

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott  
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel  
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen  
Weber Freiligrath Frey  
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel  
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas  
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach  
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil  
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London  
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Lichtenberg Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer  
Trackl Stevenson Lenz Hambroch Doyle Gjellerup  
Mommsen Thoma Tolstoi Hanrieder Droste-Hülshoff  
Dach Thoma Verne Hägele Hauptmann Humboldt  
Karrillon Reuter Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier  
Garschin Defoe Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder  
Damaschke Descartes Schopenhauer Bebel Proust  
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Grimm Jerome Rilke George  
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot  
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy  
Storm Casanova Lessing Langbein Gilm Gryphius  
Chamberlain Schiller Lafontaine Iffland Sokrates  
Brentano Strachwitz Katharina II. von Rußland Bellamy Schilling Kralik Gibbon Tschchow  
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Wilde Gleim Vulpius  
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Morgenstern Goedicke  
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Kleist Mörike Musil  
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Kraus  
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus  
Navarra Aurel Musset Lamprecht Kind Kirchhoff Hugo Moltke  
Nestroy Marie de France  
Nietzsche Nansen Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht Ringelnatz  
Marx Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz  
von Ossietzky May vom Stein Lawrence Irving  
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# **Pike County Ballads and Other Poems**

John Hay

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## INTRODUCTION.

Pike County Ballads and other poems in this volume by Colonel John Hay represent in the best manner the spirit of our strong and independent sister-land across the Atlantic. Pike County Ballads do full justice to the raw material in the United States, and show a loyal temper in the rough. The other pieces show how the love of freedom speaks through finer spirits of the land, and, dealing with realities, can turn a life of action into music.

Colonel Hay has lived always in vigorous relation with the full life of the people whose best mind his poems represent. He is descended from a Scottish soldier, a John Hay, who, at the beginning of the last century, left his country to take service under the Elector-Palatine, and whose son went afterwards with his family to settle among the Kentucky pioneers. Dr. Charles Hay was the father of John Hay the poet, who was born on the 8th of October 1838, in the heart of the United States, at Salem in Indiana. When twenty years old he graduated at the neighbouring Brown University, where his fellow-students valued his skill as a writer. Then he studied for the Bar, and he was called to the Bar three years later, at Springfield, Illinois.

At Springfield, Abraham Lincoln practised as a barrister. Shrewd, lively, earnest, honest, he grudged help to a rogue. In a criminal case, when evidence threw unexpected light upon a client's character, Abraham Lincoln said suddenly to his junior, "Swett, the man is guilty; you defend him, I can't." In another case, when a piece of rascality in his client came out, Abraham Lincoln left his junior in possession of the case and went to his hotel. To the judge, who sent for him, he replied that he had found his hands were very dirty, and had gone away to get them clean. Almost immediately after John Hay's call to the Bar at Springfield he was chosen by Abraham Lincoln, newly made President, to go with him to Washington. At Washington, Hay acted as Assistant-Secretary, and was also, in the Civil War, aide-de-camp to President Lincoln. Throughout that momentous struggle he was actively employed on the side of the North at the headquarters and on the field of battle. He served for a time under Generals Hunter and Gillmore, became a Colonel in the army of the North, and served also as Assistant Adjutant-General.

John Hay had in that struggle three brothers and two brothers-in-law serving also in the field.

In 1890 there was published, in ten volumes, at New York, by the New York Century Company, "Abraham Lincoln, a History: by John G. Nicolay and John Hay." This was, with fresh material inserted, a collection of chapters that had been published in *The Century Magazine* from November 1886 to the beginning of 1890. The friends, who worked equally together upon this large record, said, "We knew Mr. Lincoln intimately before his election to the Presidency. We came from Illinois to Washington with him, and remained at his side and in his service—separately or together—until the day of his death."

Abroad, as at home, Colonel Hay has been active in the service of his country. In 1865 he went to Paris as Secretary of Legation, and after remaining two years in that office he went as *Charge-d'Affaires* for the United States to Vienna. After a year at Vienna, Colonel Hay went to Madrid as Secretary of Legation under General Daniel Sickles. In 1870 he returned to the United States, and was for the next five years an editorial writer for the *New York Tribune*. During seven months, when Whitelaw Reid was in Europe, Colonel Hay was editor in chief.

It was for *The Tribune* that Hay wrote "The Pike County Ballads," which were first reprinted separately in 1871, and are placed first in the collection of his poems. In the same year he published his "Castilian Days," inspired by residence in Spain.

In 1876 Colonel Hay removed from New York to Cleveland, Ohio. He then ceased to take part in the editing of *The Tribune*, but continued friendly service as a writer. From 1879 to 1881 Colonel Hay served under President Hayes as Assistant-Secretary of State in the Government of the United States. In 1881 he was President of the International Sanitary Congress at Washington. Since that time he has been active, with John G. Nicolay, in the preparation and production of the full *Memoir of Abraham Lincoln*, now completed, that will take high rank among the records of a war which, in its issues, touched the future of the world, perhaps, more nearly than any war since Waterloo, not even excepting the great struggle which ended at Sedan.

That is the life of a man, here is its music.

H. M.



## THE PIKE COUNTY BALLADS.

### JIM BLUDSO, OF THE "PRAIRIE BELLE."

Wall, no! I can't tell whar he lives, Becase he don't live, you see; Leastways, he's got out of the habit Of livin' like you and me. Whar have you been for the last three year That you haven't heard folks tell How Jimmy Bludso passed in his checks The night of the Prairie Belle? He weren't no saint, — them engineers Is all pretty much alike, — One wife in Natchez-under-the-Hill, And another one here, in Pike; A keerless man in his talk was Jim, And an awkward hand in a row, But he never flunked, and he never lied, — I reckon he never knowed how. And this was all the religion he had, — To treat his engine well; Never be passed on the river; To mind the pilot's bell; And if ever the Prairie Belle took fire, — A thousand times he swore, He'd hold her nozzle agin the bank Till the last soul got ashore. All boats has their day on the Mississip, And her day come at last, — The Movastar was a better boat, But the Belle she WOULD'N'T be passed. And so she come tearin' along that night — The oldest craft on the line — With a nigger squat on her safety-valve, And her furnace crammed, rosin and pine. The fire bust out as she clared the bar, And burnt a hole in the night, And quick as a flash she turned, and made For that willer-bank on the right. There was runnin' and cursin', but Jim yelled out, Over all the infernal roar, "I'll hold her nozzle agin the bank Till the last galoat's ashore." Through the hot, black breath of the burnin' boat Jim Bludso's voice was heard, And they all had trust in his cussedness, And knowed he would keep his word. And, sure's you're born, they all got off Afore the smokestacks fell, — And Bludso's ghost went up alone In the smoke of the Prairie Belle. He weren't no saint, — but at judgment I'd run

my chance with Jim, 'Longside of some pious gentlemen That  
wouldn't shook hands with him. He seen his duty, a dead-  
sure thing, — And went for it thar and then; And Christ ain't  
a-going to be too hard On a man that died for men.

## LITTLE BREECHES.

I don't go much on religion, I never ain't had no show; But I've got a middlin' tight grip, sir, On the handful o' things I know. I don't pan out on the prophets And free-will, and that sort of thing,— But I b'lieve in God and the angels, Ever sence one night last spring. I come into town with some turnips, And my little Gabe come along,— No four-year-old in the county Could beat him for pretty and strong, Peart and chipper and sassy, Always ready to swear and fight,— And I'd larnt him to chaw terbacker Jest to keep his milk-teeth white. The snow come down like a blanket As I passed by Taggart's store; I went in for a jug of molasses And left the team at the door. They scared at something and started,— I heard one little squall, And hell-to-split over the prairie Went team, Little Breeches and all. Hell-to-split over the prairie! I was almost froze with skeer; But we roused up some torches, And searched for 'em far and near. At last we struck hosses and wagon, Snowed under a soft white mound, Upsot, dead beat,— but of little Gabe No hide nor hair was found. And here all hope soured on me, Of my fellow-critters' aid,— I jest flopped down on my marrow-bones, Crotch-deep in the snow, and prayed. . . . By this, the torches was played out, And me and Isrul Parr Went off for some wood to a sheepfold That he said was somewhar thar. We found it at last, and a little shed Where they shut up the lambs at night. We looked in and seen them huddled thar, So warm and sleepy and white; And thar sot Little Breeches and chirped, As peart as ever you see, "I want a chaw of terbacker, And that's what's the matter of me." How did he git thar? Angels. He could never have walked in that storm; They jest scooped down and toted him To whar it was safe and warm. And I think that saving a little child, And fotching him to his own, Is a derned sight better business Than loafing around The Throne.



## BANTY TIM.

REMARKS OF SERGEANT TILMON JOY TO THE WHITE MAN'S COMMITTEE OF SPUNKY POINT, ILLINOIS. I reckon I git your drift, gents, — You 'low the boy sha'n't stay; This is a white man's country; You're Dimocrats, you say; And whereas, and seein', and wherefore, The times bein' all out o' j'int, The nigger has got to mosey From the limits o' Spunky P'int! Le's reason the thing a minute: I'm an old-fashioned Dimocrat too, Though I laid my politics out o' the way For to keep till the war was through. But I come back here, allowin' To vote as I used to do, Though it gravels me like the devil to train Along o' sich fools as you. Now dog my cats ef I kin see, In all the light of the day, What you've got to do with the question Ef Tim shill go or stay. And funder than that I give notice, Ef one of you tetches the boy, He kin check his trunks to a warmer clime Than he'll find in Illanoy. Why, blame your hearts, jest hear me! You know that ungodly day When our left struck Vicksburg Heights, how ripped And torn and tattered we lay. When the rest retreated I stayed behind, Fur reasons sufficient to me, — With a rib caved in, and a leg on a strike, I sprawled on that cursed glacee. Lord! how the hot sun went for us, And br'iled and blistered and burned! How the Rebel bullets whizzed round us When a cuss in his death-grip turned! Till along toward dusk I seen a thing I couldn't believe for a spell: That nigger — that Tim — was a crawlin' to me Through that fire-proof, gilt-edged hell! The Rebels seen him as quick as me, And the bullets buzzed like bees; But he jumped for me, and shouldered me, Though a shot brought him once to his knees; But he staggered up, and packed me off, With a dozen stumbles and falls, Till safe in our lines he drapped us both, His black hide riddled with balls. So, my gentle gazelles, thar's my answer, And here stays Banty Tim: He trumped Death's ace for me that day, And I'm not goin' back on him! You may rezoloot till the cows come home, But ef one of you tetches the boy, He'll wrestle his hash to-night in hell, Or my name's not Tilmon Joy!



## THE MYSTERY OF GILGAL.

The darkest, strangest mystery I ever read, or heern, or see, Is  
'long of a drink at Taggart's Hall, — Tom Taggart's of Gilgal.  
I've heern the tale a thousand ways, But never could git  
through the maze That hangs around that queer day's doin's;  
But I'll tell the yarn to youans. Tom Taggart stood behind his  
bar, The time was fall, the skies was fa'r, The neighbours  
round the counter drawed, And ca'mly dranked and jawed.  
At last come Colonel Blood of Pike, And old Jedge Phinn,  
permiscus-like, And each, as he meandered in, Remarked, "A  
whisky-skin." Tom mixed the beverage full and fa'r, And  
slammed it, smoking, on the bar. Some says three fingers,  
some says two, — I'll leave the choice to you. Phinn to the  
drink put forth his hand; Blood drawed his knife, with accent  
bland, "I ax yer parding, Mister Phinn — Jest drap that whis-  
ky-skin." No man high-toneder could be found Than old  
Jedge Phinn the country round. Says he, "Young man, the  
tribe of Phinns Knows their own whisky-skins!" He went for  
his 'leven-inch bowie-knife: — "I tries to foller a Christian life;  
But I'll drap a slice of liver or two, My bloomin' shrub, with  
you." They carved in a way that all admired, Tell Blood  
drawed iron at last, and fired. It took Seth Bludso 'twixt the  
eyes, Which caused him great surprise. Then coats went off,  
and all went in; Shots and bad language swelled the din; The  
short, sharp bark of Derringers, Like bull-pups, cheered the  
furse. They piled the stiffs outside the door; They made, I  
reckon, a cord or more. Girls went that winter, as a rule,  
Alone to spellin'-school. I've searched in vain, from Dan to  
Beer-Sheba, to make this mystery clear; But I end with HIT  
as I did begin, — "WHO GOT THE WHISKY-SKIN?"

