In this highly original collection leading scholars address the largely overlooked genre of childhood writings by major authors, and explore the genesis of genius. The book includes essays on the first writings of Jane Austen, Lord Byron, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Charlotte and Branwell Brontë, Louisa May Alcott, George Eliot, John Ruskin, Lewis Carroll, and Virginia Woolf. All began writing for pleasure as children, and later developed their professional ambitions. In bursts of creative energy, these young authors, as well as those like Daisy Ashford, who wrote only as a child, produced prose, verse, imitation and parody, wild romance, and down-to-earth daily records. Their juvenile writings are fascinating both in themselves, and for the promise of greater works to come. The volume includes an invaluable and thorough annotated bibliography of juvenilia, and will stimulate many new directions for research in this lively and fascinating topic.

Christine Alexander is Professor of English at the University of New South Wales and General Editor of the Juvenilia Press. She is co-author of the Oxford Companion to the Brontës (2003), and has published extensively on the juvenilia and art of the Brontës, as well as on gothic literature, Jane Austen, landscape gardening, and critical editing.

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Nineteenth-century British literature and culture have been rich fields for interdisciplinary studies. Since the turn of the twentieth century, scholars and critics have tracked the intersections and tensions between Victorian literature and the visual arts, social organization, economic life, technical innovations, scientific thought – in short, culture in its broadest sense. In recent years, theoretical challenges and historiographical shifts have unsettled the assumptions of previous scholarly synthesis and called into question the terms of older debates. Whereas the tendency in much past literary critical interpretation was to use the metaphor of culture as ‘background’, feminist, Foucauldian, and other analyses have employed more dynamic models that raise questions of power and of circulation. Such developments have reanimated the field.

This series aims to accommodate and promote the most interesting work being undertaken on the frontiers of the field of nineteenth-century literary studies: work which intersects fruitfully with other fields of study such as history, or literary theory, or the history of science. Comparative as well as interdisciplinary approaches are welcomed.

A complete list of titles published will be found at the end of the book.
THE CHILD WRITER FROM AUSTEN TO WOOLF

EDITED BY
CHRISTINE ALEXANDER AND JULIET McMASTERS

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Christine Alexander and Juliet McMaster