

# LITERARY ARISTOCRACY



**M**anuscripts and Special Collections has been collecting the family and estate papers of the Nottinghamshire aristocracy since the 1940s, and these also provide evidence of their literary tastes and talents. The Portland Literary papers from the Library of the Dukes of Portland at nearby Welbeck Abbey are well known for their manuscript prose, satirical poems and drama from the 17th and 18th centuries. The Portland papers are complemented by the University's Special Collection of printed books which feature a number of rare published items such as first or early editions of works by several notable authors, including Lord Byron, one of the most famous literary members of the Nottinghamshire aristocracy.

Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle.  
From *Letters from the Originals at Welbeck Abbey*  
(London, 1909). East Midlands Special Collection  
Not 468.V32 GOU



John, Earl of Rochester.  
From Gilbert Burnet, *Some passages of the life and death of the Right Honourable John Earl of Rochester* (London, 1680).  
Special Collection PR3669.R2.B8.

**John Wilmot (1647–1680)**, the celebrated Restoration poet, inherited the Earldom of Rochester at the age of 11, becoming a favourite of the court of Charles II and leader of a 'merry gang' of court wits. He married Elizabeth Mallet, heiress to a great estate. His letters and poems suggest his genuine affection for her, but when at court he behaved wildly, drinking heavily, taking mistresses and getting involved in wild escapades.

**George Gordon Noel Byron (1788–1824)**, sixth Lord Byron, was one of the leading figures of the Romantic Movement. Although famous for his

travels, he was very fond of his ancestral home at Newstead Abbey. Byron is best known for his long narrative poems, but some of his shorter works were inspired by the landscapes and loves from his time in Nottinghamshire.



Lord Byron.  
Portrait of Lord Byron, after a portrait by  
Thomas Phillips, 1813. MS 258/4

COLLECTED  
WORDS



from the Literary Collections at the University of Nottingham



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ARTS



United Nations  
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NOTTINGHAM  
Designated UNESCO  
Creative City in 2015