

From

The Coleridge Bulletin

The Journal of the Friends of Coleridge
New Series 31 (NS) Summer 2008

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<http://www.friendsofcoleridge.com/Coleridge-Bulletin.htm>

From Infant's Soul to Black Book: Coleridge's Use of Notebook 21

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*The Context*¹

Before getting on to Notebook 21, the main subject of this essay, I'll start by giving an impression of how it fits into the context of all Coleridge's other notebook writing. *Table 1* shows all the seventy-two notebooks that have been published in the five volume Bollingen edition. Setting them out in this single diagram makes material that has justifiably been described by its editor as "the chaos of notebook after notebook" (CN I Text xxi) immediately graspable as a whole.

The first column on the left shows the identifying numbers, letters, or names of the individual notebooks. These designations were made after Coleridge's death, and the random sequence of numbering and the half-numbers are signs of how problematic the cataloguing and ordering was for their early custodians.

In the second column in Roman numerals are the series that Coleridge did name and number. He called these his Fly-Catchers, because they were designed to attract and trap the fly-like thoughts buzzing around his head. The table shows how these later books down in the bottom third of the table from 1827 onwards were numbered and used consecutively.

The row at the bottom shows how many notebooks were in use in any one year. In 1809 for example 14 were in use.

Some squares have question marks, because it's not always possible to be certain about the dates when particular entries were written. Roughly one in seven of the notebook entries were dated by Coleridge; many more can be dated through internal context, or external evidence, but there are still many entries for which only approximate date ranges can be given.

The row running horizontally from each notebook shows the variation in time span. Sometimes this is due to size—some notebooks are small and have only 20 leaves, sometimes it's hard to find an explanation other than storage and rediscovery.

Table 2 covers the immediate time frame of Notebook 21. During this period there were 21 notebooks in use. The years of foreign travel are subdivided to show which notebooks were with Coleridge in Germany, and which ones in Malta, Sicily and Italy. I have also added for each notebook its

¹ This is dedicated with much love to my sister Wendy.

Acknowledgements: Seamus Perry has given guidance, encouragement and practical help over the five year period that I have been working on this notebook; I salute Gary Herbertson, who generously shared his expertise as a forensic document examiner with an importuning stranger who was after a copy of his book. A first version of this essay was delivered at the 2006 Coleridge Summer Conference—to Nick Roe and Graham Davidson, my thanks for that fructifying environment. Thanks also to Peter Larkin and Shirley Watters for inviting me to present this at the Kilve Study Weekend in 2007.

dimensions, primary writing medium, number of leaves, and a brief description.

The earliest notebooks were written mostly (but not exclusively) in ink. It was after Coleridge's return from Germany that he specifically acquired the small pocket-size pencil notebooks. This was not only the wood enclosed graphite instrument still available today, there was also a metallic pencil, a technological innovation of the time, which made a pencil-like mark on specially treated paper.

So why bother with individual notebooks? Or, to put it the other way round, why did Kathleen Coburn, the editor of the notebooks, choose not to? Her decision to homogenise the contents of all these individual notebooks (with the exception of Gutch) into a single time-ordered sequence is well known, and generally approved of as the best solution to an intractable problem. Coleridge started filling his notebooks from the front, the back and anywhere in between; he left pages blank and filled them years later with unrelated matter; he sometimes grabbed the nearest available notebook to catch the thought of the moment. Ordering these zigzagging accumulations chronologically fulfils the primary need to know what Coleridge was thinking when. Unfortunately for this editorial policy, not all the notebook entries can be reliably dated.²

The work of transcribing, dating and ordering all these different entries has rightly been hailed as a major feat of scholarship, and spanning as it did about fifty years, represents a life's work for which we should be grateful.³ If I show in what follows that Kathleen Coburn's decision has given rise to unwanted side-effects, I'm not picking holes in her work—I am making full use of it. She gave reasons for her decision and she also provided as much information as possible short of facsimile reproduction to show what page, in which notebook, each entry came from. Before looking at the manuscript Notebook 21 itself, I started with her appendices, tables and notes, which made it possible to get a clear map of its contents and trace Coleridge's movement through the book.

* * *

Notebook 21—Infant's Soul

The first entry in the notebook is the donor's inscription on the flyleaf: 'From Joseph Cottle to his valued Friend S. T. Coleridge, Bristol Dec^r the 6. 1797—' (CN I 306). Given that Cottle was his publisher, we could see this as a motivational present, but it's a suitable one and Coleridge always referred to it

² I discuss the problem of chronological arrangement at greater length in my chapter on the notebooks in *The Oxford Handbook of Coleridge* ed. Frederick Burwick, (Oxford: OUP, forthcoming 2009).

³ Anthony Harding, 'Coleridge's Notebooks: From Manuscript to Print to Database' *Coleridge Bulletin*, NS 24, (Winter 2004), 1-10, charts the problems of transferring STC's notebooks between these different media.

Table 2 - Notebook 21 in context: Notebooks in use 1797-1806

ID	N Stowey		Germany		All over the place	Greta Hall					Malta Sicily Italy		Size to nearest 1/8"	Mostly Ink/pencil	Leaves		
	1797	1798	1798	1799		1799	1800	1801	1802	1803	1804	1804					1805
1						■				■				6X4	Ink	20	Start 1794; 1800: Draft drama <i>Triumph of Loyalty</i> ; 1804: Etna.
Gutch	■	■			■	■								6¾X3¾	Ink	89	Brief undated impersonal memoranda; poetic fragments; projected works.
21	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	7½X4¾	Ink	128	Featured notebook
3		■	■	■										6¾X4½	Ink	45	1798-99: Germany - travel journal
3½		■	■	■										6¾X3¾	Ink	141	1798-99: Germany - language study; use continues to 1826
5					■									3¼X4½	Pencil	56	1799: "Black Pocket Book No1" - S Devon with Southey; North with Cottle to meet WW & SH
4					■	■	■	■	■					3¼X4½	Pencil	56	Nov 1799: London <i>Morning Post</i> notes; Lamb; Lakes
5½					■									3¼X4½	Pencil	65	April-Oct 1800: Lakes - outdoor natural observations
10					■						■			3¾X4½	Pencil	50	Feb 1800 London political speech notes, brief memos. Apr 1804: Malta journal
6						■	■	■	■					3½X4½	Pencil	50	Sockburn; London; Lakes; journey logs, short descriptions & portable pocket bk use.
22							■	■	■		■	■		7 X 4½	Ink	94	Transcriptions: 1801-2 in hands of SH and SC; sent to Malta Aug 1804?; Metrical notes.
8								■	■					3¾X4½	Pencil	58	Jan-Feb 1802 Davy lectures; 1802-3 T. Wedgwood tour; ret. to Greta Hall Apr 1803.
2								■	■					6¾X4	Ink	32	Homestitched notebook 4-9 Aug 1802 walking tour of Lakes (portable ink horn).
16								■	■	■	■	■		6X3½	Pencil	127	Aug 1803 Scottish tour; Dove Cottage Dec-Jan 1803/04. Malta 1804-6..
7									■	■				3½X4½	Pencil	83	Aug 1803: Scottish tour.
9										■	■			4½X3	Pencil	58	Bought London Jan 1804; used for London Jan -Mar then for sea voyage
15											■	■	■	6¾X3¾	Pencil	125	April 1804 sea voyage; travel notes Malta Sicily Italy; slight use on return to England
21½											■	■		7¼X4½	Ink	75	Dec 1804; then no use till (kept elsewhere and returned to C?) in 1807-8.
K											■	■		5½X3¾	Pencil	22	Bought at Gibraltar Naval storekeepers book. Mediterranean portable pocket book use.
17												■		4¾X4½	Ink	166	SARA + Coleridge on top corners. Intensive use Feb-Mar 1805 as successor to N21.
18												■		4¾X4½	Ink	174	Pages headed with SH STC WW DW MW. Malta from Aug 1805 Longer entries, as N17.
21	2	4	3	3	4	6	4	6	6	4	8	6	2				

NOTES: ■ = Period of active use

Numbers in Bottom row = total Notebooks in use

Not all entries can be dated with certainty; descriptions of use are intended to give a broad view .

as his Cottle-Book. The fact that the rest of this page remained blank is a definite indication of his respect; he crammed in his writing subsequently on every other available space, endpapers, flyleaves and all.⁴ Notebook 21 is a handsome red leather-bound book with a leather flap extending from the back cover that keeps it securely shut. There is a leather tongue that slips into a loop on the front cover that could be seen as a symbol of eternity: the serpent swallowing its tail. I will describe later how when Coleridge reached the end of this notebook he linked the first and last pages in a way that mirrors this sense of wrapping up.

The blankness of a new book is impossible to convey in text, but in looking at his progress through this notebook it is important to begin with a sense of Coleridge contemplating these unfilled pages at this stage of his career. The promise (or challenge) is well captured by the first lines Thomas Traherne wrote in *his* notebook: “An empty book is like an Infant’s Soul, in which anything may be written. It is capable of all things, but containeth nothing.”⁵ 1797 was certainly a time when Coleridge seemed “capable of all things”—he had forged his working relationship with Wordsworth and had found his voice as a poet. Great things were expected of him, by himself as well as others.

The first entry Coleridge writes is a Latin quotation from Bacon: “Prudens Interrogatio dimidium scientiæ”. Wise enquiry is the half of knowledge (CN I 307). It could be viewed as a motto or epigraph for the notebook. In the collected notebooks it recedes into item 307 of a long string of entries. Here its significance is raised. The first thing Coleridge writes in a notebook is often an indication of how he intends to use it, even if that intention runs out of steam or otherwise gets superseded later on. And this brief quotation with no added comment is typical of the first phase of this notebook—its opening seven folios are mostly filled with undatable fragments, quotations and non-discursive memoranda. These are similar in content to those in the Gutch memorandum book he was writing in at about the same time. He took Notebook 21 to Germany with him in 1798, but only a few entries can be positively identified to this trip, and his return home is a good place to stop and see how many pages he has filled.

Table 3 (opposite p.33) tracks the stages of Coleridge’s progress through the book. The entries up to March 1800 are coloured green. As well as starting at the front by filling the first seven leaves, he also wrote a description of Ratzeburg while in Germany on what was then the final leaf (f134v—see illustration). Four entries on f48v are more problematic. See Appendix A

⁴ Not quite. After finishing this essay I was surprised to discover faint pencil writing on a scanned image of f2..

⁵ Coleridge could not have been aware of Traherne’s notebook which was discovered in the early 20th Century and published as *Centuries of Meditations...Now first printed from the author’s manuscript*, ed. by Bertram Dobell (London: Dobell, 1908). Graham Davidson raised the valid point that Coleridge would not have accepted the notion of an infant *tabula rasa*, but Traherne’s image of hope and potential suits the empty notebook.

where I review the arguments over their dating. Kathleen Coburn's chronological numbering sequence (331-4) positions them 1797-8, but she notes that their dates are uncertain. I have left them where she put them to flag up a complication on the diagram that illustrates the general uncertainty surrounding dating. If Coleridge did skip forward more than forty sheets at this point, it would be to allow room for further entries under the subject heading "Infancy & Infants" (CN I 330, on ff5-5v). Although this is numbered as a single entry by Coburn, it consists of cumulative entries on the subject between 1798 and 1802.

Greta Hall 1800-1803

When Coleridge moved to Greta Hall in July 1800, Notebook 21 started to develop its particular identity. He wrote in this notebook mainly in ink in his study, from a desk or sofa-bed, and this use makes an immediate contrast with the smaller pencil notebooks he could slip into a pocket and use in a variety of situations. As a result, it only shows a side of Coleridge. This Coleridge didn't go out walking, or go on harum scarum expeditions with Tom Wedgwood—he stayed at home, alone in his study, thinking, sleeping, dreaming and writing. All his fine descriptions of the landscape and the effects of weather by day and by night are views from the two windows of his study. If we were to form our impression from this notebook alone, Coleridge's study at Greta Hall with its windows looking out on a 270° panorama of lakes and mountains, was his permanent home by day and night. Its gothic apparatus included an organ, an Aeolian harp and the sofa bed from which he writes this nocturne:

Oct. 19. 1802.—midnight. Sitting up in my bed, which I had drawn alongside the fire, with my head to the great Window, & the foot to the Bookcase, my candle on the green table close by me—& I was reading—a flash of Lightning came so vivid as for the moment to extinguish in appearance both the Candle & the bright Fire/it was followed by a Clap of Thunder, that made the window belly in ~~and~~ as in a violent Gust of wind—the window that looks out on Newlands, thro' which the lightning came. (CN I 1251)

This sets the scene for a night about a year previously when he was lying in the dark on this same bed in an opiated reverie. The fire is spent—the only light source is a candle stump which provides a strange stroboscopic alternation of light and dark. He reaches for his notebook, and pencils in his experience. The use of a pencil is unusual in this notebook, and the hand seems rushed indicating a hasty improvisation:

Prest to my bosom & felt there—it was quite dark. I looked intensely

toward her face—& sometimes I *saw* it—so vivid was the spectrum, that it had almost all its natural sense of *distance* & *outness*—except indeed that, feeling & all, I felt her as *part* of my being—twas all spectral—But when I could not absolutely *see* her, no effort of fancy could bring out even the least resemblance of her face. (CN I 985—see f32v illustration)

The unnamed spectral figure is of course Sara Hutchinson and this notebook is pervaded by his obsessive love for her, and even includes some transcriptions in her hand. The experience described seems to be a deliberate invocation. The word “Spectrum” is not an optical science term here—it carries the sense of apparition or phantom. This could be a passage from John Dee’s magical diary, and the deliberateness is confirmed by what he goes on to write next:

By thinking of different parts of her Dress I can at times recall her face—but not so vividly as when it comes of itself—& therefore I have ceased to try it. (CN I 986)

Such invocation experiments suggest that when he addresses Sara Hutchinson in his notebooks asking “Why aren’t you here?” (CN I 981) he’s not just a lover missing his absent beloved. It’s the complaint of an idealist metaphysician who says, if you are present as a living being in my heart, then on the deepest plane of reality you *are* here! It’s the world outside that’s wrong. It’s also the cry of an unsuccessful magus. He has cast the spells, made the invocations: why, then, has the summoned spirit not appeared?

The ‘Verse Letter to Sara Hutchinson’ was written and set in this very room. The poem moves from day to evening and catches the shift from the sun’s fading light to the appearance of the new moon, a view that was so well encompassed in this corner room, with two windows looking out on different landscapes. In the poem Coleridge described a split between the part of himself that had this impossible love, and the part who aimed “by abstruse Research to steal / From my own Nature all the Natural Man”. This is usually taken to mean that he consoled himself for non-consummation by escaping into unrelated metaphysical or scientific studies. But these kind of notebook entries show that his love for her was also diverted from the physical into a kind of solitary “abstruse Research” as he sought ways of invoking her, and perhaps this activity and the opium taking that empowered it, should also be included under that heading.

He also used this notebook for another method of invocation: time travel. In October 1803 he started transcribing a long sequence of entries from an earlier notebook.⁶ At first these seem to be nothing more than extractions of interesting material from a more ephemeral pocket book, but the sense

⁶ Revising dates of CN 1230-1242 (Sept. 1802 in CN). See Appendix A.

develops that he is feeding on his own history. He sets off a time loop that gradually leads into the re-treading of his journey North in 1799, and reaches the vivid Sara Hutchinson moment he wants to freeze frame.

The associative link for this living memory is as tangential as Proust's madeleine: a "Print of the Darlington Ox, sprigged with Spots" recorded in that earlier notebook:

O Heaven when I think how perishable Things, how imperishable Thoughts seem to be! —for what is Forgetfulness? † Renew the state of affection or bodily Feeling [...] and instantly the trains of forgotten Thought rise from their living catacombs!—Old men, & Infancy/and Opium, probably by its narcotic effect[...] produces the same effect on the *visual, & passive* memory/. † so far was written in my b. pocket [book] Nov.25th 1799—Monday Afternoon, the sun shining in upon the Print, in beautiful Lights—& I just about to take leave of Mary— & having just before taken leave of Sara. (CN I 1575—see illustration f53)

And so he goes *A la recherche du temps perdu*, haunting his past from his beloved study at Greta Hall: "this noble room, the very centre to which a whole world of beauty converges, the deep reservoir into which all these streams & currents of lovely Forms flow." (CN I 1577). This "noble room" is as much the emotional core of Notebook 21 as Sara Hutchinson.

Folio 50—Facing up to Wordsworth

In addition to exploring "the vast structure of recollection" in his Proust-like meditations on memory, Coleridge was also using this notebook to think about himself in relation to Wordsworth.⁷ Notebook writing allowed him to creep up on a problem by degrees, and sometimes he seems to be hinting at things he can't quite own to. The entries "I lay too many Eggs" (CN I 1248) and "I am sincerely glad, that [Wordsworth...] is devoting himself to his great work" (CN I 1546) are both well known, but, as far as I know, they have never been connected. This is hardly surprising; although they are next to each other on f50 they are separated by ninety pages in the published *Notebooks* because Coburn dated them thirteen months apart.⁸ The sequence of entries on f50 (an illustration is also provided) runs as follows:

I lay too many Eggs <in the hot Sands of this Wilderness, the

⁷ Marcel Proust, *Remembrance of Things Past*, tr. C. K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin 3 vols, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983) I 47-51. Also cit. M.H.Abrams *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1971) 80.

⁸ See Appendix A for discussion of revised dating, but my point here does not depend exclusively on their date, but on their proximity.

World!> with ostrich Carelessness & ostrich Oblivion. The greater ~~number~~ part, I trust, are trod underfoot, & smashed; but yet no small number crawl forth into Life, some to furnish Feathers for the Caps of others, & still more to plume the Shafts in the Quivers of my Enemies, of them that lie in wait against my Soul.

I am sincerely glad, that he has bidden farewell to all small Poems—& is devoting himself to his great work—grandly imprisoning while it deifies his Attention & Feelings within the sacred Circle & Temple Walls of great Objects & elevated Conceptions. —In these little poems & his own corrections, coming *of necessity* so often, at the end of every 14, or 20 lines—or whatever the poem might chance to be—wore him out—difference of opinion with his best friends irritated him/& he wrote at times too much with a sectarian Spirit, in a sort of Bravado.—But now he is at the Helm of a noble Bark; now he sails right onward—it is all open Ocean, & a steady Breeze; and he drives before it, unfretted by short Tacks, reefing & unreefing the Sails, hawling & disentangling the ropes.—His only Disease is the having been out of his Element—his return to it is food to Famine, it is both the specific Remedy, & the condition of Health.

Jalap instead of breakfast, Ipecacuanha for one's Dinner, Glauber's salts in hot water for Tea, & the whole together in their several metempsychoses, after having passed back again thro' the Mouth, or onwards thro' the Bowels, in a grand Maw-wallop for one's Supper.

(CN I 1248,1546, & 1547 adding C's horizontal lines)

The first impression is of Coleridge's self-deprecation. "I lay too many eggs with ostrich carelessness", while Wordsworth is "devoting himself to his great work—grandly imprisoning while it deifies his Attention & Feelings within the sacred Circle & Temple Walls of great Objects & elevated Conceptions." All the imagery is of concentration and industry: Wordsworth is centred within this single great egg, and he is writing *The Recluse*, the great poem that Coleridge had helped him conceive, while Coleridge is scattering eggs he doesn't even want to hatch, in the wilderness outside.

But there is an underlying identification with Shakespeare, first noted by David Chandler, that reverses Coleridge's apparent self-deprecation.⁹ His ostrich eggs passage was adapted from Edward Capell's recently reprinted preface to an edition of Shakespeare, who seemed bafflingly careless about the printing of his works. Ostrich carelessness, explained Capell, "is a fit emblem of almost every great genius: they conceive and produce with ease those noble issues of human understanding; but incubation, the dull work of putting them correctly onto paper and afterwards publishing, is a task they cannot away

⁹ David Chandler, 'Coleridge the Ostrich and Capell's Shakespeare' *NQ*, NS45 (1998) 192-3.

with” (Chandler, 192). If Coleridge the careless ostrich is the genius, what does that make Wordsworth? Given that Coleridge felt he had a part in conceiving the plan for *The Recluse*, it follows that Wordsworth had been allocated the “dull task of incubation”.

The ostrich allusion has other resonances. In George Sandys’s *A Relation of a Journey*, which Coleridge had recently been reading, ostriches do not distinguish between their own eggs and those of others: “When they have laid their egges they leave them; & unmindful where: sit on those they next meet with”.¹⁰ There was justifiable concern at that time that Coleridge’s admiration for Wordsworth’s poetry was leading him to neglect his own work in favour of his friend’s. Shakespeare’s Sonnet 86, which has echoes with CN 1546, is about a poet being silenced by the greatness of a rival: “Was it the proud full sail of his great verse... That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse?” Coleridge later quoted this sonnet in *Biographia Literaria*, using it unconvincingly to show that a man of genius can feel no envy towards a rival (BL I 35).¹¹ The self-deprecation and the praise of Wordsworth are a gallant struggle to be noble, undermined by the underlying envious feelings that leak out. He makes these same feelings explicit a few pages later in an entry about the “Envy” A. feels “at the report that B. had written a new Poem”. By then he could acknowledge his true feelings, but he still couldn’t put his name to them (CN I 1606). In March 1805 he was still reading and mulling over the import of these passages (CN II 2471).

On folio 50, Coleridge ends his praise of Wordsworth by describing his new work as a “Food” that is his “Remedy”. The entry beneath, which qualifies as the most disgusting passage in Notebook 21, could well show the natural reaction to his attempt at noble self-effacement. Unpalatable medicine is being eaten for breakfast and the resulting vomit or excrement has to be eaten again for supper in an endless cycle *ad nauseam*.¹²

Leaving Greta Hall, 1803

It was during the Greta Hall period that Coleridge’s use of this notebook blossomed. The period 1800-1803 is described as a retreat into himself and this is undoubtedly true. But retreat is an ambivalent word, whose approval rating changes according to the value placed on the inner or contemplative life. I have emphasised here the positive aspect of this retreat; as a Proustian meditation on active and passive memory, or as an inner journey through altered states of consciousness. This view blanks out the sound of wife and

¹⁰ George Sandys, *A Relation of a Journey Begun An. Dom. 1610*, (London: Crooke, 1632) 139.

¹¹ BL Ch 2 also includes the much repeated “I lay too many Eggs...” passage.

¹² Cf CN I 1802 (Jan 1804) after Wordsworth has read him “the second Part of his divine Self-biography” STC wrote “Looking at obseen Picture ophthalmium venerea— “. A pun on the Latin term for syphilitic eye disease – literally venereals of the eyes.

The next 5 reproductions are as close as possible to actual size 19.4 X 12.0 cm.
Note pencil (CN 985) and the deleted "infinitely beloved" ll16-17 (CN 984).

Sept. 15. Observed the great half moon
setting behind the mountain Ridge, & watched
the shapes it variously presented
as it slowly sunk - first, the foot of a
Boat, all but the keel - then, a little pyramid
Δ - then a star of the first magnitude
indeed it was not distinguishable from
the evening star at its largest - then
rapidly a smaller, a small, or
very small star - and as it diminished
in size, so it grew paler in tint -
and now where is it? Unseen; but
a little fleecy cloud hangs above
the mountain Ridge, & is visit
with an amber light.

Endeavouring to make the infinitely
understand all my knowledge
I learn the art of making the
abstract truths intelligible &
interesting even to the unlearned.

Just as my horse felt them - it
made such I looked intently toward
face - & sometimes I saw it - so vivid
was the spectacle, that it had almost
all its natural sense of distance &
depth, except toward that, feeling all,

Folio 50: Annotated Transcription

Top right:
96 (ink): C's page no
50 (pencil) BM folio

CN 1247 (end)

Misplaced horizontal line
CN 1248

X + mark (pencil) on left:
transcriber's markings

& is necessary to feed & support, the fire that
converts it into its own nature.

in the hot Sands of this Wilderness, the World!

CN 1546

Horizontal lines are
Coleridge's divisions

I lay too many Eggs [^] with ostrich Carelessness & ostrich Oblivion
The greater ~~number~~ ^{part}. I trust, are trod underfoot, & smashed;
but yet no small number crawl forth into Life, some
to furnish Feathers for the Caps of others, & still more to
plume the Shafts in the Quivers of my Enemies, of
them that lie in wait against my Soul.

I am sincerely glad, that he has bidden farewell to
all small Poems – & is devoting himself to his great
work – grandly imprisoning while it deifies his Attention
& Feelings within the sacred Circle & Temple Walls
of great Objects & elevated Conceptions. – In these little
poems & his own corrections, coming of necessity so often,
at the end of every 14, or 20 lines – or whatever the poem might
chance to be – wore him out – difference of opinion with his
best friends irritated him & he write at times too much with
a sectarian Spirit, in a sort of Bravado.—But now he is
at the Helm of a noble Bark; now he sails right
onward – it is all open Ocean, & a steady Breeze; and
he drives before it, unfretted by short Tacks, reefing &
unreefing the Sails, hawling & disentangling the ropes.—
His only Disease is the having been out of his Element – his
return to it is Food to Famine, it is both [^]the specific Remedy,
& the condition of Health.

CN 1547

Jalap instead of breakfast, Ipecacuanha for one's Dinner,
Glauber's salts in hot water for Tea, & the whole together in
their several metempsychoses, after having passed back again
thro' the Mouth, or onwards thro' the Bowels, in a grand
Maw.wallop for one's Supper.—

CN 1548

Handwriting, relatively
consistent for 1248, 1546
& 1547, is larger and looser
for 1247 and 1548

A smile as foreign, as alien to—as detached from,
the gloom of ~~her~~ ^{other} the rest of Countenance, as I have
seen a small spot of Light travel slowly & sadly
along the mountain's breast, when all beside has
been dark with the Storm.

N 21, f120. CN II 2362, 2367 and 2368 (part).

Saturday night and Sunday morning (Malta 1804). The top line "Existence..." is all that remains of the previous entry. The bottom 1/4 of f119 has been cut out - see Appendix B.

Existence, P. P. C. 232
120

Saturday, Dec. 22nd 1804. The duty of stating the power and in the very formation of the letters, perceived during the formation, the meaning of the injured mind. The Best remains! Good God! wretched as I may be bodily, what is there good and excellent which I would not do? —

But this is written in involuntary intoxication.
God bless all!

Sunday, Dec. 23rd. I do not understand the first sentence of the above. ^{them, then that} I wrote ^{consequently} ~~consequently~~ suffocated by a collection of wind in my stomach & alternately tortured by its colic paroxysms. In my travels, I in despair drank three glasses rumney & whiskey & water, the violent medicine

For the location of this "final" page see Appendix B. The top entry has been inked in over the original pencil writing.

Oct 10th 1798.!!
 Saw the Town of
 Ratzeburg completely beautiful -
 20 minutes past 5 sky the
 western with light sandy clouds the
 East blue - blue over Ratzeburg a
 red light in complete harmony with
 the red Town, the fading woods, & the
 reeds on the skirts of the
 Lake, and of the Isthmus yellow-red
 a few boats on the Lake with
 single persons paddling them.

3 Feb. 1805. The gentle form of Death,
 a sylphed Death, papered by, beheld a
 sleeping Baby, became, narcissuslike, enamoured
 of its own self in the sweet counterfeit, so that
 it carried it off in a vision blue by the
 green Mandragora - the curving air awakening
 the Baby's Death dying out the
~~the~~
 sudden loss.

From December 6th 1797 to Feb. 3,
 1805, this Pocket-book has been
 falling - and now at A
 end

friends hammering desperately on his study door, and of his bewildering array of symptoms of bad health that left his intimate circle fearing for his life. It's like watching someone on a credit card binge—you know the bailiffs will soon be at the door. But whatever was happening in his life, in terms of notebook writing this was a fertile and innovative period.

The freedom from any sense of obligation to form, or expectations of others, may have been purchased at too high a cost, but it enabled passages of exquisite prose to rise casually out of nothing. If this was in other ways a time of disappointment, it was also the time when his notebook writing reached new heights.

When Coleridge left his “darling study” on 6 December 1803, it was not without a pang: “they shall not get me out—from Thee, Dear Study!” he had written a couple of weeks earlier contemplating the Southey family’s invasion of his cherished space (CN I 1682). He was intending to travel abroad to a warmer climate (Malta was as yet undetermined) to recover his health, and he packed Notebook 21 away with his luggage which was to travel separately. Initially he only got as far as Grasmere just twelve miles south, where he promptly fell ill and collapsed into the care of the Wordsworths. But his mind was on a roll, and in the absence of Notebook 21, he “filled up a full third of that *large* Metallic Pencil Pocket-book with hints, thoughts facts illustrations etc.,” as he proudly claimed in a letter to Southey (CL II 1031). These were just the kind of entries he would have been making in Notebook 21, and the more portable Notebook 16, which he was referring to, bears a complementary relationship to it. He first used it for the August 1803 Scottish tour—its intended use was for travel notes—and on the occasions when he used it while in his Greta Hall study, he was probably writing from his sofa bed.¹³

The notebook writings from the Greta Hall period are shown on *Table 3* in orange. The gap between folios 57 and 67 is a good example of the way he left space to complete thematically related entries. In this particular instance it looks as if he was planning to continue the transcriptions which I described earlier as the time travel entries. If so, the first entry he makes on jumping forward is quite significant. It dwells on his need to relive experience in memory:

Nothing affects me much at the moment it happens [...] For a Thing at the moment is but a Thing of the moment / it must be taken up into the mind, diffuse itself through the whole multitude of Shapes and Thoughts.” (CN I 1597)

* * *

¹³ For example CN I 1718. See my “‘In Caelibe Toro meo’: Coleridge’s “old sofa, half bed” at Greta Hall”, *Coleridge Bulletin* NS27, (Summer 2006), 65-66.

*Black Book—Malta and Obliterations*¹⁴

In my final section I want to consider Malta and also the subsequent overwriting and obliteration of what has already been written on the earlier pages. The Malta notebook writings are most well known for Coleridge's return to Trinitarian Christianity, but the developments in Notebook 21 show a different story: the battle between the urge to confess and the urge to conceal. This had been building up from about 1800 onwards. He had used the Greek alphabet as a simple phonetic cipher, while at Greta Hall, to record some local gossip, and obliterations started appearing as we shall see in March of that year, but this notebook reveals a particular crisis period in Malta that resulted in a number of pages having to be torn out.

Folio 120 (see illustration) is the record of a Saturday night—22nd December 1804. This is what Coleridge described elsewhere (CN I 1750) as writing “in large”. His hand is as expanded as his mind:

The duty of stating the power and in the very formation of the Letters, perceived during the formation; the meaning of the injured mind. The Best remains! Good God! wretched as I may be bodily, what is there good and excellent which I would not do—?—
But this is written in *involuntary* Intoxication. God bless all!
(CN II 2367)

Immediately below comes Sunday morning. He explains to himself (and anticipated reader) that stomach pains forced him to drink “three glasses running of whisky and water”. Either this was some very powerful local brew or he had also been adding laudanum. “I do not understand the first sentence of the above”, he wrote, “but I leave it, as I wrote it—& likewise have refused to destroy the stupid drunken letter to Southey [...] If I should perish without having the power of destroying these & my other pocket books, the history of my own mind for my own improvement. O friend! Truth! Truth! But yet Charity! Charity!” (CN II 2368)¹⁵

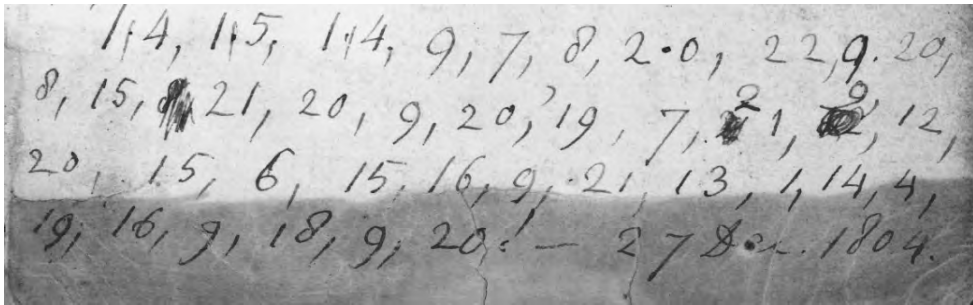
Things must have gone rapidly downhill after this. Seven of the next ten sheets have been cut out and the surviving sheets nearby suggest a time of crisis. This episode at Christmas 1804 is completely overshadowed biographically by his collapse over the news of the death of John Wordsworth that reached him on 31st March 1805 a couple of months after this notebook has ended. But here it is—measured in seven lost leaves. There are no breaks in Coleridge's page numbering, and this implies that it was he who cut these

¹⁴ The “black book” of my title was originally suggested by an aphorism in Don Paterson's, *The Book of Shadows*, (London: Picador, 2004), 67: “The black book is a greater horror than the blank book. One can still write in a blank book”. Then deeper layers of darkness became visible.

¹⁵ Coburn 2368n wonders if this is the fragmentary letter of which only a transcript survives headed Malta 10 Nov 1804. (CL II 1156)

leaves out.¹⁶

One entry from this time (CN II 2387) survives probably because he wrote it in cipher on the inside cover at the end of the notebook (f136: reproduced on *Coleridge Bulletin* front cover), instead of on one of the pages he cut out. One of Kathleen Coburn's undoubted successes was deciphering Coleridge's encrypted entries. This first attempt at a cipher is very easy to crack. Each number represents a letter in alphabetical order except for V which was omitted. Coleridge was taking no chances though—he wrote out the key to this at the beginning of Notebook 21½ (CN II 2383). His ciphers got much more sophisticated later on in other notebooks—he learned for instance that for a cipher to be secure, the frequently occurring vowels need to be represented by more than one symbol each so their regular recurrences wouldn't be detected.



	14	15	14	9	7	8	20	22	9	20
	N	O	N	I	G	H	T	W	I	T
8	15	21	20	9	20	19	7	21	9	12
H	O	U	T	I	T	S	G	U	I	L
20	15	6	15	16	9	21	13	1	14	4
T	O	F	O	P	I	U	M	A	N	D
19	16	9	18	9	20					
S	P	I	R	I	T					

**NO NIGHT WITHOUT ITS GUILT
OF OPIUM AND SPIRIT!**

Many of the deletions and concealments in this notebook, and I'm now referring to Notebook 21 as a whole, not just the Malta period, seem to be Coleridge's own. But there are good grounds for suspecting that other hands may have played a part. Anne Gillman for instance certainly wrote and initialled some annotations in Coleridge's notebooks when she read through

¹⁶ See Appendix B. There are signs from the positioning of STC's page numbering (e.g. f126 – STC's p.244) that where parts of pages have been excised he is responsible.

them after his death (and possibly even while he was alive).¹⁷ There is convincing evidence that someone cut out a part of the page of another notebook after Coleridge's death, and Kathleen Coburn suspects Anne Gillman. For this notebook there is no proof of other hands. In fact, the partial recovery of obliterations presented in the next section reduces the likelihood of them having been carried out by anyone other than Coleridge.¹⁸

Obliterations and digital image processing

New technology may reveal more about these obliterated passages. Kathleen Coburn mentions having tried ultra-violet and infra-red light on difficult entries, but there is no indication that she consulted forensic document examiners. Her preface indicates that she worked mainly from monochrome photos taken in 1937. Technology has advanced considerably since the first volume of her edition was published in 1957. I selected three obliterated passages of 8-11 lines of text whose text has not been adequately recovered: f8 (CN I 712) f53 (CN I 1575 end); f105v (CN II 2209) to research. In all three cases the original writing (quill pen & iron-gallotannate ink now faded to brown) has been lightly overwritten in a similar ink, but was considered legible enough to require a subsequent overwriting with thick black diagonal ink lines to complete the concealment.¹⁹ The effects of time may have undone this second stage of concealment, because the thick diagonal lines have remained completely black, and the browned ink beneath glints through and catches the light.²⁰

Following a first presentation of my findings at Kilve in 2007, I made contact with a professional forensic document examiner Gary Herbertson, the author of a manual on the use of digital image processing to recapture obliterated text.²¹ From a BL Standard Digital Image file, Herbertson has recovered the text of four very challenging lines of CN I 712 to a level far superior to mine. He has thus provided both a demonstration of what is possible for this specific case, and with his book, a methodology to follow. These preliminary results are encouraging enough to set out here.

¹⁷ See CN II 3078n. I'm indebted to Graham Davidson whose work in progress will, when published, shed more light on the extent of intimacy between STC and Anne Gillman. This intimacy in his view makes it possible she wrote in STC's notebooks while he was alive.

¹⁸ See CN II 2556n for Coburn's argument. When James Gillman quoted from N17 f75 (CN II 2556) in *The Life of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (London: Pickering, 1838), he included words from a section of f75 that has been cut out. The reverse side of this leaf f75v contained the compromising material (an apostrophe to Sara H that resumes after the excision as CN II 2557, an examination of why persons such as him are led to drug use, "the worst state of Degradation"). Coburn suspects Anne rather than her husband or the later family custodians.

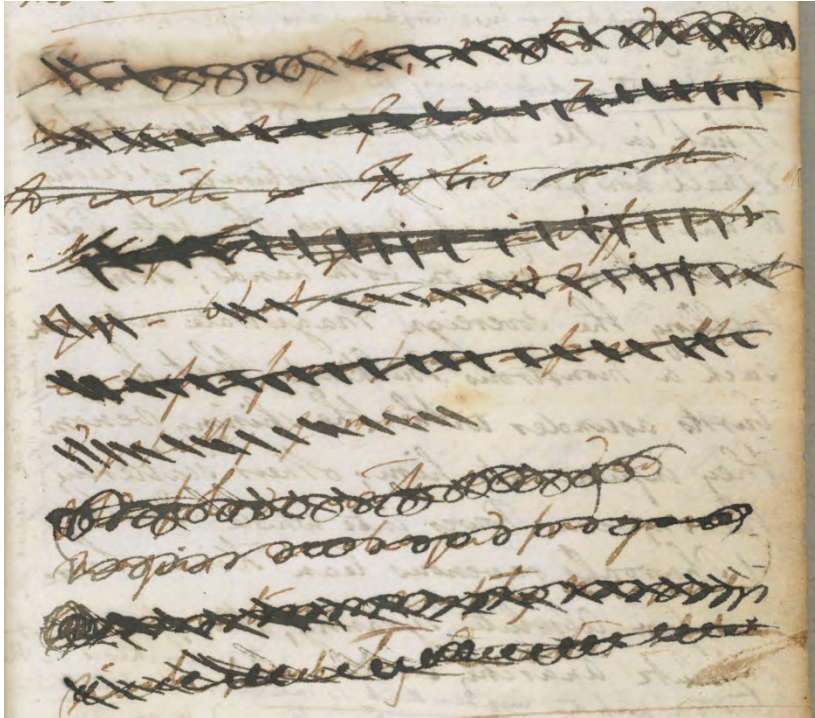
¹⁹ It is these thick black diagonals that Coburn suspects of being Anne Gillman's "heavy black ink" (see CN I Text xviii and regular inky references throughout the notes).

²⁰ Joe Nickell, *Detecting Forgery: Forensic Investigation of Documents* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1996), 110-113 describes inks and their ageing.

²¹ Gary Herbertson, *Document Examination on the Computer: a Guide for Forensic Document Examiners* (Berkeley: WideLine Publishing, 2002).

CN I 712, f8 – The process of textual recovery

The writing is “in large” and something has been written in the heat of the moment which needs to be concealed. There are at least three forms of attempted obliteration. The large smudge at the top left seems to be some kind of solvent. Then there are two kinds of overwriting by pen: the lighter spirals and horizontal lines which show up as brown, and the thick black diagonal strokes and loops. The difference in the inks makes recovery possible.



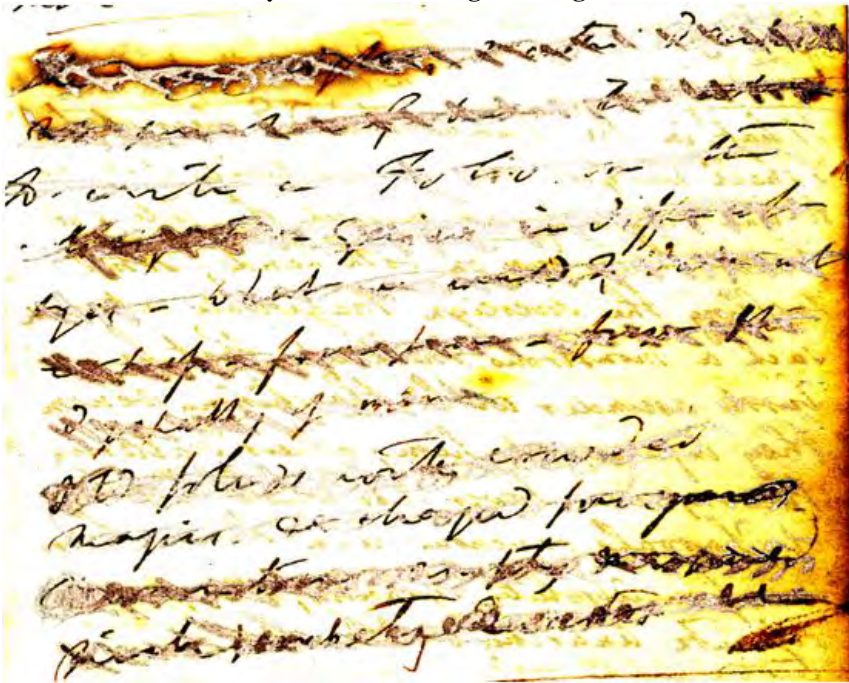
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Transcription in CN

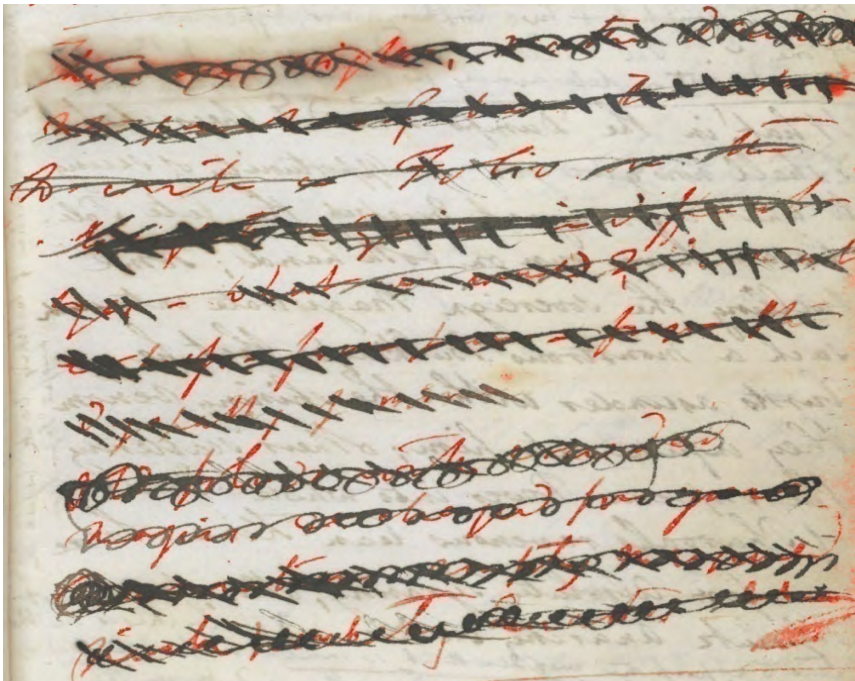
[. . . . ?dream], dream
[. . . .] & [. . .] venture
to write a folio on the
[. . . .] indifferent
eyes. What we would & dare not
express from fear & from the
dyspathy of women
Sara Sara [. . . . ?surrounded]
[.]
[.]
[.]

CNI 712, f8 – Two forms of digital image processing

Whiten heavy black overwriting and heighten contrast



Redden the brown ink



CN I 712 Restoration with Herbertson's enhancements of lines 1-2 & 4-5.
See colour illustrations for the process of textual recovery.

The sun night, rather drunk
 to write a Folio on the
 weights in Spain in different
 eyes - what we would & dare nt
~~express - from fear - [f.....] the~~
~~dyspathy of men -~~
~~Old folios with crowded~~
~~margins ex changed for [years]~~
~~[C.....] [...ty] [marginal]~~
~~[private] [property] [.....] [...]~~

The [s]am[e] night, rather drunk
 [...] [from] [...]—[&?] [had] [a] [...]
 to write a Folio on the
 [pheights?] [in] Genius in different
 eyes —what we would & [dare nt]
 [express]—[from] [fear]—[f.....] the
 [dyspathy] of [men—]
 [Old] [folios] with [crowded]
 [margins] ex changed for [years]
 [C.....] [...ty] [marginal])
 [private] [property] [.....] [...]

In March 1800 Coleridge had been staying at Charles Lamb's house in London, and this entry may well be connected with the previous one. “No person I can believe—[no] thing I can disbelieve—March 23—1800—at Lamb's—had no more Lemons—agas[p] for [thirst]—” (CN I 711, my added [] = doubtful reading). Mrs Coleridge was away in the West Country and the enhancement shows that Coburn's transcription with its “venture”, “[?dream], dream”, and “Sara Sara” was wide of the mark. It's hard to understand how she arrived at those words, but I am in no position to judge—a better recovery of the text is likely to show many places where I have gone wrong here.²²

A Lamb connection seems feasible if the line 8 reading of “folios” is right. (The minuscule “f” raises doubts, but this page shows many examples of uncapitalised nouns). A thought that may correspond occurs in a letter to Poole dated 21 March 1800 “I would not give up the Country, & the lazy reading of Old Folios for two Thousand Times two thousand Pound” (CL I 582). Perhaps this is a drunken hymn to the pleasures of a retired life spent reading, or writing marginalia in “old folios”. If so, the subsequent attempts at concealment are due to embarrassment at childish matter that seemed funny when written. The original writing is in the large loose hand that suggests drunkenness. Nothing particularly sensitive is emerging, and this may be significant. If the thick black diagonal crossing is by Anne Gillman (as Coburn suspects), it's hard to see why; unless she was going through the notebook to ink over any previous Coleridge obliterations she found to be ineffective, to fulfil what she believed to be Coleridge's intention.

²² Thanks to Seamus Perry who reviewed this textual recovery project with me and made several helpful suggestions for taking it forward and for connecting with other people working on similar MSS issues. Jim Mays and John Beer have also kindly commented on a prototype presentation.

CN II 2209 f105v

The second example of an obliterated entry (see illustration) is a start at a poem, probably one of a sequence of poems he planned but never finished: 'The Soother of Absence'. (see CPW II Part 2, 899).

We have a superb specimen of the diagonal strokes, and there are signs of crossings out beneath but they look more like the kind of crossings out that Coleridge would do when revising work in progress. A strip of paper seems to have been gummed over it but has subsequently fallen off (or been steamed off). According to Anton Langerhanns who visited him in 1830: "When Coleridge was not satisfied with a passage on perusing his work, he was accustomed to glue a piece of paper over it and write on it the intended improvement: this he called 'burking'." (IT II 443) This irresistible verb is anachronistic for the page we are looking at because it was derived from the famous Burke of Edinburgh who was tried in 1829 for smothering people to sell their bodies for medical research.

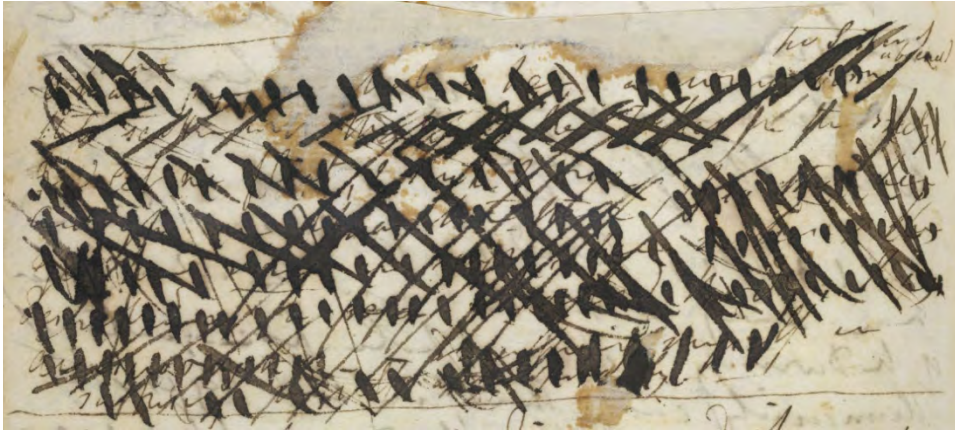
This passage looked ripe for recovery when I looked at it in the British Library on a sunny day, because the brownness of the ink had a metallic quality that shone a reflection through the heavy black lines. The artificial lighting there is low and on my next visit it was an overcast day and I couldn't see what I had seen before. It hasn't lent itself to digital enhancement. The scanned image doesn't differentiate between the black and the brown, but I feel hopeful that more specialised image capture would give results. As it is, it's a beautiful and tantalising enigma. It's like looking through railings—if only you could squeeze your head through the bars, all would be revealed. That to me does everything that a good poem should do. So perhaps it's a concrete poem as it is, and Kathleen Coburn's fragmentary poetic reconstruction sets off an appropriate mood of reverie.

┌<The Soother of absence>┐
 ┌.....┐
 ┌.....in the Breeze,┐
 And let me float & think on ┌ ?Asra/thee.┐
 ┌And.....┐
 ┌.....┐
 ┌.....┐ Body
 ┌..... myself in suffering┐
 ┌applied spiritually┐ (CN II 2209)

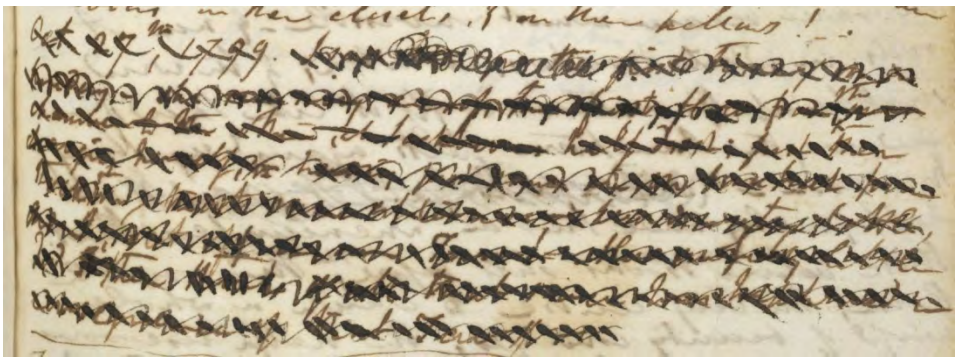
CN I 1575 f53

This obliterated passage comes at the end of one of the retrospective transcriptions of earlier notebooks—the Darlington Ox entry that leads Coleridge on to new disclosures in Latin about being smitten by love and

CN II 2209, f105v
"The Soother of absence" keeps its secrets



CN I 1575, f53
The obliterated passage



Result after manual removal of overwriting

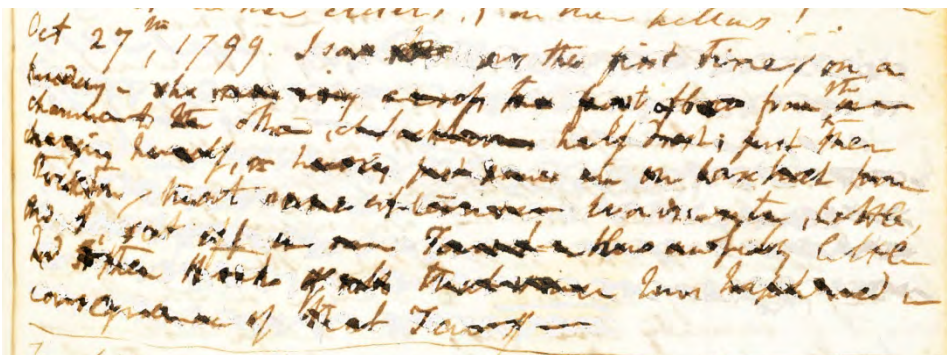


Table 3: Notebook 21, 3 Feb 1805 - 'and now let it end.'

1 - 2	Dec 1797 - Mar 1800	
3 - 4		
5 - 6		
7 - 8		
9 - 10		
11 - 12		
13 - 14		
15 - 16		
17 - 18		
19 - 20		
21 - 22	Greta Hall Period: Aug 1800 - Oct 1803	
23 - 24		
25 - 26		
27 - 28		
29 - 30		
31 - 32		
33 - 34		
35 - 36		
37 - 38		
39 - 40		
41 - 42		
43 - 44		
45 - 46		
47 - 48		48v entries c 1797 - 1803
49 - 50		
51 - 52		52r 1812: Grand Rule in Case of Quarrels
53 - 54		
55 - 56		
57 - 58	Malta July - Nov 1804	
59 - 60		
61 - 62		
63 - 64	ff60-66 filled in 1808 - (6 sheets subsequently excised)	
65 - 66		
67 - 68	Greta Hall Period: Oct - Dec 1803	
69 - 70		
71 - 72		
73 - 74		
75 - 76		
77 - 78		
79 - 80		
81 - 82		
83 - 84		
85 - 86		
87 - 88		
89 - 90		
91 - 92	Malta Jul 1804 - Feb 1805	
93 - 94		
95 - 96		
97 - 98		
99 - 100		
101 - 102		
103 - 104		
105 - 106		
107 - 108		
109 - 110		
111 - 112		
113 - 114		
115 - 116		
117 - 118		
119 - 120		
121 - 122		
123 - 124		
125 - 126		
127 - 128		
129 - 130		
131 - 132		
133 - 134	134v 10 Oct 1798: "Saw the Town of Ratzeburgh"	
135	135-135v Tipped in sheet c. March 1803: Lamb's <i>Heter</i>	
136	Endpaper pasted on back cover.	

clandestinely holding Sara Hutchinson's hand (see f53 illustration for the full page). Here, stimulated by the context, Coleridge seems to be on the verge of revealing something new. More than the other two, this passage promises interesting biographical material. Kathleen Coburn, showing more caution than for f8, restricted herself to "Oct 27th 1799. Is [...]" as a transcription for the entire passage. But even her "is" looks rash.

The most effective form of image enhancement here has come from careful manual removal of the overwriting, using PhotoShop to apply the layering techniques described in Herbertson's book (53-62). The original image is retained as a layer beneath the layer that is being worked on, so that it is possible to keep sight of the regular patterns of the obliterating loops while they are being removed.

Tentative transcription:

Oct 27th, 1799. I saw [XXX] [...] the first time / on a
 Sunday — she [...] [...] [across] the first [off...] from ^ the m....]
 [chamber?] [of] [other], [who/] [ack....] half drest ; just then
 [dressing] [her?self], [X] [hearing] [...] [...] [...] [...] [...] [...] from]
 [.....] / [that] [same] [afternoon] --- [Wordsworth], Cottle,
 and I set off in [...] [T.....] —....[How] awfully little
 [had] [S'...] [...] [...] ...that.....[I was] [satisfied] in
 [consequence] of [that] [T...]//-----

Sunday October 27th is the morning after Coleridge had arrived at Sockburn Farm where he first met Sara Hutchinson. Does this mean he didn't actually see her till the morning of his departure? He set off that Sunday morning for the Lake District, with Wordsworth and Joseph Cottle, whose closet vanity he had been complaining about in the preceding passage. Am I right about the "half drest"? And more crucially, was it a glimpse of a "half drest" Sara Hutchinson, or (far less exciting) a "half drest" Joseph Cottle? ("herself" could possibly be "himself"). Interpretation is led by context and expectation; it may be rash to assume that XXX is "Sara" crossed out. Later on the passage seems to be referring to the afternoon when Coleridge, Wordsworth and Cottle were on their tour. It's possible this expands on the original enigmatic N 5 entry for this date: "remember W's remark—near Blackwall Oct. 27—on a Sunday—" (CN I 494).

These examples are a small first step, but they are a pointer towards what is possible. Laboratories with advanced spectroscopic scanning equipment and computer programs that can enhance images and build up a database of expected letter shapes from Coleridge's handwriting should be able to do much

better. A forensic document examiner would also be able to identify the characteristics of the obliterations in terms of ink type, pen strokes etc. and thus build up a profile of the hands involved. These might then be matched to known handwriting samples, and we could learn more about who did the obliterations, and when.

* * *

And now let it end

The official last page of the notebook is f134v (see illustration). *Table 3* shows that the gap from f59-f66 left blank on leaving Greta Hall was occasionally used in Malta, but there is no apparent reason why he alternated between writing in this gap and in the pages at the end. The table includes brief notes on the handful of post-1805 entries but I'm ending here with 3 February 1805 when he reached the final page.

His 1798 Ratzeburg entry is written on the top half (CN I 357). The handwriting is odd because it is inked over original pencil writing that is just about visible on the illustration. The "1798 !!" was added later, probably at the time he inked in the entry. The two exclamation marks register his sense of time lost. To celebrate the ending he squeezed into the bottom edge of the mutilated page a little poem that rounds off this notebook and my paper. "From December 6th 1797 to Feb 3 1805, this Pocket-book has been filling—and now let it end".

The poem concludes on the top of the inside front cover (f1v, which is reproduced on the back cover of this *Coleridge Bulletin*). "so begin! so end! / Heart and Breathing no more life shall lend!" (CN II 2426). This return to the beginning restores a sense of eternity. The contrast between the notebook's inside front cover with its bright red STC seal, *bric a brac* of quotations and notes, and the back (reproduced on the front cover of the *Bulletin*) with its guilty opium cipher and defaced writing, makes them fitting bookends for his journey from infant's soul to black book.

APPENDIX A
Dating of Entries

CN I 1230-1248

Coleridge did not date any of the block of entries 1230-1248 on ff48-50 (see *Table 6*). Although Coburn conceded that "A case might be made, perhaps, for dating these early October 1803" (1230n) she opted for the date range 1-9 September 1802 and placed and numbered them accordingly. In a chronological arrangement of notebook entries such decisions become set in stone with the results I have described in my main text.

Table 4: proposed revision to dating of N 21, ff48-50.

CN	Folio	CN Date	Suggested Revision	Contents
				<i>Shaded entries are transcription series ex N4, N5 & Gutch.</i>
1249	41v	[c.3 Oct 1802]		Colnett's Voyage to the S Atlantic
	to	[c.3-28 Oct 1802]		[9 entries in sequence - most are dated by STC.]
1259	43	[28 Oct 1802]		Preface with Burton: "I am none of the best none of the meanest".
1335	43	17 Jan 1803		Man in the common apprehension ad imperium - Sara Coleridge
1397	43	8 May 1803		Took a last leave at Mr Clarkson's
929	44-v	[Apr 1801]		Bruno's "sublime ode" [probable STC jumped forward to write this]
930	44v	[Apr 1801]		To translate Engel's VI <i>stuck</i> as intro to essay on Locke
1369	44v	[c. Mar-Jul 1803]		Extracts from Scotus Erigena. On God
1370	45	[c. Mar-Jul 1803]		Her Looks like Empire shew'd, great above pride
1380	46	[c. Mar-Jul 1803]		Trichoma, a good name for a woman with matted greasy hair
1381	46v-47	31 Mar 1803		On the Loss of the Royal George' - C Lamb transcr.
1382	47v	[Mar-Jul 1803]		Creation explained by Scot Erigena
1383	47v	[Mar-Apr 1803]		"Inopem me copiem fecit." Ovid
1230	48	[?1-9 Sep 1802]	Oct 1803	N 5, CN 462, Transcripts from "velvet-writing paper Pocket Books"
	to	[?1-9 Sep 1802]	Oct 1803	[Transcriptions from N 5 continue]
1242	48v	[?1-9 Sep 1802]	Oct 1803	G 212 + N 4 830 Sopha of Sods Lackwit+Clock; Yorkshire wfall
331	48v	[?1797]	See note	Man - "Lord of Fire and Light" (cf CN III 3339)
332	48v	[1797-1802]	Oct 1803	Children driving hungry ass out of corn-field.
333	48v	[1797-1802]	Oct 1803	Lovers light: making visible blush kindled by kiss. Emblematic
334	48v	[1797-1802]	Oct 1803	Notions husked in the phantasms of space & time
1243	48v	[?1-9 Sep 1802]	Oct 1803	Large Rosemary Tree by house sign of antiquity etc.
1244	49	[?1-9 Sep 1802]	Oct 1803	Listening: mother for sound of still-born child; blind arab
1245	49-v	[?1-9 Sep 1802]	Oct 1803	George Sandys Journey - several extracts.
1246	49v	[?1-9 Sep 1802]	Oct 1803	Obs. Stedfast rainbow in hailmist; quietness daughter of storm
1247	49v-50	[?1-9 Sep 1802]	Oct 1803	Meditate on transubstantiation... fuel of the fire of faith.
1248	50	[?1-9 Sep 1802]	Oct 1803	I lay too many eggs with ostrich carelessness .
1546	50	[9-14 Oct 1803]		I am sincerely glad, that he has bidden farewell
1547	50	[9-14 Oct 1803]		Medicines eaten for meals - & vomited or excreted
1548	50	[Oct 1803]		A smile as foreign to her countenance... [re Mrs Lovell?]
1549	50v	[Oct 1803]		N 5.14 472 Aromatic smell of the poplar
	to	[Oct 1803]		[Transcripts from N5 & N4 continue, with interruptions]
1595	57	[19-21 Oct 1803]		N 4 602 Tall thin man face in back of polished spoon

There are four reasons in favour of an October 1803 dating, which I set out below in descending order of importance.

1) *Sequence of page use.*

If Coleridge wrote CN 1248 on f50 in September 1802, he would then have turned back to f41v to write the next entry, 1249, whose date can be established with reasonable certainty to 3 October 1802. The Table makes clear that dating CN 1230-1248 to October 1803 makes for a likelier sequence of page use by Coleridge. There would have to be very good reasons to disturb this clear-cut movement forwards. The handwriting, ink and pen state on f41v are similar to f50 but one stylistic difference may be significant—on f41v Coleridge does not insert horizontal lines between the different entries as he does on f50.

2) *Interruption of a continuous series of entries*

If the detailed transcriptions of Notebook 5, CN 1230–1242, are dated prior to 9 September 1802, this creates a 13 month gap before this identical task is resumed at 1549, an entry that can be reliably dated October 1803. The writing style is consistent for folios 49v to 51 (CN 1245-1248, and CN 1546-1562).

3) *The connection between CN 1248 and CN 1546 on f50*

There is no appreciable difference in handwriting and ink between CN1248 and 1546 which would be unusual if they were written 13 months apart. Both these are quoted by Coleridge in the letter to Poole dated 14 October 1803. It is true as Coburn argues that Coleridge could have been prompted to use 1248 by having opened the notebook at that page.

4) *Source for CN 1248 in 1803 publication*

The parallels between CN 1248 and a passage from Edward Capell's preface printed in a major 21 volume edition of Shakespeare's Plays published in July 1803 make it highly probable that this was the source (See Chandler).²³ Capell's preface was originally published in 1767, so to use this edition to date CN 1248, we would need to prove that Coleridge read it in the autumn of 1803. There is a likely means of acquisition. Longman and Rees were one of the 42 publishers listed, and Coleridge is known to have used them to acquire books, and had dealing with them during 1803. If more information were to emerge, this could be the best indicator of all.

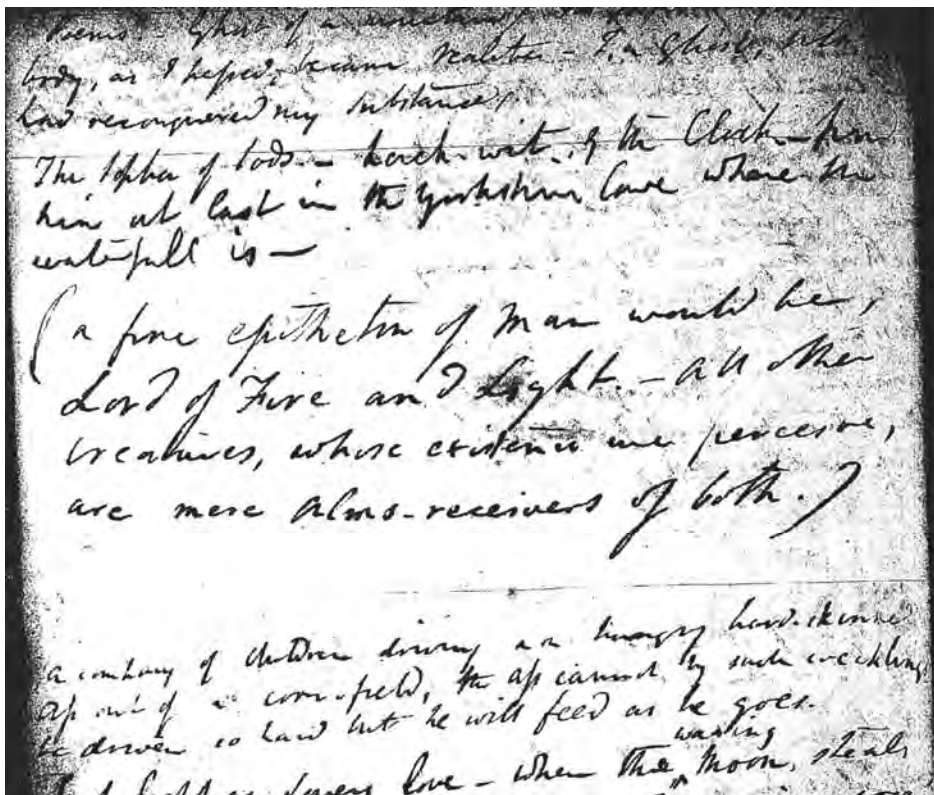
What were Coburn's reasons for dating 1230-1248 to September 1802? In 1230n she writes that these entries "appear to belong to Sept 1802. See the note on the Sept 1802 additions in N 21 to 330." In 330n she explains: "The addition to §14 is datable from CL#462 as 27 Sept 1802 or thereabouts; probably the other additions, all from N 4, were made at the same time. See however 1230n." The first chain of her argument is reasonable: if the final §14 of 330 on folio 5v where he has been accumulating pieces under the subject heading "Infancy & Infants—" (330) can be dated to 27 September 1802 because its wording matches a letter of that date, then the other transcriptions from N 4 that preceded it must have been made before that date. But the second chain of Coburn's argument is not so strong. She apparently considers that these additions to CN330 are likely to have occurred at the same time that Coleridge was entering the block of transcriptions from N 5 (CN 1230-1242) on the grounds that they too are transcriptions. But the latter sequence of transcriptions systematically follow the pages of N 5, and there are no grounds to link these chronologically to the unrelated transcriptions of N 4 that he added to 330.

²³ George Steevens and Isaac Reed (eds) *The Plays of William Shakespeare [sic]*, 21 Vols, (London: J Johnson [etc.]1803). Cit Chandler.

CN I 331-334 on f48v

Seamus Perry questions Coburn's positioning of CN 332 and suggests the entries on this page apart from the problematic "Lord of Fire and Light" (CN 331 shown below) can be dated in sequence with the 1230-1242 block. He argues persuasively that these could well be additions to a list of ideas for poems.²⁴ CN 331 is written in brackets in the middle of the page, and the handwriting is larger than normal. A 1797 dating (i.e. within 3 weeks of acquiring the notebook) would mean that Coleridge jumped forward forty four leaves to write this on a blank page and, as Coburn points out (331n), it would be unusual for him not to start writing at the top of a page. Also, why would it be surrounded by brackets (which look contemporaneous with the entry) unless this was in order to fence it off from something already written on the page?

Folio 48v (detail) showing CN I 331 "Lord of Fire and Light"



²⁴ S.T. Coleridge's *Notebooks: a Selection* ed by Seamus Perry (Oxford: OUP, 2002), 174.

APPENDIX B

BM	Fo	STC	p
	1		Red leather front cover
	1v		Inside sheet glued to front cover
	2		Cottle Inscription
	2v		
	3	2	C's first starting point
	8	12	
	8v		
	X		I stub left. CNs "torn" is misleading - a neat cut. CN counts 2 leaves. If so they are inseparable and the stub is so neat I wonder if it wasn't a BL insertion as with sheet inter 126v and 128. (See note)
	9	14	
	47	[90]	Page number top right corner torn off - no loss of written content.
	47v		
	60v		
	61	118	Cut out Top 4cm survive. Entry 3272 is complete - the subsequent entry cut out.
	61v		Top 4cm survive. Entry 3273 "To my Friends" .
	62	420	Torn out 0.6 cm inner margin has traces of same style of writing as 3273
	62v		0.6 cm inner margin has traces of same style of writing as 3273
	63	422	Torn out 0.6 cm inner margin has traces of same style of writing as 3273
	63v		0.6 cm inner margin has traces of same style of writing as 3273
	64	424	Torn out 0.6 cm inner margin has traces of same style of writing as 3273
	64v		0.6 cm inner margin has traces of same style of writing as 3273
	65	426	Torn out 0.6 cm inner margin has traces of same style of writing as 3273
	65v		0.6 cm inner margin has traces of same style of writing as 3273
	66	428	Torn out 0.6 cm inner margin has traces of same style of writing as 3273
	66v		
	100	196	
	100v		
	101		No STC page number - he must have skipped a page in error.
	101v		
	102	198	
	102v		
	107v		
	108	[209]	Top half of page cut out
	108v		Top half of page cut out
	109	210	
	109v		
	118v		
	119	230	Bottom 4-5.5 cm of page cut out
	119v		Bottom 4-5.5 cm of page cut out: this seems to be the side targeted for excision
	120	232	
	120v		
	XXX		3 sheets cut out before STC numbered the pages
	121	234	4 Horiz line ends & "the" (not looking like STC's hand but in same ink) on stub facing 121
	121v		
	XXXX		Entry 2372 starts on 121v and continues to 122 without interruption. It seems likely the 4 stubs here have been misplaced from between f123-f124 The stubs look like restorer's edge paper glued on to folio in the binding.
	122	236	
	122v		
	123	238	
	123v		CNI 2376N: "4 leaves apparently cut out of NB after f123". The stubs of CNs lost leaves are no longer here. Unfinished CNI 2376 f123, suggests that there are missing leaves.
	124	240	
	124v		
	125	242	
	125v		CNI Notes xl, states that 4 leaves were "cut out" between ff125-6. This is not apparent here.
	126	244	Top 3cm of page clipped off replaced with BL paper. STC page number is written in lower position.
	126v		
	X		Intervening stub folded over to form near perfect edge.
	128	248	
	128v		
	134	260	Foot of page cut out (waving lines = small scissors?) 1.5 cm inner edge, 0.5cm outer edge
	134v		"And now let it end" written along bottom edge following the cut line
	127	246	f27 replaced out of sequence (by BM rebinder) as noted in CN.
	127v		
	135	262	This sheet is larger and has been glued into the back
	135v		about 4.5 cm of fold over. Glued onto stump of excised sheet. To accommodate extra width?
	136		Endpaper pasted on back cover.

Explanatory Notes

1. In *BM Fo* column 1st left on Table, the quantity of missing folios is indicated by an X— i.e. X=1, XX=2 etc.
2. Foliation, restoration and rebinding by British Museum, July 1952.
3. No subsequent alteration has been carried out (Jamie Andrews, Head of Modern Literary Manuscripts, British Library, email response 9 Dec 2006—JA hereafter).
4. Foliation preceded rebinding (Indicated by misplaced f127, and the 4 stubs now after f121 which seem to belong after f123).
5. The stubs of excised pages are believed to be original and not tidied up (JA).
6. STC numbered even pages on top right corner. Position on torn p.244 indicates STC's numbering was carried out after the tear.
7. Pages not listed in the Table are complete and have no anomalous numbering. Intervening pages are shown where this helps identify the position of the anomalous sheets.

Other Remarks

When I examined it in 2006-2007, N 21 had features that were not consistent with its general description in CN I Notes xl-xlii, which in its turn was not consistent with later notes on individual entries (e.g. CN II 2376n). I have annotated on the Table where the folio excisions differ from the description in CN. Other variations are as follows:

CN I Notes xl states “Entries are all in ink”—not so—see e.g. CN I 985.

CN I Notes xli, “the notebook appears to have been packed away for the voyage and was brought out again in Malta in July [1804]”—not so—CN I 2022, 2032, and 2033 were written in April 1804 off Lisbon during the voyage out.

APPENDIX C—Unidentified Quotations.

In the course of working on the notebook with the use of internet search engines not available in Coburn's day I traced the following quotations that are not identified in CN. This is googleship rather than scholarship, but it is another sign of how much more editorial work can be done on Coleridge's notebooks. My corrections to the CN transcriptions are in square brackets.

CN I 379 (1st part) "Omnia dat qui [justa] negat".

Lucan *Pharsalia* I 349. CN misreads STC's "justa" as "frustra" (on f1v—see back cover of *Bulletin*). Literal trans. "He who refuses what is just, gives all." Julius Caesar's self justification for waging civil war against Pompey, effectively saying in a phrase that became proverbial—"you haven't given me what I'm entitled to, so I'll take the entire Republic by force!"

* * *

CN I 1007 "The sea brooked not me—nor I it; an unquiet element made only for wonder and use not for pleasure."

CN I 1008 "I pitied his ill bestowed zeal and rather wished than durst teach him more wisdom."

These entries are both written in Sara Hutchinson's hand and the passages can be found in *Bishop Hall his Life and Times or, Memoirs of The Life, Writings, and Sufferings, of The Right Rev. Joseph Hall, D.D. by the Rev. John Jones* (London: L. B. Seeley & Son, 1826) pp 31 & 34. (Google Books). Clearly this was not the edition used by STC and SH in 1801, but I have not been able to find these passages in Joseph Hall, *The Shaking of the Olive Tree [etc.]* (London: 1660) which contains the work reprinted in the 1826 edition. These should be traceable here or to another edition of Hall's works.

* * *

CN I 1373 "Et pour moi, le Bonheur n'a commencé que lorsque je l'ai [eu] perdue. Je mettrais volontiers sur la porte du Paradis le vers, que le Dante a mis sur celle de l'Enfer.

Lasciate ogni Speranza, voi ch'entrate."

Sébastien-Roch Nicolas de Chamfort, *Maximes et pensées, Caractères et anecdotes* (Original ed. 1796; cit. here Gallimard, *Livre de Poche*, 1970), 44. CN has "en" for Chamfort's "eu". STC omits Chamfort's opening phrase: "L'espérance n'est qu'un charlatan qui nous trompe sans cesse;" which explains why "perdue" (referring to L'espérance) has a feminine ending. Trans. "Hope

is nothing but a swindler who endlessly dupes us; and for me happiness only started when I lost it. I would willingly put on the gate of paradise the line that Dante has put on the gate of hell. 'Abandon all hope, you who enter here.'" This quotation may indicate that CN 1373 postdates CN 1390 which (after paraphrasing Chamfort in English) ends "Get *Chamfort*". CN 1373 shows that STC has acquired it.

* * *

CN II 2273 "Look in mine eyeballs where thy beauty lies:
Then, why not Lips on Lips, since Eyes on Eyes?"

Shakespeare, *Venus and Adonis*, ll.119-120. Arden (ed. F.T.Prince) has "eyes in eyes".

* * *

CN II 2278 "Itaque id agitur, ut ignorantia etiam ab ignominia
[liberetur]."

CN mistranscribes the final word as "liberatur". Trans. "Hence it comes about that even ignorance may be freed from shame." From *Praefatio* to Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*. See *Works of Francis Bacon*, ed. Spedding et al (London: 1857), 127.

* * *

CN II 2396 "Heri vidi fragilem frangi; hodie [vidi] mortalem ~~mei~~
mori."

Trans. "Yesterday I saw something fragile break, today I have seen a mortal die." (STC omitted the second "vidi"). From Francis Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*, (Oxford: OUP The World's Classics, 1906), 61. Bacon is quoting Epictetus "who went forth one day and saw a woman weeping for her pitcher of earth that was broken, and went forth the next day and saw a woman who was weeping for her son that was dead."