

LEONARD ROWE VALPY: PATRON OF  
SAMUEL PALMER AND DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI,  
PART 3; VALPY'S TRIBUTE TO DANTE ROSSETTI

Allan Life with Page Life

This third and final part of an investigation of the collector Leonard Rowe Valpy explores Valpy's relations with Dante Rossetti. Amplifying the annotated catalogue of Rossetti works collected by Valpy (see Part 2), it also addresses issues raised in Valpy's manuscript tribute to Rossetti, which is published here for the first time.<sup>1</sup> The circumstances under which Valpy composed this "living testimony" and his subsequent attempts to publish it, typify a man who prized his associations with Rossetti and Samuel Palmer. Following Palmer's death in 1881, Valpy lost no time memorializing his friendship with this artist, in an essay published both in the catalogue of a retrospective exhibition of his work and in the first version of A.H. Palmer's biography of his father. According to Valpy himself, his motives were laudably disinterested. As he assured Rossetti,

I was asked to put together materials connected with the Milton series which I held in the correspondence, and when I began to select I found that it was difficult if not impossible to separate much that was personal to me. I suggested various omissions to the son, but he decided to retain such, as more fully indicating his father's sympathies and character. (116)

Given the venomous critique of Valpy penned years later by A.H. Palmer (see Part 1:30), it seems unlikely the collector needed much encouragement to compose this reminiscence and to retain his presence within it. While Valpy in his essay quotes generously from Samuel Palmer's letters, he highlights tributes from the early correspondence to his own sagacity as a collaborator. His account of their personal relations, especially during Palmer's final years, memorializes the author's capacity for self-deception and hypocrisy. "The heart