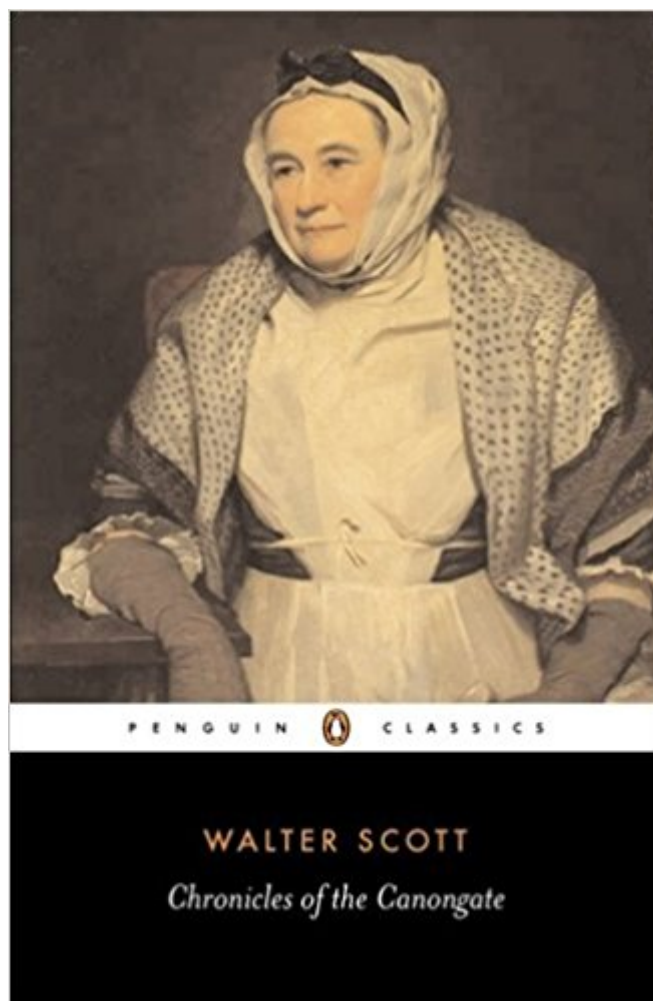


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# Chronicles Of The Canongate (Penguin Classics)



## Synopsis

Set within a framing narrative told by Chrystal Croftangry, these three stories are set in the years following the Jacobite defeat and all feature characters who are leaving Scotland to seek their fortunes elsewhere. In "The Highland Widow" and "The Two Drovers," two young men find themselves torn between traditional Scottish loyalties and the opportunities offered by England. And "The Surgeon's Daughter" follows three young Scots to India during the first phase years of the British Empire. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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## Customer Reviews

The Edinburgh Edition respects Scott the artist by 'restoring' versions of the novels that are not quite what his first readers saw. Indeed, it returns to manuscripts that the printers never handled, as Scott's fiction before 1827 was transcribed before it reached the printshop. Each volume of the Edinburgh edition presents an uncluttered text of one work, followed by an Essay on the Text by the editor of the work, a list of the emendations that have been made to the first edition, explanatory

notes and a glossary ! The editorial essays are histories of the respective texts. Some of them are almost 100 pages long; when they are put together they constitute a fascinating and lucid account of Scott's methods of composition and his financial manoeuvres. This edition is for anyone who takes Scott seriously. With a judicious mixture of historical fact, seductive legend and a vivid imagination, [Scott] invented an entire country, complete with custom, tradition, genealogy, even national dress. It was a country called Scotland and, for better or for worse, we are still living in it. The great gain to literary studies of the Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels comes ... from those volumes which make available reliable and scrupulously annotated texts of novels long out of print and consequently little read. Editors deserve high praise for the vast amount of completely original research which has gone into them .. These are splendid and timely editions which will and should drive renewed critical work on Scott and his literary and historical contexts. The Edinburgh Edition respects Scott the artist by 'restoring' versions of the novels that are not quite what his first readers saw. Indeed, it returns to manuscripts that the printers never handled, as Scott's fiction before 1827 was transcribed before it reached the printshop. Each volume of the Edinburgh edition presents an uncluttered text of one work, followed by an Essay on the Text by the editor of the work, a list of the emendations that have been made to the first edition, explanatory notes and a glossary ! The editorial essays are histories of the respective texts. Some of them are almost 100 pages long; when they are put together they constitute a fascinating and lucid account of Scott's methods of composition and his financial manoeuvres. This edition is for anyone who takes Scott seriously. With a judicious mixture of historical fact, seductive legend and a vivid imagination, [Scott] invented an entire country, complete with custom, tradition, genealogy, even national dress. It was a country called Scotland and, for better or for worse, we are still living in it. The great gain to literary studies of the Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels comes ... from those volumes which make available reliable and scrupulously annotated texts of novels long out of print and consequently little read. Editors deserve high praise for the vast amount of completely original research which has gone into them .. These are splendid and timely editions which will and should drive renewed critical work on Scott and his literary and historical contexts. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Walter Scott (1771-1832) was born and educated in Edinburgh. He is credited with establishing the form of the historical novel. Claire Lamont is Professor of English Romantic Literature at University of Newcastle and series editor for Walter Scott in Penguin Classics.

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, this book had action, adventure, and romance, that's

why I love Scott. If you are looking for action, adventure, and romance you cannot go wrong with Sir Walter Scott. I also liked the characters in this book.

This edition of *Chronicles of the Canongate* is scholarly enough to allow students of Scott's work, or Scottish Literature, to develop new insights to the work itself and to the contexts surrounding its production in relation to Scott's own situation when writing it. At the same time, it is made accessible to the general reader through well researched textual notes, including translations of the Latin phrases peppered throughout the text, and a glossary of unfamiliar (most usually Gaelic or Scottish) words and phrases, allowing for an informed--and consequently more enjoyable, reading. I was directed to this edition of the "Chronicles" through a conference paper, recently presented at the MLA (2004) Conference in Philadelphia, concerning the story "The Two Drovers"--one of the better known stories in the "Chronicles". I am not disappointed in that recommendation. And I highly recommend this volume, in turn. The text, as a whole, presents a marvellous opportunity for readers to "experience" Scott through relatively short works, before taking on one of his larger (in terms of scope), longer novels.

I enjoyed reading this book I never knew what the outcome of some circumstances would be. It kept me guessing and I was very surprised at the results of some of the things that happened. I wanted to read this because another book I had read the persons in the story said this was there favorite book so out of curiosity I wanted to read.

no comment.

A classic.

Set in 14th Century Scotland, with feuding clans and Robert III's court fraught with intrigue, the 1828 novel "The Fair Maid of Perth" is one of Sir Walter Scott's best. Though not of the strictest historical accuracy (the famous North Inch combat took place in September, not on Palm Sunday), the story is so colorfully written that only the most pedantic would complain of its liberties. The fair maid of the title is Catharine Glover, beloved by the armourer Henry Smith, sometimes called Harry Gow (another word for smith), but lusted after by the king's son, who is not only Prince David but the Duke of Rothsay. Catharine is further pursued by her father's apprentice, a lad who is called Conachar until he goes back to the Highlands and becomes Eachin (Hector) Maclan, leader of the

clan Quhele. As you will have gathered, the various names for various characters may give the reader pause. (A minor character, a bullying knight, is called the Devil's Dick; and God knows what good Sir Walter meant by that.) Also of concern to the careful reader is the heavy Scottish dialect, and all good editions of Scott's Highland novels, such as "Rob Roy" and this one, will include an indexed glossary. That's where you'll learn that a kemp is a champion and clamjamfray are lower-class citizens. Sometimes the dialect can be revealing: for instance, the word "fou" which means insane in French means drunk in Gaelic. Though the action is predominantly masculine, Catharine Glover is a strong-willed woman with a mind of her own. In fact, Wycliffe's influence on her religious beliefs gets her into trouble with the local clergy and leads to danger in the story's second half. Scott's female characters in general are forceful, sometimes unpleasantly so (the title character's mother in "The Bride of Lammermoor" is one of the great bitches in British literature), but Catharine is 100% heroine, facing her trials with fortitude, as in one chapter when she is brought out to the battlement of a besieged castle, very much like Rebecca in "Ivanhoe". Her fiancé the smith is not physically prepossessing, "neither dignified nor handsome", but he's the most successfully belligerent man in Perth (which was, incidently, Scotland's capital at the time of this story), an accomplishment which doesn't please Catharine. Basically a peaceful artisan but always ready for an honest fight, at one point he slices off a villain's hand during a brawl -- the novel's action gets pretty gruesome -- and he finds himself gradually pulled into the Highland-Lowland political conflict. The growing animosity between the clans Quhele and Chattan and the increasingly nasty machinations in the court lead slowly to the great climax at North Inch outside Perth, spectacularly described by Scott, and from there he moves quickly on to his satisfactory conclusion. The whole book is gratifying and, at over 700 pages, "The Fair Maid of Perth" is a complex but engrossing "romaunt".

Chronicles of the Canongate is a short masterpiece by Sir Walter Scott. The book is set within a framing device in which a fictional narrator Mr. Chrystal Croftangry relates three stories of Scottish life in the eighteenth century. Scotland and England were united in 1707 to become Great Britain. Scott's fiction helped the two countries understand one another's people and customs. He is the grandfather of historical fiction. Chrystal Croftangry is retired and living in Edinburgh. The well to do Croftangry decided to become a writer of fiction. Through his friendship with Mrs. Baliol and others he learns stories of Scottish life conducive to his efforts in fiction. The Highland Widow is set in the years following the failed uprising of Bonnie Prince Charlie and the final defeat of the Highland Clans at the battle of Culloden in 1746. Widow MacTavish lost her husband to English soldiery

bullets during this bloody time in Scottish history. Her son Hamish joins the British Army being recruited to fight in America during the French and Indian War of 1755-1763. Mrs. Mactavish persuades Hamish, on leave from the army, to desert. When British troops arrive to arrest him for being AWOL he shoots an officer. Hamish is executed. The strange Mrs. Mactavish lives a solemn, lonely and angry life in the highlands. Scott had the ability to etch memorable characters: you will not forget this tragic tale. The Two Drovers deals with the Scot Robin and his English friend Wakefield who are cattle drovers. Over 1000,000 cattle were driven each year from Scottish farms to markets in the north of England. On one of their droving trips Robin and Wakefield argue over the right of their cattle to graze on rented land. Robin kills Wakefield and is executed by an English court. The story shows the revenge motif in clan life put into action when Robin kills his quondam friend. This is a tragic tale which is the shortest of the three in the Chronicles of the Canongate (the Canongate is a major Edinburgh thoroughfare). The longest tale in this collection is The Surgeon's Daughter. It deals with a love triangle. Surgeon Grey's daughter Menie is loved by two medical apprentices. The first lover is Richard Middlemas (he was adopted by the doctor and named for Middlemas the Scottish village where the story begins). His rival for Menie is Albert Hartley. Middlemas is evil while Hartley is a good hearted soul. The trio of young people emigrate to India. This story is one of the earliest set by a British author in India the exotic land which became the jewel in the British crown. Tragedy and death ensue among the characters as Scott delves into native Indian politics and intrigue. The Penguin Edition is based on the Edinburgh Edition of all of Scott's novels. Over 100 densely printed pages explain literary and historical references made in the text. An extensive glossary of Scottish words is included in addition to an incisive introduction to the work. Sir Walter Scott is difficult to read. His language is elaborately ornate and the Scottish dialect makes reading hard for 21st century American eyes. I am a fan of Scott, however, for with all his literary failings the man could tell a good story peopled with memorable and colorful characters.

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