

Lord Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*: Scoping a Twenty-First-Century Digital Book History Resource

David McClay

There is a growing awareness of the potential capacity of publishing archives to provide an accurate and forensic level of detail to all aspects of the writing, production, sales and reception of books and texts. This level and range of detail which archival sources can supply often means a greater accuracy, nuance, and clarity can be provided to the publishing story, to the benefit of not only book and publishing history, but wider bibliographic, biographic, and historic studies. Whilst a significant amount of research in these areas has been undertaken with publishing archives, it has had restricted impact and exposure due to the limited access and availability of the print and digital formats in which it has appeared. However, current developments in digital presentation and platforms offers the opportunity to unite current print and digital resources in a more unified way, whilst also providing a basis to significantly expand with new research and materials. This more unified approach broadens the interdisciplinary appeal and usefulness of publishing archive resources making them relevant and useable to a modern research community and audience. This paper will use Lord Byron's poem *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. A Roumant* (1812) as an example of what publishing resources are available for constructing a detailed publishing and literary history and how the scale and type of materials requires a twenty-first-century solution to maximize the potential and use.

Introduction

This paper shall suggest that the broad and expanding field of book history requires an improving awareness and use of publishing archives. The availability, accuracy, and comprehensiveness of these resources, especially in print, has in general had limitations. Current possibilities in digital presentation offer an opportunity to reassemble existing print and digital resources into a more integrated and accessible scholarship. The extent of current resources suggests significant opportunities for expansion to include previously unknown or underused archival material in a larger and integrated digital resource.

This paper will provide a limited single case study based on one author's work; Lord Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. A Roumant (CHP)*.¹ The study's narrow subject focus excludes the poem's later cantos and is further refined by limiting the editions under review. This study will also focus on only a few specific aspects of book history, whilst making only occasional reference to the broader areas of biographical, literary, textual, and critical research which are also very well represented in publishing archives. So, rather than a comprehensive survey of all resources in archival, print, and digital forms this study will instead consider only a few and only in the interconnected areas of book production, sales, reception, and review. With such limitations it should still be possible to demonstrate the desirability of having a single digital resource for nineteenth-century book history which integrates existing and new archives, print and digital sources and interpretation.

The John Murray Archive

Publishers in the early nineteenth century were at the nexus of a literary and book network of printers, booksellers, writers, editors, readers, reviewers, and critics. The increasing commercialization and defined role of the publishing profession required a progressively comprehensive system of record generation and keeping, which has left a significant archival legacy.

This was certainly the case with the London publishing house of John Murray. Founded in 1768, by the early nineteenth century John Murray II was helping develop literary and publishing activities in increasingly professional and commercial terms. Emblematic of this wider change was the outstanding success of Byron's poetry. The immediate success of Murray's first Byron publication *CHP* in 1812 reportedly elicited from Byron the remark that "I awoke one morning and found myself famous" (Byron and Moore 2:137). The publishing story of *CHP* has also become famous with numerous popular and critical accounts, most using the John Murray Archive (JMA) in their research.

The JMA at the National Library of Scotland is one of the world's most important and extensive publishing archives. It covers the period of the Murray family's involvement with the business from 1768 to 2002. The archive's importance is partly reflected in its financial valuation (in excess of £100 million) and its UNESCO designation.² It has long been, and continues to be, a key resource for researching publishing and literary history. A survey of the archival, print, and digital resources available for the study of Byron's *CHP* from the perspective of the JMA may therefore provide a suitable vantage point in which to view current and future areas and resources for book history.

1. The original title *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, A Roumant* was used in the early editions, but was dropped when the poem extended with a third canto in 1816 and a fourth in 1818, although temporarily revived for the first edition of the whole poem in 1819.

2. The UNESCO designation refers to the inscription on the United Kingdom Memory of the World Register in 2011.

Brief Publishing History of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*

Byron wrote the first two cantos of *CHP* whilst travelling abroad. On his return to Britain he engaged his cousin Robert Charles Dallas, to whom he gifted the copyright, to secure a publisher. Initially he approached William Miller of Albemarle Street, London, who declined the work, fearing it would offend his author Lord Elgin who was maligned in it. The manuscript was then successfully submitted by Dallas to John Murray II of Fleet Street. The success of *CHP* and Murray's other publishing ventures, including a share in Walter Scott's *Marmion*, Maria Rundell's *Domestic Cookery* and his periodical the *Quarterly Review* gave him the confidence to invest in a larger, more prestigious property: 50 Albemarle Street, the premises of Miller who had earlier rejected *CHP*.

The publication of *CHP* brought immediate critical and commercial success. The standard account is that the first edition, in handsome quarto format, sold its complete run of 500 copies at 30 shillings a copy within three days of its publication on 10 March, 1812. A second octavo edition at 12 shillings followed shortly afterwards, reaching a tenth edition in 1814, after which the first two cantos were incorporated into joint publications with cantos III and IV, or in larger collected editions. St Clair's account of this publication history is perhaps the most frequently cited, possibly due to the book being available both in print and free online at Google books (586).

***CHP* Book and Publishing History: Print and Digital Resources**

There are many standard accounts of the literary and publishing history of *CHP*, notably the McGann (Byron, 1980, vol.2) and Erdman and Worrall's Garland (Byron, 1991, vol.6) text editions, which also include detailed publishing histories. These works, however, are not always easily accessible, being out of print and difficult to buy second-hand. This is also the case for other standard bibliographic works like those of Wise.

Nevertheless, there are many more easily available print accounts of the publication of *CHP* (Bone, Carpenter, Franklin, Marchand, MacCarthy and O'Connell). There also additional sources and interpretations for the review and reception of *CHP* (Erdman and Worrall, Mason, Reiman, Shattock). Further key print resources include the published letters, journals, and diaries of Byron (Marchand, Moore) and Murray (Nicholson) and others. Many of these print publications have been adapted for free online access. There are also a number of digital resources, databases, and interpretative essays about the publication history of *CHP* including *The Reading Experience Database*, *English Poetry 1579-1830: Spencer and the Tradition*, *Lord Byron and His Times* and Peter Cochran's Byron website.

These print and digital resources are only a small selection of the directly relevant material available for those interested in the publishing history of *CHP*. For the integrity, purpose, and maintenance of these individual digital resources, it would be impractical and undesirable to attempt to merge these into anything approaching a unified print publication or digital resource. However, some level of duplication and centralizing into a digital resource is surely desirable so as to

bring together many diverse and scattered resources into a single co-ordinated and easy-to-use location.

As the original material for these print and digital resources is often archival, a publishing archive might provide the focal point for such an ambitious digital book history resource. Aside from being easier to access and understand, such an archive would necessitate a reappraisal process that would provide an opportunity to confirm the factual accuracy and interpretation of original archival sources as well as identifying new material or lines of enquiry.

CHP History: Production and Sales

By highlighting some aspects of *CHP*'s production, sales, reception and review, it is intended to demonstrate that, because of the wealth of existing information and interpretation, as well as new archival material, a new unified digital approach based on original archival and published sources should be considered.

The study of book production and sales has often relied on simplified figures and acceptance of publisher's claims. However, for a more credible empirical basis for book history, a thorough examination of the publishing archive sources is required. There are, for example, some areas of *CHP* production and sales which could be more fully described with reference to the *JMA*.

One confusing detail, especially to new students of book history, is the exact publication date of a work. Whilst not always of crucial importance, it is useful for tracing the distribution and response to copies of the book as well as the general rate of sales. Exact publishing schedules also facilitate the fuller use of publishing ledgers and papers.

The date of publication of *CHP* has varied in print and digital accounts, with 1 March, 1812 (*The Reading Experience Database* [RED], Franklin 50), 3 March (Page 25) and 10 March (Nicholson xxvii, Marchand 1:325) all being given. The reason for the confusion is that Murray advertised the work for sale on 1 March, but withheld it from public sale until 10 March, with presentation copies and a subscription sale to the trade occurring within the period.³ The presentation copies have uncertain dates with most accounts identifying Lord Holland's copy from Byron on 5 March as the earliest to be sent, when Dallas claimed to have personally delivered a copy to Henry Drury on 3 March.⁴ The standard book history also reports that three days after the official publication date the complete run of 500 had been sold (Reiman 234, Dallas 222). These facts may be chal-

3. John Murray Sales Subscription book, 1812-17, National Library of Scotland (henceforth NLS) Ms.42809, ff.5-6.

4. "May I request your lordship to accept a copy of the thing which accompanies this note? [*CHP*]" Letter of Byron to Holland, 5 March, 1812 (Marchand 2.168) and "It fortunately happened that the 1st of the month fell on a Sunday, and that Lord Byron spent it at Harrow, if I recollect rightly, with his old tutor, Dr. Drury and did not return to St. James's-street till Monday evening. On Tuesday I got a copy of the Pilgrimage, and hastened with it to him" (Dallas 220).

lenged through a number of JMA sources including the sales subscription books and stock books.

In the early nineteenth century, Murray did have some direct sales to the public from his premises at Fleet Street and subsequently Albemarle Street. However, shop sales were always modest and only account for a small proportion of sales. But as these sales represented the highest profit margin to Murray, they required no trade discount. They are significant in calculating Murray's profit. Despite the increased profits from direct sales, Murray's progressively more professional approach to the publishing side of his business was matched with a decline in his direct involvement with books sales to the public, although sales to the trade were maintained.

Instead Murray, like other publishers, held sales subscription dinners for the trade. These would be held at a tavern or coffee house (normally the Anchor Tavern) where Murray would circulate books for inspection and have the representatives of the other publishers and booksellers sign their name and number of copies required. The JMA holds a large, almost complete run of subscription lists for *CHP*. Occasional mentions of the sales subscription details have appeared in print (Smiles 1:369-70).

However, there is no known published analysis of the sales subscription list for the first edition of *CHP*. The sales subscription book details Murray's sale to the trade on 5 March and details 41 subscribers for 325 copies. Individually each of these subscribers has some interest, especially the largest subscribers James Cawthorn, with 50 copies, and Longman & Co, with 25 copies, in addition to others like Miller, with 12 copies, who had earlier rejected *CHP*. Sales subscription lists are useful in helping to build up a picture of a book's distribution along with other publishing ledger material and letters.

In addition to being an important resource for broader questions over book distribution, the sales subscription list is useful in examining the claim that *CHP* sold out in three days. After all, if two thirds of the remarkable sales were to the trade, it does not mean that they each sold their stock in a few days.

The three-day sales claim can be further scrutinized with reference to Murray's stock books. These contain printing, publishing, and sales dates. The entry for the first edition of *CHP* shows the subscribed copies at the trade dinner as being only 301.⁵ The disparity between the subscription book figure can perhaps be explained in subscribers failing to follow up their intention to subscribe. This can usually be seen with the names of subscribers being struck through, but in the case of this *CHP* entry no annotations have been made. In other cases, the sales subscription figure transferred to the stock book increases slightly with some later sales.

Despite these slight disparities, it is clear that the stock book gives definite sales figures; indeed, we have a detailed breakdown for first edition *CHP*. For example, on 2 March all 30 copies that were then printed were sold in the shop

5. John Murray Stock book, 1812, NLS Ms.42778, entry 358.

to a yet-unidentified individual called Stevens. Individual sales or presentations are thereafter noted on 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14 and 16 March, by which time all 505 copies had been sold. The claim of the full edition being sold in three days is not quite correct, and acts as a cautionary note for book historians in accepting a publisher's or popular account without referring to the publishing archive sources available.

This is also the case with the print run figures, which are never or rarely given as the actual print numbers, which should include the print overrun. The ledgers in the archive for example, show that the first edition of *CHP* had 505 rather than 500 copies, and all subsequent editions also have a number of additional copies.⁶ Whilst a relatively small number of copies are involved, they are still significant when accounting for each copy and in some cases can account for a not-insignificant sum of money; five copies of the first edition of *CHP*, for example, having a retail value of £710 shillings.

Another point of accuracy that can be clarified with the archive is the actual print runs and edition history. St Clair records that the archive reveals that the supposed ten editions were only six editions, with Murray revising title pages to make it appear a greater number of editions (586). St Clair also points out that many of the later editions remained unsold and were sold in sets of Byron's *Works* made up of remainders, or as St Clair describes it "dinner left-overs reheated for next day's lunch. Made more appetising by a few fresh garnishings, an added poem, a new preface, or new notes, but sometimes with nothing but the title page changed to a new date" (181).

It may also be useful for the bibliophile and book collector to know the exact print run breakdown of a work, for which the archive can provide further detail. A clearer picture may be formed of the printing process and therefore the potential for identifying printing variations within an edition. The Murray stock-book shows that the first edition of *CHP* was made up of four prints done on 27 February (30 copies), 5 March (100 copies), 6 March (250 copies) and March 9 (125 copies).⁷ This is useful in explaining the delay between advertisement, trade subscription sale, advance presentation copies, and public sale discussed above.

Book prices to the public in the period are generally well known from sales advertisements and have in the case of *CHP* been published in a number of works, including St Clair (194). Rarely, however, can one find the sale price to the trade in printed or digital resources. The sales subscription books and other archival sources are useful again in confirming the discount to the trade. With, for example, the first edition of *CHP*, the trade subscription price was £1, 2 shillings and 8 pence in quires, to be sold at £1, 10 shillings in boards; for the second edition, the trade subscription price was 8 shillings and 6 pence in quires,

6. Print overruns third edition 512 copies (500) and fourth 1005 (1000), John Murray Stock book, 1812, NLS Ms.42778, entry 402.

7. John Murray Stock book, 1812, NLS Ms.42778, entry 358.

to be sold at 12 shillings in boards. However, at the sale subscription dinner, a further discounted cost of 8 shillings on account was also available. The trade's profits were therefore potentially better for the larger print runs in octavo rather than the smaller run quarto edition.

The trade discount and general rate and distribution of sales rarely affected the direct payments to Byron (or Dallas on his behalf) as he generally negotiated an outright copyright purchase. However, trade discount and sales are interesting for book history as they give a fuller picture of actual sales and show whether they were supported by heavy trade discounting. The archive sources may also suggest further details on geographical distribution of sales.

Dallas was responsible for negotiating publishing terms following Byron's assignment of the copyright to him. The standard account generally given is that Dallas was paid 500 guineas, i.e. £525 for *CHP*. However, Dallas boasted of receiving £600 (Marchand 288). This was due to an additional payment made by Murray, which he was obliged to do as he initially arranged not to buy the copyright outright but to publish the first edition at his own risk and on a profit-share basis, on the understanding of afterwards negotiating the copyright purchase. Given the rapid sales of the first edition, this was perhaps the wrong negotiating tactic from Murray.

The Murray ledgers show that the principal sum paid for *CHP* was made up of a number of bills on account, cash payments, and an allowance on account totaling £525.⁸ Details on the bills on account, to be paid at fixed future dates, could be discounted by the payee or bank for immediate payment. Murray did not discount the bills for quicker payment, as it often happened, but was pressured for a more favorable payment schedule by Dallas. This schedule of exact payments is of added importance in the case of *CHP*, as Murray despised Dallas who was in debt and being pursued by moneylenders and bailiffs. There were a number of other payments and negotiations for a different payment schedule partially detailed by Nicholson's thorough published footnotes to Murray's letters (Murray 6). However, a full account of the payments and schedule to Dallas for *CHP* has still to be published and would likely require reference to his own or bank's archives to get an exact picture.

***CHP* Readership and Review**

Another area of *CHP* book history the JMA can help clarify and extend is in readership and review. The publishing ledgers and papers, especially the copies day books, give details of distributed free copies, building a list of readers and reviewers. Unfortunately, limited numbers of the expensive octavo edition of

8. Copies Day Book of John Murray, 1811-1817, NLS reference Ms.42887, p.12, details the payments as follows: "14 April 1812, Childe Harold, Paid Mr Dallas for the copyright, £100 note at 6 days (No.1468), £100 note at 2 months (No.1469), £100 note at 3 months (No.1470), £100 cash this day, £50 cash draft (1413), £50 two bills (1449 and 1450), £25 allowed in account, £525 Total."

CHP seem to have been distributed for free. However, the later edition's distribution list includes many interesting details with the multiple copies sent to Byron and Dallas.⁹ Whilst the list does not distinguish who (author, publisher or other) helped compile it, it is still an interesting guide to the personal and business connections of Murray and Byron. For example, Murray authors Walter Scott, Isaac D'Israeli, and Maria Rundell all received copies. There were also a number of copies distributed to Murray family members including Mrs Elliot of Edinburgh and the Misses Gilliland.

As well as providing interesting provenance history and broad readership information, publishers' papers can also suggest lines of enquiry for further research. Whilst the principal letters of Byron and Murray are well represented in print and digital collections, letters to them regarding publication and readership matters are not as well identified or often published. Additional letters between those not in the direct Murray or Byron circles, as well as additional archival sources like diaries, reading and library lists, are even more poorly known and mostly unpublished.

Such sources might generally be expected to exist in large numbers if all public and private collections are considered, especially with a popular and sensational work like *CHP*. Dallas recollected that on the day of publication he found Byron "loaded with letters from critics, poets, authors, and various pretenders to fame of different walks, all lavish their raptures" (229). Whilst many of these letters may no longer exist in original or printed forms, a large number of sources are known and provide a valuable account of readership.

However, even major readership databases have only occasional reading references available. For example, the Reading Experience Database (RED) is an open access database and research project housed in the English Department of the Open University. With over 30,000 records of reading experiences of British subjects for the period 1450-1945, it is the largest single resource of its type. It continues to add new entries and is open to public contributions, with volunteers having contributed significantly. This contribution basis has allowed the inclusion of private, personal, and family papers which would otherwise have been inaccessible to researchers. The website also provides a selected bibliography on publications related to the history, practice, and theory of reading, including online links to articles.

The database includes many entries for the later fuller editions of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, but only two for *CHP*, each of which are based on previously published sources. These are a note from William Wordsworth to his wife Mary in May 1812 "Yesterday I dined alone with Lady B.— and we read Lord Byron's new poem which is not destitute of merit; though ill-planned, and often unpleasing in the sentiments, and almost always perplexed in the construction." This account also appears in print (Wu 40). The other RED reference is a letter

9. Childe Harold second edition Presentation copies, Copies Day Book of John Murray, 1811-1817, NLS reference Ms.42887, p.13.

from Walter Scott to Murray on 2 July, 1812 "I hope he will not consider it as intrusive in a veteran author to pay my debt of gratitude for the high pleasure I have received from the perusal of 'Childe Harold,' which is certainly the most original poem which we have had this many a day." Whilst a part of the letter is also quoted in Smiles (1.214), the full letter is arguably of significance and deserving of a full transcript, as given in Scott (3.134-6), whilst the original letter is also available in the JMA.¹⁰

Scott wrote additional letters regarding *CHP*, including one to Joanna Bailie:

Have you seen the Pilgrimage of Childe Harold, by Lord Byron? It is, I think, a very clever poem, but gives no good symptom of the writer's heart or morals. His hero, notwithstanding the affected antiquity of the style in some parts, is a modern man of fashion and fortune, worn out and satiated with the pursuits of dissipation, and although there is a caution against it in the preface, you cannot for your soul avoid concluding that the author, as he gives an account of his own travels, is also doing so in his own character. Now really this is too bad.... Yet with all this conceit and assurance, there is much poetical merit in the book, and I wish you would read it.

Whilst this has been published in Lockhart's *Life of Scott* (2:265), it would be more easily accessible in a unified digital resource, and there must be a number of other comments in his letters.

A number of excellent contemporary letters and comments on *CHP* have been identified and these may be found in published sources: for example, John Galt (182-83), Samuel Rogers (229), Lady Abercorn (Smiles 63) and a letter of Mary Leadbeater to Melesina Chenevix Trench in 1813, in which she writes, "There is fine poetry in Childe Harold; but being, like *Beattie's Minstrel*, neither narrative nor didactic, it causes some confusion in my head to comprehend it. Lord Byron seems very melancholy, and bewails his Thyrsa in beautiful numbers" (2:154). These and many more letters are not available in one single print or digital publication, and might usefully be brought together with previously unknown or unpublished letters. For example, the letters of Lady Eleanor Blunt and Sarah Ponsonby—the famous Ladies of Llangollen—to Murray in 1813-14 discuss Byron's works including *CHP*. They request all of Byron publications except the ones they name including *CHP* which they already possess (12 December, 1813): "They also beg Mr Murray will send the very last Edition of Childe Harold understanding that it contains many additions to the first volume which they are possessed of" (22 February, 1814).¹¹

Further readers include a large number of women admirers. These are in a

10. Scott to Murray letter, 2 July, 1812, NLS JMA Ms.42535, ff.33-4.

11. Letters of Lady Eleanor Blunt and Sarah Ponsonby to John Murray II, 12 December, 1813 and 22 February, 1814, NLS Ms.40176.

section of the JMA previously referred to as the “Fan Letters.” Whilst some archival research has been conducted on this part of the collection, there has been to date no known account or transcription of these letters made available. With perhaps dozens of letters from male and female admirers in the Byron papers and JMA to be identified and made available, there is a considerable amount of readership responses to be added to existing resources from the JMA alone. Such a developing resource would also hopefully encourage further public and private letters discussing *CHP* to be identified and shared.

There are a number of other correspondents in the JMA which as well as identifying readership they discuss the text, revisions, sales, and reception. These include Augusta Leigh regarding the sale of the literary manuscript, Henry Drury on why he should receive the literary manuscript as a gift, William Blackwood on the publication, Samuel Rogers on a new dedication, William Gifford on many aspects of Byron’s work including the editing, Paris publisher Jean Antoine Galignani on English language editions and Robert Charles Dallas.¹²

To extend just two of these examples: Gifford and Dallas’s letters are largely unpublished, yet both are significant figures in understanding the publication history of *CHP*. Dallas makes many of the arrangements with Murray for its publication, suggests alterations and corrections to be made in the proofs, copyright, and critical reception of the work. Dallas’s relations with Murray were not good, and he then fell out with Byron. The JMA holds 46 letters from Dallas to Murray and Byron.¹³ Dallas’s letters are to be treated with caution. In a very long letter of 16 November, 1819, Dallas reviews his entire relationship with Byron and the efforts he made on his behalf. Byron annotated the letter before forwarding it to Murray, with “This is not true ... I recollect nothing of all this ... the devil you did ... when did this happen? & how?”

Within Murray’s circle, the editor of the *Quarterly Review* William Gifford is important as Murray’s main literary advisor and the chief editorial influence over Byron’s works. It was mainly on his recommendation that Murray published *CHP*. In his largely unpublished letters, there are frequent references to Byron and he discusses the editing, setting, and publication of his works.¹⁴

There is therefore likely to be a mass of archival material on the production, sales, readership, and reception of *CHP*. The relevant archival material will be widely distributed throughout international institutional holdings as well as private collections. Even when these collections are catalogued, they are unlikely to provide references to the content of the letters. A flexible, contributory online digital resource for archivists, curators, and researchers to add new resources would therefore be most welcome.

12. Letters in JMA and Byron papers; Henry Drury, NLS Ms.40346 and Ms.43515, Samuel Rogers, NLS Ms.42532 and Ms.43504, John Galt, NLS Ms.42285 and Ms.43427 and Jean Antoine Galignani, NLS Ms.40434 and Ms.43524.

13. Letters of Dallas to Murray, 1811-18, NLS Ms.40307 and 33 letters of Dallas to Byron, 1809-1819, Ms.43422.

14. Letters of William Gifford, NLS Ms.42248.

Published Reviews

The final area of *CHP* book history to be discussed is that of reviews. Whilst this is principally an area for published sources, it can also be shown that publishers' archives have something to offer in enhancing the understanding of the importance and impact of the reviews.

Murray as publisher was necessarily interested in the published reviews and he tried to engage Byron by forwarding copies of the *CHP* reviews in late November 1812: "I have the pleasure of sending Twenty Nine Letters – and a packet of Newspapers – & a Volume containing the best of all criticisms upon Childe Harold – Extracts from it – for the instruction of the rising generation."¹⁵ Despite these efforts Byron dismissed, or affected to be disinterested by the reviews.

The bulk of published reviews of *CHP* have been reprinted as part of the facsimile series *The Romantics Reviewed* (vol.1, Parts B-C).¹⁶ Even with 19 articles identified, it is not considered to be a comprehensive list with a total bibliography of all extant reviews still required. Some published reviews appear in web resources, which have the advantage of searchable texts (e.g. *Lord Byron and his Times*). However, a number of these digital reviews are extracts only. Also, with the ever-increasing amount of text-searchable newspapers and periodicals becoming available online, there is the potential to identify further reviews.

Unifying known and new-found reviews in a single text-searchable resource would be useful, and publishing archives may enhance these texts as book history resources. For example, the date of publication on periodicals for the period is rarely accurate. The periodical publishing archives can provide these exact dates of publication: for example, the JMA can date the *Quarterly Review* article on *CHP* in volume 7, number 14, not June 1812 as the title page suggests but 13 August.

To gauge the impact of a review, itself a study in readership, full bibliographical details from the publishing archive would be welcomed. This, at a basic level, would require the cost of the review and print run, and at a more refined level actual sales, distribution, and known readership. In some cases this information is partially available; for example, Cutmore shows the print runs of volume 7, number 14 as 5,000; however, print runs of 12,000 plus were common by number 32 (185). By building up a picture of review publishing history, such information can lead beyond a basic textual analysis into a fuller impact assessment.

Publishing archives can also confirm the identity of normally anonymous reviewers. The JMA, for example, has registers of *Quarterly Review* contributors.¹⁷ Misattribution of a review's authorship could influence author, publisher, and reader, and the archive can often allow the effects of this to be traced. Byron,

15. NLS Ms.43494.

16. The leading published reviews of *CHP* are in the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, *Le Belle Assemblée*, *British Critic*, *British Review*, *The Champion*, *Christian Observer*, *Critical Review*, *Eclectic Review*, *Edinburgh Review*, *General Chronicle*, *Gentleman's Magazine*, *Literary Panorama*, *Monthly Magazine*, *Monthly Review*, *New Annual Register*, *Quarterly Review*, *The Satirist*, *The Scourge* and *Town Talk*.

17. NLS Acc.13236.

for example, was “smashed to atoms” by a hostile review of his *Hours of Idleness*, which he wrongly attributed to Francis Jeffrey, rather than Henry Brougham. His relationship with both would have been significantly affected by knowledge of the authorship. Publishing archives allow such reviews to be better understood, especially when drafts or proofs of the articles exist.

A broader definition of reviews might also be considered. For example, Walter Scott wrote an anonymous review of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto III and of Canto IV for Murray's *Quarterly Review* (vols. 16 and 19). The review of Canto IV, however, also included a reflection on the whole poem and would therefore be of interest to a study of *CHP*.

Book History Digital Resources

This brief survey of only a few aspects of *CHP*'s book history suggests that the significant existing resources would benefit from some refinement and extension through publisher and other archives. This growing collection of resources would be more useable if collated in a single source site, although this would not, and should not, preclude the on-going support of existing digital resources.

Gathering existing archival, print, and digital resources into a single site should allow for efficient searches of all relevant material related to bibliographical, biographical, critical, and literary research. These materials would preferably be full digital texts, rather than extracts, with digital images of the original source material where possible. Explanation and interpretation of these sources should also be standard, as should a listing of further reading and research.

There are a number of useable, detailed and substantial literary book history resources already available, for example the University of Edinburgh's *Sir Walter Scott Digital Archive*. This website is an example of the balance required in presenting archive and print resources, along with interpretation, descriptive data, and reading. Another example of presenting archival and print resources is Cardiff University's digital resource *The British Fiction, 1800-1829. A Database of Production and Reception*. This is an example of how book production and readership studies might be brought together. Byron is not included as this resource features novels only, but it did use numerous JMA and other publishing archive material in its research. The only criticism of this resource is that it appears to be static with no capacity for additional material to be added.

Another example of a broader digital resource is *English Poetry 1579-1830: Spencer and the Tradition website*. This is described as a gathering of texts, biography, and criticism. For *CHP* it contains the poetic text (although not a full variorum edition), a brief literary description of the poem, poetry text, selected published correspondence reviews, extracts of published reviews, extracts and sections of posthumous literary criticism, and a brief printing edition history. As such it has an ambitious scope, but still contains little direct publishing archive resources or the option for external parties to add to the resources. This is understandable given that the focus is very broad being a poetic tradition rather than a single poet or poem.

Lord Byron and his Times is another ambitious digital project which shows how a number of literary and critical resources may be brought together in a single site for a single author. Whilst having some bibliography information and book history material, the site is principally conceived as a resource for literary criticism. A final digital resource to briefly review is Peter Cochran's Byron website. The principal resource here is transcriptions with ample footnotes and scholarly introductions of many Byron correspondents. This has adapted the published sources of Byron and Murray letters, but has added also extensively some of the principle people in Byron's circle. This site is an example of what an individual and independent scholar can achieve.

Conclusion

There exist then a number of substantial and useful publications online and in print which have made use of the rich resources of publishing archives. What this paper intended to show through a few focused examples of book history for *CHP* is that these may be modified to give a more critical interpretation to current facts and details of the publishing story. For this to happen is required a digital forum which allows collection institutions, private collectors, academics and scholars to collaborate in bringing together existing resources and identifying and making available new resources.

St Clair almost ten years ago stated that "what literary historians most desperately need is more reliable and extensive quantitative data on such things as book prices, print runs, and aggregate sales" (Mason Rev. of *The Reading Nation*). Explaining the need for such work, St Clair boldly argued that "[t]he history of reading is at the stage of astronomy before telescopes, economics before statistics, heavily reliant on a few commonly repeated traditional narratives and favorite anecdotes, but weak on the spade-work of basic empirical research, quantification, consolidation, and scrutiny of primary information, upon which both narrative history and theory ought to rest" (9-10).

By engaging with a broader range of correspondence and business papers, scholars may discover new evidence and lines of enquiry into book history, which will invigorate already active areas of scholarship like that of Lord Byron's *Child Harold's Pilgrimage*, and go some way to answering St Clair's call.

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