Percy Bysshe Shelley

(1792-1822)

--unconventional

--expelled from Oxford for writing a pamphlet on atheism, which started

long quarrel with father

--Dad called him a “literary freak”

--friends with Lord Byron, part of “horror story weekend” in Switzerland

--Soap Opera life: At 19, married 16 year old Harriet to rescue her from

tyrant of a father. At 22, ran away with another 16 year Mary Godwin.

Left country for Switzerland, flaunted relationship all around Eng.

Not long after his returning to England, Harriet drowned herself.

Shelley free to marry Mary, but lost custody of his children w/

Harriet.

--secluded himself in England and wrote LOTS, but got heavily into DEBT

--left country, exiled self to Italy where writing most productive; wrote,

read, learned different languages

--During last 4 years of his life, 4 of his children died (2 from Harriet,

2 from Mary) – knew grief

-- Shelley and a friend DROWNED while sailing. Shelley was 29.

Washed ashore with books of Keats’ poetry and Sophocles in

pockets –body cremated