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As son-in-law and literary executor to Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832), John Gibson Lockhart (1794–1854) was uniquely placed to produce a definitive biography of the great poet and novelist. First published in 1837–8, shortly after Scott's death, this celebrated seven-volume work is based on personal memories, correspondence, and Scott's autobiographical sketches. Wide-ranging in his purview, Lockhart is also detailed in his descriptions: the *Aberdeen Journal* of the day observed that the volumes trace Scott's life and literary efforts with 'the most minute distinctness'. Volume 1 opens with Scott's brief autobiography, written in 1808 and revised in 1825. Lockhart's biography proper begins with Scott's birth in 1771, provides an account of his education, and concludes here with his first contributions to the *Edinburgh Review* in 1804.

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# Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott

VOLUME 1

JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART



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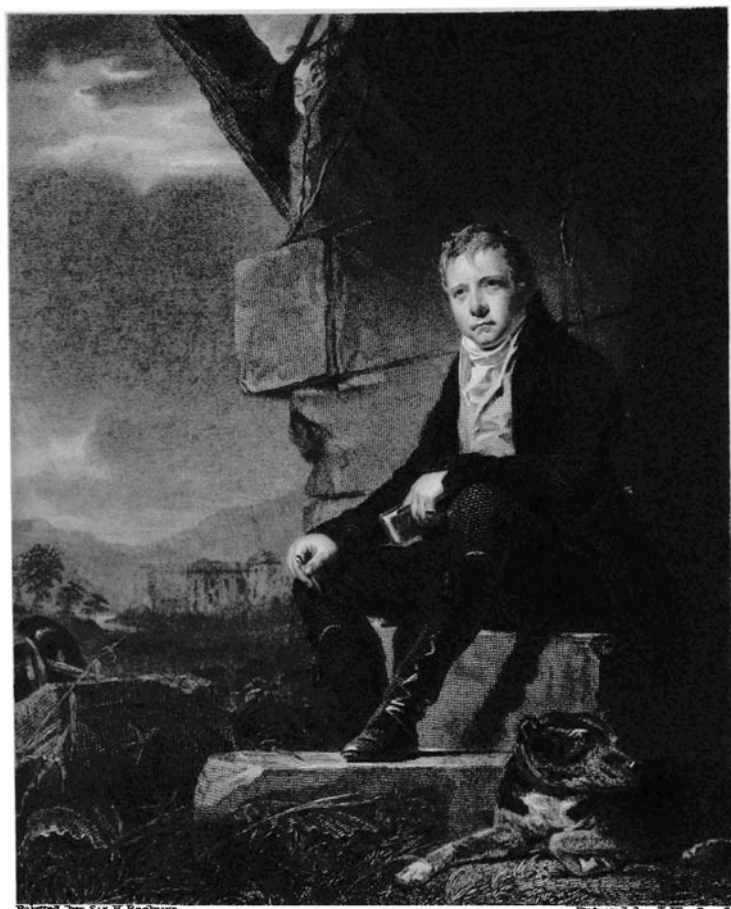
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OF  
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JOHN BACON SAUREY MORRITT,

OF ROKEBY PARK, ESQ.,

THESE MEMOIRS OF HIS FRIEND

ARE RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY

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**ERRATA.**

Page 250, line fifth from foot, *for black, read stock.*

Page 261, line seventh from top, *for attended, read alluded.*

## P R E F A C E.

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IN obedience to the instructions of Sir Walter Scott's last will, I had made some progress in a narrative of his personal history, before there was discovered, in an old cabinet at Abbotsford, an autobiographical fragment, composed by him in 1808—shortly after the publication of his *Marmion*.

This fortunate accident rendered it necessary that I should altogether remodel the work which I had commenced. The first Chapter of the following Memoirs consists of the *Ashestiel* fragment; which gives a clear outline of his early life down to the period of his call to the bar—July, 1792. All the notes appended to this Chapter are also by himself. They are in a handwriting very different from the text, and seem, from various circumstances, to have been added in 1826.

It appeared to me, however, that the author's modesty had prevented him from telling the story of his

youth with that fulness of detail which would now satisfy the public. I have therefore recast my own collections as to the period in question, and presented the substance of them, in five succeeding chapters, as *illustrations* of his too brief autobiography. This procedure has been attended with many obvious disadvantages; but I greatly preferred it to printing the precious fragment in an Appendix.

I foresee that some readers may be apt to accuse me of trenching upon delicacy in certain details of the sixth and seventh chapters in this volume. Though the circumstances there treated of had no trivial influence on Sir Walter Scott's history and character, I should have been inclined, for many reasons, to omit them; but the choice was, in fact, not left to me,—for they had been mentioned, and misrepresented, in various preceding sketches of the Life which I had undertaken to illustrate. Such being the case, I considered it as my duty to tell the story truly and intelligibly: but I trust I have avoided any unnecessary disclosures; and, after all, there was nothing to disclose that could have attached any sort of blame to any of the parties concerned.

For the copious materials which the friends of Sir Walter have placed at my disposal, I feel just gratitude.

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Several of them are named in the course of the present volume ; but I must take this opportunity of expressing my sense of the deep obligations under which I have been laid by the frank communications, in particular, of William Clerk, Esq., of Eldin,—John Irving, Esq., W.S.,—Sir Adam Ferguson,—James Skene, Esq., of Rubislaw,—Patrick Murray, Esq., of Simprim,—J. B. S. Morritt, Esq., of Rokeby,—William Wordsworth, Esq.,—Robert Southey, Esq., Poet Laureate,—Samuel Rogers, Esq.,—William Stewart Rose, Esq.,—Sir Alexander Wood,—the Right Hon. the Lord Chief Commissioner Adam,—the Right Hon. Sir William Rae, Bart.,—the late Right Hon. Sir William Knighton, Bart.,—the Right Hon. J. W. Croker,—Lord Jeffrey,—Sir Henry Halford, Bart., G. C. H.,—the late Major-General Sir John Malcolm, G. C. B.,—Sir Francis Chantrey, R. A.,—Sir David Wilkie, R. A.,—Thomas Thomson, Esq., P. C. S.,—Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq.—William Scott, of Raeburn, Esq.,—John Scott, of Gala, Esq.,—Alexander Pringle, of Whytbank, Esq., M.P.,—John Swinton, of Inverleith-place, Esq.,—John Richardson, Esq., of Fludyer Street,—John Murray, Esq., of Albemarle Street,—Robert Bruce, Esq., Sheriff of Argyle,—Robert Ferguson, Esq., M.D.,—G. P. R. James, Esq.,—William Laidlaw, Esq.,—Robert Cadell, Esq.,—John Elliot Shortreed, Esq.,—Allan Cunningham, Esq.,—Claud Russell, Esq.,—James Clark-

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son, Esq., of Melrose,—the late James Ballantyne, Esq.,—Joseph Train, Esq.,—Adolphus Ross, Esq., M. D.,—William Allan, Esq., R. A.,—Charles Dumergue, Esq.,—Stephen Nicholson Barber, Esq.,—James Slade, Esq.,—Mrs Joanna Baillie,—Mrs George Ellis,—Mrs Thomas Scott,—Mrs Charles Carpenter,—Miss Russell of Ashestiel,—Mrs Sarah Nicholson,—Mrs Duncan, Mertoun-Manse,—the Right Hon. the Lady Polwarth,—and her sons, Henry, Master of Polwarth, the Hon. and Rev. William, and the Hon. Francis Scott.

I beg leave to acknowledge with equal thankfulness the courtesy of the Rev. Dr Harwood, Thomas White, Esq., Mrs Thomson, and the Rev. Richard Garnett, all of Lichfield, and the Rev. Thomas Henry White, of Glasgow, in forwarding to me Sir Walter Scott's early letters to Miss Seward: that of the Lord Seaford, in intrusting me with those addressed to his late cousin, George Ellis, Esq.: and the kind readiness with which whatever papers in their possession could be serviceable to my undertaking were supplied by the Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch, and the Lord Montagu;—the Countess-Duchess of Sutherland, and the Lord Francis Egerton;—the Lord Viscount Sidmouth,—the Lord Bishop of Llandaff,—the Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel, Bart.,—the Lady Louisa Stuart,—the Hon. Mrs Warrender, and the Hon. Catharine Arden,—Lady Davy,

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J. G. LOCKHART.

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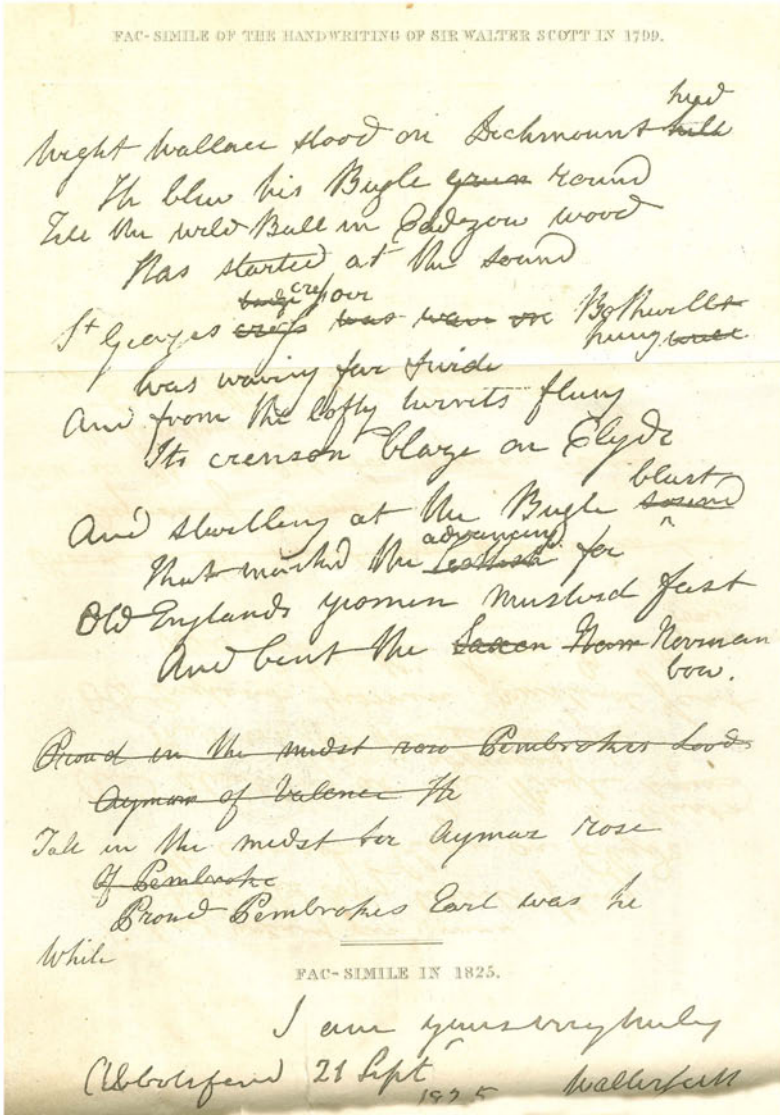
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