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title

Bright Stars John Keats, Barry Cornwall and Romantic Literary Culture

RICHARD MARGGRAF TURLEY, *University of Aberystwyth*

"*Bright Stars* raises intriguing questions about canon-formation and literary reception, about early nineteenth-century audiences and reading and reviewing practices, and about the poetry of one of the period's most admired poets in English and one of its most neglected. It makes an important contribution to our understanding of Romantic literary culture."

Professor Andrew Bennett, University of Bristol

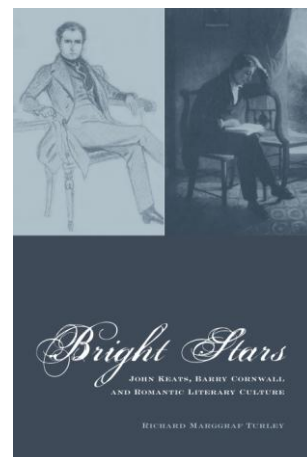
If we could ask a Romantic reader of new poetry in 1820 to identify the most celebrated poet of the day after Byron, the chances are that he or she would reply with the name of 'Barry Cornwall'. Solicitor, dandy and pugilist, Cornwall – pseudonym of Bryan Waller Procter (1787–1874) – published his first poems in the *Literary Gazette* in late 1817. By February 1820, under the tutelage of Keats's mentor, Leigh Hunt, Cornwall had produced three volumes of verse. *Marcian Colonna* sold 700 copies in a single morning, a figure exceeding Keats's lifetime sales. Hazlitt's suppressed anthology, *Select British Poets* (1824), allocated Cornwall nine pages – the same number as Keats, and more than Southey,

It is difficult to square Cornwall's early nineteenth-century popularity with his subsequent neglect. In *Bright Stars* Richard Marggraf Turley concentrates on Cornwall's phenomenal success between 1817 and 1823, emphatically returning an important and unjustly neglected Romantic author to critical focus. Marggraf Turley explores Cornwall's rivalry – and at various junctures, political camaraderie – with fellow Hunt protégé Keats, whose career exists in a fascinatingly mirrored relationship with Cornwall's own trajectory into celebrity. The book explores the central question of how Cornwall's racy and politically subversive poetry managed to establish a broad readership where Keats's similarly inflected publications met with reviewing hostility and readerly indifference.

Published December 2009

Hardback £65.00, isbn 9781846312113


LIVERPOOL
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Author Profile Richard Marggraf Turley is Co-Director of the Centre for Romantic Studies at the University of Aberystwyth. His previous books include *Keats Boyish Imagination* (Routledge, 2004), *The Politics of Language in Romantic Literature* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), *The Monstrous Debt: Modalities of Romantic Influence in Twentieth-Century Literature*, co-ed. with Damian Walford Davies (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2006) and three collections of poetry, most recently *Wan-Hu's Flying Chair* (Salt, 2009).

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