

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832)

4 *Cadyow Castle*

Addressed to the Right Honourable Lady Anne Hamilton.

When princely Hamilton's abode  
Ennobled Cadyow's Gothic towers,  
The song went round, the goblet flow'd,  
And revel sped the laughing hours.

Then, thrilling to the harp's gay sound, 5  
So sweetly rung each vaulted wall,  
And echoed light the dancer's bound,  
As mirth and music cheer'd the hall.

But Cadyow's towers, in ruins laid,  
And vaults, by ivy mantled o'er, 10  
Thrill to the music of the shade,  
Or echo Evan's hoarser roar.

Yet still, of Cadyow's faded fame,  
You bid me tell a minstrel tale,  
And tune my harp, of Border frame, 15  
On the wild banks of Evandale.

For thou, from scenes of courtly pride,  
From pleasure's lighter scenes, canst turn,  
To draw oblivion's pall aside,  
And mark the long-forgotten urn. 20

Then, noble maid! at thy command,  
Again the crumbled halls shall rise;  
Lo! as on Evan's banks we stand,  
The past returns — the present flies.

Where, with the rock's wood cover'd side, 25  
Were blended late the ruins green,  
Rise turrets in fantastic pride,  
And feudal banners flaunt between:

Where the rude torrent's brawling course  
Was shagg'd with thorn and tangling sloe, 30  
The ashler buttress braves its force,  
And ramparts frown in battled row.

'Tis night — the shade of keep and spire  
Obscurely dance on Evan's stream;  
And on the wave the warder's fire 35  
Is chequering the moonlight beam.

Fades slow their light; the east is grey;  
The weary warder leaves his tower;  
Steeds snort; uncoupled stag-hounds bay,  
And merry hunters quit the bower. 40

The drawbridge falls — they hurry out —  
Clatters each plank and swinging chain,  
As, dashing o'er, the jovial rout  
Urge the shy steed, and slack the rein.

First of his troop, the Chief rode on; 45  
His shouting merry-men throng behind;  
The steed of princely Hamilton  
Was fleeter than the mountain wind.

From the thick copse the roebucks bound,  
The startled red-deer scuds the plain, 50  
For the hoarse bugle's warrior-sound  
Has roused their mountain haunts again.

Through the huge oaks of Evandale,  
Whose limbs a thousand years have worn,  
What sullen roar comes down the gale, 55

And drowns the hunter's pealing horn?

Mightiest of all the beasts of chase,  
That roam in woody Caledon,  
Crashing the forest in his race,  
The Mountain Bull comes thundering on. 60

Fierce, on the hunter's quiver'd band,  
He rolls his eyes of swarthy glow,  
Spurns, with black hoof and horn, the sand,  
And tosses high his mane of snow.

Aim'd well, the Chieftain's lance has flown; 65  
Struggling in blood the savage lies;  
His roar is sunk in hollow groan —  
Sound, merry huntsmen! sound the *pryse!*

'Tis noon — against the knotted oak 70  
The hunters rest the idle spear;  
Curls through the trees the slender smoke,  
Where yeomen dight the woodland cheer.

Proudly the Chieftain mark'd his clan,  
On greenwood lap all careless thrown,  
Yet miss'd his eye the boldest man 75  
That bore the name of Hamilton.

“Why fills not Bothwellhaugh his place,  
Still wont our weal and woe to share?  
Why comes he not our sport to grace?  
Why shares he not our hunter's fare?” — 80

Stern Claud replied, with darkening face,  
(Grey Paisley's haughty lord was he,)  
“At merry feast, or buxom chase,  
No more the warrior wilt thou see.

“Few suns have set since Woodhouselee 85

Saw Bothwellhaugh's bright goblets foam,  
When to his hearths, in social glee,  
The war-worn soldier turn'd him home.

"There, wan from her maternal throes,  
His Margaret, beautiful and mild, 90  
Sate in her bower, a pallid rose,  
And peaceful nursed her new-born child.

"O change accursed! past are those days;  
False Murray's ruthless spoilers came,  
And, for the hearth's domestic blaze, 95  
Ascends destruction's volumed flame.

"What sheeted phantom wanders wild,  
Where mountain Eske through woodland flows,  
Her arms enfold a shadowy child —  
Oh! is it she, the pallid rose? 100

"The wilder'd traveller sees her glide,  
And hears her feeble voice with awe —  
'Revenge,' she cries, 'on Murray's pride!  
And woe for injured Bothwellhaugh!'"

He ceased — and cries of rage and grief 105  
Burst mingling from the kindred band,  
And half arose the kindling Chief,  
And half unsheathed his Arran brand.

But who, o'er bush, o'er stream and rock,  
Rides headlong, with resistless speed, 110  
Whose bloody poniard's frantic stroke  
Drives to the leap his jaded steed;

Whose cheek is pale, whose eyeballs glare,  
As one some vision'd sight that saw,  
Whose hands are bloody, loose his hair? — 115  
'Tis he! 'tis he! 'tis Bothwellhaugh.



And haggard Lindesay's iron eye,  
That saw fair Mary weep in vain.

“Mid pennon'd spears, a steely grove,  
Proud Murray's plumage floated high; 150  
Scarce could his trampling charger move,  
So close the minions crowded nigh.

“From the raised vizor's shade, his eye,  
Dark-rolling, glanced the ranks along,  
And his steel truncheon, waved on high, 155  
Seem'd marshalling the iron throng.

“But yet his sadden'd brow confess'd  
A passing shade of doubt and awe;  
Some fiend was whispering in his breast;  
‘Beware of injured Bothwellhaugh!’ 160

“The death-shot parts — the charger springs —  
Wild rises tumult's startling roar!  
And Murray's plummy helmet rings —  
— Rings on the ground, to rise no more.

“What joy the raptured youth can feel, 165  
To hear her love the loved one tell —  
Or he, who broaches on his steel  
The wolf, by whom his infant fell!

“But dearer to my injured eye  
To see in dust proud Murray roll; 170  
And mine was ten times trebled joy,  
To hear him groan his felon soul.

“My Margaret's spectre glided near;  
With pride her bleeding victim saw;  
And shriek'd in his death-deafen'd ear, 175  
‘Remember injured Bothwellhaugh!’

“Then speed thee, noble Chatlerault!  
Spread to the wind thy banner’d tree!  
Each warrior bend his Clydesdale bow! —  
Murray is fall’n, and Scotland free!” 180

Vaults every warrior to his steed;  
Loud bugles join their wild acclaim —  
“Murray is fall’n, and Scotland freed!  
Couch, Arran! couch thy spear of flame!”

But, see! the minstrel vision fails — 185  
The glimmering spears are seen no more;  
The shouts of war die on the gales,  
Or sink in Evan’s lonely roar.

For the loud bugle, pealing high,  
The blackbird whistles down the vale, 190  
And sunk in ivied ruins lie  
The banner’d towers of Evandale.

For Chiefs, intent on bloody deed,  
And Vengeance shouting o’er the slain,  
Lo! high-born Beauty rules the steed, 195  
Or graceful guides the silken rein.

And long may Peace and Pleasure own  
The maids who list the minstrel’s tale;  
Nor e’er a ruder guest be known  
On the fair banks of Evandale! 200

*1802-3*

(From *The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott*. Ed. J. G. Lockhart. Edinburgh: Robert Cadell, 1841)