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# **The Works Of Horatio Walpole, Earl Of Orford**

In Five Volumes

**Walpole, Horace**

**London, 1798**

A Letter to the Editor of the Miscellanies of Chatterton

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A  
L E T T E R  
TO THE  
EDITOR OF THE MISCELLANIES  
OF  
THOMAS CHATTERTON.



L E T T E R

TO THE

EDITOR OF THE MISCELLANIES

THOMAS CHATFIELD



## L E T T E R

TO THE

EDITOR OF THE MISCELLANIES, &amp;c.

SIR,

YOU have so clearly marked me out as the person whom T. Chatterton first addressed, in order to extricate himself from his irksome situation; and you have accompanied that description with so injurious a picture of my behaviour, that my appearing to the citation will certainly not subject me to the suspicion of vanity. Perhaps I do not think that an anonymous editor, who, to satisfy an idle curiosity, calls on a private man for an account of a private transaction, is much entitled to an answer; still less to a public answer: because, were such summons to be obeyed, the public would be troubled with ten thousand impertinent discussions. But as you have gone much farther, and, founding yourself on a very unjust assertion (I hope on misinformation), have called for the indignation of the public against me, it becomes necessary to my own character to clear it in as public a manner.

And though, sir, you are the person to whom I shall address my vindication, you will allow me to forget you for a moment, while I make an apology to your superior and mine, that public you appeal to, for the liberty I take in troubling them with the cause of so insignificant a person as I am. Your mention of me as the first to whom Chatterton applied, is not the first notice laid before the public of my having been involuntarily involved in his story. Rumours, grafted on circumstances not fathomed, have even represented me as the primary cause of his dismal catastrophe; in some publications the expressions have been so little weighed and so unguarded, as almost to insinuate this cruel and most unjust aspersion. Some of my friends have been so kindly hurt at the misrepresentation, as to advise me to give an open account  
of



of my conduct towards Chatterton, with which they were acquainted, and which they knew had been irreproachable. Conscious of my perfect innocence on that head, I chose to rest upon it. My time of life, aversion to controversy, and, above all, conviction that I am not of consequence enough to interest the attention of the public, made me decline the solicitation of my friends. You say, sir, that I am well known to the republic of letters: the description, I doubt, is too magnificent. A trifling writer, whose celebrity is confined to a very narrow sphere, scarce deserves that predication. However, my having been an author was an additional reason why I chose not to be so again, especially in my own cause. To be an author, indicates respect for the public; it implies ambition of meriting their regard. To cease to be an author, if one has not been totally an unsuccessful one, is a stronger mark of respect. It implies apprehension of forfeiting their approbation, when declining years may have impaired our faculty of pleasing. But there is a spacious difference between attempting to amuse the public by one's writings, and presuming to demand attention to one's self. This latter arrogance I dreaded; and it preponderated to make me silent. All I yielded to, was, to set down a faithful account of my intercourse with Chatterton, and to communicate it to some few persons. With that narrative I shall now indulge you, sir, as you express a wish to see it. If I violate my own law of not intruding the interests of a private man on the awful examination of the public, you, not I, sir, ought to be responsible. You, by your own confession ignorant of the circumstances of my transaction with Chatterton, have not only stigmatized it with the charge of having been contemptuous, but have most unwarrantably insinuated that that my behaviour calls for the indignation of the public. I shall examine your reasoning in support of that anathema presently—but, thus dragged out from a tranquil obscurity in which I had sought to pass the remnant of life, thus traduced before the most respectable of all auditories, the judgment of my countrymen, I must stand acquitted in the first instance of not having voluntarily presented myself before their tribunal. It would be wanting respect to what I shall ever reverence, the good opinion of mankind, if I declined submitting not only my cause, but my defence, to their judgment. It would be wearing that arrogance to all, which you unjustly charge me with towards one, an ingenious young man, but still more entitled to my respect as he was a poor and unhappy young man; though, as you will find, sir, during my acquaintance with him he appeared to me in none of those lights. You will find too, that, though I



was far from treating him either with contempt or neglect, he did not seem totally unworthy of both, as I could consider him under no aspect but that of a youth who endeavoured to impose upon me.

Having thus, sir, with the deference I owe to them, accepted the jury you have chosen for me, not excepting even to you, however prejudiced against me, for (as I flatter myself you have rather endeavoured to provoke me to gratify your curiosity, than meant me any ill-will, which, as you are totally unknown to me, I hope I have not deserved) I trust I shall bring you over to join in my acquittal. I will forbear to consider that I stand before my country, and will argue the case with you with the familiarity of equals; yet having the better of you by my being the person wronged, it shall be with that good humour which is the charity of innocence, and which, though prohibited from controversial, and rarely admitted into literary, disputes, is better suited to so ridiculous a subject as that which gave birth to this correspondence between you and me: I mean the question of the authenticity or forgery of the poems called Rowley's. Had that controversy never been agitated, you and I, sir, had probably remained unknown to each other. You seem more interested for the honour of Chatterton's abilities, than sedulous to prove that he and Rowley, if such a poet as the latter ever existed, were animated by so congenial a spirit, that the compositions of the one can hardly, very hardly, be discriminated from the other. You give us many specimens of prose and poetry which you maintain were indubitably Chatterton's. If they were, the wit of man can assign no reason why the rest ascribed to Rowley should not have been coined in the same mint. The same soul animates all, and the limbs that would remain to Rowley would indeed be "*disjecti membra poetæ.*" Rowley would not only have written with a spirit by many centuries posterior to that of his age, but his mantle, escaping the hands of all his contemporaries and successors, must have been preserved nothing the worse for time, and reserved to invest Chatterton from head to foot. I, who rather smile at the importance bestowed on this fantastic controversy, assure you, that, as I was originally an actor in this interlude without my consent, so am I a spectator most indifferent how it shall terminate. It is of no consequence in my eyes, whether Rowley, an unknown monk of the fifteenth century, wrote like poets of a polished age, in the same metres and same numbers, though then neither used nor known, nor for many years afterwards; or whether Chatterton, an attorney's clerk at Bristol, could in his very youth



counterfeit the language of the fifteenth century. That he could do plain, for he did: and it is indubitably easier to copy the style of those who have gone before us, than to imitate that of those who will not be born till many ages after we shall be dead. But it is not my business to enter into the general spirit of this grave controversy, but to clear myself from having been the innocent cause of its remaining so embroiled. Still I am so much obliged to you for having owned that you know none of the circumstances of my part in the affair, and there is such honest simplicity in condemning a man first, and then desiring him to tell you his story, that it would be unpardonable to be angry with or to deceive you, and I give you my word I will be guilty of neither.

What relates to me is contained in the following passages of your preface: "One of his [Chatterton's] first efforts to emerge from a situation so irksome\* to him, was an application to a gentleman well known in the republic of letters; which, unfortunately for the public and himself, met with a very cold reception: and which the disappointed author always spoke of with a high degree of acrimony, whenever it was mentioned to him." pp. xviii. xix.

Again, p. xxi. "Perhaps the reader may feel some indignation against the person to whom his first application was made, and by whom he was treated with neglect and contempt. It were to be wished that the public was fully informed of all the circumstances attending that unhappy application; the event of which deprived the world of works which might have contributed to the honour of the nation, as well as the comfort and happiness of their unfortunate author."

In these passages, sir, there are propositions of different kinds, which, amounting to a heavy charge on me, you will allow me to analyse. I am first taxed with giving a very cold reception to Chatterton's address. Within two pages, that coldness is grown to neglect and contempt: and within few words more, my contempt is swollen to the heavy accusation of driving the unhappy youth to despair and suicide.—I shudder, sir, and so ought you, not at the consequence of his dismal fate, the depriving the world of works that Chatterton

\* He was bound apprentice to a lawyer, and he was of a profession which might be said to accelerate his pursuits in antiquities, yet so irregularities of youth, and his profligacy was at least as conspicuous as his abilities. Although never overcome it." p. xviii.



might have written, and which you fondly imagine would have contributed to the honour of the nation; but I shudder at having that dismal catastrophe imputed to my cruelty and arrogance—nor have you cause to exult at lightly calumniating an innocent person in so black a manner. I have reason to say, you calumniate me lightly; for, if you knew the circumstances, would you be reduced to wish that the world were fully informed of them? Would you not lay them before the world? Or is it from tenderness to me that you suppress them? I entreat you to tell all you know—conceal nothing. I am going to give my narrative. Canvass it as rigorously as you have accused me. Detect the most minute grain of falsehood—surely you had better grounds than the partial relation of a disappointed author, who you say never mentioned me without a high degree of acrimony!

To so serious an apostrophe as this I am almost ashamed to join remarks on the ludicrous conclusion of your peroratio: but can I help smiling at your lamentation over imaginary abortions which my freezing breath nipped in their præ-existent state? Let me administer other comfort to you than you have bestowed on me. Recollect, fir, that premature genius is seldom equally great in its meridian. Psalmanaazar, the prototype of Chatterton, as you and I coincided in thinking, though he reformed his morals, and died a virtuous man, which we cannot be sure would have been Chatterton's case, seemed, though always a very sensible man, to have exhausted his inventive faculties in his creation of Formosa. The thread of my argument will suggest other consolations to you; but the pain you have given to my sensibility will not allow me to indulge longer mirth. It is very seriously that I must ask you, whether it was the part of a wise man to credit the tales of an acrimonious and disappointed youth, and whose profligacy you say was so conspicuous? Was it the part of a just man (for that part you could not receive from Chatterton) to couple his first unsuccessful application with his fatal exit, and load me with both? Does your enthusiastic admiration of his abilities, or your regrets for the honour of England's poetry, warrant such a concatenation of ideas? Was poor Chatterton so modest or so desponding as to abandon his enterprises on their being damped by me? Did he not continue, pursue them? Is this country so destitute of patrons of genius, or do I move in so eminent and distinguished a sphere, that a repulse from me is a dagger to talents? Did not Chatterton come to London after that miscarriage? Did he relinquish his counterfeiting propensity on its being lost on me? Was he an inoffensive



ingenuous youth, smit with the love of the Muses, and soaring above a fordid and fervile profession, whose early blossoms, being blighted by my insolence, withered in mortified obscurity, and, on seeing his hopes of fame blasted, sunk beneath the frowns of ignorant and insolent wealth? Or did he, after launching into all the excesses you describe, and vainly hoping to gratify his ambition by adulation to or satires on all ranks and parties of men, fall a victim to his own ungovernable spirit, and to the deplorable straits to which he had reduced himself? The interval was short, I own; but as every moment of so extraordinary a life was crowded with efforts of his enterprising genius, allow me to say with truth, that there was a large chasm between his application to me and his miserable conclusion. You know there was; and though my falling into his snare might have varied the area of his exploits, it is more likely that that success would rather have encouraged than checked his enterprises. When he pursued his turn for fabricating ancient writings, in spite of the mortification he received from me; it is not probable that he would have been corrected by success. Such is not the nature of success, when it is the reward of artifice. I should be more justly reproachable for having contributed to *cherish* an impostor, than I am for having accelerated his fate. I cannot repeat the words without emotions of indignation on my own account, and of compassion on his—but I have promised to argue calmly, and I will.

How will you be surprised, and, for your sake I hope, concerned (or you must be as unfeeling as you represent me), when you find that my share in Chatterton's fate is reduced simply to this? A lad at Bristol, whom I never saw then, before, or since, sends me two or three copies of verses in old English, which he tells me had been found there, and were lent to him by another person; acquaints me that he is clerk to an attorney, but, having more inclination to poetry, wishes that I would procure him a place that would enable him to follow his propensity: I suspect the poetry to be modern; he is angry, redemands it; I return it—and two years after, the youth is found dead—and by the strength of a warm imagination I am accused of blasting this promising genius, and of depriving the world of the lord knows what *Iliads* and *Lost Paradises*, which this youth might have procreated in his own or any other name—for in truth he was fonder of inventing great bards, than of being one.

Thus, sir, am I become perhaps the first instance of a person consigned to  
judgment



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judgment for not having been made a fool of ! But is it not hard that a man on whom a forgery has been tried unsuccessfully, should for that single reason be held out to the world as the assassin of genius ? If a banker to whom a forged note should be presented, should refuse to accept it, and the ingenious fabricator should afterwards fall a victim to his own flight of hand, would you accuse the poor banker to the public, and urge that his caution had deprived the world of some supposititious deed of settlement, that would have deceived the whole court of chancery, and deprived some great family of its estate ?

With me why are you offended ? You seem yourself to question the authenticity of the poems attributed to Rowley. Are you angry that I was not more a dupe than you ? If I suspected his forgeries, how did they entitle him to my assistance ? Are you sure that I was acquainted with Chatterton's genius or distresses ? Do you know certainly which of his productions were communicated to me ? Is it candid to accuse me of rejecting forgeries, when you give proofs of his having forged ?—I do not mean to use the term *forged* in a harsh sense : I speak of Chatterton's mintage, as forgeries of poems in ancient language ; and I am persuaded that when you condemn me for not having encouraged the coiner, you only mean to insinuate, that, if I had assisted him, I might have saved him from the dismal abyss into which he plunged. It is fair to interpret your words in this candid sense. What I complain of is, that you convert that possibility into positive despair in Chatterton, that you couple my rejection with his suicide, and by your innuendoes insinuate that there was something more in my repulse than the world is apprised of : and left it should want a name, you have baptised it neglect and contempt.

I lament, sir, as much as you, that I was not deceived, if my being a dupe would have converted him into an honest man. I lament that his own impetuous temper and indiscretion prevented my ever seeing him ; but when you have perused my narrative, I think you will no longer be of opinion that I was in the wrong to decline all correspondence with him. He could appear to me in no light, but in that of a bold young man, who for his interest wanted to impose upon me, and who did not commence his intercourse with me in a manner to dazzle my judgment, or give me a high opinion of his own— I allude to the article of his list of great painters at Bristol. I saw he was, as he told me himself, a youth tied to a profession he did not like, and born with a taste for more ingenuous studies.—Consider, sir, what would be the condition



dition of the world, what the satisfaction of parents, and what Peruvian mines must be possessed by the Mæcenases of the times, if every muse-struck lad who is bound to an attorney, every clerk

—born his father's soul to cross,  
And pen a stanza when he should engross,

should have nothing to do but to draw a bill or a couplet on the patron of learning in vogue, and have his fetters struck off, and a post assigned to him under the government. The duties of office perhaps would not be too well executed by these secretaries of the Muses; and though Apollo's kingdom would certainly come, king George's would not be too well served. Mr. Pope, I know, laments the misapplication of talents, enumerates the deserters from Helicon, and tells us

How many Martials were in Pultney loft;

but this was irony and compliment, and Pope himself would have been sorry that his friend our great chief justice,

He with a thousand arts refin'd\*,

should have quitted the bar, and been nothing but poet laureat.

There is another point, sir, which you forget to measure, my abilities in the character of a Mæcenas. My fortune is private and moderate; my situation, more private; my interest, none. I was neither born to wealth, nor to accumulate it: I have indulged a taste for expensive baubles, with little attention to œconomy; it did not become me to give myself airs of protection; and, though it might not be generous, I have been less fond of the company of authors, than of their works. I have not the vanity to boast of virtues; but it is surely allowable to clear myself from such odious qualities, as insolence and cruelty, if I do not deserve the imputation. It is ingenuous, it is becoming, to confess our defects; arrogant, presumptuous, to vaunt our merits; for how can men conscious, as most men are, of a larger proportion of the former than of the latter, hope that a few meritorious actions will leaven or obliterate the mass of their faults? Indeed, what have we but our

\* Vide Pope's Translation of "Intermissa Venus diu."



faults that we can call our own? Our talents are given to us by the Giver of all good—what virtues we have are the production of fear, prudence, experience, hypocrisy\* and age. Some god-like natures there are, who love virtue for herself, and whom opulence and honours cannot corrupt; some whom trials and temptations exalt; and more, who in lowly spheres never deviate from the simplicity of truth and reason; but all these are precisely such as would not quarrel with my definition above, and are too modest not to be humble on their own conquest over themselves. In short, our frailties and weaknesses are so numerous, at least I am sure mine have been so, that benevolence ought to forbid exaggeration of the account.

You may lament, sir, as I do, that I was not better acquainted with the genius of Chatterton, but you will convince nobody that I deserve the indignation of the public for that ignorance. Had I known him thoroughly, I do not believe that my admiration of his talents would have absorbed all distrust of his character. The public is too equitable to condemn any man for not countenancing a suspicious subject, however shining his abilities. Omit the term *contempt*, which you have groundlessly ascribed to me, and tell me in what respect my behaviour to Chatterton deserves reproach. Was it culpable in me to doubt at first what so many have since doubted? And doubting, did not common prudence require that I should ask for farther satisfaction? Are unknown poets of so high an order, have they such chartered immunities, as to be dispensed from bringing a character from their last place? Was my asking for that satisfaction, contemptuous? Was my giving him advice, neglect? Was my returning his papers without a word of reproach on his arrogance, arrogant? You will not affirm it. Still less, sir, was I gifted

\* It may sound like a paradox or a contradiction to assign hypocrisy, the counterfeit of virtue, as one of its sources; but nothing more is meant than this, that it produces the effects of virtue, and sometimes produces virtue itself. If false devotion affects charity, the poor are as much benefited as if the intention were sincere. Hypocrisy sometimes mellows to enthusiasm; as has been thought to have been the case of Cromwell, and more probably was so of Madame de Maintenon. Mad. de la Valiere was in love with the person of Louis, then young and handsome;

but as he was on the verge of fifty when Mad. de Maintenon engaged him to marry her, ambition could be her only motive: and as she could only effectuate her plan by inspiring him with piety, her own must have been very problematic. Yet it became so habitual, that at last there can be little doubt of her sincerity. Hypocrisy made her a king's wife; but as she found ennui, not pleasure, on a throne, nothing higher was left but heaven; and, having found that all was vanity, what had been cant became reflection; and thus hypocrisy in her was the parent of virtue.

with



with penetration enough, with such intuition into the powers of one I never saw, as, from two or three brief letters and two or three equivocal copies of verses, to conceive, to prophesy, that the writer would, if properly cherished, *prove the first of English poets*. p. xx.—but when I am tried by hyperbole, I cannot wonder the sentence should be bombast.

Might I be allowed to plead my own discretion against Chatterton's inspiration, which by the way he concealed from me, shrouding himself like a Pagan divinity under the mortal garb of an attorney's clerk, who had only borrowed some divine poems; I might urge in excuse for my caution, that this was the second time that I had been selected, I know not why, for communicating revelations of the Muses to mankind; and not having my mission acknowledged in the first instance, I was *restive*, as even prophets have been, in accepting the commission; especially as I suspected that the second dispensation was but a copy of the first. In short, sir, I was one of the first intrusted with specimens of Ossian's fragments, which though I implicitly credited, I had not found universally received. I had not zeal enough to embark a second time in a similar crusade. I have told you how indifferent I am to the controversy about Rowley's poems. I confess as fairly that I see no reason for thinking they were not all Chatterton's. The only argument of any weight on the other side, is the greatness of the phenomenon. Men can scarce conceive how at his age and under his disadvantages he could collect such foundation for his forgeries; for there lies the stress of the argument, not in his genius. You, sir, have proved that he had amassed such materials, and had sufficient genius to put them into shape. That some pieces produced by him as ancient or translations from old writers, were of his own invention, you affirm; yet he gave them at first as transcripts of old originals, and under other names. Are the poems ascribed to Rowley superior in merit to the compositions now allowed to be Chatterton's own? Have they more of the spirit of the antique? Have they any thing antique in them but single words? Is the phraseology, or turn of thinking, that of the fifteenth century? Did his producing some as Rowley's, without ever acknowledging the fraud, deserve any credit? Does an authority so prostituted deserve faith? Is there any other evidence, ancient or modern? Yes, it will be said, the ancient parchments. But is there not reason to believe that he did, what was much easier to perform, copy ancient hands as well as ancient language—ancient style I deny that he ever imitated happily.



Upon the whole, sir, I cannot agree with you, that Chatterton's premature fate has defrauded the world of any thing half so extraordinary as the miracles he wrought in almost his childhood. Had he lived longer, ample proofs of his forgeries, which proofs he destroyed in his rage, might have been preserved; and instead of the posthumous glory of puzzling the learned world, his name might now be only recorded as that of an arch-impostor. The learned persons, who still believe in Rowley, might be robbed of so great an ornament to a dark and monkish age. True antiquaries would not taste a genius, if they thought it a cotemporary. The elegance of Waller, the fire of Dryden, want in some eyes the unintelligible jargon of a barbarous century to make them captivate. Exanceastre<sup>1</sup>, Godred Crovan, Ceolwolf and Tatwallin, are dearer to modern-Saxon eyes, than all the harmonious images in Ælla. They cannot bear to divest their Gothic repositories of such precious gems. Controversy too has its charms, and delights the learned world more than indisputable discoveries—but, trust me, sir, your friends and mine, the bookfellers, have no cause to regret my not having been the dupe of Chatterton. He has made ten dupes for one, that he would have gained by imposing upon me. Yet the cause of Rowley's poems would not last an hour in a court of law. If Chatterton had pretended to find a hoard of crown-pieces, but stamped with the face and titles of Edward IV. and if it were proved that he had coined half of them, would a jury doubt a moment but that he had coined the other half? The metres ascribed to Rowley no more existed in the reign of Edward IV. than crown-pieces did.

There remains a charge insinuated at least, which I am still more desirous to repel, that of insensibility to Chatterton's distresses, and which will fall to the ground with the rest, on attending to dates. Chatterton was neither indigent nor distressed at the time of his correspondence with me. He was maintained by his mother, and lived with a lawyer. His only pleas to my assistance were, disgust to his profession, inclination to poetry, and communication of some suspicious MSS. His distress was the consequence of quitting his master, and of coming to London, and of his other extravagancies. He had depended on the impulse of the talents he felt for making impression and lifting him to wealth, honours, and fame. I have already said, that I should

<sup>1</sup> Exanceastre, Exeter. Godred Crovan is a name of the Welsh; Ceolwolf is one of his heroes, and Tatwallin, one of his bards. See his Miscellanies.



have been blameable to his mother, and society, if I had seduced an apprentice from his master to marry him to the nine muses: and I should have encouraged a propensity to forgery, which is not the talent most wanting culture in the present age. All of the house of forgery are relations; and though it is just to Chatterton's memory to say, that his poverty never made him claim kindred with the richest, or most enriching branches, yet his ingenuity in counterfeiting styles, and, I believe, hands, might easily have led him to those more facile imitations of prose, promissory notes. Yet it does not appear to my knowledge that his honesty in that respect was ever perverted. He made no scruple of extending the circulation of literary credit, and of bamboozling the misers of Saxon riches; but he never attempted to defraud, cheat, rob, unpoetically. He preserved dignity in despair; and indignant alone at the delusions of his own genius, he tore to scraps the unsuccessful monuments of his parts, and poisoned himself on being refused a loaf of bread.

It is that fierce and untameable spirit, that consciousness of superior abilities, that inattention to worldly discretion and its paths, that scorn of owing subsistence or reputation to any thing but the ebullitions of genius, that I regret not having known; that I lament not having contributed to rescue from itself. Some faint efforts of advice you will find in my narrative I did attempt: nor were they delivered with contempt, arrogance, or cruelty. I should be ashamed with reason if I could charge myself with behaviour so unbecoming my own private situation, so unworthy of a man. But this part of my defence must be weak, as it must rest on my own asseveration, having kept no copies of my letters. Perhaps it may find collateral support from the silence of my accusers. Will any man charge me with positive insolence towards Chatterton? Did he accuse me of it in his most acrimonious moments? Did he impute to me any thing but distrust of his MSS.? To myself, he did impute arrogance—but on what grounds?—on my not having returned his papers on his first summons. The world must decide on the weight of that crime. I confess the charge: I tell it myself. To judge me fairly, every man must place himself in my situation. If I have related the exact truth, in what light was my behaviour supercilious or intemperate? Let all Chatterton's relations and friends tell all they know. Resting on my own innocence, I never saw, I never applied to one of them to suppress a tittle of my conduct. They are open to inquiries; let them be canvassed. No man living has had cause to resent my treatment of that unfortunate youth—except—those, who



enamoured with the resurrection of the imaginary Rowley, were by my accidental and inadvertent doubts not left in the undisturbed possession of a world of novel antiquities, nor suffered quietly to become the dupes of an impostor of eighteen.

You, sir, indeed, have hypothetically condemned my serving as a beacon (for I protest I have taken no pains to destroy the visionary fabric invented by Chatterton, but by telling my own story, which from the first moment I have related occasionally and consistently as I tell it now) to warn the learned world against supposititious ancients and fabricated antiquities. You caution all the literati not to make use of their senses, lest promising impostors should be nipped in the bud, and mankind should be deprived of new Rowleys, who, as Richardson said a little boldly of Milton, would literally be *ancients born some centuries after their time*.

I will detain you no longer from the perusal of my narrative, but to satisfy you on its authenticity. It was sent in May last to a gentleman who will attest the receipt of it. The relation at Bath to whom I applied for information about Chatterton, is a noble lady of virtue and character, who well remembers the circumstances of my application to her. Several persons of honour and veracity were present at the royal academy when I first heard of Chatterton's death, and will attest my surprise and concern, and bear witness to my having related the story of my correspondence with him exactly as in the subjoined narrative. Mr. Mason was privy to the whole: others will confirm my having always given the same account, both before and after Chatterton's death.

Corroborated by these authorities, do I flatter myself too much, sir, if I hope that you will not only retract your accusation, but restore me to that share of your good opinion which I lost by your having received so unjust a state of my behaviour to the poor youth in question? The unprejudiced public, I trust, will not think I merit their indignation. I sincerely ask their pardon for trespassing so long on their patience—but the length of my address is proof of my anxiety on being misrepresented to them: and they will be so gracious as to remember, that this memorial has been extorted from me, and not till I found that my innocence was not sufficient protection. If my countrymen acquit me, I shall be happy. If you, sir, join your voice to theirs, I shall not



think I have mispent the time I have employed to undeceive you. Perhaps I never drew the attention of the public towards myself to so good purpose; for to have one's name known, is of little use; to wipe off the asperion of arrogance, is important; of inhumanity, very important indeed.

*Here follows the promised Narrative.*

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EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM MR. H. W. TO MR. W. B.

I AM far from determined to publish any thing about Chatterton. It would almost look like making myself a party. I do not love controversy. If I print, my chief reason would be, that both in the account of the poems, and in Mr. Warton's last volume, my name has been brought in with so little circumspection and accuracy, that it looks as if *my* rejection of Chatterton had driven him to despair; whereas I was the first person on whom he essayed his art and ambition, instead of being the last. I never saw him; there was an interval of near two years between his application to me, and his dismal end; nor had he quitted his master, nor was necessitous, nor otherwise poor than attornies clerks are, nor had he come to London, nor launched into dissipation, when his correspondence with me stopped.

As faithfully as I can recollect the circumstances, without dates, and without searching for what few memorandums I preserved relative to him, I will recapitulate his history with me.

Bathoe, my bookseller, brought me a pacquet left with him. It contained an ode, or little poem of two or three stanzas *in alternatè rhyme*, on the death of Richard the Ist, and I was told in very few lines that it had been found at Bristol with many other old poems; and that the possessor could furnish me with accounts of a series of great painters that had flourished at Bristol.

Here I must pause, to mention my own reflections. At first I concluded that somebody, having met with my Anecdotes of Painting,



had a mind to laugh at me, I thought not very ingeniously, as I was not likely to swallow a succession of great painters at Bristol. The ode, or sonnet, as I think it was called, was too pretty to be part of the plan; and, as is easy with all the other supposed poems of Rowley, it was not difficult to make it very modern by changing the old words for new; though yet more difficult than with most of them—you see, I tell you fairly the case. I then imagined, and do still, that the success of Ossian's poems had suggested the idea. Whether the transmitter hinted, or I supposed from the subject, that the discovered treasure was of the age of Richard the 1st, I cannot take upon me to assert—yet that impression was so strong on my mind, that two years after, when Dr. Goldsmith told me they were then allotted to the age of Henry IV. or V. I said with surprise, “they have shifted the date extremely.” This is no evidence—but there is one line in the printed poems of Rowley that makes me more firmly believe that the age of Richard the 1st was the era<sup>2</sup> fixed upon by Chatterton for his forgeries; for *that* line says,

Now is Cœur de Lion gone—

or some such words, for I quote by memory, not having the book at hand. It is very improbable that Rowley, writing in the reign of Henry VI. or Edward IV. as is now pretended, or in that of Henry IV. as was assigned by the credulous before they had digested their system, should incidentally in a poem on another subject, say, *now* is Richard dead. I am persuaded that

<sup>2</sup> It is very remarkable that William of Wyrcestre, an edition of whose work was printed last winter, and who was a native of Bristol and often mentions Canninge, takes not the smallest notice of Rowley, though so bright an ornament of his native city, were the poems ascribed to him genuine. Gower and Lidgate flourished at the same time, and were well known—yet how barbarous, how inferior are their compositions, how dissimilar their language, to the works ascribed to Rowley! Is it credible that he should not have been heard of, when very indifferent poets were famous? The indefatigable Bale, who lived two hundred years nearer to the age of Rowley than we do, and who dug a thousand bad authors out of obscurity, never lighted upon so much as his name.

The manner of the revival of Rowley was as suspicious as possible; and not only rests upon the faith of a youth convicted of many similar forgeries, but was rendered more incredible by the dark conduct of the discoverer. Had a youth, enamoured of poetry, found a large quantity of old poems, what would he have done? Produced them cautiously and one by one, studied them and copied their style, and exhibited sometimes a genuine and sometimes a fictitious piece? or blazed the discovery abroad, and called in every lover of poetry and antiquity to participation of the treasure? The characters of imposture are on every part of the story; and were it true, it would still remain one of those improbable wonders, which we have no reason for believing.

Chatterton



Chatterton himself, before he had dived into Canning's history, had fixed on a much earlier period for the age of his forgeries.—Now I return to my narrative.

I wrote, according to the inclosed direction, for farther particulars. Chatterton, in answer, informed me that he was the son of a poor widow, who supported him with great difficulty; that he was clerk or apprentice to an attorney, but had a taste and turn for more elegant studies; and hinted a wish that I would assist him with my interest in emerging out of so dull a profession, by procuring him some place, in which he could pursue his natural bent. He affirmed that great treasures of ancient poetry had been discovered in his native city, and were in the hands of a person, who had lent him those he had transmitted to me; for he now sent me others, amongst which was an absolute modern pastoral in dialogue, thinly sprinkled with old words. Pray observe, sir, that he affirmed having received the poems from another person; whereas it is ascertained that the gentleman at Bristol who possesses the fund of Rowley's poems, received them from Chatterton.

I wrote to a relation of mine at Bath to enquire into the situation and character of Chatterton according to his own account of himself: nothing was returned about his character, but his own story was verified.

In the mean time I communicated the poems to Mr. Gray and Mr. Mason, who at once pronounced them forgeries, and declared there was no symptom in them of their being the productions of near so distant an age; the language and metres being totally unlike any thing ancient; for though I no doubt, to them, ascribed them to the time of Richard I., Mr. Gray nor Mr. Mason saw any thing in the poems that was not more recent than even the reign of Henry VIII.—And here let me remark how incredible it is that Rowley, a monk of a mere commercial town, which was all Bristol then was, should have purified the language and introduced a diversified metre more classic than was known to that polished courtly poet, lord Surry; and this in the barbarous turbulent times of Henry VI. and that the whole nation should have relapsed into the same barbarism of style and versification, till lord Surry, I might almost say, till Waller, arose. I leave to better scholars and better

\* Rowley is made to call it a city, which it was not till afterwards.



antiquaries to settle how Rowley became so well versed in the Greek tragedians. He was as well acquainted with Butler, or Butler with him, for a chaplain of the late bishop of Exeter has found in Rowley a line of Hudibras.

Well, sir, being satisfied with my intelligence about Chatterton, I wrote him a letter with as much kindness and tenderness as if I had been his guardian; for though I had no doubt of his impositions, such a spirit of poetry breathed in his coinage, as interested me for him: nor was it a grave crime in a young bard to have forged false notes of hand that were to pass current only in the parish of Parnassus. I undeceived him about my being a person of any interest, and urged to him, that in duty and gratitude to his mother, who had straitened herself to breed him up to a profession, he ought to labour in it, that in her old age he might absolve his filial debt; and I told him, that when he should have made a fortune, he might unbend himself with the studies consonant to his inclinations. I told him also, that I had communicated his transcripts to much better judges, and that they were by no means satisfied with the authenticity of his supposed MSS. I mentioned their reasons, particularly that there were no such metres known in the age of Richard I.—and that might be a reason with Chatterton himself to shift the æra of his productions.

He wrote me rather a peevish answer<sup>1</sup>, said he could not contest with a person of my learning (a compliment by no means due to me, and which I certainly had not assumed, having mentioned my having consulted abler judges), maintained the genuineness of the poems, and demanded to have them returned, as they were the property of another gentleman. Remember this,

When I received this letter, I was going to Paris in a day or two, and either forgot his request of the poems, or, perhaps not having time to have them copied, deferred complying till my return, which was to be in six weeks. I protest I do not remember which was the case; and yet, though in a cause of so little importance, I will not utter a syllable of which I am not positively certain; nor will charge my memory with a tittle beyond what it retains.

Soon after my return from France, I received another letter from Chatter-

<sup>1</sup> See the First Letter from Chatterton, p. 236.



ton, the style of which was singularly impertinent<sup>1</sup>. He demanded his poems roughly; and added, that I should not have *dared* to use him so ill, if he had not acquainted me with the narrowness of his circumstances.

My heart did not accuse me of insolence to him. I wrote an answer<sup>2</sup>, expostulating with him on his injustice, and renewing good advice—but upon second thoughts, reflecting that so wrong-headed a young man, of whom I knew nothing, and whom I had never seen, might be absurd enough to print my letter, I flung it into the fire; and wrapping up both his poems and letters, without taking a copy of either, for which I am now sorry, I returned all to him, and thought no more of him or them, till about a year and half after, when

Dining at the royal academy, Dr. Goldsmith drew the attention of the company with an account of a marvellous treasure of ancient poems lately discovered at Bristol, and expressed enthusiastic belief in them; for which he was laughed at by Dr. Johnson, who was present. I soon found this was the *trouville* of my friend Chatterton; and I told Dr. Goldsmith that this novelty was none to me, who might, if I had pleased, have had the honour of ushering the great discovery to the learned world. You may imagine, sir, we did not at all agree in the measure of our faith: but though his credulity diverted me, my mirth was soon dashed; for, on asking about Chatterton, he told me he had been in London, and had destroyed himself. I heartily wished then that I had been the dupe of all the poor young man had written to me; for who would not have his understanding imposed on to save a fellow being from the utmost wretchedness, despair and suicide!—and a poor young man not eighteen—and of such miraculous talents—for, dear sir, if I wanted credulity on one hand, it is ample on the other. Yet heap all the improbabilities you please on the head of Chatterton, the impossibility on Rowley's side will remain. An amazing genius for poetry, which one of them possessed, might flash out in the darkest age—but could Rowley anticipate the phraseology of the eighteenth century? His poetic fire might burst through the obstacles of the times; like Homer or other original bards, he might have formed a poetical style—but would it have been precisely that of an age subsequent to him by some hundred years? Nobody can admire the poetry of the poems in question more than I do—but except being better than most modern verses,

<sup>1</sup> See the Third Letter from Chatterton, p. 237.

<sup>2</sup> See Mr. Walpole's Letter to Chatterton, p. 237.



In what do they differ in the construction? The words are old, the construction evidently of yesterday; and by substituting modern words, *aye*, single words, to the old, or to those invented by Chatterton, in what do they differ? Try that method with any composition, even in prose, of the reign of Henry VI. and see if the consequence will be the same.—But I am getting into the controversy, instead of concluding my narrative, which indeed is ended.

You seem to think Chatterton might have assistance—I don't know but he might; but one of the wonderful parts of his prodigious story is, that he had formed disciples—yes, at eighteen. Some of his youthful companions have continued to walk in his paths, and have produced Saxon and other poems of antique cast; but not with the poetic spirit of their master: nor can it be discovered that Chatterton received instruction or aid from any man of learning or abilities. Dr. P. and Mr. L. have collected every thing relating to him that can be traced, and all tends to concentrate the forgery of Rowley's poems in his single person. They have numerous pieces of Chatterton's writing in various ways—nay, so versatile, so extensive, so commanding was his genius, that he forged architecture and heraldry; that is, could invent both in art and in folly.—In short, I do not believe that there ever existed so master a genius, except that of Palmanaazar, who before twenty-two could create a language, that all the learned of Europe, though they suspected, could not detect.

Thus, sir, with the most scrupulous veracity, I have told you my share in that unhappy young man's story. With more pains I could add a few dates, but the substance would be identically the same. Rowley would be a prophet, a foreseer, if the poems were his; yet in any other light he would not be so extraordinary a phenomenon as Chatterton—whom, though he was a bad man, as is said, I lament not having seen. He might at that time have been less corrupted, and my poor patronage might have saved him from the abyss into which he plunged.—But, alas! how could I surmise that the well-being and existence of a human creature depended on my swallowing a legend; and from an unknown person? Thank God! so far from having any thing to charge myself with on Chatterton's account, it is very hypothetical to suppose that I could have stood between him and ruin. It is one of those possible events, which we should be miserable indeed if imputable to a conscience that had not the smallest light to direct it! If I went to Bengal, I might perhaps interpose and save the life of some poor Indian devoted by the fury of a British



nabob; but amiable as such Quixotism would be, we are not to sacrifice every duty to the possibility of realizing one conscientious vision. I believe I have tired you; I am sure I have wearied my own hand, which has written these seven pages without pausing; but when any thing takes possession of my mind, I forget my gouty fingers and my age—or perhaps betray the latter by my garrulity.—However, it will save me more trouble—I shall certainly never write a word more about Chatterton. You are my confessor; I have unburdened my soul to you, and I trust you will not enjoin me a public penance.

Yours most sincerely,

Strawberry-hill,  
May 23, 1778.

HORACE WALPOLE.

### POSTSCRIPT.

I RECOLLECT another passage that I must add. A gentleman of rank, being struck with the beauty of the poems, and believing their antique originality, purchased a copy of them, and shewed it to me. I expressed my doubts—Now, then, said the person, I will convince you: here is a painter's bill that you cannot question. What think you, now? This, I replied, I do believe genuine; and I will tell you why—and taking down the first volume of my *Anecdotes of Painting*, I shewed him the identic bill printed some years before. This, said I, I know is ancient: Vertue transcribed it twenty years ago from some old parchments in the church of St. Mary, Ratcliffe, at Bristol.—*That* was the origin of Chatterton's list of great painters—and probably of his

<sup>3</sup> That amongst those old parchments there might be some old poetry, is very possible. All I contend for is, that most of what Chatterton produced for Rowley's, was fictitious; especially *all* the pieces in modern metres, *all* that have nothing of antiquity but the simple words, as *Ælla*, *The Battle of Hastings*, *The Death of Sir Charles Baldwin*, &c. Chatterton was too great a poet for the age he copied; his soaring genius bestowed more elegance and harmony on Rowley than comported with the 15th century.

Rowley must either have polished the language so as to have made it adopted, or he would not have been understood. The idiom lent to him would have been more unintelligible to his cotemporaries, than the old words sprinkled on the poems ascribed to him are to the present generation. Neither can any man of sense believe, that a master genius can write with amazing abilities in an age however barbarous, and yet never be heard of till some hundreds of years after his death. The more a man soars above his cotemporaries,

the



his other inventions. Can it be supposed that Vertue should have seen that old bill, and with his inquisitive and diligent turn, especially about painters, not have enquired whether there was nothing more? Vertue was even a verifier, as I have many proofs in his MSS. and searched much after Chaucer and Lidgate, of whom he engraved portraits—yet all Rowley's remains, it seems, were reserved for Chatterton, who, it cannot be denied, did forge poetry and prose for others; and who, as indubitably, was born a great poet—yet not a line of tolerable poetry in Rowley's own hand can be produced.—Did Chatterton destroy the originals to authenticate their existence? He certainly wrote his forgeries on the backs of old parchments, and there is both internal and external evidence against the antiquity of the poetry—but I will not take part in that dispute. Error, like the sea, is always gaining as much territory in one place as it loses in another, and it is to little purpose to make it change possessions.

the more he strikes, especially in a rude age. The more an age is polished, the more are men on a par, and the more difficult it is for genius to penetrate. The next are nearer to the first, than in those early ages, when authors are rare. Rivals depreciate the former, and their partisans contest the merit of their competitors. Homer on one hand, Shakespeare and Milton on the other, confirm this hypothesis. The Grecian's glory has rolled down to Us with unabated lustre; he did not lie unknown for centuries. Shakespeare was during his life obscured by the mock pretensions of Ben Jonson; and Milton's Paradise Lost was sold for fifteen pounds.



## A P P E N D I X

## N U M B E R I.

SINCE I wrote the preceding pages, I have been told that a gentleman at Bristol is in possession of my original letters to Chatterton in my own handwriting. Will he not be so candid as to produce them, when I declare he has my full consent? They will acquit or condemn me better than my asseverations or reasoning. If they are what I have represented them on recollection after nine years are past, nothing more is necessary to my defence. If the matter or style of them is contemptuous and arrogant, be the shame mine; I deserve it. It is impossible for me to recall words written nine years ago, and which, when written, I most certainly did not expect would be publicly discussed; but I have repeated the transaction so often in that long period of time, and have such perfect remembrance of my own feelings on that occasion, that I have no fear of my sentiments being produced.

Another reflection occurs to me, and probably will to my accusers. I have complained of Chatterton's unwarrantable letter to me, on my not returning his MSS. Shall I not be told that I probably did not restore to him *that* letter? I believe I did not; I believe I preserved it—but what has become of it in nine years, I cannot say. I have lost, or mislaid it. If I find it<sup>1</sup>, it shall be submitted to every possible scrutiny of the expert before I produce it as genuine—and though I hope to be believed that such letter I did receive, and did mention to several persons<sup>2</sup> long before I was charged with ill-treatment of Chat-

<sup>1</sup> This letter was found by lord Orford's executors among waste papers, and is now sub-joined to the other two letters which his lordship had left for publication.

<sup>2</sup> It should be remembered that I gave this

account while Chatterton was living, and he could have contradicted it, if false; for I gave it to any body that questioned me, the moment the MSS. began to be talked of, and I have no doubt but it came to Chatterton's knowledge.



terton, I desire no imputation should lie on his memory, beyond what his character and my unprovoked<sup>1</sup> assertions render probable. I could not feel regret on his re-demand of MSS. on which I had set no esteem. I might have preserved copies, both of the poems and of his letters, if I had been willing. No adequate reason can be given why I returned all promiscuously, but his insult and my own indifference. Every part of my narrative is consistent, not only with truth, but with Chatterton's character and the circumstances of his story. I have not the vanity to think that, to palliate my own conduct, I could weave a tale, that I have the boldness to say will not be found false in a single fact. Still less should I have let the accusation gather head, and increase to its present bulk, had I apprehended any detection. I have neither gone, written, or sent to Bristol. I have left Chatterton's factors in undisturbed possession of all documents. I have not tried to suppress a single circumstance. On the contrary, I desire the whole of my correspondence with Chatterton may be ascertained. I demand the publicity of my letters to him. Let them be either printed, or deposited where every man may have recourse to them. Till that is done, and till *they* contradict me, I will trust to the candour of the public, that I shall not stand ill in their opinion for my conduct towards that unhappy youth. If my letters are suppressed, will it not induce a suspicion that the adherents to the authenticity of Rowley's poems, in anger to me for having been the first to stagger belief in their great Diana, have converted my distrust of their originality into pride and inhumanity?—But I am in no pain. The public have been called in as judges; and not being actuated by the prejudices of those whose interest it may be to support a fraud, or of those whose literary bigotry has attached them to a legend, will be under no difficulty to pronounce sentence. Nor is my cause so necessarily connected with Rowley's poems as to stand and fall together. If Rowley could rise from the dead and acknowledge every line ascribed to him, he could not prove that I used Chatterton ill. *I would take the ghost's word*; I am sure it would be in my favour.

Having thus fulfilled what was due to the public and to myself, I declare I will never trouble myself any farther about Chatterton and his writings; much less reply to any anonymous persons that shall choose to enter into the contro-

<sup>1</sup> I certainly had received no provocation from Chatterton, but his telling me I should not have dared to retain his MSS. if he had not trusted me with his situation. If he gave me that provocation, it was true; if he did not, I had no reason to invent it.



versy. I do not think myself of consequence enough to take up the time of the public; and I have probably too few years to live, to throw away one of the remaining hours on so silly a dispute.

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N U M B E R II.

HAVING said, p. 212. that Chatterton alternately flattered and satirized all ranks and parties, the following list of pieces written by him, but never printed, will confirm that assertion. I have seen those pieces, copies of which are in the hands of a gentleman who favoured me with the list.

1. "Kew Gardens." This is a long satirical rhapsody of some hundred lines, in Churchill's manner, against persons in power, and their friends at Bristol.

2. "The Flight:" addressed to a great man; Ld. B—e. In 40 stanzas of six lines each. Thus endorsed. "Too long for the Political Register—Curtailed in the digressions—Given to Mr. Mortimer."

3. "The Dowager, a tragedy."—Unfinished—only two scenes.

4. "Verses addressed to the Rev. Mr. Catcot, on his book on the Deluge:" ridiculing his systems and notions.

O T H E R P I E C E S I N M S.

1. "To a great lady." A very scandalous address; signed Decimus. On the back of this is written, "Jeremiah Dyfon, Esq. by the Whisperer. 10s. 6d. a column."

2. "To C. Jenkinson, Esq." An abusive letter; signed Decimus: (or Probus, as it should seem from the indorsement) beginning thus,

"Sir,

"As the nation has been long in the dark in conjecturing the ministerial agent, &c."

I

3. "To



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3. "To Ld. Mansfield." A very abusive letter; signed Decimus: (or Ænecnius, as it should seem from the endorsement) beginning thus,

"My lord,

"I am not going to accuse you of pusillanimity, &c."

N. B. In this piece many paragraphs are cancelled, with this remark in the margin. "[Prosecution will lye upon this.]"

4. "An introductory essay" to a political paper set up by him, called the Moderator, in favour of administration: thus beginning,

"To enter into a detail of the reasons which induced me to take up the title of this paper, &c."

5. "To Lord North:" a letter signed the Moderator, and dated May 26th, 1770, beginning thus,

"My lord,

"It gives me a painful pleasure, &c." This is an encomium on administration for rejecting the lord mayor Beckford's remonstrance.

6. "A letter to the lord mayor Beckford," signed Probus; dated May 26, 1770. This is a violent abuse of government for rejecting the remonstrance, and begins thus,

"When the endeavours of a spirited people to free themselves from an insupportable slavery." On the back of this essay, which is directed to Cary, is this endorsement,

"Accepted by Bingley, set for and thrown out of the North-Briton, 21 June, on account of the lord mayor's death.

	£.	s.	d.
"Lost by his death on this essay —	1	11	6
"Gained in elegies — —	2	2	0
in essays — —	3	3	0
"Am glad he is dead by — —	3	13	6



## NUMBER III.

AS the warmest devotees to Chatterton cannot be more persuaded than I am of the marvellous vigour of his genius at so very premature an age, I shall here subjoin the principal æras of his life, which when compared with the powers of his mind, the perfection of his poetry, his knowledge of the world, which, though in some respects erroneous, spoke quick intuition, his humour, his vein of satire, and above all the amazing number of books he must have looked into, though chained down to a laborious and almost incessant service, and confined to Bristol, except at most for the last five months of his life, the rapidity with which he seized all the topics of conversation then in vogue, whether of politics, literature, or fashion; and when, added to all this mass of reflection, it is remembered that his youthful passions were indulged to excess, faith in such a prodigy may well be suspended—and we should look for some secret agent behind the curtain, if it were not as difficult to believe that any man possessed of such a vein of genuine poetry would have submitted to lie concealed, while he actuated a puppet; or would have stooped to prostitute his muse to so many unworthy functions. But nothing in Chatterton can be separated from Chatterton. His noblest flights, his sweetest strains, his grossest ribaldry, and his most common-place imitations of the productions of magazines, were all the effluences of the same ungovernable impulse, which,ameleon-like, imbibed the colours of all it looked on. It was Ossian, or a Saxon monk, or Gray, or Smollet, or Junius—and if it failed most in what it most affected to be, a poet of the fifteenth century, it was because it could not imitate what had not existed. I firmly believe that the first impression made on so warm and fertile an imagination was the sight of some old parchments at Bristol; that meeting with Ossian's poems, his soul, which was all poetry, felt it was a language in which his invention could express itself; and having lighted on the names of Rowley and Canninge, he bent his researches towards the authors of their age; and as far as his means could reach, in so confined a sphere, he assembled materials enough to deceive those who have all their lives dealt in such uncouth lore, and not in our classic authors, nor have perceived that taste had not developed itself in the reign of Edward IV. It is the taste in Rowley's supposed poems that will for ever exclude them from belonging to that period. Mr. Tyrwhit  
and



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and Mr. Warton have convicted them of being spurious by technical criterions; and Rowley I doubt will remain in possession of nothing that did not deserve to be forgotten, even should some fragments of old parchments and old verses be ascertained antique.

Thomas Chatterton, born 20th of November — — — 1752

Educated at the bluecoat school at Bristol, where reading and writing and accompts are only taught.

Put clerk to an attorney, July — — — 1766

First taken notice of for a paper put into Forby's Bristol Journal, and said to be from an old MS. October 1st — — — 1768

First inserted a little poem of his own and an extract from an old MS. in the Town and Country Magazine, February — — — 1769

Sent specimens of several ancient poems to Mr. H. W. Said, there were many more, and offered to transcribe the whole, March — — — 1769

He was then aged 16 years and 4 months.

Went to London, April — — — 1770

Died, August — — — 1770