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Godwin's use of The Newgate Calendar as a source for Caleb Williams

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Godwin's use of The Newgate Calendar as a source for Caleb Williams

by

Karen Catherine Elder

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of The Requirements for the Degree of MASTER OF ARTS

Major: English

Signatures have been redacted for privacy

Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa

1976
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INTRODUCTION

The following study of Caleb Williams began as a project paper for a graduate class in "Romantic Writers: Shelley and His Circle." Although Godwin is not usually considered a figure in the romantic movement, there are at least two reasons for his inclusion in Shelley's "circle": first, his influence on his more famous son-in-law was profound; and, second, CW itself contains a romantic element, e.g., the isolated, alienated individual struggling against a threatening, menacing society. For the course work, CW was reviewed in conjunction with The Newgate Calendar, a source which contains the biographies of some of England's most notorious criminals incarcerated at Newgate prison in London. Godwin, noting that he was "extremely conversant" with the NC, had himself cited this work as bearing on the subject of the novel (CW, pp. xxviii-xxix). In researching the NC it was found that certain aspects of the biographies bore striking similarity to particular scenes in the novel. Godwin, however, had documented only one prison scene as being similar to one found in the NC (CW, II, 11). But there are other scenes obviously drawn from the NC biographies which Godwin did not, according to his usual custom, credit. To single out those details in the novel which recall the NC was time-consuming but relatively easy. To establish a reason
for the borrowings, however, other than for the strictly adventurous or romantic impact they lend to the hero's adventures, became a more difficult matter.

The following study, then, attempts, among other things, to establish why Godwin probably drew upon material from the NC. To establish such a reason, this research investigates, along with CW and the NC, Godwin's philosophical treatise An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice, published one year before CW. PJ had explicated a utilitarian philosophy which envisioned the perfectibility of man. CW, often contended to be a literary rendering of PJ, is, to be sure, invested with much of the utilitarian philosophy of that latter work. Thus, when Godwin became "extremely conversant" with the NC to prepare himself for writing CW, he encountered an attitude toward the criminal which clashed with his belief in the perfectibility of man. It is here contended that Godwin reacted to that NC attitude by incorporating in CW scenes which in circumstance and detail allude to certain biographies in the NC. Hence, a probable reason why Godwin, in writing his novel, drew upon material from the NC, was to suggest, if only indirectly, his personal antipathy to an attitude which clashed with his own philosophic point of view. The nature of Godwin's reaction will be discussed in greater detail in the following pages.
So that an overview of the research may be given, this study is organized as follows: a summary of the novel; a review of criticism regarding the novel; the thesis proposal; a discussion of the history and attitude of the NC followed by a discussion of Godwin's reaction to the NC attitude based upon a consideration of the author's philosophical stance as it expresses itself both in his political treatise, PJ, and in his novel CW; and finally a citing of the scenes in CW which are patterned after the NC accounts of three criminals, i.e., Eugene Aram, Jonathan Wild, and John (Jack) Sheppard.
SUMMARY OF CALEB WILLIAMS

In the 1794 preface to CW, William Godwin "proposed, in the invention of the...work, to comprehend...a general review of the modes of domestic and unrecorded despotism, by which man becomes the destroyer of man" (CW, p. xxiii). In the novel this "general review of the modes of domestic...despotism" is related by the hero and narrator Caleb Williams himself. Caleb tells us at the very beginning that his life "has for several years been a theatre of calamity." Such is the intense tone which marks the dramatic narration of Caleb's devastating experience with his master Ferdinando Falkland. Caleb, young and inexperienced, feels "no small uneasiness and awe" toward the inscrutable and unpredictable Falkland. The latter's ambiguous behaviour proves an irresistible challenge to the hero's "insatiable curiosity." Sensing that in the deepest recesses of Falkland's heart lies a dark, foreboding secret, the young protagonist, goaded by an irrepressible inquisitiveness, is determined to discover it. When Falkland, under stress, does disclose to Caleb the "forbidden knowledge," i.e., Falkland's complicity in the deaths of three persons, the burden of the knowledge is too great for Caleb to bear. Caleb attempts to sever his bondage to Falkland, but the master, fearful that Caleb
will disclose the secret, brings false charges of theft against his servant. Consequently, the latter is tried, convicted, and imprisoned. So has begun the "domestic despotism" to which Godwin alluded in his preface. Caleb, however, escapes ingeniously from prison but is relentlessly pursued and harassed over much of England by Falkland and his diabolical "lieutenant" Gines. For several years Caleb, through his ingenuity, eludes the powerful Falkland. A number of varied experiences keep him mentally alert and responsive to the exigencies of the moment. A "jack of all trades," Caleb assumes diverse roles and disguises: e.g., harboring himself in the forest with the gang of thieves after his spectacular prison escape, Caleb serves as a sounding board to the dubious philosophy of the gang leader, Captain Raymond; later, in order to remain anonymous, Caleb assumes the disguises of beggar, Irishman, and Jew; in London he becomes a creative writer; then watch repairman; and finally in Wales the hero serves as mathematics instructor, literary tutor, and linguistic scholar. His reputation blasted at every turn by Falkland or his agent Gines, Caleb at last becomes isolated and alienated from the warmth of human contact. Ultimately, he is driven to exonerate himself by disclosing Falkland's secret before a court of inquiry. Caleb clears his reputation, but his victory over Falkland proves hollow. Both master and servant are
spiritedly broken by the psychological stress which has characterized their tumultuous relationship.

Review of Criticism Regarding 
Caleb Williams

The critical reactions to Caleb's narrative generally fall into two groups, one of which views the novel as a literary rendering of Godwin's monumental philosophical treatise *PJ*, published one year before *CW*. George Woodcock, for example, feels that Godwin, "in order to portray 'things as they are' in a more concrete form...descended from the philosopher's rostrum and took the humbler pen of the novelist."^4 Likewise, H. N. Brailsford comments that *CW* "conveys in the form of an eventful personal history the essence of the criticism against society, which had inspired *Political Justice.*"^5 *CW* is, says another critic, R. W. Harris, an illustration of Godwin's social theories. The novel's "theme," Harris continues, "was to expose the injustices of the legal system of the time, the rottenness of society and of the power which went inevitably along with wealth and rank."^6 Harvey Gross also investigates *CW* "more or less as a sociological document...[in which] Falkland's relentless pursuit of Williams is a metaphor representing all organized society, all law, all the institutions which oppress and circumscribe the individual."^7 The critic, however,
concludes that "certain aspects of Caleb Williams...cannot be adequately explained in terms of either sociology or political allegory" (p. 410). These "certain aspects" to which Gross alludes are the psychological dimensions of the novel which the following set of critics tends to emphasize.

Patrick Cruttwell, one representative of this group, feels that although Godwin intended that the novel be read "to show...how individuals are conditioned by...society, and to evoke sympathy for the persecuted and outlawed," it is for the modern reader "a study of obsessions." 8 Cruttwell then continues by identifying the obsessions and analyzing their hold on the central characters. Rudolf Storch, also exploring the psychological aspects of the novel, comments that the "fascination...of Caleb Williams lies in the fact that Godwin seems to have written a study of neurosis without being fully aware of doing so." 9 Storch claims that "at its centre...[the novel] is not a rational exposition of social abuses but a narrative of obsession" in which the "events, characterisation, ideas and language...are determined by...[the] metaphors" of a "Calvinistic obsession with divine justice," guilt, innocence, rebellion, and persecution (pp. 189-90). Such an obsession is manifested in the turbulent relationship between Caleb and Falkland. The latter, Storch infers, becomes "the revengeful father figure who...[having] taken the place of...[Caleb's] dead
father" is now "at the mercy of his intellectually curious son" (pp. 192-94). Consequently, Falkland's "sense of honor is only a metaphor for his constant fear of his rebellious son" whose intellectual curiosity is, in turn, a metaphor for Caleb's unconscious desire for "power over Falkland, disobedience and rebellion" (pp. 194-96). Such a psychic transfer of roles results in a relationship in which the two characters become "aspects of one and the same soul, so that their conflicts and the fate that binds them together have... the force of inescapable destiny" (p. 192). Storch concludes that at the end of the novel "nothing is resolved: guilt and innocence remain"--not as Caleb once believed 'opposite to each other'--but rather "as inextricable as ever" (p. 203).

Eric Rothstein focuses not so much on the characters' obsessions, but rather more specifically on "individual recognition." In spite of "Godwin's sporadic determinism," Rothstein asserts that "the novel insists on moral action and choice...[and] that...[the reader] must consider what happens in the novel as Caleb's renderings, not as objective fact" (p. 18). Rothstein believes that Caleb's narration is "a spiritual autobiography...[through] which Caleb learns about things as they are, within him and outside him" (p. 18). Caleb's narration, the critic concludes, moves "from the egoistic portrayal of external events to the objective (if not disinterested) recognition of personal morality. The memoirs that...[began] to...vindicate the writer end with an
unselfish zeal for expiation and a socially meaningful justice" (p. 29).

Perhaps the most complete interpretation of *CW* to date, i.e., one which unites the novel's artistic and philosophic aspects, is Mitzi Myers' "Godwin's Changing Conception of Caleb Williams." In a thoroughly researched and painstaking study, Myers successfully reconciles the philosophical and fictional aspects of the novel. In her lengthy essay the critic considers several factors which support her interpretation of the novel: Godwin's separate and differing prefaces to *CW*, 1794 and 1832; the relevance of Godwin's moral philosophy as suggested in *PJ* to the novel itself; the author's "habits of composition and revision"; the importance of choosing Caleb as narrator and the consequent point of view; Godwin's own efforts to realize fully the psychological and moral relationships of the characters; and, finally, his substitution of a new ending for the original. Through a deliberate and conscientious consideration of such factors Myers establishes a convincing argument that Caleb's narration of events becomes a complex pattern of moral awareness which "underscores the principle of impartiality...[that] is the root of the moral system...[of] Political Justice" (p. 591). Myers affirms conclusively that *CW* is indeed a union of "the understanding and imagination" (p. 628).
Thesis Proposal

The following thesis regarding CW investigates one of the sources—which Godwin cited as contributing to the writing of the novel. It is true, as one critic noted, that the NC, along with other sources, suggested to Godwin some details of crime and suspense for the adventures of the hero, Caleb. This thesis will in fact research those scenes in the novel which allude to certain criminals featured in the NC, specifically, Eugene Aram, Jonathan Wild, and John (Jack) Sheppard. But to point out these allusions leaves open the question why Godwin patterns Caleb's activities on the deeds of the three criminals. One can answer simply that such details provide romance and adventure—a valid observation since Godwin himself said that he, like the authors of those sources he read, was "engaged in exploring the entrails of mind and motive, and in tracing the various rencontres and clashes that may occur between man and man in the diversified scene of human life" (CW, p. xxix). Such "exploration," of course, invites romance and adventure. But another reason for the novel's allusions to the NC suggests itself when one considers that the exhortatory tone of the NC—specifically the implication that the criminal is innately depraved—may have clashed with Godwin's philosophic and utilitarian belief in the perfectibility
of man, a belief explicated in PJ and certainly implied in CW. If Godwin did react negatively to the condemnatory tone of the NC, as I believe he did, then the scenes in CW which recall those miscreants, Aram, Wild, and Sheppard, become tributes, not to Caleb's innate tendency for evil, but rather to his energy, an energy which enabled him to respond creatively to the demands of his life. Unfortunately, as Godwin implies in the course of the novel, when such energy is misapplied, or dissipated, or frustrated—whether it be Caleb's or the criminal's—the loss is tragic—for the individual and for society.

Godwin's reaction to the NC, as suggested by the allusions in the novel, will be investigated first by considering briefly the history and attitude of the NC, followed by the ultimate assertion that the exhortatory tone of the NC clashed with Godwin's utilitarian belief in the perfectibility of man; that the conflict between the two opposing attitudes expresses itself in the nature of the allusions, specifically that the scenes which recall Aram, Wild, and Sheppard suggest a point of view which indeed values the creative energy of Caleb (and by extension of all men), but simultaneously laments the waste of that vitality. Finally, the specific allusions in CW to the biographies of Aram, Wild, and Sheppard will be noted in some detail.
HISTORY AND ATTITUDE OF THE NEWGATE CALENDAR

The _NC_ in Godwin's library was probably the five-volume "standard" edition of 1773. This lengthy work, and the many other eighteenth-century _NC_ editions, regaled the reader with a

Genuine and Circumstantial Narrative of the lives and transactions, various exploits and Dying Speeches of the Most Notorious Criminals of both sexes who suffered Death [and] Punishment in...Britain and Ireland for...various...horrid crimes and misdemeanours on a plan entirely new, wherein will be fully displayed the regular progress from virtue to vice interspersed with striking reflexions on the conduct of those unhappy wretches who have fallen a sacrifice to the laws of their country. (_NC_, p. v)

Such hearty fare had been compiled since the 1600's by the ordinaries (chaplains) of Newgate who, in addition to spiritual duties, were commissioned to record "the behavior, confessions, and dying words of the malefactors 'executed at Tyburn'." Because "the ordinary had free access to condemned convicts at all times, and...[because] his peculiar duties generally...[allowed him to establish] the most confidential relations with them, he was in a position to obtain much curious and often authentic information from the lips of the doomed offenders." The _NC_, to be sure, lacked the romanticism, humor, and satire of the contemporary "rogue" literature--literature which, in some instances, was based on the lives of real criminals but was fancified past actuality with the stock conventions of picaresque literature. On
the contrary, the NC accounts assured the reader that the volume contained "a first and faithful narration... without any additions of feigned or romantic adventures, calculated merely to entertain the curiosity of the Reader." But if this "first and faithful narration" was not "calculated merely to entertain the curiosity of the Reader," it most certainly was designed to instruct him. The intention, as indicated in the subtitle, was indeed to display "the regular progress from virtue to vice" and thereby dissuade the impressionable reader from a life of crime. And it is to this instructive and exhortatory intent that Godwin, in his novel CW, may very well have taken exception. For one can conclude, with a certain validity, that some of the allusions in CW do imply a negative response to the moralizing tone of the NC, above all to its emphasis on the criminal's depravity.

Before discussing the specific nature of Godwin's reaction to the NC and then citing the several allusions in the novel, some attention will be given to the NC's focus on the criminal's depravity.

By presenting the sometimes "sordid actualities" with appropriate editor commentary, the ordinaries no doubt intended to underscore the corruptibility of the criminal, his incorrigibility, his just punishment and, finally, to issue a warning to any potential criminal. 

Pretentious or
not, the NC claimed "to humble the pride of our nature"; to be "useful for families and [to] be a fund of...instruction" and finally to assert "that 'parents and guardians will find it one of the most useful books to be put into the hands of the rising generation, before their tender minds have been led astray from the practise of virtue.'."

In any random reading of the NC, one finds not only detailed descriptions of crimes, but also many statements admonishing the reader. One such exhortatory statement is an excerpt from one of the several exemplary sermons preached about Jack Sheppard, the legendary eighteenth-century housebreaker. (Perhaps the ordinary writing Sheppard's NC biography also preached that sermon.)

what a melancholy experience it is that men should show so much regard for the preservation of a poor perishing body, that can remain at most but a few years, and at the same time be so unaccountably negligent of a precious soul, which must continue to the age of eternity! O, what care, what pains, what diligence, and what contrivances, are made use of for, and laid out upon, these frail and tottering tabernacles of clay...

We have a remarkable instance of this in a notorious malefactor, well known by the name of Jack Sheppard! What amazing difficulties has he overcome, what astonishing things has he performed, for the sake of a stinking miserable carcass hardly worth hanging! (pp. 125-26)

And so the condemnation goes on. The emphasis here, and in many of the biographies is on the criminal's nature—the "poor perishing body," the "frail and tottering...[tabernacle] of clay," and finally, the "stinking miserable
carcass, hardly worth hanging." A salute, indeed, to the traditional belief in man's fall from grace and his subsequent inclination toward evil. One must credit the NC, however, for its allusions to Sheppard's dexterity, ingenuity, and energy, capacities cited in the concluding lines to the above quotation: "How dextrously did he pick the padlock of his chain with a crooked nail! how manfully did he burst his fetters asunder, climb up the chimney, wrench out an iron bar, break his way through a stone wall, and make the strong doors of a dark entry fly before him, till he got upon the leads of the prison; and then...how intrepidly he did descend to the top of the turner's house, and how cautiously...make his escape at the streetdoor!" (p. 126). That the NC noted Sheppard's dexterity, manfulness, intrepidity, and caution was a gesture which Godwin might very well have applauded. For Godwin, indeed, was interested in the individual's energy and abilities when they benefitted society. Unfortunately, the NC usually didn't go far enough in assessing the criminal's talents, his misapplied energy, and society's subsequent loss. Thus, regardless of this brief tribute to Sheppard's feats, the overall NC tone subordinates his talents and the unfortunate waste of them, to the continued focus on his misdeeds and innate tendency for evil. This latter emphasis reinforced the attitude that the
criminal was completely guilty even of crimes less barbaric than some cited in the biographies. The NC's point of view, controlled by a moralizing intent, served two purposes: first, as indicated earlier, by reporting the criminal's fate, the would-be criminal might be dissuaded from committing crime; and, second, by emphasizing his evil deeds, the already prevailing public sentiment that the criminal was depraved, incorrigible, and, hence, deserving of just punishment would be reinforced. Sandra Lee Kerman sums up concisely this eighteenth-century attitude toward the criminal when she remarks that the NC held a view toward the criminal and his punishment [that] was entirely in harmony with the system which so badly aggravated a problem which could hardly be worse. The criminal was considered to be an unregenerate miscreant who, due to laziness and greed, renounces the virtuous life, and becomes a menace to society. His richly deserved punishment serves to prove that the ways of evil lead to evil ends. Society can only be repaid by its just revenge upon him, which also serves as a warning to anyone contemplating a similar career. His evil is in his heart; if, at the end, he sees the error of his ways and repents, so much the better for the repose of his soul. His execution is thus for his own good as well as for that of society.21

Godwin, one presumes, would have objected to the latter condemnation of the criminal and the recommendation that the criminal (with his "stinking miserable carcass") be executed for "his own good as well as for that of society," for such a recommendation did nothing to redirect the valuable energies
of the criminal. Had Godwin written the biographies, his philosophical propensities would have led him, no doubt, to stress—no the criminal's depravity and "just" punishment—but rather society's responsibility for the tragic dissipation of such energy and vitality.
GODWIN'S REACTION TO THE ATTITUDE OF THE NEWGATE CALENDAR

Such negative thinking as the expounded must have disturbed the iconoclastic Godwin who philosophically denied in man any propensity for evil. And it is here that we must turn to Godwin's monumental philosophical work, *PJ*, to establish a probable reason for Godwin's reaction to the attitude toward the criminal. The philosophic point of view which controls *PJ* also expresses itself in the novel. Godwin himself had commented that *CW* "was the offspring of that temper of mind" in which the composition of *PJ* left him. That "temper of mind" then, which shapes both *PJ* and the novel does underscore not only Godwin's profound interest in the *NC*, but also his reaction to the *NC* attitude as suggested by the allusions in the novel.

Godwin's philosophical treatise was first published in 1793, one year before *CW* appeared. From the very beginning of the work Godwin sets forth with foremost clarity a utilitarian point of view that prizes a political system which elicits from every individual a worthwhile effort. The opening paragraph informs us that the subject proposed in *PJ* concerns "that form of public or political society... extending beyond the bounds of a single family, which shall be found most to conduce to the general benefit.... How..."
individuals of the human species [may] be made to contribute most substantially to the general improvement and happiness" (I, I). In two volumes totalling approximately one thousand pages, Godwin explores a moral system in which he believes the individual will "contribute most substantially to the general improvement and happiness." Such a system encourages man's perfectibility, i.e., his capacity to improve and his gradual but ultimate independence from such traditional institutions as that "brute engine," government (the root of all society's evils), organized religion, personal property (at least excessive accumulations of it), marriage, and the penal system (see Vol. II, Bks. V, VI, VII, VIII, and VII respectively). These institutions Godwin saw as stifling individuality, retarding moral and intellectual improvement and the individual's capability of contributing to the general good.

As his rationalistic thought progresses—-in deliberate and measured steps—-he argues away (always condemning violence in any form) our need for such established institutions and disparages the public opinion which nourishes them. Godwin's proposals sound sweeping and revolutionary to the more conservative ear, but throughout his discourse he appeals to man's individuality, his reason and intellect, not his unbridled passions. Always stressing utility, Godwin argued for the necessary freedom and welfare by which man could
best and most worthily express his talents, energy, and ingenuity (although in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British political system these capacities were stifled by government and its far-reaching arm, the law). Against a political system which Godwin considered repressive to the less powerful, he reasoned persistently: "the only measure of equity is utility, and whatever is not attended with any beneficial purpose, is not just" (II, VII).

No doubt Godwin viewed the NC's emphasis on sinful and fallen man as "not attended with any beneficial purpose," for such an attitude did nothing to reform the criminal, nothing to elicit from him a worthy contribution to the general good. Rather, like a wrathful god, society would "be repaid by its just revenge upon him." And by employing the hangman, society was assured that the criminal—evil in nature and deed—would sin no more. Thus the NC, reflecting society's attitude that the criminal was basically inclined to evil, advanced a traditional belief which embraced the concept of original sin. Godwin denied this traditional belief.

The author reasoned in PJ that the mind of man is essentially neutral at birth; that what he becomes is largely determined by those environmental influences which impinge upon his being. "The actions and dispositions of men," states the author, "are not the offspring of any
original bias that they bring into the world...but flow entirely from the operation of circumstances and events acting upon a faculty of receiving sensible impressions" (I, I). This denial of innate principles or tendencies allies itself closely to Godwin's doctrine of perfectibility, i.e., man's capacity, not to be perfect, but to the better. From such a philosophical imperative is derived the assumption that if we could improve man's environment we could also improve his character; then and only then could the individual's energies be channeled in a more beneficial direction. However, as optimistic as he was, Godwin was all too aware that such unenlightened views as the held and promoted were among the many prevailing views which indeed retarded the evolution of an atmosphere conducive to the proper diffusion of individual energy. Such an atmosphere Godwin believed possible, but yet beyond eighteenth-century society's horizons.

Godwin's philosophical position, specifically his utilitarian belief in the perfectibility of man, leads one to believe that he would have viewed the criminal, then, not as the NC did, as innately depraved because of his inheritance of original sin, but rather as an individual whose energy under more conducive circumstances might have contributed to the welfare of society. Godwin valued the intellect and reason of all men (including the criminal) and what
these capacities could contribute to mankind's general improvement. Therefore, such a NC assertion that the "execution [of the criminal] is...for his own good as well as for that of society" was a dictum from which Godwin must automatically have recoiled. For one recalls in PJ, i.e., in the book on "Crimes and Punishments," the author's comment that as "we behold a company of poor wretches brought out for execution, justice will present to our affrighted fancy all the hopes and possibilities which are thus brutally extinguished," and "the genius, the daring invention, the unshrinking firmness...which...[are thus] sacrificed" (II, VII).

This concern for the criminal's fate, i.e., the loss of his creative energy, invests itself also in the narration of CW. For example, the hero makes a similar observation regarding the possible loss of his own "genius" and "daring invention." Now imprisoned and assuming he will be executed (although he is legally innocent), Caleb comments on his own "hopes and possibilities" soon to be "brutally extinguished." Caleb laments: "Thus was I cut-off for ever, from all that existence has to bestow--from all the high hopes I had so often conceived--from all the future excellence my soul so much delighted to imagine,—to spend a few weeks in a miserable prison, and then to perish by the hand of the public executioner" (II, 11).
It is then "the high hopes," "the future excellence," "the genius, the daring invention"—the energy and ingenuity of the criminal (and of all men) which interested Godwin—both in PJ and CW. When the author in the account of the novel states that he was "extremely conversant" with the NC, he implies a fascination with its subjects, those subjects whose evil deeds the NC sketched in detail. But Godwin must have thought that there was more to the gallery of Newgate "villains" than just depravity or a criminal tendency. Both CW and PJ, each in its respective creative and logical modes, stress the importance of the individual's energy—energy which when properly applied benefits all society, i.e., perfects mankind; conversely, that same energy misapplied or frustrated is counterproductive to the progress of society.

In the novel, Caleb's activities and relationships sometimes recall the NC biographies of criminals like Eugene Aram, Jonathan Wild, and Jack Sheppard. This does not indicate that Caleb is innately depraved or inclined to evil. Rather those scenes which allude to the criminals tend to point up Caleb's (or in one instance Gines') resourcefulness, energy, and talents. As noted, it was not the criminal's villainy that attracted Godwin to the lives and deeds of the NC principals. On the contrary it was a fascination which one critic notes that Daniel Defoe, some seventy years before
the publication of PJ and CW, also found in the criminal. Like the latter author, Godwin saw the Newgate "villain"—the Aram, Wild, and Sheppard—each as "a man of action who displays ingenuity, resourcefulness and a capacity born of earlier experience to adapt to new situations. They are men whose ability to survive is tested by the rigorous demands which... life could make."23

If Godwin respected the criminal's energy and resourcefulness, especially his protean response to the exigencies of the moment, the author's utilitarian bent inclined him to view regretfully the tragic misapplication, dissipation, or destruction of that talent and vitality. Society suffered the loss, as both PJ and Godwin's narrator Caleb make clear. In one speculative moment, for example, and there are many in the novel, Caleb comments on the misapplied energy, in this instance, of the gang of thieves with whom Caleb stays after his escape from prison. Having observed the gang at some length, Caleb comments that the thieves frequently displayed an energy, which from every impartial observer, would have extorted veneration. Energy is perhaps of all qualities the most valuable; and a just political system would possess the means of extracting from it, thus circumstanced, its beneficial qualities, instead of consigning it, as now, to indiscriminate destruction. We act like the chemist, who should reject the finest ore, and employ none but what was sufficiently debased to fit it immediately for the vilest uses. But the energy of these men, such as I beheld it, was in the highest
degree misapplied, unassisted by liberal and enlightened views, and directed only to the most... contemptible purposes. (III, 2)

The "finest ore" to which Caleb alludes implies, of course, that all men, including the thieves and Caleb himself, have claim at some point in life to a potentiality which under favorable circumstances would benefit the individual and society. The tragedy is not, as the NC would have it, that man is fallen or sinful or depraved, but rather that his energies are too often misapplied or frustrated by the pressures of society. Thus it is that Caleb comments (again about the thieves): "how admirably beneficial such qualities [i.e., "energy," "genius," "invention," "firmness"] might be made in the great theatre of human affairs" (III, 3).

Such a tragedy of misapplied—sometimes frustrated—energy occurs in CW because a negative view like that which the NC expounds is perpetuated by certain characters in the novel, e.g., Falkland's brother Forester; Caleb's long-time acquaintance, Thomas; the venerable Laura whom Caleb meets in Wales. The hero, legally innocent but nevertheless convicted of stealing from his master (who is legally guilty, first of murder, then of libel against Caleb) is transformed in the eyes of his accusers from a promising young individual to a monster, despicable and damnable. Forester, for example, who serves as magistrate at Caleb's hearing, once a disinterested party, reproves Caleb severely: "Vile calumniator!
you are the abhorrence of nature, the opprobrium of the human species, and the earth can only be freed from an unsuppor-
table burthen, by your being exterminated!" (II, 10). Then addressing Falkland, but for all to hear, Forester continues by advising his brother that Caleb's "unexampled villainy" makes it Falkland's "duty to free the world from such a pest" (II, 10). Caleb, once only a step below the angels, has now been reduced from man to beast in the hierarchy of the "great chain of being."

Thomas, Caleb's long-time acquaintance, also expresses sentiments similar to Forester's, both views reflecting and reinforcing the NC prejudice against the criminal. After Caleb has been convicted, he dejectedly approaches Thomas who in turn exclaims:

Do not speak to me, Master Williams! You have given me a shock that I shall not get the better of for one while. You were hatched by a hen, as the saying is, but you came of the spawn of a cockatrice. I am glad to my heart, that honest farmer Williams [Caleb's father] is dead, your villainy would else have made him curse the day that ever he was born.... I have done with you.... To-day I love you so well, that I would go ten miles with all the pleasure in life to see you hanged. (II, 10)

Thomas' biased sentiments against Caleb parallel the prejudices of Forester and of the NC. And if we investigate for one moment the etymology of Thomas' epithet "cockatrice," we discover that the word has a meaning--unfavorable, and very much in line with the traditionally-
held concept of the fall. The word derives from old French, "cocatris," i.e., "corrupt." Historically, the word is also associated with "serpent," especially in Biblical context a "venomous serpent." The image evoked by "cockatrice," then, recalls the Garden, the temptation, the fall, man's banishment from Eden, an inheritance of original sin—a "poor perishing body," a "frail, tottering tabernacle of clay," and "a stinking miserable carcass"—specifically a corruptible nature. Western civilization in the eighteenth century was rich in such religious tradition; hence, both Thomas' and Forester's accusations against the "criminal" Caleb were not only common, but certainly predictable. And when such a negative attitude ultimately prevails against the hero, one asks how beneficial Caleb's energy, genius, and invention will then be to the "general welfare" and to himself. It is true that Caleb will respond creatively, at times brilliantly, to the "rigorous demands" of his existence, but how much more "admirably beneficial" such energy might have been expended "in the great theatre of human affairs."

As noted before, CW becomes a tragedy of misapplied or frustrated energy because such a negative view as the NC expressed is echoed by certain characters in the novel. Caleb's condemnation by the powers that be reduce him to circumstances which demand energetic responses—ingeniosity, resourcefulness, and imagination. Such energy, however,
keeps Caleb barely on the threshold of existence; it becomes energy expended merely to keep alive, to endure "the rigorous demands which...life could make."

Godwin himself agreed philosophically that "rigorous demands" elicited resourcefulness, but conversely, "rigorous demands," when negative, were not always beneficial to the individual and society. Godwin's comments on "adversity" in PJ apply to the lives not only of those real criminals in the NC, but also to the life of the fictional "criminal," Caleb Williams. In his political treatise Godwin had observed that mind "can neither exist nor be improved without the reception of ideas. It will improve more in a calamitous, than a torpid state. A man will sometimes be found wiser at the end of his career, who has been treated with severity, than with neglect. But, because severity is one way of generating thought, it does not follow that it is the best" (II, VII). Godwin's philosophical thought most certainly applies to Caleb's ingenuity, which, indeed, is stimulated by the "severity" of his circumstances. From the moment he incurs Falkland's wrath, he is subjected to situations which demand energetic responses. The resourcefulness he shows is his reaction to the exigencies of his perpetual flight. One recalls the long list of his activities and achievements: his spectacular and dramatic escape from prison; his survival with the benevolent thieves in the forest; his disguises—
"beggar," "Irishman," and "Jew"; his occupations as carpenter, watchmaker, creative writer, linguistic scholar, mathematics teacher, and literary tutor. Caleb's talents are manifold and often provide him a diverting, if limited kind of fulfillment. But again how might these talents have flourished in a less "calamitous" state of affairs?

And so CT in those scenes which allude to the NC becomes both a tribute to the criminals' energies and abilities and a lamentation for their destruction or frustration. Ultimately, Caleb implies, both in his speculations about others and in his own activities which recall Aram, Wild, and Sheppard, that "in a happier field and a purer air, [man's capacities] would expand into virtue and germinate into usefulness" (III, Postscript). And although the context of the above quotation applies specifically to Falkland, it embraces in the broader scope of the novel the talents and energies of all men including the criminal, and of course the fictional Caleb.
ALLUSIONS IN CALEB WILLIAMS TO THREE NEWGATE CALENDAR CRIMINALS

Eugene Aram, Jonathan Wild, and Jack Sheppard were three of the more notorious criminals featured in the NC. No doubt Godwin came to know the three criminals even beyond the pages of the NC, for these three "malefactors," at one time or another, became the subjects of various pamphlets, prose biographies, novels, plays, poems, ballads, essays, paintings, etc. Godwin, undoubtedly impressed with the ingenuity of the formidable trio, drew details from their biographies to create scenes and circumstantial details in CW. This latter claim can be substantiated conclusively only in the case of Sheppard. In fact the details of Caleb's escape from prison are so like those of Sheppard that one questions why Godwin did not, as was his usual custom, credit his source. And because the author so obviously borrowed from Sheppard's biography, it is not unreasonable to conclude that Godwin also drew ideas from the accounts of Aram and Wild.

Eugene Aram

Godwin's only direct allusion in CW to Eugene Aram occurs in a footnote which refers to Captain Raymond's speech about criminality and the inequity of the law. The gang leader, in a Godwinian tone, criticizes a legal system which
disregards "the character of the individual at the hour of trial. How changed, how spotless, and how useful, avails him nothing. If they [the legal institutions] discover at the distance of fourteen [years—the period between Aram's crime and trial] or of forty years, an action for which... his life shall be the forfeit, though the interval should have been spent with the purity of a saint and the devotedness of a patriot, they disdain to enquire into it" (III, 3).

It is these very circumstances of Aram's life, i.e., the period of time the criminal avoided trial and the manner in which he spent the intervening period, which may have suggested to Godwin some details for Caleb's activities. Although Aram's crime of murder is more serious than Caleb's alleged crime of theft, each is, in essence, in flight for a number of years: Aram, as noted, for fourteen; Caleb for ten years. During the long interval between Caleb's "crime" and final trial, the hero, like Aram, engages in very worthwhile pursuits, e.g., linguistic research and teaching. Although it might be noted here that such studious endeavors may not suggest the misapplied energy discussed earlier, they do indeed suggest a frustrated energy. For Caleb's scholarship will ultimately be thwarted (like Aram's) by extenuating and demanding circumstances, namely by societal forces seeking retribution from the criminal. The hero, like the historical Aram, will be unable to bring his scholarly investiga-
tion to a fulfilling conclusion. Thus, whether the energy of the hero be misapplied or frustrated, Godwin does imply—in the scenes which recall Aram—a regret for the loss of creative and intellectual energy.

Turning to the specific NC details after which Godwin patterns Caleb's activities, one finds the following description of Aram's linguistic study. The NC narrates that Aram, sometime between his crime and trial, "investigated the Celtic in all its dialects; and, having begun to form collections, and make comparisons between the Celtic, the English, the Latin, the Greek, and the Hebrew, and found a great affinity between them, he resolved to proceed through all these languages, and to form a comparative Lexicon" (p. 611).

The NC's assessment of Aram's philological efforts, although laudatory, is, as might be expected, somewhat cursory. His achievements, however, were considerable. Dr. Richard Garnett, quoted in Eric Watson's study of Aram, gives a more studied appraisal of the criminal's abilities:

As a self taught scholar he has had many equals, but his peculiar distinction is to have lighted upon a truth of the greatest moment, unrecognised in his day by any scholar—the affinity of the Celtic to any other European languages.... Aram's fragment on the subject, [done without aid of resources while in prison] though marred by fanciful analogies between the Celtic and Hebrew, proves that he had thoroughly grasped it. He had a clear perception of the importance of local names in etymology, and he was, perhaps, the only man of this age who disputed the direct
derivation of Latin from Greek. It is hardly too much to say that had he enjoyed wealth and leisure he might have advanced the study of comparative philology by fifty years.25

Whether Godwin was acquainted with the fragment cited above, i.e., "Aram's Essay Towards A Lexicon Upon An Entirely New Plan," is undetermined. However, Godwin's notes on Aram, duplicated in Paul's study, include references to Aram's acquaintance with "Languages: Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, Arabic, Celtic, with dialects, i.e., Irish, Welch.26 The information in Godwin's notes, of course, is really no more detailed than that found in the NC. At any rate Aram's interest in what later came to be the Indo-European linguistic hypothesis would have impressed the studious Godwin and no doubt suggested to him yet another detail for Caleb's activities. In the novel the hero pursues a linguistic study similar to Aram's. Caleb narrates as follows: "I met by accident...with a general dictionary of four of the northern languages.... In my youth I had not been inattentive to languages. I determined to attempt...an etymological analysis of the English language.... I procured other dictionaries. In my incidental reading I noted the manner in which words were used, and applied these remarks to the illustration of my general enquiry" (III, 13).

An interesting sidelight here is that while Caleb engages in his "etymological analysis," he also serves as
both "an instructor in mathematics and its practical application, geography, astronomy, land-surveying, and navigation" and a literary tutor for the children of the irreproachable Laura Denison (III, 13). The NC suggests that Aram, too, probably did his major study of Indo-European theory while serving as an instructor, specifically as usher at the Lynn grammar school in Norfolk. Since the Free School at Lynn had a classical curriculum, Aram also would have taught such subjects as a mathematics and literature. And like Aram, who at his arrest was forced to abandon his own books and papers on his etymological study, so too must Caleb, in a hasty withdrawal from his "retreat in Wales," leave behind "the apparatus of...[his] etymological enquiries and the papers...[he] had written upon the subject" (III, 14).

Whether in fiction or in life, such interruptions, of course, frustrate the creative energy required to bring a scholarly research to fruition.

In addition to the similarity between the linguistic studies, other details in the novel indicate further that Caleb's personality and interests were fashioned, at least in part, on those of Aram. The latter--retiring and studious--had access as a thirteen- or fourteen-year old to the house of a gentleman for whom his father was a gardener. It was here that Aram's shyness was noted and "his propensity for literature first appeared. He was, indeed, always of
a solitary disposition, and uncommonly fond of retirement and books; and...he enjoyed all the advantages of leisure and privacy. He applied himself at first chiefly to mathematical studies and later to "poetry, history, and antiquities" (p. 610).

Caleb, like Aram—shy, reflective, and studious—is well suited for his position as librarian in "the house of a gentleman," Squire Falkland. At this point in the narration Caleb is also young—about eighteen years old. The hero comments that he performed the "functions of librarian," that he "had been much engrossed by reading and reflection," and that his "intercourse with...[his] fellow mortals was occasional and short" (I, 1).

The qualities attributed to Aram—especially love of books, reflection, intelligence and resourcefulness—would certainly have appealed to Godwin's own imagination, sensitivity, and inclination for study and reflection. In fact Godwin, writing of himself as a youngster, describes interests and activities which parallel those of Aram. The author relates the following personal account: "It was scarcely possible for any preceptor to have a pupil more penetrated with curiosity and a thirst after knowledge than I was.... All my amusements were sedentary; I had scarcely any pleasure but in reading; by my own consent, I should sometimes not so
To perceive others in our own image and likeness is perhaps irresistible. If Godwin found in Aram talents and capacities which he himself possessed and valued—intelligence, reflectiveness, studiousness, etc.—then the patterning of the fictional Caleb after the real Aram becomes an almost automatic step in the author's perceptive process. Unfortunately, as Godwin implies in the novel, Caleb's intellectual energies, like those of his historical referent, thwarted by the prevailing assumption that the criminal is depraved, will never "germinate into usefulness."

Jonathan Wild

In addition to those probable allusions to Eugene Aram cited above, there are also suggestions in the novel that Godwin employed Jonathan Wild's biography to sketch the character and activities of Caleb's villainous pursuer, Gines. Before the latter makes his initial appearance in the novel, Caleb himself, during a discussion with Falkland about the merits of Alexander the Great, makes the only direct allusion to Gines' criminal counterpart, i.e., to Fielding's satire on Wild (II, 1). The other references to Wild are indirect.

When Gines, in character and deed, recalls the
historical Wild, one reflects that Wild's life, spent in dissipated criminal activity, certainly subscribes to the pattern of misapplied energy, discussed earlier. In fact Caleb's remarks about the thieves would indeed apply to Wild: such "energy...was in the highest degree misapplied, un-assisted by liberal and enlightened views, and directed only to the most narrow and contemptible purposes" (III, 2).

One presumes that Godwin, a gentle man, would unquestionably have despised Wild's violence; but he would also have prized Wild's energy and regretted its tragic waste. Such capacities as Wild possessed would have suggested to Godwin a suitable model for the diabolical Gines.

Those capacities of Wild which Godwin imposed on his character Gines were craftiness, viciousness, spitefulness, perseverance, and resourcefulness. Caleb describes Gines as a man whose reputation "could excite only emotions of abhorrence and disgust," and although his deeds "argued a mind of such a stretch of depravity," yet he had his virtues--Gines "was enterprising, persevering, and faithful" (III, 2).

"Enterprising, persevering, and faithful" characterizes both Wild and his fictional counterpart Gines. The latter, a thief-taker, a collector of "blood money," as Wild himself was, relentlessly pursues Caleb in London. The narration regarding Gines' tenacity recalls Wild's own bloodhound
tactics—tactics which Gines uses to ferret out the elusive Caleb. In the novel the hero comments that Gines was determined to draw on all resources to "consecrate every faculty of his mind to...un kenneling" Caleb from his hiding place, and that Caleb himself must be prepared to encounter Gines' professional sagacity, "whetted and stimulated by a sentiment of vengeance" (III, 9), for Caleb had been responsible for Gines' expulsion from Captain Raymond's gang.

Such a "sentiment of vengeance" pervades the NC's description of Wild's career. His pertinacity in avenging those who crossed him probably did not escape Godwin's notice. Wild, the biography reveals, "was ever a most implacable enemy to those who were hardy enough to reject his terms.... He was industrious to an extreme in his efforts to surrender ... [thieves] into the hands of justice; and...it was scarcely possible for them to escape his vigilance" (p. 149). A similar persistence and vengeance, as noted, imbues the character of Gines as he tracks the fugitive hero in London. At one point in the pursuit, Gines follows Caleb's new friend Mrs. Marney, hoping she will lead him to Caleb who has just settled secretly in a new residence which is also occupied by Mrs. Marney. The latter, on an errand for Caleb, suspecting she is being followed, and regarding Caleb's concern for privacy, takes a devious route to escape Gines. Taking "a peculiar way of going home, not through the
open streets, but by narrow lanes and alleys with intricate insertions and sudden turnings," Mrs. Marney finally stops at a friend's house and sends word of her suspicions to Caleb (III, 9).

It is likely that Godwin patterned the preceding scene after a similar instance in Wild's career. In the NC account (granting that there are different circumstances and a less dramatic description than Caleb's) the arch-villain Wild had been indefatigable in his endeavours to apprehend Timothy Dun, who had hitherto escaped the hands of justice by removing to a new lodging, where he concealed himself in the most cautious manner.

[Dun]...at length...sent his wife to make inquiries...of Wild...to discover whether he [Dun] was still in danger of being apprehended.... Wild ordered one of his people to follow her home. She took water at Blackfriars, and landed at the Falcon; but suspecting the man was employed to trace her, she again took water, and crossed to Whitefriars: observing that she was still followed, she ordered the waterman to proceed to Lambeth, and having landed there, it being nearly dark, imagined she had escaped the observation of Wild's man, and therefore walked immediately home (p. 153).

Although Mrs. Dun does not escape Wild's vigilance, Mrs. Marney in CW does elude the Wild-like Gines and is able to send Caleb a timely warning.
John (Jack) Sheppard

That Godwin drew from Aram's and Wild's biographies is speculative but probable; that he drew from Sheppard's biography is certain. The ingenuity that Jack Sheppard exhibited in his various escapes would certainly have engaged the attention of a writer like Godwin interested in narratives of romance and adventure. Sheppard was born in 1701 and by the time he swung from the gallows at Tyburn in 1724, his name had become a household word. His spectacular prison escapes had ensured his fame in "all ranks of society" and established a reputation which would be recalled time and again through both the spoken and the written word (NC, p. 125). The NC reports that Sheppard's person and deeds were artistically interpreted: for example, while Sheppard was in Newgate, his portrait was painted by Sir James Thornhill; "Histories of his life issued from the press in a variety of forms. A pantomime entertainment was brought forward at the royal theatre of Drury Lane, called 'Harlequin Sheppard,' wherein his adventures, prison-breakings, and other extraordinary escapes, were represented. Another dramatic work was published, as a farce of three acts, called 'The Prison Breaker; or, The Adventures of John Sheppard;' and... performed at Bartholomew Fair, under the title of 'The Quaker's Opera'" (pp. 123-25).
When investigating Caleb's life for parallels to Sheppard's, one notes that Caleb also has a far-reaching reputation. Although the hero's deeds are not so dramatized as Sheppard's, nonetheless, Caleb's name and reputation are known over much of England. For example, in no fewer than four instances is Caleb, after his escape from prison, reminded of his own wide-spread notoriety: e.g., the thieves with whom Caleb sojourns bring back a circulating reward for the hero; the old man in Warwick who guards Caleb on a mistaken robbery charge is startled when the hero states his Christian name; in London Caleb discovers the hawked broadsheet regarding his own "miraculous adventures"; and, finally, in a remote spot in Wales even the virtuous Laura is acquainted with the history of this "monster" Caleb (see III, 3, 7, 10, and 13 respectively). Thus, like Sheppard, Caleb's name and reputation are known far and wide.

Another parallel between Sheppard and Caleb surfaces when comparing the physical appearance of the two. It is from the several sketches of Sheppard which appeared in the unabridged edition of the NC and the common knowledge of Sheppard's physique that Godwin probably knew of the criminal's appearance and reputed energy. Sheppard "is described as of lithe, spare figure and of great strength" and "very slender." When Godwin has Caleb describe his own stature, strength, and agility, there is much in that description that
recalls Sheppard. Early in the narrative Caleb comments that he was not "particularly athletic in appearance or large in dimensions...[but] uncommonly vigorous and active...[his] joints were supple, and... [he] was formed to excel in youthful sports" (I, 1). Those "supple joints," that "vigor" and "activity" which Caleb ascribes to himself prepare us for those amazing escapes from jail which he will later accomplish and which were undeniably fashioned after those real-life escapes of Jack Sheppard.

In addition to the likeness in physical appearance, Caleb also mentions his reading interests which again allude to a Sheppard-like individual, energetic and strong. The hero reports that he "delighted to read of feats of activity, and was particularly interested by tales in which corporeal ingenuity or strength are the means resorted to, for supplying resources and conquering difficulties" (I, 1). Again, later in the narrative, when Caleb is imprisoned, he reflects on his youthful reading, the subject of which was criminals. Confident that even now, imprisoned and in chains, he can resist and overcome his oppressors, Caleb looks for inspiration to the heroes of those former books which told "of housebreakers, to whom locks and bolts were a jest, and who, vain of their art, exhibited the experiment of entering a house the most strongly barricaded, with as little noise, and almost as little trouble, as other men would lift up a
latch" (II, 13). Caleb's youthful heroes certainly remind one of a Jack Sheppard, for it is indeed that eighteenth-century criminal "to whom locks and bolts were a jest" and "whose corporeal ingenuity...[and] strength... [were] the means resorted to, for supplying resources and conquering difficulties."

And when Caleb says that he "inured [himself] to mechanical pursuits, and devoted much...time to an endeavour after mechanical invention" (I, 1), we are again reminded of Sheppard's amazing mechanical dexterity which developed during the latter's brief career as a carpenter. From this work Sheppard gained "much skill and knowledge in the handling of tools." While in prison Caleb informs us that he, too, had been a carpenter, skillful with tools, and adept at mechanical pursuits (II, 13). Reinforced by the seemingly frequent allusions in the narration, a Sheppard-like portrait of Caleb emerges quite vividly.

Convincing as the above examples may be, it is, however, Caleb's escape scenes which overwhelmingly prove that Godwin patterned his hero on Sheppard. If one selects two or three scenes from each source and sets them side by side, he sees that in part the two accounts are almost identical. For example in both the NC and the novel, precautions are taken against Sheppard and Caleb so that a future escape should be
impossible. From the NC comes the following concerning Sheppard: "He was put into a strong room called the Castle, handcuffed, loaded with a heavy pair of irons, and chained to a staple fixed in the floor" (p. 116). Caleb himself narrating an almost identical scene after his own attempted escape reports that the jailors fixed a pair of fetters on both his legs and then fastened him "with a padlock, to a staple in the floor of...[his] dungeon" (II, 14).

In addition to the above scene, there is an episode based upon the use of a nail which suggests that Godwin again drew upon the NC account of Sheppard. The NC depicts the following scene in which Sheppard after his reconfinement to and securement in jail "found a small nail in the room, with which he could, at pleasure, unlock the padlock that went from the chain to the staple in the floor; and, in...[Sheppard's] own account of this transaction, he says, 'that he was frequently about the room...when the keepers imagined he had not been out of his chair'" (p. 117).

In CW one finds Caleb narrating an almost identical scene. The hero relates that he "chanced to observe a nail trodden into the mud-floor," that "he seized upon this new treasure, and...found that...[he] could unlock with it the padlock that fastened...[him] to the staple in the floor" (II, 14). Such is the Sheppardian ingenuity of Caleb Williams.
The small nail episode preceded Sheppard's third and final escape, which is summarized in the following passage:

After removing his handcuffs, Sheppard removed an iron bar from the chimney to use in his escape; then making a breach in the wall by picking out the mortar which held the bricks he was able to get into the red room over the castle. Here, encountering a door not opened for seven years, Sheppard, nevertheless, wrenched off its lock in less than seven minutes. Through this exit Sheppard entered into a passageway which led to the chapel where he again found a locked door bolted on the opposite side. Making a hole through the wall beside the door, he pushed the bolt back and opened the door. To get through the chapel door opposite, Sheppard broke one of its spikes (which he kept for further use), then got through to an entry between the chapel and lower leads. This entry door was almost impenetrable; however, Sheppard, with darkness approaching, finally forced it open in half an hour. But this only led him to another room which was barred and bolted as well as locked. Wrenching the fillet from the main door, the box and the staples came loose. After this, there was yet another door to open which he did with little difficulty. At this point Sheppard finally gained his freedom. (pp. 117-19)

What impresses the reader about Sheppard's final prison escape is the seemingly superhuman effort required to accomplish it. To be sure the details of Caleb's escape are not exactly those of Sheppard's just cited. However, Caleb's physical endurance, the obstacles to be surmounted--removing handcuffs, iron window bars, loosening brick and mortar, and opening locked doors--all remind one of the above excerpt concerning Sheppard.

In the novel Caleb too expends an awesome amount of energy in executing a masterful, Sheppard-like escape. The
Following summarizes the hero's rigorous activities:

After removing his handcuffs with a chisel, Caleb then filed through not only his fetters but also through three iron bars of his cell window, all of which took more than two hours. Drawing out the severed iron bars from the window and finding the space still too small for his frame, Caleb loosened and removed about twenty bricks near the window itself which enabled him to get through the opening and atop a "sort of shed" on the outside. Now "in a kind of rude area between two dead walls," and having no means to scale the wall [which Sheppard had done in one of his escapes], Caleb entered the shed after first breaking its lock with the broken link of one of his chains. Concealed in the shed, Caleb began to force "a practicable breach in the lower part of the wall, which was...stone on the outside, with a facing of brick within." After removing "a considerable part of the brickwork of the outer wall," Caleb "came to the stone," which was considerably more difficult, its mortar appearing "one solid rock of the hardest adamant." Caleb, "engaged in incredible labour" for about six hours, finally removed enough stone to make his escape. Commenting on his "seemingly invincible difficulty," Caleb notes that the "pile of bricks...[he] had left in the strong room was considerable"; nevertheless, "it was a mole-hill compared with the ruins...[he] had forced from the outer wall." Caleb was further "assured that the work...thus performed would have been to a common labourer, with every advantage of tools, the business of two or three days."

(CII, 14)

Caleb had begun his operations at ten o'clock at night and had made good his escape at day break. The hero reports that his total effort amounted to about nine hours (II, 14), the approximate length of time it took Sheppard to escape; the latter had begun his labors about three in the afternoon and was at liberty by midnight (NC, pp. 117-19).

Certainly the escapes of Sheppard and Caleb are by no means identical in details. But the efforts of Sheppard were
herculean to be sure and most certainly impressed more minds than just those of the street urchins. Godwin, attracted to the energy and vitality of Sheppard, undoubtedly patterned Caleb's escape after Sheppard's third and final escape from Newgate.

Another similarity between the adventures of Sheppard and Caleb is suggested by a comparison of their activities after their respective escapes. The NC account concerning Sheppard reveals that he disguises himself, as will Caleb in the novel, as a beggar, then goes to an inn and overhears vivid tales of his escape. In the NC biography Sheppard's activities are reported as follows:

[Sheppard] tied a handkerchief about his head, tore his woollen cap in several places, and likewise tore his coat and stockings, so as to have the appearance of a beggar; and in this condition he went to a cellar near Charing Cross, where he supped on roasted veal, and listened to the conversation of the company, all of whom were talking of the escape of Sheppard.

On the Monday he sheltered himself at a public house of little trade in Rupert Street, and, conversing with the landlady about Sheppard, he told her it was impossible for him to get out of the kingdom, and the keepers would certainly have him again in a few days; on which the woman wished that a curse might fall on those who should betray him. (pp. 120-21)

Caleb recounts his own post-prison activities citing details which recall those of Sheppard's adventures. In Caleb's case the disguise and inn scene occurs, not as in Sheppard's situation two days after his escape, but rather several weeks later following his stay with the thieves in
the forest. Although the time sequence is different, the particulars are almost the same. Caleb reports his experiences, not in London, but somewhere in the country. Choosing the disguise of a beggar, Caleb says that he tied a handkerchief about his head taking care to cover one of his eyes; then he drew over the handkerchief "a piece of an old woollen night-cap," and selecting "the worst apparel" he could find, he "reduced...[it] to a still more deplorable condition by rents...purposely made in various places" (III, 4). Thus disguised as a beggar, Caleb goes to an inn and overhears the animated discussion of three or four laborers about "the notorious housebreaker, Kit Williams" (III, 5). Later after the men have gone, Caleb approaches the landlady and gets a similar response to that which Sheppard received from the landlady at Charing Cross in London. Caleb reports indirectly the following glowing description of "Kit Williams" by the "hostess, a buxom, bluff, good-humoured widow." She commented that "as she was informed...[Kit Williams] was as handsome, likely a lad, as any in four counties round; and that she loved him for his cleverness, by which he outwitted all the keepers they could set over him, and made his way through stone walls as if they were so many cobwebs" (III, 5).

And like Sheppard, Caleb continues his disguise to elicit from the landlady her further reactions to "the notorious housebreaker." Caleb "observed that the country was so
thoroughly alarmed" that he did not think it possible that Kit Williams "should escape the pursuit that was set up after him" to which the landlady indignantly responded that "she hoped he was far enough away by this time, but if not, she wished the curse of God might light on them that betrayed so noble a fellow to an ignominious end!" (III, 5).

Conclusion

Caleb's adventures, in and out of prison, are indeed Sheppardian in daring, strength, ingenuity, and romance. Godwin's use of Sheppard's biography is certain, and because the allusions are so obvious, it is reasonable to conclude that what appear, in Caleb's narration, to be references to Aram and Wild are, in fact, just that. That Godwin alluded to three major criminals in details and circumstances of the novel not only confirms his "extreme conversance" with the NC, but also suggests, as noted earlier, a reaction to the NC's emphasis on the criminal's depravity. For Godwin's interest in the Newgate "villain" centered not on the criminal's corruptibility, but rather on his potential, particularly that display of "ingenuity, resourcefulness and a capacity born of earlier experience to adapt to new situations." Those scenes in CW, which by showing Caleb's creative energy also recall the NC, become both a testament to the hero's energies and abilities and a lamentation for
their ultimate destruction. For indeed Caleb responds brilliantly to the exigencies of his persecution—his escape from jail, his disguises, his linguistic study. But like the criminal whose aspirations and potential fail to flourish in a society prejudiced against him, one finds Caleb, at the conclusion of his narration, spiritually broken—his hopes and vitality once fresh and promising, now dissipated and destroyed.

If one accepts Caleb as a spokesman for Godwin's utilitarianism, at least in part, then ultimately one must agree to the hero's assessment that "in a happier field and a purer air," Caleb's, the criminal's, and by metaphorical extension, all men's capacities "would expand into virtue and germinate into usefulness" (III, Postscript).
FOOTNOTES

1 William Godwin, The Adventures of Caleb Williams or Things as They Are, ed. with intro. by George Sherburn, 3rd ed. (1797; amended by collation with the Bentley text of 1831; Rpt. San Francisco: Rinehart Press, 1960). Hereafter referred to as CW. References to textual material in the novel are given first by volume, then by chapter number.

2 Andrew Knapp, The Newgate Calendar or Malefactors’ Bloody Register (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1932). "A selection from the work originally compiled by A. Knapp and W. Baldwin," British Museum Catalogue Accessions, 27, Aug., 1932. Hereafter referred to as the NC. This is the basic source used in the following research. At times, however other sources are referred to for information either regarding the NC itself or specific criminals therein: e.g., Arthur Griffiths, Chronicles of Newgate; Frank W. Chandler, The Literature of Robbery; Eric Watson, Eugene Aram: His Life and Trial; Sandra L. Kerman, introduction to The Newgate Calendar (a condensed version of the "deluxe five-volume edition of The Newgate Calendar" published in 1771 or 1773); Keith Hollingsworth, The Newgate Novel; Anthony Babington, The English Bastille: A History of Newgate Gaol and Prison Conditions in Britain 1188-1902.


9 Rudolf F. Storch, "Metaphors of Private Guilt and Social Rebellion in Godwin's Caleb Williams," ELH, 34, No. 2 (1967), 188.


11 SEL, 12, No. 4 (1972).

12 Woodcock, p. 117.

13 Keith Hollingsworth, The Newgate Novel 1830-1847: Bulwer, Ainsworth, Dickens & Thackeray (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1963), p. 6. Hollingsworth claims that the "primary right to the name of Newgate Calendar for a book of criminal lives seems to belong to a [five-volume] work of 1773, The Newgate Calendar, or, Malefactors' Bloody Register." It is likely that Godwin would have owned this edition.


15 Arthur Griffiths, The Chronicles of Newgate (London: Chapman and Hall, 1884), p. 200. "Tyburn," reports Sandra L. Kerman, "situated about two miles from Newgate, was the traditional place of execution in London, and Tyburn became the generic name for these locations." Intro., The Newgate Calendar, p. iv.

16 The same.

21 Sandra Lee Kerman, intro. to The Newgate Calendar or Malefactors' Bloody Register (New York: Capricorn Books, 1962), pp. v-vi.

22 Woodcock, pp. 116-17.


24 Caleb had already been tried, convicted, and sentenced to prison on Falkland's false charge of theft. Caleb, however, escapes and is at large for approximately ten years before the final trial which establishes Falkland's guilt and Caleb's innocence of the theft of Falkland's goods.


27 Watson, p. 184.

28 The same, pp. 134, 181.

29 Quoted in Paul, William Godwin: His Friends and Contemporaries, I, 11.
The following allusions to Sheppard in CW had been discovered before I read Eric Rothstein's "Allusion and Analogy in the Romance of Caleb Williams." In his article Rothstein also noted that Caleb's escape- and post-prison activities recall Sheppard. Rothstein claims, however, that these references to Sheppard reinforce Caleb's guilt. I contend, however, that the allusions point up Caleb's creative energy and its ultimate tragic loss.

Griffiths, p. 184.

The same.
LIST OF WORKS CONSULTED


