

A Passionate Sisterhood: The Sisters, Wives and Daughters of the Lake Poets (Paperback)



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Reviews

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A PASSIONATE SISTERHOOD: THE SISTERS, WIVES AND DAUGHTERS OF THE LAKE POETS (PAPERBACK)

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Book Mill, 2017. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****. The Lake Poets, Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey, have become a literary myth and we are used to looking at the Lake District landscape through its romantic prism. But for their sisters, wives and daughters the view was very different. The Wordsworths lived at Grasmere, the Coleridges and Southey's twelve miles away at Keswick and the women created a kind of extended family that kept the group together long after the men had ceased to be friends. Based on necessity, it was far from the harmonious rustic idyll of the myth. Dorothy Wordsworth's consuming love for her brother William forced Mary, his wife, to compete for her husband's affections for more than forty years. When Coleridge fell in love with Mary's sister, Sarah Coleridge found herself abandoned with three small children, forced to live on the charity of her brother-in-law Robert Southey. For the daughters, the legacy of genius was equally destructive. Dora Wordsworth was sent to boarding school at four to learn to become a useful girl in the family and was not allowed to marry the man she loved until she was thirty-seven and dying from TB. Her childhood friend, the young Sara Coleridge, had to fight disapproval, domestic conflict, unwanted pregnancy, depression, opium and morphine addiction to carve out a career as a writer and editor of national standing. Their letters and journals form the basis for an illuminating new account of their interconnected lives - their passionate attachments, petty jealousies, the deaths of children, the realities of chronic ill health and barbaric medical practice. They also contribute to a fuller understanding of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey as all-too fallible human beings.



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