John Bunyan was a major figure in seventeenth-century Puritan literature, and one deeply embroiled in the religious upheavals of his times. This Companion considers all his major texts, including The Pilgrim’s Progress and his autobiography Grace Abounding. The essays, by leading Bunyan scholars, place these and his other works in the context of seventeenth-century history and literature. They discuss such key issues as the publication of dissenting works, the history of the book, gender, the relationship between literature and religion, between literature and early-modern radicalism, and the reception of seventeenth-century texts. Other chapters assess Bunyan’s importance for the development of allegory, life-writing, the early novel and children’s literature. This Companion provides a comprehensive and accessible introduction to an author with an assured and central place in English literature.

A complete list of books in the series is at the back of this book
THE CAMBRIDGE
COMPANION TO
BUNYAN

EDITED BY
ANNE DUNAN-PAGE
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CONTRIBUTORS

VERA J. CAMDEN is Professor of English at Kent State University, Training and Supervising Analyst at the Cleveland Psychoanalytic Center and Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at Case Western Reserve University. She is co-editor of American Imago. Her most recent publications include “The Language of Tenderness and Passion” or, Sex in Paradise, New Literary History (Autumn 2007), Trauma and Transformation: The Political Progress of John Bunyan (ed.) (2008) and “The Past is a Foreign Country”: The Uses of Literature in the Psychoanalytic Process’, in Peter Rudnytsky and Rita Charon (eds.), Psychoanalysis and Narrative Medicine (2008).

MICHAEL DAVIES is Senior Lecturer in English at the University of Liverpool. He has research interests in English literature of the Renaissance and Restoration periods, focusing especially on the literary and religious cultures of seventeenth-century England. He has published essays on a range of writers, from William Shakespeare to William Cowper, and is the author of Graceful Reading: Theology and Narrative in the Works of John Bunyan (2002).

ANNE DUNAN-PAGE is Professor of early-modern British studies at the Université de Provence, Aix-Marseille I (France). She works on various aspects of religious dissent, focusing on seventeenth-century separatists and the Huguenots. She is the author of Grace Overwhelming: John Bunyan, ‘The Pilgrim’s Progress’ and the Extremes of the Baptist Mind (2006), and has edited The Religious Culture of the Huguenots, 1660–1750 (2006), Les Huguenots dans les Îles Britanniques de la Renaissance aux Lumières (with Marie-Christine Munoz, 2008) and Roger L’Estrange and the Making of Restoration Culture (with Beth Lynch, 2008).

ISABEL HOFMEYR is Professor of African literature at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa. She has published widely on South African and African literary and cultural history. Her first monograph, We Spend our Years as a Tale that is Told: Oral Historical Narrative in a South African Chiefdom (1994), was shortlisted for the Hersovits Prize. Her monograph, The


EMMA MASON is Senior Lecturer in the Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies at Warwick University and is a specialist in nineteenth-century poetry and religion. She is the author of Women Poets of the Nineteenth Century (2006), Nineteenth-Century Religion and Literature (with Mark Knight, 2006) and The Cambridge Introduction to Wordsworth (2009); and co-editor of The Blackwell Companion to the Bible in English Literature (2009) and The Oxford Handbook to the Reception History of the Bible (2010).

SHANNON MURRAY teaches early-modern and children’s literature at the University of Prince Edward Island, Canada. She is the founder and editor of The Recorder: A Publication of the International John Bunyan Society (1993–9). She writes on adaptations of The Pilgrim’s Progress for children, on the Polish children’s writer Janusz Korczak and on learning communities and teaching for creativity in higher education. She is a Canadian 3M National Teaching Fellow for excellence and leadership in university teaching and a published children’s writer.

W. R. OWENS is Professor of English literature at The Open University. His research interests are in seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century English literature, textual scholarship and book history. He is Director of the AHRC-funded project ‘The Reading Experience Database’ (www.open.ac.uk/Arts/RED). A past President of the International John Bunyan Society, he has published extensively on Bunyan, and has edited two volumes of Miscellaneous Works (1994), and editions of Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners and The Pilgrim’s Progress (1987, 2003 respectively). Together with P. N. Furbank he has written four books and many articles on Daniel Defoe, and they are the General Editors of The Works of Daniel Defoe (44 volumes, in progress, 2000–).
NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS


STUART SIM is Professor of critical theory in the English Department, University of Sunderland. He is the author of numerous publications on the fiction of the long eighteenth century and contemporary critical theory. A joint-editor and founder-member of the journal Bunyan Studies, he was elected a Fellow of the English Association in 2002. Recent works include The Eighteenth-Century Novel and Contemporary Social Issues (2008), and he has edited, with W. R. Owens, Reception, Appropriation, Recollection: Bunyan’s ‘Pilgrim’s Progress’ (2007).


DAVID WALKER is Principal Lecturer and Head of English and creative writing at Northumbria University. Co-author (with Stuart Sim) of Bunyan and Authority: The Rhetoric of Dissent and the Legitimation Crisis in Seventeenth-Century England (2000), he has published articles on Bunyan’s non-fiction in Prose Studies and Bunyan Studies. He is reviews editor for Bunyan Studies and currently writing a book on memories of the sixteenth-century Reformation in mid to later seventeenth-century literature.
Early-modern texts cited in this Companion can be consulted via Early English Books Online (EEBO). Unless stated otherwise, the place of publication is London. Spelling and punctuation have not been modernised. Dates are given in Old Style with the year beginning on 1 January.

Page references to Bunyan’s works appear in parentheses within the text. The titles of his non-fiction works have been shortened. The dating of all the works follows Richard L. Greaves’s chronology in Glimpses of Glory: John Bunyan and English Dissent (Stanford University Press, 2002), pp. 637–41.
ABBREVIATIONS

Bunyan’s works


Bunyan, Works  The Works of that Eminent Servant of Christ, Mr John Bunyan, ed. Charles Doe (1692)


LDB  The Life and Death of Mr Badman, ed. Roger Sharrock and James F. Forrest (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988)


Critical works

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS


Reference works


Journals

*BQ* Baptist Quarterly

*BS* Bunyan Studies: John Bunyan and his Times

*ELH* English Literary History

*ELR* English Literary Renaissance

*PMLA* Publications of the Modern Language Association of America

*RES* Review of English Studies

*SEL* Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900

*SP* Studies in Philology
CHRONOLOGY

1628  Born in Elstow, near Bedford (Bedfordshire), the son of Thomas Bunyan (a brazier) and his second wife Margaret Bentley. Assassination of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. Petition of Right.

1629  Dissolution of Parliament and beginning of Charles I’s personal rule (to 1640).

1633  George Herbert’s *The Temple* and John Donne’s *Poems*. William Laud appointed Archbishop of Canterbury.

1640  Summoning of the Long Parliament


1643  The Westminster Assembly of Divines begins meeting (to 1649).

1644  John Milton’s *Areopagitica*. Death of Bunyan’s mother and sister. His father marries his third wife within a few months. Bunyan joins the Parliamentary forces in Newport Pagnell (Buckinghamshire), in the garrison of Sir Samuel Luke (company of Richard Cokayne).


1646  End of the First Civil War. Episcopacy abolished. Bunyan volunteers for service in Ireland (but does not serve).

1647  The Army Debates at Putney concerning democracy and the constitution. Bunyan is demobilised and he returns to his father’s house in Elstow.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1648</td>
<td>Second Civil War (to 1649). Colonel Pride’s purge of the Long Parliament to secure a majority for bringing the King to trial, creating the ‘Rump’ Parliament.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1649</td>
<td>Trial and execution of Charles I. Monarchy and the House of Lords abolished. Commonwealth proclaimed. Bunyan marries his first wife, whose name is not recorded (four children born of the union). She brings as a dowry Arthur Dent’s <em>The Plaine Mans Path-way to Heaven</em> (1601) and Lewis Bayly’s <em>The Practise of Pietie</em> (1612?).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1650</td>
<td>Birth of Bunyan’s first child Mary, who is blind. Spiritual awakening after an encounter with ‘three or four poor women’. Starts meeting with the separatist congregation of John Gifford in Bedford.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1651</td>
<td>Thomas Hobbes’s <em>Leviathan</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1652</td>
<td>First Anglo-Dutch War (to 1654).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1653</td>
<td>Cromwell becomes Lord Protector. Margaret Cavendish’s <em>Poems, and Fancies</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1655</td>
<td>Moves from Elstow to Bedford. Admitted a full member of the Bedford congregation, possibly after accepting baptism by total immersion. Begins to preach. Death of John Gifford, succeeded by John Burton.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1656</td>
<td>Margaret Cavendish’s <em>Natures Pictures</em>. Bunyan’s first printed work, <em>Some Gospel-truths Opened</em>, against the Quakers.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 1659 | Collapse of Richard Cromwell’s Protectorate and restoration of the Rump Parliament. Bunyan marries his second wife, Elizabeth (three children born of the union). Supposed at this date to have written a tract in support of a woman accusing Quakers of witchcraft. His right to preach is challenged by Thomas Smith, keeper of Cambridge University Library and Professor of Arabic. *The*
Doctrine of the Law and Grace Unfolded, Bunyan’s exposition of his doctrinal principles.

1660 Collapse of the Commonwealth and restoration of the full Long Parliament which votes to restore monarchy and for its own dissolution. Declaration of Breda. Charles II returns to England. Reopening of the theatres with actresses on stage. Founding members of the Royal Society begin meeting. Samuel Pepys begins his Diary (which he continues until 1669). Death of the Bedford congregation’s minister, John Burton. William Wheeler is offered the pastorate, but declines. Bunyan arrested for illegal preaching in the hamlet of Lower Samsell (Bedfordshire). His wife Elizabeth gives premature birth to an infant who dies shortly afterwards.


1662 Quaker Act. Ejection of Puritan ministers who refuse to conform as required by the Act of Uniformity re-establishing the episcopal Church of England (24 August). Licensing Act. Charles II marries Catherine of Braganza. I Will Pray with the Spirit (?)


1664 First Conventicle Act. Lucy Hutchinson begins writing the Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson (first published 1806).

1666  Great Fire of London. Margaret Cavendish’s *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy. To which is added ... A New Blazing World. Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, Bunyan’s spiritual autobiography.


1668  John Dryden created Poet Laureate. Bunyan probably begins writing *The Pilgrim’s Progress* while still imprisoned.

1669  *The Holy City*.

1670  Second Conventicle Act. Treaty of Dover secretly concluded between Charles II and Louis XIV, committing Charles to return England to Roman Catholicism. Samuel Parker’s *A Discourse of Ecclesiastical Politie*. Twenty-eight members of the Bedford congregation are arrested at an illegal conventicle.

1671  John Milton’s *Paradise Regain’d* and *Samson Agonistes*.


1673  Declaration of Indulgence withdrawn. Anti-Catholic Test Act. Charles II’s brother and heir, James, Duke of York, refuses to take the sacrament at Easter and marries the Italian Catholic Mary of Modena, raising the prospect of a Roman Catholic ruling dynasty. *The Barren Fig-Tree*. Bunyan pursues his controversy with the Baptists with *Peaceable Principles And True*.

1674  Death of John Milton. Bunyan causes a scandal by riding on horseback with a young maid, Agnes Beaumont. Her *Narrative of the Persecution of Agnes Beaumont* will be published in 1760.
1675  Charles II cancels the licences formerly issued in accordance with the Declaration of Indulgence. Rebuilding of St Paul’s Cathedral by Christopher Wren begins (completed 1711). Bunyan goes into hiding for a few months, possibly finding refuge with London Congregationalists. *Instruction for the Ignorant*, a catechism, and *Light for Them that Sit in Darkness*.


1678  Popish Plot. Death of Andrew Marvell. First Part of *The Pilgrim’s Progress* published by Nathaniel Ponder. *Come, & Welcome, to Jesus Christ*, one of Bunyan’s most popular non-fiction works.


1680  Death of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, and publication of his *Poems. The Life and Death of Mr Badman*.

1681  Andrew Marvell’s *Miscellaneous Poems*. John Dryden’s *Absalom and Achitophel*. The opposition leader Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, imprisoned and later released when a London Grand Jury issues a verdict of *ignoramus*.


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<tr>
<td>1690</td>
<td>John Locke’s Essay Concerning Human Understanding.</td>
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CHRONOLOGY

Christ’s Love, A Discourse of the House of the Forest of Lebanon, Of Antichrist, and His Ruine).

1694  George Fox’s Journal.

1696  Richard Baxter’s Reliquiae Baxterianae published by Matthew Sylvester.

1698  Charles Doe publishes The Heavenly Foot-man, possibly composed by Bunyan in late 1667 or early 1668, its central metaphor anticipating The Pilgrim’s Progress.