

Waverley (1814)

Sir Walter Scott

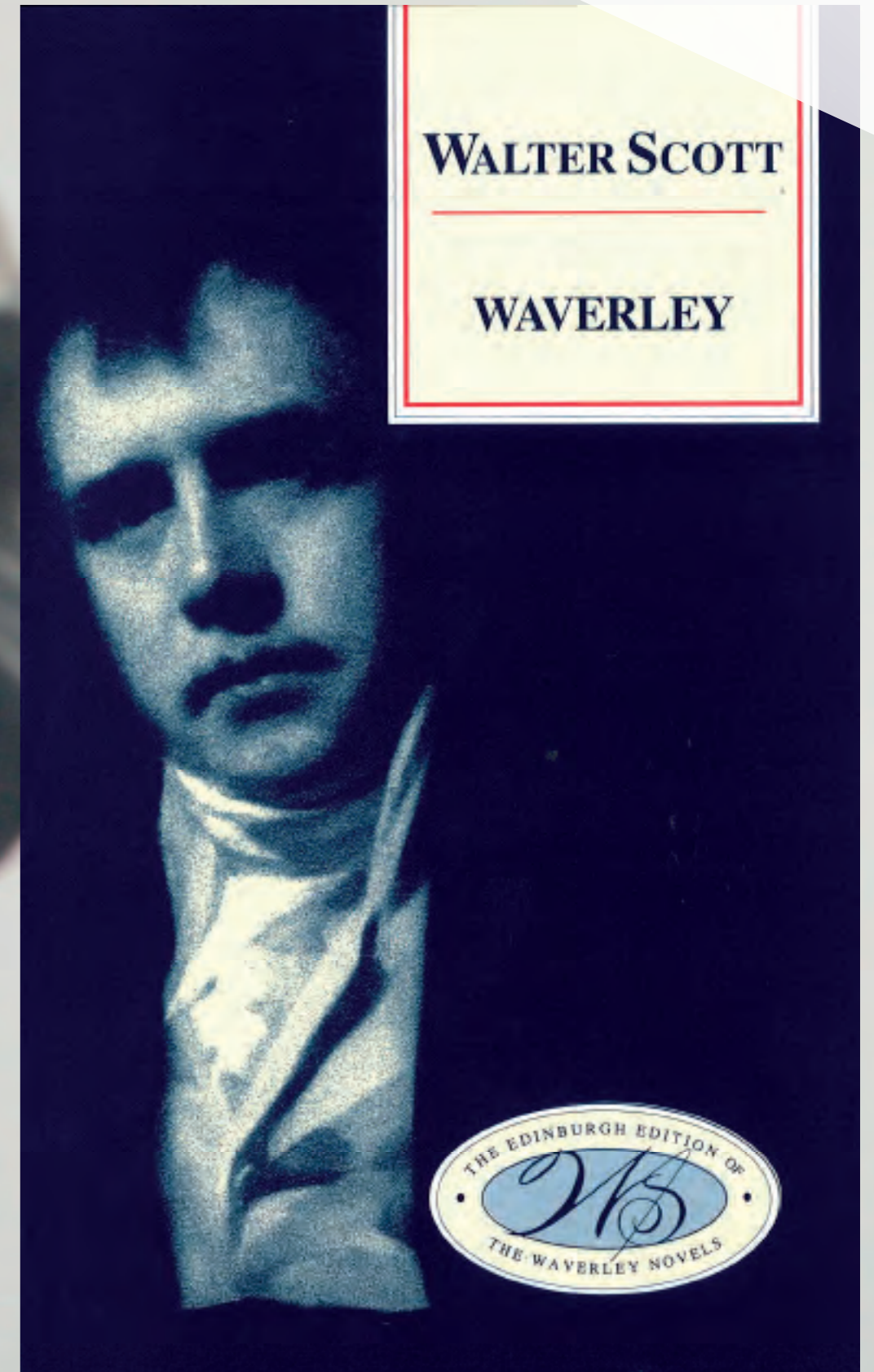


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Arguably one of the most influential novels of the last two hundred years has been Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley*, first published anonymously in Edinburgh in 1814 by Archibald Constable & Co. Set against the panoramic backdrop of the 1745 Jacobite

uprising, the plot followed the adventures of a romantic Scottish aristocrat as he becomes involved in the Jacobite cause, culminating in a stirring description of the battle of Prestonpans, where Bonnie Prince Charlie's army was ultimately defeated and dispersed.

With *Waverley*, Scott created the style of novel which has remained in use to this day: imaginative, fast-paced, historically accurate yet romantically engaged plots interweaving fictional and real-life characters. Scott's combination of historical nostalgia, strong narrative, regionally faithful dialogue and vivid pacing overwhelmed contemporary readers: within a year of publication, the novel had sold over 5,000 copies, made several thousand pounds in profit and allowed Scott thenceforth to devote his energies to full time writing. *Waverley* and successive novels in the same vein (such as *Rob Roy* and *Guy Mannering*), were widely read and imitated internationally in the years that followed: George Eliot, Charlotte Bronte, Leo Tolstoy, Pushkin, and Turgenev were just some of those who drew on Scott for inspiration. Though Scott's work is less read in current times, his legacy lives on in the number of historical romances published and read today. The narrative formula pioneered so many years ago by Scott remains as popular now as it was then.



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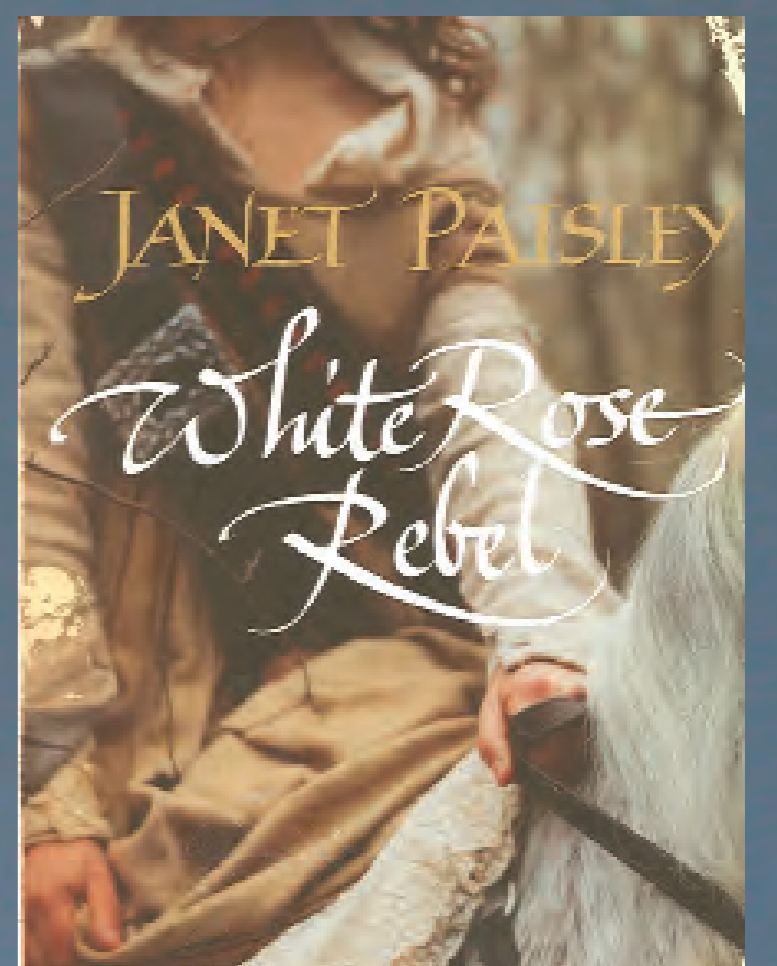
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