John Ruskin (1819–1900), one of the leading literary, aesthetic, and intellectual figures of the middle and late Victorian period, and a significant influence on writers from Tolstoy to Proust, has established his claim as a major writer of English prose. This collection of essays brings together leading experts from a wide range of disciplines to analyse his ideas in the context of his life and work. Topics include Ruskin’s Europe, architecture, technology, autobiography, art, gender, and his rich influence even in the contemporary world. This is the first multi-authored expert collection to assess the totality of Ruskin’s achievement and to open up the deep coherence of a troubled but dazzling mind. A chronology and guide to further reading contribute to the usefulness of the volume for students and scholars.

Francis O’Gorman is a professor in the School of English at the University of Leeds and the author of Worrying: A Literary and Cultural History (2015). His other recent publications include editions of Elizabeth Gaskell’s Sylvia’s Lovers (2014), Anthony Trollope’s Framley Parsonage (co-edited with Katherine Mullin, 2014), and Ruskin’s Praeterita (2012), as well as The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Culture (2010).

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

EDITED BY
FRANCIS O’GORMAN
For Stephen Wildman

Director and Curator Ruskin Library and Research Centre

University of Lancaster UK

With gratitude
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Ruskin’s writing exists in a variety of different forms: in print, in digital surrogates, and in a substantial body of important material that remains in MS form. Material cited by Cynthia Gamble from the Ruskin Library, Lancaster University (marked as RF for Ruskin Foundation), is quoted with permission. The Ruskin Foundation, which has care of these materials, has sought to establish the copyright for Ruskin’s unpublished literary manuscripts but has been unable to do so on the basis of all the information currently known to it. The Foundation, through the Library at Lancaster, would therefore welcome contact from any person or persons who can show they hold this copyright.

Francis O’Gorman
York
NOTE ON THE PRINCIPAL CONTENTS
OF THE LIBRARY EDITION

In order to avoid cluttering parenthetical references with additional text, references to the Library Edition are to volume and page number only. Below is an outline list of the main works in each volume for ease of reference.

i. Early Prose Writings
ii. Poems
iii. Modern Painters I (1843)
iv. Modern Painters II (1846)
v. Modern Painters III (1856)
vi. Modern Painters IV (1856)
vii. Modern Painters V (1860)
viii. The Seven Lamps of Architecture (1849)
ix. The Stones of Venice I (1851)
x. The Stones of Venice II (1853)
xii. Lectures on Architecture and Painting (Edinburgh lectures) (1854)
xiii. The Harbours of England (1856), Turner Catalogues and Notes
xiv. Academy Notes (1855–9, 1875), Notes on Prout and Hunt (1879–80)
xv. The Elements of Drawing (1857), The Elements of Perspective (1859), The Laws of Fésole (1877–8)
xvi. A Joy for Ever (1857), The Two Paths (1859),
xvii. Unto This Last (1860), Munera Pulveris (1862–3), Time and Tide (1867)
xviii. Sesame and Lilies (1865), The Ethics of the Dust (1866), The Crown of Wild Olive (1866)
xix. The Cestus of Agleia (1865–6), The Queen of the Air (1869)
xx. Lectures on Art (1870), Aratra Pentelici (1870)
xxi. Material relating to the Ruskin Art Collection at Oxford

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NOTE ON THE PRINCIPAL CONTENTS OF THE LIBRARY EDITION

xxii. Lectures on Landscape (1871), Michael Angelo and Tintoret (1871), The Eagle’s Nest (1872), Ariadne Florentina (1872)
xxiii. Val d’Arno (1873), The Aesthetic and Mathematical Schools of Florence (1874), Mornings in Florence (1875–7), The Shepherd’s Tower (1881)
xxiv. Giotto and his Works in Padua (1853–60), The Cavalli Monuments at Verona (1872), Guide to the Academy at Venice (1877), St Mark’s Rest (1877–84)
xxv. Love’s Meinie (1873–81), Proserpina (1875–86)
xxvi. Deucalion (1875–83)
xxvii. Fors Clavigera (1871–3)
xxviii. Fors Clavigera (1874–6)
xxix. Fors Clavigera (1877–84)
xxx. Material relating to the Guild and Museum of St George
xxxi. Bibliotheca Pastorum: The Economist of Xenophon (1876), Rock Honeycomb (1877), The Elements of Prosody (1880), A Knight’s Faith (1885)
xxiit. Studies in Peasant Life: The Story of Ida (1883), Roadside Songs of Tuscany (1885), Christ’s Folk in the Apennine (1887), Ulric the Farm Servant (1886–8)
xxxiv. The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century (1884)
xxxv. Praeterita (1885–9), Dilecta (1886–1900)
xxxvi. Letters I
xxxvii. Letters II
xxxviii. Bibliography, Catalogue of Ruskin’s Drawings
xxxix. Index
8 February 1819  John Ruskin, an only child, born to John James and Margaret Ruskin in 54 Hunter Street, London (now demolished). Brought up an Evangelical Protestant; often visits Scotland to see relatives.

1823  Family move to Herne Hill, Camberwell: Ruskin always remembers the garden (house now demolished). Ruskin taught by his mother; at some point early in his childhood, he begins to read through the Bible from cover to cover with her; early signs of exceptional memory.

1824–6  Ruskin travels with his father around Great Britain collecting orders for sherry: he sees many historical monuments and buildings.

1830  First poem published (‘On Skiddaw and Derwent Water’). Tutored in Greek and mathematics but is otherwise educated by his parents.

1832  Presented as a birthday present with a copy of Samuel Rogers’ Italy with engravings after, among others, Turner.

1833  First long family tour of the continent. Ruskin sees the Alps. Meets Adèle Domecq, with whom he falls in love.

1834  Taught at the Evangelical Thomas Dale’s school. Publishes his first prose (‘Enquiries on the Causes of the Colour of the Water of the Rhine’).

1835  First sees Venice.

1836  Writes a defence of Turner, not printed till 1903.

1837  Enters Christ Church, Oxford, as a gentleman commoner. Publishes The Poetry of Architecture.
1838 Tries unsuccessfully for the Newdigate Prize for Poetry at Oxford; visits Scotland and the Lake District.

1839 Wins the Newdigate for ‘Salsette and Elephanta’ and meets Wordsworth. Purchases Turner’s Richmond, Surrey, the first of what will become Ruskin’s significant Turner collection.

1840 Embarks on long continental tour that lays the ground for Modern Painters I.

1841 Treated for depression at Leamington Spa; writes The King of the Golden River for Effie Gray. Is taught painting by J. D. Harding.

1842 Graduates from Oxford with an honorary double fourth; father takes a lease on the grand 163 Denmark Hill (now demolished).

1843 Writes and publishes Modern Painters I. Writes more poetry. Parents continue to hope that he will take holy orders and succeed as a poet.

1844 Visits Switzerland and France, particularly the Alps.

1845 Undertakes crucial visit to France, Switzerland, and Italy, this time without his parents: extends knowledge of pre-Renaissance Italian art.

1846 Publishes Modern Painters II. Repeats much of 1845 tour with his parents.

1847 Receives more treatment in Leamington Spa. Relationship with Effie Gray becoming closer.

1848 Marries Effie on 10 April. The official story will later be that the marriage was not consummated because of impotence but the truth remains unclear (and the impotence story was almost certainly a convenience to permit an annulment). From August, the family visits Normandy.

1849 Publishes The Seven Lamps of Architecture, his first significant book on buildings. Stays the winter in Venice, working on what will become The Stones of Venice.

1850 Publishes his Poems.

1851 Issues the first volume of the firmly Protestant The Stones, together with the expensive Examples of the
Architecture of Venice and Notes on the Construction of Sheepfolds, a Protestant account of the duties of clergy. Turner dies; in Ruskin’s view, the greatest landscape painter of all time.

1852
Effie and Ruskin move to 30 Herne Hill; another long period of study in Venice.

1853
Publishes Stones of Venice II and III and takes a holiday in Glenfinlas with Millais. Ruskin gives a sequence of lectures in Edinburgh on art published the following year. Marriage falling apart.

1854
Marriage annulled; travels throughout France, Switzerland, and Italy; begins teaching drawing at the Working Men’s College.

1856
Publishes Modern Painters III and IV and begins activity in support of the new Oxford Museum. In November, he meets Charles Eliot Norton, who will become an important if obtuse friend.

1857
Begins the exhausting labour of arranging the Turner Bequest (‘upwards of nineteen thousand pieces of paper’). Delivers The Political Economy of Art (later called A Joy for Ever).

1858
Inaugural address at the Cambridge School of Art. Finally ‘unconverted’ from Evangelicalism and enters a long and difficult period of theological thinking. Meets Rose La Touche (1848–75), an Evangelical Christian with whom he eventually falls in love. She will never be reconciled to Ruskin’s religious unorthodoxy.

1859
Publishes The Two Paths. Visits Yorkshire, and later Germany and Switzerland. Visits Winnington School (Cheshire), whose liberal programme of education attracts the post-Evangelical Ruskin.

1860
Ruskin completes Modern Painters and publishes the four essays of Unto This Last, which he will later regard as his most important work.

1861
Year dominated by depression; love for Rose deepens.

1862
In April, Ruskin and Rose are forbidden contact and do not meet again till 1866. Ruskin’s father is gravely ill. Publishes Munera Pulveris.
1863
Buys land in Chamonix, planning to leave England. Spends time at Winnington, gaining ideas about education, physical exercise, and religion.

1864
Ruskin’s father dies, leaving his son a fortune. Gives the lectures that become *Sesame and Lilies*, with Rose on his mind in ‘Of Queens’ Gardens’. Joan Severn (Joanie) comes to Denmark Hill to care for Ruskin’s mother and will subsequently care for Ruskin himself at Brantwood until his death.

1865
The Governor Eyre controversy. *The Ethics of the Dust*, arising from his teaching at Winnington, is published (with ‘1866’ on the title page).

1866
Publishes *The Crown of Wild Olive*; travels in France and Switzerland; proposes marriage to Rose in February. Periodic states of despair.

1867
Publishes *Time and Tide*; continuing state of emotional torment; deep uncertainties about Christianity continue.

1868
Mrs La Touche contacts Effie (now married to Millais) who denounces Ruskin. Lectures in Dublin. In France at the end of the year.

1869
Sustained interest in ancient Greek religion. Publishes *The Queen of the Air*. Ruskin elected first Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford, his first (and only) official position.

1870
Inaugural lectures; founds drawing school at Oxford (still there).

1871
Disillusionment with Oxford undergraduates; tries to reach a new audience with *Fors Clavigera: Letters to the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain* (till 1884). Death of his mother. Buys Brantwood on Coniston Water. Begins to organise what will become the Guild of St George. In October, paints (watercolour and body-colour over graphite on wove paper) *Kingfisher* (cover image).

1872

1873
 Begins a sequence of science books searching out the mythic meanings of birds, plants, and stones.
1874  Publishes *Val d’Arno*. In Italy; important experiences of spiritual renewal in Assisi. Declines gold medal of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

1875  Death of Rose La Touche (possibly from a form of *anorexia nervosa*). Ruskin gives a substantial art collection to Oxford. Founds St George’s Museum at Walkley, Sheffield.


1877  Dark, characterful drawings of Venice; publishes *Guide to the Academy at Venice*; begins *St Mark’s Rest*.

1878  First serious mental breakdown; *Whistler v. Ruskin* libel trial; organises Turner exhibition. Resigns chair at Oxford.

1879  Reads Plato; suffers serious depression.

1880  Returns to writing, including his only literary criticism, *Fiction, Fair and Foul* (to 1881); publishes *Arrows of the Chace*; begins *The Bible of Amiens*; travels in France.

1881  Suffers second episode of grave madness. Disturbed by the death of Carlyle; undertakes some writing, including *The Bible of Amiens*.

1882  Suffers devastating attack of mental illness in the spring. Recovering in France at the end of the year.

1883  Resumes Slade Professorship but his lectures are eccentric and his frustration grows. Publishes *The Art of England*. Increasingly bothered by the associations between his state of mind and the weather.

1884  Publishes *The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century*.

1885  Resigns the Professorship, appalled by vivisection in his own Oxford Museum. Begins *Præterita*, issued, like many of his works, in parts. Publishes *On the Old Road*.

1886  Suffers from further spell of madness.

1887  Publishes *Hortus Inclusus*; banished to Folkestone and Sandgate and does not think he will see Brantwood again; meets Kathleen Olander in London.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>Leaves Sandgate for France, Switzerland, and Italy. Proposes to Kathleen Olander. Breaks down in Venice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>Writes last portions of <em>Praeterita</em>. Mental breakdown ends public career.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Dies on 20 January. Buried in the graveyard of St Andrew’s Church Coniston below a cross designed by W. G. Collingwood and carved from green slate from the local Tilberthwaite quarry.</td>
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ABBREVIATIONS

All references to Ruskin’s works, unless stated otherwise, are to The Library Edition of the Works of John Ruskin, edited by E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, 39 vols (London: Allen, 1903–12) and are cited simply as volume and page number. Note that the Library Edition is available in complete paperback facsimile from Cambridge University Press’s Cambridge Library Collection and in open access pdf form from Lancaster University’s Ruskin Library and Research Centre (www.lancaster.ac.uk/users/ruskinlib/Pages/Works.html).

In-text abbreviations


Cate  The Correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and John Ruskin, ed. George Allan Cate (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982)


Hayman  John Ruskin: Letters from the Continent, 1858, ed. John Hayman (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982)
# List of Abbreviations

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