

*I view the cloud tinged by the
western sun*

Sir Humphry Davy

I view the cloud tinged by the western sun
With hues ethereal, where the purple light
And golden radiance, undefinable
Blend as in one creation – As I view
My eye is filled, my mind is satisfied.
This moving, changing, and insensate thing
Is to my soul a comforter, a source
Of joy and hope. – Upon its fringed edge
My fancy images the falling dew,
Refreshing all that lives. – A moment gone.
Philosophy passed by. – As with a painter's eye.

(c. 1803-09)

The Davy Notebooks Project

Sir Humphry Davy (1778-1829) is today most popularly remembered for inventing a miners' safety lamp, which saved many lives below ground. Davy, the foremost man of science of his age in Britain, was also a poet, moving in the same circles as Lord Byron, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and William Wordsworth. During his lifetime, Davy published a handful of poems in periodicals such as *The Annual Anthology*, edited by Robert Southey, and *The Gentleman's Magazine*, and in other works such as *A Collection of Poems, Chiefly Manuscript, and From Living Authors*, edited by Joanna Baillie (London, 1823).

'I view the cloud tinged by the western sun' is a previously unpublished poem from a notebook (RI MS HD/13/J) held at the Royal Institution of Great Britain, where Davy, first as Lecturer then as Professor of Chemistry, made his influential chemical discoveries in the first decade of the 1800s. The Davy Notebooks Project is currently working with an online community of volunteer transcribers to transcribe Davy's seventy-five-strong notebook collection, held at the Royal Institution and Kresen Kernow. The majority of Davy's notebooks have never been transcribed before. As well as poetry, they contain chemical and scientific notes, philosophy, geology, medicine, mathematics, and more.

Readers of *The Hampstead Literary Society Journal* are warmly invited by the project team to explore Davy's notebooks online, and to submit transcriptions of their own. The transcriptions provided will form the basis of an online digital edition of Davy's notebooks, which will be free for all to access. For more information, and to get involved, please see <http://wp.lancs.ac.uk/davynotebooks>.

– Dr. Andrew Lacey, The Davy Notebooks Project team