The Romantic period was one of the most creative, intense and turbulent periods of English literature, an age marked by revolution, reaction and reform in politics, and by the invention of imaginative literature in its distinctively modern form. This History presents an engaging account of six decades of literary production around the turn of the nineteenth century. Reflecting the most up-to-date research, the essays are designed both to provide a narrative of Romantic literature, and to offer new and stimulating readings of the key texts. One group of essays addresses the various locations of literary activity – both in England and, as writers developed their interests in travel and foreign cultures, across the world. A second set of essays traces how texts responded to great historical and social change. With a comprehensive bibliography, chronology and index, this volume will be an important resource for research and teaching in the field.

James Chandler is Barbara E. and Richard J. Franke Distinguished Service Professor and Director of the Franke Institute for the Humanities at the University of Chicago. He is the General Editor of Cambridge Studies in Romanticism and has written and edited many books in the field, including Romantic Metropolis: The Urban Scene in British Romanticism, 1780–1840 (editor, with Kevin Gilmartin, Cambridge, 2005) and The Cambridge Companion to Romantic Poetry (editor, with Maureen N. McLane, 2008).
The New Cambridge History of English Literature is a programme of reference works designed to offer a broad synthesis and contextual survey of the history of English literature through the major periods of its development. The organisation of each volume reflects the particular characteristics of the period covered, within a general commitment to providing an accessible narrative history through a linked sequence of essays by internationally renowned scholars. The History is designed to accommodate the range of insights and fresh perspectives brought by new approaches to the subjects, without losing sight of the need for essential exposition and information. The volumes include valuable reference features, in the form of a chronology of literary and political events, extensive primary and secondary bibliographies and a full index.

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Acknowledgements

Like most books of such length and logistical complexity, this one was long in the planning and even longer in the making. Beyond the extraordinary roster of contributors whose work is represented here, a number of other colleagues and friends have helped in ways that demand special recognition. The volume was commissioned by Josie Dixon, and it was in extensive consultation with her that the basic scheme of the book was developed. Generously helping to finish what she helped to start, she produced detailed and helpful comments on a late draft of the Introduction. Through most of its own history, the in-house editorial work on this history was shouldered by Linda Bree. She vetted the entire manuscript at a late stage, providing helpful comments on every chapter; her patience and perspicuity have been remarkable throughout. My heartiest thanks go to them both, and also to Maartje Scheltens, who presided over the final stages of preparation and production. At the University of Chicago, I benefited from the impressive endurance and steadfast aid of Gina DeGiovanni, research assistant for the project. Her skills in organization and editing were invaluable. She and Michael Meeuwis did the lion’s share of work on the detailed Chronology that appears toward the end of this volume. Two work-study assistants, John Maki and Mollie Godfrey, stepped in to provide needed help at various points along the way. Andrew Yale has shouldered much of the work in the final stages. Janel Mueller and David Wallace, editors of two early volumes in this new Cambridge History of English Literature, delivered some sage advice in the early going. Maureen McLane and Nigel Leask offered useful suggestions about the Introduction. Philip Gossett, former Dean of Humanities at Chicago, not only encouraged me to undertake this project but also provided some assistance with its execution. Finally, I would like to thank Barbara and Richard Franke, who sponsor the eponymous faculty chair that has supported me through most of the years I have worked on this volume.