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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
RIVERSIDE

Entangled With the Dead: Burial, Exhumation, and Textual Materiality in British Romanticism

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

English

by

Jessica Anne Roberson

June 2017

Dissertation Committee:
Dr. Adriana Craciun, Chairperson
Dr. Susan Zieger
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Jessica Anne Roberson
2017

The Dissertation of Jessica Anne Roberson is approved:

Committee Chairperson

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Entangled with the Dead: Burial, Exhumation, and Textual Materiality in British Romanticism

by

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Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in English
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Dr. Adriana Craciun, Chairperson

The book and the corpse are often curiously sympathetic bodies, a relationship augmented by the tension between their respective rates of decay. Books are intended to – and unless deliberately or accidentally destroyed, do – outlast us. However, while the supposed "death" of the book in the digital age has been a charged cultural debate of the last decade, people have been both ritually and accidentally treating books like the dead for much longer. "Entangled with the Dead: Burial, Exhumation, and Textual Materiality in British Romanticism" examines how authors at the turn of the nineteenth-century treated literary decay at a time when emerging Enlightenment and Romantic sciences such as botany and geology were introducing a new material record of ruins, remains, and relics in juxtaposition to the historical record. Analyzing how Romantic authors deploy motifs of burial and exhumation to imagine books as vulnerable media objects along that material record, this project shows that in the nineteenth century the ruined book became a mutually constitutive cross-disciplinary object of natural history and the literary record. This project thus makes visible the conceptual role of the grave as Romantic authors worked to locate literary history within broader material paradigms. Scenes of book burial and exhumation, or other instances in which books and bodies are treated as synecdochical relics, highlight how Romantic writers and their later nineteenth-century readers sought to understand the material pasts and futures of books. Therefore, while the authors under discussion, such as John Keats, Percy Shelley, Mary Shelley, Felicia Hemans, and Thomas Lovell Beddoes, are largely categorized as Romantic, I look across the traditional temporal boundaries of the period to better understand the material dimensions of posterity, canonicity and affective memorialization. Responding to recent calls to treat literary and book history as essential extensions of one another, this project reconceptualizes how we describe the material consequences of posthumousness for Romantic representations of book culture. "Entangled with the Dead" thus contributes to both histories of mortality and the ongoing historicization of media and lived experience necessary to our own emergent digital moment.

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INTRODUCTION

At the turn of the nineteenth century the category of the "literary dead" expands as Romantic authors begin to frame textual history along a newly-discovered material record. In the posthumously published landscape poem *Beachy Head*, for example, Charlotte Smith sketches a vision of Contemplation "bid[ding] recording Memory unfold / Her scroll voluminous," revealing the history of the English coastline in the form of meticulously delineated botanical and fossil specimens (Smith 75). *Beachy Head* simultaneously highlights material texts (the scroll) and the testifying ability of natural "documents" like geographical features and fossils. Later in the poem, Smith turns from careful description of natural phenomenon to the additional presence of buried

> …remains of men, of whom is left
> No traces in the records of mankind,
> Save what these half obliterated mounds
> And half-fill'd trenches doubtfully impart
> To some lone antiquary; who on times remote,
> Since which two thousand years have roll'd away
> Loves to contemplate (Smith 80).

In these moments, Smith harnesses the proto-archaeological passion of an imagined antiquary in order to gesture at the entangled textual and material record present at Beachy Head, and, as in the earlier passage, represents such moments as the result of contemplation at a memorial, or more pointedly, graveside site. This is literalized at the end of the poem, when the body of the hermit, one of Smith's central characters, washes ashore after a storm and is buried in the damp cliff-side cave he had made his home. The poem's concluding lines describe the memorial epitaph "chisel'd within the rock" there, though the lines themselves are not related (Smith 86). Mark Sandy identifies the trend of graveside contemplation in Romantic representations of mourning as "ironic:" "Romantic poets locate their bereft or meditative speakers near a graveside … tak[ing] their point of imaginative origin, speculation, and irresolution from a scene of physical closure and finality" (Sandy 4). However, Smith's portrayal of graveside contemplation alongside the excavation, exhumation or turning up of the material record reminds us that many Romantic poets also turned a self-reflexive eye on the mediation of their works and the likelihood of those materials – and by extension, posthumous memorials and inscriptions – to survive them. Graves, particularly at the turn of the nineteenth century, are by no means exclusive scenes of "physical closure and finality" (Sandy 4). The material dimensions of affective mourning – and the grave in particular - are, at that particular historical moment and in the work of many Romantic writers, themselves unresolved. Subsequently, images of burial and exhumation do not necessarily constitute mutually exclusive categories. This dissertation takes up figures of burial, exhumation, and graveside visits – the mediated traces through which we access the dead – as a lens through which to consider the relationship of what has been termed the "bookish" turn in Romanticism to the emerging semiotics of Romantic science.[1]

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[1] See Ina Ferris and Paul Keen's edited anthology *Bookish Histories: Books, Literature, and Commercial Modernity*, 1700-1900, which puts a new interest in the history of the book at the center of a number of Romantic debates about circulation and knowledge-making in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This anthology contains several essays that would later form part of other monographs that this dissertation responds to, including Jon Klancher *Transfiguring the Arts and Sciences: Knowledge and Cultural Institutions in the Romantic Age*, Cambridge University Press, 2013; Andrew Piper, *Dreaming in Books: The Making of the Bibliographical Imagination in the Romantic Age*, University

These lines from another late work of Charlotte Smith, “Sonnet Written in the Churchyard at Middleton,” make the entanglement of those categories clear:

> PRESSED by the Moon, mute arbitress of tides,
> While the loud equinox its power combines,
> The sea no more its swelling surge confines,
> But o’er the shrinking land sublimely rides.
> The wild blast, rising from the western cave,
> Drives the huge billows from their heaving bed;
> Tears from their grassy tombs the village dead,
> And breaks the silent sabbath of the grave!
> With shells and sea-weed mingled, on the shore,
> Lo! their bones whiten in the frequent wave… (Smith 72)

As an example of churchyard contemplation, Smith’s sonnet illustrates the instability of the “silent sabbath of the grave,” and the ability of natural forces to erode the soil in the churchyard and mix human bones with “shells and sea-weed” (smith 72). In other words, Smith’s scene of gravesite contemplation literally deposits human remains into the natural material record via an image of exhumation. The boundaries that burial is imagined to impose between the living and the dead; between human remains and the remains of other organisms, and between the past and the present, are disrupted. Similarly, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, traditional boundaries between the historical and the natural world were also eroding, and cultural understandings of death and posthumousness changed as well, in order to accommodate new knowledge.

Such entanglements, I argue, are representative rather than anomalous, particularly as the nineteenth century progresses. As the semiotics of Romantic science continue to circulate and solidify in the public imagination during the first few decades of

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of Chicago Press, 2009; and Leah Price, *Things to do with Books in Victorian Britain*. Harvard University Press, 2012.

the nineteenth century, Romantic authors and readers had to wrestle with how to conceptualize and represent forces of literary preservation and decay. In particular, I take literally the idea of "the death of the book" in order to make visible the conceptual role of the grave as Romantic authors worked to locate literary history within the broader paradigms of the material record.[2] Accordingly, I turn to a set of texts and objects that not only mix human remains with natural remains, but contain scenes of book burial and exhumation, or other instances in which books and bodies are treated as synecdochical relics.

As Ted Underwood puts it, a "project that was becoming central to philosophic thought in the 1760s: an attempt to rob death of its terrors by focusing on its continuity with the natural processes of life," carries through into many historical projections in Romantic writing – what Underwood calls "naturalizing the afterlife" (Underwood 237). However, by the first few decades of the nineteenth century "the natural processes of life" were also in the process of becoming a broad set of defined scientific disciplines supported by a specific literature and material record. The material record, by which is meant a physical body of evidence about the past (as opposed to a textual or historical body of evidence), re-asserts corporeality, and for many Romantic writers and their readers, the scene of that transaction is a grave. Moreover, the grave, indexed via inscription or some other readable sign, provides another reminder of the way in which many of these observations self-reflexively hinged on the potential posthumous survival of vulnerable material bodies – the paper and leather bodies of books, letters, manuscripts, etc. *Beachy Head,* for example, was published as a posthumous fragment in 1807. Jacqueline M. Labbe makes a pointed comparison between Smith, who by the time the poem was circulating had "retired to the permanent home of the grave" and the poem's mobile speaker, transversing the landscape (Labbe 144). Another poignant and relevant description is Stuart Curran's, who notes that the poem is a "work that begins atop a massive feature of the landscape and ends immured within it" (Curran xxvii). In other words, *Beachy Head* is itself a work that relied on the posthumous survival of Smith's manuscript, and that textual history, as well as its influence on later critical readings of Smith as an author and interpretations of the poem's depiction of the landscape, is entangled with the language of burial.

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[2] The phrase 'death of the book,' though widely and publically discussed over the past decade, has begun to elicit a groan in popular media (see Kevin O'Kelly, "Why the death of the book is a dead subject," *The Huffington Post Blog*, June 4, 2013; or Lloyd Shepherd, "The death of books has been greatly exaggerated," *The Guardian*, August 30, 2011). However, we seem to be unable to kick the phrase out of the news – see, for example, digital studies scholar Matthew Kirschenbaum, "Books After the Death of the Book," *Public Books*, March 31, 2017.

Responding to recent calls to treat literary and book history as essential extensions of one another, this project works to understand the extent to which the vocabulary of Romantic natural history thus provided the Romantics with a vocabulary to reinterpret the posthumous legacy of literary history through a lens of material vulnerability. Therefore, in this introduction I will lay out these three distinct areas of scholarship that the subsequent chapters respond to, and provide a brief discussion of how those chapters combine the methodological approaches of literary criticism, bibliography, and material culture studies.

ROMANTIC BOOKS

Debates about the mortality of books are not new. However, prior to the nineteenth century, these debates were largely not about the precariousness of their material life, but rather a claim to the generative potential of texts, particularly as a conduit to the liveliness of the author. John Milton argues in the *Areopagitica*, for example, that

> … books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them (Milton 4).

Milton figures books as the containers of their author's essences; it is worth noting at this juncture that "books" here actually serves to distance the distinct or individual tactile and material qualities of individual books, and reaffirms instead the book as a channel for the text. Gillian Silverman aligns the expansion of this sentiment in the nineteenth century with the fad for spiritualism: "Books, then, are the repository of ghosts, belonging (in Friedrich Kittler's word) to the "realm of the dead," but reanimated through the act of reading" (Silverman 52). In other words, the author is contained and transmitted by the book. Yet even as the immortality of the text was becoming more accepted, it is contrasted with the "death" of the author. In the words of William Hazlitt: "I do not think altogether the worse of a book for having survived the author a generation or two. I have more confidence in the dead than the living. Contemporary writers may generally be divided into two classes - one's friends or one's foes" (Hazlitt 64). In other words, Hazlitt finds the hazy personality and frozen portrait of a dead author, replacing the life of the author with the life of the text, less disturbing – dead authors do less to interfere with the reading experience. However, I am motivated more by the ways in which the liveliness of a textual medium thus becomes materially embodied and entangled with memorial practice and discourse. What do we make of the physical page Hazlitt is engaging with, even as he looks over and beyond it, imagining a less visceral authorial presence? The survival of the literary dead depends not only on the fate of the text but on the fate of the book, as individual objects or artifacts as well as a media format.

Within the contexts of what Andrew Piper and Jonathan Sachs have termed "the growing miscellaneity of Romantic literary life," an investigation of the ends of texts and textual materialities is needed in order to deepen our understanding of anxieties about the decay, rot and disintegration that inevitably accompanies construction and craft (Paragraph 4). Important but underscrutinized aspects of that miscellaneity are the ways in which people dealt with or compensated for potential material decay. Authors of the early nineteenth century display not only a concern for posthumous preservation and what Andrew Bennett describes as an imagined, ideal posthumous audience whose judgment becomes "the necessary condition for the art of writing itself," but a sense that the space of the grave and associated sites become materially significant to the perpetuation of the text and its future reception (Bennett 4). Foregrounding material decay in discourses of Romantic posthumousness directs us to reconsider what writers and readers of that period did to and with books that either saved or destroyed them. This dissertation, therefore, examines ways in which Romantic texts, as much as Romantic speakers, find themselves beside, in, or framed as graves, making visible the many physical intimacies necessary for textual survival.

Romantic book history scholars have recently made a strong case for the early nineteenth-century as an important disciplinary and conceptual turning point of bookishness. Piper's innovative *Dreaming in Books: The Making of the Bibliographical Imagination in the Romantic Age*, for example, looks across both disciplinary and national borders to craft a picture of the identity of the book in the Romantic period via the proliferation of textual media in the period (Piper, *Dreaming*, 3). Piper emphases interactions between media formats (manuscript and print, for example) rather than revolution and replacement; he examines, through the lens of Romantic literature, how readers and books interacted with one another. Piper explains how the readers in the Romantic period came to think of books as a lens and suggests how book and literary history can shape our approaches to other textual mediums. Piper's argument for proliferation is joined by William St. Clair's delineation of the legal aspects of Romantic bibliographic culture; he argues that changes to copyright law significantly shape reading material in the period. Traditionally, the Romantic period has also been seen as a significant moment in the history of print, as it saw the introduction of new innovations like the machine press and paper machine.[3] Piper elsewhere argues that "Romantic books are heterotopian [embodying] the condition through which new kinds of knowledge formation as well as new kinds of mediation become possible, up to and including the non-book" (Piper, "Vanishing Points," 382). In other words, the Romantic book is distinguished by its capacity to be (or become) something else. This dissertation contends that one of the ways in which Romantic authors and their readers wrestled with that capacity was through reconsidering what I call media mortality, or the relationship between textual and material life-cycles.

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[3] See, for example, Philip Gaskell's classic work on bibliography: Gaskell, Philip. *Introduction to Bibliography*. Oxford: Clarendon Press: 1972.

Denise Gigante's delineation of the vibrant, if messy, lives of Charles Lamb's posthumous library draws another picture of Romantic miscellany and the book's capacity for material as well as theoretical transformation. Tracing the dispersal of Lamb's personal books, many of them scribbled upon by Coleridge or covered in a biscuit crumbs from Southey coming to tea, Gigante makes a compelling argument for material vulnerability and even injury as a necessary precursor to liveliness. The "final resting place" for Lamb's copy of Donne, after a hundred years circulating between various hands, is the vault of the Beineke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University, where it is not available to be borrowed. Gigante concludes with this observation: "it is … from a book historical perspective, dead" (Gigante 388). The vitality of books (Romantic books in particular) is maintained through material exchange and interaction. This combination of imagined capacity for transformation and material propensity for just that sort of interconnected liveliness make visible, too, the Romantic book's potential destruction and death.

Scholars have begun to bring together more insistently the insides and the outsides of nineteenth-century books, opening up an important critical space for literary history that encompasses the tangible as well as the intangible in open communication. Piper and Gigante join Deidre Lynch, Ina Ferris, Paul Keen, Michelle Levy, Tom Mole, and Leah Price, among others, in putting book history, the study of things, and literary history in conversation at the turn of the nineteenth-century. These explicitly Romantic studies respond, as well, to the first wave of English book history more broadly, beginning in the 1980s and 1990s. This includes the foundational print histories of Elizabeth Eisenstein (*The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (1983)) and others, as well as responses to Eisenstein's account of technological revolution such as Adrian John's *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (1998). As book history has emerged as a distinct scholarly discipline, at the turn of the twentieth century, it has been accompanied by a public discourse of anxiety surrounding the future of the book, a circumstance more recent accounts have highlighted. Robert Darnton's popular history *The Case for Books: Past, Present, and Future* (2009), for example, as well as Tom Mole and Michelle Levy's classroom anthology *The Broadview Reader in Book History* (2014), have extended both their discussions and the imagery associated with the book beyond the codex to the ebook and other digital literatures. In other words, as we work to attend to the outsides and insides of books in more detail, doing so is in part a response to our own emerging digital moment, in which the "book" is undergoing another redefinition. The continuing liveliness of the book in the digital age has been a charged cultural debate, though pronouncements of doom have lately given way to redundant assertions that "the death of the book is a dead subject," as a 2013 headline claimed (O'Kelly). The fact that these debates culminate in arguments about mortality is a phenomenon that this dissertation traces back to the Romantic book, and one set of contexts for this is a recent surge of interest in the affective material dimensions of Romantic posthumousness.

ROMANTIC AFTERLIVES

This dissertation considers the material afterlives of books, real and imagined, acting out different stages of death, memorialization and resurrection over the course of the nineteenth century. This allows me to consider the impact of changing attitudes towards the materiality of texts in conjunction with developing modern concepts of death and posterity, and comment on the relationship of such concepts to representations of literary history. The potency of remains of various kinds grew more pronounced over the course of the nineteenth century, alongside a poetics of belatedness – what Andrew Bennett has identified as a culture of posterity. Bennett argues that many of the Romantics imaged an ideal posthumous audience whose judgment became "the necessary condition for the art of writing itself;" in other words, that the posthumous survival of their literary work was its driving catalyst (Bennett 4). Over the past fifteenth years this orientation towards the posthumous has become a largely accepted narrative, creating space for both more in-depth examinations of Romantic afterlives, such as explorations of Keats by James Najarian and Sarah Wootton, but has also opened the door to scholars examining how the space of the grave and associated sites become materially significant to the perpetuation of the text and its future reception.[4]

Such approaches are intertwined with growing interest in the culture history of death in the nineteenth century, as historicist critics juxtapose a growing popular interest in memorialization with changes to the legal and religious treatment of the dead in Western Europe. By the end of the eighteenth century graveyard reform had become both a sanitary and an aesthetic concern in London and other city centers, as crowded urban churchyards were gradually replaced with sprawling, privatized suburban cemeteries – at least for the wealthy. In that sense, this dissertation contributes to a recent wave of work on necro-tourism and literary posthumousness in the nineteenth century. Particularly influential is Samantha Matthews's *Poetical Remains: Poet's Graves, Bodies and Books in the Nineteenth Century,* which elaborates on the popularity of posthumous publications provocatively titled the 'remains' of an author, strengthening connections between the corpus and the corpse as a relationship of "productive correspondence" (Matthews 3). Matthews emphasizes the role of material culture and personality in "the dead poet's translation into his immortal works," bringing specificity and tactility to conversations about literary remains (Matthews 3). The posthumous book, Matthews argues, "functioned as a substitute for and transformed incarnation of the poet's body" (Matthews 3). Paul Westover, building on Matthews's suggestion that literary tourism both results from and encourages this correspondence between the body and the book, argues that the

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[4] James Najarian, James Najarian, *Victorian Keats: Manliness, Sexuality, and Desire.* New York: Palgrave, 2003; and Sarah Wootton, *Consuming Keats: Nineteenth-Century Representations in Art and Literature*, New York: Palgrave, 2006.

Romantic period – and the reception of Romantic writers – provides the foundation for the emergence of literary heritage as a cornerstone of British national identity, and, importantly, the industry of literary tourism in Britain. Westover's book, *Necromanticism: Traveling to Meet the Dead, 1750-1860*, thus explores the desire for immediacy first evoked by the Romantics, that brings tourists to sites of literary heritage. These scholars, in bringing the material remains and bodies of writers into closer conversation with their textual afterlives, begin to shed critical light on the role of Romanticism in bringing together new articulations of the book and the body.

The production of secular relics – including literary remains and the objects of literary tourism - and their participation in a variety of cultural agendas and formations in the nineteenth century is also experiencing a wave of current scholarship. The potential of material culture studies for conversations about the nineteenth century dead has recently been illustrated by Deborah Lutz's interrogation of the Victorian mourning industry. Lutz suggests that the craze for commercialized relics such as hair brooches on the threshold of modernity makes more distinct the ensuing erasure of death from a position of everyday visibility. Meanwhile, Mary Elizabeth Hotz's work on the Victorian novel's representation of death and burial interrogates the links between the literary and the material within those contexts. As the work of these scholars suggests, bodies, books and other associative relics – hair, possessions, representations of the deceased – were circulated in highly visible and contested ways throughout the nineteenth century. Many of these studies circle, without identifying, the idea of the future "death of the book" and its roots in Romantic book culture. This dissertation argues that two additional factors –

the emergence of the material record and a major shift in attitudes towards the dead and death – provided the conditions for mortality within the discourses of book culture coming out of the Romantic period.

This dissertation traces the ways in which these two previously delineated trends – the bookish turn and an orientation towards the posthumous – were quietly but frequently connected on a frame of Romantic natural history. As literary history expanded to encompass the material bodies of both books and authors, one of the chief ways in which authors and readers processed the relationship of book and body as by projecting literary history onto emerging models of mortality that looked beyond human textual history and beyond human life cycles – those of plants, ancient animals, and archaeological ruins. This dissertation, therefore, pinpoints images of burial and resurrection – images that feature prominently in narratives of natural history and narratives of literary history – as a lens through which we can locate the Romantic invention of media mortality.

English Romanticism emerged from a historical moment of political revolution and a massive rise in media access and participation, as well as a scientific revolution, all of which contribute to the juxtaposition of organic, social, and historical ecologies throughout the period. As James McKusick puts it, "the unbounded liberation of human society was accompanied by a dawning realization of the interconnectedness between human beings and all other living things" - and, moreover, the realization that their own bounded particular moment in history existed on a long continuum that, increasingly, they could learn more about through both textual (historical) and material records

(McKusick). In other words, the early nineteenth century was a moment dealing with the large expansion of scope (of history, of media, of literacy) at the end of the eighteenth, the legacies of Enlightenment scientific and humanist thought as well as the material expansion of exploration and empire. Noah Heringman, extending to literature the robust work done by historians of science on this period, describes a similar expansion of scope: "the empirical sciences promoted by the European Enlightenment gathered and organized and unprecedented volume of natural and historical particulars, gradually revealing a 'dark abyss of time' beneath the orderly chronologies of geological, biological, and human antiquity" (Heringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*, 2). This new cultural awareness of both historical particularity and scope had implications for media and literary history, too. How were authors and readers – particularly, those concerned with posthumous survival of their work as an essential condition of authorship – to wrestle with this simultaneous sense of connection and the widening abyss of time? I contend that they turn to images of the grave, as a scene of both closure and potential revelation, where the particular is often recorded in temporary defiance of the inevitable march of time – and where the entanglement of the dead and the textual is particularly obvious.

ROMANTIC SCIENCE

The Romantic period, as traditionally bounded more or less by the French Revolution (1789-1799) and the ascension of Queen Victoria in 1837, witnessed an astonishing number of key scientific discoveries and publications. These included the confirmation of extinction, the discovery of the age of the Earth beyond the Biblical associations, and electromagnetism, to name just a few. Romantic science lacked the sharp boundaries we now associate with the sciences vs. the arts, and literature encompassed both the work of poets, novelists, and the work of natural philosophers. As Heringman describes elsewhere, they were also not separated in print:

> The rapid expansion of print culture beginning in the later eighteenth century fueled the circulation of writings famously obsessed with nature, from Romantic poems and scenic tours to theories of the picturesque or the Deluge to the persistent and polymathic genres of natural history. These kinds of writing shared a common readership (Heringman, *Romantic Science*, 1).

Such publications also shared institutional infrastructure such as publishers and booksellers. It is only over the course of the Romantic period – and as delineated by Jon Klancher, in conjunction with the media boom mentioned above – that "science" became professionalized and distinguished from the "arts." In the meantime, not only did scientific writing circulate alongside the work of poets and novelists, those authors, too, eagerly engaged with these new discoveries.

Recent scholarship has explored, in opposition to the previous general assumption that many Romantic poets were opposed to science, the relationship of nearly every major Romantic author to various scientific discourses of the moment, including most of those discussed in this dissertation. John Keats's medical training has long been of interest to scholars, as examined, for example, in Donald Goellnicht's *The Poet-Physician: Keats and Medical Science* (1984), Hermione De Almeida's *Romantic Medicine and John Keats* (1991), Alan Richardson's *British Romanticism and the Science of the Mind* (2001), Alan Bewell's *Romanticism and Colonial Disease* (2003), and James Allard's *Romanticism, Medicine, and the Poet's Body* (2007). In the last decade, Keats's connections beyond medical science have also been increasingly of interest to critics. Scholarship on Percy Shelley's relationship to Romantic natural history has a more recent history, but includes Sharon Ruston's *Shelley and Vitality* (2005), Noel Jackson's *Science and Sensation in Romantic Poetry*, much of Romantic ecological criticism including the influential work of Timothy Morton, and Noah Heringman's work on Romantic geology, *Romantic Rocks, Aesthetic Geology* (2010). Thomas Lovell Beddoes, like Keats, is classified as a poet-physician, and his medical training is at the center of studies like Ute Berns's *Science, Politics, and Friendship in the work of Thomas Lovell Beddoes* (2012). Mary Shelley, of course, is at the center of a conversation on Romantic science and its later influence too expansive to describe in this introduction. However, relevant to this dissertation, critical attention has in the last decade or so turned to include a robust body of scholarship on *The Last Man* (1826) as well as *Frankenstein* (1819), broadening the scope of scientific influence on her work to disease, geology, archaeology and climatology as well. Within these contexts, then, this dissertation seeks to understand how these expanding horizons underwrote these author's representations not only of science, but of literary and media history as well.

Contemporary book history is often framed through questions of life and death. This dissertation argues that this is a Romantic paradigm, growing out of their concern with connecting the material and social histories of literature via a natural history of literature. The following chapters work together to narrate such a natural history of literary mortality, identifying the late Romantic period as a moment when textual materiality – and thus literary history - became entangled in broad new paradigms of life, death, and interconnection.

CHAPTER SUMMARIES

My first chapter considers botanical cultivation and sampling in relation to and poetic posthumousness and memorialization through figures of generative burial in John Keats's *Isabella* and Percy Bysshe Shelley's *Adonais*. By analyzing these images of generative burial alongside textual and material treatment of the Protestant Cemetery in Rome, where both poets are buried, I argue that the entanglement of literary remain and botanical sample is the culmination of several centuries of equating textual materiality with the materiality of nature. As a result, poetic posthumousness is not only a matter of textual cultivation via practices of editing, collecting and printing; cultivation, which acquires in this period its modern dual connotations of husbandry and social attention, provides a bridge between organic and inorganic networks of vitality.

The period's centrality to the emergence of ecological thinking has been a fixture of Romantic scholarship of the past few decades. In the early 2000s important books by Jonathan Bate, Karl Kroeber, James McKusick and Onno Oerlemans argued that Romanticism's attention to nature and connectivity created the conditions for ecological consciousness. More recently, Denise Gigante and Catherine Packham have introduced the concept of vitality, drawing closer connections between embodiment and aesthetic textual forms, and gesturing at the influence of the material sciences on writers and artists at the turn of the nineteenth century. Other recent critics, including Robert Mitchell and Janelle Schwartz, have identified figures of natural regeneration. Mitchell's argument revolves specifically around the uncanny vitality of plants, which offered writers a model for non-animal life that could be compared and contrasted against human life cycles – allowing aesthetic forms to potentially mediate between the two.

While these critics largely focus on the poetic text, the language of generative vitality echoes not only in the burial of Lorenzo's head feeding the potted basil, as described by Keats; and the corpse of Keats underneath the flowers carpeting the Protestant Cemetery as depicted in *Adonais*; but in the additional availability of the well-planted gravesides of each poet to mourners arriving with their books in hand. Reaching for a regenerative life cycle, visitors to the graves of Keats and Shelley collected botanical souvenirs and paid for landscaping efforts. In addition, these memorializing practices shared a vocabulary with the more conventional textual cultivation of a posthumous poetic reputation. Romantic plants and bodies shared both a discursive and a material relationship that alters traditional paradigms of textual materiality. Thus, this chapter joins new readings of *Isabella* and *Adonais* with several examples of botanical souvenirs taken from the graves of Keats and Shelley. These individual souvenirs – and particularly, the ways in which they are framed as botanical specimens as well as relics of a poet – demonstrate one way in which literary history could be accessed through knowledge of natural history.

The second chapter continues to interrogate the notion of generative burial by looking to a different burial framework: that of burial at sea. This chapter identifies the sea-grave as a topos of the early nineteenth-century imaginary that draws on both Gothic tropes and Romantic reformulations of Gothic aesthetics in order to signal a "sea changed" poetics of shifting dislocation, decay, and denial. This chapter, therefore, considers the implications of material vulnerability for the reconstruction of history through poetry; what does the loss or decay of bodies and objects mean for the poetics of memory and memorialization? How do we imperfectly reassemble the past? Ultimately, how do we reconcile the literary historical record to the vulnerability of the material record? In considering how images of sea-burials and watery graves refuse the aesthetic effects of the nineteenth century burial reform, I contend that scenes of sea-burial respond register moments in which decay creeps into the affective historical record. The loss of a corpse at sea makes visible the extent to which any act of posthumous identification or remembering relies upon a complex network of both material and textual objects actively maintained by the living.

The newspapers, literature, poems and material culture of early nineteenth-century Britain are cluttered with shipwrecks, sea dirges, and tearful sailors fretting over watery graves. The combination of cemetery reform and changing mourning practices, swells in transoceanic tourism and immigration, public obsession with dead nautical heroes like Cook, Nelson and Franklin, and the slow, uneasy death of the transatlantic slave trade, constitute a nexus of cultural forces specific to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The some dozen sea-burials and ocean graves that litter the poetic corpus of Felicia Hemans form my central case study.

Accordingly, this chapter resituates much of Hemans's poetry in relationship to recent work on nineteenth-century literary cultures at sea and the troubled, incomplete erasure of the vast graveyards of the Middle Passage. Hemans scholarship has focused on the geographical expansiveness of her work, as well as the political ambiguity and the contentious reception history that has come to characterize her role in debates about Romantic women poets and canonicity. However, as Paula Feldman notes of *Records of Woman* (1828), "nearly every poem … describes a corpse or the anticipation of one," and recent work on Hemans has emphasized her materialism and her representation of literary relics and subsequent role in literary tourism (Feldman xxii). Examining her representation of sea-burial will deepen our understanding of Hemans, in particular how her work speaks to the Atlantic slave trade and abolition debates that as the daughter of a Liverpool merchant, she was well aware of. However, this chapter also develops our understanding of the ways in which tropes of burial extend into specifically maritime literary cultures of the early nineteenth century – accounts which might themselves reflect not only nineteenth-century anxieties about nautical death but the corporeality of both individual and cultural memory.

The third chapter shifts from scenes of burial to scenes of exhumation, revisiting the material complications of Romantic posthumousness when presented on a geological or cosmological scale, situating the work of Thomas Lovell Beddoes within intersecting shifts in the flourishing of print media and attitudes towards the material record. As fossil discoveries and speculation about geological strata disrupted Biblical narratives of Earth's past and signaled emerging ideas of 'prehistory,' texts and books were increasingly ephemeral, despite their rapid proliferation. I contend that Beddoes' noted ambivalence to publishing and long resistance to critical recovery is grounded partly in a sense of organic destruction and decay within his writing that disrupts easy narratives of preservation and being read. Also running through Beddoes' work and biography is a discourse of desiccation and un-usability that has thus far been underexplored in book history and print culture work on the period.

The chapter addresses images of literary decay in Beddoes' letters and verse of the late 1820s, in particular an 1827 letter to Thomas Forbes Kelsall. Beddoes frames an excerpt from *Death's Jest-Book* with a disavowal of his own poetic prowess, literary publication in general, and a geological projection of planet death. "Such verses as these & their brethren," he writes, "will never be preserved to be pasted on the inside of the coffin of our planet" (Beddoes lxxviii). Beddoes collapses material distinctions in decay, ambiguously figuring both planet and coffin as commonplace books or scrapbooks, as relics, and as fossilizing forces that preserve only through death, chance and ignorant recovery. Beddoes's letters and poetry (sometimes embedded within his correspondence) provide a portrait of an ambivalent late-Romantic relationship between author, text, and book. Beddoes's fossil metaphors project his poetical works, autobiographical writing, and reception history onto a rapidly enlarging nineteenth-century spectrum of antiquarian spectacle. Beddoes's fossil poetics both contribute to an emerging aesthetic imaginary of the relic and memorial, and participate in a shifting cultural response to what Martin Rudwick terms the "historicization of the earth" (Rudwick 3). Paper, poetry, the dead, and remains both organic and inorganic were often entangled in the literature of the first half of the nineteenth century. Despite continuing critical investment in the Romantic posthumous imaginary, the role of this confluence between the extension of the material record and the ways in which Romantic writers – particularly those, like Beddoes, writing during the ambiguous period of the late 1820s – represented posterity is under-acknowledged. In Beddoes's framing of literary history and posterity as inextricable from the material concerns of extinction, I identify a new poetics of media mortality. Beddoes reimagines this estranged posthumous poetics in an attempt to highlight the dependence of literary history on the physical vagaries – including decay, disappearance, or destruction – of a material record.

The fourth chapter turns to more explicit fictional representations of exhumation in Mary Shelley's 1826 novel *The Last Man*. The novel's frame narrates the discovery, exhumation, remediation, and publication of a temporally ambiguous prophecy of a plague that eradicates humanity – excepting only Lionel Verney, the titular last man. This chapter is about the troubled preservation of dead things with and in books, and Mary Shelley's long attention to this problem. To an extent, the more thoroughly studied *Frankenstein*, and Shelley's other early novel *Valperga*, exhibit similar concerns with epitaphic inscription and the remaking of memory. The Last Man, however, is more explicitly concerned with the material vulnerability of textual records and the transformations such materials undergo over time. Therefore, examining the bodies and inscriptions which necessarily litter Verney's path to becoming the last man, this chapter argues that Shelley positions nineteenth-century literary historiography as caught between the labor of the dead and the living. In the novel, literary history is inextricably entangled in both the textual and material records.

Drawing on the specific historical moments and shifting understandings of the material world in which texts and books find themselves entangled, that I have explicated in each of the previous chapters – the botanical, the oceanic, the geologic, and their relationships to early nineteenth-century reformulations of the material practices and places connected to the dead – this last chapter reads *The Last Man* as an attempt to fashion a literary history that deliberately plays with the role of the material in negotiating authenticity and access. Shelley's narrator reassembles and translates an exhumed text, while the central characters perform a series of ritual translations in an older sense of the word – the exhumation, transfer, and reburial of saints, relics, and other significant bodily remains. In this chapter I close-read several such scenes of death, burial, and textual representation, which make visible the variety of ways in which Shelley imagines the living reassemble the dead. Echoing the infamous story that Shelley kept the ashes of her husband's heart folded in a copy of his *Adonais*, *The Last Man* views material remains as inextricably entangled with the textual.

A final coda looks at the ways in which representations of Romanticism still provide a popular lens for information access and media history. Specifically, this 'epitaph' reads moments of Romantic-era bookish violence in Susanna Clarke's 2004 historical fantasy novel *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell* as necessary images for understanding our current relationship with the material vulnerabilities of media formats. This epitaph, responding to concerns I encountered while researching representations of burial and exhumation as essential metaphors for literary history, looks to the future of this project as a more focused examination of Romanticism and the making of modern media mortality. This novel, integrating imaginary and real Romantic figures, utilizes the unique properties of historical fantasy to speculate about the relationship between books, people, and the practice of literary history. While the body of the dissertation considers the ways in which Romantic authors and their nineteenth-century readers struggled to understand the material, mediated pasts and futures of books, Clarke's novel demonstrates some of the ways in which twenty-first century discourses of book mortality are expressed through the imaginary topos of Romanticism as we have come to think of it over the intervening two hundred years. *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell* performs a fantastical post mortem on Romantic bibliography. Looking ahead, the monograph that I envision developing out of this dissertation will trace the contours of those two hundred years, in order to better understand our own struggles with the mortality of books.

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CHAPTER ONE: CULTIVATING WITH THE DEAD: POETRY IN THE GROUND AND ON THE PAGE

To think that now, beneath the Italian skies,
In such clear air as this, by Tiber's wave,
Daisies are trembling over Keats's grave.

-Thomas Bailey Aldrich, "At Bay Ridge, Long Island."[5]

The daisies growing over John Keats's grave at the Protestant Cemetery in Rome are one of the most famous floral figures of nineteenth-century literary culture. Initially planted over the grave by his doctor James Clarke, the flowers had apparently been a topic of conversation in Keats's last days.[6] To Joseph Severn, the friend who nursed Keats through his final illness in Rome during the spring of 1821, the flowers were a prophetic fulfillment. Four days before the poet's death, Severn reported to a friend, Keats knew the moment was coming and figured it in flowers, telling Severn that he felt "the cold earth upon me – the daisies growing over me" (Severn to Taylor, March 6, 1821). The daisies were immediately represented, initially by Severn, and soon after by Shelley in *Adonais*, as the embodiment of the dying poet's last wishes. By extension, the flowers also represent the popular sentiment that his tragic early death had been in some way predetermined. As Keats's reputation increased at mid-century, the flowers became potent souvenirs, emblems of posthumous communion with the dead poet - though somewhat tarnished by associations of Victorian sentimentalism. In this excerpt from an 1865 sonnet titled "At Bay Ridge, Long Island," by American poet, author and literary editor Thomas Bailey Aldrich, however, the daisies remain a potent symbol of fantastical tourism, an image that allows the narrator to transport himself from New York to Rome, from solitary contemplation to a fantasy of intercourse with his predecessor.

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[5] First printed in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1865, this excerpt was reprinted in *The Shadow of the Flowers* (75).

[6] This is Severn's report, in a letter to John Taylor discussing many of the arrangements for Keats' funeral. Can be found in *Selected Letters of John Keats* (510-11). Discussed somewhat by Susan Manning, *Poetics of Character: Transatlantic Encounters 1700-1900* (91); and by Robert Douglas-Fairhurst in *Victorian Afterlives: The Shaping of Influence in Nineteenth-century Literature* (12); and on Keats and the Rossettis, Deborah Lutz, *Relics of Death in Victorian Literature and Culture* (44).

Yet that narrative is not immediately obvious from these three lines alone. These lines convey only a dream of Keats's grave. While it the grave is obviously at a physical distance from the speaker ("to think that now," "such clear air as this"), the only fully realized image is that of the "daises … trembling over Keats's grave" (Aldrich, *Shadow*, 75). This excerption was not performed by me, an extraction for the purposes of literary analysis highlighting the centrality of the Keats's daises to my reading of the poem. Instead, this excerpt was deliberately clipped and excised from the sonnet that originally homed it, and planted quite independently of "At Bay Ridge, Long Island," in a volume compiled by Aldrich's wife and son in the years following his death in 1907.

Aldrich, part of the loose collection of American Northeastern bohemian poets that included Walt Whitman, was editor of the Atlantic Monthly during the 1880s, died in 1907 at the age of 70. In subsequent years, his wife Lillian Woodman Aldrich and their son Talbot Aldrich strove to create an appropriate memorial. This anthology, titled *The Shadow of the Flowers* and published in 1912, was one result of their efforts. Lillian

Aldrich is credited with the collection of the poetic extracts, and Talbot and Albert Nordell with the accompanying illustrations. Visually, the book appears as a charming souvenir or memorial volume.[7] The title is printed only on the spine, and the cover is illustrated by a simple print of flowering branches with a sentimental verse claiming "herewith together you have flower and thorn…" making immediately apparent the conflation of a lifespan and a garden.

The anthology serves to juxtapose the man-made monument with the natural monument, and in so doing, makes clear the inability to separate them in any meaningful way. *The Shadow of the Flowers* is not a typical memorial anthology. Rather than containing complete poems, the book is a collection of extracts – often short, only a few lines – that mention flowers. In a brief introductory note in the paratexts, this curious choice is explained:

> The selection of passages from Mr. Aldrich's poems that forms the raison d'etre of this book was made in answer to a request for a list of flowers mentioned by him, in order that the garden of the Thomas Bailey Aldrich Memorial at Portsmouth might possess every flower so mentioned. In making the list asked for, Mrs. Aldrich found the lines enclosing the flower in nearly every case so much a part of the flower itself that she copied them out, as in gathering the actual flowers of the garden she would have surrounded each with the leaves belonging to it (Foreword 1).

What becomes clear from this note is that the anthology is only one node in a much more complicated material and textual network of memorial projects than is immediately obvious. The selected passages from Aldrich's work take on memorial signification only in the ways in which they refract and remediate the memorial garden. However, at the same time, the garden is only a fitting memorial because it reflects the breadth and depth of Aldrich's poetical remains. The garden and the anthology are mutually constitutive. This mutuality, I would argue, is not confined to the back-and-forth of Lillian Aldrich's attempts to memorialize her husband. Rather, look to the language employed in this paratextual foreword: "the lines enclosing the flower in nearly every case [were] so much a part of the flower itself that she copied them out, as in gathering the actual flowers of the garden she would have surrounded each with the leaves belonging to it" (Foreword 1). The simile here is almost unnecessary; the comparison is in fact rooted in the earlier conflation of the poetic 'flower' into an imagined actual flower. The language of enclosure here also gestures at an association between literary and botanical questions of preservation, display and conservation – encased like a pressed flower preserved under glass, or a tropical plant in a hot house, the memorial flower is a cultivated one.

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[7] Lillian Aldrich exhibited a frequent interest in memorial publications – in 1920 she published a memoir of her own titled *Crowding Memories* with the same press, which recounts her life with Aldrich and many of her encounters with other literary and theatrical notables.

I would like to emphasize here the importance of 'extraction' to the creation of three different collections: the garden, the gathered (dead) flowers, and the poetical anthology. Both botanical and poetical cultivation require the cut and transplantation of material across boundaries of organic (and figurative) "life" and "death." The ways in which books, bodies, and plants interact on both literal and metaphorical levels during the posthumous nineteenth-century crafting of Keats and Shelley reveal a desire to embed poets and poetry in an organic landscape capable of extending past the boundaries of human lifespans.

The mutual entanglement of literary remain and botanical sample here is the culmination of several centuries of equating textual materiality with the materiality of "nature." Two centuries earlier the Early Modern "Book of Nature" metaphor, or the idea that the physical landscape can be read as a parallel text to the scripture, for example, legitimized empirical observation of the earth by tying it an accepted textual authority.[8] The metaphor also experienced a revival during the Romantic period, taking on significance, as Samantha Harvey argues, as a flexible connection between nature and the spirit (Harvey 78).[9] The popularity of this metaphor, however, also suggests that texts have insistently material properties, recalling some of the concerns most commonly associated with the later Romantics - affective embodiment, posthumous reception, and of course, nature. That one of the chosen memorial excerpts in Aldrich's book lapses into mourning and memorial for an earlier poet – and Keats in particular – is not, I think, accidental. Aldrich's interest in Keats, and the presence of Keats's gravesite daisies, helps to ground the Aldrich memorial garden and *The Shadow of the Flowers* at the end of a long nineteenth century that has witnessed a profound shift in the materials of poetic reception and posthumousness and developed the memorial culture and literary tourism of modernity.

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[8] For a detailed explanation of the "Book of Nature" as an emerging metaphor in the Early Modern period as well as its implications for the development of natural sciences, see Peter Harrison, "The 'Book of Nature' and Early Modern Science," *The Book of Nature in Early Modern and Modern History*. Edited by Klaas van Berkel and Arjo Vanderjagt, Peeters, 2006, pp. 1-26.

[9] A treatment of the ramifications of this spiritual connection is beyond the scope of this chapter. See Samantha Harvey, *Transatlantic Transcendentalism: Coleridge, Emerson, and Nature*. Edinburgh University Press, 2013.

Aldrich demonstrated in his own work and letters an interest in the posthumous cultivation of the Romantics explicitly through literary tourism and souvenir collecting. Upon returning from an 1875 European tour, during which he and his family visited the graves of several Romantics (including Keats, Shelley, and Walter Savage Landor) and, like Keats himself, the cottage of Robert Burns, Aldrich wrote to a friend that "we enjoyed every moment and I have come back chock-full of mental intaglios and literary bric-a-brac generally" (*Crowding Memories* 219). Lillian Aldrich later recalled multiple trips to the graves of Shelley and Keats, their last stop before departing Rome "to bend the knee at the grave of Keats," and reports with some amusement the confusion of an English friend, who, when they reached London, was asked to show them the house where Keats had written "On looking into Chapman's Homer" (*Crowding Memories* 177, 216). The Aldrich's avid interest in literary tourism inflects their own memorials, whether printed, architectural, or botanical.

Looking backwards, then, from Lillian Aldrich's book-garden and garden-book, this chapter deals with the ways in which the cultivation, collection, clipping and planting of plants was often made explicitly linguistically and materially analogous to the cultivation of posthumous poets in the nineteenth-century. This study is centered on the transatlantic legacies of Keats and Shelley, whose posthumous reputations have been so jointly cultivated that they have been merged into a mutually constitutive material afterlife, because their bodies lie in nominally the same space. The posthumous Keats and Shelley were repeatedly sampled and clipped by readers and tourists throughout the nineteenth-century. I examine that interest in Keats and Shelley through the particular lens of ‘cultivation’ and the botanical – those material metaphors for dealing with the posthumous, articulated through the relation of specific poems (*Isabella, or the Pot of Basil* and *Adonais*) to the larger materially contingent networks that made their images of botanical afterlives particularly mobile in the nineteenth century. As Deborah Lutz and Andrew Bennett among others have argued, “to be influenced by Keats is to be influenced by his dying – by his corpse, even,” an influence engendered by Shelly’s Adonais and often figured both by critics and nineteenth-century readers by the flowers growing in the Protestant Cemetery (Lutz 44).[10] By focusing, as the Aldrich example illustrates, on the movements of literary tourists and notions of place and the souvenir, I argue that the transmission of literary heritage is reliant not only on the movements of books, manuscripts and texts, but is embedded in the relationships of individual readers and books to the cultural history of metaphors for handling remains, like “cultivation.”

This chapter addresses ‘cultivation’ as a term that necessarily mediates between the artificial and the authentic, and applies it to a larger ecology of poetic posthumousness for the Romantics in particular, as a different and more materially specific way to examine how poetics inform (or transform into) the material dissemination of dead authors. The same conditions of artificial and authentic are also entangled in the binary of living versus dead, particularly in respects to the critical reception of the Romantics and their own theoretical engagement with nature. In what follows, I build a more detailed archeology of cultivation as attached to relics, bodies and remains used to construct the literary canon of Romanticism and the under-studied role of underlying material networks that support that motif in constructing archives of feeling.

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[10] It is in Shelley’s elegy to Keats, *Adonais* (1821), that descriptions of the cemetery as “romantic and lovely … covered in winter with violets and daisies” initially circulated. This will be addressed in greater detail later in the chapter.

In part, this work depends on a more careful parsing of domestic botanical and gardening practices in relation to a much larger debate about poetry, poets and place. Accordingly, I conclude by examining some transatlantic movements of Keats and Shelley - and, importantly, their botanical relics - as a touristic strategy through which two marginalized American poet-critics (Margaret Fuller and William Stanley Braithwaite) articulate their own complex affective relationships to the recent British canon while they worked to establish an independent American literature. The botanical emerges from these strange intersections as a deceptively passive-seeming material mediator of the nineteenth-century, and Romantic writers in particular.

ROMANTICISM, NATURE, VITALITY

The turn to nature has long been one of the identifying characteristics of English Romanticism. Much criticism of the last few decades has been devoted to the role of Romanticism in the conceptualization of ecology, a connection James McKusick identifies as emerging “from a desperate sense of alienation from the natural world and expresses an anxious endeavor to re-establish a vital, sustainable relationship between mankind and the fragile planet on which [we] dwell" (McKusick 123). The Romantics, some eco-critics argue, turned to plants in order to represent a “new biological, materialistic understanding of humanity’s place in the cosmos” (Kroeber 2). Robert

Mitchell argues that “rather than serving as symbols for human concerns and ends, Romantic plants instead function as pathways for leading the reader to an awareness of his or her embeddedness within larger ecological and cosmic processes,” identifying in the Romantic relationship with plants an interest in the life-cycles of plants (Mitchell 191). Theresa Kelley’s recent study of Romantic botany likewise emphasizes the ability of plants to push on and disrupt traditional categories of “life,” slipping in and out of attempts to classify them concretely.[11] Plants, which do not live or die on human time, challenge a neat binary of life and death. A view of nature – of the botanical, at any rate – as haunting, both alive and dead, makes the flowering cemetery a particularly charged scene. Mitchell insists that the Romantics, in looking to plants, stretch away from interpersonal relationships. Because plants may make appeals, but require projected intermediaries in order to speak, he argues, “Romantic plants … made poor vehicles for the mapping and metaphor of human relations” (Mitchell 201). If the relationship between poet and the representation of plants is essentially one of positive alienation from human ways of living and dying, then perhaps that helps suggest why, posthumously, interactions with the Romantics are transmuted into plants.

Yet the ways in which a poet might come into contact with actual flowers are variable; such encounters do not happen in an empty narrative space but within a material landscape – perhaps a rural field or country garden, a row of pots on an urban windowsill, or an orchid in a hot house. While Mitchell’s reading uses the intermingling atmospheres of Shelley's *Sensitive Plant*, Alan Bewell reads the use of floral imagery in Keats within a more conscious material paradigm. Floral images for Keats, he argues, are "less representations of nature than substitutes for social and erotic desires" which draw their meaning from the connotations of the landscape garden (Bewell 80). Bewell thereby argues, in opposition to Mitchell, that plants are a particularly effective metaphor for human relations. However, though seemingly contradictory, I do not think these different Romantic usages of plants are mutually exclusive.

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[11] Theresa Kelley’s *Clandestine Marriages: Botany and Romantic Culture* (2012) takes up the myriad ways in which botany shaped the literature and culture of the Romantic period, looking at authors, artists, and philosophers who put botany to work in the early nineteenth century.

Denise Gigante describes vitality, as a quality of life, as the "the mark, the distinguishing feature, of Romantic aesthetics" (4). Yet, as Gigante notes, the Romantic obsession with vitality was essentially connected to both the material sciences and to aesthetic form, and, she argues, underwritten by the dynamics of power that separate the sublime from the monstrous, and always threaten to slide the former into the later category. Gigante draws on Hazlitt's assertion that an authentic work of art must be "alive" (Gigante 4). As Andrew Bennet argues in *Romantic Poets and the Culture of Posterity*, both major and minor figures of Romanticism increasingly turned to the textual afterlife as a necessary and determining impulse in the production of poetry – the Romantics wrote for posterity, intending their works to survive them (Bennett 1). This highlights the inevitable other conclusion of art's vitality – that the artist will, inevitably, be dead. The appeal that plants held for the Romantics, per Mitchell, then, is their uncanny vitality (their capacity for regrowth and "life after death"), that they can offer, representationally, a life outside of the animal life cycle. I would argue that the conflation of text and plant life in the afterlives and reception histories of the Romantics has a similar function. The text, after all, is not "alive" without a body either, and the survival of texts depends as well on the survival of individual textual bodies. Plants, and the metaphor of cultivation, offer to textual materiality that possibility of regeneration.

Under such an aegis, the material bodies of texts assume regenerative properties as well: scraps or pieces of texts are mobile, and possess the ability to in some sense to cannibalize one other and grow, as memorial objects, beyond the limits of human life cycles. However, such capabilities do not confer immortality. Individual books and textual objects are still subject to disintegration and decay. As Janelle Schwartz has shown by focusing on the figure of the worm, encounters with the decaying and the digested illuminate the animating paradoxes of Romanticism: vitality and mortality, material and immaterial, and so forth. Similarly, their differences in scale provides plants – and books – with different embodied relationships to time and to death. The desire for this posthumous state registered in Romantic poetry then becomes available to later readers assigning regenerative value to their literary remains. The botanical souvenir – and graveside corpse-flower in particular – is thus rooted in a relationship between Romantic plants and bodies, both in the ground and on the shelf.

CULTURE AND CULTIVATION

Through these juxtapositions, "nature" becomes an uncertain identifier in the contexts of nineteenth-century garden history. Accordingly, I will delineate several distinct types or forms of indoor gardening: the hot house, the container/potted garden, and collecting and preservation practices associated with gardening. The first of these is most frequently attributed the negative connotations of deliberate, "unnatural" cultivation. Raymond Williams suggests that culture in the modern sense (a large and capacious term for works of intellectual and/or artistic activity) began with cultivation – the deliberate work of "tending natural growth" (Williams 49). Until the late eighteenth century, Williams says, the word "was still a noun of process, the tending of something, basically crops or animals" (Williams 49). However, the traces of process, of natural growth, that remain attached to "cultivation" in the late eighteenth century take on a negative cast for the Romantics. Wollstonecraft, for example, in dialogue with Rousseau on flowers as a metaphor for women, concurs with what Sharon Ruston terms "the corrupting influence of cultivation" (Ruston 54): "The business of fashionable education, conducted with ostentation and expence [sic] in private families, is on the principles of artificial gardening; and the pupils are hot-house plants" (Wollstonecraft 147). Wollstonecraft, as Ruston states, saw "the forcing of hot-house plants as analogous to women's subjection and 'cultivation' by civilized society" (Ruston 55). Artificial gardening was viewed in many ways as a violent process, working actively against the natural inclinations of the plants. Yet there is an automatic contradiction in the language used to address such practices: is indoor gardening, while perhaps accomplished through the deliberate manipulation of atmospheric conditions, weather, etc. within a contained space, truly artificial? Such a reading of cultivation goes against the grain of Williams' definition of "tending natural growth" (Williams 49). However perhaps Wollstonecraft's objection to the hot house as a space of dominance clears a way for contrasting hot-house cultivation and the practice of souvenir-taking and the cultivation of affective relationships with dead authors. Wollstonecraft's objection is rooted in its reduction and exclusion of women from natural growth. These gendered connotations of cultivation lend themselves to a discussion of poetic cultivation, particularly of Percy Shelley. Wollstonecraft's daughter Mary will spend a great deal of her widowed life laboring to edit and publish Percy's work, as I will address in more detail later.

Regardless, 'cultivation' emerges as a contentious and multi-various term at the turn of the century, capable of being used in a negative sense as much – or perhaps even more than – as in a positive one. And, as Wollstonecraft indicates, it is the stifling space of the hothouse garden that becomes its frequent metaphor. The hot-house serves as a barrier to forms of self-cultivation connected to Romantic images of nature as "possessing independent powers of animation and self-direction, vital energies of self-generation and the ability to take actions" - associated, as Catherine Packham notes in the introduction to *Eighteenth-Century Vitalism: Bodies, Culture, Politics*, with forms of power located specifically in living bodies (Packham 1). A cut or potted flower thus seems to exist in an ambiguous zone of nature, representing both an attempt to preserve and bring indoors – or into a vase, or even into the pages of a book – a sample of nature that becomes a troubling artifact. There is sense that by no longer being a "pure" channel of communication with nature, the domestic floral in whatever form, has been brought too close to the body.

The accusation of artificial gardening was also used as critical ammunition against the poets of the Cockney school, including Keats. John Gibson Lockhart, in

Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine in 1818, refers to Keats's "laborious affected descriptions of flowers seen in window-pots, or cascades heard at Vauxhall" (Lockhart 521). Lockhart conflates container gardening with his similar accusations of vulgarity leveled at the Cockney poet's use of language and literary images: artificial and imitative. Bewell uses this criticism to acknowledge that Keats, while pointing towards the rural landscape garden as the originary source of such images, yet through their presence in window-pots provide the suburban poet with access to that other world (Bewell 79). The suburban flower pot, as a site of cultivation cannot be an entirely stable place. The literary politics that play out through the figure of the pot (or the hothouse) are made possible through its ambiguous status as natural or vital. In addition, the shared language of books, poems, and flowers embeds the flower pot, the pressed flower, and other botanical "souvenirs" in a similar history of poetic extraction. Before continuing, therefore, I would like to address with specificity some "poetical specimens" of Keats and Shelley.

BOTANICAL SOUVENIRS

Engaging with Shelley's and Keats's politically complicated transatlantic Victorian reputations through the collection of botanical souvenirs offers a way to consider anew reciprocal forms of generative posthumous exchange between the material and the textual. First, however, it is necessary to address the pairing of Keats and Shelley. The two poets, contemporaries and acquaintances, but not friends, are posthumously bound together by their shared place of burial at the Protestant Cemetery in Rome, their remains imaginatively comingled. Susan Wolfson, noting that "by a peculiar force, it seems, it took Shelley's own death to give his sympathy for Keats's a better reception, calls this process "fraternal twinning" and delineates its points of inception in the crucial mid-century biographies of Keats – Medwin, Hunt, and Milnes (Wolfson 36). I would tentatively advance that may also be related to the regenerative properties of botanical afterlife; it is, after all, it is the sense that both poets have been planted in and will cyclically return to the same earth that affords them this intimacy in the imaginations of their readers that they did not have in life.

The two poets died within a little more than a year of each other. Keats succumbed to tuberculosis at Rome on February 23rd 1821, following an extended final illness and a desperate move to Italy seeking a better climate. He was buried at the Protestant Cemetery at nine o'clock in the morning on February 26th. A small procession saw his body to the grave near the Pyramid of Caius Cestius. Shelley drowned on 8 July 1822 in the Bay of Spezia, returning to his temporary home in Lerici after a trip to Pisa. His ashes were buried in the Protestant Cemetery at Rome, in the next section over from Keats, nestled against the old city wall.

Although largely unread during their lifetimes, over the next few decades Shelley and Keats became posthumous fixtures on the English literary landscape and by midcentury were considered significant English poets. Similarly, their graves became a fixture on the routes of many nineteenth-century literary tourists. By 1852, American journalist William Porter Ray could report that 'around [Shelley's] grave … stands a row of rose-bushes, which have suffered to a considerable degree from the numberless 'souvenirs' they have been forced to furnish' (Ray 543). Keats's famous daises, too, were, as Susan Manning puts it, also famously "subject to predation by souvenir-hunters" (Manning 91). These ephemeral souvenirs were preserved and circulated within letters, dried between the pages of books, fixed in albums and used to produce multi-media collages. Such object-making practices embed the souvenirs within a complex network of overlapping discourses surrounding the history of botany, the visual and material organization of literary tourism, and domestic handicraft.

These souvenirs also play a part in the mutual "growth" of Keats and Shelley's reputations. One example hangs on the wall of the Keats-Shelley Memorial House in Rome. A young woman named Emma Novello visited the graves of Percy Shelley and John Keats in 1851, gathering and drying flowers that can now be seen as part of a collage decorating the main salon of Keats-Shelley. That souvenir represents an attempt to mediate between the text and the dead poet through common botanical practices, and it continues that work at the memorial house, as a "secondary text" that allows modern tourists to participate in a historicized appreciation of the poets. However, the position of crafts like Novello's in the literary archive is uncertain. Although the collage is prominently displayed next to several lithographs of Shelley's cremation, it is not entered in the Keats-Shelley catalogues, nor is there a record of its acquisition. The majority of the Keats-Shelley's displayed relics are manuscripts, early editions and bodily remains - locks of hair, for example. The collage on the salon wall is an idiosyncratic piece, neither bodily relic nor work of the poet's own hand. Novello took a violet and a fern from the vegetation growing around the grave, pasting them around the border of a drawing of the grave and labelling each with species, location, date and her own name. Novello's chief interest was in Shelley; the drawing that accompanies the flowers is of Shelley's grave, as are most of the blooms. However, she adds the note that it is the gravesite "also of John Keats," and includes one daisy from his grave as well. Importantly, it is Novello's hand, rather than Shelley's or Keats's, that leaves its trace here. This example of Victorian mixed-media resists easy classification, most closely resembling a page from an album or sketchbook. The intervention of craft confuses straightforward narratives of textual reiteration and reception.

In the last decade Nicola Watson, Samantha Matthews, and Paul Westover, among others, have brought extended critical attention to the many ways in which readers of Romantic poets struggled with a sense that the text needed to be tangible. Accordingly, literary tourists sought to supplement the text with experience. Westover's *Necromanticism: Traveling to Meet the Dead*, 1750-1860 (2012) convincingly argues that such tourism, particularly visits to dead authors, locates the idealised presence of the author at physical sites associated with them and allows an imaginative encounter mediated by the material landscape. However, the idealised presence of the author remained difficult to "grasp." The troubling boundary between ephemerality and permanence locatable in the text is reinforced by tourism, not resolved. Thus I am less concerned with what these tourists were seeking as with what they found and took away in an attempt to hold onto the experience.

Botanical souvenirs are often used as illustrative examples in discussions of Shelley and Keats's deaths and posthumous revivals, but rarely with any kind of particularity. Westover notes in a footnote that "vegetative souvenirs" were popular "contact relics" (Westover 182). Watson briefly argues that "the violets and daisies pressed into pocket-volumes of Keats and Shelley as 'souvenirs' remember Englishness disseminated and etherealised in a foreign place" (Watson 49). Yes – however, these souvenirs could be carried away and used to activate other narratives. This latter point is a large part of Samantha Matthews' argument that attention paid to the graves, set in foreign soil, recovered the exiled poets as English and brought them home, so to speak, for an English reading public (113). But as is visible in Novello's annotations, where her name and Shelley's appear in conjunction, brought together by flowers "gathered at the grave of Shelley by Emma Novello," particular souvenirs entered interpersonal economies as well as national ones.

Novello's piece testifies to the ways in which poetic afterlives become imbricated in living interpersonal relationships. The Novellos were an Anglo-Italian family of musicians, artists and writers with several connections to Shelley, Keats and their circles. The eldest daughter, Mary Victoria, married Charles Cowden Clarke, a schoolmate of Keats, and parents Vincent and Mary were longtime friends of the Hunts and the Lamb siblings. The family also entertained Mary Shelley in London following Shelley's death and her return to England. The Novellos were a talented group themselves, and the daughters were not excluded. Mary Cowden Clarke was a significant nineteenth-century scholar of Shakespeare, and their other sister Clara had a distinguished continental singing career. Emma, however, tends to surface in family memoirs as the close shadow of her brother Edward, a painter who died in 1836 at the age of 23.[12] After nursing Edward until his death, Emma emerged as the artistic talent in her family.[13] Edward's early death echoes the paradigmatic early deaths of family acquaintances Keats and Shelley, and seems to have shaped much of Emma's later interests.

It is significant that this piece, representing relationships with both the living and the dead, is not a complete production, a smooth image delivered by the printing press. Instead it is a multi-layered collage, a composite artifact that combines representational art with handwritten inscription and a tourist's souvenirs, gathered and affixed by hand. The flowers applied to the image occupy a double status as souvenir-relic and offering. Initially taken from the grave site, in their decoration of the page they are re-contextualized. The flowers serve as souvenirs, embodying the experience of seeing the grave. However, embedded in the craftwork, they generate meaning as well as preserve it. While there is no visual representation of the tourist in the collage, the productive juxtaposition of the image and the botanical matter turns on the absent presence of the hand that applied one to the other. The transition invokes a series of exchanges between the the dead poet and the living tourist, mediated by the grave. Additionally, the display of the piece extends this interaction to later viewers.

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[12] A sonnet by Mary Cowden Clarke still associates Emma with Edward's illness and art decades after his death: "My Sister Emma, most of all art thou / Associate in my thought with him we lost; / Dear Edward! whose bright promise'd path was cross'd / By Death's cold shadow" (Clark 296). A collection, which, incidentally, she prefaces as "waifs and strays of fancy, here tied up / In likeness of a handful of wild flowers / Collected for the sake of that which they / Record" (v).

[13] This is explained in more detail by her niece Valeria Gigliucci, in a memoir of her mother, *Clara Novello's Reminiscences*, 1910.

Novello's collage invites the viewer to participate in a fantasy of intimate connection with the dead poet rather than inviting a sense of power or control over experience. Within the context of the Keats-Shelley House, an artifact like this reinforces the invitation to recreate an affective experience. Similarly, the tourist in the Keats-Shelley House is invited to touch the walls that Keats lived within, stand in front of a portrait of Shelley, and experience the same unity of natural and mediated souvenir the Novello piece represents. It also creates a sense of history by providing the modern tourist with a model of the nineteenth-century tourist. Thus, the performance acquires a geneology which lends authenticity to the experience. The dead poet, the dead material of the plants, and the dead collage artist are connected to the living viewer. Posthumousness takes on a curiously vital quality.

Accordingly, I will also address here an alternative to the popular ‘dead’ botanical souvenir of a cut, clipped, and perhaps dried flower: the collection of a living botanical specimen. Much more literally than the collection of dried flowers, taking a live plant performs Matthews’ “recovery” of the poets, literally bringing a relic home to grow in familiar soil. Graves, particularly those of famous figures, anchor communities by providing a common experience of loss tied to a specific place. Philip Schwyzer, for example, pointedly describes nationalism as “depend[ing] on a form of legitimized necromancy” in its ability to cite and harness the dead to later causes (Schwyzer 97). However, the attention of the individual tourist complicates that reading.

The example of amateur botanist and travel writer Nona Bellairs further illustrates some of the ways in which interest in poetry was applied to other pursuits, not necessarily pursued as an end in itself. In 1865 Bellairs wrote the following description of a visit to Shelley and Keats's neighboring graves at Rome for the *Journal of Horticulture*:

> Shelley's grave was gay with flowers, and voices from England and America were speaking his name softly above his resting place. I gathered a few Violets and passed on to the old Cemetery, overshadowed by the Pyramid of Caius Cestius, the only sepulchral pyramid in Rome, where, apparently forgotten and neglected, was the harp with its broken strings, with the few sad words left by Keats to be written on his tomb (Bellairs 233).

So far, so familiar. Bellairs provides a nod to the transatlantic nature of Keats and Shelley tourism, and performs the typical tourist action of collecting a few flowers from Shelley's grave. Bellairs's description, in 1865, expects her audience to recognize these formulas. The reader is expected to anticipate the naming of Keats's grave through its visuals as well as its text: the flowers, the pyramid, and the broken harp that decorates the top of the marker. Here, however, is where Bellairs breaks from tradition. She continues:

> Not far from the grave of Keats I found some beautiful plants of the Serapias cordigera. I had never met with this handsome Orchid-looking plant before, and with my hands I grubbed up some roots, and I call them "Keats' Orchis" (Bellairs 233).

The Serapia Cordigera, pictured in Figure 3, is the Latin name of the "Heart-lipped Orchid," which grows throughout Southern Europe down to the Mediterranean, and which was first given its Linnaean classification in 1763. Bellairs likely either recognized it in the moment or looked it up in the identification handbook she brought, Richard Deakin's *Flora of the Colosseum* (1855). In this context Bellairs' appellation of "Keats'

Orchis" emerges not as an institutional act but as a private performative gesture that ties Bellairs' primary identity as a botanist to her affection for Keats.

As a souvenir, the flower is a remediated relic, the body of the dead translated into the embodied materiality of the flower. The flower growing from the grave is a figural gesture from the dead, engaging the tourist in a mutual touch of acknowledgement. It is the subterranean scene of this manufacture that makes the flower appealing. Similarly, the earthiness of Bellairs digging in Keats' grave soil with her hands to "grub up" roots to grow at home seamlessly inserts Keats, bodily and textually, into her botanical agenda – she is cultivating, in a quite literal sense, her desire to connect with the dead poet.

In addition, the living botanical souvenir, more so than the pressed (and dead) flower, strains the idea of static geographical place and reinforces instead a dynamic sense of place. In this I want to follow geographer Doreen Massey, who defines a "place" as a collection, or node, of the simultaneous stories-so-far that constitute the social production of space, in thinking of place as quintessentially dynamic (Massey 9, 130). When Bellairs digs up her new orchid she gives it a private and place-specific name: Keats's orchid, produced by the simultaneity of its proximity to his body, the circulation of his poetry in England at mid-century, and Bellairs' enthusiasm for pouncing on new specimens. However, when she puts it in her plant hamper – described in loving detail in an earlier column for the *Journal of Horticulture* - and takes it away with her, she mobilizes the plant's ability to continue to signify those things while growing in different soil entirely (Bellairs *No. 1*).[14] Posthumousness becomes a property attached to the plant's continuing ability to live.

To turn briefly from Keats to Percy Shelley, in her journals Mary Shelley wrote of her husband's death, burial, and afterlife in similarly suggestive botanical terms:

> That I am separated from him for ever I will never, never believe (sic) … Nature is not so rich in perfection. Having formed him the best, & wisest, she will not idly throw away her work & shatter her image. -She, in a fit of inspiration, planted this seed - a flower grew transcendent in loveliness -& she hastily translated it to a more genial soil (MWS, Journals, 463).

Immortality is a question of planting and cultivation. The popularity of botanical souvenirs – as well as the landscaping, both at the cemetery and through the press, required to sustain the dead - renders Mary Shelley's metaphor not entirely transcendent. In some senses, the more "genial soil" that she references is actually the soil of the Protestant Cemetery, and the pruning and transplantation of the cultural hodgepodge we know as "Percy Shelley" the acts of her own editorial and memorializing pen. Once begun, the puns on literary cultivation are hard to contain – however, I would contend that this is in part due to the frequency with which actual botanical collection and gardening were spoken of in literary terms as well.

I am aware that there is the danger of muddling distinctions in addressing both dried or "dead" samples and living plants in the same breath here. However, doing so allows 'cultivation' to emerge as a term whose metaphorical usage is not necessarily bounded by 'life' and 'death' despite being an ongoing process. The literary reputations of dead poets, and pressed "dead" botanical samples, are not static either. Keats and

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[14] Nora Bellairs, "Gleanings from Rock and Field Toward Rome, No. 1," *The Journal of Horticulture and Practical Gardening*, July 4th, 1865.

Shelley have about them an air of the living dead. This sentiment was often expressed during the nineteenth-century in the vocabulary – or implied through the material crafting of botanical memorials - of plants and their morbid, renewable vitality.

OF PLANTS AND BOOKS

Collections of flowers have a long association with collections of poetry. The word 'anthology' entered English in the mid-seventeenth century via French or medieval Latin, but the roots are Greek: *anthologia*, from *anthos*, or 'flower' and *logia*, 'collection' or 'gathering' (OED 'anthology'). Early printed miscellanies emphasise the conceit behind this nomenclature: the conception of poems as 'posies,' or small bouquets of flowers held or traded by hand. These posies were gathered into gardens and garlands of verses, affording textual networks a heretofore-unacknowledged material multidimensionality. As Juliet Fleming argues in *Graffiti and the Writing Arts of Early Modern England*, this emphasis on material contingency characterises the posies as acceptably ephemeral (Fleming 21). Fleming develops her definition of the 'posy' through George Puttenham's *The Art of English Poesie* (1588), a curious text devoted to describing and defining shape poems imagined to be written on actual objects. 'The posy,' Fleming claims, 'is the form that poetry takes in its fully material, visual mode, as it exists in its moment, at a particular site. Paradoxically, such poetry is portable … precisely because it has not achieved … the immaterial, abstracted status of the infinitely transmissible text' (Fleming 20). I do not intend to imply the nineteenth-century botanical souvenirs I discuss in this paper are interchangeable with or were thought of by their collectors, as poems. However, this history helps explain why Victorian tourists saw flowers as such suitable literary souvenirs.

The nineteenth-century revival of the "language of flowers," or floriography, must also inform this discussion. Nineteenth-century guides to floriography were often framed as dictionaries, alphabetizing the names and meanings of flowers (Laufer 12). The scope of such language guides were enormous. Geraldine Adamich Laufer claims that combined examples across a number of guides produces some 850 flowers, trees, shrubs, vines, herbs, spices, leaves, fruits, vegetables, and grains (Laufer 12). Frederic Schoberl's popular *The Language of Flowers with Illustrative Poetry*, for example, contains approximately 240 separate entries, and provides Latin names as well as poetic quotations to "illustrate" his choices. Schoberl's invocation of poetry served to authenticate and contextualize the meanings he attributed to flowers, drawing on the established fluidity of flowers and poetry. In his introduction, Schoberl describes the garden as "a panorama of hieroglyphics, displaying not the miserable worldly wisdom of mortals, inscribed in dead characters, but the maxis of immortal philosophy, exhibited in living forms with all their peculiar varieties" (Schoberl 23). Pitting the "dead characters" of written language against the "living forms" of plants, Schoberl echoes both the concern with "other" life cycles and a curious kind of dark immortality identified by Mitchell, and the floral emblems of Keats as rendered through Bewell.

Flower collecting and interpretation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is also inextricably bound up in the emergence of taxonomic practices as a form of popular botany. In the increasingly global world of the eighteenth century, nature too became, as Alan Bewell has convincingly argued, more cosmopolitan. Large numbers of plant specimens were brought back to Britain from newly encountered parts of the globe, and more circulated in description and illustration. The exploratory voyages of the mid to late eighteenth century, exemplified by Cook's voyages to the South Pacific, took English botanising around the world. Massive collections like the one at the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew (established 1759) both spurred on and were facilitated by the development of taxonomic schemes such as that first proposed by Swedish naturalist Carl Linnaeus in his 1758 *Species Plantarum*. Public interest in the discoveries made on these voyages, coupled with the attractive simplicity and inexpensiveness of Linnaeus's model of plant classification based on sexual differentiation, sent many into their own gardens and fields in search of specimens.

Nor was this public exclusively male. Not yet professionalised, practising and writing about early botany between 1760 and 1830 was particularly available to women, who were able to capitalise on the long association of femininity with flowers in order to pursue interests in classification and description. Women contributed extensively in this period to the educational literature of botany. Consequently, the gathering of plant material (including souvenirs), while not a gendered activity itself, was a part of larger discourse of gender performance, aesthetic taste, and the values associated with empirical science. These tensions were heightened by public unease about Linnaeus's 'sexual system' of classification, which raised questions about whether or not botany was too risqué for proper feminine interest. Botany's relationship with gender roles was precarious, contributing to the anxious desire of male botanists to define their own practices as recognisably masculine. As Ann Shteir has shown, by the 1830s, while botany sustained its presence on the English cultural landscape, female interest in botany was coded as domestic and polite (Shteir 197). This thread of gender anxiety echoes similar concerns within the development of Shelley's and Keats's nineteenth-century reputations, as does the accusation of being "potted" and made available for indoor display and consumption.

These floral and botanical practices are also reflected in Romantic poetics – to an extent. As Bewell notes, "instead of pressing real plants physically between the pages of books, Keats was concerned with gathering textual flowers and poetically reproducing them in his poems" (Bewell 74). Keats's readers, however, would become ardent fans of the more literal practice of pressing flowers between his poems. How, then, do we reconcile the cultivation of the Romantics with their own ambiguous relationships to that metaphor? And where exactly does the domestic cultivation of plants and flowers intersect with the body of the dead poet? For it is precisely the image of contained or cultivated plant or botanical sample indicated in the Aldrich poem, book, and garden that underwrites the usefulness of such metaphors for handling Romantic remains.

DEAD POETS, LIVE PLANTS

> I am as fond of books as of flowers; but in all that regards authorship I fear I am as little able to produce the one, as to create the others. I therefore hasten to the more mechanical part of my work, and to the kind aid of my quotations. I shall only add, if any body would like to have additional authority for the cultivation of a few domestic flowers, that Gray, with all his love of the grander features of nature, and all his nice sense of his own dignity, did not think it beneath him to supply the want of a larger garden with flower-pots in his windows, to look to them entirely himself, and to take them in, with all due tenderness, of an evening (xxxiii).
> -Elizabeth Kent, *Flora Domestica*

As the Aldrich garden demonstrates, over the course of the century poets are not only made botanical through the linguistic roots and rhetoric of the anthology. In 1823 Taylor and Hessey published one of the earliest gardening guides in English dedicated exclusively to container gardening. Written by Elizabeth Kent, an amateur botanist and, as the sister-in-law of Leigh Hunt, an intimate and frequent member of the Hunt circle of poets and intellectuals, *Flora Domestica* combines straight-forward instructions on the care and keeping of house-plants with their Greek and Latin names, a brief history, and poetic quotation. Part gardening handbook and part poetic anthology, Kent's book collapses, at least on the level of the text, the previously discussed distinctions between collections of poems and flowers. In the quotation selected here, Kent takes a self-effacing position, minimizing the presence of the author even as she advocates for personal connections with plants in imitation of the poets. Kent positions herself as a gardening authority not through botanical knowledge, but through poetical knowledge. The authority to cultivate is supplied by the poets, whose quotations frame all "mechanical" instructions for care. *Flora Domestica*, itself a curious object, thus mediates between the poet and the lived experience of the interior through a pot.

Kent's book is often pointed to as one of the earliest texts explicitly addressing container gardening, and potted plants are often pictured among the many objects that cluttered many Victorian parlors. However, although the Victorians expanded the making and display of floral motifs, crafts and plant furniture, the presence of decorative plants indoors was not a particularly recent phenomenon. The first book to speak of "indoor gardening," Hugh Platt's *Florae's Paradise*, was published in 1608, and reprinted a number of times over the following century. By 1677 John Worldige could write that:

> Neither is there a noble or pleasant seat in England, but hath its gardens for pleasure and delight; scarce an ingenious citizen that by his confinement to a shop, being denied the privilege of having a real garden, but hath his boxes, pots, or other receptacles for flowers, plants, &c (Worldige 4).

The container garden was not only familiar to the English at multiple class levels, but was also connected to egalitarian sentiment that upholds the "ingeniousness" of the English lower classes. The display of houseplants, typically cared for by women and domestic servants, implied a display of horticultural knowledge. Kent's emphasis on the authority of poetry also implies a display of literary knowledge, and thus transfers the responsibility for the "cultivation" of literature from the author to the reader.

Flora Domestica is also explicitly connected to the posthumous custodianship of Keats and Shelley, reinforcing the botanical associations with both poets. Kent references both Keats and Shelley in her introduction and in individual entries only a few years after their deaths, well before the mid-century solidification of their popular reputations. As Daisy Hay notes, the book "exemplifies Cockney collaborative writing practices" and "presents a posthumous celebration of the group" written "only after Hunt had left for Italy, and after the group itself had dissolved in the wake of the deaths of Keats and Shelley" (Hay 279). Hay's gesture towards collaboration also positions *Flora Domestica* within a tradition of collaborative botanical work echoed in women's album-making and scrapbooking practices of the same period, many of which served as repositories for souvenir botanical specimens.[15] While, as shown, the cultivation of indoor plants – and indoor poets – often lacked positive associations among critics, for many readers it was another matter.

The English garden is a frequently discussed site of social interaction and confrontation. Garden design an important aspect of English landscape and architectural history – the history of the English country estate.[16] However, the container garden, by nature of its mobility and relative size, has acquired a more accidental character. The history of potted plants, outside of a few exceptions – namely Catherine Horwood's excellent *Potted Histories: The Story of Plants in the Home* (2007) – has largely been sublimated to technological or scientific histories such as the introduction of Wardian cases, glass enclosures that allowed for the transportation of many more delicate and tropical live plant species, for example, or by proxy in histories of horticultural collections such as the Kew Gardens. However, by the beginning of the eighteenth-century plants were readily available in urban areas, either through nurseries or by street-vendors referred to as "Botany Bens." Houseplants could be purchased at most markets, and Josiah Wedgewood was selling decorative containers in a dedicated "Flower-Pot" room in his London showroom by 1779 (Horwood 60). By the mid-nineteenth century people of all genders and classes were growing impressive houseplants – and as Horwood notes, were as a result increasingly seen as less prestigious, more ornamental, and more effeminate.

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[15] Pressed flowers and botanical illustrations appear frequently in Romantic period scrapbooks and albums; some were dedicated to particular popular types of plants, such as ferns or seaweeds. Like houseplants, these objects were popular household display items; see Thad Logan, *The Victorian Parlour: A Cultural Study* (124).

[16] For more on the English garden leading up to and during the Romantic period, see *Romantic Gardens: Nature, Art, and Landscape Design*, eds. Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, Elizabeth S. Eustis, and John Bidwell (2010), David Coffin, *The English Garden: Meditation and Memorial* (1994), and Margaret Willes, *The Making of the English Gardener: Plants, Books, and Inspiration, 1560-1660.*

Plants also played a role in the lives of poets – and importantly for our purposes here – in the recollection and characterization of their lives and living spaces. For example, Shelley, in an 1822 letter, tells his friend Peacock he has "collected books and plants" about him at his rented home in Pisa (January 1822). According to the poet, the "windows full of plants … turn the sunny winter into spring" (January 1822). Leigh Hunt, similarly, turned his prison rooms into a bower and literary salon. In an 1834 piece for his *London Journal*, "A Flower for your Window," Hunt wonders "Why does not everybody (who can afford it) have a geranium in his window, or some other flower?" (Hunt 14). The absence of house plants in the poetic home was similarly, literally remarkable: one guidebook to Newstead Abbey reported that Byron kept human skulls on his flower-stands instead of "more tasteful ornaments of bow-pots and flower vases" (Coope 133-54). Byron's substitution of morbid relics for conventional floral elements is something the curious literary tourist – armchair or otherwise – would be interested in.

It is precisely its accidental and domestic character that puts the houseplant on a similar spectrum with books and other poetic objects. This spectrum of botanicals – souvenir pressed flowers, souvenir live plants, and plants in the home given poetic associations – frames a nineteenth-century mode of literary history that relied on material rather than textual evidence. It is also important to note that these social objects, embedded in both domestic and scientific histories and practices, often circulated at the margins of conventional histories. Souvenir-taking is often discussed as a generalized practice rather than a particular act.

SOUVENIRS AND BURIAL

In this next section I will address two poems that also contribute to the "cultivation" of Keats and Shelley, considering the ways in which their own texts show cultural currents that lead to certain metaphors for posthumous handling. While Keats and Shelley are not the only poets to have their graves plundered for botanicals, they do stand out in the sheer quantity of such souvenirs collected.[17] The Protestant Cemetery, as

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[17] The mulberry tree purportedly planted by Shakespeare in Stratford-Upon-Avon, for example, was frequently denuded by tourists – see Westover, *Necroromanticism*. Flowers from Wordsworth's homes and grave were also popular. James Mortimer Collins published an article in the *Temple Bar* magazine about Wordsworth himself taking slips of laurel from Virgil's tomb, planted there by Petrarch, and planting them at Mount Rydal – leading later tourists to get "a laurel leaf from Mount Rydal" and "have a triune record of poets" (Collins 107). See also Yoshikawa, Saeko. *William Wordsworth and the Invention of Tourism, 1820-1900*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014.

Felicia Hemans also has a poem on the topic, 'On a Leaf from the Tomb of Virgil,' emphasizing the lingering presence of the poet in the botanical, using the "leaf" as a metonym for his continued influence. Yet the leaf in question, which she addresses as a

I have hinted, gained its now familiar characterization as a "flowering" place largely through the dissemination of Shelley's *Adonais*. However, I would also like to suggest that some of the cemetery's peculiar availability to this kind of souvenir-taking is due to readers' familiarity with Keats's *Isabella, or the Pot of Basil*. Nona Bellairs's eager exhumation of her orchid, for example, carries with it the ghost of Lorenzo's head doubled by Keats's own.

First, therefore, it is worth noting that souvenirs are capable of contributing to multiple narratives. Specific souvenirs, as artifacts of tourism, can also represent individual relationships to such sites.[18] In literary criticism the souvenir has primarily been understood through the work of Susan Stewart, as an essentially incomplete fragment of an experience.[19] Stewart, and David Hume, more recently, also emphasize divisions between objects deliberately manufactured for sale to tourists, which Hume refers to as 'Representative,' and seemingly unmediated natural objects such as flowers, shells and stones (Hume 1-11). Representative souvenirs are purpose-produced, typically in response to mass tourism. The flowers from Shelley's grave I am concerned with,

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"pale wither'd thing," clearly a dried and/or pressed souvenir, casts doubt on the notion of immortality (Hemans 77).

[18] The souvenir is often glossed as the embodied or representative experience of the tourist. Dean MacCannell's seminal work *The Tourist* (1976) presents the tourist as the paradigmatic figure of modernity. Under the gaze of the tourist work becomes an object or spectacle, providing continual reinforcement of modernity's division from premodernity. The tourist, in MacCannell's model, only succeeds if they see sights as they 'ought' to be seen, conforming to the ritual distancing of difference. Tourism is a collective act that turns difference into spectacle, organizing social experience into modern totality.

[19] See, for example, Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. North Carolina: Duke UP, 1992.

however, complicate these categories by making visible methods of producing meaning not determined by the factory or the craftsman, but by the poet and other devotees. Literary tourism is the fulfillment of a desire to connect with a text in a material way, a desire unfulfilled by reading. Reading about a place and travelling to it are mutually reinforcing practices. The souvenir might be considered the material embodiment of this feedback loop: a flower from a literary site, taken from the place and then pressed and preserved between the pages of a book, becomes the material medium that both literally and figuratively connects the two. The souvenir may be partial, but it is also itself compensatory. In this sense, a literary souvenir serves as a material anchor not only for the tourist's memory of a place, but as a fragment of the author's own body, and a material anchor for the author's posthumous reception – a relic.

The relic functions as a medium through which actual contact with the dead can be imagined, providing a complimentary sensation to the embodied memory projected onto the souvenir. The gravesite flower offers an important alternative to relics of the body. Unlike locks of hair or fragments of bone, flowers are available to a far wider circle of visitors and devotees. However, that very availability renders the flowers less valuable as commodities. The value of the flower simultaneously relies on and suffers from its potential inexhaustibility in relation to bodily relics. These flowers gain significance from the idea that they grow out of and feed on the corpse. The body interferes with the easy association between souvenir and the ground of the cemetery. As a souvenir, then, the flower is a remediated relic, the body of the dead translated into the embodied materiality of the flower. The flower growing from the grave is a figural gesture from the dead, engaging the tourist in a mutual touch of acknowledgement. It is the subterranean scene of this manufacture that makes the flower appealing. The scene of production is obscured, and the collector can therefore interpret it as natural, inevitable, and continuous. The souvenir becomes not only an allusion to the dead, but a direct connection. This creates the fiction that, whether or not visitors recognize the potency of the flowers, the dead contribute to the natural beauty of the place – naturalizing the connection between the body, the gravesite and its aesthetic attractions.

ADONAIS AND THE PROTESTANT CEMETERY

Shelley's trace on the Protestant Cemetery is both material and textual; while his gravestone has altered the physical landscape of the cemetery, the discursive framework of the cemetery is in many respects shaped by the reproduction of his poetry. *Adonais* has done more than any other text, literary or non-fictional, to characterise the cemetery. Shelley's famous claim in the preface that 'it might make one in love with death, to think that one might be buried in so sweet a place' has become such an enduring articulation of the cemetery's affect that even today it welcomes visitors to the cemetery's official website (410).[20] Originally applied to Keats, a year later the phrase described the resting place of Shelley as well, lending it prophetic power, and the frequent visitors to the cemetery that followed seem to have taken Shelley at his word. This ascription of self-reflexive Romantic sentimentality to the cemetery is also tied to the frequency with which *Adonais* was posthumously re-read as a prophecy of his own early death.[6] '*Adonais* is not Keats's, it is his own elegy,' Mary Shelley mused in an 1822 letter, a claim rather morbidly reinforced by the fact that after her own death in 1851, the remnants of her husband's heart were found in her desk, wrapped in a copy of the same poem (MWS *Letters* 249). Shelley had, in the eyes of many of early readers, pre-emptively mourned himself – and he also pre-empted the description of his own burying ground.

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[20] Shelley, Percy. *Shelley's Prose and Poetry*. Edited by Neil Fraistat and Donald Reiman. New York: Norton, 2002. Subsequent citations from Adonais are from this edition. See www.cemeteryrome.it/

The flowers of the Protestant Cemetery are nearly as famous as its most influential residents. Prior to 1821, the cemetery was an unenclosed field behind the Pyramid of Caius Cestius covered in wildflowers and scattered tombstones.[21] Shelley described the cemetery as flower-covered several times. A fragment of a poem referred to as 'To William Shelley,' who died in 1819, later reconstructed and published by Mary Shelley, describes the 'sweet flowers and sunny grass' in whose 'hues and scents' the elegist hopes to see expressed some memory of his dead child (*Posthumous Poems* 196). When a dying Keats asked his companion Joseph Severn where he was to be buried, Severn described the cemetery to him as containing 'many flowers, particularly … innumerable violets … his favourite flower' (W. Sharp 92-3). Shelley's description in the Preface to *Adonais* echoes both his own previous characterisation of the landscaping and Severn's report. The lasting impact is recorded by Novello's collage – she gathered daisies and violets from the graves of Keats and Shelley in 1851, thirty years after Shelley described the cemetery as 'an open space among the ruins, covered in winter with violets and daisies' (Preface to *Adonais* 409–410). Over the course of the nineteenth century the flowering slopes of the cemetery were cemented in the English-speaking cultural imagination, and their maintenance is a matter of poetic fidelity as much as upkeep.

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[21] A recent exhibition, *At the Foot of the Pyramid: 300 Years of the Cemetery for Foreigners in Rome,* housed at the Casa di Goethe and curated by Nicholas Stanley-Price, included a number of engravings and paintings from throughout the cemetery's 300-year history. For more see Nicholas Stanley-Price, "There is still much to learn about this unusual haven in Rome," *Apollo*, July/August 2016, 20-21.

While Shelley offers and sets the pattern for many visitors to that Roman grave – and to his own – in *Adonais*, he simultaneously questions its feasibility as a recuperative site of mourning. The critical history of *Adonais* has long wrestled with the poem's paradoxical ends of eulogy and appropriation.[22] Andrew Epstein argues that Shelley's anxieties about poetic rivalry and poetic influence are figured through the 'flower that mocks the corse beneath' (*Adonais* 11, Epstein 110). The elegist as well as the flower feeds on the corpse of the buried rival (Epstein 110). The living poets' awareness that 'poets inevitably build new works out of the bits and pieces of other texts,' is the source of the tension (Epstein 106). This ambiguity, figuratively entwined with the landscape of the cemetery, has implications that go beyond the Keats and Shelley rivalry as outlined by Epstein. Michael Ulmer notes that '*Adonais* intimates the attractions of oblivion by beautifying death in the cemetery stanzas' and expressly champions them by asking 'what Adonais is, why fear we to become?' (Ulmer 449, *Adonais* 459). Ulmer describes the central question of *Adonais* as ‘who or what will ensure poetry's historical endurance’ (Ulmer 449). *Adonais*, in his reading, is a retrospective construction of history that brings up the spectre of the death of poetry via the death of the poet, emphasising the contingency of the past in a retrospective future. If *Adonais* seeks a permanent enclosure of monumental history, then the grave of the poet assures an idealised presence continually available at the marked or known site. But the cemetery itself is a dynamic material space within which the visitor can configure any number of materials, texts and connecting gestures. The ambivalence of the poem’s ending makes it easier for readers to forge their own connections with the space of the cemetery. Part of the work *Adonais* does in tearing down the possibility of any reconciled or complete view of poetic influence or history, in fact helps make this array of possible social relationships with the landscape of the cemetery more visible.

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[22] For some of the contrasting views, see Peter Sacks, 'Last Clouds: A Reading of "Adonais".' *Studies in Romanticism*, Vol, 23.3, 1984, pp. 379-382; and Michele Turner Sharp. 'Mirroring the Future: *Adonais*, Elegy, and the Life in Letters.' *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts,* Vol. 42.3, 2000, pp. 299-316.

The space of *Adonais* and the space of the cemetery have been conflated into a palimpsest with distinct material and textual layers. These materials include the anthologies, books, newspapers and pamphlets in which Shelley’s work circulated. If *Adonais* is to set a pattern for potentially more open social networks defined by the culture landscape of the cemetery, then the poem must also be visible within that material network. *Adonais* was one of the more frequently reprinted Shelley poems in the first few decades after his death. It circulated in at least three forms between 1821 and 1839, when Mary Shelley’s definitive *Poetical Works* was issued: the original 1821 Pisa edition, a reprint issued Cambridge in 1829 at the insistence of Richard Mockton Milnes and Arthur Hallam, and the influential Galignani anthology out of Paris, also in 1829, which was also the avenue for much of Shelley's early American exposure. Shelley's material remains were not excepted from this fight – public acceptance and recognition of the poet's resting place was influenced by the availability of his work (particularly *Adonais*) and by changes in the print culture of travel happening concurrently with Mary's attempts to edit and distribute his work.

There is a loose correlation between Shelley's increasing acceptance by the reading and reviewing public and visits to his grave with the language used to represent the cemetery. An updated edition of *A New Picture of Rome and Its Environs*, published in 1824, describes it simply as 'a plain [. . .] where the English and other Protestants are buried' (Vasi 254). Nathaniel Carter, in 1827, although he notes the tomb of 'Percy Shelley, a friend of Lord Byron,' as both conspicuous and eccentric, and the cemetery itself as less repulsive than any other foreign burying ground, does not seem to have any significant interest in Shelley or his poetry (Carter 344). By 1840, however, the *Monthly Chronicle* was publishing an account of the cemetery that begins with 'I had often read the *Adonais*, Shelley's beautiful dirge over the remains of poor Keats, and resolved [. . .] to make a pilgrimage to the spot' (*Monthly Chronicle* 505). The anonymous writer concludes that a 'fitter grave poet could not have' than the luxurious foliage of the Protestant Cemetery, borrowing language from Adonais, of the blue Italian sky and the numerous flowers (505). He then sits down by Shelley's slab to read his lines on 'Death' and attributes to the character of the cemetery his ability to muse over poetry at a graveside and not feel awkward or foolish (505). The landscape of the cemetery and the attractions granted it by Shelley enable an elegiac performance over his remains. The guidebook genre, explicitly directing tourists to specific places and sights, was inaugurated by Murray's *Handbook for Travellers in Central Italy* in 1843. By then, the *Handbook*'s evocation of the Protestant Cemetery's 'romantic beauty' and lengthy description of Shelley's grave is unsurprising, even expected by the literate tourist (Murray 464). The guidebook transformed modern tourism; travellers no longer depended on individually curated collections of travel writing. Instead, they all bought the same 'red guide' and visited the same sights, through the same framework. Mary Shelley's decisive 1839 edition of Shelley's poetry and prose, much of it previously unpublished, was widely read and reprinted abroad. Shelley's work and his grave emerged onto the literary map almost concurrently, the increasingly ethereal and sentimental characterisation of the cemetery echoing the development of Shelley's own reputation.

Shelley's contested nineteenth-century reputation as an ethereal, effeminate lyricist is usually attributed to Mary Shelley's authoritative editions of 1824 and 1839, which both provided most of the material and set the tone for subsequent editions. Shelley's biography and his poetry were separated and his reputation softened by Mary's attempts to show she could publish a Shelley with his rougher, more political edges worn off. She terms her publications repeatedly as monuments to her husband's memory (*Posthumous Poems* viii). However, as Neil Fraistat eloquently puts it: 'the etherealised, disembodied and virtually depoliticised poet who emerged from her editions … was the corporate product of an entire cultural apparatus' (Fraistat 410).

The cemetery, as critics like Watson and Matthews have argued, emerged within these contexts as an illustrative space for interactions between the material, textual and gestural arms of that apparatus. The ways in which visitors interacted with cemetery reflect the gendered debate over taste and aesthetics reified in the last few decades of the century by Matthew Arnold's definitive 'ineffectual angel' characterisation and the emergence of the term 'Shelley Worship' to describe feminised and uncritical interest in the poet (Arnold xxxi).[23] Tourists were often glossed this way, highlighting the ritualised nature of literary pilgrimage.

The Protestant Cemetery continued to attract physical and textual visits throughout the century, registering in each mention its importance as a text to Shelley's canonisation. Several of these were noted Victorian writers. Dickens was perhaps the earliest, presenting as one of his 1846 *Pictures from Italy* the 'opaque triangle' of the Pyramid serving 'to mark the grave of Shelley too, whose ashes lie beneath a little garden near it' (Dickens 147). The Brownings visited the grave and pressed flowers in 1859 (*Collections* H566). George Eliot wrote in her journal of an 1860 trip to Rome 'a spot that touched me deeply was Shelley's grave,' calling the cemetery 'the most attractive burying-place I have seen,' and notes that Shelley is at least 'forever at rest from the unloving cavillers of this world, whether or not he may have entered on other purifying struggles in some world unseen by us' (Eliot 150). These writers reinforced the received notion that the cemetery was a fitting and attractive resting place for a poet – and conversely, the representation of the gravesite as sentimental, attractive and superior helped secure Shelley's place within a poetic pantheon. However, the flowers that Shelley cites in *Adonais*, and the garden mentioned by Dickens, were not as constant as much of the literature makes them seem.

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[23] While the phrase 'Shelley Worship' does not seem to have any definitive origin, it was fairly common in discussions of the poet by the 1880s. Arnold's famous description of Shelley as a 'beautiful and ineffectual angel beating in the void his luminous wings in vain' description of Shelley is from his 1881 essay on Byron (Arnold xxxi).

Despite the botanical souvenir drawing much of its power from the conceit that it fed on the poet's ashes, Shelley's garden-surrounded grave was not a self-fulfilling prophecy. Devotees of Shelley's textual remains also cultivated the material landscape of the cemetery. Alfred Austin claimed that visiting the grave as a young man he found it neglected and covered with weeds. Austin 'planted pansies and violets round it, and, before leaving Rome some months later, left with the *custode* of the Cemetery a trifling sum for keeping the spot neat and flower-girt' (Austin 126). Austin interlaces this account, as well as several instances of correspondence with Lady Jane Shelley, the poet's daughter-in-law, with poems he wrote on Shelley's grave and Shelley's death in the 1870s. Austin's anxiety to restore flowers to the grave – and Lady Shelley's effusive responses – reveal the material networks necessary to maintain the fictional landscape of *Adonais*.[24] The planting and taking of flowers at the gravesite serve as one example of material exchange that reinforces the text. There is actual second-hand, or second-generation perhaps, labour behind the availability of the souvenir despite its coding as a 'natural' object. Flowers may emerge from the mythology engendered by *Adonais*, but they are themselves subject to death, decay and replacement. They too must be cultivated. What they offer is a material form of intimate memory and personal participation in the creative discourse surrounding Shelley and his afterlife.

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[24] "When at last we arrived, no words can express the feelings of deep love and gratitude we experienced towards the generous stranger who has taught us in so eloquent a manner that Shelley's memory is precious not only to us, but to the world," Jane Shelley supposedly wrote in a note left with the custodian of the cemetery in 1863, after seeing the fruits of Austin's efforts to re-plant the grave (Austin 130).

ISABELLA'S BASIL AND THE POET AS FERTILIZER

While Shelley may be in many ways responsible for Keats's posthumous flourishing, the botanical possibilities of the dead body were recognized first by Keats himself. In no poem do the dead body and the plant intertwine so thorough as they do in Keats's *Isabella, or the Pot of Basil:*

> Then in a silken scarf,—sweet with the dews
> Of precious flowers pluck'd in Araby,
> And divine liquids come with odorous ooze
> Through the cold serpent pipe refreshfully,—
> She wrapp'd it up; and for its tomb did choose
> A garden-pot, wherein she laid it by,
> And cover'd it with mould, and o'er it set
> Sweet Basil, which her tears kept ever wet (lines 409-416).[25]

Following the murder of her lover Lorenzo by her brothers, the young Isabella unearths his body where it had been hidden in the woods, and removes the head, which she then washes and perfumes before burying it under the roots of a potted basil plant. Lorenzo's severed head and Isabella's tears combine to nourish and fertilize the plant, whose exuberant growth becomes a particularly potent sign of the cyclical nature of life and death. Yet the most significant line for my purposes is Keats's description of

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[25] John Keats, "Isabella, or the Pot of Basil," *John Keats: The Complete Poems*. Penguin, 2006, pp. 239-255. All subsequent quotations of *Isabella* are from this edition.

Isabella's decision to bring her lover's body – or a part of it, at least – back into the interior with her in the form of a garden pot: "and for its tomb did choose / A garden-pot" (lines 414-5). This image of a young woman potting her lover's decapitated head with a basil plant enjoyed a vogue during the nineteenth century. The most well-known, to English audiences, is Keats's narrative poem of 1818, *Isabella, or the Pot of Basil*, which was in turn an adaptation and homage to one of the stories in Boccaccio's Decameron. Keats himself called it a compliment to Boccaccio (*Selected Letters* 84).[26] Keats's poem was followed in 1820 by Barry Cornwall's version in *The Sicilian Story*.[27] The image of Isabella embracing the potted plant proved even more popular in paintings: it is depicted by numerous artists including Richard Holman Hunt (1868), John White Alexander (1897) and John William Waterhouse (1907), and in Italy, by Riccardio Meacci: Isabella and the Pot of Basil, 1890. A piece by John Melhuish Strudwick, *Isabella and the Pot of Basil (*1879) depicts Isabella next to a vacant piece of plant furniture, an empty pot stand, while just visible through the open window over her shoulder, the plant and its precious burden are carried away.

However, while Boccaccio's Lisabetta also "plants" her lovers head in a pot of basil, it is Keats who makes explicit the language of entombment, conflating the garden-pot with a tomb. That substitution operates on a linguistic level as well as a material one: tomb becomes pot, both in the semiotic space of the poem as well, for Isabella's purposes, quite literally. The garden-pot marks the place of burial as an explicit place of cultivation. The idea of cultivation in turn disturbs a distinction between the authentic and the artificial, particularly in relationship to the potted plant and poetry – and here, the posthumous body.

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[26] See John Keats to J. H. Reynolds, April 27, 1818: "The Compliment is paid by us to Bocacce" (84).

[27] Barry Cornwall, *A Sicilian Story, with Diego de Montila and Other Poems*. Ollier, 1820.

I want to consider in this section some of the context for this particular image from Boccaccio's nineteenth-century prominence. Keats and Cornwall's initial interest in Boccaccio in the early nineteenth century can perhaps be linked to the increase in publicity surrounding "bibliomania" at the turn of the century.[28] In June of 1812, an early printed edition of the *Decameron* printed by Christopher Valdarfer in 1471 was put up to auction as part of the Duke of Roxburghe's library.[29] The famous bibliophile Thomas Frognall Dibdin (author of *The Bibliomania*) claimed that "Boccaccio himself startled from his slumber of some five hundred years" upon the sale of the volume (Dibdin 65).[30] Several modern editions of the Decameron were published at the beginning of the nineteenth century, lending to the story's popularity. The nineteenth-century in England is often characterized by its manias – its obsessions – in part perhaps because radical surges in the development of "mass" medias allowed trends to permeate access barriers

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[28] For example, see Holbrook Jackson's discussion of the Decameron's popularity with "grangerizers," when choosing volumes to ornament (581).

[29] For more on this sale, see Seymour de Ricci, *English Collectors of Books and Manuscripts, 1530-1930, and their Marks of Ownership.* Cambridge, 1930.

[30] Dibdin's *The Bibliographical Decameron* (1817), inspired by the sale, is a quasi-fictional account of book sales and their characters in the early nineteenth-century.

(of class, of language, of literacy) more and more quickly.[31] If bibliomania was one obsession of the nineteenth century, then another was the lush interior that has become in some ways stereotypical shorthand for the Victorian house. One aspect of this interior gardening and the frequency of florals as both ornamental motifs and objects. The Keats "transplantation" of Boccacio engenders for a new country and century a morbid strain of indoor gardening. For the Keats admirers of the later half of the nineteenth century, this was not in fact a prurient interest in shockingly morbid traditions of an imagined medieval Italy, but rather an image of preservation via domestic morbidity that fits with the other popular domestic practices of nineteenth-century death culture – the display of the body in the house, post-mortem photography, hair art, and other relics.

Andrew Bennett argues that the poem - and thus the pot - is a buried microcosm of the problematic relationship between the public and private spaces of writing: "a publication of the private," because "the door hinges on burial and exhumation, the confining and unconfining of bodies and secrets, and on the liminal semiotics of tears (an outward expression of inner grief)" (Bennett, *Keats,* 85). However, in the present chapter I am not interested in the poetics as such but rather the availability of the pot as a substitute for a tomb, particularly as an object of domestic or interior ornament. That substitution operates on a material level as well as a linguistic one: tomb becomes pot, both in the semiotic space of the poem as well, for Isabella's purposes, materially. Betsy Tontiplaphol calls the basil's pot a 'woven' figure: the "result of Isabella's wrapping, lacing, layering, and mingling … is an extraordinary vegetal security" (Tontiplaphol 51). While Tontiplaphol turns away from this complex potted embalming, her description highlights the botanical ability to preserve through integration. Lorenzo's head is not preserved by being kept separate and distinct but by being absorbed and redistributed. The botanical offers striking possibilities for illustrating the materially and textually composite nature of posthumous fame.

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[31] For more see Andrew Fanta, *Romanticism and the Rise of the Mass Public*. Cambridge University Press, 2007; and *Andrew Burkett, Romantic Mediations: Media Theory and British Romanticism.* SUNY Press, 2016.

Turning to the plant instead of to the book, at least momentarily, reveals a history of appropriation for "Isabella" similar to that of *Adonais*, as it is frequently used metonymically to represent Keats's body and/or grave. Shelley is first, referencing 'Isabella' obliquely in *Adonais*: "Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished, / And fed with true-love tears instead of dew" (Lines 48-9). Shelley's interpretation puts the emphasis on the act of nurturing the plant. As Karla Alwes notes, "because Isabella's tears nurture both the severed head and the basil plant itself, they become the sustenance not only of the plant, but of the memory of Lorenzo as well" (Alwes 66). Similarly, Keats's memory is sustained through the performance of grief at his gravesite as well as through acts of textual appropriation and memorialization like *Adonais*. These various botanicals - the basil – the metaphorical "pale flower" – the actual daisies growing over his grave – all become both figural and material conduits for such posthumous nurturing.

In a more literal sense, Elizabeth Kent's entry on basil in *Flora Domestica* also references "Isabella" (Kent 58-60). She offers more conventional instructions first – basils "should have as much air as possible in mild weather … and should be kept moderately moist," and speculates that the basil might be used to adorn tombs and graveyards in Italy (Kent 59). However, as she continues the entry, Kent juxtaposes her quotation from the poem with Keats's own burial:

> So that it smelt more balmy than its peers
> Of basil-tufts in Florence; for it drew
> Nurture besides, and life from human fears,
> From the fast mouldering head there shut from view;
> That the jewel safely casketed
> Came forth, and in perfumed leafits spread.

> This young poet now lies in an Italian grave, which is said to be adorned with a variety of flowers. Among them Sweet Basil should not be forgotten (Kent 59).

It is difficult not to make the suggested association between Keats's body and Lorenzo's head, and the subsequent growth of the flowers. Kent directs her readers to look to Keats for the cultivation of Basil, reinforced with the idea that Keats's own body is feeding the flowers in the Protestant Cemetery. The direction to keep the basil moist takes on an eerie new significance by the end of the entry. While Kent is not exactly telling her readers to cry into their basils, her interest in Isabella implies that plants are best served by more than practical or functional directions. Kent's project is an argument for the significance of poetry beyond the act of reading, through the medium of the poetic garden. Literary appreciation, Kent claims, provides a "green thumb" to the reader of her anthology. Conversely, "cultivating" a garden quite literally supports the memory of the dead poet.[32] Keeping a memory green was perhaps a more literal, more deliberate, more material, and more tenuous process than strictly textual reception histories have allowed. Thus, I would like to now look across the Atlantic to two examples of "poetical specimens" provided links to make Shelley and Keats, respectively, available to marginalized American literary figures both personally and politically.

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[32] Some fifty years later Oscar Wilde makes the comparison between Isabella's cultivation of the basil and the later cultivation of Keats's posthumous legacy explicit:

> They name was writ in water - it shall stand:
> And tears like mine will keep thy memory green,
> As Isabella did her Basil-tree (477).

MARGARET FULLER, SHELLEY, AND MATERIAL INTIMACY

Shelley's work had a visible presence in America in the 1830s, when the popular pirated Galignani anthology of Coleridge, Keats, and Shelley was printed stateside.[33] Shelley poems had appeared, scattered, in various literary magazines and newspapers before the release of the anthology. Nineteenth-century Americans identified British poets as a part of their own cultural inheritance, and the lack of international control over printing permissions meant that texts restricted or pulled from the English market proliferated in pirated American editions. As American tourists mobilized in the mid-nineteenth century, then, it is unsurprising that some of them were Shelley fans. Expanded travel infrastructure enabled Americans to take part in their transatlantic literary heritage by making a pilgrimage to the English poet's foreign grave and feeling a sense of recognition. Others, unable to make the trip themselves, sent a deputy - who in turn needed a medium to extend the localized experience of the poet's grave. The botanical souvenir, easily folded inside a letter, made an ideal candidate.

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[33] *The Poetical Works of Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats.* Edited by Cyrus Redding, Galignani, 1829. This edition – edited with input from Mary Shelley – evaded Sir Timothy Shelley's restrictions on his daughter-in-law's efforts to publish his son's work. It was reproduced in Philadelphia by J. Grigg in 1831.

In February, 1846 American author and critic Margaret Fuller mourned the loss of a rose from Shelley’s grave that German businessman James Nathan (later Gotendorf) had enclosed in his last letter to her: ‘the rose from Shelley's grave would have been dear to me, but somehow in opening the letter I lost the rose, and when I had finished could find only the green leaves. Is that not rather sad?’ (Fuller 178). Rather than a relic-cum-souvenir of a favourite poet, Fuller is poignantly left with only the ‘green leaves’ of the flower and the paper leaves of the letter. Fuller’s account of this loss reveals her investment in a sense of contact that goes beyond that allowed by reading alone. Significantly, it is not the literary pilgrimage to Shelley's grave that Fuller mourns; she presumably has Nathan's explanation of how and where he found the rose. She focuses instead on the loss of tactile sensation. She is able to read the letter, but the relic meant to secure a material connection to the poet’s body literally slips through her fingers.

The flower also offered Fuller a tangible symbol of Nathan’s affections. Before Nathan’s departure for Europe Fuller gave him a copy of Shelley. In May 1845 she copied out a verse by hand for him and added: ‘A small copy of Shelley's poems I wish also to make your companion, but keep that until I give it into your hand and point out some passages’ (Fuller 97). Fuller directs Nathan’s literary pilgrimage. She experiences it through him, the touch of her hand or pencil to the page of a letter or book activating the exchange. When Nathan sends her the flower, it is not only enfolded in a letter, but in a complex network of gesture and inscription. Fuller gave Nathan the poem she copied, and the book she later put ‘into [his] hand;’ in exchange he sent her the flower (Fuller 97). The pair trade Shelley’s literary remains for a relic of his physical remains. The exchange is mediated by touch, and it highlights the role of tactility in literary inheritance and in literary tourism. The flower’s potency as a souvenir relies upon Fuller’s reading of Shelley, yes – but it also depends on the physical exchange of volume, letter, and excerpt between Fuller and Nathan. Fuller points us to a poetic reception history that relies on small moments of interpersonal exchange, and on dispersed, fragmented, and fragile material actors.

Fuller herself occupies a series of precarious social and cultural positions, and her interest in Italy was closely tied to both political and professional ideals. A professional writer and editor, Fuller was the most publicly recognized woman of the New England circle of Transcendentalists. She also remained unmarried until her own journey to Italy in late 1846, as the first official female foreign correspondent. Once there she became involved in the Italian independence movement, the Risorgimento, eventually marrying a much younger Italian revolutionary, Giovanni Angelo Ossoli. The couple and their young son drowned off the coast of New York in 1850 when their ship went down. Fuller was a ground breaking professional female writer and journalist. In a slighter display of rebellion, Fuller was among the earliest of Shelley's American admirers, and was known for defending him. Fuller's interest in Shelley bucks common assumptions about Shelley's popularity among women in particular as a lyricist stripped of his revolutionary potential. In her letters, Fuller ties more domestic forms of rebellion – her ambivalent romantic friendship with Nathan – to Shelley and to the performance of interest in his remains. Her interest in recovering a fragment of Shelley is part of an extended intimacy, in which the dead and the living both participate. Her own later efforts for the Risorgimento make material Fuller's political investments in travel and exchange. The Shelley that emerges from this reading of the souvenir's circumstances and circulation is both sentimental and political.

Handling Percy Shelley allowed Fuller to express her own anxieties about personal relationships and the material complications of communication and memory. Souvenirs like Fuller's rose challenge easy assumptions about material ephemera and their role in constructing or responding to representations of a literary afterlife. The material and the textual are each as permanent and ephemeral as the other. There are both material and textual strategies for preservation, pointing to a nineteenth-century understanding of ephemerality and preservation not as a binary but as a complex and interconnected craft.

WILLIAM STANLEY BRAITHWAITE AND KEATS

Many more readers lacked the means to travel to the poets graves' but invoked the botanical souvenir in other ways. This category of souvenir does not operate as a relic of the poet's body at all, but rather highlights exclusively some personal experience of the reader. However, the similar use of botanical material draws on many of the same traditions and contexts, including botanical collection and classification, the memory-holding properties of the souvenir, and the regenerative, non-human qualities of plants. In addition, these souvenirs help highlight another way in which the sentimental could be politically mobilized, ‘gluing’ memory to objects through intertextual citation as well as the invocation of the material.

William Stanley Braithwaite (1878-1962) was a self-educated African-American poet, critic and editor who started publishing in 1906. He served as editor of several important publications and publishing houses during the early twentieth-century, most notably a number of important anthologies, and helped launch the careers of a number of Harlem Renaissance authors – Countee Cullen, for example, dedicated his 1927 *Caroling Dusk* to Braithwaite – as well as that of Robert Frost. In many ways he created a crucial link between black romantic poets and the black modernist poets, and as Sanders notes, he “made mainstream publishing venues more readily available to black writers” (Sanders 231). Studies of Braithwraite, however, often highlight the more traditional and nineteenth-century character of his own poetry, and some point to his affection for nineteenth-century sentimental verse as a factor in his mixed legacy as a critic.[34] Braithwaite’s favorite poet was Keats, who he discovered working as a type-setter (WSB Reader 173-174). “I worshipped him as a god,” Braithwaite wrote of his early encounters with Keats (WSB Reader 173). One of Braithwaite’s daughters, Katherine Keats Braithwaite, was even named for the dead poet. Braithwaite edited anthologies as well, like *The Book of Georgian Verse* (1908-9) that heavily featured Keats. Braithwaite used this identification with Keats as a way to negotiate his own position in early twentieth century publishing and poetic circles.[35]

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[34] George Hutchinson addresses Braithwaite’s complicated role in the American northeastern publishing scene of the 1910s and 1920s in detail. Hutchinson outlines Braithwaite’s difficulty in negotiating his own racial identity in Boston literary circles, his belief in a “melting pot” nationalism that did not treat black and white authors as part of a separate literary tradition, and continued financial distress. George Hutchinson, *The Harlem Renaissance in Black and White*. Harvard University Press, 1995, pp. 342-286.

However, for the purposes of this chapter, it is Braithwaite's participation in the floral cult of Keats that interests me. Keats's American reputation had also been particularly effected by the circulation of the Philadelphia reprint of Galignani's pirated anthology *The Poetical Works of Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats, Complete in One Volume* (1829).[36] G.M. Matthews's account of Keat's publication history calls it a much more significant contribution to Keats's American reputation than his English one; it "was reproduced over and over again" (Matthews 8). By Braithwaite's youth at the turn of the twentieth-century, Keats was a household name – and the institutional memorials we are now familiar with were being established. The Keats-Shelley House at Rome was opened in 1909 by a group of both English and American admirers of the two poets, led by American poet, journalist, and later ambassador Robert Underwood Johnson. Although British poet laureate Alfred Austin declined an invitation to join the initial discussions about purchasing the house on the Spanish Steps that Keats had spent his last months in, his refusal did reveal the earlier cited claim that he had replanted Shelley's grave in the

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[35] Kirk Nuss describes this identification with Keats as a deliberate strategy; see "William Stanley Braithwaite." *African-American Authors, 1745-1945*. Ed. Emmanuel Sampath Nelson. Greenwood Publishing, 2000, pp. 44-49.

[36] See for example Jack Stillinger, *Romantic Complexity: Keats, Coleridge, and Wordsworth.* University of Illinois Press, 2009, pp.116.

1860s.[37] And, importantly, the Keats-Shelley Memorial Association was also granted custodianship of the graves in the Protestant Cemetery a few miles away. The Keats-Shelley Memorial Association also began publishing the *Bulletin of the Keats-Shelley Memorial* in 1910. Included in the initial issue was a list of significant references to Keats and Shelley – among them Braithwaite's 1904 *Lyrics of Life and Love*. The Bulletin's editor signals out two sonnets: "Keats was an Unbeliever" and "On a Pressed Flower in my Copy of Keats" (Braithwaite *Lyrics* 27, 37). The first addresses a claim about Keats's own faith vis-à-vis the poet's own. The second, more significantly for my purposes here, is on a pressed flower in a book of Keats:

> AS Keats' old honeyed volume of romance
> I oped to-day to drink its Latmos air,
> I found all pressed a white flower lying where
> The shepherd lad watched Pan's herd slow advance (lines 1-4).

The encounter with the souvenir is presented as accidental. The flower is embedded in the book like a fossil in a rock, quite distinct from the surrounding material but inextricable from it without damage. The reference to *Endymion*, the Keats poem that enclosed and pressed the flower, relies on the readers' own familiarity with Keats. The sonnet's speaker seeks transportation through poetry, through the text, and encounters it instead through the material souvenir. Sanders, while helpfully outlining the poem as paradigmatic of Braithwaite's style and his affection for the Romantics, focuses on that initial intent and elides the body of the flower: "Braithwaite's speaker opens a volume of

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[37] For more on the founding of the memorial and the persons involved see Catherine Payling, "Memory Regained: Founding and Funding the Keats-Shelley Memorial House in Rome," *Writer's Houses and the Making of Memory.* Edited by Harald Hendrix, 2012, pp. 111-125.

Keats's poetry as a means of emotional transportation … Like Harper or Whitman, Braithwaite uses multiple references to Western poetics to assert the poet as participant, as actor in a Western prosodic tradition" (Sanders 233). While I agree with Sanders' assertion that Braithwaite uses the poem in order to insert himself into a Western literary tradition, deliberately making no distinction between that tradition and his own practice as an African-American writer, I think it is significant that he chooses the material medium of the botanical souvenir in order to anchor his own memories to Keats' words.

The flower echoes the popular practice of taking flowers from the poets' grave, which as we have seen was certainly circulating in poetry and prose at the turn of the century. However, unlike Aldrich's daisies, for example, Braithwaite instead finds a relic of a lover:

> Ah, then what tender memories did chance
> To bring again the day, when from your hair,
> This frail carnation, delicate and fair,
> You gave me, that I now might last its trance (lines 6-9).

"Keats' old honeyed volume of romance" lends authenticity to the speaker's memories. The text's evocative qualities press against the flower, bringing that memory into the realm of the poem "where / The shepherd lad watched Pan's slow herd advance" (lines 3-4). Keats's reputation as a floral poet, and the tradition of taking souvenir flowers from his grave, lend an additional authenticity to a carnation pressed in *Endymion*. The flower is both a tribute to Keats and a mediator between the dead poet and the living one, who is able to turn on that association, having established himself within a tradition, to his own memories. This is not necessarily a new or surprising argument; however, I would contend that the flower, rather than being a passive vessel, is instead for an essential part of this posthumous transaction. Although Braithwaite turns away from Keats, the poem and book remain essential, both for the future preservation of the flower and for its continued ability to signify. Practically, dried flowers removed from their supports quickly crumble. The book has quite literally given shape to the flower in its current incarnation. In addition, Braithwaite attributes the flower's continued ability to signify to its position within the text:

> And so to-day it brings a mellow dream
> Of that sweet time when but to hear you speak
> Filled all my soul. What waves of passion seem
> About this flower to linger and to break
> Lit by the glamor of the moon's pale beam,
> The while my heart weeps for this dear flower's sake (lines 10-15).

The "waves of passion" that "linger and break" around the flower are mimicked by the way the lines of Braithwaite's poem break around and encompass the figure of the flower and, presumably, the lines of text in *Endymion* that the flower breaks and obscures. While there is no evidence that Braithwaite himself participated in Keats tourism, like Wilde's poem or Aldrich's, Braithwaite's sonnet inhabits the same souvenir poem genre.[38]

The mention of the poem in the Keats-Shelley Memorial Association Bulletin represents an attempt to incorporate the text into the larger project of an institutional posthumous Keats, shifting the focus of cultivation from individual tourists to the board of the association. However Braithwaite's individual investment in Keats and the turn to a personal memory allow for an additional reading. While Braithwaite was criticized during his lifetime for what we would now call "assimilationist" politics, that does not negate the fact that for a self-educated African-American poet and editor in the early twenty-first century, the right to align himself with Keats was not self-evident.[39] This poem is an assertion of the writer's ability to be moved by the dead poet's language, keeping intact his right to self-expression and poetry by preserving the flower and its personal significance to the poem's speaker.

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[38] Braithwaite wrote an elegy for Aldrich, "On the death of Thomas Bailey Aldrich." *The House of Falling Leaves.* John W. Luce and Company, 1908, pp. 26-7.

CONCLUSION

Critical interest in Romantic deaths, relics, and the associated tourist practices has surged in the last few years. The work of Westover and Lutz testifies to this, as well as a swell of interest in literary tourism both then and now, exhibited in the continuing restoration projects associated with author's houses and gardens and digital projects around the world. In an article published on the Media Commons digital scholarly network in 2013, Sophie Hawkins speculates on the relation of smart phones and other

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[39] Braithwaite had a reputation for not being particularly selective in choosing poems for his anthologies, relying on a personal taste many of his contemporaries found old-fashioned, and shying away from overtly racially and politically charged work even while promoting the work of a number of other African-American authors including James Weldon Johnson, Claude McKay and Countee Cullen. As a result Braithwaite's influence waned during the 1920s. However, as James Edward Smethurst notes, when later in life Braithwaite was a professor at Atlanta University, he revised this position and urged the study of African-American life and culture. See Smethurst, *The African American Roots of Modernism: From Reconstruction to the Harlem Renaissance*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011. For another discussion of Braithwaite as a controversial figure who contributed in important material ways to the success of black authors while also championing an Anglocentric poetic tradition, in addition to authors already mentioned, see Dickson D. Bruce, *Black American Writing from the Nadir: The Evolution of a Literary Tradition 1877-1915*. Louisiana State University Press, 1989.

"talking objects" of current technology to the reliquary. The ephemeral content of the smart phone in its expensive and decorated shell, Hawkins argues, mirrors the "chimerical melding of container and contained" associated with the reliquary ("Talking Hands"). In a similar bid for the return of the relic specific to the Romantics, at a tea held this summer at the Keats House in Hampstead, poet Julia Bird concluded a discussion and recitation of Keats by sharing a flower from Keats's grave that she had collected and pressed herself. Surrounded by gardens planted in tribute to, and in imitation of, Keats's "Ode on Melancholy" and "Ode to a Nightingale," the crowd gave an appreciative murmur.

Keats and Shelley are paradigmatic examples of the Romantic impulse, as Judith Pascoe has recently put it, to 'transcend the passage of time and to preserve the wreckage of its passing' (Pascoe 6). The juxtaposition of this material and spiritual brand of longing is rendered particularly visible by the ways in which privately collected souvenirs from their graves are subject to incomplete documentation and material disintegration. The souvenir may be evidence of presence, but as the stories and objects I examine here make clear, souvenirs are hardly more permanent than the memories or bodies for which we substitute them. However, the peculiar regenerative properties of the Romantic relic have their roots not only in nineteenth-century death culture and the mythology surrounding Keats and Shelley's damaged corpses, but in the strange vegetative life and death that was so frequently used to access those corpses (and corpuses).

The material and emotional investment evident in Novello's surviving collage, Fuller's narrative of the lost rose, and Braithwaite's imagined floral relic blur the boundary between ephemera and the monumental. Therefore, rather than include these souvenirs exclusively in an inventory of Shelleyana, I prefer to draw attention to the ways in which they also inhabit other spectrums of cultural and aesthetic production. Seemingly insubstantial and ubiquitous, under the microscope these flowers are sites of unexpected and under explored exchange between bodies, objects, and texts. In addition, they point us to another node in the growing conversation about Romantic botany and the strange influence of plants, simultaneously artificial or 'cultivated' and organic products of nature.

Taking guidance from the ways in which Romantic plants resist easy classification, if we continue to abandon the idea that such souvenirs are at odds with serious interest or intellectual investment, we can move closer to an understanding of the ways in which they offered alternative affective possibilities. Individual souvenirs and evocations of that practice exceed familiar narratives of Romantic afterlives and Victorian tourists, showing how powerfully intimate acts of collection and exchange can add dimension to the library, archive, museum and cemetery.

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CHAPTER TWO: SEA-CHANGED: FELICIA HEMANS AND BURIAL AT SEA

…nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell"d, unconffin"d and unknown.

-Lord Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage,* Canto IV

Death and burial at sea deny the living corporeal access to the dead through conventional mediums like the grave or urn, demanding alternative methods of memorialization. More significantly, as this article demonstrates, the loss of the corpse at sea makes particularly visible the extent to which any act of posthumous identification or remembering relies upon a complex network of both material and textual objects actively maintained by the living. A burial at sea lacks the relative stability of a traditional land burial. A specific plot or grave, with a marker, may be returned to far more reliably than a set of coordinates on the surface of a continually shifting body of water. As Lord Byron implies in the famous passage from the fourth canto of *Childe Harold* quoted above, those who die at sea are disconnected from both material and affective containers of memory, both "uncoffin"d and unknown." Between the difficulty of marking death through traditional means and the increasing frequency with which non-sailors took to the sea during the late age of sail, it is not surprising then that the newspapers, literature, poems and material culture of the early nineteenth century in Britain are cluttered with shipwrecks, sea-burials, and sea-dirges, collectively inspiring many a 'sailor's Tear."[1] The first half of the nineteenth-century witnessed, in Western Europe and in Britain particularly, a confluence between intense attention to cemetery reform and mourning practices, swells in transoceanic tourism and immigration, public obsession with dead nautical heroes like Cook, Nelson and Franklin, and the slow, uneasy death of the transatlantic slave trade. The cultural fascination with the prospect of death and burial at sea in these late days of the Age of Sail points to a vital moment of anxiety surrounding loss and the potential to return.

At the turn of the nineteenth century the increasing recognition of individual identity as tied to an individuated physical body also had implications for funerary practices and the treatment of the dead. Archaeologist Sarah Tarlow argues that "the changing significance of the unique and identified body" led to attempts, such as the widespread adoption of individual coffins, to frame relationships between the living and the dead in new ways and displace images of skeletons and decay (Tarlow 85). Tarlow terms the result the "aesthetic corpse of the nineteenth century (85)." Images of sea-burials and watery graves, however, refuse the comforts of such attention to aesthetics –

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[1] This is a reference to a popular ballad and verse printed on everything from paper to pottery:

The man is doom"d to sail
With the blast of the gale
Through billows attalantic to steer
As he bends oe"r the wave
Which may soon be his grave
He remembers his home with a tear.

Adapted from an early Byron poem, "The Tear" (1806), this particular stanza appears on several lusterware pitchers from the 1820s and 30s, for example (antiquepottery.co.uk). The sentimental language reinforces, however, the common perception of sailors as continually poised on the edge of a watery grave.

recall Byron’s “uncoffin”d” sailor. It is in the poetic corpus of best-selling British poet Felicia Hemans (1793-1836), however, that some dozen such scenes take on a particular potency as a separate and vital thread of a nautical gothic that reveals how selective cultural memory can be. Hemans’s representations of sea-burial respond to Gothic tropes of live human burial and hidden or buried texts, registering moments in which decay creeps into the affective historical record. In other words, these are moments in which the material vulnerability of bodies and books make visible gaps and traumas in recorded history. At the intersections of Hemans’s explicit interest in neglected histories and her extensive treatment of the dead and dead bodies, burial at sea emerges as a topos of the early nineteenth-century imaginary that draws on both Gothic tropes and Romantic reformulations of Gothic aesthetics in order to signal what I call a ‘sea changed” poetics of shifting dislocation, decay, and denial. Resituating Hemans’s poetry through this lens, I consider how tropes of burial might extend into specifically nautical literary cultures of the early nineteenth century – accounts which reflect not only nineteenth-century anxieties about nautical death but the corporeality of both individual and cultural memory.

The possibility of death at sea acts also, in these circumstances, as a figure for a poetics of dislocation and denial. In “The Diver,” first printed in the *New Monthly Magazine* of Jan. 1830, Hemans constructs a conceit that aligns the poet with the pearl diver, each a “wrestler with the sea” seeking to reclaim its old wealth, whether “the pearl in its cavern” or “the gems of thought” (lines 19, 31, 32). Poems are given tangible properties as gems and lava-encased inscriptions reminiscent of the bodies at

Herculaneum that inspired Hemans's earlier poem *The Image in Lava*. The poet, however, like the pearl diver, suffers a slow sea-change in exchange for these treasures: "In thy dim eye, on thy hollow cheek, / Well are the death-signs read" (Lines 17-18). The price the poet pays is decay and a short life – linked, through Hemans's chosen epitaph from Percy Shelley's "Julian and Maddalo" (1818-19), to the early deaths of both Shelley and Byron. Also at stake in this intertextual exchange are Shelley and Byron's notably troubled corpses: Shelley's decaying body washed up on the shore of the Bay of Spezia and Byron's disabled swimmer's body preserved and shipped to England to be displayed and buried. "They learn in suffering what they teach in song," says Maddalo (Byron) to Julian (Shelley), and for Hemans, with the benefit of hindsight, this suffering is embodied and material ("Julian and Maddalo," line 546). However, such corporeal gaps extend beyond literary history.

Perhaps chief among these gaps is the often unmentioned but incompletely forgotten genocide of the Middle Passage. Joseph Roach, in *Cities of the Dead*, says of the selective cultural memory that attends the circum-Atlantic world that "the most persistent mode of forgetting is memory imperfectly deferred" (Roach 4). The slaves being thrown overboard with no concern for ritual or memorial, as depicted, for example, by J.M.W. Turner's *Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and the Dying – Typhon Coming On* (1840), are the invisible counterpart to the mourned bodies "by the dark seas bound" in Hemans's work (Hemans, *National Lyrics*, 162). Hemans's literary career and adult life, spanning the years 1808 to her death in 1836, spans almost exactly the years between the 1807 abolition of the British slave trade and the Abolition Act of 1833.

Slavery, like the Gothic, "presupposed a displacement of the subjective self," as it required viewing Africans as inhuman (Anolik) 82). Accordingly, the first part of this chapter turns to an explicitly nautical re-articulation of Gothic tropes in Hemans's work in relation to the Atlantic crossing renders such ghosts of the literary record more visible. The second part of the chapter explores in more detail how the fear that decayed corpses will reappear finds its textual reflection in the multiply mediated manuscript and print history of Hemans's poetry and the cultivation of her poetical remains.

Hemans's long-accepted characterization by both supporters and detractors as the ideal nineteenth-century "poetess," an identity closely tied to socially compliant feminine sensibilities and Victorian mores, has somewhat obscured Gothic strains in her work and these connections remain largely unexamined. However, as Paula Feldman notes of Hemans's *Records of Woman* (1828), for example, "nearly every poem … describes a corpse or the anticipation of one" (xxii). Tricia Lootens, similarly, argues that Hemans's patriotism is "mediated by death rather than birth" (242). More recently, Paul Westover and Amy Gates continued this vein of criticism, arguing, respectively, that Hemans attention to the body extends to the body of text, resulting in dense "reliquaries" of preserved quotation and that Hemans's corpses and statues constitute "effigial figures [that] make possible a vital, earthly future for the dead among the living" (Gates 59). Both Westover and Gates make available a more complex and importantly, more material perspective on Hemans and the corpse.[2] Extending this lens to her representation of sea-burial will deepen our understanding of Hemans, in particular how her work speaks to the Atlantic slave trade and abolition debates that as the daughter of a Liverpool merchant, she was well aware of.

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[2] Gates suggests that this focus on corporeality represents Hemans's attempt to insist on making the dead the "center of ongoing attention" (62). Gates's exploration of Hemans in conjunction with Jeremy Bentham's "Auto-Icon" project is both fascinating and

Recent Hemans scholarship has focused on the geographical expansiveness of her work, as well as the political ambiguity and the contentious reception history that has come to characterize her role in debates about Romantic women poets and canonicity.[3] In the introduction to a recent special issue of *Women's Writing* on Hemans, editors Kate Singer and Nanora Sweet position their collections as a portrait of a "truly international Hemans" (Singer and Sweet 2). *Romantic Readers and Transatlantic Travel* by Robin Jarvis and *Romanticism and the Question of the Stranger* by David Simpson also position Hemans as an international writer who merits attention outside the boundaries of Victorian domestic nationalism.[4] This cosmopolitanism is accompanied by an increasing interest in Hemans's deft and complex intertextual strategies and their accompanying print histories, which reveal a much more ambiguous political portrait of the poet.

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convincing. However, while this article shares her - and Westover's - concern with Hemans's "thick" poetry, I look instead to those corpses in Hemans's oeuvre that are not preserved in effigy. However, I am more in line with Gates's emphasis on Hemans work to preserve and transmit traces of those whom history has otherwise ignored than Brian P. Elliott's argument that she is merely appropriating and emptying out these ekphrastic signs. Brian P. Elliott, ""Nothing beside remains:" Empty Icons and Elegiac Ekphrasis in Felicia Hemans." *Studies in Romanticism*, 51:1, 2012, pp. 25-40.

[3] See, for example, "Felicia Hemans and the Revolving Doors of Reception." *Approaches to Teaching British Women Poets of the Romantic Period*. Edited by Stephen Behrendt et. al., Modern Language Association of America, 1997, pp. 214-241.

[4] Robin Jarvis, *Romantic Readers and Transatlantic Travel: Expeditions and Tours in North America, 1760-1840,* Ashgate, 2012, and David Simpson, *Romanticism and the Question of the Stranger*, University of Chicago Press, 2013.

Cynthia Schoolar Williams, too, argues for critiques of Hemans more firmly situated in the Post-Waterloo era, claiming forcibly that in order to shake loose the "Victorian Hemans" it is necessary to understand her as a figure on the threshold – "that is, at both domestic and national boundaries, for in Hemans's poetry, one is insistently extrapolated to figure as the other" (Williams 146). Acknowledging Hemans's cosmopolitanism, as well as her position on the boundary lines of periodization and nationality both within her own contemporary sphere and in literary history, makes an examination of her specifically nautical imagery even more urgent.

Felicia Hemans, as several of her biographers and critics have noted, had a particular fascination with images of storm and desolation, of shipwreck and sea-burial:

> the last, indeed, was so often present to her imagination, and has so frequently been introduced into her poetry, that any one inclined to superstitious presentiments might have been disposed to fancy it a fore-shadowing (Hughes 83).

Here Hemans's sister Harriet Hughes identifies sea-burial as a peculiarly frequent trope, an observation that is borne out: there are more than a dozen explicit instances or mentions of sea-burials in Hemans's work, spanning the whole of her career. Another early posthumous promoter of Hemans, family friend Henry Chorley, wrote that 'she was not prone to speak with self-contentment of her own works, but, perhaps, the one favorite descriptive passage was that picture of a sea-burial in the second canto [of *The Forest-Sanctuary*]" (Chorley 126-7). Of course, as Hughes hastens to point out, that superstition would be false; no close friends or family members ever did die at sea. The power of this image for Hemans must be attributed not to personal experience but the cultural imaginary. The sea-burial is a potent symbol of the attempt to locate or define burial – a word whose roots carry meanings of enclosure, keeping, and sheltering – in a visibly shifting and ungrounded body of water. Looking beyond Hemans's texts to the Atlantic world in which they circulated, therefore, such images speak to deeper impossibilities of recovery and representation.

Hemans's representational relationship with the sea also had a religious connotation. Immediately following the section cited above, in Hariett Hughes's memoir of her sister, is embedded the following quotation from Hemans's letters:

> Did you ever observe how strangely sounds and images of waters - rushing torents, and troubled oceans waves, are mingled with the visionary distresses of dreams and delirium? To me there is no more perfect emblem of peace than that expressed by the Scriptural phrase, "there shall be no more sea" (Hughes 86).

In other words, Hughes seems to suggest, while there was no lived experience to provide context for Hemans's investment in the sea, she nevertheless had a strong affective response to oceanic imagery. Hughes connects this to her comfort in this line from Revelations, which claims that after the first heaven and earth have passed, the next might have no sea. This other aspect of the cultural imaginary that informs Hemans's frequent depiction of sea-burial, then, is the religious suggestion that the sea itself is potentially impermanent, adding to the sense that such burials are un-grounded and irrecoverable, as well as entangled with a sensory imaginary. Much of Hemans's later work, especially, is deeply religious, and as Julie Melnyk notes, she espouses a religious vocation for her work in later years. Melnyk argues that Hemans works to "[reduce] the distance between the hearth and the heavens … to domesticate religion (as she domesticates Romanticism), but also to elevate "domestic" poetic subjects by claiming for them religious transcendence" (Melnyk 78). While Melnyk is writing about

Hemans's later volume *Scenes and Hymns of Life*, the project or aim of recovering or elevating memories seems to apply equally to the representation of incomplete memory present in her imagery of burial at sea. Hemans's work repeatedly examines different modes of preservation, exploring material, textual, and spiritual transfiguration and their implications for recorded and affective histories.

However, Hemans's work should also be understood in terms of historical attitudes towards death at sea. In this I look primarily to the work of David J. Stewart and Kristy Reid, who have recently looked beyond the historical documentation of deaths at sea to its sociological contexts. Stewart and Reid follow Marcus Rediker's suggestion that "the frequency of death at sea gave a special power to superstition, omens, personal rituals, and belief in luck" and frame death and burial at sea in the language of ritual and boundary (Rediker 186).[5] The sea-burial emerges from these contexts as highly symbolically charged. When time and circumstances allowed, the basic structure of burial at sea followed in principal land-based ceremonies. The body was washed and dressed; if a sailor, "going ashore" clothes were often used. Stewart identifies this arrangement of the corpse as the first ritual of separation between the living and the dead. Next the body was typically shrouded, rather than coffined. However, it is worth noting that even on land, the use of individual coffins for all classes was a relatively recent innovation. The body was weighted, typically with cannon shot (often carried even by merchant and passenger ships) and the shroud sewn up. Stewart outlines as well the debated practice of passing the last stitch in the shroud through the nose of the victim. This served possibly as a final test of true death – similar to pricking the corpse with a needle or installing bells in coffins, both relatively common nineteenth-century attempts to ease anxieties about being buried alive. It also may have served to literally and figuratively stitch the dead into place and superstitiously prevent their spiritual return if the flesh was indeed dead. Herman Melville recounts nineteenth-century debates about the practice in his semi-autobiographical novel *White-jacket; or the World in a Man-of-War*, based on the author's experience serving in the US Navy from 1843-44. In a chapter titled "The Last Stitch," Melville's sailmakers discuss whether or not putting a needle through the corpse's nose, "a superstitious custom generally practiced by most sea-undertakers," results in the dead sailor coming back to haunt the sailmaker (Melville 320-321). Ultimately, whether the last stitch was made or not, the corpse would be slid over the side, piercing the threshold of ship and sea.

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[5] See also Royal W. Connall and William P. Mack's *Naval Ceremonies, Customs and Traditions,* which provides a thorough account of the burial traditions of the British and United States navies through the twentieth century. Connall and Mack. *Naval Ceremonies, Customs and Traditions*, Naval Institutes Press, 2004, pp. 70-73.

BURIAL AT SEA AND THE NAUTICAL GOTHIC

There is a certain cosmetic overlap between these customs and rituals and central Gothic tropes such as live burial (for example, the internment of Agnes in *The Monk* (1796)). These aesthetic similarities, as well as the connotations of surface and depth attached to burial at sea, may help approach an early nineteenth-century nautical Gothic. The Gothic is generally characterized as a shifting set of recognizable themes and subjects or, as Michael Gamer has called it, an aesthetic (Gamer 2-4).[6] Simultaneously Gamer has reminded us that the rubrics separating, for example, the Gothic and Romanticism were later inventions, not contemporaneous observations, and current scholars are more invested in tracing continuities rather than precise boundaries between the two modes (Gamer 2-4). The Gothic aesthetic is often defined by confinement and potential for characters to return from the grave. The rituals for disposing of bodies at sea, similarly, are meant to ensure that bodies truly disappear and that the mourners will be spared the sight of a water-damaged and unrecognizable corpse. Stewart calls the rites of burial at sea practiced by Anglophone sailors during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a "ritual of separation" intended to protect the living from being haunted by the dead (Stewart 278). Similar themes are echoed in popular literature. Recall, for instance, the corpses of Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, whose narrator describes how, after falling dead on the ship's deck, the doomed ship's sailors "groan"d, they stirr"d, they all uprose and "raised their limbs like lifeless tools" (lines 332, 340). Consequently, sailors developed specific rites and rituals for burials at sea. As Ruth Bienstock Anolik notes, "The complex of Gothic tropes associated with the loss of self-possession reveals a varied response to the very actual fear of death, which represents the ultimate loss of self" (Anolik 79). Viewing images of burial at sea as wrestling with boundaries between the living and the dead, then, brings them under the umbrella of the Gothic imaginary.

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[6] Gamer cites two formative studies of the Gothic that shaped his definition of an aesthetic – Robert Miles*, Gothic Writing 1750-1820: A Genealogy* (1993) and E.J. Clery, *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction 1762-1800* (1995).

The attention to the precise moment of burial in both non-fictional and poetic accounts also underlines this Gothic tension between depth and surface, literalized by the risk of an unweighted body bobbing back to the surface almost immediately. Stewart stresses the importance of the splash, symbolizing the penetration of the ocean by the body, in contemporary accounts. Reid notes that despite the diversity of media in which representations of burial at sea featured in the nineteenth century, the depiction was typically stock: 'strikingly similar, repetitive, and even formulaic. Their narrative structure, flow and content tended to be organized around a series of common key moments," such as the sound of the corpse hitting the water (Reid 44). English traveller Robert Young witnessed a burial at sea en route to Australia in 1853 and remarked that "a sudden splash in the water produced a powerful thrill in many a heart" (Stewart 282). Hemans echoes this interest in the splash and submersion of the body in the historical narrative poem *The Forest-Sanctuary* (1825):

> Then the broad lonely sunrise! –and the plash
> Into the sound waves! –around her head
> They parted, with a glancing moment's flash,
> Then shut—and all was still (Stanza LIX).[7]

The enjambment of the "plash" echoes the confrontation with the surface of the ocean and figures the moment of successful departure from the realm of the living. When a body was not properly waited, or did not sink, the anxiety engendered by burial at sea became even more acute. If the body reappeared, it shattered the illusion of separation between the living and dead. One West Indian captain's distress at such a situation is audible in his repetition of "whenever you are going to bury a man at see you must put a sinker on him … You must put a sinker on him … We should have put a sinker on him" (Stewart 282). The ritual is doubly engaged in compensating for the loss of the corpse and its potential return, with immediate and bodily consequences, symbolically marked by the audible splash.

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[7] Hemans herself used the exploration literature of the eighteenth century as a source for such incidents and ceremonies. In a footnote to this scene in *The Forest-Sanctuary* Hemans refers to explorer and naturalist Alexander von Humboldt as her source for the burial at sea. Humboldt's *Personal Narrative of Travel to the Equinoctial Regions of the New Continent* was translated into English by Helen Maria Williams and published in 1814.

The immediate loss of the body to the deep caused a great deal of consternation, depriving the living of any specific place of the dead. I deliberately echo here the language of Paul Westover, whose wonderful articulation of "necromanticism" identifies travel to the grave or other such memorial site as a crucial component of Romanticism and of Hemans's formulation of poetic canonization in particular. To deprive the dead (and the living too) of a place for the dead severs memorial circuits of exchange between the living and the dead. As Westover puts it, Hemans repeatedly depicts graveside pilgrimage as a literary act, imagining "personal, bodily encounters at the sites of memory" (Westover 75). For example, in Hemans's elegy for Sir Walter Scott, the speaker calls for mourners to visit and sing over the grave, in order to counteract the silence of the once-eloquent poet's corpse and his final "voiceless dwelling" (Line 52). The sea-burial mirrors in reverse such graveside encounters, rendering the site of memory mobile and obscured, perhaps explaining Hemans's investment in this image as well.

Hemans utilizes burial at sea to show us the oscillating availability of posthumous intimacies in *The Forest Sanctuary*: "Death, Death! –She lay, a thing for earth's embrace, / To cover with spring-wreaths. For earth's? –The wave / That gives the bier no flowers-makes moan above her grave!" (LVII). In this depiction of sea-burial the commitment of the dead to the earth is abruptly and suddenly denied, marking a clear distinction between burial as cyclical and drawing on botanical renewal (spring-wreaths and flowers) and the enjambed "wave" that figuratively and formally breaks against and denies that comfort. Graveside gestures of connection and continued affection, such as covering and aestheticizing the body with flowers, are not as effective when the corpse may drift far away from the spot where it was lowered overboard. Deaths at sea are difficult to index; posthumous relationships are therefore more difficult to maintain. As Mark Sandy has recently noted, the graveside was a staple of the Romantic elegy, and looking further back, a primary trope of the eighteenth-century "graveyard poets" such Thomas Gray and Edward Young as well (Sandy 4). By juxtaposing the ocean with the flower-strewn earth that is the focus of such graveside elegies from the period – including many of her own, such as that for Scott mentioned above – Hemans seems to speculate about the extent to which such imagined relationships with the dead only take place on the surface, and how easily they can be disrupted or lost altogether.

The extended death of Leonor in *The Forest-Sanctuary* is the most developed scene of sea-burial in Hemans. One of Hemans's significant longer works, *The Forest-Sanctuary* tells the story of a Spaniard fleeing the Inquisition who takes refuge with his young son somewhere in the Americas during the sixteenth century. Torn from her beloved homeland, his wife dies and is subsequently buried during their Atlantic crossing. Written in Spensarian stanzas, the poem is, as Steve Newman notes, an example of high Romantic lyric: "the alienated man walking through the ruins of history, his subjectivity emerging from his search for something to ground it" (89). Newman's use of the phrase "to ground" has particular resonance here; the narrator is unmoored not only from his religion and his homeland, but quite literally from the land itself. The ocean appears throughout the poem as a force of displacement and alienation, connected from the beginning with the underwater grave of Leonor.

Remembering the graves of his family in a distant homeland, the narrator breaks off to recall the "blue, lone, distant main … sweeping / High o"er *one* gentle head – ye rest not here!" (stanza IV, line 30-1). The interjection of "ye rest not here!" does a curious double displacement – Leonor is not buried with the rest of the narrator's family, who also "rest not here, my dead!" (line 27), but nor is her "not here" the same as those, as the repeated use of 'save one! … *one*" makes clear (lines 30-31). Leonor's grave is neither here nor there, only remembered by echoes, "as moans the ocean-shell" (line 36). Burial at sea does not leave a grave, only associations and similes – in other words, a poetical tangle of impressions on the narrator's senses. In this sense, the narrator's elegiac project highlights the quintessential Romantic paradox of finding "ground" where there is none.

Yet despite the 'sweeping" ocean waves that appear to preoccupy the narrator, in the second part of the poem, the ocean emerges as a liminal space of crossing and transition that is arrested by death. The ocean at the ultimate moment of crisis is uncannily still "like a floor of sapphire" (line 423). The narrator asks the waves to stir: "Wake, ocean-wind! … --But the calm bound us midst the glass main" (line 450, 456). In counterpoint to the narrator's current agitation and earlier, his struggle against a metaphorical sea that failed to drown him, “there they lay, / All moveless through their blue transparence keeping / The shadows of our sails” (lines 459-461). The disruption, when it comes, is typographical and formal. The stanzas that relate Leonor’s death and burial are littered with long dashes that make visible on the page the narrator’s disjointed and turbulent emotions. Returning to my initial reading of the corpse-scene, we can now see how such formal elements of the text are reflected in the “glancing moment’s flash, / Then shut--” with which the waves open for Leonor’s body (lines 540-1). Charlotte Sussman identifies Leonor’s cause of death as the "burden of memory,” and a revision of both Milton’s Eve and Wordsworth’s Margaret (The Excursion); caught up in her memories of Spain she cannot survive outside of that locale (Sussman 511).[8] Following her death the weight of commemoration continues placeless and quite literally ungrounded. The ocean both displaces and consumes, and its passivity prevents the narrator from struggling or identifying any kind of completion in the burial of his wife.

Turning to the sea as a site of burial highlights, as I have explored in my discussion of Hemans’s *The Forest Sanctuary*, anxieties about the loss of identity through bodily corruption, and more immediately, the fear of the living witnessing (and thus remembering) the rapid decay of a corpse exposed to seawater. Hemans’s sea-burial thus retains much of the tension between figurative and material memory that helps define Gothic tropes of live burial and the found text. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick characterizes the primary metaphorical potency of Gothic live burial as an inability to communicate; the denial of language (Sedgwick 17).[9] Hemans's use of sea burial as displacement also focuses on broken or deferred communication, though she shifts that deferral from a metaphorical living death to the project of memorialization. What we might identify as a Romantic revision of this central Gothic metaphor, therefore, is concerned with the establishment of a record – an extension or prosthesis of personal memory – and its potential for decay and dislocation in history. The poetics of burial at sea represented in Hemans thus continue the Gothic subversion of physical and social boundaries, but put new or added emphasis on the material record in its own right, rather than in a largely metaphorical sense.

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[8] Charlotte Sussman. "Epic, Exile, and the Global: Felicia Hemans’s The Forest Sanctuary." *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, Vol. 65, No. 4, March 2011, pp. 481-512

Hemans thought of *The Forest-Sanctuary* explicitly as a record of memory. Gary Kelly notes that in the manuscript, the last sentence of the paratext reads: "The story … is intended more as the *record of a Mind*, than as a tale abounding with romantic and extraordinary incident" (Kelly 228).[10] Kelly interprets this as a statement intended to distance the poem from similar works of dramatic travel and exile written by Scott and Byron (Kelly 228). It also represents an attempt to separate "record" and "romance" as genres, foreshadowing Hemans's 1828 *Records of Woman*, specifically framed as a historical counter-narrative to the erasure of women's lives and voices. Within these contexts the image of the sea-burial emerges as a fraught chiasmus of figurative and material memory. While the re-examination of the past is represented as an embodied experience, the sea-burial contradicts much of Hemans's avowed historical and archival agenda of monumentalization. However, it is this apparent contradiction, and the continuity of this nautical poetics of decay with Gothic and Romantic uncertainties about the permanence of history, that complicate Hemans's traditional classification as a patriotic, domestic Victorian poetess.

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[9] "It is evident here that the important privation is the privation exactly of language, as though language were a sort of safety valve between he inside and the outside which being closed off, all knowledge, even when held in common, becomes solitary, furtive, and explosive" (Sedgwick 17).

[10] So far Hemans's manuscripts have not themselves been made available outside of the archive; this is one of several badly needed biographical and bibliographical efforts that Stuart Curran recently outlined, who aside from a few primary figures – Wollstonecraft and Mary Shelley, and Jane Austen – largely lack substantial scholarly biographies and extensive textual resources. Luckily, Kelly's excellent edition for Broadview transcribes many manuscript items of interest. Stuart Curran, "The Records of Woman's Romanticism." *Women's Writing*, 22:2, 2015, pp. 263-269.

The OED renders the definition of a sea-change rather prosaically as "a change wrought by the sea" (OED 'sea-change"). The phrase comes, however, from Ariel's song for Ferdinand in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, and enjoyed a revival, like many things Shakespeare, in the nineteenth-century.[11] The full song goes thus:

> Full fathom five they father lies,
> Of his bones are coral made,
> Those are pearls that were his eyes,
> Nothing of him that doth fade,
> But doth suffer a sea-change,
> Into something rich and strange,
> Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell,
> Ding-dong (Act 1, Scene 2).

The song turns on positive decay which makes of the potential grotesquely water-ravaged corpse, assimilated by the coral reef, 'something rich and strange." The sea-change is at once intrinsically poetic and quite practical, the song's transfigurations connoting textual, material and spiritual change. The characterization of the sea that emerges from the quotation of this song is that of a transitory, intertextual space that nonetheless has recognizable physical consequences.

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[11] For more on nineteenth-century "Bardolotry" see Celestine Woo, *Romantic Actors and Bardolotry: Performing Shakespeare from Garrick to Keane*, Peter Lang, 2008, and also Adrian Poole, *Shakespeare and the Victorians*, Bloomsbury, 2004.

The notion of a sea-change enters into Hemans's thought explicitly not in reference to bodies, but to books. In 1825, the year *The Forest Sanctuary* was published, Hemans received a package of books from a "Professor Norton" of Boston, with whom Hemans would strike up a transatlantic literary friendship. However, before reaching her, this gift experienced a strange sequence of events. I quote the passage in full below because in it Harriet Hughes makes some of the same connections I have just been outlining, and connects them to the trope of the "found text":

> This packet, which also contained some interesting specimens of American literature, after crossing the Atlantic in safety, had a narrow escape of being consigned to the "treasures of the deep," by a disaster which occurred to the party who had the charge of it, in traversing the Ulverstone Sands. […] By the courtesy of a stranger, it was singled out from a motley pile of other flotsam and jetsome found drying at the kitchen fire of a little inn on the coast of Lancashire, and carelessly forwarded to the destination where it was to impart so much gratification, and lead to such valuable results. Mrs. Hemans took infinite pleasure on recounting the singular adventures of this memorable packet; and the 'sea-change" which all its contents had suffered (Hughes 114).

Hughes utilizes her readership's presumed familiarity with Hemans's work, referencing "The Treasures of the Deep," another poem featuring the loss of a body at sea, in order to characterize her sister's poetical interest in the story she is about to relate. Similarly, Leticia Landon, who published an essay and an elegy on Hemans in the New Monthly several months after the later's death, points to "Treasures", curiously, as emblematic of Hemans's speech. Landon never met Hemans, but they shared a friendship with Maria

Jane Jewsbury, to whom Landon attributes this observation: 'she described her conversation as singularly fascinating - full of poetry, very felicitous in illustration by anecdote - happy, too, in quotation, and very rich in imagery; "in short, her own poem on "The Treasures of the Deep" would best describe it" (Landon 425). This story serves to characterize Hemans as very much a creature of her own poetry, thus making her biographically available to a readership already familiar with her work. The poet's interest in the material debris of history encompasses now both her own conversation and her bookshelves. Hemans's poetical remains are thus, in a sense, brought together as metaphoric "treasures of the deep" and yet, the poem itself continued to circulate as a poetic item of interest.

EXCAVATION AND CIRCULATION

Literary history is not free of missing bodies, as the textual history of The Forest Sanctuary shows. In this next section, I will pair a continued discussion of burial and death at sea with more detailed moments of archival exhumation. "The Treasures of the Deep" was first published in the New Monthly Magazine in August of 1823. It first appeared in book-form as one of the miscellaneous poems of *The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems* (1825), and was reprinted in the *Poetical Album* of 1828. However, in the manuscript of *The Forest-Sanctuary* held at the Liverpool Public Record Office, "The Treasures of the Deep" was initially a continuation of that poem's closing stanzas (Kelly 289). On its own, the poem was a popular one during Hemans's lifetime and with her

Victorian readers, circulating in a number of different venues and forms after its initial publication. Paula Feldman includes "The Treasures of the Deep" on a list of works that, by her death, "had already acquired the status of standard English lyrics" (Feldman 280). This popularity was fed by the poem's further circulation as a ballad. The poem was set to music twice during Hemans's lifetime, once by her sister Harriet Hughes and also by "Mrs. Robert Arkwright," Frances Kemble Arkwright between 1827 and 1834.[12] Printed both in London and abroad (most notably in the eastern United States), the poem emerged as a popular ballad as well.

In initial drafts of The Forest Sanctuary, "Treasures of the Deep" was preceded by an additional stanza on Leonor's death. In the published version, the narrator is left to find a kind of elegiac consolation in nature and God. However, the composition history of the poem belies the restorative effects of religion. As Gary Kelly notes, the manuscript of the poem contains an additional stanza:

> --Again that Sound, as of the rolling Wave! --
> Night-fall hath given it power, - and yet again –
> -- What! Shall my Spirit, that o"erswept the Grave,
> Sink, if a touch press Memory into pain?
> -- There is a wild Song haunts me with that moan,
> A wild low Song, and mournful! – yet a tone of
> Of Hope, thro" all the sadness of the strain,
> Breathes up to Heaven; - Strange! –twas the sweet Voice fled
> Ev"n Leonor's, that sang – "Thou Sea, restore the Dead!" (Hemans, Kelly 289)

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[12] Frances Crawford Kemble Arkwright (1786-1849), was a part of the famous Kemble acting family and the niece of Sarah Siddons. She married Sir Robert Arkwright, to the initial chagrin of his family, in 1805 and published a number of compositions under her married name. She also composed an arrangement for Hemans's poem "The Greek Exile" (1830). See Barbara Garvey Jackson. *Can You Deny Me: A Guide to Surviving Music by Women from the 16th through the 18th Centuries*. University of Arkansas Press, 1994, pp. 30-31.

Here the sea-burial appears again, this time explicitly as a "Memory." The use of the word 'sink" recalls the sinking of Leonor's body into the ocean, while "Memory" is figured as a wound or a bruise. Memory becomes a physical vulnerability that can be touched or pressed until painful. Traumatic memories are often described as wounds, acknowledging the possibility of latent violence. Wounds linger, allowing the past to intrude on the present. The sound of the sea at the beginning of the stanza – the "rolling Wave" – and the apostrophe to the sea at the end of the stanza both reflect attempts to represent that wound. The narrator's simultaneous anxiety and hope echoes Cathy Caruth's description of trauma as "a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available" (Caruth 4). It is an image anchored in the sea-burial; the invocation of the wound is enjambed under the wave/grave rhyme. Caruth continues, trauma must "be spoken in a language that is always somehow literary: a language that defies, even as it claims, our understanding" (Caruth 5). In this excised fragment, Hemans plays with both the representation of traumatic memory, in this case a burial at sea, as a literary device and as a wound that can be aided by layering poetic texts in a more material sense.

The re-examination of the past is represented as an embodied experience, and memory as something traced on a body. Hemans entertains the idea of this being a paper body: the narrator attributes here a song to his dead wife's voice calling "Thou Sea, restore the Dead!" Following that excised stanza, in the original manuscript, was the poem "The Treasures of the Deep," which ultimately circulated independently. Read in its original contexts as an interpolated ballad, the poem is a strange, ghostly apostrophe to the sea that belies the narrator's claim to have found peace in God – but that, at the same time, acts as a memorial trace of his dead wife, incorporating Hemans's mixed matierl and religious approach to ocean imagery. His reception, rather than creation, of the song, "breathes up to Heaven" hope (Hemans, Kelly 289). The inclusion of that additional text echoes Hemans's other intertextual strategies – citations, footnotes, and contextualizing introductions, all of which accompany *The Forest-Sanctuary*. However, Hemans chose ultimately to uncouple the ballad from its intertext, rendering it deliberately ahistorical and general. No longer in Leonor's voice, the ballad instead was reprinted, set to music, and voiced instead by uncounted numbers of singers. The elegiac plea is rendered collective rather than individual, materially reinforced by efforts such as the scrapbooking discussed previously. "Treasures of the Deep," rehearses a similar performance, turning on questions of loss and return that trouble assumptions about material and spiritual affect.

The title, "The Treasures of the Deep," immediately initiates a curious wordplay, both assigning and, as we see, questioning value. How is the poet defining "Treasures," a term that also appears in *The Forest-Sanctuary* describing bodies, buried at sea?[13] What emerges from a reading of the poem in conjunction with the title is an interesting conflation between "treasure" and "corpse," encasing bodies into jeweled and golden reliquaries. Relics have a long history of religious, and, by the end of the eighteenth century secular, commemoration and representation. Typically referring to fragments of saints" bodies, by the nineteenth century relics (real or fraudulent) of military or political heroes such as Nelson and Napoleon were also circulating. The famous preservation and return of Nelson's body to England after his death at Trafalgar in 1805, for example, represents a relatively more modern obsession with the celebrity corpse (Lutz 56). Still, for the moment, the nature of the treasure unrevealed, the title hints rather at something hidden or at a remove. If the reader is intended to question value, then perhaps we find it in what Lutz identifies as "the capability of objects to soak up and hold experiences and memories" (Lutz 56).

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[13] "…---When for ever,
O'er that sole spot of all the watery plain,
I could have bent my sight with fond endeavor
Down, where its treasure was, its glance to strain" (*The Forest-Sanctuary*, lines 566-569).

"The Treasures of the Deep" turns initially on this query, as Hemans begins to list possible treasures, and ends with a denial that should remind us of the ocean's role as a site of deferral:

> WHAT hid'st thou in thy treasure-caves and cells?
> Thou hollow-sounding and mysterious main!
> --Pale glistening pearls, and rainbow-colour"d shells,
> Bright things which gleam unreck"d-of, and in vain!
> --Keep, keep thy riches, melancholy sea!
> We ask not such from thee.
>
> Yet more, the depths have more!--what wealth untold,
> Far down, and shining through their stillness lies!
> Thou hast the starry gems, the burning gold,
> Won from ten thousand royal Argosies!
> --Sweep o"er thy spoils, thou wild and wrathful main!
> Earth claims not *these* again (Lines 1-12).

Hemans's opening apostrophe to the ocean – "WHAT hids"t thou" – recalls Byron's address to the ocean in *Childe Harold*, Canto IV, which Hemans had read, and a portion of which I have used as one of the epigrams for this chapter. In an 1827 letter to Joanna Baillie, quoted in the memoir written by her sister, Hemans mentions reading Childe

Harold to one of her sons, then age 11, and quotes the first line of this stanza, describing "Lord Byron's magnificent address to the sea." (Hughes 128).[14] Hemans's descriptions of the "the burning gold / Won from ten thousand royal Argosies" (lines 9-10) also echoes Byron's "Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain" (stanza CLXXIX line 2). Yet the echo of Byron also implies the treasure Hemans has not yet named: the "unknell"d, uncoffin"d, and unknown" dead (Byron, Canto IV, CLXXIX). If the sea has been a figure of denial (un-, un-, un-), then here Hemans turns this device back on itself, speaking refusal to the ocean. This is not the still, glassy ocean abruptly arrested by death of *The Forest-Sanctuary*. Instead, the ocean is almost unimaginably full, swelling with the treasures that Hemans reels off.

However, this material plenty is short-lived. Hemans's address turns to negation, denying the implied desire for either natural ("pale glistening pearls, and rainbow-colored shells") or man-made ("won from … royal Argosies") wealth that her initial question provokes. Hemans simultaneously details and disowns either knowledge or desire: "What hids"t thou" turns to "unreck"d-of" turns to "keep, keep thy riches". Yet the next stanza turns out again: "Yet more, the depths have more!—What wealth untold, far down, and shining through their stillness lies" (lines 7-8). While an initial reading of the poem might take the rejection of "worldly goods" in exchange for the return of loved ones at face value – reinforcing the interpretation of Hemans as the domestic patriot – closer attention reveals the crucial fact the speaker is asking for something else: for corpses. This call to

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[14] Hemans had a complicated relationship with Byron and Byronism; for a more thorough discussion see "*The Sceptic*: A Hemans-Byron Dialogue" by Nanora Sweet and Barbara Taylor on *Romantic Circles*.

"bring up the bodies" reveals an uneasy undercurrent to domestic patriotism. By asking the sea to "restore the dead" after a catalog of glistening artifacts, the reader is reminded not only of the value they placed in their loved ones, but of the materiality of the body. And corpses do not fare so well underwater. This is implied in Hemans's next invocation, that of submerged cities:

> Yet more, the depths have more!--thy waves have roll"d
> Above the cities of a world gone by!
>
> Sand hath fill"d up the palaces of old,
> Sea-weed o"ergrown the halls of revelry.
> --Dash o"er them, ocean! in thy scornful play!
>   Man yields them to decay (lines 13-18).

Here the sea is clearly note a preservation force, but one of decay and dissolution. Sand, sea-weed, and dashing waves possess a corrosive power. The ocean's 'scornful play" is matched by the speaker's tone. The bodies in "Treasures of the Deep" are un-figurable. They lack the substance Hemans usually attributes to her corpses and funeral statues - what Gates calls her rigid effigies (Gates 59).

Ted Underwood, in one of the few critical evaluations, calls "The Treasures of the Deep" a historicist catalog poem; essentially comprised of a list of historical artifacts and objects, resembling a textual cabinet of curiosities. Underwood argues that such a catalog dramatizes the expansion of the speaker's consciousness, and the power of immediate social sensation – granted the speaker extension outside of their own body and time. By cataloging, the poet takes pleasure in feeling haunted by historically distant testifying objects (116-7). Underwood's cogent argument that such poems focus on the gulf between speaker and object rather than on the objects themselves, allows for the poem itself to testify to a similar brand of "immortality" – or, at least, of survival beyond one historical moment. To this Underwood attributes the Romantic love of historicism. I would like to expand on this notion of historical survival to consider the ways in which the artifacts that Hemans's speaker actually desires are more tenuously preserved.

> Yet more! the billows and the depths have more!
> High hearts and brave are gather"d to thy breast!
> They hear not now the booming waters roar,
> The battle thunders will not break their rest.
> --Keep thy red gold and gems, thou stormy grave!
> Give back the true and brave!
>
> Give back the lost and lovely!--those for whom
> The place was kept at board and hearth so long,
> The prayer went up through midnight's breathless gloom,
> And the vain yearning woke "midst festal song!
> Hold fast thy buried Isles, thy towers o'erthrown--
> But all is not thine own (lines 19-30).

The objects through which the speaker is able to imagine the depths and reaches of the sea are rejected, and, subsequently, fade and turn metaphorically immaterial and insubstantial. In rejected the (traditionally masculine) valuable trappings of trade and empire, Hemans appears to be making an argument for the opposing values of the "true and the brave" dead. Indeed, Hemans detours briefly into these expected abstract qualities of the treasures the speaker desires. This catalogue of domestic virtues – the place kept at the hearth, a prayer or hopeless wish – is a familiar Hemans, the poetess of feminine mourning. Aligned with the public perception of "Mrs. Hemans," the poetess, this is the Hemans Tricia Lootens outlines as the domestic celebrant of empire in "Hemans and Home: Victorianism, Feminine "Internal Enemies," and the Domestication of National

Identity" (Lootens 238-53).[15] However, in the next stanza it is the abstract domestic virtues that retreat, replaced by the waves, sand, and sea-weed that devour Atlantis:

> To thee the love of woman hath gone down,
> Dark flow thy tides o'er manhood's noble head,
> O'er youth's bright locks, and beauty's flowery crown,
> --Yet must thou hear a voice--restore the dead!
> Earth shall reclaim her precious things from thee!
> --Restore the dead, thou sea! (lines 30-36).

The "love of woman" is uneasily conjoined with the unavoidable association of a "flowery crown" with "sea-weed overgrown," eschewing an entirely immaterial or transcendent reading of the corpses presented here, finally, as the "treasure" of the title. While the poem ostensibly turns the sea-burial's denial of the grave back on itself, rejecting the theft and demanding the return of the body, it is a largely unarticulated corpse. The damage done to the potential relic undercuts any potential restoration. While the speaker might be willing to exchange all the material "treasures" of the sea for the bodies of their loved ones, it is ultimately a futile request. And furthermore, even the poem itself provides a poor reliquary: Hemans removes it from its original contexts and creates, instead of individual consolation, collective loss. Rather than allow for the creation of a material record that substitutes for the dead and thrusts them back into the world of the living, sea-burial resists that restorative project. The sea renders the material immaterial.

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[15] The debate over whether Hemans supports or resists the oppression of women continues; Terence Hoagwood and Kathryn Ledbetter attribute this to the illusion that Hemans's poetry is "made of feelings rather than typography" (35). They cite Susan Wolfson's argument that Hemans attempts to celebrate women but runs into the resistance of a system of domestic oppression; Anthony John Harding, on the other hand, attributes to Hemans a project of memorialization that relies on oppression and death as a necessary backdrop. Terence Allen Hoagwood and Kathryn Ledbetter, *Color"d Shadows:Contexts in Publishing, Printing, and Reading Nineteenth-Century Women Writers*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. Harding, Anthony John. "Felicia Hemans and the Effacement of Woman." Ed. Feldman, Paula R. and Theresa M. Kelley. *Romantic Women Writers: Voices and Countervoices*, University Press of New England, 1995.

Often at stake for Hemans (and a co-commitment concern in later and particularly in political and nationalist readings of Hemans) is the moral/ethical status of death. What constitutes a “good death” is debated both by and through Hemans, typically with indeterminate results. While during the nineteenth century Hemans” most famous (or infamous) poem “Casabianca” – in which the “boy stood on the burning deck” and died for his country – became synonymous with the “pro patria mori” sweet death that would so provoke the World War I poets – that history has an unacknowledged trajectory through Hemans’s treatment and surprising interest in deaths at sea, a pattern that underlines and contradicts much of her own historical and archival agenda of monumentalization (line 1). Andrew Ashfield, in the introduction his anthology of Romantic women writers, notes “the persistence of the iconography of the sea, and its ambiguity as emblem of tumultuous creativity above and the scene of peace in the depths” in women’s poetry of the late eighteenth and nineteenth century (Ashfield xv). Hemans, however, appears to be inverting this trope. Instead, it is the depths that become a site of tumultuous creativity. Whether that constitutes a “rot” or a more productive mode of ‘sea-change” remains to be seen.

Often used figuratively to represent less physical metamorphoses and transformations, the ‘sea-change” is a particularly potent after-image of Romanticism - however, it is not generally attached to Felicia Hemans. The most well-known Romantic death at sea, of course, did not occur in any poem. When Percy Shelley's boat capsized in the Bay of Spezia in the summer of 1822, it was several days before the poet's loved ones knew he was dead and his body discovered. When his corpse was found, washed up on the shore, the damage was done – as detailed in the previous chapter, the body was unrecognizable from its eroded physical features. The 'sea-change" rendered Shelley's body illegible. Unlike Harriet Hughes's puzzled discussion of her sister's poetical interest in death at sea despite never being confronted with it in life, Shelley's death and subsequent transformation were afterward made to seem fated, as an important facet of his posthumous mythology.[16] Mary Shelley approved the addition of the quotation to Shelley's grave in an 1823 letter to Maria Gisborn:

> This quotation [the one from the Tempest on Shelley's grave] is pleasing to me also, because, a year ago, Trelawney came out one afternoon in high spirits with news concerning the building of the boat, saying, "Oh! we must all embark, all live aboard; we will suffer a sea change." And dearest Shelley was delighted with the quotation, saying that he would have it for the motto of his boat (*Letters MWS* 128).

Excerpted in Mrs. Julian Marshall's late nineteenth-century *The Life and Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley,* by the end of the century the anecdote appears to have been in common circulation. This story was also told in *Recollections of the Last Days of Byron and Shelley* (1858) as well as *The Shelley Memorials* (1859), by that time solidly positioned in the poet's posthumous mythology.

Hemans was a longtime reader of Shelley. She used his poetry as epigraphs to her own work (citing Alastor (1814), for example, in her *Tales and Historic Scenes, in verse*

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[16] Edward Trelawney, who took upon himself the final disposition of Percy Shelley's grave in Rome, claimed in a letter to Mary Shelley that "this quotation, by its double meaning, alludes both to the manner of his death and his genius" (27th April 1823).

(1818). Years later, she mentions, in a letter (April 3, 1831) sending one of the rare 1824 *Posthumous Poems* volumes to a friend. And, of course, there is the popular anecdote of Shelley's own interest in a teenage Felicia Browne, having read her first volume of poetry, though the letters he wrote were confiscated by her alarmed mother.[17] While there is no direct evidence that she was aware of the epitaph itself, a more truncated version – the choice of *The Tempest,* at least - was circulating during Hemans's lifetime, in venues she was likely aware of. The inclusion of a lengthy article on the Protestant Cemetery (chiefly, therefore, on Keats and Shelley), in the *Forget-Me-Not* Christmas annual of 1835 (though Hemans died in May of that year) suggests that the epitaph was in some popular circulation by then. Meanwhile, the notion of a 'sea-change" continued to develop as a specifically Romantic cultural artifact.

In an 1831 lecture on "The Diction of Poetry" James Montgomery gives this interpretation, which shares both imagery and religious sentiment with Hemans's descriptions of transformation at sea in "Treasure of the Deep":

> For as the sea is represented to convert relics of mortality into rare and precious substances - pearls, amber, and coral, which it throws upon the beach from treasures of darkness elaborated in its womb - so, from the unsounded depths of invention, the poet brings up, in new forms, old images and ideas, as different from what they were when they were received into his mind, as bodies, when buried in the ocean, were from what they became after they had 'suffered," that - 'sea-change / Into something rich and strange" of which we have now heard enough" (Montgomery 115).

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[17] Susan Wolfson tracks Hemans's responses to Shelley's poetry in her edition *Felicia Hemans: Selected Poems, Letters, and Reception Materials*. Ed. Susan Wolfson, Princeton University Press, 2000. Wolfson also provides some excerpts from Shelley's letters to Browne, and discusses their mirrored reception histories at mid-century in "Something Must Be Done: Shelley, Hemans, and the Flash of Revolutionary Female Violence." *Female Romantics: Male and Female British Writers, 1790-1835.* Edited by Beth Lau, Ashgate, 2009.

Like Hemans, Montgomery associates that underwater scene of exchange as an image of poetic invention that is materially inaccessible. However, read in juxtaposition with "The Treasures of the Deep," the sea-change reveals another potential way to understand the unreturned corpses of the dead as treasures, interweaving bodily and spiritual transformation. These apparent paradoxes often inhabit Hemans's work. While, for Hemans, there is always a potential desire for the spiritual and the eternal, the imagery she uses to approach those states in rooted in the representation of bodies and artifacts. In this way, Hemans's sea-burials and complex representation and subsequent rejection of material relics highlights the difficulty of locating the particular in the broad liminal space of the ocean. However, by extending this difficulty to some of her other poetry, we can see how these images of burial and exhumation are ultimately used to represent the tension between material vulnerability and recorded memory, especially when it comes to making emotional or spiritual connections with the past.

"The Treasures of the Deep" is itself an object circulating in an increasingly global nineteenth century economy, as I have shown. However, also like the presumably decaying and sea-changed bodies, it is not intact in its original circumstances. Poetry, both figuratively and materially, Hemans worries, is an incomplete posthumous record. Materiality, memory, and spirituality are ambiguously and imperfectly intertwined; the dead prove just as difficult to fix in poetry. Hemans's sea-burials are ghosted by literary connections between the relative vulnerability of dead bodies. However, her interest in these transformations seems to suggest, not all such changes are necessarily negative. While ultimately bodies are unstable, these relics of mortality might be transformed to something else – something more spiritual and ephemeral, even as it is represented by the life-history of objects. The sea-change, connected as it is to both the aesthetics of literary history during the Romantic period, by virtue of its Shakespearean origins, and to later representations of Romantic afterlives, also serves to connect Hemans's images of burial and exhumation to the broader themes of this dissertation. In particular, the tension between burial and exhumation, and how exactly the bodies will have changed in the meantime, is tied to the implications of a newly recognized material record for the poet's attempt to identify or outline gaps in personal or cultural memory.

This logic echoes in other Hemans poems, most notably "The Image in Lava," whose speaker disregards the works of man and empire: "Temple and tower have moulder"d, / Empires from earth have pass"d" (lines 5-6). "The Image in Lava" is the most often discussed poem of Hemans in relation to the question of what lasts. In the poem, those decaying temples and towers are juxtaposed with the sustained traces of "woman's heart … Those glories to outlast!" in the form of the impressions in lava found at Herculaneum, specifically a mother cradling her child in the moment of death (lines 7-8). The poem offers up the tension between a physical ruin and a representational image of affective ruin – the devastating "domestic" emotion of a mother for her child in the moment of death. Unlike many of her sea-burial scenes, Hemans is able to offer up a concrete body, available due to the technological innovations of modern archaeology. However, the artifact in question is not strictly speaking an exhumed body, but rather a plaster cast of a body-shaped gap, sometimes containing fragments of bone. The archaeologists who uncovered Pompeii and Herculaneium discovered they could pour plaster into gaps in the volcanic ash layer that covered the cities, and thus restore a body where a gap had been left when the original flesh had decayed. In other words, the archaeologist is able to recover an approximation of the dead body – but the object exhumed is altered into something strange and striking, not unlike suffering a sea-change. Hemans emphasizes the materiality of history while simultaneously making it clear that the material record is not a satisfying answer either.

Revisiting burial at sea as a poetics of dislocation and decay, however, highlights another gap in the literary record. Ultimately, stories of what happens to dead bodies, and subsequently their relics or memorials, are often about struggles to control the posthumous narrative of the person who died. This is particularly true of the most numerous dead buried at sea in the Romantic period – the dead of the Middle Passage. If the anxiety engendered by burial at sea is the lack of a physical site at which to gather and mourn, then the practice of throwing slaves overboard is a deliberate denial of the need to apply that anxiety to them - dehumanization in its most literal terms, as a rejection of the need to inhume or bury at all. Yet many discussions of ritualized burial at sea in the nineteenth-century do not discuss this treatment of dead slaves. Early in the eighteenth century as many as 30 percent of the men, women, and children enslaved in Africa died crossing the Atlantic. By 1820 this rate had dropped, according to Joseph Miller, to about 5 to 10 percent; the numbers remain staggering (Miller 436). Hemans utilizes the image of sea-burial to articulate anxieties about corporeality and the transference of memory, anxieties heightened by the possibility of dead bodies that were considered to have no affective value. Hemans's hesitation about the possibility of effective or lasting memorialization, particularly at sea, and particularly for the female exile who cannot survive when removed from her home ground, very subtly makes the absence of even the effort of memorialization for other marginalized figures visible.

Ultimately, these questions of recognition, material circulation and vulnerability are bound up in the same questions of aesthetics, continuity, and visibility I have addressed throughout. I will close with an example. An anonymous English scrapbook of poetry, compiled between 1814 and 1842, held by the Chawton House Library, contains fifteen separate poems about death at sea. The clippings, pulled from a variety of newsprint sources over thirty or so years, contain lines from Hemans (including "The Treasures of the Deep"), Shelley, Jewsbury, and Eliza Cook, as well as more generic, popular lyrics such as "The Sailor's Hymn" and "The Mariner's Grave." A blank book tightly packed with cut and pasted poetry, this kind of commonplacing indexes both an individual's reading interests and the availability of poetry in print. The curator of this scrapbook was particularly interested in the leading women poets of the 1820s and 30s, as the early choices of Hemans and Jewsbury indicate. Both poets are represented multiple times. Hemans's "Dirge at Sea" (1833), for example, is pasted in the bottom right-hand corner of the first page:

> Sleep ! — we give thee to the wave,
> Red with life-blood from the brave,
> Thou shalt find a noble grave:
> Fare thee well!
>
> Sleep! thy billowy field is won,
> Proudly may the funeral gun,
> Midst the hush at set of sun,
> Boom thy knell!

Lonely, lonely is thy bed,
Never there may flower be shed,
Marble reared, or brother's head
Bow"d to weep.

Yet thy record on the sea,
Borne through battle high and free,
Long the red-cross flag shall be:
Sleep! oh, sleep!

While the sacrifice of the (presumably) naval dead is redeemed by the "monument" of the flag of St. George, Hemans contrasts that abstract memorial with the "lonely … bed" that is denied marble gravestone, participation in natural generation of grave flowers, and relatives" attendance. The sea-memorial – "thy record on the sea" - is completely dependent on the continued ascendency of the English at sea, which combines intangible authority with the tangible presence of English ships in the same waters.

In *The View From the Masthead*, Hester Blum writes that "For sailors, death was a special 'subject for contemplation"; yet unlike mourners on land, sailors lacked an object to contemplate" (158). Felicia Hemans's poetic sea-burials intervene in this unfulfilled desire for stabilizing material rituals. While she calls attention to the potential for loss, her work also provides for a lingering posthumous presence, in albums and commonplaces and on tables and shelves. Hemans's work provides mobile markers and records of the occasion of burial at sea. However, as water damaged books show, those same mobile markers are in a constant state of potential transfiguration themselves, both material and spiritual. Taken together, Hemans's representations of the dead at sea and these reminders of poetry's tangibility – the reminder that poems, like the dead, requires the interference of the living – demonstrates what Julian Wolfreys calls textual haunting.

“We announce in various ways the power of texts to survive, as though they could, in fact, live on, without our help,” Wolfreys writes, continuing “we keep up the plot, the archival burial ground, saying all the while that the life or afterlife of texts is all their own, and not an effect of the embalming process in which we engage” (Wolfreys xi-xii). Hemans’s sea-burials provide another way to access the point of Wolfreys’s graveyard metaphor: when burial is impossible, the spectrality of the text is immediately visible, and its material body must be preserved. However, because of the peculiar contexts of maritime life and death at the turn of the nineteenth century – slavery, burgeoning imperialism – a specifically nautical aesthetics of such textual and material haunting carries an additional weight, or, maybe, potential. Blum’s emphasis on the inability to focus or ground death at sea is echoed by Philip Steinberg’s reminder that “Human encounters with the sea are, of necessity, distanced and partial,” and so are its representations (Steinberg 157). Yet so are our encounters with the dead, and with the literary. Sea-burial emerges from these contexts as a malleable figure for mourning, memory, and the ways in which poetry struggles to bridge both textual and material gaps. This, perhaps, is the value of identifying a nautical Gothic: that recognizing such an aesthetic might help identify and see the shape of the missing bodies in our partial histories.

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CHAPTER THREE: FOSSIL POETRY: THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES AND THE MATERIAL RECORD

"Such verses as these and their brethren," the physician-poet Thomas Lovell Beddoes wrote of his work 1827, "will never be preserved to be pasted on the inside of the coffin of our planet" (Letters 154). Beddoes argues against the vitality of his own work in extraordinary terms, amplifying anxieties about the material fate of poetry represented, for example, by Byron's jest in *Don Juan* that his lines might "only line portmanteaus" (Byron 14.14). Beddoes massively amplifies the implied obscurity Byron puns on, placing paper, paste and the manmade on the same immense geological scale as the planets. Referring ambiguously to either the coffin that is our planet, or a coffin in which our planet itself is buried, Beddoes's curious metaphor links literary to geological remains and effectively embeds his poetical works, autobiographical writing, and reception history in a rapidly enlarging nineteenth-century spectrum of antiquarian spectacle. In looking to the emergent field of geology for this metaphor, Beddoes was also participating in a shifting cultural response to what Martin Rudwick terms the "historicization of the earth" – the developing understanding at the end of the eighteenth century that the history of the earth was distinct from the relatively brief history represented by human records (Rudwick 3).

As Rudwick argues, early geologists, too, borrowed the language of antiquarianism and the grave to describe reaches of time beyond the human, and the world was reimagined as a massive grave. Another physician-author, James Parkinson, describes the earth's "enormous chains of mountains" as not only cartographical features but "vast monuments, in which these remains of former ages are entombed" (Parkinson 8). In Beddoes's framing of literary history and posterity as inextricable from the material concerns of extinction, I identify a new poetics of media mortality anchored in a nineteenth-century re-evaluation of the material record.

Beddoes's images of fossilization and extinction respond most directly to the descriptive work of continental turn-of-the-century natural historians Johann Friedrich Blumenbach and Georges Cuvier. Blumenbach, whom Beddoes studied under at the University of Göttingen in Germany and admired greatly, was an early proponent of what would become a theory of extinction, and his work on fossils relied on characterizing them as monuments of the geological past (Rudwick 427).[1] Blumenbach's work, importantly, marks a shift in the perception of fossils from examples of displaced species to vanished ones. Cuvier, the great comparative anatomist, took up Blumenbach's speculations and in 1796 gave a paper, "Memoir on the Species of Elephants, Both Living and Fossil, " at the French National Institute. This paper established three distinct species of elephant – the Indian, the African, and one now extinct and known only via the fossil record.[2] Cuvier's paper was viewed as the first definitive proof of extinction, which he linked to theories of catastrophism. Cuvier observed what he identified as dramatic change in fossils across connecting strata, and concluded that these changes were cause by massive natural upheavals, or catastrophes. The most recent example of this appeared, then, to be Noah's flood. This view would eventually give way, by mid-century and the emergence of Darwin, to a much more gradual perception of extinction. Similarly, catastrophism was gradually dismissed in favor of its competitor, uniformitarianism, as championed by the British naturalists Charles Lyell and James Hutton.[3] Uniformitarianism postulates that change instead happens very slowly across long spans of time, and, importantly, that change happens in the present the same way it happened in the past. This proto-evolutionary understanding of fossils is perhaps more familiar to us. However, while Beddoes was writing in the 1820s and 30s both theories of geological change – and their implications for the development of life – were a matter of active debate and circulation.

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[1] Blumenbach's lecture 'Specimen archaeologiae telluris' (1801) delineates three distinct geohistorical eras. For an early print version see Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, *Specimen archaeologiae telluris*. Heinrich Dietrich, 1803.

[2] A translation of the full paper, as well as invaluable context, is available in Martin Rudwick, *Georges Cuvier*, *Fossil Bones, and Geological Catastrophe: New Translations and Interpretations of the Primary Texts*. University of Chicago Press, 2008, pp. 18.

The stability and primacy of 'the world' was being replaced by a new understanding that the familiar was the *present* world, built out of the bones of a former one. Within these contexts organic remnants, such as fossils, emerged as important non-textual witnesses to the distant past. Similarly, the ruin and the relic, previously bounded by human history, now had to be understood on a much larger geological and chronological scale. The landscape shifts from the setting for a picturesque ruin to a ruin itself, made out of the spoils and remains of, in Parkinson's words again, "innumerable beings." The burial of countless known and unknown species embeds death in the landscape just as thoroughly as the burial of human bodies and the establishment of human monuments. Consequently, the destabilized notion of 'ruin' extended beyond previously understood boundaries between the past and present. When Beddoes jests about dying planets he not only, as Ute Berns suggests, looks to new geological paradigms of death, but reimagines the place of contemporary literary artifacts in such a universe (Berns 270).

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[3] Virginia Zimmerman attributes the Victorian foothold of uniformitarianism in part to a lack of confrontation with religion and the imbrication of the fossil with reading and writing. Lyell's extremely popular *Principles of Geology* "established an alternative earth history, neither refuting nor complementing the chronology recounted in the Bible … In the absence of the familiar theological narrative, metaphors of reading and writing infused geology with a sense of interpretive control" (Zimmerman 30).

This disruption of the historical and literary record is unconsciously echoed in Beddoes's own posthumous reception. Beddoes published only a few times within his own lifetime, all early: chiefly, a volume of poetry called *The Improvisatore* in 1821, at the age of 17, and a drama called *The Bride's Tragedy* in 1823. He left England to complete his medical degree in Germany the next year, and for rest of his life remained based on the continent, first at Göttingen and later at Zurich. Beddoes did not publish poetry again; and in January of 1849 took his own life after a series of accidents and infections resulted in the amputation of a leg. However, Beddoes had continued to write throughout the 1820s and 30s, and at his death left a hefty collection of manuscripts to his friend Thomas Forbes Kelsall. Kelsall, also one of Beddoes's chief literary correspondents throughout his life, would send the magnum opus closet drama *Death's Jest-Book* to press in 1850 and the *Poems, Posthumous and Collected*, in 1851. However, this relatively straightforward chain of inheritance was broken following Kelsall's own death in 1872, and the subsequent strange circumstances surrounding the disappearance of nearly all Beddoes's manuscript material engendered his twentieth-century reputation with an air of uncanny preservation.[4]

In a bizarre twist, Kelsall willed the bulk of Beddoes's manuscripts and letters to Robert Browning, who had once expressed a passing interest in the poet.[5] James Dykes Campbell transcribed the manuscripts in 1886, and while those copies are now held by the Bodleian, the originals were lost in the dispersal of Pen Browning's estate in 1912 and presumed destroyed. The lack of the manuscripts (a loose assemblage that an early twentieth-century editor, H. W. Donner, calls rather tellingly "The Browning Box") renders Beddoes's work largely visible only as posthumously published collected works and the odd surviving volume of *Improvisatore* (1821) or *Bride's Tragedy* (1822). In *Litell's Living Age* of 1894, Mrs. Andrew Crosse, commenting on the recent publication of Beddoes's letters, relates a story of Edmund Gosse and Robert Browning opening the literal box in which Kelsall had bequeathed the manuscripts to the poet. Hesitating, Browning reportedly said, "I am sure we shall come upon some dreadful secret. I cannot bear to lift the lid" (158).

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[4] One manuscript retained by Kelsall also survives in the Bodleian – Beddoes' early work *Pygmalion* (1825). MS Don. D. 76. However, the relative unpopularity of that poem combined with the allure of the vanished bulk of the manuscript material has served to obscure this, and it is largely ignored by discussions of Beddoes's literary afterlife. This is likely not helped by Beddoes own description of the poem as "considerable trash" (May 15, 1837, *Letters* 216).

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The secret Browning predicted was realized in a note from Kelsall relating the circumstances of Beddoes's suicide, a fact he and Beddoes's cousin Zoe King had carefully concealed at the time. In the wake of that revelation, the manuscripts had to be transcribed, collected, and reprinted not only to consolidate Beddoes's literary leavings into a coherent text, but in order to repackage the dead poet's biography. Kelsall and Gosse, as editors, mobilize a narrative of bequests and found texts to memorialize Beddoes in place of the suicide note; their editions are memorials that elide the possibility of scandal, and appeal to a potentially more conservative readership. This complex arrangement of material and textual envelopes is perhaps what led another early twentieth-century editor, F. L. Lucas, say of Beddoes that it "seems as if part of him had perished young: his portrait as an undergraduate has a mummy-like air; he resembles his own Wolfram, a dead thing in a living world, gentle once but hardened now" (Lucas xxiii). [6] The posthumous construction of Beddoes we encounter here is a composite object, caught between corpse, text, and portrait.

Kelsall and Gosse's production of the printed Beddoes we are now familiar with, however, was not completely successful at eliding how his composition practices escaped the confines of the linear codex. While Beddoes avoided printing his work for the latter half of his life, he engaged in a fairly lively literary correspondence, writing more or less regularly to Kelsall and other select friends. Beddoes's poetry was often both folded into, and textually intertwined with this correspondence. Literary correspondence is often imagined, not unlike the fossil, as the site of buried treasure that might yield, if carefully mined or excavated, additional detail about the subject. Ute Berns describes Beddoes's letters as "a veritable goldmine for … placing his work within a network of historical discourses" (Berns 3). Berns's skillful reading of the letters with and against one another, as well as Beddoes's dramatic work, reveals the full extent to which Beddoes's seeming eccentricities were in fact responding to specific cultural debates. Letters also function as sites of material and tactile exchange, passing from one hand to another. Beddoes's letters, serving as both container and paratext for his later literary work, therefore become a unique locus for understanding his projection of literary objects onto the longue durée of the material record.

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[6] This is a curious association, perhaps echoing the nineteenth-century craze for mummy parts and the phenomenon of spectacularized mummy unwrapping. Beddoes would certainly have been familiar with these practices himself; Blumenbach traveled to England in 1871 at the invitation of Sir Joseph Banks, and while mingling with members of the Royal Society helped open several mummies. Several years later, in 1796, one example was sent to him at Göttingen by Thomas Turner, and was still held by the University when Beddoes arrived. (See *Johann Friedrich Blumenbach – Online, Göttingen Academy of Sciences*, Blumenbach-online.de, "Chronology").

MUMMY BEDDOES

Paper, poetry, the dead, and remains both organic and inorganic were inextricably entangled in the first half of the nineteenth century. As criticism of recent decades by both literary scholars and historians of science has shown, the Romantic arts and sciences are not distinct or separate modes of literature. The half-century between 1780-1830 generally defined as the Romantic period in English literature, was also the period during which the foundational concepts of modern geology were established.[7] Noah Heringman argues that Romantic geology and Romantic literature were mutually constituted discourses, and that what he calls an "aesthetic geology" developed during the Romantic period helped to shape disciplinarily going into the long nineteenth century. Looking to literary antiquarianism, Heringman's work illuminates the relationship of visual knowledge work to authorship, and "restore[s] the connections between the literary and the empirical" (Heringman 7). Similarly, Jon Klancher looks to the nineteenth-century history of the 'institution' in order to explain the relationship between Romantic arts and sciences. Klancher too identifies the ability of the arts and sciences to "figure" one another, so that their terminologies and struggles towards autonomy are revealed as much more essentially entangled than previously understood (Klancher 17). Ralph O'Connor and Martin Rudwick, among other scholars of science and spectacle in the nineteenth century, also regard the history of geology and its representations as a historically specific merger of material and metaphor. O'Connor speaks specifically of the nature-as-book analogy here, which proposed that the earth could be 'read' as a record of God's works: "This textual analogy was reinforced by the antiquarian habit of viewing rocks and fossils in a continuum with human remains, as the 'monuments,' 'archives,' or 'medals' of nature" (O'Connor 42).[8] The early nineteenth-century interest in death and the relic is a special province of neither the literary nor the scientific.

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[7] For more see Rachel Laudan, *From Mineralogy to Geology: The Foundations of a Science, 1650-1830*. The University of Chicago Press, 1987. Rudwick focuses more specifically on the "Age of Revolutions" between 1776-1800.

[8] See also Martin Rudwick, *The Meaning of Fossils: Episodes in the History of Geology*. University of Chicago Press, 1976.

Despite continuing critical investment in the Romantic posthumous imaginary, the role of this confluence between the extension of the material record and the ways in which Romantic writers represented posterity is under-acknowledged. Andrew Bennett, in *Romantic Poets and the Culture of Posterity*, convincingly argues that for a number of earlier Romantic writers, their interest in posterity was a projection forward to idealized readers who would be capable of understanding their work. Beddoes, however, anxious that the enormous reach of material decay undermined any such certainty, does not fit easily into such a narrative. While recent Beddoes scholars, in particular Michael Bradshaw and Berns, have ably explored how Beddoes's medical and scientific training shaped his philosophical approach to mortality, the influence on his understanding of literary history is less understood. Examining Beddoes's deployment of rhetorical fragmentation, Bradshaw describes Beddoes' poetics as "more fascinated by disintegration than integrity" (Bradshaw 5). Arguing that Beddoes' philosophy of immortality "acts on and is acted upon by the structural features of Beddoes's texts," Bradshaw makes a convincing case for Beddoes's investment in material and textual entanglement (Bradshaw 3). Shifting from literal to literary immortality, how are we to understand this very different brand of canonization? Michael O'Neill contends that Beddoes's morbid poetics suggest "a longing for absorption into the canonical body of English literature; at the same time it can also express a frightening sense of literary aloneness" (O'Neill 107). I argue that this tension between absorption and rejection is present in Beddoes's treatment of his material texts as well, and resonates deliberately with the dialectical function of the fossil that is both a part of and separate from the surrounding rock.

Within these dual contexts – the widening of time and attendant debates such as that between catastrophism vs. unitarianism with the biblical flood as an important example, and his own fraught investment in poetic posthumousness – Beddoes's poetry, which often juxtaposes religious imagery with the imagery of natural history, represents a curious and difficult to define body of writing. For example, Beddoes employed the flood repeatedly as a chasm of geological and, thus, historical separation, though not without ambiguity. A fragment from *Death's Jest Book*, given the title 'The Slight and Degenerate Nature of Man,' bears the subtitle 'Antediluvianus loquitur':

> Pitiful post-diluvians! from whose hearts
> The print of passions by the tide of hours
> Is washed away for ever
> As lions' footmark on the ocean sands;
> While we, Adam's coevals, carry in us
> The words indelible of buried feelings,
> Like the millennial trees, whose horary barks
> Grow o'er the secrets cut into their core (164-5).

Positioning the fragment as a speech given by an antediluvian, or pre-Flood, man, Beddoes probes the reading of remains and traces. Intimations of writing – "the print of passions," and "secrets cut into their core" – are transposed into material traces that are either ephemeral or illegible. Both are inaccessible and prone to petrifaction, whether buried or scattered. While the poem may at first glance appear to condemn the post-diluvian as fickle and impermanent, what is permanency without legibility? Moreover, it is time and tide that washes away the trace of the post-diluvian, which seems a self-reflexive commentary on the original diluvial event. Similarly, the poem is a fragment ultimately excised from the longer work, itself a piece of de-contextualized ephemera. Beddoes plays here with both the formation and reception of the material record. Throughout this chapter I will focus on alternating modes and materials of textual survival presented as geological, and consider their consequences for a fuller portrait of Beddoes's concerns with the afterlife and posthumousness.

Decay is debilitating, and the fossil makes a reluctant witness. Louis Figuier, in the popular English translation of his *La terre avant le deluge*, or *The World Before the Deluge*, describes the frustrating unfamiliarity many felt when facing these strange remnants of the past as late as the 1860s:

> These fossil bodies have neither the beauty nor the elegance of the greater part of living beings; mutilated, discoloured, and often deformed, they seem to hide themselves from the eyes of the observer who would interrogate them, and who seeks to reconstruct, with their assistance, the Fauna and Flora of past ages (Figuier 12).

These remains resist easy reconstruction. Death produces a distinct lack of cohesion, and dead bodies are materially transformed from living ones. This passage illustrates the desire to reconstruct a readable, understandable visual narrative of the past, and the recognized difficulty - impossibility - of truly doing so. Figuier's description reveals a concern with aesthetics that is explicitly associated with the fossil's ability to testify; their ugliness, he claims, is a chief factor in their illegibility. On the one hand, this seems to mark an incongruity with nineteenth-century understandings of comparative anatomy. However, they also register a change in the cultural role of collecting fossils. Figuier has no doubt, also as a result of their ugliness, that fossils are meant to serve as documents of the material record. The fossil, for Figuier, has lost its ornamental status. It has thoroughly become a disappointingly ugly and difficult speaking witness.

Figuier positions material disruption and ruin – mutilation, coloration, deformation – opposite narrative coherence. However, this is also the language of Romantic historiography, with the historian, geographer, and poet positioned as interpreter and architect of a reconstructed past. As Lionel Gossman puts it, "the historical imagination of the nineteenth century was drawn to what was remote, hidden, or inaccessible" (Gossman 24). This is reflected as well in the emergence of the "fragment" as a defined literary form, and in the primacy, in the British tradition, of the histories of individuals. Ruins have come to emblematize core Romantic concepts and anxieties about historical trajectory, political upheaval, and particularly the fall of empires. More recently, William Keech reminds us that "ruin fosters restoration," insisting on a combination of terms – ruin, restoration and survival – whose competing implications and definitions form a shifting rather than stable material network (RC Praxis, 2012). The frustrated legibility of the past, no longer completely contained by Biblical or other historical narrative, required the creation of new categories.

I would like to reframe the conversation about Beddoes and his audience from a question of poetics to a question of aesthetic recognition. Andrew Bennett describes a Romantic poetics that imagines an ideal posthumous audience whose judgment becomes "the necessary condition for the art of writing itself" (Bennett 4). The poet is able to imagine a future reader who will be able to comprehend the text. On the other end of the spectrum, Figuier emphasizes the aesthetic inadequacy of fossils, attributing to their "mutilated, discoloured, and deformed" incompleteness an ability to "hide themselves" from the future audience (Figuier 12). If we are to consider the posthumous possibilities of "fossil poetry," then these imagined audiences must be put in conversation. What are the conditions of writing vs. the conditions of textual survival? And consequently, in what ways do the space of the grave and associated sites become materially significant to the perpetuation of the text and its future reception?

FOSSIL POETRY

The son of the successful physician and chemist Dr. Thomas Beddoes, a friend of Coleridge, and Anne Edgeworth (the sister of Maria), Beddoes spent his youth in a community of scientists, writers and educators. Following an uneven undergraduate career at Oxford, Beddoes left England to pursue his doctoral degree in Germany.[9] By the time he arrived at Göttingen in 1825, Blumenbach at 73 was a towering figure, and had already taught many leading scientific voices of the day. He still lectured frequently, and

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[9] Beddoes was at Gottingen for four years, from 1825 to 1829. He was expelled, for reasons related to his outspoken politics and mercurial temper. He finished his medical degree at the Bavarian university of Wurzburg in 1831. However, he was subsequently kicked out of Bavaria for publishing anti-establishment pamphlets in German, and relocated again to Switzerland, where he stayed, barring two short sojourns in England, for the rest of his life. See for example, Frederick Burwick, "The Anatomy of Revolution: Beddoes and Buchner," *Pacific Coast Philology*, 6, 1971, pp. 5-12; and "Death's Fool: Beddoes and Buchner," *The Haunted Eye: Perception and the Grotesque in English and German Romanticism*, Winter, 1987, pp. 274-300. See also Raphael Hormann, "'Liberty['s] smile melts tyrants down in time': T.L. Beddoes's *Death's Jest-Book* and German Revolutionary Discourse in Heine, Borne, and Buchner." *The Ashgate Companion to Thomas Lovell Beddoes*. Edited by Ute Berns and Michael Bradshaw, Ashgate, 2007, pp. 81-96.

Beddoes was a fervent admirer, describing him in one letter as the finest living writer of German (he had recently become un-enamored of Goethe) (*Letters* 73-4). Beddoes writes of attending Blumenbach's lectures in the same breath as he does composing poetry. In one letter to Kelsall from Dec. 4th, 1825, he describes how inseparable the two pursuits are to him: "The studies of the dramatist & physician are closely, almost inseparably, allied; the application alone is different" (Letters 80). Likewise, Blumenbach strongly encouraged treating fossils as historical documents, frequently employing antiquarian metaphors.[10] Beddoes, sitting in lecture, must have been impressed by the fossil's potential as one of the "most important and instructive parts of all parts of natural history" (Blumenbach 298).

The fossil's newly recognized ability to serve as a document put pressure on distinctions between natural and artificial writing. Beddoes's fossil manuscripts provide a possible interlocutor. When *Poems by the Late Thomas Lovell Beddoes, Author of Death's Jest-Book, or The Fool's Tragedy,* was published in two volumes in 1851, it included an opening "Memoir" compiled from Kelsall's personal remembrances and was illustrated throughout with excerpts from their correspondence. Beddoes' attitude towards publishing in these letters is often negative and abusive. In May 1827, for instance, he wrote to Kelsall "I fear that Printing is a devil whom we have raised to feed & fatten with our best blood and trembling vitals" (*Letters* 143). In one exchange from the spring of 1837, when Beddoes had begun to consider publishing again, Beddoes writes to Kelsall in March and asks him to send "a copy of a certain scene and song wh you, being the possessor of the only existing MS. Thereof" (Letters 211). Beddoes's next letter, from May of the same year, thanks Kelsall for his prompt response and makes this comment on the manuscripts that were, presumably, sent along:

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[10] Blumenbach's lecture title of 1801, "Specimen archaeologiae telluris," for example, specifically recognizes the contemporary use of the Latin term 'archaeologia' to describe the study of antiquity quite broadly (Rudwick, *Bursting the Limits of Time*, 426).

> I know not what the creator of a planet may think of his first efforts when he looks into the cavernous recesses which contain the first sketches of organized life beings, - but it is strange enough to see the fossilized faces of ones forgotten literary creatures years after the vein of feeling in which they were formed, has remained closed and unexplored (Letters 211).

Beddoes figures his fragmentary manuscripts as fossils, material remnants of the past that have died, decayed and been recovered (or uncovered) in a new form. The explicit comparison of Beddoes's own work to a forgotten geological past trapped in caverns beneath the earth, revealed to the contemporary eye only as "fossilized faces of … literary creatures," thrusts literary belatedness, represented by Beddoes's work - now seeing the light of day "years after the vein of feeling in which they were formed, has remained closed and unexplored" – into a larger discursive field of material and ancient bodies. This description also places the material manuscripts themselves on the same spectrum of antiquarian spectacle and display as the fossil.

Beddoes figures his own literary works as geological strata; layers of dead matter pressed one on top of the other, the different veins "closed and unexplored." The sense of scale that Beddoes evokes through this metaphor is immense: it is not the cavernous recesses of "the planet," or even "our planet" as he phrases it in the quotation with which I opened this essay, but "a planet." Ten years later, Beddoes's universe has widened even further. Again, his anxiety is explicitly material, rooted in an understanding and deep awareness of the paper and ink that compose the manuscript and literally underwrite the fragmented text. The previous circulation of fresh manuscripts is thus juxtaposed with this geologist's act of uncovering and opening.

Beddoes draws on the dialectical potential of the fossil in order to figure self-conscious alienation from his manuscripts, theorizing a version of the literary archive that operates as a material record first and a textual or narrative record second. Rather than predict an ideal future audience for his work, Beddoes instead treats his texts as artifacts, embedded at happenstance throughout some thirty years of manuscripts and letters. Literary history, no less than any other history of the nineteenth century, had to reconcile its relationship to a shifting material record. As Beddoes might serve to remind us, the making of these histories, too, shared a vocabulary: "I have been turning over plays in the British Museum," Beddoes wrote in November of 1824, "and verily think that another volume of specimens might be very well compiled" (Letters 41).

Nor did those concerned with the history of poetic image overlook the potential of this shared aesthetic discourse between geology and literature. Beddoes's description of a literary fossil participates, albeit from within the relatively closed structure of Beddoes's immediate circle, in a much broader new mutual entanglement of geological and literary figurations. Ralph Waldo Emerson coins the evocative term "fossil poetry" in "The Poet" (1844) in order to describe a poet's ability to discern the hidden meanings of words. Drawing on the fossil as an image that mediates not only between past and present, but life and death, Emerson argues that

> Language is fossil poetry. As the limestone of the continent consists of infinite masses of the shells of animalcules, so language is made up of images, or tropes,

> which now, in their secondary use, have long ceased to remind us of their poetic origin. But the poet names the thing because he sees it, or comes one step nearer to it than any other (Emerson 22).

In other words, the fossil allows Emerson to imagine a similar record for language, in the process likening the poet to the geologist who is able to uncover and exhume meaning – if not with total knowledge, then at least with a closer approximation than the general public.

Seven years later the term is adopted by the linguist Richard Chenevix Trench in two 1851 lectures. Trench has read his Emerson, and utilizes the phrase to meditate on the ability of the linguist or philologist to delineate the development of languages in the same way that studying fossils and their placement in geological strata provide a lineage and chronology for the earth and animal species. Trench writes that

> Language is the amber in which a thousand precious words have been safely embedded and preserved … 'just as in some fossil, curious and beautiful shapes of vegetable or animal life...are permanently bound up with the stone, and rescued from that perishing which would otherwise have been theirs,- so in words are beautiful thoughts and images, the imagination and the feeling of past ages, of men long since in their graves (Trench 4-5).

The language of "rescue" that Trench employs here is interesting; Emerson focuses on the "infinite masses" of pressed remains forming anew material, undistinguished. The poet, for Emerson, does not recreate (or rescue) the "real" picture of any individual remain, but instead is able to perceive and suggest earlier meanings. Trench's description also implies a slippage between the material and textual record, presenting the material metaphor of the fossil as a way to access the historical narrative. Isobel Armstrong describes Trench's geological metaphor as constituting "a hierarchy of change in which the earliest meaning is the truest and essential meaning of a word … the legitimate or originary meaning is embalmed in history" (Armstrong 251). While Armstrong turns to consider Trench's efforts to rationalize colonialism by reading "the language of the savage [as] the manifestation of a fallen state," I would argue that the invocation of a material record is not only metaphorical, but to an extent, literal (Armstrong 251). Several years later in 1857 Trench would help launch what was to become, eventually, the *Oxford English Dictionary*, a project supported by a massive, global archival effort that took decades to complete.[11] A descriptive dictionary required the literal excavation and extraction of quotations from old books and manuscripts, each word accruing its own thick material record. The fossil emerges from Emerson and Trench's work at mid-century as a rhetorical tool for these new accounts of literary and linguistic processing – and, importantly, one that connected mining the literary material record to the geological spectrum.

Emerson and Trench are more contemporaneous with the posthumous publication of Beddoes's poetry and letters than their composition. However, reading the confident deployment of the fossil within a complex transatlantic discourse of poetry and poetics alongside Beddoes's private correspondence of two decades previous makes visible the ways in which his thinking was not disconnected or singular. Reading Emerson and Trench allows us to excavate the broader historical contexts of Beddoes's thought. I use the term "fossil poetry" to signal Beddoes's rearticulation of poetry's relationship to its material circumstances. In other words, when Beddoes addresses the material substrates of his work, imagining various ways in which it may survive or disappear utterly, he is not only concerned with the posthumous viability of his own texts but the consequences of these changing paradigms of access and memory for media history writ large.

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[11] See Sarah Ogilvie, *Words of the World: A Global History of the Oxford English Dictionary*. Cambridge University Press, 2013.

PAPER BODIES

As seen in the "fossilized faces" exchange, Beddoes' letters were an important vehicle for literary exchange and collaboration. Beddoes was in the habit of sending his manuscripts to Kelsall for annotation and comment. Another example hails from the same letter of 1827 as the "coffin of our planet," and in fact almost directly precedes it (Letters 154). Beddoes refers to Kelsall's affection for his early drama *The Bride's Tragedy*, and inscribes the verse Kelsall would title in the 1851 edition "Song, on the Water" (Letters 152). What follows the poem is one of Beddoes's characteristically charming statements on his own work, half scold and half self-deprecation: "You hardly deserve it for the last time you did not say thankye for a great something snake wh. I had caught and caged in a sonnet for you" (Letters 153-4). Poems like "Song, on the Water" are embedded within the thick history of literary conversations between Beddoes and his chief literary correspondents, Kelsall and Bryan Waller Procter (also known as the poet Barry Cornwall). In this example, Beddoes presents the poem as an object – a curiosity, a specimen or souvenir. Understanding the letter as a site of tactile exchange necessitates understanding the letter as, almost always, something written on paper. An examination of how Beddoes represents and treats paper in his letters, then, is crucial to understanding to what extent Beddoes describes poetry as material and tactile.

The comments on paper found in Beddoes's correspondence usually adhere to one of two themes. The first is the quality or state of the paper. For example, in an April 1827 letter to Kelsall, Beddoes opens with the complaint that "This is an odd bit of paper, but you must excuse it," continuing with a rhetorical flourish that he "shall not thwart the rising deity because the rags on wh he is to vent his fury are not exalted to the highest perfection of Paperhood" (Letters 127). Beddoes' anxiety about paper is in part an anxiety of reception, seemingly over what Kelsall will "read into" to scrap paper. Beddoes allows that different qualities of paper will convey a different impression to the recipient. In an earlier letter to Kelsall, from March 1825, Beddoes asks his friend to read some manuscripts in similar terms – "not quite a quire of spoiled paper accompanies this. I believe the valuable autumn-hued envelope is the most deserving of the collection" (Letters 58). Beddoes substitutes the quality of the paper for the quality of the work, utilizing seemingly flippant concerns about the availability of good vellum in order to express concern about his prose or his relationship with the recipient (Letters 127).

Like many authors at the turn of the nineteenth century, Beddoes understood that the fate of poetry depends on the fate of paper. These concerns echo, for example, what Christina Lupton terms the "knowing books" of the eighteenth-century – texts that understand their own mediation (Lupton 2). Lupton argues that although paper seems a "solid material referent" it "turns out, however, to feed some of the period's deepest skeptical concerns," a quality she connects to the impossibility of the author and reader actually sharing the same page of paper, thus destabilizing the knowing book's attempt to ground itself (Lupton 70). Over the first several decades of the nineteenth-century the difficult relationship between author, page, and reader is heightened by the incipient birth of the modern paper industry. Until the 1820s, paper in Europe was primarily made by hand from cloth remnants bleached, boiled, fermented and pulped. For the well-to-do, animal-skin vellum was also still available, although it was not commonly used for printing. Rag paper manufacturing was at its peak in the 1820s, but it was also on its way out. The invention of paper machines in the late eighteenth century made the manufacturing process much more efficient, and the fresh supply of paper fueled a rapidly expanding printing industry. However, the demand for rags to make that much paper was beginning to outstrip the available supply. It was a problem that wouldn't be totally resolved until nearer the end of the century, when inventors discovered ways of breaking down the sturdier fibers of hard woods.[12] In Beddoes's time, both producers and consumers of paper were increasingly dependent on recycling and the remnant, as Beddoes intimates with his usual candor in an 1826 letter to Bryan Waller Procter: "A quantity of our modern indifferent fellows have been cheaply reprinted by different speculating booksellers … a pity that they have no good selector, who could spare them the pains of recondemning paper and print to the remaking of such trash" (Letters 121).

Consequently Beddoes's references to, specifically, paper that is spoiled, wasted, inadequate or unlikely to survive contextualize the description of his manuscripts as contingent remains (Letters 154). As Leah Price puts it, "to think about the transmission of paper is to think about the contingent the unmentionable, and the mundane" (Price

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[12] For more on the history of paper manufacture, see Nicholas Brisbane, *On Paper: The Everything of its Two-Thousand Year History.* Knopf, 2013; and Richard L. Hills, *Papermaking in Britain 1488-1988*. Bloomsbury, 2015.

219). Price's discussion of paper turns on legal and technological developments several decades later in the century than Beddoes's lifetime - the 1861 repeal of taxes on paper, and the rise of wood-pulp paper, as well as the uses to which paper was put outside of reading (219). Price's gripping late-century account of bookish waste also reveals an economic arc - the decline of waste-paper's value at the end of the century, as recycling became less central to the industry. Prior to that late-century decline, however, the distance between waste and relic was less distinct. Price quotes, for example, "one early nineteenth-century inventor [who] imagined paper manufacture itself as a kind of grave-robbing," proposing an act of parliament that would prohibit the use of linen – an increasingly scarce paper-making resource – as burial shrouds or attire in order to preserve future paper from perishing in the grave (Price 229-30). Within such a paradigm bodily and bookish remains occupy a similarly uneasy middle ground between the dirty and the transcendent, not unlike the fossil.

"Fossil poetry," viewed through this lens, is a poetics of estrangement predicated on a material record. By rearticulating the survival of paper on a geological and planetary scale, Beddoes reimagines a literary posthumousness that mediates between the historical and material records. Noah Heringman argues that "the rock record represents the earth simultaneously as the substance and the text of history, generating a materiality located precisely between the two materialities recently competing for the objects of Romanticism, that of the letter and that of history" (Heringman, "Rock Record," 55). Similarly, Beddoes reimagines along the lines of that materiality an estranged posthumous poetics in an attempt to undergird the dependence of literary history on the physical vagaries – decay, disappearance, destruction – of a material record, at a significant cultural moment. The rock record and Beddoes's fossil poetics both contribute to an emerging aesthetic imaginary of the relic and memorial rooted (appropriately, looking back to Emerson and Trench) in the etymological history of "fossil," derived from the Latin "fossus," or "having been dug up" (OED, "fossil"). The book-object, as a result, is assigned a place in the material record.

INTERLUDE – *DEATH'S JEST BOOK*

In the third act of Beddoes's closet drama *Death's Jest-Book*, the character Melveric sacrifices a letter in order to summon his dead beloved back to life. The letter contains a promise written in the blood of his former friend, Wolfram, "In which he swears that, dying first, he would / Borrow some night his body from the ground, / To visit me once more" (Act III, Scene III, 92). The Duke, subsequently quarreling with and murdering his friend, instead asks the mystic Ziba to use the letter to resurrect his wife:

An incense for thy senses, god of those,
To whom life is as death to us; who were,
Ere our grey ancestors wrote history;
When these our ruined towers were in the rock;
And our great forests, which do feed the sea
With storm-souled fleets, lay in an acorn's cup:
When all was seed that now is dust; our minute
Invisibly far future (Act III, Scene II, 96).

This short address to Death connects paper, blood, and the history of the earth as the materials of resurrection. Beddoes mixes the language of natural generation – “seed” – with the language of artificial or generated history, again projecting both onto an “invisibly” vast timeline. The future and the past gain visibility only in their shared remoteness from the present day. Life and death also merge on that scale. The dead can come back to life, provided life and death are rendered the same on a cosmic level.

Ute Berns describes *Death’s Jest-Book* as “a Romantic play [pretending] to be an Elizabethan drama that is set in the Middle Ages,” invoking its own internal Elizabethan medievalism (Berns 43). *Death’s Jest-Book*, therefore, “makes a point of exploring history’s multiple layers in depth” (Berns 43). I bring up this matter of genre and periodization here in order to illustrate the ways in which Beddoes treats his texts as excavation sites. The play’s internal theory of resurrections functions similarly: the archaeologist of the future is capable of restoring to the past some of its color. However, the question of misrecognition is raised again here as well. The resurrection is botched; Melveric succeeds in resurrecting the knight Wolfram, not his wife. Melveric’s intentions are ignored; instead the text is followed to the letter. The next day, Melveric marvels that he can “look like other men, who have been sleeping / On quiet pillows,” for “the look of the world’s a lie, a face made up / O’er graves and fiery depths” (Act IV, Scene I, 102). In the aftermath of resurrection (or posthumous survival, if you will) the world is reduced to the remains of a former: graves and a molten core.

BOOK VIOLENCE

Beddoes left instructions in his suicide note for Kelsall to "look at my MSS. and print or not, as *he* sees fit" (Gosse xxxiv). It is tempting to read Beddoes's suicide as a part or extension of the estrangement from his manuscripts he expresses throughout his life. The suicide note, resting "folded on his bosom," posthumously becomes a signifier of the manuscripts thus consigned or abandoned to Kelsall (Gosse xxxiv). Subsequently, as Beddoes's body is interred, his literary corpus is, albeit slowly, *dis*interred. Accompanying this stop and start exhumation were biographical efforts, as I have noted throughout – Kelsall and Gosse both wrote 'Memoirs' that quoted extensively from Beddoes's correspondence. Therefore, I want to conclude by examining an incident that nearly all of Beddoes's biographers, editors, and reviewers have seized upon as particularly representative of his attitudes towards the potential survival of his early work.

Beddoes published a volume of juvenilia while an undergraduate at Oxford titled *The Improvisatore.* In later correspondence, he denigrates it regularly. For example, in an 1826 letter to Kelsall, Beddoes uses the book as proof of why he is turning to anatomy instead of poetry, conflating the practice of reading with dissection: "How I envy you the pleasure of dissecting and laughing at such a grotesque fish as *The Improvisatore*" (Letters 105). This metaphor again projects the book onto a material spectrum beyond the literary. Beddoes imagines interactions with the text as an interaction with its material body, putting distance between the mental act of composition and the violent cutting and examination of reading. However, I would contend that Beddoes is not necessarily concerned about "failure" when he describes his work this way. Rather, he seems to find a kind of pleasure in anatomizing the book. In fact, Beddoes had earlier attempted to do the act of dissection himself, destroying copies of the volume whenever he encountered them. Kelsall describes it thus:

> Of this little memento of his weakness, as he used to consider it, Beddoes soon became thoroughly ashamed: and long before he left Oxford, he suppressed the traces of its existence, carrying the war of extermination into the bookshelves of his acquaintance; where, as he chuckled to record, it was his wont to leave, intact in its externals, (some gay binding perhaps of his own selection,) but thoroughly eviscerated, every copy on which he could lay his hands (Kelsall xiii).

Although Kelsall attributes these actions to shame, Beddoes is laughing as he does it, and laughing as he regales his friends with the tale. While the act is represented as morbid, that tone seems inflected by its self-conscious posthumousness, and particularly the later reader's knowledge of Beddoes's suicide. It is interesting too that Kelsall describes Beddoes's feelings towards the book as those towards a memento. In this description, the literary object is again viewed as a relic without the condition of posthumousness. Calling the book a memento also forces the text into the position of a thing. Mementos are sites or containers for affective responses. Secondly, it is interesting that Kelsall claims Beddoes "suppressed the traces of its existence" but left the books "intact in [their] externals" (Kelsall xiii). *The Imporovisatore* becomes bibliographical taxidermy, emptied of its vital organs but with its outward appearance preserved.

Rather than suppressing the trace, such an act of evisceration highlights and emphasizes the existence of a corpse. Although the text is removed the book remains, mutely testifying to what it used to hold. These destroyed books are immediately things of the past, deliberately defamiliarized and rendered literally fragmentary and disparate. A friend wishing to re-read Beddoes's work would have to assume the role of comparative anatomist himself, identifying damaged parts and imagining some past version of a whole. Rachel Poliquin argues that the primary expression of taxidermy is a disorienting, ambiguous human longing associated with the natural world and the inevitability of organic decay (Poliquin 6). There is an echo of this quandary in Beddoes's refusal to completely remove or destroy his books, despite his distaste for the text. Reviewer John Forster retells the story in this way:

> It was hardly out, however, before he was heartily ashamed of it; and the gaily-bound copies he had given to his friends but a month or two before, he would go about among their bookshelves privately and grimly eviscerating, with a chuckle to think he had left them only its glittering outside (Forster 448).

Forster, too, uses the graphic, anatomical language of evisceration, and attaches the adjective "grim" to the process. The text is treated as waste-paper with particularly "low" connotations - as entrails – echoing Price's descriptions of paper waste later in the century. This description is a reversal of the dominant mindset by the end of the century that elevated the text (the internal) over the cover (the external). However, the tension between the insides and outsides of books so grimly highlighted by Beddoes's gutting of his own published work was hotly debated during the early decades of the century. The attention paid to the covers and the bindings of books, typically by collectors, was pathologized as "bibliomania" – an obsessive interest in or lust for the appearance of books with little regard for whether or not the text contained was of any value.[13]

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[13] For some more extensive discussions of bibliomania see Holbrook Jackson's aptly titled *The Anatomy of Bibliomania.* The University of Illinois Press, 1950; and Karin Littau,

Forster's choice of the word "glittering" smacks of this, implying a decorative exterior that is now a façade, with nothing of substance behind it. Beddoes's book-murder ought to be read within this wider context.

As Jon Klancher eloquently puts it, the Romantic period witnessed "a rising crescendo of bibliographic violence" (Klancher 87). The movement referred to as 'Bibliomania' sometimes expressed its passion for editing and reconstructing the materials of literary history with the knife, as increasing numbers of readers took to extra-illustration, denuding some books to enhance others.[14] Others sought material for scrapbooks or albums, a practice sometimes called "writing with scissors."[15] Other maligners of books were categorized as 'Bibliotaphs' intent on 'burying' valuable editions in private collections.[16] All of these potential acts of violence reflect a culture testing the boundaries of mediation – and posthumous survival.

These taxidermied books might also be read on the same spectrum of spectacularlized abandonment to the material record as Beddoes's representation of fossilized manuscripts. I would like to suggest that this attention to disintegration is not

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Theories of Reading: Books, Bodies and Bibliomania, Polity, 2006; and James Raven, "Debating Bibliomania and the Collection of Books in the Eighteenth Century," *Library and Information History*, 29.3, 2013, pp. 196-209.

[14] H.J. Jackson has a wonderful discussion of annotation and extra-illustration from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries in *Marginalia: Readers Writing in Books*, Yale University Press, 2001.

[15] For more on scrapbooking see Ellen Grubar Garvey, *Writing with Scissors: American Scrapbooks from the Civil War to the Harlem Renaissance*. Oxford University Press, 2013.

[16] For a late century example, see Leon Henry Vincent, *The Bibliotaph and Other People*. Riverside, 1899.

only rhetorical, but grounded in a changing understanding of literary artifacts. The largely imagined spectacle of Beddoes's ruined books resonates with the display of literary relics throughout the nineteenth-century. For example, Percy Shelley's drowned body was identified by the book of Keats in his jacket pocket.[17] While that book was burnt with Shelley's remains, a copy of Sophocles recovered from the wreck several months later was donated to the Bodleian in 1893 and promptly put on display.[18] Some decades earlier, frozen books from the wreck of the Franklin Expedition were exhibited at Greenwhich and London in 1859; Adriana Craciun identifies this as a spectacle "oscillating between relic and waste" (190). Most of these ruined books are unreadable - putting into question the category of book - but violently situated in time by their status as remains and their display as historically significant objects. Beddoes's fascination with finding a different language for the posthumous survival of texts thus belongs to a century-long spectrum of cultural myth-making in both the arts and sciences.

The destruction of *The Improvisatore* has imaginatively refracted throughout Beddoes's own faltering resurrection as a figure of scholarly interest during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. While I don't intend to imply that a causal relationship between Beddoes's destruction of his early books and the fragments published as his posthumous and collected works, the destruction of the book provides a useful paradigm for discussing uncomfortable relationships with literary remains. *The Improvisatore* provides a startlingly literal example of how Beddoes's work might be said to survive as fossilized remnants, highlighting the labor needed to make them speak.

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[17] Leigh Hunt describes this artifact thus: "Keats's last volume also (the Lamia, &c.), was found open in the jacket pocket" (Hunt 15).

[18] Shelley's water-damaged edition of Sophocles is currently viewable through the Bodleian's online exhibition 'Shelley's Ghost.' http://shelleysghost.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/

BEDDOES AND THE RESURRECTION OF PERCY SHELLEY

Much has been said about Beddoes as a poet of death and resurrection. However, while critics of Beddoes have explored the implications of physical and spiritual resurrection in Beddoes' work, as well as been aware of the poet's early interest in the posthumous reputation of Shelley, little has been done in terms of literary resurrection through the medium of the book. Beddoes' earliest extant letters, however, deal with exactly that: his youthful contributions to Mary Shelley's and the Hunt brother's 1824 attempts to publish a collection of Shelley's poems.

In 1824 Mary Shelley published the first posthumous volume of her husband's work, *Posthumous Poems of Percy Bysshe Shelley*. Mary edited the collection, and it was published under the auspices of Leigh Hunt and his brother John. The publication was also financially supported, in part, by a young Oxford poet and medical student named Thomas Lovell Beddoes. Beddoes, with his friends Kelsall and Proctor, offered to sponsor 250 copies of a posthumous volume of Percy's work. Beddoes met briefly with Mary Shelley, as well as her father William Godwin and Shelley's friend Thomas Jefferson Hogg. The book was quickly suppressed by Shelley's father, who threatened to cut off Mary and her young son from his financial support if she persisted. However, this early gesture demonstrates, for Beddoes, both an interest in seeing the posthumous legacy of as-yet unlauded poets and an attention to the material and financial realities of such a publication. Beddoes's letters to Kelsall about the matter from 1824 mock the Hunts, and more obliquely, himself, for being willing to go to such lengths:

> For the twinkling of this very distant chance we three poor honest admirers of Shelley's poetry are certainly to pay: if all, a few, as many more who have professed the same would do as much in proportion to their power, nothing would be better than to print 500 or 750 copies (if it pleases the Gods of waste-paper,) for Mr. John Hunt to sell at two-pence a pound three or four years hence (Letters 3).

Beddoes is frustrated with Hunt for pressuring him to offer for twice or three times as much money, though interestingly he expresses this through a dismissal along the lines of "hardly worth the paper it's printed on" (Letters 3). What is more difficult to discern, through the editorial bias of both Kelsall, as the organizer of Beddoes's letters, and Mary Shelley's efforts to control her husband's reputation, is Beddoes' opinion of the edition's content. Beddoes' favorite Shelley work was *The Cenci* (1819), which went unmentioned in the 1824 volume.[19]

Beddoes's involvement in securing Shelley's legacy while simultaneously ripping apart his own books offers a useful juxtaposition for considering what new connections between materiality and posthumousness were forming. I want to suggest that Beddoes' interest in the flood and in 'antediluvian worlds,' at a time when just what that meant had shifted, thanks in part to the theories of his own teachers, is visible in the attitude he exhibits towards his literary remains. The definition of literary inheritance, both from the past and left to the future, was shifting rapidly as well.

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[19] In an April 1826 letter he calls The Cenci "the best, because truest," and then scolds Kelsall for sending him a copy, claiming with characteristic melodrama that in comparison "I open my own page, and see at once what d—d trash it all is: --no truth or feeling" (*Letters* 106).

EXHIBITING THE LITERARY REMAIN

"Fossil poetry" takes a turn towards the literal at mid-century. In his *Geological Facts: Or, The Crust of the Earth, What it is, and What are its Uses* (1855) the amateur geology teacher Rev. W. G. Barrett turns Emerson and Trench's metaphor back on itself: "Geology is the fossil poetry of the earth" (Barrett 51). Barrett construes fossil poetry as the act of "finding material for thought and reflection," in all aspects of the natural world. Mixing theology and Tennyson, Barrett quotes *In Memoriam* to explain the thrill of geology: "There rolls the deep where grew the tree / O earth! What changes hast thou seen!" (Tennyson CXXIII lines 1-2, Barrett 51). Geology and the elegy are introduced as compatible, producing imagined past landscapes capable of channeling affect. In this way, death and dead things are incorporated into a matrix of geology and poetry. "Fossil" had to be rewritten by Emerson and Trench into a poetic term before it could be borrowed in turn by the geologist – however, now the geologist utilizes "fossil poetry" as a literary term specifically citing Trench and quoting from that lineage, rather than applying "fossil" in its originally geological sense to a geological subject.

This mutual relationship between geological and literary metaphors did not only develop in written texts. At the same time, visual evidence of fossils and associated theories of prehistory was becoming more and more extensive. Proof of the former world was frequently on display. Books played several roles in establishing this visual culture.

Books on fossil collection, classification, and arrangement, for example, served as portable exhibits. Also, while the "book" itself was perhaps not as stable a format as it is often perceived to be, the form of the book in turn provided a familiar imaginative structure for geologists.

The popular Enlightenment analogy of the "Book of Nature" capitalized on this, for example, providing a methodology for "reading" the natural world as a coherent linear narrative. For some geologists, though, the "Book of Nature" could also be closed and static on the shelf. In the biblical scholar and geologist Lord Granville Penn's 1828 *Conversations on Geology*, the illustration chosen to depict the order and positions of different layers of rock is a row of books on a shelf, with the 'Holy Bible' as the central keystone. The strata are represented as a bookshelf. The illustration is labeled a "familiar method," and the bookshelf is a safe and recognizable sight, particularly anchored by the Bible. O'Conner points out that the prominence of the Bible as keystone text marks the position that "its content is the basis of all true scientific systems" (O'Conner 155-6). Writers like Penn believed that the new knowledge of geography served as proof, essentially, of intelligent design. The preface to *Conversations* posits that decisive evidence of the extinction of some species and the creation of others pointed to the hand of an intelligent creator: "where is a beginning to be found, but in the will and fiat of an intelligent and all-wise Creator?" (Penn xi) By visually representing the newly articulated geological design of the world as the old articulation of the world's design, Penn smoothly integrates new knowledge into the existing theological framework.

As Klancher argues, book collectors and bibliomaniacs of the nineteenth century were essential to the founding of institutional arts and sciences. In large part, their centrality was predicated upon ways of organizing (or disorganizing) their bookshelves:

> While the new Romantic-age bibliographers were starting to amass a huge if discontinuous database of early modern book knowledge, in service to a wider project of reconfiguring the 'arts and sciences,' the more extreme and disorderly practices of the bibliomaniacs were effectively raising the larger question of what a 'book' really is (Klancher 87-88).

The Bible-as-keystone lends a suggestion of stability not only to the new science of geography, but to the question of the new bibliographers. If geological strata can be contained in the shape of the Bible, or at least tied to it, then the form of the book also has to keep its shape. It is also important to recognize that the ways in which books were often unbound or taken apart by eighteenth and nineteenth-century readers. The Bible was not always a unifying or consolidating image; in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries this is highlighted by its popularity as a subject for extra-illustration. Requiring the unbinding and supplementation – or, at the very least, the layering of external paper and glue – of a book, the extra-illustrated volume questions the limits of the codex form. The extra-illustrated book disrupts conventional definitions of consolidation and wholeness. Luisa Cale identifies in the work of extra-illustration the definition of "the constitutive elements and the experience of the book as an object," making an important distinction between destructive and constructive relationships with books (Cale 23).

Books and fossils both operated in the early nineteenth-century as dynamic, changing markers of history, stability, and the seemingly opposed forces of destruction and construction. They are also, importantly, embedded in discourses of death, posthumous survival, and resurrection. With that in mind, I want to turn now to consider the mid-century reception of Beddoes's work as another, separate moment of confluence between the fossil and the literary remnant.

Over the course of Beddoes's lifetime the status of the fossil itself was changing from exotic but present to something familiar and local but of the past. Early fossils were assumed to be the remains of animals still living, but in other parts of the world. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century that understanding began to change; fossils ceased in some ways to be static representations, becoming instead dynamic indicators of a rapidly expanding timeline. Thus, when he compares his own manuscripts to fossils, Beddoes articulates a similar feeling of alienation from his own literary work that is both material and intellectual. And when that work begins to really circulate posthumously in the 1850s, it is participating in a much larger conversation with and about the dead. While I don't intend to imply that a causal relationship between Beddoes's destruction of his early books and the fragments published as his posthumous and collected works, the destruction of the book provides a useful paradigm for discussing uncomfortable relationships with literary remains.

If the persistent problem of the fragment is the imagined whole, then an under-examined dimension of that in the nineteenth century is that the fragment poem becomes a material problem; it becomes a problem not only of metaphor, but of the literary remain, the literary fossil, literary taxidermy. And this is within a cultural context in which such objects offered new and potent confrontations with the past. Leah Price argues that taking the end of life for a book seriously must mean "replacing the traditional question ‘what is a text’ [with] ‘when is a text’? “In the wood-pulp era,” she continues - the period into which Beddoes’s published works were emerging - “only bibliographers continued to notice the prehistory and afterlife of legible objects” (Price 217). The material text’s ability to trouble boundaries of chronologically marked life and death slips from view.

Price’s use of the word ‘prehistory’ is particularly apropos, as is her suggestion that prehistory becomes the territory of specialists just as it emerges. While the word is commonly used know to designate a period before recorded history, as the OED suggests, the word was first used in 1836 by the *Foreign Quarterly Review* to describe pre-Romans; it would emerge in greater prominence during the 1850s and 60s, particularly with the publication in 1851 of Daniel Wilson’s *The Archaeology and Prehistoric Annals of Scotland* and in 1865 of John Lubbock’s *Pre-Historic Times as Illustrated by Ancient Remains*. As Matthew Daniel Eddy points out, Lubbock’s use of ‘pre-historic’ “firmly linked the word to material evidence such as tools and fossils” yet “the literary connotations of the word remained influential in academic and public domains well into the twentieth century” (Eddy 3). Eddy’s deft explanation of prehistory’s mutable nineteenth-century implications provides a useful entry into Beddoes’s figurative fossil poetry, which renders palpable that space between material evidence and literary connotations.

I argue that Beddoes’s “skeleton complex,” the psychoanalytic reading that much of the century’s critics have attempted to push onto him, can be more productively located in the historical situation of his works rather than his individual psyche. That the historical situation of his writing and his being published are separate and distinct has been elided to some extent by his lasting characterization as an essentially posthumous and "always already" dead poet. Beddoes's own attitudes towards textual circulation and ruin embed the scientific paradigm of the 'former world' into a Romantic poetics. Quite separately, the publication and reception of Beddoes's body of work in the mid-to-late nineteenth century thrusts the textual ruin or posthumous literary remain into a different field of dead objects on display.

I want to turn now in more detail to one of the contemporary reviews of *Poems, Posthumous and Collected,* written by John Forster for the Examiner in 1851, which I also mentioned in the discussion of Beddoes's violence towards the *Improvisatore*. According to Forster, Beddoes's frequently fragmentary work exhibits an initial haziness that nevertheless has an insistent and achievable sense of both past and future embodiment:

> You see but an arm, a hand it may be, the curve of a lip; but the blood is in the veins, and inspiration has been there. Formless, characterless, undistinguishable, there is yet the opening of what may be life, and must be large and noble life – 'Like the red outline of beginning Adam…' (Forster 612).

The mid-century posthumous publication of Beddoes's "remains" must paradoxically address extinction and creation in the same breath. In a sense, Forster presumably holds the result of creation in his own hands: Beddoes's collected work assembled and bound into two volumes after his death. There is a curious tension between the material cohesion of published posthumous fragments and Forster's *imagined* disparate parts. The "opening" Forster describes can be construed, in a sense, as the opening of the book, creating an affective link with the dead poet and the life suggested in his fragments, conveyed through touch. I would like to suggest that some of the tension here lies in the difficulty of reconciling life and death in a posthumous literary work. Similarly, the fossil represents both a dead thing and, potentially, a recreation that, while still dead, nonetheless exhibits mobility and energy as a result of its assembly and interpretation.

Forster borrows this quote from Kelsall's memoir, which in turn attributes it to Beddoes as a description of his writing and editing process. Beddoes would bring an unfinished drama to Kelsall one night, and then, even after being told it was good, would not continue or finish it but write another. Traces of these fragments exist only in Kelsall's impressions, "thus deeply cut into their one observer's mind. The fine verse just quoted is the sole remnant, indelibly stamped on the editor's memory, of one of these extinct creations" (Kelsall xvii). Here Kelsall is the one to pick up the language of extinction in reference to Beddoes's lost fragments, those he is unable to include in the collection he presents following this memoir. Thus, the critical framework of both editor and reviewer establishes Beddoes's work as fragmentary, but in such a way that borrows from the distinctive language of geology and natural history. The repetition of 'Adam' also implies the inclusion of the poetic works – not visible as texts but as remnants or relics that are "cut," not written – in a system of naming or classification.

Beddoes's extant posthumous works are thus put on display as relics, suggesting through their presence (not necessarily their contents or texts) a large and extinct life. That this echoes Beddoes's own description of his manuscripts as fossil faces threatens to create a false correlation that would contain these descriptions to Beddoes's work rather than placing it within the context of a larger cultural shift. Ultimately I am arguing that during the nineteenth century understanding the world as a tomb – and literary remains as fossils, and vice versa - meant rethinking materiality as central to posthumousness, rather than as an obstacle to posthumousness.

CONCLUSION

Beddoes's projections of posthumousness turn on the metaphoric potential offered by the fossil – an inherently dialectical image negotiating the boundaries of organic and mineral substances, past and future. Beddoes's fossil poetry contributes to the emerging semiotics of Romantic natural history that renders palpable and visible the space between material evidence and literary connotations. Troubling assumptions that literature is solely the province of history and the historical record, Beddoes's estranged and fragmented literary remains have been intermittently exhumed, cleaned, rearranged, and displayed. Recasting these processes as part of the paradigm shift that accompanied the discovery of deep time, I argue, Beddoes's complex, explicit engagement with embodiment and literary survival, which has been used to frame his posthumously published work since its first appearance in the mid-nineteenth-century, disturbs lingering narratives of disciplinary formation. Perhaps it is in part this disruption, and not only his resistance to easy formal and temporal classification - he has variously been called a late Romantic, an early Victorian, and an Elizabethan throwback - that has left Beddoes in relative critical obscurity.

One aspect of Beddoes's continuing critical neglect has been the attempt to classify or place him within the canonical hierarchy of the British literary tradition, with most early scholars struggling to assign his work an imitative style or genre. In an 1825 letter to Kelsall, Beddoes challenges the attempt to revive the literary past in pastiche that he would be so often accused of:

> These re-animations are vampire-cold. Such ghosts as Marloe, [SIC] Webster &c are better dramatists, better poets, I dare say, than any contemporary of ours, but they are ghosts; the worm is in their pages, and we want to see something that our grand-sires did not know (Letters 50).

Beddoes's deployment of wormy decay here extends the language of burial and exhumation, emphasizing the material status of literary inheritance, and refusing any easy assumption of accurate reconstruction from what remains. The reiterated description of dead authors as ghosts makes clear a brand of estrangement not dissimilar to the attitude Beddoes displays towards his own work. However, Beddoes also expresses a desire for something new in literature, undermining the lingering critical portrayal of Beddoes himself as a literary ghost, vampire, or mummy.

The Oxford English Dictionary dates the earliest usage of "bookworm" to describe a reader to 1580, some eighty years before it was initially used specifically to describe "any of various insects that damage books" (OED "bookworm). By Beddoes's time, both meanings were in regular usage – and for Beddoes the pathologist, the grimmer implications are clear. More importantly, by invoking the proverbial worm, Beddoes again brings together animal and bookish bodies on a broader historical scale. Janelle Schwartz argues convincingly for the worm as a Romantic "taxonomic terror" that, not unlike the fossil, upsets categorization (Schwartz xv). The image of the worm joins with a poetics of posthumous abandonment again when it is echoed morbidly in Beddoes's suicide note: "I am food for what I am good for – worms" (Gosse xxxv). The uncanny relationship between poet and reader, bodies and texts is again specifically located in the vulnerability of paper, the base material of manuscript and printed book alike – and is presented as both a joke and an unavoidable eventuality, as the necessary proximity of the note and Beddoes's corpse makes uncomfortably clear. This closing image of the worm on and in the page, therefore, reinforces the work of the fossil manuscript in making impossible any easy distinction between the representation of the material and historical record for literature, modeling an embodied, affective posthumousness that emerges at the interstices of Romantic science and literature.

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CHAPTER FOUR: RATES OF DECAY: MARY SHELLEY'S *THE LAST MAN* AND EXHUMING THE BOOK

The past provides a powerful incentive for groups concerned with preventing cultural decline and extinction: preserving texts is a necessary condition for cultural autonomy and survival (4).
-*Burning Books and Leveling Libraries*, Rebecca Knuth

Bodies of the dead that were put to rest or abandoned hundreds or even thousands of years ago are thrust up into the present by the human equivalent of geological forces (32).
-*The Work of the Dead*, Thomas W. Laqueur

What does it mean to exhume a book at the beginning of the nineteenth century? Sarah Tarlow identifies the early nineteenth-century in Britain as the historical point at which "individual identity came to inhere in the body," resulting in a variety of funerary and mourning practices expressing a desire to "actively pursue and construct emotional and highly individualized relationships past the point of death" (Tarlow 1). While Tarlow's argument focuses on the human corpse, as I have noted at various points throughout this dissertation, the slippage between corpse and memorial object is also fundamental to nineteenth-century representations of literary afterlives and their attendant material cultures. In this chapter, I explore the ways in which Mary Shelley utilizes metonymic representations of dead bodies, grave goods, and memorial texts in and around her 1826 novel *The Last Man* to position the work of nineteenth-century literary historiography as a peculiar and material labor of the dead.[1]

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[1] *The Last Man* was first published on January 23rd, 1826 (according to Godwin) in three volumes by Henry Colburn in London. Colburn had also published Mary 1823 novel *Valperga* with his partner Richard Bentley. He was an acquaintance of Shelley's father,

Thomas Laqueur's recent argument for understanding the ways in which "the dead body matters, everywhere and across time, as well as in particular times and particular places" contends that corpses, despite existing as decaying matter for a few weeks or months, without any exceptional preservational conditions, nevertheless have and continue to exert powerful social labor (Laqueur 1). In opening this chapter, I have paired Laqueur's eloquent image of the geological upheaval of corpses interrupting linear representations of the past – and particularly, of a deeply entangled historical and material record – with Rebecca Knuth's similar evocation of extinction and survival as the stakes of preserving literary history in its material bodies (Knuth 4). The book and the corpse are often curiously sympathetic bodies, a relationship made all the more interesting by acknowledging the potential for tension between their respective rates of decay. Human bodies decay fairly rapidly, while books, particularly those made using vellum or cotton and linen rag paper (in other words, Western books and paper prior to the mid-nineteenth century introduction of much more acidic wood pulp paper), can survive in a fairly stable condition for several hundred years, given moderate levels of humidity.[2] As a result, the juxtaposition of the human and the most common textual body

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William Godwin, and published some of his own novels and histories in the same decade. Godwin reportedly leaned on Colburn to publish *The Last Man*, encouraging him to pay particular attention to the introduction.

[2] According to the Library of Congress, cotton and linen rag paper and properly treated, de-acidified wood pulp paper, is capable of surviving for several centuries, rather than decaying in 50-100 years ("The Deterioration and Preservation of Paper").

of the nineteenth century, the book, produces a complicated temporality echoed in the elegiac structure of *The Last Man*.[3]

Shelley's apocalyptic novel frames the first encounter between reader and text as a meeting of bodies. While playing tourist near Naples in 1818, the anonymous narrator and her companion explore what they believe to be the Sibyl's cave at Cumae. Making their way through a narrow passage, they ultimately arrive at a large cavern furnished by a bleached goat skeleton, a stone bench and "piles of leaves, fragments of bark, and a white filmy substance, resembling the inner part of the green hood which shelters the grain of the unripe Indian corn (3)."[4] These various organic and undetermined fragments, inscribed with a variety of symbols and texts in ancient and modern languages, reveal to the narrator the story of a plague set in twenty-second century – though, as she readily admits, "scattered and unconnected as they were, I have been obliged to add links, and model the work into a consistent form" (4). The result is the beginning of the twenty-second century figured through the beginning of the nineteenth, a temporal future that is bound up in the spatial past.

This editorial (or interpretative) work is variously described as deciphering, modeling, and fashioning, actions performed explicitly by the "hands" of the narrator (4). The resulting narrative is presented to us as a material, tactile work, framed as the exhumed grave goods of the Sibyl. In other words, Shelley insists that novelistic texts are also material texts, and locates both literary history – and importantly, the labor of literary historiography – within material paradigms of burial and exhumation. The cave is situated like a tomb, tucked deep into the back of the system of caves and illuminated by a ray of sunshine from above; the Sibylline leaves are unearthed, or exhumed, from this resting place. Through this frame narrative, Shelley imagines a literary history inescapably entangled in the book and the corpse, imaginatively figured as a tactile, multi-media environment suspended between the artificial and the organic.

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[3] For further discussion of these themes see for example George E. Haggerty, "'The End of History': Identify and Dissolution in Apocalyptic Gothic," *Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, Vol. 41, No. 3, Fall 2000, pp. 225-246.

[4] Mary Shelley, *The Last Man*, Edited by Anne McWhir, Broadview, 1996. All subsequent citations refer to this edition.

The narrator's work of translation draws on a complex, interwoven web of materials suspended on the persistent representation of corpses, funeral rites, and graves as both narrative and thematic touchstones. The transitions, translations, and movements of bodies between these sites and the ways in which they accrue both matter and meaning is metonymic to the persistent removal and 'translation' of literary bodies in the nineteenth century. In the preface, Shelley's narrator refers to her source texts as "these sacred remains" that she has "adapt[ed] and trans[lated] … giving substance to the frail and attenuated Leaves of the Sibyl" (4-5). 'Translation' holds a variety of obscure or obsolete senses active at the beginning of the nineteenth century - or in relatively recent memory - that allow for a much more complex and nuanced understanding of the material and figurative matrix Shelley establishes through this framing narrative.

The English word "translation," most commonly used now to describe the corresponding substitution of one language for another, has its etymological roots in the Latin "translation" meaning 'carried over,' the past participle of "transferre," to bring or carry over. According to the OED, the oldest meaning of 'translation' in English dates to the fourteenth century and describes material or physical transference - "removal or conveyance from one person, place or condition to another" - with a particular ritual significance in the Catholic tradition: "The removal of the body or relics of a saint to another place of interment." However, two other specific historical uses of the word also have significance for Shelley's story: "translation" from earth to heaven without death, referring to the Biblical tale of Enoch but later used to describe the death of the righteous; and the use of "translation," from the later seventeenth century to the nineteenth, to refer to the "transference of disease from one person or part of the body to another" (OED, translation). While Shelley did not have access to a comprehensive dictionary like the OED, these etymological histories and potential usages haunt or overlay her vocabulary, like the layers of linguistic sediment and fossilized meaning that Shelley's contemporaries Emerson and Trench would speculate on some twenty years later. The language of translation, therefore, illuminates as inextricably entangled *The Last Man's* central themes of textual composition, the veneration of the dead, and plague. In other words, when the narrator asks her readers to judge her 'translation' of the leaves, she underscores the embodied nature of the book, the corpse, and the artifact.

Employing this lens of translation, as the transportation and interpretation of bodies, this chapter examines the ways in which Shelley's novel wrestles with the ways in which the literary record is mutually constitutive of a tangible but vulnerable material record. In *The Last Man* the body of the book and its disposition within or along a material record is not incidental. Rather, Shelley foregrounds material transference and transformation – work done by hand. The work of mourning, specifically, is a material thing that exists on and along a non-human scale of time and decay. Moreover, that record is produced by the joint labor of the dead body and the hand that translates it. The corpse of the buried book exhumed in the frame narrative, blurring boundaries between organic and artificial, resonates throughout the novel's representations of death and memorialization. *The Last Man* is thus littered with bodies that slip between text, corpse, grave, monument and memorial. Addressing three specific moments of interment, this chapter will examine how Shelley makes media mortality insistently visible at a historical moment when both the transformational capacity of books and the natural world were being recognized with new attention to scope and specificity.

Shelley's sibylline editor has also been described through a variety of contemporary lenses that reflect her participation in a culture that has yet to neatly separate the literary from more materially-oriented practices such as collecting and archaeological exploration. Samantha Webb describes the narrator as an antiquarian; Timothy Ruppert describes her as a chresmologue, or distributor of prophetic texts. Ruppert sets these descriptions at odds, arguing that "by portraying Shelley's Englishwoman as an antiquarian, Webb misses the fact that she is also a modern-day chresmologue, that is, a collector who facilitated the circulation of prophetic texts in the classical Roman world" (Ruppert 147). The narrator is also commonly described as an editor. Ann McWhir notes, for example, that "The Last Man is an explicitly mosaic text, the leaves of the Cumaean Sibyl deciphered by a particular editor … the body, Mary Shelley's novel demonstrates … is the condition that lends meaning to all seemingly transcendent ideals and values" (McWhir 169). Charlotte Sussman, meanwhile focuses on the collusion of time and space in Shelley's representation of literary dissolution: "The Last Man intimates that the capacity for texts to bear cultural memory is as limited as the human communities that produce them … Shelley's novel of the future posits that literature is doomed not just by time but also by space" (Sussman 299). Mary Favret describes the figure Shelley presents in her posthumous organization of Percy's work as "an editor more involved in the tangible world than her subject" – an observation that also resonates, to an extent, with the work of *The Last Man's* narrator (Favret 20). Where they differ, however, is in the way in which tangible involvement in the world is represented as tangible involvement in the subject.

However, I would support Patricia Cove's recent argument that "very little work has been done on materiality in *The Last Man* despite the novel's preoccupation with mortality and physical disintegration" (Cove 20). While, as indicated above, there is a significant body of scholarship on these themes, materiality is largely treated as a metaphor for literary production, rather than as a literal description of literary products. Cove's argument, too, ultimately revolves around the ways in which Shelley's Gothic landscapes function as figures of psychological and emotional trauma, a turn away from the implications of the material landscape on its own terms. The novel demands more attention to the ways in which materiality is represented and functions within the text and as a part of the memorial and monumental ecology in which individual paper copies of the book circulated. As many readers of *The Last Man* have noted, including McWhir, Favret, and Cove, Shelley tests the permanence of writing – however, few of those readers have explored the materiality of such survival (or such passing away) as a question in and of itself, rather than as a metaphor for an ultimately disembodied text.

This chapter, therefore, positions *The Last Man* between two early nineteenth-century cultural impulses to organize and classify that the novel engages and, to an extent, refuses to disentangle from one another. The first is the field of book history – not, as Jon Klancher has explained, the same discipline with which we are now familiar, recreated in the mid-twentieth century, but a field of book history that still took its connections to literary history for granted. As Klancher puts it:

> Advocates of a new bibliographical field in the early nineteenth century believed book history *was* literary history, and they construed that history as a wide array of codex histories - those of writing, printing, typography, bookmaking and binding, the formation of private libraries and public archives, as well as nearly all categories of modern knowledges and imaginative works (Klancher 85).

In other words, while these practices pursued new formal taxonomies of the book, they continued to recognize the entangled lives of paper and text. This capacity may seem to be at odds with the extent to which distinctions between the material and textual bodies of texts have been drawn since the eighteenth century – Luisa Cale, for example, points to the codification of copyright laws, quoting legal theorist William Blackstone's description of paper and print as "merely accidents, which serve as vehicles" for their content without shaping its identity (Cale 105-25). However, in such an atmosphere the book as an epistemological object was in flux, a part of what Andrew Piper and Jonathan Sachs have referred to as "the growing miscellaneity of Romantic literary life" (Piper and Sachs 4). In other words, the material qualities of books were under scrutiny, and particularly visible.

At the same time, as I have shown in previous chapters, natural historians and early geologists were introducing, in juxtaposition to the historical record, a material record of ruins, relics and remains of older iterations of the world. Drawing on the shifting understandings of the material world in which texts and books find themselves entangled in within each of the previous chapters - the botanical, the oceanic, the geologic – this chapter looks to Mary Shelley's novel as an attempt to fashion a record of literary history that deliberately plays with the role of the material in negotiating authenticity and history. First, therefore, I will explain the specifically bookish cycles of proliferation, destruction, and resurrection that the novel participates in.

The topic of the "Last Man" was a popular, readily conceived image of the early nineteenth century, and Shelley's novel was to join what Kari Lokke has called "a crowd of solitary survivors" of the 1820s (Lokke 116). Thomas Lovell Beddoes went some way towards writing a dramatic play on the subject of the "Last Man" in 1823-4 before abandoning it in early 1825 – not without a barb or two at the expense of Thomas Campbell, who published a poem on the subject in the New Monthly Magazine in 1823, and who later made some impolitic remarks (after having it suggested that he had been inspired by Byron's 1816 "Darkness") on having mentioned his idea in passing to Byron some fifteen years earlier – the latter then, allegedly, stealing the idea for his own. A mutual friend of Beddoes and Campbell, the poet Barry Cornwall (Bryan Waller Proctor), had informed Campbell that Beddoes intended to do a much longer poem on the subject (as noted in a letter to Francis Jeffrey in Jan. 1825, printed in his 'Literary Reminiscences') – and which knowledge, according to Campbell, spurred him to finish and publish the poem he had ceded to Byron. Beddoes, telling this turn of events in a joint letter with Procter to another friend, repeats the world "paltry" four times in as many lines, then gives up the idea of writing a "Last Man" of his own. When he learns before the month is out that Mary Shelley, also a mutual acquaintance, intended to take up the subject for her next novel, he is, with characteristic sarcasm, happy to cede the hot seat: ["n]ow you must tell me all about the Last Man; I am very glad that Mrs. S[helley] has taken it from the New Monthly Fellow - and am sure that in almost every respect she will do much better than either of us" (Beddoes, *Letters,* 104). In addition to Byron, Campbell, and Beddoes, Thomas Hood published a satirical "The Last Man," also in 1826, and painter John Martin began a series of apocalyptic paintings that would culminate in *The Last Man* (1849). The origin of the genre is typically traced to the French novel *Le Dernier Homme* (1805) by Jean-Baptiste Cousin de Grainville, which had been translated into English in 1806 as *The Last Man, or Omegarus and Sydaria, a Romance in Futurity*. When Mary Shelley, therefore, takes up the subject, she is deliberately wading into a particular, defined sphere of cultural discourse.

Critics have inevitably read the novel within this context, either with or against the (largely male) extant examples of the genre. Steven Goldsmith, for example, calls the novel a "counterapocalyptic narrative," arguing that the novel deliberately engages with a gendered discourse surrounding the narratization of apocalypse and undermines both apocalypse, and by extension, "the critical ethos of originality" (Goldsmith 264). In making this connection with Beddoes, however, I want to stress the ways in which Shelley's representations of writing, inscription, and the materials of writing – stone, books, paper, ink, and paint among other, less conventional materials – entangle the novel within a network of material and immaterial bodies that theorizes a dynamic framework for understanding literary history and the material record. As I show in the previous chapter, Beddoes displayed throughout his literary career a concern with the scale of literary history and its materials. Beddoes struggles with a poetics of posthumous abandonment negotiated through a natural historical imaginary of the material record. Mary Shelley makes the recovery of transfigured literary work exhumed and re-interpreted even more literal.

The novel's frame narrative presents the contents as a translation of a Sibylline prophecy, an allusion that not only establishes the novel as prophecy of the future, but also evokes an older cycle of bookish violence and reassembly. "This is the Sibyl's cave; these are Sibylline leaves," exclaims the editor's companion upon closer examination of the debris littering the furthermost cave (3). The "Sibylline leaves" were a collection of written oracles kept at Rome under guard, initially in the temple of Jupiter Capotolinus, and later, by the direction of Augustus Caesar, the temple of Apollo. More often referred to by historians as the 'Sibylline books' the attribution of "leaves" comes from Virgil, a reference Mary Shelley clarifies several lines later in the preface: "This certainly was the Sibyl's Cave; if not indeed exactly as Virigil described it" (3). Virgil describes the prophecies as quite literally written on palm-leaves, although there is a poetic note in his hero's cautionary approbation to the prophetess: "Only commit thou not to flitting leaves / Thy songs prophetic; lest, disturb'd, they fly / The sport of driving winds" (Book VI, lines 99-101). Virgil's attribution of potential flightiness or lightness to the prophecies provides an interesting contrast with the ways in which the real Sibylline books were treated by the Roman state. This contributes to a legacy of material vulnerability and the suspension of literary remains between the organic and the artificial.

According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, a Roman historian who lived between the 1st century BC and 1st century CE, the books were "a blessing conferred by some god or power" bought by King Tarquin, probably in the early sixth century (Beard 23).[5] Tarquin (616-579 BC) was one of the early Etruscan kings of Rome. According to Dionysius:

> A foreign woman approached the tyrant and offered to sell him nine books of Sibylline Oracles; Tarquin refused to buy at her price, so she went away and burned three of the nine. Then she brought the six remaining ones and offered them for the same price as she had asked before. They thought her stupid and laughed at her, because she was asking the very same price for fewer books that she had already failed to get for more of them; but she just went off again and burned half those that were still left. Then she came back with the three remaining and asked for the same price again (Beard 23).

The burning of the books is begun by the mythological woman - later, usually interpreted as one of the Sibyls, typically the one from Cumae, where Shelley's narrator makes her own discovery - but it is continued throughout the early recorded history of the oracles. The temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline hill burned in 83 BC, and with it, presumable, the original Sibylline books. According to Eric M. Orlin, a senatorial commission set about rebuilding the collection of oracular verses from various sites associated with the Sibylline cult. Interestingly, however, as Orlin notes:

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[5] The surviving books of Dionysius of Halicarnassus' "Roman Antiquities" provide the main source for the most popular narrative of the Sibylline books. Roman Antiquities was available in Greek and Latin in Early Modern Europe as early as 1586, when a 'Collected Works' was edited by Friedrich Sylburg and printed at Frankfurt. The first English edition was translated by Edward Spelman and published in 1758. While Dionysius does not appear on the lists of Mary and Percy's reading compiled from her diaries (compiled by Stuart Curran, https://www.rc.umd.edu/editions/frankenstein/MShelley/readalph) However, his extensive historiography fits her interests, particularly given the Roman setting of The Last Man's final act.

> The burning and subsequent reassembling of a new set of oracles indicate clearly that the story of Tarquinius and the old woman is not essential to the validity of the oracles. There is no hint in our sources that the Senatorial commission was trying to find exact duplicates of the oracles which had been lost; rather it was searching for genuine Sibylline utterances (Orlin 80).

Rather than attempting to duplicate the previous prophecies, the Roman authorities were more invested in replacing them materially - the bodies or matter of the prophecies perished in the fire, and those material bodies of knowledge are what this reconstructive commission privileged. The body of prophecy is important; the existence of that body of prophecy outranks the particulars of the prophetic verses themselves.[6] The attribution of the found text to the Cumaean Sibyl in *The Last Man*, therefore, evokes a tactile literary history that emphasizes the material recovery and assembly of a text as a sacred duty. The extraction of literary history is a practice of reassembly, a contingent realignment of the material artifact in order to fit and influence a particular narrative.

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[6] Nineteenth-century sources suggest that the remaining books were often imagined to be kept in a stone chest underground, and exhumed only when they needed to be consulted by the state. Sir William Smith writes in 1842 that they were “kept in a stone chest under ground in the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus.” (882). Smith also suggests that the prophecies were “probably written on palm leaves” although other accounts call them scrolls” (Smith 882).

ROMANTIC EXHUMATIONS

The Sibylline Leaves of *The Last Man* oscillate between fossil and archaeological find; organic remain and historical artifact. This representation ties the preservation of literary texts to natural phenomena: "…and we probably owed the preservation of these leaves, to the accident which had closed the mouth of the cavern, and the swift-growing vegetation which had rendered its sole opening impervious to the storm" (3). A geological accident – an earthquake, or falling rocks – closed the cave, and the natural regenerative properties of vegetation sealed it. In other words, the 'leaves' (a comparison underlined by the pun between paper and plant leaves) are texts within a broader ecological system.

The materials of the frame narrative are initially not even recognizable as textual objects – instead, they appear somewhere between the stone "furniture" and the natural artifacts – the carved bench and the goat skeleton; collapsed rocks and the deliberately cleared space of the cavern. In this sense, those materials inhabit two similarly ghostly positions on a material and textual record. The novel's depiction of the precarious relationship of humanity to nature is grounded in this opening image that emphasizes a dynamic, shifting relationship between the human and the environmental, whether animal, vegetable, or mineral. Consider the typical materials of writing – books, in the early nineteenth-century, were made of leather and rag-pulp paper; ultimately a vegetable product – linen and cotton rags were the most common – and leather (early paper – vellum – too, had been an animal product). The goat is significant not only as a non-human body, but because common leather bookbinding was in Morocco goat-skin leather. This might be a little tenuous, but it is interesting if we are thinking about material networks – these many strange intersections and material entanglements complicate attempts to read the scene as completely figurative.

This accumulation of historicizes organic objects gestures at the same spectrum of antiquarian spectacle which I address in the previous chapter. Shelley and Beddoes both respond to what Martin Rudwick terms the "historicization of the earth" – the developing understanding at the end of the eighteenth century that the history of the earth was distinct from the relatively brief history represented by human records (Rudwick 3). Melissa Bailes, linking Shelley's description of geological features and phenomena to extinction theories, in particular those of Georges Cuvier and Robert Buckland, argues that Shelley explores and critiques "various contemporary theories about what may have caused these past species' demise as a means of guiding her narrative anticipating human destruction" (Bailes 671). The Shelley's ordered Cuvier's *Recherches sur les Ossemens Fossiles* (1812) only a few weeks before Percy Shelley's death. Bailes makes a fascinating argument aligning *The Last Man's* frame with the conversation sparked by Byron's appropriation of Cuvier for successive visions of Catastrophe in Cain, and Buckland's cave theories, in which biblical deluges swept through caves and decimated the animals/species in them, resulting in a treasure trove of fossils and other "relics" of the past. Bailes contends that by applying Cuvier and Buckland's paradigms of mass extinction to the destruction of specific individuals, as illustrated by the mounting body count of Verney's inner circle, Shelley critiques the extreme individualism of contemporary male poets' turn inward (Bailes 690). Where Bailes turns her attention to the physiological effects of such a series of extinctions on the individual, I want to turn to its compliment: the ways in which Shelley's representation of dead bodies and artificial and natural contexts ties those new material concerns to the reception of graveside historical narratives. However, as much as the initial appearance of the disjointed, disintegrating Sybilline leaves serves to represent the fracturing and fragmentation of historical documents, Shelley's frame narrative also insists on the ability to reimagine and recreate a connecting narrative.[7]

In 1822, the same summer Percy Shelley's remains were exhumed from a beach in Italy, where quarantine laws had demanded they be laid initially, with quick lime to speed decay, and consigned to the more famous beach pyre depicted by Fournier in 1889, in something resembling a new, secular version of the old translation of a saints relics, another relic was being translated. In October of that year (1822) the French linguist and historian Jean-Francois Champollion published his *Lettre a M. Dacier*, the breakthrough text in the race to decipher the Rosetta Stone: an alphabet of phonetic hieroglyphic characters constructed through references to foreign names. On display at the British Museum since its seizure from the French in 1802, the Rosetta Stone was a key object in the burgeoning Egyptomania of early nineteenth-century Europe, and the news of Champollion's discovery, along with the earlier work of British scholar Thomas Young – who contributed a long article on the subject to the 1819 *Encyclopedia Britannica* –

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[7] See also Samantha Webb, "Reading the End of the World: The Last Man, History, and the Agency of Romantic Authorship." *Mary Shelley in Her Times.* Ed. Betty T. Bennett and Stuart Curran. The Johns Hopkins UP, 2000, pp. 119-33.

circulated widely.[8] Part and parcel of this furor was wild speculation about the Stone's text. The early nineteenth century was a cultural moment deeply concerned with both locating the material remains of the past and similarly deeply invested in the relationship of that material record to the narratological past, whether glossed as fictional or not.

There is more than a surface resemblance between *The Last Man's* Sibylline Leaves – fragmented, partially-translatable documents from either the past or the future, a mixture of organic and mineral crumbling at different rates of decay – and the Rosetta Stone. Shelley's editor exclaims in particular over the heterogeneous nature of the "written characters" she and her companion distinguish on the Sibylline Leaves: "these writings were expressed in various languages: some unknown to my companion, ancient Chaldee, and Egyptian hieroglyphics, old as the Pyramids. Stranger still, some were in modern dialects, English and Italian" (3). Shelley's explicit invocation of Egyptian hieroglyphics is all the more striking because of the concurrent success in deciphering that particular dead language. The contemporary reader, too, was likely to make that connection. Indeed, the Rosetta Stone is now almost synonymous with task, text and material body of translation and the public cultural pleasures of archaeological discovery.

Shelley uses the language of both "translation" and "deciphering" to explain the task of her editor, both choices which remove that task from the pure realm of language and connect it to both the Rosetta Stone, the original Sibylline tablets, and the etymological roots of 'translation' as I previously noted. John Ray calls the Stone a modern-day version of the religious relic, referring to the life-size model of the Stone which is left uncovered and which museum visitors are encouraged to touch now that the original is kept under glass (Ray 4). While translation has become distant from its medieval or religious sense as a literal carrying offer or transportation of remains, it nonetheless retains a contextual closeness with textual relics. The Rosetta Stone and the Sibylline Leaves both exist on a rolling continuum of potential prophecy and holy writing, both of which are being evoked through the work of reassembly and translation. Shelley represents this as a continuum tied to contemporary geological and chemical discoveries, print culture, anxieties about the burial/exhumation of literary history (Chatterton, Hogg) and the disposal and decomposition of corpses. Inherently at stake in both the plague discourse of the novel, as well as in Shelley's personal experience with the disposal of her husband's body, is the rate of decay of bodies and the narratives of individuality and history that have come to inhere in them.

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[8] For more on the Rosetta Stone, see Richard Parkinson, *Cracking Codes: The Rosetta Stone and Decipherment*. The University of California Press, 1999; and Lynn Parramore, *Reading the Sphinx: Ancient Egypt in Nineteenth-Century Literary Culture,* Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

The ways in which the broad and diverse material record Shelley includes in the frame narrative both echoes the concerns of early geologists about fossils and extinction, and links those new material concerns to the reception of historical narratives of material reconstruction and material transference through artifacts like the Sibylline leaves and the Rosetta Stone. In particular, I wish to turn our attention to the ways in which the continued representation of grave goods and funeral rituals and sites throughout the novel contribute to a portrait of the material record that is not only geological, but palimpsestic. Shelley's representation of her narrator as editor, antiquary, prophet, archaeologist etc. all blur the boundaries of categorization. I would propose "gravedigger" as a paradigm with the potential to more illuminate some of these tensions, taking the term to encompass both those digging the graves and digging *up* the graves. This tension between interment and exhumation is, I argue, a driving force in the novel.

GRAVE GOODS

Shelley's novel reveals a genuine concern with the assemblage of tombs and grave as narrative projects. Shelley de-emphasizes the importance of the original association and treats monuments as encounters. As Janet Donohoe points out, "the meaning of the memorial or the monument can only be determined by those who encounter it … the monument serves as a point of contact between present and past" (268 Donohoe). Shelley echoes this sentiment through the description of a series of burial scenes over the course of the second half of the novel. As Lynn Wells notes, "After the plague's appearance, the remainder of the novel literally degenerates into a funereal triumph or procession with an ever-increasing number of disparate corpses" (Wells 219). Some of those corpses join the indeterminate mob of lost humanity necessary to render Lionel "the last man." A few, receive more specific individualized attention. In the section that follows, I provide close readings of three burials in particular: Evadne, Raymond, and Idris. These three are significant because of Lionel's intimate role in the disposition of the bodies. Evadne and Idris both die in his arms, and he is the one to find Raymond's broken body in the ruins of Constantinople. Importantly, the subsequent burials or entombments are done by Lionel himself; as he insists in the lead-up to the discovery of Raymond's corpse, the bodies are "restored … to [his] hands" (162).

In addressing the direct work of human hands in such monument making, Shelley bypasses the elision of the material traditionally associated with the second-generation Romantics. Compare, for example, this opening of the narrative stanzas of Percy Bysshe Shelley's *Alastor*:

> There was a Poet whose untimely tomb
> No human hands with pious reverence reared,
> But the charmed eddies of autumnal winds
> Built o'er his mouldering bones a pyramid
> Of mouldering leaves in the waste wilderness:— (lines 50-54).

As Andrew Stauffer points out, although the Poet of *Alasto*r refuses "incarnated form," the first thing we learn of the poet is "the fate of his mortal remains," suggests that the Poet dissolves into "an uncertain quantity of illegible, decaying material" (Stauffer, 9). However, Percy is explicit in his denial of tactility: "No human hands…" (*Alastor* 51). While chiefly, of course, this serves to clarify the poet's lack of readers, Mary Shelley's similarly explicit references to handling both paper and human remains stages a direct confrontation with the legibility of "decaying material" (Stauffer 9). If, as James Chandler as well as Stauffer insists, fallen leaves serve as a metaphor in *Alastor* and *Ode to the West Wind* for Percy's struggle with archivality and his own texts, then Mary Shelley's depiction of fallen and scattered leaves might be read as a response to that struggle (Chandler 550). While Percy, as Stauffer notes, is haunted by the repression of the material, Mary Shelley exhumes the material in its decaying, slimy, half-way illegible state and addresses it directly.

The specificity of these tombs, as well as the ways in which multiple rites of burial and epitaphic inscriptions become layered on one another in a way that might be described as both palimpsestual and sedimental, points to a nineteenth-century desire to preserve material individuality after death – and to the futility of achieving that goal with any exactness. Rather, history is made by those left behind, and shaped by its exposure to the natural world. These graves resemble little so much as the Sibyll's cave and its documents – natural sites shaped, though minimally, through human artifice, and inscribed and deposited with remains that echo their own testimonial presence. Throughout *The Last Man*, these narrative monumental projects are deliberately carried out by hand, actions that align Lionel's position – personally burying and erecting grave site monuments out of localized materials – with that of the narrator, and by extension, Shelley herself. Integrating the dead into the organic, material landscape in this way gestures towards an ecology of the dead, in which burial (and the ever-present ghost of exhumation and discovery provided by the frame narrative) is a material, site-specific transmedial moment of embodiment. In other words, I argue, Shelley deploys these burials to show that the dead are entangled in the organic and material world in some specific way that must be accounted for in understanding literary history.

Monuments produce certain narratives about the past, both through their textual inscriptions, their placement, and their ornamentation. They project certain ideas about history into the present, providing material scripts of past values. Graves in particular occupy a space between history and memory, providing a narrative association between a set of human remains and an identity – if not individual, then national or cultural. A headstone, a statue, or the stacked stones of a cairn are all intended to serve as a testimonial, to pay witness. Taking seriously Shelley's representation of material narratives, both through the representation of epitaphic inscriptions and the materials with which Lionel embeds the bodies of Evadne, Raymond, and Idris into both the natural and built environment, illuminates a material record framed as visionary prophecy. I think this is particularly visible in the ways in which grave goods form a rich material history surrounding each death that can be "read" as a narrative assemblage.

Each of these burials is an act of translation that serves to fix the identity of the dead through the mutual labor of Lionel Verney's hands and the mute labor of the dead body, working together to establish a material record. The first burial I want to address takes place in the aftermath of a battle. The impoverished Greek lady Evadne, having disguised herself as a man to join the fighting and follow her former lover (Raymond), dies in Lionel's arms after he discovers her by chance in the aftermath of the battle. Lionel takes personal responsibility for the body. This moment that grants Evadne's corpse an individual identity that is distinct against the images of mass slaughter that both precede and follow Lionel's identification of her.

The Napoleonic Wars, which embroiled England during Mary Shelley's youth, were among the early-nineteenth century mass conflicts that led, by mid-century, to the creation of military cemeteries. In contrast, most soldiers who died on the field during the early nineteenth century were buried in mass graves near the site of the battle. Images of the carnage at Waterloo, in particular, were widely circulated in the years to follow.[9] One particular example is Turner's *The Field of Waterloo*. Exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1818, the painting was accompanied in the catalogue by the following line from Canto III of Lord Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1817): "Rider and horse – friend, foe, - in one red burial blent" (III.xxviii). Turner's painting shows an indistinct mass of bodies revealed by a flash of lightning. Both Byron and Turner express a concern with the boundaries of corpses and of individual – even national – identities in the aftermath of death. Shelley utilizes similar imagery in her description of the battlefield between Kishan and Rodosto in Turkey:

> I turned to the corse-strewn earth; and felt ashamed of my species. So perhaps were the placid skies; for they quickly veiled themselves in mist, and in this change assisted the swift disappearance of twilight usual in the south; heavy masses of cloud floated up from the south east, and red and turbid lightning shot from their dark edges; the rushing wind disturbed the garments of the dead, and was chilled as it passed over their icy forms. Darkness gathered round; the objects about me became indistinct, I descended from my station, and with difficulty guided my horse, so as to avoid the slain (141-2).

The bodies are an undifferentiated mass, so thick on the ground that Lionel has difficulty keeping his horse from trampling the dead, even led forward on foot. Shelley's "red and turbid lightning," illuminating the corpses, echoes both Turner's turbulent storming sky and Byron's "red burial." Though at a glance geographically and temporally different, the scene Shelley paints here was still intimately familiar to Britain in the decade following the battle at Waterloo. For Lionel, too, the bodies become "indistinct" as he goes among them. Notably, the bodies belong to neither side.

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[9] Alan Bewell posits a deeper relationship with *The Last Man*: "Having seen in 1814 the devastation produced in France by the Napoleonic Wars, Shelley had no difficulty recognizing that war and plague were associated more than metaphorically" (Bewell 301). Shelley wrote that seeing the damage "…has given a sting to my detestation of war, which none can feel who have not travelled through a country pillaged and wasted by this plague, which, in his pride, man inflicts upon his fellow" (Shelley, History, 19).

As Clifton D. Bryant notes, "Within the complex of fears which soldiers must cope are fear of an untold death, fear of a lost or mutilated corpse, and fear of dying in a far-off land" (Bryant 161). Soldiers often attempted to compensate for these fears by attending to the bodies of their comrades. Lionel performs this service for Evadne, removing her body "from the near neighborhood of the dead" (142). He shrouds the body in cloaks – morbidly, probably taken from the surrounding dead – and lays her beneath a tree. Lionel's actions attempt to bring the body into closer contact with nature and the landscape; and out of the blurr of indistinct objects on the field. While his subsequent covering of the body in "all of the flags and heavy accouterments [he] could find" is attributed to practicality, to preserve her body from carrion birds, this layering of materials also positions the corpse within layers of textiles, metal ornaments, staffs – each object weighted with individual symbolic significance (143). Evadne's body becomes part of a multi-media display of variegated nationalism consisting of a variety of materials, colors, and textures. This temporary monument not only covers but envelops (envelopes) the corpse. These grave goods validate her final performance as a soldier, while also illustrating the ultimate costs of war.

Evadne's body is taken off the "corse-strewn earth" of the battlefield and removed to a site that Lionel can individualize and sanctify as her resting place. Shelly makes visible the different layers that comprise Byron's "one red burial" by using "heap" as both a verb to describe Lionel's assembly of Evadne's grave goods, and the piles of corpses he passes on the way to rejoin the army. The language of monument likewise slips between corpse and ornament:

> With shuddering horror I veiled this monument of human passion and human misery; I heaped over her all of flags and heavy accoutrements I could find, to guard her from birds and beasts of prey, until I could bestow on her a fitting grave. Sadly and slowly I stemmed my course from among the heaps of slain. (143)

He wraps the body for the evening and returns the next morning "attended only by [a] servant" to dig a grave at the foot of the tree, where he places her "without disturbing her warrior shroud" (143). Lionel takes deliberate care to grant Evadne an individual grave with the tactile labor of his hands, echoing the efforts of the narrator to piece together an appropriate narrative from the decaying Sibylline leaves. The grave is marked only by another "heap," this time of stones. "Heap" implies an accumulation, a progressive build-up of matter (143 "heaping stones upon the grave"). Ultimately, Evadne's burial is not marked by any distinguishing inscription. Any strength of individuality is present in the performance of the funeral rites, rather than in the later identification of her resting site. Shelley implies that legibility is derived via material accumulation rather than textually imposed.

Lionel's second act of translation continues to explore that distinction. The second significant set of funeral rites performed by Lionel is Raymond's. Crushed by falling debris during a subsequent attack on Constantinople, Raymond's body is recovered from the rubble by Lionel and a contingent of soldiers. The imagery immediately preceding and following Raymond's death projects his corpse onto the material record in a way that emphasizes both the artifactual and organic qualities of human remains, and their precarious place in both natural and built environments. Like Evadne, Raymond's body is translated from one resting place to another. Once Lionel finds his remains in Constantinople, they are temporarily set up in the Greek cemetery outside the city:

> Here on a tablet of black marble I caused him to be laid; the cypresses waved high above, their death-like gloom accorded with his state of nothingness. We cut branches of the funereal trees and placed them over him, and on these again his sword. I left a guard to protect this treasure of dust; and ordered perpetual torches to be burned around (162).

The performance of this funeral scene shares many basic traits with Lionel's treatment of Evadene: the body is moved to a more appropriate location, and then carefully layered with signifying objects. As Evadne is heaped with the military textiles, Raymond is covered with a weft of cypress branches. Again, a variety of materials and textures implies a complex, interwoven shroud that covers and encloses the corpse. The body, which Lionel repeatedly describes as a "relic" or "treasure" is transported and rearticulated, through these palimpsestic layers, into a memorial object.

As Lionel implies, evergreens carried connotations of immortality, and cypress trees were popular funeral ornaments, and had particular associations with Turkey in the English imagination. English landscape designer John Claudius Loudon, in his 1843 book *On the Laying out of Cemeteries*, one of the central texts of the mid-nineteenth century cemetery reform movement, notes this particularly. The cypress, he says "has been associated with places of burial from time immemorial" (Loudon 20). Loudon cites Wordsworth's comparison of the crowded English churchyard with "the still seclusion of a Turkish cemetery in some remote place, and yet further sanctified by the grove of cypress in which it is embosomed" (Wordsworth 333).[10] Loudon associates the comfort of such plant life as concerned with the (new) object of cemeteries, "that of improving the moral feelings" … "a source of amelioration or instruction" (Loudon 8). In other words, the cypress serves as a nexus of both material and textual associations. In this instance of translation, Raymond's obscured remains – his identity (his facial features) erased mostly by the falling rubble that killed him, and recognized, like Percy Shelley, by his dress (that being in better condition than his body) – are carried out of the city and rendered legible by Lionel's choice of location and accumulated physical goods.

Significantly, Lionel does not desire to move the body from the Greek Cemetery. However, Perdita insists it is removed to Athens and translated yet again, this time to a form much more legible on Godwin's desired map of great men. Raymond's final resting pace is a solitary rock at the base of a sublime chasm "which, divided on every side from the mountain, seemed a nature-hewn pyramid; with little labour this block was reduced to a perfect shape; the narrow cell was scooped out beneath in which Raymond was placed, and a short inscription, carved in the living stone, recorded the name of its tenant, the cause and aera of his death" (164). Lionel's heap of multi-media grave goods is superseded by his wife's desire for a more traditional memorial inscription. This removal of remains from one site to another reflects the debate throughout the novel about commemoration and material monuments.

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[10] Loudon writes "The Turkish cemeteries are generally out of the city, on rising ground, planted with cedars, cypresses, and odoriferous shrubs, whose deep verdure and graceful forms bending in the every breeze give a melancholy beauty to the place, and excite sentiments very congenial to its destination." (72). Loudon cites several specific example of cypress-forested burying grounds in Turkey and surrounding areas, citing for one example Hobhouse's *Travels in Albania and Other Provinces in Turkey* (1813) - written, of course, by John Cam Hobhouse and which recount his trip there with Lord Byron in 1809 and 1810. Shelley and Hobhouse were acquainted, through Byron, and corresponded in the wake of his death, as she was writing *The Last Man*.

The final burial I will examine continues to negotiate between these impulses. Unlike the deaths of Evadne and Raymond in battle, however, this last death takes place during the later days of the plague. History becomes increasingly tenuous as more and more of the population dies; the familiar infrastructure of the past – buildings, monuments – recedes further into the past. Lionel witnesses, in a sense, the fossilization of his culture. Fittingly, then, the burial of Idris is removed for the most part from the presence of the newly dead, and is connected instead to representations of lineage and descent. Idris is the third body largely handled by Lionel himself; she dies in his arms, and following fruitless attempts to revive her, Lionel delivers the body to her family chapel in St. George's at Windsor.[11]. Echoing, again, the arrangement of the Sibylline leaves and the furniture of the cave in the frame narrative, Lionel "with hasty, trembling hands … constructed a bier" for his wife (281). Shelley again puts the emphasis on tactile sensations and the work of the hands. Like Evadne and Raymond, Idris's corpse is wrapped in unconvential materials. Lionel covers the bier with "the furs and Indian shawls, which had wrapt Idris in her journey thither," appropriating the garments from their carriage to cover and support his wife's body (281). He arranges the body on this bed and covers her with a cloak, completing the ritual disposition of the corpse.

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[11] St. George's Chapel at Windsor is the traditional burial vault of the English monarchy, intermittently dating back to the fifteenth century and with consistency from George III onwards; a number of the members of the royal family who died during the early 1820s leading up to the ascendency of Queen Victoria were inhumed there, including Princess Charlotte of Wales in 1817, and George III in 1820.

Significantly, in each of these burial scenes Lionel has used different, but similarly specific and contextually significant objects to complete these individualized memorials.

In the case of Idris, the materials that Lionel surrounds her with function as grave goods that signal her cultural status, but also mark her corpse as distinct from the more traditional – even if hastily executed, as in the recent case of their infant son Alfred – monuments and bodies filling the rest of the crypt. There is little research available on grave goods in nineteenth-century Britain, partly due to the relative rarity of exhuming graves from this period, which do not lie quite as far in the historical past as periods for which we have a more substantiated record. Accordingly, I find the emphasis that Shelley places on them somewhat unusual.

The "indian shawls" Lionel refers to are the popular Kashmiri shawl cloths, a particular artifact of nineteenth-century British colonialism. Made from woven goat-hair fabric, the shawls were popularized by the Empress Josephine at the turn of the century, "reiterating [Napoleon's] imperial conquests in his own very public domestic sphere" (Hiner 86). Traditionally worn by men in India, in Europe the shawl became a staple of feminine fashion: "The garment that was once synonymous with the masculine, public domain of the military, its appropriation indicating conquest and power, shifted as it moved into the feminized, private, and domestic sphere of fashion but remained powerful nonetheless" (Hiner 86). The presence of the shawl's in Idris' carriage, which leads Lionel to use them as funeral shrouds, pays witness to her inherited colonial power, as the daughter of the last reigning British monarch. It is important to Lionel to surround his dead wife with trappings of her status, perhaps in defiance of hints that death will not spare anyone in this instance, including royalty.

However, the shawls' function as burial shroud in *The Last Man* also complicates the postcolonial reading of the plague as a racist, Orientalist threat from the east.[12] While it may be read as Idris shrouded in the symbols of her waning institutional power, it also seems to gesture at the death of that imperial project. Rather, what seems to be happening here is a gesture towards the closure of geographical isolation – Lionel and the other survivors will abandon England shortly after – and the simultaneous expansion of emotional isolation and political irrelevancy. Judy Attfield argues that "textiles, perhaps more than any other material good, allow for history to be recorded in the effects of aging, environment and human interaction" (Attfield 168). Margaret Ponsonby, similarly, makes an explicit connection between palimpsestual interpretation and textiles because "changes and alterations are visible in the surface layer of textile artifacts" (Ponsonby 171). The traditional inscriptions found in royal tombs are supplanted by the current and future connotations of the textiles that cover Idris's body. The use of the shawls and furs, with particular tactile as well as visual associations, also carries an echo of the narrator's description of the Sibylline Leaves. Like the editor, Lionel must attempt to construct a legible narrative from the materials at hand. Ultimately, Lionel's assembly of these graves reads as a kind of palimpsestic act itself, a material weaving and layering that contributes to a complex intertextuality.

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[12] See the previously cited Alan Bewell monograph, *Romanticism and Colonial Disease*. Also, several prominent early critics of the novel discussed *The Last Man* in relationship to the AIDS crisis: Mary Jacobus, "Replacing the Race of Mothers: AIDS and *The Last Man*." In *First Things: The Maternal Imaginary in Literature, Art, and Psychoanalysis*. Routledge, 1995, pp. 105-125. Audrey Fisch, "Plaguing Politics: AIDS, Deconstruction, and *The Last Man*." In *The Other Mary Shelley: Beyond Frankenstein.* Ed. Audrey Fisch, Anne Mellor and Esther Schor, Oxford University Press, 1993, pp. 267-286. Also relevant: Joseph W. Lew, "The Plague of Imperial Desire: Montesquieu, Gibbon, Brougham, and Mary Shelley's *The Last Man*." *Romanticism and Colonialism: Writing and Empire, 1780-1830*. Ed. Tim Fulford and Peter J. Kitson, Cambridge UP, 1998, pp. 261-78. And, for a counter-critique through an aesthetic lens, Daniel Shrierenbeck's "The "silver net": Aesthetic Imperialism in Mary Shelley's *The Last Man*." *RaVoN*, No. 45, Feb. 2007.

MATERIAL ROMANTICS

Literary history too, as I have stressed throughout this dissertation, had be re-negotiated at the beginning of the nineteenth century. As the distinction between recorded textual history and the history of the earth became clearer, writers and readers were forced to wrestle with the implications of that gap and how their books, as well as their texts, might be interpreted in the future. Erik Gray, describing the clash between the present moment and linear literary history in Keats's "Lines on Seeing a Lock of Milton's Hair," identifies a frission or "struggle to reconcile … the sheer material presence of the poet, now, in 1818," generated by the relic, "and the sense of his historical importance" (Gray 4). In other words, when the historical record is attached to the material, it generates the potential for a third history, that of the relic itself – not Milton, or his significance in English literary history, but the lock of hair. Similarly, by imagining a tactile response to literary history and the new material record, Shelley also questions the role of the material not only in bringing a historical presence into the present, but in informing the present-day interpreter. Shelley's re-negotiation of the boundaries between text and artifact are at stake in the invention of Romantic archaeology, as is visible in the mutual labor of Lionel Verney and the dead bodies he handles in assembling the records of their deaths.

The contested ground of literary history is its dynamic tactility – the ability of the literary artifact to exist simultaneously within two records: the textual and the material. Archaeology and writing "complement each other's silences," as Egyptologyst John Baines has put it (Baines 116). For example, Jennifer Wallace, in *Digging for Homer*, narrates a Romantic anxiety over the "true" location of Troy and the problem of empty tombs. Quoting Byron's journal entry in 1821, that "Who will persuade me, when I reclined upon a mighty tomb, that it did not contain a hero?" Wallace gestures towards a broad cultural response to the new clash between empirical archaeological research, newly being undertaken, and the received narrative. For the first time, scholars were "literally digging" to prove that Homer and his stories were real – a confluence of events Wallace describes as exposing "the extent to which the interest in literary authenticity during this period revolved around the problematic relationship between imaginative writing and material culture" (Wallace 74). Wallace connects this tension to the often-unrecognized influence of early archaeology and geology. Literary representation was at stake not only within the confines of literary history (as is often or traditionally discussed in the vein of 'imagination' and poetics) but on a much broader level. This new archaeological record could now potentially verify literary history.

To extend this conversation to the territory of *The Last Man*, I want to consider the local archaeological scene during Shelley's – and her narrator's – 1817 visit to Naples and the Sibylline cave. Mariana Starke's popular travel guide recommends that early nineteenth-century visitors to Naples interested in antiquities "should endeavor to obtain an introduction to the Canonic, Don Andrea de Jorio; who is not only a distinguished Antiquary, but likewise most gentlemanly and agreeable, and a kind friend to British Travellers. This Work [her book] has been materially benefited by his luminous publications" (Starke 279). De Jorio was acquainted with Byron, and Sir Walter Scott was an admirer of his book on Italian gesture, which is often cited as one of the earliest studies of modern anthropology. As Francis Haskell explains, "these [books] (and what seems to have been a very attractive personality) won him a European reputation which ranged beyond that of fellow scholars in England, France and Germany to include Byron as well as the kings of Prussia and Vabvaia" (Haskell 155). De Jorio was familiar to the Shelley's social circle and it seems likely they would either met him or had a passing familiarity with his antiquarian work. While he was most well known for his study of Neapolitan gestures, he also wrote a treatise titled "Signs of the Presence of the Sepulchres" or *Metodo per rinvenire e frugare i sepolcri degli antichi* (1824), and wrote on the discovery of the Sibylline cave visited by Shelley's narrator. Haskell also notes that de Jorio, who also worked at the Naples museum, exhibited an unusual interest in "certain analogies between the customs of antiquity and those of his own day" (Haskell 155). This interest in continuity speaks to the tension between textual and artifactual history I have described – or, perhaps, as an answer or prescription for that tension. The antique belongs both to its previous, originary moment – but also to our own; and individual objects have distinct and individual histories and lives.

I wish to call attention to this particular title, “Signs of the Presence of the Sepulchres,” because it indicates the extent to which looking for and locating graves was embedded in even casual or touristic archaeology. Shelley’s narrator follows such signs in her identification of the Sibyl’s cave. Led by their local guides to a disappointingly mundane cavern, the narrator and her companion push for something more recognizable: “we examined it with care, as if its blank, rocky walls could still bear trace of celestial visitant. On one side was a small opening. Whither does this lead? we asked: can we enter here?” (2) Intent on their search for a record of the Sibyl’s existence, Shelley’s narrator and her companion unearth what are, at first glance, odd materials and substances that can be reassembled into a textual history. Burial and exhumation, as made more explicit through the lens of Lionel Verney’s individual experience, are the figures through which Shelley is able to approach the material vulnerability of history.

GRAVE HISTORIPGRAPHY

At the beginning of the essay “Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias,” Michel Foucault makes the observation that “The great obsession of the nineteenth century was, as we know, history: with its themes of development and of suspension, of crisis, and cycle, themes of the ever-accumulating past, with its great preponderance of dead men and the menacing glaciation of the world” (Foucault 1). It is unsurprising, given the preponderance of monumental language and imagery Foucault employs in this initial description, in particular the “ever-accumulating past” rising up, full of artifacts and history, a sort of material metaphor for the recognition of deep time, that one of his chief examples of the heterotopic space – a real space which exerts itself against an unreal mirror image – is the modern cemetery, as it developed at the beginning of the nineteenth-century. Foucault describes the analysis of the heterotopia as the "simultaneously mythic and real contestation of the space in which we live" (Foucault 4). While, in the modern cemetery, each of the dead is afforded their own "box for her or his own little personal decay," the cemetery was leaving the city center for the fringes, a banished city of the dead (Foucault 5). Thomas Laqueur, similarly, points to the turn of the nineteenth-century for a new interest in recording the names of the dead, likewise acknowledging both the explosive growth of the printing industry and a culture of collecting and classification (Laqueur 402). Epitaphs and graveyard inscriptions, as narratives (however short) of the dead, inscribe the heterotopic space of the cemetery described by Foucault.

The 1996 edition of Mary Shelley's *The Last Man* put out by Broadview Press uses the frontispiece engraving from the original 1809 publication of her father William Godwin's *Essay on Sepulchres,* a favorite of Mary's, as an introductory image. It is placed at the front of the text, between the brief chronology of Mary Shelley and a reproduction of the title page of the original 1826 edition. This twentieth-century paratextual intervention suggests a relationship between the two works, which is borne out by their mutual concern with the location and memory of the multitudinous dead and the construction of monuments. I want to refer briefly to William Sherman on paratexts as physical thresholds: "the threshold itself that was an architectural space - a gateway, arch, portico, or porch" (Sherman 72). The book is an architectural construction and the paratexts – such as the frontispiece and title page – function as transitional surfaces. These pages structure the reader's encounter with the text, and with the book itself as a material object. The image in *Essay on Sepulchres* was illustrated by William Hilton and engraved by James Hopwood, the image depicts a crumbling ruin that is gradually being taken over by nature – an arch that no longer has a wall to support surrounded by broken slabs and columns. The original frontispiece also had a second epigraph "Life is the Desert and the Solitude". This is an interesting epigraph. The line appears to be a rewording of "Life is the desert, life the solitude" from Edward Young's *The Revenge*, that is missing the second line that is usually included: "death joins us to the great majority" (Young 4.1). The project of the *Essay* is to specifically mark out, not the graves of everyone, but the graves of Great Men, and particularly the literary great.

In other words, Godwin was concerned with mapping the temporal and spatial significance of graves. The community graveyard, whether in the country or in the city, was a familiar and central site in the early nineteenth century. The gravestone with its identifying name was itself a site of communication and transition. Considering the quickly expanding reading culture that also characterizes the era, it does not seem incongruous to see a call for, essentially, an encyclopedia of famous graves. If we return briefly to the discussion of epigraph, it can be seen that the meaning was currently in transition from identification to sentiment; Godwin's *Essay on Sepulchres* is in some respects mapping that transition and it is doing so through a reliance on a text. The epigraph (in a literary sense) of Godwin's *Essay on Sepulchres* takes on new significance when viewed in this light: “Not one of these should perish” can be read as a note on the physical book itself – not one copy of it should perish, but rather it should be preserved as a grave marker itself, to Godwin, to the map of authors he imagines. Godwin is interested in identifying their remains as a physical site of sympathy and historical feeling. Mark Salber Phillips calls the *Essay on Sepulchres* "a kind of visionary experiment […]whose feasibility even he could not really credit. Indeed the work, which Godwin published at his own expense, seems to have attracted very little notice, then or since” (Phillips 197). Godwin himself was aware that he was looking into the future:

> Meanwhile, I am impelled by my project to look forward to the time, when Westminster Abbey, and St Paul’s at London, and St Peter’s at Rome, shall be prostrated on the earth, and nothing but two yards of perpendicular soil shall be interposed, between the great man, and the skies to which his inherent temper unavoidably prompted him to aspire (Godwin 25).

Here we can return to the epigraph at the beginning of Godwin’s text and consider it as motto – the memory of these great figures should be preserved even beyond the boundaries of the civilization which honors them. Memory should persist past the physical monuments of that civilization – and yet Godwin is advocating for physical monuments. The difference, perhaps, is that Godwin’s proposed monuments are not singular or independent. They are to be mapped; there is to be a traceable route from one to next, no matter what direction one starts from.

Essay on Sepulchres is not entirely unaware of its own participation in the reconstruction of graves as text when he calls for the burial sites, once they have been identified, to be compiled into a "Catalogue" that exhibits "in a brief compass the places of sepulture of the Illustrious Departed" (Godwin 29). The labeling of the graves is not enough - even the act of labeling and the presence of the identifying marks (the epigraphs and epitaphs) requires a book. The book thus becomes the marker - the physical surface on which the label is inscribed. The remediation of the gravesite as text is unavoidable, if Godwin wants his plan to even be considered in the way in which he intended it to be. The point, after all, is that somebody would be able to trace the independent graves on one map, allowing the sentimental traveler to circulate in between the graves - and the book is necessarily the identifying marker of that circulation. The traveler in question would have to carry the catalogue on his person. In another nod to the underlying congruence of book and gravestone, Godwin makes his argument for the specific preservation of only particular graves through an image of an overcrowded library. Godwin sees books as disposable, except for the greatest:

> It is with the memories of men, as it is with books. Those will always be the most numerous, which are of the freshest date. But this is all accident. The books and the memories of men of the eighteenth century, at present overrun our libraries, and clog up our faculties. But the time is hastening on, when this shall no longer be the case, when they shall be reduced to their true standard, and brought down to their genuine numbers. The tomb, the view of which wakens no sentiment, and that has no history annexed to it, must perish, and ought to perish (Godwin 26).

Libraries cannot be universal or all-encompassing, and neither can cemeteries. Both are necessarily restricted by spatial constraints. The problem of overcrowded cemeteries was at the center of a heated debate on burial reform in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, that *eventually* led to the more park-like urban cemeteries of today's

England. Godwin's essay, in this context, has practical and political ramifications as well as historical and intellectual ones.[13]

Godwin's argument, though stated to be a proposal for actual physically erected monuments, works better as an argument for encyclopedias and maps, which can figure information in ways that are simultaneously physical and imaginary. To echo Hilary Strang – Godwin believes the dead are didactic and exercise power through the projection of social progress and a linear descent through history.[14] However, while Godwin insists that tombs which "wakens no sentiment" must perish, that pronouncement assumes the decay of memory rather than the monument: a name we have forgotten, rather than an inscription worn down by environmental factors (26). In *The Last Man*, burial and memorialization are presented as having a far greater capacity for transformation.

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[13] There were serious health and sanitation issues developing in eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as city churchyards became so full of bodies that they were literally unable to bury any more. Also, as Karen Sanchez-Eppler notes, "pragmatic concern over health hazards posed by urban graveyards became entangled with issues of decency … the burial reformers of the mid-eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries self-consciously advocated a new moral temper" (416-17).

[14] Hilary Strang argues that for Godwin, "the ever-increasing population of the dead becomes a curriculum for the living. Fittingly enough, what the dead teach, Godwin argues, is how not to be just alive" (Strang 420). Strang reads *The Last Man's* social leveling during the plague as a counterargument to this argument of Godwin's, as in *The Last Man*, any living person is worth more than any of the dead, no matter their fame or position in the political or cultural hierarchy. This chapter has suggested that the labor of the dead in *The Last Man* is material rather than educational; the dead help make history, but it is up to the reader to reassemble and interpret it.

READING THE DEAD

In the last few chapters of The Last Man we find a near-obsession with textual monuments, perhaps in response to Lionel's inability to handle the bodies of Adrian and Clara himself. The most significant of these, of course, is the book written by Lionel that may be read as the source of the Sibylline prophecies. Lionel's decision to write such a narrative is framed as an archaeological discovery not dissimilar to the narrator's discovery of the Sibylline leaves:

> During one of my rambles through the habitations of Rome, I found writing materials on a table in an author's study. Parts of a manuscript lay scattered about. It contained a learned disquisition on the Italian language; one page an unfinished dedication to prosperity, for whose profit the writer had sifted and selected the niceties of this harmonious language - to whose everlasting benefit he bequeathed his labours (364).

The single page with the dedication haunts Lionel. It is an identifying mark of what the world has lost and a gravestone for prosperity. Inspired to leave his own mark, he chooses to write a book and leave it in Rome. He scrawls with a "silly flourish" the following words, mimicking on the pages of *The Last Man* the inscription on the imagined title page of Verney's book. In both senses this epigraph is deliberately representing the materiality of such an inscription:

DEDICATION
TO THE ILLUSTRIOUS DEAD.
SHADOWS, ARISE, AND READ YOUR FALL!
BEHOLD THE HISTORY OF THE
LAST MAN
(364).

The reader, who Lionel is unable to imagine because they lie outside of the temporal and spatial constraints of his own narrative, is invited simultaneously to "behold" and to "read" the book. The book here functions in two distinct ways: as the reading mechanism that must be opened, and as testifying object. The discovery of writing materials, Lionel's handwritten inscription, and the necessity of a human hand to both write, and eventually to open the completed book, echo again the process of adaptation and translation by hand described in the frame narrative. This seems to align with the desire for tactile legibility that is displayed throughout the novel.

The graves and bodies that litter the book provide anchors for Lionel's own process as a writer. The interruptions that mark his continuous struggle with writing a suitable record become over the course of the story more and more closely associated with the accumulating gravesites. After describing the burial of his last surviving child on the side of a cypress-strewn mountain overlooking Lake Como, for example, Lionel breaks the illusion of a linear narrative: "Now - soft awhile - have I arrived so near the end? Yes? It is all over now - a step or two over those new made graves, and the wearisome way is done" (340). The novel's conclusion, much like its frame narrative, depends on the reassembly of a text repeatedly and consistently entangled with both its environment.

The end of the novel reinforces this reading: Lionel sets his text into circulation by deliberately treating it as a relic and a remnant. He leaves the finished memoir behind in Rome. However, it thus takes on a material life of its own. Further change will be expressed in its material transformation from codex to scattered leaves and semiunintelligible fragments. Lionel's book is not only a monument, abandoned among the empty and ancient buildings of Rome, but also a monument left to ruin. It is expected to decay, not to last. I want to put aside, for a moment, Lionel's question of who will be there to read it, and posit that the object of the book does not cease to accumulate its own sedimental, material layers of meaning in the absence of readers. While this may be read as an argument for editorial agency, or reception theory, it is also an argument for material agency, with the book mediating between organic ecosystems and human artifacts. Shelley reminds us that the concepts of decay and decline have material substrates; that the textual record, at least when it is a manuscript or printed codex, is also part of a material record.

Shelley denies the neutrality of the material by repeatedly enveloping human bodies in layers of legible objects that forcefully echo the frame narrative's presentation of the Sibylline leaves. The physical translation of various bodies throughout the text illuminates the similarities between the preparation of human bodies for burial and the preparation of a text for circulation. Significant, too, are the links the Shelley draws between immediacy and materiality, and the sensory qualities of vision and touch. Throughout *The Last Man* Shelley blurs the lines between human bodies, books, and objects. In the final absence of a human body to bury, Lionel finally lays to rest his narrative, to become an artifact and a relic in some other time. Shelley's novel, rather than remaining "haunted" by the materials of writing, is deeply invested in processes of bodily decay not only as a metaphor, but as a reality that allows texts to be transmuted, translated, and revived. Texts, Shelley insists, survive because of the vulnerability of their material bodies, not in spite of it.

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EPITAPH: ROMANTICISM AND BIBLIOGRAPHIC FANTASIES

He cannot pass a volume which is tied with a string. He spends his days and Saturday nights in tying and untying books with broken covers (31).
-Leon H. Vincent, *The Bibliotaph and Other People*

“So tell me,” he continued, “how does a man become a book?” (974)
-Susanna Clarke, *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell*

Entangled with the Dead has largely focused on representations of burial and exhumation as metaphors for literary history, showing how the ruined book acts as a mutually constitutive cross-disciplinary object of Romantic science and the literary-historical record. My attention has been on how Romantic authors and their later nineteenth-century readers framed literary history along a newly-discovered material record, articulating a posthumously-oriented poetics of media mortality for literature of the early nineteenth century. These images of burial and exhumation embed Romantic authorship in close exchanges between bodies and deteriorating books, illustrating how traditionally temporal constructs such as posterity and affective memorialization acquire a charged material dimension within the contexts of the emerging semiotics of Romantic science. The category of the “literary dead” expands from the author to encompass the body of the book as well. The center, both chronologically and thematically, has been the late Romantic period, from the 1820s to 1840.

More recently, Romantic book culture has been revived (revivified) in the twenty-first century to reflect on - and fantasize about - the role of Romanticism in shaping modern notions of literary history. Therefore, I will conclude with a brief discussion of

Susanna Clarke's 2004 historical fantasy novel *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell*, which creates a fantasy of literary history in a magical alternative England. The novel, set largely during the 1810s, might easily be described as a battle of magical bibliophiles, an object lesson against being possessive of knowledge as embodied by books, and against restricting access to important books to elite, white, wealthy men in particular. The novel's temporally ambiguous, unnamed narrator describes an alternative England which had once been ruled by the Raven King, a magician named John Uskglass who had been fostered in the land of Faerie. The Raven King ruled northern England from 1110 to 1434, when he disappeared. In his absence magic began to fail all over England, and by the time the novel picks up in 1806, has disappeared entirely. Only books remain – and the rumored book of the Raven King, written in his own hand, is the most sought-after relic of them all. The main plot revolves around the efforts of two magicians, Gilbert Norrell and Jonathan Strange, to revive English magic; the efforts of a faerie called the Gentleman with the Thistledown Hair to manipulate them; and the struggle of the women and servants caught between them to resist and remake the patriarchal, imperial structures that exercise both magical and non-magical power over their lives. The Raven King's book, and the remarkable ways in which it surfaces at various points in the novel, serves as a pivotal material and textual catalyst. Clarke's novel is difficult to summarize briefly, in part because it is structurally reliant on a deep fictional literary history referenced throughout the novel in detailed citations and footnotes. Clarke embeds the novel's central narrative within a complex, varied network of literary production, loss, and destruction.

Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell performs that unique magic of the historical novel, reflecting back at us what interests us most about the period. In this case, the early nineteenth-century is re-invested with an alternative literary history of English magic. The novel's opening chapter, "The Library at Hurtfew," marks the immediate distinction between the actual practice of magic and the theoretical discussion of the history of magic. This provides the opening catalyst: Gilbert Norrell claims he can do practical magic, while his counterparts in the York Society of Magicians "read each long, dull papers upon the history of literary magic" (1). Gilbert Norrell's secret library at Hurtfew Abbey contains books *of* magic; the York magicians possess only books *about* magic.[1] This bibliographic distinction thus models one of the core tensions of the novel, drawing as well on the tensions surrounding early nineteenth-century scientific and historical institutions.[2] And, despite the presence and/or possibility of magic, the novel's representation of literary history is firmly grounded in the manuscript and print cultures and mechanisms of the early nineteenth century.

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[1] It may be worth noting here that the fan wiki for *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell*, an online indexical concordance to the novel, is called 'The Library at Hurtfew' and tongue-in-cheek refers to readers as 'Norrellites' and contributors as 'Strangites,' modeling the differing theoretical approaches of the two main characters to magical (literary) history.

[2] The York Society of Magicians is likely intended as a reference to private groups and institutions of scholarship that began to form during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (The Royal Society, founded in 1660, for example). At the turn of the nineteenth century emerged a new category of professionalized institutions as part of what Jon Klancher identifies as a "changing topography of public knowledge practices," using the 1800 founding of the Royal Institution as a turning point (30). The Royal Institution's explicitly public-facing and educational mandate highlights a tension that plays out in Clarke's work as well, between the bibliotaphic Norell and Strange's attempts to publish a new magical history and create a studentship. For more see on these institutions and their relationship with literary and book history, see Klancher's *Transfiguration of the Arts and Sciences*.

I would contend that Clarke's deliberate use of this specific historical moment is a continuation of the topos of the imaginary identified by *Entangled with the Dead*: the convergence of the emerging semiotics of Romantic science with the emerging mass media culture of the early nineteenth century. These converging forces spark an anxiety about the material vulnerability of knowledge and a complex relationship between the material and the textual record – the vocabulary that emerged, I argue, is that of media mortality. Clarke's novel interrogates, similarly, the bodily stakes of reading with the dead.

Throughout the novel runs a strain of violence done to, with, and through books that, I argue, points to a much more tangled question about the embodiment of literary history. Bodies and books are both at stake throughout *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell*, ultimately with no clear distinction between the body and the book. The novel exerts pressure on the idea that literary history can ever be disembodied, while at the same time suggesting that "book" must be a more capacious term that goes beyond the bookshelves of those elite, white, wealthy men. Clarke employs Romantic poets (both "real" in the historical sense and fictional characters who present as Romantic poets) and the Romantic literary marketplace to do so.

In other words, like *Entangled with the Dead*, Clarke's *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell* explores how books acquired bodies at the end of the eighteenth century. Continuing to script the literary afterlives of Romantic writers, the novel illuminates the extent to which the Romantic document bears a specific charge of embodiment. In some ways a quasi-allegorical exploration of the Romantic literary movement – and importantly, the Romantic literary marketplace – the novel not only explores literary history, mining it for characters, incidents, and formats; it interrogates both materially and narratologically the ways in which we receive, handle, and interpret that history. With that in mind, in this conclusion I will discuss three specific bibliographic incidents in Clarke's novel: our introduction to Mr. Norell's bibliotaphic library; the publication and subsequent vanishing of Jonathan Strange's *The History and Practice of English Magic*; and what happened to the book of Robert Findhelm. The novel's pastiche of nineteenth-century bibliomania both transforms and comments on the forms and expressions of that bibliomania and its continued relationship with contemporary modes of affective bibliography.[3] More specifically, *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell* makes visible the continuing relationship between Romantic book culture and contemporary anxieties about book mortality.

In a discussion of bibliophiles included in his *Curiosities of Literature*, Isaac Disraeli makes the observation that a narrow view of bibliographical value would limit volumes of interest to the some twenty first editions of world-famous authors. Instead, Disraeli argues, "as a book is a sort of individual representation, not a solitary volume exists but may be personified, and described as a human being" (137). Disraeli insists on the microscopic potential of such a diffuse bibliography, which preserves and uncovers in turn "secrets" of history. Bibliographers "trace out the old roads we had pursued, and with a lighter line indicate the new ones which are opening, from the imperfect attempts, and even the errors of our predecessors!" (137) By tracing the lighter line of Clarke's bibliographical fantasy, which plays out through mortal threats to the individuated, sometimes personified bodies of books, then, I hope to show how powerfully images of mortality and the handling of the dead persist in our fantasies of literary history, and how thoroughly these notions are entangled with the Romantic dead.

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[3] Daniel Baker uses *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell* as a case study for fantastic historical fiction's relationship to New Historicism and the political reproduction of the past via fiction, in which the novel's fantastical elements become vehicles for ideological commentary, may be further illuminating here. See "History as Fantasy: Estranging the Past in *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell*," *Otherness: Essays and Studies 2.0*, August 2011. http://www.otherness.dk/journal/vol-2/

BOOKISH VIOLENCE

Gilbert Norrell is a bibliotaph; a species of bibliophile who hoards and hides books to the extent that he might be said to bury them. By 1886 Halkett Lord is able to label the bibliotaph "the undertaker of literature, for he literally buries books … covetous, suspicious, and ungenerous" (Lord 83). The bibliotaph is in that parlance a hoarder, a villain who restricts the potential of books to convey knowledge. Disraeli mentions the term, from the French Bibliotaphe, in the same essay cited above: "A bibliotaphe buries his books, by keeping them under lock, or framing them in glass-cases" (133). [4] Clarke's novel most immediately presents itself, as I've noted, as a cautionary tale on this kind of book-love. Norrell's library at Hurtfew Abbey is hidden by a spell that disorients and redirects the senses of its visitors. First-time visitor John Segundus describes the sensation: "He could never afterwards picture the sequence of passageways and rooms through which they had passed, nor quite decide how long they had taken to reach the library" (10). Norrell carefully and deliberately restricts access to his library, jealously hoarding a collection that Segundus can scarcely credit exists before laying eyes on it himself. Norrell, able to express assessments and opinions on books only he has read, possesses a unique body of knowledge underwritten by the physical space of his secret library.

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[4] "The following notices of these collectors ("but this book-gluttony is without digestion or taste") are curious; the first I find in the Pithaeana, in an explanatory note by Maifeaux. "Bibliotaphe. on appelle Bibliotaphe, ou Tombeau des Livres, celui qui ayant quelque Livre rare et curioux ne le communique a perfonne; mais le garde fous la clef, et l'enterre, pour ainfi dire, dans ton Cabinet" (Disraeli 137). It is perhaps worth noting that Disraeli explicitly connects book-gluttony with book-burying.

In addition, Norrell's book-burying is accompanied by an air of bibliographical violence that further illuminates the material dimensions of such metaphors:

> "As they were leaving the [library at Hurtfew], Mr Segundus noticed something he though odd … Upon the table lay the boards and leather bindings of a very old book, a pair of scissors and a strong, cruel-looking knife, such as a gardener might use for pruning. But the pages of the book were nowhere to be seen" (15).

The implication being, of course, that Norrell is not content to merely hoard books – he also disembowels them, removing content he doesn't even trust to his magically hidden library. The threat Norrell poses to knowledge is a material one as much as an ideological one. In this instance, the violence is done to the book's pages; to paper. In other words, the material that underwrites, literally, a book's text, makes it vulnerable to violent censure. The image of the Romantic bibliophile becomes the actor of an inherently repressive collecting practice that also extends to actions on the bodies of books, not merely their contents. Clarke's fantasy of a Romantic bibliophile reveals the extent to which we continue to view anxieties about the vulnerability of textual knowledge through paradigms first established in the nineteenth century.

Ina Ferris has recently explored the conception, during the early part of the nineteenth century, of the “book-man": “a familiar type in middle-class male culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century - an odd collection of book-hunters, book collectors - and were understood as beings who lived in and among the books in their libraries” (Ferris 1). However, as Ferris notes, when the book-man first emerged, he was “in contentious relation to a literary sphere intent on separating itself from the wider culture of books” key to the emerging modern distinction between book culture (interest in and adherence to the material form) and literary culture. In *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell*, these tensions are still familiar, though applied within the confines of her alternative England to the historiography vs. the practice of magic. If, as Ferris contends, the book-man is a figure for the tension between the bookish and the literary, illuminating ways in which Romantic culture simultaneously afforded the book a body on new and remarkable terms and also began equating books with reading in a way that blurred, for modernity, the difference between a history of the book and the history of literature, then Clarke’s Mr. Norrell is a twenty-first century reflection of that tension. Within the narrative, Norrell galvanizes the rebirth of “practical magic,” learned from his hoarded book collection, in modern Britain. However, he is also obsessed with controlling and understanding the physical bodies of those books. Ferris calls the book-man an “epiphenomenon of the ubiquitous presence of print, encapsulated at once its productive possibilities and the dilemmas raised for sorting out cultural parameters and protocols.” As a historical plant, then, the character of Norrell and his magical praxis models the potential violence of that tension. Moreover, this fantastic history refracts, through that lens, our contemporary concern about what is happening to material books.

However, Clarke's portrait of Norrell as the paradigmatic Romantic bookman and bibliotaph is also embedded in a more complicated positioning of English magic in the publishing mechanisms of the first few decades of the nineteenth century:

> The auction in the summer of 1812 was possibly the most notable bibliographic event since the burning of the library at Alexandria. It lasted for forty-one days and was the cause of at least two duels. […] In the weeks that followed the auction scholars and historians waited to hear what new knowledge was to be found in the seven wonderful books. In particular they were in high hopes that *The Mirrour of the Lyf of Ralph Stokesie* would provide answers to some of the most puzzling mysteries in English magic. It as commonly supposed that Mr. Norrell would reveal his new discoveries in the pages of *The Friends of English Magic* or that he would cause copies of the books to be printed. He did neither of these things. One or two people wrote him letters asking him specific questions. He did not reply. When letters appeared in the newspapers complaining of this behavior he was most indifferent. After all he was simply acting as he had always done - acquiring valuable books and then hiding them away where no man else could see them (Footnote, *JS & N,* 306-307).

I have quoted at length from this particular footnote because it illustrates at once many of the ways in which Clarke both utilizes and invents Romantic literary and bibliographical history for her own purposes. The sale of the library of the Duke of Roxburghe in 1812 is considered by many as a seminal moment in book collecting history, and the inauguration of "a new era in English book collecting" (de Ricci 71). Historically, the most famous (and valuable) of the Duke's collection was a 1471 edition of Boccacio's *Decameron* by the famous Venetian printer Valdarfer, which was sold to the Earl of Spencer for over two thousand pounds. The public enthusiasm surrounding the auction was codified by the establishment of the Roxburghe Club the last night of the auction, at the instigation of Thomas Frognall Dibdin, later notorious as the author of *The Bibliomania*, and more pointedly, a very strange book he titled *The Bibliographical Decameron, or Ten Days Pleasant Discourse upon Illuminated Manuscripts, and Subjects Connected with Early Engraving, Typography, and Bibliography*, in which Dibdin "adopts Boccacio's diurnal dialogue form to tell tales of the book trade," as discussed by fictional bibliophiles (Cox 188). In Clarke's scene the Valdarfer *Decameron* is joined in the spot of pride by *The Mirrour of the Lyf of Ralph Stokesie,* a fictional fifteenth-century text about a magician named Ralph Stokesey. The fictional Mr. Norrell matches the historical Earl of Spencer, bidding over two-thousand pounds for this prize.

This footnote also illustrates the extent to which Norrell's bibliotaphy is dangerous to the public interest. The Stokesey book is looked to with excitement by the general readership, who have followed his periodical *The Friends of English Magic* or whose enthusiasm has contributed to his rise in popular fame during his time in London. Norrell, however, does not view his bibliophilia as participatory; if he invested in the advancement of knowledge, it is solely his own. Clarke uses this illustration of bibliotaphy as a breaking point in Norrell's perceived patriotism. Norrell eschews the newer, democratizing forms of the periodical and the reprint. His behavior in the public sphere mirrors his behavior in private; this moment of book burial reveals how much systems of knowledge continue to depend on, one, the discovery of a rare volume or an old book which has somehow survived the last few centuries, but also on the willing participation of wealthy collectors like Norrell.

It is also worth noting that Norrell's bibliocentric secrecy also causes real harm. Norrell, almost immediately after exposing his powers to the public, causes irrevocable bodily and mental damage to a dying young woman in an attempt to resurrect and heal her. Norrell resurrects English magic, and one of his first acts is to resurrect Lady Pole. In the process, however, Norrell makes a bargain with an ill-intentioned faerie, The Gentleman With The Thistledown Hair, and Lady Pole, unable to articulate her position, is trapped between realms. In the bargain, Lady Pole loses a finger, and the violence enacted on her body follows through on the promise of the shears and the empty book covers in Norrell's library. Lady Pole, as well as, later, Strange's wife Arabella and the Pole's black butler Stephen Black, cursed to be literally unable to speak of their treatment by the Gentleman, are also rendered culturally mute by their limited ability to participate in the literary marketplace that enables Norrell and Strange. Clarke's historical fantasy outlines the dangers of an oppressive patriarchal and colonial knowledge network, and argues for the necessity of a more democratic publishing sphere, where not only authors but books are granted more individual agency – and in which 'authorship' can be more easily claimed by women, the working class, and people of color. My reading, then, not only identifies Norrell as a twentieth-century fantasy of the nineteenth-century media technology boom, but one that illuminates, through the language of mortality, death, and resurrection, many of our modern concerns surrounding the supposed waning of print media and the appearance of further participatory media like the Web 2.0, with its focus on user-generated content.

However, as *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell* demonstrates, it is also impossible to untangle these fantasies from their Romantic origins, in part demonstrated through the fictional resurrection of their chief figures. The burial and resurrection of books and bookish bodies are intertwined with the literary resurrection of Romanticism and the Romantic poet. Clarke not only sets her literary historical fantasy in the Romantic period – she introduces figures such as the publisher John Murray and Lord Byron into the center of Norrell and Strange's bookish debate.

VANISHING BOOKS

Throughout the novel Clark portrays Strange as the author to Norrell's bibliophilic collector. Where Norrell continues to acquire and hoard any book of magic he can get his hands on, Strange takes up the task of writing a new history of English magic, with pedagogical aims. While Norrell was involved in the production of the periodical *Friends of English Magic*, his editorials were more scolds than lessons, and largely served to consolidate his own anti-social sense of power, simply with a wider audience. However, the publication of Strange's book is another moment in which Norrell's cruelness towards and exercised through books becomes apparent. Rather than continue to counter Strange in the periodical press, Norrell decides to vacate the pages of his book as soon as it hits the shelves.

Clarke takes this opportunity to introduce us to John Murray – famously the publisher of Lord Byron, and in Clarke's fictional England the publisher of Jonathan Strange as well. Murray is interrupted, the day after Strange's book is published, by a series of agents and customers claiming their books have disappeared. One, a Mr. Green, returns to the shop from which he purchased the volume to complain that:

> ‘I took the first book home,’ he explained, ‘and I placed it upon the table, on top of a box in which I keep my razors and shaving things.' Mr. Green mimed putting the book on top of the box. ‘I put the newspaper on top of the book and my brass candlestick and an egg on top of that.’
>
> ‘An egg?’ said Mr. Murray.
>
> ‘A hard-boiled egg! But when I turned around - not ten minutes later! -the newspaper was directly on top of the box and the book was gone! Yet the egg and the candlestick were just as they had always been’” (603).

While Mr. Green’s eccentricities do not go unnoted by the publisher, they do seem to prove his point – the book vanished, as if by magic. Soon after Murray examines his own shelf: “‘My own copy is gone! Look! I put it here, between d’Israeli’s *Flim-Flams* and Miss Austen’s *Emma*. You can see the space where it stood’” (604). This is a particularly interesting moment: Mr. Green covered his book with other common household objects, anchoring it in a peculiarly material bedroom landscape. Murray, however, sets his copy between d’Israeli and Austen, anchoring Strange’s book instead within an explicitly literary landscape. Both details serve to establish the material and textual reality, or perhaps solidity, of Strange’s book.

In addition to vanishing whole books, Norrell empties further copies of their contents. Muray sends someone to check on the stock of unsold books; the man returns with bad news: “They are all blank - not a word left upon any of the pages. I am sorry, Mr. Murray, but *The History and Practice of English* is gone’” (609). Norell causes Strange’s book to vanish once it has been bought, and also vacates its contents, rendering the books empty shells even inside Murray’s warehouses. Norrell, in other words, murders Strange’s book. The book is a conduit for his attack against Strange, of course, denying Strange a voice in the public conversation by severing him from his potential readership.

Within the contexts of the novel's emphasis on literary history this is a more serious denial. Magical knowledge is repeatedly and consistently figured through books – books which Norrell largely controls. This extension of bibliotaphic violence to strangling Strange's book in the cradle is an active, rather than passive, effort to exert control over who reads what. It also denies some of the more benign interpretations of the bibliotaph; Norrell takes on all of the most negative connotations attached to that brand of obsessive book-love. Moreover, the manner of the book's disappearance provides another echo of the novel's mediation of the nineteenth and twenty-first century media concerns. If the nineteenth century public, as the Duke of Roxburge's sale indicates (in the real world as well as in Clarke's alternative England), is newly invested in the preservation, acquisition, and accessibility of books, then the twenty-first world of Clarke and her readers is increasingly invested in retaining preservation and access.

In the summer of 2009, Amazon utilized its digital rights management software to remotely delete a number of books from customer's devices - including in one case, as Edwin Battistella notes, a user's own margin notes and annotations (Battistella 41). While the books - most prominently (and ironically) George Orwell's 1984 - had been sold illegally by publisher MobileReference, Amazon's decision to simply make them vanish - as if by magic - provoked a vicious backlash. Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos ultimately apologized, but the specter had been raised: books can now, in fact, disappear into thin air

(Battistella 41).[5] Digital books, as objects, behave and can be affected quite differently from their paper and ink counterparts. This digital threat of book violence, then, is echoed in Clarke's historical fantasy. The novel therefore productively connects the threat of the sharp-scissored Grangerizer with the threat of being denied access to digital textual property.

In the introduction to *How to do Things with Books in Victorian Britain*, Leah Price outlines the tension between a material grasp on the book and the Victorian realist novel:

> That books function both as trophies and as tools, that their use engages bodies as well as minds, and that printed matter connects readers not just with authors but with other owners and handlers - these facts troubled a genre busy puzzling out the proper relation of thoughts to things, in an age where more volumes entered into circulation (or gathered dust on more shelves than ever before (Price 2).

The tension Price identifies here plays out in the aftermath of the Romantic bookish turn discussed by Ferris and Piper, and Clarke's novel takes up its twenty-first century traces through figures like Murray. Clarke's version of Murray moves through a resurrected nineteenth-century interior populated by books that are insistently, even troublingly, tangible – and she does so through an adopted prose style that imitates and echoes the Victorian realists more so than any Romantic-era novelist, excepting Austen. As we face the potential, though undeniably gradual, disappearance of the physical book, different ways in which to imagine the history of that relationship to the body of the book become more immediately necessary. In other words, there is an important link between scholarship and historical fiction as we look for images in which to inhere such anxieties about ideas and things. The other question, equally important, that *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell* takes up is one that looks past Price to the late eighteenth century. How and when did the book get a body, anyway?

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[5] Also helpful here Perzanowski, Aaron and Jason Scultz. *The End of Ownership: Personal Property in the Digital Economy.* Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2016.

MURDERED BOOKS

Humans can become books in a number of ways. Beyond the superficial similarities of description often attached to human bodies and to books – both are, after all, organized around a central spine – or figures of speech - “I can read you like a book” – there have also been throughout history numerous attempts to materialize this felt connection between the body and the book. In one extreme example, the practice of binding books in human skin has existed since at least the late seventeenth century. As Steven Connor has noted, leather remains the most authoritative of book bindings, and human skin can be tanned and treated like any other animal skin (Connor 42). While taboo in modern Western cultures, the practice is typically thematic, meant to immediately and literally attach the aura of an ‘authentic skin’ to a volume. Books are bound in human skins either because the owner of the skin wished it to be done, out of a sense of connection to either the author or the text; or because the binder of the book thought human skin appropriate to the text. Many books bound in human skin outside of bequests are anatomies or other medical volumes. Human skin can also become a book through inscription, whether permanent as in tattooing or scarring; or temporary, done in ink or paint. Each of these material transfigurations disrupts the rhetorical relationship of man (man's body) to the text (book), providing an uneasy reminder of the material substrates of discourse.

Clarke, similarly, turns to skin in order to explore the material instabilities of textual inheritance. As I noted earlier, at the beginning of the novel the ultimate bibliographic prize is a rumored book of magic written by the Raven King himself. This book eventually makes an appearance through the character of Vinculus, a street performer, beggar and sometime-prophet. He appears, for example, to give Strange a prophesy of two new magicians rising in England and prompts him to perform his first spell; he appears at other intervals to deliver the same prophecy to several other characters. Vinculus also bears a curious physical characteristic. Norell notes, for example, "a curious curving mark of vivid blue, not unlike the upward stroke of a pen" on Vinculus's neck that "most resembled … that barbaric painting of the skin which is practiced by the natives of the South Sea islands" (131). Stephen Black later describes the marks – which extend all over Vinculus's body – as "a strange disfiguration … like writing" (800). This language, unrecognizable to the others, is the Raven King's writing. The street-magician's inscribed skin erodes distinctions between the body of the book and the human body.

Moreover, this is an inherited condition: Vinculus is born with the King's Letters in/on his skin, embodying quite literally the divide between author and reader. This is a distinction he will comment on himself: "I am a Book," said Vinculus, stopping in mid-caper. "I am the Book. It is the task of the Book to bear the words. Which I do" (836). Clarke represents a fantasy of the historical book-man through a man-book. This hybrid body is a product of voracious bibliophilia: it is revealed that Vinculus's father, Clegg, dismembered and devoured the King's Book strip by strip. When Vinculus was born several years later, the text reappeared on his skin. The literal, rather than metaphorical, digestion of the book is what enables its inheritance by later generations. Like his son, Clegg cannot read or "understand," in traditional ways, the book's internals. Rather, he can only process and pass it on through the bodily functions of eating and reproduction, integrating the text with his own body and subsequently gifting the book the body of his son.

Clarke's novel takes the metaphorical extremes of bibliomania to their physical extremes. Like the bibliotaph, the bibliophagos ("book-eater") was also a popular hyperbole for nineteenth-century bookishness. Holbrook Jackson, for example, embroiders as discussion of the bibliomaniac with the string of synonyms: "Bookmen taste, chew, masticate, nibble, ingustate, devour, gorge, cram" (Jackson 158). These words give consumption a visceral, unpleasant connotation echoed by Clegg's consumption of the book and his subsequent punishment. Clarke does not only highlight the material vulnerability of books through this moment of biblophagy. The consequences of Clegg's act also invoke a specific discourse of book mortality and embodiment: "Clegg had been hanged for stealing a book, but the charge Robert Findhelm brought against him was not theft. The charge Findhelm brought against him was book-murder. Clegg was the last man in England to be hanged for book-murder" (338). The destruction of this particular book is distinguished as a mortal crime. A footnote to this information tells us: "Book-murder was a late addition to English magical law. The willful destruction of a book of magic merited the same punishment as the murder of a Christian" (338). In other words, as in modern times legal personhood has been granted to non-human entities such as corporations, in Clarke's alternative England books of magic have been granted similar protections and definitions. This relatively recent legal codification also provides a context in which an individual book's identity can adhere in an individual body.

This change is a consequence of loss – as magic faded following the Raven King's departure, books of magic became more and more rare (as we see in the discussions of Norrell's library and collecting habits). As the book of magic becomes endangered, a 'dying breed,' it gains a body. Here we find another potential point of connection with the history of media mortality; as production of new media booms (as it did in the early nineteenth century) anxieties arise about the preservation of the old. Vinculus's inscribed body, both a product of book destruction and embodying its potential for recovery, negotiates living vs. imagined memory through his skin. Vinculus's skin – an epidermal layer that exerts pressure both internally, containing the body, and externally, acting as the interface for every interaction with the material world – represents a medium of preservation. What this seems to highlight is the liminality of such a medium.

Clarke also positions this liminal body on the threshold between life and death. Near the novel's climax, Vinculus is murdered by the vengeful fairy called the Gentleman with the Thistledown Hair. Childermass finds the body, in February of 1817: "In the middle of the moor a misshapen hawthorn tree stood all alone and from the tree a man was hanging. He had been stripped of his coat and shirt, reveling in death what he had doubtless kept hidden during his life … his chest, back and arms were covered with intricate blue marks" (814). Childermass stares at the letters until he realizes that they are the King's Letter, and that Vinculus is indeed the Raven King's book. Childermass then faces the dilemma of what to do with a book in such an "inconvenient form" (815). How does one read a dead book? The book is now even more vulnerable to decay – remember that human bodies decompose at a much more rapid rate than the paper and leather bodies of books – and to being eaten again by scavenging animals. Childermass has been caught out without pen and paper to make a more traditional copy. His thoughts turn next to his pocket-knife, echoing the scene in the very first chapter of the novel, where a threatening knife sits next to a cut up book. Accessing the text has taken on a determinedly material dimension, accelerating the concerns of preservation that would attend a more traditional form of manuscript. The text, now that it has adhered to firmly to an individual corpse and is immediately threatened by the material consequences of mortality, is itself in a liminal state.

Vinculus' inscribed, unreadable, and resurrected body is the physically located culmination of an archaeology of literary history performed by the novel: endangered books, carefully reconstructed footnotes, botched translations, arguments in the periodicals, vanishing texts. By the end of the novel, Vinculus represents the "body" of magical history, which, at this point in time, has become a thoroughly "literary" history: it is made up of and embodied in books and reading. Although Norrell, and eventually Strange, define themselves as practical magicians against the leisure class of educated gentlemen who made up the ranks of theoretical magicians, who had ceased to actually perform magic over the last few centuries, all of Norrell's magical accomplishments are anchored in his bibliomania and obsessive control of the magical book market. Norrell's magic, in other words, is anchored in the book as a commodity, an object that can be bought and sold; or kept, conscious of its value on both the economic commodity market and the (potential) magic commodity market. Clarke utilizes the bibliographic body of Vinculus in order to explore both a historical trajectory within the Romantic period – that of a media boom that resulted in a culture war over control of the material forms of knowledge as well as over access to information – and as a representative Romantic document that allows us to consider our own contemporary struggle to understand the literary record as a material body.

Books, Clarke's novel seems to argue, are not mute or immutable. Instead, they are articulate and uncertain, embodied and fluid. Books are mortal things, and their deaths and resurrections are put into the hands of the figure of the Romantic poet. In the novel, this argument culminates not in Vinculus's death, but in his resurrection. While Childermass debates what to do with the dead book he has found, the Raven King makes his only appearance in the novel. More importantly, Clarke appropriates the tropes of the Romantic poet in order to construct the appearance of the Raven King. Childermass's anachronistic observation that the mysterious man (who to readers is quite obviously the Raven King/John Uskglass) has "something of the look of … a Romantic poet" and is a "poetical-looking person" is shorthand for the twenty-first century reader, reinforcing the novel's use of Romanticism as the necessary shape for debates about life and death in literary history (816). The touch of this Romantic figure transforms and preserves the book while simultaneously resurrecting Vinculus. The Raven King traces Vinculus's skin "as if he were writing" on it, and the dead man revives; the hand of the Romantic poet restores a book to life. However, the subtext is also important: an imagined, twenty-first century representation of a Romantic poet changes and reinscribes a book in the moment of resurrection. For, as Vinculus and Childermass will soon realize, the text that covers the resurrected Vinculus has changed. Romantic books have a great capacity for transformation.

Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell's use of Romantic literary culture helps us understand a historical trajectory from Romanticism to twenty-first century fantasies of literary history. The novel thereby offers one way to understand the evolution of a discourse of literary and book history through a vocabulary of mortality, akin to what I have called throughout this dissertation a 'poetics of media mortality.' This thread not only runs through literary works of the Romantic period, as I have shown, but continues to linger in our own current literary and bibliographic imaginary. This representation of the Romantics is possible because of a discourse they engendered themselves – and identifying it more clearly will help our current incipient digital moment wrestle with our own concerns about preservation, survival, and the complicated entanglement of our textual and material records. Clarke's novel is ultimately a commentary on play and performance between the material forces of literary history. *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell* is both a story and a record, deliberately invoking a paratextual imagined literary history as a narrative tool, in a way that requires the connotations we attach to the historical moment of Romanticism to function. Book-resurrection, according to Clarke, is a Romantic fantasy. Literary history is offered a potential mode of resurrection via literary historical fantasy.

Yet, as noted, preservation and resurrection are fluid rather than stable. As Childermass muses to himself, "he had succeeded in preserving John Uskglass's book from death and destruction; and then, just when it seemed secure, the book itself had defeated him by changing" (836). This is echoed in the novel's genre. The historical novel, to use Alessandro Manzoni's evocative metaphor, "put[s] the flesh back on the skeleton that is history" (Manzoni 67-8). Clarke uses Vinculus's literal resurrection to signal the ways in which the resurrection of Romantic characters and documents in fiction can be used to consider the embodiment of old books – to put flesh back on their skeletons. And, is should be noted, the historical novel is generally considered a Romantic invention, which can be traced back to Sir Walter Scott's *Waverly*, published in 1814, the same historical point in which Clarke's novel is set. In fact, Clarke's use of extensive notes to cite (and invent) various authorities and sources also echoes *Waverly*, a novel Jerome De Groot describes as "a collage of information and generic form" (De Groot 5). Clarke pastiches, as well as follows in the footsteps of, this brand of Romantic grab-bag historical novel. There are echoes, too, of the Gothic historical novel that also interrogates and investigates the lingering effects of history through, as Ina Ferris puts it, a framework of "scholarly retrieval … presenting itself as the rediscovery, translation, transcription, or piecing together of obscure documents from the past" (Ferris "Scholarly Revivals" 267-8). Clarke transplants these inherited formal characteristics alongside a deliberately imagined and fantastical historiography of those same characteristics. When Vinculus realizes the text written on his body has changed, he immediately begins speculating on the genre - “Perhaps I am a Receipt-Book! Perhaps I am a Novel! Perhaps I am a Collection of Sermons!” he announces gleefully (836). This outburst aligns textual transformation and variability with the bibliographic variety of the early nineteenth-century - a variety which is inherently distant to the twenty-first century reader (when was the last time you bought a collection of sermons?). In other words, Clarke employs the genre of historical fantasy in order to interrogate a multitude of ways texts transform over time.

The extent to which Clarke represents textual and bodily decay and preservation as entangled in (and on) the person of Vinculus shows just how thoroughly entangled these concepts are in images of death and material vulnerability as our figures and vocabulary for participating in discussion of literary history and literary mortality. Romanticism is a particularly dense site of such bibliographic historical fantasies. Romantic poets and scholars appear via bibliographic frameworks in a number of late twentieth- and early twenty-first century historical fantasies, from science-fiction like Tim Powers’s *The Anubis Gates* (1983), in which a Coleridge scholar time-travels to 1810, to ‘discovery’ novels like John Crowley’s *The Evening Land*, in which modern scholars uncover a lost novel by Lord Byron, recreated in interstitial chapters. I hope that this brief exploration of a twenty-first century reimagining of Romantic bibliography and bibliophilia helps makes visible a largely unexplored discourse of mortality that lingers in the disciplinary history (or perhaps the historiography) of book history. Clarke’s book shows us that the embodiment, death, and potential resurrection of books are fantasies that we largely access through representations of Romanticism. Moreover, as I hope this dissertation has shown, these tropes can be traced to Romantic struggles to reclassify and re-embody the book in the shifting material and intellectual contexts of the early nineteenth century.

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