

# 'Sir Walter Scott' at Waverley Station



## *Great Scott! – Sir Walter's Words Around Waverley*

From today Edinburgh's Waverley Station – the only railway station in the world named after a novel – will be awash with the wit and wisdom of the writer of that book, Sir Walter Scott.

Scott's Waverley, regarded as the world's first historical novel, celebrates its 200th birthday this year and in a collaboration between Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust and Network Rail, quotes from Scott's books and the thoughts of the man himself will be written across the floors, windows and walkways of the station bringing Scott's words alive for a new audience.

Quotes will include:

*O what a tangled web we weave / When first we practise to deceive!*

*In literature as in love, courage is half the battle*



The campaign, developed by Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust, aims not only to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the publication of Waverley, but also to mark the 10th anniversary of Edinburgh's designation as the world's first UNESCO City of Literature.

As part of this campaign, 25,000 copies of a free book – Great Scott! – will be given away in the station. Telling the story of Scott's incredible life, the pocket-book includes a

timeline, quotes and musings and gives tips on things to see, read and do relating to Scott. The book and campaign celebrate the life and work of one of the world's most famous writers who was a major celebrity in his time and continues to influence writers today including bestselling Game of Thrones author George R. R. Martin.

Ali Bowden, Director of the Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust said: "As a City of Literature we want to see books, words and ideas celebrated as widely as possible and Waverley station with its association to Scott and the anniversary is an ideal place. Most people know about Scott – the world's tallest monument to a writer is the Scott Monument on Princes Street – but they might not know his books and we hope this campaign helps people discover the man and his words."

The Great Scott! Celebrating Sir Walter Scott book is only available in Waverley Station in October and November while stocks last, as well as online in audio form and as an ebook at [cityofliterature.com/waverley](http://cityofliterature.com/waverley). The pocket book is also available in a large print and Braille version. The campaign will be supported by social media activity on #waverley200. The Scottish International Storytelling Festival is supporting the campaign with a strong Scott-theme in its Once Upon a Place programme which runs from Friday 24th October to Sunday 2nd November 2014 and there is a special free display of Scott's work, featuring the original manuscript of Waverley, taking place at the National Library of Scotland on George IV Bridge in Edinburgh and running until the 16th November.

✖ Juliet Donnachie, Network Rail's station manager for Waverley, said: "As the only station in the world named after a novel, I like to think that Waverley Station retains a bit of romance not always associated with modern railways. Sir Walter Scott was the most prominent Scot of his time and it's appropriate that the main railway station in Scotland's capital continues to acknowledge his influence. Waverley

Station is steeped in history – it has been the stage for millions of stories since the Victorian era and I think Sir Walter would like that. We're very happy to be able to support this celebration of his work."

The Great Scott! campaign manager, Dr Douglas McNaughton, said: "By inserting fictional characters into actual events, Scott invented the historical novel and influenced every writer who followed him, including Charles Dickens, Jules Verne and, by his own admission, George R. R. Martin, author of the phenomenally popular Game of Thrones series. Waverley isn't a boring, dusty old story – it's essentially an action movie. The naïve young hero is brought up by relatives, goes on a perilous journey and is caught up in the politics of an impossibly strange and exotic landscape. That's basically the plot of Star Wars! And Scott wrote Waverley as a novel covering historical events in living memory. The 1745 Jacobite rebellion was exactly as recent for Scott's readers as the Second World War is to us now."

Commenting in response to the news, Councillor Richard Lewis, Culture and Sport Convener for the City of Edinburgh Council, said: "As the world's first UNESCO City of Literature, Scotland's Capital city is a genuine hub for all things to do with literature. This celebration to mark one of the city's best-known writers can only go to reinforce that status further.



"Waverley station sits just a stone's throw from the Scott Monument, which is the world's largest monument dedicated to a writer. Just a few streets away in the New Town is Edinburgh's Assembly Rooms which is where, in 1827, Scott decided to reveal his identity as the 'The Great Unknown' author of the Waverley Novels. Homages to Sir Walter can be found throughout Edinburgh. In the Old Town you can learn about his life and works at the city's Writers Museum, where visitors can see the printing press on which the Waverley Novels were produced,

and a first edition of the Waverley novel. Just along the Royal Mile you will also find the Heart of Midlothian set in stone, so called after Scott's novel of the same name.

"Arriving into Edinburgh's Waverley Station is a special welcome for any visitor, with its enviable location right in the heart of the city, and I'm sure the installation of Scott's quotes will provide a great starting point for exploring Scott's legacy in the city, and will even serve to cheer up the weariest of commuters as they travel to and from the Capital."

Images from today's event by John Preece