

ROSSETTI AND ELIZABETH SIDDAL; THE PAINTER AND HIS MODEL

ONE OF THE MOST TRAGIC INCIDENTS IN MODERN LITERARY LIFE.
—HALL CAINE DISCUSSES THE ROMANCE IN HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY—ROSSETTI BURIED HIS POEMS WITH HIS WIFE AND LATER EXHUMED THE BODY.

One day a young artist named Deverell accompanied his mother to a milliner's shop in Oxford street and saw through an open door there a number of young women working in an inner room. Among these girls there was one who at once attracted his attention and admiration—especially because she had a glorious mass of reddish auburn hair, which poets and painters were then beginning to discover was a woman's greatest beauty. Young Deverell was struck at once with the artistic possibilities of this wonderful girl, and whispered to his mother to ask the girl to sit to him; after some hesitation, the mother did so and the girl began to sit to the artist. The girl's name was Elizabeth Siddal, and on this chance meeting with a young artist hung, as Mr. Hall Caine says, the most tragic series of incidents in modern literary life.

Elizabeth Eleanor Siddal was the daughter of a singer in a dissenting chapel; and she had recently returned to London from Sheffield. The family must have been poor, else the girl would not have been a milliner—a hard-worked and ill-paid trade. But she had amid these low surroundings not merely the glorious opulence of her extraordinary beauty, but some of the artistic gifts inherited doubtless from her musical father. Allowing for the exaggeration with which all men speak of the intellectual gifts of a beautiful woman, Elizabeth Siddal certainly had considerable talents. By a curious coincidence, this chance meeting with a young artist brought her into the atmosphere of which by nature she was most fitted. Her artistic gift was not in music, the art of her father—but in drawing, in painting. Artists have a closeness of association and a spirit of camaraderie that induce them to exchange confidences and confessions, and the enthusiastic admiration of Elizabeth Siddal was soon communicated to his friend Dante Rossetti. Dante Rossetti had not then achieved much fame outside the circle of adores in which he moved with the easy assurance and confidence of a leader and king. But everybody knew that he had a great, though uncertain, future in art and in letters—for this strange creature stood out from the rest of men in having an almost equally supreme gift in painting and in poetry. But he was still poor and still bohemian, and had not yet learned, and, in fact, never did learn, those economies which make a balance between expenditure and income. He was, indeed, poor. When he saw Elizabeth Siddal, he at once saw the artistic possibilities of her special kind of beauty, she became his model; and soon she became also the object of a love, so deep, so enduring, so full of pitifulness, that she blotted out and for ever nearly all other influences in his life, and in turn, was the day-star and the haunting, poisonous, destroying ghost of his later years. She gave him at once life and death.

What was she like—this wondrous girl who was to produce such momentous results? Of all the descriptions I have read of her, I choose that by the wife of another great artist. Among the first friends whom Rossetti asked to come and see his newly-made wife were Burne-Jones and his wife, Lady Burne-Jones, in her delightful biography of her husband, gives a very vivid account of

HER HUSBAND WAS A DRUNKARD

A Lady who cures her husband of His Drinking Habits Writes of Her Struggle to Save her Home.

A PATHETIC LETTER



"I had for a long time been thinking of trying the Tasteless Samaria Prescription for my husband for his drinking habits, but I was afraid he would discover that I was giving him medicine, and the thought never entered my mind. I hesitated for nearly a week, but one day when he came home very much intoxicated, I took his salary nearly all spent. I threw off all fear and determined to make an effort to save our home from the ruin I saw coming at all hazards. I sent for your Tasteless Samaria Prescription, and put it in his coffee as directed next morning and watched and prayed for the result. At noon I gave him more and also at supper. He never suspected a thing, and I then boldly kept right on giving it regularly, as I had discovered something that had not every nerve in my body tingling with hope and happiness, and I could see a bright future spread out before me. I was so happy that I shared in the good things of life, an attentive loving husband, comfort and everything else dear to a woman's heart; for my husband had told me that whiskey was vile stuff and he was taking a health to it. It was only a few days before I had given him the full course he had stopped drinking altogether, but I kept giving him the medicine until I was sure he was cured for another lot, to have on hand if he should relapse, as he had done from promises before. He never has and I am writing you this letter to tell you how thankful I am. I honestly believe it will cure the worst cases."

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the first meeting. Here it is: "Rossetti and his wife, after their return from Paris, took a lodging at Hampstead, but she was so ill at first that we never saw her till near the end of July. . . . Lizzie's slender, elegant figure—tall for those days, but I never knew her actual height—comes back to me, in a graceful and simple dress, the incarnate opposite of the 'tailor-made' young lady. We went home with them to their rooms at Hampstead, and I know that I then received an impression which never went away, of romance and tragedy of this wonderful girl, and whispered to his mother to ask the girl to sit to him; after some hesitation, the mother did so and the girl began to sit to the artist. The girl's name was Elizabeth Siddal, and on this chance meeting with a young artist hung, as Mr. Hall Caine says, the most tragic series of incidents in modern literary life."

Ten years elapsed between the first meeting between Rossetti and Elizabeth Siddal and their marriage, and over these ten years there is a heavy veil—not yet uplifted altogether. Elizabeth Siddal was not educated, and there is reason for believing that for a while Rossetti sent her away to a school to complete her education. There was thus between them some of that relation, half paternal and half lover, which is so often the relation of the tenderest relations between a man and a woman; and of the tenderest and yet one of the most perilous. For the paternal feeling may in the end swallow up the passion and feeling of the lover, and passions die in the very opulence of pure and unselfish affection. Whether anything of this kind happened in the case of Rossetti is one of the unsolved mysteries in the tragic story. It is certain that they were separated for a while. Ruskin appears at this stage of the story; this wondrous woman, and indeed, even a woman—that came within the sphere of her influence; and Ruskin was so taken by her that he helped her with his purse through some hours of stress and uncertainty—doing so with characteristic delicacy and generosity by offering to buy her pictures, but on the condition that she remained a pupil of Rossetti's. Ten years is a long trial for love—especially in the mild and impressionable nature of an artist, and when the time for the engagement secretly formed between Rossetti and Elizabeth Siddal, kept secret at her strong desire, came to be completed by marriage, there is reason, Hall Caine thinks, for believing that Rossetti was making sacrifice to duty rather than consummating the once glorious dream. Rossetti went to Paris to paint the frescoes in the Union Debating Hall at Oxford, and that while there he entered into a new, perhaps a more opulent and cultured world than any he had yet known. It was then he was acquainted with William Morris, and on this pause in his life as a Londoner and a bohemian Hall Caine makes significant and somewhat cryptic observations:

"What effect these new friendships, or any of all of them, may have had on the relation which he still stood to Elizabeth Siddal, it would perhaps be hard to say; but I think evidence is not wanting in the poems written about this period of a new and disturbing element of a painful and even tragic awakening, a sense of a passion coming too late, and, above all, of a struggle between love and duty which assured less than well for the happiness of the marriage that was about to come."

What secret there was buried in the heart of Rossetti when, after these ten long years of waiting, he and the wondrous girl who had inspired his brush and his pen to their greatest exaltations—what secret lay buried in Rossetti's heart, the world was not allowed to see. On the contrary, so far as anybody could judge, it was the supremely blissful realization of a long-cherished and beautiful romance. Hall Caine writes on this point:

"Friends who saw much of them in the earlier days of their married life speak of their obvious happiness, and protest, in particular, against evil rumors circulated later, that nothing could have been more marked than Rossetti's zealous attention to his young wife."

But did Rossetti any longer love her with the wild passion which once flooded and inspired his whole being? Did the daily intimacy of marriage rub off the splendor and the glory—especially when the hapless girl lost her health and her spirit? She must have been some thing of a trial to one like Rossetti, not the less so because it was unconsciously—or at least so inevitably. Poor health—and her health had become poor—the tragic look in her face which Lady Burne-Jones saw was working out her destiny—leads to spirits. Disappointment about not having children was well-calculated to increase both the ill-health and the depression of spirits—the only child was still-born; "and then," says

Hall Caine, "her mood, already sad, appears to have deepened to one of settled melancholy." And here is a picture of her which is eloquent and need not be dwelt upon: "I remember to have heard Madox Brown say that she would sit for hours with her feet inside the fender looking fixedly into the fire." One can well understand what effect such companionship would have on a nature like Rossetti's. Hall Caine puts this truly and yet tenderly:

"It is easy to believe that to a man so impressionable as Rossetti, so dependent on cheerful surroundings, so liable to dark moods of his own, by this must have been a condition which made home hard to bear. If he escaped from it as often as possible it is perhaps only natural, and it is no less natural if his absence was misunderstood."

And these are the circumstances which we must read into that last day and night which these two unhappy beings spent together. Here is the story as told by Hall Caine, who says Hall Caine; and, "it expressed itself in a way that was full of tragic force and beauty of a great re-creation." The poet inspired by and addressed to his wife; at her request he had copied them into a little book which she had given him. "He resolved that the poems should go with her to the grave, and he placed the little volume in the coffin by the side of her face, and she wrapped it round with her beautiful golden hair."

Everybody knows the sequel. Under pressure from friends, Rossetti applied to the home office for leave to exhume the body; the poems were recovered, were published, and immediately became popular. But they brought no joy to the poet; they were fiercely attacked in the well-known article by Robert Buchanan called the "Fleshly School," and Rossetti was tortured by the thought that he had desecrated his wife's grave to gratify a selfish ambition. He was haunted by other things, and in Rossetti the practice of taking chloral; the habit increased, bringing with it its well-known Nemesis in deep dejection and morbidity of spirits, until in the end he became a sickly hermit, and died still comparatively young in the little seaside village of Birchington-on-Sea, where he is buried. There were many things to account for the final overthrow of this noble and exalted spirit; but that red-haired girl whom he took out of the milliner's shop in Oxford street was the most potent of them. Her beauty, her youth, and other things proved in Rossetti the practice of taking chloral; the habit increased, bringing with it its well-known Nemesis in deep dejection and morbidity of spirits, until in the end he became a sickly hermit, and died still comparatively young in the little seaside village of Birchington-on-Sea, where he is buried. There were many things to account for the final overthrow of this noble and exalted spirit; but that red-haired girl whom he took out of the milliner's shop in Oxford street was the most potent of them. Her beauty, her youth, and other things proved in Rossetti the practice of taking chloral; the habit increased, bringing with it its well-known Nemesis in deep dejection and morbidity of spirits, until in the end he became a sickly hermit, and died still comparatively young in the little seaside village of Birchington-on-Sea, where he is buried.

FAMOUS BOYS' SCHOOL

FOUNDED IN 1571 AT HARROW—ATTENDANCE HAS FALLEN OFF IN RECENT YEARS—MANY NOTABLES HAVE BEEN EDUCATED THERE—CURIOUS ANCIENT RULES, SOME BEING STILL IN FORCE.

Each year brings to Harrow, England's famous boys' school, a fresh contingent of American and Anglo-American boys. When the school opened again last month there were some 50 of these pupils enrolled at this establishment, where once, according to one historian, "600 sons of earls and dukes" were trained in the essentials of English manhood as well as of education.

The Duchess of Marlborough's eldest son, Mrs. Marshall Field's boy and Mrs. Dominguez's two sons are some of those who are receiving their education here and incidentally imbibing all those traditions which make the public school life one of the great factors in an Englishman's existence.

Entrance to Harrow is not an easy matter. A boy's name is sometimes registered at his birth, so that when he arrives at the right age a place will be made for him.

It was in 1571 that John Lyon, a wealthy yeoman, and for those days an excellent scholar, conceived the idea of forming a school for the boys in and around the place he lived, which was Harrow. It was to be free and open to all who really wished to learn. He procured letters patent and a royal charter from Queen Elizabeth, and was empowered to draw up certain statutes for the foundation, regulation and government of the "free grammar school of John Lyon in the village of Harrow, upon the Hill in the County of Middlesex."

In the will of this same wise and beneficent man were left all sorts of instructions for the maintenance and continuance of his scheme, and he appointed a body corporate to be known as "keepers and governors of the school." Being a careful and far-seeing man, he provided for all contingencies.

He arranged the stipends of the masters, the number of forms in the school, the courses of study for each, and even the mode of punishment to be used. Also the pupils were only to indulge in such sports as driving a top, tossing a handball, running and shooting.

Just when the school changed its character and became a place where only the nobility or very wealthy could afford to send their sons is not recorded, but change it did, and the original idea of John Lyon that education should be free there exists now only in certain scholarships which enable a boy to take the course free of charge.

of a strong odor of laudanum; his wife breathing stertorously and lying unconscious on the bed. He called a doctor, who saw at once what was only too obvious—that the lady had taken an overdose of her accustomed sleep draught. Other doctors were summoned, and every effort was made to save the patient's life; but, after lingering for several hours without recovering consciousness for a moment—and therefore without offering a word of explanation—towards seven in the morning she died."

There is a grim irony in some of the details of the events which immediately followed. The world of London little knew that among the thousands of events which had been crushed into the great multitudinous day of London's always tumultuous, checked, gigantic life there had occurred one death which the world would never cease to hear of. "Rossetti, stunned and stupefied, had to the police the face of the coroner's court were reported in a short paragraph in one of the London papers, and there the poet's name was wrongly spelled."

So does the vast world mock our own little world of petty incident, so completely ignored, that Rossetti to darken and almost blot out everything else for the remainder of his days. "His grief knew no bounds," says Hall Caine; and, "it expressed itself in a way that was full of tragic force and beauty of a great re-creation." The poet inspired by and addressed to his wife; at her request he had copied them into a little book which she had given him. "He resolved that the poems should go with her to the grave, and he placed the little volume in the coffin by the side of her face, and she wrapped it round with her beautiful golden hair."

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To the institute that new halls, classrooms and laboratories are constantly being built. The masters' houses in which the boys live are also comfortable and modern in their appointments. The school has some 50 or 60 boys as residents and the others take as many as they can conveniently accommodate, thus adding considerably to their incomes.

The west wing of the "Old Schools" is the most ancient of the buildings. Having been completed in 1615. The first floor is occupied by a large classroom known as the fourth form room. This was for 200 years the only schoolroom Harrow possessed.

The head master occupied the throne at the end of the room and other seats were apportioned to the assistant masters, while the scholars sat on the uncomfortable forms and wrote on their knees as best they could. After it ceased to be the general classroom it was used for the boys of the fourth form and by that name it is still known.

It was in this room that Sheridan received as much instruction as he would consent to imbibe. He never carried off any honors at Harrow, but was ringleader in all mischief if school history speaks truly.

It was here, too, that Lord Palmerston first achieved distinction, for he was a student and scholar even in those early days, and his name stands in the school list of September, 1798, as head boy in the second remove of the fourth form.

In 1805 George Gordon Byron was placed in this schoolroom to wrestle with studies he hated. He was much attached to Harrow, and, like Sheridan, seems to have been a leader in sports and scrapes of all sorts. He says in his correspondence that he had seven fights at Harrow and was victorious in six. Some of his school books are to be seen and the leaves are all scribbled over with notes and comments. In his "Scriptoria Graeci" is written:

"George Gordon Byron, Wednesday, June 26, 1805, 3 quarters of an hour past three o'clock in the afternoon, 3rd school. Calvert monitor, Tom Wildman my right and Young on my left. Harrow on the Hill."

On the old panels of the fourth form room are thousands of names cut into the wood, the work of generations of boys. Byron, Sheridan, Peel, Palmerston and Manning scored their autographs among the others.

This old classroom is no longer used in that capacity and cannot be seen by the chance visitor to the school unless special permission is obtained. The boys of today have no pleasant associations with it, as it is used only for punishment. It is to this room that the present sturdy English lads, the delicate French boys and the energetic American boys are taken to be chastised when the situation does not admit of milder punishment. Amid these memories of the past they undergo the mortification of the present; so the fourth form room to the modern Harrovian is a "beastly" place indeed.

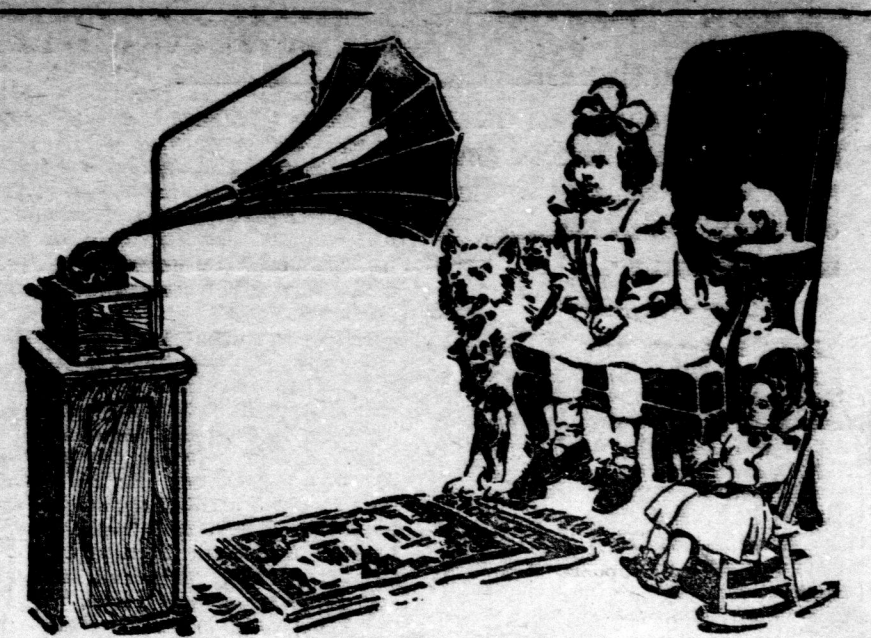
The little town of Harrow exists only for the school. As in London certain establishments call themselves bakers, fruiterers, tailors to the royal family, so in Harrow they hang signs upon their shops stating that they serve the school.

BABY OF TWENTY-TWO.

A girl who, though 22 years old, has never grown up, has been discovered in the small hamlet of Cove, Devon.

Her name is Mildred Hart, and she is the daughter of a carpenter. Since she was five years of age she has not developed either physically or mentally. Her teeth are those she cut as an infant, and she has retained all her baby ways. Her clothes, even to her little socks and shoes, are such as one is accustomed to see on a child of five. She nurses a doll, and is in turn nursed by her mother who was seventeen years ago. The girl dislikes going to bed, and insists on remaining downstairs till her parents retire for the night, when she is put in a little cot in her room.

The parents cannot assign a reason for the arrested development of their child, but it appears that two sisters of one of the child's grandmothers failed to develop in the same way.—Exchange.



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