



Tales of a Grandfather

Sir Walter Scott

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Tales of a Grandfather is a series of books on the history of Scotland, written by Sir Walter Scott beginning around 1827, and published by A & C Black. Scott also wrote books about French history in the same series. Sir Walter Scott, 1st Baronet, FRSE (1771 – 1832) was a Scottish historical novelist, playwright and poet with many contemporary readers in Europe, Australia, and North America. Scott's novels and poetry are still read, and many of his works remain classics of both English-language literature and of Scottish literature. Famous titles include *Ivanhoe*, *Rob Roy*, *Old Mortality*, *The Lady of the Lake*, *Waverley*, *The Heart of Midlothian* and *The Bride of Lammermoor*. Scott's fame grew as his explorations and interpretations of Scottish history and society captured popular imagination. Impressed by this, the Prince Regent (the future George IV) gave Scott permission to search for the fabled but long-lost Crown Jewels ("Honours of Scotland"), which during the years of the Protectorate under Cromwell had been squirrelled away and had last been used to crown Charles II. In 1818, Scott and a small team of military men unearthed the honours from the depths of Edinburgh Castle. A grateful Prince Regent granted Scott the title of baronet, and in March 1820 he received the baronetcy in London, becoming Sir Walter Scott, 1st Baronet. After George's accession to the throne, the city council of Edinburgh invited Scott, at the King's behest, to stage-manage the 1822 visit of King George IV to Scotland. With only three weeks for planning and execution, Scott created a spectacular and comprehensive pageant, designed not only to impress the King, but also in some way to heal the rifts that had destabilised Scots society. He used the event to contribute to the drawing of a line under an old world that pitched his homeland into regular bouts of bloody strife. He, along with his "production team", mounted what in modern days could be termed a PR event, in which the King was dressed in tartan, and was greeted by his people, many of whom were also dressed in similar tartan ceremonial dress. This form of dress, proscribed after the 1745 rebellion against the English, became one of the seminal, potent and ubiquitous symbols of Scottish identity.

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