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THE ANGLO SAXONS OF *IVANHOE* AND SCOTTISH JACOBITISM

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ABSTRACT

In the wake of the Norman Conquest of 1066 many different ideas sprang up among the English glorifying the days of King Alfred and the Anglo Saxon monarchy. Writing in the early nineteenth century, Sir Walter Scott shared this romantic view of the past, which was very similar to his own opinion of Scotland's days before the union of the Parliaments. In his novel *Ivanhoe*, he examines how an Anglo Saxon can remain true to his heritage and yet still succeed in what has become a Norman world. This was a very relevant question for contemporary Scots, many of whom were wishing for the day that the Stewarts would return to power while still trying to make a living under English control.

There has been a lot of attention paid to the role of the Jews in *Ivanhoe*, who are indeed prominent and important characters, but there has been less of a focus on the Anglo Saxons and their position in a world no longer their own. A close look at these characters reveals many parallels with the Jacobites of Scott's day and has proven to be a very fruitful way to approach the novel. This thesis will show that although the Anglo Saxons are presented as noble and honorable, under the surface there are troubling character flaws which complicate their simplistic view of the world. It will also show that their insistence on living in the past proves self-destructive while those Englishmen who embrace the Norman leadership go on to prosper.

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The Anglo Saxons of *Ivanhoe* and Scottish Jacobitism

When James the VII and II¹ was removed from the throne by the Glorious Revolution of 1688, it disrupted the dynastic line that had ruled Scotland since 1371. Many Scots refused to accept William of Orange as their new king and instead plotted to return the Stewarts² to power. This mirrors the situation in England 600 years earlier when the Normans invaded, defeating Harold at the Battle of Hastings and assuming control of the country. Like the Scots of the seventeenth century, the Saxons had difficulty adapting to a new monarchy. Ignoring the fact that they themselves were at one time the conquerors of Britain, the Saxons instead proclaimed themselves to be the natural rulers of England and dreamed of overthrowing William and his Normans. Much as the Scots dreamed of a Stewart on the throne once more, the Saxons longed to restore the line of Alfred. Neither restoration ever came to pass.

Sir Walter Scott's novel *Ivanhoe*, published in 1819, foregrounds the parallels between these two periods of history.³ Though it was written approximately 65 years after the failure of the last real Jacobite uprising, Jacobitism was still very much a force in the politics of the time. The likelihood of a Stewart ever ruling again was already looking nonexistent, but malcontents were still using the name to cause trouble for the English government. Similarly, *Ivanhoe* is placed over 100 years after the Norman Conquest, but the Saxons have still not completely

¹ The title James VII and II refers to his position in both of his kingdoms, James VII in Scotland and James II in England.

² In scholarship spellings of both Stewart and Stuart can be found. For consistency, I have adopted the former and will use it throughout this paper.

³ For *Ivanhoe* see: Joan Garden Cooper, "Ivanhoe: The Rebel Scott and the Soul of a Nation," *Scottish Literary Review*, 2.2 (2002): 45-63; Jane Millgate, "Making It New: Scott, Constable, Ballantyne and the Publication of *Ivanhoe*," *Studies in English Literature*, 34.4 (1994): 795-811; Jane Millgate, "The Name of the Author: Additional Light on the Publication of *Ivanhoe* and the Scott-Constable Relationship," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 101.1 (2007): 55-62; Franklin Burroughs, "Lost Causes and Gallantry," *American Scholar*, 72.4 (2003): 73-92; Terence Dawson, *The Effective Protagonist in 19th C. British Novel: Scott, Bronte, Eliot, Wilde*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004); John Morillo and Wade Newhuse, "History, Romance and the Sublime Sound of Truth in *Ivanhoe*," *Studies in the Novel*, 32.2 (2000): 267-295.

submitted to the new order.⁴ Though Cedric takes the restoration of the Saxon monarchy very seriously, the Normans are less concerned with the rise of a Saxon king and more worried about what damage the Saxons could cause if they pursued this futile mission. By looking at the destructive nature of the Saxons' obsessive pride in their heritage as compared with *Ivanhoe's* positive engagement with the new political order, this thesis will show the benefits of adapting to a new power structure. Scott did this successfully in his own life and by examining the parallels between the world of his novel and his contemporary situation it becomes clear that the Jacobites' own excessive patriotism was just as destructive as that of Cedric and Athelstane.

Scott himself was enormously proud of his Scottish heritage, but he never allowed that to interfere with his political ambitions. In *Ivanhoe* he creates a hero who has a reputation for defending English chivalry against Norman knights, but is equally known for his loyalty to King Richard. The reader's sympathies are initially guided towards the Saxons, forced to live under Norman oppression, but the deeper one looks at the issues raised in the novel, the more uncertain this sympathy becomes. The Saxons are all presented initially as noble and honorable, but their characters falter under close examination. By looking at the problems and inconsistencies beneath their noble surface, a clear warning emerges against the dangers of becoming too obsessed with the past. Scott was himself more or less successful at finding the balance between patriotism and obsession, gaining a reputation as an antiquarian but never giving the political figures in power reason to suspect that it was anything more than an entertaining hobby for him. An investigation of the Saxon characters within the novel reveals that their insistence on clinging to an outdated way of life proves harmful to everyone around them, including themselves. To

⁴ Scott's main historical source for this time period was Sharon Turner, *The History of the Anglo Saxons* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green, 1805).

show how relevant this message was in 19th century Scotland, I will provide a brief overview of Jacobitism and Scott's own involvement in politics.

History of Jacobitism

Jacobitism formed in the aftermath of the rebellion in 1688, concerned by what the Stewart loyalists saw as the disruption of the natural order.⁵ There were two major uprisings by the Jacobites, one in 1715 and the second in 1745. France played a large role in funding these attempts to put the Stewarts back in power, seeing the division as a weakness they could exploit against their historic rival.⁶ The uprising in 1715 was largely motivated by Scottish nationalism, but there were many English Jacobites supporting them. The uprising failed, mostly due to miscommunication between the English and Scottish Jacobites. Their inability to work together stemmed from the fact that both were too concerned with individual freedom to create a strong national community.⁷ After the '15⁸ the British Jacobites gave up the cause, but the Scots continued to plan for the return of the Stewarts. James had escaped to the Continent during the original rebellion of 1688. Aside from one attempt to regain his throne in 1689, he lived the rest of his life in exile in France where he died in 1701. After that the Stewart cause depended on the return of Prince Charles. He made several abortive attempts to return to Scotland, followed by his successful return which started the disastrous '45. The Jacobite forces were decimated by the British and the hopes of a Stewart returning to the throne ended.

⁵ Murray Pittock, *Jacobitism*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 17.

⁶ *Ibid.* 33.

⁷ Colin Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past: Scottish Whig Historians and the Creation of an Anglo-British Identity, 1689-c.1830*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 250.

⁸ Among Scottish historians, the uprising of 1715 and 1745 are known as the '15 and the '45, respectively.

The Jacobites justified their rebellion by citing the oppression of the English, but like the Norman Yoke⁹, this was largely fiction. In the case of the Saxons, many of society's problems which were blamed on the Normans had actually existed prior to the invasion.¹⁰ For the Jacobites, much of what they objected to was in fact reality, such as the outlawing of Scottish symbols such as tartan, but this was a result of the uprising, not a cause of it.¹¹ The English implemented harsh reprisals against the Jacobites in the wake of the uprisings in order to prevent future rebellions that could give France an opportunity to invade. Though they were struggling to give the Scottish control of their own country again, the Jacobites only brought their people trouble by fighting ineffectual battles against the English.

Sir Walter Scott

Scott was born in Edinburgh in 1771, but he was a sickly child and his mother already had four other children to raise. He was sent to live with his grandfather on his farm in the Border region of Scotland.¹² There he grew up on tales of the Jacobite uprisings, especially the '15 which his great-grandfather had participated in. Growing up he greatly admired the heroism of the Jacobites, but he soon learned that in Britain's current political climate any leanings towards Jacobitism, even just sentimentally, could quickly end a career. In order to fulfill his ambitions of becoming a lawyer, Scott was careful never to become too radical in his political activities. Watson calls Scott a Unionist in love with the Stewart cause,¹³ but the only

⁹ The Norman Yoke refers to the oppression of the Saxons by the Normans following the invasion in 1066. This term did not come into common use until the middle of the 17th century when it became the center of an English nationalist movement. It quickly gained a great deal of political significance, coming to be accepted as historical fact.

¹⁰ Christopher Hill, *Puritanism and Revolution*, (Bath: The Pitman Press, 1958), 57.

¹¹ Bruce Lenman, *The Jacobite Uprisings in Britain 1689-1746*, (Aberdeen: Scottish Cultural Press, 1980), 264.

¹² Roderick Watson, *The Literature of Scotland: the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1984), 255.

¹³ *Ibid.* 263.

demonstration of this love was his extensive work in antiquarian societies, which were by this time more social than political.¹⁴ Scott's role model in law was Robert Macqueen, who later became Lord Braxfield. Braxfield earned his title through his extreme loyalty to the English crown and was known for his brutal treatment of Jacobite dissenters.¹⁵ Though Scott successfully separated his career in law and his antiquarian hobby, there was some overlap between the two, as Scott hated any changes made to old Scottish law and worked diligently against them.¹⁶ His greatest accomplishment honoring his heritage was the discovery and restoration of the Scottish Royal Regalia, hidden away in Edinburgh Castle since the Union of Parliaments in 1707. Scott received permission from the Prince Regent in 1818 after much petitioning to look for them and they were afterwards put on display in Edinburgh.

Though Scott quickly realized that there was no future in Jacobitism, the romanticism of his childhood stories of the rebellions stuck with him, leading him to wish for a career in the military. Unfortunately, his poor health as a child left him with a limp, making this impossible. On horseback, however, his limp was inconsequential and he organized a volunteer troop of light cavalry in 1797 to repel a possible French invasion.¹⁷ This helped him fulfill his military dreams as well as giving him useful connections for his career. He enjoyed riding around the countryside with his troop, mostly in response to false alarms. In 1804, however, they saw some real action, when he was called to put down riots that broke out as a result of food shortages.¹⁸ This was nothing like the glorious campaigns he had dreamed of and the incident greatly disturbed him. Eleven years later he visited Waterloo immediately after the battle, the horrific reality of which led to his final disillusionment with war. From that point on he focused on

¹⁴ Charles Petrie, *The Jacobite Movement* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1950), 169.

¹⁵ John Sutherland, *The Life of Sir Walter Scott* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995), 31.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 30.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* 66.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* 94.

securing positions which would finance his antiquarian interests while leaving him time to write. He used the proceeds from his writing, as well as the salaries from the various offices he held, to maintain Abbotsford, envisioning it as a great Scottish manor, decorating it with relics like Rob Roy's dirk and furniture made from William Wallace's house.¹⁹ These antiquarian interests did not affect his career, but they do present a very different image of Scott than the practical-minded lawyer who cunningly manipulated himself into higher and higher offices. This double life does not appear to have troubled him. The need for more funds to finance his constant expansions of Abbotsford motivated his political advancement and connected the dual roles he fulfilled as lawyer and antiquarian. This lifelong project bankrupted him, though his books did eventually sell enough to pay off his debts. This bankruptcy shows that even with his care to separate his professional and personal interests his fascination with the past became an obsession that almost ruined him. In *Ivanhoe* he distills these competing forces still further into the opposing characters of Cedric and Ivanhoe, the first of whom is much more consumed by the past than Scott ever was and the latter of whom succeeds in balancing the tensions of ancestral pride with contemporary practicality.

Scott's Saxons

Cedric is the backbone of the Saxon resistance, if it can be called that, in Scott's novel. Athelstane provides the face of the movement, chosen to be the king of a free Saxon kingdom which never emerges, but he has no driving ambition to overthrow the Normans and return to the way the world was before 1066. Cedric's staunch patriotism has earned him the title "Cedric the Saxon" as well as the respect of his neighbors. He uses his reputation to gain support for the Saxon cause, refusing to acknowledge that Athelstane would make a completely unsuitable king.

¹⁹ Ibid. 47

The name Cedric is believed to have been made up by Scott for this novel, possibly as a purposeful variation of Cerdic, traditionally known as the founder of the kingdom of Wessex.²⁰ This creates a nice connection between him and his chosen heir, Athelstane, named after the first king of England and grandson of Alfred, another king of Wessex. Although Cedric is not of a particularly high status by either blood or title, he nevertheless has profound influence over those around him. Neither Athelstane nor Rowena desire to marry each other, and yet both quietly accept it as their fate because Cedric wishes them to be together. Gurth is a very loyal swineherd, running away from his duties only so that he can serve his master's son. Gurth's greatest ambition in life is to buy his freedom so that he can become Ivanhoe's squire, but that does not stop him from standing by Cedric faithfully while he is still his thrall. He engages the help of Locksley in rescuing Cedric from Torquilstone and protects him during the battle, despite being in disgrace for running away with Ivanhoe. Wamba, Cedric's jester, gives the most extreme display of loyalty when he willingly exchanges places with his master after sneaking into Front-de-Boeuf's castle where he is being held prisoner. While there is much to be said against Cedric's character, he is clearly loved by those who follow him.

Cedric's devotion to the Saxon cause may earn him the respect of his neighbors, but it also tarnishes all of his personal relationships. He knows that in order to restore the Saxon monarchy, he must have the strongest possible claimants take the throne. Athelstane, respected "on account of his descent from the last Saxon monarchs of England"²¹ provides a fine place to start building up a legitimate claim. Rowena, a descendant of Alfred, is the perfect match for him, politically. Alfred is a touchstone for the Saxons of the novel, who are constantly

²⁰ Barbara Yorke, "Cerdic," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2007), www.oxforddnb.com (accessed March 6, 2012).

²¹ Sir Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), 73. All subsequent quotations will be from this edition and cited parenthetically.

comparing their present condition under the Normans with the “days of Alfred.”²² For Cedric especially, “to whom the name of Alfred was as that of a deity” (157), Rowena is the ideal candidate to marry the next Saxon king. Their union would create a noble couple from the royal Saxon line with a solid foundation for attempting to regain power. In the midst of all this plotting, however, he never takes into account what any of the other characters may be feeling at having their future planned out for them.

Ivanhoe is disregarded entirely in his father's plans. His loyalty to King Richard and his participation in the Crusades go against all of Cedric's principles, but his cardinal sin is his love for Rowena. Such a love match between the two would completely undermine Cedric's strategy, and so Ivanhoe is disowned to get him out of the way. Cedric does appear to miss his son, lamenting that without his support he is left "like the solitary oak that throws its shattered and unprotected branches against the full sweep of the tempest" (37). Only a few moments later, however, he refuses to ask for news of the Crusades, instead declaring that he will not "concern [himself] more for his fate than for that of the most worthless among the millions that ever shaped the cross on their shoulder, rushed into excess and blood-guiltiness, and called it an accomplishment of the will of God" (39). When he hears of Ivanhoe's success defending English chivalry in Richard's tournament abroad, he is beset by "[a] crowd of conflicting emotions" (52). He cannot help but be proud of his son who has proven to be such a worthy knight, and yet his

²² Alfred was king of Wessex from 871 until his death in 899. He kept Wessex out of the hands of the Vikings, who had overrun all of the other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, an achievement which gave his grandson Æthelstan a solid foundation from which to unite England. Alfred's laws were also incredibly influential, especially his view of all crimes as treason. He is famous for his educational reforms, having been especially interested in literacy. He did much to encourage the use of the vernacular, which was in danger of being completely replaced with Latin in written texts, which would greatly limit the number of people who could read. We know more of Alfred than any other early English ruler thanks to the Welsh monk Asser, who wrote his *Life of King Alfred* in 893. Patrick Wormald's article in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* gives a good overview of Alfred's life and accomplishments. Joanne Parker's book *'England's Darling' The Victorian Cult of Alfred the Great*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007) does a wonderful job of showing how influential Alfred has been to the formation of England's national identity.

pride will not allow him to renounce his early declaration of disinheritance. When Bois-Guilbert, smarting from his defeat at Ivanhoe's hand in the tournament abroad, implies that his rival would not dare a rematch, Cedric refuses to come to his son's aid in his own hall. He excuses his less than enthusiastic support by claiming that it is unnecessary for him to take a more active role in defending Ivanhoe's honor since the nameless pilgrim has already stepped forward to vouch for him. What Cedric does not realize is that the pilgrim is Ivanhoe and he has once again turned away from his son and left him to fend for himself. Cedric's obsessive devotion to the Saxon cause breaks his own family apart, forcing his son to rely on the patronage of King Richard for his future. His fixation on the bloodline of Alfred and his compulsive hatred of all Norman conventions prevents him from seeing that his son has become a respected Saxon knight while Athelstane is nothing more than a joke.

As a replacement for his son, Cedric chooses Athelstane, based largely on his ancestors. Athelstane has no driving ambition to become king; it is only Cedric's insistence that he must have the throne that pushes him to go along with the plan of throwing the Normans out of England. The two of them are complete opposites, Cedric being "as prompt as his companion was tardy" (73). The combination does not create a balance, however, but just more trouble. As Wamba observes after they are captured by De Bracy's men, Cedric "was too ready to fight...and Athelstane was not ready enough" (163). Cedric's goals for Athelstane pull him into the middle of a whirl of activity, landing him in Front-de-Boeuf's dungeon. He escapes, only to be hit over the head by Bois-Guilbert and declared dead. The fight between the two is set up to be one of Athelstane's finest moments as he easily "[snatches] a mace from the pavement,...[rushes] on the Templar's band, and [strikes] in quick succession to the right and left, leveling a warrior at each blow" (268). This puts him directly in range of Bois-Guilbert, however, and the Templar uses

the advantage of his horse to defeat Athelstane with one blow, leaving him to be carried to a priory to be prepared for burial. This is no glorious battle. The Abbot of a this priory, set to inherit Athelstane's estate if he leaves no heir, leaps on this opportunity by concealing the fact that Athelstane is alive and holding him prisoner for three days before Athelstane escapes once again and makes a dramatic entrance at his own funeral feast. This series of life-threatening adventures pushes Athelstane far enough finally to declare his loyalty to Richard, making it clear to Cedric once and for all that he has no desire to be king of England.

In the midst of this plotting and scheming, Rowena stands as nothing more than another pawn Cedric uses to manipulate those around him. Although she is supposedly allowed her own way in everything, there is very little evidence of such being the truth in the novel. Cedric declares that in his hall "the descendant of Alfred still reigns a princess" (39) but such a sentiment never seems to become more than empty words. It certainly does not stop Cedric from banishing her preferred suitor, Ivanhoe, and promising her to Athelstane, towards whom she never expresses any warm affection. There is not such a difference between Ivanhoe and Rowena's stations as to make their match improper, and yet it is not until Cedric is forced to admit that his hopes for a free Saxon England are futile that he gives his consent to their relationship. Consistently throughout the novel Rowena is referred to as the one person Cedric loves most in the world, but he still see her as a convenient means of advancing his own agenda. Everything for Cedric comes back to restoring the Saxon monarchy, no matter what collateral damage may be done to those around him, including his beloved ward.

This agenda has been discarded by the end of the novel, though this shift occurs more through necessity than a change of Cedric's heart. Even though he clings to the hope of a restored Saxon monarchy to the very end, Cedric does begin to look at the world slightly

differently as a result of the novel's events. When we first see him in his hall at Rotherwood, he is completely consumed by his love for the Saxon cause, welcoming Bois-Guilbert and Prior Aymer to his table as a show of Saxon hospitality but not out of any genuine feelings of generosity. He toasts Richard at the feast following the tournament, but only as a means of getting back at Prince John, who has been mocking him and Athelstane throughout the dinner. In a startling show of hypocrisy, he claims that anyone who refuses to drink to the toast is "false and dishonoured" (131) and yet he constantly dreams of the day that he can replace Richard with Athelstane. His boasts about the might of the Anglo Saxons are mainly full of hot air and the Normans tolerate them with the same air that an indulgent child will dote on an aged parent's rambling reminiscing. Scott himself must have had a very similar experience with his paternal grandfather, whom he lived with for several years during his childhood. His grandfather often told him stories of the Jacobite Risings, stressing his father's part in the '15 as a staunch Jacobite.²³ As much as Scott enjoyed the romance of this history, he was wise enough to see that there was no future in supporting the Stewart cause. In his novel it takes Cedric much longer to come to this realization, but his final acceptance can be seen in Coningsburgh where Richard finally reveals his true identity.

The king announces himself as "Richard Plantagenet," causing the astonished Cedric to cry "Richard of Anjou" which Richard immediately revises to "Richard of England" (375). When Richard asks Cedric to bow, he refuses to kneel to a Norman, but does try to justify Richard's kingship through his "descent from Matilda, niece to Edgar Atheling, and daughter to Malcolm of Scotland" (375), which gives Richard some Saxon blood but does not put him in line for the throne. Richard refuses to be drawn into this debate, focusing instead on his goal of restoring Ivanhoe's inheritance. The reconciliation between Cedric and Ivanhoe is interrupted by

²³ Sutherland, 14.

the return of Athelstane, but once everything is calm again after the trial at Templestowe Cedric is invited to court and there he is won over "by the personal attentions of Richard" (397) within one week. He finally acknowledges that Richard is too powerful to be removed from the throne and he becomes a truly loyal subject, showing that though his mind may never be "occupied by more than one object at once" (50), it will eventually work its way around to the right conclusion. No one wishes to have a Saxon king more than Cedric, and yet by the end of the novel he has realized how hopeless this wish is, leading him to accept that Richard, although Norman, is a much better ruler than Athelstane would ever be.

It is Richard's return that ultimately kills Cedric's plans for a restored Saxon monarchy, not Rowena's insistence that she will never marry Athelstane. This is odd considering how much Cedric despises the Norman dynasty and how he is said to dote on Rowena, but her relationship with Cedric is not the only aspect of her character with discrepancies. Much like the reader is told that Cedric gives Rowena free rein and yet throughout the novel dictates her life, the narrator also describes her as the perfect Saxon princess: tall, but not overly so; fair, but not insipid; noble; graceful; and commanding. This last point especially is hard to believe, as Rowena is extremely passive for most of the story. The reader is supposed to believe that she is full of "courage and self-confidence" (191), but that quality is only the result of being elevated above everyone else around her. She cannot "conceive the possibility of her will being opposed" and when it is challenged by "a man of a strong, fierce, and determined mind" she has no idea what to do (191). She falls apart in front of De Bracy, in stark contrast to Rebecca gallantly facing down Bois-de-Guilbert, threatening suicide before dishonor. Rowena escapes any rough treatment from De Bracy, but only because he is so put out by her excessive tears and distress. Although Rowena is set up to be the ideal queen of a newly reinstated Saxon monarchy, unlike

Athelstane who is consistently mocked and shown to be completely unfit to rule, she still loses her heroine status in the novel to Rebecca, who emerges as a better match for Ivanhoe.

Rowena's connection to Alfred is her only real reason to become queen, but despite her goodness she is not a strong character. Her blood is not enough to recommend her to the throne, suggesting that it takes more than royal lineage to rule a country, a telling statement in a novel that comes from a time when many Scots were eagerly waiting for the Stewarts to resume control of Scotland, at least, if not all of Britain.

Even for Scott, Rowena is less a character than a figure. Just like the other characters use her for her connection to Alfred, Scott makes sure to highlight her connection with her quasi-historical namesake. Nennius, writing in the 9th century, is the first historian to tell the story of Hengist's daughter, whom Vortigern fell in love with after hiring the Saxons as a mercenary band. Supposedly, Vortigern gave the Saxons Kent as the bride-price for her. Geoffrey of Monmouth names her Renwein in the 12th century which Lañamon switches to Ronwen slightly later. Verstegan, whose work Scott had in his library, latinized her name to Rowena in the 1600s and this then became the accepted form among historians (514 n.29.14). Scott makes the connection between the two Rowena's very clear when Bois-Guilbert sees her for the first time. He declares that he "could pardon the unhappy Vortigern, had he half the cause that we now witness for making shipwreck of his honour and his kingdom" (45) and offers wassail to her, referencing the first Rowena's toast to Vortigern which Geoffrey of Monmouth also recounts (519, n.45.11). In William of Malmesbury's account of this scene, Hengist has purposefully sent for his daughter so that "the king [Vortigern] might feast his eyes on her as he sat at meat,"²⁴ with the end goal of marrying her off to him in exchange for land. In much the same way,

²⁴ William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, eds. Mynors, Thomson and Winterbottom (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 25.

Cedric orchestrates Rowena's betrothal to Athelstane so that the Saxons can regain control of the land originally gotten through the first Rowena's marriage to Vortigern.

This connection, ties Rowena not only to the royal Saxon line through blood, but also associates her with the very first Saxons on British soil. Her namesake, according to the legend, is the reason that the Saxons first gained ownership of land on the island, granted by the king of the Britons himself. Interestingly, however, while both Rowenas serve as catalysts for tremendously significant events, neither plays an active role in these events. Hengist's daughter has such an effect on Vortigern that he gives up a portion of his kingdom to the Saxons, thereby paving the way for their eventual rise to ultimate power. In addition to being a source of contention between Cedric and Ivanhoe, De Bracy is so stricken by the Rowena of Scott's novel that he hatches a plot to kidnap her for his bride, setting up the siege and battle of the second volume. In both cases, it is not anything the women do but rather men's desire for them that gives them such a central role in world-changing happenings. Cedric is counting on Rowena to help reestablish the Saxon monarchy, but she is too passive to truly affect the course of history. She may be a catalyst for later proceedings, but she seems to have no control of the world around her, even in Rotherwood where she is supposed to be treated as a princess but still cannot stop her lover from being disowned.

Another character who becomes caught up in events bigger than himself is Athelstane the Unready. Though he has no driving ambition to become the king of England, he has allowed Cedric to convince him that the throne is his by right and he must claim it. As previously stated, this leads him into situations which he cannot handle, and which prove him unworthy of the crown. This distinguishes him quite clearly from his historical namesake, the grandson of Alfred the Great, but aligns him quite well with the man who contributes the second half of his name,

Æthelred the Unready. Those two names are both full of significance on their own, and when combined in a single sobriquet they create some very interesting implications for the character.

The historical Æthelstan is remembered in a mostly positive light, known as the first king of England after he successfully gained control over the Northumbrians. He was also given the title "king of the whole of Britain" according to coins minted in his reign, a testament to his authority over the Scots and Welsh. He is most famous for his defeat of the Viking-Scottish alliance at the Battle of Brunanburh, which is celebrated in the Old English poem of the same name. Like his grandfather, Alfred the Great, Æthelstan was involved in implementing new laws, mostly focused on supplementing and enforcing preexisting codes. Such an accomplished reign was not a given considering the uncertain circumstances of his ascension to the throne. His half-brother Ælfweard succeeded their father Edward in July of 924, but only outlived him by one month. Æthelstan had been raised at the Mercian court and they supported him as the next king, but the West Saxons wanted Ælfweard's brother Eadwine to become king. This led to much tension between the two factions, delaying Æthelstan's coronation until September of 925.²⁵ While the crowning achievement of his reign may have been the union of the Saxon kingdoms into England, it still began with uncertainty.

As a historical precedent for Athelstane, there are several interesting points about Æthelstan. A significant similarity between the two men is that neither man married and so both remained childless. For Æthelstan this was not a major issue as he had several younger nephews and did pick one of them to be his heir. Some scholars even speculate that he purposefully did not have children to prevent fighting among his brothers and sons.²⁶ There were also rumors that

²⁵ Sean Miller, "Æthelstan," *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Anglo Saxon England*, eds. Michael Lapidge, John Blair, Simon Keynes and Donald Scragg, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 16-17.

²⁶ Sarah Foot, "Æthelstan," *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (2011), www.oxforddnb.com (accessed March 6, 2012).

he was illegitimate which could have played into his decision to name one of his nephews as his heir, but this has largely been discounted.²⁷ Athelstane, on the other hand, has no family and without any children he leaves no one to carry on the royal Saxon line. In this way he fails in his dynastic duties and turns out to be nothing more than a dead end, falling far short of the mark made by his historical namesake.

Even without a successful historical figure to set a precedent, there are very high expectations associated with the name Æthelstan. This point can be seen in the short tenth-century poem titled ADALSTAN/IOHANNES, evidently dedicated to Æthelstan, which puts forth the hope that the prince will "fulfill the promise implied by the 'noble rock' of his name,"²⁸ something which Athelstane clearly fails to do. An interesting note on their shared name is that it apparently fell out of use right around the time of the Norman Conquest,²⁹ highlighting the fact that the time of Æthelstan is past and the Saxons must make room for the new king, Richard. Prior to the Conquest, however, it was most certainly time for Æthelstan and he made the most of it, taking control of Wessex, Mercia, York and Northumbria as well as subjugating the Welsh and raiding his way through Scotland. He had a string of successful military campaigns, climaxing with his victory at Brunanburh.³⁰ Athelstane, on the other hand, does not fare nearly so well in his skirmishes. His first battle is the tournament at the end of Volume I, when he chooses to fight on the side of Bois-Guilbert, much to the dismay of Cedric who "[remonstrates] strongly with his friend upon the injudicious choice he had made of his party" (109) to no avail. Athelstane chooses to align himself with the Norman to give himself the opportunity to defeat

²⁷ Sarah Foot, *Æthelstan: The First King of England*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 30.

²⁸ *Ibid.* 110.

²⁹ Elizabeth Gidley Withycombe, *The Oxford Dictionary of English Christian Names*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977), 35.

³⁰ For a fuller examination of this critical battle see Michael Livinston (ed.), *The Battle of Brunanburh: A Casebook*, (Exeter: The University of Exeter Press, 2011).

the Disinherited Knight, not realizing that he is Ivanhoe. Although he has never actively courted Rowena, he considers her already his from Cedric's promises and does not approve of this mystery knight showing favor to her. He manages to stay in the battle until almost the end, when he attacks Ivanhoe along with Bois-Guilbert and Front-de-Boeuf. Ivanhoe seems doomed to lose, but the Black Sluggard, King Richard in disguise, comes to his rescue and defeats Athelstane and Front-de-Boeuf, leaving Ivanhoe to dispatch Bois-Guilbert. Athelstane seeks to become the Saxon king, but instead of defending the man who has gained a reputation as a defender of Saxon chivalry, he allies himself with the Normans to take him down, leaving the Norman king to come balance the scales and allow Ivanhoe to win the day. Athelstane and Ivanhoe should be working together for the purpose of reestablishing the Saxon monarchy, but Ivanhoe is too devoted to Richard to become seriously involved in this cause while Athelstane is too jealous of Rowena's affection for Ivanhoe to work with him. Thus, in the process of fighting the man who should be his greatest ally he is taken down by his true enemy, King Richard, who later becomes his rescuer during the siege of Torquilstone. Richard's superiority over Athelstane is clearly demonstrated here, not only in his physical prowess but also in his ability to protect his people, as he saves Ivanhoe from unequal odds while Athelstane only contributes to the problem. This dynamic is very similar to how the Jacobites only created problems for both the English and the Scottish through their uprisings while the Hanoverian monarchs protected their country from inside unrest and outside attack. The Stewarts did neither of these things, as they not only lost their country to William of Orange, but the Conqueror only came at the invitation of the English who were dissatisfied with James' rule.

The second battle of the novel is the siege of Torquilstone, most of which happens while Athelstane is still a prisoner inside its walls. Once the Saxons breach its walls Cedric comes to

his rescue, only to find that Wamba has already manufactured a way out of their cell. They come out in the courtyard just in time to see Bois-Guilbert carrying off Rebecca. Athelstane assumes that he is kidnapping Rowena and, ignoring Wamba's observation that "yonder is none of my Lady Rowena" and his warning that "silk bonnet never kept out steel blade" (268), challenges the Templar. Thinking he is rushing to Rowena's defense, he tells Bois-Guilbert to "let go her whom thou art unworthy to touch" (268), which particularly insults the Templar since he is actually kidnapping a Jewess. Enraged by this blasphemy, Bois-Guilbert turns to meet the challenge and fells Athelstane with one blow, leading to the false rumor that the would-be king is dead. This is enough to convince Athelstane that he was not born for a life of adventure and concludes his unremarkable career as a warrior.

The later scene where Athelstane returns after everyone believes him dead seems awkward at a first reading, but it contains some fascinating elements on a closer examination. A funeral feast has been organized at his holdings, the Castle of Coningsburgh, and he is being honored, appropriately enough, by Saxon serfs "drowning the sense of [their] half year's hunger and thirst, in one day's gluttony and drunkenness" (369). There is nothing to indicate that Athelstane is alive, except perhaps the monks' unwillingness to let anyone else handle the coffin, which they explain by saying that it was used at the funeral of St. Edmund and as such is a holy relic, not to be touched by lay persons. Richard and Ivanhoe come to pay their respects, during which Cedric and son reconcile, Cedric being forced to give up his dreams of throwing the Normans out with the death of Athelstane. Cedric no longer forbids his son to marry Rowena, but insists that she observe a two year mourning period for her betrothed, claiming that anything less would cause Athelstane to "burst his bloody cerements, and stand before us to forbid such dishonour to his memory" (376). As though his words were prophetic, at the next instant

Athelstane dramatically throws open the door, standing there "arrayed in the garments of the grave...pale, haggard, [sic] and like something arisen from the dead" (376).

The theme of the returning king, reappearing when he is needed most to save his people, is a common one and most strongly connected with King Arthur. It was also an important point in Jacobean thought, centered on the hope of the Stewarts' return to power. This dream was almost realized during the '45, but despite some promising moments the last serious Jacobite Uprising was doomed to fail. Charles Edward Stewart was living in France, who fully supported the Stewart cause as a way to weaken England. Prince Charles successfully landed on the Scottish mainland, only to find that he had much less support than he had anticipated.³¹ Against the advice of many of his followers, he decided to carry through with the uprising, winning them over mostly because the English forces stationed in Scotland were too small and largely inexperienced. The Jacobite forces managed to seize Edinburgh mostly just by marching up to it. This was particularly promising in light of Charles II's successful return to the throne in 1660, after having fled the country following the execution of Charles I in 1649.³² Prince Charles managed a tenuous hold of Scotland with a few unremarkable battles, but then he made the extremely ill-advised decision to invade England. Westminster had not taken the uprising very seriously to this point, but with Charles heading towards London he quickly encountered three armies converging on him. Charles had no resources and no escape route, so he was forced to take a stand against much larger forces at Culloden. The pitiful remnants of the Jacobite army reassembled at Ruthven a few days later, but it was decided that further fighting would gain them nothing and Charles escaped to France. He never again made a serious effort to return.

³¹Lenman, 245.

³²Ibid. 11.

Athelstane's return is no more successful from Cedric's point of view. He tells the story of how the monks, who stood to inherit his land as he left no heirs, planned on hiding the fact that he had not died at Torquilstone in order to claim his property. Athelstane faced death in the Abbey, but his largest complaint against the monks is that they fed him nothing but bread and water. Cedric takes his escape and 'resurrection' as a sign that he was born to lead the Saxons to liberty, but Athelstane quickly takes the opportunity to swear his allegiance to Richard, proclaiming that his three-day fast has rid him of all ambition but to see the Abbot who held him hanged. His return is not the beginning of a glorious campaign to overthrow the Normans, but rather the end of any chance of doing so. The cause would have been better served if Athelstane really had died at Torquilstone, in which case he could at least be said to have died honorably in battle rather than his anticlimactic and rather foolish renunciation of his right to the throne in favor of pursuing his vendetta against the monks.³³

In Jacobite literature the absent monarch is often depicted as a messianic deliverer or returns in disguise and acts as a social bandit or a criminal hero.³⁴ This does not apply at all to Athelstane, but it fits Richard perfectly, who returns from the Crusades and, known only as the Knight of the Fetterlock, allies himself with the outlaw Locksley in order to rescue Cedric, Athelstane and Rowena from Torquilstone. Richard returns from the Crusades to find that Prince John has made a mess of the kingdom in his absence, a situation which he quickly sets right. The first time he holds court after revealing his identity he sets it up in York "for the purpose of quieting the counties that had been disturbed by the ambition of his brother" (396). Even before he makes his return known he begins to repair the damage, getting to know his

³³ Paul J. deGateno, *Ivanhoe: The Mask of Chivalry*, (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1994), 77.

³⁴Pittock, 68.

people through such unconventional methods as his drinking binge with Friar Tuck.³⁵ The ideal Jacobite ruler is present in the novel, but he is embodied not in the Saxon heir to the throne but rather in the Norman king returning from the Crusades and dispensing justice to his people. By suggesting that the king who is seen as a foreign oppressor may in fact be the ideal ruler, *Ivanhoe* invites the Jacobites to reevaluate the Hanoverians based on their ability to govern their kingdom rather than dismissing them outright based on their bloodline.

Unlike Richard, the historical Æthelstan was never fully accepted by those he ruled, especially among the Welsh. Their rejection of the Saxon monarchy is clear in the poem *Armes Prydein Vawr*, which translates to *The Great Prophecy of Britain*. The poem looks forward to the day when "The Britons will rise again" and "scatter foreigners."³⁶ Even among the West Saxons, Æthelstan was never fully accepted. Raised in Mercia, his rule was not universally accepted in Winchester, where it is believed he was targeted by a plot to blind him in order to make him unfit to rule.³⁷ There was great anticipation for the day that the British would rise up and drive their oppressors into the sea. This puts him in the exact opposite role of Athelstane, who is supposed to be the one doing the rising up and driving out. Though the English lost much of their northern territory to the Norse shortly after Æthelstan's death, during his lifetime the Britons had no better luck ridding themselves of the Saxons than the Saxons had against the Normans a century later. While Æthelstan and Athelstane are on opposite sides of this equation, in both cases the conquering king continues to rule despite lingering discontent. For Æthelstan this is a sign of success, as he is the conquering king who successfully retains his hold on his new territory. Athelstane, on the other hand, occupies the losing side of this equation as Richard not only keeps his throne but actually increases in popularity up to the very end of the novel.

³⁵ deGategno, 50.

³⁶ ll. 12, 7. Translated in *Battle of Brunanburh: A Casebook*, 29.

³⁷ Foot, 40.

The other part of Athelstane's name comes from King Æthelred II, later called the Unready, and these two have much more in common. Æthelred's title is derived from the Saxon *un-ræd* or 'ill-advised counsel' and is a play on his name which means noble counsel.³⁸ Scott uses the more modern understanding of the word in his explanation of Athelstane's name, claiming that his neighbors conferred the title on him because he was "inanimate in expression, dull-eyed, heavy-browed, inactive and sluggish in all his motions" (73). The original meaning of the title also holds true, however, as it is Cedric's prodding that leads Athelstane to view himself as the rightful king in the first place, an opinion that is clearly flawed. Scott tries to pass Athelstane's willingness "to defer to the advice of counsellors more wise than himself" (156) as a strong point in his character, but that justification does not work when his adviser's view is just as mistaken as his own.

The historical Æthelred was driven out of England and forced into Normandy by the Danes in 1013. He returned in 1014, but by the end of 1016 Cnut, a Dane, was king of England.³⁹ He not only lost his kingdom, he let it slip out of Saxon control altogether.⁴⁰ Athelstane never had a kingdom to lose, but when he swears fealty to Richard he willingly gives up the chance of restoring the Saxon monarchy. Just like Æthelred was not capable of keeping the Viking invaders out of England, Athelstane did not have the ability to overthrow the Norman conquerors.

To be fair, however, neither man is necessarily as incompetent as they are often depicted. Æthelred is mainly remembered for the last decade of his reign, during which he rapidly lost

³⁸ Sean Miller, "Æthelred the Unready," *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Anglo-Saxon England*, 15.

³⁹ *Ibid.* 15.

⁴⁰ Immediately after Cnut became king he executed or exiled many rival claimants to the throne, but most of the native aristocracy remained in place. For more on his life, see Mark Lawson, *Cnut: King of England 1016-1035* (Stroud: Tempus Publishing Ltd, 2004).

ground to the Vikings.⁴¹ He had been battling these raiders for twenty years, however, successfully fending them off while simultaneously overseeing a government that was remarkably efficient.⁴² Similarly, Athelstane failed to drive the Normans out or even mount a serious campaign to make the attempt, but Cedric is the one who made the true mistake in this situation. He hand-picked Athelstane to lead this movement despite his obvious shortcomings. Out of his respect for his older neighbor, Athelstane accepted the role that was assigned to him, but once it became apparent that nothing was ever going to come of it he willingly steps aside. It speaks well of Athelstane's character that he was able to recognize Richard as a much better king than he would be and acknowledge him as his own sovereign. This moment of recognition never came for the Jacobites, who continued to clamor for the return of the Stewarts although the complete disaster of the '45 clearly showed the Prince Charles was not capable of reclaiming his throne. Like Athelstane and Æthelred, his willingness to be king does not make up for a lack of military might and all three of them must watch someone else take control of their country. Despite his redeeming self-awareness, however, Athelstane consistently falls flat when compared with the hero of the novel, Ivanhoe.

Ivanhoe comes into the novel disguised as a pilgrim from the Holy Lands, forced to sneak into his father's house, much as King Richard must return to his own kingdom with his identity hidden. The bond between Ivanhoe and his king allows him to succeed after he is disowned by his father, but it both adds to his hero status and detracts from it. Given the chance to distinguish himself as one of Richard's favorites in the Crusades, Ivanhoe becomes known as a defender of English chivalry and is able to reinforce that reputation during the tournament at Ashby. While he does become the victor of the tournament, thanks to Richard's help, Ivanhoe is injured during

⁴¹ Simon Keynes has many helpful articles on Æthelred, including one in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. See also his, "A Tale of Two Kings," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 36 (1986): 195-217.

⁴² Miller, 15.

his final battle with Bois-Guilbert and spends the siege of Torquilstone laid up in bed while Richard becomes his replacement, leading the rescue force which overruns the castle and frees the prisoners. Ivanhoe must rely on Rebecca's reluctant descriptions of the battle while his king faces death to rescue him, fighting "as if there were twenty men's strength in his single arm" (247). When the castle catches fire Ivanhoe is incapable of leaving and Rebecca refuses to leave him behind, putting herself in mortal danger along with him. Bois-Guilbert appears and carries her off, right in front of Ivanhoe who is powerless to stop him. Ivanhoe's shouts do nothing to deter Bois-Guilbert from kidnapping Rebecca, but they do lead Richard to him, and the king carries his knight to safety. This does not necessarily make Ivanhoe less heroic, but it does place the spotlight on Richard, who becomes the more active of the two following Ivanhoe's injury. Richard essentially replaces Ivanhoe as the defender of Saxon chivalry, leading the fight against the Normans who have captured the three most prominent Saxons in the country while disguised as outlaws. This reinforces Richard's right to rule as he chooses the side that is in the right, regardless of heritage. It also highlights Ivanhoe's dependence on Richard, who comes to his rescue at a time when his father is not only unable to but also unaware that he needs saved. Thus Richard takes the place of Cedric, who is the leader of the Saxon cause, and of Ivanhoe, the most prominent Saxon knight. At a time when the Normans should be at their worst, suffering defeat at the hands of a group of common outlaws as punishment for their underhanded kidnapping of Rowena and her party, the focus falls instead on the positive accomplishments of the Norman king. Similarly, the Jacobites should not be focusing on the negative repercussions of William's rise to power, many of which the Scots brought on themselves through their rebellions, but rather his positive accomplishments, such as curtailing French expansion on the Continent and

promoting religious tolerance. Like the Saxons, the Jacobites were allowing their hatred of the ruling king's people to blind them to the fact that he was good for the country.

Despite his unwilling passivity, Ivanhoe remains central to the novel. His relationship with the other Anglo Saxon characters provides a counterpoint to their focus on the past, his success highlighting their flaws. His most complicated relationship is with his father, who simultaneously loves and hates Ivanhoe's success as a knight at Richard's side. Cedric does not approve of the Crusades which provides the venue for Ivanhoe to develop his reputation as a knight. He is equally disapproving of tournaments, which were completely foreign to Saxon culture prior to the advent of the Normans, situations in which Ivanhoe truly shines. Though Cedric is somewhat proud of his son's accomplishments, he maintains that "he is fitter to do the juggling tricks of the Norman chivalry than to maintain the fame and honour of his English ancestry with the glaive⁴³ and brown-bill, the good old weapons of his country" (153). Neither can he approve of his son becoming known mainly by Ivanhoe, which is the Norman name for a Saxon estate which Richard gives to his favorite. Cedric consistently refers to his son by his Saxon name, Wilfred, but it is his decision to disinherit his son which forces him to rely on Richard's generosity to provide holdings for him. Cedric's insistence on putting the Saxon cause before anything else leads to him disinheriting his son, but that disinheritance also gives Wilfred the chance to make a name for himself by serving King Richard. Ivanhoe's acceptance of Richard's reign allows him to become a well-known and popular figure while Cedric becomes the butt of jokes at Norman dinners such as Prince John's feast the evening after the tournament of Ashby. By disowning his son, Cedric thinks that he is advancing the Saxon cause, but he is only pushing Ivanhoe further into the Norman world while also damaging his own reputation.

⁴³ Ironically, the glaive is not an Anglo-Saxon weapon. The word comes from Old French, derived from the Latin word for sword, *gladius*. The French and English both used it to refer to a polearm.

Athelstane shares in Cedric's humiliation at this feast, but it does not appear to affect him in the same way. His gluttony is more in line with the Normans' own eating habits than Cedric's stiff formality. They think nothing of Athelstane swallowing "to his own single share the whole of a large pasty composed of the most exquisite foreign delicacies" (127), though they do laugh at him for having "no idea what he had been devouring" (128). The Normans engage Cedric in a conversation about Ivanhoe, which quickly descends into a round of insults against the Saxon race, the worst of which is perhaps the reminder of the military prowess "by which they distinguished themselves at Hastings" (129). Cedric has one of his finer moments here when he chastises them with unexpected dignity for their shocking breach of hospitality, stating that no matter what can be said against the Saxons, none of them would ever "in his own hall, and while his own wine-cup passed, have treated an unoffending guest as your highness has this day beheld me used" (130). Fitzurse eases the tension with the suggestion of a toast, which Cedric refuses to participate in, as he is unwilling to accept Prince John's insincere apology. Athelstane, who can easily be imagined to have continued to gorge himself during this exchange, does not hesitate to "[show] his sense of the honour by draining a huge goblet in answer to it" (130), oblivious to the insult implied in the pledge. He consistently fails as a defender of Saxon pride, a fact which becomes even more evident when he is compared with the heroic achievements of Ivanhoe. The men attempt many of the same tasks throughout the novel, but Ivanhoe never fails to prove himself the more adept at defending himself and those around him.

Athelstane is set up as Ivanhoe's rival from the very beginning of the novel, but he is never a serious threat to his success. It is Bois-Guilbert who emerges as Ivanhoe's true nemesis, a character who is given no redeeming features by Scott, existing solely as an adversary for Ivanhoe. He is defeated by the novel's hero three times, once before the action of the story at a

tournament Richard organizes while abroad, and twice during the course of the book. Ivanhoe's victories over Bois-Guilbert are, in a way, also victories over Athelstane who allies himself with Bois-Guilbert at Ashby and is then defeated by him at Torquilstone. At the tournament of Ashby, Ivanhoe actually defeats Bois-Guilbert twice: in the jousts of the first day and the mock battle of the second. His victory over Bois-Guilbert ends the mock battle, but only because Richard clears the way for him by defeating his other opponents, including Athelstane who decided to fight with Bois-Guilbert in order to knock Ivanhoe down and reassert himself as Rowena's betrothed. In this, as in so many other things, he fails spectacularly. Another of his failures comes at the end of the siege of Torquilstone when he sees Bois-Guilbert carrying off Rebecca, whom he believes to be Rowena. As we have seen, he rushes into the fight without thinking of how unprepared he is to face Bois-Guilbert and ends up being hit in the head and rendered unconscious, leading to the rumor that he had died. Ivanhoe similarly rushes to Rebecca's aid without being fully prepared, having not yet fully recovered from the injuries he sustained at Ashby. In his case, however, there is no other option as he reaches Templestowe just in time to present himself as Rebecca's champion before she is put to death. The crowd is excited when he arrives, hoping to see a good fight between the two champions, but that hope is destroyed when they realize that "[his] horse, urged for many miles to its utmost speed, appeared to reel from fatigue, and the rider, however undauntedly he presented himself in the lists, either from weakness, weariness, or both, seemed scarce able to support himself in the saddle" (390). The fact that he is in no shape to fight turns out to be immaterial, however, as Bois-Guilbert falls down dead without Ivanhoe ever touching him, a remarkable event which is taken as definitive proof of Rebecca's innocence.

Ivanhoe successfully defeats Bois-Guilbert and rescues Rebecca from certain death at Templestowe, both of which accomplishments Athelstane failed to do (in addition to misidentifying Rebecca as his fiancée). Rowena provides another area in which Ivanhoe proves more competent than Athelstane, managing to win her affections despite Cedric's stern disapproval of their relationship. Once his rival is sent away, Athelstane still cannot win Rowena over to his side even with the support of her guardian. Becoming Cedric's replacement for Ivanhoe is the only time that Athelstane wins the upper hand in their competition, but even this proves only temporary. By the end of the novel Richard has convinced Cedric to reconcile with his son, and with Athelstane's resolve to give up his quest for the throne, there is no longer any reason for Cedric to block Ivanhoe and Rowena's relationship. Athelstane has been convinced by Cedric that he is superior by virtue of his connection to Saxon royalty, but even with the advantage of Cedric's endorsement he fails to prove himself better than the disinherited Ivanhoe, who manages to reclaim even that endorsement by the time the novel closes. Athelstane relies on the support of his fellow Saxon, Cedric, to help him secure Rowena as his wife, and though this does give him the initial advantage in the end, it proves insufficient. Ivanhoe, on the other hand, turns to his Norman patron, Richard, for help and the king is successful in convincing Cedric to acknowledge his son again, resulting in the long awaited marriage of Ivanhoe and Rowena becoming reality by the end of the novel. Cooperation with the Normans proves to be more effective than a solid wall of Saxons closing ranks against the usurpers.

Ivanhoe is notable for his willingness to work with the Normans in order to achieve his ends, but he is not the only character to do so. Ulrica is the daughter of the original Saxon owner of Torquilstone and the only one to live through the Normans' hostile takeover. She remains a

captive in her own home where she is forced to be the elder Front-de-Boeuf's mistress. For her revenge, she allies herself with the younger Front-de-Boeuf, convincing him to murder his father, whom she then washed and dressed to give "the outward show of one parted in time and in the course of nature" (255). Like *Ivanhoe*, she has accepted that the Normans are in control and work alongside them to achieve her own goals. The twisted method of her alliance, however, culminating in patricide and motivated purely by revenge, is nothing at all like *Ivanhoe*'s faithful service to King Richard. Ulrica completes her revenge by tormenting Front-de-Boeuf on his death bed, forcing him to "think on [his] sins...on rebellion, on murder, on rapine" (255). She takes great joy in pointing out to him that he will "die no soldier's death, but perish like the fox in his den, when peasants have set fire to the cover around it" (256-57). After consigning him to the hands of "Mista, Skogula, and Zerneck, gods of the ancient Saxons" (257), she leaves, locking the door behind her and leaving him to be burned alive by the fire she has lit in the magazine room beneath his chamber. Volume II ends with the disturbing image of Front-de-Boeuf going mad as the flames close in on him.

With the last Front-de-Boeuf dead, Ulrica's revenge is complete, but she sentences herself to death as well. The end of the siege is straight out of a nightmare, with Ulrica standing at the top of the castle, the flames rising around her as she "[yells] forth a war-song, such as was of yore chaunted [sic] on the field of battle by the scalds of the yet heathen Saxons" (269). The castle falls apart around her, yet even with the walls and towers crashing down "the maniac figure of the Saxon Ulrica was for a long time visible on the lofty stand she had chosen, tossing her arms abroad with gestures of wild exultation, as if she reigned empress of the conflagration which she had raised" (271). While Ulrica becomes the empress of destruction, *Ivanhoe* steps into the role of defender of Saxon chivalry. Ulrica's cooperation with the Normans leads to

nothing but death, including her own, whereas *Ivanhoe*'s work with them puts him on the path to great success in life. Although Ulrica operates within the parameters of the new hierarchy, her ultimate goal is to avenge the lost past. *Ivanhoe*, on the other hand, has truly embraced the Normans, working alongside them to achieve their goals knowing that this relationship will turn out to be reciprocal. This indeed turns out to be the case as Richard not only gives *Ivanhoe* the estate which becomes his name, but also comes to his rescue at Torquilstone and helps him to repair his relationship with Cedric.

When Cedric encounters Ulrica while escaping from the castle disguised as a monk, he condemns her for failing to commit suicide to escape her dishonor, completely overlooking her victimization. Interestingly, the character who *does* threaten to kill herself in order to avoid being raped is Rebecca, the Jewess who is universally hated by the Normans and Saxons alike. The horrible treatment that she and her father run into no matter where they go throughout the novel completely undermines the Saxons' view of themselves as the disenfranchised. When compared to the threats of torture and rape which Isaac and Rebecca must contend with, Cedric and Athelstane's outrage against the Normans seems completely unfounded. The Jews' troubles in the novel start in chapter six when Isaac must sneak out of Rotherwood before dawn to escape Bois-Guilbert's plot to seize him on the road and exhort money out of him. Isaac manages to avoid this with the help of *Ivanhoe*, the beginning of a mutually beneficial relationship which lasts throughout the novel.⁴⁴ This relationship highlights *Ivanhoe*'s progressive attitude. His

⁴⁴ There has been much scholarship devoted to the Jews in this novel. For purposes of this thesis I examine their characters solely in relation to the Saxons. For more on the Jews in *Ivanhoe*, see Ibn Warraq, "Sir Walter Scott's Treatment of the Jews in *Ivanhoe*," *New English Review*, (July 2009), www.newenglishreview.com, (accessed on November 18, 2011); Judith Lewin, "Jewish Heritage and Secular Inheritance in Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*," *ANQ*, 19.1 (2006): 27-33; Judith Lewin, "Legends of Rebecca: *Ivanhoe*, Dynamic Identification, and the Portraits of Rebecca Gratz," *Nashim*, 10 (2006): 178-212; Cristina Constantini, "The Jews and the Common Law: A Question of Traditions and Jurisdictions: An Analysis through W. Scott's *Ivanhoe*," *Textus: English Studies in Italy*, 21.3 (2008): 467-486; and Michael Ragussis, "Writing Nationalist History: England, The Conversion of the Jews, and *Ivanhoe*," *ELH*, 60.1 (1993): 181-215.

willingness to be Rebecca's protector despite his society's stance against her people parallels his willingness to work with the Normans against his father's wishes. Even though Richard becomes the hero of the siege at Torquilstone, Ivanhoe ultimately emerges as the true hero as he rushes to Rebecca's defense at Templestowe.

To repay Ivanhoe for his kindness at Rotherwood, Isaac lends him the money to equip himself for the tournament at Ashby, which Ivanhoe then repays out of his winnings after the first day of jousting. This should be the end of Ivanhoe's business with the Jews, but after he is injured on the second day of the tournament Rebecca, who is very skilled with healing herbs, convinces her father to take Ivanhoe onto their care so that she can nurse him back to health. Cedric's first instinct is to send his own servants to attend him, but he "could not bring himself to acknowledge, in presence of such an assembly, the son whom he had renounced and disinherited" (152). He delays too long and loses track of Ivanhoe, which makes Rowena furious. For a brief moment we see the strong will that she is credited with as she chastises Cedric for abandoning his son and shows her displeasure by refusing to go to Prince John's feast. She begins by defending Ivanhoe, but when Cedric cuts her off she stops trying to convince him to accept his son and simply takes her own stand, declaring that she will not go to the feast and warning Cedric that what he means "for courage and constancy shall be accounted hardness of heart" (153).

Once again Rebecca and Rowena occupy parallel roles as both wish to be the ones taking care of Ivanhoe, but only Rebecca is successful and when the two companies meet up on the road the next day the Saxons are completely unaware that they are travelling with Ivanhoe. When De Bracy discovers Ivanhoe in the litter he knows that Front-de-Boeuf would kill the wounded

knight without scruple, wanting the manor of Ivanhoe for his own, having been promised it by Prince John. De Bracy decides to protect Ivanhoe by keeping his presence a secret, instructing his squires to tell anyone who asked that "the empty litter of the Lady Rowena was employed to transport one of their comrades who had been wounded in the scuffle" (240). Wounded and in the home of a man who would gladly kill him, Ivanhoe must rely on the protection of a Norman who wants Rowena for himself, all while his friends and family are completely unaware of his predicament.

Rebecca and Ivanhoe stay together during the siege of Torquilstone and she describes the battle to him, though he must constantly pressure her to return to the window in order to see what is happening. The bond between the two becomes apparent in this scene, though it is definitely a one-sided relationship. Rebecca does not deceive herself. Even though Ivanhoe calls her dear, she knows that his "war-horse—his hunting hound, were dearer to him than the despised Jewess" (242). For her part, she becomes attached to him, mourning his imminent death, as she sees no way for them to escape the castle. While he sleeps she takes the opportunity to "fortify her mind, not only against the impending evils from without, but also against those treacherous feelings which assailed her from within" (251). Ivanhoe cannot return this affection without compromising his relationship with Rowena, though even in his unimpeachable behavior there is room to wonder "whether Rowena would have been altogether satisfied with the species of emotion with which her devoted knight had hitherto gazed on the beautiful features, and fair form, and lustrous eyes, of the lovely Rebecca" (235). Because Rowena and Ivanhoe's relationship develops before the opening of the novel, the reader does not feel invested in their relationship, unlike the developing feelings between Rebecca and Ivanhoe, which cultivate the reader's sympathy for the lonely Jewess. Ivanhoe never sees Rebecca as more than a particularly

beautiful and attentive nurse, showing that even though he is willing to protect the Jews from other people's prejudice, he does not see them as equal to his fellow Saxons. Ivanhoe's progressive thinking contributes toward his hero status in the novel, but he is still a product of his culture and as such has been conditioned to see the Saxons as superior to all other races. He has overcome this bias in the case of the Normans to the extent that he can accept Richard as his king and serve him faithfully enough to become one of his favorite knights.

Even though Ivanhoe never entertains the thought of an actual relationship between him and Rebecca, it is clear that he cares for her welfare. When she is given three days to produce a champion to fight on her behalf in Templestowe, she has no one to turn to besides Ivanhoe. She does not ask him to actually fight for her, as he is not yet fully recovered from his injuries, but she does hope that he will be able to find someone to fulfill the role of champion. Ivanhoe does not hesitate when he hears of her situation, but rushes out of Coningsburgh in the middle of Athelstane's return to fight for Rebecca despite his condition. This is the final conflict between Ivanhoe and Bois-Guilbert, which ends on a note of divine intervention when Bois-Guilbert dies without Ivanhoe inflicting a serious wound. By making Rebecca such a sympathetic character and placing her in between Ivanhoe and Bois-Guilbert, Scott elevates their conflict above simple lines of race. Were Rowena the one who was taken, it would still be a Saxon champion defending a Saxon princess against a Norman. Because Rebecca is Jewish, however, her defense becomes a matter of right and wrong rather than an issue of Saxon or Norman, though of course the fact that the Norman is the one in the wrong is by no means insignificant.

While Rebecca's plight enhances Ivanhoe's heroism, it detracts from Rowena's. Ulrica strongly implies that Rebecca is about to be raped when she is in the tower, a threat which is clear in Bois-Guilbert's warning that he will not "abstain from taking by violence what [Rebecca]

refusest to entreaty or necessity" (198). It is only her threats of suicide that keep him at bay until the alarm is given over Locksley's force at the castle walls. Rowena, on the other hand, is a Saxon princess and her status is high enough to make De Bracy tread carefully around her. He threatens both Ivanhoe and Cedric if she refuses his suit, but when she breaks down at the thought of the choice she must make he ends up consoling her, though he still refuses to retract his threats. Rebecca is more composed when facing death than Rowena is when forced to contend with an unwanted suitor.

In a similar way, Isaac's hardships make Cedric's complaints regarding the Norman Yoke look ridiculous. Isaac is threatened with torture in the dungeons of Torquilstone if he will not produce sufficient money to satisfy Front-de-Boeuf's greed, while Cedric and Athelstane are held in the great hall in relative luxury. Cedric bemoans the fact that he and Athelstane are to be put to death because it is "too much that two Saxons...should hold land in the country which was once the patrimony of [their] race" (174), never imagining that their capture is merely incidental in achieving the Normans' true goals. Cedric spends his time in captivity reliving the glory days when Torquilstone was still in Saxon hands, interrupted by Athelstane's demands for food. When dinner is not served promptly at noon Athelstane immediately begins to worry, trying to convince himself that "it cannot be their purpose to starve [the Saxons] outright" (176). Cedric compares the simple and solid food of his Saxon ancestors with the overly dainty diet of the Normans, which gives Athelstane the perfect opportunity to talk about dinner, claiming that he would be quite content with any type of food. He also points out that Cedric remembers the past very well considering how oblivious he is to the present. He is referring to Cedric's unconcern about the tardiness of their meal, but it is a keen observation about Cedric's insistence that Athelstane will be king someday. Cedric begins to have doubts about Athelstane following this

exchange, lamenting that "so dull a spirit should be lodged in so goodly a form...that such an enterprize as the regeneration of England should turn on a hinge so imperfect" (177). The steward does eventually bring them a meal, at which point Athelstane takes the opportunity to challenge Front-do-Boeuf to single combat, but he leaves a very poor impression as he is already speaking through a mouthful of food when he offers his defiance. Cedric has no room to criticize him, however, as he "[places] himself opposite to Athelstane, and soon shewed [sic], that if the distresses of his country could banish the recollection of food while the table was uncovered, yet no sooner were the victuals put there, than he proved that the appetite of his Saxon ancestors had descended to him along with their other qualities" (178). They have no reason to fear for themselves or Rowena until their fellow Saxon sets the castle on fire, unlike Isaac who is bluntly told that his daughter has been given "to be a handmaiden to Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert" (185). Isaac refuses to pay any money unless she is released, which only drives Front-de-Boeuf to order his slaves to "strip him...and chain him down upon the bars" over the fire. The Saracens are in the process of carrying out this command when they are distracted by the bugle signaling that the outlaws have been spotted. The timely interruption is all that prevents Isaac and Rebecca from violence at the hands of their Norman captors, whereas the Saxons have nothing to fear during their captivity.

The only Saxons who can really sympathize with the Jews are Cedric's thralls, who are just as powerless as Isaac and his daughter. Wamba comes through as the wisest Saxon in the novel, using his status as Cedric's favorite servant to speak his opinion of events frankly, though his greatest audacity is when he disobeys King Richard, blowing the horn he was given by Locksley against the king's express wishes and saving both of their lives in the process. His selfless sacrifice in taking Cedric's place as a prisoner in Torquilstone provides a touching display

of his devotion to Cedric, but even in this he is eclipsed by Gurth. The jester is always treated well by Cedric, but Gurth is often unappreciated by him. He never allows this to affect his service, always bringing Cedric's pigs home safely despite the danger of Norman thieves. He takes a large leap beyond simply herding swine during the siege of Torquilstone when he follows Cedric through the battle, "[neglecting] his own safety while he [strives] to avert the blows which were aimed at his master" (266). Cedric is too preoccupied with finding Rowena to pay attention to the danger he is in, making Gurth's protection critical to his survival. Moreover, this selfless service comes after the tournament, where Gurth is seized by Cedric's men and declared a worthless fugitive. Furious over Cedric's abandonment of Ivanhoe and his attack against Fangs, Gurth renounces him as master and declares that he will never serve him again. Shortly after this Gurth escapes while baggage is being rearranged to make room for the Jews, but fear of outlaws prevents anyone from staying in the area to look for him. This fear proves well founded when they are captured by the Normans masquerading as outlaws, after which Gurth does not hesitate to run to their rescue. Wamba points out that he just defected from Cedric's service, to which Gurth simply replies that "that...was but while he was fortunate" (163). Gurth sees nothing wrong with running away from Cedric so long as he feels he can do more good with Ivanhoe than with his father, but as soon as he realizes that his master needs him, he immediately leaps into action, no matter how badly he has recently been treated. In this unrelenting loyalty he lives up to the legacy inherent in his father's name Beowulf. That Scott would choose to align the swineherd in the story with the great hero of the Old English epic poem says volumes about the nature of heroism as presented in the novel. Cedric is obsessed with the honor of his people, Athelstane is descended from royalty, Ivanhoe defends English chivalry against Norman detractors, but it is the humble swineherd with no connection to noble blood whatsoever who is

named the son of Beowulf. His disregard for his personal safety while doing his best to look out for the interests of Cedric and Ivanhoe say more about his character than any amount of royal connections ever could.

When one considers the numerous troubling undertones present in the noble Saxons in the novel, it is interesting that the uneducated swineherd who serves his master faithfully should be presented in such a positive light. Though Gurth also has his shortcomings, particularly his belligerence towards Isaac when sent by Ivanhoe to settle the debt between them, his faithful service to both Cedric and Ivanhoe throughout the novel overshadows his flaws. On his way back from this errand, he falls into the hands of Locksley and his outlaws, who quickly take the purse containing the gold Rebecca had given him for Ivanhoe. While they are distracted by the money, Gurth sees an opportunity to escape but instead attacks Locksley, determined to not "leave his master's property behind" (104). Both as a squire and as a swineherd Gurth proves to be a capable servant and this is reflected in the positive portrayal of his character. A person's ability to do their job competently is apparently more important than their bloodlines, an important message for the Jacobite movement. Those loyal to the Stewart line were so busy fighting William and his successors that they never realized that the Hanoverians were doing their job admirably, even if they weren't Scottish. They may have taken this into account if they had been more aware of the forces in play in *Ivanhoe*, as well as in their own world.

Conclusion

Ivanhoe is, on the surface, an enjoyable book about the pageantry of the Middle Ages following the Norman Conquest. It is a fun adventure story with plenty of action and just the right pinch of romance. Within that drama, however, issues emerge with deep implications for

the novel and the time in which it was written. The Saxon characters of the novel have the same double purpose, at first read appearing to be noble and loveable, if a bit mistaken at times. A closer examination reveals that there is more at work besides national pride, which proves to be so destructive, though it may be at first presented in such a positive light. Cedric and Athelstane dream of recapturing the glory of the days before the Norman Conquest, but everything they do to show their rejection of the conquerors only makes them look more foolish. Ivanhoe is shunned by them for accepting the Normans and their new way of life, but what he loses by their disapproval is nothing compared to what he gains through his new, more powerful friends.

The Jacobites of the eighteenth and nineteenth century could have learned much from *Ivanhoe*. They too, were rebelling against a foreign power that had claimed dominion over their country, just as ineffectually as Cedric and Athelstane. Their two serious attempts to regain their independence, the uprisings of 1715 and 1745, ended in complete disasters. In both cases they actually made their situation worse, bringing harsh reprisals from the English for their rebellion. Even after they were forced to accept that they could not defeat the English they continued to make trouble in both countries, leaving them vulnerable to attack from the French. Scott, like Ivanhoe, fought to protect his heritage, but he did so in a manner that did not offend the current political powers. By going through the proper channels to show his patriotism, he earned a name as an antiquarian while at the same time advancing his career. Both he and his hero prospered under the new monarchy while those around them wasted effort on a futile resistance. They learned that the path to success did not lie in clinging to an old way of life, but in adapting to a new world order.

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