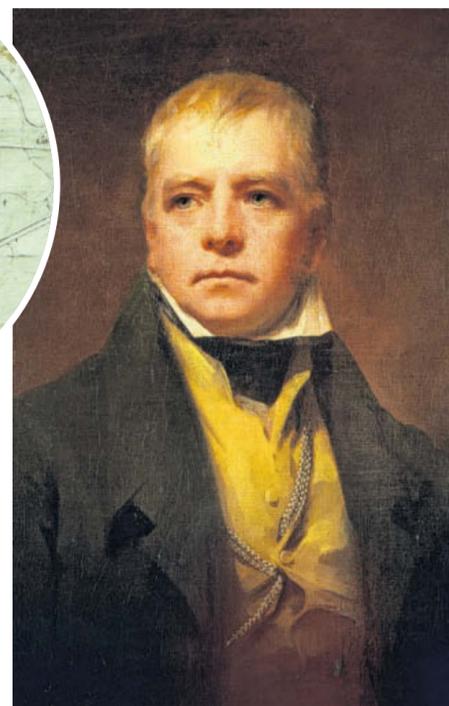




A woodland walk at Abbotsford, left; above, the map of the estate owned by Scott, right



You're nicked – by text message

Tom Harper
HOME AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

WANTED criminals have traditionally gone to great lengths to avoid the police.

Ronnie Biggs, one of the Great Train Robbers, fled to Brazil to escape the attentions of Scotland Yard, while OJ Simpson in the wake of his ex-wife's 1994 murder embarked on a car chase with police in Los Angeles.

These days, however, some criminals buckle at the slightest pressure.

A surprising number are handing themselves in after a text message from their local force, according to Laurence Taylor, assistant chief constable of Sussex police.

Explaining how the force chases suspects with arrest warrants, he said: "There's a whole raft of activity we undertake with address checks. We text message the offender and ask them to give themselves up – and you'd be surprised how effective that is."

Taylor said Sussex police had 76 outstanding warrants on their books.

@tomjharper



Taking a walk into Scott's world

Julia Horton

AS ONE of the nation's most prolific authors it seems fitting that Sir Walter Scott's favourite pastime was planting trees on his Scottish estate.

Now, new research is shedding light on his visionary woodlands and how walking there helped him combat depression.

A tattered 19th-century map of Scott's Abbotsford property, already known to feature the novelist's handwritten notes, is thought to be the elusive key to the meticulous record he kept of his pioneering plantations.

The discovery in the

archives at Edinburgh University's library has allowed the Abbotsford Trust to match up the often personal names Scott gave to dozens of woods and much-loved walks in his estate logbook, *Sylvia Abbotsfordensis*.

It is being used to design a £250,000 footpath network for people to experience the land as Scott did in the 120-acre area of the original 1,400-acre grounds surrounding his world-famous Borders home, now run by the trust as a tourist attraction.

The map, kept in Edinburgh University's archive and owned by the Faculty of Advocates, was drawn up by prominent

19th-century land surveyor and artist, John Morrison.

Paul Barnaby, an Edinburgh University archivist, said: "At that point Scott was deeply interested in his trees so this makes sense to me. In John Morrison's reminiscences he mentions Scott asking his advice on tree planting. It's an exciting discovery in terms of our collection here and also the further opening up of Abbotsford."

Pippa Coles, the Abbotsford Trust gardens heritage development manager, said: "I came across the map when I was looking for something completely different. I suddenly realised that the notes on it

were in Scott's handwriting (something other experts had previously spotted) but I then made the link with *Sylvia Abbotsfordensis* too and realised this was the key we'd been looking for.

"The map is extremely tatty, and it is not rolled like other maps but folded, which means it was carried about.

"I think he kept it in the book which he started writing in 1819, when the map was drawn up. We had managed to piece together the odd one or two names before through guesswork but this map is absolute confirmation putting all the names to all the locations for the first time.

"Scott wrote openly about his depression and walking and working in the outdoors was his prescription for mental wellbeing. That's what we're trying to do now for people today with this [footpath] project."

The research was led by trust volunteer and local historian Derek Stewart, who has spent about 18 months cross-referencing numerous documents including the map and *Sylvia Abbotsfordensis*, in which Scott recorded his planting plans, problems and walks over 20 years.

Stewart said: "With the map we can get a much better picture of what each site looked

like then because we now know which place each name referred to. For example Anne's Wood, which Scott named after one of his daughters, is the place known locally as Rispy Law.

"Scott also pioneered planting techniques which are still used today, planting larch and then, five years later, oak, at a site he called Experiment Knoll, a combination which produces better quality wood."

Cornerstone, a charity helping people with physical and mental health problems, already runs group walks at Abbotsford which have brought "huge mental health benefits". A spokeswoman

said: "Any improvements within such surroundings would be welcomed to open up the space to others for their enjoyment... It's the highlight of the week for some people we support."

The Forestry Commission Scotland has given the trust about £1,000 to draw up a detailed funding application to the body's Woods In and Around Towns scheme boosting people's quality of life by improving access to green spaces.

Plans include new signs outlining Scott's ambitions for the estate, in which he built his elaborate baronial-style family home near Tweedbank.

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