“THIS BLESSED PLOT”: NATIONALISM, HEROISM AND DOMESTIC VIRTUE IN THE NOVELS OF JANE PORTER.

Peta Beasley
Bachelor of Arts (Honours)

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of The University of Western Australia
School of Social and Cultural Studies,
Discipline of English and Cultural Studies
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Abstract

In “Romanticism, Feminism, History, Historicism” (2009) Anne Mellor identifies a continuing need for informed studies of women writers of the Romantic period who for too long have been overlooked. The focus of this thesis is one of those writers named by Mellor, Jane Porter (1776-1850). By offering a close study of her novels, my aim is to demonstrate Porter’s significance in Romantic and Victorian literary history, particularly her role in pioneering the genre of the historical novel.

My study offers a socio-cultural and historical analysis of Porter’s four historical novels, Thaddeus of Warsaw (1803), The Scottish Chiefs (1810), The Pastor’s Fireside (1817) and Duke Christian of Luneburg (1824). The significance of these novels in nineteenth-century British culture and politics is explored through contextual readings and analyses of their reception. Porter’s reputation and continuing influence are evidenced by references to Porter, and her work, in the writings of her contemporaries, and beyond.

The central argument of my work is that in Porter’s novels the concept of ‘nation’ is envisaged as an expanded domestic space. A key element of Porter’s national-domestic vision is the importance of Christian virtue, which is exemplified through the actions of the heroes and heroines of her novels.

The novels are examined in chronological order of publication, showing the development of Porter’s writing as she engaged with the changing political and historical landscape of Britain. This period spans the outbreak of the French Revolution, the turbulent years of the war between Britain and France, and the succession to the British throne by the German Hanoverian dynasty.
# Table of Contents

Abstract i.

Table of Contents ii.

Illustrations iii.

Acknowledgements iv.

Statement of Candidature vi.

Chronology of Jane Porter vii.

Introduction 1.

Chapter One 50. Historical Rivalries: Jane Porter, Walter Scott and the Historical Novel

Chapter Two 89. Domestic and National Issues in *Thaddeus of Warsaw*

Chapter Three 128. Nationalist Discourse in *The Scottish Chiefs*

Chapter Four 176. King and Country in *The Pastor’s Fireside*

Chapter Five 215. Remaining Loyal to the British Nation: Porter’s *Duke Christian of Luneburg*

Conclusion 250.

Bibliography 259.

Appendices 289.

A: Synopsis *The Pastor’s Fireside*

B: Synopsis *Duke Christian of Luneburg*
Illustrations

Figure 1: Jane Porter
*Ladies Monthly Museum*, 11 (July 1811), p [n.page]

Figure 2: Thaddeus Sobieski

Figure 3: Portrait of William Wallace by 11th Earl of Buchan (1742-1829). Found at www.clanoliphant.com

Figure 4: The Hanover Royal Arms (1816).

Figure 5: Covers: Jane Porter, *The Scottish Chiefs*, Classics Illustrated edition # 67 (1950) and British edition #39 (1954).
Acknowledgements

There are many people to thank for their support, both intellectually and personally, during the writing of this thesis.

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Special thanks also to Dr Kieran Dolin who was always willing to critique my work, provided insightful comments and assisted greatly in the writing of my abstract.

Secondly, I would like to thank the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences for awarding me the 2009 Dean’s Postgraduate Travel Award which enabled me to travel to the AVSA Conference in Dunedin, the School of Social and Cultural Studies for granting me funding in order to attend the 2006 AVSA Conference in Melbourne, the Graduate Research School for awarding me a University Postgraduate Scholarship in 2008 and UWA Top-Up Scholarship in 2009, and granting me research funding at the commencement of my candidature which allowed me to conduct valuable research at the Huntington Library in California.

I also wish to extend my sincere appreciation to Thomas McLean, for sharing his knowledge of, and interest in Jane Porter, and also for the timely words of encouragement. I would like to acknowledge my gratitude to Gayle Richardson, at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California, not only for her support during my time at the Huntington, but her ongoing support and interest in my research.

I offer my thanks to Graeme Rymill, from the Reader Services Section of the Humanities and Social Sciences Library at UWA, and Michael Hardy from the Archive Department at Messrs Christie and Manson’s for providing invaluable research assistance.

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Thanks must go to the National Library of Scotland and the Huntington Library for granting me permission to reproduce reference material from their holdings and to Dr Thomas McLean and Associate Professor Devoney Looser who kindly allowed me to read and quote from their unpublished papers on Jane Porter.

Special thanks to Sally Anne Jones, my travel buddy, not only on our wonderful adventure to Wales but also on the long and often arduous PhD journey; always smiling, always positive, always ready with a therapeutic pot of tea and a long walk when times got tough.

Finally, but in no way least, I want to acknowledge my family for their constant encouragement and support and for putting up with me for the past five years. I dedicate this thesis to John and Lauren with all my love.
Statement of Candidature

I declare that the thesis is my own composition with all sources acknowledged and my contribution clearly identified. The thesis has been completed during the course of enrolment in this degree at The University of Western Australia and has not previously been accepted for a degree at this or another institution.
### Chronology of Jane Porter’s Life and of Her Times

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Porter's Life</th>
<th>Literary Context</th>
<th>Historical Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1775</td>
<td>Jane Porter born to William Porter and Jane Blenkinsopp on the 3rd December in Durham</td>
<td>Edward Gibbon publishes <em>The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire</em></td>
<td>Declaration of Independence United States of America (4th July)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Captain James Cook sets out to find the North West Passage</td>
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<tr>
<td>1777</td>
<td>Robert Ker Porter born</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1779</td>
<td>Father, William Porter, dies.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1780</td>
<td>Anna Maria Porter born. Mrs Porter takes family to Edinburgh where they meet the young Walter Scott</td>
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<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bernardine de St Pierre publishes <em>Paul et Virginie</em></td>
<td>Captain Cook lands at Botany Bay</td>
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<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>Porters move to London, except for the two eldest sons, John and William Ogilvie</td>
<td>Edmund Burke publishes <em>Reflections on the Revolution in France</em></td>
<td>Scottish Jacobite Flora MacDonald dies</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Joanna Baillie publishes <em>Fugitive Verses</em></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>Robert wins art prize from Royal Society for the Arts for one of his historical paintings</td>
<td>Mary Wollstonecraft publishes <em>A Vindication of the Rights of Woman</em></td>
<td>Divorce becomes legal in France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>Anna Maria publishes <em>Artless Tales</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>Second edition of <em>Artless Tales</em> published</td>
<td>James Boswell dies</td>
<td>Prince of Wales marries Princess Caroline</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Louis XVII dies at age of 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>Anna Maria publishes <em>Walsh Colville</em></td>
<td>Edmund Burke dies</td>
<td>Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia dies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jane, Robert and Anna Maria produce a journal, <em>The Quiz</em>, edited by Thomas Dibdin</td>
<td></td>
<td>Britain issues first copper pennies and 1 notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event 1</td>
<td>Event 2</td>
<td>Event 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>Anna Maria publishes <em>Octavia</em></td>
<td>Maria Edgeworth and her father Richard publish <em>Practical Education</em></td>
<td>Bonaparte's army occupies Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>William Wordsworth writes <em>Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>Jane publishes anonymously <em>The Spirit of the Elbe</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>Jane anonymously publishes <em>A Defence of the Profession of an Actor</em>, dedicated to Sarah Siddons</td>
<td>Maria Edgeworth publishes <em>Castle Rackrent</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801</td>
<td>Jane publishes <em>The Two Princes of Persia</em></td>
<td>Maria Edgeworth publishes <em>Belinda</em></td>
<td>United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Act of Union</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Prime Minister William Pitt (the Younger) resigns over rejection of Catholic Emancipation Bill by George III</td>
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<tr>
<td>1803</td>
<td>Jane publishes <em>Thaddeus of Warsaw</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>Louisiana Purchase negotiated by Thomas Jefferson</td>
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<tr>
<td>1804</td>
<td>Robert is appointed historical painter to the Czar of Russia.</td>
<td>Sydney Owenson publishes <em>St Clair</em></td>
<td>Napoleon crowns himself Emperor of France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anna Maria publishes <em>The Lake of Killarney.</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>Beethoven writes his “Eroica” symphony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1805</td>
<td>Anna Maria publishes <em>A Soldier’s Friendship</em></td>
<td>William Hazlitt publishes <em>Principles of Human Action</em></td>
<td>Battle of Trafalgar and death of Nelson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1807</td>
<td>Jane publishes <em>The Aphorisms of Sir Philip Sidney, with Remarks</em></td>
<td>Charles and Mary Lamb publish <em>Tales from Shakespeare</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anna Maria publishes <em>The Hungarian Brothers</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1808</td>
<td>Goethe publishes <em>Faust</em></td>
<td>Statutory copyright period extended to 28 years</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1809</td>
<td>Robert publishes <em>Travelling Sketches in Russia and Sweden and Letters from Portugal</em></td>
<td>The <em>Quarterly Review</em> founded</td>
<td>Napoleon divorces Josephine</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hannah More</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Author/Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>1810</td>
<td>Anna Maria publishes <em>Don Sebastian</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1810</td>
<td>Jane publishes <em>The Scottish Chiefs</em></td>
<td>Walter Scott publishes <em>The Lady of the Lake</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1811</td>
<td>Jane publishes “Biographical Account of the Late Rev. Percival Stockdale” in <em>Gentleman's Magazine</em></td>
<td>Jane Austen publishes <em>Sense and Sensibility</em> anonymously</td>
<td>Regency Act passed, Prince of Wales made Prince Regent as his father George III is declared mad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1812</td>
<td>Robert marries a Russian princess, Maria Sherbatoff</td>
<td>Napoleon invades Russia.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1813</td>
<td>Robert is knighted by the Prince Regent</td>
<td>Jane Austen publishes <em>Pride and Prejudice</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1814</td>
<td>Walter Scott publishes <em>Waverley</em></td>
<td>Napoleon exiled to Elba</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1815</td>
<td>Jane Austen publishes <em>Mansfield Park</em></td>
<td>End of Napoleonic Wars with Napoleon’s defeat at Waterloo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1816</td>
<td>Third edition of <em>The Scottish Chiefs</em> published</td>
<td>Jane Austen publishes <em>Emma</em></td>
<td>Invention of the stethoscope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1816</td>
<td>Walter Scott publishes <em>Old Mortality</em></td>
<td>John Keats publishes <em>To Kosciusko</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>1817</td>
<td>Jane publishes <em>The Pastor's Fireside</em></td>
<td>Jane Austen dies</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1818</td>
<td>Mary Shelley publishes <em>Frankenstein</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>1818</td>
<td><em>Persuasion</em> and <em>Northanger Abbey</em> are published posthumously</td>
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<tr>
<td>1818</td>
<td>Walter Scott publishes <em>The Heart of Midlothian</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>1819</td>
<td>Jane’s play <em>Switzerland</em> is performed at Drury</td>
<td>Walter Scott publishes <em>Ivanhoe</em></td>
<td>Birth of the future Queen Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>1820</td>
<td>Robert publishes <em>Travels in Georgia</em>, dedicated to the Prince Regent</td>
<td>Death of John Keats</td>
<td>George IV succeeds George III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1821</td>
<td>Jane publishes <em>Duke Christian of Luneburg</em>, dedicating it to George IV</td>
<td>Walter Scott publishes <em>Redgauntlet</em></td>
<td>Accession of Charles X as King of France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1822</td>
<td>Robert’s wife dies and he travels to Venezuela as Consul-General</td>
<td>Opening of first railway in Britain</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1824</td>
<td>Jane and Anna Maria publish <em>Tales Round a Winter’s Hearth</em></td>
<td>Mary Shelley publishes <em>The Last Man</em></td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1825</td>
<td>Jane publishes ‘Nobody’s Address’ and ‘Nobody’s Journal’. <em>Ladies Monthly Museum</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>1826</td>
<td>Jane and Anna Maria publish <em>Coming Out; and, The Field of Forty Footsteps</em></td>
<td>Felicia Hemans publishes <em>Records of Woman</em></td>
<td>Corn Law Act passed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1827</td>
<td>Anna Maria publishes <em>The Barony</em></td>
<td>Christina Rossetti born</td>
<td>William IV crowned King of Great Britain after death of George IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1828</td>
<td>Felicia Hemans publishes <em>Records of Woman</em></td>
<td>Corn Law Act passed</td>
<td>—</td>
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<tr>
<td>1829</td>
<td>Catholic Emancipation Bill passed through Parliament</td>
<td>—</td>
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<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>Anna Maria publishes <em>The Barony</em></td>
<td>Christina Rossetti born</td>
<td>Whig party under Charles Grey win government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831</td>
<td>William Ogilvie writes and Jane edits <em>Sir Edward Seaward’s Narrative</em></td>
<td>First Reform Bill rejected by Parliament</td>
<td>Opening of railway in Manchester and Liverpool</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Jane Blenkinsopp
Porter dies in June

Jane completes
‘Retrospective
Introduction’ for new
Standard Edition of *The
Scottish Chiefs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event 1</th>
<th>Event 2</th>
<th>Event 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1832</td>
<td>Anna Maria dies</td>
<td>Death of Walter Scott</td>
<td>Passing of First Reform Bill</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Charles Lyell publishes <em>Principles of Geology.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1833</td>
<td>Jane contributes an article to <em>The Court Journal</em> on the expedition on the Thames, led by the Lord Mayor of London,</td>
<td>Abolition of Slave Trade in British Empire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1835</td>
<td>‘Gallery of Literary Characters. No. LXIX. Miss Jane Porter’ published in <em>Fraser’s Magazine</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>1837</td>
<td></td>
<td>Charles Dickens publishes <em>Oliver Twist</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thomas Carlyle publishes <em>The French Revolution</em></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>Jane contributes to Frederic Montagu’s anthology <em>The Seven Ages of Female Beauty</em>, “The Old Lady: A Fragment”</td>
<td>Alexandrina Victoria crowned Queen of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1834</td>
<td>Jane’s article about the consecration of the new Catholic Church on Mount Carmel is published in <em>The Court Journal</em></td>
<td>Samuel Taylor Coleridge dies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jane writes preface for Theodora Peers’ novel <em>Young Hearts, a Novel by a Recluse</em></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>Jane writes new prefaces to <em>Thaddeus of Warsaw, The Scottish Chiefs</em> and <em>The Pastor’s Fireside</em></td>
<td>Thomas Hardy born</td>
<td>Queen Victoria marries Prince Albert</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Penny post establish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Jane receives Royal payment of 100 from Queen Victoria. Her health begins to deteriorate.

1841  Jane and Robert travel to Russia to visit his daughter.

1842  Robert dies during visit to Russia with Jane. Chartist riots

Jane returns to England and receives a payment of 50 from the Royal Literary Fund.

1844  Jane receives gift of a chair from the booksellers of New York as a tribute to her work.

1846  Jane writes new notes for *The Pastor’s Fireside*  George Eliot translates D. F. Strauss’ *Das Leben Jesu* (1835) as *The Life of Jesus*  Abolition of Corn Laws in Britain

1850  Jane dies on the 24th May  Wordsworth’s *The Prelude* published posthumously  Barbara Leigh Smith and friends begin meetings at Langham Place to discuss women’s reform.

Sources used in compiling this chronology:

Introduction

When I write,...I shall write history

Jane Porter, 1793

Sara Hodson, summarising the value of Jane Porter’s correspondence collection to the Huntington Library, astutely observes that Porter’s writing today is as a window to the social and literary milieu of the nineteenth century. Hodson writes that Porter’s letters:

- can provide a view of this scene as she perceived it, as well as an insight into the phenomenon of a writer of *relatively brief* but intense popularity— one who endeavoured to make a living as an author without benefit of international copy-right law protection or a satisfactory financial arrangement with her publisher. As an author, Jane was generally comparable to many of today’s writers of best-sellers: while their works do not achieve lasting literary significance, they are widely read and often reveal much about the social views and history of the time, reflected in its popular culture.

Hodson’s use of the term ‘relatively brief’ needs to be contested, as Porter’s impact on nineteenth-century culture is comprehensively recorded in the letters and writings of her contemporaries and her successors, throughout the nineteenth century, and into the twentieth. Not a brief period by any means! However, her analogy of Porter to present day ‘popular writers’ is, nevertheless, perceptive because the literature of these popular writers has an actual and current impact and influence on the fashions, trends and social views of the period in which they are writing. Like Hodson, I believe that Porter, as a nascent Victorian, had a real impact and influence contemporaneously, and her novels can now provide a portal to

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2 The most significant holdings of Porter material can be found at The Huntington Library, California, with over 2,662 catalogued items plus ephemera; the Durham Library, UK; the British Library, UK; the Victorian and Albert Museum Library, UK; the National Library of Scotland; the Carl H Pforzheimer Library, New York; the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC; the Lilly Library at Indiana University, and USA; Princeton University, USA.

the society and culture of nineteenth-century Britain and the literature which emanated from it.

Jane Porter was born in Durham on 3 December 1775.¹ One of five children, she was the eldest daughter of William Porter (1735-1779) and Jane Blenkinsop Porter (1745-1831). The eldest, John (1772-1810) rose to the rank of Colonel;² William Ogilvie (1774-1850) was an eminent medical doctor in the Royal navy; Robert Ker (1777-1842) an historical artist and attaché to the Russian czar; and the youngest, Anna Maria (1780-1832), was also a novelist. Jane Porter was the author of four novels, *Thaddeus of Warsaw* (1803), *The Scottish Chiefs* (1810), *The Pastor’s Fireside* (1817) and *Duke Christian of Luneburg* (1824) plus various collaborative works and other minor texts published in periodicals and compilations. Both *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and *The Scottish Chiefs* were translated into many languages and distributed across many continents. Although not as immediately popular as *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, *The Scottish Chiefs* went on to become one of the most widely read novels of the nineteenth century. She continued writing until her death at age seventy-five in 1850. Not only were critics’ reviews lavish in their praise of her novels but Porter gained much public notoriety from their popularity. She was ordained a Lady Canoness of the Teutonic Order of St Joachim and received a ‘get well’ note from the young Queen Victoria.³ She boasted among her friends, the artists Sir Joshua Reynolds and Benjamin West, writers

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¹ There is speculation regarding the actual year Porter was born. Until the most recent *Dictionary of National Biography* of 2004 entry Porter’s birth date has been recorded as 3 December 1776, which is somewhat problematic given that her brother Robert was born in the early part of 1777 and was baptised on 10 July 1777. However, Dorothy McMillan in her 2004 entry records Porter’s baptism year as being 1776. I have investigated this as far as possible and can confirm that Porter’s date of birth is in fact the 3 December as in a diary entry of 3 December 1831 she writes “My Birth-Day!” Again in a diary entry of 1845 on 3 December Porter writes “Anniversary of my birthday!”. See Ina Mary White, ‘Diary of Jane Porter’. *The Scottish Review*, 29 (April 1897), p. 337. On checking the baptism entries of the St Mary le Bow Church in Durham, where the Porter children were baptised, it is recorded that Jane was baptised on 17 January 1776. It is known that she died on the 24th May 1850 at the age of 74 and so given these facts I can only conclude that she was in fact born on 3 December 1775.

² Very little is know of the eldest sibling, John and he is believed to have died under questionable circumstances.

Hannah More, Anna Laetitia Barbauld and Elizabeth Hamilton, the poets Thomas Campbell and Nathaniel Parker Willis; the actors Fanny Kemble and Edmund Kean; was childhood friend of Walter Scott, and is even thought to have met the Jacobite heroine Flora Macdonald. In France, Napoleon had her first published success, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, banned because of its anti-revolutionary theme, while in Germany she was honoured with the gold cross of the Order of Würtemberg for her contribution to literature. Praise for her work came from as far a field as America. In 1845 the *Gentleman’s Magazine* printed a copy of a letter received from the Publishers, Booksellers and Authors of New York which reads:

> The undersigned Booksellers, Publishers, and Authors have long felt desirous of transmitting to you a memorial of the high and respectful admiration which they entertain for one to whose pen we are indebted for some of the purest and most imaginative productions in the wide range of English literature. ...[T]he name of Miss Porter[will] rank high on the list of those whom the present age delight to honour, and for whom coming ages will entertain a deep feeling of reverential esteem.

This work examines Jane Porter’s four published historical novels, *Thaddeus of Warsaw* (1803), *The Scottish Chiefs* (1810), *The Pastor’s Fireside* (1817) and *Duke Christian of Luneburg* (1824), looking closely at the reception and reasons for their popularity, as detailed in the periodical

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8 Anon, ‘Literary and Scientific Intelligence. [Miss Jane Porter]’, *Gentleman’s Magazine*. 23/1 (1845), p.173. In the absence of a published official biography of Jane Porter, information about her life has been gleaned from the following sources, Jane Porter’s *Diary 1801-1803*. (Washington: Folger Shakespeare Library); letters of Jane Porter to members of her family held at the Huntington Library in California; Ina Mary White’s “Diary of Jane Porter”, published in *The Scottish Review*, 29 April 1897; the unpublished thesis (1942) of Robert Tate Irvine, Jr, *The Life of Jane Porter*, held at the University of Virginia; the brief biography contributed by Fiona Price on the Corvey Women Writers 1796-1834 web page; numerous memoirs from contemporary close friends of Porter such as Mrs S. C. Hall’s “Memories of Miss Jane Porter”, in *Art Journal*, 2 (1850), Allan Cunningham’s ‘Biographical and Critical History of the Literature of the Last Fifty Years’, published in the *Athenaeum*, (1833); entries in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, the *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*, as well as various anonymous obituary notices, and Introductions and Prefaces to her novels written by the author herself.
press of the day. I will also explore the historical and political climate of Britain at the time these novels were written in order to elucidate the influences, both historical and fictional, which gave rise to the creation of Porter's heroes and heroines, and her choice of historical settings for each of her novels. My aim is not only to reinvigorate critical analysis of Porter which waned in the twentieth century, but also to argue that her significance, either in the pioneering of the historical novel as a genre, or in Victorian literary history, has not been sufficiently appreciated or critiqued.

My interest in, and indeed discovery of, the author Jane Porter came about as a result of research for my Honours dissertation on the origins and nature of George Eliot’s fictional character, Will Ladislaw. I discovered that there is much speculation as to the origin of Ladislaw, one theory being that Eliot based him on Thaddeus Sobieski, Porter’s fictional hero, drawn from her memory and knowledge of the real-life Polish hero Tadeusz Kościuszko. Then, as now, I argue that although I have not been able to conclusively prove it, given the similarities in their fictional histories and characteristics, Eliot surely indeed modelled Ladislaw on Porter's fictional hero, Thaddeus Sobieski. My interest sparked, I began to read Porter's novels and concluded that, not only were they “full of narrative energy”, but that they also reveal much about the social and political climate of the period in which she was writing. Her novels therefore, in my opinion, are crucial to any exploration of nineteenth-century cultural and literary studies. Despite this apparent importance however, I soon became aware of the paucity of scholarship on Porter. During the course of researching the life of Porter and her writing, I have spent a great deal of time exploring general nineteenth-century library material, specialist archives, footnote references from authoritative texts

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and hard copy and on-line bibliographic indexes and believe that the bibliography that I have amassed is comprehensive.\textsuperscript{11}

**Focus of Work and Critical and Historical Contexts**

My analysis takes the form of a socio-cultural and historical study, analysing Porter's engagement with English and cultural development at a crucial turning point for the nation. Jerome McGann in *Historical Studies and Literary Criticism* (1985) has pointed out that socio-cultural and historical literary criticism is a contested arena, but identifies Marxist and Feminist literary criticism as having promoted the merits of such studies by their exposing the fact that “literary works have sociohistorical dimensions”.\textsuperscript{12} McGann further explains that there are a multitude of factors, beyond the manuscript itself, which are of value and significance when analysing a literary text. These factors include “[t]he price of a book, its place of publication, even its physical form and the institutional forms” surrounding its production and reception.\textsuperscript{13} A socio-cultural and historical study therefore not only explores the social, cultural, political, religious and historical features embedded within a text, it also provides an opportunity to understand how the original audience would have received, and indeed perceived it. McGann cites the definition by Milman Parry to elucidate succinctly the value of socio-cultural and historical literary criticism, and is one that I adopt as the basis for this study:

> The literature of every country and of every time is understood as it ought to be only by the author and his contemporaries… .

The task, therefore, of one who lives in another age and wants to appreciate that work correctly, consists precisely in rediscovering the varied information and complexes of ideas

\textsuperscript{11} These include the MLA, British Periodicals On-line, C19: Nineteenth Century Index On-line, Academic Search Premier, APA-FT, Historical Abstracts, JSTOR, Periodical Archives On-line, ProQuest 5000 International and the Wellesley Index.


\textsuperscript{13} McGann, ‘Introduction: A Point of Reference’, p. 4.
which the author assumed to be the natural property of his audience.\textsuperscript{14} 

The emphasis of this study is to examine the social, cultural and historical context in which Porter was writing and how it is manifested in her novels.\textsuperscript{15} I do not put forward a Marxist or Feminist sociohistorical study but rather offer a broad socio-cultural and historical critique. My aim is to determine and convey the value of and an appreciation for Porter's novels, both in the context of when they were written, and beyond. I hope to demonstrate, through a critical analysis of each of Porter's novels, as Parry puts it, “the varied information and complexes of ideas” found within these texts.\textsuperscript{16}

Summarising his schema for socio-cultural and historical literary study, McGann states that:

\begin{quote}
Once the [novel]* passes entirely beyond the purposive control of the author, it leaves the pole of its origin and establishes the first phase of its later dialectical life (what we call its critical history). Normally the [novel’s] critical history – the moving pole of its receptive life – dates from the first responses and reviews it receives. These reactions to the [novel] modify the author’s purposes and intentions, sometimes drastically, and they remain part of the processive life of the [novel] as it passes on to future readers.\textsuperscript{17}
\end{quote}

In other words, a literary text can be said to have many lives, the first being that which belongs to “the author’s expressed decisions and purposes”, and the others derived from its critical reception.\textsuperscript{18} One of the primary functions of any literary analysis is an evaluation of the texts’ continuing impact and relevance in contemporary society and for that reason this duality of a text is not only important in assessing and

\textsuperscript{14} Quoted in McGann, ‘Introduction: A Point of Reference’, p. 8. Although Parry put forward this theory of socio-cultural and historical criticism in 1928, I believe it to express exactly the nature of my study on Porter.

\textsuperscript{15} Hodson, \textit{The Jane Porter Collection in the Huntington Library}, p. 5.

\textsuperscript{16} Quoted in McGann, ‘Introduction: A Point of Reference’, p.8.

\textsuperscript{17} McGann, ‘Introduction: A Point of Reference’, p. 17. * McGann uses the poem as the basis for his study but I suggest that it applies equally to the novel and have substituted the word [novel] for ‘poem’.

\textsuperscript{18} McGann, ‘Introduction: A Point of Reference’, p. 17.
understanding the society from which it evolves but also its influence and significance on the future of that society. Moreover, by deciphering the underlying themes and ideologies expounded in a particular text it can then be employed as a vehicle for contemporary comment. Our proclivity for adapting texts into popular culture highlights an on-going and active engagement with the history and culture of the past. In analysing the novels of Jane Porter therefore, I will not only critically examine her novels, but, also their “continuing social life”, that is, the reviews, criticisms, references to, and adaptations of her work, found in the nineteenth-century periodical press and the journal entries, letters, and publications of Porter’s contemporaries, and beyond.\(^{19}\) Porter’s novels, I argue, provide, what Delia Falconer has termed “spaces or moments of quotidian texture, blank cheques for our imaginations” and offer to the twenty-first century reader a “touchstone”, a portal for exploring an historical space that renders an understanding of the present through engagement with the past.\(^{20}\)

Give the nature of my study, one of the preliminary points of reference was to Porter’s letters, diary, commonplace books, unpublished manuscripts and little-known publications. While it is important that the novels remain the main texts on which the ideals of nationalism, heroism and domestic virtue depend, Porter’s personal correspondence and other extant manuscripts give vital access to the life and thinking of this remarkable author and a first-hand account of many of the social customs of the period. The letters also reveal a unique insight into a family who, despite their fame, struggled to maintain their place in society, because of grave financial difficulties as a result of their mother being widowed at an early age. This initial research undertaken provided a vital insight into the motives and thoughts of Porter when writing her novels and greatly

\(^{19}\) McGann, ‘Introduction: A Point of Reference’, p. 11.
expanded my knowledge, not only of Porter, but also nineteenth-century British society.

This study importantly also draws on the work of contemporary scholars who have contributed to revised and expanded understandings of the history, society and literature of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries in England and Europe. These studies include Marilyn Butler’s *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries: English Literature and its Background, 1760-1830* (1981); Janet Todd’s *The Signs of Angellica: Women, Writing and Fiction, 1660-1880* (1989); Anne Mellor’s *Mothers of the Nation: Women’s Political Writing in England, 1780-1830* (2000); Angela Keane’s *Women Writers and the English Nation in the 1790s* (2000) and Devoney Looser’s two studies, *British Women Writers and the Writing of History* (2000) and *Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain 1750-1850* (2008). Although many of the initial studies consulted did not include the work of Jane Porter, they nevertheless provide useful Romantic-era contexts for Porter’s work. These preliminary studies were also beneficial in exploring the work of other women writers who expressed themselves, openly and fully, in writing, and who, like Porter, have yet to be fully critiqued and explored by contemporary scholars. For example, Marilyn Butler provides an insight into the period in which Porter was writing, pointing out that it was a period of enormous change and one in which many experimental works of literature began to be written. Given that Butler cites the French Revolution and subsequent Napoleonic Wars as significant historical events which shaped the works of the Romantics, it is unfortunate that she does not include Porter, whose writing is much influenced by the cultural and social impact of these two events. Butler’s later article “Against Tradition: the Case for a Particularised Historical Method” (1985), details the nature and importance of historical literary criticism, while acknowledging the inherent problems associated with such a method of study. Butler argues that scholars need to be mindful that “the historical point at which a
particular book was produced, is different from the present, in which it is being read.”

The danger, for Butler, of this is that present prejudices, opinions and ideologies may be attributed to the book and therefore “put the individual writer in a quite different situation, and history in a quite different role.” Butler asserts that the language and purpose of a particular text are distinctive and must be considered because they define the novel’s “specific and localised contexts”. By examining the “intentions and attitudes which are embedded in past writing” we can “interrogate our own.” Ironically, this is exactly what Porter attempts in her writing, interrogating the past in order to make sense of the political and social climate in England, revealing her anxiety about the revolutions occurring in Europe and the very real threat to English peace and the monarchy.

Janet Todd throws significant light on the women writers who preceded Porter and by whom she was no doubt influenced. Todd is passionate about the wealth of women’s literature written in the eighteenth century but which receives little, if no, critical attention today. Todd lays the blame for these women authors being written out of the literary canon on the male-centric study by Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding (1957). As the subtitle suggests, Watt’s study of the fiction of the eighteenth century focuses solely on the works of Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, Laurence Sterne and Tobias Smollett. Endeavouring to restore the balance, Todd highlights the work of Aphra Behn, Clara Reeve, Charlotte Lennox, Frances Sheridan, Ann Radcliffe, Frances Burney and Mary Wollstonecraft, women writers, who “despite their subterfuges, apologies and disclaimers”, were able, according to Todd, to create, “especially in fiction, a fantastic realm…[which] influenced female consciousness” and had a significant

21 Butler, ‘Against Tradition’, p. 27.
23 Butler, ‘Against Tradition’, p. 44.
affect on the society in which they lived. Todd argues that these women were pioneers and therefore “have immense historical significance as the first large body of imaginative writing by women in England.” The importance of these women in forming a literary culture and context for Porter to participate in is undoubted. As a pioneer in the Historical novel genre, Porter would have taken strength from the legacy left by her literary forebears. Todd does include Porter, and her sister Anna Maria, in *British Women Writers: A Critical Reference Guide* (1989) and *Dictionary of British Women Writers* (1991). In these entries Todd writes of the popular success of both *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and *The Scottish Chiefs*, noting that both novels went through numerous reprintings, the latter being translated into German and Russian.

Anne Mellor focuses on the writings of Hannah More, and to a lesser degree, Helen Maria Williams, Elizabeth Inchbald and Anna Letitia Barbauld, to argue that “women writers had an enormous, and hitherto largely uncredited, impact on the formation of public opinion in England between the years 1780 and 1830.” One of the key points taken from Mellor’s study is her argument that women writers in this period “played a key role in the construction of a new political ideology,” specifically, that these women “grounded the salvation of the nation on the reform of the British family.” One of the central arguments of my own work is the importance that Porter places on the family. Mellor’s earlier anthology, co-edited with Richard Matlak, *British Literature 1780-1830* (1996) is a first-rate source book for an overview of the literature of the period. It also contains a comprehensive chronology which details the major literary, educational, economic and scientific achievements of the period, together with the corresponding political and philosophical events and movements.

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27 Mellor, *Mothers of the Nation*, p. 104.
all of which is useful in placing Porter and her novels in an historical and literary context.

Also examining the works of Hannah More, as well as Mary Wollstonecraft, Charlotte Smith, Helen Maria Williams and Anne Radcliffe, Angela Keane explores the impact these women writers had on England's national literary tradition. Although not specifically addressing Porter and her oeuvre, the examples used by Keane of women whose writings began to appear in the 1790s, is important for an understanding of the formative years of Porter's own writing career. Given that Hannah More was a frequent visitor to the Porter household during the period leading up to the publication of Porter's first novel, Keane's examination of More's writing is of particular interest, as More's influences can be found in Porter's own work, especially the didactic aspect of her writing. While Keane does not refer to Porter in *Women Writers and the English Nation in the 1790s*, she does so in an earlier piece, “The Importance of Elsewhere: Romantic Subjectivity and the Romance of History” (1996). In this article, Keane explores the influence of Scottish history on popular culture, such as film and television. Her interest in Porter was sparked when looking at “the significance of the Scottish scene as a site for historical romance at …different historical moments”.28 Keane argues that the chief reason for Porter's popularity waning in the twentieth century is undoubtedly due to the influence of Lukács, who in celebrating, according to Keane, “Scott’s historical novels...[ignored] his contemporaries and predecessors”.29 Keane's article is of particular value in my discussion of Lukács' impact in the Historical novel debate. Another work of particular value is *Women and Literature in Britain 1700-1800* (2000), edited by Vivien Jones. Essay contributions to this work provide an overview of the construction of, and activities by, women in the eighteenth-century in areas of law, publication, theatre, poetry and the family. It provides


Jane Porter, I argue, is one such case in point, given that, writing on the cusp of the two centuries, she fails to be included in either *Women and Literature in Britain 1700-1800*, or, the corresponding publication *Women and Literature in Britain 1800-1900* (2001), edited by Joanne Shattock.

In *British Women Writers and the Writing of History, 1670-1820*, Devoney Looser challenges the long held perception that history was purely a male preserve “devoid of women subjects and practitioners” prior to the twentieth century. Devoney Looser, *British Women Writers and the Writing of History, 1670-1820*, (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), p. 1. On the contrary, Looser’s study of the eighteenth century reveals that women were actively involved in historical discourse, through either “direct engagement with political history” or through “the use of historical forms in letters or travel writings”, or by the use of “historical material in fictional works.” Looser uses the eighteenth century to reflect the ‘long eighteenth century’ which encompasses as her title suggests, women’s writing from 1670 through to 1820.

Rather than being passive bystanders, Looser argues that women in the eighteenth century, in particular, “participated, tangentially and head on, in debates about history writing that effected change.” Some of the examples which Looser puts forward include Lucy Hutchinson who in 1671 composed a memoir of the English Civil War, Charlotte Cowley’s *Ladies History of England* in 1780, Catherine Macaulay, who published *History of England in Letters* in 1778 and others such as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Charlotte Lennox and perhaps surprisingly, Jane Austen. Looser argues that in her novels, particularly *Northanger Abbey*, Austen engages directly with history and furthermore “refashioned it for her own purposes.”


Looser, *British Women Writers and the Writing of History*, p. 3. Looser uses the eighteenth century to reflect the ‘long eighteenth century’ which encompasses as her title suggests, women’s writing from 1670 through to 1820.

Looser, *British Women Writers and the Writing of History*, p. 27.
Straddling the long-eighteenth century and the perhaps just as long-nineteenth century, Porter, I argue, carries on and extends the work of her predecessors and creates a new genre, the historical novel, establishing the novel as a valid literary form and one which men, such as Walter Scott, then readily take up. In “Another Jane: Jane Porter, Austen’s Contemporary” (2005), Looser points out that despite writing at the same time, and moving in similar social circles, Austen did not appear to have ever met Porter, and, only briefly acknowledges the work of Porter’s sister, Anna Maria, in a letter to her sister Cassandra in 1808.35 This is surprising, given the popularity and success of the Porter sisters’ novels, especially Jane Porter’s Thaddeus of Warsaw and The Scottish Chiefs which Austen must have been aware of. Looser argues that in looking at the two authors, Austen and Porter, there is in fact more “aspects of their lives and careers” to be contrasted than compared.36 In Chapter Six of my study I investigate an incident involving the two Janes, the request by the Prince Regent to write a story of his noble progenitors, an incident which I will argue has long been misrepresented and consequently Porter’s reputation unfairly maligned. Looser’s Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain 1750-1850 (2008) is a comprehensive study on the conditions and circumstances of women writers, who despite their early career success, find that in old age they are forced to capitalise “on something as intangible as their former fame.”37 Looser argues that despite “recent feminist work on early-modern women writers” critics today “ignore or downplay” their “achievements and trials in old age.”38 Porter lived a long life and continued to write until the end. Looser dedicates a chapter to Porter’s financial challenges, as a writer and as an unmarried woman, in old age and suggests that Porter’s case is unique and one that demands critical enquiry. In this chapter, “Jane Porter and

38 Looser, Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain, p. 168.
the Old Woman Writer's Quest for Financial Independence” Looser gives close scrutiny to Porter's last published novel, *Duke Christian of Luneburg*, suggesting reasons for its less-than favourable public reception and Porter’s subsequent attempts to secure a royal pension. Looser touches on Austen's rejection and Porter's acceptance of the royal assignment to write about the Prince Regent's ancestors, suggesting that Porter accepted the King's request in order to secure hers, and her family's, financial future. In my chapter examining *Duke Christian* I also enter into this discussion, pointing out that the events of Austen's refusal in 1816 and Porter's acceptance in 1821, are two entirely separate events, occurring some five years apart and arguing that Porter's decision, therefore, to write *Duke Christian of Luneburg* must be judged independently of Austen, in a balanced and informed way. Looser does not mention the recent failure of Porter's foray into playwriting, a fact that I argue has a considerable bearing on Porter's decision to accept the King's offer, believing it will reignite her literary profile with the reading public.

Two other key texts consulted in the primary stage of my research, and which give attention to Porter, are Gary Kelly's *English Fiction of the Romantic Period, 1789-1839* (1988) and Ann Jones’ *Ideas and Innovations: Best Sellers of Jane Austen’s Age* (1996). The numerous works by Gary Kelly are core texts referenced in my work. It was in his book *English Fiction of the Romantic Period* that I first encountered the name Jane Porter. Not only does Kelly cite the novels of Porter but he examines her second novel, *The Scottish Chiefs*, in some detail. Kelly's work also explores the major shifts in the nature and focus of novel writing, particularly with regard to women, highlighting the emergence of the 'national tale'. Kelly situates Porter as influential in the development of the historical novel and argues that, while her novels are largely works of fiction, they are also historically significant. Kelly writes that Porter, and Scott, “appropriated elements of ‘traditional’ popular culture...inventing a
‘national’ culture...[and creating] a vision of a transcendental national character.” 39 Ann Jones dedicates a whole chapter to Jane Porter and another to her sister, Anna Maria Porter, not only affording some critical examination of Porter’s work but also that of many of the other women novelists who have been neglected in nineteenth-century literary scholarship. Jones argues that Porter’s significance lies in the didactic nature of her writing, a feature which she ironically also attributes to the non-inclusion of Porter in the literary canon today.

Other key texts, over and above those which will receive critical attention within my study, include Re-visioning Romanticism: British Women Writers 1776-1830, edited by Carol Shiner Wilson and Joel Haefner (1994); Revising Women: Eighteenth-Century “Women’s Fiction” and Social Engagement, edited by Paula R. Backscheider (2001); Feminist Readings of Victorian Popular Texts: Divergent Femininities (2001), edited by Emma Liggins and Daniel Duffy; Romanticism and War: A Study of British Romantic Period Writers and the Napoleonic Wars by J.R. Watson (2003); William St Clair’s The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period (2004); and Companion to Women’s Historical Writing, edited by Mary Spongberg, Barbara Caine and Ann Curthoys (2005). These scholars, and their works, reflect on the reception, nature and method of historical criticism for the period in which Jane Porter was writing, focusing on the political, cultural and literary discourses which emerged. These texts have provided me with a rich source of background detail in order to fully explore Porter’s novels.

The fundamental premise of my work is that Porter’s novels were deeply in-tune with the nascent nationalistic fervour of late-eighteenth, early-nineteenth century Britain, and consequently important texts politically within the context of the period in which she was writing. I argue that the relevance of Porter’s novels is that they reveal a real shift in the concept of

Nationalism into the domestic domain, at a time when the British people began establishing themselves as a nation. Geoffrey Cubitt in *Imagining Nations* (1998) states that a “nation is a device for identification, for self-invention; to imagine one is to formulate a sense of belonging.” Cubitt suggests that a nation is “more easily evoked than defined.” Linda Colley, in *Britons: Forging the Nation 1701 – 1837*, argues that for Britons, this self-reinvention was “an invention forged above all by war”. Colley cites the French Revolution as the catalyst for this push towards forming a strong sense of British “nationhood and identity”, as does David Powell in his book *Nationhood and Identity: The British State Since 1800* (2002). The inception of the ‘British state’, Powell argues, not only coincided with the Revolution occurring in France but also “with the expansion of British influence over the rest of the world through the rise of the British Empire”. The Empire, continues Powell, becomes “crucial to the idea of a British identity and to the self image of ‘Britishness’ that was formed in these years.” In contrast to the creation of a British national identity, Bill Brown in *A Sense of Things: The Object Matter of American Literature* (2003) asserts that the American national identity was formed indirectly by the American Civil War, a war which provided a stimulant for the proliferation of “invention, production, distribution, and consumption”. The British national identity was one determined firstly by the protection of their domestic space as a reaction to war, and secondly by the fostering of an Empire on the other, through colonial expansion. Nationalism for Britain was the forming of a community, both at home and abroad, or as John Kemble in *The Saxons in England* (1848) describes it, “a circle of ...domestic happiness”, under the liege of Queen Victoria.

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43 Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*, p. 5.  
45 Powell, *Nationhood and Identity*, p. xi.  
“that exalted Lady who wields the sceptre.”\textsuperscript{47} The novels of Jane Porter inherently reflect this push for British nationalism, this struggle to create that ‘circle of domestic happiness’, or what Angela Keane describes as that “nurturing place as the source of national security.”\textsuperscript{48}

**Nationalism, Heroism and Domestic Virtue**

In the last decades of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, Britain was witness to enormous turbulence both at home and abroad. Between 1768 and 1774 Russia, under Catherine the Great, was at war with the Ottoman empire, at the same time agitating her then ally, France, causing much political unrest throughout Europe. On the home front Russia was facing serious domestic upheaval culminating in the failed peasants’ revolt, in 1774.\textsuperscript{49} Although the revolt failed, it was a concerted attack on the autocratic rule of Russia’s monarchy and its effects were felt throughout Europe. In France, the mounting dissatisfaction with the social order came to a climax in 1789 with the siege of the Bastille, marking the beginning of a revolution that saw the execution of the King in January 1793, the rise to power of the self-appointed Emperor, Napoleon, and the declaration of war on Britain in February 1793. This assault on Britain came only ten years after a humiliating defeat in the American War of Independence, a loss which severely wounded British imperial pride. In reaction to the declaration of war, the *Annual Register* gives a strong warning to the British people that the events in France are “strongly and uniformly expressive of a malignant and hostile spirit”.\textsuperscript{50} In 1794, Britain witnessed the annexation of Poland by Russia and the defeat and capture of Tadeusz Kościuszko, the hero who would be immortalised in Jane Porter’s novel *Thaddeus of


Warsaw and in sonnets and poems by Lord Byron, Thomas Campbell, John Keats and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. What was most pertinent for Britain about Poland’s invasion was not that, as J.R. Watson explains, Russia had “greedily and cynically divided up” a weaker nation, but rather “the failure of ...the British to come to the aid of Poland”, a fact that became a great “cause of shame” for the British government and people.51

Domestically, peace was uneasy. In 1801, the Prime Minister, William Pitt resigned over the issue of Catholic Emancipation. While the act was not passed through Parliament until 1829, it was an unsettling event which George Eliot describes in *The Mill on the Floss* as a “slight wind of controversy to break the calm”.52 Taking the reins as the new Prime Minister, Henry Addington secured the Peace of Amiens in March 1802. However, as Watson points out, this period of peace witnessed a turning in public opinion against Napoleon; Edmund Burke’s public premonition that the events occurring in France would ultimately have dire consequences, came to fruition and war with France was again declared in 1803.53 This war with France was to last until 1815, when Napoleon was finally defeated at the Battle of Waterloo and the monarchy in France was again restored. The declaration of war also saw a loss of confidence in Addington, and Pitt was returned to power, the Catholic Emancipation Act eventually passing through Parliament in 1829.54

My title, “This Blessed Plot": Nationalism, Heroism and Domestic Virtue in the Novels of Jane Porter, quotes the stirring valediction by John of Gaunt to the people of England, as he witnesses his country’s descent into war and disunity under the reign of his nephew, Richard II. Shakespeare’s *Richard II* (c.1595), writes Andrew Sanders, “explores the

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53 See Watson, *Romanticism and War*, pp. 84-173 for a detailed analysis of this period and the poetry that evolved.
consequences of the disruption of the direct line of royal descent” advocating the “concept of secure monarchic government”. Although John of Gaunt’s deathbed soliloquy is often considered a touchstone of British nationhood and patriotism, it must be pointed out that John of Gaunt refers to an ideal England, not one that actually existed in the year 1399. Porter’s writing reflects just such a turbulent and unsettled time. Thaddeus of Warsaw, The Scottish Chiefs, The Pastor’s Fireside and Duke Christian convey the political, cultural and social uncertainty present in Britain during the nineteenth century. It is against this backdrop of rising national and domestic uncertainty that my study develops. Although the words ‘nationalism’ and ‘patriotism’ were not yet in commonplace usage, John of Gaunt’s speech is, so Peter Mandler argues, “the most moving and effective evocation of [nationalism and] patriotism in the English language”. This same spirit is found in the novels of Jane Porter. Through John of Gaunt, Shakespeare signifies the three ideals required in order to build and make strong “this scept’r’d isle, this earth of majesty”, nationalism, heroism and domestic virtue:

This fortress built by Nature for herself...
This happy breed of men, this little world,...
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,...
Renowned for their deeds as far from home,
For Christian service and true chivalry.

These ideals are fundamental in Porter’s writing, and through these principles Porter re-locates British nationhood and identity from the national realm into the domestic domain. Just as John of Gaunt “claims immemorial rights for the families who occupy” the England of his dominion, so too Porter acknowledges the participation and importance of

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56 Mandler, The English National Character, p. 8. The Oxford English Dictionary cites 1798 as the first time the word Nationalism was used and 1716 as the year that the word Patriotism was first used. http://dictionary.oed.com accessed 29 July 2009.
57 Quoted in Mandler, The English National Character, p. 8.
the ‘home’ and ‘family’ in the image of nineteenth-century Britain.\textsuperscript{59} According to Christopher Wortham the tide of English nationalism was in full force “following the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588.”\textsuperscript{60} Similarly, Porter’s novels are written in a period of British history which experienced an unprecedented forging of nationalism following the French Revolution. John of Gaunt’s valediction, “This blessed plot”, also succinctly expresses the narrative design of Porter’s novels. Each storyline conveys her religious conviction, her devotion to England, and, her determination to ensure its continuance as a safe and secure “fortress built by Nature for herself/ Against infection and the hand of war”.\textsuperscript{61}

The importance of securing a strong sense of ‘Britishness’ in the wake of the unstable times both abroad and at home, is put succinctly by Peter Mandler in his book \textit{The English National Character} (2006). Mandler writes:

‘National character’ is meant to refer to deep-seated structures in the minds of the people; only after generally acknowledged periods of crisis or great social changes is a substantial reassessment normally permissible. It tends to speak in terms of stability, even when palpably shifting ground.\textsuperscript{62}

This rising national consciousness gained momentum as the British Empire began to expand and industrialisation ushered in the need for reform, both politically and culturally. One of the ways of framing a national identity is to look to history, which is exactly what occurred in Britain in the late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth centuries. Following the lead of the writers, philosophers and historians of the Scottish Enlightenment, a new breed of historians emerged, such as David Hume (1711-1776), Adam Smith (1723-1790) and later, John Mitchell Kemble (1807-1857). These new men of history recognised the value and


\textsuperscript{61} Shakespeare, \textit{Richard II}, Act ii, Scene I, 43-44.

\textsuperscript{62} Mandler, \textit{The English National Character}, p. 2.
importance of “looking backward a little upon the great and good of olden
time, and who advocated the need for the British to emulate the virtues of
their forefathers, without losing the wisdom of our own times.”63 The
novels of Jane Porter are examples of this reaction to the present, through
her engagement with the past. Commenting on Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s
awareness of “the collective drama of history in the present”, Kemble
concurs that “the past lives on...furnishing that broad basis upon which
alone change becomes safe, and progress sure.”64 This engagement with
the past is often thought of as being nostalgic, and romanticised. As I will
argue in Chapter One, Porter does not romanticise history as a place
where the ideals, values and conditions of the past should be maintained
in the present, but rather, she demonstrates through her novels the
lessons to be learned from the mistakes of history. As with Kemble,
Porter wishes to examine and learn from history, without losing the
wisdom of her own time. In Reflections on the Revolution in France
(1790), Edmund Burke imagines England as a national family. Burke was an
astute politician, and as will be more fully explored in Chapter Two this,
combined with his grand eloquence and passionate sympathies, captured
the English imagination. A contemporary and avid reader and supporter
of Burke, Porter saw history as a guide to, as Mandler puts it, the “slow,
gradual, halting, fallible process of improvement”, a process which, in the
light of the French Revolution, must be forged, to use Colley’s apt term, as
a people, and a Nation, united.65

Fiona Price states, in her ‘Introduction’ to the 2007 Broadview edition of
The Scottish Chiefs, that Porter’s novels were “[r]eacting to the unease
produced by the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars”, and, can
therefore be understood as illustrating that “a public consciousness of
history and its heroes could strengthen the contemporary sense of national

63 This is part of a letter by John Kemble to Jakob Grimm written in 1833, quoted in Mandler, The
English National Character, p. 46.
64 Quoted in Mandler, The English National Character, p. 45.
65 Quoted in Mandler, The English National Character, p. 25.
community.” This awareness of a national community highlights the centrality of ‘home’ and the ‘domestic’, which, in the face of outside threats, must be held firm. Judith Johnston in her book *George Eliot and the Discourses of Medievalism* (2006), explains that this sense of public anxiety extended well into the nineteenth century, pointing to the novels of George Eliot as “reveal[ing] an innate Victorian urge for continuity, in the face of deep national anxiety about the threat that the known order may be dismantled at any time”. Porter articulated this anxiety more than half a century before Eliot began to publish her work.

The concept of ‘home’, and particularly the ‘domestic’, is fundamental to the nineteenth-century British concept of Empire, which I argue, in Porter’s novels, is envisaged as an expanded domestic space. In her landmark text, *The Politics of Home* (1999), Rosemary Marangoly George explores the nature of ‘home’ and illustrates how the idea of ‘home’ in literature is constructed by representing real experiences and desires, especially in times of trouble, and when people are displaced or exiled. Although George’s study focuses on colonial literature, and the effects of colonialism in the twentieth century, her insights and her argument have much relevance to Porter’s novels, given that when Porter was writing, England was at the beginning of considerable colonial expansion. George’s definition of the concept of ‘home’, and particularly the ‘domestic’, is fundamental to a nineteenth-century British concept of ‘Empire’ which, as previously noted, came to be envisaged as an expanded domestic space. George asserts that novels were seen as having a mainly female authorship and readership and were therefore “irrelevant to the workings of the national destiny”. However, she states that with the “advent of colonial fiction...implications [of women’s participation] in events of nation

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and empire can no longer be ignored”, as the domestic space in these novels is expanded into a metaphor for the national.69

This process of the nation being seen as an expanded domestic space began in the nineteenth century at the height of imperial expansion and is evident as well in earlier exploration narratives, the most obvious being Daniel Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe. Defoe’s fictional hero, Robinson Crusoe, it can be argued, is the true prototype of the British colonist. Novels such as Robinson Crusoe can be described as a response to what historian James Williamson describes as, ‘the eighteenth century’s “romance of unknown lands and peoples”, developing in European culture since Columbus’, and the nineteenth century’s quest for Empire.70 In both postcolonial novels, and novels of exploration and imperial expansion, the ‘home’, or the ‘domestic’, becomes inextricably linked with Nation and with Empire. In a later study on the nature of ‘home’, Susan Strehle in her book Transnational Women’s Fiction: Unsettling Home and Homeland (2008), also describes ‘home’ as “central and centering” to a nation.71 Moreover, focussing on postcolonial issues, especially in relation to the position of women in relation to their imagining of ‘home’, Strehle’s work is important to my study because it establishes the imperialist episode in British history as the moment when the home, “traditionally thought of in the West as a private, secluded space for settlement”, began to be seen as a “major player in national agendas and the settled heart of the imperial enterprise.”72 Strehle offers a critique of George’s theory of ‘home’, agreeing with her assertion that there is overt overlapping in constructions of ‘home’ and ‘nation’, but highlighting the consequences to people and nations when “the stability and value of home come[s] symptomatically undone”.73 The combination of imperial expansion and

72 Strehle, Transnational Women’s Fiction, p. 2.
73 Strehle, Transnational Women’s Fiction, p. 27.
the threat to Britain of revolution, both in France and America heralded, therefore, the beginnings of nationalism and discourses on the nature and notion of ‘home’ in much of the writings of the nineteenth century. As Roy Strong in his study, The Victorian Painter and British History (1978), comments: “No age was more intensely nationalistic than the nineteenth century, in which the myth of the historic destiny of Britain was inexorably tied up with the whole saga of their history.”74 In Culture and Imperialism, Edward Said closely links imperialism and the novel, asserting that “the novel, as a cultural artefact of bourgeois society, and imperialism are unthinkable without each other” and further states that “imperialism and the novel fortified each other to such a degree that it is impossible...to read one with out in some way dealing with the other.”75 Said argues that by the 1840s the English novel was “a major intellectual voice” and even can be said to be a participant in England’s expanding Empire.76 Said believes that novelists, such as Jane Austen, George Eliot and Elizabeth Gaskell were responsible for shaping “the idea of England in such a way as to give it identity, presence, [and] ways of reusable articulation.”77 According to Said, these novelists created what Raymond Williams refers to as a ‘knowable community’ which fostered an, albeit imagined, “relationship between ‘home’ and ‘abroad’” in which ‘home’ became clearly defined, whereas ‘abroad’ was a place that existed somewhere else.78 I would argue that Porter’s domestic spaces within her novels can be seen as operating in the same manner. The importance of ‘home’ in Porter’s novels can be seen, in Said’s terms, as a place “to uphold and maintain...and to protect from disintegration.”79

76 Said, Culture and Imperialism, p. 85. Also Pucci, ‘The Return Home’. Pucci gives the example of Jane Austen’s Mansfield Park as a novel participating in the expansion of the Empire, in the case of this novel, to the Caribbean and India (p.139).
77 Said, Culture and Imperialism, p. 85.
78 Said, Culture and Imperialism, p. 85.
79 Said, Culture and Imperialism, p. 86.
Importantly, ‘home’ is a place, as defined by Rosemary Marongoly George, of “shelter, comfort, nurture and protection”.\textsuperscript{80} In her novel \textit{The Mill on the Floss} (1860), George Eliot poignantly describes the power and fundamental importance of ‘home’. Finding himself bankrupt, Mr Tulliver fears the loss of his home which has been in the Tulliver family for generations, and has provided for him, and his family, the shelter, comfort, nurture and protection, which Marongoly George defines as ‘home’. Tulliver reflects:

But the strongest influence of all was the love of the old premises where he had run about when he was a boy...He couldn’t bear to think of himself living on any other spot than this, where he knew the sound of every gate and door, and felt the shape and colour of every roof and weather stain... .

Tulliver felt for this spot, where all his memories centred, and where life seemed like a familiar smooth-handled tool that the fingers clutch with loving ease.\textsuperscript{81}

It can be said that the notion and power of ‘home’ is perhaps never more realised than when it is threatened. Utilising George’s notion of ‘home’, we can see in Porter’s novels that, well before Eliot was exploring the function of a consciousness of the meaning of ‘home’, Porter had already formed her own awareness of the ‘national home’, her novels raising salient issues concerned with exile and estrangement, legitimacy and belonging. Porter’s novels expand the discourse of ‘home’ to include the “greater family made by the nation, a hierarchy with the king at its head.”\textsuperscript{82} George further argues that the ‘home’, can be shrunk to denote the private and the domestic, and, inflated to represent the national and the public and thus, “imagining a home is as political an act as is imagining a nation.”\textsuperscript{83} In Porter’s novels it is apparent that the ‘home’ can also be defined, in George’s terms, as “an Empire in miniature”, a representation of England, complete with all the trappings of the

\textsuperscript{80} George, \textit{The Politics of Home}, p.1.
\textsuperscript{81} Eliot, \textit{The Mill on the Floss}, p. 263.
\textsuperscript{83} George, \textit{The Politics of Home}, p. 6.
Porter’s novels also highlight the ramifications which can ensue in the event that this powerful concept of ‘home’ is threatened, or, as in the case of Thaddeus Sobieski’s home, Poland, literally “swept from the map of nations.”

In order to explore the bringing together of the ‘home’, both as domestic and national concepts, and Nationalism, Porter combines the use of her imagination with her knowledge and interest in history in fashioning her novels, creating a new class of novel which became known as the Historical novel (or as sometimes described, the Historical romance). This new genre, the historical novel, enabled Porter to represent not just a portrait of the period of which she is writing, but also of the period in which she is writing. Her novels can be read as a broader account of England, and its people, during, and in the aftermath of, the French Revolution.

Heroism is another of the key focal tropes of Porter’s novels and her heroes cast a powerful shadow. Each of her heroes, Thaddeus Sobieski, William Wallace, Louis de Montefort and Duke Christian, are the embodiment of Christian and domestic virtue. The safe keeping of home and family is always of paramount importance. Porter’s heroes are stirred into action when their domestic peace and security is threatened, or harmed. They avenge the usurper, taking to the battlefields, and beyond, to restore the shattered or threatened domestic harmony. Most importantly, Porter’s heroes are emblems of the chivalric “principles of faith, justice, and humanity”. They are sensitive, compassionate,
refined, and even prone to swooning and shedding tears. In her ‘Introduction’ to Mary Hays’ novel *Memoirs of Emma Courtney*, Eleanor Ty notes how women writers in the late-eighteenth century began experimenting with creating a new breed of hero, in response, suggests Ty, to Henry McKenzie’s Harley, the original *Man of Feeling* (1771).\(^{88}\) Ty writes that “Hays, like other female novelists of the 1790s...was experimenting with depictions of the sensitive male protagonists who possessed refined judgement, generosity, and sympathy.”\(^{89}\) How to portray this ‘man of feeling’, however, was a continual puzzle for women writers because, Ty argues, this new style of hero, this man of “new-style domesticity”, did not naturally conform strictly to the recognised “markers of masculinity and order.”\(^{90}\) Porter, however, was successful in creating these new heroes, these *beaux idéals*, locating their true heroism in their unfailing devotion to the ‘home’, whether the domestic family home or the larger national home.\(^{91}\) As will be demonstrated also in the analysis of Porter’s novels, each of her heroes are models of Christian and domestic virtue, and definitely men of feeling.

**The Writing of History and the Historical Novel**

As a sub-type the historical novel shares the “naturalism and particularisation of character” of the novel genre but in addition incorporates, according to Kevin Whetter, “its own distinctive features, notably an historical setting and characters and a sense of differences between past and present.”\(^{92}\) The historical novel, writes Whetter, “mix[es] the rich and particular factuality of history with the Aristotelian poetic, or fiction universal”.\(^{93}\) In his ‘Afterword’ to the 2005 Penguin edition of Leo Tolstoy’s *War and Peace*, Russian Historian Orlando Figes


\(^{89}\) Ty, ‘Introduction’, p. xxviii.

\(^{90}\) Ty. ‘Introduction’, p. xxix.

\(^{91}\) Anon, ‘The Pastor’s Fireside’ [review]. *Gentleman’s Magazine*, LXXXVII, (Jan-Jun 1817), p. 147. Written as *beau ideal* in GM.


\(^{93}\) Whetter, *Understanding Genre and Medieval Romance*, p. 28.
outlines the key to the success of Tolstoy’s epic novel. Figes explains how in writing *War and Peace* Tolstoy employs “several overlapping spheres of historical consciousness: the real-time…the living memory of this period…and its reflection in the political consciousness”. Although Tolstoy wrote *War and Peace* in 1869, Figes’ observations on Tolstoy’s achievement in reflecting the political consciousness of Russia, in both real-time and historical-time, is similarly, I would assert, the key to Porter’s success. Porter also employs these spheres of consciousness, observed by Figes, in each of her novels. For example, in *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, Porter uses her historical setting, the annexation of Poland, as a conduit for showing to her readers the real threat to the safety of Britain, and her people, should the French Revolution succeed. Porter outlines this aim in her Preface to the first edition:

> [B]efore the reader favours the tale itself with his attention, I beg leave to offer him a little account of the principles that actuated its composition…[T]he recent struggle in Poland, to maintain her laws and loyal independence, against the combined aggressions of the three most powerful states in Europe, seemed to afford me the most suitable objects for my moral aim, to interest by sympathy,…the exhibition of all that human nature could suffer and endure [as a result of the] terrible, regicidal revolution of France.  

In her unpublished dissertation, Lisa Kasmer writes that with *The Scottish Chiefs* Porter supports Georg Lukács’ assertion that the French Revolution was instrumental in altering the nature of historiography because, after the “mass experience” of the Revolution, history was seen as having “a direct effect upon the lives of individuals”, where before man was viewed as being “unchangeable”. Kasmer insists that Porter’s work explicates the Lukács premise because her novels clearly reveal that

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96 Kasmer, *Regendering History*, p. 113.
history is a process and individual lives are indeed, as Ian Dennis puts it, “influenced by great historical conflicts”. 97

As with socio-cultural and historical literary criticism, the writing of history and its relation to the writing of novels has always been a contested area of scholarship. During the period in which Porter published her novels, and even beyond, it was a critical commonplace that history belonged to men, and that women attempting to write history, no matter in what form, offended this gendered no-woman’s land, despite the fact that since Christine de Pisan penned her The City of Ladies in 1406, women have been contributing to the writing of history from a female perspective and challenging the traditional masculine historical discourses. 98 A good example of the ‘maleness’ of history writing is found in 1849 when the Edinburgh Review attacks Agnes Strickland’s Lives of the Queens of England (1848) for invading male space, and suggesting that “[l]adies who assume masculine functions must learn to assume masculine gravity”. 99 Strickland’s history, according to C.S.M. Phillips, writing for the Edinburgh Review, exerts too much of “an air of romance, of pathos [and] of humour”, indicative of “the work of female writers.” 100 The full vehemence of the review is realised when Phillips accuses Strickland of having presented “questionable facts”. 101 Rather than presenting “proofs and ...arguments”, Phillips states that Strickland has merely offered “views and assumptions” and her work must therefore be dismissed as having no “real historical value.” 102 This conflating of history and fiction raised as problematic by Phillips in any writing pertaining to be ‘history’ was less anxiously regarded in writing labeled ‘fiction’ or ‘romance’:

97 Quoted in Kasmer, Regendering History, p. 114, from Ian Dennis Nationalism and Desire, p. 11.
98 For a full account of Christine de Pisan and other early women writers of history see Companion to Women’s Historical Writing. Edited by Mary Spongberg et al. (New York: Palgrave, 2005).
indeed ‘historical romance’ became an applauded genre. Anne Stevens in “Tales of Other Times: A Survey of British Historical Fiction, 1770-1812” asserts that the “years 1760-1820 mark a turning point in the history of historiography” and that the Historical novel is “the most important and under-explored historiographic innovation of these years.” Stevens goes on to argue that historical fiction made history available to an audience previously denied. Stevens writes how in “repackaging contents of historiography in fictional form, novelists aimed for an audience likely to be composed of more women, older children, and middle-ranked readers”. Historical novelists, according to Stevens, “helped to erect a boundary between fiction and history, truth and falsehood”, while, ironically, “transgressing it”.

Since the publication of Georg Lukács’ *The Historical Novel* in 1937, Walter Scott has been applauded as the originator of the new genre, the ‘historical novel’. Lukács’ claim has since been used by scholars to further cement the reputation of Scott as its founder. While the debate surrounding who wrote the first historical novel will be explored in my first chapter, I wish to establish from the outset my determination that Porter was the pioneer of the historical novel genre, based on a range of varying evidence. One such example is the article, “Economy of the Month”, published in the *Monthly Magazine* in 1838. The author of this article asserts that Porter has been unfairly overlooked, writing that:

> Few are the families so distinguished by genius, talent, and goodness, as that of Porter. If Nelson’s motto - *Palmam qui meruit ferat* - were invariably acted upon, the honour of being the first and chief Historical novelist of Britain would have been unanimously accorded to Jane Porter, instead of Sir Walter Scott. Her Scottish Chiefs, the noblest prose epic in the language, was written and had acquired reputation and fame.

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104 Stevens, ‘Tales of Other Times’, p. 3.
106 Nelson’s motto - *Let him, who has earned it, bear the palm*, is inscribed on the Horatio Nelson coat of arms.
for its author before any of Scott’s productions had seen the light.\textsuperscript{107}

While agreeing that scholars concentrate far too much on the historical rivalry between Porter and Scott, and the consequential historical novel debate, to overlook it would leave an obvious gap in assessing the impact of Porter’s oeuvre. Scholars of Porter’s novels need to move beyond the historical novel debate, as fuelled by studies such as that of Lukács, and recognise that Porter offers her readers an alternative view of history from that of Scott. What also needs to be recognised is that it is not only \textit{The Scottish Chiefs} which should be compared and contrasted to Scott’s Waverley novels. As I will later argue, Porter’s first published novel, \textit{Thaddeus of Warsaw} (1803), should be incorporated into any historical novel discussions, along with her other two published novels, as well as \textit{Tales Around a Winter’s Hearth} (1826) and \textit{The Field of Forty Footsteps} (1828), written in conjunction with her sister, Anna Maria. Each of these novels lay bare “an unequivocally positive attitude to popular reconstructions of the past”, as Fiona Price puts it, which favours “continuity and tradition” and “positions popular tradition itself as the guarantee of national stability”.\textsuperscript{108} I whole-heartedly concur with Angela Keane and Fiona Robertson, who both believe Scott has for too long held a privileged position in relation to the development and success of the historical novel. They urge scholars to “broaden the field of enquiry to allow writers like Porter, lost for so long...in the literary historical netherland...back into the critical frame.”\textsuperscript{109} My work supports this endeavour.

On Friday 24th of May, 1840 at age 74 years, Jane Porter died quietly at the home of her brother, William Ogilvie, the only remaining member of

the Porter family. Tributes began immediately to appear for this well-regarded author, who, according to the *Gentleman’s Magazine* “maintained to the last moment, not only her intellectual faculties unimpaired, but that cheerfulness of disposition for which she had been so much admired during her long life.” All the tributes are consistent in framing their praise of Porter in terms of the gender ideology predominant at the time. The *Athenaeum* wrote of the “eloquence in her manner, which we shall hardly see reproduced”, which she accomplished “without, however, the slightest parade or pretension”. Similarly, the *Journal of the Belle Lettres* wrote that “it was impossible to meet a more unaffected, amiable and lady-like individual as Miss Jane Porter”, while the *Critic* remembered the “cheerfulness of disposition for which she had been so much admired during her long life.” However, while these tributes celebrated Porter as a person, what is far more important is the honour attributed to her as a writer of talent and a pioneer in her field.

On her death, the success, popularity and innovation of Porter’s novels is re-visited by critics, the public, and a host of eminent literati of the period. In their obituary, the *International Monthly Magazine of Literature, Science and Art* claims specifically that Porter “introduced that beautiful kind of fiction, the historical romance”, and further states, they will remember her as “one of the most distinguished novelists which England has produced.” In “Memories of Miss Jane Porter”, Mrs S.C. Hall writes how Porter was “a lady whose reputation, as a novelist, was in its zenith when Walter Scott published his first novel”, thereby making a substantial claim for precedence for her fellow woman writer. However, perhaps the most noteworthy praise is given by the *Gentleman’s*

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115 Hall, ‘Memories of Miss Jane Porter’, p. 221.
Magazine because it clearly demonstrates the high regard in which Porter is held, and again names her as the novelist who developed the historical novel as a genre:

It was during their residence in London that Miss Porter published, in 1803, her first and perhaps most popular tale, “Thaddeus of Warsaw,” wherein she set an example of blending truth with fiction, in the shape of an historical romance; and probably suggested to the author of Waverley, and those who have followed him, that style of novel, in which they have been so pre-eminently successful.¹¹⁶

Tributes acknowledging Porter's talents, and distinguishing her from other writers of the day, are not confined to the months immediately following her death but continue throughout the course of the nineteenth century and beyond. In 1886, Rowland Prothero published an article in the Quarterly Review outlining the development of the English novel from its earliest manifestations in Greek and Roman literature, but concentrating specifically, however, on the novel’s dramatic developments in the eighteenth and early-nineteenth century following the publication of Daniel Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe in 1719. Of the historical novel, Prothero writes of the difficulties inherent in the form:

The historical novelist attempts a Herculean task. He has to reproduce to himself a past age so vividly, that it becomes the atmosphere of his mental life, and at the same time to throw this unreal self into characters he creates, that may live and move as real beings.¹¹⁷

Although Prothero is writing more than half a century after the publication of Porter’s novels, he states that Porter’s Thaddeus of Warsaw and The Scottish Chiefs “still hold their own”, and more significantly, that “a greater and enduring distinction belongs to Miss Porter, if Scott was serious when he told her that her writings first suggested to him his own historical novels.”¹¹⁸ Still later, in 1891, an author identified only as A.H.

wrote in the journal *North-Country Lore and Legend* that Porter is “famous in the history of fiction”.\(^{119}\)

Porter’s inclusion in *Fraser’s Magazine* “Gallery of Illustrious Characters” in April 1835, some ten years after the publication of her fourth and final novel, signals clearly Porter’s reputation as a successful author.\(^{120}\) In the portrait sketch, Porter is “depicted in the quiet and ladylike occupation of taking a cup of tea”, dressed, according to the author, “in monastic costume”.\(^{121}\) Although each of the characters portrayed in the Gallery are dealt with in a humorous manner, or as William Bates notes in his preface to *The Maclise Portrait-Gallery of Illustrious Literary Characters*, each sketch is “tinged by caricature”, it is in fact a testament to the high regard with which they are held.\(^{122}\) Only writers who have successfully published, and who have particular literary reputations, are honoured by inclusion in the Gallery. There are eighty-four portraits in all, Porter being one of only eight women to be included. The other women to receive the honour are Caroline Norton, Lady Morgan, Mrs S.C. Hall, Harriet Martineau, Letitia Landon, the Countess Blessington and Mary Russell Mitford. However, more significant is Porter’s continued inclusion in *The Maclise Portrait-Gallery of Illustrious Literary Characters*, published in 1883, thirty eight years after her death. While the original sketches that appear in *Fraser’s* were in the form of a joke, the republished *Maclise Portrait-Gallery of Illustrious Literary Characters* is, in contrast, an historical document, placing Porter among eighty-six other distinguished literary figures, such as Thackeray, Scott, Wordsworth and D’Israeli. Interestingly, William Makepeace Thackeray did not form part of the

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\(^{120}\) Porter is also included in ‘Gallery of Literary Characters. No. LXVIII. Regina’s Maids of Honour’ in *Fraser’s Magazine*, 13 (Jan, 1836), pp.80-81. The sketch depicts the eight women included in the Gallery, sitting together around a table “busy taking tea, or coffee, as chance may be”.

\(^{121}\) Anonymous, ‘Gallery of Literary Characters. No. LIX. Miss Jane Porter’, *Fraser’s Magazine*, 11 (April 1835), p.404. The gallery was published in *Fraser’s* between 1830 and 1838. A glance at the corresponding sketch is enough to recognize that Porter is not dressed in a “nun-like” manner but in the typical fashion of the day, scarves and other head-dresses being the norm.

original sketches, but was only added by Daniel Maclise “for the sake of completeness”.\textsuperscript{123}

\textbf{Jane Porter’s Nineteenth-Century Reputation}

Over and above these reviews, are references to Porter and her writing in numerous Victorian novels, biographies and the collected letters of many authors throughout the nineteenth century, and beyond. These are irrefutable testaments to the impact and influence of her writing, and suggest her novels were standard additions to most Victorian homes and circulating libraries. One such notable example is acknowledgement of Porter by the young, brash Percy Shelley. Having been expelled from Oxford in 1811, Shelley moved, with his friend, Thomas Jefferson Hogg, to lodgings in Poland Street, London, declaring to Hogg that “it reminded him of Thaddeus of Warsaw and of freedom.”\textsuperscript{124} What follows are other examples of Porter’s viable and telling presence in nineteenth-century literary circles, and in the imaginations of her contemporaries. These demonstrate the “continuing social life” of her novels, integral to the “sociohistorical dimensions” of the Victorian age in particular.\textsuperscript{125}

In 1812, the dramatist and author of the popular nineteenth-century series, \textit{Our Village: Sketches of Rural Character and Scenery} (1824), Mary Russell Mitford, writes to her friend, Sir William Elford, remarking that there “is something so delightful in the idea of penetrating into the minds and motives of heroes”, preferring “the brilliant colouring of Miss Porter” to the “meagre outline of Hume”.\textsuperscript{126} Mitford’s intriguing comparison of fiction versus history associates Porter’s work with that of noted historian David Hume. Later, the relationship of literature and history will prove to

\textsuperscript{125} McGann, ‘Introduction: A Point of Reference’, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{126} Mary Russell Mitford to Sir William Elford (1812), \textit{The Letters of Mary Russell Mitford}. Selected with an introduction by R. Brimley Johnson (London: John Lane, 1925), p. 79.
be a contested one and this is an issue I shall be addressing fully later. In another letter, Mitford writes to Elford that she, “scarcely know[s] one *heroes de roman*, whom it is possible to admire, except Wallace in Miss Porter’s *Scottish Chiefs*”.\textsuperscript{127}

The nineteenth-century’s great sage and philosopher, Thomas Carlyle complains to his friend Robert Mitchell, in 1814, of his endeavours to acquire Porter’s novel *Thaddeus of Warsaw*. Carlyle writes to Mitchell:

> Firmly had I resolved, on the faith of your recommendation, to read *Thaddeus*, and you may believe me when I declare that it was not for want of exertion on my part, that I have not seen it yet. The truth is, I am acquainted only in one circulating library and there *Thaddeus* has always been ‘out’.\textsuperscript{128}

In a later letter Carlyle writes to Mitchell that:

> Great and manifold are the books I have read since I saw you. You recommended *Thaddeus of Warsaw* long ago you may remember – and the work in my judgement full deserves it.\textsuperscript{129}

Carlyle further comments that principal among his recently read novels are “Miss Porter’s *Scottish Chiefs* and *Waverley*”.\textsuperscript{130} Carol Christ, in “The Hero as Man of Letters”(1990), writes that Carlyle’s world is one of “heroic masculinity [in which] women have almost no place”.\textsuperscript{131} Carlyle’s recognition of Porter, and wish to read her novels is, therefore, high praise indeed.

Confined to bed following the birth of her daughter, Clara, Mary Shelley records in her diary on Friday 2 September 1817, that she passes the time reading, among them, Porter’s newly released novel *The Pastor’s Fireside*.

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\textsuperscript{127} Mitford, *The Letters of Mary Russell Mitford*, p. 89.
\textsuperscript{129} Carlyle to Mitchell, 25 March 1815, pp.41-45.
\textsuperscript{130} Carlyle to Mitchell, 25 March 1815, pp. 25-30.
The Pastor's Fireside was only published in February 1817 but Shelley already has it among her favoured reading. As a fan of Porter, Percy Shelley may have suggested her latest novel to his confined wife, having previously found interest in Porter’s work himself.

In creating his fictional character Arthur Gordon Pym, Edgar Allan Poe drew inspiration from Sir Edward Seaward, the naval hero of the work Sir Edward Seaward’s Narrative (1831), a novel written by Porter’s brother, William Ogilvie, and edited by Porter. Randel Helms in his essay “Another Source for Poe’s Arthur Gordon Pym” writes that Poe’s fictional hero Pym and the title The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym (1838) “came directly from [Poe’s] memory of Jane Porter’s work”. Helms argues that Poe was reading Sir Edward Seaward’s Narrative (1831) at the time he began writing Pym and this is evident when comparing the opening chapters of Poe’s novel and the account of the Seaward’s shipwreck. Helms writes:

Poe must have been reading Seaward at the time he was working on those chapters of Pym that recount his hero’s being trapped in the hold of the Granpus [the ship] and his subsequent drifting on the mastless hulk, for it is these early episodes that most clearly have their inspiration in Jane Porter’s work.

In December 1832, the Athenaeum published a poem by writer Geraldine Jewsbury, praising the adventures of the “noble minded husband and wife… their mode of living …their plans, difficulties and complete success”. The poem begins with an address to the reader suggesting:

Whether the ‘Narrative’ be truth touched by fancy, or fancy working on truth, the result is equally captivating; and whether they belong to tale or history, the characters of Sir

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Edward Seaward and his lady equally excite interest and challenge admiration.\textsuperscript{136}

As well as being a regular contributor to the *Athenaeum*, Jewsbury was a journalist, reviewer and a great advocate of women’s causes, and also worked for the publishers, Bentley’s, where she received a reputation for not necessarily being sympathetic to authors just because they were women.\textsuperscript{137} Her praise of *Sir Edward Seaward’s Narrative* would have been received by the reading public with much respect.

Praised as a “poet who sang for the people”, Eliza Cook drew inspiration from Porter’s hero William Wallace in her poem “The Song of Marion” (1840).\textsuperscript{138} The epigraph to the poem is taken directly from Porter’s novel *The Scottish Chiefs*. A poet deeply concerned with domestic and nationalist themes, Cook’s poem tells of Marion’s longing for Wallace to return to their home, Ellerslie, to protect her from the invading Southrons:

\begin{quote}
Oh, come my Wallace, quickly come,
As ever, safe and free:
Come, or thy Marion soon will find
A grave in Ellerslie.\textsuperscript{139}
\end{quote}

Writing thirty years after the publication of *The Scottish Chiefs*, Cook still finds resonance in Porter’s work which she translates into her own creative output. Like Jewsbury, Cook campaigned throughout her life for women’s reform, especially for working-class women. It is also therefore significant I believe, given Porter’s insistence on the importance of the ‘domestic’, that women, such as Jewsbury and Cook, receive inspiration from Porter’s work. Cook also wrote and edited a popular family magazine titled *Eliza Cook’s Journal*, from 1849 to 1854, in which she republished

\textsuperscript{136} Fletcher, ‘Lines Written after Reading Sir Edward Seaward’s Narrative’, p.777.
\textsuperscript{139} Eliza Cook, *Melaia and other Poems*. (London: Charles Tilt, 1840), pp. 100-01.
her poems. Her poem “The Song of Marion” would have reached a wide audience of similarly sympathetic readers.

In her novel Cranford (1853), Elizabeth Gaskell makes reference to both Jane and Anna Maria’s novels, her character Miss Pole declaring, when the distinguished gentleman, Signor Brunoni, enters the room, that she “could not help thinking of Thaddeus of Warsaw and the Hungarian Brothers, and Santo Sebastian”. Signor Brunoni is a stranger to the town of Cranford and later referred to by Miss Pole as “The Grand Turk”, who despite his foreignness was considered by Miss Pole to be a “Christian gentleman.” Elizabeth Gaskell was an extremely popular novelist in the nineteenth century. “Our Society at Cranford”, which went on to form the first two chapters of Cranford, was printed in Charles Dickens’ Household Words in December 1851. Over half a century after Porter first published Thaddeus of Warsaw, her hero is still a household word. It is significant too that Gaskell chooses Miss Pole to make the declaration concerning Porter’s hero because Miss Pole is, or at least considers herself to be, the town’s ‘intelligence’ and always had, in Gaskell’s words, “something particular to relate”, which the ladies of Cranford always took note of.

The American poet and critic Nathaniel Parker Willis writes in his book Famous Persons and Places (1854) that while visiting a castle ruin with Porter he ponders as he watches her from a distance:

Was she thinking of the great mind that had evoked the spirits of the ruins she stood among – a mind in which (by Sir Walter’s own confession) she had first bared the vein of romance which breathed so freely for the world’s delight?

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140 Elizabeth Gaskell, Cranford [1853], Elizabeth Porges Watson (ed), (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972). p. 83. Watson notes in her references that “Santo Sebastian may be a slip of Miss Pole’s memory for the hero of Anna Maria Porter’s Don Sebastian or Catherine Cuthbertson’s Santo Sebastiano (1806). Anna Maria Porter is also the author of The Hungarian Brothers (1809).
141 Gaskell, Cranford, p. 87.
142 Gaskell, Cranford, p. 82.
Porter and Willis maintained a long and warm friendship and on her death, Willis paid several tributes to her.

In William Makepeace Thackeray’s short stories, “The Professor” (1837), the Professor jokes that “she [Miss Adeliza Grampus] received her romantic name from her mother, after reading Miss Swipes’ celebrated novel Toby of Warsaw.” 144 Toby of Warsaw is of course an allusion to Porter’s Thaddeus of Warsaw. In a letter to his friend Mrs Procter, the wife of the poet Barry Cornwall, Thackeray tells of the enjoyment he felt in reading The Scottish Chiefs and Thaddeus of Warsaw, writing how he “used to admire the Scottish Chiefs once and cry over Thaddeus of Warsaw, [such] fond follies of youth!” 145 This admission by Thackeray is interesting as it shows the influence that Porter’s novels still play in his consciousness, and in that of the reading public. Despite his reputation as a prolific and comic writer it is the serious novels of Porter which have left a lasting impression. Known for her “shrewdness and wit”, Thackeray also knew that Mrs Procter would appreciate the good-humoured mocking of the standing of Porter’s work in society. 146

Thackeray also makes mention of Porter’s The Scottish Chiefs in his acclaimed novel Vanity Fair, published in 1848. Accompanying Major Dobbin on an afternoon stroll, Miss Polly spots two acquaintances and declares “There they are”. 147 The narrator continues that Miss Polly “was a confidante at once of the whole business [and] she knew the story as well as if she had read it in one of her favourite novel-books – ‘Fatherless

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“Fanny’, or the ‘Scottish Chiefs’.” Six years later Thackeray still feels able to invoke Porter for his own ends, when in *A Shabby Genteel Story* (1854), his fictional character Becky recalls how “Miss Caroline and the cook had a strong predilection, and had wept their poor eyes out over *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and the *Scottish Chiefs*”, and thus fortified “by the examples drawn from those instructive volumes, Becky was firmly convinced that her young mistress would meet with a great lord some day”. Later in the tale, the narrator reflects on the effect of novels on “romantic little girls of Caroline’s age”. The narrator muses on women and their reading practices:

Had Caroline read of Valancourt and Emily for nothing, or gathered no good example from those five tear-fraught volumes which describe the loves of Miss Helen Mar and Sir William Wallace? Many a time had she depicted Brandon in a fancy costume ...or painted herself as Helen, tying a sash around her knight’s cuirass, and watching him forth to battle.

However, while parodying the young Caroline’s fantasies, the narrator is sympathetic with regard to her need for education and the desire to read:

Silly fancies, no doubt; but consider, madam, the poor girl’s age and education. The only instruction she had ever received was from these tender, kind-hearted, silly books; the only happiness which Fate had allowed her, was in this little silent world of fancy. It would be hard to grudge the poor thing her dreams; and many such did she have, and impart blushingly to honest Becky, as they sat by the humble kitchen fire.

Although Thackeray uses the term “silly” to describe Porter’s work, nevertheless it shows that her books were both current and endurably popular. While Thackeray’s references certainly satirise Porter’s work, her novels have come to signify a ‘type’ of fiction, so much so that Thackeray employs Porter’s work to characterise Caroline. His mocking of Porter can be seen as a compliment, Thackeray also singling out, among many,
Walter Scott for one of his “cutting attacks”.\textsuperscript{153} John Carey in his ‘Introduction’ to Thackeray’s \textit{Vanity Fair}, writes how in his novella \textit{Rebecca and Rowena: a Romance upon Romance} (1850), Thackeray lampoons Scott’s \textit{Ivanhoe} as a Christmas story, “derid[ing] Scott’s novels, in which battles ’pass off agreeably’, with ’no unpleasant sensation to the reader’.”\textsuperscript{154}

Writing her autobiography under the guise \textit{The Autobiography of Christopher Kirkland} (1885), the novelist and social critic, Eliza Lynn Linton declares a past lover to be “another Amadis, a second Wallace”, and later evokes the memory of Tadeusz Kościuszko, declaring yet another beau to be “that best and noblest of us all, gone to join the Poles in the rise against Russia.”\textsuperscript{155} Linton admired Porter’s heroes because for her they represented the ideal of ancient chivalry.

Even later in the century, the popular novelist Mary Augusta Ward’s heroine, in the novel \textit{Marcella} (1894), reads \textit{The Scottish Chiefs} with much “concentration...devotion [and] joy”, and spends many hours trying to “illustrate for herself in pen and ink the execution of Wallace.”\textsuperscript{156} The niece of the distinguished nineteenth-century poet, Matthew Arnold, Ward was an ardent philanthropist, and, like Porter, a person of strong faith and commitment to duty.

Into the twentieth century, in 1908, suffragette prisoner, Flora Drummond wrote in the November issue of \textit{Votes for Women} that she was reading Jane Porter’s \textit{The Scottish Chiefs}, informing fellow suffragettes how “Lady Wallace and Helen [Mar]... had helped in the fight for freedom long

\textsuperscript{154} Carey. ‘Introduction’, p. xxix.
\textsuperscript{156} Mary Augusta Ward, \textit{Marcella} [1894]. Edited by Beth Sutton-Ramspech and Nicole Mellor (Peterborough: Broadview, 2002), p. 41.
ago”. Drummond was an influential member of the early suffragette movement and was nicknamed ‘the General’, preferring to read only “material which contained women role models.” Porter’s heroines, Marion Wallace and Helen Mar, are just such models and extend Porter’s influence into the feminist arena.

These various references across the long nineteenth century signal the extent to which Porter’s work was both significant and influential in British literary history.

**Chapter Outlines**

I have followed a chronological order for discussion of Porter’s four major novels because I consider this approach to underscore the development of Porter’s writing which engaged with the changing political and historical landscape of Britain, from the outbreak of the French Revolution to the succession of the first Hanover king. Coinciding with this is the development of British Nationalism, which ultimately, I argue, resulted in a new appreciation of the importance of the ‘home’ and ‘the domestic’.

In Chapter One I begin by assessing the reception of Sir Walter Scott’s *Waverley* novel and investigating the debate that Porter’s novels in fact inspired his. Critical attention with regard to Porter is often limited to a comparison with Scott, thus diminishing the significance of her work. For this reason the first chapter of my work begins with a look at the historical rivalry between Porter and Scott, which was quite overt and public, and an assessment of the on-going historical novel debate, which I argue had its inception even before Lukács published his influential work. I propose, from the accumulated evidence, that Porter’s novels precede Scott’s, a fact accepted during her lifetime and consequently, Porter should be given due credit in literary history for this precedent. I argue

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that both Thaddeus of Warsaw and The Scottish Chiefs were seen by nineteenth-century critics, and the public, as a clear generic departure from previous novels, such as Gothic romances, epistolary novels and those of the didactic school. I further contend that Thaddeus of Warsaw is of primary importance in the historical novel debate, because in its style, plot and characterisation, it is more closely aligned to Waverley than The Scottish Chiefs, the novel most often used as the point of comparison.

Chapter Two examines domestic and national issues in Porter’s first publishing success, Thaddeus of Warsaw (1803). This chapter explores the impact that the French Revolution had on Britain, and discusses the consequent ideologies of ‘the domestic’ and ‘nationalism’ that were formed as a result. The chapter also explores the themes of exile and estrangement, the idea of being at ‘home’ and ultimately what it means to be English. As already stated, the work of Rosemary Marangoly George defining the concept of ‘home’ is an invaluable resource, as is Susan Strehle’s work. I also draw on Marilyn Butler’s seminal study, Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries: English Literature and its Background 1760-1830 and “Against Tradition: The Case for a Particularised Historical Method”; both provide an excellent insight into this period of change and expansion in Britain. One of the central locales of Thaddeus of Warsaw is London, both as the place of exile for Thaddeus and the place that he desires to call ‘home’. Leya Landau in her article “The Metropolis and Women Novelists in the Romantic Period” (2008), suggests that in Thaddeus of Warsaw London becomes a place “defined...in relation to contemporary historical events and national identity.”159 My chapter explores the importance of London in the novel and how, through Porter’s hero, Thaddeus, the cities of London and Warsaw become conflated as ‘home’. Also important to the construction of this chapter is Gary Kelly’s book, English Fiction of the Romantic Period, 1789-1830 (1988). In the

discussions on Thaddeus of Warsaw, Nicola Watson’s Revolution and the Form of the British Novel, 1790-1825: Intercepted Letters, Interrupted Seduction (1994) and Jennifer Evans’ unpublished PhD thesis, Improving Novels: Validating Discourses and Didacticism in British Women’s Novels (2002) provide valuable insights into the didactic nature of Porter’s writing and the rise of the ‘national tale’. An article by W.F. Reddaway, “Great Britain and Poland 1762-72,” (1934) and Francis Zapatka’s book Heart of a Nation: Polish Literature and Culture III (1993) both contribute to an understanding of the events, and subsequent ramifications of the annexure of Poland, which are crucial for exploring the key issues in this chapter. By reflecting on the information and arguments of both Reddaway and Zapatka it became apparent that Porter utilises both her hero, Thaddeus Sobieski, and Poland, to make historical amends for England having abandoned Poland, and its people, who were, in Charles James Fox’s words: “sacrificed, annihilated, [and ultimately] destroyed.”

Published in 1810, The Scottish Chiefs went on to become one of the most widely read novels of the nineteenth century. In fact, the novel was so successful that historian Colin Kidd calls it “a literary sensation” and has speculated this success was the reason why Walter Scott, despite being Scottish, neglected to use the story of Wallace in any of his novels. Chapter Three looks at this novel’s reception and the history in literature and folk-lore of the novel’s hero, William Wallace. Porter uses Scotland as her vehicle, similar to the way in which she uses Poland in Thaddeus of Warsaw. In this chapter I explore the way in which Porter gives a clear affirmation of the necessity for security and tradition, and how she argues emphatically for the need to secure and safeguard a legitimate monarchy in order to maintain domestic peace. The over-arching discourse in The Scottish Chiefs is an unfailing allegiance to King and country. At the time

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of writing *The Scottish Chiefs*, the Hanoverian monarch, George III was in the final decade of his long sixty-year reign. Murray Pittock in *The Invention of Scotland: The Stuart Myth and the Scottish Identity, 1638 to the Present* (1991), looks at how the defeat of the Stuart dynasty, and the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty, “heralded a major constitutional change” in Britain, the effects of which, says Pittock, are still being felt even today.\(^{162}\) Porter was acutely aware of this constitutional change and its historical significance and this is clearly reflected in her novels. Alexander Grant and Keith Stringer in *Uniting the Kingdom?: The Making of British History* (1995), also look at the influence of the House of Stuart, and argue that it was not until the visit by George IV to Scotland in 1822 that the Scottish people felt united to the British Empire. Grant and Stringer, in another context, provide support for my contention that Porter believed the British Empire to be secure as long as it is “united by common allegiance to the king”.\(^{163}\) Porter’s writing clearly demonstrates the importance of the domestic. *The Scottish Chiefs* begins with the ‘domestic’ peace of Wallace being shattered by the murder of his wife and as a consequence he is thrust into war to avenge her death and restore peace within his beloved Scotland.

Because the theme of Nationalism is one of the key focal points of my work, the final section of this chapter will examine and elucidate key scholarly discussions of Nationalism in Porter’s *The Scottish Chiefs*. I use as a starting point Lynne Hamer’s article “Folklore and History Studies in Early Nineteenth-Century England: Jane Porter and Eliza Bray” (1993). Hamer cites Porter, and Eliza Bray, as exemplifiers of the antiquarian history writing that begins to appear in the early-nineteenth century. Hamer argues that Porter wished no harm to the French, but rather asks the British people to stand firm as a nation to protect it and to retain its


freedom. I take Hamer's position as being valid but extend it by adding that, for Porter, despite the naivety of such a position, she believed Britain's fight was for justice, not for power. In a lengthy ‘Introduction’ to The Scottish Chiefs, reprinted in his 2002 collation Varieties of Female Gothic, Gary Kelly not only details a close examination of the Gothic elements of Porter's novel, but also the national discourse contained in the narrative. Kelly delineates the literary framework developed by Porter in writing The Scottish Chiefs and concludes that her novel laid the foundation for a “new fictional genre”.\(^\text{164}\) Kelly attributes Porter with promoting the new liberal ideology, which is surprising, given that it was a movement championed by the Whig political sector and to my knowledge Porter remained a Tory supporter throughout her life. I shall address this issue in my chapter.

In her ‘Introduction’ to the 2007 Broadview edition of The Scottish Chiefs, Fiona Price argues that Porter's novels have often been misinterpreted, leading to a devaluing of their importance in literary history. With regard to Nationalism, Price states that Porter demonstrates in her novels, particularly in The Scottish Chiefs, that it is the actions of a Nation's individuals, such as her hero William Wallace, who “strengthen the contemporary sense of national community.”\(^\text{165}\) Like Price, I include Porter's heroines in this promotion of national unity. In The Scottish Chiefs, both Marion Wallace and Helen Mar are shown as strong, intelligent women who make their mark, but importantly, do not disturb the social order or abandon conventional wisdom. Marion and Helen are agents of historical change and responsible for both the domestic and national order, unlike Lady Joanna Mar, who is, according to Price, “a danger to the national cause”, a sexual manipulator fuelled only by “vicious personal and political self-interest.”\(^\text{166}\) I suggest that it is through

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her heroine, Helen Mar that we most clearly see Porter’s belief in the value of Christian virtue. As Porter herself writes in *The Scottish Chiefs*: “Happiness can only be found in virtue; virtue cannot exist without liberty; and the seat of liberty is good laws.”

The final two chapters focus on the novels *The Pastor’s Fireside* (1817) and *Duke Christian of Luneburg* (1824). While not as successful as her previous two novels, *The Pastor’s Fireside* and *Duke Christian of Luneburg* are important to this study because they reveal Porter’s championing of the House of Hanover as the rightful heirs to the British throne. It is in these two novels that Porter legitimises the Hanoverian accession, for the continued security of the crown, the Protestant faith, and importantly, a strong and secure Britain. Linda Colley’s article “The Apotheosis of George II: Loyalty, Royalty and the British Nation 1760-1820” (1984), critically evaluates the reigns of the first Hanoverian kings and their gradual acceptance by the British people and therefore provides useful historical background because indeed Porter did offer her unconditional support to the new monarchy. An important aspect of these chapters is the continuation of tradition, which Fiona Price, in “Resisting ‘the Spirit of Innovation’: The Other Historical Novel and Jane Porter” (2006), argues secures British patriotism and national identity. Also of importance is Fiona Price’s, *The Female Aesthetic Subject: Questions of Taste, Sublimity and Beauty in Women’s Prose, 1778 to 1828, with Particular Reference to the Works of Clara Reeve, Sophia and Harriet Lee, Elizabeth Hamilton and Jane Porter* (2000). Here Price argues that Porter’s novels imagine a new kind of British patriotism, and as argued in Chapter Four, one that is inclusive of, and even forged by, women. The final chapter will also explore briefly the possible reasons for the less enthusiastic public reception of *Duke Christian of Luneburg*, drawing on the work of Devoney Looser, “Jane Porter and the Old Woman Writer’s Quest for Independence” (2008). One point of issue that I address in this chapter is

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a clarification of the circumstances leading up to Porter accepting the commission to write *Duke Christian of Luneburg*. As mentioned previously, I argue that history has been unkind to Porter by conflating the fact of Jane Austen’s refusal to write this novel and Porter’s acceptance. These events, as I show, are mutually exclusive and therefore Porter’s acceptance of the King’s request should be judged on its own merits and not in continual comparison with Austen’s refusal. Looser poses the question, if Porter had been offered the assignment at the height of her popularity, would she have still accepted the King’s request? Looser believes that, yes, she would because of the financial difficulties that Porter and her family continually experienced. However, while I acknowledge that Porter would have accepted the assignment earlier in her career, I suggest it would not necessarily have been because of the hope of financial gain, but because of her enduring loyalty to the established monarchy which, I hasten to add, does not make her a “fawning, malleable…Court-flatterer”. I consider that Porter’s overarching reason for accepting the King’s request is found in the patriotic fervour of the novel’s dedication:

His Most Excellent Majesty, George the Fourth, King of England, Scotland and Ireland, King of Hanover…Defender of the Faith.  

As clearly expressed in this dedication, *Duke Christian of Luneburg* confirms Porter’s allegiance to the newly crowned heirs to the British throne, to her country and to her faith. *Duke Christian* is a significant part of Porter’s oeuvre because it provides insight, and raises questions, and comments, on the political and social ideology of nineteenth-century Britain of which Porter was a very active participant. *Duke Christian of Luneburg* in effect draws together all the threads of her preceding novels, that is, the need for the British people, as a unified nation, to maintain, indeed strengthen, their firm support for King and country.

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168 Quoted in Looser, *Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain*, pp. 144, 154.
Chapter One: Historical Rivalries: Jane Porter, Walter Scott and the Historical Novel

For, be it known to you, Mr Editor, that I am, in fact, the only legitimate issue, and heir of the GREAT UNKNOWN; being no other than the long notorious, and equally awfully mysterious personage, NOBODY! a character of even more extraordinary endowments than my late so-worthily-celebrated, and ever to-be-lamented progenitor!

 Signed J.P., The Ladies' Monthly Museum (1827)

Critical discussions on the origin of the historical novel give the impression that Sir Walter Scott, in writing Waverley, gave ‘birth’ to this new literary form.\footnote{See Andrew Hook ‘Introduction', Walter Scott, Waverley. Edited with an introduction by Andrew Hook. (London: Penguin, 1972), p. 9-10. Hook states “...Scott’s first novel established a new Literary genre. The historical novel properly speaking did not exist before Scott wrote Waverley.”} As outlined in the Introduction, this conception is in the main due to the publication in 1937 of The Historical Novel by Georg Lukács. Hungarian born Lukács was a staunch supporter of Marxism, reflected in his works such as The History of Class Consciousness (1923), Lenin: A Study of the Unity of his Thought (1924), Realism in the Balance (1838) and The Destruction of Reason (1954). Lukács views the French Revolution, or more specifically, the defeat of Napoleon, as a pivotal moment, a time writes Lukács, of enormous “economic and political transformations”, changing forever “men’s existence and consciousness”.\footnote{Georg Lukács, The Historical Novel, translated from the German by Hannah and Stanley Mitchell, (London: Merlin Press, 1962), p. 31.} Lukács championed traditionalism and in the novels by Walter Scott he recognized this. In addition was Scott’s leaning toward nostalgia and opposition to the rising bourgeoisie, Lukács writing that Scott’s novels are in fact “direct continuation of the great realistic social novel of the eighteenth century”.\footnote{Lukács, The Historical Novel, p. 31.} Everett Zimmerman in The Boundaries of Fiction: History and the Eighteenth-Century British Novel (1996) argues that what Lukács identifies in the eighteenth-century novel is their
portrayal of their world with a bold and perceptive realism. Zimmerman writes how Lukács’ formulation of historical consciousness is a “dialogue with history”, not a simulation, but “the interrogation and emulation” and unlike the novels of the eighteenth century, the Waverley novels demonstrated this dialogue by, according to Zimmerman “representing a public crisis that is fully intertwined with the private events of the novel.” However the fundamental flaw in Lukács’ theories on the emergence of the historical novel, apart from being overtly Marxist biased, is the fact that it totally ignores other writers of historical fiction, most notably Jane Porter. According to Thomas McLean, the establishment of Scott, by Lukács, as the creator and founder of the historical novel ignores the fact that some ten years prior to the publication of Waverley, Porter had not only created a literary framework, and literary taste, for the successful reception of the subsequent novels of Scott, but in fact “crafted and pioneered many of the narrative tools most commonly associated with nineteenth-century historical novels”. Thaddeus of Warsaw was successful in creating a model that combined elements of both the narratives of history and the narratives of fiction, and is therefore, according to McLean, “a particularly fruitful place to see literary history in transition”, when nineteenth-century readers quickly showed a preference for the historical novel over the previously popular eighteenth-century sentimental novel. Ironically, however, Scott failed ever to acknowledge Porter’s influence on the writing of his Waverley novels, just as later nineteenth-century critics too failed to credit Porter with any influence on the development of the popular new genre.

In “The Importance of Elsewhere: Romantic Subjectivity and the Romance of History”, Angela Keane points to Lukács’ proposition that it is “Scott’s epic detachment [which] distinguishes his sense of history from...his
contemporaries and predecessors” and establishes Scott as the “central figure...in the field of historical romance”. However, as evidenced by Porter’s exclamation in “Nobody’s Address”, published in The Ladies’ Monthly Museum in 1827, the debate surrounding the question as to who wrote the first historical novel had its inception with the authors themselves. ‘Nobody’ is of course Jane Porter, and in the four-part series titled “Nobody’s Address” the narrator, J.P., tells of Walter Scott’s revelation that he in fact is ‘the Great Unknown’, while simultaneously announcing that the narrator, ‘Nobody’, is in fact a far greater ‘Unknown’. While the ‘Address’ begins as a “mockery of Scott’s literary powers”, the focus then turns from, as McLean describes, “unacknowledged genius to rackrenters who abandon their homeland responsibilities for cosmopolitan pleasures.” While the direction of the narrative appears to shift, the main thrust and intent of the tale is overt, namely, as McLean states that “Nobody wrote an historical romance before Waverley.” Porter follows up “Nobody’s Address” and “Nobody’s Journal”, with another piece titled, “A Scottish Tradition”, published in the Literary Souvenir of 1827. The book is a compilation, which, according to Alaric Watts the editor, comprises “articles in prose and verse...by sixty to seventy of the most popular writers of the day.” The narrative of “A Scottish Tradition” follows a similar vein to “Nobody’s Address”. However, according to McLean, “A Scottish Tradition” is “a small masterpiece of narrative play, manipulating issues of storytelling, identity and gender.” Both “Nobody’s Address” and “A Scottish Tradition” are almost certainly the strongest claims made by Porter to being the progenitor of the historical novel. Previously ambivalent regarding the publication of Waverley, Scott’s subsequent growing fame and his non-acknowledgement of her novels, produces resentment in Porter which becomes apparent in these tales. 

177 Keane, ‘The Importance of Elsewhere, pp. 19, 17.
178 J.P., ‘Nobody’s Address’, p. 334. ‘Nobody’s Address’ was, followed over the next three months by ‘Nobody’s Journal’
180 McLean, ‘Nobody’s Argument’, p. 91.
argues that “Nobody’s Address” “barely conceals its author’s resentment at the fickleness and injustice of literary fame.” I would go further and say that there is obvious anger in Porter’s address as she pronounces acerbically “NOBODY is greater than he!” It is with this exclamation that ‘the historical novel debate’ began, not with the publication of Lukács’ *The Historical Novel*, and it is this historical rivalry between Jane Porter and Walter Scott which I will address in this chapter. In addition, I would further McLean’s argument that critics continue to look to Porter’s *The Scottish Chiefs* as the point of comparison with Scott’s *Waverley*. Rather, it is Porter’s first published success, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, which is the more pertinent work with which to compare *Waverley* in any discussion of the historical novel, because it is in this novel that Porter pioneers the mediation of the public historical world seamlessly with the private, narrative fictional world, cleverly overlaying the history of a nation with the private history of its people, thus creating a blueprint for the historical novel genre.

**Scott Writes Waverley; or Tis Sixty Years Since**

Having gained a reputation as a successful poet, Sir Walter Scott claims he began working on a prose fiction manuscript in 1805, however, after receiving an unfavourable response from his publisher, he set it aside, only having completed some six chapters. In his ‘General Preface’ of 1829, Scott explains that although he had misplaced this manuscript, he had never abandoned the idea and was determined to resume work on it

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184 J.P. ‘Nobody’s Address’, p. 334.
185 There has been some conjecture over this date, Peter Garside, for example, in his paper “Popular Fiction and National Tale: Hidden Origins of Scott’s *Waverley*” (1991), investigates the possible origins of the initial manuscript, concluding that in fact it could have been written actually as late at 1810, which is coincidently the year that Porter published her *Scottish Chiefs*. Garside points to the overview offered at the beginning of *Waverley* as being more acutely in the style of 1810, not 1805. (page 38) Garside still maintains his skepticism in 1997 when in ‘Producing Fiction in Britain, 1800-1829’, *Producing Fiction in Britain, 1800-1829*, 1, (August), 1997, co-authored with Anthony Mandal, he again states “to put it bluntly, it is not unlikely that Scott started the novel in Autumn 1810)...[and he] would then have known about the popular success of Jane Porter’s *The Scottish Chiefs*” (1). Critics such as Hook who dismiss the influence of Porter’s work on Scott, do so on the grounds that Scott began writing his novel in 1805. If it could be proven that the work in fact did not commence, as Garside argues, until 1810, then Porter’s influence must be considered.
at some time in the future, stating that, “I did not abandon the idea of fictitious composition in prose, though I determined to give another turn to the style of the work.”\textsuperscript{186} After supposedly stumbling upon the lost manuscript in 1813, he began working on it again and in 1814 published it anonymously under the title \textit{Waverley, or, ‘Tis Sixty Years Since}. Although \textit{Waverley} is a work that combines the facts of history with the imagination in the manner which Porter had done previously in \textit{Thaddeus of Warsaw}, and also in her second novel published in 1810, \textit{The Scottish Chiefs}, interestingly, Scott never acknowledges Porter in his preface, rather citing the Irish writer Maria Edgeworth as inspiring him with her tales. He believed Edgeworth’s stories did a good deal to elevate the national character of Ireland, similar to his wish to elevate the image of his native Scotland through his writing. In his final chapter, “A Postscript, Which Should Have Been a Preface”, Scott further cites the publication of two works by female authors, Mrs Hamilton’s \textit{Glenburnie: The Cottagers of Glenburnie} (1808) and Mrs Anne Grant’s \textit{Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland} (1811), both of which, like Edgeworth inspired him. These two rare and obscure novels use the national dialect, giving “a picture with striking and impressive fidelity” of the rural life of Scotland some years hence.\textsuperscript{187} Scott states:

\begin{quote}
Two circumstances in particular recalled my recollection of the mislaid manuscript. The first was the extended and well-merited fame of Miss Edgeworth, whose Irish characters have gone so far to make the English familiar with the character of their gay and kind hearted neighbours in Ireland, that she may be truly have said to have done more towards completing the Union than perhaps all the legislative enactments by which it has been followed up.\textsuperscript{188}
\end{quote}

Scott’s non-acknowledgement of Porter is both interesting and surprising given that he knew and was well known to the Porter family, visiting their home during their time in Edinburgh and spending many hours playing

\textsuperscript{187} Scott, \textit{Waverley}, p. 494.
\textsuperscript{188} Scott, \textit{Waverley}, p. 523.
with the three younger Porter children, Robert, Jane and Anna Maria. Although good friends during these early years, Porter and Scott apparently lost touch with each other after the Porters moved to London. However, Porter’s and Scott’s shared childhood experiences, written about so vividly by Porter in her ‘Preface’ to *The Scottish Chiefs*, is an indication as to the source of their imaginings and foundations for the novels each of them were to write in the ensuing years. Both Porter and Scott embraced the childhood stories of Robert the Bruce and William Wallace and the mysteries of the Highlanders, transferring these reminiscences into their poetry and novels. While losing contact for many years, Porter never forgot Scott and began writing to him many years later. Although she was herself a successful novelist she still remained loyal to the shared childhood experiences and was eager for Scott to read her work and give her his approval. In 1823 Porter wrote to Scott expressing her regret that she could not travel to Edinburgh to visit him but that a good friend, Captain Montgomery, would be passing and that she had asked him to call upon Scott, “the chivalrous Poet of dear old Caledonia”, 189 to extend him her best wishes. In 1828 Porter sent Scott a copy of her latest work, *The Field of Forty Footsteps*, writing that should he be “in the least pleased with it, it would be a great delight to me.”190 In 1831, Porter again sent Scott a copy of one of her book, *Sir Edward Seaward’s Narrative*, for his review, and also informed him of the death of her beloved mother. On the surface these letters appear to be innocent enough in their praise of Scott and his prowess as a poet and novel writer, however, read in hindsight, the discourse is perhaps too effusive and can be read as Porter’s challenge to Scott; her attempt to prick his conscience for his blatant dismissal of her work. In one such letter, Porter challenges Scott to create a “worthy Christian”, having perfected so well the characters of “puritan fanatics” and “world tainted Episcopalians.”191 The essence of Porter’s writing is to

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189 Letter from Jane Porter to Sir Walter Scott, 31 May 1823. (National Library of Scotland 3896/183)
190 Letter from Jane Porter to Sir Walter Scott, 8 April 1828. (National Library of Scotland 3906/196)
191 Letter from Jane Porter to Sir Walter Scott, 8 April 1828.
present her heroes as models of domestic virtue in order to maintain a strong national character and she believed this element was lacking in Scott’s novels to date. Careful reading of the letter, dated 1828, reveals an almost bitter Porter, as she realises that she will now be forever in the shadow of “the magical pen” to which “all the world has bowed”, and despite their early familiarity, common childhood experience and more importantly, the success of her two novels, Scott ignored her and never acknowledged her writing in any preface or review. The only acknowledgements Scott afforded Porter were scathing, such as his exclamation in a private conversation to his friend James Hogg about Porter’s portrayal of the character of William Wallace:

Lord help her! Her Wallace is no more our Wallace than Lord Peter is, or King Henry’s messenger to Peter Hotspur. It is not safe meddling with the hero of a country; and of all other, I cannot bear to see the character of Wallace frittered away to that of a fine gentleman.

Thus, not only did Scott never acknowledge any debt to Porter in any of his prefaces, he also dismisses her writing as that of an English interloper, unfaithful to Scottish history and legend. Silences and dismissals, such as these by Scott, can be interpreted to be the most vehement when the writer feels personally and professionally challenged. Scott avoids mentioning Porter, because he could be too readily compared to her as an author of historical novels. Porter alludes to this comparison in her letter of 8 April 1828:

I forward for the honour of your acceptance a little work recently brought out by my sister and myself… the third volume comprises mine:- and because it is a kind of trespass on ground you have so completely made your own, it comes in the

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192 Letter from Jane Porter to Sir Walter Scott, 8 April 1828.
193 Quoted in Andrew Hook, ‘Jane Porter, Sir Walter Scott and the Historical Novel’, p. 188.
194 Scott’s non-acknowledgement is also surprising given that his very good friend Joanna Baillie, also a good friend of Porter, praises Porter’s portrayal of William Wallace, citing Porter’s Wallace as being the inspiration for her poem William Wallace in The Family Legend and Metrical Legends of Exalted Characters. Introduction by Donald Reiman. (New York: Garland Publishing, 1976) p.100. Baillie consulted Scott when writing this poem, however, I can find no evidence of Scott ever commenting on the matter with regard to Porter. See Baillie, Collected Letters of Joanna Baillie, pp. 368, 370, 379, 389-90 respectively.
light of a tribute, however, humble the offering, to the rightful Lord of the soil!\textsuperscript{195}

Unfortunately for Porter the success of \textit{Waverley} was immediate, going into four editions within six months. Critics quickly nicknamed the anonymous author of \textit{Waverley} “the Great Unknown”\textsuperscript{196} and hailed his novel as conferring a “new prestige on the novel form”.\textsuperscript{197} Scott’s success, however, was at the expense of the women writers who preceded him and who were the real pioneers of the historical novel genre. Conscious of the enormous success and popularity of \textit{Waverley}, in her preface to the 1831 edition of her novel \textit{Thaddeus of Warsaw}, Porter says she was flattered that Sir Walter Scott had imitated the genre which she had established, asserting that she was persuaded by this success of the Waverley novels to republish her novels, with expanded prefaces because she wanted to demonstrate to her readers the historical accuracy and the source of her historical facts in the same way Scott had done in his extensive prefaces and postscripts. She claims in this new preface that Scott had done her the honour “to adopt the style or class of novel of which \textit{Thaddeus of Warsaw} was the first”.\textsuperscript{(4)} Porter’s statement is a reasonable one, given that Walter Scott’s \textit{Waverley} novel was first published some ten years after Porter’s \textit{Thaddeus of Warsaw} and four years after \textit{The Scottish Chiefs}. This claim however, initiated a scathing retort published in the \textit{Aberdeen Magazine} in October 1831, by a contributor signing himself “Peter Puff”. The article mocks Porter’s claim that Scott had adopted her style of writing, implying that Porter, in her preface, is accusing Scott of stealing her ideas and even plagiarising many of her passages:

For what indeed are the Waverley novels but imitations (as you, unquestionably, madam, had the honour to discover) of your Standard Novels? What is Sir Walter Scott but an imitator of Miss Jane Porter? We cannot sufficiently admire the modesty of the passage in which you state this great discovery [and] [b]elieve us, Miss Porter, when we read this

\textsuperscript{195} Letter from Jane Porter to Sir Walter Scott, 8 April 1828.
\textsuperscript{196} Scott published his work anonymously until 1827 when he finally acknowledged authorship.
\textsuperscript{197} Hook, ‘Introduction’, \textit{Waverley}, p. 11.
fine passage, we blushed as red as our morocco slippers at our disgraceful ignorance.198

There is no evidence for this accusation in any of Porter’s prefaces. She does not accuse Scott of stealing her ideas but rather wishes to reiterate that it was she who first published “in the form of such an association between fact and fancy...many years before the literary wonder of Scotland gave to the world his transcendent story of Waverley”.(4) Although there is a real sense of disappointment in her prefaces, and her letters, that Scott failed to acknowledge her work, there are not the bitter accusations that “Peter Puff” berates her for.

Porter’s assertions in her 1831 preface and the subsequent review by “Peter Puff” further fuelled the debate among critics and readers as to who in fact did write the first historical novel, a debate, as has been shown, still being explored and discussed to this day. Although critics were openly divided on the issue initially, by the end of the nineteenth century most were claiming that it was in fact Scott who invented the new genre, despite the unequivocal support for Porter in the early part of the century.199 For example, in 1835 Fraser’s Magazine reports “It is to her [Porter’s] fame that she began the system of historical novel-writing”.200 But unfortunately for Porter, the influence and popularity of the Waverley novels eventually overshadowed her works, and diminished their importance.

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Why Did Porter Write an Historical Novel?

Concerned about revolutionary activity in Europe, Porter wrote *Thaddeus of Warsaw* in order to show the importance of a social order, which she believed must begin at home. Walter Scott, however, created his Waverley novels in order to elevate the image of his native Scotland and promote the establishment of a united Britain, necessary in order to continue economic, political and social growth. Both valid motives that, while juxtaposed, also converge in the framework of their narrative structures. Lisa Kasmer, in her PhD thesis *Regendering History: Women and the Genres of History 1760-1830*, acknowledges the differences in the motivations for their writing, concluding that Porter’s novels are grounded in recognition of traditional values, whereas Scott believed that the past is firmly in the past. Kasmer argues:

> In dismissing Porter’s novels, these critics misrecognise the generic and political import of her work. Through historiography grounded upon the values of romance tales and domestic values, she establishes a *nostalgic historiography*, which is completely opposed to Scott’s progressive conception of history, to promote her conservative politics.  

While this statement positions Porter at the forefront of historical writing, the use of the word *nostalgic* tends to undermine Kasmer’s argument. The word ‘nostalgia’ implies some specific historical product of ideals and values which Porter was not engaging with when writing her novels. Nostalgia is the creation of an ideal landscape and therefore a conscious producing of an image of a memory in order to preserve a world that is perceived to be disappearing or has disappeared. In his essay, “This Once Happy Country: Nostalgia for Pre-Modern Society”, William Stafford defines nostalgia as a “rosy vision of feudal happiness.”

Nostalgia, therefore, is the construction of a past, created specifically in order to allay the fears of the present, producing an ideal image in order to preserve the

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world or society that appears to be crumbling, implying inadvertently that there is a collective authoritative voice controlling this image. Porter did not look to the past nostalgically, but rather instructively, to show to her readers, by the experiences of her heroes, that the “best use of talents and the really noblest ambition” is in living a virtuous life.\(^{203}\) Although set in either a distant or recent past, as I outlined in my Introduction, Porter does not romanticize history as a place where the ideals, values and conditions should still be maintained but rather shows the lessons to be learned from the mistakes of history. Porter also warns her readers of the havoc that can be wrought, should revolution, war and despotism infiltrate the British realm. If Porter ardently believed in chivalry, it was not nostalgically, but rather because it enabled her to postulate on the domestic morality and Christian virtue that she believed must be maintained in order to uphold, as Edmund Burke put it, “the constitution of our country with our dearest domestic ties.”\(^{204}\) Interestingly, it is this emphasis on chivalry and the importance of the domestic that leads critics today to conclude that Porter’s novels are not historical novels but rather romances, or at the very most historical romances. Scott was far more ‘nostalgic’ in his writing, especially evident in Waverley, which, as Stafford so tellingly puts it, he sets in a “semi-feudal enclave surviving within modern Europe, characterised by loyalty and devotion, good lordship, and unstinting hospitality to travellers.”\(^{205}\) But critics, like Kasmer, have been kinder to Scott, characterising his novels as portraying a “progressive enlightenment view of history” as distinct from Porter’s “sentimental portrait of the past.”\(^{206}\) The use of the word ‘sentimental’ is problematic because it implies that Porter’s novels are emotionally extravagant, a trait common in the Gothic novels. Jane Austen in her novel Sense and Sensibility, critised the use of self-indulgent sentiment by women writers.

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\(^{205}\) Stafford, This Once Happy Country: Nostalgia for Pre-Modern Society’, p. 40.
\(^{206}\) Kasmer, Regendering History, pp. 117, 113.
The novels of Ann Radcliffe are a prime example of this use of sentiment. Gary Kelly in his essay “Women Novelists and the French Revolution Debate: Novelizing the Revolution/Revolutionizing the Novel” rejects the notion that women writers of history ‘feminised’ the novel by writing about the domestic, but argues that it was an important step in asserting themselves as authoritative voices in the public sphere because they were “eluding the re-masculisation of culture and the appropriation of their literary work.”

Kelly contends that these women, of which Porter is one, were successful to a greater and lesser extent, until unfortunately, they were subsumed by the output of Scott and his contemporaries which “increasingly marginalised” them.

Kasmer’s work demonstrates that Porter was not only the first author to combine the elements of history and romance (fact and fiction), but she was also a woman, and as such, historically denied access to the public sphere of which history was a part. Kasmer writes:

Thus, when Porter created her unique form of the historical novel, she sought to change the sexual premises upon which history writing might proceed.

The sexual premises referred to by Kasmer are a salient and key critical issue when analysing not only the novels of Porter, but those of other women novelists engaged in history writing in the late-eighteenth century. It in part explains why these works have been largely dismissed after the publication of Waverley, when the novel acquired a new authority and was inculcated into the male literary domain. Kasmer’s thesis attempts to relocate the study of women’s history writing “within the tradition of women’s intellectual history” and in so doing, Kasmer writes, to re-gender history and re-position “women at the forefront of modern history writing.”

210 Kasmer, Regendering History, p.2.
211 Kasmer, Regendering History, p.15.
Like Kasmer, I maintain that it is imperative to examine women’s social, literary and political engagement in the late-eighteenth, early-nineteenth century in order to fully appreciate and understand the profound influence these early women writers of history and historical novels had on the evolution of history writing as an established literary genre. It is important for this study to explore how women found their voice and began writing both histories and historical novels because it would seem that history, ideologically relegated to a masculine public domain, was first denied to women, and second, seen as alien to their domestic experiences.

It was the socialising of history by historians such as David Hume, Edward Gibbon and William Robertson which opened the way for women to participate in the writing of history, spurred on by domestic anxiety associated with the revolutions occurring in Europe. Hume’s philosophy of history is that the present is the standpoint from which meaning can be constructed and he makes, as Everett Zimmerman puts it, “an implicit claim that the resources of the novel, the literary form that respects probability, be absorbed by history for the construal of past activity.”

Primarily concerned with maintaining harmony, both in the home and in the larger national home, women were attracted to the lessons that could be learned from history, wishing to interpret the past in order to understand the present and therefore providing a manifesto by which to live, as located in the work of such Romantic poets and writers as Charlotte Smith, Anna Barbauld, Anna Maria Williams and Felicia Hemans. Margaret Doody, in her 1980 article “George Eliot and the Eighteenth-Century Novel”, cites women authors such as Fanny Burney, Sarah Scott, Mary Hays, Jane Porter and at the forefront, Jane Austen, as opening “their eyes to the condition of the world around them, the world

outside their drawing rooms.” Doody argues that these women saw the suffering around them, “the daily invisible truth of history” and in so doing wrote about the suffering that they saw, the inequalities, the humanly caused unhappiness that existed and tried to “redress some of history’s wrongs.” As Fanny Burney writes:

Who can examine and meditate upon the uncertain existence of these creatures, - see failure without fault; success without virtue...oppression in the very face of liberty; labour without sustenance; and suffering without crime; - and not see, and not feel that all call aloud for resurrection and retribution!

Finding a voice in which to write was clearly one of the most fundamental criteria for these women novelists and Doody asserts that this came once they were able to create an “authoritative and persuasive omniscient author.” Didactic authorial voices enabled characters, especially heroines, to speak for themselves. Women, as authors, could consequently distance themselves from those characters, while still maintaining an overarching omniscient presence, guiding the reader to views of history, the authors’ voices becoming the surrogate “I” of each text. Moreover, Anne Stevens in “Tales of Other Times: A Survey of British Historical Fiction, 1770-1812” argues that this use of the surrogate “I” was instrumental in the success of historical novel writing because “the author could create a more immediate eyewitness account of historical life”, thereby enabling readers to, according to Stevens, “live vicariously in another era [by] encouraging sympathetic identification” with historical characters.

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217 Doody goes on to state that this new authoritative voice gave rise to the great novels of the Victorian period, especially with George Eliot who Doody says “brought the language and meaning of the novel which her predecessors had made to new heights of both judgment and sympathy.” p. 290-91.
218 Stevens, ‘Tales of Other Times’, p. 11.
Although Porter’s main protagonists in her novels are heroes, not heroines, she still found her surrogate “I” voice, drawing on her imagination in order to examine the lessons that can and must be learned from history. Porter wrote as an authoritative woman author who studied the facts of history and combined them with her imagination to form a style of writing that had not been witnessed prior to the publishing of *Thaddeus of Warsaw*.

It is undeniable that Scott captured the reading public’s imagination and the sheer volume of his work and its marketing outweighed any writer who preceded him and significantly contributed to his success and fame. Jane Austen and Maria Edgeworth are perhaps the only women authors able to compete with Scott’s fame (although for Austen it was well after her death that her real success was realized). It was not only the number of novels that Scott published in such a compressed period of time, but also his astute historical self-awareness and the creation of the paraphernalia that added to the machinery of Scott’s industry. His initial anonymity, the extensive prefaces and postscripts and his keen understanding of the relationship between writer and reader allowed him to perpetuate his own mythology, which in turn excited the reading public and spurred Scott on to push the limits of his credibility. In his article “Story as Historiography in the Waverley Novels”, Richard Waswo points out that Scott was instrumental in his own success and aware of the importance of pleasing his audience:

> Scott’s existence as a novelist required an audience from the beginning, and he labored to convince it that at least some aspects of its existence – its historical self-awareness, its appetite for both instruction and entertainment required him. The vital symbiosis of this relationship insured [sic] that it would not be lacking in anxieties.\(^2\)

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A pertinent example of the self-awareness and marketing prowess of Scott was his use in *Old Mortality* (1816) of a putative source, Old Mortality, a

narrator, Peter Pattieson, and a literary executor, Jedediah Cleishbotham. In the ‘Introduction’ to this novel, Cleishbotham declares:

I am NOT the writer, redacter, or compiler, of the Tales of my Landlord; nor am I, in one single iota, answerable for their contents, more or less.\textsuperscript{220}

Everett Zimmerman argues that by using this narrative framing technique, Scott challenges the reader to “self-consciously search for the provenance of this obscurely introduced narrative with its multiplied mediators”.\textsuperscript{221} What Scott does in effect is undermine “history in order to give himself the freedom to create a perspective” which separates the reader from the past.\textsuperscript{222} In other words, Scott constructs ‘historical fiction’.

Another example of Scott’s astute marketing was in his presence and self-promotion during the visit by King George IV to Scotland in 1822. Scott was instrumental in the organization of the visit and notably prominent in the events during the King’s visit. This was the first visit to Scotland by a Hanover king and while there is no question that it was a key historical moment for Scotland, members of the press were less than kind in their opinion that Scott “should deem it important to figure in every part [of the] pageant” and “from first to last...permitted himself to be put forward as a director of most...matters connected with the arrangements”.\textsuperscript{223} However, good press or bad press, Scott’s involvement in the visit ensured that he received recognition, further enhancing his reputation with the reading public, the bulk of whom were English rather than Scottish.

Unfortunately, Porter never had the same astuteness regarding her reading public and her attempt at longer descriptive prefaces in later editions only served to reinforce the arguments made by critics such as

\textsuperscript{221} Zimmerman, \textit{The Boundaries of Fiction}, p. 217.
\textsuperscript{222} Zimmerman, \textit{The Boundaries of Fiction}, p. 217.
\textsuperscript{223} Anon, ‘The King’s Visit to Scotland’, \textit{Times} September 7 (1822), p. 2.
“Peter Puff”, that it was she who was following in the footsteps of Scott, it was she who was imitating the style of Scott rather than the reverse. Porter admits in her ‘Preface’ to the 1831 edition of Thaddeus of Warsaw, that she is bowing to the “social taste of the times” by giving to her faithful readers “the conversational disclosures [such as in] the recent publications of the celebrated ‘Waverley Novels’”.(3) It is clear that Porter is uncomfortable with this process, apologising to her readers for succumbing to the pressures of the “fashion of the day”, calling her new preface an “egotistical epistle”.(3) In her final edition of Thaddeus of Warsaw, published in 1844, Porter is weary of the industry that is fast forgetting her and her work and rather than writing a new, expansive preface merely thanks her faithful readers for their “gratifying sympathies and honouring testimonies of approbation.”(2) Porter is sixty-eight years of age, alone and in financial difficulty, and signs off with humble thanks “[f]or the life that now is, and for that which is to come.”(2) Scott had been dead for some twelve years but the industry of his works continued to thrive and he continued to be referred to by readers in the Victorian age as a “prophet” and the wizard of the North. 224

Nineteenth-Century Critical Acclaim for Porter’s Novels

Nonetheless, despite Scott’s success, Porter’s popularity in the early-nineteenth century is evidenced not only by the favourable critical reviews she received throughout most of the nineteenth century but also by the number of editions of her novels published.225 Both Thaddeus of Warsaw and The Scottish Chiefs were seen by critics, and the public, as a clear departure from previous novels. For example, in 1835 Fraser’s Magazine

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224 See Gary Kelly’s summary of the life and work of Sir Walter Scott in Kelly, English Fiction of the Romantic Period, p. 179.
225 Thaddeus of Warsaw was so immediately popular that by 1810 it had gone into a tenth edition, by 1880 boasted over twenty-five editions, and was still being published as late as 1911. Its reach included America and it was translated in countries all over Europe. Although not as immediately popular as Thaddeus of Warsaw, The Scottish Chiefs went on to become one of the most popular and widely read novels of the early nineteenth century, reaching over twenty editions by 1900 and publication records showing that in fact it was still being re-published as late as 1922 and like Thaddeus of Warsaw, was translated into many languages. The Scottish Chiefs has also been republished in Gary Kelly’s Varieties of the Female Gothic (2002) and the Broadview edition in 2007.
reports: “It is to her [Porter’s] fame that she began the system of historical novel-writing”. Her novels were seen as providing a blueprint for the importance of maintaining domestic harmony at a time when England was under such threat from the Continent, rife with revolution. The hero of *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, Thaddeus Sobieski, elucidates Porter’s case:

Rather would I toil for subsistence by the sweat of my brow than be subjected to the necessity of acting in concert with those ravagers who destroyed my country!...Mine was ever to be a defensive sword; and should danger threaten England, I would be as ready to withstand her enemies as I ardently, though ineffectually, opposed those of unhappy Poland. (341)

This passage also clearly demonstrates Porter’s use of the authoritative “I”.

In the nineteenth century, women critics were perhaps the most consistently supportive of Porter and her work, praising not only her novels but also the excellent example of Christian living she and her family demonstrated. In the course of my research, this adherence to Christian principles appears to give rise to a strong sense of female solidarity in women’s published writing on Porter. For example, just after Porter’s death in 1850, Anna Maria Hall, who had met Porter on several occasions, wrote that Porter’s “reputation, as a novelist, was in its zenith when Walter Scott published his first novel” and that Porter “placed her standard of excellence on high ground.” Hall further writes that Porter “was firm and unflinching towards what she believed the right and true.” Hall’s obituary of Porter explains how *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and *The Scottish Chiefs* illustrated precisely the feelings of nationalism stirring in the people of England at the turn of the century, when “the sympathies of England were awakened by the terrible revolutions of France, and the desolation of Poland”. Porter’s stories of the struggles of the Polish hero Thaddeus Sobieski and the Scottish warrior William

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227 Mrs S.C Hall, ‘Memories of Miss Jane Porter’, pp. 221, 222.
228 Hall, ‘Memories of Miss Jane Porter’, p. 222.
229 Hall, ‘Memories of Miss Jane Porter’, p. 222.
Wallace touched a chord and awakened England as a nation to the importance of her “soldiers...sailors and patriots.” Similarly, in 1855 Sarah Hale, in her book *Sketches of all Distinguished Women*, writes that Porter “succeeded in making a deeper impression of her genius on the age” and clearly supports Porter in the historical novel debate, stating that “she was the first who introduced that beautiful kind of fiction, the historical romance, which has now become so popular”. Of *The Scottish Chiefs*, Hale writes “that this romance was the model of the historical class” and further states, as if it is indisputable, that it was the parent in Scott’s mind when he wrote *Waverley*. Further examples of the support for Porter by female writers remain in evidence some thirty years after her death. In 1882 Margaret Oliphant, herself Scottish, in her book *The Literary History of England in the End of the Eighteenth and Beginning of the Nineteenth Century*, states that Porter's novels were “the first beginning of the historical novel properly so called”. While Oliphant writes that “to our critical eyes nowadays, the all-accomplished Thaddeus looks like a waxwork hero”, she defends his chivalry and Christian valor and proclaims that “no heart of woman could resist this union of such qualities”! Oliphant is possibly one of the most astute and prolific literary critics of the Victorian age, so her comments indicate high praise indeed. It is ironic, however, that like Porter, Oliphant has never received the acclaim due to her, despite her impact on the literary world both in the Victorian era and beyond. While Oliphant waxes lyrical about Porter’s heroes, she also praises Scott and his Waverley novels, paradoxically, for his lack of heroic figures!

According to Oliphant, Scott revealed to the world a Scotland that was previously unknown, a land full of an “inexhaustible variety of character

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230 Hall, 'Memories of Miss Jane Porter', p. 222.
and wealth of emotion.”

With the advent of the Victorian period and the rise of the realistic novel, Scott’s reputation eclipsed that of Porter and critics began heralding Scott as the creator of the historical novel. Thus the dice had been well cast before Andrew Hook wrote his Introduction to the Penguin edition of Waverley, in 1972, followed by his article “Jane Porter, Sir Walter Scott, and the Historical Novel” in 1976. The most striking thing about these two essays by Hook is his shift in argument away from Porter and any debt she may be owed from Scott. In his ‘Introduction’ (1972), Hook states that Porter’s *The Scottish Chiefs* was a “fantastic success throughout Britain, Europe and America”, but in his article in 1976 his enthusiasm for Porter’s reception has waned to the statement that “*The Scottish Chiefs* caught at least the fancy of a great many readers.” In the 1972 ‘Introduction’ Hook writes that Porter, and Maria Edgeworth, were important influences on Scott and even declares that it is undeniable that Porter’s novel, and its subsequent success, that influenced Scott in his decision to publish *Waverley*:

Scott’s own historical novels were to be of a very different order to *The Scottish Chiefs*, but it is hard to believe that the example and success of Jane Porter’s book had nothing to do with Scott’s decision to publish *Waverley*.238

What is most crucial about this statement by Hook is his acknowledgement that Porter *did* write an historical novel, and that Scott was therefore adding to an already existing genre. By 1976 however, Hook declares that the “original conception of *Waverley*...owes nothing at all to *The Scottish Chiefs*”. And, Hook continues, “[n]or are the two novels closely related in their method or mode.” The only commendation Hook offers is to Porter’s epigraph, a passage from James Macpherson’s *Ossian*, which Hook admits was immensely significant, and well chosen, as the publication of *Ossian* inspired profound feelings of

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239 Hook, ‘Jane Porter, Sir Walter Scott and the Historical Novel’, p. 188.
240 Hook, ‘Jane Porter, Sir Walter Scott and the Historical Novel’, p. 188.
Scottish nationalism in many of the writers and philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment after its publication. Because of this, Hook concedes that Porter’s “The Scottish Chiefs takes its place as one of the key works for the diffusion throughout Europe and America of the romantic image of Scotland and the Scots, of Scotland’s noble and heroic past in particular.” However, Hook concludes the article by questioning if Waverley could ever have been published, indeed written, had Porter never written The Scottish Chiefs, concluding that yes, it could. Hook declares that “Jane Porter made no positive critical contribution to the writing of Waverley”, conceding only that Porter was responsible for creating a “romantic vision of Scottish history”, which gave rise to a “literary context, and a literary taste” which Scott successfully “modified and corrected”.

While later in this chapter I will discuss other aspects of Hook’s article, for now I would argue, that Hook has very much underestimated Porter’s novels contributions to her being consistently ignored and/or downplayed since the article’s publication. But perhaps, strangely enough, devotees of Porter and her work should concede a note of thanks to Hook for at least acknowledging Porter’s oeuvre and thus alerting other critics to her work.

**Revisiting the Historical Novel Debate**

Porter seemed destined to rest, like so many women writers, as George Eliot declares in her novel *Middlemarch*, in an ‘unvisited tomb’. For reasons which I have not fully determined, in the past twenty years some scholars, such as Fiona Robertson (1994), Nicola Watson (1994), Angela Keane (1996), Ian Dennis (1997), Lisa Kasmer (2002), Gary Kelly (2002), Fiona Price (2006) and Thomas McLean (2007), have revisited and re-engaged in the historical novel debate, to a greater and lesser extent.

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243 I would note that this is not an exhaustive list of critics who have perhaps touched on the historical novel debate but I believe that they are the key critics who have contributed to the debate since the publication of Andrew Hook’s article. See Ian Dennis. *Nationalism and Desire*; Lisa
While Porter may not be a household name today compared with writers like Eliot, Dickens and Tolstoy, nevertheless, it is being finally acknowledged that her novels were popular, widely read, have historical significance in the development of novel writing and are undeniably “full of narrative energy.”244

The first of these critics re-visiting the historical novel debate, Fiona Robertson, takes an interesting approach to the evolution and critical analysis of the historical novel. Her book, *Legitimate Histories: Scott, Gothic and the Authorities of Fiction*, invites critics to broaden discussions on the historical novel to include writers other than Scott, whom she believes has for too long held a privileged position, appearing to be the sole writer of the historical novel genre. Robertson claims that this exclusion process began in the later nineteenth century. My various citations from Porter’s contemporaries tend to confirm this fact, showing that earlier in the century it was deemed a simple matter of fact that she had indeed originated the first historical novel form. The exclusion process has continued to the point where Scott has come to be seen as, in Robertson’s terms, “the sole origin of the romance he bequeathed.”245 Robertson states that for far too long Scott’s novels have been isolated from critical comparison with other genres, namely the Gothic and Romance, which were the main genres utilized by women novel writers. This exclusion, or rather false elevation, has resulted in the legitimization of the Waverley novels as being in a class of their own. Robertson cites Scott as being the master manipulator behind this, separating himself from the “literary inheritance” which paved the way for the reception of his novels.246 While nineteenth-century critics heralded Scott as rescuing them from the

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244 Dennis, *Nationalism and Desire in Early Historical Fiction*, p. 16.
246 Robertson, *Legitimate Histories*, p. 66.
Gothic, then the most influential genre of the period, critics (and indeed Scott himself) do not acknowledge the debt owed to such writers as Porter and Edgeworth, who Robertson argues were the initial instigators of this shift to a more realist form of writing. Rather than being a novelist without origins, as nineteenth century critics would claim, Robertson asserts that Scott in fact was blessed with publishing his first novel at the moment in history when public perceptions of the form and function of the novel were changing and the form of the novel achieved legitimacy in the masculine domain. As Robertson states:

The reception of Scott’s work is, then, responsive to changing conceptions of the subject-matter and stylistic conventions deemed appropriate to the novel as a distinct literary genre.247

In order to rectify this misperception of Scott’s dominance, Robertson elevates the importance of writers, such as Porter, as being instrumental in the development of the historical novel and further, credits Porter with recognizing that she was going against popular tradition in writing her first novel, Thaddeus of Warsaw. Porter feared that her novel would not be enthusiastically received because unlike the “wildly interesting romances” which “had seduced the public,” her novel would seem unexciting in comparison.248 However, this was proved not to be the case, Thaddeus of Warsaw was a huge success and Porter acclaimed by readers and critics alike as having created a new style of writing. Robertson devotes a chapter to the apparatus surrounding Scott’s novels and explains that Porter, recognizing the success Scott was achieving, followed his example and with each new edition that she published she wrote a more comprehensive preface and even later added postscripts, as I have already remarked. Robertson believes this is the key to the historical novel debate, as unfortunately, even though Porter may have written the first historical novel, the support structures that Scott developed gave his work the authority that legitimized his novels and Porter was seen merely as following in his footsteps, rather than the reverse. Robertson writes:

248 Quoted in Robertson, Legitimate Histories, p. 88.
The most telling context of all for a study of Scott’s work on the Magnum Opus is the career of Jane Porter, which interacts so interestingly with his in many ways...The aspect of her work which is of significance here is the difference between the support structures created for the early editions of her novels...and those created for later editions inspired in part by the Magnum Opus. Scott’s example suggested to Porter a way of constructing a personal authority for fictionalizing history.249

As I have previously argued, and Robertson confirms in her book, Scott, by creating the apparatus surrounding his work, sealed Porter’s fate by casting a large shadow which had by the end of the nineteenth century made her invisible on the literary landscape. Robertson is correct when she says that Scott’s timing was perfect, publishing his first novel in 1814, the year of the signing of the Treaty of Paris, and his last novel in 1832, coinciding with the passing of the First Reform Act in Britain. His novels were eventually heralded as histories recording the restoration of “legitimate monarchies in several European states and the first great broadening of the parliamentary franchise in Britain.”250 However, what should be pointed out is that Scott himself readily disregarded historical accuracy for the sake of his fictional material. For example, in Chapter 14 of The Talisman where Saladin is said to have considered marriage to Lady Edith of Plantagenet, Scott provides the following footnote:

This may appear so extraordinary and improbable a proposition that it is necessary to say such a one was actually made. The historians, however, substitute the widowed Queen of Naples, sister of Richard, for the bride, and Saladin’s brother for the bridegroom. They appear to have been ignorant of the existence of Edith of Plantagenet. – See Mill’s History of the Crusades, vol. ii, p.61.251

Edith of Plantagenet is a fictional character and so Scott is playing with the facts of history and manipulating historical authority by quoting his presumed source.

249 Robertson, Legitimate Histories, p.147.
250 Robertson, Legitimate Histories, p. 8-9.
What is important about Robertson’s study is that she refutes Hook’s assertion that *Thaddeus of Warsaw* does not have the right to be classed as an historical novel. The connection with Porter and the Gothic that Robertson raises is an interesting one which Gary Kelly takes up in his book *Varieties of the Gothic*, published in 2002 and which I will discuss later in this chapter and develop more fully in my exploration and analysis of *The Scottish Chiefs*.

Writing at the same time as Robertson, Nicola Watson, in her book *Revolution and the Form of the British Novel, 1790–1825: Intercepted Letters, Interrupted Seductions*, claims that Porter’s novel, *The Scottish Chiefs*, was an important influence on Scott when writing his Waverley novels. Watson, like myself, is quick to point out that it was Porter who created the literary narrative of the Scottish highlands some four years before Scott published *Waverley: tis Sixty Years Since*. While the main objective of Watson’s text is to discuss the importance of women’s writing during the Revolutionary period 1790-1825, especially the epistolary novel, her brief discussion on Porter speaks strongly of her influence in women’s writing of the period. In the course of her discussion, Watson asserts that not only did Scott follow Porter’s lead with regard to using the Scottish highlands as his setting but is astute in highlighting the fact that the character of Lady Clementine Sobieski, the grandmother of Thaddeus Sobieski, features also in *Waverley* as the source of Flora MacIvor’s pension.252 While Watson does not devote time to examining Porter’s other novels, her appraisal of *Thaddeus of Warsaw* is positive and pays due respect to Porter’s significance and influence, and acknowledges Porter’s lead in the development of the historical novel. I will examine Watson’s analysis of *Thaddeus of Warsaw* in more detail in the following chapter because her study is astute and raises some very interesting points of interpretation to address.

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In “The Importance of Elsewhere: Romantic Subjectivity and the Romance of History” (1996), Angela Keane suggests that perhaps the spark for the renewed interest in Porter could have come from the release in 1995 of Mel Gibson’s film *Braveheart*, which according to Keane was based on Porter’s novel of *The Scottish Chiefs*. Her interest in Porter was aroused when researching “the significance of the Scottish scene as a site for historical romance at …different historical moments”.\(^{253}\) I do not support Keane’s description of *The Scottish Chiefs* as being a “fanciful excursion into thirteenth-century Scotland”, nor that Porter’s powers of evocation are invested in arousing naive enchantment”, nor that *The Scottish Chiefs* “demands emotional investment” rather than “imaginative investment”.\(^{254}\) However, as summarised in my Introduction, Keane’s main explanation for Porter’s popularity waning in the late-nineteenth and beyond, of which I do not agree, is undoubtedly due to the influence of Lukács, who in celebrating “Scott’s historical novels...[ignored] his contemporaries and predecessors”.\(^{255}\) Keane also suggests that the waning of Porter’s popularity could have been due not to the fact there was “not enough history in her romance, but that there is not enough romance in her history.”\(^{256}\) Keane argues that Porter wrote her extended prefaces in order to “establish the antiquarian accuracy of her story”, a fact which as I have previously stated points to Porter succumbing to the pressures of Scott’s popularity and which Keane argues is in effect an opportunistic response “to the changing, increasingly Romantic character of historiography.”\(^{257}\)

Ian Dennis, in *Nationalism and Desire in Early Historical Fiction* (1997), devotes a whole chapter to Porter’s *The Scottish Chiefs*, writing, that although the novel has been generally dismissed by most critics as mere *romance*, he believes that the work is underestimated and that it can be argued to be an historical novel and therefore given due credit. Dennis’

\(^{253}\) Keane, ‘The Importance of Elsewhere’, p. 17.
\(^{255}\) Keane, ‘The Importance of Elsewhere’, p. 17.
\(^{256}\) Keane, ‘The Importance of Elsewhere’, p. 19.
\(^{257}\) Keane, ‘The Importance of Elsewhere’, p. 18.
main argument is that *The Scottish Chiefs* does fulfill the criteria of an historical novel; it is factual (despite claims to the contrary), Porter constantly presents the reader with specifics, the narrative takes place in an eternalized location and she endeavours to represent the age rather than contrasting the past and the present. Dennis writes:

If the broadly historiography definition of the form were applied with an open mind ... it could be argued that, within its own undoubted limitations, the work does meet many of the requirements of an historical novel.258

Dennis also points out the decisiveness with which *The Scottish Chiefs* begins, “it does not begin with “Once upon a time” but rather with the statement “Bright was the summer of 1296.”259 This might be compared with the far more evasive beginning of Scott’s *Waverley*: “It was during the period of that great and bloody Civil War which agitated Britain during the seventeenth century, that our tale has its commencement.”260 Dennis argues that *The Scottish Chiefs* can be seen as representing a process and that Porter’s characters in the novel are both a product of their time and influenced by the moment in history in which they exist. Therefore the novel must be defined as an historical novel. Dennis reasons that:

As to the requirement that history be represented as process, and characters’ lives as produced or influenced by great historical conflicts, *The Scottish Chiefs* might be defended in a similar fashion.261

Following Dennis’ line of argument therefore, it can be concluded that *The Scottish Chiefs* is an historical novel because it is the story of the evolution of competing cultures and competing lives. It depicts not only the struggle between Scotland and England but also the resulting consolidation of a strong and independent nation and therefore fits Karl Kroeber’s definition of an historical novel, because it “conceive[s] of history as the organic

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258 Dennis, *Nationalism and Desire*, p. 11.
259 Dennis, *Nationalism and Desire*, p. 11.
260 Dennis, *Nationalism and Desire*, p. 11.
261 Dennis, *Nationalism and Desire*, p. 12.
evolution of competing styles of life.”

Drawing attention to the criticisms of Hook, Dennis also argues, as I do, that Hook ‘undervalues’ Porter’s work, suggesting that Scott learned more from Porter than “not what to do in the historical novel”. Dennis concludes by affirming that Porter’s *The Scottish Chiefs* “represents a small but somehow enabling moment in literary history, in which deeper imaginations, and more complex desires, drew breath, and from which powerful new forms soon began to emerge.”

The forming of a national culture and a national identity was the reason why Gary Kelly decided to re-publish Porter’s *The Scottish Chiefs* in his 2002 anthology of women’s gothic fiction. In his extensive introduction Kelly confirms that *The Scottish Chiefs* was widely read and also influential, not only in England but in Europe and America as well, as I have previously demonstrated. Kelly places *The Scottish Chiefs* as one of the forerunners to the historical novel, stating that it “opened the way for the historical novel, as practised by Walter Scott and his followers.” So while Kelly does not credit Porter with writing the first historical novel, he credits her with creating a new narrative structure which opened the way for Scott to follow. Kelly asserts that Scott should have acknowledged some debt to Porter because he devised “a form of historical romance that clearly counters Porter’s.”

What Kelly believes Porter was influential in achieving was the creation of a model that combined elements of historiography, historical popular tales, popular fiction (notably the Gothic) and also the narrative structure of the Bible, and it was the combination of these elements that not only made her novels popular among her reading audience, but was instrumental in guiding and informing people concerned with “founding, building and maintaining

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262 Quoted in Dennis, *Nationalism and Desire*, p.12. Karl Kroeber is Professor in Humanities at Columbia University, specialising in nineteenth-century fiction.
263 Dennis, *Nationalism and Desire*, p.44. (His italic)
264 Dennis, *Nationalism and Desire*, pp. 13, 44.
modern liberal states.” This also reinforces Kasmer’s argument that Porter, and women writers like her such as Clara Reeve, Maria Edgeworth and Mary Wollstonecraft, should be celebrated for re-gendering politics and creating a feminised historiography that was commensurate with the emerging politics in the aftermath of the French Revolution. Kelly’s introductory essay, the political importance of Porter’s novels and the significance of her writing will be discussed further in the following chapter, as I believe his critique highlights the importance of Porter’s oeuvre as valuable documentation in understanding the political and social conditions in England in the pre-Victorian period.

In “Resisting ‘the Spirit of Innovation’: the Other Historical Novel and Jane Porter” (2006), Fiona Price enters the historical novel debate by arguing that critics such as Thomas Carlyle, Georg Lukács and Andrew Hook have narrowed their definition of the historical novel to a genre which provokes “history as a force for change”, Hook declaring that Scott’s novels reveal “a powerful sense of history as movement, as the matrix of change bringing the past into meaningful relationship with the present.” Price contests this by arguing that what Porter’s novels reveal is “history as continuity.” As I earlier stated Porter does not romanticize history as a place where the ideals, values and conditions should still be maintained but rather shows the lessons to be learned from the mistakes of history. Her novels represent continuity of tradition. Using The Scottish Chiefs as the point of example, Price asserts that Porter’s novel uses the narrative of history in order to bring “the past in relation with the present” and constructs “a tradition of continuous heroism and self-sacrifice” through her characters such as William Wallace. Like Jennifer Evans, Price sees history painting as providing the validating discourse in Porter’s novels. Price writes:

Responding to developments in the discourse of civic humanism, particularly as they affected history painting, Porter thought past heroism had direct political importance in the present.\footnote{Price, ‘Resisting ‘The Spirit of Innovation’, p. 640.}

I concur with Price’s assessment that Porter’s novels “repeatedly emphasise the need to value and be inspired by the legends of history” and also that Porter had a very keen “sense of her own historical moment.”\footnote{Price, ‘Resisting ‘The Spirit of Innovation’, pp. 643, 644.} In 2007 Price edited the Broadview edition of The Scottish Chiefs, writing in her ‘Introduction’ that “Porter’s role in the development of the historical novel frequently goes unacknowledged”, an oversight which this study also importantly addresses. In her ‘Introduction’ Price astutely argues that Porter’s novels are unique and arose “out of the complex rhetorical use of romance during the post-French Revolution debate”, providing, writes Price, “a new model of patriotism and political life distinct from those that arose in the 1790s.”\footnote{Price, ‘Introduction’, The Scottish Chiefs, p. 22.} The underlying argument presented by Price in both her paper and ‘Introduction’ is that Porter uses history differently to Scott and therefore her work needs to be critiqued independently and not always in relation to Scott, even though both their novels promote the necessity for national unity.\footnote{Price, ‘Introduction’, The Scottish Chiefs, p. 33.}

Although Thomas McLean’s engagement with the historical novel debate has been outlined at the beginning of this chapter, I would add that his close reading of Porter’s fictional character Pembroke Somerset, in Thaddeus of Warsaw, is an important extension and addition to the historical novel debate. According to McLean Pembroke Somerset is the “first established motif of the alien English visitor”.\footnote{McLean, ‘Nobody’s Argument’, p. 96.} McLean writes:

Before Horatio journeyed to Ireland, or Neville visited Italy, or Waverley made his way to Scotland, Somerset fell under the spell of another European nation preserved in an earlier stage of historical development.\footnote{McLean, ‘Nobody’s Argument’, p. 96.}
Although being captured by the Polish forces, Somerset befriends Thaddeus Sobieski, who subsequently takes him back to his home in Warsaw. Somerset realises that he has been wrongly informed that the Polish are barbarians, writing to his mother back in England of the “domestic felicity” which he finds in the Sobieski home, and further how he feels the “pride of an ancient Briton distended” in his breast.277 McLean notes how Somerset’s time in Warsaw changes his “world view.”278 Somerset becomes disillusioned with the education he has received and the ignorance he feels of the details of European history. Embodied in Somerset is “the clash of opposing national cultures” and when back in England, writes McLean, acutely felt the need for British and European reconciliation. Pembroke Somerset “serves as synecdoche for the nation.”279 Where, in the next chapter, I compare Thaddeus Sobieski to Scott’s Edward Waverley, McLean compares the eponymous Pembroke Somerset:

Somerset joins the apparent forces of modernity (Catherine’s Russia), is captured by the enemy and falls in love with its feudal customs. In doing so, he (like Waverley) resolutely disobeys his father’s wishes. Somerset’s tutor...has encouraged his student’s Russian fantasy, just as Waverley’s tutor, the aptly named Mr. Pembroke, encourages his student’s interest in English morality.280

McLean’s discussion of Pembroke Somerset demonstrates that Porter clearly “anticipates several key features of the historical novel” as defined by Lukács, and is further evidence that, in McLean’s terms “the scholarly neglect of Porter” to date” needs to be addressed.281 One reason McLean gives for Porter’s neglect by scholars is that she “fails the “authenticity” test.282 That is, unlike Scott who was born in Scotland and writes about Scotland or Maria Edgeworth, born in Ireland and writes of her native

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277 Quoted in McLean, ‘Nobody’s Argument’, p. 96.
282 McLean, ‘Nobody’s Argument’, p. 94.
land, Porter was born in Durham, wrote from London (mainly Esher and Thames Ditton) but her locale for her novels range from Poland, to Scotland to the remote island of Lindisfarne, through Spain, Germany and even the East. In other words, Porter’s “fondness for chronotropic variety makes it difficult to associate her with a single region.”

Perhaps it is believed that Porter is not informed by the landscapes of which she writes. However, I would argue that in fact Jane Austen was similarly not informed by the landscapes of which she writes, despite the fact that they are all domestic spaces and set in England. For example, Mike Crang in “Placing Jane Austen, Displacing England” (2003) points out that Austen does not set any of her novels in the village of Steventon in Hampshire, where Austen was born and lived for the majority of her life, and only rarely does she make, writes Crang, “to existing places” in England.

Crang argues that Austen uses her landscapes to express a “range of ideologies of ownership, improvement, modernity, and, sensibility.” As I argue in this study, Porter uses her landscapes, her historical settings, as regional displacements, Poland acting as a displaced ancien regime, Scotland’s War of Independence as the panacea for Britain’s war with France, the setting of Lindisfarne representing an ‘ideal’ Britain, and Germany as representative of the larger national home, the ancestral home of the reigning monarch. Her use of a variety of regional settings shows that Porter was acutely aware of her sense of place and considered Britain as a national home of which she was very much a part of and informed about.

While some later critics, such as Watson and McLean, do focus their discussion of Porter on Thaddeus of Warsaw, as is evidenced by the above discussions most comparisons of Porter and Scott tend to compare The Scottish Chiefs with Waverley, presumably because they both depend on

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283 McLean, ‘Nobody’s Argument’, p. 94.
Scottish history. However, *Thaddeus of Warsaw* is in fact of far more importance in the historical novel debate, as in style, plot and main characters it is more closely aligned to *Waverley* than *The Scottish Chiefs*. However, I assert that Porter’s first published success, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, is in point of fact, a more useful work with which to draw such comparisons. In particular I want to return to the essay by Andrew Hook, “Jane Porter, Sir Walter Scott, and the Historical Novel”. In this essay, Hook asserts that “*Thaddeus of Warsaw*’s right to be described as ‘a new species of writing’ is very much open to question”, intimating that if Scott should acknowledge a debt to any of Porter’s novels, *The Scottish Chiefs* must be the only contender. As previously mentioned, according to Hook, Scott’s only indebtedness to Porter’s *The Scottish Chiefs*, is her awakening of Scottish nationalist pride and interest in Scottish history and romance. Hook’s statement that Scott “owes nothing at all to *The Scottish Chiefs*”, and, that the two novels are not even closely related in their method or mode”, is simply mistaken because both *The Scottish Chiefs* and *Waverley* offer a form of romance, fictionalise historical figures and demonise, or problematise, various female characters. In *The Scottish Chiefs* it is the scheming Lady Mar who endeavours to thwart Wallace in his campaign, and in *Waverley*, the passionate Flora MacIvor seduces the naive Edward Waverley to revolutionary action. Where the two novels drastically depart is in the portrayal of their heroes. William Wallace is the archetype of the ideal chivalric hero, whereas Waverley is an uncertain hero as his name suggests. Porter’s Wallace represents the culmination of the personification of the Scottish nationalistic cause, whereas Edward Waverley, while representing Scottish nationalism must also represent the ultimate uniting of the Kingdom. Hook dismisses *Thaddeus of Warsaw* as a contender because he believes that its language is sentimental, imbued with patriotic nationalism. The hero Thaddeus Sobieski is portrayed as the epitome of a Christian gentleman, and

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287 Hook, ‘Jane Porter, Sir Walter Scott and the Historical Novel’, p. 188.
therefore is more an ideal rather than a true character. Finally, Porter is accused of blurring the boundaries between fact and fiction, which is ironic given that Scott, as mentioned previously, overtly blurred these boundaries. In essence, Hook accuses Porter of romanticising and sentimentalising her stories at the expense of historical accuracy, while Scott he claims, brings together the elements of fact and fiction without undermining the reality of the story. Hook states that it is Scott’s use in *Waverley* of a fictional hero, rather than a historical character, which allows for more authenticity because the historical reality. By doing this, Hook argues, Edward Waverley does not become the validation for the narrative action, but rather Scott uses his hero, “to embody certain impulses, drives, attitudes of mind and feeling”. 288 This argument is contradictory to Hook’s previous claim that Thaddeus Sobieski is more an ‘ideal’ than a true gentleman, for indeed what is Waverley if not precisely this? While Porter can be said to use real historical characters in *The Scottish Chiefs*, namely William Wallace and Robert the Bruce, the hero of *Thaddeus of Warsaw* is an amalgam of characters known to, and admired by, Porter and therefore, like Edward Waverley, is not a real historical figure but a creation of Porter’s imagination. As Scott is able to represent certain feelings and attitudes of his hero, depending on the action of the narrative, so too does Porter through her fictional hero, Thaddeus Sobieski.289 Thomas Anessi in “Jane Porter’s *Thaddeus of Warsaw*” (2000) boldly states that *Thaddeus of Warsaw* “is arguably the first historical novel”.290 Anessi writes:

> [A]s a work of historical fiction, [*Thaddeus of Warsaw*] is ...particularly significant because it helped initiate a trend in fiction, followed by Scott, towards using history as a foundation for the events of the plot, rather than merely a stage for them.291
Anessi is correct in his assessment that Porter uses history as the vehicle for understanding the society in which she lives and in *Thaddeus of Warsaw* establishes “clear links between national identity and historical events, on the one hand, and an individual’s character on the other.”292 Anessi refutes Lukács argument that prior to Walter Scott’s *Waverley* “so-called historical novels” lacked the “specifically historical, that is, the derivation of the individuality of characters from the historical peculiarities of their age.”293 As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Lukács views the French Revolution, or more specifically, the defeat of Napoleon, as a pivotal historic moment and one which changed forever “men’s existence and consciousness”.294 Anessi argues that in fact women writers, such as Jane Porter, Maria Edgeworth, Charlotte Smith and Sydney Owenson had already sensed the forces of change becoming manifest in England. Their novels, says Anessi, provided a “frame of reference against which society and manners could be examined.”295 Anessi’s assessment is a convincing one, that the rise of industrialism in England and the political turmoil associated with the threat of revolution at the turn of the century was a defining historical moment and provided the impetus for these women writers to react accordingly and consciously use history as “a means of illustrating Britain’s [threatened] social and political milieu”.296

**Conclusion**

In times of such uncertainty, both in Britain and on the continent, the Christian virtues displayed by Thaddeus Sobieski were applauded and indeed embraced. While critics, notably Lukács, may be sceptical of, in Annesi’s words, an “idealized Christian hero”, Porter, like many of her contemporaries, knew the importance of maintaining a secure ‘home’ and it was believed by the majority of people that it was the breakdown in

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292 Anessi, ‘Jane Porter’s *Thaddeus of Warsaw*’, p. 72.
293 Quoted in Anessi, ‘Jane Porter’s *Thaddeus of Warsaw*’, p. 63.
295 Anessi, ‘Jane Porter’s *Thaddeus of Warsaw*’, p. 65.
296 Anessi, ‘Jane Porter’s *Thaddeus of Warsaw*’, p. 66.
Christian virtue and moral behaviour which precipitated much of the revolutionary action that was occurring in France.\(^{297}\) However, while it is true that Thaddeus is the embodiment of domestic and Christian virtue, Porter does not place him in some exotic setting in some distant past, nor marginalise him like a hero in one of Radcliffe’s Gothic novels. Rather, Porter positions Thaddeus in a recent past where the experiences he encounters are not alien to readers of her novel. The memory of the Polish annexation is still prominent in English consciousness. Thaddeus Sobieski is a young man cast upon the shores of England after the annexation of his native Poland, and in this alien place finds himself frustrated, tempted, disillusioned and outcast, just as Edward Waverley finds himself similarly positioned in Scotland. Despite many obstacles Thaddeus is able, through the strength of his convictions, to rise above all adversities and find his place in the world. For readers today, and even for readers in the latter part of the nineteenth century, he may be perceived as the “embodiment of every heroic virtue”, as Hook insists, but in a time of war and revolution, it is this ideal that shines through as an example of the proper behaviour for Christian living and the importance of living a virtuous life.\(^{298}\) Edward Waverley, on the other hand, is described by many critics as “not a very heroic hero”, sometimes labelled as a coward, or in Scott’s own words a “sneaking imbecile”, but I argue that he is a young man full of ideals, impressionable, and in this respect similar to Thaddeus.\(^{299}\) After many mishaps, disappointments and romantic encounters, the dreams of Edward’s youth are rapidly dissolved into a “a truer sense of reality.”\(^{300}\) Take for instance the following extract from *Waverley*:

> [I]t was in many a winter walk by the shores of Ullswater, that he acquired a more complete mastery of a spirit tamed by adversity than his former experience had given him; and that he felt himself entitled to say firmly, though perhaps with a sigh, that the romance of his life was ended, and that its real

\(^{297}\) Anessi, ‘Jane Porter’s Thaddeus of Warsaw’, p. 65.
history had now commenced. He was soon called upon to justify his pretensions by reason and philosophy.\footnote{Scott, \textit{Waverley}, p. 415.}

It can be argued therefore, that both novels ultimately tell the story of their heroes’ journeys, physical and emotional journeys in which they are confronted by many obstacles as they grow to maturity, a form of \textit{bildungsroman}. Having both come from protective homes, Thaddeus and Waverley are forced to journey from their birthplaces and in their new ‘homes’ are challenged by cultures that are new and unfamiliar to them. While the backdrop to Porter’s novel is the Polish annexation in 1792, and Scott’s the Jacobite Uprising of 1745, these are ultimately merely the springboard from which the action arises. Outcasts of the societies into which they journey, they must negotiate delicately the circumstances in which they find themselves. Thaddeus Sobieski and Edward Waverley, both young men full of ideals and enthusiasm, are at the centre, and indeed are the heart of both stories. The difference between the two young men is apparent in their upbringing, Thaddeus having been raised by his mother, Therese Sobieski, impressing upon him the importance of living the good and virtuous life, whereas Waverley is primarily raised by his Uncle and has, in Hook’s words, “suffered no discipline; undergone no systematic course of education; [and] experienced nothing of the realities of experience.”\footnote{Hook, ‘Introduction’ to Walter Scott, \textit{Waverley}, p.21.} Of his hero Scott himself writes:

\begin{quote}
The education of our hero, Edward Waverley, was of a nature somewhat desultory. ...To our young hero, who was permitted to seek his instruction only according to the bent of his own mind, and who, of consequence, only sought it so long as if afforded him amusement, the indulgence of his tutors was attended with evil consequences, which long continued to influence his character, happiness, and utility.\footnote{Scott, \textit{Waverley}, pp. 45,47.}
\end{quote}

Although Thaddeus and Edward may have evolved from different fictional backgrounds, it is clear however, that both Porter and Scott wish their heroes to inculcate “those passions common to all men in all stages of
society, and which have alike agitated the human heart”, as Scott elucidates, and for their novels to reflect the moral lessons of their day.\textsuperscript{304} In \textit{Thaddeus of Warsaw} Porter campaigns for the continuation of the Stuart line, whereas Scott, in \textit{Waverley}, advocates the legitimacy of the Hanoverian rule and it is through their love interests, rather more importantly their marriages, that these ideals are brought to realisation. One might argue that in fact Scott betrays Scotland in this advocacy. Thaddeus Sobieski marries Mary Beaufort and in so doing reaffirms the continuation of the Stuart line, confirming the importance of a legitimate ruler on the throne, while Edward Waverley marries Rose Bradwardine, in order to demonstrate that it is time for the Jacobites to concede their rule and accept the new legitimate monarchy, the Hanoverian dynasty. Through each of these unions, the novels end with all historical divisions reconciled. Both Mary Beaufort and Rose Bradwardine are the fair heroines, as opposed to the dark heroines, Lady Sara Ross in \textit{Thaddeus of Warsaw} and Flora MacIvor in \textit{Waverley}.\textsuperscript{305} Lady Sara Ross is a married woman and her alliance with Thaddeus threatens not only her reputation as a woman but also the social order because her husband is a British naval officer, fighting for Britain’s security. Flora MacIvor, the dark heroine of \textit{Waverley}, is a passionate Jacobite campaigner and although Waverley is attracted to her, he chooses to marry Rose, symbolic of Scott’s conviction that the only path forward for Scotland is to accept the new Hanoverian rule. The marriage of both heroes is also symbolic of the importance of maintaining domestic harmony in the national interest.

While I have endeavoured to illustrate that many similarities do exist between \textit{Thaddeus of Warsaw} and \textit{Waverley}, one of the most striking differences is the authors’ views on what lessons can be learned from history, recalling the earlier discussion on the motives of Porter and Scott

\textsuperscript{304} Scott, \textit{Waverley}, p. 35.
\textsuperscript{305} For discussion on the dark and fair heroines of the Waverley novels, see chapter III of Alexander Welsh, \textit{The Hero of the Waverley Novels}, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963). See also George Eliot’s \textit{The Mill on the Floss}, Book Fifth, Chapter IV ‘Another Love-Scene’: pp.331-37, for her version of the debate.
for writing their novels. For Porter it is a positive lesson, an acknowledgement of past mistakes that must not be repeated. For Scott, it is a far more pessimistic one, the past is past, and what was, is lost forever. While for both authors, the clear theme is that the past must give way to the present, for Porter it is an instructive passing whereas for Scott it is a necessity in order to progress. Despite this difference however, the ultimate subject of both these historical novels is the history of two heroic young men, Thaddeus Sobieski and Edward Waverley, and therefore in writing *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and *Waverley*, both Porter and Scott describe, in Avrom Fleishman’s words “how individual lives were shaped at specific moments in history, and how this shaping reveals the character of those historical periods.”

Although the following chapter will focus in greater detail on analysing the text of *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, and will, where appropriate, be compared to and/or contrasted with *Waverley*, in this chapter I have argued that Hook has done a great disservice to Porter by dismissing *Thaddeus of Warsaw* emphatically as the blueprint for the development of the historical novel. Clearly, *Thaddeus of Warsaw* is a more pertinent work by which to compare with *Waverley* in any discussion of the historical novel debate. Porter, in creating *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, manages to mediate the public historical world seamlessly with the private, narrative fictional world, and therefore from battles and invasions to domestic squabbles and infidelity, she is able to overlay the history of a nation with the private history of its people, just as critics state Scott does in *Waverley*.

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Chapter Two: Domestic and National Issues in *Thaddeus of Warsaw*

Good Kosciusko! thy name alone
Is a full harvest whence to reap high feeling;
It comes upon us like the glorious pealing
Of the wide spheres - an everlasting tone.

*To Kosciusko. John Keats (1816)*

Although not Porter’s first attempt at novel writing, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, published in 1803 under her own name, was her first literary success. It was so immediately popular that by 1810 it had gone into a tenth edition, by 1880 boasted over twenty-five editions, and was still being published as late as 1911. Its reach included America and it was translated in countries all over Europe.

Porter dedicated her novel to Sir Sidney Smith and Tadeusz Kosciuszko. Sir Sidney Smith was an Admiral in the British navy, who had the title of ‘Coeur-de-Lion’ bestowed upon him by King George III and was much admired by all the Porter family, especially Jane. Being modest about the interest her novel would hold for such a renowned British hero, Porter expressed her wish that Sir Sidney would “not refuse to read” her narrative. Porter’s admiration for Sir Sidney Smith lasted throughout her life and after his death in 1840, she set about raising money in order to erect a monument in his honour “by the side of Nelson’s tomb in St.

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308 Nicholas Joukovsky, *Notes and Queries*, March 1999, has found evidence that Jane Porter may have written a novel, *The Spirit of Elba*, in 1801 (p. 15). Also in Anon. ‘Novels: The Two Princes of Persia’, *Anti-Jacobin Review*, VIII (April 1801), p.421, there is a review of a novel titled *The Two Princes of Persia*, reportedly written by Jane Porter. Both of these novels were published anonymously.
309 There are variations in the spelling of Kościuszko, the spelling used by Porter is Kosciusko and therefore when quoting directly that will be the spelling used.
310 Jane Porter, ‘Dedication’, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*. A New and Revised Edition with the Addition of New Notes, etc, by the Author. (New York: The Federal Book Company Publishers, [1831]). Unless quoting from a different edition, all subsequent references are to this revised edition and page numbers will appear in the body of the text.
In the tenth edition of *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, published in 1819, Porter wrote a detailed appendix dedicated to her other hero, Tadeusz Kościuszko. In this lengthy appendix she wrote that all “the principles of heroic virtue” she “sought to inculcate in her narrative” were embodied in the spirit of this man, Kościuszko. Both dedications highlight the esteem in which Porter held these two men who fought for their “country’s freedom, laws and native king.”

In the ‘Preface’ to the first edition (1803), Porter says that she was at first reluctant to publish her narrative but relented after family and friends urged her “not to withhold it from the press.” Interestingly, however, in the “Preface” to the 1831 edition, while writing about her novel in modest terms, Porter nevertheless maintains the originality of her work and moreover, points out that in fact Sir Walter Scott had imitated the genre which she had established as I have explored fully in Chapter One. Porter claims that in *Thaddeus of Warsaw* she created a class of novel which by the uniting of “personages and facts of real history or biography with a combining and illustrative machinery of the imagination, formed a new species of writing.”

*Thaddeus of Warsaw* received glowing reviews both in England and overseas and its popularity endured well into the nineteenth century. Immediately after its publication, the *New Annual Register* reported that it was “one of those [novels] which are best entitled to notice, as the original production of our own country” and in 1804, the *Imperial Review* wrote in its praise that:

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312 Humility in prefaces about publishing their novels was common among nineteenth-century women writers and this is a typical example of such disclaimers. Anna Maria Porter in her Preface to *Don Sebastian* (1809), asks the reader to excuse her for any disappointments they may feel when reading her novel but says that if her work does instruct and amuse then her “literary ambition will be gratified.” Anna Maria Porter, *Don Sebastian, or, The House of Braganza: an Historical Romance*. (Exeter: J. and B. Williams, 1835), p. (iii).  
It is one of the few which, once opened, could not pass unread. The attention is arrested by the first page, and never suffered to diverge till the final denouement. 314

In 1833, in the Athenaeum, is an advertisement announcing that the fifth and concluding volume of Jane Austen’s Pride and Prejudice has just been published, listing Thaddeus of Warsaw among the other successful Standard Novels and Romances of the “popular Series of the best Modern Works of Fiction”. 315

Considerable fame surrounded the young Porter over the publication of her novel. In France Napoleon had it banned because of its anti-revolutionary theme, while in Germany its reception was well received and Porter was admitted into the order of St Joachim, receiving the gold cross of the order of Würtemberg, as I noted earlier. The real life hero of her novel, Tadeusz Kościuszko, was impressed by her novel and wrote to thank her for her story. After his death, a relative sent Porter a ring containing Kościuszko’s portrait as a memento. General Gardiner, British minister to Poland at the time of publication, read Thaddeus of Warsaw with admiration and enthusiasm, declaring that the descriptions of the battle scenes were so accurate that he believed the author must have been witness to the events in Warsaw. When he discovered that the author was in fact a young English lady, Jane Porter, he exclaimed: “Impossible...no one could describe the scenes and occurrences there, in the manner it is done in that book, without having been an eye-witness.” (9) Positive reviews were still being written well after her death. In 1850, the Art Journal praised her for “the popularity of Thaddeus of Warsaw’ – the first romance originated by the active brain and singularly constructive power of Jane Porter” 316, and as late as 1932 it was reported in America to be “quite constantly read.” 317

315 Anon, ‘The Standard Novels and Romances’, [Advert], Athenaeum, 301 (3 August, 1833), p. 520.
316 Hall, ‘Memories of Miss Jane Porter’, p. 222.
As discussed in Chapter One, in writing Thaddeus of Warsaw, Porter departs from the normal conventions of eighteenth-century novel writing, abandoning the structure of both domestic novels and novels of sentiment, written by authors such as Samuel Richardson, Tobias Smollet and Charlotte Smith. In writing Thaddeus of Warsaw, as with all her other novels, Porter took the historical setting and imaginative narrative formula of Radcliffe’s stories but went one step further by interweaving real history with narrative fiction. Porter, in creating her texts, manages to mediate the public historical world seamlessly with the private, narrative fictional world, and therefore from battles and invasions to domestic squabbles and infidelity, she is able to overlay the history of a nation with the private history of its people. There are many examples of this overlaying of fact and fiction in Thaddeus of Warsaw. For example, in Chapter I, Porter tells us that it is the year 1792 and John Sobieski, the fictional Polish king of her novel, is worried about the pending invasion of Poland’s neighbouring countries. The historical reality is, that it was in fact the March of that year, 1792, that Catherine of Russia actually did begin moving her troops towards the Polish boarder.

Jennifer Evans, in her thesis, Improving Novels: Validating Discourses and Didacticism in British Women’s Novels, 1800 – 1820, notes how precise Porter is in detailing descriptions of London, including street names, plays, popular novels, other events held and even weather conditions in order to enhance the authentication of her text. For example, in Chapter XVIII, Porter asks her readers:

> Who is there in England, I repeat, who does not remember the dreadfully protracted winter of 1794, when the whole country lay buried in a thick ice which seemed eternal? (161)

The Critical Review of September 1803 commended Porter’s unique mix of history and fiction:

> Truth and fiction are blended with much propriety in these volumes; and we have turned with sincere pleasure the pages
that praise the valour of Kościuszko, and recount though but as a novel the adventures of a Sobieski.\textsuperscript{318} Evans also observes that Porter gives detailed footnotes in later editions of the novel in order that her mid-nineteenth century readers are informed should customs or landmarks have changed in the intervening years.\textsuperscript{319}

As previously stated, the hero of \textit{Thaddeus of Warsaw}, Thaddeus Constantine Sobieski, is named after the real-life Polish war hero, Tadeusz Kościuszko (1752 – 1817). Kościuszko was the Chief of the Polish Revolution, and his glorious victories in both Europe and America were well publicized. In 1797, Kościuszko visited England en route to America and to honour the hero who fought so bravely to defend his King and country, the English poet, Henry Francis Carey published an Ode to mark the visit:

\begin{verbatim}
And shews in light reveal'd the hallow'd form.
Such think, Kosciusko! Whom our isle
Clasps in her arms, with joyful boast
That Liberty's inviting smile
Has won thy steps to seek her coast.\textsuperscript{320}
\end{verbatim}

Carey was not the only poet to honour the revered hero. Lord Byron, Leigh Hunt, John Keats and Samuel Taylor Coleridge all paid homage in their poetry to the great Kościuszko.\textsuperscript{321} Women writers also followed suit, Maria Edgeworth describing him as “(simple) in his manners like all truly great men,”\textsuperscript{322} and Helen Maria Williams wrote in her diary that she had “made her house in Paris ‘the rendezvous of distinguished foreigners like

\textsuperscript{318} Quoted in Zapatka, ‘Jane Porter’s Kościuszko’, p. 179.
\textsuperscript{319} Evans, \textit{Improving Novels}, p. 71. For example, on page 178 of the novel, Porter explains that the Blue Stocking Club was the real name given to a literary club which gathered under the auspices of Mrs Montague. On page 163 Porter explains to her readers in a footnote that the landscape of the area near Grosvenor Place has significantly altered: “There is no turnpike gate now at the Hyde Park end of the Piccadilly; neither is there a park wall.” In later editions, Porter also reflects and comments on events and people within the novel, such as Joseph Fox, who had read \textit{Thaddeus of Warsaw} and written to Porter how inspired he was by her work. (p. 287).
\textsuperscript{320} Henry Francis Carey, \textit{Ode to General Kosciusko}, (London: T Cadell, Junior and W Davies, 1797).
Like the heroine of her novel, Mary Beaufort, who ardently followed the news of her soldier hero, Thaddeus Sobieski, Porter greatly admired the real hero, Tadeusz Kościuszko, and followed with interest, as she writes in *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, his “glorious struggles against the calamities of [his] country.”(260) When Kościuszko again visited England in 1831, after his release from prison in Russia, Porter’s brother, Robert, met with him in his hotel room. In the ‘Preface’ to *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, Porter wrote how Robert told her that Kościuszko was “a noble looking man” and “spoke to him words of generous encouragement.”(6) However, although Kościuszko was the original genesis for the main protagonist of her novel, in the ‘Preface’ to the 1831 edition, Porter explains that “to have made him the ostensible hero of the tale, would have suited neither the modesty of his feelings nor the humbleness of my own expectation of telling it as I wished.”(6) Bearing this in mind, I maintain that the hero of *Thaddeus of Warsaw* is in fact an amalgam of the acclaimed Polish defender Tadeusz Kościuszko, King John Sobieski III (1674-96), who championed the cause of Christian Europe against the Ottoman Empire and her brother, Robert Ker Porter, a soldier, artist and true hero in his sister’s eyes.324

Along with Tadeusz Kościuszko, the fictional Thaddeus Sobieski also shares his name with King John Sobieski III. This association is important in the creation of the character of Thaddeus Sobieski because history shows that John Sobieski III was in fact the grandfather of Maria Clementina Sobieski, the mother of Prince Charles Edward, pretender to the Scottish throne. Charles Edward, often referred to as the Young Pretender, led the fatal and final Jacobite campaign against England in 1745. An argument, therefore, for Porter to use Poland as the historical backdrop for *Thaddeus of Warsaw* was that both Sobieski and Kościuszko, unlike the French revolutionaries, fought to restore the legitimate

323 Quoted in Zapatka, ‘Kościuszko Among the English Romantics’, p. 262.
monarchy and defend their country from invasion. Porter had great admiration for the Sobieski family and read a great deal about their history, believing John Sobieski especially to be a noble and virtuous leader. She gives high praise to the family in her ‘Preface’:

When placed at the summit of mortal fame, surrounded by greatness and glory, and consequent power, they evinced neither pride to others nor a sense of self aggrandizement in themselves. (12)

The conclusion of the novel reveals that Thaddeus Sobieski is related by direct blood to the royal Stuart line through his grandfather, John Sobieski, thus Poland and England are inextricably linked by the “extraordinary destinies of the regal race of the heroic John Sobieski with that of [the] ancestral warrior, Robert Bruce.”(441) Porter embraces both her hero Thaddeus and also Poland, thus making historical amends for England having abandoned the country and its people, who were “suffered to be sacrificed, annihilated, destroyed.”325

Instilled, therefore, with the qualities of the heroism of Kościuszko, the strength of a king and the filial virtue of a devoted brother, the fictional Thaddeus Sobieski is, as Porter writes in her ‘Preface’, both “truly heroic” and an “endearing a portrait of what every Christian man ought to be.”(13) The Epigraph to the novel is a telling indictment of Porter’s abhorrence for war and the moral struggle that truly Christian heroes face. The Epigraph reads:

Loin d’aimer la guerre, il l’abhorre;  
Entriomphant même il déplore  
Les désastres qu’elle produit  
Et couronné par la victoire,  
Il gémit de sa proper gloire,  
Si la paix n’en est pas le fruit. 326

326 ‘Epigraph’, Jane Porter, Thaddeus of Warsaw (1831 edition). Translation, provided by Lindsay Macrea, reads “Far from liking war, he abhors it, and even when triumphant, he deplores the disasters which it produces. And even wearing the victory crown, he bemoans the glory if it does not produce peace.” The lines are is attributed to Abbé de Villiers (1648-1728) and appeared in the Journal de Scavans, (December 1712), p. 691.
Although only featuring minimally in the overall action of the plot, the presence of the real life hero, Tadeusz Kościuszko, is overwhelming in the first ten chapters of *Thaddeus of Warsaw*. The fictional hero being christened Thaddeus Constantine Sobieski, after the Polish General Tadeusz Kościuszko, gives the novel an “historical juxtaposition”, a kind of virtue by association” and so Porter cleverly creates a familiar historical and literary context, incorporating both the real King Sobieski and the real Tadeusz Kościuszko.\(^{327}\) The result is that the fictional character of the young Thaddeus is enhanced because of his association with actual historical figures. In an unpublished passage in her original ‘Preface’, Porter explains: “I have made no ceremony of making Truth the helpmate of fiction.”\(^{328}\)

Critics of *Thaddeus of Warsaw* all concur that the structure and plot of the novel is divided into two distinct geographical locations, first Poland, and then England.\(^{329}\) The first section describes the Polish struggle against her invading enemies, resulting in the hero of the novel, Thaddeus Constantine Sobieski, fleeing to England, after the death of his mother and the dismantling of his country. This section is documentary-like, describing battles and elucidating the history of Poland leading up to the events. In her ‘Preface’, Porter apologises to her readers, especially her female readers, for the graphic battle scenes, which she believes are necessary in order to establish the history of Thaddeus Sobieski and show clearly the plight of Poland:

> But if the reader be one of my own sex, I would especially solicit her patience while going through the first portion of the tale, its author being aware that war and politics are not the most promising themes for an agreeable amusement; but the battles are not frequent, nor do the cabinet councils last long. (14)


\(^{328}\) Quoted in Zapatka, ‘Jane Porter's Kościuszko’, p. 173.

\(^{329}\) See Watson, *Revolution and the Form of the British Novel*, and Evans, *Improving Novels*. 
The second section of the novel details Thaddeus’ life as a refugee in London, suffering embarrassing encounters with pawn brokers, married ladies and hostile gentlemen, until in the final pages, Thaddeus finds his true birth father and is finally accepted into English society. This section of the novel is less documentary in style and has elements of romance. Porter writes in her ‘Preface’ that “beyond those events of peril and of patriotic devotedness, the remainder of the pages dwell with domestic interests.” (14)

While this geographical divisioning of the plot structure of the novel is clear, I argue that there are actually three distinct phases evident in Thaddeus of Warsaw. The first phase focuses on the young Thaddeus as a patriotic soldier, fighting for his home and country; the second details the struggle of Thaddeus as an exile in London; and finally, the third phase reveals the acceptance of Thaddeus as an Englishman, with the true identity of his father being disclosed. The tone in each phase is different, moving from patriotism to desolation to anxiety and frustration to finally, belonging and acceptance. These three phases explore the themes of exile and estrangement and the idea of being at ‘home’ and ultimately what it means to be English. Displaced in a strange country, Thaddeus feels lost, homeless and countryless but by the end of the novel has not only gained the characteristics of an Englishman but has also been given English paternity. It is in this revelation that Thaddeus not only feels accepted in his new home but he also feels he truly belongs now in his new country:

Though exiled from his native land, where his birth gave him dominion over rich territories, now in the hands of strangers, and a numerous happy people, now no more, he had not yet relinquished the love of empire. But it was not over principalities and embattled hosts that he desired to prolong the sceptre of command...In fact, the unhappy of every degree and nation found refuge and repose within the sheltering domains of Beaufort [England]. (443-4)

In this chapter I will explore in detail these three phases of the novel, showing how in Thaddeus of Warsaw, Porter effects a real shift in locating
the ‘domestic’ in relation to the ‘national’, critiquing the social, cultural and political aspects of England and the importance of the family as both a domestic and national concept. Before leaving my analysis of *Thaddeus of Warsaw* I will conclude with an investigation of Porter’s use of the theatre as an authenticating framework, highlighting the depth and range of Porter’s validating discourses in her novels, using specific theatre references to establish the importance of ‘virtue’ and ‘domestic peace’, two of the major themes found in each of her novels.

**Thaddeus, Poland and Reflections on Revolution**

The publication in 1790 of Edmund Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution in France* had a divisive effect on its commentators, embraced by those opposing the revolution in France and condemned by those who saw the Revolution as a victory to the common man. Although a prominent member of the Whig party, Burke did not agree with those colleagues, such as Richard Sheriden and Charles Fox, who greeted the revolution with enthusiasm, but rather took the more conservative line and mourned the death of chivalry in France. Burke writes in his *Reflections*: “But the age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters economists, and calculators has succeeded, and the glory of Europe is extinguished.”

Prior to the publication of his *Reflections*, written as a letter intended for a gentleman in Paris, Burke’s rhetorical power and shrewd political insight helped to engineer the political ideology of Whig politics and he quickly rose to become the moral leader of the party. Burke ardently believed that the events occurring in France would ultimately have dire consequences and his letter acts as a warning to the English people of the havoc that could be wrought, should revolution, such as that occurring in France, spread to England. He dismisses claims by supporters of the Revolution, such as William Godwin, Thomas Paine and William Hazlitt, that the events in France are similar to that of England’s Glorious Revolution of

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1688, arguing that the Glorious Revolution was essentially about restoring legitimacy and order to the English throne, not about destroying it:

Yet the restoration of our monarchy, even in the person of such a prince, was everything to us; for without the monarchy in England, most certainly we never can enjoy either peace or liberty. It was under this conviction that the very first irregular step, which we took on the Revolution of 1688, was to fill the throne with a real king.331

Despite being a Whig, Burke’s denunciation of the French Revolution gained Tory sympathy and also endorsement from George II, who claimed that *Reflections* was “a good book, a very good book; every gentleman ought to read it.”332 Burke was an astute politician and this, combined with his grand eloquence and passionate sympathies, captured the English imagination at a time when many believed that their ancient traditions and Constitution were under threat by the events that were taking place in Europe. One of the main arguments emerging from Burke’s writings was his fervent belief in the continuation of English inheritance, both primogeniture, and more importantly, the succession of the English throne. He insists that the Revolution of 1688 had secured the “bond of union in their ancient edifice”333 by restoring to the monarchy a legitimate line of succession, both an “hereditary crown and an hereditary allegiance.”334 In his *Reflections*, Burke writes with energy and conviction that:

The limitation was made by Parliament, that through the Princess Sophia an inheritable line not only was to be continued in future, but...that through her it was to be connected with the old stock of inheritance in King James the First; in order that the monarchy might preserve an unbroken unity through all ages.335

Roy Strong in *The Arts in Britain: A History* (2004), states that Burke’s *Reflections* decisively argued against “sudden innovation” such as seen in France, urging rather an “organic evolution” and became “the foundation stone of British conservatism”.336

Porter was a traditionalist and a devout monarchist and her novels endorse these principles. Although a Tory, Porter, like many other members of the Tory party, read Burke’s *Reflections*, even transcribing parts of it into her commonplace book.337 Burke’s passages on the importance of maintaining a balance, both in the political and social fabric of British society, struck a chord with Porter, especially his insistence on security and tradition rather than innovation and revolution:

> In this choice of inheritance we have given to our frame of polity the image of a relation in blood; binding up the constitution of our country with our dearest domestic ties; adopting our fundamental laws into the bosom of family affections; keeping inseparable and cherishing with the warmth of all their combined and mutually reflected charities, our state, our hearths, our sepulchres, and our altars.338

Empathising with the sympathies expressed in Burke’s writings, Porter lamented the loss of social order that the Revolution had caused in Europe and in a letter in 1803 to her sister, Anna Maria, she wrote of the danger that England faced should the Revolution spread across the Channel.339 It was in the same year she wrote and published *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, being written she explains “from the mere impulse of sympathy with its subject still fresh in my own and very pitying memory.” (11)

Growing up in a family of army and naval officers, Porter constantly heard stories of revolutionary events taking place in Europe. It was from these men that she obtained her detailed information and vivid descriptions about the events that occurred in Poland used in the writing of *Thaddeus*

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337 Kasmer, *Regendering History*, p.149.
339 Kasmer, *Regendering History*, p. 149.
of Warsaw. From an early age she was taught by these army and naval men, the importance of social order and the anarchy that can be unleashed when the true monarchy of a country is overthrown. Although Burke’s Reflections focuses on the revolution in France, it was not the French Revolution, however, that Porter chose to use as the historical backdrop for her novel, but rather the final partitioning of Poland. Porter saw Poland as an example of a country not just in the throes of revolution but literally “swept from the map of nations.” Reading Thaddeus of Warsaw it is clear that Porter believed that the dismantling of Poland was due to the negligence and anarchy that occurred as a result of the election of a king rather than the succession of the legitimate dynasty. For Porter therefore, this breakdown in the fabric of Polish culture and politics led to the stronger surrounding countries of Austria, Prussia and Russia, seizing control. The British government kept a close eye on events in Poland and as the situation worsened the then king, George III, received an appeal from Stanislaus for England to come to their assistance. However, the King responded that he was powerless to intervene and could “only express his hopes that providence and justice would console his wounded brother.” Although England technically had no part in the dismantling of Poland, the events were highly publicized both in newspapers and popular journals, and later recalled in the Athenaeum, which in 1833 wrote on the events in Poland:

The atrocious dismemberment of Poland has, for forty years and more, afforded ready matter for parliamentary, hustings and dinner speeches; the cause and the wrongs of the Poles have filled bulletins and gazettes; and their bravery have been celebrated alike by high-souled bards and metre ballad-mongers.
Being an avid reader Porter would have certainly followed the events with great interest and was fearful that this could also happen in England. She passionately writes in the opening pages of *Thaddeus of Warsaw*:

> But this reign of public and domestic peace was not to continue. Three formidable and apparently friendly states envied the effects of patriotism they would not imitate; and in the beginning of the year 1792, regardless of existing treaties, broke in upon the unguarded frontiers of Poland, threatening with all the horrors of a merciless war the properties, lives and liberties of the people. (18)

Nicola Watson, in *Revolution and the Form of the British Novel, 1790-1825: Intercepted Letters, Interrupted Seductions*, states that Porter chose Poland as the subject of her novel because it “functions as a regional displacement of *ancien regime* France during the revolution.”[^343] Porter opens her novel by describing the “magnificent palace of Villanow”, the residence of “John Sobieski, King of Poland,”(17), although the fictional reality is set in the period leading up to the final partitioning in 1795. King John Sobieski III was in fact the last royal successor of the Polish throne from 1642 until his death in 1697, when Augustus II, elector of Saxony was crowned.[^344] As Watson argues then, Poland does act as a displaced *ancien regime*, however, I want to extend this argument by suggesting that Poland also acts as a warning by Porter that invasion and usurpation is a constant threat, even to England, where a stable monarchy is in place. Contemporary feeling in England was that Poland’s downfall was a direct result, not only of an elected monarch, but also because of the infiltration of the teachings of French writers such as Voltaire and Rousseau. The writings of Voltaire and Rousseau fuelled revolutionary ideas among the people, which in turn led the country’s leaders to acts of selfishness and infidelity. This concept is expressed powerfully and emotively by Porter in *Thaddeus of Warsaw*:

> Almost all [Europe’s] nations had turned from the doctrines of “sound things” and more or less drank deeply the cup of

[^344]: It is interesting too to note that King John III died in the Polish town of Wilanow, Porter names the castle in her novel where the Sobieski family resides, Villanow.
infidelity, drugged for them by the flattering sophistries of Voltaire. (86)

Voltaire and Rousseau were exiled from their native France for professing notions of progress and liberty, and emphasis on passion and feeling in the individual, ideas that were believed by France’s leaders to be dangerous. Voltaire was often seen as the satirical analyst, while Rousseau appeared as the emotional sentimentalist and although philosophically worlds apart, and often at odds with each other, ironically, together their writings became the core foundations for the Jacobin movement. The Jacobins became the major force behind the French Revolution but whether supporters or adversaries to the Revolution, a great deal of the literature of this period reflects the “deep uncertainties over the immense political, economic, social and scientific change” that was being experienced.345

Jacobinism manifested itself in England during the first decades of the French Revolution. The most prominent proponents of the movement were Thomas Paine (1737-1809), William Godwin (1756-1836), Thomas Holcroft (1745-1809) and John Thelwell (1764-1834). It was Thomas Paine’s The Rights of Man (1791), published as a response to Burke’s Reflections, which became the pivotal text on which the manifesto of English Jacobinism was in fact formed. Paine’s text was enthusiastically received in England by many but was considered by the status quo, however, as an attack on the Church and State, resulting in Paine’s being charged with treason in 1792, upon which he fled to France.346 The English Jacobins greeted the French Revolution with enthusiasm, believing it a victory for the common man and heralded it as a battle for liberty and a platform for initiating parliamentary reform. Ironically though, it can be suggested that the Jacobin movement existed, and was so powerful in England, not because of their actions alone, but because of the counter movement which it propagated, the Anti-Jacobins. The Anti-

345 Mellor & Matlak, British Literature 1780-1830, p. 4.
346 Thomas Paine was later imprisoned in France, after the execution of Louis XVI. After his release he fled to America where he died in 1809.
Jacobin movement was a powerful and influential group in England and under the editorship of John Gifford, the *Anti-Jacobin Review* (1798-1821) was established.\(^{347}\) The journal’s subtitle was the *Monthly Political and Literary Censor*, and censorship is exactly what the Anti-Jacobins forged in their publication. In the ‘Preface’ to the journal’s first edition, the editor states the strong principles governing the Anti-Jacobin movement:

> We are actuated, exclusively, by an innate and deep-rooted principle of attachment to the genuine spirit of the British Constitution, and by a fixed determination to defend, to the utmost of our ability and at all hazards, those laws which protect the church and state, and which unite them in one indissoluble band.\(^{348}\)

Like Porter, Anti-Jacobin members were largely Tory sympathizers and devout Church members, even fundamental in the faith which added fervour to their conviction that Jacobinism must be eradicated.

The Jacobin Movement in England was divided into various factions, the most vocal being the literary circle, headed by William Godwin and Thomas Holcroft. Jacobin writers began using their novels, pamphlets and editorials to spread the Jacobin manifesto and many saw themselves as “the true legislators of mankind.”\(^{349}\) Among the foremost women Jacobin writers were Elizabeth Inchbald (1753-1821), Mary Hays (1760-1843), Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) and Helen Maria Williams (1762-1827) and their works clearly convey the essence of their belief that “reason should decide the issue in human affairs and human government,” especially William Godwin’s *Memoirs of the Author of Vindications of the Rights of Woman* (Mary Wollstonecraft) published in 1798.\(^{350}\) The *Anti-Jacobin Review* characterises these women, according to Mary Spongberg, in *Writing Women’s History Since the Renaissance* (2002) as “hyperemotional, frenzied and immoral” and after the publication of

\(^{347}\) The precursor to this journal was the *Anti-Jacobin; or Weekly Examiner* (1797-1798).
Wollstonecraft’s *Memoir* by Godwin, concluded that such women would inevitably effect the moral collapse in English society.\(^{351}\)

Despite the systematic campaign of detraction by the Anti-Jacobins and the editors and contributors to the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, ironically the real death-knell for the English Jacobin movement had come with the execution of Louis XVI in 1793 and the subsequent outbreak of war between England and France. Gary Kelly, in *The English Jacobin Novel 1780 –1805*, observes that after the bloody events in France in 1793 and subsequent arrest of Holcroft and Thelwell, the Jacobin novelists began to change tack, emphasising the importance of “achieving individual moral reform” and appreciating “the power of imagination and feeling.”\(^{352}\) This new generation of Jacobins, Kelly says, were thus the forerunner of the Romantics. Kelly claims that as Romanticism began to flourish the English Jacobin novel became but a past memory:

> The English Jacobin novel is transformed into the Romantic novel, or the novel of sentimental satire...just as the English Jacobin politics are transformed into nineteenth-century radical and liberal politics as the young followers of Holcroft, Godwin and Paine in the 1790s carry the struggle forward into the new century. The English Jacobin novel was born, flourished and died with English Jacobinism itself.\(^{353}\)

However, although the real momentum of the Jacobin movement had shifted away from unerring support of the French Revolution, the Anti-Jacobins (and publication of the *Anti-Jacobin Review*) continued well into the nineteenth century. The movement was driven by the constant fear and threat that the “malignant genius of Jacobinism” would manifest again, even more powerfully, should the revolution spread to England.\(^{354}\) The *Anti-Jacobin Review* encourages its readers to challenge and destroy Jacobinism, and declares that it will continue to publish as “the only true

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\(^{351}\) Spongberg, *Writing Women’s History*, p. 100.


\(^{354}\) Anon, ‘Preface’, *Anti-Jacobin Review*, p. iii.
safeguard of a constitution, under whose paternal wings the virtuous and the good may always find protection.”

Porter, a monarchist and a Tory, was also ardently Anti-Jacobin, her novels reflecting the principles advocated by the editors of the Anti-Jacobin Review. In fact, in 1801, the Anti-Jacobin Review critiqued Porter’s second novel (published anonymously in that year), The Two Princes of Persia. The review issues high praise for the lessons to be learnt from the novel and recommends it to those who were “solicitous for their offspring to profit by the dictates of virtue.”

Porter’s novels, especially Thaddeus of Warsaw, are vehicles for illustrating to her readers the need for maintaining domestic harmony, not only in the home but also in good government and the continuation of a legitimate monarchy. In Thaddeus of Warsaw, the French Revolution is juxtaposed to the story of Poland’s partitioning, which acts not only as a reminder of the need for domestic harmony but also as a warning to the people of England that they must be vigilant and the tragedy of Poland not forgotten. The annihilation of Poland must be a constant reminder of the need to keep England safe from invasion and free from revolutionary activities. Porter writes despairingly in Thaddeus of Warsaw, however, that: “The ruin of Poland was the fashionable topic for a month after it happened; and now nobody minds it – it is forgotten.”

In her novel, Porter highlights another important lesson to be learnt from Poland. She warns that England should never be seduced by the powerful nations, such as Russia, even if for a time she may be economically disadvantaged. As a nation England must stand firm, and not turn a blind eye, as she did with Poland. For Porter, England and its government and her people must stand up for what is right and, as she articulates in the novel, “not be allured from [her] principles.”

The hero of the novel, Thaddeus Sobieski, elucidates Porter’s case:

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356 Anon, ‘Novels: The Two Princes of Persia’, p.421.
Rather would I toil for subsistence by the sweat of my brow than be subjected to the necessity of acting in concert with those ravagers who destroyed my country!... Mine was ever to be a defensive sword; and should danger threaten England, I would be as ready to withstand her enemies as I ardently, though ineffectually, opposed those of unhappy Poland. (341)

Thaddeus of Warsaw was well received by both Tadeusz Kościuszko and the Polish people. Francis Zapatka in ‘Jane Porter’s Kościuszko’ reveals a letter to Jane Porter from the Polish novelist and historian, Count Henryk Krasinski (1804 – 1876), in which the Count writes of the “uncommon and extraordinary Miss Porter’s kindness for the Poles and the Polish cause.” In the letter, Count Krasinski, thanks Porter with “warmest gratitude” because, he writes, “whenever I bear in mind Thaddeus of Warsaw, I must confess that as a Pole I must be proud of your acquaintance.”

It is well documented that inspiration for Thaddeus of Warsaw arose not only from Porter’s sympathy for the plight of Poland but also for the refugees, who as a result of the partitioning, fled to other parts of Europe and England for asylum and were visible in and around the streets of London, often mistaken for refugees from France. In her ‘Preface’ to the second edition of Thaddeus of Warsaw (1831), Porter reflects on seeing these refugees and feeling great sympathy for their plight: “I remember seeing many of those hapless refugees wandering about St James’s Park. They had sad companions in miseries, though from different enemies, in the emigrants from France.” In the closing pages of the first phase of the novel, the Polish and French refugees become conflated and the plight of the Polish refugees is transposed onto English soil, enabling Porter to postulate on the domestic morality, virtue and ancient chivalry that must be maintained in order to uphold “the constitution of our country with our dearest domestic ties.”

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359 Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 32.
‘domestic’ in relation to the national interests of England and Thaddeus’ arrival in England as a refugee thus begins the second phase of the novel.

![Thaddeus Sobieski leading the Polish charge](image)

**Thaddeus, England and Domestic Conflict**

His country surrounded, his home destroyed and his beloved grandfather and mother both dead, Thaddeus Sobieski heeds the final wishes of his mother and flees to England:

> Look up, my dear boy and attend to me. Should Poland become the property of other nations, I conjure you, if you survive its fall, to leave it...I beseech you, should this happen, go that very hour to England: that is a free country, and I have been told the people are kind to the unfortunate...these are you mother’s dying prayers. (92)

Although Thaddeus has been told by his mother that his birth father is an Englishman, Thaddeus sets off to his new home with a heavy heart, believing that all is lost and every happiness gone:

> Farewell! Forever farewell! Thou beloved, revered Villanow, where I was reared in bliss and tenderness! I quit thee and my country forever...farewell, Poland! farewell all my earthly happiness! (99-100)

*Thaddeus of Warsaw* is an overtly religious novel and never does Porter apologise for her didactic writing, or its moral dimension, because she believed her novels to “be accountable to Heaven and [her] country... for

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Consequently, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, is laden with references to the proper behaviour for Christian living and the importance of living a virtuous life. A few months after Porter's death, writing in the *Art Journal* in 1850, Anna Maria Hall wrote of her:

Miss Porter placed her standard of excellence on high ground, and – all gentle-spirited as was her nature – it was firm and unflinching towards what she believed the right and the true.

The struggles of the young exile, Thaddeus, in London provide ample opportunity for Porter to comment on the dangers of domestic disharmony and the importance of domestic moral improvement. In *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, domestic disharmony, in fact, becomes a metaphor for national disharmony.

(i) London

London is an important locale in *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and functions as an active participant in the acceptance by Thaddeus of it as his new ‘home’. Thaddeus must negotiate London, understand it and be accepted by it. Leya Landau in “The Metropolis and Women Novelists in the Romantic Period” suggests that in early-nineteenth century literature, London is located in a “shifting and evolving historical context...there is a sense of London undergoing historical change...[and] defined increasingly in relation to contemporary historical events and national identity.”

Landau argues that Porter, along with Frances Burney, creates “a new kind of fictional representation of London”, using the perception of the émigré to show its emergence as a city. Landau writes that both Porter’s *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and Burney’s *The Wanderer* “depict [London] through a displaced community, and in the context of strong nationalist feeling” showing the “changing relationship [of the city] to the novel,

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362 Hall, ‘Memories of Miss Jane Porter’, p. 222.
history and different national spaces.”  

As I mention in the Introduction, in *Thaddeus of Warsaw* the cities of London and Warsaw become conflated as ‘home’. Thaddeus’ last vision of his native Warsaw is of the city keys being taken from the hands of the King, symbolic of the surrender of “their laws and national existence”. (99) For Thaddeus the streets of Warsaw are literally and metaphorically deserted. It is no longer a place which he recognises. Porter writes:

Thaddeus stopped a few minutes in the great square, which used to be crowded with happy citizens, but now, not one man was to be seen. An awful and painful silence reigned over all. His soul felt too truly the dread consciousness of this utter annihilation of his country, for him to throw off the heavy load from his oppressed heart, in this his last walk down the east street towards the ramparts which covered the Vistula. (99)

Heavy of heart, Thaddeus’ first impressions of London are as bleak as the streets he appears to be walking. In the first few days of his arrival, London does not appear to him to be “that London of which he had read with so much delight”(115). Porter expresses Thaddeus’ feelings of desolation, writing:

He looked about him with deepened sadness; the wet and plashy state of the streets gave to every object so comfortless an appearance.... Where were the magnificent buildings he expected to see in the emporium of the world? Where that cleanliness and those tokens of greatness and splendour, which had been the admiration and boast of travellers? He could nowhere discover them; all seemed parts of a dark, gloomy, common-looking city. (115)

Published in a time of war and social and industrial revolution in England, Porter wrote her novel, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, in order to show, as Jennifer Evans states, “a supposedly socially and morally more peaceful time”. Evans argues that in *Thaddeus of Warsaw* Porter, “harnesses and nourishes domestic nationalism” and at the same time “dramatizes a personal moral allegory”. What better way to show this ideology than

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by using drama as validating discourse because of its ability to conflate the public and the private, the stage being a symbolic representation of home and nation?

Porter authenticates the London which Thaddeus penetrates through her specific reference to several carefully chosen theatre productions being performed in London at the time of her writing. Given her long interest in the theatre and her own, albeit failed, play writing experience, Porter realised the enormous influence that the performance of plays could have on audiences. Porter chose George Lillo’s *The London Merchant, or, the History of George Barnwell* and August von Kotzebue’s *Sighs; or, the Daughter, a Comedy in Five Acts*, because they are modern, early-nineteenth century playwrights, contemporaries of Porter and her audience, and, their work represents the popular audience of the time in ways most useful to Porter’s polemic.\(^{367}\) The popularity of both Lillo and Kotzebue cannot be overestimated, each of them enormously productive, their plays still widely performed and critically discussed throughout the nineteenth century. Porter knew that her readers would be well aware of Lillo and Kotzebue, would have seen the plays to which she refers and would therefore be able to recognize the intertextual relationship to her novel. Jennifer Evans proposes that Thaddeus Sobieski, the hero of *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, is brought from the factual national struggle of the invasion of Poland to a fictional personal, emotional and moral struggle within the narrative of the novel. So too, I argue, the characters in the plays referenced by Porter in the novel, emerge from a factual space on the stage to a fictional space within the novel.\(^{368}\)

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368 Evans, *Improving Novels*, p. 71.
The similarities between *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and *Sighs* are startling and the importance of the reference to *Sighs* is in no small part evidenced by the space, some five pages, that Porter devotes to the scene in which Thaddeus, Lady Sara, Mary and Miss Egerton attend the play. Thaddeus sums up the similarities to Lady Tinemouth after returning from the Haymarket and also offers an explanation for his evident distress during the play’s performance:

>[T]he play relates to a native of Poland, one who, like myself, an exile in a strange land, is subjected to sufferings and contumelies the bravest spirits may find hard to bear. Any man may combat misery; but even the most intrepid will shrink from insult. This, I believe, is the sum of the story. Its resemblance in some points to my own affected me. (241)

Just as Kotzebue shows his characters in the “grip of powerful emotions”, so too Porter shows the extent to which Thaddeus is affected by the drama that unfolds on the stage, as the passion and force of Adelbert’s words, in *Sighs*, echo what Thaddeus feels in his heart:

>“Certainly none to me! To Poland, to my struggling country, I sacrificed my wealth, as I would have sacrificed my life if she had required it. My country is no more; and we are wanderers on a burdened earth, finding no refuge but in the hearts of the humane and virtuous.” (238)

The impassioned speech underlies Porter’s conviction in the importance of Christian virtue. Lady Sara Ross is also moved by the performance, although not from any nationalistic zeal but from a hope that Thaddeus may one day declare his love for her and be consoled, as is Adelbert, by the acceptance of her affections. Lady Sara asks Thaddeus, “do not you think that Adelbert is consoled, at least, by the affection of that lovely woman?” (239)

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370 This passage is quoted word perfect by Porter from the original translation of the script, however, despite her obvious intimate knowledge of the play, it is interesting that on the same page Porter cites the name of Adelbert’s love interest in the play incorrectly, Lady Sara calling the character in question “Rose” where in fact she is named Louisa, the believed daughter of Mrs Rose. This may be a deliberate misquotation to highlight that Lady Sara misunderstands the feelings of Thaddeus as he watches the drama unfold – she is only concerned with finding out if Thaddeus feels the same as Adelbert in relation to finding comfort in the love of a woman.
Porter uses the dramas, *Sighs* and *George Barnwell*, to show to her readers that it is in audience responses and interpretation where the real danger lies. Returning from the theatre, Sophie Egerton’s capricious response to the performance and non-empathetic feelings towards Thaddeus’ obvious distress is clearly evident. Porter writes:

> On their way home Miss Egerton ran over the merits of the play and farce; rallied Thaddeus on the "tall Pole," which she threatened should be his epithet whenever he offended her; and then, flying from subject to subject, talked herself and her hearers so weary, that they internally rejoiced when the carriage stopped in Grosvenor Place. (240)

Porter sees beyond the prevailing perception that Kotzebue’s plays are a threat to the social order of England, but rather are innately insistent on the value of the home and the family as being paramount to the nation’s peace and security. She shows, by the example of both her fictional hero, Thaddeus, and, Kotzebue’s fictional hero, Adelbert, that the truly virtuous and the noblest of minds will rise above temptation. Portrayed nationally on the stage with all the fervour drama permits, Porter uses the London theatre to demonstrate the importance of domestic virtue and peace.

It is through his eventual finding of domestic peace and the kindness of the people he encounters that London becomes a place where Thaddeus becomes fixed and, according to Landau, by the end of the novel his identity becomes “unfixed from Warsaw and …is increasingly identified with, and contained by, London.” ³⁷¹ Thaddeus gradually sees London not as, in Porter’s description, a “venal and corrupt space” but a place, “most lovely, most beloved.” (379) It is the Christian love and charity with which Thaddeus is accepted which exerts the greatest influence, an influence which Porter constantly reinforces in all her novels.

(ii) Domestic Virtue and the Evangelical Novel

As noted earlier, Anti-Jacobin supporters like Hannah More, opposed productions such as Kotzebue’s, just as More originally opposed the writing of novels as harmful to the nation’s morality. Although Porter and her sister, Anna Maria, were both part of the Evangelical Movement, who founded their belief on a personal apprehension of God and placed great importance on personal faith and the authority of the Bible, nevertheless they saw no serious threat in theatre productions, nor in the writing of novels. Numbers within the Movement swelled during the period of the French Revolution and leaders of the Movement initially sort authority in the Revolution’s Declaration of the Rights of Man, professing it to be a source of hope for the salvation of mankind. However, when events in France began to turn sour, after the bloody events of 1792 and the subsequent reign of terror in 1793, the Evangelical leaders and its members adopted a doctrine based on the importance of individual goodness and professed that this goodness would act as a buttress to the social and political order of England. Leaders of the Movement, such as John Wesley, John Clayton and William Wilberforce preached from the pulpit that as a people the English nation should strive to protect their country against the dangers of revolution, such as was seen in France. Championing the cause for the moral reform of England and under the auspices of Hannah More and the Clapham Sect, the novel and novel writing became one of the main vehicles for effecting this cause, especially among women. Gary Kelly in English Fiction of the Romantic Period 1789 – 1830, alleges that the Evangelical Movement went beyond effecting moral reform, to have a profound influence on literature by attempting to redefine “the idea of the self, the ‘domestic affections’, the experience of community, the nation, and nature.”

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372 The Evangelical movement was a dissenting group of the Protestant faith.
middle-class movement, the Evangelicals sought to redefine English culture and to mould British society in their image.

For women Evangelical writers, the ‘domestic hero’ was central to their texts and by definition therefore, the ideal of perfect womanhood created to correspond to this heroic concept. Hannah More, in her novel, *Coelebs in Search of a Wife* (1808), presents her heroine, Lucilla as the “ideal of wifehood, being passive, obedient, and satisfied with influence and her capacity to inspire male virtue.” The capacity for women to inspire virtue is paramount in all Porter’s novels and the eventual marriage of the hero and heroine is based on mutual esteem rather than ardent passion. In *The Scottish Chiefs* (1813), Porter writes of the marriage of the novel’s hero, William Wallace and the virtuous Helen Mar, not in terms of passion but of mutual respect and companionship:

The sacred rite was soon performed which endowed her [Helen Mar] with all the claims upon Wallace which her devoted heart had so long contemplated with resigned hopelessness – to be his helpmate on earth, his partner in the tomb, his dear companion in heaven.

Although only in its burgeoning phase when Porter wrote *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, the influences of the Evangelical Movement’s philosophies are notably prominent. The novel’s hero, Thaddeus Sobieski, vehemently endorses Porter’s conviction of the importance of living a good and virtuous life and the authority of the Bible as containing the whole truth necessary to live a Christian life. Given to him by his Mother, the Bible is Thaddeus’ most treasured possession. Thaddeus says to his landlady, Mrs Robson:

No Mrs Robson,...it is this book which brings me rest. I may amuse myself with others, but this alone contains perfect beauty, perfect wisdom and perfect peace. It is the only infallible soother of human sorrows. (123)

375 Spongberg, *Writing Women’s History*, p. 113
In her ‘Preface’ to *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, Porter assures her readers that in writing her novel she wishes only to show “that virtue is the highest proof of understanding... and the only solid basis of greatness.”(14) Porter, like her good friend and fellow Evangelist, Hannah More, believed that a large amount of the literature being written, mainly that originating in France, had a corrupting influence on those who read such texts. Porter declares in the ‘Preface’ that she wrote in order to show the evils of “selfish passions – ambition, covetousness, and the vanities of life,”(13) not only for the individual but also for the nation as a whole. In a letter to a friend Porter explains that when she and her sister:

began to write for publication, we regarded our works not as a pastime for ourselves, or a mere amusement for others, but as the use to be made of an entrusted talent ‘given to us for a purpose’: and for every word we set down in our pages we believe we must be responsible to Heaven and to our country.377

For Thaddeus Sobieski as the dominant protagonist of the novel, it is the interaction with his mother in Poland, and the women that he encounters in his new life in England, which provides the action, drama and intrigue in the novel. As with many other women novelists of the period, Porter highlights the importance of women performing their ‘domestic’ duties and shows that any deviation can have dire social consequences. Jane West, a contemporary of Porter’s, also believed ardently in women adhering to their proper domestic station in life. Writing about her fallen heroine, Geraldine Monteith, in a *Tale of the Times* (1799), West explains that:

The annihilation of thrones and altars are not due to the successful arms of France but to those principles which by dissolving domestic confidence and undermining private worth paved the way for universal confusion.378


Geraldine Montieth’s supposed clandestine relationship with the scheming Fitzosbourne results not only in the destruction of her marriage but also the removal of her children from her care. Many critics believe that Geraldine’s seduction can be read as representing the possible seduction of England by the revolutionaries in France. Like Porter, West was a fiercely anti-Jacobin writer who used her writing to preach to her readers the virtues of Christian living and the dangers of destabilising the status quo. As with More and other Anti-Jacobin women writers, Porter saw the breakdown in domestic harmony as representative of the breakdown in national security. The centre of this domestic harmony was the woman, responsible for the customs, manners and morals of society. This notion of women as the domestic stalwarts harks back to Burke’s Reflections, in which he asserts that the revolution in France reached the depths of depravity with the slaying of their Queen, Marie Antoinette, who he believed to be a “delightful vision...full of life, splendor and joy.”

According to Spongberg, Burke portrays Marie Antoinette as “vulnerable, sexually innocent and entirely victimised.”

The women in Thaddeus of Warsaw all have an impact on Thaddeus’ life in various ways, some positive and others negative. It is interesting how the women especially propel the plot of the novel when Thaddeus finds himself a refugee in England. Prior to arriving in England, Therese Sobieski, his mother, was the only woman who had touched the young Count’s life, impressing upon him the importance of living the good and virtuous life. It is only on the eve of his nineteenth birthday that Therese reveals the true history of his birth and the name of his father, and as Thaddeus says, producing the “first unhappy hour I ever knew.” Therese Sobieski embodies all the virtues of a good Christian and devoted mother, referred to as the “sainted Therese” by Thaddeus’ father, Sir Robert Somerset. It is Therese who gives her son the Bible, which he

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379 Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 73
380 Spongberg, Writing Women’s History, p.54.
constantly finds solace in and is, in Porter’s words, the “ark of his strength”.(289)

In England, however, the women portrayed by Porter range from the kindly Mrs Robson, who takes Thaddeus into her home, the gentle but sad Lady Tinemouth, who befriends Thaddeus, the love struck Lady Ross and Euphemia Dundas, both of whom have designs on the young hero, and Mary Beaufort, for whom Therese Sobieski is the archetype, and the heroine in whom Thaddeus finds a true companion. Porter portrays Lady Sara Ross and the Dundas sisters as dangerous women, who by their thoughtless and selfish actions cause anxiety and public embarrassment for Thaddeus. Porter shows, however, in Thaddeus’ steadfast refusal of Lady Sara’s advances (and Euphemia’s childish fantasies), the importance of maintaining the moral order. Unlike Jane West’s, A Tale of the Times, Thaddeus does not fall victim to his seducers and by doing so not only saves them from social ruin but also secures the love of the virtuous Mary. Nicola Watson, in Revolution and the Form of the British Novel, asserts that Lady Sara Ross is modelled explicitly on Madam de Staël’s heroine, from her novel Delphine (1802), arguing that like the heroine, Delphine, Lady Sara threatens to “overturn the social order” because she is a married woman and because her husband is away fighting for England in the British navy.\(^{381}\) As a naval officer’s wife therefore, Lady Sara Ross, by extension, also threatens to overturn the national order. In her later novel, The Scottish Chiefs (1810), Porter again uses the adulterous wife, Lady Mar, to demonstrate the impact of infidelity is not limited to the domestic level but also affects the national level.\(^{382}\)

As a Christian, and more significantly an Evangelical, Porter depicts Lady Sara as a woman who is lost and in need of salvation, led astray by the

\(^{381}\) Watson, Revolution and the Form of the British Novel, p. 122.

\(^{382}\) Lady Mar will be discussed in more detail in a later chapter on The Scottish Chiefs. There is reference in this later novel to the early years of the Queen Caroline affair. The scandal was much publicised and discussed in newspapers at the time Porter was writing The Scottish Chiefs (1810).
example of heroines such as Delphine. The narrator of *Thaddeus of Warsaw* says of Lady Sara:

> The instant she beheld the Count Sobieski, she formed the wish to entangle him in her flowery chain...she expected to receive ...a rare tenderness... and romantic passion! – the fashion of the day ever since the extravagant French Romances, such as Delphine, and the like came in. (168)

Marriage for Porter was sacred and its existence and maintenance vital to the well being of society. Deeply troubled by Lady Sara’s advances, Thaddeus firmly tells Lady Sara that “a breach of the marriage vow could be an outrage on the laws of Heaven.”(230)

Novel reading by women was one of the most contested areas of discussion in England in the late-eighteenth century because it was a commonly held belief that “novels raised false expectations of life” and therefore had the potential for leading women astray by fuelling their fears and fantasies. Of course the advent of the circulating libraries made novels accessible for most women, especially bourgeois middle-class women, who relished reading of the lives and loves of heroes and heroines. Young Euphemia Dundas, for whom Thaddeus is employed to teach German, spends a great deal of her time reading fiction and as the narrator of *Thaddeus of Warsaw* exclaims:

> Not content with devouring the elegant pages of Mackenzie, Radcliffe, and Lee, she flew with voracious appetite to sate herself on the garbage of any circulating library that fell in her way. (190)

Euphemia models herself on the heroines in those novels, acting out the part from dress to behaviour and speech. Constantly imitating these heroines, she pursues Thaddeus who believes that she must have no character of her own. In Mary Hays’ novel, *Memoirs of Emma Courtney* (1796), Mr Courtney warns his daughter, Emma, of the dangers of reading Romances:

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'It is as I apprehended, said he: 'your fancy requires a rein rather than a spur. Your studies for the future, must be of a sober nature, or I shall have you mistake my valet for a prince in disguise, my house for a haunted castle, and my rational care for your future welfare for barbarous tyranny.'

Thaddeus concludes that Euphemia pursues him romantically merely from “idleness, caprice and contradiction” necessitating him to “repay her overtures with decided contempt.” (248)

Circulation of novels became wide-spread as large numbers were available from Europe for the English market. As more and more novels from France and Germany made their way into the circulating libraries, the more fashionable, and indeed ‘necessary’ it became for young bourgeois women, such as the Dundas sisters, to learn these languages. Thaddeus was employed specifically by Mrs Dundas to teach her two daughters German. Determined to learn German, Euphemia declares to her elder sister Diana:

I want at once to be like you, a woman of great erudition: and for that purpose I will study day and night at the German, till I can read all the philosophers, and be a fit companion for my sister. (189)

Middle and upper-class women were not only feverishly reading during this period but also writing novels themselves, some in order to support themselves and their families. Women writers became a significant force within the literary market place. While some women writers wrote ‘serious’ novels, many however, wrote extravagant romances and fantasies, preoccupied with passion, excess and transgressions – novels deplored by Evangelical writers such as Porter, West and More.

Porter is consistent throughout her novels with regard to her heroines and as mentioned previously, eventual marriage of the hero and heroine is always based on mutual esteem rather than ardent passion. Mary

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Beaufort is in awe of the young soldier and follows his brave exploits on the battlefields of Poland with much interest, not realising at first that Thaddeus is in fact this very soldier. His good friend Lady Tinemouth tells him: “Ah! Little does Miss Beaufort think, when seated by your side, that she is conversing with the youthful hero whom she has so often wished to see.”(260) Mary is the equal of Thaddeus in her compassion, virtue and fierce loyalty. Their eventual marriage is a union of two like souls. Lady Tinemouth astutely observes how pure Mary’s love for Thaddeus is, musing to herself: “How different was the spirit of this pure and dignified love to the wild passion she had seen shake from the frame of Lady Sara Ross.” (273)

In a review of the novel published in the *Imperial Review* in 1804, the author states that “Mary bears little resemblance to the modern dames of novels” because of her “dignified tenderness” and her courage and her modesty that is carried with pride.385 In contrast to Lady Sara Ross and Euphemia Dundas, Mary Beaufort always places the feelings of others above her own and treats everyone with sincere compassion. In comparing Mary Beaufort to other women of the same wealth and position, Thaddeus contemplates “with delighted wonder that spotless mind which, having passed through the various ordeals annexed to wealth and fashion, still bore itself uncontaminated.”(314-5) He realises that although beautiful, she remains humble, although accomplished, she does not make a display of her talents. In Mary Beaufort, Porter creates the ideal of perfect womanhood, who inspires virtue not only in Thaddeus but in everyone with whom she comes in contact. Mary Beaufort is part of the growing list of Evangelical heroines, created to, in Mary Spongberg’s terms, “challenge the ‘post-Revolutionary aversion to women in the public sphere’”.386 Through the depiction of heroines such as Mary Beaufort, and later Marion Wallace and Helen Mar in *The Scottish Chiefs*, Porter constructs a domestic place, which, as Gary Kelly in “Women Novelists

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385 Anon, ‘Thaddeus of Warsaw’ [review], *Imperial Review*, p.5.
and the French Revolution Debate” argues, “advanced subjectivity and domesticity as sites and sources of a new...national identity, culture, and destiny.”

Arriving in England, Thaddeus observes and experiences a conspicuous breakdown of domestic harmony, from petty squabbles to infidelity to family derision, in all of which he finds himself at the centre. Having escaped from the battlefields of Poland to England, Thaddeus hopes to seek refuge but instead finds himself embattled in a different way. Only twelve months after leaving Poland, he finds himself similarly penniless, disowned and disinherited in the place where he had sought solace. Porter tells her readers of Thaddeus’ plight:

> It was the 10th of October, 1795, that the Count Sobieski commenced this lonely and melancholy journey. It was the 10th of October in the preceding year that he found the veteran palatine [his grandfather] bleeding to death in the midst of a heap of slain. The coincidence of his renewed banishment and present consequent mental sufferings with those of that fatal period powerfully affected him. (379)

Just as the partitioning of Poland left Thaddeus without a family, a home, or a country, so too the domestic disharmony endured by Thaddeus in London becomes so great that he vows to leave England. Ironically, however, he is rescued from his plight by his father who had abandoned him at birth and later vehemently disowned him when he first heard of Thaddeus’ arrival in London.

In the second section of *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, Porter skilfully shows therefore how the breakdown in domestic harmony has repercussions that impact on the nation as a whole, but in the third phase of the story of Thaddeus, she reveals the importance of maintaining domestic harmony and perhaps more emphatically, the importance of an English blood-line. It is not enough for Thaddeus to take on the characteristics of an Englishman. In order to be able to truly call England his home, Porter

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gives Thaddeus English paternity, thus legitimizing him as a true Englishman. In the closing pages Porter writes how: “Sir Robert, with unspeakable emotion, clasped the hand of his first-born ...and the spirit of his father was now at peace.” (408)

**Thaddeus Becomes an Englishman: Reflections on ‘Home’** 388

The third and final phase of the history of Thaddeus Sobieski commences at the point in the novel when Thaddeus discovers the identity of his father. However, not just content with giving Thaddeus an English father, Porter goes one step further and, as Nicola Watson describes it, “laces up the tear in history” and through “a series of exquisitely convoluted gyrations” reveals to Thaddeus (and the reader) that he is also a legitimate descendent of Charles Edward Stuart (the Young Pretender). 389 Historically, Porter is insightful in revealing Thaddeus as being a direct descendent from the Stuart line, even though on a surface analysis it could be assumed that this connection would in fact dissipate Thaddeus’ national standing. However, by giving Thaddeus a connection to the Stuart line, Porter actually offers an astute historical affirmation of his legitimacy, ironically this may seem, as an Englishman. As previously discussed, Porter was a true monarchist and believed ardently in the legitimate succession of the English crown. In the ‘Preface’ to her novel *Duke Christian of Luneberg* (1824), Porter addresses George the Fourth, outlining her reasons for writing the novel, commissioned by the then Prince Regent himself, and acknowledges her conviction of the legitimacy of the English crown and its succession. Porter writes:

> They succeeded the delight to real patriotism, of tracing the glory of England, in the ancestors of her Sovereign – the hereditary descent of the royal virtues, which for nearly two centuries have sealed the Magna Carta of Great Britain – the spirit of protection, rather than of conquest – the magnanimous heart, curbing the brave hand. 390

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388 The term English encompasses Scotland, Wales and Ireland unless otherwise stated
390 Porter, *Duke Christian of Luneburg*, p. i
Having read Edmund Burke’s *Reflections*, Porter understood that the Glorious Revolution of 1688 had restored the direct line of hereditary succession, a revolution, unlike the French, where no blood was shed. Burke explains in his letter that King James the Second was “a bad king, with a good title.” Burke elucidates:

He came in according to the law, as it stood at his accession to the crown; and the princes of the House of Brunswick came to the inheritance of the crown, not by election, but by the law, as it was their several accessions of Protestant descent and inheritance.

Burke goes on to assert that in the Act of Settlement in 1701 Princess Sophia was named as the successor to the throne in order to secure a Protestant line of succession and also to strengthen the parliamentary system, which had suffered under the reign of James II. Burke justifies the appointment of Princess Sophia because she was the daughter of Princess Elizabeth, late Queen of Bohemia, who was in turn was the daughter of the late James the First. Thus a legitimate Protestant line of succession was established, one, however, that could still be traced back to the Stuart line and therefore, as Burke argues, a legitimate blood line to the throne was preserved:

The Princess Sophia was named in the Act of Settlement of the 12th and 13th of King William, for a stock and root of inheritance to our kings, and not for her merits as a temporary administratrix of a power, which she might not, and in fact did not, herself ever exercise. She was adopted for one reason, and for one only, because, says the act, “the most excellent Princess Sophia, Electress and Duchess Dowager of Hanover, is the daughter of the most excellent Princess Elizabeth, late Queen of Bohemia, daughter of our late sovereign lord King James the First”.  

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Porter has neatly linked the two histories of the English monarchy and Thaddeus Sobieski through the Stuart bloodline, remembering that Thaddeus’ grandmother was Maria Clementina Sobieski, the mother of Prince Charles Edward, son of James the Second. This historical connection establishes Thaddeus as truly an Englishman and England is now legitimately his ‘home’. Thaddeus is therefore, as Nicola Watson contends, “safely domesticated in the interests of national security”, and his revolutionary lineage/inheritance is safely domesticated in the interests of national security. He is revealed as a true and legitimate Englishman, removed from the battlefields of Poland to domestic bliss in England.

The heroine of *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, the virtuous Mary Beaufort, not only steals the heart of the young Count but provides him with, as Porter says, “soil and surety.” Significantly, when discussing the women of *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, critics, both contemporary and recent tend to focus on the character of Lady Sara Ross, and/or the young Euphemia Dundas, rather than Mary Beaufort. Nicola Watson and Ann Jones in their studies of the novel do not mention or critique Mary as a character at all. Jennifer Evans, in her thesis *Improving Novels: Validating Discourses and Didacticism in British Women’s Novels, 1800 – 1820*, does validate Mary’s key role, although only briefly, and does not analyse her character in any depth. Evans states that Mary Beaufort is a pivotal character in the novel, because not only does she rescue Thaddeus from prison but in marrying him “provides the union with property and fortune.” It is also Mary who discovers the previously unknown ancestry of Thaddeus, revealing him to be a descendent of Charles Edward, the Young Pretender. Evans argues that by providing Thaddeus with a position and a fortune,

Mary brings Thaddeus “under strict and very feminised control and management.” While Mary Beaufort does certainly secure Thaddeus’ future it is not “feminised control” that Porter wishes her hero to be harnessed by, but rather ‘domestic control’. The revelation that Thaddeus is a direct descendent of the Stuart line, means that he is now a true Englishman, and further, through his marriage to Mary he is posited securely within the domestic realm of not just Beaufort Manor but also England. He has been rescued from the forces of revolution, safe within the status quo of good government and secure and legitimate monarchy.

The union of Mary and Thaddeus, not only joins two important families in England, the Beauforts and the Somersets, but as Porter writes in the closing pages of the novel, it also heals the “bleeding conscience of Sir Robert Somerset” (419) and establishes Thaddeus in “his new British character.” (434)

‘Home’ is a significant theme in Thaddeus of Warsaw and in her novel Porter raises salient issues concerned with exile and estrangement, legitimacy and belonging and what it is to be an ‘Englishman’. Remembering the Reflections of Edmund Burke, who wrote of the importance of family, loyalty, hearth and home, in Porter’s novel we see this discourse expanded to include the “greater family made by the nation, a hierarchy with the king at its head” and also the importance of a genealogical continuity with the past. As previously discussed, the literature of this period reflected the uncertainties and instability wrought by the constant threat of revolution, both in France and within England’s own borders. Very aware of this, Porter vigorously defends England as

397 Evans, Improving Novels, p.71.
398 Porter probably chose the name Beaufort intentionally because it was revered in England, just as the Sobieski name was revered in Poland. The Beaufort dukedom can be traced back to John of Gaunt, who was the son of Edward III. Gaunt’s sons were believed to be illegitimate because they were thought to have been born out of wedlock. It was later confirmed that he had indeed married Katherine Swynford, however, and his sons were therefore ‘legitimised’ by the Pope. Thaddeus, of course, was believed to be an illegitimate son but in the closing pages of the novel it is revealed that his father, Robert Somerset, had in fact married Therese Sobieski and Thaddeus was therefore his true and legitimate son. History shows that the Beaufort family was deeply loyal to the English monarchy, supporting them both on the battlefields and financially.
399 Butler, Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries, p. 4.
'home' and uses her hero, Thaddeus, as a healing figure who by his actions restores the good names of Sobieski and Somerset, freeing his father, Lord Robert Somerset, from the guilt that had weighed so heavily upon him from having disowned and denied his first born, and by extension the guilt of England for having abandoned Poland. Lord Somerset exclaims: “‘I drove my first born to be a wanderer on the face of the earth... Oh, Thaddeus, my son,” cried he, “can I be forgiven for all this, in this world or in the next?’”(399)

As outlined in my Introduction, in The Politics of Home (1999), Rosemary Marangoly George explores the nature of ‘home’ and illustrates how when people are displaced or exiled, the idea of ‘home’ can be shrunk to denote the private and the domestic, and, inflated to represent the national and the public. Thus, as previously emphasised, “imagining a home is as political an act as is imagining a nation.”400 In a later study on the nature of ‘home’, Susan Strehle in Transnational Women’s Fiction: Unsettling Home and Homeland (2008), describes ‘home’ as reflecting and resembling nation, writing that “home does the business of nation and carries its agendas forward in time, producing the subjects of nation and empire.”401 Both Marangoly George’s and Strehle’s definitions of ‘home’ are particularly pertinent to Thaddeus of Warsaw, because the concept of ‘home’ and belonging, in relation to England, is at the novel’s core. According to Marangoly George, when a people lose their land/country, they also lose their social, moral and economic foundations and it is important therefore to find new foundations.402 Exiled from his home country, Poland, a refugee in a foreign land with no economic or family base, Thaddeus finds himself without home, security or a sense of identity, feeling as Poland did, abandoned and “suffered to be sacrificed, annihilated, destroyed.”403 It is not until his father, Sir Robert Somerset,

401 Strehle, Transnational Women’s Fiction, p. 1.
403 Letter by Charles Fox in 1796, quoted in McLean, ‘When Hope Bade the World Farewell’, p.179.
formally acknowledges that Thaddeus is his son that the young exile can truly now feel at ‘home’ in England.

Keenly aware that her novel draws on facts of real history and portrays true historical figures, in the closing chapter Porter beautifully unites the historical and fictional relationship between Tadeusz Kościusko and Thaddeus Sobieski, giving the novel a fully-realised sense of closure and authenticity. As previously stated, the first ten chapters of the novel are heavy with the presence of the Polish hero, Tadeusz Kościusko, as he fights alongside the fictional Thaddeus, for the survival of their king and country. Thaddeus is in awe of the great General and is distraught when he is wounded in the battle of Maciejowice and lies lifeless in his arms. Leaving Poland forever, Thaddeus believes his hero to be dead, along with his beloved country. But the final few paragraphs witness the return of Kościusko into the arms of Thaddeus in his new home, England. The fictional year is 1797, the actual year that Kościusko visited England prior to his travelling to America. Kościusko arrived in England a hero and “people besieged his hotel to pay him a visit...some could not restrain their tears on seeing him.”404 Porter’s hero, Thaddeus Sobieski, greets Kościusko with as much emotion, embracing the beloved General and crying “I am indeed favored above mortals. I see thee again.”(444) Now, finally content in his new home, England, Thaddeus happily blesses the Polish General claiming that “I have all that remains of my country now within my arms.”(444) Porter writes how “[t]he gracious providence of God” has delivered Thaddeus to a “better life, a better country”,(444) a far cry from the desperate young Count who left his beloved Poland, believing in his heart then, that “England could be nothing to him; if anything it would prove a desert.”(103) The final image of Thaddeus embracing Kościusko is a powerful one. Francis Zapatka in his article “Jane Porter’s Kościusko” argues that Porter creates both a tactile and visual echo in this final chapter because for Thaddeus, Kościusko’s appearance is like a

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resurrection from the dead, whereby: “At Maciejowice, Sobieski’s “breast” is bathed in Kościuszko’s blood, in London, Sobieski’s head is bathed in Kościuszko’s tears.”405 This image is reflected in the earlier scene when Sir Robert embraces Thaddeus also in a veil of tears. Like Kościuszko, Thaddeus’ appearance at Beaufort is like a resurrection from the dead. Both are cathartic moments in Thaddeus’ life.

In the next chapter I will explore the way in which Porter links nationalism and domestic harmony. Using Scotland as her vehicle, similar to the way in which she uses Poland in Thaddeus of Warsaw, in The Scottish Chiefs Porter argues emphatically that in order to maintain domestic peace a strong sense of nationalism must be fostered and a legitimate monarchy safeguarded.

Chapter Three: Nationalist Discourse in *The Scottish Chiefs*

It was with a great deal of courage that [Porter] took her quill in hand to write *The Scottish Chiefs* ...[her] genius made it possible for the skeptical [sic] public of her time to accept the work of a “female” writer...[and her novel is a] masterpiece of storytelling which [has] proved itself to be...[a] breathless romantic thriller as popular today as it was more than a century ago!

*(Classics Illustrated 1950)*

**Introduction and Literary Antecedents**

In this chapter I will investigate how Porter inextricably links the struggles of her hero William Wallace to that of his native Scotland. By doing this Porter blurs the line between the domestic and the national, creating a model for British nationalism, which in the early-nineteenth century was of paramount importance given Britain’s constant threat of invasion from France. After the brutal slaying of his beloved wife Marion, Scotland becomes for Wallace his “mistress, wife and child”.(28) The domestic and the national are thus conflated. In *The Scottish Chiefs* (1810), Scotland’s fight for her freedom from the invading Southrons and the return of the crown to the legitimate heir, is analogous to Britain’s fear of a French invasion and the desolation of the British monarchy from the “pretensions of a mushroom emperor and his parvenu state...”.

In *Thaddeus of Warsaw* Porter links the two histories of the English

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406 ‘The Scottish Chiefs’, *Classics Illustrated*. Adapted by John O’Rourke, illustrated by Alex A. Blum. No. 67, January 1950.

407 Linda Colley, *The Apotheosis of George III: Loyalty, Royalty and the British Nation 1760-1820*, *Past and Present*, No. 102 (Feb 1984), p.111. It is interesting that Porter uses the term ‘Southron’ to refer to the English soldiers. It was not in use in the time of Wallace, but it is used by Blind Harrie in *Wallace*. The OED cites the first use of the word Southron as being Blind Harrie’s *Wallace* in 1470. Porter is the third entry in the OED for her use of the word in *The Scottish Chiefs*. This is a clear indication that Porter did consult *Wallace* as background to her novel. It also is a useful term for Porter to use as it allows her to avoid the term ‘English’ and so soften any negative impact on her predominantly English readers.
monarchy and that of Thaddeus Sobieski. In *The Scottish Chiefs* she transposes Scotland’s War of Independence onto Britain’s wars against France and America. The victory of William Wallace, and of Scotland, is understood by nineteenth-century readers of the novel therefore, as representing Britain’s victory over Napoleon. Whilst in *Thaddeus of Warsaw* Porter carefully constructs her concept of ‘home’ and what it is to be ‘English’, in *The Scottish Chiefs* Porter explores the concept of ‘nationalism’ and what it is to be ‘British’.

As *The Scottish Chiefs* is a long, exhaustive account of Scotland’s fight for freedom and the consolidation of it as a nation, I will divide this chapter into two key discussions, with various subheadings, in order to address the main themes Porter addresses in her novel. The first part of the chapter will focus on why Porter chose William Wallace to be the main protagonist of her novel, and if in fact he is. This section will also look at the significance of the Scottish clan system in relation to Porter’s overall nationalist ideology, and, a possible reason why she chose to title the book *The Scottish Chiefs* rather than after its hero, William Wallace. The second part of the chapter will look at nationalism as exemplified by Scotland’s struggle for freedom and recent critical interpretations of the theme of nationalism in the text.

For Porter, Christian and domestic virtue is inextricably linked to national order because it embodies courage, consistency and resolution. Each of these traits are evident in all Porter’s heroes, and I would also include her heroines as well. William Wallace, the historical hero of *The Scottish Chiefs*, encapsulates all, according to Porter, that is wise and virtuous. Like her previous hero, Thaddeus Sobieski, Wallace is imbued with the principles of heroic virtue; he is chivalrous, his courage is dauntless and his consistency in his friendships and loyalty to his country is the overriding motive for all his actions.
In a letter to her sister dated 1823, Porter recalls how the idea for *The Scottish Chiefs* came to her:

> But on retiring to the seclusion of the country the memory of other days came with me and the memory of past heroes came in the clouds and I wrote the Scottish Chiefs.\(^{408}\)

Although leaving Edinburgh for London at the age of fourteen, Porter held on to the ‘memory’ of her time in Scotland with much fondness, as evidenced in her letter, and especially stories she heard of the Scottish heroes William Wallace and Robert the Bruce.\(^{409}\) Porter wrote *The Scottish Chiefs* despite intimating in a letter to her sister in 1805, that her next novel would be dedicated to the history of Charles Edward. She writes to Anna Maria:

> One thing I say now, I seriously think of adopting the subject of Charles Edward, so don’t breathe it to anybody, in case I am forestalled… .Charles Edward shall be the first. I should have much of my bosom ardours and perhaps my cherished prejudices in favour of Scotland and the race of Stuart, to animate me. In short I could soon work myself into a passion for the work and then the difficulties will all vanish.\(^{410}\)

The question needs to be asked, as to why Porter chose the thirteenth-century hero William Wallace over Charles Edward as the central figure for her new historical novel? I would argue that there are two reasons for her choice of hero. The first is that she wishes to give to her readers a hero who, despite being an ordinary man, rallied together a nation in turmoil, a fight that would eventually result in consolidating rival nations into one and securing it “on lasting foundations”.\(^{411}\) The second reason is

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408 Letter from Jane Porter to Anna Maria Porter, 1823 (Huntington Library, POR 62).
409 It is interesting to note that just prior to Porter writing the letter to her sister in 1823, King George IV became the first English king to visit Scotland since Charles II in 1650. To honour the occasion King George wore a tartan kilt, the visit becoming a defining moment for the Scottish people. News of King George's visit was well documented and in fact Sir Walter Scott was heavily involved in the preparations for the visit. See for example, Anon, 'The King's Visit to Scotland', *Times*, (7 September 1822), p. 2; Ian Duncan, *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); Colley, *Britons Forging the Nation*; Steven Parissien, *George IV: Inspiration of the Regency*, (New York: St Martin’s Press, 2001).
the surge in English interest in the Scottish hero around this time. In 1798 poet Robert Southey wrote “The Death of Wallace”, using Wallace’s death, says Colin Kidd, “as a vehicle for the condemnation of tyranny” in the wake of the revolution occurring in France. In the 1805 version of *The Prelude*, Wordsworth explains “how he contemplated the composition of an epic poem on the theme of how Wallace fought for Scotland, leaving his name on the landscape.” Then in 1809 Margaret Holford published *Wallace, or the Fight of Falkirk*, writing in the ‘Dedication’ how she believes the story of William Wallace “expresses a proud English patriotism”. Holford writes:

> And deem not, jealous for our native land, 
> With alien step I sought the billowy Forth, 
> Whence led a pilgrim by the Muse’s hand, 
> I climb’d the rude hills of the stormy north, 
> And sung her songs – their hardihood and worth!  

Porter appears to have connected with Holford’s new form of English patriotism as the next year she published *The Scottish Chiefs*.

The history of Scotland comprises countless invasions, wars and alliances and boasts a tradition rich in poets, painters, authors and philosophers that have emerged over the centuries. The first people to inhabit the land arrived 7,000 years BC and by the end of the fourth-century AD four separate peoples co-existed (Picts, Angles, Britons and Scots), until in the eighth century the Norse invaders arrived, sparking many centuries of wars, concluding in 1263 with Alexander III’s defeat of the Norsemen, resulting in the Scots and Picts uniting and establishing Scotia, with its capital Scone. Peace prevailed then until the English invasion in 1296, under the command of Edward I. Thirty years of war ensued, ending with the Battle of Bannockburn, and Robert the Bruce proclaimed as the rightful Scottish king. A long convoluted history followed until in 1707

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414 Quoted in Kidd, ‘The English Cult of Wallace’, p.143. Kidd believes that this may have in fact been by way of an apology however for her “apparently unpatriotic choice of subject”!
Queen Anne signed the Act of Union, officially bringing under one reign the kingdoms of England, Scotland and Wales, creating the Kingdom of Great Britain. This did not ensure peace however, with many uprisings and rebellions occurring after 1707, most notably the failed Jacobite rising of 1745. Nevertheless, despite constant defeat, the Scottish people became stronger in their heritage, producing poets such as Robert Burns (1750-1796), philosophers and historians Adam Smith (1723 - 1790) and David Hume (1711 - 1776), the painter Henry Raeburn (1756 - 1823), poet and journalist Thomas Campbell (1777 - 1844) and novelist Walter Scott (1771-1832). Freedom is one of the most enduring struggles faced by the Scottish people, and the spirit of this is found in the words of the declaration signed at Arbroath in 1320, arguably one of the most important documents in Scottish history. The document is in the form of a letter to the then Pope, John XXII, from the Scottish king, Robert I and leading earls and barons, asking that he, Pope John, write to Edward II that peace be made between the kingdoms of Scotland and England, granting freedom to the people of Scotland. The declaration begins:

Most Holy Father and Lord, we know, and we gather from the chronicles and books of the ancients that among other distinguished nations our own, namely of Scots, has been marked by many distinctions...For we fight not for glory, nor riches, nor honours, but for freedom alone, which no good man gives up except with his life.

The spirit of this fight for freedom can be traced back through Scottish history, significantly during the Scottish Wars of Independence, which were for Scotland, a defining period in their struggle for independence and freedom, laying down the foundation for a strong and proud nation. It was

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415 The information on Scotland’s history was taken from Grant and Stringer, *Uniting the Kingdom*?

416 In the eighteenth century Edinburgh was known as the Athens of the North and was the centre of law, literature and the arts. It should also be noted that while this list comprises names that are part of a United Kingdom canon, they have been subsequently drafted into the canon of English writings. For a full history of the kingdoms of England and Scotland see Grant and Stringer, *Uniting the Kingdom*?.

in the year 1296, on the eve of the first War of Independence that Porter begins her story of *The Scottish Chiefs*.

*The Scottish Chiefs* follows the life of William Wallace and tells the story of his fight to protect Scotland from invasion from Edward's army. Returning home from having been given responsibility by Sir John Monteith for safe guarding a small iron box, containing Scottish holy relics, Wallace rescues the Earl of Mar from enemy Southron soldiers, killing one of them. The enemy soldiers hunt Wallace down, but not finding him at home, the leader, Heselrigge, murders Wallace’s wife, Marion, when she staunchly refuses to disclose Wallace’s whereabouts. Spurred into action by the death of his beloved wife, at the hands of the enemy, Wallace kills Heselrigge, vowing that “he has nothing now that binds me to life but my country”. (28) Wallace leads a series of victorious campaigns against the invading English forces, culminating in the victorious defeat of the English at Stirling Bridge. Although Wallace is asked to accept the Scottish crown, he refuses, insisting that the title belongs to Robert the Bruce. Robert the Bruce’s father had betrayed the Scottish people and had fought beside the English army, however, the younger Robert the Bruce sides with Wallace, winning several strategic battles against the English, the most crushing being the Battle of Bannockburn. Robert the Bruce is finally crowned king after Wallace’s death. Concurrent with the historical story of Wallace and his campaign for Scotland’s freedom is the interwoven story of the fictional characters, the Earl of Mar, his daughter Helen, his wife, the much younger, Joanna Mar and his nephew Edwin Ruthven. Having saved the Earl from certain death, Wallace becomes kindred to the Mar family, rescuing Helen from the hands of the evil Lord Soulis and becoming the sexual fantasy of Joanna and hero to the younger Edwin, who ultimately lays down his life to save that of Wallace. Despite renouncing all women upon the death of his wife, Wallace marries Helen, just prior to his death in the Tower of London. The union of Helen and Wallace is not sexual but rather “the
chaste union of two spotless hearts”(486), Helen becomes the “handmaiden”418 of Wallace and after having transported his heart back to his ancestral land after his death, she dies of a broken heart beside the coffin, an observer quoting from the lament of David to Saul and Jonathon, that “they loved in life in their lives, and in their deaths they shall not be divided”.519 The precious casket given to Wallace at the commencement of the story is discovered and on being opened is found to contain the Royal Scottish regalia by which Bruce is anointed as king. Heir to the English throne, Edward II, withdraws his troops from Scotland and the novel ends with a declaration that “Scotland is free, and Bruce is a king indeed”.519

*The Scottish Chiefs* was first published in five volumes in 1810, the year that the tenth edition of Porter’s first novel, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, was released. Although not as immediately popular as *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, *The Scottish Chiefs* went on to become one of the most popular and widely read novels of the nineteenth century, publication records showing that in fact it was still being re-published as late as 1922, and as recently as a Broadview edition in 2007. As with *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, it was translated into many languages and distributed across many continents. Porter gained much notoriety with the popularity of her second novel and critics’ reviews were lavish in their praise. Just after its release, the *Monthly Mirror* wrote:

Miss Porter’s last and just published work, *The Scottish Chiefs*, is a romance founded on one of the most interesting periods of Scottish history; and its effects on the enthusiasm of her hero’s country have lately been displayed by public commemorations in the very scenes of his most celebrated actions.419

The most widely read female poet of the nineteenth century, Felicia Hemans (1793-1835), in a letter to Matthew Nicholson in 1811, writes of her admiration for Porter’s novel:

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Poet, dramatist and member of the Blue Stocking Circle, Joanna Baillie (1762-1851), honours Porter in the ‘Preface’ to her ‘Metrical Legends’ (1821), writing that “it is a romance deservedly popular”, and later in her explanatory notes states that Porter offers “a powerful description of her hero” and praises Porter for the “terrific sublimity” of her novel.421 In 1833, the Chambers’ Edinburgh Journal was lavish in its praise of the novel, writing how on “its first appearance, it made an almost electrical impression”.422 In the ‘Review of New Publications’, the Gentleman’s Magazine reported on the historical accuracy of the novel, and Porter’s historical sources, writing that:

Miss Porter, it seems, has consulted almost every work extant founded on the transactions of England and Scotland during the period of her narrative: the list is numerous, and …tradition has afforded her much assistance and she is indebted to her invaluable friend Mr Thomas Campbell.423

Porter dedicated her novel to the Scottish poet, writer and editor, Thomas Campbell (1777 – 1844), who was a good friend and assisted Porter in the early stages of the novel by providing her with an outline of William Wallace’s life. Porter writes warmly of her admiration for Campbell, who she says has “so nobly mingled the poet’s bays with the ancient laurels of his clan”.(vii) Thomas Campbell, a contemporary of Porter, was born in Glasgow but moved to Edinburgh early to study Law. However, when his

first book of poems, *The Pleasures of Hope* (1799) was an immediate success, Campbell gave up Law to become a professional writer. Campbell was a strong patriot and it was this ardour that he and Porter shared. *The Pleasures of Hope*, like *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, held as its central theme the partitioning of Poland and the fear generated in England by the events of the French Revolution. In part I of *The Pleasures of Hope*, Campbell writes of the brave people of Poland who recently lost their struggle for independence at the hands of their oppressors. Campbell writes: “Hope for a season, bade the world farewell, and freedom shrieked – as Kosciusko fell.” As well as his outline of the life of William Wallace, Campbell also recommended many books for Porter as sources, the most influential of which she acknowledges in her ‘Preface’ as being the poem by the fifteenth century minstrel, Blind Harrie. The poem, *Wallace*, believed to be composed in the mid-fifteenth century, around 1477, was thought to be first published around 1508 under the title *The Actes and Deidis of the Illustre and Vallyeant Campioun Schir William Wallace*, and between then and 1722, when, according to Gary Kelly, it was translated into modern Scots by William Hamilton, it went through at least twenty-three editions. The title page of Hamilton’s version announces that:

> Wherein the old obsolete words are rendered more intelligible and adapted to the understanding of such who have not leisure to study the meaning and import of such phrases without the help of a glossary.

Although virtually forgotten now, William Hamilton was a popular poet in his day, the translation of Blind Harrie’s *Wallace* by far his greatest success, lauded by literati such as Lord Byron, Robert Burns, John Keats,

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425 There are many variations of the spelling of Blind Harrie, however I shall use the one as dictated by Porter in her ‘Preface’.


428 See King, *Blind Harry’s Wallace*, p. x.
Robert Southey and William Wordsworth. In fact it has been proposed that during the nineteenth century Hamilton’s translation of Wallace was the most frequently found book in Scottish homes, next to the bible! It is this version that Campbell most likely recommended to Porter. Porter assures her readers in the ‘Preface’ to her story of William Wallace, that, although her novel may appear to be a “creation of modern romance”(viii), she has faithfully drawn the facts from the poem by Blind Harrie. Despite this claim, however, Porter does stray from Blind Harrie’s storyline in several key ways. Rather than simply wishing to mislead her readers, or to alter the text of Wallace to suit her romantic disposition, Porter carefully constructs her narration of the history of William Wallace to demonstrate the essential nature of the domestic and offers to her readers, not a story of bloody and cruel vengeance and warfare, but one in which her hero, Wallace, rises from the tragedy of the murder of his beloved wife and consequently all that he holds dear, determined to fight for the restoration of Scotland’s peace and security. Just as Thaddeus Sobieski was spurred into action by the annihilation of his home, so too Wallace seeks to avenge the death of his wife and to restore the peace and freedom of his larger national home, Scotland.

The epic poem Wallace is some 11,860 lines long, comprising eleven books. Matthew McDiarmid in his ‘Introduction’ to Hary’s Wallace (1968), gives a detailed analysis of the history, politics and personality of Blind Harrie, arguing that Harrie’s motives for writing Wallace were threefold and shows the poet to be “a vigorous and complex personality…a man of passionate imagination and harsh humour”. Felicity Riddy in her article “Unmapping the Territory: Blind Hary’s Wallace” (2007) writes

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429 See King, Blind Harry’s Wallace. The ‘Introduction’ notes that Southey’s The Death of Wallace and Wordsworth’s Lines Composed at Cora Linn in Sight of Wallace’s Tower, are believed to be inspired by Hamilton’s translation of Wallace.
430 King, Blind Harry’s Wallace, p. xvi.
431 Kelly, ‘Introduction’, The Scottish Chiefs, p. xxv. See also Gary Kelly for a comprehensive recording of other texts Porter consulted in the writing of her novel (pp. xxiv-xxvii).
that the poem is “driven by an extraordinarily virulent, energetic and clearly engaging nationalism...that sustains a morality of vengeance and justified murder.” 433 Riddy writes that Wallace “conveys extraordinarily well a sense of what it is like to live in occupied territory”, and Benedict Anderson in Imagined Communities (1991), concludes that the enormous success of the poem is that it provides a portal to a “nationally imagined community”, still resonate today, and therefore by extension, resonate in 1810 when Porter began writing her novel.434 Blind Harrie’s depiction of William Wallace is that of hero and martyr, a defender of Scotland, and his legacy is one of personal suffering, both physical and spiritual, the victim not only of the enemy, England, but more significantly and perhaps tragically, of his betrayal by his own countrymen. McDiarmid writes that Harrie’s Wallace is “the tragic study of a great man”.435 It is the legend of this man, William Wallace, and the ‘imagined community’, that Porter recreates in The Scottish Chiefs. While Harrie constructs his story of William Wallace in reaction to the events occurring in the latter part of the fifteenth century, Porter constructs her story of Wallace, commensurate with the political upheaval and uncertainty in Britain in the early years of the nineteenth century. Porter’s use of William Wallace is prescient, taking the story of this Scottish hero as a vehicle for the promotion of British patriotism. Colin Kidd in his article “The English Cult of Wallace and the Blending of Nineteenth-Century Britain” (2007) argues that Porter uses Wallace to mend “the old historic allegiances to rival Scottish and English nations.”436 Kidd writes:

Declaring herself in favour of ‘an honest pride in ancestry’, Porter contends that at a time when Britain is threatened by Napoleonic France there is a place in the new order for the spirit that had once animated the old Border feuds.437 

Certainly the continuing success of The Scottish Chiefs would have pleased Porter. Believing the novel to, as Gary Kelly argues, “inspire

434 Quoted in Riddy, ‘Unmapping the Territory’, p. 116.
patriotic resistance to foreign invaders and cultures...particularly Napoleonic imperialism”438, Napoleon had it banned from being translated into French. Elspeth King in “The Material Culture of William Wallace” (2007) notes that interestingly, Napoleon was once quoted as saying that “‘[h]istory is the version of past events that people have decided to agree upon’”.439

The Historical Context
The uniting of the kingdoms of England, Scotland and Wales in 1707 and with Ireland in 1808 were significant moments in history for Porter, one that she sees as having strengthened her country against the peril of invasion from France. Following on from her fundamental premise in Thaddeus of Warsaw, that in order to stay a united nation, the Kingdom of Great Britain must ensure the continuation of British inheritance, especially in regard to the succession of the monarchy, in The Scottish Chiefs, Porter again emphasises the value “of kindred, of inheritance and of virtue.”(viii) In her initial ‘Preface’ to The Scottish Chiefs, Porter writes of the importance of ancestry and the need to maintain a legitimate blood line, a theme resonant in her previous novel. She writes:

Happy it is for this realm that the destiny which now unites the once contending arms of those brave families has also consolidated their rival nation into one, and by planting the heir of Plantagenet and of Bruce upon one throne, hath redeemed the peace of Britain, and fixed it on lasting foundations. (viii)

In her ‘Preface’ to the 1840 edition, Porter reflects on this further:

For let us remember, that when a nation ceases to recollect the great and the good amongst their own forefathers, they soon cease to be a people of much account at home; and in proportion to that internal decline, they sink in the estimation

of the nations abroad. This is my apology for having made a tale of long-inherited patriotism and loyalty, my theme.  

Previously I explored the concept of ‘home’ and belonging, in relation to England, as the key motif in *Thaddeus of Warsaw*. In this chapter I will explore the theme of nationalism in relation to Britain. Porter uses Scotland as her vehicle, similar to the way in which she uses Poland in *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, that is, as a small country in fear of being “swept from the map of nations.” While Nicola Watson states that Porter’s use of Poland “functions as a regional displacement of *ancien regime* France during the revolution” in *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, she correspondingly uses Scotland as a regional displacement for Britain in *The Scottish Chiefs*. Given her firm avowal on the necessity for security and tradition rather than innovation and revolution, as preached by Edmund Burke in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Porter sees the fight for freedom by the Scottish people as a clear and poignant example of a small nation struggling against the constant threat of invasion to maintain their independence, their customs, and their cultural heritage. Britain, at the turn of the century, was under constant threat of losing her ancient traditions and Constitution if invasion by Napoleon and his armies was successful. In order, therefore, to remain a free and independent nation, the people of Britain had to follow Scotland’s example and heed the sentiments expressed in the Arbroath declaration and fight, not for glory or riches, but for freedom. For Porter, Scotland’s Wars of Independence were not wars “for conquest nor renown, but to restore Scotland to her rights” (178), which Porter believes is maintained by securing the talismans of their “ancient edifice”, by restoring to the monarchy a legitimate line of succession, and by ensuring the people remain “masters of themselves and of their country’s liberties”. (174).

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441 Letter from Jane Porter to Robert Peel (1820), quoted in Kasmer, *Regendering History*, p. 149.
As outlined in my Introduction, the last decades of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, was for Britain one of great upheaval both at home and abroad. The threat of invasion from the time of the French Revolution (1793-1802) through to the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815) was an ever present threat. It was a period when the British people were forced to conscientiously create a strong sense of nationhood. It was believed that one way of achieving this was to secure a visible, active and successful monarchy. David Powell, in Nationhood and Identity, argues that the “institution of the monarchy” was “central to the state”, and adds that by the reign of George III, “the monarchy became a focal point around which the other institutions of the emerging British state could be built.”444 In her essay, “The Apotheosis of George III: Loyalty, Royalty and the British Nation 1760-1820”, Colley asserts that the French Revolution, Napoleonic Wars and the American War of Independence realised an individual and organised creation of British nationalism among the British people. George III’s popularity was both encouraged and fostered to “endorse the monarchy’s claim to be the prime symbol of national unanimity”.445 A contributor to The Times, reporting on the success of the King’s Jubilee celebrations in 1810, writes that the “whole nation [was] like one great family...in solemn prayer and thanksgiving, for...the Father of his People”.446 Colin Kidd argues that Porter’s story of William Wallace “provided an important point of entry to the Wallace story for generations of English readers.”447 Kidd describes Porter’s novel as being a “provenance in a new British patriotism”, one says Kidd that creates “a fusion of the old historic allegiances to rival Scottish and English nations.”448 This is demonstrated in the narrative when Porter writes “that common dangers should be repelled by united efforts”.(184) At a time when Britain is threatened by revolutionary France, Porter sees that

444 Powell, Nationhood and Identity, pp. 3, 5.
445 Colley, ‘The Apotheosis of George III’, p. 120.
446 Colley The Apotheosis of George III, p. 102.
the spirit of Wallace’s fight for Scotland’s freedom illustrates the importance of the principles of kindred, of inheritance and of virtue. William Wallace, garnering the support of the Scottish people to fight for Scotland’s freedom, and determined to return the Scottish crown to the rightful inheritor, Robert the Bruce, exclaims: “from this hour Wallace has neither love nor resentment but for her [Scotland]. Heaven has heard me devote myself to work our country’s freedom or to die. Who will follow me in so just a cause?” (37) Gary Kelly argues that by the conclusion of The Scottish Chiefs Porter has given to her readers a narrative resolution of “political, personal, social and international conflicts.” Through the efforts of William Wallace, and his followers, Porter shows that restoration of peace is achieved by “exemplary sovereign subjectivity disciplining desire” which results in a sound “political and moral order.”

William Wallace: Mythopoeic Hero

Scottish historian Fiona Watson believes that the “William Wallace we know today is a man of steel, fashioned from a dearth of hard facts and copious quantities of Scotch mist.” Watson considers that while his reputation, beginning perhaps with Blind Harrie’s Wallace through to Mel Gibson’s celluloid portrayal in the 1995 film Braveheart, has “put him squarely in the league of super-folk heroes”, he is not from the realm of fable but “most definitely flesh and blood.” Therefore, before engaging in any discussion of The Scottish Chiefs, it is necessary to determine who this hero William Wallace is, extricate the man from the legend, and then establish Porter’s literary treatment of him in her novel.

Historians are unclear on exactly when William Wallace was born and the events of his early years and his time spent in France are shadowy.

Graeme Morton, however, in his essay “The Most Efficacious Patriot: The Heritage of William Wallace in Nineteenth-Century Scotland” writes:

Since the verse of Blind Harry first caught the imagination the Wallace story has been one of Scotland’s key historical pointers, with just enough evidence to stiffen and sustain it. The result has been a series of histories which have overlain one another in quite intricate ways, merging fact, fantasy, inference and analysis.⁴⁵²

Although Wallace was written some two hundred years after the death of William Wallace, it remains the benchmark by which all other subsequent histories of Wallace are gauged. What is truly amazing about William Wallace is that despite there having never been any extant evidence of the facts of his life, he remains firmly inculcated into the history of Scotland, his life, as mentioned earlier is being constantly rewritten by poets, writers, historians, heritage trails built and monuments erected.⁴⁵³ While no official portrait of Wallace is in existence, historians, writers and poets all paint a picture of a man legendary in both stature and prowess. The fourteenth-century chronicler of Scottish history, John Fordun, writes of Wallace’s appearance:

[H]is stature tall, his body bigger make than common men, his face gentle, his expression joyful, his shoulders broad, his bones great, his belly shapely, his sides clean sloping, his look comely, but his eyes piercing; his thighs were broad, and his arms and legs sinewy, his hands very hard, and in all his limbs he was very strong and well knit together.⁴⁵⁴

Porter describes Wallace as like a god of war, “a figure breathing youth and manhood” and his face is marked with every “noble passion of the heart”, his features perfect, combining every air of “majesty and sweet entrancing grace mingled with manly union”.⁴⁵⁵ Many ballads were written about William Wallace, some extracting episodes from Blind

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Harrie’s Wallace, others it would appear from even older sources.\textsuperscript{455} One ballad which appeared in a chap book in 1745 is imitative of verses 1080-1119 of Wallace, which tells of how Wallace meets an old washerwoman who informs him that English soldiers are drinking in the nearby hostelry. Not realising she is speaking with Wallace the woman tells him that the soldiers are in the area to find and kill Wallace:

\begin{quote}
‘And they are seeking Wallace there,  
For they’ve ordained him to be slain.’
‘O God forbid!’ said Wallace then,  
‘For he’s o’er good a kind Scotsman.’\textsuperscript{456}
\end{quote}

Wallace then tells the woman that before the day is out he will kill the enemy soldiers, after which he will return and receive refreshment from her. The ballad concludes with Wallace’s success, highlighting his strength as a mythopoeic warrior:

\begin{quote}
The wife ran but, the gudeman ran behind,  
It put them all into a fever;  
Then five he sticked where they stood,  
And five he trampled in the gutter.  

And five he chased to yon green wood,  
He hanged them all out-o’er a grain;  
And gainst the morn at twelve o’clock,  
He dined with his kind Scottish men.\textsuperscript{457}
\end{quote}

In her postscript, ‘Note Respecting the Personal Confirmation of Sir William Wallace and King Robert Bruce’, Porter recalls Luckie Forbes’ description of Wallace and Robert the Bruce:

“Robert,” said she, “was a man beautiful and of a fine appearance. His strength was so great that he could easily overcome any mortal man of his time, save one- William Wallace! But in so far as he excelled other men, he was excelled by Wallace, both in stature and in bodily strength, for in the wrestling Wallace could have overthrown two such men as Robert. And he was comely as well as strong and full of the beauty of wisdom.” (520)

The actual date and place of Wallace’s birth are not confirmed, and in a lecture given in 1875 by the Marquess of Bute, John Bute states that “I fear it must be admitted the minstrel [Blind Harrie] throws no light upon the question” but goes on to surmise that:

William Wallace in May 1297, was come to man's estate, had been married at least one year, but was still very young...The Rev. John Blair is also said to have known him from 16 to 29, and to have been at school with him...This would place his birth at 1274.458

This means that Wallace would have been about 23 years old when he won the battle at Stirling Bridge and 31 years of age when he was brutally hung, drawn and quartered in London. Porter states in the opening pages of The Scottish Chiefs that Wallace was 22 years of age when he married his lover Marion Braidfoot in the autumn preceding the “summer of 1296”.(1) Porter therefore implies Wallace’s birth year as being 1273, close to the estimate given by John Bute. History is also unclear as to his ancestry but Wallace is believed to be either the son of Sir Malcolm Wallace of Elderslie or Alan Wallace of Ayrshire and was one of three sons.459 Early writers differ in their interpretation of Wallace’s heritage, from him being “an archer who sought his food with his bow and quiver”, to a “public robber...a vagabond” to an “illustrious soldier”.460 Porter nominates Elderslie as the home of Wallace and names Sir Ronald Crawford as his maternal grandfather, who had a major effect on his formative years, taking the young Wallace to “witness the arbitration of the king of England between the two contending claimants for the Scottish crown”.(6) The historical Sir Ronald was a faithful supporter of Robert the Bruce, the main opponent to John Baliol, who in 1292 was the successful claimant to the Scottish crown.461 Harrie’s Wallace names Ronald Crawford as Wallace’s uncle, the Sheriff of Ayrshire. Whether uncle or

459 See Bute, The Early Days of Sir William Wallace for full analysis of Wallace’s heritage.
grandfather, the brutal slaying of Crawford is the impetus for Wallace’s attack on the Barns at Ayr, arguably the bloodiest scene in both Blind Harrie’s poem and Porter’s novel. After his grandfather and other Scottish chieftains are massacred by the invading Southron soldiers at the Barns at Ayr, Wallace’s heart is turned to iron, resolving to “destroy all, at once, in the theatre of their cruelty – to make an execution, not engage in a warfare of man to man”. (169) It is with these words that the consolidation of Wallace’s fight for his nation’s freedom becomes apparent. Charging toward the Barns, “in a voice of thunder” (170) Wallace cries: “That ye gave ye shall receive. Where was mercy when our fathers and our brothers fell beneath your Murderess axes?” (170) McDiarmid, in his critique of Wallace, asserts that Blind Harrie presents this attack as an “unexampled war-crime crying for heaven’s vengeance” and declares that Wallace “as the divinely appointed leader and martyr of his country’s cause...is an avenging fire...something more and something less than human”. Conversely, in The Scottish Chiefs, Porter portrays two opposing emotional forces in her character of Wallace, a man fuelled by bloodshed and vengeance and a true fighter of principle, fighting not for power but for justice. Porter writes that with the “mighty spirit of retribution nerving every limb” (169), Wallace tears off the shingles to the Barns and with a “flaming brand in his hand” (170) cries to the “affrighted revellers beneath... ‘[t]he blood of the murdered calls for vengeance, and it comes’”. (170) Wallace is consumed with the need for vengeance, slaying the governor of Ayr with his own sword. However, the carnage is of such a scale that both Scots and Southrons “forgetting all discipline, fought every man for his life” (171) and all would have perished if it were not for “the relenting heart of Wallace”. (171) Wallace orders the “trumpet to sound a parley” (171), announces victory for Scotland and pleads for a cessation of any more bloodshed, crying “whoever had not been accomplices in the horrible massacre of the Scottish chiefs, if they would ground their arms,

and take an oath never to serve again against Scotland, their lives should be spared” (171), at which moment “[hundreds] of swords fell to the ground”. (171) Both the surviving Southrons and the Scottish chiefs fall at Wallace’s feet and take “the oath prescribed”. (173) The chiefs, pleading with Wallace to be appointed guardian of the nation, are aghast at Wallace’s refusal. Instead, addressing the chiefs he declares: “to behold these happy countenances of my liberated countrymen is greater reward to me than would be the development of all the splendid mysteries which the head of Baliol could devise.” (173)

It is with this declaration that Porter presents Wallace as a complete hero who can be embraced not only by the people of Scotland but by all British citizens at the time of the novel’s publication in 1810, and beyond. Wallace is the anthesis of Napoleon. He is an avenger not a conqueror, he is a protector not an invader, and most significantly, he fights for justice, not for power. In her ‘Preface to a Subsequent Edition. Added in the year 1828’, Porter writes that being a true example of a patriot, Wallace fights for the “liberty of his country, without infringing on the rights of others”. 464

In her ‘Preface’ to The Scottish Chiefs, Porter wrote that she planned to “paint the portrait of one of the most complete heroes that ever filled the page of history”. (vii) A bold statement, but one in which Porter was determined to succeed. She writes that she endeavoured to consult every extant account of Wallace that she could, in order that the reader would, in her narrative, find a true portrait of William Wallace. She gives her word that she “made no addition, excepting where time having made some erasure, a stroke was necessary to fill the space and unite the outline.” (vii) However, despite her claims Porter did take some license in her portrayal of Wallace, especially in comparison with Blind Harrie’s portrait of Wallace in his narrative of the Scottish hero. Porter commences her

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novel with the effusive “[b]right was the summer of 1269” (1), but this brightness quickly darkens with the murder of Marion. It is this event that propels Wallace into action. Blind Harrie’s narrative of Wallace begins much earlier, Blind Harrie outlining a litany of brutal slayings by Wallace prior to the death of Marion, creating a hero who is, as Elspeth King writes, “violent, bloody and anti-English”. The death of Marion does not occur until Book VI, in Wallace, by which time Wallace is, as described by King, “a one man killing machine” and a far cry from Porter’s virtuous and complete hero:

He noways dash’d, did his steel bonnet cock,  
And struck a South’ron with that trusty tree,  
Out o’er the head, till brains and bones did flee;...  
He kill’d the fellow, and turned to the lave,  
Then with an awful grace, he made a paw,  
And out his sword with majesty did draw;...  
His anger kindled, to such height it grew,  
With one good stroke, the foremost there he slew,  
A blow he got upon the other knave,  
Till he his sword down thro’ his body drav[e].  
Five South’rons he, ‘twixt hope and great despair,  
Kill’d on the spot.

While Porter does not completely eliminate from her narrative this gratuitous violence, mass slaughter and other violent atrocities found in Wallace, Porter does create a Wallace who can be seen and judged by her readers as a man of virtue and integrity. Porter’s Wallace is not anti-English but pro-Scottish, loyal to his home and country. As previously mentioned, Porter alters the sequence of events in Wallace, locating the murder of Marion in the opening pages. This shift in sequence powerfully indicates the importance Porter attributes to the domestic in national terms. As in Thaddeus of Warsaw, Wallace’s home is violated, its peace destroyed. This violation becomes synonymous with the invasion of Scotland regarding which Wallace declares:

465 King, Blind Harry’s Wallace, p. xxiv.
466 King points out that in the original text, curiously Blind Harrie never names Marion Braidfoot and Hamilton’s translation refer to her as Miranda. See King, Blind Harry’s Wallace, pp. 53, 60.
467 King, Blind Harry’s Wallace, p. xxiv.
468 King, Blind Harry’s Wallace, p. 15.
“Scotsmen! ...[I] call you to vengeance. I come in the name of all ye hold dear, of the wives of your bosoms, and the children in their arms, to tell you the poniard of England is unsheathed – innocence, age, and infancy all fall before it...From this hour may Scotland date her liberty...” (35)

Although being executed at a very early age, Wallace achieved much and as Fiona Watson points out, at the moment of execution Wallace could well have pre-empted the famous last words of Mary Queen of Scots some two centuries on: “In my end is my beginning”. As Porter writes in the closing lines of her novel: “the aim of Wallace’s life ...[was] accomplished. – Peace reigned in Scotland.” (520)

Scottish Clans and Chieftains
One of the most curious questions, to my mind, is why Porter chose to title her novel The Scottish Chiefs rather than after its hero, William Wallace. As previously noted, the conclusion to The Scottish Chiefs sees freedom for Scotland and Robert the Bruce crowned king of Scotland. While the hero of the novel is William Wallace, Robert the Bruce is the legitimate heir to the throne and it is the crowning at the end of the novel of the descendent of the Stuart dynasty, which secures both freedom and legitimacy to Scotland. Having successfully led the victorious battle at Stirling Bridge, the Scottish chiefs offer Wallace the crown, but Wallace refuses saying:

Kneel not to me...I am to you what Gideon was to the Israelites – your fellow soldier. I cannot assume the sceptre you would bestow; for He who rules us all has yet preserved to you a lawful monarch. Bruce lives. And were he extinct, the blood royal flows in too many noble veins in Scotland for me to usurp its rights. (217)

In accepting the crown, Wallace would be an antecedent of future dictators, like Napoleon, who once seizing power “founds a despotic empire over his own countrymen, and then leads them to put similar chains on their neighbours”. Wallace is not the instrument which guides his nation to this end. He is the hero, who through his “chivalric loyalty, and

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470 Porter, ‘Preface to a Subsequent Edition’ (1840), p. 11
the spirit of patriotic freedom”, is able to unite the Scottish chiefs, to put
aside their greed and jealousy and then as a cohesive force fight for the
nation’s liberty. It is then, as a united nation, under a legitimate
crown, that the Scottish chiefs are able to be, in Porter’s words, “masters
of themselves and of their country’s liberties”.(174) In titling the novel
*The Scottish Chiefs* I suggest that Porter is responding to the vulnerability
felt in Britain by the threat of invasion by Napoleon and his armies. By
accepting the crown, Wallace would in effect be, like Napoleon, a usurper
of the legitimate blood line. Through her title Porter reinforces the
importance of the principles of “kindred, of inheritance and of virtue”.(viii)
The triumph of Wallace is in uniting Scotland under their rightful king
and the strengthening of the Scottish people under the guidance of their
chiefs, not in his triumph in war.

Keith Stringer in his essay “Scottish Foundations: Late Medieval
Contributions”, claims that despite their supremacy in size and wealth
Edward I, and the English elites, failed to successfully conquer Scotland in
the thirteenth-century Wars of Independence, because Scotland was
similarly powerful in “regnal solidity and an equivalent ‘match between
people and polity’”. Stringer perceptively writes:

> The English saw the Wars of Independence not as a collision
between two unitary, European-style kingdoms but as a
dispute in which contumacious vassals were defying their
lawful suzerain. In reality, the scale, intensity and course of
the conflict can be understood only by recognising that
thirteenth-century Britain contained not one but *two* dominant
states or ‘superpowers’.

Fiercely patriotic to their Scottish Crown, the Scottish clans, under the
governance of their chiefs opposed the violence with which Edward I and
his armies threatened their land and their Crown. Even after the Act of

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471 Porter, ‘Preface to a Subsequent Edition’ (1840), p. 11
Union was signed in 1707 Scotland retained its own legal, ecclesiastical and educational institutions. S.J. Connolly in his essay “Ireland, Scotland and Wales in the Hanoverian State”, writes that Scotland in the late-eighteenth, early-nineteenth century witnessed a distinct national interest in their history, language and culture. Connolly explains:

In Scotland the new enthusiasm in the late[-]eighteenth and the early[-]nineteenth centuries for a romanticised version of the national past, the idealisation of a vanishing ‘traditional’ culture, and the elevation of the Highlands from a feared and resented outland to the repository of everything that was best in the Scottish character, can all be seen as part of a depoliticised patriotism....

One of the unique features of the Celtic race, and pertinent to this discussion, is their chiefdoms and clanships which have their origin as far back as the sixth century. In fact, clans in the Scottish Highlands were only stripped of chiefdoms after the 1745 Jacobite rebellion, when the central government of Scotland enforced its control. Such was the strength of the chiefdoms that even after 1745, although not having political control of their clan folk, the chief still maintained a socio-influence over the members of their clans and many traditions, especially those involving feasting and feuding, are still in existence today. Porter herself makes reference to this in her next novel, The Pastor's Fireside, which was published in 1817. Porter writes: “and the feudal state he [Louis de Montemar] had seen at the banquets of the chiefs of Scotland, was that of plenty, with something too much of bacchanalian festivity.”

Clans traditionally identify with geographical regions of the Scottish Highlands and were governed by a chief, who was officially recognised and registered at the central Scottish court. Members of a clan were direct blood relatives to the chief and each other, giving the members of a clan a shared sense of place and of identity. Robert Dodgshon in his study “Modelling Chiefdoms in the Scottish Highlands and Islands Prior to ‘45”,

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explains that clans “maintained an ideology of common kinship via the mantle of a common clan name”, traditional folklore claiming that “a man without a clan was a broken man”. Sometimes recruits seeking refuge from neighbouring clans were allowed to join another but their loyalty had to be proven before they were fully accepted. The chief provided protection, guidance and leadership to the members of the clan. One of the main reasons why chiefdoms prospered for so long in the Scottish Highlands is due to the ecology of that region. The mountains and valleys created natural boundaries for clans to exist and flourish and unlike the more fertile and flat lower areas of Scotland that favoured agrarian progress and urban style growth, the nature of the Highlands fostered a more subsistent style of food gathering and their survival until the mid-eighteenth century can be explained in part as a “matter of opportunity costs”, Dodgshon concluding that:

> Seen from Edinburgh, the difficult and isolated nature of the region made the costs of incorporating it into the wider state high. At the same time, the rewards of such incorporation would not have been attractive given the region’s low potential for extracting surplus.

Because of the subsistence nature of Highland chiefdoms, it can be understood that the most powerful chiefs were those who were able to extract the most food from their land, which in turn meant that chiefs had to provide necessary basic resources, support and protection to their clan members. In return the members repaid their chief with their loyalty and productiveness. Needless to say this in turn was the root of most feuding among clans as Dodgshon points out:

> [F]euding itself was food-focussed. Raids on rival clans routinely involved sorning* on their farms, the destruction of standing corn, and the theft of cattle. In effect feuding made food a central issue of inter-clan rivalry, reducing the capacity

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477 I use the word ‘his’ because to my knowledge few if any women have been appointed as clan chief.

But it is the romantic notion of a sense of community, of a shared identity and ancestry of chiefdoms that is the key in relation to an examination of why Porter titled her novel *The Scottish Chiefs*. Porter interprets clans as like a family, in which all members must work for the common good if they are to prosper and survive. Although holding power, the implicit function of a clan chief, like the father as head of the family, is as trustee for the members of the clan, the foundations being the principle of kindred and of inheritance, and implies an ancient lineage. In *The Scottish Chiefs* Porter astutely connects the concept of ‘home’ with that of ‘nation’ through the representation of clans. A ‘home’ can be defined as a cohesive unit, consisting of members who, as Rosemary Marangoly George states, share a “sense of kinship” and membership “is maintained by bonds of love, fear, power, desire and control”.\(^{480}\) Clans can be seen to operate in the same way, and therefore, in the context of *The Scottish Chiefs* can be shown to be a representation of the ‘national’ in miniature.\(^{481}\) At another level it can be seen that the necessity for Scottish clans to fight as a unified force against the invading Southrons, can be seen as representative of the four entities of the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland) uniting to stave off the threat of invasion from Napoleon. Just as each clan will still retain its own sense of identity, so too, even after the Act of Unions in 1707 and 1800, each of the four entities of the United Kingdom still retain their own entity. As stated in my Introduction, British identity came about because of the need to resist the enemy, namely France.


\(^{481}\) It is interesting to note that when organising the visit by George III in 1822, 12 years after *The Scottish Chiefs* was published, the main coordinator of the visit, Walter Scott, rallied support for the success of the visit from the Scottish public by declaring “We are the clan and our king is the chief”. See John Morrison, *Painting the Nation: Identity and Nationalism in Scottish Painting, 1800-1920*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), p. 50.
This process can be seen in *The Scottish Chiefs*. The narrative is positioned in the moment in history when, as David Powell puts it, “Scots confirmed their national independence...under the leadership of Wallace and Bruce, and enshrined it in the patriotic Declaration of Arbroath of 1320.”\(^\text{482}\) While Wallace is described by Porter in the ‘Preface’ as her “principal hero”,\(^{(vii)}\) and is praised as being one of the most “complete heroes that ever filled the page of history”,\(^{(vii)}\) the very essence of the novel lies in the consolidation of the “contending arms of those brave families”,\(^{(viii)}\) under the guidance of their chiefs, “consolidat[ing] their rival nations into one” and thus fixing it “on lasting foundations”.\(^{(viii)}\) Porter thus declares that “respect for noble progenitors cannot be wrong”.\(^{(viii)}\) Wallace is the principal hero, not in the fashion of the self-professed emperor Napoleon, but in the manner of Horatio Nelson and William Walworth and Sir Thomas Gresham, in whom all countrymen and citizens of Britain, Porter says, have “honest pride... respect ... [and] honourable memories”.\(^{(vii-viii)}\)

Porter writes to her sister Anna Maria in 1805 that the next subject for her novel will be Charles Edward. Instead however, she turns to a more distant past and writes of the Scottish heroes William Wallace and Robert the Bruce. The years between 1805 and 1810 in Britain were splintered by deep rooted social and economic insecurities, both as a result of external and internal events. It was not only the threat of invasion by Napoleon during this period but also the feelings of instability within Britain’s own kingdoms, such as the Irish rebellion in 1803, trade boycotts by France, Spain and Portugal in 1807 and the failing health of their monarch, George III, that Porter abandoned her plan to write of the failed Jacobite invasion lead by Charles Edward, rather offering to her readers a story of the success of one small nation’s victory over the might of their larger and more powerful aggressors. The uniting of Ireland into the Kingdom of Great Britain in 1800 is a prime indicator that Porter, as a

\(^{482}\) Powell, *Nationhood and Identity*, p. 2.
good Tory, wishes to celebrate this union and as a writer it is her way of contributing to the success and celebration of unification. Scotland, although the vehicle used to exemplify the imperative need for national consolidation, is, unlike Poland, not “sacrificed, annihilated, destroyed.”

Porter explains in her ‘Preface’ that the history of Scotland’s battle for freedom should be an example and inspiration to the people of Britain who now find themselves in a similar position with the threat of invasion from France and defeat in America. She writes:

Let the race of Douglas, or the brave line of the Percy bear witness whether the name they hold be not as a mirror to show them what they ought to be, and to kindle in their hearts the flame which burnt in their fathers. (viii)

Porter further explains that the victories of William Wallace and the people of Scotland demonstrate how “common dangers should be repelled by united efforts”. This stands in contrast to the more recent failed Jacobite rebellion of 1745, which was not a totally united effort to restore the Stuart king to the British throne, ending in Charles Edward’s defeat at Culloden Moor in 1746. Moreover, by setting the novel in the distant past Porter is also treading cautiously as it is safer territory to locate her novel in the years of the Wars of Independence rather than in the much more recent past of the Jacobite uprising, distancing herself as author, and subsequently the reader, politically from the more recent event. Wallace therefore, rather than Charles Edward, is able to be embraced by readers from all the kingdoms of Britain in 1810 because of this historical distancing.

While professing to “keep as near historical truth as could be consistent”, Porter adds a disclaimer that her “history being intended to be within the bounds of modern romance rather than measured by the folios of Scudery”, she was “obliged to take some liberties with time and

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circumstances”, but, says Porter, “no intentional injustice has been committed against the characters”, and in fact “more agents have been used in its conduct than [she] should have adopted had it been a work of mere imagination”. (viii) Porter, like other writers of historical fiction in the late-eighteenth, early-nineteenth century, most notably Walter Scott, writes “with a broad knowledge or an antiquarian's grasp of details” and therefore in her ‘Preface’ she prepares the reader for any lapses in historical accuracy. To write a story of Charles Edward, Porter would expose herself to much scrutiny from people who may have personally known Charles Edward and those of his loyal followers, who may have even fought alongside the Young Pretender in the failed campaign. William Wallace, like other legendary figures of British history, such as King Arthur, Robin Hood or Sir Gawain, is part of the mythology of Scotland’s past and as he is a mythopoeic figure, Porter is freer to boldly “paint the portrait of one of the most complete heroes that ever filled the page of history”, (vii) without “the modesty of his feelings” compromised.

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The Scottish Chiefs, Nationalism and Today’s Critics

While The Scottish Chiefs is a complex text with rich symbolism, both secular and sacred, the most integral theme is nationalism and it is this that most, if not all modern critics of the novel, concentrate on in their discussions. Nationalism, heroism and domestic virtue are the key terms of my argument and it is therefore essential to investigate the key scholarly discussions of nationalism in Porter's The Scottish Chiefs, evaluating her success, or failure, in creating a model for British nationalism in the nineteenth century.

486 Porter, Thaddeus of Warsaw [1831], p. 6.
Lynne Hamer’s article “Folklore and History Studies in Early Nineteenth-Century England: Jane Porter and Eliza Bray” (1993) explores some salient issues in regard to nationalist discourse in *The Scottish Chiefs*. Addressing the bourgeoning interest in antiquarianism in Britain in the early-nineteenth century, Hamer argues that it is from the new interest in gathering “artefacts, documents, legends, and folklore” that writers began to develop “innovative approaches” to writing their nation’s history. 487 Hamer singles out Porter and Eliza Bray as exemplars of this manner of innovative history writing. Like all critics and scholars of nationalist discourse in Porter’s novels, Hamer cites the French Revolution and Napoleonic imperialism as having the profoundest effect on her narratives. Hamer writes that:

> The French Revolution prompted a reactionary resurgence of old traditions throughout Europe as critics of the Revolution became disillusioned with what they saw as the results of rationalist thought carried to an extreme… . As rationalistic historians and folklorists sought that which they could systematise, writers of historic romances [such as Porter and Bray], antiquarians, and literary folklorists searched for the exceptional and told of it in narrative form. 488

A key argument in Hamer’s article, and an element which I propose contributes to the positive reception of *The Scottish Chiefs* by not only the Scottish reading public, but in England and beyond, is her assertion that Porter does not flagrantly condemn the Southrons and exalt the Scots. Rather, Porter shows that good and evil can be detected in both nations. While *The Scottish Chiefs* tells of Scotland’s fight for freedom from the invading Southrons, Porter does not label all Scots as honourable and chivalric, and all Southrons as evil and marauding, rather, as Hamer argues, “Porter shows that good people exist on both sides of the war…portraying good individuals on both sides”. 489 An obvious example of this in the novel is when, after the brutal murder of Marion at the hands

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488 Hamer, ‘Folklore and History Studies’, pp. 6, 9.
489 Hamer, ‘Folklore and History Studies”, p. 12.
of Heselrigge, the Southron soldier, Grimsby, witnessing the murder, castigates Heselrigge and swears:

Monster!...I would not pollute my honest hands with such unnatural blood. Neither, though thy hand has been lifted against my life, would I willingly take thine. It is not rebellion against my commander that actuates me, but hatred of the vilest of murders... (24)

Then turning to Marion’s faithful servant Halbert, who had also witnessed the murder, Grimsby assures him of the disgust he feels for Heselrigge, saying “I am a man like yourself; and though a Southron, am no enemy to age and helplessness”. (25) Later in the novel Wallace stops the earnest Edwin, who is about to slay the fallen De Valance, saying: “Edwin, you have done wrong...give me that weapon which you have sullied by raising it against a prisoner totally in our power...I should be unworthy the honour of protecting a brave nation did I stoop to tread on every reptile that stings me in my path.” (252-253)

The reception of The Scottish Chiefs was positively received because it did not aim to bring prejudice against any nation but rather to inspire, as stated earlier, solidarity in the British nation, and, in Porter’s words, “honest pride...respect...[and] honourable memories”. (vii-viii) In a rousing speech Wallace supports this premise when questioned by Lord Montgomery about retaliating against Edward’s conquest of Scotland. Wallace says:

No, Lord Montgomery, it is not our conqueror we are opposing; it is a traitor, who under the mask of friendship, has attempted to usurp our rights, destroy our liberties, and make a desert of our once happy country. This is a true statement of the case: and though I wish not to make a subject outrage his sovereign, yet truth demands of you to say to Edward, that to withdraw his pretensions from this exhausted country, is the restitution we may justly claim – is all that we wish. (240)

Porter wrote The Scottish Chiefs in reaction to the French Revolution and Napoleonic imperialism. However, Porter did not wish harm to the French people. On the contrary, she asks the British people to stand firm
as a Nation to protect and to retain its freedom because their fight, like that of William Wallace, was for justice, not for power.

Rhonda Batchelor’s article “The Rise and Fall of the Eighteenth Century’s Authentic Feminine Voice” (1994), analyses the emergence of the “feminized consciousness” using Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818) as the benchmark for the “fictional interventions in political and social realms by women.” In her discussion, Batchelor cites Porter’s *The Scottish Chiefs* as an example of the “unfolding course of England’s cultural revolution” resulting from the perceived anarchy in France after the Revolution. Batchelor points out that it was the shattering of the hero’s domestic world that spurred Wallace into action in the national arena. Wallace believes that the same forces that have destroyed his home will also be the forces that will destroy his nation. At the centre of this domestic home is of course Wallace’s wife, Marion, who is “the idol of his heart” and in whose presence he is able to “forget the wrongs of his country”. Marion’s death causes a fissure in Wallace’s world and is the point at which the domestic and national collide. Wallace is propelled from his domestic haven into the public space, which is itself in a state of imminent elimination. While Marion inspires Wallace into action, she is simultaneously silenced, her final sentence left unsaid, unable, as Batchelor argues, to enter into the public arena, dying being easier than to “speak of her husband’s political affiliations and his public space”. Marion’s death occurring at the beginning of the narrative becomes, Batchelor believes, “the ideal against which all other women may be measured”. Like Marion, Helen Mar is passive, but in this defined female space, is able to “fuel and direct Wallace’s patriotic self expression”,

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490 Rhonda Batchelor, ‘The Rise and Fall of the Eighteenth Century’s Authentic Feminine Voice’, *Eighteenth –Century Fiction,* 6/4 (July 1994), p. 345. The argument is a similar one to that used of women in Malory’s *Le Morte d’Arthur.* In these terms Helen Mar is like the active heroine who urges the chivalric hero forward to accomplish great deeds.


unlike Lady Mar, who dares to enter the active public space, becoming in the narrative the emblem of evil and ultimately being destroyed herself.\textsuperscript{495} It is from his domestic space that Wallace’s patriotism is drawn. Batchelor argues that nineteenth-century readers would recognise the national narrative that Porter creates in the novel because “speaking from and of the heart of the nation is identical to speaking from and of the heart of the domestic sphere.”\textsuperscript{496} The crux of Batchelor’s argument is that, although silenced in the public arena, women, like Marion and Helen Mar, still continue to articulate a “moral, authentic femininity” that shaped the national moral code. Batchelor concludes that the “women were quiet, but they were still there and still speaking”.\textsuperscript{497} Batchelor’s argument is sustained in \textit{The Scottish Chiefs}, by Marion’s continued presence, appearing to Wallace as a soothing and inspiring spirit as he surveys the land of his youth that is now bathed in blood. Her unsaid words upon her death may have silenced her to the world, but to Wallace, Marion is still in commune with his soul, her spirit constantly guiding him in his quest for Scotland’s freedom. The omniscient narrator writes:

\begin{quote}
Full of thoughts of her who used to share those happy scenes, he heard a sigh behind him. He turned round, and beheld a female figure disappear amongst the trees. He stood motionless; again it met his view: it seemed to approach. A strange emotion stirred within him. When last he passed these borders, he was bringing his bride from Ayr! (150)
\end{quote}

The ghostly presence of Marion throughout \textit{The Scottish Chiefs} is not a romantic inclusion by Porter into her narrative of Wallace. Blind Harrie also includes such an apparition in his verse, but with no mention of the name Marion. Harrie identifies the apparition to be that of the blessed Virgin Mary, who after informing Wallace that God has ordained him as the saviour of Scotland, she promises him that his reward will be of eternal glory. Mary says to Wallace:

\begin{quote}
Quickly to him descended there a queen, All shining bright, and with majestic mien;
\end{quote}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{495} Batchelor, ‘The Rise and Fall of the Eighteenth Century’s Authentic Feminine Voice’, p. 362. \\
\textsuperscript{496} Batchelor, ‘The Rise and Fall of the Eighteenth Century’s Authentic Feminine Voice’, p. 367. \\
\textsuperscript{497} Batchelor, ‘The Rise and Fall of the Eighteenth Century’s Authentic Feminine Voice’, p. 368.
\end{flushleft}
Her countenance did dazzle so his sight...
This kingdom, thou redeem it surely shall,
Though thy reward on earth shall be but small.
Go on and prosper, sure thou shalt not miss,
For thy reward, the heaven’s eternal bliss.\(^{498}\)

Despite the heavily laden religious overtones in Porter’s narrative, it is interesting that in this particular sequence, unlike Blind Harrie, Porter does not suggest that this apparition is that of the Virgin Mary. The apparition is clearly named by Wallace as his Marion: “What then was this ethereal visitant?.. His heart paused...’Marion!’”\(^{(150)}\)\(^{499}\)

But as the vision fades, Wallace falls to his knees, and renames the apparition a phantom of his own creation, convinced that the “pure spirit of Marion would never fly [him]”, she “would not thus redouble [his] grief”.\(^{(150)}\) Wallace is soothed, however, in the knowledge that he will be reunited with Marion, and it is this certainty, he realises, is that the Christian’s hope. What Porter clearly shows is that the foundation of her narrative is the strong union of Wallace and Marion even after her death. Once reunited in heaven, peace for Wallace will be restored and his efforts will not have been in vain. The space that Marion creates in the narrative holds Wallace firm as he fights to restore the peace that has been shattered by the invading Southrons. Gary Kelly argues that the relationship between Wallace and Marion establishes the standard by which all other relationships are measured and their home the epitome of domestic peace and security.\(^{500}\)

In *Nationalism and Desire in Early Historical Fiction* (1997), Ian Dennis asserts that Scotland and England at the time of the Wars of Independence were two distinct and autonomous nations, having their own “respective cultures” and that the events witnessed in Porter’s novel

\(^{498}\) King, *Blind Harry’s Wallace*, p. 81.
\(^{499}\) Worshipping the Virgin Mary, or Mariolatry, was highly suspect in Protestant England so that Porter would never have risked such an inclusion. See Marina Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: the Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary* (New York: Vintage, 1983).
represent Scotland’s “rebirth” as a strong and proud nation out of the “catastrophe of internecine and dynastic conflict, and under the pressure of ruinous foreign oppression”. 501 Dennis cites the murder of Marion as the beginning of Scotland’s fight to preserve their ‘nation’ because the death of Marion is not seen just as the death of a Scottish woman by an English man but symbolic of the death of Scotland as a proud nation by the invading English nation. The violent act of Marion’s murder, Dennis says, “releases the forces which propel both the rebellion and the narrative”. 502 The ‘forces’ which are released in Wallace’s heart are vengeance and desire and from that moment Wallace is consumed with avenging the murder of his wife and unborn child and it is at this point also that Marion and Scotland become, for Wallace, inextricably linked. Grasping his sword Wallace cries:

From this hour may Scotland date her liberty, or Wallace, return no more. My faithful friends...let the spirits of your fathers inspire your souls ye go to assert that freedom for which they died. Before the moon sets the tyrant of Lanark must fall in blood. (35)

The analogy that womanhood equals nation is further supported when later in the novel Wallace rescues Helen Mar from the evil Soulis, who according to Dennis rapes, or attempts the rape, of Helen. Therefore, the murder of Marion and the abduction of Helen are the source of Wallace’s desire for vengeance and restitution, as he becomes, says Dennis, “an abstracted vehicle of national destiny”. 503 Dennis reads Porter’s narrative as sexually charged and believes that in fact Porter “appears unembarrassable” in her depiction of sexual aggression, yet, Dennis believes that far from being overtly embarrassing, the “constellation of desires” expressed in The Scottish Chiefs will appear again in future historical novels. 504 For Dennis, The Scottish Chiefs “brims with a purely Scottish nationalism” which was widely shared by nineteenth-century

501 Dennis, Nationalism and Desire, p. 12.
502 Dennis, Nationalism and Desire, p. 14.
503 Dennis, Nationalism and Desire, p. 19.
504 Dennis, Nationalism and Desire, p. 19.
readers, not just in Scotland but throughout the kingdom of Great Britain and also further afield.  

Dennis argues that:

Porter’s considerable success in romanticising Scotland even for the non-Scottish reader suggests that in her unembarrassable prodigality she achieved something rather special and perhaps new in harmonising of passion and place, in the persuasive gratification of a more general desire to feel that human beings and their concerns have a home which actively welcomes and reflects them.  

Dennis’ interpretation of *The Scottish Chiefs* is both idiosyncratic and compelling because most critics, both Porter’s contemporaries and more recent ones, paint a picture of Porter much suited to her nickname, ‘Il Penseroso’, her nature being thought of as serious and conscientious, compared to her younger sister, Anna Maria, dubbed ‘L’Allegro’, she being lively and gay.  Samuel Carter Hall writes:

No two sisters of the same parents could have been more opposite...Jane was statuesque, her deportment serious though cheerful, a seriousness quite as natural as her sister’s gaiety.  They both laboured diligently, but the labour of the one seemed sport when compared with the careful toil of the other.  The mind of Jane was of a lofty order; she was intense, ponderous perhaps, and obviously felt more than she said; while Anna Maria said more than she felt.  

Dennis has revealed a side to Porter that most critics and scholars overlook.  Porter was a young, passionate and impressionable woman when she wrote her novels and they reveal, says Dennis, narratives that “are full of energy”, going even further when he asserts that they are “sexually charged”.  Porter’s discourse on nationalism and patriotism is represented in *The Scottish Chiefs* by desire and vengeance, Scotland and womanhood being conflated, paralleling the domestic and the national.  Keenly aware of Britain’s threat of invasion by France, of the calamity of violence in the American War of Independence and the internal riots and

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506 Dennis, *Nationalism and Desire*, p. 32.
508 Dennis, *Nationalism and Desire*, p. 16.
political fracturing occurring in Britain at the time, Porter is both informed and affected and this is evident in her narratives which are brimming with nationalist desire and vengeance. This is evident in Wallace’s pledge after hearing the news of Marion’s murder. Porter writes:

[F]rom this hour Wallace has neither love nor resentment but for her. Heaven has heard me devote myself to work our country’s freedom or to die...I have nothing now that binds me to life but my country; and henceforth she shall be to me as mistress, wife, and child ...[and] I will never again appear in the tracks of men if it be not as the defender of her rights. (37-39)

In relation to Porter’s national and patriotic fervour Dennis compellingly argues that The Scottish Chiefs:

[E]mploys a discourse of love and self-sacrifice, of blood and death and martyrs, of shared national or ethnic virtues such as bravery and honesty, of revenge and opposition...[and it] participates in ...discovering or creating a national or folkloric past with which to stimulate the imagination of national community.509

Fiona Price in The Female Aesthetic Subject: Questions of Taste, Sublimity and Beauty in Women’s Prose, 1778 to 1828, with Particular Reference to the Works of Clara Reeve, Sophia and Harriet Lee, Elizabeth Hamilton and Jane Porter (2000), places Porter’s concept of nationalism as reliant on the folklore tradition and how in combining elements of romance with history, Porter opens the way for women to participate in patriotism and nationalism, normally thought of as being of the public, or male, domain. Price states that Porter’s work has for too long been undermined by discussions in relation to the rise and origins of the ‘historical novel’, rather than due recognition given to her pioneering of the foundation of

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509 Dennis, Nationalism and Desire, p. 38.
By creating the national romance novel, Price argues, Porter closes the gap between the public and private narrative, allowing the participation of the female in the forming of a national identity. Price states that unlike other women writers of the period, Porter “insisted on the importance of a complete bond between national narrative and sentiment in a way that makes her an important and unusual figure in the development of the national romance.” In other words, Price is saying that Porter’s novels are romances because she constructs her stories with the “scale of history, but the flexibility of a novel”. While most of Price’s discussion focuses on the role of the sublime in Porter’s texts, her point that, unlike Scott, Porter sees history as a continuum with an emphasis on the “links between past and present patriotic virtues” is important. However, while Price argues that the significance of Porter’s work is that she made history available to women, and therefore allows them to participate in that history, I want to elaborate on this to suggest that Porter makes a shift from the domestic to the national, not in order to include merely women, but to illustrate that the nation can be viewed as an expanded domestic space. Therefore, in order to keep the nation safe from invasion, the domestic, which is the social, moral and economic foundation of a nation, must be preserved. In *The Scottish Chiefs*, William Wallace is spurred into action after the bloody and senseless death of his wife, Marion. The invasion and violation of his domestic space becomes the impetus for Wallace’s retaliation and subsequent quest for the freedom and safety of his home, not just his private and domestic home but his national home, Scotland, which is also experiencing invasion and violation by Edward I’s armies. The vengeance sought by Wallace is not just for his beloved wife but also for his beloved

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510 Price recognises the quandary of categorisation in any discussions of the ‘historical novel’ versus the ‘historical romance’. Categorisation and defining of these terms is complex and one which I addressed in my Introduction to this study.


Scotland, the two being, according to Porter, inextricably linked. Price proposes that in her writing, Porter “cultivated a suitable and increasingly elaborate authorial persona”,\textsuperscript{514} which was unique, given that Porter cultivates this authorial ‘I’ not only through her heroines but through her heroes as well. By achieving this, Porter is able to participate in, and respond to, Britain’s struggle and development as a nation. In \textit{The Scottish Chiefs}, it is clear to see that Porter is examining the “effects of properly led popular action”\textsuperscript{515} demonstrated in the garnering of support by Wallace from the Scottish people in the struggle to free Scotland from the invading Southrons. Porter uses the battle by a united Scottish front in the Wars of Independence as a metaphor for the unification of Britain as a united kingdom in its war against France. As Price suggests, “Porter was far less concerned with Scottish independence than with fiction as a method of consolidation for Britain”.\textsuperscript{516} In this, her political agenda was almost identical with that of Scott.

In a subsequent article, “Resisting ‘the Spirit of Innovations’: the Other Historical Novel and Jane Porter” (2006),\textsuperscript{517} Price links Porter’s nationalist discourse found in her novels, to her understanding of, and exposure to, history painting.\textsuperscript{518} Porter’s brother, Robert Ker Porter attended the Royal Academy in 1790, and was befriended by Benjamin West, who became President of the Academy in 1792, and who specialised in history painting. Robert Ker Porter quickly embraced the mode of historical landscape painting as his preferred genre, his most celebrated being \textit{The Storming of the Seringapatam} (1799). As a young woman, Porter was thus exposed to the nature and symbolism of historical landscape paintings through conversing with her brother’s Academy friends and also through Robert’s own work. Robert and his Academy

\textsuperscript{514} Price, \textit{The Female Aesthetic Subject}, p. 205.
\textsuperscript{515} Price, \textit{The Female Aesthetic Subject}, p. 209.
\textsuperscript{518} Jennifer Evan’s in her thesis \textit{Improving Novels} also discusses the link between Porter’s novels and history painting.
friends were steeped in the philosophy that their historical paintings were able to inspire public virtue and therefore believed that art could in fact assist in the creation of a national community. Price writes that the function of history painting that developed in this period stresses the “continuity between the heroism of the past and the virtues of the present” and it should not appeal just to the elite members of the community but have broad patriotic and moral appeal to the whole community.\(^{519}\) History painting greatly influenced Porter’s writing, transferring her creative energy to the written word, and, in Price’s opinion, emphasising the “need to value and be inspired by the legends of history” and “shaped by her sense of her own historical moment”, most profoundly “Napoleonic imperialism”, her national discourse reinforces the link between past heroism and the present”.\(^{520}\) Price astutely points out, that by using the example of Scotland’s struggle for freedom in *The Scottish Chiefs*, the novel’s original readers would have understood the “associations with Jacobitism”, the plight of the Polish refugees, and the fear of invasion and the devastation of France during Napoleon’s reign.\(^{521}\) As has been determined, Porter’s novels are too often scrutinised against Lukács’ model of the historical novel and have therefore not been given due recognition. Porter’s narratives generate a nationalistic discourse that does not just depend on “history as progress”,\(^{522}\) but on “continuity and tradition” and in so doing she “positions popular tradition itself as the guarantee of national stability”.\(^{523}\) In 2007 Price edited a Broadview edition of *The Scottish Chiefs*, with an Introduction and detailed chronology. Price explains that she has adapted the original 1810 edition of the novel in order, she writes, “to reflect the author’s first intentions”.\(^{524}\) In her ‘Introduction’ Price looks at the reasons why Porter’s novels have often been misinterpreted, leading to a devaluing of their importance in


\(^{521}\) Price, ‘Resisting “The Spirit of Innovation”’, p. 646.


literary history. Price argues that in contrast to Scott’s Waverley novels, Porter’s novels create “a sense of national romance”, not in a “quixotic” sense but in the manner in which they show how a nation’s struggles affect the lives of ordinary people.\(^{525}\) Porter believed that it is the actions of a Nation’s individuals which “strengthen the contemporary sense of national community.”\(^{526}\) Price points out that Porter’s novels differ also from contemporary national tales in that they illustrate the difference between “virtuous patriotism ... and vicious unpatriotic self-interest” and that unlike other national tales Porter is concerned with “consolidation in the face of an outside threat”.\(^{527}\) The use of romance by Porter in her novels provides, says Price, “a new model of patriotism and political life distinct from those that arose in the 1790s, when Edmund Burke “tried to construct the French Revolution as the death of chivalry”.\(^{528}\) Porter wishes to promote an acceptable national romance, therefore, characters such as Lady Sara Ross and Lady Joanna Mar, are depicted as “a danger to the national cause”, while she provides the ideal in the form of Mary Beaumont and Helen Mar.\(^{529}\) The beauty of both Mary and Helen lies in their moral purity. For example, by sublimating her sexuality, Helen takes on the role of a “quasi-masculine” patriot and therefore an active participant in Scotland’s struggle for freedom.\(^{530}\) Price concludes her Introduction by stating that Porter shows in her novels that national romances do have relevance to contemporary society and that the “patriotism of the past can exist in the present.”\(^{531}\)

Lisa Kasmer’s thesis *Regendering History: Women and the Genres of History, 1760-1830* (2002), addressed earlier, explores Porter’s attempt to relocate the study of women’s history writing “within the tradition of

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\(^{530}\) Price, ‘Introduction’, *The Scottish Chiefs*, p. 25. Scott may have been inspired by this characterization in his creation of Flora Maclvor in *Waverley*.
women’s intellectual history”, thus re-gendering history and re-positioning “women at the forefront of modern history writing”. However, Kasmer’s interpretation of Porter’s view on nationalism still needs to be considered. Price argues that Porter gives access to women to participate in history by making it available to them through the writing of her historical romances, drawing on romance in order to allow women’s entry into the historical public domain. Kasmer, however, argues that Porter “reconfigures notions of women’s civic participation” in history because in reading her novels women gain access to “the public sphere of ‘consensual reason and discourse’” through the writing of historical novels, rather than historical romances referred to by Price. Kasmer asserts that Porter was unique in creating a “public forum within the domestic space of the novel”. Kasmer goes further to state that Porter considers her writing as a “national duty” answering to “God and country”. Unlike Price, Kasmer argues that critics have “incorrectly categorised [Porter’s] work as romance”. According to Kasmer, Porter did not indulge in “anecdotal romance but was boldly attempting to transform the sexual assumptions upon which official history was known and understood”. In other words, Kasmer proposes that Porter sought to “regender history” rather than merely allowing women access to the historical domain by creating a story which “bridges romance and sentiment with history”. Kasmer endeavours to argue that Porter privileges the domestic arena as the foundation site for the historical, thereby positing that, it is the action and responsibility of individuals that will affect and determine the future of Britain as a nation. Kasmer’s thesis relies heavily on the ‘Retrospective Prefaces’ and letters of Porter to

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532 Kasmer, Regendering History, p.2.
533 Kasmer, Regendering History, p.15
534 Kasmer, Regendering History ,p.16.
535 Kasmer, Regendering History, p.116
537 Kasmer, Regendering History, p.117.
538 Kasmer, Regendering History, p.117.
539 Kasmer, Regendering History, p.139.
540 Kasmer, Regendering History, pp.141-42.
support her arguments rather than close scrutiny of the actual novels. These Prefaces and letters, it must be remembered, were written many years after the initial publication of the novel and are therefore subject to much hindsight and introspection, issues which may not have been present when Porter first penned her novels, something that Price is clearly conscious of. Kasmer’s definition of Porter’s nationalist discourse in *The Scottish Chiefs* centres on the notion of domestic virtue and the purposeful and active patriotism of her heroes. The courage in their fight for freedom and legitimacy by historical heroes such as William Wallace, cannot be ignored because it is through them that Porter believes a nation is built and strengthened. For a nation to be strong, it must work in unison, perpetuating the work of its historical heroes. Kasmer writes that Porter’s “remembrance of the nation’s heroes, then, is not only patriotic but purposeful in sustaining the nation”, supporting this with a quotation, not from the text, but from the 1840 ‘Retrospective Preface’ to *The Scottish Chiefs*:

> For let us remember, that when a nation ceases to recollect the great and the good amongst their own forefathers, they soon cease to be a people of much account at home.

A passage from the novel, does however, illustrate this far more effectively. Porter writes:

> In the midst stood a tower, which had once been a favourite hunting-lodge of the great King Fergus. ...here did our lion, Fergus, attended by his royal allies, Durstus the Pict, and Dionethus the Briton, spread his board during their huntings...and here eight hundred years ago, did the same heroic prince form the plans which saved his kingdom from a foreign yoke! On the same spot we will lay ours; and in their completion, rescue Scotland from a tyranny more intolerable than that which menaced him...there is not a stone in this building that does not call aloud to us to draw the sword and hold it unsheathed till our country be free. (100)

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542 Kasmer errs in not including Porter's heroines in this argument, unless she is using the term 'hero' generically.
Finally, Gary Kelly’s lengthy ‘Introduction’ to *The Scottish Chiefs*, reprinted in his 2002 collation *Varieties of Female Gothic*, details a close examination, not only of the Gothic elements of Porter’s novel, but also of the nationalist discourse contained in the narrative. In the opening paragraph of his ‘Introduction’ Kelly outlines the literary structure of *The Scottish Chiefs* and concludes that Porter’s novel laid the foundation down for a “new fictional genre”, the historical romance. This new genre, Kelly states, combines the “elements of the national tale, historiography, historic popular literature, a narrative structure of deliverance modelled on the Bible, and the commercialised fictional form of the Gothic”. Kelly argues that this ‘new’ literary genre “linked national identity and destiny to the individual and the family, as these were being redefined and made central elements in middle-class culture”. In accord with other critics, particularly Fiona Price and Jennifer Evans, Kelly believes that one of the major influences for Porter adopting history as the foundation for her novels was the inspiration she gained from her brother’s historical landscape paintings. Porter put into words what Robert depicted on the canvas. Also, as with other critics, Kelly cites another significant influence, Porter’s associations and experiences during her time spent in Edinburgh, most notably the stories of local Scottish eccentric, Luckie Forbes, companionship with the young Walter Scott, and her meeting with Jeannie Cameron, Prince Charles’ companion fugitive during the Jacobite rebellion of 1745. While Kelly explores and theorises on a great range of motifs found in Porter’s novel, such as hagiography, gender relationships, Gothic representation and ancient epic and classical Homeric influences, it is his examination of Porter’s nationalist discourse in *The Scottish Chiefs* that is my focus. According to Kelly, *The Scottish Chiefs* was Porter’s effort to “inspire patriotic resistance to foreign invaders” and “designed
to address a particular moment of national and international crisis by promoting what was then an emergent liberal ideology and politics”.\textsuperscript{549} As stated earlier in this chapter, the Act of Union in 1800 was an important moment in history for Porter, because in forging a union with Ireland, as England, Wales and Scotland had done a century earlier, it created a greater degree of national unity, escalating the “political entity known as Great Britain... into the United Kingdom of Great Britain”.\textsuperscript{550} This had the effect of heightening the solidarity of the British nation. Kelly asserts Porter’s promotion of this “emergent liberal ideology” in her novel.\textsuperscript{551} The emergent ideology referred to by Kelly, as I understand his meaning, relates to the movement in Britain for acknowledgement of the “rights of the ‘people’” and protection against the “encroachments of crown and landed magnates on the one hand and politicised plebeians on the other”, in other words, protection of the ‘people’ from “despotism and disorder”.\textsuperscript{552} The clearest example of this is found in Britain’s reaction to the destruction in France of the legitimate monarchy and the subsequent rise of imperial dictatorship. The ‘people’ in the new liberal ideology is the rising middle class and the “respectable lower ranks”.\textsuperscript{553} Kelly indicates that Porter’s liberal nationalism is first evident in her previous novel Thaddeus of Warsaw, which found solid support from the growing pro-European liberal nationalist movements which evolved in reaction to “Napoleonic imperialism on the one hand and on the other hand opposition to inept monarchic regimes”.\textsuperscript{554} As stated earlier in this chapter, the success of The Scottish Chiefs lay in its broad appeal in both Britain and beyond. Kelly cites Porter’s promotion of a liberal ideology and politics in her narrative for its broad appeal. This ideology was

\textsuperscript{553} Kelly, ‘Introduction, The Scottish Chiefs, p.xxxiv.
\textsuperscript{554} Kelly, ‘Introduction, The Scottish Chiefs, p.xi.
subsequently “realised in the July Revolution in France in 1830 and the Reform Act in Britain in 1832.” It is interesting that Kelly attributes Porter with promoting the new liberal ideology given that it was a movement championed by the Whig political sector. Porter herself was a devout Tory and firm supporter of the Party’s leader, William Pitt. Her heart-felt poem in his honour is testament to this. The poem is copied in a letter to her sister, Anna Maria:

While Paris fills the world with Plaster kings;  
And Rome, for Saints some mouldering carcase brings;  
Let Britain show the sculptors art divine,  
And draw her glory with a marble line.  
On Dover’s rocks, let virtues statue stand,  
In form of Pitt to awe the Gallick land!  
There, while bold honour from each eye-ball glows,  
And threatening Justice, frowns upon his brows,  
The breathing lips, “My Country!” still exclaim.  
My Country echo’s loud, the voice of Fame!  
The sound is spread—the watch word spreads afar,  
And calls all England to the front of War;  
While moveless on the shore, the Patriot stands,  
A Beacon for the Brave, from distant lands  
Like Troy’s blessed statue, that Olympians gave  
It’s men to rally and the realm to save!  

At the conclusion of The Scottish Chiefs there is no uniting of the kingdoms of Scotland and England, the denouement instead announcing and reinforcing the restoration of Scotland’s freedom. However, this is not signalling that Porter is against unification. As previously argued Scotland is being used by Porter in the same way she uses Poland in Thaddeus of Warsaw, as “a regional displacement”, to use Nicola Watson’s term. In The Scottish Chiefs, Scotland is a regional displacement for Britain, the Southron invasion analogous to the feared French invasion. While the conclusion of the novel can be interpreted as Tory in nature, at the same time it can also be seen as a celebration of Scottish nationalism,

555 Kelly, ‘Introduction, The Scottish Chiefs, p. lxxiii. Also for a succinct overview of the Reform Act, see Powell, Nationhood and Identity, pp. 31-57.
556 Letter from Jane Porter to Anna Maria Porter, June 1806 (Huntington Library, POR 1591).
557 See Watson, Revolution and the Form of the British Novel, p. 119.
which I concede, can be seen as closer to a Whig political stance. Kelly’s statement that Porter’s novel reflects a Whiggish standpoint is difficult to refute as he offers a detailed and well constructed argument of the promotion of a liberal ideology. Although Kelly agrees with most, if not all critics, that the main focus of the novel is a “commentary on the current, Napoleonic phase of a longstanding imperial confrontation”\textsuperscript{558}, he simultaneously argues that:

\textit{The Scottish Chiefs} also addresses the formation over several centuries of a ‘British’ constitutional tradition variously called ‘old Whig’, ‘classical republican, ‘commonwealth’, or ‘country interest’ ideology…this tradition was refashioned into a reformist and liberal ideology that would, in the nineteenth century, bring about the founding of modern liberal states in Britain.\textsuperscript{559}

However, I argue that what Porter is endeavouring to show in her novel, is the importance of maintaining a balance, both in the political and social fabric of British society. Her emphasis, or perhaps even insistence, is on security and tradition over innovation and revolution, similar to that advocated by Edmund Burke. Kelly points to the revised footnotes, ‘Prefaces’ and ‘Endnotes’ in later editions of \textit{The Scottish Chiefs} as evidence of Porter’s shift to a liberal Whig stand. However, from my reading of the period, there was a fine line separating Tory and Whig philosophy in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, and so while not discounting Kelly’s argument, I am reluctant to define Porter’s politics in \textit{The Scottish Chiefs} as indicating a change in her political loyalty. The fine line between Party politics in the period can be seen in the example of Edmund Burke, who in his \textit{Reflections on the Revolution in France}, condemned the French Revolution, thus alienating himself from fellow Whigs who, at least initially, enthusiastically supported the Revolution. While promoting what many at the time would have thought to be a Tory position, Burke nevertheless remained a Whig throughout his

life and even rose to become the moral leader of the Party. David Powell concludes succinctly that Edmund Burke was an:

Irishman who became a leading figure in the British state of the late eighteenth century as a politician and political theorist. He supported policies of conciliation towards the American colonies and Irish Catholics. In his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) he developed the ideological basis of Conservative thinking which became an important component of British patriotic politics during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars.\(^560\)

Porter’s main loyalty was to ‘King and country’. In her 1840 ‘Recollective Preface’, she concludes by writing that “her maiden pen has ever inculcated [and] must rest for ever in its people’s firm support of the Laws, the Liberties, and the Throne of England”.\(^561\) I concur with Richard Maxwell’s assessment, that although set in a chivalric past, *The Scottish Chiefs* is most definitely “grounded in the present moment”.\(^562\)

\(^560\) Powell, *Nationhood and Identity*, p. 271.
In her previous novels, *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and *The Scottish Chiefs*, Porter uses small struggling nations as regional displacements. In the case of *Thaddeus of Warsaw* Poland becomes the displacement for the *ancien regime* in France during the French Revolution, and in *The Scottish Chiefs*, she uses Scotland’s fight for freedom during the Wars of Independence as a regional displacement for Britain embroiled in war with France. However, in her next novel, *The Pastor’s Fireside*,\(^{563}\) Porter uses the gentle and domestic location of a pastor’s fireside, situated on the remote island of Lindisfarne off the coast of Scotland, as the ‘ideal’ of the British Empire against the backdrop of the political machinations and battle fields of the troubled nations of Europe which were, as Linda Colley in her essay “The Politics of Eighteenth-Century British History” states, “prone to invasion and usurpation”.\(^{564}\) Throughout her life Porter held a keen patriotic interest in Britain’s economic, religious and military involvement in, and relationship with, Europe.\(^{565}\) Her use of historical settings and portraits marks her novels as important indicators of the contemporary political and social climate in Britain, revealing her anxiety about the future of peace and stability in a time of both political reformation and expansion of the Empire.

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\(^{563}\) Note, some editions of this novel use Fire-side, however unless directly citing one of these editions I use the spelling Fireside.


\(^{565}\) According to Christie and Manson’s catalogue for the auction of Porter’s personal possessions after her death, among her collection of books and journals, Porter held copies of the lives of Knox, Bonaparte and James II, two volumes of *Naval and Military Magazine* (1827), four volumes of *Military History* (1737), Richardson’s *Geology* (1842), Agnes Strickland’s *Lives of the Queens of England* (1840-47), two volumes of *East India Military Calendar* (1823), Buchanan’s *History of Scotland* (1690), *Hexham’s Principles of the Art Military* (1641), and *Militarie Instructions for the Cavallrie* (1632). See *Catalogue of the Library of that Celebrated Authoress Miss Jane Porter, Deceased, Sold at Auction by Messrs Christie and Manson, Wednesday July 24th 1850*. 
Fiona Price, in *The Female Aesthetic Subject: Questions of Taste* (2000), surmises that the setting of Lindisfarne represents an ‘ideal’ Britain, writing:

Lindisfarne, a microcosm of an ideal Britain, here contains not only the Christian but also the familial. As an island, it functions as a metaphor for a possible Britain. The sea around it in fact acts in the same way as the mountains around the glens of Scotland do in *The Scottish Chiefs* - enclosing, empowering and sublime.  

Published in 1817, *The Pastor’s Fireside* begins “late one winterly evening in September” 1725, the final years of the reign of the first Hanover king, George I (r.1714 – 1727) and nearly a hundred years prior to the time in which Porter was writing, in the declining years of the reign of George III (r. 1760 – 1820).  

George III successfully reigned through some of the toughest years in British history, most significantly the American War of Independence, the French Revolution and subsequent war between Britain and France, and the parliamentary push for Catholic emancipation by the then Prime Minister, William Pitt. His reign saw both the victorious defeat of Napoleon and, what was deemed a success by the monarchy, the defeat of the Emancipation Bill. The defeat of the passage of Catholic emancipation by the Parliament held safe the Coronation Oath which was presented to Parliament by the “Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and the Commons, assembled at Westminster” on 22 January 1689. The Oath, presented as part of the *Bill of Rights: The Declaration of Rights of the People of England*, officially declared the abdication of James II and the passing of the crown to William and Mary of Orange. It conclusively named the Protestant faith as the established Church of the Kingdom and secured the succession of this faith through the crown by resolving:

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568 *Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights, with the Petition of Right Presented to Charles the First by the Lords and Commons, together with His Majesty’s Answer; and the Coronation Oath*. (London: Hamblin and Seyfang, [1810]), p. 41.
That WILLIAM and MARY, Prince and Princess of Orange, be, and be declared King and Queen of England, France and Ireland, and the dominions there-unto belonging, to hold the crown... and that the sole and full exercise of the regal power be only in, and executed by the said Prince of Orange ...and after their decease the said crown and royal dignity of the said kingdoms and dominions to be to the heir of the body of the said Princess; and for default of such issue, to the Princess Anne of Denmark, and the heirs of her body; and for default of such issue, to the heirs of the body of the said Prince of Orange.569

From this point on, each new heir to the throne solemnly swears the Coronation Oath of Protestant allegiance and supremacy. The Oath reads:

“Will you solemnly promise and swear to govern the people of this kingdom of England, and the dominations thereto belonging, according to the statutes in Parliament agreed on, and the laws and customs of the same?”

“Will you to the utmost of your power, maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant reformed religion as by law established? And will you preserve unto the Bishops and Clergy of this realm, and to the Churches committed to their change, all such rights and privileges as by law do or shall appertain unto them, or any of them?”570

The Acts of Union were significant events for Porter, not least in regard to the devoutness of her Protestant faith. The union with Ireland in 1800 was particularly pertinent, given the on-going war with Catholic France, the push by parliament for Catholic Emancipation and the growing numbers of Irish Catholics moving to the other nations in the Kingdom, but mostly to England. Porter’s novel, The Pastor’s Fireside, focuses on the period 1725 to 1728 in which the first Hanover king, George I, reigned, concluding with the accession of the second Hanoverian king, George II. As outlined in my Introduction, the three ideals required to build and make strong “this scept’red isle...this England”571 are nationalism, heroism

569 Magna Carta…and the Coronation Oath [1810], p. 47.
570 Magna Carta…and the Coronation Oath [1810], p. 51.
571 Shakespeare, Richard II, Act ii, Scene i, Line 40.
and domestic virtue. I would argue that these ideals become manifest during the reign of George III and it is the spirit of these principles which Porter brings to *The Pastor’s Fireside*.

The Hanover Dynasty

Much to the ire of the British people, George I arrived in London in the dark of night, avoiding any ceremony. Although “his coronation a month later was celebrated with the full panoply of state pageantry”, it was, as Kathleen Wilson points out “not particularly grand by later-eighteenth-century standards”.\(^{573}\) Despite his reign being viewed in some quarters as a deliverance from “Tory, High Church ascendancy and Jacobite hopes”\(^ {574}\) it was not a popular one. George I suffered much personal public antagonism over the collapse of the South Sea Company, the infamous “South Sea Bubble”\(^ {575}\) which plunged Britain into debt, and was responsible for the rise of the politically astute Robert Walpole to the position of Chancellor of the Exchequer. Walpole was subsequently elected as the first Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and in 1726 so ingratiated himself with the monarch that he was awarded the Order of


\(^{574}\) Wilson, *The Sense of People*, p. 88. The first Jacobite rebellion was put down in 1715.

\(^{575}\) The South Sea Company, founded in 1711, had trade monopoly with Spanish America and in 1720 was given monopoly of trade in the South Seas at which time it offered to take over Britain’s National Debt. This resulted in gross over-speculation causing many companies to be floated, ultimately leading to their ruin. The South Sea Company survived until 1856. See Wilson, *The Sense of People*, pp. 118-120.
In fact, as Roy Strong points out, the accession to the throne by the House of Hanover heralded an “alliance of the Crown and the Whig party under the aegis of Sir Robert Walpole which was to last forty years.” George I soon lost most of his power to the ever strengthening Walpole who oversaw the establishment of the House of Commons, seen by many in Britain, especially the opposition Tory party, as the ultimate infringement of personal and constitutional tradition. As Wilson argues:

[T]he Hanoverian regime had inaugurated a reign not of “schismaticism” but of single party rule, overweening executive influence and a growing number of effective mechanisms for interfering in people’s private lives and pockets, which were perceived on the popular level as infringements of Englishmen’s birthrights.

Writers, such as Jonathan Swift and Alexander Pope, saw Walpole as “the incarnation of the worst kind of corruption”, embodying, as Roy Strong puts it, “squalid mercantilism and materialism”. George I died in Germany in 1727. His lack of popularity with the British nation was such that his body was never returned to Britain for burial. He was succeeded by his son, the forty-four year old Prince of Wales (George II; r1727 – 1760), who was just as unpopular as his father. Culturally, George II was, according to Strong, “a dedicated philistine.” During George II’s reign, the monarchy was “no longer the leader of taste and the fount of patronage”. Although Walpole maintained much influence with the King even after his defeat in Parliament in 1742, George II’s new foreign policies caused much public discontent, especially, according to Kathleen Wilson, the “commencement of formal hostilities with France in early 1744 and the establishment of a nominally ‘broad-bottom’ coalition”. The failed Jacobite invasion in 1745, however, did serve the King in good

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577 Strong, The Arts in Britain, p. 332.
578 Wilson, The Sense of People, p. 122.
579 Strong, The Arts in Britain, p. 332.
580 Strong, The Arts in Britain, p. 333.
581 Strong, The Arts in Britain, pp. 333-34.
582 Wilson, The Sense of People, p. 166.
stead, and highlighted the need for a united front against “the Young Pretender’s threat to the nation”.\textsuperscript{583} Not only did the failed Jacobite rebellion finally “put paid to Jacobite alternatives”, Wilson argues it also had the effect of “rallying [the people] together for king, religion, liberty, property, empire”.\textsuperscript{584} The Jacobites were defeated, not by military strength but by lack of domestic support. Linda Colley argues that while the British people had “little love for the Hanoverian dynasty”, the defeat of Charles Edward’s attempt to restore the exiled monarchy was a result of “the lack of widespread domestic support”, especially by people in “the affluent and urban areas”.\textsuperscript{585} The British people had begun to look forward to the future, their duty now resting in loyalty to king, country, people and themselves. The seeds of nationalism had begun.

The crowning of George III in 1760 heralded the first Hanoverian monarch, who despite his ‘madness’ in his latter years, was popular with the British people not only because of his personal and political integrity, but, importantly because he had been born and raised in England. In 1821 The Times reported in support of the King how in his “reign of 60 years that true-born Englishman never once crossed the threshold of his native isles.”\textsuperscript{586} He was two generations removed from German ancestry, he involved himself with the arts, commissioning the writing of the patriotic ‘Rule Britannia’ in 1740 and establishing the Royal Academy of Arts in 1768. The British people recognised that George III took his role as head of the Church of England seriously and was a staunch supporter of the Protestant faith, evidenced by his opposition to the Catholic Emancipation Bill proposed by William Pitt in 1801. George III recognised the value in bestowing knighthoods and rewarding military men for their heroic work. As Linda Colley argues, George III was astute in rewarding “exceptional talent and to incorporate that talent within the ranks of those

\textsuperscript{583} Wilson, \textit{The Sense of People}, p. 171.
\textsuperscript{584} Wilson, \textit{The Sense of People}, p. 171.
\textsuperscript{585} Colley, \textit{Britons: Forging the Nation}, p. 85.
\textsuperscript{586} Anon, ‘Court Circular: King’s Visit to Hanover’, \textit{Times}, 11365, Oct 1(1821), p. 2.
who had merely inherited their titles.” Significantly, it was also under his reign that Napoleon was finally defeated at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. Under George III’s reign the ethos among the British people became, according to Colley, one of “hard work, complete professionalism, an uncompromising private virtue and an ostentatious patriotism.”

Affectionately referred to as “Farmer George”, the death of George III witnessed a genuine outpouring of sadness and sympathy. An estimated thirty thousand mourners gathered at Windsor “not from the idle curiosity of seeing a grand exhibition, but to shed a last tear over the grave of a father and a friend”. It would appear that George III had heeded his wife’s warning “of the dim precedents his ancestors had set for the fate of kings who lost the respect and love of their people.”

George III’s popularity as monarch was strengthened by his historic visit to Scotland in 1822. He even survived several assassination attempts during the course of his reign.

The Importance of Protestantism

For Porter, legitimising the succession to the throne by the House of Hanover strengthens both the security of the crown and the Protestant faith, under the mantle of the Church of England, creating importantly, a strong and secure Britain. This allegiance to the House of Hanover is pivotal to any discussion of The Pastor’s Fireside as it embraces Porter’s most fundamental loyalty, as stated in my previous chapter, and as Porter herself puts it, to “the Laws, the Liberties, and the Throne of England”.

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587 Colley, Britons Forging the Nation, p. 191.
588 Colley, Britons Forging the Nation, p. 191.
589 Fraser (ed), The Houses of Hanover and Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, p. 49.
591 Wilson, The Sense of the People, p. 217.
592 See Fraser (ed), The Houses of Hanover and Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, pp. 46-47. Fraser explains that while it was believed that George III declined into madness in the final ten years of his life, there have been many theories since about the actual nature of his illness. Most recent studies suggest from the symptoms displayed by the King, he was in all probability suffering from porphyria, which is a blood condition which attacks the nervous system and ultimately the brain.
Linda Colley in *Britons Forging the Nation 1707-1837*,\(^{594}\) argues that after the *Act of Union* (1707), and in the face of a clear and real threat of war from Catholic France, Protestantism became perhaps the most significant unifying factor in the British push for a united nation. Colley writes:

> More than anything else it was this shared religious allegiance combined with recurrent wars that permitted a sense of British national identity to emerge alongside of, and not necessarily in competition with older, more organic attachments to England, Wales or Scotland, or to county or village. Protestantism coloured the way that Britons approached and interpreted their material life. Protestantism determined how most Britons viewed their politics. And an uncompromising Protestantism was the foundation on which their state was explicitly and unapologetically based.\(^{595}\)

In response to Colley’s argument, David Powell, in *Nationhood and Identity: The British State Since 1800* (2002) argues that while Protestantism can be viewed as a “cultural cement for a sense of British nationality”, it was not, however, uniform throughout Britain during this period.\(^{596}\) Powell points out that England and Scotland both retained their own versions of Protestantism, Anglicanism and Episcopalism being mostly practised in England, while Scottish Presbyterianism remained the most common denomination practised in Scotland. This dissention in turn meant that disparate educational, academic and political institutions were established and operated outside the dominant Protestant discourse. Powell writes that these disseminating bodies “built up their own educational, intellectual and political networks, reinforced by ties of community and kinship”.\(^{597}\) Religion aside, Powell also points to other differences within Britain, namely social, political and linguistic. While Colley focuses on Protestantism as being the unifying force in forging British nationalism in the eighteenth and early-nineteenth century, Powell argues that these other fracturing forces in operation were equally

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\(^{594}\) The parameters of these dates signifies the Act of Union, between England, Wales and Scotland, and the ascension to the throne of Queen Victoria, both defining moments in British history.

\(^{595}\) Colley, *Britons Forging the Nation*, p. 18.

\(^{596}\) Powell, *Nationhood and Identity*, p.9.

\(^{597}\) Powell, *Nationhood and Identity*, p. 10.
significant in the formation and promotion of “Britishness”. Keith Robbins in *Nineteenth-Century Britain: the Making of a Nation* (1989) argues that while the Act of Union had enshrined the establishment of one church in Scotland (Presbyterian) and one church in England and Wales (Anglican)...[a]ll the main ecclesiastical families – Roman Catholic, Episcopalian/Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Congregationalist/Independent, Unitarian, Quaker – were [still] present in all parts of Britain [and were] all ‘carriers’ of traditions which they believed to be deeply embedded in the spiritual life of their people.

In a recent study, Rowen Strong also agrees that Protestantism per se was not the only religious force in operation, pointing to the Anglican influence on empire and imperial expansion. Anglicanism was, as Strong argues, “self-consciously and institutionally part of an older collective institution, the Church of England.” The institution of the Church of England was the official Church of the State and its head was the reigning monarch. Strong states that religion and empire in Britain has been inextricably linked since the sixteenth century, however, it was not until the eighteenth century that religious conceptions of empire began to play a large role in British imperial identity and he places Anglicanism at the forefront of this push. Strong sees the beginning of Anglican involvement in British empire and imperialism as having its roots in the formation of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) in 1701. The sermons and reports of the SPG was an Anglican discourse, primarily concerned, according to Strong “with the construction of English-British imperialism”, that is “with evangelism and conversion of both indigenous peoples and white colonists...which can be understood as part of a pan-European eighteenth-century Protestant revival of

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What is evident from these arguments by Colley, Powell, Robbins and Strong is that while religion may have been the “cultural cement”, to use Powell’s phrase, it is not a simple dichotomy of Protestantism versus Catholicism, but far more complex and one that Strong believes has not been fully explored or understood even today. Fully appreciating and understanding the complexities of the religious milieu in Britain in the period in which Porter was writing, I nevertheless maintain the validity of Colley’s argument that Protestantism was indeed the significant unifying factor in the push for British nationalism. I do not read Colley as making a simple Protestant versus Catholic dichotomy, as she clearly acknowledges that tensions did exist “between Anglicans and Protestant non-conformists in England and Wales, between Presbyterians and Episcopalians in Scotland” and that these “internal rivalries were abundant and serious.”

In particular, the significant aspect that I do take from Colley’s study is her insistence that, when threatened by the ‘hostile other’, Britons began to define themselves collectively against this ‘other’, which was Catholic France. Protestantism, as the collective faith, can therefore be seen as a clearly defined unifying force during this period in British history. Colley writes:

> At odds in so much of their culture and secular history, the English, the Welsh and the Scots could be drawn together – and made to feel separate from much of the rest of Europe – by their common commitment to Protestantism. To a very limited extent, this had been the case since the Reformation. But throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and even after, external pressures and imperatives made the fact that this was an overwhelmingly Protestant culture relevant and compelling in a quite unprecedented way.

Keeping in mind all the complex arguments in relation to Protestantism and ‘Britishness’, I argue that in *The Pastor’s Fireside*, Porter affirms her

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603 Colley, *Britons Forging the Nation*, pp. 18-19.
604 Colley, *Britons Forging the Nation*, p. 5.
605 Colley, *Britons Forging the Nation*, p. 18.
commitment to Britain, to a Protestant crown, to the Church of England and to British succession.

In the ‘Introduction’ to the novel’s 1832 edition, Porter insists that her aim in writing the novel is to “show the temptations, the dangers, and, generally, even the temporal ruin of immoderate ambition”. (xii) Ann Jones in Ideas and Innovations: Best Sellers of Jane Austen’s Age (1986) cites Christian virtue as being The Pastor’s Fireside’s “predominating concern”.606 However, while acknowledging this, I nevertheless maintain that while there is a strong adherence to the importance of Christian virtue and the nature of chivalry in The Pastor’s Fireside, at the very centre of the novel is Porter’s promotion of her commitment to the British Hanoverian monarchy, and, the importance of maintaining a strong Protestant faith. As stated in my discussion on Thaddeus of Warsaw, the Act of Settlement in 1701 deemed that on the death of Queen Anne, the Princess Sophia, Duchess of Hanover, would be the successor to the throne, thus securing a Protestant line of succession, because, despite being the grand-daughter of James I and cousin of Queen Anne, Princess Sophia was a Protestant. Unfortunately, the Princess Sophia died unexpectedly before inheriting the throne and so on the death of Queen Anne, Sophia’s son, George Lewis, was pronounced king. Designed not just to legitimise the Protestant claimants to the throne, the Act of Settlement was also enacted to strengthen the parliamentary system, which had suffered greatly under the reign of James II. In The Pastor’s Fireside, Porter dispels any misconceptions held by herself, and her readers, that the “throne of Great Britain came to the House of Brunswick, not...by an Act of Parliament”(450), but, by Divine Providence and the mandate of the British people.607 As even the very title would suggest, religion is an

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606 Jones, Ideas and Innovations, p. 135.
607 Porter refers to the House of Brunswick, which in conjunction with the house of Luneburg, formed the House of Hanover. Porter’s next novel is about the descendents of the Brunswick/Luneburg families, Duke Christian of Luneburg, the heir of who Duke George of Brunswick-Luneburg, believed to be the first member of the Hanover House. The novel was produced at the request of George IV.
overarching theme throughout *The Pastor’s Fireside*. In this novel Porter offers acute insights into the prevailing belief in the superiority of the Western world’s Christian faith over the East’s religion of Islam. While there is a tolerance of the Catholic faith in *The Pastor’s Fireside*, like Porter, the young hero of the novel, Louis de Montemar, remains strong and constant in the Protestant faith, Louis declaring with great passion and fervour, “I am a Protestant, and I will die one”.(377) It is these two themes, the monarchy and religion, which are the focus of my exposition in this chapter.

**The Novel and its Reception**

As in *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, the hero in *The Pastor’s Fireside*, Louis de Montemar, is a fictional character. However, while in *Thaddeus of Warsaw* the narrative is propelled by the actions of Thaddeus Sobieski, in *The Pastor’s Fireside*, validation for the narrative action is generated by the two historical characters in the novel, Louis’ father, the Duke de Ripperda, and his foe, Duke Philip of Wharton. Therefore, while still allowing her fictional hero, Louis de Montemar to represent and embody the feelings and attitudes intrinsic to the novel’s aim, Porter had to ensure the accurate and consistent depiction of de Ripperda and Wharton so as not to undermine the historical validity of the story. Porter’s achievement is reflected in the various critical reviews which confirm the validity of the two historical characters. While one reviewer does accuse Porter of taking “great liberties with the historical facts”, the majority were lavish in their praise. The *Gentleman’s Magazine* writes of Porter’s portrait of Duke de Ripperda as “masterly”, and Duke Wharton as embodying all the “fascination attributed to that eccentric character”. The *London Review* similarly writes of the masterly portrait of de Ripperda, which “gives to this work its decided tone of superiority”.

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writes of Porter’s attention to historical detail that on reading the novel “we are ready to believe ourselves not wandering through the paths of fiction, but...admitted to a participation in a train of minute facts and characteristic details”.611

The title, The Pastor’s Fireside, is quite misleading, inferring gentleness and domestic bliss rather than mystery and intrigue, of which there is a great deal in the narrative, and suffice to say, the main action of the novel abounds with “war, murder and intrigue”.612 The implications of this odd title may be explained if considered in the context of when it was written. Walter Scott had just published Old Mortality (1816), part of the series he called ‘Tales of My Landlord’. In the “Introduction”, the fictional literary executor, Jedediah Cleishbotham, tells his readers that he has “sat in the leathern armchair, on the left-hand side of the fire, in the common room of the Wallace Inn, winter and summer, for every evening of my life, during forty years bypast” and although he has travelled the world, it is from that armchair that Cleishbotham now feels he can be “considered as an oracle” and the tale which is about to follow is not his story but that of his Landlord, now deceased.613 Scott is implying that the ‘tale’ of the Landlord is an anecdote handed down to him and which he now wishes to hand down to future generations. As a ‘tale’ it should be accepted as truth, a history remembered, shared and then handed down. Similar to a ‘village anecdote’, which presumably represented, in Gary Kelly’s words, “what authentic social life should be”, the ‘tale’ encompasses a wider “scale of national social identity”.614 The ‘tale’ conveys a moral, a narrative that both entertains and informs, and importantly, implies tradition. A ‘tale’ is

613 Scott, Old Mortality, pp. 5, 6.
614 Kelly, English Fiction of the Romantic Period, p. 92. I wish to point out that I am not referring here to the genre of the ‘national tale’ which Katie Trumpener defines as “a genre developed initially by female authors, who from the beginning address the major issues of cultural distinctiveness, national policy and political separatism”. See Katie Trumpener, ‘National Character, Nationalist Plots”, ELH, 60/3 (1993), pp. 685-731 and Kelly, English Fiction of the Romantic Period, pp. 71-110.
also intimate, it is domestic and as such everyone can participate in its unfolding narrative.

Porter introduces her ‘tale’ as one stemming from a shared memory, the memory of place, the memory of she and her sister wandering through the hills at Lindisfarne, gathering “handfuls of butter-cups” and her brother sitting “on a stone to make a sketch”. What is evoked is a cumulative history of place, history as a shared experience and one that we can all learn from. By telling a ‘tale’ Porter is creating a dialogue between the history of the Pastor and his family, the history of the events narrated in the ‘tale’ and Porter’s own history. By inviting her reader to engage in the ‘tale’ to be told by the fireside, the past and the present become linked and will continue in perpetuity. Told as a ‘tale’ The Pastor’s Fireside is a clear example of how Porter successfully locates the national securely in the domestic domain, or, to use Fiona Price’s term, unites “national narratives with the domestic.” The novel’s plot is complex, and although a relatively comprehensive synopsis can be found in the Critical Review, 1817, I provide a lengthy synopsis as Appendix A on the assumption that both the Critical Review and the book are not readily available.

Porter explains in her ‘Introduction’ to the The Pastor’s Fireside, that although “the story of two such men as de Ripperda and Wharton...belong to the south of England and the Continent”, she chose the “remote island of Lindisfarne” as the setting for the formative years of her fictional hero, the young Louis de Montemar, because “with it my own youth was most familiar”. Louis was given to the care of the Reverend Richard Athelstone by his father, the Duke de Ripperda, when his mother died when he was in his infancy. The Reverend was the Pastor of Lindisfarne. In the ‘Introduction’ Porter writes that not only was it because of her familiarity with the region that prompted her to choose Lindisfarne as her

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615 Porter, The Pastor’s Fireside, (1849), pp. xi, x.
616 Price, The Female Aesthetic Subject, p. 234.
location for the familial home of her fictional hero Louis de Montemar, but also because “under the north’s stern winters, and brief though bright summers, seemed to me more consonant to such a destiny...[for one] whose life was to be one of stemming the world’s torrents”. Porter later re-visited this area when she worked as an assistant and companion for the poet and historian, the Reverend Percival Stockdale. Not only was she re-acquainted with the area during this period but she also learnt from Stockdale of the adventures of the novel’s historical characters, Duke Philip Wharton and read of the extraordinary tales of the Duke de Ripperda. Robert Irvine in his unpublished thesis, *The Life of Jane Porter* (1942), states that much of the information about de Ripperda and details of his adventures were acquired by Porter from her reading of a “recent biography of de Ripperda”. My research shows that there are possibly three memoirs of de Ripperda that Porter could have read. The first is *Memoirs of the Duke de Ripperda: first Embassador [sic] from the States-General to his Most Catholick [sic] Majesty then Duke and Grandee of Spain...* published by J. Stagg of London in 1740. The second is *Memoirs of the Duke de Ripperda* written by John Campbell, published in London in 1745, and the third is, *Lives of Cardinal Alberoni and the Duke de Ripperda*, published in 1806 and republished in 1814, written by George Moore and also published in London. The strongest evidence for Porter having read the last of these Memoirs can be found in the text of the novel when she writes, “since the removal of Cardinal Alberoni, others may have the title of prime minister.” In her novel, the title of Prime Minister is bestowed on de Ripperda later in the narrative, although only temporarily, as was the case with his predecessor, Cardinal Alberoni. Moreover, the fact that Moore’s historical account was re-issued in 1814, close to the year in which *The Pastor’s Fireside* was published, 1817, strengthens the likelihood that this was indeed Porter’s source text.

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619 Other sources of references for the novel can be deduced from the record of Porter’s library, which was sold at auction by Christie and Manson in 1850. They include, Francis Sanders, *An Abridgement of the Life of James II* (1704), George Buchanan, *The History of Scotland* (1690), Robert Douglas, *The Baronage of Scotland* (1798) and Stockdale’s *Edition of Shakespeare* (1784).
Ironically, in the novel, de Ripperda prophesies his own fate, which is historically similar to that of Alberoni: “Alberoni’s mysterious policy, which held Europe in awe five apprehensive years, was revealed and destroyed in one moment”.(100) Historical accounts of Alberoni and de Ripperda, reveal that, as in the novel, both fell quickly from Philip V’s favour after their policy measures failed. In each case the policy failures resulted in a handing over of more power to the British Hanoverian monarchy. In her long and exhaustive ‘Recollective Preface’ to the 1840 edition of *The Scottish Chiefs*, Porter explains that she also came across the name of de Ripperda, when, while visiting Eton College with some friends, she was shown the chamber where de Ripperda purportedly “lodged during his refuge in England from the persecutions of ungrateful Spain”.(621) The choice of Duke Wharton and Duke de Ripperda, as the historical characters in *The Pastor’s Fireside*, is a departure from the previous heroes that Porter brought to life in *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and *The Scottish Chiefs* and could in part account for the limited impact of this novel, compared with her previous two. While the unquestionable Christian virtues of the fictional Thaddeus Sobieski and the legendary William Wallace are indisputable, Wharton and de Ripperda, as historical entities are flawed. The anonymous author of the ‘Introductory Note’ to the 1846 edition describes de Ripperda and Wharton as:

> [T]wo illustrious dukes [who] were men of towering ambition; equals in genius, and rival statesmen on many foreign shores,

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See Catalogue of the Library of that Celebrated Authoress Miss Jane Porter, Deceased, Sold at Auction by Messrs Christie and Manson, Wednesday July 24th 1850.

620 The Italian born Giulio Alberoni was appointed as the agent for the Duke of Parma in 1711 at the age of 51 and quickly became a ‘favourite’ of Elizabeth Farnese, arranging the marriage between her and Philip V of Spain, being then appointed a chief minister for the King. It is documented that Alberoni advised the King that he could make Spain the most powerful nation in Europe if the King could keep peace in the kingdom for five years. Alberoni instigated several policy measures and established a new army and navy. However it was Alberoni’s advice to support the failed Jacobite rebellion in 1715 that saw his demise, being forced to surrender his troops to the British navy. He was ordered by Philip V to leave Spain. He traveled to Italy, set up a leper colony and a seminary. He died in 1752. I assume that it was his part in the Jacobite rebellion that probably sparked Porter’s interest and also, after Alberoni’s demise, it was Ripperda who succeeded him in matters of diplomacy in the Spanish Court. Information about Alberoni has been sourced from Henry Kamen, *Philip V of Spain: The King Who Reigned Twice*. (London: New Haven Press, 2001).

perilous with quicksands and opposing breakers; and both were in a manner wrecked.\textsuperscript{622}

In contrast to the two Dukes is the gentle and “true-minded”\textsuperscript{623} Louis de Montemar who “breasted the storm”\textsuperscript{624} into which he was led by his father, de Ripperda, and his friend, Wharton. Exposed to ambition and temptation by both, Louis is an exemplar that the best use of ambition and talents “is to lead a life of Christian devotedness”. (xii-xiii) While the merits of the young Louis are unquestionable, surprisingly, contemporary critics of the novel were also positive in their evaluation of the two flawed historical figures. The reviewer of the novel for The Literary Gazette of 1817 writes that:

The Duke de Ripperda displays a sad example of the demoralising quality of ambition, or rather the lust of power. Born with a capacity for every virtue, the best feelings of his heart are smothered by policy and deception; and, after years of anxiety and toil, he leaves the frightful warning of a life darkened by guilt and closed in infamy.\textsuperscript{625}

And of the character of Wharton the same reviewer declares:

A principal agent in the story and the fortunes of the hero, of which he seems almost the master-spring to cause and control all of the events, is no other than the celebrated (a severe annalist might say, the notorious) Duke of Wharton! To this dangerous child of folly and of whim, the benevolent authoress has attributed not only most bewitching graces of person and manner, but virtues of the highest order, sullied indeed with levities, but unpolluted by crime.\textsuperscript{626}

Despite the favourable reception by critics, Porter, it seems, was hesitant about her portrayal of Wharton, believing in hindsight that despite the fate she allowed him, he was in essence a “dangerously brilliant man”(xiii) describing him, some fifteen years after her original creation of him, as an

\textsuperscript{622} Jane Porter, ‘Introductory Note by a Friend of the Author’, \textit{The Pastor’s Fire-side a Biographical Romance. A New Edition, Revised with an Introductory Note by a Friend of the Author’s; an Appendix &c.} (London: George Virtue, 1846), p. vii. [Note this is a different edition to that referenced fn 3].
“ignis fatuus”. (xiii) The unusual choice of idiom is interestingly one used by Byron in his poem *To A Youthful Friend* (1808), the speaker of the poem describing his mischievous friend as one who is easily led astray, but admitting that “[t]he fault was Nature’s fault not thine/Which made thee fickle as thou art”.627 Porter was an avid reader of Byron, and her description of Wharton’s nature in her ‘Introduction’ to the 1832 edition of the novel, can be convincingly compared to that of the youthful friend in Byron’s poem.628 Although fundamentally believing Wharton to be “mischievous to all who followed him”, on the advice of a friend who read the draft of her manuscript, Porter relented and “proceeded to modify the actions of the profligate...Wharton, into colours more answerable to the change of my view in the ultimate result of his character”. (xiv) However, this ‘change of view’, on her original plan of Wharton, troubled her greatly in subsequent years, lamenting that:

I sincerely blame painting a union between gay, splendid and mischievous vices, with any of the truly generous virtues; for they never did, nor never can, exist in the same breast: and this, to my infinite regret, I have drawn in the character of Duke Wharton. Such men may talk largely of the noble virtues...but when they come to the practice of any really disinterested act, it never is done, unless it have gazers on to give it fame!(xiv)

This re-appraisal in 1832 of the character of Wharton must be evaluated from several perspectives. First and foremost, it is in 1832 that her beloved sister, Anna Maria died, just one year after their Mother having also passed away. With Robert living abroad, Porter found herself bereft of family. Her only other living sibling, William Ogilvie, living some distance away in Bristol. Robert Irvine in *The Life of Jane Porter* explains that in the years following the death of her Mother and sister Porter led a “nomadic life which was to last for over ten years.”629 Letters reveal that she left the cottage in Esher and sought the hospitality of friends. With

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628 In her ‘Recollective Preface’, *The Scottish Chiefs* (1840), Porter mentions meeting Byron “at his house in Grosvenor Street”, p. 43.
Anna Maria uppermost in her mind, in the 1832 ‘Introduction’ Porter reflects on the guiding principles influencing her novel writing. She writes how for “every word we set down in our pages we believed we must be responsible to Heaven and to our country.”(xiii) In retrospect, Porter laments that she did not follow her primary instinct to “bring on [Wharton] a terrible catastrophe”, but instead follows the advice of “a loved critic...that he should [in the final pages] turn from his wickedness, and live!”(xiv) Although pronouncements such as these were made by many authors, especially women authors, at this time, Ann Jones argues that the Porter sisters differ from the rank and file “by their deeply pious cast”. Jane and Anna Maria’s piousness was not used as a disclaimer for “fawning humility and presuming vanity” but from deep and genuine piety, instilled in them from a very early age. Jones points out that Porter’s religious tone in her novels became more overt with each successive novel, corresponding, according to Jones, to the growing influence on her of the Evangelical movement. Jones writes:

Interestingly, we find more frequent overt religious reference as the Evangelical movement gained force. It is not nearly so obvious, for example, in Jane’s first novel of 1803, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, as it is in her second of 1810 – and in neither is it so obvious as in later work.

I do not disagree with Jones’ assessment, but would add that as Porter advanced in her years she became less sure of herself as a writer. One reason is undoubtedly the rising popularity of Walter Scott and the success of his novels. As Robert Irvine suggests, the consequence is that Porter was inclined more and more to write what she believed she ought to write, rather than following the instincts of her own heart and skill as a writer of two bestselling novels. An example of her growing uncertainty and piety can be seen when considering the characters of Lady

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632 As discussed in Chapter Two, the Porter sisters were closely aligned with the Protestant Evangelical movement, in particular a follower of Hannah More and the Clapham Road sect.
Joanna Mar in *The Scottish Chiefs*, or Lady Sarah Ross in *Thaddeus of Warsaw*. Both are women of questionable reputation and clearly are devoid of the strict Christian moral code demonstrated, through their jealous passion and carnal desires for Wallace and Thaddeus, respectively. However, Porter makes no apology for their characterisations and yet she feels compelled to re-appraise her portrayal of Duke Wharton. Dorothy McMillan in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004) observes that:

> Nevertheless, the jealous passion of Lady Mar, who betrays Wallace when he spurns her advances, is nearly credible, and it may be that Jane Porter’s Christian morality inhibited a talent for the treatment of the paradoxical attractiveness of wickedness. Certainly she was horrified by her own success with the profligate Wharton in her later work *The Pastor’s Fireside*.\(^{635}\)

In addition to the death of her sister, and her Mother, the 1832 ‘Introduction’ to *The Pastor’s Fireside* also coincides with the release, and enormous success, of Scott’s *Magnum Opus* edition of the Waverley novels. The *Magnum Opus* was published over a forty-eight month period beginning with the first volume in 1829, the final volume coming off the press in 1833, one year after Scott’s death. In his ‘General Introduction’ to *Ivanhoe*, David Hewitt explains that the main feature of the *Magnum Opus* is the addition “of a clutter of introductions, prefaces, notes, and appendices, containing”, writes Hewitt, “a miscellaneous assemblage of historical illustration and personal anecdote.”\(^{636}\) Also, each volume of the *Opus* sold for a mere 5 shillings, making it affordable to most consumers and therefore exceedingly popular.\(^{637}\) Ian Duncan argues that the most profound legacy of Scott’s undertaking was the public’s reception of the

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\(^{637}\) An estimated 35,000 copies were sold each month. Sales of the volumes from 1827 to 1849 saw up to 50,000 copies sold. See William St Clair, *Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 642-43
new literary format, ‘the collected works’. Duncan asserts that with the publication of the *Magnus Opus*:

Literary production now represented itself as a new relation between life and works, exceeding the sum of the parts. It was an organic totality, a dynamic presence; it was life itself, recovered in the act of reading. The author sat at the chronological origin of this animating circuit and the reader at its end.\(^\text{638}\)

It may be an unfortunate truth that in writing new introductions, prefaces and appendices to her novels, Porter was bowing to the commercial incentives by following Scott’s lead. In hindsight it could be argued that it would have been more astute perhaps to allow her novels to speak for themselves and avoid the necessity of apologising for the actions of her characters or explaining her motives for their creation. In *Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain, 1750-1850* (2008), Devoney Looser argues that “Porter’s labours in late life were not tied up with working toward new success in the literary marketplace” but “republishing her earlier novels” with the addition of lengthy new introductions, prefaces and postscripts.\(^\text{639}\) Looser points out that the “market for old novels was helped by the genre’s rise in status, as well as by Porter’s ability to claim that she was offering to the public improved, corrected versions.”\(^\text{640}\) More successful than many women writers of the period, Porter managed to earn “an irregular income” from the republication of her novels, and from other “miscellaneous writing”, and while never free from financial worry did manage to eke out a living from her writing, albeit meagre.\(^\text{641}\)

While not nearly as successful as her previous novels, *The Pastor’s Fireside* went, without delay into a second edition and was still being reprinted as late as 1892, although the reprints and new editions of her two

\(^\text{639}\) Looser, *Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain*, pp. 142, 163.
\(^\text{640}\) Looser, *Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain*, p. 165.
\(^\text{641}\) Looser, *Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain*, pp. 157, 156.
more famous novels far outnumber this. One reason for its lack of success could be attributed to the passive title of the novel, which goes no way towards promoting the action and complexity. Moreover, its Spanish *dramatis personae* would have been far less attractive to a readership more used to Spanish/Italian Catholicism as the basis of the more lurid Gothic novels of the time, Matthew Lewis’ *The Monk* (1796) for instance. It is, however, unfortunate that *The Pastor’s Fireside* has been mostly ignored in present-day scholarly discussions of Porter’s oeuvre because it is, according to various critics of the time, equal in style and content to that of her previous novels which were immediate bestsellers. For example, a reviewer for the *Gentleman’s Magazine* in 1817 declares that the novel “is a romance of the same class with *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and *The Scottish Chiefs*”, and that “the numerous characters are drawn with much strength and felicity of discrimination”.

Nineteenth-century critics were on the whole extremely favourable in their praise of the novel and particularly positive in their endorsement of Porter as an “eminently successful” novelist. The *Gentleman’s Magazine* reports that *The Pastor’s Fireside* is “consistent in its plan,...[and] sustains a constantly progressive interest”. The author of the review praises Porter for her “scenes conceived with a truly dramatic talent” and “[i]n common with every other work from the same pen, *The Pastor’s Fireside* is imbued with a chivalrous spirit, which breathes of honour and magnanimity”. The *Literary Gazette* reports that Porter’s “magic pencil gives to the varied and successive pictures which are displayed upon her canvas, all the reality of portraits” and that her narrative is “enriched...by characters singularly well developed and

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A lengthy column in the *London Review and Literary Journal*, informs the reader that:

*The Pastor’s Fireside* is not, as its unassuming title should seem to announce, a simple rural tale, but an historical novel, worthy to be associated with the Thaddeus and the Scottish Chiefs of its admired author.  

The journal praises Porter’s depiction of her hero, writing that Louis is “endowed with every virtue under heaven, [and] is sufficiently a human being to subdue the heart even of a critical reader”. The *British Lady’s Magazine* delights in reporting that “the style of Miss Porter is elegant and engaging, and so admirably adapted to convey the fastidious code of honour”, while Robert Nares in the *British Critic* extols the novel’s virtues, writing that “this tale will prove a source of great interest...[and] is certainly above the ordinary run of Romances”. The *Critical Review* hails Porter as in the class of novelists along with Maria Edgeworth and “the author of Waverley”. While the writer of the review acknowledges that some grammatical errors are evident, they are the work of carelessness, assuring the reader that *The Pastor’s Fireside* is a narrative that is “certainly above the ordinary run of novels”. Perhaps the most negative appraisal is found in the *Monthly Review*, the critic writing that, although the reader “will be surprised at finding themselves carried into palaces and dungeons, and to fields of battle” and that the “character of Louis...is a touching and finely conceived picture of filial piety and heroic self-denial”, it highlights a couple of historical inaccuracies, concerning the wife of de Ripperda and the apparent age of Wharton. My research on the historical circumstances concurs with the reviewer that the wife of de Ripperda was not deceased as the novel would have, but, that “the

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Duchess de Ripperda outlived her husband”, Porter also chooses not to mention “the fair Castilian” who fled with de Ripperda to Barbary. The reviewer does acknowledge though, that in spite of these inaccuracies, the novel displays “a great variety of incident, with much justness of thought”. Notwithstanding inaccuracies in historical facts, and some literary licence with regard to both de Ripperda and Wharton, I would suggest that it is a well constructed and well told narrative of a period in British history, a period which in effect, heralded the defeat of any further claims to the throne by the Stuart dynasty and saw the legitimising of the House of Hanover line of succession to the British throne.

**Recent Criticism**

Despite the positive reviews of her nineteenth-century readership, more recent scholars of Porter have offered little, if any, critical analysis of The Pastor’s Fireside, choosing instead to focus primarily on The Scottish Chiefs, with a smattering of analysis on Thaddeus of Warsaw. Those critics who do foray into some discussion of the novel, do so only as part of a general overview of Porter’s oeuvre. Ann Jones in Ideas and Innovations (1986), acknowledges that The Pastor’s Fireside was “highly acclaimed” and that Porter had “done much reading in preparation for it”. Jones finds the young hero, Louis de Montemare, a “much less sympathetic character” than that of Wharton and de Ripperda, who she describes as “credibly mixed characters”. Jones writes:

> Wharton was not only dissipated but a notorious liar, and Ripperda was not a man of integrity destroyed by slanders against him but arrogant in his office and a traitor to the Spanish government which employed him.

Jones asserts that Wharton and de Ripperda, because flawed, are more interesting characters than the young hero Louis de Montemare.

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658 Jones, Ideas and Innovations, p. 135.
659 Jones, Ideas and Innovations, p. 135.
Ironically it is their flaws which make their rendition more lively and interesting. Jones offers no further critical insight to the novel, apart from concluding that the nobility of Christian virtue is clearly the dominant theme in the narrative. Linda Woolsey in *British Short Fiction Writers 1800 – 1880* (1992) gives very little comment on *The Pastor’s Fireside*, writing merely that it is “full of violence and intrigue”. Gary Kelly in his ‘Introduction’ to the 2002 edition of *The Scottish Chiefs* makes a brief mention of the novel, writing:

Jane published another historical novel, *The Pastor’s Fireside*, set in the seventeenth century with incidents at various places in Europe, perhaps appealing to the reading public’s concern over the post-Napoleonic restoration of absolutist monarchy and aristocratic hegemony throughout Europe.

By far the most significant critique to date on *The Pastor’s Fireside* is from Fiona Price. In her thesis *The Female Aesthetic Subject*, Price explores the representation of the beautiful and the sublime in the novels of a range of women writers, including Porter, and does address *The Pastor’s Fireside*, although focuses largely on *The Scottish Chiefs*, and interestingly, as lesser known Porter novels, *Tales Round a Winter Hearth* (1826) and *The Field of Forty Footsteps* (1828) which Porter published in conjunction with her sister Anna Maria. Price argues that: “Porter places feminine values at the heart of the national romance by redefining the sublime.” For Porter, the patriotic sublime exists within “the domestic hearth” and it is within this enclosed space, the home, that women have a public voice. As mentioned at the very beginning of this chapter, Price describes Britain

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662 Kelly, ‘Introduction’, *The Scottish Chiefs*, p.xii. Kelly has stated that the novel is set in the seventeenth century which incorrect, it is set in the early eighteenth century. This sentence is quoted correctly.
as an enclosed, domestic, religious space. While Price’s exposition of the sublime is extremely interesting, it is her discussion of history and tradition in these minor works that is of most interest with regard to my own research. *Tales Round a Winter’s Hearth* is a collation of four short tales, “Glenrowan, A Scottish Tradition”, “Lord Howth, an Irish Legend”, “A Tale of Our Own Time” and the fourth, “The Pilgrimage of Berenice”, written by Jane. Price explains that the “first three tales are grouped to suggest the diversity of traditions and identities within the British Isles”, while the fourth “suggests all three narratives have a common heritage”, that being “Christian virtue.” Price elaborates that “The Pilgrimage of Berenice”:

> Indicates that the differences of region and class which appear in the first three stories (but which, in any case, never appeared particularly threatening) are nullified because of the shared sublime of Christian virtue.

The main emphasis of “The Pilgrimage of Berenice” is “on Christian versus Islamic values and on west versus east”, while the first three tales focus on “folk tales and narratives of political strife within Britain”. This contrast demonstrates that while there may be regional and class differences in Britain, it is infinitely more unified when compared to an alien and exotic other. In *The Pastor’s Fireside* Porter refers to followers of eastern religion as “Christian infidels”(372), and as will be discussed later, she shows no tolerance for Islamic faith. In *The Field of Forty Footsteps* Porter likens Britain to a garden, “damaged by levelling commonwealth rhetoric”. In 1850 Edward Rimbauil, in *Notes and Queries*, informs readers that the field referred to by Porter is “behind Montague House [which] from about the year 1680, until towards the end of the last century...[was a place] of robbery, murder, and every species of

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depravity and wickedness of which the heart can think.” The footsteps are the indentations left by two brothers who fought each other to the death and from which time the field could produce no “grass or vegetable [because of this] vengeful struggle”. The field is both real and allegorical, a place of battle but one that now seems to offer “dreamlike spaces for meditation”. Price suggests that what Porter is conveying to her readers is the value of tradition and the need to take heed of nature’s consoling voice in the wake of combat and war. Price argues:

In other words, Porter’s interest was not in history as change but in tradition. This becomes most clearly evident in *The Field of Forty Footsteps*. Porter emphasises history as continuity in order to create a British identity which acknowledges but is not threatened by past political conflict.

As discussed in my Introduction, in her novels Porter attempts to interrogate the past in order to make sense of the political and social climate in England at the time of her writing. Porter’s acknowledgement of the importance of tradition in *The Field of Forty Footsteps*, lays bare, in Price’s words “an unequivocally positive attitude to popular reconstructions of the past” which favours “continuity and tradition” and “positions popular tradition itself as the guarantee of national stability.”

In addition, however, *The Field of Forty Footsteps* confirms my continued insistence on Porter’s unquestioning faith in legitimate hereditary and succession to the British crown. In *The Pastor’s Fireside*, Porter emphasises that it is the continuation of tradition, maintained in the enclosed geography of Britain (that is, the national domestic space), which perpetuates British national security and fosters British patriotism. Lindisfarne is the embodiment of the sublime and the beautiful, creating the ‘ideal’ of Britain, discussed at the beginning of this chapter.

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676 See Price, *The Female Aesthetic Subject*, pp. 240-263.
Price describes Britain as “an enclosed, often domestic” space.\textsuperscript{679} So too does Linda Colley, who argues that because Britain was an island, Britons were physically “enclosed and together” by virtue of the sea surrounding them, not only keeping them safe within but also acting as a “highly effective frontier” against the ‘Other’.\textsuperscript{680} In Shakespeare’s deathbed soliloquy for John of Gaunt in \textit{Richard II}, he eloquently captures this image of “England, bound in with the triumphant sea”, describing this watery frontier as a “fortress built by Nature” protecting England from “infection and the hand of war”.\textsuperscript{681} In her subsequent novel, \textit{Duke Christian of Luneburg} (1824), Porter continues this notion of Britain as an island, safe from the turmoils of troubled Europe. Her young German hero, George of Luneburg, having visited Britain for the first time, upon leaving, turns towards the coast and laments:

\begin{quote}
I see thee no more --- but thine image is in my heart. Girt about by the ocean, like a lovely garden in the centre of a lake; other countries have avenues on all sides, thoroughfares for intrusions, and invasions of every sort; but here, in this \textit{green Eden of the deep}, security, peace, and happiness dwell! \textsuperscript{682}
\end{quote}

While boundaries within Europe in the eighteenth century were more “imagined” and in a constant state of flux, depending on the dominant power of the moment, the sea provided Britain with a “clear, incontrovertible” boundary by which Britons were able shape their identity and define themselves as a Nation.\textsuperscript{683} The pivotal moment when Great Britain defined itself as a nation, states Colley, was in 1707 when the:

\begin{quote}
Parliament of Westminster passed the Act of Union linking Scotland to England and Wales. From now on this document proclaimed, there would be ‘one united kingdom by the name of Great Britain’, with one Protestant ruler, one legislation and one system of free trade.\textsuperscript{684}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{679} Price, \textit{The Female Aesthetic Subject}, p. 232.
\textsuperscript{680} Colley, \textit{Britons Forging the Nation}, p. 17.
\textsuperscript{681} Shakespeare, \textit{Richard II}, Act ii. Line 43-44. It must be noted that the invention of the aeroplane, at the end of the nineteenth century, has shattered that fortress forever.
\textsuperscript{682} Porter, \textit{Duke Christian of Luneburg}, p. 393. Italics as in text.
\textsuperscript{683} Colley. \textit{Britons Forging the Nation}, p. 17.
\textsuperscript{684} Colley, \textit{Britons Forging the Nation}, p. 11.
For Porter too, 1707 was an important moment in British history, however, I would argue that the irrefutable moment for the defining of the United Kingdom of Great Britain as a united nation was forged on 1 August 1714, the day on which the German born George Lewis, ascended the British throne. At that moment not only did Britain secure a Protestant ruler, but the boundary between Britain and France became overtly “clear [and] incontrovertible” not only geographically but religiously as well.\(^{685}\) While historians may argue that the accession to the throne by the George I became the basis for a long and unhappy period in which the British people resented having a German on their throne, I would counter that argument by suggesting that that very resentment, ironically, more truly united Britons in a common cause, the fervour of which had not been witnessed until this moment in history. Rowan Strong argues that as a Christian society Britons “affirmed the union of church and state because both were founded by God”.\(^{686}\) Therefore, Strong asserts that:

> England’s national Christianity was expressed constitutionally in the Church of England, and in the requirement of its Christian government to uphold that religion and its national church. ...By carrying out this duty, English society and its government fulfilled its Christian obligation, and its own self-interest, because religion was seen as the basis of morality and social order.\(^{687}\)

Kathleen Wilson describes how in 1715, a pamphlet entitled *The Harmony of the Lutheran Doctrine, with that of the Church of England*, was widely distributed and was designed to “prove the superb compatibility of the two variants of Protestantism and George I’s suitability as Defender of the Faith.”\(^{688}\) The king, as defender of the faith and head of the established

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\(^{685}\) Colley, *Britons Forging the Nation*, p. 17. While acknowledging that Ireland was not part of the Kingdom until 1800, nevertheless the ascension of the Protestant king determined the future strength and success of Britain as a truly united nation.

\(^{686}\) Strong, *Anglicanism and the British Empire*, p. 117.

\(^{687}\) Strong, *Anglicanism and the British Empire*, p. 117.

\(^{688}\) Wilson, *The Sense of People*, pp. 89-90. Lutherism was the German branch of the Protestant faith. It evolved in the sixteenth century when Martin Luther broke from the Catholic Church of Rome. This split precipitated what is referred to as the Protestant Reformation.
institution of the Church of England was therefore a significant factor in the internal unification process, necessitating not “because of any political or cultural consensus at home, but rather in reaction to the Other”.\textsuperscript{689} The ‘Other’ being Catholic France, and to a lesser extent, but no less derisive, to the predominantly Catholic Ireland, which was subsequently united with the rest of Britain in 1800. In fact, so unyielding was the Protestant foundation on which Britain was building its national identity, that Irish Catholics (in fact any Catholic), living in Britain, were, until the Catholic Relief Act was passed in 1829: “excluded from all state offices and from both houses of Parliament...were subject to punitive taxation, forbidden to possess weapons and discriminated against in terms of access to education, property rights and freedom of worship.”\textsuperscript{690}

Anti-Catholicism was fostered in Britain by holding Catholicism up, most notably in France and Italy, as being a religion of “misery and oppression...[fuelled by] superstition and manipulation”,\textsuperscript{691} compared with Protestantism, the true religion, which upheld the values of “prudence, industry, honesty and decorum”, as Robert Romani puts it.\textsuperscript{692} Anti-Catholic propaganda began to pervade all aspects of British life. Marjule Drury in her essay “Anti-Catholicism in Germany, Britain, and the United States: A Review and Critique of Recent Scholarship” (2001), stresses that Protestantism began to become “a cultural glue, able to unite Britons at all socio-economic levels ...[creating] a positive and patriotic self-image”.\textsuperscript{693} Leading clerics championing the cause began to attack the rituals associated with Catholicism, claiming that it was a direct derivation of paganism, and was therefore “not really Christian at all, but rather the perpetuation of an intoxicating idolatry”.\textsuperscript{694} Particularly targeted were the ornate Catholic churches, their worship of icons and the importance placed

\textsuperscript{689} Colley, Britons Forging the Nation, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{690} Colley, Britons Forging the Nation, pp.19, 332.
\textsuperscript{691} Marjule Anne Drury, ‘Anti-Catholicism in Germany, Britain, and the United States: A Review and Critique of Recent Scholarship’, Church History, 7 (March 2001), p. 98.
\textsuperscript{692} Quoted in Drury, ‘Anti-Catholicism in Germany, Britain, and the United States’, 104.
\textsuperscript{693} Drury, ‘Anti-Catholicism in Germany, Britain, and the United States’, p. 101.
\textsuperscript{694} Drury, ‘Anti-Catholicism in Germany, Britain, and the United States’, p. 106.
on holy relics. This was in total antithesis to Protestant “antiseptic” practice of worship, and in comparison to their places of worship, which Drury describes as “studiously cleansed interiors”.

In *The Pastor’s Fireside*, Porter makes particular reference to this Protestant piety and simplicity of devotion, a facet also of the Evangelical movement to which Porter belonged. In the opening chapters, the Reverend Athelstone tells his sister, Mrs Coningsby and her daughters, that the reason the Marquis Santa Cruz and his son are visiting Lindisfarne is to make a pilgrimage to the relics of St Cuthbert, believed buried there. The Reverend explains:

> [T]he Marquis Santa Cruz is a Roman Catholic in the strictest sense of the term; that his mind, enlightened on every other subject, is here under a thick cloud he brings his son to the island, *to touch the dead man’s bones, and be healed.* (9)

Later in the novel, Marcella surprises Louis with her exclamation that “to suffer, is the cross that makes men’s virtues Christian”. In a similar exclamation further in the narrative, Marcella says with firm conviction that “[v]irtue is not an heathen idol...a block, or a stone. It is the Christian spirit in a human body”. In both cases Louis thinks that Marcella speaks as if taught from “the lips of [the Reverend Athelstone], his first Christian teacher”. Although born a Catholic, the daughter of a devout father and mother, Marcella received her religious instructions from a Protestant governess and it was from her that she formed her religious beliefs. However, from the moment of her birth, her father, the Marquis Santa Cruz, promised Marcella to a monastic life as a form of penitence for his having seduced “the beautiful novice”, his now wife, away from the convent when young and “full of youthful spirits”. Thus,

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695 Drury, ‘Anti-Catholicism in Germany, Britain, and the United States’, p. 106. As discussed previously in this chapter, it must be remembered that religious antagonism at this time was not merely a simple dichotomy of Catholics versus Protestants, the religious issues were complex and diverse. For example, Scottish sects, such as Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists were fundamentally opposed to the Church of England, which they considered dangerously close to Catholicism. This is borne out in Walter Scott’s novel, *Old Mortality* (1816). For fuller expositions of this rivalry see Rowan Strong, Anglicanism and the British Empire and Keith Robbins, Nineteenth-Century Britain. England, Scotland, and Wales, pp. 63-96.
when Marcella was born, Santa Cruz “hung a golden crucifix at the neck, and always addressed her [from then on] by the name of ‘the little nun’”.(267) Marcella’s heart is heavy with the burden of her imminent entry to the Ursuline Convent and taking “the vow of abjuration from the world”.(369) Monasteries and Convents were viewed by anti-Catholics as “perversions”,696 because as Drury comments, there was much Protestant suspicions regarding these single sex communities, developed from the time of Henry VIII. Drury writes:

Women who would deny the only acceptable role of bourgeois wife and mother in favour of a nonreproductive life beyond patriarchal authority were regarded as at best terribly confused and manipulated, at worst, indecent. A ‘perverse’ masculine authority was enjoyed by the mother superior, though only so far as the male hierarchy would allow. And this male celibate caste was mocked, indicted, envied, but most of all feared.697

As revealed in the narrative, for Porter, true Christian ministry “cannot be fulfilled by retiring to a solitude beyond the stars, or immuring oneself below them, in monasteries and loneliness”.(430)

Porter believed unquestionably that her ministry was to promote Christian virtues through her novels, writing in the ‘Preface’ to the 1832 edition of The Pastor’s Fireside, as has been previously noted, that she and her sister Anna Maria firmly believed that “for every word we set down in our pages we believed we must be responsible to Heaven and to our country.”698 However, The Pastor’s Fireside clearly reveals that Porter was tolerant of all Christian-based religions. This tolerance is evidenced in the Marquis’ acceptance of his son’s intention to marry the Reverend’s niece, Alice, and his beloved daughter, Marcella, to marry Louis. The Marquis relents:

Trusting, indeed, to the spirit of Christian toleration in their bosoms, which he had lately imbibed into his own, and from the same foundations of truth and peace – by a not unfrequent

698 Quoted in Jones, Ideas and Innovations, p. 116.
communication with a little English book, which during his
daughter’s attendance at the couch of his wounded son, he had
one night observed on the table of her watching; and having
taken it up to look at [said], “Do we not read...in that sacred
word, that all who reverently name the name of its Divine
legislator, should love each other as brethren? And as it was
wrought on the Catholic minds of the marchioness and myself,
we trust the hearts of the Protestant pastor and mother at
Lindisfarne will not withhold the tender kindred tie we came
to seek.” (429)

The Reverend Athelstone responds with similar understanding and
toleration:

For hearts which the Almighty hath joined together by his own
gracious will, let no man put asunder! And that he hath done
so by a signal bond between the Marquis’s family and ours, is
distinctly marked by the mutually shedding of their blood for
each other in the terrible fields of Barbary. (429)

Porter’s religious toleration may appear capricious, given her novel is an
endorsement of the one true Protestant faith and the Hanoverian dynasty
as the legitimate monarchy, but it must be remembered that the main
thrust of her rhetoric is espousing the “Laws, the Liberties, and the
Throne of England”. As previously mentioned, for Porter, first and
foremost, her devotion was for family, for King and for country. Her
toleration does not extend to Eastern religions, which she perceives as a
perilous threat to Christianity. Her young hero, Louis, does not
participate in the battle with the “Christian infidels”, (emphasis Porter’s)
(372) for “military fame or its adjuncts”(352) but in defence of the “cause
of his country and the faith of his fathers”, (361) volunteering to fight the
enemy only to save his father, de Ripperda, who Louis believes is in
“mortal rebellion against his country and his God”. (367) Louis’ every being
is in torment because of his father’s rejection of the Christian religion, de
Ripperda having turned in anger after his banishment from Spain, to the
Islamic faith. Louis’ heart is broken as he declares, “[h]e is now a
proclaimed outcast from his name and his country” and worse still that he
is “banished from the face of Heaven and the Christian world for

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ever”.(371) Twice in the novel Louis risks his life in desperation to convince his father that he has “become an apostate to his faith, and traitor to his country”.700 Falling on his knees before de Ripperda, Louis pleads:

It is not in you, my father, to desert a religion the founder of which was perfectly holy, just, and merciful, to embrace the creed of an impostor! - one whose life was polluted with every vice, and whose blasphemous doctrines sanctioned oppression, and privileged murder! Oh, my father, it is not in you to become the very thing that excites your vengeance. (333)

After the bloody battle between the Moors and the Spanish at Ceuta, de Ripperda is mortally wounded and is taken to a monastery in Tetuan, having been now declared “a traitor to the empire and ...prophet”.(381) Despite being wounded himself, Louis travels quickly to his father’s side, explaining to the Marquis that “my course is clear,- to seek my father; and make my last effort to share with him that happiness in the world to come he has forever destroyed”. (380) In the face of eternal perdition, de Ripperda agrees to listen to the words his son learnt from the Reverend. Louis says in earnest:

He has taught me that it is impossible for the finite faculties of man to comprehend the infinite attributes of God; how he reconciles justice with mercy, in the mystery of redemption; and renews to purity the corrupted nature of man by the regeneration of repentance through the cross of Christ! Recall the promises of the Scriptures, my father and there you will find that He who washed from David blood-guiltiness, and blotted out the idolatry of Solomon; that He who pardoned Cephas for denying Him, in the hour of trial and satisfied the perverse infidelity of Thomas; that He who forgave Saul his persecutions, and made him the ablest apostle of his church; nay that He who has been the propitiation of man, from the fall of Adam to the present hour – wills not the death of a sinner, but calls him to repentance, and to life! (387)

So moved by his son’s fervour, de Ripperda receives the “sacred absolution ...the pledge of his salvation, in tasing, with a believer’s heart, the last supper of our Lord”.(389) De Ripperda’s last words to Louis are that he

immediately return to England, which de Ripperda declares, is the only country “where virtue is a man’s best friend”. (388)

Porter portrays Britain as maternal, with the “welcoming smiles of a mother” (397) and in *The Pastor’s Fireside* she overtly celebrates Britain’s glory. When first leaving England, at the beginning of his journey, the young Louis looks back towards the coast and exclaims, “Majestic England”. (80) Upon returning three years later, Louis is even more enamoured of his blessed country. Porter writes how as Louis:

[S]tepped out on the old mole, the partialities of his infancy were re-awakened by what he saw; and, though more than nominally a Spaniard, he felt the honest glow of an Englishman, when viewing that rock, and those bastions, where the most heroic and persevering achievements had been recently performed by the countrymen of his mother. It was now England’s own imperial domain; and Louis, with self-upbraiding remorse, inwardly exclaimed, “Oh! Why did I wish for any other country?” (390)

At the heart of Porter’s patriotism, is her unaltering belief in the monarchy, which, as previously mentioned, at the time of writing *The Pastor’s Fireside* was under the reign of George III. On Louis’ arrival home, George II has newly ascended the throne and is described as “representative of the long line of British kings, uniting the royal blood of Scotland and of England in [his] bosom”. (449) While having championed the Stuart cause for most of the narrative, Duke Philip Wharton is granted a pardon by George II, but while extremely grateful for granting him amnesty, insists that although acknowledging George II as the king, his loyalty does and always will lie with the Stuarts as the true royal ascendants to the British throne. Wharton believes that the Hanovers have possession of the crown not by blood but by election:

I accept the amnesty in the spirit it comes – ingenuous and free! It will afford me the joy of witnessing the nuptials of my dearest friend [Louis]; and also hereafter, my betrothed need not to shrink from bestowing her spotless hand on a husband under doom of scaffold. But for my rights as a British peer! I derived them from the House of Stuart, and will hold them by
my own honour. George of Brunswick may be the people’s and
the parliament’s king; James Stuart was, and is mine! I give
what I claim; and while your sovereign reigns in their hearts, I
shall not dispute his possession. (450)

Porter does not shrink from this ‘open declaration of principle’ by
Wharton, her loyalty having always been firmly in support of true
inheritors of the royal line, both her previous novels, Thaddeus of Warsaw
and The Scottish Chiefs overtly supporting inheritance over election.
However, as previously stated, Porter was also caught in the strong wave
of Protestant patriotism that spread throughout Britain at this time. In
The Pastor’s Fireside, Porter carefully lays out her strong allegiance,
putting to rest any reservations and misconceptions previously held, and
in fact still held by many Britons during these early years of the Hanover
reign, of the legitimacy of the House of Hanover as the rightful heirs to the
throne:

    Permit me …to explain the mistake of some who suppose that
the throne of Great Britain came to the house of Brunswick,
not by right of birth, but by virtue of an Act of Parliament, the
people’s representative. George the First was descended from
a Stuart, a daughter of James the First of England. And the
Act of Settlement on the present family neither creates nor
confers any new right upon them; it only confirms that which
was inherent in the House of Brunswick, on the exclusion of
the papist branch of the royal line. To assert the contrary, is to
subvert the ancient constitution of the country, and to turn our
hereditary into an elective monarchy. (450)\textsuperscript{701}

Conclusion

Porter found the task of writing A Pastor’s Fireside a difficult one. In a
letter to Anna Maria in 1816, Porter writes: “The Pastor gets on. – I am
now in the depths of Babary! To be sure, never was there a more
wandering young gentleman than my hero and yet to have dwelt so long in
my hands!”\textsuperscript{702} In a later letter, Porter writes again to her sister that The

\textsuperscript{701} It should be noted that, Princess Sophia is the grand-daughter of James I, not the daughter.
Porter refers to the House of Brunswick, which in conjunction with the house of Luneburg, form the
House of Hanover.

\textsuperscript{702} Letter from Jane Porter to Anna Maria Porter, 8 October 1816, (Huntington Library, POR
1736).
*Pastor's Fireside* “is the only work that ever was under my hand, that has seriously troubled me.”  

I suggest there are two possible reasons for Porter’s inner turmoil with regard to writing this novel. The first is that it had become very evident to Porter that the novels of Walter Scott were so popular with the reading public that he was being accepted as “an outstanding luminary of the literary establishment”, as Angus Calder puts it. As Porter was writing *The Pastor's Fireside*, Scott published *Old Mortality*, the first the four planned in the series he titled ‘Tales of my Landlord’ and as Angus Calder points out, it was at this time that Scott’s novels “sold while other speculations came to grief.”

A handful of surviving letters written by Porter to Scott reveal that the two had only just become reacquainted, having known each in childhood while both residing in Edinburgh. As mentioned in my first chapter, Porter sent Scott copies of her manuscripts, asking for advice and opinion, however the relationship certainly does not appear to have been reciprocal. From my research, no letters from Scott to Porter appear to exist. As Thomas McLean argues, Porter’s anxiety over the success of Scott will become manifest in “Nobody’s Journal”, published in 1827. McLean writes that “Nobody’s Journal” “barely conceals its author’s…resentment at the fickleness and injustice of literary fame.”

Relying on her writing for income, Porter could not help but be worried about the obvious evidence of Scott’s increasing popularity and also the resultant loss in income should her novel not be accepted by her once loyal reading public. Porter felt pressured to complete the novel, writing to Anna Maria about the need to complete the manuscript:

I suppose ten days will carry me to the end. – But what end?
Only the rough copy. – Yet, the moment that is finished, I

703 Letter from Jane Porter to Anna Maria Porter, 16 October 1816, (Huntington Library, POR 1740).
commence the proper MSS and shall send it off by sheets at a time as they are transcribed, to the Printer.\textsuperscript{707}

Notwithstanding this urgency to complete the novel, and the need for it to sell well, I would further argue that Porter’s turmoil during the writing of \textit{The Pastor's Fireside} is reflective of the domestic tumult Britain was engulfed in, despite its recent victory over France and Napoleon. While Wellington’s victory over Napoleon was a triumph it did not come without a cost. Many young British (and needless to say French) soldiers lost their lives during the campaign, the extent of the bloodshed powerfully evoked in Byron’s \textit{Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage} (1816): “The grave of France, the deadly Waterloo!”\textsuperscript{708} As J.R. Watson argues, the victory at Waterloo had come with much “horror and sacrifice”.\textsuperscript{709} The ending of the war with France also had a grave financial effect on British domestic economy. Large numbers of returning soldiers were unable to find employment and that, combined with the rising taxes, food shortages and general disenchantment produced unrest, riots and widespread poverty. It would have appeared to the people of Britain that the revolution had moved from across the Channel to their own shores. At home, the King’s health deteriorated and his profligate son, the Prince Regent, was making himself very unpopular with the British people. Unlike his father, the Prince of Wales was seen as reckless, extravagant and his private life less than savoury.\textsuperscript{710} For Porter domestic peace must be maintained in order to stay safe and secure and the most powerful way for this to be achieved was for the monarchy to remain strong. Her novel therefore was designed to show that in the national interest, domestic peace must be preserved.

In her next novel, \textit{Duke Christian of Luneburg} (1824), I will show how by using the example of the history of the Hanoverian ancestors, Porter conclusively affirms her belief that in order to keep Britain safe and

\textsuperscript{707} Letter from Jane Porter to Anna Maria Porter, 16 October 1816, (Huntington Library, POR 1740).
\textsuperscript{708} Quoted in Watson, \textit{Romanticism and War}, p. 162.
\textsuperscript{709} Watson, \textit{Romanticism and War}, p. 162.
\textsuperscript{710} For a full account of the Prince Regent, George IV, see Parissien, \textit{George IV}. 
secure, both from internal unrest and external threats, Britons must remain unified in their support for King and country.
Chapter Five: Remaining Loyal to the British Nation: Porter’s 
*Duke Christian of Luneburg*

Then succeeded the delight to real patriotism, of tracing 
the glory of England, in the ancestors of her Sovereign

*Duke Christian of Luneburg* (1824)  

In my Introduction I stated that the fundamental premise of my work is to demonstrate that Porter’s novels were deeply in-tune with the nascent nationalistic fervour of late-eighteenth, early-nineteenth century Britain, and consequently they are important texts politically within the context of the period in which she was writing. Published in 1824, *Duke Christian of Luneburg* in effect draws together all the threads of Porter’s preceding novels, that is, her unquestioning devotion to the Church of England as the one true church and the need for the British people, as a unified nation, to maintain, indeed strengthen, their firm support for King and country. The novel’s epigraph, “Alles für Gott und Sie”, which translates “Everything for God and You” is an apt indicator of the novel’s major theme. Porter recognised that history provided lessons from which we can learn. As John Kemble argues, by “looking backward a little upon the great and good of olden time” it is possible to learn from the mistakes of history “without losing the wisdom of our own times.” The sentiment is one Porter undoubtedly shared.

*Duke Christian of Luneburg* tells the story of the House of Hanover’s noble progenitors and exemplifies Porter’s belief that true heroism lies in an unfailing devotion to the ‘home’, whether that be the domestic family home or the larger National home. The recently ascended German

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711 Jane Porter, ‘Dedication’, *Duke Christian of Luneburg; or, Tradition from the Hartz*. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Green, 1824), p. vi. All subsequent references are to this edition and page numbers will appear in the body of the text.

712 My thanks to Dr Jacqueline van Gent, School of Social and Cultural Studies for translating the epigraph for me.

713 This is part of a letter by John Kemble to Jakob Grimm written in 1833, quoted in Mandler, *The English National Character*, p. 46.
Hanovers to the British throne are in effect ‘fathers’ of the British nation and by exemplifying their heroic ancestry Porter is affirming their rightful place as leaders and protectors of the national home, Great Britain. According to Porter, by looking at the actions of past heroes, and the events of history, it is possible to strengthen, as Fiona Price puts it, “the contemporary sense of national community.”

As a national community, the British people must accept the anointed heirs in order for Britain to remain safe from external threats and secure in a continuing of domestic peace. The growing dissatisfaction with the reign of George IV makes instilling this acceptance even more imperative. As in *The Pastor’s Fireside*, in *Duke Christian*, Porter demonstrates a desired loyalty to King and country. The novel’s dedication further exemplifies an overarching ideology, which Porter appears to endorse, of the importance of national unity and her commitment to the Protestant faith by revealing George IV as king of a “United British Empire”, the key phrase in the description of her patron. The dedication reads:

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HIS MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,
GEORGE THE FOURTH,
KING OF
ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND,
THE UNITED BRITISH EMPIRE,
KING OF HANOVER,
DUKE OF BRUNSWICK AND LUNEBURG,
DEFENDER OF THE FAITH,
&c. &c. &c. &c. (v)
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**The Royal Request**

In the previous chapter I argue that *The Pastor’s Fireside* reveals a firm affirmation of Porter’s allegiance to the German Protestant heirs to the British throne. This allegiance is further confirmed with her acceptance of a request by the King’s Librarian, Dr James Stanier Clarke, to write the story of George IV’s heroic Hanover ancestor, Duke Christian of Luneburg. Porter received the request via her good friend Andrew Halliday, while

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staying in Clifton, due to ill-health. Buoyed by the request she writes excitedly to Anna Maria, quoting from the letter received by Halliday from Dr Clarke.715

Dear Sir, I have great pleasure in being able to inform you, for the information of Miss Jane Porter, that the King has been pleased to permit that ingenious and most delightful writer, to dedicate her intended Novel, by Permission, to His Majesty.716

She also writes in her diary how she was honoured to be asked by Dr Clarke, later remarking to her friend, Mrs Elwood, that she “could not but obey so distinguishing a command.” 717 It should be remembered that this is her first attempt at novel writing since her disastrous foray into playwriting, and so the King's compliments are an incentive for Porter to return to the genre which produced such popular personal success. During the hiatus following her unsuccessful attempts at playwriting, however, Porter was in no way idle but busying herself with assisting her brothers with their work; Robert with his Travels in Georgia, Persia, Armenia, Ancient Babylon...in the years 1817 to 1821 (1821),718 and William with his treatise Remarks on the Causes, Prevention and Management of the present prevailing epidemic, commonly call Typhus Fever for the use and benefit of the People (1819). While at Clifton Porter writes to Anna Maria that after her morning walk she returns to her “lodgings and then writes letters or reads (which is principally on subjects to assist Robert's 2nd volume)”, going on to say in this letter that she hopes “with the blessing of God to get Robert's work out of my hands”, so she can

715 Thomas McLean and Devoney Looser both cite the author and physician to Duke Clarence, Mr Andrew Halliday, as being the person to suggest to Porter that she write Duke Christian, not Dr Clarke and that Halliday, after having received permission from Dr Clarke for Porter to write the story, may have intimated to Porter that a pension could be forthcoming should she complete this assignment. See Looser, Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain, and McLean, ‘Nobody’s Argument’.

716 Letter from Jane Porter to Anna Maria Porter, 4 July 1821 (Huntington Library, POR 1798).

717 Quoted in Jones, Ideas and Innovations, p.136.

718 In her ‘Recollective Preface’, The Scottish Chiefs (1840), Porter remarks “that his Majesty having had the works of the sister of Sir Robert Ker Porter recalled to his recollection by the then recent publication of her brother's Travels in Persia, &c., (which were dedicated to the King,) he took my early published volumes from the royal shelf, and was so satisfied with the historical fidelity of the heroes they portrayed that Dr. Clarke was commanded to communicate to me his Majesty's gracious request that my next subject should be The Life of his Great and Virtuous Progenitor, Duke Christian of Luneberg”, p. 39.
commence writing *Duke Christian*. So energized is she by the request to write about the King’s ancestor, Porter appeals to her Mother, and sister, to provide “a sanctum somewhere for my business” when she returns home, suggesting that “it be in the inner parlour”, so as to take advantage of the best light. After the public failure of her plays, Porter is not only proud to receive the request from the King, but is also certain that such a commission will improve her family’s financial situation. In fact, as a writer, now distinguished by the King, a room of her own, (to paraphrase Virginia Woolf), is both necessary in order for her to complete the task propitiously, and the money that she will gain from its publication will more than pay for the cost of any renovations to their home. Porter writes of this room of her own:

But when I do come home, I must contrive a sanctum somewhere for my business, and if it is to be in the inner parlour, to give the other room the advantage of light, could not you and Mr Matthews contrive a light extra door, to open outwards, with a window in it…?

Although perhaps presumptuous of Porter, her letter displays confidence in the outcome, writing to Anna Maria: “I feel a comfort in our opening prospects that I cannot describe; I see a gate, opened to us by providence, for the royal beneficence to render our latter days free from care.”

Unfortunately however, it appears that history is once again unkind to Porter, for as with her second novel *The Scottish Chiefs*, any modern scholarship on *Duke Christian of Luneburg* is tainted by a continual comparison, not with Walter Scott in this case, but the ‘other’ Jane, Jane Austen. The few critical discussions of *Duke Christian* are always preceded by the recounting of how Austen notoriously turned down the request by Dr Clarke to write “an historical romance illustrative of the

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719 Letter from Jane Porter to Anna Maria Porter, 4 July 1821.
720 Letter from Jane Porter to Anna Maria Porter, 4 July 1821.
721 Letter from Jane Porter to Anna Maria Porter, 4 July 1821.
722 Letter from Jane Porter to Anna Maria Porter, 4 July 1821.
The proposed historical romance suggested by Dr Clarke was to be dedicated to Prince Leopold on the occasion of his marriage to the Prince of Wales’ daughter, Princess Charlotte. Austen’s refusal that she could “no more write a Romance than an Epic Poem” has become legendary. Austen boldly writes to Dr Clarke that the request would be “much more to the purpose of Profit or Popularity, than such pictures of domestic Life in Country Villages as I deal in”, and conclusively quips that she would be “hung before [she] had finished the first Chapter”. Austen’s refusal has subsequently damaged Porter’s reputation because her refusal, and Porter’s acceptance, has historically been conflated. This conflation has meant that Porter has been unjustly viewed as being a “royal sycophant”, when in fact Austen was being asked to produce work outside her preferred genre, while Porter’s reputation had been established with the historical romance form being attributed to her in this period. In order to clarify the issues, the two events need to be reinvestigated. Firstly, Dr Clarke’s request to Austen was in April 1816, while his request to Porter was in 1821, a gap of some five years, by which time the Prince of Wales had been crowned King George IV. Secondly, Austen was asked to write the Romance to honour the occasion of the marriage of the Prince of Wales’ daughter to Prince Leopold, whereas Dr Clarke’s request to Porter was, as far as my research indicates, in order to help restore the much maligned reputation of the King, which had suffered greatly because of the turbulent events of the Queen Caroline Affair. Thirdly, it is either not widely known, or perhaps ignored by scholars when making the comparison between Austen’s bold actions and Porter’s presumed sycophantic submission, that in fact Austen was nevertheless not above using Royal patronage for

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727 For details of the Queen Caroline Affair, see Parissien, *George IV*, pp. 209-315.
personal financial gain either. During the writing of *Emma* Austen was invited to tour the palace, “during which George’s librarian...told her he had been directed to pay her every possible attention”, and told her that “she was ‘at liberty to dedicate’ any forthcoming novel to His Highness, the Prince of Wales.”728 This Austen did in the ‘Dedication’ to *Emma*, published in 1816. The ‘Dedication’ reads:

To His Royal Highness, The Prince Regent, this work is, by His Royal Highness’s permission, most respectfully dedicated, by His Royal Highness’s dutiful and obedient humble servant, the Author.729

Whether or not the dedication had any impact on the popularity of *Emma*, the fact is that it sold a record 2,000 copies in its first print run, the most successful to that date of Austen’s novels. It would appear, therefore, that as Steven Parissien in *George IV: Inspiration of the Regency* notes, Austen was “shrewd enough to appreciate the possible commercial value”730 of dedicating her novel to the Prince Regent and because of its success, confident enough to refuse any further literary suggestions from Dr Clarke. Steven Parissien also makes the astute observation that in fact Austen “privately satirised” Dr Clarke’s suggestions for a future novel in her essay “Plan of a Novel”.731 Kristin Flieger Samuelian in her 2004 Broadview edition of *Emma* also notes this satirising by Austen, writing:

Austen satirises Clark’s suggestion, in which she outlines the plot of a typical novel of sentiment – broadly satirised but not in fact diverging very far from the popular norm. In margin notes, she identifies the friends and acquaintances, among them Clarke, whose suggestions she was following.732

Austen’s refusal to agree to write an historical romance demonstrates, in Parissien’s words, Austen’s “low opinion of the Regent”, Parissien suggesting that her dedication of *Emma* to the Prince was “rather

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728 Parissien, *George IV*, p. 258.
730 Parissien, *George IV*, p. 258
hypocritical” and a ploy to promote the sale of her novel. While this is not doubted, I would suggest that the request to Austen by Clarke to undertake an assignment outside the genre within which she worked, must have been a strong factor in her refusal. In a letter to her friend, Martha Lloyd, in 1813, Austen quite overtly demonstrates her dislike of, perhaps even disgust for, the Prince of Wales. Austen writes:

I suppose all the World is sitting in Judgement upon the Princess of Wales's Letter. Poor Woman, I shall support her as long as I can, because she is a Woman, & because I hate her Husband.

In the case of Porter, it seems clear that she openly accepted Dr Clarke’s request, in the hope that attention from the King would result in a royal pension. What is clear to my mind is that both Porter and Austen therefore, as any other writer of the time would, saw financial opportunities through royal patronage.

Whether or not Porter was a true patriot, she was certainly smart enough to use ‘patriotism’ in order to appeal to her readers, as she details in the 1840 ‘Recollective Preface’ to The Scottish Chiefs:

For let us remember, that when a nation ceases to recollect the great and the good amongst their own forefathers; they soon cease to be a people of much account at home; and in proportion to that internal decline, they sink in the estimation of the nations abroad.

Although historically conflated by scholars, the events of Austen’s refusal in 1816 and Porter’s acceptance in 1821, are two entirely separate events, occurring some five years apart. Porter’s decision, therefore, to write Duke Christian of Luneburg must be judged independently of Austen’s rejection, in a balanced and informed way. Having said this, Porter probably

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733 Parissien, George IV, p. 259.
734 Le Faye, Jane Austen’s Letters, p. 208.
736 It should also be remembered that Porter’s brother, Robert Ker Porter, had recently dedicated his work Travels in Georgia to the King, a work that the King found most interesting. The Porter name therefore was already held in high regard in the Palace.
made a fundamental error of judgement by writing a too-serious historical account, rather than an historical romance, as suggested by Dr Clarke. Reviews clearly indicate that readers were disappointed with the “love-plots” in Porter’s attempt, even though, according to the *New Monthly Magazine*, “[t]he period chosen by Miss Porter is one very favourable to romantic incidents.”\[^{737}\] Although the young Duke Christian has taken a vow of celibacy in the opening pages of the narrative, Porter fails to engage in romantic possibilities as she so eloquently does in *The Scottish Chiefs*, where, despite renouncing all women upon the death of his wife Marion, in the opening pages, Wallace marries Helen Mar at the conclusion of the novel. As a fictitious character, Helen Mar is able to fulfil the role as the romantic heroine, because never at any stage does her relationship with Wallace compromise his love for Marion, or his devout loyalty to delivering freedom to his beloved Scotland. Porter’s mistake rests not in accepting Dr Clarke’s request, but in her failure to produce a work in the manner which had made her so popular with the reading public. Possibly the royal patronage hampered her sense of freedom and made her reluctant to fictionalise her royal patron’s family history, despite the fact that the historical events were clearly chosen as sufficiently distant to allow some licence.

**The Novel’s Reception**

Published in 1824, *Duke Christian of Luneburg; or, Tradition from the Hartz* received none of the fanfare Porter experienced with her previous novels, virtually going unnoticed by literary critics at the time, and it would appear a good deal of the reading public, despite its high profile subject matter. The London evening daily newspaper, the *Star*, did pre-empt its imminent release, reporting in January that Porter’s new novel would be published on 20\(^{th}\) February of that year, but did not print any review once the novel was published. The *Morning Chronicle* simply

announces in their 15th March edition that the new novel by Miss Jane Porter, “dedicated by the most gracious permission to his Majesty”, had been published in three volumes, while on the 19 April 1824 the *Times* newspaper reports the novel’s release. 738 Neither newspaper followed up with a critical review. While the *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* reports that *Duke Christian* was simultaneously published in Boston and France in the same year as its release in Britain, and a year later in Germany, there is no evidence of any further editions having been published. 739 Unlike the large number of reviews for her previous novels, my research has revealed few reviews of *Duke Christian*. 740 The *New Monthly Magazine* reports that:

*Duke Christian of Luneburg* does not, according to our apprehensions, equal some of Miss Porter’s former productions. The style is occasionally negligent, and the story is, upon the whole, rather deficient in interest....The character of Prince George, [however], who fills almost as prominent a situation as his brother [Duke Christian], is drawn with spirit and vivacity. 741

In contrast, the tone of the review in *la Belle Assemblée* is noticeably more ardent in its praise, beginning with, “[i]t is with no slight feeling of satisfaction, that...we hail the appearance of another historical romance...from the pen of that amiable and admirable writer, Miss Jane Porter.” 742 The review continues:

Referring to the ancestry of our beloved Sovereign to whom it is dedicated, the scene of the present production is laid in the age that immediately succeeded the Reformation...Duke Christian is a hero of a spirit most truly chivalric; ...The picture of the English court in the reign of James I is very ably drawn...and the romantic incidents connected with the tender passion are developed with all that delicate and soul-thrilling

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738 Anon, ‘Miss Jane Porter’s New Romance’, *Star*, 29 January 1824, (1.4.3); Anon, ‘Miss Jane Porter’s New Romance’ the *Morning Chronicle*, 15 March 1824 (3.3.5), found at [http://www.british-fiction.cf.ac.uk/newspapers/duke24-77.htm](http://www.british-fiction.cf.ac.uk/newspapers/duke24-77.htm); and *Times* 19 April (1824), p. 4.
740 I have done extensive searches in the *Times*, in the Wellesley index to Victorian periodicals, 1824-1900, the *British Fiction* website ([www.british-fiction.cf.ac.uk](http://www.british-fiction.cf.ac.uk)), William Ward’s literary bibliography, and the many memoirs and biographical entries for Porter.
741 Anon, ‘Novels, Tales, &c’, *New Monthly Magazine*, p. 220.
pathos which we have been accustomed to admire in the writer’s earlier efforts.\textsuperscript{743}

Given the effusiveness of the review, it is not surprising that scholars are convinced that, because Porter was a regular contributor to the periodical, she may have been in fact the author of her own review, especially in light of the final claim that “the work is finely, nobly, and beautifully written”.\textsuperscript{744} In 1829 the \textit{Edinburgh Literary Gazette} retrospectively reports that “\textit{Duke Christian [is] penned in the true British vein}”, and reports also that Porter received a personal letter from the Emperor of Russia praising her “talents and application”.\textsuperscript{745} The \textit{Chambers Edinburgh Journal} (1833), while mistakenly citing 1823 as the date of publication, gives only a short summary, the author of the entry writing that \textit{Duke Christian} “is written in the same free and generous spirit of independence, tempered by genuine loyalty, which distinguishes her former productions”.\textsuperscript{746} As well as the summary, the article mentions that the “late Emperor of Russia...on perusing it, wrote with his own hand a most gratifying letter to its author, and bore his testimony of commendation to her talents, and their application.”\textsuperscript{747}

Although gratifying enough reviews, the novel lacks any serious critique. Praise for, and acknowledgement of, \textit{Duke Christian} appears to receive no further mention beyond these few, surely political, notices. The \textit{Cyclopaedia of English Literature: A History, Critical and Biographical, of British Authors from the Earliest to the Present Times} (1858), Sara Josepha Hale in \textit{Women’s Record; or Sketches of all Distinguished Women from Creation to A.D. 1854}, (1855) and Mrs Hall in her “Memories of Miss Jane Porter” (1850) all fail to acknowledge \textit{Duke Christian} when

\textsuperscript{743} Anon, ‘Duke Christian of Luneberg’ [review], \textit{La Belle Assemblée}, pp. 170-71.
\textsuperscript{744} Anon, ‘Duke Christian of Luneberg’ [review], \textit{La Belle Assemblée}, p. 171.
\textsuperscript{745} Anon, ‘Memoir of Miss Jane Porter’, \textit{Edinburgh Literary Gazette}, 1/18 (Sept 12, 1829), 274. It should be noted that her brother, Robert, was well known to the Emperor, having been appointed court painter to Alexander I, in 1804. The letter may have been written because of this relationship between Robert and the Tsar.
discussing Porter’s novels.\footnote{Robert Chambers (ed). Cyclopaedia of English Literature: A History, Critical and Biographical, of British Authors from the Earliest to the Present Times. (London: William and Robert Chambers, 1858); Hale, Women’s Record; or Sketches of all Distinguished Women; Hall, ‘Memories of Miss Jane Porter’, pp. 221-223.} Twentieth-century commentators, most noticeably in the Dictionary of Literary Biography (1992) entry, report that it was a “made-to-order novel [which] lacked the energy and conviction of Jane’s earlier work.”\footnote{Woolsey, ‘Jane Porter and Anna Maria Porter’, p. 271.} The author of the entry, Linda Mills Woolsey, concludes that its unpopularity was a result of “a public whose taste had been reshaped by Scott’s Waverley novels”.\footnote{Woolsey, ‘Jane Porter and Anna Maria Porter’, p. 271.} However, there are many more factors, other than just the popularity of the Waverley novels, which could account for the less than enthusiastic reception, one being the growing literate middle classes’ appetite for novels of gossip and scandal, rather than novels endorsing a creed “of a high and noble virtue.”\footnote{Anon, [review], Monthly Review, 9 (Nov 1828), pp. 310-25.} These novels, known as ‘fashionable novels’, or, ‘silver-fork fiction’, began to appear in the mid-1820s and were, to quote John Sutherland, “short-life bestsellers, exploiting post-Regency fascination with high life.”\footnote{John Sutherland, Longman Companion to Victorian Fiction, (London: Longman, 1988), p. 577.} Some of the more significant novels of this genre are Theodore Hook’s Sayings and Doings (1824), Robert Plumer Ward’s Tremaine (1825), Benjamin Disraeli’s Vivian Grey (1826) and Lord Bulwer-Lytton’s Pelham (1828), all published by Henry Colburn. The most noted female writer of silver-fork fiction is arguably Catherine Gore, whose contribution to the genre includes Theresa Marchmont; or, The Maid of Honour (1824) and The Manners of the Day; or, Women as They Are (1830). Silver-fork novels were purported to be written by an insider, an interloper “privy to the intimate secrets of the aristocracy and willing to divulge all to a middle-class reading public.”\footnote{Sutherland, Longman Companion to Victorian Fiction, p. 577.} As popular as they were, their success fed off the reading public’s thirst for gossip and scandal, especially when it emanated from the hallowed upper-class and aristocracy. They were therefore deemed by most literary critics as being
“morally, socially, and intellectually corrupting.”

Gary Kelly argues that silver fork novels reveal:

A deepening sense of social, cultural, and political crisis, a fresh sense of the inadequacy of ‘Old Corruption’, of court and aristocracy, the patronage system, and the hierarchical and paternalistic social order of gentry hegemony, both for the maintenance of social order and progress at home and the defence and expansion of empire abroad.

Seen as a reaction to the less-than popular reign of George IV and the political uncertainty under the Prime Ministership of Lord Robert Liverpool, Kelly argues that these novels were an attempt by the middle-class to re-fashion English society, in Kelly’s words, to “forge a new image of the social leader as gentleman.”

Peter Mandler argues that in effect a consequence of the rise of the individual as social leader, meant that “the sphere of ‘laws and kings’” is diminished, undermining the patriotic vision espoused so passionately by Edmund Burke at the beginning of the French Revolution.

A devotee of Burke, and a strong advocate of the monarchy, Porter would therefore not have contemplated following this novelistic trend, which dared to question the “natural hierarchy”. Mandler argues that:

The 1820s was a decade not only of increasingly democratic turbulence but also of a sharpening awareness of social change as physical and social mobility intensified – to a unique degree in Britain – the concentration of masses in great towns.

‘Silver-fork fiction’ marked a transition not only in literary history but also the social and political history of Britain. As Gary Kelly argues, silver fork novels had an “ostensible aim”; they were “critiques of British society and its institutions in the last years of the decadent George IV”, although

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754 Kelly, British Fiction of the Romantic Period, p. 222.
756 Kelly, British Fiction of the Romantic Period, p. 222. Lord Liverpool was responsible for the introduction of the Corn Laws (1815), failed to prevent the Peterloo Massacre (1819) and helped to progress the passage of the unpopular Catholic Emancipation Act through Parliament (1819). For details of the Prime Ministerial years of Liverpool, see Parissien, George IV, pp, 45, 137, 187, 189 and 247.
757 For more details on this see Mandler, The English National Character, pp. 29-38.
758 Mandler, The English National Character, p. 28.
759 Mandler, The English National Character, p. 28.
ironically they, as Kelly puts it, “show a fascination for what they condemn.”

For both Jane and Anna Maria, their purpose for writing novels was to promote Christian principles, not to engage in social gossip and scandal and both viewed novel writing as “one of the most powerful ways of influencing people’s behaviour.”

From an early age Porter aspired to write ‘history’ (as the epigraph at the beginning of this work attests) because she believed that it was through the medium of history that she could convey an accurate representation of life and manners and show to her readers the expected way to conduct a Christian life. Jacqueline Pearson in *Women’s Reading in Britain 1750-1835* (1999) argues that in the nineteenth century it was considered that:

> History-reading prepared a girl, whose ‘sphere of action is more narrow and confined’, for domestic life, making her ‘more a companion for her husband, and brother’. For her, its function would be primarily ‘moral, even ‘religious’, since it provided ‘the study of virtue’ rather than ‘the study of vice’ to be acquired from novels, with which history was persistently contrasted.

Pearson points out that in the fiction of the period “a love of history defines a rational and moral female character, often in opposition to an excessively imaginative and emotional companion who reads novels or poetry”. The prime example of course is the character of Catherine Morland in Jane Austen’s *Northanger Abbey*, but can be clearly seen also in the character of Euphemia Dundas in Porter’s *Thaddeus of Warsaw*. Pearson labels Euphemia Dundas as ‘an anti-heroine...who pursues the unfortunate hero with aggressive readings from *Romeo and Juliet*”

In a letter to Anna Maria in 1805, Porter writes to her sister that she “much approve[s] of your Historical system of reading”, assuring Anna Maria that “it is one of the best tonicks [sic] we can apply to the mind.” The assumption of ‘truth’ in history gave historical writings, such as the

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763 Pearson, *Women’s Reading in Britain*, p. 50.
764 Pearson, *Women’s Reading in Britain*, p. 63.
765 Letter from Jane Porter to Anna Maria Porter, 27 March 1805, (Huntington Library, POR 1550).
popular female biographies and histories of countries and great leaders, a “moral as well as aesthetic priority...and give a more ‘just and vivid picture of life and manners’”. Porter saw novels as, in Ann Jones' terms, “one of the most powerful ways of influencing people’s behaviour” and as such would not have therefore written anything that she considered would not promote Christian ideals.

**Protestantism, King James and William Shakespeare**

*Duke Christian of Luneburg; or, Traditions from the Hartz* takes the reader back to the years in which King James VI of Scotland and I of England (1603-1625) reigned over England and Scotland, at a time when Europe was engaged in a series of religious-based wars, prior to the unleashing of the Thirty-Years War in 1620. History remembers the reign of King James for his efforts to secure a full constitutional union between England and Scotland (although not realised until 1707), for the authorising and overseeing of the King James Bible, published in 1611, and thirdly, for awarding to Shakespeare's theatrical troupe a royal patent, creating what became known as the King’s Men. As discussed in previous chapters the Acts of Union in 1707 and 1800 were key historical milestones for Porter, representing the consolidation of Britain into a United Kingdom. Nonetheless, despite unification, and the Protestant German dynasty being legitimised as the rightful heirs to the British crown through the Act of Settlement in 1707, an air of mistrust still pervaded the Kingdom. David Powell in *Nationhood and Identity* (2002) writes:

> [T]he accession of the German George of Hanover on the death of the childless Anne, although pre-sanctioned by the Act of

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766 Pearson, *Women’s Reading in Britain*, pp. 51-52. Some of the notable examples of nineteenth-century history writing include, Agnes Strickland’s *Lives of the Queens of England* (1840-47) and *Letters of Mary Queen of Scots* (1843), Jane West’s *The Advantages of Education: or, the History of Maria Williams* (1793), Mary Hays’ *Female Biography* (1803), the works of David Hume, Vicesimus Knox, Edmund Burke and the women’s journal *Lady’s Magazine*, history being a central part of the editorial.


768 Any further reference in this chapter to King James VI of Scotland and I of England, will simply state King James.
Settlement, aroused hostility because of the idea of a foreign prince per se, irrespective of his personal merits. Neither George I (1714-27) nor George II (1727-60) was able totally to overcome this mistrust, even if after the events of 1745-46 it was clear that the Hanoverians were securely established on the throne. Not until the reign of George III, the first ruler of the House of Hanover to ‘glory in the name of Briton’ and to place the interests of his British dominions above those of his German ones, was this sense of suspicion of an exploitive ‘incomer’ at last set aside.769

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the eventual sanctioning by the British of the third Hanover king to rule Britain, George III, also forged Protestantism as a “badge of [British] identity”.770 What Porter is demonstrating in Duke Christian is that this cohesive Protestant identity had its roots in the reign of King James. Although a Stuart, James was brought up as a devout Protestant in the Protestant National Church of Scotland and, according to Powell, after the infamous Gunpowder Plot in 1605 made any leniency toward Catholics unthinkable and stalled the passage of Catholic emancipation for another two hundred years,771

As part of his legacy to Britain and to Protestantism, King James, is perhaps most famous for presiding over the writing and publication of the new ‘Authorised Version’ of the King James Bible, which, as Roy Strong notes, remained “in use within the liturgy of the Church of England until the close of the twentieth century”,772 and which, according to Bill Bryson in Shakespeare: The World as a Stage (2007), “was the one literary production of the age that rivalled Shakespeare’s for lasting glory.”773 Porter had an enduring belief in the lessons that can be learned from history, because, as she affirms in her ‘Introduction’ to Duke Christian, “the hand which writes [this story]” inculcates “the same lesson from the same root [just] as successive fruit and foliage spring from one stem, to nourish and to shelter many a succeeding race of man”.(I, 5)

769 Powell, Nationhood and Identity, p. 4.
770 Powell, Nationhood and Identity, p. 9.
771 See Powell, Nationhood and Identity, p. 11.
With her keen interest in history and the theatre, Porter had great admiration and respect for William Shakespeare, writing in a letter to Anna Maria in 1803 that “the oftener you read his works, the more enchanted you are with his Genius – it seems exhaustless”. Shakespeare is not just referred to in Duke Christian, he is an actual character. As previously mentioned, the reign of King James, was a significant period for Shakespeare, with the granting of the royal patent, the purchase of the Blackfriars playhouse in 1596 by the King’s Men and the building of the Globe in 1599. During the course of the novel, Duke Christian and his youngest brother George travel to England, staying at the Court of King James. For Christian the highlight of this visit to England is a meeting with the much respected playwright and poet, William Shakespeare. While Shakespeare’s genius was not widely renowned in England at this time, Christian is quick to recognise the English bard. Porter describes him in princely terms:

Christian checked his horse, struck with the whole appearance of this man; for his countenance was distinguished as his figure; his unbonnetted head displaying a brow so expansive in mental dignity, with eyes of such bright yet mild intelligence, that both seemed ready to mirror every high expression of which the soul of man is capable. (II,266)

This description is interesting, echoing I would argue her description of William Wallace in The Scottish Chiefs, when describing Wallace as “a figure breathing youth and manhood”, his face is marked with every

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774 Letter from Jane Porter to Anna Maria Porter, 16 September 1803, (Huntington Library POR 1491).
775 The Globe was rebuilt from the timber of the Theatre, located on the other side of the Thames in Shoreditch, which closed after the lease expired in 1597. The Globe was an open air playhouse and therefore purchase by the King’s Men of the Blackfriars meant that plays could be performed in both summer and winter. See Roy Strong, The Arts in Britain, p. 186 and Bryson, Shakespeare, pp. 136-37.
776 St Clair in The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period, writes that the “publication in 1623 of Mr William Shakespeare’s Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies, the first folio edition, the book which brought together almost all of the Shakespeare plays already printed and added seventeen others, was a defining event in the history of Shakespeare and of English literature. (p. 143). I estimate, from historical events described in the novel, that it is either 1611 or 1612 when Duke Christian and his brother visit England, a decade prior to the publication of the first folio. The Christie’s catalogue of Porter’s library indicates that she had a copy of Douce’s Illustrated Shakespeare and several volumes of Shakespeare’s plays and poems.
“noble passion of the heart” and his features perfect, combining every air of “majesty and sweet entrancing grace mingled with manly union”.777 Christian is honoured to be introduced to Shakespeare and clasping the poet’s hand exclaims that he already feels he knows him in “the soul of Harry Percy – of Henry Monmouth”(II,269), and indeed all the other characters that Shakespeare has created in his plays and poems. Christian considers Shakespeare to be “of a mind, royal, noble…[but one which still] abides that principle of respect for all.”(II,271) In Shakespeare, Christian recognises the virtue of dignity and humility in the mien of the man “whom all the world honours!”(II,270). To Christian’s great surprise, and gratitude, Shakespeare agrees to accompany the brothers on their journey to Dover, where they will quit England and set sail for home. Standing on the ship’s bow, Christian and George see “Shakespeare’s peculiarly noble figure, standing like a genius of the land” and reflect admiringly how “his pen ha[s] given a presence on every coast, where the English language could be read.”(II,392) While clearly a fictitious scene, Porter is foreshadowing the immense personal and literary respect Shakespeare had come to command at the time of her writing Duke Christian. Shakespeare, like William Wallace, is a complete hero who can be embraced by all British people and his inclusion in the novel highlights the importance Porter places on the bard’s potential (and perhaps even real) influence in shaping and forging a strong British identity. Shakespeare was also at the forefront of creating ‘tradition’. Seventeenth-century scholars of Shakespeare declared that he never adapted his work from other writers but drew “his materials direct from Nature.”778 Shakespeare was thus an inventor of tradition, or in William St Clair’s terms, “a romantic genius, inspired [and] unique”.779 In the moment in history when Britain is forging a nation and a national identity, the recognition and maintenance of tradition was imperative. In Shakespeare’s work Porter also finds an illumination of her overarching

ideology, that is, the importance of the domestic in the National cause. In *Julius Caesar*, for example, Shakespeare compares the state of man to the state of the kingdom:

The state of man,
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
The nature of an insurrection. (2.1.63)

The play ends with order being restored to Rome, the empire preserved. Throughout her novels, Porter constantly preaches to her readers the importance of maintaining a safe and secure nation and for England to be constantly aware of both the enemy within and the enemy without. Porter is acutely aware of the power of the written word and the influence it can have on shaping a nation’s identity. R.S. White in *Hazlitt’s Criticism of Shakespeare* (1996) points out that Shakespeare’s history plays were considered so influential in the early nineteenth century that *King Lear* “was banned between 1811 and 1820 because George III was mad.” Porter’s contemporaries, such as Hazlitt, Coleridge, Lamb and Anna Jameson, were all writing on or celebrating the genius of Shakespeare, promoting him as instrumental in forging England as a proud and strong nation. The genius of Shakespeare was also widely acknowledged in Europe, especially in Germany in the writings of the scholar August von Schlegel (1767-1845), who coincidentally was born in Hanover. Schlegel’s translation of Shakespeare’s works into German was positively received and soon the genius of the English bard was well recognised there.

In the ‘Introduction’ to *Duke Christian*, Porter writes of the impact the printing press generated and how the proliferation of literacy enabled Britons to “comprehend and appreciate the advantages of civil

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783 See August von Schlegel’s *A Course of Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature* [1809-1811]. Translated by John Black. (London: George Bell, 1889).
liberty”. (I,11) St Clair, in *Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* supports Porter’s statement, writing that by the nineteenth century, British readers recognised the vital role that writers played in the shaping of the nation:

> Reading, all were sure, shaped the knowledge, the beliefs, the understanding, the opinions, the sense of identity, the loyalties, the moral values, the sensibility, the memories, the dreams, and therefore, ultimately, the actions, of men, women, and children. Reading helped to shape mentalities and to determine the fate of a nation.784

Peter Mandler in *The English National Character* looks to Shakespeare’s history plays as forming a pro-Tudor national image of England.785 Like Shakespeare writing history to endorse the Tudor line, so Porter writes history to sanction the Hanover line. The fundamental premise of *Duke Christian*, I propose, is located in her words, “wherever a true arm is yet to be stretched in [the Protestant cause], there we must seek Christian of Brunswick”. (I,74)

Although it is apparent that the action of the novel takes place during the reign of King James, determining the exact time frame in which the novel is set is somewhat difficult, as the only date mentioned by Porter is in the first few paragraphs. Porter ambiguously writes that the:

> chronicle and its adjunct bear the date anno Domino 1610; but the events they record something earlier. (I, 24)

In order, therefore, to gauge an accurate idea of exactly what period Porter is writing about I have systematically moved through the text, assigning dates to the various historical events referred to by Porter, in order to lay down a timeframe for the narrative. The historical sequence is as follows: the death of Duke Christian’s father Duke William (1592), the reign of King James (1603-1625), the failed Gunpowder Plot (1605), the death of the young Prince Henry (1612), the marriage of the Princess Elizabeth to

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Frederick V (1613), the marriage of George to Eleanor (1617), the Thirty-Years War (1620-1648), the murder of Henry IV (1622), and finally the subsequent birth of Elizabeth and Frederick’s twelfth child, Sophia Dorothea (1630), who, importantly, is grandmother to King George I. Having concluded this process it would appear that the span of the novel’s events is 1592 to 1630. Having completed this task, I have every admiration for Porter in chronicling such a complex period of history. Researching the historical character of Duke Christian of Luneburg too was no easy task, Porter herself acknowledging the difficulties in tracing the true history of her hero, given the many conflicting references to Duke Christian, and given there was more than one Duke Christian of Brunswick. Porter makes reference to the difficulties of clearly delineating the character of Duke Christian in an ‘Historical Note’ that she adds at the conclusion of the novel, writing that:

contradictions became observable in the character of Duke Christian, impossible to reconcile in one character.(III,400)

Both Christians were sons of Brunswick dukes, and both were bishops, one to the See of Minden, the other to Halburstadt. One reference cites Christian as a “brave but not always successful soldier”, another that “a fever ended the excesses of his military career”. Another reports that he “lost his left arm…and wore a silver one in its place”, while yet another reports that “after losing an arm, he rode forth…with a substitute made of

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786 There are conflicting dates for this marriage, however given that Elizabeth was born in 1592 and Porter states that she had “hardly turned seventeen” (119) when she was married, I date the marriage as 1613.

787 These historical markers have been drawn from a reading of Adolphus William Ward’s The Electress Sophia and the Hanoverian Succession. Second edition, revised and enlarged (London: Longmans, Green, 1909) and Arthur Collins and Sir Egerton Brydges, Collins’s Peerage of England: Genealogical, Biographical, and Historical. Many of the studies consulted during the researching and writing of this chapter are now out of date. I have been unable to locate any recent works which detail the life and events of Duke Christian.


789 See Ward, The Electress Sophia and the Hanoverian Succession (p. 23) and Collins’s Peerage of England (p. 42) respectively.
iron”. To try and clarify any confusion her readers may have, Porter explains:

The writer of this little narrative cannot quit its concluding page without noticing a circumstance to the reader, which, if alluded to in the preface, might have forestalled the interest of the story—namely, a regular proof that two Princes of Brunswick bearing the name of Christian, existed at the same period, and performed a nearly similar train of military exploits. (III, 399)

However, after “consulting the chronicled documents from Brunswick itself” (III, 400), in particular the “register of ducal entombments”, Porter concludes that the hero of her narrative “was Christian, Duke of Brunswick Luneburg, born 1566, died 1633, and entombed at Celle”, while the “other was Christian, Duke of Brunswick Wolfenbuttel, born 1599, died 1626, and buried at Wolfenbuttel”. (III, 401)

To my knowledge there is no full and detailed synopsis of Duke Christian written, either at the time of its publication, or by recent scholars. Devoney Looser, in her chapter on Porter in Women Writers in Old Age in Great Britain, provides a brief précis of what she admits to being a very difficult novel to summarise. Attached in Appendix B is a brief summary of the novel, based on my own investigations and Devoney Looser’s commentary. It is pertinent to note that the historical settings for all three of Porter’s previous novels were begun at a time of domestic peace amid a fragile national peace. When the domestic peace is interrupted, shattered or irrevocably altered, the main protagonist and the narrative are propelled into action, which in turn impacts simultaneously on that fragile national peace. In Thaddeus of Warsaw, Thaddeus flees to England after enemy forces brutally slay his beloved grandfather and mother. It is in England that the main events of the novel unfold. In The Scottish Chiefs, Wallace is spurred into battle against the invading enemy

790 See Ward, The Electress Sophia and the Hanoverian Succession (p. 23) and Collins’s Peerage of England (p. 42) respectively.
791 Looser, Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain, pp. 153-54.
after the murder of his wife Marion. In *The Pastor’s Fireside* the unexpected arrival of the Spanish Marquis Santa Cruz and his son to the home of the Pastor, results in the young Louis accompanying them to Vienna in the hope of finding his estranged father, the Duke de Ripperda. In Vienna, Louis finds himself in the midst of a plot to overthrow the British king and re-instate the exiled James Stuart to the throne. Similarly, in *Duke Christian*, it is the death of the Duke of Luneberg, Christian’s father, which dramatically alters the course of his life.

As in her previous novels, and again in *Duke Christian*, Porter overlays the histories of the nation with the private history of historical figures who all have title and power to effect change. In this case it is the tenuous relations between England, Germany, Spain and Bohemia which come under scrutiny and it is not only Duke Christian who has the power to effect change, the King’s daughter, the Princess Elizabeth is also instrumental in changing the course of history by marrying Prince Frederick of Spain. History will show that it is the progeny of this marriage which will eventually ascend to the throne of England.

*Duke Christian* begins in a time of relative peace in Europe, King Henry III of Navarre having signed the Edict of Nantes, which, prior to the outbreak of the Thirty Years War, saw a cessation of the religious war that had been raging in France. The Chronicler of the novel writes:

> But Henry of Navarre closed its bloody tournaments, for awhile, ...[a]nd when the writer of this sketch opened his master’s doors...he believed all the world was at peace. (I,21)

The ‘Chronicler’ is actually a fictitious character used by Porter to give authority to the story that is about to be told. As discussed in the previous chapter, Scott constantly used this technique successfully in his novels, through the fictional Jedediah Cleishbotham and Peter Pattieson. However, it is the first novel in which Porter employs such a tactic and it is clear that Scott’s influence is now having an impact on her narrative
choices, as well as her decision to re-write lengthy retrospective prefaces for subsequent editions of her novels. However, as I stated in Chapter One, Porter it would appear was never entirely comfortable with this process, calling these new additions “egotistical epistle[s]”.\textsuperscript{792}

The action of the novel begins at the bed-side of Duke William of Celle and Luneburg, who in his dying hours, requests his seven sons to gather to hear his final wishes. Duke William demands, that for the “conservation of his paternal country”,\textsuperscript{(I,219)} he will hand over the government of Celle and Luneburg to the eldest son, Ernest, and further stipulates that “for the perpetuity of such a settlement, the line of descent must be made single”, requiring the other brothers, bar one, to remain celibate \textsuperscript{(I,219)}. The line of succession must remain pure and the title of Duke of Celle and Luneburg can only be inherited by legitimate succession. The wishes of the dying Duke resonate with Shakespeare’s John of Gaunt’s death-bed declaration that England’s land and people must, as Richard Wilson puts it, “remain as a single heritage of blood and soil, to be bequeathed as an heirloom” and must never be shunted from those rightful heirs.\textsuperscript{793}

Identity is maintained and strengthened through rightful inheritance. That inheritance, for Porter, is situated in the legitimate and rightful heir to the British crown, which in 1824, the year \textit{Duke Christian} was published, was George IV.

Because his favourite son cannot be by his bed-side, Duke William writes to Christian:

\begin{quote}
But Christian, my second son, not having had it in his power to be present, I, William of Celle, Duke of Brunswick Luneburg, his father, \textsuperscript{.} in these my dying moments, take an oath to the same double import, on the part of that dear and absent son; promising in his name, that on his return from fighting the battles of Christendom, he will here fulfil his duty as a son, a patriot, and a Christian, by solemnly ratifying this my vow:
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{792} Porter, \textit{Thaddeus of Warsaw}, (1831), p. 3.
\textsuperscript{793} Richard Wilson, \textit{Will Power}, p. 205.
and in firm faith of such a sacrifice, I bequeath him my blessing. (I,219)

Duke William's declaration to Christian is testament to the character of his son and illustrates the qualities that would certainly have drawn Porter to this favoured second son as her hero for her novel. Upon his return home, Christian is distraught over the news of his beloved father's death but is determined to follow his final wishes that he remain celibate. Christian accepts his fate, "because it was his duty to do so", exclaiming, "[my] father – my country."(I,220)794 Echoing the final words spoken by Marion Braidfoot, in *The Scottish Chiefs*, "my Wallace – to God",795 Porter again cleverly conflates the domestic and the national, establishing the connectedness and co-existence of the public and the private and of home and country. It is Christian's adherence to duty, I would argue, that defines Christian as the novel's principal hero.

However, despite Porter's clear sanctioning of Duke Christian as the narrative's hero, it is unclear as to why George IV should single out Christian to be the subject of the novel, given that Christian's younger brother George, is the grandfather of George I, the first Hanover to ascend to the British crown.796 History records after all too that George was a splendid soldier, "made colonel of a regiment of foot" and subsequently "general of the Danish army in opposition to Charles IX, King of Sweden" and was instrumental in the signing of the "treaty of Prague [in] 1635".797 Adolphus Ward writes of George in admiring terms:

> He was accounted one of the most capable commanders of the latter part of the war, and an ardent supporter of the Protestant cause, with whose great champion Gustavus Adolphus he had been one of the earliest among the German Princes to enter into an understanding... and laid the foundations, in the fortified town of Hanover, of the castle

794 Emphasis Porter's.
796 Perhaps the reason George IV chose Duke Christian as the ancestral hero of Porter's narrative because of the name 'Christian'. One scenario is that at this time John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, although first published in 1678, became extremely popular again and the hero of that story is named 'Christian'.
797 *Collins's Peerage of England*, p. 25.
which was to be expanded, in after ages, into the palace of Electors and Kings.\textsuperscript{798} Ward goes on to say also, that having paved the way, George’s sons “entered upon a period in the history of their dynasty which was to conduct it from petty beginnings to unforeseen greatness”,\textsuperscript{799} that is they are rightful inheritors of the British throne. Nevertheless, in compliance with the King’s request, Porter instils in Christian all the qualities found in abundance in her other heroes, Thaddeus Sobieski, William Wallace and Louis de Montemar. In the opening pages Porter describes Christian as a “youthful hero” and one whose “principles are proved by his practice”.\textsuperscript{(I,75,153)} At their father’s death-bed, the brothers of Christian avow that “[h]is character was indeed no common one”\textsuperscript{(I,153)} and Porter continues to flesh out the virtuous qualities of her hero and of his “warm and noble heart”,\textsuperscript{(I,153)} writing how “[f]rom infancy, Christian possessed that powerful energy which must ever act from himself, though not for himself... To befriend, to protect, to extend happiness, those were the first impulses of his mind; and to these purposes he directed all his studies.”\textsuperscript{(I,153)} Porter tells her readers that as a person and as a soldier, Christian followed in the tradition of his ancestors, the most renowned being Henry the Lion (1129-1195).\textsuperscript{800}

Following Duke William’s death, Christian and George travel to England. The visit, a fictional event, is employed by Porter in order to allow her hero, Duke Christian, to witness and experience the good counsel of the English Court of King James and therefore enable her, not only to showcase England as an example of a harmonious realm, but also to emphasise to her readers that Britain and Germany have been regally

\textsuperscript{798} Ward, The Electress Sophia and the Hanoverian Succession, p. 149.
\textsuperscript{799} Ward, The Electress Sophia and the Hanoverian Succession, p. 149.
\textsuperscript{800} Henry the Lion was the founder of the Brunswick Luneburg dominions and as such was the first Duke of Brunswick Luneburg. Henry the Lion is recognised by history as being a powerful soldier and a mighty prince, possessing acute political and military astuteness, and was responsible for building the first cathedral of Brunswick, erecting a bronze lion on the site, the heraldic symbol from which he takes his name. Background information on Henry the Lion is taken from Karl Jordon, Henry the Lion: a Biography (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).
linked for over 200 years, prior to George I ascending the British throne. While in England the brothers are entertained by the Queen, the young Prince Henry and the Princess Elizabeth, the King being in Scotland at the time of their arrival. Porter paints the Court, and England, as an idyll, in comparison to Europe with its continual religious and political tensions. Porter writes:

[W]hat they did see of the great city [London], affected Christian with reverence for a people whose least grandeur was in their buildings; and whose open suburbs, declared a country at peace with itself. In fact, no embattled wall presented itself anywhere. The ramparts of England, were in the arms alone of her brave citizens; and the single heart of a united nation guiding the stroke, when-ever called for, he was yet to land in England, who could have withstood its Power. (II,160)

Porter speaks of England in domestic terms and of England as the ‘beau ideal’, as a mother figure, the protectress of her people, the sea providing the protection which walls alone could not provide. As discussed in the previous chapter, Britons were physically enclosed by virtue of the sea surrounding them, not only keeping them safe within but also acting as a barrier against invasion. Christian reinforces this when he exclaims to Prince Henry: “What a moat is the ocean!- And to be lord of this castle in the midst of it! ...this is a station that might be the strong-hold of Europe. Commanding the ocean, it could command justice in all the world.” (II,161)

Similar to the sentiments expressed by the young Louis de Montemar in A Pastor’s Fireside, on quitting England’s shore, George takes one last look at the place where he has been so happy: “England, farewell!...I see thee no more – but thine image is in my heart.” (II, 393)

During the brothers’ visit to England, the Princess Elizabeth falls hopelessly in love with Christian, however, on learning that he had taken a solemn oath to remain celibate, she reluctantly agrees to the wishes of her father to marry Frederick V of Spain. There is an interesting parallel to be drawn here between the Princess Elizabeth and Mary Beaufort, the heroine in Porter’s Thaddeus of Warsaw. Both women fall in love with the
respective heroes, Christian and Thaddeus, prior to actually meeting them. Both Elizabeth and Mary hold the heroes high in their heart’s regard through hearing about their chivalrous actions and reading tales of their virtuous adventures. Porter writes how, although Elizabeth had never met him “her enthusiastic heart beat and thrilled...[whenever she heard] the fame of Christian of Luneburg”. (II,122). Similarly in *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, Lady Tinemouth confides to Thaddeus that “little does Miss Beaufort think, when seated by your side, that she is conversing with the youthful hero whom she so often wished to see”.\(^{801}\) Again Porter is emphasising the virtue of pure and loyal love. The Princess Elizabeth, like Mary Beaufort, places the feelings of others above her own, and more importantly in Elizabeth’s case, the good of her country above her own passions, something which both Lady Sara Ross in *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and Lady Joanna Mar in *The Scottish Chiefs* were unable to do. Despite not loving Frederick, Elizabeth knows that in marryi

> James I was then of opinion that in a few years Frederick V would be King of Bohemia. Thus, the expectation of the Bohemian Crown unmistakeably contributed to bring about the marriage which determined the course of Elizabeth’s life. To the English public, of course, ‘the Palsgrave’ was a handsome and courtly Prince, the nephew of Maurice of Orange, heroic father’s heroic son, and in their eyes his union with the Princess Elizabeth promised to connect the royal family...with the great Protestant Houses...and the Protestant interest at large.\(^{802}\)

It is here, in the Court of King James, that Porter could have drawn on the “machinery of her imagination”,\(^{803}\) as she did so skilfully in her previous novels, creating a non-historical character to engage with Christian in similar terms to the relationship between Wallace and Helen Mar in *The

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Scottish Chiefs. The union of Helen and Wallace is not sexual but “the chaste union of two spotless hearts”, Wallace referring to Helen as the “[d]earest sister of [his] soul”.804 The relationship between Wallace and Helen is one of mutual respect and companionship, Wallace promising their eventual union in heaven, where “[n]o heart will be left unsatisfied; no spirit will mourn in unrequitted [sic] love”, and there, says Wallace to Helen, “thy soul and Marion’s [will be] indeed one, and as one I love ye!”805 The heavenly union of the virtuous Helen Mar to Wallace ingeniously provides passion and romance, while still maintaining the integrity of the historical truth. Given the presence of the historical character of the enamoured Princess Elizabeth, Porter may have perhaps even created a character in the vein of Lady Joanna Mar, whose “intemperate passion”806 for Wallace is the cause of her own downfall and whose advances Wallace vehemently rejects when her true character is revealed. Porter also employed this scenario successfully in The Pastor’s Fireside, when the fictitious Otteline, companion to the historical Queen Elizabeth of Spain, schemes to marry the young Louis, but is ultimately rejected and publicly shamed. Either scenario could quite fittingly have been written into the narrative, providing the reader with the desired romance and tempering the dryness of the historical narrative. As previously mentioned, reviews of the novel are unanimous in their conclusion that Duke Christian is “rather deficient in interest”, primarily due to the lack of “love-plots”, because, as the New Monthly Magazine reports, “the lady to whom Christian is first attached dies in the first volume; and the lady to whom he is secondly attached is married in the second volume to another.”807 The recent failure of her plays would have certainly bruised Porter’s confidence, making her determined to rise again in the esteem of her reading public, which she believed to be the “stronghold of [her] usefulness

as a Writer”. Romance aside, the reviews, it must be remembered, do praise Porter for her “considerable talent” displayed in the “martial descriptions”, and the *Edinburgh Literary Gazette* reflects that the novel is “still written in the free and generous spirit of independence... which distinguishes her former productions.”

Like Elizabeth, the young Prince Henry is also infatuated with the two German brothers, who in return treat him like a brother. The strong devotion shown by Henry and Elizabeth to Christian and George is resonant of the strong paternal, maternal, filial and kindred relationships found in Porter’s other novels and collaborations. For Porter, family is paramount and represents a microcosm of the strong relationship which must be maintained between the monarchy and its subjects in order to secure a nation’s lasting peace and prosperity. Porter affirms this categorically in *Duke Christian*:

> [F]or a king and people, are like man and wife. ...it is as much a prince’s duty to maintain his own station as head of the commonwealth, as it is that of the people to preserve their freedom of action, as equally useful members of the body politic. (II,183)

The notion of the domestic and the affirmation of family as both a private and a national ideology is powerfully presented in *Duke Christian*. The desire and importance of keeping the family united is found in both the German family of Duke William and the Royal family of King James. Both Duke and King preside over their private, domestic family and also their country, their national family, both requiring constant care and attention in order to keep it strong. On his death bed, Duke William signifies this mutual relationship between the private and public,

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808 Letter from Jane Porter to Robert Ker Porter, 28 February 1824, (Huntington Library, POR 2069)
810 Anon, ‘Memoir of Miss Jane Porter’, (1829), p. 274.
811 Examples of these relationships: paternal - the Earl of Mar and his daughter Helen, in *The Scottish Chiefs*, maternal - Thaddeus Sobieski and his mother Therese in *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, filial - Duke Christian and his brother George in *Duke Christian* and kindred - Wallace and his cousin Edwin in *The Scottish Chiefs*, Louis and his cousins Alice and Cornelia in *The Pastor’s Fireside*. 
reminding his absent son, Christian of his duty “as a son, a patriot, and a 
Christian”. (I, 219) The young Prince Henry also acknowledges the strong 
link between the domestic and national, referring to King James as “my 
King and father”. (II, 352) Henry later confirms this undivided duty to 
home and country, declaring to Christian, “Oh Luneburg, I love my 
country as I would my wife”. (II, 353)

Even though peace reigns in England during the course of the novel's 
narrative, the members of the Court are acutely aware of the threat of 
Catholic or eastern religious invasion. The young Prince Henry warns his 
father that England must remain strong and pleads to be allowed to travel 
with Christian and George to Europe to assist in the fight for the 
Protestant faith. Henry implores his father: “Let me, my King and my 
father, but meet [the enemy] at the head of my brave countrymen, and at 
the side of [Christian and George]”. (II, 353) In Prince Henry’s plea to fight 
the Protestant cause we also understand Porter's promulgation of 
religious conviction in Protestantism, in all its manifestations, as the one 
true faith and the King as the rightful head of the institutional Church of 
England. As in The Pastor’s Fireside, Porter again expresses an overt 
prejudice against eastern religion, so common in the period and persistent, 
one would argue, to this day. Interestingly though, unlike The Pastor’s 
Fireside, in Duke Christian Porter's narrative evinces far less tolerance for 
Catholicism and the style is vehement in her assessment of the Christian 
world prior to the Lutheran Reformation. Porter writes at some length:

For some centuries before this period [the Reformation], the 
moral and religious ignorance of princes and their guides, held 
the world in the most deplorable vassalage, and degree of 
human wretchedness. Passion and power were the only 
dictators. Men saw no law but their own wills, or the strong 
arm of force, which compelled them within the bonds of 
another’s. That there was a God above, most of them 
confessed; and to conciliate his favour, many of them made 
vows of penance, or endowed monasteries; but none found it 
requisite to curb a passion or restrain an appetite, while the 
errection of a church, or the shaving of his head, could atone for 
the one or the other. (I, 8-9)
Porter is unforgiving in her attack on what was to her a corrupt and amoral papacy, writing passionately of the “monstrous immoralities sanctioned by papal Rome”, and even more so of the “infidel barbarians of the East”. The ‘Address from the old chronicler’, in the opening pages of Duke Christian, reveals a powerful conviction by Porter about the Protestant faith and a strength in her writing that reflects her position as an author, writing not for a mere pastime, but as a vocation, for which religious principles are the foundation. It should be remembered that it was during the years from 1819 to 1829 that the push for Catholic Emancipation was high on the political agenda. Duke Christian was written and published right in the middle of this Catholic push. David Powell argues that the “Hanoverian monarchs...took very seriously their role as head of the Church and defender of the Protestant faith”. He also states that “Catholicism provided both the external and internal threat”, a threat which, seen in the light of Porter’s novels, must be contained.

For Porter, the written word is a powerful and influential tool, writing in the ‘Introduction’ to Duke Christian how the “discovery of printing ...[and the] consequent diffusion of knowledge enabled the...people of Christendom [to] not merely ...understand the arguments for religious purity, but to comprehend and appreciate the advantages of civil liberty”. Porter uses her novel of the King’s noble ancestors to sanction the German princes as rightful heirs to the British crown and protectors of the Protestant succession.

Porter ends the novel with the two Christians, Christian Duke of Luneburg and Christian Duke of Wolfenbuttel, being bestowed with the English Order of the Garter, and “in the evening of the same day”(III,397), George takes Eleanor of Darmstadt as his wife. The prophetic final

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812 Powell, Nationhood and Identity, p. 11.
813 Powell, Nationhood and Identity, p. 11.
814 Collins’s Peerage of England states that this honour was bestowed on Christian in 1624. Porter infers that this event occurred at the same time as George married Eleanor of Darmstadt, however, she has taken some literary license in compressing these two events to conclude the novel because
paragraph of the novel is at the christening of Frederick and Elizabeth’s baby daughter, where the name of Sophia is bestowed and who history now shows is the mother of George Lewis, crowned George I of England on the 8th of June, 1712, the first Hanoverian to succeed to the British throne. It is perhaps poignant to learn that Sophia never saw her son crowned, dying less than two months before the “consummation of the British Succession” to the House of Hanover. The novel ends with the same patriotic fervour with which it began in the dedication:

May the descendant of a race of Princes, who from the first have chosen the wiser part – a pure faith against the world; their people's love, rather than their vassalage. May she, born here, in one land of her ancestors, live to take her part in binding both countries in the firmest of bonds of peace! In the blest union of national amity, founded on the rock of ages – piety towards God, and justice wedded to mercy, in all the dealings of man to man! (III, 398)

Porter and Old Age

Although *Duke Christian of Luneburg* is the last novel written by Porter as sole author, Porter continued to write until her death in 1850. Thomas McLean, in his unpublished manuscript “Later Works by Jane Porter, 1826-1846”, records that after ceasing novel writing, Porter “focused her still-considerable energies on shorter works”, many of which “were unsigned or signed simply ‘J.P.’.” She also continued to collaborate with her sister, until Anna Maria’s premature death in 1832, and assisted her brothers, Robert and William in their literary forays, notably, *Sir Edward Seaward’s Narrative*, published in 1831, in which she collaborated with

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George in fact married Eleanor in 1617. Also, my research has not revealed any evidence that Duke Christian of Luneburg ever received the Order of the Garter, only that the “other” Duke Christian, Christian of Wolfenbuttel, did so in 1624 (the date quoted in Collins’ Peerage of England). Unraveling the true history of Duke Christian of Luneburg from Duke Christian of Wolfenbuttel is almost impossible as there are so many conflicting facts.

815 Again Porter has compressed events in order to conclude her novel as Sophia was born and christened in 1630, see Ward, *The Electress Sophia and the Hanoverian Succession*, pp. 445-446.


William. These, coupled with her prolific letters, “[o]ffer a remarkably rich and varied collection of work in fiction, history, and biography”.  

Devoney Looser in “Jane Porter and the Old Woman Writer’s Quest for Independence” (2008) also acknowledges that Porter worked well into “her twilight years” and as an “unmarried woman writer” Porter knew all too well “that old age brought financial challenges”. Porter was forty-eight years of age when she wrote *Duke Christian*, and even then was all too aware that she needed to secure a steady income in order to support herself through old age. Her father having died when she was a child, Porter was no stranger to financial difficulties. Looser points out that the Porter family “perpetually struggled financially to maintain their place in society” and Jane Porter appeared to be constantly “derailed” in her quest for financial security “whether by a death in the family, a bank’s failure, an unrealised sum from a promised bequest, or a rejected request for monetary assistance.”

Porter’s financial plight is not unique by any means but one she shared with many nineteenth-century women writers in old age, who, argues Looser, were forced to capitalise “on something as intangible as their former fame.” What is unique about Porter’s plight, is that she never asked for, in Looser's term, “run-of-the-mill charity” but rather sought a pension on the basis of her contribution to the literary market. On the evidence of letters written by Porter to Sir Robert Peel, requesting financial aid and assistance, there is no doubt that Porter did suffer financially, especially after the unexpected and untimely death of her brother Robert in 1842. Although it would appear in hindsight that her requests were not unreasonable, given her literary success with *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and *The Scottish Chiefs*, her pleas for a royal or civic pension

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819 Looser, *Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain*, p. 141.
820 Looser, *Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain*, p. 141.
821 Looser, *Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain*, p. 142.
822 Looser, *Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain*, p. 142.
were unsuccessful. It would appear that the only concession Peel made to Porter was the offering of a donation of £150. Porter was not at all pleased with the donation offer, writing in her diary:

During this month letters passed between me and Lord Aberdeen and others relative to my hopes of a Pension. The last from Lord Aberdeen closed these Hopes as far as Man could do! By Sir Robert Peel’s refusal to grant it, offering me a Donation of £150.823

In 1840 she received £100 payment from the Royal Bounty courtesy of Lord Melbourne but ironically was successful in securing more substantial funds from the Royal Bounty for two of her friends, Sarah Belzoni and the widowed sister of the late naval hero Sir Sidney Smith.824 Failing to secure a pension, Porter “employed new tactics to try to make a living”,825 such as making contributions to popular periodicals and journals, contributing to anthologies, such as Frederick Montagu’s The Seven Ages of Female Beauty, published in 1838 and writing lengthy prefaces for new editions of her previous best-selling novels, Thaddeus of Warsaw and The Scottish Chiefs. In her diary in 1840 Porter writes of a payment received for the republication of The Scottish Chiefs:

Last October, entered into an agreement with Mr Virtue...to furnish him a new Preface and additional notes to The Scottish Chiefs – at the end of 3 months or within 6 months – when he will give me a Bill for £200.826

Her diary indicates that she received two further payments of £100 from the publishers Virtue for new editions of Thaddeus of Warsaw and The Pastor’s Fireside.827

Porter continued throughout her life to write and remained acutely responsive and receptive to the world around her. As with her previous novels, Duke Christian, is an important text because it reveals a real shift

824 Sarah Belzoni, the widow of the Egyptologist Giovanni Belzoni, received £600, while Mrs Dwyer received £400. For further details see Looser, Women Writers and Old Age, p. 161.
825 Looser, Women Writers and Old Age in Great Britain, p. 166.
in the concept of Nationalism into the domestic domain, at a time when the British people began establishing themselves as a nation. Accepting the Hanoverians as the rightful heirs to the throne is integral to this nation building. Therefore, while it may not have had the public or financial prestige of her previous novels, *Duke Christian* is still an important part of Porter’s overall oeuvre because it is deeply in tune with the cultural climate in England at the time she was writing and should be included in any scholarship on Porter.
Conclusion:

There comes a voice that awakes my soul. It is the voice of years that are gone; they roll before me with their deeds.

Ossian

I will confess, the ambitious projects which I once had, are dead within me. After having seen the parts which fools play upon the great stage; a few books, and a few friends, are what I shall seek to finish my days with.

The Pastor's Fireside, 1849

After the death of Porter’s brother, William Ogilvie Porter, a devoted friend of the family funded the erection of a memorial tablet in Bristol cathedral to honour the Porter family.

Sacred to the memory of
WILLIAM OGILVIE PORTER, Esq. M.D.
Surgeon in the Royal Navy, and for nearly forty years
An eminent Physician in this city;
He was the author of “Sir Edward Seaward’s Narrative,” “Medical Ethics,” &c.&c.
He died in Portland Square, on the 15th August, 1850,
Aged 76 years.

Of Colonel JOHN PORTER, who died
In the Isle of Man, in the year 1810, aged 38 years.

Of Sir ROBERT KER PORTER,
Her Majesty's Minister at Venezuela; author of
“Travels in Babylon, Persia,” &c.&c.
He died at St Petersburgh, 4th May, 1842, aged 65 years.

Of Miss JANE PORTER, authoress of

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828 Epigraph to The Scottish Chiefs. From the poems of Ossian, third century Gaelic bard. His poems were purported to be translated by James Macpherson in the eighteenth century. While Macpherson’s translations were very popular at the time it appears that they were essentially made up by the poet and not authentic translations. Hook in ‘Sir Walter Scott and the Historical Novel’ notes how this epigraph used by Porter is very evocative because it conveys the “true spirit of the Scottish Enlightenment” and conjures up the “romantic image of Scotland and … [its] noble and heroic past”. p. 191.

829 Epigraph to The Pastor’s Fireside, (1849 edition). Quoted by Porter from Robert Tweddell, Remains of the late John Tweddell (1815).
“Thaddeus of Warsaw,” “The Scottish Chiefs,” &c.&c.  
She died in Portland Square, on 24th May, 1850,  
Aged 74 years.

And of Miss ANNA MARIA PORTER, authoress of  
“Don Sebastian,” “Hungarian Brothers,” &c.&c.  
She died at Montpellier, in this city, on the 21st June, 1832,  
Aged 52 years.

WILLIAM PORTER, Esq.  
Surgeon in the Enniskillen dragoons, was the father of  
This highly gifted and most estimable family;  
He died at Durham in the year of our Lord 1780.  
Their mother, Mrs. JANE PORTER, died at Esher, in Surrey,  
On the 18th of June, 1831, aged 86 years.

This tablet is erected by their devoted friend. 830

Such an impressive memorial clearly demonstrates the respect and high  
estee in which the Porter family was regarded and their very real  
contribution to, and influence on, British society in the nineteenth  
century.

Expressing his deep sympathy at the death of Jane Porter, her good friend  
and ardent admirer, American poet Nathanial Parker Willis, wrote:  
We shall, doubtless, soon have an authentic biography of her,  
from some one to whom her papers and other materials will  
have been entrusted by the brother who survives her. 831

However, Nathanial Willis’ prediction of a biography of Porter was never  
realised. On William’s death, the correspondence of Porter, and her family  
was handed over to Sotheby’s and was sold, according to records at the  
Huntington Library, at auction two years later, in March 1852, to a “noted  
antiquarian collector, Sir Thomas Phillips”. 832 The collection of letters,

830 Tablet printed in Anon, ‘Notes of the Month’, Gentleman’s Magazine (June 1851), p.636-37. The devoted friend is thought to be Mrs Booth, a close friend of the Porter family. The tablet heralds a medallion of a portcullis, surrounded with the words “Agincourt 1415”. This refers to Robert Ker Porter’s well known painting Agincourt, a painting which depicts the battle that took place in October 1415, lead by Henry V. See Anon, ‘Minor Queries’, Notes and Queries, (15 October, 1853), p. 364-65.

831 Willis, Famous Persons and Places, p.471.

diaries and other ephemera, bought by Phillips, were packed in four large seas chests, where they remained untouched until re-sold to the Huntington Library, California, in 1977. Although cataloguing began two years later, in 1979, the collection was not fully accessioned and available to the public until 2001. Despite the Huntington’s 3,000-piece collection, many other letters, diaries and extant manuscripts of Porter and her family are spread far and wide.

Reporting the death of Joanna Baillie in 1851, the London Times referred to Baillie as “one of the most eminent female writers and poets”\(^{833}\). The significance of this obituary to my work on Porter can be found in the final lines when the author writes: “In her death passed away, we believe, the last of those maiden authors whose brilliant list includes the names of Edgeworth, Porter and Moore...”\(^{834}\). This is a further testament to and confirmation of Jane Porter’s significance in Victorian literary history.

As well as giving close scrutiny to each of Porter’s novels in relation to my thesis premise, I have also endeavoured to demonstrate the contemporary influence and impact that Porter’s novels had in pioneering the historical novel as a genre. Moreover, I have argued that her impact and influence extends beyond the nineteenth century, as evidenced by the number of reprints of The Scottish Chiefs, over the course of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. As recently as 2007, Broadview have released an edition of The Scottish Chiefs, with an introduction by Fiona Price. To my mind, however, the inclusion of The Scottish Chiefs in the comic, Classics Illustrated (and its various subsequent manifestations), is significant testimony to the continuing influence and popularity of Porter. Perhaps even more noteworthy is that her hero, William Wallace, was chosen for adaptation by Classics Illustrated ahead of Shakespeare’s quintessential

\(^{833}\) Quoted in Baillie, Collected Letters of Joanna Baillie, p. 20.
\(^{834}\) Quoted in Baillie, Collected Letters of Joanna Baillie, p. 21.
hero Julius Caesar, considered by literary scholars to be the benchmark by which other heroes are judged.

*Classics Illustrated* was the creation of Russian-born Albert Kanter. The first edition, published in 1941, featured Alexander Dumas’ *The Three Musketeers*, quickly followed by Sir Walter Scott’s *Ivanhoe*. Jane Porter’s, *The Scottish Chiefs*, features nine years later, at number 67 in post-war 1950. As in the case of the *Maclise Portrait-Gallery*, Porter is again one of only eight women authors to have been chosen by *Classics Illustrated* for inclusion in the series. The other women’s novels represented are Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*; Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*; Charlotte Bronte’s *Jane Eyre*; George Eliot’s *Silas Marner*; Emily Bronte’s *Wuthering Heights*; Anna Sewell’s *Black Beauty* and Marie Louise de la Ramee’s (Ouida) *Under Two Flags*.835 In the novel, Porter describes her hero William Wallace as a god of war, “a figure breathing youth and manhood” and his face is marked with every “noble passion of the heart”, his features perfect, combining every air of “majesty and sweet entrancing grace mingled with manly union.”836 In her Preface to *The Scottish Chiefs*, Porter writes that Wallace was one of the most complete heroes that ever filled the page of history”.837 He is, therefore, the archetypal comic hero, flawed, but brave, with a good heart, and a passion for justice. As an historical romance, *The Scottish Chiefs* depicts, as Margaret Oliphant argues in her late nineteenth-century appraisal, “the panorama of brilliant and highly-coloured mediaeval life”.838 This colourful portrayal of the past, and the presence of a hero such as Wallace, is, I suggest, the crux of *Classics Illustrated’s* appeal, and why *The Scottish Chiefs* is a natural inclusion in the series as these colourful cover pages show.

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Given the length and scope of *The Scottish Chiefs*, condensing the narrative to a 48-page comic adaptation is invariably going to result in the omission of many of the characters and some subtleties and nuances being lost. As with all *Classics Illustrated* adaptations, the main characters are laid out in the opening page. The cast, which in the case of *The Scottish Chiefs*, is reduced to six, includes only one woman, Wallace’s wife, Marion. The other main characters featured, are Wallace, King Edward I, Governor Heselrigge, Sir John Monteith, Aymer de Valence and Lord Mar. Minor characters introduced during the course of the comic adaptation, such as Wallace’s servant Halbert, his cousin Edwin, the love-struck Lady Mar, and Robert the Bruce, only hint at the subplots contained in Porter’s original text. The most noticeable omission is Porter’s fictional heroine, Helen Mar, whose desire for Wallace, in Porter’s narrative, is as great as her desire to see Scotland free. His soul-mate and fellow patriot, Helen Mar stands steadfast alongside Wallace throughout Porter’s narrative. However, the reading demographic for *Classics Illustrated* was predominately young and male, and therefore, the fictional relationship

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between Wallace and Helen Mar was discarded as not passing the “gender-neutral test”, as William Jones notes it in another context.\footnote{Jones, Classics Illustrated, p. 48.}

Despite writing Helen Mar out of the comic narrative, credit should be given to the Classics Illustrated adaptor, John O'Rourke, for emphasising the importance of Marion in the story. As in Porter's original narrative, in O'Rourke's adaptation, Marion's character also pervades the entire narrative, her spirit present until the closing pages. Although not overtly stated, as in Porter's original narrative, it is implicit in O'Rourke's adaptation that Wallace's personal struggle is a moral allegory for Scotland's struggle. While the majority of readers of this adaptation of The Scottish Chiefs might not understand the full meaning of Marion's death as a symbol of the violation of the domestic, and her presence throughout the narrative, as a metaphor for a struggling nation, what can be clearly understood is that Marion is slain in order to protect her husband and her home. The readership in post-war America and England would, from recent experience, readily understand such ideologies as patriotsm and freedom fighting because it was a major part of the propaganda published throughout the war years. The importance of the domestic is the fundamental premise of my thesis, and the comic adaptation of The Scottish Chiefs maintains this overarching principle of Porter's original text. Given their wide appeal, Classics Illustrated are, as Robert Fyne attests, “as much a part of growing-up in post-war America as baseball cards, hula-hoops, Barbie dolls, [and] rock’n’roll”, positioning Porter therefore firmly in contemporary domestic culture.\footnote{Robert Fyne, “Reviews: "Classics Illustrated: A Cultural History With Illustrations," by William B. Jones Jr.” Film & History, 34/1 (May 2004), p. 82.}

As a socio-cultural and historical study, throughout this work I have argued that Porter's texts demand extensive scholarly study today because they reveal much about the social and political climate of the period in which she was writing, and, given her position as a popular author, we can
learn much about the nature of nineteenth-century Britain. Porter’s oeuvre extends well beyond the four novels examined however. Over and above these, Porter wrote prolifically, often anonymously, so compiling a complete list of her works is subject to much serendipity. Aside from her unsuccessful attempt at playwriting, she published a non-fiction work, *The Aphorisms of Sir Philip Sidney* (1807); several very successful collaborative pieces with her sister Anna Maria, including the editing of two short-lived journals, *The Sentinel* (1804) and *The Quiz* (1797); assisted her brother Robert with his *Travels in Georgia, Persia, Armenia, Ancient Babylon...in the years 1817 to 1821* (1821) and her brother William with his treatise *Remarks on the Causes, Prevention and Management of the present prevailing epidemic, commonly call Typhus Fever for the use and benefit of the People* (1819) and *Sir Edward Seaward’s Narrative* (1831). She was also a prolific contributor to a range of journals and periodicals. The *Gentleman’s Magazine* comments on her contributions:

Miss Porter was...an indefatigable contributor to the periodicals of the day. Her biographical sketch of Colonel Denham, the African traveller...was much admired as one of the most affecting tributes ever paid to departed merit.  

Other contributions by Porter to journals and periodicals include, “Some Particulars Respecting the Life and Character of the Late Miss Benger” (1827); “Peter the Great, and, the Shipwreck” (1828); and “The Ball at Holyrood House: An Anecdote of the Year 1745” (1829).  

“The Old Lady”, written when Porter was 62 years old, is the closing piece in a collection of prose, verse and engravings, compiled by Frederic Montagu, titled *The Ages of Female Beauty* (1838). “The Old Lady” provides an insight into Porter’s intimate, personal journey as she approaches old age.

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842 Anon, ‘Miss Jane Porter’ [Obituary], *Gentleman’s Magazine*, p. 221.
It is a stark departure from her extremely popular historical novels, and shows that she was very much still a participant in life, and still responsive and receptive to the world around her. These are only a small sample of her publications in her latter years. Thomas McLean’s article “Jane Porter’s Later Works, 1826-1846” illustrates the breadth of her output and the diversity of her subject matter.845 Throughout her life Porter was keenly interested in politics, the armed forces, the Royal Family and the introduction of the Reform Bill. Some of her contributions include a translation of Count Orchowski’s “History of the Siege of Vienna by the Turks in 1683; and its Deliverance by John Sobieski, King of Poland” (1828); “Literary Anecdote of the Late King” (1830); the pamphlet On the Laws and Liberties of Englishmen; Britons Ever Shall be Free! (1831); a review of Alexander Bronikowski’s The Court of Sigismund Augustus; or Poland in the Sixteenth Century (1834).846 As Mclean points out, and I concur, these articles, reviews, pamphlets and biographical sketches “offer a remarkably rich and varied collection of work” and show definitively that Porter’s contribution to literary history, in particular Victorian literary history, has been to date undervalued.847

Thomas Carlyle said of Porter, that “with all her deficiencies she is interesting – never failing to excite our sympathy”.848 Mona Wilson, in her book These Were Muses (1924), wrote that Jane Porter “should be content to have lived actively in the spirit of her age and to have made a heavy contribution...”.849 Writing in 1897, Walter Besant muses that “a story, a romance, an adventure, well told ...will always find eager listeners.”850 I believe that these statements still hold true today and are an accurate

845 Thomas McLean’s article, ‘Jane Porter’s Later Works, 1826-1846’, due for publication in 2010, is a comprehensive list of works, known to be by and attributed to Porter. [forthcoming in Harvard Library Bulletin]. My thanks to Thomas for allowing me access to the unpublished article.
846 For further details of these publications see McLean ‘Jane Porter’s Later Works, 1826-1846’.
depiction of Porter’s novels. Porter’s novels were popular, widely read, and undeniably “full of narrative energy”. The debt owed to Porter for her contribution to illuminating the political and social conditions in England during a time of vast and rapid change, for initiating the historical novel genre, and, for her historical significance therefore in the development of novel writing in the nineteenth century, has always demanded further investigation. This study goes, I trust, some way towards addressing that demand.

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Appendix A: Synopsis *The Pastor’s Fireside* (1817)

The novel begins with the arrival of two Spanish strangers, who, on a pilgrimage to visit the relics of St Cuthbert on the island of Lindisfarne, take refuge in the warm and welcoming parsonage where the Pastor, the Reverend Richard Athelstone, his widowed sister, Mrs Coningsby, and her two daughters, Cornelia and Alice, abide. The Spanish gentlemen introduce themselves as the Marquis Santa Cruz and his son Don Ferdinand. The parsonage is also the adopted home of the Reverend’s great-nephew, Louis de Montemar. Louis was given to the care of the Reverend by his father, the Duke de Ripperda, when his mother died when he was in his infancy. During a stay with another maternal uncle, Sir Anthony, who lives on a nearby island, Louis is introduced to Duke Philip Wharton, who “took an immediate fancy to Louis...[and] delighted in betting on [his] youthful talents”, including on one occasion getting the young Louis extremely intoxicated to the extent that he “passed the remainder of the night in delirium and fever”. Reverend Athelstone is perturbed by Louis’ friendship with the older, more worldly Wharton, warning Louis that Wharton was “more than suspected of assisting to maintain the interest which the expelled James Stuart still preserved in some parts of the kingdom”. While firmly on the side of “liberty, and the Hanoverian succession”, Louis is shocked at the Reverend’s accusations but he continues to hold a firm belief that Wharton is a faithful friend to him. Meanwhile, Don Ferdinand falls passionately in love with Alice. However, because she is a Protestant and he a Catholic, Ferdinand fears that his father will not bless the union.

Some weeks later, Louis’ father, de Ripperda, invites his son to join him in Vienna and so Louis accompanies the Marquis and Don Ferdinand there, excited for the future but deeply sad to be leaving his family and his home. On departing Louis exclaims: “Majestic England...[w]here shall I find a country like thee?” To Louis’ surprise, on arriving in Vienna, he is met, not by his father, but by a stranger, a Jesuit, calling himself Sieur
Ignatius. Ignatius has a letter from de Ripperda requesting that Louis be obedient to the commands of Ignatius, obeying him in “word and deed, as you would revere and obey” me. (84) Louis faithfully follows all the commands of Ignatius and is eventually escorted to the Palace, where he is introduced to Elizabeth, the Queen of Spain, not as de Ripperda’s son but under an assumed title of Chevalier de Phaffenberg. The Queen’s companion, the beautiful Otteline, instantly takes a fancy to Louis and schemes to marry him, as she believes he will elevate her to a favourable position in Court. Although at first enamoured by the many charms of Otteline, Louis is soon aware that “he did not find that sense of perfect sympathy, shooting from her dear presence”(141), but against his better judgement finds himself ensnared in her deception and is forced, by the Queen, to vow to marry her. After much political manoeuvring, it is revealed to Louis that Sieur Ignatius is in fact his father, Duke de Ripperda, who is well pleased with his son’s obedience and the outcomes. When de Ripperda is finally successful in having the politically and economically significant Pragmatic Sanction signed by the participating nations, he is quickly elevated in the Spanish Court and gains much favour with the Spanish King and Queen. Having achieved his mission, de Ripperda informs Louis that he has converted to the main religion of Spain, Catholicism, in order to faithfully fulfil his duties as Spain’s most powerful subject, aside from the King. Learning of the Queen’s anger at Louis’ rejection of her companion Otteline’s marriage proposal, de Ripperda urges Louis to marry Otteline in order to protect and strengthen his own position in the Court.

However, Duke Wharton, who is also at the Court, rescues Louis from the fatal marriage. Wharton is at the Palace to further his cause for “reinstating the Stuarts”(143), but on discovering a plan to convict de Ripperda of treason, Wharton offers to assist Louis, if he will help him in his campaign to restore James to the throne. A fervent supporter of King George I, Louis, although grateful to Wharton for promising to help his
father, and for saving him from marriage to Otteline, rejects Wharton’s offer of help, declaring, “I will not purchase even the life of my father by my own conscious guilt”. Further complex political machinations take place, eventuating in the demise and betrayal of de Ripperda. He is imprisoned, but escapes with his servant Martini, flees to Barbary, the home of his ancestors, converts to Islam and changes his name to Aben Humeya. As Aben Humeya, de Ripperda leads the Moorish army into battle with Spain. Louis manages to track down his father with the assistance of the Marquis Santa Cruz and is horrified to find that he has again changed religion, converting this time to Islam. Arriving in Barbary, Louis finally gains an audience with de Ripperda, and Louis informs his father that “the decree of his exile not only was recalled...but the church, too, should open its arms to receive him” again, and thus the dark deed would be “obliterated by penitence...[and] would then be blotted from the book of Heaven”. De Ripperda is enraged by Louis’ news of amnesty and banishes Louis forever from his sight. The war between Turkey and Spain continues, Louis, fighting on the side of Spain is wounded, but is mercifully cared for by the daughter of the Marquis Santa Cruz, Marcella. Louis is amazed that although she is the daughter of the Catholic Marquis, Marcella is herself a devoted Protestant, having been raised by a Protestant nursemaid. De Ripperda is mortally wounded in a bloody battle but determined not to abandon his father, as soon as he is able, Louis again goes to see him. Now on his death-bed, de Ripperda listens to the pleas of his son and is so impressed by Louis’ devotion to “the truth and efficacy of the religion of Christ, that [he] begged to seal his repentance and his faith by receiving the holy sacrament”. Consoled by his father’s repentance, Louis returns to England, “where his heart had first known the glows of dear domestic tenderness”.

Shortly after his return, George I dies and George II is crowned king. Then, late one stormy evening, he and his cousin Cornelia come upon a wounded stranger and conceding to Cornelia’s ardent pleas, Louis agrees
to take the gentleman to their home. The gentleman is discovered to be Wharton and while at first horrified that he is under the same roof and in the care of the dedicated Cornelia, Louis learns from the Reverend that despite the appearance of duplicity, Wharton has in fact been exonerated and honoured by the King with the “badge of the Garter”. Wharton declares his love for Cornelia and she agrees to marry him after he returns from his business in Europe. The Marquis Santa Cruz and his family visit the island of Lindisfarne again and with the consent of both guardians, Louis and Maircealla and Alice and Ferdinand are married by the venerable Pastor, who “raised his devout hands and solemnly pronounced the general benediction”. Within a year of their union the happy couples welcome the arrival of their offspring, but Cornelia sadly receives the news that Wharton has been killed in an accident and is buried in the humble cemetery of the Spanish Bernadine nuns, with the inscription on his tombstone: “Here sleeps what was Philip Wharton. His merciful Lord will take care of the rest”. Heartbroken, Cornelia devotes the rest of her life to the caring of her family, never quitting “her mourning garments” nor the “equally blessing eye of her venerated uncle, seated silently in his ‘old arm chair’ before the happy hearth of sacred Lindisfarne”.

(451) Wharton

(452)

(456)
Appendix B: Synopsis *Duke Christian of Luneburg*

After an overview of the period by the ‘Chronicler’, the action of the novel begins at the bed-side of Duke William of Celle and Luneburg, who in his dying hours, requests his seven sons to gather to hear his final wishes. His second, and it would appear favoured son, Duke Christian, is elsewhere “fighting the battles of Christendom”. (I,219) Duke William demands, that for the “conservation of his paternal country”, (I,219) he will hand over the government of Celle and Luneburg to the eldest son, Ernest. The Duke also stipulates that “for the perpetuity of such a settlement, the line of descent must be made single”, requiring the other brothers, bar one, to remain celibate (I,219). This is done by the drawing of lots (scrolls). In Christian’s absence, Duke William himself draws a scroll on Christian’s behalf, hoping it to be the scroll which will enable his favourite son to marry and procreate. However, this is not to be, the lot falling to the youngest son, George. With the assistance of his sons, Duke William writes his wishes and the outcome of who will marry, on the otherwise blank scroll, to be given to Christian immediately upon his return. Duke William’s declaration to Christian is testament to the character of his son and explains why Christian is the Duke’s favoured son. Duke William writes:

> But Christian, my second son, not having had it in his power to be present, I, William of Celle, Duke of Brunswick Luneburg, his father, - in these my dying moments, take an oath to the same double import, on the part of that dear and absent son; promising in his name, that on his return from fighting the battles of Christendom, he will here fulfil his duty as a son, a patriot, and a Christian, by solemnly ratifying this my vow: and in firm faith of such a sacrifice, I bequeath him my blessing. (I,219)

Upon his return home, Christian is distraught over the news of his beloved father’s death and doubly so on reading his father’s wishes that he remain celibate. Christian, being secretly engaged to the orphaned Adelheid, knows that the breaking of his promise to marry her, and thus keeping her always in his protection, will destroy her. Christian
nonetheless accepts his fate, “because it was his duty to do so”, exclaiming, “[my] father – my country.”(I,220)\textsuperscript{852} After breaking the news to Adelheid that they can never marry, Adelheid consequently dies of grief.

Although still grief stricken by Adelheid’s death, Christian travels with his young brother George to England, to the Court of King James. The visit is at the request of the Bohemian Emperor Matthias, who wishes the brothers to secure the King James’ support, in the event that the Spanish try to seize the Bohemian crown on Matthias’ death, given Matthias had no issue to succeed to the throne. If the Bohemian crown is secured by the Spanish it would mean that the Bohemian dominion would revert to Catholic rule.\textsuperscript{853} While in England the brothers are entertained by the Queen, the young Prince Henry and the Princess Elizabeth, the King being in Scotland at the time of their arrival.\textsuperscript{854} During the brothers’ visit to England, the Princess Elizabeth falls hopelessly in love with Christian, however, on learning that he had taken a solemn oath to remain celibate, she reluctantly agrees to the wishes of her father to marry Frederick V of Spain. Believing that Frederick would one day inherit the Bohemian crown after the death of the Emperor Matthias, King James encourages the union of Elizabeth to Frederick V, as a means of securing the Protestant faith as the dominant religion of Europe. Her heart still given to Christian, Elizabeth agrees to marry Frederick, but only, it would appear, because it was the last wish of her dying brother, Henry.\textsuperscript{855} Despite not loving Frederick, Elizabeth knows that in marrying the future

\textsuperscript{852} Italic as per text.

\textsuperscript{853} In fact the Emperor Matthias died without issue in 1619 and the crown was seized by his cousin, Ferdinand who was a staunch Catholic. This is the event which historians believe sparked the Thirty Years War in Europe. See Adolphus Ward (1909), Collins’s Peerage of England (1812) and Abridgement of the History of England being a Summary of Mr Rapin’s History and Mr Tindals Continuation. Vol II, (London: John and Paul Knapton, 1747).

\textsuperscript{854} Porter gives no actual date of this apparent visit to England by the two brothers, but given the historical events recorded by Porter in the narrative, it is appears that their visit took place in late 1611 or early 1612. Unfortunately I cannot verify this as the only reference I have found in Collins’s Peerage of England, which states 1608 as the year of the visit, and only mentions George, not his brother Christian. Collins’s Peerage of England records that: “This George [the youngest son of Duke William of Luneburg], ... was born 1582. He travelled into France and England, 1608; and into Italy, Sicily, and Malta, 1609”. See Collins’s Peerage of England, p. 25.

\textsuperscript{855} Prince Henry died of typhoid fever in 1612, see Ward, The Electress Sophia and the Hanoverian Succession, p.22.
Bohemian king she will be marrying a man “whose life would hereafter be modelled after the truest to the cause of the Reformation”. (II, 414)

While in England the brother’s meet with William Shakespeare, an event which occupies several pages of the novel. Christian is clearly taken with the English sage and much to his delight Shakespeare agrees to accompany the himself and George to Dover where they will depart England to return to Germany. The following pages of the narrative detail the numerous battles and series of treacheries which the brothers engage in. The battles encompass the events of the Thirty-Years War (1620-1648), and the murder of Henry IV (1622) During these battles, Duke Christian befriends another Duke Christian, Duke Christian of Wolfenbuttle. The two Dukes fight alongside the Count von Mansfeldt, who was recruited by the English army to seize the Palatinate lands.

Porter ends the novel with the two Christians, Christian Duke of Luneburg and Christian Duke of Wolfenbuttel, being bestowed with the English Order of the Garter, and “in the evening of the same day” (III, 397), George takes Eleanor of Darmstadt as his wife. 856 The prophetic final paragraph of the novel is at the christening of Frederick and Elizabeth’s baby daughter, where Mansfeldt, “who stood representative for the British King” (III, 397), bestowed on her the name of Sophia. As history now shows, Sophia is the mother of George Lewis, 857 crowned George I of England on the 8th of June, 1712, the first Hanoverian to succeed to the British throne. The novel ends with the prophetic words:

856 Collins’s Peerage of England states that this honour was bestowed on Christian in 1624. Porter infers that this event occurred at the same time as George married Eleanor of Darmstadt, however, she has taken some literary license in compressing these two events to nicely conclude the novel because George in fact married Eleanor in 1617. Also, my research has not revealed any evidence that Duke Christian of Luneburg ever received the Order of the Garter, only that the “other” Duke Christian, Christian of Wolfenbuttle, did so in 1624 (the date quoted in Collins’ Peerage of England). Unraveling the true history of Duke Christian of Luneburg from Duke Christian of Wolfenbuttle is almost impossible as there are so many conflicting facts, it would appear because of not just the name but also the careers and personalities of the two Dukes being so similar.

857 Again Porter has compressed events in order to conclude her novel as Sophia was born and christened in 1630, see Adolphus Ward, The Electress Sophia and the Hanoverian Succession, pp. 445-446.
May the descendent of a race of Princes, who from the first have chosen the wiser part – a pure faith against the world; - their people's love, rather than their vassalage. May she, born here, in one land of her ancestors, live to take her part in binding both countries in the firmest bonds of peace! In the blest union of national amity, founded on the rock of ages – piety towards God, and justice wedded to mercy, in all the dealings of man to man! (III, 398)