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Editorial

NOT ALL Elians may be aware of an ambitious, multi-volume production from America entitled *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*. It aims to produce biographical summaries and extracts from the work of novelists, poets, playwrights, short story writers, and other creative writers who lived between 1900 and 1960. Those of you who do subscribe will know that it has now reached (unbelievably, perhaps) volume 73, and in doing so has arrived at E. V. Lucas (pp. 151-75). Lucas enthusiasts will find much of interest here about his involvement with the work of the Lambs, including an excerpt from Claude Prance's essay from this *Bulletin* (October 1974), pp. 157-62.

One of our most energetic Elians, George Soule, formerly of Carleton College, has just published what will no doubt prove a very useful volume, *Four British Women Novelists: Anita Brookner, Margaret Drabble, Iris Murdoch, Barbara Pym—An Annotated and Critical Secondary Bibliography*. It is published by the Scarecrow Press, 4720 Boston Way, Lanham, Maryland 20706, USA. We wish him luck with the volume.

All those who were able to attend will recall with pleasure this year's birthday luncheon at the Royal College of General Practitioners, Princes Gate in London. One of the highlights of the event was Professor John Beer's toast to the assembled company, and we are pleased to be able to present it in these pages. In addition, we present an essay by Scott McEathron on Hazlitt's famous portrait of Lamb in the National Portrait Gallery; Professor McEathron will be lecturing to the Society in London in 1999. And Mary Wedd has allowed us to publish the lecture she delivered at the Wordsworth Winter School in 1997 on Wordsworth's shorter lyric poems of spring 1802.

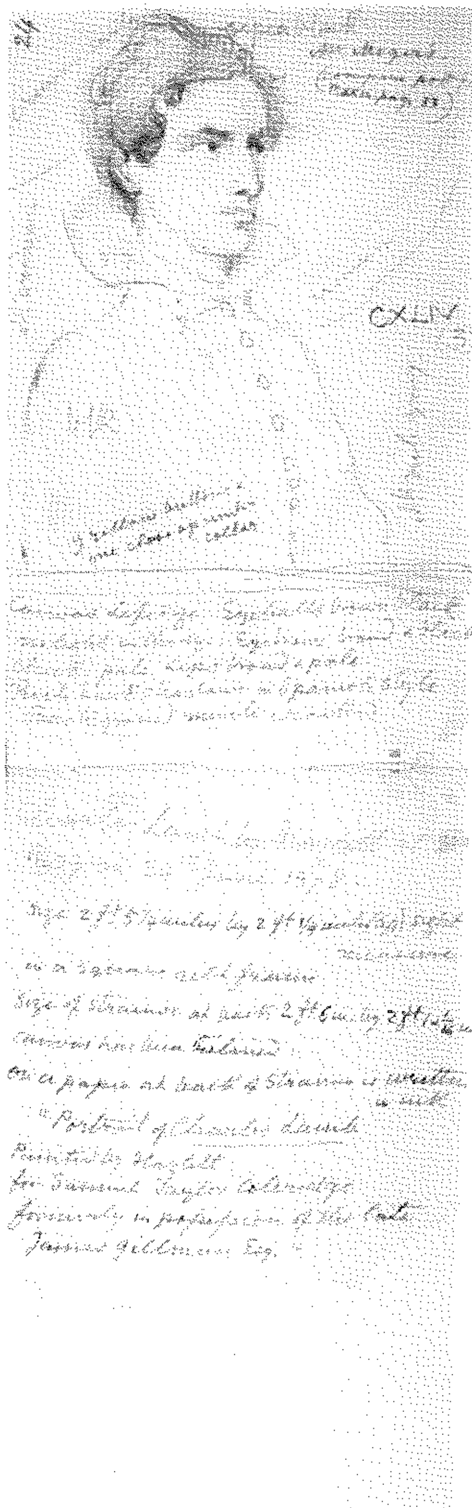
Hazlitt's Portrait of Charles Lamb: An Early Institutional History

By SCOTT McEATHRON

WILLIAM HAZLITT'S 1804 PORTRAIT of Charles Lamb is a Romantic artifact of surpassing interest. Now hanging in the Romantics Room of the National Portrait Gallery, it is the best preserved of those few Hazlitt paintings still in existence, and arguably our finest remaining link to Hazlitt's artistic talent and aspirations. Its depiction of Lamb as a dashing young man, though not applauded by all of Lamb's acquaintances, helps illustrate Hazlitt's attraction to subjects who exhibited an 'intense personal character' and who seemed, in their perfect self-possession, to 'exercis[e] a discretionary power' over the viewer.[1] Even as the painting offers a valuable means of exploring Hazlitt's artistic performance in relationship to his aesthetic theory, in particular his theories of portraiture,[2] it also comes with a particularly rich institutional history, the result of nineteenth-century uncertainties about its provenance and authenticity. It is this latter concern, and specifically the purchase of the painting by the National Portrait Gallery in 1878, that is the focus of this essay. A reconstruction of events surrounding the painting's acquisition, based on a remarkable series of letters preserved at the Heinz Archive of the National Portrait Gallery and published here for the first time, offers a Victorian-era account of the personal and cultural genealogies of Lamb and Hazlitt.

The painting dates to the aftermath of Hazlitt's journey to the Louvre during the winter of 1802-3, where, inflamed with artistic ambition, he copied Titians, Raphaels, and other Old Masters. The two or three years after Hazlitt returned from France are, however, poorly documented, and the sole contemporary reference to the Lamb portrait comes not from Hazlitt himself, but from a letter of Mary Lamb to Sara Coleridge, dated 13 October 1804: 'I have lately been often talking of you with Mrs Hazlitt. William Hazlitt is painting my brother's picture, which has brought us acquainted with the whole family'.[3] The portrait is a half-length, 30 x 25, showing Lamb in the dress of 'a Spaniard or Venetian senator', wearing a dark cape with upstanding collar. It is now one of the most familiar images of Lamb, reproduced in Lucas's 1905 biography, as the frontispiece to Lucas's *Letters* (1935), and also serving as the basis for the engraving by Edward Smith first used in Lamb's *Poetical Works* (1836); see figure 3.

[1] *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt* ed. P. P. Howe (21 vols., London, 1930-4) (hereafter Howe), xii. 285.
[2] For discussions of Hazlitt as an art critic and theorist, see Norman Bryson, 'Hazlitt on Painting', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 37 (1978) 37-45; Roy Park, 'The Painter as Critic: Hazlitt's Theory of Abstraction', *PMLA* 85 (1970) 1072-81; J. D. O'Hara, 'Hazlitt and Romantic Criticism of the Fine Arts', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 27 (1968) 73-85; Richard Verdi, 'Hazlitt and Poussin', *Keats-Shelley Review* 32 (1981) 1-18; John Barrell, *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt* (New Haven, 1986), pp. 308-41; David Bromwich, *Hazlitt: The Mind of a Critic* (Oxford, 1983), pp. 104-29, 197-229; Douglas Kinnaird, *William Hazlitt: Critic of Power* (New York, 1978), pp. 129-64.
[3] *The Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb* ed. E. V. Lucas (3 vols., London 1935) (hereafter Lucas), i. 380. Perhaps the best documented event from this period of Hazlitt's life is his disastrous trip to the Lake District in the summer of 1803.



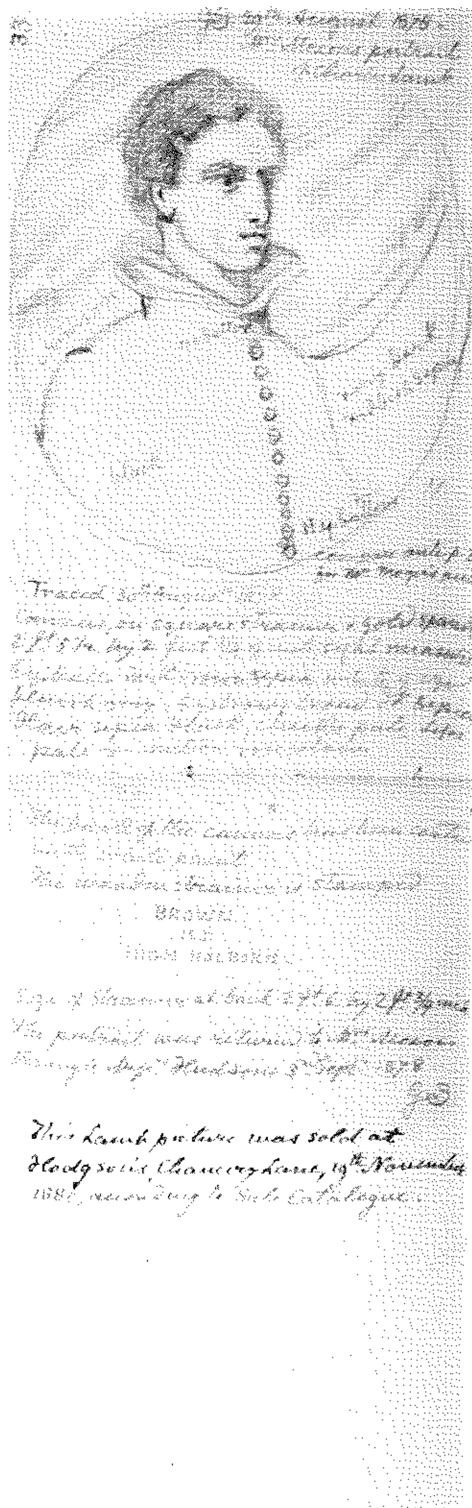


Fig. 1: George Scharf's sketch of Moger's painting Fig. 2: George Scharf's Sketch of Moxon's painting
Both sketches appear by courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, London

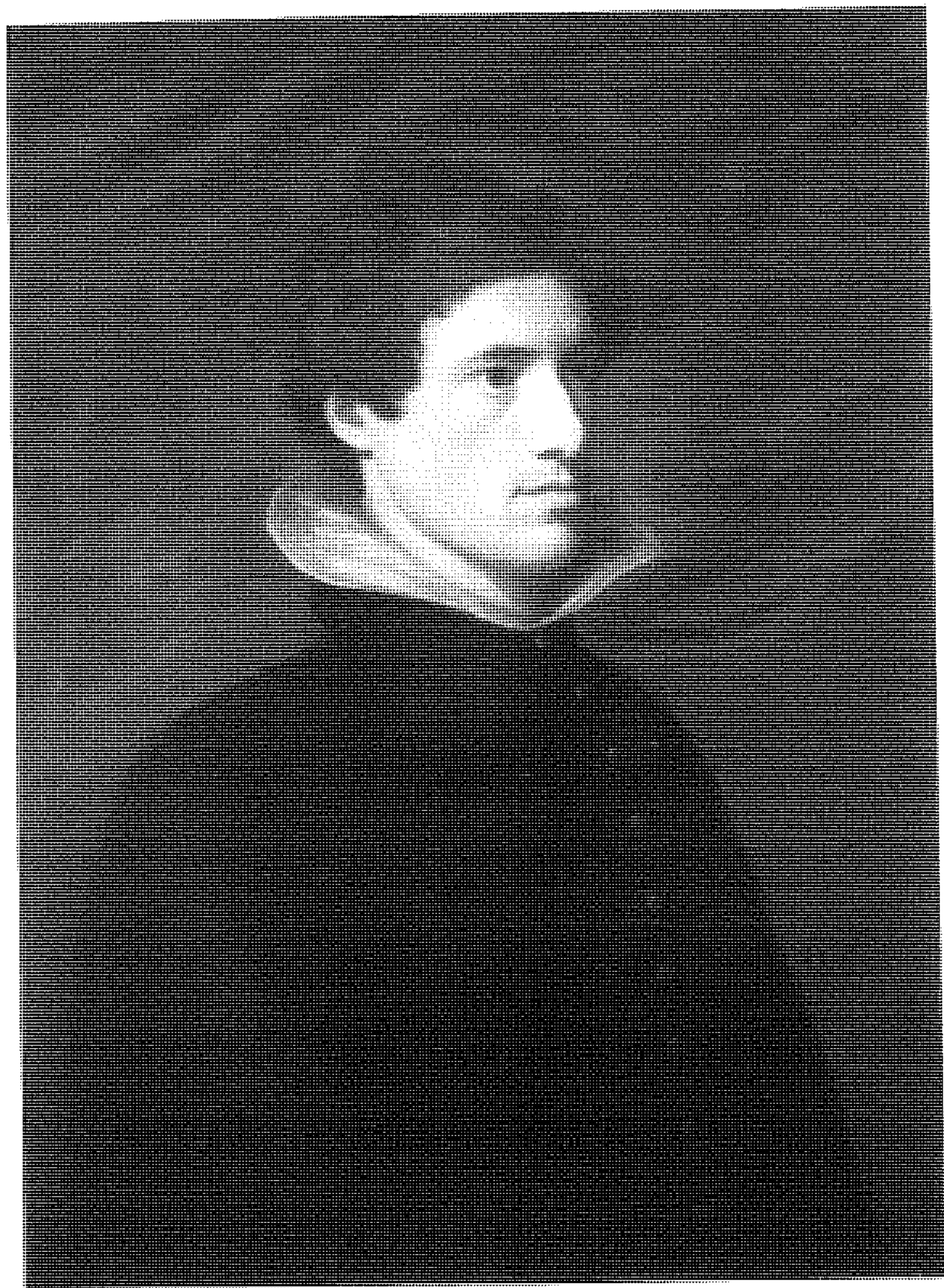


Fig. 3: 'Charles Lamb' by William Hazlitt (1804)
By courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, London

Hazlitt may have intended the portrait as a gift for Coleridge, who had it in his possession some time after his move to the Highgate residence of Dr James Gillman in 1816.[4] For the better part of several decades the portrait remained in Highgate, where by degrees its ownership shifted: it passed first from Coleridge to Gillman upon Coleridge's death in 1834, and then, after Gillman's death in 1839, from his wife to his medical partner Robert Moger. This, at least, is the provenance provided by Moger himself when he put the painting up for sale in 1878, but it took some time for his account to be confirmed. The central ambiguity was the existence of a copy of the painting, a copy which Moger himself inadvertently brought to the surface when he began his search for buyers. The story, then, is actually of two paintings, and two Elian genealogies, one extending from the Coleridge circle at Highgate, and the other extending from Edward Moxon, Lamb's publisher.

In the spring of 1878, Moger, in declining health and planning retirement, began seeking buyers for various of his effects. He first wrote Lamb's publisher and friend Edward Moxon—unaware that Moxon had died in 1858—offering him first option on the Lamb portrait.

> Highgate/May 26, 1878
>
> Dear Sir,
>
> Long continued ill-health and much impaired sight, have at length compelled me most unwillingly to retire from the practice of my profession—shall leave Highgate as soon as I can let my house & shall dispose of some of my pictures & books. Amongst the pictures is that Portrait of Charles Lamb by Hazlitt which I lent you some years gone—as you may like to purchase it—I make you the first offer thereof.
>
> Amongst the books are some with manuscript notes by S.T.C. If you do not want the picture, you may probably know some one who would be eager to buy it. I shall be glad to let any one see it who may have this wish. I have 'stuck to' Lambs portrait all this time, because my dear old friend & former partner the late James Gillman used to say of this picture with peculiar emphasis 'Tis the picture of the man I love painted by the man I hate' —£15 [sic][5]
>
> Really Gillman hated nobody, he was too good for that.
>
> yours faithfully
>
> Robt. Moger[6]

A couple of things incidental to Moger's attempt to sell the painting might be noted about this first letter. One is the painting's accrued emotional value: Gillman's beloved link to Lamb is redoubled through Moger's memory of Gillman. Yet this talk of love and passionate loyalty makes Gillman's bitter feelings for Hazlitt stand out all the more. It is unlikely that Gillman ever met

[4] There is uncertainty about both of these matters. In a letter to W. P. Sherlock (15 November 1834), Lamb says that the portrait had been made for John Stoddard, who was in Malta at the time (Lucas iii. 420). Coleridge went to Malta, at Stoddard's invitation, in May 1804, and left in September 1805. The portrait of Lamb may have been exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1805, under the title 'Portrait of a Gentleman'. In 1827 it was in the possession of Edward White of the Accountant's office, India House. See Lamb's letter to Leigh Hunt (Lucas iii. 144-5).

[5] This '£15' perplexed Scharf, and though it seems logical to think it connected to Moger's later asking price (150 guineas), neither Scharf nor Frederick Locker saw such a connection. Locker later wrote, 'I do not know what the "£15" relates to—probably nothing at all' (NPG 507).

[6] This letter is held in NPG Registry Packet 507. I thank K. K. Yung, Head of Documentation at the National Portrait Gallery, for kind permission to quote from this and other letters regarding this sale. All transcriptions are my own, though in a few cases I am following from Scharf's handwritten transcriptions. Small portions of some of the letters, unrelated to the narrative of the portraits, have been deleted as noted.

Hazlitt in person, but because several of Hazlitt's most vituperative attacks on Coleridge appeared in print shortly after Coleridge's arrival at Highgate, Gillman had ample cause for antipathy.[7] Moger's closing attempt at a retraction ('Really Gillman hated nobody') is hard to credit, since Gillman's feelings were evidently so frequently repeated as to have produced a prized rhetorical formulation: 'the picture of the man I love painted by the man I hate'.

Moger's offer to Moxon did not draw an immediate response (Emma Moxon had in fact forwarded his letter to her son); and Moger quickly turned to other avenues. Three days later he wrote to F. Claude Webster, Secretary of the Athenaeum Club, thinking '[p]erhaps [the portrait] would find a purchaser among the members',[8] and Webster in turn sent Moger's letter on to George Scharf at the National Portrait Gallery.[9] A visit to Moger's home was arranged, and Scharf sketched the painting on 24 June, noting, among other things, a note attached to the stretcher which said 'Painted by Hazlitt for Samuel Taylor Coleridge' (fig. 1).[10] Moger then delivered the picture to Scharf on 26 June, reporting that 'From the Gillmans it passed into my possession in the year 1840', and telling Scharf that the price was 'one hundred & fifty guineas'.[11]

Negotiations between Moger and the National Portrait Gallery might have proceeded straightforwardly, except for one thing: sometime in late June or early July Scharf discovered that Emma Moxon had a very similar portrait of Charles Lamb, which she believed to be an original Hazlitt. Before pursuing the details of these conflicting narratives, it is worth pausing to consider what a delicate situation Emma Moxon's claim created for Scharf. In the 1820s Charles and Mary Lamb had for several extended periods lodged the young Emma Isola in their household; they had contributed to her schooling, nursed her through illness, helped secure her a position as a governess, and helped make possible her marriage to Edward Moxon in 1833. To all effects, she was, as Richard Monckton Milnes described her, the Lambs' 'adopted daughter'.[12] Whatever emotional value Gillman and Moger may have vested in the Lamb portrait at Highgate, Emma Moxon also had a portrait of a man she loved.

Scharf's sensitivity to Emma Moxon's claims was doubtless heightened by the widely known financial and management troubles which had beset Moxon & Co. since her husband's death in 1858, and which led eventually to the firm's collapse in 1871. Run in these years under a series of legal configurations, the firm for much of the 1860s was effectively controlled by John B. Payne, whose legal maneouverings and consolidations of power prompted Emma and Arthur Henry Moxon to bring suit against him in 1873. Though the Moxons finally prevailed in court,[13] Emma Moxon's continuing financial plight led several public figures to come to her aid, including Frederick Locker (later Locker-Lampson) and Richard Monckton Milnes. Locker, the extraordinarily well-connected bibliophile, art collector, and poet of *vers de société*, raised a

[7] See, for example, Hazlitt's reviews of *The Statesman's Manual* in *The Examiner* (8 September and 29 December 1816), and of the *Biographia Literaria* in the *Edinburgh Review* (August 1817).

[8] NPG 507.

[9] Scharf was made the Gallery's first Secretary in 1857, and led the institution for nearly 40 years, during which the time the collection grew from 57 pictures to nearly a thousand. He was made a KCB in the months shortly before his death in 1895.

[10] The sketch is preserved at the NPG in Scharf's *Sketchbook* XXVI:24. Coincidentally, Scharf's father had visited Highgate more than forty years earlier, and made a drawing of Coleridge's room at Gillman's. This 1835 drawing, reprinted in Rosemary Ashton, *The Life of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (Oxford, 1996), shows a portrait over Coleridge's fireplace, but it does not appear to be the portrait of Lamb.

[11] NPG 507.

[12] T. Wemyss Reid, *The Life, Letters, and Friendships of Richard Monckton Milnes, First Lord Houghton* (2 vols., New York, 1891), i. 248.

[13] See *Times*, 29 May 1873, p. 11; 13 June 1873, p. 12.

subscription fund.[14] Monckton Milnes, having tried unsuccessfully to secure her a Civil List Pension, also took up a fund on her behalf. Writing to Gladstone on Christmas Day 1873, he reflected, 'I thought that public opinion would recognise a certain claim in anyone so closely connected by association and family life with "Elia"'.[15] Whatever safety net these private funds created for Emma Moxon, for the rest of her life she would continue to live in reduced circumstances. When she died in 1891 her estate, according to Harold Merriam, was valued at £665, while her husband's estate upon his death in 1858, including the publishing business, had been valued at approximately £16,000.[16]

All of this lies in the background, then, to letters exchanged among Moger, Scharf, Emma Moxon, and Locker during July and August of 1878. It is not quite possible to ascertain their chronology, as several were written virtually simultaneously, and at least a few have not survived, but most of the important details can be reconstructed. Locker had a crucial role, acting as an intermediary who had the confidence of both Emma Moxon and Scharf.

In a letter of 11 July, Scharf informed Moger of Emma Moxon's belief that she too had a portrait of Lamb by Hazlitt. Disclaiming any 'positive' knowledge of a copy, Moger's reply of the following day nonetheless points to the likely source of the controversy. Edward Moxon, he says, had borrowed his painting 'some years ago', as a model for a 'differently arranged' picture or drawing of Lamb.

> On the Bank/Highgate.N./July 12th 1878
>
> Dear Sir
>
> In answer to your letter of the 11th [?inst.] I have to state that I do not know of, nor did I ever hear of the existence of any replica or copy of Charles Lambs Picture painted by Hazlitt. Some years ago Mr. Moxon the Elder—Lamb's publisher asked me to let him use Lambs picture, not for the purpose of making a *copy* of that picture, for he promised that the painting or drawing (I know not which) he wished to have done should not be a copy but differently arranged—I never saw any drawing or picture, nor do I positively know Mr. Moxon had one taken—The picture has been in my possession for nearly forty years—from various circumstances I feel quite sure that no other portrait of Charles Lamb was painted by William Hazlitt, or I should have heard some mention made of it,—when the picture came into my possession. I hope your Trustees will be liberal towards me & add another fifty to the price talked of between us at our interview when you first saw the picture & were then in some doubt as to its authenticity which can now be certainly no longer be the case—
>
> Believe me
> Yours sincerely,
> Robert S. Moger[17]

As credibly as Moger here addresses the question of his painting's authenticity, we know from his follow-up letter three days later that Scharf had, at some point, voiced other sorts of reservations about the painting as well. In this succeeding letter, dated 15 July, Moger defends Lamb's

[14] Perhaps it was Locker's fund that Monckton Milnes referred to in a letter of 25 March 1874: 'I have heard nothing of Isola's pension, where did you hear of it from?' (Reid, op. cit., i. 292).
[15] Ibid., p. 248.
[16] Harold G. Merriam, *Edward Moxon: Publisher of Poets* (New York, 1939), pp. 193-5.
[17] NPG 507.

'Spanish Don' costume, which Scharf must have suggested was anachronistic, before briefly turning to the issue of the painting's physical condition.

> Dear Sir,
> It quite grieves me to think that you differ from me in opinion with regard to the costume in which Charles Lamb has been painted by Hazlitt in the portrait I sent to you—You must remember that this is the only representation of Charles Lamb in his early manhood—he being then in his twenty ninth year, a time of life at which I should think all Worthies should be presented to the Nation.—As to the costume, it is not unlikely that Lamb might have been assisting at some private or public theatricals, & that he or his friends thought it suited him. I suppose Charles Lamb was once young but all the representations I have ever seen of him, drawings, etchings &c—have been those of an old [?spindled] shrunken man a cross between a 'moist' methodist parson & a grave digger. This is certainly not the mode in which such a man as Charles Lamb should be represented to future generations. That this picture represents Lamb in the prime of his manhood there can be no possible doubt—As to the materials with which this picture is painted you are the best judge—all I can say is I have had it in my possession for nearly forty years, during which time it has not deteriorated as far as I can judge
>
> I remain Dear Sir
> Yours very Sincerely
> Robert S. Moger[18]

Moger was at least somewhat justified in his conviction that other representations of Lamb tended to render him aged and 'shrunken'. Robert Hancock's pencil and chalk drawing of Lamb at age 23, acquired by the NPG just a year earlier, had been described by Southey in strangely equivocal terms: 'It looks older that Lamb did at that time, but he was old-looking'.[19] Similarly, Henry Meyer's 1826 portrait of Lamb was described by Henry Crabb Robinson as having a 'strong likeness', but looking 'more like the framer of a system of Philosophy than the genial and gay author of the 'Essays of Elia'.[20] The late, double portrait of Charles and Mary Lamb by Francis Stephen Cary, dating from the summer of 1834, is particularly grim, though commended by Emma Moxon as 'perfectly characteristic of Charles Lamb and his sister'.[21] Offered for sale (without positive result) to the NPG in 1881, it was donated in 1895.[22] If these portraits were all generally good likenesses which nonetheless inclined towards depicting Lamb as 'a gravedigger', the Highgate portrait offered a decisively youthful alternative.[23]

Even so, Scharf's concerns about Lamb's costume—and, more fundamentally, about the painting's condition—were only proper given what the painting might potentially represent for the NPG and the nation: a more or less permanent iconographic image of Lamb. Scharf had to be certain about the value of the painting as an appropriate representation of Lamb, and as an appropriate investment. Moger's defense of the 'materials with which [the] picture is painted',

[18] NPG 507. I have omitted here the letter's postscript, in which Moger describes to Scharf some unrelated books he is attempting to sell through Christie's.

[19] C. C. Southey, *The Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey* (6 vols., London, 1849-50), vi. 287.

[20] 26 May 1826, *The Diary of Henry Crabb Robinson* ed. Thomas Sadler (3 vols., London, 1869), i. 369n.

[21] Lucas iii. 407.

[22] Richard Walker, *Regency Portraits* (2 vols., London, 1985), i. 304.

[23] Crabb Robinson judged it 'certainly the only painting by Hazlitt that I ever saw with pleasure' (Sadler, op. cit., i. 368n), but DeQuincey decribed it as 'far from being a good likeness . . . more nearly resembling John Hamilton Reynolds' (E. V. Lucas, *The Life of Charles Lamb* (2 vols., London, 1906), ii. 291).

for example, is doubtless in reply to Scharf's knowledge (or notice) of techniques the artist had used which threatened the long-term stability of the painting. As best as can be judged, it appears that throughout his career Hazlitt employed both a bituminous, tar-like derivative as a pigment, and the varnish megilp, often in multiple coats, as a finish. Together these materials can damage a painting in two ways over a period of years. The bituminous underlayer will tend to make the paint crack and pull apart as it slowly dries, while the varnish, intended to give an instant Rembrandt-like glow to newly finished work, will steadily darken. Most of Hazlitt's surviving works, including his fine self-portrait on display at the Maidstone Museum, have suffered in the long term because of his use of these materials.[24] The Lamb portrait is today the brightest of the known Hazlitt paintings, but even so it has been necessary to restore it extensively in order to suppress separation *craquelure*. Perhaps in 1878, however, Scharf's main concern was fundamentally one of authenticity, and these questions of physical condition and 'costume' primarily allowed him a means of temporizing while he hoped to gain a reliable provenance for Emma Moxon's painting.

In any case, Moger's original asking price, 150 guineas, would doubtless have taxed the NPG's budget, which at the time—covering all staff salaries, expenses, and acquisitions—was £2,000 per annum.[25] Scharf's confidants also thought the Lamb portrait would be especially desirable if verifiably by Hazlitt. His friend Richard Holmes wrote from Windsor Castle, saying the painting is 'very curious & good', and suggesting that it might be worth £200. Locker commented that 'If Moger is right, his picture is much more valuable than I thought. . . . but of course [?you] cannot appraise a property of this sort'.[26]

As these exchanges with Moger proceeded, Scharf asked Locker to find out what he could from Emma Moxon. Her most detailed surviving account is told in a letter to Locker of 16 July:

> 34 Buckingham Rd. Brighton./16 July 1878
>
> Dear Mr Locker
>
> I must first of all apologize to you for not answering your letter at once but on receipt of it I wrote to Arthur who was too unwell to reply until last night, as I he [sic] had made some confusion in name when he spoke to you about a portrait of Lamb by Hazlitt in the possession of Mr Moger. I remember that Mr Lamb once gave two or three sittings to an artist named [?Buss], but I never heard that Hazlitt painted two portraits of Mr Lamb. I cannot help thinking that my late husband would like have to known [sic] there were two portraits by Hazlitt, he always spoke of the one now in our possession as being an original if he had thought it was only a copy I am sure he would not have valued it so much. My late husband bought it from Mrs Gilman where Coleridge used to live.
>
> The portrait in Lambs works I presume is after our picture. We have not that edition, but Arthur has promised to send us one tomorrow so that I can compare it with ours and will then write to you again. Arthur has sent me a letter from Mr Moger which I enclose to you & says he wrote to him since about the books but has received no answer. Arthur also says he remembers Mr Moger sending Payne some *print* or *engraving* about the year 1866, he

[24] I thank Veronica Tonge, Keeper of Fine Arts at the Maidstone Museum, for her invaluable assistance with Hazlitt's paintings, as well as for her generosity in granting me access to Hazlitt material at Maidstone. For further discussion of Hazlitt's painting techniques, see Kinnaird, op. cit., pp. 141-5.

[25] *Times*, 9 June 1879, p. 6.

[26] 18 June and 15 July 1878, in NPG 507.

> does not think it was ever used in any way. I will write again directly Arthur sends the portraits. . . . [Emma Moxon.][27]

In laying particular emphasis on a 'print or engraving' borrowed around 1866, Emma Moxon seems to imply that Moger did not ever lend her husband a portrait of Charles Lamb. Nonetheless it should be noted that her remembrance shares many of the elements of Moger's story: the storage of the painting at Highgate; its purchase (or acquisition) from Mrs Gillman; Moger's one-time loan (of something) to the Moxons. On the basis of this letter, which Locker seems to have sent along to Scharf with a hastily written note of his own on 17 July, Locker did not think the matter resolved. His tone throughout, as well as his reference to Scharf's 'meeting', suggests that Scharf was trying to resolve the issue against some deadline:

> Dear Mr Scharf,
> I came to town last night, & the enclosed was brought to my bedside early this morning & I hasten to send it on to you, to reach you before yr. meeting if possible. I cannot make out the name of the Artist Mrs Moxon mentions (IS IT MEYERS?) but from my hasty reading of the letter I do not think the question is settled as to the two pictures. You see Mrs Moxon encloses to me a letter Mr Moger sent to her in May. I write in haste to catch you & from bed! I go down to Rowfant this afternoon. What shall I say to Mrs Moxon? She is a good old Lady. FL.[28]

When Locker wrote Scharf again on 25 July, he had adopted a cloak-and-dagger tone not present elsewhere in the correspondence: 'no doubt she has been advised, by those about her, *not* to do what we want. You will use Yr. discretion as to your next move'.[29] Unfortunately it is impossible to surmise what Scharf and Locker 'wanted' Emma Moxon to do. But a week later she had sent her painting directly to Scharf for evaluation, noting at the time that she knew 'it would be better for a coat of varnish'.[30] Scharf began a reply to her on the 26th, but apparently decided not to send the letter. His fragmentary draft is as follows:

> Dear Madam,
> I had scarcely received your obliging letter this morning when the picture of Charles Lamb came to hand, delivered, as you stated it would be, by Mr Wm. Hudson the Removal Contractor—Expenses are paid. I hereby acknowledge the receipt into our care of the portrait of Charles Lamb mentioned by Mr. Locker [?about]. It is extremely interesting and I should very much like to show it to Mr. Theodore Martin & Mr. Browning and also to Lord Hardinge Chairman of the Trustees of this Gallery.[31]

The letter he did send is not dated until 29 August:

> Dear Madam,
> The Hazlitt portrait of Charles Lamb which you so obligingly sent to London for our inspection at this Gallery unfortunately arrived rather too late (26th July) for some of our principal [?members] to enjoy a sight of it.

[27] NPG 507. The letter's last lines and postscript, unrelated to the subject of the painting, have been omitted.
[28] Ibid. Even granting the difficulty of Emma Moxon's script, I cannot account for the differences between Locker's speculative reading of the other artist's name ('Meyers') and my own conjectural reading of 'Buss'.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid.

Lord Hardinge our Chairman had left town, but was expected to return for a few days, but did not do so. I was myself absent from London for a considerable time although within easy reach of all business communication. I am now, very shortly, about to start on a foreign tour, and as there seems to be no chance of any of the leading artistic and literary judges being in town again before the end of the year, I feel it best to request you to receive your picture again.

For that purpose, I must beg you to [?desire] Hudsons your agents to call for the picture in the same manner as before. You will please to give them some little written authority to show as a warrant for our giving up the picture and as soon as I hear that it has reached you in safety, I will defray all remaining expenses. I thank you most sincerely for the kind and prompt manner in which you have acceded to our wishes.

It is much to be regretted that the Trustees did not hold a meeting whilst the portrait remained in the building. Neither Mr Martin nor Mr Browning came to see it. They are also out of town.

Believe me, Dear Madam,
Your obedt. serv.[32]

One senses from this second letter, written more than a month after the receipt of Emma Moxon's painting, that Scharf had begun to feel substantially doubtful about the authenticity of her painting. Of course by this time he had had the opportunity to compare the works directly. The portraits were in several ways nearly identical, enough so that Moger and Emma Moxon each could plausibly conclude that their painting had served as the basis of the line engraving of Lamb by Edward Smith, used as the frontispiece to Lamb's *Poetical Works* (1836) and Talfourd's *Letters of Lamb* (1837). On this point, anyway, Scharf did not see a decisive distinction, noting that Smith's engraving 'varies to a certain extent both from the Moger & Mrs Moxon portraits'.[33] There were some important differences between the paintings, though, the most obvious being that Moxon's employed an oval canvas and frame, while Moger's was a standard rectangular half-length. Lamb's cape in each painting had a large, upright collar, but Scharf noted slight differences in the number and position of the capes' yellow buttons. Scharf's sketches also show, as he says, that Lamb's 'head and body position' varies slightly in the two works (see figs. 1 and 2). Lamb's expression is firm yet still open and direct in the Moger version, sterner and more constricted in Moxon.[34] Crucially, Scharf's examination also revealed a stamp on the stretcher of Emma Moxon's painting, reading 'BROWN, / 163, / HIGH HOLBORN, / LONDON'. This stamp, used by Brown, *c.* 1840-60, may have been for Scharf nearly decisive evidence that her painting did not date from the early years of the century.[35]

Probably Scharf had been moving conclusively in Moger's direction for several weeks, primarily because of yet another letter he had received from Moger in late July, this one setting forth what Moger called 'the whole history of Lamb's Portrait of Hazlitt'.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Of the Highgate portrait, Scharf notes: 'Eyeballs brown black' with 'no light in the eye' (fig. 1) (*Sketchbook* XXVI:24), while in Moxon he notes 'Eyeballs dark brown sepia' and 'eye bluish grey' (fig. 2) (*Sketchbook* XXVI:33).

[35] I thank K. K. Yung, Head of Documentation at the NPG, for this information.

In the Bank/Highgate/July 19, 1878

Sir—

I think I related to you the whole history of Lamb's Portrait by Hazlitt & how it came into my possession but in case I should not have done so I now write it—In the year 1837 when I joined the late Mr James Gillman as his partner, the Picture of Charles Lamb by William Hazlitt was hanging over the fireplace in his consulting room & had been hanging there for some years—Gillman called it 'the Picture of the man I love, painted by the man I hate'—Gillman died in 1839 & soon after I had *that same* picture from his Widow—About twenty five years ago old Mr Moxon of Albemarle Street (Lamb's Publisher) called on me & pressed me very much to lend him the Picture as he wanted to have a copy; he promised me that the copy should be in modern costume. This I have no doubt is the picture referred to by Mrs Moxon—When I first formed an idea of disposing of this picture I wrote to the old Mr Moxon, not knowing that he was dead, to inform him of my intention—I received no answer for some weeks & then I had a letter from a Mr Arthur Moxon asking particularly as to the Picture, its size &c—to which letter I returned an answer being by that time in communication with you. If his Mother had already been in possession of *the* picture by W. Hazlitt, it would hardly have been necessary to ask these questions. I believe the existence any other picture of Lamb by Wm. Hazlitt is altogether mythical—It would be well to inquire of Mrs Moxon at what period her husband *purchased* her picture from Mrs Gillman. If old Mr Moxon had an exact copy made of my picture there might be some ground for the mistake of his Widow, but in that case Old [sic] Mr Moxon deceived me, an action of which I should not have thought him capable. The Picture was returned to me in precisely the same state in which I lent it. Mr Moxon offered to pay me for the loan, which of course I refused. The engraving in Talfourds edition of Lambs works is from my picture, —and was done before 1837 whilst the picture was *Mr* Gillman's—consequently long before any picture of Lamb could have been purchased by old Mr Moxon of *Mrs* Gillman. Mrs Gillman has been dead for many years—the date of her death I do not precisely know.

I have the honor & be Sirs
Your Obedient Servant
Robert S. Moger[36]

This was the letter that seemed to turn the tide in Moger's favour; Scharf sent it along to Locker for his evaluation, and Locker responded on 21 July: 'I think Mr Mogers [?letter] is v. satisfactory. I cannot help thinking Mrs Moxon's portrait is the copy!'[37] On 31 August an unsolicited additional endorsement of Moger's painting appeared, in the form of an item in the *Athenaeum*:

> A portrait round which a very exceptional amount of literary interest clusters has been offered to the Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery for purchase. It is a likeness of Charles Lamb, painted by the artist and essayist, William Hazlitt, and presented to Coleridge; Coleridge left it to his friend and host, Mr Gillman, and from the widow of Mr Gillman it has come its present owner, Mr Moger. The likeness has been spoken of with special approval by Crabb Robinson in his Diary. This picture represents Lamb at the age of about thirty, in a sixteenth century Spanish costume, half length and full size; the amount of life-like variable expression in the face is very considerable, and the execution is sufficiently good to show that Hazlitt, however superior he may have been as a writer, was not by any

[36] NPG 507.

[37] Ibid.

> means without capability as a painter. A duplicate of this portrait is in the possession of Mrs Moxon; there cannot be a doubt that the original is the one now offered by Mr Moger for purchase. It has been engraved in one of the collections of Lamb's letters, but the oil picture is vastly better than the engraving.[38]

Scharf was mystified about who had written this piece,[39] but had his answer the same day when William Michael Rossetti claimed responsibility. The often prolix Rossetti is brief and self-consciously portentous. His note reads in its entirety: 'You may have seen in today's *Athenaeum* a paragraph about that portrait, & will now know to whose hand to assign it'.[40]

The unexpected entrance of a member of the Pre-Raphaelite circle into this discussion leads one to wonder how Rossetti was in a position to comment on the painting or, for that matter, even to know that the National Portrait Gallery was conducting discussions with the owners of two portraits of Charles Lamb. In all likelihood, the connection came through Locker, whom Rossetti had known since at least the 1860s, and with whom he exchanged strong opinions about the difficulties of Moxon and Co.[41] Indeed, Rossetti's strenuous endorsement of Moger's painting reflects Moger's account so directly that one wonders if Locker had shown him Moger's letters. A more tenuous possibility is that Rossetti's advocacy of the Moger painting was at least in part a knowledgeable rejection of the Moxon painting. We know that Rossetti had at least some contact with Moxon & Co. after Moxon's publication of Tennyson's *Morte d'Arthur* in 1855, and he later worked for them directly in editing the series *Moxon's Popular Poets*. If Edward Moxon had, as Moger said, been lent the Highgate portrait in the early or middle 1850s, it is at least possible that Rossetti had at some point gathered inside information on the execution of the Moxon copy.

That Scharf's opinion had consolidated around Moger's story is made clear by the next item in the record: the NPG's purchase, in November 1878, of Moger's portrait. The price was £105. In agreeing to the transaction, Moger 'confess[ed] to some disappointment' in the amount of the

[38] *Athenaeum* 2653 (31 August 1878) 281.

[39] Scharf thought F. S. Stephens had contributed the item, but Stephens assured him that he hadn't: 'I never publish anything in the way of gossip without leave from persons concerned, as I only knew of this matter from your kind note. I should have consulted you on the subject before sending a paragraph to the Editor. The paragraph contains more than I knew before reading it, and I supposed must have been supplied by the owner of the picture, as doubtless no one of your trustees would have sent it. To say the truth I thought you had sent it and thus judged the purchase was complete' (1 September 1878, NPG 507).

[40] NPG 507.

[41] According to Odette Bornand, the men met when Locker was a clerk at Somerset House. They exchanged information for Rossetti's edition of Shelley, and Rossetti found Locker very generous in lending him Shelley manuscripts and letters he had in his possession. A particularly interesting account concerning Locker, WMR, and Moxon Co. is found in Rossetti's diary, 19 October 1869:

> Locker says (but did not tell me his authority, and I should hope the disgraceful story is not absolutely true) that Payne (of Moxon's), after the dissension of his firm with Tennyson, affixed a pair of ass's ears to the portrait of T[ennyson] which figures in the Dover Street premises; also (which I had heard before) that he wrote an . . . attack on T[ennyson] in *The Queen's Messenger*. Locker intimated that it is hardly decorous in me to do literary work for Payne and his firm. For my own part, now that the Shelley job is almost out of hand, I don't set any very great store by continuing my connexion with the firm (limited as it always has been to the simplest business-relationship); but on the other hand I think it is quite possible to care too much about the *publisher* in a literary undertaking. If it is desirable that a series of cheap Poets should be issued, and that I should work upon it, the question of who publishes the series and acts as my paymaster is after all a subsidiary one.
>
> (William Michael Rossetti, *Rossetti Papers 1862 to 1870* (London, 1903), pp. 411-12)

For more discussion about the failure of Moxon & Co., see the entry for 16 June 1871 in the *Diary of William Michael Rossetti (1870-73)* ed. Odette Bornand (Oxford, 1977), p. 69.

offer and told Scharf, perhaps facetiously, that if 'at any future time the funds of the Trustees allow it, they may send me a supplementary cheque!'[42] Ten days later, however, he expressed to Scharf his gratitude: 'Throughout the whole of this transaction I have to thank you for your perfectly upright & gentlemanlike conduct'.[43] The painting was cleaned and lined, and put on public view when the Gallery reopened, after extensive refurbishments, over the Whitsuntide holiday weekend of 1879. The gallery space in South Kensington had been markedly expanded and improved, and two large donations from the British Museum and Serjeants Inn had added nearly one hundred works to the collection.[44] From all these newly-displayed paintings, Mary M. Heaton singled out Hazlitt's portrait for praise in her *Academy* review:

> [Among the new works is] Charles Lamb at the age of twenty-nine, painted by William Hazlitt, who by no means deserves to be classed, as [Allan] Cunningham classes him, with 'the lowest of the low in painting', for this work, at all events, is very fairly painted (far better than one in the same gallery by his brother, John Hazlitt, who was a professional painter), and is of great interest as representing the genial Elia at an earlier age than that at which he is usually known to us. The picture belonged to Coleridge, and passed from him into the possession of his friend Mr Gilman.[45]

The acquisition process had been difficult enough, but Heaton's words suggest that the unveiling of the Lamb portrait was a minor triumph. Even so, the confusion over attribution had not quite exhausted itself. Nearly two years later, in November 1880, Hodgson's week-long auction of Edward Moxon's books and effects featured as one of the lead items an 'ORIGINAL OIL PAINTING—FINE PORTRAIT OF CHARLES LAMB, BY HIS FRIEND WILLIAM HAZLITT, in gilt frame and oval gilt mount'. Locker, his eyes always poring over sale-catalogues, dashed off a letter to Scharf.

25 Chesham Street/16 Nov. 1880

> Dear Mr Scharf.
>
> I see that that picture of C. Lamb by Hazlitt (Moxon's) is going to be sold at Hodgson's, Chancery Lane, this week. I cut the enclosed out of the Catalogue of Sale—Pardon me for the suggestion but do not you think it might be wise that some memorandum [?thus] be made, & *attached* to the National Portrait Gallery Picture—that this other picture exists —for, if not, as time goes on, then [?Jenkins], or whoever buy this picture, will accept the pedigree, & consider they have the original, and that Yr. picture is the Copy, or at any rate that theirs is also an original picture.
>
> [?] this line. I hope you are well.
>
> From [?] in haste
> F Locker[46]

Locker's fears seemed confirmed only a few days later when the *Athenaeum* of 27 November reported the sale:

> An interesting relic of Charles Lamb was sold on Friday, the 19th inst., at Messrs. Hodgson's sale rooms. This consisted of a portrait of the essayist by his friend Hazlitt. Originally

[42] 18 November 1878. NPG 507.
[43] 28 November 1878. NPG 507.
[44] *The Academy* 15 (7 June 1879) 503; *The Times*, 9 June 1879, p. 6.
[45] *The Academy* 15 (7 June 1879) 503.
[46] NPG 507.

in the possession of S. T. Coleridge, the portrait passed at his death into the hands of Mrs Gillman, from whom it was purchased by the late Mr Edward Moxon. Started at 10£, the portrait was ultimately sold for 60£.[47]

This item—appearing with no acknowledgment whatever of the contradictory endorsement printed in the *Athenaeum*'s own pages only two years earlier—had the potential to reopen the entire controversy. In fact it seems not to have done so; the National Portrait Gallery file contains no additional comment on the matter from Locker, and Scharf's only responses are brief: one an annotation in his sketchbook simply noting the painting's sale, the second an annotation in his copy of Hodgson's catalogue discounting Hodgson's claim and citing Moger's 19 July letter as the reliable account of the Hazlitt portrait. Indeed, there is apparently no further published record of any sort regarding the later fate of the Moxon painting. After the sale at Hodgson's, the trail goes cold, and we may never know what became of the painting, or even who painted it. Emma Moxon's treasured likeness of Lamb seems to survive only in Scharf's invaluable sketchbooks (reproduced here as fig. 2)

* * * *

While the history of the Moxon copy cannot be traced after 1880, there is an early twentieth-century coda to the institutional history of the original Hazlitt. Late in 1900 Lionel Cust, then Director of the NPG, wrote to A. G. Temple, Director of the Guildhall Art Gallery, suggesting that a group of about ten portraits be presented to the Guildhall on 'permanent loan'.[48] This transaction was effected, and two years later, Cust wrote again, proposing that Hazlitt's portrait of Lamb be sent to the Guildhall under the same conditions.[49] It is clear from the correspondence

[47] *Athenaeum* 2770 (27 November 1880) 270.

[48] 5 November 1900, Guildhall Library Committee Minutes, Vol. 40. I thank the Corporation of London Records Office for permission to quote from these records, and I wish especially to thank James Sewell of that office for his help in verifying the precise details of this complicated transaction. After considerable discussion back and forth between the institutions, the following portraits were lent, as cited in the Library Committee Minutes of 5 November.

Sir Marcus [sic] Isambard Brunel	by S. Drummond, A. R. A.
Samuel Richardson, novelist	by Joseph Highmore
Frederick Denison Maurice	by Miss Hayward
Joseph Nollekens, R. A.	by J. Lonsdale
Samuel Rogers, the poet	by Sir Thomas Laurence, P. R. A.
John Flaxman, R. A.	by Guy Head
William Godwin	by H. W. Pickersgill, R. A.
Thomas Hobbes	Painter Unknown
Mrs. Elizabeth Fry	A large miniature

The Minutes go on to note that 'No restrictions were proposed as to the particular place where the portraits were to be exhibited, but on the other hand, it was understood that if the Corporation accepted the loan they would be at liberty to place the portraits wherever they pleased, in the Art Gallery, in Committe rooms, in Corporation Offices, or elsewhere as they might think fit.'

[49] The NPG described these works as 'duplicate' portraits, and this term led Richard Walker to conclude that the lending of the Lamb portrait to Guildhall was an extension of the 1878 attribution controversy: 'Owing to a misunderstanding about [the Moxon] copy, NPG 507 was deposited for a time at the Corporation of London Art Gallery, Guildhall, in 1903' (Walker, op. cit., p. 304). Walker seems to imply here that the NPG mistakenly lent Guildhall the original Hazlitt, thinking it was the copy. But the documents regarding this loan at both the NPG and the Corporation of London records office make it clear that all of the loaned paintings were original works, and always understood as such by both institutions. The term 'duplicate' in this case did not denote a copy of an already existing work, but a duplication or redundancy of the *person* represented. Simply put, the NPG had other paintings

that Guildhall expected to have these paintings on a long-term basis, and it is quite possible that they would have remained there for decades—except that the Charles Lamb portrait somehow changed that. In the autumn of 1909, C. J. Holmes, Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford, succeeded Cust (who was retiring) as NPG Director. Within a few months of his appointment he had written to the Guildhall Gallery, requesting the Lamb portrait's return. Temple wrote back on 20 April 1910, telling Holmes 'I will bring yr. letter regarding the return on the Portrait of Charles Lamb before my Committee on Monday week. I suggest they will decide to return the whole ten, as the contribution when it was made, [was] represented by Mr Lionel Cust as being practically a permanent loan & the wall space here is much needed'.[50]

Unfortunately Holmes's specific reasons for wanting the portrait back are unknown, since his original letter has not survived and his diaries for these months do not provide any sense of why he considered the matter urgent. But clearly Holmes valued the Lamb portrait greatly. As it turned out, the Guildhall decided not to return all ten paintings at once, and kept at least one for thirty more years. The Lamb portrait, however, was in a small group returned in early 1911, and we know that it was displayed almost the moment it returned to the building; the NPG Trustees Minutes of 2 February report that since their previous meeting five paintings have been returned, and the Lamb portrait 'hung in the East Wing next to the portrait of Coleridge'.[51]

Surely Hazlitt, who remarked that 'There have only been four or five painters who could ever produce a copy of the human countenance really fit to be seen',[52] would have been gratified at the personal and then national interest generated by his portrait of Lamb. If Hazlitt was not himself one of those 'four or five painters', he nonetheless could deftly articulate his own standards of taste, and the Lamb portrait provides us one of the only ways of comparing his artistic preferences with his artistic execution. Hazlitt favoured Titian above all portrait-painters, noting especially the 'intense personal character' of his works. '[W]henever you turn to look at Titian's portraits, they appear to be looking at you; there seems to be some question pending between you, as though an intimate friend or inveterate foe were in the room with you; they exert a kind of fascinating power; and there is that exact resemblance of individual nature which is always new and always interesting'.[53] For Hazlitt—and this bears directly on why he would have been so interested in the debate over his Lamb portrait—the conveyance of this 'individual nature' could not properly occur in the production of a copy. Portraiture, he said, was 'painting from recollection and from a conception of character, with the object before us to assist the memory and understanding'.[54] It was the artist's intimacy with the sitter that mattered, and not the simple 'imitation of external and visible fonn'. Indeed, external form could be described as 'correct' only 'when the information of the eye and the direction of the hand are aided and confirmed by the previous knowledge and actual feeling of character in the object represented'.[55]

Hazlitt's portrait of Lamb illustrates his theoretical interest in a portraiture that, through this quality of empathy, allowed the 'living and permanent interest' of the subject to be revealed. What is perhaps most striking about the Lamb portrait is its dynamic inscrutability of expression (fig. 3). Lamb's clear-eyed, open countenance seems on one hand to embody Hazlitt's notion that

representing Lamb, Richardson, Flaxman, *et al.*, and decided, as a civic service, to make additional works available to the public.

[50] NPG 507.

[51] NPG Trustees Minutes, 2 February 1911, pp. 139-140.

[52] Howe xii. 291.

[53] Howe xii. 285-6.

[54] Howe xii. 288.

[55] Howe xii. 289.

'Goodness of disposition, with a clear complexion and handsome features, is the chief ingredient in English beauty'.[56] Yet with further examination the portrait also seems to depict a sense of hardened resolution, or tenacity, underlying Lamb's 'goodness of disposition'. And even as we are uncertain as to whether the painting ultimately depicts a gentle-hearted Charles, or an Elia with a somewhat darker psychic life, we also sense that the figure in the painting is himself perfectly calm and self-possessed: his steady gaze announces no such division. The suggestion of latent power with which Hazlitt endows Lamb can, in the end, fairly be described as giving the portrait a Titianesque flavour, even if Hazlitt was unable to satisfy his larger artistic desire to 'engraft Italian art upon English nature'.[57] With most of Hazlitt's other paintings lost or destroyed, we can be grateful that this picture has survived, both for what it reveals about the man James Gillman loved, and for what it suggests about the talents of the man he hated.

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[56] Howe xii. 281.
[57] Howe xvii. 139.

'Thoughts That are fed by the Sun': Some Wordsworth Lyrics of 1802

By MARY R. WEDD

A talk given at the Wordsworth Winter School in February 1997

'LIFE IS REAL, Life is earnest!'[1] Not all the time, thank goodness! Nobody can live for ever on a diet of solemnity. In a recent discussion at my house about what achievements each of us most valued in our lives, some spoke of rewarding careers, some of successful rearing of children, some of overcoming very great odds, all valuable things. Then 'a still, small voice' spoke through one of my daughters: 'Learning to notice and get pleasure from *small things*'. Surely she was the wisest of us all. Glittering prizes lose their lustre and eventually crumble to dust. Children leave the nest, companions die, fortitude is a necessary evil. But the joy in small things, one's garden, the signs of the changing seasons, a kitten playing with falling leaves, the antics of children and old people, conversations with chance-met passers-by, these things are a lasting joy and we ignore them at our peril. Wordsworth knew better than to do so.

Looking round the world, then as now, it seemed that the definition of man as 'a rational animal' needed modifying to 'an animal only very rarely capable of rationality'. Even the aspiration that one might be useful in helping to ameliorate the sufferings of the world seemed a forlorn hope, the merest puny defence against the flood that is capable at any time of rising up and overwhelming us all. In his own life, Wordsworth was aware too of his failing vision. 'The things which I have seen I now can see no more'. 'We Poets in our youth begin in gladness; / But thereof come in the end despondency and madness'.

Yet alongside work on these poems, the first stanzas of the 'Intimations Ode' and 'Resolution and Independence', and the interplay with Coleridge's *Dejection*, which Jared Curtis calls 'a poetic dialogue on despair',[2] in the same year, even sometimes on adjacent days, Wordsworth was writing poems about small things, poems full of delight, 'This beautiful and beauty-making Power! / Joy', as Coleridge put it. Whatever happened to joy? One does not often hear it mentioned today. We may not think entirely favourably of the effect of Matthew Arnold on Wordsworth criticism in general but he did understand this: 'The source of joy from which he thus draws is the truest and most unfailing source of joy accessible to man. It is also accessible universally.'[3]

By observing seemingly unimportant details, a winding river (seen from a train perhaps?), green farmsteads, wooded hillsides, a spiral of smoke going up to heaven, we may find that 'with an eye made quiet by the power / Of harmony, and the deep power of joy, / We see into the life of things'.[4] A Wordsworthian who is not aware of his natural surroundings is a contradiction in terms. How often do we watch people with walkmen or portable phones clamped to their ears, oblivious to the exulting spring song of the birds; or occupants of a sight-seeing coach with their backs to the windows and the views! Even the learned sometimes prefer to blind and deafen themselves with technicalities rather than open their hearts so that inspiration can come in. And

[1] Longfellow, 'A Psalm of Life'.

[2] Jared R. Curtis, *Wordsworth's Experiments with Tradition: The Lyric Poems of 1802* (Ithaca, NY, 1971) (hereafter Curtis), p. 25.

[3] From The Preface to *The Poems of Wordsworth*, chosen and edited by Matthew Arnold (London, 1879).

[4] *Tintern Abbey* 48-50.

always and everywhere there is noise, from the pips and squeaks of computers to the roar of aero-engines. If a blessed hush does fall someone must rush to switch on the muzak. It is as though people would rather be dead than risk being alone with themselves. As Coleridge commented in a Notebook, 'they recoil from their Heart, or rather the place where the Heart ought to be, with a true *Horror Vacui*'.[5] Not so Wordsworth. Dorothy recording a walk below Nab Scar on 23rd April, 1802, says 'Coleridge and I pushed on before. We left William sitting on the stones feasting with silence'.[6] What a wonderful expression, 'feasting with silence'! I am not accusing Coleridge and Dorothy but don't we know too well those tiresome people who 'push on before', proving their virility perhaps, but never noticing a thing!

Some time about 22 April, Wordsworth wrote 'These Chairs They Have No Words to Utter' and then *Half an Hour Afterwards* ('I Have Thoughts That Are Fed by the Sun'), neither of which was published in his lifetime. They are obviously written in a relaxed mood—Mark Reed suggests 'before rising from bed'[7] and are distinctly informal in tone. They have been related in readers' minds to Dorothy's account on 29 April of her and William lying in the trench and thinking 'that it would be as sweet thus to lie so in the grave, to hear the *peaceful* sounds of the earth . . . ' In the two poems death is indeed regarded as a state of peace and in the first 'Happy'. Everything is very unthreatening in its lack of life.

> These Chairs they have no words to utter,
> No fire is in the grate to stir or flutter,
> The ceiling and floor are mute as a stone,
> My chamber is hushed and still,
>   And I am alone.
>   Happy and alone.
>
> Oh who would be afraid of life,
> The passion the sorrow and the strife,
>   When he may be
>   Sheltered so easily?
> May lie in peace on his bed
> Happy as they who are dead.

But half an hour afterwards he changes his tune. The sun has kindled life in him and he responds to the spring of joy to be found in small things.

> I have thoughts that are fed by the sun.
> The things which I see
> Are welcome to me,
> Welcome every one:
> I do not wish to lie
>   Dead, dead,
> Dead without any company;

[5] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Notebooks* ed. Kathleen Coburn (5 vols., Princeton and London, 1957-), iii. 3965.
[6] Quotations from Dorothy's journals are from *The Grasmere Journals* ed. Pamela Woof (Oxford, 1991) (hereafter Woof).
[7] Mark L. Reed, *Wordsworth: The Chronology of the Middle Years 1800-1815* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), p. 163.

They had been reading Chaucer and William translating some, and you will recognize the echo from *The Knight's Tale*, bringing a note of extreme poignancy into this curious poem with its jerky rhythms. The dying Arcite asks

> What is this world? what asketh men to have?
> Now with his love, now in his colde grave
> Allone, withouten any compaignye. (*The Knight's Tale* 2777-9)

Perhaps a peace, deep down, can co-exist with the strains of *life*. For the moment the poet is content.

> Here alone on my bed,
> With thoughts that are fed by the Sun,
> And hopes that are welcome every one,
> Happy am I.
>
> O Life, there is about thee
> A deep, delicious peace,
> I would not be without thee,
> Stay, oh stay!
> Yet be thou ever as now,
> Peace, peace, peace.

These lines, written primarily for his own consumption and with a tinge of self-mocking humour, essentially affirm life and welcome those thoughts and hopes 'that are fed by the sun'. But the dark side suggested by the echo from Chaucer is still there. In the lyrics of 1802 which celebrate living in the present and enjoying the observation of small things, there is yet a sense of a lost Eden.

Can it be, for example, that man's favourite bird, the Robin, can appear in the guise of predator, chasing the butterfly who reflects his colouring?

> Like thy own breast
> His beautiful wings in crimson are dress'd;
> As if he were bone of thy bone . . .[8]

At De Quincey's prompting Wordsworth added a note to the lines

> Could Father Adam open his eyes
> And see this sight beneath the skies,
> He'd wish to close them again.

We are referred to *Paradise Lost* Book XI where Adam draws Eve's attention to the first signs of a fallen world, an eagle chasing 'Two Birds of gayest plume' as 'the Beast that reigns in Woods, / First Hunter then, pursu'd a gentle brace, / Goodliest of all the Forest, Hart and Hinde . . .' (ll. 181-90).

The Archangel Michael is sent to make clear to Adam the consequences of his sin, challenging him with 'Adam, now ope thine eyes', reminding him and us that the forbidden apple-tree had opened his eyes to the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 3:5, 7). Dorothy's observation in her Journal of 17 April 1802, 'I saw a robin chasing a scarlet butterfly this morning' led to William's

[8] Curtis 174.

poem 'The Redbreast Chasing the Butterfly', demonstrating that the same creature who, in the poem in Percy's *Reliques*, 'The Children in the Wood', 'piously / Did cover them with leaves' could become an aggressor. Wordsworth, like Adam, would like to close his eyes to this unwelcome fact and revert to an Eden before the Fall, when all creatures lived together in amity.

> Would'st thou be happy in thy nest,
> O pious Bird! whom man loves best,
> Love him, or leave him alone!

Perhaps this unresolved difficulty is reflected in the unsatisfactory form of the poem and Wordsworth's repeated efforts to improve it by revision. Yes, we have to acknowledge the imperfections in the world, even of Nature, but there is still an unquenchable lifting of the spirit to be had by valuing apparently small things.

For instance, have you ever seen a glow-worm? Probably not. Sixty years ago they were so common in some localities that people could read by their light. Now they are very rare. I first saw one in Cornwall during the war. A friend had found it and led me to it. Its green phosphorescent radiance in the dusk looked like a miracle. The impact it made is evidenced by my still-vivid memory of it.

> Among all lovely things my Love had been;
> Had noted well the stars, all flowers that grew
> About her home; but she had never seen
> A Glow-worm, never one, and this I knew.

How beautifully managed that seemingly simple stanza is! Look at it. See the effect of the reversed sentence in the first line: to stress 'all lovely things', to emphasize the kinship between them and 'my Love', to end on a strong note and to echo the sense in the rhythm of the line. Then the use of lines broken by punctuation and of enjambment provide a varied, running measure which leads into the more straightforward stanzas which tell the story.

> When to the Dwelling of my Love I came,
> I went into the Orchard quietly;
> And left the Glow-worm, blessing it by name,
> Laid safely by itself, beneath a Tree.
>
> The whole next day, I hoped, and hoped with fear;
> At night the Glow-worm shone beneath the Tree:
> I led my Lucy to the spot, 'Look here!'
> Oh! joy it was for her, and joy for me!

Wordsworth tells Coleridge in a letter of 16 April 1802 how he wrote the poem that day on horseback returning from visiting Mary Hutchinson, though the incident had happened with Dorothy 'about seven years ago' at Racedown.[9] The poem always meant a great deal to Dorothy, reassuring her that William's forthcoming marriage would not lessen his love for her. But even if we did not know that, could we fail to be touched by such an evocation of delight?

> Oh! joy it was for her, and joy for me!

[9] *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth* ed. E. de Selincourt, revised Chester L. Shaver (Oxford, 1967) (hereafter *EY*), pp. 347-8.

Well, Richard Mant, the author of *The Simpliciad*, published in 1808, could and did entirely miss the beauty of small things. His smart-aleck, prep-school humour shows *him* up rather than Wordsworth. More people have made fools of themselves by overestimating their own cleverness than by being naive.

> Poets who fix their visionary sight
> On Sparrows' eggs in prospect of delight,
> With fervent welcome greet the glow-worm's flame,
> Put it to bed, and bless it by its name . . .
> With brother lark or brother robin fly,
> And flutter with half-brother butterfly.

Yes, it is mildly funny—but how crass! Had the author never been young? Had he never known the thrill, for instance, of finding in the hedge a bird's nest with eggs in it? One has to pity him.

In their early years together in Grasmere William and Dorothy loved to reminisce about the time when they were together as children before the death of their mother separated them. Dorothy tells in her Journal for 14 March 1802, how William neither got properly dressed nor touched his breakfast till he had written the poem 'Stay near me—do not take thy flight'. 'The thought first came upon him as we were talking about the pleasure we both always feel at the sight of a Butterfly.' The conversation may have arisen following their reading of Spenser's poem 'The Fate of the Butterflie'. Boy-like, William had unthinkingly chased the butterflies and 'used to kill all the white ones when he went to school because they were frenchmen'. Naturally so, for England was at war with France. But Dorothy, more sensitively, was afraid of damaging the beautiful things by brushing the dust off their wings. A small matter, one might think, hardly worth recording, but is it? The adult Wordsworth was able to gain from it perhaps the most important lesson for a man to learn, that of empathy, not only observing creatures outside oneself but feeling with them and honouring their right to exist.

> Stay near me—do not take thy flight!
> A little longer stay in sight!
> Much converse do I find in thee,
> Historian of my infancy!
> Float near me; do not yet depart!
> Dead times revive in thee:
> Thou bring'st, gay creature as thou art!
> A solemn image to my heart,
> My father's family!
>
> Oh! pleasant, pleasant were the days,
> The time, when, in our childish plays,
> My sister Emmeline and I
> Together chased the butterfly!
> A very hunter did I rush
> Upon the prey:—with leaps and springs
> I followed on from brake to bush;
> But she, God love her! feared to brush
> The dust from off its wings.

Lest you should think no conscious art went into such a poem, notice that Dorothy repeatedly records William's work on revising and, ten days after it was first written, says, 'William altered the Butterfly as we came from Rydale'. We know that Wordsworth and Dorothy were reading at this time from Anderson's *British Poets* poems by Ben Jonson and Spenser, as well as some other sixteenth and seventeenth century poets not in Anderson's collection, such as Herbert and Herrick.[10] Speaking of the style of some Elizabethan lyrics, Geoffrey Hiller describes them as 'dressed with exquisite simplicity and grace'. This beautifully describes Wordsworth's 1802 lyrics and such quality is not achieved without great skill. The stanza-form, for example, is handled with considerable virtuosity, whether it is the simple four-line iambic pentameter with alternate rhymes of 'The Glow-worm' or the quite complicated shape and rhyme-scheme of the Butterfly poems and others, which yet are modified by variation and counterpoint. Critics have commented on Wordsworth's frequent use in these of the octosyllabic measure which some relate to his reading of Jonson, or to Milton in *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, and occasionally particular poems of Wordsworth's can be compared to predecessors in Jonson, Drayton or Herrick. But exact imitation is rare and surely Jared Curtis is right to say that 'a number of effects seem to derive from Wordsworth's adaptation of certain techniques common among Elizabethan and Jacobean poets' (Curtis 88). Both the Butterfly poems have a basic stanza pattern of nine lines, usually five tetrameters, one trimeter, two tetrameters and a final trimeter, but this is not invariable and in the last stanza of the second Butterfly poem, 'I've watched you', there is an extra four-stress line before the final three-stress line, which by prolonging the nostalgic account of childhood beautifully conveys the sense of leisure and timelessness associated with it.

> We'll talk of sunshine and of song,
> And summer days, when we were young;
> Sweet childish days, that were as long
> As twenty days are now.

Similarly, Wordsworth's rhyme-scheme in these poems begins with two couplets AA and BB followed by a third rhyme C, leading us to expect a common pattern after that—in which he delights in disconcerting us. Sometimes it is what we expect, sometimes it is not, acting on our unconscious mind like a kind of counterpoint. Just as he uses different combinations of the four and three beat lines in different poems, so he varies the use of rhymes. In other words, he is a virtuoso performer. Let those critics who dismiss these lyrics ask themselves whether they could create anything half as good!

In the second Butterfly poem, Wordsworth tries to recreate Eden before the Fall. In his and Dorothy's garden, he says, the butterfly need fear no predator.

> I've watched you now a full half-hour,
> Self-poised upon that yellow flower;
> And, little Butterfly! indeed
> I know not if you sleep or feed.
> How motionless!—not frozen seas
> More motionless! and then
> What joy awaits you, when the breeze
> Hath found you out among the trees,
> And calls you forth again!

[10] See Duncan Wu, *Wordsworth's Reading 1800-1815* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 121-2, 107-9.

What skill goes into the delicacy of that first stanza describing the butterfly! The emphasis on the length of time that it remains unmoving and the wonderful adjective 'self-poised' suggesting containment, control and serenity. Then comes the broken line, 'How motionless!' followed by the run-on line and the repetition with alliteration, 'not frozen seas / More motionless!' This seemingly far-fetched comparison startlingly encapsulates within it the notion of something normally in perpetual motion struck with suspended animation and leads on to the other contrasting manifestation of the butterfly when it comes to life again. 'What joy awaits you . . . !'

> This plot of orchard-ground is ours;
> My trees they are, my Sister's flowers;
> Here rest your wings when they are weary;
> Here lodge as in a sanctuary!
> Come often to us, fear no wrong;
> Sit near us on the bough!
> We'll talk of sunshine and of song,
> And summer days, when we were young;
> Sweet childish days, that were as long
> As twenty days are now.

For the first time since the death of their mother William and Dorothy had at last a home together that was really their own. 'My trees they are, my Sister's flowers.'

I married just before war broke out and had never had an establishment of my own. In the unsettled life we all led then I developed a secret vice. Whenever, in unbombed territory, I passed by a little house like a child's drawing, with a door in the middle and a window each side, I coveted it. I'm sure if I had seen Dove Cottage I should have broken the last commandment over that. Imagine having no settled base to which to return. One has nowadays to make conscious choices from the charities with whose appeals one is bombarded and most of mine are for the homeless, either here or abroad. William and Dorothy always had a roof over their heads but as children they were farmed out to relations and friends and even their own first adult years together were in other people's houses. So one can feel for the joy they had in the simple pleasure of looking at and working in their own garden. I have mentioned here before my delight in Dorothy's entry for 27 March 1802: 'A divine morning—at Breakfast William wrote part of an ode—Mr. Oliff sent the Dung and William went to work in the garden.' First things first. The entry goes on, 'we sate all day in the Orchard'. Where, no doubt, later in the year they would watch the butterflies.

My butterfly book describes how the Red Admiral 'flocks to windfall apples rotting on the ground' and quotes Wordsworth, 'This plot of orchard-ground is ours'.[11] Do you remember when buddleia bushes were covered with Red Admirals and Painted Ladies? For many years now, at least in my area, one has been lucky to see there the occasional small Tortoiseshell, which used to be too common to mention: most of the time the once populous bush is deserted. William and Dorothy as adults could be sure that the butterflies they had known in childhood would still be there to remind them of the old days. It would not be so now. Man's overestimation of his own cleverness has brought a cruel harvest. Aldous Huxley was right to say, 'We are losing half the subject-matter of English poetry'.[12]

[11] *The Field Guide to the Butterflies and other Insects of Britain* (London and New York, 1984), p. 69.
[12] Julian Huxley, Introduction to Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (London, 1963).

However, the garden is not entirely depopulated and great pleasure may be had by looking out over it. Though the thrushes did vanish suddenly from mine, they are coming back and a great variety of birds still remain. I had never heard the name 'Green Linnet' except in Wordsworth and used to be puzzled by it. The Linnet has no green on it and I concluded that he must mean the Greenfinch, which belongs to the same family. This was confirmed when I got hold of a very old bird-book where the alternative name was given. Editors are curious people—present company excluded, of course! They only tell you a fraction of what you want to know. Perhaps it doesn't matter too much—though I think it does—what bird Wordsworth is talking about but, like the Elephant's Child, I suffer from 'insatiable curtiosity' and would like to be sure. He does, in fact, describe the Greenfinch's characteristic behaviour very well, so perhaps I should have recognized it, but I am no expert and he does not mention the male's distinctive loud 'jee call in spring and summer'.

Like the butterfly, Wordsworth's greenfinch glories in its self-sufficiency.

> A Life, a Presence like the Air,
> Scattering thy gladness without care,
> Too blest with any one to pair;
> Thyself thy own enjoyment.
>
> Amid yon tuft of hazel trees,
> That twinkle to the gusty breeze,
> Behold him perched in ecstasies,
> Yet seeming still to hover;
> There! where the flutter of his wings
> Upon his back and body flings
> Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
> That cover him all over.
>
> My dazzled sight he oft deceives,
> A brother of the dancing leaves;
> Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves
> Pours forth his song in gushes;
> As if by that exulting strain
> He mocked and treated with disdain
> The voiceless Form he chose to feign,
> While fluttering in the bushes.

The bird is beautifully observed, flirting about in the bushes with a butterfly-like flapping of wings, making an inconspicuous sound until it takes flight when it launches into warbling song. These creatures know their own nature and function in life and fulfil them confidently, calmly and yet with a sense of fun. Yes fun. Surely the greenfinch is enjoying teasing, with the change from its negligible voice when hiding among the leaves to its exuberant trilling when it escapes into the open. Wordsworth's gentle humour recurs in a number of these poems. His exaggeratedly warlike behaviour when chasing the butterfly is a case in point, the boy too acting out his fantasies in characteristic fashion. One of the great joys of nature is the dappled effect of leaves in sunlight. Wordsworth uses all his art to conjure this up. 'There!' he exclaims, then in two run-on lines ending with the magic word 'glimmerings' he imitates the moving scene in the rhythm and diction and ends with the bird clothed, as it were, by the reflection.

There! where the flutter of his wings
Upon his back and body flings
Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
That cover him all over.

In 'To a Skylark', written at this time, though Wordsworth briefly catches the exhilaration of hearing the bird and the 'joy divine / In that song of thine', he is less successful to my mind than he was later to be in the poem on the same subject of 1825. 'To the Cuckoo' is another matter. Here, as in 'The Green Linnet', the poet brilliantly describes the bird's characteristic manifestation and relates it, without any heavy-handedness, to his own experience. The Cuckoo is the opposite of the child who 'should be seen but not heard'. He is heard all the time but is notorious for being hard to see. In his 1815 Preface Wordsworth quotes 'Shall I call thee Bird / Or but a wandering Voice?' as an example of the power of the Imagination.[13]

> This concise interrogation characterises the seeming ubiquity of the voice of the cuckoo, and dispossesses the creature almost of a corporeal existence; the Imagination being tempted to this exertion of her power by a consciousness in the memory that the cuckoo is almost perpetually heard throughout the season of spring, but seldom becomes an object of sight.

It is not a bird of admirable character but its return has become so synonymous with the arrival of Spring that we all rejoice at it and people used to vie with one another to write to *The Times* claiming to be the first to hear it. Dorothy records on 29 April 1802, 'Mr Simpson heard the cuckoo today'; then, a couple of days later, 'Heard the cuckoo today this first of May'. I always note hearing it in my gardening diary, though for two dreadful years I did not hear it at all, despite walking to all the places where I remembered hearing it before. But don't despair. It has not entirely vanished. In 1996 I tracked it down again, with a little help from my friends.

O blithe New-comer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice.
O Cuckoo! Shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering Voice?

Hartman speaks of 'the overcoming of time' in this stanza:

> When Wordsworth says of the cuckoo, hailing its return, 'I have heard, / I hear thee and rejoice', the doubling (reflecting) is immediate. Yet since in listening to its call the poet *begets again* the golden time of his youth (st.VII), the simple repetition of 'hear' together with the tense change from past to present, indicates in one formula his inward response, and the renewal of the past in the present—in short, the gentle and immediately renovating influence of nature.[14]

Those first lines do prepare us for the rest of the poem, since in hearing the cuckoo now one is reliving all the other times one has heard it with the joyful associations that go with them. The magic of the experience seems to be bound up with the bird's apparently disembodied state.

[13] *The Prose Works of William Wordsworth* ed. W. J. B. Owen and Jane Worthington Smyser (3 vols., Oxford, 1974), iii. 32.

[14] Geoffrey H. Hartman, *Wordsworth's Poetry 1787-1814* (New Haven, 1971), p. 270.

While I am lying on the grass
Thy twofold shout I hear,
From hill to hill it seems to pass
At once far off and near.

Though babbling only to the Vale,
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

These simple, everyday experiences can be a bridge not merely to past or future but to another realm altogether, which is timeless.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my schoolboy days
I listened to; that Cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green;
And thou wert still a hope, a love;
Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessed Bird! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, faery place;
That is fit home for Thee!

Shall I confess and admit that this poem was the one that converted me to Wordsworth when I first read his work at school? I still have the book in which I marked that penultimate stanza. I suppose I was remembering the days before, at the age of eight, I was sent to boarding-school.

The equivalent harbinger of spring in the plant world is the lesser celandine, 'which Mrs. C. calls pile wort' (Woof 85). At that time of the year when it seems that winter will never end, and in my experience well before the first primrose, the eye is suddenly caught by a patch of pure shining gold and the heart lifts. Dorothy writes, 'The pile wort spread out on the grass a thousand shining stars' (Woof 89).

Ere a leaf is on a bush,
In the time before the thrush
Has a thought about her nest,
Thou wilt come with half a call,

Spreading out thy glossy breast
Like a careless Prodigal;
Telling tales about the sun,
When we've little warmth, or none.

In the Fenwick note Wordsworth says, 'It is remarkable that this flower, coming out so early in the Spring as it does, and so bright and beautiful, and in such profusion, should not have been noticed earlier in English verse.' He set to to repair the omission at this time in two poems of great charm, which, because the third, which he wrote a year or two later, is so much more succinct and powerful, have been undeservedly neglected. They are celebrations of the beauty of little, unregarded, unsung things which yet are the light of our life. Conventions establish which flowers are to be praised and poets follow fashion, he says.

Pansies, lilies, kingcups, daisies,
Let them live upon their praises;
Long as there's a sun that sets,
Primroses will have their glory;
Long as there are violets,
They will have a place in story;
There's a flower that shall be mine,
'Tis the little Celandine . . .

Poets, vain men in their mood!
Travel with the multitude:
Never heed them; I aver
That they all are wanton wooers;
But the thrifty cottager,
Who stirs little out of doors,
Joys to spy thee near her home;
Spring is coming, Thou art come!

Comfort have thou of thy merit,
Kindly, unassuming Spirit!
Careless of thy neighbourhood,
Thou dost show thy pleasant face
On the moor, and in the wood,
In the lane;—there's not a place,
Howsoever mean it be,
But 'tis good enough for thee . . .

Prophet of delight and mirth,
Ill-requited upon earth;
Herald of a mighty band,
Of a joyous train ensuing,
Serving at my heart's command,
Tasks that are no tasks renewing,
I will sing, as doth behove,
Hymns in praise of what I love.

In the second Celandine poem, that sense of fun which recurs in these light-hearted poems of 1802 is seen in the notion of the inn-sign of The Rising Sun: the painter must have got his inspiration from somewhere!

> I have not a doubt but he,
> Whosoe'er the man might be,
> Who the first with pointed rays
> (Workman worthy to be sainted)
> Set the sign-board in a blaze,
> When the rising sun he painted,
> Took the fancy from a glance
> At thy glittering countenance.

In both poems Wordsworth compares the finding of this flower favourably with the discoveries of great scientists and explorers. In the first poem

> Eyes of some men travel far
> For the finding of a star;
> Up and down the heavens they go,
> Men that keep a mighty rout!
> I'm as great as they, I trow,
> Since the day I found thee out,
> Little Flower—I'll make a stir,
> Like a sage astronomer.

In the second,

> Thou art not beyond the moon,
> But a thing 'beneath our shoon':
> Let the bold Discoverer thrid
> In his bark the polar sea;
> Rear who will a pyramid;
> Praise it is enough for me,
> If there be but three or four
> Who will love my little Flower.

These are playful poems and the more delightful for it but they are saying something quite serious about our values. The echo from *Comus* is significant. In Milton's Masque the plant which 'the dull swain / Treads on daily with his clouted shoon' (ll. 634-5) is a herb, 'a small unsightly root, / But of divine effect'. In another country it 'Bore a bright golden flow'r but not in this soil: / Unknown, and like esteem'd . . . / And yet more med'cinal is it than that Moly / That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave' (ll. 631-7). I am not suggesting that all this baggage was any fresher in Wordsworth's memory than the line that he misquotes, but I do think that the associations of a little-esteemed plant, trodden in ignorance beneath our feet, yet of health-giving and protective power come with the reference. It is not the people or things that make the most pretentious show that are always the most rewarding.

The other small flower that Wordsworth celebrates is the Daisy. I have the greatest respect for Jared Curtis, but what can he mean by calling the daisy 'unprepossessing' (Curtis 51)? Can it be that a lost generation has grown up that never made a daisy-chain? Would children throughout the ages have made crowns and necklaces for themselves from an 'unprepossessing' flower?

'Unpretentious', yes. 'Unprepossessing', no. Burns's epithet, in 'To a Mountain Daisy', with which Wordsworth would have been familiar, was 'modest'. His own is 'unassuming' (in 'With little here to do or see'), but he draws attention, in a note to the last line of the first poem, 'Art Nature's favourite', to the justice of his appellation by saying, 'See, in Chaucer and the elder Poets, the honours formerly paid to this flower'.

The extract from George Wither which now heads the first Daisy poem was not added till 1815 and, appropriate though it is, time being short I shall not dwell on it. It has been suggested that the metre of the Daisy poems is imitated from Ben Jonson's *Underwoods, Eupheme*, Song 1, but the minute you put the poems side by side you have to start making exceptions, as Miss Darbishire does in her note.[15] What it boils down to is that both use a combination of four-stress and three-stress lines, as we have seen, but if it suits Wordsworth's purpose to change the overall pattern, or to add a syllable to a line or a line to a stanza, he feels free to do so. The Daisy poems are more regular than the Butterfly poems but caution is wise in making comparisons. The influence of Jonson is certainly there, as Ann Barton convincingly showed, but slavish imitation is not. The same general conclusion must be made about Drayton's *Nymphidia* 'the metre of which', Miss Darbishire says, 'is used for *The Green Linnet*'. The verbal echo of Drayton's poem in the first Daisy poem, which she points out, is a superficial matter of common rhymes rather than anything more important.

The first stanza of the first Daisy poem is reminiscent of *Tintern Abbey* and very similar wording was to be used in Book XI of the 1805 *Prelude*.

> Yet was I often greedy in the chace,
> And roamed from hill to hill, from rock to rock. (ll. 190-1)

The 'appetite' that drove him 'more like a man / Flying from something that he dreads, than one / Who sought the thing he loved' provided an intensity whose loss he mourned, yet it was an unbalance from which it was necessary to grow up.

> In youth from rock to rock I went,
> From hill to hill in discontent
> Of pleasure high and turbulent,
> Most pleased when most uneasy;
> But now my own delights I make,—
> My thirst at every rill can slake,
> And gladly Nature's love partake
> Of Thee, sweet Daisy!

He describes how the Daisy is always there and always a solace.

> A hundred times, by rock or bower,
> Ere thus I have lain couched an hour,
> Have I derived from thy sweet power
> Some apprehension;
> Some steady love; some brief delight;
> Some memory that had taken flight;

[15] See *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth* ed. Ernest de Selincourt and Helen Darbishire (5 vols., Oxford, 1940-9), ii. 490.

Some chime of fancy wrong or right;
  Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,
And one chance look to Thee should turn,
I drink out of an humbler urn
A lowlier pleasure;
The homely sympathy that heeds
The common life our nature breeds;
A wisdom fitted to the needs
  Of hearts at leisure . . .

'Hearts at leisure', in a relaxed mood, are free to enjoy the random thoughts and pleasures of everyday life but it is also true that when the mind is emptied of solemn duties and the self lets go, spiritual influences may enter unawares. Addressing the Daisy Wordsworth says

And all day long I number yet,
All seasons through, another debt,
Which I, whenever thou art met,
To thee am owing;
An instinct call it, a blind sense;
A happy genial influence,
Coming one knows not how, or whence,
Nor whither going.

The second Daisy poem (Bright Flower), which Wordsworth says was part of 'the overflowings of the mind in composing' the first, is more economical and consequently perhaps more moving, especially the last stanza. Remember 1 Corinthians 13, 'love suffereth long' and 'endureth all things'.

Thou wander'st the wide world about,
Uncheck'd by pride or scrupulous doubt,
With friends to greet thee, or without,
Yet pleased and willing;
Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,
And all things suffering from all,
Thy function apostolical
In peace fulfilling.

There is too a strong echo of the Beatitudes here: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. . . . Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. . . . Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. . . . Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God . . .' We are back to the longing for that 'Peace, peace, peace.'

Needless to say the author of *The Simpliciad* chooses the best thing in the poem to sneer at.

Of Apostolic daisies learn to think,
Draughts from their urns of true devotion drink.

I have complained of editors who do not tell us enough but poor Wordsworth, constrained by criticism, had in his Fenwick note to explain what one would have thought any fool with two gorms to rub together would understand, the meaning of 'apostolical'. The Simpleton of the

Simpliciad would have been the better for some of the daisy's modesty. Wordsworth refers us to the derivation of the word 'apostolical', 'implying something sent on a mission; and assuredly this little flower, especially when the subject of verse, may be regarded, in its humble degree, as administering both to moral and spiritual purposes'. If the last two lines of this poem do not touch the reader it is hardly something to be proud of.

The third Daisy poem is an exercise or, as Wordsworth says, a 'game' of listing comparisons, as in the last stanza of Ben Jonson's 'Her Triumph' in *The Underwood* or 'appellations' as, on a more serious level, in George Herbert's 'Prayer'. In the manner of a metaphysical conceit, he calls the daisy 'nun' 'Cyclops' 'shield' 'star'—then:

> Bright *Flower*! for by that name at last,
> When all my reveries are past,
> I call thee, and to that cleave fast,
> Sweet silent creature!
> That breath'st with me in sun and air,
> Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
> My heart with gladness, and a share
> Of thy meek nature!

That is the point: these small, self-contained, modest yet confident creatures have the power to repair the human heart, if one takes the trouble to notice them.

On 16 April 1802, Dorothy writes to Mary, worried by William's report of her weak health. She makes suggestions about ways for Mary to take care of herself and then says, 'above all, my dearest Mary, seek quiet or rather amusing thoughts. Study the flowers, the birds and all the common things that are about you. O Mary, my dear Sister! be quiet and happy' (*EY* 350). Good advice in times of stress, anxiety or weakness—or indeed at any time! Later in the letter she goes on, 'Dear Mary, we are glad to be at home. No fireside is like this. Be chearful in the thought of coming to it' (*EY* 352). Doesn't this speak volumes about the Wordsworths' long rootlessness and their joy in now being in a settled home at Grasmere?

The advice about 'quiet' but 'amusing' thoughts was followed by Wordsworth very much to his advantage in these lyrics of 1802, providing a relief from the material anxieties relating to his coming marriage, the worry over Coleridge's troubles, as well as his friend's bullying of him about *The Recluse* and his disapproval of so many short poems, and deeper doubts about the loss of his own vision and the serpent so evident in the garden of the world. They are not poems of mere escapism, though, for they faithfully depict those balancing 'thoughts that are fed by the sun' which are as much a part of life as the shadows of night, and the two aspects co-exist in Wordsworth's mind. What he particularly appreciates in the creatures he observes, the butterflies, the greenfinch, even the flowers, is their capacity for living in and glorying in the present. The poet tries to emulate them in this but, being human, is aware, as they are not consciously, of the tentacles that stretch back from the present into the past and forward to the future. As Shelley was to write (in 1820), 'We look before and after, / And pine for what is not' (*To a Skylark*). But this capacity of memory and foresight can itself add to the joy in the present, as we see in these poems.

It will not have escaped you that some of them are not written out of immediate experience. Butterflies rarely appear in March and the Cuckoo poem was written a full month before Dorothy recorded hearing the bird for the first time that year. Some were written at the time but others were sparked off by reminiscence. Both Coleridge and Wordsworth had great faith in man's

power to store up memories of nature 'for future restoration'. When Coleridge missed the walk with Lamb and the Wordsworths because of his scalded foot, he wrote,

> I have lost
> Beauties and feelings, such as would have been
> Most sweet to my remembrance even when age
> Had dimmed mine eyes to blindness.[16]

It is indeed true that scenes of beauty from the past do

> Flash upon that inward eye
> That is the bliss of solitude

and that past, present and future and the timeless realm can all be conjured up by the small things of life. 'The Sparrow's Nest', which the *Simpliciad* so scorned, demonstrates what Wordsworth gained from Dorothy's emphasis on this. You will observe that he is again using the combination of four- and three-stress lines and note the effectiveness of that last shorter line with its three monosyllables.

I think Wordsworth may have had at the back of his mind a passage from Matthew's Gospel, quoting Isaiah: 'For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart and should turn to me, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear' (Matthew 13:15-16).

> Behold, within the leafy shade,
> Those bright blue eggs together laid!
> On me the chance-discovered sight
> Gleamed like a vision of delight.
> I started—seeming to espy
> The home and sheltered bed,
> The Sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by
> My father's house, in wet or dry
> My sister Emmeline and I
> Together visited.

One cannot miss the touching connotations of 'My father's house' alongside the Sparrow's 'home and sheltered bed'.

> She looked at it and seemed to fear it;
> Dreading, tho' wishing to be near it:
> Such heart was in her, being then
> A little Prattler among men.
> The Blessing of my later years
> Was with me when a boy:
> She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;
> And humble cares, and delicate fears;
> A heart, the fountain of sweet tears;
> And love, and thought, and joy.

Sevenoaks

[16] *This Lime-Tree Bower my Prison* 2-5.

Ainger's Comforts and Lamb's Indulgences: the 1998 Toast

By JOHN BEER

This toast was given at the Charles Lamb Birthday Luncheon, 21 February 1998.

AS YOU KNOW, I like to use this occasion to recall any way in which the immortal memory of Lamb has impinged on me during the year. I have little to report this year except that while foraging in a Norfolk bookshop recently I came across Edith Sichel's life of Alfred Ainger,[1] and dipped into it with considerable fascination. As you know, Ainger was one of our illustrious nineteenth-century predecessors in his enthusiasm for Lamb, whose letters he edited. In view of the fact that this year is the bicentenary of the annus mirabilis, it's pleasant to read that in August 1888 Ainger and Dykes Campbell, Coleridge's editor, set off for a few days to visit the Romantic haunts in north Somersetshire. Mindful, perhaps, of Lamb's example, Ainger wrote to Campbell in advance saying that he had a small hamper packed, consisting of two or three bottles of claret, one of sherry and perhaps a few extras 'to keep us up'; and a day or two later that he had ordered the *Times* to be posted each day to them from his Hampstead newsagents, and that he would be taking Murray's *Somersetshire*, a copy of *Lyrical Ballads*, 'and other comforts'. As you may guess from these preparations it had been a rather bad summer up till then, but I'm glad to say that the weather perked up and they had a glorious time.

Editing Lamb's letters made Ainger aware of his virtues as a critic—even as critic of those same *Lyrical Ballads*. Referring to a well-known criticism by Wordsworth of *The Ancient Mariner*, he wrote, 'In one of the letters to Wordsworth Lamb tells him he is quite wrong to wish that a definite profession etc., had been assigned to the venerable mariner. How curiously narrow and limited Wordsworth was in his estimate of other men's work!'[2] (Lamb, you'll recall, had gone on to argue that 'the Ancient Marinere undergoes such Trials, as overwhelm and bury all individuality or memory of what he was'.[3])

Lamb always felt that Wordsworth needed to be rescued from taking himself too seriously or getting above himself. In 1808 he wrote to Manning, 'Wordsworth the great poet is coming to town. He is to have apartments in the Mansion House. He says he does not see much difficulty in writing like Shakespeare if he had a mind to try it. It is clear then,' he added innocently, 'nothing is wanting except the mind.' 'Even Coleridge', he continued, 'a little checked at this hardihood of assertion'.[4] To Coleridge of course he was always more indulgent—even when his own more worldly indulgences were being curtailed. In 1810 Mary Lamb was unwell and put herself under the care of a doctor who prescribed a water cure and Charles gave up alcohol for the time being in her support. But it came a little hard and he wrote in elegiac mood, 'Must I then leave you, Gin, Rum, Brandy, Aqua Vitae—pleasant jolly fellows—. Damn Temperance and them that first invented it, some Ante Noahite.' He was able to console himself with the thought of Coleridge, however: 'Coleridge has powdered his head, and looks like Bacchus, Bacchus ever sleek and young. He is going to turn sober, but his Clock has not struck yet, meantime he pours

[1] *Life and Letters of Alfred Ainger* (London, 1906).

[2] Ibid., 156.

[3] *The Letters of Charles and Mary Anne Lamb* ed. Edwin W. Marrs, Jr (3 vols., Ithaca, NY, 1975-8), i. 266.

[4] Ibid., ii. 274.

down goblet after goblet, the 2nd to see where the 1st is gone, the 3rd to see no harm happens to the second, a fourth to say there's another coming, and a 5th to say he's not sure he's the last.'[5] May I invite you to rise and drink to Lamb's immortal memory.

Peterhouse, Cambridge

[5] Ibid., iii. 62.

Reviews

JOHN WARDROPER, *The World of William Hone*. London: Shelfmark Books, 1997. Pp. vii + 328. 80 illustrations. ISBN 0 9526093 2 0. £28.50 hardback, £12.95 paperback.

'I LIKE YOU and your book, ingenuous Hone'. So began Lamb's 'Quatrains to the Editor of the *Every-day Book*', which appeared in the *London Magazine* for May 1825. There is some dispute about when the two men first met. Hackwood, Hone's biographer, claims it may have been as early as 1819; the more cautious Lucas supposes it to have been soon after May 1823, when Lamb, having received from Hone a copy of his *Ancient Mysteries*, invited its author to dinner. What isn't in dispute, however, is the warm friendship and mutual admiration that existed between the two writers right up to Lamb's death. Hone copied the 'Quatrains' into his *Every-Day Book* and then responded to Lamb's tribute by publishing a verse compliment of his own. While convalescing in Enfield during the summer of 1825 Lamb let Hone stay at his cottage in Islington. Lamb was also a frequent contributor to the *Every-Day Book* in this period and the grateful Hone dedicated the completed project to him when it appeared in book form in 1826. Lamb went on to write copiously for the *Table Book* (mainly on Garrick's plays) and two of his poems first appeared in Hone's last venture of this kind—the *Year Book*. Thereafter, as his friend's financial affairs worsened, Lamb became the most energetic of the many admirers who set Hone up as a coffee-house keeper in the City. But why, one is foreced to ask, did Lamb, who was one of the top earners at the *London Magazine*, spend so much time and energy on publications that plainly lacked intellectual respectability in the eyes of his literary contemporaries? It is unlikely that the almost permanently impoverished Hone paid him much, if at all. It is more probable that Lamb would have refused to take his friend's money.

So what did Lamb see in Hone? For answers to these questions one must look not only at Hone's pioneering compendiums of folklore and curiosa, a selection from which is offered here by John Wardroper, but also at Lamb's polemical poetry, particularly 'The Three Graves' and 'A Sonnet to Matthew Wood', which in their anti-government sentiment mirror Hone's own verse squibs, notably 'The Political House that Jack Built' and 'The Man in the Moon'. Lamb's poems appeared in the *Champion* less than a fortnight after five of the Cato Street conspirators had been executed and at a time when the radical furore at the government's employment of *agents provocateurs* was at its height. While Lamb was certainly no political malcontent, neither was he above politics, as these poems show. And if his letters understandably reveal little of his real opposition to the government of Liverpool his association with one of its most recalcitrant enemies should suggest a level of sympathy for the cause of political reform that few, if any, of Lamb's commentators have been willing to acknowledge. In short, by 1823, Hone was seen by Lamb as someone who, by his commitment to truth and justice, richly deserved his support. Moreover, by embarking on his *Every-Day Book*, Hone was also striking a blow for the people by making their history available to them in a cheap form. This aim would undoubtedly have pleased Lamb who, like Hone, was aware of the centuries-old domination of antiquarianism by a privileged class of amateurs.

The astonishing dedication of Hone as a collector of folklore, customes and antiquarian bits and bobs comes across in Mr Wardroper's anthology, which is the work of someone steeped not only in the subject matter but also in the Golden Age of political caricature. And yet I turned the pages of *The World of William Hone* without enthusiasm. This has something to do with the fact that I was already familiar with the original works, which, after all, were frequently reprinted throughout the nineteenth century, but there was a feeling too that in the presentation and selec-

tion process the distinctive flavour of Hone and his times, which seeps up through the pages of the *Every-Day Book* and its companion volumes, has been entirely jettisoned in favour of a jejune blandness. This was perhaps inevitable given the task of squeezing a gallon into a pint-pot, but to exclude much of Hone's antiquarianism was a bad decision, as was the policy of selecting *passages* from the original entries and not supplying notes or sources. A smaller font and the use of columns and wide margins would have restored much of the savour of the originals, but then the anthology would still need to be twice the length to give the modern reader an idea of Hone's grand plan. A straightforward reprint on India paper of the best of Hone would have served him ideally. Instead, what we have is a re-heated Hone, a Hamburger-heritage Hone of easily digested mouthfuls. Lamb would have disapproved and I can imagine his verdict on it: 'What need was there of unearthing the bones of that fantastic old great man to expose them in a winding sheet of the newest fashion to modern censure?'

R. M. HEALEY

Recollections of a Tour Made in Scotland, by DOROTHY WORDSWORTH. Ed. Carol Kyros Walker. London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997. Pp. ix + 233. ISBN 0 300 07155 8. £19.95 hardback.

'ONE OF THE MOST DELIGHTFUL of all books of travel', wrote Ernest de Selincourt of Dorothy Wordsworth's *Recollections of a Tour Made in Scotland, A.D. 1803*: 'it is, undoubtedly, her masterpiece.' That artistic masterpiece now has a most attractive frame in the introduction, notes, and photographs accompanying Carol Kyros Walker's new edition. Author and photographer of the superlative *Walking North With Keats* (1992), Walker brings unique qualifications to her work. As a Professor of English, she writes knowingly and well of the historical and personal contexts of Dorothy's work. As a photographer and visiting professor at an art institute, she has produced over 200 fine images illustrating the 1803 tour. As an indefatigable traveller, she has walked in Dorothy's Scottish footsteps and can write notes based on personal observations as well as on scholarly research.

When Dorothy Wordsworth, her brother William, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge set out on 15 August 1803, on their six-week tour (Coleridge left the others after two weeks), the Grasmere household had been recently expanded by the birth of William and Mary's first child John. It may seem an odd time to withdraw an aunt's and a father's aid from Mary, but Walker sensibly discusses the displacement Dorothy must have felt in 1803—and William's recognition of 'the need for Dorothy to have some separate time with him now and the value of investing in the woman who had been so sensitive a partner in the generation of his poems' (p. 11).

Whatever the case, Dorothy and William had plenty of opportunity for mutual reinvestment during their 663-mile trip in an open-air, two-wheeled, one-horsed Irish jaunting car, jolting over roads Dorothy characterized from 'excellent' (rarely) to 'middling', 'tolerable', 'roughish', 'baddish', 'bad', 'very bad', 'wretchedly bad'. Accommodations varied, but lowered expectations helped in judging both lodging ('clean for a Scotch inn') and food ('true Scottish—a boiled sheep's head, with the hair singed off'). Walker well reminds us that as a woman Dorothy could get behind the scenes of Scottish life and frequently provide truer and more sympathetic domestic portrayals than did such male predecessors as Samuel Johnson, James Boswell, Thomas Pennant, William Gilpin, and John Stoddart.

As for Dorothy's writing, she seems to have made at least a few jottings while on tour, but 'recollections' (always a mystical word for the Wordsworths)—not a contemporaneous journal —is what she wanted to produce. For her, journals of tours were 'except as far as one is inter-

ested in the travellers . . . very uninteresting things'. Dorothy's recollections, matured by her artistic skill, still portray experiences immediately and vividly but also reconsider their imaginative significance. And, of course, for us there is inexhaustible interest in the travellers themselves.

Walker's 210 photographs enable us to come as close to Dorothy's visual experiences as is now possible. From first (the door of Coleridge's Greta Hall encircled by a tunnel of trees) to last (the shadowy interior of Dove Cottage dappled with sunlight splashed from an open window), her camera records Dorothy's perceptions. Walker selected black and white photography, she tells us, to suggest 'calling up and re-collecting the images of a place' in that 'moment just before total illumination in the mind; for her, 'that instant is in black and white' (p. vii). Photographs are bundled in six sections to match the weeks of the tour. Below each image appears Dorothy's words to give, according to Walker, 'color' to the black and white pictures. As photographs, Walker's images are stunning; as evocations of Dorothy's impressions, they are invaluable.

The text of *Recollections* has not been re-edited for this volume and returns to John Campbell Shairp's version, first published in 1874. That text, argues Walker, is the 'most readable' of the three published versions (the others were edited by William Knight in 1897 and by Ernest de Selincourt in 1941). As a 'fine editor', Shairp knew 'how to present a travel book for a general audience' (p. 25): as Walker points out, he divided Dorothy's prose into paragraphs, organized her work into a week-by-week format, occasionally toned down her prose by reducing the number of underlinings, and omitted sentences here and there. One could argue, however, that Shairp's text does not fully provide what many late-twentieth-century readers prefer: Dorothy's words with little or no editorial interference.

Until a new, much-needed critical edition of the *Recollections* appears, scholars will probably still quote from the de Selincourt version (which has its own difficulties). But anyone wanting to re-imagine Dorothy's Scottish journey should certainly go to Carol Kyros Walker.

JAMES A. BUTLER

Society Notes and News from Members

FROM THE HON. SECRETARY

Annual General Meeting

The 'old familiar faces' were re-elected as Officers and Council at the AGM on 9 May; perhaps in 1999 we may welcome, in addition, some new, less familiar faces to run the Society. In any case, expect changes at the 1999 AGM when Mary Wedd and I will not be seeking re-election as Chairman and General Secretary respectively.

The Treasurer reported that the Society was in a sound financial position; the Council were currently investigating ways in which Bill Ruddick's legacy to the Society could best be used to promote causes dear to his heart.

1998-9 Programme

It is issued with this *Bulletin*. If you can use additional copies for friends, local libraries, etc., please contact me or the Membership Secretary.

Visit to Dulwich Picture Gallery

This took place on 4 April. We are most grateful to Cecilia Powell for leading us through her exibition, 'Italy and British Art in the Age of Turner', on an enlightening and enjoyable afternoon.

From the Editor

Conferences

The Conference season is now upon us, and this is a final reminder for the big events of the summer, at least on this side of the Atlantic. The Coleridge Conference will be held at Cannington on 23-9 July 1998. This Conference cannot be too highly recommended; for further information contact either Graham Davidson, 87 Richmond Road, Montpelier, Bristol BS6 5EP, or Professor Nicholas Roe, Depart-ment of English, The University, St Andrews, Fife KY16 9AL (telephone: 01334 476161 ext. 2642).

The Kilve Court Weekend this year promises to be a star-studded event. It will take place in the magnificent setting of Kilve Court, but a stone's throw from the green sea, and a short hop away from the Quantocks. It will be held on 4-6 September, its theme being 'Figures in the Landscape'. Speakers will include David Fairer, Cecilia Powell, Robin Jarvis, Tom Mayberry, and Peter Larkin. For further details contact Shirley Watters, 11 Castle Street, Nether Stowey, Somerset TA5 1LN (telephone: 01278 733338).

The Fate of the Fenwicks, Letters to Mary Hays 1798-1828 ed. A. F. Wedd (1927)

A new member, Deborah Rowbottom, is attempting to procure a copy of this volume, in the cause of her research into the life of Elizabeth Fenwick. If any reader can help, please contact her direct at 23 Connington Crescent, Chingford, London E4 6LE.

* * *

The AGM of the Alliance of Literary Societies

On 25 April the Alliance forsook its usual cramped quarters in Birmingham (a church hall behind Tesco's) for the Arts and Craft opulence of the city centre's Midland Institute. Nor surprisingly, in view of the more spacious premises, the turn-out was up on last year, although Romanticism remained poorly represented, and even lost one of its authors, John Clare being sadly missed. And yet, for all this, Romanticism dominated the stalls this year. Besides Lamb, Mr Keats and Mr Shelley were there in spirit, every one of the many leaflets your delegate had brought from the Friends of Coleridge was taken, and it can be reported that the Thomas Beddoes Society managed somehow to envelop, Quatermass-like, three whole display tables! Not bad for a society that three years ago could boast but one member. There is, perhaps, a lesson here for the CLS. Could we not hire Beddoes' energetic descendant to boost our membership?

The AGM was more than usually uneventful. All officers, including your delegate, who had been elected Press Officer last November, were re-elected with the exception of Secretary 'Bill' Adams. He has announced his retirement. The Great Public Liability Insurance debate rumbled on, though without yours truly who, on awaking like Abou ben Adhem 'from a deep dream of peace', found himself one of two delegates voting against the scheme. The saga goes on . . .

More interesting was the news that local councils nowadays offer decent sums to local literary societies for lists of authors associated with particular places. The Dymock Poets Society was given £200 to provide names for a proposed housing estate. Couldn't the CLS offer its services to the Enfield UDC?

After lunch it was the turn of the two rival Lewis Carroll societies to host a centenary tribute. Carroll's latest biographer, Miss Anne Amor, explained how the author's Cheshire childhood and years at Oxford furnished material for the Alice books. Various editions of these, together with Dodgson's mathematical treatises, figured in Selwyn Goodacre's illustrated talk on 'Alice through the Ages', which was followed by an appreciation of Carroll's surreal humour. As for

his interest in small girls, it was generally agreed that had he been alive today someone at Boots would certainly have reported Carroll to Oxford Social Services. The afternoon concluded with an impressive attempt by President Gabriel Woolf to make some juvenile verse sound as funny as Carroll's mature work, but as a finale, 'The Walrus and the Carpenter' was a triumph.

The next AGM will take place on 24 April 1999 and will be hosted by the Thomas Beddoes and H. G. Wells Societies.

R. M. Healey

50 Years Ago: from *CLS Bulletin* no. 84: July 1948

Distant Correspondents: News from Overseas

'I cannot image to myself whereabout you are.' From Mrs K. [doubtless a member], Junabee, Queensland.

'Thank you for your letter [presumably from one of the CLS Corresponding Secretaries] which delighted me, and I am very grateful. I've often heard of St Albans. My great-grandmother was born at the old Windmill Inn. Her father owned the Windmill and a number of nearby little cottages. Loynes I think was the family name; William Streek, an uncle of my mother's, inherited the Windmill and other St Albans property but sold it and went to Kent. The great-grandmother struck hard times in Lond. She had years nursing an invalid husband and then was left a widow in poor circumstances. However she managed to give her children a decent education, and except for the months of extreme winter she went to the country every Sunday of her life following her husband's death. She took the train and got out at some small station and wandered down the lanes, buying milk at some attractive old farm house. My mother or some other grandchild went with her after her own children passed from home or had other interests. Every time I pick up the *Essays of Elia* and read of Hertfordshire I think of my own great-grandmother getting her weekly happiness in those old Hertfordshire lanes, and I can quarrel with anyone who calls Charles Lamb for his Dream Children as 'escapist'. If there was escapism it was tender, lovable, and brave 'escapism', true in its harmony with the spirit of Lamb that makes the best of things—the great courage of living that gave us the great loveliness of 'Old China'.

From *CLS Bulletin* no. 85: September 1948

Summer Visits: To Hampstead, 10 July 1948

In his recent book *The Story of Hampstead* Mr J. H. Preston (a member of the Society) states: 'Hampstead's streets are quiet and her gardens beautiful, established and full of echoes of the past. . . . Walk in Hampstead where you will and realize that the world of long ago will never die.'

On Saturday 10 July, 35 members of the Society set out to capture this lyrical note in a ramble from 'The Lower to the Upper Flask' under the guidance of Mr Frank V. Hallam.

Lamb and Hone often frequented the Heath and probably called at the Bull and Bush Inn for tea or other refreshment; and is it not fitting therefore that Lamb's 'followers' on this occasion should partake of tea there?

During the tea interval conversation hummed like a merry song, and later Mr. H. G. Smith read some verses entitled 'Houses with memories: a Series of Elian Cameos', descriptive of scenes and events at the houses and rooms occupied by Charles and Mary and their friends.