1. Prologue: Thelwall’s Birthday Lines

My ‘CONVERSATION POEMS’ in this talk are those of the ‘virtuous high treasonist’ and ‘atheist reprobate’ as Coleridge called John Thelwall. I begin with his slightly garrulous poem, Lines, written at Bridgewater, in Somersetshire, on the 27th of July 1797; during a long excursion, in quest of a peaceful retreat. Thelwall opens this poem by celebrating his birthday and his wedding anniversary as the ‘day of my double birth’—an image of marital reciprocity considerably more vibrant than anything in Coleridge’s conversation poems. In fact it looks forward to Christina Rossetti’s wonderful sense that ‘the birthday of my life / Is come, my love has come to me’.

    DAY of my double birth! who gave me first
    To breathe Life’s troubled air; and, kindlier far
    Gave all that makes Life welcome—gave me her
    Who now, far distant, sheds, perchance, the tear
    In pensive solitude, and chides the hours
    That keep her truant wanderer from her arms—
    Her’s and our smiling babes…

Has this birthday brought the usual return of troubles, he asks, or does it bring new promise?

    With cheering prophecy of kindlier times?—
    Of hours of sweet retirement, tranquil joys
    Of friendship, and of love—of studious ease,
    Of philosophic thought—

Whereas critical discussions of Coleridge and Thelwall tend to contrast Coleridge’s uneasily slothful retirement with Thelwall’s still brandished torch of liberty, the Bridgewater lines treat very directly and very positively the usefulness of poets living in retirement. He seems happier with Wordsworthian ‘wise passiveness’ than anything of Coleridge’s outside ‘and tranquil muse upon tranquillity’, in The Aeolian Harp. Poetic fancies are not vain, Thelwall says,

    For, but for dreams like these, Meonides
    Had never shook the foul with epic song,
    Nor Milton, slumbering underneath the shade
    Of fancy-haunted oak, heard the loud strain
    Of heavenly minstrelsey:

To poets, Thelwall says, ‘Youth owes its emulation’ and ‘Age the bliss / Of many a wintry evening, dull and sad, / But for your cheering aid!’.
such strains, ‘The quickning mind, else stagnant, learns to flow / In tides of
generous ardour’.

Thelwall’s active model of ‘a poet living in retirement’ inspired
Wordsworth’s in *Home at Grasmere*. Both have in mind what hippies called ‘an
intentional community’:

Yet not, for aye
In hermit-like seclusion would I dwell
(My soul estranging from my brother Man)
Forgetful and forgotten: rather oft,
With some few minds congenial, let me stray
Along the Muses’ haunts, where converse, meet
For intellectual beings, may arouse
The soul’s sublimer energies, …. 

Thelwall, too, is ‘sick of public turmoil’—sick

Of the vain effort to redeem a Race
Enslav’d, because degenerate; lost to Hope,
Because to Virtue lost—wrapp’d up in Self,
In sordid avarice, luxurious pomp,
And profligate intemperance—

Poignantly (because Poole, Coleridge and Wordsworth have all taken fright at
the prospect before seeing this poem), he imagines to himself a future in
Nether Stowey:

Ah! let me, far in some sequester’d dell,
Build my low cot; most happy might it prove,
My Samuel! near to thine, that I might oft
Share thy sweet converse, best-belov’d of friends!—
Long-lov’d ere known: for kindred sympathies
Link’d, tho far distant, our congenial fouls.

Do we find in the ‘official’ conversation poems any expression of friendship
quite so clearly reciprocal? What sense of Lamb’s strengths do we get from
*This Lime-Tree Bower*? All Coleridge expects from Sarah in *The Eolian Harp* is apt
chastisement and the odd cuddle. What Thelwall describes is symbiotic
friendship; he differentiates his friends, and one feature of the verse in which
he imagines this friendship is its wonderful freedom of rhythm. Each line in
this next little passage plays a different tune. Its blank verse has the freedom
almost of *The Two-Part Prelude*. Its ejaculations and eddies of thought arise
naturally from the feeling and course of ideas:

Ah! ‘twould be sweet, ^ beneath the neighb’ring thatch,
In philosophic amity to dwell,
Inditing moral verse, ^ or tale, ^ or theme,  
Gay or instructive; ^ and it would be sweet,  
With kindly interchange of mutual aid,  
To delve our little garden plots, ^ the while  
Sweet converse flow’d, ^ suspending oft the arm  
And half-driven spade, ^ while, ^ eager, ^ one propounds,  
And listens one, ^ weighing each pregnant word,  
And pondering fit reply, that may untwist  
The knotty point—^ perchance, of import high’——^  
Of Moral Truth, of Causes Infinite,  
Creating Power! ^ or Uncreated Worlds  
Eternal and uncaus’d! ^ or whatso’er,  
Of Metaphysic, or of Ethic lore,  
The mind, with curious subtilty, pursues —  
Agreeing, or dissenting—sweet alike,  
When wisdom, ^ and not victory, ^ the end.  

This long sentence is rooted in the wonderful letters of the previous twelve months, but it assumes no knowledge of those letters—so the poem does not rely on private reference—and he candidly sets out their radical difference, contrasting his own faith in uncreated worlds and ethic lore with Coleridge’s Creating Power and Metaphysics. Along with such dialogue there is room for a naturalistic jar of ‘home brew’ and a widening circle of friendship:  

—by our sides  
Thy Sara, and my Susan, and, perchance,  
Allfoxden’s musing tenant, and the maid  
Of ardent eye, who, with fraternal love,  
Sweetens his solitude.  

With these should join  

Arcadian Pool, swain of a happier age,  
When Wisdom and Refinement lov’d to dwell  
With Rustic Plainness, and the pastoral vale  
Was vocal to the melodies of verse —  

‘O’ he concludes, ‘it would be / A Golden Age reviv’d !:  

—Friendship’s joys,  
And social happiness, and tranquil hours  
Of studious indolence; or, sweeter far!  
The high poetic rapture, that becalms  
Even while it agitates ?—  

I stop at that curious image of poetic fantasy, with its strangely positive use of ‘becalms’ because it anticipates the almost vexatious calm of Frost at Midnight
six months later, which is where I want to end.

Thelwall’s weaknesses are obvious enough. A certain garrulousness; a weakness for the sugary epithet (‘sweet’ occurs eighteen times in four poems); an excessive liking for ‘social’ (as in ‘social bliss’, ‘social banquet’, ‘social decoration, ‘social happiness’ and ‘social rapture’), and, usually, a lack of the circular shape we admire in Coleridge’s poems—waving circles around significant symbol. But his strengths are also clear. Having Tom Paine’s gift for plain English, he writes without those affectation of inversions, double negatives, chiasmus, showy parallelisms, and even a ghostly presence of Augustan end-stopping—that tendency to think in couplets, if not to rhyme them—vices that linger (if I dare say so) in Coleridge’s poems until Frost at Midnight, in February 1798. That, basically, is my simple thesis: Thelwall may not have set his country free, but he did liberate Coleridge’s ‘numbers’. He became his ‘voice coach’. He co-created ‘The Somerset Sound’. For twelve months or more, between May 1796 and February 1797, and again between July and December 1797, Thelwall pruned Coleridge’s redundancies, while Coleridge wrestled for Thelwall’s soul.

2. Poetry as Speech

The true nature of poetry [is as] the darling child of speech, of lips and spoken utterance: it must be spoken.¹

In Hopkins’s remark to his brother the operative word is speech. As Wordsworth said, a poet is a man speaking to men. One point of his argument in the 1802 Preface is that poet is precisely not a man chanting to men. We don’t of course know precisely how Wordsworth sounded. All we have is Hazlitt’s wonderful evocation of his conversational voice, and Coleridge’s doubtful reference to hearing The Prelude read aloud in January 1807: ‘a song divine of high and passionate thoughts / To their own music chaunted’. I call this doubtful, because nobody else (I am open to correction) ever refers to Wordsworth ‘chaunting’, and because, to my mind, Wordsworth’s poem could either obey the music of his thought (as in what Emerson called ‘a metre-making argument’) or it could be chanted (which implies that the music of thought is secondary to that of metre, and confined to a pre-limited range of notes). As Stephen Gill says, however difficult a passage of Wordsworth may appear to the eye, read aloud the passage will usually ‘yield itself up’ because ‘the rhythm will make the emphases and supply the punctuation’.² It will only do that, however, if we say the poem rather than read it, and thus release the pattern that arises from giving each sound precisely the intonation required by


its intrinsic verbal quality and by its function in an ongoing series—the syntactic architecture.

In Wordsworth’s astonishingly free handling of blank verse (Herbert Read thought that Wordsworth was already writing free verse, and it is in some ways closer to prose than Whitman’s very mannered ‘versicles’) there is musical work—the music of thought—that a ‘chaunt’ of the Yeatsian kind would quite obliterate. Yeats’s monotone chaunt of *The Lake Isle of Innisfree* is not a style of reading one could listen to for long and its viability depends on there being remarkably little to understand; imagistic poetry, almost free of syntax, rendering ‘lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore’ and ‘evening full of the linnet’s wings’, has only to be heard to be understood. Navigating the flights of mind in *Frost at Midnight*, say, is a wholly different matter. It cannot be done without engaging the mind, and Coleridge’s slow, rich timbre aids such intellectual digestion if it is heard.

Timbre, as defined in Francis Berry’s once famous book *Poetry and the Physical Voice*, is an integral part of intonation. Intonation is the result of the combination of pitches, durations and volumes required by the sense and the situation, exercised in a series (words in a series do not retain the seemingly integral accents they have in isolation) and subject to an overall timbre. That timbre is both personal (it is what we recognize on the telephone) and collective. We know the timbre of Boston English (President Kennedy’s) or of the Caribbean (Viv Richards) or of South Africa (Nelson Mandela)—or of Barnes’s ‘the blue-hill’d worold’ or ‘The gookoo over white-weaved seas / Do come to zing in thy green trees.’ Loss of that timbre, Berry says, involves losing not merely a dialect but ‘a way of knowing and feeling’. And eventually any English poetry that was not originally spoken in the BBC ‘caste voice’, Berry complains, goes unheard.

A deracinated voice may lose its dialect but retain its timbre; Coleridge’s childhood dialect could not have survived Christ’s Hospital and Cambridge, but it is almost impossible for a voice to lose its natal timbre. All his life, even as a lecturer, Coleridge retained that timbre; and given the remarkable prominence of Westcountry role-models in his age—Borlase, Reynolds, Davy, Haydon, and even Hazlitt—it would be remarkable if he had not. Like Yorkshire or Edinburgh speech in later times, 1790s Devonshire had a certain cachet.

When William and Dorothy named their drinking can ‘Kubla’ they may have done so because they would themselves have called the poem Kubla Can (as of course they would, with a short north-country ‘a’, as in ‘hat’) or because on Coleridge’s lips the vowel was the same, but took more than twice the Northern time. The title of Coleridge’s poem is Kubla Caaan (the ‘a’ of man but dwelt on). The evidence is internal and incontrovertible: Khan (spelt Can in Coleridge’s source) must rhyme with man and ran and assonate with cavern

3 Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962
and Alph. Along with mispronouncing the poem’s title, as most do, we lose ‘a way of knowing and feeling’; in this case, a specifically Westcountry tone that is both unique and hard to describe (without resorting to IPA notations, which few can read). It is a story teller’s tone, sharing wonder through immense variations of pitch from phrase to phrase, so that barely two successive syllables have the same pitch.

Wordsworth, we can all agree, must be read in Ian McKellen’s fashion. In the lines ‘And in the frosty season when the sun / Was set, and visible for many a mile / The cottage windows through the twilight blazed, / I heeded not the summons…’ the vowels of sun and summons assonate with the first syllable of woman, and the alliteration of frost’y, cot-age and twilight is very pronounced. Equally, I would argue, Coleridge’s ruminative verse depends upon his ‘r’s being pronounced, and his favourite liquids and sibilants, and nasal ‘mm’s and ‘nn’s, being given twice their London weight. His ‘Frost perfo-ems its secret ministry’. The owlet’s cry returns ‘Loud as befoerr’. The silence, in all probability, ‘soots abstrooser’ musings (there are no French u’s West of Swindon). And ‘at my side / My cradled infant slummberrs peacefully.’ The ‘caalm [rhyming with the river Cam] … disturbs and vexes meditattionn’. Village life is ‘in-naudible as dreamzz.’ When the sooty film is described as ‘a com-pAN-ion-ab-le form’—the word has five heard syllables, rising to and falling from a single prominence. One can detect already in 1798 the music Carlyle heard in the elder Coleridge—a half singing, half shuffling sound, with sibilance, liquids and especially nasals quarantining the few plosives. Thelwall later insisted, brilliantly, that whereas in song the length comes from vowels, in speech it is the liquids (in which he includes the nasals and ‘ng’) that gives syllables their length and their resonance. In his Highgate monologues, Carlyle said, his listeners lost on the high seas of transcendentalism, islets of the blest and intelligible, appeared from time to time like mirages through the mist of Coleridge’s quavering and lengthened ‘sum-mjects and om-m-mjects’.

3. ‘Pulsation and Remission’: Thelwall’s ‘Systole and Diastole’

But much as I would like to dwell on that debatable aspect of the zummerz-ound, I return to aspects of conversational blank verse more quantifiable—to wit prosodic quantity. It is now generally agreed that the two blank verse masterpieces of 1798, Frost at Midnight and The Poem upon the Wye (each in some respects greater than the other) were not merely in dialogue as a kind of duet, but part of a trio involving John Thelwall.

Jonathan Wordsworth remarks of this relationship:

As might be expected of one who became a specialist on elocution, and who in 1814 marked in the cadence of every line in The Excursion, his poetry is especially sensitive in its musical effects. … [He] often seems a lesser Coleridge—Coleridge without the high moments of inspiration, but also without the fustian, the posturing. … The new voice he has heard is that of the Conversation Poem, yet for him
there can be no ‘infinite and intellectual breeze, / At once the soul of each and God of all’, no ‘great Universal Teacher’ (Frost at Midnight) who will presently make all things well. ....

This summary requires three corrections. First, it is legitimate, but inaccurate, to call Thelwall a specialist in elocution; legitimate because that is what he called himself; but inaccurate because what he called elocution comprised, in addition to prosody and rhetoric, what are now called phonetics, intonation, and (clinical) speech therapy. His lecture notes include a full analysis and tabulation of the phonemes and their production, as well as discussion and demonstration of treatments for such physical problems as the cleft palate, or the uses of verse for treatment of more psychologically induced speech defects as stammering and stuttering. These he set out to cure by exercising the poetic rhythmus of ‘Pulsation and Remission’, his terms for the systole and diastole of the diaphragm. Second, while it is true that he has ‘heard the voice of the Conversation Poem’, it would be fairer to say that he has invested in the co-creation of that voice. Third, though this is outside my scope, I suspect that Thelwall (as at least a semi-Priestleian) was as capable as Shelley of imagining a force that was ‘at once the soul of each and God of all’, though of course he might have called it Electricity rather than God.

Wordsworth no doubt thought Thelwall’s study of his cadence was fully deserved. He wrote to Catherine Clarkson in January 1815, who had passed on a complaint of monotony in The Excursion, that:

Unitarian hymns must by their dispassionate monotony have deprived your Friend’s ear of all compass, which implies of all discrimination. To you I will whisper, that The Excursion has one merit, if it has no other, a versification to which for variety of musical effect no Poem in the language furnishes a parallel. Tell Patty Smith … to study with her fingers till she has learned to confess it’.

Thelwall’s approach to prosody, based on the little evidence there is, aligns in
part with modern linguistic practice. It recognizes, as did Hopkins, that ‘no two weak accents in a word are exactly equal’, and it gives considerable attention to the prosodic function of the significant pause and the peculiar length of the ‘sonorous consonants’ in English. His *Introductory Discourse on the Nature and Objects of Elocutionary Science* (1805) defines ‘Elocution’ as

the Art, or the Act, of so delivering our thoughts and sentiments, or the thoughts and sentiments of others, as not only to convey to those around us (with precision, force and harmony) the full purport and meaning of the words and sentences in which those thoughts are clothed; ... It embraces the whole Theory and Practice of the exterior demonstration on the inward workings of the mind.\(^8\)

It requires mastery of, for example, ‘the musical accents, or inflections of the voice in the harmonic scale; the proportions of respondent sounds and cadences, and the essential contradistinctions of percussion, accent and quantity’ (8). (Those, by the way, are the three elements of ‘stress’ identified by modern linguists—volume, pitch and duration). In these degenerate days, Thelwall insisted, ‘pronunciation, tone and melody—and even the constituent requisite of percussive accent (upon which the individuality, the character and the force of spoken words essentially depend) have been abandoned. (11).

Notice in those quotations the word that provided the grit in the Wordsworth / Coleridge ointment; that is to say their debate on whether there was or was not any essential difference between the language of poetry and that of prose. It is a dispute related to a sense or otherwise of election and hierarchy, of whether the poet is, or is not, ‘a man speaking to men’. Poetic diction, Wordsworth argues in the extended 1802 Preface, impresses ‘a notion of the peculiarity and exaltation of the poet’s character’ and flatters the reader by putting him in ‘a perturbed and dizzy state of mind’ without which—having got used to the intoxication in which because words follow words, sense seems to follow sense—he feels baulked of poetry. Unless we are advocates for ‘that pleasure which arises from hearing what we do not understand’ the poet must express himself ‘as other men express themselves’. *The Preface* insists that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose when prose is well written’, and that ‘there neither is nor can be any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition’. Although one might define Prose and Metre as more strictly antithetical than poetry and prose, ‘lines and passages of metre so naturally occur in writing prose that it would be scarcely possible to avoid them, even

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8 The Bodleian copy of *The Trident of Albion, an epic effusion; and an oration on the influence of elocution on martial enthusiasm; with an address to the shade of Nelson: delivered at the Lyceum, Liverpool, on occasion of the late naval victory. To which is prefixed an Introductory Discourse on the Nature and Objects of Elocutionary Science*, By John Thelwall, Professor of the Science and Practice of Elocution (Liverpool, 1805), p. 5.
Thelwall’s version of this is that all fluent and harmonious speech, even in familiar conversation, falls into the rhythmical division of musical bars, and into the two generic measures of common and triple time, that is, with one pulsation accompanied by either one or two ‘remissive’ sounds: or to scan that remark in Thelwall’s fashion: “with /ONE pul / SAtion ac/ COMP’ned by / EITH er / ONE or / TWO re/ MISS ive SOUNDS”. Before or after each Pulsation (or Stress) there will be a unitary Remission (in the case of iambic and trochaic) or an interrupted remission (producing anapaestic and dactylic), or of course in the amphibrach or the amphimacer, the so-called ‘ rocking’ feet, one fore and one aft. The name CO–le-RIDGE, you will recall is, on his own testimony, spoken in three syllables, as an amphimacer (like those deliberately heightened characters Chris-ta-bel, Le-o-line, and Ger-al-dine). BeLOVed is Coleridge’s own mnemonic for an amphibrach. But whereas classical scansion is based on quantity, that is, the duration of vowels, and rudimentary English scansion is based on accent, Thelwall’s scientific scansion seems to be based on intonation—the intonation required by communicative speech acts, saying poems, rather than reading them.

In his famous note on ‘The Thorn’, Wordsworth says that it was necessary that the poem, to be natural, should in reality move slowly yet it should appear to move quickly; and in the same paragraph that words must be weighed ‘in the balance of feeling’ and not measured by the space which they occupy on paper. He is saying the same thing twice in different ways, and ‘appear’ is meant literally: the lines look short, but when realized, are slow. The point is illustrated by Thelwall. Thelwall insists on the identity, in terms of time, of the two following lines:

My hopes, fears, joys, pains, all centre in you
My hopes and fears and joys and pains, all centre in you

The law by which Thelwall arrive at this notation is that ‘Substantive monosyllables … all necessary in Pulsation (i.e. heavy) with or without intervening conjunctions, will occupy precisely the same time in

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9 Hopkins points out, citing Aristotle (Rhetoric, 3:8), that prose ‘must not be metrical, nor yet unrhythmical’. But he is not making an absolute distinction. Rhythm means ‘the repetition of feet, the same or mixed’, whereas metre is defined precisely as ‘the grouping of a certain number of feet’. Journals and Papers, 275. 273.

10 Thelwall could not have, and I suspect that Wordsworth could not have, excepted speech-intonation from their definition of what is essential to either verse or prose. There may, however, be an equivocation—in the Preface—in what is meant by metre. Wordsworth regards metrical language as having a degree of regularity, and argues that it is the presence of ‘something regular’, divesting language ‘in a certain degree of its reality’, and adding ‘small, but regular impulses of pleasurable surprise’ that enables poetry to deal with ‘pathetic situations and sentiments… that is, those which have a greater proportion of pain connected with them’. There is little doubt that Wordsworth felt that ballad metre (that of The Mad Mother, for instance) enabled him to deal with subjects that would have been too painful in blank verse, and impossible in prose. That exceptional degree of feeling with his subjects is why he found that Thelwall’s Paternal Tears—though they had very great merit and were the product of a poet with ‘a good ear’—could only be read ‘with much more pain than pleasure’.

11 The Bodleian copy of Selections and Original Articles for Mr Thelwall’s Lectures on the Science and Practice of Elocution (Birmingham 1806).
pronunciation’—i.e. will take precisely the same time as identical pulsations with remissive syllables. In a comparable point, the poet Francis Berry insists that of the next two lines, one from Marvell, one from Marvell one from Crashaw, the latter is much the longer.

Had we but world enough and time
Love, thou art absolute sole Lord

This is because ‘the sum of the durations of the sounds of the latter, together with intervals and cessations from sound, is greater than the sum of those elements in the former, if said as it ought to be said’ (9). The ‘ought’, here, derives from the communicative situation, the sounds of the words, and the audience. Marvell’s ‘To His Coy Mistress’ has an audience of one and (except for the lines upon the tomb) an environment free of resonance; whereas Crashaw’s poem supposes both a congregation and a nave. Its ‘t’s and ‘l’s in ‘art’, ‘absolute’, ‘sole’, and ‘Lord’ force a pause. So Marvell’s seductive opening gambit is half way through line two while Crashaw is still enunciating his liquids. As with Donne’s helter-skelter ‘For God’s sake hold your tongue and let me love’, metaphysical lovers were notoriously urgent.

Because he relates scansion to speech, Thelwall’s prosodic analysis distinguishes three weights, as in this line from Thomas Campbell’s ‘Erin go Bragh’, which he marks as indicated below:12

There / came to the / beach a poor / exile of / Erin

While classical metre only requires one way of marking the unstressed syllables, English intonation distinguishes between the reducible (one dot) and irreducible syllables (two dots) in what T calls the ‘remission’ phase of each foot. ‘Thuh’ is equivalent to ‘tuh’ (in ‘to the beach”), but ‘poor’ is significantly longer than ‘uh’ (in ‘a poor”), as ‘ile’ is longer than ‘uv’, because of the longer vowels.

Exactly three years before Wordsworth allegedly ‘chaunted’ The Prelude, Thelwall extracted from him an acknowledgement that poetry should never compel the use of a tone or emphasis that ‘violates the nature of prose’. Wordsworth entered one caveat, that as long as poetry uses line endings the final syllable cannot be ‘indifferent’.13 The proviso to do with line endings is obvious in the heavily end-stopped meditation of:

Possessions have I wholly, solely, mine,
Something within, which yet is shared by none,
Not even the dearest to me and mostt dear,
Something which pow/er / and ef/fort ^ may impartt.

12 Hopkins uses this same line to illustrate how it is hard to tell in English poetry whether one is hearing anapests, dactyls or amphibrachs (Journals and Papers, 274).
13 Wordsworth to Thelwall, January 1804
I would impart it; ^ I would spread it wide,  
Immortal in the world which is to come.

The slowness of these end-stopped lines from *Home at Grasmere* is accentuated if you imagine Ted Hughes’s ‘d’s, ‘t’s and vowels and the careful articulation of some syllables that would be unstressed in Southern speeches. The difference in run-on lines such as

Five years have passed, five summers with the length  
Of five long winters! and again I hear  
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs  
With a sweet inland murmur.—Once again  
Do I behold…

is that whereas in the end-stopped lines the accent is, in Thelwall’s terms, ‘grave’, here the accent is ‘acute’, lifting the line for its anticipated syntactical extension.

Wordsworth remembered Thelwall’s practice well enough to write to Benjamin Robert Haydon in 1817 of Thelwall’s *Paternal Tears* (a series of effusions for his lost daughter, Maria) that they were in ‘a harmonious blank verse, a metre that he wrote well, for he had a good ear’. They had ‘great merit’ Wordsworth said, except that because of their harrowing subject matter and inconsolability ‘one cannot read them but with much more pain than pleasure’. Wordsworth echoes them, nonetheless, in the sonnets he himself wrote after losing Catherine and Thomas.

Let me return from Thelwall’s good ear to Patty Smith’s deficient one. When Wordsworth described Ms Smith’s ear as habituated to ‘monotony’ and ‘deprived of compass’ he is using technical terms from Thelwall’s *Selections*. Describing Franklin’s kind of conversation poetry (pointed and epigrammatic couplets) Thelwall writes:

The mode of delivery should be, at once, sprightly and familiar—the *accent* pointed and acute [i.e. rising, because it invites assent]—the tone simple [rather than heterogeneous]—the voice rather in an under key—and the *modulation* restrained: the melodies of conversation (though the same in principle) being more temperate in their *compass* than those of public declamation…

‘Compass’ Thelwall later defines as loud and soft in volume, high and low in the musical scale and involving ‘Flexure of Tone’ (tone means ‘acerbic’, ‘warm’, ‘tender’ and so forth). If the speaker’s habitual *compass* is too high in pitch and volume the result will be harshness and exhaustion. The Franklin selection and the advice reminds one that conversation poetry is not a

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14 *Selections and Original Articles for Mr Thelwall’s Lectures on the Science and Practice of Elocution*. Birmingham, 1806.
15 Selections, n.pag; my emphases.
neologism in 1797, but also that while Coleridge may not have been wholly converted to the speaking (as opposed to chanting) of poetry, he is likely to have felt differently about the speaking of poetry that ‘affects not to be poetry’ or that might be ‘sermoni propiora’ [properer in prose]—his remarkable remarks on Reflections (when first published in the Monthly Magazine and when collected).

How much of Professor Thelwall’s later science was already in his head in 1797 it is impossible to conjecture, but in 1806 in his Selections he offered a fascinating analysis of the modes of ‘Monotony’ as opposed to appropriate ‘flexure of Voice’. These are, first, ‘The Barking or Schoolboy Style’ as in ‘And, the, Lord, said, un, to, Mo, ses’. That, by the by, is the only mode of monotony Thelwall illustrates himself. Second, the ‘Parish Clerk’ style of delivery—allowing for syllables of different quantities and alternations of heavy and light, but without inflection of acute and grave (i.e. no ups and downs of pitch). Third, there is ‘The Clerical Drawl’, served up in ‘portions of half-enunciated sound, uniformly divided in equal quantities … terminating in imperfect murmurs’, which I imagine would sound rather like ‘Thy kingdom come, / thy will be done, / on earth, / as-tisinevn’. Fourth among Thelwall’s heresies is ‘The Cathedral Chaunt’, which but probably sounds something like Yeats. Fifth, ‘The Humdrum Style’, consisting of ‘stationary alternations of loud and soft on stated portions of each verse or particular members of each sentence’: and sixth ‘The sing-song style’, with, presumably, pointless and exaggerated alternations of high and low.

Against these heresies of elocution, Thelwall appeals to ‘the example of uneducated man—to the native orators of America—to the usage of all men when strongly moved’. I need hardly point out that he is combining in those two phrases the two foremost advocates of the language of men in a state of nature, namely Thomas Jefferson’s praise of Chief Logan’s native eloquence in his Notes on the State of Virginia, and Wordsworth’s Preface of 1802.

4. The Correspondence Course

Coleridge’s remarkable correspondence with Thelwall begins in April 1796 when he claims kinship with Thelwall as a fellow-political-lecturer, and sends him a copy of his newly published Poems on Various Subjects. Eighteen months previous to this, Thelwall had been acquitted and release from Newgate, having survived Pitt’s attempt at judicial murder, thanks to the forensic skill of his advocate, Erskine, assisted by the legal researches of William Godwin. One can imagine how Thelwall felt on being maligne publicly by Coleridge, in his essay on ‘Modern Patriotism’ with the words: ‘Your principles are villainous ones. I would not entrust my Wife or Sister to you—think you I would trust my Country?’ (CL 212–3). In his letter of 13 May 1796 Coleridge proceeded to vilify Joseph Gerrald, as ‘prone to intoxication, and a whoremonger’, Erasmus Darwin as wedded to Insincerity and Godwin (Thelwall’s deliverer) not only as a philandering misanthrope but—breathtakingly!—as a base calumniator.
The Somerset Sound; or, the Darling Child of Speech

Thelwall’s reply to these further calumnies accused Coleridge ‘of industriously collecting anecdotes unfavourable to the characters of great men’. Somehow this robust exchange led into a warm friendship on both sides, and inspired some of the best and most quoted of Coleridge’s letters.

Tempting though it is to follow this correspondence through, I shall simply ennumerate its poetical agenda. Only one of Thelwall’s letters survives, and appeared in the *Modern Language Review* in 1930. This letter of 10 May 1796 found in some of Coleridge’s Poems of 1796 ‘tenderness and simplicity’ ‘love & passion’, ‘warmth with such delicacy’. He singles out ‘Brockley Comb’ for praise. He does not mention ‘The Eolian Harp’ perhaps because of its pious close, but he finds *Religious Musings* ‘the very acme of abstruse, metaphysical, mistical rant’ and ‘infected with inflation & turgidity …worthy of Blackmore himself’. Coleridge’s letter of May 13 defends both religion and metaphysics in poetry (even Wordsworth has admired the lines on Hartley, Priestley and Leibniz he points out), but he had accused himself of ‘much faulty glitter of expression’ when sending the poems to Thelwall, and he now admits the justice of some of helwall’s remarks on his *Poems*. ‘Your remarks … are … just in general—there is a rage and affectation of double epithets—“Unshuddered, unaghasted” is indeed truely ridiculous’. Most important for my theme, Thelwall has cited passages where the phrasing seemed to require emphasis on feeble epithets, such as “sore wounds” and “flamy child”!!!!’ [Thelwall’s exclamation marks]. Coleridge replies:

Your remarks on the Della-Crusca place of Emphasis are just in part—where we wish to point out the thing, & the quality is mentioned merely as a decoration, this mode of emphasis is indeed absurd—therefore I very patiently give up to critical vengeance high tree, sore wounds, and rough rock—but when you wish to dwell chiefly on the quality rather than the thing , then this mode is proper—& indeed is used in common conversation …. therefore big soul, cold earth dark womb and flamy child are right…

Not surprisingly Thelwall also objected to ‘Ye petrify the imbrothell’d Atheist’s heart’ as ‘one of those illiberal and unfounded calumnies with which Christian meekness never yet disdained to supply the want of argument’. On 19 November Coleridge encloses two sonnets on the birth of Hartley, which include this surely hapless attempt to express the idea of *deja-vu*.

Oft of some unknown past such fancies roll
Swift o’er my brain, as make the Present seem,
For a brief moment, like a most strange dream
When, not unconscious that she dreamt, the Soul
Questions herself in sleep.

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When Thelwall finds this sonnet ‘obscure’ Coleridge first insists, defensively, on 17 December: ‘You ought to distinguish between obscurity residing in the uncommonness of the thought, and that which proceeds from thoughts unconnected and language not adapted to the expression of them’. At his humblest he adds: ‘When you do find out the meaning of my poetry, can you (in general I mean) alter the language so as to make it more perspicuous—the thought remaining the same?’. He then spends half a page trying to justify his usage, before admitting that he doesn’t like this sonnet much himself, and confessing that he has since altered the lines to:

Oft o’er my brain does that strange Rapture roll  
Which makes the Present (while its brief fits last)  
Seem a mere Semblance of some unknown past,  
Mixed with such feelings, as distress the soul  
When dreaming that she dreams.

Notice how he has removed all instances of inverted word order and needless parenthesis and presented the listener with the information one needs in the right order for auditory comprehension. Admitting that the thought and language of much of his own poetry ‘deviates “from nature & simplicity”, he praises some of Thelwall’s for its ‘harmonious verse, & chaste and pleasing Imagery’. 17

Those ‘deviations’, to my mind, might include the emblematic Jasmin and Myrtle, in The Eolian Harp, along with the same poem’s suspended syntax in ‘and mark the star of eve / Serenely brilliant (such should wisdom be)/ Shine opposite’; or the clumsy unspeakability of ‘holily dispraised’ at the close. It is even present, dare I suggest, in the awkwardness of ‘they, meanwhile, Friends’ in This Lime-Tree Bower, as if the conversational is not yet quite naturalized in the blank verse form. But while accepting his own unnaturalness, Coleridge springs to the defence of [William Lisle] Bowles, ‘the most tender, and, with the exception of Burns, the only always-natural poet in our language’. Coleridge had sent Thelwall twenty lines of Bowles which include two ornately elaborated Personifications and seven or eight banal redundancies, including stony stare, deep dungeon, passing time, and vernal gale. That this should be judged ‘Della Cruscan’ Coleridge says, ‘cuts the skin & surface of my Heart’.

In February 1797 Coleridge not only dispraises his own Ode on the Departing Year but says that Thelwall’s criticism of one line for sounding too Juvenalian has ‘convinced me that your nerves are perfect electrometers of Taste’. Throughout these exchanges, Coleridge has repaid Thelwall’s coaching in matters of diction with similar attempts to bring Thelwall closer to religion. It is remarkable, in fact, just how many of Coleridge’s finest and most quoted letters are inspired by his friendship with ‘the Patriot’.

5. Thelwall’s Poems and the precipitation of Frost at Midnight

In July 1797 distance learning was, briefly, exchanged for *viva voce* debate, a three-way debate, between Wordsworth, Coleridge and Thelwall. The story of Thelwall’s visit to this neighbourhood is so well known, from Nicholas Roe’s and Kenneth Johnston’s various treatments of the episode, that I pass it over. In August Coleridge does, genuinely, seem to have tried to help Thelwall find somewhere local to live. But as Thelwall warms to the prospect of a poetic triumvirate, Coleridge’s ardour cools. The net result is that early in October 1798 Coleridge received an armful of conversation poetry from Thelwall, certainly three or four poems, which later appear (slightly amended in response to comments from Coleridge) in the 1801 volume, *Poems chiefly written in Retirement.*

Immediately after his visit to Nether Stowey in July, Thelwall adopted a style he had not used hitherto, namely conversational blank verse. One poem is addressed to Coleridge and refers to Wordsworth; another to named friends and places in Gloucestershire, one to his wife and child, and one to his infant Hamden. In each he is wont to ‘heave the sigh’ rather Coleridgeanly, and in two of them he is perilously close to personification. But the line is in general closer to *Frost at Midnight* than to *This Lime-Tree Bower,* in its naturalness, and such figures as chiasmus and emblematic plants are mercifully restrained. The single feature that distinguishes Thelwall’s work most gratifyingly takes the form of exclamations—believable exclamation, phrases of tender address, realizing the powerful personal feeling that is his strength as a poet, and which tends to be sublimated in Coleridge’s effusions into religious feeling.

Replying on 14 October Coleridge quotes lines 38–43 from *This Lime-Tree Bower*—which T has already heard, hot from the skillet as it were, and which may have inspired these manuscript poems—and praises two or three poems by Thelwall. He queries the last and first lines of *The Infant Hamden,* mentions a 25 line ‘sonnet’ as a real manifestation of British liberty, and passes come comments that seem most applicable to *The Bottoms of Gloucester.* And Maria, which Coleridge alludes to in *Frost at Midnight,* was clearly one of the bundle.

In the first line of *To the Infant Hamden,* Thelwall seems to have changed Susan’s ‘downy breast’ to ‘guardian breast’: Susan’s *upper lip,* says Coleridge, is likelier to be downy, but in any case ‘a mother is so holy and divine a being that I cannot endure any corporealizing epithets to be applied to her, or any part of her’. Thelwall seems to have accepted that criticism. But he did not change the closing image (unless he has in some degree clarified the development) whereby he figures himself—intelligibly enough—as a latter day Noah, adrift in an Ark without sight of a single ‘leaf’ to cheer him.

Rather than attempt a systematic comparison of Thelwall’s new poems with Coleridge’s I will conclude by sampling three of these remarkable and only recently cherished poems by the apostle of treason. We have looked at Bridgewater’s cherishing of ‘social happiness’ with three poets, two wives, a sister and a friend. ‘Social rapture’ is celebrated in ‘On Leaving the Bottoms of
Glocestershire where the Author had been entertained by several families with great hospitality. Aug. 12, 1797’ and it is marked by its way of evoking a village set among woods and hills. This evocation looks back to Coleridge’s Reflections, which seems to have the odd idea that you have to leave the country to take part in life. Thelwall, his poem insists, has found social rapture in the country and he leaves it under protest:

For I must leave ye, pleasant haunts! brakes, bourns,
And populous hill, and dale, and pendant woods;

—a line Coleridge echoes (or re-echoes, since it was itself based on Reflections) in Frost at Midnight.

Just as ‘the stilly murmur of the distant sea tells us of silence’ in The Eolian Harp, so does the distant hum of village life in The Bottoms of Glocester. The haunts, however, are not ‘consigned’ to ‘gloom lethargie’ or ‘pious inutility’ (a dig at monastic superstitions possibly based on Wordsworth’s in An Evening Walk). The hum is of cottage industry, with its ‘talk assiduous’. Such village industry, as Wordsworth will argue again in The Excursion, is humane, and Thelwall’s lines provide a link from the social criticism of Salisbury Plain to that of The Excursion. It is a scene

That wakes to social rapture. Nor, as yet,
Towers from each peaceful dell the unwieldy pride
Of Factory over-grown; where Opulence,
Dispeopling the neat cottage, crowds his walls
(Made pestilent by congregated lungs,
And lewd association) with a race
Of infant slaves, brok’n timely to the yoke
Of unremitting Drudgery—no more
By relative endearment, or the voice
Of matronly instruction, interspersed—
Cheering, or sage; not by the sports relax’d
(To such how needful) of their unknit prime
Once deem’d the lawful charter............

Some there are, Thelwall concludes, and the few still include Coleridge and Wordsworth, who will visit him the following Summer:

Some few,
Still warm and generous, by the changeling world
Not yet debauch’d, nor to the yoke of fear
Bending the abject neck: but who erect
In conscious principle, still dare to love
The Man proscribed for loving human kind.

Maria, A Fragment, one might claim, is perhaps the poem Wordsworth did not write to his own Catherine until it was too late. In Tintern Abbey we are
told that Wordsworth was sustained from 1793 to 1798 by his memories of the Wye. What kept Coleridge going in Christ’s Hospital, he says in the second movement of Frost at Midnight, was daydreams of Ottery St Mary, its bells, and his sister. What solaced Thelwall in the Tower and Newgate was, in the first place, anticipations of social bliss with his wife and daughter,

Dear is the Babe—thrice dear, to my fond heart!
For she was my first born; and she has sooth’d,
With many an infant smile, the anxious hours
Of hard captivity;

and, in the second place, visionary twilight processions of patriots and martyrs arrayed

At dawn or even-tide, around my couch,
With presence all inspiring, and with tongues
Awfully eloquent, that bad me think
“‘Twas for Mankind I suffer’d…”

These visions,

were oft
My props, my consolations: ye could turn
My bonds to trophies, my keen wrongs to boons,
My solitude to high communion;

That last line surely anticipates Wordsworth’s ability to pass through restoring memories of the Wye into communion with ‘the life of things’. But Susan and Maria inspire a fonder eulogy. The power of Thelwall’s feeling in these lines will inspire Coleridge’s memory of his sister in Frost at Midnight, and encourage Wordsworth’s impassioned address to Dorothy in Tintern Abbey, as ‘my dearest Friend / My dear, dear Friend … My dear, dear Sister!’. Fonder thoughts prevailed, Thelwall writes,

When thro’ my grated dungeon I have gaz’d,
With straining eye unmov’d, upon the gate
Thro’ which the partner of my soul should pass—
And this, my only babe:—my only, then,
And still my best beloved!—ah! how high
(With what a tide of fervour thro’ my breast)
Swell’d the fond passion—for Thee, babe belov’d!—
(Even in the earliest dawn of infancy,
So sweet thy promise!) and, for Her, more dear
To my connubial heart, that she had giv’n
Birth to thy infant sweetness.—
The headlong syntax and the parentheses parallel Wordsworth’s sense of how to convey impetuousness, but Thelwall’s poem stops suddenly, there, in mid-line simply because the image of Maria’s infancy is so arresting.

The fourth poem, To the Infant Hamden, offers Coleridge the precise situation of Frost at Midnight and with that situation, its central theme of parental hopes and fears.

Sweet Babe! that, on thy mother’s guardian breast,
Slumberest, unheedful of the autumnal blast
That rocks our lonely dwelling, nor dost dream
Of woes, or cares, or persecuting rage,
Or rending passions, or the pangs that wait
On ill-requited services, sleep on;
Sleep, and be happy!—“Tis the sole relief
This anxious mind can hope, from the dire pangs
Of deep corroding wrong, that thou, my babe!

This is, conspicuously, Coleridge’s way of addressing Hartley, in the same line position.

And the sweet twain—the firstlings of my love!
As yet are blest; and that my heart’s best pride,

That tender phrase for Susan, remarkably, echoes seventeen years later in Wordsworth’s ‘my heart’s best treasure’ in Surprized by Joy. Susan, incidentally, has not gone to bed. She,

Who, with maternal fondness, pillows thee
Beside thy Life’s warm fountain, is not quite
Hopeless, or joyless; but, with matron cares,
And calm domestic Virtues, can avert
The melancholy fiend, and in your smiles
Read nameless consolations.

Hamden, however, is an ill-omen’d babe (as Hartley at this date appeared not to be)

Conceiv’d in tempests, and in tempests born!
What destiny awaits thee?—Reckless thou.
Oh! blest inapprehension!—Let it last.

(There is wonderful timing in these two lines)

Sleep on, my Babe! now while the rocking wind
Pipes, mournful, lengthning my nocturnal plaint
With troubled symphony!—Ah! sleep secure:
And may thy dream of Life be ne’er disturb’d

—in these lines Thelwall anticipates both the ‘dream of life’ image in *Intimations of Immortality*, where it is applied to Hartley, and the way the storm functions in *Dejection: an Ode*—

With visions such as mar thy father’s peace.

The consoling visions that relieve Coleridge’s solitude in *Frost at Midnight* allude directly to Thelwall’s *Maria*. In *Hamden*, however, Thelwall’s visions are of ‘resistless wrongs’ imaged in ‘a waste of troubled waters’.

There my Ark—

The scanty remnant of my delug’d joys!
Floats anchorless; while thro’ the dreary round,
Fluttering on anxious pinion, the tired foot
Of persecuted Virtue cannot find
One spray on which to rest; or scarce one leaf
To cheer with promise of subsiding woe.

This elaborate and somewhat laboured reference to Noah’s Ark may or not be a successful concluding symbol. But it does develop the *maritime* implications of the opening blast ‘that rocks our lonely dwelling’ (‘this house has been far out at sea all night’, as Ted Hughes has it in ‘Wind’). It thus accomplishes in some measure the ‘return’ of the conversation poem, as well I think as *The Eolian Harp* achieves, with its reappraisal of ‘the cot’, or *This Lime-Tree Bower*, with its no longer imprisoning ‘Bower’, though not, of course, as wonderfully as in *Frost at Midnight*, where the initially puzzling ‘ministry of frost’ only acquires its closing sense through the intervening discovery of nature as ‘that eternal language which thy God utters’.

Intentionally or not, the Ark enables Coleridge in his long-meditated reply, six months later, to open out what might be termed a New Testament reply to this Old Testament motif. The longest and most important of Coleridge’s letters to Thelwall (that of 17 December 1796) contains his famously angry dismissal of Classical myth. ‘You and I are very differently organized’, Coleridge says, if you prefer ‘the quarrels of Jupiter and Juno, the whimpering of wounded Venus, & the jokes of the celestials on the lameness of Vulcan’ to the passage ‘in which the Apostle marks the difference between the Mosaic and the Christian dispensations’. The twelfth chapter of Hebrews is that in which Paul assures believers that while their sins shall be remembered no more, unbelievers will know what it is to spurn the living God. So one cannot suppose that Thelwall was much impressed. Still, Coleridge offers his beliefs fraternally. Most movingly, he translates a passage of Voss’s *Luise* on the rainbow: ‘Papa!’, says Luise, ‘it rains flowers from Heaven! Does the blessed God strew these that we children may gather them
up? ‘Yes!’, the Pastor answers, ‘full-blowing and heavenly Blessings does the Father strew, who stretched out the Bow of his Favour: flowers and fruits that we may gather them thankfulness & joy.’ However much men differ, the Pastor says, we are all ‘dear children of the same Parent, nourished by the same spirit of Animation, and ere long to fall asleep … to wake in the common morning of the Resurrection’. Before the letter closes Coleridge imagines meeting Thelwall in Heaven, when ‘I with transport in my eye shall say—“I told you so, my dear fellow”’ (CL 1: 285).

The wrath of Thelwall’s God, in To the Infant Hamden, leaves an Ark and its eco-mariner without sight of foliage. The Ancient Mariner will be similarly tried. But Frost at Midnight pleads with Thelwall through its concluding version of a new covenant. In place of ‘the Bow of his Favour’—which first brought Noah’s story into their discourse and perhaps inspired Thelwall’s ark—Coleridge’s symbol suggests a more constant symbol. In Frost at Midnight the light of God, symbolized in the Sun, shines even within its antithesis, the icicle, as a reminder of God’s love and omnipresence.

6. A Wordsworthian Postscript

In a substantial and in most respects impressive essay, Judith Thompson has argued that Frost at Midnight’s true message is that Thelwall is wrong to despair for his son, as he appears to do in To the Infant Hamden, because times change and new generations rise to carry the torch from their exhausted and embittered fathers. Coleridge’s poem, Thompson concludes, ‘participates in a broader discourse among reformers exploring possibilities for preserving, modifying, or realizing their dreams of liberty, justice and democratic rights amid the reactionary, repressive atmosphere of the late 1790s’. 18

If that expansive conclusion reads like a piece of wishful thinking, anchored rather tenuously in Coleridge’s poem, it can be redeemed, I think, by bringing in ‘Alfoxden’s musing tenant’, and Frost at Midnight’s partner poem, The Poem on the Wye. Having already alluded rather publicly to Thelwall’s residence at Llys-Wen, in Anecdote for Fathers, Wordsworth does so again in July 1798 by invoking the Hermit of the Wye. Unlike Frost at Midnight, Tintern Abbey presents a speaker who is explicitly haunted by ‘the still sad music of humanity’, and who is still licking his own political wounds. In place of nature as ‘the eternal language which thy God utters’, Wordsworth’s poem offers Thelwall a faith more palatably anchored in ‘the language of the sense’ and in a vision of nature energiz’d (as it was for Paine and Priestley) by something that is both ‘more deeply interfused’ (than a transcendent deity, presumably) and

18 ‘An Autumnal Blast, A Killing Frost: Coleridge’s Poetic Conversation with John Thelwall’, SIR 36 (1997) 427–456. The article is brilliant on the epistolary dialogue of 1796–97, but is less persuasive when interpreting the poem. I cannot find Coleridge’s frost either ‘aguish’ or ‘killing’, or his quietness redolent of ‘creepy, creeping stagnancy’. Nor do I find that like the ‘fluttering stranger’ Thelwall’s intellectual differences ‘force Coleridge to examine his own motives for retirement’. Thompson’s argument that the poem intends a consolatory message to Thelwall is surely right, but in privileging a conjectured political message, she overlooks Coleridge’s belief that Thelwall would be a happier man if he shared a sacramental view of Nature.
yet free of dogmatic associations. Moreover, if the point of the poetry of 1798 is to find grounds for hope, as Thompson argues, Wordsworth’s poem articulates explicitly—in the closing address to Dorothy—the message that Thompson wishes to find in *Frost at Midnight*; namely that what was once true for us remains so for those we love, and who, as they mature, will be our representatives.

Not only does Wordsworth’s poem conclude with a paean to ‘social nature’ (in which landscapes become more dear when they are beloved by those we love) but it offers its faith in nature quite explicitly *as an antidote to something Dorothy has not conspicuously suffered from*—namely ‘evil tongues, / Rash judgments, [and] the sneers of selfish men’. Addressed to John Thelwall—as, like *Frost at Midnight, Tintern Abbey* arguably is—this consolatory burden seems much closer to the mark.

**Bibliographical Note:** This talk was largely concerned with Thelwall’s remarks on prosody, which are scattered through a number of works mostly consisting of pamphlets and illustrative materials bound together. One of two British Library copies of his *Vestibule of Eloquence* (London, 1810) contains, inter alia, (1) *Mr Thelwall’s Plan and Terms of Tuition* (London, 1808), (2) *The Plan and objects of Mr Thelwall’s Institution* (London: 1811) and (3) *The Trident of Albion* (Liverpool, 1805), which at 160 pages, itself contains *An Introductory Discourse on the Nature and Objects of Elocutionary Science* (as does the Bodleian copy of *The Trident*), and numerous ‘selections’. These selections or exercises partly duplicate the Bodleian copy of *Selections and Original Articles for Mr Thelwall’s Lectures on the Science and Practice of Elocution* (Birmingham, 1806) but unlike that copy are continuously paginated, much fuller, and along with more of Thelwall’s fragmentary Northumbrian epic poem *The Hope of Albion*, include his *Ode Addressed to the Energies of Britain in Behalf of the Spanish Patriots* (July 1808) and his *Monody on the Right Honourable Charles James Fox* (London 1806). All three of these poems, incidentally, parallel aspects of Wordsworth’s oeuvre.