



The New Oxford Book of Romantic Period Verse (Oxford Books of Verse)

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As Jerome McGann writes, the poets whom we call the Romantics--Wordsworth, Coleridge, Burns, and Blake, Byron, Shelley and Keats--belonged to an age that saw the development of an extremely diverse array of writing styles. Byron's romanticism--a form that dominated the practice of 19th-century poetry throughout Europe--differs greatly from Wordsworth's and Coleridge's, whose works influenced the way the twentieth century came to think about romantic pieces. And Blake's romanticism holds a very special position, as it had to wait until the coming of PreRaphaelitism (a mixture of late romantic attitudes and early modern gestures) to receive its laurels. In *The New Oxford Book of Romantic Period Verse*, McGann explores the wide range of verse that was published in Britain between the years 1785 and 1832.

Here are selections from all the major and minor Romantic poets, as well as important political and satiric verse of the period, the continuing tradition of 'sentimental' verse, regional and dialect verse, and verse in translation. McGann has attempted to preserve a sense of the historical age: as a result we find Coleridge's classic "The Rime of the Ancyent Marinere" and Darley's "It is not beautie I demande" in their original form. And organizing the material by date of first appearance, and not by author grouping, McGann calls attention to the historical and cultural contexts in which the poetry is embedded--he ends the collection with Alfred Tennyson's "The Palace of Art," because that poem, as well as the volume from which it is taken, represent Tennyson's farewell to romanticism.

In addition, McGann has found that while there were many great romantic women writers, they have been forgotten and neglected by recent collections. Here he provides the works of Felicia Dorothea Hemans, who was one of the most widely published and widely read poets of the nineteenth century, as well as poems by Anne Yearsley, Anne Radcliffe, Laetitia Barbauld, Mary Tighe, Lady Morgan, and Laetitia Elizabeth Landon. The works of William Blake, Robert Burns, Charles Lamb, William Wordsworth, Mary Lamb, George Crabbe, Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, John Keats, and other distinguished writers serve to round out this evocative anthology.

With an appendix including the manifesto to the romantic movement, Wordsworth's Preface to the "Lyrical Ballads," *The Oxford Book of Romantic Period Verse* is a treasury of the imaginative desire that inspired the romantic experience.

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