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'Mr. Keats'

NICHOLAS ROE

Much is known about John Keats's medical training at Guy's Hospital. He registered there on Sunday, 1 October 1815, and within four weeks was told that he would be promoted to the rank of Dresser – an assistant Surgeon – from 3 March next. On Thursday 25 July 1816 he passed the examination to qualify for his Apothecary's licence and continued as a Dresser until – having completed a full year - he left to gain his living by poetry. His first collection, *Poems, by John Keats*, had been in preparation for several months and appeared on 10 March 1817.[1] Its publication has often been understood to signal that Keats had irrevocably abandoned medicine for poetry: Robert Gittings, for instance, contended that Keats had 'rejected' medicine for a 'total devotion' to poetry, although such single-mindedness may seem unlikely in a poet who confessed to being 'undecided', his 'way of life uncertain', his prospects 'all in a mist'.[2] For Keats the physician-poet, the alternatives of medicine and poetry were never fully resolved - indeed, his awareness of the one continued to define his consciousness of the other.[3] 'I have been at different times turning it in my head whether I should go to Edinburgh & study for a physician', he admitted early in March 1819, and then composed 'La Belle Dame sans Merci'; having written 'Ode to a Nightingale' he dallied with the idea of going as ship's surgeon on an Indiaman;

and in June 1820, now seriously ill and with his *Lamia* volume due from the press, he proposed to 'try what I can do in the Apothecary line'.[4] Throughout Keats's writing life, his medical training and his experiences at Guy's found their way into his poetry in often surprising ways, as a newly recovered first-hand account of Keats at work at the Hospital allows us to see.

At Guy's he was an assiduous and successful student. He attended lectures, dissection classes and ward rounds; qualified as an Apothecary; and survived stressful duty weeks as a Dresser – a role that demanded medical expertise, practical experience, steady judgement and a strong stomach. As John Barnard has shown, every three weeks one of the three senior surgeons at Guy's took his turn on a week's duty, and for that week one of his Dressers was required to stay twenty-four hours a day, every day, at the hospital.[5] The duty Dresser was 'frequently … called to the first management of serious accidents', coped with overnight emergencies, treated outpatients, performed minor operations, and took charge of patients admitted before the surgeon attended.[6] *The London Medical Repository* contains a 'Register of Diseases' for February and March of 1816: omitting colds and indigestion, when Keats started as a Dresser the most common ailments were asthma, rheumatism, tonsillitis, scabies, pneumonia, whooping cough, and syphilis.[7]

Friday afternoons at Guy's were given over to surgical operations. At the centre of the operating theatre was a simple wooden table surrounded by seats for Surgeons and their Dressers; behind them were steeply stacked galleries for students.[8] Half a century before the discoveries of Louis Pasteur and Joseph Lister, there was little understanding of antisepsis: the floor was scattered with sawdust, the water supply taken from the Thames. Apart from traditional sedatives such as opium, alcohol and plant extracts there was nothing to offset the agony of surgical probes, scalpels and saws; as a Dresser Keats would have assisted by restraining patients, applying tourniquets, bandaging wounds, and disposing of amputated limbs. Richard Hengist Horne, a former pupil at Enfield School, reported him saying that there was 'great pleasure in alleviating suffering, but it was a dreadful profession on account of having to witness so much'.[9]

Keats's sonnet 'To Lord Byron' dates from December 1814:

Byron, how sweetly sad thy melody,
Attuning still the soul to tenderness,
As if soft Pity with unusual stress
Had touch'd her plaintive lute; and thou, being by,
Hadst caught the tones, nor suffered them to die.
O'ershading sorrow doth not make thee less
Delightful: thou thy griefs dost dress

With a bright halo …[10] (ll. 1-8)

This is apprentice work, written between quitting Thomas Hammond's surgery at Edmonton and commencing at Guy's. Once there, Keats dressed in dashingly Byronic fashion - open collar, neck-ribbon, moustache - and, as his sonnet suggests, he was already thinking of poetry as a lyrical 'dressing' of life – both embellishment and remedy. [11] When this early manner of conventionally 'plaintive delight' was braced by 'a dreadful profession', Keats started to grow towards the more astringent music of 'sorrow's mysteries' and 'aching Pleasure' that would be heard, four years later, in the poetry of 1819.

On the wards, the physical act of dressing and binding wounds with bandages was a responsibility in which he reportedly found 'great pleasure'; accordingly, the words 'dress' and 'drest', 'bind' and 'band' acquired particular force in his poetry, linking the gratification of staunching a wound with poetry's assuaging discipline. 'I stood tip-toe', written late in 1816, has 'violets … / That … bind the moss in leafy nets' (ll. 33-4) – a striking image, in that the medicinal qualities of violets had been recognised since classical times, and sphagnum moss was traditionally netted to form a dressing for wounds (a practice that continued during the First World War). A few lines later a description of sweet pea tendrils, 'taper fingers catching at all things, / To bind them all about with tiny rings' (ll. 59-60), combines delicacy and tenacity in an image of needy

attachment that is echoed in the opening lines of *Endymion*: 'Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing / A flowery band to bind us to the earth, / Spite of despondence, … / Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways / Made for our searching' (I. ll. 6-11). While *Blackwood's* 'Z' (John Gibson Lockhart) dismissed *Endymion* as a cockney concoction of 'extenuatives and soporifics', advising 'Mr John' to get 'back to "plasters, pills, and ointment boxes"', his sense that the poem's 'flowery band' was somehow medical in inspiration was accurate, and true to Keats's reported 'pleasure in alleviation'. [12]

Two years after Keats had left Guy's, the 'rosy sanctuary' of *Ode to Psyche* - 'dress[ed] / With the wreath'd trellis of a working brain' – may glance back to Southwark, and the rose-trellised bower in Surrey Gaol infirmary where Leigh Hunt (who was ill and susceptible to nervous attacks) had composed 'The Descent of Liberty' and *The Story of Rimini*. Here Hunt had welcomed visits from Lord Byron, Charles Cowden Clarke, John Hamilton Reynolds and many others. Keats heard about this scene of lyrical recuperation from Clarke, his former school master, and he invoked Hunt's poetic 'regions of his own' in his sonnet 'Written on the Day that Mr. Leigh Hunt Left Prison'. His later sonnet 'On *The Story of Rimini*' repeats the phrase,

> He who knows these delights, and, too, is prone
>
> To moralize upon a smile or tear,

Will find at once a region of his own,

A bower for his spirit (ll. 9-12)

- and it is echoed again in the final stanza of 'Ode To Psyche'. There Keats imagines 'some untrodden region of my mind' and vows 'in the midst of this wide quietness / A rosy sanctuary will I dress', a line that associates memories of Guy's Hospital with Hunt's infirmary and his own continuing poetic creativity. The association could have arisen from the proximity of Guy's to Hunt's prison, a mere ten-minute walk along the Borough High Street.

For 'Aesculapius', author of *Oracular Communications, Addressed to Students of the Medical Profession*, medical practitioners were 'now ranked with the other *literati* of the age' and Keats could have served as an exemplary figure.[13] While studying for his Licentiate examination between October 1815 and July 1816, he composed ten and possibly as many as twelve poems, and at least twenty-six more following his examination until he left Guy's. One of the few accounts of him at this time comes from a fellow-student, Henry Stephens, who recalled after many years that Keats had had 'no desire to excel' in medicine and paid 'little attention to his profession; his 'absolute devotion' was to poetry.[14] But this fantasy of Keats as a daydreaming idler, doodling skulls and flowers in his medical notebook, fitted the Victorians' picture of 'poor Keats' at a time when his genius was belatedly being

recognised. Stephens, who passed many years as a country physician before taking up ink-making, seems to have held a lingering grudge at having failed the qualifying examination when Keats's skill at Latin ('the common language of medicine'[15]) enabled him to translate the *Pharmacopoeia* and pass first time.[16] The 'Regulations of the Apothecaries' Society of London' required students to 'translate grammatically parts of the Pharmacopoeia Londoniensis, and Physicians' Prescriptions', and warned: 'The Court are anxious to impress upon Candidates a conviction of the necessity of a knowledge of the Latin Language, because they have had the painful duty imposed on them of rejecting several persons, entirely from their deficiency in this important pre-requisite of a Medical Education'.[17] Stephens recalled many years later that Keats's 'knowledge of the Classics helped him a good deal in that examination … at that time the examinations were more a test of Classical, than Medical–Knowledge. –He was a tolerable swimmer for I remember going with him once to the New River, to Bath'.[18] That deflection from the examination to a swimming jaunt along the New River seems odd, but it takes us to the source of Keats's expertise in Latin - Enfield School, where he had studied from 1803-10. The New River flowed directly past the school house where Keats had translated *The Aeneid* and explored Lemprière's *Classical Dictionary*.[19]

In reality Keats's role as a Dresser required cool-headed competence through long hours under extreme stress when poetic reverie was not an option. 'The busy time has just gone by', he told Charles Cowden Clarke in October 1816, 'and I can now devote any time you may mention to the pleasure of seeing Mr Hunt—'t will be an Era in my existence—I am anxious too to see the Author of the Sonnet to the Sun'.[20] The 'Author' mentioned here was Charles Ollier, who would soon publish *Poems, by John Keats*: his 'Sonnet on Sunset' had been copied into Clarke's commonplace book.[21] Evidently Keats was endeavouring to keep his Hospital commitments separate from the region of poetry, to which he could 'now' devote time. Three weeks later, in his first letter to Joseph Severn, he put off a meeting in order to 'look into some beautiful Scenery—for poetic purposes'; 'poetic purposes' required him to leave other responsibilities behind.[22] What Keats feared most, Charles Brown remembered, were moments when his clinical composure might be lost, rendering him 'unfit to perform a surgical operation' and with possibly fatal consequences.[23] We have many records of Keats's tendency towards poetic abstraction, Stephens' and Brown's among them; what has been lacking, however, is an account of Keats's work at Guy's that dates from his months there. While investigating Charles Wentworth Dilke's baffling claim that Keats had 'not only walked the Hospital, but was *twice* dresser there' (the emphasis is Dilke's), I read a report in *The Morning Chronicle* of a woman who had been admitted to Guy's Hospital with a gunshot wound to

her head.[24] As subsequent accounts of this incident soon revealed, the duty Surgeon who dealt with the emergency was 'Mr. Keats'.[25]

On the morning of Monday 25 March 1816, Jane Hull went to the Prince Regent public house in Lock's Fields, South London. She called for a glass of cordial and was standing at the bar when a man walked up to her, raised a pistol, and fired at point-blank range. Moments later a neighbour, Mr. Wasfield, came in and saw the woman collapsed on the floor with a large wound to the back of her head. Making no attempt to escape, her assassin lingered a little distance away while his victim, 'in a very dangerous state', was hurried to Guy's Hospital. John Collingbourn, an officer from Union Hall police station, Southwark, then took the man into custody; a pistol, powder and ball were found in his pockets along with two letters 'informing him that his wife was false to him and naming the person with whom she was intimate'. On questioning, the prisoner - Samuel Hull, hitherto a respectable breeches-maker – said that he had been happily married to the woman for thirteen years until, two weeks earlier, his wife had left him. He was now indifferent to his fate, and could not live without her. When officers went to take his wife's deposition, the surgeons advised that this should be deferred as she was no longer in imminent danger; while she recovered, her husband would be questioned further.[26]

Four weeks later, on Monday 22 April, Jane Hull was interviewed at Union Hall about the shooting. The landlord of the Prince Regent also explained what had happened and Wasfield, the neighbour, tendered his own version. Also present to give evidence at the enquiry was 'Mr. Keats, one of the Surgeons belonging to Guy's Hospital'. John Keats had begun his Dressership at Guy's on 3 March 1816, just three weeks before Jane Hull was admitted. His report to the inquest, printed by the *Morning Chronicle* on 23 April, clarified the nature of her head wounds:

> Mr. Keats, one of the Surgeons belonging to Guy's Hospital, stated, that Mrs. Hull was brought into the hospital on the 25th of March. She had received a severe wound in the back part of her head with a pistol ball; the ball had pierced the lobe of her ear, taken a direction along the occiput, and lodged in the neck, from whence the witness extracted it. Mr. Keats produced the ball, which fitted the pistol found upon the prisoner.[27]

Keats's notebook of medical lectures at Guy's demonstrates his knowledge of the bones of the skull, and in particular of the 'occiput' at the lower back of the skull: the 'Os Occipitis', Keats noted, 'is but rarely broken'.[28] Evidently the pistol ball had not penetrated the woman's brain, but glanced off the bone sideways 'along the occiput' and embedded itself in her neck from where

Keats, ‘the witness’, had with clinical precision ‘extracted it’. The police interview closed with Mrs. Hull saying that she did not wish to prosecute, and at the Surrey Summer Assizes her husband was found ‘Not Guilty’.[29]

Mrs. Hull was just one of many patients admitted around this time with gun-shot wounds, limbs crushed by cart wheels, scalds, poisonings and so on, and Mr. Keats’s role as a Dresser evidently corresponded to what would now be called ‘Accident and Emergency’. For Keats himself, however, her arrival at Guy’s had occurred at a significant moment. As a skilled physician he could reasonably have hoped to build a long-term career at Guy’s or one of the other London hospitals. As an aspirant poet, who had yet to see one of his poems in print, the incident may have been decisive in encouraging his first publication. Reports of the Hull case in the *Morning Chronicle*, *Morning Post* and *The Times* were reprinted in provincial newspapers and, crucially, on the back page of Leigh Hunt’s *Examiner* where there was space for ‘Police’, ‘Accidents, Offences, &c’. Always a keen reader of *The Examiner*, Keats is unlikely to have missed these notices of a patient he had recently treated at Guy’s.[30]

The Morning Chronicle carried its report of ‘Mr. Keats, one of the Surgeons’ on 23 April, by coincidence a date that was of personal significance for him. Following a riding incident his father had died ‘of a mortal bruise in

and upon his head', and his funeral at St. Stephen's Coleman Street took place on this day in 1804; 23 April was also said to be the birthday of Keats's poetic 'presider' Shakespeare, an auspicious date in 1816 as in other years.[31] When *The Examiner* noticed the Union Hall inquiry a few days later it did not mention 'Mr. Keats' the surgeon, although this issue for Sunday 28 April 1816 proved to be momentous for another reason. In it Leigh Hunt referred to Keats's poetry for the first time: immediately above his editorial column was the announcement 'J. K., and other Communications, next week'.[32] Seven days later Keats's sonnet 'To Solitude' appeared in *The Examiner*, introducing a new poetical voice from that 'beastly place in dirt, turnings and windings' surrounding Guy's Hospital:

O SOLITUDE! if I must with thee dwell,
Let it not be among the jumbled heap
Of murky buildings;— climb with me the steep,
Nature's Observatory—whence the dell,
Its flowery slopes—its river's crystal swell
May seem a span: let me thy vigils keep
'Mongst boughs pavilioned; where the Deer's swift leap
Startles the wild Bee from the Fox-glove bell.
Ah! fain would I frequent such scenes with thee;
But the sweet converse of an innocent mind,

Whose words are images of thoughts refin'd,
Is my soul's pleasure; and it sure must be
Almost the highest bliss of human kind,
When to thy haunts two kindred spirits flee.

J.K.[33]

In *The Examiner*, 'To Solitude' marked Keats's intervention in a debate about Wordworth's remoteness from society. Hazlitt's three-part review of *The Excursion* had regretted Wordsworth's 'intense intellectual egotism' and Shelley's *Alastor; or, the Spirit of Solitude*, published in February 1816, pursued a 'self-centred' poet to his 'untimely grave'.[34] Hunt then published Wordsworth's sonnet 'While not a leaf seems faded' in *The Examiner*, thus allowing the poet to proclaim himself 'a lone Enthusiast' in the same columns that had carried Hazlitt's surmise: 'It is as if there were nothing but himself and the universe. He lives in the busy solitude of his own heart'.[35] By responding to Wordsworth's lake District seclusion with a sonnet of sympathetic suburban 'converse', 'J.K.' tactfully aligned himself with Hazlitt and Hunt.[36] South of the Thames, however, his sonnet voiced a more personal longing to escape his vigils at Guy's, while 'innocent converse' could reflect upon the Hulls' story of 'false intimacy' and 'criminal conversation'.

It is 'Almost the highest bliss … / When to thy haunts two kindred spirits flee'. Yet repeated wrenching transitions between bloody lancet and lyrical

beauty surely also brought home to him how inextricably his lives as physician and poet were now connected. From his recognition that both roles sought to alleviate human suffering sprang his ambition in 'Sleep and Poetry' for 'a nobler life, / Where I may find the agonies, the strife / Of human hearts' (ll. 123-5). That 'nobler life' would measure 'poetical purposes' against the dreadful scenes he witnessed day by day at Guy's; thus, one of his self-imposed tests in *Endymion* was to imagine the physiognomy of pain and agitation, in 'the trembling knee / And frantic gape of lonely Niobe' (i. ll. 337-8) and Glaucus's 'convuls'd clenches' (iii. 231). *Hyperion* surveys the Titans' physical symptoms - 'clenched teeth still clench'd', 'limbs / Lock'd up like veins of metal, crampt and screw'd', 'hearts / Heaving in pain, and horribly convuls'd', 'open mouth / And eyes at horrid working' (ii. ll. 24, 24-25, 26-7, 51-2) - with the imaginative sympathy and calm detachment that had enabled Keats to probe the living flesh of Jane Hull's neck and extract the pistol-ball. This complex act of identification and distancing, steadying him as a surgeon amid uncertainties and doubts of success, in some ways anticipates his self-effacing ideal of negative capability – 'that is when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact & reason'. Both as a surgeon and as a poet Keats operated in 'half knowledge' - tentatively feeling his way into what he termed the 'Penetralium', the innermost part.[37]

Jane Hull survived, and I want to suggest that her story resurfaces in Keats's later writing in several ways. A first instance appears in his letter to his publishers Taylor and Hessey of 10 June 1817. Having quit the Isle of Wight to go to Margate, Keats anticipated resuming *Endymion*: 'I was not right in my head when I came [to Margate]', he tells his publishers, '—At Cant^{y} I hope that the Remembrance of Chaucer will set me forward like a Billiard-Ball — I am gald to hear of M^{r} T's health'.[38] His letter moves from being 'not right in my head' to the idea of a ball 'set forward', reversing the sequence of a ball 'set forward' by a pistol-shot to cause a head wound. That speculation might seem far-fetched, yet Keats's 'gald' for 'glad' makes it plausible in that the OED cites one sense of 'gald' as to be harassed or annoyed by gunshot: 'gaule them with shot'.[39]

His hope of being 'set forward like a Billiard-Ball' may also foreshadow his thoughts on the 'poetical character' in his letter to Richard Woodhouse of 27 October 1818. Woodhouse's 'Notes on a Letter from Keats', of about the same date, report that '[Keats] has affirmed that he can conceive of a billiard Ball that it may have a sense of delight from its own roundness, smoothness & very volubility & the rapidity of its own motion'.[40] While a billiard ball is not a pistol-ball, their roundness, smoothness and rapidity are shared - as is their 'volubility'; that is, their rolling, revolving motion and tendency to 'take a direction' - into a pocket, or 'along the occiput' to 'lodge in the neck'. Lurking behind this network of associations may be the fact that 'a fashionable pursuit

with medical students' at that time was a 'seductive' and 'pernicious' recreation - playing '*billiards*'. Wasting time at billiards, 'Aesculapius' warned, was a 'prominent method of *murdering talent*'.[41]

In his report to the Union Hall inquest, we hear Keats display his command of anatomical knowledge and pathologist's insight as to how a pistol ball will 'take a direction' once it enters a human body. This is the matter-of-fact Keats, confining his language to the requirements of forensic precision; the Keats who might have made a career as a surgeon. That he would become a poet of Shakespearean imagination was a less obvious destiny when he 'produced the ball', although his undeviating explanation of Mrs. Hull's head wound held imaginative potential. The pistol ball had 'taken a direction along the occiput': Keats's clinical expression may rule out any possibility that 'along the occiput' echoed Wordsworth's curious phrase 'felt along the heart' in 'Tintern Abbey'. Yet it is almost as if, at this point, 'Mr. Keats' the surgeon changes places with 'J.K.' the poet for whom, two years later, 'Tintern Abbey' would prompt speculation about the dark passages and chambers of human consciousness in his letter to John Hamilton Reynolds of May 1818. Opening with reflections on Reynolds's illness, Tom Keats's fever, and his own 'uneasy state of Mind', this famous letter suggests how his 'study [of] physic or rather Medicine' and 'medical Books' had led to 'widening speculation' about how the chambers of experience 'sharpen one's vision into the head and nature of Man'.[42]

This letter to Reynolds survives in a transcript by Richard Woodhouse's clerk, in which Woodhouse himself had corrected the phrase 'head and nature of Man' to read 'heart and nature'. On the face of it, Keats must have originally written 'heart' which Woodhouse's clerk misread for 'head' – a simple mistranscription, caught and corrected by Woodhouse. As Hyder Rollins pointed out in his edition of Keats's letters, Woodhouse was 'a painstaking copyist whose transcripts are, in the main, reliable' – and, in this instance, Rollins decided to bracket the cancelled reading 'head' to alert readers that it is 'of interest or significance'.[43] Possibly Woodhouse's correction of 'head' to 'heart' reproduced an identical alteration in Keats's manuscript that had been overlooked by his clerk; the cerebral tendency of surrounding phrases – 'thoughtless Chamber … thinking principle … Chamber of Maiden-Thought … advance of intellect … greatness of Mind' – would suggest that 'vision into the head and nature of Man' might indeed have been Keats's first thought.[44] In this context of passages, chambers, 'Misery and Heartbreak, Pain, Sickness and oppression', the thought of a 'vision into the head' could well have arisen from a memory of literally looking into the flesh that surrounded a human skull and brain.

The incident involving Jane and Samuel Hull shows for the first time Keats as an accomplished young surgeon, beginning what might have become a promising career on the London medical scene. It only offers a single instance of him at work, and this speaks for a professional medical status and sense of

responsibility in months when he had also been developing productively as a poet. Such was the 'busy time' that Keats sought to recover when subsequently 'turning it in [his] head' whether to resume his medical studies, a time when the duties of 'Mr. Keats, one of the Surgeons' had infiltrated the imaginative and verbal world of the aspiring poet. The little sketches of a human skull and flowers with which Keats had decorated his medical notebook were rather more than distractions from the lecture-room. Together they prefigured the images of Lorenzo's mouldering head and the sweet basil plant around which he constructed the plot of *Isabella*. And in *The Fall of Hyperion*, perhaps it was his memory of a pistol-ball's passage along a human occiput that came to him as he wrote of 'sad Moneta', and of how he 'ached to see … what high tragedy / In the dark secret chambers of her skull / Was acting' (i. ll. 256, 276-8).

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[1] John Barnard, 'The Publication Date of Keats's *Poems* (1817)', *Keats-Shelley Review*, 28. 2 (September 2014), 83-5.

[2] Robert Gittings, *John Keats* (1968), p. 115. For 'undecided' and 'uncertain', see the published 'Preface' to *Endymion*, *The Poems of John Keats*, ed. Jack Stillinger (1978), pp. 102-3. Unless indicated otherwise, quotations from Keats's poems are from this edition. For 'mist' see Keats's letter to J. H. Reynolds, 21 September 1819, *The Letters of John Keats, 1814-1821*, ed.

Hyder Edward Rollins, 2 vols. (1958; Cambridge Mass., 1972), ii. p. 167, hereafter LJK.

[3] See Joseph Epstein, 'The Medical Keats', *The Hudson Review*, 52. 1 (Spring, 1999), 44-64, for the suggestion that 'medicine never entirely departed Keats's mind' (62). For more sustained exploration of Keats's poetic responses to pain and healing, see Michael E. Holstein, 'Keats: The Poet-Healer and the Problem of Pain', *Keats-Shelley Journal*, 36 (1987), 32-49.

[4] *Letters of John Keats*, ii. pp. 70, 95, 114-15, 298. His thoughts of Edinburgh medical school and a transcription of 'La Belle Dame' appear in the same journal-letter to the George Keatses of 14 February-3 May 1819.

[5] See John Barnard, '"The Busy Time": Keats's Duties at Guy's Hospital from Autumn 1816 to March 1817', *Romanticism*, 13. 3 (2007), 199-218. For Dressers 'assisting the surgeons in the performance of operations', see H. C. Cameron, *Mr. Guy's Hospital, 1726-1948* (London, New York and Toronto, 1954), pp. 146-7, 151-2.

[6]'Aesculapius', *The Hospital Pupil's Guide, being Oracular Communications, Addressed to Students of the Medical Profession*, 2nd. edn. (1818), p. 29, hereafter *Hospital Pupil's Guide*. I am grateful to Bob White for a photocopy of this rare pamphlet.

[7] 'A Register of Diseases between February 20th, and March 19th, 1816', *The London Medical Repository*, 5. 28 (1 April 1816), 356-7.

[8] *Mr. Guy's Hospital*, p. 153.

[9] 'Keats at Edmonton', *Daily News* (8 April 1871), 5.

[10] 'To Lord Byron', *Poems of John Keats*, p. 31.

[11] See Henry Stephens to G. F. Mathew, March (?) 1847, *The Keats Circle*, ed. Hyder Edward Rollins, 2nd edn., 2 vols. (Cambridge Mass., 1969), ii. p. 211.

[12] *Quarterly Review* (April 1818) and *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* (August 1818) rpt. in *Keats. The Critical Heritage*, ed. G. M. Matthews (1971), pp. 112, 110.

[13] *Hospital Pupil's Guide,* p. 10, quoted in R. S. White, *John Keats. A Literary Life* (Basingstoke and New York, 2010), p. 19.

[14] *Keats Circle*, ii. pp. 208, 210-11.

[15] *Hospital Pupil's Guide*, p. 23.

[16] See William S. Pierpoint, *John Keats, Henry Stephens and George Wilson Mackereth: The Unparallel Lives of Three Medical Students* (2010).

[17] *The Medical Calendar: or Students' Guide to the Medical Schools* (Edinburgh and London, 1828), p. 123.

[18] *Keats Circle*, ii. p. 211.

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[19] The course of the New River where it flowed in front of the school can still be traced at Enfield, nearly opposite Enfield Town station.

[20] *Letters of John Keats*, i. p. 113. Letter dated 9 October 1816.

[21] See John Barnard, 'Charles Cowden Clarke's "Cockney" Commonplace Book', in *Keats and History*, ed. Nicholas Roe (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 65-87, 68.

[22] *Letters of John Keats*, i. p. 115. Letter dated 1 November 1816.

[23] 'Charles Brown: Life of John Keats', *Keats Circle*, ii. p. 56.

[24] See Dilke's maginalia to his copy of Milnes's *Life, Letters, and Literary Remains, of John Keats*, 2 vols. (1848), i. p. 31. A copy of the maginalia, from the original in the J. Pierpoint Morgan Library, New York, is at the Houghton Library at Harvard, at Keats*67m-163.

[25] The *Hospital Pupil's Guide*, p. 28, mentions 'being called to accidents, the first treatment of which devolves usually upon the dresser for the week'.

[26] Based on the initial report of the incident, *Morning Chronicle* (27 March, 1816), 3. Possibly the Hulls were the Samuel Hull who married Jane Paul at St George, Bloomsbury, 13 September 1803. Ancestry.co.uk accessed 23 March 2015.

[27] *Morning Chronicle* (23 April 1816), 3.

[28] *John Keats's Anatomical and Physiological Note Book*, ed. M. B. Forman (Oxford, 1934), p. 29.

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[29] 'England and Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892, England, Surrey, 1816'. Ancestry.co.uk accessed 17 November 2014.

[30] *The Examiner* carried a first report on 31 March and another on 28 April, 1816.

[31] 'Inquisition taken the 27th day of April 1804 on Thomas Keates', London Metropolitan Archive, CLA/041/1Q/02/017. For more on the connections between 23 April, Thomas Keates, and Shakespeare, see my *John Keats. A New Life* (London and New Haven, 2012).

[32] *The Examiner* (28 April 1816), 264.

[33] *The Examiner* (5 May 1816), 282. For 'beastly place …' see Keats's letter to Charles Cowden Clarke of 9 October 1816, *Letters of John Keats*, i. p. 114.

[34] See *The Examiner* (21 August 1814), 541-2; (28 August 1814), 555-8; (2 October 1814), 636-8. 'Preface' to *Alastor; or, the Spirit of Solitude*, in *Percy Bysshe Shelley, The Major Works*, eds. Zachary Leader and Michael O'Neill (Oxford, 2009), p. 92.

[35] For Wordsworth's sonnet, *The Examiner* (11 February 1816), 92; for Hazlitt, *The Examiner* (21 August 1814), 542.

[36] Keats's 'boughs pavilion'd' was almost certainly a tactful allusion to Hunt's recent *Story of Rimini*, especially the seduction scene in Canto Three which occurs in Francesca's 'pavilion' outside the walls of Rimini. See *The Story of Rimini* (1816), 69.

[37] *Letters of John Keats*, i. pp. 193-4. See also, M. Faith McLellan, 'Literature and Medicine: Physician-Writers', *The Lancet* (22 February 1997), 564.

[38] *Letters of John Keats*, i. pp. 146-7.

[39] Gall, *v*. 1, sense 5, 'gaule them with shot' (1603).

[40] *Keats Circle*, i. p. 59.

[41] *Hospital Pupil's Guide*, pp. 49-50.

[42] *Letters of John Keats*, i. pp. 275-81.

[43] *Letters of John Keats*, i. pp. 16, 18.

[44] *Letters of John Keats*, i. pp. 280-1.