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1780–1832

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A Romantics Chronology, 1780–1832

Martin Garrett

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Preface

Between 2 and 9 May 1814 the annual Royal Academy exhibition opened, Louis XVIII arrived in Paris and Napoleon on Elba, Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin met Percy Bysshe Shelley for either the first or the second time, Byron saw Kean as Iago at Drury Lane, and *Mansfield Park* was published. One of the main purposes of a chronology is to reveal juxtapositions, connections, possible links. It cannot, given the immense amount of material available for the years 1780–1832, be very detailed. But it should, I hope, provide readers with some leads to pursue.

The choice of opening and closing date is inevitably somewhat arbitrary, but in the early 1780s writers including Crabbe, Wollstonecraft and Burns are active, and in 1832 Scott and Goethe die and the Reform Act passes into law. At the beginning such representatives of an older generation as Samuel Johnson are still writing, and in the late 1820s and early 1830s many people usually thought of as Victorians are starting their careers. In 1832 Elizabeth Barrett is twenty-six, Alfred Tennyson twenty-three, Charles Dickens twenty.

The chronology focuses in particular detail on the life and works of Austen, Blake, Burns, Byron, Coleridge, Hazlitt, Hemans, Keats, Charles and Mary Lamb, Landon, Scott, Mary and Percy Bysshe Shelley, Turner, Wollstonecraft and William and Dorothy Wordsworth. Beyond this group there are varying levels of coverage of other writers, painters, dramatists, actors and composers of the period in Britain, and of relevant political, religious, military, scientific and industrial developments. Material from other countries is included either where it has special bearing on Britain or where it illustrates the more general climate of the time: what, sometimes surprisingly, coincides with what. For both these reasons there is a fair amount on the French Revolution, the Napoleonic wars, and German and French Romanticism. Perceived Romanticism is not a necessary qualification for inclusion. Different spheres and ideas overlap, integrate or collide, and figures traditionally seen as non- or anti-Romantic (Austen, for instance) may of course be influenced by or influence those who are normally considered Romantic.

The format is simple. Events that can be assigned to a particular day are followed, at the end of the month, by material datable only by month rather than day. Some events and publications are gathered, similarly, at the end of the relevant year. Sometimes a sequence of events or of responses – journeys, reactions to Waterloo and Peterloo – are collected together rather than listed strictly chronologically.

People's full names and dates are given when they are first mentioned. Usually first name or initials as well as surname continue in use where there are two or more people with the same surname, for instance Sir Joshua and John Hamilton Reynolds, John Constable the painter and Archibald Constable the publisher. There are occasional exceptions to this rule: for example it seems unnecessary, in the light of just a few occurrences of John Scott of *The London Magazine*, always to use Sir Walter Scott's full name.

MARTIN GARRETT

General Editor's Preface

Most biographies are ill-adapted to serve as works of reference – not surprisingly so, since the biographer is likely to regard his function as the devising of a continuous and readable narrative, with excursions into interpretation and speculation, rather than a bald recital of facts. There are times, however, when anyone reading for business or pleasure needs to check a point quickly or to obtain a rapid overview of part of an author's life or career; and at such moments turning over the pages of a biography can be a time-consuming and frustrating occupation. The present series of volumes aims at providing a means whereby the chronological facts of an author's life and career, rather than needing to be prised out of the narrative in which they are (if they appear at all) securely embedded, can be seen at a glance. Moreover, whereas biographies are often, and quite understandably, vague over matters of fact (since it makes for tediousness to be forever enumerating details of dates and places), a chronology can be precise whenever it is possible to be precise.

Thanks to the survival, sometimes in very large quantities, of letters, diaries, notebooks and other documents, as well as to thoroughly researched biographies and bibliographies, this material now exists in abundance for many major authors. In the case of, for example, Dickens, we can often ascertain what he was doing in each month and week, and almost on each day, of his prodigiously active working life; and the student of, say, *David Copperfield* is likely to find it fascinating as well as useful to know just when Dickens was at work on each part of that novel, what other literary enterprises he was engaged in at the same time, whom he was meeting, what places he was visiting, and what were the relevant circumstances of his personal and professional life. Such a chronology is not, of course, a substitute for a biography; but its arrangement, in combination with its index, makes it a much more convenient tool for this kind of purpose; and it may be acceptable as a form of 'alternative' biography, with its own distinctive advantages as well as its obvious limitations.

Information not readily assignable to a specific month or day is given as a general note under the relevant year or month. Each

volume also contains a bibliography of the principal sources of information. In the chronology itself, the sources of many of the more specific items, including quotations, are identified in order that the reader who wishes to do so may consult the original contexts.

NORMAN PAGE

Chronology

1780

January

- 22 Antonio Canova (1757–1822) sets off to see Naples, Pompeii, Herculaneum and Paestum. In December he returns to Rome, where he spends much of his career.

February

- 22 *The Belle's Stratagem* by Hannah Cowley (1743–1809) opens at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.

April

Late this month George Crabbe (1754–1832) comes to London, moving into lodgings on 24.

- 27 Marie-Joseph du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette (1757–1834), arrives in Boston as part of the French expedition to aid the rebels in the American War of Independence or Revolution, which began in 1775. He leaves for France on 23 December 1781. Foundation, by John Cartwright (1740–1824) and others, of the Society for Constitutional Information. This year Cartwright publishes *The Legislative Rights*, expanding *Take Your Choice!* (1778).

May

- 12 British forces capture Charleston. They hold it until 13 December 1782.
- 31 Last performance at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, by Mary Robinson (1758–1800), famous as 'Perdita' since playing this role in *The Winter's Tale* in 1779. Between June and December she is the lover of George, Prince of Wales (1762–1830; later George IV); on 5 September 1781 she accepts £5,000 and a pension for returning the Prince's letters. At the height of fashion and notoriety, she is painted in 1781–2 by Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723–92), Thomas Gainsborough (1727–88) and George Romney (1734–1802).

June

- 2 Lord George Gordon (1751–93) presents a petition, with 45,000 signatures, against the Catholic Relief Act of 1778. An immense

crowd accompanies him to the House of Commons; the anti-Catholic ‘Gordon riots’ continue until 8. About 700 people are killed and much damage is done to property. About thirty rioters are executed and many more are transported or sent as soldiers to Africa. According to Alexander Gilchrist’s 1863 *Life of William Blake*, William Blake (1757–1827) is among the rioters. Crabbe witnesses the burning of Newgate on 7. *A Plain and Succinct Narrative ...* by Thomas Holcroft (1745–1809) is published soon after the events. Gordon is charged with treason and acquitted in February 1781.

- 19 William Beckford (1760–1844) sets off on his Grand Tour, travelling via the Netherlands and Germany to Venice, which he reaches in August. He proceeds to Lucca (16 September), Florence (October), Rome (29 October) and Naples, where he stays in November and early December with his cousin Sir William Hamilton (1731–1803), British Envoy Extraordinary since 1764. Beckford returns to Venice in December and stays in Paris before arriving in England on 14 April 1781.

July

John Nichols publishes, at the author’s expense, Crabbe’s *The Candidate: a Poetical Epistle to the Authors of the Monthly Review*.

August

- 5 *The Chapter of Accidents* by Sophia Lee (1750–1824) opens at the Haymarket Theatre.
- 29 Birth of Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780–1867) at Montauban.

September

About now William Blake, Thomas Stothard (1755–1834) and several fellow artists, sketching by the River Medway, are detained for some time as suspected spies.

- 11 William Wilberforce (1759–1833) is elected MP for Hull.
- 12 Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751–1816) is elected MP for Stafford.
- 25 Birth in Dublin of Charles Robert Maturin (1780–1824).

November

- 11 First meeting of Tarbolton Bachelors' Club, established by Robert Burns (1759–96) and his brother Gilbert (1760–1827).
- 29 Empress Maria Theresia of Austria dies. Her son Joseph II, Holy Roman Emperor since 1765, now becomes ruler of the Habsburg lands until his death in 1790.

December

- 14 Death in London of Charles Ignatius Sancho (1729?–80). *Letters of the Late Ignatius Sancho, an African* is published in 1782.
- 26 Mary Fairfax, later Mary Somerville (1780–1872) is born in Jedburgh.
- 29 First performance of the pantomime *Harlequin Freemason*, by Charles Dibdin (1745–1814), at Covent Garden. It plays 52 times this season.

Sophia Lee and her sisters Charlotte (c.1748–?) and Harriet (1757/8–1851) found their school in Bath, which continues until 1803.

Joseph Priestley (1733–1804), who moved to Birmingham a few months ago, agrees to become senior minister of the Unitarian New Meeting.

1781**January**

- 1 Official opening of the Iron Bridge, built by Abraham Darby III (1750–91), near Coalbrookdale in Shropshire. Ironbridge develops by the bridge.
- 29 First performance of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's (1756–91) opera *Idomeneo, re di Creta*, in Munich.

Early in the year Nourse publishes the sixth and seventh volumes of *The History of England* by Catharine Macaulay (1731–91). The eighth and final volume comes out early in 1783.

February

- 13 Philippe Jacques de Louthembourg (1740–1812) is elected to the Royal Academy. On 26 his spectacular 'Eidophusikon, or Representation of Nature', opens at his house off Leicester

Square. The first season runs until May, the second from December this year to May 1782. It re-opens at Exeter Change at the end of January 1786.

- 15 Death of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729–81).
- 28 Foundation of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester.

Thomas Paine (1737–1809), who has lived in America since 1774 and been actively engaged in the Revolution, is a member of a fund-raising mission to Paris, returning to America in August. His *Letter to the Abbé Raynal, on the Affairs of North America*, appears in 1782.

March

- 1 Publication, by Strahan and by Cadell, of volumes two and three of Edward Gibbon's (1737–94) *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.
- 6 Erasmus Darwin (1731–1802) marries his second wife, Elizabeth Chandos Pole (1747–1832). Following a visit to London they settle, in May, at Radburn Hall near Derby. Darwin practises medicine in the city, as in Lichfield since 1756. In 1783 the family moves into Derby. Darwin remains in contact with other members of the Lunar Society of Birmingham (established in about 1765, particularly flourishing in the 1780s); they include Matthew Boulton (1728–1809) and his business partner James Watt (1736–1819), Priestley, Richard Lovell Edgeworth (1744–1817), Thomas Day (1748–89) and Josiah Wedgwood (1730–95).
- 13 William Herschel (1738–1822) discovers the planet later called Uranus. From August 1782, at Datchet, he and his sister Caroline (1750–1848) survey the sky, discovering comets and over two thousand nebulae.

Edmund Burke (1729/30–97) becomes Crabbe's patron in response to his appeal in a letter sent in February or March. As a result James Dodsley publishes Crabbe's *The Library* on 24 July.

April

This spring the third volume of a projected four in *The History of English Poetry*, by Thomas Warton (1728–90) is published by Dodsley and others.

June

The four-volume edition of *The Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets; with Critical Observations on Their Works* by Samuel Johnson (1709–84) is published early this month by a consortium including Thomas Davies and Rivington and Sons.

July

4 Burns is initiated as a freemason at St David's Lodge, Tarbolton.

August

23 Death of John Eccles, fiancé of Mary Hays (1759–1843). Their parents long opposed the match. She compiles a manuscript 'Love Letters Book' from her correspondence with Eccles.

September

Joseph Johnson's (1738–1809) first edition of *Hymns in Prose for Children* by Anna Laetitia Barbauld (1743–1825). She and her husband run a school for boys at Palgrave in Suffolk between 1774 and 1785.

October

5 Sudden death of Rev. John Coleridge (1719–81), father of Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834).

13 Holcroft's *Duplicity* is performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.

19 British forces surrender to American and French at Yorktown after the last major battle of the war.

Mary Robinson visits Paris, where she meets Queen Marie-Antoinette. This autumn Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–97) comes back to London from her post as a companion in Bath to be with her sick mother, who dies in April 1782.

November

c.29–30 The crew of the British ship *Zong*, under sail in the Caribbean, kills about 140 slaves by throwing them overboard. The owners are able to claim insurance on them, although the insurers challenge this in court in 1783. The incident later informs the growing abolitionist movement.

December

21 Crabbe is ordained deacon. He is ordained priest on 4 August 1782. He serves briefly as curate at Aldeburgh in 1782.

Late in the month Beckford gives a party at Fonthill Splendens house, with scenery and illuminations by Loutherbouurg – an influence on *Vathek*.

This year *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, by Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) is published in Riga.

Canova works on *Theseus and the Minotaur* between 1781 and 1783.

1782

January

1 Death in Paddington of Johann Christian Bach (1735–82), ‘the London Bach’.

13 First performance, in Mannheim, of *Die Räuber* by Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805). The first English version, based on Friedel and de Bonneville’s *Les Voleurs* (1785), is by Alexander Tytler (G.G. and J. Robinson, 1792 and later editions). The play is translated and adapted for private performance in August 1798 at Brandenburg House, Fulham, by Elizabeth (Berkeley Craven), Markgräfin of Brandenburg-Ansbach (1750–1828); the first public performance in England is of Joseph Holman’s version, *The Red-Cross Knights*, at the Haymarket on 21 August 1799.

February

5 Edmond Malone (1741–1812) is elected to Samuel Johnson’s Literary Club. The members already include Sir Joshua Reynolds, Thomas Percy (1729–1811), Burke, Sheridan, James Boswell (1740–95), Charles James Fox (1749–1806), Gibbon, Joseph Warton (1722–1800) and Sir Joseph Banks (1743–1820).

March

20 Lord North (Frederick North, 1732–92) resigns as Prime Minister in the political aftermath of the defeat at Yorktown. The new ministry, led by Charles Watson-Wentworth, Marquess of Rockingham (1730–82), includes Fox as Secretary of State for the Northern Department and Sheridan as his Under-Secretary.

23 John Cartwright dates his pamphlet *Give Us Our Rights!*

23 Anonymous publication in Paris of *Les Liaisons dangereuses* by Pierre Choderlos de Laclos (1741–1803).

Poems by William Cowper [1731–1800], of *the Inner Temple, Esq.* is published by Joseph Johnson.

April

29 The annual Royal Academy exhibition opens. It includes *The Nightmare* (1781) by Henry Fuseli (Heinrich Füssli, 1741–1825). Fuseli returned to London in 1779 having studied and worked in Rome since 1770. He becomes associated in the 1780s with the circle of the publisher Joseph Johnson. John Wolcot (1738–1819), as ‘Peter Pindar’, responds to the exhibition in *Lyric Odes to the Royal Academicians, for MDCCLXXXII* (published by Kearsley & Forster). He produces sequels in 1783 and 1785 and *Farewell Odes, for the Year 1786*. Among his other popular works is *The Lousiad* (1786).

Romney paints Emma Hart (1765–1815; born Emma Lyon) – the first of his series of portraits of her between now and 1791.

May

In the House of Commons William Pitt (1759–1806) proposes parliamentary reform including the abolition of rotten boroughs. The motion is defeated, as is his similar one of 7 May 1783.

12 Crabbe is appointed domestic chaplain to the Duke of Rutland. From 1783 he also holds livings at Frome St Quintin and Evershot, which are exchanged for West Allington in Lincolnshire and Muston in Leicestershire in January 1789. In addition he is curate at Stathern from May 1785.

16 Birth of John Sell Cotman (1782–1842) in Norwich. He spends much of his life in Norfolk but lives in London in 1798–1806; his *Specimens of Norman and Gothic Architecture, in the County of Norfolk* is published in 1817 and *A Series of Etchings Illustrative of the Architectural Antiquities of Norfolk* in 1818.

Beckford sets off again for Italy, reaching Padua on about 11 June. He is in Naples between 8 July and 10 September and returns to England in November.

June

12 Publication of Fanny Burney’s (1752–1840) *Cecilia, or Memoirs of an Heiress*, in five volumes. 2,000 copies are issued and she

is given £250 for the copyright. Her sales potential has been established by several editions of *Evelina* (1778); there are twelve more between 1783 and 1829.

July

- 1 Rockingham dies. He is succeeded on 4 by William Petty, Earl of Shelburne (1737–1805), with Pitt, from 10, as Chancellor of the Exchequer.
- 16 First performance of Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at Theater an der Burg in Vienna.

August

- 18 Blake marries Catherine Boucher (1762–1831) at St Mary's Church, Battersea. Later she works with him on the production of his illuminated books. Probably they move at once into lodgings at 23 Green Street, Soho; from there they go to 27 Broad Street in late 1784 and to 28 Poland Street in autumn 1785. At Broad Street Blake works briefly in a printing partnership with James Parker.

September

- 15 First performance, at the Hermitage in St Petersburg, of *Il barbiere di Siviglia, ovvero La precauzione inutile*, after Beaumarchais, by Giovanni Paisiello (1740–1816).
- 22 Schiller deserts from the army of the Duke of Württemberg, who has ordered him to end his literary activities. He goes into hiding and exile for a time, living in Thuringia between late 1782 and summer 1783, but the Duke does not, in the event, proceed against him.

Coleridge starts as a pupil at Christ's Hospital (until 7 September 1790). Charles Lamb (1775–1834) begins there on 9 October 1782 and leaves in 1791. Subsequently Leigh Hunt will also be a pupil here between 24 November 1791 and 1799. Memories of and references to the school feature in works including Coleridge's 'Frost at Midnight' (1798), Lamb's essays 'Recollections of Christ's Hospital' (1813) and 'Christ's Hospital Five-and-Thirty Years Ago' (1820), and Hunt's poem 'Christ's Hospital' in his *Juvenilia; or, a Collection of Poems* (1801).

October

- 10 Sarah Siddons (1755–1831), after a period acting in Bath, appears at Drury Lane in the title role of Thomas Southerne's *Isabella; or, The Fatal Marriage*. Her fame is established during the 1782–3 season. In 1783 she is appointed 'reading preceptress' to the daughters of King George III and Queen Charlotte.

November

- 14 Cowper's 'The Diverting History of John Gilpin' appears, anonymously, in *The Public Advertiser*. It is reprinted with *The Task* in 1785.
- 30 Preliminary Articles of Peace are signed by Britain and the United States.

December

- 1 William Jones (1746–94) issues his translation of *The Moallakát, or Seven Arabian Poems Which were suspended on the Temple at Mecca*.

Priestley's *Essay on the Corruptions of Christianity* is published in two volumes by Joseph Johnson.

Confessions, by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78) is published in Geneva in 1782 and (the second part) 1788. An English translation of the first part is published by Bew in 1783 and of the second by Bew and G.G. and J. Robinson in 1790.

Richmond Blamire publishes William Gilpin's (1724–1804) *Observations on the River Wye, and Several Parts of South Wales, &c. Relative Chiefly to Picturesque Beauty*. Gilpin produces further volumes of *Observations* on Cumberland and Westmorland (1786), the Scottish Highlands (1789), western England and the Isle of Wight (1798), Hampshire, Sussex and Kent (1804) and eastern England and North Wales (1809), and *Remarks on the New Forest* (1791).

This year the second volume of *A General History of Music from the Earliest Ages to the Present Period*, by Dr Charles Burney (1726–1814), is published. The first came out in 1776 and the third and fourth follow in 1789.

Dodsley publishes Thomas Warton's *An Inquiry into the Authenticity of the Poems Attributed to Thomas Rowley* – part of the debate over the work of Thomas Chatterton. Dodsley also brings out the second volume of *An Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope* by Joseph Warton;

the first appeared in 1756. Warton's edition of Pope is published by a consortium including Joseph Johnson and G.G. and J. Robinson in 1797.

In about 1782–3 Joseph Wright of Derby (1734–97) paints *Arkwright's Cotton Mills by Night*.

1783

January

- 17 Henry Cort (1740–1800) patents his grooved rolling process. In February 1784 he patents another important development in the manufacture of iron, the puddling furnace.
- 23 Henri Beyle (1783–1842), who writes most of his work as Stendhal from 1817, is born in Grenoble. He leaves for Paris in October 1799.

February

- 6 Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (1716–83) dies at Hampton Court.
- 24 Shelburne resigns. Fox and North form a coalition, with William Cavendish Bentinck, Duke of Portland (1738–1809) as Prime Minister from 2 April. Sheridan is joint Under-Secretary to the Treasury.
- 25 Cowley's *A Bold Stroke for a Husband* is at Covent Garden.

March

By early March Erasmus Darwin has founded the Derby Philosophical Society.

- 29 Foundation of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, replacing the earlier Philosophical Society of Edinburgh.

April

- 3 Birth of Washington Irving (1783–1859) in New York.
- 15 Beckford decides, under family pressure, not to go ahead with publication of *Dreams, Waking Thoughts and Incidents*. Most of the five hundred copies printed by Joseph Johnson are destroyed.

Burns makes the first entry in the commonplace book which he keeps until October 1785. It includes versions of 'Green grow the

rashes' (c. August 1784) and 'Death and Dying Words of Poor Mailie' (June 1785; first written 1782).

This spring Jane Austen (1775–1817) and her sister Cassandra (1773–1845) attend Mrs Ann Cawley's boarding school in Oxford. In the summer the school moves to Southampton. Having fallen ill during a typhus outbreak in September the Austens are taken home to Steventon in Hampshire.

May

23 Dodsley publishes Crabbe's *The Village*. It includes six lines by Samuel Johnson, whom Crabbe met in 1782 through Sir Joshua Reynolds and Burke.

June

7 In London, Strahan, Cadell & Creech publish *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, in two volumes, by Hugh Blair (1718–1800). Publication in Edinburgh follows on 5 July. Blair first lectured in Edinburgh in 1759 and became Regius Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres in 1762.

July

20 First performance of Schiller's *Die Verschwörung des Fiesco zu Genua* in Bonn. A translation by George Noehden and Sir John Stoddart, *Fiesco; or the Genoese Conspiracy*, is published by Joseph Johnson in 1796.

This month Hannah More (1745–1833) begins circulating her poem *The Bas Bleu, or, Conversation* (published 1786), among her friends. She is one of the younger members of the 'Bluestocking' circle which flourishes from the 1750s to the 1790s, prominent in which are Elizabeth Montagu (1718–1800), Frances Boscawen (1719–1805), Elizabeth Vesey (c.1715–91) and Elizabeth Carter (1717–1806).

August

More visits Horace Walpole (1717–97) at Strawberry Hill.

September

3 Peace of Versailles, by which Britain recognizes American independence. Benjamin Franklin (1706–90), American minister in France since 1778, is one of the signatories.

- 7 George, Prince of Wales visits BRIGHTHELMSTONE (Brighton) for the first time. Here he rents a farmhouse in 1786, expanded from 1787 into the Marine Pavilion.
- 25 Sir William Jones (knighted on 20 March this year) arrives in Calcutta to take up his post as a judge in the Supreme Court of Bengal.
- 30 Drury Lane debut of John Philip Kemble (1757–1823), Siddons's brother, as Hamlet.

November

- 17 Blair is elected as a fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.
- 21 First manned flight, in a Montgolfier hot-air balloon, at Versailles.

Walter Scott (1771–1832) enters Edinburgh University (until 1786). His schooling was at Edinburgh High School (1779–83) and Kelso Grammar School (1783), where his fellow pupil was James Ballantyne (1772–1833), later his printer, editor and close adviser. Scott spends a second period at the university in 1789–92.

December

- 15 Crabbe marries Sarah Elmy (1751–1813).
- 17 Fox's East India Bill is defeated in the House of Lords. On 18 the King dismisses the Fox–North coalition and on 19 Pitt takes office as Prime Minister, serving until 14 March 1801.
- 23 George Washington (1732–99) resigns as commander-in-chief of the American or Continental army.

Probably this month Sir William Jones starts work on 'A Hymn to Camdeo', published in London in *A Discourse on the Institution of a Society* in 1784. This is the first of nine such hymns written between now and 1788.

Blake's *Poetical Sketches* ('By W.B.') is printed. The poems were written mainly in the 1770s. Some he sings at the salon of Harriet Mathew, which he attends in about 1782–4; her husband Rev. A.S. Mathew pays for the printing with John Flaxman (1755–1826). Publication in Riga of Kant's *Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik*. John Richardson's translation *Prolegomena to Every Future Metaphysic* is published in London by Simpkin & Marshall in 1819.

Sophia Lee's *The Recess, or, A Tale of Other Times* is published in three parts by Cadell in 1783–5.

Day's *The History of Sandford and Merton* is published by J. Stockdale in three parts (1783, 1786, 1789).

The *Tragedie* of Vittorio Alfieri (1749–1803) are published in five volumes between 1783 and 1789.

1784

January

Early this month Wollstonecraft rescues her sister Eliza Bishop, who she feels will never recover from post-natal depression while she continues to live with her husband. For a time they go into hiding in Hackney. Later in the year, with Wollstonecraft's friend Fanny Blood and her other sister Everina Wollstonecraft, they attempt to set up a school in Islington. They go on to start one successfully in Newington Green.

- 11 Schiller's *Kabale und Liebe: Ein bürgerliches Trauerspiel* opens in Mannheim. It is translated by Matthew Gregory Lewis (1775–1818) as *The Minister: a Tragedy in Five Acts* (Bell, 1797). Lewis's version opens at Covent Garden on 4 May 1803 as *The Harper's Daughter; or, Love and Ambition*.
- 23 More, Walpole, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Carter, Fanny Burney and Charles Burney are together.

February

- 28 John Wesley (1703–91), while maintaining continued membership of the Church of England, formalizes 'the Conference of the People called Methodists' by deed of declaration in Chancery. His followers establish a more fully separate church in 1795.

March

- 11 Treaty of Mangalore between Tipu Sultan (1750–99) of Mysore and the East India Company, ending the war of 1780–4. Following the death of his father on 13 February, Burns moves with his brother Gilbert and mother to Mossiel farm, near Mauchline. He meets Jean Armour (1765–1834), with whom in March or April 1786 he contracts a form of marriage.

April

- 7 Wilberforce is elected as MP for Yorkshire, serving until 1812.
- 26 *Les Danaïdes*, by Antonio Salieri (1750–1825) is given at the Paris Opéra.
- 28 Watt patents parallel motion and several other mechanisms.

May

- 15 Publication of *Elegiac Sonnets, and Other Essays* by Charlotte Smith (1749–1806).
- 22 Siddons plays in Edinburgh for the first time, as Belvidera in Otway's *Venice Preserved*. This season the Royal Academy exhibition includes Sir Joshua Reynolds's portrait of Siddons as 'The Tragic Muse'. In 1786 the Academy will show 'Mrs Jordan in the Character of the Comic Muse' by John Hoppner (1758–1810). (Hoppner first exhibited here in 1780.)

June

- 30 Boswell and Samuel Johnson meet for the last time.

July

- 6 *The Mogul Tale*, a farce by Elizabeth Inchbald (1753–1821), is at the Haymarket.
- 23 Hester Thrale (1741–1821) marries, as her second husband, Gabriel Mario Piozzi (1740–1809). They land at Calais on 7 September and travel extensively in Europe, returning to London on 10 March 1787; her *Observations and Reflections made in the Course of a Journey through France, Italy, and Germany* appears in June 1789.
- 31 Death in Paris of Denis Diderot (1713–84).
Late this month Gainsborough, after disputes with the Royal Academy about the hanging of his paintings, opens his first exhibition at Schomberg House, Pall Mall.

August

- 2–3 A mail coach, financed by John Palmer (1742–1818), reaches London from Bristol in sixteen hours. Pitt agrees to the use of Palmer's efficient new system on other routes.
- 13 Pitt's East India Act is passed. The Board of Control gains in authority over the East India Company.

More stays with Montagu at Sandford Priory, Berkshire.
Lafayette visits the United States between August and December.

October

19 Birth of (James Henry) Leigh Hunt (1784–1859).
Charlotte Smith meets William Hayley (1745–1820).
Jacques-Louis David (1748–1825) goes to Rome, where he completes and displays *The Oath of the Horatii* (1785).

December

- 13 Death of Samuel Johnson at 8 Bolt Court in London. He is buried in Westminster Abbey on 20. Malone's obituary of Johnson is in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for December. A monument in St Paul's Cathedral is put up in 1796.
- 14 Premiere at the Haymarket of *The Follies of a Day*, Holcroft's adaptation of Beaumarchais' *La Folle journée, ou Le Mariage de Figaro*, which was first performed in Paris on 27 April. (Holcroft repeatedly attended performances at the Théâtre de l'Odéon in order to memorize it.) There are 28 performances of *The Follies* this season and many subsequently. Holcroft plays Figaro on the opening night.

Rumours circulate about Beckford's homosexual relationship with William Courtenay, eight years his junior and from a powerful family. Social ostracism results; Beckford and his wife Lady Margaret (Gordon) (c.1760–86) retreat to Switzerland in July 1785. She dies there and he returns to England in January 1787.

Blake writes the work later known as *An Island in the Moon* probably in 1784–5.

Burns writes 'Address to the Unco Guid, or the Rigidly Righteous' in about 1784–6.

Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit, by Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803), is published in Riga and Hamburg between 1784 and 1791. A translation by T. Churchill, *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man*, is published by Joseph Johnson in 1800.

Joanna Baillie (1762–1851) comes from Scotland to live with her brother at Windmill Street, London, until 1791. She lives in Colchester before moving to Hampstead in 1798.

1785

January

- 1 *The Daily Universal Register* starts publication. On 1 January 1788 it becomes *The Times*.
- 7 Jean-Pierre Blanchard (1753–1809) and John Jeffries (1745–1819) cross the English Channel by hydrogen balloon.
By early this year Sir William Jones has written 'The Enchanted Fruit; or, The Hindu Wife'. It is published in the *Asiatick Miscellany* in 1786.
Early this year Burns writes 'Holy Willie's Prayer'.

February

- 2 Siddons's London debut at Drury Lane as Lady Macbeth, one of her most popular roles.
- 5 First number of *The Lounger*, edited and mostly written by Henry Mackenzie (1745–1831). The last number appears on 5 January 1787.
- 8 Charles Dibdin's *Liberty Hall; or, The Test of Good Fellowship* opens at Drury Lane.

March

- 7 Birth in Milan of Alessandro Manzoni (1785–1873).
- 24 Sir William Jones delivers 'On the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India' to the Asiatick Society of Bengal, which he founded on 15 January 1784. It is published in *Asiatick Researches* in 1788.

April

- 2 *La finta principessa* by Luigi Cherubini (1760–1842) is performed at the King's Theatre. Cherubini works in London between 1784 and 1786, when his *Giulio Sabino* opens at the same theatre.
- 11 An exhibition of 25 paintings by Wright of Derby opens at Robins's Rooms, Covent Garden, continuing until June.
- 14 William Whitehead (1715–85), Poet Laureate since 1757, dies. His successor from 1785 to 1790 is Thomas Warton, who this year also becomes Camden Professor of ancient history at Oxford and publishes his edition of Milton's *Poems upon Several Occasions* (Dodsley; revised edition 1791).

- 18 Another of Pitt's parliamentary reform bills is defeated in the House of Commons.
- 28 Blake's 'The Bard from Gray' is one of his four drawings in this year's Royal Academy exhibition. Two others were in the 1784 show.
- Rev. Edmund Cartwright (1743–1823) patents his power loom.
- Schiller lives in Leipzig until July 1787. Here he writes 'An die Freude' in 1786.

June

Poems, on Several Occasions by Ann Yearsley (1753–1806), known sometimes as 'the Bristol Milkwoman', is published by a subscription organized by More. Yearsley and More quarrel over how the profits should be handled: More and Elizabeth Montagu set up a trust for Yearsley but she insists on being given the whole sum immediately. With some help from other patrons she publishes *Poems, on Various Subjects* in 1787.

July

- 24 Franklin arrives in Southampton on his way back to America from France. He reaches Philadelphia on 14 September. During the voyage he works on the Maritime Observations included in his *Philosophical and Miscellaneous Papers* of 1787. His successor in Paris, until October 1789, is Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826).

By this month, in Colchester, William Keymer publishes Reeve's *The Progress of Romance Through Times, Countries, and Manners*.

Jane and Cassandra Austen start at Mrs Latourelle's Ladies' Boarding School, Reading. They are pupils here until December 1786.

August

Early this month Cowper's *The Task: a Poem in Six Books* is published by Joseph Johnson.

- 4 Inchbald's *I'll Tell You What* opens at the Haymarket.
- 5 Thomas De Quincey (1785–1859) is born in Manchester.

September

Publication in Florence of *The Florence Miscellany*, with a preface by Piozzi and poems by her, Robert Merry and other 'Della Crusicans'.

The group is satirized by William Gifford (1756–1826) in *The Baviad* (1791) and *The Maeviad* (1795).

October

- 1 Charles Dilly publishes Boswell's *The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides, with Samuel Johnson*. A second edition follows on 22 December.
- 18 Debut at Drury Lane of Dorothy Jordan (1761–1816) as Peggy in Garrick's *The Country Girl*. She plays many roles here in seasons between 1785–6 and 1808–9. Scandal is generated from 1790 by her relationship with the Duke of Clarence (later William IV, 1765–1837), with whom she has ten children between 1794 and 1807.
- 18 Franklin becomes President of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania until 14 October 1788.
- 18 Thomas Love Peacock (1785–1866) is born in Dorset.

November

- 10 First performance at Covent Garden of Holcroft's *The Cholerick Fathers*.
 - 13 Birth, as Caroline Ponsonby, of Lady Caroline Lamb (1785–1828). Wollstonecraft goes to Lisbon to join Fanny Blood, who dies in childbirth.
- Burns writes 'To a Mouse, On turning her up in her Nest, with the Plough, November, 1785'. It is published in his 1786 *Poems*. Probably also this autumn he writes 'Love and Liberty – A Cantata', which is published in 1799 as 'The Jolly Beggars; or Tatterdemallions. A Cantata'.

December

- 15 George, Prince of Wales secretly marries Maria Fitzherbert (1756–1837).
- In late 1785 Burns writes 'To a Louse, On seeing one on a Lady's Bonnet', and in late 1785 or early 1786 'The Cotter's Saturday Night'. Both pieces are published in his 1786 *Poems*.
- This year R. Faulder publishes William Paley's (1743–1805) *The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy*. It is a prescribed part of the Cambridge University syllabus from 1787.

1786

January

In January or February Wollstonecraft closes the school at Newington Green.

February

2 Sir William Jones gives 'The Third Anniversary Discourse, on the Hindus', to the Asiatick Society of Bengal. He identifies the 'affinity' of Sanskrit with Greek and Latin and posits the existence of 'some common source'. The lecture is published in the first volume of *Asiatick Researches* (1788).

Paine's *Dissertation on Government; the Affairs of the Bank; and Paper Money* defends the Bank of North America.

March

25 Piozzi's *Anecdotes of the Late Samuel Johnson* is published by Cadell. Her *Letters to and from the Late Samuel Johnson* comes out on 8 March 1788.

April

26 Hart arrives in Naples to live with Hamilton. Her 'Attitudes' – performances suggestive of classical scenes and figures – are much celebrated and depicted, most famously in Goethe's *Reise* (see September). Hart and Hamilton marry in London on 6 September 1791.

'Haymakers and Reapers' by George Stubbs (1724–1806) is at the Royal Academy.

Hays's 'The Hermit: An Oriental Tale' is in *The Universal Magazine* for April and May.

May

1 Opening performance of Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* at the Theater an der Burg in Vienna.

Cadell publishes Charlotte Smith's anonymous two-volume translation *Manon Lescaut, or the Fatal Attachment*, from the 1753 text of the Abbé Prévost's novel.