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Sir Walter Scott, Queen Victoria, the Railways, and Scottish Romanticism

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Author

Prince, Carla Jean

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Abstract

This work examines the role Sir Walter Scott, Queen Victoria, and the railways played in the rise and popularization of a romantic, mythic Scotland. Scott's works captured the imagination and were used as guidebooks when traveling in the northern kingdom. Victoria grew up reading Scott's works, and his romantic ideals of a mythic Scotland shaped her views of Scotland. The royal family visited Scotland three times before they leased the Balmoral estate. With the acquisition of this estate, the royal family had a Highland home. Railways facilitated the monarch's travel to Scotland and allowed others a relatively cheap method of visiting the romantic wilds of the country.

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that "Collins and Tom Wharton might have lived to hail it as the light at last, towards which they had struggled through the cold obstruction of the eighteenth century. One fancies Dr. Johnson's disgust over this new monstrosity which had every quality he disliked exc Sir Walter Scott, 1st Baronet (August 15, 1771 – September 21, 1832) was a prolific Scottish historical novelist and poet popular throughout Europe during his time. A lawyer without history or literature is a mechanic, a mere working mason; if he possesses some knowledge of these, he may venture to call himself an architect. Guy Mannering (1815), Ch. 37. Bluid is thicker than water. Guy Mannering (1815), Ch. Walter Scott's phenomenally popular novels and poems created an image of Scotland as a land of sublime scenery and heroic chivalry. Why is it Scott's version rather than any of the many other nineteenth-century literary representations of Scotland that has endured in the popular imagination? This lecture will explain why Scott's romanticised representations of Scotland were such a hit, and how his enduring legacy has helped or hindered Scotland as it seeks to define its place in Britain today. Queen Victoria, one of Scott's most celebrated admirers, perpetuated this distorted image of the Highlands in a journal entry that describes a day spent near Loch Lomond in 1869 Napton, Dani. 'Sir Walter Scott: Home, Nation, and the Denial of Revolution', in *Home and Nation in British Literature from the English to the French Revolutions*, ed. A. D. Cousins and Geoffrey Payne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 250-65. Discusses *Waverley* and *Redgauntlet*. 'Historical Redgauntlet: Jacobite Delusions and Hanoverian Fantasies', *Romanticism*, 21 (2015), 145-59. Watt, Julie. 'What Walter Scott Can Offer Us Today', in *Gael and Lowlander in Scottish Literature: Cross-Currents in Scottish Writing in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Christopher MacLachlan and Ronald W. Renton (Glasgow: Scottish Literature International, 2015), pp. 56-71. [Back to top.](#)