

different character. Scott, like Byron, is one of the few English authors who was speedily and widely popular throughout Europe. Abbotsford became a centre for pilgrims from many lands, apart from being the resort of numerous visitors drawn thither by closer and more personal ties. Scott amidst all his work, literary and legal (for he held a permanent position as clerk of Session), found time to play the hospitable host, to attend to his plantations and the other affairs of his estate, to indulge in country sports, to mingle freely in society when in Edinburgh, where he spent a portion of each year, and to take a prominent part as a citizen in many matters of public interest. No man worked harder or accomplished more, and no man in his leisure hours threw himself with more hearty zest into his amusements.

A visitor to Abbotsford in 1823 thus records his impressions: "I had seen Sir Walter Scott, but never met him in society before this visit. He received me with all his well-known cordiality and simplicity of manner. . . . I have since been present at his first reception of many visitors, and upon such occasions, as indeed upon every other, I never saw a man who, in his intercourse with all persons, was so perfect a master of courtesy. His manners were so plain and natural, and his kindness took such immediate possession of the feelings, that this excellence in him might for a while pass unobserved. . . . His air and aspect, at the moment of a first introduction, were placid, modest, and for his time of life, venerable. Occasionally, when he stood a little on ceremony, he threw into his address a deferential tone, which had in it something of old-fashioned politeness, and became him extremely well. A point of hospitality in which Sir Walter Scott never failed, whatever might be the pretensions of the guests, was to do the honours of conversation. When a stranger arrived, he seemed to consider it as much a duty to offer him the resources of his mind as those of his table; taking care, however, by his choice of subjects, to give the visitor an opportunity of making his own stores, if he had them, available. . . . It would be extremely difficult to give a just idea of his general conversation to any one who had not known him. Considering his great personal and literary popularity, and the wide circle in which he had lived, it is perhaps remarkable that so few of his sayings, real or imputed, are in circulation. But he did not affect sayings; the points and sententious turns, which are so easily caught up and transmitted, were not natural to him; though he occasionally expressed a thought very prettily and neatly. . . . But the great charm of his 'table-talk' was in the sweetness and abandon with