

THE CHARLES LAMB BULLETIN  
*The Journal of the Charles Lamb Society*

NEW SERIES No. 2

APRIL 1973

THE LAMBS' STORY OF REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE: A NEWLY DISCOVERED FRAGMENT

Louis James

*My dear Friend, -*

*More than once, you have expressed a wish to know my adventures from the time of my second marriage, which took place in the year seventeen hundred and eighty-seven.*

This sentence begins a hitherto unknown story by Charles and Mary Lamb. The holograph is on paper torn from a ledger book, paper made specifically by Whatmans for the East India Company, and watermarked 1814: it has been further torn and mended in ways to be noticed later. The first seven pages are in the hand of Mary Lamb. At the bottom of the seventh page Charles took over, contributing a further seven, with a tantalising fragment interleaved from a later part of the story indicating that more was written of which as yet there is no trace. The first page is headed with the note 'This manuscript in the Autograph of Charles Lamb was given me by Westwood the poet who was the intimate friend of Lamb. It has never been published. Edward Lumley.' Lumley was a Victorian bookseller. The manuscript was found folded in an envelope among the papers of Joseph Ellis, poet and proprietor of the Bedford Hotel in Brighton, and is here quoted by kind permission of Mrs Cyril Ellis.

The 'Adventures' were clearly not prepared for publication, and are of interest in their detail rather than as a narrative - at least in the preserved fragment. They are told by a Mrs McKenna, who has just undergone her second marriage, to a merchant. In 1787 the couple go to Dunkirk to enter business with a partner there, leaving behind Mrs McKenna's five year old son, her 'affectionate father and many other kind relatives and friends'. The Dunkirk merchant however turns out to be a smuggler, and the McKennas move on to 'St Omers'.

The stay is nearly a fatal one. First a factious Englishman makes trouble between the McKennas and their friends. Then, when Mrs McKenna is in 'a very low nervous state', and unable to stand the least noise, a French officer overhead begins wilfully to disturb her. Mr McKenna challenges the officer to a duel, although to fight one officer was by custom to take on the whole regiment. His wife's hysterics are followed by a fever which nearly kills her. Fortunately, the regiment's Colonel and other officers intervene to make up the quarrel and 'having naturally a good constitution' the invalid recovers.

Then follows an episode visiting Paris. A friendly Count takes them to Versailles, where Mrs McKenna goes to chapel to hear the Queen's Mass. Unknown at the time to her the Princess Elizabeth, plainly dressed, was

sitting on the same bench. In the Presence Chamber she sees the King and Queen. 'The Queen did me the honour to walk up to me, and saluted me very genteely. Alas, they little thought then what a very few years would bring forth.' They then continued towards L'Orient (Lorient), travelling down the Loire from Orleans to Nantes. 'I forget the names of the many places at which we stopped.'

At this point Charles Lamb's handwriting begins. A meeting at Tours with French hospitality leads into a passage defending French courtesy against English detractors. Lamb also makes a plea for the Catholic religion, and in particular for the Continental observance of Sunday, comparing French Sabbath amusements with English Card-playing, and suburban public house and tea garden drinking 'as I knew /them/ from my residence in Islington, &c.' The couple arrive at L'Orient, the French centre for East India Company trade, on the first of April, 1788. 'I liked L'Orient very well.' Mr McKenna is a supporter of Neckar and reform, and when an American declares he is going to fetch his family over 'to be a witness to the French enjoying their liberty', the McKennas 'joined him in that hope'. In August Mrs McKenna, beset by anxious fears, takes the chance of a voyage back to England. The boat is hit by storms, and only thirty days later does it reach Ramsgate. By December, when she returns, events are taking an ominous turn.

Mr McKenna has moved into a large house owned by 'a Romish Priest, a very worthy man', who lives upstairs. They also make close friends with 'the Chevalier Burke, an Irish gentleman who being a Catholic, and incapable of home service, in consequence had entered that of the French'. They know another Irish family, and have French and American associates. They would have settled very happily 'had it not been for the troubles which broke out'.

First there is an unexplained fire, which nearly catches the port powder magazine and destroys the town. An earthquake upsets barges in the river and shakes jars from the shelves. Disturbances of some sort occur every night, and 'the lower sort of people began to be very violent'. It became 'a great crime' for any person to say prayers, and only a warning from the McKennas saves the priest who says mass in their house from the Guards.

At this point the Manuscript breaks off in mid-sentence at the end of page fourteen. The additional fragment is clearly from a later point in the story. It indicates the full violence of the revolution. An angry mob, losing one victim, turns its anger on his wife and small child, who receive warning in time to flee with the nurse to a country cottage nearby. The rambling account evidently moved into a longer and more purposeful narrative, and this is supported by the detailed account of the families met in L'Orient - 'you will be likely to hear more of them' says Lamb.

The origin of the story was almost certainly the trip made by the Lambs to France from June 18 to September 9 1822 (Charles returned in August alone), interwoven with earlier reactions to the French revolution. Charles and Mary left via Brighton and Dieppe, taking with them Sarah James as a nurse for Mary and a Frenchman named Guichy or Guichet. As Crabb Robinson noted, Mary was apprehensive, and at Amiens, in the *diligence*, she had a nervous attack. Evidently this breakdown, and possibly the fantasies arising from it, are embodied in the illness precipitated by the rowdy officer in the story. Indeed, the whole of her contribution is fragile with nervous tension. 'I had made my husband very uncomfortable for a time - teasing

him with my dread of hearing bad news' she writes. When she comes to an inn with the bedroom floor tiled instead of boarded, and no carpeting, it is a 'misfortune' only remedied by the landlady laying down blankets everywhere (was Mary afraid of falling on the floor in a seizure?).

Charles left his sister in care and continued to Paris, staying with the family of James Kenney the dramatist at Versailles, and at the Hotel de l'Europ in Paris. He was probably back in England by the time (mid-August) that his sister followed him to the Kenneys, and to Paris where she was guided by Crabb Robinson.

Here again the story echoes life. The name chosen for the heroine is itself close to Kenney, McKenna; like Mrs Kenney, Mrs McKenna is in her second marriage. The visit to the palace at Versailles is embodied in the imaginative picture of the 'full court', 'all so gay and lively, it was delightful to see them, and many of them took notice of me, seeing I was English'.

Charles's contribution is more rooted in his remembered reactions to the French revolution itself, a crisis which must have become associated with upheaval and disaster for the Lambs themselves. Both benefactors, Samuel Salt and Grandmother Field, died in 1792, the year of the storming of the Tuileries, and the family had to move to an impoverished life in Holborn. The approval of Neckar's reforms, the growing horror with anarchy and violence, is a rare statement of Lamb's political views that only the end of the story could complete. The praise of French courtesy, and sympathy towards Catholicism, are also interesting. The latter goes back to the childhood of Charles and Mary. It is not too fanciful to see in Mr Laporte, 'the Romish priest, a very worthy man,' living upstairs, a distant image of the 'Witch Aunt' Sarah Lamb, on her knees reading her Catholic Prayer Book in the midst of a disapproving family.

When was the fragment written? Possibly as early as September of 1822, when Mary Lamb returned from France. Her portion is written with some signs of strain. There are frequent erasures and mistakes, corrected later by Charles. A word like 'determined' can defeat her altogether (spelt 'detitimed'). It may have been written soon after the French experience as a form of mental therapy.

The latest date is March 22, 1833. The manuscript had been torn up at some time. This has been done neatly, across the page, suggesting that the paper had been prepared for some use - probably spills for lighting candles or the fire. As the ledger paper was thick, pages were torn in groups of three or four at a time: tearing in this way a manuscript rightly faced would leave the first pages at the bottom of the pile, which would explain why the end is the missing part, with one strip left which had got out of order.

The pages have been joined using two torn-up letters and some more (blank) ledger paper. Only a complete removal of the joining slips would make possible analysis of them, and this at present is not possible. However, useful information can be gained. One letter is addressed to 'Chs. Lam/b Esq. /...?/ En/field' and franked '11Mr./18/33'. The second letter is addressed 'To the / Lady of the H/ouse' and is franked '12 noon 29. Mr. /1833?/' The ledger paper is again Whatman's for the East India Company, with a slightly different watermark, but the date is torn after 18/?.

The Lambs were at Enfield in March 1833. As Crabb Robinson noted on April 9,

however, they were increasingly out of sympathy with their landlord, and shortly afterwards Mary's further illness precipitated their last move, from Enfield to Edmonton. Did Charles, tidying up their Enfield cottage, come across the pile of strips, have his eye caught by some sentences, sit down, and tearing up two recent letters, piece the manuscript together?

There is a more likely train of events. Lumley states that he received the manuscript from 'Westwood the poet'. Now Westwood was no other than the Lambs' landlord at Enfield. By March the Lambs were so hostile to Westwood it is unlikely they would have given him the manuscript as a parting present, especially as it was both personal and unfinished. Probably Westwood, clearing up after the Lambs had gone (they left hastily, for Mary was ill), came across the bundle of spills, saw the writing, and there and then pieced it together, using other waste paper to hand.

It is clear why Westwood did not think of publishing it, and why it was kept for curiosity value until it became lost among the papers of Mr Ellis. Yet its very imperfections as a polished narrative provide its importance. Mary distraught at the sight of uncovered tile floors, Charles offended by the rowdies in Islington on Sunday nights, these are glimpses such as rarely slip through the bright patina of poise the Lambs used for self-protection even in their private letters. The relationship between Mr and Mrs McKenna is also moving. When Mary writes 'I left all to follow my husband, and a most kind and tender one he was: my happiness and my comfort was his constant study,' she is surely writing of her brother. But the most tender sentiment is that of Charles. It comes, tantalisingly, in the fragment. As the young wife hides from the mob, which tears down the family buildings, she holds her child in her arms, talking to it. She says, 'My dear, let them pull them down, & take all we have; when your dear father comes, we will be happy in spite of them.'

#### SOME ACCOUNT OF THE PUBLISHING HISTORY OF THE LAMBS' LETTERS, WITH NOTES ON A NEW EDITION IN PROGRESS

Edwin W Marrs Jr.

These letters, for all their humor and pathos, verve and color, and revelations of the lives and extraordinary natures of their writers and the relationships they record, are among the most engaging and frequently published we have. What is known of the making of their first two editions comes principally from those portions of the letters of Talfourd and Wordsworth and the diaries and letters of Crabb Robinson that Robert S Newdick incorporated in *The First Life and Letters of Charles Lamb: a Study of Thomas Noon Talfourd as Editor and Biographer* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University, 1935). Robinson told Wordsworth of the plan to collect and edit the letters on February 13 1835, less than two months after Lamb's death, more than twelve years before Mary's, and after a few of the letters had appeared in Hone's *Table Book* (1827) and Procter's 'Recollections of Charles Lamb' in the *Athenaeum* of January 24 and February 7, 1835. On February 16 Barron Field wrote to Robinson to express his preference for Southey as the editor. Field further believed himself a good second choice, Moxon a third, that heaven should preserve them all from Forster, and that Talfourd would be too busy and his writing 'too fine' (Newdick, p.19) to be

approached. It was probably Moxon who did approach him, and Talfourd with the assistance mainly of Moxon, Robinson, Southey, Wordsworth and Le Grice in gathering the letters and details of Lamb's life prepared the selection and its attendant biographical narrative called *The Letters of Charles Lamb, with a Sketch of His Life*, which Edward Moxon published in two volumes in 1837 and Harper and Brothers of New York republished in 1838, Moxon in 1840, and Cassell and Company of London in 1911. In his Preface Talfourd explained that he omitted many portions from the letters because of their recent composition and personal references, reproduced their underscorings and unexpected capitals but regretfully not their 'curious varieties of writing.. scrupulously adapted to their subjects' (I,ix), generally transmitted the dates on those bearing them but was hesitant about the correctness of his assignments to others, and necessarily reserved for the future the many available letters he felt he could not include. He did include 180, which is a number I have arrived at, as I shall arrive at every such, by dismissing existing computations, restoring the integrity to those letters and portions that Talfourd and his successors both joined into one letter and disjoined into two or more letters, and counting as letters the discrete letters and portions and also the excerpts regardless of length in prefaces, introductions, running commentaries and notes.

Cottle in *Early recollections; Chiefly Relating to the Late Samuel Taylor Coleridge, during His Long Residence in Bristol* (1837), revised as *Reminiscences of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey* (1847), Hood in 'Literary Reminiscences No. IV' in *Hood's Own* (1838), Mrs Anne Mathews in *Memoirs of Charles Mathews, Comedian* (1838), and Henry Cary in *Memoir of the Rev. Henry Francis Cary* (1847) made public a few more, and in October 1847 Talfourd spent at least two days with Robinson discussing the new edition at which he had hinted in 1837. Time, as he would put it in his new Preface, which had brought Mary's death in May and would shortly bring in the *British Quarterly Review* of 1848 and other serials the full disclosure of her insanely killing her mother in September 1796; which had brought too the deaths of several of the Lambs' friends and excited interest especially in Britain and America for every scrap of a letter; would permit him now to present, 'with some very slight exceptions' (I,xi), the letters and portions he had earlier withheld either out of regard for the persons whose names figure with questionable credit in them or because he considered their contents not deep or broad enough to have general appeal. He first thought to combine his published and unpublished material in an edition that would thus be complete with almost the whole of almost all of the letters that their owners had from the start entrusted to him and Moxon. But out of regard for purchasers of his earlier work he instead assembled only the originally withheld letters and portions, with parts of the biographical narrative of 1837 repeated to introduce and connect them, and composed the accounts of the *London Magazine*, the Lambs' Wednesday evenings, and the Lambs in their later years titled *Final Memorials of Charles Lamb; Consisting Chiefly of His Letters Not before Published, with Sketches of Some of His Companions*, which Edward Moxon issued in two volumes in 1848 and G S Appleton of Philadelphia reissued in 1848 and 1849, Moxon in 1849 and 1850, W P Hazard of Philadelphia in 1854, Crosby, Nichols, Lee and Co. of Boston in 1860, and G Routledge and Sons of New York in 1867. It contains 102 letters, 82 of them new and 20 undesignated portions omitted from some in the first edition. In his two editions, then - which Harper and Brothers brought out as one in 1852, Moxon in 1855, 1859 and 1865, Sheldon and Co. of New York in 1863, William Veazie of Boston in 1863, Bell

and Daldy of London in 1867 and 1870, W T Amies of Philadelphia as the Enfield Edition in 1879, and Dana Estes and Co. of Boston in a year not specified - Talfourd introduced a total of 262 letters.

The total was increased with the appearances of Lucy Barton's *Selections from the Poems and Letters of Bernard Barton* (1849); Tom Taylor's *Life of Benjamin Robert Haydon, Historical Painter, from His Autobiography and Journals* (1853); Peter George Patmore's *My Friends and Acquaintances* (1854); George Daniel's 'An Inedited Letter of Charles Lamb' in the *Illustrated London News* of October 20, 1855; Mary Cowden Clarke's 'Recollections of Mary Lamb, by One Who Knew Her' in the *National Magazine* of April 1858; Mrs Mary Balmanno's *Pen and Pencil* (1858), which gives a letter in facsimile; George William Curtis's 'Notes of Charles Lamb to Thomas Allsop', *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 20(1859), 88-97; the anonymous 'My Friend's Library', *Atlantic Monthly* 8(1861), 440-447; Thornton Hunt's *The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt* (1862); J E Babson's *Eliana: Being the Hitherto Uncollected Writings of Charles Lamb* (1864 and republished a minimum of eight times); Mrs Clarke's *The Life and Labours of Vincent Novello* (1864); and *Charles Lamb: His Friends, His Haunts and His Books* (1866) by the novelist, biographer and Lamb's later editor Percy Hetherington Fitzgerald (b.1834). The number of editions was increased to three and four with the unusual appearances of *The Complete Correspondence and Works of Charles Lamb*. Moxon's firm planned it in the early sixties and, according to the stories of its development in William Carew Hazlitt's letters in the *Athenaeum* of November 2 and 30 and that of the Moxon company in the issue of November 23, 1867, first engaged Procter to construct it and what came to be his *Charles Lamb: a Memoir* (1866) and then Hazlitt when Procter defaulted as editor. From that point on the stories conflict in their details beyond resolution. But their conclusions are that trouble grew between Hazlitt and the firm over money and the quality of the manuscript on which Hazlitt had spent perhaps two years and submitted in the fall of 1866, and the results were a separation between the two parties in 1867 and subsequent public comments on the affair by the embittered Hazlitt in his *Mary and Charles Lamb: Poems, Letters, and Remains* (1874) pp.15-17; his edition of Lamb's letters (see below) I,xiv, note 2; and his *The Lambs: Their Lives, Their Friends and Their Correspondence. New Particulars and New Material* (1897) pp.83-93. The journalist George Augustus Henry Sala (1828-1896) succeeded Hazlitt and brought the edition partially into the light with the 223 letters, arranged not chronologically as Talfourd's are but by addressee as they were in Hazlitt's manuscript, that E Moxon and Co. released as the first volume of a projected three or four volumes in 1868 and then withdrew, presumably because Sala, for reasons not known today, retired from the project. Possibly at this time, so reads an inscription citing an ALs for support inside the cover of the Sala volume owned in 1902 by J Rogers Rees of Llandaff and presently by the Yale University Library, its editorship was offered to Matthew Arnold. At the last the drama critic and novelist Thomas Purnell (1834-1889) brought it the rest of the way with the assistance of Emma Isola Moxon by editing the additional 114 letters and the works that, including the first volume now with Purnell's prefatory essay on Lamb substituted for Sala's, E Moxon, Son and Co. published over Purnell's name in four volumes in 1870. It contains no statements of editorial policy (nor does Sala's volume), excludes 3 letters from the 262 in Talfourd's editions, and among its 337 includes 78 not in them.

Other letters published shortly before and in the first half of the seventies are those in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of September 22, 1869; Thomas Sadler's

*Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson* (1870); John Payne Collier's *An Old Man's Diary, Forty Years Ago* (1871-72); Mrs Clarke's 'Some Letters of Charles Lamb; with Reminiscences of Himself awakened thereby', *Gentleman's Magazine*, NS 11 (1873), 617-630, republished in *Living Age*, 5th Ser., 5 (1874), 49-56; and Hazlitt's *Mary and Charles Lamb* (1874). Their fifth edition, Percy Fitzgerald's *The Life, Letters and Writings of Charles Lamb*, E Moxon and Co. published in six volumes in 1876 and John Slark of London republished over the period 1882-84, W W Gibbings and Co., Ltd of London and J B Lippincott Co. of Philadelphia again as the Temple Edition in 1895, and an unspecified London firm as the Enfield Edition probably in 1824. Fitzgerald was the last editor to arrange the letters by addressee and the first to praise and retain Talfourd's biographical narrative revised and supplemented with notes and to criticise his suppression of portions of the letters for no apparent reason, for their language offensive only to Talfourd, or for their references to Lamb's excessive drinking. He remarked of Talfourd's deceptive substitution of fictitious initials for certain names within the letters, of his own willingness to have collated again those collated for Purnell's edition had not their originals disappeared, and of his own edition as containing 40 new letters and about 20 taken from published sources other than the previous editions and therefore the most complete yet. It excludes 2 letters from the 337 in Purnell's work, and among its 451 (which accounts for the 2 added at least to the Temple and Enfield editions) includes 116 not in Purnell's.

More first appeared in C Kegan Paul's *William Godwin: His Friends and Contemporaries* (1876); Richard Henry Stoddard's *The Life, Letters and Table Talk of Benjamin Robert Haydon* (1876); Coventry Patmore's edition of Procter's *An Autobiographical Fragment and Biographical Notes* (1877); Charles and Mary Cowden Clarke's *Recollections of Writers* (1878); M Betham-Edwards' 'Letters of Coleridge, Southey and Lamb to Matilda Betham', *Fraser's Magazine*, 18 (1878), 73-84; his *Six Life Studies of Famous Women* (1880); J Fuller Russell's 'Charles Lamb', *Notes and Queries*, 6th Ser., 4 (1881), 223-4 and 363-4; R S Chilton's 'Some Letters of Charles Lamb to John Howard Payne', *Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*, 24 (1882), 927-30; and the anonymous 'Letters of Charles Lamb in the *Atheneum* of April 12, 1884. Then followed Hazlitt's *Letters of Charles Lamb: with Some Account of the Writer, His Friends and Correspondents, and Explanatory Notes. By the Late Thomas Noon Talfourd, D.C.L., One of His Executors. An Entirely New Edition Carefully Revised and Greatly Enlarged*, which George Bell and Sons of London published in two volumes in 1886. Hazlitt condemned Talfourd's work generally for an 'inaccuracy and slovenliness...little less than miraculous' (I,iv) and his biographical narrative particularly for its faulty grammar, euphuistic style, fulsome praises, and distasteful religious opinions. At the same time he recognized the value and agreeably conciliatory tone of the narrative, acknowledged that Talfourd had cause for having mutilated and withheld some of the letters that he was now permitted to restore and release with other new ones, and mildly regretted that even he was 'precluded by circumstances' from printing all the extant letters, many of which are 'wholly unimportant, and chiefly curious as samples of handwriting' (I,xviii). He did not directly mention Sala, Purnell or Fitzgerald, but cited the work of the first two as his own and noted that its four volumes abound with blunders, for which he was not responsible, and was extended to six volumes, with the last two of which he had no concern.

Hazlitt's edition, the sixth, excludes 18 letters from the 451 in Fitzgerald's, and among its 488 includes 55 not in Fitzgerald's.

The seventh edition shortly followed that, the first of three by the writer and divine Alfred Ainger (1837-1904) titled *The Letters of Charles Lamb: Newly Arranged, with Additions*, which the Macmillan Co. of London and New York issued in its Eversley Series in 1888 as the concluding two volumes of Ainger's life and works of Lamb (1878-88) and Macmillan and A C Armstrong and Son of New York both reissued in the same year. Ainger briefly recounted the instances and characteristics of the existing editions and found Hazlitt's advantageous over the others since Talfourd's for its reversion to a chronological ordering of the letters. He thought it improper of Hazlitt, however, to have republished so extensively revised Talfourd's work over Talfourd's name, and of Hazlitt and Fitzgerald to have so harshly criticised his procedure. But while allowing for the difficulty of Talfourd's position, Ainger still had to concede that his failure to indicate in his second edition to what letters in his first its restored portions belong 'was, beyond all question, a grave error of judgment' (I,xvii) and his disregard of postmarks and other evidences of dates defects in his editions. He explained that his own work is without dozens of Lamb's notes whose triviality if admitted would have been 'little short of an insult to his memory and to his readers' (I,xxi). It excludes 101 letters from the 488 in Hazlitt's volumes, and among its 414 includes 27 not in them.

Published between 1888 and the end of the century are those in Peter William Clayden's *Rogers and His Contemporaries* (1889); William Knight's *The Life of William Wordsworth* (1889); Hazlitt's 'Some Unpublished Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb', *Atlantic Monthly*, 67 (1891), 145-60; I A Taylor's 'On Autographs. II', *Longman's Magazine*, 18 (1891), esp. 141; James Dykes Campbell's 'A Letter of Charles Lamb' in the *Atheneum* of June 13, 1891; the anonymous 'Unpublished Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb', *Cornhill Magazine*, NS 19 (1892), 610-23; John Hollingshead's *My Lifetime* (1895); Mrs James T Fields's *A Shelf of Old Books* (1895), which gives a facsimile of the letter in the *Atlantic Monthly* of 1861 already cited; George Birkbeck Hill's *Talks About Autographs* (1896); Hazlitt's *The Lambs* (1897); Curtis Guild's *A Chat About Celebrities* (1897); Edward Verrall Lucas' 'Charles Lamb and Robert Lloyd; Some Unpublished Letters', *Cornhill Magazine*, 77 (1898), 595-605 and 734-45, the first part of which reappears in *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, 61 (1898), 721-28, and the whole of which Lucas, to become the Lambs' best and most devoted biographer and editor, expanded into *Charles Lamb and the Lloyds* (1898; his 'A New Lamb Letter', *Academy*, 57 (1899), 373, republished in *Public Opinion*, 27 (1899), 533-34; and Hazlitt's *Lamb and Hazlitt: Further Letters and Records hitherto Unpublished* (1899).

The eighth edition, Ainger's second *The Letters of Charles Lamb: Newly Arranged, with Additions*, Macmillan and Co., Ltd., published in 1900 as the last four volumes in its twelve-volume Edition de Luxe of *The Life and Works of Charles Lamb* (1899-1900) and the Lamb Publishing Co. of New York republished as the Elia Edition in a year not given. Ainger again explained the incompleteness of his work, this time for the absence of letters not personally known to him but surely abroad and of some 'of great interest, in the possession of a family who, for reasons satisfactory to themselves, will not consent to their publication' (I,xxxiii). Among his additions are the letters in Lucas' *Charles Lamb and the Lloyds*, which he inserted in their proper order with those he had either misdated or had to place in the notes



to his earlier work. He also corrected its misreadings and misprints and supplemented its notes. This edition excludes no letters from the 414 in the previous one, and among its 446 includes 32 not in that one. Two other letters were first published in Adrain H Joline's *Meditations of an Autograph Collector* (1902) and by that date 6 more, photocopies of whose holographs or texts I possess but whose first appearances I have not been able to see, in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, the *National Review*, and the *Autographic Mirror*.

William Macdonald, editor of the Turner House Classics and the Temple Autobiographies, prepared the ninth edition, *Letters of Charles Lamb*, which J M Dent and Co. of London and E P Dutton and Co. of New York issued as the final two volumes of their twelve-volume standard and large-paper editions of *The Works of Charles Lamb* (1903) and on which Ernest Rhys based *The Letters of Charles Lamb* for Everyman's Library in 1909 and 1930. Macdonald credited Talfourd with having had the opportunity and ability to have written a full biography of Lamb, but attacked him for having written instead the fragmentary though brilliant memoir and for his methods especially in his second edition. He praised Hazlitt, Sala, Purnell, Mrs Moxon and Fitzgerald for having collected the new letters and repaired the old that form the editions culminating in that of 1876, but criticized them for having ordered the letters as they did. He pointed to Hazlitt's and Ainger's correction of that order, but also to their erroneous dating. He was pleased that Ainger had omitted Talfourd's narrative and placed his own notes at the ends of his volumes rather than having followed Hazlitt in encumbering the letters with them, but was displeased that Ainger had 'set his face resolutely against a certain class of correspondence which was likely to keep a faithful editor out o' bed at night' and, because of his position as canon of Bristol, had 'sacrificed Lamb to considerations....a little special and personal' (II,xxiv). He proclaimed his work complete with all available letters, his texts secure in their fidelity to their originals and thus without either omissions to protect the feelings of the descendants of Lamb's correspondents or expurgations for reasons social or professional or personal, his dates more nearly accurate than those of his predecessors, and his sorrow for the want of time that caused the paucity of his notes and the neglect of his proofs. This edition, which is troubled in all ways, excludes 20 letters from the 446 in Ainger's of 1900, and among its 581 includes 155 not in Ainger's.

Lucas's 'Lamb's Letters on the Death of John Wordsworth' in the *Athenaeum* of February 6, 1904, and Major S Butterworth's 'A Lamb Letter', *Academy and Literature*, 67 (1904), 72, appeared about the time of Ainger's third *The Letters of Charles Lamb: Newly Arranged, with Additions*, which Macmillan and Co., Ltd., and the Macmillan Co. of New York published, again in their Eversley Series, in two volumes in 1904 and on which Saxe Commins in part established *The Complete Works and Letters of Charles Lamb* for the Modern Library in 1935. Ainger stated that he retained the letters in his edition of 1900 and added perhaps 20 to Rickman here printed for the first time. This edition, the tenth, excludes 155 from the 581 in Macdonald's, and among its 464 includes 38 not in Macdonald's. The letters in Ernest Betham's *A House of Letters* (1905) appeared about the time of the eleventh edition, that introduced by Henry Howard Harper (1871-1953), secretary of the Bibliophile Society, and with notes on the facsimile letters by Richard Garnett (1835-1906), biographer and critic, minor poet, and Keeper of Printed Books at the British Museum. They elaborately titled it *The Letters*

of *Charles Lamb: in Which Many Mutilated Words and Passages Have Been Restored to Their Original Form; with Letters Never before Published and Facsimiles of Original MS Letters and Poems*, and the Bibliophile Society of Boston sumptuously produced it for its members in five volumes in 1905. Harper rehearsed the shortcomings of the editions of Talfourd through Fitzgerald, gave examples of the omissions and corruptions in those of Hazlitt through Ainger, and declared that he and Garnett had restored more than five thousand locutions and rehabilitated almost three thousand others dropped from or damaged in editions allegedly complete and sound and had made sixty-three corrections in the one letter to Coleridge of August 14, 1800. He commented on the occasional liberties he and Garnett took with such matters as punctuation and capitalization and on the lengths to which they went to fashion their edition complete, accurate and attractive. It is seriously inaccurate, excludes 2 letters from the 464 in Ainger's of 1904, and among its 746 includes 284 not in Ainger's.

The twelfth is Lucas' first and comprised of the last two volumes of *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*, which G P Putnam's Sons of New York and Methuen and Co. of London published in seven volumes over the period 1903-5. Lucas' claim that his is the first to contain Mary's letters is not altogether true. His further one that his is the first to notice in chronological order the letters in earlier editions but restricted from his under laws of copyright, 16 in *Charles Lamb and the Lloyds* among them, understandably does not include Harper and Garnett's work. He wrote that he was still able to present between 70 and 80 new and some old ones newly transcribed, though caring greatly for accuracy refused in view of the inaccuracies of the editors before him 'to guarantee a single line', and now and then altered punctuation to clarify a reading and omitted a passage for its 'freedom beyond modern taste' or for its personal references 'possibly hurtful to the susceptibilities of living people' (VI, viii). This edition excludes 183 letters from the 746 in Harper and Garnett's, and among its 590 includes 27 not in theirs. The letters in Bertram Dobell's 'Some Unpublished Letters of Charles Lamb' in the *Athenaeum* of May 5, 1906, and Walter Jerrold's *Thomas Hood; His Life and Times* (1907) preceded the thirteenth, Lucas' *The Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb*, which Methuen and Co., Ltd., published as the final two volumes of its six-volume *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb* in 1912. Here Lucas announced the inclusion of all Mary's letters, 45 by his arithmetic, and again claimed either a reference to or an abstract of every letter in earlier editions that copyright continued to restrict from his use. He mentioned particularly his failure to obtain permission to republish certain letters published by Harper and Garnett and recited the legalities that persisted in restraining him from those 16 in *Charles Lamb and the Lloyds* and republished by Ainger and Macdonald. He remarked of revisions and additions over his previous work and of having missed a series of letters that passed through Sotheby's while this one was passing through the press. It excludes 1 letter from the 590 letters in his first edition, and among its 604 includes 13 not in his first.

Preceding the fourteenth and most recent edition are S M Ellis's 'Some New Charles Lamb Letters' *Saturday Review*, 119 (1915), 596-7 and 625-6; Mrs G A Anderson's 'Some Unpublished Letters of Charles Lamb', *London Mercury*, 7 (1922), 36-45; facsimiles in W K Bixby's *Charles Lamb: a Letter regarding Roast Pig to William Hazlitt and a Letter on Friendship to Robert Lloyd, together with a Dissertation on Roast Pig* (1922), Luther A Brewer's *Some Lamb and Browning Letters to Leigh Hunt* (1925; rpt. 1969), and the Oxford University Press *Seven Letters from Charles Lamb to Charles Ryle of the East*

*India House, 1828-1832* (1931); Thomas Ollive Mabbott and John Howard Birss's 'Some Uncollected Letters of Charles Lamb', *Notes and Queries*, 165 (1933), 296-298; R C Bald's 'A New Letter from Charles Lamb', *Modern Language Notes*, 49 (1934), 511-3; and another new letter in L E Holman's *Lamb's "Barbara S-": the Life of Frances Maria Kelly, Actress* (1935). Lucas' *The Letters of Charles Lamb, to Which Are Added Those of His Sister, Mary Lamb* J M Dent and Sons, Ltd., and Methuen and Co., Ltd., published in three volumes in 1935 and the Yale University Press republished in the same year. By the perseverance of Lucas and the cooperation of especially Hugh Dent in acquiring the rights of the residuary legatee, here virtually is 'as complete a harvest' (I,v) as for its time probably could be. Lucas simply alerted his readers to his perpetuation of Lamb's odd spelling and in acknowledging his debts paid tribute to the researches of Mrs Gertrude Alison Anderson (1875-1924), which extend past her articles on Lamb and her edition of *The Letters of Thomas Manning to Charles Lamb* (1925), by providing space in his Introduction for Basil Anderson and Edmund Blunden's appreciation of her. This edition excludes 1 letter from the 604 letters in Lucas' second and 4 from other publications, and among its 1,021 (a number coincidental only with its own count) includes 418 not in Lucas' second and 223 not in any of the preceding editions.

It is superior only to the other editions. Early to make known some of its weaknesses were E G B in 'Notes on "The Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb"' *Notes and Queries*, 184 (1943), 248-9; and George Leonard Barnett in 'Dating Lamb's Contributions to the *Table Book*', *PMLA*, 60 (1945), 602-5. Professor Barnett later exposed many more and of every conceivable type, first principally in the letters in the Berg Collection at the New York Public Library in 'A Critical Analysis of the Lucas Edition of Lamb's Letters', *Modern Language Quarterly*, 9 (1948), 303-14; and then, though it was not his purpose to do so, in those in the Henry E Huntington Library in 'Corrections in the Text of Lamb's Letters', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 18 (1955), 147-58. In the article of 1948 he concluded that 'while there is no doubt that it is the best edition to date, it cannot be the final text for scholars who demand accuracy in every detail. In short, we do not yet possess a definitive edition of the letters of Charles Lamb'. In that of 1955 he concluded that in 'the twenty years since the appearance of Lucas' edition of 1,021 letters written by Charles and Mary Lamb, it has become clearly evident that the text is unreliable and the dating inaccurate in a large number of cases. The locations of the manuscripts of more than half the total number of letters are omitted. Presumably the text of these is based on previous editions, and in the case of those manuscripts that have been lost, we may never be certain of the accuracy or completeness of the printed versions; indeed, the faults in transcriptions that can be checked should make us aware of the strong possibility of other errors. Certainly, when a new or revised edition of Lamb's correspondence is called for, dependence on available original manuscripts should be insisted on'. Carl Woodring gave evidence of Lucas' mishandling of the material at Harvard in the exhaustive 'Charles Lamb in the Harvard Library', *Harvard Library Bulletin*, 10 (1956), 208-39 and 367-402. P F Morgan published his observations of the flaws in the letters at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 'On Some Letters of Charles Lamb', *Notes and Queries*, NS 3 (1956), 531-2. And others before and after them presented their random findings to the *CLS Bulletin* and elsewhere - P P Howe, for example, in 'Lamb and Hazlitt' in the *TLS* of September 26, 1935; T O Mabbott in 'Notes on Two Letters of

Charles Lamb', *Notes and Queries*, 189 (1945), 37; and Wallace Nethery in 'Charles Lamb to Janus Weathercock', *Notes and Queries*, 207 (1962), 182-3.

A new edition is needed to offer correctly the letters published before and in the edition of 1935 and also those uncovered since, some of which have appeared by and in

- Altick, Richard D *The Cowden Clarkes*. 1948
- Barker, John R 'The First Mrs Hazlitt: and Some New Lamb Letters' *CLS Bulletin*, September 1961
- 'Some Early Correspondence of Sarah Stoddart and the Lambs' *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 24 (1960), 56-9, which gives the same letters given in his other article
- Barnett, George L 'Charles Lamb and the Button Family: an Unpublished Poem and Letter' *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 19 (1956), 191-5
- 'Charles Lamb and the Evolution of *Elia*'. 1964; it includes the letter mentioned by Newman I White in 'Unpublished Letters' in the *TLS* of September 10, 1938
- 'Charles Lamb to John Britton: an Unpublished Letter'. *Modern Language Quarterly*, 13 (1952), 353-5, which gives complete the letter given in part in John H Birss's 'A New Letter of Charles Lamb', *Notes and Queries*, 173 (1937), 278
- 'Charles Lamb's Part in an Edition of Hogarth' *Modern Language Quarterly*, 20 (1959), 315-320, which is republished in the *CLS Bulletin* of July, 1960
- Birss, John H 'Lamb on Revisions: an Uncollected Letter' *American Notes and Queries*, 2 (1942), 83-4, and *Notes and Queries*, 183 (1942), 286, which republishes with corrections the letter published in Guild's *A Chat about Celebrities* (1897)
- Braekman, W 'Two hitherto Unpublished Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb to the Morgans' *English Studies*, 44 (1963), 108-118, which presents the same letters presented by Skeat (s.v.), but includes Mary's portion of a letter by her and her brother
- Erdman, David V 'Reliques of the Contemporaries of William Upcott, "Emperor of Autographs"' *New York Public Library Bulletin*, 64 (1960), 581-7
- Finch, Jeremiah Stanton 'Charles Lamb's "Companionship...in Almost Solitude"' *Princeton University Library Chronicle*, 6 (1945), 177-9
- Green, David Bonnell 'Charles Lamb, Bradbury and Evans, and the Title of *The Last Essays of Elia*' *English Language Notes*, 1 (1963-64), 37-40
- 'A New Letter of Charles Lamb to Basil Montagu' *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 31 (1968), 199-200
- 'Three New Letters of Charles Lamb' *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 27 (1963), 83-6, the letters in which are republished in the *CLS Bulletin* of March 1964
- Griggs, Earl Leslie, ed. *Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, III (1959), 220; the same letter is republished in Barbara E Rooke's edition of Coleridge's *The Friend* (1969), I, lv
- Howe, M A de Wolfe 'Lamb to Hazlitt: a New-found Letter' *Spectator*, 161 (1938), 237-8, and the *CLS Bulletin* of March 1952
- Joseph, M K *Charles Aders: a Biographical Note, together with Some Unpublished Letters Addressed to Him by S T Coleridge and Others, and Now in the Grey Collection, Auckland City Library*. 1953

- Ketcham, Carl E 'The Death of Wordsworth's Brother John: Manuscript Materials in the Cornell-Dove Cottage Collection' *Cornell Library Journal* of Spring, 1970, pp. 25-43, which gives complete the letter given in part in Frank Prentice Rand's *Wordsworth's Mariner Brother* (1966)
- Lucas, E V 'An Unpublished Letter of Charles Lamb' *TLS*, February 13, 1937
- Newdick, Robert S *The First Life and Letters of Charles Lamb: a Study of Thomas Noon Talfourd as Editor and Biographer*. 1935
- Olybrius 'Complete Text of a Letter of Charles Lamb' *Notes and Queries*, 174 (1938), 28
- Olybrius and Co. 'An Uncollected Letter of Lamb' *Notes and Queries*, 175 (1938), 437-8; a part of that letter was shown to be in Lucas' edition after all by V Rendall in 'An Uncollected Letter of Lamb' *Notes and Queries*, 176 (1939), 64
- Skeat, T C 'Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb and Coleridge' *British Museum Quarterly*, 26 (1962-63), 17-21 (see above, Braekman)
- Watson, Vera 'Thomas Noon Talfourd and His Friends' *TLS*, April 20 and 27, 1956
- Willey, Basil and Paul Zall 'Another Unpublished Letter of Charles Lamb' *CLS Bulletin*, March 1954
- Woodring, Carl 'Charles Lamb in the Harvard Library' *Harvard Library Bulletin*, 10 (1956), 208-39 and 367-402
- 'Lamb Takes a Holiday' *Harvard Library Bulletin*, 14 (1960) 253-64

In March 1967 Messrs L M Cooper and R R Maddison of the firm of Knapp-Fishers, Solicitors, London, and trustees of Lucas' will, granted me the publishing rights requisite to the preparation of a new edition. By advertisements in the scholarly and antiquarian journals and the New York and London newspapers, perhaps four thousand letters of inquiry to librarians and collectors and booksellers throughout the world, and the courtesies of hundreds and the financial assistance of Colgate University, the University of Pittsburgh, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Humanities, and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation I have been able to collect, transcribe and proofread 1,145 letters, date and verify the texts of most of the photocopies against the originals, and write the notes to about half of them. The total is the sum of 1,076 letters by Lamb, 48 by Mary (1 being a dictation), and 21 by both; of the 1,021 letters in the edition of 1935, 5 published before but not in it, 38 published after it, and 81 new ones; and of 869 holographs, printed texts of 255 whose holographs I have not recovered, 19 copies, and 2 facsimiles. The holographs and copies are owned by seventy-five institutions and individuals. The largest collection, of about 200, is the Huntington's; the second largest, of about 100, is Mr W Hugh Peal's. Collections of between 19 and 59 are in the British Museum, New York Public Library (Berg Collection), Philip H and A S W Rosenbach Foundation, Pierpont Morgan Library, Victoria and Albert Museum, Dr Williams's Library, and in the university libraries of Brown, Harvard, Princeton, Texas and Yale. The remaining collections are in the college, seminary or university libraries of Akron, Bristol, California at Berkeley, Colorado at Colorado Springs, Cornell, Dartmouth, Edinburgh, Haverford, Indiana, Iowa, Jena, Karl-Marx at Leipzig, Leeds, London, New York at Buffalo, Oxford (Bodleian), Rochester, Scripps, St John's at Camarillo, Southern California, Stanford, Texas Christian, Victoria at Toronto, Virginia, Washington at St Louis, and Wellesley; in the city, public or state libraries of Auckland,

Boston, Buffalo and Erie County, Library of Congress, Liverpool, Mason City (Iowa), National Library of Scotland, National Portrait Gallery, New York (Arents Collections and Manuscript Division), and Victoria at Melbourne; in the private acquisitions of the Carl H Pforzheimer Library, Charles Lamb Society, Folger Shakespeare Library, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, John Rylands Library, Maine Historical Society, Massachusetts Historical Society, and Wordsworth Museum; and in the personal holdings of Lord Abinger (with the microfilms of the Duke University Library), Roger W Barrett, Thomas C Bright, Mrs A D G Cheyne, James and Helen Stevens Cox, Emily Driscoll Autographs and Manuscripts, The Rev M D C Forrer, Goodspeed's Book Shop Inc., Raymond E Hartz, Arthur A Houghton, Jr., Mrs Donald F Hyde, Francis Kettaneh, Mrs L V Ledoux, Mrs George de F Lord and Mrs Alfred C Harrison, Maggs Bros. Ltd., Edwin W Marrs Jr., Charles J Rosenbloom, David Satinoff, and D G Wilson.

The Main sections of the manuscript or edition are, or will be:

- a chronological list of the letters enumerated under such headings as date(s), writer(s) and Addressee(s), and owner(s) of the holograph or copy or source of facsimile or printed text
- an introduction giving a brief biography of the Lambs to the date of the first letter, an evaluation of the letters, the history of their prior publication, and a statement of editorial principles
- the letters, with their elucidations at either the bottom of the page or the end of the letter, chronologically arranged and possibly into chapters determined by the Lambs' residences - for instance

### III

#### Letters 101-227

16 Mitre Court Buildings, Inner Temple

March 1801-March 1809

- a list of the abbreviations used in, and an index to, each volume or pair of volumes issued independently and ones comprehensive of the edition in the final volume.

Each letter will be headed with a number and the names of its writer and addressee and, for one constituted of all these parts, formed of the place and date of its composition, salutation, body, complimentary close, signature, postscript(s) and glosses. The place of its composition will be assigned when not given and different from that in the chapter title and running head. The date will be placed beneath it no matter where it is on the original; for a letter that carries more than one date, the first will be extended (within brackets) to include its last and each retained at the beginning or end of the portion of the letter with which it is associated. The salutation will be separate from the body and so will the complimentary close, except for the one with many sections, whose upper parts will be run in to avoid a trail of ink down the page. The signature will be separate from the complimentary close and placed where it belongs. Postscripts will be positioned as successive paragraphs following the signature and in what was or seems to have been the order in which they were written, except for those in which their author complains of having been driven to the top of a first page; they will necessarily be left there. Glosses will be treated as footnotes. The first note, an unnumbered one, to each letter will provide the name of the owner of its holograph or the



In the further interests of uniformity, clarity and an attractive page

Lucas' text of 1935 will be used whenever possible for the body of a letter whose holograph is missing, made to conform to the model just presented, and its editorial intrusions deleted

questionable assigned dates, with some explanation for them, shown as /May 26, 1829/ when the day is in question, /?May 6, 1829/ when the month, /May 6?, 1829/ when the day and month, and /May 6, 1829?/ when the day, month and year.

paragraphs indented and significant or interesting cancellations restored when legible within angle brackets and the extent of cancellations past restoration noted when their length is or exceeds one line

words torn away or illegibly indicated by ellipses, placed in square brackets to distinguish them from existing ones, and their extent noted

the American conventions of pointing about close-quotation marks adopted, punctuation silently added and quotations and parentheses silently closed when urgently required, and the misplaced carets ignored

parentheses substituted for virgules enclosing parenthetical remarks and glosses marked by the asterisk, dagger, double dagger

superior characters and interlinear readings lowered, '&' and '&c' expanded to 'and' and 'etc.,' scorings under the date and signature and in the address of a letter dismissed, and sic not used except possibly in a note.

Everything else will, with the cooperation of the right publisher, be reproduced as found, including the red and the red and black ink with which perhaps six letters were written; the sketches, corkscrews, series of dots and dashes, meaningful ink blots, and letterheads; the hundreds of locutions formed of abnormally large upper- and lower-case characters, except as they occur in dates, addresses, and (generally) signatures; the blank second page to one letter whose first page instructs its reader to turn to the next, and the comic second page to another that reveals as much by its form as by its content that the calamitous news in its first page is a hoax; and the downhill line of writing in the letter in which Lamb exaggerates Mary's inability to write in parallel lines. Not to reproduce the red ink in the letter to Coleridge that begins 'A Letter written in the blood of your poor friend..', say, or any one of what Talfourd characterized collectively as those 'curious varieties of writing...scrupulously adapted to the subjects' would be to present these letters, if not again flawed then still deprived of a share of the meaning and spirited of a great share of the force of their originals and tantamount to presenting *Tristram Shandy* without all of its similar vital dependencies.

The manuscript is titled 'The Letters of Charles and Mary Anne Lamb' and should occupy four or five volumes, the first two of which ideally will be out for the bicentenary of Lamb's birth and the others by the end of this decade. I should appreciate a letter directed to me at 306 South Homewood Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA.15208, U.S.A., from anyone knowing of letters by the Lambs, the original drawings of their homes and haunts by Herbert Railton and John Fulleylove, the portrait of Lamb by Thomas Wageman or willing to criticize the bibliography or the editorial plan or to send me at my expense Nos. 1-22, 24-28, 31-32, 41, 43-46, 48-49, 51-52, 58,61,69,85 or 93 of the *CLS Bulletin*.



## THE CHARLES LAMB BIRTHDAY LUNCHEON

The luncheon took place this year on the actual birthday at Simpson's in the Strand an eating place which, as one speaker pointed out, had existed in Lamb's day. The Guest of Honour, Dr Josephine Bauer, read out the following verse which is in an album presented to the Society by Mrs Merrett, a descendant of the Mary Saywell to whom the poem is addressed (no doubt a friend of Emma Isola), and who was happily able to be present. The verse is in Lamb's handwriting - the menu card for the luncheon bore a facsimile

To M ——— S ———

Of all the names, at the baptismal font  
To female infants given, yours, young friend,  
(For such to me are all whom Emma loves),  
To me by many a link is most endear'd.  
It hath a simple, almost Quakerish sound,  
And is the same a dear-loved Sister bears,  
Whose care for me thro' many a weary stage  
Of life - except for her, in folly spent -  
Hath past the love of Mothers!

O watch well

The import of this name, and trace it back  
To that Meek Mother who with lowly thoughts  
Hung o'er her cradled Babe in Bethlehem,  
While angels sang the birth - that nothing low,  
Nothing unworthy, in your actions stain  
The Blessed Name of Mary.

C. Lamb, 5<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup> 1830

Dr Bauer made some impromptu comments on the verse in the course of her speech proposing 'the immortal memory', and was thanked by the Chairman, Mr Sydney Hall. Miss M E Brice ably proposed the toast of the Provincial and Overseas Members and the response was well made by Mr Andrew Cheyne who, however, came from no further than Welwyn Garden City. 'The Society and Our President' was proposed in an amusing and laconic speech by Mr G P Kingham, an Old Blue and like Lamb a former Deputy Grecian, and a newly-married Dr Jack responded. As is customary the reigning Senior Grecian at Christ's Hospital and the House Captain of Lamb A said grace at the beginning and end of the luncheon respectively, and inscribed copies of *The Essays of Elia* were presented by the President to each and to two senior girls from the Hertford school who were also present.

## 1971-72 LECTURES

On 4 November Miss Reeves read a general survey of Lamb's life and work which had been prepared by the late Ernest Crowsley for delivery to other societies, and Miss Bandy read poems to illustrate the talk: Mr Hall was in the chair.

On 2 December Tim Chilcott, author of *A Publisher and His Circle*, gave an account of the publishing operations of the firm of Taylor & Hessey: Mr Savage was in the chair.

On 6 January Mr D Montagu Scott, legal adviser to the Mary Ward Settlement, gave us a talk on 'The Law in Elia's Time'. Dr S F Rich, legal adviser to the C.L.S., was in the chair and produced the document conveying Button Snap to a Mr Greg: Lamb's signature on the document is witnessed by Hazlitt.

Even more interesting was the discovery that the conveyance was accompanied by a note in Lamb's own hand giving notice to his tenant of the change of ownership. It reads:

Mr Sargus

This is to give you notice that I have parted with the cottage to Mr Greg Junr. to whom you will pay rent from Michaelmas last. The rent that was due at Michaelmas, I do not wish you to pay me. I forgive it you as you may have been at some expences in repairs.

Yours

Ch. Lamb

Inner Temple Lane, London  
23 Feb 1815

read to Mr Sargus 27 April 1815 by me /?in the same handwriting as the letter/

read to Wm Sargus By me /?written by Mr Enever/ Wm Enever April 27

On 3 March Miss Molly Sands talked on 'London Entertainment of Lamb's Day' and a shortened version of this will appear in the July Bulletin: Mrs Huxstep was in the chair.

#### ANOTHER LAMB LETTER

Offered at Sotheby's on 28 November 1972 was a 2 page quarto letter to Thomas Hood. Hood was about to go on holiday and the address in Lamb's hand '2 Robert Street, Adelphi, London' is superseded by an address in another hand re-addressing it to '25 King's Road, Brighton'. It is post-marked 18 March 1828 and dated by Lamb 'Tuesday'. Part of the text reads:

'...We have long look'd for you, and yet I never had nerve to sit down to propose a set day, but kept gaping for you on Sundays with helpless imbecility...when you come back, a day or two here may let you down from the salutary sea air in a middle /course ~~deleted~~ state between that and the Adelphi atmosphere....

....Every bush appears a Bear, and I am haunted with misgivings whether I have done right in coming here...we want Mrs Hood's friendly face again, and your jokes, which Emma's blank face feels the gap of - Adieu best friends both, and think of us with kindness....

The letter is signed 'C Lamb & Co' and on the back Lamb has written, in a large script 'Good b'ye!' It is not included in Lucas's 1935 edition and is apparently unpublished. It was sold to Miss Winifred Myers for £220.

#### OBITUARY

It is with much regret that we record the death of Mr H J Ormond Harris on 19 February in his 80th year. He had been a member of the Society since 1946, and although he had not taken a very active part in its affairs, he had been a frequent attender at its meetings and will be missed by a considerable circle of friends. If I may be permitted a personal note, it was Mr Harris who introduced me to the Society in 1970 and he did this in a simple Elian spirit of friendliness which we like to think of as typical in our members.

Basil Savage

## BOOK REVIEWS

Ralph M Wardle: *Hazlitt University of Nebraska Press, 1971*

Let a book weigh over two and a quarter pounds, and extend to 508 pages; let it be attended by scholarly apparatus of all kinds, and let footnotes abound; let it be encumbered with chapter titles of earnest coyness, and let us cite merely 'Try, try again', 'Marry in Haste' and 'REJECTED' as exemplars; let it carry numbers to impress, of International Standard Book Number, and Library of Congress Catalog Card Number, amounting to eighteen digits in all (Oh Barclaycard, Oh Access, Oh North Thames Gas Board, how weakly doth thou compare!); let it be gestated within the brain of an American Professor of English from Omaha; let it be dedicated 'To Mary, Again' (what on earth happened the first time?); let it cost \$15; such and so many are the criteria by which this book might, in a weak moment, be judged.

Hazlitt carries many lessons for the lover of English, but the foregoing sentence (less than one-fifth as long as his famous opening of a chapter in the *Life of Napoleon*) is perhaps not the best. Better would be '(The writer) must trust to his previous knowledge of the subject and to his immediate impulses, and he will get to the close of his task without accidents or loss of time'. A laudable ambition, and exactly suiting my feeling when setting out to review a remarkable book. The adverse impressions rehearsed in my opening Hazlittian pastiche are in no way borne out in the actual reading, and if I confidently set out to write now on a basis 'of previous knowledge', than that knowledge has been admirably fortified by Professor Wardle's tale.

I felt, briefly, that there was some attempt to 'fit' the facts to the theory as set out in the chapter titles, but such unworthy thoughts were soon dispelled by the sheer interest of the narrative; a nice proportion is held between description of Hazlitt's life, and of his writings. If sometimes, the reader wonders slightly at the too ready manipulation of the 'quotable quotes' on freely cross-indexed cards, even this is soon put aside as carping criticism, since the result is always readable, and mixes with the familiar a happy selection of less-known references. Such a book tends to be time-consuming in its perusal - twice I felt I had caught out Professor Wardle with an incorrectly cited use of Hazlitt's words; on both occasions, taking the first edition out of the bookshelf, I confirmed his accuracy. I have not Keats' letters by me, but did he really write 'fiery laconiscism' (p.239)? In this context of trivia, I was able to detect only four misprints (pages 100, 224, 239 and 471) in a finely printed volume, which is a delight to hold and handle.

My only serious quarrel with the author would be with his view of Hazlitt as a philosopher; admittedly Hazlitt himself had a love for his philosophical works out of proportion to their importance, and admittedly their influence at the time was negligible. Profound in the greatest sense they may not have been, nevertheless the ideas and attitudes which grew out of his philosophical studies underlay all his other work, and his essays and criticisms would have been different indeed without this background. Who can say, also, how much Hazlitt may not have influenced the tenor of his times by his conversation (black-browed as he may have been sometimes) over the mutton and cold beef on Lamb's sideboard of a Wednesday evening? He may not have been such a word-spinner as Coleridge, but there is evidence a-plenty that he could talk well when he wanted to, and when the company was sympathetic. Professor Wardle quite fairly makes these points, but I suspect half-heartedly.

I hope I have made clear my enjoyment of this first-class book. It is the most 'readable by far of the authoritative work on Hazlitt - Baker I find'

almost unendurably dry, and Howe (bless him for the Complete Works) does not carry the reader along. I would have wished Professor Wardle to be kinder to Catherine MacDonald MacLean for her 'Born Under Saturn'. I trust there has not been too much 'accident or loss of time'; let me end an essay of affection for William Hazlitt and any good book about him as Professor Wardle himself ends his book... 'But there was something about William Hazlitt and his work that the world would not willingly let die'.

D G Wilson

Charles & Mary Lamb: *A Midsummer Nights Dream; Romeo and Juliet*  
*Franklin Watts, 1972 (£1.00 each)* illus. Brian Froud

Here are two books of rare delight, combining the subtleties of the Lambs' prose tales with the delicately coloured and fascinating illustrations of Brian Froud. The older reader and the teenager will be intrigued by the accuracy of the stories and the skill with which Shakespeare's own words are used in the text by Charles and Mary Lamb.

The beautiful drawings repay careful study, for their flowing rhythmic lines reveal all kinds of treasures too numerous to mention in so short a review. The merry charms of the characters in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* illustrations are in sharp contrast with the tragic ones in *Romeo and Juliet*. Here the curving lines are thorny rose briars and creatures of ill omen, and there are no smiling human faces; but in the comedy there is a jolly Bottom dancing a hornpipe, a Puck one could gaze upon constantly and find something new cunningly placed, a most alluring Titania and handsome Oberon, and mortals with pleasant faces.

Charles and Mary would be delighted with these beautifully produced editions of the stories they so skilfully produced, for the illustrations placed on the same page as the text they illuminate enhance the reader's enjoyment and make these books worthy companions to the many previous editions of the Tales.

F S Reeves

J W and Anne Tibble: *John Clare, a Life (revised edition) Michael Joseph, 1972*

I can only welcome this new edition of a standard life of one of the London Magazine's distinguished contributors. Much has been done since its first appearance in 1932 to uncover and reduce to order the Clare MSS held in the Peterborough Museum and the Central Library, Northampton, not least in the two volumes of prose and of letters edited by Professor and Mrs Tibble in 1951 and reprinted in 1970 (RKP, £3.25 each). In the present edition Mrs Tibble has retained much of the original structure of the biography, but has gone through it with great care and made amendments or corrected emphases where necessary. In particular the transcription of Clare's own writings have been restored to something much nearer the original - modernised spellings have been corrected and inserted punctuation omitted - to the very great gain of immediacy and power. As might be expected, the later years are covered in rather greater detail.

No-one reading Clare's brave and melancholy story can remain unmoved by what seems, as the Tibbles say, to have been a deliberate rejection of a normal and possibly comfortable life for the sake of retaining his poetic integrity: this reader was moved almost to tears. I am grateful for the chance to make myself more closely acquainted with the facts, and I can only wish that the publishers had not found it necessary to put out this splendid book at the almost prohibitive price of £6.00. True, it has had to be completely reset, but a little more courage in terms of numbers printed might have reduced the price to more reasonable proportions.

Basil Savage