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 René Wellek, "Walter Pater," in *A History of Modern Criticism, 1750-1950*, volume 3 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), pp. 381-399;
 Carolyn Williams, *Transfigured World: Walter Pater's Aesthetic Historicism* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1989);
 Samuel Wright, *An Informative Index to the Writings of Walter H. Pater* (West Cornwall, Conn.: Locust Hill Press, 1987).

Papers:

Pater left few personal papers or manuscripts. However, the major collection of manuscripts is

at Harvard University. Most of the material is from Pater's later years, and much of it is unpublished. Included are several fragmentary "imaginary portraits" and drafts of several lectures. Harvard also has the manuscript of the 1880 version of the Coleridge essay. The manuscript for the published chapters of *Gaston de Latour* is in the Berg Collection at the New York Public Library, while the manuscripts of the unpublished chapters are in the library of the University of Arizona. "Measure for Measure" is in the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C., and "Diaphaneité" is at the King's School, Canterbury. The manuscript of the essay on Pascal, Pater's last, is at the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti

(12 May 1828 - 9 April 1882)

This entry was updated by Florence S. Boos (University of Iowa) from her entry in DLB 35: Victorian Poets After 1850.

- BOOKS:** *Sir Hugh the Heron: A Legendary Tale in Four Parts* (London: Privately printed, 1843); *Poems* (London: Privately printed, 1869; enlarged, 1870; revised, London: Ellis, 1870; Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1870); republished with slightly different contents as *Poems. A New Edition* (London: Ellis, 1881); *Ballads and Sonnets* (London: Ellis & White, 1881; Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1882); *Ballads and Narrative Poems* (Hammersmith, U.K.: Kelmscott Press, 1893); *Sonnets and Lyrical Poems* (Hammersmith, U.K.: Kelmscott Press, 1894); *Jan Van Hunks* (London: Printed for T. Watts-Dunton, 1912); republished as *Dante Gabriel Rossetti: Jan Van Hunks*, edited by John Robert Wahl (New York: New York Public Library, 1952); *The Paintings and Drawings of Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882): A Catalogue Raisonné*, 2 volumes, edited by Virginia Surtees (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).

- Collection:** *The Collected Works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, 2 volumes, edited by William M. Rossetti (London: Ellis, 1886); republished as *The Poetical Works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, 1 volume (London: Ellis, 1891); enlarged as *The Poems of Dante Gabriel Rossetti with Illustrations from His Own Pictures and Designs*, 2 volumes (London: Ellis, 1904); revised and enlarged as *The Works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, 1 volume (London: Ellis, 1911).

- TRANSLATION:** *The Early Italian Poets* (London: Smith, Elder, 1861; London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent / New York: Scribners, 1861); republished as *Dante and His Circle* (London: Ellis & White, 1874; Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1876).

Gabriel Charles Dante Rossetti, who assumed the professional name Dante Gabriel Rossetti, was born 12 May 1828 at No. 38 Charlotte Street, Portland Place, London, the second child and eldest son of Gabriele Rossetti (1783-1854)



Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 1867

and Frances Polidori Rossetti (1800-1886). Gabriele Rossetti was a Dante scholar, who when younger had been exiled from Naples for writing poetry in support of the Neapolitan Constitution of 1819. He settled in London in 1824, where in 1826 he married the daughter of a fellow Italian expatriate and man of letters; Frances Polidori had trained as a governess, and she supervised her children's early education. Gabriele Rossetti supported the family as a professor of Italian at King's College, London, until his eyesight and general health deteriorated in the 1840s. Frances then attempted to support the family as a teacher of French and Italian, and as an unsuccessful founder of two day schools. Few Victorian families were as gifted: Maria Rossetti (1827-1876) was described as talented, enthusiastic, and domineering as a child; in later life she published *A Shadow of Dante* (1871) and became an Anglican nun (1873); William Michael Rossetti (1829-1919) was along with his brother an active member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and became an editor, man of letters, and memoirist; the youngest child, Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830-

1894), became an introspective lyrical poet.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti was bilingual from early childhood and grew up in an atmosphere of émigré political and literary discussion. From childhood he intended to be a painter and illustrated literary subjects in his earliest drawings. He was tutored at home in German and read the Bible, William Shakespeare, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust*, *The Arabian Nights*, Charles Dickens, and the poetry of Sir Walter Scott and George Gordon, Lord Byron. At the age of eight he entered Mr. Paul's day school in Portland Place and a year later began studies at King's College School, which he attended for five years, from 1837 to 1842. From 1842 to 1846 he attended Cary's Academy of Art to prepare for the Royal Academy, which he entered in July 1846. After more than a year in the Academy Antique School, Rossetti left to apprentice himself to the historical painter Ford Madox Brown, who later became his closest lifelong friend. He also continued his extensive reading of poetry—Edgar Allan Poe, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Blake, John Keats, Robert Browning, and Alfred, Lord Tennyson—and romantic and satiric fiction—Charles Robert Maturin, William Makepeace Thackeray, Friedrich Heinrich Karl de la Motte-Fouqué, Charles Wells—and in 1845 began translations from German medieval poetry (Hartmann von Ave's twelfth-century *Der Arme Heinrich*, and parts of the *Nibelungenlied*), and from the Italians (Dante's *Vita Nuova* and British Museum volumes of Dante's little-known predecessors, published as *The Early Italian Poets* in 1861). In 1847 and 1848 Rossetti began several important early poems—"My Sister's Sleep," "The Blessed Damozel," "The Bride's Prelude," "On Mary's Portrait," "Ave," "Jenny," "Dante at Verona," "A Last Confession," and several sonnets, including "Retro Me Sathana" and a trio, "The Choice." There is some evidence that Rossetti might have wished to take up poetry as a career but felt impelled to turn to painting to earn his living. In 1848 he wrote the poet and critic Leigh Hunt about the possibility of supporting himself by writing poetry, and his dual impulses toward art and poetry may have hindered his development as a painter.

In 1848 Rossetti joined with six other young men, mostly painters, who shared an interest in contemporary poetry and an opposition to certain stale conventions of contemporary academy art. Their name, Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood,



Self-portrait in pencil and chalk by Rossetti, March 1847
(National Portrait Gallery, London)

honored Giovanni Paolo Lasinio's engravings of paintings by Benozzo Gozzoli and others who decorated Pisa's Campo Santo. In a general way, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood sought to introduce new forms of thematic seriousness, high coloration, and attention to detail into contemporary British art. Talented members of the group included John Everett Millais, its most skilled painter and future president of the Royal Academy, and William Holman Hunt, a painter inclined to religious themes and dedicated to accurate representation of natural phenomena. The painter James Collinson soon left the brotherhood on religious grounds and was unofficially succeeded by the painter Walter Howell Deverell. Other members were the sculptor Thomas Woolner; the future art critic Frederic Stephens; and William Michael Rossetti, who as P.R.B. secretary kept a journal of activities and edited the six issues of its periodical, the *Germ* (1850). Associates of the group (other than Elizabeth Eleanor Siddal) included the older painter Ford Madox Brown, the painter and poet William Bell Scott, the poet Coventry Patmore, the painter Anna Mary Howitt, the woman's rights activist Barbara Leigh Smith (Bodichon), and Christina Rossetti, six of whose poems appeared in the *Germ*.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brothers provided each other with companionship, criticism, and encour-

agement early in their careers and defended each other against initial public hostility. Dante Gabriel Rossetti shaped the group's literary tastes, pressed for the founding of the *Germ*, and published in it several poems, including "My Sister's Sleep," an early version of "The Blessed Damozel," and six sonnets on paintings. He also contributed an allegorical prose tale, "Hand and Soul," in which a thirteenth-century Italian painter, Chiaro dell'Erma, is visited by a woman representing his soul, who tells him, "Paint me thus, as I am . . . so shall thy soul stand before thee always . . ."—an early suggestion of Rossetti's later artistic preoccupation with dreamlike, heavily stylized female figures. In 1849 Rossetti accompanied William Holman Hunt to France and exhibited his first oil painting, *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*, at the Free Exhibition in London; in 1850 he exhibited his *Ecce Ancilla Domini* at the National Institution. P.R.B. meetings became sporadic by 1851, and the group had disbanded by 1853; it had served its purpose, which was to provide initial professional encouragement to its members.

In 1850, at the age of twenty-two, Rossetti met Elizabeth Eleanor Siddal ("Lizzie") then about seventeen years old. According to William Michael Rossetti, she was the daughter of a Sheffield cutler and was working as a millinery shop assistant when Walter Deverell persuaded her to serve as an artist's model. After 1850 she became a model for many of Rossetti's drawings and paintings, including a series of informal sketches made in the early 1850s and a large watercolor exhibited in 1852 and 1853, *Beatrice at a Marriage Feast Denies Dante Her Salutation*. Lizzie Siddal and Rossetti became engaged about 1851 but did not marry for several years. Her recurrent respiratory illness, his financial difficulties, and some mutual ambivalence may have contributed to the delay. Lizzie Siddal shared Rossetti's poetic and artistic interests and under his tutelage produced a series of emotional lyrics and watercolors on medieval themes (collected in *The Poems and Drawings of Elizabeth Siddal*, edited by Roger Lewis and Mark Samuels Lasner, 1978).

In 1856 several university undergraduates, including William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones, began a journal modeled after the *Germ*. Entitled the *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, it had a run of twelve issues to which Rossetti contributed three poems—an early version of "The Burden of Nineveh," "The Staff and the Scrip," and a revised version of "The Blessed Damozel." In 1857

CYCLOGRAPHIC SOCIETY. CRITICISM SHEET.

1307
No.

Subject of Picture or Quotation:—

Margaret, having abandoned virtue and caused the death of her mother and brother, is tormented by the evil spirit at Mass, during the chanting of the "Eiel, Ise." — (Goethe's Faust.)

Evil spirit — How different, Margaret, it was, with thee
When first of innocence, than camest to be seen
The mother and I had heard thee of the street
Lifting thy fingers out of the well-known book
Half in the playfulness of childhood, half
As if a sense of God were in thy soul
And if it with thee were? Within thine hand
What price and art bring? etc.

Margaret — Was ever, these few feet thought?
They seem to tell me, and come close on
Spoke of myself. — "Eiel, Ise, Ise, Ise."
Evil spirit — The glorified then countenance, now
Turned from thee; to slouch below the ground
The pale & tremulous shadow, 'twas to thee!

Date July 27 /45

Signature Gabriel C. Rossetti

The Members of the C. S. are requested to write their remarks in Ink, concisely and legibly, avoiding sarcasm or animosity, which ever defeat the true end of criticism, and are more likely to produce unhealthy feeling and dissension.

A very clever & original and design, beautifully executed —

The figures which ~~do~~ deserve the greatest attention are the four figures, grazing to the left — The young girl's face is very pretty but the head is too large; the other three are full of piety.

For Devil is in my opinion a mistake; his head wants drawing & the horns through the cowl are common place & therefore objectionable — The right arm of Margaret should have been drawn, for by hiding the Devil's right hand, (which is not sufficiently prominent) you are impressed with the idea that he is leaving her to pieces for a meal.

The drawing & composition of Margaret are original & expressive of utter prostration — The greatest objection is the figure with his back towards to you who is unaccountably short; the pleasing group of flowers should have accentuated his place — The girl & child

well in the foreground are exquisite in feeling — The flaming sword is ~~well~~ emblematical of the subject which is well chosen & with a few alterations in its treatment should be painted ~~Cheris~~ out of respectiveness — *J. E. Millais*

[This design is in such perfect feeling as to give me a far higher idea of Goethe than I have before obtained either from a translation, or the ~~most~~ artificial illustrations of Ripzel; the Margaret here is wonderful, Margaret ~~with~~ ~~conducing~~ the workings of the evil spirit who is pressing her weight of sin into her kneeling ~~and~~ and repenting self — The children are beautifully introduced, without in the slightest interfering with the principal figures, and the holy heads around are beautiful, devotional through Mr P. never having seen the evil one, he has not got it sufficiently grand, or near so good as the other parts, excepting the elevated hand which most appropriately accords with the utter prostration of Margaret *W. H. Hunt*]

Criticism sheet with comments by John Everett Millais and William Holman Hunt of a drawing by Rossetti. The sketching and drawing club known as the Cyclographic Society was an immediate forerunner of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (Collection of William E. Fredeman).

No. 2. (*Price One Shilling.*) FEBRUARY, 1850.

With an Etching by JAMES COLLINSON.

D. G. Rossetti
and
W. S.

The Germ:

Thoughts towards Nature

In Poetry, Literature, and Art.



When whose merely hath a little thought
 Will plainly think the thought which is in him,—
 Not imaging another's bright or dim,
 Not mangling with new words what others taught;
 When whose speaks, from having either sought
 Or only found,—will speak, not just to skim
 A shallow surface with words made and trim,
 But in that very speech the matter brought:
 Be not too keen to cry—"So this is all!"—
 A thing I might myself have thought as well,
 But would not say it, for it was not worth!"
 Ask: "Is this truth?" For is it still to tell
 That, be the theme a point or the whole earth,
 Truth is a circle, perfect, great or small?



London:

AYLOTT & JONES, 8, PATERNOSTER ROW.

G. F. TUPPER, Printer, Clement's Lane, Lombard Street.

Cover for the second of six issues of the Pre-Raphaelite journal (George Price Boyce's copy from the Collection of William E. Fredeman)



Sent to me 4/7/6 by Dr. Williamson. This is printed off from another photograph of Lizzie Rossetti, wh. is coloured - as it is stated, by Gabriel. The coloured photograph used to belong to a monthly nurse who attended L. in her confinement, 1861, & afterwards. She says that she saw G. in the act of colouring it.

Wm R

Photograph of Rossetti's wife, Elizabeth Siddal Rossetti, with explanatory note by William Michael Rossetti
(Collection of William E. Fredeman)



Beata Beatrix, Rossetti's portrait of his wife, Lizzie, painted two years after her 1862 suicide
(The Tate Gallery, London)

Not I myself know all my love for thee:
 How should I reach so far, who cannot weigh
 To-morrow's dower by gage of yesterday?
 Shall birth and death and all dark names that be
 As doors and windows bared to some loud sea,
 Lash deaf mine ears and blind my face with
 spray;
 And shall my sense pierce love,—the last relay
 And ultimate outpost of eternity?

Rossetti and Jane Morris's brief period of apparent happiness and (presumably) sexual liaison has attracted biographers by its supposed romantic unconventionality. It might be more sympathetic as well as realistic to keep in mind the situation's infirmities and constraints: Rossetti's obesity, addiction, hydrocele, bad eyesight, and growing anxieties; and Jane Morris's ever-present children, neuralgia, and bad back.

In October 1871 the *Contemporary Review* published a pseudonymous article by Thomas Maitland (Robert Buchanan), who reacted against Sidney Colvin's praise of "The Blue Bower" for its "marvellous fleshliness of the flesh," and attacked Rossetti as a leader of a school of poets of

sensual lust: "he is fleshly all over, from the roots of his hair to the tip of his toes." Buchanan was a penurious minor poet who had resented a slighting reference to him in a review by William Michael Rossetti. Rossetti replied with an article in the *Athenaeum*, "The Stealthy School of Criticism," and Buchanan then expanded his views for publication under his own name in the spring of 1872 as *The Fleshly School of Poetry and Other Phenomena of the Day*. In this lucubration, he added a lengthy attack on "The House of Life" as a "hotbed" of "nasty phrases," which virtually "wheel[ed] . . ." the poet's "nuptial couch into the public streets." Of his brother's response, William Michael Rossetti wrote in his memoir:

His fancies now ran away with him, and he thought that the pamphlet was a first symptom in a widespread conspiracy for crushing his fair fame as an artist and a man, and for hounding him out of honest society. . . .

It is a simple fact that, from the time when the pamphlet had begun to work into the inner tissue of his feelings, Dante Rossetti was a changed man, and so continued till the close of his life.

In an atmosphere of Victorian prudery, it was not unreasonable to fear harm from such a pamphlet. Still, most of Rossetti's poetic predecessors and contemporaries—Tennyson, Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Morris, and Swinburne—had survived worse reviews, and much of Buchanan's article in fact blasted Swinburne rather than Rossetti. Almost all the reviews of Rossetti's 1870 *Poems* were favorable, and the book sold unusually well (four editions in 1870). Few in Rossetti's actual or potential audience were likely to share Buchanan's extreme prudery. Rossetti was deeply proud of the originality of his best work, which did, after all, idealize male heterosexual fantasies; yet he retained a good deal of social and sexual conservatism. His own ambivalence, heightened by the effects of his growing drug dependence, seemed to leave him unusually vulnerable to Buchanan's philistine attack.

More directly, Rossetti may also have feared public exposure of his relationship with Jane Morris. Rossetti scholar William E. Fredeman notes that the printed version of Buchanan's pamphlet applies the accusations of sensuality at greater length to "The House of Life" and identifies its "house" with the brothel of "Jenny."

In any case, after leaving Kelmscott on 2 June 1872, Rossetti suffered a complete mental

"A Lady's here, by a dark-sted barge,
 Sister Helen,
 So darkly clad, I saw her not!"
 "See her now or never see ought,
 Little brother!"
 (O Mother, Mary Mother,
 What more to see, between Hell & Heaven?)

"Her head falls back, & the moon shines
 Sister Helen, fair
 On the Lady of Ewer's golden hair!"
 "Blest hour of my power & her despair,
 Little brother!"
 (O Mother, Mary Mother,
 How blest and bann'd, between Hell &
 Heaven?)

"Her clasped hands shield from her beating
 head,
 Sister Helen;
 With the low wind's wail her sob is
 wail."
 "What wedding-strains hath her bride,
 Little brother?"
 (O Mother, Mary Mother,
 What strain but death's, between Hell
 & Heaven?)

Rossetti's revisions and additions for the ballad "Sister Helen" written in a copy of Poems (Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1873).
 His note on the flyleaf reads: "This copy contains alterations to be adopted in reprinting. D. G. R. 1879"
 (Anderson Galleries auction catalogue, sale number 1806, 11-13 February 1924).

Alexa Wilding for *La Ghirlandata*. Jane Morris seemed to absent herself more and more frequently, and during one such absence in 1874 Rossetti left Kelmscott for Chelsea. There his health continued to decline, and in 1874 he seems to have written no "House of Life" sonnets, and only one obituary sonnet on the death of Oliver Madox Brown. His volume of *Early Italian Poets* was republished that year, under the title *Dante and His Circle*. In 1875 he wrote three sonnets, in

1876 two short poems, and in 1877 one sonnet, "Astarte Syriaca," to accompany a picture.

After Kelmscott, Rossetti rented several country residences in succession for privacy. Jane Morris visited him for an extended period at Bognor in 1875, but she became increasingly unavailable for sittings in ensuing years, and his loneliness and anxieties about his work seem to have grown. Jane's letters of the mid 1870s indicate a decline in her own health; she found it difficult



Rossetti's tombstone at Birchington-on-Sea, designed by his lifelong friend Ford Madox Brown

left behind the almost completed "Joan of Arc" and "Salutation of Beatrice." Rossetti was buried in Birchington churchyard, under a tombstone designed by his lifelong friend Ford Madox Brown, and near a stained-glass memorial window designed by Frederick Shields. A fountain and bust by Brown were placed in Cheyne Walk.

If one moderates them somewhat, many of Rossetti's self-estimates were accurate. Had he been able when young to choose a literary career, he would probably have been a better poet than painter; he was a more genuinely original and skillful writer than many who were more prolific. In part, his achievement was vicarious: he galvanized others in many ways not easily measured. In his youth, he was capable of infectious and gregarious enthusiasm for the work of others, however obscure, but resentment at his own lack of fame deepened gradually as he aged. Insecurity and self-reproach manifested themselves in all but his earliest poems. Behind his self-confident, even peremptory manner with artistic associates, he seemed to need a praise-filled, even sheltering environment for completion of work: first the

P.R.B.; then his intimates of the "Jovial Campaign" to paint the Oxford Union Debating Hall and, later, the members of the Firm; and, finally, Jane Morris and a few faithfully supportive friends. His final surge of poetic effort, for example, benefited from the ministrations of Theodore Watts. He withdrew from former friends in his last years, but new acquaintances formed a fresh audience, which seemed to soothe reminders of his former self.

Had Rossetti curbed his use of chloral and lived another decade, he might have doubled his oeuvre. Striking shifts in range and manner occur in the last poems, and reflections on old subjects of sexuality and failed ambition are graced by a new and mediating detachment. Even his paintings after 1870, such as the large oil *Dante's Dream*, show somewhat improved ability to arrange a complex canvas (his greatest weakness throughout his career). Some of his late designs for oil paintings, such as *The Boat of Love* and *The Death of Lady Macbeth*, were at least as good as any he had done earlier. Rossetti was haunted by a (perhaps partially accurate) private assessment of his weaknesses as a painter and was obsessed with Jane Morris as a model. Yet he was perhaps right that his intense response to such private archetypes was the chief distinction of his work. Perhaps he might have found a new focus for this intensity had he lived a few more years. Likewise, of course, he might also have improved his technical ability, or finished more of the poetry which at some level he yearned to write, had he painted fewer lucrative replicas and painted more slowly.

It would be wrong, at any rate, to sentimentalize Rossetti as a victim of "tragic loves." It seemed to serve some inner purpose for Rossetti to idealize women who were withdrawn, invalid, and/or melancholic. Their genuine alienation (literal, in the case of Elizabeth Siddal and Jane Morris, from their families, potential friends, and class origins) seems to have provided some counterpart for an inner sense of inadequacy and isolation in him. In some way he seemed to need serious emotional attachments with women who were poised on the edge of abrogation and withdrawal. In any case, a sense of this equilibration heightened the effects both of his paintings and of his poetry.

Critics have differed in assessing the quality of Rossetti's poetic achievement and in their preferences for different periods of his work. Directly after his death, the later ballads and "The House of Life" were much admired. In the early

The Blessed Damozel.

The Blessed Damozel leant against
 The silver bar of Heaven
 Her eyes were more of rest and shade
 Than a deep water well.
 She had three stars in her hand
 And the stars on her hair were seven.
 Her robe caught from heaven & hung
 No wrought flowers did adorn
 But a white robe of heaven's gift
 For service mighty worn.
 And her hair came down her back
 Was yellow like ripe corn.
 Her seemed she scarce had been a day
 One of God's cherubim;
 The wonder was not yet quite gone
 From the still look of heaven,
 Albeit to them she left her day
 Had counted as ten years.
 (To one it is ten years of years
 Yet now and in this place,
 Surely she leant on me - her hair
 Fell all about my face.
 Nothing; the autumnal fall of leaves
 The whole year sets apace.)
 It was the trumpet of God's house
 That she was breathing on;
 By God built was that sheer dottle
 The which is Spain begun.
 So high, that looking downward there
 One scarce could see the sun.
 Heard hardly, some of her new words,
 Flaming at holy games,
 Spoke gentle-mouthed among themselves
 Their virginal chaste names;
 And the walls mounted up to God
 Went by her like thin flames.
 And still she bowed herself & stooped
 To the vast waste calm
 Till her bosom's purple mist knew her
 The sea she leant on warm
 And the fishes lay as if asleep
 Along her banded arm.
 From the first hall of Heaven she saw
 Time like a pale snake pass
 Through all the world's huge gulf still strown
 With them that gulf to pierce
 The swarms, and then the spade as when
 The stars sang in their spheres.
 "I wish that he were come to me,
 For he will come," she said.
 "Have I not prayed in Heaven?" - a long
 Lord, Lord, how he not pray?
 Are not two prayers a perfect prayer?
 And shall I feel afraid?
 When round his head the aureole shone
 And he is clothed in white,
 I'll take his hand and go with him
 To the deep wells of light.

And we will set down us to a stream
 His better than in God's light.
 "We two will stand beside that shrine
 Greenly, with little umbels
 Whose lamps are stam'd continually
 With prayers sent up to God
 And see our own rivers mounted up
 Each like a little cloud.
 "We two will be the shadow of
 That living mystic tree
 Whence, whose secret growth the Dove
 To some was felt to be,
 While every leaf that His plumes lay
 Smith His name audibly.
 "And I myself will teach to him -
 I myself, lying so -
 The songs I sing here, which his son
 Shall praise in his harp & lute,
 And find some knowledge at each page
 Or some new thing to know."
 ("Alas!" just now, in that bird song,
 I have not her accents heard
 Fain to be heard again? When those bells
 Popped the midday air
 Gave she not stepping to my side
 Upon a silver stair?)
 "We two," she said, "will reap the years
 When the living Mary is
 With her five sweet musicians who sing
 The five sweet symphonies -
 Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
 Margaret and Rosaly.
 "They sit in circle, with bound books
 And voices engarlanded,
 Into the fine cloth white like flame
 Weaving the golden thread
 To fashion the birth-robes for them
 Who are just born, born, dead.
 "Herself shall bring us down in hand
 To him whom whom all souls
 Kneel, the unnumbered thousand
 Bowed with their aureoles,
 And Angels meeting us shall sing
 To their cathedrals and citadels.
 "There will I ask of Christ the Lord
 Them much for him and me: -
 Only to live at once on earth
 At peace - only to be
 At them another, far ever now
 Together, I and he."
 She gazed and listened, and then said
 Lest said of speech than mild:
 "All this is when he comes." She ceased.
 The light thrilled fast her, filled
 With Angels in shining level laps.
 Her eyes prayed, and she smiled.
 ("I saw her smile.") But soon their flight
 Was vague in distant spheres.
 And then she laid her arms along
 The shining beams,
 And laid her face between her hands,
 And wept. ("I heard her weep.")

— 292. 1867

Fair copy of the poem published as "The Blessed Damozel," probably made circa 1873, when Rossetti was beginning the painting of the same title (The Pierpont Morgan Library)

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Collections in the United States that include manuscripts and letters by Rossetti are at the Library of Congress; the library of the Wilmington [Delaware] Society of the Fine Arts; Princeton University Library; the Pierpont Morgan Library; and the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas, Austin. In Great Britain, Rossetti manuscripts can be found in the British Library; the library of the Victoria and Albert Museum; and the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.