

# John Keats (1795- 1821)

## Biography

John Keats was born on October 31, 1795, in London. He lost his parents at a very young age. He received very little formal education. Throughout his life he had close ties to his sister, Fanny, and his two brothers, George and Tom. Keats read Elizabethan poetry voraciously which evidently served as an inspiration to his own poetic brilliance.

Keats' first book, *Poems*, was published in March 1817 and was influenced by his contemporary poet, Leigh Hunt. In his short lifetime Keats produced poems on a variety of forms such as odes, sonnets and epics. The Odes are Keats' most distinctive poetic achievement. Some of his famous odes are: Ode on a Grecian Urn, Ode on indolence, Ode to a nightingale, Ode to Psyche etc.

In July 1820, he published his third and best volume of poetry, *Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, and Other Poems*. Keats also left an unfinished "Hyperion" which is considered finest among the English language. He received enthusiastic praise from his contemporaries Leigh Hunt, Charles Lamb, Shelley and Others. He also received praise for his poem *Endymion*, published in 1818.

The fragment "Hyperion" was considered by Keats' contemporaries to be his greatest achievement. However, his failing health precluded his literary ambitions no less. Under his doctor's advice to seek a warm climate for winter, Keats went to Rome. He died there on February 23, 1821 at the age of twenty-five.

