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I am!

History of Modern English Literature

John Clare

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Poet John Clare

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I am!

John Clare

*I am—yet what I am none cares or knows;
My friends forsake me like a memory lost:
I am the self-consumer of my woes—
They rise and vanish in oblivious host,
Like shadows in love's frenzied stifled throes
And yet I am, and live—like vapours tossed*

*Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,
Into the living sea of waking dreams,
Where there is neither sense of life or joys,
But the vast shipwreck of my life's esteems;
Even the dearest that I loved the best
Are strange—nay, rather, stranger than the rest.*

*I long for scenes where man hath never trod
A place where woman never smiled or wept
There to abide with my Creator, God,
And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept,
Untroubling and untroubled where I lie
The grass below—above the vaulted sky.*

John Clare 1793~1864

Northamptonshire Peasant Poet

- born in Northamptonshire
- wrote about English countryside (sights, customs, etc)
- understanding of the oral tradition

Working Class Poet

- illiterate field laborer parents
- little formal education *night school

Pious Anglican

aware of religious issues but..



P O E M S

DESCRIPTIVE OF

RURAL LIFE AND SCENERY.

BY JOHN CLARE,

A NORTHAMPTONSHIRE PEASANT.

"The Summer's Flower is to the Summer sweet,
" Though to itself it only live and die."

Shakespeare.

11/17/69
11/17/69
THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR TAYLOR AND HESSEY, FLEET STREET;
AND E. DRURY, STAMFORD.

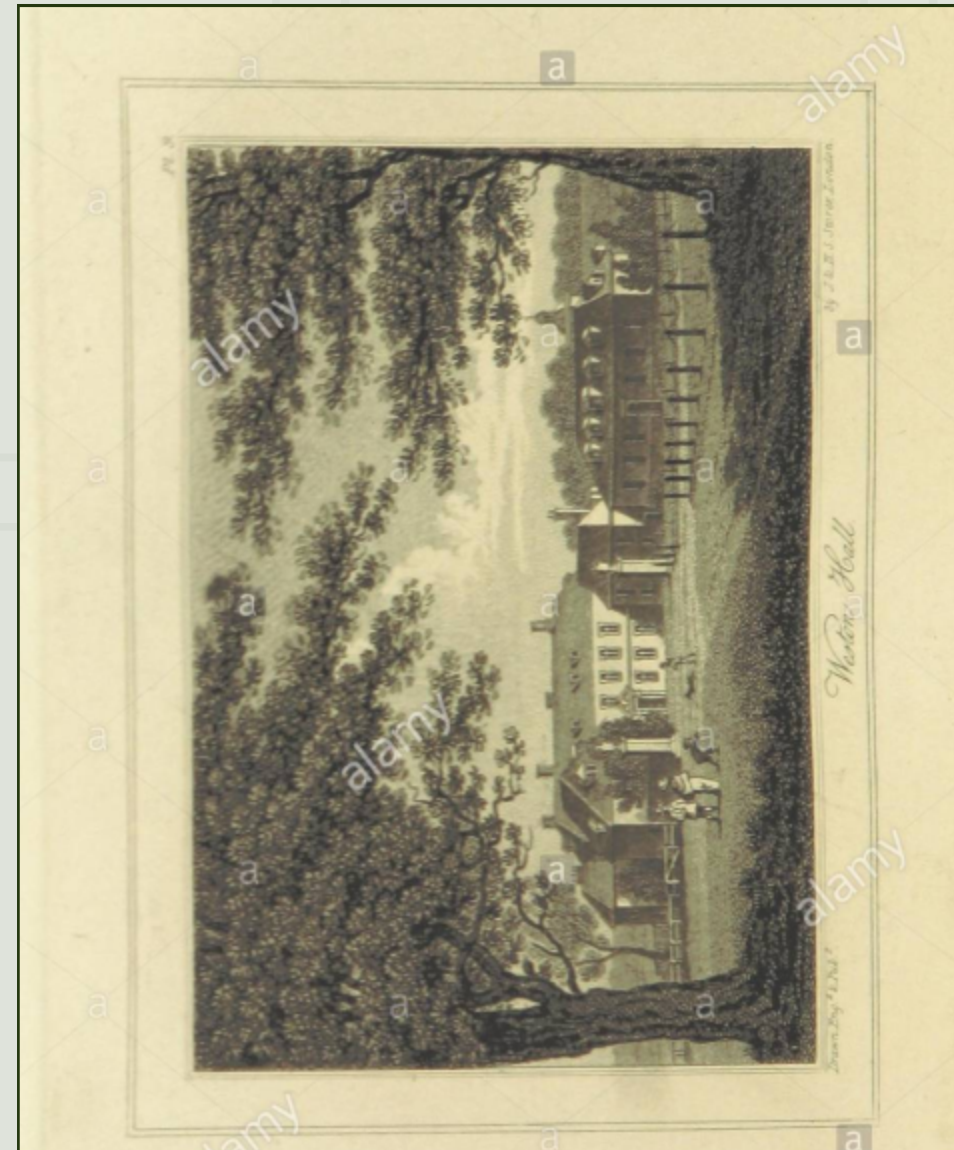
1820.

1820

Poems

Descriptive of

◀ Rural Life and Scenery



*ranges over a variety of topics and themes
nature, folk literature, social injustice, mind*

*includes a number of poetic forms
descriptive verse, elegies, sonnets, comic poems.*

- gained temporary popularity*
- three later books were financial failures*
- the novelty of 'peasant poet' wore off*
- went through financial difficulty*

voluntarily committed (1837)
in High Beach Private Asylum

escaped - (1841)

Northampton-Lunatic Asylum

1842 - 1864



*severe depression+ increased alcohol consumption + dissatisfaction of own identity
produced some remarkable poems*

- introspective(alienated and unstable self)

- misspelled words, standard syntax ignored, absence of punctuation in the lines

I am!

John Clare

1 *I am—yet what I am none cares or knows;*
2 *My friends forsake me like a memory lost:*
3 *I am the self-consumer of my woes—*
4 *They rise and vanish in oblivious host,*
5 *Like shadows in love's frenzied stifled throes*
6 *And yet I am, and live—like vapours tossed*

1 *Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,*
2 *Into the living sea of waking dreams,*
3 *Where there is neither sense of life or joys,*
4 *But the vast shipwreck of my life's esteems;*
5 *Even the dearest that I loved the best*
6 *Are strange—nay, rather, stranger than the rest.*

3 stanzas - 3 sestet

ABABAB - ABABCC - ABABCC
couplet couplet

iambic pentameter

1 *I long for scenes where man hath never trod*
2 *A place where woman never smiled or wept*
3 *There to abide with my Creator, God,*
4 *And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept,*
5 *Untroubling and untroubled where I lie*
6 *The grass below—above the vaulted sky.*

I am!

John Clare

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WHY? the frequent use of **dash**?

*Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,
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The grass below—above the vaulted sky.*

Stanza 1

content analysis

I am—yet what I am none cares or knows;
My friends forsake me like a **memory lost**:
I am the self-consumer of my woes—
They **rise and vanish** in oblivious host,
Like **shadows** in **love's frenzied stifled throes**
And yet I am, and live—like **vapours** tossed

I am _____ *???* _____ .

- Clare's intention?

self destructive imagery

dim, insubstantial vs. *vivid, apparent imagery*

Stanza 1

literary devices

I am—yet what I am none cares or knows;

My friends forsake me like a memory lost:

I am the self-consumer of my woes—

They rise and vanish in oblivious host,

Like shadows in love's frenzied stifled throes

And yet I am, and live—like vapours tossed

Anaphora

repetition of phrase at the beginning of the line

Alliteration

repetition of identical initial consonant sounds within neighboring words

Consonance

the repetition of the same consonant sounds in a line of text

Simile

figure of speech that directly compares two things 'like~'

Imagery

Stanza 2 content analysis

*Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,
Into the living sea of waking dreams,
Where there is neither sense of life or joys,
But the vast shipwreck of my life's esteems;
Even the dearest that I loved the best
Are strange —nay, rather, stranger than the rest.*

Line 1,2

nothingness / scorn, noise

- nothingness와 청각적 이미지를 통해 화자가 실제 없는 대상으로 여겨짐을 표현

living sea

- 현실세계

Line 3,4

Where(living sea) there is neither sense of life or joys

- 암울함만이 남은 현실

shipwreck

- 화자의 소외된 삶 혹은 고통스러운 화자의 정신세계를 상징

Line 5,6

Even the dearest that I loved the best are strange

-> 상실과 소외의 이미지 강조, 슬픔의 절정

Stanza 2

literary devices

(Stanza 1) like vapors tossed
Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,
Into the living sea of waking dreams,
Where there is neither sense of life or joys,
But the vast shipwreck of my life's esteems;
Even the dearest that I loved the best
Are strange —nay, rather, stranger than the rest.

Enjambment

- Line 1 like vapors tossed
-> Into the nothingness of scorn and noise
- Line 5-> Line 6

Metaphor

- waking dreams를 living sea에 비유

Assonance

- e sound
- th sound

Imagery

- But the vast shipwreck of my life's esteems;
- 시각적으로 형상화

Stanza 3

Content analysis

I long for scenes where man hath never trod

A place where woman never smiled or wept

There to abide with my Creator, God,

And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept,

Untroubling and untroubled where I lie

The grass below — above the vaulted sky.

Line 1~3

- 천국을 지향하는 욕망을 가감없이 드러냄.
- 천국: 사람들이 밟지 않은 곳, 울거나 웃는 사람이 없는 곳, 창조주 God이 있는 곳.

Line 4,5

- 어린시절 편안하고 달콤한 잠과 같은 곳, 괴로움을 주고 받지 않는 이상적인 곳을 갈망.

Line 6

- 천국에 대한 욕망 구체화
-> The grass: 지상 / the vaulted sky: 천국

Overall content

- Stanza 1,2 화자의 고통과 비애
-> Stanza 3연 가라앉음&기대하는 바 제시

Stanza 3

literary devices

I long for scenes where man hath never trod

A place where woman never smiled or wept

There to abide with my Creator, God,

And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept,

Untroubling and untroubled where I lie

The grass below — above the vaulted sky.

Alliteration

- w sound
- s sound

Enjambment

- Line 3 God -> Line 4 and

Simile

- 천국에서의 sleep을 어린 시절의 잠에 비유

Imagery

- And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept
-> 시각적으로 형상화

Assonance

- uh sound

Theme

Loneliness

- Clare는 정신문제로 고통 받는 삶을 살았음.
- 정신적인 문제로 인해 주변 사람들의 태도가 변하고 자신의 존재를 인정해주지 않는 데에서 오는 상실감과 고통 표현.

Religion

- God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" (Exodus 3:14)
- I Am! -> 신과의 절대적인 교감에 대한 갈망
- 자신의 유일한 희망은 영적인 구원에 있다고 인식함.
-> 외로움과 상실감의 해결책으로 종교적 믿음이 작용.

Discussion Question

Q1.

형식적 측면 외의 내용적 측면에서 stanza1과 2를 나눈 이유는 무엇인가

Q2.

3연에서 화자는 천국으로 암시되는 곳으로 가기를 갈망한다. 그렇다면 시인은 죽음 역시 소망했다고도 볼 수 있는가

Q3.

Stanza1 이후 rhyme scheme 변화의 효과는 무엇이고 이것은 의도된 것인가

Q4.

화자는 계속해서 I am이라고 외친다. 자신의 존재를 계속해서 외치고 있는 화자는 천국을 소망하면서도 한편으로는 자신의 존재를 인정해주기를 바라는 것은 아닌가

Q5.

시인은 죽음을 바라지만 동시에 그의 어린시절이 신성불가침의 시절이라고 말한다. 그는 왜 어린시절을 그렇게 바라보고 있는가

Source

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Thank you!

Source: Stephen Greenblatt, general editor, *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Vol. 2, 9th ed., W. W. Norton & Company, 2012

Ode to a Nightingale

John Keats

1

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains

My sense, as though of hemlock¹ I had drunk,

Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains

One minute past, and Lethe²-wards had sunk:

'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,

5

But being too happy in thine happiness,—

That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,

In some melodious plot

Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,

Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

10

2

O, for a draught of vintage!* that hath been

wine

Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth,

Tasting of Flora³ and the country-green,

Dance, and Provençal song⁴, and sunburnt mirth!

O for a beaker full of the warm South,

15

Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene⁵,

With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,

And purple-stained mouth;

That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,

And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

20

3

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget

¹ A poisonous herb, not the North American evergreen tree; a sedative if taken in small doses.

² River in Hades whose waters cause forgetfulness.

³ The Roman goddess of flowers or the flowers themselves.

⁴ Provence, in southern France, was in the late Middle Ages renowned for its troubadours—writers and singers of love songs.

⁵ Fountain of the Muses on Mount Helicon, hence the waters of inspiration, here applied metaphorically to a beaker of wine.

What thou among the leaves hast never known,
 The weariness, the fever, and the fret
 Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
 Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs, 25
 Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;⁶
 Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
 And leaden-eyed despairs,
 Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
 Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow. 30

4
 Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
 But on the viewless wings of Poesy,⁷
 Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
 Already with thee! tender is the night, 35
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
 Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays*;
 But here there is no light, *fairies*
 Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown 39
 Through verdurous* glooms and winding mossy ways. *green-foliaged*

5
 I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
 But, in embalmed* darkness, guess each sweet *perfumed*
 Wherewith the seasonable month endows
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild; 45
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;⁸
 Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
 And mid-May's eldest child,
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
 The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves. 50

⁶ Keats's brother Tom, wasted by tuberculosis, had died the preceding winter.

⁷ I.e., by getting drunk not on wine (the "vintage" of stanza 2) but on the invisible ("viewless") wings of the poetic imagination. (Bacchus, god of wine, was sometimes represented in a chariot drawn by "pards"—leopards.)

⁸ Sweetbriar or honeysuckle

6

Darkling* I listen; and, for many a time *in darkness*
 I have been half in love with easeful Death,
 Call'd him soft names in many a mused* rhyme, *meditated*
 To take into the air my quiet breath;
 Now more than ever seems it rich to die, 55
 To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
 While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
 In such an ecstasy!
 Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain— 59
 To thy high requiem* become a sod. *mass for the dead*

7

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
 No hungry generations tread thee down;
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard
 In ancient days by emperor and clown*:
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a path *peasant*
 Through the sad heart of Ruth,⁹ when, sick for home, 65
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn*;
 The same that oft-times hath *wheat*
 Charm'd magic casements*, opening on the foam *windows*
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn. 70

8

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
 To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
 Adieu! the fancy¹⁰ cannot cheat so well
 As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
 Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem* fades *hymn* 75
 Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
 Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
 In the next valley-glades:
 Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
 Fled is that music:—do I wake or sleep? 80

⁹ The young widow in the biblical Book of Ruth

¹⁰ I.e., imagination, "the viewless wings of Poesy" of line 33.