

**THE PIKE COUNTY
BALLADS**

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The Pike County Ballads by John Hay

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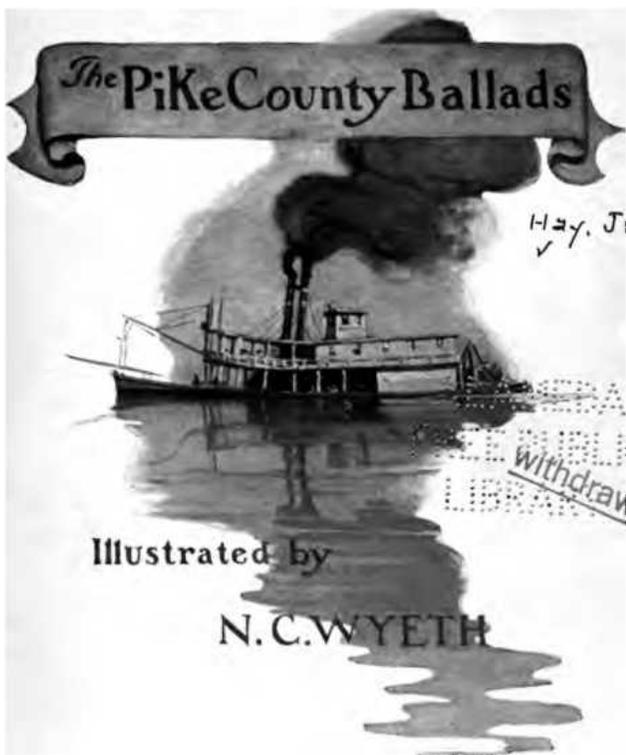
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JOHN HAY

**THE PIKE COUNTY
BALLADS**

1891



Illustrated by

N. C. WYETH

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Illustrator's Preface

RECKING with the swaggering spirit and customs of the early river-settlements along the Mississippi, the Pike County Ballads succeed pre-eminently in contemporizing the reader with those remote days. Living fragments lifted bodily and placed beneath our very eyes!

We hear the creak of wagons over the prairie roads; the lurch and strain of the stage-coach in the dark, the crack of the whip, and men's voices.

We are made to know that the sun flames upon the broad bosom of the Mississippi, and that the white, wheezing river-boats are gleaming on its surface, ever trailing their long waving banners of wood-smoke.

We hear the din of a fight in "Taggart's Hall"; we can smell the rum and tobacco, and note the glint of a quickly moving "Derringer" or the broad flash of a Bowie knife. We sense infinitely of these things.

ILLUSTRATOR'S PREFACE

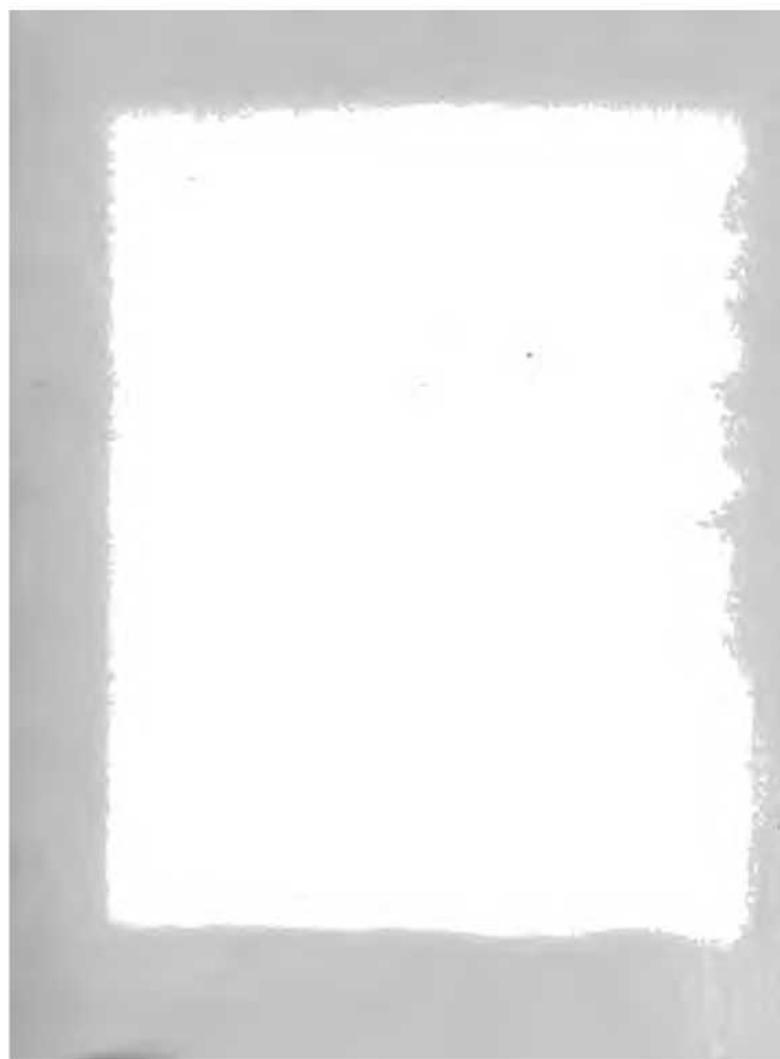
And I have endeavored here to add my mite to these already potent lines; to lift the curtain intermittently, to draw the veil aside, cautiously, and look upon the unsuspecting folk of Pike County.

N. C. WYETH.

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 1903

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Jim Bludso