own unglossed "terpsichorean joy" in his Introduction; those with an interest in the heightening of colloquialism in direct speech in *The Mayor* are told neither of the change in Chapter 37 of "mandy" (applied to Henchard in MS—1895 revising copy) to "hontish" in subsequent printings nor of its significance, being left rather to infer that it has none. And in both editions, readers are presented not only with the important Map of Wessex from 1895-96 but with new maps of Casterbridge and The Isle in Ingham. This strong pull of the empirical is in editions seeking to be all things to all readers. Could we have the coach-times from Casterbridge to Budmouth, please?

So facetious a question is not the right note to end a short review of the Penguin Classics Hardy. Wilson's introduction is a competent analysis of the patterning of human relations in *The Mayor*. Both volumes have judicious lists of further reading, although Wilson's omission of the economic history of K.D.M. Snell is a serious lack on the agricultural context. This series promises to be useful and affordable to late twentieth-century readers, many of whom will not need reminding that the reproduction of a nineteenth-century title-page and of an 1843-48 print of an irrelevant bearded man on the cover do not necessarily augment the texts of Hardy "as his readers first encountered them."

John Winter

***Victorian Women Poets: An Anthology*, edited by Angela Leighton and Margaret Reynolds. Oxford: Blackwell, 1995. (Distributed in Australia by Allen & Unwin.)**

***Nineteenth-Century Women Poets: An Oxford Anthology*, edited by Isobel Armstrong and Joseph Bristow with Cath Sharrock. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996.**

These two important anthologies belatedly appeared almost simultaneously two years ago to supply a need which had been evident for at least twenty years before that. Now with the imminent paperback publication of the Armstrong/Bristow anthology (the Leighton/Reynolds was initially issued both in hardback and paperback) both are more accessible as teaching texts. It is therefore ironic that at the time when it is becoming increasingly difficult to justify a course solely on nineteenth-century women poets—at least at the undergraduate level—suitable and ample materials are only now available to do just that. Prior to this I had resorted to photocopied handouts for any poems (usually by lesser known poets not included in standard anthologies) that I wished to include in my nineteenth-century women's writing course. Unfortunately this practice might have to be continued for courses which range across the genres because of the high cost of even the paperback ($45 for the Leighton/Reynolds, the Armstrong/Bristow price not yet known), making both anthologies more suitable (at least economically) for more focused postgraduate work and, of course, as essential library reference texts.

Both anthologies move through the century chronologically, covering a huge range of familiar and unknown work and, as might be expected, there are some interesting comparisons to be made in the choices in each case, although I do not have space here to consider these at length. Given the fact that the Armstrong/Bristow covers the whole of the century, the number of poets included is necessarily greater (102 to Leighton/Reynolds's 50), but in many cases the selections are slimmer. A brief comparison is instructive, however, to illustrate both the wealth of material available and some of the different editorial emphases: of the thirteen poems by Felicia Hemans in the Leighton/Reynolds anthology, only three have also been chosen by Armstrong/Bristow for their eleven-poem selection, the marvellous "Properzia Rossi," "The Image in Lava," and her most famous poem, "Casabianca," source of so many rugby club parodies. By contrast the anthologies have eleven Elizabeth Barrett Browning poems in common, although even here they each have completely different sections from *Aurora Leigh*, and only two of the chosen *Sonnets from the Portuguese* are the same. One could certainly presume from this that within Barrett Browning's work there is already a well recognised canon of woman-centred and socially conscious poems (like, for instance, the two George Sand sonnets and the poignant "The Cry of the Children," already frequently anthologised), but the Hemans example also hints at a canon in the making.

The Leighton/Reynolds selection particularly demonstrates a desire to show a tradition of women's poetry, which they expound at some length in their introductions. The anthology begins with Hemans's "The Last Song of Sappho" and "Corinne at the Capitol," indicating both the classical beginnings of the tradition and the great early nineteenth-century inspiration of de Staël's *Corinne*. The selection from L.E.L. includes "Sappho's Song" and "Stanzas on the Death of Mrs Hemans," followed by Barrett Browning's "Felicia Hemans" and "L.E.L.'s Last Question"; Sappho is recalled in poems by, among others, Caroline Norton, Christina Rossetti, and finally "Michael Field," and Frances Kemble (from the acting family) responds to inspiration with "To Mrs Norton." Reynolds describes this "professional sisterhood" at some length, beginning with an investigation of "how and why these writers used the annuals. This constant looking at each other's work, valuing and assessing each other's talent, marks not only the personal experience of the Victorian women poets, but spills over into their poetry too. There are numerous poems addressed by one poet to another as if carrying on a conversation with one another." Beginning in the 1850s, however, this network began to assume "a more political aspect" which became more focused as the century progressed.

While one could argue about the relative values of the chosen poems in each anthology, ultimately major collections such as these must depend on the value of the associated editorial material, the introductions, the headnotes, the guides to reading, and so on. The Leighton/Reynolds headnotes are more extended than the Armstrong/Bristow ones with adequate bibliographies appended to them, which include both the source of the copy-texts used and appropriate critical material. The Armstrong/Bristow bibliographies, equally as full, are given at the end with normal indices and also an

interesting index of "Main Subjects." Both anthologies base their texts in the main on the first volume-printed version, except where the text has only ever appeared in the more ephemeral form of newspaper or periodical. Armstrong and Bristow give date/s of publication at the end of each poem in the more standard Oxford format, and they acknowledge in the "Note on the Texts" that bibliographical research into the dating of nineteenth-century women's poetry still needs much work, particularly into the dating of actual composition.

The introductions to both anthologies indicate quite clearly that they are intended as teaching texts. This is moreover underscored by the almost simultaneous publication by Blackwell of *Victorian Women Poets: A Critical Reader*, edited by Angela Leighton, which contains essays referring to many of the poets she includes in the anthology, and which, together with the dual introduction, provides an important basic critical reader for the field. But that dual introduction! It's a niggling criticism, but it gives the impression either of territorialism or of an uncertainty about whether the editorial focus is really a consistent one. Unnecessarily so, I think. In fact the two halves of the introduction could quite well have followed on seamlessly one from the other. Reynolds concentrates on the annuals, the tradition (mentioned above), publication outlets throughout the century; Leighton begins with a mention of the annuals and then moves into the continuity of ideas, themes and images throughout the period.

The introduction by Armstrong and Bristow is a much more politically astute and exciting entry into the field, however, and would therefore make this a more useful teaching text than the Blackwell anthology. They begin by situating the output of nineteenth-century women poets both within an historical context and within the conventions of anthology use and choice, concluding that "we have chosen material that allows a multiplicity of thematic cross-connections to emerge." The introduction then proceeds to show how a reader "might trace some of these relationships. Then we describe the political formations and cultural groupings to which various poets belonged, and which make deeper sense of the woman poet's themes. Lastly, we consider how styles and genres change in the century." This is an important and comprehensive task, and it is amply fulfilled. There is an emphasis on social and political movements, on various sorts of oppression, on the power of women in national histories and the icons which result and which are taken up by women poets, on class, patterns of publication, provincial cultures, and, most importantly, on that tradition of dissent—political and religious—which underlay the questioning of both social convention and poetic form. The last section of the introduction is particularly exciting as the editors chart the move through "monumental legend" and "oceanic monody" (their own terms) towards the early signs of a proto-Modernism as the later generation "were forced to confront the fractured experience that came from social rifts which could simply not be healed."

As I have said, two important and long-overdue anthologies. Together they form a substantial reference source, and there should be multiple copies in all our libraries. If any of you are lucky enough to be able to offer a course solely on nineteenth-century women's poetry, then I'd suggest the Armstrong/Bristow. It is slightly cheaper, covers a

longer period (although the early period has to a certain extent already been catered for with substantial anthologies of the work of eighteenth-century and Romantic women poets), and has an exceptionally fine introduction to recommend it.

Barbara Garlick

***Victorian Love Stories: An Oxford Anthology*, edited by Kate Flint. Oxford and New York: Oxford UP, 1997.**

The cover of the paperback edition of *Victorian Love Stories: An Anthology* features William Holyoake's celebrated portrayal of a lovers' tryst. In the foreground of the painting a young woman sits on a wooden bench under a tree. Her feet are demurely crossed and her hands are clasped lightly in her lap. Her gaze moves away from the viewer toward a point that lies beyond the physical and imaginative scope of the painting. Who would hazard a guess as to her thoughts? Is she dreaming of her lover or ruminating upon the vagaries of romantic love? Will she, like the young starry-eyed heroine of Walter Besant's short story "The Shrinking Shoe," discover to her chagrin that her "Prince" in real life is merely a figment of her imagination and desire? Or is she, like the restless maiden figure in Christina Rossetti's fable "Hero," on the threshold of a love that "glitters with diamonds and opals as with ten thousand fire-flies"? Whatever this woman's thoughts and desires, she is destined to remain in the moment—awaiting the advent of her lover. The painting thus captures an instant of stasis and of limitless possibilities, and as such provides an illuminating metaphor for the convergence of theme and genre in this anthology.

To write of romantic, heterosexual love in the nineteenth century, Kate Flint observes in her introduction to the volume, "almost always meant offering some kind of reflection on the position of women within society." The short stories in this anthology amply support this proposition. From Christiana Fraser-Tytler's story "Margaret," which explores and ultimately upholds the unattainability of a love shared by an impoverished but genteel governess and the son of an aristocratic household, to Thomas Hardy's depiction of a middle-class son's proud refusal to sanction a marriage between his working-class mother and a successful greengrocer in "The Son's Veto," many of the stories included in this anthology simultaneously challenge and consolidate the prevailing rigid class and gender hierarchies.

With Flint's emphasis upon the value of the Victorian love story to articulate and interrogate conventional configurations of women in love and in marriage, it is somewhat surprising then to discover that she fails to note the significance of narrative form in her introduction. Irrespective of the writer's gender, it would appear from these selected stories that the woman "in love" is precluded from directly addressing the reader. Her emotions and desires are either mediated through a third-person narration, through the first-person narrative voice of the male protagonist, or through the perceptions of a fictive audience. While Ella Darcy's "The Pleasure-Pilgrim" uses a