

Quentin Durward



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Quentin Durward Details

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From Reader Review Quentin Durward for online ebook

Kristy says

I have to admit I was a little surprised by how engaging, exciting, and funny this historical novel by Sir Walter Scott was. This novel, written in 1823, tells the story of Quentin Durward, a wandering Scottish nobleman who goes to France to make his fortune and ends up serving in the Scottish Guard of the French King, Louis XI. Quentin is as noble and true and chivalrous as Louis is sneaky, cruel, and out for number one, but together they make a pretty good team and a very satisfying story. Also includes a damsel in distress, some pointedly two-faced religious devotions, and some pretty racist comments about the gypsies.

Esdaile says

This is an enjoyable historical romance. Scott's strength is character portrayal, where portrayal is the operative word, because he paints his colourful characters with words. They are vivid, they are larger than life. Having read several of his novels now I realise that he works according to a template of hero, damsel in distress, scheming villain, atheist and the like. However, his depiction of Charles the Bold of Burgundy and Louis XI of France known as the Spider King, is powerful and highly enjoyable. There is a fair amount of humour and much of the grotesque. Scott does not shy away from the horrors of the time without dwelling on them in any malicious manner. He interweaves fictional and historical characters, which is presumably the particular skill of the successful historical novelist.

sabisteb aka callisto says

Frankreich zur Zeit der Regierung von Louis XI (1461-1483) und Karl der Kühnen (1433-1477). Quentin Durward ist der letzte Spross einer adeligen schottischen Familie, die von einem rivalisierenden Klan ausgerottet wurde. Quentin überlebte den letzten Angriff nur knapp und durfte weiterleben unter der Bedingung, Mönch zu werden, damit die Familie Durward mit ihm endet. Das Mönchsdasein ist aber so gar nicht Quentins Berufung, er flüchtet nach Frankreich zu seinem Onkel Ludovic Lesley, Le Balafré, der als Schütze und Bodygard für Louis XI arbeitet. Zunächst zielt sich Quentin in den Dienst des Königs zu treten, der nicht den besten Ruf hat und daher würde ein Dienst für Louis XI gegen Quentins Ehrenkodex verstoßen. Durch gewisse Umstände dazu gezwungen tritt Quentin doch bei den schottischen Schützen ein und purzelt die Karriereleiter hoch, nicht ahnend, dass der König seine ehrenhafte Naivität für seine Zwecke ausnutzen will, den die reiche Erbin Isabelle de Croye hat am französischen Hof um Hilfe gebeten, weil sie nicht den Mann heiraten will, denn ihr Lehensherr ihr dazu bestimmt hat. Die Lage ist gespannt, Louis XI muss Isabelle los werden, will er keinen Ärger mit Karl dem Kühnen. So beauftragt er Quentin, Isabelle zu Karls Schwager, dem Bischof von Liege zu bringen, organisiert aber gleichzeitig einen Überfall auf diese durch den Banditen captain William de la Marck, damit dieser Karl ablenkt und beschäftigt, während Louis die Bürger von Liege aufwiegelt. Die Liebe jedoch, macht ihm einen Strich durch die Rechnung.

Quentin ist 19 Jahre alt, voller Ideale, hochfahrender Ideen und unglaublich naiv. Mit seinem Gutgläubigkeit und Ehrpusseligkeit geht er einem manchmal auf die Nerven und Isabelle ist auch nicht besser. Walter Scott hat diese Geschichte sicherlich auch nicht sonderlich ernst genommen und eher mit einem Augenzwinkern geschrieben, denn er lässt in diesem Roman eine junge Frau vor den dümmlichen Ritterromanzen voller

Liebe und Ehre explizit warnen. In dieser Warnung zieht er seinen eigenen kompletten Plot einmal so richtig durch den Kakao:

"Mabel took the opportunity to read a long practical lecture to Trudchen upon the folly of reading romances, whereby the flaunting ladies of the Court were grown so bold and venturous, that, instead of applying to learn some honest housewifery, they must ride, forsooth, a-damsel erranting through the country, with no better attendant than some idle squire, debauched page, or rake belly archer from foreign parts, to the great danger of their health, the impoverishing of their substance, and the irreparable prejudice of their reputation."

Auch Quentin wird vom König darauf hingewiesen, dass die Romanzen über Palladine, die er so gerne liest unrealistisch sind und er sich diese gleich mal aus dem Kopf schlagen soll:

"I can allow thee like a youth, who hath listened to romances till he fancied himself a Paladin, to form pretty dreams for some time, but thou must not be angry at a well meaning friend, though he shake thee something roughly by the shoulders to awake thee."

Um was ging es Scott dann, wenn er die romantische Rittergeschichte selber ins Lächerliche zieht, den ganz ehrlich, das Geschichtchen ist schon eher dünn und kommt an andere Romane Scotts nicht ran, weder in der Charakterisierung seiner Figuren noch in der Komplexität des Plotts. Dieser Roman, der auch auf dem Kontinent ein Bestseller war ist nur oberflächlich eine klassische mittelalterliche Rittergeschichte, voller Ehre, Liebe, Galanterie, denn er hat einen anderen Auftrag, einen Bildungsauftrag. Ja Bildungsauftrag! Normalerweise muss ich in solchen Romanen vieles das mir unbekannt ist nachschlagen. Das erspart Scott dem Leser. Er gibt weite Exkurse in denen er die Geschichte kurz unterbricht und dem Leser erklärt, wie die tatsächliche historische Konstellation war und wo er aus dramaturgischen Gründen abgewichen ist.

Historische Personen, die als Vergleich in Dialogen erscheinen, werden in Klammern mit einem kurzen Abriss ihres Lebens versehen. Man lernt, dass "cards were invented for the amusement of an insane king" und "The Fairy Melusina [...] is closely interwoven with the legends of the Banshee and Mermaid".

Erneut kramt Scott seine Deutschkenntnisse hervor, ist dismal aber so net, diese Dialoge seinen Landsleuten zu übersetzen, was sich für deutsche Leser ein wenig lustig liest, wenn man zu deutschen Passagen die englische Übersetzung in Klammern bekommt, das klingt sehr karriert.

"Du bist ein comische man [thou art a droll fellow]," said the lanzknecht, "I swear."

Dennoch blitzt auch in diesem Roman Scotts Genialität durch. In jedem Seiner Romane findet man etwas, dass sich auf die heutige Zeit anwenden lässt und schon fast Prophetisch anmutet, so auch in diesem sonst eher durchschnittlichen Roman:

"When I reflect with what slow and limited supplies the stream of science hath hitherto descended to us, how difficult to be obtained by those most ardent in its search, how certain to be neglected by all who regard their ease; how liable to be diverted, altogether dried up, by the invasions of barbarism; can I look forward without wonder and astonishment to the lot of a succeeding generation on whom knowledge will descend like the first and second rain, uninterrupted, unabated, unbounded; fertilizing some grounds, and overflowing others; changing the whole form of social life; establishing and overthrowing religions; erecting and destroying kingdoms."

Scott sagt hier die digitale Revolution voraus und wie das für jeden verfügbare Wissen Staaten stürzen und Regierungen entmachten wird!

Witzig ist der Schluss. Ich empfand ihn zunächst als unbefriedigend. Scott äußert sich dazu persönlich, warum er diesen Schluss so gewählt hat und meint, wem der nicht passt, soll eben einen anderen schreiben:

"I will not, therefore, tell more of this matter, but will steal away from the wedding, as Ariosto from that of Angelica, leaving it to whom it may please to add farther particulars, after the fashion of their own imagination."

Fazit: Ein durchwachsener Roman. Die Geschichte an sich ist vorhersehbar, ausgelutscht und sehr platt. Die Charakterisierung der Personen kommt an andere Romane Scotts nicht heran, hier wimmelt es von Archetypen. Hier geht es eher darum etwas über die Regierungszeit von Louis XI zu lernen und dabei mit einer kleinen Liebesgeschichte unterhalten zu werden. Ein Bildungsroman, der das Genre der romantischen Rittererzählung ein wenig auf die Schippe nimmt, was den meisten Lesern auch Filmemachern jedoch entging.

Zur deutschen Kindle Ausgabe:

Sie entstammt dem Spiegel Gutenberg Projekt und ist eine alte, schreckliche, entstellende Übersetzung.

Das einführende, wichtige Vorwort des Autors fehlt.

Sämtliche erklärende Einschübe des Autors fehlen. Das Buch wurde auf die reine Rittergeschichte zurückgestutzt und hat somit mit dem Original nur noch wenig zu tun. Sie ist wohl am ehesten als gefällig gekürzte Version zu bezeichnen. Ich kann nur dringend empfehlen, nach einer gescheiterten, vollständigen Übersetzung zu suchen, oder die englische Kindle Ausgabe zu lesen.

Roman Seliverstov says

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Hend says

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Lucy says

"Aroint thee, deceitful witch! Why, this device smells rank as the toasted cheese in a rat trap. Now fie, and double fie, upon the old decoy duck!"

I quite enjoyed this my third venture into Scott (Ivanhoe and Waverley, previously) because it does have it's funny moments and the characters are somewhat more believable. He doesn't believe in using ten words when a hundred will do, though. But I might venture another....

Yana Huryn says

I really liked the book, maybe not Scott's most popular thing but surely one of the finest.

Djordje says

My rating: ★★★★★

Curtiss says

I recently watched the Hollywood movie version of *Quentin Durward* (in several Youtube installments), starring Robert Taylor, Kaye Kendall, and Robert Morley; and I decided to pick up a used hard-bound copy to read in the original literary format. Even after having read barely 70 pages of the book, including the 33-page "Introduction", I was able to affirm that for once Hollywood captured the book's droll, ironic humor, especially in the on-screen characterization of Louis XI (aka the "Spider King") as he was portrayed by Robert Morley.

I found myself chuckling aloud at several passages in the introduction alone, in which Scott spends 31 pages describing a visit to France during a decline in his fortunes and his dismay at the ensuing conversion of his neice, Christian, to Catholicism, and her subsequent enrollment in a convent, and at his fifty-year-old Aunt's marriage to a French pop-in-jay described as looking "as if one pair of half-extended compasses had been placed perpendicularly upon the top of another, while the space on which the hinges revolved quite sufficed to represent the body ... the rest was mustache, pelisse, and callico trouser."

Scott eventually got around to the point of having an introduction, where (after 30+ pages) his host's remote Scottish lineage and extensive library of illuminated works on French history became the inspiration for this story about a Scottish adventurer's exploits during the era when Louis XI's Pre-Machiavellian intrigues solidified France into a modern state while simultaneously putting the final nails in the coffins of both feudalism and the obsolescent "code of chivalry."

I finally finished the book, and it maintained its droll irony and dead-pan gallows-humor throughout! Very amusing - not at all what I had expected from Sir Walter Scott of all people.

Jo says

This novel should have been called *Louis XI*, but then no one would have read it.

I actually enjoy Sir W's flow of words, and in his depictions the medieval period is just what one would wish it to be; but as usual I ended up disappointed with the book. King Louis of France is an interesting character and he and his accomplices and opponents have absorbing dialogues, but Quentin and his lady love are just like the illustrations (by C. Bosseron Chambers) in my edition - obviously artificial and sometimes laughably posed. And there's no closure to any of the meaningful events or characters in the story. As soon as the guy gets the girl, 'nuff said, I guess.

I highly recommend envisioning the actors Rufus Sewell as King Louis

and Jason O'Mara as the Duke of Burgundy.

Patrick Fay says

Great action, good humor and a picturesque setting as Scott always delivers. But for this one, also a nice introduction to a period of French history less well known to me - the mid 15th century while the King of France was still struggling with Burgundy to weld together the modern French state. Many memorable characters from Quentin who is like a younger, Scottish D'Artagnan, the always composed, perfectly cynical Louis XI and the well-meaning but utterly rash Charles of Burgundy, down to the comic relief of Louis' mismatched pair of over-worked executioners.

Gytis Bielskus says

Šiek tiek nuspėjamas, bet įdomus ir traukiantis istorinis romanas, kuris pasakoja apie jaunojo Kventino Dervardo nuotykius XV amžiaus Prancūzijoje ir Burgundijoje. Romane pinasi tikri istoriniai vykliai ir autorius pramanai, o skaitant susidaro įspūdis, kad ši istorija iš tikro kažkada galėjo vykti...

vhatos says

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Stas Lebedenko says

Some kind of achievement for me.

Finally, read "Quentin Durward" by Walter Scott in original and expand my English vocabulary with about 50 words, that would be useful for reenactment).

Great book, definitely the good read, as it was in my childhood.

PS. Historical notes and references alongside the text are great too.

Steve R says

The title character is a typical Hero for Scott: young, ambitious, brave, adept at swordplay, of impeccable honor, hopelessly romantic and in love with a very beautiful but seemingly unattainable young lady. Set in fifteenth century France, the novel is really more about the rivalry between King Louis XI of France and Charles the Bold, the Duke of Burgundy. The main issue arising between them, which each of them use to get the better of their rival, is the marriage of Isabelle of Croye. It is in this tussle of wills that Quentin gets involved, initially as a pawn of Louis, then later, as a boon to both of them when he relates information about

a stratagem to be used by a common foe, the Boar of Ardennes, William de la Merck. Louis, Charles and William were all actual personages, and Scott lets the reader know in his notes how he has bent history to his novelistic ends. Of especial interest are the characters of Martius Galeotti, a soothsayer to Louis, who escapes the wrath of his leader for giving him seemingly bad advice in a quite remarkable manner and Hayraddin Maugrabin, a gypsy who conspires to lead the fair damsel astray but is thwarted in this attempt by the erstwhile Quentin. He eventually goes to his death (at the hands of Tristan l'Hermite, the Provost Marshal, and his two attendant executioners) totally unrepentant and consistently irreligious: a mark of Scott's willingness to understand the uniqueness of this interesting subsection of humanity. The Cardinal Balue, who meets a truly discomfiting end; the barber/advisor Oliver Dain, who is compared to a cat for his stealth and sneekiness; Quentin's uncle, Ludovic Lesly, Le Balafre (the 'scarred') who steps aside for his nephew while encountering an absolute inability to put into words what he feels; Philip de Comines, an advisor to Burgundy who, in one of the longest and most interesting chapters of the novel, advises Louis on how to approach Charles in upcoming negotiations with consummate political tact; Lady Hemeline, who is described as 'that blundering, romantic, old match-making and match-seeking idiot' by the Count de Crevecoeur, who is himself a refreshingly blunt observer of all the conflicting motivations and actions of those around him help round out this thoroughly satisfying picture of the France of the late feudal period. A masterful development of character, plot and social observation.
