

# Introduction

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This chapbook anthology of poems by female-identifying Romantic-era poets writing in English is the product of a senior-year seminar in English literature at Simon Fraser University in the Summer term of 2020. Each student found a poet and poem that interested them and contributed a section to the chapbook: each section contains a headnote with biographical/other contextual information, an edited version of the poem, and explanatory footnotes.

We hope that you will enjoy the range of poets and poems in our selection, arranged chronologically by birth year. We have included mainly English poets but also Anglo-Irish, Scots, Canadian settler, and enslaved African American. Of the thirteen poets in the anthology, five died before the age of fifty and four lived into their eighties. Some of the poems we chose have a domestic and suitably feminine focus (by the standards of the time), including elegies and poems about nature and children. Some, however, focus on politics, warfare, and social justice. Some of their names were well-known in their own day—e.g. Charlotte Smith, Felicia Hemans, Mary Robinson, Hannah More—and some were and are next to unknown. For example, “the Widow Fleck” is someone we know nothing about, only what she chooses to share with us on her title page. If you find a poet here whose poem/life intrigues you, we encourage you to seek out her other work.

## **Editorial Practices**

For each of these poems, we have attempted to find the earliest print copy to use as a copy text. In cases where the poems were published long after their composition, we attempted to use online photo facsimiles of manuscripts where available. The overall editorial practice has been 1) to retain original indentation and capitalization patterns and 2) to retain original spelling and punctuation except where they might be confusing to readers (for example, in one instance “your’e” was changed to “you’re”).

Because we created this chapbook anthology in the summer of 2020, COVID-19 restrictions meant that physical library buildings were off limits, and it was not possible to check student choices of poems and student-authored footnotes against those in existing print anthologies. Any resemblance between our footnotes and those that may be found in print-only anthologies we could not access is coincidental, and we regret not being able to check for any unintentional plagiarism.



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