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Tales of the Alhambra

Washington Irving

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Tales of the Alhambra

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Tales of the Alhambra Washington Irving
Washington Irving's "Tales of the Alhambra" is really two books in one. The first section chronicles Irvings 1829 visit to the crumbling Alhambra Palace in Granada, Spain. Irving was permitted to reside within the palace grounds. His beautifully detailled descriptions of the deteriorating palace and its inhabitants fit well within the romantic vision that was beginning to sweep Europe. One can only imagine Irving's influence in shaping the Orientalist craze that played out in the Nineteenth Century European art. As a young man, Washington Iriving was inspired to learn Spanish after having read Miguel Cervantes' "Don Quixote". In that work, Cervantes interjected long romantic tales into the middle of the narrative. The second half of "Tales of the Alhambra" is a collection of romantic tales inspired by the Alhambra's Moorish and Spanish past. They are charming tales clearly inspired by Miguel Cervantes. "Tales of the Alhambra" was published in 1832 and has been in continous print. This book survives because of Irving's ability to recreate a beautiful and romantic past for the ever elegant Alhambra Palace.

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