Nineteenth Century Literary Society
The John Murray Publishing Archive
An unparalleled resource for nineteenth century culture and the literary luminaries who shaped it.
The National Library of Scotland is a reference library with world-class collections. Its holdings range from unique historical documents to online journals, with a specialism in Scotland’s knowledge, history and culture. The Library has held the John Murray Archive materials since 2006.

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**THEMES**

- Literature and poetry
- Publishing and book history
- The life and works of Lord Byron
- Travel and exploration
- Science and geology
- Politics and society

**KEY FIGURES**

The Murray family stood at the heart of nineteenth century literary society, and their authors and correspondents included many leading writers of the period such as:

- Lord Byron
- Charles Darwin
- David Livingstone
- Contemporary bestselling authors: Austen Henry Layard and Charles Lyell
- Sir Walter Scott
- Jane Austen
- Political figures: William Gladstone, Sir Robert Peel and Benjamin Disraeli
- Washington Irving
- Herman Melville
- Pioneering female writers including Isabella Bird
- Editors of the periodical, The Quarterly Review: William Gifford, John Gibson Lockhart and Whitwell Elwin

**COLLECTION HIGHLIGHTS**

- Correspondence charting the founding of the business by John Murray in 1768
- Annotated drafts of Lord Byron’s works including *Don Juan* and *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, and the poet’s personal papers
- The completed, first edition file copy of *On the Origin of Species*, with related correspondence from Charles Darwin
- Financial papers recording the sales success of hundreds of Murray titles
- Correspondence sent home from Isabella Bird’s travels in America, Australia and the Far East
- Drafts of David Livingstone’s seminal work, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*, with proof illustrations
- Advertisements originally published in the Murray journal, The Quarterly Review

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“The Murray authors set our standards for modern literature and civilisation. This archive contains their stories and hundreds, perhaps thousands, of untold tales – it’s a researcher’s goldmine.”

David McClay
Former Senior Curator of the John Murray Archive

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