

**DE MOWBRAY, A LEGEND
OF PENWORTHAM, AND
OTHER POEMS**

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De Mowbray, a legend of Penwortham, and other poems by James Flockhart

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JAMES FLOCKHART

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A
Legend of Penwortham :

AND
OTHER POEMS.

BY
JAMES FLOCKHART.



" For from thee breathes the odour of a nurse
Whose sweetness warms my soul and dims my eyes :
And in thy mystic leaves of moss and shade
I read a tale to which my heart replies
In voiceless throbbing and devoted sighs ;
Death's darkest agony and mercy's claim,
And love's best words of grief are written in thy dyes."
SONNET TO THE PASSION FLOWER.



LONDON :
THOMAS BOSWORTH, 215, REGENT STREET.
1854.

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INTRODUCTION.

I LOVE the nooks and corners of Old England ! I have been a wanderer upon the earth, and my life has been strangely chequered ; still my heart warms when I behold the bright and sunny spots of my native land. The village church with its ivied tower, the ruined abbey and baronial hall, the woodland glen and forest glade, have each a peculiar beauty, which is only to be found in English scenery. Under the influence of this feeling I have often rambled out of my way to

visit an old church, or survey the mouldering remains of some ancient minster.

During these excursive visits I have been in the habit of dotting down my observations and thoughts on the passing scene, occasionally peopling it with beings of my own creating.

It was on one of these occasions, when I visited Lancashire, that the following pages were written.

While I resided in Preston I was much struck with the beauty of its environs. It mattered little whither I bent my steps, I perceived in every direction that Nature had bestowed her gifts with a lavish hand. The botanist, geologist, antiquary, and general lover of the picturesque were alike indebted to her bounty.

During my desultory rambles on the banks of the Ribble, I have often gazed with delight on the various picturesque points of view in the sur-

rounding scenery as I watched the river wind its serpentine way through the broad and peaceful valley. When the mind becomes predisposed to admire the beautiful, it requires but little stretch of the imagination to clothe the objects before us with romantic incidents, and give to

————— “ Airy nothingness
A local habitation and a name.”

The following legend is of this description, being a mere creation of the fancy—in short, a poet's dream. One of my greatest delights was to watch during the sunset of a summer's evening the picturesque old Church of Penwortham casting its lengthening shadows upon the calm still waters. It was only needful to find an old castle or baronial dwelling, a priory or abbey, and some other necessary adjuncts to weave a tale of interest or mystery; and it was not long before my wants were satisfied.

I found, after a little research, that a castle formerly stood to the north of the church, on what is now called the "castle hill." I am told that some remains of it, such as fragments of broken arches and walls, existed sixty years ago; be that as it may, not a vestige is at present left, but, like the owners, it has floated down the stream of time, and left

"No wreck behind."

It is unknown whether it was built by the Britons, Romans, or Saxons: one thing, however, is certain, Edward the Confessor possessed the Barony and Castle of Penwortham, so that its high antiquity is unquestionable. William the Conqueror afterwards bestowed it on one of his favourites, Roger de Busli, who probably resided there.

Soon after the Conquest some monks from Evesham, in Worcestershire, founded a Priory