

My dear friend at length has arrived. Oliver's parcel & with it the portrait.
What a delightful present! It is almost gone off, & we sat
talking with it & of it all the evening. You want nothing
but that deepest & most earnest look with which you sometimes
now ride the mirror out of your oration when you talk with us,
& the liquid beauty of the eye. But it is an admirable portrait
& admirably resembles you, - it is a great pleasure to us to
possess it - a pleasure in a time of need, coming to us when
there are few others. How we wish that it were you & not your
picture! - How I wish that we were with you!

This parcel you know & all its letters are now of your old - some
older, than are all kinds of dates from March to August 18
18. & "your date" to be Shakespeare's "expressive" is better in
your file or your pocket than in your "letter: virginity
Parables says, but letters are the same thing in another shape.

With it came too, Lamb's note - I have looked at you &
the other books yet. - What a lovely thing is Sir Percival
Gray, how much knowledge of the world & the deepest part
of our nature in it! When I think of such a mind as Lamb's
when I see how unnoticed woman thought of such exquisite
& complete perfection what I hate I hope for myself if I had
not higher objects in view than fame.

I have seen too little of Study & of Pictures. Perhaps Peacock
has shown you some of my letters to him. That at home I was

England. — I write to these things heaven knows why.

I have written something & printed it different from anything else & a new attempt for me, — & I mean to dedicate it to you I should not have done so without your approbation, but I asked your opinion last night & it smiled about it. I did not think it in form dignified by you, I would not make you a public offering of it. — I expect to have to write to you soon about it. — If this is not turned Christian, I fear, or become infected with the Gurrain in will publish it. — Don't let him be frustrated, for it is nothing which by any courtesy of language can be termed either immoral or insignificant.

Mary has written to Mariamne for a parcel in which I beg you would make this inclose what you have written in the letter & Mr. Owen calendar a neat basket for which I am by the sea-side, & the other poems belonging to you and for some friends of mine — in return. This parcel or book must be sent instantly will reach me by post this week but don't send it to us to us except just a line or so. — If you write, write by the post. —
I am your affected and obliged servant

We have a specimen of a Mr. Gibson who teaches me Spanish
& is very much in love both with the portrait & the
character of our best friend

The letter has been sent addressed to York Street instead
of York Buildings. Inquire for it if it happens come to hand



RECEIVED

Leigh Hunt Esq
York Buildings
100 Road - London
Jupitera

1819
45
871

456-2
A.L.S.

Autograph

of

P. B. Shelley

Born

Died

Contents

A. L. S. to Leigh Hunt. Sept. 3, 1819
Quarto, 3 pp. A Magnificent Letter

The Rosenbach Company
Rare Books, Autograph Letters and Manuscripts
1320 Walnut Street, Philadelphia
15 East 51st Street, New York

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY, A. L. S., [18-23 August 1819,]
to Leigh Hunt.

My dear friend

At length has arrived Ollier's parcel & with it the *portrait*. What a delightful present! It is almost yourself, & we sate talking with it & of it all the evening. There wants nothing but that deepest & most earnest look with which you sometimes draw aside the inner veil of your nature when you talk with us, & the liquid lustre of the eyes..

Transcription from:

Kendall, Lyle H., Jr. *A Descriptive Catalogue of the W.L. Lewis Collection--Part One.*

Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1970.

But it is an admirable portrait & admirably expresses you,—it is a great pleasure to us to possess it—a pleasure in a time of need, coming to us when there are few others. How we wish that it were *you*, & not your picture!—how I wish that we were with you!

This parcel you know & all its letters are now *a* year old—some older, there are all kind of dates from March to August 1818, & “your date” to use Shakespeare’s expression “is better in your pie or your pudding than in your” letter: Virginité Parolles says, but letters are the same thing in another shape.

With it came too, Lamb’s works—I have looked at none of the other books yet.—What a lovely thing in his *Rosamund Gray*, how much knowledge of the sweetest & the deepest part of our nature in it! When I think of such a mind as Lamb’s when I see how unnoticed remain things of such exquisite & complete perfection what should I hope for myself if I had not higher objects in view than fame.—

I have seen too little of Italy & of Pictures. Perhaps Peacock has shewn you some of my letters to him. But at Rome I was [p. 2] very ill, seldom able to go out without a carriage, & though I kept horses for two months there, yet there is so much to see. Perhaps I attended more to Sculpture than Painting, its forms being more easily intelligible than those of the latter. Yet I saw the famous works of Raphael, to [deleted] whom I agree with the whole world in thinking the finest painter Why I can tell you another time. With respect to Michael Angelo I dissent, & I think with astonishment & indignation on the common notion that he equals & in some respects exceeds Raphael. He seems to me to have no sense of moral dignity & loveliness; & the *energy* for which he has been so much praised appears to me to be a certain rude, external, mechanical quality in comparison with any thing possessed by Raphael.—or even much inferior artists. His famous painting in the Sixtine Chapel seems to me as [deleted] deficient in beauty and majesty both in the conception & the execution; it might have combined all the forms of terror & delight—& it is a dull & wicked emblem of a dull & wicked thing. Jesus Christ is like an angry pot-boy & God like an old alehousekeeper looking out of window. He has been called the Dante of painting—but if we find some of the gross & strong [a word superscribed with another word] outlines which are employed in the most [deleted] few most distasteful passages of the *Inferno*, where shall we find *your* Francesca, where the Spirit coming over the sea in a boat like Mars rising from the

vapours of the horizon, where Matilda gathering flowers, and all the exquisite tenderness & sensibility & ideal beauty, in which Dante excelled all poets except Shakespeare? As to Michael Angelo's *Moses*—but you have a cast of that in [p. 3] England.—I write to [deleted] these things heaven knows why—

I have written something & finished it—different from anything else & a new attempt for me,—& I mean to dedicate it to you. I should not *have done* so without your approbation, but I asked your picture last night & it smiled assent—If I did not think it in some degree worthy of you, I would not make you a public offering of it—I expect to have to write to you soon about it—If Ollier is not turned Christian, Jew, or become infected *with the Murrain* he will publish it.—Dont let him be frightened, for it is nothing which by any courtesy of language can be termed either moral or immoral.

Mary has written to Marianne for a parcel in which I beg you would make Ollier inclose what you know would much interest me. Your Calendar a sweet extract from which I saw in the Examiner), & the other poems belonging to you—and for some friends of mine—my Eclogue. This parcel which *must be sent instantly* will reach me by October. But dont trust letters to it, except just a line or so. If [deleted] When you write, write by the Post

Ever your affectionate P B S

[p. 4] We have a friend here a M^{rs}. Gisborne who teaches me Spanish & is very much in love both with the portrait & the character of our best friend [slanted long dash]

One letter has been sent addressed 8 *York Street* instead of *York Buildings*.—Inquire for it if it has not come to hand

ALS, 4 pages. Double sheet, 25.1 x 21.2 cm.

Wove paper. No watermark. Lower third of second half sheet has been cut off (and with it, presumably, a paragraph by Mary—see Jones, II, 113, for example) and skilfully replaced by paper of slightly different quality.

Seal removed.

Postmarks: LIVORNO; FPO | SE · 3 | 1819; 12 o'Clock | SP · 3 | 1819 NO. Postal fee: 3/10.

Address (in Mary's hand): Leigh Hunt Esqr | 8 York Buildings | New Road—London | *Inghilterra*.

Provenance: Listed in De Ricci, p. 151 (no. 442): “. . . now in a

private collection in Massachusetts." In a Rosenbach folder.

Published in Leigh Hunt, *Lord Byron and Some of His Contemporaries* (1828), I, 389–393 (not consulted); *Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations and Fragments by Percy B. Shelley*, ed. Mrs. Shelley (London: Moxon, 1840), II, 223–226 (not consulted); *The Prose Works of P. B. Shelley*, ed. H. Buxton Forman (London, 1880), IV, 120–123; *Shelley and Mary* (privately printed, [1882]), I, 402–404; Wise, I, 44–49; Nicoll and Wise, I, 344–347; Ingpen, II, 711–714; Ingpen and Peck, X, 75–78; Jones, II, 111–113, with 3 substantive and 13 accidental variations from the Lewis MS.

Notes: 1. The date of this letter can be assigned on fairly firm ground: Shelley's letter to Ollier, 6 September 1819, speaks of receiving the packet and portrait "about a fortnight ago."

2. The "something . . . different" to be dedicated to Hunt was *The Cenci*, which Shelley had printed in Leghorn in 1819 and which Ollier brought out (not being afflicted with Murray's disease) in 1820.

3. "My Eclogue" was *Rosalind and Helen*, 1819.

4. Here published by permission of Frederick L. Jones and the Clarendon Press, Oxford.

- C O P Y -
OF
A U T O G R A P H L E T T E R
OF
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY
TO
LEIGH HUNT

Livorno - Sept 3. 1819.
(page 120 Vol IV Prose Works - Foreman)

My dear friend

Ellin

At length has arrived Othis's parcel & with it the portrait. What a delightful present! It is almost yourself, & we sat talking with it & of it all the evening. There wants nothing but that deepest & most earnest look with which you sometimes draw aside the inner veil of your nature when you talk with us, & the liquid lustre of the eyes. But it is an admirable portrait & admirably expresses you, - it is a great pleasure to us to possess it - a pleasure in a time of need, coming to us when there are few others. How we wish that it were you & not your picture, - how I wish that we were with you!

This parcel you know & all its letters are now a year old - some older, there are all kind of dates from March to August 18 18. & "your date" to use Shakespeare's expression "is better in your pie or your pudding than in your" letter: Virginitie Pavobles says, but letters are the same thing in another shape.

With it came too, Lamb's works - I have looked at none of the other books yet. What a lovely thing is his Rosamond Gray, how much knowledge of the sweetest & the deepest part of our nature in it! When I think of such a mind as Lamb's, when I see how unnoticed remain things of such exquisite & complete perfection, what should I hope for myself if I had not higher objects in view than

fame.

I have seen too little of Italy & of pictures. Perhaps Peacock has shown you some of my letters to him. But at Rome I was very ill, seldom able to go out without a carriage, & though I kept horses for two months there, yet there is so much to see. Perhaps I attended more to sculpture than painting, its forms being more easily intelligible than those of the latter. Yet I saw the famous works of Raphael, whom I agree with the whole world in thinking the finest painter. Why I can tell you another time. With respect to Michael Angelo I dissent, & I think with astonishment & indignation on the common notion that he equals & in some respects exceeds Raphael. He seems to me to have no sense of moral dignity & loveliness; & the energy for which he has been so much praised appears to me to be a certain rude, external, mechanical quality in comparison with anything possessed by Raphael - or even much inferior artists. His famous painting in the Sistine Chapel seems to me to be deficient in beauty and majesty both in the conception & the execution, it might have combined all the forms of tenor and delight - & it is a dull & wicked thing. Jesus Christ is like an angry pot-boy & God like an old alehousekeeper looking out of window. He has been called the Dante of painting - but if we join some of the gross & strong outlines which are employed

in the few most distasteful passages of the Inferno, where shall we find your Francesca, where the Spirit coming over the sea in a boat like Mars rising from the vapors of the horizon, where Matilda gathering flowers, and all the exquisite tenderness & sensibility & ideal beauty in which Dante excelled all poets except Shakespeare? As to Michael Angelo's Moses - but you have seen a cast of that in England. I write these things heaven knows why.

I have written something & finished it - different from anything else & a new attempt for me, - & I mean to dedicate it to you. I should not have done so without your approbation, but I asked your picture last night & it smiled assent. If I did not think it in some degrees worthy of you, I would not make you a public offering of it. I expect to have to write to you soon about it. If Othis is not turned Christian, Jew, or become infected with the murrain he will publish it. Don't let him be frightened, for it is nothing which by any courtesy of language can be termed either moral or immoral.

Mary has written to Marianne for a parcel in which I beg you would make Othis enclose what you know would interest me. Your calendar, a sweet extract from which I saw in the examiner, & the other poems belonging to you are for some friends of mine - the Eclogues.

This parcel which must be sent instantly will reach
me by October. But don't trust letters to it except
just a line or so and when you write, write by post.

Ever your affectionate

P. B. S.

We have a friend here a Miss Gisborn who teaches me Spanish & is very much in love both with the portrait & the character of our best friend.

One letter has been sent addressed 8 York Street instead of York Buildings. Inquire for it if it has not come to hand.

Leigh Hunt Esq.

8 York Buildings

New Road - London

Inghilterra