

LIFE OF JOHN KEATS

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649108015

Life of John Keats by William Michael Rossetti

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

WILLIAM MICHAEL ROSSETTI

**LIFE OF
JOHN KEATS**

LIFE
OF
JOHN KEATS.

BY
WILLIAM MICHAEL ROSSETTI.

LONDON
WALTER SCOTT
24 WARWICK LANE, PATERNOSTER ROW
1887

(All rights reserved.)

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
Keats's grandfather Jennings; his father and mother; Keats born in London, October 31, 1795; his brothers and sister; goes to the school of John Clarke at Enfield, and is tutored by Charles Cowden Clarke; death of his parents; is apprenticed to a surgeon, Hammond; leaves Hammond, and studies surgery; reads Spenser, and takes to poetry; his literary acquaintances—Leigh Hunt, Haydon, J. Hamilton Reynolds, Dilke, &c.; Keats's first volume, "Poems," 1817	11

CHAPTER II.

Keats begins "Endymion," May 1817; his health suffers in Oxford; finishes "Endymion" in November; his friend, Charles Armitage Brown; his brother George marries and emigrates to America; Keats and Brown make a walking tour in Scotland and Ireland; returns to Hampstead, owing to a sore throat; death of his brother Tom; his description of Miss Cox ("Charmian"), and of Miss Brawne, with whom he falls in love; a difference with

Haydon ; visits Winchester ; George Keats returns for a short while from America, but goes away again without doing anything to relieve John Keats from straits in money matters	23
--	----

CHAPTER III.

Keats's consumptive illness begins, February 1820 ; he rallies, but has a relapse in June ; he stays with Leigh Hunt, and leaves him suddenly ; publication of his last volume, "Lamia" &c. ; returns to Hampstead before starting for Italy ; his love-letters to Miss Brawne—extracts ; Haydon's last sight of him ; he sails for Italy with Joseph Severn ; letter to Brown ; Naples and Rome ; extracts from Severn's letters ; Keats dies in Rome, February 23, 1821 .	40
---	----

CHAPTER IV.

Keats rhymes in infancy ; his first writings, the "Imitation of Spenser," and some sonnets ; not precocious as a poet ; his sonnet on Chapman's Homer ; contents of his first volume, "Poems," 1817 ; Hunt's first sight of his poems in MS. ; "Sleep and Poetry," extract regarding poetry of the Pope school, &c. ; the publishers, Messrs. Ollier, give up the volume as a failure	64
---	----

CHAPTER V.

"Endymion" ; Keats's classical predilections ; extract (from "I stood tiptoe" &c.) about Diana and Endymion ; details as to the composition of "Endymion," 1817 ; preface to the poem ; the critique in <i>The Quarterly Review</i> ; attack in <i>Blackwood's Magazine</i> ; question whether Keats broke down under hostile criticism ; evidence on this subject in his own letters, and by Shelley, Lord Houghton, Haydon, Byron, Hunt, George Keats, Cowden Clarke, Severn ; conclusion	73
---	----

CONTENTS.

7

CHAPTER VI.

	PAGE
Poems included in the "Lamia" volume, 1820; "Isabella"; "The Eve of St. Agnes"; "Hyperion"; "Lamia"; five odes; other poems—sonnet on "The Nile"; "The Eve of St. Mark," "Otho the Great," "La Belle Dame sans Merci," "The Cap and Bells," final sonnet, &c.; prose writings	107

CHAPTER VII.

Keats's grave in Rome; projects of Brown and others for writing his Life; his brother George, and his sister, Mrs. Llanos; Miss Brawne; discussion as to Hunt's friendship to Keats; other friends—Bailey, Haydon, Shelley	118
--	-----

CHAPTER VIII.

Keats's appearance; portraits; difficulties in estimating his character; his poetic ambition, and feeling on subjects of historical or public interest; his intensity of thought; moral tone; question as to his strength of character—Haydon's opinion; demeanour among friends; studious resolves; suspicious tendency; his feeling toward women—poem quoted; love of flowers and music; politics; irritation against Leigh Hunt; his letters; antagonism to science; remarks on contemporary writers; axioms on poetry; self-analysis as to his perceptions as a poet; feelings as to painting; sense of humour, punnings, &c.; indifference in religious matters; his sentiments as to the immortality of the soul; fondness for wine and game; summary	124
---	-----

CHAPTER IX.

Influence of Spenser discussed; flimsiness of Keats's first volume; early sonnets; "Endymion"; Shelley's criticisms of this poem; detailed argument of the poem; esti-	
--	--

mate of "Endymion" as to invention and execution ; estimate of "Isabella" ; of "The Eve of St. Agnes" ; of "The Eve of St. Mark" ; of "Hyperion" ; of "Otho the Great" ; of "Lamia" ; "La Belle Dame sans Merci" quoted and estimated ; Keats's five great odes—extracts ; "Beauty is truth, truth beauty" ; imagination in verbal form distinctive of Keats ; discussion of the term "fault- less" applied to Keats ; details of execution in the "Ode to a Nightingale" ; other odes, sonnets, and lyrics ; treat- ment of women in Keats's last volume ; his references to "swooning" ; his sensuousness and its correlative senti- ment ; superiority of Shelley to Keats ; final remarks as to the quality of Keats's poetry	163
---	-----

INDEX	211
-----------------	-----

NOTE.

IN all important respects I leave this brief "Life of Keats" to speak for itself. There is only one point which I feel it needful to dwell upon. In the summer of 1886 I was invited to undertake a life of Keats for the present series, and I assented. Some while afterwards it was publicly announced that a life of Keats, which had been begun by Mr. Sidney Colvin long before for a different series, would be published at an early date. I read up my materials, began in March 1887 the writing of my book, finished it on June 3rd, and handed it over to the editor. On June 10th Mr. Colvin's volume was published. I at once read it, and formed a high opinion of its merits, and I found in it some new details which could not properly be ignored by any succeeding biographer of the poet. I therefore got my MS. back, and inserted here and there such items of fresh information as were really needful for the true presentment of my subject-matter. In justice both to Mr. Colvin and to myself I drew upon his pages for only a minimum, not a maximum, of the facts which they embody; and in all matters of opinion and criticism I left my MS. exactly as it stood. The reader will thus understand that the present "Life of Keats" is, in planning, structure, execution, and estimate, entirely independent of Mr. Colvin's; but that I have ultimately had the advantage of consulting Mr. Colvin's book as one of my various sources of information—the latest and within its own lines the completest of all.

