

Kidnapped

Retold by Pauline Francis



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Introduction

Robert Louis Stevenson was born in 1850, in Edinburgh, Scotland. After studying law at Edinburgh University, he decided to earn his living as a writer. Unfortunately, he became ill with tuberculosis, a disease of the lungs, and he had to travel to warmer countries to improve his health.

In 1880, Robert Louis Stevenson married Fanny Osborne and a year later, he wrote *Treasure Island* for her young son. In 1886, *Kidnapped* was published. Both these books were very popular, but they did not make much money. So, in 1886, Stevenson wrote *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. This story made Stevenson well known, and made him more money, because it was bought by adults.

Kidnapped is a story of the kidnapping of David Balfour, a young boy who is cheated out of his inheritance and wrongly accused of murder. It is set in 1751, five years after the Jacobites (led by Bonnie Prince Charlie, the son of James II) were defeated at Culloden Moor in the north of Scotland. The Jacobites supported James II, who claimed the right to be the king of Great Britain, instead of King George. Most of the Scottish Highlanders were loyal Jacobites and had their land taken from them by King George.