

# **HUGH MILLER; A CRITICAL STUDY**

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Hugh Miller; a critical study by W. M. Mackenzie

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**W. M. MACKENZIE**

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# HUGH MILLER

A CRITICAL STUDY

BY

W. M. MACKENZIE

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**HUGH MILLER**





## CHAPTER I

### EARLY LIFE AND TRAINING

LIFE in Scotland a hundred years ago was less centralised and more deliberate than it is to-day. The ferment and activities of religious strifes and protestations had subsided: there was, for the time, a calm ere acute internal conflict broke out again, partly on the old but predominantly along new lines. As the ecclesiastical obsession weakened, Scotland had blossomed out into literary and philosophic splendour. Edinburgh was still, in a representative as well as a departmental sense, the capital. The smaller towns had not yet sunk to the position of supply-

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agencies for the exhausting demands of great industrial centres. Most of them nourished each a culture-life of its own, and possessed something more than a merely geographical individuality.

In particular, thus flourished Cromarty at the tip of that almost insular promontory dividing the Beaully and Cromarty Firths. Its population—about 1500—was small, but, so far, unsifted. Highland roads being still few and utterly bad, and its harbour safe and extensive, the port was a natural centre for the distribution of goods to adjoining districts. It had a hempen factory whose business with the more enterprising dependents migrated later, in the “killing time” of local industries, to the neighbourhood of Dundee. There was a valuable provision trade: the herring-fishery was rising to the commercial