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Bulletin of

The Edinburgh Sir Walter Scott Club

2009

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Editorial

Last year we thought we would be writing the Editorial for an eBulletin as the cost of this publication, being subscribed to by a select few, couldn't be justified. But all that has changed thanks to John Loska of Colin Page Books. His promise of an annual donation of £250 spurred us on to seek financial support from other members of the Club. We would like to thank all those who contributed, but especially Geoffrey Bond and Callum Kennedy, as they were able to make available £500 each. So now, with over £1500 in the kitty and with John's annual donation (and provided we are still around to offer our services for free), this Bulletin ought to be here for a few more years.

It is probably just as well that we do have the transcripts from the last 12 months of our events printed as 2009 has certainly been a very significant year for the Club. Thanks to the tireless efforts of our previous Secretary we celebrated our 100th Annual Dinner in real style. We not only had Royalty giving a Toast to the Club we had His Grace the 10th Duke of Buccleuch as our President.

We also have a new Hon. Secretary. Miss Joan Dunnett joined the Club in 1996 and has been regular attender ever since. She is passionate about Scottish History and Literature; enjoys reading historical novels, and is a volunteer guide with the National Trust for Scotland. We wish Joan all the very best in her role.

So, sit back and savour the contents and be grateful that you are not attempting to read this with your face glued to some computer screen.

The 4 page colour insert containing photos from the 100th Dinner has been sponsored by Fraser Elgin.

President 2009/2010

Dr Iain Gordon Brown, FRSE, FSA

Dr Iain Gordon Brown, FRSE, FSA, is Principal Curator of Manuscripts in the National Library of Scotland, where he is responsible for (among other areas of the collections) material relating to Walter Scott and his world. Over the course of a long career he has made many important acquisitions for the nation in this and other fields.

Born in South Africa to a Chartered Accountant father and a mother who read English at the University of Edinburgh under teachers such as the Scott scholar Arthur Melville Clark, he came to Edinburgh as a child. George Watson's College was the only Edinburgh school that his father had heard of in South Africa, and there he was sent. Classics and archaeology were his great boyhood interests. He subsequently read History at Edinburgh University and took a Ph D at St John's College, Cambridge, his thesis being on Sir John Clerk of Penicuik and the world of eighteenth-century virtuosoship.

Iain joined the staff of the National Library in 1977. As a scholar he has published extremely widely, much of his academic work being on topics connected with British art and architecture of the eighteenth century (notably on Allan Ramsay and Robert Adam); antiquarianism and taste; the history of British travel abroad, especially in Italy; and the literature and culture of the age of Walter Scott. He edited *Scott's Interleaved Waverley Novels: an Introduction and Commentary* (1987) and *Abbotsford and Sir Walter Scott: the Image and the Influence* (2003). He has written some important articles on aspects of Scott collecting and scholarship. His involvement with exhibitions or projects for the National Library has led to publications such as *The Hobby-Horscial Antiquary* (on Scottish antiquarianism between 1630 and 1830); *Poet and Painter: Allan Ramsay, Father and Son, 1684-1784; Building for Books: The Architectural Evolution of the Advocates' Library; Monumental Reputation: Robert Adam and the Emperor's Palace; The Todholes Aisle; Elegance and Entertainment in the New Town of Edinburgh; Witness to Rebellion* (on the remarkable Jacobite drawings he discovered at Penicuik House); and *Allan Ramsay and the Search for Horace's Villa.* He has contributed to many volumes of essays, and to major works of reference such as the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.*

Elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London in 1985 and of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1997, he has been President of the Old Edinburgh Club since 2007, seeing it through its Centenary celebrations in 2008. He serves on the editorial boards of several academic journals, and frequently features on radio and television programmes.

Iain is married to Dr Patricia Andrew, daughter of the distinguished physicist Professor E. Raymond Andrew, FRS. She herself is a well-known lecturer on art-historical subjects for the National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh University, NADFAS, the Art Fund, etc. They live in Abercromby Place in the New Town.

Scott's Birthday

At the Scottish Book Trust on 15th August 2008. Some 40+ members, guests and public celebrated the Birth of Walter Scott with a Glass of Wine. Prof David Purdie was in the Chair, Paul Scott gave the following address. The event was brought to a close with a delightful rendition of Jock o Hazeldean by Margaret Bennett.

In the chapter about his early life which Walter Scott wrote for Lockhart's biography he says:

> I was born, as I believe, on the 15th of August 1771
> in a house belonging to my father, at the head of the
> College Wynd. It was pulled down with others to make
> room for the northern front of the new College.

In other words, the fortunate event which we celebrate today occurred not far from here at what is now the eastern end of Chambers Street. After his education at the High School and University he became the most celebrated and influential writer not only in Scotland, but in the world at large. As George Simenon is reputed to have said when he first saw the Scott Monument in Princes Street, it is right that he should have the greatest memorial. He was the father of us all.

Also, as A.N.Wilson, who addressed the Club at our annual dinner this year, said in his book, *The Laird of Abbotsford*, "Scott was not only a great writer; he was also a great man" and "one of the most genial who ever lived".

In Scotland, of course, we owe a particular debt to him. When Henry Cockburn heard of his death, he wrote in his Journal, "Scotland never owed so much to one man". Before that on 23 February 1827 when Scott confessed (if that is the right word) at the Theatrical Fund Dinner that he was the author of the Waverley novels, Lord Meadowbank said" "We owe to him, as a people, a large and heavy debt of gratitude…He it is who has conferred a new reputation on our national character, and bestowed on Scotland an imperishable name".

There had been a wide-spread feeling in Scotland towards the end of the 18th century that because of the Union, Scotland was gradually loosing its distinctive character. As Scott himself said in his famous outburst on the Mound in 1806: "tis no laughing matter. Little by little, whatever your wishes may be, you will destroy and undermine, until nothing of what makes Scotland Scotland shall remain".

That was a threat which Scott was determined to resist. As Lockhart said in the biography: "The love of his country became indeed a passion….He would have bled and died to preserve even the airiest surviving nothing of her antique pretensions for Scotland"…."He was not only apt, but eager to embrace the opportunity of again rehoisting, as it were, the old signal of national independence; and I sincerely believe that no circumstance in his literary career

gave him so much personal satisfaction as the success of Malachi Malagrowther's Epistles". That is the book which in an edition which I edited for Blackwood's, in 1981, I called the first manifesto of modern Scottish nationalism.

The gratitude of which Cockburn and Meadowbank spoke was due to Walter Scott because he had reminded the Scots of their history and the distinctive character of Scotland and had restored a determination to resist its erosion.

Later on in the 19th century the Empire, in which Scotland was a partner by virtue of the Union, provided brilliant careers for many Scots and stimulated the Scottish economy. This encouraged the press and even the academics to do their best to present the Union in a favourable light. A completely false idea of the origin and nature of the Union became orthodox wisdom and so did the notion that Scott had been an uncritical enthusiast for it. This was the consequence that we now call spin and much of it has survived even long after the Empire has disappeared.

Still with the recovery of the Scottish Parliament and with moves towards the recovery of independence, events in Scotland are moving in a direction which would have given Walter Scott great pleasure. Probably this would not have happened without his influence.

So today we have an additional reason to celebrate his birthday. Let us raise a glass to his memory.

Colloquium on *The Heart of Midlothian*

On Saturday 20th September in the New Club we had a different form of meeting from the usual. The chairman, Prof. David Purdie, opened the meeting at 1500hrs with a welcome followed by a presentation of images of Scott and his times from the National Archives. This was followed by three brief presentations; Brian Gill on Scott and the Law, *Paul Scott on* Scott and the Union, *and Ian Campbell on* Scott and Change — *all focussing on* The Heart of Midlothian, *and underlining the richness of Scott's text in the approaches which could be taken. The discussion in which the members present participated shed further light on how the text remained open and accessible in our own century. Thanking the speakers, David Purdie hoped this event would be the precursor of many. The meeting concluded with a light afternoon tea with sandwiches.*

Unfortunately only the text presented by Paul Scott has been made available.

The Heart of Midlothian

In one of his essays on Scott David Daiches said: "Scott had never really reconciled himself to the Union of 1707, though he never dared say so, not even in his novels." Of course, no one has analysed these novels with more understanding and brilliance than Daiches or done more to re-establish Scott's critical reputation. In fact, it has been said that Scott was not fully understood until Daiches analysed and explained his strengths. But this remark about the Union is very strange. The first part, "never really reconciled himself" is fair enough; but how could Daiches say that Scott "never dared to say so"? He expressed his feelings on the subject clearly and powerfully in his *Tales of a Grandfather* and *The Letters of Malachi Malagrowther* and one of the greatest of his novels, *The Heart of Midlothian,* which we are discussing today, is a sustained protest against the Union.

Daiches seems to have had difficulty in arriving at a clear statement about Scott's attitude to the Union. "Never really reconciled", although rather non-committal, is, I think, the closest he came to recognising the truth. In 1971,for example, he delivered an excellent paper to the Sir Walter Scott Bi-centenary Conference in Edinburgh. In discussing the *Heart of Midlothian* he said: "Scott understood very well that the Porteous Riots were at bottom a protest against the Union". These riots were, of course, a major theme in the novel, but of Scott himself Daiches says: "He supported the Union of 1707 while showing a full and sympathetic awareness of the attitude of those who opposed it." In support of this view, Daiches quotes the passage early in Scott's history of Scotland for children, *The Tales of a Grandfather*, where he says: "before this happy union of England and Scotland, there were many long, cruel and bloody wars between the two nations". But he does not quote the full and frank account later in the *Tales* of the way in which England contrived the Union. It concludes:

> Men of whom a majority had thus been bought and sold forfeited every right to interfere in the terms which England insisted upon…But despised by the English and detested by their own country,…had no alternative left save that of fulfilling the unworthy bargain they had made…a total surrender of their independence, by their false and corrupted statesmen into the hand of their proud and powerful rival.

Scott's attitude to the Union was therefore more complex than straight-forward approval or outright opposition. He welcomed its effect in bringing to an end the long series of wars between Scotland and England; but he was deeply worried that it would lead to the gradual transformation of everything in Scotland to the English model. He wrote his *Letters of Malachi Malagrowther* to rally Scottish opinion against this risk. In other words, he would have welcomed the Union if it had been an alliance or permanent truce which allowed each country to govern itself independently.

There was no secret about this. Lockhart, for instance, makes it very clear in his biography where he says of Scott's attitude on such matters:

> The love of his country became indeed a passion; .., he would have bled and died to preserve even the airiest surviving nothing of her antique pretensions for Scotland. …Whenever Scotland could be considered as standing separate on any question from the rest of the empire, he was not only apt, but eager to embrace the opportunity of again rehoisting, as it were, the old signal of national independence.

Daiches was of course familiar with all of this. Why then was he so coy in stating the facts? It was, I think, part of a curious conspiracy, or yielding to moral pressure, which from the about the middle of the 19th century persuaded even serious scholars that that they must always present the Union of 1707 in a favourable light. This was presumably a consequence of the connection with the empire in which Scotland was a partner by virtue of the Union. At that time the empire brought economic benefits to Scotland and provided many Scots with brilliant careers as administrators, governors and the like. If you attacked the Union, you seemed to be attacking the goose that laid the golden eggs.

I do not suppose that all respectable scholars and journalists and the like were deliberately misrepresenting the facts. A strong climate of opinion, or successful spin or manipulation, can exercise a powerful, but unconscious, influence. At all events, it became normal for even serious historians to conceal the nature of the Union and the way in which England achieved it. By and large this attitude became general. For the same reason, and because

he was then so powerful an influence, Walter Scott too had to be represented as an uncritical enthusiast for the Union. All of this created such an atmosphere of unquestionable truth that historians, literary critics and the like still follow it, including even such a brilliant and widely read scholar as David Daiches.

This has been a digression, but I think a necessary one before we consider Walter Scott's novel which deals directly with the Union, *The Heart of Midlothian.* The episode with which the novel begins, the prosecution of Wilson and Robertson for smuggling, exposes one of the reasons at the time for the outrage of most of the Scottish people against the Union. It had imposed on Scotland not only a share in the liability for the repayment of the heavy English National Debt, but also English excise duties. English revenue officers were despatched to Scotland to collect them. This meant that whenever anyone in Scotland bought a glass of wine they were contributing to the cost of the bribes paid to Members of the Scottish Parliament to persuade them to vote for the Treaty of Union. As Scott said in his *Tales of a Grandfather*:

> In fact, the Parliament of Scotland was bribed with the public money belonging to their own country. In this way, Scotland herself was made to pay the price given to her legislators for the sacrifice of her independence.

The Treaty also provided for free trade between Scotland and the English plantations overseas and it was this provision which eventually brought benefits to Scotland. But, as Adam Smith said, this was a trade with which the Scots were at the time unfamiliar and the immediate effect of the Union was to depress the Scottish economy for several decades. The Scots at the time were also unaccustomed to import duties and, in the words of *The Heart of Midlothian,* "regarded them as an unjust aggression upon their ancient liberties". That was the attitude of Wilson in the novel who "considered himself as robbed and plundered" by "the obnoxious revenue officers". Wilson was therefore regarded by the people at large, not as a smuggler and a criminal, but as a defender of the ancient rights of the Scottish people. This was the reason for the public protest at his execution which led Porteous to fire on the crowd. When he was condemned for death for this, it was the Queen in distant London who ordered his reprieve. The result was the riot in which the people of Edinburgh took the law into their own hands, a protest against the Union and against English interference in Scottish affairs.

That Jeanie Deans had to walk to London to seek a reprieve of the sentence against her sister is another demonstration of the impotence to which Scotland had been reduced by the transfer of power to London. The Scots in the novel frequently denounce the Union, as for instance the conversation in chapter 4:

I dinna ken muckle about the law, but I ken when
we had a king, and a chancellor, and parliament
men o our ain, we could aye peeble them wi stanes
when they wearna gude bairns—But naebody's
nails can reach the length o Lunnon.

Weary on Lunnon, and a that e'er came out o't.
They hae taen awa our parliament. And they
hae oppressed our trade.

Scott's account of the state of Scottish opinion in the decades after 1707 when the Union came into force is supported by the records of the time. As Houston and Knox say in the introduction to their *History of Scotland*: "Scott's novels have strong elements of realism (including historical accuracy in *The Heart of Midlothian)"* Scott makes no attempt to conceal the wide-spread bitterness and resentment of the people and, I think, conveys his understanding and agreement. It seems to me that the book is an expression of his deep apprehension about the consequences of the Union and his distress over the loss of the independence of Scotland, even if he welcomed the end of wars between the two countries.

An Evening with Scott

On Wednesday, 8th October, members were entertained by Scott Moffat to a performance of memories of Sir Walter from his own writings, made most realistic by him being in traditional costume. After the performance the audience partook of wine and canapes. This is what Walter Scott *said:*

Scene: sitting in the study of Abbotsford

Every Scotsman has a pedigree; it's a national prerogative like his pride and his poverty! I myself was connected with ancient families both on my father's and mother's side. My dear mother was a Miss Rutherford, her father was Dr John Rutherford professor of medicine at the University of Edinburgh. But her mother's family were Swintons, an ancient Border clan which bred many distinguished warriors during the middle ages.

My father's forbears were also a turbulent warlike clan. In fact he was the first of his race to adopt a town life and a respectable profession at the law. One of his ancestors was the legendary Auld Wat o'Harden, a fearless Border reiver. Legend has it that when the food in the larder was low, his wife placed a pair of spurs on the serving dish as a gentle reminder that is was time to mount another raid on his neighbours' cattle!

Now my great grandfather, another Walter Scott, was known as "Beardie". He was an ardent Jacobite. When that unfortunate dynasty was banished in 1688, he swore that he would never let razor or scissors touch his beard till a Stuart sat on the throne. Now such a gesture was harmless, but Beardie did not stop there, he took up arms in that lost cause in 1715, and thereby lost everything he had and might have been hanged as a traitor. Such were my Border antecedents but I was not born in the Borders, but in Edinburgh, in College Wynd on the 15th of August 1771. Apparently I showed every sign of being a healthy child. But one night when I was eighteen months old, as usual I showed great reluctance to go to bed. It was the last time I would ever be such a lively child, for the next morning I awoke with a fever, not unlike the type connected with teething. But on the fourth day when I was put in the bath, they discovered I had lost the power of my right leg. Various medical remedies were tried without success. Many respected members of the medical school were consulted. But in the end the sage advice of my grandfather, Doctor Rutherford, was taken. He said "Let's try Sandy Knowe." Thus I was consigned to Sandy Knowe farmhouse, near Kelso in the Borders, to try the benefits of fresh air and country living, aye back to the very place my own father had been born. Little did my worried parents foresee the effect that this would have on my entire life.

I still harbour memories of my childhood at Sandy Knowe. Perhaps the most bizarre is of me wearing a sheep's skin. Some local worthy had suggested to my grandparents that when a sheep was slaughtered I should be swathed in the skin,

apparently the warm skin had strength-giving properties which the lame bairn badly needed. I can just remember lying wrapped up in a sheepskin like some Tartar warrior on the floor of the parlour in the farmhouse.

Above the farm lay the ruins of Smailholm Tower, an old Border fortress set among crags. The young ewe milkers used to carry me on their backs among the crags and if the weather was clement I was left lying on the soft green grass among the grazing sheep. As the months went by, I swear I could recognise every single sheep on that farm. But it was pleasant to lie in the sun, the silence only broken by the sough of the wind or the bleat of the lambs. All my life I have retained a fondness for those silly gentle creatures, no doubt from my sojourn among them at Smailholm Tower.

My favourite companion was Auld Sandy Ormiston, the shepherd. He would carry me to some particular safe spot and leave me there to roll or crawl while he attended to the flock. One day he must have forgotten about me or was otherwise busy, when a sudden thunderstorm came on. My aunt Jenny must have realised I was not in the farmhouse and came running up the hill for me in great agitation. And there she told the family later, she found me, lying on my back in my sheepskin looking up at the lightning, clapping my hands and crying out in great glee, "Bonnie, bonnie, dae it again!"

After the death of my grandfather, my uncle Tom used to come and help my grandmother with the farm. This was during the American War of Independence and I clearly remember how much I looked forward to these visits and longed to hear news of the defeat of General George Washington. My uncle also told me heart-rending tales of the Jacobite executions at Carlisle and the cruelty meted out to those tragic Highlanders brought tears to my infant eyes. This then, was the time I developed a sentimental bias toward the Stuarts or was it that the blood of auld "Beardie" was coursing in my young veins!

My grandmother used to tell me Border tales round the fire of a winter's night. She knew all about her warlike ancestors. By the flickering firelight I could see in my mind's eye the fierce moss troopers silhouetted against the full moon, with helmet jack and lance, fording swollen rivers with their stolen cattle, I could hear the loud slogans of the men: "Elliot for Aye" or "The Scotts are out" which put fear into the hearts of their victims., or the high pitched wailing of the widows keening over their dead menfolk. From the lips of my grandmother fell the names of all the ancient border heroes …. Watt of Harden, Wight Willie of Aickwood, Jamie Telfer of the fair Dodhead, Johnnie Armstrong and Jock o' the Side. These stories from my grandmother or Aunt Jenny I hungrily devoured like a nestling falcon, no sooner was one finished than I would open my mouth and demand another. These two women wove a spell around me of feats of arms, fortresses, lovers, ladies, routs and revels which has never been broken.

And still to this day, well meaning strangers come up to me in a drawing room or at a dinner party and ask "Now tell me Sir Walter, how on earth did you, an Edinburgh lawyer, develop an interest in history and romance?"

Scott hums: "Will ye no come back again"

How I love the auld Jacobite airs, but don't be misled; I am a devoted subject of His Majesty. The Coronation of His Majesty George IV, 19th July 1821. Aye that was a day to remember, though I never intended to make the journey to London on my own having asked my friend, James Hogg, to accompany me. I thought perhaps he could make an honest penny by penning a coronation poem or maybe a pamphlet in honour of the grand occasion. Forbye, imagine letting that great wild Caledonian boar loose among the genteel literary salons of fashionable London – aye, he would have routed the blue stockings right out the door! He might even have appeared among all that silk and feathers with his rough woollen plaid, aye and even his collie dog!

An then he wrote to me, declining the invitation! The reason, if you can call it that: says he, that if he went to London, he would miss the great annual Border Fair, held on St Boswell's Green every 18th of July! His absence he claimed, would be the speak o' the Borders, a new tenant sheep farmer, gadding off to see the grandees of London when he should be buying tups! Ecod! Only a Borderer would come up with an excuse such as that!

So in the end I went on my tod, by steamship, if you please! A new ship called the "City of Edinburgh" plies atween Leith and London. A journey of only 60 hours for she makes a good nine knots even agin wind and tide. But oh man, every time I took a turn on deck, I was near suffocated by the clouds of smoke. The master asked me what I thought o' his ship and I told him it had been misnamed and had better been christened the "New Reekie" for it produced even mair smoke than Auld Reekie!

Ah but the reek was worth the tholing! The ceremony was of such magnificence it would have put the Field of the Cloth of Gold to shame. The scene in Westminster Abbey, I can never forget – imagine long tiered galleries stretching along the aisles, the grandees in their finest clothes, the constant waving plumage of feathers, the universal headdress of the elegant girls and matrons, bobbing up and down like flamingos on some African lake.

The box assigned to the foreign Ambassadors was in a prefect blaze with diamonds! When the sunshine lighted on Prince Esterhazy he glimmered like a veritable galaxy. I'm not sure to this day if he was wearing his famous coat said to be worth £100,000 or some such trifle! Indeed 'twas said every time he put it on he lost 2 or 3 hundred pounds because of the pearls which scattered from it as he walked!

And His Majesty himself! Dare I say that He looked every inch a king with his £24,000 Coronation robe of crimson velvet with gold stars and ermine trim with a train which stretched for 27 feet. I fear the sheer weight of his robes, the warm sunshine and the four hour ceremony much fatigued His Majesty, but He bore himself up with much grace and dignity and his demeanour was the theme of universal admiration.

At the Banquet in Westminster Hall I was much taken by the age old ceremony of the Hereditary Champion. Young Dymocke clad in an entire suit of armour entered the Hall on a white charger, he threw down the gauntlet and challenged anyone to deny the new sovereign.

Certainly the armour was in good taste but (if I'm allowed to pick nits) the shield was wrong. It was round like a Highland targe and would have been impossible to use on horseback. They employed three cornered or heater shields suspended round the neck. I dare say none o' the company would have been aware o' that. Ye'll excuse an auld antiquarian like myself for being sae fuddy duddy!

But all in all a grand day and did the populace of London turn out aye, in their thousands! It was computed that about 500,000 people shared in this great festival.

Indeed the presence of this great multitude made me miss my carriage, hired to take me home after the Banquet in Westminster Hall. Even at such a late hour, between two and three in the morning, the streets were a huge press of people. A young gentleman, his name escapes me now, offered to accompany me home on foot. Near to Whitehall, the festive crowds were extremely dense and my young companion was frightened that the lame old man beside him might be knocked to the ground.

Farther ahead, a space for dignitaries was being kept by men of the Scots Greys. I became detached from my companion and asked a sergeant if I might pass to the open ground in the middle of the street. "Sorry sir" said the sergeant, "no one to pass through from the street, strict orders." Suddenly behind me there was a great commotion and shoving. My lost companion's voice suddenly carried above the tumult – "Take care, Sir Walter Scott, take care!" The sergeant looked at me "What, Sir Walter Scott, well you shall get through anyhow!"

He turned to the file of soldiers and barked "Make room men, for Sir Walter Scott, our illustrious countryman!" The men answered. "Sir Walter Scott - - God Bless you!" People in the crowd nearby heard my name and shouted in reply "Sir Walter Scott" or "God bless you Sir Walter". Men waved their hats and ladies their kerchiefs. This vast crowd opened up like the Red Sea to Moses to let this lame old man hobble across to safety on the other side. I was deeply touched by this show of affection by these ordinary folk. It was a mark of homage I have never forgotten and remember with pride to this day. Oh I smiled and nodded to my admirers, but I did not wave, after all, it was the King's day!

Sets up three leather bound books and then knocks them down, domino style.

Three companies, Hurst Robinson – printers, Archibald Constable, my publishers – James Ballantyne, my own printing company. Each had backed the others' bills and if any one of these companies collapsed, t'would bring down t'other, and so it was. Oh to be sure, the system works, but not when the City of London is swept by speculation, panic selling, tumbling prices and a credit squeeze by the Bank of

England itself. Aye 'tis then among the tumult of the bulls and bears a poor inoffensive literary lion like myself is pushed to the wall.

£121,000 dear God! Can it really be so much? Constable, you see, would advance me money for novels not yet written. I reaped even before I sowed, and now it promises to be a bitter harvest. But I needed the credit to build my dear house at Abbotsford for the builders and planners have drained my purse. Yet my heart clings to the place I have created, there is scarce one tree on it that does not owe its being to me. But those stones above the Tweed have proved a fickle mistress. Never was so much love and money and care lavished on a building, but now it has become my Delilah!

What options lie before me, aye, I have heard the words "personal bankruptcy!" whispered about. I would rather die! Never again could I hold my head up in my own country. Indeed I would have to forsake its shores, to live in exile and never again to breath the air of my own dear native land.

Now my head tells me to consider "trade bankruptcy" and indeed had I a client in such a situation I might well advise this course. But to start up in business again after a few months, to meet men in Galashiels, Selkirk or the High Street of Edinburgh who had received but 7/- in the pound as my creditors – no, no, no, that is the coward's way out!

My true friends have not deserted me in this dark hour. Indeed I am embarrassed by the offers of financial help that come almost daily with the post. The great and the good have offered their help. Their Graces the Dukes of Buccleuch and Somerset and good men such as James Skene and Colin MacKenzie. And – most humbling of all, from those who can least afford it! I received a letter from Mr Poole, a poor music teacher who taught the harp to my daughters, he offers me £500 in my present difficulties – probably all the money he has in the world.

God Almighty forbid that I should take one penny, I will involve no friend either rich or poor – my own right hand shall do it. Through the good offices of Sir William Forbes the creditors have agreed to set up a private trust into which I will pay my entire revenue from literary sources and God willing, if I am spared, I will be their vassal for life. I will dig in the mine of my imagination until every farthing is paid back. Now some will say that Scott writes only for money, but no work of imagination proceeding from the mere consideration of money ever did or ever will succeed.

I made little schemes, myself, Lady Scott and Anne to live at Abbotsford, and I sold the house in Edinburgh. For my poor ladies, it was a retreat with dignity rather than a rout on the field of battle. For myself, I did not care a farthing about the appearance of things. I wished to raise as much money as I could for my creditors. I asked the selling agent to advertise that the furniture of 39 North Castle Street was lately the property of Sir Walter Scott, thinking if the public knew who the furniture belonged to, they might offer a better price.

As for myself, I look with perfect firmness and calmness on the life before me, though I have no delight in the circumstances which led me to adopt it. I shall get rid of company of every kind, from Dukes to Canvas Daubers. Solitude has one good thing – it disposes a man to work.

I get up at 7, breakfast half an hour and write on until 1. then walk with Tom Purdie till 4, dine and chat for 2 hours and a half then work till suppertime at 10 and to bed before 11.

By fine scribbling I have already realised more than £17,000 which I believe is a higher remuneration than was ever made to a literary man of my time. *Woodstock, Chronicles of the Canongate* and *The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte* have flown off the shelves, thank God. There are nights I feel I have written myself blind and my eyes ache, my head aches, my whole body aches. I feel like the weary traveller who, after having walked all day, reaches the summit at last only to find even more hills and valleys spread out before him.

Already some funds have been sent to Willie Laidlaw to pay any outstanding debts about Selkirk, Galashiels and Melrose. For I dearly wish the smaller debts and poorer people settled with, if possible – the great can wait.

I have lost a large fortune, but I have an ample competence remaining behind and as Charlotte once said: " You are just like an oak that loses its leaves but keeps its branches."

Scott sings "Will ye no come back again"

Poor poor Charlotte, she died at nine in the morning here at Abbotsford, but they did not send word to me in Edinburgh until all was over. Oh I saw her body when I arrived home, but what I saw lying on that bed was not my Charlotte, not my thirty years companion, not the bride of my youth, the mother of my children.

Those stiff limbs which were once so graceful in movement, that pinched face like…. like a yellow mask seemed like a gross caricature of a human face rather than the real one. Anne tried to convince me, she still looked as she always did, but I will remember her, when she had her health, her looks, her spirit.

We buried her among the ruins of Dryburgh Abbey, a place we often visited for pleasure and enjoyment. It's a lovely place, Dryburgh, my favourite abbey. You suddenly come upon it hidden among tall trees. Just beyond the ruins, the River Tweed flows gently past, on its way to the sea. Such a peaceful spot.

It still seems like a dream… It was a lovely day, Charlotte would have enjoyed the warm weather, her being French. The sky was so blue, the trees in new leaf, the grey ruins, clustered together, as though waiting on us. But among all this beauty and tranquillity the grave lay open, dark and deep. It looked to me for all the world like the black mouth of some great monster waiting on its prey. The solemn-faced men standing either side with their spades and mattocks ready to

pile the cold earth on the coffin, containing the creature that was once the dearest on earth to me.

I hate funerals – always did. It's the mixture of acted grief and real grief. One or two heart-broken and the rest making solemn faces or whispering to each other, aye and what do they whisper? "A fine day", "Good to see you", "Poor old Sir Walter!" *(Sighs*)

The first time I opened the door of our bedroom after the funeral, dear God – it was so quiet, no voice, no movement, calm, calm as death. I looked at the bed and began to choke, the indentation made by the coffin was still plainly visible. This was where I saw her last, she had raised herself on her bed and said with a sort of smile – "You all have such melancholy faces" I turned away to conceal my tears, and when I returned later to say goodbye to her before leaving for Edinburgh, even this was denied me, for then she was in a deep sleep – it is deeper now.

Would to God my sleep was as deep. Now, as I doze in my chair I often hear her voice calling me. There are lines written by Lord Byron which flit constantly though my head…

> "Our life is twofold
> Sleep hath its own world,
> A boundary between the things misnamed
> Death and existence."

Now my feet walk that boundary line. There are times I would voluntarily stray from one to another but what need is there?

> For come he slow, or come he fast,
> It is but Death who comes at last.

Months after she died, it was the night before I left for Paris, I saw her figure in front of me, she cried out plaintively – "Scott, do not go!"

Since her death I feel sometimes as firm as the Bass Rock, sometimes as weak as the wave that breaks on it. My mind is as alert as it ever was, yet, when I compare this house now to what it used to be, I think my heart will break.

There are days I wake after a poor night's sleep and have this strange dreamy feeling. I wander around my house and estate like a lost soul.

What is this world? - A dream within a dream? As we grow older each step is an awakening. The youth awakes, as he thinks, from childhood – the full grown man despises the pursuits of youth as frivolous – the old man looks on manhood as a feverish dream.

The grave the last sleep? No it is the last and final awakening.

I can still see their faces... and who could forget the face of GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON Now he had this reputation for being the "enfant terrible" of

English society. But I did not find him so, indeed I will never forget my last lunch with him in London. He was as playful as a kitten, full of fun, frolic, wit and whim. In fact we agreed on most things but certainly not on politics or religion. I remember I gave him a beautiful Turkish dagger mounted in gold and Byron sent me a large silver funeral vase full of dead men's bones! For he had a melancholic trait and could be quite gloomy at times. When he got like that with me I would just simply wait and wait and wait and eventually the shadows would leave the pale face just like the mist rising from a landscape.

What I liked about Byron, besides his boundless genius, was his generosity and his utter contempt of all affectations of literature. Byron wrote from impulse, never from effort. It was as though there was an ever gushing and perennial fountain within him giving us such epics as Don Juan and Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. I have always reckoned Burns and Byron, the most genuine poetical geniuses of my time – aye, and both Scotsmen!

Now, a nice American was WASHINGTON IRVING aye and a brilliant story teller. I well remember my dear Charlotte and I, the tears running down our cheeks as we laughed our way through his History of New York, a classic piece of comic writing. The Americans are so like the British and the British like the Americans that they have little patience with each other for not being in all respects exactly the same. Mr Irving arrived early one morning at Abbotsford just as I was about to breakfast. He remonstrated that he had already eaten in Selkirk. "Hout man" said I, "a ride in the morning in the keen air of the Border hills is warrant enough for a second. Come away in, there is baith meat and pastry, cauld sheep's heid, eggs, porridge and fine brown bread." Aye, and I was right, for he did it justice.

It was during his visit that I was busy reading the proofs of *Rob Roy*, but I made time to show my distinguished American guest by beloved Border Country for I knew he had a relish for the auld world. I took him to Dryburgh Abbey and Bemersyde and showed him Huntly Bank where True Thomas met the Faerie Queen

"True Thomas lay on Huntly Bank
A ferlie he spied wi' an e'e
And there he saw a lady bright
Come riding down by the Eildon Tree."

We climbed the high hill above Cauldshiels Loch where, like the pilgrim in Pilgrim's Progress, he was shown all the goodly regions thereabouts – the Lammermuirs, Galashiels, Torwoodlee, Teviotdale and the Braes o' Ettrick and Yarrow. I'm afeared the bare Border Hills did not much impress Mr Irving, for he told me he loved the great forests of his native land.

But as we walked along the banks of the Tweed, he was amazed that every cottager and herd stopped work to have a pleasant crack wi' the laird. But I wanted him to meet these excellent plain Scotch people, not the fine gentlemen and ladies, for the character of a nation is not to be learnt from its fine folks. A

sudden storm came on that day so we crawled under a bank for shelter. I opened up by plaid and said to him "Come under my plaidie, as the old Scotch sang goes." And we courried in thegither agin the storm.

Another fine man to visit me was WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. I well remember the first visit he and his sister Dorothy paid me in 1803. We met up in Melrose, and at the inn there was only a double room for William and me. Mine hostess was quite upset about this and asked twice, quite pointedly, if "the Shirra' has any objection to sharing a room with that gentleman?"

I pointed out to her that I had no objection whatsoever to sharing a room with one of England's greatest poets. I remember the next day the three of us standing on a knoll in the Jed Valley looking towards Ferniehurst Castle and Wordsworth turned to me and said, "What life there is in trees." Every time I have planted a sapling on my braes here at Abbotsford, I have remembered those words of Wordsworth. On his first visit I was busy writing my poem *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* and as my guests journeyed south up the Teviot, I was able to point out scenes from my epic poem, such as Minto Crags.

"On Minto Crags the moonbeams glint
Where Barnhill hewed his bed of flint
Who flung his outlawed limbs to rest
Where falcons hang their giddy nest."

Like me Wordsworth loved his native land. When I visited him at Dove Cottage in the Lakes, he insisted we climb to the summit of Helvellyn and just as I had shown Washington Irving the promised land, he showed me his.

"I climbed the dark brow of mighty Helvellyn
Lakes and mountains beneath gleamed misty and wide.
All was still, save by fits, when the eagle was yelling
And starting around me the echoes replied."

Wordsworth chose an austere life but I believe he could have been a rich man had he tried to write to please public taste. But he was disposed to take the bull by the horns and write in his own unique way. Despite his pride and single mindedness and isolation there is a freshness, a vivacity, an originality about his poetry which few can equal. I do not acquiesce in his system of poetry, but a better, more sensible man I do not know than William Wordsworth, a man whom I am proud to call friend.

Talking of which, there is one, not well known, but a better, more loyal friend man never had than my dear Tom Purdie. My first meeting with Tom was not very auspicious, for he was on one side of the bench, on trial for poaching, and I was on the other as his judge. But his woeful tale of a wife and starving bairns, how the work was scarce but the grouse plentiful, brought a suppressed smile to my face. He is a likeable rogue and was let off with a small fine which I knew he could not pay, but I could. I tell ye, it was the best investment I ever made in my

entire life. That night Tom walked 7 miles to "thank Your Honour" and left my house with legal employment. In the course of his life Tom became my forester, gamekeeper, librarian indeed general factotum. I would ha' trusted that man with my life and anything I possessed except perhaps my cellar for he loved his dram or two.

When I was created a baronet by his Majesty king George IV in 1820 do ye ken who got most satisfaction? The King? Me? My family? My readers? No, it was dear Tom Purdie! He went round the fields at Abbotsford and rounded up all the sheep and painted a black S in front of the WS already painted on their backs. He came back to his cottage that night hands and face as black as the earl's waistcoat with a huge grin on his face and said to his wife "Now they'll all ken the yowes belong to **SIR** Walter Scott." He was so proud of his master.

My plans for **my** estate did not always agree with those of Tom and arguments ensued but here at Abbotsford I am king of the castle. Tom would leave for a while, then after a decent interval so as not to lose face, he would reappear and say " I hae been thinking over the matter, and, upon the whole, I think I'll tak yer Honour's advice." Once, after a particularly vehement dispute I cried out to him "Tom this won't do, we can't live together any longer, we must part!" There was a silence for a while then Tom looked at me and flashed his white teeth in a huge grin and asked "And where the deil does Your Honour mean to go?"

Every Sunday night without fail, Tom would appear when dinner was over. He was given a quaich of whisky and drank "Lang life to the Laird and the Lady and all the good company!" Indeed I called him my Sunday pony for often when we walked the braes or the woods he would let me lean on him when the ground grew rough or the flesh grew tired. Many's the snowdrift he pulled me from in the dreary dark days of winter.

I always said that he and I would go to the grave thegither – but it was not to be. One night after dinner, Tom leaned his head on the table and fell asleep never to awake. How I miss that man. It is as though my right arm has been severed. Now when I meet a bad step on my walks, Tom's powerful arm is no longer there to hold me up. Sometimes in the woods I think I can hear the sound of his axe but when I reach the spot all I can hear are the birch leaves rustling in the wind. Tom is not there but his spirit, I believe, still haunts the woods and hills where he and I spent so many happy days.

Abbotsford will never be the same again. I used to love coming back here after my travels. I would have exchanged the company of Lords and Dukes and noble Princes, all the pride and flower of Spain for that of Tom Purdie and my dogs, and turtle and venison for simple sheep's heid, whisky and water and a cigar.

Now my dearest friend and companion lies among the stones of Melrose Abbey. His stone has the words "Thou has been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." Matthew Chapter 25, verse 21.

Well done, thou good and faithful servant.

I'm getting very unlocomotive, something like an old cabinet that looks well enough in its corner but will scarcely bear wheeling about even to be dusted!

Ah well as the auld wifies say

"We must just e'en do as we dow."

I've been told not to work but Dr Abercrombie knows better than most people that a man can no more say to his mind "don't think" than Molly can say to her kettle "don't boil" when she finds it on a brisk fire.

If I am a bad Divine and a worse Philosopher I hope I am not ignorant of all the advantages I have enjoyed or unreasonably impatient under the increasing infirmities which must attend old age. Besides have I not my dear children, Sophia, Walter, Anne, Charles, loving each other and affectionate to me.

I feel like the Eildon Hills, quite firm, though a little cloudy. I do not dislike the path which lies before me for I have seen all that Society can show, and enjoyed all that wealth can give - and I am satisfied that much is vanity, if not vexation of the spirit.

For we are all pilgrims for a season, the evening of our day is necessarily the weariest and most over-clouded portion of our march, but while the purpose is firm and the will good, the journey may be endured and in God's good time we shall reach its end, footsore and heartsore perhaps, but neither disheartened nor dishonoured!

Scott and Satire

On Thursday 6th November 2008, the annual Joint Lecture with Edin.Univ.English Dept. was held at 5.15 pm in the Advocates' Library. Stuart Kelly (literary editor of Scotland on Sunday) delivered the following address to a full house under the above title, a transcript of which follows:

The Romantic period is often thought of as being especially earnest and sincere – and, indeed, there are very few laughs in Scott's narrative poems, or Wordsworth's *The Prelude*, Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*, Keats' *Hyperion* or Southey's *Thalaba the Destroyer*, except perhaps that title. Byron's monumental *Don Juan* or Hogg's *The Poetic Mirror*, however, are not anomalies in the period, but the visible, "literary" peaks of a thriving culture of satire, pastiche, burlesque, parody, lampoon and pasquinade. When a writer becomes as famous and widely-read as Scott was, it is almost inevitable that this will be reflected in the more irreverent aspects of that culture.

In his *Life of Scott*, Lockhart mentions this trend very much en passant. "About this time several travesties of Scott's poetry, I do not recollect by whom, were favourably noticed in some of the minor reviews, and appear to have annoyed Mr Morritt. Scott's only remark on *The Lay of the Scotch Fiddle*, etc., etc., is in a very miscellaneous letter to that friend:- "As to those terrible parodies which have come forth, I can only say with Benedict, *A college of such wit-mongers cannot flout me out of my humour*. Had I been conscious of one place about my temper, were it even, metaphorically speaking, the tip of my heel, vulnerable to this sort of aggression, I have that respect of mine ease, that I would have shunned being a candidate for public applause, as I would avoid snatching a honey-comb from among a hive of live bees". Scott's pose of phlegmatic hauteur is typical: so too is Lockhart's underestimation.

Lady Anne Hamilton, in *Epics of the Ton, or Glories of the Great World* (1807) was first to have a little dig at Scott (he was a personal friend, and spent the Christmas of 1801 at Hamilton Palace). The poem is mostly an exposé of aristocratic misdemeanours, but she makes space to swipe at poets too:

> Good-natur'd Scott rehearse in well-paid lays
> The marv'lous chiefs and elves of other days.

It's a small but important wryly raised eyebrow: Scott is becoming rich. The poems were generally sold in editions costing around 35 shillings; the equivalent today of £109.54 by the retail price index.

The most famous satirical attack on Scott came in Lord Byron's *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (1808).

> And think'st thou, Scott! By vain conceit perchance,
> On public taste to foist thy stale romance,
> Though Murray with his Miller may combine,
> To yield thy Muse just half-a-crown per line?

Byron goes on to call Scott "Apollo's venal son" with a "prostituted muse". That they latterly became friends goes some way to prove that Scott had a certain generosity of spirit; however, at the time, he was splenetic. "It is funny enough to see a whelp of a young Lord Byron abusing me", he wrote to Southey, "whose circumstances he knows nothing, for endeavouring to scratch out a living with my pen." (Scott is somewhat disingenuous here, having already secured several legal positions) "God help the bear, if, having nothing to eat he must not even suck his own paws. I can assure the noble imp of fame it is not my fault that I was not born to a park and £5,000 a year, as it is not his lordship's merit, although it may be his great good fortune, that he was not born to live by his literary talents or success".

The satires tend to reiterate the predominant criticisms found in Jeffrey and other reviewers, with an added element of scepticism about Scott's finances – although Jeffrey himself had ended his review of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* with the caveat that "the form of the publication is also too expensive; and we hope soon to see a smaller edition, with an abridgement of the notes for the use of the mere lovers of poetry." The *Modern Dunciad* (1815) by George Daniel, though complimentary of Scott, still swinges at "paper-staining" "venal Scotchmen". John Taylor's *The Caledonian Comet* (1810) mentions Scott's "love of lucre" and compares him with another "flash in the pan", the actor Kemble. Sir Alexander Boswell wrote a mock-epic version of Scott called *Sir Albon* (1811), which misapplies Scott's manner to mundane subjects. The comedy is sometimes acute, as in these lines

> De Wodrow! though it mar my tale,
> To sing of thee can minstrel fail?
> For clerk he was, if clerk there be,
> Though little skilled in minstrelsy,
> And less, I wot, of chivalry;
> But I may say, in sooth he knew
> The magic power of two and two,
> And four the wonderful result.

Boswell ends with the familiar jibe. "I ask but half-a-crown a line - / The Song be yours, the Disk be mine".

Some of the satires were just puerile, such as *The Ass on Parnassus and From Scotland, Ge Ho !! comes Roderigh Vich Neddy Dhu, Ho! Ieroe !!! Cantos I and III of a poem entitled What are Scot's Collops?* (1811) by "Jeremiah Quiz". Others use Scott not just as an object of ridicule in himself, but as a vehicle for ridiculing others, much as modern satirical programmes might rewrite the words of a pop-song for humorous effect. It was just *presumed* that Scott's work was known. In this category would come George Colman the Younger's anti-Irish *The Lady of the Wreck* (1812); in which "The stag at eve had drunk its fill" becomes "The Pig, at eve, was lank and faint", the "Harp of the North" becomes the "Harp of the Pats" which "roused the hopless lover to a rape / Made timorous Tenants knock poor Landlords down" and the famous Boat Song is transformed to

Hail to our Chief! Now he's wet through with whiskey;
Long life to the Lady come from the salt seas!
Strike up, blind Harpers! skip high to be frisky
For what is so gay as a bag full of fleas?
Crest of O'Shaughnashane
That's a Potato, plain,
Long may your root every Irishman know!
Pats long have stuck to it,
Long bid good luck to it;
Whack for O'Shaughnashane! – Tooleywhagg, ho!

A surprising number of the satires take the form of a line by line parody of the Scott poem. *Marmion Travestied* (1809) by Thomas Hill reapplied the entire narrative, structure and imagery of *Marmion* to send-up the *scandale* between the Duke of York and his former mistress (and pioneer of the kiss-and-tell genre) Mrs Mary Anne Clarke. *The Lay of the Last Minstrel, Travesty* (1811) by "O. Neville" is a burlesque, with a bigamous tailor, his slatternly family and a drunken vagrant replacing the principal characters. Neville says that Scott's "versification [is] wretched, topography execrable and anachronisms unpardonable", but occasionally hits on a neat joke at Scott's solemnity. "Breathes there a man…" is rendered as the banal "Is there a man, or is there not?" *Rokeby* spawned *Jokeby* by J. Roby in 1813, which played pretty much the same game, peopling the narrative with characters more reminiscent of Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* and consistently updating into banality – so the "shaggy mantle" becomes a "wet umbrella".

Leigh Hunt wrote satirically about Scott in his 1811 *The Feast of the Poets*, and attacked Scott's politics more than his poetics. Apollo calls together the finest writers of the day – Scott, Southey, Campbell, Moore and Wordsworth – though Wordsworth is sent home after showing "some lines he had made on a straw / Shewing how he had found it and what it was for". As regards Scott, Hunt writes

However he scarcely had got through the door
When he look'd admiration and bow'd to the floor,
For his host was a God, - what a very great thing!
And what was still greater in his eyes – a King!

It might not amuse the radical Hunt that at the outset of his career Scott had been compared to his political idol and called "a kind of poetical Godwin… call[ing] upon the public to submit to a state of barbarism, by way of arriving at perfection" in the pages of *Le Beau Monde.* Scott's politics were also pilloried in an article in *The Satirist*, which began by talking about second sight and went on to predict Scott's next, ultra-royalist poetic romance, *MacArthur*. Uncannily, the anonymous satirist thought he might address the Jacobite Uprising of 1745.

There were several collections that satirised a number of different writers – James Hogg's *The Poetic Mirror* being one such, and featuring a Scott parody entitled *Wat o' The Cleugh*. But there were many more: John Agg's *Rejected Odes* (1813),

W.F. Deacon's sublime *Warreniana* of 1824, in which the most celebrated writers of the day all supposedly wrote poems in praise of Warren's shoe-blacking, and the best known of all, James and Horace Smith's *Rejected Addresses* of 1812. The conceit of the volume is that the poets will all write on the fire at Covent Garden Theatre. Lockhart claims that when "the whole world laughed over James Smith's really admirable *Death of Clutterbuck*… no-one laughed more heartily than the author of Marmion". Scott did say that he had "seldom been so diverted with any thing this long while", but Lockhart manages to get the title wrong – the Scott parody is called *A Tale of Drury Lane* – and although there is a character called Clutterbuck, he does not die (in fact, someone called Higginbottom does). But it must have struck a chord: we will meet Clutterbuck again in Scott's work.

As for the satire that Lockhart mentions by name, *The Lay of the Scottish Fiddle* (1813) by James Kirke Paulding, is actually one of the most astute and interesting of these works. It is remarkable for a number of reasons, but its provenance is one of them. This is an American satire on Scott. (An early review in *The Quarterly Review* makes for curious reading, especially for contemporary postmodern theorists: "the first effort of American wit would necessarily be a parody. Childhood is everywhere a parodist. America is all a parody, a mimicry of her parents".)

The poem claims to be the first American edition of a new work by Scott which has already gone through four editions in Britain, with extra notes for the American audience supplied by Paulding. The action of the poem concerns the retaliation by Warren, Cockburn and Beresford for Madison's incursion into Canada, where they burnt villages in New England. Paulding saw naval action on the American side and introduces Cockburn, the British naval commander, as a stereotypical Scott hero:

Sir COCKBURN next, a border chief,
Descended from full many a thief,
Who in the days of olden time,
Was wont to think it little crime,
In gallant *raid* at night to ride,
And scour the country far and wide;
Rifle the murder'd shepherd's fold,
Do deeds that make the blood run cold,
And cottage fire with burning hand,
In Durham or in Cumberland.

Paulding offers five proofs that the work is genuinely by Scott. Firstly, it was written in a single week. It features extensive genealogies; an obsession with antiquity but not classicism; inset ballads and in most places a great deal of importance on locality. This leads to the most linguistically extravagant version of Scott's penchant for topography:

Steady the vessels held their sway,
Coasting along the spacious bay,
By Hooper's strait, Micomico,
Nantikike, Chickacomico,
Dam-Quarter, Chum, and Hiwasee,
Cobequid, Shubamaccadie,
Piankatank, and Pamunkey,
Ompomponoosock, Memphragog,
Conegocheague, and Ombashog,
Youghiogany, and Choctaw,
Aquakanock, Abacooche;
Amoonosock, Apoquemy,
Amuskeag, and Cahokie,
Cattahunk, Calibogie,
Chabaquiddick, and Chebucto,
Chihohokiem and Chickago,
Currituck, Cummashawo,
Chickamogaaw, Cussewago,
Canonwalahole, Karatunck,
Lastly great Kathtippakamunck.

The poem signs off with a very typical attack: "Yet once again, farewell, Scotch fiddle *dear*, / (For dear thou art, to those who buy this lay)."

The most inventive humour in Paulding's satire comes in satirising Scott's footnotes and editorial material. A couplet which mentions Robinson Crusoe and Sinbad is footnoted "Here Mr Scott has inserted copious extracts from the romances of these renowned persons, noting all the editions of the Arabian Nights that have ever been published, and adding a copious biography of Daniel De Foe". The footnotes are stuffed with "original" texts, each lauded by Scott. One is a "valuable relique… communicated to me by my learned friend Mr R Surtees of Mainforth, who had it from his nurse, an old woman, deaf and blind, and therefore more likely to have a good memory". Another, described by "Scott" as being better than all classical poetry, reads

Heye dyddle dyddle
Ye catte and ye fythele
Ye keouw yumped over ye moone
Ye leetle dogge laugffed
Vor to zee syche craffte
And ye dysche felle a-lyckynge ye spoone.

Lockhart mentions favourable notices. Although most critics tended to discuss Paulding's politics, *The Monthly Magazine* praised that "the author has evinced poetical talents of a superior order". Personally, I agree, and Paulding would cross swords with Scott again, once Scott's fame as a novelist was established. He would also, briefly, be the United States Secretary of the Navy.

Some Classical Quotations and Allusions in The *Journal* of Sir Walter Scott, Bt. (1825-1832)

On Wednesday 12th November at 7pm in The New Club we were entertained to an address by Prof. David Purdie on the above subject. John Davie of St Paul's School and Balliol College, Oxford, who had collaborated was unable to be present.

The *Journal* of Sir Walter Scott Bt., one of the best and least read works of the entire canon, was commenced by its 55 year-old author in Edinburgh on Sunday 20th November 1825. It ends in Rome on April 14th 1832, six years & six months later and some five months before his death at Abbotsford. The MS is in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York City.

The *Journal* was first edited - or rather transcribed - by its author's daughter Sophia for her husband John Gibson Lockhart, who included sections from it in his biography of Scott which was published five years after his death.

It was subsequently edited by David Douglas (Douglas & Foulis, 1891), and by John Guthrie Tait (Oliver & Boyd, 1939 -46) Tait was Principal of Central Indian College, Bangalore, and brother of the champion golfer Freddy Tait. His father was the celebrated physicist Peter Guthrie Tait, author - with Lord Kelvin - of the standard university physics textbook of the late 19th Century.

The most recent and the best edition is by Sir Eric Kinloch Anderson (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1972) a Past President of this Club and Headmaster of Eton. It was first published when he was Headmaster of Abingdon School and revised in 1998 when Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford, before coming back to Eton as Provost. We have used the latter text for this paper.

The Journal is clearly written with a view to eventual publication. He vows "*not to alter anything contained in it*" - and he is true to this. Nothing has been retro-corrected or revised. There are occasional additions but all deletions or corrections are contemporary. Scott's own *Memoirs* containing details of his school and College days are now in the NLS and were published by John Gibson Lockhart as the first chapter of his biography of his father-in-law in 1837.

On his return to George Square from convalescence at Sandyknowe after his attack of poliomyelitis, young Walter Scott was privately educated in preparation for the High School of Edinburgh - now the Royal High School - which he entered in October 1779. Scott was initially at a disadvantage, for although he was a year older than most of his classmates, his knowledge of Latin, the bedrock of the curriculum, was markedly inferior. Soon, however, he had bridged the gap and became a competent, if never brilliant, classical scholar. He was popular with his schoolfellows who admired his refusal to let his lameness prevent him from participating in their boisterous playground games.

Scott thought his first-year tutor Luke Fraser something of a pedant and his father may have thought so too - as he had a tutor at home who was a sound classical scholar. This was the Rev. Fraser, a minister who, being of the Evangelicals, had resigned his living in a seaport town as the mariners refused to abandon their tradition of putting to sea on the Sabbath.

Scott flourished when in 1780 he entered the class of the Rector, Dr Alexander Adam (1741-1809). Adam, an innovative and popular educator, sought to instil in his pupils not only a grasp of grammar but also a sensitivity to literary language. With Adam's encouragement, Scott translated Horace and Virgil into English verse and made his first attempts at original composition. Scott remembered with pleasure the praise he received from Adam who told the class that although others were technically ahead of *Gualterus* Scott - none showed a more ready grasp of the Latin authors' actual meaning.

Adam, a fine classical scholar, became first assistant at Watson's Hospital and then Headmaster in 1761. In 1764 he became private tutor to Alexander Kincaid, afterwards Lord Provost of Edinburgh, by whose influence he was appointed in 1768 to the rectorship of the High School.

His popularity and success as a teacher are strikingly illustrated by the great increase in the number of his pupils, many of whom subsequently became distinguished men. Among them were, in addition to Scott, Lords Henry Brougham and Francis Jeffrey. He succeeded in introducing the study of Greek into the curriculum of the school, notwithstanding the opposition of the University headed by Principal William Robertson. In 1780 the University of Edinburgh conferred upon Adam the degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*.

He died after an illness of five days, during which he occasionally imagined himself still at work, his last words being, *"It grows dark, the boys may dismiss."*

His principal published works include; *Principles of Latin and English Grammar* (1772), which, being written in English instead of Latin, brought down a storm of abuse upon him and *Roman Antiquities* (1791) his best work, which passed through a large number of editions and received the unusual compliment of a German translation.

During his last year at the High School, Scott had put on several inches and was now over six feet tall. His family, fearing that he was outgrowing his strength, decided that before sending him to college, he should spend six months with his Aunt Jenny in Kelso building up his constitution. He was to keep up his Latin while at Kelso by attending the local Grammar School, picturesquely set in the shadow of the ruined abbey. Here he continued with his Latin under Mr Lancelot Whale with whom he studied Persius, Tacitus and Cornelius Nepos.

In November 1783, Scott was called home to study Classics at Edinburgh University. At only twelve years old, he was a year or so younger than most of his classmates, and an initial sense of inferiority was heightened by his ignorance of

Greek. With overpopulated lecture-rooms, no tutorials, and uninspiring teaching, there was little hope of him catching up with his peers.

At the end of his first session, Scott scandalized his Greek lecturer, Professor Dalzell, by handing in an essay arguing that Ariosto was a superior poet to Homer. Scott initially spent two years at the College, interrupted by a bowel haemorrhage necessitating a further stay at Kelso. Then in March 1786, he began his apprenticeship to the profession of Writer to the Signet in his father's law office. This was when he saw and later met Burns

With parental support, Scott soon resolved to aim for the Bar and resumed his university studies. Before taking up the formal study of Law, he attended classes in Moral Philosophy and Universal History in 1789-90. The former was taught by the charismatic Dugald Stewart (1753-1828) who combined the Scottish 'Common Sense' tradition with elements of empiricism. Believing that the true object of moral philosophy was the study of man in society, Stewart argued that human welfare could be advanced by following universal ideals of truth and virtue. Stewart's stress on man as a social being, his view of society as a constantly evolving mechanism, and his faith in universal, trans-historical values would all play their part in the development of Scott's own philosophy of history.

After attending lectures in Moral Philosophy and Universal History in 1790-91, he enrolled in a Scots Law class at Edinburgh University. His lecturer was David Hume, nephew of the philosopher and the major writer on criminal law in Scotland during the late Enlightenment period. After a further year studying Roman Law, Scott successfully passed his examinations and was called as an Advocate in July, 1792. On his father's advice, he had dedicated his Faculty admission thesis: "*Disputatio Juridica de Cadaveribus Damnatorum"* (*a juridical debate concerning the corpses of the condemned)* to Lord Braxfield, their neighbour in George Square and Lord Justice-Clerk. Scott was to practise briefly, or rather brieflessly, as an advocate, but his legal career progressed to his appointment as Sheriff Substitute of Selkirkshire – and as Clerk to the First Division of the Inner House.

The *Gurnal* opens at Abbotsford with Scott at the height of his powers – as depicted that year in the famous Portrait by Sir Henry Raeburn. The very first Classical quotation is the only one in Greek – all subsequent ones, 41 in all, are Latin.

ΓΑΡ ΝΥΞ ΕΡΧΕΤΑΙ

This aphorism, literally "*...for the night cometh…"* appears on Scott's "dial stone" (sundial) by John Greenshields in the east courtyard at Abbotsford.

In his account of his life Scott mentions the sundial and its quotation: "*I must home to work while it is called day; for the night cometh when no man can work."* He then goes on to say, ruefully, *"I put that text, many years ago, on my dial-stone; but it often preached in vain….."*

This inscription derives from the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the New Testament and is from John, Ch. 9

v.4: *I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.*

v.5: *As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.*

In the Vulgate, St Jerome has: … *me oportet operari opera eius qui misit me donec dies est – venit nox quando nemo potest operari… (Codex Amiatinus)*

Incidentally, Boswell reports that the quotation appeared also on Dr Johnson's watch.

Sunday 20th November 1825:

Dined with us, being Sunday, Will. Clerk and Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe. Clerk is the second son of the celebrated author of Naval Tactics. I have known him intimately since our college days; and, to my thinking, never met a man of greater powers, or more complete information on all desirable subjects. In youth he had strongly the Edinburgh ***pruritus disputandi*** *; but habits of society have greatly mellowed it,*

The source of this quotation is from the epitaph of Sir Henry Wotton in the chapel at Eton. viz:

hic iacet huius sententiae auctor pruritus disputandi sit ecclesiarum scabies;

Here lies the author of the phrase.

the itch for Disputation will be the Mange of Churches.

Wotton was a diplomat and statesman, a friend of Donne, a minor poet and ambassador. He is also noted for thus defining a Diplomat:

Legatus est vir bonus peraegre missus ad mentiendum pro re publica.

An ambassador is a good man sent abroad to lie for his country (!)

When Queen Elizabeth's ambassador in Tuscany, he was dispatched by Duke Ferdinand of Florence to King James VI at Stirling with the warning of a plot to assassinate him. He was therefore very well received in London *post* 1603. His last appointment was as Provost of Eton which position he held until his death, being thus a predecessor of the editor of the *Journal*. There is a compleat biography by his friend Izaac Walton.

Tuesday 22nd Nov 1825

Scott writes of his friend the Irish Poet Thomas Moore (1779 - 1852)

Moore has, I think, been ill-treated about Byron's Memoirs; he surrendered them to the family (Lord Byron's executors) and thus lost £2000 which he had raised upon them. It is true they offered and pressed the money on him afterwards, but they ought to have settled it with the booksellers… At any rate there must be an authentic life of Byron by somebody. Why should they not give the benefit of their materials to Tom Moore, whom Byron had

made the depositary of his own Memoirs ?— but T. M. thinks that Cam Hobhouse has the purpose of writing Byron's life himself. He and Moore were at sharp words during the negotiation. It was a pity that nothing save the total destruction of Byron's Memoirs would satisfy his family. But there was a reason:

Premat nox alta.
Deep night will close in upon it.

Horace. Odes : Book I ; IV.

Moore was as a poet, translator, balladeer and singer of great fame. His work became immensely popular and included:

The Harp That Once Through Tara's Halls; The Meeting of the Waters; *The Minstrel Boy* and *The Last Rose of Summer*.

Moore is considered Ireland's National Bard and is to Erin what Robert Burns is to Scotland. Moore is commemorated by a large bronze statue in College Street beside his beloved *alma mater,* Trinity College, Dublin.

Some of his time on the Continent was spent with Lord Byron, whose literary executor Moore became. He was much criticized later for allowing himself to be persuaded into destroying Byron's memoirs at the behest of Byron's family due to their damningly honest content and sexual explicitness.

Moore did, however, edit and publish *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron, with Notices of his Life* (1830) dedicated to Sir Walter Scott by *"his affectionate friend, T.M"*

Wednesday 23rd Nov 1825

Dined at St. Catherine's with Lord Advocate, Lord and Lady Melville, Lord Justice-Clerk, Sir Archibald Campbell of Succoth, all class companions and acquainted well for more than forty years. All except Lord J.C. were at Fraser's class, High School. Boyle joined us at College. There are, besides, Sir Adam Ferguson, Colin Mackenzie, James Hope, Dr. James Buchan, Claud Russell, and perhaps two or three more of and about the same period—but,

Rari apparent nantes in gurgite vasto

This quote is drawn by Scott from Vergil's *Aeneid*, Book I, when he describes a dramatic episode, in this case a shipwreck, in the voyage of Aeneas and the survivors of Troy on their way to Latium and the foundation of Rome. Scott thus chooses literally an epic simile to describe the vibrant scene of an Edinburgh dinner party of old friends most of whom had been educated together at the High School and then the University. Fraser refers to Luke Fraser, Scott's first classics master at the High School.

.....ter fluctus ibidem
torquet agens circum, et rapidus vorat aequore vortex.
Adparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto,
arma virum, tabulaeque, et Troia gaza per undas.

P. Vergilius Maro. Aeneid : I ; 116-9

….three times, the circling flood
spun the bark through swift engulfing seas.
Look, how the lonely swimmers breast the wave!
And on the waste of waters wide are seen
weapons of war, spars and Ilium's treasure rare –
– all mingled with the storm….

St. Catherine's, the seat of Sir William Rae, Bart., then Lord Advocate, is at Currie about three miles from Edinburgh. Rae's refusal of a legal appointment to Lockhart was the cause of Scott's son-in-law and biographer quitting the Bar and devoting himself entirely to literature. In 1825 he and Sophia migrated to London as editor of the Tory *Quarterly Review.*

January 7, 1826. Sunday.

John Prescott Knight, a young artist, son of the performer, came to paint my picture at the request of Daniel Terry. This is very far from being agreeable, as I submitted to this distressing state of constraint last year to Newton, at request of Lockhart and to Wilkie, for his picture of the King's arrival at Holyrood House.

I am as tired of the operation as old Maida, who had been so often sketched that he got up and went away with signs of loathing whenever he saw an artist unfurl his paper and handle his brushes. I have agreed he shall sit in the room while I work, and take the best likeness he can, without compelling me into fixed attitudes or the yawning fatigues of an actual sitting. At least I can't have the hang-dog look which the unfortunate Theseus has, who is doomed to sit for what seems an eternity.

sedet, eternumque sedebit Infelix Theseus
Virgil. op.cit. VI ; 840

Unhappy Theseus, doom'd for ever there,
Is fix'd by fate on his eternal chair; (Tr. Dryden)

Virgil, in describing the inmates of Tartarus, that part of the Underworld where sinners are punished for their crimes in life, Virgil utters these famous words on Theseus: He is here invoking an old myth.

Theseus and Pirithous had gone to the underworld to abduct Persephone daughter of Ceres for Pirithous. But they were not successful. Pluto invited them to sit on Leta's chair, and wait for guests' gifts there; but when they sat, they stuck to the chair and were bound to it with ropes of snakes by an Fury or Erinys. Theseus was eventually at last rescued by Hercules.

Scott continues ; *I wrought till two o'clock—indeed till I was almost nervous with correcting and scribbling. I then walked, or rather was dragged, through the snow by Tom Purdie, while Skene accompanied. What a blessing there is in a man like Tom, whom no familiarity can spoil, whom you may scold and praise and joke with, knowing the quality of the man is unalterable in his love and reverence to his master. Use an ordinary servant in the same way and he will be your master in a month.*

January 12th 1831

I have a visit from Mr. Laurence Macdonald the sculptor, who wishes to model a head of me. He is a gentlemanlike man, and pleasant as most sculptors and artists of reputation are, yet it is an awful tax upon time. I must manage to dictate while he models, which will do well enough.

So there we sat for three hours or four, I sitting on a stool mounted on a packing-box, for the greater advantage; Macdonald modeling and plastering away, and I dictating, without interval, to good-natured Will Laidlaw, who wrought without intermission. It is natural to ask: Do I progress? but this is too feverish a question. A man carries no scales about him to ascertain his own value. I always remember the prayer of Virgil's sailor in extremity:—

Non jam prima peto Mnestheus, neque vincere certo;
quamquam sed superent quibus hoc, neptune, dedisti!
extremos pudeat rediisse hoc vincite, cives
et prohibete nefas!"
Virgil. op.cit. V ; 193-6

Tis not the palm that Mnestheus seeks:
Nor hope of Victory fires his cheeks:
Yet, O that thought!—but conquer they
To whom great Neptune wills the day:
Not to be last - make that your aim,
And triumph by averting shame. (Tr.Conington)

Professor John Conington was the first occupant of the chair of Latin Literature, founded by Corpus Christi College, Oxford. His Aeneid was written in the octosyllabic couplet style of Scott's longer poems of which he was a considerable admirer.

Mnestheus was captain of the *Pristis* one of the four ships in the famous race during the games held by Aeneas and the Trojans. This took place after his return from Carthage and his affair with Dido, the occasion being a celebration of the first anniversary of the death of King Priam in Sicily.

The classical quotations in the *Journal* reflect Scott's classical education, his photographic memory and his uncanny ability to see connections between his current circumstances and those described by classical authors. They add a garnish of scholarship to the autobiographical central content of the work – which shows him as the true Renaissance humanist shouldering the Herculean task of amortising his debts through sheer literary effort while still functioning as the *pater familias* at Abbotsford and as the literary lion in the North.

The complete set of Scott's quotations and allusions sourced from the Odes of Horace will be the subject of a future paper.

Annual Dinner, Monday 9th March, 2009

It was a happy day in November 2008 when the hon. secretary received a letter from Buckingham Palace confirming his highest aspirations, that HRH the Princess Royal had consented to grace the club with her presence on the occasion of the Hundredth Annual Dinner. The subsequent meetings and arrangements necessary to ensure the smooth operation of such a major event in the annals of the Club were a revelation of how many intricate details required attention, a challenge which the club accepted and complied with to everyone's satisfaction.

Guests assembled at 7pm – total attendance being 110 – after appropriate security requirements, in the Morning Room of the New Club to await the arrival of HRH the Princess Royal at 7.30.pm The interim was pleasantly spent in the consumption of wine and canapes and in conversation The inconvenient arrangements in the city due to the advent of trams necessitated HRH being welcomed at the back door of the Club by the New Club chairman and secretary. After introductions to the Club chairman, Professor David Purdie, and the hon. secretary, Fraser Elgin, HRH was introduced to the Top Table, where greetings were exchanged; HRH was then afforded an opportunity to meet Club members in the Morning Room. Guests were shortly thereafter summoned to the dining room followed, after a brief interval, by the Top Table piped in by Alan Forbes, an old friend of the hon. secretary and official New Club piper.

Prof. Purdie's introduction of the Top Table was followed by a beautifully composed Grace by the Very Rev. Allan Maclean of Dochgarroch:

> "O Almighty God, tonight we remember Sir Walter Scott 'the best loved Scotsman who ever lived.'
>
> We give thanks for the pleasure we enjoy from Scott, the person and the author, from the characters he drew and the verse he penned, and from our thoughts of the age in which he lived.
>
> This year, we remember how Scott renewed the links between the Royal Family and Edinburgh in 1822, and the mutual affection that has existed ever since.
>
> We remember too Sir Walter's love of family and kinsfolk, and his respect for his chief, the Duke of Buccleuch.
>
> And finally, we give thanks for Edinburgh, 'his own romantic town', recalling all that it meant to Scott, not least in his own words, 'its busy day and social night.'
>
> And for the 'social night' of this Gathering and Dinner, remembering Scott's own pleasure in conviviality and friendship, we pray that you will bless these gifts to our use as also ourselves in your service, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Dinner was then served, consisting of

Traditional Cock-a-Leekie Soup
Fillet of Beef Wellington
Rich Chocolate Marquise with Coffee Bean Syrup
Coffee and Mints.

The Menu and Toast List was accompanied by a copy of the Report on the First Annual Dinner of the Club in 1894, kindly sponsored by Lee A. Simpson and dedicated to the hon. secretary.

After *The Loyal Toast*, the Chairman invited Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal to give the Toast to *The Edinburgh Sir Walter Scott Club.*

HRH in proposing the toast to *The Edinburgh Sir Walter Scott Club* reminded members of the First Dinner and had wondered why if it took place in 1894 this was only the hundredth dinner; she then realised the interruptions caused by two world wars. She reminded members of the debt due to Fraser Elgin and Bernard Brown for giving the club a new lease of life in the 1980s and how it was living up to its aim of honouring the memory of Sir Walter and making his life and works known to others with the Annual Programme of lectures and meetings. She referred to the sad losses in recent years of Patricia and Dame Jean Maxwell-Scott with whom the Club had had a close association. She commented on the website and hoped this would introduce new members to the Club. She ended by wishing Fraser Elgin a happy retirement from his duties as hon. secretary and toasted the future of the Club.

The chairman replied to HRH's Toast to The Club as follows:

Your Royal Highness, My Lord Lieutenant, Your Graces, My Lords, Ladies & Gentlemen

On behalf of the Club and our Guests, may I thank your Royal Highness for these kind words and observations.

In responding, I am conscious that both the main Toasts at our Dinners have a serious purpose and function – and since I come from the academic sector myself, the audience must be steeling itself for a dry, scholarly disquisition upon some aspect of Scott's work. Fear not. For it is the *humour* in Scott that I wish to touch on in the next few minutes – the humour which shines out of the characters who populate his novels.

And the source of much of the humour is Scott's uncanny ear for the speech and the wit of his fellow countrymen. He has *an unerring* ability to reproduce – in direct speech – the sound, the cadence and the rhythm of the language of our People and he does this, not only across the full range of social backgrounds, but also across the geographical regions of the country.

Whether the character be a Judge of the Court of Session or a poacher appearing before the Sheriff, Scott captures the sound - and the humour. And whether the

Character be a Highland chieftain a Glasgow bailie an Edinburgh street seller or a Border reiver, again the authentic voice of old Scotland floods out of the page to us.

For example, was there ever a more authentic *Glaswegian* than Bailie Nicol Jarvie in *Rob Roy*? And Scott, were he with us tonight, would be pleased to hear that the unique wit and repartee of Glasgow is with us yet?

I remember the Lord Provost of Glasgow when a patient in our Coronary Care Unit at the Royal Infirmary, receiving a telegram, the origin of which was never established – but which purported to have come from the City Chambers in George Square. The text ran:

> *Lord Provost, I thought you would like to know at once that, at its meeting last night in plenary session, the City Corporation voted to wish you a* ***total*** *and speedy recovery – by a majority of 49 to 38. (There were 12 abstentions……..)*

Was there ever a better Edinburgh character than the Laird of Dumbiedykes in *The Heart of Midlothian* – and Scott clearly drew upon his own circle of Edinburgh characters and eccentrics for such portraits, one of whom was that great Court of Session advocate John Clerk of Eldin (later raised to the bench as Lord Eldin).

Clerk, like Dumbiedykes, spoke the old *broad Scots* and like many of his learned friends was a great man for the claret. After one of the convivial Dinners of the Bannatyne Club – which Walter Scott himself so enjoyed – the great pleader weaved gently home to Picardy Place and tirled noisily at the pin (the doorbell of those days). The door was eventually opened by a servant girl:

Clerk: *Lassie, is thish the hoose of John Clerk of Eldin, advocate?*
Servant: *Oh, go on, Sir. Ye're John Clerk himsel' !*
Clerk: *Lassie, I ken who I am! I'm askin' ye: is - this - my -* ***hoose****?*

Scott also captures the beautiful melody and musicality of highland speech in *Waverley* and in the interaction between the Englishman Edward Waverley and that great Gael Fergus McIvor Vich Ian Mhor of Glennaquoich. The McIvors are of course a great Hebridean Clan – and the name came up just last month at a Burns Supper here in Edinburgh when James Brown of the Mearns reported that in Oban he observed a large commercial van whose sides proudly proclaimed:

Alexander MacIvor & Alexander MacLeod

The Two Sandies
Electrical Services

London, New York, Dubai, Sydney - and Oban

(mostly Oban)

And finally, in *Quentin Durward*, Scott superbly captures the interaction between the speech of the Scots – and of the French of the Court of Louis XI – an interaction which even to this day can cause confusion on both sides as happened to a French rugby referee who had little English and who was faced

with no option – after a stamping incident – but to send off a gigantic, mud bespattered Lock Forward. So he blew his whistle – and the giant advanced…

Ref: You, weel leeve thee feelde.
Forward: Eh ?
Ref: You - weel **- leeve** - thee - ***feelde*** **!**
Forward: What! Ach awa an get stuffed, ye wee garlic reekin little French nyaff ye, ye *gomerel,* ye wee ***bauchle*** ye !
Ref: The apology ees too late….

So, before I get too late, Ma'am, I thank you for your Toast to the Club which will now advance with confidence and relish toward our next great occasion – the Bicentenary of the publication of *Waverley* in 2014 – and with the warmest memory of our Centenary Dinner and your presence among us tonight.

The Chairman then called on Dr. Margaret Bennett who entertained the assembly with a delightful rendering of *Jock o' Hazeldean.*

His Grace, the Duke of Buccleuch, President of the Club, was then invited by the Chairman to propose the toast to Sir Walter, of which the following is a transcript:

Your Royal Highness, My Lord Lieutenant, My Lords , Ladies and Gentlemen ;

I am enormously grateful, Mr Chairman, for your kind introduction particularly for the pertinent allusion to my Scott kinship – for that really is the only *raison d'être* for my appearance at this dinner. Sir Walter would, I think, have been amused and approving of a Buccleuch and a Purdie being seated side by side at this top table. I have noted in earlier conversations that you are rather modest about your own connections to that key player in the Abbotsford household Tom Purdie – to me a Scott from Selkirk or Shetland, is a Scott, and a Purdie is a Purdie – and I just hope it hasn't anything to do with lingering, latent, embarrassment at the family penchant for a little salmon poaching or even Sir Walter's comment to Washington Irving that Tom Purdie *'Could be trusted with untold gold – but not with unmeasured whisky….'* I can assure you that we Scotts have far blacker records to contend with!

In 1824 Walter Scott wrote to my forebear Walter Francis that whilst – and I'm paraphrasing dreadfully – being a Duke had quite a lot to recommend it, at times he would inevitably end up shot full of arrows. I am conscious that in accepting the invitation and great honour of being your President for this Centenary Dinner year I will, as one woefully ill read in Walter Scott, deservedly be peppered with a metaphorical sheaf full of arrows – the final *coup de grace* being probably the Chairman's when the witching hour arrives. However, I cannot exaggerate the pleasure of the necessary and overdue immersion in things Scott, the joy of discovery of a world of relationships and correspondence – in particular the several hundred Buccleuch letters from which I will be drawing in my short paper tonight.

My father, to whom you did this honour 26 years ago, was equally fascinated. You will forgive me for following his lead away from a scholarly analysis of Sir Walter's great *oeuvre* and south to safer territory: to his Scottish Borders homeland, to the Eildons, in whose shadow I myself grew up, the Tweed and Selkirk and the web of folk and families – my own in particular – that was woven so deeply into his life and work

This is, after all, the *Year of Homecoming* – it happens also to be the 250th Anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns. Much is being made of that and there is to be a fine new multi-million pound Robert Burns Birthplace Museum. Sir Walter, with his huge respect for Burns, would surely have been delighted.

But in such a year where is Walter Scott? On the official website of Homecoming 2009 there is not one direct mention of the author of those most eloquent of words of footsteps turning to *"… this, my own, my native land"* ; of the organiser of King George IV's visit here in 1822 with its drawing together of the clans on a scale which this year's organisers can only hope to match in July; of the man who put Scotland on the tourism map with his revelation of Highlands scenery and whose name was a byword for hospitality: *"…an open sesamum,"* as Wordsworth put it, *"to a hearty welcome under any roof in the Border country."*

We can't deny Scott's lower profile. The universality of Burns Suppers and Auld Lang Synes, taken with his declining readership – if only in the English language – are all to his disadvantage. And perhaps it's also the old chestnut of not quite suiting the prevailing political and social tides, this baronet, new laird, and avowed Tory.

James Hogg, fellow bard from the Ettrick Valley, didn't help in his 1834 memoir:

> *"The only foible"* but my, how he goes on about it, *"I could ever discover in the character of Sir Walter was a too strong leaning to the old aristocracy of the country. His devotion for titled rank was prodigious and in such an illustrious character altogether out of place"*

Thus wrote Hogg apparently blind to the irony of having himself just received a farm for life from the Duke of Buccleuch. Lady Louisa Stuart, amongst the closest of Scott's friends, put it more kindly in saying that *"he had an old fashioned partiality to a gentlewoman."*

His attachment to the old order at the time of the Reform Bill didn't help. He had *"An innate reverence for the feudalism of a privileged aristocracy"* according to one 1960's biographer, but there are plenty since who find a balanced middle ground – like John Sutherland to whom I owe a particular debt tonight – and others still who will have none of it. Eric Anderson says firmly that Scott was not a snob. For once I might dare take slight issue with Sir Eric for snobbery comes in many forms and there are few of us surely who wouldn't admit to a little of it at times. Doubtless there were tinges of snobbery in my own forebears' enjoyment of the company and friendship of such an international celebrity as Scott.

And surely it is an essential part of Scott's appeal that he is *not* a saint. He is human, a man of the world, visionary, pragmatic, a doer hastening to leave his mark – but with his frailties. Reading his letters or his *Journal* you can't think otherwise. Over and over again I have been simply surprised at things revealed both about him – and my own forebears – through just a random scratching of the surface of a man who seems to have written about everything his daily life touched on, every emotion, every activity. Scott, as Virginia Woolf encapsulated so neatly, was both the Last Minstrel and the first Chairman of the Edinburgh Oil and Gas Company.

Quickly then, Scott's links with his Buccleuch kinsmen extended through the lives of three Dukes. Henry, dedicatee of the Minstrelsy, died in 1811, Charles, the closest to him, who died 1817, and the young Walter Francis. Very important were their *'gentlewomen'*, in particular Elizabeth – and Harriet, his adored Chieftainess of the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*. Charles's brother Lord Montagu, dedicatee of *Marmion*, was a friend to the very end.

First, a surprise. What does the following exchange say about the alleged pursuit of status, and snobbery? As you will remember, the Poet Laureateship was offered on the Prince Regent's behalf in 1813. Sutherland describes it as a signal honour for a Scottish writer, but Scott's immediate reaction was doubt: *"I feel much disposed to shake myself free of it"* he says in seeking Duke Charles's advice on Aug 24th 1813 – but mixed with anxiety about how to refuse. The response is unequivocal – and I'm rather embarrassed at the bluntness ….

> *"The Poet Laureate would stick to you like a piece of Court Plaister, Your muse has hitherto been independent – do not put her into harness. We know how lightly she trots along when left to her natural paces…. I cannot conceive but that HRH, who has much taste, will at once see the many objections which you must have to his proposal but which you cannot write. Only think of being chaunted and recitatived by a parcel of squeaking choristers in the ante-room to the drawing room on a birthday for the edification of the Bishops, Pages, Maids of Honour and Gentlemen-Pensioners ! Oh, horrible, thrice, horrible,"*

No flight to the bright lights there and, incidentally, that same letter of August 28th 1813 is notable for containing the Duke's swift response to Scott's by now desperate need for a guarantee for £4,000 – over £300,000 in our money – to save him from ruin in that first financial crisis, the collapse of publishers John Ballantyne & Co. Its generosity is admirable – if a little alarming for what it says about the management of our own family finances:

> *"I received your letter of the 24th yesterday. I shall with pleasure comply with your request of guaranteeing the £4,000. You must however furnish me with the form of a letter to this effect as I am completely ignorant of transactions of this nature."*

Of course much of the correspondence is not so surprising, about matters of less import – or greater, depending on your perspective – countryside and sporting

matters feature frequently; burning the river fishing, shooting, coursing, pursuit of foxes. To Walter Francis in 1828: *"on the subject of foxes, mine are carefully preserved and have furnished the hunt with some sport."* Not very PC – but through it comes knowledge, love of the countryside, affection for animals – dogs particularly – and not to be forgotten this evening, the 200th anniversary almost to the day, since the death of his beloved bull terrier Camp.

Farming interested him and he was a forester *par excellence*, clothing his own growing estate with trees – and it's the second surprise to find how hands-on he was – plotting plantations, comparing limes, Spanish chestnuts, the ugliness of larch, petitioning for a bushel of special acorns from Lord Montagu, confessing when he overstepped the boundary. At the end of a letter May 1812 to Harriet: *"It is reported that the Sheriff has stolen some holly plants out of the Peel wood, but this is wanting confirmation."*

And doing the honest work – October 1820: *"if my hand shakes, impute it to my noble exercise of cutting trees – larch trees of my own planting, eight years old and as well worth 5/- per dozen as a thief is worth a halter."*

As you know, he was forever bringing his Border neighbours together. He was the ultimate party planner. The Carterhaugh Ball game of 1815 with the Souters *versus* the Valley folk playing that first game of rugby with 750 players and 2,000 spectators, was well covered by my father last time. The local town traditions of Selkirk gave much scope for his fertile imagination – he was passionate about it but – and third surprise – he wasn't in the least bit pompous – he could see the ridiculous side. For example, by ancient tradition the award of the Freedom of the Burgh in Selkirk's case involved *Licking the Birse.* As Lockhart described it, the Birse – a bunch of hog's bristles – was passed round with a cup of welcome. Every burgess tipped it into the wine and drew it through his mouth, before it reached the happy newcomer who was of course expected to pay it the same respect. Even Scott actually flunked this trial.

Not long afterwards, and to his consternation as he said in a letter to Lord Montagu in 1818 with a nice domestic insight, Prince Leopold, later King of the Belgians gave only three hours notice of wanting to see Abbotsford. The news elicited from Mrs Scott a scream: *"What have we to offer him?" "Wine and cake"* said I, thinking to make all things easy – but she ejaculated in a tone of utter despair, *"Cake! Where am I to get cake?"*. Much worse though, it was to Selkirk that the Prince was headed first. No wonder that extra horses were in harness as the Scotts set off in their coach *'in full puff ':*

"His Royal Highness received the civic honours of the Birse very graciously", Scott continues to Lord M, *"but I had however hinted to Baillie Lang that it ought only to be licked symbolically on the present occasion so he flourished it three times before his mouth, but without touching it with his lips, and the Prince followed his example as directed."*

Scott was no saint – all of life passes through his letters – but being convinced that my family have minds as pure as driven snow I was surprised, fourthly, at the following correspondence. He and Lord Montagu seem to have had the measure of each other: Montagu started – February 11th 1825:

> *"My dear Sir, All London are reading the Memoirs of a Miss Harriet Wilson – a celebrated lady of a certain line."*

Indeed they were and it must have been some relief that the "*Duke of B"* turned out to be Beaufort. By then three volumes had appeared and Miss W let it be known that those not wishing to appear in the subsequent eight could pay her £100….

> *"One Cabinet member"*, continues Montagu, *"having been mentioned set the rest, I suppose, to read it – for I hear Mr Canning says it is the cleverest book (of its kind I presume) he has seen for some time. I thought you would like to know of its celebrity, for your reading is very various."*

Scott replies: *"I remember (what I trust in Providence she has forgotten) that I had the honour of supping with the fair authoress. Not* tete a tete *however, but* vis a vis *at one of the evening parties where the company was sometimes chosen in that genre. I won't however give a hundred guineas to be struck out of the catalogue. I remember she was ugly, remarkably witty and her society men courted for her mental, rather than her personal, accomplishments. At the time she had a sister Lady Berwick who had whitewashed herself and cut Harriet. This was not to be forgiven and as both had boxes at the opera and as Harriet's was uppermost, she had now and then the opportunity of revenging herself by spitting on her sister's head. It is impossible but that this work must be delicious scandal and I will bet on Canning's side without having seen a letter of it.*

The correspondence didn't always come off. There's a letter of 1816 to Charles which the Duke has marked *"April Fool"* and added rather caustically: *"he did not disguise his hand well…"* and I was initially puzzled by one of 2nd October 1817 described as from his "Castle of Grawacky" – actually it's Abbotsford which is constructed of Greywacke, that hardest of Border stone. It's all to do with Lord Lothian. Scott was highly complimentary of the Lothian family and their branch of the Kerrs – the Kerr girls appear regularly in the *Journal*, generally dining of an evening and singing beautifully. *Plus ça change.*

September 1817 to Charles Buccleuch: *"I dined with Lord Lothian two days since – and saw his monument."* This was the Waterloo monument on Peniel Heugh, and this was Lothian's second attempt at building that dominant Borders landmark.

> *"It is the finest piece of masonry I have seen in this part of Scotland, Bowhill and even Abbotsford itself not excepted. The said monument is made of real granite – my house as well as Your Grace's mansion at Bowhill are, as Sir Humphrey Davy assures me, simply Grawacky, a hard word which I write in my best hand … I have*

fallen in my own eyes one degree and a half … but it is an inferiority which I share in your Grace's good company."

Good company – how Scott enjoyed that. This is not him but instead the painter David Wilkie, about dinner at Bowhill after an agricultural show:

"The dinner was given quite in the ancient style of Border conviviality. Mr Scott presided at a bay table in the principal room, at which the Ballantynes, Hogg the poet and some others besides myself were present. There was a great variety of songs and before parting the gentlemen were so enthusiastic with music and claret, that the song of 'weel may we a be' *was sung no less than five times, and God save the King about four times in full cry. The company sat till 2 o'clock…"*

I make this correspondence and these relationships sound flippant, superficial – but to me they are evidence of deep friendships and I could have laboured the countless references to Border affairs; the appointments of clergy and schoolteachers; the promotion of theatre; of business from circular saws to railways. I have made no mention of the tangible emotion as he writes to comfort people in distress, how he was so evidently thrown by the deaths of people who he counted as his friends.

I have said nothing of the touching reminders of his infirmity. From his *Journal:*

"Do the Duchess's walk by the Nith – fall in with the young ladies but their donkeys out walked me and I began to think on my conscience that a snail put on training might out walk me. I must lay the old salve to the old sore and be thankful to walk at all."

How one longs for the presence of a Scott today, facing the rollercoaster of rich times and now lean times, triumph and adversity with humour and grit, honesty and self deprecation, rolling up his sleeves but never giving up his friends let alone those less fortunate than himself. And that is what he expected from others too. Of young Walter Francis he wrote:

"It delights me to hear this hopeful young nobleman talk with sense and firmness about his plans for improving his estate and employing the poor."

That last word is significant. How wrong it would be not to recognise those principles of social justice, compassionate conservatism to use today's language, which underlie so much of Scott's writing. This starts early on when, as an enthusiastic young dragoon, he experienced the reality of taking on, albeit with only the flat of his sword, the Meal rioters in 1802:

"Truth to say it was a dreadful feeling to use violence against a people in real and absolute want of food."

I was also struck to read the third of the lecturers in the University of Edinburgh's series begun in 1940: Grierson, Edwin Muir and then G.M. Young. Young, the great historian of the 19th century who died in 1959 and whose *Portrait of an Age* Simon Schama has called *" the greatest long essay ever written"*. Young's 1946 lecture

draws attention to what he calls *"a letter of quite extraordinary interest"* from Scott in 1806 to Charles, then Lord Dalkeith, analysing the reasons for depopulation in the Borders:

"Without in the least realising he was doing anything out of the common, Scott has here furnished the social historian with an almost perfect example of method and presentation. The theme is the depopulation of the Southern Uplands….and there can hardly be one element, one operating cause for which Scott has not allowed, to which he has not assigned due weight in a letter, only four or five pages long, but written with that full ease which gives assurance of a vast reserve of knowledge behind every word."

I wish time allowed me to quote from it for it is so striking in its balance and honesty, with no holds barred for the ducal heir. He *"could name many farms where the old people remember twenty smoking chimneys and now there are two."*

Young ended his lecture with a passage from Scott's *Culloden Papers*, an article for the Quarterly Review in 1817, which Young prefaces saying: *"Clanship was no more, and the passage in which Scott recounts its end is one of the most moving, and in its eloquence, one of the truest things ever written in history."*

Scott speaks highly of certain landlords but he ends in lamenting: *"the unrelenting avarice which will be one day found to have been as short sighted as it is unjust and selfish…. the pibroch may sound through the deserted regions, but the summons will remain unanswered. The children who have left her will re-echo from a distant shore, the sounds with which they took leave of their own – Ha til, Ha til, Ha til, Mi tulidh – we return, we return, we return, no more!"*

Let us hope that in this of all years he is wrong, that the streams of visitors Scotland needs from her diaspora are forthcoming – but please let us see, in writings on the subject, the profound awareness and humanity of Scott. Let us acknowledge that he is just as entitled as Burns to an honoured place in the Homecoming celebration and, I would venture to say, just as entitled to a proper home. Of course for Scott there is a home- a real one that he himself made, Abbotsford, which his spirit has never left, thanks most especially to those wonderful sisters with whom we here will forever associate it, Patricia and Jean Maxwell-Scott.

Abbotsford doesn't need a spanking new museum but it does need nurturing and support. I hope I am not overstepping the mark in asking this Centenary Dinner of this Club to remember the serious nurturing which a public spirited body of Trustees is now embarked on. We have just 12 years, not long in practice, to get it really right – for in 2021 we too will have a 250th Anniversary to celebrate.

At Abbotsford last October, in an inspirational address in which he spoke of Scott as the most influential Scotsman who ever lived, Sir Eric Anderson reminded his listeners that *"civilised countries cherish the houses connected with their great creative geniuses."*

Abbotsford is not just a house. It is the essence of Scott, the repository of everything collected by the great creator and explorer of the antiquity and minstrelsy of his homeland and especially his Border land. Within each room, each artefact, there are stories waiting to be brought to life. And what a power objects can have, a rare power to cast a spell. For me *this* is such a one, this leather-bound manuscript which passed on January 10th 1805 from Walter Scott's hands to those of Harriet Dalkeith, with, as his inscription inside says, some ornamentation incomplete, *"for the transcriber had to work by candle light."*

It is her copy of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* and you will forgive me for ending with a few words from it. Although there is much about Yarrow and the home in whose library the book rests, sweet Bowhill, it's a passage instead whose words seem to me to have echoes for now. Words that reflect perhaps what the Homecoming is about, what those concerned with Abbotsford could achieve, what this historic Club represents – or maybe it's just a thoughtful motto for each and every one of us:

True love's the gift which God has given
To man alone beneath the heaven:
It is not fantasy's hot fire,
Whose wishes soon as granted fly;
It liveth not in fierce desire,
With dead desire it doth not die;
It is the secret sympathy,
The silver link, the silken tie,
Which heart to heart and mind to mind
In body and in soul can bind.

The Lay of the Last Minstrel. Canto v. Stanza 13.

Let us remember in heart and mind the wonder of Abbotsford, the work of those most dedicated of descendants, Patricia and Dame Jean. Could I ask you now to stand and raise your glasses in this Centenary Dinner year – to the greatest of our countrymen – Sir Walter Scott.

After His Grace's toast, *Sir Walter Scott* (in the shape of Scott Moffat), appeared in traditional costume and delivered the following speech written for the occasion by Prof. David Purdie:

Your Royal Highness, Your Graces, My Lords, Ladies & Gentlemen

(*Turning to Duke Richard*)

Your Grace,

My warmest thanks to your Grace – as the present Head of the House of Scott – for that fluent and eloquent toast to my Memory. It is a great pleasure to be here this night and above all to be *warm* at last – after a hundred and sixty years in the open – under that lofty, but oh so *draughty* Monument down the street there….

(*turning to HRH*) – It does my Soul good to see your Royal Highness here – and it is just *remarkable* to be gazing up at your three times great-grandmother who, as young Princess Victoria, I met at Brighton when a guest of her parents, the Duke and Duchess of Kent.

And indeed I was perhaps as close as a Subject might *be* in my day – to your royal ancestor George, the Prince Regent. He it was who advocated my Baronetcy to his father the King in 1818 and he it was, four years later as King himself, George IV, who asked me to organise his splendid and successful royal visit to this great city of Edinburgh – the first by a reigning monarch for nearly two centuries.

When I boarded the royal yacht – the *Royal George* – in the river Forth that day and was announced, I heard the King exclaim: *"Sir Walter Scott? The man in Scotland I most wish to see!" Very* kind. That visit, during which His Majesty was a guest of the 5th Duke at Dalkeith Palace, was to establish a firm and mutual affection between the Royal Family and the people of Scotland which continues to this very day. And in recent years, *no one* has been more assiduous in promoting that most necessary relationship, Ma'am, – than you yourself.

And when my health was failing fast in 1831, the new King – William the Fourth – arranged with the Admiralty to make the frigate HMS *Barham* available for my last visit to the Mediterranean and then to Italy – after which I came slowly home to Abbotsford – and to lay my bones with my Scott ancestors at the Abbey of Dryburgh.

(turning towards Duke Richard):

Among those who mourned that day was your Grace's noble ancestor Walter, 5th Duke of Buccleuch and 7th of Queensberry, whose succession at the age of just 13 years had followed the tragically early death in Lisbon of his father Duke Charles.

Tragic also for me, for he was both my chieftain - *and* my *great* friend. With him I had served in the Royal Edinburgh Light Dragoons. Through his support and that of his father I had the Sheriffdom of Selkirkshire. But, above all, his friendship and good counsel I had enjoyed almost all the days of his adult life. And sixty years after my passing, it was to be his grandson the 6th Duke who unveiled my Memorial in *Poets' Corner* in the South Transept of Westminster Abbey.

That place I have the honour to share with men whose work I loved; with Wordsworth whom I knew well; with Burns whom I met but once here in Edinburgh – and with Will Shakespeare whom I venerated. In the Abbey that day the Duke said that he was one of the few men living who had been in *my* company, and probably the *only* man living who had met me and yet had *no* memory of it! For it was at his christening, when he was but an infant – and I had but one year left…..

The Duke concluded his speech by observing that myself and the 4th Duke had been the greatest friends – and that for his grandmother, when Countess of Dalkeith, I had written a great poem – the poem through which my name first became known in the world….

Your Royal Highness, Your Graces, my Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen, I must return to my shades. However, in the presence tonight of the gracious Duchess of Buccleuch, herself a former Countess of Dalkeith, may I take my leave of her – and this fair company – with a few lines from that same poem, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel,* composed indeed for Countess Harriet, beloved wife of my friend. Here the Minstrel sings of the lovely Yarrow Valley in the Borders – and of *your* own great house and home there – at Bowhill……

So pass'd the winter's day. But still,
When Summer smil'd on sweet Bowhill,
And July's eve, with balmy breath,
Wav'd the blue-bells on Newark heath;

When throstles sang in Harehead-shaw,
And corn was green on Carterhaugh,
And flourish'd, broad, Blackandro's oak,
The aged Harper's soul awoke!

Then would he sing achievements high,
And circumstance of Chivalry,
Till the rapt traveller would stay,
Forgetful of the closing day;

And noble youths, the strain to hear,
Forsook the hunting of the deer;

(spoken slowly) And Yarrow, as he roll'd along,
Bore burden to the Minstrel's song….

(He then bowed to the Company and exited).

The Chairman then thanked *Sir Walter* and intimated that HRH would be leaving shortly. Lt.Cdr. Dairmid Gunn then delivered a short but eloquent Vote of Thanks to the Chairman, the Hon. Secretary, the Staff of the New Club and finally to all who had contributed to the Club's successful and enjoyable Centenary Dinner.

Annual General Meeting,

Thursday, 14th May 2009

As was customary, the A.G.M. was held in the Long Room in the New Club, 86 Princes Street, Edinburgh. This unfortunately was the only customary event of the evening. While it was understood that a major change in the secretariat of the club would occur, it was certainly not expected that the meeting would be without a chairman. Most regretfully the intended chairman, Professor David Purdie, was stricken down with a recurrence of a major illness and at the very moment of 7pm when he should have been occupying the chair in the New Club he was occupying a bed in the Western General Hospital. It was quickly appreciated that the chairman would not be available and Lt.Cdr. Dairmid Gunn kindly agreed to act in his place and to preside over some 38 members who were present.

After Cdr. Gunn had explained the contretemps and extended a welcome to members the hon. secretary intimated apologies on behalf of Dame Mary Corsar, Chay Corsar, Lord Lothian and Mary Rankin.

The Minutes of the A.G.M. held on 14th May 2008, which had been circulated, were taken as read and approved on the motion of Alex. Currie, seconded by Michael McIntosh Reid.

The acting chairman suggested deferring the item *Chairman's Remarks* until later in the meeting in the hope that Professor Purdie would subsequently arrive. This was agreed to. In the event, as mentioned above, Professor.Purdie did not appear, the item was dispensed with and the rest of the Agenda resumed.

Professor Ian Campbell proposed that Dr. Iain G. Brown be appointed President for the year 2009/10; this was seconded by Fraser Elgin and agreed unanimously.

It was announced that Bill Lynch and Michael McIntosh Reid had retired from Council; they were thanked by the Chairman for their services over many years. The remaining members, whose names were read out by the hon. secretary, were all re-appointed. The following new members of Council were appointed: Martin Philip, Peter Garside, and Bill Bell.

The Honorary Treasurer, Mr Lee Simpson, in presenting the accounts for the year to 31st December 2008, highlighted various items in the accounts including the fact that the cost of the meetings was running at a slight loss because of free events, including the celebration of Scott's birthday, and covering the costs of guests and their expenses He also expressed appreciation for the grant of £1000 from the Bank of Scotland; generous donations from members were also much appreciated. He reported that there had been a larger than usual surplus, due partly to several life memberships, and elimination of the cost of the Bulletin thanks to the generous donation from Professor Purdie. Due to several donations

amounting to £1600, the continuance of the Bulletin in its present form was assured for a few more years. He asked for the approval of the accounts, which had been certified by the Very Rev. Allan MacLean of Dochgarroch. Adoption of the accounts was carried unanimously.

The Hon. Secretary reported that several meetings were being held later in the year which could interest club members. These were as follows:
Thursday, 18 June in Parliament Hall from 6.30pm to 8.30pm. Fundraising Event, with drinks, on behalf of the Trustees of Abbotsford. Ticket £25.
Saturday, 20 June Royal Overseas League. Dorothy Dunnett Literary Association Lunch. With John Guy as the main speaker.
Thursday 2nd July. At Abbotsford. 9.30am to 4.30pm. Antiques Road Show.
Friday 14th August. At 11 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh - 10am to 4pm. Lecture by John Milne on *Sir Walter Scott and the Covenanters.* Fee £30.

In intimating the retiral of Fraser Elgin as hon. secretary the Chairman remarked on his many years of devoted service as secretary, treasurer and as both combined and expressed the profound appreciation of members. He conveyed their best wishes for a long and happy retirement from his onerous position and trusted that he would still be around at club meetings. A bottle of champagne was then presented to him as a personal token from the absent chairman, Professor Purdie.

Before proposing the appointment of his successor, Fraser Elgin reminisced briefly on the past 27 years or so, and the truth of the adage *Tempora mutantur nos et mutamur in illis.* Some changes were of great advantage – self-sealing stamps and envelopes, computer use in dealing with administration. Other changes were initiated such as the holding of the AGM independently of the annual dinner, the enlargement of activities of the Club largely aided by the late Dr Bernard Brown, the attainment of charitable status, the adoption of the New Club as the main venue for meetings and, of course, the introduction of the Club website, for which enormous thanks was due to Lee Simpson for his expertise and industry. The site had to be the envy of many other clubs.

There had been two major events in the period, the celebration of the centenary of the Club in 1994 when the volume *Talking about Scott* was introduced and, of course, the Centenary Annual Dinner when the Club was privileged and fortunate to have HRH the Princess Royal as the guest of honour. It was felt universally that this dinner had been a great and most successful occasion. Mr Elgin had had the great pleasure of having HRH as his dinner companion on one side and her Grace the Duchess of Buccleuch on the other. It had been a memorable way to end a quarter of a century's service with the Club.

Mr Elgin went on to thank the succession of excellent chairmen and a lady chairman, and all members of Council for their support, and after having alluded to the pleasure he had had in meeting many eminent people and making friends within the Club, ended his reminiscences by reading out a delightful letter he

had received from the lady-in-waiting to HRH expressing HRH'S appreciation and enjoyment of the evening.

In proposing Miss Joan Dunnett as his successor he knew that with the continuing support of the hon. treasurer the Club would be in good hands. She had been a regular attender at meetings over a good number of years and had considerable knowledge of Scott and literature in general. Mr Elgin's proposal for Miss Dunnett to become Hon. Secretary was seconded by Lee Simpson and approved unanimously.

The appointment of Lee Simpson as Events Convener was proposed by Diarmid Gunn and seconded by Michael McIntosh Reid.

The meeting concluded with A Vote of Thanks to the Chair.

Abbotsford, Past, Present and Future

Following on the conclusion of the A.G.M. it had been hoped to set the scene for an illustrated lecture under the above title by Jacquie Wright, Executive Manager at Abbotsford; unfortunately the projector to be used was not available due to the contretemps already mentioned. Members were most interested to learn the up-to-date situation regarding Sir Walter's home and were suitaby rewarded for having endured the A.G.M. by a lecture which lost little from the absence of slides. The lecture was in the following terms:

Tonight I am going to have to restrain myself from talking about what has become my favourite subject – Sir Walter Scott, and concentrate on my next most favourite subject his 'Conundrum Castle', Abbotsford.

My first thoughts went something like: "What am I going to tell them that they don't already know?" However, on reflection I realised that, whilst you may all know a great deal about Abbotsford's past, there will be much that you may not know about how it operates today and the developments for its future.

Scott once remarked: "Whenever a Scotsman gets his head above water, he immediately turns it to land," and in his case it would be more apposite to say that land went to his head.

Scott purchased a spot he coveted on the Tweed in 1811 known as Clarty Hole between Melrose and Selkirk, and the site where the last of the great Border clan battles was fought. It consisted of a meadow along the bank of the river, a small farmhouse and a hundred acres. Having once been owned by Melrose Abbey, the name of Abbotsford was substituted.

He paid £4200 for the privilege of becoming a laird and to quote him: "I wished to buy Abbotsford and settle myself where I could spit into the Tweed, without which I think that I could hardly have been quite happy anywhere."

From the moment that Scott settled at Abbotsford his eyes were set on the horizon, and by the end of 1815 he had doubled his property. More and more land was added and by the time of his death in 1832 the estate numbered 1400 acres.

While his grounds were increasing his house was expanding and in 1816 he decided to add four rooms to the corrage, saying "I should wish this to be rather nattily done."

The architects were Edward Blore and William Atkinson and the builder was John Smith of nearby Darnick, and he was in continual consultation with his friends Daniel Terry and George Bullock concerning fixtures, fittings and furniture.

Abbotsford was filled with Scott's enormous collection of historical curiosities, and his collection of books, meticulously placed in his Library and Study, have

now been recognised as one of a handful on the planet which are intact as the collector placed them on the shelves.

Abbotsford was not finished until the end of 1824 when a huge party was thrown for New Year. The house was always full of visitors, bedrooms were reoccupied the instant they were vacated, and Charlotte Scott, who had to cater for this endless stream of guests remarked that Abbotsford was a hotel in all but name. As a rule the visitors to Abbotsford left it with regret, with Scott being very much the king in his castle and a wonderful host.

After Scott's death a stream of eminent visitors flocked to the house, including Queen Victoria, William Wordsworth, Washington Irving and Charles Dickens to name a few.

In the 1850's the family, by then James Robert Hope and Charlotte Lockhart Scott, had decided to enlarge the house further in order to avoid the constant scrutiny of visitors. They also added the Catholic Chapel following their conversion to the Catholic faith during the Catholic revival.

More familiar figures to you all will be Patricia and Jean Maxwell-Scott, Patricia running the house from 1954 until 1998 and then Jean from 1998 until her death in May 2004. Their task was a hard one, particularly for Jean, who really had not been involved until the unexpected death of her sister.

Jean Maxwell-Scott's will did not give the Executors a clear decision as to what was to happen to Abbotsford, and they had three options:

A member of the family – 41 in total
The NTS
Independent Charitable Trust

In the end they decided to go down the trust route – risky but with the freedom to treat Abbotsford in the unique way which it deserved.

There was also the question of the Collections. The books (over 9000) and various collection items came into the care of the F of A in 1954 when the Entail was broken. The House, Faculty and Universities now work in harmony, with the Library Research Trust being directly responsible for the stockchecking, cataloguing and conservation of the books.

The Abbotsford Trust was formed in 2008 and there is a Board of seven Trustees, with an Executive Board (Andrew Douglas-Home, Tony Taylor and myself) responsible for the actual management and development plans.

The financial position of the trust is precarious, and reserves are small. It was decided that if we wanted to save Abbotsford we would have to take action immediately. Currently a range of commercial activities take place at Abbotsford in order to develop income and they include: weddings, events, retail, catering, filming.

A new guide book and corporate image was developed. A website was designed and has proved very successful. As these things are constantly moving on, a new website will be launched in a couple of weeks time which offers more information. A meeting/training room which can also be used for catering has been created in SWS's bedroom and dressing room which also brings in additional income.

It was decided that to move Abbotsford forward into the 21st century we would need a huge investment. The house is not about to fall down, but restoration is required in many areas – nothing has been spent on the interior for around 60 years and whilst Historic Scotland has been more than generous with grants for roof, chimney and rot repairs, plus a partially rebuilt garden wall and a rebuilt bartisan, the interior needs re-wiring, re-plumbing and re-thinking.

The visitor expectation has changed radically and we are not able to offer facilities which match the international stature of SWS' home.

At this point the decision was taken to commission a feasibility study, looking at what might be possible and more to the point – how much it would cost. In all of this the trustees have been in no doubt that we must protect Scott's vision of Abbotsford and his collections for the public and advance the education of the public in relation to the life and works of Scott and the history of Abbotsford.

Following on from the Feasibility Study, the decision was taken to go for HLF funding. If anyone here is familiar with HLF applications they will know that it is never a straightforward affair. However, after about 12 months of work with our consultants, we were ready in November last year. Our application was for £4.5m of a £10m project.

The Stage 1 application was accepted by the Scottish HLF committee and then went to the main UK Board in London in March. As a result of the 2012 Olympics, the pot of money available for the entire UK had been reduced to £10m, with £41m projects bidding for it. We were amazed and delighted that our application was accepted, and not only that, the full amount was offered – £4.48m. Of course we have to go through Stage 2, when the detail is put into the project.

The project includes:

Restoration to the house, interior and exterior
6 bedrooms, 5* and all facilities in the private wing
Redevelopment of the basement to include an education suite and offices, facilities, etc
Work on the landscape and interpretation for various length walking trails
Children's activity areas
A new reception building and large carpark which will incorporate
Restaurant with terrace
Interpretation of SWS life

A film
An area for multi-purpose seminars, exhibitions, talks, etc
Retail

The educational role of Abbotsford will change with the introduction of programmes for children of all ages and adults. Governance will change and is changing already and we will be drawing on the expertise of our national institutions (who are keen to assist) and others in this development.

We hope to attract our old friends and new ones and to revitalise the public's perception of Scott and his literary and heritage legacy, without destroying the essence of Abbotsford.

Timescale: start summer 2010, completion by early 2013.

So – where is the money coming from?

A variety of sources

HLF
Historic Scotland
Scottish Enterprise
SBC
The Scottish Government
Fundraising: appointment of a fundraiser and the campaign plus friends organisation

I will finish with this thought: The future of this project will determine the future of Abbotsford – we are determined to raise the money and complete the project.

The Great Unknown:
Scott as Poet, Critic and Historian

Ronald Silvester, a member of the club, gave an address to some 35 members in the New Club on Thursday, June 4th 2009. Ronald read English at Oxford and did a PhD on Tobias Smollett, though his main passion has always been Scott. He lectured to the Club on "The Wizard of the North – Confounding the Detractors" .a few years back. The address which follows was much appreciated by members and the evening was suitably terminated with some wine and canapés.

The last time I had the honour of addressing the Club, I was engaged in the vindication of *The Waverley Novels*, a comparatively easy undertaking since, after all, they speak for themselves.

This evening, however, I have undertaken a more ambitious task: the rehabilitation of Scott as poet, critic and historian. In the time available to us this evening, I can only touch on a few facets of what is an extensive subject.

Some years ago, The Times Literary Supplement, reflecting on the collapse of Scott's reputation, dubbed him "The Disinherited Baronet"; and as far as his poetry, criticism and historical writing are concerned, James Ballantyne's title for Scott, The Great Unknown, has become literally accurate: Scott's heritage has indeed never been fully restored to him.

Turning first, then, to Scott's poetry, there are several reasons for his unpopularity. Andrew Lang wrote: 'The Critic who would praise without reserve the poetry of Scott has not only all the other critics against him, but has to reckon with Sir Walter himself.' David Cecil, a warm admirer of the novels, dismissed Scott the poet with the patronising comment: '…his rousing ballad tales in verse are poetry for boys rather than men'. And, as Lang hinted, Scott himself did nothing to defend his cause, with his habitual modesty rating his poetry inferior to that of Wordsworth and Byron.

It must also be said that Scott's approach to writing poetry was as cavalier and pragmatic as it was to authorship in general. Reviewing Jane Austen in *The Quarterly*, he wrote: 'the immediate and peculiar object of the novelist, as of the poet, (is) to please.' His object was to entertain. This accounts for the complaint that Scott had no overt moral lesson to teach us – a criticism strongly expressed, for example, by Carlyle and Bagehot in the 19th century. Influential critics from Arnold onwards increasingly sought to formulate prescriptive definitions of what constituted 'good' literature. Arnold made the seemingly unexceptional assertion that the aim of criticism was 'to see the object as in itself it clearly is', but finished up by concluding that Chaucer was not a 'classic'! T S Eliot came up with such vague and pretentious terms as 'dissociation of sensibility' and 'objective correlative' which led him to condemn Milton and to pronounce *Hamlet* 'an

artistic failure'. In much the same way, the arrogant F R Leavis sought to re-invent the canon of English Literature by simply denigrating those writers who did not reflect his theories.

Another theorist was Wordsworth. In his famous Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, he asserted: 'It may be safely affirmed that there neither is, nor can be, any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition'. The absurdity of this pronouncement is demonstrated by Wordsworth's own best poetry, *Tintern Abbey,* for example. I find it interesting to note that in his Journal Scott remarked: 'I do not at all acquiesce in (Wordsworth's) system of poetry and I think that he has injured his own fame by adhering to it'. And, indeed, the consequence for Wordsworth of his theory was that no poet of comparable standing produced as much doggerel as The Sage of Grasmere, as he demonstrated in *The Idiot Boy:*

"She pats the Pony, where or when
She knows not, happy Betty Foy!
The little Pony glad may be
But he is milder far than she,
You hardly can perceive his joy."

This is not poetry: rather it recalls the plodding versification of the egregious William Magonagall who began his celebration of Edinburgh with the following:

"Beautiful city of Edinburgh!
Where the tourist can drown his sorrow
By viewing your monuments and statues fine
During the lovely summer-time.
I'm sure it will his spirits cheer
As Sir Walter Scott's monument he draws near,
That stands in East Princes Street
Amongst flowery gardens, fine and neat."

Well, whatever may be said of Scott's poetry, he was never guilty of anything quite like that!

And let me make a further point in connection with Scott's poor standing as a poet. The prevailing view of what constituted poetry in the 20th century was crucially shaped by the two World Wars. The most influential poet and critic of the time, T S Eliot, and others of his contemporaries, dubbed "the doleful writers" by A J P Taylor, were writing in an age of disillusion, pessimism and brittle cynicism, portraying as bleak a world as Graham Greene and Aldous Huxley did in their novels, a world moreover, threatened by the rise of the sinister ideologies of Nazism and Fascism. Scott himself, of course, lived through two decades of war with France and was by no means detached from current events as, for example, was Jane Austen. Indeed, he served with great enthusiasm as the Quartermaster of the volunteer force of the Royal Edinburgh Light Dragoons. Nevertheless, his poetry was not shaped by the struggle with Napoleon; his

inspiration was that of the legends, traditions and characters of his beloved Borders which, by the time he found fame as a poet in his own right, he had already celebrated in *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border.*

Writing of the novels, Oliver Elton commented: '…(Scott) has the huge advantage (over Balzac) of making the reader happier.' We might add that he also had this advantage over many modern poets. Edgar Johnson indeed asserted that Scott was a pessimist; but this cannot go unchallenged. Of course, Scott viewed some of the developments of his time with deep apprehension; but the overwhelming impression we derive from his writing, with its vigour, colour and human perception, is a positive one: in short, he makes his readers feel happier. He was far removed from the anxieties, gloom and perplexity which have characterised so much modern literature. With Sir Walter, we are in a very different world from that of *The Waste Land* and Scott would have been an unhappy guest at Eliot's *Cocktail Party*.

Scott first found literary fame – and financial success – with *The Lay of the Last Minstrel, Marmion* and *The Lady of the Lake*. The last of these was published in 1810, by which time he was being superseded as a popular poet by the flamboyant Byron, and he was soon to find his true vocation as The Author of Waverley.

The Lay is based on the Border legend of the goblin, Gilpin Horner, and is a convoluted tale of tortured love and revenge. Like all Scott's narrative poems, it is episodic. Critics have referred to the poem's improbable plotting and faulty execution. But in his Introduction, Scott had himself said that his object was 'the description of scenery and manners rather than a combined and regular narrative.'

And to criticise Romantic literature for improbability is illogical: the improbable, the supernatural and the macabre are, after all, some of the defining characteristics of the period, owing a great deal to Gothic romance, with which Scott had flirted in his earliest verse. At his best, Scott could produce sinister effects very successfully, as he demonstrated in *Wandering Willie's Tale* and the haunting ballad, *Proud Maisie*. The implausible easily slips into absurdity as even Keats demonstrated in *Isabella, or the Pot of Basil*, in which the distraught heroine preserves the head of her murdered lover in a plant pot:

> "And so she pined, and so she died forlorn,
> Imploring for her basil to the last"

Scott is never guilty of this laughable mawkishness.

So, let us forget Gilpin Horner, who is more on the level of The White lady of Avenel in *The Monastery*, and rather enjoy the magic of: 'fair Melrose' in the 'pale moonlight…'

Marmion, with its vivid account of the tragic battle of Flodden, is Scott's finest long poem. It makes some attempt at characterisation, has epic narrative pace

and a brooding sense of impending disaster, as well as memorable passages of Scott's personal reflections.

The ambivalent character of *Marmion* supplied Byron with material for witty ridicule in *English Bards and Scottish Reviewers,* and – writing before he and Scott became cordial friends – referred to him as 'Apollo's venal son'. This was one of the very few occasions when Scott reacted to criticism, and even then he resented the charge of venality, rather than the literary attack. The power of *Marmion* is undeniable; had Scott written it a decade later as a novel, we might well have had another *Ivanhoe*.

The Lady of the Lake, another tale of tangled love is even more convoluted than *The Lay* or *Marmion*. And as with the *Lay*, its incidental features are its most attractive qualities. Scott never bettered its natural description and lyrics like *He's gone on the mountain* and the elegiac *Soldier Rest.*

The patriotism which informs all Scott's finest creative work and was the driving force behind *The Minstrelsy*, found eloquent and much-anthologised, expression in *The Lay* with the lines beginning:

> "O Caledonia! stern and wild,
> Meet nurse for a poetic child! . . .*and so on…*

Scott's descriptive powers, which can sometimes produce 'longueurs' in the novels, are concentrated by the discipline of verse, and account for some of his most striking poetry. In this, as in other respects, it seems to me that *Marmion* contains his finest work:

> "But scant three miles the band had rode,
> When o'er a height they pass'd,
> And, sudden, close before them show'd
> His towers, Tantallon vast;
> Broad, massive, high, and stretching far,
> And held impregnable in war.

And let me remind you of the Homeric narrative power of the last Canto of *Marmion*:

> "By this, though deep the evening fell,
> Still rose the battle's deadly swell,
> For still the Scots, around their King,
> Unbroken, fought in desperate ring…

And so on to that last dying fall:

> Afar, the Royal Standard flies,
> And round it toils, and bleeds, and dies.
> Our Caledonian pride!

And let me also say a word on Scott's technical skill. His language is a mixture of the much-maligned poetic diction of the 18th century and the pounding

octosyllabics which give those lines, for instance, such powerful effect and which owe much to the ballad tradition. In contrast to his account of the battle of Flodden, consider the following which combines elegant phrasing with sharp observation:

"The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold,
And wraps him closer from the cold;
His dogs, no merry circles wheel,
But, shivering, follow at his heel;
A cowering glance they often cast,
And deeper moans the gathering blast."

Earlier I mentioned T S Eliot. Now, this is his idea of a simile:

"Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherised upon a table".

And here is a simile from *Marmion*:

"While thus in Marmion's bosom strove
Repentance and reviving love,
Like whirlwinds, whose contending sway
I've seen Loch Venachar obey…"

Scott is evocative; Eliot, straining for modernist originality, merely produces the bizarre.

Before leaving Scott the poet, let me make a more general point about Scott's relatively low reputation as a poet in a period that was particularly rich in poetic genius. C M Bowra, who managed to write a whole book on the Romantic Imagination without mentioning Scott, said that the defining quality of the Romantics was their use of the imagination. Just as significant, however, and what is perhaps a more crucial characteristic, was the poet's obsession with self. The justice of this generalisation is evident, for example, in Byron's flamboyant self-publicity as Childe Harold; in Shelley's chaotic life; and in the somewhat priggish tone we find in Wordsworth.

This self-indulgence is totally absent in Scott whose reserve was such an important aspect of his personality. The late Professor Robson put this side of Scott neatly, saying of him: 'although in his autobiographical publication Scott speaks to his readers with manly frankness, he is never intimate.'

Gentlemanly reticence is out of fashion in the modern world; but it is a quality as evident in Scott the poet as in Scott the novelist.

Contrast the personal tones of Wordsworth and Scott when speaking of themselves. First, listen to Wordsworth recalling his youth in *The Prelude*:

And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime

Of something far more deeply interfused…
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things."

And now turn to where Scott fondly recalls his days at Sandyknowe:

"Thus while I ape the measure wild
Of lakes that charm'd me yet a child,
Rude though they be, still with the chime
Return the thoughts of early time;
And feelings, roused in life's first day,
Glow in the line, and prompt the lay.
Then rise those crags, that mountain tower,
Which charm'd my fancy's wakening hour.
Though no broad river swept along,
To claim, perchance, heroic song;…
Yet was poetic impulse given,
By the green hill and clear blue heaven.

These passages are on the same theme: the recollection of childhood; and yet there is a subtle and persistent difference. With Wordsworth there is a preoccupation with self, with what Keats referred to as Wordsworth's 'egotistical sublime'. He emphasises how unique he was to experience these exalted feelings. In contrast, Scott, although just as personal, is not insistently drawing attention to himself.

Scott makes a revealing remark in his *Life of Smollett*, when he writes: 'Every successful novelist must be more or less a poet.' Scott was a true poet; and without the poet we might never have had the great novelist that he became.

Mention of Smollett brings us conveniently to Scott's criticism, which is even more neglected than the poetry. As with every area of his work, its sheer bulk is intimidating and not easily accessible to Johnson's 'common reader'. And it is with the common reader that Scott is concerned. He is not preoccupied with arcane theories about literature: he has broad standards, like his successors among the critics of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, who approached literature with the object of appreciating their subjects. Scholars like Oliver Elton, George Saintsbury and Arthur Quiller-Couch – 'Q" – produced works of critical insight which are above all readable. By contrast, there developed in the early and middle years of the last century, a group of very different critics, men such as F R Leavis, William Empson and I A Richards with a predominantly cerebral approach to the art of literature; while the whole field of literary discourse became encumbered with the irrelevancies and obscurities of semiotics, structuralism and post-structuralism, all expressed in impenetrable and misused technical language. The gentleman-scholar, now to be considered an expression of opprobrium, was dispatched: the current *Oxford Short History of English*

Literature, I regret to say, dismisses the elegant 'Q' with a passing reference to his 'well-bred vacuousness'.

That excessively intellectualised and dogmatic approach is totally alien to what Hume called 'conversable' writing. And Scott, writing in the tradition of Dryden and Johnson, is eminently 'conversable'. His approach is direct and practical; it is that of a formidably well-read professional, with a remarkably catholic taste, a phenomenal memory, a tireless energy, and a judgement of writing which is always persuasive and unfailingly generous – perhaps too generous - to his subjects. He may lack the incisiveness of Johnson, but he is also without Johnson's acerbity and rigid classical principles.

The extent of the literary criticism is daunting. It is to be found mainly in his editions of Dryden and Swift; in the periodical reviews, many of which were republished in *The Miscellaneous Prose Works*; in the Introductions to the Magnum Opus edition of *The Waverley Novels*; and in *The Lives of the Novelists*. The chief interest of the last lies in Scott's accounts of his 18th-century predecessors: Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, Tobias Smollett and Laurence Sterne.

Scott's assessment of Richardson defines precisely his contribution to the English novel:

> "…he tore from his personages those painted vizards, which concealed, under a clumsy and affected disguise, everything like the natural lineaments of the human countenance".

Scott's praise for Richardson is the more remarkable because he is writing of a novelist whose style is as far removed from his own as was that of Jane Austen. Scott the novelist is often dismissed as being boring; but if you compare a passage of dialogue from *The Heart of Midlothian* with, let us say, something from *Clarissa* or *Sir Charles Grandison*, you will be tempted to agree with Dr Johnson's comment:

> "Why, Sir, if you were to read Richardson for the story, your impatience would be so much fretted that you would hang yourself."

And Scott, not wearing his editorial hat, revealed his own more instinctive feelings when in one of his letters, he called Richardson 'a sad dog'.

The format of the *Lives*, with their combination of biography and criticism, following the tradition set by Johnson's *Lives of the Poets,* is ideally suited to Scott's literary acumen and insight into human nature.

And with Fielding, Scott was in more congenial company: his account displays an empathy with the man which is absent from his comments on the personality of Richardson. He covers Fielding's bohemian way of life with candour, but without censoriousness. He does full justice to both the man and the writer, and notes the integrity which Fielding showed as an incorruptible Justice of the Peace.

The *Life of Smollett* is one of Scott's best pieces of criticism; it is an excellent account of Smollett, whose multifarious activities as poet, playwright, novelist,

editor, compiler and historian, prefigure, on a smaller scale, the career of Scott himself; and Scott clearly found his irascible fellow-Scot a congenial subject.

He writes with understanding of Smollett's ill-health and constant financial difficulties, and of his grief at the loss of his daughter. But he is not blind to Smollett's propensity to take and give offence, the latter characteristic involving Smollett in many literary and personal disputes, and in one case, landing him in prison for libel. And while Scott's distaste for some of Smollett's Hogarthian characteristics is obvious, this never detracts from his high opinion of his vigour and vividness as a writer.

With the *Life of Sterne*, we find Scott dealing with an author who, like Richardson, was in his method – if one can refer to 'method' in *Tristram Shandy* – totally different to his own. Some aspects of Sterne were clearly not to Scott's taste; nevertheless he captures the highly idiosyncratic style of Sterne, which, in essence, consists of the bizarre collocation of disparate images, the total absence of any logical narrative structure, and the portrayal of extremely eccentric characters. He sums up:

> '…(Sterne) may be at once recorded as one of the most affected, and one of the most simple writers – as one of the greatest plagiarists, and one of the most original geniuses, whom England has produced.'

One easily sees how the character of Walter Shandy would appeal to the creator of Jonathan Oldbuck, and to the author of that extraordinary exercise in self-mockery, *Reliquiae Trotcosiensis*, a title worthy of Sterne himself.

Scott's open-mindedness as a critic is illustrated by a comment he makes in connection with a forgotten novelist called Robert Bage, who was a warm admirer of the French Revolution. Scott says of himself:

> 'The Editor (of Ballantyne's Novelists) was never one of those who think that a good cause can suffer much by free discussion; and though differing entirely both from his political and theological talents, admitted all Bage's novels into the collection which he superintended, as works of talent and genius.'

Scott's achievement as a writer was not, of course, like that of Johnson, Hazlitt or Arnold, that of a critic. His genius lay elsewhere, but to ignore this aspect of his work is, as George Saintsbury put it, 'very unintelligent'.

And it seems to me, Ladies and Gentlemen, that to ignore Scott the historian is equally foolish. G M Trevelyan wrote:

> 'Walter Scott did more than any professed historian to alter mankind's vision of its past. Not only did he invent the historical novel, but he revolutionized the scope and study of history itself.'

Trevelyan pointed out that Scott's essential contribution to history is, nevertheless, to be found in Scott the novelist rather than Scott the historian. In

the great series of novels, from *Waverley* to *The Bride of Lammermuir*, he was drawing on the Scottish nation's tumultuous past – the fight for Independence, the religious and constitutional struggles of the 17th century, and the extinction of the Stuart dynasty – which had fashioned the Scotland of his day. The conflict of loyalties which forms the dominant theme of the novels is as relevant to Scotland – and to England – today, as it was from the 14th to the 18th centuries. Indeed, contemplating Scotland's history from Union to Devolution and the tensions, constitutional, fiscal and psychological, that are today developing on both sides of the Border, one could reverse Von Clausewitz's familiar dictum and conclude that north of the Tweed politics has become the continuance of war by other means.

But Scott's enduring vision would have been impossible without his wide historical knowledge, displayed most notably in *Tales of a Grandfather* and in the *Life of Napoleon.*

The *Tales* were written for Scott's grandson, Hugh Littlejohn Lockhart, who died aged 11 in 1831. But although written for a child, Scott's approach is never patronising; Scott never writes down to his grandson; he is, poignantly, educating the future man. In the Introduction to the Third Series, he states his purpose:

> 'What I have presumed to offer is a general, and, it is hoped, not an uninteresting selection of fact, which may at a future time form a secure foundation for political sentiments.'

Of course, he tells the boy colourful tales like that of Bruce's spider, or of Bruce and the bloodhound; but, importantly, he also includes the unromantic realities of the past, the 'Realpolitik' behind the generally accepted facts of history.

Scott's method as an historian is a combination of vigorous narrative, interspersed with vivid character sketches, anecdotes which illustrate the story, and the social and political background to the events he narrates. Throughout he maintains a strong storyline. He aims at impartiality; and a steady common sense informs his judgements.

Commenting, for example, on the principles of the French Revolution, he says:

> '…to erect a levelling system to place the whole mass of the people on the same footing… is a gross and ridiculous contradiction of the necessary progress of society. It is a fruitless attempt to wage war with the laws of Nature.'

As an example of Scott's historical style, consider this short paragraph pinpointing the fateful moment on the eve of Culloden:

> 'The Prince did not hesitate a moment which course to pursue. He entertained, like others who play for deep stakes, a tendency to fatalism, which had been fostered by his success at Preston and Falkirk, and he was

> determined, like a desperate gamester, to push his luck to extremity and he now summoned his detachments … to join his own standard at Inverness.'

Thus are the pivotal events in a nation's history determined.

What gives depth to Scott's account of the past is his awareness of the powerful currents under the surface of the sea of events. His approach is well illustrated by a comment he makes on Smollett as an historian:

> 'Smollett had no access to those hidden causes of events which time brings forth in the slow progress of ages; and his work is chiefly compiled from those documents of a public and general description, which often contain rather the colourable pretexts which statesmen are pleased to assign for their actions, than the real motives themselves.'

The periodic release, under The 30-year Rule of hitherto restricted Cabinet papers suggest that little has changed since that shrewd observation about 'the colourable pretexts' of politicians; a good example being what has subsequently come to light about Anglo-French collusion over Suez half a century ago.

And so Scott's account of the disastrous attempt to found a colony at Darien is a vivid record of what happened; it is also a candid description of the ruthless efforts of William III and the English government to frustrate the Scottish plans, in favour of English commercial interests.

When we come to the tortuous negotiations preceding the Act of Union, Scott exposes the bribery that London employed to push the measure through the Scottish Parliament. His contempt for the prominent men involved in this venality - Burns' 'parcel of rogues' - is forthright.

No event in Scotland's past lends itself to romantic swash-buckling storytelling as readily as The Forty-Five. Scott, of course, was very alive to this. But consider the account he gives of the political gyrations of Lord Lovat. His was no quixotic attachment to the Stuart cause, but cold-blooded calculation - or miscalculation, in view of his end on the scaffold. One reflects on the character of Fergus MacIver in *Waverley* and the grim irony that such a cynical politician should inspire unhesitating readiness for self-sacrifice among his devoted clansmen. It is when Scott places before us such paradoxes of human conduct that we recognise his calibre, not only as a novelist but also as an historian, whose interpretation of the past rings so true.

Scott's realistic insight into human affairs is nowhere better illustrated than in his account of 'The Forty-Five'. He concludes that had the Rebellion succeeded, it would inevitably have led to civil war. And the travesty of portraying Scott as a reactionary Tory cannot be sustained when we read what he had to say about the demise of the outdated clan system, one of the main consequences of Culloden. He realised that what he called 'the misuse of unlimited authority' by the clan chiefs had to end.

Scott's major work as an historian is his *Life of Napoleon*. This is a massive work in nine volumes and although well-received (except in France!) at the time, it has sunk into total neglect. Leslie Stephen said it had no 'serious historical value', and Sainte-Beuve, who hailed Scott the poet and novelist as 'un grand créateur…un peintre immortel de l'homme', said, in effect, that Sir Walter was out of his depth in French history. James Anderson, in his *Sir Walter Scott and History*, accuses Scott of being superficial, inaccurate and prejudiced.

All this does something of an injustice to Scott. Let us admit that an undertaking of such scope, covering as it does pre-Revolutionary Europe, the events of the French Revolution itself, and the whole course of Napoleon's career, one man could hardly, in the space of about two years, produce a work which would retain its authority in the sense that Gibbon's account of Rome remains authoritative. But let us also remember that Gibbon devoted more than two decades to his great undertaking, not two years.

In one of his letters, Scott referred to *Napoleon* as 'the most severe and laborious undertaking which choice or accident ever placed on my shoulders.' So let us also recall that the work was the product of a man in failing health, often extremely depressed, and one writing under immense financial pressures.

Hear also what Scott himself, in his characteristically modest way, had to say on the *Napoleon*. On December 22nd 1825, he wrote in his *Journal*:

> 'The story is so very interesting in itself, that there is no fear of the book answering. Superficial it must be, but I do not disown the charge. Better a superficial book, which brings well and strikingly together the known and acknowledged facts, than a dull, boring narrative, pausing to see further into a mill-stone at every moment than the nature of the mill-stone admits.'

In other words, he was, as usual, addressing the 'common reader'.

In 1896, David Douglas – an Edinburgh bookseller and editor of Scott's *Journal* – published a shortened extract of The Napoleon entitled *The Downfall of Napoleon* covering the emperor's career from Elba to St Helena. A reprint of this would help to do some justice to the extraordinary range of Scott's forgotten literary achievements.

Having said that, it is clear that *Tales of a Grandfather* is a more satisfactory historical work than the *Napoleon*, in the same way that *Waverley* is a greater novel than *Quentin Durward*. The reason is obvious: *Napoleon* was very hard work for him, and it shows in its undue length and prolixity, while the *Tales* dating from the same period of Scott's life, drew effortlessly on what was his national heritage and which he had been absorbing since those magical days at Smailholm.

Earlier I referred to a comment made by my old tutor, Wallace Robson. He also commented that speaking of a double life in connection with Sir Walter was inadequate; we should be speaking more of a quadruple life, so various were his

activities. John Morritt, Scott's long-standing friend and the dedicatee of *Rokeby*, described Scott's conversation as '…the whole encyclopaedia of life and nature'. This might well serve as a description of the extraordinary reach of Scott's genius as a poet, critic and historian.

And just as the range of his work, which I have attempted to sketch this evening, is greatly underrated, so is the complexity of Scott's character from which it sprang. The famous best-selling novelist and the genial host of Abbotsford concealed a deeply introspective, creative personality. I referred to Scott's reserve as a poet when writing of his personal feelings. But let us not mistake this for insensitivity or coldness. In 1817, the year in which he completed *Rob Roy*, and was wracked by the agony of gallstones, he wrote *The Sun upon the Weirdlaw Hill*, one of his finest short poems and one which confounds Cecil's remark about Scott's poetry. Let me quote the second stanza:

> With listless look along the plain,
> I see Tweed's silver current glide,
> And coldly mark the holy fane
> Of Melrose rise in ruin'd pride.
> The quiet lake, the balmy air,
> The hill, the stream, the tower, the tree, -
> Are they still such as once they were?
> Or is the dreary change in me?

In his presidential address to this Club in 1926, 'Q' said:

> "… always in reading Scott, in almost any dozen pages, say of *The Talisman* or of *Nigel*, we are haunted by undertones (and) overtones of Shakespeare."

Let me, therefore, conclude by quoting lines of Shakespeare which are surely a perfect description of The Wizard:

> 'His life was gentle, and the elements
> So mixed in him that Nature might stand up
> And say to all the world: 'This was a man!' '

Rob Roy Colloquium: Abbotsford

At 3pm on Saturday 20th June at Abbotsford, we enjoyed our second Colloquium. This time the subject was Rob Roy. *There were over 35 members present, Prof. David Purdie being in the Chair. He presented the following background to* Rob Roy *and then introduced Alasdair Hutton and Prof David Hewitt before they in turn gave their assessments. What followed was a very lively discussion. Tea and Sandwiches later gave us further stimulus.*

Background:

The contract for *Rob Roy* was signed by Scott and Constable (who suggested the title) in May 1817. When the Court of Session rose in July, Scott visited Rob Roy's cave at the head of Loch Lomond and Glen Falloch in order to refresh his grasp of the terrain around the outlaw's home and the scenes of his activities.

Work on the novel began in August 1817, but progress was hampered by repeated recurrences of severe biliary colic and jaundice, brought on by gallstones. This would have been treated today by cholecystectomy (gallbladder removal) but in Scott's day treatment involved Laudanum, and severe dietary restriction.

Laudanum (Tincture of Opium) contains morphine and heroin and, while a powerful analgesic, has serious side-effects including generalised pruritus (itching) constipation and physical addiction. Remarkably, it was under such difficult constraints that Scott produced this highly successful and readable novel. *Rob Roy* was finished by early December 1817 and was published on the 30th of the month. The first impression of 10,000 was gone within a fortnight - at which point Scott was restarting work on *The Heart of Midlothian.* He was particularly pleased to learn that in the New Year a cargo vessel left Leith for Tilbury carrying *only* copies of the book for the London market.

The critical reception of *Rob Roy* was generally positive. The only substantial stricture appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, whose editor, Jeffrey, observed that Diana Vernon's character and behaviour was at odds with her societal background. More recently, Allan Massie has argued that *Rob Roy* asserts the moral superiority of commerce over the world of feudal honour represented by Rob. Its true hero is Baillie Nicol Jarvie who forces us to see that, for Scotland, the new Hanoverian civil society with its open ports and commitment to economic development, as advocated by Adam Smith - is the way ahead.

Alasdair Hutton's text:

I am not a scholar but a reader. So my remarks can only be at the level of the man on the bar stool, the blow-hard who sounds off as though he knows it all but in reality only displays a crass lack of understanding of whatever he is boring his hearers about.

Rob Roy is an astonishingly modern novel. It is all there – intrigue, adventure, romance and a more or less happy ending with the baddie getting his just deserts and the hero winning the fair maid. There are some memorable characters, a moral sub-text and most compelling of all it is a rattling good story.

I guess it most obviously differs from a modern novel in the length of time it takes to set the scene and get going but once it does it zips along to its conclusion with much entertainment along the way.

I am not critical of the book but if I was to venture an observation, I thought Francis Osbaldistone was not a vibrant character who lived long in my memory. He is a decent man and he carries the virtues well but I do not think I could describe him to you at a distance. I know he is a good chap who I would trust in business and I know he had a strong enough character to face all the adversities strewn in his path but I think he suffers from the fate of practically all handsome heroes, we somehow prefer them to have quirks and not be too perfect. I suppose we would like to think of them as being like us.

Bailie Nicol Jarvie, on the other hand, is a strong character. I guess we rather like a quirky old man, as long as we do not have to live with him. Folk will always warm to an honest man with homely wisdom. There is a reassurance that all is well with the world while there are such men abroad. We know the baddies will not win when their deeds and their characters can be seen through by such men. I have met men like him and can see him in three dimensions.

I did not even think that the wicked Rashleigh Osbaldistone was drawn with that much detail. I did not mind that though. It seemed to me that the knowledge that there was evil abroad and that the perpetrator was slightly shadowy, to me rather heightened the menace.

I did enjoy the way we were teased to think of Mr Campbell as *possibly* being Rob Roy McGregor, then *probably* being the subject of the tale and not until a long way into the yarn have it confirmed. That was a device I admired.

Rob Roy himself was strongly drawn. A man who could move easily between worlds living by a firm moral code which was not the code of the genteel. I thought Scott was drawing the fine figure of the noble savage in his portrayal of the Highlander and the people he lived among and whose loyalty he commanded. I thought that here Scott was saying this may not be your code but such a society has its own code and you should not dismiss it lightly for it works and seems less devious than ours.

It has its own harsh justice, most clear in the action of Helen McGregor in ordering the unseemly execution of the weasely spy Morris. Scott, the shirra, seemed to be saying "we may not think this is quite civilized but in Helen McGregor's society it sends a clear signal that traitors are especially odious and to keep the clan cleansed of them needs tough, clear, unambiguous leadership which she was not afraid to give in her husband's absence."

I do not want to jog down the dramatis personae ticking off each one in turn but it would not be right to pass Diana Vernon and Andrew Fairservice without appearing to notice them.

Diana Vernon provided the romantic interest and her untouchability until the end was a compelling strand in the tale. She was drawn with more colour in her pale cheeks than others among the characters and the mystery in which she is cloaked constantly draws the reader on.

I could never quite make up my mind if Scott intended Andrew Fairservice to be the clown with the obviously grim humour of his name.

I found him more feeble than funny and perhaps my irritation with his obvious fecklessness and cowardice is after all a tribute to Scott's power of character drawing.

Although I did not see all the people Scott sketched in the novel in their full colour I realise that, just like people watching a sporting event, we do not all read the same novel in the same way. The people I see in novels are people I know in real life. When you have reached a fullness of years you find you have met a lot of people of all shapes and sizes and I certainly take them down from the shelves of my memory and dress them in the clothes of the characters I am reading about.

To avoid this a writer would have to write such detailed descriptions that the pace of a good story would be ruined but I did wonder who Sir Walter saw inhabiting the personality of each of the people he created.

It led me on to thinking about the effect Sir Walter's work had had on those who came after him. From boyhood I devoured the yarns of John Buchan and as I read Rob Roy I could hear the voice of Buchan following the same path as a story teller. I could see Dickson McCunn and the good Baillie in the same skin. Diana Vernon and Richard Hannay's wife Mary could have been sisters in the way each writer treated them.

But I do not want to stray too far into generalities and away from the book we have gathered here in Scott's home to talk about.

I will close my untutored remarks with one observation which is exemplified in Rob Roy. Sir Walter loved the Borders. He set up his home in this house which he substantially designed, he collected the ballads of the old Borderland and yet he spent much more time in his novels writing about highlanders than about the lawless Borderers whose name he carried and whose descendants he lived among.

Now I am looking forward to learning about Rob Roy from those much better tutored than I and with more understanding of the great man's work than I shall ever be able to aspire to.

Prof David Hewitt's text:

Rob Roy is a first-person narrative (in fact, it is Scott's only first-person narrative). The story is told by Frank Osbaldistone writing in 1763 as he remembers events that took place mainly in 1715. The first-person narrator does not have 'characteristics'. An observer notices those external features that identify someone, and so Baillie Nicol Jarvie has lots of identifying characteristics, but Frank does not because his own sense of identity is related to his experience. The kind of question we have to ask of Frank is whether he is wiser in 1763 than in 1715, and whether the process of telling his own story has made him wiser.

It is immediately clear that Frank has told his story more than once to his friend Will Tresham: he talks of 'the narratives to which you have listened with interest, as told by the voice of him to whom they occurred'.[i] Trying to make sense of what was an overwhelming experience in 1715 has pre-occupied Frank over very many years. If we consider what this tells us about the narrator, two issues are predominant. In the version of the tale he tells us, the troubles he faced in 1715 were the consequence of his rebellion against his father's insufferable imposition of paternal authority; one strand of Frank's tale is his account of his opposition to and reconciliation with his father. The second issue is the narrator's melancholy: the old man (Frank is 69) is contemplating his own death as he writes; Diana is dead and there appears to be no family; and when he contemplates the past it is with 'a chequered and varied feeling of pleasure and of pain' (5), even although a religious stoicism mitigates the sense of loss, for those feelings of pleasure and pain are 'mingled, I trust, with no slight gratitude and veneration to the Disposer of human events, who guided my early course through much risk and labour, that the ease with which he has blessed my prolonged life, might seem softer from remembrance and comparison' (5).

Frank tells the story of a journey; he is a cultural tourist in Britain. In his journey he finds political and social conditions in Northumberland and in the Trossachs vastly different to those to which he was accustomed in London, and which he found in Glasgow. There is a kind of symmetry: London is to Glasgow as Northumberland is to the south-west Highlands. Although he does not know it, Frank travels north with the commitments and the outlook of the London merchant: he is a Presbyterian committed to the Hanoverian succession, and is appalled by the actual poverty, by the brutish way of life, and by the Catholicism of his cousins. Part of the education provided by the exposure to other parts of Great Britain is his learning about the ideological basis of his own responses: he discovers that Protestantism and Liberty are the underpins of economic prosperity.

There is no need to analyse Scott's reading to show that he linked Protestantism, liberty and economic development. As Linda Colley shows,[ii] these terms are bracketed together in eighteenth-century Britain, and the collocation would be natural to Scott. William Osbaldistone links liberty and commerce; Adam Smith

says that the proper determination of price requires 'perfect liberty',[iii] without further explanation. But Scott is not just repeating the ideological clichés of the eighteenth century, although it is perfectly appropriate to do so given the era in which the protagonist is nominally writing. Economic theory is central to the novel. It cannot be shown that Scott had read *The Wealth of Nations*, but he possessed the fifth edition which was published in 1789, which rather suggests that he bought it as a student in his second spell at university in Edinburgh. The term 'political economy' is used in the novel (95) and in *The Wealth of Nations* Smith writes:

> Political œconomy, considered as a branch of the science of a statesman or legislator, proposes two distinct objects: first, to provide a plentiful revenue or subsistence for the people, or more properly to enable them to provide such a revenue or subsistence for themselves; and secondly, to supply the state or commonwealth with a revenue sufficient for the public services. It proposes to enrich both the people and the sovereign.[iv]

Jarvie is a brilliant illustration of Scott's awareness of Smith's great theme, how the selfishness of the individual pursuit of wealth can be reconciled with social obligations to one's fellow men and country. More specifically Scott shows considerable awareness of the technical aspects of the regulation of trade: he owned the second edition of Malachy Postlethwayt's *The Universal Dictionary of Trade and Commerce* (1757), and quotes from it repeatedly; he mentions Jacques Savary des Brûlons (1657—1716), author of *Dictionnaire universel de commerce* (1723—30) from which Postlethwayt is derived; he quotes from 'Saxby's Tables' (15), a shortened form of reference to Henry Saxby, *The British Customs* (1757). The Jacobite plot in the novel barely touches on armed insurrection, but centres on whether the Jacobites can use financial instruments to destabilise the British state. The relationship of confidence and credit was important to Scott throughout his career as writer and businessman, and is a theme of which he shows great understanding in his *Letters of Malachi Malagrowther* (1826). In addition Scott quotes from two great works which concern themselves in practical ways with the economic development of Scotland, Daniel Defoe's *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1724—26), and Thomas Pennant's *A Tour in Scotland and Voyage to the Hebrides MDCCLXXII* (1774).

In William Osbaldistone Scott combines several of the features of the government creditor: he is one of the 'bankers and eminent merchants' (317) who subscribe to loans, and who purchase stock when it comes cheaply on to the market at times of crisis when there is a 'run upon the Funds' (317); he is able to raise credit through his international connections ('with funds enlarged, and credit fortified, by eminent success in his continental speculations': 312–13); he is knowledgeable about financial instruments, hugely confident, and Protestant. On the other side, people like Rob Roy in Scotland and Sir Hildebrand in Northumberland are Catholics who are driven into rebellion by their financial desperation.

In reconciling himself to his father Frank comes to recognise the ideological basis of the modern British state, which Frank fully supports. At the same time, however, he is aware of the destructive power of that state. The Rob Roy of the novel, is an entirely fictional creation, and this Rob Roy, who in his own way is trying to reconcile a traditional way of life with the new possibilities of trade (unlike his wife whose response to the encroachment of the south is violent) is a victim of the state: his lament for his situation is most moving:

> "And they *shall* find," he said, in the same muttered, but deep tone of stifled passion, "that the name they have dared to proscribe—that the name of MacGregor is a spell to raise the wild devil withal.—They shall hear of my vengeance, that would scorn to listen to the story of my wrongs—The miserable Highland drover, bankrupt, barefooted, stripped of all, dishonoured and hunted down, because the avarice of others grasped at more than that poor all could pay, shall burst on them in an awful change. They that scoffed at the grovelling worm, and trode upon him, may cry and howl when they see the stoop of the flying and fiery-mouthed dragon.—But why do I speak of all this?" he said, sitting down again, and in a calmer tone—"Only ye may opine it frets my patience, Mr Osbaldistone, to be hunted like an otter, or a sealgh, or a salmon upon the shallows, and that by my very friends and neighbours; and to have as many sword-cuts made, and pistols flashed at me, as I had this day in the ford of Avondow, would try a saint's temper, much more a Highlander's, who are not famous for that gude gift, as ye may hae heard, Mr Osbaldistone.—But ae thing bides wi' me o' what Nicol said—I am vexed for the bairns—I'm vexed when I think o' Hamish and Robert living their father's life." And yielding to despondence on account of his sons, which he felt not upon his own, the father rested his head on his hand.
>
> I was much affected, Will.—All my life long I have been more melted by the distresses under which a strong, proud, and powerful mind is compelled to give way, than by the more easily excited sorrows of softer dispositions. The desire of aiding him rushed strongly on my mind, notwithstanding the apparent difficulty, and even impossibility of the task. (300)

Frank's melancholy is personal: all that he has most valued has passed away. It also has a wider scope, for the advocate of modernity (for that is what he has become) has been pondering the costs. His experience led him to recognise the importance of his father and what he represents, and he gave up writing 'poetically' about the past to become a London merchant whose business supports the British state. He has come to write an evaluative memoir about the point in which the British state was at its most vulnerable. And yet he has also come to recognise that Rob Roy was a victim, and that the desperate condition of Frank's uncle and cousins, and of Helen MacGregor, was not voluntarily adopted, but the result of their literal and cultural marginalisation.

Frank Osbaldistone becomes both intellectually and personally wiser through writing about the events of 1715.

[i] Walter Scott, *Rob Roy*, ed. David Hewitt, EEWN 5 (Edinburgh, 2008), 5. Further references to the novel are given in the text.
[ii] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707—1837* (London, 1992), 43—60.
[iii] Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, ed. Edwin Cannan, 2 vols, 6th edn (London, 1950), 1.63, 70, 111.
[iv] *The Wealth of Nations*, ed. Cannan, 1.449.

Miscellanea

The BBC held an Antiques Road Show at Abbotsford on Thursday, 2nd July 2009.

A new "Literary Quarter" in Edinburgh. The Scottish Book Trust, which has offices in Sandeman House, former church halls dating from 1916, in Trunk's Close, may be at the heart of a new Literary Quarter, if a proposed extension to be constructed beside the literary garden goes ahead. It is hoped that prominent Edinburgh authors will back fundraising to get the project off the ground. Edinburgh World Heritage and architect Malcolm Fraser are involved in drawing up plans for what could become a great visitor attraction.

Ave Atque Vale

A warm welcome is extended to the following who have joined the Club since the publication of the last Bulletin:
Dr. Robert Aitken, Edinburgh
Lady Caplin, Edinburgh
Chris Evans, Washington, USA
Suzanne Gibson, Edinburgh
Thomas Garbett, Birmingham*
Rev. James D. Harrison, Edinburgh
Geoffrey R. Hickey, Huddersfield
Michael Lyons, Scarborough
Mollie Marcellino, Edinburgh
Tim McAlpine, USA
Barry McGown Scott, Brisbane, Australia
Ian F. McLennan, Aberdeen
Mr & Mrs Scott Moffat, Edinburgh*
Emeritus Professor James Pickett, Greenock
Joan Pilling, Cupar
Charles Robertson, Antwerp, Belgium*
P.A.M Walker-Kinnear, Lasswade*
Jacquie Wright, Biggar

** Life member*

It is with great regret that we record the deaths of the following members:
Sir Bernard Crick — Professor Sir Neil McCormick
Dr. Tom. Johnston — Irene Thornton

The following member has intimated her resignation from the Club:
Sarah Forsyth

The Edinburgh Sir Walter Scott Club

STATEMENT OF BALANCES AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2008

GENERAL FUND (SC037636)	2008 £	2007 £
Bank and Cash in hand		
Opening Balance	503	2,063
Surplus/ Deficit for year	989	-54
	1,492	2,009
Treasury Stock Sold	3,500	
	4,992	
Treasury Stock Bought	- 3,696	1,506
Closing Balance	1,296	503
Investments		
£ 1,500 5% Treas 2014	1,506	1,506
£ 3,500 5 1/2% Treas 2008/12	-	3,689
£ 3,500 5% Treas 2012	3,696	
	5,202	5,195
Reserves		
General Funds	6,498	5,698
Assets		
PA System (at Purchase Cost)	941	941
Wine Clips	51	51
Hard Drive for Club Data	80	80
Merchandise (at Purchase Cost)	631	763
	1,703	1,835

ESSAY FUND (SC005823)	2008 £	2007 £
Bank and Cash in hand		
Opening Balance	542	1,808
Surplus for year	365	240
	907	2,048
Treasury Stock Sold £ 3,500 5 1/2% Treas 2008/12	3,500	
	4,407	
Treasury Stock Bought £ 3,500 5% Treas 2012	- 3,696	- 1,506
Closing Balance	711	542
Investments		
£ 1,500 5% Treas 2014	1,506	1,506
£ 3,500 5 1/2% Treas 2008/12	-	3,689
£ 3,500 5% Treas 2012	3,696	
	5,202	5,195
Reserves	5,914	5,737

Essay Fund Notes: An Essay Prize was organised by Aberdeen University and the winner will be presented with a cash award of £100 in May.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf.

Date 7th May 2009

Lee Simpson
Hon. Treasurer

Based on the information supplied to me I approve these accounts

Allan MacLean of Dochgarroch Date 7 May 2009

The Very Rev Allan MacLean of Dochgarroch

The Edinburgh Sir Walter Scott Club

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2008

	2008		2007	
	General (SC037636) £	Essay (SC005823) £	General (SC037636) £	Essay (SC005823) £
Receipts				
Subscriptions:	1,380		927	
Donations	164		458	
Grant, HBoS	1,000		1,000	
Annual Dinner	2,316		2,090	
Other Functions	1,493		2,998	
Bank Interest	12	3	38	10
Interest on Government Stock	270	362	230	230
Bulletins	559		90	
Misc			45	
Merchandise Sold	43		108	
	7,237	**365**	**7,984**	240
Payments				
Postage, Tel.,Stationery,Sundries	601		571	
Annual Dinner	2,964		1,810	
Other Functions	1,643		3,930	
Honoraria	300		300	
Website	160		164	
Merchandise	45		36	
Bulletin	515		936	
Miscellaneous	20		160	
New Assets			131	
	6,248		**8,038**	
Surplus or Loss for year	989	365	-54	240
Purchase of Investment				
£3,500 5.5% Treasury Stock 2014			1,506	1,506
£3,500 5% Treasury Stock 2012	3,696	3,696		
Sale of Investment				
£3,500 5.5% Treasury Stock 2008/12	3,500	3,500		

List of Past Presidents

1894 Charles A. Cooper, LL.D.
1885 The Hon. Lord Ardwall
1896 Emeritus Professor Masson, LL.D.
1897 The Hon. Lord Stormonth Darling, LL.D.
1898 Sir George Douglas, Bt.
1899 The Right Hon. Sir Herbert Maxwell, Bt., LL.D.
1900 The Right Hon. Viscount Findlay, G.C.M.C, LL.D.
1901 The Right Hon. The Earl of Aberdeen, G.C.M.C., LL.D.
1902 Sir Henry Craik, K.C.B., LL.D., M.P.
1903 The Right Hon. Augustine Birrell, K.C., LL.D., M.P.
1904 The Right Hon. Viscount Haldane, K.C., LL.D., M.P.
1905 The Right Hon. The Earl of Lytton
1906 Sir Ludovic J. Grant, Bt., B.A., LL.D.
1907 The Right Hon. George Wyndham, LL.D., M.P.
1908 Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, Bt., LL.D.
1909 Sir Gilbert J. Parker, LL.D.
1910 Sir Donald MacAlister, K.C.B., LL.D.
1911 The Hon. Lord Guthrie, LL.D.
1912 The Most Rev. and Right Hon. Cosmo Gordon Lang, D.D., LL.D., D.litt. The Archbishop of York (later Canterbury)
1913 The Right Hon. Sir John Simon, K.C., M.P.
1914–19 The Right Hon. Viscount Bryce, O.M.
1920 The Right Hon. Lord Latymer (Resigned)
The Right Hon. Lord Glenconner
1921 The Right Hon. Robert Munro, K.C., M.P. (Lord Alness)
The Very Rev. W. P. Paterson, D.D., LL.D. delivered the address
1922 The Right Rev. Herbert Hensley Henson, D.D.s, LL.D., Lord Bishop of Durham
1923 Colonel John Buchan, LL.D. (Lord Tweedsmuir)
1924 The Right Hon. The Earl of Birkenhead, P.C., D.L., D.C.L., LL.D.
1925 The Hon. Lord Sands, LL.D.
1926 Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, M.A., d.Litt., F.R.S.L.
1927 Professor H. J. C. Grierson, M.A., LL.D.
1928 Professor George Gordon, President of Magdalen
1929 The Right Hon. Stanley Baldwin, P.C., M.P., D.C.L., LL.D. (Earl Baldwin of Bewdley)
1930 The Very Rev. Sir George Adam Smith, D.D., LL.D., D.Litt, F.B.A.
1931 Professor W. MacNeile Dixon, LL.D., D.Litt.
1932 Hugh Walpole, C.B.E.
1933 The Most Hon. The Marquess of Linlithgow, K.T., G.C.I.E., O.B.E.
The Hon. Lord St. Vigeans presided and delivered the address

1934 The Hon. Lord St. Vigeans presided
The Most Hon. The Marquess of Linlithgow, K.T., G.C.I.E., O.B.E. delivered the address
1935 The Right Hon. Lord Macmillan, P.C., K.C., LL.D.
1936 Sir Robert S. Rait, C.B.E., M.A., LL.D. (resigned)
James Curle, LL.D., W.S.
1937 Professor George Trevelyan, O.M., C.B.E., F.B.A., D.C.L., LL.D.
1938 Major General John Hay Beith, C.B.E., M.C.
1939 The Right Hon. Lord Ponsonby
1947 Dr. O. H. Mavor ('James Bridie')
1948 Field Marshal The Right Hon. Earl Wavell of Cyrenaica and Winchester, P.C., G.C.B., C.M.B., M.C.
1949 The Right Rev. Maurice H. Harland, D.d., Lord Bishop of Lincoln (later Lord Bishop of Durham)
1950 The Right Hon. Walter E. Elliot, P.C., C.H., M.C., M.P.
1951 Professor Sir Alexander Gray, C.B.E., LL.D.
1952 Eric Linklater, M.a., LL.D.
1953 Principal John Traill Christie, M.A., F.R.S.A.
1954 The Right Hon. Lady Tweedsmuir, M.P.
1955 Professor C. S. Lewis, F.B.A.
1956 The Right Hon. Viscount Kilmuir, G.C.V.O., D.C.L., LL.D.
1957 The Right Rev. Monseignor Ronald Knox, D.litt. (resigned)
Arthur Melville Clark, M.A., D.Phil., D.litt.
1958 The Right Hon. R. A. Butler, C.h., M.P.
1959 Hesketh Pearson
1960 The Most Rev. and Right Hon. Arthur Michael Ramsay, D.D. Lord Bishop of York (later Canterbury)
1961 The Right Hon. Lord Birkett of Ulverston
The Right Hon. Lord Clyde, The Lord Justice General, presided and delivered the address
1962 Baroness Elliot of Harwood, D.B.E., LL.D.
1963 Malcolm Muggeridge
1964 Professor David Daiches, MA, D.Phil., D.litt., F.R.S.E.
1965 The Right Hon. Lord Cameron, K.T., D.S.C., F.R.S.E.
1966 The Right Hon. Sir Alec Douglas-Home, D.T., LL.D., D.C.L., M.P.
1967 The Right Hon. Lord Polwarth, T.D., LL.D, C.A.
1968 Ludovic Kennedy (now Sir Ludovic)
1969 The Hon. Lord Kilbrandon, LL.D.
1970 Professor Hugh Trevor-Roper (later Lord Dacre)
1971 Robert Speaight, C.B.E., M.A., F.R.S.L.
1972 The Right Hon. Earl of Longford, K.G., P.C.
1973 The Right Hon. Harold Macmillan, P.C., D.C.L., LL.D, F.R.S. (later Lord Stockton)
1974 The Right Hon. Lord Tweedsmuir, C.B.E., C.D., LL.D

1975	Allan Frazer, W.S.
1976	Ian Grimble, B.A., Ph.D., F.R.Hist.Soc.
1977	The Right Hon. Lord Scarman, O.B.E., LL.D.
1978	Magnus Magnusson, D.Univ.
1979	Lord Ballantrae, K.T.
	Professor David Daiches presided and delivered the address
1980	W. E. K. Anderson, M.A., D.Litt., F.R.S.E.
1981	Professor R. J. Adam, M.A., F.R.Hist.Soc.
1982	Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry, K.T. (9th Duke)
1983	Lady Antonia Fraser
1984	The Right Hon. Lord Grimond
1985	The Right Hon. Lord Swann
1986	Dr. T. L. Johnston, M.a., P.h.D., D.L., F.R.S.A., C.B.I.M.
1987–88	Dr. David Hewitt, M.A., Ph.D. (now Professor)
1989	Allan Massie, B.A., F.R.S.L.
1990	Professor Edwin Morgan, O.B.E., M.A., D.Litt.
1991	Mrs. Dorothy Dunnett, O.B.E. (later Lady)
1992	Right Hon. Malcolm Rifkind, P.C., Q.C., M.P.
1993	Right Hon. Lord Mackay of Clashfern
1994	Dr. Archie Turnbull, M.A., D.Litt., F.R.S.E.
1995	Paul H. Scott, C.M.G., M.A., M.Litt.
1996	Professor Neil MacCormick
1997	Mrs. Patricia Maxwell-Scott, O.B.E.
1998	Sir John Thomson
1999	Tom Fleming, C.V.O., O.B.E.
2000	Fraser Elgin, C.A.
2001	The Rt Hon Sir David Edward, KCMG QC LLD DUniv Drhc FRSE
2002	Professor Jane Millgate
2003	Dame Jean Maxwell-Scott, DCVO
	(Professor Ian Campbell presided and delivered the address)
2004	Tam Dalyell, M.P.
2005	James Robertson
2006	Professor Ian Campbell, M.A., Ph.D.
2007	A. N. Wilson
2008	Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry, KBE (10th Duke)
2009	Dr Iain Gordon Brown, FRSE, FSA

Constitution & Rules of

The Edinburgh Sir Walter Scott Club

1. **NAME**. The name of the Club shall be "THE EDINBURGH SIR WALTER SCOTT CLUB"

2. **OBJECT.** The object of the Club is to advance the education of the public concerning the life and works of Sir Walter Scott to such extent and by such methods as shall be determined to be appropriate from time to time by the Council of the Club.

3. **MEMBERSHIP.** Membership shall be open to any individual or organisation. Council shall have the right for sufficient reason to terminate the membership of any individual or organisation, but the individual or organisation shall have the right to be heard by Council before a final decision is made.

4. **HONORARY MEMBERSHIP.** Honorary members, who shall not be liable to pay any subscription, but be entitled to all the privileges of membership, may be elected by the Council of the Club; after his/her term in office the President shall automatically become an Honorary Member.

5. **COUNCIL**. A President and up to fifteen members, in addition to the *ex-officio* members under-mentioned, shall be appointed annually at the Annual General Meeting to carry on the general business of the Club, including arrangements for the Annual General Meeting, Five members of Council shall form a quorum. Council may appoint sub-committees of its members for conducting such work as may be deemed advisable. Council shall have power to co-opt.

6. **OFFICIALS.** A Chairman, an Honorary Secretary and an Honorary Treasurer shall be appointed annually by the Council; they shall be *ex-officio* members of the Council and all Committees. The Chairman shall hold office for a term of three years; he/she shall be eligible for re-election but shall not hold office for more than two consecutive terms.

7. **GENERAL MEETINGS.** An Annual General Meeting of the Club shall be held in every year. At least fourteen days' notice shall be given to members of the date and time of the Annual General Meeting and of any other General Meeting summoned by Council. At every General Meeting every member of the Club shall be entitled to be present and to have one vote on each question raised.

8. **SUBSCRIPTIONS.** Subscriptions shall be as follows:

Annual Membership	£ 15
Joint Annual Membership	£ 18
Life Membership	£120
Joint Life Membership	£150
Corporate Membership	£400

Subscriptions shall be payable on admission, and the annual subscription thereafter by 30th June in each year. Council shall have the power to remove from membership any member whose subscription shall fall two years in arrears.

9. **ACCOUNTS**. The financial year of the Club shall end on December 31st. The Honorary Treasurer shall keep such proper records of account as shall enable him to present at every Annual General Meeting of the Club an accurate Report and Statement of the Finances of the Club; the Statement of Finances shall have been confirmed by a member of the Club appointed by Council.

10. **PROPERTY.** Property of the Club, of whatever kind, may be applied only for purposes of a charitable nature. It may be distributed only as specified in Rule 12 infra or in similar circumstances.

11. **ALTERATION OF RULES.** All or any of the foregoing Rules may be altered, and any new Rules may be added, at the Annual General Meeting or at an Extraordinary General Meeting, by a majority of members present. Any motion for alteration or addition to the Rules of the Club shall be given notice of to the Honorary Secretary at least one month before the date of the meeting, accompanied by the names of the proposer and seconder. Such motions shall be included in the notice calling the meeting.

12.. **DISSOLUTION.** Should Council by a two-thirds majority decide at any time that it is necessary or desirable to dissolve the Club, it shall call an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Club, for which not less than fourteen days' notice be given, stating the terms of the proposal. If such a decision shall be carried by a majority comprising two-thirds or more of members present and voting, the Council shall have power to dissolve the Club and to dispose of any assets held by or on behalf of the Club and remaining after satisfaction of any proper liabilities, to such other charitable organisation or organisations with objects similar to that of the Club, as Council shall determine.

Application for Membership

Complete the form below or join online by visiting www.walterscottclub.org.uk

To the Hon. Treasurer:

Mr. Lee Simpson
9 Burnbank Grove
Straiton
Midlothian EH20 9NX
Tel: (0131) 448 1976
e-mail: lee@walterscottclub.org.uk

I wish to join the Edinburgh Sir Walter Scott Club.

Please send me a Standing Order form: ☐

or

I have pleasure in enclosing herewith remittance for £..... in payment as follows:

Annual Membership	£ 15.00	☐
Joint Husband and Wife	£ 18.00	☐
Life Membership	£120.00	☐
Joint Life Membership	£150.00	☐
Corporate Membership	£400.00	☐

Tick as appropriate

Name .....

Address .....

..... Post Code .....

Email ..... Tel No.....

I understand that this information will be held on the club computer and will not be passed on to any other organisation.

Signature ..... Date .....