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978-0-521-86235-6 - The Cambridge Companion to British Romantic Poetry

Edited by James Chandler and Maureen N. McLane

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THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO
BRITISH ROMANTIC POETRY

More than any other period of British literature, Romanticism is strongly identified with a single genre. Romantic poetry has been one of the most enduring, best-loved, most widely read, and most frequently studied genres for two centuries and remains no less so today. This Companion offers a comprehensive overview and interpretation of the poetry of the period in its literary and historical contexts. The essays consider its metrical, formal, and linguistic features; its relation to history; its influence on other genres; its reflections of empire and nationalism, both within and outside the British Isles; and the various implications of oral transmission and the rapid expansion of print culture and mass readership. Attention is given to the work of less well-known or recently rediscovered authors, alongside the achievements of some of the greatest poets in the English language: Wordsworth, Coleridge, Blake, Scott, Burns, Keats, Shelley, Byron, and Clare.

JAMES CHANDLER is Director of the Franke Institute for the Humanities at the University of Chicago.

MAUREEN N. MCLANE is Lecturer in the Committee on Degrees in History and Literature at Harvard University.

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currently editing Robert Southey's letters and poems for the first Collected Edition. His collection of essays (co-edited with Kevin Hutchings), *The Indian Atlantic*, also published by Cambridge University Press, appeared in 2008.

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NICK GROOM is Professor in English at the University of Exeter (Cornwall Campus) and Director of the Centre for Literatures of Identity and Place. He has written widely on national identity and authenticity in literature and culture – most recently in *The Union Jack* (2007) – and his edition of Percy's *Reliques* will be published shortly. He is currently writing a book on the cultural history of the British environment.

SIMON JARVIS is Gorley Putt Reader in Poetry and Poetics in the Faculty of English, University of Cambridge. He is the author of *Scholars and Gentlemen: Shakespearean Textual Criticism and Representations of Scholarly Labour* (1995); *Adorno: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), and *Wordsworth's Philosophic Song* (Cambridge University Press, 2007).

WILLIAM KEACH is Professor of English at Brown University. His most recent book is *Arbitrary Power: Romanticism, Language, Politics* (2004); previous works include *Shelley's Style* (1984). He is currently working on determination and play in lyric poetry.

CELESTE LANGAN is an Associate Professor in the English Department at the University of California, Berkeley. She is the author of *Romantic Vagrancy* (Cambridge University Press, 1995, 2006) and several other essays on Romantic poetry. An essay on Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel* led to her ongoing interest in media theory and media archaeology. Her current book project, *Post-Napoleonism: Imagining Sovereignty after 1799*, interrogates Napoleon as, among other things, a figure of mass mediation.

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ANN WIERDA ROWLAND teaches in the English department at the University of Kansas. She has published articles on Wordsworth, Scott, and the Romantic ballad revival, and is currently finishing a book on notions of childhood and Romantic literary culture.

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SUSAN STEWART is the author of *Columbarium*, which won the National Book Critics Circle Award in Poetry in 2003, and the forthcoming *Red Rover*. Her prose works include *On Longing*, *Poetry and the Fate of the Senses*, and *The Open Studio*. She is a current Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets, a former MacArthur Fellow and the Annan Professor of English at Princeton University.

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CHRONOLOGY

- 1757 William Blake born
Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*
Thomas Gray, “The Bard”
- 1759 Robert Burns born
Mary Wollstonecraft born
Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*
Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1759–67)
- 1760 Accession of George III
James Macpherson’s *Ossianic Fragments* published
- 1762 Joanna Baillie born
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract* and *Emile*
- 1763 Treaty of Paris ends Seven Years War
Hugh Blair, *A Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian, the Son of Fingal*
Christopher Smart, *A Song to David*
James Macpherson, *Temora*
- 1764 Ann Radcliffe (née Ward) born
John Thelwall born
Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*
- 1765 Thomas Percy, ed., *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*
- 1766 Oliver Goldsmith, *The Vicar of Wakefield*
- 1767 Hugh Blair, *Heads of the Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*
- 1768 Sterne dies
Maria Edgeworth born
- 1769 Napoleon Bonaparte born
Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses on Art*
- 1770 Captain James Cook lands at Botany Bay
Thomas Chatterton’s suicide

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- Ludwig van Beethoven born
 Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel born
 William Wordsworth born
 1771 Walter Scott born
 Dorothy Wordsworth born
 James Beattie, *The Minstrel* (1771–4)
 Henry Mackenzie, *The Man of Feeling*
 1772 Mansfield Decision denies a legal basis for slavery in England
 Samuel Taylor Coleridge born
 1773 Anna Laetitia Barbauld, *Poems*
 1774 *Donaldson v. Becket* reestablishes limits on copyright
 Accession of Louis XVI of France
 Robert Southey born
 Goldsmith dies
 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*
 1775 War begun with American colonies
 Jane Austen born
 Charles Lamb born
 Joseph Turner born
 Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The Rivals*
 Robert Wood, *An Essay on the Original Genius and Writings of Homer* (posthumous)
 1776 American Declaration of Independence
 John Constable born
 David Hume dies
 Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*
 1777 Thomas Chatterton, “Rowley” Poems (posthumous)
 Sheridan, *The School for Scandal*
 1778 Franco-American Alliance signed at the Second Continental Congress
 Britain declares war on France
 William Hazlitt born
 Rousseau dies
 Frances Burney, *Evelina*
 1779 Britain declares war on Spain
 David Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*
 Samuel Johnson, “Prefaces” to *The Works of the English Poets* (1779–81)
 William Cowper and John Newton, *Olney Hymns*

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- 1781 Friedrich Schiller, *The Robbers*
Immanuel Kant, *A Critique of Pure Reason*
- 1782 Burney, *Cecilia*
Edward Cowper, *Poems*
Rousseau, *Confessions*
- 1783 American independence recognized at Peace of Versailles
Blake, *Poetical Sketches*
George Crabbe, *The Village*
- 1784 Pitt's India Act restricts the East India Company's autonomy
James Leigh Hunt born
Johnson dies
Pierre Beaumarchais, *The Marriage of Figaro*
Capt. James Cook, *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*
Hannah More, *The Bas Bleu; or, Conversation*
Charlotte Smith, *Elegiac Sonnets*
Jacques-Louis David, *The Oath of the Horatii*
- 1785 Thomas de Quincey born
Thomas Love Peacock born
Cowper, *The Task*
Thomas Warton appointed Laureate
- 1786 Burns, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* published at Kilmarnock
Mozart, *The Marriage of Figaro*
- 1787 Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade founded
American Constitution signed
James Johnson, *The Scots Musical Museum* (1787–1803, with anonymous contributions from Burns)
- 1788 George III's first attack of insanity
George Gordon (later Lord) Byron born
More, *Slavery, a Poem*
Ann Yearsley, *A Poem on the Inhumanity of the Slave-Trade*
Charlotte Smith, *Emmeline*
- 1789 Convening of the Estates General to deal with financial crisis in France; the Tennis Court Oath; the Bastille falls; Declaration of the Rights of Man
Jeremy Bentham, *Principles of Morals and Legislation*
Blake, *Songs of Innocence and The Book of Thel*
William Bowles, *Fourteen Sonnets Written Chiefly on Picturesque Spots during a Journey*
Charlotte Brooke, *Reliques of Irish Poetry*

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- Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*
- 1790 William Lisle Bowles, *Fourteen Sonnets, Elegiac and Descriptive*
Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*
Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*
Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men*
- 1791 Henry James Pye appointed Laureate
American Bill of Rights ratified
Church and King Riots aimed at Joseph Priestley's beliefs concerning religious toleration and his political radicalism lead to the destruction of much property, including Priestley's house
Mozart dies
Louis XVI captured at Varennes
Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*
Paine, *The Rights of Man*
Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*
- 1792 Royal Proclamation against seditious writings issued by George III; *The Rights of Man* banned and Paine charged with sedition
Continental allies invade France; September massacres; declaration of the French Republic; imprisonment of French royal family
Wordsworth in France
Percy Shelley born
Burns, "Tam o' Shanter"
Charlotte Smith, *Desmond*
Samuel Rogers, *The Pleasures of Memory*
Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*
- 1793 Trial and execution of Louis XVI; France declares war on Britain; the Terror; execution of Marie Antoinette
Blake, *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* and *America: A Prophecy*
William Godwin, *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*
Wordsworth, *An Evening Walk* and *Descriptive Sketches*
- 1794 Suspension of Habeas Corpus in England; reformers jailed without charges; Robespierre executed; end of the Terror; the Directorate established
Blake, *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, *Europe: A Prophecy*, and *The Book of Urizen*
Coleridge, "Monody on the Death of Chatterton"
Erasmus Darwin, *Zoonomia*
Godwin, *Caleb Williams*

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- Thomas Paine, *The Age of Reason*
 Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolfo*
- 1795 Thomas Carlyle born
 John Keats born
 Macpherson dies
 Blake, *The Book of Los* and *The Book of Ahania*
 Coleridge, *Conciones ad Populum*
 Matthew Lewis, *Ambrosio, or The Monk*
 More, *Repository Tracts* (1795–8)
 Friedrich Schiller, *Letters on Aesthetic Education* and *On Naive and Sentimental Poetry*
 Southey, *Poems*
- 1796 Attempted French invasion of Ireland
 Robert Bloomfield, *The Farmer's Boy*
 Burns dies
 Burney, *Camilla*
 Coleridge, *Poems on Various Subjects* and *The Watchman*
 Mary Hays, *Memoirs of Emma Courtney*
 Charlotte Smith, *Marchmont*
 Mary Robinson, *Sappho and Phaon*
 Southey, *Joan of Arc*
 Thelwall, *The Rights of Nature Against the Usurpation of Establishments*
- 1797 Wordsworth and Coleridge become neighbours in Somerset,
 begin their historic collaboration
 Burke dies
 Wollstonecraft dies
 Coleridge, *Poems*
 Radcliffe, *The Italian*
- 1798 Irish Rebellion; French army lands in Ireland
 The *Athenaeum* publishes fragments by founders Friedrich and
 A. W. Schlegel, and by Novalis, and Schleiermacher (1798–1800)
 Baillie, *Plays on the Passions*
 Coleridge, “Fears in Solitude,” “France: an Ode,” and “Frost at
 Midnight”
 Thomas Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population*
 Wollstonecraft, *Maria, or the Wrongs of Woman*
 Wordsworth and Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads* (published by Joseph
 Cottle in Bristol)
 Wordsworth launches the poem “on his own mind,” a work that
 would be posthumously published as *The Prelude* in 1850

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- 1799 French Directorate falls; Napoleon made First Consul
Thomas Campbell, *The Pleasures of Hope*
- 1800 Act of Union with Ireland
Cowper dies
Anne Bannerman, *Poems*
Edgeworth, *Castle Rackrent*
Mary Robinson, *Lyrical Tales*
Wordsworth and Coleridge, much expanded second edition of *Lyrical Ballads*
- 1801 George III refuses to support Catholic Emancipation; Pitt resigns
James Hogg, *Scottish Pastorals*
Southey, *Thalaba*
- 1802 Napoleon elected First Consul for life
Erasmus Darwin dies
Edinburgh Review begins publication; Francis Jeffrey christens the “Lake School of Poetry”
William Cobbett begins the *Political Register* (1802–35)
Bannerman, *Tales of Superstition and Chivalry*
Coleridge, “Dejection: An Ode”
Edgeworth, *Belinda*
Amelia Opie, *Poems*
Scott, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*
Wordsworth begins composition of what would become “Ode: Intimations of Immortality”
- 1803 Napoleon interns all British civilians in France; war resumed
Erasmus Darwin, *The Temple of Nature*
- 1804 Henry Addington resigns; Pitt becomes Prime Minister
Napoleon becomes Emperor
Kant dies
Blake, *Milton and Jerusalem*
Edgeworth, *Popular Tales*
Wordsworth completes the Immortality Ode
- 1805 Samuel Palmer born
Scott, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*
Southey, *Madoc*
Turner, *The Shipwreck*
Wordsworth completes the thirteen-book version of what would later be called *The Prelude*
- 1806 Charlotte Smith dies
Edgeworth, *Leonora*
Sydney Owenson (Lady Morgan), *The Wild Irish Girl*

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- 1807 Slavery abolished in England, but not in colonies; slave trade ended
 Hazlitt, *A Reply to the Essay on Population*
 Byron, *Hours of Idleness*
 Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*
 Charles and Mary Lamb, *Tales from Shakespeare*
 Charles Maturin, *The Fatal Revenge*
 Moore, *Irish Melodies*
 Wordsworth, *Poems* (2 vols.)
- 1808 Hunt becomes editor of *The Examiner*
 Goethe, *Faust* Part I
 Felicia Browne (Hemans), *Poems, England and Spain*
 Charles Lamb, *Specimens of the English Dramatic Poets*
 Scott, *Marmion*
- 1809 Alfred Tennyson born
 Charles Darwin born
Quarterly Review founded
 Blake, *A Descriptive Catalogue*
 Byron, *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*
 Campbell, *Gertrude of Wyoming*
 Coleridge, *The Friend*
 Wordsworth, *The Convention of Cintra*
- 1810 Scott, *The Lady of the Lake*
 Percy Shelley, *Zastrozzi*
 Southey, *The Curse of Kehama*
- 1811 Regency begins as George III is declared mentally unfit to rule
 Luddite movement begins in response to mechanization of the textile industry
 Austen, *Sense and Sensibility*
 Barbauld, *The Female Speaker*
 Hunt, “The Feast of the Poets”
 Charles Lamb, “On the Tragedies of Shakespeare”
 Scott, *The Vision of Don Roderick*
 Percy Shelley, *On the Necessity of Atheism*
 Mary Tighe, *Psyche* (privately printed 1805)
- 1812 America declares war on Britain
 Robert Browning born
 Charles Dickens born
 Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812–18)
 Crabbe, *Tales in Verse*

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- Edgeworth, *The Absentee*
 Percy Shelley, *An Address, to the Irish People*
- 1813 Edmund Kean's first appearance at Drury Lane
 Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*
 Byron, *The Bride of Abydos* and *The Giaour*
 Coleridge, *Remorse*
 Hogg, *The Queen's Wake*
 Scott, *Rokeby*
 Percy Shelley, *Queen Mab*
 Robert Southey appointed Laureate
- 1814 Fall of Paris; Napoleon abdicates
 Wars with America ended by the Treaty of Ghent
 Austen, *Mansfield Park*
 Burney, *The Wanderer*
 Byron, "Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte," *The Corsair*, and *Lara*
 Hunt, *The Feast of the Poets*
 Scott, *Waverley*
 Percy Shelley, *A Refutation of Deism*
 Southey, *Roderick*
 Wordsworth, *The Excursion*
- 1815 Battle of Waterloo; Napoleon's surrender and exile; Restoration of Louis XVIII
 Byron, *Hebrew Melodies* and *Collected Poems*
 David Ricardo, *An Essay On the Low Price of Corn and the Profits of Stock*
 Scott, *The Lord of the Isles*, *The Field of Waterloo*, and *Guy Mannering*
 Wordsworth, *The White Doe of Rylstone* and *Poems*
- 1816 Byron leaves England
 Sheridan dies
 Austen, *Emma*
 Byron, *The Siege of Corinth*
 Coleridge, "Christabel," "Kubla Khan," *Lay Sermons*, and "The Pains of Sleep"
 Hunt, "Young Poets"
 Maturin, *Bertram*
 Peacock, *Headlong Hall*
 Scott, *The Antiquary*, *The Black Dwarf*, and *Old Mortality*
 Percy Shelley, *Alastor, or, the Spirit of Solitude; and other Poems*
 Southey, *The Lay of the Laureate*
 Wordsworth, "Thanksgiving Ode"

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- 1817 Jane Austen dies
The Shelleys join Byron in Italy
Blackwood's Magazine founded
Byron, *Manfred*
Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria* and *Sibylline Leaves*
Hazlitt, *The Characters of Shakespeare's Plays*
Keats, *Poems*
Scott, *Rob Roy*
Southey, *Wat Tyler* (pirated)
- 1818 Austen, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*
Hazlitt, *Lectures on the English Poets*
Keats, *Endymion*
Scott, *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*
Percy Shelley, *The Revolt of Islam*, "Ozymandias"
- 1819 Peterloo Massacre occurs outside Manchester when a large public meeting calling for Parliamentary Reform is attacked by troops
Queen Victoria born
Walt Whitman born
John Ruskin born
Byron, *Don Juan* (1819–23)
Thomas Campbell, *Specimens of the British Poets* (7 vols.)
Hemans, *Tales and Historic Scenes in Verse*
Keats composes his Great Odes
John Polidori, *The Vampyre*
Scott, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, *The Legend of Montrose*, and *Ivanhoe*
Wordsworth, *Peter Bell* and *The Waggoner*
- 1820 Accession of George IV
London Magazine founded
John Clare, *Poems Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery* and *The Village Minstrel*
Keats, *Lamia*, *Isabella*, *The Eve of St. Agnes*, and *Other Poems*, and *Hyperion*
Peacock, "The Four Ages of Poetry"
Percy Shelley, "Ode to the West Wind" and *Prometheus Unbound*, *The Cenci*
Scott, *The Abbott*, and *The Monastery*
- 1821 Greek War of Independence begins
Keats dies
Napoleon dies

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- Baillie, *Metrical Legends of Exalted Characters*
 John Constable, *The Hay Wain*
 De Quincey, *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*
 Hazlitt, *Table-Talk*
 Percy Shelley, *A Defence of Poetry*, “Adonais,” and
 “Epipsychidion”
 Scott, *Kenilworth*
- 1822 Matthew Arnold born
 Percy Shelley dies
 Byron, Hunt, and Percy Shelley publish in *The Liberal*
- 1823 Radcliffe dies
 Hemans, *The Vespers of Palermo, The Siege of Valencia, and
 Other Poems, Tales and Historic Scenes* (2nd edn.)
 Mary Shelley, *Valperga*
- 1824 Byron dies
 Beethoven, Symphony No. 9 (Choral)
 Hogg, *Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*
 Scott, *Redgauntlet*
 Percy Shelley, *Posthumous Poems* (ed. Mary Shelley)
- 1825 Barbauld, *Works*
 Hazlitt, *The Spirit of the Age, or, Contemporary Portraits*
 Laetitia Elizabeth Landon, *The Troubadour: Poetical Sketches of
 Modern Pictures and Historical Sketches*
- 1826 Mary Shelley, *The Last Man*
- 1827 Beethoven dies
 Blake dies
 Wordsworth, *Poems* (5 vols.)
 Scott acknowledges authorship of the *Waverley* novels
- 1828 Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts permits Dissenters to
 hold official posts
 University College London opens
 Hemans, *Records of Woman with Other Poems*
 Hunt, *Lord Byron and Some of His Contemporaries*
 Carlyle, “Essay on Burns”
 Coleridge, *Poetical Works*
- 1829 Honoré de Balzac, *Les Chouans*
 Carlyle, “Signs of the Times”
 Peacock, *The Misfortunes of Elphin*
- 1830 Death of George IV and accession of William IV
 July Revolutions in France
 Christina Rossetti born

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CHRONOLOGY

- Hazlitt dies
 Carlyle, "On History"
 Charles Lamb, *Album Verses*
 Palmer, *Coming from Evening Church*
 Tennyson, *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical*
- 1831 Lord John Russell introduces a Reform Bill in House of Commons
 Charles Darwin departs on the *Beagle*
 Coleridge's last meeting with Wordsworth
 Benjamin Disraeli, *The Young Duke*
 Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*
- 1832 The Representation of the People Bill (First Reform Act) passes in
 Parliament
 Scott dies
- 1834 Coleridge dies
 Lamb dies
 Thelwall dies