

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	xi
Introduction	xiii
A Note on Monetary Values	xxvii
Myth 1 Romanticism began in 1798	1
Myth 2 English Romanticism was a reaction against the Enlightenment	8
Myth 3 The Romantics hated the sciences	17
Myth 4 The Romantics repudiated the Augustans, especially Pope and Dryden	29
Myth 5 The Romantic poets were misunderstood, solitary geniuses	40
Myth 6 Romantic poems were produced by spontaneous inspiration	49
Myth 7 Blake was mad	58
Myth 8 Blake wrote 'Jerusalem' as an anthem to Englishness	66
Myth 9 <i>Lyrical Ballads</i> (1798) was designed to illustrate 'the two cardinal points of poetry', using poems about everyday life and the supernatural	74
Myth 10 Wordsworth's Preface to <i>Lyrical Ballads</i> was a manifesto for the Romantic revolution	82
Myth 11 Wordsworth had an incestuous relationship with his sister	90

Myth 12	Tory Wordsworth	98
Myth 13	The person from Porlock	108
Myth 14	Jane Austen had an incestuous relationship with her sister	115
Myth 15	The Keswick rapist	124
Myth 16	Byron had an affair with his sister	132
Myth 17	Byron was a great lover of women	140
Myth 18	Byron was a champion of democracy	149
Myth 19	Byron was a ‘noble warrior’ who died fighting for Greek freedom	156
Myth 20	Shelley committed suicide by sailboat	166
Myth 21	Shelley’s heart	175
Myth 22	Keats’s ‘humble origins’	185
Myth 23	Keats was gay	193
Myth 24	Keats was killed by a review	203
Myth 25	Percy Bysshe Shelley wrote <i>Frankenstein</i>	212
Myth 26	Women writers were an exploited underclass – unknown, unloved, and unpaid	220
Myth 27	The Romantics were atheists	232
Myth 28	The Romantics were counter-cultural drug users	242
Myth 29	The Romantics practised free love on principle	251
Myth 30	The Romantics were the rock stars of their day	261
Coda		270
Further Reading		277
Index		283