



Wales related Fiction of the Romantic Era

Recent investigations of the concept of 'Britishness', as well as political developments such as devolution and the establishment of the Welsh Assembly, have raised the question of the relationship of the national culture of Wales to the larger British 'union'. It is also now acknowledged by literary historians that the novel played a vital part in constructing images of national identity, most notably in the form of the 'national' tale, but also in other related sub-genres such as the historical novel and the domestic tale.

This scholarly interest in the national novel of the Romantic Period has encouraged the rehabilitation of previously unrecognised works by a number of authors, whose fictions relating to Wales address issues of cultural identity and nationhood. Yet even so fiction written by Welsh authors or set in Wales is still conspicuously absent from general surveys of the Romantic-era novel. The aim of this collection is to address this absence, by providing a representative body of novels which reflects the broad and rich involvement of Wales in fiction of the Romantic Period. The main criterion in selecting the 85 ebooks, first published between 1785 and 1831, has been the treatment within the narrative of issues relating to Wales, regardless of the nationality of the author, although a number of the authors included do have Welsh connections, either through birth or residency. Traditionally, the only works featuring Wales which have attracted critical appraisal have been those few written by such authors as Sir Walter Scott, here excluded as

being readily available in other forms, and Thomas Love Peacock. Other writers, however, who have made significant contributions to the construction of a Welsh literary canon in English are Edward Trevor Anwyl, Anna Maria Bennett, and Anne Hatton, and until their contribution and that of others is recognised our understanding of the positioning of Wales in British Romantic literature will remain incomplete. Sub-genres which feature Wales are as abundant and varied as those to be found generally in Romantic-era fiction.

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