



Ian Hamilton Collected Poems

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A professional man of letters - critic, editor, biographer - though never a professional poet, Ian Hamilton (1938-2001) referred to his poems as 'miraculous lyrical arrivals', and he bided their time with exemplary patience and humility. His widely praised first collection, *The Visit*, published by Faber in 1970, was incorporated into *Fifty Poems* in 1988, itself expanded to *Sixty Poems* in 1998. In a preface to the former collection, he wrote: 'Fifty poems in twenty-five years: not much to show for half a lifetime, you might think. And in certain moods, I would agree.' Readers of Hamilton's condensed and immaculate oeuvre have felt otherwise: the poems of his youth and middle years (there was to be no opportunity for a late flowering) acquired talismanic significance for his contemporaries, and their combination of terseness and emotional intensity continues to set an example to younger poets.

Edited by Alan Jenkins, this authoritative *Collected Poems* contains all of the poetry that Ian Hamilton chose to publish, together with a small number of uncollected and unpublished poems; it also supplies an illuminating introduction, and succinctly helpful apparatus. The result is an edition whose thoroughness and tact are themselves a moving tribute, restoring to view one of the most distinctive bodies of work in twentieth-century English poetry.

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