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COLERIDGE AND THE MANCHESTER ACADEMY

John Unsworth

Robert Owen, philanthropist, social reformer and convinced secularist, was born in 1771 at Newtown, Montgomeryshire, and died at the age of 87 in 1858. He was a man of great natural ability, and personal ambition. He finished his formal education by the age of nine; at the age of ten he had left home and was working in Stamford; and at the age of fourteen he moved to London and after three years moved to Manchester. He quickly made a name for himself to such good effect, that by the time he was nineteen he was manager of a cotton mill in which five hundred people were employed.

He arrived in Manchester in 1788, and left for New Lanark in 1800. He continued to experiment and put into effect plans to better the conditions of his work people. He saw to their housing, instituted schools for their small children, and in 1813 published his first book: *A New View of Society, or Essays on the Principle of the Formation of Human Character*. It was a copy of this book that he sent to Coleridge, and which prompted Coleridge to remark in a letter to Stuart: 'This is my Lecture day, or I would immediately peruse the work inclosed to me & write or call on Mr Owen'¹. This was not the first time that Coleridge had had dealings with Robert Owen, nor was it the last, for five years later in 1818 he wrote in his usual trenchant fashion about the measures before Parliament designed to limit the hours that children might work in cotton mills: the letter is addressed to C A Tulk², and protests at the half-hearted measures proposed, and maintains that it was all or nothing: 'there is no beneficial medium between a compleat system (such as that of Owen's when he was in his senses) and nothing ...'.

As for the occasion of their first meeting, Owen himself tells the story in his *The Life of Robert Owen written by Himself*³, which was published the year before his death, in 1857. Writing of the period 1792/3 he says:

At this period there were two institutions which attracted considerable notice in Manchester, and were popular and celebrated in their own way. One was the "Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society" then under the presidency of the late highly respected Dr Percival. The other was the "Manchester College" under Dr Baines, which after his death was removed to York under Mr Wellbeloved, and was chiefly for the training of Unitarian Ministers.

At this period John Dalton, the Quaker, afterwards the celebrated Dr Dalton the philosopher, and a Mr Winstanley, both intimate friends of mine, were assistants in this college under Dr Baines; and in their rooms we often met in the evenings, and had much and frequent interesting discussions upon religion, morals, and other similar subjects... Occasionally we admitted a friend or two to join our circle, but this was considered a favour. At this period Coleridge was studying at one of the universities, and was then considered a genius and

eloquent. He solicited permission to join our party that he might meet me in discussion, as I was the one who opposed the religious prejudices of all sects... Mr Coleridge had a great fluency of words...but my few words, directly to the point, generally told well ...

It cannot be doubted that Owen is stating as a matter of simple fact, that he and Coleridge met at the Manchester Academy, and took part along with John Dalton in discussions on religion, morals and politics. From the context it seems to have been one of those special occasions when it was 'considered a favour' to allow a guest to be present, but that Coleridge attended more than one of these sessions cannot be ruled out.

Owen's unequivocal assertion that Coleridge was in Manchester and that he visited the Dissenting Academy there, must be taken seriously, with all its implications. If we can assign the event to a fairly precise point in time, it will be of some importance in future Coleridgean scholarship. Several people have noted the meeting quoted by Owen, but so far the account has not been tested nor subjected to the strict examination it deserves. It is possible that, if Owen's assertion is verified, some light might be thrown upon a period that hitherto has been rather muddy in biographical accounts of Coleridge. Knowing Owen's deep-seated beliefs and concern for the improvement of the human character by manipulation of the environment, it might even be seen that in the meetings at the Manchester Academy, the seeds of Pantisocracy were sown.

Paul Kaufman in *A Review of English Literature* Vol.1, 1966, considers Owen's statement and draws attention to the *Reminiscences* of Henry Gunning, where an account is given of the trial of William Frend, at Jesus College, Cambridge. Gunning recounts that the undergraduates 'were unanimous in favour of Mr Frend'⁴. Frend was a Fellow of Jesus College who had taken Holy Orders after a brilliant academic career and then resigned from the orthodox church on the grounds that the doctrine of the Trinity was not Scriptural. Later he was in France during the Revolution and on his return to England published in 1793 a pamphlet *Peace and Union Recommended*. This brought upon him the censure of the University authorities and he was deprived of his Fellowship after a formal enquiry. During the trial proceedings there were some noisy exclamations from the students present, and the Senior Proctor Mr Farish decided to interfere, and taxed a young man with rowdy behaviour and asked his name and college. 'The name of the young man was Charnock, and his College, Clare Hall; the real culprit was S T Coleridge, of Jesus College, who having observed that the Proctor was coming into the gallery, turned to the person who was standing behind him and made an offer of changing places.'

There is little doubt that at Cambridge Coleridge was moving in dissenting circles, for as early as his second term his brother George appears to have remonstrated with him, receiving in reply and excuse the letter dated January 1792 in which Coleridge wrote: 'Mr Frend's company is by no means invidious. On the contrary Pierce himself is very intimate with him...I have not yet prudence enough to *respect that gluttony of Faith* waggishly yclept Orthodoxy'⁵.

Kaufman is quite right in pointing out that the meeting between Owen, Dalton and Coleridge, must be 1793 or later⁶, as John Dalton did not arrive at the Manchester Academy until that year, for the beginning of the session 1793/1794. But Kaufman's suggestion that the meeting might have taken place during the *Watchman* tour of 1796 is quite incorrect. The only

course open to us, is to examine every facet of the evidence provided by Owen's account, substantially quoted above.

He is accurate in attributing a certain popularity and fame to the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society. The Society was established in 1781 and originated in weekly meetings held in the home of Dr Thomas Percival, an old student of the Warrington Academy which might be considered a precursor of the Manchester Academy, and he was also a member of the Cross Street Chapel in Manchester. But Owen is mistaken when he refers to the Academy as Manchester College: it was one of the many Dissenting Academies set up to provide an education for the sons of Dissenters who might be barred from attending and taking a degree at one of the universities. In many respects such an education was at least the equal of that provided by the Universities and in the breadth and scope of the studies offered, they were in some ways superior. Owen's further mistake is in referring to the Principal as Dr Baines - in fact it was Dr Thomas Barnes, who was also the first Secretary of the Literary and Philosophical Society, which, after Dr Percival's death in 1804, met in the Cross Street Chapel Room. Such mistakes are those of a faulty memory and an imperfect understanding: they are not errors of fact.

In 1783 Barnes read a paper to the Literary and Philosophical Society on *A Plan for the Improvement of Liberal Education in Manchester*. The result of this was the establishment of the short-lived College of Arts and Sciences, at which Barnes lectured on Commercial Law, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy. In 1786, at a meeting chaired by Dr Thomas Percival, FRS, a decision was taken to establish an Academy in Manchester. The opening statement of the record of the meeting is historic:

A very respectable meeting of gentlemen was held this 22nd day of February 1786 when it was unanimously agreed...that an Academy should be established in Manchester...open to young men of every religious denomination, from whom no test, or confession of faith, will be required.⁷

Although the initiative came from the Unitarians and the Principal was Unitarian, Owen is quite wrong in saying that it was 'chiefly for the training of Unitarian ministers'. Again the mistake is not so grave as to throw any doubt on his story: it was merely a natural misunderstanding often made even today. In connection with Coleridge it is interesting that among the subscribers is the name of Josiah Wedgwood of Etruria: the father of the second Josiah who, with his brother Thomas, became Coleridge's benefactor in 1798.

John Dalton came from Kendal to join the staff at the Manchester Academy, and was, as Owen records, a lifelong Quaker. His subjects were to be Mathematics and Geography, Natural Philosophy and Chemistry and the year when he arrived in Manchester was also the year in which he published his *Meteorological Observations and Essays*. His greatest achievement in the formulation of the Atomic Theory came later, as did his election as a Fellow of the Royal Society and the Honorary Oxford Degree of DCL. He remained in Manchester until he died at the age of seventy-seven in 1844. Dalton relinquished his position as Tutor at the Academy in 1800 but stayed on in Manchester and became in time the Secretary of the Literary and Philosophical Society. There is extant a letter from Dalton to his cousin Elihu Robinson who lived near his own native town of Cockermouth; it is dated February 1794 and gives an impressive picture of an Academy of fine

proportions, endowed with good accommodation and a fine library:

Our Academy is a large and elegant building in the most elegant and retired street of the place; it consists of a front and two wings; the first floor of the front is the hall where most of the business is done; over it is a Library with about eight thousand volumes; over this are two rooms, one of which is mine; it is about eight yards by six, and above three high, airy and retired; ... There is in this town a large library, furnished with the best books in every art, science and language, which is open to all gratis... 8

The 'large library', to which Dalton refers, was the Chetham Library, founded in 1656 by the trustees of Humphrey Chetham, along with the foundation of a 'bluecoat school'. It was probably the oldest free library in Europe, and we may be quite sure that Coleridge, himself once a 'bluecoat boy' would know of its existence. In addition to the services of Dalton as Tutor, Dr Barnes also had the Rev. Lewis Loyd, who was Classical Tutor and also Minister of a Manchester Unitarian Chapel. He left in 1792 and was succeeded by William Stevenson (1772-1829). This is interesting, in that Loyd left sometime in 1792 - probably at the end of the academic year, about June: and we do not know precisely when Stevenson took over as classical tutor. We do however know that he was on the continent either travelling, or in Bruges, as a companion-tutor, and that he left France when that country declared war on England in February 1793. It seems likely that some little time would elapse before he secured the position at the Academy and neither Owen nor Dalton mentions him. Like Coleridge, he viewed with distaste the role of a 'hired preacher'.

Stevenson was, of course, the father of Elizabeth Gaskell, and the fact that he probably met Coleridge at the Academy throws some light on the warmth with which Mrs Gaskell in later years regarded the poet. She refers to him in her letters as "the old man eloquent", and also refers to a portrait, now lost of 'poor Sam' which she placed over the fireplace in the dining-room of her home in Plymouth Grove, Manchester.⁹ In addition it is surprising how often she quotes from Coleridge, on most occasions without giving her source: one of her favourite quotes was from *Christabel*: 'The blue sky bends over all'. She also quotes from Wordsworth, notably from *The Old Cumberland Beggar*: 'we all of us have one human heart', and she visited Wordsworth in his old age and was much taken with Dorothy's account of "The Poor Greens": *A Narrative Concerning George and Sarah Green of the Parish of Grasmere, addressed to a Friend*.

The interesting speculation concerns the question, whether or no Coleridge knew of the vacancy for a classics tutor when he paid his visit to the Academy? We can't be at all sure, but if indeed the vacancy and Coleridge's visit coincide there is room for fruitful speculation. We can be reasonably sure that within the comparatively small circle of academic Unitarians the Wedgwoods, for instance, would know of the vacancy, and one wonders if there is any link between this event and the idea of Tom and Josiah Wedgwood to set up what virtually amounted to a School for Genius with either or both Coleridge and Wordsworth as tutors. There is little doubt either that William Frend, the expelled academic, and Benjamin Flower, the radical Cambridge journalist, would know. These last two men would also have cause to know of Coleridge's aptitude for the classics. One can only ask the question and hope that sometime an answer will be forthcoming: did Frend and Flower pass on their knowledge of the vacancy at the Academy, and was this the real reason for Coleridge's visit?

Dr Barnes retired as Principal of the Academy in June 1798 and in 1800 Dalton also retired as tutor. Barnes was succeeded by George Walker in 1798 and again we find an interesting coincidence, for Walker was Minister of the High Pavement Chapel in Nottingham when Coleridge preached his Charity Sermon there, during the *Watchman* tour. After Walker retired in 1803 he was succeeded at the Academy by Charles Wellbeloved under whose guidance and Principalship the Manchester Academy moved to York where it stayed until 1840. In 1840 it moved back to Manchester for a second period until 1853 when it moved again, this time to London where it had a close connection with University College, London. In its London days it was known as Manchester New College, until in 1889, it was decided to effect yet another move and establish the College in Oxford. In 1893 the present buildings in Mansfield Road were officially opened, and the old Manchester Academy, last of a series of Dissenting Academies, found its permanent home as Manchester College, Oxford.

Owen's account still rings true - it was indeed as he says, under Mr Wellbeloved the Academy moved from Manchester to York, the only error is when he claims that it was chiefly for the training of Unitarian Ministers. A glance at the roll of students for 1793 and 1794, shows that in those two years there were few students enrolled to read Divinity and the great majority were there to study Commerce. This is not at all surprising in view of the dominant position that Unitarians held in the commercial world in England in the 1790s and early nineteenth century: a few students read medicine and law.

There is however, what appears to be a more serious error. Owen mentions that: 'Dalton...and a Mr Winstanley, both intimate friends of mine were assistants...under Dr Baines'. In an essay *John Dalton and Manchester, 1793-1844*¹⁰, Dr Herbert McLachlan recalls that Frank Podmore in his biography of Robert Owen, 1906, called the Principal, Dr Baines, and the institution 'a Unitarian College - both statements equally incorrect'. Dr McLachlan also observes that G D H Cole, in his life of Owen (1925), made the same mistakes, and draws the obvious conclusion that both men were drawing on Owen's autobiography. These are understandable errors although, perhaps, not entirely excusable: what causes more concern is a further error, noted also by Dr McLachlan. Robert Owen writes that Winstanley was an assistant tutor to Dr Barnes at the Academy, and one of his intimate friends. There is no such tutor listed in the College records: if Owen was guilty of so gross an error, then his whole story must come under the gravest suspicion.

I am greatly indebted here, to Mrs Barbara Smith, the Assistant Librarian at Manchester College, Oxford, who searched out the records for me. It is true that there is no tutor by the name of Winstanley entered in the College records for the relevant period, and it is fair to assume that in fact Winstanley the tutor, never existed. However, when we come to study the roll of students for 1793, we find the following entry. 'William Winstanley, Cuerden, near Preston. (Divinity); admitted September 6th 1793; left June 24th 1795; Minister at Tunley; at Derby, 1798-1803; retired from the ministry, 1803; (M.D. Edinburgh, 1806); afterwards Physician; Died 1852.'

We are entitled to assume that this was the Mr Winstanley referred to by Owen, and he provides us with the terminal dates for the period during which Coleridge visited the Academy. It fits in with Owen's account perfectly, and it also fits in with the period when Coleridge was becoming increasingly despondent and restless at Cambridge. Some time after the 6th September

1793, we can accept that Coleridge was indulging himself in eloquent fashion, discussing with John Dalton, Robert Owen and William Winstanley, religious, moral and political subjects. And we should note here, that these discussions took place some nine months at least before he met Southey and, according to the accepted history, formed the idea of Pantisocracy.

We need to consider Winstanley further, if only to test again Owen's statement that he was 'brother-in-law to Dr _____ one of the most successful physicians in Manchester'. I believe that this is another of the typical errors that sprang from Owen's aging memory, writing as he did, so long after the event: there is no reason why he should have omitted the name of the 'Dr _____', except the very simple one, namely that he couldn't remember: he was after all over 80 when he wrote his book!

Winstanley came of a Dissenting family of Presbyterian origin, and in 1790 he entered the Dissenting Academy at Northampton upon which Dr Philip Doddridge (1702-1751) when tutor there, had left an indelible mark of his own scholarship. It cannot be too often stressed that this, like the Manchester Academy, was not Unitarian but rather set itself out to provide the broadest possible education. It is of interest that, although not a Unitarian, Doddridge did exercise a considerable influence on Unitarian views, especially in Lancashire.

Winstanley's obituary¹¹ provides a full account of the man. At Northampton, his close friend was William Stevenson, which the writer of the obituary wrongly spells Stephenson, who studied there from 1789 until he went to Bruges. The two men came together again at the Manchester Academy: according to the *History of Manchester College* already quoted, Stevenson was a tutor, Winstanley a student. The obituary of Winstanley says 'not improbably, Mr Stephenson for a time superintended the classical department in this institution'. Other sources suggest that Stevenson was also a student - and it may well be that the truth is a combination of both statements, namely that Stevenson was a student but so far advanced in his studies as to be able to take on some temporary tutoring. Both men were born in 1772, as indeed was Coleridge and whatever be the truth of the matter concerning Stevenson's status at Manchester Academy, it is still open to speculation that Coleridge might have been drawn to the place, on hearing of the vacancy for a classical tutor.

Winstanley left the Academy having completed his education, on June 24th 1795 and became for a time the Minister of the Presbyterian Chapel at Tunley in Lancashire. That gives us the other terminal date for the meeting at the Academy, and the reference by Owen to Winstanley being related to 'the most successful physician in Manchester' is explained when we find that Winstanley left the Ministry and in 1804 studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh. Whilst there he stayed for some time with his old friend William Stevenson who, married to his first wife, conducted a hall of residence for the University and did some private coaching. He qualified in 1806 and soon after took up his medical practice in Manchester where he achieved some distinction as a physician to the Infirmary, gave evidence before a Parliamentary Committee and was a member of the Literary and Philosophical Society and an attender at Cross Street Unitarian Chapel. He died in 1852.

We have then, two reliable dates for the assumed presence of Coleridge at the Manchester Academy - sometime between the 6th of September 1793 and the

end of June 1795. The Chronological Tables we have come to expect in *The Collected Works of S.T. Coleridge* under the general Editorship of Kathleen Coburn, together with *The Collected Letters* edited by Earl Leslie Griggs provide a reasonably detailed account of Coleridge's movements for 1794 and 1795. In the early part of 1794 he was in the Army under the pseudonym of Silas T. Comberbache. He was discharged in April and the Military Records state 'discharged S.T. Comberbache/Insane/10th April'¹²: on the 12th April he writes to brother George from Cambridge 'On Wednesday night, I arrived from Reading - I took my place immediately in the Cambridge Fly'¹³. He appeared before the Fellows of Jesus College, we may judge soon after his return, and as part of his punishment, was confined to the precincts of the College, which reasonably accounts for the month of May. In June some of his poems appeared in Flower's paper *The Cambridge Intelligencer* and he embarked on his walking tour with Hucks. He met Southey in Oxford and this is vouched for by a letter from Southey written on the 19th June: 'Allen is with us daily, and his friend from Cambridge, Coleridge...'¹⁴. Early in July he and Hucks left Oxford and we find him writing from Gloucester 'a nothing to be said about town - the Women have almost all of them sharp Noses'¹⁵. From Gloucester there is a detailed itinerary of the rest of the tour which ended in Bristol by the end of July. He stayed there enquiring after Southey's whereabouts, the evidence for this is in notes written by Coleridge, a letter from Southey, and by Cottle in his *Reminiscences of Coleridge and Southey*¹⁶. He went to London towards the end of August, met George Dyer who talked to him about Joseph Priestley and discussed the idea of Pantisocracy with him¹⁷. He was in London from the 1st September certainly until he took the coach which deposited him in Cambridge on the 17th September. On the 19th September he wrote to Southey making excuses for not showing more ardour in his courtship of Sara Fricker and claiming that he was in London for two weeks. For the whole of October he was in Cambridge, then in early November he visited London, possibly tormented by the thought of Mary Evans, and Southey's continued urging of the case for Sara Fricker. By early December he was in London again and never returned to Cambridge as a student.

In January 1795 Southey went to London determined to bring Coleridge back to Bristol and Sara Fricker¹⁸. From January he was in Bristol preparing and delivering his lectures on politics and religion, on the 16th June he delivered his lecture on the Slave Trade and by the 24th June, Winstanley had left the Manchester Academy. We therefore need to examine more closely the events of the last three months of the year 1793.

In the long vacation of 1793 Coleridge was in Devon and Wiltshire and, when the time came for him to return to Cambridge, his brothers George and James came to the rescue with money to enable him to pay off some of the debts that accumulated. As he admits in a letter to George dated 23rd February 1794¹⁹: 'by your exertions and my Brothers' generous Confidence a fair road seemed open to extrication - Almighty God! What a sequel! - I loitered away more money on the road and in town than it was possible for me to justify ...'. On return to College he was, he says, faced with: 'a multitude of petty Embarrassments...so small a sum remained, I could not mock my tutor with it'.

In October 1793 Christopher Wordsworth was entered, and took up residence at Trinity College, Cambridge, and soon became friendly with Coleridge. With others, the two formed a literary society and on the 5th November they discussed a review of William Wordsworth's poems *An Evening Walk* and

Descriptive Sketches, published earlier that year, and 'Coleridge talked Greek...and spouted out of Bowles'²⁰. On the 7th November they met again and Coleridge repeated some lines, and had them criticised. The next meeting on the 13th was in Wordsworth's rooms at Trinity and Coleridge should have read a paper, but had not prepared it, and in default recited some poems and promised the paper for the following week i.e. before the 20th November. There is no record of that paper, nor is there any reason to believe that Coleridge was present, and Dykes Campbell assumes that he had left en route to London to await the outcome of the lottery which he hoped would redress his fortune and enable him to meet his debts. The draw was made on the 26th November and Coleridge failed to win anything. On the 2nd December he enlisted in the King's Light Dragoons, and was formally enrolled on the 4th. There is a considerable blank between the 13th of November when he was with Christopher Wordsworth at Cambridge and the 2nd December when he enlisted, which is only partly accounted for by a visit to London. In his hysterical letter of penitence to George in February 1794,²¹ he ends almost incoherently, and hints at things he could not reveal to George:

My Agitations were delirium - I formed a Party, dashed to London at eleven o'clock at night, and for three days lived in all the tempest of Pleasure - resolved on my return - but I will not shock your religious feelings - I again returned to Cambridge, - staid a week - such a week! On Sunday night I packed up a few things, - went off in the mail - staid about a week in a strange way, still looking forward with a kind of recklessness to the dernier resort of misery - An accident of a very singular kind prevented me - and led me to adopt my present situation ...

I do not believe there was any danger of suicide, but would submit that it is very possible that, knowing of the Manchester Academy, and possibly knowing too of the vacancy for a tutor in the classics, he saw this as a convenient bolt-hole. It would relieve him of the financial pressures of Cambridge, would provide some means of subsistence and relieve him also of the conflict with the more orthodox of the authorities and his fellow-students. That he did meet Owen, Dalton and Winstanley at the Academy there is little reason to doubt: all that remains is to assign the correct date, and the period between early November and early December 1793 is not inappropriate.

The men who met in Dalton's rooms that November were, each in his own way, of considerable genius, and very much of an age. Dalton was the eldest having been born in 1766, and he went on to become as Owen correctly points out, 'the celebrated Dr Dalton' and a Fellow of the Royal Institution. Owen was next in age being born in 1771 and he developed his ideas to such an extent both in England and in Scotland, that he has been called 'philanthropist and founder of English Socialism'²². Coleridge and Winstanley were born in the same year 1772, and Winstanley went on to make a considerable name for himself in medicine.

Other small coincidences lend a little extra weight to the hypothesis. In 1794 Dalton read a paper to the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society on *Extraordinary Facts Relating to the Vision of Colours* - the earliest account in English of colour blindness, from which Dalton himself suffered. It was included in Volume V of *The Memoirs of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society*. We find Coleridge making a note²³: 'Mr Ellis of Glostershire...on being shown red he will say Green...' which would

suggest a common interest with Dalton in the subject, or he may have been intending to pass the information on to Dalton. Again in the Notebooks we find Coleridge quoting from *The Memoirs of the Society* Volume III page 462, the description of 'a Glory'²⁴, a natural phenomenon in which he had a particular interest, and it is on record that he borrowed Volume II of *The Memoirs* from the Bristol Library in 1798. In his poem, first published in 1828, *Constancy to an Ideal Object*, there is a rather lovely description of 'a glory':

' such as thou art, as when
The Woodman winding westward up the glen
At wintry dawn, where o'er the sheeptracks maze
The Viewless snow-mist weaves a glist'ning haze,
Sees full before him, gliding without tread,
An image with a glory round its head;
The enamoured rustic worships its fair hues,
Nor knows he makes the shadow, he pursues'.

As a footnote he writes: 'this phenomenon which the Author has himself experienced, and of which the reader may find a description in one of the earlier volumes of the *Manchester Philosophical Transactions* is applied figuratively in...*The Aids to Reflections*...(1825). p.220.'

It is therefore submitted for consideration, that in late November 1793, Coleridge visited the Manchester Academy - a Dissenting Academy and not properly speaking, Unitarian. There he met and talked with John Dalton, Robert Owen and William Winstanley, and by inference met William Stevenson also. The meetings were brought to an end by the intervention of Dr Barnes the Principal, but continued elsewhere. At these meetings, the germ of ideas that were to bear fruit in later years were put forward, discussed and left their mark on the thought of three great men. Dalton's concern with vision and colour-blindness and optical experiences; Owen's concern with social democracy which would bring more justice and a better share of the world's wealth to the working-classes, and create an ideal society which may well have been the first seed of Pantisocracy; and Coleridge's idea of religion as the anchor in every community, which would serve to preserve the values essential to civilisation. Though each took his separate path, they influenced each other in a permanent way and had the meetings never taken place, it is highly possible that something would have been lacking in the eventual work of each man.

In future Chronological Tables, it is further submitted, the following entry should appear:

'1793 (November) visited the Manchester Academy and met Robert Owen and John Dalton'.

References

- 1 CL (Coleridge Letters ed Griggs), Vol.III, page 426
- 2 CL IV, page 843
- 3 *The Life of Robert Owen* written by Himself: Charles Knight. London 1971. Page 35f
- 4 Henry Gunning: *Reminiscences of the University, Town and County of Cambridge from the year 1780*. 2 volumes, 1855, page 299. Quoted in *A Review of English Literature*, Vol.VII, No.1, January 1966, pp 63ff. 'Coleridge as Undergraduate' by Paul Kaufman.

- 5 CL I, page 20 - 'Pierce' was Master of Jesus College
- 6 Kaufman op. cit., page 67
- 7 V D Davis *A History of Manchester College, Oxford*. Allen and Unwin 1932, page 56
- 8 *ibid*, page 64 quoted. The Academy was situated between Cooper Street and Mosley Street, behind the Town Hall. It has of course been demolished
- 9 Mrs Gaskell in a letter to Marianne says she received the portrait of 'poor Sam' in an oval frame from a Mrs Nicholls. There was such a portrait which has since disappeared - it is possible that this is the one
- 10 Dr Herbert McLachlan: *Essays and Addresses*. Manchester University Press, 1950, page 62
- 11 *Christian Reformer*, Vol.VIII, 1852, pages 636ff
- 12 CL I, page 76
- 13 CL I, page 79
- 14 CL I, page 82 note
- 15 CL I, page 83
- 16 CL I, page 96 and note
- 17 CL I, page 97f
- 18 CL I, page 149
- 19 CL I, page 68
- 20 Christopher Wordsworth *Social Life at English Universities 1874*. Quoted in Dykes Campbell *Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, page 25f
- 21 CL I, pages 66ff
- 22 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 9th edition, vol.18, pages 86ff
- 23 *Notebooks of S.T. Coleridge*, ed Kathleen Coburn, Routledge and Kegan Paul. Text 258 and Notes
- 24 *ibid* 745

(C John Unsworth 1980)

CHARLES LAMB AND JOHN LINNELL

Claude A Prance

Charles Lamb's friends included artists, art critics and collectors of pictures. His brother, John, was numbered among the collectors. Charles, although no artist himself, received great pleasure from the work of others and has recorded his delight in the many picture galleries he visited. He stands high too as an art critic and besides his famous essay on Hogarth and that on the lack of imagination he found in contemporary painters, there are scraps of criticism in his letters and elsewhere which are of the greatest interest. It is known that during his lifetime he submitted to having his portrait executed by more than a dozen artists, some of them his friends.

In an early letter he told Robert Lloyd that portraits of the illustrious dead were "the only species of painting I value at a farthing"¹ and Crabb Robinson maintained that Lamb had no relish for landscape painting but liked historical painting;² Professor Barnett perhaps best made the point when he wrote that Lamb preferred pictures of human activity to landscapes.³

John Linnell, who was born seventeen years later than Charles Lamb, is best remembered today as a landscape painter and as the friend and

benefactor of William Blake. During Lamb's lifetime Linnell was mainly a painter of portraits which brought him contemporary fame and great financial reward. It was only in the middle 1840's that he ceased to paint portraits as his chief activity and concentrated on the landscapes which had always been his favourite form of painting.

Linnell's biographer, Alfred T Story, states that Charles Lamb and John Linnell met at the house of Charles Aders in Euston Square.⁴ Although Lamb does not mention the artist in his letters or essays, there seems no reason to doubt Story's statement, as Linnell was a frequent guest in Euston Square and had done several paintings for Mrs Aders,⁵ while Lamb was also known at this house and in 1831 wrote a poem to Charles Aders on his collection of paintings by old German Masters.⁶

Charles Aders was a wealthy German merchant and collector of pictures. His wife, Elizabeth, herself a painter, was the daughter of John Raphael Smith, the painter and engraver. She was a woman of taste and intelligence and her house was for some years a centre for many of those celebrated in art and literature. Lamb's poem "Angel Help" was inspired by an engraving in the possession of Charles and Elizabeth Aders. Coleridge was also a visitor to the house and addressed his poem "The Two Founts" to Mrs Aders.⁸

Story states that Lamb and Linnell also met at the house of John Varley, the artist, where they would have found William Godwin and Shelley.⁹ John Linnell had been a pupil of Varley's and later Godwin's daughter, Mary, was a pupil of Linnell's.¹⁰ Charles Clairmont, Godwin's step-son, was also taught by Linnell¹¹ and he recorded in a letter a picnic on Hampstead Heath in May 1808, when the party included William Mulready, the artist, George Dawe - Lamb's friend also an artist, and John Linnell.¹² Young Clairmont told his step-father that Mulready described Linnell as "the best painter he knows". Story also mentioned that Linnell was an excellent boxer, as was Mulready, facts not perhaps compatible with the delicate hands of artists, although possibly understood by Hazlitt. Another to whom Linnell taught painting was Thomas Griffiths Wainwright, of notorious fame,¹³ but like Lamb a contributor to the *London Magazine*.

One of Lamb's friends with whom Linnell was well acquainted was the Quaker poet, Bernard Barton. The artist was at one time attracted to Quakerism but never joined the sect, although there was much correspondence between the two and Barton wrote a sonnet to Linnell.¹⁴

Whether Lamb and Linnell would have been in accord if they had met more frequently we cannot know, for both their ages and natures were different. We do know, however, that both had a sense of fun. Lamb's escapades are well known and it is recorded of Linnell that as a student he, in company with Mulready and William Henry Hunt, were once unable to proceed from the Life School at Somerset House to their lodgings owing to crowds in the Strand watching illuminations to celebrate some important event. The young artists, anxious for their supper, were not to be defeated, and the small figure of Hunt was hoisted on to the shoulders of the other two, where he held himself inert and stiff as though a dead man, while the crowds parted sympathetically in response to the bearers' cries for passage for the "corpse".¹⁵ An incident which would have appealed to Lamb's sense of humour.

William Mulready, the artist who was a lifelong friend of Linnell's, may have been another link with Charles Lamb, for when *Tales from Shakespear* appeared in 1807 it was illustrated from designs done by Mulready and it is

generally supposed that William Blake did the engravings. This may well be true since Blake is thought to have done journeyman work for Godwin. Mulready also designed the illustrations to Lamb's *The King and Queen of Hearts* and to other books for Godwin's Juvenile Library.¹⁶

There seems no evidence that Lamb ever met William Blake, but Crabb Robinson records that the artist's work was discussed at a party in Inner Temple Lane in 1811.¹⁷ Earlier Robinson had given Lamb a copy of the Descriptive Catalogue of Blake's exhibition of 1809.¹⁸ Much later Lamb wrote to Barton full of praise for Blake's work.¹⁹ Linnell did not meet Blake until 1818,²⁰ but although the younger and more successful artist, he soon gave his financial help in the form of commissions. A set of Blake's famous *Illustrations of The Book of Job* were done for Linnell and passed to the Tate Gallery after the Linnell sale in 1918. Other commissions from Linnell followed including the illustrations to Dante.²¹ Crabb Robinson records that both Blake and Linnell were guests in Charles Aders' house.²² No doubt Lamb's friends in their discussions of Blake's paintings and poems must have mentioned John Linnell as a mutual acquaintance if only for the help he gave Blake.

After Blake's death in 1827 his wife lived in Linnell's house in Cirencester Place for a time, and here she was visited in January 1828 by Barron Field and Crabb Robinson. Field bought a proof of Blake's Chaucer's *Canterbury Pilgrims* and Robinson two prints of it, one of which he gave to Charles Lamb.²³

Robinson hints in his *Diary* that Linnell may have been less than kind to Blake's widow in dealing with her husband's work, but he undoubtedly helped her when she was bereaved for he took her into his house where she acted as his housekeeper. When in 1836 Robinson met Samuel Palmer, the painter, on a tour in Wales, Palmer, Linnell's son-in-law, said Linnell had been very generous to Blake. He also sent buyers to the widow and Blake's biographers, the Gilchrists, thought Linnell blameless in his dealings with Mrs Blake.²⁴

Charles Lamb had a most understandable love for Izaak Walton's *Angler*. He first praised it in a letter to Coleridge in June 1796 and again in October the same year in a letter to S T C he maintained "it would sweeten a man's temper at any time to read it",²⁵ and there are other references. Although Lamb does not mention it, Samuel Bagster's Second Edition, edited by Sir Henry Ellis of the British Museum, was published in 1815. This was printed in the village of Broxbourne by the river Lee, "in the very footsteps of old Izaak" as Thomas Westwood, Lamb's youthful friend, said.²⁶ Lamb might have been interested to know that drawings for this new edition were done by John Linnell, who visited Hertfordshire and Derbyshire in 1814 specially for this purpose.²⁷

Another mutual friend of Lamb and Linnell was the artist, Benjamin Robert Haydon, and it is recorded that Linnell, when a Royal Academy student, used to dine with Haydon, David Wilkie and William Mulready at a chop house at thirteen pence a head.²⁸ Even in those days Haydon was improvident and always spent more than his companions. Lamb while always careful in financial matters would have known lean times himself. In 1819 Linnell painted a portrait of Robert Hunt, Leigh Hunt's brother, another link with Lamb's friends.²⁹

John Linnell, who was born in 1792 and lived until 1882, had a most successful painting career. As a student at the Royal Academy Schools he

obtained the Academy's silver medal in 1807, exhibited at the British Institution the following year and sold his picture on the first day, gained the Institution's 50 guinea prize in 1809 for his landscape "The Woodcutters" and won other distinctions, including the Academy's medal for modelling in 1810.³⁰

About this time he also worked on a transparency for Lamb's friend, George Dawe. In 1811 his picture "The Quoit Players" was bought by Sir Thomas Baring for 75 guineas after its exhibition at the British Institution: some years later it was sold for 1,000 guineas.³¹ He toured Wales and parts of England painting all the time and in 1817 married and spent his honeymoon painting in Scotland.

During the early part of his life Linnell did much portrait painting and found it very profitable. His subjects included Princess Sophia Matilda, sister of George IV, the Duke and Duchess of Argyle, the Marquis of Bristol, Sir Robert Peel and many of similar rank. Nor were those without titles any less distinguished and included Thomas Carlyle, Thomas Malthus, Samuel Rogers, Sarah Austin, William Mulready, William Blake, William Collins, Miss Mitford and Kitty Stephens, the singer who became Countess of Essex, and who was Hazlitt's favourite actress and a lifelong friend of Lamb's Fanny Kelly.

Linnell went on to further successes and when he had amassed a considerable fortune from portrait painting, then turned more to landscapes. These are the pictures for which he is best known and which fetched the highest prices at sales during his lifetime and shortly afterwards. "The Last Gleam before the Storm" which he painted in 1847-8 and sold to Joseph Gillott for £250, fetched £2,500 at Christie's in 1874: "The Woodcutters" later fetched £3,000 and his "The Timber Waggon" was sold for 3,100 guineas at Christie's in 1892.³²

Linnell had now a considerable family and felt the need for more room. Accordingly in 1849 he bought 11 acres of land at Redhill, Surrey from Thomas Allsop, the stock broker,³³ who had been Lamb's friend and was also described as Coleridge's "favourite disciple." He started building on the site and later acquired further land until his estate comprised about 80 acres, mainly woodland which gave him the peace and seclusion he loved and provided many subjects for his brush, for the views were magnificent.

In 1855 his picture "The Timber Waggon" won a gold medal at the Paris Exhibition and two years later a man was sent to Newgate for forging Linnell's pictures, so popular were they.³⁴ In 1867 he was asked if he would accept the honour if elected an Associate of the Royal Academy, but he refused.³⁵ He was a man of a decided mind and had earlier had disputes with the Academy. He is said to have ruled his numerous children with a strict hand. Most of them, both sons and daughters, inherited his artistic abilities and exhibited their pictures at the Royal Academy and in other galleries. One who has been brought to mind by a recent book is Hannah, Linnell's eldest daughter, who married Samuel Palmer, the distinguished painter.³⁶ Their honeymoon was spent in Italy and extended over many months, during which time John Linnell wrote to them many rather peremptory letters telling the young couple what pictures they should see and copy for him in Italy.

In 1866, near the end of his life, Crabb Robinson recorded in his *Diary* that Edwin Wilkins Field, the lawyer, brought his old friend, Linnell, to visit him and described him as "the friend of Blake...a remarkable man of

genius as an artist...³⁷ He was to live many years after Robinson, who died in the following year, and his fame as a landscape painter increased as time went on. In his later years he wrote verses and having taught himself Greek and Hebrew turned much to Biblical scholarship on which he published several pamphlets.³⁸ In a letter to his son, William, written in 1865 when he was 73, he said "I am in love with life." In one of his poetical fragments he wrote

"I like good ale, I like good wine"³⁹

sentiments likely to have been echoed by Charles Lamb.

John Linnell's pictures are now found widely spread and can be seen in the Tate Gallery, National Gallery, National Portrait Gallery, Victoria & Albert Museum and in other London galleries, as well as in the Ashmolean, the Fitzwilliam, at Port Sunlight, and even as far away as Sydney Art Gallery and the Museum of Fine Arts in Virginia.

That interest in him as a painter is still considerable is indicated by the exhibition held in 1973 by the well-known art dealers, P & D Colnaghi & Co., Ltd, of Old Bond Street.⁴⁰ It was described in the catalogue as *A Loan Exhibition of Drawings, Watercolours and Paintings by John Linnell and his Circle*. It comprised about 160 items, mainly by Linnell, but including work by his friends, John Varley, Cornelius Varley, William Mulready, William Henry Hunt, William Collins, G R Lewis, Samuel Palmer and William Blake.

Although Charles Lamb and John Linnell may have differed greatly in their natures and objects in life, there are certain similarities which could have made them congenial companions if they had met more frequently. Among these was the love of the theatre and particularly of Shakespeare's plays.⁴¹ In literature too they had much in common, Shakespeare, Milton and Burns were Linnell's favourite poets and in prose he liked Fuller's *Worthies* and Butler's *Hudibras*,⁴² all of which came high in Lamb's preferences. Both were interested in Quakers, although neither joined the sect. Charles Lamb wrote of what he knew and John Linnell painted what he saw. Linnell had a strong character, was a man of great vitality and enthusiasm, direct, fearless and sincere, of striking individuality and originality and at times uncompromising.⁴³ In his later years he was something of an eccentric with a contempt for fine clothes, for fashions and social conventions. Many of these characteristics would have endeared him to Charles Lamb who loved an eccentric.

John Linnell contributed to the Royal Academy exhibitions for 60 years,⁴⁴ and he was still painting until well on in his 80's.⁴⁵ Richard and Samuel Redgrave published their *A Century of British Painters* in 1866 and in it they described John Linnell as "perhaps the most thoroughly English of our landscape painters".⁴⁶ An artist who could be so described would surely have had much in common with Charles Lamb, even though one loved the country and the other loved the town. Samuel Palmer's comment on Linnell in a letter to George Richmond was "wherever he is, nothing can be dull or stagnant."⁴⁷

Notes and References

- 1 *The Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb*. ed. E V Lucas. 1935. London: Methuen/Dent. 3 vols. I.195

- 2 Henry Crabb Robinson on Books and their Writers. ed. Edith J Morley, 1938. London: Dent. 3 vols. I.145
- 3 George L Barnett. *Charles Lamb*. 1976. Boston: Twayne. p.136
- 4 Alfred T Story. *The Life of John Linnell*. 1892. London: Bentley. 2 vols. I.223. See also Alexander Gilchrist. *Life of William Blake*. 1863. London: Macmillan. 2 vols. I.335
- 5 Story. I.223
- 6 *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*. ed. E V Lucas. 1903-5. London: Methuen. 7 vols. V.85
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- 9 Story. I.65
- 10 Story. I.54
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- 12 C Kegan Paul. *William Godwin. His Friends and Contemporaries*. 1876. London: King. 2 vols. II.168
- 13 Geoffrey Grigson. *Samuel Palmer: The Visionary Years*. 1947. London: Kegan Paul. p.21
- 14 Story. I.174 and 194
- 15 F G Stephens. *The Art Journal*. 1882. p.264, also Story I.42
- 16 Lucas. *Works*. III.477 and 489
- 17 Morley. I.40
- 18 *Blake, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Lamb &c.* ed. Edith J Morley. 1922. Manchester University Press. p.17n, also Gilchrist. I.227
- 19 Lucas. *Letters*. II.424
- 20 Story. I.158
- 21 Story. I.169 and 228
- 22 Morley. I.324
- 23 Morley. I.353. See also Mona Wilson. *The Life of William Blake*. 1948. London: Hart-Davis; p.318
- 24 Morley. I.353 and II.498. Wilson p.319. William Gaunt. *Arrows of Desire*. 1956. London: Museum Press. p.193
- 25 Lucas. *Letters*. I.21 and 51
- 26 Thomas Westwood. *The Chronicle of the 'Compleat Angler'*. 1864. London: Willis & Sotheran. p.41
- 27 Story. I.73
- 28 Story. I.37
- 29 Now in the National Portrait Gallery, London
- 30 Story. I.49-51
- 31 Story. I.59 and 62
- 32 Story. II.20, 281 and 271
- 33 Story. II.31
- 34 Story. II.169 and 220
- 35 Story. II.172
- 36 Edward Malins. *Samuel Palmer's Italian Honeymoon*. 1968. London: OUP
- 37 Morley. II. 820
- 38 Story. II.73
- 39 Story. II.162 and 41
- 40 The firm of Colnaghi is an old one and it is recorded that John Scott, the first editor of *The London Magazine* which contained Lamb's most famous work, married Caroline, a daughter of Paul Colnaghi, print dealer of Bond Street. Mrs Scott, described as a beauty and a woman of superior talents, was a friend of John Keats and B R Haydon
- 41 Story. I.55 and 227
- 42 Story. I.78-9 and 156-7

- 43 Story. II.208
 44 Story. II.233
 45 Story. II.231
 46 Richard and Samuel Redgrave. *A Century of British Painters*. 1947.
 London: Phaidon Press. p.384
 47 Gregson. 74.

BOOK REVIEW

Lamb as Critic. Edited by Roy Park. *The Routledge Critics Series*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980. pp 353. £9.75

It comes as something of a shock to be reminded that E M W Tillyard's *Lamb's Criticism* is now nearly fifty years old. Nothing comparable appeared until the present volume: the differences in format and approach between the two seem to indicate significant changes in attitude and emphasis in Lamb studies since the nineteen twenties so they may be worth considering for a moment.

In 1923, E M W Tillyard was given clear type, good paper and a firm binding for his text by the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press. His selection from Lamb's literary criticism runs to 110 closely-printed pages, presenting a fairly catholic body of Lamb's essays, reviews and familiar correspondence so as to show the full range of his comments on English literature. In accordance with the severe taste of young critics of his generation, Tillyard chose not to include passages from Lamb's writings which indicated where Lamb's interests lay without actually criticising the objects of his enthusiasm. So, for example, Lamb's letter to Bernard Barton on May 15th 1824, in which he expresses a fondness for Blake's *Tiger* is omitted. Furthermore, Tillyard decided not to give place to essays which were not strictly concerned with literature. As a result he sometimes threw baby and bathwater out together, as when he excluded Lamb's fine essay on Hogarth and, with it, some of Lamb's most stimulating remarks on the novels of Fielding and Smollett. But at this distance of time it is impossible to be sure which decisions on editorial policy were Tillyard's own and which were influenced by the directors of the Cambridge University Press. Tillyard's introduction is sound, but certainly very terse: he seems to be counting words all the way through it, as though some higher power was watching over his shoulder.

Roy Park is a Fellow and Praelector in English at University College, Oxford, who has already written on *Hazlitt and the Spirit of the Age* (OUP, 1971). He has been given rather mixed treatment from Messrs Routledge & Kegan Paul, who clearly do not envisage a very large sale for this volume since it is set in that direst of modern formats, the text photographically reduced from typescript. Such a text is always hard to read, even when (as here) the editor has had the benefit of a highly accurate typist working on a good electric machine. But after moaning about aesthetic unsatisfactoriness and the risk of eyestrain one's complainings must cease. The book is printed on good paper with a substantial binding and the cost, for these days, is scarcely excessive. Above all, Mr Park benefits from the much higher standards of presentation and annotation of a text that have come to be expected in recent years and his own choice from Lamb's work (which runs to nearly 300 pages, to which there is added a 40 page introduction) is, in accordance with the general policy of the *Routledge Critics Series*, broader in scope, as well as much greater in length, than

Tillyard's.

Before discussing the selection itself, one should say that Mr Park has been permitted to annotate his chosen passages much more fully than Tillyard chose (or was allowed?) to do, and that his annotations are both scholarly and helpful to the reader throughout.

Helpful scholarship is, indeed, the characteristic of the entire volume. Its keynote is established in the long, closely-argued introduction, in which Mr Park maintains that Lamb was at one with his friends Coleridge and Hazlitt in his insistence on the vital relationship between art and life, and the important function of the work of art as the means to imaginative redemption of the fallen (and therefore imaginatively crippled) individual consciousness. Mr Park characterises Lamb's concern with the past as representing an almost Wordsworthian desire to recall the adult to a sense of what once was known; to recapture the feel of a state of imaginative intensity and vision in childhood which has since been lost; and thus to awaken the mature personality to a sense of its full potential for imaginative response to experience. The desire to both stimulate and feed awareness also lies at the heart of Lamb's studies of theatrical and poetic experience: in illustrating this Mr Park offers close and illuminating examinations of the two central essays, on 'Imperfect Sympathies' and 'On the Tragedies of Shakespeare, Considered with Reference to their Fitness for Stage Representation'.

Mr Park's introduction follows Tillyard's basic principle in stressing the quality of Lamb's critical intelligence irrespective of the difficult conditions in which that intelligence was often forced to work. He declares with some justice that 'the Victorian bias for the personal and biographical, only resulted in the dubious elevation of Lamb to the status of cultural teddy-bear in the Victorian establishment' and he laments 'the century-long critical vacuum' in which repeated editions of *ELIA* were published while the rest of Lamb's work was largely ignored. Mr Park is clearly aware of Tillyard's assertion that 'his very faults, his amateurishness and lack of range, helped him to concentrate the more intensely on what he loved, and to reach a more intimate sympathy with it.' He appreciates the second part of Tillyard's assertion, but his own introduction stoutly defends Lamb against Tillyard's initial criticism. Mr Park acknowledges the limited range of subjects in Lamb's critical writings while refusing to be daunted by the critical range of Lamb's friends ('Hazlitt's comprehensiveness is, after all, very largely the result of an empty purse' he remarks wittily). Lamb's sympathies, he points out, 'are not limited to the rather small number of authors he wrote about', and he goes on to offer a long list of other writers that Lamb is known to have admired, but on whom he never had occasion to write at length. But Mr Park's main concern is to demonstrate the strong theoretical framework within which Lamb's far from amateur intelligence operates. Lamb's conception of the revelatory nature of art, its Romantic 'apprehension of what cannot be stated rationally, only expressed imaginatively' is clearly analysed by Mr Park's preface and amply illustrated in the selections from Lamb's prose which follow.

On looking at the selections, one's first impression may be that the best-known critical essays have been incorporated in a severely truncated form. The situation becomes clearer, however, when we grasp that since material has been arranged into six main sections (on 'Acting and Actors', 'Shakespeare', 'English Drama', 'Poetry', 'Prose' and 'Painting'), passages

from a single essay may appear in two or three different places. It is, therefore, still convenient to have Tillyard's selection on one's shelf (to say nothing of *Elia* itself, or Lucas's volumes) so as to be able to consult essays in their entirety: though of course Tillyard does a certain amount of abbreviating too, often giving the same stretch of prose which, in Mr Park's book, is redistributed in two or three different places.

It should be said that the dividing up of the great essays into parts is never wilfully done: it generally proves illuminating in the new contexts. And of course there is Lamb's own authority to justify such redistribution of material where appropriate.

Having rescued Lamb from sentimental biography and demonstrated the quality of his critical intelligence, Mr Park returns Lamb to a new kind of biographical context by presenting well-annotated sequences of opinions (mainly taken from Lamb's letters) on the poetry of Wordsworth and Coleridge. The biography of Lamb's developing intelligence proves well worth reconstructing. In particular, the independence (and very often the originality) of viewpoint in his early letters to Coleridge comes across with striking clarity.

Lamb's consistence as a critic is something which also comes across most impressively in this new book. Mr Park draws on Lamb's correspondence more fully than Tillyard did and the mere unadorned statements of Lamb's literary preferences and enthusiasms (particularly frequent in the letters to Bernard Barton) often prove both more supportive to the main themes of the compilation and more illuminating in themselves (because of the way they are prepared for, and link up with statements made elsewhere) than Tillyard would probably have thought possible. The surviving records of Lamb's conversation are also skilfully used, and they often prove highly stimulating.

Most of all, though, it is Mr Park's greater inclusiveness of subject matter that pays rich dividends. By extending his range beyond Tillyard's so as to include painting and the fine arts he is able to illustrate Lamb's insistence on the moral freedom of the creative imagination much more clearly than the older work does. In his admirable public letter to Robert Southey, written in 1823, Lamb maintains (as in his writing on Restoration Comedy, on *The School for Scandal*, and elsewhere) that timidity, censoriousness and literal-minded interpretations of works of art impoverish the human imagination. In the passages on Hogarth, Reynolds and Da Vinci, and John Martin (the essay on the 'Barrenness of the Imaginative Faculty in the Productions of Modern Art') which come with additional emphasis from acting as a conclusion to the book, Lamb seems to amplify and summarize his thoughts on early nineteenth century tendencies towards controlling the imagination by forcing it to conform to pre-existent systems of values. The words, of course, are all Lamb's own: but they seem to call out more clearly, with fresh subtlety and the utmost strength of conviction, because of the way in which the passages are brought together and intelligently combined in their present arrangement.

The final words of the text are from Lamb's denunciation of the imagination-trammelling pictures in Boydell's Shakespeare gallery:

To be tied down to an authentic face of Juliet! To have Imogen's portrait! to confine the illimitable!

In clearing away confining notions about Lamb's 'illimitable' critical

intelligence Mr Park has done his job very well indeed. The only addition I would like to have made to his excellent selection is the very interesting appreciation of Defoe which makes up most of Lamb's verse prologue to William Godwin's *Faulkener*.

William Ruddick

ERRATA

Our apologies for some misprints in the July Bulletin, in particular to Mr Ledwith for the first date in his article, which should of course have been (and was in his copy) 1792. The exam season perhaps rendered your Editor's proof-reading less than vigilant.

NEWS

Congratulations to our President, Professor Stevens, who received a CBE in the Birthday Honours "for services to Musicology".

Our Vice-President, Professor Barnett, writes that he is retiring after 38 years of service at Indiana University. We wish him and Mrs Barnett every happiness in retirement and are particularly glad that he is to continue his association with the Charles Lamb Society. We hope one day to see them over here again.

VISIT TO BUTTON SNAP

The weather on 28 June did not "flame" for us but it did stay dry long enough for a delightful visit to Button Snap, where we were kindly entertained by Mrs Tickle. Ducking our heads to dodge beams, we were charmed by the shining interior of the tiny house, with its single upstairs room, two downstairs sitting rooms and kitchen. This, then, was Lamb's "commodious mansion", a charming thatched cottage in its "allotment of three quarters of an acre", over which we strode "with larger paces" as of landed proprietors. We were tremendously impressed (and some of us made envious) by the results of Mrs Tickle's hard work in the garden, where flower-beds bloomed, green lawns shone like velvet and a large vegetable plot overflowed with mouth-watering variety. Button Snap is deep in the country, an idyllic spot, but not one where Lamb could ever have lived, far from Fleet Street and all that "bustle and wickedness" of London.

After our visit to the house and garden, we went in a cavalcade of cars for a splendid tea in Buntingford before returning home in contented repletion of mind and body.

CROWSLEY MEMORIAL LECTURE

We are making a big effort to get this Bulletin out early, so that members will be reminded in good time of the Crowsley Lecture, which will be held at the Mary Ward Centre, 9 Tavistock Place, London WC1, at 2.45, on 4 October. The Lecture will be given this year by Miss Jane Aaron, Research Fellow St Anne's College, Oxford, and her subject will be

"We are in a manner *marked*": Images of Damnation in Charles Lamb's Writings.

LAMB IN THE SALE ROOM

A Lamb item sold at the Antiquarian Book Fair, London on 11 June 1980 was an autograph manuscript of two poems, written on both sides of a quarto page, evidently from a commonplace book. On the recto Lamb had transcribed "The Milk-Maid's Mother's Answer: from the same", by Sir Walter Raleigh, 28 lines, and on the verso "Christy: Scotch Song", 24 lines. Maggs' Catalogue 1001, comments, "The selections here are representative of two kinds of literature often referred to in his own works - Elizabethan poetry and Scotch ballads".

THE CHARLES LAMB BIRTHDAY LUNCHEON

The Birthday Luncheon will be held this year on 14 February 1981, and the Guest Speaker will be Professor Brian Morris of Sheffield University. Full details will be in the January Bulletin.

BOOK MARKET

FOR SALE

Family Friend, London 1850 (Vol.3 only)	£5
Charles Lamb and Elia, Ed. J E Morpurgo (Paperback Penguin 1948)	£1.50
Claire Clairmont by R Glynn Grylls (Murray 1939)	£5

Add 50p for packing and postage

Enquiries to R Mander, Wightwick Manor, Wolverhampton, Staffs
(No telephoning please)

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ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members are reminded that subscriptions for 1981 fall due on 1 January.
The rates of subscription for 1981 are as follows:

Corporate Members Overseas	\$10
Other Corporate Members	£5
Individual Members - London	£3 (doubles £4)
- Provincial	£2 (doubles £3)
- Overseas	\$7 (doubles \$10)

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