyment of health and vigour, he bowed his head one evening on the table, and dropped asleep—for ever. Laidlaw lies at Contin amid the Highland solitudes. But few from Tweedside have beheld the green turf beneath which his loyal heart has been long resting, or read the simple inscription on the white marble that marks a spot so sacred to all lovers of Abbotsford and Sir Walter.

'Here lie the remains of William Laidlaw,
Born at Blackhouse in Yarrow,
November, 1780. Died at Contin, May 18, 1845.'

No account of the Abbotsford life can fail to take notice of the extraordinary number of visitors, who, even at that early date, flocked to the shrine of Sir Walter. The year 1825, as has been said, must be regarded as the high-water mark in the splendours of Abbotsford. From the dawn of

'Waverley,' but particularly the period immediately preceding the crash, Abbotsford was the most sought-after house in the kingdom. It was seldom without its quota of guests. 'Like a cried fair,' Scott described it on one occasion. 'A hotel widout de pay,' was Lady Scott's more matter-of-fact comparison. What a profoundly interesting and curious record a register of visitors to Abbotsford would have been! We may regret, like Lockhart, that none was ever attempted. His pages, however, supply to some extent the lack of such a list. One is amazed at its vastness and cosmopolitanism. Scott's visitors came from all parts of the compass. Even then the ubiquitous American led the way, much less reticent and more irrepressible than his modern representative. Of Continental visitors to Britain in the early part of last century, not a few, Lockhart says, crossed the Channel, chiefly as a consequence of their interest in Scott's writings, and in the hope of seeing the man himself under his own roof. As for the more intellectual of his own countrymen, Lockhart will be surprised if it can be shown that any of them crossed the Tweed without spending a day at Abbotsford.

It was Scott's ambition to assemble at his board

some of the best blood of the country, and at the height of his prosperity he is said to have entertained as many persons of distinction in rank, politics, art, literature, and science, as the foremost nobleman of his age ever did in the like space of time. Lockhart computes that one out of every six of the British Peerage had dined at Scott's table. Prince Leopold, afterwards Leopold I. of the Belgians, husband of the Princess Charlotte, and the exiled Crown Prince Gustavus of Sweden, were guests at Abbotsford in 1819 and 1820 respectively. With the leading Border families Scott was on the best of terms, and the neighbouring gentry were all, more or less, included within the Abbotsford circle. Of his literary friendships some account will be found in the next chapter.

Nor was Scott above introducing his poorer relations to Abbotsford. No old acquaintance or family connections, however remote their station or style of manners, were forgotten or lost sight of. These were welcome guests, whoever might be under his roof; and it was the same with many an old classmate, or the fellow-apprentice who had faced him at the desk when he was proud to earn threepence a page in drudging pen-work. 'To dwell on nothing else,' says Lockhart, 'it was

surely a beautiful perfection of real universal humanity and politeness that could enable this great and good man to blend guests so multifarious in one group, or contrive to make them all equally happy with him, with themselves, and with each other.'

Whilst, however, Abbotsford was a kind of ever open door to an unparalleled variety of guests, there was another and a much larger company constantly invading its precincts—the great army of the uninvited. Such interruptions were a constant source of worry to Scott. Lockhart counted in one day no fewer than sixteen parties begging admittance. It was impossible at that time, it was said, to pass between Melrose and Abbotsford 'without encountering some odd figure, armed with a sketch-book, evidently bent on a peep at the Great Unknown.' Some came furnished with letters of introduction from friends for whose sake Scott received them cordially, and treated them kindly. Others had no introduction at all, but, pencil and note-book in hand, took the most impertinent liberties with the place and its occupants. On returning to Abbotsford upon one occasion, Lockhart recalls how Scott and he found Mrs. Scott and her daughters doing penance under the

merciless curiosity of a couple of tourists who had been with her for some hours. They were rich specimens—tall, lanky young men, both of them rigged out in new jackets and trousers of the Macgregor tartan, the one a lawyer, the other a Unitarian preacher from New England. These gentlemen, when told on their arrival that Scott was not at home, had shown such signs of impatience that the servant took it for granted they must have serious business, and asked if they would wish to speak a word with his lady. They grasped at this, and so conducted themselves in the interview that Mrs. Scott never doubted they had brought letters of introduction to her husband, and invited them accordingly to partake of her luncheon. They had been walking about the house and grounds with her and her daughters ever since that time, and appeared at the porch, when the Sheriff and his party returned to dinner, as if they had been already fairly enrolled on his visiting-list. For the moment he too was taken in; he fancied that his wife must have received and opened their credentials, and shook hands with them with courteous cordiality. But Mrs. Scott, with all her overflowing good nature, was a sharp observer; and she, before a minute had elapsed, interrupted

the ecstatic compliments of the strangers by reminding them that her husband would be glad to have the letters of the friends who had been so good as to write by them. It then turned out that there were no letters to be produced, and Scott, signifying that his hour for dinner approached, added that, as he supposed they meant to walk to Melrose, he could not trespass further on their time. The two lion-hunters seemed quite unprepared for this abrupt escape. But there was about Scott, in perfection, when he chose to exert it, the power of civil repulsion. He bowed the overwhelmed originals to the door, and on re-entering the parlour, found Mrs. Scott complaining very indignantly that they had gone so far as to pull out their note-book and beg an exact account, not only of his age, but of her own. Scott, already half relenting, laughed heartily at this misery, afterwards saying, 'Hang the Yahoos, Charlotte, but we should have bid them stay dinner.' 'Devil a bit,' quoth Captain Ferguson, who had come over from Huntlyburn, 'they were quite in a mistake, I could see. The one asked Madame whether she deigned to call her new house Tully Veolan or Tillietudlem, and the other, when Maida happened to lay his head against the

window, exclaimed, "*Pro-di-gi-ous!*"' 'Well, well, Skipper,' was the reply, 'for a' that, the loons would hae been nane the waur o' their kail.'

Much has been written of Scott and his dogs—not the least important part of the establishment. All true poets, from Homer downwards, have loved dogs. Scott was seldom without a 'tail' at his heels. His special favourites, Camp and Maida (the Bevis of 'Woodstock'), are as well-known as himself. Both were frequently painted by Raeburn and others. When Camp died at Castle Street, Scott excused himself from a dinner-party on account of 'the death of a dear old friend'—a fine compliment to the canine tribe—a finer index to the heart of the man. Scott looked upon his dogs as companions, 'not as the brute, but the mute creation.' He loved them for their marvellously human traits, and we know how they reciprocated his affection. He was always caring for them. When the financial cloud burst, there is this touching record in the Diary: 'I was to have gone there (Abbotsford) on Saturday in joy and prosperity to receive my friends. My dogs will wait for me in vain. It is foolish, but the thought of parting with these dumb creatures has moved me more than any of the painful reflections I have put down. Poor

things! I must get them kind masters! There may be yet those who, loving me, may love my dog, because it has been mine. . . . I feel my dogs' feet on my knees; I hear them whining and seeking me everywhere. This is nonsense, but it is what they would do could they know how things may be.' 'Be very careful of the dogs,' was his last request to Laidlaw on the eve of setting out for Italy. And when, close on a year afterwards, he returned so deadly stricken, it was his dogs fondling about him which for the most part resuscitated the sense of 'home, sweet home.'

# AN ABBOTSFORD BEAD-ROLL

## CHAPTER V

### AN ABBOTSFORD BEAD-ROLL

Of Scott's friendships in the world of letters, Lockhart's account runs like a silver thread through the Life. Many of his strongest ties were on the literary side. His attitude to literature was a curious one, however. Notwithstanding the unique place which he held, and his unrivalled popularity, his successes, from an author's point of view, were accepted with singular sang-froid. Nor was he ever heard to profess a love of literature for its own sake. Carlyle's statement that, with Scott, literature was mainly a means to an end—and a material enough one at that—it is to be feared, is only too true. His fictional work was made entirely subsidiary to the other and more tangible creations of his imagination and ambition —Abbotsford, and the race of Abbotsford Scotts. Literary reputation, he was fond of saying, while a bright enough feather in one's cap, is never a substantial covering for the head. 'He never

considered,' says Lockhart, 'any amount of literary distinction as entitled to be spoken of in the same breath with mastery in the higher departments of practical life—least of all, with the glory of a first-rate captain. To have done things worthy to be written was a dignity to which no man made any approach who had only written things worthy to be read.' Of his own work he seldom spoke, except to his intimates. The making of a book he held to be no great matter, and to the glory which might be won thereby 'one is apt,' he said, 'to ascribe an undue degree of consequence.' Recounting his introduction to the Iron Duke, he told Ballantyne that he had felt awed and abashed as never before in the presence of the man whom he regarded not only as the greatest soldier, but also as the greatest statesman of the age. Ballantyne suggested that, on his part, the Duke had seen before him a great poet, and the greatest novelist of the age. Scott smiled. 'What,' said he, 'would the Duke of Wellington think of a few *bits of novels*, which perhaps he had never read, and for which the strong probability is that he would not care a sixpence if he had?' 'I have more than once,' said Laidlaw, 'heard Sir Walter assert that, had his father left him an estate

of £500 or £600 a year, he would have spent his time in miscellaneous reading, not writing.' This, to a certain extent, might have been the case. It is hardly likely, however. Had he not tasted blood in the success of the 'Minstrelsy,' and the magnificent reception given to the verse romances, matters might have been different. But, so singularly successful at the first venture, it was not possible for Scott to restrain himself from further achievements. Writing was as natural to him as breathing. From boyhood he had a penchant for letters. And had he not been 'making himself' right on from Sandyknowe and Kelso to Lasswade and Ashestiel? The fruit came late, but what a crop! Still, it was nothing for him, in one aspect of it, to be the uncrowned king of his country's literature. So far as it made him Scott of Abbotsford, that was a much more real matter.

We have seen how Abbotsford, in its palmy days, was the most popular guest-house in the kingdom. To the intellectual lions of the time its doors offered a specially gracious welcome. Never did gatherings glisten with a more resplendent genius or such genuine good-fellowship. An Abbotsford 'noctes' was worth dozens at Ambrose's, as Lockhart and the contemporary biographies evidence.

To the present bead-roll, which is based almost entirely on the Biography, Thomas Faed's picture, 'Scott and his Literary Friends,'* offers a good index. The piece is purely imaginary, for the persons represented were never all at Abbotsford at the same time, two of them, indeed—Crabbe and Campbell — never having seen it. Scott is represented as reading the manuscript of a new novel; on his right, Henry Mackenzie, his oldest literary friend, occupies the place of honour. Hogg, the intentest figure in the group, sits at Scott's feet to the left. Kit North's leonine head and shoulders lean across the back of a chair. Next come Crabbe and Lockhart—at the centre of the table—together with Wordsworth and Francis (afterwards Lord) Jeffrey. Sir Adam Ferguson, a bosom cronie, cross-legged, his military boots recalling Peninsular days and the reading of the 'Lady of the Lake' to his comrades in the lines of Torres Vedras, immediately faces Scott. Behind him, Moore and Campbell sit opposite each other. At the end of the table are the printers Constable and Ballantyne, and at their

* In the possession of Captain Dennistoun of Golfhill. The picture has been frequently on exhibition, and frequently engraved.

back, standing, the painters Allan and Wilkie. Thomas Thomson, Deputy Clerk Register, is on the extreme left, and Sir Humphry Davy is examining a sword-hilt. A second and smaller copy of Faed's picture (in the Woodlands Park collection, Bradford) substitutes Lord Byron and Washington Irving for Constable and Ballantyne. Allan, Davy, and Thomson are also omitted. The artist might well have introduced Scott's lady literary friends, Joanna Baillie and Maria Edgeworth, and it is a pity that Laidlaw has been left out.

Such a picture suggests instinctively the table-talk of Abbotsford. One cannot help regretting the absence of a volume on the subject, apart from Lockhart. What would 'Bozzy' not have given for the opportunity! Lockhart, naturally, scorned to 'Boswellize' his hero. Notwithstanding the sterling excellence of the Biography, with its reproductions of many rare conversations and chronicling of scores of delightful little incidents, some of the finest things that fell from Scott's lips and from his guests must have perished irretrievably. Laidlaw, it is said, was urged to play the rôle of Boswell, but declined, yet few could have done it better. He was part of the establishment, and hardly any company was considered complete

without his quiet and sagacious presence. Scott once remarked when they were alone, after a specially brilliant night, that many a one, meeting such people and hearing such talk, might make excellent 'copy' out of it in a very lively and entertaining book, which would be sure to be read with interest. Hence the value of the 'Abbotsford Notanda'—Laidlaw's correspondence and other papers, collected and edited by Robert Carruthers—with no thought, possibly, on Laidlaw's part, of their ever being printed. It is a perfect little gem of its kind—one of the sweetest pictures of the Abbotsford life and of that winsomely ideal relationship which existed between Sir Walter and his steward. No student of Scott can overlook it. As the writer, be it noted also, of one of the most touching and characteristic Scottish ballads, 'Lucy's Flittin',' and an enthusiastic collaborateur with Scott in the 'Minstrelsy,' Laidlaw will always merit the most honourable remembrance.

It is interesting to recall that Scott's first really distinguished visitor from the arena of letters was from the other side of the Atlantic—Washington Irving, an American of the Americans. Irving's visit, doubtless, helped to modify Scott's estimate of his countrymen. He did not at first care for many

of his Yankee admirers, but by-and-by not a few of them became friends for life. Campbell introduced Irving to Scott. 'When you see Tom Campbell,' wrote Scott to Richardson of Kirklands, 'tell him, with my best love, that I have to thank him for making me known to Mr. Washington Irving, who is one of the best and pleasantest acquaintances I have made this many a day.' Irving was the guest—if we except Basil Hall at a later period—who made the most of his brief stay at Abbotsford. He was there in August, 1817, whilst the building operations were in progress. Some parts of his famous and classical essay are too good and too graphic not to be quoted at length.

'While the postilion was on his errand, I had time to survey the mansion. It stood some short distance below the road, on the side of a hill sweeping down to the Tweed; and was as yet but a snug gentleman's cottage, with something rural and picturesque in its appearance. The whole front was overrun with evergreens, and immediately above the portal was a great pair of elk horns, branching out from beneath the foliage, and giving the cottage the look of a hunting-lodge. The huge baronial pile, to which this modest mansion in a manner gave birth, was just emerging into existence; part of the walls, surrounded by scaffolding, already

had risen to the height of the cottage, and the court-yard in front was encumbered by masses of hewn stone.

'The noise of the chaise had disturbed the quiet of the establishment. Out sallied the warder of the castle, a black greyhound, and, leaping on one of the blocks of stone, began a furious barking. His alarm brought out the whole garrison of dogs, all open-mouthed and vociferous. In a little while the "lord of the castle" himself made his appearance. I knew him at once by the descriptions I had read and heard, and the likenesses that had been published of him. He was tall, and of a large and powerful frame. His dress was simple, and almost rustic. An old green shooting-coat, with a dog-whistle at the buttonhole, brown linen pantaloons, stout shoes that tied at the ankles, and a white hat that had evidently seen service. He came limping up the gravel walk, aiding himself by a stout walking-staff, but moving rapidly and with vigour. By his side jogged along a large iron-grey staghound of most grave demeanour, who took no part in the clamour of the canine rabble, but seemed to consider himself bound, for the dignity of the house, to give me a courteous reception.

'Before Scott had reached the gate he called out in a hearty tone, welcoming me to Abbotsford, and asking news of Campbell. Arrived at the door of the chaise, he grasped me warmly by the hand: "Come, drive down, drive down to the house,"

said he; "you're just in time for breakfast, and afterwards ye shall see all the wonders of the Abbey."

'I would have excused myself, on the plea of having already made my breakfast. "Hout, man," cried he, "a ride in the morning in the keen air of the Scotch hills is warrant enough for a second breakfast."

'I was accordingly whirled to the portal of the cottage, and in a few moments found myself seated at the breakfast-table. There was no one present but the family, which consisted of Mrs. Scott, her eldest daughter Sophia, then a fine girl about seventeen, Miss Anne Scott, two or three years younger, Walter, a well-grown stripling, and Charles, a lively boy, eleven or twelve years of age. I soon felt myself quite at home, and my heart in a glow with the cordial welcome I experienced. I had thought to make a mere morning visit, but found I was not to be let off so lightly. "You must not think our neighbourhood is to be read in a morning, like a newspaper," said Scott. "It takes several days of study for an observant traveller that has a relish for auld-world trumpery. After breakfast you shall make your visit to Melrose Abbey. When you come back, I'll take you out on a ramble about the neighbourhood. To-morrow we will take a look at the Yarrow, and the next day we will drive over to Dryburgh Abbey, which is a fine old ruin well worth your seeing." In a word, before

Scott had got through with his plan, I found myself committed for a visit of several days, and it seemed as if a little realm of romance was suddenly opened before me. . . .

'After my return from Melrose Abbey, Scott proposed a ramble to show me something of the surrounding country. As we sallied forth, every dog in the establishment turned out to attend us. There was the old staghound Maida, a noble animal, and a great favourite of Scott's; and Hamlet, the black greyhound, a wild, thoughtless youngster, not yet arrived to years of discretion; and Finette, a beautiful setter, with soft silken hair, long pendent ears, and a mild eye—the parlour favourite. When in front of the house, we were joined by a superannuated greyhound, who came from the kitchen wagging his tail, and was cheered by Scott as an old friend and comrade.

'In our walks, Scott would frequently pause in conversation to notice his dogs and speak to them, as if rational companions; and, indeed, there appears to be a vast deal of rationality in these faithful attendants on man, derived from their close intimacy with him. Maida deported himself with a gravity becoming his age and size, and seemed to consider himself called upon to preserve a great degree of dignity and decorum in our society. As he jogged along a little distance ahead of us, the young dogs would gambol about him, leap on his neck, worry at his ears, and endeavour to tease

him into a frolic. The old dog would keep on for a long time with imperturbable solemnity, now and then seeming to rebuke the wantonness of his young companions. At length he would make a sudden turn, seize one of them, and tumble him in the dust; then, giving a glance at us, as much as to say, "You see, gentlemen, I can't help giving way to this nonsense," would resume his gravity and jog on as before.

'Scott amused himself with these peculiarities. "I make no doubt," said he, "when Maida is alone with these young dogs he throws gravity aside, and plays the boy as much as any of them; but he is ashamed to do so in our company, and seems to say, 'Ha' done with your nonsense, youngsters; what will the laird and that other gentleman think of me if I give way to such foolery?'" . . .

'We rambled on among scenes which had been familiar in Scottish song, and rendered classic by the pastoral muse, long before Scott had thrown the rich mantle of his poetry over them. What a thrill of pleasure did I feel when first I saw the broom-covered tops of the Cowdenknowes peeping above the grey hills of the Tweed! and what touching associations were called up by the sight of Ettrick Vale, Gala Water, and the Braes of Yarrow! Every turn brought to mind some household air—some almost forgotten song of the nursery, by which I had been lulled to sleep in my childhood; and with them the looks and voices of

those who had sung them, and who were now no more. It is these melodies, chanted in our ears in the days of infancy, and connected with the memory of those we have loved, and who have passed away, that clothe Scottish landscape with such tender associations. . . .

'Our ramble took us on the hills, commanding an extensive prospect. "Now," said Scott, "I have brought you, like the pilgrim in the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' to the top of the Delectable Mountains, that I may show you all the goodly regions hereabouts. Yonder is Lammermoor and Smailholm; and there you have Galashiels, and Torwoodlee, and Gala Water; and in that direction you see Teviotdale, and the Braes of Yarrow, and Ettrick stream, winding along, like a silver thread, to throw itself into the Tweed."

'He went on thus to call over names celebrated in Scottish song, and most of which had recently received a romantic interest from his own pen. In fact, I saw a great part of the Border Country spread out before me, and could trace the scenes of those poems and romances which had, in a manner, bewitched the world. I gazed about me for a time with mute surprise, I may almost say with disappointment. I beheld a mere succession of grey waving hills, line beyond line, as far as my eye could reach, monotonous in their aspect, and so destitute of trees that one could almost see a stout fly walking along their profile; and the far-

famed Tweed appeared a naked stream, flowing between bare hills, without a tree or thicket on its banks; and yet, such had been the magic web of poetry and romance thrown over the whole, that it had a greater charm for me than the richest scenery I beheld in England.

'I could not help giving utterance to my thoughts. Scott hummed for a moment to himself, and looked grave; he had no idea of having his muse complimented at the expense of his native hills. "It may be partiality," said he, at length; "but to my eye, these grey hills and all this wild Border Country have beauties peculiar to themselves. I like the very nakedness of the land; it has something bold, and stern, and solitary about it. When I have been for some time in the rich scenery about Edinburgh, which is like ornamented garden land, I begin to wish myself back again among my honest grey hills; and if I did not see the heather at least once a year, *I think I should die!*" The last words were said with an honest warmth, accompanied with a thump on the ground with his staff, by way of emphasis, that showed his heart was in his speech.'

Following Irving's visit came Lady Byron—for a day only—spent on the banks of the Yarrow. Lord Byron never was at Abbotsford. Scott and he met at John Murray's London house and elsewhere, and they frequently corresponded. Like

the old heroes in Homer, they exchanged gifts. Scott gave Byron a beautiful dagger mounted with gold, which had been the property of the redoubted Elfi Bey, and some time after, Byron sent to Abbotsford a large sepulchral vase of silver, filled with dead men's bones from the Piræus, and suitably inscribed. A letter from the noble poet accompanying the gift was filched from the vase, much to Scott's annoyance.

That same year, 1817, Sir David Wilkie painted his incongruous 'Abbotsford Family' (in the Scottish National Gallery), wherein Scott figures as a miller and the rest of the group as peasants. Sir Adam Ferguson, who commissioned the picture, was depicted as a poacher. Wilkie's impressions of Abbotsford, in a letter to his sister, reveal the pleasant nature of his visit. 'I have never been in any place,' he says, 'where there is so much real good humour and merriment. There is nothing but amusement from morning till night, and if Scott is really writing "Rob Roy," it must be while we are sleeping.' (That was practically so.) 'He is either out planting trees, superintending the masons, or erecting fences, the whole of the day. He goes frequently out hunting, and this morning there was a whole cavalcade of us out hunting hard.'

Lockhart at Abbotsford, which he first saw in 1818, merits a chapter to himself. Sir Humphry Davy and Dr. Wollaston, natural philosophers both, Henry Mackenzie, and William Stewart Rose, translator of Ariosto, to whom Scott dedicated the first canto of 'Marmion,' were at Abbotsford in 1820. Of their doings (unliterary) some account will be found in the preceding pages. The year 1823, when Miss Edgeworth visited Abbotsford, Lockhart believes to be the happiest in Scott's life. Probably no more welcome guest crossed his threshold. Scott and she corresponded occasionally. As a matter of fact, it was Maria's delightful delineations of Irish life and character which inspired him to try his own hand at fiction. Long had he hoped to meet her. At last the novelist of 'Castle Rackrent' and 'The Absentee' was in Scotland, with Abbotsford as her objective. Barely had she and her sister reached Edinburgh before a note came from Scott begging them to venture to his house that very night, late as it was, and just as they were, to hear the Laird of Staffa and some of his clansmen singing Highland boat-songs. 'Ten o'clock struck,' writes Miss Edgeworth, 'as I read this note. We were tired; we were not fit to be seen; but I sent for a hackney,

and just as we were, without dressing, we went. As the coach stopped, we saw the hall lighted, and the moment the door opened, heard the joyous sounds of loud singing. Three servants: 'The Miss Edgeworths!' sounded from hall to landing-place; and as I paused for a moment in the ante-room, I heard the first sound of Walter Scott's voice—'The Miss Edgeworths?—come!' Thus the eventful meeting took place, and the friendship of two lives long intimate, so far as correspondence can be said to create intimacy, seems to have grown to its full height, literally at their first hand-clasp. Here is Scott's opinion of the 'little Irish lioness,' as he called her: 'It is scarcely possible to say more of this remarkable person than that she not only completely answered, but exceeded the expectations which I had formed. I am particularly pleased with the naïveté and good-humoured ardour of mind which she unites with such formidable powers of acute observation.' 'Never did I see a brighter day at Abbotsford,' says Lockhart, 'than that on which Miss Edgeworth first arrived there; never can I forget her look and accent when she was received by Scott at his archway, and exclaimed: 'Everything about you is exactly what one ought to have had wit enough to dream!' The


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visit was a series of fêtes. The weather, on its good behaviour, allowed of an out-of-doors life to the full. One day they picnicked at Cauldshiels. Another, the whole party feasted by the Rhymer's Waterfall in the Glen, and the stone on which Maria sat was ever afterwards called 'Edgeworth's stone.' A third day they drove to the Upper Yarrow, and about sunset the baskets were unpacked beside St. Mary's Chapel of the Lowes, or all that remains of it, high up on the hillside, overlooking the shining waters of the Loch. The young ladies trimmed their hair with heather and blue-bells, and some of the party sang, and Scott recited, until it was time to go home beneath the softest of harvest moons. So passed that halcyon fortnight, and Miss Edgeworth never saw Abbotsford again. But exactly two years later, Mr. Lovell Edgeworth threw open the doors of his classical mansion at Edgeworthstown to the Wizard of the North, and Maria, with her brother and sister, accompanied him to Killarney amid a succession of festive gaiety wherever they halted.

John Leycester Adolphus, author of the 'Letters to Heber,' unmasking the 'Great Unknown' in proof that 'Marmion' and 'Waverley' were from the same pen, was a frequent guest from 1823

onwards. His 'Memoranda, like Irving's and Hall's, discloses interesting little sidelights of Scott as seen by an outsider. There is nothing better than his exquisite description of Scott's laugh: 'Never, perhaps, did a man go through all the gradations of laughter with such complete enjoyment and a countenance so radiant. The first dawn of a humorous thought would show itself sometimes, as he sat silent, by an involuntary lengthening of the upper lip, followed by a shy sidelong glance at his neighbours, indescribably whimsical, and seeming to ask from their looks whether the spark of drollery should be suppressed or allowed to blaze out. In the full tide of mirth he did, indeed, laugh the heart's laugh, like Walpole, but it was not boisterous and overpowering, nor did it check the course of his words. He could go on telling or descanting, while his lungs did 'crow like chanticleer,' his syllables, in the struggle, growing more emphatic, his accent more strongly Scotch, and his voice plaintive with excess of merriment.'

Tom Moore came in 1825—the culminating year. Scott and he had only once met, in public, some twenty years earlier. Abbotsford, curiously, but luckily for Moore, was absolutely guestless

during his visit. Scott enjoyed having the author of 'Lalla Rookh' all to himself, and sacrificed his mornings, usually sacred to work, in honour of the occasion. The liking between the two men was immediate, but none the less profound. To Moore—and tired, doubtless, of the long mask-wearing—Scott confessed the Novels' authorship, the first avowal outside his own circle. On the third day Moore's Diary notes that Scott, 'laying his hand cordially on my breast, said: "Now, my dear Moore, we are friends for life."' Together they called on Laidlaw at Kaeside, the Fergusons at Huntlyburn, saw Melrose, and in the evening Scott 'collected his neighbours to enjoy his guest, with the wit and humour of Sir Adam Ferguson, his picturesque stories of the Peninsula, and his inimitable singing of the old Jacobite ditties.' 'I parted from Scott,' says Moore, 'with the feeling that all the world might admire him in his works, but that those only could learn to love him as he deserved who had seen him at Abbotsford.' And there is no passage in Moore's memoirs more evidently sincere than that in which he expresses (only a few months later) his 'deep and painful sympathy' in the news of Scott's financial misfortune: 'For poor devils like me (who have never

known better) to fag and to be pinched for means, becomes, as it were, a second nature; but for Scott, whom I saw living in such luxurious comfort, and dispensing such cordial hospitality, to be thus suddenly reduced to the necessity of working his way is too bad, and I grieve for him from my heart.'

Arthur Henry Hallam, of 'In Memoriam,' cut off in the very bloom of life and genius, accompanied by his father, the historian, was at Abbotsford in 1829. His beautiful verses, 'written after visiting Melrose Abbey in company of Scott,' have been often reprinted:

'I lived an hour in fair Melrose;
It was not when the "pale moonlight"
Its magnifying charm bestows;
Yet deem I that I "viewed it right."
The wind-swept shadows fast careered,
Like living things that joyed or feared,
Adown the sunny Eildon Hill,
And the sweet winding Tweed the distance crownèd well.

'I inly laughed to see that scene
Wear such a countenance of youth,
Though many an age those hills were green,
And yonder river glided smooth,
Ere in these now disjointed walls
The Mother Church held festivals,
And full-voiced anthemings the while
Swelled from the choir, and lingered down the echoing aisle.

'I coveted that Abbey's doom;
For if, I thought, the early flowers
Of our affection may not bloom,
Like those green hills, through countless hours,
Grant me at least a tardy waning,
Some pleasure still in age's paining;
Though lines and forms must fade away,
Still may old Beauty share the empire of Decay!

'But looking toward the grassy mound
Where calm the Douglas chieftains lie
Who, living, quiet never found,
I straightway learnt a lesson high:
For there an old man sat serene,
And well I knew that thoughtful mien
Of him whose early lyre had thrown
Over these mouldering walls the magic of its tone.

'Then ceased I from my envying state,
And knew that aweless intellect
Hath power upon the ways of fate,
And works through time and space uncheck'd.
That minstrel of old chivalry
In the cold grave must come to be,
But his transmitted thoughts have part
In the collective mind, and never shall depart.

'It was a comfort, too, to see
Those dogs that from him ne'er would rove,
And always eyed him reverently,
With glances of depending love.
They know not of that eminence
Which marks him to my reasoning sense;
They know but that he is a man,
And still to them is kind, and glads them all he can.'

That same summer Mrs. Hemans, visiting the Hamiltons at Chiefswood, was daily at Abbotsford. Lockhart has no mention of the occasion. See, however, the references in the 'Journal.' As with Miss Edgeworth, Scott piloted the 'poet of womanhood' to Yarrow, and over into Ettrick, and in the Rhymer's Glen he related the incident which gave origin to her inspiring 'Rhine Song.'* At parting with her, he said, 'There are some whom we meet and should like ever after to claim as kith and kin; and you are one of these.' Susan Ferrier, authoress of 'Marriage,' 'Inheritance,' etc., novels of the older school (in need of modern revival), visited Scott in 1829, and again in 1831. 'This gifted personage,' says the 'Journal,' besides having great talents, has conversation the least *exigeante* of any author—female, at least—whom I have ever seen among the long list I have encountered—simple, full of humour, and exceedingly ready at repartee; and all this without the least affectation of the blue-stocking.'†

* See 'Memoir of Mrs. Hemans' and her beautiful poem on 'The Funeral-Day of Sir Walter Scott.'

† See 'Memoir and Correspondence of Susan Ferrier,' edited by J. A. Doyle, for account of her visits to Ashestiel and Abbotsford.

Wordsworth was the last of the giants to visit Scott at Abbotsford. They met for the first time at Lasswade Cottage as far back as 1803, and at least on four other occasions, both in Scotland and England. But how altered the circumstances of their present meeting! Scott, a confirmed invalid, was on the eve of saying farewell to Abbotsford practically for ever. Wordsworth arrived on September 21, 1831, and Scott was to leave on the 23rd. On the 22nd—the last day at home, and the last one of real enjoyment—the two friends spent the morning together in a visit to Newark. 'It was a day to deepen both in Scott and Wordsworth whatever of sympathy either of them had with the very different genius of the other'; and that it had this result in Wordsworth's case we know from the very beautiful poem 'Yarrow Revisited,' and the Sonnet ('A trouble, not of clouds, or weeping rain'), which the occasion also produced. As long as English poetry lives, so will the memory of that last day of the Last Minstrel at Newark:

'Grave thoughts ruled wide on that sweet day,
Their dignity installing
In gentle bosoms, while sere leaves
Were on the bough, or falling;

But breezes played, and sunshine gleamed—
The Forest to embolden ;
Redden'd the fiery hues, and shot
Transparence through the golden.

* * * * *

'For thee, O Scott ! compelled to change
Green Eildon Hill and Cheviot
For warm Vesuvio's vine-clad slopes ;
And leave thy Tweed and Teviot
For mild Sorrento's breezy waves ;
May classic Fancy, linking
With native Fancy her fresh aid,
Preserve thy heart from sinking !

'O ! while they minister to thee,
Each vying with the other,
May Health return to mellow Age
With Strength, her venturous brother ;
And Tiber, and each brook and rill
Renowned in song and story,
With unimagined beauty shine,
Nor lose one ray of glory !

'For Thou, upon a hundred streams,
By tales of love and sorrow,
Of faithful love, undaunted truth,
Hast shed the power of Yarrow !
And streams unknown, hills yet unseen,
Wherever they invite Thee,
At parent Nature's grateful call,
With gladness must requite Thee.'

Sitting in the Library that same night, the talk turned on Smollett and Fielding, both driven abroad, as Scott recalled, like himself, through declining health, and we hardly wonder if there was the feeling present to his mind that, like them, he, too, might not return.

Mention of Yarrow instinctively calls up the name of James Hogg, a true friend of Scott, notwithstanding Lockhart's farrago. Hogg and Lockhart were constantly misunderstanding one another. In one sense, they were wide as the poles asunder—Lockhart aristocratic to the finger-tips, Hogg excessively plebeian. But that should have made no difference. It made no difference with Scott. Lockhart undoubtedly tried to help Hogg a good deal, which Hogg resented more than once; hence Lockhart's strictures. But for all that, the Shepherd is a picturesque and lovable figure, even in the pages of Lockhart. Hogg's alleged 'insult' to the dust of Scott—the 'Scorpion's' most stinging charge against him—amounts, after all, to very little. That Hogg was never further from insult in the writing of his little brochure* seems perfectly clear. There are, to be sure, some things that had

* 'Domestic Manners and Private Life of Sir Walter Scott,' first published 1834; reprinted 1882.

been better left unsaid. But the book is, nevertheless, one of the brightest and most natural pen-portraits of Scott that we have. Hogg was a regular visitor at Abbotsford. Laidlaw denies that he ever, even in his cups, descended to 'Wattie' and 'Charlotte.' Scott smiled at Hogg's inordinate vanity, and Hogg had one or two stupid estrangements with him. But Sir Walter's attachment to his more humble compeer was never lessened in the least until the day when the two friends parted for ever at the Gordon Arms in Yarrow—the dearest vale on earth to them both.*

* Of other Abbotsford visitors, mention may be made of Skene of Rubislaw, a friend of long standing; Sir David Brewster, who lived at Allerly, on the Gattonside bank of the Tweed; William Scrope, author of 'Days and Nights of Salmon Fishing on the Tweed,' who leased the Pavilion, 'and lived on terms of affectionate intimacy with Scott'; G. P. R. James, the novelist, who rented Maxpoffle, near Bowden; Thomas Hamilton, Lockhart's tenant at Chiefswood; Lord Cockburn, a frequent guest; J. M. W. Turner, R.A., and a host of artists who found their way at all seasons to Abbotsford. Of celebrated visitors *after* Scott's day, there were Queen Victoria in 1867; George Eliot in 1845; Charles Dickens, John Ruskin, Edward FitzGerald, William Howitt, Oliver Wendell Holmes, R. L. Stevenson, with men and women of note from every land.

# THE WIZARD'S FAREWELL TO ABBOTSFORD

## CHAPTER VI

### THE WIZARD'S FAREWELL TO ABBOTSFORD

On March 5, 1817, at Castle Street, in the midst of a merry dinner-party, Scott was seized with a sudden illness—the first since his childhood. The disorder was cramp in the stomach of an unusually severe type. From Gillies's 'Recollections' we learn that, although disabled and compelled to retire to his room, he was unwilling that the festivity of the evening should be broken up, and actually sent a message to Mrs. Siddons that nothing would do him so much good as to hear her sing. He would, he said, be all right in the morning. But the illness lasted a week, and was more serious than had been anticipated. It was, indeed, the first of a series of such paroxysms, which for years visited him periodically, and from which he never absolutely recovered. Probably the best index to his feelings at this period is found in what may be described as the most pathetically poetic verses he ever penned. He was at Abbots-

ford, battling with depression and melancholy, and seldom without a sense of pain. On the bare height above Cauldshiels, with its then magnificent prospect of Melrose and the open valley of the Tweed, hemmed in on the west by the Selkirkshire uplands, he wrote, on one lovely autumn evening, these exquisite lines—exquisite because expressing the deepest passion of his soul at the moment :

'The sun upon the Weirdlaw Hill,
In Ettrick's vale, is sinking sweet;
The westland wind is hush and still—
The lake lies sleeping at my feet.
Yet not the landscape to mine eye
Bears those bright hues that once it bore,
Though evening with her richest dye
Flames o'er the hills of Ettrick's shore.

'With listless look along the plain
I see Tweed's silver current glide,
And coldly mark the holy fane
Of Melrose rise in ruin'd pride.
The quiet lake, the balmy air,
The hill, the stream, the tower, the tree—
Are they still such as once they were,
Or is the dreary change in me?

'Alas! the warp'd and broken board,
How can it bear the painter's dye!
The harp of strain'd and tuneless chord,
How to the minstrel's skill reply!

To aching eyes each landscape lowers,
To feverish pulse each gale blows chill,
And Araby's or Eden's bowers
Were barren as this moorland hill.'

The 'change' in himself was visible enough. He was worn almost to a skeleton, and sat on his horse slanting, as if unable to hold himself upright. His dress was threadbare and disordered, his countenance meagre, haggard, and of the deadliest olive brown. Afterwards, a single season blanched his hair snow-white. The last days of the Last Minstrel seemed to have come. Lockhart parted on one occasion with 'dark prognostications' that it was for the last time. Scott, too, despaired of himself. Calling his children about his bed, he took leave of them with solemn tenderness, adding, 'For myself, my dears, I am unconscious of ever having done any man an injury, or omitted any fair opportunity of doing any man a benefit. I well know that no human life can appear otherwise than weak and filthy in the eyes of God; but I rely on the merits and intercession of our Redeemer.' 'God bless you!' he again said to each of them, laying his hand on their heads. 'Live so that you may all hope to meet each other in a better place hereafter.' Presently he fell into a profound

slumber, and on awaking, the crisis was seen to be over. A gradual re-establishment of health followed. Of the 'Bride of Lammermoor,' and 'Ivanhoe,' written under the most adverse circumstances, whilst he still suffered acutely, one is surprised to find both romances in the very front rank of his creations. He was under opiates, more or less, when the 'Bride' was on the stocks, dictating nearly the whole of it to Laidlaw and John Ballantyne. It is a most curious fact psychologically, for of its characters, scenes, humour, and all that connected him with the authorship of the story, he recollected nothing. A more extraordinary incident literature has not known.* But work which cut him short in the end was the saving of his life in this instance. The mind was a constant conquest over the weaker physical framework. 'It is my conviction,' he declared to Gillies, 'that by a little more hearty application you might forget, and lose altogether, the irritable sensations of an invalid, and I don't, in this instance, preach what I have not endeavoured to practise. Be assured that if pain could have prevented my application to literary labour, not a page of

* Dickens, however, had a somewhat similar experience, though not, of course, to the like extent.

"Ivanhoe" would have been written; for, from beginning to end of that production, which has been a good deal praised, I was never free from suffering. It might have borne a motto somewhat analogous to the inscription which Frederick the Great's predecessor used to affix to his attempts at portrait-painting when he had the gout: "Fredericus I., *in tormentis* pinxit." Now, if I had given way to mere feelings and ceased to work, it is a question whether the disorder might not have taken deeper root, and become incurable. The best way is, if possible, to triumph over disease by setting it at defiance, somewhat on the same principle as one avoids being stung by boldly grasping a nettle.'

By 1820 he was enjoying tolerably good health, with no cramp recurrences for a time. But in 1823, when busy with 'Peveril,' an arresting hand laid itself upon Scott in the shape of a slight stroke of apoplexy. As a matter of fact, and as Lockhart suspected, this was only one of several such shocks which he had been carefully concealing. '"Peveril" will, I fear, smell of the apoplexy,' he afterwards admitted. Hence, no doubt, 'Peveril's' dulness. He rallied, notwithstanding, and up to Christmas, 1825, his health was excellent. But

from 1826—the year of his crowning sorrows—the record of Scott's life reads like a long martyrdom. Rheumatism, hallucinations, strange memory lapses, began to steal from Scott all the little joy that was left. On February 5, 1830, the blow fell which, like Damocles' sword, had been hanging over him for years. It fell with unmistakable meaning. It was his first real paralytic seizure—long dreaded, long expected. On his return from the Parliament House, in his usual health, he found an old friend waiting to consult him about a memoir of her father which he had promised to revise for the press. Whilst examining the MS. the stroke came, a slight contortion passing over his features. In a minute or two he rose, staggered to the drawing-room, where were Miss Anne Scott and Miss Lockhart, but fell to the floor speechless and insensible. A surgeon quickly at hand cupped him, after the old-fashioned treatment for such complaints. By night, speech had returned, and in a day or two he had resumed his Court duties. But he was never the same again. People in general did not remark any difference. Doctors and patient, however, knew well enough that it was the beginning of the end. Both his parents had succumbed to paralysis, and 'considering the

terrible violence and agitation and exertion,' says Lockhart, 'to which he had been subjected during the four preceding years, the only wonder is that this blow was deferred so long; there can be none that it was soon followed by others.'

Still he plodded on. Even with half a brain he should not 'lag superfluous on the stage.' And heedless of innumerable warnings, he was at his desk day after day, writing and dictating by turns. He now resigned his Clerkship, on an £800 a year allowance, surrendered his Edinburgh house, and settled permanently at Abbotsford, lonely and desolate, an old man before his time, but indomitable to the core. There he commenced 'Count Robert of Paris,' the penultimate of his published tales. But the mighty machinery of his mind moved not as of yore. Like Samson, his strength had departed. He was now as other men. By November he suffered from a second stroke, and wrote in his Diary for January: 'Very indifferent, with more awkward feelings than I can well bear up against. My voice sunk, and my head strangely confused.' But a worse shock was coming. Cadell pronounced the 'Count' a complete failure. Yet he struggled to recast it. To crown all, he went to the 'hustings'—a hardened anti-Reform Billite.

At Jedburgh, as Lockhart tells, the crowd saluted him with blasphemous shouts of 'Burke Sir Walter!'*—the unkindest cut of all, which haunted him to the end. By July he had begun 'Castle Dangerous,' and in the middle of the month, accompanied by Lockhart, he started for Lanarkshire to refresh his memory for the setting of his new story. They ascended the Tweed by Yair, Ashestiel, Elibank, Innerleithen, Peebles, Biggar, places all dear to his heart and celebrated in his writings. Crowds turned out to welcome him. Everywhere he was received with acclamation and the deepest respect. At Douglas the travellers inspected the old Castle, the ruin of St. Bride's, with the monuments and tombs of the 'most heroic and powerful family in Scottish annals.' At Milton-Lockhart, the seat of Lockhart's brother, Scott met his old friend Borthwickbrae. Both were paralytics. Each saw his own case mirrored in the other. They had a joyous—too joyous a meeting, with startling results to the older invalid. On returning to Cleghorn, another shock laid him low, and he was despaired of. When the news reached Scott, he was bent on getting home at once. 'No, William,' he said to his host, urging

* The Burke and Hare murders were recent.


Walt. Smith
Jedburgh 1904

him to remain, 'this is a sad warning; I must home to work while it is called to-day, for the night cometh when no man can work. I put that text many years ago on my dial-stone, but it often preached in vain.'

Returned, he finished 'Count Robert' and 'Castle Dangerous.' Both novels were really the fruit of a paralytic brain. The 'Magnum Opus,'* too, proposed by Cadell (a huge success), engaged much of his attention. But Sir Walter's work was done. At length, doctors' treatment doing him little good, from his constant determination to be at his desk, it was decided, not without difficulty, that Scott should spend the winter of 1831 in Italy, where his son Charles was attached to the British Legation at Naples. On September 22 all was in readiness. A round of touching adieus, one or two gatherings of old friends, the final instructions to Laidlaw, and Scott quitted Abbotsford practically for ever. He returned, to be sure, but more a dead man than a living one. Of his journey to London (meeting

* A reissue of the Poetry, with biographical prefaces, and a uniform reprint of the Novels, each introduced by an account of the hints on which it had been founded, and illustrated throughout by historical and antiquarian annotations.

again with Moore, Milman, Croker, Wilkie, and Washington Irving) there is no need to write, nor of the Italian tour—Malta, Naples, Rome,* Florence, Venice—for which, no matter the brilliance of their associations, he exhibited but a mere passive interest. His heart was in the homeland. *Its* voices had the strongest appeal for him; an exile song rang in his ears:

> 'Hame! hame! hame! O hame fain wad I be!
> O hame! hame! hame! to my ain countrie.'

Not a little of the scenery reminded him of Scotland—Edinburgh, the Eildons, Cauldshiels, Abbotsford. A peasant's lilt recalled the melodies of the Border, and pathetically he repeated some lines from 'Jock o' Hazeldean' and his boyhood's 'Hardyknute.' When, on March 22, he heard of Goethe's death, whom he hoped to visit, he exclaimed: 'Alas for Goethe! but he at least died at home; let us to Abbotsford!' Then, by-and-by, the return journey was begun, viâ Switzerland, the Tyrol, Munich, Heidelberg, to Frankfort and the

* Scott resided for a month in the Casa Bernini. In 1882 the Earl of Haddington unveiled a marble tablet in commemoration of the visit, when the venerable Duc de Salmonetta, with whom Sir Walter travelled in Italy, was present and took part in the proceedings.

Rhine. At Nimeguen, on June 9, he had another attack of apoplexy, combined with paralysis. It was the crowning blow. By the 13th, London was reached, and in the St. James's Hotel, Jermyn Street (now demolished), he lay for three weeks in a state of supreme stupor. Allan Cunningham was in London then, and tells of the extraordinary interest and sympathy which Scott's illness evoked. Walking home late one night, he found a number of working men standing at the corner of Jermyn Street, one of whom asked him, as if there had been only one deathbed in London: 'Do you know, sir, if this is the street where *he* is lying?' 'Abbotsford!' was his cry in the more lucid intervals that came to him. All its summer beauty seemed to be standing out before him, and to beckon him northwards. On July 7 he was carried on board the *James Watt* steamer, accompanied by Lockhart, Cadell, a medical man—Dr. Thomas Watson—and his two daughters. The Forth was reached on the 9th, and the next two days—the last in his 'own romantic town'—were passed, as all the voyage had been, in a condition of absolute unconsciousness. On the 11th, at a very early hour of the morning, Scott was lifted into his carriage for the final journey homewards. During the first part of the

drive he remained torpid, until the veil lifted somewhat at Gala Water. Strange that, after oblivion so profound and prolonged, he should open his eyes and regain a measure of consciousness just here, amid landscapes the most familiar to him in the world. Some good angel must have touched him then. A mere coincidence! Perhaps! But there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy. 'Gala Water, surely—Buckholm—Torwoodlee,' he murmured. When he saw the Eildons—

> 'Three crests against the saffron sky,
> Beyond the purple plain,
> The kind remembered melody
> Of Tweed once more again'—

he became greatly excited, and in crossing Melrose Bridge, his 'nearest Rialto,' as he called it, he could hardly be kept in the carriage. Abbotsford, a mile ahead, was soon reached. Laidlaw—a big lump in his throat, we may be sure—was waiting at the door, and assisted to carry his dying master and friend to the dining-room, where his bed had been prepared. He sat bewildered for a moment or two, then, resting his eyes on Laidlaw, as if trying to recollect, said immediately, 'Ha, Willie Laidlaw! O man, how often have I thought of

*you!*' By this time his dogs were around his chair, fawning on him, and licking his hands. Then, indeed, he knew where he was. Between sobs and tears he tried to speak to them, and to stroke them as of yore. But the body, no less than the brain, was exhausted, and gentle sleep closed his eyelids, like a tired child, once more in his own Abbotsford. He lingered for some weeks, alternating between cloud and sunshine—mostly cloud. One day the longing for his desk seized him, and he was wheeled studywards, but the palsied fingers refused their office, and he sank back, assured at last that the sceptre had departed. Lockhart and Laidlaw were now his constant attendants. Both read to him from the New Testament. 'There is but one Book,' Scott said, and it 'comforted' him to listen to its soothing and hope-inspiring utterances. Then the cloud became denser. At last delirium and delusion prostrated him, and he grew daily feebler. Now he thought himself administering justice as the Selkirkshire 'Shirra'; anon he was giving Tom Purdie orders anent trees. Sometimes, his fancy was in Jedburgh, and the words, 'Burke Sir Walter,' escaped him in a dolorous tone. Then he would repeat snatches from Isaiah, or the Book of Job, or some grand

rugged verse torn off from the Scottish Psalms, or a strain sublimer still from the Romish Litany:

> 'Dies iræ, dies illa,
> Solvet sæclum in favilla.'

'As I was dressing on the morning of September 17,' says Lockhart, 'Nicolson came into my room and told me that his master had awoke in a state of composure and consciousness, and wished to see me immediately. I found him entirely himself, though in the last extreme of feebleness. His eye was clear and calm—every trace of the wild fire of delirium extinguished. "Lockhart," he said, "I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man—be virtuous—be religious—be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here." He paused, and I said: "Shall I send for Sophia and Anne?" "No," said he, "don't disturb them. Poor souls! I know they were up all night. God bless you all." With this he sunk into a very tranquil sleep, and, indeed, he scarcely afterwards gave any sign of consciousness, except for an instant on the arrival of his sons. About half-past one p.m., on September 21, Sir Walter Scott breathed his last, in the presence of all his children. It was a beautiful day—so warm that every window was

wide open, and so perfectly still that the sound of all others most delicious to his ear, the gentle ripple of the Tweed over its pebbles, was distinctly audible as we knelt around the bed, and his eldest son kissed and closed his eyes.'

He died a month after completing his sixty-first year. On December 7, 1825, almost seven years earlier, we find him taking a survey of his own health in relation to the ages reached by his parents and other members of the family, and then setting down in his Diary the result of his calculations, 'Square the odds, and good-night, Sir Walter, about sixty. I care not, if I leave my name unstained and my family property settled. *Sat est vixisse.*' His prophecy was fulfilled. He lived just a year—but a year of gradual death—beyond his anticipations. His wish, too, was fulfilled; for he died practically free of debt. The sale of his works, the insurance of his life, and a sum advanced by Cadell, completely cleared his engagements.*

* As all the world knows, Scott stood indebted in 1826, on the Ballantyne-Constable crash, for no less a sum than £120,000, and a further £10,000 raised on Abbotsford with the view of averting the disaster. He determined to give every man his own. 'If my life is spared, nobody shall lose a penny by me,' he said, 'and this right hand shall work it all off.' Between 1826 and 1832 the debt was diminished by £66,000,

On September 26—a Wednesday—Sir Walter was buried. Services at Abbotsford, after the

an average of £11,000 a year. Against the remaining £54,000, a sum of £22,000 was received for his life insurance, and a generous advance from Cadell enabled his executors to settle in full with the Ballantyne creditors. By 1847 the loan was reduced to one-half, and the mortgage on the lands to £8,500. On May 11, 1847, Lockhart writes to Croker: 'I have finally settled all our Sir Walter's affairs. There remained debt secured on the lands, £8,500; to Cadell, £16,000; and sundries, £1,000. I have taken the £1,000 on myself, and Cadell obliterates the £24,500 on condition of getting the whole remaining copyright of Scott's works, and also of the Life.' At the time of the failure Scott surrendered his Collection at Abbotsford to his creditors; but so pleased were they with his fair and honourable response to their claims that they requested him to accept the furniture, plate, paintings, library, and museum, as a mark of sympathy and appreciation of his conduct. He valued his Collection at £10,000, and left it in his will to his eldest son, burdened to the extent of £5,000, for division among his younger children. In order to effect this, the second Sir Walter would have been obliged to disperse the Collection but for a subscription raised among a number of Scott's admirers to purchase the Abbotsford Collection and hold it in trust for the public and the family. This trust is vested in the Dean and Council of the Faculty of Advocates, who are empowered to leave the Collection in the charge and keeping of Scott's representatives at Abbotsford, or, should occasion arise, to remove it to some other building. The copyrights purchased by Cadell in 1847 were sold in 1851 by

simple fashion of the Scottish Kirk, were conducted by the Revs. Principal Baird, of Edinburgh University, Dr. Dickson, of St. Cuthbert's, and the minister of Melrose. The courtyard and all the precincts of Abbotsford were crowded with uncovered spectators as the procession (over a mile in length) was arranged. And as it advanced through Darnick and Melrose, and the villages on the route, the whole population appeared at their doors in like manner, almost all in black. From Darnick Tower* a broad crape banner waved in the wind, and the Abbey bell at Melrose rang a muffled peel. At Leaderfoot the Tweed was crossed for the last time. Thence there is a somewhat steep ascent to Gladswood and Bemersyde. On the crest of the road overlooking the 'beautiful bend' the hearse came to a curious halt, at the very spot where Scott was accustomed to rein up his horses. It was no 'accident,' as Lockhart imagines. For one of the horses was Sir Walter's

private bargain for £27,000 to Messrs. Adam and Charles Black, the publishers of the present volume. Messrs. Black's editions of Scott's works may, therefore, be trusted to contain the exact text as left in the 'Magnum Opus,' the MSS. of which are still in their possession.

* Scott was an intense favourite with the Darnickers, who playfully dubbed him 'Duke of Darnick.'

own, and must have borne him many a time hither. Hence the explanation of an incident which, strangely enough, seems to have puzzled Lockhart, and was long regarded with a sort of superstitious awe. It was late in the day—about half-past five—before the memorable procession reached Dryburgh. The wide enclosure was thronged with old and young. Peter Mathieson, Laidlaw, and others of Scott's servants carried the plain black coffin to the grave within St. Mary's aisle, where it was lowered by his two sons, his son-in-law, and six of his cousins, Archdeacon Williams reading the Burial Service of the Church of England. And thus the remains of Sir Walter Scott—our Scottish Shakespeare—were laid by the side of his wife in the sepulchre of his fathers, 'in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

# LOCKHART AND ABBOTSFORD

## CHAPTER VII

### LOCKHART AND ABBOTSFORD

JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART, next to Boswell the greatest of British biographers, though Mr. Saintsbury is inclined to class him even above Boswell, was born in the manse of Cambusnethan, June 12, 1794.* He came of an ancestry of which he might well be proud. Some of the best blood of Scotland ran in his veins. Lockhart of Lee, in Lanarkshire, was probably the source of his family. The Lockharts had owned territory in the Upper Ward for centuries, Symington, or Symon's Town, famous now chiefly as a junction on the Caledonian Railway, being, perhaps, their earliest possession. The name is thought to be derived from Symon Locard, who founded its church and assumed lordship of the locality in the reign of Malcolm the

* Mr. Lang's 'Life of Lockhart' gives the date as *July* 14; the month is probably a printer's error, however. At Dryburgh the date is *June* 14; but the Cambusnethan Records read *June* 12.

Maiden. Lee itself may have been acquired about the close of the thirteenth century by William Locard, whose son, another Symon, was companion to 'the Good' Sir James Douglas on his hazardous mission with the heart of Bruce. Every schoolboy knows how Douglas fell on a blood-red field of Spain, how he flung the royal casket in front of him with the cry, 'Forward, brave heart, as thou wert wont; Douglas will follow thee or die,' and how Locard assumed the lead, rescued the King's heart and the body of his comrade, and, like a wise man, returned to Scotland. Bruce's heart he laid by the high altar at Melrose, the Douglas with his own dear dust in the Kirk of St. Bride, among the Lanarkshire uplands. It was this Symon who brought to Scotland the famous Lee Penny—Scott's 'Talisman,' the most celebrated charm in the country—a heart-shaped, dark-red stone now set in a groat of Edward IV., with a silver chain and ring attached, and long sought after by the superstitious as a positive cure for the worst ailments of man and beast.

Following Sir Symon Locard there comes on the scene Sir Stephen Lockhart,* as the name

* There is no foundation for the fanciful etymology of the name Lockhart, *quasi* Lock-heart (purely *post facto*). There were Locards in Scotland long before 1330.

was now spelled, who held the lands of Cleghorn, in the same county. He was the direct male ancestor of John Gibson Lockhart, and almost certainly a cadet of the Lee family. His son, Allan Lockhart of Cleghorn, married for his second wife a daughter of the third Lord Somerville, by whom he had a son Stephen, Laird of Wicketshaw, also in Lanarkshire. In 1606 another Stephen, grandson of the latter, married Grizel Carmichael, a sister of the first Lord Carmichael, and by her he had three sons: William, heir to Wicketshaw; Robert of Birkhill, in the parish of Lesmahagow; and Walter of Kirkton. From the second of these, a noted Covenanter and leader of the Lanark Whigs at Bothwell, Scott's biographer had his immediate descent. William Lockhart, grandson of Robert of Birkhill, and his wife, Violet Inglis, of Corehouse, had two sons, the second of whom was the Rev. John Lockhart, D.D., minister of Cambusnethan, and for nearly half a century of the College Kirk, Glasgow. Dr. Lockhart was twice married, and it was his second wife, Elizabeth Gibson, daughter of the Rev. John Gibson, senior minister of St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, who became the mother of John Gibson Lockhart. Lockhart's ancestry on his mother's side connects him with

James Nimmo the Covenanter, with the Erskines of Cardross, and the Pringles of Torwoodlee.

While the boy was still young his parents removed to Glasgow. There Lockhart matriculated, and blossomed into a scholar of brilliant parts, winning such academic blue ribbons as the Greek Blackstone and a Snell Exhibition, which took him to Oxford. He was at Balliol for some years, and left in 1813 with a 'first' in Classics. After a Continental visit (conversing with Goethe at Weimar), he studied law at Edinburgh, and in 1816 was called to the Scottish Bar. His Parliament House career came to a rather curious end, however. Speechifying was not in his line. He flustered and floundered upon every attempt, and was a complete failure. And he might have perambulated the boards of the Parliament Hall long enough. For, like Scott, 'deil a ane speered his price.' 'Gentlemen,' said he, in happy allusion to this infirmity on the occasion of a banquet in his honour long after he had relinquished the Bar, 'you know that if I could speak we would not be here.'*

* Yet we find Lockhart, at the Jedburgh circuit of 1823, 'pleading,' so Scott says, 'for a clansman of mine (Rob Scott), who, having sustained an affront from two men on the road

It was in the realm of literature (more alluring than law) that Lockhart was fated to shine. Already he had shown talent in that direction in his 'Heraldry' article for Brewster's 'Encyclopædia,' and a translation of Schlegel's 'Lectures on the History of Literature.' And when *Blackwood's Magazine* soared into the arena (1817), Lockhart and John Wilson divided its chief honours. It was largely under Lockhart that 'Maga' made its position as the most pronounced Tory organ of the day. In his earlier career Lockhart adopted the slash-style of criticism (the tomahawk type)—incisive, irritating, and keenly offensive, as a rule. He was a master of satire, blazing away to his heart's content, with many to fear him, but none to stay his unsparing pen. If he could not speak, he could at least write to purpose and with effect. He had now come to his kingdom when the whole torrent of thought, imagination, and genius, which the Bar may have held in check, burst forth in its full brilliance. He was then barely five-and-twenty, and a handsomer fellow never stepped on shoe-leather—tall, with dark Italian-like features

home from Earlston Fair, nobly waylaid and murdered them both, single-handed.' Lockhart lost his case, and his client was hanged.

inherited from his mother, close, tight lips, a mobile chin, and temples clustering with huge masses of curly jet hair. There is an admirable pen-portrait of him in the 'Noctes' when Wilson makes the Shepherd say: 'Wasna't me that first prophesied his great abeelities when he was only an Oxford Collegian wi' a pale face and a black toozy head, but an e'e like an eagle's, an' a sort o' lauch about the screwed-up mouth o' him that fules ca'd no canny?'

Though Lockhart must have seen Scott frequently in public—in the Law Courts, the book-shops, and elsewhere—he does not appear to have met him in private society till the General Assembly of May, 1818. The incident of the 'hand,' some years previously, is so interesting, however, as not to be overlooked in any notice of Lockhart and Scott. Happening to pass through Edinburgh in June, 1814, Lockhart relates how, along with a band of budding barristers, he dined at a friend's house in George Street whose windows overlooked at right angles the back of Scott's town-house and study at 39, Castle Street. As the merry evening advanced, Lockhart observed a strange dulness settling over his friend's demeanour, and fear of his being unwell bade him put the question. 'No,' said he, 'I shall be well enough

presently if you will only let me sit where you are, and take my chair; for there is a confounded hand in sight of me here which has often bothered me before, and now it won't let me fill my glass with a goodwill.' 'I rose to change places with him,' says Lockhart, 'and he pointed out to me this hand, which, like the writing on Belshazzar's wall, disturbed his hour of hilarity.' 'Since we sat down,' he said, 'I have been watching it; it fascinates my eye; it never stops; page after page is finished and thrown on that heap of manuscript, and still it goes on unwearied—and so it will be till candles are brought in, and God knows how long after that. It is the same every night; I can't stand a sight of it when I am not at my books.' 'Some stupid, dogged, engrossing clerk, probably,' exclaimed Lockhart, 'or some other giddy youth in the company.' 'No, boys,' said their host, 'I well know what hand it is—'tis Walter Scott's.' This was the hand which in the evenings of three summer weeks wrote the two last volumes of 'Waverley.' Lockhart was introduced to Scott at a society function in the house of Home Drummond, of Blair-Drummond, grandson of Lord Kames. 'Mr. Scott,' he says, 'ever apt to consider too favourably the literary efforts of others, and

more especially of very young persons, received me, when I was presented to him, with a cordiality which I had not been prepared to expect from one filling a station so exalted. When the ladies retired from the dinner-table I happened to sit next him, and he, having heard that I had lately returned from a tour in Germany, made that country and its recent literature the subject of some conversation. He appeared particularly interested when I described Goethe as I first saw him alighting from a carriage crammed with wild plants and herbs which he had picked up in the course of his morning's botanizing among the hills above Jena.' 'I am glad,' said he, 'that my old master has pursuits somewhat akin to my own. I am no botanist, properly speaking; and though a dweller on the banks of the Tweed, shall never be knowing about Flora's beauties; but how I should like to have a talk with him about trees!'

A few days afterwards, on Scott's initiative, Lockhart was given the compilation of the historical part of the 'Edinburgh Annual Register,' worth £500 a year, plus daily intimacy with Scott—a lucky asset for one so young. Apparently, Scott had taken at once to the younger writer, then only half his age, and for the next fourteen years

Lockhart was Scott's right-hand man. No more fortunate and happy relationship was ever formed. It was said of Sir Walter's own sons that they left little record behind them. They fell back into the common crowd, and perished in the direct line, leaving no children to carry on his name. But Lockhart was the son of his heart, his confidant and faithfullest friend through all the troubles that followed, and his children were the only heirs of Abbotsford and their great forebear's glory.

Of the Edinburgh life, the Castle Street domesticities, with Lockhart's picture of the 'den,' we are not now concerned. In October of that same year, 1818, along with Wilson, Lockhart saw Abbotsford for the first time. Scott was in high feather. The second of his building schemes had just been completed, and the famous tower, the cynosure of the edifice, was his main topic. When his guests rose from table, he was eager to take them all to the top for a moonlight view of the valley. Some—the more youthful members—assented, and Scott led the way up the narrow, dark stairs. 'Nothing could have been more lovely,' says Lockhart, 'than the panorama, all the harsher and more naked features being lost in the delicious moonlight; the Tweed and the Gala winding and sparkling beneath

our feet; and the distant ruins of Melrose appearing as if carved of alabaster, under the black mass of the Eildons.' The poet, leaning on his battlement, seemed to hang over the beautiful vision as if he had never seen it before. 'If I live,' he exclaimed, 'I will build me a higher tower, with a more spacious platform, and a staircase better fitted for an old fellow's scrambling.' Then to John of Skye (John Bruce), whose pipes were heard retuning on the lawn beneath, he called for 'Lochaber no more,' and as the music rose, softened by the distance and the murmur of the river, Scott crooned what Lockhart calls the 'melancholy words of the song of exile.' In the new dining-room, unfinished, but brilliantly illuminated for the occasion, music and dance and whisky-punch passed the remainder of the evening, Scott and Dominie Thomson (a reputed original of Dominie Sampson) looking on with gladsome faces, and now and then beating time, the one with his staff, the other with his wooden leg. Lord Melville proposed 'good luck' to the 'roof-tree,' and the whole party, standing in a circle hand-in-hand, sang joyously:

> 'Weel may we a' be,
> Ill may we never see,
> God bless the King and the gude companie!'

Such was the 'handselling' of the 1818 Abbotsford.

Lockhart's next visit (with John Ballantyne), on April 10, 1819, found Scott still in the grip of his cramp enemy, and changed in appearance far beyond what Lockhart was led to expect. In the night he had a recurrence of his pains, and Lockhart, naturally, intended to leave next morning. But Scott, recovered, and wishful to 'drive away the accursed vapours of the laudanum I was obliged to swallow last night,' was bent on taking him 'for a good trot in the open air'—'up Yarrow'—the home phrase, none dearer.

Past Carterhaugh they rode, where the Forest waters meet, and where Janet rescued Tamlane from the fairies; Philiphaugh, Scott describing the battle as vividly as if he had witnessed it; Newark where the 'Lay' was chanted; and Slain Men's Lea, where the Covenanters butchered prisoners taken under promise of quarter (darkest memory of Philiphaugh). They saw Minchmoor, too, and recalled Montrose and his cavaliers scurrying Tweedwards. Next day they rode across Bowden Moor, and up the Ale Water to Lilliesleaf and 'ancient Riddell's fair domain,' Scott doing election business on the way. Next day, again, from the

crest of the Eildons Lockhart was shown the 'Kingdom of Border Romance'—Eildon itself a not unfitting centre. Between the Lammermoors and the Cheviots on one side, and from the Merse to Moffatdale on the other, there is perhaps no range of landscape more intensely interesting from a literary point of view, and none in which Lockhart felt a more personal sympathy. Though not a Borderer (a measure of Border blood in his veins, however), the dearest ties of his life were destined to be with the Border; nor, so long as the English language lasts, will there be lacking generous hearts to love and remember the man who had Sir Walter for friend and hero. As to Irving, Scott pointed out to Lockhart the more notable landmarks of the locality and the places connected with his own career. Sandyknowe he saw, the home of Scott's boyhood; Earlston, where the Tower of the Rhymer recalled 'Sir Tristrem,' one of his early essays in literature; song-haunted Cowdenknowes; Bemersyde of the perennial Haigs, 'a wizard-spell hanging over it'; Mertoun, where he penned the 'Eve of St. John'; and Dryburgh,

> 'Where with chiming Tweed
> The lintwhites sing in chorus';

and many another spot long famous in popular song and story. He repeated the lines (often on

his lips)* ascribed to Burne the Violer, the last of the race of Border minstrels, and the prototype, doubtless, of his own 'Last Minstrel':

'Sing Ercildoune and Cowdenknowes,
Where Homes had ance commanding;
And Drygrange, wi' the milk-white yowes,
'Twixt Tweed and Leader standing.
The bird that flees through Redpath trees
And Gladswood banks each morrow
May chant and sing sweet Leader Haughs,
And bonnie howms of Yarrow.

'But Minstrel Burne cannot assuage
His grief while life endureth,
To see the changes of this age
Which fleeting time procureth;
For mony a place stands in hard case,
Where blithe folks kent nae sorrow,
With Homes that dwelt on Leader side,
And Scotts that dwelt on Yarrow.'

Lockhart's 'Peter's Letters,'† published in 1819,

* Carlyle, curiously, had a fondness for the same verses, and was frequently quoting them.

† 'Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk'—the name was, of course, borrowed from Scott's 'Paul's Letters' (see vol. ii. for Abbotsford)—is seldom read nowadays, and there has been no new edition for years. Still, it is a faithful, if pungent, picture of the period, and, notwithstanding a certain ill odour, really contains far more good than evil. There was no first edition, the first actual publication being called the second edition. Why, would be difficult to say.

contains, in some respects, an even better report of the Abbotsford pilgrimage than the Biography chapter. 'If I am very partial to the Doctor,' wrote Scott, acknowledging a gift of the book, 'remember I have been bribed by his kind and delicate account of his visit to Abbotsford.' Indeed, as Mr. Lang hints — and properly — had Lockhart never lived to write the Biography, Dr. Morris's description of Abbotsford would have remained the *locus classicus*.

Lockhart was not at Abbotsford again till the middle of February, 1820. He had not been idle, however. Of the charms of (Charlotte) Sophia, Scott's eldest daughter, and dearest, 'the flower and blossom of his house, and the likest of all his family to their father,' not much is said, of course, in the Biography. There is a pretty portrait of her at Abbotsford as a Norwegian peasant, with a great hound looking up into her face, in which it is not difficult to discern Sir Walter's lineaments. But she exhibited several of the Carpenter characteristics as well. Sophia was the singing member of the family. Scott insisted on his children being taught music, and Scottish music particularly; and the most delightful evenings of the Abbotsford life were spent in the Library listening to his daughter's rendering

of the old ballads and songs, and snatches which he loved with all his heart and soul. Thus, no doubt, was the 'cold and unimpressionable and unconquerable' Lockhart pierced to the quick, notwithstanding a bravado determination 'to continue single.' It was an ideal love-match, one of the very fortunate (among many unfortunate) marriages of men of letters. 'Lockhart is Lockhart,' wrote Scott at a later period, 'to whom I can most willingly confide the happiness of the daughter who chose him and whom he has chosen.' They were married at Edinburgh (not at Abbotsford) April 29, 1820, by the incumbent of St. George's Episcopal Church (where, by the way, the Scotts worshipped), and took up house at Great King Street, afterwards removing to 25, Northumberland Street. Chiefswood, a snug little cottage on the Abbotsford property—'bigged in gude greenwood'—close to the Rhymer's Glen, within a mile and a half of the mansion-house, and bordering on Huntlyburn, became their summer residence. Though somewhat low-lying, a sweeter scene of seclusion could not be fancied,—even yet. Except for an extra gable, and one or two minor alterations, the place remains unchanged since the Lockharts' tenancy — their truly golden days. For never were they half so

happy than here. Abbotsford was then at its acme—the Wizard at the height of his enchantment.

Of Scott's fascination for Chiefswood, Lockhart has more than one familiar passage. He tells how with his own hands Scott planted creepers brought from the old cottage at Abbotsford around its little rustic porch, and how he was a constant visitor, glad to escape to its quiet retreat when the stir and strain of his own guest-crowded castle were too much for him. Here Scott penned large portions of the 'Pirate' (his writing-bureau may still be seen).* Under the great ash, flourishing yet, on the slope to the Rhymer's Glen, William Erskine (afterwards Lord Kinnedder), Scott's most intimate friend, read aloud chapter after chapter from the manuscript before the packet was sealed up for the printer; and here, too, some years later, when much of the gaiety and splendour of Abbotsford had vanished, little Johnnie Lockhart — 'Hugh Littlejohn'—who, in a sense, had inspired them, listened to the first narration of those 'Tales of a

* Some of Lockhart's own best work was done at Chiefswood—*e.g.*, 'Valerius,' a romance of the times of Trajan; 'Adam Blair'—a Scottish 'Scarlet Letter'; and several of his Spanish Ballads.

Grandfather,' which, it is to be hoped, the children of Scotland have not left off studying. John Hugh Lockhart, 'the inheritor of so much genius and sorrow,' the boy who had Sir Walter to tell him stories, was a prime favourite with the Chiefswood circle; the centre of many of its happiest groups; his grandfather's companion in many rare plantation raids and riverside rambles. Born in Edinburgh in 1821, his days were few and evil, however. Smitten with spine disease, he was barely eleven when 'God's finger touched him, and he slept.' Seldom—hardly ever, indeed—does Lockhart unburden his own heart to the reader of the Biography. But there is one pathetic reverie of the Chiefswood days which cannot be passed over—when the crowning sorrow of his life had come, and he was left to bemoan her, 'next to Sir Walter himself, the chief ornament and delight at all those simple meetings, she to whose love I owed my own place in them —Scott's eldest daughter, the one of all his children who in countenance, mind, and manners most resembled himself, and who indeed was as like him in all things as a gentle, innocent woman can ever be to a great man deeply tried and skilled in the struggle and perplexities of active life—she, too, is no more. But enough—and more than I intended.'

In 1825 Lockhart left Chiefswood for London. A curious embassy from the house of Murray had surprised him in the autumn, in the person of young Benjamin Disraeli, then a mere tyro in literature. He came to enlist Lockhart's services for the *Representative*, a new daily which Murray had set his heart on establishing, and, in default of that, to offer him the editorship of the *Quarterly Review*. But to edit, or even to supervise, an ordinary newspaper, both Scott and Lockhart considered to be *infra dig*. There was no difficulty, however, in accepting the *Quarterly* appointment, at a salary which ran to four figures. For the next dozen years London was Lockhart's home. Chiefswood was occasionally let—as, for instance, to Thomas Hamilton, who wrote there his dashing military novel of 'Cyril Thornton.' But for all practical purposes it remained in Lockhart's hands, he and his family still spending some pleasant summers and autumns on Tweedside.

Of his last summer with Scott the Biography presents a full account. On April 22, 1831, learning of Sir Walter's third and more serious seizure, he sent down Mrs. Lockhart and the children, arriving himself on May 10. 'I found Sir Walter,'

he says, 'to have rallied considerably, yet his appearance, as I saw him, was the most painful sight I had ever then seen. All his garments hung loose about him, his countenance was thin and haggard, and there was an obvious distortion in the muscles of one cheek. His look, however, was placid, his eye bright as ever. He smiled with the same affectionate gentleness, and though at first it was not easy to understand anything he said, he spoke cheerfully and manfully.' Despite illness, he was fighting away at 'Count Robert.' He had planned 'Castle Dangerous,' too, and a 'raid' into Douglasdale. Autumn brought some slight rallies, when Abbotsford resumed something of its former brightness. Again, day about, they dined at Abbotsford and under the trees at Chiefswood. Once more they had the old excursions—to Oakwood and the Linns of Ettrick, and the twin peels of Sandyknowe and Bemersyde. Very near the end there came some unexpected things to cast a 'sunset brilliancy' over Abbotsford—the arrival of Major Scott ('a handsomer fellow never put foot into stirrup'), Captain Burns, son of the poet, and Wordsworth. Then Scott left for the Mediterranean, Lockhart's lines ringing in his ears :

'Heaven send the guardian Genius of the vale
Health yet, and strength, and length of honoured days,
To cheer the world with many a gallant tale,
And hear his children's children chant his lays.

'Through seas unruffled may the vessel glide,
That bears her Poet far from Melrose' glen!
And may his pulse be steadfast as our pride,
When happy breezes waft him back again!'

The rest of the story is well known. Lockhart did not see him for other eight months — October 23 to June 13 — but after that, he was with Scott to the end. There is nothing more beautiful in the annals of literary friendship than Lockhart's unwearied solicitude for the dying Sir Walter. However cold, distant, unemotional, unknowable, the world may have judged him, here at any rate we see the real man. At bottom, and according to those who knew him most intimately, Lockhart was one of the best of men—a prince of good fellows in the truest sense—above all, though saying little about it, genuinely and reverently religious.

In the latter portion of his own life Lockhart was more or less a martyr to ill-health. For few men, too, were the fires of affliction more constantly burning. Friend after friend, on both sides

of his house, passed from him. Worst loss of all, Mrs. Lockhart—*his* Charlotte—was taken, and then, on the wedding of his daughter, Lockhart was left a comparatively lonely man, with age creeping on him and many maladies, in a great empty house in London. He had many things to vex him, too, in the 'wild ways of a son whom he never ceased to love.' In 1847, for the funeral of the second Sir Walter, he was back at Abbotsford—the first time since Scott's death. 'Everything in perfect order,' he writes, 'every chair and table where it was then left, and I alone walk a ghost in a sepulchre amidst the scenes of all that ever made life worth the name for me.' During the occupancy of his son-in-law, however, he was often among the familiar scenes. In 1853 he resigned his editorship, and, like Scott, spent the following winter in Italy, returning in April. In August he was at Milton-Lockhart (where, by the way, much of the Biography had been written). By the end of September Abbotsford saw him once more, and for the last time. His books were brought down from London, and placed in the new drawing-room, where they still are. The cheerful breakfast-parlour, facing the Tweed and Yarrow—Scott's sanctum at one period—was fitted up as his bed-

chamber, as the dining-room had been for Sir Walter. And there he remained until the end. 'He arrived at Abbotsford,' says Mr. Ornsby's 'Memoirs of James R. Hope Scott,' 'hardly able to get out of his carriage, and it was at once perceived that he was a dying man. He desired to drive about and take leave of various places'—Chiefswood, no doubt, Huntlyburn, Torwoodlee, Ashestiel perhaps, Gladswood, and Dryburgh—'displaying, however, a stoical fortitude, and never making a direct allusion to what was impending. . . . 'He would not suffer anyone to nurse him till, one night, he fell down on the floor, and after that, offered no further opposition. Father Lockhart, a distant cousin, was now telegraphed for, from whom, during his stay in Rome, he had received much kind attention, for which he was always grateful. He did not object to his kinsman's attendance, though a priest,* and yielded also when asked to allow his daughter to say a few prayers by his bedside. Mr. Hope Scott was absent

* It may be noted here that while Lockhart 'regarded his son-in-law's conversion to Romanism as a grief and a humiliation, nevertheless, the nobleness of his nature, and the deep regard he always felt for his virtues, prevailed without an effort.'—*Life of Hope Scott.*

on business, but returned home one or two days before the end, which came suddenly'—no pain, no struggle, but the falling into a soft sleep like that of a little child. The date was November 25, 1854. He died at the same age as Scott. As he desired, he was laid 'at the feet of Walter Scott,' within hearing of the Tweed. The funeral was 'strictly private.'

We have said that Lockhart was, at bottom, a religious man. In company with an Oxford friend (G. R. Gleig probably) Lockhart used to walk on Sunday afternoons in Regent's Park. 'With whatever topic their colloquy began, it invariably fell off, so to speak, of its own accord into discussions upon the character and teaching of the Saviour; upon the influence exercised by both over the opinions and habits of mankind; upon the light thrown by them on man's future state and present destiny. Lockhart was never so charming as in these discussions. It was evident that the subject filled his whole mind.' His verses on Immortality, first published in full in the *Scotsman* for 1863, have often been quoted. No poem probably, not even by Wordsworth or Tennyson, has done more to inspire and console the bereaved. Lockhart sent the poem (in part) to

Carlyle, and 'the lines,' says Froude, 'were often on his lips to the end of his life, and will not be easily forgotten by anyone who reads them.'

'When youthful faith has fled,
Of loving take thy leave;
Be constant to the dead,
The dead cannot deceive.

'Sweet, modest flowers of spring,
How fleet your balmy day!
And man's brief year can bring
No secondary May.

'No earthly burst again
Of gladness out of gloom;
Fond hope and vision vain,
Ungrateful to the tomb!

'But 'tis an old belief,
That on some solemn shore,
Beyond the sphere of grief
Dear friends will meet once more.

'Beyond the sphere of time,
And sin, and fate's control,
Serene in changeless prime
Of body and of soul.

'That creed I fain would keep,
That hope I'll not forego:
Eternal be the sleep,
Unless to waken so!'

# THE LATER ABBOTSFORD

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE LATER ABBOTSFORD

Sir Walter's Abbotsford, as we saw, was completed in 1824. For the next thirty years there was practically no alteration on the place. At Scott's death the second Sir Walter came into possession. He does not appear to have lived at Abbotsford after 1832, and indeed for many years previous his time had been spent almost entirely with his regiment, the 15th Hussars, of which, at his father's death, he was Major. In 1839, as Lieutenant-Colonel, he proceeded to Madras, and subsequently commanded the Hussars in India. At Bangalore, in August, 1846, having exposed himself rashly to the sun during a tiger-hunt, he was smitten with fever, from which he never recovered. Obliged to return to England, his death took place on board the *Wellesley*, near the Cape of Good Hope, February 8, 1847, in his forty-sixth year. His widow conveyed his remains to

this country for interment at Dryburgh Abbey on May 4 following. Lady Scott—the pretty 'Jeanie' Jobson of Lochore,* as she was affectionately called by the old people of Ballingry, in which parish Lochore estate lies—continued to reside for the most part in London, and only once visited Abbotsford. They had no family, which put a pathetic finis to Scott's most cherished dream. Lady Scott died at London, March 19, 1877, in her seventy-sixth year, and was buried at Dryburgh.†

* Miss Jobson appears to have been a young lady of great beauty. When George IV. came to Edinburgh, she was one of the maids of honour at Holyrood. She was Sir Adam Ferguson's niece, and it was he who practically arranged the match. Following her marriage, she and her husband lived for a time at Lochore (purchased in 1813 by her father, a prosperous Dundee merchant). Sir Walter Scott himself was often there. Reference is made in 'The Abbot' to Ballingry Kirk. After 1832 Lochore was let to tenants, and in 1867 was sold for £60,000 to the Lochore Coal Company, in whose hands it still remains.

† A friend who knew her writes: 'Lady Scott was exceedingly sensitive and reserved. She hardly ever mentioned her husband's name after his death. She was very kind-hearted, but rarely expressed her feelings. She was very fond of children. She lived a quiet and retired life, interesting herself much in politics, and could talk and argue well on the subject. She was clever and well read. She would never speak of Abbotsford.'

Charles Scott,* younger son of Sir Walter, 'whose spotless worth tenderly endeared him to the few who knew him intimately,' and with whom much of the Naples pilgrimage was spent, died at Teheran, October 29, 1841, in his thirty-sixth year. He was buried there, whither he had gone as attaché and private secretary to Sir John McNeill, Commissioner to the Court of Persia. Anne Scott, the 'Lady Anne' of many delightful pleasantries (the original of Alice Lee in 'Woodstock'), Scott's younger daughter, died June 25, 1833, less than a year after her father. A handsome sarcophagus, still in excellent repair, covers her remains in Kensal Green Cemetery, London. Charlotte Sophia Scott—so named in honour of a French lady, Sophia Dumergue, who had befriended the first Lady Scott's mother on her arrival in England—wife of John Gibson Lockhart, died May 17, 1837. Of her two sons, the elder, John Hugh ('Hugh Littlejohn') died December 15, 1831, and, like his mother and aunt, was interred at Kensal Green. Walter Scott Lockhart, the younger, born April 16, 1826, became a Lieutenant

* 'I have the liveliest impression of that good, honest Scotch face and character, though never in contact with the young man but once.'—Thomas Carlyle.

in the 16th Lancers, and succeeded to Abbotsford on the death of his uncle in 1847, assuming the additional surname of Scott. He died, unmarried, at Versailles, January 10, 1853, and was buried in the Notre Dame Cemetery there. Charlotte Harriet Jane, born January 1, 1828, only daughter of the Lockharts, and granddaughter of Sir Walter Scott, then came into possession. She was the wife of James Robert Hope, Q.C., who, on her succeeding to Abbotsford, also assumed the family name of Scott. To Mr. Hope Scott and his wife were born: A boy, who died at birth, 1848; Walter Michael, born June 2, 1857, died December 11, 1858; Mary Monica, by-and-by heiress of Abbotsford, born at Tunbridge Wells, October 2, 1852; Margaret Anne, born September 17, 1858, died December 3 of the same year. Mrs. Hope Scott died of consumption at Edinburgh, October 26, 1858, aged thirty. Mr. Hope Scott married January 7, 1861, as his second wife, Lady Victoria Alexandrina Fitzalan Howard, eldest daughter of the fourteenth Duke of Norfolk, by whom he had two sons: Philip, born April 8, 1868, who died next day, and James, born December 18, 1870, now M.P. for the Brightside Division of Sheffield; also four daughters—Minna Margaret,

born June 6, 1862, wife of Sir Nicholas O'Conor, G.C.M.G., British Ambassador at Constantinople; and Catherine, a twin, who died the day of her birth; Josephine Mary, born May 18, 1864, married Wilfred Philip Ward, B.A., son of 'Ideal' Ward of the Oxford Movement, and himself a well-known writer on ecclesiastical controversies; Theresa Anne, born September 14, 1865, a Carmelite nun, who died November 1, 1891. Lady Victoria died December 20, 1870, aged thirty, the same age, curiously, as Mr. Hope Scott's first wife. Mr. Hope Scott himself died April 29, 1873. His remains were laid beside those of Mrs. Hope Scott and her children in the vaults of St. Margaret's Convent at Edinburgh, Lady Victoria and her children being buried at Arundel.

Mary Monica Hope Scott, the sole surviving descendant of Sir Walter Scott, now succeeded to the estate, and on July 21, 1874, married the Hon. Joseph Constable-Maxwell, third son of William, eleventh Baron Herries of Terregles, and Marcia, eldest daughter of the Hon. Sir Edward Marmaduke Vavasour, first Bart., of Hazlewood, Yorkshire, then Lieutenant in the Rifle Brigade. Their children are:

1. Walter Joseph, born April 10, 1875, Captain

in the Cameronians. He volunteered for South Africa, and was in Ladysmith throughout the siege.

2. Joseph Michael, born May 25, 1880, a Lieutenant R.N., H.M.S. *Dominion.*

3. Malcolm Joseph Raphael, born October 22, 1883, Sub-Lieutenant R.N., H.M.S. *Pegasus.*

4. Herbert Francis Joseph, born March 14, 1891, a student at Stonyhurst.

5. Mary Josephine, born June 5, 1876; married (1897) Alexander Dalglish.

6. Alice Mary Josephine, born October 9, 1881; married (1905) Edward Cassidy of Monasterevan, County Kildare.

7. Margaret Mary Lucy, born December 13, 1886.

James Robert Hope Scott, who may be styled the second maker of Abbotsford, was born at Great Marlow, in Berkshire, July 15, 1812. He was the third son (not second, as the 'Abridged Lockhart' has it) of General the Hon. Sir Alexander Hope of Rankeillour and Luffness, G.C.B., M.P., sometime Governor of Chelsea Hospital. His mother was Georgina Alicia, youngest daughter of George Brown of Elleston, Roxburghshire. The family of Hope, honourable

in Scottish history to the present day, is of considerable antiquity. The name is derived from the Saxon *hop* or *hope*, signifying a sheltered place among hills. The names of Adam le Hope and John de Hope appear on the Ragman Roll as swearing fealty to Edward I. in 1296. Edward Hope was a leading Edinburgh citizen in Queen Mary's time. His grandson was the celebrated King's Advocate, Sir Thomas Hope, of Craighall, whose great-grandson, again, Charles Hope, of Hopetoun, became the first Earl of that name. His son, the second Earl, had for his third wife Lady Elizabeth Leslie, daughter of the Earl of Leven and Melville, and of two sons born to them, the second was General Sir Alexander, father of James Robert Hope.

Educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, young Hope was called to the Bar in 1838, and specializing as a Parliamentary Counsel, soon found himself in a large and lucrative practice. On August 19, 1847, he married Lockhart's daughter. Her description is that of 'a very attractive person, with a graceful figure, a sweet and expressive face, brown eyes of great brilliance, and a beautifully shaped head. The chin, indeed, was heavy, but even this added to the interest of the face by its

striking resemblance to the same feature in her great ancestor, Sir Walter Scott.' There is a portrait of her at Abbotsford. The following year Mr. Hope Scott rented Abbotsford from his brother-in-law, removing thither in August. Five years after, on the death of the latter, Abbotsford fell to him as possessor in right of his wife, and for the remainder of his life it became his principal residence. The place had been sadly neglected since Scott's death in 1832, and everything needed restoration. But the new laird's purse was splendidly equal to the occasion. He did wonders for Abbotsford. Between the years 1855 and 1857 he built a new west wing to the house, consisting of a Chapel, hall, drawing-room, boudoir, and a suite of bedrooms. The old kitchen was turned into a linen-room, and a long range of new kitchen offices facing the Tweed was erected, which materially raised the elevation of Scott's edifice, and improved the appearance of the whole pile as seen from the river. An ingenious tourist access was also arranged, with other internal alterations. Outside, the grounds and gardens were completely overhauled, the overgrown plantations thinned, and the old favourite walks cleaned and kept as Scott himself would have wished. In the lifetime of the Great

Magician the ground on which he fixed his abode was nearly on a level with the highway running along the south front, and wayfarers could survey the whole domain by looking over the hedge. A high embankment was now thrown up on the road-front of Abbotsford, the road itself shifted several yards back, the avenue lengthened, a lodge built, and the new mound covered with a choice variety of timber, which has now grown into one of the most pleasing features of the Abbotsford approach. The courtyard was at the same time planted as a flower-garden, with clipped yews at the corners of the ornamental grass-plots, and beds all ablaze with summer flowers. The terraces on the north, so rich and velvety, date from this period.

These, with much elaborate and costly furnishing for the new interior, make up the Abbotsford of to-day. Mr. Hope Scott had not the 'yerd-hunger' of his illustrious predecessor. His was rather a 'stone-and-lime mania,' all to most excellent purpose, however. Most visitors to Abbotsford have the impression that Sir Walter was responsible for every part of the present edifice, whereas it is at least a third larger from that of Scott's day. From the south, the Hope Scott addition is easily recognisable, being of light free-

stone, in contrast to the darker hue of the 1824 pile, which is built of native red whin. The Hope Scott succession practically rescued Abbotsford when its fortunes were at their lowest, and its history almost at a standstill. After sixteen years, Abbotsford had once more a family life and a domestic happiness of a singularly exalted type. Everybody must admit the ideally happy life spent by Scott himself at Abbotsford—prior to 1826, at any rate. Few men enjoyed life more. His happiness, in the main, sprang from the physical side of things—the out-of-doors sports and exercises in which he revelled, and which were among the chief attractions of his Abbotsford. Scott was never happier than when he was making others happy. No man sacrificed himself more on that side. And surely that was religion at its reallest. Scott did not say much about religion. He had, like Lockhart, all a Scotsman's reticence on the subject. But that he gave it profound and reverent thought —that there was in him a vein of earnest religious feeling,* goes without saying, strong man of the world though he was, and exhibiting, as he did, many things outré to the ordinary religious sense—seldom

* The entries in the 'Journal' show this strongly,—his resignation to God's will, and thankfulness for blessings.

going to church, for instance, (he read the Church of England Service-Book, however, to his household); and 'writing his task' on Sundays more often than he should.

Mr. Hope Scott's happiness, on the other hand, was the outcome of striking spiritual experiences. He had always been eminent for piety, and his views in connection with the Oxford Movement were well known. In 1851, after anxious deliberation, he became a Roman Catholic, and was received on the same day as Cardinal Manning. Shortly afterwards his wife followed him into the same communion. Mr. Hope Scott's religion was consequently a dominating influence at Abbotsford, permeating, as was said, the whole atmosphere of the place. 'The impression left by that most interesting and charming family,' writes a lady visitor in 1854, 'could never be effaced from my mind. It always seemed to me the most perfect type of a really Christian household, such as I never saw in the world before or since, A religious atmosphere pervaded the whole house, and not only the guests, but the servants, must, it seems to me, have felt its influence. Mr. Hope Scott was the beau-idéal of an English gentleman, and a Christian.' There were many guests at the later Abbots-

ford—a different order from those of an earlier day. Hither came John Henry Newman for five weeks during the winter of 1852-53, and again, for a fortnight, in 1872. 'We have a Chapel in the house, but no Chaplain,' wrote Hope Scott to Newman. 'You can say Mass at your own hour, observe your own ways in everything, and feel all the time perfectly at home.' Newman replied: 'It would be a pleasure to spend some time with you; and then I have ever had the extremest sympathy for Walter Scott, that it would delight me to see his place. When he was dying, I was saying prayers for him continually (whatever they were worth), thinking of Keble's words, "Think on the Minstrel as ye kneel."' And, again, we have Newman writing: 'I have ever had such a devotion, I may call it, to Walter Scott. As a boy, in the early summer mornings, I read "Waverley" and "Guy Mannering" in bed, when they first came out, before it was time to get up; and long before that —I think when I was eight years old—I listened eagerly to the "Lay of the Last Minstrel," which my mother and aunt were reading aloud. When he was dying I was continually thinking of him. Hope Scott was one of the Cardinal's 'intimates.' He was also on affectionate terms with Manning

and Gladstone, to the latter of whom he dedicated his edition of Lockhart's 'Abridgment of the Life.'* Several passages in Morley's 'Gladstone' show how strong and genuine was the bond between them. 'Hope especially had influence over me more than, I think, any other person at any period of my life. My affection for him during those latter years before his change was, I may almost say, intense; there was hardly anything, I think, which he could have asked me to do, and which I would not have done.' When Hope Scott joined the Roman Church, Gladstone, the day after, made a codicil to his will, striking him out as executor. Friendship did not die, however, but only lived 'as it lives between those who inhabit separate worlds.'

A man of great wealth,† Mr. Hope Scott never spared his means when the interests of religion

* In 1868 Gladstone urged Mr. Hope Scott to produce an abridged version of Lockhart, ignorant, apparently, of Lockhart's own Abridgment. And in 1871 Hope Scott asks leave to dedicate a reprint of it to Gladstone as 'one among those who think that Scott still deserves to be remembered, not as an author only, but as a noble and vigorous man.'

† In addition to Abbotsford, Mr. Hope Scott owned the estate of Dorlin, on Loch Shiel; the Villa Madona, Hyères, South France; and property in County Mayo.

were in question. As an example of his Christian zeal and affection for Romanism, it may be stated that he built the Church of Our Lady and St. Andrew at Galashiels at a cost of £10,000, also the Chapel at Selkirk, the Church on Loch Shiel, and the Church of the Immaculate Conception at Kelso. He helped churches and schools and convents all over the country. Following his death in 1873 (Newman preaching his funeral sermon), Abbotsford went to Mary Monica* (named from a favourite saint). So we are thankful that there is still a Scott—one of Sir Walter's blood —his great-granddaughter, 'Lady of Abbotsford.'

* Mrs. Maxwell Scott has taken a deep interest in all the affairs of Abbotsford. Literary in her leanings, quite a number of volumes have come from her pen: 'The Making of Abbotsford, and Incidents in Scottish History'; 'Abbotsford and its Treasures'; 'The Tragedy of Fotheringay'; 'Life of Henry Schomberg Kerr, Sailor and Jesuit'; 'Joan of Arc,' and many articles besides, with the Prefaces to the 'Melrose' edition of the Novels.

# THE TREASURES OF ABBOTSFORD

## CHAPTER IX

### THE TREASURES OF ABBOTSFORD

Towards the close of his life, at the suggestion of Cadell (to keep him from more serious tasks), Scott commenced the writing of a descriptive catalogue of the most curious articles in his library and museum—his 'gabions' he called them. This, which he entitled 'Reliquiæ Trottcosianæ—or the Gabions of the late Jonathan Oldbuck, Esq.,'—thus assuming to himself some claim to be the original of the inimitable Laird of Monkbarns—was, unfortunately, never finished. The MS. is at Abbotsford, and has been partly printed in *Harper's Magazine* for April, 1889. As the writing shows, it is first in Scott's own hand, sadly cramped and shaky; then Laidlaw takes up the pen, but the work was soon abandoned for 'Count Robert,' the romance that was simmering in his brain. It is a thousand pities that Scott preferred 'Count Robert' to the gabions history. His mind, impaired by repeated shocks of paralysis, was quite unfitted for

serious imaginative composition. Even the 'Reliquiæ' fragment is not without proof of waning power. Still, 'Count Robert' could well have been spared for the completion of the latter project, and none but the Wizard himself, with his rare wealth of anecdote and story, could have done it justice.

Of the many haunts of genius in this and other countries, Abbotsford is unique in that it was the first (and likely to be the last) great estate won by the pen of an author. Created practically within a dozen years—a marvellously brief period—it remains (the Hope Scott extension excepted) very much as in Sir Walter's lifetime. His own house has undergone no change beyond slight and necessary rearrangement of the furnishings. The visitor of to-day may rest assured that he sees the place almost identically as Scott saw it. The apartments open to the public were planned by him to the minutest particular. His eyes fell on these same pictures, with very few exceptions. And of its antiquarian treasures—the most remarkable private collection in existence—almost all have personal association with Scott.

There are two methods of reaching Abbotsford—by rail to Galashiels, thence to Abbotsford Ferry Station on the Selkirk line, alighting at which and

crossing the Tweed, a delightful tree-shaded walk of about a mile brings us to the house. But the more popular method is to make the journey from Melrose, three miles distant. The way lies between delicious green fields and bits of woodland — a pleasant country road, exposed somewhat, despite smiling hedgerows on either side. Seldom in summer is it without being dust-blown. For in a more than local sense, this is one of the world's highways, with a constant stream of pilgrims from every land passing to and fro. No better proof, surely, of Scott's abiding popularity. The road teems with reminiscences of the Romancist. Out from the grey town, with its orchards and picturesque gardens, the Waverley Hydropathic is passed on the right. In the grounds a handsome seated statue of Scott may be noticed. Further on, to the left, tree-ensconced, lie Chiefswood and Huntlyburn on the Abbotsford estate. Then comes Darnick, with its fine peel, now open to the public, and well worth a visit. At the fork of the roads (that to the right leading by Melrose Bridge to Gattonside and Galashiels) we turn leftwards, and are soon at the visitors' entrance (a modest wicket-gate) to the great Scottish Mecca. But nothing is to be seen yet. Mr. Hope Scott's plantations and 'ingenious tourist arrangement'

screen the pile with wonderful completeness. And it is only when within a few paces of the building, at a turn in the lane leading from the highway, that all at once one emerges upon it. The public waiting-room is in the basement, whence parties of ten or twelve are conducted through the house.

In point of picturesqueness, Abbotsford is, of course, best seen from the Tweed—the north bank—or the hillside, whereon the Galashiels manufacturers have reared their own princely residences—unknown to Scott's day. But we are then looking, let us remember, at the *back* of the edifice. Nearly all the photographs present this view, however, for the sake of the river. The situation is low—poor, indeed, except for the Tweed. At first not unfrequently is there a sense of disappointment, especially if one's ideas have been founded on Turner's somewhat fanciful sketches. These, it need scarcely be said, though beautiful, and art at its highest, are yet far removed (like his Sandyknowe and Chiefswood) from the real Abbotsford.

In his lifetime Scott's friends had no end of praise and flattery for the place: 'A perfect picture of the wonderful owner's mind'; 'a romance in stone and lime'; 'a poem in stone'; 'a mosaic of Scottish history'; 'like places that we dream about'; 'ex-

actly what one ought to have had wit enough to dream,' etc. It is surprising, therefore, to have the more modern descriptions of such men as Dr. John Brown, who actually calls it the 'ugly Abbotsford'; Ruskin, albeit a true Scott-lover, who describes it as 'perhaps the most incongruous pile that gentlemanly modernism ever designed'; Hugh Miller, who characterizes it as a 'supremely melancholy place'; Dean Stanley, who (curiously) speaks of it as 'a place to see once *but never again*'; George Gilfillan, who compares it to a 'Castle Folly'; Robert Chambers, to whom it was chiefly a 'sad piece of patchwork'; and Carlyle (never friendly to Scott), who simply refers to it as 'a stone house in Selkirkshire.' [It is not in Selkirkshire, however.] Granting it to be in many respects bewildering, heterogeneous, irregular, fantastic, odd, a revelry of false Gothic, reared on no set plan, and so forth, the general effect does not seem to be at all displeasing. Ruskin and the others saw Abbotsford perhaps only once at the most. But it is not a place to be exhausted in an hour, or a day, and hundreds (among modern trippers) in their hurry can hardly carry away a correct impression. Abbotsford is a place to be seen often, and the oftener it is seen and studied, the more fascinating

will it become, and the less prominent will its defects appear.

Abbotsford proper is enclosed by an embattled wall and a fine castellated gateway, surmounted by a sculptured portcullis with Scott's motto, 'CLAUSUS TUTUS ERO,' an anagram of his name in Latin. The 'jougs' (stocks for the neck) of Threave Castle dangle to the left of the handsome iron-clenched door. Entering, we are in the court-yard, half an acre or so in extent, nicely turfed and parterred. It is walled on two sides, and on the third, facing the entrance, an elegant stone screen of sixteen elliptic arches, set with iron lattice-work, separates from the gardens. The fourth side is the house-front, 150 feet in length. All the grounds are kept in the pink of perfection. The antiquarian character of the place is at once apparent. Medallions, tablets, altars, etc., from the Roman station at Petreia (Penrith) and elsewhere, fill numerous niches in the courtyard wall, against which runs a trellised arbour covered with creepers. The centre of the courtyard is occupied by a fountain, which is said to have stood in former days at the foot of the Cross of Edinburgh (see Lockhart, vol. v., p. 261). The dial-stone in the flower-garden, inscribed (like Johnson's watch) with

the motto 'ΓΑΡ ΝΥΞ ΕΡΧΕΤΑΙ' ('For the night cometh'), is an object of suggestive interest. 'Turn-Again' is in the corner, recalling Scott's first introduction to Abbotsford. Across the archway leading into the fruit-garden there is the appropriate text:

*'Et audiverunt Vocem Domini deambulantis in horto.'*

Within, and guarded with jealous care, is the last survivor of the fruit-trees planted by Sir Walter himself.

The exterior of Abbotsford abounds in relics and inscriptions, woven here and there throughout the masonry. At the western side of the main entrance, and high up in the wall, is the door of the old 'Heart of Midlothian' (see p. 37), with the words:

'THE LORD OF ARMIS IS MY PROTECTOR: BLISSIT AR THAY THAT TRUST IN THE LORD, 1575.'

The arched entrance-porch was copied from Linlithgow Palace. The arms of the family with the legends—

'REPARABIT CORNUA PHŒBE; WATCH WEEL,'

are conspicuous above it. Near by are the grave

and stone effigy (cut by Smith of Darnick) of Maida, Scott's favourite deerhound, with Lockhart's famous 'false-quantity' lines:

> 'Maidæ Marmoreâ dormis sub imagine Maida
> ad januam domini sit tibi terra levis,'

thus Englished by Sir Walter:

> 'Beneath the sculptured form which late you wore,
> Sleep soundly, Maida, at your master's door.'
> (See Lockhart, vol. vii., pp. 275-281.)

There is apparently only one date, 1822, on the south front, on a stone below the staircase window. Eastward is the Study, with Scott's bedroom above, and the tower from which he looked out on the Eildons. A long stone near the visitors' entrance carries the inscription:

> 'By Night by Day Remember ay the goodness of ye Lord:
> And thank His name whos glorious fam is spred Throughout ye world';

whilst another, showing a rudely-carved sword, has the words:

> 'Up with ye Sutors of Selkyrke.'

Over the great bay-window of the Library, the first of the principal rooms facing the Tweed, is a

lintel from the Common Hall of the old Edinburgh College, with a quotation from Seneca:

'Virtus Rectorem Ducemque
Desiderat; Vitia—sine—Magistro Discuntur.' Anno 1616.

Next the Library is the Drawing-Room, then the Armoury, and Dining-Room, with the motto:

'SO
LI DEO
GLORIA.'

And, lastly, the Breakfast Parlour, once Scott's sanctum, in which Lockhart died.

Now turn we to the interior. Be it at once said that Mrs. Maxwell Scott's excellent little 'Catalogue of the Armour and Antiquities at Abbotsford' is absolutely indispensable. A previous study of its pages will enable the visitor to know exactly how he is to be piloted, and the whereabouts of the 'gabions' he is most bent on seeing. The attendants are always ready to point out objects of special interest to individuals, and there need be no hesitancy to ask questions. For the sake of convenience, we follow the order which has been in force for years. All we plead for in the public interest is a little more leisure, if that be possible, for seeing what is to be seen.

Visitors are admitted first into what is surely the *sanctum sanctorum* of the place—

### The Study.

This is a fair-sized apartment, 20 feet long, 14 feet broad, and 16 feet high, lighted by a large window which looks out to the courtyard. Everything is practically as Scott left it. Oaken bookcases line the walls, and hardly a volume (it is chiefly a reference library) has been altered. A light gallery, graced with ample book-shelves, runs round three sides of the room, opening out on a private staircase, by which the 'inhabitant of the study,' as the 'Reliquiæ' puts it, 'if unwilling to be surprised by visitors, may make his retreat, a facility which he has sometimes found extremely convenient.' The Desk is, of course, the chief object of interest. Modelled from one at Rokeby (see 'Letters,' vol. i., p. 180), it is thus described by Lockhart as he first saw it in the 'den' at Castle Street in 1818:

'The only table was a massive piece of furniture with a desk and all its appurtenances on either side, that an amanuensis might work opposite to him when he chose, and with small tiers of drawers reaching all round to the floor. The top displayed a goodly array of session papers, and on the desk

below were, besides the MS. at which he was working, sundry parcels of letters, proof-sheets, and so forth, all neatly done up in red tape. His own writing apparatus was a very handsome old box, richly covered, lined with crimson velvet, and containing ink-bottles, taper-stand, etc., in silver, the whole in such order that it might have come from the silversmith's window half an hour before.' At the desk most of the novels were written, we may suppose, though not all at Abbotsford, as is not unfrequently imagined. It is, however, impossible to collate with exactness the dates and occasions of their composition. The fact remains, that in all probability each of the Waverleys was penned at this desk. Hence its unreckonable value to the literary pilgrim, and the unqualified reverence with which tens of thousands have gazed upon it. Certainly no article of furniture has been so intimately associated with Scott. Fourteen years from the time that he first saw it, it fell to Lockhart himself to open Scott's desk under the mournfullest circumstances. 'Perhaps the most touching evidence of the lasting tenderness of Sir Walter's early domestic feelings was exhibited to his executors when they opened his repositories in search of his testament the evening after his burial. On lifting

up his desk we found, arranged in careful order, a series of little objects which had obviously been so placed there that his eye might rest on them every morning before he began his tasks. These were the old-fashioned boxes that had garnished his mother's toilette when he, a sickly child, slept in her dressing-room—the silver taper-stand, which the young advocate had bought for her with his first five-guinea fee; a row of small packets, inscribed with her hand, and containing the hair of those of her offspring who had died before her; his father's snuff-box and etui case, and more things of the like sort, recalling "the old familiar faces."'

Scott's desk is seldom seen open. The present writer counts it one of the memories of his life to have had that pleasure, and to have sat in Sir Walter's 'own huge elbow-chair,' and to have handled—an act almost too sacred after all those years—relics so touching and pathetic in their associations. The little locks of hair are still there, with the quills used by Scott, and his spectacles, pocket-knife, paper-knife, and a large number of account-books and other private documents. Here, too, is Mrs. Lockhart's Bible 'From J. G. L., 1825,' her Prayer-Book, and a host of articles with


Wm. Smith
Abbotsford 1904.

which both Scott and Lockhart must have been long familiar.

Other objects of interest may be briefly noted:

Sir Walter's chair.

Of green morocco; in the Empire style, which prevailed early in the last century.

The Wallace chair.

Presented by Joseph Train in 1822. Made of wood from Robroyston, near Kirkintilloch, the scene of Wallace's betrayal. A MS. volume in Train's handwriting, contained in a drawer under the seat, tells the story of the chair (see Lockhart, vol. vii., p. 223; note inscription).

Lockhart's chair.

Of plain horse-hair.

Scott's card-plate.

Carries the simple address: 'Sir Walter Scott, Castle Street.'

A small folding box-writing-desk.

Made from wood of the Spanish Armada, and inscribed: 'Afflavit Deus et dissipantur.'

Print of Stothard's 'Canterbury Pilgrims' (over the mantelpiece).

The best-known of Stothard's paintings. Engraved in 1817. 'Sir Walter made the characteristic criticism upon it that, if the procession were to move, the young squire who is prancing in the foreground would in another minute be off his horse's head' (Adolphus's 'Memoranda').

Portrait of Claverhouse.
Painter unknown.

Portrait of Queen Elizabeth.
Painter unknown.

Portrait of Rob Roy.
Painter unknown.
'The eagle, he was lord above,
And Rob was lord below.'

Bust of Lord Chief Commissioner Adam.
Sculptor probably Samuel Joseph, R.S.A. Founder of the Blair-Adam Club (see Lockhart, vol. viii., p. 200). 'I have lived much with him, and taken kindly to him as one of the most pleasant, kind-hearted, benevolent men I have ever known.'

Scott's walking-sticks, pipes, etc.
In cabinet to the right.

A small turret-room off the study is of peculiar interest. Sir Walter styled it his 'Speak-a-bit.' Here he enjoyed many a happy *tête-à-tête*. It is said to be panelled with the oak of the bedstead on which Queen Mary slept at Jedburgh in 1566. Scott's death-mask is the only article the room contains. The dead face is so tired that nobody can look upon it without a gush of pity, and a feeling of thankfulness that at last the man is in his grave. We are not moved by the grandeur of its modelling; the appeal it makes is to a larger humanity

than that. It is the face of a brother man, stretched out too long upon the rack of this tough world. The majesty of the forehead, and the dour earnestness of the features, tell of Walter Scott, the genius; but it is in the corners of the mouth that all the pathos lies. In them there is the droop of an infinite weariness, and it makes the heart ache (see *Temple Bar*, 1904).

### Library.

Adjoining is the Library, the largest and finest apartment in the house—40 feet long by 18 feet broad and 16 feet high—with an immense bay-window, commanding a lovely view of the Tweed. The book-presses, wired and locked, rise to a height of 11 feet, leaving a space of 5 feet accordingly between the top of the shelves and the magnificent cedar ceiling, whose rich Gothic ornamentation (of plaster, however) is modelled from Melrose and Rosslyn. Notice the familiar 'curly green' of the Melrose Abbots. Close on 20,000 volumes line the walls.* Many are presentation copies, and not a few contain MS. criticisms and jottings by Scott. The furniture of this room is very

* See the Abbotsford Library Catalogue, a handsome quarto, edited by John G. Cochrane for the Maitland and Bannatyne Clubs, 1838.

valuable. Two very richly-carved chairs, said to have come from the Borghese Palace, in Rome, were presented by Constable (see letter to Terry in Lockhart, vol. vii., p. 104). An ebony writing-cabinet, gorgeously figured, and once the property of George III., was presented by his successor. Note should be taken of Sir Walter's four-sloped reading-desk, movable at the will of the writer, thus enabling him to consult a number of works at one time. This was in constant use when 'Napoleon' was on the stocks. The great centre-table was the work of Joseph Shillinglaw. Darnick, 'the Sheriff planning and studying every turn as zealously as ever an old lady pondered the development of an embroidered cushion.' The hangings and curtains (not in use) were chiefly the work of a little hunch-backed tailor, William Goodfellow, who occupied a cottage on Scott's farm of the Broomielees. 'Not long after he had completed his work at Abbotsford,' says Lockhart, 'little Goodfellow fell sick, and as his cabin was near Chiefswood, I had many opportunities of observing the Sheriff's kind attention to him in his affliction. I can never forget the evening on which the poor tailor died. When Scott entered he found everyone silent, and inferred from

the looks of the good women in attendance that their patient had fallen asleep, and that they feared his sleep was the final one. He murmured some syllables of kind regret. At the sound of his voice the dying tailor unclosed his eyes, and eagerly and wistfully sat up, clasping his hands with an expression of rapturous gratefulness and devotion that, in the midst of deformity, disease, pain and wretchedness, was at once beautiful and sublime. He cried with a loud voice, "The Lord bless and reward you!" and expired with the effort.' One painting only has place in the Library—a full-length of the second Sir Walter, by Sir William Allan (1822), in the uniform of the 15th Hussars, his horse by his side. 'A handsomer fellow never put foot into stirrup,' said Scott. The celebrated Chantrey Bust, of which Lockhart said that it 'alone preserved for posterity the cast of expression most fondly remembered by all who mingled in his domestic circle,' was placed in its present niche (at the end of the room) by young Sir Walter the day after his father's funeral. Scott sat to Sir Francis Chantrey in 1820, and it is this original bust which is at Abbotsford. Only one duplicate was made (for Apsley House). Chantrey sculptured a *second* bust in 1828 (acquired by Sir Robert Peel), having

in the meantime presented Scott with the bust of 1820, which bears an inscription to that effect on the back.

A large octagonal glass table in the fine bay contains the following gabions:

Napoleon's blotter and gold bee-clasps.

Found in his carriage after Waterloo. The blotter contains a small packet of Napoleon's hair.

Napoleon's pen-case and sealing-wax.

Left on the writing-table at the Palace of the Elysée Bourbon, in his flight from Paris, 1815 Presented by Lady Hampden, 1829.

A tricoloured cockade.

Brought from France in 1815.

Soldier's Memorandum-book.

Found at Waterloo. See 'Paul's Letters,' p. 199.

Piece of oat-cake.

Found in a dead Highlander's pocket on the field of Culloden the day of the battle. Given to Scott by Robert Chambers.

Queen Mary's seal.

Base engraved with a crowned shield, bearing the Scottish lion and initials 'M.R.'

A piece of Queen Mary's dress.

## Prince Charlie's quaigh.

With mirror bottom, 'that he who quaffed might keep his eye on the dirk hand of his companion.' Often used by Scott. Presented, in 1825, by Mrs. Stewart of Stenton.

## Lock of Prince Charlie's hair.

## Rob Roy's purse.

Of brown leather; much worn. Presented by Joseph Train, 1818, a few days after the publication of 'Rob Roy.'

## Helen MacGregor's brooch.

A six-pointed star, with a thistle and two leaves between. 'I confess, for my own part,' says Scott, 'that I looked long and curiously upon the brooch that belonged to Rob Roy's wife. I was thinking more of the wife than of the dauntless outlaw; of the woman who reproached her husband upon his deathbed for exhibiting some signs of contrition for his past misdeeds, exhorting him to die as he had lived, "like a man."'

## Flora MacDonald's pocket-book.

Presented by Alexander Campbell, Leith, 1825. Flora, it would appear, had intended this as a present to the Rev. Martin Martin, a minister in the Isle of Skye, but he having died, it never reached its destination. The initials 'M. M.' have been wrought on the outside.

## Lock of Nelson's hair.

Lock of Wellington's hair.

'As to the Duke of Wellington, my faith is constant that there is no other man living who can work out the salvation of this country. He is such a man as Europe has not seen since Julius Cæsar.'—Scott to Lockhart.

Robert Burns's tumbler.

With some verses scratched thereon. Scott and Burns met only once, in 1786.

Toadstone amulet.

'It was sovereign for protecting new-born children and their mothers from the power of the fairies,' says Scott.

Joanna Baillie's purse.

Netted in thick red silk by the poetess, and presented to Scott in 1812 (see Lockhart, vol. iii., p. 387).

Box made of the pulley of the 'Maiden.'

An instrument of execution, of the guillotine order, introduced into Scotland by the Regent Morton, who himself suffered death by its means.

Balfour of Burley's snuff-box.

Immortalized in 'Old Mortality.'

Gold snuff-box set in brilliants.

Presented, in 1815, by George IV., then Prince Regent, Scott's friend and patron.

Bog-oak snuff-box.

Presented by Maria Edgeworth.

Silver snuff-box.

Presented by City of Cork, 1825.

Robert Scott's (of Sandyknowe) snuff-box.

Tom Purdie's snuff-box.

Peter Mathieson's snuff-box.

Tom Purdie's wood-knife.

Sir Walter's knife.

Small knife and fork used by Scott as a child.

'Beardie's' quaigh.

Wallace-oak quaigh.

Presented by Joseph Train.

Quaigh made from Queen Mary's yew at Craigmillar.

Quaigh made from Duke of Wellington's tree at Waterloo.

'Such a multifarious collection of ancient quaighs (little cups of curiously dove-tailed wood inlaid with silver) as no Lowland sideboard but his was ever equipped with' (see Lockhart, vol. v., p. 339).

Cardinal Mezzofanti's skull-cap.

Brought from Rome by Scott. The Cardinal was one of the greatest linguists of his day.

A Russian icon.

Silver medal of Charles I.

Miniature of Charles II.

Miniature of James VIII., the Chevalier de St. George.

Medallion of George IV.

Bronze medallion of Scott.

Miniature of Scott at the age of six.

Painted at Bath in 1777; painter unknown. A copy from the original in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. A second copy is in the possession of Mr. John Murray, London.

Miniature of Scott, 1797.

As an officer in the Edinburgh Light Dragoons. According to the fashion of the day, his hair is powdered. A lock of light brown hair is fastened, under glass, at the back of the frame. This is the second authentic likeness of Scott.

Miniature of Lady Scott, 1797.

When Miss Carpenter—'a brunette as dark as a blackberry, but her person and face very engaging.'

Miniature of M. Jean Carpenter.

Father of Lady Scott.

### Drawing-room.

Next we pass to the drawing-room, a deeply interesting apartment, 24 feet by 18 feet, and in

height the same as the others. The walls are hung with Chinese paper (wonderfully fresh still), evidence of that Chinese fashion which the skill of Sir William Chambers succeeded in foisting upon fashionable people during the reign of George IV. The windows, doors, and other woodwork, are of Jamaica cedar, and have a rich and beautiful appearance, and the furnishings are of great value. Notice some very pretty china specimens. The paintings, both numerous and valuable, include :

Full-length portrait of Scott, by Sir Henry Raeburn, R.A.

> Painted in 1809. A replica, with variations, of the picture done for Constable the year before (now at Bowhill). In the Abbotsford copy the background gives the valley of the Yarrow instead of Liddesdale. Camp is the dog at Scott's feet, and Douglas the greyhound.

Lady Scott, by James Saxon, 1805.

> A companion portrait to that of Sir Walter, painted in 1805.

Scott's mother, by Sir John Watson Gordon, P.R.S.A., R.A.

Anne Scott, by William Nicholson, R.S.A.

> In fancy dress ; a water-colour sketch. 'An honest, downright good Scots lass, in whom I would only wish to correct a spirit of satire.'

Anne Scott, by John Graham.

In Spanish dress.

Sophia Scott (Mrs. Lockhart), by William Nicholson, R.S.A.

In Norwegian peasant dress.

The Hon. Mrs. Maxwell Scott, by Miller.

Presented by Mr. Maxwell Scott's cricketing friends, 1887.

James VI. of Scotland.

Painter unknown.

Anne, Duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth.

Painter unknown. To her the 'Lay' was chanted:

'In pride of power, in beauty's bloom,
She wept o'er Monmouth's bloody tomb.'

Henrietta, Queen of Charles I.

Painter unknown.

Sir Thomas Hervey, Knight Marshal to Queen Mary.

Painter unknown.

Nell Gwynne, by Sir Peter Lely.

John Dryden, by Sir Peter Lely.

William Hogarth, by himself.

Oliver Cromwell.

Painter unknown.

Head of Mary Queen of Scots, by Amyas Cawood (not Camwood, or Canwood, as the guide-books say).

Presented by a Prussian nobleman. This picture represents the head of the Queen after decapitation, and bears the signature of the painter, with the inscription and date, 'Maria Scotiæ Regina, Feb. 9, 1587,' the day after the execution. 'It is known that leave was granted for such a picture, and in the painter's name we may probably recognize a brother of Mary's faithful attendant, Margaret Cawood.' Cawood, or, as now, Carwood, near Biggar, was the seat of this family.

Fast Castle.

By Thomson of Duddingston. Presented by the artist. Fast Castle, Berwickshire, is the supposed 'Wolf's Crag' of the 'Bride of Lammermoor.'

Jedburgh Abbey.

A water-colour drawing by Bennet. Presented by the artist.

Bust of Shakespeare.

Somewhat youthful-looking. Presented by George Bullock, along with the finely-carved oak cabinet on which it stands (see Lockhart, vol. v., p. 167).

### Armoury.

'Stepping westwards,' we enter the Armoury, a long, narrow apartment, running right across the house, with emblazoned windows at either end (heads of the Scottish Kings), and forming a sort

of ante-room to the drawing-room on one side and the dining-room on the other. It consists of two parts, that to the south being 10 feet in length, the other 25 feet. Both portions communicate by a Gothic archway, with carved oaken wicket. Scarcely a nation on earth, savage or civilized, but has contributed something in the shape of a warlike weapon to the stores of the Abbotsford armoury. Of its many remarkable and valuable objects—the mere enumeration of which would, of themselves, form a goodly catalogue—the following may be specially noted:

Sword of Montrose.

'I have a relic of a more heroic character; it is a sword which was given to the great Marquis of Montrose by Charles I., and appears to have belonged to his father, our gentle King Jamie. It had been preserved for a long time at Gartmore, but the present proprietor was selling his library, and John Ballantyne, the purchaser, wishing to oblige me, would not conclude a bargain till he flung the sword into the scale' (letter to Joanna Baillie, Lockhart, vol. iii., p. 390). The sword bears on both sides the royal arms of Great Britain, with the following inscription on the blade:

'Jacobe alumne pacis atk pallæ
Serene cultor et decus Britannici
Clarrissimum regni tuis regalib
Sceptris subest de stirpe quond martia.'

Scott had the sheath remounted in 1822.

## Rob Roy's gun.

An immensely long-barrelled weapon of Spanish manufacture, bearing the initials of the freebooter, 'R. M. C.'—Robert Macgregor Campbell (see Introduction to 'Rob Roy,' p. 87). 'A dialogue between Montrose's sword and Rob Roy's gun might be composed with good effect' (Scott to Joanna Baillie).

## Rob Roy's sword.

'A fine old Highland broadsword with Andrea Ferrara blade and basket hilt.'

## Rob Roy's dirk.

Of Andrea Ferrara make.

## Rob Roy's sporran.

Presented by Joseph Train, 1817. A plain leather spleuchan likely to have been used by 'Rob' in his honest drover days.

## Claverhouse's pistol.

A fine old Highland flint-lock. Not known how it came into Scott's possession.

## Napoleon's pistols.

Taken from his carriage after Waterloo, and presented by the Duke of Wellington.

## Andreas Hofer's rifle.

The patriot leader of the Tyrolese in 1809. Presented by Sir Humphry Davy, who obtained it from Hofer's lieutenant in reward for having cured him of a fever.

James VI.'s hunting-bottle.

In an old tooled and gilt leathern case. Presented by George Huntly Gordon.

Prince Charlie's hunting-knives.

Of French make, time of Louis XIV.

Canadian cow-horn.

With a map of Canada and its lakes most ingeniously and not incorrectly carved upon it by a native Indian.

Keys of Loch Leven Castle.

Three in number, on an old iron padlock.

The 'thumbikins' or thumbscrews.

An instrument of torture used in Covenant times. Presented by Gabriel Alexander.

Small iron box.

Found in the Chapel of Mary of Guise at Edinburgh Castle.

Model of Bruce's candlestick.

Mary Queen of Scots' crucifix.

Of mother-of-pearl.

Russian Prayer-Book.

Russian cross (brass).

Tamul Book.

Necklaces of human hair and bones.

From the Sandwich Islands.

Celtic mask.

Found at Torrs, Kelton parish, Galloway. Presented by Joseph Train, 1820.

White tail-duster.

Used by Scott for dusting his books.

Highland broadsword.

Presented to Scott by the Celtic Society; a gorgeous article, with a sheath of elaborately-chased silver (see Diary, January, 1826).

Scott's blunderbuss.

Round the muzzle are the words: 'When rogues appear, my voice you'll hear.'

Scott's pistols and sabre.

Used when Quarter-Master of the Edinburgh Light Dragoons.

Scott's sword.

'A Highland broadsword, with engraved basket hilt and Andrea Ferrara blade.'

Scott's own gun.

An old Spanish double-barrelled flint-lock.

Officer's sword.

Worn by the second Sir Walter when in the 15th Hussars.

Pair of gilt dress spurs.

Worn by the second Sir Walter when in the 15th Hussars.

The Armoury paintings consist chiefly of Scott's servants and friends:

John Swanston.

Gamekeeper. 'A fine fellow, who did all he could to replace Tom Purdie.' Painter uncertain; initialled 'G. D.'; date 1851.

Peter Mathieson, with 'Donald,' the pony.

Coachman. 'I cannot forget how his eyes sparkled when he first pointed out to me Peter Mathieson guiding the plough on the haugh. "Egad," said he, "auld Pepe" (this was the children's name for their good friend)—"auld Pepe's whistling at his darg. The honest fellow said a yoking in a deep field would do baith him and the blackies good. If things get round with me, easy shall be Pepe's cushion"' (Lockhart, vol. ix.). Painter uncertain; initialled 'G. D.'; date 1851.

Tom Purdie.

Described in 'Redgauntlet' (see Lockhart, vol. vi., p. 121). Painted by Sir Edwin Landseer, R.A.

James Ballantyne.

Painter unknown. 'James was a short, stout, well-made man, and would have been considered a handsome one but for those grotesque frowns, starts, and twistings of his features, set off by a certain mock majesty of walk and gesture, which he had perhaps contracted from his usual companions, the emperors and tyrants of the stage.'

Miniature of Claverhouse.

Painter unknown.

Charles Mackay, as 'Bailie Nicol Jarvie.'

'The man who played the Bailie made a piece of acting equal to whatever has been seen in the profession. For my own part, I was actually electrified by the truth, spirit, and humour which he threw into the part. It was the living Nicol Jarvie' (Scott to Terry, April, 1829).

Miniature of Prince Charlie.

James IV. (contemporary portrait, 1507).

Portrait of Allan Ramsay.

By Allan Ramsay, junior.

The Scotts of Raeburn.

By Sir John Watson Gordon.

Scott in his study.

By Sir William Allan.

Medallion of Scott.

Medallion of Christopher North.

By Andrew Currie.

Hinse of Hinsfeldt.

Scott's cat. See description of the Castle Street 'den.'

'Ginger.'

Scott's dog. Painted by Landseer.

Drawing of Queen Elizabeth dancing.

By Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe. 'This production of Mr. Sharpe's pencil, and the delight with which Scott used to expatiate on its merits, must be well remembered by everyone that ever visited the poet at Abbotsford.'

'The Dish of Spurs.'

By Sharpe. 'When the larders of our ancestors were bare, and fresh meat was desired, the housewife placed a pair of spurs on a dish to remind the men-folk that the moment was come for a raid on their neighbour's cattle.'

'The Reiver's Wedding.'

By Sharpe. See Lockhart, vol. ii., for unfinished ballad of 'The Reiver's Wedding'; also letter to Miss Seward, June 29, 1802, same vol.

'Gibbie wi' the Gowden Gairters.'

By Sharpe. Sir Gilbert Elliot paying his addresses to Auld Wat of Harden's daughter.

An (not The) Ettrick shepherd.

The Paschal Lamb.

From the High Altar at Dryburgh.

Dead partridge.

The above three wood-carvings are by Andrew Currie.

Statuette of Sir Walter.

From John Greenshields' seated figure, carved in freestone, now in the Advocates' Library—'Sic Sedebat.'

### Entrance Hall.

In this order of going round the Entrance Hall comes last — a spacious apartment, 40 feet by 20 feet, panelled to the height of 7 feet with dark oak from Dunfermline Abbey. The roof is of stucco-work in imitation of the wainscotting, and comprehends a series of arches with dependent points, modelled from Melrose Abbey. The effect of this room is grand and impressive. A sort of rich and red twilight, even at noonday, from the emblazoned 'Bellenden'* windows, pervades the place, which is literally laden with relics and trophies. The cornice displays a double line of escutcheons, with the heraldic bearings of the Scotts, Kers, Elliots, Douglases, Homes, Pringles, Maxwells, Johnstones, Chisholms, and other Border families, and the inscription in black letter:

'These be the Coat Armouris of ye Clannis and men of name quha keepit the Scottish Marches in ye days of auld. They were worthie in thair tyme and in thair defens God thaim defendid.'

* The slogan of the Scotts of Buccleuch—'A Bellenden!' from Bellendean, near the head of the Borthwick Water, in Roxburghshire. The windows show the shields of eight families of the clan.

The arms of Scott's own ancestors occupy sixteen shields running along the centre of the roof, being the complete quarterings of a man of 'gentle blood.' On his father's side—running west—are the names of Scott, Haliburton, Campbell, M'Dougal, Murray, Scott (Dryhope), Ker, Riddel; and on his mother's side—running east—Rutherford, Swinton, Shaw, Ker, Ainslie. Three shields on this side are blanks,—Scott not being able to trace out his pedigree to the full length of his spaces,—and are painted over with blue clouds, and the motto, *Alta—Nox—Premit* ('Oblivion has covered them'). The floor is a mosaic of black and white Hebridean marble. Of a singularly rich assortment of curiosities in the shape of cuirasses and suits of armour, helmets, shields, swords, lances, and other arms of all sorts and ages, flags, cannon-balls, and numberless other articles from apparently every country under the sun, all of them interesting in their antiquity or associations, the following are some of the more notable:

Suit of fluted armour.

Early sixteenth century.

Suit of polished steel tilting armour.

Middle of the sixteenth century. Believed to have come from Bosworth Field, and, as Scott

suggests, to have belonged to Sir John Cheney, the biggest man of both armies on that memorable day. An enormous two-handed sword, nearly the length of a man, is held by this figure (see also the celebrated Calendar-sword, close by, and tilting-lance, about 12 feet long).

Relics from Waterloo.

Pistols, cuirasses, swords, sabres, etc. (see Lockhart, vol. v.).

Relics from Culloden.

Highland back-swords.

Relics from Roxburgh Castle.

Two cannon-balls.

Archbishop Sharp's grate.

See letter to Terry, January 9, 1823. The fireplace is modelled from the Abbot's Stall at Melrose.

Head of elk.

Found in Abbotsrule Moss, twelve miles from Abbotsford.

Ralph Erskine's pulpit.

The two semicircular presses between the windows, forming a sort of wine-cellar, were made from the wood of this pulpit, with the precentor's desk and King's seat of Dunfermline Abbey Church.

Keys of the old Tolbooth of Edinburgh.

Presented by the magistrates of Edinburgh, 1816.

Lock and key of Selkirk Gaol.

A Jeddart axe.

Time of James V.

Hermitage touting-horn.

'How great he was when he was made master o' *that!* Sir Walter carried it home all the way from Liddesdale to Jedburgh, slung about his neck like Johnny Gilpin's bottle, and muckle and sair we routed on't, and hotched and blew wi' micht and main' (Shortreed's 'Memoranda').

Burgess hat of Stow.

Model of the Scottish branks.

For scolding wives.

Model of skull of Robert the Bruce.

On the mantelpiece.

Model of skull of Shaw, the Waterloo Lifeguardsman.

On the mantelpiece (see Lockhart, vol. v., p. 71).

Marie Antoinette's clock.

On the mantelpiece.

Bronze pot from Riddell, Roxburghshire.

'The mistletoe chest where Ginevra lay.'

Sent from Italy to Scott as the identical chest in which the beautiful young bride hid herself on her marriage-day, in a frolicsome wish to baffle the search of her newly-wedded lord, and out of which chest she never came, until the lapse of many years had converted her beautiful frame into a

mouldering skeleton. A spring-lock had shut her in, and all search for her proved vain. Sir Walter was led to doubt the authenticity of the relic from the fact that Italy has a box with similar claims in several of her principal cities. Besides, the chest at Abbotsford has not the spring-lock.

Sir Walter's clothes.

The last suit worn by him—drab trousers, striped waistcoat, dark-green coat with white metal buttons, and light fawn beaver hat. 'When I was at Abbotsford I saw in a glass case the last clothes Scott wore. Among them an old white hat, which seemed to be tumbled and bent and broken by the uneasy, purposeless wandering hither and thither of his heavy head. It so embodied Lockhart's pathetic description of him when he tried to write and laid down his pen and cried, that it associated itself in my mind with broken power and mental weakness from that hour' (Charles Dickens, 1851).

Bust of Wordsworth.

'So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness.'

## Dining-room.

The Dining-room—'his own great parlour'—is not open to the public. It was the first room of any pretensions that Scott built at Abbotsford (it is 30 feet in length, including a considerable bow, 17 feet in breadth and 12 feet high), and much care was expended on its design and decoration. He adorned the walls with portraits of his

ancestors, and, says Lockhart, 'he seemed never to weary of perusing them.' It was here, too, as has been already said, that the final tragedy was played out.

### Walter Scott.

Sir Walter's great-grandfather, known as 'Beardie,' from a vow which he made never to shave his beard till the Stuarts were restored.

'With amber beard and flaxen hair,
And reverend apostolic air,
Small thought was his, in after time,
E'er to be hitch'd into a rhyme.
The simple sire could only boast
That he was loyal to his cost;
The banish'd race of kings revered,
And lost his land—but kept his beard.'

Painter unknown.

### Robert Scott, of Sandyknowe.

Sir Walter's grandfather.

'The thatch'd mansion's grey-hair'd sire,
Wise without learning, plain and good,
And sprung of Scotland's gentle blood.'

Painter unknown.

### Professor Rutherford.

Sir Walter's maternal grandfather, Professor of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh, 'one to whom the school of medicine in our northern metropolis owes its rise, and a man distinguished for professional talent, for lively wit, and for literary acquirements.' Painter unknown.

## Walter Scott, W.S.

Sir Walter's father, 'a most just, honourable, and conscientious man. He passed from the cradle to the grave without making an enemy or losing a friend.' Painter unknown.

## Mrs. Scott.

Anne Rutherford, Sir Walter's mother, 'short of stature and by no means comely.' Painter unknown.

## Thomas Scott.

Sir Walter's uncle. 'The most venerable figure I had ever set my eyes on—tall and erect, with long flowing tresses of the most silvery whiteness. He sat reading his Bible without spectacles, and did not, for a moment, perceive that anyone had entered his room; but, on recognizing his nephew, he rose with cordial alacrity, kissing him on both cheeks, and exclaiming: "God bless thee, Walter, my man! thou hast risen to be great, but thou wast always good."' Painter unknown.

## Thomas Scott, W.S.

Sir Walter's third brother, 'a man of infinite humour and excellent parts.' Painter unknown.

# AROUND ABBOTSFORD

## CHAPTER X

### AROUND ABBOTSFORD

WHILST this work deals mainly with Abbotsford, it will be fitting to refer briefly to one or two places within what may be called the Abbotsford radius. At least half a dozen scenes of interest can be visited with profit by the literary pilgrim. Abbotsford is his Mecca *par excellence*, and it is here that homage must rise to its full height. Abbotsford is but the centre, however, of a widely historic locality, in which it may be possible to discover shrine after shrine, each demanding some show of devotion. Of course, Scott is the chief attractive force to the Scottish Border. But long before his day Tweedside and the country around Abbotsford lay in the very lap of 'glamourie.' And it was, as we have seen, largely because of the romance which haunted the whole district that Abbotsford took shape, to become by-and-by perhaps the most romantic spot in Europe.

Melrose—the Kennaquhair of the 'Monastery'—is the most convenient headquarters for studying the homes and following the footprints of Sir Walter Scott. Scott may be said to have made Melrose. It was a mere village when Abbotsford was building. It really grew with the growth of Abbotsford, and in the wake of Scott's success. The name—*maol-ros*, 'the open or naked headland' — is a transfer from Old Melrose, two and a half miles further down the Tweed, where flourished the first monastic settlement, fragrant with the memories of Aidan, Boisil (whence St. Lessuden and St. Boswells), and most celebrated of them all, Cuthbert, that Leaderside shepherd lad, who rose to be head of the great See of Durham. It was David, 'the Sair Sanct,' who founded the second religious house of Melrose between the years 1136 and 1146. Dedicated to the Virgin, and tenanted by a colony of Cistercians from Rievalle, in Yorkshire, the pioneers of their Order in Scotland, Melrose quickly came to the front as the most famous establishment of its kind in the kingdom. For four centuries, like the rest of the Border Abbeys, Melrose held its place, and was a power in the land. During the Edwardian Wars it suffered frequently from fire and assault,

and, indeed, about 1322, it was more or less a ruin. Mainly through the munificence of Robert the Bruce, it was rebuilt in 1326, 'in the most magnificent style of the period,' at a cost of £50,000 in modern money. By 1384 it was again sacked, this time by Richard II., and again restored. In 1544 Evers and Latoun, the English generals at Ancrum Moor, desecrated and demolished the Douglas tombs at Melrose, and in the following year, on the Hertford invasion, the work of destruction was complete. At the Reformation the Abbey was finally dismantled, and for long afterwards the ruin was used as a quarry by the townspeople. Not a little of the original Abbotsford found its way from Melrose Abbey. The statues, specially numerous and costly, were 'ground to powder' in 1649, and up to 1820 the nave was used as the parish church. Scott's genius and patriotism have done more for Melrose than anything else. To him, in large measure, as the Biography shows, the place owes its preservation as the finest ecclesiastical ruin in the country. None knew Melrose Abbey better, or bore a dearer regard to it, than Scott, and its architecture is nowhere more faithfully described than in the 'Lay.' To read the 'Lay' at Melrose is one of

the delights of a lifetime. The best view is from the south-east corner of the churchyard. By the high altar Bruce's heart was interred. Here also lie the bodies of the brave Earl Douglas, hero of Otterburn, and of that other Douglas, the 'dark knight of Liddesdale,' a prominent figure in Border story. There, too, is the traditional grave of 'the wondrous Wizard,' Michael Scot, from whose cold dead hand Deloraine snatched the Book of Might. And many another — monarch and monk, priest and warrior, Border laird and lady—are at rest under these time-worn canopies. How interesting and touching to follow the inscriptions around the walls, and the numerous chaste carvings on 'pillar and arch and lintel high.' Two epitaphs outside call for attention, both connected with Scott. One, which he was fond of repeating—it is surely one of the most pregnant in epitaphian literature—runs :

'The earth goeth on the earth,
Glist'ring like gold;
The earth goes to the earth
Sooner than it wold;
The earth builds on the earth
Castles and towers;
The earth says to the earth,
"All shall be ours."'

The other, his own simple and sincere words, covering the grave of honest Tom Purdie:

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE
OF
THE FAITHFUL
AND ATTACHED SERVICES
OF
TWENTY-TWO YEARS,
AND IN SORROW
FOR THE LOSS OF A HUMBLE
BUT SINCERE FRIEND,
THIS STONE WAS ERECTED
BY
SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.,
OF ABBOTSFORD.

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HERE LIES THE BODY
OF
THOMAS PURDIE,
WOOD-FORESTER
AT ABBOTSFORD,
WHO DIED 29 OCTOBER,
1829,
AGED SIXTY-TWO YEARS.

'Thou hast been faithful
Over a few things,
I will make thee ruler
Over many things.'
MATTHEW, chap. xxv. v. 21st.

Close under the Abbey windows reposes all

that is mortal of the great Christian philosopher, Sir David Brewster. 'The Lord is my Light' is a not unfitting text for one who was the acknowledged master of optics in his day. Melrose Cross, in the centre of the town, with the date of its restoration (1642), is believed to be the oldest 'mercat-cross' in the Borders. From Melrose we may climb the clefted Eildons, always in vision, the supreme landmarks and sentinels of the Borderland. Here Scott loved to linger. 'I can stand on the Eildon Hill,' he said, 'and point out forty-three places famous in war and verse.' Or the romantic green-woods of the Fairy Dean may attract us, despite the 'White Lady' and her vagaries. And we may be led to explore Elwyndale and the fine open country to the head of the glen, with the three towers of the 'Monastery,' Hillslap or Glendearg—Dame Glendinning's home—Langshaw, and Colmslie.

As a rule, the visitor to Abbotsford has also Dryburgh as an objective, and ample provision has been made for his ease and comfort in getting thither. By far the most picturesque route is to follow that of Scott's funeral-day. Past Newstead first, quaintest of old-world hamlets, the supposed Roman Trimontium (from the Eildons, at whose

base it nestles). Note its wealth of sun-dials. Thence, still keeping by the serpentine Tweed, to Leaderfoot, across its old Bridge — where was Scott's last passing of the Tweed—up by Gladswood and Bemersyde Hill, pausing for a moment or two at 'Sir Walter's gate,' on the crest of the whinny road—

> 'Where fair Tweed flows round holy Melrose,
> And Eildon slopes to the plain.'

This was Scott's favourite view, and it has few equals. Did not Elihu Burritt affirm that 'it is the most magnificent view I ever saw in Scotland, excepting, perhaps, the one from Stirling Castle'? Still pursuing our way Dryburghwards, we catch a glimpse of Sandyknowe* to the east, the scene of Scott's child-years, and enshrined in some of the noblest verse of 'Marmion.' Then, dipping down through the thickest and tallest of wild-woods, and the most luxuriant of bracken and broom, we reach Dryburgh, which, if it cannot boast the

* Sandyknowe appears to be the correct designation of the tower. In most books on Scott it is generally referred to as Smailholm Tower. Smailholm, however, had another Keep of that name (now demolished) close to the village. Many old records and maps read Sandeknow, etc., and local usage confirms this. Scott himself liked to speak of Sandyknowe.

architectural glories of Melrose, far surpasses it for queenly situation. Surrounded on three sides by the Tweed, itself unseen from the Abbey precincts, and amidst a 'brotherhood of venerable trees,' in picturesqueness and seclusion it is perhaps the most charming monastic ruin in Great Britain. And here, in the lap of legends old, in the heart of the land he has made enchanted, and among his ancestral dust (for Dryburgh belonged to his forebears, and might have come to himself but for the stupidity of a spendthrift relative), Walter Scott waits the breaking light of morn. There are the inscriptions which we must read, and as reverent and worshipful pilgrims, heads are bared for this sacred duty. In 1847 a massive granite sarcophagus was placed over Scott's grave, where thousands upon thousands from all the winds that blow have treasured its simple words:

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BARONET,
DIED SEPTEMBER 21, A.D. 1832.

The other inscriptions are:

DAME CHARLOTTE MARGARET CARPENTER,
WIFE OF
SIR WALTER SCOTT OF ABBOTSFORD, BARONET,
DIED AT ABBOTSFORD, MAY 15, 1826.


Wm Smith
Dryburgh 1901.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL SIR WALTER SCOTT
OF ABBOTSFORD, SECOND BARONET,
DIED AT SEA, 8 FEBRUARY, 1847, AGED 45 YEARS.
HIS WIDOW PLACED THIS STONE OVER HIS GRAVE.

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DAME JANE JOBSON,
HIS WIDOW,
DIED AT LONDON, 19 MARCH, 1877, AGED 76 YEARS.

These tombs and inscriptions follow each other from the back to the front of the aisle. And on the right of the others is Lockhart's, at right angles, with a bronze medallion at the top :

HERE,
AT THE FEET OF SIR WALTER SCOTT,
LIE
THE MORTAL REMAINS OF
JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART,
HIS SON-IN-LAW,
BIOGRAPHER AND FRIEND.
BORN 14 JUNE, 1794.
DIED 25 NOV., 1854.

If we be wise, we shall make the return journey by Dryburgh village and Newtown. What a magnificent river the Tweed is here, looking either up or down from the Baillie Suspension Bridge, or the high red bank beyond! Surely the Eildons never backgrounded a pleasanter picture than this.

All the landscape is, in sooth, among the fairest of fair scenes, on which we shall want to feast the eye again and again, to be dreaming of Dryburgh when, it may be, over the seas and far away. On a summer's day, or at the early autumn, or even 'mid winter's mantling white, it seems to carry a perpetual charm.

Kelso, as a shrine of Scott, may not be left unvisited. Here he was schooled (partly), but better, it was at Kelso that the whole world of Romance opened out to his delighted fancy. Robert Burns is said to have gazed in wondrous and even prayerful rapture on the vision of Kelso Bridge and the Tweed, forming an almost perfect picture. And this, with the Abbey, 'like some antique Titan predominating over the dwarfs of a later world'; ruined Roxburgh, between Tweed's and Teviot's flow; and the near neighbourhood of other memory-moving spots, were just the scenes which made the best appeal to Scott, which influenced him most, and the fruits of whose inspiration we still daily reap. Jedburgh has some claim on the Scott student and for the lover of old romance. His best hours will be spent by its venerable Abbey, in the most excellent of situations (how well those old monks could gauge the


Wm Smith
Utica N.Y.

lie of the land!), girt about with well-kept gardens, overlooking the bosky banks of the Jed—a veritable poem in Nature and Art.

There is one place which should not be overlooked. To him who writes it is the sweetest and the best, entwined with memories lasting as life itself. With the story of Thomas of Ercildoune he first heard that of Sir Walter Scott. Under the weird shadow of the Rhymer's Tower, other names fell upon his ear—Ashestiel, Abbotsford, 'Marmion,' 'Waverley.' Much has been since then! But home and the days of youth are never forgotten. One hears still in memory the music of the Leader. Across the years comes there again and again a sweet old-time fragrance of yellow broom from Cowdenknowes.

# INDEX

THE END

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