



Marmion

Sir Walter Scott

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Marmion is an epic poem by Walter Scott about the Battle of Flodden (1513). It was published in 1808. The poem tells how Lord Marmion, a favourite of Henry VIII of England, lusts for Clara de Clare, a rich woman. He and his mistress, Constance De Beverley, forge a letter implicating Clara's fiancé, Sir Ralph De Wilton, in treason. Constance, a dishonest nun, hopes that her aid will restore her to favour with Marmion. When De Wilton loses the duel he claims in order to defend his honour against Marmion, he is obliged to go into exile. Clara retires to a convent rather than risk Marmion's attentions. Scott started writing Marmion, his second major work, in November 1806. When Archibald Constable, the publisher, learnt of this, he offered a thousand guineas for the copyright unseen. William Miller and John Murray each agreed to take a 25% share in the project. Murray observed: "We both view it as honourable, profitable, and glorious to be concerned in the publication of a new poem by Walter Scott." Scott later said that he thoroughly enjoyed writing the work. He told his son-in-law, Lockhart, "Oh, man, I had many a grand gallop among these braes when I was thinking of Marmion."

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