

**Ainsley McIntosh, ed., *Marmion: a Tale of Flodden Field*. The Edinburgh Edition of Walter Scott's Poetry. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018. Pp. 486. £90. ISBN 9781474425193.**

As interest in Walter Scott rises, both scholars and general readers are likely to turn to what initially made him famous: his poetry. It was his poetry, not his anonymously published novels, which established him as a member of the early nineteenth century's Scottish literati. However, reputable scholarly editions of his poetry are lacking. The Edinburgh Edition of Scott's Poetry (EEWSP) of which *Marmion: a Tale of Flodden Field* is the first volume to be published, seeks to rectify this. The EEWSP is a companion series to the recently-completed Edinburgh Edition of the Waverly Novels (EEWN) and follows a similar format. It aims to restore the text of the poems, along with their corresponding notes, to that which Scott intended. They also provide detailed essays justifying the editorial decisions made, the history and availability of manuscripts, drafts and editions, and a list of emendations, thus allowing the reader to recover other readings of the poems. The series editor is Professor Alison Lumsden, who worked on the EEWN and is currently Chair in English at the University of Aberdeen; *Marmion*'s editor is Dr Ainsley McIntosh who is an Advisory Editor for the EEWSP and affiliated with the Walter Scott Research Centre at the University of Aberdeen.

The volume opens with a short 'General Introduction' to the series by Lumsden. Lumsden reminds the reader of the 'dazzling' (ix) success of Scott's poetry and its impact on the literary scene, and posits that the lack of a scholarly edition may be one of the reasons why it has been overlooked by academia. She then provides a justification of the choice of the base text for the poems. Unlike in the EEWN when the 'the first fully articulated version' (xi), usually the first edition, was chosen as a base text, the EEWSP recognises that Scott continued to engage creatively with his poems after publication, and thus chooses a later edition, when 'the continuing process of adjustment and augmentation more or less ceases' (xii). McIntosh explains this in detail in relation to *Marmion* in the 'Essay on the Text.' She chronologically describes the different versions of the poem, starting with Scott's earliest references to it in his correspondence, and finishing with the posthumous 1833-34 edition. She justifies her choice of the third edition as a base text arguing that this represents the culmination of what she terms 'socialisation' (308), that is the process of mediating his text through discussion with readers. The third edition, McIntosh argues, marks the end of this process of discussion and emendation. However, during socialisation the text simultaneously deteriorates, and thus, the edition also seeks to correct mistakes which entered the text between manuscript form and third edition.

The first half of the volume presents the poem as Scott intended; the text of the poem contains Scott's short footnotes, and his longer notes are presented at the end. The second half of the volume includes the editorial notes. Following McIntosh's 'Essay on the Text' is the 'Emendation List' which details the differences between this edition and the third edition; a page on 'End-of-line Hyphens'; a 'Historical Note' which sets the text in its context and outlines Scott's practice of dealing with history; 'Explanatory Notes' which aim to 'identify places, historical events, and people, Scott's sources, and all quotations and references; to explain proverbs; and to translate difficult or obscure language' (367); and a 'Glossary' of words which are dialectical, archaic, technical, or are used in a different way than they usually are today.

The EEWSP's *Marmion* is a clear and scholarly edition of Scott's 1808 poem. As with the EEWN, the reader can be confident in the rigorous editorial process, and can approach the poem as Scott, not Lockhart, would have intended. McIntosh's notes provide detailed information on the editorial decisions she has made and thus grant an interested

reader the ability to evaluate the emendations. The clear presentation of the text, the historical background given, and the explanatory notes and glossary, make the text accessible to all. Rejecting Lockhart's decision on Scott's notes returns the text to Scott's relatively reader-friendly approach. On the other hand, the edition recognises that fewer emendations are necessary with the poetry than with the novels; the text of the poem itself reaches the reader in a very similar form to earlier editions, making the need for a scholarly edition less pressing than it was with the novels.

*Marmion* is the first of ten volumes of the EEWSP to be published. It restores the text to the way Scott intended, and provides the reader with pertinent background information. Therefore, it is a welcome addition to Scott scholarship.

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