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## The Cambridge Companion to Byron

Byron's life and work have fascinated readers around the world for two hundred years, but it is the complex interaction between his art and his politics, beliefs and sexuality that has attracted so many modern critics and students. In three parts devoted to the historical, textual and literary contexts of Byron's life and times, these specially commissioned essays by a range of eminent Byron scholars provide a compelling picture of the diversity of Byron's writings. The essays cover topics such as Byron's interest in the East, his relationship to the publishing world, his attitudes to gender, his use of Shakespeare and eighteenth-century literature, and his fit in a postmodernist world. This Companion provides an invaluable resource for students and scholars, including a chronology and a guide to further reading.

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COMPANION TO  
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## CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	page vii
<i>Notes on contributors</i>	viii
<i>Chronology</i>	xi
<i>Abbreviations</i>	xx
Introduction	I
<b>Part 1: Historical Contexts</b>	
1. Byron's life and his biographers PAUL DOUGLASS	7
2. Byron and the business of publishing PETER W. GRAHAM	27
3. Byron's politics MALCOLM KELSALL	44
4. Byron: gender and sexuality ANDREW ELFENBEIN	56
<b>Part 2: Textual Contexts</b>	
5. Heroism and history: <i>Childe Harold</i> I and II and the Tales PHILIP W. MARTIN	77
6. Byron and the Eastern Mediterranean: <i>Childe Harold</i> II and the 'polemic of Ottoman Greece' NIGEL LEASK	99

## CONTENTS

7.	1816–17: <i>Childe Harold</i> III and <i>Manfred</i>	118
	ALAN RAWES	
8.	Byron and the theatre	133
	ALAN RICHARDSON	
9.	<i>Childe Harold</i> IV, <i>Don Juan</i> and <i>Beppo</i>	151
	DRUMMOND BONE	
10.	<i>The Vision of Judgment</i> and the visions of ‘author’	171
	SUSAN J. WOLFSON	
11.	Byron’s prose	186
	ANDREW NICHOLSON	
<b>Part 3: Literary Contexts</b>		
12.	Byron’s lyric poetry	209
	JEROME MCGANN	
13.	Byron and Shakespeare	224
	ANNE BARTON	
14.	Byron and the eighteenth century	236
	BERNARD BEATTY	
15.	Byron’s European reception	249
	PETER COCHRAN	
16.	Byron, postmodernism and intertextuality	265
	JANE STABLER	
	<i>Select bibliography</i>	285
	<i>Further reading</i>	292
	<i>Index</i>	297

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Edited by Drummond Bone  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

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## NOTES ON THE CONTRIBUTORS

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## NOTES ON THE CONTRIBUTORS

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## CHRONOLOGY

- 1778  
 John Byron elopes with Amelia D'Arcy, Marchioness Carmarthen. William Hazlitt b.; Voltaire d.; Rousseau d.
- 1779  
 John Byron marries Marchioness Carmarthen. Thomas Moore b.; John Galt b.; David Garrick d.
- 1780  
 Gordon Riots.
- 1781  
 British surrender at Yorktown; Schiller's *Die Räuber*; Kant's *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Critique of Pure Reason).
- 1782  
 Laoclos, *Liaisons Dangereuses*; James Watt patents his double-acting steam engine.
- 1783  
 Birth of Augusta Byron, daughter of John Byron and Amelia D'Arcy. Peace of Versailles; The Paris Peace Treaty; Britain recognises United States of America; Stendhal b.; Crabbe's *The Village*; Montgolfier brothers' hot-air balloon flights in Paris.
- 1784  
 Lady Carmarthen dies. Leigh Hunt b.; Samuel Johnson d.; Diderot d.; Wesley establishes Methodism.

## CHRONOLOGY

- 1785  
 John Byron marries Catherine Gordon (13 May). Thomas de Quincey b.; Thomas Love Peacock b.; Lady Caroline Lamb b.
- 1786  
 John Cam Hobhouse b.; Robert Burns, *Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*; Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*.
- 1787  
 Signing of the American Constitution; Schiller's *Don Carlos*; Mozart's *Don Giovanni*.
- 1788  
 George Gordon Byron, son of John Byron and Catherine Gordon, born on 22 January, at 16 Holles Street, Cavendish Square, London. Christened, 29 February, in Marylebone parish church. Kant's *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* (Critique of Practical Reason); *The Times* first published.
- 1789  
 First colony established in Australia; Fall of the Bastille, 14 July; the beginning of the French Revolution; George Washington becomes first President of United States; Edmund Kean b.; Jeremy Bentham's *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*.
- 1790  
 Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*; Adam Smith, author of *Wealth of Nations* (1776), d.
- 1791  
 Death of Byron's father, John Byron. Mozart d.

## CHRONOLOGY

- 1792  
 Percy Shelley b.; Samuel Rogers' *Pleasures of Memory, with Other Poems*; Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women*; Tom Paine escapes to France whilst British government prepares for his treason trial.
- 1793  
 Louis XVI executed; John Clare b.; Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*.
- 1794  
 Death of William Byron makes George Gordon heir to title and estates. Enters Aberdeen Grammar School. Edward Gibbon d.; Gifford's *Baviad*; Godwin's *Caleb Williams*; Southey's *Fall of Robespierre*; Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho*.
- 1795  
 John Keats b.; Thomas Carlyle b.; James Boswell d.; William Blake's *Book of Los*; *Book of Ahania* and *Song of Los*; Southey's *Joan of Arc*; John Murray, Byron's future publisher, succeeds to his father's business.
- 1796  
 Robert Burns d.; Coleridge's *Poems on Various Subjects*.
- 1797  
 Franz Schubert b.; Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (Shelley) b.; Mary Wollstonecraft d.; Horace Walpole d.
- 1798  
 Inherits title, Lord Byron of Newstead and Rochdale and moves to Newstead Abbey, Nottinghamshire. *Lyrical Ballads* published anonymously; Malthus's *Essay on the Principle of Population*; the Irish rebellion.

## CHRONOLOGY

- 1799  
 Byron travels to London. His club foot is examined by Dr Baillie and Dr Laurie. Byron enters Dr Glennie's school in Dulwich. Thomas Jefferson becomes second President of the United States; *coup d'état* in France sees Napoleon seize power.
- 1800  
 Second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* published with Wordsworth's preface; Haydn's *The Seasons*; Alessandro Volta describes the voltaic 'pile' to Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society.
- 1801  
 Byron enters Harrow. Peace of Amiens; William Pitt resigns as Prime Minister; the Act of Union with Ireland receives royal assent; invention of the steam-powered locomotive.
- 1802  
 War between Britain and France ends.
- 1803  
 Byron's mother moves into Burgage Manor, Southwell. In October, Byron begins his unrequited idealised love for his cousin, Mary Chaworth. After Napoleon breaks peace treaty, Britain declares war on France; US pays \$15 million to France for the Louisiana Territory.
- 1804  
 In Southwell, meets Elizabeth Pigot; returns to Harrow and takes part in the Speech Day. Sir Walter Scott, *Lay of the Last Minstrel*; Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell*.
- 1805  
 Byron takes part in Harrow's Speech Day. In Harrow cricket team for their match in London, 2 August. Byron arrives at Trinity College, Cambridge. Napoleon proclaimed king of Italy. Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson dies at Trafalgar; Beethoven's *Eroica* symphony first performed; Joseph Turner's *The Shipwreck*.

## CHRONOLOGY

- 1806  
*Fugitive Pieces* published. John Stuart Mill b.; publication of Bowles's edition of Pope.
- 1807  
*Poems on Various Occasions* published, January. Keeps tame bear at Cambridge; joins Cambridge Whig club; returns to London, July; Byron's review of Wordsworth's *Poems in Monthly Literary Recreations*; *Hours of Idleness* published. William Pitt d.; The Abolition Bill is passed, outlawing the slave trade; Crabb's *The Parish Register*; Thomas Moore's *Irish Melodies*; Mme De Staël's *Corinne*; first gas-lights in streets of London.
- 1808  
 Received his MA from Cambridge; receives scathing criticism from the *Edinburgh Review*. Start of the Peninsular War; the United States bans the import of slaves; Convention of Cintra signed; Leigh Hunt founds *The Examiner*; Goethe's *Faust* (Pt. 1); Goya's *Execution of the Citizens of Madrid*.
- 1809  
 Takes seat in House of Lords; anonymous publication of *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*; Byron leaves Falmouth on the *Princess Elizabeth* to begin his first tour of Portugal, Spain, Malta, Albania and Greece. Reception by Ali Pasha. Byron finishes the first canto of *Childe Harold*. Charles Darwin b.; Alfred Tennyson b.; Thomas Paine d.
- 1810  
 Completes *Childe Harold* Canto 11. On 16 April, Byron attempts to swim across the Hellespont but fails because of cold weather and strong currents. Successfully swims the Hellespont, 3 May. Baillie's *Family Legend*; Hogg's *Forest Minstrel*, Goethe's *Pandora*; H. von Kleist's *Käthchen von Heilbronn*.

## CHRONOLOGY

## 1811

Moved by hearing of the death of John Edleston, Byron writes poems addressed to 'Thyzra'. Hears Coleridge lecture. Death, on 1 August, of Byron's mother, Catherine Gordon. He writes 'Hints from Horace' and *The Curse of Minerva*.

Shelley expelled from Oxford, marries Harriet Westbrook; the Prince of Wales becomes Regent; Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*; Luddite riots.

## 1812

Maiden speech in the House of Lords. *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Cantos 1 and 11 published. In March, he meets Lady Caroline Lamb with whom he begins a three-month affair. On 12 March, writes letter to Walter Scott apologising for *English Bards*. Writes *The Waltz*. 'Parenthetical Address, by Dr. Plagiary' printed in the *Morning Chronicle*.

Robert Browning b.; Charles Dickens b.; Prime Minister, Spencer Perceval, assassinated in the lobby of the House of Commons. US declares war on Great Britain; Beethoven meets Goethe; Napoleon invades Russia

## 1813

Lionised by London society; politically active in Whig cause; Byron attends dinner at Lady Jersey's and meets Madame de Staël; speaks in the House of Lords; possible affair with half-sister, Augusta; publications of *The Giaour*, and *The Bride of Abydos*.

Hobhouse's *A Journey Through Albania and Other Provinces of Turkey in Europe and Asia to Constantinople*; Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*; Robert Southey becomes poet laureate; Leigh Hunt imprisoned.

## 1814

Publication of *The Corsair* and *Lara*. 10,000 copies of *The Corsair* sold in a day. Byron admires Edmund Kean's performance in *Richard III*.

Napoleon abdicates; Scott's *Waverley*.

## CHRONOLOGY

## 1815

Byron marries Annabella Milbanke on 2 January. Birth, 10 December, of daughter, Ada. Publication of *Hebrew Melodies*, containing many of Byron's best-known lyrics.

Riots in London against the Corn Law; restored Bourbon monarchy in France under Louis XVIII; Napoleon escapes Elba; British victory at Waterloo.

## 1816

Separation of Byron and Annabella. Publication of *The Prisoner of Chillon*, *The Siege of Corinth* and *Parisina*. Byron's books are sold in a public auction for a total of £723 12s 6d. Byron leaves England for last time. Visits the fields of Waterloo. Byron and Shelley sail around the northern shore of Lake Geneva. Spends the summer with the Shelleys in Switzerland. Views Voltaire's château with 'Monk' Lewis. Moves in October to Milan and meets Italian revolutionary circle. Moves in November to Venice. Completes Canto III of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. *Childe Harold* Canto III published.

Richard Sheridan d.; marriage of Shelley and Mary Godwin; Shelley's *Alastor*; anonymous publication of Lady Caroline Lamb's *Glenarvon*; Southey's *Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo*; Leigh Hunt's *The Story of Rimini*; Jane Austen's *Emma*; Walter Scott's *Old Mortality*; Goethe's *Italienische Reise*; Schubert's Symphonies nos. 4–5.

## 1817

Claire Claremont (Mary Shelley's half-sister) gives birth to Byron's illegitimate daughter, Allegra; publication of *Manfred*; Newstead Abbey sold to Thomas Wildman for £94,500; visits Rome and *Childe Harold* Canto IV written.

Jane Austen d.; Keats' *Poems*; the 21-year-old Princess Charlotte dies in childbirth; Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*; Heman's *Modern Greece*; Scott's *Rob Roy*; Monroe becomes President of USA; *Blackwood's Magazine* founded.



## CHRONOLOGY

## 1818

Mainly in or near Venice. Sends Murray manuscript of *Beppo*. *Beppo* is published. First meets Teresa Guiccioli. Lady Melbourne dies. *Childe Harold* Canto IV published. Byron wins swimming contest against Mengaldo. Begins *Don Juan*.

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*; Percy Shelley's *Ozymandias* and *Revolt of Islam*; Thomas Love Peacock's *Nightmare Abbey*; Hazlitt's *Lectures on the English Poets*; Keats's *Endymion*; Caspar David Friedrich's *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog*; attack on Keats in *Quarterly Review*.

## 1819

Begins affair with Countess Teresa Guiccioli. Writes the *Prophecy of Dante*; leaves Venice for Ravenna; arrives in Ravenna; *Mazeppa* is published with the *Ode on Venice*. *Don Juan* Cantos I and II published anonymously by John Murray. Accompanies Thomas Moore to Venice. Gives Moore his memoirs.

Wordsworth's *Peter Bell* and *The Waggoner*; Shelley's *Masque of Anarchy*; the Peterloo massacre in which 11 are killed and over 500 injured; US purchases Florida from Spain.

## 1820

Moves to Ravenna; Teresa Guiccioli separates from her husband; Byron sends Murray Cantos III and IV of *Don Juan*; Pope grants Teresa Guiccioli separation; Byron begins Canto V of *Don Juan*.

George III dies; George IV proclaimed king; Shelley's *The Cenci*; Keats's *Lamia*, *Isabella*, and *Hyperion*; Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* published; Scott's *Ivanhoe*; Venus de Milo discovered on Greek island of Melos.

## CHRONOLOGY

## 1821

Byron follows Teresa Guiccioli's exiled family to Pisa; Byron begins his 'Ravenna Journal'; *Marino Faliero* published 21 April; writes *Sardanapalus*, *The Two Foscari*, and *Cain*, all of which are published in a single volume on 19 December; writes *The Blues*; writes *The Vision of Judgment*; begins *Heaven and Earth*.

Napoleon d.; Keats d. (aged 25); Queen Caroline d.; Baillie's *Metrical Legends*; Hazlitt's *Table Talk*; Southey's *A Vision of Judgment*; Michael Faraday demonstrates electro-magnetic rotation; Greek War of Independence begins.

## 1822

September, Byron moves with the Gambas to Genoa; daughter, Allegra, dies in convent at Bagnacavallo; Byron begins Canto XI of *Don Juan*; *Vision of Judgment* and *Werner* published; begins to write *Age of Bronze*.

Shelley publishes *Hellas*; Shelley drowns off the coast of Viareggio, Italy; Robert Stewart, Viscount Castlereagh, commits suicide; Heine's *Gedichte*.

## 1823

Byron sails for Greece, July; arrives in Cephalonia on 3 August; *Heaven and Earth*, *Age of Bronze*, and *The Island* published.

Ann Radcliffe d.; Carlyle's *Life of Schiller*; Lamartine, *Nouvelles Méditations*; Hazlitt's *Liber Amoris* and *Characteristics*; Beethoven's Symphony No. 9.

## 1824

Byron arrives in Missolonghi, Greece on 5 January; develops fever; dies, aged 36, on 19 April; public attend Byron's lying in state, 10 and 11 July; buried at Hucknall Church, England, 16 July.

James Hogg's *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*; Thomas Medwin's *Journal of Conversations with Lord Byron*; Scott's *Redgauntlet*; Southey's *Book of the Church*.

## 1825

Dallas's *Correspondence of Lord Byron*; Moore's *Life of Sheridan* and *Evenings in Greece*; Hazlitt's *Spirit of the Age*; John Quincy Adams becomes President of the USA; opening of the Stockton and Darlington railway in England.

## ABBREVIATIONS

The following short titles have been used throughout this volume:

- BLJ*: *Byron's Letters and Journals*, ed. by Leslie A. Marchand, 13 vols. (London: John Murray, 1973–94);
- CMP*: *Lord Byron: The Complete Miscellaneous Prose*, ed. Andrew Nicholson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991);
- CPW*: *Lord Byron: The Complete Poetical Works*, ed. Jerome J. McGann, 7 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980–93);
- HVSV*: *His Very Self and Voice: Collected Conversations of Lord Byron*, ed. Ernest J. Lovell Jnr (New York: Macmillan, 1954).