

***Ivanhoe* in Australia: the First Fifty Years**

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ABSTRACT

Walter Scott's novel *Ivanhoe* was one of his most popular and influential works. It arrived in Australia, then the colony of New South Wales, very soon after its publication in late 1819 and was enthusiastically taken up by people in the colony. As well as the book itself, *Ivanhoe* manifested itself in a number of different ways in the coming years. There were regular references to the novel and its characters in newspaper articles; names derived from it were regularly given to houses and farms, towns and streets, horses and other possessions; and plays based on it were regularly performed. This article takes the bicentenary of the novel's publication as an opportunity to consider the ways in which *Ivanhoe* was received and appropriated in the developing European culture of Australia in the first fifty years after its publication. The study is based on references to the novel and to items derived from it in Australian newspapers from 1820 to 1870.

KEYWORDS: Walter Scott, Australia, 1820-1870, Australian Newspapers, *Ivanhoe*

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At the end of 1819, Walter Scott moved in a new direction with a novel which was not only set in England, not Scotland, but also set much further back in time than any of his earlier novels. The publication of *Ivanhoe* was not only a turning point in his work but also marked the birth of what was to prove over time his most popular and, arguably, most influential novel. *Ivanhoe* spread quickly across the English-speaking world of the British empire and the United States of America, Australia being no exception.¹ Two hundred years after the first publication of the novel seems a fitting point to reflect on the presence of *Ivanhoe* in what was at the time of its publication one of the most far-flung outposts of British rule. However, the presence and influence of the novel in Australia has been so great that I have chosen in this paper to confine myself to the first fifty years, dating from 1820, the year when we first have a reference to the novel in Australia. Furthermore, I am focussing on Australian newspapers and limiting myself to direct references to *Ivanhoe*, including its characters, plot and setting.

Scott's shift to England and the twelfth century was of more than superficial significance. First, the setting in the distant past forced the reader to recognise Scott as a writer of historical novels rather than focusing on him as a writer of Scottish novels. Secondly, Scott did not just write a novel set in England: he embodied in memorable form a foundational myth in which the English were the result of the happy marriage of Saxon love of freedom and Norman energy, a myth which continued to resonate throughout the nineteenth century. Thirdly, while he had always been interested in outcasts (think, for example, of Madge Wildfire in *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*), in *Ivanhoe* he introduced a new kind of outcast, the Jews: the novel's two Jews, particularly Rebecca, fascinated readers of his own time and the succeeding Victorian age. Nevertheless, *Ivanhoe* was both a new direction and a continuation of Scott's previous work. It added to the succession of novels that had begun with *Waverley* and continued to exist within the broader category of the Waverley Novels, a status that was reinforced with the issue of the so-called Magnum collected edition of the novels published at the end of Scott's life. It was read alongside his other works and shared common themes with them. In examining the history of *Ivanhoe* in Australia, it is important to remember that it has its unique features but also shares in the history of the Waverley Novels in general.

¹ To avoid confusion, I have used the modern names for Australia and Tasmania although these names only established themselves in general usage in the course of the period under discussion.

The presence of *Ivanhoe* in Australia takes many forms, or, to put it another way and adapt the title of Ann Rigney's book, it has many afterlives. Obviously it exists as the book itself, a physical object to be read, lent and treasured. However, after its publication it begins to manifest itself in other ways, one of the first being derivative works, especially plays and operas, but also poems. From this it is a short step to artefacts such as paintings and engravings (often adorning illustrated editions of the novel, although the first edition and the two that followed were not illustrated). Two further important manifestations are the naming of people, places, and things after the novel's characters and settings (with an extension of this practice into brand names) and references to incidents, characters or historical "facts" from the novel in public discourse (particularly political discourse) in newspapers and journals. All of this begins in Australia within a few years of the publication of *Ivanhoe*. There is evidence of copies of the book in Australia from December 1821, and in 1828 we find an advertisement for a picture of Rebecca and a reference to the novel in a newspaper article. In 1833 comes the first instance of a place-name derived from the novel, and in 1836, there are references to two *Ivanhoe*-derived texts, a play and a poem. Thus within two decades of the publication of *Ivanhoe* all the major manifestations of the novel in Australia had already appeared. Together these and later presences of *Ivanhoe* tell us a lot about how the novel was read, understood, used and valued.

The remainder of this paper discusses the many and various presences of *Ivanhoe* in Australia between 1820 and 1870. My source is, as already noted, Australian newspapers of the period. Specifically, I am using those covered in the National Library of Australia's *Trove* website. Because the *Trove* newspapers are based on OCR, although supplemented by very substantial correction by a large number of volunteers, it is not possible to be certain that one has identified the first occurrence of any particular part of the *Ivanhoe* story. Nevertheless, by searching for a number of different terms it has been possible to establish a fairly precise chronology and select a representative set of examples.²

Before the advent of *Ivanhoe*, Scott's books had been present in Australia since at least September 1815 when *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Lady of the*

² While I have concentrated on newspapers as my source of information I have found invaluable background to my study in the books and articles listed in the Works Cited, particularly those by Louise D'Arcens, Ann Rigney and Elizabeth Webby.

Lake, and *Waverley*, “imported in the Baring,” were advertised for sale (*Sydney Gazette* 16 Sept. 1815: 1). Even if this is actually the first time *Waverley* was available in Australia (and it may well not be) it still represents quite a quick passage to the colony of the novel, which was published in July 1814. A voyage to Australia typically took four to five months, and the Baring left England on 20 April 1815 and arrived in Sydney on 7 September (*Sydney Gazette* 9 Sept. 1815: 2). It is also highly likely that some of Scott’s poetry had reached the colony even before this date, since *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* was published in 1805 and *The Lady of the Lake* in 1810, although I have not found any earlier references to either poem. In all these cases, copies would necessarily have been imported. The colony of New South Wales was still relatively young, having been established in 1788, and the reading population was still very small. Consequently, the market was not large enough to support any industry of reprinting novels, unlike in America, where, for example, within in a year of its appearance, *Ivanhoe* was printed and published in Philadelphia, New York and Boston. To read Scott’s novels, people in Australia had either to bring copies with them when they travelled from Britain or wait until copies were on sale at the small number of outlets in Sydney or Hobart.

Ivanhoe was published on 20 December 1819 in Edinburgh and 29 December in London and a second edition appeared shortly afterwards (Todd and Bowden 502-05). A reference to the use of “the tune of Sir Walter Scott’s *Ivanhoe*” at a St Andrew’s Day ball on 30 November 1820 shows that the novel was known about within a year in Australia—although whether a reference to the tune represents any direct knowledge of the novel is hard to say. What this event does show is that Scott’s new medieval novel was first received in Australia under the aegis of the preceding series of “Scotch Novels” with which he had established his reputation. A tune associated with a novel set in twelfth-century England does not seem particularly appropriate to a ball celebrating the day of the patron saint of Scotland, where the ladies “were all dressed in something tartan” (*Sydney Gazette* 2 Dec. 1820: 2). It certainly provides no hint that, at this very early stage, *Ivanhoe* was recognised a something quite new in Scott’s work. The main motivation was perhaps to show that people in Australia were up to date with the latest literary work of the age’s most famous novelist, just as, by referring to him as Sir Walter Scott, the article shows Australian awareness of his recent baronetcy, conferred in March 1820. The Australian

public wanted to show they knew what was happening in the literary sphere in Britain, but as yet they did not realise what a major turning point *Ivanhoe* was.

The first certain reference to a copy of the novel being in Australia occurs towards the end of 1821 with an advertisement stating that “‘IVANHOE,’ ‘Florance Macarthy,’ and the 2d and 3d Volumes of ‘The Hermit in London,’ had better be returned to the Owner, to prevent him from having Recourse to legal Proceedings for the Recovery of the same” (*Hobart Town Gazette* 8 Dec. 1821: 1). Even stronger attachment to a missing copy of the novel is evident with another advertisement which makes clear that a copy of *Ivanhoe*, evidently imported in its original covering, boards, is more highly prized than a bound copy of the Bible: “LOST, a few days ago, the Novel of ‘Ivanhoe,’ in 3 vols. boards; also, in January last, a pocket Bible, in 1 vol. bound in blue Morocco.—A Reward of 3 Dollars is hereby offered for Ivanhoe, and 2 Dollars for the Bible, upon delivering of the same to the Printer” (*Hobart Town Gazette* 10 May 1823: 1). How these copies arrived in Australia is not known, but the Hobart copy in boards is obviously not one of the “superbly bound” copies advertised in Sydney a year earlier (*Sydney Gazette* 24 May 1822: 4). Undoubtedly copies of the novel continued to be imported and continued to be borrowed. In 1825, the Jewish free settler Barnett Levey, whose name will recur in this article, posted yet another advertisement for a missing copy of *Ivanhoe*, in this case on behalf of his brother Solomon, a former convict with very substantial business interests in the colony: “It is requested that those Ladies and Gentlemen who have, from time to time, borrowed Books from Mr. S. Levey, will return them to the undersigned, who respectfully solicits all books, now in possession of persons to whom they do not belong, to comply with the above—a fresh supply may be had. Among the number missing are the Pastor’s Fire Side, Tales of my Landlord, Kenelworth [sic], Princess Charlotte, Secret Revenge, Smollet’s Works, Ivanhoe, Tales of the Times, Paradise Lost—so are the books until found by B. Levey No. 72, George-street” (*Australian* 1 Dec. 1825: 4). In a striking illustration of the world of intra-Empire communication, the *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its Dependencies* (published in London for the East India Company) picked up this advertisement and made fun of its apparent call for the borrowed books to return themselves (“Characteristics” 35), only to have the Sydney *Australian*, in which the advertisement first appeared, complete the circle by reprinting the *Asiatic Journal*’s article (*Australian* 23 Feb. 1827: 3). Evidently, from the inclusion of

Kenilworth and *Tales of My Landlord* in the list, *Ivanhoe* was not alone amongst Scott's books in attracting readers.

The most intriguing of all the cases of missing copies of *Ivanhoe* surfaces in a court report a few years later in 1841. A man named John Kenny was accused by a Sydney shoemaker, John Waddell, of having stolen a copy of *Ivanhoe* from Robert Kibble in the course of moving Kibble's belongings from one house to another. According to the newspaper account "Mr. Kibble, on being examined, stated that he had borrowed the book from Mr. Waddell, to shew to some gentlemen, as it had the proof corrections of the illustrious author. He got the book many months before, and it lay carelessly among other volumes, but after his removal to [his] new house, the work was wanting" (*Sydney Gazette* 7 Jan. 1841: 2). Taking this at face value, it is extraordinary that a copy of *Ivanhoe* with Scott's proof corrections should have ended up in Australia and, unsurprisingly, I have not been able to trace a copy of the book fitting this description. However, one possibility exists for the conveyance of such a book to Australia. In the years from 1828 to 1832, Scott's publisher, Robert Cadell, was engaged in preparing the corrected edition of Scott's novels, the so-called *Magnum*, for the press. Scott wrote his corrections into a copy of his novels with interleaved blank pages. This copy has survived and is now in the National Library of Scotland and cannot be the copy allegedly found in Australia. However, Cadell did not send Scott's interleaved copy to the press but instead carefully copied Scott's corrections into another copy of the novels (Millgate 62-66). In 1832, Robert Cadell's brother Thomas emigrated to New South Wales where he became a successful brewer, as recorded in his obituary notice (*Empire* 16 May 1857: 2). It is not impossible that Robert Cadell gave his brother the copy of *Ivanhoe* into which he had copied Scott's corrections, as this copy is not known to have otherwise survived. Whatever the means by which it came to Australia, this is the most interesting of all the copies of *Ivanhoe* to have made its way from Edinburgh to the other side of the world.

The discussion of "borrowed" books brings us to libraries, another important source of copies of the text. In 1845, Lipscomb's Circulating Library of Maitland in New South Wales advertised, calling for odd volumes missing from the library to be returned as the loss of most of them would "spoil sets and render them valueless." Amongst the missing volumes were two of *Ivanhoe* (presumably from a three-volume set) but also two volumes of *The Fortunes of Nigel*, and one each of *The Betrothed* and *Castle Dangerous*, as well as the first

volume of a life of Wellington and another of Madame du Barry's memoirs and Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* (*Maitland Mercury* 8 Feb. 1845: 3). Evidently, *Ivanhoe* was once again not the only popular Scott novel. In 1848, the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution published a list of all the holdings in its very well stocked library. In a substantial list of novels, including classics texts and popular contemporary fiction, Scott's novels are well represented, most of them with only one copy, but six with two copies each: *Waverley*, *Guy Mannering*, *The Antiquary*, *Old Mortality*, *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* and *Ivanhoe* (*Port Phillip Patriot* 15 July 1848: 4; 19 July 1848: 4). Of these, only *Ivanhoe* has a setting outside Scotland. While this confirms the special position of *Ivanhoe* in Scott's work, it also confirms the continuing popularity of the Scottish novels that preceded it, including, notably, the first three. When we turn to the evidence of loans rather than holdings, the popularity of Scott's first novel is confirmed in the records of the South Australian Institute in 1861 and 1862 (accessible through the *Australian Common Reader* website). In this two-year period, *Waverley* is overwhelmingly the most popular Scott novel, with two hundred borrowings, whereas *Ivanhoe*, the next most popular, was borrowed only seventeen times, *Pevekil of the Peak* eleven times, *Rob Roy* eight times, and *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* and *Old Mortality* each five times. Even taking into account the special prominence given to *Waverley* by its name being attached to the whole series of "Waverley Novels," this is a remarkable result. What it might suggest is that the prominence of *Ivanhoe* in popular culture in Australia (which I will discuss later) is not matched by its readership. Although it was edging towards a more dominant position amongst Scott's novels, it had not yet reached it. However, as the century wore on, the situation changed and *Ivanhoe* became Scott's best-known novel. We can see this by turning to the borrowing figures for his novels for the Miners and Mechanics Institute of the New South Wales town of Lambton for 1903-1912, also available on the *Australian Common Reader* website, where we find *Waverley* has only three borrowings compared to seven for *Ivanhoe*, and even *Rob Roy* has six, although none of these can compete with the fourteen for Stevenson's *Treasure Island*—by the early twentieth century the replacement of Scott by Stevenson as the world's favourite Scottish novelist is well under way.

Through the period of this study, copies of *Ivanhoe* continue to be offered for sale in Australia, but after the appearance of the 1829-1832 collected edition of the *Waverley Novels* (the so-called *Magnum*), copies are often advertised as

part of a complete set of the novels. The first advertisement for a set of the Waverley Novels that I have found is in 1832 (*Hobart Town Courier* 12 May 1832: 1). This cannot be a complete set, as the Magnum, which was published in monthly volumes, was not completed until May 1833. Nevertheless, the appearance of these volumes in Hobart is impressively up to date. While the volumes of the Magnum were cheaper than the original first editions—each volume was sold at 5s. with most novels occupying two volumes—they were still relatively expensive, so the appearance of cheap editions in the 1840s represents a further extension of the availability of the novel. In 1848, a five-volume edition of the complete novels (with *Ivanhoe* in the second volume) was advertised in Geelong at £5 for the five volumes or £1 7s. 6d. a volume (*Geelong Advertiser* 11 Feb. 1848: 5), but the following year a similar five-volume edition was offered in Sydney for the even cheaper price of £3 10s. and with the further possibility of buying copies of individual novels for 2s. 6d. However, in 1848 comes an ominous note, at least for *Ivanhoe*'s future reputation. John Moore, printer of the *Hobarton Guardian*, advertised “a variety of pleasing and instructive Books for Youth.” His list includes writers who had avowedly written for young people, like Hannah More and Maria Edgeworth, but also *Ivanhoe*, as well as Scott's *Marmion* and *The Lady of the Lake* (*Hobarton Guardian* 6 July 1848: 1). While this presages the future, and ultimately damaging, reputation of *Ivanhoe* as an adventure story for boys (along with *Marmion* and even *The Lady of the Lake*), other evidence suggests that it was still at this stage also considered to be a serious book for adults. The decline in its reputation as serious writing took a long time to reach its full extent.

Even as the book itself continues to be offered for sale, other artefacts drawing on the novel very soon begin to appear. In November of 1828, an auction was advertised in Sydney that included “various other articles of fashion and economy, the Properties of several Officers proceeding to England.” Amongst these were “Pictures by Ackerman, and Others. The Chapeau de Paille, Rebecca in *Ivanhoe*, Flora Macdonald, Don Quixote, Miss Tree” (*Australian* 14 Nov. 1828: 4). At this date, and in the context of a reference to Ackermann, the producer of lavishly illustrated annuals, this probably refers to an engraving by Charles Heath of a painting of Rebecca by C. R. Leslie, which appeared in the annual volume, *The Keepsake for 1828*. In fact, this item is at two removes from *Ivanhoe* since the illustration is of a poem entitled “Rebecca,” in which

the anonymous author presents the thoughts of the captive Rebecca. It thus represents not only the popularity of the novel in general, but also the particular and lasting fascination Rebecca held for readers as its “real” heroine. A few years later, a painting, supposedly by Sir Joshua Reynolds, was offered for sale in 1842 in Hobart under the title “Ivanhoe,” one of a series of dubious “splendid Oil Paintings (originals) by . . . celebrated Artists” (*Colonial Times* 10 May 1842: 2). That the painting included Rebecca becomes evident when it was again offered for sale, this time in Melbourne, with a description: “Rebecca and Ivanhoe are delineated with an expression highly pleasing, and even poetical” (*Argus* 19 Mar. 1853: 4). Given that Reynolds died in 1792 and the list includes an equally implausible painting of Edward V by Rubens, it is unclear whether this was seriously offered as genuine. What it does attest to is the continuing focus on Rebecca as Ivanhoe’s true mate, a focus that had been reinforced by Thackeray’s parody version *Rebecca and Rowena, a Romance upon Romance*. Issued in 1849 for the Christmas market, but dated 1850 on the title and available in Australia from at least June of that year (*Courier* 29 June 1850: 1), it expresses Thackeray’s strong preference for Rebecca, who at the end converts to Christianity and marries Ivanhoe. At a further remove, but still attesting to the popularity of the novel, are items with “Ivanhoe” used as a trade name, such as the “Ivanhoe boots” along with “pilot trousers, fashionable woollen shawls, 36 inch stout Wigan and cotton check, blue kersey shirts, Lancashire flannel” advertised for sale in Perth in 1847 (*Inquirer* 15 Sept. 1847: 1) and the Ivanhoe bowls advertised with other earthenware in Hobart in 1848 (*Courier* 3 May 1848: 3).

So far this paper has been dealing with items imported from overseas. However, within a short time of the arrival of the book in Australia, *Ivanhoe*-related items began to be generated in the colony. As one might expect, some of the first items are in print, beginning a long history of references to the novel in newspaper articles. The earliest such reference comes in a review of Scott’s life of Napoleon. Scott’s nine-volume *Life of Napoleon Buonaparte, Emperor of the French* was published in June 1827 (Todd and Bowden 638) and it is reviewed in Tasmania in June 1828. Significantly, in an article which criticises Scott’s portrayal of Napoleon as historically inaccurate, the reviewer refers to Scott both by his traditional soubriquet, “the Author of Waverley,” when discussing his Scottish novels, and as “the author of Ivanhoe” when discussing his role as a writer of history (*Colonial Advocate* 1 June 1828: 20). Thus, by

implication, *Ivanhoe* is promoted to a special position as the novel which gives Scott status as a historian: as I have already remarked, the earlier novels, set in the relatively recent past, could be seen as primarily *Scottish* novels, but *Ivanhoe*, set fully seven centuries before the author's own time of writing, is undeniably first and foremost a *historical* novel. This perception of *Ivanhoe* as a source of historical information pervades much of the subsequent journalism that makes reference to it. For instance, a letter to the editor of the Melbourne *Argus*, criticising the political views of an earlier writer as "unmitigated trash," accuses him of having no knowledge of English history and proposes a remedy: "It may be some excuse that he never read the history of England; but, surely, a man who sets himself up as one of the lights of the world, will not plead guilty to never having read Scott's novels. If he has never read even Scott, let me recommend him to read *Ivanhoe*, immediately; and, among other things, he will learn something of Saxon life, from the authentic memoirs of Cedric the Saxon, Garth [sic] the swineherd, and Wamba the fool" (*Argus* 7 July 1849: 4). Despite the facetious reference to "authentic memoirs," this injunction straightforwardly presents *Ivanhoe* as providing reliable historical information.

The mention of Cedric, Gurth and Wamba here is typical. These three characters are the ones most frequently brought forward in political discourse. The signature "Cedric" serves as a token of a man of good old English values in an 1842 letter on usury (*True Colonist* 23 Sept. 1842: 2), as does the more elaborate and humorous signature "Cedric Hengist, (for Hengist, Horsa and Co.)" (*Melbourne Punch* 2 Aug. 1855: 37). Wamba is principally remembered, it seems, for his shield of brawn, which, in the novel, he interposes between Cedric and Isaac to prevent Cedric from hurling Isaac down from the seat he is attempting to take (*Ivanhoe* 75). "Wamba's shield of brawn in *Ivanhoe*" is referred to in a crime report in Melbourne in 1835 (*Sydney Herald* 7 Dec. 1835: 3), although a reference to "Wamba the son of Witless brandishing his shield of brawn in token of his readiness to defend the hapless Rebecca" (*Australian* 26 May 1835: 2) seems to represent only a garbled recollection of Scott's text. In political discourse he figures as the type of the jester bound to do his master's bidding (*Moreton Bay Courier* 5 Jan. 1859: 2), his subservience being expressed by his brass collar (*Argus* 31 Aug. 1861: 4). More benignly, his name is also adopted by a tipster for horseraces in Melbourne's Olympic Theatre: "Do you want a correct Tip for the Great Champion Race? Take Wamba's" (*Age* 28 Sept. 1859: 1). References to Gurth more consistently feature his brass

collar: this symbol of feudal serfdom resonated powerfully, not only in Australia, but in political discourse elsewhere. Australian examples include a letter to the editor asserting that “Mr. Fawkner’s scheme” for the distribution of land would create a new class of dependants rather than free workers: “The Saxon swineherd, in *Ivanhoe*, wore a collar, certifying that he was the born thrall of ‘Cedric of Rotherwood,’ why should not ‘Fawkner of Pascoeale,’ sound as well?” (*Geelong Advertiser* 20 Sept. 1849: 2). Another example, in an article graphically headed “Our Slave Law,” is also concerned with rural workers: “But here the condition of the labourer in the rural districts is still nearly the same as that of Gurth, the swineherd in the forest, the thrall of the Saxon Thane about the time of the Norman conquest. . . . The squatter’s servant is Gurth, the thrall of the Saxon Cedric, merely without the old thrall’s appendage of a brass collar” (*Empire* 10 Dec. 1853: 3). While all of this could suggest detailed knowledge of the text, it is hard to know whether references to Wamba’s shield of brawn and Gurth’s brass collar are based, for writers and readers alike, on anything more than a few scenes which had entered popular consciousness, possibly through *Ivanhoe* plays rather than the novel itself. This is especially the case with mistakes such as the shield of brawn being used to defend Rebecca (cited above), or the claim that “[h]ad our fathers advocated any such man take care of thyself crusade, we should all at this day be like Gurth the son of Wamba—each man his collar, and thereon engraved the name of his owner,” which seems like a half recollection of “Wamba, son of Witless” (*Geelong Advertiser* 17 Oct. 1863: 3). So, Cedric and his three thralls loom large in references to the novel and both Wamba and Cedric have their names adopted by figures in Australia, but, unlike this trio, *Ivanhoe* himself is very rarely invoked. A rare exception is a notice from the Loyal and Independent Order of the Knights of Manchester, signed by “Harold de *Ivanhoe*” as secretary (*Sydney Morning Herald* 10 Aug. 1847: 1). *Ivanhoe*’s actual name in the novel is Wilfred, but the secretary has adopted the name of the heroic King Harold. In doing so, however, he has by a curious coincidence unwittingly adopted the name Scott originally intended for his hero (Tulloch 411).

Names derived from literature or the lives of literary figures form an important subset of the British and Irish names which were imposed on the landscape in the British settler colonies and, earlier, in America. As Ann Rigney points out at the very beginning of *The Afterlives of Walter Scott*, “[t]here are towns called Waverley spread across the globe: in Victoria, Australia; in Nova

Scotia; near the border of South Africa with Swaziland, and in no less than twenty-two states in the USA” (1). The whole process of endowing the Australian landscape with British names, whether derived from literature or actual places or the names of governors and politicians, rendered the unfamiliar familiar, but also, less benignly, stamped British ownership, political and cultural, on territory which belonged to the indigenous inhabitants of the land. Louise D’Arcens, in her study of medievalism in Australian literature 1840-1910, writes of “colonial Australia’s desire to situate itself within deep European and English tradition” and points to the need “to recognize the extent to which colonial evocations of continuity with European and English antique tradition were implicated in the refusal and displacement of local traditions that were as sophisticated, and even more ancient” (4). What better way to enter “deep” into European tradition than through reference to the Middle Ages, including through medievalist texts like *Ivanhoe*?

For anyone wanting a name with literary associations, Scott was a particularly useful writer because he used so many unique names, often invented ones, including those for two of his best known novels, *Waverley* and *Ivanhoe*. In fact, it is no accident that these names were uniquely associated with Scott since he had deliberately chosen them as being without previous associations. Thus, in the first chapter of *Waverley* he writes that he has rejected names traditionally used in novels and has instead “assumed for my hero, WAVERLEY, an uncontaminated name, bearing with its sound little of good or evil, excepting what the reader shall be hereafter pleased to affix to it” (3). Similarly, when he changed direction in writing *Ivanhoe*, he chose a name his readers would not have encountered before, explaining in his later introduction to the novel that the name came from an obscure old English rhyme and thus, having no prior associations, “conveyed no indication whatever of the nature of the story” (Scott, *Introductions* 16-17). Thus using these two names tied the colonists’ new country inextricably to one of the most admired writers of their time. Known even to those who had not read his novels, they came to be the most popular place names derived from his works in Australia and were only rivalled by the name of his house, Abbotsford, itself an invented name and thus also uniquely associated with him.

Names from *Ivanhoe*, with their connection to the deep Anglo-Saxon and Norman past, were to prove particularly valuable in the process of renaming Australia and erasing its Aboriginal past. Nevertheless it was *Waverley*,

published five years earlier, which first was written onto the Australian landscape: the first case of a Scott-derived place-name in Australia that I have been able to trace occurs in 1827 when Barnett Levey, already mentioned above, chose to name his house near Sydney “Waverley.” However, the use of the name Ivanhoe followed quickly after. In 1831 Ivanhoe appears as a place name in Tasmania with an advertisement of cattle and horses for sale “at Ivanhoe, Messrs. Lamb and Bell’s farm” (*Colonial Times* 17 Aug. 1831: 1). The use of Ivanhoe as the name of a farm or other piece of land is appropriate since it is the name of the hero’s estate: he is Sir Wilfred of Ivanhoe. However, in practice the name Ivanhoe is more associated with the man than with the estate. On the other hand, Rotherwood, the name of Cedric’s home, figures much more as a place name than as a personal name—unlike Wilfred, Cedric is never referred to simply as Rotherwood. Consequently, Rotherwood seems a natural choice for a house or farm and is very quickly adopted as such, including by David Burn, better known as a writer than as a landowner, who had followed his mother Jacobina to Tasmania in 1826. Jacobina received a grant of land after her arrival in 1821 and gave it the name Ellangowan from Scott’s *Guy Mannering*: in doing so she expressed her sense of herself as a Scotswoman. By contrast, David Burn, equally Scottish by birth and upbringing, having acquired land himself in Tasmania chose the English name Rotherwood (*Tasmanian* 22 Aug. 1834: 1).³ We can only conjecture why Burn chose this name but it certainly marks an attachment to a wider British culture rather than the specifically Scottish one of his mother’s choice. Consciously or not, it may also have expressed a desire to lay a claim of longstanding ownership on land which he did not recognise as belonging to the Aboriginal people that he saw merely as criminals by whom the previous owner was “victimized” (Burn 354-55): living in a house associated with the Saxon Cedric implies a kind of ancestral connection with the land and at the same time erases the real Aboriginal ancestral connection to country. It is also possible that there was a more innocent motivation. Rotherwood, as described in the novel, is a low crudely constructed building (33), more like the first houses constructed on farms in Australia than a medieval castle or manor-house; perhaps Burn and others thought of it as an appropriate choice for an Australian home. Whatever the reasons for choosing the name, two other Rotherwoods followed within the

³ Although Burn was not the first European to occupy this piece of land, I have found no reference to it by the name of Rotherwood before he took over ownership of it.

period covered by this paper—both were in New South Wales, one near Lake Bathurst (*Sydney Monitor* 4 Jan. 1837: 1) and the other in the Upper Hunter Valley (*Australian* 6 Jan. 1843: 3). In 1840, an estate named Ivanhoe on the Yarra River near Melbourne was offered for sale, fulsomely described as “most delightful of all” the properties in the area (*Port Phillip Gazette* 22 Feb. 1840: 2).

While properties which their owners might hope would become gentlemen’s seats on the English model could be given names like Ivanhoe and Rotherwood, a different strategy was needed for humbler dwellings—hence Miss Grahame’s Rowena Cottage in Hobart (*Courier* 9 Feb. 1853: 1). From estates and houses it was an easy step to street names, and in the same year as the advertisement for Ivanhoe estate we find a reference to a Rowena Parade in the Melbourne area (*Port Phillip Gazette* 19 Sept. 1840: 5), and in the following year part of Barnett Levey’s already mentioned estate of Waverley was laid out as a separate “village of Ivanhoe” which included a Rebecca Terrace (*Australasian Chronicle* 12 Oct. 1841: 3). With one street named from *Ivanhoe*, another was likely to follow: thus, in 1853 auctioneers offered Rowena Crescent for sale in St Kilda, now a seaside suburb of Melbourne, one month, and the adjoining Ivanhoe Terrace, the next (*Argus* 26 Feb. 1853: 10; 18 Mar. 1853: 4).

The popularity of Rowena as a house name brings us to its application to another valued possession, horses, a role it shares with Ivanhoe, thus bringing together hero and heroine at the races. One of the horses in the 1832 races at Launceston in Tasmania was a filly named Rowena (*Tasmanian* 10 Mar. 1832: 6), presumably the same as the bay mare sold the next year along with a grey filly bearing the name Brenda—another name popularised by Scott, in this case in *The Pirate* (*Independent* 2 Nov. 1833: 2). Ten years later “Mr Campbell’s Rowena” was favoured in a race at Geelong in Victoria (*Geelong Advertiser* 17 Oct. 1842: 4), and four years after that, Lady Rowena ran in the Hawkesbury races in New South Wales (*Hawkesbury Courier* 2 Apr. 1846: 2). If Rowena was a popular name for a mare, so was Ivanhoe for a stallion. In 1844 a number of Australian horses were exported to Calcutta, including one called Ivanhoe and another named Marmion after Scott’s second verse romance (*Australian* 31 Aug. 1844: 3). In the 1840s and early 1850s the name Ivanhoe appears frequently in accounts of horse races in Adelaide (*South Australian* 3 Jan. 1845: 3) and surrounding towns (*South Australian Register* 3 Jan. 1849: 3; 22 Apr.

1850: 3; 17 Jan. 1853: 2), and in 1854, a steeplechase horse of this name was sold in Tasmania for £300 (*Tasmanian Colonist* 6 Nov. 1854: 3) and then taken to Victoria where he was raced for 100 guineas (*Argus* 21 Nov. 1854: 5) but unfortunately came second (*Geelong Advertiser* 30 Nov. 1854: 4). In this racing context it is not surprising to see a racing yacht called Ivanhoe as well (*Shipping Gazette* 7 Dec. 1850: 320), but while Ivanhoe may seem a sufficiently gallant name for a horse or even a yacht, it seems rather out of place for a bull (*Commercial Journal* 20 Jan. 1838: 2).

In April 1836, *Ivanhoe* manifests itself in a different way with the reprinting, from another source, of the poem “Rebecca and the Templar of Ivanhoe” (*Sydney Gazette* 2 Apr. 1836: 4). The author was the American poet and lawyer Grenville Mellen, but the *Sydney Gazette* does not name him, merely giving its source as the *New England Magazine* where it was first published. In fact, it is more likely that the *Gazette* reprinted the poem from a British journal, *The Mirror of Literature, Amusement and Instruction*, where it had appeared in the 3 October 1835 issue (Mellen 218), with the author’s name, however, attached, as well as an ascription to the *New England Journal*. As we have already seen in reference to the picture of Rebecca from the *Keepsake for 1828*, this was not the first original poem about Rebecca, and it illustrates what Jason R. Rudy, in his study of British poetry in the colonies, refers to as “a greater nineteenth-century culture of enthusiastic, unauthorized reprinting” (52), in which poetry produced in one part of the English-speaking world circulated throughout that world and was accepted as applicable to any of the colonial spaces. The poem also illustrates the central role Rebecca was coming to have in the understanding of the novel. In keeping with this, Rebecca also had a central role in another and much larger body of *Ivanhoe*-derived texts, plays and operas, the subject of the next section. Despite the popularity of Rebecca in these imported texts, I have not been able to find any home-grown Australian texts about her. The one original Australian poem mentioning her that I have found, the anonymous “Invocation of the Nepean to the Hunter,” also names a number of other Scott heroines and accords her no special status (*Australian* 6 Mar. 1835: 4).

Throughout the nineteenth century plays and operas derived from the novels were one of the most important ways in which the Waverley Novels reached a broader audience both in Britain and overseas. According to H. Philip Bolton, “[a]mong Scott’s novels, *Ivanhoe* has been one of the half-dozen most

important progenitors of plays” (342). It appeared as a play less than a month after its publication as a book: the first play version, by Thomas J. Dibdin, was staged at the Surrey Theatre in London on 20 January 1820 (Bolton 342). Usually known as *Ivanhoe: Or, The Jew's Daughter*, but sometimes subtitled *The Jew of York*, it was the first of many versions and, with its usual subtitle, it already foreshadowed the centrality of Rebecca in popular reception and understanding of the story. Printed editions were published shortly after the first performances of the plays, with Dibdin's appearing in 1820, and in the same year an alternative version by W. T. Moncrieff, *Ivanhoe, Or The Jewess* (also sometimes subtitled *The Jew of York*). Other versions very quickly followed, including a pasticcio using music from a number of Rossini's operas, arranged by Antonio Pacini with a libretto by Emile Deschamps and Gustave de Wailly (Bolton 351-52; Mitchell 146). It was first performed at the Odeon in Paris on 15 September 1826 and was seen by Scott himself during a visit to Paris in 1829 (Scott, *Journal* 227). An English version of this opera entitled *The Maid of Judah: Or, Knights Templars*, with a libretto by Michael Rophino Lacy appeared in 1829 (Bolton 353; Mitchell 146).

The play versions must have first arrived in Australia in printed form (although I have not been able to find any advertisements for any play version until much later), but the first mention I have found of any projected stage production of the play comes in 1835, with a notice that “The Grand Melodramatic Romance of THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR; or, THE MAID OF JUDAH” is “[i]n active preparation” at Barnett Levey's Theatre Royal in Sydney (*Sydney Gazette* 16 July 1835: 2). I have, however, not found any evidence that it was ever staged. The title seems an inversion of Lacy's English version of the Rossini pastiche, but *Ivanhoe*-inspired plays regularly ring changes on their titles, and this could be another play with its title altered under the influence of the extremely popular song, “The Maid of Judah” by Charles Sloman, which was, for example, performed later in the same year in a production of *The Merchant of Venice* (*Sydney Monitor* 12 Sept. 1835: 3). In the absence of further detail, it is not possible to determine which dramatic version was “in active preparation,” but the first version for which an actual performance is recorded, at the Theatre Royal on 30 April of the following year, was Dibdin's version, as both its title, *Ivanhoe; Or The Jew's Daughter*, and the list of characters in the advertisement on its opening day make clear. It is described as “THE MOST SPLENDID NOVELTY EVER PRODUCED IN

THE COLONY” and as “Got up at a considerable expense, with new Dresses, Decorations, &c. in a style superior to any thing ever yet attempted in this Colony” (*Commercial Journal* 30 Apr. 1836: 1). A subsequent review, like the advertisement, lays emphasis on the tournament, which was to appear regularly in the future as a key attraction. It also mentions some of the accompanying music, particularly the minor character Elgiva’s rendition of “Fly Away, Ladybird” (*Sydney Gazette* 3 May 1836: 2). As was to continue to be the case through the period examined here, the play was not the only item on the program, but was accompanied by musical performances and recitations, still life representations of Roman statues by some of the actors, and another short play. *Ivanhoe* was thus presented as very much part of a whole range of imported European culture in a colony which was still largely deriving its culture from overseas, but with the beginnings of a literary culture of its own.

Over the following years *Ivanhoe* plays appear regularly. For instance, in 1838 an *Ivanhoe* production called *The Jewess* was performed in Hobart (*Austral-Asiatic Review* 20 Feb. 1838: 7). Later in the same year the Royal Victoria Theatre in Sydney presented “with appropriate and New Scenery, Music, Dresses and Decorations, the Celebrated Operatic, Romantic, and Melo Dramatic Drama, in three Acts, (founded on one of Sir Walter Scott’s most Popular Titles) called the KNIGHTS TEMPLARS; OR, Ivanhoe and the Jew of York’s Daughter.” The evening was to begin with “Rossini’s celebrated overture to *Ivanhoe*” (actually the overture to *Semiramide* reused for the pasticcio). However, both the title and the inclusion of Rowena in the cast list show this is not the Rossini/Lacy opera, since Bolton (353) notes she is omitted from the opera. The advertisement gives special prominence to the fact that “the whole extent of the Stage will be splendidly arranged for A GRAND TOURNAMENT. Prince John seated on his Throne, surrounded by Knights and Ladies, to view the Combatants”: the impression is that the spectacle was as important as anything else. On the other hand, the other capitalised scene, “TRIUMPH OF ROBIN HOOD AND THE OUTLAWS,” which is unlikely to have been spectacular, reminds us of how much Scott had linked his novel to popular culture through the introduction of the famous outlaw (*Sydney Gazette* 21 Aug. 1838: 3).

In 1844, the Royal Victoria Theatre in Sydney advertised a performance by “MRS. BUSHELLE, who will appear at the Theatre for the first time this season, in the character of REBECCA, in the celebrated Opera called

IVANHOE in which she will sing the celebrated *Airs*, adapted to the Opera, and selected from the compositions of Rossini, Bellini, &c.” (*Australian* 9 Aug. 1844: 2). While the mention of Rossini and the absence of Rowena from the following cast list might suggest the Rossini/Lacy opera, the title and the reference to Bellini argue against this. A more muted reference to music is provided by an advertisement for “a Musical Play, in three Acts, entitled IVANHOE; or, THE JEW OF YORK,” again at the Royal Victoria Theatre in 1848, and again of an unidentified version (*Sydney Morning Herald* 25 Sept. 1848: 2).

Passing over for the moment the burlesques based on *Ivanhoe*, which appear regularly between 1850 and 1865, we find another serious version produced in Melbourne in 1866. Advertised as “In preparation, the Magnificent Spectacle of IVANHOE; Or, TRIAL BY BATTLE” (*Argus* 17 Aug. 1866: 8), it was first staged on the evening of 25 August with “spectacular embellishment . . . new dresses and properties, and new and appropriate scenery” (*Argus* 25 Aug. 1866: 4). A lengthy review which appeared two days later tells us a great deal about what the reviewer felt to be the important features of an *Ivanhoe* play, both as a work in itself and as a representation of the novel. Significantly, it opens with an acknowledgement of the special position of *Ivanhoe* in Scott’s work: “The historic romance from which this melodrama is drawn was the result of the first experiment of Sir Walter Scott’s creative genius upon materials outlying the groove of Scottish tradition, language, and character, in which he had hitherto moved.” The novel is important, then, for its evocation of the medieval world. The reviewer finds little to say in favour of the text, describing a large part of the dialogue as “dull, heavy, and lifeless,” but praises the “grand spectacle” and “appearance of reality” of the scenery which “takes the imagination vividly back to the old feudal time,” and “two splendid scenes one depicting the destruction by fire of Torquilstone Castle, when De Bois Guilbert carries off Rebecca; and the other showing the courtyard of the Preceptory at Templestowe where the fate of Rebecca is decided by the ordeal of battle.” He offers particular praise of the actors depicting Bois-Guilbert and Wamba but objects to the omission of both Gurth and King Richard and deplores the use of a woman to depict the hero which “in this case . . . positively borders upon burlesque.” According to the reviewer, the incongruity of having a woman in the role of a manly knight put the seriousness of the play in jeopardy, when “[t]he house laughed at the combat scene in the

trial by battle, when the faggots are prepared and the victim Rebecca is led to the stake” (*Argus* 27 Aug. 1866: 5).

For the reviewer, then, this should be a serious play and should use its spectacular scenery and fine acting to bring the Middle Ages to life, thus providing its Australian audience with the opportunity to imagine themselves back into the medieval past which their new country so conspicuously lacked. The review also reminds us, as did the subtitle, “Or, The Trial by Battle,” of just how much the predicament of Rebecca had come to dominate these plays (and, by implication, readers’ reactions to the novel). Moreover, if Rebecca is central, then Bois-Guilbert moves to centre stage as well, as evidenced in the attention the review gives to his role. Wamba, too, is given special attention through praise of the actor taking his role. Wamba was evidently seen as key to the comic elements of *Ivanhoe* plays: this is borne out by the fact that his role appeared in the cast list of almost all of the plays so far discussed as appearing on the stage in Australia. (He was very likely in the others but the evidence is not available). Perhaps Wamba’s prominence in the casual references in prose discussed above owes more to the plays than to the novel. The reviewer’s regret that Gurth and King Richard had been omitted also reminds us that they were seen as important characters in the novel—particularly Gurth with his brass collar, symbolic of the Norman oppression from which the English had escaped. By his absence from the play Gurth draws attention to the political significance of the novel in Australia.

Although these plays were performed in Australia with scenery made in Australia and actors resident in Australia, and although motifs from them were adopted into general discourse in Australia, they still remained in themselves imported items with no scope for the introduction of Australian content. This did not stop them from being enthusiastically accepted as a major contribution to the literary culture of the colonies, but the possibility of introducing local content arrived with the last manifestation of *Ivanhoe* to appear on the scene in its first fifty years in Australia, the burlesque play. Burlesques were released from the need to stay strictly within the medieval timeframe and typically included local and contemporary references. The burlesque which first dominated the Australian stage in this period was *The Last Edition of Ivanhoe* by the brothers Robert, Barnabas and William Brough. It was first staged in London on 1 April 1850, was published in book form that year, and arrived quickly in Australia, being advertised as in preparation in late September (*Bell’s*

Life 28 Sept. 1850: 2), and on the stage in early October (*Sydney Morning Herald* 8 Oct. 1850: 2). Evidently on this occasion the producer did not take advantage of the opportunity to introduce local references since a review of the production slates it as irrelevant to Australia: “We admired some of the dresses, of course, and appreciated Rogers’ acting—as who does not? but anything more stupid than the whole affair we never saw. It . . . may tell very well in London, but not having, thank God, any starving needlewomen here *as yet*, nor tradesmen of the stamp of Messrs. Moses & Co., it does not strike us as a very happy selection, even of the class to which it belongs” (*People’s Advocate* 19 Oct. 1850: 2). Nevertheless the taste for burlesques did not disappear, and in 1854 the playscript was offered for sale in Sydney along with others under the category “Extravaganzas and Burlesques” (*Sydney Morning Herald* 15 July 1854: 1), and in 1859 it was staged again, this time in Melbourne (*Argus* 24 Sept. 1859: 8). On this occasion local references had been included, although, even with this addition, the first performance received a mixed response from the reviewer: “It is to be regretted that a capital burlesque, well put on the stage, enlivened with smart localisms, and bequeathed to a good company, should run great risk of being spoilt only because the aforesaid good company has not taken the trouble, at least a portion of it, to be ‘well up’ in its several parts” (*Argus* 27 Sept. 1859: 4).

Six years later, a rival burlesque appeared at the Princess Theatre in Melbourne in the form of Henry James Byron’s *Ivanhoe in Accordance with the Spirit of the Times* which was first performed at the Queen’s Theatre in Edinburgh in February 1858 (Bolton 264). This new production was designed as entertainment for the Christmas and New Year period and had its first Melbourne showing on 23 December 1865 (*Herald* 23 Dec. 1865: 2). A long advertisement on New Year’s Day, aimed at the time to entice the audience to that night’s production, now serves to give us some idea of the silly puns and jokes with which the play was permeated (*Herald* 1 Jan. 1866: 2). According to the reviewer “the different jokes interspersed throughout the burlesque were as favourably received as ever” (*Herald* 2 Jan. 1866: 2) but unfortunately neither advertisement nor review gives any indication of whether there were any local references in the jokes.

There can be no doubt that these plays extended knowledge of Scott’s *Ivanhoe* to a wider audience especially as the play’s text was often lifted wholesale from the novel. Even the burlesques would have achieved this since

they were evidently based on the familiar play versions and the puns and jokes were easily recognisable as additions to Scott's text. However, all the derivative plays made changes to the characters and plot. Part of the audience would have been well acquainted with the novel, but for others the omissions and emphases of the plays defined their perception of it, and it is the elements which were regularly retained, such as the story of Rebecca and the comic figure of Wamba, which would have most easily entered into popular memory. This was at the expense of other elements of the novel, such as the story of Rowena, who is omitted altogether in some versions. One play, *Isaac, the Jew of York*, performed in Launceston in Tasmania in 1848, carries this process to the extreme: the list of characters shows that only Isaac, Rebecca and the Black Knight have survived, the rest of the cast being persons unknown to the novel (*Cornwall Chronicle* 26 July 1848: 1). This is yet another indication of how central to popular perceptions of the plot Rebecca had become. At the same time, while the evidence for variation of the text to produce local references tying the play to the here and now of the audience is scanty, the regular revival of *Ivanhoe* plays and introduction of new ones show that the Australian audience embraced this manifestation of Scott's novel as their own, as part of popular culture, despite the carefully realised medieval settings so distant from them in time and place.

The plays, both serious and burlesque, were only one of the ways in which people in Australia took *Ivanhoe* to their hearts. Even though, at least during the fifty years covered by this study, the colonies failed to produce any derived texts of their own, apart from a poem which mentions Rebecca and Rowena in passing and a few localisms in the burlesques, Australians embraced *Ivanhoe* in many and significant ways. The people who signed letters to the editor with the name Cedric, who found Gurth's brass collar relevant to life in the colonies, who named their houses *Ivanhoe* or *Rotherwood* or *Rowena Cottage*, who placed names like *Rowena Crescent* and *Ivanhoe Terrace* on the streets of Australian towns and cities, or who raced horses called *Ivanhoe* and *Rowena*, were the same people as those who took the plays to their hearts as expressing something about themselves. By 1870 *Ivanhoe* had been wholeheartedly absorbed into Australian culture. That it was derived from Britain was no reason to dismiss it. As Rudy has argued in relation to colonial poetry, its derivativeness was its point—the whole project aimed to recreate British culture in this outreach of empire (43-48). But it was British culture with a new

application which mattered to those who applied it. Rather than criticising it as derivative what we should rather note is the enthusiasm, energy and inventiveness with which *Ivanhoe* in its many different manifestations was taken on board and made part of the emerging Australian consciousness.

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