

**AN ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF  
JAMES BEATTIE: LL.D.  
PROFESSOR OF MORAL  
PHILOSOPHY AND LOGIC,  
ABERDEEN**

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An Account of the Life of James Beattie: LL.D. Professor of Moral Philosophy and Logic,  
Aberdeen by Alexander Bower

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**ALEXANDER BOWER**

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PROFESSOR OF MORAL  
PHILOSOPHY AND  
LOGIC, ABERDEEN**



AN  
ACCOUNT  
OF  
THE LIFE  
OF  
JAMES BEATTIE, LL.D.

PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY AND LOGIC,  
ABERDEEN.

IN WHICH ARE OCCASIONALLY GIVEN  
CHARACTERS OF THE PRINCIPAL LITERARY MEN,

AND A SKETCH OF  
THE STATE OF LITERATURE IN SCOTLAND  
DURING THE LAST CENTURY.

*Some Poems, not generally known to be Dr. Beattie's, are  
also introduced in the course of the Narrative.*

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BY ALEXANDER BOWER.

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LONDON:

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1804.





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Bower

TO

ROSS THOMPSON, ESQ.

OF LAURENCETOWN, COUNTY OF DOWN,

IRELAND :

THIS LIFE OF DR. BEATTIE,

IN TESTIMONY OF REAL ESTEEM AND SINCERE

GRATITUDE,

*is respectfully inscribed,*

*By his most obliged*

*humble Servant,*

ALEX. BOWER.

Aberdeen,  
24th January 1804.

THE  
L I F E  
OF  
DR. BEATTIE, &c.

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SECTION I.

*Birth of Dr. Beattie, and the History of  
his Education till the Commencement of  
his Academical Studies.*

**J**AMES Beattie, LL.D. was born on the 5th of November, in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty-five. The parish of Laurencekirk, in the county of Kincardine, in Scotland, has the honour of enrolling his name among those of several other literary characters, which that remote part of the island has produced.

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His ancestors had resided there for a considerable period. The Beatties or Beatons, however, came originally from the western isles; upon what occasion, or at what precise time, cannot be exactly ascertained. His father, James Beattie, followed the honourable profession of a farmer. His mother's name was Jean Watson.

Dr. Beattie's father was a man of very considerable abilities—of the strictest probity—exact in taking an account of the manner wherein he spent his time; and at his leisure hours he cultivated the Muses. A journal kept by him, as well as some specimens of his poetry, are still in the possession of his descendants. This last circumstance is the more worthy of being noticed, as it proves that Dr. Beattie derived his poetical turn from his father.

The subject of this memoir was deprived of his father at a very tender age; he was then only seven years old. An event of this kind is always accompanied

with serious consequences, in whatever situation the sufferer may be placed; such misfortunes, however, are felt more severely by some ranks in society than by others. Those who are in circumstances, not sufficiently destitute to excite the commiseration of the public, are generally left to their own unassisted exertions; and in this situation was the family of Mrs. Beattie. The hopes of the widow, and her helpless offspring, were immediately fixed upon the senior, and only brother of the Doctor. In him they were not disappointed. David Beattie, at the time of his father's death, was eighteen years old; and as it was not then the custom, in Scotland, to initiate boys so early into the knowledge of the learned languages, as has of late become fashionable, he was at that age at school prosecuting his studies. His father, in consequence of the promising talents which he discovered, had resolved to send him to the University; but a premature death de-

prived him of this advantage, and imperiously called upon him to relinquish such pursuits, and to devote his time and abilities to the support of his mother's family. This duty, for a long series of years, he discharged with assiduity and affection; and whatever pleasure, or instruction, the public have derived from Dr. Beattie's writings, they ought to consider themselves as highly indebted for it to the fostering, generous, and, I may say, parental care of his elder brother.

Of a character so interesting one would wish to be acquainted with particulars, which the hand of time has now consigned to oblivion. It may not be improper, however, to add that after living to a good old age (nearly fourscore years) his good sense, his general knowledge, and the superiority of his powers, were universally acknowledged, because felt by those who had the honour of his acquaintance.

In his early years Dr. Beattie was of a