

THE KEATS Foundation

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THE KEATSIAN

The Newsletter of the Keats Foundation June 2018

This issue of *The Keatsian* looks forward to forthcoming Keats Foundation events for the autumn of 2018. Reported here too are our fifth bicentenary conference at Keats House, Hampstead, on 18-20 May, *Keats's Places*, the *John Keats Bicentenary Diary 2018-2019*, and events in the coming months.

Dates for your Diary

The annual wreath laying to commemorate Keats's birthday will take place at Westminster Abbey on Wednesday 31st October at 12 noon.

The Keats Foundation Annual Lecturer for 2018-19 will be announced shortly.

The Keats Foundation plans to celebrate St Agnes Eve at the Guildhall Art Gallery on Monday 21 January at 6.30 pm. More news to follow on this.

CONFERENCE REPORT:

Shadows, Magnitudes, Tests and Trials: John Keats in 1818

The fifth Keats Foundation bicentenary conference took place over the gloriously sunny weekend of 18-20 May 2018 at Keats House, Hampstead. This year's conference theme was 'Shadows, Magnitudes, Tests and Trials', keywords that reflect the frenetic itinerary – both in terms of writing and travel – that Keats set himself as he raced to establish his poetic reputation. 1818 was a year of peripateticism: Keats not only crisscrossed the south of England,

visiting popular tourist spots such as the Isle of Wight, Margate and Canterbury, but also undertook a lengthy northern walking tour through the Lake District, across to Ireland by boat and up into Scotland. His plan was to fire his poetic imagination and learn the popular sublime style. However, illness cut his tour short and he was forced to return to London to recoup his strength. Tests and trials, indeed.

Picking up cues provided by Carol Kyros Walker's superb opening slideshow, several speakers foot-stepped Keats's movements. A number of innovative papers traced the connections between place and authorial identity, and looked afresh at the poetry Keats wrote on the move and was inspired to compose afterwards. Keats's major poem of 1818, *Endymion*, also received welcome attention. The epic of the Greek shepherd boy and the moon – Keats's self-set 'test of Invention' – is often neglected by critics and was notoriously ridiculed by reviewers in Keats' own day. Our conference provided a valuable space for new contextualisations and recuperation.

Interspersing a full and rigorous academic programme were enlivening events that included a wonderful poetry reading by Michael O'Neill, a reenactment of the 'living orrery' that Keats remembered from his school days (Rico Brown's comet deserves special mention), the customary 'conference walk' led by Nicholas Roe through Keats's homes and haunts, and intervals of rich sociability on the Keats House lawns powered by endless teas and coffees generously made by the trustees of the Keats Foundation. As always, the conference draws strength from a vitalising mixture of Keats scholars, students, dedicated enthusiasts and members of the public. This democratic and sociable assembly makes the Keats Foundation Bicentenary conferences a popular – and very special – fixture in the calendar.



L to R: Hrileena Ghosh, Giuseppe Albano, Meiko O'Halloran, Carol Kyros Walker.

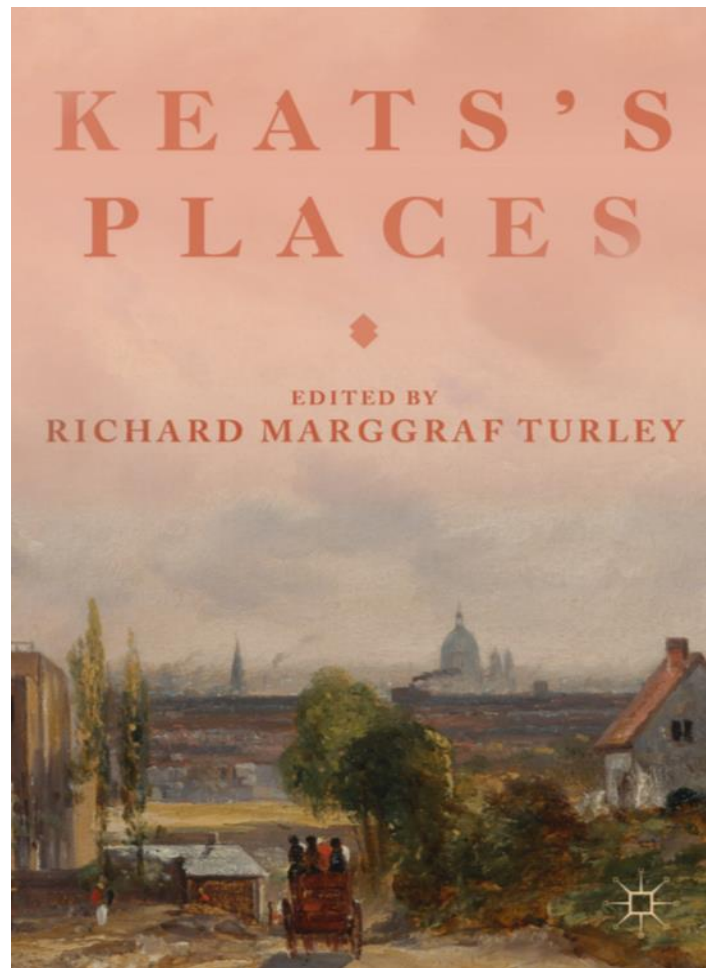
CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT: *Keats in 1819: Cloudy Trophies, Quiet Power*

The Keats Foundation is delighted to announce its sixth bicentenary conference, 'Keats in 1819: Cloudy Trophies, Quiet Power', to be held at Keats House, Hampstead, 17 - 19 May 2019.

For more information as it becomes available, please check the Keats Foundation website at <http://keatsfoundation.com>.

New Book!

Keats's Places, edited by Richard Marggraf Turley (Palgrave/ Springer 2018).



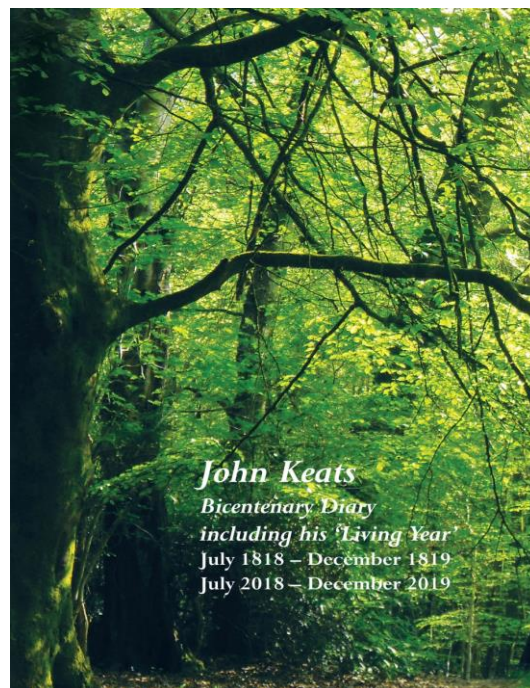
Drawn from papers presented to the 2016 Keats Foundation conference, the essays in this volume reveal that Keats's places could be comforting, familiar, grounding sites, but they were also shifting, uncanny, paradoxical spaces where the geographical comes into tension with the familial, the touristic with the medical, the metropolitan with the archipelagic. Collectively, the chapters in *Keats's Places* range from the claustrophobic stands of Guy's Hospital operating theatre to the boneshaking interior of the Southampton mail coach; from Highland crags to Hampstead Heath; from crowded city interiors to leafy suburban lanes. Offering new insights into the complex registrations of place and the poetic imagination, the contributors to this book explore how the significant places in John Keats's life helped to shape an authorial identity.

To find out more go to the Palgrave online catalogue at <https://www.palgrave.com/gb/book/9783319922423#aboutAuthors>

The John Keats Bicentenary Diary 2018-2019

The John Keats Bicentenary Diary 2018-2019 lets you plan and record your days alongside what Keats was doing 200 years earlier. The diary runs from 1 July 2018 to 31 December 2019 (to include his 'Living Year'). There are 80 weeks of double-spreads with 1818/19 events and relevant writings by Keats on the left-hand page, and 2018/19 diary information on the facing page. As well as pages for personal information, telephone numbers and notes, the diary includes 11 pages of Keatsian information and 27 double-spreads with longer extracts from Keats's letters and poems.

It is available to visitors to Keats House, Hampstead, London NW3 2RR, price £15. Or by mail order from A. P. Phillips, 57 Station Road, Romsey SO51 8DP price £18 (within the UK) or £24 for overseas orders.



10-16 March 1819

Wentworth Place

The 'Living Year'

March 2019: Week 11

Wednesday 10 March 1819	A portrait of the writer at work [12 March 1819]: The candles are burnt down and I am using the wax taper—which has a long snuff on it—the fire is at its last click—I am sitting with my back to it with one foot rather askew upon the rug and the other with the heel a little elevated from the carpet—I am writing this on the Maid's tragedy, which I have read since tea with Great pleasure. Besides this volume of Beaumont and Fletcher—there are on the table two volumes of Chaucer and a new work of Tom Moore's called "Tom Cribb's Memorial to Congress"—nothing in it. These are trifles but I require nothing so much of you but that you will give me a like description of yourselves, however it may be when you are writing to me. Could I see the same thing done of any great Man long since dead it would be a great delight: As to know in what position Shakspeare sat when he began "To be or not to be"—such things become interesting from distance of time or place. I hope you are both now in that sweet sleep which no two beings deserve more than you do—I must fancy you so—and please myself in the fancy of speaking a prayer and a blessing over you and your lives—God bless you—I whisper good night in your ears, and you will dream of me. Saturday 13 March. I have written to Fanny this morning and received a note from Haslam. I was to have dined with him to-morrow: he gives me a bad account of his Father who has not been in Town for 5 weeks—and is not well enough for company... I know not why Poetry and I have been so distant lately—I must make some advances soon or she will cut me entirely. ¹¹²
Thursday 11 March 1819 ○	Keats goes to town, hoping to meet some would-be emigrants who could carry letters to George and Georgiana.
Friday 12 March 1819	Keats paints a captivating word-picture of himself (see right).
Saturday 13 March 1819	Keats writes to his sister (see p. 96), and continues to George & Georgiana (see right).
Sunday 14 March 1819	Keats describes dining with Davenport and then having a nap. He says how much he hates having a day 'annihilated in that manner.' ¹¹⁰
Monday 15 March 1819	Keats admits being idle all day, doing 'nothing—nothing—nothing.' ¹¹⁰
Tuesday 16 March 1819	Keats visits Mr Abbey in town, who talks about a hat making concern, wishing that George had taken it up. ¹¹¹

Sunday 10 March 2019 Giuseppe Mazzini (patriot) d.1872	
Monday 11 March Torquato Tasso (poet) b.1544 Benjamin West (painter) d.1820 Sir Henry Wallford Davies (composer) d.1941	
Tuesday 12 March John Aubrey (antiquarian) b.1626 Thomas Augustine Arne (composer) b.1710	
Wednesday 13 March Charles Cowden Clarke (friend and early biographer of Keats) d.1877	
Thursday 14 March ☽ Karl Marx (philosopher) d.1883	
Friday 15 March Caius Julius Caesar (emperor) assassinated 44BC Luigi Cherubini (composer) d.1842	
Saturday 16 March Georg Olm (physicist) b.1787 Maksim Gor'ky (writer) b.1868 Aubrey Beardsley (artist) d.1898	
[Week 12 follows on p. 99]	

The Bull Inn at Redbourn

Here Keats, Charles Brown, George and Georgiana paused on Monday 22 June 1818 en route by coach from London to Liverpool. Keats sent word to his former fellow-student at Guy's, Henry Stephens, physician in the town, and the two chatted for a few moments. Stephens recalled the meeting many years later:

I went & saw them. Our interview was brief, he enquired a little into my prospects and I into his, I found he had no intention of practising in the Medical profession, but was still devoted to Poetry. His brother George's wife was rather short, not what might be strictly called handsome, but she looked like a being whom any man of moderate Sensibility might easily love. She had the imaginative poetical cast.—Somewhat singular & girlish in her attire, whether from her own taste, or whether she had accommodated herself to the taste of her husband, or to that of the Poet, the presiding Genius of the family, I know not; but there was something original about her, & John seemed to regard her as a being whom he was delighted to honour, & introduced her to me with an evident satisfaction As I before said, our Interview was short—they departed by the Coach, & I to my home, and this was the last I ever saw of John Keats.—

A short time afterwards I heard of him as an Author who had attracted some Notice ...



The Bull, formerly one of many coaching inns at Redbourn, survives to this day although it is now boarded up and in a sorry state. It is due to be taken over by the CoOp as a local supermarket.

Website

For all the latest news from the Keats Foundation, please visit our (new) Website at <http://keatsfoundation.com>. Please visit, explore and enjoy!

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