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Aims and Scope: Formerly *Cardiff Corvey: Reading the Romantic Text* (1997–2005), *Romantic Textualities: Literature and Print Culture, 1780–1840* is an online journal that is committed to foregrounding innovative Romantic-studies research into bibliography, book history, intertextuality, and textual studies. To this end, we publish material in a number of formats: among them, peer-reviewed articles, reports on individual/group research projects, bibliographical checklists, and biographical profiles of overlooked Romantic writers. As of Issue 15 (Winter 2005), *Romantic Textualities* also carries reviews of books that reflect the growing academic interest in the fields of book history, print culture, intertextuality, and cultural materialism, as they relate to Romantic studies.

editorial apparatus more clearly delineate the working relationship between Scott and his intermediaries. The Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels and this edition of *Peveiril of the Peak* must therefore be welcomed not only for their impeccable scholarship and editorial policy, but also for making more transparent the complex 'socialisation' of Scott's novels.

Walter Scott, *The Siege of Malta and Bizarro*, edited by J. H. Alexander, Judy King, and Graham Tulloch (Edinburgh: EUP; New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), xiv + 511pp. ISBN 978-0-7486-2487-4; £55 (hb).

VISITING SIR WALTER SCOTT AT J. G. LOCKHART'S HOUSE in London just before Scott's final voyage to Malta and Italy in 1831, the Irish poet Thomas Moore reflected sadly in his journal on Scott's series of debilitating strokes and was more than once 'painfully struck by the utter vacancy of his look'. Moore claimed that the Lockharts' 'great object in sending [Scott] abroad' was 'to disengage his mind from the strong wish to *write* by which he is haunted—continually making efforts to produce something, without being able to bring his mind collectedly to bear upon it'. While the extent of Scott's vacancy and lack of intellectual consistency is perhaps overstated here—indeed, he is described as being more receptive and convivial during two further visits by Moore—his final two incomplete works written in 1831–32 while convalescing abroad, *The Siege of Malta* and *Bizarro*, both bear the imprint of his illness and present a different set of challenges from those facing the editors of the Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels.

On Lockhart's recommendation, neither text was revised or published by Robert Cadell after Scott's death, and the editorial concerns of the Edinburgh Edition—the attempt to resolve textual variations between the manuscripts and published works, the desire to produce an ideal first edition, and the rejection of the paratextual intricacies of the Magnum Opus—are therefore largely irrelevant in the present case. The novels are incomplete in more ways than one: *Bizarro* is quite literally unfinished and until now has remained wholly unpublished; *The Siege of Malta* finishes mid-sentence, increasingly elides its fictional narrative for a historical account of Malta, and has been published only in fragments. The manuscripts of the novels, primarily preserved in the Berg Collection at the New York Public Library, are, moreover, locally faulty, and are written in Scott's (by then) stricken and sometimes undecipherable hand.

None of this makes for an easy editorial commission, but in this meticulous edition by J. H. Alexander, Judy King, and Graham Tulloch every attempt has been made to provide the reader with all the requisite tools for scholarly and more general use. The edition presents the texts in 'three parallel forms': scans of the manuscripts on CD-ROM; 'reading' texts, in which the editors have attempted to act almost as contemporaneous intermediaries would have done by correcting straightforward errors, tidying punctuation, and filling

small lacunae; and diplomatic, literal transcriptions of the texts. In preparing the reading texts, the editors have (sparingly) applied the techniques used by Cadell and Lockhart themselves in preparing late novels for publication. Given the fraught nature of the manuscripts and the necessarily high level of editorial interpretation involved in their transcription, readers are advised by the editors to consult the CD-ROM before quoting a passage or completing an analysis. They modestly note that scholars may more generally prefer to use the scans and transcriptions rather than the reading texts, but the high quality of the latter makes them valuable in their own right, as well as being helpful as textual commentaries on the transcriptions.

In their joint introduction, the editors declare that a scholarly fascination with Scott's later writings as well as a frustration with the non-availability of the texts currently under consideration 'has emboldened [them] to set aside Lockhart's wish that they would not be published'. They also rightly point to other reasons why the novels are important for Scott scholarship: the elision of the imaginary narrative in *The Siege of Malta* reflects a tendency in other late novels such as *Anne of Geierstein* and *Count Robert of Paris* to prioritise historical record over fiction in the final pages; and *Bizarro* confirms Scott's ongoing fascination with outlaws and brigands such as Rob Roy and Robin Hood, albeit in a more gruesome, explicit, and violent form than readers will have previously encountered in his work.


The two 'Essay[s] on the Text' at the end of the volume provide histories of the genesis and composition of the novels, as well as commentaries on the manuscripts and present texts. In the case of *The Siege*, this genesis is largely pieced together through the exchange of letters between Scott, Cadell, and Lockhart during Scott's journey and visit to Malta; and in the case of *Bizarro*, from Scott's journal and the *Reminiscences* of William Gell, a famous classical scholar and antiquarian who Scott met in Italy. The editors also consider the vicissitudes of the manuscripts in some detail. The manuscript of *The Siege* in particular underwent a number of mutilations in the nineteenth century. In the first instance, Scott divided it as he wrote into six parcels, one of which he misnumbered and incorrectly paginated. Later, some short passages were cut out of the manuscript as curiosities and a copy or transcription made in 1878 is, in some instances, the only surviving proof of these missing leaves.

As the primary editor of *The Siege of Malta*, Alexander has dealt with these mutilations with exceptional care, providing detailed descriptions of each parcel and, when appropriate, a brief note on the physical characteristics of each leaf. The same level of meticulous detail and care extends to any amendments or corrections made to the manuscript. Emendation lists have rightly been excluded on the basis that any such lists would have been of inordinate length and complexity, but the editorial decisions made in relation to small changes, punctuation, and spelling in the reading text of *The Siege* are clear and consistent. More difficult editorial decisions arise when Scott is at variance with topography

or the historical record, as Alexander has had to decide whether the difference is part of Scott's fictionalising of history or whether it is simply an error. The historical notes provided for each text are therefore particularly useful in the present case and explicitly deal with the question of historical accuracy in order to more clearly delineate those parts of the novels that are fictitious.

Scott's primary source in the case of *The Siege* is Vertot's *History of the Knights of Malta*; and, in the case of *Bizarro*, oral sources and some pamphlets on Italian brigands. His use of Vertot is at first sporadic and relates to historical incidents which can be incorporated in the fiction, but increasingly becomes more direct and exacting, although it is never without reinterpretation and some degree of creative involvement. In relation to *Bizarro*, Scott seems to have relied on two oral accounts received during his travels in Calabria and Naples. Francesco Moscato or 'Il Bizarro' was a real historical figure and, although Scott gives his hero a new Christian name and surname, the oral accounts on which he relies are largely corroborated by contemporary reports of officers involved in the suppression of brigand bands.

Explanatory notes and a glossary round off a very comprehensive set of editorial clarifications for the reading texts. Editorial intervention has, on the other hand, been kept to a minimum in the transcriptions, as the reading texts represent a more comprehensive attempt to discern Scott's authorial intentions. Nonetheless, difficulties in deciphering words and letters are clearly explained in the notes on the transcriptions and alternative readings are provided when Scott's sense is unclear. Ambiguous spellings are resolved in line with Scott's preferred manuscript usage. Where letters are clear, the transcription follows the manuscript even if this results in misspellings, but where words or letters are unclear the editors have adopted the normalisation course as the lesser of two evils.

The stated aim of the present volume is 'to make available to scholars and more general readers what Scott wrote, or what he may reasonably be conjectured as having intended to appear in print, taking into account the editorial and printing procedures which governed the production of his late novels, and the expectations of contemporaneous readers'. In this the editors have succeeded admirably. This is an exemplary piece of editing under a difficult set of circumstances and the volume not only provides us with the first complete editions of these texts, but also gives general readers and scholars alike reading texts on which they may rely. The transcriptions and CD-ROM scan of the manuscripts are important additional resources for scholars, but they in no way undermine or detract from the substantial editorial achievement of the reading texts. 

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS



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Gavin Edwards is Professor of English Studies at the University of Glamorgan, Wales. His research focuses on Romantic literature and society, and historical applications of narrative theory and semantics. He is the editor of *George Crabbe: Selected Poems* (1991) and *Watkin Tench: Letters from Revolutionary France* (2001), and the author of *Narrative Order, 1789–1819: Life and Story in an Age of Revolution* (2005). He is currently working on capital letters in the novels of Dickens.

Porscha Fermanis is a lecturer in Romantic and eighteenth-century literature at University College Dublin. Her research interests include Enlightenment history and philosophy, as well as Romantic-era poetry, historical fiction, and historiography. Her book, *John Keats and the Ideas of the Enlightenment*, will appear with Edinburgh University Press in late 2009.

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Richard Hill completed his PhD at Edinburgh University in 2006, and is now teaching English at the University of Hawaii, Maui Community College. His thesis was entitled 'The Illustration of the Waverley Novels in Scotland: Walter Scott's Contribution to the Nineteenth-Century Illustrated Novel'. He has written articles on Scott, Hogg, and book illustration, and is currently working on the lifetime illustrations of Robert Louis Stevenson.

Ceri Hunter is a DPhil student at Oxford University. Her thesis examines the literary and cultural meanings of cousin love in the nineteenth-century novel. She teaches in the field of Victorian literature and has previously published in the *George Eliot Review*. Ceri completed her MA in English at Cardiff University in 2005, where she also developed interests in women's fiction and Welsh writing in English.

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Don Shelton is a collector, researcher, and writer on miniature portraits from Auckland, New Zealand. His collection includes over 800 miniature portraits which, together with his research notes, can be viewed at <http://portrait-miniature.blogspot.com>. He finds research into sitters such as Sir Anthony Carlisle fascinating, and is frequently surprised at how much information can be gleaned via dedicated Internet research.

Maria Paola Svampa is a PhD Student at Columbia University. She specialises in nineteenth-century and Romantic poetry, and her chief interests are stylistics, prosody, and comparative approaches to literature. She has written about Letitia Landon and Arthur Hugh Clough. Her recent research has focused on intertextuality and the bourgeois culture of tourism in the literary annuals.

