

**ANCIENT SPANISH BALLADS  
HISTORICAL AND ROMANTIC,  
A NEW REVISED EDITION, WITH  
A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649529193

Ancient Spanish Ballads Historical and Romantic, a New Revised Edition, with a Biographical Notice by J. G. Lockhart

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**J. G. LOCKHART**

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*Richard*

ANCIENT  
SPANISH BALLADS;

HISTORICAL AND ROMANTIC.

TRANSLATED

By J. G. LOCKHART, Esq.

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BOSTON:  
WHITTEMORE, NILES, AND HALL.

MILWAUKIE: A. WHITTEMORE & CO.

1857.

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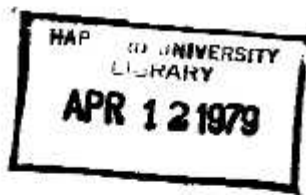
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1857

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WHITTEMORE, NILES, AND HALL,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.



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## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE.

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JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART was a younger son of a Scotch clergyman, and was born in 1794 in the parish of Cambusnethan. When he was two years old his father removed to Glasgow, and in this city he passed the remaining years of his childhood. At an early age he entered the University of Glasgow, where he at once distinguished himself by his proficiency as a scholar, and by his rich promise of future eminence. In 1809, upon the presentation of the Senatus of this venerable institution, he was entered of Baliol College, Oxford. Here he fully sustained his reputation for excellent scholarship; and in 1813 he took the highest honors awarded to young men of his standing. Before the completion of his collegiate course he visited the Continent, and spent some time in Germany in studying the language and literature of that country. Upon his return to England he resumed his connection with Baliol College, and was graduated in 1817 with the degree of Bachelor of Laws.

After leaving Oxford he was admitted to the Scotch bar; but he soon relinquished the practice of the law for the more congenial pursuit of polite literature. Upon the commencement of Blackwood's Magazine, he became one of its ablest and most frequent contributors; and it is known that he wrote a considerable part of the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*. It was from the tone



and temper of his contributions to this journal that the famous quarrel arose which resulted in the death of John Scott, a friend of Charles Lamb, and at that time editor of the London Magazine. The pages of Blackwood's Magazine were from the first disfigured by gross personalities, and by sweeping abuse of every prominent person who differed with its writers upon political and literary questions. To some of these articles Scott replied with considerable asperity through the pages of his own journal. Lockhart considered himself aggrieved by the turn which the discussion took, and challenged his antagonist. But in the correspondence relative to the proposed meeting, new elements were introduced, which changed it into a duel between Scott and a lawyer named Christie, Lockhart's second. The duel was fought by moonlight at Chalk Farm, famous as the scene of the bloodless encounter between Moore and Jeffrey, and Scott was mortally wounded. His opponent and the seconds were tried for wilful murder, and were acquitted. The whole transaction, however, must be regarded as a heavy stain upon Lockhart's character, since he was both the aggressor and the challenging party.

In 1819 he published anonymously *Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk*, a series of sketches of persons of note in Scotland, written with much spirit and ability, but marked by a strong party tone. It is said that the publication of this work led to Lockhart's intimacy with Sir Walter Scott, whose eldest daughter he married in the following year. A son by this marriage, John Hugh Lockhart, was the Hugh Little-John, Esq. to whom Sir Walter dedicated the charming *Tales of a Grandfather*. Mrs. Lockhart died in the spring of 1837, a few years after the death of her father, and several of Lockhart's children died at an early age. His married life extended over about seventeen years, and was only clouded by these frequent bereavements. In his *Life of Scott*, he has given a pleasing picture of the happy

years passed in the society of Sir Walter, and in his own family circle at Chiefswood, near Abbotsford, where he resided until his removal to London.

After his marriage Lockhart devoted himself exclusively to literary pursuits; and in 1821 he published *Valerius*, the earliest and best of his novels. The scene of this story is laid in the times of the Emperor Trajan, and its interest principally turns upon the persecutions of the Christians in that age. But it contains some brilliant sketches of Roman life and manners, and is one of the earliest in a class of novels which have since become quite numerous in our language. He next published, in rapid succession, three other novels, *Adam Blair*, *Reginald Dalton*, and *Matthew Wald*. Each of these works was strongly marked by his intellectual peculiarities, and was much read; but they were not of equal merit, and are now nearly forgotten.

About the same time he published an edition of *Don Quixote*, with a *Life of Cervantes*, and copious notes, and also collected from *Blackwood's Magazine*, and from the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, the Spanish Ballads contained in this volume. These celebrated translations appeared at a time when Spanish literature was beginning to attract much attention in England, and they soon became popular. This popularity they have ever since maintained; and their real merits are acknowledged by all competent critics. Yet it must be admitted that they are bold and spirited paraphrases, rather than exact translations. Since their publication much new light has been thrown upon Spanish literature and history by the writings of Southey, Frere, Ford, Lord Holland, Lord Mahon, and William Stirling, in England, and of Prescott and Ticknor in this country. In the admirable *History of Spanish Literature* by Mr. Ticknor, the most thorough and scholarly work of its kind which has yet appeared in any language, the reader will find much curious information in regard to the old ballad literature of Spain, and

some excellent translations. But notwithstanding the greater familiarity with Spanish literature now common, Lockhart's Spanish Ballads must continue to hold a high place among similar productions; and it has been judiciously remarked, that they will preserve his name longer than any of his original productions.

Two years after the publication of the Ballads he published a *Life of Burns*. Though the researches of subsequent biographers have brought to light some new facts in regard to the poet's personal history, this *Life* is one of the best biographies of him which we possess, and is written in a pleasing and graceful style. These different works had already given Lockhart an extended reputation, and not long after the withdrawal of Gifford, the first editor of the *Quarterly Review*, he was appointed to the editorial charge of that journal, upon the recommendation of Sir Walter Scott. This office he continued to hold for more than a quarter of a century, until he was compelled to resign it in 1853, in consequence of failing health. During the whole of this period his editorial duties were discharged with signal ability, and the *Review* maintained a high character, notwithstanding the occasional virulence of its tone, and the gross injustice of some of its literary judgments. Upon his appointment as editor of the *Quarterly Review*, Lockhart removed to London; and here he resided for the greater part of the time until his death.

In 1829 he published a second biographical work, a *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte*, in two small volumes, which had a considerable popularity at the time, and was reprinted in this country. This was followed, in 1836, by the first volume of his *Life of Sir Walter Scott*; and the whole work, extending to seven volumes, was completed within the next two years. The *Life of Scott* is the most elaborate and best known of Lockhart's original works, and deservedly ranks among the most successful biographies in our language. It exhibits, indeed, a characteristic