

Demonology and Witchcraft: Letters Addressed to J. G. Lockhart, Esq.

Sir Walter Scott

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Demonology and Witchcraft: Letters Addressed to J. G. Lockhart, Esq. Sir Walter Scott Sir Walter Scott's "Demonology and Witchcraft," or "Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft" as it was originally titled, were his contribution to a series of books, published by John Murray, which appeared between the years 1829 and 1847, and formed a collection of eighty volumes known as "Murray's Family Library." The series was planned to secure a wide diffusion of good literature in cheap five-shilling volumes, and Scott's "Letters," written and published in 1830, formed one of the earlier books in the collection. The book attempts to develop broad theories on such subjects as the prevalence of belief in witchcraft in the Middle Ages. Scott was far more accomplished in dealing with particular instances of occult history - such as his account of demonology in France and in Sweden and his assessment of Joan of Arc. Moreover, his intimate knowledge of early Scottish literature gives a singular importance to chapters concerned with his native land, and it is interesting to find that here and there he offers something of a sidelight on his own novels (e.g., when he discusses the specters he dealt with in "Woodstock"). "Demonology and Witchcraft" is written in the form of a series of letters to the author's son-in-law.



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