

Jane Porter in the Margins:
Paratext in the Romantic National Novel

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Abstract

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“Jane Porter in the Margins: Paratext in the Romantic National Novel” argues that Romantic novelist Jane Porter uses paratext in her national novels to accomplish bold political and personal goals. I examine her most famous novel *The Scottish Chiefs* (1810) as a case study of Romantic female authorship in which Porter asserts women’s power to shape conceptions of national identity. Often studied as an imitator of Walter Scott, Porter published two historical novels before *Waverley* (1814) and claimed her innovative precedence in multiple prefaces and footnotes to her novels. While Porter presented a modest feminine authorial persona to her public, my archival and bibliographical study reveals a politically engaged woman writer seeking to serve her nation from the margins. Each of the three chapters traces a paratextual element across multiple editions (1. Title page; 2. Footnotes and prefaces; and 3. Illustrations and bindings) to reveal how it facilitates Porter’s fervent support of British unity and women’s patriotic service. This dissertation studies the paratext of *The Scottish Chiefs* to help restore Porter’s reputation as a political writer and reveal her contributions to the nineteenth-century novel and women’s authorship. Beyond Porter, I seek wider acknowledgement of paratext’s crucial role beside the text within a book, particularly how it shapes the legacy of both book and author.

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List of Abbreviations

Throughout this dissertation I cite many different editions of Jane Porter's *The Scottish Chiefs* and *Thaddeus of Warsaw*. To differentiate these editions, I use the following abbreviations:

The Scottish Chiefs:

TSC SN: Bentley and Colburn's Standard Novels edition (1831), McGill University Special Collections.

TSC Virtue: George Virtue's edition (1841), New York Public Library Pforzheimer Collection.

TSC Crowell: Thomas Y. Crowell and Co. edition (ca. 1890s), University of Washington.

TSC McClurg: A. C. McClurg and Co. edition (1891), University of California, San Diego.

TSC Broadview: Broadview Press edition, edited by Fiona Price (2008).

TSC Scribner's: Scribner's Illustrated Classics edition (1991).

Thaddeus of Warsaw:

ToW First: Longman and Reese first edition, (1803), McGill University Special Collections.

ToW Second: Longman and Reese second edition (1804), National Library of Scotland.

ToW SN: Bentley and Colburn's Standard Novels edition (1831), McGill University Special Collections.

Sydney Owenson's *The Wild Irish Girl* is also abbreviated in in-text citations:

TWIG: Oxford UP edition, edited by Kathryn Kirkpatrick (2008).

Introduction

Jane Porter (1775-1850)¹ was one of the best-selling and most popular novelists of the Romantic era. Her novels narrate various tumults in European history; her 1810 novel *The Scottish Chiefs* tells the tale of William Wallace's (1270-1305) valiant fight to free thirteenth-century Scotland from the tyrannical rule of England's Edward I (1239-1307). Set amidst the national strife of succession and the romance of a mysterious locked iron box, the action of the novel begins when the English governor of Lanark murders Wallace's pregnant wife Marion. Wallace, who admits he had previously been blind to Scotland's woes while happy in his domestic bliss, declares himself to now be the servant of Scotland and vows to secure its freedom. Along his five-volume quest he gathers many companions, many of whom are drawn not from history but from Porter's imagination, including the young hero Edwin Ruthven and Wallace's eventual second wife Helen Mar. Helen becomes the second principal character of the novel as she falls in love with Wallace and takes virtuous action in national events in opposition to her stepmother Lady Joanna Mar, who covets Wallace's beauty and power and eventually betrays him to the English. Though the novel ends with the death of Wallace and the coronation of his friend Robert Bruce (1274-1329),² Porter softens the ending by including a secret marriage ceremony between Wallace and Helen and removing his final anguish. Just as Wallace is about to be hanged, Helen rushes to the scaffold; he bursts from his bonds to hold her and dies a peaceful death of a broken heart in her embrace. Wallace thus dies unsullied by the torture detailed in history and unconquered by the English. Helen soon also dies of a broken heart upon Wallace's coffin, and the mysterious iron box is opened to reveal the Regalia of Scotland, which Bruce dons to become King. Porter concludes her novel by

¹ Though Porter's birth year is frequently listed as 1776, Thomas McLean has recently proven that Porter was born in December 3, 1775 ("Jane Porter's Later Works" 45).

² Porter refers to Robert the Bruce as simply Robert Bruce in the novel.

signaling the end of Scottish-English conflict, writing: “a lasting tranquility spread prosperity and happiness throughout the land” (*TSC* Virtue 2: 461).

The novel’s romantic incidents induce great emotion not merely to entertain a growing readership, but to warm British hearts to patriotism. Yet this is just one vehicle of Porter’s politics within *The Scottish Chiefs*. A pivotal scene in the first volume shows William Wallace’s ardent followers pressing him to don the crown of Scotland and become their new king. He refuses, citing his lack of royal blood and his desire to serve Scotland as a brother, father, and patriot, but not as its ruler. Just after the Bishop of Dunkeld anoints his head with sacred oil to consecrate the potential kingship, Wallace protests:

Holy father...this unction may have prepared my brows for a crown; but, it is not of this world. Rise lords!...Kneel not to me...I am to you, what Gideon was to the Israelites, your fellow-soldier. I cannot assume the scepter you would bestow; for he who rules us all has preserved to you a lawful monarch:—Bruce lives. And were he extinct, the blood royal flows in too many noble veins in Scotland for me to usurp its rights. (*TSC* Broadview 339).

Wallace’s declaration of the inability of those without royal blood to rule serves as Porter’s scathing critique of another famous national leader: Napoleon Bonaparte of France (1769-1821). The doubling between Edward I and Napoleon is a key tenet of the politics of *The Scottish Chiefs*, which places their tyranny and self-interest in opposition to Wallace’s virtue and patriotism. In response to Porter’s thinly veiled critique, Napoleon banned *The Scottish Chiefs* from publication in France, thus acknowledging her power as a political actor on the European stage.

However, my argument that Porter is a political author may have puzzled critics who have scorned *The Scottish Chiefs* for its historical inaccuracies and overt sensibility. Until Fiona Price’s 2008 introduction to the Broadview Press edition of the novel, most scholars did not recognize Wallace’s

humility as a political dart at Napoleon. In one of the first articles on Porter, A.D. Hook claims that he is unsure what caused Napoleon to ban the novel. More recently, in Porter's *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* entry, Dorothy McMillan also questions the ban: "Napoleon amazingly proscribed a book that was accused even at the time of being unhistorical and wildly sentimental" (n.p.). As I argue in Chapter One, the fact that the novel is "wildly sentimental" does not preclude it from being historical or political. On the contrary, Porter's emotion is the foundation of her power as a historical novelist. Yet the answer to the question why Napoleon banned *The Scottish Chiefs* lies in plain sight in the novel's multiple prefaces and footnotes. Neglect of, or lack of access to, her paratext—information that is printed "by the text," such as footnotes, prefaces, appendices, illustrations, etc.—has led to scholarly misreadings of Porter since her re-emergence into academic conversations in the 1970s. Without her paratext we cannot see the extent of her political interventions, and with limited understanding of her political goals critics have made reductive assumptions about both the woman and her novels.

A return to the archive for long neglected copies of *The Scottish Chiefs* reveals that the paratext to many early editions celebrates Napoleon's ban. In an infrequently reproduced postscript to the third edition published in 1816, less than a year after Britain's conclusive victory over France at Waterloo, she thanks the public for their warm reception of her novel and describes Napoleon's proscription as an "honor":

It was elegantly translated by a man of letters into the French language, and it was denied publication by the command of Buonaparte. That an Englishwoman's narrative of a Scottish patriot struggling for the liberty of his country and dying in its cause should alarm the vigilance of the tyrant who at that time had subjected all countries but her own, is a circumstance in which even the most modest mind might be allowed to see some honor; and the biographer of William Wallace trusts that

such honest pride may not be blamed in her. She writes but from one motive,--to inspire virtue into the hearts of her youthful readers: and from that motive she cannot be insensible to the reward bestowed on her attempt, by its reception from the good and its rejection from the wicked. (*TSC McClurg xi*)

This passage clarifies that Porter believed Napoleon banned *The Scottish Chiefs* due to her critique of his tyranny through celebrating Wallace's disinterested and humble service to his country. In short, because she depicted Wallace as a man of virtue. This was precisely the trait that Jane and her sister Anna Maria Porter (1778-1832) thought would determine the tone of Napoleon's reign. Anna Maria wrote to Jane in 1799 that virtue would decide whether Napoleon would become a "patriot" or a "traitor/terror": "Should he be really a man of virtue, his Dictatorial power over France, will be its salvation."³ The Porter sisters and Britain would come to decide Napoleon was a traitor rather than a patriot, and Jane Porter launched an attack against him in *The Scottish Chiefs*.

Virtue was a guiding light of Porter's literary career. Yet rather than exploring the virtue of young women in conduct literature or domestic novels, as many Romantic women writers did, she delineated the virtue of valiant patriots and mingled sensibility with bloodshed. While women's achievement of public influence through emotional appeals has been widely discussed, Porter built her legacy mixing sentiment with national strife. This, alongside Napoleon's ban of her novel, recasts Porter's traditionally feminine goal of inspiring young minds to virtue not merely as part of Edmund Burke's (1729-1797) little platoon politics traditionally associated with women's work, but as a publicly political act opposite Europe's greatest leader on an international stage.

Porter's fame grew throughout the 1810s and 1820s, and she returns to the ban in her longer Retrospective Preface to the 1828 edition of the novel, noting that Napoleon admired her first well-

³ Box 29, 1445, Nov. 2, 1799, Jane Porter Papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

known novel *Thaddeus of Warsaw* (1803) but then experienced a change of heart. She denounces his action in Poland as his wish “to impose his lasting scepter on the one people; and to hold in unreflecting subjection the other” (*TSC Virtue* 1: 10), referring to the Polish and the French, respectively, displaying her increased confidence to attack him directly in print. She also notes that the ban “giv[es] her the honor of sharing a literary banishment along with the great name of Madame de Staël” (*TSC Broadview* 8), revealing her desire to place herself in company with one the most famously political women in Europe at the time, Germaine de Staël (1766-1816). My archival work shows that the two women were friends and had much in common; both were noted antagonists of Napoleon against whom he took legal action, and both wrote popular national novels in the second decade of the nineteenth century. However, none of Staël’s fame (nor her infamy) is associated with Porter today despite her best efforts to secure her friend’s prowess to herself in the 1820s. While Staël is hailed as a political woman, Porter is not.

The last edition of *The Scottish Chiefs* to include new paratext written by Porter was the 1841 revised edition published by the aptly named George Virtue (1793-1868) in London, which boasts a new forty-three-page preface, multiple appendices, and over a hundred footnotes. Using this last paratextual device, Porter moves her critique of Napoleon on to the very pages of her novel. A note physically below the scene in which Wallace refuses the Scottish crown reads: “This scene between Wallace and his chiefs has lately been pointed out to the author as the part most likely to have incurred the censure and interdiction of the Emperor Napoleon” (*TSC Virtue* 1: 429). Her demure tone is further discussed in Chapter Two, but what is important to note here is that answers to many early critical questions about Porter’s role in European politics are answered by Jane Porter herself in the paratext to her novel, if we only choose to look at it.

However, it is hard to look at what is not printed. The majority of nineteenth- and twentieth-century editions of *The Scottish Chiefs* fail to print Porter’s prefaces and footnotes. The edition that

preserved Porter's novel in print for the majority of the twentieth century, the illustrated 1921 Charles Scribner's Sons edition, removes all of Porter's paratext; it does not reappear until twenty-first century academic editions of the novel. While Fiona Price's 2008 edition is a marvel of literary recovery with regard to Porter's critical reception and historical context, approximately one-third of Porter's footnotes are omitted, including the 1841 footnote about Napoleon banning *The Scottish Chiefs*. Without the direct connection Porter sought to create between the Scottish Wars of Independence (1296-1328) and Napoleon's despotic rise, much of Porter's prowess and importance as a political female novelist is obscured, and our critical understanding of her contributions to women's writing and the novel incomplete.

Porter's literary acts of international resistance alongside her claims of personal importance as a woman on the public European stage are lost when we fail to study the paratext to her novels. This dissertation thus argues that a return to the paratext of *The Scottish Chiefs* reveals Porter's goals as a political female novelist, revising critical conceptions not only of Jane Porter and her novels, but of authorship, women's writing, and the novel in the early nineteenth century. As a case study, *The Scottish Chiefs* reveals that Jane Porter was a political woman who sought to influence British, European, and her own fortunes by incorporating the personal into the public in her national novels.

Jane Porter

Jane Porter was born in December 1775 in Durham, England, and died at the age of seventy-five in London in 1850. While she lived primarily in and near London for her adult life, she spent her early years in Edinburgh, where she and her siblings played with Walter Scott (1771-1832) as a child. Her family was large, artistic, and talented; her younger sister, Anna Maria, was deemed

the literary darling of the family when she published her first collection of poems, *Artless Tales*, at the age of fourteen in 1793. The three youngest siblings—Robert, Anna Maria, and Jane—combined their early talents to anonymously publish articles and short stories and produce a short-lived periodical, *The Quix*. Robert, later Sir Robert Ker Porter (1777-1842), was also a prodigy in painting; their mother moved the family to London in the 1790s so Robert could study at the Academy with Benjamin West (1738-1820). His panoramic *Storming of the Seringapatam* (1800) brought him great acclaim as a historical painter; he eventually became the court painter to Alexander I of Russia (1777-1825) and published multiple volumes about his European military and international adventures.

Though more limited in opportunities for travel and education, both sisters shared their beloved brother's interest in the great people and events of the past and explored European history in their novels. They were close companions and confidantes in their frequent travels in their youth, as well as collaborators on multiple short story collections. Their older brother William Olgive Porter (1774-1850), author of *Sir Edward Seaward's Narrative of His Shipwreck* (1831), describes their collaborative writing efforts as “spinning at one thread.”⁴ Sir Andrew Halliday (1782-1839), in the *Edinburgh Literary Gazette*, writes:

Much as the two sisters, Miss Jane and Anna Maria Porter, resemble each other in the moral and religious images of their writing, their stile of diction are [sic] totally unlike. Those who are acquainted with them personally, find the same sort of likeness and dissimilarity in themselves--the elder having a striking gravity of deportment, and the younger, as conspicuous an air of cheerful animation.⁵

⁴ Box A, March 24, 1826, Porter Family Correspondence, Durham University Library.

⁵ National Library of Scotland, Acc. 9856, No. 18, Aug., 1830.

More serious than Anna Maria by many accounts, Porter studied the ideas of freedom and liberty of her time, and her diary reveals that in her early years she wrote a eulogy of Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) (McMillan n.p.). She also imbibed the poignant spirit of national strife and rebellion from her friendships with Anna Letitia Barbauld (1743-1825) and Hannah More (1745-1833), and their interest in the French Revolution (1789-1799).

While her first novel *The Spirit of the Elbe* (1799) came out anonymously with little notice, she published her historical romance *Thaddeus of Warsaw* under her own name in 1803 to great success. The novel establishes Porter's lifelong interest in glorifying great men, as Devoney Looser terms them, and follows the fictional character of Thaddeus Sobieski from the Polish-Russian War of 1792 to his life in London as a refugee. Porter sought to mingle the facts of reality with the emotion of fiction, hoping that by depicting real virtue she would inspire real compassion. She was widely successful; one famous tribute is Mary Brunton's novel *Self-Control* (1810) in which the heroine Laura says: "I prefer the hero of Miss Porter's new publication – Thaddeus of Warsaw. Truly generous, and inflexibly upright, his very tenderness has in it something manly and respectable; and the whole combination has an air of nature that interests one as for a real friend" (136). She so effectively represented late-eighteenth-century turmoil in Poland that General William Gardiner (1748-1806), the British Minister in Warsaw, protested that he did not know Porter had ever been in Poland, for "none but an eye-witness could have described what actually happened there, as she has done."⁶ She, of course, had not; the remark attests to Porter's success in relaying the details of war and national culture with conviction.

Her pursuit of the traditionally masculine topics of nationhood, history, and particularly war, was noted by many of her contemporaries. While some readers were skeptical of her ability to mix

⁶ National Library of Scotland Acc. 9856, No. 18, Aug., 1830.

fact and fiction, many praised the emotion of her novel. Felicia Hemans echoes contemporary reviews' concerns about her method of narrating history, then writes "yet this animated Authoress has painted her Hero, the Patriot William Wallace, in such glowing colours, that you cannot avoid catching a spark of her own enthusiasm, as you follow him through the incidents of the Narrative" (qtd. in Kelly "Intro" lix). Porter's friend and fellow novelist Lady Charlotte Bury (1775-1861) attributes her prowess over masculine topics to that great Romantic ideal: imagination. Upon reading *The Scottish Chiefs*, she wrote to its author:

I am halftempted to give credence to the System of Metempsychosis- while perusing your Battles- for surely though unknown to you your Soul must have animated the Clan of rare Renowned Men—but does not the single word Imagination explain the matter at once and is it not in itself a transmigration into a thousand lives?⁷

The emotion with which Porter's admirers write to her speaks to her success at writing political novels of sensibility that encompass masculine and feminine registers in their imaginative re-telling of history.

Porter believed that inspiring sympathy for historical figures, and particularly masculine martial figures, was an enlightening moral act that elevated readers toward virtue. In her 1831 preface to *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, she recalls seeing Polish refugees in St. James Park as a child and wishing to create compassion for their plight, writing "I dipped my pen in their tears" (*TSC* SN viii). She continues: "Such sympathy, is, indeed, right; for it is one of the secondary means by which Providence conducts the stream of his mercies to them who need the succor of their fellow-creatures" (*TSC* SN ix). In *Thaddeus*, Porter combines national and historical interest with a deep

⁷ PORT 24.05A, Feb. 10, no year (pre-1825), Jane Porter Papers, Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library. All references are courtesy of the Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

pervading sensibility to inspire the British public with generosity toward the brave but unfortunate Polish refugees.

Encouraged by the praise she won from many corners of Europe, Porter wrote another biographical romance about the heroes of whom her Edinburgh nursery maids had spoken with great enthusiasm, William Wallace and Robert Bruce. *The Scottish Chiefs* was published in 1810 to further acclaim, and Jane Porter's place in the national literary market was cemented for the following three centuries. The novel went through over seventy-five editions in the nineteenth century, and was translated into multiple European languages and performed as theatrical and musical productions on the continent in her lifetime. Thomas Brown, one of Porter's publishers, writes in 1817: "We are all happy to hear of 'The Scottish Chiefs' being dramatized in France."⁸ *The Scottish Chiefs* also encourages her readers to noble deeds, but she wields sympathy for a slightly different cause. Rather than inspiring international generosity for Polish relief, she compels her countrymen to embody virtue by casting down the tyranny of Napoleon. Rather than extending a helping hand to those who had been overthrown, she seeks to destroy the overthrower.

The martial bravery, generous deeds, and deep sensibility of both Thaddeus Sobieszki and William Wallace serve as her ideal model of manly heroism. While some modern critics denounce the romanticization of Porter's heroes and the pervasive sensibility of her novels (Dennis 10), my research reveals that her contemporaries had few such objections. In fact, there is archival evidence of her novels inspiring virtue and valor in British soldiers, one of her dearest goals. At the age of 74, Jane Porter received a letter from Sir Charles James Napier (1782-1853), who had served in the British forces with her brother Robert under Sir John Moore (1761-1809) in his youth. After acknowledging his friendship to her as Robert's sister, he adds:

⁸ PORT 17.04.01, Apr. 1, 1817, Jane Porter Papers, Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library.

But Miss Jane Porter has a claim of her own upon all soldiers who have read her beautiful works; and who that reads, whereall have not read them? May I be so ungallant as to say that 40 years after Thaddeus of Warsaw set myself and (no doubt) many a young soldier wild with the desire to do noble deeds in war not only to try and imitate the hero but to win praise from the authoress of whose beauty we all heard and lo! In my old age the grey headed veteran has gained the wish of his youth!⁹

This letter, alongside those of Charlotte Bury and General Gardiner, show Porter's success at mixing masculine and feminine discourses and voices in her novels. She not only places women metempsychotically on the battlefields of the past, granting them conceptual agency to influence their contemporary politics, but also produced real results in inspiring the current soldiers of the British army.

In tribute to this success, international political and religious leaders heaped numerous accolades on the young author; General Thaddeus Kosciuszko of Poland's (1746-1817) nephew sent her one of his uncle's rings, and she was made a Canoness of the German Teutonic Order of St. Joachim when *Thaddeus of Warsaw* was translated into German. Aided by the rising interest in celebrity authors in the early nineteenth century, her image, character, and novels were frequently featured in periodicals, including *Frasers* and *The Lady's Monthly Magazine*. Within her artistic circle in London, Porter befriended (or continued previous friendships with) many celebrity women writers, including Germaine de Staël, Mary Robinson (1757-1800), Letitia Elizabeth Landon (1802-1838), Lady Caroline Lamb (1785-1828), Anna Letitia Barbauld, Hannah More, Sydney Owenson (1781-1859), Lady Charlotte Bury, and Elizabeth Spence (1768-1832), and male authors, including

⁹ Acc. 12104, Mar. 11, 1846, National Library of Scotland.

Washington Irving (1783-1859), Percival Stockdale (1736-1811), Thomas Campbell (1777-1844), and N. P. Willis (1806-1867).

Her childhood playmate, Walter Scott, who had since become Scotland's leading author, is purposefully left off this list. The two did not maintain a friendship in their adult lives, despite Porter's frequent liberty of penning of letters of introduction to his house for her friends. One of many such housed at the National Library of Scotland opens: "At sight of this, perhaps you will think my little notes of introduction, haunt you like a ghost!"¹⁰ She also desired their mutual publisher Owen Rees (1770-1837) to send him novels written by herself and her siblings,¹¹ though the presents did not produce any friendly overture, and the Porter sisters remained dissatisfied with the lack of notice by their childhood friend. This vexation only grew as Scott published his own historical novel of English-Scottish conflict, *Waverley*, in 1814. Jane Austen's (1775-1817) complaint that Scott had "no business to write novels, especially good ones. — It is not fair. — He has fame and profit enough as a poet, and should not be taking the bread out of other people's mouths" (qtd. in La Faye 289) would prove prophetic for the Porter sisters. As Scott's success grew and their reputations and purses diminished, both women would assert that Scott lifted their techniques for historical fiction into his own writing.

There are many similarities between *Waverley* and *The Scottish Chiefs*; in addition to their shared exploration of past wars between Scotland and England to posit theories of future Britishness, both also feature copious paratext. It is important to note that while Porter is occasionally mentioned as an imitator of Scott's text and paratext, the first edition of *The Scottish Chiefs*—published four years before *Waverley*—contains ninety-nine footnotes while the first edition

¹⁰ MSS.3901, fos. 118–19, Sep. 10, 1825, National Library of Scotland.

¹¹ MSS.3906, fos. 196–7, Apr. 8, 1828 and MS.5317, fos. 185–6, Oct. 5, 1831, National Library of Scotland.

of *Waverley* contains only two. Scott includes footnotes to his celebrated poems of the early 1800s which may indeed have inspired Porter, yet neither he nor Porter set the precedent for footnotes in novels. The suggestion that Porter copied Scott stems from Magnum Opus edition of the *Waverley Novels* (1829-1833) rather than the first editions; she acknowledges in the 1831 preface to *Thaddeus of Warsaw* that she enhanced her paratext in response to the Magnum Opus edition to achieve a similar pecuniary reward. She writes: “Indeed, the social taste of the times has lately fully shown, how advantageous the like conversational disclosures have proved to the recent republications of the celebrated ‘Waverley Novels’” (*TSC Broadview* vi). However, Porter couches this paratextual move not as a lesser author borrowing from a greater one, but as a fair exchange of tactics.

This preface houses Porter’s most famous authorial statement. *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and *The Scottish Chiefs* were included in Colburn and Bentley’s Standard Novel Series in 1831, and she wrote new prefaces and footnotes for both novels. The new preface to *Thaddeus of Warsaw* claims her precedence to Walter Scott in creating the historical novel. She writes that she was the first to “unit[e] the personages and facts of real history or biography, with a combining and illustrative machinery of the imagination, [which] formed a new species of writing” (*ToW SN* vi). However, with the publication of *Waverley*, it was Scott, not Porter, who was hailed as “the founder of a new historical fiction” (Garside 31). When discussing her decision to enhance her notes and introductions, she writes that she is “particularly pleased to adopt, in my turn, a successful example from the once Great Unknown—now the not less great avowed author of the *Waverley Novels*, in the person of Sir Walter Scott; who did me the honour to adopt the style or class of novel of which “Thaddeus of Warsaw” was the first” (*ToW SN* vi). Her footnotes are not simply an obsequious ploy to imitate Scott but are rather what Porter couches as an eye-for-an-eye literary exchange. Since he borrowed her innovative style and was made rich and famous, she adopts his paratextual technique to earn what she saw as her due.

Porter fought for her precedence in public and private; she circulated the story that Sir Andrew Halliday told Scott that he “must allow that the foundations of [his novels], were laid by Miss Porter in her *Scottish Chiefs*,” and that Scott had confirmed the assumption (McLean “Nobody’s Argument” 95). Yet these claims failed to swell her pocketbook or her reputation and even led to reviews chastising her immodest pretension. In October 1831, *The Aberdeen Magazine* published an article in which the ascribed “Peter Puff” expresses sarcastic horror upon discovering that Scott had copied Porter’s novels, and then provides numerous examples of the ways Porter copied Scott’s poetry. My goal in this dissertation is not to decide who invented the historical novel or who copied whom; instead I explore how and why Porter asserted her claim in paratext to her novels and its implications for her political authorship.

The 1830s held worse woes for Porter than the scorn of Peter Puff. The deaths of both her mother and beloved sister Anna Maria forced Jane to leave her home in Esher, Surrey, in 1833. She then became a perpetual guest until she unhappily took up residence with her brother William Olgive until her death in 1850. Throughout the last two decades of her life she fell into genteel poverty as she repeatedly sought royal assistance, which was finally granted by the young Queen Victoria (1819-1901). Looser has shown how Porter transacted new prefaces and notes to her novels for funds to support her dwindling purse. Her paratext accumulated as her need increased, and she was confident that it laid a strong groundwork for her literary biography and family’s future legacy, alongside the thousands of documents she put in order for such a purpose toward the end of her life. These papers, however, were auctioned off piecemeal over the next century and a half, scattering Porter’s story throughout various archives around the world.

As further explored in Chapter Two, the elements of Porter’s public persona that didn’t accord with feminine ideals were diminished by the end of her life. Beyond her elegant, fashionable likenesses in *Lady’s Monthly Magazine*, and then the overtly religious iconography of her portraits in

the garb of the Teutonic Order of St. Joachim affixed to later editions of her novels, she was idolized as an ideal retired female author in her obituary by Anna Maria Hall (1800-1881) in the *Art Journal* in 1850. This final public persona is challenged by her use of more masculine registers in her earlier prefaces, and particularly her private and anonymous papers. These reveal the political agendas that defined Porter's private life in addition to her public novels. She published many anonymous and pseudo-anonymous political pamphlets that show her desire to move beyond the accepted realm of women's writing and grant her contributions a masculine validity. Her brother William Olgive writes to her in 1837: "Bristol is full of your 'Address to Englishmen on Rights + Liberties' it is much extolled, I have heard you called 'a very clever fellow.'"¹²

Porter was also the family businesswoman. She made constant effort toward the success and fame of her siblings and handled all publishing business with her and Anna Maria's publishers personally. Challenging narratives of Romantic female authorship that argue that women writers' male relatives worked as their agents, Porter's brothers actually relied on her. William Olgive writes to her in 1831: "My dear sister Jane, As you are the Man of Business, I send you this document; & let it be taken care of."¹³ Porter mused on gender constraints within publishing in her private notes to her novel *The Pastor's Fireside* (1817): "Why should a woman put Miss in the title page, when a man does not put Mr?"¹⁴ Porter's attention to the way her authorship would be construed, particularly when facilitated by her title pages, footnotes, and prefaces, led me to examine how she uses these paratextual mediums to challenge the accepted roles of women in political conversations spanning from the heart of the British home to complex international concerns.

¹² Box B, Apr. 11, 1837, Porter Family Correspondence, Durham University Library.

¹³ Box F, Apr. 18, 1831, Porter Family Correspondence, Durham University Library.

¹⁴ PORT ND – P.05, no date, Jane Porter Papers, Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library.

Beyond Anna Maria Hall's obituary, there was little notice of Porter's death in 1850. *The Musical World* complains about this neglect: "As in the case of the recent death of Miss Edgeworth, it is singular that so little notice has yet been taken of the demise of Miss Jane Porter, one of the most distinguished novelists which this nation has produced" ("The Late Miss Jane Porter" 387). Despite the publication of both cheap and elaborately illustrated editions of her novels throughout the nineteenth century, Porter's reputation continued its gradual decline after her death. When publishing parts of her diary in 1897, Ina White writes the fatal words: "Few of us in the present remember the name of Jane Porter, and still fewer have ever read her works" (322).

This lack of recognition pervaded early notices of Porter in modern literary studies. A. D. Hook claimed in the 1970s that Porter was "a minor Romantic novelist" and that the great interest taken in her by Queen Victoria was "unusual" (181). Roughly twenty years after Hook's claim, however, Carol Anderson and Aileen M. Riddell name Porter "among the most interesting women writing in the early nineteenth century" (179). The subsequent twenty years have seen an uptick in scholarly material on Porter, though no monograph or biography has yet been produced, though Devoney Looser is currently producing a biography of Jane and Anna Maria Porter. Looser writes that Jane Porter "may be the most important Regency-era novelist you've never heard of" ("The Other Jane" 36). While she writes to a mixed academic audience with an interest in Austen, her words hold true for most scholars of Romanticism, Scottish Studies, and the nineteenth-century novel.

Looser is joined primarily by Fiona Price, Thomas McLean, Graeme Morton, and Gary Kelly in her efforts to expand the conversations in which Porter participates. Noticed primarily in connection to Scott and the historical novel, she remains excluded from studies of women's political novels, national novels, and paratextual novels. This dissertation argues that these conversations are all connected; by examining how gender, genre, nation, history, and print culture are woven together

in her work, new light is shed on each as well as on Porter herself. I study Porter to challenge the consensus that her work was a mere steppingstone on the way to a male revolution of the novel; my archival and bibliographical study instead reveals a politically engaged woman writer seeking to serve her nation from the margins.

“The Then Untrodden Field”: Gender and Genre

Porter’s fame in modern literary studies stems from her ties to Jane Austen and Walter Scott. Indeed, early work on Porter argued for her importance as an auxiliary of the two fiction giants’ careers.¹⁵ It was as common in the Romantic era as it is now to compare Porter to Scott due to their shared national themes and paratextual styles. While Austen was little-known during her lifetime and thus less apt for comparison, connections between the authors, if only their names, pervaded the nineteenth century to the point that one London edition of *The Scottish Chiefs* listed Porter as the author of *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) (Looser “The Other Jane” 36). While these connections were essential to recovering Porter to our conversations of Romantic writing, they reveal how our current thoughts about Porter have been shaped by comparison to others, and particularly by gendered conceptions of genre stemming from Scott and Austen’s work.

The main connection between Jane Austen and Jane Porter hinges on gender, genre, and politics, and concerns a moment now famous in Austen studies. In 1816 James Stanier Clarke (1766-1834), Librarian to the Prince Regent, wrote to Austen to suggest she write a historical romance about the royal house of Cobourg. Declining, Austen laughingly replied that she was not suited to the genre, instead preferring to write scenes of “domestic life,” adding: “I could not sit seriously down to write a serious Romance under any other motive than to save my Life” (qtd. in La Faye

¹⁵ See Looser, *Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain*.

326). Lisa Kasmer argues that Austen's refusal to write a historical romance "clearly marks 'feminine' and 'masculine' genres of writing" (2), placing the masculine historical romance and epic poem in generic tandem against the feminine novel. Walter Scott himself would describe this gendered demarcation of fictional topics as that of "ordinary life," the purview of Austen, and "the Big Bow-wow strain" of epic history in which he excelled (qtd. in Lockhart 8: 292). Thus, the 1810s saw a divide between a woman's domestic novel and a man's historical or epic novel, and we have come to associate Jane Austen with one and Walter Scott with another. Where, then, does that leave Jane Porter's epic historical novels?

To answer this question, I return to the beginning of the nineteenth century with the publication of Maria Edgeworth's (1768-1849) *Castle Rackrent* in 1800. Unlike Edgeworth's didactic and moral tales that came before and after, *Castle Rackrent* takes Irish history and national identity as its central topic and educates its British audience on Irish customs. The book was well-received throughout Britain and started a new vogue for novels about Ireland. Her countrywoman Sydney Owenson (1776?-1859), also known as Lady Morgan, followed Edgeworth's lead when she published *The Wild Irish Girl* in 1806, a sentimental story of a prejudiced Englishman falling in love with a romantic Irish princess. While the new genre of the national tale took shape in the writings of Irish authors, Scottish authors such as Elizabeth Hamilton (1756-1816), Mary Brunton (1778-1818), Christian Isobel Johnstone (1781-1857), soon contributed their own explorations of national life .

This new genre gave women the chance to participate in political conversations from which they were customarily barred. Women were already in high circulation in the print market in the early nineteenth century, but their writings were largely concerned with more traditionally feminine subjects of courtship and education. Romances and didactic novels covered bookshelves as women took advantage of a booming literary market. The 1810s in particular saw a sharp uptake in women's authorship, calling it "a time of female ascendancy, and when women novelists...were more likely

than in any other decade to acknowledge their own work” (Clery et al. 6). As women owned their work more boldly, they also sought new discourses and arenas of influence. Anne K. Mellor notes the power of Regency women writers to educate their readers in what she calls the “knowledge novel,” which discussed “history, politics, science or the arts” and offered women readers “intellectual information not otherwise available to them” (“Regency Women Writers” 44).

Among other critics, Mellor notes how Edgeworth and Owenson used existing feminine forms of the novel to authorize their more overt forays into national politics. Andrew Monnickendam claims that Edgeworth transformed didactic fiction into the national tale (101), and Joseph E. Lew states that “Owenson turned to the novel of courtship in order to discuss the politics of empire, a topic otherwise forbidden to women” (42). Owenson herself acknowledged the political power of novels, writing: “A novel is especially adapted to enable the advocate of any cause to steal upon the public, through the by-ways of the imagination, and to win from its sympathies what its reason so often refuses to yield to undeniable demonstration” (qtd. in Ferris *Question* 13). By altering previous didactic genres of women’s fiction and taking advantage of the novel’s sensibility and imagination, women writers used the national tale to transmit their political ideas into public discourse.

Yet writing on nation and history was particularly tenuous for women, as it increased the pervasive danger of the act of publication and the novel’s low status, both of which could harm a woman’s reputation. Some female novelists felt precluded from political conversations; Pam Perkins shows that Scottish author Anne Grant (1755-1838) did not comment openly about public fields in her letters, feeling “unable to exhibit any of the public concerns which constituted its main field of interest” (qtd. in Clery et al. 7). This is in part because, as Joan B. Landes summarizes, “women and dependents were factually and legally excluded from the political public sphere” (141). Landes also notes, however, that women were more active in literary public spheres, a point that Stephen C.

Behrendt explains further when he says that Romantic women's writing was "a designedly self-reflexive part of a *public* conversation carried on in print concerning issues of real national cultural, intellectual, political, and moral significance" (9, emphasis his). The new sub-genres of the novel in the 1810s thus allowed women a stronger foothold in the literary marketplace to explore topics of public and political importance.

The Act of Union in 1800 was the spur for the national novel, as British citizens were eager to learn and authors to conceptualize how Ireland fit into its new place in the United Kingdom. In her influential *Bardic Nationalism* (1997), Katie Trumpener notes that "the cultural nationalism of the peripheries" sparked the majority of new genres in the early nineteenth century (xi), particularly what would come to be known as the national tale. The genre interrogates the relationship between England and its subjugated peripheries, and thus Edgeworth, Owenson, and Scott dominated early discussions. Another leading critic on the national tale, Kathryn Kirkpatrick, argues that *Castle Rackrent* "can be read as an important document in the tortuous struggle for Irish national identity" ("Introduction to *Castle Rackrent*" x) and that *The Wild Irish Girl* "seeks to provide a genealogy for a separate Irish identity at a historical moment when that identity seemed lost" ("Introduction to *TWIG*" vii). Though Owenson's traditionally feminine genre conventions led some scholars to discount the power of her novels, the early national tale held immense political cache. The preface to *Castle Rackrent* has been called propaganda for the union (Kirkpatrick "Intro to *Castle Rackrent*" xxxiv) and *The Wild Irish Girl* studied as both pro- and anti-union.¹⁶

These women made many of their covert political claims in prefaces and footnotes to their novels. In doing so they create what Anthony Grafton calls a "double-story" (23), a dialectic between text and paratext that troubles any concrete political reading of a novel. Edgeworth and

¹⁶ For more on the politics of *The Wild Irish Girl*, see Heather Braun, Jane Elizabeth Dougherty, and Natasha Tessone.

Owenson's copious footnotes to their popular Irish novels were so striking that they forged a generic affinity between national tales and paratext. The idea that one comes with the other was established within a decade of *Castle Rackrent's* appearance; in an 1808 review of Owenson's *The Wild Irish Girl*, the *Monthly Review* offers praise but complains: "in narration, however, we are much interrupted by many intrusive subjects, which are forced on us, no doubt, because the tale *is* a national tale" ("Miss Owenson's *Wild Irish Girl*" 379, emphasis theirs). The *Monthly Review* refers to the long footnotes about Irish culture, music, history, and folklore intended to educate a British reader about Ireland. Beyond explaining the unfamiliar, footnotes can also authenticate the female writer and her work on political topics. Jeanne Moskal notes that because the national novel and woman writer were co-emergent, they had to establish simultaneous credibility: "new nations are trying to establish legitimacy in ways that resemble new writers, so the struggle to 'legitimate' Ireland and the struggle to 'legitimate' the female author follow overlapping strategies" (178).

To do this, national novels co-opted the paratextual trappings of authenticity from the male-dominated genre of history. Both Looser and Kelly note that national novelists "added the quest for the historical origins of national culture to the developing 'national tale,' giving the novel some of the authority already enjoyed by historiography" (Kelly *English Fiction* 94). Footnotes let national novels not only claim rightful kinship to history, but also allowed women to combat "the effect of nineteenth-century historical scientificity—[which,] though it did not literally force women out of historiography—appears to have limited how far audiences were prepared to see women's historical writings as authoritative or successful" (Looser *Writing of History* 9). I would reiterate that though we associate *Castle Rackrent* and *The Wild Irish Girl* with their contemporary national struggles when studying them as national tales, both novels use Irish history as the clay with which they mold their constructions of nation. Thus, we should remember that their footnotes are not only the borrowed

feathers of authenticity, but conventions of the genres they incorporate to shape their own political positions.

Just as Looser remarks that women do not write history the way we expect, I argue that women do not always use the paratextual trappings of history the way we expect. While we may assume that women attempt to co-opt masculine authority through footnotes, they frequently assert a more personal, though not distinctly feminine, ethos in their paratext. Susan Kubica Howard argues that national tales and historical novels are “mediating texts” (21), yet the various ways women use paratext to mediate their novels for mutually political and personal goals has not been studied until now. The fact that Ferris’s *The Achievement of Literary Authority: Gender, History, and the Waverley Novels* (1991) does not mention Porter reveals that our studies of paratext in national novels is not yet complete. Ferris’s point that “literary authority regulates generic hierarchy” (2) shows how crucial women’s assertions of authority are to better understand the burgeoning genres of the Romantic novel.

Though women writers had the generic right to include long footnotes, it does not necessarily follow that readers enjoyed them. Many modern critics have followed the critiques of the *Monthly Review* and other contemporary sources that protested against the novels’ baggy accumulation of paratext. Perhaps because it is a more traditionally feminine novel, *The Wild Irish Girl* in particular has been censured for its footnotes. Joep Leerssen calls the footnotes containing information from non-fiction sources “un-novelistic” (*Remembrance* 60), and Heather Braun remarks that a cursory reading of the novel yields “reasonable disappointment” partly due to its “excessive footnoting” (33). While they may be unpalatable to fiction readers, they are essential to the novel as a whole; Susan B. Egenolf contends that reading text and paratext together offers “access to a truth not found in either” (56). Egenolf’s conclusion follows previous work that lauds Edgeworth and Owenson’s paratext: Gary Kelly views the footnotes as so essential to *Castle Rackrent* that he calls the

genre it finds “the footnote-novel or novel of social and historical description” (*English Fiction* 17). Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace argues that to remove the editorial paratext to *Castle Rackrent* “is to read only a portion of the text” (154), and Julie Donovan argues that the “voluminous footnotes and intertexts” of *The Wild Irish Girl* are central to the novel as a whole (33).

One of the reasons paratext is so integral to the novel is because it frequently houses not only the author’s personal voice, but also her political agenda. This has already been a subject of note in studies of Romantic genres, begun by Marilyn Butler and Kathryn Kirkpatrick’s criticism on Edgeworth’s *Castle Rackrent*. While Kirkpatrick sees the footnotes as a restrictive place in the novel, arguing that they contain the dangerous politics of her Irish narrator Thady Quirk’s voice (“Introduction to *Castle Rackrent*” xxvi), footnotes soon came to house authors’ own voices. Sydney Owenson was an innovator of this method, which contributed to footnotes’ power for political subversion through individual female knowledge and demonstrated party loyalty. In her 2009 book, *The Art of Political Fiction in Hamilton, Edgeworth, and Owenson*, Egenolf argues the power of glosses (or paratext) to subvert not only traditional gender and genre hierarchies, but also the stability of history and nation. She argues that “history...and national identity are constructed by interpretations,” and that women writers’ paratext “draw readers’ attention to this construction that is far from fixed and final” (Egenolf 16). Furthermore, Egenolf argues that we should “always understand these authors as keenly aware of their role as political writers” (187).

While I also use paratext to explore women’s political writing, my work is different from Egenolf’s in two major ways. One, Egenolf does not mention Jane Porter in her study, while she is my main focus. Two, her analyses show how paratext helps us understand the text, while I argue that an interplay between text and paratext illuminates the complexity of a book as well as its author, a point to which I will return below. Footnotes to women’s novels do not merely provide a veneer of formal authenticity to the text; they actively shape the author’s construction of nation as well as a

more complex female authorship that intermingles women's private experiences with bold political statements. Studying women's paratext thus helps collapse previous assessments of the divide between public and private spheres, the demarcation of masculine and feminine topics, and the types of authority that women could wield in the public discourse.

Egenolf's study reminds us that while Maria Edgeworth and Sydney Owenson are seen as founders of the national tale and have been the beneficiaries of multiple political readings, Jane Porter remains largely overlooked. Ina Ferris, Katie Trumpener, and many others discuss Owenson and Edgeworth in dialogue with each other, yet both overlook Porter. Ian Dennis studies Owenson and Porter in his book *Nationalism and Desire in Historical Fiction* (1997) yet does not place the women in conversation or acknowledge the unique conditions of women's authorship of political novels. Furthermore, he acknowledges Scott as the "protagonist" of his critical teleology (172), a pervasive problem in criticism of national novels to which I will return. The lack of cross-analysis of Porter and Owenson is particularly surprising given the women were friends and both used sensibility as a political vehicle in their national novels. While Kirkpatrick notes that Owenson has been studied in dialogue with Scottish national novelist Susan Ferrier due to their mutual use of a marriage plot ("Introduction to *TWIG*" xvi), Porter is excluded from this conversation due to her more masculine topic of war. However, Trumpener's idea that that "the constant copying and cross-pollination between the Irish and Scottish novel amount almost to a transperipheral literary life" (17) certainly applies to the two authors. Both claim a novelistic invention for which Scott was given credit, incorporate vast paratextual systems into their novels that facilitate their entry into the political sphere, and claim inspiration for their national fiction from the folk tales of their childhoods.

Similarly, both *The Wild Irish Girl* and *The Scottish Chiefs* have been decried as bad novels by modern critics.¹⁷ Richard Haslam writes that excessive paratext and sentiment doom *The Wild Irish Girl*. He remarks that it is “a poor novel written in a slipshod fashion, lumping together elements of the historical tract, social document, didactic treatise, antiquarian pedantry (on many pages footnotes outweigh the text), implausible melodrama, and excruciating sentiment” (qtd. in Connolly “Introduction to *TWIG*” xxxiii). Its heightened emotion caused Jane Austen to remark: “If the warmth of her language could affect the body in a cold English winter, it might be worth reading in this weather” (qtd. in Whelan xxii). Austen might have thought the same of *The Scottish Chiefs*. Though it has received less notice than *The Wild Irish Girl*, the novel’s overt sensibility has procured most of its derision. Dorothy McMillan calls it “unhistorical and wildly sentimental” (n.p.), and A. D. Hook notes that it is Porter’s “bad example” that leads to Scott’s more masterful re-telling of Scottish history in *Waverley* (189). Trumpener has warned against our kneejerk reaction to read national novels as bad novels, remarking that comparing them to nineteenth-century realist fiction may make them seem “scrappy or odd” but that “when they are reread in relation to the intellectual life of their period, their true degree of conceptual ambition and formal experimentation becomes clear, for even their hoariest literary clichés or set pieces prove to be saturated with cultural and historical meaning” (xiii-xiv). Thus, this dissertation’s second chapter seeks to better understand the “cross-pollination” and mutual exchange between Owenson and Porter as they simultaneously fought for women’s voices to be heard in politics via the “odd” emergent genres of the new century.

Despite the copious similarities between Edgeworth, Owenson, and Porter’s works, I am hesitant to call *The Scottish Chiefs* a national tale. Ina Ferris’s definition of the genre as one that discusses “the grievances of a small people” centers the national tale around the unequal power

¹⁷ See Brigid Brophy, Thomas Flanagan, and Elmer Andrews’s comments on *The Wild Irish Girl*.

struggles of a subjugated nation (*Question* 50). At first glance this seems to encompass *The Scottish Chiefs*' re-telling of the Scottish Wars of Independence, for which reason Andrew Monnickendam and Ian Dennis have compellingly categorized the novel as a Scottish national tale. Yet beyond the difficulty of Porter's status as an Englishwoman, paying attention to the paratext troubles the whether the book itself posits Scotland's subjugation. While the text narrates the story of a national tale, the paratext precludes the book from being considered as such. I agree with Fiona Price's assessment that Porter's project is inherently British; while it argues for the valor of Scotland, it also argues for the importance of Scotland's union with England, a point that can be missed if one does not give proper attention to the paratext, as discussed in Chapter One. It is certainly a strange choice to celebrate a unified British state by narrating a period of English tyranny and Scottish insurrection, and more work needs to debate the generic affinity of the novel. Porter's novel could be described as Scottish national fiction, or perhaps more accurately as British national fiction. Ferris's term that was derived from the "alternative fictions of cultural difference by Maria Edgeworth and Lady Morgan" does not sit well with Porter (Ferris *Achievement* 11), who attempts to create a fiction of cultural union by diminishing difference. Thus, the categorization of *The Scottish Chiefs* as a national tale contrasts its project of British unity and is therefore not the best term for the novel.

Yet the correct term is hard to come by. Like *Castle Rackrent* and *The Wild Irish Girl*, *The Scottish Chiefs* evades easy generic categorization. Porter called her novel a "biographical romance," and chose "A Romance" as its subtitle to be printed on the title page. I believe romance is the most accurate term, the implications of which are discussed in Chapter One. While romances were viewed as feminine in the early nineteenth century, *The Scottish Chiefs* was also discussed as a masculine work during Porter's lifetime. One contemporary critic called it "an exquisite Epic Poem, (though denominated a Romance)" (Fosbroke 252). It of course is also considered a historical novel in comparison to Scott's work. My decision to not categorize *The Scottish Chiefs* as solely a national tale

or a historical novel stems in part from our critical tendencies to separate the two along gendered and national lines. Our propensity to study Scottish historical fiction by men and Irish national tales by women has obscured the work of women's historical fiction, men's national fiction, Scottish national fiction, and Irish historical fiction.

The Scottish Chiefs is both national—exploring issues of statehood, conflict and union between nations, and national character—and historical—set in the past, dealing with issues of continuity, memory, and an interplay between past and present—and thus deserves attention for its role in developing genres that encapsulate both topics. To revise our understanding of how gender, nation, and genre intermingle across modern critical divisions, I use a term that places these novels into new conversations with each other: national novels. I use the term national novel in its simplest sense as an umbrella term—*The Scottish Chiefs*, alongside *Castle Rackrent*, *The Wild Irish Girl*, and *Waverley*, explores concepts of national identity in part by investigating its history. Analyzing nation and history together, as well as men's and women's work together, produces new and more well-rounded readings of how nationhood was depicted in the emergent genres of the nineteenth century.

This dissertation thus undercuts studies that place Walter Scott at the fore of generic and paratextual invention. It contributes to “displacing Scott and especially *Waverley* as a singular yet symptomatic event, to recover alternative forms of historical explanation that emanate from the same historical moment” (Trumpener 130). Women's work in national novels has been seen as a steppingstone to the exemplary Great Unknown in critical teleologies of genre, particularly with regard to paratext. Ian Duncan writes: “Scott's novels took over with a vengeance the authenticating devices of romance revival—editorial frames, antiquarian commentary, the citation of documentary sources—to establish the technical repertoire of what Fiona Robertson has called ‘fictions of authenticity’” (*Scott's Shadow* 274-275). In the postscript that should have been a preface to *Waverley*, Scott acknowledges his debts to Ann Radcliffe (1764-1823) and Maria Edgeworth as his

predecessors in both romance revival and the national novel. Yet it was Scott, not Edgeworth, who was hailed as the progenitor of authentic national writing communicated via paratext. Ferris shows how contemporary reviews argue “that what Scott introduced into the novel was scholarship” facilitated by “the details and documentation that ‘cram’ the pages of *Waverley*” (*Achievement* 85). Thus, the paratext of women’s national novels was re-cast as the hallmark of a male historical novelist.

The narrative of Scott’s inventions has pervaded scholarship on the novel since the publication of the *Waverley Novels*. A century ago, R. Brinsley Johnson remarks that “Scott himself has plainly set forth the ancestry of the National, or Historical, novel” (xi). His precedence in both remains; while trying to situate Scott among his contemporary practitioners, Trumpener acknowledges the hybridity of *Waverley* and its contributions to “the intertwined development of the historical novel and the national tale” (131). The work to detangle Scott from his central place in our teleologies of early nineteenth century novels has taken the work of the past decades. This is difficult work with regard to the historical novel since scholarship on the genre springs from criticism on *Waverley*, particularly György Lukács’ *The Historical Novel* (1955). Lukács defines it as a work that combines real and fictitious personages and celebrates Scott’s *Waverley* as its paragon. Some critics such as Susan Kubica Howard, A. D. Hook, and Ian Duncan maintain the popular assumption that Scott invented the historical novel, while others have begun to question our ontological assumptions about the genre by challenging its line of innovative succession.

Critics such as Fiona Price and Tom McLean have recently argued for Porter’s importance to the genre. Price critiques Lukács’s ontological “construction of the historical novel to which Porter does not conform” (“Resisting” 638), showing how the gate was barred to Porter before she even became a subject of serious study. Anne K. Mellor, however, argues that Porter invented the genre and then Scott appropriated it (“Regency Women Writers” 44), and McLean affirms Porter’s

claim that *Thaddeus of Warsaw* does precisely what Lukács says a historical novel should and does so over ten years prior to *Waverley*. Regardless of the ordering and re-ordering of this generic teleology, Angela Keane's point that Scott's critical apotheosis damaged Porter's reputation, which became lost "in the literary historical netherland between eighteenth and nineteenth-century social realism" in the decades following Lukács (17) defines modern Porter scholarship's drive to re-place her into conversations of gender and genre.

Some critics have assumed that Porter needed to de-masculinize her subject matter to make it palatable to the literary market. Kelly argues that Porter's political re-rendering of the conflict between Britain and France "was considered 'masculine' in the gendered discursive order of the time, but Porter feminizes her material in several ways. She emphasizes the value of religious piety, feminizes her heroes, shows the basis of public life in subjectivity and domesticity, and historicizes her material only to an extent that does not intrude upon 'masculine' learned discourses" ("Women Novelists" 383). While I agree that she feminizes the book in some of these ways, this is not in deference to manly erudition, but to assert the power of sensibility to produce political power. This also allows her to populate what Mellor calls the "'feminine discourse'" of a vastly female reading public (*Romanticism and Gender* 7) with female-authored renderings of war to authorize women's political contributions. Like her cross-dressing heroine Helen Mar, Porter was adept at code switching genders according to her goals rather than subverting the masculine to the feminine or vice-versa. Thus, Porter's novels aim to make historical strife pleasing and inspiring to both genders; her success is evidenced in the raptures of Lady Charlotte Bury, General Gardiner, and Sir Charles James Napier detailed above.

Yet it was Scott who "did much to raise the respectability of creative writing" (Gribben 119) as he masculinized the feminine forms of the romance and novel. His apotheosis had (and still has) an inverse effect on Porter's reception. Price notes that comparison with Scott "often leads to the

misinterpretation (and devaluing) of Porter's work," which "has been judged by inappropriate criteria only applicable to Scott" ("Introduction" 9; 26). The idea that her novels are lesser than Scott's because they are dissimilar pervades Porter scholarship. Dorothy McMillan offers this assessment of Porter's novels: "Neither *Thaddeus* nor *The Scottish Chiefs* is a historical novel in the manner of Scott's later *Waverley* novels: although she did some research for both, Jane Porter shows little interest in understanding either historical or contemporary events" (n.p.). As explored further in Chapter One, historical authenticity was not Porter's main goal in writing *The Scottish Chiefs*.

Her novel presents a different view of history than that provided by Scott and exalted by Lukács, through which authenticity and progress became the hallmarks of the historical novel. Scott's portrayal of mutual temporal and national progress was hailed as mimetic truth, particularly in the aftermath of the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion depicted in *Waverley*, when the Highland Clearances displaced old ways of life. Ina Ferris has shown it was "the fact and accuracy of the novel...[that] most clearly establishe[d] its positive critical value" in contemporary reviews (*Achievement* 83). Caroline McCracken-Flesher reminds us that Scott's 'middle way,' though an anti-Romantic idea, was perceived as an authentic one (141), and Price notes that his teleological account of Britain's progress after the '45 "is taken as historical truth, and correspondingly the representation of 'history as progress' is accepted as the defining characteristic of the historical novel" ("Resisting" 639). Porter, on the other hand, looks nostalgically back to a time when "all the men were brave and all the women fair!" (*TSC Broadview* 374). Yet while Price posits that she elegizes a lost past, I argue that she instead rekindles the spirit of antiquity to inspire current bravery—she looks back as a means to look forward. She hopes to reify a unified British identity that celebrated a mutually glorious past, present, and future and thus reduces temporal and national difference in *The Scottish Chiefs*.

To make my final note regarding gender and genre, and to further illuminate Porter's political authorship, I return to James Stanier Clarke. After Austen refused to write a royally sanctioned historical romance, Clarke did not give up the project. He instead turned to another leading novelist of the day, one who already had tried her hand at the big bow-wow strain of epic history. Jane Porter, unlike Austen, accepted Clarke's suggestion and produced *Duke Christian of Luneburg* (1824), most likely in the hopes that it would procure her royal favor in the form of an annuity. This preferment never came, as Sir Andrew Halliday mourns in the *Edinburgh Literary Gazette* in 1829, though it was "written with the avowed purpose of making the renown of his majesty's illustrious ancestor more familiar to the British public."¹⁸ As Looser has noted, Austen has since been praised for her independent refusal while Porter has been denigrated as a sycophantic hack for hire. Beyond depreciating the financial desperation of her family at the time Porter took the commission, this assessment devalues her interest shaping British understanding of European history. Though *Duke Christian* is not a subject of further interest in this dissertation, its royal commission, as well as its warm reception by European powers such as the Emperor of Russia, who wrote Porter a letter commending the novel,¹⁹ foregrounds the political bent of Porter's writings.

At the end of her life, Porter described her authorship as entering "the then untrodden field" ("The Late Miss Jane Porter" 387). Her originality as well as bravery in bringing the battlefields of Scotland's past to life were constant themes of her reflections on her novels. Porter inspired poets such as Margaret Holford (1778-1852) and Felicia Hemans (1793-1835) to explore history "to challenge the view that women had no role to play in the crucial events of the past" (Mellor "Regency Women Writers" 45). Yet the ensuing decades were unkind to her and her prowess and influence forgotten, and she was left out of early scholarship that sought to demarcate the origins of

¹⁸ Acc. 9856, no. 18, Aug., 1830, National Library of Scotland.

¹⁹ Acc. 9856, no. 18, Aug., 1830, National Library of Scotland.

the historical novel and the national tale. These studies in turn established gender/genre binaries that have excluded Porter from a clear place in studies of the novel. My work helps re-incorporate Porter into our discussions of Romantic writing not only to continue to revise our current ideas of gender/genre divisions, but also to reveal new intersections of the personal and political in women's novels.

Paratext and Self-Reflexive Women's Writing

Paratext helped Porter communicate with readers and develop her widespread fame, but it was also instrumental to erasing her from modern criticism. This section explores how paratext's inherent connection with the author led to Porter's rise and fall, laying the groundwork for my study of her posthumous paratext in Chapter Three. Porter used paratext to place herself in the space of her novel, both metaphorically—in her comments on its production, reality, and moral effect—and also physically within the space and stuff of the material book. *The Scottish Chiefs* therefore challenges readings of early nineteenth-century novels that attempt to ignore paratext and thus remove the author to facilitate a purely textual reading. It also suggests that literary studies' shift toward removing the author from the text was more easily facilitated by a print market that had already stripped authors' paratext from new editions.

Paratext, as theorized by Gerard Genette, "is what enables a text to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers and, more generally, to the public" (1). This definition brings up three important points I wish to discuss in this section: the separation of text and paratext, paratext's contribution to a larger book project, and its facilitation of the connection between author and reader. Despite what Genette sees as its necessary function, paratext is not given the same critical value as the text and remains understudied. This is because the way we think about paratext is construed by how we are taught to read the novel, especially the nineteenth-century novel, in a way

that produces a myriad of textual rather than material readings. I seek to challenge Genette's assertion, alongside much of the last century of criticism, that "whatever aesthetic or ideological investment the author makes in a paratextual element...whatever coquettishness or paradoxical reversal he puts into it, the paratextual element is always subordinate to 'its' text, and this functionality determines the essence of its appeal and its existence" (12). Viewing the paratext as subsidiary diminishes its immense power to alter the reader's concept of the text, author, and book.

One reason for paratext's secondary status in current concepts of the novel is its connection to the author. Genette argues that paratext is "characterized by an authorial intention and the assumption of responsibility" (3). As said authorial intention lost credence throughout the twentieth century, famously marked by Roland Barthes in "The Death of the Author" (1967), scholars placed undue importance on the text and diminished interest in the author's voice within a book. Chapter Three reveals that this erasure of the author was itself facilitated by the erasure of paratext from nineteenth- and twentieth-century books; new editions that removed prefaces and footnotes also removed an author's personal voice housed in those spaces. Literary studies' shift toward ideologically removing the author from the text was more easily facilitated by a print market that had physically stripped the author from the text.

While this is sometimes efficacious, authors should not be removed from the study of national novels because they intentionally place themselves within them. We must pay heed to the author of *The Scottish Chiefs* because its political message is facilitated by direct intervention of the proclaimed author herself, not a theoretical "Editor" as seen in Maria Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent* or even the "Author" and various authorial pseudo-personas of Walter Scott's *Waverley Novels*. Furthermore, footnotes and prefaces offer authors unique sites to communicate with their audiences, and H. J. Jackson has shown that readers paid careful attention to the margins. It is

important to remember that though they may have lost credence today, Romantic era paratext was a productive site of communication between authors and readers.

Among others, Robert Darnton has re-asserted the importance of a text within a larger print culture network, and Maurice Couturier and Jerome McGann have theorized the role of the author in the materiality of cultural production. However, the paratext which houses an author's voice within a book remains understudied. Genette's point that paratext "is what enables a text to become a book" led me to conclude that text and paratext cooperate to create a book. I think it important to say book because I do not wish to grant wholeness to the term text when it has been given hierarchical preference over paratext. In using the term book, I encompass Leah Price's idea of the book-object, in which the text, "a string of words" is differentiated from the "physical thing" of the book-object (4). In speaking of the fullness of a book, I speak also of its many re-iterations as hundreds of editions of new book-objects throughout the decades. Thus, this dissertation examines *The Scottish Chiefs'* text and paratext as well as its material additions and editions as part of the same book. I contend that if we don't acknowledge the author in the text (via the paratext) we lose a full reading of the book—if we don't acknowledge the book's impact on the author, we inhibit our understanding of women's self-reflexive political writing and its shifting reception.

Material and book history studies help us better understand women's writing through authors' unique manipulations of the print and literary market. Betty Schellenberg argues that "print culture studies offer a start toward a theoretically self-conscious, yet historically nuanced and delimited, understanding of the agency of the woman writer in literary history" (14). Jennie Batchelor adds that women's writing should be seen as labor and due credit given to their artistic and political missions. Though viewed as unequal to the "implicitly masculine work of (intellectual) labour," Batchelor argues that Romantic women writers viewed their writing as strenuous work, "revealing labour's centrality to these authors' self-conceptualization as women and as literary

professionals” (J. Batchelor 15; 4). I argue that paratext is a visible site of the author’s work within its commodifiable product. Claire Brock puts it succinctly when she writes: “Against the grain of contemporary critical theory, which refuses to contemplate the interrelationships between author and text...in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the authorial figure was, for the first time, integral to the reception of the writing, perceived as inextricably bound up with the creation process” (9). Romantic women’s writing can thus be studied as an act of self-reflexive labor that is marked by paratext that solidly connects author to text.

I follow Looser’s dedication to examining individual authors, particularly her argument that such studies reveal “how subjects participate in and shape textual modes” (*Writing of History* 2), including paratextual modes. I study *The Scottish Chiefs* rather than *Thaddeus of Warsaw* due to its focus on Britishness, its proliferation of prefaces and footnotes since its first edition, its robust and varied afterlife, and for the simple yet practical reason that there was no critical edition of *Thaddeus of Warsaw* when I began my research.²⁰ I notice the prefaces and footnotes of her other works only as they shed light on her goals in *The Scottish Chiefs* to show how concentrated attention to paratext can reveal a myriad of new information about a book, including its text, its author, and its reception. This focused structure allows me to form conclusions not as easily facilitated by examining multiple authors, or even multiple novels by the same author, and its defined scope grants attention to the novel’s many small details as I seek to understand the fullness of one book. This dissertation has implications for larger conversations surrounding authorship and how it has been construed in literary studies, particularly its turn toward material culture, as well as the importance of the early

²⁰ Edinburgh University Press has recently published a critical edition, edited by Thomas McLean and Ruth Knezevich, in 2019. Future studies of Porter’s political writing will greatly benefit by this addition to Porter’s recovery.

nineteenth-century novel to the emergence and development of authorship studies. At its core, this dissertation offers a revised study of authorship via the material book.

Chapter Overview

Each of my three chapters traces a paratextual element across multiple editions to generate various readings of *The Scottish Chiefs* and its author. In their simplest form, the three chapters examine the:

- 1: Title page
- 2: Footnotes and prefaces
- 3: Illustrations and bindings.

These paratextual focuses reveal new ways to read the:

- 1: Text
- 2: Author
- 3: Book object.

More specifically, each paratextual element provides a new reading of the:

- 1: Text's portrayal of history and nation
- 2: The public persona of the female author of political fiction
- 3: Anthumous and posthumous reception of book and author.

Each chapter has a guiding principle, yet just as text and paratext should not be parsed out and analyzed separately, neither should paratext. Thus, each chapter discusses a mixture of textual and paratextual elements, and is therefore organized by the main argument about Jane Porter's political writing derived from each guiding piece of paratext.

I have one final note on Walter Scott in reference to organization. The study of paratext underscores the centrality of Scott to Porter studies; I acknowledge this connection yet seek to remove Porter from conversation with Scott. I do this for many reasons: In Chapter One it is to

place Porter within the national conversations of Scottish history from which she has been excluded by over-connection with Scott. I instead put her in dialogue with James Macpherson's (1736-1796) *Poems of Ossian* (1761-1765) regarding sentiment and national identity. In Chapter Two, it is to contextualize her writing with that of another political woman writer, Sydney Owenson, to reveal how women publicly argued their place in national discourse. I include Scott in Chapter Three to understand how his influential paratext affected Porter's own material books and reception, because to ignore Scott would be a similarly fraught narrative. I hope to diminish or at least invert the custom of studying Porter as an auxiliary to Scott, and give Porter new interlocutors to restore her national novel and political authorship to the contemporary conversations in which she participated and shaped.

Chapter One (Title Page): Jane Porter's Ossianic Anachronism

For her epigraph to *The Scottish Chiefs*, Porter chooses a quote from James Macpherson's (1736-1796) *Poems of Ossian* (1761-1765) that emphasizes the power of a glorious past to inspire the present. Both texts establish the Scottish heroes of the past as monumental figures of martial valor, sentiment, and patriotism, and use paratext to defend their historical narratives against claims of fabrication. Analyzing Porter's deliberate incorporation of Macpherson's sentimental poetry and their numerous textual and paratextual similarities allows me to re-evaluate how she uses history to define national character. Understanding their mutual anachronisms in the service of sentiment, while recognizing Macpherson and Porter's differing political goals, allows us to appreciate how Porter revises eighteenth-century theories of social evolution to bolster a patriotic British nation in the early nineteenth century.

By sentimentalizing Wallace and his compatriots, Porter uses the anachronism of the *Poems of Ossian* to her advantage; her choice to color the past with the feelings of the present was a deliberate

choice. While A. D. Hook calls *The Scottish Chiefs* “totally ahistorical” (189) because “its characters seem curiously detached from their age” (191), this ahistoricism is intentional. The anachronistic sensibility of Wallace diminishes the ideological distance between past and present, between Wallace’s heroism and that of her contemporary British readers. Thus, though it would prove her critical downfall, she actively detaches her characters from the customs of their historical reality to emphasize shared interests between her characters and readers across national and temporal boundaries.

Porter incorporates Ossianic material into her text to instruct readers to learn from—and act on—inspiration from the past. William Wallace and Robert Bruce, her own heroes, are inspired by Ossian’s poetry, and locations associated with the great deeds of the warriors Fingal and Fergus serve as diegetic sites of communion with past heroism for her Scottish chiefs. Porter complements this textual theme with paratext, including footnotes that draw attention to the modern condition of locations associated with Wallace, and how they should be visited and revered by true Scotsmen and Britons alike. In contrast to Macpherson, Porter’s footnotes provide readers access to a still virile past, arguing that monuments to Scottish glory—and that glory itself—endure rather than crumble.

While her footnotes do sometimes stress the historical accuracy of her romance, at other times they openly display her deliberate re-construction of fact through fiction. She declines to make printed history the principal source of her narrative, instead favoring the vast oral and literary tradition surrounding the figure of William Wallace. This choice allows her to situate her own depiction of the Scottish hero as a virtuous man of feeling, and to claim this transformation as a valid contribution to the constantly shifting legend within the bounds of romance. By examining Porter’s title page, which declares the novel a romance as well as its debt to the Scottish nationalism and sensibility of Macpherson’s *Poems of Ossian*, I argue that Porter steps the present in the

sentiment of the past while also constructing a new narrative of national identity to embolden the present and future.

Chapter Two (Prefaces and Footnotes): No Apology Necessary

In this chapter I study how Jane Porter and Sydney Owenson use paratext to craft public-facing personae in *The Scottish Chiefs* and *The Wild Irish Girl*, respectively, alongside other public and private writings. While some contemporaries like Jane Austen published anonymously, Owenson and Porter openly affixed their names to their title pages and discussed their personal lives in the paratext to their national novels. Defying the expectation for women to remain in the private sphere, these authors challenge our notion that women writers needed to be reserved and un-public to avoid censure; rather than having their personal lives dragged into view, they readily laid out their cards for all to see, believing they held the trump in doing so. While their advocacy for women's participation in national politics is visible in their texts, it becomes personal in the material that surrounds the text, physically and ideologically, in the margins of the printed book.

Like Owenson, Porter addresses the issue of whether her gender is suited to her national project throughout her multiple prefaces to her novels which span the first fifty years of the nineteenth century. These prefaces serve many functions from patriotic to personal; and each paint a modified image of the female author as her literary fame was eclipsed by Walter Scott and her financial security declined. Throughout her four prefaces to *The Scottish Chiefs*—which mid-nineteenth-century editions print in succession as a fifty-page authorial evolution—Porter offers a seemingly harmonious portrait of the conflict embedded in female authorship, simultaneously presenting a narrative of retired domesticity and championing her claims to literary fame and authority.

Overshadowed by contemporary realist novelists and Romantic women poets in arguments of women's public writing and lives, and by Walter Scott in discussions of paratextual innovation, Owenson and Porter's use of paratext to establish identities as public authors has been neglected. By analyzing Owenson and Porter in conversation with each other under the umbrella of the national novel, their similarities of paratextual methods and authorial goals become clear and contribute new understandings of women's self-reflexive authorship in the Romantic era. Studying their paratext reveals their intention to cast greater attention on the female author during the reader's experience of a text, mirroring their commitment to highlighting the impact of individual women within national politics.

Chapter Three (Illustrations and Bindings): The Bound Afterlife of Jane Porter

The final chapter examines the illustrations and bindings of *The Scottish Chiefs* to trace how Porter's political interventions studied in the first two chapters—a British present revering its Scottish past and women's contributions to history and politics—are altered or erased in subsequent editions. Since Porter uses paratext as a site of political power during her lifetime, I investigate what power it holds over her posthumous legacy. I study key moments in Porter's reception roughly one hundred years apart: her anthumous relationship with Scott's innovative editions of the early nineteenth century, her transatlantic American reception in the early twentieth century, and the academic editions of the early twenty-first century. Throughout, I trace how new visual and accompanying verbal paratext alters our perception of the novel's central messages of national unity and the ability of women—characters and author alike—to influence politics through patriotic service.

The book-object of *The Scottish Chiefs* was modified excessively as cheaper editions, expanding readership, and new technology and markets affected publishing choices. These changes

tend to reinforce Porter's secondary position to Scott, promote a manly sentiment of heroism that omits the bravery and transgression of the novel's women, and remove the paratext that holds Porter's voice. In acknowledging these alterations I do not seek to fault editors, since paratextual changes and omissions are necessary to publishing new editions; rather I reveal how, regardless of intent, new paratext shaped readers' understanding of Porter's novel and her authorship. The shifting paratext of two hundred years of new illustrated editions of *The Scottish Chiefs* frequently hides the very innovations for which she is now appreciated.

While there are now two academic editions of *The Scottish Chiefs* that argue its importance to literary studies, the most common edition found in bookstores—and perhaps influencing some critical appraisals of novel and author—is still the Charles Scribner's Sons edition of 1921, which prints none of Porter's paratext and ushers in her reception as a forgotten spinster author of male-focused sentimental children's fiction. While new academic editions re-focus on Porter's paratext, one must still access multiple previous editions primarily held in research libraries to analyze a complete narrative of Porter's paratextual goals. Thus, this dissertation contributes to the work that remains to be done to fully appreciate Porter's paratextual novel and its political and personal goals, as well as its place in conversations of national identity, the various sub-genres of the early nineteenth-century novel, and the public Romantic woman writer.

Chapter One: Jane Porter's Ossianic Anachronism

The title page to Jane Porter's *The Scottish Chiefs* holds an important paratextual guide to reading the novel's depiction of nation and history. Her epigraph reads: "There comes a voice that awakens my soul. It is the voice of years that are gone; they roll before me with their deeds. — Ossian" (*TSC* Broadview 39). The quote comes from the *Poems of Ossian*, a collection of epic poems by the third-century Scottish bard Ossian, supposedly translated by James Macpherson. Porter's choice to connect her novel to Macpherson's poetry is logical and seemingly routine: both *The Scottish Chiefs* and the *Poems of Ossian* sentimentally narrate the military careers of Scottish patriots long lost to history, and both include paratextual apparatuses that validate their source material and romantic portrayals of history. Yet the epigraph signals a more productive relationship between Porter and Macpherson than has been acknowledged. Beyond marking Macpherson as her guide for developing a mistily romantic and noble Celtic past in her own Scottish historical narrative, the Ossianic epigraph reveals how Porter embraces the transformative genre of romance to connect past and present and assert the importance of sentiment within national narratives.

However, the Ossianic epigraph also signals an element of fantasy in Porter's portrayal of Scottish history. By the time she publishes *The Scottish Chiefs* in 1810, Macpherson's claim that the *Poems of Ossian* were translated third-century originals, rather than productions of his own fancy, was undercut by the Highland Society's 1805 report of its investigation into the poems' legitimacy. Thus, the title page's declaration that the third-century bard Ossian authored the epigraph would be known to be problematic, and the *Poems* acknowledged as poetic masterpieces and sentimentally affecting reading, yet bad history. As the *Poems of Ossian*'s literary offspring, *The Scottish Chiefs* inherits the taint of debunked romantic history. Fiona Stafford shows that the *Poems of Ossian*'s inauthenticity contributed to its denigration in the Romantic era: "As originality and authenticity became essential to the assessment of artistic quality, a translation long since exposed as inaccurate and regarded by

many as a fake, was unlikely to fare well” (28). A similar statement can be made about Porter, who is consistently left out of Romantic canon, particularly when her work is read as a historical novel against Walter Scott’s *Waverley*. As Angela Keane and Fiona Price explain, her exclusion from Romantic studies stems in part from György Lukács’ theory of the genre, which celebrates “the triumph of the historically faithful, those high romancers of history, over the peddlers of bad faith” (Keane 17). Porter’s incorporation of Macpherson’s sensibility, alongside her book’s echo of his poems’ dubious origin story, prohibited Porter’s novel from attaining the Romantic ideal of authenticity.

The epigraph embroils Porter’s novel in a further authenticity crisis when we realize that it is an incorrect quotation from Macpherson, possibly given from memory. The original quote from “Oina-Morul: A Poem” is slightly different: “then comes a voice to Ossian, and awakes his soul. It is the voice of years that are gone: they roll before me, with all their deeds” (Macpherson 323). While Porter’s alterations of articles and punctuation may seem a small matter, I contend that the epigraph holds the key to understanding her method of re-telling Scottish history. The epigraph—which quotes and yet also alters Ossianic poetry, maintaining the emotion and thrust of the poetic lines while failing to reproduce them exactly—announces a historical novel in which sentiment is more important than accuracy. While we can read the epigraph and the novel it introduces as inauthentic Scottish history and thus discount Porter as a poor historical novelist, this chapter asks: what if we view *The Scottish Chiefs* not as bad history, but as sentimental history—as a re-telling of history that incorporates inaccuracy for a purpose?

To explore this question, I return again to Porter’s title page. Accompanying her choice of epigraph is her choice of subtitle: *The Scottish Chiefs, A Romance*. This genre signals her intention to revise Ossianic and medieval history for a modern purpose and audience; she not only breathes new life into historical narratives but molds them to her desired shape. Porter employs the

“transformative dynamics” of romance (Duncan *Modern Romance* 3) to authorize her alterations, including depicting medieval William Wallace as an eighteenth-century man of feeling. Wallace’s sentiment exists in a twelfth- and thirteenth-century Scotland that closely resembles her own Romantic era Britain; while early Porter scholars perceived this anachronism as bad history indicative of her lack of skill as a novelist, Porter in fact actively diminishes difference between times through the generic affordances of the romance in an echo of Macpherson’s anachronism in the *Poems of Ossian*. This temporal collapse constructs William Wallace as an exemplary yet sentimental hero, both familiar and exalted, to create empathetic bonds that spur her readers into emulative action.

Furthermore, Porter does not follow Macpherson blindly. In narrating the past from the vantage point of the present, both authors explore the relationship between historical time and national character. While both revere Scotland’s past, they come to different conclusions about its modern relevance within union with England. Porter borrows Macpherson’s depiction of a sentimental past to fortify the heroic emotion of her novel, yet she employs romance and her footnotes to challenge and re-write Scotland’s cultural evolution narrative. Macpherson’s *Poems of Ossian* construct a valiant past eroded by modernity; Porter instead argues for a consistent virility of national character across time, from Ossian’s warriors to William Wallace to her contemporary soldiers fighting Napoleon in the British army. She does not view Scotland’s union with Britain as a development from childhood to adulthood in accordance with stadial theory, or from vigor to decay in a narrative of national decline, but instead as sustained valor and continuous heroism—from vigor to vigor. Porter creates a timeless Scottish national character of martial yet sentimental virtue that does not shudder under its union with England but endures in perpetuity.

To make these arguments, I first explore how Porter’s portrayal of the early years of the Scottish Wars of Independence in *The Scottish Chiefs* aligns with the genres of history and romance,

suggesting that Porter's focus on the virtues of an individual hero creates an emulative sympathy in her readers. I then examine Porter's incorporation of source material to reveal that Porter views her novel not as a regurgitation of accurate history, but a re-working of traditional narratives authorized by the genre of romance. Next, I return to Macpherson's *Poems of Ossian* to show that Porter's romance recycles Macpherson's sentiments while revising his portrayal of national character, particularly Scotland's relationship with England. I examine how her diegetic use of Ossian and copious footnotes remind readers that the past endures, and that true patriots should engage with the past to embolden the present and future. I conclude by demonstrating that Porter claims Wallace as a British, rather than Scottish hero, to encourage all Britons to emulate his valor and to proclaim the enduring strength of Scotland within the United Kingdom. Porter incorporates Ossianic sentiment and revises history through romance to create a sympathetically heroic British past, present, and future in *The Scottish Chiefs*.

History and Sentiment

The Scottish Chiefs suggests that examples from the past can inspire current and future conduct. This was neither a new nor controversial idea; Porter's readers did not doubt the moral power of glorifying the past, which by the early nineteenth century was a common historical practice. However, it was Porter's execution of this plan that concerned critics, particularly her intermingling of fact and fiction in her portrayal of the Scottish Wars of Independence.

Contemporary reviews of the novel contain doubts: *The Gentleman's Magazine* hints its suspicion of her claim that English soldiers murdered Wallace's wife Marion, while *The Scots Magazine* was "disposed to doubt the propriety of thus intermixing the two departments of history and romance" (qtd. in *TSC Broadview* 750). *The Monthly Magazine* agrees with *The Scots Magazine*, questioning "whether the generality of novel readers are gainers or losers by a mixture of real history and

romance” (qtd. in *TSC Broadview* 754). This was not the only view of Porter’s historical project, however. The *Lady’s Monthly Museum* writes that “her general adherence to the leading facts transmitted by the historian, give to the whole an air of probability” (“Miss Jane Porter” 2), and other reviewers praise Porter’s sentiment and morality. Yet the concerns about authenticity that haunted the novel upon publication persist in modern criticism. In an early assessment of *The Scottish Chiefs*, A.D. Hook calls the novel “totally ahistorical” (189) in an unflattering comparison with Scott, and Claire Lamont remarks that Porter’s patriotic “motives did not create a credible past world, nor credible characters to inhabit it” (xiv-xv). Thus, Porter’s novel still contends against the “credit” of factual accuracy that remains essential to assessments of historical novels and the realism of the nineteenth-century novel.

Accusations of inaccuracy in *The Scottish Chiefs* are usually leveled at Porter’s portrayal of William Wallace, whom she depicts as a paragon of martial prowess, sentiment, Christian charity, and virtue. Her exploration of virtue—which Dafydd Moore defines as an “autonomous patriot citizenship” in which the virtuous serve their country willingly with no self-interest (*Enlightenment* 89)—develops out of larger humanist concepts explored in the eighteenth century. Dana Harrington argues:

The eighteenth century inherited from its classical and humanist predecessors a concept of virtue defined in terms of public service to the state or polis. This ‘civic’ concept of virtue subordinated private or personal interests to the public good and assumed that ethical excellence was attained through political action in the public realm...The civic humanist concept of virtue, as it has come to be known, also carried with it strong military and masculine connotations. (34)

In describing Wallace as a figure of great virtue, Porter provides a model of selfless patriotism for her fellow citizens, particularly a military idol to inspire British soldiers fighting in the Napoleonic

Wars (1803-1815). By adding sophisticated sentiment and Christian morality, Porter creates an exemplary model with both ancient heroism and modern refinement.

Throughout *The Scottish Chiefs*, Wallace is described as god-like in his beauty, power, and embodiment of Scotland. After Wallace learns that his pregnant wife Marion and her unborn babe have been murdered, he blows his bugle in “a summons so dear to every Scottish heart” (*TSC* Broadview 88). The men and women of his native Lanark surround him as he calls them to action, holding the sword that had slain his wife:

Wallace stood on the cliff like the newly-aroused genius of his suffering country. His long plaid floated afar, and his glittering hair streaming on the blast, seemed to mingle with the golden fires which shot from the heavens. Wallace raised his eyes: a clash, as of the tumult of contending armies, filled the sky; and flames and flashing steel, and the horrid red of battle, streamed from the clouds upon the hills.

“Scotsmen!” cried Wallace, waving the fatal sword, which blazed in the glare of these northern lights like a flaming brand, “behold how the heavens cry aloud to you. I come in the name of all you hold dear, of your lives, your liberties, and of the wives of your bosoms, and the children in their arms! The poniard of England is unsheathed:—Innocence, age, and infancy, fall before it. With this sword, last night, did Heselrigge, the English tyrant of Lanark, break into my house and murder my wife!” (*TSC* Broadview 88-89)

As his loyal followers draw arms to avenge Marion, Wallace claims that his personal vengeance shall start a necessary national rebellion. He murmurs: “From this hour may Scotland date her liberty, or Wallace return no more!—My faithful friends...let the spirits of your fathers inspire your souls! ye go to assert that freedom for which they died” (*TSC* Broadview 89). Wallace becomes the glorious

“genius” of his country and evokes the heroism of their forefathers to inspire their final quest for freedom.

Though spurred by bloody revenge, Wallace’s campaign is balanced by his personal characteristics of virtue and piety mingled with sensibility. In frequent and highly affecting scenes, Wallace comforts the poor, rescues Helen from abduction and rape, grants clemency to defeated noble Englishmen, and praises God for his victories. His countryman Monteith claims that Wallace’s truth “stands as fair as virgin purity” (*TSC Broadview* 50), and Wallace tells his young compatriot Andrew Murray: “Patriotism is a virgin passion in thy breast, and innocence and joy wait upon her” (*TSC Broadview* 192-193). His pure motives and deeds are accompanied by a deep sensibility, and throughout the novel Wallace is struck with emotion that physically pains him or causes him to weep. While enjoying a Christmas feast in Kilchurn Castle, memories of Marion overwhelm him: “he struck his hand forcibly on his bursting heart, and fled from the room” (*TSC Broadview* 416). Later, he goes to Marion’s grave and sees the stones still marked with her blood:

He flung himself among them, and a groan burst from his heart. It echoed mournfully from the opposite rock.—He started, and gazed around. “Solitude! Solitude!” cried he, with a faint smile; “nought is here but Wallace and his sorrow. Marion! I call, and even thou dost not answer me; thou who ever flew at the sound of my voice! Look on me, love,” exclaimed he, stretching his arms towards the sky; “look on me; and for once, for ever, cheer thy lonely heart-stricken Wallace!” Tears choked his further utterance; and once more laying his head upon the stones, he wept in soul-dissolving sorrow, till exhausted nature found repose in sleep. (*TSC Broadview* 660)

These moments of feeling speak to Romantic ideals of masculinity rather than to thirteenth-century warrior culture, and thus inspire a kinship of feeling between Wallace and her readers.

The other great hero of Scotland, Robert Bruce, provides a useful description of Porter's flawless Wallace. As Bruce, Helen, and Wallace travel together in France, the former two reflect on their mutual love for the latter. Helen says she is "grateful to heaven which has allowed me to witness the goodness, to share the esteem of such a man—if a man he may be called" (*TSC Broadview* 569). Bruce exultingly responds:

He is one of the few, Lady Helen...who is worthy of so august a title; and he brightly shews the image in which he was made; so humble, so dignified! so great, so lowly! so super-eminent in all accomplishments of mind and body; wise, brave, and invincible, yet forbearing, gentle, and unassuming: formed to be beloved, yet without a touch a vanity; loving all who approach him, without the least alloy of passion.— Ah! Lady Helen, he is a model after which I will fashion my life; for he has written the character of the son of God in his heart; and it shall be my study to transcribe the blessed copy into mine! (*TSC Broadview* 569)

This passage shows not only Wallace's god-like—and, more accurately, Christ-like—perfection, but also how he serves as an ideal "model" for Bruce to emulate.

Wallace was a celebrated figure long before Porter's book idolized him, and some felt that such literary adulation was unnecessary. William Robertson (1721-1793), in his 1759 *History of Scotland*, writes that Wallace needed no "heightenings of fiction" and that he already "revived the spirit of his countrymen" (qtd. in Hook 191). Yet Wallace had been constantly re-imagined in a long tradition of literary works since the fifteenth-century poet Blind Harry wrote his epic poem *The Wallace*. Despite the wide proliferation of Wallace narratives in circulation, Walter Scott took umbrage with Porter's idealized rendering of the hero. As recorded by James Hogg (1770-1835), Scott says that he is "grieved" by *The Scottish Chiefs*: "It is not safe meddling with the hero of a country and of all others I cannot endure to see the character of Wallace frittered away to that of a

fine gentleman” (qtd. in McLean “Nobody’s Argument” 93). This assessment of Wallace as too delicate and too refined was pervasive. *Frasers Magazine* described Porter’s Wallace as “a sort of sentimental dandy, who, if we mistake not, faints upon occasion, is revived by lavender water, and throughout the book is tenderly in love” (“Gallery of Literary Characters” 404).

Porter’s characterization was not only too effeminate, but also anachronistic, with clear roots in eighteenth-century sentimental fiction and Romantic feeling. *The Scots Magazine* protests:

The characters and manners do not quite recall those of the age and of the history. Wallace, the fierce champion of Scotland in the field, and the terror of her enemies, suggests to us an idea of rough strength and austerity, which accords ill with his portraits in these volumes, where he is represented as finished fine gentleman, and the idol of every female heart. (qtd. in *TSC Broadview* 751)

Mona Wilson notes that “Joanna Baillie and [Mary Russell] Mitford united in admiration of the hero, William Wallace, but Allan Cunningham complained that the authoress had added ‘attributes’ which neither pertained to the times nor to the hero” (132). Though Wallace had been re-imagined throughout the centuries, Porter’s contribution to this tradition—turning him into a man of feeling—was controversial due to its anachronism. Reviews chastise her historical anachronism as a blunder, rather than an artistic choice. Yet, as Devoney Looser has argued, Porter’s alteration of Wallace was “more deliberate method than unintended shortcoming” (“The Great Man” 309). Beyond celebrating virtue, as Looser writes, her method uses purposeful anachronism to construct the temporal continuum necessary to Porter’s nationalist goals.

Though Scott and other critics may not have liked it, Porter was at liberty to do with Wallace what she pleased. As Graeme Morton notes: “Wallace was a most efficacious patriot, one who could be ‘remembered’ by nationalists and unionists alike for their own ends...The lack of ‘facts’ allowed different stories to be accepted” (“The Most Efficacious Patriot” 231). While I discuss Porter’s

unionist goals later in this chapter, it is important here to recognize that Wallace, while a real historical person, had also become a malleable character of Scottish tradition by the early nineteenth century, and thus an apt conduit for her re-imagining of the past. Furthermore, Wallace was popular; William Hamilton's (1665?-1751) 1722 adaptation of Blind Harry's poem *The Wallace* "was the book next to the Bible most frequently found in Scottish households" (Morton "The Most Efficacious Patriot" 225), and he was prominently featured in chapbook literature (Kelly *English Fiction* 95). Wallace's popularity and his story's lack of verifiable facts allow him to be recycled with relative ease. Porter chooses a story that has been incessantly reworked, taking advantage of its status within a long tradition to justify her alterations and using its popularity to affect a mass audience.

Wallace's popularity was part of a larger vogue for history in the eighteenth century, particularly in Scotland. David Hume (1711-1776) famously pronounced: "I believe this is the historical Age and this the historical Nation" (qtd. in Duncan "Urban Space" 75). Theories of history were created and revised throughout the century, and by the end of the Enlightenment it was commonplace to think of history as invention. *The Scottish Chiefs* was published amidst epistemological debates regarding history, in which Romantic effusions of individual imagination were antithetical to supposedly authentic history. Lynn Hamer reveals a tension between historians that "catalogued only empirically verifiable events and facts" and those, like Porter, who focused on "individual characters and their motivations" (9). The latter, whom she terms "imaginative historians" (Hamer 5), are commonly dismissed as a "dangerous 'romantic interlude' in the development of the discipline;" yet offer something new by celebrating the "individual agency" (Hamer 9) of the figures of history. Porter embraces the facts—the who, what, when, where, and why of history—to gain credit as a historiographer yet focuses far more on the character of the individual in her idealized portrayal of Wallace.

Following Enlightenment women writers, Porter moves the didactic use of exemplary figures onto the fields of history.²¹ Her adulatory depiction of Wallace is an example of the contemporary practice of using “compelling examples to train readers to aspire to virtue and to shun the temptations of vice” (Phillips 65). Mark Salber Phillips notes that this instructional method of history was at odds with history as “a faithful narrative” (21). Furthermore, her didacticism, as well as her focus on the individual, contribute to the perceived effeminacy of her novel. In his essay “Of History and Romance,” William Godwin (1758-1836) bristles that some historians “disdain the records of individuals. To interest our passions, or employ our thoughts about personal events, be they of patriots, of authors, of heroes or kings, they regard as a symptom of effeminacy” (454). Porter, following Godwin, defends a feminized model history that uses an idealized portrayal of the individual as a form of exemplary modeling.

While Porter asserts the accuracy of historical facts regarding the places and events of the Scottish Wars of Independence, she alters the character of historical figures to produce a strong moral effect. In the first preface to *The Scottish Chiefs*, Porter takes a direct stab at the efficacy of most history to improve its readers, an echo of Maria Edgeworth’s question in the preface to *Castle Rackrent* (1800): “Of the numbers who study, or at least read history, how few derive any advantage from their labors!” (1). Placing her novel in opposition to the “folios of Scudery” that are uninterested in individuals, she argues that her “history [is] intended to be within the bounds of modern romance” (*TSC Virtue* 1: 7). While I will return to romance, this statement marks Porter’s desire to transform the dry pages of history into a compelling narrative through the character of William Wallace. Her plan is “to paint the portrait of one of the most complete heroes that ever filled the page of history” (*TSC Virtue* 1: 5). Thus, she sets her novel apart by focusing on individual

²¹ See Bannet for more on Enlightenment women writers and example (14).

character, by “painting a portrait” of William Wallace with its attendant ekphrastic liberties, rather than the facts of historical events.

In this focus on the individual as an exemplary model, Porter seeks to create an empathetic bond between readers and hero. Individuality was particularly lacking in history, as Maria Edgeworth complains again in *Castle Rackrent*: “The heroes of history are so decked out by the fine fancy of the professed historian...few have sufficient taste, wickedness or heroism, to sympathize in their fate” (1). What history lacks, Edgeworth contends, is fodder for empathy. Though Edgeworth may have found Porter’s Wallace another hero of history decked out by fine fancy, Porter intended his anachronistic sentiment to inspire sympathy and encourage the humanist emulation of an ideal to “foster habits of benevolence” (Phillips 127). As a national novel set in the past, *The Scottish Chiefs* benefits from both history and fiction’s facilitation of sympathy: Adam Ferguson (1723-1816) explains in *Essays on the History of Civil Society* (1767) that history held great moral value by creating sympathy, while fiction was instrumental to “shaping the inner self of the reader and thus affecting ethical action and social relations” (Kelly *English Fiction* 9). As a hallmark of the Enlightenment that spans history and fiction alike, sentiment and its attached moral seriousness fosters a sympathy that Porter hopes will inspire emulative action.

The novel explores theories of sympathy developed by David Hume and Adam Smith (1723-1790) in the eighteenth century. The Humean idea of contiguity, a term I take from James Chandler, helps explain what Porter hopes to accomplish through anachronistic sentiment. Because Wallace’s emotions are available and familiar, her readers can more easily catch a Humean sympathetic bond in which they feel for his plight as if it were their own. This is within the text; Porter’s footnotes—which, as I discuss below, connect Wallace’s thirteenth century to the reader’s nineteenth century—create not only a Humean sympathy as she seeks to create contiguity by reducing difference between Wallace and the reader, but also a Smithean sympathy, in which she encourages readers to examine

what their own reactions to such adversity and tyranny might be, were they in Wallace's place. This, Porter hopes, will help firm their resolve in standing against the current tyrant Napoleon, further solidifying Wallace's status as an ideal model for British patriotism.

Porter not only encourages but also models sympathy throughout her novel. One example is Robert Bruce's declaration that Wallace shall be his guide quoted above. Another is demonstrated by Wallace himself early in the novel. In a typical moment of suffering, he throws himself on a fern-covered rock beneath misty mountains to gaze into Loch Lubnaig, and soliloquizes over Marion and his own folly:

No tender wife will now twine her faithful arms around my neck. No child of Marion's will ever be pressed to my fond bosom!—I saw slavery around me and yet I slept. Alas, the angel that charmed away my sense of injury, that sunk my country's wrongs to a dreamy forgetfulness in her arms, she was to be immolated that I might awake!—my wife, my unborn babe, they both must bleed for Scotland! And the sacrifice shall not be yielded in vain. (*TSC Broadview* 195)

He then prays for victory and a quiet grave and begins to weep. As he weeps, the "plaintive voice of the highland pipes, at this moment broke upon his ear" (*TSC Broadview* 196). Before his soliloquy, Wallace had announced that the women and children of his loyal Lanarker men must depart the war company. As he realizes the pipes signal their departure, he casts aside his own suffering in sympathy with theirs:

Wallace started on his feet. The separation had then taken place between his trusty followers, and their families; and guessing the feelings of those brave men from what was now passing in his own breast, he dried away the traces of his tears, and grasping his spear,—cast from him all depressing thoughts; and once more resuming the

warrior's cheerful look, sought that part of the rock where the Lanarkmen were quartered. (*TSC Broadview* 196)

His sympathy and selflessness are here consonant with his identity as a military leader, who grasps his spear cheerfully to serve his men and country. Porter hopes her readers will form a kinship to Wallace, who renders sympathetic emotion noble and manly, and facilitates it through an anachronistic sensibility that provides contiguity from Wallace to her readers.

While Porter's Wallace is not accurate, he is certainly moving; friends, family, and complete strangers wrote to Porter to admire her morality, sentiment, and piety in rendering him, and reviews praised her skill of evoking emotion. One letter from Anna Maria to her sister Jane Porter on March 25, 1810 notes: "Wallace indeed is thro' out a beacon of Light—he is the perfection of human excellence—you never cease to excite all that melting tenderness in the contemplation of him" and notes that their friend Mrs. Taylor "could not but think of the character of our blessed Saviour while she listened to tales of Wallace."²² *The Scots Magazine* praises Porter's handling of emotion, saying that her "peculiar excellence consists, we think, in her power of expressing ardent and enthusiastic passion" (*TSC Broadview* 752). A later review writes: "It appears to be a work which, for a continual support of the Sublime in the two leading characters, is superior to any thing ever written: It is the only modern work, which shows the elevation of Soul produced by Warton's Middle Age ideas. Milton or Virgil do not surpass it in Sentiments" (Fosbroke 252). In short, most who read *The Scottish Chiefs* felt a sympathy for Wallace's plight that elevated their own sentiments.

This latter point of improvement is key, since many of Porter's contemporaries, such as Joseph Priestly (1733-1804) and Thomas Campbell were suspicious of the efficacy of sentiment to

²² Box 13, 639, Mar. 25, 1810, Porter Family Correspondence, Durham University Library.

produce model citizens and thought it needed to be sublimated to “more rational forms of understanding” (Phillips 127). Phillips explains further:

If the proponents of sensibility saw it as offering a kind of vicarious strengthening of the moral faculties, its opponents believed that sentimental reading would only induce a state of excited passivity that had no outlet in effective action...indeed, it has often been remarked that sentimental plots center on the man of feeling, not of action. (Phillips 127)

Wallace, however, offers a prime example of transforming sentiment into action, for his deep grief upon Marion’s murder catalyzes his military career as well as Scotland’s rebellion.

Furthermore, Porter depicts Wallace as both a man of feeling and a warrior. In this, she moves “the man of feeling onto scenes of revolution” (McLean “Nobody’s Argument” 99) to explore the importance of individual virtue in national conflict. The burning of the Barns of Ayr shows Wallace’s immense bodily action and force of retribution in sharp contrast to his frequent fainting spells and Romantic agonies. After being shown the head of his grandfather, Sir Ronald Crawford Wallace, who had been murdered amongst other Scottish noblemen by the English stationed in Ayr, Wallace immediately moves toward the English-occupied palace to set it on fire. He intends “to make an execution, not engage in a warfare man to man...for, they were not soldiers he was seeking, but assassins” (*TSC Broadview* 274).

His men now surrounded the building with hurdles filled with combustibles, which they had prepared according to his directions; and when all was ready, Wallace, with the mighty spirit of retribution nerving in every limb, mounted to the roof, and tearing off part of the tiling, with a flaming brand in his hand, shewed himself, glittering in arms, to the affrighted revelers beneath; and as he threw it blazing

amongst them, he cried aloud, “The blood of the murdered calls for vengeance, and it comes!” (*TSC Broadview* 274)

Wallace is depicted as a “supernatural being” who watches the Englishmen burn and who kills the governor of Ayr as he attempts to flee (*TSC Broadview* 275). After the English murderers have all been slain, Wallace grants mercy to those who had not participated in the massacre of the Scottish noblemen. Mercy is a defining feature of his military career, yet he is unafraid to deliver bloody justice upon those who betray honor. Porter’s Wallace is thus a combination of the isolated and deep-feeling Romantic individual, the eighteenth-century man of feeling, and the fearless captain of war. If, as William Godwin says, studying historical individuals is “the most fruitful source of activity and motive” (456), Porter’s sentimental yet active hero was sure to produce a correlative effect in her readers. This is her goal in writing Scottish history; rather than reproducing accepted ideas of accuracy in developing Wallace’s character, she uses the exemplar model of the virtuous individual to produce corresponding national fervor in her countrymen.

Romance

Porter’s deliberate anachronism is also facilitated through her choice of genre. Despite her claim that she invented the historical novel in her 1831 preface to *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, *The Scottish Chiefs* is first and foremost a romance. She claims the genre subtitle as part of her title: *The Scottish Chiefs, A Romance*. Since, as Walter Scott says in his introductory chapter to *Waverley*, a subtitle “may be held as pledging the author to some special mode of laying his scene, drawing his characters, and managing his adventures” (4), it is crucial to examine how Porter’s choice of romance signals a specific reading of history and nation within *The Scottish Chiefs*. Its use of romance has been overshadowed by analyses of the novel as a historical novel or national tale; while Gary Kelly, Devoney Looser, Fiona Price and Graeme Morton have noted that it is a romance, little has been

said of how Porter uses the genre to endorse her nationalist revision of history. In this section, I show how Porter uses romance to acknowledge the long, evolving tradition surrounding Wallace, which authorizes her own molding of the narrative into a morally instructive and sentimentally inspiring tale that promotes Scotland's timeless virtue.

Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), Walter Scott, Clara Reeve (1729-1807), and William Godwin, among others, theorized the genre of romance in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Johnson defines it as "a military fable of the middle ages; a tale of wild adventures in love and chivalry;" Scott removes its connotations with the medieval, defining it instead by its "marvelous and uncommon incidents" in opposition to the novel's "ordinary train of human events" (Scott "Essay on Romance" 65). While the romances of Ann Radcliffe were seen as a different breed than the novels of Jane Austen in the early nineteenth century, the two were grouped together in opposition to history. A project like *The Scottish Chiefs* confused the ontology of fiction even more. Yet while reviewers may have wished to keep them separate, many late eighteenth-century thinkers acknowledged the similarities between history and romance. Godwin notes that romance "may be pronounced to be one of the species of history" (464), while Scott views history and romance as interconnected, arguing that they have the same origin and "form a mixed class between them" (Scott "Essay on Romance" 67).

Conversations about this theoretical mixed class continue today, in some cases returning to eighteenth-century concepts of loosely defined genres to combat the strict boundaries that sprung up in ensuing centuries. Devoney Looser acknowledges "history's and fiction's functional interconnections" (*Writing of History* 22), and Lisa Kasmer notes that privileging historical fiction over romance has cast the latter in a negative light and associated it with "political archaism" and "historiographical uselessness" (14). Both note how fiction was increasingly associated with women in the late eighteenth century, contributing to the further feminization of Porter's novel already

induced by her model of history.²³ Early assessments of *The Scottish Chiefs* that denigrate the novel as romance, as A.D. Hook does when he claims that the novel “is finally romance rather than historical fiction” (190), define it based upon a gendered genre hierarchy that privileges the perceived accuracy of male historical fiction over the improbabilities of female romance.

Yet the improbabilities of romance could serve important functions in women’s writing. Jane Spencer notes that Sophia Lee’s (1750-1824) novel *The Recess* (1783) “purports to restore lost records of women’s lives to history...by turning history into romance” (195), highlighting the affordances rather than limitations of the genre. JoEllen DeLucia explores how the Bluestockings similarly contributed to eighteenth-century theories of history by centering women’s experiences. A champion of Macpherson’s *Poems of Ossian*, Elizabeth Montagu (1718-1800) claimed that women were essential to stadial theory because they were better prepared to “cultivate the sentiments that were understood as markers of a morally and economically advanced society” (DeLucia 4). Furthermore, they saw emotion as an improving quality, privileging it above reason and viewing “progress as a move toward a more feminine world marked by heightened emotional states” (DeLucia 10). Porter inherits this Bluestocking theory of emotional and moral progress and its proximity to the *Poems of Ossian*. Her decision to write a romance facilitates her goal of privileging the feminized qualities of morality and sentiment within depictions of history.

Porter’s depiction of a nearly perfect Wallace is effective romance. Scott notes that a romance’s hero, with his “great bodily strength, and perfection in all martial exercises” and also “the virtues of generosity, bravery, devotion to his mistress, and zeal for the Catholic religion...[was] of the utmost importance in affecting the character of the age” (“Essay on Romance” 85). Porter writes

²³ See Jane Spencer for the connections between women and romance (182), Looser for romance and women (*Writing of History* 11), Kasmer for history and women (9), and Duncan for gender and romance more widely (*Modern Romance*).

in her 1828 preface to *The Scottish Chiefs* that romance is the best genre to inspire new generations by using such models:

What ballads were to the sixteenth century, romances are to ours; the constant companions of young people's leisure hours; biasing them to virtue, or misleading them to vice. And to inspire the most susceptible period of man's existence, his youth, with the principles which are to be his future staff, and their effects his exceeding great reward, is the motive of my pen. (*TSC* Virtue 1: 11)

By connecting her work to the artistic tradition and inspirational power of ballads, Porter claims that her novel's ability to foster virtue lies in its status as a romance, not in spite of it.

While the desire to produce a positive moral influence was common in historical narratives, as well as in other genres popular with women such as the national tale and the courtship novel,²⁴ didacticism may appear out of place in the romance. Dafydd Moore notes the "flexibility and ambivalent nature" of romance (*Enlightenment* 8), and Susan Manning its "ethical ambivalence," arguing that the genre frequently "offer[s] no clear calls to action or moral messages" (130). Porter, however, co-opts the romance as a blatant vehicle for morality. In this she succeeds; the *Scots Magazine* writes: "The standard of morals is pure; the love of virtue, of generosity, of genuine heroism, is expressed with ardour in every page. A fervent religious spirit, truly rational and unaffected, appears strongly on all occasions" (qtd. in *TSC* Broadview 753). As she writes above, Porter infuses the romance with morality to shape the minds of young people toward virtue and patriotism. Thus, while Kasmer argues that "as 'patriotic' novels, her work seems aligned with moral, didactic tales, rather than with political or historical intent" (8), Porter's focus on shaping the

²⁴ See Looser for conduct in women's history (*Writing of History* 16), Monnickendam for didacticism in the national tale, and Mellor for the courtship novel.

patriotism of the nation's youth, particularly in opposition to the example of Napoleon's tyranny, renders her romance both didactic and political.

If not common, morality is not out of place in a genre in which constant evolution allows authors to shape previous narratives to their will. Scott notes that writers have been recycling and updating the tropes of romance for hundreds of years, and that "the whole store of romantic history and tradition was free to all as a joint stock in trade, on which each had a right to draw as suited his particular purposes" ("Essay on Romance" 76). He thus unintentionally validates Porter's embellishment of the Wallace narrative as a process regular to the genre. Romance signals a re-working of existing material, and thus offers neither perfect faithfulness nor pure invention. Moore, following Northrop Frye, describes the genre as a "balance...between myth and mimesis," and notes that "the romancer's art is one of contribution and moulding" (Moore *Enlightenment* 11; 54). Furthermore, early twentieth-century theorists such as Nathaniel Griffin show how authors mediate between source material and audience in "an attempt to make the ideas of an epic story...intelligible and significant' to a culturally alien people" (66-67). Transformation and alteration are integral parts of romance, intended to render tradition palatable and useful to new audiences.

Porter implies that for the purposes of writing a romance, history is malleable. She re-casts sources of information about William Wallace as inherited cultural tradition, flexible material she can mold to serve the sentimental goals of her national novel. Embracing the romance's concern with source material, Porter duly notes her sources for the historical content of *The Scottish Chiefs* in its multiple prefaces and copious footnotes. Adamant about her research and writing processes, she asserts:

I have spared no pains in consulting almost every writing extant which treats of the sister kingdoms during the period of my narrative. It would be tedious to swell this page with a list of these authorities; but all who are intimate with our old British

historians must perceive on reading the *Scottish Chiefs* that in the sketch which history would have laid down for the biography of my principal hero I have made no addition, excepting where, time having made some erasure, a stroke was necessary to fill the space and unite the outline. (*TSC* Virtue 1: 5)

The “strokes” she adds to Wallace’s story, Porter argues, are unavoidable due to the “erasure” of time, not merely because of her own fancy as a novelist. In regard to this practice, she notes:

“Tradition has been a great assistance to me in this respect” (*TSC* Virtue 1: 5), observing that almost every Wallace narrative has been reformed in some way. She acknowledges the constructed nature of her narrative but guards herself against charges of undue fabrication: “Very few persons wholly imaginary have been introduced; and, wishing to keep as near historical truth as could be consistent with my plan, no intentional injustice has been committed against the characters of the individuals who were real actors with the chief hero of the tale” (*TSC* Virtue 1: 6).

Furthermore, she claims that her alterations to historical record are acts of creative engagement with tradition, rather than corruption of fact. Near the end of the novel, the Earl of Gloucester and Lord Montgomery conspire together to warn Robert Bruce of his imminent danger after Wallace is captured and sentenced to death for high treason; in a footnote, Porter describes her respectful yet imaginative use of her source material: “In the relation of this incident, Buchanan names Montgomery as the friend who apprized Bruce of his danger. Holinshed attributes it to Gloucester. I have paid due deference to both authorities” (*TSC* Broadview 703). Porter posits that new iterations of tradition should have roots in the old to establish her novel as the latest addition to the overall Wallace narrative progression.

Her list of named historical sources is relatively small, and quotes and attributions infrequent. She occasionally provides direct corroboration of her historical narrative, such as when she remarks that two of the letters recorded in *The Scottish Chiefs* “are extant in Holinshed” (*TSC*

Virtue 2: 281). However, Porter's paratext reveals that her preferred sources are not historians, but poets, particularly the fifteenth-century poet Blind Harry. In this choice, Porter evokes a popular and literary tradition, rather than a strictly historical one, for, as Graeme Morton states, "No understanding of how the Wallace story has permeated the popular imagination can start from any other point" than Blind Harry ("The Most Efficacious Patriot" 225). Harry's account cannot be verified as historically accurate, yet he is an authentic source of Wallace folklore, having been widely read throughout Scotland and modernized by Hamilton in the early eighteenth century. The incorporation of folklore into national narratives was not new; Lynn Hamer, Maureen McLane, and Angela Keane acknowledge the "changing sense of the legitimacy of such sources" (Keane 18). Porter capitalizes on these sources specifically because they allow her to create a narrative- rather than fact-based history; she most frequently cites Blind Harry since her goal is to situate her romance within a malleable literary tradition.

Porter pays frequent homage to Harry throughout her paratext, praising the sentiment and artistry of his epic poem *The Wallace* and elevating him as "the Homer of Scotland" (*TSC* Virtue 2: 368). She refers to his poem seven times in her footnotes to establish the near kinship of her novel. One such is affixed to the scene in which the servants of Sir Ronald Crawford Wallace mourn his murder: "The parallel scene to this in the interesting Lay of Blind Harrie, is one of the finest in the poem" (*TSC* Virtue 2: 368). She also cites Harry to protest that the more fantastical events of her novel are not simply fabricated to induce emotion, but instead have a long literary tradition. She writes in a preface: "The melancholy circumstance which first excited him to draw his sword for Scotland, though it may be thought too much like the creation of modern romance, is recorded as a truth in the old poem by Blind Harrie" (*TSC* Broadview 41). Thus, literary tradition simultaneously verifies fact and authorizes its transfiguration.

Paratextual notes of source material are a hallmark of the romance, a genre that gradually transforms famous narratives through the ages by allowing authors to alter previous iterations. In calling her work a romance, Porter signals her novel is one in a long tradition of William Wallace narratives—one that is open to adaptation to reflect the progress of the present age. In her prefaces and footnotes, Porter validates the act of modifying source material as essential to Wallace’s literary history, thus ensuring the narrative’s survival and relevance to contemporary readers. Though her revisions are not factually accurate, Porter uses the genre of romance to signal that she cares less for the accuracy of historical fact than she does about modern efficacy. Wallace is authorized as a hero of romance to convey the affective power of sentiment and patriotism. Thus, Porter’s modifications to accepted historical narratives can be understood as a shrewd engagement with a popular genre for a moral effect when read as romance.

Poems of Ossian and Authenticity

Porter inherits this complicated paratextual structure that authenticates her portrayal of history in part from the *Poems of Ossian*. When James Macpherson claimed that the poems were translations of ancient manuscripts written by a third-century Scottish bard, eighteenth-century Scottish literati were eager to elevate public conception of their nation’s past. Hugh Blair (1718-1800), Professor of Belles Lettres at the University of Edinburgh and one of Macpherson’s champions, asserted their authenticity in his paratextual “Critical Dissertation,” which was published alongside the poems in 1763. Howard Gaskill informs us that the first edition was printed in uniformity with the poem *Fingal* (1762) so the two could be bound together. An expanded edition, including an authenticating appendix, appeared in the second volume of the collected *Poems of Ossian* in 1765 and was included in most eighteenth and nineteenth century editions.

Yet British and Irish critics continued to question whether Macpherson's source texts were authentic. Debates ramified through periodicals, which were flooded with diatribes against or celebrations of Macpherson's publications. The poems themselves participated in these discussions as new editions offered variously authored prefaces, dissertations, and footnotes that proclaimed the authenticity of the poems as translations. Though this editorial move was not new to the literary market in the mid-eighteenth century, Ian Duncan notes that the paratext to the *Poems of Ossian* was unique in its quest to convince readers of the poems' literal truth.

The 'Poems of Ossian' effectively inaugurate the modern tradition of works of historical fiction supported by an antiquarian apparatus, with the crucial difference that in this case the authentication was meant to be taken literally. The 'authenticity effect'...advertises a problematical, unstable boundary between history and fiction, evidence and invention, textual surface and ontological depth. (*Scott's Shadow* 277)

This is in contrast to the pseudofactual novels of Samuel Richardson and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), who openly avow the ambiguity of their paratextual and extratextual claims to be the editors of their sentimental tales, but not the authors.²⁵ The *Poems of Ossian*, then, changed how history was narrated and authenticated through text and paratext in the mid-eighteenth century.

Beyond the dubiousness of Macpherson's claim of translated originals he could not materialize, their Celtic themes embroiled the poems in another legitimacy crisis: that of Celtic identity, which had acquired "a taint of falseness and inauthenticity" (Ó Gallchoir 114). In dialogue with contemporary stadial theory, the poems contributed to associating Celticism with the past, barbarism, and defeat. Simultaneously, Celtic archaism also became timeless: Clare O'Halloran notes that both England and its Celtic peripheries "created an *idea* of Gaelic society which existed outside

²⁵ For more, see Paige.

historical time and was shaped to a large degree by contemporary preoccupations” (99). Thus, the Ossian poems helped construct the nebulous idea of a misty, far-off, yet timeless Celtic romance—an inauthentic yet compelling image that many Romantic authors would take up, including Jane Porter.

Macpherson sought to assert the poems’ authenticity through the esteemed genre of the epic. Yet Dafydd Moore reasons that, rather than epic, “the characteristics and modalities of romance offer the best way of understanding the central features of *Ossian*” (*Enlightenment* 21). Macpherson’s near contemporaries agreed: eighteenth-century pamphlets deliberately re-worked Ossianic characters within the tropes of medieval romance, focusing on “the various ‘combats, tournaments, feasting, invincible champions, the motivation of love’ that betray Ossian as romance” (Moore *Enlightenment* 35). Clara Reeve (1729-1807) counted “*Ossian* among the Romances, on the basis of its ‘strong marks of genius and Originality’” (Manning 130). Blair and Hume took a less favorable view of romance since it “dealt in fantasy and improbabilities” while the epic was “firmly tagged to historical reality” (Manning 130). Yet, as with Porter’s novel, if we distance ourselves from the need for authenticity, we can more clearly see the affordances rather than the limitations of the romance. Susan Manning shows that “Macpherson contributed to the rehabilitation of romance in the final third of the eighteenth century, as a form able to incorporate the requirements of sentiment” (130).

Viewing the *Poems of Ossian* as sentimental romance helps explain a heavy charge against them: anachronism. As they would decry the depiction of Wallace in *The Scottish Chiefs* fifty years later, critics protested that Macpherson’s third-century characters partake in the language and sensibility of the eighteenth century. In *Fingal*, the defeated Cuchullin cries:

But, O ye ghosts of the lonely Cromla! ye souls of chiefs that are no more! be ye the companions of Cuchullin, and talk to him in the cave of his sorrow. For never more

shall I be renowned among the mighty in the land. I am like a beam that has shone; like a mist that fled away, when the blast of the morning came, and brightened the shaggy side of the hill. (Macpherson 88)

Mourning for her lover Oscar, Malvina intones: “I was a lovely tree, in thy presence, Oscar, with all my branches round me; but thy death came like a blast from the desert, and laid my green head low” (Macpherson 187). Their language, critics protested, was more likely to be found in novels of sensibility than in third-century speech, and the poems in turn wielded mass influence over contemporary literature. Jerome McGann notes how the Ossian poems “set the literature of sentiment and sensibility on a whole new footing” (1).

Contemporary critics, and some modern scholars, have seen this sentimental anachronism as a blatant mistake in Macpherson’s supposed translation. But Eric Gidal and Fiona Stafford, among others, give Macpherson more credit in the choice to inhabit the past with the present: “Rather than allowing readers to abandon themselves entirely to an imaginary heroic past, Macpherson allowed the self-consciousness of a modern in pursuit of the ancient to pervade his texts” (F. Stafford 34). While reducing the quality of the authentic epic, this complex relationship between past and present is at home in the romance. Ian Duncan theorizes “the condition of romance as modernity’s vision of worlds it has superseded, charged with a magic of estrangement, peril and loss: a cultural uncanny” (*Modern Romance* 9), a definition that resonates with Macpherson’s elegiac heroes. The poems’ anachronicity explores not only the cultural but the temporal uncanny of re-imagining the past through the lens of the present.

With the publication of Henry Mackenzie’s (1745-1831) 1805 report of the Highland Society of Scotland’s enquiry into the authenticity of the works, the “melancholy sentimentalism” of Macpherson’s Celtic warriors was deemed false, and his poems a “scandal of imposture” (Stewart 38). Even as the poems’ authenticity was decried, Romantic writers continued to celebrate their

literary merit. Sydney Owenson gives a sympathetic overview of the Ossian poems and the debates surrounding them in her 1806 novel *The Wild Irish Girl*; Lord Byron (1788-1824) would follow the next year with his re-working of Ossianic themes in “The Death of Calmar and Orla” (1807); and Walter Scott appreciated the poems and their impact on European poetry despite declaring them false. While their representation of historical manners was accepted to be anachronistic, they were nonetheless recuperated as poems of literary merit. Part of the lingering popularity of Ossian may be due to the fact that the romance was thriving in the early nineteenth century. David Duff and Stephen C. Behrendt show how the tropes of romance were repeated and reformulated throughout the Romantic era as the genre was “indispensable to the period’s awareness of itself” as a time of transition (Duff 6; Behrendt 23-24). By the time of Scott’s *Waverley Novels* (1814-1832), the romance was established “as modern culture’s construction of a symbolic form prior to itself” (Duncan *Modern Romance* 11). Similar to those of the mid-eighteenth century, the re-imaginings of the past in the Romantic era romance reveal contemporary rather than historic preoccupations.

In calling *The Scottish Chiefs* a romance and sentimentalizing Scottish heroes, Porter reaps the benefits of the debt to Macpherson she acknowledges in her epigraph. Her Wallace is an Ossianic figure; beyond basic similarities as historic Scottish warriors, Wallace’s speeches mimic those of Ossian’s characters in both emotion and rhythm. His soliloquies, a nod to the *Poems of Ossian*’s epic style, echo Macpherson’s “focus on the poet-narrator as a suffering individual [which] reflected an eighteenth- rather than third-century perspective” (F. Stafford 34). Wallace proclaims: “What is renown, what the loud acclaim of admiring throngs, what the bended knees of worshipping gratefulness, but breath and vapour! It seems to shelter the mountain’s top; the blast comes; it rolls from its sides; and the lonely hill is left to all the storm! So stand I, my Marion, when bereft of thee” (*TSC Virtue* 2: 363). Compare this to a passage of Macpherson’s first-published poem *Fragments of Ancient Poetry* (1760), which shows Porter’s debt of lonely soliloquy, mountain blasts, rhythmic prose,

and profound heroic loss: “By the mossy fountain I will sit: on the top of the hill of winds. When mid-day is silent around, converse, O my love, with me! come on the wings of the gale! on the blast of the mountain, come! Let me hear thy voice, as thou passest, when mid-day is silent around” (Macpherson 9). The melancholy, apostrophic longing in both Macpherson and Porter’s works, in combination with their corresponding barren landscapes, reveal a shared Romantic sentiment.

Porter’s Wallace and Macpherson’s Oscar and Fingal share not only mingled sensibility, but military heroism and patriotic virtue. Moore notes that “Ossian suggested that society did not have to choose between ‘strength and bravery’ and ‘courtesy and sentiment,’ but could combine both within a system of what we might call civic sensibility” (“Heroic Incoherence” 44), or what he would later call “muscular sensibility” (*Enlightenment* 15). Walter’s Scott’s 1805 comment that Fingal combined “all the strength and bravery of Achilles, with the courtesy, sentiment, and high-breeding of Sir Charles Grandison” (qtd. in Moore “Heroic Incoherence” 43) could apply just as well to Wallace. So could Richard Sher’s description of the civic leadership of Fingal:

By bravely performing his duty as king and warrior in a world of continual adversity, by fighting only for public virtue, and above all by successfully defending Scotland against armies of foreign invaders, Fingal raised to epic proportions the theme of martial virtue in the service of national defense. (60)

In both *The Poems of Ossian* and *The Scottish Chiefs*, a hero’s bravery is derived from ancestral inspiration and his victories tempered by mercy. Ossian says to his son Oscar:

O Oscar, pride of youth, I saw the shining of thy sword and gloried in my race. Pursue the glory of our fathers, and be what they have been; when Trenmor lived, the first of men, and Trathal the father of heroes. They fought the battle in their youth, and are the song of bards. —O Oscar! bend the strong in arms: but spare the feeble hand. Be thou a stream of many tides against the foes of thy people; but like

the gale that moves the grass to those who ask thine aid. —So Trenmor lived; such Trathal was; and such has Fingal been. My arm was the support of the injured; and the weak rested behind the lightning of my steel. (Macpherson 77)

Porter incorporates the heroism and sentiment of Macpherson's *Poems of Ossian* into *The Scottish Chiefs* to construct a similar ideal patriotism and create sympathy for her own national hero through the anachronistic sensibility of romance.

Revising Ossian

While Porter models *The Scottish Chiefs* on the *Poems of Ossian*, critics have failed to notice that she does not follow Macpherson completely. A.D. Hook, Gary Kelly, and Graeme Morton consider Porter's use of Ossian as a passive imbibing of his nostalgic sentiment and another method of feminizing history, but Porter's interaction is more meaningful and has a political charge. While both authors narrate Scotland's past, they differ regarding the Scotland's current and future status within the United Kingdom. As described by Murray Pittock, Macpherson writes of a valiant past melting into a degraded present. Rather than embracing Ossian's elegiac mode, as Kelly argues, Porter employs the poems' anachronism to depict a maintained strength from past to present. Porter thus resists the Enlightenment theory of stadial history by rejecting the idea of a barbaric past, as well as Macpherson's historical progress narrative of national denigration, by celebrating a Scotland strengthened by its union with England.

William Robertson writes in *History of Scotland* that "Scotland is childhood, Britain adulthood" (qtd. in Pittock 4), describing pre-Union Scotland as having been in an undeveloped state in accord with stadial theory. In the *Poems of Ossian* which immediately followed, James Macpherson upends his positive progressivism—instead of Robertson's youth to maturity, Macpherson posits a trajectory from vigor to decay (Pittock 5). He thus participates in a wider

movement within Celtic historiography; O'Halloran shows how the Irish also constructed a pre-colonial golden age which contrasted with the present state. Macpherson challenges stadial notions of pre-Union Scotland as rude and barbaric, and instead “recalls the splendor of the national past in intimate detail rather than discarding it as unfit for memory” (Pittock 4). In this he engaged the nostalgic sentiment prevalent in Britain; Fiona Stafford argues: “For an age that had begun to articulate a deep longing for a nature which ‘lies behind and must continually lie behind’, *The Poems of Ossian* struck a deep sympathetic chord” (34). By revering a superior Scottish past, and depreciating the modern present, he subsequently re-casts the Acts of Union 1707 and formation of Great Britain not as progress, but as diminishment of a nobler Scottish past.

While hearkening to a previous time ennobles the past, it can also render it irrevocably gone and a subject fit only for nostalgic elegy. William Hazlitt (1788-1830) wrote about the Ossian poems: “There is one impression which he conveys more entirely than all other poets, namely, the sense of privation, the loss of all things, of friends, of good name, of country” (15). Scotland’s nostalgia was for all times past, and Macpherson’s work “was only partly a yearning for supposedly third-century simplicities; it was also an elegy to the pre-Culloden Highlands of his childhood” (O’Halloran 106). Juliet Shields has shown more specifically how nostalgia emerged from the context of the Highland Clearances to become a generalized Romantic condition of loss (“Highland Emigration” 765). However, in remembering the Scottish past, Macpherson arguably also contributes to its irrelevance and even eradication within modern Britain. Joep Leerssen describes the *Poems of Ossian* as rooted in a lost past: “The image of Ossian lifting stones to create a memorial cairn to the dead is an apt symbol for Macpherson’s efforts in translating Gaelic poetry into English, for although he may have solved the problem of giving a voice to the primitive, in doing so he placed that voice permanently in the past” (“Celticism” 95). Thus, while Macpherson’s past is valiant, it has power primarily in an elegiac mode.

Jane Porter does not believe the past is irrevocably gone; she instead asserts that it is a constant source of inspiration to the present and future. Rather than establishing a juxtaposition between past and present, she instead uses anachronism to diminish difference and emphasize continuity across over a thousand years of Scottish patriotism. Duncan writes that the Ossian poems “exposed the predicament of tradition in modernity, with the first term conceptualized as a transmission of origins and the second as a radical break” (*Scott’s Shadow* 277). Porter, however, removes the need for a radical break between history and modernity. Furthermore, Juliet Shields notes that the Ossian poems “raised the question of whether sensibility was an innate trait or an acquired, historically contingent capacity, and consequently whether Britishness was an innate or acquired identity” (*Sentimental Literature* 25). *The Scottish Chiefs* argues that sensibility and Britishness are intimately connected, innate, and timeless. Instead of subscribing to Robertson or Macpherson’s teleologies, Porter offers her own progression from Scotland to Britain as one of sustained virtue.

In her prefaces, Porter writes that the noble traits of valor, heroism, and patriotism “are consecrated to a purpose beyond the time of their action” (*TSC Virtue* 1: 12). By insisting on the timelessness of these characteristics, she argues that national character is untouched by time: true Scots have always been noble and always will be. She constructs a thirteenth-century Scotland in which none of the glory of third century has been lost in part by connecting Ossianic heroes to Wallace’s company in the text. Porter writes of Andrew Murray’s choice to eschew attacking drunken English soldiers: “Like his brave ancestor Gaul, the son of Morna, *he disdained to stab a sleeping foe*” (*TSC Broadview* 114, Porter’s emphasis). Stephen Ireland refers to Edwin as “some bright-haired son of Fingal” (*TSC Broadview* 182), and Porter compares the poet Thomas of Ercildoun (ca. 1220-1298) to “the bard of Morven issuing from his cave of shells to bed a hero’s welcome to the young and warlike Oscar” (*TSC Broadview* 157). She creates a direct line of succession from Fingal to Wallace’s compatriots: “Lord Loch-awe, who, from the extent of his

domains on the western coast, and from his tried valour, might well have assumed the title of his great ancestor Fingal, and been called king of woody Morven, rose from his seat” (*TSC Broadview* 445). Porter directs her readers to make intimate connections between Scottish heroes of the two different millennia.

Furthermore, William Wallace and Robert Bruce both have diegetic connections to Ossian that reveal their virtue and loyalty to Scotland. Bruce reads Ossian—despite the fact that the poems were supposedly never written down—and derives direct inspiration from their sensibility. He reads “with bursts of admiration, many passages apposite to his own heroic sentiments, from Ossian, and other favourite bards of Scotland” (*TSC Broadview* 513). When Bruce lies despondent in the English court, Wallace disguises himself as a sennachie to gain access to his chambers and plays Ossianic music to rouse him. Bruce’s rising agitation as he listens to “Death of Cuthullin” reveals the immediate power of Ossian to stir emotion in the virtuous. Porter further uses this song to foreshadow the plot, since Cuthullin dies protecting the young king Cormac, a slant parallel to Wallace and Bruce.

The evocation of Ossianic sentiment, particularly through music, is only effective when connected to virtue. The scheming and sensuous Lady Joanna Mar, who covets Wallace’s person despite being already married to his compatriot Lord Mar, sings Ossian’s “Cath-Loda” within Wallace’s hearing in the hopes of arousing his admiration. “She had designed that these tender words of the bard of Morven, should suggest to her hearer, the observation of her own resembling beauties. But he saw in them only the lovely *dweller of his own soul*” (*TSC Broadview* 234-235, Porter’s emphasis), referring to his first wife Marion. In this, Porter shows that while Ossian’s nostalgic tenderness appeals to Wallace’s mourning for his wife, it cannot inspire lust for the unvirtuous Lady

Mar.²⁶ Ossianic sentiment is expressed by the virtuous for the virtuous and is safe from corruption. As the two greatest Scottish chiefs produce and react to the sentiment of the Ossian poems, they serve as exemplary models for how Porter wishes readers to react to her novel. Like Wallace, she serves as a sennachie, singing songs of past valor to inspire modern heroism.

Porter's heroes are inspired by the deeds of Fingal just as her readers are to be inspired by Wallace. Within the text, sites associated with Ossian inspire her characters to bravery. While the Scottish chiefs are at Craignacoheilg, Kirkpatrick takes Murray to "a tower which had once been a favourite hunting-lodge of the great King Fergus" (*TSC* Virtue 1: 177). This tower then facilitates a connection to the past, one of divine inspiration, for Kirkpatrick. He tells Murray:

Here, eight hundred years ago, did the same glorious monarch form those plans which saved his kingdom from a foreign yoke. On the same spot, we will lay ours, to rescue Scotland from a tyranny, more intolerable than that which menaced him. Yes, Murray; there is not a stone in this building that has not a voice which calls aloud to us to draw the sword, and give liberty to the people whom that illustrious prince kept free at the price of his blood. (*TSC* Virtue 1: 177)

The tower, and the past it channels, serves as the Ossianic "voice which calls aloud," an echo of her epigraphic "voice which awakens [the] soul" to inspire the Scottish army. It is a holy point of connection with the past, a testament to the immortal figure of Fergus, and spurs direct military action in the chiefs.

Porter trusts this inspiration will serve just as readily seven centuries later by mentioning sites where her readers can connect with the valiant past depicted in her novel. While acknowledging the passage of time, she insists that the past is still very much alive by describing the physical places

²⁶ For more on women's lack of self-control leading to rebellions passions that preclude them from proper sensibility in eighteenth-century novels, see Juliet Shields, *Sentimental Literature*.

from Wallace's time her readers can visit. She then uses footnotes to bridge the temporal gap between past and present, commenting on the sites' present-day states and the patriotic pilgrimages to them. The text narrates the thirteenth century, the footnotes the nineteenth—by guiding the reader's attention repeatedly from one to the other, she uses the material space of the book to strengthen the resultant ideological bond between the two times.

Porter's prefaces, and especially her footnotes, stress how cultural sites and objects facilitate connections to the past. She ends her footnote about the Stone of Scone by noting that "Edward the First of England caused it to be carried to Westminster Abbey, where it now stands" (*TSC Broadview* 53), informing the reader both of its long history and where they can currently seek it. Most locations throughout Scotland receive a footnote about their present, nineteenth-century state: when describing Alloa, she footnotes that "the remains of this ancient seat of the Mar family are yet visible" (*TSC Broadview* 291), and when visiting Alnwick Castle, that "the traveler may now see a fine monumental pillar, erected in former times by the earls of Northumberland..." (*TSC Crowell* 2: 10). Rather than focusing on what has been lost, Porter describes what endures, and what has been added, to describe Scotland as accumulating glory rather than losing it over time.

These persistent spatial markers remain intimately connected to the story of Wallace. His return to his ruined home is marked by a lonely tower, which Porter describes as "the last of his race" in another allusion to Ossian (*TSC Broadview* 659). She then includes a footnote: "On the banks of the Clyde, near Lanark, such a tower is still seen, and bears the name of Wallace" (*TSC Broadview* 659). Another footnote states that the ruins of war battered Lammington Castle "are still visible; and near to them the people of the country point out the place where Wallace encamped his brave army" (*TSC Broadview* 388). While in Irish literature ruins are frequently the "materialisations of the defeat of the colonized" (Whelan xviii), Porter instead infuses them with strength, noting the persistence of the past within the present. She explains that these places are still appreciated; when

describing the destruction of Stirling Bridge, she notes that the tale in connection with the bridge “is yet exultingly repeated on the spot” (*TSC Broadview* 307), celebrating both spatial and verbal monuments to bravery. The paratext implies that any patriot shows a similar adulation for historic places; she writes that Ramsay’s caves “are still visited with veneration by every true Scot” (*TSC Broadview* 592). She proves that monuments to a heroic Scottish past endure—just as Scottish heroism endures—and encourages true patriots to revere them to emulate Wallace.

Yet while these spatial links to the past exist, Porter cannot ignore that they are greatly altered; many of the locations mentioned in the text are in ruins. However, instead of bewailing their eventual loss in an Ossianic elegy, she admires their ability to serve as persistent cultural markers: “Huntingdon-tower, a castle of the Lords Ruthven, in the near neighborhood of Perth, is still a fine structure...Much of it is in ruins, but the banqueting-hall is discoverable” (*TSC Broadview* 422). Porter focuses on the positive; other grand castles are “still to be seen” throughout Scotland as “fine ruins” (*TSC Broadview* 416), and “in picturesque decay” (*TSC Crowell* 2: 52). These remarks speak to the vogue for Scottish tourism that sprung up in the nineteenth century, a burgeoning industry Porter’s books respond and contribute to as further discussed in Chapter Three, particularly by encouraging Scottish and English visitors alike to experience Scotland’s noble past in person. Discussing her native Durham and its castle, she notes “This round tower, or keep, is the only part of the ancient castle of Durham in preservation, but there are still some fine ruins of the old fortified walls” (*TSC Crowell* 2: 116). In Fiona Price’s *Broadview* edition, this footnote is altered to “This round tower (or keep) is the only part of the castle of Durham in any good preservation” (*TSC Broadview* 502). This version loses Porter’s appreciation of ruins and puts undue emphasis on preserved sites, when Porter wishes to provide as many links to the past as possible, even those in disrepair. Ruins do not signal the eventual erosion of the past, but instead inspire Romantic sentiment while asserting the ability of the past to endure.

Even when locations and objects have been lost to time, Porter is quick to point out that tradition survives, particularly through memorialization. She mentions the Eildon tree, an object of medieval tradition connected with the prophet-poet Thomas of Ercildoun, or Thomas the Rhymer, another historical character in *The Scottish Chiefs*. A footnote reads: “The Eildon tree is famous in tradition...the tree no longer exists, but the place where it stood is marked by a large stone called the Eildon-tree stone” (*TSC Broadview* 234). Though the tree itself is gone, its memory is physically preserved, and thus nothing of value has truly been lost. In memorializing a valiant piece of tradition, Porter’s romance itself can be read as an Eildon-tree stone, commemorating what is no longer extant but will never be forgotten.

Further bolstering her importance as memorialist, Porter proclaims the power of her novel as a site of communion, unabashedly communicating the good its reverence for temporal and spatial connections has procured for the nation. In 1820, Porter adds a new footnote to the text when Wallace’s young brother-in-arms Edwin is buried in Dumbarton chapel to commemorate his heroic climb of Dumbarton Castle’s towers. She writes: “Since this little tale of Edwin’s fate has been recalled to memory, those towers have often been revisited as his noble monument, and many a warm-hearted schoolboy has shed a tear over his young mate in years” (*TSC Crowell 2*: 286). The Dumbarton towers thus facilitate this admirable sentiment in British youth as they become associated with Porter’s sympathetic portrait of the fictional Edwin Ruthven. Furthermore, she claims that her printed act of memorialization inspired others. She writes: “Since the first publication of this work, the inhabitants of Falkirk have erected a pillar to the memory of Wallace, on the hill where he drew up his army” (*TSC Crowell 2*: 79). While the decision to raise these monuments cannot be proven to be inspired by *The Scottish Chiefs*, Porter implies that her goal has been achieved: her veneration of Wallace has moved others to commemorative and emulative action.

By connecting past to present, and thus historic Scotland to modern day Britain, Porter claims Wallace not only as a Scottish chief, but as a British patriot. While he is cast as the epitome of Scottishness in contemporary renderings, such as the 1995 film *Braveheart* that Gary Kelly claims is an adaptation of *The Scottish Chiefs*, his national history is more complicated. While Wallace was a Scottish hero fighting the English, intervening history, including the Union of Crowns (1603) and Acts of Union (1707), allowed Porter to re-cast him as valid British heritage. Political use of the Wallace narrative was not new; Graeme Morton notes that “the Wallace cult was first and foremost a debate about the nation and how it should be governed as an equal in union with England” (“The Most Efficacious Patriot” 251). Porter aligned with contemporary Tories on this issue; she was pro-Union and wrote about Wallace to bolster a united British patriotism alongside a specifically Scottish patriotism. In doing so, she echoes her contemporary Sir John Sinclair’s (1754-1835) call for Scots to consider themselves both Scots and Britons.²⁷

British unity allowed the Scots and English to mutually benefit from each other’s virtues, which were joined together in opposition to the perfidy of France. While Katherine Haldane Grenier acknowledges that the nineteenth century allowed Britons to adopt Scottish heroes and love of liberty (10), she acknowledges Scott’s contributions to this rather than Porter’s before him. Linda Colley gives a masterful overview of the ways in which British identity was defined by conflict with France, and particularly how women helped form British national identity during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. She contends: “Looking critically and comprehensively at patriotism in this period is also vital if we are to understand the evolution of what must be called British nationalism” (Colley 5). I follow Colley in using Benedict Anderson’s definition of a nation as “an imagined political community” to examine how a new British identity was “an invention forged

²⁷ See Kenneth McNeil and Juliet Shields for a detailed discussion of simultaneous Scottish/British identity.

above all by war” (5). Thus, Porter’s war-focused novel that encouraged the British appreciation of past Scottish heroism is an apt site of national identity formation.

In her focus on war, Porter certainly did not intend to revive old rivalries between England and Scotland that had resurfaced in the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion. *The Scottish Chiefs* does not tread the “very tight cultural tightrope” the Ossian poems did upon their publication fifteen years after the ‘45 (Moore *Enlightenment* 27). Macpherson and Porter both had political and national goals for their noble depictions of Scottish martial valor, responding to ongoing wars with France and the Jacobite Rebellion. Britain’s enmity with France required impassioned soldiers, yet Scots were forbidden to bear arms after 1745. Richard Sher reads the *Poems of Ossian* as support for a Scottish militia, and Mícheál Mac Craith argues that Macpherson was “genuinely seeking to restore Scots’ honour after the debacle of the ‘45” (138). While sympathetic to the Edinburgh widows of the Jacobite Rebellion she knew as a child, Porter’s primary focus in *The Scottish Chiefs* is to create a unified British patriotism to respond to the Napoleonic Wars.

Fiona Price notes that in choosing the revolutionary narrative of William Wallace, Porter could have made a bold political claim by “suggesting the power of unified mass action to overthrow the state,” but her repetition of the loss associated with rebellion and war “functions to discourage the revolutionary impulse” (“Resisting” 639; 646). In this *The Scottish Chiefs* is a precursor to *Waverley*, which was received as a warning by some contemporary readers: “If the history of those bloody days, which is embodied in this tale, shall by an early and awful warning inspire the nation with a jealous vigilance against the very first symptoms of their recurrence, we shall consider that not even the light pages of fiction have trifled in vain” (“Review of *Waverley*” *British Critic* 486). Porter seeks to ennoble her countrymen with tales of valor while simultaneously minimizing the national hostility that caused the Scottish Wars of Independence. She celebrates heroism while decrying division, and names tyranny and self-interest, rather than England and its monarchy, as the true enemy of Scottish

and British peace. In this, she delivers one of many pointed attacks at Napoleon's regime, further strengthening her novel's call to arms against France and contributing to the Emperor's decision to ban *The Scottish Chiefs*.

In her paratext, Porter repeatedly claims her pleasure that the heroic personages of both England and Scotland are no longer enemies under the new British flag: "Happy it is for this realm that the destiny which now unites the once contending arms of those brave families has also consolidated their rival nations into one, and by planting the heir of Plantagenet and of Bruce upon one throne hath redeemed the peace of Britain, and fixed it on lasting foundations" (*TSC* Crowell 1: vi). She associates the Union of the Crowns with security and happiness as it unites the virtues of both nations. Furthermore, she asserts British timelessness through the word "redeemed," implying Britain is older than it is, and that the Union has restored Britain to its just state rather than forging something new and unstable.²⁸ She is thus able to describe their former enmity, and the tales of courage it inspire, within the safe parameters of union. The text and paratext of *The Scottish Chiefs* assert that contemporary Britain must celebrate its mutually glorious past to form a nation in history's best image.

In this Porter contributes to eighteenth and nineteenth-century discussions of Scottish nationality that were frequently the "justificatory praxis for the teleological absorption of an older Scottish into a newer British society" (Pittock 8). Porter not only reflects British values but contributes to the formation of a new British sentiment. Juliet Shields, quoting Leith Davis, notes that "most agree that post-Union Britain was far from 'a homogeneous stable unit,' but instead was a work-in-progress composed of 'heterogeneous elements'" ("Situating Scotland" 1). Porter contributes to this work-in-progress by helping shape the nation's sentimental relationship with its

²⁸ For more on the instability of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, both at the Union of the Crowns and the Acts of Union, see Juliet Shields and Leith Davis.

past. Her 1828 preface reinforces the unity yet heterogeneity of Scotland and England when she writes that she has received acclaim from both nations, and that she feels like “a child rejoicing in the approbation of indulgent parents” (*TSC* Crowell 1: viii), invoking an idea of separate entities united into one categorical unit. By describing herself as the child of both nations, she reinforces the idea of modern British subjects enjoying a shared heritage.

This and other paratext helps illuminate Porter’s use of history within her national novel. Her choice of hero and historical moment has led some scholars to infer that she writes a national tale that valorizes Scotland over England. However, reading the paratext alongside the text offers a different perspective. *The Scottish Chiefs* links past and present in the text and paratext to celebrate Scotland’s history as a noble part of the British heritage. In diminishing the semblance of temporal difference between character and reader, Porter presents an opposing model of union to other national novels. Maria Edgeworth distances her reader from contemporary national customs by placing them in the past to fabricate temporal disconnection in *Castle Rackrent*; Porter reduces temporal distance to encourage connection. Furthermore, Edgeworth writes that, after its union with Great Britain, Ireland’s past would be an amusing nostalgic memory: “When Ireland loses her identity by an union with Great Britain, she will look back with a smile of good-humoured complacency on the Sir Kits and Sir Condys of her former existence” (*Castle Rackrent* 5). Porter, however, does not believe that union subduces former identities. Rather than “losing its identity,” as Edgeworth feared Ireland must, Porter’s Scotland is revered as a valuable contributor to modern Britain. Thus, *The Scottish Chiefs* can be read not only as a Scottish national tale, but as an important contributor to the formation of British sentiment and identity as a British national novel.

While the overall conflict of the novel is one of Scotland versus England, Porter focuses on individual character in determining heroes and villains. It is true that Wallace is Scottish, and the tyrant Edward is English. Yet their opposition is not one simply of nationality, but of morality—

Wallace is humble, repeatedly refusing the crown his followers press on him while Edward covets a kingdom not his own. Wallace's Scottish patriotism is transcendent not only due to his nationality, as Andrew Monnickendam claims, but due to his virtue. His additional point that "the aggressors are basically English" (Monnickendam 104), while true within the larger context of the battles fought in *The Scottish Chiefs*, is inaccurate in the context of individual character, as is Ian Dennis's statement that the Scots are perfect and the English "ravening and perfidious" (12). Scottish Balliol and Monteith are traitors, and the noble English Earl of Gloucester is depicted as a kind-hearted hero. Thus, Porter asserts that it is not Scottishness or Englishness that divides the good from the evil, but individual possession of morality and humility. In this she argues that virtue, a trait shared by both Scotland and England, defines patriotic heroes.

Porter distinguishes true virtue through refined sentiment, particularly the act of weeping. When Wallace's followers declare that they will accept no king but himself he sheds tears of love for his countrymen. "As soon as the agitation of his soul would allow him to speak to this faithful group, he stretched his hands over them; and tears, such as a father would shed who looks on the children he is to behold no more, gliding over his cheeks..." (*TSC Broadview* 650-651). His visible sentiment is not feminized, but instead linked to his virtue and power as the pater/patriot of the nation. Conversely, the female villain of the novel, Joanna Mar, is unable to weep. While Wallace is scorned by some critics for his frequent tears, he is not the only man in the novel to weep; it is instead a shared affective state that connotes sentimental heroism. Two other heroes of the novel, the Earls of Mar and Gloucester, weep in moments of heightened emotion. The latter example is particularly important, for the Earl of Gloucester is an Englishman and the tyrant Edward's son-in-law. Porter thus shows that sensibility crosses borders and is housed in the breasts of noble men on both sides of the conflict. Through manly weeping, Porter casts sentiment—both the ability to inspire and to feel—as an essentially British quality.

Among the numerous noble-hearted Englishmen in the book, there are also coarse Scotsmen. One such is Wallace's militant companion Kirkpatrick, who is fueled by revenge and bloodlust and rails against Wallace's "maidenly mercy" toward his enemies (*TSC Broadview* 202). During a passage describing Kirkpatrick's desire for bloody vengeance against the English villain Cressingham, she makes a sharp contrast between true patriotism and "the portentous malignity with which the great adversary of mankind determines the ruin of nations" (*TSC Broadview* 186). When Kirkpatrick finally defeats Cressingham in battle, the latter cries for mercy: "Hell would be my portion, did I grant any to thee," cried Kirkpatrick; and with one stroke of his axe, he severed his head from his body. 'I am a man again!' shouted he, as he held its bleeding veins in his hand, and placed it on the point of his sword" (*TSC Broadview* 308). Ian Dennis writes that Kirkpatrick is a clear example of Porter's "contrast between people 'then' and 'now' [that] permeates the text" (11). While I agree that Kirkpatrick is meant to be a figure of the past, this is not so Porter can accurately "portray the psychology of the time" (Dennis 11), but rather to create a foil for Wallace's moral and thus temporal transcendence. After Kirkpatrick's bloody display, the English soldier Montgomery worries that he is the leader of the Scottish troops to whom he would need to surrender. Andrew Murray directs his notice instead to Wallace:

The chieftain rose from the ground, and though dyed in the same ensanguined hue that had excited the abhorrence of Montgomery, yet it had been drawn from his own veins, and those of his horse, and all of blood about him seemed to be on his garments; none was in his eyes; none in his heart, but what warmed it to mercy, and to benevolence, for all mankind. (*TSC Broadview* 308-309)

Though Wallace has far greater cause for revenge against the English than Kirkpatrick, Porter's patriot cares more for virtue and its attendant self-disinterestedness than pride. Thus, while Wallace's virtue is linked to his nationality, it is not solely his nationality that renders him a righteous

patriot. Through her frequent heavy-handed contrasts between the bloodthirsty Kirkpatrick and saintly Wallace, Porter establishes Wallace as a timelessly virtuous Scot and thus the ideal model for contemporary British readers.

She minimizes temporal differences that compromise her project of unity while celebrating timeless virtue, implying that modern Britain is not so different from medieval Scotland. Rather than placing her narrative energy on the divided history of Scotland and England, Porter celebrates the shared heroism of individuals on both sides of the border. In doing so, she praises the British nation that consolidates the heroism of both countries' pasts. Porter uses her paratext to argue that Scotland has not been diminished through its union with England, but in fact has greater influence now through its ability to inspire all British citizens. Through her textual incorporation of anachronistic Ossianic sensibility and her paratextual emphasis on temporal transcendence, she asserts the timelessness of a patriotic, valiant, and sentimental British née Scottish national character.

Conclusion

The title page to the first edition of *The Scottish Chiefs* contains two guides to reading the novel. The subtitle of "A Romance" and the Ossianic epigraph both imply a sentimental work that evokes the past as a means to inspire the present and future. Porter combines the romance's temporal uncanny and ability to re-mold traditional narratives with the heroic sentiment of the Ossian poems to forge a new, moral national narrative. Rather than blindly following, she alters previous accounts of Wallace and Macpherson's vision of union to emphasize England and Scotland's shared virtue embodied by British national character. She accomplishes this via the very facet of her work for which she was denigrated: sentimental anachronism. By reducing temporal difference between the heroes of the third, thirteenth, and nineteenth centuries, and by transforming Wallace into a man of feeling and action, Porter encourages her readers to connect with and emulate

her hero. Thus, this chapter argues for a revised reading of Porter's national novel that considers her active incorporation of Macpherson's *Poems of Ossian* alongside her carefully crafted paratext. By employing romance to transform previous narratives of Wallace, and by using footnotes and textual references to Ossian to connect past to present, she transforms Macpherson's Scottish elegy into a tale of British sentiment and strength.

Chapter Two: No Apology Necessary:

The Paratextual Personas of Sydney Owenson and Jane Porter

“For love of country is of no sex”

—Sydney Owenson, Preface to the *O'Briens and the O'Flahertys*

“Regina’s Maids of Honour” (fig. 1), an engraving of literary celebrities by Daniel Maclise (1806-1870) for the January 1836 issue of *Fraser’s Magazine for Town and Country*, has achieved a celebrity status of its own in studies of nineteenth-century women writers. Studied by Terence Allan Hoagwood and Kathryn Ledbetter in *Colour’d Shadows: Contexts in Publishing, Printing, and Reading Nineteenth-Century British Women Writers* (2005), and again by Linda H. Peterson in *Becoming a Woman of Letters: Myths of Authorship and Facts of the Victorian Market* (2009), the print has proven a goldmine for both print culture and authorship studies. It establishes the zenith of 1830s British female authorship, including its top practitioners—Letitia Elizabeth Landon, Anna Maria Hall, Mary Russell Mitford (1787-1855), Harriet Martineau (1802-1876), Caroline Norton (1808-1877), Marguerite Gardiner (Lady Blessington) (1789-1849), Jane Porter, and Sydney Owenson (Lady Morgan)—as well as its public image—well-dressed, beautiful women sitting at tea, reading and conversing.



Figure 1. "Regina's Maids of Honour." Jane Porter is third from the right, wearing the headdress of the Teutonic Order of Saint Joachim and speaking to her friend L.E.L. across the table. Owenson is seated in the foreground, looking right at Caroline Norton and Lady Blessington. Public Domain.

Peterson and Hoagwood and Ledbetter highlight how this print illuminates the connections between print culture and public conceptions of women's authorship. Peterson notes that, unlike their Bluestocking predecessors, these women are removed from men in a wholly domestic space, marking the increasing separation of public and private spheres for the genders throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. Despite the intermediary position of women's publications between the spheres, literary laurels do not here threaten a woman's femininity. Peterson also studies how periodicals like *Fraser's* contributed to shifting ideas of authorship by "projecting a conception of authorship that merged Romantic literary genius with a new Victorian middle-class ideal of business success" (34). Hoagwood and Ledbetter, however, remark on the slander barely kept at bay by the respectable group portrait, particularly for Lady Blessington, Caroline Norton, L.E.L., and Sydney Owenson (48). These women's personal scandals compelled the reading public to consume any new print media about them even while condemning them.

The women who are not subject to calumny are routinely glossed over in analyses of the image. Jane Porter, Mary Russell Mitford, and Anna Maria Hall—described as “mild, angelic domestic models” by Hoagwood and Ledbetter (52)—seem to offer less to those interested in celebrity and print culture studies due to their seeming conformity to Victorian ideals of separated public and private spheres and domestic female authorship. While the circulated image of Jane Porter’s person and reputation were indeed near spotless, she has much to offer to print and celebrity studies in her voluminous paratext to her popular novels. Devoney Looser and Thomas McLean recognize Porter’s careful manipulation of her public persona for funds and fame, respectively; Looser’s examination of Porter’s production of new prefaces for much-needed financial assistance in her later years is the most in-depth study of her paratext yet. I examine a wider swath of paratext—prefaces, footnotes, and portraits—to reveal a long career of interventions in public discourse, in which Porter asserts her importance as a national author and fans the flames of her own celebrity to support her political and personal goals. She crafts a complex authorial persona that nods to public expectations of femininity while embracing the national novel’s opportunity to influence international politics and contemporary literature. With her zealous patriotism and blatant self-aggrandizement, her paratextual public persona is far more complex than one of mild, angelic domesticity.

Fellow “Regina’s Maids of Honor” subject Sydney Owenson strayed from the safety of Porter’s image of quiet piety and was frequently attacked by critics. Hoagwood and Ledbetter remark that “Lady Morgan must surely be the most maligned, calumniated woman author of the nineteenth century” (52). Studies of Owenson’s public persona tend to focus on extratextual rather than paratextual material; those that focus solely on her public performances as her titular “Wild Irish Girl” in English salons or her vitriolic relationship with *Quarterly Review* editor John Wilson Croker (1780-1857) do not explore how Owenson nonetheless successfully markets herself to an

avid reading public in her paratext.²⁹ I seek to revise our assumptions about Sydney Owenson's public persona by focusing on what she chooses to publish about female authorship as paratext to her novels.

By examining the footnotes and prefaces Owenson and Porter affix to their national novels, I offer a new reading of these authors' personas and their feminist contributions to women's writing in the early nineteenth century. Porter and Owenson have not been analyzed in conjunction with one another; comparing two such seemingly dissimilar women writers reveals just how similar their goals were, if not their chosen personas. Both wrote highly popular national novels, and both embraced public authorship, by which I mean non-anonymous, unapologetic writing for a large reading public. Furthermore, they seek to validate their authorship of national narratives to their readers, rather than to critics, through multi-faceted and complex celebrity personae that emphasize their positions as women patriots. Their paratext champions the ability of women to write on political topics within the novel, providing an overlooked feminist call for women to enter the public sphere and influence the nation. Owenson and Porter embrace their reading public and accept the public's embrace in return.

Personal Relationship: Pomp and Piety

The familiarity between Owenson and Porter seen in the *Fraser's* print was not imagined—they were tenuous friends throughout their long careers, though the friendship was turbulent. As their contemporaries noticed, the two women differed vastly in appearance, nationality,

²⁹ See Hoagwood and Ledbetter and Claire Connolly for discussions of Owenson's clashes with the *Quarterly Review*. Connolly also offers an in-depth discussion of the "media event" surrounding *The Wild Irish Girl* and Owenson's public performances as Glorvina, accompanied on this subject by Ina Ferris, Terry Eagleton, Kathryn Kirkpatrick, and Natasha Tessone. There is a longer discussion of these critics' work later in the chapter.

temperament, and reputation. The strains on their personal relationship are analogous to key features of their public personas, as pious Jane Porter admonishes blasphemous, independent Sydney Owenson, yet also covertly grasps at her literary and social success. In this section I explore their letters, memoirs, and paratext to reveal the tension between their real personal relationship and the paratextual performance of authorial connection that sits at the crux of the divide between public and private for both writers.

Their letters and memoirs reveal the authors' close attention to the reception of their public personas as writers, particularly in contrast to each other. One of their main differences was religion and its attendant femininity, for Porter was far more religious and conservative than Owenson. In an 1817 letter to John Taylor (1757-1832), her friend and editor of the Tory newspaper *The Sun*, Porter fears that the ideological link between herself and Owenson as contemporary women writers will implicate her in the other's calumny. Upon reading a diatribe against Owenson in *The Sun*, she writes: "I quaked that the whole Sisterhood of Ink and Quill, were to be sent, by a certain Lord of the Solar System, to the mending of their shrouds," yet notes her pleasure that she and her sister Anna Maria Porter are aligned with Maria Edgeworth rather than Owenson. While she first feels "a pang, on rising at the expense of Lady Morgan," she loses her sympathy upon reading "the evidence of her unwomanly, & even anti-Christian principles." She concludes: "I could not regret, that she has been so derided to the World. When genius deserts the course of virtue, and blasphemes the God which bestowed its powers; to make it an apology, is to join in its transgression."³⁰ Porter views Owenson's injured reputation as her due deserts and cannot excuse her transgression against both God and femininity. She is pleased to not be associated with her, yet also acknowledges their tenuous affinity, as well as Owenson's "genius."

³⁰ PORT 17.09.16, Sept. 16, 1817, Jane Porter Papers, Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library.

Five years later, Porter continues her religious harangue against Owenson, while admitting upon meeting her that she is pleasant company. She writes to her mother: “You ask me how I like Lady Morgan.—I was much pleased with her amusing qualities, till yesterday—when a discussion took place at dinner, in which the infidel principles of herself & her husband were so conspicuous I shall have no regret in never meeting her again and I believe (*entre nous*) that conversation will much circumscribe her visit here, hereafter.”³¹ But Porter did meet her again, for they shared many literary friends. Contemporary comparisons between the two are frequently contrasts. Henry Crabb Robinson thought Owenson “an aggressive little creature,” but liked Porter: “Her stately figure and graceful manners made an impression on me. Few ladies have been so gifted with personal attractions, and at the same time been so respectable as authors” (qtd. in Wilson 128-129). Lady Charlotte Bury, a mutual friend with a more favorable opinion of both authors, offers a comparison that defines the two women’s public personas: she considers Porter’s person and character “replete with sweetness” and “estimable,” and thinks Owenson “a very extraordinary woman, with genius of a very high stamp” (255; 85). Porter is religious, sweet, and of high character, whereas Owenson is aggressive, extraordinary, and a blasphemous genius.

Though we do not know what Owenson thought of Porter’s novels, in terms of personal effects Owenson found being compared to Porter disagreeable and insulting. In her account of a dinner party at Lady Catherine Stepney’s (1778-1845) on April 2, 1835, when Porter was sixty and Owenson only a few years younger, she writes that she met with a party of authors:

Amongst others, poor dear Jane Porter; she told me she was taken for me the other night, and talked to *as such* by a party of Americans! She is tall, lank and lean, and lackadaisical, dressed in the deepest black, with rather a battered black gauze hat, and

³¹ POR 1994, Box 39, 18-19, May, 1822, Jane Porter Papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

an air of a regular Melpomene. I am the reverse of all this, *et sans vanité*, the best dressed woman wherever I go.” (*Lady Morgan’s Memoirs* 2: 396, emphasis hers)

Owenson, in her superior social position as Lady Morgan in relation to Porter’s poor and unmarried state, did not desire a personal affinity with Porter, just as Porter did not desire an ideological affinity with Owenson as members of the “Sisterhood of Ink and Quill.”

Despite their differences and epistolary diatribes upon each other, the two were not unfriendly. According to Porter’s diary, as selectively published by Ina White in the late nineteenth century, Owenson was her regular visitor when she lived in London at the time of Lady Stepney’s dinner party. Three years later, in 1838, Jane Porter writes to her brother Robert describing a friendly relationship with Owenson as well as her continued fears for her religious principles:

You remember the lady-authoress of Green-Erin Romances, and far-stretching Travels over the Continent?—She is lively and amusing, having a pretty large endowment of her Country’s constitutional vivacity...She is always very social with me, for which I feel so kindly a return, but I often inwardly lament that her buoyant spirits do not spring from a better foundation, than mere constitution. That is, I much fear that her own and her husband’s religious principles are little different from what they were, when I started from their Voltaire Creed twenty years ago...³²

Five years later in 1843, Porter sends Owenson a commiserating letter upon the death of her husband; Porter lost her brother Robert the year before. Porter’s comfort, as expected, is highly religious. Yet she also takes the opportunity to congratulate Owenson on her latest work, *Woman and Her Master* (1840), and to stress the ties between them, calling herself “a Sister in Sorrow!”³³ While

³² Item 4.1, Sept. 20, 1838, Folder 11, Box 7, MS 28, Porter Family Collection, Courtesy of Special Collections, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

³³ PORT 43.09.11, Sept. 11, 1842, Jane Porter Papers, Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library.

Porter shied from being a Sister of Ink and Quill in the public mind in 1817, she is quick to cast herself as a Sister in Sorrow to Owenson herself in 1843. Their fraught personal relationship highlights key aspects of each woman's public persona: Owenson is an opinionated, talented, and self-important Irishwoman, while Porter is conservative, religious, and desirous in her later years to draw similarities between herself and Owenson in genius and feeling, if not in public persona, to grasp at some of her friend's success.

Porter does not claim friendship with Owenson in the paratext to her novels, as she does with Anna Letitia Barbauld, Hannah More, Elizabeth Hamilton, and Germaine de Staël. She does, however, draw a connection between their novels. This is warranted, as both women published heavily footnoted national novels that glow with the zeal of patriotism throughout their long careers. Yet it is not their shared national topics on which Porter comments, but their mutual celebration of women's contributions to society. Of course, they did not consider the two as separate; both writers believed that what is best for women is best for the nation and vice versa. However, studied primarily in conversations of the national tale and historical novel, both women's claims about women's writing have been overshadowed by their claims about nation. In this chapter I combine gender and nation to examine how Porter and Owenson theorize women's place within political discourse via paratext to their novels.

In her 1841 preface to *The Scottish Chiefs*, Porter mentions recent contributions to female-centered and -authored texts. Despite her earlier condemnation of Owenson's principles, she adds a footnote that hails her work and fame: "Lady Morgan has published her long-expected work of 'Woman and her Master.' It is a work that will carry her name to posterity with respect and honor. I felicitate her on the imperishable wreath she has now attained" (*TSC* Virtue 1: 35). While this may seem like an abrupt shift from Porter's opinions of Owenson above, the key difference here is the divide between private and public audiences. While Porter expressed her condemnation of

Owenson's blasphemy in private, she publicly praises *Woman and Her Master* (1840), subtitled *A History of the Female Sex from the Earliest Period*, because it appeals to her own efforts to place women in historical discourse and elevates her own novel's contributions to the same cause. Laced among her praise is Porter's bitter congratulation of Owenson's "imperishable wreath" of fame and success, for she must have felt the acute difference in their situations in 1841. Not only had Owenson been granted the literary pension Porter repeatedly failed to secure,³⁴ she was also married and rich, while Porter lived as a guest in the homes of friends and relations with no wealth beyond her personal possessions.

Though their material positions differed, Porter assiduously claims their ideological similarity of promoting women's place within civil discourse. In the Advertisement to *Woman and Her Master*, Owenson writes: "the true 'age of chivalry,' where woman is concerned, is *that* in which the highest development of science bears evidence of her natural claims to all the social benefits and civil rights, which, in darker and more unlettered ages, have been assumed, under the supremacy of physical force, to have been the exclusive prerogative of her master" (1: iv-v, emphasis hers). In the footnote that mentions this work, Porter insists on her equal if not higher caliber as an advocate for women. In a customary thinly veiled boast, records a family friend's protest that her and her sister Anna Maria's novels first "came forth with the doctrines that there was and is the same moral law for man as for woman" (*TSC* Virtue 1: 35). Not wishing to be outshone by Owenson's recent work, Porter is

³⁴ In *These Were Muses* (1924) Mona Wilson suggests that Owenson received the pension partially due to her friendship with Lady Caroline Lamb, wife of Prime Minister Lord Melbourne, who granted the pension. Yet Porter, also friends with Lamb, was only granted 100 pounds from the Royal Bounty by Melbourne in 1839 (and would secure another £150 from the Royal Bounty from Sir Robert Peel in 1845, according to PORT 45.08.30 (Jane Porter Papers, Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library)), but failed to secure the pension she continued to seek for the rest of her life. Porter listed Lady Morgan's name to Peel as those with whom she wished to count herself in receiving a pension (PORT 42.06.11, Jane Porter Papers, Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library). For more information on Porter's finances late in life, see White and Looser, *Women and Old Age*.

adamant that women deserve a valued place in public discourse in her final preface to *The Scottish Chiefs*.

Paula C. Backscheider places Porter's prefaces at the forefront of a shift away from eighteenth-century women writers' compulsory apologies for publication, a movement to which Owenson also greatly contributes. Their lack of apology is remarkable considering their national and historical topics and their bold assertions of their identities on their title pages. Thus, in the first decade of the nineteenth century we see some women shift from what Ann K. Mellor calls the "modesty *topos*," (*Romanticism* 8) into unabashed public authorship. This is specific to the novel; Paula R. Feldman reminds us that women were far less likely to be publish poetry anonymously (44), and Devoney Looser reminds us that women offered fewer apologies for history than novels (*Writing of History* 12). This shift from women's apologies for publishing traditionally feminine novels to women unapologetically entering political conversations via their novels is facilitated by their savvy manipulation of the generic expectation for paratext in the national novel to bolster their personal celebrity with their readers.

Owenson and Porter develop paratextual authorial personas that support their national and gendered goals. Critics have acknowledged how Owenson becomes her spirited muse Glorvina, the titular "Wild Irish Girl" of her 1806 novel, presenting herself as the embodiment of Irishness in public performance. They have also noticed how she asserts her masculine learning in footnotes to *The Wild Irish Girl*. Overlooked, however, are her prefaces, and many of her footnotes, in which she combines her identity as an Irishwoman with that of a scholar and patriotic warrior to appeal to her readers. I further explore gender and patriotism in the various prefaces Owenson attaches to her work, re-examining her clash with John Wilson Croker not to rehearse arguments by Ina Ferris and others about her attempts to grasp political authority, but rather to re-write herself to gain sympathy and esteem from her reading public.

Critics have likewise acknowledged that Porter dons the role of the virtuous female writer, pious and domestic yet full of patriotic zeal, to rally the British nation against Napoleon. Yet the few that study Porter tend to see her authorship as femininely passive, a conclusion only feasible if one does not consider the majority of Porter's prefaces and footnotes. Her public persona was easily assimilated into conceptions of the female author as one who privileges, however untruthfully, domestic over professional pursuits and lives out of the public eye. She oscillates between the quiet domestic woman author and the literary innovator and public's darling patriot in paratext to *The Scottish Chiefs* and *Thaddeus of Warsaw*. If we pull back the curtain on Porter's carefully cultivated feminine modesty, we see the intricate groundwork Porter lays in her hopes to achieve fame and funds from her novels by establishing herself as a celebrated literary innovator. I suggest that perhaps Porter's later embrace of domestic religious quietude was rather too successful, and that in her attempt to accommodate shifting attitudes toward women writers she committed herself to become the true Great Unknown.

Throughout this chapter I explore Porter's claim that she and Owenson are linked not only as friends and national novelists, but as feminist public-facing (and public-embracing) authors. I argue that they expand the boundaries of women's relationships with their reading public through personal paratext in their national novels, and that the very concerns raised in their private relationship—religion, nationality, and public reputation—are assiduously addressed in their public personas. A renewed look at Porter and Owenson's paratext reveals a long trajectory of nuanced self-marketing as they sought to build a literary celebrity agreeable to their reading public, while also championing women's importance to national discourse and literary innovation.

Women Writers, Print Culture, and the Public Sphere

Contemporary national novelist Maria Edgeworth explores the dangers of female authorship and fame in her earliest piece, *Letters for Literary Ladies* (1795). In the first epistle, a fictional opponent of women's rights rehearses familiar arguments about women in the public sphere: "Censure...is a tax which every man must pay to the public who seeks to be eminent. Women must expect to pay it doubly" (Edgeworth *Literary Ladies* 30). He warns of the threat of an imminent invasion of private life caused by public acclaim. "Malignant critics, when they cannot attack an author's peace in his writings, frequently scrutinize his private life; and every personal anecdote is published without regard to truth or propriety. How will the delicacy of the female character endure this treatment?" (Edgeworth *Literary Ladies* 29).

This short work identifies the key threat to women in the act of authorship: the ability of the printed book to make public what should be private. The letter-writer continues: "how will they like to see premature memoirs and spurious collections of familiar letters published by needy booksellers or designing enemies?" (Edgeworth *Literary Ladies* 29). If becoming an author means opening yourself to "spurious" publications and widespread condemnation, the letter-writer reserves deeper punishment for "those learned and ingenious ladies, who publish their private letters, select maxims, secret anecdotes, and family memoirs" (Edgeworth *Literary Ladies* 41). He argues that women who thus make their private lives public "are entitled to our thanks for thus presenting us with full lengths of their minds" (Edgeworth *Literary Ladies* 41). He warns that by seeking fame and genius and engaging in "imprudent exhibitions" (Edgeworth *Literary Ladies* 41) that grant the public access to that which should be sanctified as private, female authors put not only their literary reputations at stake, but their reputations as women.

Letters to Literary Ladies contributes to the view that publishing was a perilous act for women in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, one which gave prying eyes access to the private female mind, and—by extension—her body. Hoagwood and Ledbetter, following Dorothy Mermin, show

how “any venture into public life by a woman risked being greeted as a highly sexualized self-exposure” (49). While the separation of public and private spheres, and particularly women’s confinement to the latter, has been challenged by numerous scholars,³⁵ Brenda R. Weber makes the important point that whether the spheres were separate in reality or not, they were separate in the public mind. Thus, any woman who ventured into the public via publication risked her reputation, which, as James Fordyce (1729-1796) teaches us, was infinitely fragile. While Joanne Wilkes shows that women who published works that demonstrated knowledge of life beyond the domestic sphere were particularly suspect (10), Behrendt reminds us that the censure of female authorship did not necessarily depend upon subject matter: “what is ‘unnatural’ is not so much the *content* of women’s writing as *the gesture itself*: the public-ation of the otherwise cloistered female voice” (18, emphasis his). Authorship robs women of their femininity through the act of “thrusting oneself before the public eye” (Fergus 2), and thus a woman who published was in a double bind. In becoming an author, she risked being labeled Matthew Lewis’s (1775-1818) epithet of a “half-Man”; yet the alternative was worse: if not an “unsex’d female” (qtd. in Hoeveler 1) a woman writer could become a radically sexed public figure—a private woman who voluntarily places herself into the public gaze, and possibly enjoys it.

While women were to belong in the private sphere, they flourished in a print market that circulated their work throughout the public sphere. Publication and its attendant material proliferation was an act of exposure due to what Kate Flint calls “the proximity of textuality and sexuality” (4). Katherine Sobba Green notes how the “availability” of one implies the availability of the other (11), with new copies of printed works spreading the author throughout the country, allowing anyone who can access the material to access the mind (and figurative body) of the woman.

³⁵ See Brenda R. Weber, Susan Dalton, Stephen C. Behrendt, Hawkins and Ives, Joan B. Landes, Joanne Wilkes, among others.

Betty Schellenberg, however, has offered an alternative understanding of gender and print culture, one in which the “disembodied mechanisms of print replication and distribution offer an opportunity to transcend” the limits of women’s physical bodies (15-16). Studying how women manipulated their public image through meaningful interactions with print culture helps us continue to revise early feminist assumptions, spearheaded by Gilbert and Gubar, that women were trapped by fears of publication and authorship. In Schellenberg’s words, print culture helps us “to imagine the woman writer as agent rather than as victim” (15). For Behrendt reminds us that women writers in the Romantic era “were fully attuned to the actual, practical realities involved in public behavior, among which was of course publication” (3), and Jennie Batchelor shows how women incorporated their deep awareness of these tensions between public and private authorship into their novels.

Beyond their texts, women addressed the public/private divide by constructing authorial personas to address the public. Claire Brock contends that in the late eighteenth century “women were actively embracing the new forms of public self-representation” (2), and by the Victorian era Linda H. Peterson argues that women writers’ “authorial self-constructions... [were] more enabling than disabling” (10). In the nineteenth century, then, a woman writer could wield the spotlight to her advantage to “actively build her own reputation” (Weber 4). Challenging Catherine Gallagher’s claims that women negated their individual selves to become authors, Brock argues that “far from accomplishing vanishing acts, women were actively promoting named public presence” (2). Individual women, then, rather than negating or hiding their private selves, courted recognition as public-facing authors by the early nineteenth century.

Their deliberate authorial personas—carefully crafted and disseminated through periodicals, paratext, and other print culture mechanisms—soon created literary celebrities. Ann R. Hawkins and Maura Ives reveal how success in the increasingly commercial literary market could sometimes hinge on a “particular kind of authorship, one that rests not only, or even primarily, upon the author’s

works, but upon a particular kind of personal fame” (1). “[F]aster, cheaper printing” fed the public’s appetite for literary celebrity (Hawkins and Ives 2), which grew so quickly that soon “literary success required talent and genius, but also a keen sense of the marketplace” (Peterson 181). Weber notes, however, that “though celebrity offered a form of cultural currency, it was a coin that women spent at great cost” (3). Many women did not dare to acquire or spend this coin at all. While discussing the idea of attaining fame, Mary Brunton famously quipped in 1810: “my dear, I would sooner exhibit as a rope-dancer” (qtd. in Showalter 18). Some who achieved success and fame deplored it; in a letter to Anna Maria Hall, Letitia Elizabeth Landon wrote: “Envy, malice, and all uncharitableness—these are the fruits of a successful literary career for a woman” (qtd. in Hoagwood and Ledbetter 57). Jan Fergus shows how “the fame of authorship could become infamy” (2). Yet, for those who sought fame and fortune, it could also be immensely profitable: “Realizing the necessity for self-exposure in a society obsessed with celebrity, women skillfully managed their public images, marshalling the expanding print culture to their advantage and mounting a successful challenge for literary laurels” (Brock 2).

While some women, such as Felicia Hemans, achieved these laurels through their traditionally feminine poetry, accolades were more elusive for women who wrote not only for the public sphere but about it. William Stafford writes that “the space where women were most likely to be denied access was the bitterly contested terrain of public controversy in politics and religion” (8). And while Behrendt reminds us that politics was a dangerous subject for literary men and women alike, women faced greater hurdles since they “were attacked for having the temerity to write without having the necessary learning and taste” (Fergus 3). These attacks circulated throughout the public sphere in booming periodicals, in which male critics slung insults at women writers, even those who were celebrated as traditionally feminine, such as John Wilson Croker’s backlash in the *Quarterly Review* against Anna Laetitia Barbauld’s “Eighteen Hundred and Eleven” (1812). Some

women thus turned to print culture not only to control their fame and celebrity, but also to authenticate their forays into conversations of the public sphere.

Jane Porter and Sydney Owenson's first novels appeared within a year of each other in the first decade of the nineteenth century amongst discouraging debates about women writers' place in public discourse and in literature. Yet neither author shied from the dangers of female authorship, instead facing its challenges head-on by controlling their public images through their paratext. Rather than fearing the circulation of their personal lives via the printed page, they publish personal details to wield celebrity for personal gain, and for the larger cause of women's equality in public discourse. Their pervasive popularity with the public disrupts expectations of female celebrity as outlined by Weber, who argues that "if she schemed and plotted to achieve her fame, the avarice for celebrity was a scathing social stigma" (18). Though Porter escaped far more unscathed than Owenson she was also subsequently forgotten, revealing the fickle market for women's personal authorship in the nineteenth century and its reception in modern literary studies.

Both women published their novels under their own names in the first decade of the nineteenth century, and penned accompanying prefaces and footnotes that offer details from their personal lives to their reading public throughout their careers. This is in sharp contrast to their more famous contemporaries, Jane Austen and Maria Edgeworth: Austen published anonymously and with a marked lack of paratext, personal or otherwise, and Maria Edgeworth, while she includes footnotes that blur the boundaries between personal anecdote and male editorial persona in her first novel *Castle Rackrent*, refused to write personal prefaces for her works. Her refusal is couched in gendered terms of engagement with the private and public spheres: "As a woman, my life, wholly domestic, cannot afford anything interesting to the public" (qtd. in Ferris *Question* 67). Owenson and Porter, however, embrace the public and eagerly address it. Recognizing how they use their national novels to contribute to the public persona of the unapologetically public woman writer is crucial to

fully understanding the development of female authorship, as well as the shifting relationship between author, text, and reader throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. Rather than fearing print culture and its exposure of the private to the public, Porter and Owenson embrace the public through their paratext, arguing that for their authorship, if not their texts, there was no apology necessary.

Sydney/Glorvina: Personal Politics

Throughout her recovery into critical conversations over the past fifty years, Sydney Owenson has been defined by a particular “in-betweenness” (Whelan xvii). An Anglo-Irish woman who charged into male-dominated discussion of Irish culture and European politics, Owenson has been analyzed as particularly unrooted in both nation and gender. While she propagated the myth that she was born on the crossing from England to Ireland, her Anglo-Irishness was a tool rather than an owned identity. As her pedagogical footnotes to her Irish national tales stress, while Owenson saw herself as a conduit of understanding between the Irish and British, she was unequivocally Irish. She was quick to own and display a masculine classical education, yet was also fervent in her position as a woman in political discourse and “argued for female authorship as a properly public activity” (Ferris *Question* 68). She did not disavow her identity either as a woman or an Irish citizen to render her contribution to national discourse more palatable, but rather claims these identities as her greatest assets to securing personal popularity with her public.

Owenson became famous for blurring fiction and reality, particularly the already hazy line between heroine and author in the early nineteenth century. The popularity of her third novel *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806) and her reputation as an author were symbiotic; the novel immediately sparked an interest in its author, and soon “Sydney Owenson herself became as much the object of argument and speculation as her fictional work” (Connolly “*TWIG as Media Event*” 98). The book created in

the public mind what Natasha Tesson calls “the metonymic chain Owenson/ Glorvina/ Ireland” (172), in which author, heroine, and nation were interchangeable as one. Capitalizing on a deep public interest, Owenson embraced the merged identity of character and author, visiting the salons of Great Britain as her titular Wild Irish Girl and sparking a fad for Irish music, clothing, and jewelry that went so far as to increase the price of Irish gold.

While reveling in the public spotlight led to ridicule and disgust from some, it also brought her a great deal of publicity, commercial success, and personal agency. Kathryn Kirkpatrick, Natasha Tesson, and Terry Eagleton have noticed how Owenson’s public performance reveals her savvy manipulation of a market that consumed celebrity and allowed her to escape a woman’s conventional domestic role and emerge into political discourse. By performing the character of a feminine yet passionately patriotic Irishwoman in English salons and claiming it as a performance of fiction despite its blatant reality, she “troubled the boundary between the domestic and the political” (Eagleton 184). Though she certainly did not enjoy a spotless reputation or easy public life, she achieved “a professional and economic success usually reserved for men” (Kirkpatrick “Introduction to *TWIG*” ix) through her deliberate blurring of fact/fiction, author/heroine, and masculine/feminine. Jeanne Moskal and Richard C. Sha both mark her concern with navigating boundaries, and she takes advantage of what Lisa Kasmer calls “the slippage between generic categories and gender roles” (4). Rather than hiding her desire for masculine reason, discourse, and authority, or eschewing feminine sensibility, Owenson demands a respectable gendered and national middle ground by “hyperbolically self-consciously, stressing her in-betweenness” in a way that is “liberating rather than debilitating” (Whelan xvii).

The Wild Irish Girl includes a proliferation of footnotes about Irish culture that engage and challenge contemporary sources. These footnotes were viewed as masculine in style and content: in their review of *O’Donnel* (1814), the *Critical Review* notes “the frequent occasions taken by the fair

author to shew us, that her reading is far beyond the usual studies of her sex; and that she prefers the boldness of masculine reasoning to the softer claims of feminine opinions” (“O’Donnel” 277). Her novels were criticized as both too masculine and too feminine; the former due to content and the latter due to style. John Wilson Croker railed against Owenson’s verbosity, though he saw it as natural to her sex. Ina Ferris has shown how Owenson played high with gender norms—if she was both too feminine and too masculine, these two at least balanced each other out: “If Morgan’s high-colored sensibility threatened the decorum of femininity through a female excessiveness, her ambition challenged it through an assumption of masculine power” (*Achievement* 48). Rather than her masculine authorship reducing her femininity, Owenson courted both positions as appropriate to the role of national patriot.

While scholars have focused on the Glorvina/Sydney conflation as the cause for Owenson’s rapid celebrity, I suggest that she deliberately laid the groundwork for her rise to fame in the highly personal footnotes to *The Wild Irish Girl*. Once her celebrity was secure through the novel’s wide reception, Owenson wields her celebrity in future prefaces to argue for women’s place in national discourse by blending the private and public in her paratext. Rather than hindering her public reputation, Owenson’s open display of her private life is the key to her success with her public, since it enables her to build the national celebrity that fed her literary, national, financial, and gendered ambitions.

Footnotes: The Personal Anecdotes of a Scholar, Irishwoman, and Patriot

Both Maria Edgeworth’s *Castle Rackrent* and Sydney Owenson’s *The Wild Irish Girl* include vast paratextual information about Irish and British cultures. The key difference between their footnotes is each author’s choice of paratextual persona. Though Edgeworth’s letters prove she owns some of the opinions presented in the footnotes, she does not claim them as her own. Neither

of *Castle Rackrent's* two authoritative voices—the first-person narrator Thady Quick in the text, and the anonymous male editor in the paratext—is associated directly with Edgeworth herself. She in fact distances herself from her footnotes twice over, first by declining to give her name on the title page in anonymous publication and again by adopting a paratextual persona. This male editor persona establishes his authority through a detached, impartial tone and references to empirical sources; the editor's credit then lends credence to the text. Edgeworth's novels were hailed as particularly authentic, so much so that in 1820 the *New Monthly Magazine* wrote that “in extent and accuracy of observation Miss Edgeworth has no rival” (“On Female Literature” 274).

While adopting—and continuing to develop—the national novel's paratextual authority, Owenson sheds Edgeworth's anonymous male editor to instead present a bold new authority: herself. Ferris remarks that Owenson was “writing female authorship itself in a more aggressive and performative register than Edgeworth was willing to do” (*Question 12*). She ensures that her readers know both text and paratext are authorized by a flesh-and-blood woman, not a nebulous narrative device. By co-opting the footnote's connotation of authenticity to openly present her own experiences and ideas, Owenson asserts her private life a valid source of authentic Irish information and authorizes her role as a public author and burgeoning celebrity. Though footnotes are generally understood to verify the text, Owenson simultaneously crafts her footnotes to authenticate herself as a woman writer who mingles private and public by using her personal experiences to discuss politics.

Many scholars acknowledge that the footnotes explain Irish culture to English readers.³⁶ Melissa Fegan, following Joep Leerssen, views impulses toward cultural instruction as destructive to an author's national identity:

³⁶ See: Connolly, Leerssen, Whelan, and Fegan, among others.

As a result of this need to placate and explain, Anglo-Irish novels in the post-Union period suffer a crisis of identity; loaded with long and detailed footnotes to explain and authenticate Irish customs, and to argue the case for an Irish civilization, in some cases the plot ceases to be important, and becomes the vehicle for the paratext.

The author is distanced from the text and, by association, from their country. (38)

While *Castle Rackrent's* male editor is impassive and detached, Owenson's personal voice is intertwined with her text, even within the physical space of the page. She is a warm, patriotic defender of the Irish people, so much so that the *Monthly Review* patronizingly comments: "Milesian pride in so many forms must make us smile" ("Miss Owenson's *TWIG*" 379). Furthermore, letting her footnotes frequently overwhelm the text privileges the spaces of her novel that house her personal voice and allow her to communicate directly to her readers. Owenson's paratext does not "distance" her from text or nation, but instead constantly reminds the reader of her presence beside the text to establish her personal, intimate role as a public defender of Ireland.

Ina Ferris, Claire Connolly, Susan B. Egenolf, and Gary Kelly argue that we should not ignore Owenson's paratext, nor dismiss it as masculine displays of learning or pedagogical crutches. However, with the exception of Ferris, these scholars all view the footnotes as a way to better understand the text and its genre. This is a correct reading yet is not the only reading. We can and should also read her footnotes as a means to authorize her persona as a public women writer, for she does not attempt to negate her identity to gain authority over the national novel. Whereas Jeanne Moskal writes that Owenson "defends herself against the charges of woman and patriot by embracing and utilizing the marginal" (171), she instead embraces those identities in the margins by developing a personal relationship with her readers that contributes to her celebrity as a patriotic Irishwoman. We should view Owenson's footnotes not as a mere attempt to defensively assert her

learning in a male-dominated field, but also as a crucial site of her self-conscious development of personal female celebrity.

The footnotes to *The Wild Irish Girl* are deeply personal; approximately one-fifth mark the importance of the experiences and opinions of “The Author” to the construction of the text. Owenson’s insistent references to “The Author” mirror Edgeworth’s own to “The Editor” in *Castle Rackrent* yet differ in that Owenson’s readers know exactly who “The Author” is. She does not decline to draw attention to herself for fear of lost authority. In her footnotes such as “not long since, the Author met a person in the capacity of a writing-master in a gentleman’s family, who assured her that he was a *Prince* by lineal descent” (*TWIG* 117, emphasis hers), and “In the summer of 1802 the Author was present at a rural festival at the seat of an highly respected friend in Tipperary, from which this scene is partly copied” (*TWIG* 144), she creates an interest in her private experiences that authenticate her fictional representation of Irish life. She also provides exclusive information available through her family connections, particularly her father, such as: “This anecdote the Author had from her father, who had the honour of hearing it from the lips of the lady herself” (*TWIG* 90). Owenson highlights her unique offerings as a nexus of authentic information about Ireland, laying the groundwork for Walter Scott’s highly personal and celebrity-driven paratext to the Magnum Opus edition of his Waverley novels.

Owenson famously doesn’t rely on personal experience alone to authenticate her text, she also includes references to Arthur Young’s *A Tour in Ireland* (1780), Charles Vallancey’s *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernica* (1770), Geoffrey Keating’s *History of Ireland* (ca. 1634), and over thirty others. Some scholars view her engagement with these sources as a transparent attempt to appropriate masculine expertise to authorize both her romantic portrayal of Ireland and women’s ability to write on national subjects. Jeanne Moskal sees Owenson’s attempt to carve out female authority via her sources as ironic, noting that “much of this authority is mustered by quotations from male

authorities” (177). Yet, as I’ve shown above, this is only half the picture; Owenson supplements male scholarship with her personal anecdotes. It is also worth noting that Owenson quotes from women in *The Wild Irish Girl*, including Charlotte Brooke’s *Reliques in Irish Poetry*, further invalidating the claim that Owenson musters authority solely through male quotations.

Furthermore, she does not merely cite or defer to male authority in her footnotes, as Ina Ferris and Claire Connolly note. In one footnote she includes a sizeable quotation of a personal letter sent to her from the “very eminent modern Irish bard, Mr. O’Neil” regarding the Irish harp (*TWIG* 71). After the quote, she includes further information she has personally gathered, another quotation, then expresses her personal opinion: “And I believe in Ireland only, is the minstrel of remote antiquity justly represented in the itinerant bard of modern days” (*TWIG* 72). Owenson not only synthesizes and analyzes information, she also improves it through personal access to new scholarly material. It is only because she is well-connected enough to maintain a private correspondence with Mr. O’Neil that she can provide previously unpublished information to her reading public. She ensures that it is via the real woman Sydney Owenson, rather than an anonymous “editor,” that this information can be attained.

She frequently ensures that her authority surpasses that of her sources, both in content and through the spatial hierarchy of footnotes on the printed page. In another lengthy footnote she quotes various sources while discussing the origin and etymology of the harp, then trumps the authority of her source material by providing a footnote to this footnote: “A few months back the author having played the Spanish guitar in the hearing of some Connaught peasants, they called it a clarseach beg, or little harp” (*TWIG* 71). Beyond Owenson’s act of footnoting her own footnote and giving her own evidence in the final footnote and thus assigning her knowledge the highest level of credibility, she also offers a charming image of Irish rural life that features her as its core figure.

Owenson's paratext at one point usurps the text's primary status in the physical hierarchy of the page by encompassing most of the leaf. Here, the narrative is displaced to fully privilege Owenson's authoritative experiences, travels, connections, and active role in crafting Irish history, culture, and reception. Though most of the footnote quotes another personal letter she's had from Rev. Mr. Sampson, Owenson ensures that she has the final word: "In February 1806 the author, being then but eighteen miles distant from the residence of the Bard, received a message from him, intimating that as he heard she wished to purchase his harp, he would dispose of it on very moderate terms" (*TWIG* 202). The majority of this page of *The Wild Irish Girl* is dedicated to describing Owenson's connections, travels, and purchases, rather than to the plot of her text.

Rather than merely borrowing the authority of male-authored printed sources, Owenson uses her footnotes to cast herself not only as an authority, but as a cultural curiosity and celebrity. Refusing to hide behind anonymity or disavow her gender, Owenson posits herself, as an Irishwoman, as the most authentic and interesting voice in the national conversation. Whether in providing footnotes to footnotes, or letting the paratext usurp the text entirely, she reminds her readers of her own importance through mediating external sources and the physical space of the printed page. Owenson boldly asserts her presence to argue for the individual woman's ability to take part in political discourse, and inserts her private experiences to show that rather than fearing print as a threat, women should embrace it as a vehicle toward greater participation in the public sphere.

Prefaces: Sydney Owenson on the Battlefield

Owenson's use of public-facing paratext in *The Wild Irish Girl* brought her fame and success, but also an onslaught of critical attacks. Her willingness to battle with male reviewers, most commonly in the prefaces affixed to her new novels, "represents a determined and unusual female

intervention in the generally male struggle over literary authority in the period” (Ferris *Question* 68). In these prefaces as in the footnotes, Owenson embraces her marginal identities; Ina Ferris writes that they are “bent on deliberately and provocatively placing her in public discourse as a female and Irish author” (*Question* 67). She also appeals directly to her readers, asking the public to sanction and protect the very identities critics see as her greatest weakness. Owenson fires back at these critics by divulging the details of their abuse while also developing a relationship with her readers, granting the reader access to the woman writer in exchange for protection and patronage.

Like other Romantic authors, Owenson’s most famous critic was fellow Irishman John Wilson Croker, who published multiple diatribes against her in the *Quarterly Review*. Croker’s attacks are many and varied, but gender is a consistent issue; while Claire Connolly notes that her status as a political writer made her “a proper object of political attack” regardless of her gender (“Media Event” 101), Croker certainly objects to Owenson’s lack of proper femininity in her pursuit of fame and funds. Connolly notes that it is Owenson’s blatant professionalism that disturbs Croker and compromises her reputation in his eyes: “Croker makes it clear that had Owenson not been in search of commercial gain...her reputation might have remained her ‘private property.’ Once her book is made available ‘for the gain of the sale,’ however, Owenson herself becomes a public possession” (“Media Event” 112). Thomas Tracy adds that the content of Owenson’s novels further strips away her femininity, writing that Croker “equates the political and social vision she expresses with socio-sexual impropriety” (82). Thus, Owenson faces the threat of two confluences of textual and sexual promiscuity, both in the content of her novels and in her pursuit of social and monetary gain.

The Quarterly Review implies that Owenson’s identity as an Irishwoman impedes her national authority twice over. As Whelan writes, in Croker’s eyes “her status as an Irish woman precluded her from any pretence of being able to narrate with any authority the relationship between the personal

and the impersonal (a discourse such as history or politics)” (xxiv). Owenson, of course, disagrees, and denounces the journal as particularly hostile to her work and person in her preface to *France* (1817), stating that her ideas are “foreign to its own narrow doctrines” (vii). She condemns the injustice of the *Quarterly Review*, and complains of treatment similar to that which Maria Edgeworth describes in *Literary Ladies*, particularly how publication exposes a woman to personal attack:

It is now nearly nine years since that review selected me as an example of its unsparing severity; and, deviating from the true object of criticism, made its strictures upon one of the most hastily composed and insignificant of my *early* works, a vehicle for an unprovoked and wanton attack upon the personal character and principles of the author. The slander thus hurled against a young and unprotected female, struggling in a path of no ordinary industry and effort, for purposes sanctified by the most sacred feelings of nature, happily fell hurtles. (*France* vii, emphasis hers)

Owenson experiences what Edgeworth’s character warns is a ready conflation between literary and personal criticism when women decide to publish.

Yet while casting herself as the ingénue heroine in the story of women’s publication, Owenson re-casts the villain. It is the critic who poses the greatest threat to women writers; rather than fearing the public as a body of censure, Owenson embraces it as her savior.

The public of an enlightened age, indulgent to the critical errors of pages, composed for its amusement, under circumstances, not of vanity or choice, but of *necessity*, has, by its countenance and favour, acquitted me of those charges under which I was summoned before their awful tribunal, and which tended to banish the accused from society, and her works from circulation...Placed by that public in a definite rank among writers, and in no undistinguished circle of society; alike as *woman* and as author, beyond the injury of malignant scurrility, whatever form it may assume; I

would point out to those who have yet to struggle through the arduous and painful career that I have ran, the feebleness of unmerited calumny; and encourage those who receive with patience and resignation the awards of dignified and legitimate criticism, to disregard and contemn the anonymous slander, with which party spirit arms its strictures, under the veil of literary justice. (*France* vii-viii, emphasis hers)

While she condemns critics as unjust, Owenson thanks the public for their generous support that keeps her novels in circulation and her reputation—“alike as *woman* and as author”—intact, despite Croker’s slander. Furthermore, she promotes the public’s opinion as an inducement, rather than a warning, to other women writers, encouraging them to ignore the “unmerited calumny” of malicious criticism to instead embrace “legitimate criticism” and public favor. In the preface to *France*, Owenson acknowledges the *Quarterly* as the true threat to a woman’s private character, and, in an inverse of the textuality-sexuality trope, casts the public not as the pawing uncouth masses, but as the chivalrous hero who protects the “young and unprotected female.”

This courting of public admiration and subsequent thanks for its reward is consistent from her earliest prefaces to her last published memoirs. She notes her gratitude for “public indulgence” toward *Woman: or Ida of Athens* in 1809, and fifty years later, expresses her appreciation for the “dear public, which has ever been [her] best friend” in *Passages from My Autobiography* (1859) (a2; x). While she notes in the preface to *Florence Macarthy* (1818) that “the appeal to public opinion belongs to the age in which we live,” she is quick to add: “But be that as it may, the ‘*national tale*,’ with which the reader is here presented, is no pathetic appeal to public compassion” (iv). She does not beg the public for their approval; she publicly notices the marks of approbation it has already granted to her works, and exultingly presents a new work for its consideration.

A decade after *France* and *Florence Macarthy*, Owenson continues to publish national novels and counterattack her critics’ scathing reviews. Yet rather than the “young and unprotected female”

of the preface to *France*, Owenson is a patriotic warrior in the preface to *The O'Briens and the O'Flabertys* (1827). She describes novel writing as an act of war, violent and bold: "I venture forth once more, with something less perhaps of intrepidity, than when I 'fleshed my maiden sword' under the banners of 'The Wild Irish Girl'" (i). She continues her militaristic language:

In again presenting an Irish novel to the public, I hope I am not doing a foolish thing: and yet I feel, that as far as my own interests are concerned, I am not doing a wise one. To live in Ireland and to write for it, is to live and write *poignard sur gorge*; for there is no country where it is less possible to be useful with impunity, or where the penalty on patriotism is levied with a more tyrannous exaction. (v)

Her imprecise French—one of the most frequent critiques leveled against her—translates to "dagger on throat." Thus, to write is to engage in battle, and Owenson enters the field with a selflessness that marks the true patriot. She then writes that the uncouth threat of violence will not prohibit her from engaging in national discourse:

I anticipate upon this, as upon similar occasions, that I shall be accused of unfeminine presumption in 'meddling with politics;' but while so many of my countrywomen 'meddle' with subjects of much higher importance;—while missionary misses and proselyting peeresses affect to 'stand instead of God, amongst the children of men,' may not I be permitted, under the influence of merely human sympathies, to interest myself for human wrongs; to preach in my way on the 'evil that hath come upon my people,' and to 'fight with gentle words, till time brings friends,' in that cause, which made Esther eloquent, and Judith brave? For love of country is of no sex. (*The O'Briens and the O'Flabertys* vi-vii)

Owenson here evokes the topos of service, of women's work, as justification for her crossing gendered boundaries through national authorship, a paratextual move that was heavily employed by

professional women writers in the nineteenth century, as Linda H. Peterson has shown. Yet Owenson does not rely on her femininity to sanction her service to her country. While Elaine Showalter argues that professional roles for Victorian women, including novelists, “were extensions of the feminine role as teacher, helper, and mother of mankind” (14), Owenson here deliberately argues that “love of country is of no sex.” Rather than describing her writing primarily as a woman’s work, it is instead the work of a patriot. This is further emphasized by her references to Esther and Judith, who transcend traditional femininity to save their people through deeply bloody means, complementing the violent diction she uses earlier in the preface. She asserts her personal ability to “fight,” albeit with “gentle words,” for her cause, while also making the larger feminist argument that Ireland and the United Kingdom should not scorn to view women as patriots—nor cast off in fear or disgust those who are willing to bloody their hands.

In the preface to the 1846 edition of *The Wild Irish Girl*, Owenson reflects on her most popular novel at forty years’ distance. She writes that while she is slightly ashamed of her style, “the spirit and the sympathy, and above all the *earnestness of purpose* and desire to serve...remain undiminished” (246). To Owenson, both the efficacy of her text and her message about gendered authorship remain uncompromised. Rather than the unprotected female or the bloody patriot, Owenson here is the celebrated author resting on her laurels, still reflecting on women, writing, and the nation. She offers an approach to women’s writing that appears more conservative than that of the preface to *The O’Briens and the O’Flahertys*, rehearsing arguments by Jacobin feminists about the importance of education to traditional feminine roles. She manages to turn the most blatant evidence of her public professional authorship, the literary pension of 300 pounds a year secured from the British government, into a celebration of great men and the family. She writes regarding this award:

due honour, then, to the men in power, of whatever party who took the initiative in directing the spiritual nature of woman to intellectual pursuit, by the encouragement of public distinction—who thus fostered those mental faculties by which the humanity of either sex is best improved and forwarded, and by which the greatest scheme of the Creation,—motherhood—can alone be brought to its ultimate perfection. (“Prefatory Address” 260)

Though Owenson does accommodate the rising Victorian idealization of motherhood, this passage should not be read conservatively. For rather than participating in the re-boxing of women into the private sphere, Owenson instead champions the public celebration of and pecuniary reward for female authorship. She uses her success as an example to argue that women can and should be public authors, and that this role does not prohibit them from also being women. In attaining the masculine effects of education, fame, and fortune, Owenson argues that she has not lost any of her femininity. Later in the preface she asserts her position as a woman: “I am not the one to give up any of the *privileges* of my sex, *en attendant*, their rights” (“Prefatory Address” 240). As a young woman she was defended and championed by her reading public, and though by 1846 she is an older woman and no longer “unprotected,” she still claims the public’s respect as a woman in political discourse whose fame and celebrity is not an unnatural stray from femininity, but a recognition of the superior intellect that exalts a woman’s place in society.

Owenson’s career was long, and while this examination of forty years of paratext reveals shifting tactics during her quest to legitimize women’s authorship, her plan and goal remain consistent. She refuses to apologize for her position as a female patriot who serves her country through her writing and embraces the public as her champion. Boldly dashing her name onto her title pages, critiquing and subverting male authority, and offering personal anecdotes from her private life in her paratext, Owenson is an unapologetically public woman writer in *The Wild Irish*

Girl. Throughout the next forty years, she re-casts herself into various roles; beyond Glorvina, she plays the rescued damsel in distress who kisses her hand to her gallant public, the warrior patriot writing *poignard sur gorge*, and the celebrated woman who asserts her role as a female patriot, and who has secured marriage, fame, and fortune through her paratextual embrace, rather than terror, of her reading public.

Jane Porter: Pious Patriot and (Self-Proclaimed) Literary Heavyweight

Successful in sales and social position through an advantageous marriage secured by her celebrity, Sydney Owenson was nonetheless held up as a negative example of public female authorship. Even other national women writers turned away from her; Maria Edgeworth writes: “Oh that I could prevent people from ever naming me along with her... God forbid as my dear father said I should ever be such a thing as that” (qtd. in Butler 448). In an 1825 letter, Scottish author Anne Grant writes that a young Irishman wishes to draw her portrait, having already taken those of Walter Scott, Francis Jeffrey (1773-1850, Charles Maturin (1780-1824), and Sydney Owenson. She says about the latter: “I am not proud of going about in company with her” (Grant 83). This comment, reminiscent of Porter’s fear of being linked to Owenson in the “Sisterhood of Ink and Quill” in her 1817 letter to John Taylor, shows how other women writers wished to avoid affinity with Owenson.

If this were simply the result of Owenson’s embrace of public celebrity and novelistic forays into political topics, then Jane Porter would surely have shared the same fate. Both women wrote feminist national novels riddled with footnotes in the first decade of the nineteenth century, so it was not the content of their work that set them apart. Much of the difference stems from each author’s desired relationship with her reader, and the individual choices of how to navigate that relationship. Furthermore, Porter did not contend with British prejudice against the Irish, nor have

the boon of being considered a national curiosity. She was not subjected to what Behrendt calls the “post-Burkean tut-tutting” about women writers entering political discourse (51), yet also didn’t benefit from the media phenomenon that built Owenson’s celebrity. Porter’s works seem less transgressive and she did not openly engage in Owenson’s “more explicitly Jacobin feminist politics” (Whelan ix). This does not mean, however, that Porter was neither feminist nor political; she was both. Due to her social position, however, as a single woman without fortune, and bolstered by a fervent piety, she chooses to cloak her feminism in acceptable gendered concepts of female authorship like morality and service. Yet alongside this domestic image is the valiant patriot and celebrated author; we should not let Porter’s later paratext fool us into forgetting her earlier claims of literary and international importance—she would be most disappointed if we did.

Porter’s best-known persona centers around piety and domesticity; because this persona aligns with the religious and moral themes of her novels, many scholars haven’t looked beyond its surface. Others, like Devoney Looser and Thomas McLean, have begun to look at the nuance of Porter’s paratext as a bold attempt to demand her due as a celebrated author, including recognition for her literary innovations and financial support in her later years. No one has yet examined the paratext as a means to track Porter’s attitude toward women engaging in political discourse, nor how she manages her personal celebrity within the public sphere. Throughout over forty years of paratext, Porter cultivates a pious, yet deeply patriotic persona, asserting her ability to engage in international politics and influence national life through her novels. Domesticity was only one side of the coin with which Porter attempted to purchase lasting influence.

Like Porter’s presence in “Regina’s Maids of Honour,” her prefaces might not seem to offer much to scholars of Romantic authorship and print culture. The second, third, and fourth major prefaces to *The Scottish Chiefs* (1828; 1831; 1841) include large swaths of anecdotal history and reminisce on her connections to royalty, as well as copious details about with whom the Porters

drank tea and who took her out in their phaeton. However, as I've argued above, the act of publishing private detailed memoirs was transgressive, being both perilous to a woman's private reputation and financially lucrative. Furthermore, a close examination of the paratext reveals a marvel of conflicted authorial personae. By the final prefaces to *The Scottish Chiefs* and *Thaddens of Warsaw* published 1840-1845 for George Virtue, Porter casts herself as an ideal Victorian woman writer: pious, domestic, and providing a great act of service through her writing. This persona, while not a ruse, hides Porter's feminist interventions in the novel and her savvy manipulation of print culture throughout her long career.

Porter's obituaries reflect her balance between the domestic and the professional late in life and shrink from the public-ness of authorship while celebrating her widespread popularity. *The Musical World* says that "as a novelist Miss Jane Porter obtained the highest celebrity" ("The Late Miss Porter" 387), yet never lost her femininity. Her obituary in the July 1850 edition of *The Art Journal*, written by her close friend and fellow "Regina's Maids of Honour" subject Anna Maria Hall, states: "We desire to place a chaplet upon the grave of a woman once 'celebrated' all over the known world; yet who drew all her happiness from the lovingness of home and friends, while her life was as pure as her renown extensive" (221). The *Gentleman's Magazine* comments on the "highly religious and moral principles which characterize all her works," writing:

If purity of sentiment, felicity of expression, and the constant inculcation of the noblest lessons of religion and morality, be any passport to literary fame, then will the name of Miss Porter rank high on the list of those whom the present age delight to honour. ("Literary and Scientific Intelligence" 173)

These are claims of which Porter would have been proud, for she cultivated them herself throughout her paratext to her popular novels. Yet where are the claims of great generic innovation and international political impact she cultivated with equal effort? One answer can be found in

Porter's attempt to satisfy the burgeoning Victorian expectation of domesticity that hid her professional laurels from view, revealing not only the benefits that socially acceptable public personas allowed, but also their danger to an author's posterity.

Porter hoped her fame as an author would endure. She quotes multiple male friends' opinions about the immortality of her novels in the final 1841 preface to *The Scottish Chiefs*. Warren Hastings, she tells us, says her novels "are like a good drama, and will live when the author and the present audience are no more" (*TSC Virtue* 1: 38), and her oft-quoted friend Mr. O'Sullivan remarks: "The immortality of a work, like the happy immortality of the soul, does not lie in its superior faculties, but in the use to which they are applied—in its virtue—its power to move men's minds to good thoughts and great actions; and such is the character of yours and your sister's works" (*TSC Virtue* 1: 37). As mentioned in Chapter One, Porter's themes of national patriotic virtue are "consecrated to a purpose beyond the time of their action" (*TSC Virtue* 1: 12); she hopes that the timeless lessons of her text will result in lasting literary fame for herself.

She is assiduous, however, not to appear to seek fame. Her 1831 preface to *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, explains that she had no wish to publish her first novel—she wrote it due to "an almost resistless impulse to embody the ideas and impressions with which her heart and mind were then full... dictated by a fervent sympathy with calamities which had scarcely ceased to exist," regarding the influx of Polish refugees in London (*ToW SN* 1: vii). Yet her indulgent mother and friend Thomas Rees—of Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme of Paternoster-Row, publishers of the Porters' novels and the London publishers of Scott's novels—persuaded her to publish the novel. Porter writes: "it was given to the world, or rather to those who might feel with her, with all the simple-hearted enthusiasm which saw no impediment when a tale of virtue or of pity was to be told" (*ToW SN* 1: vii). Porter is modest yet makes no apology for the publication of her first novel. She sees "no

impediment” to publication because she believes her novel will achieve her goal to inspire sympathy and virtue in her readers.

Porter frequently seems to shy from praise even as she transcribes it into her prefaces. Beyond the testaments of Hastings and O’Sullivan listed above, and those of Joanna Baillie (1762-1851) and Walter Scott to be included below, Porter diligently catalogues public praise of her novels in her prefaces. Yet this praise is always removed from her own estimation—she asserts that it is not her own opinion, but the opinion of others, that her novels will live forever. She is almost painfully coy in her attempt to appear demure, such as her constant insistence that things are “pointed out” to her. As noted in the Introduction, one offhand footnote to *The Scottish Chiefs* she remarks: “This scene between Wallace and his chiefs has lately been pointed out to the author as the part most likely to have incurred the censure and interdiction of the Emperor Napoleon” (*TSC* Virtue 1: 429). Her nonchalance at the great political effect of this ban could not have fooled many. She frequently goes too far, noting with pride how her mother is related to the noble house of Blenkinsopp and has inherited its admirable qualities, yet curiously failing to mention that she there is therefore also related to them. Her attempt to deny a desire for fame and importance backfires, and Porter risks disingenuity instead.

In further attempt to cater to Victorian expectations of female authorship, Porter makes her mother and sister a main focus of the final preface to *The Scottish Chiefs*. Unmarried, raised without her father and with her brothers frequently away, Porter immures herself in a purely feminine space, and describes herself as a moralist distinctly within her family sphere. She heaps praise on her pious mother and talented younger sister Anna Maria, with whom she shares her literary laurels. She recasts the sisters’ diligent professional writing as an inoffensive family pastime, a process Jane Austen’s youthful writing would also undergo in the Victorian era. Porter writes: “It was amusing to our mother to hear read by us at our evening tea-table, the produce of our morning hours” (*TSC*

Virtue 1: 41). Beyond the focus on her role as dutiful daughter and supportive sister, she takes great notice of their idyllic, sheltered homes in Esher and Thames-on-Ditton. After describing all her royal neighbors, she writes:

On a less elevated, but not less revered subject, a daughter's pen delights to dwell—on the immediate objects surrounding her own little home; objects which most especially recall the never-faded memories of all it once possessed for her; and which, whether from the traditions connected with them, or from the imagination alone, excited by the romance of certain associations they conjured up, became the successive moving principles of most of the tales herself and her sister wrote, while under that village roof. (*TSC* Virtue 1: 26)

While in earlier prefaces Porter describes the great national events of Poland and Scotland as her inspiration, she revises the narrative in 1841 to exalt the home as the true origin for her novels.

Accompanying feminine domesticity is deep religious feeling. Porter shows a savvy understanding of her strengths in the marketplace by enhancing the piety of her text in revised editions of *The Scottish Chiefs* as well as in her paratextual persona. Since religion was an acceptable subject on which women could educate the public and one which she greatly revered, Porter, among other female national novelists, wields women's moral influence to gain influence over political topics. This influence without religious sanctity, however, concerned Porter, as we see in her letters about Sydney Owenson. Other national women writers faced deep concerns about their piety: in the preface to the third edition of *France*, Owenson's husband Thomas Charles Morgan (1784-1843) counters accusations of his wife's "impiety and blasphemy" (xiv), and the *Antijacobin* writes about Maria Edgeworth: "there is scarcely a production of her pen, of which any reader could conjecture, on reading it, whether it was written by a pagan or a Christian" ("Review of *Waverley*" *Antijacobin* 489). Yet both Owenson and Edgeworth had fathers or husbands who defended their public

reputations in paratext to their novels. Porter, however, did not have this luxury, perhaps offering another reason for her deep embrace of a religious public persona.

Porter was frequently depicted with religious iconography in frontispieces to *The Scottish Chiefs* and *Thaddeus of Warsaw*. Both famous portraits by George Henry Harlow (1787-1819) center Porter's piety; one highlights her beauty, particularly her red cheeks and lips and her grey eyes, complemented by her religious habit, cross, and rosary (fig. 2); while the other shows her sitting in a Romantic background, her inspired expression merging piety with genius (fig. 3). Porter was proud of the honor of being made a Lady of the Teutonic Order of Saint Joachim, a German order of chivalry, due to the positive moral and religious effects of her novels. She frequently refers to the honor, which she shared with another great patriot and enemy of Napoleon, Lord Horatio Nelson (1758-1805), in her prefaces. The story is rehearsed in multiple prefaces, as well as in footnotes to those prefaces; Porter even affixes a footnote to her signature to the 1841 preface of *The Scottish Chiefs* that reminds her readers, once again, that she has been made a Lady of the Teutonic Order of Saint Joachim. She draws an explicit connection between the Order's religious principles and those inculcated in her novel: "it's *impresse* I trust may be considered as reflected in the book—Deo, Principi, Legi" (*TSC* Virtue 1: 51). The fact that Porter's likeness in "Regina's Maids of Honour" is depicted in the garb of the Teutonic Order of Saint Joachim shows how pervasive Porter's public image as a religious writer had become by the 1830s.



Figure 2. George Henry Harlow, "Jane Porter" (between 1804-1810). NPG 1108, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Figure 3. Engraving of Jane Porter, frontispiece to the 1840-41 *Virtue* edition of *The Scottish Chiefs*. NYPL/Pforzheimer.

Porter describes her authorship as pious, but also as professional and responsible in her prefaces. Though she calls *The Scottish Chiefs* a romance, she is quick to note that the book is not intended as mere entertainment, or as a far-away tale of old times. She explains her reasons, and those of her sister's, for authorship: "when we began to write for publication, we regarded our works not as a pastime for ourselves or a mere amusement for others, but as the use to be made of an intrusted talent 'given to us a for a purpose' and for every word we set down in our pages we believed we must hereafter be accountable to Heaven and our country" (*TSC* Virtue 1: 20-21). This was not only a public statement—Porter repeats a similar statement in a letter to her friend and publisher Thomas Longman in 1843, referring to "the Talents—bestowed on me from Heaven; and which I ever dedicated to the moral and patriotic service of my country."³⁷

Her avowal of artistic responsibility in this preface builds on the intrepid persona of the first preface to *Thaddens of Warsaw*, in which she frequently refers to her "plan" for the novel (*ToW* SN 1: xxii). In describing her reasons for setting her fiction in history, she writes: "preferring a series of incidents which are true and interesting, before a legend of war fabricated by my own hand, I have made no hesitation to accept truth as the helpmate of fiction" (*ToW* SN 1: xxii). This act of mixing fact and fiction caused the greatest concern about her novels, yet she makes "no hesitation" to enact it, due to its ability to accomplish "her plan." As discussed in Chapter One, Porter hopes that her novels will have a positive moral impact on her readers, claiming that "the contemplation of virtue is an improving as well as a delightful employment." Porter thus argues that romance writing is a "responsible task" (*TSC* Virtue 1: 35) and a patriotic act, rather than the silly pastime of women scribblers.

³⁷ PORT 43.08.29, Aug. 29, 1843, Jane Porter Papers, Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library.

By 1841, Porter marks the positive effects of her service to the nation. The preface goes so far as to compare her to Jesus Christ, though of course Porter repeats another's comparison rather than making it herself. She records the words of her family friend O'Sullivan: "Thousands felt the same that I did, and everywhere acknowledged their effect—infusing the great doctrine of universal purity, without the formality of preaching it; teaching in fact by examples. Our Divine Instructor himself set the model—*he breathed the breath of life into precept, by parables*" (*TSC* Virtue 1: 36, emphasis hers). This ability to educate the nation is a distinctly feminine quality, as O'Sullivan continues: "So dedicating female talents...is fulfilling the end for which they were bestowed; a peculiar Christian duty, lady, in your sex, when so endowed: a grateful debt to that religion, which alone has elevated woman again to that station in creation which she lost at the fall" (*TSC* Virtue 1: 36-37).

While Porter here seeks to conform to Victorian ideals of women's writing, she nonetheless simultaneously claims personal and professional success. Beyond the "thousands" mentioned by O'Sullivan, she includes a quote from Warren Hastings in which he remarks that her novels (and, of course, those of her sister—Porter never claims credit alone) have "already done much good amongst young folk" (*TSC* Virtue 1: 38). The full quote from O'Sullivan shows her piety, yes, but also her progressive ideology: "You came forth with the doctrines that there was, and is the same moral law for man as for woman; that no other is sanctioned by Heaven: you declared it boldly, and have maintained it steadily (*TSC* Virtue 1: 36-37). While the overall thrust of the final preface to *The Scottish Chiefs* is religious and domestic, we should not overlook that Porter uses her feminine position as teacher to also sway the political and gendered view of the British nation.

Porter seems unable to fully commit to an idyllic womanhood as she inserts notes throughout her novel that also assert her widespread influence. In particular, she uses public recognition of her piety to bolster her professional success. Her multiple mentions of becoming a Lady of the Teutonic Order of Saint Joachim are not just gratitude, but opportunities to assert her

international import, her precedence over Scott, and her vast impact as a moral novelist. Furthermore, assertions of her piety are frequently intermingled with those of literary innovation. She quotes from O'Sullivan's discussion of the positive influence of her and Anna Maria's novels: "You and she came forward the first to teach, in such works, to inculcate Christianity, in stories of romance" (*TSC* Virtue 1: 36). While Porter here emphasizes her Christianity, she also asserts that she was the *first* to combine religion and romance. In this, and in many other ways, the paratext is aimed to strengthen her claims that she was as great a literary innovator as Scott.

Porter uses her footnotes to establish her laurels within multiple literary networks that support her cause: with Germaine de Staël in her enmity with Napoleon, and the celebrated Scottish literary network including Walter Scott and Joanna Baillie in her veneration of Scottish history. One of the longest footnotes to *The Scottish Chiefs* was added in 1828, and depicts Porter's wavering between modesty and pride. She circuitously congratulates herself on her artistic skill by noting how the praise of Joanna Baillie and Walter Scott has contributed to her "evergreen wreath" of fame. In a footnote to the scene depicting the Barns of Ayr:

The narrator of this terrible event, would be stripping herself of one of the brightest leaves in the evergreen wreath which the beloved 'land of the holly' has given to her, did she deny herself the pleasure of expressing, here, to Mrs. Joanna Baillie, her just appreciation of that lady's honouring opinion on the above-described scene.—She, whom so many countries have united in recognizing as the true dramatic 'sister of Shakespeare' has said—that Miss Porter's account, in her 'Scottish Chiefs,' of the burning of the Barns of Ayr, and of Wallace's appearance in the conflagration, was one of the sublimest descriptions she had ever read. The reader may find her eloquent words on the subject, in a note annexed to a poem, which forms part of Mrs. Joanna Baillie's historical volume of 'Metrical Legends.' (*TSC* Virtue 1: 347)

Despite the eloquent language, this is nothing short of a boast, made more egregious by Porter's quickness to corroborate her account of Baillie's praise by providing the source in which her readers can seek it for themselves. This note accompanies Porter's many assertions that her novel has been celebrated not only by an English audience, but by a Scottish audience as well, supporting her claims of authenticity and moral effect.

The footnote, already lengthy, then continues with praise from Walter Scott:

Sir Walter Scott, too, has not been backward in awarding his invaluable testimony on the merit of this scene, by making it appear as reflected again in one of his works, the beautiful poem 'Rokeby;' where the adoption of her description of the burning palace of Ayr, and of Sir William Wallace in the flaming rafters, has been often pointed out to the authoress of 'The Scottish Chiefs.' A spirit for literary foray has so repeatedly been playfully and frankly avowed by him, in different pages of his magic books, that no one need be surprised at such transfers: and, surely, no wandering shepherdess could see a sheep of hers gathered into that mighty wizard's fold, without feeling pride rather than loss, in the selection! (*TSC* Virtue 1: 347)

She maintains her air of impassive recognition as she notes that Scott's "adoption" of her work is "pointed out" to her, thus protecting herself from arrogance while also implying that others agree with her. While she claims pride at Scott's "transfer" and returns to it throughout multiple prefaces and editions of footnotes, her anger at his lack of recognition of their former acquaintance and literary similarities bleeds through her flowery language. The difference between public and private avowal of their connection and Scott's literary pilfering is key as the Porter sisters' letters show their thought that Scott took undue advantage from their works. Thomas McLean has proven Porter's authorship of multiple bitter articles responding to Scott's announcement of his authorship of the *Waverley* Novels in 1827. However, Porter was unwilling to publish these diatribes against Scott

under her own name, choosing instead to put her name to passive-aggressive claims of being honored by his literary robbery in her paratext.

Beyond her bold claims of theft, she uses paratext to more subtly de-privilege Scott's literary apotheosis. In the 1831 preface to *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, she writes how her novels were "published in England, and translated into various languages abroad, many years before the literary wonder of Scotland gave to the world his transcendent story of Waverley," to which a footnote is affixed that reads: "It was on the publication of these, her two first works, in the German language, that the authoress was honoured with being made a lady of the chapter of St. Joachim, and received the gold cross of the order from Wirtemberg" (*TSC Broadview vii*). Porter here manipulates the affordances of paratext on the material page to ensure that the reader's attention is driven back to her own writings and accomplishments. At the very moment she mentions the Waverley Novels, she leads the reader away from Scott to a story about her own prowess as an author. In particular, she emphasizes the heightened acclaim and far-reaching impact of her novels before Scott entered then dominated the field.

Porter exultingly records the appreciation of her literary efforts in her paratext. She revels in the proliferation of new editions of her novels, commenting that "the work having gone through so many editions, proves that she did not aspire quite in vain" in the dedication to the tenth edition of *Thaddeus of Warsaw* in 1819 (*ToW SN 1: xx*). She details approbation in the form of gifts, including a gold ring with her historical subject's Thaddeus Kosciuszko's portrait sent by a Polish expatriate. More thrillingly, she receives the approbation of Kosciuszko himself, whose nephew sends her a lock of his hair which she wore as a ring.³⁸ She uses paratext to link his name with hers by dedicating the tenth edition to him, and thus "daring to catch at some memorial of herself in after-times, by

³⁸ PORT 18.03.05, Mar. 5, 1818, Jane Porter Papers, Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library.

thus uniting to the name of Thaddeus Kosciuszko, that of his ever grateful Jane Porter” (*ToW* SN 1: xx).

The Scottish Chiefs also brought her tributes and gifts, which she duly records. An 1820 footnote says that she has been “saluted by the Scottish bands with the old patriotic air of ‘Scots wha hae...,’ the true pibroch of Scotland” in “provincial theatres, concert-rooms, and on military parades” (*TSC* Virtue 2: 453). An 1841 footnote notes she has been given “caskets, crosses, and even rings, set in gold” made from the trees near Wallace’s Oak, sent from the “brave and noble” descendants of her Scottish Chiefs, “namely, the late Earl of Buchan, Lady Macdonald Lockhart, the Lady Charlotte Gordon, Duchess of Richmond, etc. etc” (*TSC* Virtue 2: 150). Porter takes pleasure in her gifts, and in the opportunity to display both her popularity and her aristocratic network. She is also careful to include the exact names of her benefactors, both as recognition to them, but also to connect herself to a wider contemporary noble network by honoring both ancestor and descendent alike in text and paratext.

Like Owenson, Porter did not survive her public celebrity and subsequent attempts at fame and funds unscathed. Porter’s ornate language and thinly veiled self-aggrandizement in connection to the nobility and famous authors, and particularly her claims of inspiring Walter Scott, rubbed some the wrong way. The paratext to the 1831 editions of *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and *The Scottish Chiefs* were heavily satirized in the *Aberdeen Magazine* by someone fashioning themselves as “Peter Puff.” In a letter to Porter published October 1831, Puff notes Porter’s habit of quoting from others’ praise in her paratext: “We shall relieve you from the necessity which you have been sometimes under, of sounding your own panegyric by quotations from MS. and verbal communications, by committing our epistle to the Columbian press” (Puff 755). He then satirizes her paratext’s “extreme—in fact—culpable modesty” saying that she is “too bashful by half” (Puff 755). The most pointed attack is Porter’s claim in her new preface to *Thaddeus of Warsaw* that she invented the historical novel that

Walter Scott then copied. Puff writes: “What is Sir Walter Scott but an imitator of Miss Jane Porter?” (Puff 755), and pointedly mocks her paratextual clawing for fame and posterity. Puff mirrors Porter’s ornately polite language with piercing attacks on her arrogance, particularly her “telling tales of the many great personages who admired them and sent you portraits and locks of hair; and of quoting, in your notes, all the favourable criticism ever written, or never before published, upon *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and the *Scottish Chiefs*” (Puff 759). In addition to these attacks on the paratext, the epistle ends with assaults on Porter’s writing in the text, and even upon her female delicacy. While Porter’s text clearly met with great popular acclaim, her attempt to carve a space for herself among the literary great in her paratext was met with claims of immodesty and ridicule.

She responds to this backlash in her self-professed autobiography of the 1841 preface, which she explains was not her idea to write, but that she was pressed into it by friends: “being invited to the task of making such an explanation, I trust I may now proceed, without any charge of ‘offensive egotism’... (*TSC* Virtue 1: 13). Archival evidence shows how Porter did assiduously seek the chance to pen new prefaces for much-needed funds—she received 200 pounds for this new preface to *The Scottish Chiefs*.³⁹ While her footnotes show that her egotism—or, alternatively, financially-driven plea for due recognition—remains in the paratext, she cloaks them in the piety and domesticity of the 1841 preface.

One of the main changes from the early to the late prefaces is Porter’s depicted relationship with Germaine de Staël. Porter met Staël at a play in London in 1813, and both Germaine and her daughter Albertine de Staël (1797-1838) were her frequent correspondents. In the 1828 preface she is keen to link herself to arguably the most political woman writer in Europe in the Romantic period. In her own words, Napoleon’s ban of *The Scottish Chiefs* “giv[es] her the honor of sharing the

³⁹ For more on Porter’s finances, see Looser, *Woman and Old Age*.

distinction of a literary banishment along with the great name of Madame de Staël” (*TSC Virtue 1: 8*). Yet by 1841, Porter is keen to set herself apart from Staël, while still claiming the esteem of her connection in another iconic oscillation between fame and modesty. The final preface to *The Scottish Chiefs* claims Porter’s friendship with Staël—a distinction she does not grant to her more scandalous friends L.E.L., Mary Robinson, and Lady Caroline Lamb—but she also hedges to ensure her readers of her proper British feeling toward celebrity and fame. Porter records Staël’s account of her childhood as an intellectual prodigy:

I was set on a stage...at a child’s age, to be listened to as a wit and worshipped for my premature judgment. I drank adulation as my soul’s nourishment, and I cannot now live without its poison. It has been my bane, never an ailment. My heart ever sighed for happiness, and I ever lost it when I thought it approaching my grasp. I was admired, made an idol, but never beloved. (*TSC Virtue 1: 44*)

Porter details Staël’s experience to contrast it with her own, describing how her mother removed Jane and Anna Maria from the dazzle of London to ensure that they grew up in retirement and modesty. She notes how Staël “frequently praised my revered mother for the retired manner in which she maintained her little domestic establishment, yielding her daughters to society but not to the world,” a practice which she says Staël has adopted for her own daughter Albertine, who she will bring up “in the shade” (*TSC Virtue 1: 44*). Porter thus establishes her upbringing as one designed to inculcate the model of British feminine modesty and asserts its positive international influence on Staël and her family. Despite evidence that Porter also drinks adulation, and her clear veneration of Germaine de Staël, this preface marks a clear shift in her tactics of self-preservation as a female author later in life as she moves from the international public author to domestic, private woman.

Yet the international public author is never truly gone. In detailing her connections and tributes, Porter emphasizes that her impact extends beyond Britain. She receives a piece of Robert

Bruce's shroud from a Scottish minister, a rocking chair from a New York literary society, and, of course, the honor of becoming a Canoness of the Teutonic Order of San Joachim from Wirtemberg. Porter requests that her friend S. C. Hall published notice of the gifted rocking chair in *The Art Journal* as she attempts to rally the public to remember her and her accomplishments. She writes that she "received from Vienna, Berlin, Wirtemberg, Petersburg, and Moscow, and even far distant India, letters of generous criticism from persons of the highest names in rank and literature" (*TSC Virtue 1*: 8). Rather than just trying to bolster local patriotism, she presented her works as influential to the fate of all nations. Thus, while Fiona Price describes Porter's public-facing persona as "a female spectator particularly affected by heroic national struggle" ("Introduction" 10), I see it instead as a female actor influencing international struggle.

Her prefaces consistently describe her project as one of national memory and legacy-building. She defends her love of ancestry and history, she remarks: "For let us remember that when a nation ceases to recollect the great and the good amongst their own forefathers, they soon cease to be a people of much account at home; and in proportion to that internal decline they sink in the estimation of the nations abroad" (*TSC Virtue 1*: 13). To Porter, then, her novel not only transcends temporality and Scottish/English nationality to inspire the British, it also safeguards the fate of the nation internationally. This virtuous national work is consistent across her major novels—she discusses the Polish-Russian conflict in the 1831 preface to *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, writing: "for the balance of Europe trembles at the turning of her scale" (*ToW SN 1*: xvi), and notes in her little-studied *Aphorisms of Sir Philip Sidney* (1807), that she writes "at a moment when the proudest potentates of the world lie at the feet of the universal ravager" (v). She emphasizes a moral hero like her Thaddeus or Wallace's international, rather than solely national, influence: "The sway of such a king, is not confined to one nation; he rules in the hearts of all good men, whether they be of his own proper realm, or the subjects of virtue abiding in any other country: and such a king, every

honest man must acknowledge in the King of Sweden! (*Aphorisms* ii-iii). Just as carefully as she cultivates a pious and domestic feminine persona, Porter develops a patriotic political persona to intrepidly engage in European politics.

Porter does not see this political discourse as inconsonant with her role as a woman, nor attempt to negate her gender. While her first preface to both *Thaddens of Warsaw* and *The Scottish Chiefs* make no mention of her gender, both were published under her own name. Subsequent prefaces assert that she has been successful with both her political and moral subject matter. While she doesn't categorize her success in spite of her gender, she acknowledges the antagonistic relationship between women writers and national—and particularly military—narratives. Porter cites public acclaim as proof that she has overcome these obstacles. In the advertisement to the second edition to *Thaddens of Warsaw*, published in 1804, she writes: “The world has stamped that with approbation, which she dreaded it might disapprove or ridicule, when proceeding from the pen of a woman” (*ToW* Second vii). Yet all trace of fear vanishes after this preface; she instead leans into her laurels and public admiration. She writes in her 1828 preface to *The Scottish Chiefs*: “In dismissing this edition of the *Scottish Chiefs* from the press, after so many of its predecessors, its author will not deny herself the genuine pleasure of expressing her grateful sense of the candor with which so adventurous a work from a female pen has been generally received” (*TSC* Virtue 1: 8). She returns to this theme in her final preface to that work in 1841, writing that she has been asked to describe “the ‘where and when’ she first imbibed the impulse which ultimately impelled her to choose a theme so unusual to a female pen—a theme of war and bloodshed!” (*TSC* Virtue 1: 12). Porter acknowledges that her subject matter is not usual for her gender, yet does not concede that it is not appropriate, nor does she apologize for her choices. She writes herself as a brave female author able to narrate international politics in combination with divine morality.

Similar to Sydney Owenson, Porter evokes militaristic metaphors for her writing. Describing her decision to dedicate her first novel to Sir Sidney Smith (1764-1840), she writes that “even the boldest knight never made a new sally without consecrating his shield with some impress of acknowledged reverence” (*ToW* SN xii). She records how her friend O’Sullivan says that she “made a field of [her] own” (*TSC* Virtue 1: 36), and Porter herself writes that with her novels she “came into the then untrodden field” (“The Late Miss Jane Porter” 387). Describing the kindness Queen Victoria showed her during an illness, Porter writes: “This was a testimony to a female writer of England which could not but be of as distinguishing an estimation in her breast as the cross or the star to the bosoms of the brave defenders of that country, whose weal at home and abroad her maiden pen has ever inculcated” (*TSC* Virtue 1: 50), casting herself both as a decorated patriotic warrior and a reverent maiden writer. In the preface to *The Field of Forty Footsteps* (1828), she writes that she offers the novel “with the humility of an old archer herself, whose bow has been worn in many fields” (ix). Rather than disavowing the masculine in her novels of war and revolution, Porter describes herself as militaristic in her act of patriotic romance writing. Porter and Owenson both unapologetically evoke the topos of military service and warfare to describe their national authorship, arguing their rightful place in the field as women writers.

The final editions of Porter’s novels print her multiple prefaces in succession, forming an autobiographical authorship narrative that places forty years of various celebrity tactics on display. Porter re-casts her role as a woman writer throughout her public paratext—from moral guide, to international actor, to the domestic writer who cheers her family. She would re-cast the role in her private correspondence further, particularly in her appeal to Sir Robert Peel for a literary pension in which she writes, truthfully, that she and her sister wrote to financially assist their mother’s small

income as a widow.⁴⁰ While Porter attempts to situate herself firmly within the domesticity and piety of Victorian ideals of women's writing at the end of her career, her earlier paratext preserves the bold and valiant patriotic writer. Her insistence on morality and piety, and particularly her iconography in the garb of the Teutonic Order of San Joachim, was successful in hiding her bold authorship for centuries, as critics have consistently passed her over in favor of more blatantly transgressive or complicated female authors. However, her paratext reveals a complex authorial persona; Porter asserts her importance as a public author, an international actor, and a literary innovator, while also insisting on her role as a pious and reserved woman. Throughout her various guises, Porter remains consistent in her claims that writing national novels is a moral and political task appropriate to women writers. She refuses to offer any apology for her gender and proclaims her popularity with an international reading public with pride. With innovations in the genre of the national novel as well as in woman's public authorship, Porter valiantly drew her patriot's sword in the "then untrodden field."

Conclusion

Though very different women and writers, the lives and works of Sydney Owenson and Jane Porter were intertwined. Beyond their personal relationship, and contemporaneous publication throughout 1800-1850, the authors are bound through the genre of the national novel, their use of extensive personal paratext, and their keen awareness of their public personas as women writers. Furthermore, they unite in challenging our ideas of how women writers engaged with the public sphere, embracing public adulation and offering private details in their paratext rather than attempting to keep their personal lives separate like Maria Edgeworth and Jane Austen. Both

⁴⁰ PORT 42.06.11, June 11, 1842, Jane Porter Papers, Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library.

embrace militaristic metaphors for their writing that assert their roles as patriotic public servants, boldly championing their engagement with political and international topics. Most importantly, they assert the ability of women to engage in international affairs while not apologizing for their gender.

Sydney Owenson creates a personal public persona primed for celebrity in the footnotes to *The Wild Irish Girl*, then hones her celebrity over the next forty years to champion women's place in public and national discourse. She presents herself as a battered yet valiant patriot who is willing to risk her private reputation to perform national service. Furthermore, she evokes her femininity to rally the public to protect her reputation, while embracing the rhetoric of warfare to assert her selflessness and valor. While her reputation suffered blows, her novels were consistently popular and brought her immense success. Beyond her literary goals, Owenson achieved her personal goals—she received funds, fame, and an advantageous marriage as a result of the personal celebrity she developed in her novels. She doesn't shy from proclaiming this, so much so that one of the reviews of *France* acknowledges that “her novels have found readers, and she has found a husband” (“Review of *France*” 334). Thus, Owenson's paratext reveals a secure and confident woman writer who champions her right, and that of other women, to engage national discourse by embracing the publication of private experiences.

Jane Porter's paratextual itinerary was more winding—she gained confidence in her international and literary influence in the first twenty-five years of publication, during which she claims a place of pride in royal, aristocratic, and literary circles, as well as in the public's heart. Upon the publication of Peter Puff's accusations of indelicate egotism alongside deep family sorrow, she shifts toward a quieter, more domestic persona in the final prefaces to her novels. However, she never loses her self-importance and assurance as an international actor and national patriot. Throughout her paratext stands a woman unafraid to engage the public in her mission to inspire greater morality and heroism through the tumult of nineteenth-century Europe. Understanding

Porter's quiet domesticity as a performed persona, rather than the trappings of flat conventionality, allows us to see her professional ambitions and acknowledge her as an eager developer of women's public authorship. Porter is an understudied paragon of "how a set of literary practitioners fought fire (the representation of famous women as 'unsexed') with fire (the counter-representation of famous women as the epitome of womanhood)" (Weber 23). Yet more importantly, Porter kindled as many fires as possible, testing which would burn eternal.

Both Jane Porter and Sydney Owenson unabashedly put themselves forward as public women writers in the prefaces and footnotes to their highly popular novels of the first half of the nineteenth century. They co-opt the national novel's accompanying paratext not simply to authorize their texts, but also themselves as political writers and literary celebrities. In writing for and embracing the public, they embody the topos of service necessary to Victorian expectations of women's writing, yet also claim international influence in the political public sphere through patriotic service. Despite widely different personas and personalities, Jane Porter and Sydney Owenson both wield voluminous paratext to argue that "for love of country is of no sex."

Chapter Three: The Bound Afterlife of Jane Porter

The first two chapters of this dissertation reveal two of Porter's goals in *The Scottish Chiefs*: to re-write history to display a consistent national character through the sentiment of romance, and to bolster her fame and funds through literary celebrity. She affixes paratext to her novel that supports both goals—a subtitle, epigraph, and footnotes that evoke the past to inspire the present, and prefaces and footnotes that craft a public-facing persona as a champion of women's political and domestic duties. In this chapter I add the element of the visual, exploring how illustrations have affected Porter's reception in the United Kingdom and the United States 1810-2010. While the first two chapters examine verbal paratext chosen by Porter for her novel, this chapter tracks how both anthumous and posthumous visual paratext shapes Porter's afterlife, particularly the connection between past and present, her portrayal of women within history, and the importance of the author within the book.

Porter's portrayal of gender within the text is crucial to understanding both the novel and its afterlife. Anne K. Mellor, Fiona Price, Andrew Monnickendam, and Carol Anderson and Aileen M. Riddell counter Rhonda Batchelor's argument that Porter presents a conservative gender politics in the novel. Beyond Mellor's point that Porter includes women in history, Price shows how she argues that women can change history. Yet a thorough analysis of the novel's women—including loyal Marion Wallace, virtuous Helen Mar, powerful Queen Margaret, and passionate Joanna Mar—would usefully challenge Batchelor's argument that Porter offers an ideal womanhood that is passive and silent in national discourse. Porter's women are brave and active in national politics, whether through the traditionally feminine pursuits of sewing war tokens, or the more transgressive acts of dressing in male clothing to stand by Wallace's side in his moments of need.

However, over the course of two centuries the visual paratext to new editions increasingly depicts women as mere responders to male action. New editions seek to capitalize on the craze for

illustrated editions of tales of medieval chivalry for children, yet depicting Porter's women as piously passive or damsels in distress frequently counteracts Porter's text. For as many times as Wallace saves Helen from kidnap and rape, as depicted in various illustrations, Helen ultimately saves Wallace from torture, death, and defeat at English hands when she rushes the scaffold at the end of the novel to embrace him as his soul ascends from his unsullied body. This scene, however, is never pictured. Though I do not have the space to offer a full reading of the novel's women, I provide the analysis necessary to read how new illustrations of women alter readers' understanding of the text and its author.

To do this I examined approximately sixty editions of *The Scottish Chiefs*, most of which are housed at the New York Public Library or the National Library of Scotland, as well as around seventy-five editions of Walter Scott's *Waverley* for initial comparison. I could say many things about two hundred years of editions, and particularly their connections to Scott's novels, but I have focused here on those editions that illuminate Porter's legacy, rather than those that simply diverge from Scott's reception. I begin by showing how Porter's book has been bound to Scott's since the 1820s; beyond their similar subject matter and the authors' personal relationship, the print culture in which they were conceived and disseminated shapes a hierarchical relationship between the two authors' works and personas. This connection begins the initial complication of Porter's portrayal of women's roles and of her message that Scottish history is a strong inspiration for present-day Britain rather than a decayed memory. I then move to the turn of the century to look at the American reception of *The Scottish Chiefs* that culminated in the Charles Scribner's Sons edition in 1921, which almost single-handedly kept Porter in circulation for the entirety of the twentieth century. I examine how the new introduction written by Kate Douglas Wiggin as well as illustrations by N. C. Wyeth affect the American post-WWI reception of Porter's romance by facilitating connections to the past through domestic memory. I conclude by analyzing the new paratextual material added to Fiona

Price's edition of *The Scottish Chiefs* for Broadview Press, particularly how its illustrations restore the novel's focus on women in history for new critical audiences.

New visual and verbal paratext added to *The Scottish Chiefs* reveals that while the legacy of Porter's political message of national unity fluctuated, her assertion of the importance of women—both characters and authors—to the narrative of history steadily declines in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The visual paratext thus plays a key role in altering the reception of Porter and her novels. Devoney Looser acknowledges the trickiness of receptions studies in her recent work on the illustrated editions of Jane Austen's novels, particularly of proving the influence of individual editions on readers; yet her claim that shifting illustrations affected the reception of Romantic women's writing is clearly visible in Jane Porter's legacy. I explore key moments in Porter's reception history to claim that the visual afterlife of *The Scottish Chiefs* shaped Porter's reception in both popular and academic circles by altering the reader's interpretation of her central messages surrounding history and gender.

Nineteenth-Century Anthumous Illustrations: Bound to Walter Scott

Though Walter Scott and Jane Porter are frequently studied in dialogue with one another, no one has yet compared the material objects that contributed heavily to the conversation. This is mainly due to a lack of record of Porter's bibliography; studies of her reception are still cursory—Fiona Price and Gary Kelly both give slight overviews and Graeme Morton a longer description of nineteenth- and twentieth-century editions of *The Scottish Chiefs*. Luckily, we have many studies of Scott's publication history—for example, Richard Maxwell looks at the effect of the Abbotsford edition while Richard J. Hill looks at anthumous paratext, and Jane Millgate, Ian Duncan, and others examine a broad array of paratext—that can help shed light on Porter's new editions.

In this section I examine how Scott's immense impact on the illustrated book through the Waverley Novels affected the images chosen to accompany *The Scottish Chiefs* within Porter's lifetime. Richard J. Hill remarks that "this period in publishing history began to see an unprecedented synergy between image and text" (Hill 13). While this is undoubtedly true for Scott, who had control over the illustrations to his novels and communicated regularly with their artists, the same cannot always be said for Porter, whose editions frequently present what Bakhtin calls a "hybrid discourse" (361). I focus on three major editions that shed light on material connections between *Waverley* and *The Scottish Chiefs*: the first edition (*Waverley*: 1814, Cadell & Co.; *The Scottish Chiefs*: 1810, Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme), the first illustrated editions (*Waverley*: 1829, Cadell & Co. (Magnum Opus); *The Scottish Chiefs*: 1831, Bentley and Colburn (Standard Novels)), and the most elaborate editions published within Porter's lifetime (*Waverley*: 1842, Robert Cadell (Abbotsford edition) / *The Scottish Chiefs*: 1841, George Virtue). These anthomous editions reveal that the material conditions of illustrated books heightened the view that Porter was an auxiliary figure to Walter Scott. Yet the illustrations to *The Scottish Chiefs*, which were inspired by those of *Waverley*, also reinforce Porter's distinct claims that women should participate in national history and that the past must inform the present.

Despite later divergences, the first editions of *Waverley* and *The Scottish Chiefs* are similar book objects. The title pages are comparable with the exception of authorial attribution; *Waverley* is anonymous while Jane Porter boldly claims *The Scottish Chiefs*. Both contain a title, subtitle, and epigraph chosen by the author, as well as publication information. The subtitles—*Waverley*'s "'Tis Sixty Years Since" and *The Scottish Chiefs*'s "A Romance"—speak to their respective genres; while Porter uses a recognizable category to guide readings of her novel, Scott's more nebulous phrase refers to the temporal distance of his subject matter, implying historical interest. Both title pages contain epigraphs that speak to the core themes of their novels. Scott's quote from Shakespeare's

Henry IV, “Under which King, Bezonian? Speak, or die!” has obvious connotations for the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion explored in *Waverley*. Porter’s “There comes a voice that awakens my soul. It is the voice of years that are gone; they roll before me with their deeds. – Ossian,” establishes her depiction of a heroic Scottish past as a direct stimulus for the present, as discussed in Chapter One. Neither title page, nor any other page, contains illustrations. The first editions contain core paratext selected by the authors to guide the reader’s interpretation of each novel’s central English-Scottish conflict—*Waverley* as a historical examination of conflict of monarchical loyalty and subsequent violence, *The Scottish Chiefs* as a sentimental tale of past heroism alive in the present. Paratext to the first editions presents visually similar books before the roar of Scott’s popularity causes a wide rift in their reception.

In one of the most important moments in nineteenth-century book history, Cadell & Co. published the Magnum Opus edition of *Waverley* in 1829, followed by Scott’s other Waverley Novels in a forty-eight-volume set by 1833. Fueled by Scott’s immense personal fame as the newly revealed author of the Waverley Novels, this edition features a proliferation of paratext. Scott scholars have seen the new prefaces, footnotes, and illustrations as an important vehicle for Scott’s rise in the literary market. While Jane Millgate suggests paratext was previously reserved only for the more respectable genres of poetry and drama, thus glossing over women’s paratextual novels of the decade preceding *Waverley*, paratext did nonetheless elevate Scott and his oeuvre (vii). Alongside Millgate, Ian Duncan and Richard J. Hill have shown how Scott sought to pay the debt incurred by his partnership with Constable and Co. after the crash of Hurst, Robinson, and Co. in January 1826 left them bankrupt. They note that the Magnum Opus editions of the Waverley Novels, which were published in attempt to assuage this debt, changed the course of publication, print culture, and authorship for the rest of the nineteenth century. Millgate calls the Magnum Opus a “crucial stage” in the “general history of publishing” (vii), while Hill notes its pervasive influence throughout the

nineteenth century, showing how Scott's illustrated books laid the groundwork for the Victorian illustrated book (1).

The high-quality illustrations of the Magnum Opus edition of *The Waverley Novels* were central to marketing the new series. Richard Maxwell discusses how Scott's antiquarian novels inspired a need for "supplements" (2) that led to a plethora of verbal and visual paratext and produced the illustrated book. Scott selected the illustrations and was meticulous about "ensuring their accuracy and appropriateness" (Millgate 17). Hill adds that "the details Scott valued most highly were details of ethnology, topography, and antiquarianism with regard to the people, locations, or periods depicted in the novels. Such images typically involved depictions of a national or historical costume, ritual, object, character, or landscape" (5). Scott corrected artists who portrayed national costume inaccurately; upon seeing the new illustrations proposed for *Rob Roy* (1817), he remarked: "Rob Roy should have breeches & leggings instead of a dress which is neither a kilt nor a lowland dress" (qtd. in Millgate 18). The illustrator of the *Waverley Novels*, William Allan (1782-1850), emphasized the "costumes, domestic interiors and physiognomies of the Scottish characters of the novels" (Hill 110), which increased the *Edinburgh Monthly Review's* perception of the edition's authenticity, a trait that defined the Romantic movement.

While Hugh Trevor-Roper has since proven in inauthenticity of many of Scott's costume choices in fiction and reality, Kenneth McNeil, following Malcolm Chapman, posits the "culturally resonant" power of Highland dress that provides a "complex spectacle of national identity for Scots—Highlander and Lowlander alike" (124). Thus, the illustrated book was instrumental to Scott's goal of presenting the *Waverley Novels* as not only an accurate description of Scotland's national customs and history but also of forging a new Scottish identity as a part of Great Britain. However, we do not see this emphasis on cultural accuracy nor the "alluring fascination" of Highland masculinity in the Magnum Opus edition of *Waverley* (McNeil 124). In fact, we do not see

the tartan kilt at all. This omission reveals the edition's portrayal of British similarity rather than Highland difference. Instead of dashing portraits of Charles Edward Stewart (1720-1788) or Fergus MacIvor, we see English Edward Waverley, Lowland Cosmo Comyn Bradwardine and David Gellatly, and British soldiers. We thus see those men who would come to represent a new Britain in many critical readings of the novel.

The only tartan we see is worn by Flora MacIvor as she sings to Edward Waverley in her bower (fig. 4). In the illustration as in the novel, Flora's exotic, Ossianic Scottishness is largely performative, and is put on display for the benefit of an English visitor. Yet in this image she is more active than the novel's other heroine, Rose Bradwardine (fig. 5). An illustration of Edward Waverley greeting Rose's father, the Baron of Bradwardine, features an almost ghostly Rose in the background. Though Rose becomes Waverley's future wife, she is not depicted in the act of writing to save Waverley after his arrest, nor even engaging with him in this scene. Instead, she listens passively with a placid smile while the men talk to each other. Waverley's posture while listening to Flora mimics Rose's, revealing that Waverley has become passive and effeminate while entranced with Flora and the Jacobite dream she embodies. We get an illustration of David Gellatly standing alone, but there are no images of a lone woman, revealing how women exist primarily in their connections to men in *Waverley*. While both women affect Waverley, they do so in either passive or performative ways.



Figure 4. Flora MacIvor sings for Waverley. National Library of Scotland.



Figure 5. Rose Bradwardine listens to Edward and Sir Everard Waverley. National Library of Scotland.

The first illustrated edition of *The Scottish Chiefs* was produced as a direct result of the success of the illustrated Waverley Novels. The popularity of the Magnum Opus edition spurred the publication of the first series of re-printed fiction, Colburn and Bentley's Standard Novels (McGettigan 135),⁴¹ which was produced in the style of the Magnum Opus. Three of Porter's novels feature in the series: *The Scottish Chiefs*, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, and *The Pastor's Fireside*. Porter's considerable presence in the collection sealed her literary status and legacy; John Spiers remarks that a series can "fix texts by giving them the authority of permanence" (28), and Michael Sadleir remarks that the Standard Novels series in particular "became a tradition almost as soon as it came into existence" (qtd. in McGettigan 136). Beyond fame and canonicity, Katie McGettigan discusses how being included in series "recontextualize[s]" a text, which "appears in relation to the series theme and its other titles" (135). *The Scottish Chiefs* is accompanied by British Romantic novels like Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), as well as American novels like James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826). It is placed in dialogue with domestic fiction and historical adventure fiction alike, as well as novels like *Frankenstein* which push the boundaries of acceptable topics for women writers; the series thus undermines the idea that certain novels are for certain genders and instead presents all texts as suitable for all its readers. Porter's inclusion in the Standard Novels series speaks not only to her relevance to contemporary literature and the print market, but also discounts gendered expectations of women's novels as it widens Porter's range of readership.

Yet while the Standard Novels helped establish Porter's legacy and facilitates new readings of *The Scottish Chiefs*, it also reinforces Porter's position in the literary world as secondary to Scott. Since the Standard Novels were meant as a companion to the Waverley Novels this places all its titles in a

⁴¹ This series was Colburn and Bentley's Standard Novels (just referred to as "Standard Novels" until Colburn left the firm in 1832, after which it became known as "Bentley's Standard Novels.")

secondary position to Scott. Bentley and Colburn sought to imitate the print media choices of the *Magnum Opus*,⁴² with each volume uniformly featuring two steel engravings. This may have irked Porter since the visual imitation could suggest a textual imitation as well, a claim against which she fought her entire career. The material connection drawn between the two authors' work in the *Standard Novels* offers a new context for Porter's bold claims of superseding Scott in the invention of the historical novel, which she attached to her first novel to appear in the series, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*. Porter bristles at the perception that she was ancillary to Scott in the prefaces she writes for Bentley and Colburn as she seeks to establish herself as a writer of individual merit and throw off the yoke of Scott's looming presence. The material conditions surrounding the books' publication, however, subtly counteract her claims and reinforce her status as an accessory to his fame and genius.

While we know Porter did use the *Magnum Opus* as a model for her new footnotes, we know little about the selection of illustrations for the edition. Hill remarks that all illustrations to Scott's novels produced in Edinburgh were created with the author's consent; the same is not known to be true for Porter. Archival evidence shows that Porter was at least partially involved in the process of adding illustrations to later editions of her novels in the 1840s.⁴³ Porter's involvement in selecting the illustrations to the *Standard Novels* edition was likely minimal if any, though more research needs to be done on this subject. Yet these illustrations had an immense impact on how readers would engage with the novel. In her recent work on the *Standard Novels* illustrations to the works of Jane Austen—which reveals that Porter and Austen share an illustrator in yet another tie

⁴² See Millgate, Kelly, and McGettigan.

⁴³ One letter communicates her wish to rotate the images in *The Scottish Chiefs* (POR 73, Jane Porter Papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California) while another reveals her choice of plates for *The Pastor's Fireside* (PORT 44.09.22 A, Jane Porter Papers, Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library).

between the Janes—Devoney Looser notes that readers “would have turned to Bentley’s illustrations in all of the Standard Novels as a kind of visual guide to reading, as an advertisement, preview, or a taste of the novel to come” (*Making of Jane Austen* 20). If, like Austen’s executors, Porter had no say in the chosen illustrations after she sold the copyright, Scott and Porter’s illustrated editions are sites of material similarity yet a vast divide in authorial agency.

The Scottish Chiefs was published in two volumes in the Standard Novels series, and thus had four illustrations. These include a bucolic image young Edwin Ruthven reclining dreamily after being made a knight by his idol and brother-in-arms, Wallace (fig. 6), and Wallace himself riding upon his horse (fig. 7). The quote printed beneath this second image connects him to the novel’s heroine Helen, who becomes Wallace’s second wife, beginning: “He comes, Helen, he comes!” It thus presents the reader’s first image of Wallace as one seen through the gaze of a woman, a subtle reinforcement of Porter’s historical project and themes.



Figure 6. Edwin reclines after being made a knight. National Library of Scotland.



Figure 7. Wallace on horseback. National Library of Scotland.

There are in fact as many images of Helen as there are of Wallace in this edition; thus the visual supports Porter's textual and paratextual goals of including women in the familiar scenes of history. Furthermore, these images do not depict Helen in the act of swooning or being rescued by Wallace from kidnap and rape. Rather, the main image of Helen centers the feminine and the political as she readies her present of a plumed casque for Wallace in a scene of domestic contentment and national support (fig. 8). This image would have resonated with contemporary ideas of women's roles in political movements, particularly in wartime. Linda Colley notes that literature contemporary to the Standard Novels echoed Hannah More's assertions that women had an active role to play in politics and must stay busy helping national efforts (276). This image of a medieval noblewoman presenting a favor to a beloved knight would have been familiar to readers of romance, but would have also struck a distinctly modern political chord for readers who knew of the trend for female reformers to sew liberty caps for men who supported their cause. Colley notes: "Borrowing from chivalric myths in this fashion provided another opportunity for female reformers to present themselves as embodiments of virtue and high morality, whose function it was to inspire

their menfolk to proper political actions” (277). While this is certainly a conservative version of women crossing the boundary of the private sphere, the act of sewing political tokens, such as Helen sews in this image, was an active site of women’s entrance into political spheres when the edition was published.



Figure 8. Helen prepares Wallace's plumed casque and scarf. National Library of Scotland.

Yet this image may convince readers that Porter believed only in a conservative approach to women’s role in politics. It depicts Helen in her virtuous role as supporting character, rather than active heroine. We do not, for example, see her dressed in a page’s male clothing as she travels through France with Wallace and Bruce. Nor do we see Helen donning the outfit again to slip out her window alone and run with increasingly blistered feet toward Dundee to catch a ship to London to be with Wallace in his final days. We certainly do not see any illustrations of Joanna, Helen’s stepmother who also loves Wallace, disguising herself as the Knight of the Green Plume to take up arms beside Wallace in battle. These images are perhaps too active, too transgressive, for the

Standard Novels, which were intended for genteel middle-class readers. Whatever the intent, the illustrations show how a reader's understanding of Porter's version of women in history was influenced by the constraints of the publishing market, by what was depicted and what was not. While this edition provides illustrations of women active in national politics, it also suggests that images of women transgressing gender roles in pursuit of personal and political goals was still something to be imagined, rather than seen.

In addition to being depicted alone, Porter's Helen is depicted alongside Wallace. Figure 9 depicts Helen weeping over Wallace's corpse after he has died of a broken heart at the Tower of London. We do not see Helen's face in this image; the most prominent visual about her person is the large cross necklace she wears, emphasizing her virtue and piety. Helen's transgression of traveling alone in men's clothing to then be alone with Wallace in his prison cell is thus visually sanctioned. Porter ensures that there is a secret marriage ceremony upon her arrival, but Helen's chaste and virtuous motivation for the journey, to soothe Wallace's final days, is given the iconography of religious and moral guidance. This image shows the two principal characters of the novel bodily united in a spiritual consummation of their marriage, reinforcing their purity and piety.

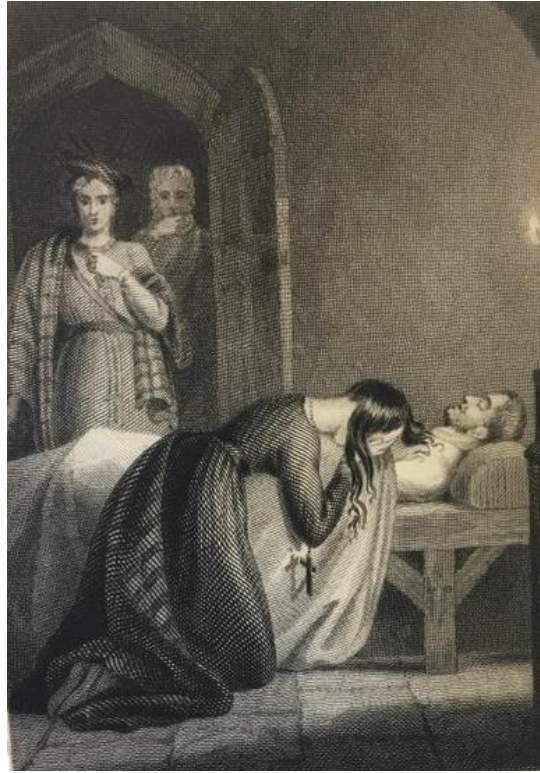


Figure 9. Helen weeping over Wallace's corpse. National Library of Scotland.

The choice of Helen's grief, rather than her remarkable action of rushing the scaffold and embracing Wallace, not only hides her actions, but also overemphasizes the tragedy of the novel. It centers the loss of Wallace rather than the victory of Scotland and subsequent peace between nations. Fiona Price notes that this focus on the loss incurred by war serves to temper the revolutionary impulses of the novel; yet it also diminishes the novel's final message of hope and unity. In this final image, Robert Bruce and Helen's sister Isabella, Bruce's soon-to-be wife, appear in the doorway to discover Helen's grief. In the text, immediately after this depicted moment, Helen terrifies her sister Isabella as she assumes an almost supernatural role as the conduit of Wallace's intention that Bruce become king, before she too dies of a broken heart.

This image reveals how Porter's vision of lasting British unity has been counteracted since the first illustrated edition. Its focus on grief and loss is particularly egregious when we consider the edits Porter made to the text for the Standard Novels edition. The first edition, though focusing on

Helen's soul joining Wallace's in heaven and their spiritual reunion, ends with her death. After being crowned, Bruce calls to Helen, who is draped upon Wallace's corpse:

“Look up, my sister; and let thy soul, discoursing with our Wallace, tell him that Scotland is free, and Bruce a king!”

She spoke not, she moved not. Bothwell raised her clay-cold face. “That soul has fled, my lord!” said he, “but from yon eternal sphere they now together look upon your joys. Here let their bodies rest; for *they loved in their lives, and in their deaths they shall not be divided!*” (TSC Broadview 722, emphasis hers)

For the Standard Novels edition Porter added one final paragraph:

Before the renewing of the moon whose waning light witnessed their solemn obsequies,—the aim of Wallace's life, the object of Helen's prayers, was accomplished.—Peace reigned in Scotland.—The discomfited King Edward died of chagrin at Carlisle, and his humbled son and successor sent to offer such honorable terms of pacification, that Bruce gave them acceptance, and a lasting tranquility spread prosperity and happiness throughout the land. (TSC SN 2: 397)

This added paragraph focuses on the future beneficiaries of Wallace and Helen's deeds, on the “lasting tranquility” that would be strengthened by a united Britain. However, the illustration of Helen and Wallace's death aligns with the first ending, countering Porter's deliberate alterations to not only mourn what has been lost, but to celebrate what endures for future generations.

Thus, the similar book objects of the first editions of Porter and Scott's novels diverge along gendered lines in both the verbal and visual paratext to the Magnum Opus edition of *Waverley* and the Standard Novels edition of *The Scottish Chiefs*. Though Porter may have been peeved at the incessant comparisons to Scott, the production of the Magnum Opus edition facilitated her own lasting fame in the Standard Novels series it inspired. By the same coin, this series reinforced

Porter's role as an auxiliary to Scott. Though she was admittedly in good company, this displeased Porter, who had not only personal but professional reasons to be upset by Scott's eclipse of her own star, and spurred her composition of the preface that claimed her generic innovation before him. In an uneasy dialogue with this verbal assertion of women's contributions to the re-telling of history, the illustrations to the Standard Novels edition of *The Scottish Chiefs* provide a conservative yet meaningful depiction of Porter's women's roles in national politics. However, it diminishes the action she takes to revise her novel's ending to assert a lasting British peace, thus affecting the reader's understanding of Porter's political goals.

In 1841, George Virtue of London publishes the most paratextually-adorned edition of *The Scottish Chiefs* of the nineteenth century. In addition to printing Porter's three prefaces published 1810, 1828, and 1841,⁴⁴ it features the first image of Jane Porter affixed to the novel, marking the apex of Porter's authorial persona in both her anthumous fame and, unbeknownst to Porter, her posthumous afterlife. Curiously, other illustrations to this edition vary. A plethora of illustrations of characters, landscapes, and battle scenes abound in the copy held by the New York Public Library. Yet the only illustrations besides that of Porter in the copy held by the National Library of Scotland are of Scottish castles and landscapes. While both are catalogued as published by George Virtue in London in 1840-41,⁴⁵ it may be that the editions are not exactly contemporaneous; nevertheless, the multiple versions of the one edition speak to the general confusion of Porter's messages by the early Victorian era. Images affixed to both holdings echo her romance's temporal and cultural uncanny in

⁴⁴ Virtue details this preface as being published in 1828, prior to the Standard Novels preface, yet I have never been able to find an edition that publishes this preface prior to 1831. Virtue does not print Porter's 1831 preface because Bentley still held the copyright.

⁴⁵ This edition is frequently referred to as the 1840 edition, but Porter's appendix is dated 1841, showing that it was not published until 1841.

their depictions of people and places, supporting her idea of a present inspired by the past while marring her image of the future and diminishing women's roles in national action.

The image of Jane Porter affixed to both editions features the author looking upward in divine inspiration while a crucifix hangs prominently at her breast (fig. 10). Beyond its role in increasing her public-facing profile, it corresponds with the New York Public Library holding's illustration of Helen, thus creating an ideological link between author and heroine as supportive religious patriots. Though Helen looks down in prayer while Porter gazes upward, and Helen's dress is not contemporary, they are similarly dressed, posed correspondingly within the visual space of the illustrations, and share a prominent cross necklace.⁴⁶ This doubling is fraught; while it erases Porter's individual agency by conflating her with her fictional heroine in angelic piety, it also mutually reinforces her attempt to cast women as active participants in history.

⁴⁶ They wear unadorned cross necklaces rather than crucifixes, further diminishing their religious difference. This mirrors the text, in which marks of Wallace and Helen's Catholicism are present but understated to provide further similarities between character and reader.



Figure 10. *Jane Porter (left) and Helen Mar (right)*. NYPL/Pforzheimer.

The NYPL holding of the edition employs a variety of illustrators who each depict the novel in their own style; the novel thus presents multiple versions of the text's narrative and characters literally bound together. The figure of Wallace is particularly diverse; some illustrations show him as distinctly Scottish in tartan (fig. 11) or distinctly medieval with armor and plume (fig. 12). By presenting these varying identity-related images of one character, the edition physically binds Scottishness to the past and highlights both identities' distinction from contemporary Britain. This focus on visual markers of an othered Wallace are necessary given Porter's setting, yet they also subtly counteract Porter's desire to diminish ideological difference between her hero and her readers, as discussed in Chapter One. As the sympathy Porter wishes to create is facilitated through the imagination, particularly by her construction of a Wallace that is similar to the reader and could

thus be imagined as such, the starkly visual other complicates Porter's message of timeless national character.



Figure 11. Wallace addresses his soldiers in tartan. NYPL/Pforzheimer.



Figure 12. Wallace addresses his soldiers in historical dress. NYPL/Pforzheimer.

The Virtue edition shows many images of men in action. Porter's famous battle scenes, such as that at Dumbarton Castle (fig. 13), are depicted as tumults of action and bloodshed with axes, swords, and arrows flying. Moments of interpersonal altercation, such as Wallace's command that his compatriot Kirkpatrick not kill his enemy De Valence when the latter has begged for mercy, depicts all three men in motion with limbs outstretched and violent lightning crashing in the background (fig. 14). The women of Porter's novels, however, do not receive such thrilling illustrations. Similar to the Standard Novels edition before it, the Virtue edition does not show Porter's women at their most active or transgressive. In fact, despite the greater number of illustrations, the female characters are more limited than in the Standard Novels. Helen's patriotic service of preparing Wallace's casque as well as her grief and spiritual union with Wallace are removed. We instead see Helen as an apolitical heroine whose image would suit a variety of contemporary novels. The two images of Helen with her cousin and admirer Andrew Murray conjure ideas of domestic fiction (fig. 15) and gothic romance (fig. 16), while that of Helen leaving Wallace's prison cell depicts none of the bodily force of passion seen in the previous edition (fig. 17). In all three images Helen is contained physically and led somewhere by a man.



Figure 13. *Attack on Dumbarton Castle.* NYPL/Pforzheimer.

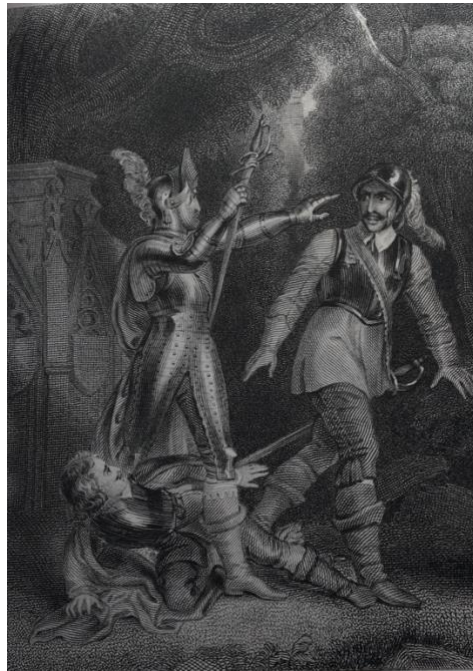


Figure 14. *Wallace warning Kirkpatrick to not kill Lord de Valence.* NYPL/Pforzheimer.



Figure 15. Helen and Andrew Murray. NYPL/Pforzheimer.

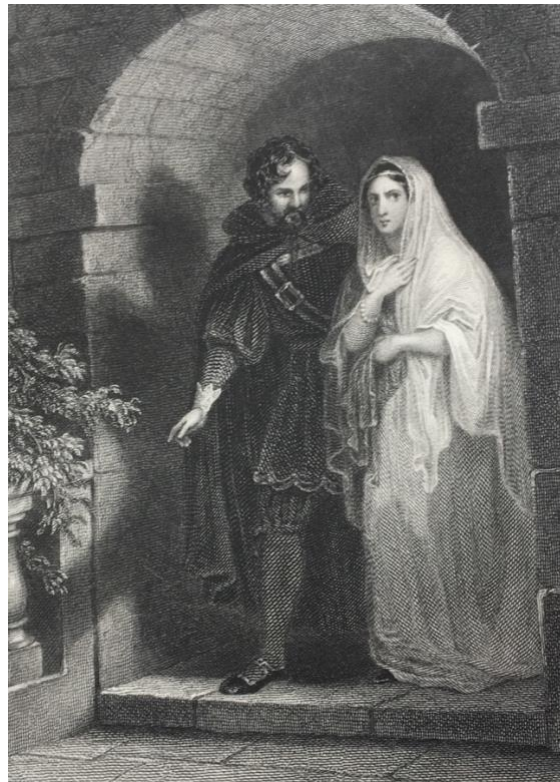


Figure 16. Andrew Murray leading Helen through the secret passageway. NYPL/Pforzheimer.

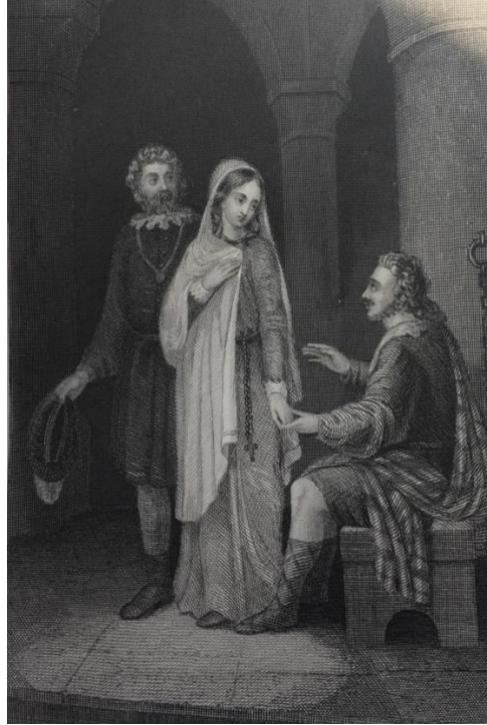


Figure 17. Helen leaving Wallace's cell in the Tower of London. NYPL/Pforzheimer.

Wallace's two wives are depicted as formulaic heroines of romance, falling into the arms of men that rescue or mourn them. His first wife Marion lays slain in their servant Halbert's arms (fig. 18), and his second wife Helen lies swooning in the arms of her father (fig. 19). The only action we see Helen take of her own accord is her prayer in Snawdoun Chapel (fig. 20). This image marks one of the most melodramatic moments in Porter's novel: Wallace, depicted below watching Helen, surprises her in the act of praying for his safety not only in the war, but from the treachery of de Valence, who covets Helen and is jealous of Wallace. They embrace in mutual piety, then Helen shrieks and throws her arms around Wallace as she sees a dagger flash. Wallace is stabbed, but is horrified to see that Helen's arm has also been struck as she attempted to shield him. Contemporary reviewers protested against this scene as "too much in the style of Monk Lewis's dramas—the exploded school of romance" ("No. IV. Miss Porter" 144). The illustrators of the Virtue edition certainly did not wish to highlight the gothic horror of such moments, instead depicting Helen in her two most pious and passive postures of the scene: praying beforehand and swooning after. Thus,

Helen's heroic action of shielding Wallace from bodily harm, a foreshadowing of her rush to the scaffold at the end of the novel, is hidden under the cloak of a more traditional virtuous femininity.



Figure 18. *The death of Marion.* NYPL/Pforzheimer.

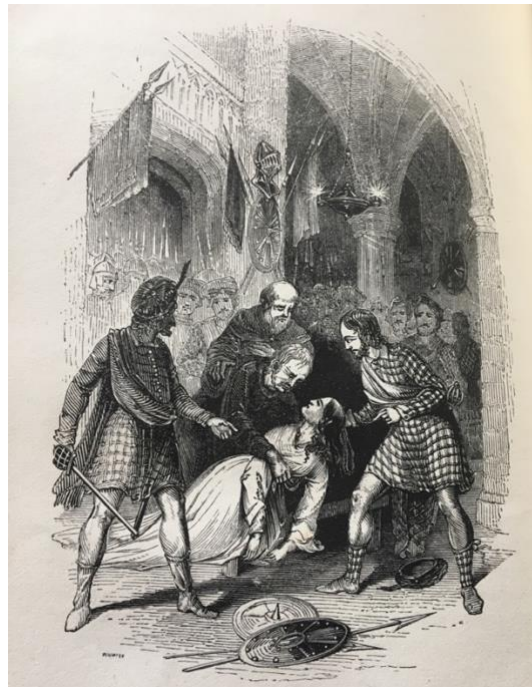


Figure 19. *The Earl of Mar holding his swooning daughter Helen.* NYPL/Pforzheimer.



Figure 20. *Wallace and Helen in the Chapel at Snawdon*. NYPL/Pforzheimer.

The action of Porter's women is further hidden in the Virtue edition's portrayal of the novel's female villain, Joanna Mar. Rather than revealing what Porter portrays as wicked lust for Wallace's person and then base betrayal of him after he kindly refuses her advances, Joanna appears as a noblewoman sitting for a commissioned portrait (fig. 21). Her early Victorian dress displaying her sloping shoulders, as well as her dark hair behind her ears, crown, and uplifted expression render Joanna an uncomfortable echo of contemporary portraits of the newly crowned Queen Victoria. This portrait diminishes temporal and national difference between character and reader in a way Porter may not have approved of, and brings the threat of treachery posed by a young woman in power close to home for British readers. It does not masculinize or demonize the transgressive Joanna, but rather presents her as a model of passive femininity that would feel eerily familiar, while the heroism and virtue of Wallace is rendered other by his Scottish and medieval garb.



Figure 21. Joanna Mar. NYPL/Pforzheimer.

Readers are not to sympathize with her beauty nor approve of her transgressions, similar though they may be to Helen's in their mutual act of disguising themselves as men to be close to Wallace. Joanna is punished for her treachery because her intentions were lustful and selfish rather than virtuous like Helen's. As the text's paragon of morality, Wallace denounces her action, and Porter's strong language is clear when describing his abhorrence of her unwomanly disguise and martial acts as a soldier: "The prowess of the knight of the green plume, the respect he owed to the widow of the Earl of Mar, the tenderness he ever felt for all of woman-kind, were all forgotten in the disgusting blandishments of this determined wanton" (*TSC Broadview* 605). Despite Porter's strong denunciation, Joanna Mar undoubtedly remains one of the most compelling and certainly the most complex character of the novel.

The novel ends with Joanna locked inside Stirling Castle, having gone mad after hearing of the death of Wallace caused by her betrayal. Her final scene within her prison is visually and emotionally striking:

She was seated on the floor, enveloped in a mass of scarlet velvet, which she had drawn off her bed: her hands clasped her knees; and she bent forward, with her eyes fixed on the door at which they entered...She remained motionless as they advanced. But when Bruce stopped directly before her, contemplating with horror the woman whom he regarded as one of the murderers of his most beloved friend, she sprung at once upon him and clinging to him with shrieks, buried her head in his bosom, and exclaimed—“Save me!—Mar drags me down to hell; I burn there, and yet I die not!” (*TSC Broadview* 715)

She then raves further, dashes her head on the hearth, and shrieks while Bruce puts her in the arms of her attendants and leaves “with an awful sense of divine retribution” (*TSC Broadview* 715).

Bruce’s holy impassivity to Joanna’s grief and madness, particularly when he is depicted as a man of great sensibility throughout the novel, is only the final instance of male neglect of Joanna throughout the novel.

Porter’s early study of Mary Wollstonecraft reveals itself in her painting of young Joanna Mar as a girl coddled by an ill-educated and inattentive mother, then impregnated by Lord Mar when he was still married to his first wife, who was then pregnant with Helen, and she a guest in his household. Cloaked in scarlet velvet as a sensuous fallen woman, Joanna’s cry that Mar “drags [her] to hell” can be read as her husband punishing her for betraying his friend, or as Mar’s own treachery in destroying her innocence and chastity haunting her disordered mind. Contemporary readers found her character moving; the *Belle Assemblée* writes: “Contrasting with the character of Helen, that of Lady Mar is deeply and powerfully conceived; though, perhaps, the latter is painted in colours

almost too dark for woman” (“No. IV. Miss Porter” 144). More recently, Anderson and Riddell have suggested that modern readers will find her sympathetic, and that her end serves as a premonition of the Gilbert and Gubar’s idea of the madwoman in the attic in Victorian women’s fiction. Andrew Monnickendam suggests that Porter’s treatment of Joanna is favorable and that Porter highlights men’s cruelty to women in her novel (103). Her bravery and even martial valor fighting beside Wallace as the mysterious Knight of the Green Plume certainly produce admiration for her character, in spite of and due to its transgression of accepted gender roles. While her betrayal of Wallace and quest for self-aggrandizement render her the female villain of Porter’s novel, the 1841 Virtue edition’s final image of her locked away, her tempestuous spirit and great force of action subdued, haunts rather than rewards (fig. 22). The looming figure of Christ as well as the hourglass behind her suggest that Joanna will not long survive her solitude.



Figure 22. *Joanna Mar imprisoned in Stirling Castle*. NYPL/Pforzheimer.

These artistic impressions of Porter's fictional characters are joined in some versions of the Virtue edition by illustrations of real Scottish locations. Porter owes this new development yet again to Walter Scott's novels and illustrations. Richard J. Hill, citing art historians and literary critics Lindsay Errington, Richard Altick, and Catherine Gordon, among others, reveals the *Waverley Novels*' vast triangular impact on landscape painting and travel literature in Scotland throughout the nineteenth century, arguing that they "popularized topographical sites of aesthetic and historical interest" (10). The first illustration to Scott's works was in 1819 to Constable's *Novels and Tales of the Author of Waverley* and featured Edinburgh Castle (Hill 2), revealing an instant connection between the national novel and images of real Scottish sites that would endure in Porter's own illustrated editions. One such image is a landscape of the Glen of Ellerslie (fig. 23), Wallace and Marion's home. Small figures are seen in the bottom left, centering the human experience of Romantic landscapes. Though Porter's textual descriptions of locations are not as detailed as those of other Scottish national novelists such as Elizabeth Hamilton and Susan Ferrier, the Victorian era's vogue for landscape illustrations places a new emphasis on location in the novel.

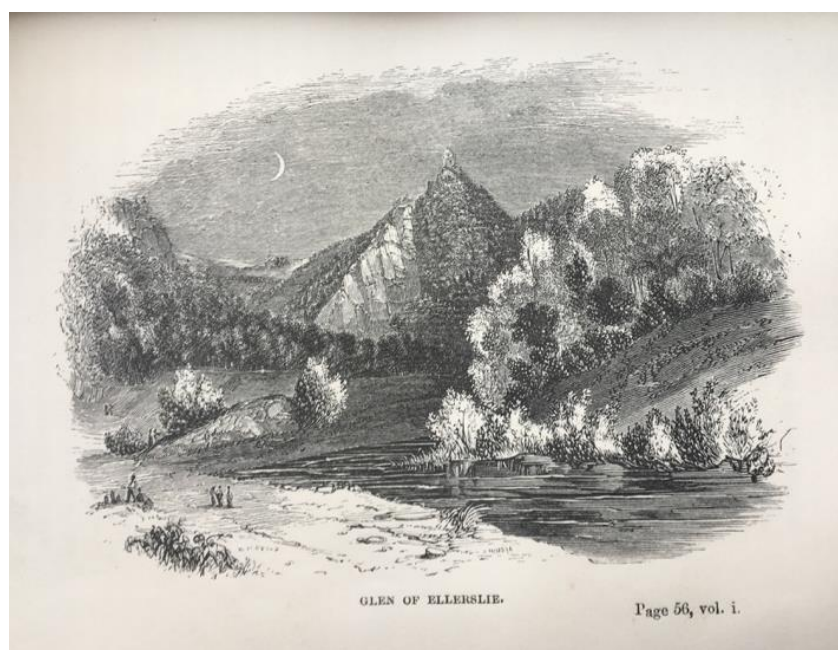


Figure 23. *Glen of Ellerslie*. NYPL/Pforzheimer.

Within *The Scottish Chiefs*, these illustrations perform a crucial task that support Porter's vision of a nation that joins past to present: they fuel and respond to the Victorian trend for Scottish tourism that united Britons in mutual admiration of Scotland's sites and history. Benjamin Colbert and Carl Thompson have shown how travel literature was on the rise throughout the early decades of the nineteenth century, and Richard J. Hill how Scott's *Waverley* was published at a height of interest in travel and illustration, having previously produced his own illustrated *Border Antiquities of England and Scotland* (1814). Tourism was popular in Victorian England, but Scotland in particular experienced a new surge in popularity as an ideal Romantic location wistfully associated with the past (Grenier 1). English and Scottish alike flocked to the Highlands in their search to return to a previous time and escape the industrialization of the modern day (Grenier 2).

Katherine Haldane Grenier and Kenneth McNeil show how Scottish tourism was spurred by Walter Scott and Queen Victoria's love of his novels, yet Porter's novel remains an unrecognized source of fuel for the tartanization and vogue for Romantic Scotland. Though outstripped by Scott's incredible levels of impact, Porter's romance participates in the larger movement toward reifying an ideal Scottish past in the early nineteenth century. As the illustrated book allows readers to see the very places Porter describes, it provides a new avenue through which to accomplish her romance's message of national and temporal unity. These spatial images echo Porter's insistent paratextual connections between past and present within the verbal paratext, particularly the footnotes, as discussed in Chapter One. One such footnote describes Wallace's tower at Dumbarton; in 1810, she writes that Wallace's sword is housed there; in 1841, she expands her history of the sword, noting its removal to the Tower of London and restoration after patriotic outcry from the Scots. She concludes: "The traveler may therefore see it at Dumbarton still; and in the print of the old fortress which illustrates this edition, may be traced the spot of its lasting sanctuary" (*TSC Broadview* 245).

In this seemingly throwaway comment, Porter acknowledges how developments in print culture strengthen her text's facilitation of connection to Wallace through illustrations.

Many illustrations depict historical structures or geographical sites that Wallace visited, and thus associate location with history. Others show structures that were built centuries after Wallace's death—such as Culzean Castle, erected in 1792—echoing the novel's temporal uncanny in its anachronistically modern depiction of history. Unlike many images of Porter's characters, these extemporaneous illustrations of real places echo Porter's paratextual work to erase temporal distinctions; 1792 and 1292 both exist on a temporal continuum of national strength and beauty. They are depicted simply as history, just as Ossian and Wallace exist in a vague sense of history in the text and paratext, and particularly a history barely removed from the present. The image of Culzean Castle thus marks Porter's novel as a site of British national interest in all of Scottish history.

Lynn Hamer reads the illustrations of Scottish landmarks in the 1841 edition differently, arguing that they

include touches suggestive of a Victorian view of the past: the engraving of “Bothwell Castle,” for example, shows a trio in distinctly Victorian dress strolling in the foreground, the castle looming in the background... Thus, the thirteenth-century history is written from a nineteenth-century vantage point that sees landmarks of the past as quickly disappearing. (14)

This reading, however, does not take Porter's verbal paratext into account. While the thirteenth century is indeed written through the lens of the nineteenth century, Porter does not assert that the past and its landmarks are disappearing. On the contrary, this image of Bothwell Castle (fig. 24) complements Porter's message that the present can be in dialogue with the past, and that British citizens should engage with memorial sites to reconnect with their ancestors. Grenier shows the

importance of pilgrimage and ritual to Victorian tourism (4), a concept that Porter championed. Historic castles are one point of communion; Porter's novel, and the descriptions of the castles within, is another. Thus, the illustration of Victorian British citizens visiting Scottish castles does not represent an elegiac farewell to the past, but the opposite. It shows how the illustrated book can facilitate an enduring connection to the past by inspiring British citizens to travel and commune with its heroes.



Figure 24. Bothwell Castle. National Library of Scotland.

Beyond connecting past to present, these tourist-inspiring images support Porter's paratextual emphasis on a united Britain that acknowledges both nations' contributions to a united kingdom. While the extent to which its various citizens may have felt British is still disputed,⁴⁷ tourism impacted the construction of British identity. Grenier argues that though English trips through Scotland tended to strengthen identification with England, they also provided a forward-

⁴⁷ Graeme Morton counters Linda Colley's claims that by the 1830s British identity superseded regional identity. For more, see Gottlieb, Shields, and Davis, among others.

thinking impetus toward an ideal union, contending that “[j]ourneys north also help remind that Great Britain was a joint project” (6). Scotland, and particularly the Highlands, was foreign, wild, and romantic, while England was increasingly modern; joined as Great Britain both qualities could be retained for all (Grenier 7). Jane Porter makes this point herself in this illustrated edition’s preface, in which she celebrates that modern British citizens can reap the joys of a monarch descended from Scottish and English crowns.

However, not all of Porter’s national politics are encompassed or even supported in her illustrations. On the last page of one version of the 1841 *Virtue* edition (NYPL), the final engraving once again contradicts Porter’s deliberate alterations to the text and complicates her message of national unity. The image depicts the visual cacophony of war, including felled horses, dying soldiers, waving banners, and arms poised for bloody blows (fig. 25). The revised text, however, emphasizes the peace of a united Britain at the end of her narrative: “a lasting tranquility spread prosperity and happiness throughout the land” (*TSC Virtue* 2: 461). In another salient example of visual paratext compromising Porter’s project of British harmony, the final illustration leaves the reader with a haunting harbinger of continued violent national strife. It may have reminded Victorian readers of the Jacobite Rebellion almost prophesied by the illustration, and still fresh in their minds from recent editions of the *Waverley*.

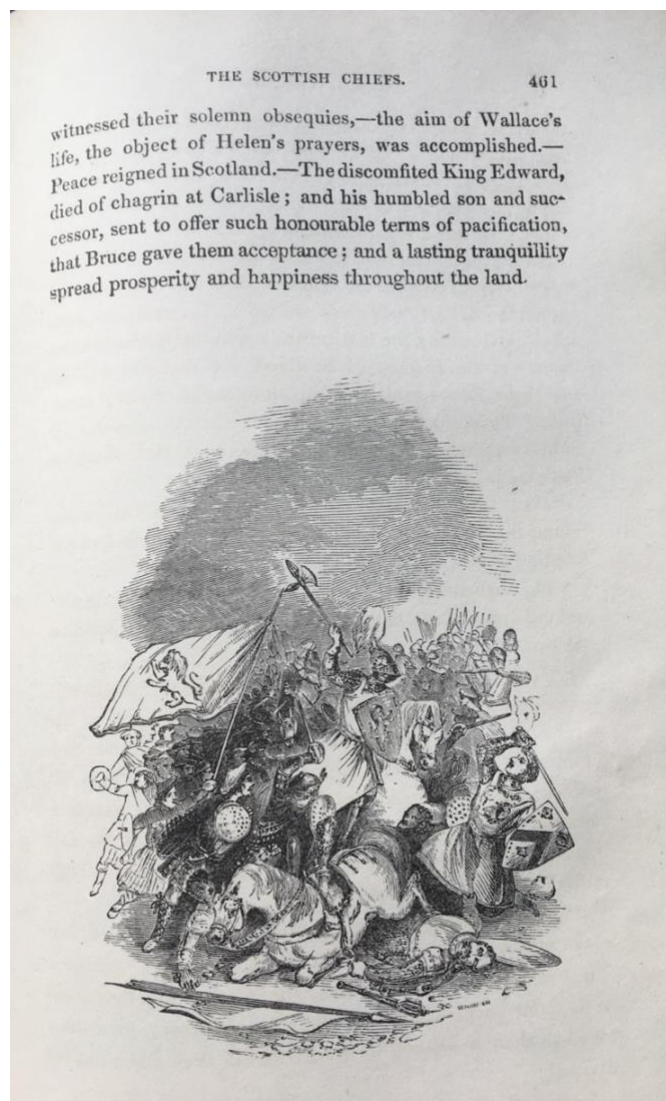


Figure 25. *The final page to the The Scottish Chiefs.* NYPL/Pforzheimer.

A year after this final anthumous edition of *The Scottish Chiefs*, an elaborate posthumous edition of *Waverley* was published. There are over 4000 illustrations added to the Abbotsford edition of the *Waverley Novels*, published 1842-46 by Robert Cadell (1788-1849) after Walter Scott's death in 1832. This edition creates a book in which the author is of equal interest to his characters. The memorialization of Sir Walter Scott—which is repeated in the visual paratext to *Waverley* throughout the next two hundred years—stems in part from the fact that his home at Abbotsford already served as a living museum during his life, and Scott as an international celebrity. In this edition we are

invited to learn more about him; we see multiple portraits of Scott: Scott at the height of his fame (fig. 26), Scott as a young boy, Scott's mother (fig. 27), Scott's coat of arms, facsimiles of Scott's handwriting, and images outside and inside Abbotsford (fig. 28), including his chair (fig. 29) and the famous writing desk in which the first chapters of *Waverley* were lost, a bit of fishing tackle sticking out.



Figure 26. Sir Walter Scott. NYPL/Rare Book Collection.



Figure 27. Scott's mother, Anne Rutherford. NYPL/Rare Book Collection.



Figure 28. Abbotsford. NYPL/Rare Book Collection.



Figure 29. *Scott's chair*. NYPL/Rare Book Collection.

Beyond the obvious emphasis placed on Scott's posthumous cult of personality and public interest in his life and history, the 1840s editions reveal another tension between Scott and Porter's paratext. We are invited into the intimate world of Scott's home—part antiquarian museum and part personal shrine—which had been open to the public since Scott's death. We are not, however, invited into Porter's home—indeed, by 1841 she scarcely had one. While Anna Maria Hall's obituary of Porter in 1850 displays the domestic cottage where she spent her youth in Esher, her home is not a point of interest in the visual paratext to the Virtue edition of *The Scottish Chiefs*. This is understandable within the increasing ideological separation of public and private spheres in the early Victorian era, and given the fact that Porter was still alive, yet it sits uneasily with her 1841 preface that situates her writing as domestic rather than political. The Virtue edition of *The Scottish Chiefs* reveals that Porter could not benefit from an interest in the private and personal on which the Abbotsford Edition of the Waverley Novels depends. They show a vast difference in personal paratext—while images of Scott, his family, his dogs, his house, and his effects abound, we see only one image of Jane Porter—an image that conflates her with her heroine.

The lives and afterlives of Jane Porter and Walter Scott are inextricably bound. While Scott is recognized as having one of the greatest influences in book history, Porter's novels also participated in contemporary conversations about nation, history, and tourism, and contributed to and responded to shifting gender ideals in the first half of the nineteenth century. Though the two novels were originally published in visual uniformity, the immense impact of the Magnum Opus edition of *Waverley* spurred both the paratextual similarities and dissonance between the two authors. Illustrations to *The Scottish Chiefs* in the Standard Novels and the 1841 Virtue editions reveal the inability of the book to present the full range of Porter's female characters, diminishing their transgressions alongside their physical action in national events. Images of Victorian visitors to Scottish monuments, inspired by the vogue for Scottish tourism fed by the *Waverley* Novels, support Porter's concept of British history inspiring the present. Yet the final image of national strife in the Virtue edition hints toward the conflict of *Waverley* and compromises her version of the past as well as her vision for the future. Though each edition accumulates more verbal and visual paratext, a comparison to the evolution of *Waverley* reveals how visual paratext facilitated the ascent of Scott's reception and legacy while binding Porter not only to Scott, but also to contemporary restrictions regarding women's place in the public sphere.

Twentieth-Century Transatlantic Revival: Charles Scribner's Sons

In the second half of the nineteenth century, cheap editions of *The Scottish Chiefs* prevail in a booming transatlantic print market. Many of these editions remove Porter's authorized verbal paratext and are visually stripped even as new printing techniques increased the proliferation of illustrated books. Yet *The Scottish Chiefs* experienced a surge in popularity by the end of the century in the United States. A.D. Hook tells us that the novel "from the beginning enjoyed a remarkable vogue in America," and immediately upon its publication and in the decades to follow there were

editions from Philadelphia, New York, Baltimore, and Hartford (184). Fiona Price notes that its “fame even spread as far as Hawaii, where Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894) found the inhabitants difficult to distract from ‘the novel of the day’” (“Introduction” 15). Porter was aware of her American audience, and archival evidence shows that she kept them in mind as she wrote and revised her novels. Her sister Anna Maria Porter reminds her in 1804, as she revised *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, to “remember that Buonaparte is a favorite in America, and therefore though you cannot praise, you must not censure his actions.”⁴⁸ While Porter made textual and paratextual choices for a transatlantic audience during her life, American editors then altered her paratext to suit their own visions after her death.

The novel’s Scottish subject influenced this popular reception, as Americans maintained an affinity with Scotland and a “sense of cultural secondariness to metropolitan England well into the nineteenth century” (Shields “Situating Scotland” 144). Fiona Price suggests that the novel’s popularity in America may have been in response to the novel’s subtle implication that “those who have ruled in the past may not find themselves able to rule in the future” (“Introduction” 13). Beyond rebellion, Hook notes that the novel is one of the “key works for the diffusion throughout Europe and America of the romantic image of Scotland and the Scots, and of Scotland’s noble and heroic past in particular” (191). This is partially due to Porter’s intertextual relationship with James Macpherson’s *Poems of Ossian*, which were also widely popular in America. The 1890s saw an increased look to the past for new life; Porter’s novel, with its echoes of Ossianic sentiment, was a vehicle of the antique spirit to resurge in a new transatlantic context.

Despite Porter’s emphasis on a unified British state in her paratext, *The Scottish Chiefs* became a visually Scottish rather than British book in 1890s America. The cover of the undated 1890s

⁴⁸ POR 442, Mar. 31, 1804, Jane Porter Papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Crowell edition is bound in tartan and stamped with a golden thistle (fig. 30), showing how the novel's Scottishness became a key selling point for the book in late nineteenth-century America. While it facilitates a romanticized image of Scottish history, the Crowell edition continues the Virtue edition's legacy of depicting places in Scotland, and uses new technology to provide a real image of Porter's locations. It includes lithographic prints of Scottish castles and monuments for its transatlantic audience, granting a new avenue for Porter's goal that the book should connect modern readers with Scotland's past. Furthermore, the edition publishes contemporary images of Scottish castles, rather than attempting artistic renderings places and people as they were in history (fig. 28). The images do not relay a diegetic reality of the novel's past, but rather seek to connect readers with modern Scotland's act of memorializing its past. For example, the image on the title page shows The National Wallace Monument near Stirling (fig. 29)—while this image does not accurately depict the Scotland of Porter's novel, the Monument having been erected in 1869, it emphasizes her book's similar status as a celebratory monument to past glory.

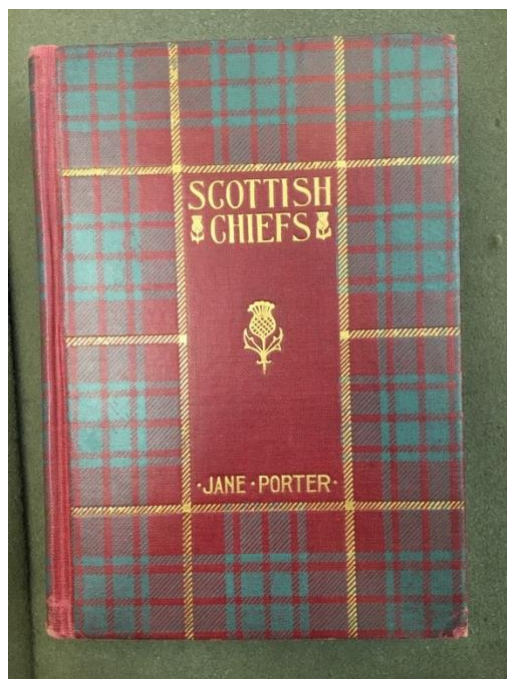


Figure 30. The cover of the undated 1890s Crowell edition. University of Washington Libraries.

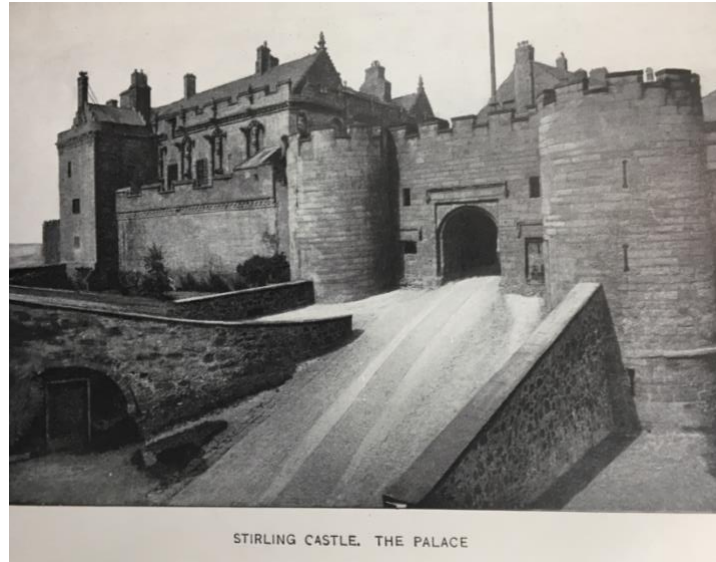


Figure 31. *Stirling Castle. University of Washington Libraries.*



Figure 32. *The Wallace Monument. University of Washington Libraries.*

Other editions of *The Scottish Chiefs* follow the Crowell throughout the turn of the century that market the novel as either a Scottish or a medieval story of war, primarily featuring images of heroic manly deeds. Then in 1921, Charles Scribner's Sons published their edition of *The Scottish Chiefs* edited by Kate Douglas Wiggin (1856-1923) and her sister Nora Archibald Smith (1859-1934) and illustrated by N. C. Wyeth (1882-1945). This edition would define its reception for the entirety of the twentieth century. Not only was it consistently re-printed, it was marketed in series such as the Scribner's Illustrated Classics for Young Readers and later the Atheneum Books for Young

Readers, placing it within a canon of Scottish adventure fiction for children, particularly by male authors and with young boys as the target audience. It thus follows the Standard Novels series and the more recent edition published by Grant Richards in 1904, which was published as part of a Boys' Classics series alongside *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and *The Last of the Mohicans*. McGettigan's argument that "reprinting a book within a series is an act of relocation as well as reproduction" (135) applies not only to the Standard Novels as she intended, but to Porter's inclusion in subsequent series for young readers, marking a new transatlantic life for *The Scottish Chiefs* in America as a children's book.

Like its recent predecessors, the edition creates a romantic image of Scotland for twentieth-century American readers. Hill argues that illustrations of Scotland in the Waverley Novels were "involved in a process of 'creating' Scotland in the imagination of people who would never actually see it" (51). The Scribner's edition facilitates a similar connection a hundred years later in a transatlantic context. This edition reveals how the illustrated book could help Americans feel kinship with Scotland through re-imaginings of its past that center on family and the domestic. Juliet Shields has shown how sentiment and discourses of feeling were embraced by Scottish and American Romantic writers alike to "represent a formative, unstable, and artificial political entity as an organic familial community," revealing both "the malleability of sentiment" and its "political utility" (*Sentimental Literature* 171-172). We see the legacy of this movement in this twentieth century edition of Porter's novel that encapsulates her blending of the sentimental and political in a modern American context.

These ideological connections are facilitated by transatlantic print culture; Jessica DeSpain notes that "the smooth patina of textual transmission and national identity was severely fractured by transatlantic reprinting, which called attention to the mediating role of the publisher and the many versions of any one book" (14). Though referring to British publishers adding paratext to American literature, Katie McGettigan's statement about transnational spaces applies to American

reconstructions of British literature as “the product of transnational print circulations and the interplay between a text and its material form” (134). Examining these transatlantic connections through the book-object will allow us, she argues, to “rethink the role of the publisher and the material text in fashioning national and transatlantic culture both within, and outside of, the nation itself” (McGettigan 144). In the case of *The Scottish Chiefs*, the book’s publisher—and the publisher’s choice of illustrator and editors—has a marked effect on American reception of Porter’s novel and the type of shared transatlantic community it forges.

While Charles Scribner’s Sons also published Ernest Hemmingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald—*This Side of Paradise* (1920) came out just a year before their edition of *The Scottish Chiefs*—it was not American authors of the 1920s with whom Porter was paired through a shared publishing house, but rather those authors with whom she shared an illustrator. The American painter N. C. Wyeth illustrated many nineteenth-century adventure stories for Scribner’s, including Robert Louis Stevenson’s *Treasure Island* (1882) and *Kidnapped* (1886), James Fenimore Cooper’s *The Last of the Mohicans*, as well as earlier tales like *Robinson Crusoe*. The similar style of visuals would forge strong associations between the books, conjuring tenable connections between boys’ adventure fiction and Porter’s romance. Wyeth’s illustrations thus create new ideologic bonds through adventure and imagination for *The Scottish Chiefs* in its twentieth-century transatlantic reception.

These bonds were solidified as the books were bundled together within Scribner’s Illustrated Classics for Young Readers. Beyond the links it creates to other adventure classics, Porter’s inclusion in the series supports her paratextual hopes for her novel’s positive and long-lasting effect on youth. The advertisement remarks that the series includes “[s]tories which have been loved by young readers for several generations” (*TSC* Scribner’s n.p.).

They are all books of rare beauty and tested literary quality, presented in handsome format and strikingly illustrated in color by such famous artists as N. C. Wyeth,

Maxfield Parrish, Jessie Willcox Smith, and others. No other series of books for youthful readers can compare with them; they make gifts of lasting value which will be cherished into adult years. (n.p.)

This excerpt shows the material book's facilitation of important messages from the text and paratext even in simple advertisement blurbs. It marks *The Scottish Chiefs* as a book of "beauty" and "tested literary quality" and suggests that it will be enjoyed by youthful readers, which are obvious boons for the novel's legacy. Yet it also asserts that it will make "a gift of lasting value," claiming its status as a marketable commodity while also suggesting the act of passing on the novel and its message to younger generations. Furthermore, it implies that the novel will be "cherished" into readers' adult years, complementing Porter's goal of inspiring youth to shape their adult lives with virtue. Charles Scribner's Sons beautiful, marketable book provides *The Scottish Chiefs* the opportunity to stay relevant and inspiring for the multiple generations of the twentieth century.

Scribner's was a thriving publishing house in the early twentieth century, and its reach widespread throughout the United States. Financial success allowed them to employ fine artists as their illustrators, such as N. C. Wyeth. While Wyeth had an uneasy relationship with all publishing firms due to his frustration at the tension between fine art and illustration and feeling overworked and underappreciated, he noted that Scribner's was a popular and able conduit for conveying art and literature to the public. He created many full-length canvases for each of the many novels he illustrated for Scribner's; for *The Scottish Chiefs* alone he painted seventeen images which were then engraved. Upon receiving early commissions, Wyeth noted the firm's prowess and large audience. He writes: "fine letter from Scribner's today suggests that they give me still more to do [...] This sounds good to me as there isn't a publishing firm in the world better equipped, financially and with better mediums to reach the public" (Wyeth 114). In February 1921, while working on the illustrations for *The Scottish Chiefs*, Wyeth bemoans the poor color of the firm's reproductions, yet

remarks that “[t]he books have been too successful from the sales point of view to hope for a more expensive process of reproduction” (148). Scribner’s popularity with a wide range of readers, fueled by Wyeth’s paintings, gave it a large influence over the reception of Porter’s novel in America.

Wyeth received the commission for *The Scottish Chiefs* in January 1921; five months later his seventeen paintings were nearly done. This feat is even more impressive considering that he painted illustrations for Porter’s friend Washington Irving’s *Rip Van Winkle* (1819) at the same time. At the end of June he writes of his satisfaction with the work: “Scottish Chiefs and Rip Van Winkle are nearly done [...] I think they are probably the best I have done in that line” (Wyeth 148). He spent the ensuing time not only painting, but also researching Porter’s subject matter. His tutor, Howard Pyle (1853-1911), had taught him the importance of personal knowledge of his subject, and Wyeth had traveled to the American West to gather inspiration for his illustrations for Charles Kingsley’s (1819-1875) novel *Westward Ho!* (1855) as well as other Western novels. However, Wyeth could not travel to medieval Scotland, nor had he ever seen contemporary Scotland. Wyeth was dedicated to learning what he could; he writes in a letter to his father on January 31, 1921:

I started this morning on my cover design for *Scottish Chiefs*. I have spent almost two months absorbing data of all descriptions, embracing most of the authentic history of the early middle ages in Scotland (11th to 13th centuries). [...] It really seems a pity that one isn’t given the time and sufficient money to do a book like this romantic tale of Scotland thoroughly, and with knowledge substantiated by facts as far as is possible – and above all else after a personal investigation of the country. However, I feel encouraged when I hear, as I did recently, that *Kidnapped*, *Robin Hood* and *King Arthur* are almost popular books in Edinburgh! Several Scotsmen have complimented my highland interpretations in *Kidnapped*, especially the Isle

of Erraid. And yet the interpretation was purely imaginative, built upon accumulated and composite knowledge gained from photos, drawings, and descriptions. (Wyeth 147)

Wyeth believed that accuracy was important for conveying “this romantic tale of Scotland thoroughly,” and had performed research on the medieval period at the New York Public Library in 1916 for his other medieval novels, such as Paul Creswick’s (1866-1947) *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1902). His illustrations produce sympathy between the reader and Wallace as they see his virtuous deeds depicted; they also inspire a mutuality of Wallace’s Romantic feelings as both reader and hero gaze on the sublime Scottish scenery.

The cover features a handsome blonde Wallace holding a sword and helmet, flanked by knights in armor on his right and a man in plaid and bonnet on his left (fig. 33), and the title page depicts valiant knights carrying the lion rampant flag (fig. 34). The pastedown and fly leaf feature Stirling Castle, marking a return to the focus on location of the 1890s Crowell edition that allows American audiences to connect with the sites of Scotland (fig. 35). However, it is important that this image of Stirling Castle is a painting, marking Wyeth’s return to artistic renderings of real places that move away from the lithographs in the 1890s Crowell edition. His Stirling Castle is imagined reality, just as it is rendered in the text and therefore in the reader’s mind. Though, like Porter, he wished to be as accurate as possible, Wyeth’s illustrations of real Scottish places encourage the reader to construct an imagined yet real place to house an imagined yet real Wallace. For a modern transatlantic audience detached from the specific political moment of Porter’s paratext, this focus on imagination rather than physical pilgrimage to Scotland’s memorials offers a medium through which American audience could connect with the patriotism and virtue of the Wallace story.

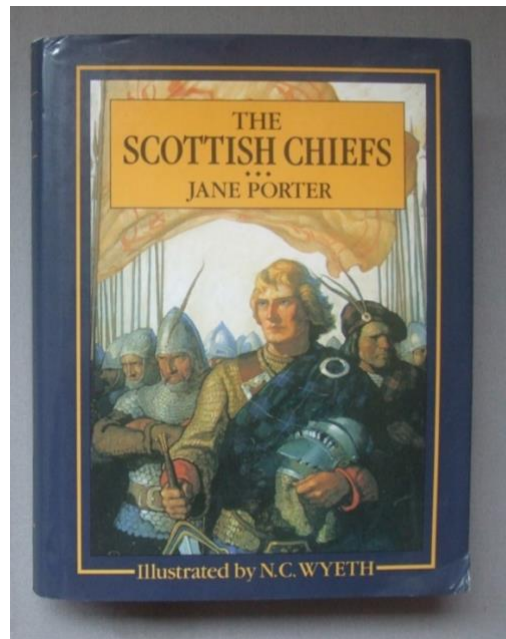


Figure 33. Cover. Photograph of the author's copy.

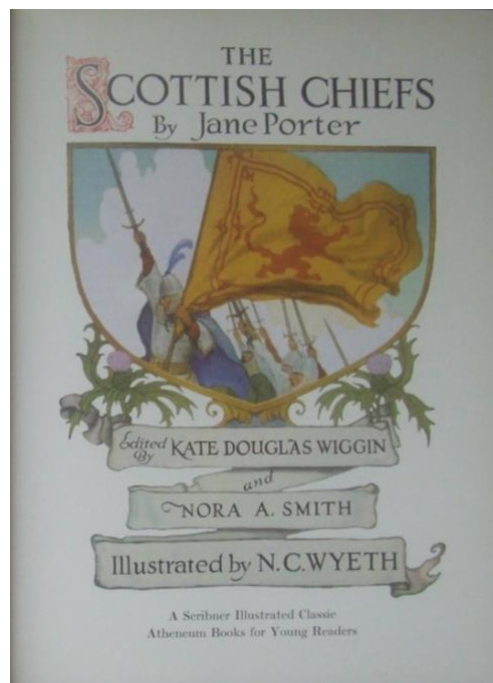


Figure 34. Title page. Photograph of the author's copy.



Figure 35. *Pastdown of Stirling Castle. Photograph of the author's copy.*

Wyeth's admirable pursuit of accurate scenery as well as moments of manly adventure in accord with *Treasure Island* and *Last of the Mohicans* come at the cost of a complex portrayal of Porter's women in *The Scottish Chiefs*.⁴⁹ Wallace, as the male hero, is granted complexity as the images portray his balance between domestic romance and military action. Wyeth depicts Wallace and Marion in an ideal state of repose (fig. 36), while Wallace's call to his men to avenge Marion and Scotland is rendered with energetic action (fig. 37). Wyeth also paints an unusual choice of scene called "Wallace and the Children," further emphasizing Wallace's domesticity and well-rounded perfection (fig. 38). However, the women of the novel are not given similar complexity. While Marion is understandably given only one image, this is one of the only elaborately illustrated editions that contains no image of Joanna Mar. Thus, not only the complexity of Joanna's character, but the

⁴⁹ I have been unable to discover whether it was Wyeth or Charles Scribner's Sons who decided the subjects of the paintings. Future work on Wyeth's unpublished letters would greatly aid this research.

complexity of women's roles in *The Scottish Chiefs* is removed in this edition as we only see women in passive, domestic roles.

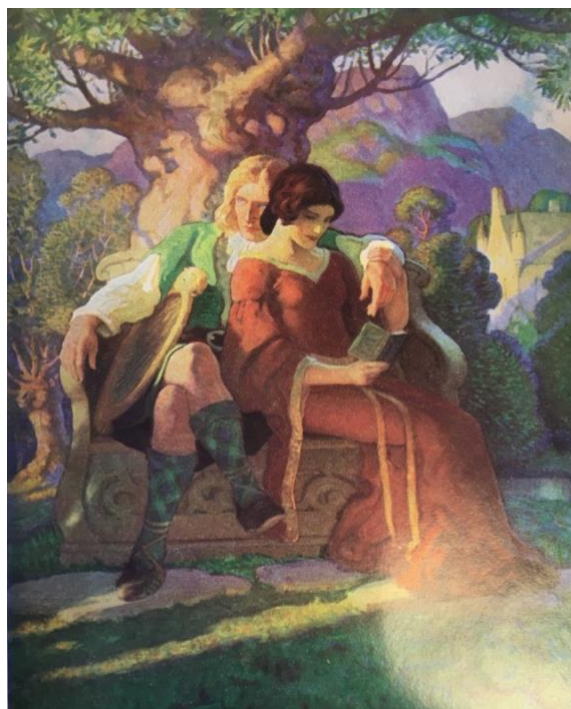


Figure 36. *Wallace and Marion*. Photograph of the author's copy.

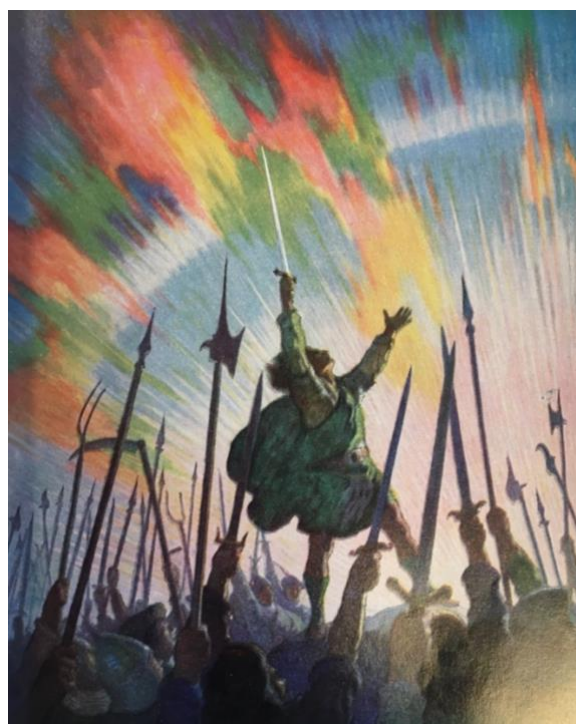


Figure 37. *The Pledge*. Photograph of the author's copy.

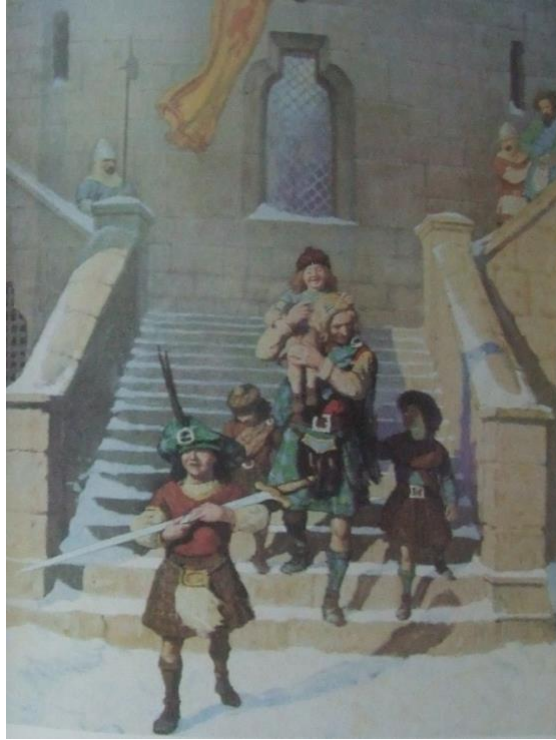


Figure 38. Wallace and the Children. Photograph of the author's copy.

There are four images of Helen, all of which depict her passive moments in connection to Wallace in a nod to traditional—and marketable—tales of medieval chivalry. The first shows Helen being carried into the Glen of Stones after Wallace rescues her from de Valence's first abduction and potential rape (fig. 39). Her face is barely visible, and the illustration focuses more upon the mountain landscape in the background than upon Helen herself. The second shows Wallace carrying Helen, whose face we again cannot see, after she is stabbed by de Valence trying to shield Wallace in the Snawdoun Chapel (fig. 40), and the third Wallace rescuing Helen from yet another abduction by de Valence (fig. 41). This is the clearest image of Helen's face in the edition, yet, lying asleep, she conveys no emotion. Finally, we see Helen draped over Wallace's corpse in an echo of the illustration of the same scene in the Bentley's Standard Novel, yet here physical and emotional actions are diminished in favor of the religious iconography at the center of the painting (fig. 42). Helen is re-cast as a medieval damsel in distress, a passive reactor to men's violence in the Scribner's

illustrations, and thus her bravery and transgressive actions—alongside those of Porter in depicting Helen’s influence over national events and futures—are diminished in this popular edition.



Figure 39. Helen descending into the Glen of Stones. Photograph of the author's copy.

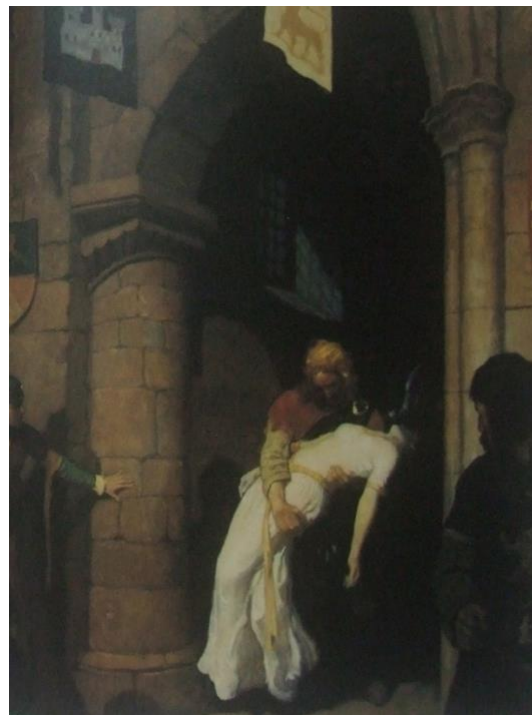


Figure 40. Wallace supporting a swooning Helen. Photograph of the author's copy.

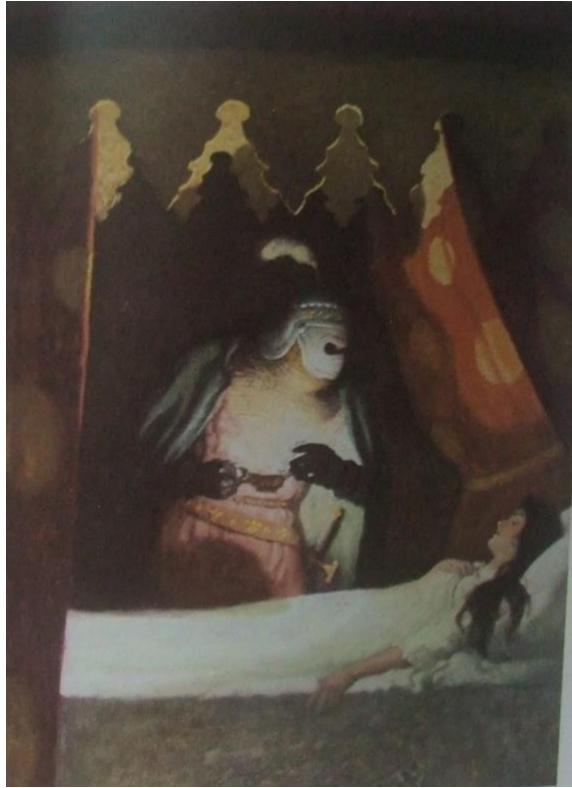


Figure 41. Wallace saving an abducted Helen. Photograph of the author's copy.

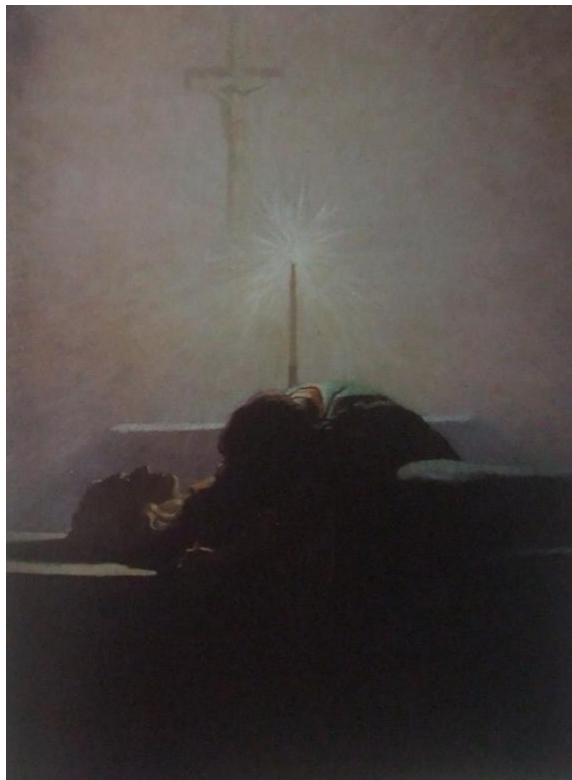


Figure 42. Helen mourns Wallace. Photograph of the author's copy.

The lack of women's agency in the illustrations complements editors Kate Douglas Wiggin and Nora Archibald Smith's decision to remove all of Porter's paratext as well as to re-edit the text itself, removing Porter's authorial agency. Porter's arguments for women's place within history—characters and authors alike—barely appear in this edition as it is marketed instead toward children's expectations of an inspiring military tale. While Wallace is rendered in accordance with Porter's text as sentimental and active, the women are either passive or erased. Containing the most famous images to *The Scottish Chiefs* in the most prominent edition, the Scribner's edition obscures Porter's legacy as a champion for women's political influence in favor of a commercially successful children's tale.

While the visual paratext to the edition secures as it alters Porter's legacy, the new verbal paratext guides the novel's transatlantic reception as a book object for children. Kate Douglas Wiggin is a natural choice to introduce *The Scottish Chiefs*. Called "one of the most popular American writers" in 1896 ("Kate Douglas Wiggin" 308), Wiggin wrote children's stories—most notably *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* (1903)—in addition to teaching kindergarten and making a career of educating America's youth. Fred Erisman notes that she brought "Transcendental ideals to American children" (238), stemming in part from her personal friendship with Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) and her time in Bronson Alcott's (1799-1882) Concord School of Philosophy.

Wiggin studied and practiced Froebelian theories of education, which included making children "good neighbors, good citizens, 'builders of new worlds'" (Forman 275). Quoting Wiggin's *Marm Lisa* (1896) and Wiggin and Smith's *The Story Hour* (1918), Erisman writes that rather than focusing on improving adults, as Emerson does, Wiggin focuses on children as agents of change.

But Mrs. Wiggin goes to the source, the child: it is the children, she says, who will 'do all we have left undone, all we have failed to do, all we might have done had we been wise enough, all we have been too weak and stupid to do.' This they will learn

to do from their reading, for stories, Mrs. Wiggin says, are the child's "first introduction into the grand world of the ideal in character." (Erisman 247)

This idea may have been influenced by Wiggin's reading and re-reading of *The Scottish Chiefs* in her youth; Porter's rendering of Wallace as "the ideal in character" certainly inspired Wiggin, as described in her preface detailed below. While Wiggin's focus was children, Henry James Forman notes that she writes fairy tales "for children from six to ninety-six" (273), and the contemporary *Journal of Education* remarks that her works have a larger scope as they "play in a very forceful and wholesome manner upon the fundamental emotions of human nature" ("Kate Douglas Wiggin" 308). Wiggin certainly has more humor than Porter, and is far less high-flown in her sentiments, yet both authors hoped to inspire youth through emotion and example to improve their worlds as adults.

With its emphasis on sympathy, the effect of childhood stories on adult life, and its insistence that the novel is an enduring masterpiece, Kate Douglas Wiggin's preface is more closely aligned with Porter's composition goals than its edition's marketability as children's literature would have us believe. Wiggin's preface details an apt reading of Porter's use of romance and history; she writes that the novel is "genuine in spirit, if not in absolute detail" (vi) in an echo of Porter's prefaces, and praises the author's genius in re-telling the tale rather than her source material, showing the success of Porter's attempt to convince her readers of her appropriate narration of history through romance. Wiggin, like Porter, argues the importance of romance to modern times due to its ability to inspire patriotism, subtly invoking the horrors of the Great War (1914-1918) as an impetus for returning to tales of past glory. She writes that though she has altered the text, she "preserv[es] the historic content, and not allowing a single romantic incident to escape us in a world that sometimes threatens to be dull, dreary, and lacking in idealism" (Wiggin ix). Furthermore, she writes: "The world has always needed heroes and it needs them sadly now, for the 'greatest good a

hero does to the race is to be a hero and thereby inspire others to heroic living” (Wiggin xiii), a direct echo of Porter’s thoughts on heroism in her own prefaces.

These prefaces, however, are removed. Wiggin explains this choice thus: “As to these prefatory essays of Miss Jane Porter, their literary style belongs to the time in which she lived, but ‘Scottish Chiefs,’ the book itself, belongs to the ages” (x), marking Porter as historically limited while the book is timeless. Yet Wiggin, despite her buy-in to the idea of “Happy Jane Porter, carefully-sheltered young English spinster,” commends Porter’s descriptions of war and valor as a female writer. “Our dear, modest, delicate Jane,” she writes, “how amazingly and thoroughly at home she seems in her scenes of ‘war and bloodshed.’ She might have been born on a battlefield, baptized from her father’s helmet (an ancient Scottish custom)” (Wiggin x). Furthermore, her eulogy on Porter as “dear, modest, delicate Jane” may seem condescending to us now, but it was typical of Wiggin’s style of praising those whom she loved: her autobiography refers to her friend and mentor Mrs. Caroline M. Severance as “[g]reat-hearted, generous, wise Mrs. Severance!” (qtd. in Forman 276). Though her language may irk current readers and probably contributed to negative assessments of Porter’s work throughout the twentieth century, Wiggin’s appraisal of Porter’s skill as a female author of male-dominated topics is positive and admiring.

Wiggin’s preface shows how important the print history and visual paratext of *The Scottish Chiefs* was to its American reception as, like Porter, she includes many of her personal memories in her introduction. She writes: “The copy of ‘Scottish Chiefs’ which was the companion of my early days had a cover of dark red cloth and when I first caught sight of the last American edition bound in gay tartan I felt a certain bereavement, as if I had lost a friend. The volume of my childhood had been literally ‘read to death’” (Wiggin vii). This shows the particular impact the bound and illustrated book had on a reader’s connection to the text. For Wiggin, it is the physical object of the book, its

visual paratext, in addition to its romantic and nostalgic content, that connects her not only to Scotland, but to the very notions of familial and generational ties that Porter stresses in her paratext.

In another parallel to Porter, who frequently collaborated with her sister Anna Maria in their writings, Wiggin edits this edition with her sister Nora A. Smith. She recalls their early childhood reading the book together: “the common occurrence being that while I was finishing my allotted chapter a younger sister was dancing disturbingly on one foot, awaiting her turn to know what might be happening to Sir William Wallace” (Wiggin vii). The act of reading *The Scottish Chiefs* is a family activity in the Smith household, and one that in later times evokes nostalgia for a shared childhood. Wiggin remembers her mother “calling me to supper from my nook in the window-seat, while I pleaded: ‘Oh! Only five more minutes, please!’” (vii). Porter recalls a similar memory of her young brother Robert listening in awe to tales of Wallace and Bruce, “keeping his eager attention awake evening after evening, often to a late hour, and sending him to his bed, still asking for more” (*TSC* Virtue 1: 10). Wiggin preserves Porter’s belief that William Wallace engages and inspires children, and marks *The Scottish Chiefs* as a book over which families and individuals can nostalgically connect to their pasts.

Porter’s assertion that locations can to link readers to history resurfaces here in a tangibly transatlantic context. While Porter’s historical connections were primarily temporal—relating nineteenth-century Britain to thirteenth-century Scotland—Wiggin’s are spatial—connecting the locales of America to those of Scotland. Again echoing Porter, it is sympathy that causes these connections for Wiggin. She writes: “The towers that Edwin Ruthven so bravely scaled still stand as a noble monument and many a warm-hearted school-boy has shed a tear there over his young mate in years” (Wiggin xi). Yet her references to places and spaces also create imaginary bonds. She writes upon re-reading the novel:

When, however, the beloved book lay before me for this present re-reading, the magic was still there and my eyes flew to lines that had thrilled me long ago...Oh, so many years since the arrow had first called me to Glenfinlass; how eagerly I followed, and how ready I was to follow again! (Wiggin vii)

The text, and more aptly the material object, transports Wiggin to Glenfinlass not just as an imaginative child, but again as an adult as she is ready “to follow again.” Wiggin had traveled in Scotland and enjoyed it thoroughly, yet it is not her memories of visiting, but rather of imagining Scotland that she dwells on in her preface. Thus, the physical book produces an affective response that transports readers to Scotland, to their childhood, and to their imagination.

A more noticeable example of shared locale, and particularly of the transatlantic bond created by imagination and memory, is when Wiggin describes her attempts to recreate Wallace’s brave deeds as a child: “It was one of the miraculous feats of strength and skill daily performed by the gallant Wallace, that acted as a direct inspiration to similar exploits,—exploits most difficult to achieve in the upper chamber of a Maine cottage with beds, chairs and stools to serve for Highland scenery” (Wiggin vii). Her direct parallel between a Maine cottage and Highland scenery shows the deep yearning for connection while also a poignant realization of difference—yet in this moment of imagination and memory, the American beds, chairs, and stools, intermingle with the hills, trees, and caves of *The Scottish Chiefs*. While her introduction reveals the bond between her American childhood and Scotland as imaginary, it emphasizes the novel as the conduit of this bond, as the vehicle through which she finds herself in the Highlands, however mundane reality may be.

Kate Douglas Wiggin’s preface to the Charles Scribner’s Sons edition focuses on the home and the family as well as memory as sites for imaginative action. As a practitioner and theorist of children’s education, Wiggin highlights how *The Scottish Chiefs* can inspire children. It’s not only the youth of Porter’s early nineteenth-century Britain that can connect with an ideal Wallace, but those

of twentieth-century America, particularly in response to another international crisis that required patriotic sentiment and bravery. While the timeless text facilitates this transatlantic and transtemporal connection, individual book-objects also spur a productive nostalgia that recalls the power of childhood imagination, supporting Porter's goal of connecting past and present through romance. Finally, though Wiggin and Smith remove Porter's preface and footnotes, Wiggin praises Porter's artistic mastery of male-dominated themes. She does not, however, mention Porter's enmity with Napoleon, her wartime patriotism, her larger Romantic network, nor her assertions of generic precedence. While it could hardly be expected that Wiggin's young readers would be interested in these topics, and Wiggin not to blame, we must also acknowledge that this edition's status as the only edition in print for the entirety of the twentieth century has a lasting legacy. The introduction thus acknowledges Porter as an unconventional, though not a political woman writer. It instead facilitates her posthumous legacy as an author of efficacious sentiment, domestic adventure, and timeless inspiration. Thus, it elevates the text at the expense of the author, influencing readings of *The Scottish Chiefs* for the next hundred years.

It would take almost that long for a new edition of *The Scottish Chiefs* to appear, particularly one that recognized women's place within Porter's literary efforts. Yet while the depiction of women suffered further, the Scribner's edition was monumental in the reception history of *The Scottish Chiefs*. Without it we would probably barely remember the book today, as it almost single-handedly kept the book in circulation in the twentieth century. While Lynn Hamer makes the important point that in re-shelving of *The Scottish Chiefs* as children's literature "Porter's efforts as an imaginative historian have been overlooked" (14), this re-shelving also facilitated her wish to inspire patriotism in a nation's youth by reaching new American audiences. N. C. Wyeth's adventure paintings added to its appeal and placed it among classics that would only continue to gain popularity and cultural cache in film and media, such as *Treasure Island* and *Last of the Mobicans*. Her careful blend of the martial and

the domestic in Wallace's character survives both the temporal and physical distance of this new edition in his illustrations, and Wiggin's preface provides an instance of the novel's new transatlantic life as an inspiring and patriotic tale, as well as an object that produces a lifelong nostalgic affection.

Twenty-First Century Restoration: Academic Editions

After many reprints of the Scribner's edition and a brief stint as a comic book throughout the twentieth century, the twenty-first century saw the first academic edition of *The Scottish Chiefs*. Edited by Gary Kelly and published by Pickering & Chatto in 2002, *The Scottish Chiefs* is not published as a standalone novel, but as volumes four and five of a series entitled *Female Gothic* edited by Kelly, in which it features as an example of the "Historical Gothic." As a re-print of the first edition, this edition contains no illustrations and prints only the paratext included in the first edition. Though it thus does not provide the full narrative of Porter's paratextual control of her persona, it brings the novel back into print and marks it as a Romantic text worthy of careful study. Kelly's introduction acknowledges Porter's importance to Romanticism as he analyzes how the text engages British and European political ideologies, gender politics, source material, and contemporary genres. Thus, even in twenty-first-century academic editions, the verbal paratext adds to Porter's legacy while other conditions of publication—such as the visual paratext and its inclusion in a larger series—limits her reception as an important figure in Romanticism.

The only other scholarly edition of *The Scottish Chiefs* is edited by Fiona Price and published by Broadview Press in 2008. This edition continues Kelly's work of placing Porter in wider conversations in Romantic studies, including the development both of the novel and of British national identity. Price restores much of Porter's paratext and adds copious new verbal and visual paratext, thus recovering and advancing Porter's legacy. Much of the added verbal paratext acknowledges the wider national conversations in which Porter participated. One appendix to the

novel features excerpts of Wallace material written by Joanna Baillie, Robert Burns, Felicia Hemans, and Thomas Campbell, as well as contemporary reviews of *The Scottish Chiefs*. Price's emphasis in her introduction on divorcing Porter from theories of the historical novel that unfairly define her as lesser to Walter Scott contributes to the edition's overall move to establish women as equal actors to men, rather than passive or subordinate.

The two illustrations to the novel support this restoration to Porter's goals. Broadview's standard of using nineteenth-century photographs on their covers provides a unique and much-needed visual re-reading of *The Scottish Chiefs*. The cover features an 1874 photograph by Victorian artist Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879), "The Parting of Sir Lancelot and Queen Guinevere" (fig. 43). This is thus the first edition to feature a female illustrator, as well as to depict a man and woman as of equal interest on the cover. The photograph was featured in *Illustrations to Tennyson's Idylls of the King and Other Poems* (1874); Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892) and Cameron were friends while living on the Isle of Wight, and he asked her to provide photographs for one of many new editions of his collection of poems re-telling British legend (Rosen 231). *Idylls of the King* (1859-1885), like *The Scottish Chiefs*, offers an ideal figure from the past to guide a modern age toward virtue and patriotism. Also akin to Porter, Cameron provides a re-interpretation of a man's version of historical legend that focuses on and questions the status of women.



Figure 43. Julia Margaret Cameron, “The Parting of Lancelot and Guinevere” (1874). Courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Museum Open Content Program.

The mirroring of Wallace and Helen with Lancelot and Guinevere markets Porter’s novel not only as one of medieval chivalry, but also as a site of re-writing women’s roles in history. Tennyson’s Guinevere is a transgressive woman who betrays virtuous Arthur in her love affair with Lancelot. Described by Jeff Rosen as an “antiheroine,” Guinevere is not to Lancelot as Helen is to Wallace. In fact, the character mirroring hints more at Lady Mar’s aspirations than Helen’s, while Wallace is more akin to Arthur than Lancelot as a patriotic paragon of virtue. Yet when re-purposed for Porter’s re-telling of historical legend, Cameron’s photograph takes on new meaning that restores balance to a virtuous couple. There is no sign of Lancelot and Guinevere’s indiscretion in the photograph, only tender repose in a more intimate echo of N.C. Wyeth’s illustration of Wallace and Marion. More importantly, they lean into each other in mutual support—the man does not support the woman nor is he independent of her support. Though Cameron’s title declares this image a parting, this is not evident in the photograph; furthermore, if read as a farewell, the couple’s

embrace marks their unity in a poignant echo of the ending of *The Scottish Chiefs*. Beyond the figures, Cameron’s famously out-of-focus style of photography has recently been read by Mirjam Brusius as eliding precision in favor of illuminating character, a striking similarity to Porter’s method of narrating history. In featuring work by a woman whose unique techniques made her a “pioneer in the history of photography” (Rosen 4), the Broadview Press edition underscores Porter’s own innovative contributions to her field.

Porter’s cries for greater acceptance of women’s artistic portrayals of history is emphasized by the edition’s only other image, which is of Jane Porter herself. The George Henry Harlow portrait, as discussed in Chapter Two, depicts Porter in religious garb holding a cross (fig. 44). This portrait emphasizes Porter’s Christian themes and later Victorian persona as a religious and moral guide to the nation. While it presents only one aspect of Porter’s authorial persona, it brings how the author wished to present herself to her readers to the fore of the edition, complementing Price’s restoration of Porter’s personal paratext.



Figure 44. George Henry Harlow, “Jane Porter” (between 1804-1810). NPG 1108, National Portrait Gallery, London.

While Price's edition is a milestone in the recovery of *The Scottish Chiefs* in Romantic circles, Jane Porter is still obscured in favor of her text. Like Kelly, Price favors Porter's first edition as her copy text and thus does not show Porter's textual edits and new paratext. While she does include Porter's later prefaces in her first critical appendix, the final 1841 preface is abridged to remove, among others, Porter's musings on how historical spaces produce a sense of national memory and unity, one of the core themes of her novel illuminated by my study of paratext. Furthermore, it prints the footnotes of the first edition, yet only selectively prints those of later editions. The removed footnotes are precisely those that house Porter's authorial voice and project; notes that are not of interest to Wallace's story, yet are paramount to Porter's story, are cut. While it is understandable that editors would seek to streamline Porter's paratextual material, we must recognize that it is consistently those footnotes that develop Porter as a valiant and celebrated author that are removed, while footnotes that describe Scottish history and culture in relation to the Wallace narrative remain, providing an incomplete rendition of both Porter's authorial persona and her patriotic novel. Nonetheless, Price's edition is a crucial moment in Porter's legacy as the book re-establishes the importance of women to the novel and markets *The Scottish Chiefs* as a text worthy of academic study.

Conclusion

The original complexity of paratext attached to *The Scottish Chiefs*, which asserts the importance of the past inspiring the present and women's active place in history alongside the prominence of the female author, is altered greatly throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as publishers respond to book-selling trends and the material constraints of publication. Tracking the addition and removal of paratext over two hundred years shows how illustrations altered readings of Porter's novel, as well as how the residual effects of previous paratextual readings

still guide our current estimations of *The Scottish Chiefs* today. New editions tend to preserve Porter's novel as a site of sympathetic connection to the past that inspires virtue, as well as her depiction of a complex Wallace that balances the militaristic with the domestic. However, until recent academic editions, the agency and action of Porter's virtuous and transgressive women alike was gradually dimmed in favor of pacifying the women within modern tropes of medieval chivalry.

Porter's career is in many ways bound to that of Walter Scott, and it remains an onus of current critical work to divorce her from constant comparison to him and his work. Yet examination of the publication history of *The Scottish Chiefs* and *Waverley* reveals how Porter's book-objects reacted to Scott's throughout her life, suggesting claims of imitation still prevalent today. While the illustrations affixed to Porter's novel were designed to be in uniform with the Magnum Opus edition, they illustrate women actively engaged in national politics and gesture to the larger conversation of female patriotism in Romantic Britain. Her inclusion in the Standard Novels as well as the paratextually rich Virtue edition build the cultural cache that propelled her novel through the nineteenth century, though her reputation and nuanced treatment of history and women begin to decline. At the turn of the century, seeds of lasting English-Scottish discord sewn in Victorian illustrations are more pronounced as Scotland is celebrated over Britain, and loss is given greater weight than victory. The Scribner's edition reinforces Porter's conversation with adventure classics established by the Standard Novels, yet re-publishes them for children with dazzling new illustrations of Scottish scenery and medieval chivalry. The introduction's emphasis on childhood inspiration and patriotism aligns with Porter's goals, and shows the material book object's ability to foster transatlantic and transtemporal connections focused on domestic memory, while also diminishing Porter's patriotic valor as a national author. Interest in the text is divorced from interest in Jane Porter in the twentieth century. Porter's recovery into academic conversations is ushered in

by partial restoration of Porter's paratext and greater acknowledgement of women's agency in the novel, a promise for new work to come on *The Scottish Chiefs* and Porter's other works.

When Porter's paratext is removed for cheap editions in the 1860s, her voice never truly recovers. While anthumous verbal paratext creates a symbiotic relationship between sentimental history and patriotic female author, subsequent editions ran wild with tartan-clad warriors and fainting women and forgot Jane Porter. While we may at first be inclined to disparage the twentieth-century re-shelving of *The Scottish Chiefs* as children's literature, it is rather the accompanying stripping of paratext that obscures Porter's contributions to nation, history, the novel, and women's writing. By examining the evolution of paratext over two centuries we see not only how it alters a reader's estimation of Porter's goals, but also how it can sway critical assessments of authors and texts. The paratext attached to *The Scottish Chiefs* thus has power not only to influence readings of the text, but also to shape Porter's reception, publication history, and legacy.

Conclusion

In July 1810, just months after the publication of *The Scottish Chiefs*, Jane Porter received a letter from a Renfrewshire gentleman.⁵⁰ The man admires her work, praising her “genius” and finding the novel worthy of the author of *Thaddeus of Warsaw*. Yet he has two suggestions. He protests that William Wallace’s hometown of Elderslie is not situated in Lanark as she claims but in Renfrew, and requests that Porter fix the error in subsequent editions. His second suggestion is artistic rather than factual:

Would not the following lines from Burns, be a more appropriate motto for the ‘Scottish Chiefs’ than the one chosen?

At Wallace’ name what Scottish blood
 but boils up in a springtide flood
 oft have our fearless fathers trod
 by wallace’ side
 still pressing onward red wat shod
 or glorious died” -Burns

The quote from Robert Burns’ “Epistle to William Simson” (1785) does indeed relate more closely to her historical subjects of Wallace and the Scottish Wars of Independence. Yet while Porter was more than willing to take advice from readers—she altered the text according to his hint about Elderslie and dutifully thanked him in a footnote—she did not take his advice about her epigraph. She instead chose to keep her selection from the *Poems of Ossian*: “There comes a voice that awakens my soul. It is the voice of years that are gone; they roll before me with their deeds. – Ossian.” Rather than embrace Burns’ bloody evocation of Wallace, Porter maintained her focus on Ossianic

⁵⁰ PORT 10.07.27, July 27, 1810, Jane Porter Papers, Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library.

inspiration from the past, and thus elevates transcendent patriotic sentiment over historic bloodshed and loss. Porter's paratextual spaces thus hold power over how readers engage with her text—power she was eager to wield for political and personal means within *The Scottish Chiefs*.

Three years later, Porter received another letter that reveals her success not only at creating sentiment, but also of depicting women as active patriots alongside men in her text. In choosing the genre of the romance, Porter insisted on her ability to re-invent the tale of William Wallace according to contemporary feeling; she used her freedom of imagination to create Helen Mar, who is both virtuous and courageous, to assert women's rising place in national politics. Her hope of altering the course of future Wallace narratives saw fruition in an 1813 letter from William Warrington,⁵¹ presumably the Berkshire vicar and author of *The History of Wales* (1786) and two medieval dramas (Morgan n.p.). He writes:

I have read with great pleasure, the ingenious Works, which you have lately published...I was struck with the portrait you have delineated of Sir Wm. Wallace; the heroe [sic] and the patriot of Scotland. Impelled by the subject; for I cannot say inspired, having scarcely set a foot on the base of Parnassus; I have presumed to send you the enclosed lines; under a conviction, that Miss Porters sense of justice, will be mellowed by her candor.

The poem rehearses the familiar tale of bravery and national pride, yet includes one of Porter's distinct contributions to the tale: a female heroine. Furthermore, rather than re-writing her as a passive domestic figure, Warrington notes her cross-dressing and adventurous travel:

So stood the Maid: heroick, and serene:
beaming bright rays around the dusky scene.

⁵¹ PORT 13.05.16, May 16, 1813, Jane Porter Papers, Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library.

Regardless of her sex, her charms, her age,
 clad as a Knight, she brave'd wild Ocean's rage:
 seeking her warrior, midst contending arms:
 her bosom beating with no false alarms"

He also depicts her direct interventions into the fate of nations as she cries to inspire Wallace's army:

"Degen'rate Scotia: where is now thy name?
 Sunk are thy honors: and Heraldick Fame."

Appropriately, Warrington includes footnotes to his composition. One such is on Porter: "The ingenious Miss Porter, author of the *Scottish Chiefs*. In that work, she has beautifully detailed the Loves of Wallace, and the Lady Helen, with their virtues, and their sorrows." In this unpublished tribute, alongside published tributes by Joanna Baillie and Felicia Hemans, Porter thus achieved her goal of becoming a valued contributor to the larger Wallace narrative to demonstrate how both genders work to create a united and virtuous nation.

It is commonplace to assert that *The Scottish Chiefs* is a patriotic book. Jane Porter was warmly zealous in her support of a monarchy that united the Scottish and English royal lines and a nation that attempted to overthrow the tyranny of Napoleon. She does not simply reflect contemporary feeling in her novel, but encourages a type of empathy that results in action and change. Furthermore, she asserts the importance of women acting in national history through her courageous heroines and boldness as a public author. From its conception in her Edinburgh nursery to its hundreds of editions across the globe, she works and re-works text and paratext to render the novel inextricable from national politics.

Much of this paratext collapses temporal distance to assert a continuous British heroism that extends beyond Fergus, Wallace, and the British army to encapsulate Porter herself. Toward the end of the novel, the poet and prophet Thomas of Ecrildoun predicts that an heir of Bruce shall sit upon

a united British throne. In a footnote, Porter mentions her historical source James Spottiswood's assertion of this event as well as its realization: "Spottiswood insists very much on this prediction of Ercildoun's, which was verified in James, in the ninth degree from Bruce" (*TSC Broadview* 673).

This is where the footnote ends in modern academic editions of the novel; yet in 1831 Porter added to the footnote for the Standard Novels edition:

By a most extraordinary coincidence the author of this work was revising it, and this very page, and at this very passage, just as the guns were firing which proclaimed the coronation of King William IV., on the 8th of September, 1831. Though several miles distant from the royal scene, she heard them, and fervently united her response—
'Long live the anointed descendant of the Bruce and Plantagenet!' (*TSC Crowell* 2: 288)

The past and present intermingle in this paratextual moment. Ercildoun prophesies, Spottiswood confirms, King William IV reigns, and Porter revises. The author then gathers these illustrious figures—herself included—into one physical space. The footnote shows Porter's loyalty to her state and monarch, but also how she presents her acts of writing and revising as bound with the fate of her nation.

Porter intended the influence of her novel to continue after her death as she hoped her legacy would increase in scope and grandeur. Throughout her four major prefaces Porter's signature becomes more elaborate. By the conclusion to the long 1841 preface, she unites her emphasis on a merged past and present with her identity as a female author who loves and is beloved by the public:

I would subscribe myself to those who are yet alive amongst the indulgent readers of my early youth, and to their children who have read, and to their grandchildren who may be induced to con hereafter, my true tale of former times, that I am, with a

tender and grateful remembrance of the past, and an affectionate zeal for the present rising generation, their ever faithfully devoted Jane Porter” (*TSC* Virtue 1: 51)

Porter’s assertion that her novel is a “true tale of former times” speaks not to the complete factual accuracy of the novel, for she had already disavowed any such claim and justified it within the genre of romance. Instead, Porter’s truth is one of sentiment—of loyalty, sympathy, and virtue that transcends the verifiable facts of history to inspire nations in their times of need. It is Wallace’s selfless patriotism that is true—and it is Jane Porter who breathes life into his quest to overthrow tyranny.

While the text of *The Scottish Chiefs* both preserves and reimagines the great tale of William Wallace, the paratext preserves and reimagines the public image of Jane Porter. Porter constructs an affinity between herself and Wallace in the spatial affordances of the printed page that unites their identities as virtuous patriots valiantly serving their country. In addition to footnoting the story of Wallace throughout the text, Porter similarly footnotes her own prefaces. In one footnote she gives the history of her house in Esher and describes its famous former occupants, attempting to render her personal history of mutual interest as Wallace’s. At the Esher house near Hampton Court, Porter would gaze across the Thames and ponder the historic acts that took place in the surrounding fields: “It is impossible to think on these things while standing where the monarch and his minister stood, and not find the ‘visions of other days’ passing before us” (*TSC* Virtue 1: 25). In these footnotes Porter models the empathetic connection to the past via physical sites she encourages her readers to emulate; her footnotes thus present Wallace and Porter herself as ideal models. Though the two patriots perform different work on different scales, Porter argues for their shared virtue, piety, and valiant patriotism as they commune with the past to serve their nations.

Porter felt a sense of kinship with Wallace. She writes in one preface: “I ceased not during my whole future life to remember, with something like a kindred sympathy, himself and the

dauntless friends who had followed him to honor or the grave” (*TSC Virtue 1: 15*). Such a sentence not only models how patriots should react, but also claims a kinship with her hero that her sister Anna Maria had asserted upon first reading *The Scottish Chiefs*: “When I know all that you could have made of this work under different circumstances, I feel that my Jane found kindred heroism with her Hero in publishing it at this period.”⁵² Porter’s heroism is literary and Wallace’s military, yet Porter merges them in her comment that “Sir Walter Scott (her stalworth brother bard) did not less approve my attempt at ‘drawing the sword’ of the Scottish ‘Gideon.’” (*TSC Virtue 1: 38*). This remark is both ekphrastic in the sense that Porter depicts Wallace, but also militaristic in its implication that Porter physically draws the sword in conjunction with him. Through both meanings, Wallace and Porter merge in a way that emphasizes the latter’s artistic skill and patriotic bravery.

Artistry and patriotism mingle in the burgeoning genre of the national novel, which has been associated with paratext since its inception in the early nineteenth century. With emerging genres comes the opportunity to change how national narratives are crafted and delivered, and women writers seized upon paratext as a means to alter ideas regarding who can contribute to national conversations. Porter helps bring the woman writer boldly into the public eye by wielding feminized genres and tropes—such as the romance and the man of sensibility—as well as paratext to assert her authority over traditionally masculine topics. Her historic subject matter, anachronistic sentiment, political authorship, and textual and paratextual revisions all claim a stake in evolving conversations about British identity and women’s acceptable influence over national feeling and action.

Subsequent inattention (or lack of access) to Porter’s paratext has obscured the many innovations of her novels and authorship. Porter’s accumulation of paratext re-shape the novel’s

⁵² POR 652, 1810, Jane Porter Papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

gendered and national messages and fails to recognize that paratext is an essential aspect of a work consistently in dialogue with the text to generate its full meaning. This case study suggests that for the early nineteenth-century national novel more widely, to focus on the text at the exclusion of the paratext, and thus to exclude the voice of the author intentionally housed therein, is to alter the novel and its meaning. Its study of paratext reveals new insights into Jane Porter's public persona, her political mission in writing *The Scottish Chiefs*, her reception throughout the last two centuries, and her place in contemporary Romantic criticism. We need to attend to paratext; specifically, we need to look at paratext to women's novels which has been routinely stripped and forgotten, and therefore has not been incorporated into our assessments of authors or their texts. Thus, a closer look at what we currently call paratext to national novels encourages consideration of paratext as intratext—inseparable from the text and an equal aspect of an overall book.

Porter believed in the power of memorials. She offered her novel as a memorial to the past—and more particularly to its virtuous men *and* women—that will inspire the present and future. This goal is re-inscribed in the final piece of paratext she attached to *The Scottish Chiefs*, the appendix to the 1841 edition. The final paragraph of the appendix discusses the recent death of Porter's idol Sir Sidney Smith (1764-1840), another opponent of Napoleon and the dedicatee of the first edition of *Thaddens of Warsaw*. She mentions that the most recent session of parliament had pledged to return Smith's body from Paris to place the "sacred relics" in a "tomb of honor in one or other of the two great cathedral cemeteries of our British metropolis" (*TSC* Crowell 2: 354). This memorial would be the nation's greatest display of honor and patriotism:

Thus, it indeed becomes the government of every country, and the people who compose its population, to uphold its defenders in life, and to honour their remains when dead. Such memorials speak aloud to future generations.[...]“Honor to whom honor is due.” Of the like character and acceptance are the records of history. Even

so that of the epic song. The aim, also, of the biographical style of romance; to which my pen hath ardently, though humbly been devoted, from its holder's 'youth to age;' and, that its aim has not been disappointed, in the hearts of many a young aspirant to patriotic glory, and to private virtue, who has read her pages—chronicling the noble deeds of old!—is indeed a 'setting sun' of gracious influence, to the declining days of Jane Porter. (*TSC* Crowell 2: 355)

Before she wrote this final paratextual farewell, Porter created a subscription list to raise a monument to Sir Sidney Smith (White 328). The name she inscribed alongside her pledge: "William Wallace."

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