

Guide to the George Gordon Byron, Baron Byron Collection

GEN MSS 892



by Beinecke Staff

September 2012

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
(203) 432-2977
beinecke.library@yale.edu
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

CALL NUMBER: GEN MSS 892

CREATOR: Byron, George Gordon Byron, Baron, 1788-1824

TITLE: George Gordon Byron, Baron Byron collection

DATES: 1804-1927 1804-1822

BULK DATES: 1804-1822

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 0.42 linear feet (1 box) + 2 broadside items

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The collection consists primarily of manuscripts and letters by George Gordon Byron, Baron Byron, including a manuscript of the Preface to Childe Harold's Pilgrimage and the manuscript of The Prisoner of Chillon; and letters to John Murray, Francis Hodgson, and Samuel Rogers. Other contents include several letters by Anne Isabella Milbanke, Baroness Byron; two notes by Catherine Byron, the poet's mother; and eighteen letters from Augusta Leigh to Francis Hodgson.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.baronbyron>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.baronbyron>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Acquired by gift and purchase from various sources, 1933-1968. Further acquisition information available in finding aid entries for individual items.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The George Gordon Byron, Baron Byron Collection is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

George Gordon Byron, Baron Byron Collection. General Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

Processing Information

The George Gordon Byron, Baron Byron Collection is comprised of material formerly classed as MS Vault Shelves Byron.

This collection received a basic level of processing, including rehousing, in 2012.

The finding aid for this collection is largely compiled from individual catalog cards for each acquisition that were created at or around the time of receipt by the library. Information from the catalog cards was repurposed in the finding aid in accordance with current archival descriptive standards. Some catalog cards, filed with the collection, include more detailed descriptions of individual items and/or provenance notes. Descriptions for items not represented by catalog cards were derived from accession records, folder labels, or other available descriptive material. Some items are accompanied by transcripts or other explanatory material; this is not generally noted in the finding aid.

George Gordon Byron, Baron Byron (1788-1824)

George Gordon Byron, Baron Byron (1788-1824), British poet who became one of the leading figures of the Romantic movement and gained fame as much for his scandal-ridden personal life as for his poetry. Educated at Harrow and Cambridge, Byron embarked on an extended Grand Tour in 1808, visiting both the western and eastern Mediterranean.

On his return to England in 1812, Byron published the first two cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, a narrative poem featuring the first appearance of the "Byronic hero." The poem was a sensation, and Byron "awoke one morning and found myself famous." The following four years saw a series of successful publications, including *The Bride of Abydos* (1813), *Hebrew Melodies* (1815), and *The Prisoner of Chillon* (1816), and a series of often scandalous love affairs, including relationships with Lady Caroline Lamb and Lady Oxford.

Byron married the mathematically gifted heiress Anna Isabella Milbanke, Caroline Lamb's cousin, in 1814. The couple had one daughter, but the marriage soon broke down, and Byron was the subject of widespread rumors of adultery and an incestuous relationship with his half-sister, Augusta Leigh. After signing a deed of separation in April, Byron left England and never returned. A summer spent at the Villa Diodati with Percy Bysshe Shelley, Mary Shelley, and her half-sister Claire Claremont resulted in the story fragment *The Vampyre* and the eventual birth of his illegitimate daughter by Claremont, Clara Allegra.

Byron spent the following years in Italy, settling primarily in Venice from 1816 through 1819, where he pursued a series of affairs with local women, documented in his correspondence and journals, and wrote, among other works, the first cantos of his *Don Juan* (1819-1824). This satiric poem is today considered

Byron's masterpiece; the first two cantos were widely condemned for immorality when they were published anonymously in 1819.

In Venice Byron met the nineteen year old, and already married, Countess Teresa Guiccioli, moving to Ravenna and becoming her *cavalier servente*. The Count and Countess eventually separated, and Byron accompanied her to Pisa and later to Genoa. In 1823, Byron gave his support to the Greek Independence movement, and sailed to Greece late in that year. He planned to lead part of an expedition against Lepanto, but died of a fever at Missolonghi on April 19, 1824.

Scope and Contents

The collection consists primarily of manuscripts and letters by George Gordon Byron, Baron Byron, including a manuscript of the Preface to *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and the manuscript of *The Prisoner of Chillon*; and letters to John Murray, Francis Hodgson, and Samuel Rogers. Other contents include several letters by Anne Isabella Milbanke, Baroness Byron; two notes by Catherine Byron, the poet's mother; and eighteen letters from Augusta Leigh to Francis Hodgson.

Arrangement

Organized into three series: I. George Gordon Byron, Baron Byron Papers, 1806-1823. II. Anne Isabella Milbanke Byron, Baroness Byron Papers, 1814-1856. III. Other Related Papers, 1804-1927.

Collection Contents

Series I: George Gordon Byron, Baron Byron Papers, 1806-1823

26 Folders

The series consists primarily of autograph manuscripts by Byron, including the Preface to *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*; *Lines on Hearing that Lady Byron Was Ill*; and *The Prisoner of Chillon*. It also contains letters from Byron to recipients including Thomas Davison, Francis Hodgson, John Murray and Samuel Rogers; and miscellaneous portraits of Byron.

Writings arranged alphabetically; correspondence arranged alphabetically, followed by miscellaneous personal papers.

b. 1	<i>The Age of Bronze</i> Autograph manuscript of six additional lines to be inserted.	[1823 March 13]
b. 1	<i>Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. Preface.</i> Autograph manuscript, with numerous corrections, deletions, etc. Paper watermarked 1810. Given in memory of William A. Borst '37, by a group of his friends, 1953.	[1810]
b. 1	<i>The Corsair</i> A scrap of the first page of the text in proof, with autograph manuscript note signed "B" and dated January 11, 1814, and with one correction. Gift of Wilmarth Lewis, 1952.	1814 January 11
b. 1	<i>The Curse of Minerva</i> Original "fair copy" manuscript, in an unidentified hand, with two additions, possibly in the hand of Robert Charles Dallas. The paper is watermarked 1812. Purchased from Gabriel Wells with Durand Fund, 1944	[1812]
b. 1	<i>The Death of Calmar and Orla</i> Autograph manuscript. The last half page with the concluding five lines of the poem and a sentence of explanation signed with initials, in the autograph of Elizabeth Pigot--the front cover has also a mutilation of the manuscript. Enclosed in a red cloth folding case. Purchased with the Albert H. Childs Fund from Gabriel Wells, 1936.	undated

b. 1	<i>Lines on Hearing that Lady Byron was Ill</i> Autograph manuscript poem. Enclosed in a red morocco folding case. The following lines are written on the margin of page 3: The moral Clytemnestra of thy lord / And Hewed down with an unsuspected sword / Fame - peace - & hope - and all the better Life / Which but for this cold treason of thy heart / Might still have risen from out the grave of strife.. Purchased with the Albert H. Childs Memorial Fund from Gabriel Wells, 1936.	undated
b. 2 (Broadside)	<i>The Prisoner of Chillon</i> Autograph manuscript with revisions, additions and deletions. Interleaved with an unidentified printed copy and bound in dark blue morocco. Gift of Edwin J. Beinecke, 1968.	[1816]
b. 1	<i>Some Observations Upon an Article in Blackwoods' Edinburgh Magazine</i> Also stored in: Broadside 3 Proofsheets with many corrections and additions. Negative photostats of originals once in the John A. Spoor Library and now in the Meyer Davis Collection, University of Pennsylvania. Accompanied by photostats of letters from B. F. Stevens & Brown and A. E. Prothero, concerning the history of the pamphlet, and an article by Philip B. Daghlion reprinted from <i>The Review of English Studies</i> , v.23, no.90, April 1947.	1821 November 18
b. 3 (Broadside)	<i>Some Observations Upon an Article in Blackwoods' Edinburgh Magazine</i>	1821 November 18
b. 1	Tambourgi Autograph manuscript poem, followed by stanza 71 [LXII in the printed version] of <i>Childe Harold's Pilgrimage</i> , signed. January 26, 1810, Athens.	1810 January 26
b. 1	<i>"To the Ladies who have so Kindly Defended the Author from Attacks of Unprovoked Malignity"</i> Autograph manuscript poem of 12 four-line stanzas, signed and dated 1806. Unpublished. Manuscript notes on wrapper and p.4 authenticating the poem and signed "Elizabeth Pigot". Accompanied by a typescript and an autograph note by Reverend Herbert Haworth Wood to whose father, William Seward Wood, the manuscript was given by Miss Pigot. Sold for the Red Cross Fund by Sotheby on June 29, 1916. Bound in full brown levant. From the estate of Gabriel Wells, 1947.	1806

b. 1	<p><i>Translation of the Romaic Song</i></p> <p>Autograph manuscript poem.</p> <p>Paper watermarked 1809. Printed in his <i>Childe Harold's Pilgrimage</i>, London, 1812.</p> <p>Addressed in Byron's hand to R.C. Dallas, addressed in the latter's hand as follows: 'Miss Carter with Mr. Dallas's compliments June 20th 1816</p>	[1809]
b. 1	<p>Autograph note signed to unidentified recipient, signed with initials</p> <p>Daggett autograph collection.</p>	undated
b. 1	<p>Autograph note to an unidentified recipient</p> <p>The conclusion of the note has been cut away and replaced, but without the signature.</p> <p>Purchased with the Library Associates Fund, from John Heise, 1934.</p>	1815 July 10
b. 1	<p>Autograph letter signed to an unidentified recipient, signed with initials</p> <p>1822 December 3, [Genoa.]</p> <p>Daggett autograph collection.</p>	1822 December 3
b. 1	<p>Autograph letters signed to the Chairman of the Greek Committee</p> <p>ANS to the Chairman of the Greek Committee, accepting with pleasure his appointment to the Greek Committee.</p> <p>1823 May 21, Genoa.</p> <p>Purchased with the Library Associates Fund from Robinson who bought it at the Sotheby sale, 1933.</p>	1823 May 21
b. 1	<p>Autograph note signed to Thomas Davison</p> <p>London.</p> <p>Removed from In.B996.816F (Tinker 552). Tinker 492.</p>	1816 April 3
b. 1	<p>Autograph letter signed to Francis Hodgson</p> <p>Falmouth.</p> <p>From the estate of Gabriel Wells, 1947.</p>	1809 June 25
b. 1	<p>Autograph letter signed to Ingram, Esquire</p> <p>In which Irving, Madame Soluzzo and Countess D'Ison are mentioned.</p> <p>Albano.</p> <p>Accompanied by a typewritten transcript of the letter.</p> <p>Purchased from the American autograph shop with the Library Associates Fund</p>	1823 January 16
b. 1	<p>Autograph note signed to John Murray containing two lines to be added to <u>The Giaour</u></p> <p>Note on the verso reads: "Autograph of Lord Byron presented to Dr. Ewing by J. Murray London. 1st July 1835. Presented to me by Mrs. Ewing. Alex Ewing M.D."</p> <p>Accompanied by typescript.</p> <p>Gift of Samuel W. Meek, 1951.</p>	[circa 1810]

b. 1	Autograph letter signed to Samuel Rogers Paper watermarked 1811.	[1811?]
b. 1	Autograph letter signed to Captain Weston Venice. Purchased from Raphael King with the Library Associates Fund, 1951	1818 November 5
b. 1	Address of Thomas Moore In Byron's autograph, cut from a letter postmarked July 28, 1813. Gift of Wilmarth Lewis, 1952.	[1813 July 28]
b. 1	Envelope addressed to John Murray Envelope in his hand to John Murray his publisher with a note on the reverse identifying the handwriting in autograph of John Murray. Purchased with the Library Associates Fund from Robinson who bought it at the Sotheby sale, 1933.	undated
b. 1	Four engraved portraits of Lord Byron Two from the drawing of G.H. Harlow, and two from the painting by T. Phillips. Purchased with the Library Associates Fund from Robinson who bought it at the Sotheby sale, 1933.	undated
b. 1	Manuscript note signed "B" on the verso of a Greek manuscript song Byron's note says that the song was copied for him by Dudu Roque, daughter of a French merchant in Athens, on April 19, 1811. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Halsted B. VanderPoel, 1943. Accompanied by photostats of the song and note. Also accompanied by a study of the song in <i>Hesperia</i> , Vol. XIV, No. 1, 1945	1811 April 19
b. 1	Portrait of Lord Byron by Alonzo Chapell (print)	undated
b. 1	Printed prospectus of the Greek Committee Printed prospectus of the Greek Committee, with a list of the contributors, a list of members of the Committee, and the Resolutions passed at the meeting of May 15, 1823. Signed by three members. Purchased with the Library Associates Fund from Robinson who bought it at the Sotheby sale, 1933.	undated
b. 1	Two pencil sketches by an unknown person of the doorway of Petrarch's house, and his tomb. Presumably the same person has added quotations from Byron's <i>Childe Harold's Pilgrimage</i> by way of identifying the sketches. Purchased with the Library Associates Fund from Robinson who bought it at the Sotheby sale, 1933	undated

Series II: Anne Isabella Milbanke Byron, Baroness Byron Papers, 1814-1856

7 folders

The series contains a poem in Lady Byron's hand, as well as several letters, including two to the actress Sarah Siddons.

Writings, followed by correspondence, alphabetically arranged.

b. 1	Autograph manuscript poem beginning: "Poet! buy yet whose verse no ear can measure..." Three stanzas, four lines each. Gift, through the Library Associates, of John Seymour Thacher, 1937, of the Fogg Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts.	undated
b. 1	Autograph letter signed to an unidentified recipient No year July 18, Berkenham. Accompanied by a typewritten copy. Purchased with the Library Associates Fund, 1946.	no year July 18
b. 1	Letter to William Mulready on behalf of Lady Byron in an unidentified hand. Removed from In.B996.830Y (Tinker 588).	[1830]
b. 1	Autograph letter signed to Mrs. Scott To Mrs. Ann (Ker) Scott. Concerning a visit from her grandson, Ralph, to John Alexander Scott. Gift of William S. Pforzheimer.	1856 March 24
b. 1	Autograph letter signed with initial to Mrs. Henry Siddons. 1833 March 30, London. Accompanied by a typewritten copy. Purchased with the Library Associates Fund, 1946.	1833 March 30
b. 1	2 Autograph letters signed to Sarah Siddons 1814 October 18, Seaham. No date, no place. The undated letter is accompanied by a poem to Mrs. Siddons on the death of her son. Accompanied by typescripts. Purchased with the Library Associates Fund, 1946.	1814 October 18, [n.d.]
b. 1	Autograph note signed in French about Madame Recamier Gift, through the Library Associates, of John Seymour Thacher, 1937, of the Fogg Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts.	1841 January 22

Other Related Papers , 1804-1927*6 folders.*

Arranged alphabetically by author.

b. 1	Byron, Catherine Gordon: 2 Autograph letters signed to Miss Abercromby Purchased from Maggs on the Mainwaring Fund, 1951.	1804, 1808
b. 1	Guiccioli, countess Teresa: Autograph note signed to Mr. Ridgway Gift, through the Library Associates, of John Seymour Thacher, 1927, of the Fogg Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts.	[1870?]
b. 1	Hodgson, James W.: Autograph letter signed to John S. Thacher Peterborough, England. Gift, through the Library Associates, of John Seymour Thacher, 1927, of the Fogg Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts.	1927 June 28
b. 1	Hodgson, Mrs. Blanche: Autograph letter signed to John S. Thacher Berkhamsted, Hertshire. Gift, through the Library Associates, of John Seymour Thacher, 1927, of the Fogg Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts.	[1927] July 31
b. 1	Leigh, Augusta: 18 autograph letters signed to Francis Hodgson More than 80p. Accompanied by list. Gift, through the Library Associates, of John Seymour Thacher, 1927, of the Fogg Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts.	[1814]-[1824]

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Authors, English -- 19th century -- Archives
English literature -- 19th century
English poetry -- 19th century
Romanticism -- Great Britain

Occupations

Authors

Names

Byron, Anne Isabella Milbanke Byron, Baroness,
1792-1860
Byron, Catherine Gordon, 1764?-1811
Byron, George Gordon Byron, Baron, 1788-1824
Hodgson, Francis, 1781-1852
Leigh, Augusta, 1784-1851
Murray, John, 1778-1843
Rogers, Samuel, 1763-1855