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ARTIST OR NOVELIST? LAMB, HAZLITT AND THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY RESPONSE TO HOGARTH.

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Charles Lamb was a good judge of pictures. Hazlitt, who was himself a painter and critic of paintings, said so, Coleridge agreed, Walter Pater repeated it in *Appreciations* and William Gaunt's recent study *The World of William Hogarth* (London, 1978) says the same. Charles and Mary Lamb had seen good paintings at Blakesware when they were children, and they went to exhibitions of pictures and prints for as long as they lived in Central London. At Lamb's Thursday evening gatherings, Hazlitt tells us, pictures were frequently discussed, and from the time of their early visits to Blakesware, when they found engravings after Hogarth on the walls, Charles and Mary continued to love his work. They had Hogarth prints hanging in their own rooms (the *Rake's Progress* series and the *Election Entertainment* are mentioned) and it was a sad day for Mary Lamb when her brother had them taken out of their frames and bound up in a volume. She made the best of it, of course: 'Now that I have them all together and perceive the advantage of peeping close at them through my spectacles I am reconciled to the loss of them hanging around the room' she declared, but she was forced to add that their loss from the walls had been 'a great mortification to me'. (1)

Hazlitt recalled how in the evening conversations at Lamb's it was always

'the old everlasting set' that they discussed, including 'Hogarth's prints, Claude's landscapes [and] the Cartoons at Hampton Court'. He declared that Hogarth was Lamb's preferred artist, adding that 'Leonardo [prints from whose work Lamb also had on his walls] is his next greatest favourite'. As an art critic he could only censure Lamb for the most pardonable of faults, an 'over-eagerness of enthusiasm'. (2)

By the time Lamb wrote his essay 'On the Genius and Character of Hogarth; with some Remarks on a Passage in the Writings of the late Mr. Barry' for Leigh Hunt's *Reflector* in 1811, Hogarth had been dead for almost half a century. The topical elements in his yet-popular prints had faded from people's memories and like the other great popular topical London satire of George II's time, *The Beggar's Opera*, Hogarth's engravings had become detached from their original context. The prints were still well known, but they existed in a critical vacuum. Such accounts of Hogarth as were to be had were biographical, or confined themselves to spotting the sources for characters in his pictures. Formal criticism was cool. Horace Walpole had declared that 'as a painter Hogarth had but slender merit' and Lamb was annoyed by other writers of Walpole's generation who agreed with him. But the prints continued to be enjoyed, and there were to be large exhibitions of Hogarth's original paintings in 1814 and 1817. Hazlitt seems to have summed up the contemporary situation with characteristic shrewdness when he declared that 'criticism has not done him justice, though public opinion has'.

Lamb's essay on Hogarth was based on long study of the engravings which he possessed. Without having the advantage of an opportunity to study the original paintings (which Hazlitt was to have only three years later) he naturally concentrated on Hogarth's qualities as a linear artist and not as a colourist. But his response to the prints was intensely imaginative and he felt more than enough of Hogarth's power to want to take issue with two of the leading painter-theorists of the previous generation, James Barry and Sir Joshua Reynolds (both pillars of the Royal Academy, whose inauguration Hogarth had steadfastly opposed). Barry and Reynolds represented the cult of formal genres or categories of painting. To their way of thinking history painting, with its subjects chosen from antiquity or the noblest scenes of modern history (such as the death of General Wolfe) must, by definition, be more valuable than mere satire or caricatures of actuality such as Hogarth's pictures purveyed.

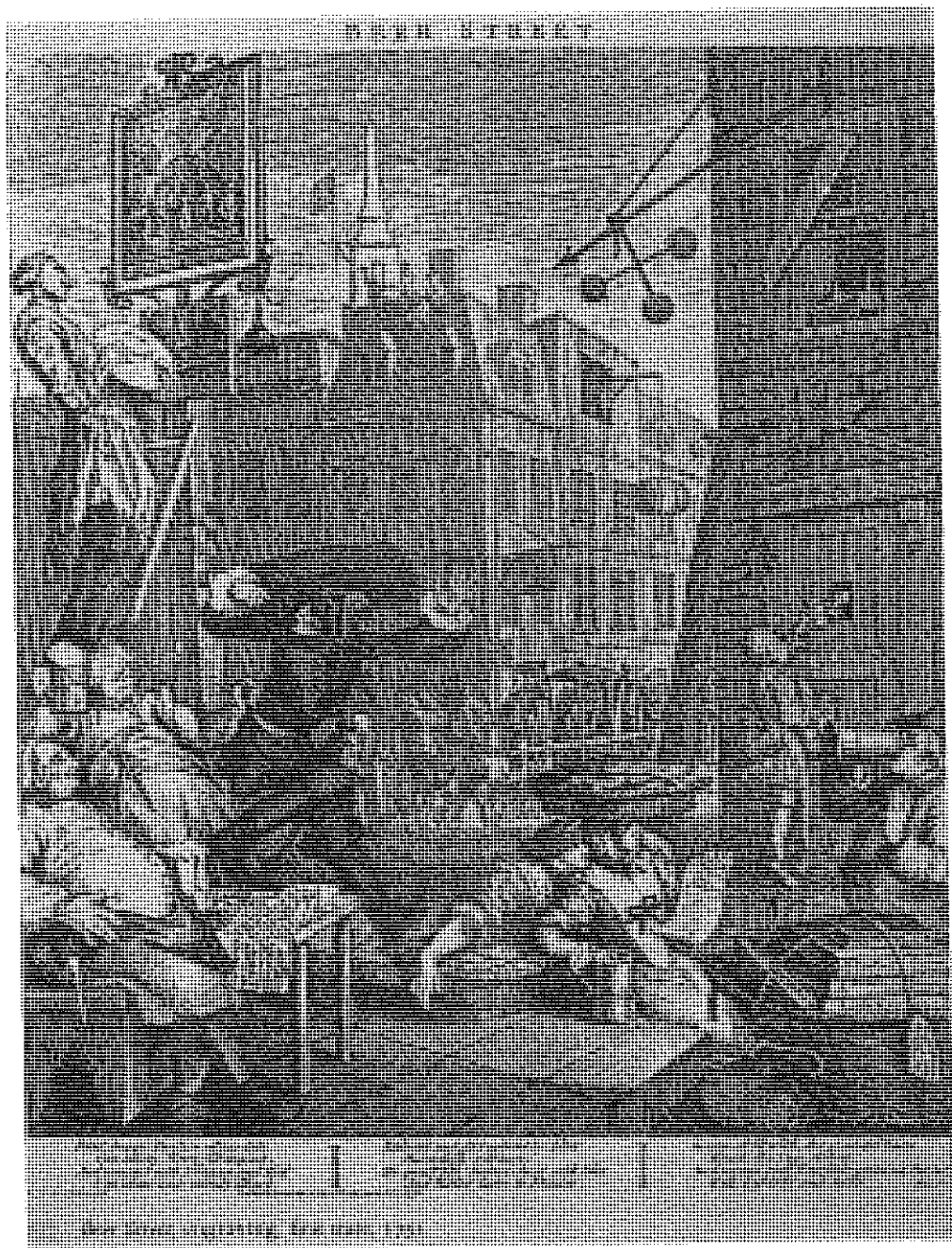
Charles Lamb would have none of this. In both the essay on Hogarth and his later treatment of the 'Barrenness of the Imaginative Faculty in the Productions of Modern Art' (written in 1831) in which he makes mincemeat of John Martin's epic Biblical canvasses, Lamb totally rejected the idea that there was such a thing as the Grand Manner. Classifications of this sort produced inflated ideals and inadequate execution, in his view, and he could find plenty of dull works by Reynolds to prove his point. In Lamb's opinion, Hogarth was the exact opposite: not a theorist but a pure, inventive, witty genius whose work cleanses with the power of genuine, liberating laughter. Though Lamb was judging from the prints almost entirely, he hit on a typically Romantic explanation of the way in which Hogarth's imagination worked which fits in well with modern discoveries about Hogarth's actual methods of composition. At the beginning of the essay on John Martin, Lamb defines, while complaining of their absence in modern art, the qualities through which Hogarth's imagination functioned:

Hogarth excepted, can we produce any one painter within the last fifty years, or since the humour of exhibiting began, that has treated a story *imaginatively*? By this we mean, upon whom his subject has so acted, that it has seemed to direct *him* - not to be arranged by him? Any upon whom its leading or collateral points have impressed themselves so tyrannically, that he dared not treat it otherwise, lest he should falsify a revelation? Any that has imparted to his compositions, not merely so much truth as is enough to convey a story with clearness, but that individualising property, which should keep the subject so treated distinct in feature from every other subject, however similar, and to common apprehensions almost identical; so as that we might say, this and this part could have found an appropriate place in no other picture in the world but this?(3)

The passage presents a Romantic conception of the wholeness of the artist's process of imagining (like Keats's image of the leaves coming to the tree). Interestingly, a recent writer on Hogarth, R.S. Cowley, bears Lamb out by noting that George Vertu's contemporary notes on Hogarth support A.P. Oppé's claim (in his study of Hogarth's drawings) that 'Hogarth composed his narratives on canvas without making preliminary drawings'. (4) Lamb had characterised this procedure with typical acumen: 'His subject has so acted, that it has seemed to direct him - not to be arranged by him'.

At the beginning of David Bindman's recent study *Hogarth* he mentions how 'it was assumed by many writers on the arts after Hogarth's death that great painting was not compatible with a comic sensibility: an artist must aspire to the tragic or the historic mode in order to be placed on the highest level'. (5) Lamb would have none of it. Perhaps, in attacking the idea of the Grand Manner, which assumes the superiority of historical and allegorical painting over other kinds, he may have resembled Dr Johnson demoting the concept of the Unities in his *Preface to Shakespeare*: Lamb might be seen as mounting an attack on a critical orthodoxy which had already been left behind and had come to seem rather old fashioned outside the doors of the Royal Academy because of current developments in painting and picture engraving. But the new aesthetic deserved a clear formulation. And, more profoundly, Lamb's essay on Hogarth is, in Roy Park's words, an indication of 'his acceptance of the early nineteenth-century view of the unity of all the arts as springing from the same creative impulse'. (6) Imagination can operate through comedy: Lamb compares one of Hogarth's most sombre visions, the self-destroying path to madness of *A Rake's Progress*, with Juvenal's satires and 'the satiric touches in *Timon of Athens*'. He offers chapter and verse to validate his point and the Shakespearean analogies are, indeed, very striking. Elsewhere he stresses Hogarth's inventiveness, his fertility of imagination. James Barry had balked at Hogarth's low-life, brutal realism. Lamb finds instances of noble endurance, compassion and suffering in scene after scene. And whereas Barry had said that Hogarth was bad at figure drawing, Lamb counters by insisting over and over again on Hogarth's absolute command and inexhaustable variety of effect in the depiction of the human face. 'It must be a cold eye that in the interest so strongly demanded by Hogarth's countenances has leisure to survey and censure' he declares. For Lamb, Hogarth is 'next to Shakespeare, the most inventive genius which this island has produced'. And he is a poet. Lamb here picks up and develops a point which Coleridge had made in *The Friend*:

'Hogarth himself', says Mr. Coleridge, from whom I have borrowed



this observation, speaking of a scene which took place at Ratzeburg, 'never drew a more ludicrous distortion, both of attitude and physiognomy, than this effect occasioned: nor was there wanting beside it one of those beautiful female faces which the same Hogarth, in whom the satirist never extinguished that love of beauty which belonged to him as a poet, so often and so gladly introduces as the central figure in a crowd of humorous deformities, which figure (such is the power of true genius) neither acts nor is meant to act as a contrast; but diffuses through all, and over each of the group, a spirit of reconciliation and human kindness...' (7)

Lamb develops Coleridge's point with eagerness, as, for example, in his comment on Hogarth's methods which finds its illustration in *Gin Lane*:

There is scarce one of his pieces where vice is most strongly satirised, in which some figure is not introduced upon which the moral eye may rest satisfied; a face that indicates goodness, or perhaps mere good humouredness and carelessness of mind (negation of evil), only, yet enough to give a relaxation to the frowning brow of satire, and keep the general air from tainting. Take the mild, supplicating posture of patient Poverty in the poor woman that is persuading the pawnbroker to accept her clothes in pledge, in the plate of *Gin Lane* for instance. A little does it, a little of the *good* nature overpowers a world of *bad*. (8)

Lamb's sense of 'Good Nature' often carries him to the heart of Hogarth's humorous manner. A single example must suffice, but it can be a choice one, showing Lamb's own sense of humour at its most alert and appreciative:

The conceited, long-backed Sign-painter, that with all the self-applause of a Raphael or Corregio (the twist of body which his conceit has thrown him into has something of the Corregiesque in it) is contemplating the picture of a bottle which he is drawing from an actual bottle that hangs beside him, in the print of *Beer Street*, -- while we smile at the enormity of the self delusion, can we help loving the good humour and self-complacency of the fellow? would we willingly wake him from his dream? (9)

Towards the end of his essay on Hogarth, Lamb expresses his notion of Hogarth's moral healthiness, purging scenes of wickedness and grossness with the cleansing power of good, honest laughter. He proves his point through a series of comparisons with his beloved eighteenth-century novelists; in particular Smollett and Fielding. A few years later, in 1818, Lamb's friend William Hazlitt lectured on 'The English Comic Writers'. His published text shows how he had elaborated an earlier *Examiner* article, inspired by his examination of Hogarth paintings at the British Institution in 1814, and, in expanding it, had drawn upon Lamb's essay on Hogarth to provide a basis for some of the most important sections of his discussion.

Hazlitt noted Lamb's attack on academic criticism in his lecture and echoed several of its points. But he thought Lamb's Shakespearean parallels with Hogarth rather overstrained. In his view, Hogarth's imagination was not poetical but satirical, moral and psychological. As a painter himself he could sense the connection between imagination and execution more acutely than Lamb had done:



Every stroke of his pencil tells according to a preconception in his mind. If the eye squints, the mouth is distorted; every feature acts and is acted upon by the rest of the face. (10)

(Here and elsewhere he clearly benefits from having seen the original paintings in 1814). But two other features of Hazlitt's lecture show that he brought a coarser sensibility to bear on Hogarth's work than Lamb had done: it is ironical that in both areas he was picking up and over-emphasising points which Lamb himself had made.

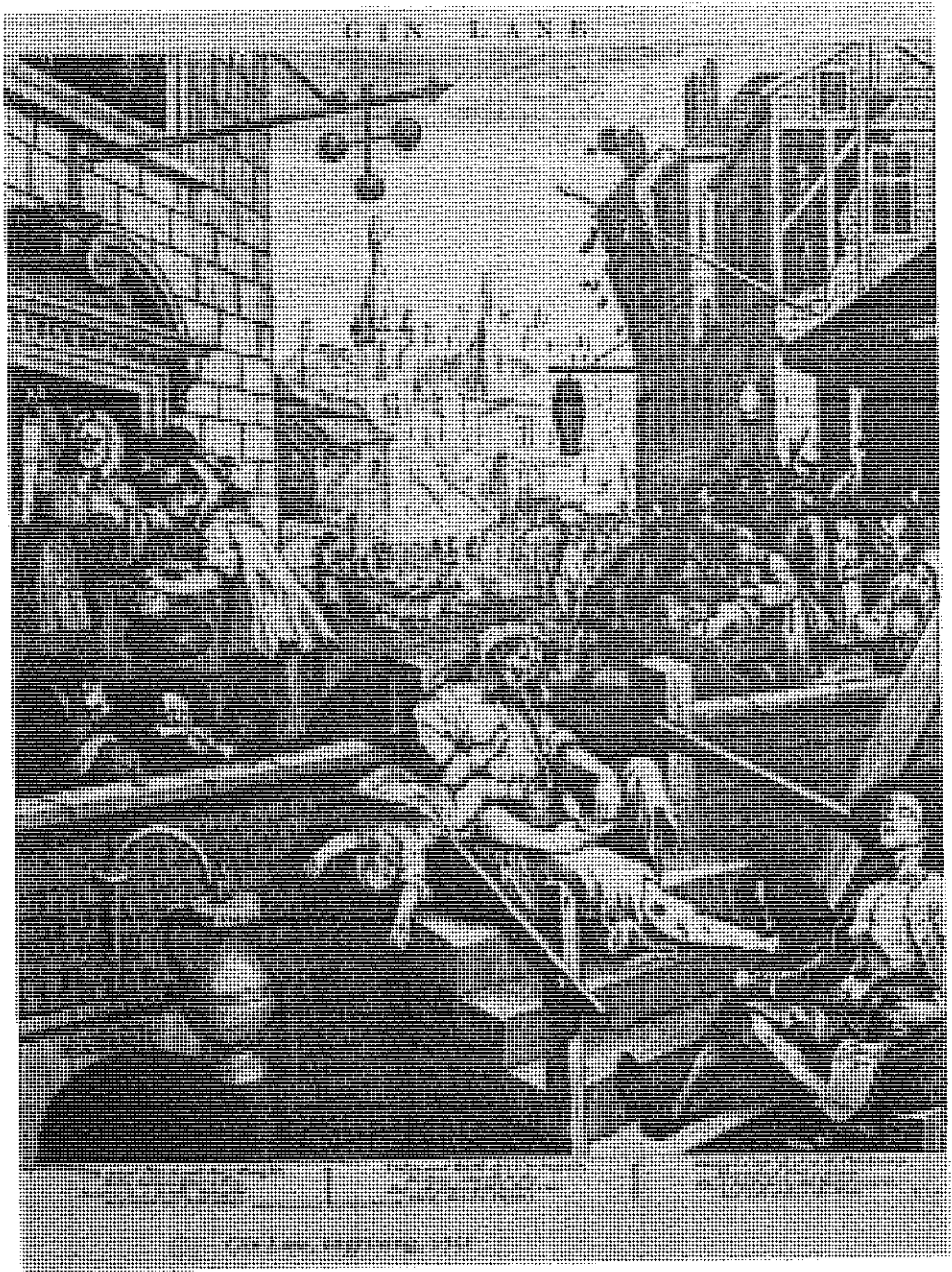
First of all, Hazlitt constantly describes scenes within Hogarth's pictures, turning images into narrative (which Lamb had only done sparingly, generally in order to establish a moral point) and releasing the story within the picture into words. In the old Victorian phrase, 'Every picture tells a story' - or else begins to.. And secondly, by giving his lecture on Hogarth straight after one 'On the English novelists' Hazlitt increases the connection between them already established in the argument about the nature of Hogarth's moral impact in Lamb's essay. In Hazlitt's treatment Hogarth begins to turn into a pictorial novelist. By Thackeray's time this way of seeing him seemed entirely natural, and the tradition of Hogarth the pictorial storyteller has proved so tenacious that the considerable number of scholarly publications about Hogarth which have appeared in the last twenty-five years still feel a very real need to try to shake it off.

A single example of Hazlitt's method will show how sensitively but yet how totally he interprets a scene as a series of contrasting studies in character:

The gradations of ridiculous affectation in the 'Music Scene' are finely imagined and preserved. The preposterous, overstrained admiration of the Lady of Quality; the sentimental, insipid, patient delight of the Man with his hair in papers, and sipping his tea; the pert, smirking, conceited, half-distorted approbation of the figure next to him; the transition to the total insensibility of the round face in profile, and then to the wonder of the Negro-boy at the rapture of his mistress, -- form a perfect whole It is curious to observe the infinite activity of mind which the artist displays on every occasion. An instance occurs in the present picture. He has so contrived the papers in the hair of the Bride, as to make them look almost like a wreath of half-blown flowers; while those which he has placed on the head of the musical Amateur very much resemble a *chevaux-de-frise* of horns, which adorn and fortify the lack-lustre expression and mild resignation of the face beneath. (11)

Thackeray's lectures on 'The English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century', originally delivered in 1851, actually group Hogarth, Smollett and Fielding together (as Lamb had done in passing in his essay) but display a tone quite unlike Lamb's or Hazlitt's:

His art is quite simple: he speaks popular parables to interest simple hearts, and to inspire them with pleasure or warning and terror. Not one of his tales but is as easy as 'Goody Twoshoes'. (12)



One may well think of one of Lamb's sharper criticisms of James Barry's remarks: 'But, Good God! is this *milk for babes* to be set up in opposition to Hogarth's moral scenes, his *strong meat for men*?' Yet one should notice Thackeray's terms: 'popular parables' ... 'tales' ... Every picture does unmistakably tell a story now. Thackeray paraphrases several of the scenes in 'Marriage à la Mode' and 'Industry and Idleness', and really his lecture does nothing else. But he had thought about Hogarth more constructively a few years earlier and his remarks then showed that without the distracting presence of an audience he could do a fair measure of justice to him.

In 1840 Thackeray wrote a long article on George Cruikshank for the *Westminster Review*. In it he praised Hogarth from time to time, and much of the theoretical part of the essay, in which he discusses Cruikshank's creativity in caricature and assesses its value, seems to have originated in Lamb's discussion of Hogarth, which Thackeray obviously knew well:

Many artists, we hear, hold his works rather cheap; they prate about bad drawing, want of scientific knowledge; they would have something vastly more neat, regular, anatomical. (13)

This echoes Lamb's discussion of James Barry's charge that Hogarth is a poor figure drawer very directly. And Thackeray steps back beyond Hazlitt's viewpoint, from which the satirist is primarily an inventive moralist 'carried away by a passion for the *ridiculous*' to assert, like Lamb, the great satirist's poetic quality:

How many among these men [*academic critics*] are *poets* (makers), possessing the faculty to create - the greatest among the gifts with which Providence has endowed the mind of man? (14)

But the view of Hogarth which prevailed in most people's minds was not that of Thackeray's obscure early review, but that of the well-known public lecture. The tone of 'Hogarth, Smollett, and Fielding' echoes through some of the best-known (often frequently-reprinted) later studies of Hogarth. In 1869 Mrs Oliphant pronounced that 'No man before or since has presented a story like him, or set forth a parable with such authentic force and boldness'. And in the 1880s Austin Dobson, whose book on Hogarth remained well-read for generations, could declare that 'He was an unparalleled pictorial satirist: he was, and still is, an unsurpassed story-teller upon canvas'. (15) And later studies did little to challenge such views.

Modern discussions of Hogarth are still edgily nervous of a direct response or any attempt to 'read' his pictures. A comment by the leading Hogarth scholar Ronald Paulson suggests a typical uneasiness:

He dealt with everyday subjects, told compelling stories, and made people laugh and cry. His designs were engraved, and so from the time of publication to the present have not lacked a wide audience. But for this very reason many people have never thought of Hogarth as a painter. (16)

Present-day studies have swung to the opposite extreme from 'compelling stories'. Hogarth's earliest critics tried to find the sources for his

pictorial characters and settings in contemporary life. Today the hunt is after iconography: the emblematic significance of elements within the pictures and the dialogue between Renaissance pictorial sources and the mock-heroic burlesquing of Hogarth's scenes.

But the flight from narration has, so far, not carried the critics back to Charles Lamb's insights into the poetic basis of Hogarth's imagination. And, in one of the most finely imaginative passages of his essay on Hogarth, Lamb suggests a complexity of creative involvement between the artist, his creations and the spectator which criticism of Hogarth has still to begin to approach:

The faces of Hogarth have not a mere momentary interest, as in caricatures... but they are permanent abiding ideas. Not the sports of nature, but her necessary eternal classes... They have intense thinking faces, though the purpose to which they are subservient by no means required it; but indeed it seems as if it was painful to Hogarth to contemplate mere vacancy or insignificance.

This reflection of the artist's own intellect from the faces of his characters, is one reason why the works of Hogarth, so much more than those of other artists are objects of meditation. Our intellectual natures love the mirror which gives them back their own likenesses. The mental eye will not bend long with delight upon vacancy. (17)

There could hardly be a clearer proof of the sympathetic clarity of Lamb's mental eye, or the rich insights that came to him in his frequent meditations on those favourite plates after Hogarth which for so long ornamented his walls.

Based on a lecture given to the Society on 2 November 1985.

NOTES

1. Mary Lamb to Dorothy Wordsworth, postmarked 21.11.1817. *Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb*, ed. E.V. Lucas, London 1935, vol. 2, p.217.
2. *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt*, ed. P.P. Howe, London 1931, vol. XII, p.36.
3. For convenience the quotations from Charles Lamb are taken from *Lamb as Critic*, ed. Roy Park, London 1980. Present quotation, p.338.
4. R.S. Cowley, *Marriage a la Mode: a re-view of Hogarth's Narrative Art*, Manchester 1983, p.5.
5. David Bindman, *Hogarth*, London 1981, pp.7-8.
6. *Lamb as Critic*, p.30.
7. *Ibid*, p.325.
8. *Ibid*, p.330.
9. *Ibid*, p.333.
10. *Complete Works*, ed. Howe, vol.VI, p.145.
11. *Ibid*, vol. VI, pp.135-36.
12. W.M. Thackeray, *Works*, London 1869, vol. XIX (contains *The Four Georges* and *The English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century*), pp.291-92.

13. W.M. Thackeray, *Works*, London 1900 (New Century Library), p.624.
14. Ibid.
15. Mrs. Oliphant, quoted by Austin Dobson in *William Hogarth*, London 1907, p. 181. See also Dobson's *Eighteenth Century Vignettes*, London 1892, p.144.
16. Ronald Paulson, *The Art of Hogarth*, London 1975, p.7.
17. *Lamb as Critic*, pp. 324-25.

THE OTHER LONDON MAGAZINE: GOLD'S AND ITS CONTRIBUTORS

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'And let me tell you, Mr. Gold's contributors are not to be sneezed at ...' *Blackwood's Magazine*, October 1821.

Naturally all Elians are familiar with the name of the *London Magazine* published by Baldwin Cradock and Joy, and first edited by John Scott. Fewer will have heard of Gold and Northhouse's *London Magazine and Monthly Critical and Dramatic Review* (*Gold's* for short). The first issues of *Baldwin's* (as Scott's journal was soon dubbed) and *Gold's* both appeared on the same day in January 1820, at the same price, and, with a similar size and general format, not surprisingly caused much public confusion and, in the case of *Gold's*, resentment that was never completely dispelled. It is hard to determine whether the charges of plagiarism brought by the latter against *Baldwin's* were justified. It is far easier to say which was the better and more successful magazine; though for the nineteen months that it lived *Gold's* would have had its readers believe otherwise. But then, this other 'London' was indeed equal to its rival in one department and superior in another. The reviews in *Gold's* of the major Romantic poets--Keats, Shelley, Wordsworth and Byron-- are invariably sound and often perceptive. Lamb too is sympathetically treated. But *Baldwin's* is outshone in humour-- sheer, rollicking entertainment in the form of brilliant parodies and often anarchic narratives (that occasionally remind us of Dickens)--in all instances provided by *Gold's* chief contributor and guiding hand, who shall be considered later.

But first the genesis of *Gold's*. The new magazine was the first fruit of a partnership between Joyce Gold, a long-established printer and publisher of Shoe Lane, and the much younger William Northhouse, a figure about whom little is known. Gold's previous source of income had been the rather staid *Naval Chronicle*, published from 1799 until 1818, but he had also brought out an anti-Cobbett tract and other pamphlets in this period. Literary journalism was undoubtedly a new and very bold departure. Yet his partner, praised by Talfourd for his lively parts, was probably a source of encouragement, and may have been the project's instigator.

The twin birth of two London Magazines cannot easily be explained away. A coincidence seems unlikely. There is written evidence that in the Spring of 1819 negotiations were taking place between John Scott and his publishers over the publication of a new literary monthly to rival *Blackwood's Magazine*.

Unfortunately, no documents exist to show what Gold and Northhouse were planning at that time. We can only speculate. However, if one is to believe the newspaper adverts that appeared in the early months of 1820 the publishers of *Gold's* could have had no real cause for complaint. This is from the *Times* of January 1st:

Gold and Northhouse respectfully state that they issued several thousand prospectuses of the above work between 27th Oct and 19th Nov: last. On the last mentioned day a house, hitherto considered too respectful for such conduct, gave notice of another magazine under the same title: G and N hope that the public will prevent the intended result of this piracy, and not be deceived by receiving a book on 'social philosophy', when they may be desirous of having the above work. (1)

In replying publicly to the charge of piracy Robert Baldwin maintained that his firm had published a *London Magazine* in the eighteenth century and plans for its revival had been settled in 1819. Thus, leaving aside coincidence, it would seem that Gold and Northhouse had somehow learned of Baldwin's projected magazine, had stolen its title, and had issued prospectuses before the rivals could make their announcement!

At this point, however, a rather bizarre fact emerges to cloud the issue. The editorial office of *Gold's* was at number nineteen Great Russell Street, Covent Garden. Now, Charles and Mary Lamb at that time were occupying rooms at numbers twenty and twenty-one, and were therefore neighbours. It is inconceivable that the Lambs (especially the curious Charles) should have been unaware of what was happening next door. (2) A magazine office is not the quietest of places at any time of day. It is tempting to imagine the staff of *Gold's* and the Lambs, attended perhaps by the occasional fellow contributor to *Baldwin's*, listening to each other's conversations through the wall. Count Pecchio described the average London house in the 1820s as having 'walls...so thin that they allow the passage of sounds without interruption'. (3) He had distinctly heard his neighbours discussing the weather! But though such speculation may seem fanciful, the odd fact remains that only one reference by Lamb to *Gold's* can be traced, and that is in a postscript to his essay, 'A Complaint on the Decay of Beggars in the Metropolis', where a friend's preference for *Baldwin's* over its rival is cited. (4) For its part *Gold's* never tired of ridiculing *Baldwin's* and its contributors, including Lamb, as we shall see. Yet the peculiar irony of Lamb's position appears to have provoked no sentiment worth recording. It is perplexing and raises more questions than it answers. Perhaps the puzzle will never be solved.

The first issue of *Gold's* appeared and was virtually ignored by the critics. In its stolid menu of memoirs, book reviews, poor verse, narrative prose, meteorological and other technical information, there was little to excite the palate. Only the dramatic reviews stood out. Meanwhile *Baldwin's* had got off to an excellent start, with pieces from Wainwright and Hazlitt. The men at *Gold's*, however, were evidently unabashed, even resolute. After complaining that the 'spurious London Magazine' and not their own had been mistakenly sold to their customers they boasted that 'nearly the whole of a very large impression' of *Gold's* '...was sold in London alone within a few days after it was published'. (5) This claim however was to

be far exceeded by the following month's *braggadocio*:

This work [maintained Gold and Northhouse] has now, from the judicious discrimination and kind patronage of the public, taken its stand amongst the principal periodicals of the age: for quantity and variety of matter it is unequalled; its literary articles, partly contributed by an eminent Nobleman connected with the jurisprudence of the country, and partly by several distinguished authors, is allowed to be unsurpassed in talent, and unequalled in impartiality; its dramatic review has attracted general attention by the accuracy and variety of its information, and the poignancy and justice of its strictures... (6)

As in other such rodomontades truth jostles uneasily with bluster and pure fantasy. The literary and dramatic reviews were indeed sound and perceptive, sometimes scathing, and were easily the best parts of the magazine; but the wit and sparkle that characterised *Baldwin's* was lacking. As if in response to this glaring deficiency a new feature was introduced into the March issue of *Gold's*. 'The Alchymist' professed to emulate the example of the *Tatler*, *Spectator* and *Rambler*, by including sketches of modern manners and essays on the present state of literature within its pages. This diversion, which on average took up a quarter of each issue, ran until December 1820, and, was edited by William Frederick Deacon, then a twenty-one year old of precocious talent, who single-handedly changed the character of *Gold's* and in doing so reversed its fortunes.

Deacon was born in 1799, the eldest son of a London merchant. He attended Reading School, where he had Lamb's friend, Thomas Noon Talfourd, as a schoolfellow, and the famous Dr. Valpy as his headmaster. (7). In the Memoir to his friend's posthumous novel *Annette* (1852) Talfourd recalled the young Deacon's preference for novel reading over classical studies, but also noted his sensitivity, light-heartedness and general good nature. In Autumn 1817 (Talfourd says 1815) Deacon entered St. Catherine's College Cambridge, where he was said to have possessed well developed literary tastes and conversational powers. Nevertheless, his natural high spirits and a probable reluctance to study got him sent down. By this time Deacon had already found a publisher for his first book-- *Hacho, or the Spell of St. Wilten*--a long poem influenced by Scott, which William Hone brought out in 1817. Fired by this early success, and having now abandoned the intention of taking holy orders, Deacon embarked on a literary career. This was sometime in 1819, the year in which Deacon met Talfourd, his old Reading school-chum, in London. (8) It is possible, of course, that Talfourd, who was to write for *Baldwin's* and knew some of its prospective contributors, told Deacon that a new *London Magazine* was to be launched and that this news got back to Joyce Gold, who promptly stole the title. There is no solid evidence, however, that this was the case.

Facts concerning Deacon's career are indeed very hard to come by--the early years being the most mysterious. That he had a raw literary talent is beyond doubt. Talfourd has hinted as much and there is overwhelming proof of this in the early writings. As to these, their sheer volume prompts one to speculate on whether many were re-worked pieces dating from the author's undergraduate days. Some, certainly (though none published in *Gold's*), had a Cambridge background and all betray the faults of a promising, though

unpractised, young writer--that is a super-abundance of imagination and gusto but a lack of craft. This latter quality came with time but it might have developed earlier had Deacon needed to write in order to exist, as did most of his rivals at *Baldwin's*. This wasn't so. Deacon in 1820 lived with his parents in Tavistock Square and until 1829 was in receipt of an annuity worth £100. He would gladly have written for nothing, and may even have done so, for a short while at least. Gold and Northhouse could not match the wealth of the long-established Baldwin Cradock and Joy. But Deacon needed his publishers in order to make his name--to prove himself to his father after the Cambridge disgrace. And Gold and Northhouse badly needed a contributor of Deacon's originality to boost sales after the unenthusiastic reception of the first two numbers of *Gold's*.

Whether or not the idea of a rival London Magazine originated with Deacon, and whether or not he became a contributor from the outset are open to debate. Some pieces signed 'W' in the January and February issues may possibly be his--it is hard to determine. That he was the *Gold's* mainstay and chief contributor from March 1820, when 'The Alchemist' began, until at least May 1821, is unarguable. His high-spirited humour, flair for parody and critical acumen (rare for someone of Deacon's age) caught the attention of rival journalists--including those at *Blackwood's*. 'Deacon is a cleverish fellow', wrote Alexander Sidney Trott in October 1821, quoting some Cockney-bashing satirical verse from a recent *Gold's*. (9) Moreover Trott (unless Trott was Deacon in disguise) did more in correctly identifying the young writer than some subsequent literary historians have done. Bertram Dobell identified him as Thomas Griffiths Wainewright and John O Hayden has declared that 'nothing is now known of its (*Gold's*) editor or contributors'. (10) Jonathan Curling, a great literary detective, was probably the first, in his admirable biography of Wainewright, to put the record straight by correcting Dobell, but even he had little to say on Deacon's work in general. (11) It is time, perhaps, for a discussion of this.

Deacon's literary contribution to *Gold's* was wide-ranging and impressive. Anxious to shine, he tried his hand at most forms--criticism, poetry, romantic fiction, drama, domestic comedy and (what he most excelled in) parody. His serious verse and attempts at romantic melodrama are unremarkable and need not detain us for long. The romance, for instance, is overtly influenced by the turgid novels to which the writer was addicted, as may be shown by this description of the state of mind of Rosalie, a typically melodramatic Deacon heroine: in 'every thought, every action, every pulse of her frame she felt the power of that passion'. (12) It is interesting to note, however, that the setting for this drama is not some exotic location, but Reading and its environs. Indeed, Deacon frequently draws on his childhood memories of school and holidays for the *Gold's* writings. There is a strong tone of melancholic nostalgia, in, for instance, 'Old Scenes Re-visited', in which the author's return to his old school prompts much soul-searching, and 'A Day at the Mill', which describes a recent fishing-trip taken while Deacon was staying at Three Mile Cross. (13) Moreover, when Dr. Valpy and his colleagues at Reading School are introduced in various comic guises (the pedantic Dr Peter Prosody is one) in pieces such as 'Black Monday' and 'Breaking-Up' the savage scorn that characterises all Deacon's attacks on despised 'moderns' is replaced by affectionate banter. (14) Incidentally, both Valpy and Deacon's schoolfellow, T.N. Talfourd were friends of Mary

Russell Mitford, whose magazine sketches depicting life in and around Three Mile Cross were later collected as *Our Village*. Did Deacon, who many months before had described this very village in *Gold's*, inspire Mitford to write her far more memorable work? Oddly, there is no evidence that the two writers ever met. (15)

Deacon in playful mood, in describing the comedy of domestic scenes, can be very funny indeed. Sketches like 'Black Monday' and 'Breaking-Up', with their archness and attention to detail remind us more strongly of the Dickens of *Sketches by Boz* and *Pickwick* than of anyone else, though Deacon does admit to having taken a hint from Leigh Hunt's essay 'A Now'. But then the young Dickens read Hunt avidly and may have known Deacon through his later volumes of sketches. Certainly, much of the comic effect of both Dickens and Deacon is achieved by debunking and deflating. In 'A Guide to Love', for instance, Deacon the phlegmatic Englishman, after having told the sad tale of a love-struck young female who boils up by mistake rhubarb root in a coffee-pot, thereby griping herself 'her lover and family for a week', concludes that though consumption may be 'pathetically interesting' as an illness for such a love-lorn girl 'for God's sake let her never have a stomach-ache! Who ever heard of a lover with a bowel complaint?' (16) Similarly in 'A Hampshire Farmer's Letter' the victim is the farmer's son, who has forsaken the plough and homely country fare to become a thin and absent-minded poet and who, in attempting to imitate his poetic heroes, is pushed into an unromantic ditch. Deacon had prefaced this 'letter' with a suggestion that too many men of little or no talent were deluding themselves with thoughts of literary fame having been over-influenced by worthless 'poems, novels and romances'. (17) No names are mentioned but it is clear that in Deacon *Gold's*, in some respects a journal of advanced critical sympathies, had a writer who was willing to satirize the fashionable literati, and in particular the 'Cockney School', as *Blackwood's* was doing. It is interesting to contrast Deacon's scornful treatment of, for instance, Hunt, Hazlitt and Keats, with the favourable (unsigned) reviews in *Gold's* of work by Keats and Shelley. One is tempted to suggest that Deacon's hostility to the younger generation of writers owed more to personal jealousy at their success than to critical reservations. Nevertheless, Deacon did possess limited critical sympathies--as his parodies for *Gold's* very forcibly show.

The feature 'Immortality in Embryo', which ran for three issues, consisted of parodies of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Leigh Hunt and Barry Cornwall, but also imitations of George Colman the Younger and George Crabbe. As a parody the Wordsworth piece is poor, though it is funny for other reasons, as is a facetious portrait of Coleridge in which phrases from 'Christabel' are taken wildly out of context to great comic effect. (18) The actual parody of 'Christabel' when it appears later is typical of Deacon in that it cleverly punctures the romantic mysticism of the original, though here, as elsewhere, when Coleridge is a victim in, for instance a review of *Sybilline Leaves*, there is no serious attempt by Deacon to understand what the poet is about. But then any critic who could so passionately defend novelists like Mrs. Opie, Mrs. Edgeworth, Jane Porter and Hannah More against charges of sentimentalism and falsity, and who could demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of the verse of George Colman the Younger, is hardly likely to appreciate the complexity of Coleridge's mind, or even, it seems, that of Wordsworth, who, in Deacon's parody, admits to having founded 'a new poetical system yclept the Lake School'. (19) 'New' in 1820! No wonder the Cockneys were regarded by Deacon as poetical interlopers upon Parnassus, which was also how

Blackwood's saw them. Indeed Deacon's hilarious sketch of Hunt, who is pictured with 'an ivy crown twined conceitedly around his temples' owes its satiric tone to the attacks by 'Z' in that journal. The language, however, with its preponderance of compound epithets and neologisms, is a faithful distillation of Hunt's own felicitous style, as he proceeds to relate his idyllic life at Hampstead where:

We write sonnets which no-one reads...and tell stories of my just-like-dandy-dressed Lord C... or my exactly-like-an-ass-looking Mr C. And then we stir about our snug family and recite pretty little verses 'to our pretty little Johnny, singing hey ho nonny! with hat so blythe upon 'e'e.' And tell anecdotes of Dante and read Raphael, and write sundry criticisms on Mr. Liston's physiognomy...'
(20)

Hunt also appears as one of the principal victims of Deacon in an Alchymist satire 'On Authors'. Taking a cue from Hunt's own *Feast of the Poets* (1811) Deacon exposes a handful of writers to the critical gaze of Apollo at Covent Garden Library. The whole exercise is a blatant (if very amusing) vehicle for the satirist's self-promotion, as each candidate for literary fame pleads his or her case before the god. Hunt, John Hamilton Reynolds, whose literary prococity matched Deacon's own, the Minerva novelists, and many others including the *Baldwin's* writers are all summarily dismissed and refused a licence to be eccentric, while Deacon (as the Alchymist) together with Washington Irving are granted a 'carte blanche for unlimited eccentricity' as authors of great promise. (21)

'On Authors' appeared in *Gold's* for October! Two months later Deacon had signed off as the Alchymist. Various individuals were thanked for their contributions, including 'the late editor of the *Theatrical Inquisitor*' and a prolific author identified as P.G. (22) Deacon was apparently unwilling to reveal his own real name and so the Alchymist bids farewell as 'Greville Faulkland', a pseudonym, incidentally, that crops up in one of the stories in *November Nights*, published by Deacon in 1826. One possible reason for the Alchymist's departure could have been the launch on October 21st of the *Déjeuné, or Companion for the Breakfast Table*, a twopenny literary miscellany edited by Deacon and probably wholly written by him. Appearing each morning until December 15th, then three times a week before it ceased altogether, this venture fairly gobbled up material that would otherwise have gone to *Gold's*. Indeed, *Gold's* pieces were reprinted in the *Déjeuné*, and after January 1821 articles 'from the *Déjeuné*' appeared in *Gold's*; though it is highly probable that by this time the former had ceased to exist as an independent magazine. In the *Gold's* review of the only volumes extant of the *Déjeuné* puzzling reference is made to Deacon as a 'ci-devant' writer for *Gold's* by someone who is almost wholly appreciative of the volume and who quotes extensively from its pages. (23) The piece is in the style of Deacon and as subsequent articles by him are littered with puffs for himself and his *Déjeuné* it may perhaps be deduced that he reviewed his own book.

In February 1821 the *Theatrical Inquisitor* was incorporated into *Gold's*, which subsequently changed its name. One result of the merger was that the regular 'Dramatic Review' became the much longer 'Theatrical Inquisitor' part of the revamped magazine. Nevertheless, the always forceful, often scathing, critical style remained unchanged. And there may be a good reason for this. When Deacon thanked his 'esteemed friend', the late editor of the

Theatrical Inquisitor 'for a contribution to the "Alchymist" ' was he not also acknowledging the part that George Soane (who had been editor of the latter) had played in another department of *Gold's*--namely the Dramatic Review feature? Deacon and Soane may well have been personal friends, but the partiality shown by *Gold's* towards the critic, dramatist and rival editor goes beyond the bounds of friendship. There is not a single bad review of a Soane play throughout the invariably hypercritical *Gold's*, either before or after the merger. Sometimes the praise is effusive to the point of absurdity, as in a very long notice of Soane's published play *The Dwarf of Naples* where this distinctly ordinary work is compared to 'the purest models of the glorious age of Elizabeth' and its author is described as possessing 'genius of a very superior dramatic nature'. (24) Soane had been wont to publish similarly overblown praise of himself in his own *Theatrical Inquisitor* and therefore the possibility of an early parallel role in *Gold's* seems likely. Certainly Soane, whose savage and anonymous attacks in the *Champion* on the architecture of his father, Sir John, had caused the early death of his mother, was capable of the violent (and libellous) censure of Elliston's management of Drury Lane that *Gold's* published in 1820. Incidentally, in one of the most vicious of these attacks a play is singled out for praise as being a 'tolerable' Drury Lane production--it is by George Soane. (25) The conclusive evidence for Soane's involvement in *Gold's* comes in a letter from John Britton to Sir John Soane dated July 1st 1821. Britton maintains: 'I am perfectly satisfied that Mr. G. Soane, or the Editors connected with *Gold's London Magazine*, have no connection with the *Guardian*'. (26) Apparently Sir John had been attacked in that paper.

There are no such documents to support the claim that Cornelius Francis Webb(e) wrote for *Gold's*, but the initials CFW, Webb(e)'s most commonly-used signature, that occur after prose and poetry seem evidence enough. It seems odd that Webb(e), the Londoner whose inferior nature-verse and eulogy of Keats and Hunt prompted J.G. Lockhart to launch his 'Cockney School' diatribes in *Blackwood's*, should find his work gaining favour with a magazine whose chief contributor, as we have seen, was implacably anti-Cockney and pro-*Blackwood's*. It is not the only editorial anomaly to be found in *Gold's*, which, incidentally, also noticed Webb(e)'s *Summer; An Invocation to Sleep; Fairy Revels* among the forthcoming publications (Deacon's projected *Tales of Sentiment, Humor and Romance*, which never, in fact, appeared was also publicized). (27) However Webb(e) himself thought little enough of his *Gold's* contributions, which included many sonnets and an attack on prize-fighting, for they were not collected in book form.

We cannot close this account of *Gold's* without mentioning the magazine's treatment of Lamb. He is first referred to in a review of Hazlitt's *Dramatic Literature in the Age of Elizabeth* where he is described as 'kind, and his talents not mean'. (28) Exactly a year later, however, in March 1821, he is featured twice--firstly as a witty dinner guest of John Scott's in a fantasy by Deacon (masquerading as 'Paul Clutterbuck') in which the humorist takes every opportunity to promote *Gold's* at the expense of *Baldwin's*; and secondly as the subject of a short piece of literary appreciation (unsigned). In Deacon's very clever sketch Lamb 'of antique memory' is given a 'Songe to Fancy, by Good Master Webster' to recite--which turns out to be a version with archaic spelling of Sam Quiz's previously published imitation of George Colman! (29) Such an oddity is best viewed as an example of Deacon's imperfect knowledge of English literature rather than as a critical comment on Lamb's fondness for 'antique' poets--

though this latter trait is discussed at length in the enthusiastic critique which follows. (30) Here, in surveying the canon that included *John Woodvill*, *Rosamund Gray*, the *Tales from Shakespeare* and the poetry, the author praises Lamb's feelings for the spirit of the 'olden time' and his adopted 'quaintness of diction' without a single reference to those essays signed 'Elia' that had appeared in *Baldwin's*. Evidently, this particular writer did not link Elia with Lamb. And yet, Deacon, without saying as much, may have made this connection himself or may have been let into the secret. Certainly by singling out Lamb as a key guest at the fictitious dinner Deacon strongly identifies him as a regular *Baldwin's* writer--even though Lamb's *real* signature had previously appeared only *once* in the magazine!

Deacon may actually have become editor of *Gold's* at some point, possibly at the incorporation of the *Theatrical Inquisitor* in February 1821. This may explain the frequency of *Déjeuné* pieces at this time and the relentlessness of 'Paul Clutterbuck's' campaign against *Baldwin's*, which vendetta, incidentally, continued after the death of John Scott and only ended with Clutterbuck's last offering in the April issue. There is nothing attributable to Deacon for May and only a single *Déjeuné* article in the number for June, although here we find an editorial note which reveals that a 'sudden and severe illness' had forced the editor to retire. (31) The nature of Deacon's illness is not known, nor the date on which he left London for Llangadock to convalesce in an old cottage where, for a few happy months, he amused himself, according to a later reminiscence, 'with a few old books and a daily ramble among the Black Mountains'. (32) Meanwhile *Gold's*, under a new editor, but destined to close, printed a mass of Deacon material in its final (July) issue, a revealing letter to 'Paul Clutterbuck' on the mythical 'Déjeuné Club' and its personalities, being one of the items. (33) That same month Taylor and Hessey, owners of *Baldwin's* since April, bought out Joyce Gold. *Gold's London Magazine* was no more.

From Wales Deacon wrote to Sir Walter Scott for advice and encouragement, enclosing with his first letter a sample of work which the novelist agreed to send on to *Blackwood's*. (34) Scott strongly recommended his young admirer to take up his father's offer of a place in his mercantile business, arguing that a 'steady income' was to be preferred to the precarious existence of a freelance writer. But he encouraged Deacon to continue writing, seeing in his work 'indications of very considerable talent'. No doubt bolstered in spirit by these words Deacon spurned his father's offer and instead continued to seek immortality through his pen. His Welsh sketches were collected as *The Inn Keeper's Album* (1823) and *November Nights*, a volume similar in style, appeared in 1826. For a few years before his death in 1845 he conducted the *Sun* newspaper, in which he demonstrated a keen admiration for Dickens. His contributions to *Blackwood's* of 1837-9, later reprinted as *The Picture Gallery*, are among his liveliest and best, but it is as the author of *Warreniana* that Deacon deserves to be better known today. In this volume of parodies which Ian Jack has rightly praised as having 'considerable interest to the literary historian', and some of which first appeared in a different form in *Gold's*, a galaxy of Deacon's contemporaries (including Lamb) become the victims of his irreverent, wholly original, and perhaps unfulfilled, comic genius.

NOTES

1. *The Times*, I Jan. 1820
2. J. Rogers Rees, 'The Lambs in Great Russell St.', *N & Q*, 8 (1907), pp. 421-2.
3. Count Pecchio, *Semi-Serious Observations of an Italian Exile* (London 1833), pp.29-30.
4. *London Magazine* (Baldwin's), 5 (Old Series), p.532.
5. *The Times*, 1 Feb. 1820.
6. *Ibid.* I Mar. 1820.
7. In his *Companion to Charles Lamb* (p.91) Claude A. Prance maintains that Deacon and T.G.Wainwright were schoolfellows. This cannot be the case, as Wainwright, according to his biographers W.C. Hazlitt and Curling, was a pupil of Charles Burney at Greenwich Academy and there is no evidence to suggest that Deacon came here before going on to Reading School.
8. For a more detailed account of Deacon's early years see the prefatory memoir by Talfourd to Deacon's *Annette* (London, 1852).
9. *Blackwood's Magazine*, 10 (Oct 1821), pp. 284-6.
10. John O. Hayden, *The Romantic Reviewers, 1802-24* (London and Chicago 1969) p. 65.
11. Jonathan Curling, *Janus Weathercock* (London 1938), pp. 396-8.
12. *Gold's*, 2.
13. *Ibid.*, 2 (Oct. 1820), pp. 345-7; (Sept. 1820), pp.271-5.
14. *Ibid.*, 2 (Oct. 1820), pp. 350-354.
15. See R.M. Healey, 'William Frederick Deacon--a forgotten Berkshire writer', *Bucks and Berks Countryside*, 22, (April 1982), pp. 36-7.
16. *Gold's*, 2 (July 1820), pp.21-2.
17. *Ibid.*, 2 (July 1820), p.23.
18. *Ibid.*, 2 (July 1820), p.41.
19. *Ibid.*, 2 (July 1820), p.39.
20. *Ibid.*, 2 (July 1820), p.42
21. *Ibid.*, 2 (Oct 1820), p.358.
22. *Ibid.*, 2 (Dec 1820), p.542.
23. *Ibid.*, 3 (Jan 1821), p.54.
24. *Ibid.*, 3 (May 1821), p.509.
25. *Ibid.*, 2 (Aug 1820), p.203.
26. A.T. Bolton, *Portrait of Sir John Soane* (London 1927), p.345.
27. *Gold's*, 3 (June 1821), p. 649.
28. *Ibid.*, I (Mar.1820), p. 282.
29. See Bertram Dobell, *Sidelights on Charles Lamb* (London 1903), p. 291.

30. *Gold's*, I (Mar. 1820), pp.273-5.
31. *Ibid.*, 3 (June 1821), p.554.
32. W.F. Deacon, *The Inn Keeper's Album* (London 1823), L'Envoy; see also Deacon's *Annette* (prefatory memoir by T.N. Talfourd).
33. *Gold's*, 4 (July 1821), No XIX, pp. 65-8, microfilm in University of London Library.
34. *Letters of Sir Walter Scott*, edited by H.J.C. Grierson et al., (1932-7), volume for 1821, pp. 6-9, 22-4. Deacon later asked Scott not to forward the article(s) to *Blackwood's*.

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COLERIDGE'S STOWEY CIRCLE (SEEN BY A CONTEMPORARY)

Berta Lawrence

Author of Coleridge and Wordsworth in Somerset

INTRODUCTION

In 1984 there was published a book of some importance to those who are interested in everything connected with the life of Coleridge. The ill-chosen title *Paupers and Pig Killers* does not attract; its sub-title is explanatory:

The Diary of William Holland
A Somerset Parson 1799-1818.

William Holland was Vicar of the small village of Over Stowey in the Quantock Hills, a place as familiar to Coleridge as the larger village of Nether Stowey, generally called Stowey, lying along the main road below (the present A39). In Mr.Holland's time Nether Stowey, which had 700 inhabitants, was called a market-town. He gives a detailed picture of society in these two places and also writes frequently of neighbouring Aisholt, a tiny, pretty village situated high in the Quantocks and wellknown to Coleridge who toyed with the idea of living there.

The Diary reveals a Parson who is a bigoted Anglican and a stiff-necked Tory totally prejudiced against new and radical opinions, snobbish, kind, if condescending, to the poor, appalled by the poverty yet impatient with their demands, affectionate to his family and devoted to his calling. Like all the inhabitants of the locality he lived in terror of a French invasion and even had a covered cart made in order to evacuate his household.

The book (edited by Jack Ayres published by Alan Sutton) contains a wide selection of Diary entries. A transcription of Holland's original notebooks has been given to the Somerset Record Office. Originally there were ninety

but a number are missing; this may explain some of Mr. Holland's apparent omissions.

Some of the information in the present article is based on passages in the transcription in order to augment information found in the published selections. The editor of the selections has chosen to limit his own explanatory notes.

COLERIDGE

The lack of reference to Coleridge is extremely tantalising, those that exist are antagonistic. In 1799, just after Coleridge's return from Germany - Mr. Holland settled in Stowey at that date after several short stays - Mr. Holland encounters Sarah in Nether Stowey and refers to her as 'that Democratic hoyden' - a strange description - who looked like 'a frisky girl or worse' exactly the wife 'a Democratic Libertine' would choose. He mentions 'the husband's' sudden departure to London, 'no-one knows the reason' as if it is a sinister event. A few days later he attacks Stowey Methodists in his Diary. 'Democratic Orators have got among them'. Attacking them again in 1800 he suspects 'the influence of Philosophers who have become known as Celebrated Preachers'. Perhaps he has in mind Coleridge's locally renowned preaching in the Unitarian churches of Taunton and Bridgwater.

In late December 1800 Coleridge stays with Thomas Poole in company with Tom Wedgwood. Mr. Holland runs into the Rev. John Poole, a close friend who shares Mr. Holland's opinions, and is surprised, even shocked that he is about to dine with his cousin Tom, 'Patron of Democrats', and 'will meet Coleridge and Wedgwood - hum hum! Ho Ho!' writes Mr. Holland with heavy humour.

In 1817 he meets Hartley Coleridge at Poole's, and in his Diary writes scathingly of Hartley's short stature and odd appearance. He sneers at Hartley for thinking he should have been awarded the poetry prize at Charterhouse with verses containing only four good lines. He *thinks* Hartley is 'son of a Mr. Coleridge who distinguished himself as a writer'.

THOMAS POOLE

Tom Poole, that remarkable self-educated tanner whose friends include men of all ranks and abilities (John Rickman and Charles James Fox among them) and who is the unfailing benefactor of Coleridge and his family, rouses violent antagonism in Mr. Holland. This is caused mainly by Poole's advanced political views, his 'French principles', his 'Democratic notions' that are anathema to Mr. Holland. 'Democrats are dreadful creatures', Poole is their Patron. The other cause of Mr. Holland's enmity is Poole's own character. According to Holland Poole is vain, pretentious, a busybody, false, interfering, full of his own importance, convinced that he is an expert on every subject. We do have Coleridge's own testimony that Poole manifested some of these defects, that he was tactless and rode rough-shod over people's feelings. Yet even Mr. Holland cannot deny Poole's unfailing generosity and his benefactions to his native place although Holland believes that vanity 'is the fundamental motive'. 'He always would appear generous, I never found him so in his dealings'.

He sneers at Poole's 'capacious study' (perhaps the well-known Book Room

mentioned as an inducement to Coleridge) and his 'boy servant'. Coleridge too mentions a boy-servant waiting on *him* at Poole's in 1805 and receiving a penny with gratitude.

Holland likes dining at Poole's and playing whist there. He praises the well-maintained house and table. He is patron of the Book Club Poole founded, attends its dinner with local gentry. He preaches the sermon for the anniversary of Poole's Men's Club (a Friendly Society) although 'they all hold Democratic opinions'. In 1807 he attends the first anniversary of the Women's Club Poole founded and enjoys its marvellous tea with a few gentleman. It is disappointing that he does not mention seeing Coleridge who stays at Poole's that June.

Mr. Holland's antagonism extends to Poole's spectacled young partner Thomas Ward (transcriber of Coleridge's letters from Germany and always affectionately remembered). Ward is another Democrat, Poole's 'faithful shadow'. At Marshmills he runs a silk mill where the women workers are mostly Dissenters and frowned on by Mr. Holland who suspects them of immoral behaviour with workmen.

However, Mr. Holland's most congenial companion is Tom Poole's cousin the Rev. John Poole, classical scholar, amateur botanist, Fellow of Oriel, Vicar of Enmore - another Quantock village - and founder of its nationally famous village school. He nourishes a lifelong dislike of Coleridge.

LORD EGMONT AND THE CRUICKSHANKS

John James Spencer Perceval, Earl of Egmont, brother of Perceval the assassinated Prime Minister, was one of the chief land owners in the Quantock area. He lived at Enmore Castle in the pretty Quantock village of Enmore where at times Coleridge received his hospitality. Holland's *Diary* makes it plain that the Earl was greatly respected and that several villages profited from his benevolence. He built John Poole's rectory, paid the teachers at Over Stowey Sunday school, gave money and blankets to Stowey poor. However Mr. Holland criticises him for ignoring the malpractices of his agent William Cruickshank, a member of an Enmore family with whom Coleridge was very friendly. There were three brothers and two sisters, Mary and Eleanor known as Ellen who is mentioned in Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journal* as a visitor to Alfoxden. John, the eldest son who lived with wife and baby (the subject of a Coleridge poem) in a house close to Coleridge's and who communicated to Coleridge his dream about a ship with a skeleton crew, is not mentioned by Mr. Holland although included in the accusation that the whole 'swaggering family are presumptuous upstarts' the sons 'most worthless beings'. But William, the Earl's agent, is constantly attacked for his dishonesty in financial matters; he is 'a sharper, a trickster' who 'bilks' Mr. Holland over payment of tithe, breaks every promise about settling debts and retains money sent by Lord Egmont for the Sunday School. 'An accomplished scoundrel' in short. One recalls that Poole and Coleridge refer in letters to 'poor Cruickshank's distresses' that is to the defaulting of their friend John Cruickshank over payment of bills.

A further charge, much repeated, against William Cruickshank and his sister Mary concerns their conceit and extravagance as well as their attitude of condescension - even to the Vicar - as if they were 'lords of

the country' and their ostentation in riding about 'superbly mounted' or in a carriage with servants. Years later Mrs. Coleridge alluded in a letter to the extravagance that 'infected' the whole Cruickshank family. Yet Holland's picture of an arrogant Mary Cruickshank varies from the impression conveyed by Coleridge in his correspondence with Mary about books and friends.

Certainly William Cruickshank the agent acts like a petty tyrant. He 'oppressively' turns out tenant-farmers from their farms 'for his own use' and will 'depopulate the parish'. Again Lord Egmont seems blind to his agent's offences.

REV. JOHN REEKS AND REV. JOHN BRICE

John Reeks, married to a Miss Betty Brice, was Vicar of Aisholt when Coleridge and Southey first visited Nether Stowey in 1794. Aisholt is a tiny Quantock village that Mr. Holland describes as 'looking romantic on a June day'. Its cottages lie in a combe called by Coleridge 'a green romantic chasm' when on his return from Germany he wanted to rent a cottage (later Sir Henry Newbolt's) and was frustrated by Sarah. A lake in the grounds of the former Rectory sends its overflow under a wall and into the stream by the cottage.

In her book *Tom Poole and his Friends* Mrs Sandford tells us that the Rev. John Poole was greatly offended when his Poole cousins brought Coleridge and Southey to his mother's house: 'atheists ... hot with Democratic rage'. That same day his friend John Reeks indignantly reported to him that he had just met these young men, who held 'odious views' at Tom Poole's house. Mr. Reeks himself was a hopeless alcoholic. In 1799 Mr. Holland recorded doing Duty for Mr. Reeks because Mr. Reeks was 'totally incapable' and a little later that Mr. Reeks had 'the horrors' and needed forcible restraint. In 1800 he died of raving d.t.'s. Mr. Holland read the burial service and the distinguished bearers included the Rev. John Poole and Tom Poole.

Soon after Mr. Reeks's death, Mr. Holland inducted the Rev. John Brice, whose relative Betty Brice had married Mr. Reeks, to the living of Aisholt but for a year Mr. Brice continued to live at Porlock and Mr. Holland rode four miles to Aisholt most Sundays and at Christmas to conduct a service after his Over Stowey duty. When Mr. Brice did take over he proved very indolent and often sent a note to say he was ailing and to request Mr. Holland's assistance. Mr. Holland's diary-entries are often indignant: Mr. Brice had received him dressed like a 'Great Beau', Mr. Brice was 'as able for Duty' as himself. Once when Mr. Brice was ill, Holland was scandalised by the slatternly state of the bedroom where he found him and his wife: 'a room without paper', furnished with 'sorry chairs' and a curtainless bed, with only a small wood fire. Surely they could have done better! he comments.

However on 29 December 1809 Mr. & Mrs. Holland dined agreeably at the Brices' on 'a haunch of wild venison' locally hunted. They played whist, and Mr. Brice proved more pleasant company in a small gathering and did not 'brag egregiously' as he did with a bigger audience.

Coleridge, we know, dined with great enjoyment at Aisholt Rectory on an

August night in 1807 when he and Mr. Brice consumed two bottles of port and a quantity of mead. Brice's daughters were present: Coleridge and Sarah were very friendly with Mary the eldest, who owned a first edition of Coleridge's poems.

Mr. Brice could be more convivial than Holland approved. At a Stowey dinner Mr. Brice 'chattered as usual and told stories that made us stare'. Mr. Brice loved good food and at this dinner so annoyed Mr. Holland by praising a dinner given by Tom Poole the previous night that Mr. Holland remarked sarcastically

'So it is a *good dinner* that attaches you to man'.

The morning after the Hollands had dined and slept at Aisholt, Mr. Brice got up early to look at his lambs. He was 'a considerable farmer with extensive glebe'.

THE CHESTER FAMILY

Chesters lived for many years in Dodington the very small Quantock village where the copper-mine remembered by Coleridge in Germany was situated. They were prosperous farmers. Mr. Holland who served Dodington as curate, baptised the eldest son, Coleridge's friend John. Widowed Mrs. Chester settled in Nether Stowey with her numerous children of whom several died, perhaps of tuberculosis. In their letters Coleridge and Sarah refer to 'poor Mrs. Chester' and her diminishing family and Coleridge says that he shed a tear over the death of Chester's sister.

Mr. Holland describes Mrs. Chester as an old lady *smoking a pipe* when he and his wife went to tea with her. She had forgotten the invitation, it seems, for they waited in a cold parlour while she got a fire going. At that date, 1810, her family, according to Mr. Holland, had been reduced to four sons and two daughters. Her son Sam lived with her. He was a cattle-dealer who attended Salisbury market, 'a very important man' writes Mr. Holland sarcastically. He continues with a description of Sam Chester's physical appearance that strongly resembles Hazlitt's description of Coleridge's friend *John* Chester at the time Hazlitt walked to Lynton with Chester and Coleridge. 'He walks very bad' writes Mr. Holland, 'bow-legged, broad shouldered, not convex but concave behind which gives him an uncouth movement'. One recalls that Hazlitt said John Chester walked like a *drover*. But John abandoned farming to manage a Redruth copper-mine from 1802. He married a Quaker girl Elizabeth Jenkin, daughter of the Cornish William Jenkin who visited Tom Poole and gave advice on the Stowey mine. Mr. Holland met Elizabeth Jenkin in 1801 at the Chesters; 'a Miss Jenkin from Cornwall, a Quaker, rather a fine girl but said nothing'.

In March 1800 Mr. Holland was in company with Mrs. Chester and three of her children at a Stowey dinner-table. Afterwards he writes in his Diary 'Her son John has been in Germany and seems I think rather improved'. He makes no reference to Chester's travelling-companions.

Writing to Poole Mrs. Coleridge sometimes asks for news of John Chester's sister Elizabeth who became Mrs. Ridler. She visited the Ridders in later years. Mr. Holland, on one occasion, was scandalised by finding Miss Elizabeth Chester 'and her intended, Mr. Ridler' in Mrs. Chester's house, 'with no one else present'.

REV. WILLIAM ROSKILLY

We know that William Roskilly, the Cornish curate of Nether Stowey, and his wife, were friendly with the Coleridges, came to their cottage for tea, received a letter of congratulation from Coleridge in Germany when Mr. Roskilly was given the living of Kempsford, and gave Sarah and the infant Hartley six weeks hospitality at Kempsford in 1799. When curate of Stowey Mr. Roskilly kept a boarding-school.

In October 1804 Mr. Holland encounters the Roskillys on a visit to Stowey, and later in the day writes a damning summary of Mr. Roskilly's career: he has been 'a poor scholar, a poor schoolmaster whose school ran into debt, a poor preacher and a poor parson promoted only by marrying the bishop's niece. In appearance, mean and plain'.

REV. JAMES NEWTON

The Newtons, who gave Sarah and Hartley hospitality for several weeks in autumn 1799, lived in the large, pleasant vicarage in the picturesque village of Old Cleeve near Minehead. Mr. Holland meets them at various social gatherings; the Newtons are a lively and sociable family fond of cards and tea-parties. There are several high-spirited daughters, Fanny, Sophie and the rest, whose society Mr. Holland enjoys whenever a Miss Newton rides her horse to Over Stowey Vicarage to stay for a few days. He finds the Rev. James Newton 'sensible and respectable' but unfit to serve a church since his paralytic seizure.

REV. HENRY POOLE

Henry Poole, fellow-student with Coleridge at Jesus College, brought Coleridge in 1794 to stay at a Poole home in the coastal hamlet of Shurton, a few miles from Nether Stowey (hence Coleridge's 1795 poem *Lines Written at Shurton Bars*). When Mr. Holland becomes friendly with him he is married to a rich wife and very comfortably settled in Shurton. Mr. Holland finds him an unspiritual and lazy 'squire-parson' who delegates his duties but 'can preach a fine sermon when he has to'. In Mr. Holland's opinion he wears clothes 'unsuitable for a parson' - for example, white nankeen trousers, and Poole's wife too 'dresses rather gay'. Henry Poole greatly enjoys dining with prosperous families, particularly the St. Albyns of Alfoxden where Mr. Holland is sometimes his fellow-guest and finds himself embarrassed by Henry Poole's 'gross repartees'.

At the homes of various Pooles Mr. Holland encounters Henry Poole's sister Lavinia, the Louisa of Coleridge's verses *To A Young Lady on her Recovery from a Fever*.

Mr. Holland describes her as a silly, giggling girl, whispering to another girl 'about her lovers' while playing whist, so spoiling the Vicar's game.

JOHN CHUBB

At the Bridgewater home of this prosperous merchant, at one time Mayor of the town, de Quincey, seeking Coleridge, was entertained in 1807. The Chubbs were a musical and artistic family. Chubb, an enthusiastic water-colourist

left a number of small portraits that included those of Lord Egmont and William Cruickshank. An active Whig, Chubb was a close friend of Charles J. Fox and other Whig politicians: hence, the hostility expressed by Mr. Holland after meeting Chubb's young son at a dinner-party. 'Son of the Celebrated Chubb, the Philosopher and Atheist from Bridgwater, descended from a more celebrated Chubb... and they have all inherited the same principles'. However, he admits that 'young Chubb has a good voice' after hearing him sing catches and glees with a group of friends.

This book reflects the small, enclosed, suspicious world where the flashing personality of Coleridge and the unusual life-style of the Wordsworths, who are not mentioned, created sufficient alarm to set up the famous 'Spy' investigation.

The book has recently been re-issued by Penguin.

BOOK REVIEWS

John R. Nabholz: *'My Reader My Fellow-Labourer': A Study of English Romantic Prose* University of Missouri Press, Columbia, 1986, \$22

'The field [of prose] is at present almost uncultivated', readers preferring the lazy skimming of 'short sentences linked by no development of thought or even syntactical connection'. Who is being reported here? An old-fashioned English tutor of to-day complaining that students can no longer be expected to follow compound-complex sentences, as written by Donne, Sir Thomas Browne or even Virginia Woolf, and appreciate their beauty? Not so. It is Wordsworth and Coleridge, early in the nineteenth century. Wordsworth hastily qualified his condemnation, to pay tribute to the prose of 'Lamb, my friend', Coleridge and Southey - and there were also Hazlitt and De Quincey - but to whom could we now look for such exceptions? Each of the great prose-writers of the Romantic period, Professor Nabholz says, attempted in their own work to counter the decline in prose-writing by the use of various devices, 'of which the adoption of seventeenth-century modes of sentence-structure, particularly and concreteness in word-choice, and "constitutive" rather than merely "decorative" metaphors and images are the most easily documented and widely recognized. However, all these specific devices must be seen as supporting a radical remedial purpose: *to alter profoundly the reader's relation to the prose text*'. The prose of Jeremy Taylor, or even of Burke, they regarded as close to poetry and they demanded from the reader of prose an equal attention and involvement as for verse. In order to achieve this, each of the writers Nabholtz selects for study, Lamb, Hazlitt, Wordsworth and Coleridge, confronts the reader, challenging his 'conventional habits of response' by engaging him as an active participator or partner in the the joint enterprise.

It was not for nothing, as Nabholtz had pointed out earlier (*TWC* Spring 1980), that James Penn's *Latin Grammar for the Use of Christ's Hospital* (1761) 'contained an appendix of figures of speech and rhetoric' and that this was generally a part of grammar school education. Elians have already reason to be grateful to Professor Nabholtz, whose article 'Drama and Rhetoric in Lamb's *Essays of the Imagination*' (*Studies in English Literature* 1972) was part of the movement of the 60s and 70s to give serious critical attention to Lamb as a literary artist. Now he demonstrates

again with what rhetorical skill Lamb involves the reader from the very first paragraph of the first of *Essays of Elia*, 'The South Sea House', leading him from a visit to the Bank or a coach-stop, a purely utilitarian journey, to an imaginative one in which by 'the imaginative recreation of the past ... the ordinary becomes extraordinary'. In other essays the reader-author relationship has the *appearance* of being taken for granted, Lamb appealing to supposedly shared experiences and assumptions so that he is able to use idiosyncratic details of Elia's personal life to illuminate facts of human existence which are basic and universal. Along the way, in each essay, the reader is seduced by a build-up of imagery and allusion appropriate to the tendency of the theme. For example, 'The South Sea House' 'is punctuated with references to other frauds and hoaxes' beside 'the famous BUBBLE'. Even the quotation from Ossian, with a footnote directing us to its source in case we should miss it, reminds us of a *literary* deception. In 'Blakesmoor in H - shire', the picture from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, though actual childhood memories, also relate to the change in the old house 'from its physical life (now threateningly vanished) to its "immortality" in the imagination and emotional life of Elia', by which it is recreated in co-operation with 'the transformed reader'.

By contrast with Addison and Johnson, who assume 'an engagement with the reader primarily, indeed almost exclusively, in terms of his response to a logical process', Hazlitt is much closer to Lamb in that he 'sought to turn the exposition of ideas into an affective experience for the reader'. As Professor Nabholz expressed it earlier (*TWC* Winter 1797), contrary to common critical opinion, Hazlitt's essays are not disorganized but display a multitude of 'rhetorical and organizational skills'. Here he shows examples of how these modes of discourse are used 'to involve the reader in the expository process'.

In the same way, much wasted effort has been devoted to trying to make Wordsworth's 'Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*' what Wordsworth himself stated that it was *not*, 'a systematic defence of the theory upon which the poems were written'. Nabholz says, 'The "Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*" is as much an elaborate manipulation of the reader as Lamb's "South Sea House"; certainly it is more a rhetorical work than the "systematic" exposition of literary theory most readers have demanded it be for nearly two centuries'. Instead, 'the goal of the "Preface" is *the creation of a mutually understanding and beneficial relationship between reader and writer*'. A study of the tactics by which Wordsworth attempts to achieve this 'will not remove the "logical inconsistencies" ' but will reveal 'the integrity of the work as rhetoric and apologia', as Professor Nabholz's analysis shows. He goes on to examine *The Convention of Cintra* from a similar viewpoint, with brief reference also to the *Essays on Epitaphs* from which the chapter title comes, 'Participating the Truths'.

The book ends with a chapter on 'Coleridge and the Reader', in which Professor Nabholz examines selected examples from 'the wide range of procedures for shaping the reader's role and response' which Coleridge uses in his various prose writings. He demonstrates how classical rhetoric abounds not only in devices of style but also in arrangement and argument in 'works as distant in time as *Conciones ad Populum* (1795) and *The Statesman's Manual* (1816)'. Yet Coleridge's 'concern to address the reader on a deeper

level than classical rhetoric ordinarily sought to reach, and to require of him an active response and exertion of thought', demands other strategies. His wish in *The Friend* was to stir readers to self-examination from which they might gain 'a heightened awareness of ... our moral life'. *The Friend* of 1809-1810 is more significant for its attempt to reach a goal of prose expression than for its immaculate achievement of that goal' but literary devices used there were 'more finely honed and disciplined in the later achievements of *Biographia Literaria* and in the 1818 edition of *The Friend*'. Nabholz briefly surveys other areas of Coleridge's prose before reaffirming his thesis that 'the reader's creative participation' is a common factor in the romantic prose of Lamb, Hazlitt, Wordsworth or Coleridge.

This is a useful little book, drawing together by a unifying motif and under one roof developments from earlier work both of his own and of others (acknowledged both in text and bibliography) to emphasize that there is still a fruitful field of non-fictional prose deserving of critical cultivation.

Mary Wedd

Cecilia Powell *Turner in the South: Rome, Naples, Florence*

London: Yale University Press, 1987. pp 216. £25.

'Who does not know Turner's picture of the Golden Bough? The scene, suffused with the golden glow of imagination in which the divine mind of Turner steeped and transfigured even the fairest natural landscape, is a dream-like vision of the little woodland lake of Nemi...' The poetical opening of Frazer's great comparativist epic sounds some of the main themes explored by Dr. Powell in her rich, informative and fascinating study. She demonstrates the great complexity of the innumerable ways in which Turner, by force both of imagination and of mind, transformed his experience of Italy, in particular those parts beyond the Alps and Venice covered by his journeys of 1819 and 1828. That the painted lake evoked by Frazer is Avernus, not Nemi, hardly matters: topography is not the issue. Turner has visited and painted both; the lake, in a phrase he applied to the whole ideal Italy of Claude Lorrain, is 'made up of bits'. Frazer ends his work with a flourish, the church-bells of Rome faintly heard on the shores of Nemi- an impossibility, it was pointed out; but, citing Scott in a similar context and loving to hear the 'distant chiming', he appeals to imagination and keeps it in. The Romantic imagination responds to the multi-layered depths of Roman history with depths and rearrangements of its own.

It is no surprise that Turner composes with poetic licence; but what Dr. Powell brings out so interestingly is the enormous difficulty Turner had in dealing with Italy and how involved the mental process was by which he eventually created some of his finest, if also most puzzling, paintings: *Rome, from the Vatican. Raffaele ... preparing his Pictures ...*, say, or *Regulus*. Turner, of course, knew Italy as a country of the mind long before he set foot in it; its natural formations, its sunlit atmosphere, were familiar to him especially through the paintings of Claude. On his tour of 1819 he went primarily as a sightseer and a strict observer of the reality: in 1828 he had absorbed the lessons and the emotion of his

previous visit - 'intensive fact-gathering' gave way to imaginary landscapes. 'Turner loved Italy as only a northerner can' says Dr. Powell and she sees the story behind her book as 'in a sense, that of any love affair: anticipation, realisation, recollection'. Many things urged Turner to Italy in 1819 but the importance of Byron and *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* Canto IV published the previous year can hardly be overstressed. Everyone was dreaming of Italy; Dr. Johnson's pronouncement 'A man who has not been in Italy, is always conscious of an inferiority' must have taken on a peculiarly topical force - and, as Dr. Powell remarks, 'Turner was not the man to allow himself to feel inferior for long'. He was constantly ambitious; he could do no less than match himself against the scenes of antiquity and the relics of imperial civilization. The Corsican General Paoli, responding to Johnson, had remarked that '*The Mediterranean* would be a noble subject for a poem'. Turner, in meditating on Roman history and in sensing the tradition and continuities of classical architecture and of Western religion too, went as near as anyone to creating such a poem. This is not just a pretty analogy - the literary content of Turner's Roman art is continuously apparent. He shows all the reflectiveness and image-making of a reading man - even if his range of actual Roman historical subjects is oddly limited to the ever-fascinating story of Rome and Carthage.

Turner's attitude to Italy Ancient and Modern, both on the spot and in his reflective paintings, especially those of the 1830s, was properly ambivalent. He shared the reverential spirit of Samuel Rogers ('Oh if you knew what it was to look upon a Lake which Virgil has mentioned') and avoided the conventional contrast between past grandeur and a degraded mundane present. James Thomson's *Liberty* had epitomized that approach in moralistic terms; more recently Hazlitt had acted the comically disillusioned traveller ('the smell of garlic prevails over the odour of antiquity') - but, like Turner, he was responsive enough to feel the mixed Byronic pathos of ruin, of beauty in decay. And Turner was right - it was a sign of his intelligence - to be disconcerted by his first impressions of Italy: Rome is not re-imagined in a day. Dr. Powell quotes effectively from Goethe's *Italian Journey* to suggest something of Turner's intellectual reaction to Italy. 'In their breadth of vision', she concludes, 'their seizure of essential truths, their sensitivity and their searching approach towards everything they saw in Italy, Goethe and Turner are certainly equals'. Well ... this is no more extravagant than Ruskin ('Turner's love of truth was as stern and patient as Dante's'); though Turner does seem - in his incoherence and uncouthness, in his sheer Englishness - a very *un-Goethean* figure. But it is a measure of the fullness of Dr. Powell's material and her energy and success in presenting it that she makes such a comparison seem reasonable. P.G. Hamerton's *Victorian Life* remarked on the 'danger, especially with the influence of Mr. Ruskin's eloquence and frequent use of hyperbole, of a national idolatry of Turner'. With the opening of the Clore Gallery and the current general revaluation, to which *Turner in the South* makes such a substantial and original contribution, Turner may well be in danger again of becoming an English idol; but this will happen only because he is seen, rightly, to be a figure of European stature - the legitimate touristic object of some 'English journey'. The figure presented here is a richly complicated one: an artist who ignored fashion but delighted in, and used, the picturesque and the literally operatic - *Banditti* of the Alban Hills, the great Italian soprano Giuditta Pasta performing Medea on the London stage; who kept pace on many fronts with the advancing 19th century; who was, not to forget it, simply a wonderful painter; a figure of European

stature because he was a poet and visionary historian of the European mind.

Christopher Salvesen

University of Reading

Charles Lamb: *Ausgewählte Essays* ⁿÜbersetzt von Berta Moritz, Königshausen & Neumann 1987

We were delighted to receive from our German member, Professor Dr. Berta Moritz of Wurzburg this little book of Selected Essays which she has translated into German. The essays she has chosen are: 'Dream Children', 'Mackery End, in Hertfordshire', 'Old China', 'The Superannuated Man', 'The Convalescent', 'The Praise of Chimney-Sweepers', 'A Dissertation upon Roast Pig', 'A Bachelor's Complaint of the Behaviour of Married People', 'A Chapter on Ears' and 'The Wedding'. This excellent choice is preceded by a Preface, or rather, modestly, 'In place of a Foreword', which gives a carefully balanced, though obviously loving, account of Elia, the translation having been, she says, 'produced in the course of long years of preoccupation with Charles Lamb'. It is a very great pleasure to experience the fellowship across frontiers that admiration and affection for a great writer can bring.

Our thanks to Professor Moritz for the book, which will go into the Society's Library.

Thanks are due, too, to Dr. Marianne Walenda of Heidelberg who kindly interpreted for us and translated the Preface into English.

Mary Wedd

FIFTY YEARS AGO

Charles Lamb Society Bulletins will in future contain items extracted from the equivalent issues of fifty years ago. The staff at Guildhall Library were very helpful in producing the required bound volume from a store but pointed out that when the Society's Library was deposited with them, it was agreed that twenty-four hours' notice would be given of any items required from it and that they would be grateful if this point could be borne in mind.

It may be as well to record that the early Bulletins were published monthly with a break of two summer months, i.e. ten issues each year. Their brevity was augmented by the issue of Supplements, often provided or paid for by members of the Society. Items to be reprinted have been selected, where possible, to cast light on the present-day Society, to jog memories, or to note a worthwhile reference. The idiosyncratic punctuation has been preserved as far as possible.

D.E. Wickham

CLS Bulletin No. 24 (Third Year) With Two Supplements October 1937

REPORT OF SEPTEMBER MEETING

On Saturday afternoon, September 11th., thirty members met at Temple Bar, and under the leadership of Mr. William Kent, the well-known writer on London, enjoyed a remarkable ramble "Through Lamb's London". Among the places visited were the Temple, sites associated with Lamb in the Fetter Lane area, Christ Church, Greyfriars, and the neighbourhood where Christ's Hospital stood until its removal to Horsham. At several points in the ramble Mr. Kent gave most interesting "lecturettes", the concluding talk taking place at "The George Inn" in the Borough; which, although having no direct Elian associations was an appropriate rendezvous for such a Society as ours. A hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Kent was proposed by Mr. S.M. Rich.

There are also references to (1) The opening meeting of the Winter Session, an Informal Social Evening at the Court Restaurant, 43 Drury Lane: whist, songs, and a "Surprise Item" were promised and 'Morning dress will be worn'; (2) Proposed 'Junior' Membership for those aged 16-18 at 2/6d a year; (3) The possibility of supplying Bulletin binders, spring-backed and gold-lettered, at 2/6d each, postage extra; (4) A series of nineteen autograph letters from Thomas Westwood the younger, mentioning Charles Lamb and priced at £21; and (5) The title of an article discussing Charles Lamb's "New Year's Eve" from a Spiritualist standpoint.

CLS Bulletin No. 25 (Third Year) With Supplement November 1937

DONATIONS RECEIVED AND UN-RECEIVED

If this meets the eye of the anonymous sender of two ten-shilling notes for the "General Fund" of the Society, the Treasurer would like to assure him (or her) of the gratitude of her who administers the Society's exiguous funds; AND, if this meets the eye of anybody else, let him (or her) ponder on the fact that whereas £2.12.6. was received in 1936 for the Bulletin Fund, only 5/6d has so far been received in 1937. *Read, resolve, remit.*

Mr. E.F. Lewis noted, with reference to the October Social Evening that 'Your otherwise admirable reporter always refers in undertones to Mr. S.M. Rich.' This was countered with 'We have remonstrated with our reporter, but he declares he "doesn't take much stock of" Mr. S.M. Rich; and states moreover, that if the Editor doesn't like his reports, he knows what he can do! - Ed.'

CLS Bulletin No. 26 (Third Year) With Supplement December 1937

OUR CHRISTMAS NUMBER

Most periodicals issue double numbers at this time of year because it is erroneously believed that people have more time for reading. We, knowing better, issue an abbreviated number of one page only.

SUPPLEMENT to No. 27

With this issue is presented a poem by Lionel Johnson entitled "Lamb", the reproduction of which has entailed no expense to the Funds of the Society. (Countenance of Treasurer here registers delight!) [The Hon. Treasurer was Miss S.A. Coltar but she had resigned by February 1938.]

COUNCIL MEETING

[Details]. There will be no other intimation of this Council Meeting.

THIRD ANNUAL DINNER

We have great pleasure in announcing that Mr. Frank Swinnerton has consented to be the Society's Guest of Honour ... 7.30 p.m. (for 8 o'clock) at the London Tavern, Fenchurch Street, E.C.3. Application for tickets (7/6 excluding wines) [Evening dress was to be worn and seventy members and friends attended].

SOCIETY NEWS AND NOTES FROM MEMBERS

JOHN KEATS AND CHARLES LAMB - AN EDMONTON CELEBRATION

The combination of two of my 'all-time' favourite people made me determined to get to Edmonton for the 'Celebration' at the Parish Church on 13 June 1987, if I possibly could. In the event - it being '*terra incognita*' as yet and public transport being somewhat vague and unreliable - I should probably have 'opted out' had it not been for the good offices of our magnificent Secretary, who added Transport Officer to her many titles. And how glad I was of her kindness!

A beautiful church, with a loved and loving atmosphere and a feeling of actively caring for the past while *living* in the present and looking to the future, was the setting for a programme that was a well-balanced mixture of words and music. Most of the readings were favourite and familiar to me: and this was a happy circumstance as, if I have a criticism, it would be that the readers had not fully gauged the acoustic difficulties for the spoken word, and there was some inaudibility, especially on the female side. But I much enjoyed (among other items) Keats' 'The Devon Maid' - comparatively new to me - and Lamb's 'Dissertation upon Roast Pig' splendidly put over by Eric Rees, who had also devised, arranged and directed the whole programme.

The music was well-chosen and performed, and I particularly enjoyed the two movements of Elgar's 'Dream Children' - a perfect complement to Lamb's tender essay. Indeed the whole 'mosaic of verse, prose and music', as Eric Rees calls it, was very well presented and a most enjoyable tribute from Edmonton to 'the brightest stars in its literary firmament' (Eric Rees again!)

Helen Stutfield

CORN IN EGYPT

was the intriguing title of the City Literary Ramble organized by Edward G. Preston on 6 June 1987. Having assembled at the Royal Exchange we made a leisurely perambulation to many sites of Elian (and Dickensian) interest, high-lighted with appropriate quotations from Lamb and Dickens. How astonished Lamb would have been at Richard Rogers' Lloyd's glass and aluminium palace on the site of the East India House! We are indebted to Edward for sharing with us his knowledge and love of the City.

Madeline Huxstep

WORDSWORTH WINTER SCHOOL

This year the Winter School at the Prince of Wales Hotel, Grasmere, will be held from 28 February to 4 March. This course 'is not designed for specialists but for general readers and lovers of the poets and the Lakes'. The programme consists of a lecture at 9.30 followed by a seminar for discussion after coffee, then an outing either by coach or walking during the afternoon. Another lecture, after tea, starts at 5.30 and in the evening there is a reading of the poetry which is to be discussed the following day. Lamb Society members will find many familiar faces (both among the audience and lecturers!) and will certainly feel at home in the warm and friendly atmosphere. Further particulars can be obtained from 'The Wordsworth Winter School, Dove Cottage, Grasmere, Cumbria LA22 9SH.

The Summer Conference, which *is* primarily for specialists, will be held this year from 30 July to 13 August, details from the above address.

THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS

Our congratulations to Mr. Frank Ledwith on the publication of his third book, under this engaging title. It is a successor to *Ships that Go Bump in the Night* and *Ships Afloat in the City*. Mr. Ledwith has for many years been a good friend of the Society, serving as Vice Chairman and as Christ's Hospital Representative and, with his wife, being a faithful attender at meetings. We have often had occasion to be grateful to him for his wise advice to the Council on practical matters and we remember with pleasure his talks to the Society on 'Christ's Hospital in Lamb's time and my own' and on 'The East India Company'. *The Best of All Possible Worlds* is published by Robert Hale at £9.95 and we hope to publish a review of it in a forthcoming *Bulletin*.

COLLEGE ENGLISH ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

We are delighted to hear that there will be a Lamb section again at this gathering to be held in New Orleans in April. Carolyn Misenheimer will offer a paper on *Tales from Shakespeare*, Joe Riehl one on *The Adventures of Ulysses* Duane Schneider one on Lamb in his letters in relation to references to children and education. Professor James B. Misenheimer will be in the Chair and professor John I. Ades will be respondent.

ALLIANCE OF LITERARY SOCIETIES (See *Bulletin* No. 60)

We were pleased to hear in August that there has been a stay of execution of the proposed demolition of the Free School Building, Chilvers Coton, Nuneaton - negotiations were then in progress to find an alternative use for the building. The Secretary writes:

'This stay of execution ... has come about entirely because of the storm of protest at the proposed demolition ... The Borough Council were also overwhelmed - and greatly impressed, I understand - by the strength and the quality of the letters of protest from member societies of our Alliance. Once more the Alliance has proved its worth'.

REDEVELOPMENT OF 'THE BELL' WIDFORD SITE

We have received an acknowledgement of our letter to the East Herts Planning Authority (August 1987) supporting local objections to the redevelopment proposals but have not heard the outcome.

MISS W. GADBURY

Our former Registrar has moved from London to Elstree. We wish her well in her new home.

CELEBRATION LUNCHEON

The 'official birthday' Celebration is on the move again! In order to avoid the extra expense of sending out a separate notice of the A.G.M., with the Annual Report and Accounts, we have reverted to May (7th) for the A.G.M.: the 1988 Luncheon will be held on

Saturday, 23rd April at 12.15 for 1 p.m. at the
Vitello D'Oro Restaurant, Church House, Great Smith
Street, London S.W.1.

We are delighted that Professor Christopher Salvesen has agreed to be our Guest of Honour.

Tickets at £14 each for a 3-course luncheon, wine or soft drinks, and coffee, will be available from the General Secretary from 6 February.

Members wishing to pay for *both* their Annual Subscriptions *and* Luncheon ticket(s) at the same time may send one cheque (payable to the Charles Lamb Society) to the General Secretary, enclosing S.A.E. for return of ticket(s). Remittance for Annual Subscriptions *only* should be sent to the Joint Hon. Treasurer.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

These are due on 1 January 1988. Please note that, after no increase for four years, the new rates are as follows:

U.K. Members	Single	£8
	Double	£12
	Institutions	£12
Overseas	Individuals	\$14
	Institutions	\$21

Cheques should be made out to 'The Charles Lamb Society' and sent to the Joint Hon. Treasurer, Nicholas Powell, 30 Camberwell Grove, London S.E.5.

FROM MR. D.E. WICKHAM

FOR THE RECORD

'Mr. [George] Dyer the author of 'The History of Cambridge, 2 vols. 8 1815' has just made his appearance here, and has been introduced to me this morning. Good Lord! what a dirty wretch! 2nd April 1816'.

From the Notebooks of Henry Cotton (1789-1879), sub-librarian of the Bodleian: Bodleian Library Record, Vol. XII, No. 2, April 1986, p.155. Dyer was then aged sixty-one, if that makes any difference.

A SECOND CARLYLE?

The following extract about Charles Lamb (in case you wondered) was circulated to members of the Charles Lamb Society as part of a Supplement to No. 50 of the CLS Bulletin, April 1941, and was offered by the Editor to his fellow-members 'as evidence that Elians "can take it".' Who wrote it? (Answer on page 180).

'If you had met him one evening at Benjamin Haydon's, you would have seen a grubby little person, somewhat the worse for liquor, who could be very dull, and if he made a joke it might easily have been a bad one. In fact he [sic, for 'you'?] would have met Charles Lamb and not the Gentle Elia. And if you read that morning one of his essays in "the London Magazine" you would have thought it an agreeable trifle. It would never have occurred to you that this pleasant piece would serve one day as a pretext for the lucubrations of the learned'. [And so on and so on and so on.]

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL GLEANINGS

May I record the following curiosities in the Bulletin, as an obvious source for the exhaustive up-to-date Elian bibliography that someone might produce one day.

J.G. Lewis: The Evolution of Lamb's Ballads from the German
vol. 14 of the Nottingham Sette of Odd Volumes,
dated 17 Feb. 1897.

George Mackaness: Bibliomania - An Australian Book Collector's Essays;
published in Sydney in 1965 (British Library shelf-mark 2714,
bpa. 26).

Ch. 9, pp. 84-93, and three plates between pp. 136-7: Hunted
Down (re Thomas Griffiths Wainewright).

Ch. 19, pp. 182-7: Barron Field.

FOR THE RECORD

Martin Fido's 'Murder Guide to London', Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986,
is a messily-compiled book with its covers too far apart but it makes a
couple of minor marginal additions to the Elian canon.

In the 1930s Fred Murphy lived at 57a Colebrook Row, worked at 22
Islington Green, and murdered Rosina Field who lodged at 13 Duncan Terrace.

In 1828 Thomas Griffiths Wainewright ('Janus Weathercock') found Grove
House in Little Ealing Lane, Ealing, for two newly-wed friends of his who
wanted to open a private school. The husband was William Corder. His
sudden marriage led people back home in Polstead in Suffolk, who believed
him already married to Maria Marten, to search the 'old red barn' there
and find her body.

[May I make the point that, despite the plot of the Victorian melodrama,
this was not a case of the young squire having his wicked way with an
innocent village maid. Maria Marten was a village tart, already the
mother of two illegitimate children, and she entrapped Corder into a
promise of marriage.]

Solution to 'A Second Carlisle':- W. Somerset Maugham in 'The Gentleman
in the Parlour'.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION LUNCHEON (23rd April 1988)

For full announcement and important details of this please turn back to page 178.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

For the new rates due on January 1st 1988 please turn back to page 179.



Scholars at a Lecture. 1736/7. Etching.
8 $\frac{3}{16}$ · 6 $\frac{15}{16}$ in. London, British Museum