

## REVIEWS

*A Rossetti Family Chronology* by Alison Chapman and Joanna Meacock. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. v, 484 pp. ISBN 13:978-1-4039-1219-0. ISBN-10: 1-4039-1219-X. \$129.95; £64.00.

This volume, edited by Alison Chapman and Joanna Meacock, is the most recent addition to the series of Author Chronologies being published under the general editorship of Norman Page. As Page indicates in the general preface, these chronologies are not intended to serve as biographies but rather to provide “a means whereby the chronological facts of an author’s life and career ... can be seen at a glance.” As the word “family” in the title indicates, this chronology goes beyond the single author to include all four Rossettis. Significantly, not only are events in the lives of Dante Gabriel and Christina covered but the editors have also attempted to give William and Maria “their full place along side their more canonical siblings.” This inclusion of William Michael and Maria Francesca is a welcome addition to Rossetti scholarship. Not only were both literary figures in their own right, but also as a careful look at this chronology makes clear, both made significant contributions to sustaining the family: William’s role as a major provider of financial support is readily apparent, as is Maria’s willingness to contribute to the family finances through her various positions as governess. Furthermore, the fact that the editors also record events in the lives of both the parents, Frances and Gabriele Rossetti, and the maternal aunts, Margaret, Charlotte, and Eliza Polidori, who often shared a household with the Rossettis, adds to the fullness of the family picture created.

The number of sources Chapman and Meacock consulted in order to create this chronology is impressive, as is the range of materials. The unpublished diaries of both Frances and William Michael Rossetti have provided information on such things as family finances, health, social engagements, and travel. Letters both published and unpublished have been considered along with poetry manuscripts, contemporary reviews, and essays. The diaries and memoirs of those who knew the family, such as Arthur Munby and William Bell Scott, have also been gleaned for facts and personal observations. Additionally, the editors have drawn upon some of the recent biographical work done on the family, such as Jan Marsh’s *Christina Rossetti: A Literary Biography* (1994) and Angela Thirlwell’s *Lucy and William: The Other Rossettis* (2003). A full bibliography of sources is provided as part of the introductory material.