THE LATE POETRY OF THE LAKE POETS

The long-established association of Romanticism with youth has resulted in the early poems of the Lake poets being considered the most significant. Tim Fulford challenges the tendency to overlook the later poetry of no longer youthful poets, which has had the result of neglecting the Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey of the 1820s and leaving unexamined the three poets’ rise to popularity in the 1830s and 1840s. He offers a fresh perspective on the Lake poets as professional writers shaping long careers through new work as well as by the republication of their early successes. The theme of lateness, incorporating revision, recollection, age and loss, is examined within contexts including gender, visual art and the commercial book market. Fulford investigates the Lake poets’ later poems for their impact now, while also exploring their historical effects in their own time and counting the costs of their omission from Romanticism.

This series aims to foster the best new work in one of the most challenging fields within English literary studies. From the early 1780s to the early 1830s a formidable array of talented men and women took to literary composition, not just in poetry, which some of them famously transformed, but in many modes of writing. The expansion of publishing created new opportunities for writers, and the political stakes of what they wrote were raised again by what Wordsworth called those “great national events” that were “almost daily taking place”: the French Revolution, the Napoleonic and American wars, urbanization, industrialization, religious revival, an expanded empire abroad and the reform movement at home. This was an enormous ambition, even when it pretended otherwise. The relations between science, philosophy, religion, and literature were reworked in texts such as *Frankenstein* and *Biographia Literaria*; gender relations in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* and *Don Juan*; journalism by Cobbett and Hazlitt; poetic form, content and style by the Lake School and the Cockney School. Outside Shakespeare studies, probably no body of writing has produced such a wealth of comment or done so much to shape the responses of modern criticism. This indeed is the period that saw the emergence of those notions of “literature” and of literary history, especially national literary history, on which modern scholarship in English has been founded.

The categories produced by Romanticism have also been challenged by recent historicist arguments. The task of the series is to engage both with a challenging corpus of Romantic writings and with the changing field of criticism they have helped to shape. As with other literary series published by Cambridge, this one will represent the work of both younger and more established scholars, on either side of the Atlantic and elsewhere.

*For a complete list of titles published see end of book.*
THE LATE POETRY OF
THE LAKE POETS

Romanticism Revised

TIM FULFORD
For Oju

A violet by a mossy stone
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Abbreviations

ELH  *English Literary History*
ERR  *European Romantic Review*
SEL  *Studies in English Literature*
SiR  *Studies in Romanticism*
Abbreviations


