

## THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO 'LYRICAL BALLADS'

*Lyrical Ballads* (1798) is a work of huge cultural and literary significance. This volume of poetry in which Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and Wordsworth's *Lines Written above Tintern Abbey* were first published lies at the heart of British Romanticism, establishing a poetics of powerful feeling that is, nonetheless, expressed in direct, conversational language and explores the everyday realities of common life. This engaging, accessible collection provides a comprehensive overview of current approaches to *Lyrical Ballads*, enabling readers to find fresh ways of understanding and responding to the volume. Sally Bushell's introduction explores how the Preface to the second edition (1800) became a potent manifesto for the Romantic movement. Broad in scope, the *Companion* includes accessible essays on Wordsworth's experiments with language and metre, ecocritical approaches, the reception of the volume in America and more, furnishing students and scholars with a range of entry points to this seminal text.

SALLY BUSHELL is Professor of Romantic and Victorian Literature and Co-Director of the Wordsworth Centre in the Department of English Literature & Creative Writing, Lancaster University. She has long had an interest in Wordsworth. Her first book, *Re-reading the Excursion* (2002), sought to open up the text to new readings, followed by her co-editing of the Cornell edition of *The Excursion* (2007) and her second monograph, *Text as Process: Creative Composition in Wordsworth, Tennyson and Dickinson* (2009), which explored the margins of textuality by developing a method for interpreting works in a state of process. A strong interest in place and space in literature has recently led her into research around the question of how the reader spatialises literature with a forthcoming monograph (Cambridge, 2020), *Reading and Mapping Fiction*. She is also interested in digital and spatial projects for the mapping of literature. She is the PI on the AHRC-Funded project, *Chronotopic Cartographies*, and has developed an educational project using Minecraft to map literary worlds (*LITCRAFT*).

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*Lancaster University*



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*For Jeff Cowton at the Wordsworth Trust,  
and for John Beer, in memoriam.*

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## *Chronology*

- 1770 William Wordsworth (WW) born 7 April in Cockerthorpe, Cumberland (now the Lake District), second of five children.
- 1771 Dorothy Wordsworth (DW), the poet's sister, born 25 December, Cockerthorpe.
- 1772 John Wordsworth (JW), the poet's younger brother, born 4 December, Cockerthorpe.
- Samuel Taylor Coleridge (STC) born 21 October, Ottery St Mary, Devonshire. Youngest of ten children.
- 1776 4 July 1776: American Declaration of Independence. War with Britain begins.  
 France recognises American Independence.
- 1778 WW's Mother, Ann Wordsworth, dies 6 March. DW sent to live with cousins in Halifax, WW to Penrith.
- 1779 In May, WW and his brother Richard sent to Hawkshead Grammar School (they lodge with Ann Tyson).
- 1781 Death of STC's father, Rev. John Coleridge, October.
- 1782 STC sent to Christ's Hospital School, London.
- 1783 WW's father, John Wordsworth, dies, 30 December.  
 3 September 1783, Treaty of Paris ends the Revolutionary War.
- 1787 WW goes to St John's College, Cambridge.  
 25 May 1787, American Constitution adopted.
- 1789 In Paris, storming of the Bastille, 14 July. Declaration of 'The Rights of Man', 26 August. Start of the French Revolution.
- 1790 WW undertakes a walking tour of France and Switzerland with Robert Jones during the long vacation.
- 1791 WW goes on a walking tour of Wales with RJ. WW in London. November, WW goes to live in France, meets Annette Vallon. STC attends Jesus College, Cambridge.

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- 1792 WW's illegitimate daughter, Caroline, born 15 December in France.
- 1793 WW returns to England (unable to return to France for next nine years because of war).  
 Publication of 'An Evening Walk' and 'Descriptive Sketches'.  
 Unpublished radical 'Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff'.  
 STC Enlists in the 15th Light Dragoons under the false name 'Silas Tomkyn Comberbache'. Discharged April 1794.  
 Execution of Louis XVI, 21 January 1793.  
 War declared between France and England. 'Reign of Terror' commences.
- 1794 WW reunited with DW in Keswick after many years apart.  
 STC returns to Cambridge. Meets Robert Southey, plans pantisocracy in America. Both become engaged to the Fricker sisters. STC collaborates with Southey on *The Fall of Robespierre*.  
 Execution of Robespierre, 28 July 1794. End of the Terror.  
 Treason Trials in London.
- 1795 WW and STC meet for the first time in Bristol in September.  
 WW is left £500 by his friend Raisley Calvert, enabling him to pursue a poetic career.  
 STC marries Sara Fricker, 4 November.  
 Directory takes power in France.
- 1796 STC publishes *Poems on Various Subjects* and 10 issues of *The Watchman* (a political journal).  
 Hartley Coleridge born 19 September 1796.  
 Coleridge family moves to Nether Stowey, Somerset, in December.  
 Napoleon Bonaparte leads campaign in Italy.
- 1797 WW and DW move to Alfoxden, Somerset, in July to be near Coleridge.  
 WW writes play *The Borderers* and tries to get it put on in London.  
 STC writes play *Osorio* and tries to get it put on in London.  
 Walking tour of Quantocks in Somerset. First composition of 'The Rime of the Ancyent Marinere'.  
 Switzerland and Italy declared Republics.
- 1798 Often called the *annus mirabilis*. WW finishes 'The Ruined Cottage' and writes most of the poems for *Lyrical Ballads (LB)*

1798. Walking tour of the Wye valley in July with DW results in 'Tintern Abbey'.  
***Lyrical Ballads with a Few Other Poems (anon)* printed in September by Joseph Cottle, Bristol; pub. in London 4 October, J & A. Arch.**  
 STC pub. 'Fears in Solitude' with 'Frost at Midnight' and 'France, An Ode'. Birth of second son, Berkeley, in May.  
 WW, DW and STC travel to Germany together, then split up. WW and DW go to Goslar. WW writes first episodes of *The Prelude*, drawing on childhood memories. STC goes to Ratzeburg and Göttingen.  
 Napoleon invades Egypt.  
 Nelson destroys French fleet at the Battle of the Nile, 3 August 1798.
- 1799 WW and DW return to England. WW writes up early *Prelude* material (Bks I and II).  
 On walking tour of Lake District with STC and JW, WW sees Dove Cottage, Grasmere; moves there with DW in December. Death of Berkeley in February. STC returns to England in July. Works for *The Morning Post*. Walking tour with WW and JW in October, meets Sara Hutchinson (SH).  
 Napoleon overthrows Directory and is elected First Consul, 12 December.
- 1800 WW writes 'Preface' for *LB*. **Second edition *Lyrical Ballads with Other Poems in Two Volumes* by W. Wordsworth (with Preface) pub. January 1801.** Writes 'Home at Grasmere'.  
 STC moves to Greta Hall, Keswick, to live near the Wordsworths. Birth of Derwent, 14 September.
- 1802 WW writes lyrical poetry towards **third edition of *Lyrical Ballads with Pastoral and Other Poems in Two Volumes* by W. Wordsworth (with revised Preface). Pub. April 1802.**  
 Temporary peace Treaty of Amiens allows WW and DW to visit Annette and Caroline.  
 WW marries Mary Hutchinson (MH) 4 October.  
 Birth of STC's daughter, Sara, 23 December.  
 Napoleon established as First Consul for life, 2 August.
- 1803 Birth of WW's first son, John. Scottish tour with WW, DW, STC.  
 STC becoming ill, decides to travel abroad.  
 Britain declares war on France, 18 May.



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- 1804 WW works on *The Prelude*, enlarging it from 2 to 5 to 13 books.  
 Daughter Dora Wordsworth born 16 August.  
 STC visits Sicily and works as Acting Public Secretary to Alexander Ball in Malta.  
 Napoleon crowned Emperor by the Pope, 2 December.
- 1805 John Wordsworth drowns as captain of his ship, *The Earl of Abergavenny*, off Portland harbour, 5 February. WW completes *The Prelude* in a state of mourning.  
 Nelson defeats the French navy and is killed at the Battle of Trafalgar, 21 October.
- 1806 WW's son Thomas born 15 June 1806.  
 STC returns to Keswick, separates from his wife.
- 1808 WW's daughter Catherine born 5 September. With four children the WW family move from Dove Cottage to Allan Bank, Grasmere.  
 STC also moves to Allan Bank, Grasmere. Begins to publish *The Friend* (28 numbers).  
 Peninsular War begins. Convention of Cintra signed 30 August 1808, allowing French evacuation from Portugal.
- 1809 Wordsworth pub. *The Convention of Cintra*.
- 1810 Son William born 12 May.  
*Select Views of Cumberland, Westmoreland and Lancashire* pub.  
 WW and STC fall out and their friendship ends. Coleridge goes to London to live with the Montagues.
- 1811 In May, the WW family leaves Allan Bank for rectory opposite Grasmere Church.  
 STC gives famous lectures in London sponsored by the Philosophical Institution.  
 Napoleon's son born 20 March.
- 1812 Death of Catherine Wordsworth, aged 3, 4 June.  
 Death of Thomas Wordsworth, aged 6, 1 December.  
 Napoleon's disastrous Russian Campaign.
- 1813 Wordsworth appointed Distributor of Stamps for Westmoreland.  
 WW family move to Rydal Mount.  
 STC's play *Remorse* is staged at Drury Lane.
- 1814 WW's second long poem *The Excursion* published.  
 Napoleon abdicates 4 April; Louis XVIII is restored to the throne.  
 Napoleon is exiled to Elba, 4 May.

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*Chronology*

- 1815 *Poems in Two Volumes* (first collected edition) pub. with poems arranged by WW and a new 'Preface'.  
 Napoleon escapes and arrives in Paris, 20 March; marks beginning of the 'Hundred Days'. Napoleon finally defeated at the Battle of Waterloo, 18 June. King is restored 8 July. NB is exiled to St Helena, 16 October.
- 1816 STC pub. *Christabel; Kubla Khan; The Pains of Sleep; The Statesman's Manual*.
- 1817 STC pub. *Biographia Literaria; Sibylline Leaves; Zopolya*.
- 1819 WW pub. *Peter Bell* and *The Waggoner*, both written many years earlier.
- 1820 WW pub. *The River Duddon: A Series of Sonnets*.
- 1821 Napoleon dies on St Helena, 5 May.
- 1822 WW pub. *Description of the Scenery of the Lakes*.  
 Henry Nelson Coleridge begins recording STC's conversation for *Table Talk*.
- 1825 STC pub. *Aids to Reflection*.
- 1828 Pub. of *The Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, 3 vols., ed. Henry Nelson Coleridge.
- 1829 STC pub. *On the Constitution of Church and State*.
- 1834 STC dies at Highgate, London, 25 July.
- 1843 WW becomes Poet Laureate on death of Robert Southey.
- 1847 Death of Dora, 9 July.
- 1850 WW dies 23 April. Posthumous pub. of *The Prelude*.

## *Abbreviations*

- BL* Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Biographia Literaria or Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*. Eds. James Engell and W. Jackson Bate. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983.
- CL STC* Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *The Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. 6 vols. Ed. Earl Leslie Griggs. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956. (Identified by volume number.)
- CNSTC* Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. 5 vols. Ed. Kathleen Coburn. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957–2002. (Identified by volume number.)
- Cornell*  
*LB* *Lyrical Ballads and Other Poems 1797–1800*. Eds. James A. Butler and Karen Green. Ithaca and New York: Cornell University Press, 1993.
- CW*  
*STC* Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. Ed. James Engell and W. Jackson Bate. 16 vols. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983.
- DWJ* Dorothy Wordsworth. *The Grasmere and Alfoxden Journals*. Ed. Pamela Woof. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991. Rpt. 2002.
- Letters*  
*EY* *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: The Early Years 1787–1805*. Ed. Ernest de Selincourt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967.
- Letters*  
*MY* *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth*. Ed. Ernest de Selincourt. *The Middle Years Part I 1806–1811*. Rev. Mary Moorman. Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1969; 2nd ed. III. *The Middle Years Part II. 1812–1820*. Revd. Mary Moorman and Alan G. Hill. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970. (Identified by volume number.)

- Letters*      *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: The Later Years 1821–1853*. Ed. Ernest de Selincourt. 4 vols. Revd. Alan G. Hill. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978–1988. (Identified by volume number.)
- LY*
- LB*      Wordsworth, William. *William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Lyrical Ballads 1798 and 1802*. Ed. Fiona Stafford. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Owen*      Owen, W. J. B. Ed. *Wordsworth's Literary Criticism*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974.
- Prelude*      *The Prelude, 1799, 1805, 1850*. Ed. Jonathan Wordsworth, M. H. Abrams and Stephen Gill. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1979.
- Prose*      *The Prose Works of William Wordsworth*. Ed. W. J. B. Owen and Jane Worthington Smyser. 3 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974. (Identified by volume number.)
- PW*      *The Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. Ed. J. C. C. Mays. 3 Parts; 6 vols. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001. (Identified by part and volume numbers.)
- STC*      *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, Vol. 16.
- WSCW*      William Shakespeare: *The Complete Works*. Compact Edition. Ed Stanley Wells, Gary Taylor, John Jowett and William Montgomery. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.