

Eighteenth Century Women Poets: An Oxford Anthology



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In the first decade of the eighteenth century, only two women published collections of verse. By the 1790s, more than thirty had done so. Yet, in the two intervening centuries, most of that verse has disappeared from view-now either ignored or forgotten. This delightful anthology takes us back to Augustan England, introducing over one hundred of these lost poets from Lady Mary Chudleigh and Octavia Walsh to Mary Locke and Georgiana Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire. Their poetry speaks with vigor and immediacy, in a range of moods from the resentful and melancholic to the humorous and exuberant, as they unveil their individual worlds to us. They came from all levels of society-including washerwomen and duchesses-and from both the town and country. The volume reveals that as eighteenth-century women poets gained confidence, their writing eventually spanned a variety of poetic forms and encompassed both public and private topics. Eighteenth-Century Women Poets offers a compelling reassessment of a neglected aspect of eighteenth-century literature.

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