

**METRICAL LEGENDS
OF
NORTHUMBERLAND**

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Metrical Legends of Northumberland by James Service

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JAMES SERVICE

**METRICAL LEGENDS
OF
NORTHUMBERLAND**

METRICAL
LEGENDS
OF
Northumberland :

CONTAINING THE
TRADITIONS OF DUNSTANBOROUGH CASTLE,
And other Poetical Romances.

WITH NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

By **JAMES SERVICE.**

" Ah! happy he who thus, in magic themes,
" O'er worlds bewitch'd in early rapture dreams;
" Where wild enchantment waves her potent wand,
" And Fancy's beauties fill her fairy land."

Crasse.
papa



ALNWICK:
PRINTED AND SOLD BY W. DAVISON.
TO BE HAD OF ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1834.

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SIR GUY, THE SEEKER;

A LEGENDARY TALE.

—
BY M. G. LEWIS.

—
**INSCRIBED TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE EARL GREY.**

“Io son l'Occasione, a pochi nota.
Dietro del capo ogni capel m'e tolto,
Onde in van s'affatica un, se gli avviene,
Ch' io l'abbia trapassato, o' s'io mi volto.—
—Dimmi; chi e' colei, che teco viene?—
—“E' Penitenza! e pero, nota e intende,
Chi non sa prender me, costei ritiene.”—

MACHIAVEL.

Sir Guy, the Seeker,

Is founded upon a tradition current in Northumberland.—Indeed, an adventure nearly similar to Sir Guy's, is said to have taken place in various parts of Great Britain, particularly on the Pentland Hills in Scotland, (where the prisoners are supposed to be King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table), and in Lancashire, where an ale-house near Chorley still exhibits the sign of a Sir John Stanley following an old man with a torch, while his horse starts back in terror at the objects, which are discovered through two immense iron gates—the ale-house is known by the name of the "Iron Gates," which are supposed to protect the entrance of an enchanted cavern in the neighbourhood. The female captive, I believe, is peculiar to Dunstanborough Castle; and certain shining stones, which are occasionally found in its neighbourhood, and which are called "Dunstanborough Diamonds," are supposed, by the peasants, to form part of that immense treasure, with which the Lady will reward her Deliverer.—In Wallis's "History of the Antiquities of Northumberland," the castle is described as follows:—"It stands on an eminence of several acres, sloping gently to the sea, and on the north and north-west edged with precipices in the form of a crescent: by the western termination of which are three natural stone pyramids of a considerable height, and by the eastern one an opening in the rocks made by the sea, under a frightful precipice, called Rumble Churn, from the breaking of the waves in tempestuous weather and high seas. Above this is the main entrance, and by it the ruin of the chapel: at the south-west corner is the draw-well, partly filled up. It is built with rag and whinstone."

This Romance was written during my residence in the castle's neighbourhood at Howick, the seat of the present Earl Grey; to whose ancestor, Sir William Grey, Dunstanborough Castle was granted by James the First. It is now the property of the Earl of Tankerville.

SIR GUY, THE SEEKER.

LIKE those in the head of a man just dead
Are his eyes, and his beard's like snow ;
But when here he came, his glance was a flame,
And his locks seemed the plumes of the crow.

Since then are o'er forty summers and more ;
Yet he still near the castle remains,
And pines for a sight of that lady bright,
Who wears the wizard's chains.

Nor sun nor snow from the ruins to go
Can force that aged wight ;
And still the pile, hall, chapel, and aisle,
He searches day and night :

But find can he ne'er the winding stair,
Which he past that beauty to see,
Whom spells enthrall in the haunted hall,
Where none but *once* may be.

That once regret will not let him forget!—
'Twas night, and pelting showers
Did patter and splash, when the lightning's flash
Showed Dunstanburgh's grey towers.

Raised high on a mound that castle frowned
In ruined pagean-trie ;
And where to the north did rocks jut forth,
Its towers hung o'er the sea.

Proud they stood, and darkened the flood ;
For the cliffs were so rugged and steep,
Had a plummet been dropt from their summit,
unstopped
That plummet had reached the deep.

Nor flower there grew ; nor tree e'er drew
Its nurture from that ground,
Save a lonely yew, whose branches threw
Their baleful shade around.

Loud was the roar on that sounding shore ;
Yet still could the Knight discern,
Louder than all, the swell and the fall
Of the bellowing Rumble Churn !

With strange turmoil did it bubble and boil,
And echo from place to place ;
So strong was its dash, and so high did it splash,
That it washed the castle's base :