BYRON’S CORRESPONDENCE AND JOURNALS 05:
FROM LONDON AND OTHER PLACES IN ENGLAND, 1814

Work in progress, with frequent updates [indicated]. Letters not in the seventeen main files may be found in those containing the correspondences Byron / Annabella, Byron / Murray, Byron / Hobhouse, Byron / Lady Melbourne, / Byron / Moore, Byron / Scott, Byron / Kinnaird, Byron / The Shelleys, or Byron / Hoppner.

UPDATED July 2012. My thanks to Paul Curtis for several previous corrections and contributions.

Abbreviations

B.: Byron; Mo: Moore; H.: Hobhouse; K.: Kinnaird; Mu.: Murray


NLS: National Library of Scotland.


I am very grateful to John and Virginia Murray for permission to quote texts from Byron’s Letters and Journals, ed. Leslie A. Marchand (John Murray 1973-1994).

READER!

This edition gives you a raw version of Byron’s correspondence. As far as can be done in linear print, it conveys what he wrote and how he wrote it, before any editor got to it to neutralise him. FEEL FREE TO MAKE IT MORE ACCOMMODATING BY EDITING IT YOURSELF. Once you’ve shaded and copied it, you can: run through his page-breaks; expand his contractions and ampersands; delete his deletions; regularise his interlineations … would you? dare you? modernise his spelling? (I hope not!); regularise his capitalisation, so that students feel less bewildered than usual? (I hope not!) – P.C.
POSTAGE

The recipient, not the sender, normally paid the postage: but as a peer, Byron used a frank, so in England his recipients got his letters free. However, I believe several of his “letters” to Murray from St James’s Street, the Albany, or Piccadilly Terrace, are notes taken round by servants (as are those of Murray to him). He does not have the franking privilege when abroad, and as the cost of postage is calculated by weight, he only uses an envelope when he is enclosing a manuscript. The address is written on side four, the sheet is folded and the wax stamped (“wafered”), and then Fletcher takes it to the post office.

A letter from Byron is usually a bifolium, with the following shape:

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<tr>
<th>Sheet 1 side 4:</th>
<th>Sheet 1 side 1:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text continued from side 3, above address</td>
<td>Address and Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>AD</td>
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<td>DR</td>
<td>TEXT</td>
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<td>Text continued below address</td>
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<td>Signature [sometimes]</td>
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<td>Signature [sometimes]</td>
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<td>P.S. [sometimes]</td>
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</table>

Sometimes the letter goes on to a second or even third sheet, which is either enclosed in the first bifolium, or placed at last in an envelope. The longest Byron letter that I have encountered so far is the one to John Murray, from Ravenna, August 1st 1819, which is on five sheets.

If he has too little paper to write all that he wants, Byron writes around the margin of side 3, starting at the bottom right-hand corner, curling up the right-hand side, and sometimes continuing inverted across the top and down the left-hand side. Sometimes he adds messages parallel to the address, either above it or below. I have always indicated these things.

Not all letters from Byron are the linear communications previous editors have seemed to indicate, but contain several discrete bundles of text in different places and at different angles.

If Byron leaves much of a letter blank, it’s often a sign that he’s angry with his addressee.

Codes: Names of writer and recipient are in bold type, with location from which sent, and date. (Source is given in round brackets beneath the title: “text from” indicates that the actual source has been seen).

Where the manuscript is the source, the text is left-justified only.
Where the source is a book, the text is left- and right-justified.
[The address, if there is one, is given in square brackets beneath the source]
“1:2” and so on indicates a page-turn on the bifolium.
“1:2 and 1:3 blank” shows that not all the paper has been used.
If Byron goes on to a second bifolium, or a second sheet, it’s an occasion.
The address, if there is no envelope, is normally in the centre of 1:4.

<Authorial deletion>
<xxxxxx> Irrecoverable authorial deletion
<deleted> Infra-red and ultra-violet might reveal something interesting
{Interlineated word or phrase}
E[ditoria]l A[dditio]n
[ ] Illegible
Hyphens: where Byron has split a word over two sides, and used a double hyphen, the effect has been retained. But, as the text is not transcribed on a line-for-line basis (except in the case of Susan Vaughan’s letters for reasons explained at January 12th 1812), hyphens are not used when he splits a word over two lines. See April 3rd 1819 for another letter transcribed line-for-line.

Underlining: sometimes Byron underlines a whole word, sometimes single syllables (for comical effect, as in “Quarterlyers”), sometimes an entire phrase, and sometimes part of a word (from haste). In all cases except the last, where the whole word is underlined, we have tried to keep to his usage, underlining with a single understroke, with two understrokes, with a heavy underlining, or with a decorative line.

Signatures: As time goes on, Byron’s signature becomes less careful, but then recovers. Few of his ways of signing off can be conveyed in print.

“Byron” indicates a word whose second syllable is both underlined and overlined.

“BN” indicates those two letters with different degrees of dash-decoration around them. Sometimes they appear Greek.

“[swirl signature]” indicates a bird’s-nest effect which can with charity be read as a capital “B”.

“[scrawl]” is a long wavy line, often starting as “yrs” but with no other letters decipherable.

After the death of Lady Noel, Byron regains pride in his name, and often signs “N. B.” with a decorative underlining.

Byron’s Most Important Correspondents in this Section

- Alexander Rae (1782-1820), co-stage manager at Drury Lane with Thomas Dibdin
- Annabella Milbanke (1792-1860), soon to be Lady Byron
- Augusta Byron, now Augusta Leigh (1783-1851) Byron’s half-sister; the most important woman in his life
- Charles Dibdin (1768-1833), manager at Drury Lane
- Charles Maturin (1782-1824), Irish writer; author of Bertram
- Claire Clairmont (1798-1879), Byron’s mistress; to be mother of his illegitimate daughter Allegra
- Douglas Kinnaird (1788-1830), Byron’s Cambridge friend and future banker and London agent
- Edmund Kean (1789-1833), actor much admired by Byron
- Edward Daniel Clarke (1769-1822), much-travelled Cambridge don
- Frances Wedderburn Webster (17??-18??), wife to James
- Francis Hodgson (1781-1852), Cambridge friend of Byron
- Harriett Wilson (1786-1845), celebrated courtesan
- Henry Drury (1778-1841), another Harrow friend of Byron
- Isaac d’Israeli (1766-1848), writer
- Isaac Nathan (1790-1864), composer of the Hebrew Melodies
- James Henry Leigh Hunt (1784-1859), radical journalist
- James Hogg (1770-1835), Scots poet
- James Wedderburn Webster (17??-18??), inept friend of Byron
- John Cam Hobhouse (1786-1869), Byron’s close friend and travelling companion; his Napoleonic letters from Paris in this period are not answered by Byron
- John Hanson (17??-1841), Byron’s solicitor and surrogate father
- John Hay (17??-18??), friend of Byron
- John Herman Merivale (17??-18??), author
- John Murray II (1778-1843), Byron’s publisher, 1812-23
- Lady Melbourne (1751-1818), Byron’s confidante
- Lord Holland (1773-1840), leader of the Whigs in the Lords; nephew of Charles James Fox
- Madame de Staël (1766-1817), French authoress
- Mary Chaworth Musters (1785-1832), Byron’s beloved from his Nottinghamshire youth
- Mary Jane Clermont (17??-18??), Lady Byron’s confidante, target of Byron’s irrational hatred
- Matthew Gregory Lewis (1775-1818), author of The Monk and The Castle Spectre
- Robert Charles Dallas (1754-1824), Byron’s early literary adviser, who introduced him to Murray
- Samuel Rogers (1763-1855), English poet, friend of Byron
- Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), poet admired by Byron; author of Christabel
- Sarah Siddons (1755-1831), actress much admired by Byron
- Scrope Berdmore Davies (1782-1852), close Cambridge friend of Byron
Sir James Bland Burges (17??-18??), author
Sir Ralph Noel (17??-18??), Byron’s father-in-law
Susan Boyce (17??-18??), actress, very briefly Byron’s mistress
Thomas Claughton (17??-18??), speculator who tried but failed to buy Newstead Abbey
Thomas Dibdin (1771-1841), actor and playwright, manager at Drury Lane with Alexander Rae
Thomas Moore (1779-1852), Irish poet, close friend of Byron
Thomas Phillips (1770-1845), portrait painter; did the Cloak and Albanian portraits
Walter Scott (1771-1832), the only British writer to rival Byron in fame during this period
William Clark (17??-18??), Cambridge don
William Gifford (1756-1826), Murray’s principal literary adviser; Byron’s “literary father”
William Sotheby (1757-1833), writer; author of Ivan, translator of Wieland’s Oberon

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THE CORRESPONDENCE

1814: On February 1st *The Corsair* sells 10,000 copies on the first day of its publication. However, Byron refuses payment, signing away the copyright to R.C. Dallas. Up to 1816 he persistently refuses payment for his poems, but Murray pays him anyway. Byron takes an apartment in the Albany. He writes *Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte*, expressing partial disillusionment with the man who has hitherto been his hero. *Lara* is published on August 6th. In October he starts *Hebrew Melodies*, in collaboration with Isaac Nathan. In December he travels with Hobhouse to Seaham, County Durham, to marry Annabella Milbanke.

From the correspondence of Robert Southey, 1814-1816:

Grosvenor Bedford to Robert Southey, January 12th 1814:
(Source: Bodleian M.S. English Letters d.52.48)

Murray¹ is in the language of Captain Fluellen “an ass and a fool and a prating coxcomb”² and thinks that a review of an unpublished book³ cannot be given in the Quarterly, but Gifford wishes you to go on and will decide upon its insertion when he sees the article.

Robert Southey to Neville White, April 29th 1814:
(Source: CSS IV 73.)

The Laureateship will certainly have this effect upon me, that it will make me produce more poetry than I otherwise should have done. For many years I had written little, and was permitting other studies to wean me from it more and more. But it would be unbecoming to accept the only public

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¹: John Murray, B.’s publisher and founder of the *Quarterly Review*, often gets the sharp edge of both poets’ pens.
²: *Henry V*, IV i 76.
³: S. is setting up his best friend to review his latest work, *Roderick, Last of the Goths.*
mark of honour which is attached to the pursuit, and at the same time withdraw from the profession. I am therefore reviving half-forgotten plans, forming new ones, and studying my old masters with almost as much ardour and assiduity as if I were young again. Some of Henry’s papers yonder strikingly resemble what I used to do twenty years ago, and what I am beginning to do again.

Thank you for Lord Byron’s Ode: the there is in it, as in all his poems, great life, spirit, and originality, though the meaning is not always brought out with sufficient perspicuity. The last time I saw him he asked me if I did not think Bonaparte a great man in his villany. I told him no, – that he was a mean-minded villain. And Lord Byron has now been brought to the same opinion. But of politics in my next.

Byron to John Herman Merivale, early 1814:
(Source: this text from BLJ IV 12)
Murray has just published Merivale’s Orlando in Roncesvalles, a version in ottava rima of part of Pulci’s Morgante Maggiore, the first canto of which B. later translates.

My dear Merivale—I have redde Roncesvaux with very great pleasure and (if I were so disposed) see very little room for Criticism —there is a choice of two lines in one of ye. last C[antos] I think “Live & protect[”] better because “Oh who[?]” implies a doubt of Roland’s power or inclination.—I would allow ye.—but that point you yourself must determine on—I mean the doubt as to where to place a part of the poem—whether between the actions or no—only if you wish to have all the success you deserve—never listen to friendsand as I am not the least troublesome of the number—least of all to me.—I hope you will be out soon[.] March Sir—March is the month—the teeming time for the trade & they must be considered.—You have written a very noble poem & nothing but the detestable taste of the day can do you harm—but I think you will beat it—your measure is uncommonly well chosen & wielded.—[end of letter missing in MS.]

Byron to John Murray, from London , January 1814:
(Source: Harry Ransom Center, Texas, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ IV 11)
The change or erratum Byron refers to here is for either The Giaour or The Corsair.

Dear Sir /

I send you one more after thought – if possible – (and even in an erratum if too late for the body corporate) insert it – as it is on a topic which it was almost inexcusable to forget ever yth. B.

P.S. –

One line in answer with a pencil. –

Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, January 2nd 1814:
(Source: not in Moore’s Life; not yet found in NLS Acc.12604 / 4159; BLJ IV 13)
This is the Dedication to The Corsair.

January 2d. 1814

My dear Moore – I dedicate to you the last production with which I shall trespass on public patience, and your indulgence for some years – and I own that I feel anxious to avail myself of this latest & only opportunity of adorning my pages with a name consecrated by unshaken public principle & the most undoubted and various talents. While Ireland ranks you among the firmest of her patriots – while you stand alone, the first of her bards in her estimation and Britain repeats and ratifies the decree – permit one whose only regret since our first acquaintance has been the years he had lost before it commenced – to add the humble but sincere suffrage of Friendship to the voice of more than one Nation. – – It will at least prove to you that I have neither forgotten the gratification derived from your society nor abandoned the prospect of it’s renewal when your leisure or inclination allow you to atone to your friends for too long an absence. – It is said among those friends – I trust truly – that you are engaged in the composition of a poem whose scene will be laid in the East – none can do those scenes so much justice. – – The wrongs of your own Country – the magnificent and fiery spirit of her sons – the beauty and feeling of her daughters may there be found – and Collins when he denominated his Oriental his Irish Eclogues was not aware how true at least a part of his parallel. – – Your Imagination will create a warmer Sun & less clouded sky – but wildness tenderness and originality are part of your national claim of Oriental descent to which you have already thus far provided your title more clearly than the

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4: B.’s Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte, published April 16th 1814.
most zealous of your Country’s Antiquarians. – May I add a few words on a subject on which all are said to be fluent and none agreeable? – Self. – I have written much & published more than enough to demand a longer silence than I now meditate – but for some years to come it is my intention to tempt no further the award of “Gods – men – nor columns.” – In the present composition I have attempted not the most difficult but perhaps the best adapted measure to our language – the good old and now neglected heroic couplet – the Stanza of Spenser is perhaps too slow and dignified for narrative – though I confess it is the measure most after my own heart – and Scott alone (he will excuse the Mr. “we do not say Mr. Caesar”) Scott alone of the present generation has hitherto completely triumphed over the fatal facility of the octosyllabic verse – and this is not the least victory of his varied mighty Genius. – In Blank verse – Milton Thomson and our Dramatists are the beacons that shine along the deep but warn us from the rough & barren rock on which they are kindled. – The heroic couplet is not the most popular measure certainly – but as I did not deviate into the other from a wish to flatten what is called public opinion I shall quit it without further apology & take my chance once more with that versification in which I have hitherto published nothing but compositions whose former circulation is part of my present & future regret. – With regard to my story – & stories in general, I should have been glad to have rendered my personages more perfect & amiable if possible – inasmuch as I have been sometimes criticised & considered no less responsible for their deeds & qualities than if all had been personal. Be it so – if I have deviated into the gloomy vanity of “drawing from self” the pictures are probably like since they are unfavourable – and if not – those who know me are undeceived – and those who do not – I have little interest in undeceiving. – I have no particular desire that any but my acquaintance should think the author better than the beings of his imagining – but I cannot help a little surprize & perhaps amusement at some odd exceptions in the present instance – when several (far more deserving I allow) poets in every good plight & quite exempted from all participation in the faults of those heroes who nevertheless might be found with little more morality than “The Giaour” and perhaps – but No – I must admit Childe Harold to be a very repulsive personage – and as to his identity – those who like it must give him whatever “Alias” they please. – If however anything could remove the impression it may be of some service to me – that the Man who is alike the delight of his readers and his friends – the poet of all circles – and the idol of his own – permits me here & elsewhere to subscribe myself

most truly & affectionately his servant

Byron

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Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, January 6th 1814:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 515-16; LJ III 5-7; QI 259; BLJ IV 16-17)

January 6. 1814.

I have got a devil of a long story in the press, entitled ‘The Corsair,’ in the regular heroic measure. It is a pirate’s isle, peopled with my own creatures, and you may easily suppose they do a world of mischief through the three cantos. Now for your dedication—if you will accept it. This is positively my last experiment on public literary opinion, till I turn my thirtieth year,—if so be I flourish until that downhill period. I have a confidence for you—a perplexing one to me, and, just at present, in a state of abeyance in itself. * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

However, we shall see. In the mean time, you may amuse yourself with my suspense, and put all the justices of peace in requisition, in case I come into your county with ‘hackbut bent.’

Seriously, whether I am to hear from her or him, it is a pause, which I shall fill up with as few thoughts of my own as I can borrow from other people. Any thing is better than stagnation; and now, in the interregnum of my autumn and a strange summer adventure, which I don’t like to think of, (I don’t mean [Caroline Lamb]’s, however, which is laughable only,) the antithetical state of my lucubrations makes me alive, and Macbeth can ‘sleep no more;’—he was lucky in getting rid of the drowsy sensation of waking again.

Pray write to me. I must send you a copy of the letter of dedication. When do you come out? I am sure we don’t clash this time, for I am all at sea, and in action,—and a wife, and a mistress, &c. &c.

Thomas, thou art a happy fellow; but if you wish us to be so, you must come up to town, as you did last year: and we shall have a world to say, and to see, and to hear. Let me hear from you.

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5: Horace, Ars Poetica, 373; compare TJOJ 91, 8.
6: See N&Q 1909 s10-XII 289.
7: Shakespeare, Macbeth II ii 34 et seq.
P.S. Of course you will keep my secret, and don’t even talk in your sleep of it. Happen what may, your dedication is ensured, being already written; and I shall copy it out fair to-night, in case business or amusement—Amant alterna Camœnæ.\(^8\)

Byron to Augusta Leigh, from London, January 1814[?]

(Source: text from B.L.Add.Mss.31037 f.15; BLJ IV 25-6)

P.S –

Can you tell me – (but that may be done on meeting) how much G– owes – – I trust on Cn’s\(^9\) paying the residue – I shall be able to make some arrangement – for him – but at all events you & the Children shall be properly taken care of. – what I did for him might be seized &c. anything done for yourself would be safer & more advantageous to both. –

[second side blank.]

John Cam Hobhouse to Byron, from Frankfurt-am-Main, January 7th 1814:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43441 f.32; BB 117-19)

[To, / The Lord Byron.]

Hobhouse’s second and last letter to Byron from abroad.

[letter concludes at top of first sheet:] curiosity, which is to the banks of the Rhine to see Mayence – tomorrow I return to this town, and the day after set off for Holland – Travelling in Germany is bad at any time but at this season intolerable and very slow yet I count that three weeks will bring me to Helvotsluys. Pray leave word at Murray’s where you are to be found. I have thought it best to direct this letter under cover to him. If you can, give me one line directed to Mon. Mon. H. Gentilhomme Anglais, poste restante Helvotsluys – ever most affectionately & faithfully your’s, John C. Hobhouse

Frankfort on the Main, Jan. 7. 1813\(^10\)

Although my dear Byron, not a line not a single line from you has arrived to cheer me during a most tedious peregrination from the Baltic to the Adriatic and back again to the rag-covered plains of Saxony, I shall not conclude myself forgotten, but write as if I were as fresh on your remembrance as you are in mine – Were I inclined to let you slip from my memory, I assure you it would not be easy even here, for notwithstanding the rigour of the then Continental system I found on entering Austria some months ago that your name and reputation had been smuggled into Vienna, and I am now many deep in promises to convey to the forts esprits of that place your childe\(^11\) – The Giaour will soon be there for I have got it here\(^12\) – – – I reserve all my congratulation on that subject for my first sight of you, yet as old friends must now & then be allowed to speak their mind without fear of imputed flattery, I cannot help telling you that I think your Kashmeer butterfly, the very prettiest insect in all poetry.\(^13\) That palid double faced fellow Sam Rogers must be highly delighted, and I own I hate him worse than ever. Thank God it is impossible to mewl more maukishly

1:2

than does the same sallow faced fellow in his Columbiad – I trust you have received the many notices I have sent you formerly of my proceedings – All notion of going into Greece at present must be frustrated for the plague is raging in European Turkey to an extent positively unknown even in that pestilential country – At Constantinople last year died 375,000 people, which, when you consider that only 60,000 were carried off by what we call the Great Plague in London, is a most monstrous draft upon human life. A M’ Moore a friend of mine,\(^14\) who lately came from that city across Wallachia Transilvania & Hungary to Vienna told me that he had one of his Janissaries drop dead from his horse, that he never passed a village without encountering the pest cart full of dead, and that in short the

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8: Virgil, Eclogue III, 59 (“singing by turns the Muses’ love”).
9: “Claughton’s”.
10: For “1814”.
11: The diary mentions no such forts esprits.
12: The diary has not mentioned it except at November 16th, where all it says is “Giaour, fifth edition”.
13: The first public edition of The Giaour was published on June 5th 1813, after Ho. left England; and the fifth edition, to which he refers on November 16th, in early September.
14: See diary for November 14th.
whole country from the capital to the frontiers is one large lazaret – A double line of troops guard the
Austrian boundary and the quarantine is 41 days – Amongst the particulars – he informed me that the
Morea is infected in every part. Albania is defended by troops – Ali suffers no one to enter – we know
he let no one go out before so that his dominions must be more of the dungeon than ever. Athens is a
little better off than its neighbourhood – The plain of Troy is entirely depopulated – You cannot
in short go to Turkey now, you must content yourself with the narrow limits of Christendom – I will
give you reasons enough when I see you to determine your choice – although to be sure I cannot say I
have received much delight from my Dutch expedition – It is not worth while to say the thing which is
not to you, but indeed my dear Byron, you have been the cause of a great deal of my discontent – it will
not flatter you to hear it from such a one as myself, but never was man so missed as yourself – old
habits had taught me to look for a friend by my side, in the dull monotony of locomotion, and I assure
you my former companion gained very much by a comparison with those who have been the partners
of my steps during this Journey – I should certainly have been in England in the beginning of
November or the middle of that month at farthest, had not a most distressing circumstance occurred in
the form of a rumour which made me miserable for a longer space than any known fact has ever been
able to affect me.15 The presence of my old acquaintance Baillie & the company of one or two very
agreeable companions went no way towards consoling me for what I supposed the loss of the only
person in the world who cares a farthing about me (for I have long felt secure of your regard, and the
assurance has always made & still makes the best part of my happiness) – It has not been until very
lately that I have dared trust myself with the persuasion that this report & the thousands of forebodings
then recalled to my recollection, were unfounded. For weeks and weeks your name which had been so
often in my mind

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often in my mind

[above address:] never escaped my lips nor those of my fellow travellers – nor had I ever courage to
enquire directly into the truth of a fact the very suspicion of which had given me such painful alarms.
No wonder I did not for three months write a single letter –16 I can scarcely at this time persuade myself
that I may again indulge in an occupation which has always afforded me so much [below address:]
delight. Now that every fear has vanished the impression still remains, and so little inclined am I to
render it more lively, that after having thus accounted to you for my silence, no hint or allusion either
by word or letter will on my part renew so distressing a topic – did not you know me, and my affection
I should not have said so much – I am now on my return to England and shall see you I trust in three
weeks. This letter which goes by the post will be my forerunner only a few days. This morning I take
my last trip of [letter concludes at top of first sheet]

Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, January 7th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 517n; BLJ IV 18)

January 7. 1814.

My dear Moore,
I had written to you a long letter of dedication, which I suppress,17 because, though it contained
something relating to you which every one had been glad to hear, yet there was too much about
politics, and poesy, and all things whatsoever, ending with that topic on which most men are fluent, and
none very amusing—one’s self. It might have been re-written—but to what purpose? My praise could
add nothing to your well-earned and firmly-established fame; and with my most hearty admiration of
your talents, and delight in your conversation, you are already acquainted. In availing myself of your
friendly permission to inscribe this poem to you, I can only wish the offering were as worthy your
acceptance as your regard is dear to,

Yours, most affectionately and faithfully,

BYRON.

Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, January 8th 1814:

15: A pencilled note on the Ms. says, “The Rumour was Byron had committed Suicide – I remember J.Hanson”.
H. refers to the report of B.’s death which heard on board the Wizard on September 27th.
16: B. hadn’t written to H. for three months before, either.
17: The Dedication was not suppressed.
January 8, 1814.

As it would not be fair to press you into a dedication, without previous notice, I send you two, and I will tell you why two. The first, Mr. M[urray]., who sometimes takes upon him the critic (and I bear it from astonishment), says, may do you harm—God forbid!—this alone makes me listen to him. The fact is, he is a damned Tory, and has, I dare swear, something of self, which I cannot divine, at the bottom of his objection, as it is the allusion to Ireland to which he objects. But he be d——d—though a good fellow enough (your sinner would not be worth a d——n).

Take your choice;—no one, save he and Mr. Dallas, has seen either, and D[allas], is quite on my side, and for the first. If I can but testify to you and the world how truly I admire and esteem you, I shall be quite satisfied. As to prose, I don’t know Addison’s from Johnson’s; but I will try to mend my cacology. Pray perpend, 18 pronounce, and don’t be offended with either.

My last epistle would probably put you in a fidget. But the devil, who ought to be civil on such occasions, proved so, and took my letter to the right place.

Is it not odd?—the very fate I said she had escaped from * *, she has now undergone from the worthy * *. Like Mr. Fitzgerald, shall I not lay claim to the character of ‘Vates’?—as he did in the Morning Herald for prophesying the fall of Buonaparte,—who, by the by, I don’t think is yet fallen. I wish he would rally and route your legitimate sovereigns, having a mortal hate to all royal entails.—But I am scrawling a treatise. Good night.

Ever, &c.

John Murray to Byron, from 50 Albemarle Street London, June or January 1814:

My Lord,

I am truly anxious to know of your personal safety during this weather of turbulence & disaster19—only three Mails had arrived at 3 oClock today.

I called upon M’ Gifford today & he expresses himself quite delighted with the annexed Poems most particularly with—the Song from the Portuguese20 & the stanzas to a “Lady weeping” the latter however he thinks you ought to slip quietly amongst the Poems in Childe Harold for <this is> the present work is to be read by women & the lines would disturb the poetical feeling21—& as it has been already published in a Newspaper22 it does not accord with your character to appear to think too much of it—If you allow me I should transfer it to Childe Harold23 & insert the Impromptu24 in its place.

M’ Dallas has sent his proofs with about 200 alterations of the pointings merely now as Gifford made nearly as many – I could not venture so direct an affront upon him as to overturn all that his care has taken

Allow me the pleasure of hearing from your Lordship as early as convenient – M’ Moore returned his proof to me without a correction

1:2

fer it to Childre Harold23 & insert the Impromptu24 in its place.

I hope to go to press immediately upon receipt of Your Lordships letter – M’. Gifford is really delighted

I remain in haste

most faithfully,

Yr Lordships

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18: Shakespeare, Hamlet, II ii 105.
19: Mu. may refer to B.’s association with Caroline Lamb, which is causing everyone much stress.
20: From the Portuguese was first published with CHP I and II.
21: G.’s advice was ignored (unless by “slip amongst” Mu. means “remove from”), and Lines to a Lady Weeping was first published with The Corsair on February 1st 1814. It is, of course, very much a woman’s poem. Mu. is postponing a decision over the poem, which was sensitive politically.
22: Lines to a Lady Weeping had appeared first in the Morning Chronicle for March 7th 1812.
23: CHP I and II had been published on March 12th 1812. 6,500 copies were printed in that year.
24: Impromptu in Reply to a Friend was printed with CHP I and II.
Byron to Edward Daniel Clarke, from London, January 10th 1814:
(Source: Houghton; text from Byron Journal 36 No 2 2008, p.144; transcription by Andrew Stauffer)

My dear Sir.

Many thanks for Sadi, yourself and your harmonious namesake – to the two last I am infinitely indebted as I mean to be to the former. – Fogs, journeys and business have hitherto prevented the due acknowledgements for your kindness which to me has been uniform and deeply felt since our first acquaintance. Dr. C. has sent me the Music for which I return him my most sincere thanks – if the works from which he has honoured me by taking ye words are deemed worthy his acceptance I will take an early opportunity of sending him ye latest Ens of all – C H is at present out of print but Mr. Murray talks of an illustrated En & in that case I should wish my friends to have copies with Stothard’s designs. –

I preserve your seal (the Paphian) with great care – it is a most agreeable impression & confirmation of my text – for I was rather afraid that passage would be unintelligible at least to the uninitiated. ——

Pray when will you be out – ? is this next the closing volume? – there are enquiries I hear made – & should wish to be able to answer. –

Ever your obliged & faithful Serv’t.
Byron

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from London, January 12th 1814:
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4149C; 1922 I 229-31; BLJ IV 26-7)

More letters one – two – three – from C. who wants pictures – forgiveness – praise for forbearance – promise of future confidence – and God knows what beside with leave to shew some elderly gentleman of wit and discretion the “Curse of Minerva.” – She may shew him the “Curse of Car” – or whatever she pleases – and may tell him the same long story she did to Sheridan the other day – I really believe her shortest & best way <but> would be to print it as her recitations are endless – and I think she never will rest till she or M. de Stael have it circulated through regenerated Germany – where she may enjoy the honours of Suicide till a happy old age. – – But a truce with these fooleries – I must not – & can not write – and as to pictures I have no time to sit for a Sign Post. –

1:2

Just as I had got her quite out of my head – and she was quietly disposed with you <all> and every one else – here she comes again – it is too late – and never was an> more unlucky moment – as it happens that the least additional drop will make my cup run over – and any irritation – revenge her amply – but certainly at the same time separate her and you and me beyond ye. possibility of reunion – for the remainder of our lives. – – –

I don’t think mine will be a long one (this you will think like her – but I don’t allude to Suicide – that is weak – and if I were inclined that way it would never be from the pressure of pain – but satiety of pleasure) because from mere common causes & effects it cannot last – I began very early & very violently – and alternate extremes of excess and abstinence have utterly destroyed – oh! unsentimental word! – my stomach – and as Lady Oxford used seriously to say a broken heart means nothing but bad digestion.

25: Famous Persian poet: on B.’s juvenile Reading List.
26: B. refers to John Clark, later Professor of Music.
27: B. refers to Clarke’s six-volume Travels, the second volume of which came out in 1816.
I am one day in high health – and the next on fire or ice – in short I shall turn hypochondriacal – or dropsical – whimsical I am already – but don’t let me turn go [get] tragical. – – The last dangerous illness I had was a fever in the Morea in 1811 – this very month – and what do you suppose was the effect? – I really can’t tell you – but it is perfectly true – that at the time when I myself thought & everyone else thought I was dying – – I had very nearly made my exit like some “just man” whom a King of Poland envied. – – – You will not believe this – but pray confine your scepticism to any good you may hear of me – I think you have seen that in <most of> my statements to you – truth has been the basis – you do not know how uncomfortable the doubts (not yours) about M. 28 had made me – you have now perceived that we were “inmates of the same house” and I think you may also see that she was not ignorant that I was attached to her, I never said that it was returned.

however in a boyish & girlish way I might fancy it. – Heigh ho! – well – it does not much matter – but if I could begin life again – there is much of it I would pass in the same manner. – – I leave town on Sunday or Monday next – and will write to you from Newstead – if you can pacify C. and keep her in her good resolutions you will do her a service – as for me I am not worth serving nor preserving. – –

By the bye – don’t you pity poor Napoleon – and are these your heroes? – Commend me to the Romans – or Macbeth – or Richard 3rd – this man’s spirit seems broken – it is but a bastard devil at last – and a sad whining example to your future Conquerors – it will work a moral revolution – he must feel doubtless – <but> if he did not there would be little merit in insensibility – but why shew it to the world – a thorough mind would either rise from the rebound or at least go out “with harness on it’s back.” – – – –

ever yrs.

[swirl signature]

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from London, January 13th 1814:
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4149C; 1922 I 231-3; QI 261-3; BLJ IV 27-30)

Jan'y 13th 1814

My dear L. M. –

I do not see how you could well have said less – and that I am not angry may be proved by my saying a word more on ye subject. – You are quite mistaken however as to her – and it must be from some misrepresentation of mine that you throw the blame so completely on the side least deserving and least able to bear it – I dare say I made the best of my own story as one always does from natural selfishness without intending it – but it was not her fault – but my own folly (give it what name may suit it better) and her weakness – for – the intentions of both were very different and for some time adhered to – & when not it was entirely my own – in short I know no name for my own conduct. – Pray do not speak so harshly of her to me – the cause of all – – –

1:2

particularly C. – . – As to manner – mine is the same to anyone I know or like – and I am almost sure less marked to her than to you – besides any constraint or reserve would appear much more extraordinary than the reverse – until something more than manner is ascertainable. – Nevertheless I heartily wish M’. de Stael at the Devil – with her observations – I am certain I did not see her – and she might as well have had something else to do with her eyes than to observe people at so respectful a distance. – – –

So “Ph is out of my thoughts” – in the first place if she were out of them – she had probably not found a place in my words – and in the next – she has no claim – if people will stop at the first tense of the verb “aimer” they must not be surprised if one finishes the conjugation with somebody else. – “How

28: Mary Chaworth-Musters.
29: Shakespeare, Macbeth, V v 52.
soon I get the better of – in the name of S. Francis and his wife of Snow\(^{30}\) – and Pygmalion & his statue what was there here to get the better of? – a few kisses for which

1:3

she was no worse – and I no better. – Had the event been different – so would my subsequent resolutions & feelings – for I am neither ungrateful – nor at all disposed to be disappointed – on the contrary I do firmly believe – that I have often only begun to love – at the very time I have heard people say that some dispositions become indifferent. – – – – –

Besides – her fool of a husband – and my own recent good resolutions – and a mixture of different piques and mental stimulants together with something not unlike encouragement on her part – led me into that foolish business – out of which the way is quite easy – and I really do not see that I have much to reproach myself with on her account – if you think differently pray say so. – As to M\(^{31}\). C—

\[\begin{align*}
1:4
\end{align*}\]

I do verily believe you hope otherwise – as a means of improving {me} – but I am sunk in my own estimation – and care of course very little for that of others. – –

As to Ph – she will end as all women in her situation do – it is impossible she can care about a man who acted so weakly as I did with regard to herself. – –

What a fool I am – I have been interrupted by a visitor who is just gone – & have been laughing this half hour at a thousand absurdities as if I had nothing serious to think about.

y\(^{9}\). ever

[swirl signature]

P.S.

Another epistle from M – my answer must be under cover to “dear friend” who is doing or suffering a folly – what can she (Miss R)\(^{32}\) be about? – the only thing that could make it look ill – is mystery – I wrote to her and franked – thinking there was no need of concealment – and indeed conceiving the affection of it an impertinence. – but she desires me not – and I obey – I suspect R\(^{33}\) of wishing to make a scene between him & me {out of dislike to both!} – but that shall not prevent me from going a moment – I shall leave town on Sunday. – – –

\[\begin{align*}
\text{[page missing:]} \quad \text{pantomime – I don’t think I laughed once save in soliloquy for ten days – which you know who me won’t believe (every one else thinks me the most gloomy of existences) we used to sit & look at one another – except in duetto & then even our serious nonsense was not fluent – to be sure our gestures were rather more sensible – the most amusing part was the interchange of notes – for we sat up all night scribbling to each other – & came down like Ghosts in the morning – I shall never forget the quiet manner in which she would pass her epistles in a music book – or any book – looking in – – [Webster]’s face with great tranquillity the whole time – & taking mine in the same way – once she offered one as I was leading her to dinner at N[ewstead] – all the servants before – & W[ebster] & sister close behind – to take it was impossible – and how she was to retain it without pockets – was equally perplexing – I had the cover of a letter from Claughton in mine – and gave it to her saying “there is the Frank for Ly. Water[ford?] you asked for” she returned it with the note beneath with – “it is dated wrong – alter it tomorrow” and W[ebster] complaining that women did nothing but scribble – wondered how people could have the patience to frank & alter franks – and then happily digressed to the day of the month – fish sauce – good wine – & bad weather. – – Your “matrimonial ladder” wants but one more descending step – “d — nation” I wonder how the carpenter omitted it – it amused me much. – I wish I were married – I don’t care about beauty nor subsequent virtue – nor much about fortune – I have made up my mind to share the decorations of my betters – but I should like – let me see
\end{align*}\]

\(^{30}\): Compare DJ I 64.4, or VI 17.6.

\(^{31}\): Mary Chaworth-Musters.

\(^{32}\): Miss Radford.

\(^{33}\): Radford.
liveliness – gentleness – cleanliness – & something of comeliness – & my own first born – was ever
man more moderate? what do you think of my “Bachelor’s wife”? What a letter have I written”]

**Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, January 13th 1814:**
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 518-19; BLJ IV 30)

January 13. 1814.

I have but a moment to write, but all is as it should be. I have said really far short of my opinion, but if
you think enough, I am content. Will you return the proof by the post, as I leave town on Sunday, and
have no other corrected copy. I put ‘servant,’ as being less familiar before the public; because I don’t
like presuming upon our friendship to infringe upon forms. As to the other word, you may be sure it is
one I cannot hear or repeat too often.

I write in an agony of haste and confusion.—Perdonate.

**Lady Melbourne to Byron, January 16th 1814:**
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4150A; Gross 159-60)

16th Jan’ 1814

Dear L[d] B—

“This oath though sworn by one has bound us both”34 – rather wild even in theory! but must be
sd by a person quite ignorant of the practise in such cases – how you might be bound without even
knowing it – & to what – really to be constant – does not this frighten you – the word itself must be
discordant to your Ears – don’t you blush at the question that follows “are you my <L>?” <how> {in
what manner} could you answer this Letter? I wish I had seen it – You could not even make use of
your favorite basis – truth – not even swear to it in ‘motley guise.’ You must have given it up entirely,
or talk’d entirely of the past – perhaps that may have satisfied this poor little ignorant Girl,35 – There is
much simplicity in many parts of her Letter – & I am very sorry for her, as I believe she is very sincere
– & you must believe that she loves you dearly, – tho’ you will hardly own it to yourself, you have
imbibed such ideas of the deceit practiced by all Women, – that you would never confess y’t you, had any

1:2
dependance upon their constancy – & yet such things have come to pass – & from all I have heard &
known of her character & her actions, I am impress’d with a belief that all she says is true, & that she is
not at all as you express’d yourself {to me} in one of your former Letters “embarassed with her
constancy” – & my opinion is that you never were so loved before as you would know better how to
appreciate her feelings — after all this I think her a little childish, & now & then tiresome, that may
proceed from being restless & dissatisfied with herself —— how curious the account you give me of y’
being seen at N – but do you believe that I think you have no feeling – because if so, you wrong me
very much – I never was acquainted with any person who had so much – I have s’d it over & over
again, when ever I have conversed Seriously about you – & must I think have told it you.

I am curious to know, why she conceal’d what she had seen from Ph36 – she seems to me an
unamiable person – I have never heard a hint about Ph except from C who would have s’d it about any
body ——

You ask me how she37 goes on? in better humour, & I hope will be quiet at least for a little while, – she
ask’d me the other Night

1:3

whether you had written another poem – as Me de Stael in a Letter had ask’d her if she had seen it –
This I know was not true but merely to bring up y’ Name – I s’d dryly enough that I had not heard any
thing one way or the other – she then s’d she believed she had been very much misrepresented to you,
for she had reasons to think you were angry with her – but she shd let it rest as it was, without
enquirig further. – I said I thought her very right, as it was the purpose of the Message I had deliver’d
by y’ desire, & which put her into such a passion she s’d. it was Mad. de Stael that had driven her into a

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34: *The Bride of Abydos*, ll.349-60: “that sacred oath, / Though sworn by one, hath bound us both”.
35: Frances Wedderburn Webster.
36: Frances Wedderburn Webster.
37: This “she” is Caroline Lamb.
frenzy. I said that would not do for me, as I knew the humor she was in before M de Stael came here – but I declined any further conversations upon the Subject – & never would talk to her about you. – she owned she behaved very ill but she hop’d I forgave her – I believed I never Should, that there were things never be forgiven. She said she had written a detail of reports that had been made to her, which would be given me if she died, & that I should see how she had been work’d upon.

The idea of her leaving a paper for me to see, made me laugh & some one coming into your room, ended our conversation which she has not resumed, but is cheerful enough to be very tiresome with her theory’s and her discussions which she is continually beginning & always turn upon some supposed ill usage, which Women receive from Men, evidently alluding to you.

Certainly her Theorys & your Ethics as you say, are extraordinary – but whether I draw the conclusion from them which you Suppose

is what I can not tell, as it is not decided in my own Mind – I am very glad I have knowledge enough to understand yrs – so far I know. – You may envy the R the Visit he is going to make, as it might be rather pleasant than otherwise to you to see me – but you are mistaken if you think any part of his former Life ever was enviable – unless rank & power is look’d up to – – he never was liked which may seem strange to you who have such Numbers who doat upon you – but it is nevertheless true – & if ever we Should have an opportunity of conversing together upon indifferent Subjects I will convince you of it not only in one instance, but in Several – I believe I shall have L B here to meet him – I think a & this cold weather together a great deal too much to bear – for I can do nothing but Sit in the Fire, & even then I am frozen however I wish it may last during your Journey as it will be much better travelling than if it was to thaw. – What odd things happen, Lewis, & Mrs. Fitzherbert have both proposed themselves to me, not knowing he was coming. The first of ye two tells me he quarrelled at Oatlands with M de Stael – she was in a passion, he laugh’d, she said his “rire” showed her he was “inferieur” mais “tres inferieur” – she talk’d loud, so did he, & the Singers at the other end of the room could not hear

one another & were obliged to Stop — I wish I had seen it – there never was such a person for tracasseries as she is – There are two in love C – which I could explain, but shall not, as it would produce ten more so I remain Silent – which I may as well practice at this moment towards you – as I run on Strangely whenever I write to you

Ever yours

[swirl]

Lady Melbourne to Byron, January 19th-25th 1814:
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4150A; Gross 160-3)
[The Lord Byron / Newstead Abbey / Nottingham]

Jan'y 19th 1814

Dear L B.

I think you would proceed so far on your Journey on Monday – that even this very deep snow, would not prevent your reaching N – & shall therefore send you a few Lines in answer to your last Letter. I am certain you have no such trick as M de S. described unless you have acquired it since we last parted. probably it was the brilliancy of her Eyes, that had the same effect upon yrs that the Sun has upon an Owls – or still more probably she stared at you with such determined effrontery, that the Family Shyness induced you to shun her observation. Seriously tho’ – I would tell you if I had observed any peculiarity of the Sort, but I have always seen your Eyes so open, that I can not assert that you have the power of Shutting them, & have never even seen your {Eyes} look Sleepy, or heavy – {or} half closed, or {you} Wink or blink in any manner–

1:2

38: Hobhouse records, on June 1st 1814, “Caroline Lamb marked me out for all sorts of attentions – she would insist on taking me home in her carriage and setting me down at my own door – her maid was with her. She told me Madame de Stael used to embrace her very often, and seemed to like it very much.”
39: The Prince Regent.
it is only when Eyes are not sufficiently expressive to convey their meaning, that such aid is requisite – I take some credit to myself for discovering that it would be difficult for you – Yourself – to answer Ph’s Letter; those who believe in C— think falsehood is so easy to you that you prefer it to truth – you see I judged otherwise – what another? a Young one coming up in Succession not contented with five or six I know of – & twenty I don’t – You are looking after another? – {well} be it so – & I only pray that this one may go on – as it will settle all the others in the best manner possible – what is she 14 or 15? & you say a fool – how should you know? believe me tho’ so Young, she is old enough to conceal a great deal of her Character there is so much Shyness at that Age, in general, that it obscures all their Ideas, & hardly knowing them, they can speak clearly on no Subject, – if she has no prevalent unamiable qualities it is most likely she will turn out well, when these appear it is hopeless for living in yª World generally increases them & only Softens them in appearance, Witness C—

1:3

I see the Night is so very severe that I shall not send this Letter the Man may lose the Bag in a Snow drift, & I shall have the Letters found & brought back to the House & examin’d a Week hence – so I will {not} run the risk but to morrow – –

25th Jan'+

by this date you will perceive how long this letter has lain in my drawer, but the Post has been so irregular, from the roads being Stop’d in that I have had no opportunity of sending it; every Evening there have been questions about sending yª Letters & often examinations, to see, whether it was necessary they should go that day, which has prevented my finishing my Letter —— in the mean time, where are you? I am quite anxious to know, but still hope you have perform’d your Journey before the Weather was so very bad – & that you have been sitting over a warm fire, & have only seen the Snow at a distance, I envy you the good Nott’re Coals – which I think the best in the World, & which I always regret do not come up by the Canal as well as the Staffordshire which are much

1:4

inferior – it is rather extraordinary having hit upon such a Subject in a Letter to you but if ever one is to think of Coals or fire or Warmth, it seems justifiable at this moment for really I have been frozen all this last Week – & this is the first day the weather seems at all settled – but to return to our usual topics, I have at last wrung from you a confession that you believe Ph Sincere. I have no doubt of the fact, but I think your reason a bad one. You Estimate the force & truth of a person’s liking by the imprudences they commit (C— always told me so) – now I think it a false way of judging – & that a persons conduct in such Situations depends upon their character – a Woman who respects les bienseances – & is driven from them, by a Strong passion, gives you the greatest proof of attachment – but she still adheres to propriety & decorum in trifles, when she has given it up in reality: & is much more to be relied upon & believed than one of those light whimsical Ladies who defy the World & run headlong into every sort of imprudence – & then call it violent Love

2:1

which cannot be controu’d – I think Ph’s deserves that name – You differ from me I know, because you have as yet only seen one Sort of Woman – or to express myself more clearly Women of one turn of mind – I think you may understand what I mean & your Anger with Ph convinces me I am right – – I long to hear something upon which I can found some opinion of M – & as probably you are at present engross’d entirely by yr friendship – I shall say no more of the others – les Autres (dans le grand plural) how odd that Sounds. & yet you have some pretensions to Sentiment!! – according to your own Acceptation of yª Word –

If you should not be detain’d in Nott – I shall see you sooner than I expected for we are not to remain much longer here – I shall therefore only say one word on ye Subject of the person you say you envy – would you envy any one who like another, who never had the least liking, I could almost say toleration for them? – If you have any reliance

2:2

upon my Veracity – You must believe that, – why should I deny it? have never denied other things, & why should I that? I certainly from some strange circumstances – got myself into a disagreeable
embarrassment, but from which I extricated myself as Speedily as it was possible; & which altogether
makes an odd history – & which it is no wonder should be misreprented in yᵉ World, as I assure {you} that I never told half so much to any one person as I have to you, but have always allow’d every body
to make their own comments, without ever trying to set them right – the Post is just going – believe me
Yᵉ ever,
[swirl]
I think if you had I should have heard of either from you or from others, so I shall
2:3
direct to Nⁿ – you accuse me wrongfully when you think yᵗ what I sᵈ about Selfishness was ironical

February 1st 1814: The Corsair published.

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, February 2nd 1814:
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4161A; Smiles I 223-4; LJM 72-3)

My Lord
I have been unwilling to write until I had something to say, an occasion to which I do not
always restrict myself –
I am most happy to tell you that your Lordships last Poem⁴⁰ is – what Mr Southey’s is called – a Carmen Triumphale – never in my recollection has any work since the Letter of Burke to the Duke of Bedford excited such a ferment – a ferment which I am happy to say will subside into lasting fame – I
sold on the Day of Publication, a thing perfectly unprecedented, 10,000 Copies – and I suppose Thirty
People who
1:2
were purchasers (strangers) called to tell the people in the Shop how much they had been delighted &
satisfied – M’ Ward says it is masterly – a wonderful performance – M’ Hammond – M’. Heber – D
Israël every one who comes & too many call for me to enumerate declare their unlimited approbation – M’ Ward was here with M’ Gifford yesterday & mingled their admiration – M’ Ward is much
delighted with the unexpected charge of the Dervise – Up rose the Dervise with that burst of light &c⁴¹ –
and Gifford did, what I never knew him to do before he repeated several passages from memory
Particularly the closing Stanza
1:3
his death yet dubious, deeds too widely known⁴² – indeed from what I have observed from the very
general & unvarying sentiment which I have now gathered the suffrages are descidedly in favor of this
Poem in preference to the Bride of Abydos – & are even now balancing with the Giaour – I have heard
no one pass without notice & without expressed regret the idea thrown out by your Lordship of writing
no more for a considerable time – I am really marking down without suppression or extention literally
what I have heard – I was with M’ Shee this morning to whom I had presented the Poem – he declared
himself to have been delighted & swore he had long placed your Lordship far beyond any
contemporary Bard – and indeed the your last Poem does in this
1:4
is the opinion of almost all that I have conversed with – indeed men women & Children are delighted – I have the highest encomiums in Letters from Croker & M’ Hay – but I rest most upon the warm
feeling it has created in Giffords Critic heart – and I do most sincerely congratulate your Lordship –
confessing that when you first told me you were creating another Poem – that heart quaked for your
fame – The versification is thought highly of indeed – After Printing the Poems at the End of the first
edition I transplanted them to Childe Harold conceiving that your Lordship would have the goodness to

⁴⁰: The Corsair.
⁴¹: The Corsair, I 747.
⁴²: The Corsair, antepenultimate line.
pardon this ruse to give additional impetus to that poem & to assist in making it a more respectable
thickness – I <would> {sent}

2:1

previous to Publication Copies to all your Lordships friends containing the Poems at the End & one of
them43 has provoked a great deal of discussion, so much so that I expect to sell off the whole Edition of
Childe Harold merely to get at it –

Lord Holland M’ Gifford
Lady Holland – Frere
– Melbourne – Rogers
– Jersey – Canning
M’ Lewis – W Scott
had them – I sent your Lordship on Sundays Sundry Reviews &c wch would amuse you
I really think that I may

2:2

venture to congratulate your Lordship upon the Publication of a Poem wch has set up your fame
beyond all assailment – You have no notion of the sensation which it has occasioned and my only
regret is that you were not present to witness it.
I earnestly trust that your Lordship is well & with ardent compliments I remain
My Lord
Your obliged &
faithful Servant
John Murray

Wednesday Night

2:3

I have very strong reason to believe that the Bookseller at Newark continues to reprint – not altering
the Edition – your Lordships early Poems – Perhaps you would ascertain this fact.
I am really so dreadfully busy as to be forced to ask yr Lordships forgiveness for writing in this
haste

[2:4 blank.]

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, February 8th 1814:
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4161A; Smiles I 225-26; LJM 78-9)

My Lord
I have allowed myself to indulge in the pleasure I derived from the expression of your Lordships
satisfaction, because I have anticipated the point upon which there was likely to be some uneasiness –
as soon as I perceived the fuss that was made about certain Lines44 – I caused them to be immediately
reinstated {x} and I wrote on Saturday to acquaint your Lordship that I had done so – a conviction of
duty towards your Lordship made me do this – –
I can assure your Lordship with the most unreserved sincerity that Childe Harold did not require the
insertion

8 I wrote

1:2

of the Lines which have made so much noise, to assist its sale but they made it still more attractive &
my sordid propensities got the better of me – I sold my Lord at once nearly a Thousand Copies of this

43: Lines to a Lady Weeping.
44: Lines to a Lady Weeping. Mu. can’t bring himself to name it.
New Edition – and I am convinced by the collected & unshaken opinions of the best Critics that it is just as certain of becoming a Classic as Thomson or Beattie – what delights me is that amidst the most decided applause – there is a constant difference at to which is the best of your Lordships poems – Gifford declared to me again the other day that you would last far beyond any poet of the present day – I tried him particularly as to Campbell – but he had not a doubt about the certainty of your passing him – Although therefore I may concur with your Lordship in feeling some little surprise at such unprecedented triumph over peoples prejudices – yet I can differ upon very solid reasons from your Lordships notion of “temporary reputation” – I declare to God that I have not heard One expression of disappointment or doubtful satisfaction upon reading the Corsair – which bids fair to be the most popular of your Lordships Poems – I believe I have now sold 13,000 Copies a thing perfectly unprecedented & the more grateful to me be

as every buyer returns with looks of satisfaction & expressions of delight – & one more confirmative expression I always hear <from all> is – of heartfelt regret at <a> hint in the dedication of leaving off writing for a time however short. – You cannot meet a man in the Street – who has not read or heard read the Corsair.

The Fac Simile is restored to Childe Harold only 200 copies having been sent out without it – The poem on the Skull Cup – is introduced – I long to have the pleasure of congratulating yr Lordship personally – Your Noble conduct to a Schoolfellow does not lessen the admiration with which I remain My Lord Your faithfully attached Servt

Jno Murray

Byron to Leigh Hunt, from London, February 9th 1814:
(Source: text from V&A Forster, 48.G.22 ff. 5/1-3; LJ III 27-31; BLJ IV 49-50)
[To / Leigh Hunt Esq. / &. &. &.]

My dear Sir /

I have been snow=bound and thaw=swamped (2 compound epithets for you) in the “valley of the Shadow” of Newstead Abbey for nearly a month – & have not been four hours returned to London. – Nearly the first use I make of my benumbed fingers is to thank you for y. very handsome note in the volume you have just put forth – only – I trust – to be followed by others on subjects more worthy your notice than the works of contemporaries. – Of myself you speak only too highly – & you must think me strangely spoiled – or perversely peevish – even to <doubt> {suspect} that any remarks of yours in the spirit of candid criticism could possibly prove unpleasantable. – Had they been harsh – instead of being written as they are in the most indelible ink of good Sense & friendly admonition – had they been the harshest – as I knew & know that you are above any personal bias at least against your fellow bards – believe me – they would not have caused a word of remonstrance nor a moment of rankling on my part. – Your poem I redde long ago in “the Reflector” & it is not much to say it is the best “Session” we have – & with a more difficult subject – for we are neither so good nor so bad (taking the best & worst) as the wits of the olden time. – To your smaller pieces I have not yet

possibly prove unpleasantable. – Had they been harsh – instead of being written as they are in the most indelible ink of good Sense & friendly admonition – had they been the harshest – as I knew & know that you are above any personal bias at least against your fellow bards – believe me – they would not have caused a word of remonstrance nor a moment of rankling on my part. – Your poem I redde long ago in “the Reflector” & it is not much to say it is the best “Session” we have – & with a more difficult subject – for we are neither so good nor so bad (taking the best & worst) as the wits of the olden time. – To your smaller pieces I have not yet

had time to do justice by perusal – and I have a quantity of unanswered & I hope unanswerable letters to wade through before I sleep – but tomorrow will see me through your volume. – I am glad to see you have tracked Gray among the Italians – you will perhaps find a friend {or two} of yours there also

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45: The letter from the Bey of Corinth.
46: Start not! nor deem my spirit fled …
though not to the same extent – but I have always thought the Italians the only poetical moderns: – our Milton & Spenser & Shakespeare (the last through translations of their tales) are very Tuscan and surely it is far superior to the French School. – You are hardly fair enough to Rogers – why “tea?” you might surely have given him supper – if only a Sandwich. – Murray has I hope sent you my last bantling “the Corsair” – I have been regaled

1:4

at every Inn on the road by lampoons and other merry conceits on myself in the ministerial gazettes – occasioned by y’ republication of two stanzas inserted in 1812 in Perry’s paper.57 The hysterics of the Morning Post are quite interesting – and I hear (but have not seen) of something terrific in a last week’s Courier, all which I take with “the calm indifference” of Sir Fretful Plagiary.58 The M. P. has one copy of devices upon my deformity – which certainly will admit of no “historic doubts – like “Dicken my Master’s”59 another upon my Atheism – which is not quite so clear – and another very downright says I am the Devil (boiteux they might have added) and a rebel and what not – possibly my accuser of Diabolism may be Rosa Matilda60 – & if so it would not be difficult to convince [her] that I am a mere Man. –

I shall break in upon you in a day or two – distance has hitherto detained me – & I hope to find you well & myself welcome. – ever y’ obliged & sincere Bn.

2:1

PS – Since this letter was written I have been at your text which has much good humour in every sense of the word – but your notes are of a very high order indeed – particularly on Wordsworth. –

Leigh Hunt to Byron, from Horsemonger Lane Gaol, February 10th 1814:
(Home: text from NLS, Acc.12604 / 4132)
[To the / Rt Hon. Lord Byron, // Leigh Hunt.]
Hunt answers at once.

My dear Lord,

Allow me to thank you for a letter which has in every respect delighted me. You must not suppose I had any doubt of the spirit in which you would receive my remarks; – if there is any thing like depreciation in the tone of them, it was rather relieve myself from the idea of presumption, than your Lordship from any unpleasant feeling: – nay, I would not swear that I did not think to please you the more by my plain-speaking, for I honestly confess to you that I have a design on your friendship in the most cordial as well as most disinterested sense of the word; & to see you meet my observations in this manner, & sport as you do with the arrow thrown at you by despicable enemies, – (to say nothing of your congeniality of opinion with regard to my old friends the Italians) gives me so many agreeable anxieties on that score, that I believe I shall never rest till we know each other well & habitually. – Will you oblige me by naming, as soon as possible, some day on which we can dine & spend the afternoon together without interruption?

The accompanying book has been waiting for you; & Cawthorn was to have sent it today. I have not yet had the Corsair, but I was better pleased to wait also on my part, till you could send me

1:2

a copy under your own hand. Mr. Rogers, if you please, shall make one among the innumerable persons (scandal apart) of whom I mean to talk {with} you, when I get you over a glass of wine, a warm fire, & a little table with books on it.

Your’s, my dear Lord,

Most sincerely,

Leigh Hunt.

Surrey Jail
10 Feb. 1814.

47: Lines to a Lady Weeping.
48: Sir Fretful Plagiary at Sheridan, The Critic, I i.
49: Shakespeare, Richard III, V iii 305.
50: “Rosa Matilda” is Charlotte Dacre.
Madame de Staël to Byron, February 1814:
(Source: text from BL.Add.Mss. 31037 f.13)

Madame de Staël does not believe in uppercase.

in Byron's hand: Received February 1814 / NB /

j’ai besoin de vous parler de votre dernière poème puisque tous ce qui l’admirent doivez vous flatter plus que moi – je ne juge que des images et des idées et des sentiments mais il y a de plus un style enchanteur que je sais mais que je ne puis juger – si vous avez le tort de ne pas aimer l’espèce humaine il me semble qu’elle fait ce qu’elle peut pour le raccommoder avec vous pour Son Suffrage – et la destinée n’a pas maltraité celui qu’elle a fait le premier poète de son siècle et tout le reste – traitez ceux qui vous admirent avec un peut plus de bienveillance et sachez [ ] gré de pardonner à votre génie tout ce qui a du me déplaire en vous – je voudrais causer avec vous quand m’en trouverez vous digne?

N. de Staël Holstein

argyle street no 31

[1:3 blank]

Translation: I need to talk to you about your most recent poem since all who admire it must flatter you more than I do – I do not judge the images and the ideas and the sentiments but there is besides these an enchanting style which I can see but of which I am no judge – if you are wrong enough not to love the human race it seems to me that they are doing all they can to recommend themselves to you for toleration – and destiny has not mistreated him whom she has made the first poet of his age and [of] all the rest – treat those who admire you with a little more benevolence and know [ ] taste to pardon by your genius all who have had to displease you – I should like to chat with you when might you be free to see me? / Necker de Staël Holstein / No. 31 Argyle Street

Madame de Staël to Byron, February 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from LJ III 384)

[The / Lord Byron / St James]

Je renonce à vos visites, pourvu que vous acceptiez mes diners, car enfin à quoi servirait il de vivre dans le même temps que vous, si l’on ne vous voyait pas – dinez chez moi dimanche avec vos amis – je ne dirai pas vos admirateurs car je n’ai recontré que cela de tous parts.

à dimanche,

N. de Staël

Mardi –

je prends le silence pour oui –

Translation: I renounce your visits, as long as you accept my dinners, because in the end, what is the point of living at the same time as you, if one never sees you? Dine with me on Sunday with your friends – I shall not say your admirers, for I have met none but them everywhere. Until Sunday. N[ecker], de Staël – Tuesday. I shall take silence for assent.

Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, February 10th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 526-7; LJ III 32-3; BLJ IV 51-2)

February 10. 1814.

51: Mu. published The Corsair on February 1st 1814.
I arrived in town late yesterday evening, having been absent three weeks, which I passed in Notts. quietly and pleasantly. You can have no conception of the uproar the eight lines on the little Royalty’s weeping in 1812 (now republished) have occasioned. The R[egent], who had always thought them yours, chose—God knows why—on discovering them to be mine, to be affected ‘in sorrow rather than anger.’52 The Morning Post, Sun, Herald, Courier, have all been in hysterics ever since. M. is in a fright, and wanted to shuffle; and the abuse against me in all directions is vehement, unceasing, loud—some of it good, and all of it hearty. I feel a little compunctious as to the R[egent]’s regret;—‘would he had been only angry! but I fear him not.’

Some of these same assailments you have probably seen. My person (which is excellent for ‘the nonce’) has been denounced in verses, the more like the subject, inasmuch as they halt exceedingly. Then, in another, I am an atheist, a rebel, and, at last, the Devil (boiteux, I presume). My demonism seems to be a female’s conjecture;53 if so, perhaps, I could convince her that I am but a mere mortal,—if a queen of the Amazons may be believed, who says αριστον γειλος οιφει.54 I quote from memory, so my Greek is probably deficient; but the passage is meant to mean * * * * * * * *

Seriously, I am in, what the learned call, a dilemma, and the vulgar, a scrape; and my friends desire me not to be in a passion; and, like Sir Fretful, I assure them that I am ‘quite calm,’55—but I am nevertheless in a fury.

Since I wrote thus far, a friend has come in, and we have been talking and buffooning till I have quite lost the thread of my thoughts; and, as I won’t send them unstrung to you, good morning, and

Believe me ever, &c.

P.S. Murray, during my absence, omitted the Tears in several of the copies. I have made him replace them, and am very wroth with his qualms,—‘as the wine is poured out, let it be drunk to the dregs.’56

Thomas Moore to Byron, February 1814:
(Source: NLS Acc.12604 / 4149; Dowden I 306)

Thursday

My dear Byron

You really, as I have often told you before, ought to give me at least two letters for every one of mine—Full of incidents as your own days are, and busy and various as the scene is about you, I should not think myself at all too exigéant, if I were to require you to sit down every day for half an hour before dressing-time, and give me an account of all the hes, shes and its you have had to do with since morning—particularly, as you recall you have appointed me your Editor & Historiographer, (in case any enraged husband should be the death of you) and a journal of this kind would soon make very respectable material—Do you know that I was all agog about a week ago with the hope of being forced to go to town upon business very soon?—but I am disappointed and left without a single pretext for the trip but pleasure, which, tho as good a pretext as a man can well have in this life for any thing, would be a little too selfish upon the present occasion for me to be quite satisfied with it—Now, do, pray write me very long letters, my dear Byron—there is but one great man in this world, besides yourself, that I feel interested about—and that is Bonaparte—We owe great gratitude to this thunder-storm of a fellow, for clearing the air of all the old legitimate fogs that settled upon us, and I seriously hope his task is not yet quite over—When he is once off the stage, the Play is over for me—the rest of the Kings may strut over their hour & be d—d!—I inclose you a letter, which you will have put in the Twopenny for me—by the bye, is Rogers annoyed at being suddenly with the bag?—I had half an intention of clearing him from the imputation, but I did not like to distract that profound contemptuous silence with which (till your friend Dallas’s letter) the Courier was so properly treated.

Ever, my dear Byron, yours most truly
Thomas Moore

Walter Scott to Byron, from Edinburgh, February 11th 1814:
(Source: not in Grierson)

My dear Lord

52: Shakespeare, Hamlet, I ii 231.
53: This critic may be Charlotte Dacre, author of Zofloya.
54: Mimnerus, fragment No. 23: “a lame beast covers best”, or, “a cripple makes the best fuck”
55: Sheridan, The Critic, Act I.
56: Shakespeare, Macbeth II iii 93-4 (adapted).
I have delayed thanking you for the Bride of Abydos till I should have it in my power to send you a life of Dean Swift with which I have been for some time busy not for acquittal of my debt but merely to show that I am sensible of it – However it has happened to me like all or most tardy debtors that my delay[s] of acknowledgement have very much incurred the burthen of my obligation – For I really think the Corsair which I received two days since is the most delightful of these three poems delightful as they all are. It is the good old form of Drydens fables to me always the most delightful part of his works. I assure you I am highly sensible of the kind compliment you have paid me in the preface and am not at all mortified by the idea that some part of it may be owing to the particularity which the generous & liberal always feel for those who have attempted with more or less success their own walk to fame. There is only one particular line in which I hope and almost think you will be a false prophet & that is when you

you say you will not soon write again. In our free masonry, my Lord, we may be allowed to talk with some freedom – and therefore judging from the usual symptoms I rather hope that you will not keep your word on this occasion, and that your repose will be no longer than such rapid [ ] may demand,

There is a thing I cannot forbear telling you though I am writing to a man whom I never saw about whom I never spoke to above twice. I met Lord Elgin (to whom I am just known) in a sale-room today & to my surprize He began to talk of the Corsair of which he seems to be a vast admirer. <and> He drew a very lively description of one who had been captured by the frigate in which he saild from the Levant; & who seemed by Lord E’s description to be much such a character as your hero. I had a curious account of [ ] practised by the pirates & privateers in the Levant which was recorded in the Journal of a common sailor who had just served on board one of them. The journal was found when the man then a King’s seaman was put in confinement & his chest examined. I had the copy from Sir Edw’s Pellews Secretary & its authenticity appeared undoubted. I caused it to be published in one of the late volumes of the Edinburgh Annual Register and from the manner in which the unfortunate journalist describes his first sensations of horror & then his becoming gradually reconciled to the shedding of blood it is a curious record of the gradual hardening of the human heart.

Adieu my dear Lord accept my grululor [“gratitude”? “garrulity”?] in good part – write on when you have no better amusement & we will ask no better than to read on when you will permit us

Believe me very sincerely & respectfully your truly obliged

Walter Scott

Edin. – 11 fe.y [pencilled: 1814]

Byron to Lord Holland, from London, February 15th 1814:
(Source: text from B.L.Add.Mss.51639 ff.159-69; BLJ IV 59-60)

February 15th. 1814 –

My dear Lord –

I called today for the purpose of answering your letter in person – but others being present & more agreeable topics occurring I would not touch on a subject on which I am <occasion> [still] rather at a loss how to express myself. – It is now nearly two years since I suppressed the publication in question in consequence of a conversation with Mr. Rogers, & I may add, my perfect concurrence in his opinion, and I have since declined a large offer from the publisher to reprint it – I mention this last merely because it more completely establishes the fact of the suppression – on any other account it neither merits nor met with a moment’s notice. –

I have also – as far as in me lay – regretted not only in conversation – but as lately as publicly in my letter to M’. Moore prefixed to the Corsair – the composition and circulation of that satire. – – –

<From> {To} yourself this has appeared sufficient – for those who are less liberal – or more injured – I have no further redress to offer – but such as they may win & wear – – they must take it. – Of all times this happens to be the period when I cannot concede – even if my judgement & feelings incline me to

57: Scott is extremely polite. The Corsair is the first of B.’s Turkish Tales which do not borrow from him.
regret the bitterness of many expressions in that production – but I can [not] blame nor accuse anyone
– I have made myself enemies – some powerful –

1:3

and all zealous – & I must meet them as I best can – when I know them I shall be better able to
determine how. –
To Lady Holland & yourself I can only repeat that I have been & ever am
most truly

your obliged ser.

Byron

To

The Lord Holland
&c. &c. &c.

[1:4 blank.]

Byron to Samuel Rogers, from London, February 16th 1814 (a):
(Source: text from UCL Library, Sharpe Papers 18 / 122-4; LJ III 36-7; BLJ IV 61)

F. 16th. 1814

My dear Rogers –

I wrote to Lord Holland briefly but I hope distinctly on the subject which has lately
occupied much of my conversation with him & you. – As things now stand – upon that topic my
determination must be unalterable. – – – –

I declare to you most sincerely that there is no human being on whose regard & esteem I set a higher
value than on Lord Holland’s – and as far as [regards] {concerns} himself & Lady H[olland]. I would

1:2

concede even to humiliation – without any view to the future – & solely from my sense of his conduct
as to the past. – For the rest I conceive that I have already done all in my power – by the suppression –
if that is not enough – they must act as they please – but I will not ‘teach my tongue a most inherent
baseness’ sc. [scom]. come what may. – – –

I am sorry that I shall not be able to call upon you today – & what disappoints me still more – to dine
with you toomorrow – I

1:3

forwarded a letter from Moore to you – he writes to me in good spirits – which I hope will not be
impaired by any attack brought upon him by his friendship for me. – – – –
You will probably be at the Marquess Lansdowne’s tonight – I am asked – but am not sure that I shall
be able to go – Hobhouse will be there – I think if you knew him well – you would like him. – – –

Believe me always yours

very affect.

B

[1:4 blank.]

Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, February 16th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 530-1; LJ III 38-40; BLJ IV 62-3)

February 16. 1814.

You may be assured that the only prickles that sting from the Royal hedgehog are those which possess
a torpedo property, and may benumb some of my friends. I am quite silent, and ‘hush’d in grim
repose.’ 59 The frequency of the assaults has weakened their effects,—if ever they had any;—and, if
they had had much, I should hardly have held my tongue, or withheld my fingers. It is something quite
new to attack a man for abandoning his resentments. I have heard that previous praise and subsequent
vituperation were rather ungrateful, but I did not know that it was wrong to endeavour to do justice to

58: Shakespeare, Coriolanus, III ii 122-3.
59: Gray, The Bard, 1.76.
those who did not wait till I had made some amends for former and boyish prejudices, but received me
into their friendship, when I might still have been their enemy.

You perceive justly that I must intentionally have made my fortune like Sir Francis Wronghead.60
It were better if there were more merit in my independence, but it really is something nowadays to be
independent at all, and the less temptation to be otherwise, the more uncommon the case, in these times
of paradoxical servility. I believe that most of our hates and likings have been hitherto nearly the same;
but from henceforth they must, of necessity, be one and indivisible,—and now for it! I am for any
weapon,—the pen, till one can find something sharper, will do for a beginning.

You can have no conception of the ludicrous solemnity with which these two stanzas have been
treated. The Morning Post gave notice of an intended motion in the House of my brethren on the
subject, and God he knows what proceedings besides;—and all this, as Bedreddin in the 'Nights' says,
‘for making a cream tart without pepper.’61 This last piece of intelligence is, I presume, too laughable
to be true; and the destruction of the Custom-house appears to have, in some degree, interfered with
mine; added to which, the last battle of Buonaparte has usurped the column hitherto devoted to my
bulletin.

I send you from this day’s Morning Post the best which have hitherto appeared on this ‘impudent
doggerel,’ as the Courier calls it. There was another about my diet, when a boy—not at all bad—some
time ago; but the rest are but indifferent.

I shall think about your oratorical hint;62—but I have never set much upon ‘that cast,’ and am
grown as tired as Solomon of every thing, and of myself more than any thing. This is being what the
learned call philosophical, and the vulgar lack-a-daisical. I am, however, always glad of a blessing;63
pray, repeat yours soon,—at least your letter, and I shall think the benediction included.

Ever, &c.

Byron to R.C.Dallas, from London, February 17th 1814:
(Source: text from Huntington HM 7398, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ IV 63)

My dear Sir /

The Courier of this Evening accuses me of having “received & pocketed” large sums for
my works. – I have never yet received nor wished to receive a farthing for any – M’. M’.
offered a
thousand for the G’. & B’. which I said was too much – & that if he could afford it at the end of 6
months I would then direct him it might

be disposed of – but neither then nor at any other period have I ever availed myself or shall avail
myself of the profits on my own account. –
For the republication of the Satire I refused 4007gs. & for the previous editions I never asked nor
received a sou – nor for any writing whatever. –
I do not wish you to do anything disagreeable to yourself – there never was nor shall be any conditions
nor stipulations with regard to any accommo=

=dated that I could afford you – & on your part I can see nothing derogatory in receiving the
copyrights – it was only assistance afforded to a worthy man by one not quite so worthy. –
M’. M’. is going to contradict this – but your name will not be mentioned, for your own part you are a
free agent & are to do as you please – I only hope that now as always you will think that I wish to take
no unfair

60: In Vanbrugh and Cibber, The Provoked Husband.
61: From the 1,001 Nights.
62: Moore’s note: I had endeavoured to persuade him to take a part in parliamentary affairs, and to exercise his
talent for oratory more frequently.
63: Moore’s note: In concluding my letter, having said “God bless you!” I added—“that is, if you have no
objection.”
advantage of the accidental opportunity opportunity circumstances permitted me of being of use to you.

 ever yrs. most truly

Biron

P.S.
It is a cruel & bitter thing on all parties to be obliged to notice this – but the statement is made in such a manner as requires it to be done away with – founded as it is on utter falsehood. ——

Byron to R.C.Dallas, from Albany, February 18th 1814:
(Source: Harry Ransom Center, Texas, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ IV 64)

Fy 18th. 1814

My dear Sir /

Since I wrote to you last night – it is determined that M. shall say nothing (& certainly I shall not) but allow them to sail on & lie to the uttermost. –

Do not you therefore think of involving yourself in the squabble by any statement but let it rest.  

ever yrs.

[signature swirl]

R.C.Dallas to the Editor of the Morning Post, February 21st 1814:
(Source: text from LJ III 41-2)

Dallas' style makes Byron's regard for him harder still to fathom. This public letter, stating that Byron has received no money from his poetry, causes much trouble between Byron and Murray.

Sir, – I have seen the paragraph in an Evening Paper, in which Lord Byron is accused of 'receiving and pocketing' large sums for his works. I believe no one who knows him has the slightest suspicion of this kind; but the assertion being public, I think it a justice I owe to Lord Byron to contradict it publicly. I address this letter to you for that purpose, and I am happy that it gives me an opportunity, at this moment, to make some observations which I have for several days been anxious to do publicly, but from which I have been restrained by an apprehension that I should be suspected of being prompted by his Lordship.

I take upon me to affirm, that Lord Byron never received a shilling for any of his works. To my certain knowledge the profits of the satire were left entirely to the Publisher of it. The gift of the copyright of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, I have already publicly acknowledged, in the dedication of the new edition of my novels; and now I add my acknowledgment for that of The Corsair, not only for the profitable part of it, but for the delicate and delightful manner of bestowing it, while yet unpublished. With respect to his two other poems, The Giaour and The Bride of Abydos, Mr. Murray, the publisher of them, can truly attest that no part of the sale of these has ever touched his hands, or been disposed of for his use. Having said thus much as to facts, I cannot but express my surprise, that it should ever be deemed a matter of reproach that he should appropriate the pecuniary returns of his works. Neither rank nor fortune seems to me to place any man above this; for what difference does it make in honour and noble feeling, whether a copyright be bestowed, or its value employed in beneficent purposes? I differ with my Lord Byron on this subject, as well as some others, and he has constantly, both by word and action, shown his aversion to receiving money by his productions.

The pen in my hand, and affection and powerful feelings in my heart, I cannot refrain touching upon a subject of a painful nature, delicate as it is, and fearful as I am that I shall be unable to manage it with a propriety of which it is susceptible, but of which the excution is not easy. One reflection encourages me, for if magnanimity be the attendant of rank (and all that I have published proves such a prepossession in my mind), then I have the less to fear from the Most Illustrious, in undertaking to throw into its proper point of view a circumstance which has been completely misrepresented or misunderstood.

64: The advice came too late – see next item.
65: The Courier; the article is printed at LJM 493-5.
66: B. draws Dallas’s attention to the Courier article on this date (BLJ IV 63-4); on the 18th he advises Dallas to keep quiet (BLJ IV 64); but too late, for Dallas has already written this letter.
67: In fact Mu. has offered B. 1,000 guineas for the poems, but B. is postponing acceptance. See London Journal, November 17th 1813: Mr. Murray has offered me one thousand guineas for the "Giaour" and the "Bride of Abydos". I won’t—it is too much, though I am strongly tempted, merely for the say of it. No bad price for a fortnight’s (a week each) what?—the gods know—it was intended to be called Poetry. Eventually Mu. pays him anyway.
I do not purpose to defend the publication of the two stanzas at the end of The Corsair, which has given rise to such a torrent of abuse, and of the insertion of which I was not aware till it was published: but most surely they have been placed in a light which never entered the mind of the author, and in which men of dispassionate minds cannot see them. It is absurd to talk seriously of their ever being meant to disunite the parent and child, or to libel the Sovereign. It is very easy to descant upon such assumed enormities; but the assumption of them, if not a loyal error, is an atrocious crime. Lord Byron never contemplated the horrors that have been attributed to him. The lines alluded to were an impromptu upon a single well-known fact; I mean the failure in the endeavour to form an administration in the year 1812, according to the wishes of the author’s friends; on which it was reported that tears were shed by an illustrious female. The very words in the context show the verses to be confined to that one circumstance, for they are in the singular number—disgrace, fault. What disgrace? What fault? Those (says the verse) of not saving a sinking realm (and let the date be remembered—March, 1812) by taking the writer’s friends to support it. Never was there a more simple political sentiment expressed in rhyme. If this be libel—if this be the undermining of filial affection, where shall we find a term for the language often heard in both Houses of Parliament?

While I hope that I have said enough to show the hasty misrepresentation of the lines in question, I must take care not to be misunderstood myself. The little part I take in conversing on politics is well known among my friends to differ completely from the political sentiment which dictated these verses; but knowing their author better than most who pretend to judge of him, and, with motives of affection and admiration, I am shocked to think that the hasty collecting of a few scattered poems, to be placed at the end of a volume, should have raised such clamour.

February 18, 1814.

R. C. DALLAS.

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Byron to John Murray, from London, February 24th-25th 1814:

Murray has protested to Dallas; Dallas has protested to Byron; now Byron protests to Murray, on a torn scrap of paper, 18.3 x 11cm.

Pray what the Devil may all this be? — you never heard from me of any “letter” {<but the one>} nor did I ever hear a word on the subject from D. nor do I know that he is about to say any more on y’.

1:2

With regard to the truth & the “whole truth” which you speak of to him — to what do you allude? — did anyone ever require of you on my part anything but the truth? — & is there anything in his former statement that you can contradict? —

1:3

I am quite in the dark & really confounded between you & him

y”.

Bn

F³. 25th. — 1814

Do you mean to tell me as you told M’ de Stael that you actually paid the sum you offered or that I received it — or that any one else did — if so – Bravo!

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, February 26th 1814:

Murray’s professional pride will not allow him to let the world think he has had The Giaour and The Bride of Abydos for nothing.

My Lord

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69: B. encloses a letter he has received from Dallas (LJM 82), itself enclosing an angry note from Murray: “Every line of it,” he writes, “contains a gross insult.”
Your Lordship appeared to be so satisfactorily convinced that silence would be most becoming – that I wrote the note to Mr Dallas late on Saturday evening with the hope of preventing the publication of his Letter.

The meaning of the “expressions” pointed out by your Lordship in my note, is, that having formerly told Mr Gifford – Mr Hammond Mr Frere – Mr Ward – Mr Canning & many other of my friends, that your Lordship had given me the Copyright of the Giaour & having had occasion, subsequently to unsay this – it would be placing my assertions in a very doubtful light – if I allow it to be insinuated, publicly, that I was to pay nothing for this Poem or for the Bride of Abydos.

Your Lordship does not seem

Rt Honble Lord Byron

1:2

<that I> to be aware that I feel as much bound, by my promise, to pay your Lordship a Thousand Guineas for the Copyright of the Giaour & Bride of Abydos in May next" – as I am by my Bond, to give Lord Sheffield a similar sum for Gibbon

My expression to Mad. de Staël was, that I had actually “paid” but that I had “given” you 1,000 G for these two Poems – because it is as much as the 500 G for the Corsair which I am to pay in 2 – 4 & 6 Mos. – And I must confess that at the time I stated this circumstance to Mad. de Staël I was not aware of your Lordships liberal intentions with regard to this sum – for I did

1:3

not then conceive it possible that your Lordship would have resumed your Gift of the Giaour to me – to bestow it on another – & therefore the “explanation” of that part of Mr Dallass Letter which refers to me is, – that although Lord Byron has not actually received anything for the “Giaour & Bride” – yet I am under an engagement to pay his Lordship a Thousand Guineas for them in May – But as Dallass Letter was published & as your Lordship appeared to approve of it – I said nothing – nor should I have said anything further if your Lordship had not commanded this explanation – I declare to God I think these things are very unworthy a place in your Lordships mind

1:4

– Why allow a Blight on our Blade – to prevent you from reaping & revelling in the Rich & superabundant Harvest of Fame which your Inspired Labours have created

I am sure my Lord if you will give it but a reflection my conduct towards you has uniformly been that of a very humble – but very faithful friend –

I have the honour to be

My Lord
Your Lordships obliged
& obedient Servant
John Murray

Saturday
Feb 26 – 1814

Byron to John Murray, February 26th 1814:
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4160B; BLJ IV 71-2)
Byron, who cannot decide whether he wants to take money for his poems or not, can only bluster.

Sir /

The purpose for which the produce of the Bride & Giaour is to be appropriated – is for a friend as you will perceive when the time comes. – Our discussions upon that point took place as you will

70: This copyright is indeed bought by Mu.: £1,050 (1,000 guineas) is paid into B.’s account with Hoare’s on October 25th 1815.
71: See B. to Francis Hodgson, Dec. 1 1813.
72: Decorated underlining.
perceive by dates – before the publication of the Bride – which was never left in abeyance – as the Giour had been until that period. – – – –

With regard to the disposal

1:2

of copyrights it is enough that I do not avail myself of any personal profit from them – if the works succeed there is the fair advantage to the publisher from the residue – & if they do not – they would be of no service to you nor any one else. – – – –

I have always I believe kept clear accounts with you – & settled all my bills regularly – these cannot be much now – but if there is I should wish to discharge them immediately. –

1:3

Your distinctions between “paid” & “given” seem to me without a difference – but as you had done neither <th> one nor the other in the usual sense of those words – you will permit me to think that your statement to M de Stael was a little premature. – – – –

Upon the subject of these last I shall merely say that if I had been anxious on the subject I might have received the sum you offered at the time – & had it been on my own acc. I probably should – I declined it at that time – because

1:4

I wished to accommodate you till the expiration of a period sufficient to ascertain your probable profit or loss. –

What you mean by “the Gift” of the G. I do not know – unless you mean that by not coming hastily to any arrangement – I never intended to arrange it at all – had it been given – the copyright would have been made over as in the other cases. –

I have now done with the subject – & I think you may as well follow the example [swirl signature]

Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, February 26th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 533-4; LJ III 50-51; BLJ IV 72-3)

February 26. 1814.

Dallas had, perhaps, have better kept silence;—but that was his concern, and, as his facts are correct, and his motive not dishonourable to himself, I wished him well through it. As for his interpretations of the lines, he and any one else may interpret them as they please. I have and shall adhere to my taciturnity, unless something very particular occurs to render this impossible. Do not you say a word. If any one is to speak, it is the person principally concerned. The most amusing thing is, that every one (to me) attributes the abuse to the man they personally most dislike!—some say C[roke]r, some C[oleridg]e, others F[itzgeral]d, &c. &c. &c. I do not know, and have no clue but conjecture. If discovered, and he turns out a hireling, he must be left to his wages; if a cavalier, he must ‘wink, and hold out his iron.’

I had some thoughts of putting the question to C[roke]r, but H[obhouse]., who, I am sure, would not dissuade me if it were right, advised me by all means not;—‘that I had no right to take it upon suspicion,’ &c. &c. Whether H[obhouse]. is correct I am not aware, but he believes himself so, and says there can be but one opinion on that subject. This I am, at least, sure of, that he would never prevent me from doing what he deemed the duty of a preux chevalier. In such cases—at least, in this country—we must act according to usages. In considering this instance, I dismiss my own personal feelings. Any man will and must fight, when necessary,—even without a motive. Here, I should take it up really without much resentment; for, unless a woman one likes is in the way, it is some years since I felt a long anger. But, undoubtedly, could I, or may I, trace it to a man of station, I should and shall do what is proper.

* * was angrily, but tried to conceal it. You are not called upon to avow the ‘Twopenny,’ and would only gratify them by so doing. Do you not see the great object of all these fooleries is to set him, and you, and me, and all persons whatsoever, by the ears?—more especially those who are on good terms,—and nearly succeeded. Lord H[olland]. wished me to concede to Lord Carlisle—concede to the

73: Shakespeare, Henry V, II i 7.
devil!—to a man who used me ill? I told him, in answer, that I would neither concede, nor recede on the subject, but be silent altogether; unless any thing more could be said about Lady H[olland], and himself, who had been since my very good friends;—and there it ended. This was no time for concessions to Lord C[arlisle].

I have been interrupted, but shall write again soon. Believe me ever, my dear Moore, &c.

Byron to Francis Hodgson, from London, February 28th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 534-5; LJ III 51-2; BLJ IV 74-5)

February 28, 1814.

There is a youngster, and a clever one, named Reynolds,74 who has just published a poem called ‘Safie,’ published by Cawthorne. He is in the most natural and fearful apprehension of the Reviewers; and as you and I both know by experience the effect of such things upon a young mind, I wish you would take his production into dissection, and do it gently. I cannot, because it is inscribed to me; but I assure you this is not my motive for wishing him to be tenderly entreated, but because I know the misery at his time of life, of untoward remarks upon first appearance.

Now for self. Pray thank your cousin—it is just as it should be, to my liking, and probably more than will suit any one else’s. I hope and trust that you are well and well doing. Peace be with you. Ever yours, my dear friend.

Thomas Moore to Byron, February 28th 1814:
(Source: not in NLS Acc.12604 / 4149; Dowden I 301-2)

Monday, Febr 28

My dear Byron—

If I were to guess my dislikes, as your other friends have done, I should certainly say that Croker was the man for tho he & I have made up our quarrel, it is something like the reconciliation of Asmodeus with his brother-devil—“We embraced and have hated each other ever since”—but notwithstanding this, and that I think him quite enough of a maligno animaletto to do such a thing, I do not believe it was he—it is not his style—there would have been more of a brisk flippancy in the attack, and besides, to give my brother-devil his due, I have heard him speak of you in terms of admiration rather inconsistent (if any thing be inconsistent in such a lickspittle) with the language of these Ana—75 I quite agree with Hotham, that you are not called upon to seek the toad in his lurking-hole, but if he should come across your path, put your foot upon him most certainly—You mistake me in supposing that I had any idea of avowing the Bag—76 my only thoughts were about disavowing it for Rogers, without in any way saddling it upon my own shoulders more than it is at present. As to Dallas’s letter, the statement with respect to the appropriation of the profits of your writings was absolutely called for and could not be withheld in justice both to himself and you—and indeed this explanation gave me particular pleasure, for I may now tell you that one of the stories which, I was told circulated with most credit in town was that you had given the proceeds of the Corsair to me! Yet all thro I bore “well—very well”77—rather than break the sacred silence of contempt with which such things should be heard by both of us—indeed, I would not even to you, my dear Byron, dignify this wretched nonsense with one more mention, if it had not struck me, from your two last letters,78 that either this or something else is making you uncomfortable and out of spirits— to tell you it ought not will do you, I know, but little good, if it does, and therefore all I shall say is that if by my coming to town to you or by doing any thing else in the world that is in my power I can either amuse, serve or in the slightest degree minister to your comfort, I am heartily ready at a minute’s notice—too happy if you can discover (what I cannot flatter myself enough to find out) any one way in which I can be made useful to you—If I am, after all, mistaken, and you are not suffering any unusual uneasiness of mind, pray lose no time in telling me so, for I feel very anxious about you.

Ever yours

T. Moore

Byron to James Wedderburn Webster, from Albany, February 28th 1814:
(Source: Harry Ransom Center, Texas, photocopy from microfilm; LJ III 52; BLJ IV 75)

[London February twenty eighth / To / J.W.Webster Esq. / Aston Hall / Workhop / Notts / Byron]

74: John Hamilton Reynolds.
75: Moore implies “Ananaiases”.
76: Moore’s Tuppenny Post-Bag.
77: Othello IV ii 57.
78: Perhaps BLJ IV 51-2 and 62-3 (February 10th and 16th 1814); but this letter takes up none of the points in either.
Late in 1813, Byron had almost had an affair with Webster’s wife Frances.

My dear W. – I have but a few minutes to write to you. –
Silence is the only answer to the things you mention – nor should I regard that man as my friend – who said a word more on the subject. – I care little for attacks – but I will not submit to defences & I do hope & trust that you have never entertained a serious thought of engaging in so foolish a controversy.

Dallas’s letter\(^79\) was to his credit – merely as to facts which he had a right to state. – I neither have nor shall take the least public notice – nor permit anyone else to do so. – If I discover the writer – then I may act in a different manner – but it will not be in writing. – –
An expression in your letter has induced me to write this to you – to entreat you not to interfere in any way in such a business – it is now nearly over – & depend upon it – they are much more chagrined by my silence than they could be by the best defence in ye. world. – I do not know anything that would vex me more – than any further reply to these things.

\[\text{ever y}^{es}, \text{ in haste}\]

\[[\text{swirl signature}]\]

**Thomas Moore to Byron, February 1814:**
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4149; Dowden I 305)

Sunday Evening

My dear Byron –

I have been expecting some announcement of your return to town, and asked Mr. Murray about your whereabouts in a note I wrote to him, but his answer has not given me the best information – further than that the Corsair is “liked beyond measure,” which was what I could easily take for granted without his having the kindness to inform me – “liked!” – Werter was angry at this cold word being applied to Ossian, and what would he say to its being used of “the Corsair”? I may perhaps, as God-father, be suspected of undue partiality for this child, but certainly any thing more fearfully interesting, more wild, touching, and “negligently grand,” I never read even from your pen – you are careless, but you can afford to be so, and,

whenever you slumber, it is like the albatross, high in air and on the wing – the blood upon Gulnare’s cheek is terrifically fine – as to my part of the Work, I will not render my thanks to you in words, tho I do in feeling twenty times a day – but I must tell you what an honest neighbour of mine says of it – “This makes me like him better than all the rest of his works put together; for it shows he’s a warm-hearted fellow, which is better than all the genius in the world” –

I write this to catch a flying opportunity for the Post, so must conclude –

Ever yours most faithfully

Thomas Moore

I shall make my old mother so happy by the Copy I have sent her! She will worship you –

[1:3 and 4 blank.]

**Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, March 3rd 1814:**
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 535-7; LJ III 54-7; QI 272-3; BLJ IV 76-8)

March 3. 1814.

My dear Friend,

I have a great mind to tell you that I am ‘uncomfortable,’ if only to make you come to town; where no one ever more delighted in seeing you, nor is there any one to whom I would sooner turn for

\(^79\): Dallas had written to the papers stating that B. never received payment for his poems.
consolation in my most vapourish moments. The truth is, I have ‘no lack of argument’ to ponder upon of the most gloomy description, but this arises from other causes. Some day or other, when we are veterans, I may tell you a tale of present and past times; and it is not from want of confidence that I do not now,—but—always a bit to the end of the chapter.

There is nothing, however, upon the spot either to love or hate;—but I certainly have subjects for both at no very great distance, and am besides embarrassed between three whom I know, and one (whose name, at least,) I do not know. All this would be very well if I had no heart; but, unluckily, I have found that there is such a thing still about me, though in no very good repair, and, also, that it has a habit of attaching itself to one whether I will or no. ‘Divide et impera,’ I begin to think, will only do for politics.

If I discover the ‘toad’ as you call him, I shall ‘tread,’—and put spikes in my shoes to do it more effectually. The effect of all these fine things I do not enquire much nor perceive. I believe * * felt them more than either of us. People are civil enough, and I have had no dearth of invitations,—none of which, however, I have accepted. I went out very little last year, and mean to go about still less. I have no passion for circles, and have long regretted that I ever gave way to what is called a town life;—which, of all the lives I ever saw (and they are nearly as many as Plutarch’s), seems to me to leave the least for the past and future.

How proceeds the poem? Do not neglect it, and I have no fears. I need not say to you that your fame is dear to me,—I really might say dearer than my own; for I have lately begun to think my things have been strangely over-rated; and, at any rate, whether or not, I have done with them for ever. I may say to you what I would not say to everybody, that the last two were written, The Bride in four, and The Corsair in ten days,—which I take to be a most humiliating confession, as it proves my own want of judgment in publishing, and the public’s in reading things, which cannot have stamina for permanent attention. ‘So much for Buckingham.’

I have no dread of your being too hasty, and I have still less of your failing. But I think a year a very fair allotment of time to a composition which is not to be Epic; and even Horace’s ‘Nonum prematur’ must have been intended for the Millennium, or some longer-lived generation than ours. I wonder how much we should have had of him, had he observed his own doctrines to the letter. Peace be with you! Remember that I am always and most truly yours, &c.

P.S. I never heard the ‘report’ you mention, nor, I dare say, many others. But, in course, you, as well as others, have ‘damned good-natured friends,’ who do their duty in the usual way. One thing will make you laugh. * * * * * *

Byron to Thomas Phillips[?], March 6th 1814:

(Transcription by Paul Curtis, modified)

Philips painted the Cloak portrait (1813), and the portrait in the Albanian costume (1814). March 6th, 1814

Dear Sir /

I regret troubling you – but my friend H who saw the pictures today suggests to me that the nose of the smaller portrait is too much turned up— if you recollect I thought so too – but as one never can tell the truth of one’s own features – I should have said no more on the subject but for this remark

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80: Shakespeare, Henry V, III I 21 (adapted).
81: “Divide and rule”; not a quotation; a standard Latin phrase.
82: See Mo to B., February 28th 1814.
83: Moore’s note: In asserting that he devoted but four days to the composition of The Bride, he must be understood to refer only to the first sketch of that poem,—the successive additions by which it was increased to its present length having occupied, as we have seen, a much longer period. The Corsair, on the contrary, was, from beginning to end, struck off at a heat—there being but little alteration or addition afterwards,—and the rapidity with which it was produced (being at the rate of nearly two hundred lines a day) would be altogether incredible, had we not his own, as well as his publisher’s, testimony to the fact. Such an achievement,—taking into account the surpassing beauty of the work,—is, perhaps, wholly without a parallel in the history of Genius, and shows that ‘écrire par passion,’ as Rousseau expresses it, may be sometimes a shorter road to perfection than any that Art has ever struck out.
84: Shakespeare, Richard III (additional line by Cibber).
85: Horace, Ars Poetica, 1.388 (“nonumque prematur”: “and keep your poem nine years”).
86: Sir Fretilus Plagiary in Sheridan, The Critic, Act I.
87: Hobhouse diary, Saturday March 19th 1814: “… went with Kinnaird, Frederick, and young Dr Chambers, to see three pictures which Philips R.A. is painting of Lord Byron – I see no resemblance in any or either one ….”
of a friend whom I have known so long that he must at least be aware of the length of that nose by which

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I am (so) easily led. — Perhaps you will have the goodness to retouch it — as it is a feature of some importance — the Albanian wants nothing — if you can — excuse my plaguing you with this request.—
yours, very truly

Biron

Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, March 12th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 537-8; LJ III 57-9; BLJ IV 79-81)

March 12. 1814.

Guess darkly, and you will seldom err. At present, I shall say no more, and, perhaps—but no matter. I hope we shall some day meet, and whatever years may precede or succeed it, I shall mark it with the ‘white stone’ in my calendar. I am not sure that I shall not soon be in your neighbourhood again. If so, and I am alone (as will probably be the case), I shall invade and carry you off, and endeavour to atone for sorry fare by a sincere welcome. I don’t know the person absent (barring ‘the sect’) I should be so glad to see again.

I have nothing of the sort you mention but the lines (the Weepers), if you like to have them in the Bag. I wish to give them all possible circulation. The Vault reflection is downright actionable, and to print it would be peril to the publisher; but I think the Tears have a natural right to be bagged, and the editor (whoever he may be) might supply a facetious note or not, as he pleased.

I cannot conceive how the Vault has got about, — but so it is. It is too farouche; but, truth to say, my satires are not very playful. I have the plan of an epistle in my head, at him and to him; and, if they are not a little quieter, I shall embody it. I should say little or nothing of myself. As to mirth and ridicule, that is out of my way; but I have a tolerable fund of sternness and contempt, and, with Juvenal before me, I shall perhaps read him a lecture he has not lately heard in the C——t [Cabinet]. From particular circumstances, which came to my knowledge almost by accident, I could ‘tell him what he is—I know him well.’

I meant, my dear M., to write to you a long letter, but I am hurried, and time clips my inclination down to yours, &c.

P.S. Think again before you shelf your poem. There is a youngster, (older than me, by the by, but a younger poet,) Mr. G[ally] Knight, with a vol. of Eastern Tales, written since his return,—for he has been in the countries. He sent to me last summer, and I advised him to write one in each measure, without any intention, at that time, of doing the same thing. Since that, from a habit of writing in a fever, I have anticipated him in the variety of measures, but quite unintentionally. Of the stories, I know nothing, not having seen them; but he has some lady in a sack, too, like The Giaour:—he told me at the time.

The best way to make the public ‘forget’ me is to remind them of yourself. You cannot suppose that I would ask you or advise you to publish, if I thought you would fail. I really have no literary envy; and I do not believe a friend’s success ever sat nearer another than yours do to my best wishes. It is for elderly gentlemen to ‘bear no brother near,’ — and cannot become our disease for more years than we may perhaps number. I wish you to be out before Eastern subjects are again before the public.

Byron to James Wedderburn Webster, from London, March 21st 1814:
(Source: text from Huntington HM 6549, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ IV 83)

[No address.]

Byron had lent Webster £1,000 the previous October, and never got it back.

March 21st, 1814

Dear Webster /

I am sorry to say that in consequence of a disappointment [for the present] in the amount of the remittance I expected I am obliged to decline advancing the sum which I would readily

88: Moore’s note: Those bitter and powerful lines which he wrote on the opening of the vault that contained the remains of Henry VIII. and Charles I.
89: Moore’s note: He was not yet aware, it appears, that the anonymous manuscript sent to him by his publisher was from the pen of Mr. Knight.
90: Pope, Epistle to Arbuthnot, II.197-8.
have done had it been within my power. – With regard to joining you as a security – I should have no objection – but on the terms & with the persons to whom you have applied – I should only become instrumental in involving both you & myself

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without any permanent benefit to yourself. – I speak from experience – as my own difficulties have arisen from similar sources. – Your own agent could surely direct you to more respectable lenders – and better terms – and as you must have security to give on your own property – I should think the business might be arranged without your having recourse to the Advertisers in papers. – – I regret very much that it is not now

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in my power to <have> advance this myself – & I think you know that I would have done so had it been practicable.

very truly y’s.

[swirl]

Byron to Scrope Berdmore Davies, March 24th 1814:
(Source: text from B.L. Loan 70 / 1 f.12; BLJ XI 162)
A formal letter asking Davies exactly how much Byron still owes him: five years after contracting the debt, Byron now intends to honour the remainder of it. He has by now repaid Davies the interest of £2,300 (£1,500 on November 10th 1812, plus £800 on August 5th 1813), and he pays the principal £4,804 12s 4d now.

March 24th. 1814

Dear Sir /

I have to request the favour of a memorandum of the sum on bond due from me to you with y’es interest & expences incurred upon the same. – An early answer will oblige y’es very obed. Serv’t.

Byron

To S.B.Davies Esqr.

P.S. – As I am preparing to liquidate it (tomorrow I hope) you will perhaps get it ready for delivery – –

Scrope Berdmore Davies to Byron:
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4178A)
No date, but as quickly as possible after the previous item.

My dear Lord

The bond debt is 4633
Seven months interest 135 – 2 – 0
4768 – 2 – 0
Deduct Property Tax 13 – 10 – 0
There is also due with the last bond 4754 – 12 – 0
56 – 0 – 0
4804 – 12 – 0

Before your Lordship shall leave England, I should wish to have an interview with your Lordship – I remain

Your Ldship’s
Obd’ Servant
Scrope Davies

3 Little Ryder St
St James’s St

Byron to James Hogg, from 2, the Albany, London, March 24th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found: NLS. printed version; BLJ IV 84-6)
Byron expresses his sense that Shakespeare is overrated.

Albany, March 24th

Dear Sir, – I have been out of town, otherwise your letter should have been answered sooner. When a letter contains a request, the said request generally figures towards the finale, and so does yours, my good friend. In answering perhaps the other way is the better: so not to make many words about a trifle, (which any thing of mine must be,) you shall have a touch of my quality for your first Number – and if you print that, you shall have more of the same stuff for the successors. Send me a few of your proofs, and I will set forthwith about something, that I at least hope may suit your purposes. So much for the Poetic Mirror, which may easily be, God knows, entitled to hang higher than the prose one.

You seem to be a plain spoken man, Mr. Hogg, and I really do not like you the worse for it. I can’t write verses, and yet you want a bit of my poetry for your book. It is for you to reconcile yourself with yourself. – You shall have the verses.

You are mistaken, my good fellow, in thinking that I (or, indeed, that any living verse-writer – for we shall sink poets) can write as well as Milton. Milton’s Paradise Lost is, as a whole, a heavy concern; but the two first books of it are the very finest poetry that has ever been produced in this world – at least since the flood – for I make little doubt Abel was a fine pastoral poet, and Cain a fine bloody poet, and so forth; but we, now-a-days, even we, (you and I, i.e.) know no more of their poetry than the brutum vulgus – I beg pardon, the swinish multitude, do of Wordsworth and Pye. Poetry must always exist, like drink, where there is a demand for it. And Cain’s may have been the brandy of the Antedeluvians, and Abel’s the small [“beer”?] still.

Shakespeare’s name, you may depend on it, stands absurdly too high and will go down. He had no invention as to stories, none whatever. He took all his plots from old novels, and threw their stories into a dramatic shape, at as little expense of thought as you or I could turn his plays back again into prose tales. That he threw over whatever he did write some flashes of genius, nobody can deny: but this was all. Suppose any one to have the dramatic handling for the first time of such ready – made stories as Lear, Macbeth, &c. and he would be a sad fellow, indeed, if he did not make something very grand of them. [As] for his historical plays, properly historical, I mean, they were mere redressings of former plays on the same subjects, and in twenty cases out of twenty-one, the finest, the very finest things, are taken all but verbatim out of the old affairs. You think, no doubt, that A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse! is Shakespeare’s. Not a syllable of it. You will find it all in the old nameless dramatist. Could not one takeup Tom Jones and improve it, without being a greater genius than Fielding? I, for my part, think Shakespeare’s plays might be improved, and the public seem, and have seemed for to think so too, for not one of his is or ever has been acted as he wrote it; and what the pit applauded three hundred years past, is five times out of ten not Shakespeare’s, but Cibber’s.

Stick you to Walter Scott, my good friend, and do not talk any more stuff about his not being willing to give you real advice, if you really will ask for real advice. You love Southey, forsooth – I am sure Southey loves nobody but himself, however. I hate these talkers one and all, body and soul. They are a set of the most despicable impostors – that is my opinion of them. They know nothing of the world; and what is poetry, but the reflection of the world? What sympathy have this people with the spirit of this stirring age? They are no more able to understand the least of it, than your lust – nay, I beg her pardon, she may very probably have intense sympathy with both its spirit, (I mean the whisky,) and its body (I mean the bard.) They are mere old wives. Look at their beastly vulgarity, when they wish to be homely; and their exquisite stuff, when they clap on sail, and aim at fancy. Coleridge is the best of the trio – but bad is the best. Southey should have been a parish-clerk, and Wordsworth a man-midwife – both in darkness. I doubt if either of them ever got drunk, and I am of the old creed of Homer the wine-bibber. Indeed I think you and Burns have derived a great advantage from this, that being poets, and drinkers of wine, you have had a new potation to rely upon. Your whisky has made you original. I have always thought it a fine liquor. I back you against beer at all events, gill to gallon.

By the bye, you are a fine hand to cut up the minor matters of verse-writing; you indeed think harmony the all-in-all. My dear sir, you may depend upon it, you never had name yet, without making it rhyme to theme. I overlook all that sort of thing, however, and so must you, in your turn, pass over my real or supposed ruggedness. The fact is, that I have a theory on the subject, but that I have not time at present for explaining it. The first time all the poets of the age meet it must be in London, glorious London is the place, after all – we shall, if you please, have a small trial of skill. You shall write seventeen odes for me, anything from Miltonian blank down to Phillupian namby, and I a similar number for you, and let a jury of good men and true be the judges between us. I name Scott for foreman – Tom Campbell may be admitted, and Mrs. Baillie, (though it be not exactly a matron case.) You may name the other nine worthies yourself. We shall, at all events, have a dinner upon the occasion, and I stipulate for a small importation of the peat reek.

Dear sir, believe me sincerely yours,
Byron to Scrope Berdmore Davies, from 2, the Albany, London, March 25th 1814:
(Source: text from B.L. Loan 70 / 1 ff.13-14; BLJ XI 162-3)

March 25th, 1814

My dear Scrope

My Bankers (Messrs Hoares) will discount some bills of Mr. Claughton’s today to the amount required & I peremptorily hope the whole will be adjusted tomorrow & transferred to you. — — — Hobhouse has informed me of some unintentional sin of omission on my part towards you in regard to an appointment made to meet Col. Matthews the brother of our late friend 91 — I can only say — that the whole thing had entirely escaped my memory — and I trust it will not live in yours;

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had I been at all aware that you had been the least annoyed by this or any other apparent negligence on my part — I should long [ago] have said — what I say now — that I am sorry for it. — In the ignorance of my innocence — I had imputed this estrangement to any cause but the real one — I thought that a sudden passion for y6. Prince Regent — the columns of the Courier — or — to be serious — pleasanter pursuits than visiting an abstemious friend might have made this hitch in our acquaintance — but of any real cause of difference between us I had as little suspicion — as I now have

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hesitation in saying that I wish I had known it before. — — — — — —

Hobhouse & I have a kind of a dual: Club once a week at the Cocoa — to which we are allowed to ask one visitor — <who by the regulations of the C<<xxx>> must be a> [who must be a Cocoaan — ] will you dine with us on Monday next? at 6. ————

We are restricted to fish all the year — except Lent when flesh is strictly enjoined — the season is luckily in your favour for greater variety of viands as a guest — pray come. —

ever y7. very affect8.

Byron

Byron to James Wedderburn Webster, from 2, the Albany, London, March / April 1814:
(Source: this text from BLJ IV 88)

Wednesday Noon

Dear W.—I hear that you are in town & unwell—the last report I shall be very glad to have contradicted by yourself.—When you have nothing better to do I shall be happy to see you—if you are not disposed to stir in this weather I can call upon you when you like.

yrs. very truly

B

Byron to Harriette Wilson, from 2, the Albany, London, April 1814 (with context):
(Source: Mss. not found; texts from Harriette Wilson’s memoirs of herself and others, with a preface by James Laver, P. Davies 1929, pp.247-9; Byron’s letter at BLJ IV 88-9)

Wilson writes: I had long been, sentimentally, in love with Lord Byron, and, some years previous to the publication of the last canto of “Childe Harold”, I had written to him to solicit the honour of his acquaintance.

If, my Lord, said I in my letter, to have been cold and indifferent to every other modern poet, while I have passed whole nights in studying your productions, with the eagerness of one who has discovered a new source of enjoyment, as surprising as it was delightful, deserves gratitude from the vanity of an author, or the gallantry of a gentleman, you will honour me with a little of your friendship.

Would you believe, reader, this eloquent epistle obtained me no answer during three long days? I was furious, and wrote again to tell him that he was a mere pedant; that my common sense was a match for his fine rhymes; that the best of us poor weak mortals, and I acknowledged him to be at the head of the list, must still be ignorant, subject to sickness, ill temper, and various errors in judgment, therefore was there little excuse for his impertinence, in presuming to find fault with the whole world, as he had

91: C.S.Matthews.
done in his *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, at an age when his natural judgment could not be matured. It was vulgar, and showed the littleness which such want of philanthropy towards our poor fellow creatures always must evince. Was he really so superior, and would he crush the poor worms which dared not aspire to his perfections, or was he but a mere upstart man, of extraordinary genius, without strength of mind to know what he would be at? Could he not, at least, have declined the honour I wanted to confer on him, civilly?

This eloquent letter ended simply thus, after assuring him that it was now much too late to make my acquaintance, as I had changed my mind, and no longer desired it the least in the world—like the fox and the grapes—*You be hung’d!*

HARRIETTE WILSON.

This, to a favourite, was tolerably severe; but, when I take a liking to a person, I must and will be something to them; So they will not like me, I always make it my business and peculiar care, that they shall dislike, and quarrel with me. Let me get them into a quarrel, and I am sure of them.

The next day I received the following answer from Byron, dated Albany, Piccadilly.

*If my silence has hurt “your pride or your feelings”, to use your own expressions, I am very sorry for it; be assured that such effect was far from my intention. Business, and some little bustle attendant on changing my residence, prevented me from thanking you for your letter as soon as I ought to have done. If my thanks do not please you, now, pray accept them. I could not feel otherwise than obliged by the desire of a stranger to make my acquaintance.*

*I am not unacquainted with your name or your beauty, and I have heard much of your talents; but I am not the person whom you would like, either as a lover or a friend. I did not, and do not suspect you, to use your own words once more, of any design of making love to me. I know myself well enough to acquit anyone who does not know me, and still more those who do, from any such intention. I am not of a nature to be loved, and so far, luckily for myself, I have no wish to be so. In saying this, I do not mean to affect any particular stoicism, and may possibly, at one time or other, have been liable to those follies, for which you sarcastically tell me, I have now no time, but these, and everything else, are to me, at present, objects of indifference; and this is a good deal to say, at six-and-twenty. You tell me that you wished to know me better, because you liked my writing. I think you must be aware that a writer is in general very different from his productions, and always disappoints those who expect to find in him qualities more agreeable than those of others; I shall certainly not be lessened in my vanity, as a scribbler, by the reflection that a work of mine has given you pleasure; and, to preserve the impression in its favour, I will not risk your good opinion, by inflicting my acquaintance upon you.*

*Very truly your obliged servant,*

B

Wilson continues: This was very dry; but I had not aspired to Lord Byron’s love, and I did not despair of making his acquaintance. I am indeed surprised that I never fell in love with His Lordship; but, certain it is, that, though I would have given anything to have been his most humble friend and servant, his beauty was of a nature never to inspire me with warmer sentiments.

There was nothing whatever voluptuous in the character of it; it was wholly intellectual: and, as such, I honoured it; but give me, for my lover, an indolent being, who, while he possesses talents and genius to do anything he pleases, pleases himself most and best in pleasing me! *Au reste*, I admire and look up to heroes! but indolent men make the best lovers.

Leigh Hunt to Byron, from Horsemonger Lane Gaol, April 2nd 1814:
(Source: text from NLS, Acc.12604 / 4132; LJ III 416-17)

*My dear Byron,*

*(To fall in with your very kind & acceptable mode of addressing me) you leave me little to do on this occasion, except to thank you for the trouble you have taken in noticing my venturous remarks. There certainly is a feeling among men of spirit in general, which leads them to prefer this desperate flash-out of a man’s career to his quieter & more patient extinction; but is not this feeling among the numerous & dangerous errors, which the world chuse to palm upon their own minds for the sake of looking bold in each other’s eyes, & which, in fact, help to keep up all those evils of war & ambition, which whenever it suits them, they nevertheless think themselves justified in resenting? The question is, will it stand the test of truth & reason? Your Lordship has answered, no; then what is the business of a man who aims at shewing himself superior to others, & not the common dupe of their prejudices, but to act as truth & reason require. To be sure, it is rather late in the day for Bonaparte to*
set up for a philosopher, but if he would do it at all, it is clear he must do it in this manner, and not, as it were, run his head impatiently against his hard fortune. The

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eamples of Richard & Macbeth, though historical, are scarcely applicable, I think, in the present instance, for they are hardly to be considered as any thing but ruffians from first to last, & their sole object was the violent possession of a crown; whereas Bonaparte has had, or pretended to have, “great views” for society at large, – he has affected a certain great & speculative philosophy; & perhaps may have really juggled with his conscience promising himself to do mighty things for us, as soon as he had demolished our principles & cut all our throats. He may therefore say to himself, “My views for society have not succeeded; I am suddenly rendered powerless; but as my object was not mere reigning, as I pretend to a courage & understanding superior to that of most men, & above all, as I have undertaken, in so many words, that adversity shall not be too much for me, I must shew myself able to bear my reverses with fortitude.” – With regard to Palaeologus, I think perfectly with your Lordship; but why do I do so? Because Palaeologus had an honourable cause to maintain; & a submission to circumstances, with him, would have been a compromise with his honour; – he would have given up a good principle, & this he had no right to do: virtuous example would have lost more by his patience than it gained by his desperation. Now Bonaparte had no such cause to fight for; he was a legitimate monarch, it is true, because he was chosen

1:3

by the people; but he had not acted his true part as a monarch, & could no longer be considered as fighting for his subjects; he had no right to imitate the useful desperation of patriotism: – in him, it would have been mere useless bloodshed, & boyish or rather ruffianish obstinacy. – Your picture indeed of what he might have been, it is almost too painful to contemplate; never had man such opportunities of true glory, or so wantonly threw them away. But perhaps his violent follies have been more useful to mankind in adding to their hard-earned experience; – it is doubtful if the French would have obtained so much rational freedom, or the world such a prospect of peace & improvement, if we all had not gone our full round of suffering, & been taught, by main force, to discern. – Come, – if your Lordship wrote me a long letter & thought fit to apologize for it, I think I have had my revenge. Pray, however, think no more of such apologies or of those for your not visiting me oftener. I know the thousand little things that prevent a man who is living out in the world from keeping engagements elsewhere; & I expect to have you some day or other, if I live. All that I must request of you in the mean time is not to write me letters full of kindness & candour, which make me more than ordinarily intent to see the writer.

Ever, my dear Byron, most sincerely your’s,

Leigh Hunt.

P.S. The morning papers have just been brought me. Do you see what Bonaparte says?

[1:4 blank.]
My Lord

Mr Merivale has delivered to me, a very valuable Snuff box, enclosing a draught for fifty pounds, which Your Lordship has done me the honor, to desire him to convey to me, accompanied with the testimony of Your Lordships flattering & most valuable Approbation of my humble efforts – in the discharge of my professional duties, it is impossible for me to express what I feel at this proof of your Lordships Liberality, or the high sense I shall ever entertain of the Approbation of a person so eminently distinguished as Your Lordship – I am equally flattered at what Mr Merivale has communicated to me, of Lord Carlisle’s Commendation. I can only in return offer for Your Lordship, my respectful Acknowledgement; with an Assurance, that the proof of Your Lordship’s partiality, will stimulate me to increased exertions in my profession.

I have the honor to be,

with great respect,

Your Lordship’s most obliged

& Obedient humble Servant

E. Kean

Right Honorable Lord Byron &c &c &c

Byron to Thomas Moore, from 2, the Albany, London, April 9th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 540-2; LJ III 63-5; QI 274-6; BLJ IV 91-3)


Viscount Althorp is about to be married, and I have gotten his spacious bachelor apartments in Albany, to which you will, I hope, address a speedy answer to this mine epistle.

I am but just returned to town, from which you may infer that I have been out of it; and I have been boxing, for exercise, with Jackson for this last month daily. I have also been drinking, and, on one occasion, with three other friends at the Cocoa Tree, from six till four, yea, unto five in the matin. We clareted and champagned till two—then supped, and finished with a kind of regency punch composed of madeira, brandy, and green tea, no real water being admitted therein. There was a night for you! without once quitting the table, except to ambulate home, which I did alone, and in utter contempt of a hackney-coach and my own vis, both of which were deemed necessary for our conveyance. And so,—I am very well, and they say it will hurt my constitution.

I have also, more or less, been breaking a few of the favourite commandments; but I mean to pull up and marry, if any one will have me. In the mean time, the other day I nearly killed myself with a collar of brawn, which I swallowed for supper, and indigested for I don’t know how long: but that is by the by. All this gourmandise was in honour of Lent; for I am forbidden meat all the rest of the year, but it is strictly enjoined me during your solemn fast. I have been, and am, in very tolerable love; but of that hereafter as it may be.

My dear Moore, say what you will in your preface; and quiz any thing or any body,—me if you like it. Oons! dost thou think me of the old, or rather elderly, school? If one can’t jest with one’s friends, with whom can we be facetious? You have nothing to fear from *, whom I have not seen, being out of town when he called. He will be very correct, smooth, and all that, but I doubt whether there will be any ‘grace beyond the reach of art;’ 94—and, whether there is or not, how long will you be so d——d modest? As for Jeffrey, it is a very handsome thing of him to speak well of an old antagonist,—and what a mean mind dared not do. Any one will revoke praise; but—were it not partly my own case—I should say that very few have strength of mind to unsay their censure, or follow it up with praise of other things.

What think you of the review of Levis? It beats the Bag and my hand-grenade hollow, as an invective, and hath thrown the Court into hysterics, as I hear from very good authority. Have you heard from * * * * * * * *

No more rhyme for—or rather, from—me. I have taken my leave of that stage, and henceforth will mountebank it no longer. I have had my day, and there’s an end. The utmost I expect, or even wish, is to have it said in the Biographia Britannica, that I might perhaps have been a poet, had I gone on and amended. My great comfort is, that the temporary celebrity I have wrung from the world has been in the very teeth of all opinions and prejudices. I have flattered no ruling powers; I have never concealed a single thought that tempted me. They can’t say I have truckled to the times, nor to popular topics, (as Johnson, or somebody, said of Cleveland,) and whatever I have gained has been at the expenditure of as much personal favour as possible; for I do believe never was a bard more unpopular, quoad homo,

93: BLJ has Althorpe.
than myself. And now I have done;—'ludite nunc alios.'95 Every body may be d——d, as they seem fond of it, and resolve to stickle lustily for endless brimstone.

Oh,—by the by, I had nearly forgot. There is a long poem, an ‘Anti-Byron,’ coming out, to prove that I have formed a conspiracy to overthrow, by rhyme, all religion and government, and have already made great progress! It is not very scurrious, but serious and ethereal. I never felt myself important, till I saw and heard of my being such a little Voltaire as to induce such a production. Murray would not publish it, for which he was a fool, and so I told him; but some one else will, doubtless. ‘Something too much of this.’

Your French scheme is good, but let it be Italian; all the Angles will be at Paris. Let it be Rome, Milan, Naples, Florence, Turin, Venice, or Switzerland, and ‘egad!’ (as Bayes saith,)97 I will connubiate and join you; and we will write a new ‘Inferno’ in our Paradise. Pray think of this—and I will really buy a wife and a ring, and say the ceremony, and settle near you in a summer-house upon the Arno, or the Po, or the Adriatic.

Ah! my poor little pagod, Napoleon, has walked off his pedestal. He has abdicated, they say. This would draw molten brass from the eyes of Zatana. What! 'kiss the ground before young Malcolm’s feet, and then be baited by the rabble’s curse!'98 I cannot bear such a crouching catastrophe. I must stick to Sylla, for my modern favourites don’t do,—their resignations are of a different kind. All health and prosperity, my dear Moore. Excuse this lengthy letter.

Ever, &c.

P.S. The Quarterly quotes you frequently in an article on America; and every body I know asks perpetually after you and yours. When will you answer them in person?

Edmund Kean to Byron, from Taplow House, April 15th 1814:
(Source: text from typed copy in Morrison manuscripts)

Taplow House,
15th April

My Lord

Mr Merivale has delivered to me, a very valuable Snuff box, enclosing a draught for fifty pounds, which Your Lordship has done me the honor, to desire him to convey to me, accompanied with the testimony of Your Lordships flattering & most valuable Approbation of my humble efforts – in the discharge of my professional duties, it is impossible for me to express what I feel at this proof of your Lordships Liberality, or the high sense I shall ever entertain of the Approbation of a person so eminently distinguished as Your Lordship – I am equally flattered at what Mr Merivale has communicated to me, of Lord Carlisle’s Commendation, I can only in return offer for Your Lordship, my respectful Acknowledgement; with an Assurance, that the proof of Your Lordship’s partiality, will stimulate me to increased exertions in my profession.

I have the honor to be,
with great respect,
Your Lordship’s most obliged
& Obedient humble Servant
E. Kean

Right Honorable Lord Byron &c &c &c

Byron to Scrope Berdmore Davies, no date [B.L.says “before 25 Apr. 1816”]:
(Source: text from B.L. Loan 70 / 1 f.15; BLJ XI 161)

My dear Scrope –

I need not say that I should have been glad to have seen you oftener – but today I am obliged to go out early – & stay late – tomorrow or Friday I am yours any time before 3. – Pray present my respects to M. – & say everything for me which you know we both feel but no one can express better or so well as yourself when you like.

ever y6.

95: A common Latin inscription, from Ovid, Fasti, II 208: see Le Sage, Gil Blas, Book IX, last sentence.
96: Shakespeare, Hamlet, III ii 72.
97: In Buckingham’s The Rehearsal.
Byron to Scrope Berdmore Davies, no date [B.L. says “before 25 Apr. 1816”]:
(Source: text from B.L. Loan 70 / 1 f.17; BLJ XI 161)

Dear Scrope –
I have not my own box tomorrow – but have taken another No. 3 South Side private box door
where I shall be very happy to see you – –

ever yrs.
B

April 10th 1814: Byron writes the Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte, and fair-copies it the next day.

April 16th 1814: Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte published.

Byron to an unknown recipient, from 2, Albany, London, April 18th 1814:
(Source: Harry Ransom Center, Texas, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ IV 98)

Sir / I have to thank you for your present – & request that in future the numbers be sent to my
bookseller Mr. Ridgway at the time of publication – who will receive my orders to account for them
regularly to the Publisher. – – –
If you think the Ode worth sending for – Mr. Murray will deliver a copy to anyone sent in my name
for that purpose. – A friend of mine left town for Paris this morning – otherwise I should avail
myself of your obliging
1:2
offer. – The latter part of your letter I will consider & am
very truly y’. obliged Ser’.
Byron

2 Albany

P.S. – If you wish to have the Ode – it will be better to delay till Wednesday – as there is a slight
addition which will then be published. – – –

Byron to Bernard Barton, from 2, the Albany, London, April 16th 1814:
(Source: text from Leeds Brotherton photocopy; BLJ IV 97)

Albany April 16th.
1814

Sir / All offence is out of the question – my principal regret is that it is not in my power to be of
service. – My own plans are very unsettled – & at present from a variety of circumstances embarrassed
– and even were it otherwise – I should be loth to offer anything like dependence to one who from
education and acquirements must doubly feel sensible of such a situation – however I might be
disposed to render it tolerable. – As an adviser I am rather qualified to point out what should be
avoided than what may be pursued – for my own
1:2
life has been but a series of imprudences & conflicts of all descriptions – from these I have only
acquired experience – if repentance were added perhaps it might be all the better, since I do not find the
former of much avail without it. –

[no signature]

Byron to William Clark, from 2, the Albany, London, April 19th 1814:
(Source: text from Wren Library R2 40, Trinity College Cambridge; BLJ IV 99-100)
[1814 / London April nineteenth / To – Dr. W. Clark / Trin: Coll / Cambridge / Byron]

2. Albany – April 19th.
1814

99: The Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte.
100: H. actually left for Paris on April 16th.
Dear Sir /

Certainly – & I only regret that circumstances will not permit me {to} join you there immediately. – I have only [to] add that if we meet either at home or abroad within a reasonable time I hope you will allow me to renew our acquaintance & joint expedition if the last should not interfere with more agreeable pursuits on your part. – You will find Hobhouse at Paris, & your sword & trunk here in your way. –

ever y'rs.

B

Byron to Thomas Moore, from 2, the Albany, London, April 20th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 543-4; LJ III 69-72; BLJ IV 100-101)

Albany, April 20. 1814.

I am very glad to hear that you are to be transient from Mayfield so very soon, and was taken in by the first part of your letter. Indeed, for aught I know, you may be treating me, as Slipslop says, with ‘ironing’ even now. I shall say nothing of the shock, which had nothing of humeur in it; as I am apt to take even a critic, and still more a friend, at his word, and never to doubt that I have been writing cursed nonsense, if they say so. There was a mental reservation in my pact with the public, in behalf of anonymes; and, even had there not, the provocation was such as to make it physically impossible to pass over this damnable epoch of triumphant tameness. ‘Tis a cursed business; and, after all, I shall think higher of rhyme and reason, and very humbly of your heroic people, till—Elba becomes a volcano, and sends him out again. I can’t think it all over yet.

My departure for the Continent depends, in some measure, on the incontinent. I have two country invitations at home, and don’t know what to say or do. In the mean time, I have bought a macaw and a parrot, and have got up my books; and I box and fence daily, and go out very little.

At this present writing, Louis the Gouty is wheeling in triumph into Piccadilly, in all the pomp and rabblement of royalty. I had an offer of seats to see them pass; but, as I have seen a Sultan going to mosque, and been at his reception of an ambassador, the most Christian King ‘hath no attractions for me’—though in some coming year of the Hegira, I should not dislike to see the place where he had reigned, shortly after the second revolution, and a happy sovereignty of two months, the last six weeks being civil war.

Pray write, and deem me ever, &c.

Leigh Hunt to Byron, from Horsemonger Lane Gaol, April 27th 1814:
(Source: text from NLS, Acc.12604 / 4132)

Surrey Jail April 27. 1814.

My dear Byron,

I was much entertained with the letter you were good enough to enclose, & shall take the liberty of making the extracts accordingly. But <are> you are getting upon dangerous ground with an editor. Do you know, I was half tempted to extract the arguments of your last (the best that are to be found for that side of the question), & answer them in my next Examiner, as a correspondent’s, – with permission, of course; – but this would only have looked as if some one had been unsuccessfully arguing for you, & that would not have been well. I wish to God that society at large were possessed of the fine candour & simplicity that sometimes distinguish individuals, & then these things might be canvassed in public as undisguisedly as in a room.

101: Evidence of a missing letter from Mo..
102: Moore’s note: I had begun my letter in the following manner:—“Have you seen the ‘Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte?’—I suspect it to be either F——g——d’s or Rosa Matilda’s. Those rapid and masterly portraits of all the tyrants that preceded Napoleon have a vigour in them which would incline me to say that Rosa Matilda is the person—but then, on the other hand, that powerful grasp of history,” &c. &c. After a little more of this mock parallel, the letter went on thus:—“I should like to know what you think of the matter?—Some friends of mine here will insist that it is the work of the author of Childe Harold,—but then they are not so well read in F——g———d and Rosa Matilda as I am; and, besides, they seem to forget that you promised, about a month or two ago, not to write any more for years. Seriously,” &c. &c.
I quote this foolish banter merely to show how safely, even on his most sensitive points, one might venture to jest with him.
104: Moore’s note: We find D’Argenson thus encouraging Voltaire to break a similar vow:—“Continue to write without fear for five-and-twenty years longer, but write poetry, notwithstanding your oath in the preface to Newton.”
I quite agree with you about the Empress, – that is to say, provided the match was not entirely an unwilling one on her side, & Bonaparte did not absolutely ill treat her. What a noble opportunity for his former wife!

Ever sincerely yours,

Leigh Hunt.

P.S. Since commencing this note, I have made the extracts, as I thought you might wish to have the letter returned speedily.

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from 2, the Albany, London, April 29th 1814:

April 29th, 1814

I delivered “Mamma’s message” with anatomical precision – the knee was the refractory limb – was it not? injured I presume at prayers – for I cannot conjecture by what other possible attitude a female knee could become so perverse. – Having given an account of my embassy – I enclose you a note which will only repeat what you already know – – but to obviate a possible Pharisaical charge – I must observe that the first part of her epistle alludes to an answer of mine – in which talking about that eternal Liturgy – I said that I had no great opinion one way or the other – assuredly no decided unbelief –

and that the clamour had wrung from me many of the objectionable passages – in the pure quintessence of the spirit of contradiction & &c. – She talks of “talking” on these same metaphysics – to shorten the conversation I shall propose the Litany – “from the crafts & assau” ay – that will do very well – what comes next – “Deliver us” – an’t it? – Seriously – if she imagines that I particularly delight in canvassing the creed of St. Athanasius – or prattling of rhyme – I think she will be mistaken – but you know best – I don’t suspect myself of often talking about poets or clergymen – of rhyme or the rubric – but very likely I am wrong – for assuredly no one knows itself – and for aught I know – I may for these last 2 years have inflicted upon you a world of theology – and the greater part of Walker’s rhyming dictionary. –

I don’t know what to say or do about going – sometimes I wish it – at other times I think it foolish – as assuredly my design will be imputed to a motive – which by the bye if once fairly there is very likely to come into my head – and failing to put me into no very good humour with myself – I am not now in love with her – but I can’t at all foresee that I should not be so if it came “a warm June” (as Falstaff observes) and seriously – I do admire her as a very superior woman a little encumbered with Virtue – though perhaps your opinion & mine from the laughing turn of “our philosophy” may be less exalted upon her merits than that of the more zealous – though in fact less & God benevolent advocates of charity schools & Lying in Hospitals. – –

By the close of her note you will perceive that she has been “frowning” occasionally and has written some pretty lines upon it to a friend (he or she is not said) as for rhyme I am naturally no fair judge & can like it no better than a Grocer does figs. – – – –

I am quite irresolute – and undecided – if I were sure of myself (not of her) I would go – but I am not – & never can be – and what is still worse I have no judgement – & less common sense than an infant – this is not affected humility – with you I have no affectionate – with the world I have

105: BLJ has “assau”. Incomprehensible word could be either.
106: Compare Beppo, 52, 4.
107: Falstaff at Shakespeare, Henry IV I, II iv 352 (in fact “a hot June”)

1:2
1:3
1:4
2:1

a part to play – to be diffident there is to wear a drag-chain – and luckily I do so thoroughly despise
half the people in it – that my insolence is almost natural. –
I enclose you also a letter written some time ago and of which I do not remember the precise contents –
most likely they contradict every syllable of this – no matter. – Don’t plague yourself to write – we
shall meet at M’s. Hope’s I trust –
ever y°°°

[swirl signature]

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from 2, the Albany, London, April 30th 1814:
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4149C; 1922 I 254-5; QI 279-81; BLJ IV 110-11)

April 30th. 1814 –
My dear Lady M°. – You – or rather I have done my A°°° much injustice – the expression which you
recollect as objectionable meant only “loving” in the senseless sense of that wide word – and – <may>
It must be some selfish stupidity of mine in telling my own story – but really & truly – as I hope mercy
& happiness for her – by that God who made me for my own misery – & not much for the <happiness>
{good} of others – she was not to blame – one thousandth part in comparison – – she was not aware of
her own peril – till it was too late – and I can only account for her subsequent “abandon” by an
observation

which I think is not unjust – that women are much more attached than men – if they are treated with
any thing like fairness or tenderness. – – – – –
As for your A°°° I don’t know what to make of her – I enclose her last but one – – and my A’s last but
one – from which you may form your own conclusions on both – I think you must allow mine – to be a
very extraordinary person in point of talent – but I won’t say more – only do not allow your good
nature to lean to my side of this question – on all others I shall be glad to avail myself of your
partiality. – Now for common life. –

1:3

There is a party at Lady J’s°°° on Monday and on Wednesday – I am asked to both – and excused
myself out of Tuesday’s dinner because I want to see Kean in Richard again – pray why did you say – I
am getting into a scrape with R’s moiety? – one must talk to somebody – I always give you the
preference when you are disposed to listen – and when you seem fidgetted as you do now & then –
(and no wonder – for latterly I do but repeat –) I turn to anyone and she was the first that I stumbled
upon – as for anything more – I have not even advanced to the tip of her little finger – and never shall –
unless she gives it. – You won’t believe me – & won’t care if you do – but I really believe that I have
more true regard and affection

1:4

for yourself than for any other existence – as for my A – my feelings towards <me> her – are a mixture
of good & diabolical – I hardly know one passion which has not some share in them – but I won’t run
into the subject. – Your Niece has committed herself perhaps – but it can be of no consequence – if I
pursued & succeeded in that quarter – of course I must give up all other pursuits – and the fact is that
my wife if she had common sense would have more power over me – than any other whatsoever – for
my heart always alights upon the nearest perch – if it is withdrawn – it goes God knows where – but
one must like something. –
ever y°°°

[swirl signature]

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from 2, the Albany, London, April 31st 1814:

108: Augusta.
109: Annabella.
110: Lady Jersey’s.
My dear Lady M,

She says “if la tante” neither did she imagine nor I assert that you did have an opinion of what Philosopher Square calls “the fitness of things.” You are very kind in allowing us the few merits we can claim – she surely is {very} clever – and not only so – but in some things of good judgement – her expressions about A are exactly your own – and these most certainly without being aware of the coincidence – and excepting our one tremendous fault – I know her to be in point of temper & goodness of heart

1:2

almost unequalled – – now grant me this – that she is in truth a very loveable woman – and I will try and not love any longer – if you don’t believe me – ask those who know her better – I say better – for a man in love is blind as that Deity. – –

You yourself soften a little in the P. S. and say the letters “make you melancholy –” it is indeed a very triste and extraordinary business – & what is to become of us I know not – and I wont think just now. – Did you observe that she says “if la tante approved she should” she is little aware how much “la tante” has to disapprove – but you perceive that without intending it she pays

1:3

me a compliment by supposing you to be my friend and a sincere one – where approval could alter even her opinions. – – –

Tomorrow I am asked to Lr. Jersey’s in the evening – and on Wednesday again – tuesday – I go to Kean & dine after the play with Lr. Rancliffe – and on Friday there is Mr. Hope’s we shall clash at some of them. – What on earth can plague you? – I won’t ask – but am very very sorry for it – it is very hard that one who feels so much for others – should suffer pain herself – God bless you – Good night –

[swirl signature]

B

P.S.
A thousand loves and excuses to Mr. Damer with whom I weep – not to dine.

1:4

P.S. 2d – It indeed puzzles me to account for it is true she married a fool – but she would have him – they agreed – & agree very well – & I never heard a complaint but many vindications of him – as for me brought up as I was & sent into the world as I was both physically & morally – nothing better could be expected – and it is odd that I always had a foreboding – and remember when quite a child reading the Roman History – about a marriage I will tell you of when we me – asking ma mere – why I should not marry +

Since writing this – I have received y. enclosed – I will not trouble you with another – but this will I think enable you to appreciate her better. – she seems very triste – and I need hardly add that the reflection does not enliven me. – – – – –

Byron to John Murray, from 2, the Albany, London, May 1st 1814:

April – May 1st, 1814 –

Dear <Murray> {Sir} / If your present note is serious – and it really would be inconvenient – there is an end of the matter – tear <the paper> {my draft} – & go on as usual – in that case we will recur to our former basis. That I was perfectly serious in wishing to suppress all future publication is true – but certainly not to interfere with the convenience

111: Fielding, Tom Jones, III vi.
112: B. omits the last two letters of “meet”.
of others – & more particularly your own. – Some day I will tell you the reason of this apparently strange resolution – at present it may be enough to say that I recall it at your suggestion – and as it appears to have annoyed you I lose no time in saying so

yours truly

[signature swirl]

[1:3 blank.]

Byron to Mercer Elphinstone, from 2, the Albany, London, May 3rd 1814:
(Source: QI 282-3; BJL IV 112-13)

Byron gives Mercer Elphinstone the Albanian costume.

I send you the Arnaout garments – which will make an admirable costume for a Dutch Dragoon. – The Camesa or Kilt (to speak Scotishly) you will find very long – it is the custom with the Beys and a sign of rank to wear it to the ankle – I know not why – but so it is – the million shorten it to the knee which is more antique – and becoming – at least to those who have legs and a propensity to show them. – I have sent but one camesa – the other I will dispatch when it has undergone the Mussulman process of ablation. – – There are greaves for the legs – 2 waistcoats are beneath – one over the jacket – the cloak – a sash – a short shawl and cap – and a pair of garters (something of the Highland order –) with an ataghan wherewithal to cut your fingers if you don’t take care – over the sash – there is a small leathern girdle with a buckle in the centre. – – – It is put off & on in a few minutes – if you like the dress – keep it – I shall be very glad to get rid of it – as it reminds me of one or two things I don’t wish to remember. – – – To make it more acceptable – I have worn this very little – & never in England except for half an hour to Phillips – I had more of the same description but parted with them when my Arnaouts want back to Tepalen and I returned to England, it will do for a masquerade. One word about “caprice” I know you were merely in jest – and that my caprices – supposing such to exist – must be a subject of laughter or indifference – but I am not unconscious of something not unlike them in the course of our acquaintance. – Yet you must recollect that from your situation you can never be sure you have a friend – (as somebody has said of Sovereigns I believe) and that any apparent anxiety on my part to cultivate your acquaintance might have appeared to yourself like importunity – and – as I happen to know – would have been attributed by others to a motive not very creditable to me – and agreeable to neither. – This is quite enough – & more than I have a right to trouble you with on this or any other subject.

ever yours very sincerely

2 Albany May 3d, 1814

Byron

Mercer Elphinstone to Byron, May 1814:
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4247D)

Mercer Elphinstone thanks Byron for the Albanian costume.

How can I thank you half enough for your book and the splendid dress you have been so kind as send with it – my eyes are quite dazzled with its beauty, but I really have not impudence enough to keep it, tho I feel equally grateful to you for your offering it to me – The latter part of your letter is too flattering for me not to thank you most Sensibly for it; I am but too well aware of all the désagréemens of my own situation, and I am certain no woman of real feeling could value such a one, however, with regard to our acquaintance I can only say I must ever think of it with pleasure, and I trust that all the nonsense that has been said or may be said, will not prevent its continuance – When I came home last night I found that one of my cousins had carried off the original Mdm de S: – I have done another for you, which I fear is not, or like, but will at least preserve my good intention of performing my promise – in [ ]

yrs very sincerely

M. M. E.

I hope we shall [ ] at dinner to-day at Lady Jerseys.
Byron to Thomas Moore, from 2, the Albany, London, May 4th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 553-4; LJ III 79; Q1 283; BLJ IV 113-14) 

May 4. 1814.

Last night we supp’d at R——fe’s board, &c.113 

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * 

I wish people would not shirk their dinners—ought it not to have been a dinner?114—and that d——d anchovy sandwich! 

That plaguy voice of yours made me sentimental, and almost fall in love with a girl who was recommending herself, during your song, by hating music. But the song is past, and my passion can wait, till the pucelle is more harmonious. 

Do you go to Lady Jersey’s to-night? It is a large party, and you won’t be bored into ‘softening rocks,’115 and all that. Othello is to-morrow and Saturday too. Which day shall we go? when shall I see you? If you call, let it be after three, and as near four as you please. 

Ever, &c.

Byron to Thomas Moore, from 2, the Albany, London, May 4th 1814: 
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 554-5; LJ 80; BLJ IV 114)

May 4. 1814.

Dear Tom, 

Thou hast asked me for a song, and I enclose you an experiment, which has cost me something more than trouble, and is, therefore, less likely to be worth your taking any in your proposed setting.116 Now, if it be so, throw it into the fire without phrase.

Ever yours, 

BYRON.

I speak not, I trace not, I breathe not thy name, 
There is grief in the sound, there is guilt in the fame; 
But the tear which now burns on my cheek may impart 
The deep thoughts that dwell in that silence of heart. 

Too brief for our passion, too long for our peace 
Were those hours—can their joy or their bitterness cease? 
We repent—we abjure—we will break from our chain— 
We will part,—we will fly to—unite it again!

Oh! thine be the gladness, and mine be the guilt! 
Forgive me, adored one!—forsake, if thou wilt;— 
But the heart which is thine shall expire undebased, 
And man shall not break it—whatever thou mayst.

And stern to the haughty, but humble to thee, 
This soul, in its bitterest blackness, shall be; 
And our days seem as swift, and our moments more sweet, 
With thee by my side, than with worlds at our feet.

One sigh of thy sorrow, one look of thy love, 
Shall turn me or fix, shall reward or reprove; 
And the heartless may wonder at all I resign— 
Thy lip shall reply, not to them, but to mine.

Byron to Thomas Moore, from 2, the Albany, London, May 1814: 
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 555; BLJ IV 115)

113: Moore’s note: “An epigram here followed, which, as founded on a scriptural allusion, I thought it better to omit”. 
114: Moore’s note: We had been invited by Lord R. to dine after the play,—an arrangement which, from its novelty, delighted Lord Byron exceedingly. The dinner, however, afterwards dwindled into a mere supper, and this change was long a subject of jocular resentment with him. 
115: Shakespeare, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, III ii 79 (a rough recollection). 
116: Moore’s note: I had begged of him to write something for me to set to music.
Will you and Rogers come to my box at Covent, then? I shall be there, and none else—or I won’t be there, if you twain would like to go without me. You will not get so good a place hustling among the publican *boxers*, with damnable apprentices (six feet high) on a back row. Will you both oblige me and come,—or one—or neither—or, what you will?

P.S. An’ you will, I will call for you at half-past six, or any time of your own dial.

*Byron to Thomas Moore, from 2, the Albany, London, May 1814:*
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 556; LJ III 80-1; QI 283-4; BLJ IV 114)

May 5, 1814.

Do you go to the Lady Cahir’s this even? If you do—and whenever we are bound to the same follies—let us embark in the same ‘Shippe of Fooles.’ I have been up till five, and up at nine; and feel heavy with only winking for the last three or four nights. I lost my party and place at supper trying to keep out of the way of * * * *. I would have gone away altogether, but that would have appeared a worse affectation than t’other. You are of course engaged to dinner, or we may go quietly together to my box at Covent Garden, and afterwards to this assemblage. Why did you go away so soon?

Ever, &c.

P.S. *Ought not* R[anclif]te’s supper to have been a dinner? Jackson is here, and I must fatigue myself into spirits.

*Byron to Thomas Moore, from 2, the Albany, London, May 1814:*
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 556; LJ III 81-2; BLJ IV 115)

Sunday matin.

Was not Iago perfection? particularly the last look. I was close to him (in the orchestra), and never saw an English countenance half so expressive.

I am acquainted with no *im*material sensuality so delightful as good acting; and, as it is fitting there should be good plays, now and then, besides Shakspeare’s, I wish you or Campbell would write one;—the rest of “us youth” have not heart enough.

You were cut up in the Champion—is it not so? this day so am I—even to shocking the editor. The critic writes well; and as, at present, poesy is not my passion predominant, and my snake of Aaron has swallowed up all the other serpents, I don’t feel fractious. I send you the paper, which I mean to take in for the future. We go to M.’s together. Perhaps I shall see you before, but don’t let me *bore* you, now nor ever.

Ever, as now, truly and affectionately, &c.

*May 15th 1814: Byron starts *Lara*, and finishes it June 12th.*

*Mary Chaworth Musters to Byron, May 17th 1814:*
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4176)

[The Right Hon[ble]: Lord Byron / Albany – / London –]

May 17th, —

Your kind letter my dear Friend relieved me much, & came yesterday when I was by no means well, & was a most agreeable remedy. — — — for I fancied a thousand things. — Is it possible you are invited to Aston — when did you see M’. W? pray oblige me — by accepting ye invitation as I know it will be gratifying to him & his sister, who you did not *use to like* — but to whom you *must now* for many

1:2

reasons — She has or is about to take a house for us in St. James’s Place but if you are there in all probability you will hear it talked of. — I shall set great value by your *seal* & if you come down to N*d* before we leave A*119* see no reason why you sh*d not call upon us {& bring it} We hope to be in town early in July — but our plans are uncertain for dear A is still very much out of health & I have lately

117: Falstaff at Shakespeare, *Henry IV* I, II ii 85; compare Jan 17 1813 (to H.); Nov 10 1813 (to Annabella); Nov 12 1813 (to Gifford); Mar 15 1814 (London Journal); July 15 1818 (to K.); Aug 4 1819 (to H.); and Nov 19 1820 (to Mu.).

118: Aston Hall, Yorkshire, home of the Wedderburn Websters.

119: Annesley Hall.
suffered from a pain in my side which has alarmed me. — but I will not in return for your charming epistle fill mine with complaints — nor sh’d I have answered so immediately, but from my anxiety that you sh’d go to Aston tho’ I hate visiting quite as much as you can do & from inclination, I really believe I sh’d never leave my own home — for I am become very stupid, & have neither mind nor strength to enjoy society — & it must be the presence of those I very much esteem to afford me y’. least amusement.

This was not y’ case when I drove with you from G: &c &c These were indeed the happiest days of my life — & believe me they are often thought of & regretted. I am not so sanguine as to look forward for any such in y’ future, tho’ I do think happiness depends much upon ourselves, & that our own follies occasion our miseries. I am sure for my own part, I might have acted better — but my indifferent health — & a variety of circumstances have conspired against me, & not improved my temper, which my connections say is intolerable. I am surprised you have not seen Mr. C., as I hear of him going about a great deal — We are now visiting very near Nott: at the house of my Arbitrator — but return to A to morrow, I trust, where I have left all my little dears but the eldest whom you saw & who is with me. — We are very anxious to see you & yet know not how we shall feel on y’. occasion formal, I daresay, at ye first but [Ms. tear: “our”] meeting must be confined to [Ms. tear: “our”] trio — & then I think we shall all be more at our ease. — Do write me & make a sacrifice to friendship, which I shall consider y’. visit to A you may always address y’. letters to A, perfectly safe. — & with Annes best affects: as well [as] those of y’. sincere friend, Mary

You do not give me any account of y’ Kings or Bruces whom very [ ] is going to see — one reason why he defers our Journey ——— Miss Fonteyne called upon me a little time ago — quite as young and blooming as when we saw her ———

Byron to Thomas Moore, from 2, the Albany, London, May 18th 1814:
(May 18. 1814.

Thanks—and punctuality. What has passed at * * * *s House? I suppose that I am to know, and “pars fui” of the conference. I regret that your * * * *s will detain you so late, but I suppose you will be at Lady Jersey’s. I am going earlier with Hobhouse. You recollect that to-morrow we sup and see Kean.

P.S. Two to-morrow is the hour of pugilism.

Byron to Thomas Moore, from 2, the Albany, London, May 23rd 1814:
(May 23. 1814.

I must send you the Java government gazette of July 3d, 1813, just sent to me by Murray. Only think of our (for it is you and I) setting paper warriors in array in the Indian seas. Does not this sound like fame—something almost like posterity? It is something to have scribblers squabbling about us 5000 miles off, while we are agreeing so well at home. Bring it with you in your pocket;—it will make you laugh, as it hath me. Ever yours,

B.

P.S. Oh the anecdote! * * * * * * * * * * * *
I have gotten a box for Othello to-night, and send the ticket for your friends the R——[anclif]fes. I seriously recommend to you to recommend to them to go for half an hour, if only to see the third act—they will not easily have another opportunity. We—at least, I—cannot be there, so there will be no one in their way. Will you give or send it to them? it will come with a better grace from you than me.

I am in no good plight, but will dine at * *’s with you, if I can. There is music and Covent-g.

Will you go, at all events, to my box there afterwards, to see a *début* of a young 16[121] in the “Child of Nature?”

Byron to William Sotheby, from London, May 27th 1814:
(Source: text from Huntington SY 20, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ IV 118)

May 27th, 1814

My dear Sir / 

I have received ye. “Song of Triumph” and if my praise were worth having it would be yours – it is a very noble poem. – – –

It is with much regret that I plead a prior engagement – but I did not receive the card or rather perceive it (owing to the negligence of a servant of my own) till yesterday &

1:2

in the meantime I had accepted an invitation from M’. Nugent for the very day, – or rather renewed one – for the engagement was of long standing but the day unfixed till last week. – Pray make my best respects acceptable to M’. Sotheby & believe me ever & very truly yrs.

Byron

Byron to Thomas Moore, from 2, the Albany, London, May 31st 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 560-1; LJ III 86-7; BLJ IV 120-1)

May 31. 1814.

As I shall probably not see you here to-day, I write to request that, if not inconvenient to yourself, you will stay in town till Sunday; if not to gratify me, yet to please a great many others, who will be very sorry to lose you. As for myself, I can only repeat that I wish you would either remain a long time with us, or not come at all; for these *snatches* of society make the subsequent separations bitterer than ever.

I believe you think that I have not been quite fair with that Alpha and Omega of beauty, &c. with whom you would willingly have united me. But if you consider what her sister said on the subject, you will less wonder that my pride should have taken the alarm: particularly as nothing but the every-day flirtation of every-day people ever occurred between your heroine and myself. Had Lady [Rancliffe] appeared to wish it—or even not to oppose it—I would have gone on, and very possibly married (that is, if the other had been equally accordant) with the same indifference which has frozen over the “Black Sea” of almost all my passions. It is that very indifference which makes me so uncertain and apparently capricious. It is not eagerness of new pursuits, but that nothing impresses me sufficiently to fix; neither do I feel disgusted, but simply indifferent to almost all excitements. The proof of this is, that obstacles, the slightest even,* stop* me. This can hardly be *timidity*, for I have done some impudent things too, in my time; and in almost all cases, opposition is a stimulus. In mine, it is not; if a straw were in my way, I could not stoop to pick it up.

I have sent this long tirade, because I would not have you suppose that I have been *trifling* designedly with you or others. If you think so, in the name of St. Hubert (the patron of antlers and hunters) let me be married out of hand—I don’t care to whom, so it amuses any body else, and don’t interfere with me much in the daytime.

Ever, &c.

Byron to Samuel Rogers, from 2, the Albany, June 7th 1814 (?):
(Source: text from UCL Library Sharpe Papers 18 ff.142-3; LJ III 91; BLJ IV 121-2)

Tuesday

My dear Rogers –

Sheridan was yesterday at first too sober to remember your invitation but in the dregs of the third bottle he <rememed> {fished up} his memory – <but/>& found that he had a party at home. I left & leave any other day to him & you – save Monday & some yet undefined dinner at Burdett’s. –

Do you go to-night to

---

121: Moore’s note: Miss [Maria] Foote’s first appearance, which we witnessed together.
L[d]. Eardley’s? & if you do – shall I call for you – (anywhere) it will give me great pleasure,

ever y[rs]. entire

B[N]

P.S. – The Stael out-talked Whitbread – overwhelmed his spouse – was ironed by Sheridan –
confounded Sir Humphry – & utterly perplexed your slave. – The rest (great names in the red book
nevertheless) were mere segments

[bottom of 1:3:]

of the circle – Ma’mseille daunced a Russ saraband with great vigour – grace – & expression – though
not {very} pretty – I think her eyes & figure promise a lively part in bed. – – –

[1:4 blank.]

Byron to Henrietta d’Ussières, from 2, the Albany, London, June 8th 1814: 122
(Source: NLS Acc.12604; QI 286-7; BLJ IV 122-3)

June 8th, 1814

Excepting your compliments (which are only excusable because you don’t know me) you write like a
clever woman for which reason I hope you look as unlike one as possible – I never knew but one of
your country – M[me]. de Stael – and she is frightful as a precipice. – As it seems impracticable my
visiting you – cannot you contrive to visit me? telling me the time previously that I may be in y[rs]. way –
and if this same interview leads to the “leap into the Serpentine” you mention – we can take the jump
together – and shall be very good company – for I swim like a Duck – (one of the few things I can do
well) and you say that your Sire taught you the same useful acquirement. – I like your education of all
things – it in some degree resembles my own – for the first ten years of my life were passed much
amongst mountains – and I had also a tender and peremptory parent who indulged me sometimes with
holidays and now and then with a box on the ear. – If you will become acquainted with me – I will
promise not to make love to you unless you like it – and even if I did there is no occasion for you to
receive more of it than you please: – you must however do me two favours – the first is not to mistake
me for S – who is an excellent man – but to whom I have not the honour to bear the smallest ( I won’t
say slightest for he has the circumference of an Alderman) resemblance – and the next is to recollect
that as “no man is a hero to his Valet” 123 so I am a hero to no person whatsoever – and not treat me
with such outrageous respect and awe – which makes me feel as if I was in a strait waistcoat. – you
shall be a heroine however if you prefer it and I will be and am

y[rs]. very humble Ser[vant].

B

P.S. – “Surprized” oh! no! – I am surprized at nothing – except at your taking so much trouble about
one who is not worth it. – – You say – what would “my servants think?” 1stly, they seldom think at all –
2ndly, they are generally out of the way – particularly when most wanted – 3rdly. I do not know you – and
I humbly imagine that they are no wiser than their Master. –

Thomas Moore to Byron, June 1814:
(Source: NLS Acc.12604 / 4159; Dowden I 319)

Wednesday 6 o’clock

My dear Byron—

It is so uncertain at what hour I can get to Lady Jersey’s that I shall not ask you to take me there—
but I shall meet you sans faute— poor Lady Adelaide! What a fit you took about her— Fit the second,
Isn’t it?

You kept me awake till daylight this morning, first reading your journal, and then thinking of the
απορργτα of your story.

Malgré tout ever your

122: Henrietta d’Ussières was one of B.’s more literate fans. There is no record of their meeting.
123: Compare Beppo 33, 8.
I could be very sentimental now, but I won’t. The truth is, that I have been all my life trying to harden my heart, and have not yet quite succeeded—though there are great hopes—and you do not know how it sunk with your departure. What adds to my regret is having seen so little of you during your stay in this crowded desert, where one ought to be able to bear thirst like a camel,—the springs are so few, and most of them so muddy.

The newspapers will tell you all that is to be told of emperors, &c. They have dined, and supped, and shown their flat faces in all thoroughfares, and several saloons. Their uniforms are very becoming, but rather short in the skirts; and their conversation is a catechism, for which and the answers I refer you to those who have heard it.

I think of leaving town for Newstead soon. If so, I shall not be remote from your recess, and (unless Mrs. M[oore], detains you at home over the cauldle-cup and a new cradle,) we will meet. You shall come to me, or I to you, as you like it;—but meet we will. An invitation from Aston has reached me, but I do not think I shall go. I have also heard of * * * [Mary Chaworth-Musters]—I should like to see her again, for I have not met her for years; and though ‘the light that ne’er can shine again’ is set, I do not know that ‘one dear smile like those of old’ might not make me for a moment forget the ‘dulness’ of ‘life’s stream.’

I am going to R * * [ancliffe]’s to-night—to one of those suppers which ‘ought to be dinners.’ I have hardly seen her, and never him, since you set out. I told you, you were the last link of that chain. As for * *, we have not syllabled one another’s names since. The post will not permit me to continue my scrawl. More anon.

Ever, dear Moore, &c.

P.S. Keep the Journal; I care not what becomes of it; and if it has amused you I am glad that I kept it. ‘Lara’ is finished, and I am copying him for my third vol., now collecting;—but no separate publication.

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from 2, the Albany, London, June 26th 1814:

My dear L. M. /

<1 have> to continue the conversation {which} Ld. C. has broken off by falling asleep – & his wife by keeping awake –) I know nothing of C’s last night adventures; to prove it there is her letter – which I have not read through – nor answered – nor written these two months – & then only by desire to keep her quiet. – – –

You talked to me – about keeping her out – it is impossible – she comes at all times – at any time – & the moment the door is open in she walks – I can’t throw her out

1:2
of the window – as to getting rid of her – that is rational – & probable – but I will not receive her. – The Bessboroughs may take her if they please – or any steps they please – I have no hesitation in saying – that I have made up my mind as to the alternative – and would sooner – much sooner be with the dead in purgatory – than [with] her – Caroline (I put the name at length as I am not jesting) upon earth. – – She may hunt me down – it is in the power of any mad or bad woman to do so by any man – but spare me she shall not – <kill> {torment} me she

1:3

may – how <I> am I to bar myself from her? – I am already almost a prisoner – she has no shame – no feeling – no one estimable or redeemable quality. – These are strong words – but I know what I am writing – they avail nothing but to convince you of my own determination – my first object in such a dilemma would be to take <xxxxxxx> with me – that might fail – so much the better –. but even if it did – I would lose an hundred souls rather than be bound to C. – if there is one human being whom I do utterly detest & abhor – it is she – & all things con=

1:4

=sender – I ful<o> to myself justified in so doing – she has been an adder in my path ever since my return to this country – she has often belied – & sometimes betrayed me – she has crossed me every where – she has watched – & worried & guessed – & been a curse to me & mine. – – You may shew her this if you please – or to anyone you please – if these were the last words I were to write upon earth – I would not revoke one letter – except to make it more <possible> legible. –

ever yours most sincerely

Byron

Byron to John Murray (b), June 27th 1814:
(Source: text from the Berg Collection, NYPL; BLJ IV 134)
Transcription by Paul Curtis, modified

June 27th 1814 –

Dear Sir /
I have not looked over the proofs – but send you more additions &c. & request a correct revise of the whole – when convenient. –
ya. truly
B

[1:2 and 3 blank.]

[1:4 in another hand:] “Byron Lord / 28 June 1814”

Byron to Samuel Rogers, from 2, the Albany, London, June 27th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from LJ III 101-2; BLJ IV133-4)

June 27th, 1814

My dear Rogers, – You could not have made me a more acceptable present than Jacqueline. She is all grace and softness and poetry; there is so much of the last, that we do not feel the want of story, which is simple, yet enough. I wonder that you do not oftener unbend to more of the same kind. I have some sympathy with the softer affections, though very little in my way, and no one can depict them so truly and successfully as yourself. I have half a mind to pay you in kind, or rather unkind, for I have just “supped full of horror”128 in two cantos of darkness and dismay.

Do you go to Lord Essex’s to-night? if so, will you let me call for you at your own hour? I dined with Holland–house yesterday at Lord Cowper’s; my Lady very gracious, which she can be more than anyone when she likes. I was not sorry to see them again, for I can’t forget that they have been very kind to me.

Ever yours most truly,
BN

P.S. – Is there any chance or possibility of making it up with Lord Carlisle, as I feel disposed to do any thing reasonable or unreasonable to effect it? I would before, but for the Courier, and the possible misconstructions at such a time. Perpend, pronounce.

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, July 6th or 13th 1814:
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4161A; Smiles 229; LJM 101)

My Lord

Mr Rogers called today with his Poem to be printed with yours129 – I send the first Sheet of Gifford’s Copy of the Proof – the rest I will get (if not to-day) tomorrow –

Mr Ward has read the Proof & admires the Poem greatly – I suggested if it were not too semblable130 – he said it showed uncommon talent to exhibit the same Portrait in so many lights &c &c

I am obliged to go to the Country ¼ before 3 – but return at night.

faithfully y’ Lordships Serv

Jno Murray

Wednesday

[1:2 and 1:3 blank.]

1:4

The Lord Byron

Byron to an unknown recipient, June 29th 1814:
(Source: text from Morgan Library MA 0062, 286952, Item 43; BLJ IV 135)

Transcription by Paul Curtis, modified

Absence of any detail suggests a forgery.

June 29th. 1814

Sir /

I have to thank you for the perusal of your work – and assure You that I perfectly coincide with your judges in their opinion of it’s merits. – Excuse my having detained it so long. – I have the honour to be y’. very obed’l. Ser’.

Byron [flourish]

Byron to Thomas Moore, from 2, the Albany, London, July 8th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 56-7; LJ III 102-3; BLJ IV 138)

July 8. 1814.

I returned to town last night, and had some hopes of seeing you to-day, and would have called,—but I have been (though in exceeding distempered good health) a little head-achy with free living, as it is called, and am now at the freezing point of returning soberness. Of course, I should be sorry that our parallel lines did not deviate into intersection before you return to the country,—after that same nonsuit,131 whereof the papers have told us,—but, as you must be much occupied, I won’t be affronted, should your time and business militate against our meeting.

Rogers and I have almost coalesced into a joint invasion of the public. Whether it will take place or not, I do not yet know, and I am afraid Jacqueline (which is very beautiful) will be in bad company.132 But in this case, the lady will not be the sufferer.

I am going to the sea, and then to Scotland; and I have been doing nothing,—that is, no good,—and am very truly, &c.

Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, July 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 567; LJ III 103-4; BLJ IV 139)

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129: Rogers’ Jacqueline was published with B.’s Lara shortly after August 5th 1814.
130: That is, too close in subject-matter to The Corsair.
131: Moore’s note: He alludes to an action for piracy brought by Mr. Power (the publisher of my musical works), to the trial of which I had been summoned as a witness.
132: Moore’s note: Lord Byron afterwards proposed that I should make a third in this publication; but the honour was a perilous one, and I begged leave to decline it.
I suppose, by your non-appearance, that the philosophy of my note, and the previous silence of the writer, have put or kept you in humeur. Never mind—it is hardly worth while.

This day have I received information from my man of law of the non—and never likely to be—performance of purchase by Mr. Claughton, of impecuniary memory. He don’t know what to do, or when to pay; and so all my hopes and worldly projects and prospects are gone to the devil. He (the purchaser, and the devil too, for aught I care,) and I, and my legal advisers, are to meet to-morrow, the said purchaser having first taken special care to enquire ‘whether I would meet him with temper?’—Certainly. The question is this—I shall either have the estate back, which is as good as ruin, or I shall go on with him dawdling, which is rather worse. I have brought my pigs to a Mussulman market. If I had but a wife now, and children, of whose paternity I entertained doubts, I should be happy, or rather fortunate, as Candide or Scarmentado. In the mean time, if you don’t come and see me, I shall think that Sam.’s bank is broke too; and that you, having assets there, are despairing of more than a piastre in the pound for your dividend.

Ever, &c.

Byron to John Murray (a), July 29th 1814:
(Source: text from Morgan Library MA 0062, 286952, Item 44; BLJ IV 146)
Transcription by Paul Curtis, modified

July 29th, 1814

Dear Sir /

I am sorry to say that all enquiry after this parcel which should have arrived 24 hours ago have been in vain – and I am in a fuss about my letters which had they been sent {as desired} by the Post would have been now in my poss=

1:2

=ession. – – Pray allow some enquiry to be made after them – and never in future trust to a parcel with my address for mine always miscarry. –

y\(^t\)ruly

B [flourish]

[1:3 and 1:4 blank.]

Byron to Gentleman John Jackson, from Hastings, August 3rd 1814:
(Source: Harry Ransom Center, Texas, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ IV 153)

August 3\(^d\), 1814

Dear Jack –

Grimaldi\(^{134}\) has sent me some tickets for his benefit at the Wells which I only received the other day and not in time to go there. – Will you pay him five guineas for them & I will settle with you when I come to town-his address is – Prospect Cottage Spa fields –

ever y\(^t\)ruly

Byron

Byron to Thomas Moore, from Hastings, August 3rd 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 571-3; LJ III 117-21; QI 295-7; BLJ IV 151-3)

Hastings, August 3. 1814.

By the time this reaches your dwelling, I shall (God wot) be in town again probably. I have been here renewing my acquaintance with my old friend Ocean; and I find his bosom as pleasant a pillow for an hour in the morning as his daughters of Paphos could be in the twilight. I have been swimming and eating turbot, and smuggling neat brandies and silk handkerchiefs,—and listening to my friend Hodgson’s raptures about a pretty wife-elect of his,—and walking on cliffs, and tumbling down hills, and making the most of the ‘dolce far-niente’ for the last fortnight. I met a son of Lord Erskine’s, who says he has been married a year, and is the ‘happiest of men;’ and I have met the aforesaid H., who is also the ‘happiest of men;’ so, it is worth while being here, if only to witness the superlative felicity of these foxes, who have cut off their tails, and would persuade the rest to part with their brushes to keep them in countenance.

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133: Voltaire, *Histoire des Voyages de Scarmentado*.
134: Joe Grimaldi, the clown.
It rejoiceth me that you like ‘Lara.’ Jeffrey is out with his 45th Number, which I suppose you have got. He is only too kind to me, in my share of it, and I begin to fancy myself a golden pheasant, upon the strength of the plumage wherewith he hath bedecked me. But then, ‘surgit amari,’ &c.—the gentlemen of the Champion, and Perry, have got hold (I know not how) of the condolatory address to Lady J. on the picture-abduction by our R[egent], and have published them—with my name, too, without even asking leave, or enquiring whether or no! D——n their impudence, and d——n every thing. It has put me out of patience, and so, I shall say no more about it.

You shall have Lara and Jacque (both with some additions) when out; but I am still demurring and delaying, and in a fuss, and so is R[ogers]. in his way.

Newstead is to be mine again. Claughton forfeits twenty-five thousand pounds; but that don’t prevent me from being very prettily ruined. I mean to bury myself there—and let my beard grow—and hate you all.

Oh! I have had the most amusing letter from Hogg, the Ettrick minstrel and shepherd. He wants me to recommend him to Murray; and, speaking of his present bookseller, whose ‘bills’ are never ‘lifted,’ he adds, totidem verbis, ‘God d——n him and them both.’ I laughed, and so would you too, at the way in which this execration is introduced. The said Hogg is a strange being, but of great, though uncouth, powers. I think very highly of him, as a poet; but he, and half of these Scotch and Lake troubadours, are spoilt by living in little circles and petty societies. London and the world is the only place to take the conceit out of a man—in the milling phrase. Scott, he says, is gone to the Orkneys in a gale of wind;—during which wind, he affirms, the said Scott, ‘he is sure, is not at his ease,—to say the best of it.’ Lord, Lord, if these homekeeping minstrels had crossed your Atlantic or my Mediterranean, and tasted a little open boating in a white squall—or a gale in ‘the Gut’—or the ‘Bay of Biscay,’ with no gale at all—how it would enliven and introduce them to a few of the sensations!—to say nothing of an illicit amour or two upon shore, in the way of essay upon the Passions, beginning with simple adultery, and compounding it as they went along.

I have forwarded your letter to Murray,—by the way, you had addressed it to Miller. Pray write to me, and say what art thou doing? ‘Not finished!’—Oons! how is this?—these ‘flaws and starts’ must be ‘authorised by your grandam,’ and are unbecoming of any other author. I was sorry to hear of your discrepancy with the * *s, or rather your abjuration of agreement. I don’t want to be impertinent, or buffoon on a serious subject, and am therefore at a loss what to say.

I hope nothing will induce you to abate from the proper price of your poem, as long as there is a prospect of getting it. For my own part, I have seriously and not whiningly, (for that is not my way—at least, it used not to be,) neither hopes, nor prospects, and scarcely even wishes. I am, in some respects, happy, but not in a manner that can or ought to last,—but enough of that. The worst of it is, I feel quite enervated and indifferent. I really do not know, if Jupiter were to offer me my choice of the contents of his benevolent cask, what I would pick out of it. If I was born, as the nurses say, with a ‘silver spoon in my mouth,’ it has stuck in my throat, and spoiled my palate, so that nothing put into it is swallowed with much relish,—unless it be cayenne. However, I have grievances enough to occupy me that way too;—but for fear of adding to yours by this pestilent long diatribe, I postpone the reading of them, sine die.

Ever, dear M., yours, &c.

P.S. Don’t forget my godson. You could not have fixed on a fitter porter for his sins than me, being used to carry double without inconvenience.

August 5th 1814: *Lara* published with Rogers’ *Jacqueline*.

John Cam Hobhouse to John Murray, August 1814:
(Source: John Murray Archive, 50 Albemarle Street)

Hobhouse shows his pedantry over a single word.

M’ Murray is requested by M’ Hobhouse to look again at the advertisement which, in consequence of the alteration, is, as it now stands, not English—the first sentence must be either—‘The reader of *Lara* may probably regard it as a sequel to a poem *which has recently appeared*’ or, ‘The reader of *Lara* may probably *have regarded* it as a sequel to a poem *which recently appeared*’—The first is the best form—

135: Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, IV 1224: medio de fonte leporum surget amari alicuam (‘from the very fountain of enchantment rises a drop of bitterness’).


137: The preliminary material to *Lara*. 
“That” is never used by correct writers for “which” and the word *appeared* is in a different tense from the former part of the sentence.

It is really of considerable consequence that the mistake should be corrected as it is neither more nor less than an offence against grammar – which the first who reads the lines will be certain to remark.

M’H desires M’Murray will be good enough to give him a line in answer to this intimation – Can he borrow a *Luidas an Heschuis* and an *Etymologiacon Magnum* for Mr H? –

**John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albermarle Street, London, August 6th 1814:**

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4161A; Smiles I 230-1; LJM 103-5)

My Lord

I am really grateful for your obliging sufferance of my desire to publish *Lara*, for, I am sure, your Lordship knows the respect I bear you in every way, would not have allowed me to do this without your consent – I had anticipated this and had done everything but actually deliver the Copies of *Lara* and the moment I received your Lordships Letter, for, for it I waited – I cut the last cord of my aerial work – and at this instant Six Thousand Copies are gone!!! I have sent copies, I believe, to every one of your Lordships friends and without an exception they are delighted and their praise is most particularly and rootedly confirmed on a second perusal – which proves to them that your researches into the human heart and character are at once wonderful & just – M’Frere likes the Poem greatly & admires most-

-ly the first canto – I mentioned the passage in the second canto descriptive of the morning after the battle, which delighted me so much, and indeed M’Wilmot and many other persons, and his remark was that he thought it rather too shocking – this is perhaps a little fastidious – Sir Jno. Malcolm, whom I have not seen since, called to express his satisfaction; & by the way, I may <just> add that M’Frere has been here this moment to take another Copy with him to read again in his carriage – he told me that M’Canning liked it equally – M’Frere and, in his report, M’Canning, are the only persons whom I can have the pleasure of hearing speak in praise of *Jacqueline* – but they say it is beautiful & this is a Host – there is an obvious tendency to disparage *Jacqueline* but I think it is unjust & will be overcome.

With regard to the portrait, the advertisement which your Lordship notices, was sent to the papers immediately after you had, at first, not disapproved of it – but as this was a point of realy delicacy towards your Lordship I did not think of giving out a Copy of it until I should have obtained permission – which I venture to entre at for – as a matter in which you need not care to concern yourself – & the next I make shall be with every endeavour to render it more worthy of the original – upon the score then of indifference – I solicit your Lordships Fiat.

Against the formidable attack on my Advertisement I feel perfectly secure – Imprimis – the *words* are Giffords – in the second place M’Frere denies that they are not Grammar & in the third place no other persons or person have noticed them & those to whom I suggested the *incorr* alleged incorrectness agree that they can be noticed noly by fastidiousness and Hypercriticism – who, in such a poem, would stop for a moment at a word in the preface – Moreover, here is *Johnson* for you – and (thank God) for your Publisher – who, now that his author is found out to be Dryden is, I suppose to be treated like Tonson but to Johnson

That – I not this

2 Which: relating to an antecedent thing

The mark that is set before him

Perkins

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138: The sentence finally went, “The reader of *LARA* may probably regard it as a sequel to a poem that recently appeared”.

139: Works of Byzantine history.

140: J.S. Agar’s engraving of the Phillips portrait is advertised at the end of *Lara and Jacqueline*.

141: H. had objected to the use of “that” instead of “which” in the advertisement to *Lara*, and to the depiction of medieval Spaniards as “serfs” in the poem’s opening line.
The time that clogs me
Shakespeare

Bones that hasten to be so
Cowley

Judgment that is equal
Wilkins

are you Answered?

Mr Merivale is here, and subscribes to <my> {the} opinion in favour of That
I felt more about the publication <about> {of} those lines than I could express & therefore I said
nothing – it was most shameful to print at all – but with the name it was villainous – I saw them only in
the Chronicle & I rejoice that they did not originate with our friend Perry – they spoil that tone of
harmony towards your Lordship

2:1

which had been so powerfully struck into the Public Mind by Jeffery – everybody thinks highly of the
{talent of the} Article in the E.R and is in accord with its sentiments throughout.
I must remain some days yet to watch the progress of the demand for Lara & therefore, as I could
not attend my family to Scotland, I rather think of going to Paris first – and afterwards {to the} North.
Your Lordship does not tell me & perhaps cannot the time of your return – Do me the favor to say if I
shall have the pleasure of forwarding your Lordships Letters? x x x I have now decyphered the last part
of your Lordships note – made obscure by the erasure of some valuable remarks – and rejoice that I
shall have the pleasure of seeing your Lordship in Town – next week.

With assurances of the highest esteem I have the h onour to remain
My Lord
Your faithful Servant
John Murray

Albemarle S't
Saturday

Byron to Thomas Moore, from 2, the Albany, London, August 12th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 574-6; LJ III 123-5; QI 298-300; BLJ IV 156-7)

August 12. 1814.

I was not alone, nor will be while I can help it. Newstead is not yet decided. Claughton is to make a
grand effort by Saturday week to complete,—if not, he must give up twenty-five thousand pounds and
the estate, with expenses, &c. &c. If I resume the Abbacy, you shall have due notice, and a cell set
apart for your reception, with a pious welcome. Rog ers I have not seen, but Larry and Jacky came out a
few days ago. Of their effect I know nothing.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

There is something very amusing in your being an Edinburgh Reviewer. You know, I suppose,
that T[hurlow] is none of the placidest, and may possibly enact some tragedy on being told that he is
only a fool. If, now, Jeffery were to be slain on account of an article of yours, there would be a fine
conclusion. For my part, as Mrs. Winifred Jenkins says, ‘he has done the handsome thing by me,’143
particularly in his last number; so, he is the best of men and the ablest of critics, and I won’t have him
killed,—though I dare say many wish he were, for being so good-humoured.

Before I left Hastings I got in a passion with an ink bottle, which I flung out of the window one
night with a vengeance;—and what then? Why, next morning I was horrified by seeing that it had
struck, and split upon, the petticoat of Euterpe’s graven image in the garden, and grimed her as if it
were on purpose.144 Only think of my distress,—and the epigrams that might be engendered on the
Muse and her misadventure.

I had an adventure almost as ridiculous, at some private theatricals near Cambridge—though of a
different description—since I saw you last. I quarrelled with a man in the dark for asking me who I was
(insolently enough to be sure), and followed him into the green-room (a stable) in a rage, amongst a set

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142: Decorated underlining.
143: Smollett, Humphrey Clinker, final letter.
144: Moore’s note: His servant had brought him up a large jar of ink, into which, not supposing it to be full, he
had thrust his pen down to the very bottom. Enraged, on finding it come out all smeared with ink, he flung the
bottle out of the window into the garden, where it lighted, as here described, upon one of eight leaden Muses, that
had been imported, some time before, from Holland,—the ninth having been, by some accident, left behind.
of people I never saw before. He turned out to be a low comedian, engaged to act with the amateurs, 
and to be a civil-spoken man enough, when he found out that nothing very pleasant was to be got by 
rudeness. But you would have been amused with the row, and the dialogue, and the dress—or rather 
the undress—of the party, where I had introduced myself in a devil of a hurry, and the astonishment 
that ensued. I had gone out of the theatre, for coolness, into the garden;—there I had tumbled over 
some dogs, and, coming away from them in very ill humour, encountered the man in a worse, which 
produced all this confusion.

Well—and why don't you 'launch'—Now is your time. The people are tolerably tired with me, 
and not very much enamoured of [Wordsworth], who has just spawned a quarto of metaphysical blank 
verse, which is nevertheless only a part of a poem.

Murray talks of divorcing Larry and Jacky—a bad sign for the authors, who, I suppose, will be 
divorced too, and throw the blame upon one another. Seriously, I don't care a cigar about it, and I don't 
see why Sam should.

Let me hear from and of you and my godson. If a daughter, the name will do quite as well. * * * *

Ever, &c.

Byron to Thomas Moore, from 2, the Albany, London, August 13th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 576; LJ III 125-6; BLJ IV 157-8)

August 13. 1814.

I wrote yesterday to Mayfield, and have just now enfranked your letter to mamma. My stay in town is 
so uncertain (not later than next week) that your packets for the north may not reach me; and as I know 
not exactly where I am going—however, Newstead is my most probable destination, and if you send 
your despatches before Tuesday, I can forward them to our new ally. But, after that day, you had better 
ot trust to their arrival in time.

[Lord Kinnaird] has been exiled from Paris, on dit, for saying the Bourbons were old women. The 
Bourbons might have been content, I think, with returning the compliment. * * * *

I told you all about Jacky and Larry yesterday;—they are to be separated,—at least, so says the 
grand M[urray], and I know no more of the matter. Jeffrey has done me more than 'justice;' but as to 
tragedy—um!—I have no time for fiction at present. A man cannot paint a storm with the vessel under 
bare poles on a lee-shore. When I get to land, I will try what is to be done, and, if I founder, there be 
plenty of mine elders and betters to console Melpomene.

When at Newstead, you must come over, if only for a day—should Mrs. M[oore]. be exigeante of 
your presence. The place is worth seeing, as a ruin, and I can assure you there was some fun there, even 
in my time; but that is past. The ghosts, however, and the gothics, and the waters, and the desolation, 
makes it very lively still.

Ever, dear Tom, yours, &c.

Walter Scott to Byron, summer / autumn 1814:146
(Source: text from Grierson 1815-17, pp.2-4)

My Lord, — I have long owed you my best thanks for the uncommon pleasure I have had in perusing 
your Turkish fragment.147 But I should hardly have ventured to offer them, well knowing how you must 
be overwhelmed by volunteer intrusions of approbation — (which always look as if the writer valued his 
opinion at fully more than it may be worth) — unless I had to-day learned that I have an apology for 
entering upon the subject, from your having so kindly sent me a copy of the poem. I did not receive it 
sooner, owing to my absence from Edinburgh, where it had been lying quietly at my house in Castle 
Street; so that I must have seemed ungrateful, when, in truth, I was only modest. The last offence may

145: Moore’s note: It was, if I mistake not, during his recent visit to Newstead, that he himself actually fancied he 
saw the ghost of the Black Friar, which was supposed to have haunted the Abbey from the time of the dissolution 
of the monasteries, and which he thus describes, from the recollection perhaps of his own fancy, in Don Juan:—
“It was no mouse, but, lo! a monk, array’d / In cowl and beads and dusky garb, appear’d. / Now in the moonlight, 
and now lapsed in shade, / With steps that trod as heavy, yet unheard: / His garments only a slight murmur made: / 
He moved as shadowy as the sisters weird, / But slowly; and as he pass’d Juan by, / Glanced, without pausing, on 
him a bright eye.”
It is said, that the Newstead ghost appeared, also, to Lord Byron’s cousin, Miss Fanny Parkins, and that she made a 
sketch of him from memory.

146: Grierson dates this letter earlier than where he places it, adding the dates of The Giaour’s later editions.

147: Scott has been reading one of the later editions of The Giaour — having known its first edition, which is much 
shorter than the later ones.
be forgiven, as not common in a lawyer and poet; the first is said to be equal to the crime of witchcraft, but many an act of my life hath shown that I am no conjurer. If I were, however, ten times more modest than twenty years’ attendance at the Bar renders probable, your flattering inscription would cure me of so fashionable a malady. I might, indeed, lately have had a legal title to as much supremacy on Parnassus as can be conferred by a sign-manual, for I had a very flattering offer of the Laureate; but as I felt obliged, for a great many reasons, to decline it, I am altogether unconscious of any other title to sit high upon the forked hill.

To return to the Giaour; I had lent my first edition, but the whole being imprinted in my memory, I had no difficulty in tracing the additions, which are great improvements, as I should have conjectured aforehand merely from their being additions. I hope your Lordship intends to proceed with this fascinating style of composition. You have access to a stream of sentiments, imagery, and manners, which are so little known to us as to convey all the interest of novelty, yet so endeared to us by the early perusal of Eastern tales, that we are not embarrassed with utter ignorance upon the subject.

Vathek, bating some passages, would have made a charming subject for a tale. The conclusion is truly grand. I would have given a great deal to know the originals from which it was drawn. Excuse this hasty scrawl, and believe me, my Lord, your Lordship’s most obliged, very humble servant,

Walter Scott.

Byron to Thomas Claverton, from Newstead Abbey, September 14th 1814:
(Source: this text from BLJ IV 165-6)
Claverton has been trying to buy Newstead since 1812. He never succeeds.

Newstead Abbey.—Sept. 4th. 1814

Dear Sir—Whenever your business or leisure prompts you to visit this place you can take your choice of it’s apartments[,] I will take care that they are ready for your reception.—The key of the cellar will be left with Murray so that I hope you will not find it more uncomfortable than heretofore.— —I cannot yet fix any day for my departure—but probably it will take place within the ensuing ten days—but if you are disposed to come here before that period I trust you will not doubt that you will be very welcome. I have to thank you for your answer on the subject of Mr. Kirkby’s lands—and shall come to some agreement with him on the subject.—Upon the subject of Newstead I will be explicit with you—it is my intention to sell the estate—and I would certainly rather renew the sale with yourself on the same terms—than part with it to any other—even should chance or circumstances offer a more advantageous purchase—upon this point you can determine for yourself—you have the preference.—In the mean time I have not interfered with the new tenants—nor disturbed or removed any of the furniture—perhaps it may be as well even to leave the things which you directed to be sent to Haydock (spoons &c.) till you arrive and may choose to order their removal in person—as the plate may hardly be safe in a parcel—but if required they shall be forwarded now.—I hope you are now satisfied that the channel of Negotiation is left open nor would it ever have been closed on my part—but for the necessity that existed of some decision one way or the other for the time being; but I am by no means insensible to the handsome part you have acted in not seeking fresh litigation for the purpose of delay, nor to the whole of your recent conduct, and have only to regret the untoward circumstances which produced the temporary (or final) relinquishment of your purchase.

Believe me very truly yrs.

BYRON

P.S.—I believe there is a Gun of yours here—I have long given up sporting—but you will find plenty of game (by all accounts) and if you like to bring any friend with you there will be room & birds enough for both.—The gun (if here) shall be taken care of & not used except by yourself.— —

Byron to Annabella Milbanke, from Newstead Abbey, September 7th 1814:
(Source: text from Ethel Coburn Mayne, The Life of Lady Byron, Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York, 1929, pp.108-9; BLJ IV 168-9)

Newstead Abbey. Sept. 7th, 1814

It is Porson’s letter to Travis to which you allude and—if I recollect rightly—one of his remarks (the highest praise to be passed on an Historian) is that amidst the immensity of reading through which he had tracked Gibbon, not one of his authorities was misquoted or perverted even unto a syllable.

148: It was because Scott declined the Laureateship that Southey was offered it.
149: Scott seems to imply that B.’s Turkish Tales are not as original as they seem.
Perhaps I am wrong in giving this as from P’s preface, for years have elapsed since I saw it but of the fact as P’s opinion—and no one could be a better judge—I am certain.

Porson was slowly extinguishing, while I was a Cantab. I have seen him often—but not in “his happier hour,” for to him that of “social pleasure” could not be so termed. He was always—that is daily—intoxicated to brutality. I hate to think of it, for he was a perfect wonder in powers and attainments.

Newstead is mine again—for the present—M. C., after many delays in completion, relinquished his purchase. I am sorry for it. He has lost a considerable sum in forfeiture by his temporary inability or imprudence; but he has evinced a desire to resume or renew his contract with greater punctuality, & in justice to him—though against the advice of lawyers, and the regrets of relations—I shall not hesitate to give him an opportunity of making good his agreement. But I shall expect—indeed I will not endure such trifling for the future.

I am much amused with your “sovereign good” being placed in repose. I need not remind you that this was the very essence of the Epicurean philosophy, and that both the Gods (who concerned themselves with nothing on earth) and the Disciples of the illustrious idler the founder of that once popular sect, defined the “Τὸ Κατόν” to consist in literally doing nothing—and that all agitation was incompatible with pleasure. The truth possibly is that these materialists are so far right; but to enjoy repose we must be weary—and it is to “the heavy laden” that the invitation to “rest” speaks most eloquent music.

You accuse yourself of “apparent inconsistencies.” To me they have not appeared; on the contrary, your consistency has been the most formidable apparition I have encountered. There seem to be no grounds for complaint on one side nor vindication on the other; and as to explanations—they are always a puzzle. After one or two letters which lately passed between us, and to which I must request your pardon for recurring we—at least I (to speak for myself)—could hardly have met without some embarrassment, possibly on both sides, certainly on one. This has been avoided—and so far is a subject of congratulation.

Your letters are generally answered on the day of their arrival so that it can’t be very “irksome to me to write soon.”

On my return to London which will not take place immediately I shall have great pleasure in forwarding the book offered in my last. The “Agricola” is beautiful. It is a pity that there are so many objections to a like perusal of Suetonius also; whose portraits are but too faithful even in their coarsest features. You must be partial to Sallust—but after all there are none like Tacitus & him you have.

ever yours

B.

Byron to Annabella Milbanke, from Newstead Abbey, September 9th 1814:

(Source: text from Ethel Coburn Mayne, The Life of Lady Byron, Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York, 1929, pp.111; BLJ IV 169-70)

Newstead Abbey. Sept. 9th, 1814

You were good enough in your last to say that I might write “soon”—but you did not add “often.” I have therefore to apologize for again intruding on your time—to say nothing of patience. There is something I wish to say; and as I may not see you for some—perhaps for a long time—I will endeavour to say it at once. A few weeks ago you asked me a question which I answered I have now one to propose—to which if improper, I need not add that your declining to reply to it will be sufficient reproof. It is this. Are the “objections” to which you alluded insuperable? or is there any line or change of conduct which could possibly remove them? I am well aware that all such changes are more easy in theory than practice; but at the same time there are few things I would not attempt to obtain your good opinion. At all events I would willingly know the worst. Still I neither wish you to promise or pledge yourself to anything; but merely to learn a possibility which would not leave you the less a free agent.

When I believed you attached, I had nothing to urge—indeed I have little now, except that having heard from yourself that your affections are not engaged, my importunities may appear not quite so selfish, however unsuccessful. It is not without a struggle that I address you once more on this subject; yet I am not very consistent—for it was to avoid troubling you upon it that I finally determined to remain an absent friend rather than become a tiresome guest. If I offend it is better at a distance.

With the rest of my sentiments you are already acquainted. If I do not repeat them it is to avoid—or at least not increase—your displeasure.

ever yours

B.

150: Compare Manfred, III i 13.
Douglas Kinnaird to Byron, from Pall Mall, London, September 15th 1814:
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4136B)
[The Lord Byron / Newstead Abbey / Nottingham]

Pall Mall Sep’. 15. 1814

Dear Byron,

Your grim white woman\(^{151}\) gives me {no} hope of finding you in Town for some time, I am reduced therefore to the necessity of recording a piece of indiscretion which I am only anxious you should not consider as quite unpardonable. – It is no less than to endeavour to put your poetical talent in requisition for the benefit of a composer of Music,\(^{152}\) whose very singular merits, both as a composer and a man, have interested me on his behalf. – He is about to publish some Hebrew Melodies as they are call’d. They are the very identical religious airs sung by the Jews, ’ere our blessed Lord & Saviour came into the world to be the cause of the persecution of these bearded men. – He very properly concludes that, if you would give him a few lines (if only for one air) the sale of his work would be Secur’d and his pocket enrich’d –

The music is beautiful certainly – and I shall be greatly gratified if your determination shall be in favour of the Petitioner. He already set to a very beautiful piece of composition those six lines in Lara beginning with “Night Wanes”\(^{153}\) – The Music is in Handel’s style, & I am much mistaken if all the musical world do not ‘ere long mouth your lines after their usual fashions. –

Believe me, Dear Byron

Very faithfully your’s

Douglas Kinnaird

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Byron to Thomas Moore, from Newstead Abbey, September 15th 1814:
(Source: text from Moore’s Life I 579-81; LJ III 134-5; BLJ IV 172-3)

Newstead Abbey, September 15. 1814.

This is the fourth letter I have begun to you within the month. Whether I shall finish or not, or burn it like the rest, I know not. When we meet, I will explain why I have not written—why I have not asked you here, as I wished—with a great many other whys and wherefores, which will keep cold. In short, you must excuse all my seeming omissions and commissions, and grant me more remission than St. Athanasius will to yourself, if you lop off a single shred of mystery from his pious puzzle. It is my creed (and it may be St. Athanasius’s too) that your article on T[hrulow] will get somebody killed, and that, on the Saints, get him d——d afterwards, which will be quite enow for one number. Oons, Tom! you must not meddle just now with the incomprehensible; for if Johanna Southcote turns out to be * * * * * * * you must not meddle just now with the incomprehensible; for if Johanna Southcote turns out to be * * * * * *

Now for a little egotism. My affairs stand thus. To-morrow, I shall know whether a circumstance of importance enough to change many of my plans will occur or not. If it does not, I am off for Italy next month, and London, in the mean time, next week. I have got back Newstead and twenty-five thousand pounds (out of twenty-eight paid already),—as a ‘sacrifice,’ the late purchaser calls it, and he may choose his own name. I have paid some of my debts, and contracted others; but I have a few thousand pounds, which I can’t spend after my own heart in this climate, and so, I shall go back to the south. Hobhouse, I think and hope, will go with me; but, whether he will or not, I shall. I want to see Venice, and the Alps, and Parmesan cheeses, and look at the coast of Greece, or rather Ephirus, from Italy, as I once did—or fancied I did—that of Italy, when off Corfu. All this, however, depends upon an event, which may, or may not, happen. Whether it will, I shall know probably to-morrow, and, if it does, I can’t well go abroad at present.

Pray pardon this parenthetical scrawl. You shall hear from me again soon;—I don’t call this an answer. Ever most affectionately, &c.

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151: Mrs Mule, B.’s housekeeper.
152: Isaac Nathan.
153: Lara, opening of Canto 2.
I have written to you one letter to-night, but must send you this much more, as I have not franked my number, to say that I rejoice in my god-daughter, and will send her a coral and bells, which I hope she will accept, the moment I get back to London.

My head is at this moment in a state of confusion, from various causes, which I can neither describe nor explain—but let that pass. My employments have been very rural—fishing, shooting, bathing, and boating. Books I have but few here, and those I have read ten times over, till sick of them. So, I have taken to breaking soda-water bottles with my pistols, and jumping into the water, and rowing over it, and firing at the fowls of the air. But why should I 'monster my nothings' to you, who are well employed, and happily too, I should hope? For my part, I am happy, too, in my way—but, as usual, have contrived to get into three or four perplexities, which I do not see my way through. But a few days, perhaps a day, will determine one of them.

You do not say a word to me of your poem. I wish I could see or hear it. I neither could, nor would, do it or its author any harm. I believe I told you of Larry and Jacquy. A friend of mine was reading—at least a friend of his was reading—said Larry and Jacquy in a Brighton coach. A passenger took up the book and queried as to the author. The proprietor said 'there were two'—to which the answer of the unknown was, 'Ay, ay—a joint concern, I suppose, summot like Sternhold and Hopkins.'

Is not this excellent? I would not have missed the 'vile comparison' to have 'scaped being one of the 'Arcades ambo et cantare pares.' Good night. Again yours.

Douglas Kinnaird to Byron, from Pall Mall, London, September 19th 1814:

My dear Byron

You desire me to acknowledge the safe arrival of our letters at your Rooms in Albany; but I am too impatient to thank you, not to give myself a chance of saying to you what I feel, before you leave Newstead—

The truth of the old maxim, Bis dat, qui cito dat, you have {not only} illustrated in a manner most gratifying to me, but as I had deem'd the nature of my request questionable, you have surprised & delighted me into an obligation which I have too much sincere pleasure in feeling myself under to you, to be able to lighten it in any degree by the warmest expressions of thanks—

The benefit conferr'd on my protégé is really an important one; & that thought makes me still more thankful to you – It is a great satisfaction to me to be able to assure you, that your kindness & poetry will be conferr'd on both worth & talent – And, that he has met with misfortune in his career, will I am sure be no ill recommendation to your notice – Be assur'd that your lines will be made use of with discretion –

The lines beginning Sun of the Sleepless! are beautiful – If you hereafter give him leave to set them to Music, well & good – But I would not for the world that he separated the lines from Lara, from the music he has added to them – I am delighted at your proposal to hear the Airs play'd & chaunted to you – You shall then hear the lines from Lara sung – you will be delighted – For I can almost venture to say the music is worthy the lines – I have heard nothing so good, that is not in Handel – I have no doubt that at the oratorios, when it will be produc'd, it will create a great sensation –

The lines beginning,

Oh weep for those that wept for Babel’s stream, are I think, very well suited to the style of some of the Hebrew Melodies – & are beautiful –

None of the verses not to be set to music, shall pass out of my hands; but shall be return’d uncopied to you –

With many thanks, I am

My dear Byron

Your’s very faithfully & oblig’d

154: Shakespeare, Coriolanus, II ii 74.
155: Virgil, Eclogues VII 4-5.
Douglas Kinnaird

Byron to Thomas Moore, from Newstead Abbey, September 20th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 582-3; LJ III 138-40; QI 301-2; BLJ IV 178)
Newstead Abbey, Sept. 20. 1814.

Here’s to her who long
Hath waked the poet’s sigh!
The girl who gave to song
What gold could never buy.

—My dear Moore, I am going to be married—that is, I am accepted, and one usually hopes the rest will follow. My mother of the Gracchi (that are to be) you think too strait-laced for me, although the paragon of only children, and invested with ‘golden opinions of all sorts of men,’ and full of ‘most blest conditions’ as Desdemona herself. Miss Milbanke is the lady, and I have her father’s invitation to proceed there in my elect capacity,—which, however, I cannot do till I have settled some business in London and got a blue coat.

She is said to be an heiress, but of that I really know nothing certainly, and shall not enquire. But I do know, that she has talents and excellent qualities; and you will not deny her judgment, after having refused six suitors and taken me.

Now, if you have anything to say against this, pray do; my mind’s made up, positively fixed, determined, and therefore I will listen to reason, because now it can do no harm. Things may occur to break it off, but I will hope not. In the mean time, I tell you (a secret, by the by,—at least, till I know she wishes it to be public,) that I have proposed and am accepted. You need not be in a hurry to wish me joy, for one mayn’t be married for months. I am going to town to-morrow; but expect to be here, on my way there, within a fortnight.

If this had not happened, I should have gone to Italy. In my way down, perhaps, you will meet me at Nottingham, and come over with me here. I need not say that nothing will give me greater pleasure. I must, of course, reform thoroughly; and, seriously, if I can contribute to her happiness, I shall secure my own. She is so good a person, that—that—in short, I wish I was a better. Ever, &c.

from John Murray to Mrs Murray, September 24th-26th 1814:
(Source: text from Smiles I 251-2)

I was much surprised to learn from Dallas, whom I accidentally met yesterday, that Lord Byron was expected in town every hour. I accordingly left my card at his house, with a notice that I would attend him as soon as he pleased; and it pleased him to summon my attendance about seven in the evening. He had come to town on business, and regretted that he would not be at Newstead until a fortnight, as he wished to have seen me there on my way to Scotland. Says he. ‘Can you keep a secret?’ ‘Certainly — positively — my wife’s out of town!’ ‘Then — am going to be MARRIED!’ ‘The devil! I shall have no poem this winter then?’ ‘No.’ ‘Who is the lady who is to do me this injury?’ ‘Miss Milbanke — do you know her?’ ‘No, my lord.’

So here is news for you! I fancy the lady is rich, noble, and beautiful; but this shall be my day’s business to enquire about. Oh! did he curse poor Lady C—— as the fiend who had interrupted all his projects, and who would do so now if possible. I think he hinted that she had managed to interrupt this connexion two years ago. He thought she was abroad, and, to his torment and astonishment, finds her not only in England, but in London. He says he has written some small poems which his friends think beautiful, particularly one of eight lines, his very best — all of which, I believe, I am to have; and, moreover, he gives me permission to publish the octavo edition of ‘Lara’ with his name, which secures, I think, £700 to you and me. So Scott’s poem is announced [‘Lord of the Isles’] and I am cut out. I wish

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156: Moore’s note: On the day of the arrival of the lady’s answer, he was sitting at dinner, when his gardener came in and presented him with his mother’s wedding ring, which she had lost many years before, and which the gardener had just found in digging up the mould under her window. Almost at the same moment, the letter from Miss Milbanke arrived; and Lord Byron exclaimed, “If it contains a consent, I will be married with this very ring.” It did contain a very flattering acceptance of his proposal, and a duplicate of the letter had been sent to London, in case this should have missed him.—Memoranda.
157: Shakespeare, Macbeth, I vii 33.
158: Shakespeare, Othello, II i 246.
I had been in Scotland six weeks ago, and I might have come in for a share. Should I apply for one to him, it would oblige me to be a partner with Constable, who is desperately in want of money. He has applied to Cadell and Davies (the latter told me in confidence) and they refused.

September 26th, 1814.

The instance which you mention brings very forcibly to my mind the loss which I have sustained by not keeping up my Scottish literary connexion, which I shall have much difficulty in revivifying. Had I been earlier in the field I cannot help thinking that Scott would have given me a share in his poem, which nevertheless I meditate to write to him about. Lord Byron sent me yesterday a hare and a brace of partridges; I was glad to send half of the latter to Gifford for his housekeeper, who is very ill. 159

Byron to William Sotheby, from 13. Piccadilly Terrace, London, September 24th 1814:
(Source: text from Huntington SY 22, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ IV 313)
Sept. 24th. 1815

Dear Sir –

I think it would be advisable for you to see the acting managers when convenient – as there must be points on which you will want to confer: the objection I stated was merely on the part of the performers – and is general & not particular to this instance – I thought it as well to mention it at once – and some of the rehearsals you will doubtless see notwithstanding. – – – Rae I rather think his eye on Naritzen for himself – he is a more popular performer than Bartley and certainly the cast will be stronger with him in it – besides he is one of the managers

1:2

and will feel doubly interested if he can act in both capacities. – – M159. Bartley will be Petrowna – as to the Empress – I know not what to say or think – the truth is we are not <cat> <all> {<well>} {amply} furnished with tragic women – but must make the best of those we have – you can take your choice of them. – We have all great hopes of the success – on which – setting aside other considerations – we are particularly anxious as being the first tragedy {to be} brought out since the old Committee. – – – – –

By the way – I have a charge against you – as the Great M. Dennis roared out on a similar occasion “By G–d that is my thunder” so do I exclaim “This is my Lightning.”160 – I allude to a

1:3

speech of Ivan’s in the scene with Petrowna {& the Empress} – where the thought and {almost} expression are <nearly> similar to Conrad’s in the 3rd. C160, of “the Corsair.” – I however do not say this to accuse you – but to exempt myself from suspicion: – as there is a priority of six months publication on my part between the appearance of that composition & of your tragedies. – – – – –

George Lamb meant to write to you – if you don’t like to confer with the managers at present – I will attend to your wishes – so state them. –

y”. very truly

Byron

John Cam Hobhouse to Byron, from Easton Grey, Gloucestershire, October 1st 1814:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43441 f.40; BB 138)
Hobhouse has heard of Byron’s engagement from Davies. He assures Byron that he’s not upset.

Easton Grey, near Tetbury, Gloucestershire

My dear Byron –

A letter from that dear rough diamond of our acquaintance has led me to suppose that you are about to marry and to be given in marriage. As Scripture informs us that this is not done in heaven, every one, to be sure, is right to make a trial of it upon earth. You have the warmest congratulations from one whose friendship although not abounding in worldly goods is by no means

159: Gifford’s housekeeper, Anne Davies, died aged forty-two on February 6th 1815.
160: John Dennis (1657–1734) invented a new way of making the noise of thunder on stage. His play failed, but he came back to hear his invention used in a production of Macbeth, and shouted “That’s my thunder, by God! the villains will not play my play but they will steal my thunder!” Hence the expression “to steal my / your thunder”.
deficient in good will and affection, as also the sincere assurance that no other possible event could reconcile him to resigning the

1:2

prospect of a second expedition with the same companion as contributed so large a portion to the pleasing circumstances of his former journey. Of the lady of your choice you are, I believe, aware that I know nothing except such points as have induced me repeatedly to urge the advisedness of attempting to attain the object which, it seems, is now shortly to be put in your possession – If I had the pleasure of a personal acquaintance I should take the liberty of congratulating her on her approaching union with the person whom the trial of some varying years has made most dear to me, and whose qualities, as far as I am myself concerned, I would not exchange for those of any man living – The same esteem

1:3

and discernment which has enabled her to appreciate the value of such a connection must convince her that an old friend would utter no felicitations on an event which is frequently fatal to former intimacies were he not entirely persuaded that in the present instance he runs no hazard of finding diminished that kind regard of which he would not consent to lose the smallest particle – To say more would be to show an anxiety which, believe me, I do not feel – Again dear Byron accept the congratulations of your very faithful friend

John Hobhouse –

[1:4 is blank.]

Byron to Isaac Nathan, October (?) 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from LJ; BLJ IV 187)

Albany, Saturday Morn[ing]

My dear Nathan, – You must dine with me to-day at Seven o’clock. I take no refusal.

Yours truly

BYRON

Byron to James Perry, from 2, the Albany, London, October 7th 1814
(Source: Harry Ransom Center, Texas, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ IV 197)

Perry was editor of the Morning Chronicle, and published several of Byron’s anonymous poems.

Oct. 7th. 1814

Dear Sir –

I have to thank you for your handsome letter and the note – the writer & motive I can only guess at. – As far as my own feelings are concerned – misrepresentation can hardly affect one so used {inured} to it – but I cannot willingly allow those of others to be hurt – as had been the case in this instance – –

Enclosed I send you some lines which I was desired by our relatives to write on the death of

1:2

Sir P. Parker (my first cousin) and one very much beloved & regretted. – – If you think them worth insertion – they are at your service – I would rather not have my name to them at length – but have left an initial to indicate the writer. – – I wish you could persuade our friend Moore to bring out his work – but I suppose he will now wait till the first brunt of Scott’s newly announced one is over – perhaps he is right – but there never was a man

1:3

who had less reason to fear competition or comparison with others than Moore – I wish he could be convinced of this as truly as his friends & readers are.

y’. obliged Ser’t.

Byron

P.S.
My handwriting is so horrible that I must entreat your attention to ye. printing – if you print the enclosed.

James Hogg to Byron, from Edinburgh, October 11th 1814:

Edin. Oc’t. 11th, 1814.

MY GOOD LORD,—I never was diverted by any correspondence so much as yours (leaving the honour out of the question), which I think is chiefly owing to the frankness and unaffectedness so apparent throughout the whole. There is so much heart in the praise which you bestow, and so little ill-nature in your censure—though fraught with the severity of truth, that even those blamed could hardly be offended, although they might feel it. I am really ashamed, and blame myself much, for having drawn so much of your attention and occupied so much of your precious time of late; therefore I lay my commands upon you not to answer this letter, which I only send in acknowledgement of your last so kind and benevolent one, which I found on my arrival here on the 8th. I will not harass nor tease about poetry any more; but will wait the movements of the Spirit within you, with a patience and a resignation of which you shall be forced to approve, and, to put your heart perfectly at ease with regard to the time, I set none; only it shall be welcome when it comes, be that when it will.

Concerning myself and prospects, I have no good account to give your lordship at present. In truth, it seems with me one of fortune’s most capricious moments. Every penny of the little foundation that I had laid, on which to rear a tiny independance, is by the failure of the damned bookseller you know vanished;—the third edition of the work on which I chiefly depended is locked up till such time as the bankrupt’s affairs permit it to be brought to the hammer. The review of it, part of which was read to me in Mr. Jeffrey’s MS. 5 months ago, and which is a compleat saviour, has again been deferred, for what reason I have yet to learn.

I told you I had sold an edition of a new poem161 to Constable and Miller;—on my return to town, after an absence of 3 weeks, by which time it was to have been published, I found it in the same state in which I left it, and the MS. taken out of the press and passing through all the notable blues. I went to the shop in a tremendous rage, threatened Miller with a prosecution, and took the MS. out of his hands. So that, if Murray and I do not agree, I am in a fine scrape. But I have the far worst thing of all to relate, and which in my own eyes crowns my misfortunes, and upon the whole renders my situation so whimsical that I cannot help laughing at it, for nothing of that nature makes me cry. I have differed with Scott, actually and seriously I fear, for I hear he has informed some friends of it. I have often heard poets in general blamed for want of common sense, yet I know that Scott has a great deal of it; but I fear he has had to do with one who had little or none at all.

I have never mentioned this to any living soul, nor would I, if I had not heard last night that Scott had mentioned it in a company, and that it was like to become publicly known. Therefore I must tell you all how it fell out, though I cannot explain it. At our last meeting it was most cordially agreed that he was not to appear in the first No. of the Repository, but to exert himself for the second. “The first,” said he, “is secured if Lord Byron sends a piece of any length. With those which you already have, I shall take in hand to get you £500 for this number. The difficulty will be in keeping it up, therefore depend on it, I shall do my best to support the second No.” All this was very well, till of late we had a correspondence about a drama that I was attempting. He sent a sheet of criticisms in his own shrewd sensible manner and most friendly. But in the last page he broke off and attacked me about some jealousies and comparisons between him and me so cavalierly, that I was driven completely out of myself, and, without asking any explanation (for I knew no more than the man in the moon what he adverted to), I look the pen and wrote a letter of the most bitter and severe reproaches. I have quite forgot what in my wrath I said; but I believe I went so far as to say everything which I knew to be the reverse of the truth, and which you in part well know—yea, to state that I had never been obliged to him (it was a great lie) and never would be obliged to him for any thing; and I fear I expressed the utmost contempt for both himself and his poetry!

This is all true, and yet I cannot believe that I am a madman either. The truth is that I must have erred in something to have deserved the reflections he cast upon me: but I was so conscious of never having in all my life said one word or thought one thought prejudicial to Scott, that I was hurt extremely. I suppose some unfortunate lines near the end of the Queen’s Wake,162 which haply he did not know I had altered in the latter editions, gave rise to it—or, perhaps, some odious comparisons which my abominable bookseller had picked up out of some shabby reviews and published in the papers, and in which I had no more hand than you had.

161: The Pilgrims of the Sun (published by Blackwood 1815).
162: Published 1813.
Thus one of the best props of the Repository is irrevocably lost. If the other should likewise prove a bruised reed, why, every herring must hang by its own head. When you said to me once that your poetical days were drawing to a close, I had not the slightest idea that there was a fair Millbank in the question. I need not dun you for poetry now, faith you’ll be milled well enough for a time; but I hope by the time you have tried the avocation of a miller for a month or two, that you will then begin jilting with the muse again. Believe me, the time of vigour, health, and anticipation is a precious time for the children of fancy and of song, and ought not to be neglected; and here I cannot help adverting to an old Scottish proverb, though I scarcely know how to apply it. “There’s muckle water rins while the miller sleeps.” By the by, I hope your’s brings a good multure with her, rich and certain, then she will in truth be a Mill and a Bank both. I would not be ill to persuade to try the grinding too, as a last and desperate resource in these hard and evil times. I wish you would advise me of your day of entry, if it is not already past; and, by heaven, if my fair West Indian have as good a grist as she promises, I’ll play you for the first poet, for the profits of our next new productions,—the one against the other.

I have not a word of literary news from this, having seen very few people since my return. Wordsworth’s new poem is very little talked of here as yet, and Southey’s not at all, I believe. I told you my sentiments of them at considerable (length). With regard to Mr. Scott’s expected one, the public, I perceive, are hanging in a curious suspense—good reason has he to be anxious about its fate. By it he is established or falls. I know it will be excellent, and the scenes and even names of the Highlands he can make so much of. There is but one thing against it, and that is his being so much of a mannerist in stile, language, and character, that, whether in verse or prose, a partial reader thinks he is always reading the same thing. My fixed belief is that the public will receive it with great caution and a slowish sale, but that it will finally prevail. It is one of my greatest faults, my lord, that I always speak and write too precisely as I feel; but your own frankness to me encourages me to throw off all reserve when writing to you, which I hope you will excuse. Murray is probably by this time in Edinburgh. If so, you shall hear from me in a few days. Till then, I remain,

Your lordship’s most affectionate and faithful shepherd,
JAMES HOGG

James Hogg to Byron, from Edinburgh, October 11th 1814:
(Source: text from LJ III 394-5)

MY LORD,—I have had a very pleasant crack with Mr. Murray, and we have sorted very well. I hope we shall long do so. He made me a present of a proof copy of your picture, and seems indeed very much attached to you. I am very sorry for having joked you so freely about a certain fair. I did not know it was true, but weened that it had been put into the papers by some officious person; but now I promise not to cast up the miller trade any more to your lordship. Indeed, the picture which Murray has drawn to me of the charms both of her person and mind, has quite enamoured me of her; and I look upon you already as raised a step higher in the scale of being, and just beginning to experience a new existence.

You once said of my dedication that, if I thought of transferring it to another, I needed not to scruple on your account. I take you at your word, and if, before my title-page is required, there is then a Lady Byron living, I will transfer it to her in a single stanza or sonnet, which you shall previously see—if there is none, the lord is still to the fore.

If it be true that you will pass a part of the Winter in the county of Durham, I would not say but that I might pop in on you some day, as I have a small stewardship in Northumberland, where I have to appear once or twice a year. I have not a word of news to-day; therefore adieu for the present, and may all the kind and benevolent powers that watch over the destinies of men linger nigh your lordship and shed on your mind those energies and feelings of delight, the breathings of which are so likely to charm the souls of the unborn, is the earnest wish of

Your lordship’s most Obed’t.,
JAMES HOGG.

from John Murray to Mrs Murray, October 5th 1814:
(Source: text from Smiles I 253-5)

163: The Excursion.
164: Roderick, Last of the Goths.
165: Waverley.
I got to Newstead about 11 o’clock yesterday and found the steward, my namesake, and the butler waiting for me. The first, who is good-looking and a respectable old man of about sixty-five years, showed me over the house and grounds, which occupied two hours, for I was anxious to examine everything. But never was I more disappointed, for my notions, I suppose, had been raised to the romantic. I had surmised the possibly easy restoration of this once famous abbey, the mere skeleton of which is now fast crumbling to ruin. Lord Byron’s immediate predecessor stripped the whole place of all that was splendid and interesting; and you may judge of what he must have done to the mansion when I inform you that he converted the ground, which used to be covered with the finest trees, like a forest, into an absolute desert. Not a tree is left standing, and the wood thus shamefully cut down was sold in a day for £60,000. The hall of entrance has about eighteen large niches, which had been filled with statues, and the side walls covered with family portraits and armour. All these have been mercilessly torn down, as well as the magnificent fireplace, and sold. All the beautiful paintings which filled the galleries – valued at that day at £80,000 – have disappeared, and the whole place is crumbling into dust. No sum short of £100,000 would make the place habitable. Lord Byron’s few apartments contain some modern upholstery, but serve only to show what ought to have been done there. They are now digging round the cloisters for a traditionary cannon, and in their progress, about five days ago, they discovered a corpse in too decayed a state to permit of removal. I saw the drinking-skull and the marble mausoleum erected over Lord Byron’s dog. I came away with my heart aching and full of most melancholy reflections – producing a lowness of spirits which I did not get the better of till this morning, when the most enchanting scenery I have ever beheld has at length restored me. I am far more surprised that Lord Byron should ever have lived at Newstead, than that he should be inclined to part with it; for, as there is no possibility of his being able, by any reasonable amount of expense, to reinstate it, the place can present nothing but a perpetual memorial of the wretchedness of his ancestors. There are three, or at most four, domestics at board wages. All that I was asked to taste was a piece of bread-and-butter. As my foot was on the step of the chaise, when about to enter it, I was informed that his Lordship had ordered that I should take as much game as I liked. What makes the steward, Joe Murray, an interesting object to me, is that the old man has seen the abbey in all its vicissitudes of greatness and degradation. Once it was full of unbounded hospitality and splendour, and now it is simply miserable. If this man has feelings – of which, by the way, he betrays no symptom – he would possibly be miserable himself. He has seen three hundred of the first people in the county filling the gallery, and seen five hundred deer disporting themselves in the beautiful park, now covered with stunted offshoots of felled trees. Again I say it gave me the heartache to witness all this ruin, and I regret that my romantic picture has been destroyed by the reality.

Byron to Thomas Moore, from 2, the Albany, London, October 7th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 584-5; LJ III 146-50; BLJ IV 200-2)

October 7. 1814.

Notwithstanding the contradictory paragraph in the Morning Chronicle, which must have been sent by [Caroline Lamb?], or perhaps—I know not why I should suspect Claughton of such a thing, and yet I partly do, because it might interrupt his renewal of purchase, if so disposed; in short it matters not, but we are all in the road to matrimony—lawyers settling, relations congratulating, my intended as kind as she could wish, and every one, whose opinion I value, very glad of it. All her relatives, and all mine too, seem equally pleased.

Perry was very sorry, and has re-contradicted, as you will perceive by this day’s paper. It was, to be sure, a devil of an insertion, since the first paragraph came from Sir Ralph’s own County Journal, and this in the teeth of it would appear to him and his as my denial. But I have written to do away that, enclosing Perry’s letter, which was very polite and kind.

Nobody hates bustle so much as I do; but there seems a fatality over every scene of my drama, always a row of some sort or other. No matter—Fortune is my best friend; and as I acknowledge my obligations to her, I hope she will treat me better than she treated the Athenian, who took some merit to himself on some occasion, but (after that) took no more towns. In fact, she, that exquisite goddess, has hitherto carried me through every thing, and will I hope, now; since I own it will be all her doing.

Well, now, for thee. Your article on [Lord Thurlow] is perfection itself. You must not leave off reviewing. By Jove, I believe you can do any thing. There is wit, and taste, and learning, and good humour (though not a whit less severe for that), in every line of that critique.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Next to your being an E[edinburgh]. Reviewer, my being of the same kidney, and Jeffrey’s being such a friend to both, are amongst the events which I conceive were not calculated upon in Mr,—what’s his name?‘s—‘Essay on Probabilities.’
But, Tom, I say—Oons! Scott menaces the ‘Lord of the Isles’. Do you mean to compete? or lay by, till this wave has broken upon the shelves? (of booksellers, not rocks—a broken metaphor, by the way.) You ought to be afraid of nobody; but your modesty is really as provoking and unnecessary as a * *’s. I am very merry, and have just been writing some elegiac stanzas on the death of Sir [Peter]. Parker. He was my first cousin, but never met since boyhood. Our relations desired me, and I have scribbled and given it to Perry, who will chronicle it to-morrow. I am as sorry for him as one could be for one I never saw since I was a child; but should not have wept melodiously, except ‘at the request of friends.’

I hope to get out of town and be married, but I shall take Newstead in my way; and you must meet me at Nottingham and accompany me to mine Abbey. I will tell you the day when I know it.

Ever, &c.

P.S. By the way my wife elect is perfection, and I hear of nothing but her merits and her wonders, and that she is ‘very pretty.’ Her expectations, I am told, are great; but what, I have not asked. I have not seen her these ten months.

Byron to the Editor of the Poetical Register, from 2, the Albany, London, October 10th 1814:
(Source: B.L.Add.Mss.54224; BLJ IV 205)

Oct 10th. 1814

Sir – I have just received your obliging present of your “Poetical Register”. – It is a work which deserves & I doubt not will obtain every success and I request that you will accept my sincere thanks for your kindness in deeming me worthy of a copy. – I have the honour to be

your obliged & very faithful Ser.

Byron

Byron to Thomas Moore, from 2, the Albany, London, October 15th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 586-7; LJ III 152-3; BLJ IV 208-9)

October 15th 1814.

An’ there were any thing in marriage that would make a difference between my friends and me, particularly in your case, I would ‘none on’t.’ My agent sets off for Durham next week, and I shall follow him, taking Newstead and you in my way. I certainly did not address Miss Milbanke with these views, but it is likely she may prove a considerable parti. All her father can give, or leave her, he will; and from her childless uncle, Lord Wentworth, whose barony, it is supposed, will devolve on Ly. Milbanke (her sister), she has expectations. But these will depend upon his own disposition, which seems very partial towards her. She is an only child, and Sir R[alph].’s estates, though dipped by electioneering, are considerable. Part of them are settled on her; but whether that will be dowered now, I do not know,—through, from what has been intimated to me, it probably will. The lawyers are to settle this among them, and I am getting my property into matrimonial array, and myself ready for the journey to Seaham, which I must make in a week or ten days.

I certainly did not dream that she was attached to me, which it seems she has been for some time. I also thought her of a very cold disposition, in which I was also mistaken—it is a long story, and I won’t trouble you with it. As to her virtues, &c. &c. you will hear enough of them (for she is a kind of pattern in the north), without my running into a display on the subject. It is well that one of us is of such fame, since there is sad deficit in the morale of that article upon my part,—all owing to my ‘bitch of a star,’ as Captain Tranchemont says of his planet.

Don’t think you have not said enough of me in your article on Thurlow; what more could or need be said?

Your long-delayed and expected work—I suppose you will take fright at ‘The Lord of the Isles’ and Scott now. You must do as you like,—I have said my say. You ought to fear comparison with none, and any one would stare, who heard you were so tremulous,—though, after all, I believe it is the surest sign of talent. Good morning. I hope we shall meet soon, but I will write again, and perhaps you will meet me at Nottingham. Pray say so.

P.S. If this union is productive, you shall name the first fruits.

Byron to Leigh Hunt, from 2, the Albany, London, October 15th 1814:
(Source: text from V&A Forster, 48.G.22 ff. 7/1-2; LJ III 153-4; BLJ IV 209-10)

166: A recollection of Shakespeare, Hamlet, III i 146 ("I’ll no more on’t").
167: From the 1,001 Nights.
My dear Hunt –

I send you some game of which I beg your acceptance – I specify the quantity as a security against the porter – a hare – a pheasant – and two brace of partridges which I hope are fresh. – My stay in town has not been long and I am in all the agonies of quitting it again next week on business preparatory to a “change of condition” as it is called by the talkers on such matters – I am about to be married – and am of course in all the misery of a man in pursuit of happiness. – My intended is two hundred miles off – and the efforts I am making with lawyers &c. &c. to join my future connections are for a personage of my single and inveterate habits – to say nothing of in dolence – quite prodigious. – – I sincerely hope you are better than your paper intimated lately – and that your approaching Freedom will find you in full health to enjoy it.

Leigh Hunt to Byron, from Horsemonger Lane Gaol, October 15th 1814:

My dear Byron,

I accept your game with much pleasure as a proof that I am still in your recollection, & have lost something of a savage resolution I had to come upon you some day with a <xxxxxxxxxd> formal return of a visit. I heard of your intended change of condition by means of the newspapers, but am so little in the habit of believing my editorial brethren, that I waited patiently for the event itself, which, I assure you, it gives me unfeigned pleasure to contemplate. The triumph over your bachelorian habits was reserved, as it ought to be, not for philosophy, nor even for friendship, but for good old English love & a wife; & I trust I shall still live to see you with your boys & girls about your knees, enjoying more real happiness than even the exaggerations of poetry can arrive at. Take this as a husband’s, – perhaps a poet’s – anticipation; & believe me, my dear Byron, very truly your’s.

Leigh Hunt.

Byron to Henry Drury, from 2, the Albany, London, October 18th 1814:

My dear Drury

Many thanks for your hitherto unacknowledged “anecdotes” now for one of mine – I am going to be married – and have been engaged this month. –  – – – – It is a long story – & therefore I can’t tell it – <and> an old – & (though I did not know {it} till lately) – a mutual attachment – the very sad life I have led since I was your pupil must partly account for the offs & ons in this now to be arranged business. – –

We are only waiting for the lawyers & settlements &c. – and next week or the week after – I shall go down to Seaham in the new character of <an> regular suitor for a wife of mine own. – Do you remember the dialogue with that father of the girls who ran away with your best bound Tacitus last speechday? – M’. I forget the name? – – it is – or was – odd enough – but no matter for that. – – I hope Hodgson is in a fair way on the same voyage – I saw him & his idol at Hastings – I wish he would be married at the same time – I should like to make a party – like people electrified in a row by – <the> or rather – through the same chain – holding one another’s hands, – & all feeling the shock at once. – I have not yet apprized him of this – he makes such a serious matter of these things –
and is so “melancholy & gentlemanlike” that it is quite overcoming to us choice spirits – that never to be forgotten journey to Ox[ford]¹⁴ on his suitoring last year! – by the way it was about this time –

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do you recollect our ribaldry? – if you do – pray renew it. –
They say one should not be married in a black coat – I won’t have a blue one – that’s flat – I hate it. –
Jackson (the Pancratiaist) tells me he met with “two M’. Drury’s” to whom he sang several “flash” dithyramb<rics>{bics} with unbounded applause. –

   ever yº. Dear D.
   most amicably

B

P.S. –
Your correspondent & my old amie Lady O[xfor]d. hath gotten the King (& several of his subjects probably) of Naples as my successor – you may perhaps have <heard> heard this from Tu. Tayler – the report is rife among the gossips. –

Byron to James Cawthorn, October 21st 1814:
(Source: from Morgan Library MA 0062, 286952, Item 45; BLJ IV 220)
Transcription by Paul Curtis, modified

Oct. 21st. 1814 –
Sir – Some time ago I received your letter in the country but have been so much hurried that I hope you will excuse my not having answered it before. – If you can prove <that> “the piracy”¹⁶⁸ & chuse to prosecute I will pay the expences – it must undoubtedly be stopped – because independent of other considerations though the copyright was never parted with I should not permit others to publish what I refused you. – Of course my mind

1:2
remains unaltered on the subject of publication – it must not proceed on any account – I can’t conceive how the devil a temporary subject of that kind should still be sought after – unless it is the perversity of people – who want a thing because they can’t have it. –

Byron

P.S. – Perhaps the best way would be to obtain an injunction – is not that the word? –

[1:3 and 4 blank.]

Byron to John Cowell, October 22nd 1814:
(Source: this text from BLJ IV 222-3)

In 1808, Byron had bet some friends that he would not marry. He now faces the consequences.

My dear Cowell—Many & sincere thanks for your kind letter. —The bet or rather forfeit was one hundred to Hawke—and fifty to Hay—(nothing to Kelly) for a guinea received from each of the two former—I shall feel much obliged by your setting me right if I err in this statement in any way— —& have reasons for wishing you to recollect as much as possible of what passed and state it to Hodgson.— My reason is this—some time ago—Mr. Hay required a bet of me which I never made and of course refused to pay—& have heard no more of it—to prevent similar mistakes is my object in wishing you to remember well what passed—& to put Hodgson in possession of your memory on the subject.—I hope to see you soon in my way through Cambridge—remember me to H. and believe me ever & truly yrs.

Byron

John Murray to Byron, from Edinburgh, October 24th 1814:
(Source: NLS Acc.12604 / 4161A; LJM 116-19)

My Lord

¹⁶⁸: A piracy of English Bards and Scotch Reviewers, which B. had suppressed in 1812.
If I have been too long in availing myself of your obliging permission to address you, on my travels, it has been occasioned less, I believe, from the want of objects to write about, than from their hurried succession.

Your Lordship will smile to be told how much your name has mingled in every stage of my journey & of my stay – Nottingham, the first place of my rest, became so, only from the magic of the Letter which your Lordship had so kindly given me <for> to your steward, for every part of the “Blackmoors Head” (as well as its Landlords,) was filled with the People, from all surrounding parts, who had come to the Fare, &, in the noble market Place, where it was held, I saw Forty Thousand well dressed men & women. The next morning I rode over to Newstead Abbey, into every corner of which I obliged my namesake to carry me, & to repeat its individual history – it was indeed “a vast and venerable pile” – but now, “so old it seemeth only not to fall” I can not describe to your Lordship the anxiety, & instant vexation, with which I viewed every spot & <to> heard M’ Murrays description of what it had once been & what it now is; to have seen it in all its antique splendour and

1:2
to have experienced, inch by inch, all its sad changes, as he has done, reflected to my mind a picture of human existence so miserable that I was thrown into a state of despondence which I could not shake of until the day after, when I <gave> lost my melancholy reflections amongst the delightful scenery of Matlock. I, now, less wonder at your Lordships philosophy in parting with it – than admire the noble feelings which have induced you to retain a place which constantly reflects upon the barbarity which could have despoiled it to a degree that absolutely annihilates every hope, even in possibility, of any means by which it could be re instated – to have torn from within every remnant of its Monastic splendour, to have sucked its waters dry & to have shorn the land of the noble wood which surrounded it – are things as impossible to be forgotten or <to be> forgiven – as they are to be restored --

At Darlington where the Mail Coach stopped to breakfast – the room was preoccupied by a most respectable man who was very polite to us whom I had a good & with whom I had a good deal of conversation – when the passengers had assembled in the Mail again I learnt that my late friend was Steward to – Sir Ralph Millbane – this gave rise to a discourse upon a reported marriage & upon the merits of both parties in which they were loud & <without> unanimous – – ever since my

1:3
arrival in this City, I have incessantly breakfasted in one place, dined in another & passed the evening in a third – I have supported myself literally upon the interest which all ranks are possessed with, of making enquiries about your Lordship & really the people here are so confoundedly intelligent that if it had not been for this fortunate source of Literary wealth I could not have supported my place in society here – but I may assure your Lordship of the pride which I feel in perceiving your fame so deeply rooted in the estimation of such a people & so universally – as to Hogg – he is out of the question for you have intoxicated him – but you will not be dissatisfied to learn how much you are esteemed Dugald Stewart & his accomplished wife who dined with me at my mothers, on Sunday last & who were minute in their enquiries & vehement in their commendation – M” S had heard a great deal also of the accomplished & amiable character of — & rejoiced with maternal kindness at the prospect of so auspicious a union – There is a Lady Williamson here just now, who is my only rival, for she is a particular friend of Miss — & has delighted every one here with her character – Ballantyne – Walter Scotts particular friend gave me a full account of the delightful manner in which Scott speaks of you & in a very kind invi

1:4
tion to pass some days with Scott, of which I am about to avail myself, the cause of his desire to see me is let out in the concluding line of his letter in which he says “as I want to hear about Ellis Gifford – but especially about Lord Byron” – I am neither chagreed nor vain at my spurious importance, but I

169: Joe Murray, head man at Newstead.
170: CHP I, 7, 2.
171: CHP I, 7, 3.
172: “Miss Milbanke”.
173: Mu. omits the third syllable at the page-turn.
do assure your Lordship I am very Proud to see so completely realized all that my own mind & heart have felt for you –

To trouble your Lordship with business in which I know your kindness is not uninterested I am happy to say that I am actually printing Hogg’s new poem wch he has parted with as we thought irreparably & that we are arranging for his collection & moreover that we are very good friends. – I am very sanguine in my expectation of carrying off with me a slice of M’ Scotts new Poem – of which I saw the Mss of the first part, wch is now beginning to be printed & that in every other respect I have solid reason to rejoice at my visit to this Land of Literature & to regret an absence wch has deprived me of Waverley & of other things – Waverley is universally given to Scott & Hogg can prove logically that the Bridal of Triermain is by the same by the same

by the same author.

If your Lordship meditate any excursion upon a certain event, I most earnestly entreat you to think of this place, where, both you & yours, will be received with delight, and, I am certain, that you will, both, be charmed with this intellectual Swerga174 – as to the City itself, it surpasses every thing that can be imagined, & I stop whenever go out to breathe out my extacy at the pleasure its architecture & situation, – afford me at every Step. M’ & M’’ Stewart would give you an introduction to every thing, & it is sufficient to tell you respecting the latter, that she is the confidential correspondent of M’ Ward.

I am grievously disappointed with Lord Thurlow in which, I do avow, there is not more than one tolerable thing, – but I can assure you that it is upheld here “by those concerned” as the most inimitable piece of wit.

I know your Lordships goodness will excuse the openness with which I write & I shall be most anxious in the hope of finding you in London upon my return on Tuesday (if not Monday) next, that I may tell you all that passes during my visit with M’ Scott, at whose house I shall sleep the day after tomorrow (Wednesday)

I sent 500 Lara here the day it was published & they have not had a copy for a month – it is in high estimation here –

Allow me to assure your Lordship that wherever I go I carry with me the highest esteem for your Lordship & that I ever remain

My Lord
Your grateful & affectionate
humble Servant
John Murray175

[2:3 and 2:4 blank.]

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, [October 31st??] 1814:
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4161A; Smiles I 257; LJM 121-2)

My Lord

It is no small addition to my vexation at finding that I came to town only one day after your Lordship had left it, to be deprived of the means of addressing you. I do confess I guess where you are – but am I at liberty to <add> write to you where my imagination – & wishes have placed you? – You see my Lord I am under the necessity of committing the trespass before I can be certain that it is unprivileged land –

Walter Scott, my Lord, (you see I put my best foot foremost) commissioned me to be the bearer of his warmest greetings to you. His house was full the day I passed with him, & yet, both in corners and at the surrounded table he talked incessantly of you, & unwilling that I should part without bearing some mark of his love (a Poets love) for you

1:2

174: Mu. refers to the celestial location of the climax of Southey’s The Curse of Kehama.
175: Decorated underlining.
he gave me a superb Turkish Dagger to present to your Lordship as the only remembrance which at that moment, he could think of to offer you – He was greatly pleased with a Portrait which I recollected to carry with me during the whole dinner when all were admiring the peculiarity & taste in which Scott has fitted up a sort of Gothic Cottage he expressed his anxious wishes that your Lordship might honour him with a visit which I ventured to assure him you would feel no less happy than certain in effecting when you should go to Scotland & I am sure he would hail your Lordship as “yet more than brother.”

The – the Quarterly Review – my Lord (have patience!) has ventured during my & your Lordships absence to put forth a voluminous criticism upon certain poems entitled – The Corsair & Lara – which I wish to introduce to your Lordship – presuming that, upon the whole, you will not be displeased with the acquaintance

1:3

and now, I rise to the real purpose of this Letter – Your Lordship has often performed, in my favour, what you did not promise – but there is one promise, which yet remains to be performed – I shall never feel satisfied until your Lordship is so very good as to send me an order upon Phillips – for the Portrait which I do entreat of you again even at the heavy risk of being thought troublesome –

I am advancing in the Fourth Volume of The Works – wch will consist of

Ode to Buonaparte
Poems at End of Child Harod
D⁰ – Corsair
Death of Sir P. Parker ?
Any thing unpublished ?

Allow me to hope that your Lordship will find a vacant moment to write a few lines to My Lord your grateful & faithful humble servant John Murray

1:4 blank.

Douglas Kinnaird to Byron, November 7th 1814:
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4136A)
[The Lord Byron / at Sir Ralph Milbanke’s / Seaham / N Stockton on Tees / Durham]
Dear Byron,

I dare say you will feel anxious to know something more of Kean’s performance of Macbeth than the Newspapers will tell you – I cannot accuse either the Chronicle Times or Post of doing him injustice – No praise can do justice to the merits of the scene after the murder – to that of the Vision of the Dagger – to his manner of receiving the first intelligence of M’Duff being in arms against him – & that Birnham wood was on the move – His fight & death were likewise excellent – He was decidedly below my expectation in some parts – but had he acted all the rest decidedly ill

1:2

which was far from the case the excellence of what I have quoted would have redeem’d all – I cannot pretend to describe his manner of playing the scene of remorse & agony for what he had done, but the effect on the audience was such as I shall never forget – Not a face that was not distorted involuntarily, not a neck that was not stretch’d out in breathless horror – The chief feature of his acting that scene was the absence of all writhing of the body, all study of attitude & grimace – The tones of his voice, et vox faucibus hesitavit & his difficulty of utterance seem’d all the charms with which he work’d up

176: The phrase occurs four times in the Aeneid: at II,774, III,48, IV,280 and XII, 868. It means “and the voice choked in / cleaved to his / my throat”. 
the audience to a feeling of the utmost pity for the murderer, whose hands were before them reeking
with the blood of the recent deed –

[1:3 blank.]

**Byron to Lady Melbourne, November 13th 1814:**
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4149C; 1922 I 289-91; BLJ IV 231)

Nov. 13th. 1814 –

My dear Lady Mel. –

I delivered your letters – but have only mentioned ye receipt of your last to myself. –

Do you know I have great doubts – if this will be a marriage now: – her disposition is the very reverse of
our imaginings – she is overrun with fine feelings – scruples about herself & her disposition (I
suppose in fact she means mine) and to crown all is taken ill once every 3 days with I know not what –
but the day before and the day after she seems well – looks [& eats] well & is cheerful & confiding &
in short like any other person in good health & spirits. –

1:2

A few days ago she made one scene – not altogether out of C’s style – it was too long & too trifling in
fact for me to transcribe – but it did me no good – – in the article of conversation however she has
improved with a vengeance – but I don’t much admire these same agitations upon slight occasions. – I
don’t know – but I think it by no means impossible you will see me in town soon – I can only interpret
these things one way – & merely wait to be certain to make my obeisances and “exit singly.” I hear of
nothing but “feeling” from morning till night – except from Sir Ralph with whom I go on to admiration
– L. M. too is pretty well – but I am never sure of A – for a moment – the least word –

1:3

and you know I rattle on through thick & thin (always however avoiding anything I think can offend
her favourite notions) if only to prevent me from yawning – the least word – or alteration of tone – has
some inference drawn from it – sometimes we are too much alike – & then again too unlike – this
comes of system – & squaring her notions to the Devil knows what – for my part I have lately had
recourse to the eloquence of action (which Demosthenes calls the first part of oratory) & find it
succeeds very well & makes her very quiet which gives me some hopes of the efficacy of the “calming
process” so renowned in “our philosophy.” – In fact and entre

1:4

nous it is really amusing – she is like a child in that respect – and quite caressable into kindness and
good humour – though I don’t think her temper had at any time – but very self=tormenting – and
anxious – and romantic. – – – – – In short – it is impossible to foresee how this will end now –
anymore than 2 years ago – if there is a break – it shall be her doing not mine. –

ever y”, most truly

Francis Hodgson to Augusta Leigh, from King’s College Cambridge, November 23rd 1814:
(Source: text from BL.Add.Mss. 31037 f. 20)

**Byron is cheered in the Cambridge Senate House.**

My dear M’ Leigh /

An occurrence has just taken place in the Senate House at Cambridge which will give you the
truest pleasure, and which I hasten to tell you – When dear B — walked up the Senate to give his vote,
the Young Men burst into the heartiest tokens of applause & admiration – He was wholly unprepared
for it, & of course very much disturbed – Most unluckily I was absent at the moment,

1:2

177: Lady Milbanke, Annabella’s mother.
which I shall regret as long as I live – but however this is nothing – that it has taken place is the point, & I rejoice as you will most cordially at it –

There is not time for another word – He is quite well, and as I hope to God he ever may be, happy

I am, My Dear M’s. Leigh,
Ever sincerely Yours
in the greatest haste

F. Hodgson

King’s College
Nov 23d 1814 ——

Hobhouse writes in his diary for November 23rd 1814: “Went to Cambridge – saw Lord Byron – voted in the senate House for Dr Clarke, fellow of Trinity, for the Professorship of Anatomy – this is the same Clarke who shot Mr Payne for debauching his sister, and the same who was to have travelled with Lord Byron – Clarke had 135 votes, Woodhouse 60, and Haviland of St Johns 150 – the poll opened at two pm and closed at seven – Lord Byron, when he gave his vote, was clapped by the students in the gallery and also when he left the place of voting – this is, they tell me, unique. He looked as red as fire – Mansel & Dr Clarke contended for the honour of escorting him: this is well, for a Bishop to attend upon a poet who has the reputation of an atheist and has done something to deserve it (BL.Add.Mss. 47232 f.35r).

Grosvenor Bedford to Robert Southey, December 4th 1814:
(Source: Bodleian M.S.Eng.Letters d.52.103)

Southey’s best friend is to review his latest poem.

Murray told me that Ld Byron has spoken of it [Roderick, Last of the Goths] as the very finest thing he has ever read. His criticism will lead the judgement of many others who will be glad of the example of a <great> popular name. I told Murray of my intention of endeavouring to review it, which he did not seem to be particularly pleased with, as he said that he had put it into the hands of one of the ablest men in London (so much the better) but that he should like to have whichever may turn out to be the best. Murray is a very spirited and enterprizing bookseller, but he does not understand a thing of this coil and I can tell in his conversation what is his own language and what phrases he has got by heart from other people, these make a curious piece of inlaid work of the whole of it. I do not think he has spoken upon the subject to Gifford, nor does it matter, for I would not have him stop the hand he has already set to work, because it will present a choice, and I mean at all events to try <mine> mine. In some respects I am better qualified than anyone else for the task having watched & paid a great deal of attention to the poem from its outset & being more familiar with your style of thinking & writing than anyone else can be – I am glad too that you have given me a longer time than I expected to do it in, and to send it to you when I have finished it ...

John Murray memorandum, late 1814:
(Source: text from LJ III 496)

When Southey’s poem, Don Roderick, was published, Lord Byron sent in the middle of the night to ask John Murray if he had heard any opinion of it, for he thought it one of the finest poems he had ever read.

Byron to Thomas Moore, from 2, the Albany, London, December 14th 1814:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 597-8; LJ III 163-4; BLJ IV 243)

December 14. 1814.

My dearest Tom,
I will send the pattern to-morrow, and since you don’t go to our friend (‘of the keeping part of the town’) this evening, I shall e’en sulk at home over a solitary potation. My self-opinion rises much by

178: S.’s epic Roderick, Last of the Goths was published in 1814.

179: See also B. to Annabella on November 28th 1814, only a month before he married her; “… I think Southey’s Roderick as near perfection as poetry can be – which considering how I dislike the school I wonder at – however so it is – if he had never written anything else he might safely stake his fame upon the last of the Goths …” (BLJ IV 235).

180: See TVOJ, 99, 5-6: “… there’s no ground / For fear – for I can choose my own reviewers …”
your eulogy of my social qualities. As my friend Scrope is pleased to say, I believe I am very well for a 'holiday drinker.' Where the devil are you? With Woolridge, I conjecture—for which you deserve another abscess. Hoping that the American war will last for many years, and that all the prizes may be registered at Bermoothes, believe me, &c.

P.S. I have just been composing an epistle to the Archbishop for an especial licence. Oons! it looks serious. Murray is impatient to see you, and would call, if you will give him audience. Your new coat!—I wonder you like the colour, and don’t go about, like Dives, in purple.

Douglas Kinnaird to Byron, December 21st 1814:
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4136S)

My dear Byron,

You will not doubt have anticipated my poor Brother’s nearer approach to the termination of his sufferings, & thus have explained my silence as well as absence during the whole of yesterday—It was all over a little after two o’clock this morning—Were it not for the occupation that has devolved upon me both as his nearest relation & as the person who felt the warmest & deepest attachment towards him of any living, I shd be now quite unnerv’d by the Scene I witness’d—He had so many friends who felt as Brothers towards him that I have felt a melancholy satisfaction in employing some of my time in writing a faithful account

1:2

of his last moments—He died (as you will perceive by the inclos’d account, which pray read & return for bearer) like a man—& confirm’d <any/>all those feelings which in life were excited by his manliness & manifold noble qualities—

A death-bed is a most awful scene—

I sh’d have much satisfaction in seeing you to-night in Clarges St. or if you cannot come I w’d endeavour to come to you for a time—I know you are fond of character— and the greatest pleasure I can now feel is in discussing one which I so much admire—With my Sisters I cannot talk— & I must write or talk about him—for I can think of nothing else—

Your’s ever

DK.

[1:3 blank.]

Byron, P.S. from a letter to J.C.Hobhouse, from 2, the Albany, London, received December 22nd 1814:
(Source: text from BL.Add.Mss. 47232, f.47r.; not in LJ or BLJ)

Poor Frederick Kinnaird died last night. He made a most heroic or rather philosophical end. Hume’s was hardly better.

Thomas Moore to Byron, December 12th 1814:
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4159; Dowden I 343)

My dearest Byron

I have not been able to call upon you to-day, and, what is worse, I fear, from an engagement that has been made for me, I shall not be able to meet you at that Deipnosophist Kinnaird’s to-night—

I feel Bessy was right in her jealousy of you—if I were to see so much of you as lately, you would be a dangerous rival to her—“how pleasant!”—

181: The “War of 1812” ended on February 16th 1815.
182: Ariel at Shakespeare, The Tempest, I ii 229.
183: Including the following: Kinnaird died nobly. He talked of indifferent subjects—of religion he said he should have liked to have had his mind made up by some sensible man—Douglas mentioned his friend Smedley—“No,” said he, “Smedley is a clergyman—but I know his notions already.” The last thing he said was, “I feel confused in my head— — don’t ask me a question that requires an answer”: he died in ten minutes (B.L. Add. Mss. 47232, 47r. H. diary entry for December 23rd 1814, two days after K. writes this letter).
I wish you would send me the pattern of the olive Coat you have ordered, as I am about to
get one, and, for the fun of the thing, <you> I should like to wear your Benedictine livery –

Ever yours

Thomas Moore

Tomorrow we must do something at the Play or elsewhere –

Thomas Moore to Byron, December 1814:
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4159; Dowden I 345-6)

If your servant should be travelling near 34 Strand, pray, and send me, a frank for Bessy

My dear Byron –
As you would not come down to me, me voici come up to you – I saw you on Saturday evening, but as I was a Pittite, 
I could not come near you – you did not look worried, and I began to quake about you – “Speak, brother, speak – is the deed done?” – or when will it be?
I am busy all this day and must in the evening see Miss O.Neill – I shall again venture on the Pit, if I can get nothing better – & tomorrow I shall try & catch you about boxing time –

Ever yours affectionately

T. Moore

If you have any thing to say to me to-day send it to 34 Strand –

Thomas Moore to Byron, c. 1814:
(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4159; Dowden I 346)
[Lord Byron.]

My dear Byron – In charity to a poor hired (and tired) hack, who does not belong to himself just now, pray, contrive to be at home to-day about four, as I shall at that hour have a chance of emancipating myself & tomorrow I am off –

<You may think perhaps I am lately>

Evr Yours

T. Moore

Byron to an unnamed postal official, from Six Mile Bottom, Cambridgeshire, late 1814:
(Source: Harry Ransom Center, Texas, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ IV 237)

Sir, – It is with regret I trouble you with any complaints but in this case I have no other resource. – A letter addressed to me at this place (where a relative of mine resides and I sometimes visit) has been charged – I returned the cover and wrote a short but certainly not uncivil note to the Postmaster at

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184: Not that he was a Tory, but that he sat in the pit at Drury Lane.
185: Identified at BLJ IV 237n, on the evidence of a letter of August 15th 1815, as Francis Freeling, Secretary to the General Post Office.
186: Augusta.
187: Letters from peers were delivered free of charge.
Newmarket regarding the charge to be returned – I have received no answer whatever. – Whether this person be in the right or wrong in the circumstance {of the charge} I feel assured that you will not approve of <the>  

1:2

what I feel justified in terming the insolence of his conduct in withholding a reply. – Upon the subject of the letter itself I must state that I was not here & did not arrive for some time after the delivery of it – but I did not know that my absence authorized an exception from the usual privilege – for instance – Many letters are addressed to me at Newstead – or to London – while I am elsewhere without having been subjected to the same penalty. – If you will have the goodness to set the postmaster or me right and excuse this  

1:3

trouble you will much oblige

y‘. very obed‘.  
humble Ser‘.  

Byron

P.S. –  
If you favour me with an answer address to – Seaham – Stockton on Tees – Durham. –