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## Preface to SSL 44.2

Tony Jarrells  
*University of South Carolina*

Patrick Scott  
*University of South Carolina - Columbia*

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## SERIES EDITORS' PREFACE TO *SSL* 44:2

Compared with his contemporary, Jane Austen, Walter Scott has not fared nearly so well, of late, in the “reworkings” department. Where Austen’s life and novels continue to inspire film adaptations, fan clubs, biopics, YouTube series, zombie plots, and even koozies, many of Scott’s works struggle to stay in print. It is true that bits of *Waverley* can be glimpsed in the story line of the popular romance and television series, *Outlander*. And the historical novel that Scott helped pioneer remains a thriving genre in the twenty-first century—and not just in the English-speaking world. Still, as Daniel Cook and Lucy Wood explain in their introduction to this *SSL* special issue, “‘The Great Unknown’ is now indeed unknown again,” and this time the reasons have nothing to do with fame, mystery, merit, or interest.

Critical attention to Scott’s work, however, has been on the rise these last couple of decades, thanks to excellent scholarly editions of the novels and—now—the poetry. There have been field-changing studies of Scott’s fiction by Ian Duncan, Anne Rigney, Ina Ferris, and others, and a triennial international conference recognizes the importance of encouraging younger scholars to contribute to the discussion of Scott’s work.

This journal’s interest in Scott’s influence, reception, and reworking in later writing and culture is of long standing. Notably, nearly fifty years ago now, *SSL* published one of the first of Jerome Mitchell’s influential studies of how Scott was reworked in opera.<sup>1</sup> Nearly a decade before that, *SSL*’s second issue included one of the first of William Montgomerie’s studies of ballad manuscripts, tracing how manuscript ballads in Scott’s collection were transmitted and reused by the American scholar F.J. Child.<sup>2</sup> In more strictly literary terms, *SSL* has published articles about Scott’s influence on Nathaniel Hawthorne and about negative attitudes to Scott in the twentieth-

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<sup>1</sup> Jerome Mitchell, “Operatic Versions of *The Bride of Lammermoor*,” *SSL*, 10.3 (1973): 145–164: <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl/vol10/iss3/3>

<sup>2</sup> William Montgomerie, “William MacMath and the Scott Ballad Manuscripts,” *SSL*, 1.2 (1963): 93–98: <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl/vol1/iss2/3>

century Scottish Renaissance movement, just as his historical fiction was drawing new interest from European theorists such as Georg Lukacs.<sup>3</sup> A recent article discussed the several visual tributes in Edinburgh to Scott's continuing presence in the Scottish canon.<sup>4</sup>

Thus we are pleased to be able to publish this special issue of *SSL* on *Reworking Walter Scott*, edited by Daniel Cook and Lucy Wood. The articles published here are taken from edited versions of the papers originally presented in April 2017 at the University of Dundee. They feature reworkings of Scott in many different genres and suggest a number of exciting new directions for scholarly engagement with his work. It may be some years yet before we get *Waverley, the Musical*, or *The Rose Bradwardine Diaries*. Together with other recent publications, such as the MLA volume *Approaches to Teaching Scott's Waverley Novels*, and forthcoming ones, such as the essay-collection *Twenty-First-Century Walter Scott*, edited by Caroline McCracken-Flesher and Matthew Wickman, this special issue on *Reworking Walter Scott* will ensure that the Author of *Waverley's* work continues to find a place not only in discussions of Scottish literature, Romanticism, and the nineteenth-century novel, but also of popular culture, comic books, affect theory, and media studies.

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*Reworking Walter Scott* is the second of the two special-topic issues this spring, following *SSL* 44.1, *Scottish-Russian Literary Relations*. They will be followed by three regular general issues, with articles drawn from a wide range of literary periods. Coming next, in *SSL* 45.1, are essays by Nigel Leask, Penny Fielding, Gerard Carruthers, and Tomás Monterrey, and we are beginning to commit space in issues after that. We continue to welcome the opportunity to consider scholarly articles on all periods of Scottish literature and from varied perspectives.

Tony Jarrells  
Patrick Scott

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<sup>3</sup> Will Stephenson and Mimosa Stephenson, "Scott's Influence on Hawthorne," *SSL*, 28 (1993): 123-132: <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl/vol28/iss1/11>; Margery Palmer McCulloch, "'A very curious emptiness': Walter Scott and the Twentieth-Century Scottish Renaissance Movement," *SSL*, 35-36 (2007): 44-56: <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl/vol35/iss1/5>

<sup>4</sup> Silvia Mergenthal, "Edinburgh Monuments, the Literary Canon, and Cultural Nationalism: A Comparative Perspective," *SSL*, 41.1 (2015): 15-22: <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl/vol41/iss1/4>