“Jane Porter in the Margins: Paratext in the Romantic National Novel” argues that Romantic novelist Jane Porter uses paratext in her national novels to accomplish bold political and personal goals. I examine her most famous novel *The Scottish Chiefs* (1810) as a case study of Romantic female authorship in which Porter asserts women's power to shape conceptions of national identity. Often studied as an imitator of Walter Scott, Porter published two historical novels before *Waverley* (1814) and claimed her innovative precedence in multiple prefaces and footnotes to her novels. While Porter presented a modest feminine authorial persona to her public, my archival and bibliographical study reveals a politically engaged woman writer seeking to serve her nation from the margins. Each of the three chapters traces a paratextual element across multiple editions (1. Title page; 2. Footnotes and prefaces; and 3. Illustrations and bindings) to reveal how it facilitates Porter's fervent support of British unity and women's patriotic service. This dissertation studies the paratext of *The Scottish Chiefs* to help restore Porter's reputation as a political writer and reveal her contributions to the nineteenth-century novel and women's authorship. Beyond Porter, I seek wider acknowledgement of paratext's crucial role beside the text within a book, particularly how it shapes the legacy of both book and author.