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Kenneth M. Sroka

Education in Walter Scott's
Waverley



Early in the third chapter of *Waverley* (titled "Education"), the narrator pauses in his discussion of Edward Waverley's formal education to speak at length about the danger of excessively:

rendering instruction agreeable to youth...an age in which children are taught the driest doctrines by the insinuating method of instructive games, has little reason to dread the consequences of study being rendered too serious or severe. The history of England is now reduced to a game at cards,--the problems of mathematics to puzzles and riddles,--and the doctrines of arithmetic may, we are assured, be sufficiently acquired, by spending a few hours a-week at a new and complicated edition of the Royal Game of the Goose.... It may...be subject of serious consideration, whether those who are accustomed only to acquire instruction through the medium of amusement, may not be brought to reject that which approaches under the aspect of study....¹

The passage has been called "simply irrelevant and distracting," and because of it Scott has been charged with indulging "himself with a long diatribe against modern education."² However, the passage becomes more than relevant if we consider that education--in the broad sense of the education process, its components, and the effect varying proportions of those components have on individuals--is a central theme in *Waverley*. The passage deserves further attention because it curiously stresses the seriousness and importance of "practical" studies--history, mathematics--and warns against "amusement" as a sole means of instruction. Ironically, *Waverley* (itself a novel) instructs by amusing and asserts the importance of fiction in the formation of character. In effect, *Waverley* urges a balance in education between "useful" studies and "useless" ones (useful studies including not only the practical subjects one learns from books, but also the practical experiences one learns from "the book of life" itself [Ch. 5]).

In the tradition of the Bildungsroman (a relatively young tradition in 1814), *Waverley* deals with the development of its young hero as he grows up. But its concern with balanced education extends beyond the protagonist to include two narrators and several major and minor characters. The final 1829 edition of *Waverley* offers two complementary narrators whose educations can be inferred from their voices in the novel: one is the anonymous storyteller of the 1814 edition, himself a fictional character whose voice is mainly literary; the other is the historical Walter Scott of the 1829 edition who is separate in time from the fictional narrator and who speaks to his readers chiefly in the historian's voice from the footnotes of that later edition.³ The novel also develops several major and minor characters partly by examining their formal educations--the books they read or fail to read, their attitudes toward book knowledge generally--and by demonstrating how their studies or lack of them impinge on their response to real life experience.

The first narrator of *Waverley* is himself a definite fictional character whose education the reader becomes aware of in the course of reading the novel. The characters of the novel have sprung from the narrator's imagination--almost, it seems, simultaneously with our reading--yet he too is a creature of the imagination and places himself in their world. Speaking of Aunt Rachel's "common-place book" which contained "choice receipts for cookery and medicine, favourite texts, and portions from High-Church divines, and a few songs...with other authentic records of the Waverley family," the narrator informs the reader that these imaginary records were all "ex-

posed to the inspection of the unworthy editor of this memorable history" (Ch. 5). Continuing the convention of the eighteenth-century story-teller, the fictional narrator presents himself, his characters, and the sources of his tale as "real."

Both the worldly experience and the literary background of the narrator characterize him as a gentleman who can draw upon a fund of various knowledge to enrich his story. For example, he can describe Waverley's growing military ability by comparing it to a type of social confidence he himself has met in real life:

Waverley had but very little of a captain of horse's spirit within him--I mean of that sort of spirit which I have been obliged to when I happened, in a mailcoach or diligence, to meet some military man who was kindly taken upon him the disciplining of the waiters, and the taxing of reckonings. Some of this useful talent our hero had...acquired during his military service.

(Ch. 29)

To complement his first-hand knowledge of the world, the narrator draws upon literary allusions and similes from a broad range of fictional works which enable him to present his scenes more vividly to his reader.⁴ When at one point the narrator catches himself displaying, like Baron Bradwardine, his learning for its own sake, he turns his comment into self-parody:

But without further tyranny over my readers, or display of the extent of my own reading, I shall content myself with borrowing a single incident from the memorable hunting at Lude, commemorated in the ingenious Mr. Gunn's Essay on the Caledonian Harp, and so proceed in my story with all the brevity that my natural style of composition, partaking of what scholars call the periphrastic and ambagitory, and the vulgar the circumbendibus, will permit me.

(Ch. 24)

While evidence of the narrator's literary background is abundant, his borrowings from historical materials are minimal.

The narrator refuses to choose the name of his novel from English history:

What could my readers have expected from the chivalrous epithets of Howard, Mordaunt, Mortimer,

or Stanley, or from the softer and more sentimental sounds of Belmour, Belville, Belfield and Belgrave, but pages of inanity, similar to those which have been so christened for half a century past?

(Ch. 1)

He admits using Lindsay of Pitscottie, however, as a source "ready at my elbow" for describing Scotch manners and even quotes a lengthy list of items of Highland hospitality from him.⁵ At best, such historical laundry-listing is boring and pales beside the fictional portrait of the feast at Glennaquoich which the narrator had earlier painted. The fictional accounts take such dry, historical bones and put flesh on them. Furthermore, the narrator explicitly states that "It is not our purpose to intrude upon the province of history" (Ch. 57), and most of the history in the novel's text is presented in the form of summary reminders to the reader which are, at most, one paragraph long.

Despite such subordination of fact to fiction, the real and the imaginary remain complementary. Consider the narrator's description of Flora MacIvor's close resemblance to her brother Fergus:

Flora MacIvor bore a most striking resemblance to her brother Fergus; so much so, that they might have played Viola and Sebastian with the same exquisite effect produced by the appearance of Mrs. Henry Siddons and her brother, Mr. William Murray, in these characters.

(Ch. 21)

Recognizing Shakespeare's fictional twins helps the reader to understand the likeness between the fictional MacIvors. However, when the narrator extends his description to a third look-alike pair, the *real* Mrs. Siddons and Mr. Murray in the *roles* of Viola and Sebastian, the fictional and the real merge. To have seen a flesh and blood portrayal enables one to better imagine both fictional pairs of brother-sister look-alikes. The real and the imaginative reciprocally elucidate each other. The narrator subordinates the real rather than eliminates it.

The narrator is primarily a story-teller, not an historian. He tells us that his topic is not "history," neither is it purely "fiction." Fiction that is wholly divorced from reality clearly is eliminated from the narrator's intent:

I beg pardon, once and for all, of those readers who take up novels merely for amusement, for plugging

them so long with old-fashioned politics, and Whig and Tory, and Hanoverians and Jacobites. The truth is, I cannot promise them that this story shall be intelligible, without it....I do not invite my fair readers...into a flying chariot drawn by hippogriffs, or moved by enchantment. Mine is a humble English post-chaise, drawn upon four wheels, and keeping his majesty's highway.

(Ch. 5)

Though the flying chariot is set aside in favor of the post-chaise, the post-chaise is fictional. The narrator continually reminds us that we are reading a work of fiction and repeatedly calls our attention to the writing process he is involved in. In the last chapter of the novel--a chapter which is also a preface, a conclusion, and a dedication--the narrator praises the historian, Lord Selkirk, who has traced the "political and economic effects" of the changes in Scotland since 1745 "with great precision and accuracy" (Ch. 72). But the narrator emphasizes that less noticeable changes have occurred as well, changes involving the emotions of individual men which are not included in Lord Selkirk's history. *Waverley* does give an account of those changes, and because the emotions of men are not confined to one time or one place, the narrator's fictional achievement appears the more significant and the more valuable of the two.

The reader of *Waverley* is kept conscious of the fact that he is reading a novel made up of chapters whose form and content are subject to the decisions of the narrator:

Shall this be a long or a short chapter?--
This is a question in which you, gentle reader,
have no vote, however much you may be interested
in the consequences....[T]hough it lies within
my arbitrary power to extend my materials as I
think proper, I cannot call you into Exchequer if
you do not think proper to read my narrative.

(Ch. 24)

The narrator asserts that he wishes to please both himself and the reader by the variety and economy of his composition. As long as his pen "can speedily change from grave to gay, and from description and dialogue to narrative and character," he will be satisfied and the reader, his "worthy friend, will have no occasion for discontent" (Ch. 19). He explains his economy in omitting Evan Dhu's Highland narratives which might be "more perhaps to the amusement of *Waverley* than that of our readers" (Ch. 18). Likewise, he abruptly ceases tracing one of *Waver-*

ley's daydreams with: "but why pursue such a description?" (Ch. 4). Yet, like the capable storyteller that he is, he can insist that letters from Waverley's family "were not such as required any particular notice in this narrative" (Ch. 25) and then devote an entire chapter to those letters without diminishing our interest.

The narrator fills *Waverley* with internal allusions, references to its own parts and literary techniques. For example, the narrator takes the time to explain his use of suspense: "These circumstances will serve to explain such points of our narrative, as, according to the custom of story-tellers, we deemed to fit to leave unexplained, for the purpose of exciting the reader's curiosity" (Ch. 65). He refers to "hints we noticed at the end of the fourteenth chapter" (Ch. 25), or offers "a clue to all the intricacies and obscurities of the narrative previous to Waverley's leaving Glennaquoich" (Ch. 51). He intrudes so far as to insert parenthetical reminders to the reader into phrases of dialogue: "(Remember, Reader, it was Sixty years since)" (Ch. 28).

When the narrator is pleased with the originality of his writing, he tells the reader about it. Having compared Waverley's progressive sociability at a ball to a horse getting "warm in harness," he says:

This simile so much corresponds with the state of Waverley's feelings in the course of this memorable evening, that I prefer it (especially as being, I trust, wholly original) to any more splendid illustration, with which Byshe's Art of Poetry might supply me. (Ch. 43).

In general, the narrator's conception of the relation of fiction and history and their individual importance reveals an attractive broadmindedness that is related to his willingness to admit his limitations while we become more aware of his capacity to sympathize. He humbly admits that he cannot explain why Waverley should be upset at Fergus's interest in Rose Bradwardine: "This is one of the inexplicabilities of human nature, which we leave without comment" (Ch. 23). Nor does he presume "to describe his [Waverley's] sensations" (Ch. 69) after Fergus's execution. Finally, the narrator censures Colonel Talbot's refusal to acknowledge that even Fergus might deserve mercy, the Colonel's over-rational acquiescence in the belief that in the time immediately following the rebellion punishment will be greatest, and the lightness with which he expresses the manner of choosing those to be punished--"First come, first served" (Ch. 62)--because Talbot's

lack of feeling is contrary to the narrator's own sympathetic outlook:

Such was the reasoning of those times, held even by brave and humane men towards a vanquished enemy. Let us devoutly hope, that, in this respect at least, we shall never see the scenes, or hold the sentiments, that were general in Britain Sixty Years since.

(Ch. 67)

The narrator of *Waverley* is the first of two speakers in the novel. The second speaker, the historical voice of Walter Scott, speaks from the footnotes of the 1829 edition.

The content of the footnotes characterizes the second speaker as someone very different from his fictional narrator-double. This second speaker is an historical narrator portrayed as a reader of history, and not a reader of literature as his fictional counterpart is. Instead of the copious fictional allusions we find in the narrative, the allusions of the historical Scott are taken from such works as the non-fictional biographical sketches in *Lord Chesterfield's Characters Reviewed* (Ch. 6), the *Memoirs* of Chevalier Johnstone, P. Doddridge's *Some remarkable passages in the Life of Colonel James Gardiner* (Ch. 47), and the *Travels* of Fynes Morrison (Ch. 20). Only a few references are made to authors of fictional literature, and then only to confirm some historical fact. For example, Ben Jonson's verse is offered as evidence that the Scotch disliked pork (Ch. 20); some Highland customs are pointed out in the lyrics of a song (Ch. 44); and in two instances, lines of poetry that occur in the text are simply identified as being Burns's (Ch. 28). The Scott in the footnotes, an older man than the narrator of the novel, has lived beyond the lifetime of the narrator and now stands outside the novel commenting as he looks back on it. The distance between him and the narrator resembles that between the narrator and his topic:

Alas! that attire, respectable and gentleman-like in 1805, or thereabouts, is now as antiquated as the Author of *Waverley* has himself become since that period.

(Ch. 1)

In three instances, the historical Scott resembles the narrator of *Waverley* in his discussion of the complex relationship of fiction to history. In the first he stresses the difference between them:

The author has been sometimes accused of confounding fiction with reality. He therefore thinks it necessary to state that the circumstances of the hunting described in the text as preparatory to the insurrection of 1745, is, so far as he knows, entirely imaginary. But it is well known such a great hunting was held in the Forest of Braemar, under the auspices of the Earl of Mar, as preparatory to the Rebellion of 1715; and most of the Highland Chieftans who afterwards engaged in that civil commotion were present on this occasion.

(Ch. 24)

In another instance, the nearness of fiction to fact is illustrated in a story he relates about an escape from Doune Castle, the "actual scene of a romantic escape" (Ch. 38). Finally, he uses historical evidence to support the fictional characterization of Prince Charles (Ch. 58).

Of the two speakers, the fictional narrator with his broad education and his capacity for feeling is more attractive than the historical Scott in the footnotes. Often the reader of *Waverley* feels he is reading two documents in the same book, one mainly fictional, one mainly historical. Part of the reading experience involved with a novel filled with notes includes the distracting but unavoidable urge to lower one's eyes from the asterisk to the footnote. Not only does the reader satisfy his curiosity, but he becomes more continually aware of the fact that there are two different speakers of different educational backgrounds addressing him and interweaving their voices into the single reading experience. The revelation, then, of the education of the two speakers in *Waverley* provides a frame for Scott's thematic development of education more generally in the novel and underscores a major concern of the novel mentioned earlier--the interpenetration of "useful" and "useless" knowledge. The important but secondary (perhaps "footnoted") role of the historical knowledge in *Waverley* as illustrated by the second speaker offers the reader an example of an observation by an avid appreciator if not an accurate critic of literature, Sigmund Freud: "The meagre satisfaction that man can extract from reality leaves him starving."⁶ The human appetite for balanced education which *Waverley* illustrates extends beyond the novel's two narrators to its major and minor characters as well.

The story of Edward Waverley's wavering affection for Rose Bradwardine and Flora MacIvor contributes more to the novel than a love interest and still more than a symbolic rendering

of Waverley's struggle to choose between domesticity and heroism.⁷ The members of this triangle form a small but varied spectrum of examples illustrating some effects of book-education applied to real life. Waverley begins his education mainly among books and progresses to maturity through experience.⁸ Rose Bradwardine enjoys a mature capacity for human sympathy sooner because she experiences some of life's harsh realities earlier than Waverley, and therefore her formal education realizes a more timely complement. Unlike Waverley and Rose, Flora MacIvor allows the romance of her literary knowledge to pervade so thoroughly her dreams of social change that her education goes untempered.

Waverley devotes much of his isolated youth to reading fiction in his uncle's library. As a result, "he knew little of what adds dignity to man, and qualifies him to support and adorn an elevated situation in society." When he finally approached real life, Waverley had a vast store of literary knowledge "which long continued to influence his character, happiness, and utility" (Ch. 3); but the long delay in the arrival of that moment and the lack of contact with a world other than that of books left Waverley a child, even as he began to grow into young manhood:

Edward loved to 'chew the cud of sweet and bitter fancy, and, like a child among his toys, culled and arranged, from the splendid yet useless imagery and emblems with which his imagination was stored, visions as brilliant and as fading as those of an evening sky.

(Ch. 4)

He had formed no friendships and grew more irritable at interruptions in his castle-building. Eventually, such excessive isolation fostered in Edward a dislike for the unknown society he had not yet entered.

Edward's commission in the army as an officer responsible for his men hurled him into the second part of his education, the world of experience. So "sudden [a] page being turned up to him in the book of life" (Ch. 5), the immediate effects of his predominantly literary education began to show. Just as he renounced study "as soon as curiosity...[was] gratified" and the "novelty of pursuit [was] at an end" (Ch. 3), he loses interest in the army "when his first ardour was past" (Ch. 7). Edward's inadequate reaction to this first encounter with reality is not surprising. As his experiences increase, the become progressively more serious, while his response to them becomes generally more mature.

The novice drinker who wakes up with a painful awareness that he may have to fight a duel scarcely resembles the Edward Waverley who is twice wounded, accused of treason and suffers the unjust loss of his commission and the public scorn that follows; who witnesses the death of Sgt. Houghton and feels the burden of responsibility for his death as well as those of Col. Gardiner and Col. Talbot's still-born child; and who suffers the indescribable agony which follows the execution of a friend. Throughout these experiences, Waverley's romantic education is more and more tempered into practical wisdom. It is not the rejection of his earlier education but rather its gradual incorporation into his real life experience that constitutes Waverley's slow but certain progress. Such progress in Waverley's development should temper our hastiness to label him a thorough romantic fool.

Frequently, Edward draws on his literary background to aid his understanding. He is better able to respond to a new person or situation because he has already encountered such a person or experience in the world of fiction.⁹ Even before he enters the army, Waverley possesses a raw wisdom evident in a poem he composes. The first stanza of the poem depicts the attractive world of imagination in a landscape reflected in a lake:

Each drooping tree, each fairy flower,
So true, so soft, the mirror gave
As if there lay beneath the wave,
Secure from trouble, toil, and care,
A world than earthly world more fair.

The stanzas that follow indicate Waverley's awareness of and willingness to leave such a reflected world for the real one. The "idle dreams of youth"--his excursions into imaginary worlds--give way to "the loud trumpet-call of truth"--the real world that awaits him. But the wisdom here remains "raw:" the last two lines of the poem reflect a half-laughable naiveté, only *half* laughable because they suggest romantic versions of what will become part of Waverley's real experience:

While dreams of love and lady's charms
Give place to honour and to arms.
(Ch. 5)

Waverley's dreams of love materialize into his real attractions to Rose and Flora, and his pride in appearing at church in military dress belies his later discovery of the seriousness of military conflict.

Edward's love-life as part of his entire educational development deserves special attention because of the important role of literature in it and because it expresses particularly well that final mature blending of a life of books and the book of life that constitutes a full education. Waverley's early romantic attraction for Miss Cecilia Stubbs, an attempt to "compare the creatures of his own imagination with the females of actual life," is ridiculed by the narrator who remarks that a romantic lover "cares not out of what log he frames the object of his adoration" (Ch. 5).¹⁰ Ironically, another pair of lovers, also named Cicely and Ned (Cicely Jopson and Ned Williams), eventually marry. During Waverley's lengthy stay at the Williamses, he contemplates his experiences with the Highland army and becomes aware that his "real history" has begun. Ned and Cicely subtly remind the reader of the earlier Waverley who apotheosized Miss Stubbs and, by contrast, of the change he has undergone.

Waverley's relationship with Rose Bradwardine is far wiser than that with Miss Stubbs: "since mixing more freely with the world, [he] had learned to think with great shame and confusion upon his mental legend of Saint Cecelia, and the vexation of these reflections was likely, for some time at least, to counterbalance the natural susceptibility of his disposition." Besides, we learn that Rose, "beautiful and amiable as we have described her, had not precisely the sort of beauty or merit which captivates a romantic imagination in early youth." Not physical attraction, but a mutual love of literature accounts for a large part of Waverley's early interest in Rose. Edward readily poured out his knowledge while Rose "listened with eagerness to his remarks upon literature, and showed great justness of taste in her answers." Eventually, Edward sends for more of his books, which

...opened to her sources of delight of which she had hitherto had no idea. The best English poets, of every description, and other words on belles lettres, made a part of this precious cargo.... These new pleasures became gradually enhanced by sharing them with one of kindred taste. Edward's readiness to comment, to recite, to explain difficult passages, rendered his assistance invaluable....

(Ch. 14)

Rose's youth makes her susceptible to the wild romance of Waverley's spirit, though relative to him her education is more complete for it more fully combines life experience with book knowledge. Baron Bradwardine had taught Rose French and

Italian "and a few of the ordinary authors in those languages ornamented her shelves" (Ch. 13), but at the age of ten Rose had also witnessed the horror of a real military skirmish in which three Highlanders were killed. She relates the incident to Waverley with the same sympathy she had earlier felt for the fallen men and their mourning wives and daughters. Edward is fascinated by Rose's actually having experienced what for him was only imaginary: "Here was a girl scarce seventeen... who had witnessed with her own eyes such a scene as he had used to conjure up in his imagination" (Ch. 15). Waverley and Rose educate each other: whereas Waverley teaches Rose more about books, Rose sparks his enthusiasm for experience.

Flora MacIvor's beauty and accomplishments are obstacles to Waverley's education. What progress he has made in tempering his youthful zeal is seriously threatened by this new girl of his dreams. Because of Flora, Waverley lapses back into a dream world,

...that not unpleasing state of mind in which fancy takes the helm, and the soul rather drifts passively along with the rapid and confused tide of reflections, than exerts itself to encounter, systematize, or examine them. At a late hour he fell asleep, and dreamed of Flora MacIvor.

(Ch. 23)

Waverley's misjudgment of Flora and his infatuation with her involves his blindness to the true nature of Flora's education, which, though highly literary, she has used only to foster her political fanaticism, her obsession with a dream which Flora fervently hopes will materialize. Flora's early education was highly political and her study of literature lacks the "feeling" that must accompany it if its true value is to be realized: "She was highly accomplished...yet she had not learned to substitute the gloss of politeness for the reality of feeling." The pleasure she feels in pursuing literature is basically practical, not literary:

Early education had impressed upon her mind, as well as on that of the Chieftain, the most devoted attachment to the exiled family of Stewart. She believed it the duty of her brother, of his clan, of every man in Britain, at whatever personal hazard, to contribute to that restoration which the partizans of the Chevalier de St. George had not ceased to hope for. For this she was prepared to do all, to suffer all, to sacrifice all...[I]n order

to fill up the vacant time, she bestowed a part of it upon the music and poetical traditions of the Highlanders, and began really to feel the pleasure in the pursuit....

(Ch. 21)

At Glennaquoich, the gardens and waterfalls providing a highly romantic setting, Flora sings to Waverley Celtic songs whose verses encourage the reunion of Highland warriors in the spirit of past revolutionary times: "For honour, for freedom, for vengeance awake!" (Ch. 22). Flora's practicality extends to her censure of Waverley's "uselessness." She cannot understand why he allows his "talents and genius" for social reform to go unused:

'All men of the highest education...why will
he not stoop like them to be alive and useful?...
He would never have been his celebrated ancestor
Sir Nigel, but only Sir Nigel's eulogist and poet.'

(Ch. 52)

While Flora herself chases political rainbows, she condemns the poet who could have been a man of practical affairs as a failure. Basically Flora's dream of Stuart rule, like the eventually successful dream of her Irish counterpart, Constance Gore-Booth (Countess Markievicz), is not beyond realization if we view it from the perspective of the 1740's. However, the historical perspective from which Scott writes in 1814 recognizes the need to accept the demise of an old in the evolution of a new social order. This historical vantage point exposes Flora's specific dream as futile, for the Stuart cause in the Waverley Novels, however touched with attractiveness, is a hopeless one.¹¹

Though Flora does not bring common sense to her political beliefs, she manages to use it in rejecting Waverley's advances as a lover. She is sensible enough to realize that the woman who marries Edward must resemble him in her "studies:" "The woman whom you marry ought to have affections and opinions moulded upon yours. Her studies ought to be your studies;--her wishes, her feelings, her hopes, her fears, should all mingle with yours" (Ch. 27). Waverley's initial acceptance of the early hints of Flora's rejection is painful because at the time he misreads Flora's true character: "This, then, is an end of my daydream!" (Ch. 43), he says: "an" end but not "the" end. Before Waverley can fully accept the loss of his dream girl, he must be educated in Rose's real worth and Flora's real shortcomings. On a larger scale, between

Waverley's initial and final acceptance of Flora's rejection, he must witness Sgt. Houghton's death and, the night before the Battle of Preston Pans, experience the self-realization that begins his "real history."

Only after this initial moment in Waverley's development does his maturity in love become evident. He begins to notice in Rose "a certain dignity of feeling and expression, which he had not formerly observed; and that she omitted no opportunity within her reach to extend her knowledge and refine her taste" (Ch. 52). Waverley also better understands his own feelings toward Rose when he realizes that Fergus would not make a suitable husband for her. Edward blames his own blindness for not having seen this sooner:

"And such a catastrophe of the most gentle creature on earth might have been prevented, if Mr. Edward Waverley had had his eyes!-- Upon my word, I cannot understand how I thought Flora so much, that is, so *very* much, handsomer than Rose."

(Ch. 54)

Waverley regains his sight during the literary discussion at a tea attended by both Rose and Flora.

The critical moment of Waverley's full awakening occurs when he is asked to read some scenes from *Romeo and Juliet*. A lively discussion follows the reading during which Flora's critical analysis of the play leads to Edward's decision to abandon his hopes of being her lover. This is one of the rare moments when Flora's use of literature is non-political. Flora uses the literary triangle of Romeo, Juliet, and Rosalind to resolve the real-life triangle of Waverley, Rose, and Flora:

"Romeo is described," said she [Flora], "as a young man, peculiarly susceptible of the softer passions; his love is at first fixed upon a woman who could afford it no return; this he repeatedly tells you,--

From love's weak childish bow she
lives unharmed;
and again,--

She hath forsworn to love.

...I can scarce conceive a situation more calculated to enhance the ardour of Romeo's affection for Juliet, than his being at once raised by her from the state of drooping melancholy...."

Flora's message has its effect in Edward's resolving his future course of action: "I will love my Rosalind no more" (Ch. 54).

Waverley's education in love is a miniature of his over-all education. His second visit to the once beautiful but now devastated estate of Tully-Veolan impresses him with a sense of the changes he himself has undergone:

Then, life was so new to him, that a dull or disagreeable day was one of the greatest misfortunes which his imagination anticipated, and it seemed to him that his time ought only to be consecrated to elegant or amusing study....--Now, how changed! how saddened, yet how elevated was his character, within the course of a very few months! Danger and misfortune are rapid, though severe teachers.

(Ch. 63)

Francis R. Hart maintains that of all the characters in the novel, "Waverley's experience is the broadest, his humanity the most attractive and fruitful, in the book." Such high praise is due in large part to the high capacity for sympathy Waverley achieves, what Hart calls his "fuller humanity."¹² Waverley's new humanity is the result of his matured education. Though none of the minor characters in *Waverley* measure up to Edward's new humanity, the relative degree of their success or failure is related to the nature of their "educations"--their ability to appreciate fiction and to incorporate that knowledge into their practical studies and life experience..

Very often when the narrator of *Waverley* describes a particular minor character, he takes the time to tell us what that character likes to read and what he has read in the past. Books and readers of books abound in *Waverley*. The minor characters who are "readers" are either pedants who have not progressed beyond the stage exemplified by Edward Waverley's youth and view books as life's agreeable but useless ornaments; or they are men of practical affairs who, in varying degrees, use books mainly to further their real-life purposes. Among the pedants are Sir Everard Waverley, Colonel Talbot, and, in a more qualified way than he is usually given credit for, Baron Bradwardine. The practical readers include Bailie Mac Wheeble (Baron Bradwardine's accountant), Mr. Pembroke (Edward Waverley's tutor), Richard Waverley (Edward's father), and Fergus MacIvor.¹³

Sir Everard Waverley and Colonel Talbot are pedants educated in belles lettres, but literature to them is no more than

another trait of "the gentleman." Though Sir Everard owns the vast library where his nephew spends so much of his youth, he himself is merely a "skimmer:"

...[He] had never been himself a student, and... held the common doctrine, that idleness is incompatible with reading of any kind, and that the mere tracing the alphabetical characters with the eye, is in itself a useful and meritorious task, without scrupulously considering what ideas or doctrines they may happen to convey.

(Ch. 3)

Books, to Sir Everard, are primarily a source of knowledge separate from real life experience:

Edward was a little bookish, he admitted; but youth, he had always heard, was the season for learning, and, no doubt, when his rage for letters was abated, and his head fully stocked with knowledge, his nephew would take to field-sports and country business.

(Ch. 5)

Like Sir Everard, Colonel Talbot is "a man of extended knowledge and cultivated taste." Talbot is a man of experience as well--an army officer who travels much abroad. His unselfish effort to rescue Waverley wins our sympathy. As a soldier, he outshines Bradwardine, Fergus, and Major Melville (the Laird of Cairnvreckan):

Colonel Talbot was in every point the English soldier. His whole soul was devoted to the service of his king and country, without feeling any pride in knowing the theory of his art, with the Baron, or its practical minutiae with the Major, or in applying his science to his own particular plans of ambition, like the Chieftain of Glennaquoich.

But Talbot falls short of Waverley's kind of humanity because of his lack of sympathy with the rebels. He feels the Baron is "the most intolerable formal pedant;" that Fergus is a "Frenchified Scotchman...with [a] proud, vindictive, and turbulent humour" who is followed by "a gang of such cut-throats as those whom you [Waverley] are pleased to admire so much." Talbot's insensitivity toward Scottish women rivals Fergus's indifference for the feelings of women in general, for Talbot

believes Flora puts on airs and that Rose is a "little uninformed thing, whose small portion of education was...ill adapted to her sex or youth." Talbot himself "jocularly allowed, that he could not have endured Venus herself, if she had been announced in a drawing-room by the name of Miss Mac-Jupiter" (Ch. 52). Fortunately, because the Colonel's prejudice against the Scots is not very deep-rooted, he can learn from Waverley. The cultured but intolerant man learns sympathy from Waverley's example and practices it by obtaining a royal pardon for Edward and Bradwardine and by helping in the surprise restoration of Tully-Veolan for the Baron. In Talbot's case, it is his life experience with Waverley, not literature, that catalyzes the change in his character; but Waverley, who acts as the catalyst, owes his sensitizing power to a great extent to literature.

Although Baron Bradwardine seems the most eccentric of the readers who are pedants, the evidence of his education tempers that judgment and proves him to be more practical than he appears at first glance.¹⁴ The narrator compares Bradwardine's reading with Waverley's, and the contrast reveals the Baron's practical and historical bent:

Edward, we have informed the reader, was warm in his feelings, wild and romantic in his ideas and in his taste of reading, with a strong disposition towards poetry. Mr. Bradwardine was the reverse of all this....As for literature, he read the classic poets, to be sure, and the Epithalamium of Georgius Buchanan and Arthur Johnstone's Psalms, of a Sunday; and the *Deliciae Poetarum Scotorum*, and Sir David Lindsay's Works, and Barbour's Bruce, and Blind Harry's Wallace, and the Gentle Shepherd, and the Cherry and the Slae. But though he thus far sacrificed his time to the Muses, he would, if the truth must be spoken, have been much better pleased had the pious or sapient apothegms, as well as the historical narratives, which these various works contained, been presented to him in the form of simple prose. And he sometimes could not refrain from expressing contempt of the "vain and unprofitable art of poem making."

The Baron whose education originally had been aimed at preparing him for a legal profession, "only cumbered his memory with matters of fact--the cold, dry, hard outlines which history delineates" (Ch. 13). Thus, the Baron may quote Virgil at times, but draws mostly upon authors such as Cicero, Tacit-

tus, Livy, and Pliny. Among the practical writings he prescribes for Rose's reading are "several heavy folios of history," and "certain gigantic tomes in High-Church polemics." In fact, one effect of the Baron's common sense is that it blinds him to Rose's passion for Waverley, for he could not believe Rose was susceptible to "idle and fantastic affection" (Ch. 14). Furthermore, his concern for literature is connected with the sense he has of his duty to preserve the traditional culture he has inherited and is analogous to his devotion to the feudal order.¹⁵ Therefore, while the Baron's speeches often mark him as an academician, his pragmatic bent suggests his resemblance to the novel's practical readers as well.

Of the practical readers among the minor characters, Bailie MacWheeble and Mr. Pembroke gain our sympathy more readily than Richard Waverley and Fergus MacIvor. Though all four use books to practical ends, the former pair do so selflessly and in a way helpful to Edward Waverley, whereas the latter pair act out of self-interest and to the detriment of the protagonist.

Only books of his trade fill Bailie MacWheeble's bookshelves. He finds his happiest moments those in which he can use his talent as an efficient financier stabilizing the finances of his clients. At times he outdoes himself, as when he becomes involved with the rebel army in the hope that some of the troops will commission him to write their wills. When Waverley announces his intention to marry Rose, MacWheeble's "ecstasy" almost deprives "the honest man of his senses:"

He mended his pen...marked half a dozen sheets of paper with an ample marginal fold, whipped down Dallas of St. Martin's Styles from a shelf, where that venerable work roosted with Stair's Institutions, Dirleton's Doubts, Balfour's Practiques, and a parcel of old account books--opened the volume at the article Contract of Marriage, and prepared to make what he called a "sma' minute, to prevent parties frae resiling."

(Ch. 66)

MacWheeble's "poor understanding," imbalanced as it is, presents a thoroughly humorous version of an otherwise serious problem. Likewise, Mr. Pembroke's religious zeal, though immoderate, contributes to the novel's humorous treatment of the overpractical reader.

Pembroke not only reads religious pamphlets but also composes them. His two unpublished religious tracts--"A Dissent

from Dissenters, or the Comprehension Confuted..." and "Right Hereditary Righted!"--are the products of "the labour of the worthy man's whole life; and never were labour and zeal more absurdly wasted."¹⁶ He bases his desire to "educate" Waverley in his religious tenets on the sincere conviction that Waverley will reproach him "for so long concealing the light which the perusal will flash upon his mind." The texts, however, never become part of Waverley's educational experience, for "seeing nothing very inviting in the title of the tracts, and appalled by the bulk and compact lines of the manuscript, [he] quietly consigned them to a corner of his travelling trunk" (Ch. 6). Pembroke's books gain more serious practical import later when they are used against Waverley as evidence of his disaffection from the government.

Of Richard Waverley's reading we are only told that he "read and satisfied himself from history and sound argument that, in the worlds of the old song,"

Passive obedience was a jest,
And pshaw! was non-resistance.

Though born into a Jacobite family, Richard's self-centeredness leads him to adopt "a political creed more consonant both to reason and his own interest than the hereditary faith of Sir Everard in High Church and in the House of Stewart" (Ch. 2). We learn more of Richard's character from what he writes than from what he reads. His letters to Waverley, the narrator tells us, are masterpieces of jargon-filled arguments complaining of the injustices done to him by the government he uses for his own ends. The letters reflect the "pompous affectation of one who was too much oppressed by public affairs to find leisure to attend to those of his own family" (Ch. 25). Richard is careless about his son's education and so his selfishness is in part responsible for the early imbalance in Waverley's learning:

He [Richard]...prevailed upon his private secretary... to bestow an hour or two on Edward's education while at Brerewood Lodge, and left his uncle answerable for his improvement in literature.

(Ch. 3)

Richard Waverley's self-interest, his lack of sympathy, and his opportunism are mirrored in another practical reader: Fergus MacIvor.

Unlike his sister Flora whose attitude toward literature was practical but selfless, Fergus MacIvor uses his learning

solely to further his own schemes. Like Flora, Fergus had been "brought up at the French court" (Ch. 41). He has a more than ordinary knowledge of literature which he displays by quoting Cervantes and occasionally bursting into song: "You see, my dear Waverley, I can quote poetry as well as Flora and you" (Ch. 25).. Yet we are told that Fergus's "perceptions of literary merit were more blunt, rather affected for the sake of popularity than actually experienced" (Ch. 21) and that he liked "no poetry but what is humorous" (Ch. 22). His shallow understanding of the real merit of literature is consistent with his disproportionate ego. The prince's refusal of Fergus's petitions results in a tirade which reveals Fergus's selfishness by his repeated use of a favorite word--"I:"

"Why, what signifies what they were, man?
I tell you it was I that made them; I, to
whom he owes more than to any three who have
joined the standard; for I negotiated the
whole business....I am not likely, I think,
to ask anything very unreasonable, and if I
did, they might have stretched a point."

(Ch. 53)

Fergus's ultra-rational thinking is as foolish as Waverley's early romantic stop-and-start methods of study. In fact, the description of Fergus's inconstant thinking habits is very similar to that of Waverley's:

[He] would often unexpectedly, and without any
apparent motive, abandon one plan, and go earnestly
to work upon another, which was either fresh from
the forge of his imagination, or had at some former
period been flung aside half finished.

(Ch. 52)

What is more serious, Fergus's egocentricity disables him from feeling sympathetically with others:

[Waverley] had now been more than once shocked
at the small degree of sympathy which Fergus
exhibited for the feelings even of those whom
he loved, if they did not correspond with his
own mood at the time, and more especially if
they thwarted him while earnest in a favourite
pursuit.

(Ch. 50)

Though we sympathize with Fergus's heroism at his trial and execution, we see him to be an opportunist who uses his sister to further his own ambitions, who laughs at Baron Bradwardine's concern about the ritual of removing the king's boots after battle, and who neglects ever to consider Rose's feelings in his efforts to marry her. Finally, in a far more serious manner than Mr. Pembroke, Fergus uses literature to influence Waverley's decision to join him. He sends Edward a copy of Flora's verses about Captain Wogan, a gallant officer who lost his young life fighting for Charles II; he thereby knowingly takes advantage of Waverley's romantic disposition at a time when Edward's infatuation with Flora is at its height:

Whatever be the real merit of Flora MacIvor's poetry, the enthusiasm which it intimated was well calculated to make a corresponding impression upon her lover. The lines were read--read again--then deposited in Waverley's bosom--then again drawn out and read line by line, in a low and smothered voice, and with frequent pauses, which prolonged the mental treat, as an epicure protracts, by sipping slowly, the enjoyment of a delicious beverage.

(Ch. 29)

By feeding the fires of Waverley's infatuation, Fergus increases the obstacle which Waverley must overcome in his progress toward wisdom.

Two minor characters--Major Melville and Mr. Morton (the parish pastor at Cairnvreckan)--deserve consideration apart from the classes of pedants and practical readers discussed above because their educations and joint actions in the novel complement each other, each tempering the excesses of the other. After Waverley accidentally wounds the town blacksmith, Mr. Morton proposes that he be taken before Major Melville. Melville is a man of the world, a non-reader, who "had been versed in camps and cities; he was vigilant by profession, and cautious from experience, had met with much evil in the world, and therefore, though himself an upright magistrate and an honourable man, his opinions of others were always strict, and sometimes unjustly severe" (Ch. 32). Morton believes the Major has "too little allowance for the imperfections of human nature" (Ch. 33), a lack of "sympathy," and treats people too often with "cold and punctilious civility" (Ch. 34). In contrast, Morton "had passed from the literary pursuits of a college...to the ease and simplicity of his present charge, where his opportunities of witnessing evil were few, and never dwelt

upon, but in order to encourage repentance and amendment." Neither character is wholly attractive; each has his flaw, but together Mr. Morton and Major Melville are capable of coming close to a true estimation of Waverley's guilt or innocence: Morton's sympathy tempers Melville's harshness. Whereas Morton worries about Gilfillan's lack of mercy, Melville's official position is: "you would hardly advise me to encounter the responsibility of setting him at liberty." Likewise Gilfillan's haughtiness embarrasses Melville but brings a smile to Morton's face. The townspeople of Cairnvreckan perhaps best express the complementary nature of these two characters: "it was a common saying in the neighbourhood (though both were popular characters), that the laird knew only the ill in the parish, and the minister only the good" (Ch. 32).

Education in its broadest sense means the continuous and lifelong human struggle to reconcile factual reality with one's imaginative hopes and fears. With *Waverley* Scott invents a new literary genre whose blend of history and fiction directly confronts the problem of human education. Scott realistically refuses to guarantee that reading fiction necessarily results in a deeper sense of humanity, nor does he snobbishly condemn literary ignorance. Rather, by presenting a broad spectrum of characters of varying educations, his novel proclaims the advantages that fiction offers its students, advantages unattainable from useful studies alone, while it warns against the danger of neglecting the "medial" function of literature as a passage to understanding the real world. *Waverley* practices what it preaches: it educates the reader by revealing to him in his reading experience the coalescence of fact and fiction which cultivates a "fuller humanity."

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NOTES

¹ Sir Walter Scott, *Waverley*, Ch. 3. Further references will be cited by chapter in the text.

² John Lauber, *Sir Walter Scott* (New York, 1966), p. 54.

³ In Scott's "Advertisement to the 1829 Edition" he defines the historical function of this second narrator:

The Author also proposes to publish on this occasion the various legends, family traditions,

or obscure historical facts, which have formed the ground-work of these Novels, and to give some account of the places where the scenes are laid, when these are altogether or in part real; as well as a statement of particular incidents founded on fact; together with a more copious Glossary, and Notes explanatory of the ancient customs and popular superstitions referred to in the Romances.

⁴ A watchful old grandam at Tully-Veolan is "like a sibyl in frenzy" (Ch. 8); the cavalry in Edward's regiment "almost realize the fable of the Centaur" (Ch. 7); the features of the young women at Tully-Veolan "resembled those of Minerva" (Ch. 8); Davie Gellatley is described as "idle as Diogenes at Sinope" (Ch. 15); the smith at Cairnvreckan as "Vulcan," and his wife as "Venus," a "Bacchante" and an "Amazon" (Ch. 30). The stale effect of the Baron of Bradwardine's pedantry on his listeners is likened to "Sancho's jests while on the Sierra Morena" (Ch. 57). Flora is "like a fair enchantress of Boiardo and Ariosto" (Ch. 22), and the gardens at Tully-Veolan are "not quite equal to the gardens of Alcina" (Ch. 9). The narrator quotes from "Chevy Chase" (Ch. 24); uses verse from Spenser to describe Janet Gellatley's hut (Ch. 67); compares the Baron of Bradwardine to "Toby Belch" (Ch. 11); portrays Donald Bean Lean's cave as "hell," his men as "demons" (Ch. 17), Flora's garden as "Eden" (Ch. 22), and the hunters in Fergus's hunting party as "Milton's spirits in metaphysical disquisition" (Ch. 24).

⁵ "...[A]ll kinds of drink to be had in burgh and land, as ale, beer, wine, muscadell, malvaise, hippocras, and aquavita; with wheat-bread, main-bread, ginge-bread, beef, mutton, lamb, veal, venison, goose, grice, capon, coney, crane, swan, partridge, plover, duck, drake, brissel-cock, pawnsies, black-cock, muir-fowl, and caper calizies;" not forgetting the "costly bedding, vaiselle, and napry," and least of all the "excelling stewards, cunning baxters, excellent cooks, and pottingars, with confections and drugs for the desserts." (Ch. 24)

⁶ *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* (New York, 1938), p. 325.

⁷ David Daiches maintains that in the Waverley Novels generally "love affairs are of no significance whatsoever except to

indicate the nature of the observer's [protagonist's] final withdrawal from the seductive scenes of heroic, nationalistic passion. Waverley does not marry the passionate Jacobite Flora MacIvor but the douce and colourless Rose Bradwardine; Waverley's affair with these two girls is not presented as a serious love interest, but as a symbolic indication of the nature of his final withdrawal from the heroic emotions of the past" ("Scott's Achievement as a Novelist," *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, 6 (1951), 86.

⁸ Mark A. Weinstein discusses Waverley's progress from the dominant imagination of his early training to his growing awareness that "accurate sense impressions are the avenue to understanding" ("Imagination and Reality in Romantic Fiction," *The Wordsworth Circle*, 2 (1971), 126-130). The limitation of this argument lies in its too absolute definition of "imagination" in *Waverley* as a "perjorative term, interchangeable with 'fancy,' and in opposition to 'understanding' and 'judgment.'" It suggests mental invention that is capricious, whimsical, or untruthful, characteristically well removed from reality." Professor Weinstein seems to suggest that Edward simply substitutes real experience for his earlier book knowledge. Unlike Weinstein, Robin Mayhead casually relates the "legacy" of Waverley's undisciplined education to its subsequent effect upon his life (*Walter Scott*, New York, 1968), pp. 35-40. Edgar Johnson, in his *Sir Walter Scott: the Great Unknown*, (New York, 1970), considers more fully the importance of Edward Waverley's education as the kernel of the plot's progress:

Waverley...is not a romantic novel at all but an ironic novel of a young man's education. Its hero, as E. M. W. Tillyard notes, begins as an "innocent let loose upon the world" and ultimately becomes "the young man who grows up. He is the young romantic, slightly ridiculous as well as generous, who gradually sheds his illusions through the discipline of crude and genuine experience."

Johnson defends the early chapters depicting Waverley's "long hours in the Gothic Library at Waverley Honour" and "his proneness, not to the absolute delusion of Don Quixote, but to colouring reality with his own imagination." The early chapters establish "the influences that render inevitable the young Edward Waverley's responses to all his later experiences." The "influences" of Waverley's book-learning are part of a larger scheme that forms his character, a "program" that ex-

plains Scott's depiction of protagonists in several *Waverley* novels. Scott "emphasizes the powerful ways in which men and women are shaped by the society of which they are a part, by the beliefs and attitudes of their milieu, in short, by the particular culture of their time....The characters in Scott's novels are the products both of their own and of the collective past" (pp. 521-24). Edward *Waverley's* education is a small part of that larger achievement.

⁹ *Waverley* can sympathize with the Baron's pride in his Bear-goblet for it reminds him of "Ben Jonson's Tom Otter, with his Bull, Horse, and Dog" (Ch. 11). The superstitious legend of St. Swithin's Chair "reminded *Waverley* of a rhyme quoted by Edgar in *King Lear*" (Ch. 13). Fergus reminds him of a "sort of Highland Jonathan Wild" (Ch. 15); and his voice "reminded Edward of a favourite passage in the description of Emetrius:

--whose voice was heard around,
Loud as a trumpet with a silver sound."
(Ch. 21)

¹⁰ Professor Johnson mentions *Waverley's* passion for Miss Stubbs as another example of Scott's giving us "an almost Restoration mockery of the conventions of romantic love" (*op. cit.*, p. 524).

¹¹ Robin Mayhead diminishes the charge of political fanaticism against Flora MacIvor because of her admission of responsibility for Fergus's death: "Scott is no lover of fanaticism ...and Flora herself, after the death of the rebels, feels that her obsession with the Stuart cause has led to her brother's death" (*op. cit.*, p. 42). Though Mayhead is correct in judging Flora to be without the "taint of interest and advancement," Flora's political zeal remains as strong after Fergus's execution. In her last interview with *Waverley*, she strongly distinguishes between sorrow for her brother's loss and devotion to the Jacobite cause: "I do not regret his attempt because it was wrong--oh no! on that point I am armed--but because it was impossible it could end otherwise than thus" (*Waverley*, Ch. 68). Flora mourns Fergus's death but not the political ideals he died for.

¹² *Scott's Novels: The Plotting of Historic Survival* (Charlottesville, 1966), pp. 29-30.

¹³ Few of *Waverley's* minor characters are "non-readers." Although characters like Callum Beg and Evan Dhu Maccombich

would enjoy an oral cultural tradition, as non-readers in *Waverley* they reveal an undesirable imbalance of character. Although there is a kind of dignity in the devotion Callum and Evan Dhu have toward Fergus MacIvor, there is something insane about it as well. Callum's devotion to Fergus distorts his judgment and causes him to respond impulsively and entirely out of proportion to the situation. The most obvious example of this is Callum's shooting at Waverley because he felt Waverley had insulted Flora. At Fergus's trial, the judge gives Evan Dhu a chance for grace since he realizes Evan had only followed "the ideas in which you have been educated." But Evan remains faithful to the only code he ever knew, that of the clan, and rejects the judge's offer (Ch. 68).

¹⁴ Daiches defends the Baron's pedantry on the grounds that he represents those people "less affected by changes of dynasty than those of higher rank" and therefore "should survive to indulge his love of the past harmlessly in antiquarian studies and pedantic conversation" (*op. cit.*, p. 92).

¹⁵ On one occasion the Baron worries about applying his knowledge of regal decorum. He wishes to pay homage to Prince Charles Edward after the battle of Prestonpans according to an ancient feudal ritual. Mayhead reminds us that the Baron's conscientious hair-splitting over ceremony here is not wholly ridiculous, but points to his "connection with that world of the heroic past which we see, in this novel, fading into 'the light of common day'" (*op. cit.*, pp. 24-25).

¹⁶ A more serious religious enthusiast, Habakkuk Gilfillan, a Cameronian who "has suffered persecution without learning mercy" (Ch. 32), reads, as we would expect, religious works such as "the Book of Sports and the Covenant" and "the Longer and the Shorter Catechism" (Ch. 36).