

Eliza R. Snow
The Complete Poetry

Documents in Latter-day Saint History

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Eliza R. Snow
The Complete Poetry

Compiled and Edited by

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and

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In 1981 the project moved to Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, where the work of the History Division had been transferred to the newly established Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History (1980–2005). Ronald K. Esplin, longtime director of the institute, supported the project and provided funding for student research assistants, including Amy Wilkinson, Jill Jacobsen, Melinda Parker, Rebecca Rogers Smith, Bonnie Pelton, Wendy Parker, Matthew Grow, Jake Olmstead, Ann Colton, and others, along with many students who helped Maureen Beecher complete *Personal Writings of Eliza R. Snow* (1995) and are acknowledged therein. Special thanks are due to Smith Institute secretary Marilyn R. Parks and to Anissa Olson Taylor and Katie Farnsworth Bitner, who did extensive work in compiling and cataloguing different versions of poems. Karen Lynn Davidson joined the project as co-editor in 1997, after Beecher decided to pursue other priorities. In the many transitions among researchers and editors, the progress was sometimes inconsistent.

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This project, which began under the direction of one Church Historian, has come to fruition since 2005 with the support of another, Elder Marlin K. Jensen, Church Historian and Executive Director of the Church History Department. We are grateful to him and to Assistant Church Historian Richard E. Turley Jr. for their encouragement and assistance and for time and space to complete this work. Although Church institutions have supported this effort at various times, this work expresses the private opinions of the poet and the editors and does not represent the views of the Church or the publishers. The editors accept full responsibility for this work, including any flaws and inconsistencies.

Finally, we gratefully acknowledge our husbands, C. Brooklyn Derr and David A. Davidson, for patiently sustaining us through such a long and demanding endeavor.

A Brief Chronology of Events in the Life of Eliza R. Snow

21 January 1804	Born in Becket, Berkshire Co., Massachusetts
1805	Snow family moves to Mantua, Portage Co., Ohio
13 August 1825	Publication of first poem, "Pity &c," <i>Western Courier</i> , Ravenna, Portage Co., Ohio
c. 1828	Baptized and became a member of the primitivist Christian congregation at Mantua, Ohio (later Disciples of Christ)
Winter 1830–31	Met Joseph Smith at her parents' home, Mantua, Ohio
5 April 1835	Baptized a member of the Church of the Latter Day Saints
December 1835	Moved to Kirtland, Geauga Co., Ohio
Spring 1838	Moved to Adam-ondi-Ahman, Caldwell Co., Missouri
March 1839	Moved to Illinois
17 March 1842	Organization of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo; ERS elected secretary
29 June 1842	Married and sealed to Joseph Smith
27 June 1844	Martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith
3 October 1844	Married Brigham Young
October 1845	Wrote "O My Father"
2 October 1847	Arrived in the Salt Lake Valley

- May 1855 Called by Brigham Young to preside over women’s ordinance work in the Salt Lake Endowment House
- 1856 *Poems, Religious, Historical, and Political*, Vol. 1, published in Liverpool, England
- 1856 Moved into the Lion House, where Brigham Young’s family lived
- April 1868 Called to assist in reestablishing ward Relief Societies, Utah Territory
- May 1870 Assisted in organizing the Young Ladies’ Retrenchment Society, Salt Lake City
- 26 October 1872–
July 1873 Traveled to Europe and Palestine with Lorenzo Snow, George A. Smith, and others; *Correspondence of Palestine Tourists* published 1875
- 29 August 1877 Death of Brigham Young
- 1877 *Poems, Religious, Historical, and Political*, Vol. 2, published in Salt Lake City
- August 1878 Assisted in organizing the Primary Association, Farmington (17 miles north of Salt Lake City)
- June–July 1880 Called and set apart as General President of the Relief Society, Salt Lake City
- 1880 *Children’s Primary Hymn Book* and *Children’s Primary Tune Book* (ERS ed.) published in Salt Lake City
- 1881 *Bible Questions and Answers* published in Salt Lake City
- 1882 *Primary Speaker Book One* and *Primary Speaker Book Two* (ERS ed.) published in Salt Lake City
- 1884 *Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow* published in Salt Lake City
- 24 August 1887 Wrote “Evening Thoughts” (last poem)
- 5 December 1887 Died in Salt Lake City
- 7 December 1887 Funeral held in Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City



Eliza R. Snow in Cairo, Egypt, February 1873. In fall 1872, Eliza left on a trip to Europe and the Middle East with her brother Lorenzo Snow and other ecclesiastical leaders. Photo by H. Delie and E. Bechard photography studio in Cairo, Egypt. Courtesy Church History Library.

Chapter I

“My Untaught Muse,”

1825–1835

ELIZA ROXCY SNOW LAUNCHED HER career as a poet in August 1825, when her first published poem appeared in the Ravenna, Ohio, *Western Courier*. Twenty-one years old at the time, she had been refining her poetic skills in private for many years. In her youth, she had sometimes written her school lessons in rhyme; she noted that she had “frequently made attempts at imitations of the different styles of favorite authors.”¹ The more than forty poems from the years 1825 to 1835 that have survived in print or manuscript display her skill with a variety of poetic meters and forms. These are not the poems of a beginner.

With her first publication, young Eliza Snow joined the swelling ranks of female poets writing for North American newspapers and magazines. She, like many of these women writers, had New England roots, began writing verses as a child, and had “a hope for acclaim, and a desire to say something important.”² She wrote lofty, high-minded verse patterned on neoclassical models, and her subjects were often the most serious national or world events—the fight for Greek independence, the plight of the American Indian, the deaths of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams. Her pseudonyms, too, were classical: Angerona, Narcissa, Cornelia, Tullia. Among poetic models for Snow were Alexander Pope, Edward Young, and William Cullen Bryant, but she also wrote poetry in the sentimental style of such popular women poets as Felicia Hemans and Lydia H. Sigourney, addressing religious topics and domestic themes of home and friendship. Snow wished “to be useful as a writer, and unknown as an author,”³ she later recalled. Yet the desire for recognition was not entirely

1. ERS, “Sketch,” in Beecher, *Personal Writings*, 7.

2. Lawrence Buell, as quoted in Coultrap-McQuin, *Doing Literary Business*, 194–195.

3. ERS, “Sketch,” in Beecher, *Personal Writings*, 7.



The Oliver and Rosetta Pettibone Snow home in Mantua, Ohio. Eliza lived here with her family until 1836–1837, when she moved to Kirtland, about thirty miles away. Courtesy Maureen Ursenbach Beecher.

absent; she acknowledged in one 1832 poem an “impulse of instinctive pride,” in hoping that she would “*not be forgotten quite.*”⁴

Young Eliza grew up in the new American republic. Her Snow and Pettibone grandfathers had fought in the Revolutionary War. The new nation was pushing westward to new land and building new waterways and roads to keep its expanding population connected. In 1805, Eliza’s parents, Oliver and Rosetta Pettibone Snow, brought their two young daughters from Becket, Massachusetts, to the Western Reserve in north-eastern Ohio.⁵ Thomas Jefferson was President of the United States when the Snows cleared heavily timbered land at Mantua to construct a log cabin. As did other Portage County farmers, Oliver cut roads, raised sheep, hunted wolves, and was drafted into the Ohio Militia to fight in the War of 1812.⁶

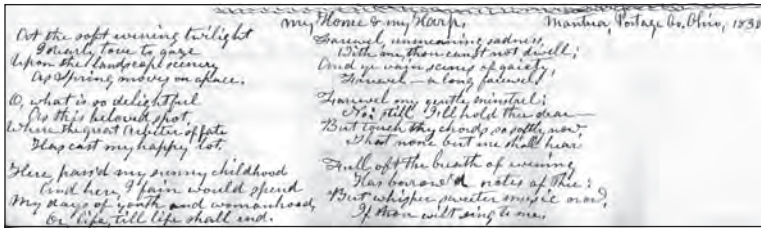
Oliver and Rosetta moved their growing family into a frame house in 1815, the Mantua home where Eliza would reside for the next twenty years.⁷ She was the second of her parents’ seven children; four daughters were followed

4. See poem 35, “Forget Me Not.”

5. Harmon, “Historical facts,” 114.

6. Pfaff, *Rediscovering Mantua*, 40.

7. Harmon, “Historical Facts,” 114.



Detail of poem in Eliza R. Snow's handwriting, recorded in her journal. "My Home and My Harp" (poem 15) expresses her desire at this time to be private rather than public in her poetic expression. Courtesy Church History Library.

by three sons.⁸ Her 1885 "Sketch of My Life" described her home as a place of "book-studies and schooling ... music and singing," where her parents extended to their children "the best educational facilities attainable at that time, without preference to either sex."⁹ The Snow family emphasized industry, and Rosetta, convinced that "useful knowledge was the most reliable basis of independence," taught her daughters to do kitchen work, house-keeping, and needlework. Eliza had an "inherent fondness for reading" and became proficient at running hand penmanship with handsomely flourished capital letters. Her father performed "much public business" as county commissioner and justice of the peace, and he employed Eliza "as Secretary in his Office." The Snows welcomed visitors to their home and encouraged open and lively discussion of politics and religion.¹⁰

"Perhaps there is scarcely another township in the country that takes greater pains to get political information than the inhabitants of Mantua," a resident observed in 1825, noting the town's forty-one subscribers to eleven different weekly newspapers.¹¹ The popular press informed and connected the nation's citizenry. Young Eliza developed an avid and abiding interest in newspapers, and the press provided her a public forum for expression and recognition. The *Western Courier* and the *Ohio Star*, weekly papers published at Ravenna, Ohio, the seat of Portage County, carried at least thirty-one poems Eliza wrote between 1825 and 1832. She received prizes for her poetry, and the *Ohio Star* reported in 1830 that

8. The seven children of Oliver and Rosetta Pettibone Snow were Abigail Leonora, Eliza Roxcy, Percy Amanda, Melissa, Lorenzo, Lucius Augustus, Samuel Pierce (or Pearce). See Beecher, *Personal Writings*, 232–233.

9. ERS, "Sketch," in Beecher, *Personal Writings*, 6, 7.

10. ERS, "Sketch," in Beecher, *Personal Writings*, 6–8.

11. 6 June 1825.

“several of Tullia’s pieces have been generally republished in eastern papers which we exchange.”¹²

The years between 1825 and 1835 marked a time of profound change for Eliza Snow. She began publishing her poetry, she attracted (and dismissed) at least one intelligent suitor, James B. Walker,¹³ and she encountered two prominent figures in American religion, Alexander Campbell and Joseph Smith, embracing in turn the teachings of each. Her poems for this period help illuminate that spiritual journey. By the early months of 1828, Snow had firmly committed herself to New Testament Christianity as taught by Campbell. She joined other “restorationists” seeking unity through adherence to the ancient or primitive order of Christian worship.¹⁴ In 1835, four years after she first met Joseph Smith, she was touched by “the faith and humility of those who had received the gospel as taught by Joseph.” She remembered: “The spirit bore witness to me of the truth. . . . My heart was now fixed; and I was baptized on the 5th of April 1835.”¹⁵ She moved from Mantua to Kirtland, Ohio, penned two hymns for her new faith,¹⁶ and attended the dedication of the Kirtland Temple, when “a sense of divine presence was realized by all present.”¹⁷ She remained a Latter-day Saint, or “Mormon,” for the rest of her life.

Under a variety of pseudonyms, experimenting always with different meters, voices, and topics, Snow gradually built her personal and literary identity. The voices and aspirations evident in these early poems would characterize her work for the next sixty years. As a young woman in her twenties, she addressed themes of friendship, patriotism, responsibility, and alienation, and she explored questions regarding oppression, gender roles, and life beyond death—topics that recur repeatedly in the larger corpus of her work. In these formative years, it seems, she arrived at a sense of her life’s commitment as a poet: she would seek not worldly reputation, but rather the “nobler joys” of service in the cause of spiritual truth.¹⁸

12. “Editorial Notes,” *Ohio Star*, 9 February 1832, n.p. Tullia was one of Snow’s pseudonyms.

13. See poems 5 and 13.

14. See especially poems 7 and 11.

15. ERS, “Sketch,” in Beecher, *Personal Writings*, 10.

16. See poems 41 and 42.

17. Tullidge, *Women of Mormondom*, 95.

18. See “The Better Choice,” poem 7.

I Pity &c

ERS's first published poem was part of a debate that swirled in the pages of the *Ravenna, Ohio, Western Courier* in August 1825. The exchange began with a poem signed "Cynick," a diatribe against women that elicited various responses. One of these, signed "Susan," attacked Cynick himself. ERS responded to Susan's poem (see textual notes), chiding her for her hard heart; what Susan lacked, as the title of this poem indicates, was "Pity et cetera." ERS's note to the editor appeared above the poem: "Mr. Editor,—It is not my wish to appear in print, yet, as the only medium by which I can address the unknown 'Susan' I have the presumption to solicit your permission." These words yielded a delicious irony: the first printed words of ERS's prolific career as a published poet were, "It is not my wish to appear in print." Her pseudonym Angerona (see poems 5, 10, 14), the goddess of silence in Roman mythology, was a fitting choice to match the self-effacing prefatory sentence.

Many elements of ERS's first poem characterize her poetry for the remainder of her life: the classical allusions, often obscure; the lofty idealism and confident tone; and the tendency to divide people into two camps—those who seek "Fame more celestial" (l. 35) and those who, like Susan, fail in this higher duty.



Sweet as the zephyrs' balmy gales
Arabian spices yield;
Sweet as the breath, the rose exhales,
From beauties half conceal'd,
The balm which "pity" may impart, 5
To blunt misfortune's pointed dart.

Pure is the suleus¹—purling rill,²
Beneath the osier shade;³
Pure is the torrent from the hill,
Meandering thro' the glade; 10
If aught more pure, 'tis "pity's" flow
To calm—to soothe another's woe.

1. Furrow.

2. Small brook.

3. Shelter made from willows.

Then "Susan" flee Lubentia's¹ wiles,
 To buoy the satire up;
Nor less the faithless joy that smiles,
 In Momus'² shallow cup; 40
A nobler pleasure, be thy aim;
Fan in thy soul, compassion's flame.

Hast thou a heart that's wont to feel
 For others' blighted joys?
A heart the maniac head to heal, 45
 With "pity's" soothing voice?
Then let compassion kindly spread
Oblivion's veil o'er "Cynick's" head.

published in Western Courier, 13 August 1825

2 Mental Gas

This engaging piece of wry humor, published in the Western Courier in March 1826, was signed "Camera Obscura," a pseudonym suggesting a discreet, unidentified observer. In pseudoscientific language, a professor explains to a young Charles that when the brain is emptied of common sense a certain "mental gas" seeps in to fill the void. This gas, which may fill even the "noblest heads" (l. 34), is a form of pride that blinds the subject to the realities of life (ll. 24–27). Part of the humor of the poem is that the pompous professor himself seems to suffer from this affliction. Lines 37 to 41—implicating the parson, the lawyer, the sage, and the simple millboy as possible victims of this delusion—were deleted by ERS when she published a later version.



Charles to his teacher—Sir, you say,
That nature's law admits decay,
 That changes never cease;
And yet you say, no void or space,

1. Venus, or morning star.

2. Greek god of censure and ridicule.

'Tis only change of shape or place, 5
No loss and no increase:
That space, or ignorance, Sir, explain—
When solid sense forsakes the brain,
 Pray what supplies its place?
Oh! Sir, I think I see it now— 10
When substance fails you will allow,
 Air occupies the space.
“Not so, my child—that rule must fail,
For by my philosophic scale,
 The substitute for sense— 15
Is not so dense as common air;
Nor by the most consummate care,
 The chemic skill can dense.
But when misfortune turns the screw,
'Tis oft compress'd from outward view, 20
 By outward force confin'd;
But with expansive pow'r 'twill rise,
Destroy the man—increase the size,
 And swell his optic blind.
Of various hues—yet still the same, 25
Tho' *human gas*, 'tis chemic name,
 Some poets call it pride:
Th' important aid this gas imparts,
Among the various human arts,
 Can never be denied. 30
This gas entire may be obtain'd
From skulls whence sense is mostly drain'd,
 Or never had supplies;
But were the noblest heads disclosed,
From acts and motives decompos'd, 35
 This human gas would rise.
The parson's lecture—lawyer's plea,
Devoted sums to charity,
 The sage with book profound;
The muse's pen—the churchman's creed, 40
The mill-boy on his pacing steed,
 Are more or less compound.

But he who struts, in fiction's dress,
And boasts his ill deserv'd success,

In wooing some fair lass—
Who uses this perfidious¹ art,
To gain an unsuspecting heart,
Is late discovered gas.”

45

published in Western Courier, 18 March 1826

3 Missolonghi

In 1821 the Greeks initiated a war of independence to end four hundred years of domination under the Ottoman Empire. Nineteenth-century Americans quickly drew parallels to their own revolutionary war. Through the columns of the Western Courier, ERS “watched, with deep interest, the events of the war.”² Missolonghi (Mesolongi), a city strategically located on Greece’s west coast, withstood a series of Turkish sieges beginning in 1822 but fell to the Turks in spring 1826. Some seven thousand of the town’s men, women, and children were killed or taken captive as they attempted to flee Missolonghi. Because of their refusal to capitulate in the face of a desperate situation, the inhabitants of Missolonghi were celebrated throughout Europe in poems, songs, musical plays, essays, sermons, and art.³ In reporting the battle in summer 1826, the Western Courier declared it “the most heroic of all defenses.”⁴ ERS recalled that following news of “the terrible destruction, by the Turks, of Missolonghi,” she submitted her poem to the Courier (see also poem 6).⁵ “Missolonghi” is the first of four poems that ERS signed with the pseudonym “Narcissa,” a feminine form of Narcissus from Greek mythology (see poems 4, 6, 12).



-
1. Faithless or treacherous.
 2. ERS, “Sketch,” in Beecher, *Personal Writings*, 7.
 3. Brewer, *Greek War of Independence*, 269–288.
 4. *Western Courier*, 15 July 1826.
 5. ERS, “Sketch,” in Beecher, *Personal Writings*, 7–8.

“*Nor prudence can defend, nor virtue save.*”¹

Arise my infant muse, awake thy lyre,
To plaintive strains; but sing with cautious fear
Lest thou profane. Ye favor'd daughters, ye
Who nurs'd on blest Columbia's² happy soil,
Where the pure flag of liberty shall wave 5
Till virtue's laurels wither on your breasts;
If e'er a sigh your virtuous bosoms heav'd;
If from your eyes e'er 'scap'd the trickling tear,
Which pity prompts at thought of others' woe;
Weep now; nor blush to weep, while ye lament 10
How bled the matron and the maid of Greece.

Should some Parnassian³ Genius feed my muse
On drougths sublime—on pure poetic fire;
Still should the Grecian daughter be my theme.

See with what anxious tenderness she plies, 15
Unmindful of the grief that swells her heart,
Some healing balm—some kind restorative
To save a husband, brother, or a sire,
On whose joint efforts hang the fate of Greece,
Pierc'd by the foe, and near the shades of death— 20
View with what tender care, till his last sigh
Wakes her resentment on the cruel foe,
Her pallid cheek ting'd with the vermeil hue;
Swift from the lifeless corse⁴—she seeks revenge:
Fearless of death, regardless of her fate, 25
Swift to the field already stain'd with gore,
Despair and anguish, bear her tender frame.

Ah! what infernal demon urg'd the foe
To deal the deadly shaft that seal'd her fate,
And round the sluices of her bleeding heart 30
Death's mystic mantle twin'd?—
Thus fell—thus nobly fell, the Grecian fair

1. Young, *Night Thoughts*, 1, l. 268: “Not prudence can defend, or virtue save.”

2. Feminine personification of the United States.

3. Parnassus was the home of the Greek Muses; it was also favored by Apollo, the god of truth, harmony, and healing.

4. Archaic form of *corpse*.

At Missolonghi's fall!—But while their fates
Who sleep in dust, Columbia's daughters mourn;
Let pity sadden at the thought of those
(If such the will of Heav'n) who shall survive, 35
To seal the obsequies¹ of fallen Greece!

composed 13 July 1826

published in *Western Courier*, 22 July 1826

4 Adams and Jefferson

The editors of the *Western Courier* were evidently impressed with “Missolonghi” (poem 3). They printed an invitation to “Narcissa,” asking her, while her harp was still “tuned to sympathy for sorrowing Greece, to sing the mournful Requiem of our departed sages, Jefferson and Adams” (see textual notes).² Thomas Jefferson and John Adams died within hours of each other on 4 July 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. ERS described the public reception of her poem “Adams and Jefferson” as a turning point in her literary life. She stated, “[I] found myself ushered into conspicuity.”³ The poem is signed “Narcissa,” one of ERS’s pseudonyms (see poems 3, 6, 12).



“Now to their ashes honor—peace be with them,
And choirs of angels sing them to their rest.”⁴

What bold presumption for my untaught muse!
Oh! for a muse by heaven inspired, to sing
In strains appropriate, the mournful theme!
What shock has nature felt, that should produce
Such strange vibrations—such responsive sounds? 5
Hark! 'tis the death-bell—mark its solemn tone,

1. Funeral rites.

2. *Western Courier*, 22 July 1826.

3. ERS, “Sketch,” in Beecher, *Personal Writings*, 8.

4. Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, act 5, scene 2, l. 348: “And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!” See also the epigraph to poem 78.

Columbia¹ mourns, she mourns her patriot sons!
 Methinks some sacred genii hover'd o'er
 Their hoary heads, and life's protracted thread
 Drew to its utmost length, that they might hail, 10
 Columbia's Jubilee.² Oh, how unlike
 The pathos of that day, big with event—
 The storm thick gath'ring, and the threat'ning clouds
 Bursting, from proud Britannia's isle impell'd
 Against Columbia's shore!—then those we mourn, 15
 With patriotic and heroic zeal,
 Dar'd Albion's³ pow'r—proclaimed their country free.
 Then liberty triumphant, burst the chains
 Of hydria⁴ darkness; nor awoke in vain—
 Her sages have beheld her fiftieth year, 20
 By time unsullied! Yes, the self-same day;
 Which fifty years before their signet fix'd,
 To crown with freedom's wreath! Columbia's spires—
 Their souls, envelop'd in the glorious theme,
 Triumphant o'er the chain that bound to earth, 25
 Emancipated rose: infirm with age,
 Yet venerable! nature's fabric fell!
 The supple willow shade their funeral pile;
 Fair gems of honour sparkle o'er their deeds:
 Was ever obloquy, with venom cast, 30
 To mar the visage—blast the manly form—
 Envelope excellence in mystic doubt;
 Apollo's⁵ touch, the dubious wound shall heal,
 And stamp their features with immortal youth.
 Those tall, majestic cedars, thus have sunk, 35
 In nature's last decay! From Caurus'⁶ blast,
 Or pendent storms, their boughs no more shall shield,
 The sons and daughters of America!

1. Feminine personification of the United States.

2. Fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

3. Great Britain.

4. Possibly ERS meant *hydra*, the nine-headed serpent of Greek myth.

5. Greek and Roman god of truth, harmony, and healing.

6. Northwest wind.

We mourn—but not as Greece, in slavish chains!
 Oh! ye Columbian Pithos!¹ chant their dirge, 40
 Who (join'd with Washington's² Herculean skill,
 The tyrant humbled—dark'ning cloud dispel'd,
 Now black, with tenfold darkness over Greece!
 While freedom's wand, shall steer thy barge aloof
 From Albion's yoke, and proud tyrannic sway, 45
 Columbia! be thy sleeping patriots' names
 In lofty paeans³ sung.
 Ye Sylvan gods! o'er all your vast expanse
 Of bending osiers,⁴ oaks and tow'ring firs;
 Propitious deign to bend that ambient bow, 50
 From which nocturnal, sympathetic dews
 And show'rs diurnal, fall.
 Go search Columbia's fields—her laurel boughs
 In freedom's soil deep rooted, and profuse
 Diverging from their center, genius' bud; 55
 Entwine in garlands and adorn that shade,
 Where Jefferson's and Adams' ashes rest.

composed 27 July 1826

published in Western Courier, 5 August 1826

5 Replication—To “D”

The “D” to whom this poetic response is dedicated is “Dermody,” a pseudonym employed by James B. Walker, the young man who had become half-owner and literary editor of the Western Courier. In addition, Walker was a would-be suitor seeking the attentions of ERS, whose poem signed “Angerona”⁵ he had read previously in the Courier (see poem 1). Walker issued the following invitation in the Western Courier on 29 December 1827, one week before

1. The Pythian festival at Delphi, in honor of Apollo, included competition among poets and musicians as well as athletes.

2. George Washington.

3. A song or hymn of praise and thanksgiving.

4. Willows.

5. Roman goddess of silence.

ERS composed her reply, signed *Angerona*, weaving some of his or D's words into her poem.

[For the Western Courier]

Has *Angerona* hung her lyre beneath her own "ozier shade,"¹ or quarreled with the Muses, or why in the name of Poesy do we not hear from her again.

Perhaps because the purity of her feelings cannot be reciprocated by the "cold and the common world," and "heart sick with the ways of men," she has hung her harp on the willow.

Her effusions have not been long nor numerous, but we think few of the writers for a western periodical

"—have won a greener wreath

"Than that which braids her hair."²

And there is one who has thought it pleasant to turn from the sameness of prosing politics to the page hallowed by the attic imaginings of *Angerona*.—D

Walker's claim not to know *Angerona*'s identity was a pretense, as he made clear in his later memoirs. Little more than a year later, ERS addressed a more personal poem of rejection to James Walker (see poem 13).



"—Who but wishes to invert the laws of Order,
sins against the Eternal Cause."³

Evolv'd—the royal mandate flew,

Clad in Eternal might;

Blind chaos fled before his view,

And Nature sprung to light

Vast in extent—no finite bound

5

Let mortals dare to sing:

'Twas matchless wisdom, skill profound

That gave creation spring.

1. Shelter made from willows.

2. Quoting Fitz-Greene Halleck's poem, "To a Rose, brought from near Alloway Kirk," in honor of Robert Burns: "And few have won a greener wreath / Than that which binds his hair" (ll. 51–52).

3. From Pope, *Essay on Man*, epistle 1, ll. 129–130.

When nature mov'd, her sacred Law,
 Primeval 'Order,' shone; 10
 Celestial orbs were wrap'd in awe,
 And each terrestrial zone.
 Consummate 'Order' crown'd the hand
 That built the human frame;
 It gave to sight its magic wand, 15
 To reason its domain.
 No less ordains for man to grace
 The sphere by nature given;
 And tread with cheerful constant pace,
 The orbit marked by Heaven. 20
 The sylvan Muse's artless lay,
 The sylvan shade may cheer;
 And rustick numbers sweetly play
 Upon the rustick ear.
 Then "D." will blazon Fama's¹ spire, 25
 (Its 'Order' be obey'd)
 And Angerona tune "her lyre
 Beneath her ozier shade."
 Untaught Olympian heights to tread,
 Where lofty Genius deigns 30
 Her pure ambrosial drops to shed
 And chant Parnassian² strains:
 Adapted to the rural plain,
 Where rural scenes engage;
 Her lyric numbers might profane 35
 The editorial page.
 You'll please to pardon if she err'd
 In silence' neutral hour;
 But *rather pardon* that she's heard
 Beneath the "Muses Bower."³

composed 4 January 1828

published in Western Courier, 19 January 1828

1. Personification of fame.
 2. Parnassus was the home of the Greek Muses; it was also favored by Apollo, the god of truth, harmony, and healing.
 3. "Muses' Bower" was the title of the poetry column in the *Western Courier*.

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