

Anniversary edition of Scott's Waverley



Sir Walter Scott's Waverley: Newly adapted for the modern reader by Jenni Calder is being published 200 years after the original appearance of the first of the Waverley novels and the birth of the historical novel in English. The Edinburgh Reporter met the author in Princes Street gardens next to the Walter Scott Monument where a cake was cut and champagne popped to mark today's significant anniversary. She was ably helped by piper Neil MacLure from Goldenacre.

✘ Waverley was published anonymously on 7 July 1814. Scott had no idea whether how the novel would be received. In evoking the Jacobite Rebellion in 1745, Scott created an entirely new phenomenon in literature and a public reception of derision or praise were equally possible. Perhaps for this reason, he chose to conceal his authorship and even the manuscript submitted to publisher Archibald Constable was not in his own handwriting. Constable saw through the subterfuge but agreed to keep the author's name off the title page.

The new genre was a smash hit. In terms of overnight success as a novelist, Scott was the JK Rowling of his day. The first edition sold out within 48 hours, Waverley fever swept Europe and it was avidly sought in translation around the globe. Among the general public, speculation was rife as to the author's identity but Scott's authorship remained a closely guarded secret for the next 13 years.

In 'losing' over 50,000 words in her adaptation of Waverley for the modern reader, Jenni Calder has 'found' a compelling storyline that deals with perennial human themes of choice, identity, loyalty, trust, betrayal and intrigue.

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Jenni Calder was born in Chicago, educated in the United States and England, and has lived in or near Edinburgh since 1971. After several years of part-time teaching and freelance writing, including three years in Kenya, she worked at the National Museums of Scotland from 1978 to 2001 successively as education officer, Head of Publications, script editor for the Museum of Scotland, and latterly as Head of Museum of Scotland International. In the latter capacity her main interest was in emigration and the Scottish diaspora. She has written and lectured widely on Scottish, English and American literary and historical subjects, and writes fiction and poetry as Jenni Daiches. Her *RLS: A Life* is regarded as the definitive biography of Robert Louis Stevenson. She has two daughters, a son and a dog.