

A Chronology of Joan Aiken's *Wolves Chronicles* - Compiled by John Bullough (jbulloug@gmail.com)

Joan Aiken's *Wolves Chronicles* tells the story of an alternate Great Britain in which the Stuart family retained the British monarchy while agents of Hanover plotted to install a Hanoverian king. In addition, this alternate Britain was overrun by ferocious wolves who entered through a tunnel connecting England and France. Many of the books in this series featured Dido Twite as the heroine of the monarchy; she is a plucky and very sensible cockney girl from London. The twelve books in the series were published between 1962 and 2004, the last posthumously. A thirteenth volume, *Midnight is a Place*, apparently shares the same universe as the *Chronicles*, being set in the same city of Blastburn featured in *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* and *Is Underground*. Perhaps because the books were not all written in chronological order of the overall storyline, it is difficult to place them in their historic context. A few clues exist within the books to help construct a timeline, however. We know, for instance, that the sixth Duke of Battersea (Simon) was supposed to have been born in 1818, and the fifth Duke passed away in 1840. *Midnight* occurs in 1842, based on a date Lucas Bell writes on a fogged window. Dido is likely nine years old and Simon fifteen at the start of *Black Hearts in Battersea*. Is, Dido's sister, is nine or ten in *Dido and Pa*, while Simon's younger sister Sophie is eighteen. And the demise of Blastburn seen at the end of *Is Underground* must occur after *Midnight*. One final clue is provided in the form of an inadvertent slip by Joan Aiken in *Stolen Lake*. Dido remarks that Queen Ginevra's chin (or lack thereof) resembles that of Queen Victoria - but Victoria of the House of Hanover never became queen! Nonetheless, for Dido to have referred to Queen Victoria means *Stolen Lake* would have had to occur in 1837 or later. Despite all of these clues, it was not possible to align every date. I was only able to make Simon's birth year as early as 1819, and occasionally I blurred a couple of years together to make some dates fit, such as the 1840 death of Duke William of Battersea. This timeline is perhaps stretched compared to others that have been described on the Internet, and by the end of the series, I have Dido as being nineteen while Simon is twenty-five years old. Following the description of *Whispering Mountain* as a prequel to the *Chronicles*, I set this volume as early as possible while keeping young Owen Hughes (who may have been eleven in *Whispering Mountain*) no more than about eighteen years old for the coronation of King Richard, and allowing Richard's son Davie to be perhaps eleven or twelve years old by the time of *Is*. I'm not sure any timeline can be perfect but overall, I am pleased with the result, especially having fit *Midnight* into the timeline. Items that are underlined are fairly non-negotiable based on the texts of their corresponding books.

Book Title	Dido Age	Simon Age	Is Age	Sophie Age	Year	Notes
Whispering Mountain	6	12	1	10	1831	Davie Stuart born 1832.
Wolves of Willoughby Chase	9	15	4	13	1834	
Black Hearts in Battersea	<u>9-10</u>	<u>15-16</u>	4-5	13-14	1834-1835	Simon moves to London and meets Dido.
Nightbirds on Nantucket	11	17	6	15	1836	
Stolen Lake	12	18	7	16	<u>1837</u>	Queen Victoria begins reign.
Dangerous Games	13	19	8	17	1838	
Cuckoo Tree	13-14	19-20	8-9	17-18	1838-1839	King James dies; Richard becomes King.
Dido and Pa	14-15	20-21	<u>9-10</u>	<u>18-19</u>	1839-1840	Duke William dies; Simon becomes Duke.
Midnight is a Place	17	23	12	21	<u>1842</u>	Anna-Marie Murgatroyd moves into Midnight Court.
Is Underground	18-19	24-25	13-14	22-23	1843-1844	Takes place " <u>a few years</u> " after Dido and Pa; Blastburn destroyed.
Cold Shoulder Road	19	25	14	23	1844	
Midwinter Nightingale	18-19	24-25	13-14	22-23	1843-1844	King Richard dies; Simon becomes King.
Witch of Clatteringshaws	19	25	14	23	1844	

Alternate timelines: <http://calmgrove.wordpress.com/2013/08/04/whispering/>

<https://calmgrove.wordpress.com/2018/02/10/whisper4/>

Further information: http://www.joanaiken.com/pages/wolves_chronicles.html