

## XI

### UNPUBLISHED LETTERS CONCERNING COTTLE'S COLERIDGE

JOSEPH COTTLE'S *Early Recollections; chiefly relating to . . . Samuel J Taylor Coleridge, etc.*<sup>1</sup> has received the censure of students of Coleridge ever since its publication, not only because of the author's evident effort to distort facts but also for his inexcusable errors. His book was first regarded, however, as was also Thomas Allsop's *Letters, Conversations and Recollections of S. T. Coleridge*<sup>2</sup> published a year earlier, as a violation of ethical standards in biography. Contemporary criticism of both books generally deplore the want of taste and discretion in their revelations of Coleridge's private life. The type of biography created by Boswell had not yet displaced the eulogistic or formal method of the eighteenth century. Biographies were still expected to be dignified, moralistic, or instructive. To expose weaknesses of character would naturally detract from the virtues of the subject; the faults should lie buried with the dead. But Cottle, in his work—<sup>3</sup>

endeavoured, however imperfect the accomplishment, to exhibit an example of what Biography ought to be, in order to redeem its character, an undisguised portraiture of the man, rather than a stream of undeviating eulogy.

This ideal follows Boswell; but English biographers after him had generally not displayed the courage to imitate his great *Life of Johnson*.<sup>4</sup>

Unpublished letters<sup>5</sup> exist—from Joseph Cottle, Thomas Poole, Joseph Henry Green, Henry Nelson Coleridge, and Sara Coleridge—that throw considerable light on the inception of Cottle's book; and it is the purpose of this article to publish some of those letters which show the circumstances that created the *Recollections*.

<sup>1</sup> Two vols. (London, 1837).

<sup>2</sup> For reviews of Cottle's *Coleridge* see *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, iv (June, 1837), 341–348, and *The Quarterly Review*, lix (1837), 25–32. For Allsop's book see *Tait's Edinburgh Review*, iii (Feb., 1836), 113–123. *The Quarterly Review*, lix (1837), 32, and a letter from William Wordsworth to Edward Moxon, Jan. 4, 1836, *Letters of the Wordsworth Family*, ed. by William Knight (London, 1907), iii, 93.

<sup>3</sup> Cottle's *Early Recollections, etc.*, i, xxv.—See also Allsop's *Letters, etc. of Coleridge*, (London, 1864), pp. 87–89, 138–139.

<sup>4</sup> Lockhart's *Life of Sir Walter Scott* was published in 1837–38. The reviewer of Cottle's *Recollections* in *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, iv (June, 1837), 341, remarks that Scott's life could be written in the manner of Cottle's work, but he doubts if it would be justifiable, as he thinks the book under his consideration was not. A like remark regarding the treatment of Scott's life was made by the reviewer of Allsop's *Coleridge* in *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, iii (Feb., 1836), 113.—Probably both articles were written by the same person.

<sup>5</sup> The Thomas Poole Collection, British Museum, Add. MS. 35344.

In the preface of the first edition of the work, Cottle states that “an influential friend” urged him to write a memoir of Coleridge, but after considering “the almost unconquerable difficulty of maintaining *fidelity*” without in some quarter exciting *offence* which would attend his efforts in arranging the great mass of material in his possession, he refused to take up the work and then only after a second letter from this friend, who is later revealed in a new edition of the book<sup>6</sup> as being Poole. In Cottle’s review of the reasons for writing the book one infers that he quarrelled with Poole,<sup>7</sup> as well as with other friends and relatives of Coleridge, who saw that he was compiling a damaging lot of material on Coleridge’s life; and the existing unpublished letters show there was real alarm and concern, accompanied by bitter feeling and misunderstanding, over his project when the nature of it was eventually discovered. Obviously, among Coleridge’s family and closest friends the manner in which his life should be treated hardly agreed with Cottle’s intentions. They had already been deeply chagrined and hurt by what had been published without their authorization, and consequently they sought to formulate some plans to counteract the destructive character of these bold publications. Henry Nelson Coleridge is one of the earliest on record to take steps in this direction. He replies to Poole, who had evidently asked him to undertake a life of Coleridge:<sup>8</sup>

I observe that you speak earnestly about a Life, a minute narrative of events with an expression of opinion such as the abstract merits of the case demands, you must, I am sure, see, cannot be written now by any one—least of all by me. Such a life would necessarily implicate the characters of very many living persons, and would tear open wounds which Death has at length healed. And I might speak it with affectionate reverence and in confidence—could the truth as to many particulars be told, if at all, without some injury to the subject of the biography, unless accompanied by a laborious commentary, the total effect of which would, I fear be of an appearance of a wish to salve over a bad case? I suggest this in reference to a minute narrative published in a separate form, and thereby assuming to *A Life of Coleridge*.<sup>9</sup> From *that* I think, and I trust no one will attempt it. But short of that, I think there are two or three modes open by which the principal circumstances of my Uncle’s life may be correctly recorded, together with such additional matter of detail as you and others can furnish and which shall be pertinent to the purpose of preventing a fair picture of the intellectual temper of this great man. I want to see something done, which shall

<sup>6</sup> 2d ed. (London, 1847).

<sup>7</sup> Mrs. Henry Sandford in her book, *Thomas Poole and his Friend* (London, 1888), II, 303, says that he “almost quarrelled with honest Joseph, who was determined to bring out his very readable, but very indiscreet and inaccurate record, in precisely his own way.”

<sup>8</sup> Letter dated “3 Sept. 1834.”—B. M. Add. MS. 35344, p. 110.

<sup>9</sup> Such a work does not exist.

illustrate, but shall not look like a vindication. . . . Before his death—a short time—he talked of a new arrangement of the *B. Literaria*. Might not a new edition of that work be accompanied by a memoir, and notes? Or, might not his Letters be interwoven into a body of a narrative, so as to let them tell half the story—no letters ever containing more of the writer's mind than my Uncle's? I am drawing out selections from my memoranda of Coleridge's *Table Talk*—it would fill a small volume; might not a memoir, that and leading, be prefixed to that, if published? In some shape or other we shall, no doubt, do whatever can wisely be done as to this; and as I do not know that any other person is likely to interfere with me about it, I shall esteem it a great favor, if it at your lesiure you would put upon paper as much as possible in series of years, whatever you remember remarkable in the sayings and doings of S.T.C.—secondly, the opinions and feelings of the time, and not omitting domestic details and common traits of character. Your doing this in a form which would be a publication *totidem verbis* as *your* account, would be the best and most interesting contribution; but if that is too laborious, I could wish you merely to jot down the substance in order of time, taking no trouble about composition. If you would entrust your communication to me, I need not assure you that the most honourable use shall be made of it. Etc.

Poole's reply to this letter has not been preserved, but Sara Coleridge received Poole's letter during her husband's absence from home and she writes immediately for him:<sup>10</sup>

Mr. Green should have the disposition of such notes and letters of my Father as you may think proper to part with. I am sure he will feel justified as I do by your motive for consulting him on the subject. I am sorry to say that Henry does not possess and sees no means of possessing materials for a regular History of my Father's life—if he did it would be scarcely possible to present the tenor of many parts of it as we might think justly, yet so as to neither assail the feelings nor touch the memory of some among his contemporaries. Our age has been called one of personality—more if not coarser than was ever indulged in before—yet an almost captious delicacy is felt in these times by many so affected by others. However, I hope that Henry will preserve any facts of my Father's History the truths of which he may be able to ascertain and which may otherwise prevail or be misunderstood—how far and in what shape they should be recorded may be an after consideration. Your remarks on his character and genius have been delightful to us—they are among the valuable tributes from valued persons which have mingled sweetness with our cup of sorrow. We mourn not only one near and dear taken from our sight but the extinction of a light such as can never beam over our earthly path again. It has made this world more spiritual and the next in some sort more visible to our apprehensions—"the feeling of that loss can never be old." But there was everything in the circumstances of his departure to soothe our regret and we feel happy in the hope that his writings will be influential for good purposes. All his views philosophical and theological may not

<sup>10</sup> September 5, 1834, Hampstead. B. M. Add. MS. 35344, p. 104.

be adopted, and the effect of his posthumous works must be impaired by their fragmentary condition, but I think there is reason to believe that what he left behind him, published and unpublished, will introduce a higher and more improving mode of thinking and teach men to consider some subjects on principles more comprehensive and accordant to reason than that has hitherto been done. Immediately popular they can never be—but their exposition of truth may mould the opinions and tinge the feelings of hundreds who have never read the words themselves by the intervention of more popular agents—and we all know that pious but simple persons would never have wrought out for themselves those pure and exalted views of Christian faith and (example) by which means of the gifted few they now entertain. I have often heard that the more intellectual among the Americans have begun to study my father's writings—every condition of society has its besetting sins for those who attend upon the state of things in America it is thought that these metaphysical productions will afford a powerful remedy. I have been encouraged by your expressions, my dear Mr. Poole, to write thus freely to you—I cannot often express my hopes or feelings on the subject for the assertion of high claims of any sort are not relished by the world in general and to most persons claims founded on speculative writings are as imperceptible as Duncan's disembodied spirit was to the guests of Macbeth. They fancy that you are dwelling on a phantom of your imagination and wonder how you can imagine that any practical benefit is to arise from words which do not treat of matter of fact. . . .

Poole is again urged by H. N. Coleridge in September, 1834:<sup>11</sup>

to devote an hour or so a day till you have drawn up a story of what you know of your friend from first to last. I am persuaded your own tale would be much better than the compilation of any other person's from your materials.

Evidence in the following letter from Poole to J. H. Green indicates that he had planned an account of his association with Coleridge; but if it was ever written it is now lost. Mrs. Sandford was also unable to find it when she was preparing her life of Poole. As Poole's letter and Green's reply contain many items of interest, they are printed in full.

THOS. POOLE TO J. H. GREEN.<sup>12</sup>

Nether Stowey,  
4th June, 1835.

My dear Sir:

I cannot help admiring and being grateful for your *patience* in waiting and for your *forebearance* in reproaching in consequence of my so long delaying to contribute what I possess to the Life & Works of our admirable friend Coleridge.

I now transmit you letters and other M.S. of which the accompanying sheets contain a Catalogue with occasional explanatory remarks.

<sup>11</sup> B. M. Add. MS. 35344, p. 112.

<sup>12</sup> B. M. Add. MS. 35344, p. 104. This letter is not in Poole's handwriting. Punctuation and spelling in all the letters published here have not been corrected or changed.

As to the propriety of publishing this mass of interesting matter which I send, I need not say I submit much to your discretion and that of his *other friends*, yet I must make two conditions concerning the Letters.

1st those passages and names in the letters which I have scored under with *red ink*, must not be published. I leave you to perfect liberty to suppress any of either which you think right to be suppressed which *are* not scored, but at the same time I think it would be highly instructive that the whole interesting Being should appear such as he was in all his Phases, marking the progress of his Mind and heart from cradle to grave. With this in view I have ventured to leave under-scored so many affectionate expressions towards myself and some of his familiar Friends here, for I could not find in my heart to suppress that overflow of benevolent feeling for which he was perhaps as peculiar as for his surpassing intellectual powers, and to exhibit these letters in all their energetic variety in early life, I have from the same motives left *untouched* many passages otherwise of the most trifling matter.

2nd. Those copies of Letters which he wrote to others cannot I think be published without the permission of those to whom they are addressed—at all events those to and from the cannot be published (as I have said in the catalogue) without Mr. Josiah Wedgewood's consent. I have lately had some correspondence with him and have pledged myself, so far on this subject. Some of the letters which I send you, you will be aware Coleridge used in the "Friend" and in his "Literaria Biographia." The Sermon and the remarks which he made in the margins of some of my Books, which later Mr. Ward has been so good as to copy, you will know how to estimate.

Favour me with your impressions on reading all those materials, and your notion of the use you intend to make of them, and when that use is accomplished, be so good as to return them to me. You will I doubt not, submit them to Mrs. Henry Coleridge's perusal.

Mrs. H. N. Coleridge desired me to write what I could recollect concerning our Friend. I hope soon to communicate a short account of the circumstances which brought us together and of our usual goings-on here, with such anecdotes as occur to me. It will interest me to learn in what state you found Coleridge's papers and if the World is to expect any important posthumous Work of his.

I am, my dear Sir, Yours very sincerely and obliged

THOS. POOLE

Jos. Henry Green Esq<sup>r</sup>.

P.S. I acknowledge the receipt of the *handsome ring* which you were so good as to direct the Jeweller to send me. It is in excellent taste. I prize it on every account, but especially as containing a Lock of *his Silver Hair*.<sup>13</sup>

I should think he wrote some interesting letters to our Mutual Friend Mr. Purkis. If so, they may, I am sure be had by applying to his son-in-law, Mr. Webster of Henly Middlesex. I would with pleasure inquire if you wish it.

I have a little picture of Coleridge taken while he resided here. It was a striking likeness of him at *five and twenty* and tho' a *sad painting*, I doubt not an

<sup>13</sup> Coleridge had willed to Poole a ring.

*interesting print* may be taken from it. Shall I send it to you? Mr. Ward has a likeness in crayon taken in Germany which is also much at your service.

J. H. GREEN'S REPLY TO THOS. POOLE.<sup>14</sup>

46, Lincoln Inn Fields,  
June 11, [1835].

My dear Sir,

I am sure you will be anxious to know that the papers concerning our dear friends have come safely into my possession, and I am anxious to offer you without delay my grateful thanks for the treasures that you have intrusted to my keeping; I lose no time, therefore, in acknowledging their receipt, and in assuring you that the very reasonable condition that you propose shall be strictly adhered to. I wish sincerely that I had grounds for complaining of what you are pleased a "long delay" and that it was the only cause retarding the publication of Coleridge's posthumous works, but unfortunately my avocations and duties interfere most seriously with a work, the accomplishment of which is the nearest my heart, and one of the difficulties of the undertaking that of collecting materials which are widely scattered, is of a kind that must necessarily in and of itself retard the publication. With respect to the materials themselves they seem to be readily classed as, 1. Critical and Philological. 2. Devotional and Theological and Philosophical, and no doubt will furnish enough for a separate or volume under each head. H. N. Coleridge has under the first, and the second shall not appear without the advice of those on whom judgement reliance can be placed. The philosophical part of Coleridge's remains it must be my duty (would that it had fallen into abler hands!) to prepare for the press, and although unfortunately the system, which it was the occupation of my revered friend's life to construct only as far as his own words are concerned in detached fragments, hints, and unfinished essays, yet I do not doubt (God granting me his aid) with the knowledge that I have derived from the conversation of Coleridge to be able to offer to the public the most satisfactory system of philosophy that has ever appeared, at once bearing with it the stamp of truth, and offering the most incontestable proof of the genius of the author. It would certainly, however, be desirable, as you very properly observe, to place before the world the wonderful man himself, in all the manifold excellence of his intellectual and moral character; the difficulty must be admitted to be great, and any ordinary memoir would, especially if its object were that only of tracing the events of his life, be inefficient and perhaps objectionable; but perhaps with your assistance, with the aid of other friends, with his writings, memorandum of his own, and his published works, it might be possible to give a history of his mind, and to trace the growth and development of his character that would be no inconsiderable aid to the intelligibility of his writings, and no less serve as the pedestal to the fame, which his writings must ensure him. Having this view you will see that my material, and doubtless Mr. Purkis' letters would be highly acceptable, and no less so the portrait which you mention.

I am, my dear Sir,  
Most sincerely and respectfully  
JOSEPH HENRY GREEN

<sup>14</sup> B. M. Add. MS. 35344, 1, 202.

Cottle's intentions for a life of Coleridge are fully outlined in his two following letters to Poole.

LETTER I<sup>15</sup>

My dear Sir:

After much solicitation, I have determined to draw up a narrative of our Friend Coleridge's Life and Literary History, during his residence in Bristol. In this object I have made some progress. The work will necessarily contain references to others. Wordsworth, Southey, Davey, yourself, De Quincey, Lloyd, Lamb, Ann Yearsley, Hannah More, Gilbert, and some others, illustrative of the numerous Letters received from S.T.C. during many years, and the others. I include only the periods when he resided in Bristol, Clevedon, and Stowey, as well as the others.

With respect to Bristol and Clevedon, it is stating an undeniable fact, that no person is so familiar, as myself, with all the incidents connected with these places; but it has occurred to me, that you can best elucidate the Stowey part of Coleridge's history. Would it be asking too great a favour to request you to furnish me with some account of Coleridge, during his abode in your place? I should prefer the incorporating of your Narrative in my own, but if to this you have no unconquerable objection, the obligation will still be felt, if you will favour me with data and incidents, which (on your authority) I may introduce with my own statements.

You doubtless have numerous, and I need not add, valuable Letters of S.T.C., addressed to yourself. Will you favour me with them, to select such parts as are *unexceptionally* applicably (sic) to my purpose? My obligations also would be increased if you could obtain for me, any of Coleridge's Letters, in the possession of any of your acquaintances, or any other Letters, of any of the above names.

I might mention that some ladies of the name of Cruickshank are come to reside near Firfield House, (the residence of my Brother-in-Law, Mr. Hare) who lately delivered to my Sister for me, several Letters of S.T.C.'s. Will you allow me to ask who these Ladies are, as, it seems they speak of your acquaintance, but *as Strangers*, my Sister hardly knows how to receive them.

I remain

My dear Sir, with great respect,

Yours truly

JOSEPH COTTLE

P.S. Will you do me the favour to accept the enclosed small Work, in which (among the Notes) you will find some references to S.T.C.

Coleridge once stated to me the nature of a *faithful* letter which, in the spirit of kindness, you once addressed to him, and also his reply. Will you favour me with a sight of these letters?—which I am more desirous of seeing, as I myself once wrote to him, in the *same feeling*, and received from him a long and interesting reply. To you, I understand, he happened to be rather testy.

<sup>15</sup> B. M. Add. MS. 35344, 1, 206.

Carlton Place, Bedminster near  
Bristol. Aug. 7th., 1835.

It would be wrong not to inform you, that I received, sometime ago, a Letter from Coleridge's Executor (Gillman) requesting any letters I might have of Coleridge's with some little account of him during the residence in Bristol. In this I expressed an intention of giving him. On beginning, however, the task, I found the Letters so numerous, and the whole subject so comprehensive, and, as some of the Characters are living, of so personal a nature, that it would not suit an immediate publication. Of this I must inform Gillman. I shall endeavor to be faithful in my delineations. It will be written with a kind feeling, and, as I judge, contain a great, and peculiar Body of Interest. The Title will be "Literary Recollections."

I see, in the "Congregational Mage."<sup>16</sup> for this month they have transcribed the whole of my "valuable" Note respecting Coleridge.

LETTER II<sup>17</sup>

My dear Sir,

I had declined compliance with the request of Mr. Gillman, from a feeling of delicacy; conceiving that as a considerable portion of Coleridge's Letters to me, consisted of references to others (some of the characters still living) I should not be justified in giving publicity to them. It was my intention, therefore, to throw the whole into a connected narrative, illucidating the letters by concurrent facts, in a way, somewhat similar to Mason's Life of Gray. And considering the number of Literary Men, with whom I had, oddly enough, become acquainted, the papers would have been pregnant with deep interest. My intention was to leave this work behind me, to be published by my successors, when all personal feelings should cease to be violated.

I am almost ashamed to say, your Letter has shaken my resolution, at least, so far as to leave a conviction on my mind, that a narrative of the most interesting portions of Coleridge's Life, with which I was so minutely familiar, might be illustrated in his letters, reflecting credit on himself, and without, in any objectionable way, compromising the feelings of others. This I should now have no objection to do. But after having returned Mr. Gillman a negative, I could on no account be induced to manifest such versatility as voluntarily to propose a change in my resolution, especially with an uncertainty whether or not, my proposal would now be accepted.

If you still entertain a wish to see this "gap" in C's history filled up and deem it of importance enough to intimate to Mr. G. that (in consequence of your letter) if he would convey to me one line, expressing a wish to receive my communication, the way would be clear, and *you* would be the indirect means of

<sup>16</sup> "S. T. Coleridge in Company with Socinians and Atheists," *Congregational Magazine* (August, 1835) pp. 486-490.—An editorial note states that the article was taken from Joseph Cottle's recently published volume, entitled, "On the Predictions and Miracles of Jesus Christ, with References to Sceptics, Infidels, and Socinians, by a Layman."

<sup>17</sup> B. M. Add. MS. 35344, I, 208.

conveying to the Public, at this time, whatever pleasure or profit might be involved, in this portion of our Friend's Life.

I return you many thanks for your Letter, as well as for the particulars it contained, respecting.

With my best wishes, I am My dear Sir  
Yours with great sincerity

JOSEPH COTTLE.

P.S. I have, in my collection of Portraits, one of Coleridge (six inches by seven) taken just forty years ago, a perfect likeness, as he was then; a countenance beautiful in itself, and *beaming with genius*, and which even by strangers, is universally admired. If Mr. Gillman, and Mr. Green should wish to enrich their work with this protrait of the young Bard, and will state *the size* they would like, and at the same time, (at a cost of four Guineas) would authorize me to employ our *famous* "Branwhite,"<sup>18</sup> it shall be quite at their service.

I have complete likenesses, taken at the same time, and by the same Artist, of Wordsworth, Southey, and Lamb. I might mention also, that I have larger Portraits (taken about the same time) of Coleridge, Southey, Wordsworth, all admirable likenesses but the former set are my favourites.

Bedminster. Sept. 8, 1835

As Poole's replies to these letters have been lost, we can only surmise what action he took, through a letter from H. N. Coleridge to Poole, in regard to Cottle's purpose. Obviously Cottle was causing no little disturbance, for on the 21st of September, 1835, Coleridge writes:<sup>19</sup>

I am exceedingly obliged to you for your letters and services, and for the two letters from Mr. Cottle. The latter I will safely keep until I can find an excellent Whig to frank them back—if possible; failing such, I will be beholden for the favor to the first Radical or Tory of speaking acquaintance whom I can meet amongst the representatives of the people. I have written to Mr. Green, and endeavored both by transcription and description to put him in possession of the state of Mr. Cottle's mind; and no doubt, he will be very glad to write him immediately in the required tone and terms. Between ourselves, and without any undue disparagement of Mr. C., I think you have done us all a great service in extinguishing his publication. His materials, in any shape, must be most valuable of course; but it must be obvious, that if half a dozen separate fragments of S.T.C.'s life and actions are published by different persons, just comprehending some small portions,—the man,—the personal identity, will be literally torn in pieces. He will be like a pier glass dashed in shivers—the parts all shining, but reflecting nothing entirely. I am uncommonly thankful to you for your prompt and discreet remembrance. I hope Mr. Cottle will not refuse to let Mr. Green have either the originals or copies of the letters—such at least as Mr. C. does not wish to keep back from feelings of *his own*. I think it might be men-

<sup>18</sup> Nathan Branwhite (fl. 1825), a miniature painter and engraver of Bristol.

<sup>19</sup> B. M. Add. MS. 35344, I, 122.

tioned to him that my Uncle (the writer) has in his very solemn will committed the care of collecting letters to Mr. Green, in whom he put confidences, and therefore I suggest that no consideration, but those peculiar to a man's *own self*, should restrain the communications. And this has been done generally.

We are very much obliged to you for your license to copy your picture of S.T.C. I have communicated it to Mr. Green and the Gillmans. I shall have a copy too. I am most anxious to have a copy of Mr. Cottle's portrait of S.T.C.

It will be seen in the next two letters from Cottle to Poole that the latter did not succeed in "extinguishing" the Bristol printer's indiscreet manuscript. On the contrary, he has gone ahead with his work, and obviously without any hindrance from the friends and kin of Coleridge.

LETTER I<sup>20</sup>

Dec. 23, 1835.

Bristol [Postmark]

My dear Sir:

Since I last had the pleasure of hearing from you, I have received Letters from Mr. Green and Mr. Gillman, expressing a somewhat earnest wish that I would furnish them with a narrative of our Friend, during his residence in Bristol, with his Letters, received during that period. Such application, combined with your own, were not to be resisted, and for the two months past, I have been engaged in examining all my old papers, and in throwing them into as regular a form as the case would allow; but as many, if not most, of Mr. Coleridge's Letters have no dates, and an intervention of *forty years!* has weakened my recollections of the order of some of the events; to obtain all the accuracy which is possible, I am obliged to refer to the very few persons who knew Mr. C., and of that number, you are by far the most important. I am sure your kindness will lead you to favour me with replies to the following few queries, on the resolution of which some other events depend.

1st. What time in the year 1795, did Mr. C. go to reside at Stowey?

2nd. What house did he occupy, and what rent, and when did he leave it?

3rd. Mr. C. married in the Autumn of 1795 and went to reside at Clevedon. He afterwards resided in Bristol, where his first child was born, and subsequently went again to Stowey. What was the *date* of his second residence?

4th. Did George Burnet, and Charles Lloyd both reside with him there?

5th. C. Lloyd left Coleridge. Pray, at what time? And for what cause?

6th. When did Mr. C. finally leave Stowey? And for what place? I think to go to Germany.

7th. Were not his second son, and his daughter born at Stowey?

8th. Had Mr. C. to your knowledge, begun the practice of opium, during his residence at Stowey?

At your convenience, if you could favour me with answers to the above queries, it would confer on me a great obligation, and expedite the object, which indeed thro' you has been undertaken.

<sup>20</sup> B. M. Add. MS. 35344, II, 210.

In your last letter, you pleased me with the hope of seeing you, ere this, in Bristol. In the expectation of that pleasure, I deferred complying with your request, of furnishing Mr. H. Coleridge with a copy of my Portrait of Mr. C. The fact is I have two Portraits of Mr. C.: one, a side face, perfectly like at the time it was done, (1795, by Hancock)<sup>21</sup> and one, larger, a three quarter face, painted by Vandyke,<sup>22</sup> a Bristol artist. (1796) Mr. Wade, whom you know, has also, a full sized Portrait painted by Al(l)ston,<sup>23</sup> a clever American, of who, you have doubtless often heard C. speak. This was painted in 1814, and is an excellent likeness in maturer life. Mr. Wade says he should have no objection to have his engraved, nor should I object to let either of mine be engraved, and good likenesses of so intellectual a countenance taken, respectively, at early and middle life, would greatly enhance the nature of Mr. Coleridge's Life, and Posthumous Works. I mean to write to Mr. Green on the subject. When you come to Bristol, you can decide on the merits of the Portraits.

In writing a fair copy of my MS., and making certain additions, and alterations, may occupy me six weeks, perhaps two months, and at its completion, before I send it to London, it would be very gratifying to me, if it should suit your convenience, to submit the MS. to you, in Bristol, when perhaps, you might correct, from your more perfect recollections, the order of some of the incidents, and, especially pass your judicious judgement on the general arrangement.

I am

My dear Sir,

Yours with great sincerity and respect,

JOSEPH COTTLE.

P.S. You sent me, some years ago 5 (pounds) for your copy of Captain Southey's West Indies . . . etc.

LETTER II<sup>24</sup>

My dear Sir,

I send you a line to inform you that I have completed my recollections of our Friend Coleridge. The name of Southey being intimately interwoven with the First part of the Narrative, I thought it a point of delicacy to send him the MS, expressing a full permission to strike his pen through any and every part relating to himself, to which he had the slightest objection. This he has done, and with the expurgations, it is now ready for your perusal. Perhaps you will be kind enough to give me a line, stating the time when you may find it convenient to be in Bristol.

<sup>21</sup> Robert Hancock (1730–1817). He lived in Bristol about 1796. This portrait of Coleridge is in the National Portrait Gallery.

<sup>22</sup> Peter Vandyke (fl. 1767). He lived in Bristol in late life. His picture of Coleridge is also in the National Portrait Gallery.

<sup>23</sup> Washington Allston (1779–1843), an American artist who greatly admired Coleridge. His portrait of Coleridge was made by the order of Josiah Wade, in Bristol in 1814. It hangs now in the National Portrait Gallery.

<sup>24</sup> B. M. Add. MS. 35344, II, 212.

As I so soon expect the pleasure of seeing you, I need only now subscribe myself

My dear Sir  
Yours with great sincerity  
JOSEPH COTTLE.

Bedminster, March 12th, 1836.

H. N. Coleridge, in his letter to Poole of April 16, 1836, continues to urge him to write of his memories of Coleridge; but Cottle's work is still unread by this date. Coleridge writes:<sup>25</sup>

If I might urge you, I would do so in the matter of putting on paper your recollections of your friend. No man will be able to say more about S.T.C. than you, and few so well. Write a little from time to time, no matter how desultarily this point or that point,—it can all be arranged afterwards.

I have read your letter to Mr. Green and I need not say how completely he and I agree with you and Mr. Wade with respect to any such naked statements and disclosures upon those unhappy parts of S.T.C.'s life. The life to be written must be a catholic life—the whole man from his learned father Parson Adams to his death-bed at Highgate—the whole 63 years; all must be told, but even this harmonized, deduced and developed. Mr. Cottle's memoirs will be most highly valuable in whatever shape he may think fit to compose it, and I wish you would express to him, as I believe Mr. Green will himself do, how grateful we shall be for his communication when he considers it finished. The life of Coleridge can of course, be written by one person only; but that one person must necessarily construct the tale on the statements of different friends and acquaintances of the subject; and no doubt Mr. Cottle will not object to trusting to the honour, zeal and discretion of Mr. Green, to whose superintendence Coleridge by his will has committed the charge of publishing his letters and other remains.

In the following extract of the letter, dated May 31, 1836,<sup>26</sup> from H. N. Coleridge to Poole, we see that the contents of Cottle's *Recollections* have been reported:

I write a few lines in a good deal of hurry to acknowledge the receipt of your kind letter. I have seen Mr. Green upon the subject, and we have agreed to wait till Monday or Tuesday next when we shall have an opportunity of consulting Derwent, who is coming to town, and who for himself and brother and mother is, I think, deeply in the question. What, therefore, occurs to Mr. Green and myself as the best thing for you to do now, is, to write to Mr. Cottle to appraise him that you have communicated the contents of his late letters to Mr. Green and Mr. Coleridge's own family, and that you understand that early next week their sentiments upon the matter in question will be communicated to him. It will be right that you should state to Mr. Cottle that you have informed us to the best of your ability of the nature of the proposed publication, as far as S.T.C. is

<sup>25</sup> B. M. Add. MS. 1, 127.

<sup>26</sup> B. M. Add. MS. 35344, 1, 129.

concerned. I cannot express my affliction at Cottle's unthinking and ruthless vanity; but I have no hope of being able to suppress his work. I limit my endeavors solely to inducing him not to print such wretched details as those mentioned by you.

In the following letter from Cottle<sup>27</sup> to Poole, it appears as if Cottle had been deceived by Poole. But the latter explains himself in a reply.

Bedminster, June 15th, 1836.

Sir,

In the present state of my mind I can not say Dear Sir. I am afraid I have not experienced fairness at your hands. My letter to you of May 18th, was a Letter of *advice*, not of determination. I found myself involved in difficulties, with respect to my Narrative of Coleridge, and asked *your counsel*; making three proposals, for the consideration of yourself, and Mr. Green. 1st, to *give him* my MS. on the condition alone of printing it in the form sent, or *2ly* to print my own MS. as tho' no communication had taken place between us, or *3ly*, as resulting from the *2d*, that, in case of *my* printing, Mr. G. should be allowed to take from my Vol. without restriction, whatever suited his purpose. Is there an upright mind living who should deem this an unreasonable proposal?

When I considered the quantity of extraneous matter there was in my Narrative, that is, extraneous to the rigid account of Coleridge, I could hardly expect that Mr. G. would print the whole, and would not the requirement have been equally unreasonable, which wished me to suppress all references to other deceased friends? I saw, in the first instance, this difficulty, and *declined the work*, but when I received the combined requests of yourself, Mr. Green, and Mr. Gillman, to persist in giving them an account of Coleridge's Bristol Life, and knowing that no other person *could* do it, I *did* relax, and resolved to draw up this account. I accomplished the object in my best and most impartial manner, and you came all the way from Stowly to read my MS. You did read it with every mark of approval; once and again commending the *writing*, and at the conclusion, your remark was: "This is the only long MS. I ever read, or heard read, without yawning." To one part alone you expressed an objection, and that was to Mr. C's Letter, wherein he requested that, for the warning of others, after his death, a full account might be *published* of his guilty passion for Opium. If there were objections secretly working in your mind, why did you not candidly avow them?

On my sending you my letter of May 18th, you replied, on the 4th inst. by informing me, "I have communicated the contents of your Letter to Mr. Henry Coleridge, and a day or two ago I received a letter from him, in which he says, that he has seen Mr. Green, and that they are both of the opinion, your work seriously affects, not only our beloved Friend's *Reputation*, but that of his surviving Family. They deem it right to consult those of them within their reach, and then to write to you." This conjoint Family Letter, I rather anxiously awaited, imagining what its contents would probably be, and determining, as

<sup>27</sup> B. M. Add. MS. 35344, II, 214.

far as possible, to make every sacrifice to the feeling of Coleridge' Family, not incompatible with *Truth*. They *could* know nothing of my MS. but from your representation, and what those representations were, may be collected from the following, rude, and ungentlemanly Letter, received yesterday from Mr. Gillman.

Highgate, 8th, June, 1836

Sir,

In your letter to Mr. Poole, sometime since, you write, 'I am almost ashamed to say, your letter (viz. Mr. P's) has shaken my resolution' &c, and afterwards, 'after having returned Mr. Gillman a negative.' My request to which this negative had been returned, was, indeed, best for the restoration of *property* not belonging to *you*, but to the Trustees of the Estate of the late S.T. Coleridge. You add, 'I could on no account be induced to answer such versatility as voluntarily to propose a change in my resolution, especially with an uncertainty whether or not my proposal would now be accepted.' You further add, 'If Mr. Green would convey to me one line, the way would be clear'

On receiving this information, I immediately took up my pen, and addressed myself courteously to *the man* who had been so wavering, and who is I understand, was about to make a breach of private confidence, reposed in him full faith by a friend revealing to him his sufferings, unconscious at that time of their real cause, but attributing them to the use of *Opium*, which he abhorred.

In my letter, I gave you a short sketch of his sufferings, with the appearance of his body after death. Yours of the 1st of Dec<sup>r</sup>. last reached me, informing me that the MS. was complete, and that you would now have it copied out fair, as I presumed for Mr. Green. I waited till a few days ago, to ask whether the MS. had arrived, and to my surprise learnt, that it had not, and that you are now contemplating its publication. You are ignorant of the consequences of this proceeding, this betrayal of confidence reposed in you by a departed friend. In the case of Murray versus Dallas, it was ruled by the Lord Chancellor, that property in Letters is not the property of the possessor, but where there is a Will, that of the Executor. This is now a received and established axiom, and therefore an Injunction is applicable to your case, and, as I am informed by able Lawyers, in London, will lay immediately on application, when you publish the MS.

Your conduct admits of no *delicacy*, and in such a case, Executors and Trustees have no choice. Trusting you will see the propriety of delivering up the letters, (or copies) in question,

I am,

Sir &c

JAMES GILLMAN.

Allow me to ask you, what there was in my letter of the 10th of May, to authorize such a letter as this? If I had not believed (justly or unjustly) Mr. Gillman to be the man who so long befriended Coleridge, and that he bore the reputation of being a man of honour, and understanding, I should have turned from his

letter, with disgust, as being vulgar and bullying; replete as it is with misstatements, and evidencing nothing that characterizes a well disciplined mind; being as destitute of sound reasoning, as of common courtesies of life. It wants *sense*, and *manners*.

I see plain enough that you have separated yourself from Coleridge's old and steady friends, who have proved their friendship, by something more substantial than words. You seem to have entered heart and hand in the views of his more recent friends, and are labouring, in conjunction with them, to suppress Truth, and promote literary Falsehood; to cheat the *Public* with a *Life* of Coleridge, which is no *Life*. I will become accessory to no such temporizing conduct. Without conceding Coleridge's faults, I have done him *ample justice*, and have set an example of what Biography *ought to be*—a faithful exhibition of *the man*, not a stream of undeviating Eulogy. I regard *Traits of Characters*, as of more consequence often than that even *Facts* themselves. And who are these who are now so clamorous to conceal Coleridge's undeniable, and disastrous habits? their honor, now so sensitive as to shrink from the least intimation that C. was once poor, and rescued from want, by strangers rather than *friends*. Instead of cherishing a *tender feeling* toward those who assisted poor Coleridge, when deserted by his Relatives, and (for one individual I can answer) who often straitened *themselves* to cheer his drooping heart, the weeds of indignation spring up, and they shudder at the remotest intimation that Coleridge classed other than those, to whom he naturally looked for support, but who in his extremity *deserted* the great Ornament of their Name and Race. The *insolent letter* and the *impotent threat* of Mr. James Gillman (once so obsequiously polite) have excited trains of thought, reluctantly expressed, while every generous mind will sympathize in the necessity that called them forth.

You are urgent with me to pass over in silence Mr. De Quincey's gift to Coleridge of Three Hundred Pounds.<sup>28</sup> With this request no consideration on earth should induce me to comply; and that for two reasons. *First*, because I was the communicating Agent, and never before, *fully* announced who the Donor was; and *Secondly*, because so generous an action ought to be made known, in justice to *him*, and as an example to *others*. I have seen nothing of Mr. De Quincey for the last twenty years, and grieved I am to learn that he has adopted the destructive Opium practices of poor Coleridge! With this however I have nothing to do. I can only deplore the misdirection of his splendid talents, and hope and pray that he may yet be reclaimed.

And now I must speak one more word about that Letter, which you wish me to suppress, in which S.T.C. makes a full confession of all the sins he had committed, in drenching himself with Opium, and requires, that, "after his death," it might be made public, "as a warning to others." This is the most *redeeming*

<sup>28</sup> This loan (not a "gift") De Quincey proposed in July, 1807, but it was not paid until November. See James Dykes Campbells' *Coleridge; A Narrative of the Events of his Life* (L., 1894), pp. 163–4. See also Alexander H. Japp's *De Quincey Memorials* (L., 1891), 1, 127–134; and *Unpublished Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. by Earl Leslie Griggs (L., 1932), II, 131 and note, 293 and note.

Letter<sup>29</sup> he ever wrote, and I should have thought that no friend to Coleridge's reputation would desire the withdrawal of a letter which propitiates the Reader, and converts *condemnation* into *compassion*.

Your argument against *publicity* as to his *passion* for Opium, is also not sound, for fear, it seems, it should urge others to the same practices, from the perverse passion for *imitation*. On this principle, no Highwayman, no Forger, no Sheep or Horse-stealer should be punished, lest, thro' its notoriety, others should be stimulated to taste the sweet luxury of getting *hanged*.

In looking at one of the periodicals, the other day, I saw a Letter of Coleridge to a friend, written a year or two before his death, where he says, "If I should be arrested for Eight Pounds, I could not pay it without selling my Books." The declaration made my blood run cold! Let the Biographer of his later life explain where, at this time, all those *New Family Friends* were; (not his *old Friends*) and who are now so rampant to derive honour from Coleridge's name, and fame; desiring, to partake the triumph, without sharing the gale, and reminding one of Robert Lowell's line on Chatterton.

"When living starved, and when dead adored."

I shall have *no more communications* with Mr. Green, or Mr. Gillman, or any of the family; whatever they may write. A civil letter deserved a *civil reply*, but the *coarse* answer of Mr. Gillman, would merit unqualified *contempt*, if a portion of it were not transferred to that half-Lawyer who *evidently* dictated it, and who has so libelled a late Lord Chancellor, as well as common sense.

When I find that you "run with the hare, and yet hold with the hounds"; that while you are speaking and writing courteously to me, you are impressing the mind of others with those hostile feelings which prompted Mr. Gillman's letter, I perceive you have deteriorated, since our last interview, (38 years ago) and I have now only to say that I neither expect nor desire to hear from you again, tho' my good wishes will continue.

JOSEPH COTTLE.

P.S. Mildness might have produced some effect, but I have been attacked on a side where I am invulnerable.

P.S. Coleridge's character will only suffer from *concealment*, and false statements, and will rise in proportion as *Truth is respected*. Altho' Mr. Green is involved in this affair, yet from all accounts I have received, I entertain for him great personal respect, both as to his Worth and Talents. But after all, the *Indestructable monument* to Coleridge, is, his Writings, and I confidently expect that his "Posthumous Works," under the superintendence of Mr. G. will prove the Key Stone to that *Movement*.

<sup>29</sup> Cottle is evidently referring to S. T. Coleridge's letter to Josiah Wade of June 26, 1814, although he is not quoting accurately. It should read: "After my death, I earnestly entreat, that a full and unqualified narration of my wretchedness, and of its guilty cause, may be made public, that at least some little good may be affected by the direful example." —*Letters of S. T. Coleridge*, ed. by E. H. Coleridge, (L., 1895), p. 624.—Cottle, of course, published his own letter from Coleridge in which was an anguished confession of the opium habit. See the letter of April 26, 1814, in *Letters of S. T. Coleridge*, pp. 616–619.

You say, Coleridge at no period would have desired the publication of those confessional letters. This is an unfounded opinion. He knew that he had written those letters, for the very *purpose* of giving publicity to his lamentable practice and that "as a warning to others." At the time he wrote these Letters, his understanding was as sound as at any time of his life. What right therefore has any man to say, that his wishes and opinions were latterly different from those he had expressly avowed when no evidence can be adduced in support of this gratuitous affirmation? If Mr. C. had ever requested Mr. Wade to return him his *very* important Letters, his honourable mind would have instantly complied. Or if he had requested *me* to return those letters in which he deplores the effects of Opium, I should have instantly complied. But he never made such requests to one or the other, and the inference to be drawn from this, is decisive, namely, that his formerly expressed wishes should be complied with. It is confirmatory also of this opinion, that when I called on Mr. Coleridge in 1821, he was totally silent on the subject. After such proofs, to persist in denying Mr. C's assent to the publications of these *solemnly instructive Letters*, is monstrous.

Mr. Gillman, I see affirms that Mr. Coleridge "*abhorred* Opium," and that his bodily and mental sufferings did not originate in *this cause!* He might as well affirm that the Sun's rays are *dark*. I wish that he and others would learn a lesson from the noble-minded Son of Crabbe! I am fighting the Battle of the Public.

The Public shall judge between us. Mr. Gillman may regret his rude letter, his *misstatements*, when too late.<sup>30</sup>

POOLE'S REPLY TO COTTLE:<sup>31</sup>

Stowey.

19th June, 1836.

[No salutation.]

I was never more surprised than I was by the contents of your letter of the 15th inst. which I received the other night, In complaining that Mr. Gillman had written a harsh letter to you, you have, without the least provocation on my part written a most harsh and angry one to me., on the conjecture forsooth that you had not experienced fairness at my hands and that I have been impressing the Friends of others with those hostile feelings which prompted Mr. Gillman's letter.

You begin by referring to the points relative to the disposal of your work contained in your letter of May the 20th. Now it happened on the receipt of that letter I was much engaged and had not time to copy it; I therefore at once enclosed it to Mr. Henry Coleridge in a short letter stating the substance verbatim as nearly as I could recollect of what I had said to you in reply to that letter of the 20th of May. I know not how I could make him, and through him Mr. Green and Mr. Gillman better acquainted with your views; and it rests for them to receive the proposals as they thought fit. If you wish to see the letters in which I enclosed yours to Mr. H. Coleridge, I will obtain it from him for your

<sup>30</sup> Poole has inscribed this note on the letter: "fr. Cottle, 15th June, 1836. Con. his Narrative relative to Coleridge—a curious letter—see my answer. No man can be more wrong."

<sup>31</sup> B. M. Add. MS., 1, 214.

perusal, and indeed any other letters which I have written to Coleridge's friend since his lamented death. There are only two points in which I, and, I believe most of Coleridge's *old* and *new* Friends, (as you term them) differ from you as to the propriety of your Narrative,—and these are the first the entering into the detail of our poor Friend's conduct while under the influence of opium and consequent disease and the publishing of letters which he wrote during the melancholy hallucination.

2nd. as to propriety of publishing the pecuniary transaction which took place between him and Mr. De Quincey. Now as to the first, however, we may differ. I did not for a moment disguise my sentiments while you were reading your Narrative; and when I got to Mr. Wade, which was immediately from your house, I urged him to join me in persuading you to suppress those affecting letters.

As to the 2d point, the transaction with Mr. De Quincey. On very little consideration it seemed clear to my mind that it was improper to publish it without the consent of Coleridge or his representatives (he himself being dead), and also of Mr. De Quincey, the other party concerned. If in transactions of this nature that sort of delicacy were not to be exercised, what man of genius with the least feeling (and can genius ever be without it) would receive pecuniary aid from any one? Would he not naturally ask when offered assistance—Sir, Is my acceptance of this *to be published?*

To go back to your proposals in your letter to me of the 20th of May.<sup>32</sup> In repeating and speaking of them, you ask me, "Is there any upright man living who would deem this an unreasonable proposal?"

I answer *yes*, because either of the Proposals the publishing of those matters on which I have spoken above, and on which I might have much dilated and which I think come by no means within the scope of fair or useful Biography.

One word more. On receiving your correspondence with me which I always faithfully copied, I am not surprised at Mr. Gillman, Mr. Green, and Mr. H. Coleridge's expecting that you would have frankly transmitted your MS. L.[etters] to them, nor I at their consequent disappointment. Tho' I by no means desire to vindicate the tone of Mr. Gillman's letter. If you had in your Narrative confined yourself to our dear Coleridge you might still have sent it to them, and I yet wish as I strongly recommended when we were together that you should separate what concerns him from other matter—reserving the latter for a distinct publication.

I trust by this time your asperity toward me is somewhat softened and that you will excuse my thinking it right to write you tho contrary to *your expectation or desire* and, indeed, I should have written much more at large if it did not so happen that I am engaged to be at Bristol on Wednesday next to stand Godfather to my nephew Richard King's little boy on Thursday next, and unless I find a Note from you for me at No. 2 Redcliff Parade declining to see me I shall call

<sup>32</sup> This reference may be to Cottle's preceding letter of the 15th of June, as his quotation, the reader will see, is taken from the one of that date. His previous mention of a May 20th letter must be correct, and it is quite possible that Cottle used the same words in the earlier letter. At any rate, I have not found this particular letter.

on you Wednesday evening or Thursday morning soon after 9 o'clock when I hope I shall be able to convince you that a mutual good feeling of twenty-three years standing ought not to be given up for the groundless suspicion of an hour, and that you will be enabled in your next letter to me with truth to say *my dear Sir*—as I now honestly declare I am my dear Sir yours very sincerely,

THOS. POOLE.

P.S. I have heard nothing from Mr. Henry C. or any since I last wrote you.

Joseph Cottle, Esq.,  
Carlton Place, Bedminster.

Cottle writes quickly back to Poole, showing some grace of forgiveness in being too harsh, but he is unbending in his ideas regarding biography.<sup>33</sup>

My dear Sir,

You have satisfactorily exculpated yourself, and I perceive my surmizes were unfounded. My Letter to you, written under the excitement of the moment, was other than I should have written. Your temperate reply did you credit, and I beg your pardon.

I am under the painful necessity of stating that, at this time, and under present circumstances, *I cannot see you* in Carlton Place. We have the misfortune to differ in judgement on two points, and as we do not lightly adopt our opinions, and have mutually recorded those adverse opinions by Letter, mere verbal discussion, would only give pain, without producing any change in our views. To save you therefore unnecessary trouble, I am compelled to say, I shall not be at home, at the time you propose to call.

On your *next* visit to Bristol, it will give me much pleasure to see you.

My respect for you is undiminished.

JOSEPH COTTLE

Bedminster, June 21, 1836.

POOLE TO COLERIDGE.<sup>34</sup>

N. Stowey,  
1st Sept. 1836.

My dear Sir,

You have I doubt not been expecting to hear from me, but the negotiating, by writing, on a delicate matter, with such a publishing gentleman as our friend Cottle appeared to me somewhat dangerous.

I therefore thought it best to postpone attempting to set him right about Mr. Gillman's letter until I could see him in person, which I had hopes of doing on my attending the British association at Bristol last week.

<sup>33</sup> B. M. Add. MS. 35344, II, 217.

<sup>34</sup> B. M. Add. MS. 35344, I, 181.

I however failed. The morning after my arrival, I called at his house, and after a little waiting his sister came home and said he was too unwell to see me, that he was in bed with a blister on for the relief of his eyes.

I regretted the circumstances and told her I should remain in Bristol during the week, that I should be happy to speak with him, and that I would call upon him on any day at any hour if he would favour me with a Note at Mr. King's where I was remaining.

I heard nothing from him. On the day before I left Bristol I called on our simple hearted very different friend Friend *Wade*. As he occasionally sees Cottle, I desired him to take the earliest opportunity and to tell him I wished to have seen him and to have talked with him about the letters which Mr. Derwent Coleridge and Mr. Green wrote to him—that those letters I understood he had not answered, unless he had done it very lately—that Mr. Gillman wrote a letter by his own impulse, in the warmth of his feeling toward his dear departed friend, on apprehending that some things with which the publick had nothing to do, and injurious to the memory whom he held so dear, were about to published. That in reality neither Mr. Green nor Mr. Henry Coleridge knew anything of his writing, and therefore Mr. Cottle had with them, as he had with me in other points, assumed that for which there was no foundation and I hoped in learning this real state of the case, he would have candour enough to acknowledge he had done wrong. I added that no one could be surprised at Mr. Gillman's considering the circumstances which had attended the correspondence with both.

Wade promised he would see Cottle without delay, and hoped that it maybe productive of peace, that he would take care and communicate all I had said to him. Cottle had never told him that he had heard from Derwent or Mr. Green.

Whether this will induce Cottle to write to any of you or to me I know not but I think if I hear nothing from him soon, I shall write to him.

It is amusing, but I called on Jack Pritchard and there I met old Mrs. Estling<sup>35</sup> who I thought had been long dead. She told me in a large party it was understood that Coleridge's friends were going to prosecute Cottle if he published and asked me if it was true. I told her there had been some differences of opinion as to the propriety of publishing various matter and that was foundation enough for such a report. She said she had letters which she would by no means allow to be published, and therefore I thought she said, had refused to give them up. I told her that you and Mr. Green would be much obliged to her for any letters which she possessed, and that she may be assured they would not be made an improper use by either of you.

Another thing amused me. Wade told me that Cottle had read to him in MS, and he observed to him there was so much egotism that everyone would laugh at him. I should think it very odd, added Wade, if I published every little kindness I did my dear friend Coleridge, or indeed any other person.

.....

When you write just say a few of the last words you have received from our

<sup>35</sup> Poole is doubtless referring to the widow of the Rev. John Prior Estlin, whose letters from Coleridge were published in 1884.

friend in the North. I am come quickly and carelessly to the end of my paper—  
excuse all lines of omission or commissions.

Say what you think of writing to Cottle, and if *what*.

THOS. POOLE

Henry Nelson Coleridge Esq<sup>r</sup>  
St. Mary Ottery

Literary history shows that Cottle proceeded as he pleased with his  
publication. What other correspondence followed after this last letter of  
Poole's there is no record so far as I have been able to discover.

WARREN E. GIBBS

*Columbia University*