

## *Introduction*

### *The Scottish Novel after Scott*

In August of 1871, on the centenary of Walter Scott's birth, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* featured an essay celebrating his achievements. It declared that only

a hundred years ago there was no Scott known in Scotland. No Scott! No genius of the mountains, shedding colour and light upon their mighty slopes; no herald of past glory, sounding his clarion out of the heart of the ancient ages; no kindly, soft-beaming light of affectionate insight brightening the Lowland cottages... No Highland emigration could depopulate those dearest hills and glens as they are depopulated by this mere imagination. A hundred years ago they were bare and naked – nay, they were not, except to here and there a wandering, hasty passenger.<sup>1</sup>

Without Scott's works, the essay asserts hyperbolically, Scotland would be unimaginable – a void – to most Britons. Its author, Margaret Oliphant, recognized a good century before Benedict Anderson the role that novels play in imagining national identity and in representing a nation to itself.<sup>2</sup> For, not only was there “no Scott known in Scotland” a century earlier, but

There were no novels; and a hundred years ago, the past history of Scotland was a ground for polemics only – for the contentions of a few historical fanatics, and the investigations of antiquarians – not a glowing and picturesque past in which all the world might rejoice, a region sounding with music and brilliant with colour, as living as our own, and far more captivating in the sheen and brightness of romance than the sober-tinted present.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Margaret Oliphant, “A Century of Great Poets, from 1750 Downwards. No. II – Walter Scott,” *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 110.670 (August 1871): 230–1.

<sup>2</sup> On the nation as imagined community, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, revised ed. (London: Verso, 1991).

<sup>3</sup> Oliphant, “Great Poets,” 230.

## 2 Scottish Women's Writing in the Long Nineteenth Century

If Walter Scott invented Scotland, as Margaret Oliphant and many after her have contended, he did so largely by inventing the Scottish novel.<sup>4</sup>

Before Scott, there were a few Scottish novelists – Tobias Smollett, Henry Mackenzie, and Jean Marischal, for instance – but no body of works or characteristic form that we could refer to as the Scottish novel. Scott's vastly popular *Waverley* novels changed that, defining the Scottish novel indelibly as historical romance. At a time when the average print run of a new novel was 750 copies, each of the *Waverley* novels commanded an initial print run of between 6,000 and 10,000 copies, and libraries in London reported ordering between 50 and 70 copies of each novel as it appeared in order to meet readers' demands.<sup>5</sup> The *Waverley* novels were a commercial success in large part because, as William St. Clair has shown, Scott "achieved an ownership of the whole literary production and distribution process from author to reader, controlling . . . the editing, the publishing, and the printing of the books, the reviewing in the local literary press, [and] the adaptations for the theatre."<sup>6</sup> The *Magician of the North*, as Scott was known, was also an entrepreneur, a curator, and a manufacturer, shaping Scotland's cultural identity through his involvement in every aspect of the *Waverley* novels' production and marketing. The *Waverley* novels cultivated a vogue for Scottish fiction that brought attention and more limited success to Scott's contemporaries, James Hogg, John Galt, Susan Ferrier, and a rash of lesser-known novelists parodied in Sarah Green's *Scotch Novel Reading* (1820). Green's protagonist Alice, a Londoner, is addicted to reading "Scotch novels," which inspire her to dress in tartan and speak in Scots until she meets some real Highlanders – dirty, uncouth, and incomprehensible – who put an end to her obsession. With Scott's death in 1832, the Scottish novel's brief efflorescence would seem to have ended, at least until Robert Louis Stevenson took up Scott's literary mantle, trying his hand at historical romance with *Kidnapped* (1886) and *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889), among other works.

Over the past 150 or so years, scholars have debated the literary value of Scott's achievements, but the seminal position that Oliphant accorded him in Scottish literary history remains unchallenged. Nor do I intend to contest it here. Rather, I am interested in Oliphant's investment as a

<sup>4</sup> See, for instance, Stuart Kelly, *Scott-Land: The Man Who Invented a Nation* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 2010), and Tom Nairn, *The Break-Up of Britain: Crisis of Neo-Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (London: Verso 1981), 114–51.

<sup>5</sup> William St. Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 418, 245.

<sup>6</sup> St. Clair, *Reading Nation*, 170.

Scotswoman and a novelist in this narrative, and in its implications for the other nineteenth-century Scottish women novelists who wrote, to borrow Ian Duncan's phrase, in "Scott's shadow."<sup>7</sup> The very moment of Scott's domination of the British literary marketplace was the moment that Scotswomen, for the first time, constituted a noticeable presence as novelists in that marketplace. The novels of Elizabeth Hamilton, Mary Brunton, Susan Ferrier, and Christian Isobel Johnstone, to name only the most prominent Scottish women novelists of the Romantic period, were all available to Oliphant and her Victorian successors as models. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, in their classic revision of Harold Bloom's theory of the anxiety of influence, argue that nineteenth-century women writers struggled to rewrite patriarchal literary traditions "by actively seeking a *female* precursor who . . . proves by example that a revolt against patriarchal literary authority is possible" and who consequently "legitimize[s] her own rebellious endeavors."<sup>8</sup> Yet despite the ready availability of female precursors, Oliphant and those who came after her looked to Scott. Instead of rebelling against patriarchal literary authority, as Gilbert and Gubar's theory suggests, Oliphant feminized it, transforming Scott, as Chapter 1 argues, into a prototype of the professional woman writer.

Nonetheless, as a literary predecessor and precedent-setter for Scottish women novelists, Scott posed problems. In *The Achievement of Literary Authority*, Ina Ferris argues persuasively that Scott's *Waverley* novels rendered the feminized and degraded genre of romance a respectably masculine form of writing.<sup>9</sup> They did so by reverting to an earlier understanding of romance, one that preceded its corruption by women who

<sup>7</sup> Ian Duncan uses this phrase to refer to Scott's contemporaries, including James Hogg, John Galt, and Christian Isobel Johnstone, whose literary achievements were overshadowed by those of their more famous contemporaries. But Scott cast a long shadow over nineteenth-century Scotland, and his successors, male and female, also wrote in its shade. See *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

<sup>8</sup> Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*, new ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 49–50.

<sup>9</sup> Ina Ferris, *The Achievement of Literary Authority: Gender, History, and the Waverley Novels* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992). A great deal has been written on the *Waverley* novels and romance. See, for instance, Martha F. Bowden, *Descendants of Waverley: Romancing History in Contemporary Historical Fiction* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2016); Ayşe Çelikkol, *Romances of Free Trade: British Literature, Laissez-Faire, and the Global Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Fiona Robertson, "Romance and the Romantic Novel: Sir Walter Scott," in *A Companion to Romance: From Classical to Contemporary*, ed. Corinne Saunders (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 287–304; Ian Duncan, *Modern Romance and Transformations of the Novel: The Gothic, Scott, Dickens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); David Oberhelman, "Waverley, Genealogy, History: Scott's Romance of Fathers and Sons," *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 15.1 (1991): 29–47; and Jerome Mitchell, *Scott, Chaucer, and Medieval Romance: A Study in Sir Walter Scott's Indebtedness to the Middle Ages* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1987).

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wrote sentimental novels for the Minerva press. Scott's romances dwelt on the past rather than the present, and on what he described as the "marvellous and uncommon" rather than the familiar and mundane.<sup>10</sup> Yet, as Ferris shows, Scott at the same time brought to his novels a new precision of detail that distinguished them from "highly conventionalized" sentimental fiction.<sup>11</sup> Reviewers repeatedly praised *Waverley* for "its 'variety' of mode, scene, and characterization; and the 'fact' and 'accuracy' of its historical and cultural representations."<sup>12</sup>

It is perhaps not surprising, then, that literary scholars from Georg Lukács to Harry Shaw have found in *Waverley* and its successors the origins of the realist novel. Like Scott's contemporaries, these more recent readers have celebrated the *Waverley* novels' "human and historical particularity," whether as an end in itself or as a vehicle for exploring abstract ideological processes.<sup>13</sup> But they have also recognized the limits of Scott's realism, which might be described as material or formal rather than psychological. For, as Shaw observes, in the *Waverley* novels "the focus rests almost entirely on the social and historical aspects of human life, with the inner life being relegated to the realm of the ineffable."<sup>14</sup> Scott's status as an originator of the realist novel depends on his representation of things – his re-creation of the texture of real life – rather than on his representation of characterological interiority. His narrators do report characters' thoughts and feelings, but readers rarely gain the less mediated access to their "inner life" that free indirect discourse would provide. Shaw's qualification of Scott's realist credentials echoes nineteenth-century readers' reservations. In 1858 Walter Bagehot suggested that readers must endure the *Waverley* novels' "peculiar interest . . . as if for their own sake" in "antiquarian details" in order to enjoy their "sentimental element." In 1864 Henry James valued these details more positively, acknowledging that although many of the *Waverley* characters "may seem little better than lay-figures," readers might nonetheless take pleasure in "the sight of unmistakable velvet and brocade and tartan."<sup>15</sup> If early nineteenth-century readers appreciated Scott's novels as romances that incorporated history, late nineteenth-century readers, accustomed to greater depth and

<sup>10</sup> Walter Scott, "Essay on Romance," in *The Miscellaneous Prose Works of Sir Walter Scott, Bart.*, vol. 6 (Edinburgh: Cadell, 1827), 155.

<sup>11</sup> Ferris, *Achievement*, 81. <sup>12</sup> Ferris, *Achievement*, 83.

<sup>13</sup> Harry E. Shaw, *Narrating Reality: Austen, Scott, Eliot* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), 14.

<sup>14</sup> Shaw, *Narrating*, 36.

<sup>15</sup> Walter Bagehot, "The *Waverley* Novels," *National Review* 6 (April 1858): 446; Henry James, Review of *Essays on Fiction* by Nassau Senior, *North American Review* 99 (Oct. 1864): 585.

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complexity of character, judged them as realist novels manqué, eventually relegating them to the status of children's literature.<sup>16</sup>

Scott himself regarded the “marvellous and uncommon” as entirely compatible with accuracy of detail, explaining in his *Essay on Romance* (1827) that romance and history were originally one and the same. As narratives of a tribe's or nation's origins were passed down over generations, they were enhanced by “tributes from the Imagination” of storytellers, thus becoming increasingly “mythological and fabulous” over time.<sup>17</sup> Scott's novels embody the definition of romance he offers in this essay, recounting a series of conflicts that were central to the centuries-long consolidation of the modern British nation-state. For instance, *Ivanhoe* (1820) tells of Anglo-Saxon resistance to Norman rule, *Old Mortality* (1819) of the Scottish Covenanters' opposition to the Stuart monarchy's Erastianism, *Rob Roy* (1817) of the unsuccessful Jacobite uprising of 1715, and *Waverley* (1814) of its similarly futile successor in 1745. Scott's tales of chivalry and adventure, superstition and enchantment, inaugurated a masculinized Scottish romance tradition that Robert Louis Stevenson, George MacDonald, James Barrie, and John Buchan, among others, would perpetuate in their own fiction. Twentieth-century critics from Edwin Muir and Hugh MacDiarmid to Tom Nairn and Stuart Kelly have charged Scott with inventing a Scotland of romantic illusions that displaced and discounted the material realities of Scottish life – including the effects of industrialization, migration, and agricultural modernization – and filled the void with tales of days gone by.<sup>18</sup> In 1932, MacDiarmid, disgusted by national events marking the centenary of Scott's death, dismissed Scott as a writer “full of false Romanticism,” and with “no profound and progressive sense of his country.”<sup>19</sup> But in 1871, when Oliphant celebrated the centenary of his birth, Scott's sway was still strong. He was, as William St. Clair has shown, “by several orders of magnitude, the author whose works had sold the largest number of copies in the English-speaking world.”<sup>20</sup>

<sup>16</sup> John O. Hayden dates this transition in public perceptions of Scott to around 1885. Introduction, *Scott: The Critical Heritage*, ed. Hayden (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), 2.

<sup>17</sup> Scott, “Essay on Romance,” 181, 162.

<sup>18</sup> Edwin Muir, *Scott and Scotland: The Predicament of the Scottish Writer*, introduction by Allan Massie (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1982); Hugh MacDiarmid, “The Scott Centenary,” in *Modernism and Nationalism: Literature and Society in Scotland 1918–1939*, ed. Margery Palmer McCulloch (Glasgow: Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 2004), 125–6; Nairn, *The Break-Up of Britain*, 114–51; and Kelly, *Scott-land*.

<sup>19</sup> MacDiarmid, “The Scott Centenary,” 125–6. That MacDiarmid was responding to public events marking the centenary of Scott's death suggests that many people did not share his views.

<sup>20</sup> St. Clair, *The Reading Nation*, 419.

6 Scottish Women's Writing in the Long Nineteenth Century

### Romancing the Real

If romance was masculine literary territory in nineteenth-century Scotland, how did Scotswomen who aspired to authorship navigate this terrain? This is the question that this book seeks to answer. These women could not escape Scott's influence, but neither could they adopt or imitate his masculine mode of fiction wholesale. Each of the women discussed in this book responded differently to Scott and to the romance tradition he epitomized, but together their novels form an overlooked countertradition of unromantic or even antiromantic representations of Scotland – from stories of mundane domestic life in villages where nothing ever happens to accounts of grinding poverty in Glasgow's slums. Although claiming to reject romance, many of these women instead domesticated it, finding the “marvellous and uncommon” in the mundane. In doing so, they revised Scott's materialist realism. Instead of using descriptive detail to evoke the pastness of the past, they used it to evoke the beauty of the commonplace, or to reveal the romance in everyday life. This neglected body of writing challenges the claim that Scotland lacked any equivalent to the English Victorian realist tradition, with its novels of political debate and social reform.

Who were these women and why has their work been so neglected? Between Scott's death in 1832 and the beginning of World War II, when Scottish women writers came to recognize themselves as belonging to a distinct and gendered literary tradition, Scotswomen produced literally hundreds of novels, most of which are now forgotten. With the exceptions of Margaret Oliphant and Catherine Carswell, Scottish women writers of the long nineteenth century have received little critical attention individually, let alone as a group that includes Sarah Tytler [Henrietta Keddie], Lucy Bethia Walford, Flora Annie Steel, Annie S. Swan, Isabella Fyvie Mayo, Mary and Jane Findlater, Mona Caird, Robina Hardy, Sarah MacNaughtan, and O. Douglas [Anna Buchan], among others. While writing this book I have been asked repeatedly whether these women's novels are really worth revisiting, or whether they shouldn't simply be relegated to the dustbin of literary history.

In response I have argued, as I will argue here, that Scottish women's fiction constitutes a distinct and coherent chapter in the development of the British novel that demands scholarly attention for both its literary value and its historical significance. Moreover, I suggest that these women's novels are highly pleasurable reading. They will appeal not only to readers of Scott and Stevenson but also to admirers of Jane Austen, Charles

Dickens, and George Eliot. That these women and their works have disappeared so completely from our purview does not mean that they deserved to disappear. Rather, their current invisibility derives from a range of factors including the relatively recent rediscovery of Scottish Victorianism, the tacit Anglo-centrism of studies of nineteenth-century realism, the ephemerality of the media in which these women tended to publish their writing, and, it must be acknowledged, their own efforts at concealment. Above all, though, their disappearance reflects the masculinist bent of Scottish literary history, which has celebrated the male romancers who followed Scott over their female counterparts.

A quick glance at the third volume of *The History of Scottish Literature* (1988) will reveal the extent to which masculinist attitudes toward nineteenth-century Scottish literature have changed over the past thirty years. Douglas Gifford, the editor of the volume, laments that nineteenth-century Scottish literature, dominated by a backward-looking aristocratic romance tradition, “failed to respond imaginatively to society’s changes, and failed to interpret and empathise with the mass of ordinary people.”<sup>21</sup> Paul H. Scott, in his contribution to the volume, argues that the fifty years after Walter Scott’s death saw “a loss of cohesion and self-confidence” in Scottish literary culture; Christopher Harvie echoes the indictment, describing the 1830s through the 1880s as a “great ‘black hole’ in Scottish creative literature and social thought.”<sup>22</sup> Whereas Paul Scott traces the problem to the “disastrous” Disruption of 1843, when the splitting of the Presbyterian church destroyed the “bulwark of national identity,” Harvie suggests that Victorian Scottish writers willfully neglected the problems accompanying Scotland’s industrial growth: poverty, poor sanitation, and alcoholism.<sup>23</sup> In turning to romance, these writers failed to develop a Scottish version of the English Victorian “novel of political practice and public doctrine.”<sup>24</sup>

Gifford’s introduction to volume 3 of *The History of Scottish Literature* did affirm that Victorian Scotland was “an exceptionally male-dominated society,”<sup>25</sup> and in an essay published in *Scotland and the 19th-Century World* (2012) Gifford acknowledged that *The History of Scottish Literature’s*

<sup>21</sup> Douglas Gifford, “Introduction,” in *The History of Scottish Literature*, vol. 3: *The Nineteenth Century*, ed. Douglas Gifford (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988), 5.

<sup>22</sup> Paul H. Scott, “The Last Purely Scotch Age,” in Gifford, ed., *The History of Scottish Literature*, vol. 3: *The Nineteenth Century*, 13; Christopher Harvie, “Industry, Religion and the State of Scotland,” in *ibid.*, 24.

<sup>23</sup> Scott, “The Last Purely Scotch Age,” 19.

<sup>24</sup> Harvie, “Industry, Religion, and the State of Scotland,” 28.      <sup>25</sup> Gifford, “Introduction,” 9.

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third volume was similarly “male-dominated,” neglecting “to recognize sufficiently the achievement of women like Susan Ferrier and Margaret Oliphant.”<sup>26</sup> If we take women’s writing into account, Gifford argues, Scottish literature in the latter half of the nineteenth century was in fact quite vibrant, with “the twenty years between 1835 and 1855 (with the Disruption of the Church of Scotland at its heart)” forming “the real nadir” of Victorian Scottish literature.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps it was editing, with Dorothy McMillan, the compendious *History of Scottish Women's Writing* (1997) that revealed to Gifford the wealth of nineteenth-century literature by women. This collection of essays on individual authors and trends in Scottish women’s writing remains among the most substantial contributions to the topic even twenty years later. But its impact has been limited. Ironically, *Scotland and the 19th-Century World* makes even fewer references to women writers than *The History of Scottish Literature*. Significantly, it also has very little to say about the Scottish novel, focusing instead on periodicals, travel writing, balladry, and history. *Scotland and the 19th-Century World* takes the value of nineteenth-century Scottish literature to lie, as its title suggests, in its interactions with the “world” – a term encompassing British imperial expansion and the industrialization that enabled and was enabled by it. The editors assert that nineteenth-century Scotland was as “complex and contradictory as might be expected of any culture involved in negotiating . . . cultural anglicization, rampant industrialization, and willing partnership in British imperial enterprise.”<sup>28</sup> The world in which they situate nineteenth-century Scotland seems very much a man’s world, one that would necessarily exclude women’s writing.

Yet Scotswomen did write about industrialization, imperialism, and Anglicization. Take, for instance, *Saint Mungo's City* (1884), by Henrietta Keddie, who wrote under the name Sarah Tytler. Set in Glasgow during the 1850s, this novel depicts the effects of industrialization and imperialism on the city. The three elderly Mackinnon sisters live in one of the great houses built in the eighteenth century by Tobacco Lords before the “tide of trade” had turned and “sugar had got the better of tobacco, and cotton had rivalled sugar, and iron distanced cotton.”<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Douglas Gifford, “Preparing for the Renaissance: Revaluing Nineteenth-Century Scottish Literature,” in *Scotland and the 19th-Century World*, ed. Gerard Carruthers, David Goldie, and Alastair Renfrew (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2012), 21.

<sup>27</sup> Gifford, “Preparing for the Renaissance,” 23.

<sup>28</sup> Gerard Carruthers, David Goldie, and Alastair Renfrew, “Introduction,” in Carruthers et al., eds., *Scotland and the 19th-Century World*, 19.

<sup>29</sup> Sarah Tytler, [Henrietta Keddie], *Saint Mungo's City: A Novel*, 3 vols. (London: Chatto and Windus), 1: 2.

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These genteel but impoverished women avoid “silly pretence at polished instead of plain manners,” and scorn “any attempt in Scotch people to speak ‘high English.’”<sup>30</sup> By contrast, Mrs. Drysdale, whose husband owns a textile mill, has “somehow managed, with misdirected ambition, to give an undesirable varnish to the native Doric of her tongue, which, in robbing it of its simple rusticity, lent it a false lustre that by no means improved its quality.”<sup>31</sup> The Miss Mackinnons represent the old ways of life that are rapidly disappearing as the newly monied Drysdales import the manners and values of the English middle class. Among the younger generation, however, Tam Drysdale sides with the workers in his father’s mill, and Lieutenant Eneas Mackinnon eats “the sparse meal of enforced self-denial and petty economy” so that his aunts might remain in their grand but echoing empty mansion.<sup>32</sup> Tytler addresses another effect of industrialization and imperial expansion in Scotland when Tam boards a steamer boat to Rothesay in the hopes of experiencing “for himself what the people’s holiday was like,” and encounters Rory, a man from North Uist who has recently arrived in Glasgow and is seeking work.<sup>33</sup> From the peasantry’s difficulties in sustaining life in the Highlands and Islands, to the upward and downward mobility generated by industrialization, and the benefits and hardships of participating in British imperial endeavors, *Saint Mungo’s City* is very much a novel about Scotland’s engagement with the world and the world’s impact on Scotland.

*Saint Mungo’s City* is far from the only work that might be designated a Scottish equivalent to what is known as the “Condition of England” novel — a genre that, as in Elizabeth Gaskell’s *North and South* or Charles Dickens’s *Hard Times*, examined the effects of industrialization on traditional social structures. Annie S. Swan’s *Mary Garth: A Clydeside Romance* (1902), like *Saint Mungo’s City*, explores class conflict through generational conflict as Anne Garth supports the miners in her father’s pits in their effort to unionize. *Mary Garth* is set in mining country in the southwest of Scotland, where Craigs village sits near the pitheads, a “square of depressed, ugly little brick houses” that forms “an unpicturesque blot on a landscape naturally fair.”<sup>34</sup> Other novels by Swan explore the causes of economic inequality and represent the vulnerability of the working class, especially women, in Dundee’s jute mills and in Glasgow’s slums. Margaret Oliphant’s *Harry Muir: A Scottish Story* (1852) explores another

<sup>30</sup> Tytler, *Saint Mungo’s City*, 1: 13.

<sup>31</sup> Tytler, *Saint Mungo’s City*, 1: 91.

<sup>32</sup> Tytler, *Saint Mungo’s City*, 1: 227.

<sup>33</sup> Tytler, *Saint Mungo’s City*, 1: 254.

<sup>34</sup> Annie S. Swan, *Mary Garth: A Clydeside Romance* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1904), 7.

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of the evils of poverty: the eponymous protagonist's alcoholism and his sisters' struggles to compensate for its economic and social impact on the family. *Harry Muir* is set in Port Dundas, an area of Glasgow that in the nineteenth century was home to textile mills, chemical works, glassworks, and iron foundries. In Oliphant's novel, Port Dundas is primarily the realm of women, who labor in these mills, factories, and foundries – a fate that the Muir women seek to avoid. If Walter Scott left nineteenth-century Scotland “a wasteland,” as the editors of *Scotland and the 19th-Century World* contend, his female successors transformed it into a flourishing landscape of cities, villages, and seaports, peopled with diverse individuals who reflected the changing composition of Scottish society during the nineteenth century.<sup>35</sup>

The critical neglect of Scottish women writers has given false validation to the claim that Scotland failed to develop a realist novel – the genre that we have come to regard as the acme of Victorian Britain's literary achievements. The successes of Scott, Stevenson, Barrie, and other romancers have been something of an embarrassment to scholars of Scottish literature because they imply that nineteenth-century Scottish prose fiction remained “stuck” in the romance mode, an earlier stage on the trajectory of literary evolution than realism. While I contend that Scotswomen did in fact develop a realist novel, it is worth pausing for a moment to recognize that even a concept as seemingly self-evident or universal as “realism” emerges from the study of what John Kerrigan calls “Anglo Eng. Lit.,” a comparatively narrow canon of works dominated by authors situated in metropolitan England.<sup>36</sup> Thus, as Chapter 1 argues, Oliphant's *Chronicles of Carlingford* remain the best known of her ninety-odd novels because they mimic from an outsider's position the tradition of the provincial English novel as developed by Austen, Trollope, or Eliot. The familiarity of their technique accounts for their comparative longevity. By contrast, her Scottish romances, in which she revises the masculine tropes of Scott's novels, have been largely neglected. Rather than seeking a Scottish realist novel that looks like an English realist novel, and thereby imposing implicitly Anglo-centric definitions of realism onto Scotland, it might be more productive to see how Scottish literature troubles the categories that organize the study of Anglo-English literature – categories that

<sup>35</sup> Carruthers et al., “Introduction,” 15.

<sup>36</sup> John Kerrigan, *Archipelagic English: Literature, History, and Politics 1603–1707* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 12.