THE INFLUENCE OF CHATTERTON ON KEATS

SYNGE UNTOE MIE ROUNDELAIE

THE INFLUENCE OF CHATTERTON ON KEATS

By

PENELOPE ROSE DINELEY, B.A.

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AUTHOR: Penelope Rose Dineley, B.A. (Wilfrid Laurier University)

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ABSTRACT

It is the contention of this thesis that Thomas Chatterton had an artistic and philosophic influence on Keats comparable to that of Shakespeare. By treating first the biographical similarities that exist between the two poets, and then moving into actual artistic influence, the close interrelation of life and art, and the osmotic nature of Keats's organic response to Chatterton reveal themselves. Exciting stylistic and linguistic affinities are to be discovered between Keats and Chatterton, affinities which have either been overlooked or dismissed as irrelevant. In all cases, the affinity between the two poets deepens from the word surface into the meaning of their art.

The study of artistic parallels is always rewarding for it intensifies our understanding of the poets under consideration. My thesis is from the point of view of Keats, and so the comparison has greater ramifications for his art. While Chatterton shows himself a true craftsman, the empathic nature of Keats's artistic response is confirmed. Indeed, if Shakespeare was a good omen to Keats, Chatterton was his silent presider.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

> After dark vapours have oppress'd our plains
> For a long dreary season, comes a day
> Born of the gentle South, and clears away
> From the sick heavens all unseemly stains.
> The anxious month, relieved of its pains,
> Takes as a long-lost right the feel of May;
> The eyelids with the passing coolness play
> Like rose leaves with the drip of Summer rains.
> The calmest thoughts come round us; as of leaves
> Budding - fruit ripening in stillness - Autumn suns
> Smiling at eve upon the quiet sheaves -
> Sweet Sappho's cheek - a smiling infant's breath -
> The gradual sand that through an hour-glass runs -
> A woodland rivulet - a Poet's death.[1]

The profound effect of Shakespeare upon Keats's poetic and philosophic development has been well documented both by the poet's contemporaries and by modern critics. Only cursory attention has been given to another influence, that of Thomas Chatterton. Perhaps, in accordance with the popular Romantic response to Bristol's poet, it was the myth of "death for art's sake" that initially attracted Keats to Chatterton.[2] Out of this initial attraction to the idea of death, however, a vital

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[1] J. Keats, Poetical Works, ed. H.W. Garrod (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 364. All subsequent quotations from Keats's poetry are from this edition.

[2] E.C. Pettet, On the Poetry of Keats (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970), p. 271. Pettet cites this opening poem, and states: "Was it among other reasons this fascinating thought of a Poet's death that drew Keats so strongly to Chatterton?"

and intense response grew. The original preface to Endymion, which claimed Chatterton to be "The most English of Poets except Shakespeare", is evidence of the growing and profound importance Chatterton had for Keats. He associated both Chatterton and Shakespeare as joint and living forces in his own development, and it is the contention of this thesis that the life, philosophy, and artistry of the "Marvellous Boy"[3] played a role in the intellectual ripening of Keats comparable to that of Shakespeare.

Before examining the particular influence of Chatterton on Keats, I will consider the reaction of other English Romantic writers to the earlier poet. Keats's initial embrace of Chatterton was part of a contemporary nostalgic movement in the arts. As he matured artistically, Keats's response became more individual and significant.

"Romanticism, at its profoundest, reveals the depths of the enchantments in which we live."[4] The Romantic glorification of Chatterton was, in part, an admiration for his medieval world and his total involvement in art, even to the point of suicide. In their attempts to remake language and so define man and his world in a creative way, the Romantic poets exalted all previous adventurers in the field. History

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[3]W. Wordsworth, "Resolution and Independence", l. 43. In English Romantic Writers, ed. D. Perkins (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1967), p. 284.

[4]G. Hartman, "Romanticism and Anti-Selfconsciousness", in Romanticism and Consciousness ed. H. Bloom (New York: W.W. Norton & Co. Inc., 1970), p. 54.

was to be remade so that creativity was its criterion of truth, not the judgements of moralists or politicians. Chatterton's remade Bristol world was an example of pure poetic history. The ideal world is to be created out of the real materials at hand, and so the Romantics sought models whose style was both in the world -- metaphorically concrete, yet out of it -- visionary and imaginative. Keats's own art, full of symbols for the spiritual eye, yet pleasing to the physical eye, grew with the influence of Chatterton's similar style.[5] Both the myth of Chatterton's life and the newness of his art appealed to the Romantics, and particularly to Keats, for whom life was art.

The forgery controversy which raged around the value of Chatterton's Rowley poems was dismissed by the Romantics. Chatterton had created a whole body of poems written in an old English dialect which he claimed were written by a fourteenth-century monk named Thomas Rowley. Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley and others saw the Rowley mask as evidence of the total immersion in form, rather than as a forgery. Like Keats, who told Shelley that his imagination was a monastery, and he was its monk,[6] Chatterton lived only within the cloistered walls of St. Mary Redcliffe, tonsured and robed as Brother Thomas:

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[5]N. Frye, A Study of English Romanticism (New York: Random House, 1968), pp. 154-5.

[6]J. Keats, Letters of John Keats, ed. R. Gittings (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 390.

> . . . he was a born artist, who, before mature vision had come to show him to power and the sacredness of moral conscience in art, was so dominated by the artistic conscience - by the artist's yearning to represent, that, if perfect representation seemed to him to demand forgery, he needs must forge.7

Sir Walter Scott's 1804 review of The Works of Thomas Chatterton, edited by Southey and Cottle, is interesting for the treatment it gives to the two Chattertons, one who wrote freely and well as Rowley, the other who was cramped by his secret life and wrote poor satires. Again the Romantic Scott responds to Chatterton's total involvement in art and form.[8]

Coleridge worked on his Monody on the Death of Chatterton throughout his lifetime. Neglected genius, tragic waste, praise of inspired originality, and Coleridge's own psychological identification with Chatterton's doom, are themes voiced in the poem. The "Sweet Harper of time-shrouded Minstrelsy" symbolized a new land of poetic freedom for Coleridge superior to his faded Pantisocracy dream:

> O Chatterton! that thou wert yet alive!
> Sure thou would'st spread the canvas to the gale,
> And love with us the tinkling team to drive
> O'er peaceful Freedom's undivided dale;
> And we, at sober eve, would round thee throng,
> Would hang, enraptured, on thy stately song,
> And greet with smiles the young-eyed Poesy
> All deftly mask'd as hoar Antiquity.9

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[7]T. Watts-Dunton, "Thomas Chatterton", in The English Poets, II, ed. T. Ward (London: MacMillan & Co. Ltd., 1896), pp. 404-5.

[8]Sir W. Scott, Critical and Miscellaneous Essays (Philadelphia: Carey & Hart, 1841), I, p. 166. First in The Edinburgh Review, April 1804.

[9]S.T. Coleridge, "Monody on the Death of Chatterton", ll. 163,

Wordsworth's "Resolution and Independence" contains perhaps the most famous tribute to Chatterton, and in addition parallels the theme of Chatterton's poem, "An Excelente Balade of Charitie". The storms of life darken Wordsworth's disposition; he thinks of Chatterton (and Burns) who perished in despair, "the Marvellous Boy / The Sleepless Soul that perished in his pride."[10] It is the thought of human strength and perseverance in the figure of the leech-gatherer that will solace him in the storms to come. So in Chatterton's poem, a "hapless pilgrim" finds shelter from the storm in an act of human charity, in the strength of human spiritual goodness, when a Limitour gives him both his cloak and alms.[11]

In the famous lines from "Adonais", Shelley links Keats and Chatterton in a way that prefigures Conrad Aiken's association, to be considered shortly. Since both Shelley and Aiken were themselves attracted by the idea of death, it is a deathly connection that they discover between the two poets. "Far in the Unapparent", "The inheritors of unfilled renoun", like Chatterton and Keats, will have their creative reward.[12] Finally, to represent the PreRaphelite conception of the

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148-55, in Poetical Works, ed. E.H. Coleridge (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967), p. 130.

[10] W. Wordsworth, op.cit.

[11] E.H.W. Meyerstein, A Life of Thomas Chatterton (New York: Russell & Russell, (1930), 1972), pp. 504-5.

[12] P.B. Shelley, "Adonais", XLV, in Poetical Works, ed. T. Hutchinson (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1970), p. 441.

Romantic myth of Chatterton, there is Rossetti:

> He was as great as any English poet whatever, and might absolutely, had he lived, have proved the only man in England's theatre of imagination who could have bandied parts with Shakespeare . . . Not to know Chatterton is to be ignorant of the true day-spring of modern romantic poetry.

He noted too that "strong derivative points are to be found in Keats from the study of Chatterton."[13]

The Romantics looked with awe upon the miracle of the Rowley poems, created by a boy of sixteen. They seized upon the tragedy of wasted talent, and proclaimed his merits. Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Shelley praised Chatterton's linguistic and stylistic innovations as well, but none did so as completely as Keats. Chatterton was both a patron saint and a pioneer of Romanticism;[14] he was Keats's silent presider.

With the same intensity Keats read Shakespeare and Chatterton, and his early effusive praise for past poets links them together in rhyme.[15] Any study of poetic sources and influences in the case of Keats is valuable because of the vital nature of his response. He believed that when one mind imagined into another in a sympathetic way, a miraculous understanding of the art of that mind, and a miraculous identification with that mind, resulted:

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[13]D.G. Rosetti cited by Sir Hall Caine in Recollections of DGR, p. 184-191. In Meyerstein, op. cit., pp. 515-517.

[14]R. Nye, "Chatterton: The Marvellous Boy", in Books and Bookmen, (May 1974) p. 64.

[15]See "To George Felton Matthew", ll. 56-7, p. 24, and "Sleep and Poetry", ll. 213-219, p. 47.

> One of the most mysterious of semi-speculations is . . . that of the Mind's imagining into another. Things may be described by a Man's self in parts so as to make a grand whole which that Man himself would scarcely inform to its excess. A Poet can seldom have justice done to his imagination - for men are as distinct in their conceptions of material shadowings as they are in matters of spiritual understanding.16

Beyer, in his study of the influence of Wieland's Oberon on Keats, states that for Keats the processes of absorption and sensation were interrelated.[17] Keats's aesthetic response conditioned his own aesthetic activity; the source of Keats's poetic vision is illuminated by an analysis of its origins. The process of one mind shaping the area of its experience is elusive, subtle and complex, but controlled by the artistic purpose. The intricacy of such a process is worthy of attention, especially when the richness of Chatterton as source and the sensitivity of Keats as shaper are born in mind. To cite Beyer again:

> The conscious power of judgement and subconscious powers of memory interpenetrate when energized by the will. But the artist's purpose is the determinate in the complex creative process . . . the richer the area of experience and the more sensitive the judgement, other things being equal, the richer and subtler can the work become that the shaper strives to create.18

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[16] J. Keats, "Notes on Milton's Paradise Lost," Bk. I, ll. 53-75, in The Poetical Works and Other Writings of John Keats, ed. H.B. Forman, revised M.B. Forman (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938-39).

[17] W.W. Beyer, Keats and the Daemon King (New York: Octagon Books, 1969), p. 102.

[18] Ibid., p. 294.

The seed of a poem is nourished by the sources it absorbs; the stalk grows rhythmically in systole and diastole; the fruit is the culmination of an endless artistic process.[19] The early sonnet, "To Chatterton" claimed "Thou didst die / A Half-blown flow'ret which cold blasts amate" (ll. 7-8, p. 375); Keats came to understand the full-blown flower of Chatterton's art as his own matured. Chatterton joined the ranks of bards who "gild the lapses of time", and who are "food to a delighted fancy". (IV, ll. 1-3, p. 34).

Robert Gittings, whose perceptive comments on Chatterton and Keats will be treated later, notes the dramatic quality of Keats's identification with his sources:

> Most poets dramatize their lives. All are affected, though not so much as Keats, by the appositeness of what they are reading to their own life's situation, and this in turn, may affect or falsify the situation itself.[20]

And Murry's study, Keats and Shakespeare,[20A] posits just such a dramatic in-feeling as the source of pure poetry. The dramatic, empathic, negatively capable response is synthetic:

> any Man may like the Spider spin from his own inwards his own airy Citadel - the points of leaves and twigs on which the Spider begins her work are few and she fills the Air with a beautiful circuiting: man should be content with as few points to tip with the fine Webb of his Soul and weave a tapestry empyrean - full of Symbols for his Spiritual eye, of softness

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[19] B. Blackstone, The Consecrated Urn (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1954), p. 363.

[20] R. Gittings, The Mask of Keats (London: Wm. Heinemann Ltd., 1956), p. 77.

[20A] J.M. Murry, Keats and Shakespeare (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1926), pp. 9 - 11.

> for his spiritual touch, of space for his wandering of distinctness for his Luxury.21

Poetic sources, such as Chatterton and Shakespeare, are the points from which Keats spins his web. He "fills the Air with a beautiful circuiting", sometimes using old patterns, sometimes fresh ones.[22] The finished poem satisfies both the physical and the spiritual eye because in it we see the interweaving of life and art.

Since, then,the study of poetic influence is revealing both of a poet's imagination and the products of that imagination, and since Keats's response to his sources was particularly intense, an examination of yet another influence is justified. Like Shakespeare, Chatterton had a sustained effect on Keats as a poet, and his role as a catalyst deserves attention.

Keats's biographers have noted a connection between the two poets, but their treatment of Chatterton has been, on the whole, cursory. Only Robert Gittings and W.J. Bate have discussed in any depth the linguistic and stylistic similarities that are to be found between them. Meyerstein, on Chatterton's behalf, has done a thorough job in tracing the lyrical emanations from Chatterton into Romantic poetry; Robert Nye and Linda Kelly have followed Meyerstein in their treatment of Chatterton.[23] W.J. Bate and Aileen Ward discuss

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[21]J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 66.

[22]M.R. Ridley, Keats' Craftsmanship (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), p. 16.

[23]E.H.W. Meyerstein, op. cit.; Robert Nye, op. cit.; Linda Kelly

the early attraction to Chatterton in terms of the tragic myth of the death of a young poet for art.[24] Basil Cottle's little pamphlet on Chatterton states that Keats was much influenced by Chatterton.[25] As early as 1896 in Ward's English Poets, Theodore Watts-Dunton emphasized the dramatic quality of Chatterton's art and compared it to Keats. The core of inspiration for Chatterton was his intense identification with Monk Rowley. Keats likewise identified with his sources, making the total product organic and dramatic:

> As a youthful poet showing that power of artistic self-effacement which is generally found to be incompatible with the eager energies of poetic youth, - as a producer, that is to say, of work purely artistic and in its highest reaches unadulterated by lyric egotism, - the author of the Rowley Poems (if we leave out of consideration his acknowledged pieces), however inferior to Keats in point of view of sheer beauty, stands along side of him in our literature and stands with him alone.26

As the remarks of biographers and critics alike are compiled, the possibility of a philosophic and artistic influence of Chatterton upon Keats emerges. Although, as Gittings warns, "any interpretation of the appearance in Keats's style of the other young and tragic poet, must, of course, land us in conjecture",[27] it is a conjecture

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The Marvellous Boy (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1971).

[24]W.J. Bate, John Keats (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1966), p. 40, 53; A. Ward, John Keats. The Making of a Poet (New York: The Viking Press, 1963), p. 40.

[25]B. Cottle, Thomas Chatterton (Bristol: Bristol University, 1963), p. 14.

[26]T. Watts-Dunton, op.cit., p. 403.

[27]R. Gittings, The Mask of Keats, p. 96.

that has lengthy historical and biographical documentation, as well as fruitful ramifications for the aesthetic appreciation and criticism of Keats's poetry. The influence of Chatterton grew from a psychological identification to which modern artist-critics, Conrad Aiken and Malcolm Lowry, attribute great importance. Aiken, whose critical view of Keats is itself obsessed with the idea of death, sees an obsession with death as the heart of the attraction:

> Chatterton, it is possible, influenced him not only in his work (the medievalism especially) but also in his life. The tragedy of Chatterton's life was then comparatively recent. It parallels in so many particulars Keats's own life that one speculates - idly perhaps - on the extent to which Keats, in his adolescence, may actually have been warped by it. His death obsession found in Chatterton's early death a ready symbol; the temptation to romanticize that unfortunate career must have been great; and it was then only a step to the morbid assumption (peculiarly easy for Keats) that genius is ipso facto doomed to obloquy and premature death. Love, fame, and death were Keats's three graces. The death of a young poet - this was almost the most tragic (and attractive!) thing he could imagine. The death of a young poet while in love, however, was a turn of the screw which, if he had conceived, he had certainly not discounted. When he realized that this was to be his destiny, his imagination gave it fullest value, and he died as passionately and uncontrolledly and consciously as he had lived. He grasped death hard with all his senses and went under the earth alive.[28]

Aiken's view is important for the emphasis it places on the conscious identification of one artist with another. Malcolm Lowry, writing to a young writer who himself felt drawn to Lowry, discusses the nature of this powerful, creative response:

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[28] C. Aiken, "Keats, John" (1925), in A Reviewer's ABC (London: W.H. Allen, 1961), pp. 252-253.

> The feeling . . . is . . . first and foremost creative . . . one of the most powerful and one of the most unknown - as to knowledge of what it is - feelings it is possible to have, and one of the purest as it were, even if directed at an object of blistering evil . . . perhaps it is religious in origin or perhaps it has something to do with evolution itself; but it is certainly a force and as force obliges you to use it, obliges you to make an act of transcending . . . Aiken once told me that he considered it primarily an operation of genius. Genius knows what it wants and goes after it . . .Eliot himself - who owes a great deal to Aiken himself that has not been acknowledged- has called this identification "one of the most important experiences (for a writer) of adolescence." I'd like to know when adolescence stops at that rate. I surmise an identification on Eliot's part with LaForgue. On the tragic plane you have Keats's identification with Chatterton, leading, Aiken once suggested, to a kind of conscious death on Keats's part. However that may be, it is a force of life. But it is also an operation of the soul. As you have observed - in fact as you have proved yourself - it can be clairvoyant.29

Artistic kinship for Lowry is powerful and unknown; Keats called it "one of the most mysterious of semi-speculations." Lowry suggests that the feeling might have something to do with evolution; Keats sees the reward of a creative life, which involves such a feeling, as a repetition of happiness in a finer tone, for "Imagination and its empyreal reflection is the same as human life and its spiritual repetition."[30] Evolution is not a physical phenomenon, but a soul-making process. "Genius knows what it wants and goes after it", says Lowry, echoing Keats's views on human activity: "The Creature

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[29]M. Lowry, Selected Letters of Malcolm Lowry, ed. H. Breit and M. Bonner Lowry (London: Jonathan Cape, 1965), pp. 264-265.

[30]J. Keats Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 37.

has a purpose and his eyes are bright with it."[31] Since artists have the added characteristic of self-effacement, their purpose is only to be read in their created works. So to understand the work of art requires an empathic response. However much Keats pursued the idea of death, his embrace of Chatterton was a force of life and a step in his growth to fellowship with essence, with the self-energizing power of poetry.

I will consider Chatterton primarily as a poetic influence on Keats's development, and secondly as a fine artist in his own right. As Robert Browning said,

> . . . there is fine, the finest poetry in Chatterton. And surely, when such an Adventurer so perishes in the Desert, we do not limit his discoveries to the last authenticated spot of ground he pitched tent upon, dug intrenchments round, and wrote good tidings home from - but rather give him the benefit of the very last heap of ashes we can trace him to have kindled, and call by his name the extreme point to which we can track his torn garments and abandoned treasures.[32]

Members of the Keats circle were quick to notice an affinity, more than sentimental, between the two young poets. Richard Woodhouse became a friend of Keats in December of 1817. Worried about Keats's negative speculations on the originality of genius, Woodhouse sent praise and encouragement in a letter dated October 21, 1818:

> I believe there has appeared <u>one</u> bard who "preserves his vessel" in purity independence and honour . . . shall he let "so fair a house fall to decay" - and shall he give the land which let

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[31] J. Keats, <u>Letters</u>, ed. R. Gittings, p. 229.

[32] R. Browning, <u>Essay on Chatterton</u>, ed. D. Smalley (Cambridge,

> Chatterton and K. White die of neglect and unkindness and neglect, - but which yet had retained the grace to weep over their ashes, as opportunity of redeeming its Character, and paying the vast great debt it yet owes to Genius? - Your conduct, my Dear Keats, must give these Questions an answer.33

Writing to Mary Frogley two days later, he again made the equation between the skill of Chatterton and Keats -- both needed time to stretch and try their wings.[34] And Woodhouse explained his kind behavior to Keats in the following manner to John Taylor:

> You are well acquainted with my good wishes towards Keats, as well as with their complete disinterestedness. Whatever People say they regret that they could not do for Shakespeare or Chatterton, because he did not live in their time, that I would embody into a Rational principle, and (with due regard to certain expediancies) do for Keats.35

When Keats shared lodgings with Bailey in Oxford during the writing of Endymion Book III, he read and discussed his favourite Chatterton:

> Everyone now knows what was then known to his friends that Keats was an ardent admirer of Chatterton. The melody of the "marvellous Boy who perished in his pride", enchanted the author of Endymion.36

Jane Porter, a friend of Woodhouse, wrote to Henry Neville, who

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Mass: Harvard U. Press, 1948), pp. 132-133.

[33]H.E. Rollins, ed., The Keats Circle (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U. Press, 1965), I, 50-51.

[34]Ibid., p. 83.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Ibid., II, 276-277.

married Woodhouse's niece, in December of 1818, with an interesting comment:

> I hope the ill-natured review will not have damped such true parnassian fire - it ought not: for when life is granted to the possessor, it always burns its brilliant way thro' every obstacle. Had Chatterton possessed sufficient manliness of mind to know the magnanimity of Patience and been aware that Great Talents have a Commission from Heaven he would not have deserted his post - and his name might have posed with Milton.37

Her letter praises "manliness of mind," a quality which the Victorians were to find lacking in Keats. She stresses the importance of "the magnanimity of Patience", the ability to await inspiration, or Negative Capability. The poetic talent is a "Commission from Heaven" which Keats firmly believed. And her reference to Chatterton and Milton hints at Keats's own use of Milton for his epic Hyperion. Because his fire was true and kindled to a degree by Chatterton, Keats burned through all obstacles and "posed" with the author of Paradise Lost.

Early reviewers often paired the names of Keats and Chatterton. One anonymous reviewer in the London Magazine, April, 1820, praised the promise of Endymion as equal to "some things of Chatterton." The "Ode to Sorrow" in Book IV merited particular favour:

> Perhaps we like it the better for its reminding us (we do not very well know why) of the little elegies that are especial favourites with us, - one by Chatterton, beginning 'O sing unto my roundelay;' - and the other by Kirkby White, 'Edwy, Edwy, ope they eye!'38

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37 H.E. Rollins, ed., The Keats Circle, I, 67-68.

38 P.G. Patmore, The London Magazine, Keats: The Critical

Richard Monkton Milnes, referring also to Endymion, compared the phenomenon of Keats's achievement to that of Chatterton.[39] A review in The Times seized upon the similarity of neglected talent and scorned the public for its hindsight:

> The instances are two out of many. The tale did not begin with "the marvellous boy, the sleepless soul, that perished in his pride"; it has not ended with Adonais, whose soul "like a star / Beacons from the abode where the eternal are".40

Finally, before Keats's poetic response to Chatterton is examined, an entry in the Encyclopedia Britannica for 1857 confirms the affinity traced to this point:

> After Chatterton, Keats is the most extraordinary phenomenon in our poetic literature; and, had life been granted to him, there is reason to believe he would have taken his place in the very first rank of English poets.41

It was the tragic myth that first aroused Keats's sympathy. The early sonnet "To Chatterton", dated February 1815, is full of romantic convention, but as noted earlier, its metaphors of blasted

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Heritage, ed. G.M. Matthews (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1971), p. 145.

[39]R.M. Milnes, Life Letters & Literary Remains of John Keats, Keats: The Critical Heritage, ed. G.M. Matthews, p. 317.

[40]S. Phillips, The Times, Sept. 19, 1848, Keats: The Critical Heritage, ed. G.M. Matthews, p. 320.

[41]A. Smith, The Encyclopedia Britannica, 1857, Keats: The Critical Heritage, ed., G.M. Matthews, p. 366.

growth hold the seed for a later and more mature influence. Keats's use of the word "amate" is a linguistic borrowing from Chatterton's Aella, first where Aella speaks to Birtha: "Thou doest mie thoughtes of paying love amate", "amate" glossed as "destroy", and then where Celmonde speaks to Birtha: "Ontylle thou doeste mie brendynge love amate", amate meaning "quench".[42] Keats refers to Chatterton's Death-filmed eyes "Whence Genius mildly flashed, and high debate." (11.4, p. 375) Keats's idea of the "Man of Genius", the man capable of immersion in art, was, to recall the discussion of Lowry's letter, fostered by poets like Chatterton. In addition, Keats's future dialectical philosophy of art and life is suggested by his discussion of the "Dear child of sorrow" in the opposing pairs of images, night and day, decay and birth, foul and fair, cold and warm.

In "To George Felton Matthew", written in November 1815, Keats advises his friend to think of past poets in order to grasp the muse of poetry. Significantly, the dynamic partners, Chatterton and Shakespeare, appear together:

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[42]T. Chatterton, The Works of Thomas Chatterton. In Three Volumes. (New York: AMS Press, 1971. A Facsimile edition of the 1803 edition edited by R. Southey and B. Cottle), II, 206, 299. I have chosen to use this edition of Chatterton's poetry because it is the edition that Keats read. (See my note at the opening of Chapter Two.) All subsequent quotations of Chatterton's poetry will be from this edition. In his Appendix C to the 1905 edition of Keats's poems, E. De Selincourt notes the borrowing of "amate" from Chatterton. The Poems of John Keats, ed. E. De Selincourt, (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1905), p. 597 & 611.

> Yet this is vain - O Mathew led they aid
> To find a place where I may greet the maid -
> Where we may soft humanity put on,
> And sit, and rhyme and think on Chatterton;
> And that warm-hearted Shakespeare sent to meet him
> Four laurell'd spirits, heaven-ward to entreat him.
> (ll. 53-58, p. 24)

Keats, luxuriating in a Huntian richness of style, considers the soft, romantic aspects of both poets.[43] His opinions later ripen, and of this future fullness Keats in "Sleep and Poetry" shows himself aware. He will perfect his style and so match the achievements of Shakespeare and Chatterton:

> Did ye never cluster round
> Delicious Avon, with a mournful sound,
> And weep? Or did ye wholly bid adieu
> To regions where no more the laurel grew?
> Or did ye stay to give a welcoming
> To some lone spirits who could proudly sing
> Their youth away, and die? 'Twas even so:
> But let me think away those times of woe:
> Now 'tis a fairer season; ye have breathed
> Rich benedictions o'er us; ye have wreathed
> Fresh garlands: for sweeter music has been heard
> In many places.
> (ll. 213-224, p. 47)

Keats shows a perceptive grasp of Chatterton's psychological state - like Wordsworth in "Resolution and Independence" he recognizes the artistic pride which urged Chatterton to his death.

During the writing of Endymion, Book III, with Bailey in Oxford, Keats was delighted with the rhythmic complexities of Aella. My later treatment of this metrical affinity will show that Chatterton's

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[43] E. Meyerstein, op, cit., p. 509.

effect was sustained throughout Keats's poetic development. As Keats matured, so did his conception of the "Lone spirit" who sang his youth away. In April of 1818 Keats dedicated his first major poem to an artist who had taken similar creative risks. The dedication's first draft is effusive, but confirms the intensity with which Keats read Chatterton:

INSCRIBED
With every feeling of pride and regret
And with a 'Bowed mind',
To the memory of
The most English of poets except Shakespeare
THOMAS CHATTERTON
(p. 462)

In his rejected first preface, Keats defiantly stated: "Should any one call my dedication to Chatterton affected I answer as followeth: 'Were I dead, Sir, I should like a Book dedicated to me'." (p. 463) The final inscription reads simply: "Inscribed to the memory of Thomas Chatterton."[44]

Keats's initial response to Chatterton was one of simple sympathy, conditioned by the Romantic myth. Because of his negative capability, this response ripened into an influence of major import for the life and art of Keats. The sympathetic imagination works in both a horizontal and vertical direction. To understand a work

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[44]E.W.H. Meyerstein, op.cit., pp. 510-511, suggests some interesting thematic parallels between Chatterton's life and the story of Endymion. I follow Meyerstein here, except in my conclusion as to who Glaucus represents. Briefly, Endymion, in love with the moon, and a figure for the poet, is a Chatterton type. In Book III a young poet revives the old and dead through creative interaction. The prophecy of

of genius or to create a work of genius demands total immersion in the spirit of that work. Such immersion involves an identification on the spiritual plane with the creator, if we are trying to understand that work, or with the very essence of the beautiful things we are shaping, if we are trying to create that work. Immersion, involvement, absorption in the life as seen through the art, is the horizontal direction. When we analyse in terms of form to understand a work, or concentrate on the aspects of form to create a work, the sympathetic imagination is functioning vertically. Both imaginative directions are essential to understanding and creation, and to each other:

> If we compare the Passions to different tons and hogsheads of wine in a vast cellar - thus it is - the poet by one cup should know the source of any particular wine without getting intoxicated - this is the highest exertion of Power and the next step is to paint from memory of gone self-storms.45

To see how Keats tasted Chatterton's poetic life without getting intoxicated, through an exertion of negative capability, and how he then painted from memory, through an intense analysis of poetic form,

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Glaucus's book is fulfilled by Endymion; as the pages of the book are torn and scattered upon the dead, a "lightning-swift" change occurs, for the lovers come to life. Chatterton revived an ancient time by moonlight and in the morning tore up his manuscripts. Endymion is a Chatterton figure who revives an older time, symbolized by Glaucus, and frees the creative spirit of poetry, symbolized by the entombed lovers.

[45]J. Keats, "Notes on Hazlitt's Characters of Shakespeare's Plays", The Poetical Works and Other Writings of John Keats, ed. H.B. Forman, revised M.B. Forman, V, 286. Cited as well by W.J. Bate, The Stylistic Development of Keats (New York: The Humanities Press, 1958), p. 45.

it is necessary to examine the life and the art of both men. Chapter Two will discuss biographical and philosophical affinities, focusing in particular on the four letters written by Keats where Chatterton is specifically mentioned, and which hereafter will be called the "Chatterton Letters". Chapter III, to complement the horizontal imaginative movement which is the theme of Two, will treat the vertical direction, analysing the craft of both poets. Chapters Four and Five will discuss poetic parallels.

CHAPTER TWO

Life and Art. Biographical Similarities

From the evidence of the letters, Keats read Chatterton intensely five times.[1] The first reading occurred during the composition of Book III of Endymion in the fall of 1817.[2] Then in the spring of 1818 in Devon he turned again to Chatterton for the dedication of Endymion and for the inspiration of his lovely Devon songs. Possibly he connected the death of young Chatterton with the slow death at this time of Tom. As Keats worked through Book III of Hyperion in December of 1818 he was working through Chatterton's poetry; the changes in that book show the earlier poet's direct influence.[3]

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[1]The edition of Chatterton's poetry which Keats used was, I believe, the 1803 Southey & Cottle subscription edition, in three volumes entitled The Works of Thomas Chatterton, containing his life by G. Gregory, D.D., and Miscellaneous Poems. The edition, famous as it was, would have certainly been familiar to members of the Keats circle. If Keats did not own an edition (there is no mention of one in Charles Brown's list of books in Keats's library at his death), he could have borrowed Leigh Hunt's or Charles Cowden Clarke's. To support this conclusion is the opinion of H.E. Rollins, who in a note to Bailey's discussion of Keats and Chatterton in The Keats Circle, Vol. II, p. 276, says that Keats read Aella in the Southey & Cottle edition. Robert Gittings seconds Rollins in The Mask of Keats, p. 89. AMS Press in New York published a facsimile edition of this famous edition in 1969, and I used the second printing of this edition, 1971. Because my thesis is from Keats's point of view, I wished to use the edition which he read.

[2]B. Bailey to R.M. Milnes, Keats Circle, ed. H.E. Rollins, II, 276-277.

[3]Evidence for this reading is to be found in verbal parallels

The Gothic medievalism of The Eve of St. Agnes and The Eve of St. Mark with their "Mother Radcliffe" names indicated that in January and February of 1819, Keats had turned again to Chatterton. Finally, the ripeness of "To Autumn" and the two September letters from Winchester show that in that month of 1819 Keats had once more turned to Chatterton.[4] Major philosophical advances, as the letters will prove, and major stylistic developments as the poetry will prove, coincide with Keats's reading of Chatterton.

Thomas Chatterton was born near Bristol's Gothic cathedral, St. Mary Redcliffe, on November 20, 1752. Two months before his birth, the poet's father, a sexton of St. Mary's and a chorister there, had died. Chatterton, like Keats, was fatherless from youth. At five he was sent to Pyle Street School, but soon dismissed as impossible to teach. Mrs. Chatterton despaired of her son until

> he fell in love . . . with the illuminated capitals of an old musical manuscript in French, which enabled her, by taking advantage of the momentary passion, to initiate him in the alphabet. She taught him afterwards to read from an old black-lettered Testament .
>
> (Works, I, p. iv)

How much this sudden and passionate embrace of knowledge recalls Keats, who "ramped through the scenes of that, (not of this earth) that purely

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between Hyperion, III, The Battle of Hastings and The Vision of William Canynge; between To Fancy included in the journal letter of Dec. 16 to Jan. 4, 1819, and The Revenge, Chatterton's Burletta; between song experiments in this same letter and Chatterton's work in the same form.

[4]R. Gittings, The Mask of Keats, p. 88, for the idea of five distinct readings.

poetical romance [The Faerie Queene] like a young horse turned into a Spring meadow."[5] The musical quality of Chatterton's poetry perhaps springs from his initiation into literature by means of an old musical manuscript. His earliest reading was of antiquity and the ornate, two factors which reproduced themselves in the Rowley poems.

Because Colston's Charity School was designed to produce tradesmen, and because Chatterton had shown from earliest youth an artistic inclination, it was an unfortunate choice for his education. No green Enfield awaited him, but rather the drudgery of a mechanical training. (Works, I, p.v) One happy fact, however, was that Colston's had been erected on the site of a Carmelite priory, "known at the time of the Dissolution as White Friars . . . of which . . . several very ancient arches were still extant twenty-nine years after Chatterton's admission to the school."[6] Among these arches, Chatterton took on the persona of his monk, Thomas Rowley. Little emphasis was placed at Colston's on creative writing, nor did Chatterton show much initial interest in that direction. But here, upon the site of an old priory, dressed in a blue tunic and yellow stockings, and tonsured like his own monk, Chatterton discovered the idea of a medieval poetry. The school day was a long one, and at about ten Chatterton began to fill his time with reading. (Works, I, ix) From a circulating library he

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[5]C.C. Clarke, "Biographical Notes on Keats", in The Keats Circle, ed. H.E. Rollins, II, pp. 148-149.

[6]E. Meyerstein, A Life of Thomas Chatterton, p. 25.

borrowed works in history and divinity, laying the foundation for his version of fourteenth-century Bristol.

Both poets at an early age were apprenticed to a trade. With John Lambert, a scrivener, the fifteen-year old Chatterton furthered his reading in Shakespeare, Chaucer, and Percy, and began his Rowley poems. Keats escaped from Dr. Hammond's office to pass his free time at Enfield. Both poets loved walking in country meadows away from dusty streets, and show their love of natural scenes in vivid metaphorical description. It was surely Keats, and he voiced Chatterton's feelings, who contributed the following to Leigh Hunt's "A Now, Descriptive of a Hot Day":

> Now rooms with the sun upon them become intolerable; and the apothecary's apprentice with a bitterness beyond aloes, thinks of the pond he used to bathe in at school.7

Keats, however, began his great works after he left the medical profession, while Chatterton had nearly completed the Rowley corpus when he left Lambert and Bristol for London at seventeen.

The deaths of both poets have wrongly been attributed to women -- in Keats's case, Fanny Brawne, and in Chatterton's, a host of prostituted females. Ebenezer Sibley, an astrologer, included Chatterton's horoscope in his New and Complete Illustration of the Occult Sciences, published in 1797:

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[7]J. Keats, with L. Hunt, "A Now, Descriptive of a Hot Day", The Poetical Works and other Writings of John Keats, ed. H.B. Forman, revised M.B. Forman, V, 262.

> Finding himself encompassed with private enemies, surrounded with the evils of poverty, and destitute of every means of subsistence, he quitted Bristol, to try his future in the metropolis. Having fixed himself in private lodgings, he sought for bread through the medium of his literary talent, which falling short of his expectations, as well as of his merit, he most unfortunately fell into the hands of the lower order of prostitutes, by whom he was duped, diseased and finally deserted! In this deplorable situation he continued a few months, occasionally drudging for the booksellers, who neither having the generosity to reward him as he deserved, nor the spirit to advance upon the credit of his future productions, he at length, oppressed with poverty and disease, and overcome by despair, put an end to his existence, in the month of August, 1770, by a dose of poison, which he prepared with his own hand.8

As late as 1926, in Keats and Shakespeare, John Middleton Murry blamed Fanny for Keats's premature death, though he later retracted his negative opinion of Fanny in Keats (1955). Biographers of Chatterton have since seen a psychological instability to have been the cause of his suicide, rather than a dissolute character.

The affinities between the two poets are fascinating. Both demonstrated keen delight in antiquity, in the natural sciences, and in pictorial art, proven by Rowley's account of "The Ryse of Peynctcyne in Englande", by Keats's association with Haydon and knowledge of the visual arts,[9] and by the brilliant imagery of their poems. Further, both indulged their etymological interest by manipulating words and the meaning of words to create poetry. The

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[8]E. Sibley, A New and Complete Illustration of the Occult Sciences, p. 810, in E. Meyerstein, op. cit., p. 531.

[9]See Ian Jack's study of this aspect of the poet, Keats and the Mirror of Art (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967).

number of dictionaries owned by Keats and Chatterton affirms this particular affinity. Both suffered from a "horrid morbidity of Temperament",[10] and were inclined to be melancholy. The death obsession has been discussed in Chapter One; both poets were attracted by the idea of death and by its corollary, that life is an illusion. Compare Keats's view of death:

I

Can death be sleep, when life is but a dream,
And scenes of bliss pass as a phantom by?
The transient pleasures as a vision seem,
And yet we think the greatest pain's to die.

II

How strange it is that man on earth should roam,
And lead a life of woe, but not forsake
His rugged path; nor dare he view alone
His future doom which is but to awake.
("On Death", p. 426)

to Sir Charles Baldwin's statement from Chatterton's Bristowe Tragedie:

"Wee all must die", quod brave Syrr Charles;
"Of thatte I'm not affearde;
What bootes to lyve a little space?
"Thank Jesu, I'm prepar'd."
(II, p. 89)

"We all must die", quod Brave Syr Charles;
"What bootes ytte howe or whenne;
"Dethe y s the sure, the certaine fate
"Of all wee mortall menne."
(II, p. 93)

"Thenne welcome Dethe! for lyfe eterne
"I leave thys mortall lyfe:
"Farewell, vayne world, and all that's deare,
"Mie sonnes and lovynge wyfe;

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[10] J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 13.

"Nowe dethe as welcome to mee comes,
"As e'er the moneth of Maie;
"Nor woulde I even wyshe to lyve
"Wyth my dere wyfe to staie."
(II, pp. 97-98)

During the "moneth of Maie", enraptured by the song of a nightingale, it seemed to Keats a time "rich to die, / To cease upon the midnight with no pain" ("Ode to a Nightingale", VI, p. 208). Death at that moment was as welcome to him as the spring, a thought voiced by Sir Charles too.

Accounts by friends and relatives of both poets discuss the rapid shifts in mood from exuberance to despair. Meyerstein has compared their mercurial temperaments: "Keats, in the letter where he styled Chatterton 'the purest witer in the English language', spoke of 'my unsteady and vagarish disposition'. Chatterton's phrase in his will: 'The wild Expenses of a Poet's Brain' is equally apposite."[11] To complement this vagarish disposition, each poet displayed voracious and greatly varied habits of reading and writing. Said Haydon of Keats -- "One day he was full of an epic poem; the next day epic poems were splendid impositions on the world. Never for two days did he know his own intentions."[12] James Thistlethwaite's reference to Chatterton is similar:

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[11] E. Meyerstein, op. cit., p. 75.

[12] Ibid., p. 75.

> One day he might be found busily employed in the study of heraldry and English antiquities, both of which are numbered among the most favourite of his pursuits; the next discovered him deeply engaged, confounded and perplexed amidst the subtleties of metaphysical disquisition, or lost and bewildered in the abstruse labyrinth of mathematical researches; and then in an instance again neglected and thrown aside, to make room for music and astronomy, of both which sciences his knowledge was entirely confined to theory. Even physic was not without a charm to allure his imagination, and he would talk of Galen, Hyppocrates, and Paracelsus, with all the confidence and familiarity of a modern empiric. (Works, I XXXII) 13

Keats and Chatterton were chameleons in their reading as well as in their creations.

Both artists suffered misunderstanding as poets of mere sensual appeal. Any sympathetic analysis of their art will reveal that both men were highly efficient craftsmen, and that Keats learned from his predecessor. Methods of composition are also comparable. Chatterton closed his inspired "Elegy on the Death of Mr. Phillips" with this envoy:

> Observe in favour of an hobbling strain
> Neat as exported from the Parent brain,
> And each and every couplet I have penn'd,
> But little labor'd, and I never mend.
> (I, p. 222)

Keats likewise created in a "white heat", according to Richard Woodhouse:

> He is impatient of correcting, and says he would rather burn the piece in question and write anor or something else - "My judgement, (he says,) is as active while I am actually writing as my imaginn. In fact all my faculties are strongly excited and in their full (state) (vigour) play - And shall I afterwards,

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[13] Comparison made by Meyerstein, in op. cit., p. 75.

> when any imagination is idle, and the heat in which I wrote has cooled, (sit gone off,) sit down coldly to criticize when in Possn of only one faculty, what I have written when almost inspired."[14]

Considered separately, either the life or the art of a poet is mysterious and difficult to comprehend. With Chatterton and Keats, for both of whom life and art were one, the problem is compounded. An analysis of their lives and ideas will illumine their art and confirm the bond between them.

Chatterton's attitude to orthodox religion was ambiguous and uncertain, as was Keats's. He carried with him at all times his own personal creed:

> That God being incomprehensible it is not required of us to know the mysteries of the Trinity & c & c & c &
> That it matters not whether a Man is a Pagan Turk Jew or Christian if he acts according to the Religion he professes
> That if a man leads a good moral Life he is a Christian
> That the Stage is the best school of Morality
> and
> That the Church of Rome (Some Tricks of Priestcraft excepted) is certainly the true Church.[15]

In his first article Chatterton declares himself of Keats's party. He possesses that quality which forms a "Man of Achievement especially in Literature and which Shakespeare possessed so enormously -- I mean NEGATIVE CAPABILITY, that is when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason." He is able to catch the "Fine isolated verisimilitude"

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[14] H.E. Rollins, ed., The Keats Circle, I, 58.

[15] E. Meyerstein, op. cit., p. 317.

from "the Penetralium of mystery"; he is content with half knowledge.[16] Tolerance and sincerity are upheld in the second article, values which Keats in his concepts of sympathetic identification, and the pursuit of reality, revered. That morality is to be found in the process of living, in the gradual ripening of a man's intellect, is a recurrent Keatsian idea. We make ourselves and our morality by experiencing and living through good and evil. Therefore, to move on to the fourth article, on the stage where we see "the playing of different Natures with Joy and Sorrow",[17] morality as process is most fully envisaged. Although Chatterton is reiterating in part an eighteenth-century belief in the didactic quality of drama, in his fourth article, he is as well showing his affinity with the Keatsian idea of process. Both poets wrote dramatic poetry replete with an organic vision of life. Chatterton states that apart from a few strictures, the Church of Rome is the true church. His love of medieval Catholic England, of cathedral architecture, of religious art in stained-glass, music, and verse, is evidence that his belief was aesthetic rather than religious. Keats manifests a like response to the magnificence, spectacle and visual finery of the Catholic church. Robert Gittings has shown how the North-West windows of Stanstead Chapel influenced the heraldic descriptions in "The Eve of St. Agnes", and

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[16] J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 43.

[17] Ibid., p. 60.

how the East windows of that Chapel are reflected by the description of Bertha's book in "The Eve of St. Mark."[18] In both poems Keats seizes upon images of holy architecture. The Odes are filled with the censers of high mass, but Keats's Trinity of Heart, Mind, and Soul is rather unorthodox. Both poets gleaned from religious ceremony, and made that beauty their spiritual truth.

The remarkable spiritual affinity leads directly to a consideration of the Chatterton letters, those letters with specific references to the "Marvellous Boy", where proof of Chatterton's role in the progress of Keats's intellect is to be found. Keats first refers explicitly to Chatterton in a letter from Hampstead to George and Tom Keats, February 21, 1818. Because of his absorptive and diffusive mind, it is important to look both before and after each Chatterton letter, to set it in an intellectual landscape. Keats's thoughts on the relationship between the creative mind and human society precede the letter, a relationship which Chatterton was not able to maintain. Chapter One traced the weaving of the work of art; how one man is to understand another's invented product needs explanation:

> the Minds of Mortals are so different and bent on such diverse Journeys that it may at first appear impossible for any common taste and fellowship to exist between two or three under these suppositions - It is however quite the contrary - Minds would leave each other in contrary directions, traverse each other in Numberless points, and all [at] last greet each other at the

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[18] R. Gittings, John Keats: The Living Year (London: Wm. Heinemann Ltd., 1954), pp. 73, 87.

> Journeys end - A old Man and a child would talk together and the old Man be led on his Path and the child left thinking - Man should not dispute or assert but whisper results to his neighbour, and thus by every germ of Spirit sucking the Sap from mould ethereal every human might become great, and Humanity instead of being a wide heath of Furse and Briars with here and there a remote Oak or Pine, would become a great democracy of Forest Trees.19

It is only by empathic participation and immersion in the life of another that we can understand his art, for the life of every man is his work of art.

In Chatterton's Battle of Hastings and in Aella, the noble man is perpetually described as an oak, or pine, towering over the furse of his footman. Here is Aella:

> So have I sene a mountayne oak that longe
> Has caste his shadowe to the mountayne side,
> Brave all the wyndes, tho' ever they so stronge;
> And view the briers belowe with self-taught pride;
> But whan throwne downe by mightie thunder stroke
> He'de rather bee a bryer than an oke.
> (II, p. 380)

Keats's Hyperion makes use of many similar Miltonic metaphors, and his Titans are noble oaks in a shady forest. Although the oak-briar simile is a common one in English literature, it is one of Chatterton's favourite and most repeated metaphors, and Keats would certainly have noted the earlier poet's use of it. D'Avanzo notes the particular importance of the oak for Keats as a symbol of the oracular power of inspiration,[20] and so the use made by both poets of the oak-briar

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[19] J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 66.

[20] M.L. D'Avanzo, Keats's Metaphors for the Poetic Imagination (Dueham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1967), pp. 106-108.

relationship takes on more than traditional associations. Chatterton died before he progressed to a conception of all men as "oakes"; Keats foresaw a grand democracy of Forest Trees, perhaps remembering another poet's significant use of the metaphor.

In the letter itself, Keats expresses his disappointment with Hazlitt's treatment of Chatterton, in one of his series of lectures on the English Poets delivered in the late winter and early spring of that year. After quoting lines from "Resolution and Independence" on Chatterton and Burns, Hazlitt commented:

> I am loth to put asunder what so great an authority has joined together, but I cannot find in Chatterton's works anything so extraordinary as the age in which they were written. They have a facility, vigour, and knowledge, which were prodigious in a boy of sixteen, but which would not have been so in a man of twenty. He did not show extraordinary powers of genius but extraordinary precocity. Nor do I believe he would have written better had he lived. He knew this himself or he would have lived. Great geniuses like great kings have too much to think of to kill themselves.21

Keats thought differently. Chatterton was for him a man of genius - "Great as certain ethereal Chemicals operating on the Mass of neutral intellect -- but they have not any individuality, any determined Character."[22] As a poet Chatterton is everywhere and nowhere; his personality is diffused through his poetry; like a chameleon he blends into his art. "What shocks the virtuous philosopher", said Keats, "delights

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[21]W. Hazlitt, "The English Poets", in Meyerstein, op.cit., p. 513.

[22]J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 36.

the camelion Poet."[23] Two apposite remarks by Meyerstein suggest that Chatterton, like Keats, had a "poetical Character": "Apostate Will' is a key to much that is strange in the short life of this chameleon-like being." "There was a risk of starvation, but less so, surely, than in a score of cases, thanks to his improvisatory and chameleon-like faculties."[24] Chatterton's Rowley mask adds a further dimension to the shape-shifting nature of the man of genius. The poet is necessarily a Proteus or a chameleon in order, as Shelley stated, to "take the colour not only of what they feed on, but of the very leaves under which they pass."[25]

Artistry "cannot be matured by law and precept but by sensation and watchfulness." It demands instead a leap into the sea for "it must work out its own salvation in a man . . . That which is creative must create itself."[26] For a fourteen-year-old poet to claim authenticity for various medieval manuscripts is certainly an act of courage, and although many critics have faulted the poet for hiding behind his monk mask, the fiction demonstrates just as much the dramatic immersion of self into art, as it does an act of cowardice. In poetic creation, Chatterton annihilated himself and created not only

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[23] J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 229.

[24] E. Meyerstein, op. cit., pp. 46, 348.

[25] P.B. Shelley, Letters (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), II, 308.

[26] J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 156.

the magnificent Rowley poems, but a fictional envelope as well, in which to present them to a skeptical world. Hazlitt at the next lecture apologized for his remarks having offended anyone, and quoted the "Mynstrelles Songe" from Aella. But he maintained his cautious view of Chatterton: "It is his name, his youth, and what he might have lived to have done that excite our wonder and admiration. He has the same sort of posthumous fame that an actor of the last age has -- an abstracted reputation which is independent of anything we know of his works."[27] It is interesting that Keats, who attended this lecture, called his existence "posthumous", when, near death, he felt abstracted from his art and so from his life as well.[28]

On February 27, Keats followed his Chatterton letter with one to Taylor where he stated his three poetic axioms. First, poetry should "surprize by a fine excess and not by singularity."; second, poetry should arouse a complete response in the reader, leaving him content not breathless. Finally, poetry must be the result of an organic spontaneity. Keats responded intensely to Chatterton's poetry because it manifested these three axioms. Although Chatterton's archaisms in the Rowley poems could be and have been viewed as "singularity", Keats was not startled by them. They were rather part of

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[27]W. Hazlitt, "The English Poets", in Meyerstein, op. cit., p. 513

[28]J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 398.

the richness of the style, part of an "excess", and Keats's praise in the last two letters of Chatterton's language leaves no room for the possibility of "singularity".[29]

Sheer delight in sound, in colour, in music and metre, caused Chatterton to transmute the shape of words. Sometimes he copied words directly from Bailey's Universal Etymological English Dictionary or from Kersey's Dictionarium Anglo-Britannicum or from Percy's Reliques, or from Speght's Chaucer, "the glossary to which he carefully subscribed." (I, xxxiii)[30] Keats shared this delight in word texture, as his notes to Milton's Paradise Lost demonstrate:

> There is a cool pleasure in the very sound of vale.The english word is of the happiest chance. Milton has put vales of heaven & hell with the very utter affection and yearning of a great Poet. It is a sort of delphic Abstraction - a beautiful thing being made more beautiful by being reflected and put in a Mist.31

In Keats's library at his death were Bailey's Dictionary and Speght's Chaucer, showing his comparable interest in linguistics and the growth of language. Both poets used Percy's Reliques, a work which Meyerstein called "the efficient poetical cause of Rowley . . . a model to anyone who wished to produce antique verse, and appeal to his century at one

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[29] J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 69-70.

[30] E. Meyerstein, op. cit., p. 174.

[31] J. Keats, "Notes on Milton's Paradise Lost, in The Poetical Works and Other Writings of John Keats, ed. H.B. Forman, revised M.B. Forman, V, 295.

and the same time."[32] When copied words were unsatisfactory, then Chatterton took a word root and varied its ending to suit his metre. He would coin words on a logical or an imaginative basis, and at all times he was untrammelled by the rules of spelling and grammar.[33] Single words do not leap out at the reader. The total effect of Chatterton's style elicits a complete response because "the rise, the progress, the setting of the imagery "comes as naturally as the sun. It shines and sets magnificently, "leaving [one] in the luxury of twilight."[34]

In April of 1819 from Devon, Keats wrote to Reynolds referring to both the first draft of the Endymion preface and the dedication. His Devon songs show an affinity both philosophic and stylistic with Chatterton's lyrics that will be discussed in Chapters Three and Four. Keats in the letter tells how he regards the public as his enemy; only the principle of beauty and the memory of great men can make him humble. Again a likeness of temperament is to be noted, for on December 20, 1769, after his satiric "Epistle to The Rev. Mr. Catcott", Chatterton added a note in which he justified his barbs: "The many admirers of Mr. Catcott may on perusal of this rank me as an Enemy: But I am indifferent in all things, I value neither the praise nor the

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[32] E. Meyerstein, op. cit., pp. 56-57.

[33] Ibid., p. 174.

[34] J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 70.

censure of the Multitude." (I, p. 107) And Keats: "I could not live without the love of my friends -- I would jump down Aetna for any great Public good -- but I hate a Mawkish Popularity -- I cannot be subdued before them."[35] It was the principle of beauty alone which made Keats and Chatterton humble, and which led Chatterton to the creation of an entire elite devoted to such a principle.

A considerable time elapses before Keats mentions Chatterton again, but the letter of September 21, 1819 from gothic Winchester to Reynolds, shows that Keats has not forgotten but has matured his conception of Chatterton:

> I always somehow associate Chatterton with autumn. He is the purest writer in the English language. He has no French idiom, or particles like Chaucer - 'tis genuine English Idiom in English words.36

With autumn Keats associates Chatterton. Thus a spiritual affinity with his ideas of death-in-life, of process, and of harvest is first mentioned. Then Chatterton as a craftsman of the English language is treated. The boy poet had revived a pre-Norman vocabulary, trying to keep his words Saxon and free of French or Latin influence. He went to a time before Chaucer, who according to Percy, "made considerable innovations in his mother tongue and introduced many terms and new modes of speech from other languages."[37] Similarly, Keats

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[35]J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 85.

[36]Ibid., p. 292.

[37]T. Percy, Reliques of Ancient English Poetry (Edinburgh:

progressed to a more native, consonantal, natural English. From Hyperion through "The Eve Of St. Agnes", "The Eve of St. Mark", the Odes, excepting Lamia, and The Fall of Hyperion, to "Autumn", Keats's increasing use of short, consonantal native words and falling use of Latinate words is apparent.[38] His concern for concreteness in the texture of poetry, for a beautiful communication of truth, simple but intense, determines this development.

"Miltonic verse cannot be written but in an artful or rather an artist's humour. I wish to give myself up to other sensations. English ought to be kept up."[39] The next Chatterton letter will clarify what Keats finally pinpointed in Milton that he disliked. Just as Chatterton had rejected the Miltonisms and Latinate phrasings of his own time and turned to a simpler style, so Keats, in order to keep up his delight in language, gave himself up to an appreciation of those poets, who, like Chatterton and Shakespeare, wrote from their native hearts in their native tongues.

In his letter of the same day to Woodhouse, Keats sends his ode "To Autumn", and some lines from The Fall of Hyperion. The ode illustrates both his spiritual and his technical bond with Chatterton.

James Nichol, 1858), II, 5.

[38]W.J. Bate, The Stylistic Development of Keats, pp. 66, 92, 134, 182.

[39]J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 292.

The ripeness of its theme of endurance and of the coalescense of pain and pleasure, echoes the poignancy of Aella's songs; its monosyllabic native words give the ode an organic natural appeal. In the Fall, although polysyllabic and latinate words replace a consonantal texture,[40] Keats uses fewer and shorter extended metaphors, which parallel the simpler, more direct comparisons of Chatterton in his Battle of Hastings. One other, perhaps incidental, effect of Keats's absorption of Chatterton is his decision to take up a journalistic career: "I am determined to take up my abode in a cheap lodging in Town and get employment in some of our elegant Periodical Works -- I will no longer live upon hopes."[41] This decision parallels Chatterton's move to London in order to make his fame in the periodicals. "My first attempt", said Chatterton,

> shall be in the literary way. The promises I have received are sufficient to dispell doubts; but should I, contrary to my expectations, find myself deceived, I will in that case turn methodist preacher: Credulity is as potent a deity as ever, and a new sect may easily be deceived. But if that too should fail me, my last and final resort is a pistol.
> (I, lii)

The final Chatterton letter is again written from Winchester. The gothic architecture of that city, and Keats's love of the cathedral, parallel Chatterton's love of gothic Bristol and St. Mary Redcliffe. The whole journal letter to George and Georgiana from September 17 to 27 bears consideration. Since Keats's thought process is alchemic,

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[40] W.J. Bate, The Stylistic Development of Keats, p. 177.

[41] J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 297.

although an idea may be mentioned specifically only once, that idea diffuses itself throughout the whole time in which it is being entertained. Chatterton's influence is directly referred to once, but the elements of his effect reveal themselves everywhere in the letter. "I have pass'd my time in reading, writing and fretting", says Keats -- "the last I intend to give up and stick to the other two. They are the only chances of benefit to us."[42] He tries to dispell his fears about Otho, seeing the tragedy as a source of financial hope. Actual difficulties will be met. "I feel I can bear real ills better than imaginary ones."[43] With their tendency to be morbid, both Keats and Chatterton were on more stable ground dealing with real ills. The factors contributing to Chatterton's suicide were various but of special importance were a persecution complex and tyrannical pride. He could bear real hunger and poverty, but to imagine himself a failure as an artist was overwhelming.[44]

Winchester is "a respectable, ancient aristocratical place", like Rowley's Bristol, with its "fetive pile", St. Mary Redcliffe, "The pride of Brystowe and the Westerne lande." (II, p. 110) After

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[42]J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, pp. 304-305.

[43]Ibid., p. 405.

[44]E. Meyerstein, op. cit., p. 433. The legend of the loaf of bread confirms this burning pride which led to self-destruction.

discussing his interest in Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, further evidence of an affinity with Chatterton's gloomy temperament, and the prospect of political writing which Chatterton also attempted, Keats returns to the idea of place in poetry. Because he is an empathic poet, Keats must imagine himself into experience before he can recreate it. That is why his task is harder than Byron's whose life was not figurative, although he cut a figure. "He describes what he sees", writes Keats, "I describe what I imagine -- Mine is the hardest task."[45] Imaginative seeing recreates beauty -- "The great beauty of Poetry is that it makes every place interesting." So Chatterton's figurative poetry made Bristol fascinating. Poetical mood is born of a concrete situation, which is itself imaginatively perceived. "In the spirit of Town quietude" Keats began "The Eve of St. Mark", which he hopes will give "the sensation of walking about an old country town", surprize by a fine excess, seem a remembrance, and leave the reader content, because it has grown naturally from empathy. Chatterton's old poems give us the sense of walking in ancient towns at twilight. "The Eve of St. Mark" recaptures this Chattertonian medieval setting,[46] and its couplet rhyme and four foot metre recall The Songe of Seyncte Baldywynne. Keats's experiment in medieval linguistics directly reveals Chatterton's presence:

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[45]J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 314.

[46]R. Gittings, John Keats (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1965), p. 288.

Gif ye wol stonden hardie wight -
Amiddes of the blacke night -
Righte in the churche porch, pardie
Ye wol behold a companie
Appouchen thee full dolourouse.
(The Eve of St. Mark", ll. 98, p. 359)

When he was a student at St. Thomas's Hospital, Keats composed a similar medieval fragment, which, despite Forman's comments to the contrary, reveals an early interest in linguistic experimentation and so in Chatterton:

> Whenne Alexandre the Conqueroure was wayfayringe in ye londe of Inde, there mette hym a damoselle of marvellouse beautie slepynge uponne the herbys and flourys. He coldne ne loke uponne her withouten grete plesaunce, and he was welle nighe loste in wondrement. Her forme was everyche whyttle lyke ye fayrest carvynge of Quene Cythere, onlie thatte yt was swellyd and blushyd wyth warmth and lyffe wythalle . . . The authoure was goynge onne withouten descrybynge ye ladye's breste, whenne lo, a genyus appearyed - 'Cuthberte', sayeth he, 'an thou canst not descrybe ye ladye's breste, and fynde a similie thereunto, I forbyde thee to procede yn thy romaunt.' Thys, I kennd full well, far surpassyd my feble powres, and forthwythe I was fayne to droppe my quille.47

Ford quoted the last paragraph of this fragment to show the origin of Keats's progression to a concrete embodiment of the prefigurative vision.[48]

Keats refers to his desire to compose without fever, with a "more thoughtful and quiet power."[49] As he lives "Kepen in solitariness",

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[47]J. Keats, "A Scrap written in the lecture-room at St. Thomas Hospital," in The Poetical Works and other Writings of John Keats, ed. H.B. Forman, M.B. Forman, V, pp. 321-322.

[48]N.F. Ford, The Prefigurative Imagination of John Keats (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1966), p. 126.

[49]J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 322.

he responds more quietly to artistic influences. It is the total effect of Chatterton that Keats now discusses. While the spiritual link is diffused throughout the letter, the linguistic link is direct:

> I shall never become attach'd to a foreign idiom so as to put it into my writings. The Paradise lost though so fine in itself is a corruption of our language - it should be kept as it is unique - a curiosity, a beautiful and grand Curiosity. The most remarkable Production of the world- a northern dialect accomodating itself to greek and latin inversions and intonations. The purest english I think - or what ought to be the purest - is Chatterton's - The Language had existed long enough to be entirely uncorrupted of Chaucer's gallicisms and still the old words are used - Chatterton's language is entirely northern - I prefer the native music of it to Milton's cut by feet. I have but lately stood on my guard against Milton. Life to him could be death to me. Miltonic verse cannot be written but [in] the vein of art - I wish to devote myself to another sensation.50

Shortly after this letter, in October, Keats abandoned The Fall of Hyperion, and the reason is to be found above.[51] Milton's verse, with its regular metre determined by feet, was incompatible with the free stress rhythm that Keats was developing. Paradise Lost is a strange blend of quantitative and qualitative rhythm - Keats wanted pure and simple stress patterns in his poetry, and these he found in the revived song rhythms of Chatterton. As in the previous Chatterton letter, here again Chaucer is viewed as the poet who first introduced the French and Italianate idiom into English poetry. Keats follows Chatterton's lead in seeking a language free of foreign influence. By his adjective

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[50] J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 325-26.

[51] R. Gittings, John Keats, p. 350.

"northern" Keats means uncorrupted Anglo-Saxon English. Northern England was slow to respond to French culture: dialect there remained for the longest time unadulterated. In the introduction to his dictionary, which was read by both poets, Bailey traces the language shifts from the Roman Conquest to the Norman Invasion. He cites examples of the Anglo-Saxon tongue and concludes this way: "By these influences it does appear that the ENGLISH SAXON Language of which the NORMANS despoiled us in great Part, had its Beauties, was Significant and Emphatical, and preferable to what they imposed upon us."[52] Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, with its retention of Anglo-Saxon alliterative stress rhythm, is a more purely "English" work than the soft and lyrical rhythms of Chaucer. In his "Essay on the Ancient Minstrels", introducing the Reliques, Percy makes a similar comparison between Northern and Southern poetic forms. Both poets were familiar with Percy's work, and Keats perhaps based his comparison on this essay:

> The old Minstrel-ballads are in the northern dialect, abound with antique words and phrases, are extremely incorrect, and run into the utmost licence of metre; they have also a romantic wildness, and are in the true spirit of chivalry. The other sort are written in exacter measure, have a low or subordinate correctness, sometimes bordering on the insipid, yet often well adapted to the pathetic; these are generally in the southern dialect, exhibit a modern phraseology, and are commonly descriptive of more modern manners.53

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[52]N. Bailey, An Universal Etymologial English Dictionary (Second Edition. London: Printed for E. Bell, J. Darby, A. Bettesworth, F. Fayram, J. Pemberton, J. Hooke, C. Rivington, F. Clay, J. Batley, & E. Symon, 1724), Introduction.

[53]T. Percy, "Essay on the Ancient Minstrels", Reliques, I, . lvii.

Percy's account of the old northern ballads could easily apply to any of Chatterton's Rowley poems -- both Keats and Chatterton had for their artistic goals a simple and non-latinate poetic form.

In the remainder of the letter, Keats returns to his idea of negative capability and how it works in life and friendship. Because Dilke has made up his mind about everything, he cannot forget himself and participate in the lives of others. His identity depends upon preconceived notions, not, as it creatively should, upon an immersion into mysteries and doubts. Keats would have Dilke share his identity with others, as the empathic and dramatic poets, Shakespeare and Chatterton, do with their characters. He ends the letter by quoting lines from his own drama, Otho the Great, lines which embody the metaphor of shared identity. Because "the poetical character", the character of Shakespeare, Chatterton, and Keats, "has no self", is "everything and nothing", "enjoys light and shade", and "lives in gusto, "It has as much delight in conceiving an Iago as an Imogen,"[54] in conceiving a Celmonde as a Birtha, in conceiving a Conrad as an Ermina. The Creative sensation to which Keats devoted himself, through the influence of Chatterton, will be discussed in Chapter Three. It was the sensation of the drama. His poetry, like Chatterton's, does not put its hands in its pockets if we disagree, but rather leads us gently on a dramatic passage "towards all the two and thirty Pallaces."[55]

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[54]J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 157.

[55]Ibid., p. 65.

There are interesting parallels between the lives of Chatterton and Keats. Because Keats was the kind of poet for whom life, lived intensely, was real and creative, for whom life was art, this evidence of parallels becomes significant in terms of an understanding of his poetry. Any life is a potential work of art -- it takes a man of Genius to create out of that life by living into it. Keats was moved by Chatterton first because Chatterton lived most creatively in his works, diffusing himself throughout. Secondly, Keats found in his reading of this emphatic poet, new vehicles of expression which he could use in his own creative process. The Chatterton letters show how powerfully the dual influence of that poet's life and art affected Keats. From his reading of poets like Chatterton, Keats formulated his aesthetics, based on the ideas of life as an allegory, negative capability, life as the art of soul-making, and intensity as the criterion of truth in art. Having discussed in terms of life and artistic philosophy Keats's horizontal immersion in Chatterton's poetry, it is now time to consider the vertical direction of his imagination.

CHAPTER THREE

"White Simplicity". The Craftsmanship of Keats and Chatterton

> Craftsmanship is the skill with which the poet turns his subconscious treasures to account. Without that application, no matter how deft it may be, mere skill, operating as it were, in the air, will only approximate and imitate and endeavour to to deceive. It is a thing done with the hands, a legerdemain, not magic.[1]

While Keats knew that Shelley was no trickster, he was still concerned that Shelley would not "turn his subconscious treasure to account." Spiritual vision may be the artist's God, but he must serve Mammon and put that vision into physical terms. Keats's words for the craft of poetry are remarkably similar to Aiken's idea of the spiritual treasure -- Shelley ought to load every rift of his subject with ore, and be more of a craftsman. The artist who can translate his spiritual flights into gold is the true magician. He demands and gets total participation from his readers; his poetry is truly dramatic.

The concentration which craftsmanship demands can appear a sort of selfishness to the uninitiated. Keats and Chatterton knew better. When discussing the Romantic myth in Chapter One, I referred to this letter to Shelley in terms of immersion in form. In Chapter Two, I used the same letter to describe devotion to the principle of beauty. With his Rowley mask, Chatterton was a monk in his

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[1] C. Aiken, "Magic or Legerdemain", in A Reviewer's ABC, p. 45.

cloistered imagination. Keats lived more in the world, but both poets were craftsmen; both put their spiritual treasure to account and served Mammon. The magical synthesis of form and idea in poetry comes from craftsmanship, not artifice.

Craft begins with raw material. Chatterton found an edition of Camden's Britannica in Lambert's office to supplement his early reading in history and divinity at Colston's. "The Englysh Metamorphosis", loosely based on Canto X, Book II of Spenser's Fairie Queene, shows an awareness of English geology and geography. The whole Rowley circle, Thomas Rowley, William Canynge, John Iscam, Thybbot Gorges and others, each with his own documented history, the brilliant picture of fourteenth-century Bristol and its environs, the account of feasts and celebrations and births and deaths, however full of anachronisms, show a keen historical sense. From scanty sources, Chatterton made his history, and his productions are more vivid than factual truth.

The list of books found in Keats's library[2] includes a number of archeological, historical, and scientific works. John Potter's Archaeologica Graeca (London, 1804), Alexander Adam's Roman Antiquities (London, 1807), Edmund Davie's Celtic Researches (London, 1804), and Description Abrégée des Antiquities de la Ville de Nismes (Nismes, 1786), by Mr. B., indicate Keats's interest in the monuments of antiquity, as does his awe for the Elgin Marbles. Because Keats often feels

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[2]C. Brown, "List of Keats's Books", The Keats Circle, ed. H.E. Rollins, II, 253-260.

that his poetic wings are weighted by mortality, his aspirations in art, "Dimconceived glories of the brain / Bring round the heart an indescribable feud." ("On Seeing the Elgin Marbles", ll. 9-10, p. 376) The marbles arouse a similar feud in him, because they have permanently captured Keats's own struggle between aspiration and the mortal "Wasting of old Time." When Keats wrote his poem in March of 1817, he was still an immature poet; as he developed his technique he discovered the way to incorporate permanence in art with his conception of life as process. Chatterton's awe for St. Mary Redcliffe is comparable -- the architecture of that cathedral captured the struggle between time and eternity in such a glorious form that it represented to him the permanence of art. In his Rowley poems he attempted a like feat, by perfecting the form.

In the historical category, Keats owned Edward Spelman's Expedition of Cyrus, Vertot's Roman Revolutions, Livy's Roman History, Seldon's Titles of Honour, Voltaires's Siècle de Louis XIV, Raleigh's History of the World, Marmontel's Les Incas, and Malory's History of the Renouned Prince Arthur, King of Britain (London, 1816). Through craftsmanship the facts are remade. A guide book to Paris, and Atlas, and John Aiken's Natural History of the Year complete Keats's reading in history, science, archeology and geography.

Although both poets moved away from Chaucer's southern English, with its French idiom, they were well-acquainted, and to a certain extend influenced by his poetry. Keats owned two copies of Chaucer's

works, one a black-letter Speght edition, the edition which Chatterton used as well[3]. Chaucer was valued for his simplicity, his lyrical sweetness, and for his song-like rhythms, close to life's movement. Chatterton liked to think of his Rowley as a Chaucer incarnate, and he has John Ladgate compose the following lines of praise:

> Ynne Norman tymes, Turgotus and
> Goode Chaucer dydd excelle,
> Thenn Stowe, the Bryhtstowe Carmelyte,
> Dydd bare awaie the belle.
>
> Nowe Rowlie ynne these mokie dayes
> Lendes owte his sheenynge lyghtes,
> And Turgotus and Chaucer lyves
> In ev'ry lyne he wrytes.
> (II, p. 183)

Rowley revived Chaucerian forms, imagery, and naturalness, the aspects which Keats so loved in his reading of Chaucer as well:

> This pleasant tale is like a little copse:
> The honied lines do freshly interlace
> To keep the reader in so sweet a place,
> So that he here and there full-hearted stops;
> And oftentimes he feels the dewy drops
> Come cool and suddenly against his face,
> And by the wandering melody may trace
> Which way the tender-legged linnet hops.
> Oh! what a power hath White Simplicity!
> What mighty power has this gentle story!
> I that for ever feel athirst for glory
> Could at this moment be content to lie
> Meekly upon the grass, as those whose sobbings
> Were heard of none besides the mournful robins.
> (Written at the end of Chaucer's tale, "The Floure and The Lefe", p. 364.)

"White Simplicity" is the true craftsmanship which involves the reader in a total respnse. The third Minstrel's song in Aella sees "Autumpne"

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[3]C. Brown, "List of Books", The Keats Circle, ed. H.E. Rollins, II, 256.

as the time "Whanne al the hyls wythe woddie sede ys whyte" (II, p. 218). Keats first used this image of the white seed in his own autumn poem -- "and plump the hazel shells / With a sweet kernel" originally read "With a white kernel". The white ripeness of autumn involves man in process and growth; the white ripe simplicity of a poem makes a reader surrender his own spiritual treasure. It is quite possible that "White Simplicity" owes something to the "Autumpne" song in Aella.

Borrowings from Spenser and Shakespeare abound in the work of both poets. What is significant in their shared use of these two sources is the transmutation process which any borrowed forms or metaphors undergo. The Spenserian stanzas of "The Eve of St. Agnes" and The Battle of Hastings are remade, though informed by the presence of The Fairie Queene. The pain of Hyperion evokes Lear's pathos, and Aella's closing scenes recall Othello; neither poet is slavishly adhering to a Shakespearian model, but rather alchemically manipulating that influence. Many images as well as the ballad form from Percy's Reliques appear in Keats and Chatterton -- again the source is a catalyst, not a crutch. Finally the dictionary was used by both poets in their exploration of language. Keats owned a copy of Chatterton's favourite source -- Bailey's Dictionary, as well as Lempriere's Classical Dictionary, an abridged edition of Rober Ainsworth's Thesaurus Linguae Latinae Compendiarus, a French-Italian vocabulary, and Voltaire's Dictionary of Philosophy. Bailey's Introduction most surely would have appealed to the etymological interest of both poets:

> It ought, therefore, to be the special Care and study of every one who would have his Mind furnished with the useful Knowledge of Things of any kind, to get a True and Distinct Idea of the proper Sense and Meaning of Words, and Terms of Art, in which they are express'd, without which no good Progress can be made.4

Besides an inspired use of sources, craftsmanship demands great variety in form and much experimentation in style. The poetry of Keats and Chatterton can be divided into three main thematic modes, although Keats's poetry in the third category far outweighs the other two. The Satiric mode was used by both poets. Keats's Cap and Bells is his main effort in this area, while Chatterton wrote many bitter satires of eighteenth-century life and manners. These are his acknowledged pieces, and for the most part inferior to the Rowley poems. "Apostate Will", "Resignation", Kew Gardens, "The Whore of Babylon", The Consuliad, and "Epistle to the Rev. Mr. Catcott", show some poetic promise but are no match for Rowley. Similarly, Keats's Cap and Bells on the whole falls below the rank of his other work. The dramatic genius of both poets was not mocking but sympathetic; the negatively capable man makes a poor satirist.

Keats and Chatterton experimented with the historic mode of military drama. Otho the Great, Keats's melodrama, is constructed on a backdrop of war; King Stephen is a history play fragment with battle scenes; Goddwyn, Chatterton's dramatic fragment, is a fierce war tale; The Battle of Hastings shows a boyish love for blood-thirsty military

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[4]N. Bailey, An Universal Etymological English Dictionary, Intro.

adventure.

The third and largest thematic mode used by Keats and Chatterton is that of romance. In his review of "Edmund Kean as a Shakespearian Actor", Keats called Kean a "relict of romance" and a "Posthumous ray of chivalry". He advised the actor to be more solicitous of his health and have "a pity for us in these cold and enfeebling times! cheer us a little in the failure of our days! for romance lives but in books. The goblin is driven from the heath and the rainbow is robbed of its mystery."[5] Romance lives in the medieval poems of Chatterton and in Keats's love stories; the spirit of chivalry is revived by the figures of Aella and Porphyro. The poetry of romance is divine -- "It knows no stop in its delight, but 'goeth where it listeth' -- remaining however, in all men's hearts a perpetual and golden dream."[6] Witness Endymion, "Isabella", "The Eve of St. Agnes", "The Eve of St. Mark" and "La Belle Dame sans Merci", along with the African Eclogues, Aella, "The Storie of William Canynge", "An Excelente Balade of Charitie", and "The Tournament an Interlude".

Keats and Chatterton worked through many genres to perfect their magic. The dramatic mode is central in almost every poetic experiment, and this is a direct result of their empathic imaginations. The chameleon poet will be drawn naturally to dramatic representation

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[5]"On Edmund Kean as a Shakespearian Actor", The Poetical Works and other Writings Of John Keats, ed. H.B. Forman, revised M.B. Forman, V, 227, 232.

[6]"On Kean in Richard Duke of York", in op. cit., 238.

of his creative in-feeling.

> To be the living instrument in which the burden of the mystery would be borne, and through which it would find its life, was Keats's ultimate acceptance, and in that way of poetry the dramatic principle of objectivity as a balance to and expression of intensity of feeling came to be of great significance.7

Chatterton and Keats sought the balance in form between objective narrative and subjective lyric. They found that form in a dramatic poetry which revolves around the presentation of life as process. Aella and the Odes embody this blend of objective and subjective form; the approach of both poets

> was essentially dramatic rather than didactic . . . [they] merely present or narrate. Even in the lyrics, a form in which by definition and convention the author directly expresses his own feelings and reactions, [they] often remain in the background . . . Keats [and Chatterton] allow [their] own attitudes to take on the tincture or bent of the symbol.8

Since life was art for both poets, and full of uncertainties, mysteries and doubts, the best way of coping with that life was in dramatic form, for "the only art to be made out of uncertainty is drama."[9] The poet's identity is in the objects of his imagination; he is the voice of life, whether that life is expressed in a narrative or a lyrical form:

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[7] B. Slote, Keats and the Dramatic Principle (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1956), p. 5.

[8] D. Perkins, The Quest for Permanence (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1965), p. 196.

[9] Ibid., p. 297.

Where's the Poet? show him! show him!
Muses nine! That I may know him!
'Tis the man who with a man
Is an equal, be he King,
Or poorest of the beggar-clan,
Or any other wondrous thing
A man may be 'twixt ape and Plato;
'Tis the man who with a bird,
Wren or Eagle, finds his way to
All its instincts; he hath heard
The Lion's roaring, and can tell
What his horny throat expresseth,
And to him the Tiger's yell
Comes articulate and presseth
On his ear like mother-tongue.
("Where's the Poet", pp. 393-394)

Three narrative forms, ballad, epic, and romance were used by both poets. Wordsworth had revived the ballad form's simplicity and flowing metres in the Lyrical Ballads; Coleridge's Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner confirmed the popularity of the ballad technique. The great impetus for the ballad rebirth was Percy's Reliques. Keats would naturally have been familiar with this revival of older forms, and his interest found a ready example in Chatterton's poems. "La Belle Dame sans Merci" has the round form and stanza rhyme (abcb) of the traditional ballad. Keats varies the traditional rhythms by giving lines one, two and three four stressed syllables, instead of giving just lines one and three stresses. Line four has the usual three heavy stresses. This change weights Keats's stanza and effectively slows down the normally fast-paced ballad. His subject is profound enough to warrant such a rhythmic variation, and the change gives the ballad form an incantatory quality. A simple form for a complex idea was chosen by Keats to discuss the failure of vision

and the tragic shift from dream to deathly illusion:

> And this is why I sojourn here
> Alone and palely loitering,
> Though the sedge has wither'd from the lake,
> And no birds sing.
> ("La Belle Dame sans Merci", XII, p. 351)

Keats's Knight is death-in-life; Chatterton's Syr Charles Baldwin is life-in-death. In "The Bristowe Tragedie", Chatterton uses traditional ballad form to present a man's victory over death. The light in his poem is as cold and wintery as that light in "La Belle Dame", but Syr Charles suffers no illusion. His dream remains bright; the birds continue to sing in this poem:

> The feathered songster chaunticleer
> Han wounde hys bugle horne,
> And told the earlie villager
> The commynge of the morne:
>
> King EDWARD sawe the ruddie streakes
> Of lyghte eclypse the greie;
> And herde the raven's crokynge throte
> Proclayme the fated daie.
> (II, p. 87)

Chatterton's ballad is more metrically regular than "La Belle Dame" but Keats seized upon "The Bristowe Tragedie" for artistic treatment of the theme of life-in-death, and reflected that form in his reversed version of the theme of death-in-life. The dawn metaphor which begins Chatterton's poem, where the coming of light is described from the perspective of those who await it in darkness, influenced Keats's dramatic "felt" dawn in Hyperion:

> In pale and silver silence they remained,
> Till suddenly a splendour, like the morn,
> Pervaded all the beetling gloomy steeps,
> All the sad spaces of oblivion,
> And every gulf, and every chasm old,

> And every height, and every sullen depth,
> Voiceless, or hoarse with loud tormented streams:
> And all the everlasting cataracts,
> And all the headlong torrents far and near,
> Mantled before in darkness and huge shade,
> Now saw the light and made it terrible.
> It was Hyperion.
> (Hyperion, II, ll. 356-367, p. 238-239)

Finally, that Keats knew this poem well is affirmed by the comment of Jonathan Henry Christie, a friend of Benjamin Bailey in Notes and Queries, August 24, 1872: "I never saw the poet Keats but once, but then he read me some lines from (I think) the 'Bristowe Tragedie' with an enthusiasm of admiration such as could only be felt by a poet."[10]

Milton's epic style influenced Keats in his own epic Hyperion; Chatterton chose the Spenserian stanza of The Faerie Queene for his epic model in The Battle of Hastings. Neither poem on analysis can be related so simply to a predecessor. Chatterton's poem is full of the extended Miltonic metaphor; thus Keats found another model besides the originator Milton, for his own Hyperion similes. Keats in Book III of his epic returns to the lushness of Faerie land although maintaining Milton's blank verse form. The return to a more naturalistic, rich metaphorical description is due to the epic vision of both Chatterton and Spenser.

For his romance "Isabella", Keats chose Ottava Rima, perhaps not the best choice for a sentimental tale, because the firm con-

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[10] J. Keats, The Letters of John Keats, ed. H.E. Rollins (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), II, 167.

cluding couplet often jars with the lyric softness of the preceding alternately rhymed lines. Still a romance needs strictness of form to avoid diffuseness and Keats's poem is effective for its control of sentimental material. Keats perhaps chose this particular form because Chatterton used it to introduce his great romance Aella. Rowley's letter to "The Dynge Mastre Canynge" is better suited to ottava rima because it is a criticism of contemporary poetic techniques and a statement of Rowley's artistic credo. Those stanzas in "Isabella" best suited to their form are ones where Keats parallels Rowley's artistic beliefs. Rowley will not be confined to historical truth:

> Canynge and I from common course dyssente;
> Wee ryde the stede, but yev to hym the reene;
> Ne wylle betweene crased molterynge bookes bespente,
> Botte soare on hyghe, and yn the sonne-bemes sheene;
> And where wee kenn somme ishad flowres besprente,
> We take ytte, and from oulde rouste doe ytte clene;
> Wee wylle ne cheynedd to one pasture bee,
> Botte sometymes soare 'bove trouthe of hystorie.
> (II, pp. 197-198)

Nor will Keats, as he pays his respects to Boccaccio:

> Grant thou a pardon here, and then the tale
> Shall move on soberly, as it is meet;
> There is no other crime, no made assail
> To make old prose in modern rhyme more sweet:
> But it is done - succeed the verse or fail -
> To honour thee, and thy gone spirit greet;
> To stead thee as a verse in English tongue,
> An echo of thee in the north-wind sung.
> ("Isabella", XX, p. 184)

If it is to be of any value, the poetry of romance must reach for a truth beyond history and prose, in both form and idea. Rowley complains that "pynant historie ys onlie grace", and that "Shaplie poesie hast loste ytts powers"; (II p. 195) so Keats after relating

the gruesome facts of Boccaccio's prose tale calls for gentle romance to sooth the soul:

> Ah! wherefore all this wormy circumstance?
> Why linger at the yawning tomb so long?
> O for the gentleness of old Romance,
> The simple plaining of a minstrel's song!
> Fair reader, at the old tale take a glance,
> For here, in truth, it doth not well belong
> To speak: - O turn thee to the very tale
> And taste the music of that vision pale.
> ("Isabella", XLIX, p. 191)

The fourth line of this stanza read originally "The simple plaining of the minstrels' song", which confirms the influence of Aella with its famous "Mynstrelles Songe".[11] Ottava rima, then, as a choice for a narrative romance, found justification in the introductory letter to Aella. In addition, the romantic genre itself was praised by Rowley in his verses to Canynge.

In the narrative genre, ballad, epic, and metric romance, drama resides in the objective presentation of a situation which necessarily involves the reader in sympathetic response. Similarly, in the lyrical genres of Keats and Chatterton, sonnet, song, elegy, and ode, the reader is involved because although the poet expresses a personal belief, he presents conflict in such a way that the reader can participate. The early sonnets of both poets are conventional, but show signs of this dramatic development. The growth metaphor of "To Chatterton"

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[11] R. Gittings, The Mask of Keats, p. 92.

became a symbol of life's ripening process in "To Autumn". The seasonal imagery in "To Miss Hoyland, 1768" (I, p. 91) prefigures full dramatic use of that imagery in Aella and The Battle of Hastings, where characters are completely identified with natural process, where Birtha is Flora and "flourishes in new-born pride"; where Aella is the "tempestuous roar", and where their sorrow is a symbol of all the troubles of human life.

The songs of both Keats and Chatterton owe much to their Elizabethan master, Shakespeare. In his attempts to find a better sonnet form,[12] Keats experimented with many song metres. All the Romantics used song as a vehicle for personal expression -- Keats made his songs particularly dramatic by leaving himself out of the melody. "To Fancy" discusses the cloying of pleasure that stays at home. Only the dramatic imagination, which soars above time, knows no spoiling. Although a song is written from the heart, the fancy which creates that song must be free:

> Break the mesh
> Of the Fancy's silken leash;
> Quickly break her prison-string
> And such joys as these she'll bring.-
> Let the winged Fancy roam,
> Pleasure never is at home.
> ("To Fancy", ll. 89-94, p. 215)

Keats's poem "Fancy" owes much to the songs in Chatterton's Burletta,

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[12] J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 194.

The Revenge. This spirited work describes literally the cloying of a spouse upon the palate, and the desire to freely taste love everywhere. Juno and Jupiter are tired of each other, and Juno sings accordingly:[13]

> When a woman's ty'd down
> To a spiritless log,
> Let her fondle or frown,
> Yet still he's a clog.
>
> Let her please her own mind,
> Abroad let her roam;
> Abroad she may find,
> What she can't find at home.
> (I, p. 239)

A clog-like husband parallels the leash which confines Fancy, and Chatterton's second stanza is directly repeated by the opening of Keats's poem, "Ever let the Fancy roam, / Pleasure never is at home." (ll. 1-2, p. 212) Keats's rapid metre has its model in the Burletta song as well.[14]

The divine effects of music and love are celebrated in the songs of both poets. "Bards of Passion", included with "Fancy" in the letter of December 16 to January 4, 1818, 1819, to George and Georgiana Keats, is on "the double immortality of Poets." [15]

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[13]Nai-Tung Ting, "The Influence of Chatterton on Keats", The Keats-Shelley Journal, Vol. V, Winter 1956, p. 104.

[14]E. De Sélincourt, op. cit., p. 621 notes that an archaic word in "Fancy", "shoon", Line 21, was one that Keats probably borrowed from Chatterton's Rowley poems.

[15]J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 193.

The faint echoes of truth heard in an earthly Nightingale's song are

> divine melodious truth;
> Philosophic numbers smooth;
> Tales and golden histories
> Of Heaven and its mysteries,
> ("Bards of Passion", ll. 19-22, p. 215)

in the new regions of heaven which await the intense poet. Chatterton writes comically about the pleasures of the immortals in his Burletta. In the end, Cupid and Bacchus are reconciled to one another, and the double pleasure of poetic immortality is confirmed. In the setting of a celestial Mermaid Tavern:

> Love and wine uniting,
> Rule without controul;
> Are to the sense delighting,
> And captivate the soul.
>
> Love and wine uniting,
> Are everywhere ador'd;
> Their pleasures are inviting,
> All heav'n they can afford.
> (I, p. 270)

Keats was undoubtedly influenced by the songs in Chatterton's Burletta. He calls "Fancy" and "Bards of Passion"

> specimens of a sort of rondeau which I think I shall become partial to - because you have one idea amplified with greater ease and more delight and freedom than in the sonnet - It is my intention to wait a few years before I publish any minor poems - and then I hope to have a volume of some worth - and which those people will realish who cannot bear the burthen of a long poem.16

From the lyrical sonnet, Keats progressed to the dramatic song, and hoped to perfect his work in that genre. He concludes his comments

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[16] J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 194.

to his brother and sister-in-law with a pretty song that reiterates the idea of tethered fancy, and the cloyed passions of earthly realms. He "wrote it off to some Music as it was playing ":

> I had a dove and the sweet dove died;
> And I have thought it died of grieving:
> O what could it grieve for? Its feet were tied,
> With a silken thread of my own hands weaving;
> Sweet little red feet! why should you die -
> Why should you leave me, sweet dove! why?
> You liv'd alone on the forest tree,
> Why, pretty thing! could you not live with me?
> I kiss'd you oft and gave you white peas;
> Why not live sweetly, as in the green trees?
> (p. 345)

Keats's odes, and the odes "To Pan" and "To Sorrow" in Endymion show his success in combining the narrative and lyric genres through a dramatic presentation of life's dialectic. I have not the space here to examine any of these complex poems in depth, but will show how "To Sorrow" and "To Autumn" draw from Chatterton's Elegy, "Joyless I seek the solitary Shade", and "Elegy on the Death of Mr. Phillips", for theme and imagery.

Keats called his "Ode to Sorrow" a "roundelay", suggesting the connection with the "Acorne Coppe" roundelay in Aella. The Indian Maid sings of the interpenetration of joy and sorrow, which occurs to such a degree that they are indistinguishable. Her mood echoes Chatterton's: "Joyless I seek the solitary shade, / Where dusky Contemplation veils the scene." "Nature seems to mourn the dying view", says Chatterton, a phenomenon noted by the Maid:

> O Sorrow,
> Why dost borrow
> Heart's lightness from the merriment of May?
> (Endymion, IV, ll. 164-166, p. 136)

Nature participates in the identification of joy and sorrow to make the sad mind more melancholy:

> The bubbling brooks in plaintive murmurs roll,
> The bird of omen, with incessant scream,
> To melancholy thoughts awakes the soul,
> And lulls the mind to contemplation's dream.
> (I, p. 65)

So the Indian Maid affirms:

> O Sorrow,
> Why dost borrow
> The mellow ditties from a mourning tongue? -
> To give at evening pale
> Unto the nightingale,
> That thou mayst listen the cold dews among?
> (Endymion, IV, 11. 158-163)

Neither speaker can escape from sorrow:

> A dreary stillness broods o'er all the vale,
> The clouded moon emits a feeble glare;
> Joyless I seek the darkling hill and dale;
> Where'er I wander sorrow still is there.
> (I, p. 65)

Echoes of "Ode to a Nightingale" with the word "darkling",[17] and with the whole theme of sorrow are traced to this elegy, as well as the Indian Maid's conclusion about sorrow's omnipresence:

> To Sorrow,
> I bade good-morrow
> And thought to leave her far away behind;
> But cheerly, cheerly,
> She loves me dearly;
> She is so constant to me and so kind:
> I would deceive her,
> And so leave her,
> But ah! she is so constant and so kind.
> (Endymion, IV, 11. 173-181)

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[17] E. De Sélincourt, op. cit., p.613 notes the Chattertonian use of "darkling" in Keats's poetry.

Chatterton's "Elegy on the Death of Mr. Phillips" shows a keen awareness of seasonal process, the same awareness that pervades "To Autumn". It is Chatterton's personification technique that most influenced Keats's poem. Compare autumn in the elegy -- "When golden Autumn wreathed in rip'ned corn, / From purple clusters prest the foamy wine," (I, p. 216) to Keats's golden autumn, a "Close bosom'd friend of the maturing sun", (p. 218) who "by a cyder-press, with patient look, . . . watchest the last oozings hours by hours." (p. 219) In the elegy, autumn inherits "Magestic Summer's blooming flow'ry pride", and leaves the moors russet to await winter's wind. Keats's final stanza similarly shows autumn as the coalescence of ripeness and decay, the union of summer and of winter, for "barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day, / And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue." (p. 219).

Having examined the craftsmanship of Keats and Chatterton by comparing their use of sources, their poetic forms in theme and genre, noting the importance of dramatic presentation in every experimentation, it is now time to examine the style of each poet. "White Simplicity" is discovered in the music of their poetry. I will show how the rhythms of both poets are firmly based upon a song tradition, and I will attempt to explain the principle of melody in verse, which Keats developed from his reading of Chatterton, in terms of both assonance and rhythm.

Where gripinge grefes the hart would wounde,
And doelfulle dumps the mynde oppresse,

There musicke with her silver sound
With spede is wont to send redresse:
Of trobled mynds, in every sore
Swete musicke hath a salve in store.18

Percy cites this poem as a source for Shakespeare's reference to silver sound in Romeo and Juliet, IV, V. The silver sounds of Keats and Chatterton are part of a song tradition which began with Chaucer, played through Shakespeare, Percy and the Romantics. Song rhythm and technique are used by both poets in their larger forms for great dramatic effect.

The letters and poems of both poets are full of catches and airs. There is, however, one reference in a letter Keats wrote to Charles Cowden Clarke which so far has been missed or misconstrued by the critics: "You may now look at Minerva's Aegis with impunity", says Keats, "seeing that my awful visage did not turn you into a John Doree".[19] Rollins glosses the "awful visage" as Keats's life mask, and "John Doree", as a fish, the dictionary definition. While I agree with the first, I cannot accept the second interpretation. There is a song in Fletcher's play The Chances, sung to Antonio after his operation, called "John Dory":

As it fell on a holiday
And upon a holy tide-a,
John Dory brought him an ambling nag,
To Paris for to ride-a.

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[18]"A Song to the Lute in Musicke", Percy's Reliques, I, 149.

[19]J. Keats The Letters of John Keats, ed. H.B. Rollins, I, 121.

And when John Dory to Paris was come
A little before the gate-a
John Dory was fitted, the porter was witted
To let him in there at-a.

The first man that John Dory did meet
Was good King John of France -a
John Dory could well of his courtesie,
But fell down in a trance-a.20

Keats owned the Dramatic Works of Jonson, Beaumont, and Fletcher, knew the song, and is referring to the John Dory trance in his letter to Clarke, who being well-versed in the song tradition, would have caught the allusion.

In The Story of Minstrelsy, Duncan has high praise for the songs of England:

> the folk song of England is the most wonderful in the world. Like our literature, it possesses a wider range than any other . . . it deals with the history of a people who, whatever their faults, have still maintained a leading place in the direction of the world's affairs . . . Therefore it is that we find the bulk of our songs of exceedingly practical import. There has been less time for the study of Nature and an immensely pressing need to study the ways and habits of humanity.21

Chatterton and Keats combined the wide and dramatic range of English literature and the English song genre. Both were concerned to present the actions of men in poetry, and used song to enhance their lyrical studies of "the ways and habits of humanity."

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[20]J.M. Gibbon, Melody and the Lyric (N.Y.: Haskell House, 1964), p. 126.

[21]E. Duncan, The Story of Minstrelsy (London: The Walter Scott Publishing Co. Ltd., 1907), p. 96.

Poetry and music were happily married in Chaucer's lyrics. The variety of genres, besides his "White Simplicity", made Chaucer a fertile source, but the lyric polish of his poetry eventually palled for both Keats and Chatterton -- they came to prefer the startling rhythms of Anglo-Saxon melody. As song passed from medieval times to the Elizabethan, it became more truly an art form. The secret of song, as the poets Chaucer and Shakespeare knew, was to balance the effects of music and poetry. This secret was kept by the Renaissance musicians, who in the introductions to their song collections, began to formulate a theory of word music. Thomas Campion opened his First Book of Ayres in 1613 as follows:

> In these English Ayres I have chiefly aimed to couple my Words and Notes lovingly together, which will be much for him to do that hath not power over both. The light of this will best appear to him who hath paysed (i.e. paced) our monosyllables and syllables combined, both which are so loaded with consonants as that they will hardly keep company with swift Notes, or give the Vowel convenient liberty.22

Rowley's songs exhibit such a power over words and music that weight of consonants and the monosyllabic texture of Anglo-Saxon English harmonizes perfectly with the swiftness of his melody and free-playing vowels. Keats's principle of melody in verse was an attempt to combine a weighted texture with light rhythms,and he learned from Rowley and the song tradition. Henry Lawes praised the monosyllables

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[22]In D. Ivey, Song: Anatomy, Imagery, and Styles (N.Y.: The Free Press, 1970), p. 147.

of English for rendering verse smooth; Chatterton and then Keats turned increasingly to short, native words for this very reason:

> And (I speak it freely once for all) that if English words which are fitted for my song do not run smooth enough 'tis the fault either of the Composer or of the Singer. Our English is so stir'd with plenty of monosyllables (which, like small stones, fill up the chinks) that it hath great priviledge over divers of its neighbours, and in some particulars (with reverence be it spoken) to the very Latin, which language we find over-charged with the letter S especially in 'bus' and such hissing terminations. 23

As Keats perfected his style he was careful to balance sibilant alliteration with labials and bilabials, in order not to mar the consonantal texture of his poetry. In the line "Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue" the S's of 'seen', 'save', and 'strenuous' are harmonized with the N's of 'seen', 'none', and 'strenuous', and the M of 'him'.

Chatterton had turned to Chaucer, Shakespeare and Percy; Keats turned to all three poets as well as Chatterton in his experiments with song metres and rhythms. In Percy's Reliques, Volume I, there is a ballad called 'The Childe of Elle', from which Chatterton possibly derived his name Aella. The ballad presents the tragedy of love on a deathly feuding backdrop, reminiscent of Romeo and Juliet and of Aella. Desdemona's song in Othello, IV, iii., "Sing Willow, Willow, Willow", which influences the "Mynstrelles Songe" in Aella, both through the direct verbal link of 'Willow' and in theme, is a des-

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[23] in J.M. Gibbon, Melody and the Lyric, p. 176.

cendant of an older song, "Willow, Willow, Willow".[24] Ophelia's Mad Song in Hamlet, Act III, drew upon an ancient tune called "The Friar of Orders Gray":

> And will he ne'er come again
> Will he ne'er come again
> Ah! no he is dead and laid in his grave,
> For ever to remain.25

Here is Ophelia's song:

> And will he not come again,
> And will he not come again?
> No, no he is dead
> Go to thy death-bed,
> He will never come again.26

The similarities of both older versions to the "Mynstrelles Songe" in Aella, in rhythm and diction, are apparent.

Both Keats and Chatterton exhibited a sympathy for the old ballads. "The Not-Browne Mayd" in Volume II of Percy has influenced, both through images and the theme of faithful womanhood, Chatterton's description of Kenelwalcha in The Battle of Hastings, II. In Hyperion, III, Keats in turn drew upon Chatterton's metaphors for Kenelwalcha,[27] perhaps feeling an intuitive bond to the song tradition as well. Percy includes in his own ballad, "The Hermit of Warkworth" a metaphor which which was to become a favourite with Chatterton:

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[24] T. Percy, Reliques, I, 156.

[25] Ibid., p. 199

[26] Hamlet, IV, v. In J.M. Gibbon, Melody and the Lyric, p. 107.

[27] To be discussed in Chapter Four. R. Gittings, John Keats, p.269.

As when a grove of sapling oaks
The livid lightning rends;
So fiercely 'mid the opposing ranks
Sir Bertram's sword descends.28

The description of Lamia's cold death at her wedding feast owes something to "The Bride's Burial", another ancient ballad:

Then lo! a chilling cold
Strucke every vital part,
And gripinge grief, like pangs of death,
Seiz'd on my true love's heart.

Down in a swoon she fell,
As cold as any stone;
Like Venus picture lacking life,
So was my true love brought home.29

Lamia's hand "'Twas icy, and the cold ran through his veins", parallels the ballad, "a chilling cold strucke every vital part". (Lamia, II, ll. 251, p. 177) The ballad lover looks upon his bride as a lifeless picture; so Lycius stares into the eyes of Lamia and "There was no recognition in those orbs." (Lamia, II, ll.260, p. 177) "Gripinge grief, like pangs of death / Seiz'd on my true love's heart", sings the ballad, and Lamia is pierced grievously by the eyes of Apollonius, which "Like a sharp spear, went through her utterly, / Keen, cruel, perceant, stinging." (Lamia, II, ll. 299-301, p. 178)[30] The ballad bride swoons; Lamia from her stony trance vanishes "with a frightful

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[28]T. Percy, Reliques, III, p. 316-317.

[29]Ibid., p. 121 .

[30]E. De Selincourt, op. cit., p. 619, notes that Keats's use of "perceant" in Lamia, is an echo of Chatterton's medieval English.

scream", to leave Lycius dead in his marriage robe. Theme and imagery from the ballad add an emotional depth to Keats's poem. Finally, Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale", prompted as it was by bird song, echoes a lyric from the time of Henry VII, credited to William Cornysshe:

> The little pretty nightingale
> Among the leaves green,
> I would I were with her all night;
> But yet ye wot not whom I mean.
>
> The nightingale sat on a briar
> Among the thorn sharp and keen
> And comforts me with merry cheer;
> But yet ye wot not whom I mean.[31]

Although Cornysshe's nightingale turns out to be a woman, there is an affinity with Keats's ode. Both poets desire to be with the source of comforting song, to transcend life's briars and to be able to sing "of summer in full-throated ease". Cornysshe's lover has his heart stolen by the singing lady; Keats stands forlorn in his garden, listening to a fading anthem. The lyric's refrain, "But yet ye wot not whom I mean", turns upon the identity of the singer; Keats's ode closes with a similar confusion of identity and of the distinction between dream and reality: "Was it a vision, or a waking dream? / Fled is that music - Do I wake or sleep?" (VIII, p. 209) While the complexity of Keats's ode cannot be reduced to that of a simple lyric, still the song, with its varied line length, the interlocked rhyme

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[31] J.M. Gibbon, Melody and the Lyric, p. 32.

scheme over four stanzas -- abcb dbeb fbgb hbib, and its idea, has had some influence on the "Ode to a Nightingale".

The "silver sound" of the poetry of Chatterton and Keats, shows them to be part of a song tradition. Simplicity was their aim and the result was a poetry that demands oral presentation. Chatterton must be read aloud, "not with the eye merely, and out of that barbarous incantation emerges the indisputable form and stature of an English poet."[32] Much of Keats's craftsmanship is missed "from our inveterate habit of reading by the eyes and not by the ear."[33] Having set both poets in a song tradition, now their individual techniques will be considered. Through their use of song rhythm, diction, theme, and structure, poetry and music beautifully coalesce.

> Poetry withers and dies out when it leaves music, or at least imagined music, too far behind it. Poets who are not interested in music are, or become, bad poets.34

Chatterton learned to read from an old musical manuscript. His father had been "Engaged as a singing man of the Cathedral of Bristol" (I, ii), and left to posterity, besides a musical son, a rousing tavern song called "At the Pineapple." It is a catch for three voices:

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[32]E. Meyerstein, A Life of Thomas Chatterton, p. 179.

[33]M. Ridley, Keats' Craftsmanship (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), p. 218.

[34]Ezra Pound, cited by J.M. Gibbon, Melody and the Lyric, p. 196.

1: Since now we are met and re-solved to be jolly, and
2: Then pass it about, my brave Boys, ne-ver fear; there's
3: While Zealots and Fools with their Factions do grapple, they

1: Drink our good Liquor to drain Melancholy,
2: Meat, Drink, and Clothes, in good Ale and strong Beer,
3: Taste not the Joys that are at the Pine-Apple.
(III, p. 495)

Chatterton's Burlettas, The Revenge and to some degree The Woman of Spirit, echo the gay tone and carefree air of his father's song. Music was his inheritance, and his way into literature; it is everywhere in his poetry.

What is most astounding about The Revenge is the variety of stanzaic and rhythmic forms employed by the poet. Recitatives are followed by airs of different line length and metre to enhance the poetry of every verse. Shortness of line prevents the pace of the drama from ever slowing down. Dialogue is skillful, and the battles between Jupiter and Juno are superb.

AIR

What is love? the wise despise it;
'Tis a bubble blown for boys:
Gods and heroes should not prize it
Jove aspires to greater joys.

JUNO
AIR CONTINUED

What is Love? 'Tis Nature's treasure,
'Tis the storehouse of her joys;
'Tis the highest heav'n of pleasure,
'Tis a bliss which never cloys.

JUPITER
AIR CONTINUED

What is love? an air blown bubble,
Only silly fools receive it:

'Tis a magazine of trouble;
'Tis but folly - thus I leave it. (Jupiter runs off)
(I, p. 238)

Alternate rhyme, and alternating eight and seven syllable lines give the air a brilliant, unified motion. That the two antagonists play games with the original stanza heightens poetic effect.

The exchanges between Cupid and Bacchus affirm Chatterton's lyrical ability. Bacchus opens Scene VI tipsily, and his entrance is followed by an air and variations:

AIR CHANGES

Rosy, sparkling, powerful wine,
All the joys of life are thine,
Search the drinking world around,
Bacchus ev'ry where sits crown'd:
Whilst we lift the flowing bowl,
Unregarded thunders roll.
(I, p. 244)

Keats's Hyperion, Book III, opens with a praise of the life of sensations, and derived some of its imagery from the Bacchic praise of wine - "Let the red wine within the goblet boil,/ Cold as a bubbling well." (III, ll.18-19), p. 240) "Robin Hood" parallels the alternate rhyme scheme and four foot line of Chatterton's air, as well as being a praise for a time of drinking merriment long past:[35]

On the fairest time of June
You may go, with sun or moon,
Or the seven stars to light you,

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[35]E. De Selincourt, op. cit., p. 614, notes the occurance of "drear" in "Robin Hood", a favourite adjective with Chatterton.

Or the polar ray to right you,
But you may never behold
Little John or Robin bold;
Never one, of all the clan,
Thrumming on an empty can
Some old hunting ditty, while
He doth his green way beguile
To fair hostess Merriment,
Down beside the pasture Trent;
For he left the merry tale
Messenger for spicy ale.
(11. 19-32, p. 217)

In another song Keats joins the Bacchic spirit "here that laughest", "Here that quaffest!":

Spirit with thee
I join in the glee
A-nudging the elbow of Momus.
Spirit, I flush
With a Bacchanal Blush
Just fresh from the Banquet of Comus.
(p. 346)

He has also joined the very spirit of The Revenge in theme, in stanza form, and in rhythm, for here is Chatterton's original:

'Tis madness to think,
To judge ere you drink,
The bottom all wisdom contains:
Then let you and I
Now drink the bowl dry,
We both shall grow wise for our pains.
(I, pp. 245-246)

Keats's song "Hence Burgundy, Claret and Port", may be a rejection of Bacchic wine for the wine of Apollonian inspiration, but there is a metaphoric similarity to be noted. Keats claims that

My Wine overbrims a whole summer;
My bowl is the sky,
And I drink at my eye,
Till I feel in the brain
A Delphian pain -

Then follow, my Caius! then follow:
On the green of the hill
We will drink our fill
Of Golden sunshine,
Till our brains intertwine
With the glory and grace of Apollo!
(11. 6-16, p. 378)

Chatterton's bowl, when wine and women unite, is equally spacious:

Fill the bowl, and fill it high,
Vast as the extended sky,
Since the dire disease is found,
Wine's a balm to cure the wound:
O the rapturous delights!
When with women wine unites,
(I, p. 253)

Bacchus originally rejects Cupid's claim that "The charms of wine cannot compare, / With the soft raptures of the fair", (I, p. 246) and Keats desires to forget through wine the love of women:

Fill for me a brimming bowl
And let me in it drown my soul:
But put therein some drug, designed
To Banish Women from my mind.
(11. 1-4, p. 427)

Cupid and Bacchus, however, unite in harmony to close Chatterton's play. The final song is a rondeau variation, with three rhymes rather than two and sixteen lines rather than fifteen. It retains the circular form through a refrain and the eight-syllable line:

Away to the Woodlands, away!
The shepherds are forming a ring
To dance to the honour of May,
And welcome the pleasures of Spring.
Away to the Woodlands away!
And join the amorous train:
'Tis treason to labour to day,
Now Bacchus and Cupid must reign.
With garlands of primroses made,

And crown'd with the sweet blooming spray,
Thro' Woodland, and meadow, and shade,
We'll dance to the honour of May.
Away to the Woodlands, away!
The Shepherds are forming a ring
To dance to the honour of May,
And welcome the pleasures of Spring.
(I, p. 274-275)

Chatterton's concluding song is the one which he claimed was "a great favourite with the town, on account of the fullness of the music."[36] If he was expressing a false hope, it was not the fault of his lyric. Keats too was to experiment with the rondeau, varying the number of rhymes and line lengths in order to finally arrive at his ode form, a more natural and "English" vehicle.

All Chatterton's variations upon the rhythms of poetry, in the Burletta and in the Rowley poems, serve to enhance the melody of his verse. "The Songe to Aella" shows his discovery of foot substitution to have been a fortunate one:

Oh thou, orr what remaynes of thee,
Aella, the darlynge of futurity,
Let thys mie songe bolde as thie courage be,
As everlastynge to posteritye.

Whanne Dacya's sonnes, whose hayres of bloude redde hue
Lyche kyng-cuppes brastynge wythe the morning due,
Arraung'd ynne dreare arraie
Upponne the lethale daie,
Spredde farre and wyde onne Watchets shore;
Thann dyddst thou furious stande,
And bie thie valyante hande
Beesprengedd all the mees wythe gore.

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[36]From a letter to T. Cary, cited by Meyerstein, in op. cit., p. 397.

Drawne bie thyne anlace felle,
Downe to the depths of helle
Thousands of Dacyanns went;
Brystowannes, menne of myghte,
Ydar'd the boudie fyghte,
And actedd deeds full quent.
(II, pp. 179-180)

Chatterton's song is a variation of the Pindaric ode, reminiscent of Milton's "Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity"[37]; he successfully interchanges long and short lines and fills them with brilliant images to create a fine lyric. The third stanza with its short, drum-beat lines, is an incantation of Aella's might - Chatterton

> had already recaptured marvellously the sounds and colours of a very different age, and made a revolutionary rediscovery of 'equivalent substitution' of feet in his four-stress lines, a revival commonly dated from Coleridge's Christabel at the end of the century.38

Chatterton's poem "The Tournament" is written in a ten line metric scheme with a dramatic dialogue stanza division like Aella. Two songs are especially effective. An Alexandrine refrain, upon which linguistic changes are rung throughout, effectively weights the stanza of the first song of praise:

Wyth passent steppe the lyonn mov'th alonge;
Wyllyamm hys ironn-woven bowe hee bendes,
Wythe myghte alych the roghlynge thonderstronge;
The lyonn ynn a roare hys spryghte foorthe sendes.
Goe, slea the lion ynn hys blodde-steyn'd denne,
Botte bee thie takelle drie fromm blodde of odherr menne.
(II, p. 71)

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[37]Suggested by Meyerstein too, in op. cit., p. 215.

[38]B. Cottle, Thomas Chatterton, p. 8.

The second song switches from iambic to trochaic rhythm[39], and the result is a moving lyric. Endymion's "Rain scented eglantine" (I, ll. 100), and "dew-sweet eglantine" (IV, ll. 697), Isabella's "dewy rosary on the eglantine" (XXIV), and the "Nightingale's" "White hawthorne, and the pastoral eglantine" (st. 5, ll.6), are all echoes of Chatterton's melody:

> Whanne Battayle, smethynge wythe new quickenn'd gore,
> Bendyngewythe spoiles, and bloddie droppyngehedde,
> Dydd the merke wood of ethe and rest explore,
> Seekeynge to be onn Pleasures downie bedde,
> Pleasure, dauncyng fromm her wode,
> Wreathedd wythe floures of aiglintine,
> From hys vysage washedd the bloude,
> Hylte hys swerde and gaberdyne.
> (II, pp. 81-82)

Chatterton's descriptive power is here aided by the dramatic coined words, "Bendyngewyth" and "droppyngehedde", which evoke an empathic response, like "sea-shouldering whales". With the ministrations of pleasure, battayle is transformed to honour, and Chatterton ends his Tournament with a medieval homily:

> Soe, gyff thou lovest Pleasure and herr trayne,
> Onknowlachynge ynn whatt place herr to fynde,'
> Thys rule yspende, and ynn thie mynde retayne;
> Seeke Honoure fyrste, and Pleasaunce lies behynde.
> (II, p. 82)

Chatterton's poetry is melopoeia, "poetry on the borders of music"[40], and no song proves this quality better than the "Mynstrelles Songe" from Aella, which deserves to be quoted in full:

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[39]E. Meyerstein, op. cit., p. 222.

[40]Ezra Pound, cited by Robert Nye in "Chatterton: the

O! synge untoe mie roundelaie,
O! droppe the brynie teare wythe mee,
Daunce ne moe atte hallie daie,
Lycke a reynynge ryver bee;
Mie love ys dedde,
Gon to hys deathe-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

Blacke hys cryne as the wyntere nyghte,
Whyte hys rode as the sommer snowe,
Rodde hys face as the mornynge lyghte,
Cale he lyes ynne the grave belowe;
Mie love ys dedde,
Gon to hys deathe-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

Swote hys tyngue as the throstles note,
Quycke ynn daunce as thoughte canne bee,
Defte hys tabourne, codgelle stote,
O! hee lyes bie the wyllowe tree:
Mie love ys dedde,
Gonne to hys deathe-bedde,
Alle underre the wyllowe tree.

Harke! the ravenne flappes hys wynge,
In the briered delle belowe;
Harke! the dethe-owle loude dothe synge,
To the nyghte-mares as heie goe;
Mie love ys dedde,
Gonne to hys deathe-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe-tree.

See! the whyte moone sheenes onne hie;
Whyterre ys mie true loves shroude;
Whyterre yanne the mornynge skie,
Whyterre yanne the evenynge cloude;
Mie love ys dedde,
Gon to hys deathe-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

Heere, uponne mie true loves grave,
Schalle the baren fleurs be layde,
Nee one hallie Seyncte to save
Al the celness of a mayde.

Marvellous Boy", #3, Books and Book men, June 1974, p. 72.

Mie love ys dedde,
Gonne to hys deathe-bedde,
Alle under the wyllowe tree.

Wythe mie hondes I'lle dente the brieres
Rounde his hallie corse to gre,
Ouphante fairie, lyghte youre fyres,
Heere mie boddie stylle schalle bee,
Mie love ys dedde,
Gon to hys deathe-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

Comme, wythe acorne-coppe and thorne,
Drayne mie hartys blodde awaie;
Lyfe and all yttes goode I scorne,
Daunce bie nete, or feaste by daie.
Mie love ys dedde,
Gon to hys death-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

Waterre wytches, crownede wythe reytes,
Bere mee to yer leathalle tyde.
I die; I comme; mie true love waytes.
Thos the damselle spake and dyed.
(II, p. 280-283)

"The remarkable thing about this", according to Saintsbury, "is the almost unerring skill with which the variations of the metre are adapted, and the still more wonderful judgement with which the values adjust themselves."[41] Adds Robert Nye:

> words like 'reynynge', (running), 'rode' (complexion), 'cale' (cold), and 'reytes' (water flags) are absolutely fresh and unspoilt by association with anything outside their context. Such words lie on the page like dew, clean and clear and true to the purity of Chatterton's lyric impulse. That purity, and the tenderness it expresses here, alike exquisite, are not so common in English poetry that we can afford to neglect any poet who possesses them.42

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[41] G. Saintsbury, A History of English Prosody (London: MacMillan & Co. Ltd., 1908), II, 522.

[42] R. Nye, "Chatterton the Marvellous Boy" #3, in Books and Bookmen, June/74, p. 72.

In the first four lines of each stanza, stress falls generally on the first syllable, except for the opening two lines, where stress is on the second syllable. There are four stresses per line. Each line of the refrain increases the number of syllables per line, from four to five to seven, but there are three stressed syllables in each. Chatterton's rhythms follow speech patterns, and are determined qualitatively through accent, rather than quantitatively through the number of syllables per line. Thus because the stanza body and refrain are characterized by the same kind of rhythmic stress, they harmonize well. The dramatic "O!", which begins lines one and two, shows how Chatterton refused to confine himself to a metric definition -- although "O! Synge" scans best as an iamb, "O!" demands more stress than "un" of "untoe". I scan it therefore as a half-stress - "O! Synge untoe mie roundelaie".

Chatterton works from within the song tradition of Shakespeare and Chaucer to ring changes on the rhythm of verse. He creates as well a fresh poetic diction, simple and pure, like his own "reynynge river". It is a diction heavily consonantal and monosyllabic, or as Keats called it "English and northern". Elements of the Petrarchan love convention in the mayd's description in vivid and contrasting terms of her lover are skillfully used to increase pathos:

> Blacke hys cryne as the wyntere nyghte,
> Whyte hys rodde as the sommer snowe,
> Rodde hys face as the mornynge lyghte,
> Cale he lyes in the grave belowe.

Gothic touches are well handled in stanza four to the end, as Chatterton

presents his theme of the death of love and joy. The song's tragic mood always maintains control over poetic techniques such as anaphora:

> See! the whyte moone sheenes onne hie;
> Whyterre ys mie true loves shroude;
> Whyterre yanne the mornynge skie;
> Whyterre yanne the evenynge cloude.

Keats will provide the best commentary on Chatterton's interplay of vowel sounds.

Both in The Revenge and in the Rowley poems, Chatterton shows himself to be a master in song rhythms, techniques and diction. Loading his ore with musical notes, he whitened his simplicity of style and proved himself a true craftsman. Nowhere in his songs does he reveal himself -- he was a pure poet who used the lyric form in a dramatic way. Chatterton was a pioneer in poetic rhythms, and guided Keats to the principle of melody in verse.

Keats spun his principle of melody in verse around two points -- assonance and rhythm. The discussion to follow will centre on these two points.

As shown above, the "Mynstrelles Songe" is justly famous for its rhythmic innovations. To continue, the first four lines of each stanza are bound together by an alternating rhyme scheme. Every line exhibits an inner unity through the stress pattern, the alliteration of consonants and vowel assonance. The refrain, which concludes each verse but the last, unites the entire poem, and exhibits a parallel inner unity. Within this tight metric system, Chatterton sings freely of desolation and the quenching of life's bright flame. --

"Daunce ne moe at hallie daie." Small wonder that Keats, who was experimenting with "roundelaies" of his own, to gain a greater ease and freedom than that afforded by the sonnet, should have been so attracted to this particular song. Here is Bailey's account of the principle of melody in verse, which Keats was at the time developing:

> Methinks I now hear him recite, or CHANT, in his peculiar manner, the following stanza . . .:
>
> COME WITH ACORN CUP & THORN,
> Drain my hertys blood away;
> Life and all its goods I scorn;
> Daunce by night or feast by day.
>
> The first line to his ear possessed the great charm. Indeed his sense of melody was quite exquisite, as is apparent in his own verses . . . One of his favourite topics of discourse was the principle of melody in Verse, upon which he had his own notions, particularly in the management of open and close vowels . . . He was himself . . . a master of melody . . . As an instance of this, I may cite a few lines of that most perfect passage of Hyperion . . . the picture of dethroned Satan (Saturn) in his melancholy solitude. Keats's theory was that the vowels should be so managed as not to clash with one another so as to mar the melody, - and yet that they should be interchanged, like differing notes of music to prevent monotony . . .
>
> Deep in the shady sadness of a vale,
> Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn-
> Far from the fiery noon and eve's one star-
> Sat grey haired Saturn, quiet as a stone,
> Still as the silence round about his lair;
> Forest on forest hung about his head
> Like cloud on cloud.
>
> These lines are exquisitely wrought into melody. They are beautifully varied in their vowel sounds, save when the exception proves the rule, and monotony is a beauty; as in the prolonged breathing . . . of the similar vowels, in "healthy breath of morn", in which we almost inhale the freshness of the morning air; and in the vowel sounds repeated in the words - "Sat grey haired Saturn" and "Forest on forest - "Like cloud on cloud" - In all which the sameness of the sound increases the melancholy and monotony of the situation. . . The rest is beautiful by its skilful variation of the vowel sounds; as these are touching

by their sameness and monotony.43

Bailey's discussion turns upon assonance, and whether Keats would alternate "open and close vowels", to gain harmony, or repeat them to produce an effect of monotony. Both Keats and Chatterton were concerned with mastering the most expressive of poetic forms. The theory of inner line melody, demonstrated by the "Mynstrelles Songe" and by Hyperion, is an ingenious vowel assonance. W.J. Bate has gone to great lengths to clarify Bailey's account. Open vowels are equivalent to dipthongs and the traditional long vowel sounds like 'deēp'. Close vowels correspond to the traditional short vowel sounds of 'ĭn' or 'cŭppe'.[44] Bate adds that although we cannot determine the exact phonetic character of Keats's English, our concern is rather with "the potential division of English vowels of the early nineteenth century . . . into groups which have presumably preserved the same relation to each other",[45] such as 'open' and 'close'. For E.C. Pettet, an important aspect of Bailey's discussion is that the harmonious variation of vowel sounds, which creates "a unifying and delightful pattern of sound that is more or less consciously per-

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[43]Bailey, in The Keats Circle, ed. H.E. Rollins, II, 276-278.

[44]W.J. Bate, citing Prof. Cabell Greet in The Stylistic Development of Keats, p. 52. I use - to equal long or open sounds and ˘ to equal short or close sounds.

[45]Ibid., note #7, p. 52.

ceived by the ear",[46] occurs in a whole passage of poetry, not just in single lines. On the other hand, the effect of monotony is best realized in small pieces of poetry, rather than sustained over many lines. Vowel repetition often comes from epithet-noun combinations which coordinate with the spondaic stress of Keats's loaded lines - 'cool'rooted; 'soft-conched', 'sunburnt mirth'.[47] Chatterton uses this same device of noun-epithet repetition, the repeated vowels in both cases receiving a stress - 'deathe-bedde'. The assonance of vowel sounds was so important to Keats that it governed his revisions, as the following lines from"Autumn", before revision, will show:

> And fill all fruit with sweetness to the core;
> To swell the gourd and plump the hazel shells
> With a white kernel;
> (p. 219)

Besides the metaphoric link with Chatterton's "Autumpne" song as noted earlier, the subsequent revisions show his influence in determining the most successful blend of sound. 'Sweetness' becomes 'ripeness'; 'white' becomes 'sweet'; Keats has alternated his sounds -- the close sound of EE is replaced by the semi-close sound of I, but in the three lines, the same sounds are retained.[48]

Keats's assonance is a complicated one, based on the alternation or repetition of two or more vowel sounds both in whole passages

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[46] E.C. Pettet, On the Poetry of Keats, p. 91.

[47] Ibid., p. 112

[48] Ibid., p. 120

of verse and in single lines. Such interplay is rare in Keats's poetry before Hyperion Book I, and after "To Autumn", "when Keats appeared to have ceased striving for the rich and weighted intensity of expression which had until that time been both a conscious and an unconscious goal."[49] Corresponding to the period when Keats realized his intricate principle of melody in verse are the three significant readings of Chatterton -- in December of 1818 when he wrote Book III of Hyperion, in January and February, when he wrote "The Eve of St. Agnes" and "The Eve of St. Mark", through the spring odes to September of 1819 and "To Autumn". There can be no doubt, both from inner evidence, and from Bailey's discussion, that Chatterton influenced the assonance patterns of Keats's mature poetry.

Open sounds echo and sustain each other -- they are deep and resonant and when many are linked together the effect is elegaic and melancholic. Close sounds are softer and more active. In the first line of Keats's favourite stanza,

Comme, wythe acorne-coppe and thorne,

urgency is stressed immediately by the two consecutive close vowels which are echoed by two more later on in the line. The repeated vowel in 'comme' and 'coppe' links the two pairs together. Similarly, 'acorne' and 'thorne' are united by internal rhyme and balance the urgency of

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[49]W.J. Bate, The Stylistic Development of Keats, p. 65.

the line with a mournful tone. The importance of retaining Chatterton's spelling is evident, for the double consonants in 'comme' and 'coppe', although following close vowels, lengthen and sustain their short sound and so link them as well with the resonant tone of 'acorne' and 'thorne'. Bernard Blackstone calls the acorne-coppe the smallest of Keats's urns, meaning that Chatterton's organic metaphor contained the seed for growth inwards into form, and outwards into idea.[50] Like the sympathetic imagination which immerses itself horizontally in the life of an artist, and then vertically into the art to analyse form, the acorne-coppe is a vital image with two dimensions, and demands an intense response.

In the refrain, the interplay of open and close sounds continues. Chatterton strives to balance the harmonious alternation and the repetition of vowel sounds. In line two as noted, the internal rhyme of 'deathe-bedde' gives the repeated vowels the quality of a funeral bell. In addition, the rhyme on 'dedde' and 'bedde' links lines one and two by three repeated vowels, increases melancholic effect, and gives the mental image of a shrouded marriage bed. 'Ys' in line one is echoed by 'hys' in line two, and double consonants combined with close vowels in 'gonne' and 'wyllowe' weight the urgency of their sound,

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[50] B. Blackstone, The Consecrated Urn, p. 60.

joining them to the resonant melancholy tone of the whole refrain and the whole stanza:

Mie love ys dedde,
Gonne to hys deathe-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

The "Ode on a Grecian Urn", on a grand acorne cappe, will demonstrate Keats's artistic vowel assonance. Not only did Keats seek to develop a new form to satisfy "his yearning for an almost physically felt intensity of image and of sound",[51] but in the odes he perfected a new sound principle.

ea,o,ee,u	Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard	1
ee,o-u	Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;	2
o-u,e,ea	Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,	3
i,o	Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:	4
ee	Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave	5
e-a,ee	Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;	6
er	Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,	7
o,ee	Though winning near the goal - yet, do not grieve;	8
a,o	She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,	9
e-a,ee	For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!	10

(pp. 209-210)

All the lines but five and seven interweave two or more vowel sounds

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[51] W.J. Bate, The Stylistic Development of Keats, p. 133.

(shown in the left margin). Each line demonstrates variation between open and close sounds represented respectively by ⏑ and ∪, and many boast an internal rhyme. The stanza is a celebration of the spiritual hieroglyphics of art, and so preserves a balance between resonance and urgency. The activity of close sounds as Keats strives to understand the urn is matched by his passive, deeper, open sounds as he immerses himself in the unknowability of the urn.

To parallel this balance of vowels is a balance of fast - moving liquid consonants with the slower bi-labials 'p', as in 'ye soft pipes, play on' and 'b' as in 'Bold lover' and 'thy bliss.'[52] Keats links swift liquid sounds with slower open vowels, to produce sonority. Consonantal alliteration in both Chatterton and Keats is skilful, but because the principle of melody in verse is based on assonance, I will not treat this aspect of their art in much detail. The subtlety of Keats's alliteration is demonstrated by his ode, and it continues from line to line to give the entire poem shape. The Z of 'melodies' is echoed by 'those' and 'ditties' in line four, by 'trees' in line five, and by 'those trees' in line six. The S of 'sweet' is continued in 'sweeter', 'soft' and 'pipes' in line two, 'sensual' in three, 'spirit' in four, 'canst' in five, 'song' in six, 'canst' again and 'kiss' in seven, 'hast' and 'bliss' in nine. Alliteration on 'er' and 'r' and on a voiced 'th' can similarly be

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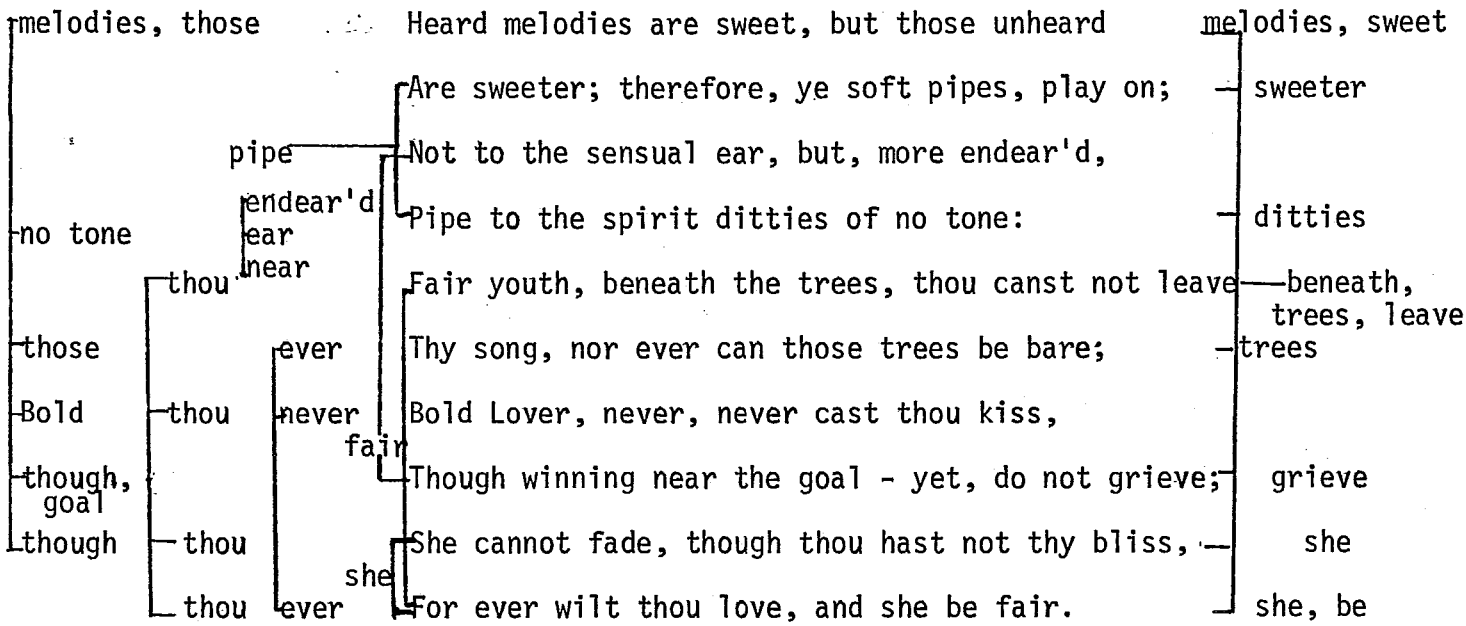
[52]W.J. Bate, The Stylistic Development of Keats, p. 136.

traced through the stanza. Like Chatterton's method in 'Comme wyth acorne coppe', Keats's alliteration is enhanced by a quiet assonance. Vowel assonance has been treated in individual lines -- now the total stanza will reveal a vowel unity, as it is illuminated by alliteration:



Both Chatterton and Keats preferred the purity of Anglo-Saxon English to any latinate or French idiom. Another reason for their praise of the purity of pre-Norman verse is its rhythmic pattern. Anglo-Saxon poetry does not scan quantitatively, but qualitatively. In every line there are three stressed syllables, whatever the number of syllables in that line. The stressed syllables are those which are alliterated or contain the same vowel sound, hence those which are assonantal. I have shown how Chatterton tried to free stress from quantitative metre; Keats continued this experimentation by fusing

his own vowel patterning with an Anglo-Saxon-based theory of poetic stress, where assonance, alliteration, and rhythm coalesce.

More than fifty years after the death of Keats, and more than one hundred years after Chatterton's suicide, a Victorian poet was to call this stress-based free movement in poetry, sprung rhythm. Gerard Manley Hopkins admired Keats as a fellow innovator in art. In his Preface to Poems Hopkins declared his theory to be the most like the rhythms of natural speech, and to be the most musical. Keats and Chatterton were concerned with the purity of language and loaded their ore with "White Simplicity". Poetry was to be the most passionate and 'felt' speech possible; poetry was music. To increase the similarity between all three poets, the freedom of poetry written in sprung rhythm demands an oral presentation.

Rowley voiced his discontent with common running rhythm in the letter to Mastre Canynge, introducing Aella. The "auncyante lee" of pre-Norman times "dyd . . . deftlie delyghte the eare" (II, p. 189), because it was based on the movement of native speech. He deplores the latinate influence which has imposed a false rhythm on pure English language -- "Whoever spekethe Englysche ys despysed, / The Englysch hym to please most fyrs te be latynized." (II, 190) Contemporary poetry he sees as vacuous; the Neoclassic end-stopped line and couplet receive his special scorn:

> Saie, Canynge, whatt was vearse yn daies of yore?
> Fyne thoughtes, and couplettes fetyvelie bewryen,
> Not syke as doe annoie thys age so sore,
> A keppened poyntelle restynge at eche lyne.
> (II, p. 198)

Only the free alliterative-assonantal stress of an older time will suit Chatterton's thought. Idea and form, "an onlist lecturn" and a "songe adynge", join perfectly in the "Mynstrelles Songe".

Neither Keats nor Chatterton abandoned metric systems totally, but worked within forms to make them suitable. In his sonnet, "If by Dull Rhyme" Keats voices his concern to find the most satisfying vehicle:

> Let us find out, if we must be constrain'd,
> Sandals more interwoven and complete
> To fit the naked foot of Poesy.
> (11.4-6, p. 371)

The requirements of sound and sense, of the "ear industrious and attention meet" (11.9) must be met. Through vowel interplay and alliteration-assonance based rhythms, melody in verse is realized by the poet who is as careful of his craft as "Midas of his coinage". (11. 11) The bondage of art is the necessity of expressing vision in form -- although poetry is bound to the earth, Keats and Chatterton used fetters that were organic parts of the poetic process. Sprung rhythm is at work in the "Mynstrelles Songe", especially in the refrain; there are hints of it in the songs of both poets. There are hints in the "Ode on A Grecian Urn", where the most natural reading demands an accent on the assonantal or alliterative syllables, and tends to run over the slack syllables, and where many lines run over, due to the use of alliteration and assonance.

The movement of both Keats and Chatterton to free rhythm is a product of their desire to load every rift of poetry with ore, to make

it intense and free. Neither poet could match the gravity of Milton's lines without cramping his lyric rhythm. They needed to put the profound emotion of every-day speech into a poetry that moved like that speech, and so began to develop a rhythm based on accent, rather than quantity. Not only the vowels but the motion of the "Mynstrelles Songe" delighted Keats. The inspirational significance of the oak was noted in Chapter Two when the use of this metaphor by both poets was compared. Acorns too had an oracular power similar to the oak leaf.[53] That Keats's favourite line was "Comme wyth acorne coppe and thorne" shows how interrelated the perfection of style and the expression of poetic inspiration were for him.

The inscape of a poem is its inner oneness, its organic wholeness. It is held in being by an energy or intensity called instress. The inscape of art can be experienced only when the beholder matches in his own being the instressed energy of the art work in question.[54] Instress is "White Simplicity", the result of craftsmanship. In terms of form, the use by Keats and Chatterton of their sources, of thematic modes and of genre, is a superb manifestation of their creative instressed energy. In terms of style, their place in a song tradition from Chaucer through Shakespeare and Percy into the nineteenth century, their experimentation with

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[53]M. D'Avanzo, Keats's Metaphors for the Poetic Imagination, pp. 106-108.

[54]G.M. Hopkins, Poems and Prose of Gerard Manley Hopkins, ed. W. H. Gardener (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1935), p. xxi.

musical styles, their assonance and movement to free rhythmic stress, all prove again the intensity of artistic instress. Just as it required immersive energy to create their art, so the reader must use his own creative energy to respond. The essence of instressed poetry is dramatic. An annihilation of self created it; an annihilation of self grasps it. This understood, then the inscapes of the art worlds of Keats and Chatterton are revealed; to the ear of the instressing reader "spiritual ditties of no tone" play on. Their music has indeed "a salve in store."

CHAPTER FOUR

The Rowley Poems and Keats

I have examined the lives of Chatterton and Keats, and I have discussed their craftsmanship. Now by examining the works of both artists, the lives and artistic techniques will coalesce. Using Chatterton's poetry as a pivot point, his philosophical, linguistic, and stylistic influence on the poetry of Keats will be considered. Both poets immersed themselves in their creations, and so the summation of any biographical or artistic similarities is to be found in an intense analysis of their poetry.

Since Chatterton is best as Rowley, I will treat only three more non-Rowley poems - The African Eclogues. "Narva and Mored", written in the spring of 1770, with its lush imagery, couplets, and run-on lines, is very like Keats's youthful poem, Endymion. Chatterton's poem opens with an invocation to Chalma to bless the loves of Narva and Mored:

> In all the mystic mazes of the dance,
> The youths of Banny's burning sands advance,
> Whilst the soft virgin panting looks behind,
> And rides upon the pinions of the wind:
> Ascends the mountains brow, and measures round
> The steepy cliffs of Chalma's sacred ground,
> Chalma, the god whose noisy thunders fly
> Thro' the dark covering of the midnight sky,
> ---

> Chalma, whose excellence is known from far;
> From Lupa's rocky hill to Calabar.
> The guardian god of Afric and the isles,
> Where Nature in her strongest vigour smiles;
> Where the blue blossom of the forky thorn,
> Bends with the nectar of the op'ning morn:
> Where ginger's aromatic, matted root,
> Creep through the mead, and up the mountains shoot.
> (I, p. 11-12)

"Steepy" and "Forky" are Keatsian adjectives, usually attributed to Hunt's influence. Endymion similarly begins with thankful praise of Pan, a god who like Chalma, is the source of fertile life. Youths and "young damsels danced along", in a procession like Chatterton's; a "venerable priest" comes "full soberly, Begirt with ministring looks" to praise the Pan, just as in "Narva and Mored" a priest invokes Chalma. Pan's excellence is "known from far", but his mystery, like Chalma's, is impenetrable and mystic:

> 'Be still the unimaginable lodge
> For solitary thinkings; such as dodge
> Conception to the very bourne of heaven,
> Then leave the naked brain: be still the leaven,
> That spreading in this dull and clodded earth
> Gives a touch ethereal - a new birth:
> Be still a symbol of immensity;
> A firmament reflected in a sea;
> An element filling the space between;
> An unknown - but no more: we humbly screen
> With uplift hands our foreheads, lowly bending,
> And giving out a shout most heaven rending,
> Conjure thee to receive our humble Paean,
> Upon thy Mount Lycean!'
> (I, ll. 293-306 p. 62)

And at his touch, "Nature in her strongest vigour smiles":

> O thou, to whom
> Broad leaved fig trees even now foredoom
> Their ripen'd fruitage; yellow girted bees
> Their golden honeycombs; our village leas

> Their fairest blossom'd beans and poppied corn;
> The chuckling linnet its five young unborn,
> To sing for thee; low creeping strawberries
> Their summer coolness; pent up butterflies
> Their freckled wings; yea, the fresh budding year
> All its completions - be quickly near,
> By every wind that nods the mountain pine,
> O forester divine!
> (I, ll. 251-262 p. 61)

Keats's "low creeping strawberries" parallel the ginger which "creep through the mead, and up the mountains shoot", in Chatterton's poem. And all the completions of "the fresh budding year" recall Chatterton's seasonal God who is present when blossoms bend "with the nectar of the op'ning morn". Both poems, significantly, open with these "pretty pieces of Paganism", and then tell love stories.

Theodore Watts-Dunton has noted a parallel between Isabella and the following lines from "Narva and Mored":[1]

> Where the pale children of the feeble sun,
> In search of gold, thro' every climate run:
> From burning heat to freezing torments go,
> And live in all the vicissitudes of woe.
> (I, p. 13)

Here is Keats's castigation of western capitalism:

> With her two brothers this fair lady dwelt,
> Enriched from ancestral merchandize,
> And for them many a weary hand did swelt
> In torched mines and noisy factories,
> And many once proud-quiver'd loins did melt
> In blood from stinging whip; - with hollow eyes
> Many all day in dazzling river stood,
> To take the rich-ored driftings of the flood.
> (XIV p. 182)

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[1] T. Watts-Dunton, "Thomas Chatterton", The English Poets, ed. T. Ward, II, 402-403.

Keats shows how the search for gold ravages all climates too, from burning heat to freezing torments:

> For them the Ceylon diver held his breath,
> And went all naked to the hungry shark;
> For them his ears gush'd blood; for them in death
> The seal on the cold ice with piteous bark
> Lay full of darts; for them alone did seethe
> A thousand men in troubles wide and dark:
> Half-ignorant, they turn'd on easy wheel,
> That set sharp racks at work, to pinch and peel.
> (XV)

The "vicissitudes of woe" are parallel in the examples cited.

Finally there are a few verbal links in "Narva and Mored" with Hyperion. "Pale children" in the passage cited above suggests Keats's epithet for his Titans, "Sky Children" (I, 11.133). The monotony of Hyperion's opening is rooted in Chatterton's poem, specifically in his Priestess's chant:[2]

> Far from the burning sands of Calabar;
> Far from the lustre of the morning star;
> Far from the pleasure of the holy morn;
> Far from the blessedness of Chalma's horn;
> Now rest the souls of Narva and Mored,
> Laid in dust, and number'd with the dead.
> (I, p. 14)

Here is Keats's version, a description equally still and dark. He has retained the burning sand image with "fiery noon", and has transferred Chatterton's adjective, "morning" to a description of the air. His star is the star of twilight, a more effective metaphor for the Titanic demise:

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[2]Noted as well by Meyerstein, in op.cit., p. 356.

> Deep in the shady sadness of a vale
> Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,
> Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,
> Sat grey-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone,
> Still as the silence round about his lair;
> Forest on forest hung about his head
> Like cloud on cloud.
> (I, ll. 1-7 p. 221)

Thus, parallels in "Narva and Mored" with Endymion, Isabella and Hyperion show the power of Chatterton's influence on Keats.

The other African Ecloques, "The Death of Nicou", and "Heccar and Gaira", like "Narva and Mored" are written in the luxurious run-on couplet form that characterizes Endymion. Nicou is a god-like warrior who reminds one of Enceladus in Keats's mighty poem of epic struggle:

> From this Narada, mighty Nicou sprung;
> The mighty Nicou, furious, wild and young.
> Who led th'embattled archers to the field,
> And bore a thunderbolt upon his shield:
> That shield his glorious father died to gain
> When the white warriors fled along the plain
> When the full sails could not provoke the flood,
> Till Nicou came and swell'd the seas with blood.
> (I, p. 19-20)

Just as Nicou comes to swell the sea with blood and gain vengeance, so Enceladus like a mighty sea swallows Clymene's timorous brook of a voice, and swallows it "in wrath". And he, like Nicou, uses the thunderbolt as a symbol of courage:

> The ponderous syllables, like sullen waves
> In the half-glutted hollows of reef-rocks,
> Came booming thus, while still upon his arm
> He lean'd, not rising, from supreme contempt.
> 'Or shall we listen to the over-wise,
> 'Or to the over-foolish, Giant-Gods?
> 'Not thunderbolt on thunderbolt, till all
> 'That rebel Jove's whole armoury were spent,

'Not world on world upon these shoulders piled,
'Could agonize me more than baby-words
'In midst of this dethronement horrible.
'Speak! roar! shout! yell! ye sleepy Titans all.
(II, 11.305-316 p. 237)

That Keats knew "Heccar and Gaira" as well is affirmed by his use of the inland sea metaphor which opens Chatterton's poem:

Where the rough Caigra rolls the surgy wave,
Urging his thunders thro' the echoing cave;
Where the sharp rocks, in distant horror seen,
Drive the white currents thro' the spreading green.
(I, p. 116)

Endymion, Book I describes the ebb and flow of music as "air swellings" which "with a gentle wave" break "Through copse-clad vallies, - ere their death, o'ertaking / The surgy murmurs of the lonely sea." (11.118-121) When Endymion passes into the underworld of Book II, the landscape becomes more like Chatterton's rocky sharpness, and the sea more like Chatterton's sad echo:

On a ridge
Now fareth he, that o'er the vast beneath
Towers like an ocean-cliff, and whence he seeth
A hundred waterfalls, whose voices come
But as the murmuring surge.
(II, 11.239-243, p. 85)

The "surges prone' on which tearful Glaucus gazes in Book III serve only to increase his despair, and the "surges" which wash the feet of Lycidas in "On Visiting Staffa" are part of a sombre landscape. Chatterton's metaphor links an underground sea with a cavernous echo and makes both sound and echo awesome. Keats likewise links the sea and sound in a profound metaphor, reinforcing the fact that Chatterton's influence was an important one. A philosophic and linguistic affinity

between the two poets far outweighs any sentimental response on Keats's part to the tragic myth of Chatterton.

In his Rowley mask, Chatterton wrote four more Ecloques, and all are wonderful lyrics. "Ecloque the First, Roberte and Raufe" depicts "Twayne lonelie shepsterres" victimized by a "Baronnes Warre". Their suffering is timeless:

> Oh! I coulde waile mie kynge-coppe-decked mees,
> Mie spreedynge flockes of shepe of lillie white,
> Mie tendre applynges and embrodyde trees,
> Mie Parker's Grange, far spreedynge to the syghte,
> Mie cuyen Kyne, mie bullockes stringe yn fyghte,
> Mie gorne emblaunched with the comfreie plante,
> Mie floureSeyncteMarie shotteyngewythe the lyghte
> Mie store of all the blessynges Heaven can grant.
> I amm duressed unto sorrowes blowe,
> Ihantend to the peyne, will lette ne salte teare flowe.
> (II, pp. 5-6)

"MieflоureSeycnteMarie shottyngewythe the lyghte" shows the sheer weight of Chatterton's line as he runs his words together to create a brilliant metaphor for the marigold. The violent setting for this human drama suggests the stormy backdrop of "The Eve of St. Agnes". In both poems, Nature reflects human action and since both describe human conflict, both show Nature hostile to man:

> Whanne Englonde, smeethynge from her lethal wounde,
> From her galled necke dyd twytte the chayne awaie,
> Kennynge her legeful sonnes falle all arounde,
> (Myghtie theie fell, 'twas Honoure ledde the fraie,)
> Thanne inne a dale, bie eve's dark surcote graie,
> Twayne lonelie shepsterres dyd abrodden flie
> (The rostlyng liff doth theyr whytte hartes affraie,)
> And wythe the owlette trembled and dyd crie.
> (II, p. 3)

Keats's poem opens with an echo of Chatterton's setting, especially "dark surcote graie", and the trembling owlette. Keats adds a hare,

and rather than describing shepherds, gives us the silent flock. Both poets present a setting as a metaphor for human suffering:

> St. Agnes Eve - Ah, bitter chill it was!
> The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;
> The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass,
> And silent was the flock in woolly fold:
> Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told
> His rosary, and with his frosted breath,
> Like pious incense from a censer old,
> Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,
> Past the sacred Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.
> (I, p. 195)

The beadsman, Robert and Raufe all pay harsh penance; the joys of all their lives "were said and done."

"Nygelle, Ecloque the Second", is a series of word pictures in ten line stanzas all joined by a vivid refrain - "Sprytes of the beste, the pious Nygelle sed, Poure owte yer pleasaunce on mie fadres hedde." Chatterton praises the deeds of "Rycharde of Lyon's harte in a way that again suggests "The Eve of St. Agnes":

> The gule depeyncted oares from the blacke tyde,
> Decorn wyth fonnes rare, doe shemrynge ryse;
> Upswalynge doe heie shewe ynne drierie pryde,
> Lyche gore redestells in the eve merk skyes;
> The nome-depeyncted shields, the speres aryse,
> Alyche talle roshes on the water syde;
> Alenge from bark to bark the bryghte sheene flyes;
> Sweft-kerv'd delyghtes doe on the water glyde.
> Sprytes of the bleste, and everich Seyncte ydedde,
> Poure owte youre pleasaunce on mie fadres hedde.
> (II, p. 11-12)

More than the direct verbal borrowing of "gules" is paralleled in this passage from The Eve of St. Agnes":

> A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,
> All garlanded with carven imag'ries
> Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
> And diamonded with panes of quaint device,

Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and kings.

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon.
(XXIV-V , p. 201.)

First the love of thousand heraldries is obvious in both descriptions which use that iconology to paint an evocative setting. Chatterton's oars are "gule depeyncte", showing "Lyche gore red estelles in the eve merk skies"; on Madeline's breast, the wintry moon throws "warm gules". The oars are "Decorn wyth fonnes (devices) rare", while Keats's casement is "garlanded with carven imag'ries "and" diamonded with panes of quaint device." Keats's window is stained with the metaphoric blood of queens and kings, while Chatterton's oars are dipped in real blood, but both descriptions turn upon the contrast between dark night, silver light, and red reflection. Keats's "shielded scutcheon" parallels the "nome-depeyncted shields" in Chatterton's poem, whose "bryghte sheene", combined with the gleam of spears, flies from ship to ship and reflects "sweft-kerv'd delyghtes" on the water. That Keats was influenced by Chatterton's poem is confirmed by the pious conclusion to his heraldic description. Both passages end in prayers that contrast effectively with the luxurious details of war.

"Eclogue the Third, between a Manne, a Womanne, and Sir Rogerre" is a beautiful pastoral lyric which has caught "precisely

the right 'folk' atmosphere; the writing is forthright, naively humourous and refreshingly free from any kind of self-conscious artifice."[3] Chatterton's metric variation in this poem is according to Saintsbury, a "breath from heaven":[4]

> Manne: I kenne Syr Roger from afar
> Tryppynge over the lea;
> Ich ask whie the loverds son
> Is moe than mee.
> (II, p. 23)

The whole eclogue is an exhalation of the spirit that blows through all Keats's Devon songs. Here is Chatterton's Manne:

> Botte whether, fayre mayde do ye goe?
> O where do ye bende yer waie?
> I will knowe whether you goe,
> I wylle not bee asseled naie.
> (II, p. 21)

here is Keats:

> Where be ye going, you Devon Maid?
> And what have ye there in the basket?
> Ye tight little fairy just fresh from the dairy,
> Will ye give me some cream if I ask it?
> (P. 432)

Both questions capture the simplicity of pastoral song. Chatterton's Manne lives close to the rhythms of life:

> I ryse wyth the sonne,
> Lyche hym to dryve the wayne,
> And eere mie wurche is don
> I sygne a songe or twayne.
> I followe the plough-tayle,

---

[3] J.C. Nevill, Thomas Chatterton (London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1948), p. 138.

[4] G. Saintsbury, A History of English Prosody, II, 520.

Wythe a longe jubb of ale.
Botte of the maydens. Oh!
Itte lacketh notte to telle;
Syre Preeste mote notte crie woe,
Culde hys bull do as welle.
I daunce the beste heie deygnes,
And foile the wysest feygnes.
On everych Seynctes hie daie
Wythe the mynstrelle am I seene,
All a footeyenge it awaie,
Wythe maydens on the greene.
But oh! I wyshe to be moe greate,
In rennome, tenure, and estate.
(II, 26-27)

And Keats, in "Dawlish Fair" is close to the basic rhythms of life, in an equally charming lyric:

Here's somebody coming, here's somebody coming!
Says I 'tis the Wind at a parley
So without any fuss any hawing and humming
She lay on the grass debonnai[r]ly.
O who wouldn't hie to Dawlish fair
O who wouldn't stop in a Meadow
O[who]would not rumple the daisies there
And make the wild fern for a bed do.
(11. 9-12, 16-20, p. 384)

The Manne's dissatisfaction with his state goes deeper than the social criticism which is an inherent part of the pastoral genre. Chatterton gives Syr Roger the last word, but his homily is shallow consolation for the Manne's hidden malaise:

Has thou ne seene a tree uponne a hylle,
Whose unliste braunches rechen far toe syghte;
Whan fuired unwers doe the heaven fylle,
Itte shaketh deere yn dole and moke affryghte.
Whylest the congeon flowrette abessie dyghte,
Stondethe unhurte, unquaced bie the storme:
Syke is a picte of lyffe: the manne of myghte
Is tempest-chaft, hys woe greate as hys forme;
Thieselfe a flowrette of a small accounte,
Wouldst harder felle the wynde, as hygher thee dydste mounte.
(II, pp. 27-28)

Keats's song to follow shows how and why Syr Roger's analogy breaks down:

> In a drear-nighted December,
> Too happy, happy tree,
> Thy Branches ne'er remember
> Their green felicity:
> The north cannot undo them,
> With a sleety whistle through them;
> Nor frozen thawings glue them
> From budding at the prime.
> (I, p. 436)

The Manne suffers from the human condition - no natural parallels such as those drawn by Syr Roger can fully answer him. Keats then speaks for him, for the womanne, and for all Rowley's shepherds, who are part of the rhythm of rustic life, and yet at the same time hear a discordant note:

> Ah! would 'twere so with many
> A gentle girl and boy!
> But were there ever any
> Writh'd not of passed joy?
> The feel of not to feel it,
> When there is none to heal it,
> Nor numbèd sense to steel it,
> Was never said in rhyme.
> (III, p. 437)

The only one of Chatterton's Rowley poems to be published in his lifetime was "Eclogue the Fourth, Elinoure and Juga", which appeared in The Town and Country Magazine in May of 1769. It presents "twa pynynge Maydens . . . Echone bementynge for her absente mate" (II, p. 29) in a series of dialogue stanzas each seven lines long and ending with the Spenserian alexandrine. Although Chatterton's stanza is one line shorter than the Spenserian stanza of "The Eve of St. Agnes", his use of the lengthened concluding line to add weight to his poem provided

Keats with an example of a poet who caught the spirit as well as the technique of Spenser.

Chatterton's "Fourth Eclogue", like his first, shows human suffering upon a backdrop of bloody feuds. The two maidens, although of different houses, Elinoure a white rose, Juga a red, are bound together by a common loss. Treachery is cruel to love as it is in Isabella. Elinoure's vow to retreat into sorrow is very like the reaction of Keats's heroine to her loss. Elinoure's words also foreshadow the"Mynstrelles Songe" to Birtha, a heroine in a similar plight:

> No moe the miskynette shall wake the morne,
> The minstrelle daunce, good cheere, a morryce plaie;
> No moe the amblynge palfrie and the horne
> Shall from the lessel rouze the foxe awaie;
> I'll seke the forreste all the lyve-longe daie;
> Alle nete amenge the gravde chyrche glebe wyll goe,
> And to the passante Spryghtes lecture mie tale of woe.
> (II, p. 31-32)

Aella's song cries "Daunce ne moe at hallie daie", and sings instead a roundelay of death. So Elinoure hears only the sound of her own sorrow, and Isabella hears only the dirge-like roundelay of autumn winds. The following lines from Isabella thus echo Elinoure's plaint and death wish, as well as the "Mynstrelles Songe" in Aella:[5]

> In the mid days of autumn, on their eves
> The breath of Winter comes from far away,
> And the sick west continually bereaves
> Of some gold tinge, and plays a roundelay
> Of death among the bushes and the leaves,
> To make all bare before he dares to stray

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[5]R. Gittings, The Mask of Keats, p. 91.

From his north cavern. So sweet Isabel
By gradual decay from beauty fell,

Because Lorenzo came not.
(XXXII-XXXIII, p. 187)

Isabel, like Elinoure, retreats to the forest. Isabel goes at the urging of the "sprygh t" Lorenzo; Elinoure goes to speak with "spryghts." Elinoure's forest at night becomes a church-glebe; for Isabel the forest becomes a hearse. Juga's perceptive grasp of the transitory quality of happiness, and her death wish, again parallel Isabel's mood:

Whan mokie cloudis do hange upon the leme
Of leden Moon, ynn sylver mantels dyghte;
The tryppeynge Faeries weve the golden dreme
Of Selyness, whyche flyeth wythe the nyghte;
Thenne (botte the Syenctes forbydde!) gif to a spryte
Syrr Rychardes forme ys lyped, I'll holde dystraughte
Hys bleedeynge clai-colde corse, and die eche daie ynn thoughte.
(II, p. 32)

Isabel too dies "eche daie thoughte" because the spryte Lorenzo claims her love even from beyond the grave. Her decaying beauty feeds his love, just as warm-blooded Juga will join herself to a corpse: "Thy beauty grows upon me, and I feel / A greater love through all my essence steal" (XL), says the dead Lorenzo.

The imagery of Chatterton's stanza, immediately above, using silver to colour the realm of dreams, and red to paint reality, also had some bearing on Keats's choice of colour in "The Eve of St. Agnes." Madeline is bathed in silver moonlight, "hoodwink'd with faery fancy"; Porphyro is red with passion and love, his heart and blood burning. To prefigure the consummation of their love, Keats, in a stanza already examined, has the silver moonlight cast warm red gules through glass

blushed with the blood of kings and queens, on Madeline's white breast. The "Seynctes" protected Madeline and Porphyro - silver and red join and remain in a golden dream; the lovers, wrapped in their "selyness", "flyeth wythe the nyghte" from the cold castle. Elinoure and Juga are not so blessed - for them the dream of love fades. They both choose death over life without love.

The alexandrine line, the mood of sorrow, imagery, and treatment of the dream-reality theme, in "Elinoure and Juga" are similarly manifested in "The Eve of St. Agnes" and Isabella. Again Chatterton was a fertile source for Keats in language and in theme.

"The Storie of William Canynge" is Chatterton's successful excursion into the medieval dream-vision genre. "From the first line to the last the mood of remoteness, of spiritual detachment, is consistently maintained, and the whole composition moves with a lovely grave serenity rarely equalled and, within its self-prescribed limits assuredly never surpassed in English Poetry."[6] In his power to evoke a dreamy otherness, Keats in Hyperion III, and "The Eve of St. Agnes" equals Chatterton. An examination of the imagery used by both poets to paint the other world will show their power of dream description to rest on a similar use of metaphor.

In January and February of 1819 Keats wrote the poems mentioned above and returned to his favourite Chatterton, as the poetry will prove. Here is the opening of Chatterton's lovely vision:

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[6]J. Nevill, Thomas Chatterton, p. 128.

Anent a brooklette as I laie reclynd,
Listeynge to heare the water glyde alonge,
Myndeynge how thorowe the grene mees yt twynd,
Awhilst the cavys respons'd yts mottring songe,
At dystaunt rysyng Avonne to be sped,
Amenged wyth rysyng hylles dyd shewe yts head;

Engarlanded wyth crownes of osyer weedes
And wraytes of alders of a bercie scent,
And stickeynge out wyth clowde agested reedes,
The hoarie Avonne show'd dyre semblamente,
Whylest blataunt Severne, from Sabryna clepde,
Roes flemie o'er the sandes that she hepde.
(II, p. 126)

In Hyperion III Keats superimposed Spenserian richness on his Miltonic model. He wanted to soften the bright outlines of Miltonic imagery and so turned to both Spenser and Chatterton for examples. The following lines, which give the setting for Apollo's awakening, are thus full of verbal echoes of Chatterton's "Storie". The red wine was discussed in Chapter Two, but there are more likenesses:

let faint-lipp'd shells
On sands, or in great deeps, vermilion turn
Through all their labyrinths; and let the maid
Blush keenly, as with some warm kiss surpris'd.
Chief isle of the embowered Cyclades,
Rejoice, O Delos, with thine olives green,
And poplars, and lawn-shading palms, and beech,
In which the Zephyr breathes the loudest song,
And hazels thick, dark-stemm'd beneath the shade:
Apollo is once more the golden theme!
Where was he, when the Giant of the Sun
Stood bright, amid the sorrow of his peers?
Together had he left his mother fair
And his twin-sister sleeping in their bower,
And in the morning twilight wandered forth
Beside the osiers of a rivulet,
Full ankel-deep in lillies of the vale.
The nightengale had ceas'd, and a few stars
Were lingering in the heavens, while the thrush

> Began calm-throated. Throughout all the isle
> There was no covert, no retired cave
> Unhaunted by the murmurous noise of waves,
> Though scarcely heard in many a green recess.
> (III, ll.19-41, p. 240)

The labyrinthine flow of liquid through shells parallels the twining of Chatterton's brook. Delos is shaded with green olives as the Avon in Chatterton's poem is engarlanded with alders and reedes. "Crownes" of "oyser weeds"grow upon the Avon banks; beside the "osiers of a rivulet" Apollo wanders. Through both descriptions an underground stream incessantly mutters: in Hyperion "the murmurous noise of waves" and in the "Storie" the "cavys" which "respons'd yts mottryng songe".[7] Further, although Chatterton retains a stanzaic rhyme, both descriptions are written in iambic pentametre.

I will treat The Battle of Hastings, Chatterton's Spenserian epic, fully in a later part of this chapter, but there is one description in his second version which has contributed to the above lines from Hyperion as well. Chatterton interrupts his battle poem to depict the wife of Adhelm, "The fynest dame the sumer moon adave", in his vivid way:

> White as the chaulkie clyffes of Brittaines isle,
> Red as the highest colour'd Gallic wine,
> Gaie as all nature at the mornynge smile
> Those hues with pleasaunce on her lippes combine,
> Her lippes more redde than summer evenynge skyne,
> Or Phoebus rysinge in a frostie morne,
> Her breste more white than snow in feeldes that lyene,

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[7] R. Gittings, The Mask of Keats, pp. 93-94, compares these two passages.

> Or lillie lambes that never have been shorne,
> Swellynge like bubbles in a boillynge welle,
> Or new-braste brooklettes gently whyspringe in the delle.
> (II, p. 432-433)

Keats's "Let the red wine within the goblet boil, / Cold as a bubbling well", besides owing something to The Revenge echoes Chatterton's "Red as the highest colour'd Gallic wine", and "Swellynge like bubbles in a boillynge welle".[8] The highly coloured Kenewalcha is a maid who would "blush keenly". Shell lips that turn vermilion are like her "lippes more redde than summer evenynge skyne". And Keats's sensuous metaphor for clouds - "Let the clouds of even and of morn / Float in voluptuous fleeces o'er the hills" is like Chatterton's description of Kenelwalcha's breasts, like "lillie lambes that never have been shorn". Both metaphors are unusual but effective because of the emphathic response they arouse. Chatterton's "New -braste brooklettes gently whysperynge in the delle" again influenced Keats's rivulet and "the murmurous noise of waves". Both passages incorporate the passing of time from morning to night into their metaphoric structure - Kenelwalcha's lips are "Gaie as all nature at the mornynge smile" and Apollo journeys through "morning twilight".

Thus powerful imagery which demands a total response is used by both poets to enhance their descriptions of a world of pure intensity. This is the world where Madeline and Porphyro exist, and so

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[8] R. Gittings, The Mask of Keats, pp. 93-94.

it is not surprizing that more linguistic similarities are to be found between Canynge's vision and the lovers' dream. Canynge's vision of Truth is very like Porphyro's sight of Madeline in her chamber:[9]

> Astounded mickle there I sylente laie,
> Still scauncing wondrous at the walkygne syghte;
> Mie senses forgarde ne coulde reyn awaie;
> But was ne forestraughte when shee dyd alyghte
> Anie to mee, dreste up yn naked viewe,
> Whyche mote yn some ewbrycious thoughtes abrewe.
>
> But I ne dyd once thynke of wanton thoughte:
> For well I mynded what bie vowe I hete,
> And yn mie pockate han a crouchee broughte,
> Whych yn the blosom woulde such sins anete;
> I lok'd wyth eyne as pure as angelles doe,
> And dyd the everie thoughte of foule eschewe.
> (II, p. 129)

Porphyro's request to view his love does "some ewbrycious thoughte abrewe" in Angela, but he vows fervently, like William, to be pure in thought:

> 'I will not harm her, by all the saints I swear;'
> Quoth Porphyro; 'O may I ne'er find grace
> 'When my weak voice shall whisper its last prayer,
> 'If one of her soft ringlets I displace,
> 'Or look with ruffian passion in her face.
> (XVII, p. 199)

Not with ruffian passion but with "eyen as pure as angelles" he looks on his angel, just as the "astounded" William, whose senses "forgarde ne coulde reyen awaie" gazes on truth:

> Rose bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
> And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
> And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
> She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
> Save wings, for heaven: - Porphyro grew faint:
> She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.
> (XXV, pp. 201-202)

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[9] Ibid., p. 94. Suggested, but not fully traced by Gittings. "Mickle", as De Selincourt in op. cit. notes, occurs in Stanza XIV of "The Eve of St. Agnes".

Canynge has a cross which nips sin in the bud; Madeline's cross is stained with the glow of life, intense and pure, and the union of silver and red light prefigures the consummation of dream and reality to come. Chatterton's dream vision is realized by history; Madeline and Porphyro realize their dream by repeating it in a finer tone. Although the visions are vastly different, that both poets use comparable methods to differentiate between dream and waking states suggests the influence of Chatterton on Keats.

There is only one canto of "The Unknown Knight or the Tournament", "one canto only, but a fragment lovers of poetry will wish more of, so replete with the glamour of real imaginative verse are its metrical mutations."[10] The dramatic opening lines are full of hustle and immediacy[11]:

> The Matten belle han sounded long,
> The Cocks han sang their morning songe,
> When lo! the tuneful Clarions sound,
> (Wherein all other noise was drowned)
> Did echo to the rooms around,
> And greet the ears of Champyons stronge;
> Arise, arise from downie bedde
> For Sunne doth gin to shew his hedde!
> (II, p. 164)

Metric variation and stress rhythm heighten the swift flow of words which plunges the reader directly into the action of a medieval tournament. Robert Gittings has compared these lines with

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[10] J. Ingram, Chatterton and his Poetry (New York: AMS Press, 1971), p. 98.

[11] J. Nevill, Thomas Chatterton, p. 117.

those which open "The Eve of St. Mark":[12]

> Upon a Sabbath-day it fell;
> Twice holy was the Sabbath-bell,
> That call'd the folk to evening prayer;
> The city streets were clean and fair
> From wholesome drench of April rains;
> (11. 1-5, p. 357)

Although Keats sets his poem in the evening, the bell, the vivid sense of something about to happen, and the short eight syllable lines are all like Chatterton's opening. The stanzas quoted from "The Eve of St. Agnes" on pp. 106-7 describing Madeline's chamber are similar to this passage from "The Unknown Knight" as well. Both poets use heraldry to deepen the melancholic backgrounds of their poems. Chatterton's "sheeldes with devices shone" - Keats uses the words, "device" and "shielded"; Chatterton's shields are decorated with emblems of wounded hearts and battles won; the glass of Madeline's window has "A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and kings." The fine appearance of knights in splendid trappings, unknown to them makes the hearts of ladies bleed for love. in "The Tournament." Madeline, although as yet unaware, will become involved in the intense life. The warm gules dancing on her breast prefigure her love of Porphyro. Thus the very movement of Chatterton's stanza from knights to the emotions of their ladies is reflected in Keats's description of a thousand heraldries and Madeline's symbolic involvement in them.

Simple cataloguing of linguistic borrowings is a barren task.

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[12]R. Gittings, The Mask of Keats, p. 95.

The influence of Chatterton on Keats goes far deeper than the word surface of poetry. Rhythms, theme, and language all intertwine and share likenesses that illuminate the poems of both artists. Both wrote from the belief that life was art, that the intense life was the most worthy of artistic rendering, and that a life once dramatically captured in art could only be understood by an intense response. Thus as I continue to examine the poetry of both men, I will try to show that it was a total response that Keats made to Chatterton's poetry, to his ideas and to his forms.

In "Goddwyn A Tragedie" Chatterton again indulged his passion for dramatic form. As Rowley, he was a superb playwright:

> Inn drawynge of hys menne no wytte ys lackte;
> Entyn a kynge mote bee full pleased to nyghte.
> Attende, and marcke the partes nowe to be done;
> Wee better for toe doe do champyon anie onne.
> (II, p. 326)

There are only two extant scenes of the tragedy -- one between Goddwyn and Harolde, the rebellious northern leaders, brave and unbending; the other between the treacherous King Edward, his weak Queen and his lackeys. The scenic contrast between bold action and cowardly plotting, between the rebel and the evil monarch is paralleled in Keats's own dramatic fragment, King Stephen. In three well-handled scenes, Keats presents his heroic warrior, Stephen, who fights against odds for justice. Even though, like Harold and Goddwyn, his resistance is doomed, Stephen is glorious in defeat. Scene four shifts to a chamber of court where the machinations of monarchs are revealed.

Proud Maud wants only revenge, not an honourable peace; she loves the flattery of Lord Chester and rejects the idea of mercy. Chatterton's Edward, in a like way, determines to revenge his wounded pride by slaying Goddwyn and Harolde; he is moved to this decision by Hughe's praise. Thus in his progress to a dramatic form, Keats turned to Chatterton for guidance in the structure of his play.

In scene one of Chatterton's Tragedie, dramatic conflict is established between the old order and the new, between wisdom and impetuosity. Goddwyn coucils delay, but Harolde will not hear of it:

> Harolde: Stylle mormorynge atte yer shap, stylle toe the kynge
> Theie rolle theire trobbles, lyche a sorgie sea.
> Hane Englonde thenne a tongue, botte notte a stynge?
> Dothe all compleyne, yette nonne wylle ryghted bee?
>
> Goddwyn: Awayte the tyme whanne Godde wylle sende us ayde.
> (II, pp. 329-330)

This conflict between new and old fills the rocky home of the Titans in Hyperion too. Oceanus, like Goddwyn, advises endurance:

> 'My voice is not a bellows unto ire.
> ---
> And first, as thou wast not the first of powers,
> So art thou not the last; it cannot be:
> Thou art not the beginning nor the end.
> From chaos and parental darkness came
> Light, the first fruits of that intestine broil,
> That sullen ferment, which for wondrous ends
> Was ripening in itself.
> ---
> Now comes the pain of truth, to whom 'tis pain;
> O folly! for to bear all naked truths,
> And to envisage circumstance, all calm,
> That is the top of sovereignity.
> (II, ll.176-205, pp. 234-5)

Goddwyn advises Harolde to "wayte untylle somme season fytte" (II, p. 331), but the younger man will not be restrained: "No, we muste, streve to ayde oureselves wyth powre." (II, p. 330) Like Hyperion who claims:

> Fall! - No, by Tellus and her briny robes!
> Over the fiery frontier of my realms
> I will advance a terrible right arm
> Shall scare that infant thunderer, rebel Jove,
> (I, ll.246-249, p. 227)

and Enceladus who scorns Oceanus's advise with an assertion of might, Harold will seize the moment in battle. With images of cataclysmic fire and storm, both poets surround their rebellious figures. Hyperion's

> flaming robes stream'd out beyond his heels,
> And gave a roar, as if of earthly fire,
> That scar'd away the meek ethereal Hours
> And made their dove-wings tremble.
> (I, ll.214-217, p. 226)

When Nicou and Enceladus were compared, the thunder storm image was a significant parallel. That image of storm links Enceladus with another of Chatterton's warriors, Harold:

> Nowe, Englonde, ys the tyme,
> Whan thee or thie felle foemens cause moste die.
> Thie geason wronges bee reyne ynto theyre pryme;
> Now wylle thie sonnes unto thie succoure flie.
> Alyche a storm egederinge yn the skie,
> Tys fulle ande brasteth on the chaper grounde;
> Sycke shall mie fhuirye on the Normans flie,
> And alle theyre mittee menne be sleene arounde,
> Nowe, nowe, wylle Harolde or oppressionne falle,
> Ne moe the Englyshmenne yn vayne for hele shal calle.
> (II, p. 339-340)

The above stanza from "Goddwyn" is an example of Chatterton's variation on the Spenserian stanza which makes The Battle of Hastings also so effective. The stanza is successfully united by three

rhymes, and the concluding couplet sums up the theme both of this stanza and of the entire first scene. The purity of Chatterton's language adds to the poetic expression -- "egederinge" is a powerful adjective full of movement; "chaper" is a suggestive term for barren; "brasteth" is a vivid description. The spelling of "fhuirye" increases the weight of the word in the line and intensifies Harolde's exclamation. It is this simple but passionate quality of Chatterton's poetry that Keats appreciated. And "Goddwyn", in addition to "Eclogue Two" provided Keats with his gules, amid the thousand heraldries of "The Eve of St. Agnes":

> Harolde: No, bydde the leathal mere,
> Upriste withe hiltrene wyndes and cause unkend,
> Beheste it to be lete; so twylle appeare,
> Eere Harolde hyde hys name, his countries friende.
> The gule-steynct brygandyne, the aventayle,
> The feerie anlace brede shal make mie gare prevayle.
> (II, pp. 333-334)

Besides the "gule-steynct" metaphor, the word "hiltrene" is especially effective, for it suggests both hidden and hilt, that the knife-edge of the wind is sheathed in clouds, a phenomenon as rare as it would be for Harold to sheathe his name in cowardice.

"Goddwyn" has received highest praise for its concluding Chorus to Freedom. In its juxtapositioning of right and might the Chorus recalls the conflict of the Titans in Hyperion. There is Freedom, skillfully personified:

> dreste yn blodde-steyned veste,
> To everie knyghte her warre-songe sunge,
> Uponne her hedde wylde wedes were spredde;
> A gorie anlace bye her honge.
> (II, p. 348)

and Power,

> wythe his heafod straught ynto the skyes,
> Hys speere a sonne-beame, and hys sheelde a starre,
> Alyche twaie brende ynge gronfyres rolls hys eyes,
> Chaftes with hys yronne feete and soundes to war.
> (II, p. 349)

The metric variation of the whole chorus together with its vivid metaphors, especially the "gronfyre" which again recalls the flaring Hyperion, made it a source for Keats in his search for an intense dramatic form.

In Chapter One I noted how Wordsworth was influenced by "An Excelente Balade of Charitie", and incorporated that influence into "Resolution and Independence." Now the reaction of Keats to the last-written Rowley poem will be considered. "Not only are the beggar and the thunderstorm depicted with the sensuous sympathy and melodious insistence which is the great charm of "The Eve of St. Agnes", writes Theodore Watts-Dunton of the "Balade", "but the movement of the line is often the same."[13] Watts-Dunton demonstrates that Keats's use of triptology as in his description of the Beadsman, "meagre, barefoot, wan", sprang from Chatterton's description of the beggar, "Howe woe-begone, howe withered, forwynde, deade."[14]

Besides a stylistic link, there is a thematic affinity. Like

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[13] T. Watts-Dunton, "Thomas Chatterton" in The English Poet ed. T. Ward, II, 402.

[14] E. Meyerstein, op. cit., p. 415, and M. Ridley, Keats' Craftsmanship, pp. 70-71, note the triptology influence as well.

the Beadsman, the cold beggar, is isolated from the luxury of medieval society. Both have said and done the joys of their lives. Harsh penance is the Beadsman's choice:

> Another way he went, and soon among
> Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,
> And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to grieve.
> (III, p. 195)

He must not heed "Music's golden tongue; nor can Chatterton's beggar:

> Haste to thie church-glebe-house, asshrewed manne!
> Haste to thie kiste, thie onlie dortoure bedde,
> Cale, as the claie which will gre on thie hedde,
> Is Charitie and Love aminge high elves;
> Knightis and Barons live for pleasure and themselves.
> (II, p. 362-363)

Keats's depiction of the argent revelry, of merry-makers who riot into sleep, affirms that "Knightis and Barons live for pleasure and themselves."

Chatterton's storm is portrayed as empathically as the storm in "The Eve of St. Agnes". Both poets use the storm as a metaphor for the inescapable pain of the human condition. Relief comes in the establishing of human relationships. The storm of "The Balade" involves all life in its literal effect, and all the sensations of the sympathetic reader:

> The gatherd storme is rype; the bigge drops falle;
> The forswat meadowes smethe, and drenche the rain;
> The comyng ghastness do the cattle pall,
> And the full flockes are drivynge ore the plaine;
> Dashde from the cloudes the waters flott againe;
> The welkin opes; the yellow levynnne flies;
> And the hot fierie smothe in the wide lowings dies.
>
> Liste! now the thunder's rattling clymmynge sound
> Cheves slowlie on, and then embollen clangs,

> Shakes the hie spyre, and losst, dispended, drown'd,
> Still on the gallard eare of terroure hanges;
> The windes are up; the lofty elmen swanges;
> Agayn the levynne and the thunder poures,
> And the full cloudes are braste attenes in stonen showers.
> (II, pp. 363-364)

Visual, tactile, gustatory, and auditory images are all used by Chatterton in this passage. His skill in coining words is demonstrated by "forswat" for sunburnt, "ghastness" for darkness", "lowings" for flames which picks up the reference to the frightened cattle, "levynge" for lightning, "clymmynge" for noisy, and "embollen" for swollen which suggest the very act of swelling up with the'em' suffix. Triptology deepens and weights his pic.ture -- "losst, dispended, drowned" The reader is totally involved in a storm which is a symbol of the pain of life. Into this setting which engulfs the beggar, ride two men, an Abbot and a Limitour. The finely dressed Abbot, very like Chaucer's Friar in dress and spirit, spurns the beggar. A plainly clad Limitour, like Chaucer's Parson, shares alms and his cloak with the beggar, and proves that even in the storms of life it is possible to enjoy the fine weather of friendship and goodness. Likewise, on a stormy night, in a cold and dark castle, the light and warmth of love is possible, as Madeline and Porphyro discover. Keats sets the feast and consummation of love on such a harsh background in order to illuminate the dialectical music of life. No sooner has Porphyro become the reality of Madeline's dream than St. Agnes' moon sets and a storm begins:

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet:
'This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!
'Tis dark: the iced gusts still rave and beat:
'No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!
(XXXVII, p. 205)

The storm proves a boon to the lovers, just as Chatterton's storm brings a kind Limitour to the beggar -- "Hark! 'tis an elfin-storm from faery land / Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed" (XXXIX, p. 205). Keats's description, though shorter than Chatterton's, uses the same all-involving metaphors. The reader sees, hears and feels both sleet and rain. Just as Chatterton's second stanza opened with the dramatic interjection. "Liste!", so Keats begins his second reference to the storm with "Harke!"

Into the storm rides the Limitour, having restored the beggar's faith in human goodness; into the storm flee Madeline and Porphyro, secure in the intensity of their love. Chatterton ends his poem with a prayer of compact expression: "Vyrgynne and hallie Seyncte, who sitte yn gloure, / Or give the mittee will, or give the gode man power." (II, p. 368) The poem's perspective changes from the immediacy of human conflict to a universal comprehension of the human condition. If the powerful were minded to be good, or the good were more powerful, then the storms of life would be fewer, and the spells of good weather more frequent. So Keats in his fade-out leaves the immediate plight of the lovers and takes a comprehensive view of all the actors in his stormy drama. Madeline and Porphyro as good lovers had the power to seize their happiness and make their dream reality;

the powerful Baron and his knights lack the will to goodness; Angela and the Beadsman seem to exist somewhere in-between, with a will to neither goodness nor power, and so pass into nothingness. Keats's final stance, like Chatterton's, is a wish that all would live intensely, that the powerful would have the desire to be good, and that the good would have the will enough to realize their goodness.

One final similarity in metaphor is to be noted. Before the storm bursts, Chatterton presents a late summer landscape. It is as ripe as the landscape of "To Autumn":

> In Virgyne the sweltrie sun gan sheene,
> And hotte upon the mees did caste his raie;
> The apple rodded from its palie greene,
> And the mole peare did bende the leafy spraie;
> The peede chelandri sunge the lyvelonge daie;
> 'Twas nowe the pryde, the manhoode of the yeare,
> And eke the grounde was dighte in its moste defte aumere.
> (II, 360-361)

Keats's Ode captures a like sense of process. Apples bend the moss'd cottage trees as ripe apples fill Chatterton's poem, and both pictures evoke those endless budding days that belong to the manhood of the year. Fine weather is one part of life; storm is the other. Chatterton's poem ends with a prayer to bring back the warm days, but his prayer fully accepts the inevitability of change. Keats's Ode is a praise of life in all its fluctuations, a celebration of sun and storm, and a recognition that life ripens through rich intensity. Thus the links to be noted in metaphor and style between Chatterton's "Balade" and both "The Eve of St. Agnes" and "To Autumn" extend into a philosophic affinity. It is the depth of Keats's appreciation of

Chatterton that makes the Bristol poet such a rich poetic source.

The Battle of Hastings is Rowley's supposed translation of a tenth-century work by a Saxon monk named Turgot. There are two versions of the poem, the second a more mature treatment of war and death. Both versions present panoramic views of the battlefield, zooming in on a particular warrior, rapidly presenting a series of bloody vignettes. To the Spenserian nine line form, Chatterton added one line rhyming with the ninth to form an independent couplet. He retained the compact quality of Spenser's stanza, and gave it a firm conclusion. The form allowed Chatterton to incorporate the vividness of Spenser with his own desire to present a series of self-contained scenes, each one complete in itself. The first version opens with an echo of Percy's Reliques,[15] an example of Chatterton's ability to load a military poem with the lyrical grace of song:

> O Chryste, it is a grief for me to telle,
> Howe manie a nobil erle and valrous knyghte
> In fyghtynge for Kynge Harolde noblie fell,
> Al sleyne in Hastyngs feeld in bloudie fyghte.
> O sea! our teeming donore han thy floude,
> Han anie fructuous entendement,
> Thou wouldst have rose and sank wyth tydes of bloude,
> Before Duke Wyllyams's knyghts han hither went;
> Whose cowart arrows manie erles sleyne,
> And brued the feeld wyth bloude as season rayne.
> (II, p. 371)

It is a dramatic opening to the poem, and the metaphor of the sea flowing with blood shows an empathic sense of participation in natural

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[15] T. Percy, Reliques, I, "The More Modern Ballad of Chevy Chase": "O Christ, my very heart doth bleed wyth sorrow for thy sake."

process.

Keats, as was pointed out in Chapter Three, shared Chatterton's boyish delight in military drama, and in Otho the Great and King Stephen experimented with the themes of war and bravery. The Battle of Hastings has a more important influence on Keats's experimentation with the Spenserian stanza in "The Eve of St. Agnes". Both poets realized the metaphoric and thematic potential of Spenser's form and transmuted it through their "White Simplicity". There are two stops in the nine line stanza as Spenser used it, at the fourth and the eighth lines. The ninth line was an alexandrine. Most of the eighteenth-century imitators neglected the eighth line stop in their preference for the run-on line. Keats was careful to avoid the run-on after he had realized the diffuseness of Endymion, and he progressed to a poetry that demanded full stops and loaded lines. "The Eve of St. Agnes" incorporates the two full stops of Spenser, and this phenomenon is noted by W.J. Bate who writes, "except for Spenser himself, I question whether any other writer in the Spenserian stanza has been as wary of run-on lines as Keats."[16] Chatterton is one writer who within the bounds of Spenser's form parallels this avoidance of the run-on, and who retained the two full stops. Thus Keats found in The Battle of Hastings an example of the weighted Spenserian form that he wanted for "The Eve of St. Agnes". Compare

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[16]W.J. Bate, The Stylistic Development of Keats, p. 103.

the ponderous slow turns of Chatterton's stanza,

> Soone as the erlie maten belle was tolde,
> And sonne was come to byd us all good daie,
> Both armies on the feeld, both brave and bolde,
> Prepar'd for fyghte in champyon arraie.
> As when two bulles, destynde for Hocktide fyghte,
> Are yoked bie the necke within a sparre,
> Theie rend the erthe, and travellyrs affryghte,
> Lackynge to gage the sportive bloudie warre;
> Soe lacked Haroldes menne to come to blowes,
> The Normans lacked for to wielde their bowes.
> (II, pp. 372-373)

to the heavy sensuous grace of Keats:

> Her falt'ring hand upon the balustrade,
> Old Angela was feeling for the stair,
> When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmed maid,
> Rose, like a mission'd spirit, unaware:
> With silver taper's light, and pious care,
> She turn'd, and down the aged gossip led
> To a safe level matting. Now prepare,
> Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed;
> She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove fray'd and fled.
> (XXII, p. 201)

Besides the shared use of Spenserian form, there is a strange reference in "The Eve" to Merlin, one of only two in all of Keats's poetry, that perhaps derives from a metaphoric device of Chatterton's, used twice in The Battle of Hastings. Angela's promise to Porphyro

> was, to lead him, in close secrecy,
> Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hide
> Him in a closet, of such privacy
> That he might see her beauty unespied,
> And win perhaps that night a peerless bride,
> While legion'd faeries pac'd the coverlet,
> And pale enchantment held her sleepy-eyed.
> Never on such a night have lovers met,
> Since Merlin paid his Demon all the monstrous debt.
> (XIX, p. 200)

Chatterton concludes his description of Harold's attack on the Normans with a fairy reference: "So who he be that ouphant faieries strike, / Their soules will wander to Kynge Offa's dyke" (II, p. 384), and uses same lines in his description of Harold's countryman:

> His countryman, brave Mervyn ap Teudor,
> Who love of hym han from his country gone,
> When he perceevd his friend lie in his gore,
> As furious as a mountayn wolf he ranne.
> As ouphant faieries, when the moone sheenes bryghte,
> In littel circles daunce upon the greene,
> All living creatures flie far from their syghte,
> Ne by the race of destinie be seen.
> For what he be that ouphant faieries stryke,
> Their soules will wander to Kyng Offa's dyke.
> (II, p. 398)

Both poets deepen their descriptions of human activity by appealing to the realm of enchantment. Both depictions suggest the potential danger and threat of fairy legions. Keats's furious storm parallels the furious action of Mervyn ap Teudor and the idea of this unparalleled burst of activity, either as a natural phenomenon or a human one, leads both poets to the comparison with magic forces. Keats possibly had Chatterton's image of "ouphant faieries" in mind when he wrote "The Eve", not surprisingly since his poem is an enchanted one. The reference to Merlin and his debt perhaps sprang from Chatterton's warrior with a similar name, Mervyn, who also paid a monstrous debt, by avenging his kinsman, Harold, in war.

In Chapter Three, I suggested that into his use of the Spenserian epic model, Chatterton blended the Miltonic metaphor. Keats in turn, in his epic Hyperion fused the Miltonic metaphor with a Spenserian richness. Perhaps this Keatsian marriage of Milton and

Spenser was born in a reading of The Battle of Hastings. Chatterton's metaphors turn upon an identification of warriors with oaks, rocks, rushing rivers, and fierce animals, with the symbols of natural energy:

> And nowe the battail closde on everyche syde,
> And face to face appeard the knyghtes full brave;
> They lifted up theire bylles with myckle pryde,
> And manie woundes unto the Normans gave.
> So have I sene two weirs at once give grounde,
> White fomynge hygh to rorynge combat runne;
> In roaryng dyn and heaven-breaking sounde,
> Burste waves on waves, and spangle in the sunne;
> And when their myghte in burstynge waves is fled,
> Like cowards, stele alonge their ozy bede.
> (II. pp. 378-379)

The opening stanza of the poem showed how Chatterton identified the clashing of men with the process of nature; his metaphor continues the relationship between war and those brute forces. Keats too in Hyperion is concerned to show his war-like Titans as organic parts of their environment. His theme is that beauty determines the evolutionary process and that the Titans, as parts of nature, must give way to more intense forms of life, just as oaks fall and comets burn out. Saturn, as the poem opens is a fallen oak; Hyperion is a burning comet; the Titans are the very crags of their abode, "bleak-grown pines" roaring in the winter of their discontent:

> There is a roaring in the bleak-grown pines
> When Winter lifts his voice; there is a noise
> Among immortals when a God gives sign,
> With hushing finger, how he means to load
> His tongue with the full weight of utterless thought,
> With thunder, and with music, and with pomp::
> Such a noise is like the roaring of bleak-grown pines:
> Which, when it ceases in this mountain'd world,

> No other sound succeeds; but ceasing here,
> Among these fallen, Saturn's voice therefrom
> Grew up like organ, that begins anew
> Its strain, when other harmonies, stopt short,
> Leave the dinn'd air vibrating silverly.
> (II, ll.116-128,pp. 232-233)

In the second version of his poem, Chatterton deepens its historical background and gives it a fated significance by describing Stonehenge:

> Where fruytless heathes and meadowes cladde in greie,
> Save where derne hawthornes reare theyr humble heade,
> The hungrie traveller upon his waie
> Sees a huge desarte alle arounde hym spredde,
> The distaunte citie scantlie to be spedde,
> The curlynge force of smoke he sees in vayne,
> Tis to far distaunte, and his onlie bedde
> Iwimpled in hys cloke ys on the playne,
> Whylste rattlynge thonder forrey oer his hedde,
> And raines come down to wette hys harde uncouthlie bedde.
>
> A wondrous pyle of rugged mountaynes standes,
> Placd on eche other in a dreare arraie,
> It ne could be the worke of human handes,
> It ne was reared up bie menne of claie.
> Here did the Britons adoration paye
> To the false god whom they did Tauran name,
> Dightynge hys altarre with greete fyres in Maie,
> Roastynge theyr vyctualle round aboute the flame,
> 'Twas here that Hengest did the Brytons slee,
> As they were mette in council for to bee.
> (II, p. 440-441)

Chatterton first describes the traveller's reaction to Stonehenge and then gives the supernatural details of the circle, his whole passage standing as a metaphor for the unknown forces which surround and make significant all human conflicts. Keats likewise uses the Stonehenge metaphor in Hyperion to show the utter desolation of the Titans and the timeless quality of their suffering:

> Scarce images of life, one here, one there,
> Lay vast and edgeways; like a dismal cirque
> Of Druid stones, upon a forlorn moor,

> When the chill rain begins at shut of eve,
> In dull November, and their chancel vault,
> The Heaven itself, is blinded throughout night.
> (II, ll.33-38, p. 230)

Keats's gothic description echoes the autumn setting, the gloom, the rain, the dreariness, and the mystery of Chatterton's. Both passages deepen the significance of human suffering by extending that suffering into timelessness.[17]

The second version of The Battle of Hastings opens with a dramatic invocation to Truth, and continues the stanza experiment. It is a finer poem than the first, better organized and more coherent. It is held together by the perspective taken in the first stanza, that fate controls the world where men make their souls:

> The fickle moone, bedeckt wythe sylver rays,
> Leadynge a traine of starres of feeble lyghte,
> With look adigne the worlde belowe surveies,
> The worlde, that wotted not it coud be nyghte;
> Wyth armour dyd, with human gore ydeyd,
> She sees Kynge Harolde stande, fayre Englands curse and pryde.
> (II, p. 405-406)

Keats was not satisfied with his first attempt in the epic; nor was Chatterton. Both men rewrote their poems incorporating much of the same material into their reworkings as they sought a perfect form.

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[17]The temple in The Fall of Hyperion is described in a similar way, to suggest its eternal permanence and mystery, and the gothic cast to the dreamer's vision deepens its significance. Like Chatterton's Stonehenge, this monument "ne could be the worke of human hands." See lines 61-71, Canto I, p. 404.

Part of the impetus for writing his epic twice, psychologically at any rate, might have come to Keats from Chatterton. The dissatisfaction of both with Milton has been discussed in Chapter Three. It is interesting to note the similar struggles by both poets in their second versions, to break with the Miltonic metaphor. Chatterton extended the metaphor to make it fill a full stanza; it becomes more of a decisive comment on action completed or to come, rather than an extension into other realms of comparable activity. Here is the new description of Harold's army:

> As when the shepster in the shadie bowre
> In jintle slumbers chase the heat of daie,
> Hears doublyng echoe wind the wolfins rore,
> That neare hys flocke is watchynge for a praie,
> He tremblynge for his sheep drives dreeme awaie,
> Gripes faste hys burled croke, and sore adradde
> Wyth fleeting strides he hastens to the fraie,
> And rage and prowess fyres the coistrell lad;
> With trustie talbots to the battel flies,
> And yell of men and dogs and wolfins tear the skies.
>
> Such was the dire confusion of eche wite,
> That rose from sleep and walsome power of wine.
> (II, p. 411-412)

More sure of himself in the use of metaphor, Chatterton fused it with his stanza form to make both metaphor and stanza entirely his own. Keats likewise in The Fall of Hyperion drastically reduced his Miltonisms, and made his metaphors organic parts of the whole poem. The "green robed senators of mighty woods" are no longer a separate entity unto themselves, but are rooted in the ground of the entire poem. Thus Keats's metaphors are less startling, and more inherent parts of his work. Like the permeating effect of incense, the image

breathes its effect subtly:

> When in mid-May the sickening East wind
> Shifts sudden to the south, the small warm rain
> Melts out the frozen incense from all flowers,
> And fills the air with so much pleasant health
> That even the dying man forgets his shroud; -
> Even so that lofty sacrificial fire,
> Sending forth Maian incense, spread around
> Forgetfulness of everything but bliss,
> And clouded all the alter with soft smoke.
> (I, ll.97-105, p. 405)

There is a brilliant dawn image in the second Battle of Hastings which Keats used for both Hyperions:

> And now the greie-eyd morne with vi'lets drest,
> Shakyng the dewdrops on the flourie meedes,
> Fled with her rosie radiance to the West:
> Forth from the Easterne gatte the fyrie steedes
> Of the bright sunne, in fierie pompe enthrond on hie,
> Swyfter than thoughte alonge hys jernie gledes,
> And scatters nythtes remaynes from oute the skie:
> He sawe the armies make for bloudie fraie,
> And stopt his driving steedes, and hid his lyghtsome raye.
> (II, p. 420)

Chatterton shows that human conflict has the power to stop the dawn; Keats's hero, enraged at the conflict of the Titans and their plight, in a similar way, tries to change the course of natural events, by bringing the dawn before its time:

> Releas 'd, he fled
> To the eastern gates, and full six dewy hours
> Before the dawn in season due should blush,
> He breath'd fierce breath against the sleepy portals,
> Clear'd them of heavy vapours, burst them wide
> Suddenly on the ocean's chilly streams.
> The planet orb of fire, whereon he rode
> Each day from east to west the heaven's through,
> Spun round in sable curtaining of clouds.
> (I, ll.263-713, p. 227)

Besides the like conceptual thrust of both dawn descriptions, that profound action can potentially alter nature's course, there are

perceptual links. Both mention the eastern gates; Chatterton's morn and Keats's hours are "dewy"; Chatterton's morn flies in rosy radiance; Keats's morn blushes. Both dawns are personified as mounted, fierce figures, who ride swiftly through sable clouds and scatter the vapours of night. The combined similarity of their language and theme confirms the possibility of Chatterton's influence.

Hyperion Book III showed a lingusitic affinity with the description of Kenewalcha in the second Battle of Hastings. She is very like the damsels in Percy's Reliques,[18] and so again Chatterton proves his ability to blend dramatic narrative and pretty lyric. Similarly, Keats's lyrics to Fanny are in this song tradition and show some influence of Chatterton's vivid painting of a maid in a strange battlefield setting. Fanny's "white ripening breast" in "Bright Star" is like Kenewalcha's snow-white breast, and that before his wish to pillow his head on that breast, Keats mentions the snow on the hills and moors, affirms the possibility of a verbal echo.

Both versions of Chatterton's battle poem, then, had fruitful ramifications for the poetry of Keats. Milton and Spenser combined in The Battle of Hastings and the union was an example for Keats who sought a similar fusion of metaphor and luxuriousness in "The Eve of St. Agnes", Hyperion and The Fall of Hyperion. Verbal echoes of Chatterton, reverberate into theme, as Keats responded totally to the Rowley union of form and idea.

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[18] T. Percy, Reliques, II, "The Not-Browne Mayd" and "Fair Rosamond".

If the work of art is a comment on and an explanation of the mystery of life, then it follows that art must be intensely and sympathetically understood. When one artist influences another in a sustained way, that influence manifests itself in significant artistic parallels. Such is the case with Keats and Chatterton. The African Eclogues, lush, rich, and intense, were reservoirs for Keats in Endymion, Isabella and Hyperion. The Rowleian "Eclogues" influenced "The Eve of St. Agnes", the Devon lyrics, and Isabella. Chatterton's dream vision, "The Storie of William Canynge", is echoed by Hyperion, Book III and "The Eve of St. Agnes"; "The Unknown Knyghte or The Tournament" is reflected by "The Eve of St. Mark" and "The Eve of St. Agnes". Goddwyn a Tragedie guided the dramatic growth of Keats in King Stephen, and the presentation of conflict in Hyperion, as well as contributing to the imagery of "The Eve of St. Agnes." The empathic metaphors of "An Excelente Balade of Charitie" live again in "The Eve of St. Agnes" and "To Autumn"; all three poems show the deepening of image into theme. Finally, The Battle of Hastings was full of symbols for Keats's spiritual eye as he spun Chatterton's stanza experiments, metaphors, use of epic models and lyrical grace into "The Eve of St. Agnes", Hyperion, The Fall of Hyperion and his lyrics to Fanny. In every case, the influence of Chatterton upon Keats is a combined one of linguistic detail, stylistic experiment, and philosophical intent.

CHAPTER FIVE

"Tides of Power" Aella and Keats

Keats intensely absorbed both the spirit and the form of Chatterton's work, and enriched the organic wholeness of his own poetry by doing so. I will conclude my comparison of the art of Keats and Chatterton by considering Chatterton's masterpiece, Aella, A Tragycall Interlude, and its importance for the poetry of Keats.

Aella's story is simple, its motif the timeless one of love and death. Aella is Chatterton's major attempt in the drama, a fully developed play of fourteen scenes. Birtha and Aella are torn from a marriage celebration by threat of war. As Bristol's military hero, Aella must choose country over love. Celmonde, apparent comrade to Aella and secretly in love with Birtha, plots to destroy the hero in order to possess his wife. Scenes shifts are rapid between the two warring camps, Saxon and Danish, and the Danish chiefs are presented skillfully in masterful dialogue. Aella is victorious in war, but because of his tempestuous nature, becomes jealous of Birtha and so destroys himself. After suspenseful pauses, and melodramatic confrontation between the lovers, the play ends with them both dead in each other's arms.

The theme of Aella then was a favourite of Keats. Whether love could be fulfilled only in death is a question he asked both in

the context of his relationship with Fanny Brawne and in his own love poetry. Aella's subject is the strife of human hearts, presented in a dramatic medium. Both poets came to view human conflict as the most worthy of artistic rendition. "Lette somme greate storie of a manne be songe" (II, 193), cries Rowley at the beginning of his drama; as Keats matured as an artist, dramatic clash became his main concern. Aella is set in the "Vale of men". (II, 200) In the deep sadness of a vale which is a symbol of the vale of soul-making, the earth and all its sorrow, Keats sets his dramatic epic, Hyperion.

Keats was influenced by the style of Aella as well. Rowley states his artistic credo in the introductory letters. "Yn auntyent tym", claims Rowley, truth was clothed in beauty and the "preeste delyvered alle the lege yn rhym". (II, 189) Poetry ought to strive for a coalescence of beauty and truth by closely interweaving idea and form. So Keats in the Odes sought a style that allowed maximum expression within a tight, controlled structure. Keats realized the vow made in "Ode to Psyche"; he clothed truth in beauty and created all the "soft delight / That shadowy thought could win". (11.64-65, p. 212) Poetry wants an "onlist lecturn and a songe adyne", (II, 198) stated Rowley, a noble story in a beautiful style, and Keats likewise believed in the union of idea and form. In his introduction alone, Chatterton moves through three poetic forms: a six line decasyllabic stanza with an alexandrine, ottava rima, and rime royale. He shows then, by matching Keats's stylistic experimentation, the same determination to find "sandals more interwoven and complete / To fit the

naked foot of Poesy". (XVII, ll. 5-6, p. 317)

Aella thus had a powerful effect on Keats in terms of theme, plot and style. Chatterton's play will be the point of the discussion as the mystery of artistic influence unravels. In the art of both poets, similar biographical details and shared elements of style coalesce and become meaningful.

The love of Aella and Birtha as they celebrate their wedding night is as passionate as that between Lorenzo and Isabella, or Porphyro and Madeline. Birtha's description of the course of her love in terms of the changing moon especially recalls "The Eve of St. Agnes":

> For twelve tymes twelve the mone hath bin yblente,
> As manie tymes hathe vyed the Godde of daie,
> And on the grasse her lemes of sylverr sente,
> Sythe thou dydst cheese mee for thie swote to bee,
> Enactynge ynn the same moste faifullie to mee.
> (II, p. 205)

Just as Madeline danced across the floor, "with vague, regardless eyes" (VIII) and just as Porphyro shuts out the sound of mad revelry from love's chamber, so Birtha and Aella love each other to the exclusion of all else:

> Ofte have I seen thee atte the none-daie feast,
> Whanne deysde bie thieselfe, for wante of pheeres,
> A whyst thie merryemen dydde laughe and jeaste
> Onn mee thou semest all eyne, to me all eares.
> (II, p. 205)

The wedding feast is filled with lovely songs and the following parallels between Chatterton and Keats show them to be notes in a sustained song from Chaucer to Shakespeare, through Percy to the

nineteenth century. The first, between a manne and a womanne, sings of the joys of sensual love, a theme celebrated as well by Keats.

> Manne: See the moss-growne daisey'd banke,
> Pereynge ynne the streme belowe;
> Here we'lle sytte, yn dewie danke;
> Tourne thee, Alyce, do notte goe.
> (II, p. 210)

Chatterton echoes his own Eclogue Three, and the daisy recalls Chaucer's praise of spring and love. From the point of view of the daisy, Keats sings of similar joy in "Daisy's Song":

> I
>
> The sun, with his great eye,
> Sees not so much as I;
> And the moon, all silver proud,
> Might as well be in a cloud.
>
> II
>
> And O the spring - the spring!
> I lead the life of a king!
> Couch'd in the teeming grass,
> I spy each pretty lass.
>
> III
>
> I look where no one dares,
> And I stare where no one stares,
> And when the night is nigh,
> Lambs bleat my lullaby.
> (pp. 347-348)

Again sings the manne:

> Lette us seate us bie thys tree
> Laughe, and synge to lovynge ayres;
> Comme, and doe notte coyen bee;
> Nature made all thynges bie payres.
> Drooried cattes wylle after kynde;
> Gentle doves wylle kyss and coe.
> (II. p. 213)

"I had a Dove" echoes Chatterton's last note, and the "Devon Maid" catches the whole melody:

IV

> I'll put your basket all safe in a nook,
> Your shawl I hang up on the willow,
> And we will sigh in the daisy's eye,
> And kiss on a grass green pillow.
> (p. 432)

In the song of the first and second minstrels, all the joys of Paradise cloy to Adam without Eve with whom to share them:

> The eveynge commes, and brynges the dewealonge;
> The roddie welkynne sheeneth to the eyne;
> Around the alestake Mynstrells synge the song;
> Yonge ivie rounde the doore poste do entwyne;
> I laie mee onn the graise; yette, to mie wylle,
> Albeytte all ys fayre, there lackethe somethynge stylle.
> (II, p. 217)

Chatterton's lyrical gift is revealed by the coined word "dewealonge", a noun and verbal adjective combined, full and sensuous, and by the weight of his lengthened last line. Keats's "Ode to Fancy" repeats this idea of unfulfilled joy, and in another lyric he states that only the song of love will make the storms pass:

> And when bleak storms resistless rove,
> And every rural bliss destroy,
> Nought comforts then the leafless grove
> But thy soft note - its only joy -
> E'en so the words of love beguile
> When Pleasure's tree no flower bears,
> And draw a soft endearing smile
> Amid the gloom and grief of tears.
> (pp. 429-430)

Likewise the second minstrel advises, "Goe, take a wyfe untoe thie armes, and see / Wynter, and browne hylle, wylle have a charme for thee."

The third minstrel's song is a beautiful statement of life's poignancy:

> Whanne Autumpne blake and sonne-brente doe appere,
> Wyth hys goulde hande guylteynge the falleynge lefe,
> Bryngeynge oppe Wynterr to folfylle the yere,
> Beerynge uponne hys backe the riped shefe;
> Whan al the hyls wyth woddie sede ys whyte;
> Whanne levynge-fyres and lemes do mete from far the syghte;
> Whann the fayre apple, rudde as even skie,
> Do bende the tree untoe the fructyle grounde;
> When joicie peres, and berries of blacke die
> Doe daunce yn ayre, and call the eyne arounde;
> Thann, bee the even foule or even fayre,
> Meethynkes mie hartys joie is steynced wyth somme care.
> (II. pp. 218-219)

"Wyth hys goulde hande guyltynge the falleynge lefe" is a powerful line.[1] Sheer weight of words, due to Chatterton's spelling, emphasizes the fullness of his subject. The labial "p" of "Autumpne" stresses its ripeness; double consonants slow the flow of verse into a measured intensity. "Folfylle" is a sensuously sounding word and combines the idea of falling and fulfillment. "Fructyle" suggests etymologically both fertile and the verb to fructify, to make fertile or to bear fruit, and so combines at once the process of ripening and its culmination, just as Keats's autumn is at once the process of organic growth and the conclusion to that ripening. The final alexandrine increases the sonorous weight of the song, and adds to the poignancy of the singer's sadness as his heart is "steynced" or stained with an

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[1] Meyerstein sees this line as epitomizing Chatterton's appeal to the Romantics, in op. cit., pp. 512-513.

unknown pain.

Chatterton's pure and northern dialect was full of ripe metaphors for Keats. Keats's autumn is a "close-bosom'd friend of the maturing sun", as Chatterton's is "sonne-brente". Keats beautifully personifies autumn as a golden gleaner crossing a brook in stanza two of his ode; Chatterton's song tells of autumn gilding the leaves, like a giant painter.[2] "Autumpne" bears both harvest and winter on his back, so that even at the moment of fulfillment, the minstrel is made to consider storms. Similarly in his ode, Keats discusses the co-existence of growth and ripeness in stanza one where even at the time of maturity, budding is proceeding; the idea of both planting and harvest as simultaneous in stanza two as the figure of autumn sleepily spares some swaths, hair lifted by the "winnowing wind"; the idea of end and beginnings as identical in stanza three, where the songs of spring are absorbed into the universal song of life as process.

Chatterton concludes his song on a similar note, emphasizing the presence of care even as the heart rejoices in harvest. In Chatterton's song the "fayre apple" bends trees to the "fructyle" ground", which recalls the opening of the "Balade of Charitie" and shares the comparison with autumn's conspiracy in Keats's ode, "To bend with apples the moss'd cottage trees, / And fill all fruit with ripeness

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[2]R. Gittings, The Living Year, p. 187.

to the core." As I mentioned in Chapter Three, Keats's original version of the ode directly echoed Chatterton's line "Whan all the hyles wythe woddie sede ys whyte", as it read "and plump the hazel shells / With a white kernel". And he also first incorporated Chatterton's "goulde hande gyylteynge the fallynge lefe" by writing "While gold clouds gild the soft dying day".[3] One little song of Keats's retains the white seed image found first in Chatterton:

> Shed no tear - O shed no tear!
> The flower will bloom another year.
> Weep no more - O weep no more!
> Young buds sleep in the root's white core.
> Dry your eyes - O dry your eyes,
> For I was taught in Paradise
> To ease my breast of melodies
> Shed no tear.
> (p. 345)

This lyric could be an answer to the Aella minstrel's sadness, and it reiterates the theme of "Autumn" that life is the dialectical union of joy and sorrow, fulfillment and decay. (All quotations from "To Autumn", pp. 218-219)

The final song, by the second minstrel, compares the effect of women on men to that of angels on mankind. Woman and man complement each other; love is the most fulfilling of emotions; it reveals in glimpses a spiritual reality. Women need the fire of men's desire to "hete / The milkynesse of kynde, and make hemselves complete.", (II, p. 220), and

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[3] R. Gittings, The Odes of Keats and their Earliest Known Manuscripts (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1970), pp.75-6.

> wythout wommen, menne were pheeres
> To salvage kynde, and wulde botte lyve to slea,
> Botte womenne efte the spryghte of peace so cheres,
> Tochelod yn Angel joie heie Angeles bee;
> Go, take thee swythyn to thie bedde a wyfe,
> Bee bante or blessed hie yn proovynge marryage lyfe.
> (II, p. 220)

"Tochelod", joined, approaching, is another of those suggestive Chatterton originals that functions as a noun and a verb, to connote at once both completion and process to completion. Neither Keats nor Chatterton denies the sensual element of love, but rather both see it as an integral part of an emotion which is both passionate and spiritual. The pleasure thermometer is mounted by degrees; the physical is never abandoned but is transmuted instead into essence, in proportion to the intensity of the participation in life. At the tip-top of the gradation of happiness

> There hangs by unseen film, an orbed drop
> Of light, and that is love: its influence,
> Thrown in our eyes, genders a novel sense,
> At which we start and fret; till in the end,
> Melting into its radiance, we blend,
> Mingle, and so become a part of it, -
> Nor with aught else can our souls interknit
> So wingedly: when we combine therewith,
> Life's self is nourished by its proper pith,
> And we are nurtured like a pelican brood.
> (Endymion, I, ll.806-15, p. 75)

Life is nourished by love, as the four wedding songs and as Keats's songs affirm.

The image of a feast to represent love, where hungry guests eat and make merry, is used frequently by both poets. Although it is a common metaphor for passion, both Gittings and D'Avanzo point out

Keats's particular recourse to the feast image in his presentation of theme.[4] The feast stands as a metaphor for creative release, for the inspiration of vitality, and for the consummation of love.[5] The love of Birtha and Aella is celebrated with feasting. When Celmonde interupts the festivities to tell Aella that "the Danes ar thonderynge onn our coasts; / Lyche scolles of locusts, caste uppe bie the sea," (II, p. 223) Aella sees that he must curtail his wedding joy: "O love, was thys thie joie, to shewe the treate, / Then groffyshe to forbydde thie hongered guestes to eate?" (II, p. 225) "Groffysche" is glossed as sternly, and Keats in a parallel situation echoes this word. In Lamia, the feast of love is interupted by Apollonius "Gruff with contempt" (II, 11.292) who forbids the guests, Lycius and Lamia, to eat. Neither of the lovers can eat at the feast of love because Lycius has attempted to bring all reality into his dream. "Dreadful guests" spoil the solitude of love as the rude Danes shatter wedding bliss. The metaphor of the interupted feast affirms that for both couples, Birtha and Aella, Lamia and Lycius, death will be the consummation of their love. In a little song, "Hither, Hither love", Keats represents love as nourishment, as he had in the pleasure thermometer passage:

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[4] R. Gittings, The Living Year, pp. 172-174.

[5] D'Avanzo, Keats's Metaphors for the Poetic Imagination, p. 97.

Hither, hither, love -
'Tis a shady mead -
Hither, hither, love,
Let me feed and feed.
(p. 428)

And in "The Eve of St. Agnes", a feast of luxurious food, which is interrupted by no dreadful guests or thundering Danes, prefigures consummation and the perfect union of dream and reality. Food imagery springs from a conception of love as life's "proper pith."

Comparable to Lamia's attempts to dissuade Lycius from a public celebration of their love, is Birtha's reaction to Aella's departure. She even cries that she will be like an adder, a Lamia, in her clinging embrace:

I, lyche a nedere, wylle untoe thie byde;
Tyde lyfe, tyde deathe, ytte shall behoulde us twayne.
I have mie part of drierie dole and peyne;
Itte brasteth from mee atte the holtred eyne;
Ynne tydes of teares mie swarthynge spryte wyll drayne,
Gyff drierie dole ys thyne, tys twa tymes myne.
Goe notte, O Aella; wyth thie Birtha staie;
For wyth thie semmlykeed mie spryte wyll goe awaie.
(II, p. 228)

In both poems, when the woman prevents a return to reality, she fails. Lamia's "spryght" does "goe awaie" - she fades into nothingness when proud Lycius abandons love for glory:

'Why do you sigh fair creature?' Whisper'd he:
'Why do you think?' return'd she tenderly:
'You have deserted me; - where am I now?
'Not in your heart while care weighs on your brow:
'No, no you have dismiss'd me; and I go
'From your breast houseless; aye, it must be so!
(II, ll.40-45, p. 172)

Long, decasyllabic lines in both examples emphasize the profound sorrow they describe.

Birtha eventually reconciles herself to separation; the only course of action for her valorous man is to do the world some good. Aella must leave the "vyrgyn brydall bedde for bedde of warre"; Birtha will "strev / To keepe [her] woe behyltren yn [her] breaste." (II, 233, 234) As Keats's lover in the following lyric does, they must accept the circumstances of the vale of soul-making, and trust in the constancy of love:

> See, the ship in the Bay is riding,
> Dearest Ellen, I go from thee;
> Boldly go, in thy love confiding,
> Over the deep and trackless sea: -
> When thy dear form no longer is near me,
> This soothing thought shall at midnight chear me;
> 'My love is breathing a prayer for me'. -
> (p. 426)

In a similar stanza form, Aella speaks to Birtha of his faith in love, to illuminate again Keats's close reading of Chatterton, and the place of both artists in a song tradition:

> Thie mynde ys now thieselfe; why wylte thou bee
> All blanche, al kyngelie, all soe wyse yn mynde,
> Alleyne to lett pore wretched Aella see,
> Whatte wondrous bighes he nowe muste leave behynde?
> O Birtha fayre, warde everyche commynge wynde,
> On everych wynde I wylle a token sende:
> Onne mie longe shielde ycorne thie name thoul't fynde
> Butte here commes Celmonde, wordhie knyghte and friende.
> (II, p. 235-236)

Aella's verse ends ironically, for Celmonde is the villain of Chatterton's play, and a model for Keats in his portrayal of both Conrad and Albert in Otho the Great. In love with Birtha, he is consumed by

his jealousy of Aella, and he plots to destroy both the lovers and himself, if he cannot possess Birtha. He disregards honour in order to pursue his own aims:

> Honnoure, what bee ytte? tys a shadowes shade,
> A thynge of wychencref, an idle dreme;
> On of the fonnis whych the clerche have made
> Menne wydhoute sprytes, and wommen for to fleme.
> (II, p. 242)

Keats's two villains in Otho are similarly conceived. Conrad is a clever manipulator, who, like Celmonde, has for "every lie an lordship" (I, i, 11.4), and who would not hesitate to "putte stronge poysonne ynne the beere" (Aella, p. 203), of the wedding feast. He is the typical stage machiavel. For his development of Albert as a more complex villain Keats also turned to Chatterton's Celmonde. Albert is torn between his love of evil Auranthe, Celmonde's sister, and his love for Ludolph. Since his motive, like Celmonde's, is self-destructive, he refuses to support the just testimony of Ermina and Ethelbert. So intense is his dilemma that he spends much of his time justifying his actions to himself in soliloquy, as Celmonde does in Aella. Celmonde sacrifices all joy, and denies himself all hope, in order to complete his "blake" plan, and so does Albert:

> Though my name perish from the book of honour,
> Almost before the recent ink is dry,
> And be no more remember'd after death,
> Than any drummer's in the muster roll;
> Yet shall I season high my sudden fall
> With triumph o'er that evil-witted duke!
> He shall feel what it is to have the hand
> Of a man drowning, on his hateful throat.
> (III, ii, 11.265-72, pp. 282-3)

While Albert plots to destroy an evil duke and Celmonde wishes to

destroy a good one, the conception of both villains arises from a psychological study of the motivation of evil. Again, in the way that Godwyn a Tragedie guided Keats, Aella's dramatic structure was an influence on his artistic growth to the drama.

As he turns to the Danish camp in Aella, Chatterton effectively varies his metric scheme. To contrast with the decasyllabic ten-line stanza of the Danish chiefs' dialogue, is the song of the "hie preeste", a sixteen-line stanza of couplets, each line with four stresses, the whole moved by a chant-like rhythm:

> Yee, who hie yn mokie ayre
> Delethe seasonnes foule or fayre.
> Yee, who, whanne yee weere agguylte,
> The mone yn bloddie gyttelles hylte,
> Mooved the starres, and dyd unbynde
> Everyche barriere to the wynde;
> Whanne the oundynge waves dystreste,
> Striven to be overest,
> Sockeynge yn the spyre-gyrte towne,
> Swolterynge wole natyones downe,
> Sendynge dethe, on plagues astrodde,
> Moovynge lyke the erthys Godde;
> To mee send your heste dyvyne;
> Lyghte eletten all myne eyne,
> Thatte I maie now undevyse
> All the actyonnes of th'empprize.
> (II, pp. 243-244)

Keats's "Hymn to Pan" in Book One of Endymion is dedicated to the softer side of the "Dread opener of mysterious doors / Leading to Universal Knowledge", but Keats, like Chatterton, uses the song of praise to vary his poem's metric structure. In the "Song of Four Fairies", Keats uses a very similar lyric form - seven syllable lines of four stresses each in rhyming couplets to achieve a chant effect. His

stanza is two lines longer, but otherwise very like Chatterton's, in form and in diction:

> Happy, happy glowing fire!
> Dazzling bowers of soft retire,
> Ever let my nourish'd wing,
> Like a bat's, still wandering,
> Faintly fan your fiery spaces,
> Spirit sole in deadly places.
> In unhaunted roar and blaze,
> Open eyes that never daze,
> Let me see the myriad shapes
> Of men, and beasts, and fish, and apes,
> Portray'd in many a fiery den,
> And wrought by spumy bitumen.
> On the deep intenser roof,
> Arched every way aloof,
> Let me breathe upon their skies,
> And anger their live tapestries;
> Free from cold, and every care,
> Of chilly rain, and shivering air.
> (ll. 5-22, p. 352)

Salamander's "roundelay" as Zephyr calls it, a verbal echo of another song from Aella, is devoted to a similarly destructive and awesome supernatural power, "A spirit sole in deadly places" who "hie yn mokie ayre / Delethe seasonnes foule or fayre". Salamander prays for fire "In unhaunted roar and blaze / [To] open eyes that never daze", just as the "hie preeste" prayed for "lyghte [to] eletten all myne eyne."

I have compared Enceladus in Hyperion to Nicou, to Harolde of Godwyn, and to the warriors of The Battle of Hastings. Hurra, the Danish hero in Aella is also a model for Enceladus. He scorns his wordy leader Magnus, and prefers deeds to deliberation:

Thie wordes are greate, full hyghe of sounde, and eeke
Lyche thonderre, to the whych dothe come no rayne.
Itte lacketh notte a doughtie honde to speke;
The cocke saiethe drefte, ytt armed ys he alleyne.
Certis thie wordes maie, thou motest have sayne
Of mee, and meynte of moe, who eke canne fyghte,
Who haveth trodden downe the adventayle,
And tore the heaulmes from heades of myckle myghte.
Sythence syke myghte ys placed yn thie honde,
Lette blowes thie actyons speeke, and bie thie corrage stonde.
(II, pp. 245-246)

Nicou's thunder, and the thunderbolts of Enceladus are no empty show. Like Hurra, Enceladus is enraged by words, by the prudent Oceanus and the baby-words of Clymene, "In the midst of this dethronement horrible." He will rage as Hurra does, even in a losing cause, against his enemy. He opposes prudent Oceanus as Hurra rejects the hesitant Magnus, for his cowardice:

'Speak! roar! shout! yell! ye sleepy Titans all.
'Do ye forget the blows, the buffets vile?
'Are ye not smitten by a youngling arm?
'Dost thou forget, sham Monarch of the Waves,
'Thy scalding in the seas? What, have I rous'd
'Your spleens with so few simple words as these?
'O joy! for now I see ye are not lost:
'O joy! for now I see a thousand eyes
'Wide-glaring for revenge!
(II, ll.316-324, pp. 237-238)

The flyting of the Danish chiefs is interrupted by messengers who speak in the iambic pentameters of blank verse, to change the dramatic tone from petty strife to high deeds. Keats similarly uses blank verse in his epic Hyperion to present in a lofty style the mighty clash of generations.

Messengere: Blynne your contekions, chiefs; for, as I stode
Uponne mie watche, I spiede an army commynge,

> Notte lyche ann handfulle of fremded foe,
> Botte blacke with armoure, movynge ugsomlie,
> Lyche a blacke fulle cloude, that dothe goe alonge
> To droppe yn hayle, and hele the thonder storme.
> (II, p. 253)

"Thyke as the ante-flynes ynne a sommer's none" (II, 254), or as the wailful choir of gnats in autumn, comes Aella's army, and disorder flies through the Danish host, "born onne wynges" of Aella's name.

The messenger above called the Saxon army a thunder cloud, and this by-now familiar image for the warrior is a clue to Chatterton's presentation of Aella. He leads a procession of heroes that includes Nicou, Harolde, and all the Hastings warriors, and he is an important model for Keats's dawn hero, Hyperion. The Bristol knight is fiery and magnificent:

> Ye Chrystyans, doe as wordhie of the name;
> These royneres of our hallie houses slea;
> Braste, lyke a cloude, from whence doth come the flame,
> Lyche torrentes, gushynge downe the mountaines, bee.
> And whanne alonge the grene yer champyons flee,
> Swefte as the rodde for-weltrynge levyn-bronde,
> Yatte hauntes the flyinge mortherer oere the lea,
> Soe flie opponne these royneres of the londe.
> Lette those yatte are unto yer battayles fledde,
> Take slepe eterne uponne a feerie lowynge bedde.
> (II, pp. 259-260)

Again Chatterton surrounds his warrior with metaphors of pure natural energy, with lightning and torrents and flame. If Keats had continued his epic he would have written a similar flaming exhortation to battle intensely against fate, for Hyperion to deliver to his Titans. As dawn god, Hyperion is surrounded by images of radiance. But because he and the Titans are fallen, his brilliance is shadowy:

> Golden his hair of short Numidian curl,
> Regal his shape majestic, a vast shade
> In midst of his own brightness, like the bulk
> Of Memnon's image at the set of sun
> To one who travels from the dusking East.
> (II, ll.371-5, p.239)

Not so Aella, whos bursts out in hope of victory:

> Lyche a rodde gronfer, shalle mie anlace sheene,
> Lyche a strynge lyoncelle I'lle bee ynn fyghte,
> Lyche fallynge leaves the Dacynnes shalle bee sleene.
> (II, p. 262)

Like Keats in the Odes and in "The Eve of St. Agnes", Chatterton heaps metaphor on metaphor to intensify his verse. With his own flame Aella will kindle the martial passions of his men : "Inne everie eyne I kenne the lowe of myghte, / Sheenynge abrode, alyche a hylle-fyre ynne the nyghte." (II, p. 265) Keats's powerful image for Porphyro, "like a throbbing star", owes something to Chatterton's use of light imagery.

In the discussion of The Battle of Hastings, Chatterton's influence on Keats's movement to organic and compressed metaphor was noted. Both poets strove to make the Miltonic metaphor a living part of the texture of their verse. The battle scenes of Aella are beautifully vivid and compressed, and provided Keats with more evidence of Chatterton's descriptive power. Hyperion failed to bring the dawn before its appointed time; Aella and his army seem to bring the sunrise with their advance. Hyperion's failure foretells the inevitability of his fall; Aella and his men burn victoriously like the sun:

Bryghte sonne han ynn hys roddie robes byn dyghte,
From the rodde Easte he flytted wythe hys trayne,
The howers drewe awaie the geete of nyghte,
Her sable tapistrie was rente yn twayne.
The dauncynge streakes bedecked heavennes pleyne,
And on the dewe dyd smyle wythe shemrynge eie,
Lyche gottes of blodde wyche doe blacke armoure steyne,
Sheenynge upon the borne whyche stondeth bie;
The souldyers stood uponne the hillis syde
Lyche yonge enlefed trees whyche yn a forreste byde.
(II, pp. 271-272)

Into the torrents of a mountain prison Titanic groans blend unheard:

their own groans
They felt, but heard not, for the solid roar
Of thunderous waterfalls and torrents hoarse,
Pouring a constant bulk, uncertain where.
(II, l. 7-9, p. 230)

Keats makes his fallen heroes part of their environment; they are like the monoliths of Stonehenge and like bleak-grown pines which need a wind before they roar. Because Chatterton's heroes are victorious, they are represented by positive natural powers, but he too presents the Saxon army as an organic part of the world. "Lyche a tree besette with brieres", (II, p. 272) Aella arises; "Lyche slowie dynnynge of the croucheynge streme / Syche dyd the mormynge sounde of the whole armie seme" (II, 273) as it responds to Aella's speech. "Moovynge alyche a mountayne yn affraie, / Whanne a lowde whyrlevynde doe yttes bresomme tare," Aella marches,

Lyche a talle rocke yatte ryseth heaven-were,
Lyche a yonge wolfynne brondeous and strynge,
Soe dydde he goe, and myghtie warriours hedde
Wythe gore-depycted wynges masterie arounde hym fledde.
(II, p. 273)

Chatterton's favourite alexandrine, plus the doubled consonant of "fledde", make the last two lines as solemn as their subject. Such metaphors of natural power are used, as Moneta explains in The Fall of Hyperion, to

> humanize my sayings to thine ear,
> 'Making comparisons of earthly things;
> 'Or thou might'st better listen to the wind,
> 'Whose language is to thee a barren noise,
> 'Though it blows legend-laden thro' the trees.
> (II, ll. 2-6, p. 414)

Both poets knew that metaphor was the way to make supernatural power understood. Keats's legend-laden wind echoes Chatterton's "lowde whyrlevynde" and Moneta's statement that metaphor is necessary recalls Chatterton's remark from the same stanza: "To telle howe everie loke wuld banyshe fiere, / Woulde aske an angelles poyntelle or hys tyngue." (II, p.273)

"The Eve of St. Mark" reveals Chatterton's influence in its setting of "town quietude", its four foot metre, and couplet rhyme, and in its experiment with medieval linguistics. It is no accident that Keats names his heroine Bertha;[6] like Chatterton's Birtha, she is withdrawn and melancholic:

> All was silent, all was gloom,
> Abroad and in the homely room:
> Down she sat, poor cheated soul!
> And struck a lamp from the dismal coal;
> Lean'd forward, with bright drooping hair
> And slant book, full against the glare.
> (ll. 67-70, pp. 358-359)

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[6] R. Gittings, The Living Year, pp. 90-91.

Here is the original "poor cheated soul":

> Gentle Egwina, do notte preche me joie;
> I cannotte joie ynne annie thynge botte weere,
> Oh! yatte aughte schulde oure sellynesse destroie,
> Floddyne the face wythe woe and brynie teare!
> (II, p. 279)

Whether the retreat from life is voluntary as it is for Keats's Bertha, or imposed by external circumstances, as it is for Chatterton's Birtha, both poets agree that such a withdrawal is harmful.

In Chapter Three I discussed the "Mynstrelles Songe" in terms of the principle of melody in verse. Because of his total response, Keats was able to incorporate Chatterton's influence into his own poetry:

> In his own practice Keats certainly made a very considerable use of the melodic principle embodied in this admired line from Chatterton, and there are innumerable examples in his own poetry of a line or two in which pairs, and sometimes triplets of vowel sounds are variously combined, sometimes simply, sometimes complexly.[7]

The sympathetic imagination moves horizontally to an immersion in the life of an artist; it moves vertically to appreciate an artist's craftsmanship. To see the life and art as one was Keats's aim; he found an example of the union in poetry like the "Mynstrelles Songe". The mood of Chatterton's song is, like "The Eve of St. Mark" and "The Eve of St. Agnes", richly melancholic. It was the pure simplicity of the Rowley song that moved Keats to an absorption of its spirit and its form.

Chatterton's dramatic skill is apparent when, in sharp con-

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[7] E. Pettet, On the Poetry of Keats, p. 92.

trast to the slow pain of Birtha's song, he turns to consider Aella, passionate in longing. His pain on separation from Birtha far surpasses the pain of his wounds. He lies tormented at Watchette, having subdued the Danes:

> Yee goddes, howe ys a loverres temper formed!
> Sometymes the samme thynge wylle bothe bane, and blesse;
> On tyme encalede, yanne bie the same thynge warmed,
> Estroughted foorthe, and yanne ybrogten less.
> (II, pp. 285-286)

Keats wondered too at many times "Howe ys a loverres temper formed." His was a temperament, like Aella's, that loved what would "both bane and blesse":

> Welcome joy, and welcome sorrow,
> Lethe's weed and Hermes' feather;
> Come today, and come to-morrow,
> I do love you both together!
> I love to mark sad faces in fair weather;
> And hear a merry laugh amid the thunder;
> Fair and foul I love together.
> (11. 1-7, p. 397)

Thus in love he was a vacillating figure, passionate and contradictory:

> And let me feel that warm breath here and there
> To spread a rapture in my very hair, -
> O, the sweetness of the pain!
> Give me those lips again!
> Enough! Enough! it is enough for me
> To dream of thee.
> (11. 52-57, p. 399)

From the pain of Aella, the scene shifts to the midnight ride of Birtha and Celmonde. The touches of gothic horror given by Chatterton to the flight were recalled by Keats when he presented Isabella's ghastly ride into her forest-hearse. Chatterton creates dramatic suspense by presenting the fallen Danes in order to forstall completion

of Celmonde's plan. The newly appointed Danish leader, Hurra, comes to see that the human condition is indeed a painful one, in contrast to his vaunting courage earlier. He rescues Birtha from Celmonde's grasp, and through his ability to feel compassion for others, becomes a nobler figure. The compassionate man does not deny the troubles of the world; pain is the reality that makes pleasure possible. Thus Chatterton uses the word "darkling" to describe a setting which stands as a metaphor for the human condition. In his Elegy, considered in Chapter Three, "Joyless I seek the darkling hill and vale" the tragic fullness of life is evoked by the adjective. Now Hurra, newly aware of life's wholeness, describes the movement of light on water at dawn to profoundly suggest the poignancy of existence:

> The mornynge' gyns alonge the Easte to sheene;
> Darklinge the lyghte doe onne the waters plaie;
> The feynte rodde lemes slowe creepeth oere the greene,
> Toe chase the merkyness of nyghte awaie;
> Swifte flies the howers thatte wylle brynge oute the daie;
> The softe dewe falleth onne the greeynge grasse;
> The shepster mayden, dyghtynge her arraie,
> Scante sees her vysage in the wavie glasse;
> Bie the full daylieghte wee schalle Aella see
> Or Brystowes wallyd towne; damoyselle, followe mee.
> (II, pp.308-309)

In his lengthened Spenserian stanza, Chatterton presents life as a "greeynge" process, both tinged with the gray tones of sadness and continually growing, as his spelling suggests.

Keats uses the Chattertonian word "darkling" twice as well, and in both places the word forms part of a like theme, that though man often lives darkly, by pursuing reality he will see the dawn. Madeline and Porphyro, like the speaker in Chatterton's "Elegy", find

a "darkling" way out of the castle of life-in-death, into the storm of reality. Significantly, the use of "darkling" appears in Keats's Spenserian stanza, to reinforce the bond with Chatterton's Spenserian use of the adjective in Aella:

> She hurried at his words, beset with fears,
> For there were sleeping dragons all around,
> At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears -
> Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found. -
> In all the house was heard no human sound.
> A chain-dropp'd lamp was flickering by each door;
> The arras, rich with horsemen, hawk, and hound,
> Flutter'd in the beseiging wind's uproar;
> And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.
> (XL, p. 206)

After their momentary and ecstatic glimpse of a spiritual reality, the lovers must return to the dark passages that wind through the human condition. Love and the memory of light, make the transition from the warm chamber of Maiden thought to the cold passages of life, bearable.

To the ecstatic song of a nightingale, a poet intensely listens:

> Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
> I have been half in love with easeful Death,
> Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
> To take into the air my quiet breath;
> Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
> To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
> While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
> In such an ecstasy!
> Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain -
> To thy high requiem become a sod.
> (VI, p. 208)

While like Hurra, Madeline and Porphyro are spurred to live intensely by their knowledge of life as a "darkling" process, here, Keats parallels the speaker in Chatterton's "Elegy", moved to express a death

wish because of life's darkling quality. The nightingale stanza stresses the dialectical position of man, at once able to hear and respond to beauty, and yet enveloped in darkness. It closes with a turn to life - for if death was chosen, even the darkling sounds would be unheard. It is the nature of man that he listen in darkness to the beauty of life, for life can never be freed from decay. Man returns always to his sole self, and sees that in the return is both beauty and truth.

Aella bursts in upon the closing scene like the dawn -- his first words, "Tys nowe fulle morne", affirm his metaphoric association with morning, and so with Keats's dawn hero,Hyperion. He is a mad lover, in the tradition of Othello and Troilus. Keats based his mad lover, Ludolph, on his own tempestuous love of Fanny and on fictional characters like Aella. Writing about Otho to Fanny, Keats said that "The Lover is madder than I am - I am nothing to him - he has a figure like the Statue of Malaeger and double distilled fire in his heart." [8] Aella is consumed by his "double-distilled fire", a loving jealousy:

> Botte yette ytte muste, ytte must bee soe; I see,
> Shee wythe somme loustie paramoure ys gone;
> Itte moste be soe - oh! howe ytte wrackethe mee!
> Mie race of love, mie race of lyfe ys ronne:
> Now rage, and brondeous storm, and tempeste comme;
> Nete lyvynge upon erthe can now enswote mie domme.
> (II, p. 314)

Death is Aella's choice when love is quenched -- like Ludolph he kills himself. Death consummates love at the end of the play, and Conrad

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[8] J. Keats, Letters, ed. R. Gittings, p. 274.

Aiken's quotation in Chapter One is recalled: the idea of death when married to love was certainly not discounted by either Chatterton or Keats, in their lives or their art. Aella is able to possess both love and death at the same moment, while neither Keats nor Chatterton was so fortunate. Both Birtha and Aella "Swoon on to death" as Keats wished to do in the "Bright Star" sonnet, which if not the last written poem, certainly embodies the last thoughts of a poet who so intensely lived and died.

"Through the bitter-sweet of this Shakespearian fruit" ("On Sitting down to read King Lear again", p. 380), Aella, Keats burned. With his passionate outbursts Aella recalls Shakespeare's heroes, and so the connection made by Keats between Chatterton and Shakespeare is recalled. The fire of passion which consumes Chatterton's lovers, consumes the sympathetic reader. Out of the closing ashes rises the phoenix of the play's theme of life as process, of the coalescence of joy and sorrow, of intensity, of love and death, of endurance. From Chatterton's artistic technique, metric, rhythmic and linguistic control, Keats learned. The moral intent of poetry, the importance of dramatic presentation, characterization, song, imagery, dramatic structure, rhythm, diction and theme, are points of contact found between Chatterton and Keats in Aella. The play shows how important an intense reading of the Bristol poet was for the Romantic artist.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion

Out of the study of Shakespeare's influence upon Keats, I was led to consider Chatterton as a parallel artistic catalyst. Keats's absorption of the spirit and the form of the Rowley poems grew out of the Romantic myth of death for art's sake into a living and mature response. Keats was above all an empathic poet, intensely living into the work of another, and recreating that immersion in the form of his work. Life and art were interwoven for him through the dual movement, horizontal and vertical, of his sympathetic imagination. This dramatic nature of Keats's response to his sources makes the study of poetic influence a fascinating one, and biographers, modern critics, and members of the Keats circle have all noted the affinity with Chatterton. Just as Chatterton spun out his fabricated Bristol world from the point of his identification with Rowley, so Keats spun his poetry from the tips of spiritual presiders like Chatterton, with whom he identified, and whose poetic forms he wove into his art.

As I traced through Keats's life and the five readings of Chatterton, the depth of poetic influence revealed itself. From the exciting parallelism of their lives in both a physical and a psychological context, I moved to study the four Chatterton letters. Here the philosophic affinities between the two poets, as well as the germinal role of Chatterton in Keats's ripening intellect, became apparent.

It is not the contention of this thesis that the Keatsian aesthetic sprang directly from a reading of Chatterton, in particular the Rowley poems, but rather that through his absorptive habit of reading, Keats drew ideas from Chatterton. No one would claim that Shakespeare was directly responsible for Keats's dramatic technique, but the Shakespearian influence cannot be denied. In a like osmotic way, Chatterton is a major influence upon the development of ideas -- negative capability, the life of allegory, life as the art of soul-making, and intensity as the criterion of artistic truth -- and upon the development of Keat's stylistic practice.

Chapter Two then focussed on the immersive, horizontal movement of Keats's imagination. The other half of the allegory, the concrete manifestation of spiritual truth in the form of poetry, was the subject of Chapter Three. Keats's style mirrors many of Chatterton's linguistic and metrical effects. It is essential to be aware of this dichotomous relationship between idea and form, horizontal immersion and vertical influence, life and art. As an empathic poet, Keats had to imagine himself into experience before he could recreate it. Similarly, his embrace of another's art had for its prerequisite an imaginative grasp of the spirit of that art. Only then could the imagination translate the hieroglyphics of beauty which Keats found in the Rowley poems:

> A melodious passage in poetry is full of pleasures both sensual and spiritual. The spiritual is felt when the very letters and points of charactered language show like the hieroglyphics

of beauty; - the mysterious signs of an immortal freemasonry!
"A thing to dream of not to tell !"[1]

Craftsmanship transmutes spiritual vision. As in any alchemic process, it begins with raw materials,words and literary sources. Geographical, archeological, scientific, and historical works were absorbed by Keats and Chatterton in their search for beautiful form. Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Percy and Baileys Dictionary were put to inspired use as both poets perfected their "White Simplicity".. After the raw materials comes the experimentation in form. Satire, military history, and Romance were the thematic modes practised by both. Central to work in any form was the dramatic quality of their imaginations. In dramatic poetry, Keats and Chatterton found a form which permitted a coalescence of objective narrative and subjective lyric. In the narrative genre both composed ballads, epics and romances; under the lyrical heading came their sonnets, songs, elegies, and odes. Binding both the objective and the subjective expression is a dramatic presentation of ideas which demands an empathic response.

Craftsmanship involves experimentation in style as well as in form. The second half of Chapter Three showed how both poets were firmly based in a song tradition that played from Chaucer through Shakespeare, Percy and on into the nineteenth century. Silver sound

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[1]J. Keats, The Poetical Works and Other Writings of John Keats, ed. H.B. Forman, revised M.B. Forman, V, 134-5. Cited as well by N.F. Ford, The Prefigurative Imagination of John Keats, p. 32.

fills the Rowley poems and is echoed by Keats's assonance and rhythm. The lyrical grace and simple rhythm of Percy's Reliques appealed to both artists as they sought to combine the best of poetry and music in one style. Chatterton's Burletta and the Rowley poems reveal him to be a master of song technique and an innovator in the art of versification. The "Mynstrelles Songe" from Aella was the focal point for my discussion of the principle of melody in verse -- Chatterton helped Keats perfect his assonantal and rhythmic technique and the "Ode on a Grecian Urn" demonstrates the influence of Rowley's acorne cuppe song. The depth given to poetry by inner melody greatly reinforces the theme that life is a rich blend of light and shade, on one hand, and the correspondent theme of the necessity to intensely live every moment that one may become "full alchemized and free of space", on the other. To conclude my chapter on style, the affinity of both poets with a later artist, Gerard Manley Hopkins, was noted. Chatterton and Keats were working with the same stress-based system of rhythm that Hopkins adopted. White simplicity led to the creation of inscapes that must be stressed and instressed before their full beauty is appreciated.

With the biographical and philosophic likenesses established in Chapter Two, and the similarities of artistic techniques discussed in Chapter Three, I began in Chapter Four to examine the poetry. Sometimes a philosophical affinity was to be noted, sometimes a linguistic comparison such as a word borrowing or a parallel in metaphor or imagery; sometimes rhythm and assonance were identical. In all cases

I attempted to show that Chatterton's influence was a profound one, and his art always affected the whole of Keats's poetry, both its form and its idea. Keats and Chatterton led elusive lives of allegory and their art shares common ground in being the explanation of the mystery. "The African Eclogues", the four Rowley "Eclogues", "The Storie of William Canynge", "The Unknown Knyghte or the Tournement", "Goddwyn a Tragedie", "An Excelente Balade of Charitie" and The Battle of Hastings were full of pleasures both sensual and spiritual for Keats; the Rowley hieroglyphics were sign posts into the mystery of Chatterton's life. Art is form and idea; life is body and soul. By an imaginative grasp of art, life is explained; by an understanding of life, art is fully realized. In imagery, metaphor, dramatic construction, and theme, Chatterton's poetry was a fine source for Keats.

One final poem remained to be considered. Aella was Chatterton's masterpiece, and shows the scope of his poetic ability. The goal of both poets was to realize in poetry the perfect coalescence of idea and form, of an "Onlist lecturn and a songe adynge". Aella is such a union and so was a favourite with Keats. In terms of form, the lyrics of Aella and Keats's affinity with them affirm the point made in Chapter Three concerning the song tradition. As was noted in Chapter Four, imagery similarities deepened always into theme. Like "Godwyn", Aella served as a structural model for Keats in his experiments in the drama. Chatterton's play shows his skill in various metres and rhythms and so provided Keats with numerous examples of an innovative technique. Keats's dramatic characterization was affected by

a reading of Chatterton's play with its vivid hero. Mood similarities are very common in the work of both poets as they present life's dialectic. In terms of idea as well, Aella parallels many of Keats's themes. The presence and inevitability of pain, the view of life as a soul-making process, the inseparability of light and shade, the value of intensity in love, and the proximity of love and death, are ideas developed by both poets.

Two enigmatic lines by Keats act as an ironic epitaph to Aella:

> They weren fully glad of their gude hap
> And tasten all the pleasaunces of joy. (p. 441)

Besides imitating Chatterton's English, they are a perfect contrast to the vision of life in Aella. Both poets emphasize in their art that life's value springs from the intensity with which it is lived. Although Birtha and Aella do not "tasten all the pleasaunces of joy"; although like Lycius and Lamia, their feast of love is curtailed by death, they burn out intensely and so will have their love repeated in a finer tone beyond the world. Even pain is better than a life of illusion, for intense living is the only way to heaven's bourn. Both poets were attracted by the idea of death, but their simultaneous belief in living intensely and creating intensely is a victory for life and for art.

The influence of Chatterton on Keats shows how mysterious and yet how rich is the imagining of one mind into another. Keats immersed himself in Chatterton's life as it was to be glimpsed in his art, and

then distilled the essence of Rowley into his own poetry. The worthy life is the life of allegory, an organic union of concrete and spiritual realities. Intense participation in both the concrete and the spiritual aspects is the way into life and art. It was Keats's way with Chatterton, and the result was profound.

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