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Below/around/between **Edwin Stockdale**

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Poetry in the Spaces between History and Fiction

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ABSTRACT

This essay focusses on the junctions and fault-lines of history, exploring the ways in which poetry can illuminate and populate spaces of uncertainty in the historical record in ways which are akin to – yet different from – non-fiction and prose fiction. It investigates poetics in relation to the interpretation of history, specifically the divergent interpretations of the life of Richard III, and how poetry facilitates a more open approach to historical speculation.

To begin, it commences with the assimilation of historians’ interpretations of Richard III, based on records, material possessions and artistic representations. It then discusses what the creative writer may bring to historical sources, through both fiction and poetry. It finishes by considering my current creative/research project, which is a sequence of poems which tell the story of Richard and the Princes in the Tower. In doing so, it addresses the ways in which poetry can give voice to multiple interpretations simultaneously in a way which is different from non-fiction and prose fiction.

This essay will focus on the junctions and fault-lines of history, exploring the ways in which poetry can illuminate and populate spaces of uncertainty in the historical record in ways which are akin to – yet different from – non-fiction and prose fiction. It will investigate poetics in relation to the interpretation of history, specifically the divergent interpretations of the life of Richard III, and how poetry can facilitate a more open approach to historical speculation.

In doing so, I shall refer closely to three of my poems.

Anne Neville at the Oriel Window

Barnard Castle

November 1474

Down the river cliff I see the Tees in spate, the stony bed made barren by peaty water. I stare over at the North Pennines, the fells of dark earth struck by the first frosts. In that cold, half the linnets have gone. How many of them might have been mothers, nesting in thickets of whin? (Stockdale 2018a)

Anne Neville's Unknown Heirs

Penrith Castle

December 1479

You rush inside
your apartments, shooing
your ladies away.
You fear the inside,
bones gnawing,
knowing, gripe.
Your body and blood
feel wrong.

You are drawn to large
windows, but they never
let in enough light.
You touch Cumberland
sandstone: red, viscous.
Your womb shreds. (Stockdale 2019a)

Black Watch Tower/The White Wall

Berwick-upon-Tweed

November 1482

His armour frost-gleamed:
the sky endless, mutable.

Richard thinks: *Where
does the horizon end/begin?*

Standing on the semi-circular
tower, the sea below/around/between,

the North Sea hart-white and jade,
seething waves; he shudders.

He lingers on the town's walls,
the wooden bridge fording the Tweed.

Here are the Breakneck Stairs,
their frigid drop compelling.

Anne has a stillbirth
again. He blinks. (Stockdale 2020a: 25)

There are questions in history which cannot be answered definitively by the historian. As John H. Arnold (2000: 5) explains: "In many ways history both begins and ends with questions; which is to say that it never really ends, but is a *process*." Further, E. H. Carr (1987: 132) muses that a historian, "is balanced between fact and interpretation, between fact and value. He cannot separate them. It may be that, in a static world, you are obliged to pronounce a divorce between fact and value. But history is meaningless in a static world." My position is that as history shifts and moves its boundaries over time, it seems logical that fiction and non-fiction will change too. Just as history is a process, I would argue that so, too, are other narratives which respond to history, including both fiction and non-fiction. On the unfixed sphere of historical fiction, Catherine Padmore (2017) says:

Might some of the pleasure of reading and writing historical fiction then come from this complex and "inherently contradictory" [de Groot 2010: 31] relationship between the real and the imagined, by holding these opposites in delicious and uncomfortable tension and allowing the real and the fictive to (impossibly) exist together, rather than in opposition? ... Readers and writers of historical fiction must use a paradoxical logic that allows for "both/and" [de Groot 2010: 6] rather than "either/or" [ibid] responses.

In addition to Padmore's and de Groot's claims that historical fiction engages with the either or both points of history, I argue that poetry can also effectively engage with the real and fictive components of history.

The main subject of my poems, Richard III, was, and still is, a controversial historical figure. One of the main controversies surrounding Richard is whether he killed his nephews, the Princes in the Tower. As Bertram Fields (1998: 22) points out, “Future writers will struggle with the same problems, looking for clues to the truth. Perhaps we will never know. Perhaps that’s what makes the subject so intriguing.” Historians write about the uncertainties and gaps in knowledge. These questions may circumscribe the historian and the historical novelist especially so: a historical novelist will probably settle on one version. However, these questions open up possibilities to the poet. Thus, the unanswered questions are useful tools for the creative writer of poetry because the poet can fill the spaces between history and historical fiction. My research project, telling the story of Richard III and the Princes in the Tower through the medium of poetry is, essentially, a version of history, but one in which contradictory perspectives can coexist simultaneously. New poetry can be created from the interplay between history, non-fiction and historical fiction. There is a multi-layered process at work here. History is usually balanced by historians as the likeliest interpretation of the evidence we have of what happened. In this sense it is not dissimilar to how a poet shapes the same materials. The poet shares the historian’s method and the historical fiction writer’s method but differs in how they apply it.

With this in mind, I will be demonstrating how poetry can straddle the chasm between history and historical fiction, how this unique position between history and historical fiction is both comfortable and uncomfortable. An example of what I mean by historical fiction is Hilary Mantel, who is widely acclaimed as a historical novelist. Mantel’s rendition of Thomas Cromwell is achieved by close-third person narration, almost a fictional biography. Using third-person narrative gives Mantel the opportunity to create a voice for Cromwell’s opinions, feelings and beliefs. In *Wolf Hall* (2009), for example, Mantel presents Cromwell’s view of Halloween as a communal experience between the living and the dead, whereby “the world’s edge seeps and bleeds. This is the time when the tally-keepers of Purgatory, its clerks and gaolers, listen in to the living, who are praying for the dead” (Mantel 2009: 154). In the second book of the trilogy, *Bring Up the Bodies*, Cromwell’s interior mood is projected onto his exterior surroundings:

Since his return from Kimbolton, London has closed around him: late autumn, her fading and melancholy evenings, her early dark. The sedate and ponderous arrangements of the court have enfolded him, entrapped him into desk-bound days prolonged by candlelight into desk-bound nights. (Mantel 2012: 121-2)

Here, Mantel envisions Cromwell’s “melancholy” disposition following a visit to the banished Catherine of Aragon. The third-person representation of Cromwell’s introspection continues in the final book of the trilogy, *The Mirror and the Light* (2020):

Get out of their way: he moves back against the wall. They ignore him, in the dimness taking him perhaps for some inventory clerk. Still they tread, with their cadavers the size of men, eyes on their feet, their heads bent and hooded, silent, undeterred, squishing the gore from their bloody boots, around the winding stair and, guided by the rushing waters, down into the dark. (Mantel 2020: 506)

By using one form of Cromwell, Mantel achieves a consistent and sustained portrait of Cromwell. The reader is looking over Cromwell’s shoulder, so the reader and Cromwell are both the observer and the observed. Thus, historical fiction provides us with glimpses of Cromwell’s fictional character, as manufactured by Mantel. Bringing historical figures palpably to life before readers is at the core of my own work, and in this essay I will consider the ways in which poetry allows me to do this in a way that is similar to, though distinct from, the means employed by Mantel and other historical novelists.

To begin with, I will survey what historians have written about Richard, including how they have interpreted Richard’s personal possessions. In this section I will also investigate different representations of Richard through portraiture. Next, I will consider what creative writing, particularly poetry, can bring to history. I do this by navigating my way through craft and poetics in relation to contemporary poetry and how these apply to my own creative practice. I shall interrogate what historians have written about Richard, to reveal the conflicting views and uncertainties that form the construction of his personality. History can never tell us exactly what happened as history depends on who is writing it retrospectively, how much they know, and the

reasons why they are writing. As Michael Hicks (1991: 69-70) explains, “Facts do not come to us unvarnished, but are loaded, slanted, and embedded in narratives that attach particular significance to them and from which they can be extracted only with difficulty.” Essentially, history is interpretation. What I am looking for is how to find my own version – or versions – of Richard for my poems by navigating my way through the conflicting histories of others. The versions of Richard III historians present, of his failures and successes as a monarch, are varied. David Horspool (2018: 266) opines that: “Whether or not Richard was a bad man, he was a bad king. His actions led not only to his own destruction, but that of his dynasty. Can there be a blacker mark against a medieval king’s name than that?” In the same vein, Terry Breverton (2015: 279) questions Richard’s apparent piety, suggesting that: “In Richard’s case his gifts to the Church, in exchange for forgiveness for his sins, came from illegal confiscations of properties and fees.” However, an opposing view to those of Horspool and Breverton is voiced by Annette Carson (2013: 262, 269, 270):

During his years in the north he had built up a reputation as a fair and rigorous administrator of the rule of law.

[...]

Richard’s Parliament, for example, reformed the bail and jury systems, *inter alia* granting persons arrested on suspicion of felony the ability to enjoy bail and not to have their possessions seized.

[...]

Richard made himself personally accessible to appeals on the part of those who had insufficient means to apply to the courts.

These conflicting judgements can stem from concrete objects, which could be thought to display certainty, but are themselves open to debate, as I shall argue.



Figure 1: Italian School (16th century), *Portrait of Richard III*, The Trustees of the Weston Park Foundation, UK. WES33724.

Two contrasting portraits of Richard show how even with the same subject, visual representation can differ and create different perceptions. The anonymous Italian School portrait (fig. 1) paints Richard’s mouth as sensual with its rosebud lips, which may present him as a romantic figure. He wears elaborate clothes. These could suggest status, but, at the same time, he could be boasting of his riches. He twists a ring on his finger. This could be read as nerves but could also be a guilty conscience. Alternatively, it could represent a sense of duty, reminding himself of his regal duties by handling the ring that symbolizes those obligations. Pamela Tudor-Craig, who curated an exhibition dedicated to Richard III at the National Portrait Gallery in 1973, has dated the portrait to the “late 16th or possibly even early 17th century” (Tudor-Craig 1977: 81). The anonymous English School portrait (fig. 2) has a prominent hump and Richard’s thin mouth is set hard in a line. Richard holds a broken sword, which could be symbolic of defeat in battle. The broken sword may be a holy relic, an illusion to the Knights Templar (Griffin 2004: 175). It could also be a reference to the Roman Emperor Constantine, who had a vision of a cross and used a broken sword as

his emblem (Barnes 1981: 43). Constantine was held in high regard during the Middle Ages (Barnes 1981: 273). The clothes in the broken sword portrait of Richard look plainer, which could present him as an ordinary man and not worthy to be king. Richard's other hand, the one not bearing the sword, is clearly malformed. Using tree ring dating the panel has been narrowed to 1533-43 (Tudor-Craig 1977: 90). Where the original painting was to be hung or who commissioned it is unknown, but it was "radically altered", as related by Tudor-Craig (1977: 91):

Not only does it show a prodigious humpback, but the sitter's left arm was originally painted to spring unnaturally from that shoulder. ... The alteration had been made in the 17th or 18th centuries and the deformities no longer appeared prominently when Thomas Kerrich owned it [after August 1783].



Figure 2: English School (16th century), *Richard III* (1452-1485), Society of Antiquaries of London, UK. SOA235456

Thus, even in just two portraits of Richard there emerge multiple possible views of his character. How an audience interprets a painting also depends on how the paintings are viewed: how and where they are displayed and the moods of the people looking at

them. As Umberto Eco (1989: 4) outlines:

A work of art ... is a complete and *closed* form in its uniqueness as a balanced and organic whole, while at the same time constituting an *open* product on account of its susceptibility to countless different interpretations which do not impinge on its unadulterated specificity. Hence, every reception of a work of art is both an *interpretation* and a *performance* of it, because in every reception the work takes on a fresh perspective for itself.

Eco observes that a work – and by “a work of art” Eco is referring not only to painting but also to other media such as drama, poetry, fiction, non-fiction, biographies, dance, and music – can be both open and closed at the same time. In this way, in the context of the portraits discussed above, while a historian may seek to identify the most likely meaning, the poet can choose to see nerves, guilty conscience, religious fervour and defeat in the paintings, all of which can be suggested simultaneously in poems. I shall return to Eco's *The Open Work* later in this article in order to consider its application to poetics.

Just as these portraits suggest diverse interpretations, historians have attempted to attribute sometimes conflicting meanings to Richard's personal possessions. Thomas Penn (2019: 136) writes:

A diligent pupil, [Richard] absorbed a working knowledge of Latin and law and – an indication, perhaps, of his comfort in the schoolroom – developed a handwriting that was more precise than his brothers' extravagant scrawls... Richard's education was conventional enough; so too was his conspicuous piety. But there were hints of a passionate intensity. One book that he kept by him was a collection of chivalric romances... At the bottom of one page, in his careful hand, Richard signed his name and the ardent phrase “*tant le désirée*”: “I have wanted it so much”, a phrase that was to become his motto.

Here, Penn is interpreting the scant clues to his character left behind by Richard. Yet, a history book cannot reveal with certainty its subject's inner life. A historian cannot tell us what was going on in Richard's mind. Although Penn can only speculate upon Richard's character regarding “passionate

intensity,” a creative writer can build on this. Historians have also discussed Richard’s Book of Hours. Chris Skidmore (2017: 291, 295) suggests that:

One of Richard’s most treasured possessions would have been his illuminated Book of Hours, produced around 1420, though several prayers have been added to the work, suggesting that the collection had been chosen and then enhanced for the king’s personal use and tastes.

[...]

What use Richard made of these prayers or how often he sought to repeat them, cannot be known, though the king considered the work important enough to take with him even when staying in his royal tent, where it was eventually discovered.

What a historian can only suggest in tentative terms, a creative writer can adopt wholeheartedly. It is open to me, as an author and poet, to build on what historians have suggested. The idea of interpreting Richard’s personal possessions is akin to some of the detail in the portraits I mentioned earlier: the ring that Richard shifts around his finger and the broken sword he holds.

While historians have looked to Richard’s personal possessions, portraits, and textual records, the biggest prevailing mystery that cannot be verified is whether he killed his nephews, the Princes in the Tower. The closest to a contemporary source regarding the fate of the Princes is by Dominic Mancini, an Italian monk who stayed in London during the first half of 1483. He left in July 1483 and completed his account back in Italy in December 1483. Mancini was writing for Angelo Cato, Archbishop of Vienne, one of the counsellors of King Louis XI of France. All Mancini (1969: 115) writes is: “already ... there was a suspicion that he [Edward V] had been done away with.” The *Crowland Chronicle*, written in 1486, refuses to give full credence to the mutterings that the Princes had been murdered stating only that: “a rumour arose that King Edward’s sons, by some unknown manner of violent destruction, had met their fate.” (Crowland 1986: 163) Matthew Lewis (2018: 390) critiques this, observing that, “[the chronicler] reports a rumour that they were dead, but neither states his belief or disbelief in it, and never mentions it again. Odd, for one of the most politically well-informed commentators of the entire

period.” Given that Richard had died on the field in Bosworth the year before, the writer of the *Crowland Chronicle* could have named Richard as murderer with impunity yet does not.

Another near-contemporary source is John Rous. In the *Rous Roll* (1482-3: f. 2br, f. 7cr) he describes Richard as: “a mighty Prince in his days[,] special good Lord to the town and Lordship of Warwick wherein the castle he did great cost of building” and notes that, “[he was] the most mighty Prince Richard by the Grace of God... Ruled his subjects in his realm full commendably.” A few years later, when Henry VII had come to power, Rous’s expressed opinion of Richard is the complete opposite. This is significant because the *Rous Roll*, his original view (1483-4), was written while Richard was on the throne. Rous also resided in Warwickshire and was a devotee of the Earls of Warwick. Anne Neville, Richard’s wife, was the Earl of Warwick’s daughter. The *Rous Roll* was possibly presented to Anne and Richard. In Rous’s new document, *History of the Kings of England* (1480-1500), he creates a monstrous legend:

[Richard was] retained within his mother’s womb for two years and emerging with teeth and hair to his shoulders... And like a scorpion he combined a smooth front with a stinging tail. He received his lord King Edward V blandly, with embraces and kisses, and within about three months or a little more he killed him together with his brother.

[...]

This King Richard, who was excessively cruel in his days, reigned for three years [sic] and a little more, in the [same] way that Antichrist is to reign.

(Rous 1480-1500: f. 134v, f. 137r)

Rous finished this about face from his earlier flattery of Richard in 1486. This is when Henry VII was king, the first of the new lineage, the House of Tudor. Richard was from the deposed line, the Plantagenets and the House of York. Rous’s new work was dedicated to Henry VII and was obviously pitched to curry favour with the new power base.

Continuing with Tudor sources, in the early part of the sixteenth century, probably around 1512, a chronicle was compiled by Robert Fabyan, a London merchant. This chronicle, the *Great Chronicle of London* (1938: 236-7), posits three different methods

of death for the princes: suffocation in a feather bed, drowned in wine, or poisoned. According to Sir Thomas More (1513), the Princes were suffocated by feather pillows on the orders of Richard and were buried at the bottom of a staircase in the Tower. More's narrative (1976: 88) also states: "a priest of Sir Robert Brackenbury took up the bodies again and secretly interred them in such place as, by the occasion of his death which only knew it, could never since come to light." More was aged five when these events were happening; he was writing his account during Henry VII's reign and later became Henry VIII's chancellor. Polydore Vergil was commissioned by Henry VII to write an official history. Like Crowland, and unlike More, Vergil does not know how the Princes died:

with what kind of death these sely [blessed] children were executed with is not certainly known. But King Richard, delivered from his care and fear, kept the slaughter not long secret, who, within few days after, permitted the rumour of their death to go abroad. (Anglica Historia 1950: 188-9)

More and Vergil were employed by the Tudors, thus compelled to represent the Tudors in a positive way. Richard III was killed by Henry VII at the Battle of Bosworth Field, ending 300 years of the Plantagenet dynasty and the House of York.

William Shakespeare's play, *Richard III* (1597), shows Richard as a hunchbacked villain with a limp and a withered arm; by this, Shakespeare was clearly influenced by Rous, More and Vergil. This play is probably the root of modern popular perception of Richard. Shakespeare's play was written while Henry VII's granddaughter, Elizabeth I, was on the throne. Henry VII, called Richmond in *Richard III*, is addressed by the Ghost of Henry VI as: "Virtuous and holy, be thou conqueror." (Shakespeare 2009: V. 3. 128) Henry Richmond is the golden boy, come to rescue England from the tyranny of Richard III.

Richard first appears in Shakespeare's play *King Henry VI Part 2*, where Old Clifford says directly to Richard, "foul, indigested lump, / As crooked in thy manners as thy shape." (Shakespeare 1999: V. 1. 157-8) Later in the same scene, Young Clifford brands Richard as, "Foul stigmatic." (Shakespeare 1999: V. 1. 215) In Shakespeare's play *King Henry VI Part 3* Richard says of himself:

Why, Love forswore me in my mother's womb, ...
To shrink mine arm up like a withered shrub;
To make an envious mountain on my back,
Where sits deformity to mock my body;
To shape my legs of an unequal size;
To disproportion me in every part
(Shakespeare 2001: III. 2. 153-60)

When Richard enters as the title character in Shakespeare's *Richard III*, Lady Anne – Anne Neville, Richard's prospective bride – mocks him as a "hedgehog" (Shakespeare 2009: I. 2. 104). Shakespeare has Anne name Richard as hedgehog because it is a laden image: the hedgehog is a hump-backed beast and bristled like the boar, Richard's heraldic symbol. In the same way Queen Margaret taunts Richard: "Thou elvish-marked, abortive, rooting hog." (Shakespeare 2009: I. 3. 227) Elves were thought to be spiteful and Shakespeare's Margaret devalues Richard by drawing attention to his birth marks. Abortion has connotations of Richard being prematurely born (taken from Rous), but also Richard's uselessness. Margaret's "rooting hog" metaphor suggests that Richard violates the succession as a hog uproots plants. Stanley, Henry VII's stepfather, refers to Richard as "the most deadly boar" (Shakespeare 2009: IV. 5. 2), although the First Quarto edition has Richard as "this most bloody boar" (Shakespeare 2000: IV. 5. 2). Henry VII, echoing his stepfather Stanley, names Richard as a "wretched, bloody and usurping boar" (Shakespeare 2009: V. 2. 7). Continuing the theme of Richard being allied to non-noble animals, Queen Margaret calls Richard a "bottled spider" and a "poisonous bunch-backed toad" (Shakespeare 2009: I. 3. 241, 245). Queen Elizabeth – Elizabeth Woodville, Edward IV's widow – repeats these insults: "bottled spider, that foul bunch-backed toad." (Shakespeare 2009: IV. 4. 81) Lady Anne compares Richard "to wolves, to spiders, toads / Or any creeping venom'd thing that lives" (Shakespeare 2009: I. 2. 19-20). The First Quarto edition has Richard likened to these creatures: "to adders, spiders, toads" (Shakespeare 2000: I. 2. 18). Anne curses Richard as a "foul devil" and a "lump of foul deformity" (Shakespeare 2009: I. 2. 50, 57). At the climax in the same scene, Anne cries: "Never hung poison on a fouler toad. / Out of my sight! Thou dost infect my eyes." (Shakespeare 2009: I. 2. 150-1) Anne then refers to Richard's eyes as "basilisks" (Shakespeare 2009: I. 2. 153). Even Richard himself recognizes and laments his disability: "nor made to court an amorous looking-

glass,” calling himself “rudely stamped” and leering

Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
And that so lamely and unfashionable
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them.
(Shakespeare 2009: I. 1. 15, 16, 20-3)

All of these animal comparisons made by other characters and Richard himself cement Shakespeare's portrait of Richard as beastly and inhuman. Shakespeare's design of Richard is a study of evil. Some of the play's characters are changed to suit Shakespeare's creative interpretation of Richard. Queen Margaret was Margaret of Anjou, Henry VI's widow. Henry VI was deposed and killed by Richard's brother, Edward IV, but Shakespeare has Richard murder Henry VI. Margaret was also not at the English Court. After her husband's death, she spent the rest of her years in France and was dead when Richard became king. As a dramatist Shakespeare was a poet reacting to historical sources to inform his characterization of Richard. Whereas I populate the absence of authenticated facts by deliberately creating simultaneous and overlapping narratives, Shakespeare settles on one version of Richard. I take all the conflicting and conflicted versions of Richard and widen them out as I refuse to take one side or the other.

Shakespeare's portrait of Richard has become engrained in the public consciousness and continues shaping our conception of Richard to this day, further blackening his reputation, as demonstrated by Jonathon Hughes (1997: 93, 98):

Richard's sense of moral superiority made him a more dangerous and ruthless man than his father.

[...]

It is even possible to see the killing of the Princes as the product of religious delusion. Richard had convinced himself they were the bastard fruit of his brother's degeneracy and the whole stock of the House of York, from Edward and Clarence, was sickened with sin and he was the only legitimate and sinless representative in the male line.

David Baldwin (2015: 118) counters this viewpoint: “There is no evidence that the boys were murdered – by Richard or by anyone else – they *disappeared*.” Michael Hicks (2019: 391-2) continues with the

theme of accusations being made against Richard:

The crimes with which he was slandered denied him the allegiance owed by every subject. No wonder Richard gambled on trial by battle – indeed on his own martial prowess – and lost as he could have won. He was a remarkable man who made more of himself by sheer determination and assertion than his physical limitations should have permitted... Kingship was the pinnacle of his career and also his ruin.

As John Gillingham (1993: 8) sums up: “Richard himself remains an enigma.”

So far, I have been examining histories, from the chroniclers, to early historians such as Vergil and More; how Shakespeare interpreted history as dramatist and poet; and what modern historians have written concerning Richard. I could use these variations to make my own single interpretation, but that is not what I wanted to do. Instead, I use these variations of Richard by making my poems open to interpretation. Moreover, because we do not know for certain what happened to the Princes, I can play on this by using multiple endings, to show different scenarios that could have occurred. My practice-led doctoral research in Creative Writing has involved historical research on Richard III and the Princes in the Tower, and research in poetry and creative writing theory, resulting in a body of original poetry negotiating the sources of historical record, art, fiction, drama, poetry and history. These diverse – and sometimes contradictory – sources provide a core space for poetry to settle in amid the friction between history and fiction. This is what the poet can add to fragments of history.

To reflect on my own approach as a creative writer, I will transition from examining different constructions of Richard to how I can use this information in my poetry collection-in-progress. I move from scrutinizing Richard as a historical figure to interrogating contemporary poetry dealing with historical figures and events. In my examination of contemporary poets, I will be focussing on craft. Different interpretations within the same poem will be useful because this can be applied to my own creative practice: the conflicting versions of Richard that will exist simultaneously.

I shall begin by considering Ruth Stacey's poem

“Anne Neville,” which is written in the voice of Anne Neville, wife of Richard and widow of Edward of Westminster, Prince of Wales. Stacey’s version of Anne Neville says this of Edward:

He wound my hair around his limbs,
Binding me with long lengths,

So I lay utterly still as he entered me
In those owl-grey, fleeting nights.
(Stacey 2015: 64)

In these two stanzas Stacey suggests that Anne still loves her first husband Edward, the Lancastrian Prince. The nights could well be “fleeting,” meaning Anne regrets the brief times she shared a bed with her first husband. There are, however, other readings. Anne recalls lying “utterly still,” which could suggest that Anne is enamoured of Edward, but it could also point to her being terrified of him. Amy Licence (2014: 117) notes that: “What Anne made of her betrothed [Edward] on a personal level is not recorded. ... [She was] probably more pragmatic about it than some historians and romantic novelists have given [her] credit for.” Stacey’s poem (2015: 65) ends: “I lie utterly still in our marriage bed, / He has my body but not my head.” Again, Stacey’s Anne uses the words “utterly still,” only now referring to Richard, hinting at the dual possibilities. Anne could be transfixed by Richard, but she could also be repulsed by him. Then, there is the final line, alluding to Anne still loving Edward. Historians have likewise commented on Anne’s marriage to Richard. John Ashdown-Hill (2016: 40) makes a plausible suggestion regarding Richard and Anne’s relationship: “Richard, Duke of Gloucester, had spent some time under the guardianship of Warwick at Middleham Castle, and he must have known Anne. Indeed, it is possible that he loved her and had already aspired to marry her himself.” Matthew Lewis (2019: 35) agrees:

There is circumstantial evidence to suggest that the marriage between Richard and Anne was happy and perhaps filled with love, but there also was a dynastic benefit to the union to both. It is perhaps a case of balance, an instance in which a political match carried an element of personal attachment that became love.

My own prose poem “Anne Neville at the Oriel Window” is likewise written using Anne’s

perspective. I attempt to give Anne her own voice, which is difficult because, as Kavita Mudan Finn (2012: 1) reveals, historically, “She remains an empty space.” Alan Garner identifies this “empty space” as the difficulty between the voice on the page and how it sounds to the listener. Garner (1997: 157) rationalizes this by saying:

Although I must be able to hear and use the spoken word that I am interpreting, it is the printed text that is the vehicle. It may itself become again a spoken text, but I cannot, beyond a point, control or predict the voice that will speak it. That voice will most likely belong to a parent, a teacher, or an actor, all of whom usurp the position of the storyteller without any questioning of their being qualified to do so.

The printed word, to be true to the primary voice, the voice in the shadow, must be proof against such performers. It must also communicate directly with the eye, and not obscure the story, so that it can speak to its other audience, the solitary reader. ... The achievement of such a balance between the natural voice and the formal page is not easy.

Garner begins by pointing out the similarities and differences between a printed text, having a printed text read to you, or reading the printed text yourself. Although the author may hear the voice of the character they are trying to capture, the reader or listener may interpret this differently. Garner advocates that a piece, in my case a poem, should work visually to the reader on the page and the listener. The “voice in the shadow”, to borrow Garner’s phrase, can be lost between the page and the ear. With Anne Neville, whose voice I am attempting to evoke, there are no primary sources in her voice; she has been silenced. In the gap between the pages of history and my poems, perhaps Anne’s voice can be heard in the spaces of silence. This anomaly, weaving between, through and within the records of history, is the essence of my creative project.

As outlined earlier, I am presenting multiple narratives in my current work and it therefore makes sense to use multiple viewpoints (a mixture of first, second and third persons) to present a fragmentary picture, as different viewpoints lend themselves to different effects.

At this point it is pertinent to consider narrative

perspective and voice in poetry. Lorraine M. López (2013: 35) usefully summarizes these approaches:

Third-person limited and unlimited narration allows for presentation of interiority, but the third-person perspective can be problematic when it comes to consistency and managing narrative distance. Second-person and first-person points of view are much easier to control for consistency and they offer greater intimacy with characters, but just in the way that familiarity breeds contempt, such intimacy is not always desirable or sustainable.

Exploring voice further, I will look at Helen Ivory's "Scold's Bridle" (2019: 54); while not a poem concerned with Anne Neville, it is pertinent to a discussion of voice and silence because the scold's bridle was a device used to degrade women, making them unable to speak by trapping their tongue. In the poem, the speaker says: "the root of me is driven down to silence / to some dark earth." Here, there is a wonderful paradox of the silenced speaking. In my poem "Black Watch Tower/The White Wall" Richard tells part of Anne's story from his own close third person view. Ivory's poem has the speaker silenced by the scold's bridle and in "Black Watch Tower/The White Wall" Anne has been silenced by Richard's narrative, in effect a scold's bridle. In some of my other poems, however, Anne speaks in first person or second person. In terms of historical record, none of Anne's letters have survived. Furthermore, there are no contemporary portraits of Anne Neville, which is unusual for a queen of England. There are, however, later portraits of Anne Neville in paintings and stained glass. Hilary Mantel's rendering of history and creative writing is important here because it is through a dearth of primary sources in a subject's voice that they must be constructed. Mantel (2017) says, reviewing a biography of Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, who was a niece of Richard III:

In 1876, during restoration work on the chapel of St Peter ad Vincula, the bones of a tall, elderly woman came to light. The skeleton was not complete, but part of the skull had survived, and certain other bones. This is what Margaret is now, besides paper and ink, and the ruins of her palaces: pieces of breastbone and pelvis, a single finger bone and four vertebrae. Her thoughts, her motives, are so hidden, either by her inclination or by the work of time, that it is difficult for the most

diligent biographer to put her together and make her walk and talk. Her life, marked by stunning reversals of fortune, is an irresistible subject, but it presents a familiar difficulty for the historian. Was she, at this point or that, doing nothing of interest at all – or was she doing everything, in a way that was almost supernaturally discreet? Margaret's later life, at least, is well documented, but we cannot approach her story from the inside. We know her, as we know so many of her contemporaries, through her inventories, through legal documents and official letters. Did she plot against the crown? Did she, as the regime alleged, burn the evidence that incriminated her? Or was there, as she claimed, nothing worth burning?

There are some sources that can be found for Margaret, but in Anne Neville's case these are limited. What strikes me about Mantel is the reference to "the ruins of her [Margaret's] palaces." There are plenty of buildings and landscapes still there in some form that were known to Anne and I make a point of visiting these, in order to study and photograph landscapes and buildings inhabited by my characters. By reading the landscape and pondering the ruins of buildings left behind it is possible to gain a glimpse of characters from the past by placing them in locations that they knew and walked in. The process by which Mantel's perception of the evidence or lack of evidence pointing to Margaret's alleged machinations against the crown is at the heart of my own research project: I make creative use of the lack of hard evidence in the Princes' disappearance and alleged murder.

Bearing in mind the discussion above concerned poems in first and third person, I now turn my attention to poems in the second person, in order to illustrate how I can use multiple points of view and multiple characters to present my fragmented narrative. Second person is, at the same time, familiar and unfamiliar to the reader. Barrie Llewelyn (2012: 77-8) argues: "The use of the second person can have the effect of involving the reader in the story. ... At the same time, the second-person address can also add distance." Ruby Robinson's poem "Locked Doors" (2016: 16) uses second person point of view: "Your mind is not your own; leave a thought / lying around and before you know it, someone's inhabited it." Robinson uses the second person point of view because it unsettles the

reader. It is unsettling because readers are invited to participate, to be present within, when they are actually without. Robinson is deliberately pointing out this uncanny practice by turning it back onto the reader: someone, perhaps the poet, has entered your mind. “Locked Doors”, Robinson’s poem (2016: 16), invites multiple readings: “In the safe, there’s a bottle of vodka with your name on it.” The speaker (the “you” voice) could be an alcoholic. “You ask / permission for a cup of tea; the kitchen’s locked.” (Robinson 2016: 16) The reader does not know whether the speaker is in an institution or being kept a prisoner in their own house. The speaker ends the poem by saying: “No wonder you dropped your voice / through a crack in the floor of this dim room you’re locked in.” (Robinson 2016: 16) The multiple interpretations of Robinson’s poem by using second person led me to use second person in my poem “Anne Neville’s Unknown Heirs” to invite different interpretations of Anne’s miscarriage: Anne may be having a miscarriage, but it could also be a stillbirth. Her body aborting could be read as a genetic defect but may also be her body’s way of dealing with the acute difficulties in conception.

Beyond mode of address, imagery helps to find a character’s inner voice in the absence or scarcity of historical evidence. It is through language that imagery emerges. David Morley (2007: 140) points out: “Precise language wakes or rewakes the world... moreover, clarity finds its equal in simplicity.” In Rhiannon Hooson’s poem “Without Narcissus” (2016: 50), the speaker describes the location as, “the empty water / and the stiff-leaved lilies which break for sharp fingers.” Hooson’s imagery is specific, using the well-placed adjective “empty” to describe water. In my poem “Black Watch Tower/The White Wall” I describe stairs as having a “frigid drop”. Returning to Hooson’s poem there are also the strong verbs of “break” and “sharp”. I have used strong verbs in my poems (“struck”, “gripe”) to give a sense of place and space where my poems are set. It is the lexis of image clusters and precise language that makes a poem and can create alternative scenarios in the poem. So, the “frigid drop” in “Black Watch Tower/The White Wall” could be Richard contemplating throwing himself down the stairs but also an allusion to Anne’s miscarriage.

Having discussed voice, now I am going onto framing and drawing the reader into the space of that frame. The opening lines of a poem are important. This is because the poet introduces the images to

be built upon using precise language and image clusters. Maura Dooley’s poem “My Heart and My Liver” (2016: 44) begins: “Marsh gas, smoke, slant rain from the East / rattles a pattern of print onto paper, / sweeps the river to flux, an eel of a story.” This poem is a response to Charles Dickens’s novel *Great Expectations*. Dooley’s opening lines hook the reader with their sparse imagery (“slant rain”), onomatopoeia (“sweeps”, “rattles”) and alliteration (“pattern”, “print”, “paper”). The “eel of a story” could be an extended metaphor for the river, the journey of Magwitch, Dickens’s own writing process, all different possibilities, and interpretations. Paul Mills (2006: 88) says that, “Poetry discovers connections between meaning and physical sensation. It shifts from the general to the specific, ... emphasises the moment and the local.” “Anne Neville at the Oriel Window”, one of my prose poems, begins: “Down the river cliff I see the Tees in spate, the stony bed made barren by the peaty water.” In using onomatopoeia, like Dooley’s poem, I aim to build a sense of place, space and movement. “The stony bed made barren” alludes to Anne’s low fertility. With these images, I am hoping to draw the reader in, situating them within the world of the poem and in relation to the speaker.

As well as strong opening lines, the closing lines of a poem are vital. Katrina Naomi’s poem “The Woman who Married the Berlin Wall” (2016: 39) closes with the lines: “I have practised kissing tables, licking car seats, / have pressed myself against an aeroplane’s wing.” These are tough closing lines. The imagery is uncomfortable, but it makes Naomi’s lines more memorable. My poem “Anne Neville’s Unknown Heirs” ends: “Your womb shreds.” I am building on the images threaded through the poem to give a sense of unease and dread: “inside”, “gnawing”, “gripe”, “blood”, “sandstone” and “viscous”.

Having considered voice, imagery and framing, I turn now to the relationships between words, in order to further explore the possibilities for articulating multiple readings. Terry Eagleton (2007: 139) says: “It is language’s lack of visualisability which confers such enviable freedom upon it. Seeing language as no more than an image or representation of reality, is a way of restricting its liberty.” Language can be further unrestricted by using slashes (/) to invite alternative scenarios as demonstrated by Polly Atkin’s poem “Buzz Pollination” (2017: 10):

Marks her sources
as rewarding/unrewarding.

There are also slashes in Atkin's poem "The New Path" (2017: 11) showing simultaneous interpretations, the options around a point:

The new path means
equality/against disruption.
[...]
The path
is dangerous/does not like danger.

In my poem "Black Watch Tower/The White Wall" there are the lines: "Where does the horizon end/begin?" and "the sea below/around/between." Some of Atkin's poem titles contain slashes: "Heron/Snow" (2017: 16) and "Fog/Fox" (2017: 59). Atkin uses slashes because they represent alternatives, thus either or both, representing a marrying of theory and approach. Ultimately, these slashes are the simultaneous embrace of ostensible contradictions that exist within my whole project. As Umberto Eco (1989: 166) says: "A work consists of the interpretative reactions it elicits, and these manifest themselves as a retracing of its inner genetic processes." These "interpretative reactions" are the spaces in the hermeneutics of history and poetics. Eco's "interpretative reactions" also refer to the interpretation of objects in historical portraits: the twining of Richard's ring around his finger and the way he is holding a broken sword. The idea of slashes (/) used as a way of demonstrating substitutes, either/or/both, in language intersects with historical fiction practitioners writing on the creation of historical fiction. Leanne Bibby (2020: 58) makes a moot point: "Historical fiction, perhaps more than any other type, figures things that are both there and not there, real and unreal." These concurrent narratives relating to the flipside of meaning in language are why I use different characters and different points of view to expose my fragmented narrative.

In a similar vein to slashes inviting multiple interpretations, I now consider imagery, landscape and architecture, and how these elements can also point to multiple interpretations. The title poem of James Sheard's collection, *The Abandoned Settlements*, contains bone imagery: "The spine you once caressed / is the bony turf at Wharram" and "Think of how it twitches in our backbone." (Sheard 2017: 2) Sheard's lines here could be interpreted as invoking a physical body, but also a representation of

place. I have threaded body imagery and architecture throughout my poetry collection too and will now quote some examples. This is to demonstrate that, like Sheard, some of my lines can be read as conjuring up a physical body, but, at the same time, may also be a depiction of a physical place. Cecily Neville, Duchess of York, mother of Richard III, says: "In the space beneath my ribs I feel blood surging." (Stockdale 2018b: 83) Richard's brother, George Plantagenet, Duke of Clarence, says:

Beside the curtain wall
the polygonal tower, grey mare's tail.
The arrowloops on each face rise unbroken
through two storeys. George looks
out, looks through, looks within.
(Stockdale 2019b)

Further, in a later poem "Two Hogsheads" (Stockdale 2018c: 84) I continue to combine imagery of body and physical space in the line: "His [George's] son Edward's little footsteps stutter / up the spiral staircase." Body and the landscape are also used as motifs in several poems featuring Richard III from my collection-in-progress: "His [Richard's] spine is a spiral staircase" (Stockdale 2020b: 16), "Richard stands by the spine wall of the keep" (Stockdale 2020c), "Within limestone walls / Richard affirms his cold empty veins / where no blood dwells" (Stockdale 2020d) and "Snow covers the landscape, but can't bury those forked bodies. Out in the Wolds, wolves stir." (Stockdale 2020c) The Princes in the Tower add to the concept of landscape and body in my collection. A poem about the older Prince, Edward V, says: "He thinks the obtuse towers will fall on him." (Stockdale 2018d) The youngest Prince, Richard of Shrewsbury, Duke of York says: "The last time he [Richard III] picked up my brother and I, he grimaced as his spine cracked." (Stockdale 2018e: 85)

In the same manner Sheard's poem "The Abandoned Settlements" invokes place, body and architecture in order to highlight the absence, Sheard's poem "On Reading" is open to interpretation by using varying tenses. The opening lines of "On Reading" (Sheard 2017: 5) are: "When I read it – the past – / I do not check my facts." Reading the past is what history does. The first two lines of the second section of Sheard's poem "On Reading" (2017: 6) are: "And when I read it again, the past, / it is something else." The speaker of the poem is talking about how the past changes as the reader approaches it anew. Umberto Eco (1989: 74) argues:

Contemporary poetics places a greater emphasis on these particular mechanisms while situating aesthetic pleasure less in the final recognition of a form than in the apprehension of the continuously open process that allows one to discover ever-changing profiles and possibilities in a single form.

The “particular mechanisms” that Eco mentions are cognitive processes, inferring that a work is open to different analysis depending on the state of mind of the reader or listener. The third section of Sheard’s poem “On Reading” (2017: 7) begins: “Right now, I am reading it – / the past.” The poem’s speaker is now in the present progressive tense, whereas the other two opening sections are written in the simple present tense. History, then, is open to interpretation, and the poet makes use of that. What Hilary Mantel imparts in one of her *Reith Lectures* is also related to Sheard’s poem. Mantel (BBC Media Centre 2017) says:

Facts and alternative facts, truth and verisimilitude, knowledge and information, art and lies: what could be more timely or topical than to discuss where the boundaries lie? Is there a firm divide between myth and history, fiction and fact: or do we move back and forth on a line between, our position indeterminate and always shifting?

Sheard’s poem “On Reading” is not static: it enacts the process of reading and interpretation. This is what I am trying to achieve with my multiple endings. I am tying up the threads of either/or/both that my poems are enacting, filling in the cracks between conflicting histories.

The shifting nature of history is also explored by Terry Breverton (2015: 7): “History is not exact. It is not a science. History is full of uncertainties.” This uncertainty is a part of Sheard’s poem “On Reading” (2017: 7), where the final stanza of the third part reads:

And it – whether the body, the reading or
the past –
does not last the morning. It lasts

no longer than it takes the unharried sheep
to move like oxen, from one field to another.

Here, Sheard explores the dichotomy of history:

how it stretches out “unharried,” but also how it is mutable and changing. Umberto Eco (1989: 24) reiterates the notion that works of art are open and closed at the same time and, on the tension that this creates, he says: “Contemporary poetics proposes a whole gamut of forms – ranging from structures *that move* to the structures *within which* we move – that call for changing perspectives and multiple interpretations.” This idea of a variety of readings can be applied to my own research on Richard III and the Princes in the Tower. After the Battle of Tewkesbury in May 1471 Richard is sometimes accused of killing Edward of Lancaster and murdering his father, Henry VI, in the Tower. David Baldwin (2015: 56) explains: “The deaths of Prince Edward and his father are among the ‘crimes’ sometimes attributed to Richard, but both are stories that have grown with the telling.” Continuing to unpick the meaning of history, A. J. Pollard (1991: 1) observes that: “As the very word “history” (*storia* in Italian) suggests, it was once and some would argue essentially still is, a form of storytelling.” This “storytelling” leads me to interpretations and possibilities. Colin Richmond (1998: 80) critiques Thomas More’s *The History of King Richard III*:

Did not Thomas want to write what we have been taught to call Humanist history, black and white history – in scarlet and black, one is tempted to say – a study in polarities, a Manichean book therefore, a book about Good or Evil, about tyranny and its opposite? And did he not discover that the more he learned of the recent past, the more oral testimony he took from old and ageing politicians who had lived through that apparently black and white period, that it was all much greyer, much murkier than he expected?

History is full of complications. This is vital for me, as a creative writer, because it allows me the opportunity to explore these complications. The speaker of Sheard’s poem “Tan Y Bwlch” (2017: 46) similarly draws attention to these complications of history, imagined in the movement of coastlines:

I have tried it before – to write the headland.
But there is the trickiness of coastlines –
distances which fool us, traced journeys seen
from a lifted land and its loftiness.

Sally O’Reilly (2019) addresses the problem of using historical sources in creative writing: “Although

these texts and artefacts are evidence, they present a fragmentary picture. A fictional narrative adds to this, filling blanks, imagining conversations and constructing a sensory world." Engaging with O'Reilly's "fragmentary picture," the narrative arc of my poetry collection is incomplete because we do not know who killed the Princes in the Tower, if they were even murdered, and how they died. In response to this, I take a fragmentary approach to narrative, which is why there are multiple perspectives from different characters and multiple points of view (first, second and third person). Referring back to Padmore and de Groot, who I quoted at the beginning of this essay, it is from the "delicious and uncomfortable tension" between history and the imagination that historical fiction is forged. What my poetry collection does is to move beyond both history and historical fiction. It is in the space between history and historical fiction that my poetry collection sits. Instead of either/or and both/and I deliberately make use of either/or/both. I irradiate and populate the small, intimate moments of history by creating new poems. The absent, the unseen, the forgotten: these are my themes.

Now I refer to the historical context of my poems quoted in full at the beginning of the article. This is the purpose I set out with at the start. It is the big drawing-together of history and poetry in the creation of new work. Richard's queen, Anne Neville, had one child, Edward of Middleham. Michael Hicks (2006: 182) says: "Unfortunately, Prince Edward was all she had delivered and, moreover, that she could produce. That was to prove a fatal flaw." This was "a fatal flaw" because in order to secure the succession of the throne, an heir was of the utmost importance, while additional sons could guarantee succession if the first-born son died; daughters, too, were important, to expand their allies through advantageous marriages. In my poem "Anne Neville at the Oriel Window" Anne uses reproductive words such as "barren", "mothers", "nesting". I choose these words because Sarah Gristwood (2013: 218) says, "Judging by her mother and sister, low fertility seems to have run in Anne's family." Anne's mother, Anne Beauchamp, Countess of Warwick, produced two daughters: Isabel Neville, Duchess of Clarence and Anne Neville, Duchess of Gloucester. Anne Neville's sister, Isabel Neville, produced one daughter, Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury and two sons, Edward Plantagenet, Earl of Warwick, and George Plantagenet. George only survived a few days after he was born. Referring to this, in my poem, Anne

says, "Your body and blood feel wrong." Amy Licence (2014: 162) is more speculative concerning Anne: "Edward was to be Anne's only child, although later miscarriages and stillbirths cannot be ruled out." I have drawn on this speculation in my poems: in "Anne Neville's Unknown Heirs" the poem ends with Anne having a miscarriage and in "Black Watch Tower/The White Wall" Anne has a stillbirth again.

My three poems all took their inspiration from real locations that my characters lived in. Charles Ross (1999: 53) says of Richard that:

He acquired, through his marriage, the lordship of Barnard Castle. Along with Middleham, Sheriff Hutton, Sandal near Wakefield and Penrith, this was one of the many residences which he embellished during his period of residence in the north between 1471 and 1483, and later as king.

My prose poem "Anne Neville at the Oriel Window" is set at Barnard Castle in County Durham. If I had not visited this location, I would not have utilized the oriel window, which is huge, and provides a panoramic view of the Tees and the fells. Rosemary Horrox (1989: 48) says: "The main component of Gloucester's landed influence in the north was the former Neville land centred on Middleham, Sheriff Hutton and Penrith." The location of "Anne Neville's Unknown Heirs", another of my poems, is Penrith Castle in Cumbria. The day I photographed Penrith Castle the red sandstone was dripping with November rain and this emerged in my poem as Anne's womb "shredding" and the possible miscarriage or stillbirth. Paul Murray Kendall (2002: 169) writes: "On August 24 the castle fell. The great fortress which King Edward had so long yearned to repossess was at last won back." Kendall is referring to August 1482, when Berwick Castle and the town was recaptured from the Scots. "Black Watch Tower/The White Wall" takes place at Berwick Castle in Northumberland. I have visited Berwick Castle many times in the past but had not walked the walls. It was from this circumnavigation of Berwick's walls that I experienced how steep the Breakneck Stairs were. Also, how the walls on the far side of Berwick do merge into the North Sea. These sites, Barnard Castle, Penrith Castle and Berwick Castle, were visited and photographed by me as part of my research process for visual creative inspiration.

In conclusion, then, this article has been a looping

journey of how poems colonize the span between history and fiction. I started by dissecting what historians have written about Richard and his personality. I unlock different nuances in Richard's personal objects and how he is depicted in portraiture. I have also gone to the heart of the mystery of the Princes in the Tower by examining the contradictions and audiences of original sources and chronicles, and the implications of these for our understanding of how they were adopted by Shakespeare in his play *Richard III*. The middle section of this article merges history and poetics by focussing on several contemporary poetry collections. In the closing stages of this article, I outline the historical context of my three sample poems. The crux of my argument is shown by my analysis of Sheard's poem "On Reading". Sheard's poem is not static: it enacts the process of reading and interpretation. This is what I am trying to achieve with the way that I embrace uncertainty and inconclusiveness in order to inhabit – and populate – the imaginative spaces left by gaps in historical record and material survivals. I am tying up the threads of either/or/both that my poems are enacting, filling in the cracks between conflicting histories. As Hilary Mantel observed in an interview by Rob Attar (2020: 56): "Historians want to move in a state of certainty, while an imaginative writer wants to move into an area of creative doubt. I am content to say, in the end: 'He [Thomas Cromwell] eludes me.'" I tie Mantel's words specifically to my engagement with Richard, who both eludes me and simultaneously multiplies in his possible selves.

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Edwin Stockdale has a BA Hons in Creative Arts (Creative Writing and Music) from Lancaster University and a PGCE in Primary and Early Years Education from Liverpool Hope University. Red Squirrel Press have published two of his pamphlets: *Aventurine* (September 2014) and *The Glower of the Sun* (January 2019). In 2017 he graduated from the University of Birmingham with an MA in Creative Writing. His poems and short fiction have been widely published, for instance in *Atrium*, *Dreich*, *Ink sweat and tears*, *Interpreter's House*, *London Magazine*, *Long Poem Magazine*, *Magma*, *Obsessed with Pipework*, *Orbis*, *Poetry Salzburg Review*, *Poetry Scotland*, *Prole* and *Stand*. Practice-based papers on his research have been presented at the *Prose Poetry Symposium* (Leeds) and *NAWE Conference* (York). Recently, he has submitted his PhD in Creative Writing at Leeds Trinity University.
