



Tales of the Alhambra (with original illustrations)

Washington Irving

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Tales of the Alhambra is a collection of essays, verbal sketches, and stories by Washington Irving. The book combines description, myth and narrations of real historical events, even up through the destruction of some of the palace's towers by the French under Count Sebastiani in 1812, and the further damage caused by an earthquake in 1821. Throughout his trip, Washington filled his notebooks and journals with descriptions and observations though he did not believe his writing would ever do it justice. He wrote, "How unworthy is my scribbling of the place."

The book was instrumental in reintroducing the Alhambra to Western audiences. A plaque now marks the rooms in which Irving stayed while writing some of his book.

Alexander Pushkin's 1834 tale in verse The Tale of the Golden Cockerel is based on two chapters of Tales of the Alhambra. In turn, the Pushkin poem inspired Vladimir Belsky's libretto for the opera "The Golden Cockerel" by Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov.

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