The Romantic period saw the first generations of professional women writers flourish in Great Britain. Literary history is only now giving them the attention they deserve, for the quality of their writings and for their popularity in their own time. This collection of new essays by leading scholars explores the challenges and achievements of a fascinating set of women writers, including Jane Austen, Mary Wollstonecraft, Ann Radcliffe, Hannah More, Maria Edgeworth, and Mary Shelley, alongside many lesser-known female authors writing and publishing during this period. Chapters consider major literary genres, including poetry, fiction, drama, travel writing, histories, essays, and political writing, as well as topics such as globalization, colonialism, feminism, economics, families, sexualities, aging, and war. The volume shows how gender intersected with other aspects of identity and with cultural concerns that then shaped the work of authors, critics, and readers.


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Anne K. Mellor is Distinguished Research Professor of English at UCLA and the author of numerous books and articles on Romantic-era male and female writers, including Blake’s Human Form Divine (University of California Press, 1974), English Romantic Irony (Harvard University Press, 1980), Mary Shelley: Her Life, Her Fiction, Her Monsters (Methuen, 1988), Romanticism and Gender (Routledge, 1993), and Mothers of the Nation (Indiana University Press, 2000). She has edited many volumes, including Romanticism and Feminism (Indiana University Press, 1988), The Other Mary Shelley (Oxford University Press, 1993), British Literature, 1780–1830 (Harcourt Brace, 1996), Wollstonecraft’s Rights of Woman and Wrongs of Woman (Pearson Longman, 2007), and Lucy Aikin’s Epistles on Women (Broadview, 2010). She is currently working on the fiction of Jane Austen.

Fiona Price is Reader in English Literature at the University of Chichester and author of Revolutions in Taste 1773–1818: Women Writers and the Aesthetics of Romanticism (Ashgate, 2009). She has edited two historical novels: Jane Porter’s The Scottish Chiefs (1810; Broadview Press, 2007) and Sarah Green’s Private History of the Court of England (1808; Pickering & Chatto, 2011). She has written widely on women’s writing, historical fiction, and the aesthetics of political change. She is currently working on a book on nation, liberty, and the historical novel from Walpole to Scott and is co-editor, with Ben Dew, of Historical Writing in Britain, 1688–1830: Visions of History (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

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The Romantic period – often defined as beginning in 1780, 1789, or 1798 and ending in 1830, 1832, or 1837 – was a watershed moment for British women’s writing.¹

That statement now seems so self-evident and inarguable that it is difficult to believe that, just a few decades ago, it was neither. The Romantic period has long been characterized as a time of innovation and change in both literary form and content, as well as a momentous era of new political thought and social upheaval. But for most of the twentieth century, the term “Romantic” did not serve to plumb the depths of that innovation and change. Instead, it focused on a small number of writers said to be the greatest ones. The Romantic period separated out the writings of what came to be called the Big Six male poets – William Blake, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth, Percy Bysshe Shelley, John Keats, and Lord Byron – placing them at the center of a new tradition.

Despite our pigeonholing them in this way, the Big Six penned more than poetry, and most did not imagine themselves as in league with each other. Writers we now call part of the Romantic period in Great Britain certainly did not label themselvesRomantics. That labeling came into wide use later, as critics looked back on this period of literary history. Other so-called minor male writers also came to be considered Romantic, among them Thomas De Quincey, William Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt, and Robert Southey. But prior to the 1980s, as Stephen C. Behrendt’s chapter in this book carefully describes, the study of British Romanticism did not encompass many – or sometimes any – women writers. This is strange, because, as Behrendt notes, between 1770 and 1835, there were at least 500 women publishing poetry in Great Britain. This number does not include those who circulated their poems, perhaps deliberately and widely, in manuscript, rather than seeking print – a then common practice that scholars have come to call manuscript circulation or scribal publication. The figure of 500 also leaves out women
who did not seek a wider audience for their verse and those who wrote in genres other than poetry.

The shift from our slighting of Romantic women writers’ contributions to including them in our conversations can be measured in many ways. It is evident in the changing tables of contents of literature textbooks. These anthologies provide collective assessments of the writings that make up our literary canon. Prior to the 1980s and even into the 1990s, female authors were poorly represented. Although the first edition of *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women* was published in 1985, it was skewed toward representing women who published after 1830. Today that anthology has grown to two volumes, with approximately twenty Romantic-era women writers featured among its 219 authors. Some may argue that this is still not sufficient as a percentage of the total contents, but it is at least a move toward greater representation. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* went from virtual absence to greater inclusion for women writers in its updated contents. (Authors who have been newly included – and dropped – in the *Norton Anthology* can be tracked on the publisher’s website.) Women’s writings are now much better represented in the pages of that anthology. By design, these oft-used textbooks feature but a fraction of known authors of any given period. We are still in the process of discovering and documenting the full range of women writers and their published and unpublished texts in the Romantic era.

Even in the case of the most familiar Romantic female authors, reputations have changed profoundly. Jane Austen was among the few read widely from the late nineteenth century forward, but she was not imagined as Romantic until the late 1970s. Instead, she was grouped with eighteenth-century novelists, a classification said to be more in keeping with her Augustan (or neo-classical) literary sensibilities. Feminist philosopher and novelist Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–97) was absent from classrooms and textbooks until second-wave feminist literary critics successfully brought her back into our conversations in the 1970s. Formerly, when Wollstonecraft’s daughter, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (1797–1851), was mentioned, it was as the wife of Percy Bysshe Shelley and as the author of one novel, *Frankenstein* (1818). She was rarely considered, as she is today, as a prolific and notable novelist, short story writer, biographer, and travel writer. Similarly, Dorothy Wordsworth (1771–1855) was not taken seriously as a writer in her own right. She was condescended to as her famous brother’s helpmate, muse, or inspiration, rather than as the original creative force we now know her to be from her journals.

Austen, Wollstonecraft, Shelley, and Wordsworth were, and remain, the most recognized female names in British Romanticism, but hundreds
of others were active. Cataloguing them and assessing their contributions in aggregate is a project that scholars are now vigorously engaged in, as Anthony Mandal’s chapter on fiction shows. Still, accurately counting these writers remains a difficult task. Among other things, it presents us with a problem of categorization. What is a “Romantic” woman writer? Do we consider a woman writer to belong to the Romantic period if she died in the early 1790s, or if she didn’t start publishing until the late 1830s? Do her birth and death dates matter most, or is it the dates of her published works, or might it be some other qualities of her career or writings that lead us to describe her as Romantic? Placing women writers in the traditional literary categories of eighteenth-century, Romantic, nineteenth-century, or Victorian literature is definitely not an exact science. Lives and careers are rarely so neat. Most authors from the period straddle more than one chronological category (e.g. eighteenth century and Romantic, or Romantic and Victorian), but we tend to label them as belonging to just one group, making it difficult to envision and attend to the entirety of their careers.

Compounding the problem of hazy chronology is the question of the sex of unmarked or ambiguously marked authors. A portion of authors in this period, male and female, published anonymously or used pseudonyms. Even in the case of those who identified their anonymous authorship by gender, we may never know with certainty whether their claims were truthful. A text said to have been written “by a lady” may or may not have been authored by a female. Jane Austen published her first work, *Sense and Sensibility* [1811] as “By a Lady” – an accurate claim. But *Confessions of an Old Maid* (1828), once believed to have been written by a woman, was later revealed as the work of a man, Edmund Frederick John Carrington (1804–74). Anonymous and pseudonymous mysteries aside, it is clear that this period saw the first generations of professional women writers to flourish in larger numbers. We often encounter Aphra Behn (c. 1640–89) being labeled as the first professional woman writer, the first to make her living by writing. But if this is an accurate claim – and stories of origins always deserve our skepticism! – then Behn made a living by authorship at a time when there were just a handful of literary women actively publishing. A century later, more women were trying than ever before to make a living by the pen. Some were financially successful, and some were not, as Jacqueline M. Labbe’s chapter on the economics of authorship shows. The number of women writers making the attempt had unquestionably swelled.

Once-celebrated Romantic female authors have made a forceful return to our textbooks, syllabi, classrooms, and scholarship, among them Joanna Baillie, Anna Letitia Barbauld, Frances Burney, Maria Edgeworth, Felicia Dorothea Hemans, Letitia Elizabeth Landon (popularly known as L. E. L.),
Preface

Hannah More, Ann Radcliffe, Mary Robinson, and Charlotte Smith. All of these, and many others who remain lesser known, are discussed in the chapters of this book. Behrendt and Mandal consider them as poets and fiction writers respectively. Catherine Burroughs looks at women as contributors to British drama, and Anne K. Mellor—in focusing on Wollstonecraft, More, Mary Hays, and Anna Letitia Barbauld—looks at women’s essays and political writings. Angela Wright unpacks female-authored Gothic texts, and Elizabeth A. Fay considers women travel writers, whose contributions remain less frequently examined. Crystal Lake explores the innovations in history writing and the vogue for antiquarian pursuits by women writers during the period, and Catherine Ingrassia focuses on women, particularly poets, who were actively writing about war during this tumultuous time. Caroline Franklin’s essay makes sense of the ways in which mid- to late eighteenth-century feminists (particularly in what is called the Bluestocking Circle) established political and social ideas and ideals that endured into the nineteenth century. Deirdre Coleman looks at how British women writers entered a literary marketplace shaped by global concerns, including imperialism and colonialism. Julie A. Carlson helps us to understand the ways that writers functioned within familial and literary networks and relations. Jacqueline M. Labbe’s chapter examines women writers’ financial circumstances, particularly the financial challenges they faced in producing profitable, publishable writing, using Charlotte Smith as a focal point. My chapter investigates the role that age and aging played in a woman writer’s life, career, and reception by readers and critics during this pivotal period in literary history. Fiona Price considers national identities and regional affiliations as they shaped female authors’ sense of themselves, their readers, and the circulation of their writings. Finally, Jillian Heydt-Stevenson looks at sexual expression and sexualities in a range of Romantic-era women’s texts.

The longstanding neglect of the fascinating, pioneering group of women writers of the Romantic period is now a thing of the past. This Cambridge Companion devoted to studying them is a testament to that fact. It is, at the same time, evidence that our merely recognizing their existence does not mean that our work is done. Some accomplished Romantic-era women writers already have extensive entries in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, the Cambridge Orlando Women’s Writing database, The Literary Encyclopedia online, or the less reliable, ever-changing Wikipedia. The project of adding more trustworthy, well-documented introductory information about this group of British women writers is a noble goal. Simply put, we need more introductions, as well as full-scale biographical studies. In the case of many of these women, there is as yet no book-length work devoted to them or their writings. Or, if there is one, it was often published half a
century or more ago and may have drawn on partial, outdated, or even incorrect information or assumptions. As the essays in this Companion show, continuing biographical neglect of this body of women writers does not arise from a lack of interesting subjects. Burroughs’s description of playwright Hannah Cowley, Fay’s discussion of traveler and travel writer Hester Stanhope, and Heydt-Stevenson’s assessment of lesbian diarist Anne Lister will no doubt leave many wondering not if, but when, further biographies, literary studies, and even biopic films may appear.

More Romantic-era women writers and writings seem poised for revivification. Nevertheless, in our era of “big data” and more precise large-scale claims to measure impact – made possible by online databases like British Fiction, 1800–1829 – some critics and readers may remain skeptical about whether women writers deserve greater notice. Old debates have prompted new questions. How ought we to gauge Romantic-era women writers’ noteworthy successes and high visibility in their own day? Does extensive publication point to greater significance, or might quantity here be just quantity, rather than quality or importance? (I certainly believe we will conclude that it means more than mere quantity.) In short, what makes Romantic women writers worthy of rereading and worthy of further study? The question may turn on how these women writers’ first critics and readers valued them. It may turn on whether critics and readers of today do so. We may choose to read these authors because of their literary importance, their historical importance, or their social importance – or some combination of these factors. Such debates will certainly continue and are helpful in propelling our scholarship forward.

Some have questioned whether we ought to continue to study women’s writings separately from men’s. I believe there is value in doing so. When we look at Romantic-era women’s writings in aggregate, we stand to gain new perspectives and notice different patterns of self-presentation and critical reception based on sex. These patterns shaped how women writers wrote and how all readers read. They created the conditions for what we came to call male or female – or, more properly, masculine or feminine – in literary terms. If we do not continue to study and read women writers as a group, both in comparison and contrast, we risk misconstruing the reach and implications of these gendered patterns in literary history, as well as how such patterns led the way to where we are now.

Whether today’s readers think so or not, most eighteenth- and nineteenth-century readers and writers believed that the author’s sex mattered. How and why it mattered – how gender shaped writing and reception – is worth knowing, particularly as it intertwined with other aspects of identity that are explored in this book, including class, race, nation, age, and
sexuality. Genres were seen as having gendered dimensions, which no doubt had an impact on authors, readers, critics, and publishers, whether they acceded to or defied such stereotyping. Certain kinds of diction and rhetoric were imagined as gendered. How did writers and readers respond to female authors who either followed or flouted what was expected of them in their writings, based on their sex? This Companion sets out to convince you that we stand to gain vital knowledge by looking at Romantic-era women writers en masse.

Regardless of where your opinion ultimately falls on these questions, the asking of them – and seeking better answers to them – is crucial to creating more nuanced literary histories in generations to come. Today’s students and scholars who seek to gain expertise in the Romantic era are rightly expected to read once-celebrated women writers’ once-famous texts, just as educated readers would have done when these texts were first published. Rereading Romantic-era women writers – and reading about them – helps us to interrogate what our literary values are and were. In the course of rereading these and other female-authored texts, two centuries hence, all of us take part in the project of building and rebuilding a significant body of knowledge.

Devoney Looser

NOTES

1 A quick word about the Romantic period may be needed. When “Romantic” is defined as beginning in 1789, it marks the beginning of the French Revolution. When 1798 is used, it is to reference the publication of the “Preface to Lyrical Ballads,” a groundbreaking piece of writing about changes in poetic form and content. When the Romantic period is said to end in 1832, it marks the passing of the first Reform Bill, and when 1837, Queen Victoria’s coming to the throne. The choice of 1780 or 1830 reflects our desire to delimit periods using beginnings of decades.


Editors incur many debts. My greatest thanks are to Linda Bree, for entrusting me with a subject that means so much to us both. I am grateful for her guidance throughout the editorial process, as well as for her vision, generosity, patience, and friendship. The contributors to this volume have been a pleasure to work with. I appreciate their insights and their willingness to tackle matters large and small, over a longer period of time than they or I anticipated. Anna Bond at Cambridge University Press has been unfailingly helpful, as has Arizona State University English PhD student and research assistant Emily Zarka.

There are many whose encouragement and support makes doing scholarly work that much more meaningful. Several deserve mention for assistance during the completion of this Companion. The members of the 2012 National Endowment for the Humanities Seminar on Jane Austen and her Contemporaries at the University of Missouri and its coordinator Caitlin Kelly continue to energize and sustain me. Calinda Shely, Stacy Kikendall, and the organizers of the British Women Writers Conference held in Albuquerque in 2013 are inspiring as emerging scholarly leaders, as is Heather Dundas at USC. Gillian Dow and Jennie Batchelor, co-organizers of the tenth-anniversary conference, Pride and Prejudices: Women's Writing of the Long Eighteenth Century, held at Chawton House Library in July 2013, are models of brilliance, professionalism, rigor, and aplomb. My profound gratitude also goes to Paula Backscheider, Janine Barchas, Ron Broglio, Tina Brownley, Antoinette Burton, the CoMo Derby Dames, Al Coppola, Jeff Cox, Frances Dickey, Leigh Dillard, Tom DiPiero, Alistair Duckworth, Elizabeth Eger, Margaret Ezell, Emily Friedman, Catherine Ingrassia, Steve Karian, Ruth Knezevich, Crystal Lake, Mark Lussier, Teresa Mangum, Bob Markley, Nick Mason, Michelle Masse, Anne Myers, Chris Nagle, Megan Peiser, Claude Rawson, Alexander Regier, Angela Rehbein, Joe Roach, Donelle Ruwe, Peter Sabor, Clifford Siskin, Rajani Sudan, Ed White, and
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Jeff Williams for their support and encouragement above and beyond the call of collegial duty. I'm grateful to Lowell Justice for being in training with me and to Carl Justice for his wish that, if I must mention him, I ought to make a joke about his behaving just well enough to allow for the book’s completion. Finally, and as ever, George L. Justice helps me to redefine both the Romantic and the romantic as they evolve in our lives and work.
CHRONOLOGY

1741      Foundling Hospital established in London
          Hester Lynch Piozzi and Sarah Trimmer born
1742      Anna Seward born
1743      Anna Letitia Barbauld and Hannah Cowley born
1745      Hannah More born
1749      Charlotte Smith born
1750      Sophia Lee born
1752      Frances Burney born
1753      Elizabeth Inchbald and Ann Yearsley born
1754      French and Indian War begins
1755      Anne MacVicar Grant born
 c. 1756   Elizabeth Hamilton born
1757      William Blake, Ellis Cornelia Knight, Harriet Lee, and Mary
          Robinson born
1758      Jane West born
1759      Mary Hays, Helen Maria Williams, and Mary Wollstonecraft
          born
1760      George III becomes King of Great Britain
1762      Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile*
          Joanna Baillie born
1763      Seven Years War/French and Indian War ends with signing of
          treaty in Paris
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<td>Mary Lamb, Ann Radcliffe, and Regina Maria Roche born Horace Walpole, <em>The Castle of Otranto</em></td>
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<td>1766</td>
<td>Eliza Fenwick born</td>
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<tr>
<td>1768</td>
<td>Maria Edgeworth born</td>
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<tr>
<td>1769</td>
<td>Amelia Opie born</td>
</tr>
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<td>1770</td>
<td>William Wordsworth born</td>
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<tr>
<td>1771</td>
<td>Dorothy Wordsworth born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1772</td>
<td>Lord Mansfield’s ruling declares that there is no legal basis for slavery in England Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Mary Tighe born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1773</td>
<td>Anna Letitia Barbauld, <em>Poems</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1775</td>
<td>Start of American Revolutionary War or the American Rebellion Jane Austen born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 1778</td>
<td>Sydney Owenson, Lady Morgan, likely born, although later claiming a birthdate of 1785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1778</td>
<td>Britain declares war on France Mary Brunton born Frances Burney, <em>Evelina</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1779</td>
<td>Mary Robinson acting as Perdita catches eye of 17-year-old Prince of Wales Frances Trollope born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1781</td>
<td>Lucy Aikin born Anna Seward, <em>Monody on Major André</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1782</td>
<td>Susan Ferrier born</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chronology

Frances Burney, *Cecilia*
Hannah More, *Sacred Dramas*

1783 Treaty of Paris signed, ending the war and establishing the United States of America as its own country
Sophia Lee, *The Recess, or A Tale of Other Times* (1783–5)

1784 First manned hot air balloon flight made in England
Hannah More, *The Bas Bleu, or Conversation*
Anna Seward, *Louisa: A Poetical Novel in Four Epistles*
Charlotte Smith, *Elegiac Sonnets*

1785 Clara Reeve, *The Progress of Romance*
Ann Yearsley, *Poems, on Several Occasions* (with help and patronage of Hannah More)
Lady Caroline Lamb born

1786 Helen Maria Williams, *Poems*

1787 Mary Wollstonecraft, *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters*

c. 1787 Jane Austen begins her juvenile writings

1788 United States constitution is ratified and comes into effect
George III’s first signs of mental illness appear
George Gordon, Lord Byron born
Hannah More, *Slavery, a Poem*
Hester Lynch Piozzi, *Letters to and from the Late Samuel Johnson*
Charlotte Smith, *Emmeline*
Mary Wollstonecraft, *Mary: A Fiction*
Ann Yearsley, *A Poem on the Inhumanity of the Slave Trade*

1789 Storming of the Bastille (July 14); mob forces Louis XVI out of Versailles and to Paris; Declaration of the Rights of Man
George Washington elected president of the United States of America
Elizabeth Inchbald retires from acting to concentrate on writing
William Blake, *Songs of Innocence*

1790 Ellis Cornelia Knight, *Dinarbus*
Catharine Macaulay, *Letters on Education*
Helen Maria Williams, *Letters Written in France*
Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men*
Chronology

1791
Anne Lister born
Elizabeth Ogilvie Benger, The Female Geniad
Elizabeth Inchbald, A Simple Story
Thomas Paine, The Rights of Man

1792
Overthrow of French monarchy
Proclamation against seditious writings, made by George III;
Paine charged with sedition
Percy Shelley born
Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman
Charlotte Smith, Desmond

1793
Execution of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette in France
France declares war on Britain
Felicia Hemans born
Anna Maria Porter, Artless Tales

1794
End of the Reign of Terror and execution of Robespierre in France
William Blake, Songs of Experience
Ann Radcliffe, The Mysteries of Udolpho

1795
Food riots in Britain
John Keats born
Maria Edgeworth, Letters for Literary Ladies
Eliza Fenwick, Secrey, or The Ruin on the Rock
Hannah More, Cheap Repository Tracts (1795–8)

1796
Frances Burney, Camilla
Elizabeth Hamilton, Translations of the Letters of a Hindoo Rajah
Mary Hays, Memoirs of Emma Courtney
Mary Robinson, Hubert de Severac
Regina Maria Roche, Children of the Abbey
Charlotte Smith, Marchmont
Jane West, A Gossip’s Story, and A Legendary Tale
Napoleon begins his campaign in Italy; French forces attempt to invade Ireland
Mary Lamb stabs her mother to death in a fit of insanity

1797
Coleridge walks 40 miles to meet the Barbaulds
Mary Wollstonecraft dies in childbirth; Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (later Mary Shelley) born
Ann Radcliffe, The Italian

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CHRONOLOGY

Harriet Lee, *The Canterbury Tales* (later with Sophia Lee, 1797–9)

1798

Samuel Coleridge and William Wordsworth, *Lyrical Ballads*
Joanna Baillie, *Plays on the Passions*
Mary Hays, *Appeal to the Men of Great Britain in behalf of Women*
Mary Wollstonecraft, *Maria, or The Wrongs of Woman*, published posthumously
Rev. Richard Polwhele, *The Unsex’d Females*
Irish Rebellion; French army lands in Ireland

1800

Maria Edgeworth, *Castle Rackrent*
Elizabeth Hamilton, *Memoirs of Modern Philosophers*
Mary Robinson, *Lyrical Tales*
Wordsworth and Coleridge, expanded second edition of *Lyrical Ballads*, with Preface
Mary Robinson dies
Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland

1801

Maria Edgeworth, *Belinda*

1802

Letitia Elizabeth Landon (L. E. L.) born
Mary Hays, *Female Biography*
Amelia Opie, *Poems*
Hester Piozzi, *Retrospection*

1803

Louisiana Purchase doubles the territory of the United States
Jane Porter, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*

1804

Napoleon crowns himself Emperor of the French
Amelia Opie, *Adeline Mowbray*

1806

Sydney Owenson (Lady Morgan), *The Wild Irish Girl*
Elizabeth Barrett Browning born
Charlotte Smith and Ann Yearsley die

1807

Anne MacVicar Grant, *Letters from the Mountains*
Charles and Mary Lamb, *Tales from Shakespear*, published under Charles’s name
Charlotte Smith, *Beachy Head, Fables, and other Poems* (published posthumously)
Abolition of the slave trade in Great Britain (but not of slavery itself, which continues in the British colonies)
Chronology

1808  Felicia Browne (later Hemans), Poems
       Hannah More, Coelebs in Search of a Wife

1809  Hannah Cowley and Anna Seward die

1810  Lucy Aikin, Epistles on Women
       Jane Porter, The Scottish Chiefs
       Mary Tighe and Sarah Trimmer die

1811  Regency begins, as George III is deemed mentally unfit to rule
       Jane Austen, Sense and Sensibility
       Anna Letitia Barbauld, The Female Speaker
       Mary Brunton, Self-Control
       Lord Byron, Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage (first two cantos)
       Mary Tighe, Psyche (after private printing, 1805)

1812  War of 1812; United States declares war on the British
       Charles Dickens born

1813  Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice

1814  Napoleon abdicates and is exiled
       Jane Austen, Mansfield Park
       Frances Burney (Madame D’Arblay), The Wanderer
       Sir Walter Scott, Waverley
       Maria Edgeworth, Patronage

1815  Battle of Waterloo, ending Napoleonic wars
       Louis XVII installed as King of France
       Napoleon escapes from exile, briefly returns to power, and is
       exiled again

1816  Jane Austen, Emma
       Lady Caroline Lamb, Glenarvon
       Charlotte Brontë born
       Elizabeth Hamilton dies

1817  Jane Austen dies
       Maria Edgeworth, Harrington
       Felicia Hemans, Modern Greece: A Poem (anonymously)

1818  Mary Shelley, Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus (pub-
       lished anonymously)
       Jane Austen, Northanger Abbey and Persuasion (posthumous
       publication)
Chronology

Susan Ferrier, *Marriage*
Mary Brunton dies

1819  Peterloo Massacre; a large public demonstration in Manchester seeking reform in parliamentary representation results in citizens being attacked by troops
Queen Victoria born
Lord Byron, *Don Juan* (1819–24)
Felicia Hemans, *Tales and Historic Scenes in Verse*

1820  Death of George III; accession of Regent as King George IV

1821  Letitia Elizabeth Landon, *The Fate of Adelaide*
Napoleon, Elizabeth Inchbald, John Keats, and Hester Piozzi die

1822  Percy Shelley dies

1823  Second edition of *Frankenstein*, published with author’s name,
Mary Shelley
Ann Radcliffe dies

1824  Lord Byron, Sophia Lee, and Jane Taylor die

1825  Anna Letitia Barbauld dies

1826  Mary Shelley, *The Last Man*
First photograph taken (c. 1826–7)

1827  Helen Maria Williams dies

1828  Repeal of Test and Corporation Acts; Dissenters now able to hold government posts
Felicia Hemans, *Records of Woman with Other Poems*
Lady Caroline Lamb dies

1829  Catholic Emancipation Act ends ban on suffrage and allows the ownership of property and the holding of public office

1830  Death of George IV; his brother, King William IV, enthroned
Manchester and Liverpool Railway opened
Christina Rossetti born

1832  First Reform Act passed; extends voting rights to some previously disenfranchised men
Frances Burney (Madame D’Arblay), *Memoirs of Doctor Burney*
Frances Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans*

1833  Slavery Abolition Act outlaws slavery in the British Empire
**Chronology**

Factory Act limits children under 12 to 48-hour work week and stipulates that young children must be permitted to leave work for two hours a day to attend school

Hannah More dies

1834

Poor Law Amendment Act establishes system of workhouses

Maria Edgeworth, *Helen*

1835

Felicia Hemans dies

Dorothy Wordsworth contracts a form of dementia, adding to her *Journal* only sporadically hereafter

1837

King William IV dies; reign of his niece, Queen Victoria, begins (d. 1901)

Civil List Act establishes pensions for needy authors; Sydney Owenson, Lady Morgan becomes the first woman writer to receive an annual pension of £300

Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*

Ellis Cornelia Knight dies

1838

Anne MacVicar Grant and Letitia Elizabeth Landon (L. E. L.) die

1840

Anne Lister and Eliza Fenwick die

Queen Victoria marries her first cousin, Prince Albert

1843

Mary Hays dies

1845

Regina Maria Roche dies

1846

Commercial telegraph service established

1847

Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*; Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*

Mary Lamb dies

1848

Maria Edgeworth, *Orlandino*

1849

Maria Edgeworth dies

1850

William Wordsworth dies

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Sonnets from the Portuguese*

1851

Joanna Baillie, *Dramatic and Poetical Works of Joanna Baillie*

Joanna Baillie, Harriet Lee, and Mary Shelley die

1852

Jane West dies

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Chronology

1853      Amelia Opie dies
1854      Susan Ferrier dies
1855      Dorothy Wordsworth dies
1859      Sydney Owenson, Lady Morgan dies
1863      Frances Trollope dies
1864      Lucy Aikin dies