

## Some Uncollected Coleridge Letters

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE. Edited by Earl Leslie Griggs. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1933. 2 vols. \$10.

Reviewed by GEORGE McLEAN HARPER

NO art or science is more individual than poetry. It springs from the inmost depths of personal experience. The poet has truer perceptions, feels more keenly, and expresses himself more peculiarly than other men. One might therefore expect poets to be solitary persons, with a particular aversion for one another. The love and mutual dependence between Coleridge, Charles Lamb, and William and Dorothy Wordsworth would be a conspicuous proof of the falseness of this expectation. It is impossible to disentangle the thoughts that originated in Coleridge's fertile brain from those that underlie many of Wordsworth's poems; equally impossible to determine how often Coleridge's opinions were based on the firmer convictions of Wordsworth, or how many of the most penetrating observations and happy phrases of both poets were caught by them from the lips of Dorothy in their walks and talks with her. Almost equally interdependent are the critical views of Wordsworth, Lamb, and Coleridge and their ultimate expression in Wordsworth's great Preface to "Lyrical Ballads" or in Coleridge's Lectures on Shakespeare or in Lamb's appreciations of seventeenth century plays and lyrics.

Mr. Griggs's contribution on Coleridge is an important achievement in the field of literary biography. It is a result of remarkable energy and industry. He could not have succeeded in so vast an undertaking had he not won the friendship of the Rev. G. H. B. Coleridge, the poet's great-grandson. Furthermore, he benefited from the wonderful generosity with which English men and women usually treat serious and well equipped American scholars, for the letters were widely scattered, in the possession of many persons, who of course knew their value.

"Uncollected" would have been a more accurate word in the title than "Unpublished," because a considerable proportion of the letters were already in print, though not in E. H. Coleridge's two large volumes. It is a great service to have brought these together in one collection and a still greater service to have added so much as Mr. Griggs has done from manuscript sources. It is true that E. H. Coleridge's volumes, published in 1895, contain a greater number of important letters and that he rejected with good reason many which Mr. Griggs has included. Yet since interest in Coleridge is more widespread now, this aftermath is a welcome supplement to the main harvest. As one might expect from Coleridge, there are many passages of an impersonal character, on philosophical problems, on matters of technique, on questions of literary taste, on the principles of criticism. These are of high value. Others throw light on certain biographical points hitherto obscure. For example, the charge once cruelly brought against Sir Walter Scott, that he had, in "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," taken unfair advantage of having heard "Christabel" read aloud before it was published, is absolutely refuted; and the unfortunate misunderstanding between Wordsworth and Coleridge in 1810 is shown to have been the latter's fault. An important clue is given in regard to the wanderings of William and Dorothy Wordsworth in Germany in 1799, tending to confirm a conjecture I have elsewhere made, that they went as far southwest as to the Rhine and perhaps even farther.

Only with half-truth did Coleridge write:

To be beloved is all I need,  
And whom I love, I love indeed.

Rather, there was something besides love that he needed. He had love in abundance. No one possessed a greater gift for making friends, and his friends were marvellously faithful to him. He tried their patience almost beyond endurance; yet

they stood by him unflinchingly. The Wedgwood brothers, Tom Poole, Lamb, Southey, William and Dorothy Wordsworth, Mrs. Wordsworth, Sara Hutchinson, the Gilmans,—it is a long and only a partial list of men and women whose homes and purses and hearts were open to him. They recognized his genius, enjoyed his humor, profited by his ideal wisdom, pitied his frailty, and did all they could to alleviate his sufferings. Again and again in Dorothy's journal and letters, for example, occur notes of sympathy and distress like the following:

Every sight and every sound reminded me of him—dear, dear fellow, of his many talks to us, by day and by night, of all dear things. I was melancholy and could not talk, but at last I eased my heart by weeping. But friends were decidedly not all he needed. He needed health, which was denied him from childhood—"My body which does me grievous wrong," he cried, not without cause; and he needed firmness of character, which is not always within reach of an invalid.

In spite of all his troubles, however, he shows himself at times, in these letters, not only cheerful but full of fun. What were more specifically the troubles? A chronic condition of neuralgia, aggravated by the misuse of opiates; an unfortunate marriage, quixotically made, with a woman who in many respects was excellent, but evidently lacked imagination and breadth of understanding; and, as a result of these causes, a fatal inability to command his own vast mental resources.

The letters teem with interesting remarks; for example, he says of Charles Lamb: "His taste acts so as to appear like the unmechanic simplicity of an instinct." To William Godwin he writes: "Let me tell you, Godwin, four men such as you, I, Davy [Humphrey Davy, the physicist], and Wordsworth, do not meet together in one house every day in the year. I mean four men so distinct with so many sympathies." Of the study of Greek he remarks: "It seems wrong that a language containing books so much more numerous and valuable than Latin, and in itself so much more easy and perspicuous, should be confined, as to the ready and fluent reading of it, to a few scholars." In a gay letter to Wordsworth he says: "You and I, dear William, pass for an ugly pair with the lower orders, which, I protest, dear Dorothy will not admit." The following is from a very important letter to Robert Southey:

In an evil hour for me did I first pay attention to Mrs. Coleridge, in an evil hour for me did I marry her, but it shall be my care and my passion that it shall not be an evil day for her, and that whatever I may be or may be represented as a husband, I may yet be unexceptionable as her protector and friend.

To Thomas De Quincey he writes, with characteristic warmth: "That there is such a man in the world as Wordsworth, and that such a man enjoys such a family, makes both death and my inefficient life a less grievous thought to me." There are scores of equally interesting passages and many that are very amusing. One of the most serious, which should please all of us who regret the unnecessary and miserable war of 1812, is in a letter to Washington Allston, the American painter, in October, 1815:

I shall utter a voice of lamentation on the moral war between the child and the parent country, a war laden with curses for unknown generations in both countries.

As material for literary biography, no more important work than this collection has been published for several years. That Mr. Griggs is an American is creditable to our country. The beautiful printing and binding of the volumes are worthy of the letters themselves and of their editor's judgment, industry, and skill.

George McLean Harper, who last year retired from the Woodrow Wilson professorship of literature at Princeton University, is one of the outstanding authorities in this country on the Lake poets.

The Hamburg Senate has ordered the memorial to Heine to be removed from the City Park. Heine was of Jewish descent. He became a Christian in 1825.

## Jungle to You!

PINDORAMA (*Jungle to You!*) By Desmond Holdridge. New York: Minton, Balch & Co. 1933. \$3.

Reviewed by ARTHUR RUHL

PINDORAMA, it seems, meaning "land of palms," is an old Indian word for the great valley of the Amazon. It was there, in the British Guiana hinterland, on the borders of Brazil and Venezuela, up the Rios Negro, Branco, Catrimany, and various other Amazonian headwaters, that Mr. Holdridge did his exploring. Not that it makes much difference to the average stay-at-home readers of narratives of this kind, who want to enjoy quite comfortably their jungles, fevers, poisoned-arrows, and what not, and don't much care whether the mysterious Uaikas—"only two whoops and a holler from the amoeba"—are South Americans or Filipinos.

Mr. Holdridge is attached to the Department of Ethnology of the Brooklyn Museum and the solid facts he gathered were doubtless satisfactory to its Curator, Dr.

ical joke of the wild Indians whose life he shared for a time turned on cruelty just as the typical Broadway joke turns on smut. Cruelty became funny, even to Holdridge himself. On the other hand, the wild Indian, although not in the least a "noble red man," isn't, therefore a beast—"he's simply a man, like the rest of us, who muddles through a bewildering world, blundering, banging his head on stone walls, hurting himself and his fellows, being a little happy sometimes, and finally dying without having learned a hell of a lot."

There were times when he was in dire peril and scared blue and with reason, and others when he got along so pleasantly with the natives that they "threw" parties for him night after night. Holdridge swallowed gallons of local fire-water—he had to, to prove his personal prowess—got drunk with the rest, "popped" his lunch with the rest, and next morning, a little seedy with the rest, hit the river trail again. There were many dances, but despite the "throbbing



UAIKA IN A CORRESPONDENCE-COURSE CANOE.  
A photograph from "Pindorama."

Herbert Spinden, himself a veteran tropical traveller, or he would have been kept "dusting off the bones of long dead Indians" instead of being permitted to range through the Amazonian wilderness getting acquainted with live ones. But the important thing to the stay-at-home reader aforesaid is that Mr. Holdridge is an altogether unconventional type of tropical explorer—young and husky, evidently, gifted with humor and a lot of hard, common sense, and with a really extraordinary knack of writing a book of this sort (in the calm and comfort, doubtless, of a New York flat or office) in the literal mood and words of the day's adventures.

This is much more of a trick than you might think. Between the thing itself, as it actually came, and the written record as it almost invariably emerges, there interposes a sea-change which alters its character altogether. If the explorer is of the routine "expedition" type, the resulting report is pompous and dull, to all but a few ethnologists. If he is a professional writer looking for copy, the thing as it actually came will be touched up, prettified or darkened, somehow or other transformed, and this with the best of intentions and sincerity. With the worst, as in the case of one or two tropical yarn-spinners needing no further advertisement, it will be used merely as the basis for highly-spiced fiction, bearing just about as much resemblance to the real thing as the average Broadway mystery-play bears to everyday life.

Mr. Holdridge is miles away from both. One or two of his very rare philosophical generalizations will suggest his general approach. He notes, in one place, the degree to which the savage's life, with its constant physical danger and uncertainty, inevitably accentuates cruelty. The typ-

drums" which doubtless accompanied them but which Mr. Holdridge mercifully omits, these didn't differ, essentially, from Saturday-night bath-tub gin parties "thrown" in many a humdrum Manhattan flat. Pretty brown girls would be modest with a modesty painfully rare in so-called civilized communities, yet when sufficiently pie-eyed with rum or some such local drug as *yekuana*, would join enthusiastically in "scenes closely resembling Hollywood conceptions of a hot night among Parisian drug addicts."

Mr. Holdridge's story is honest, shrewd, packed with common sense. It debunks without making debunking a pose, is humorous without effort, and, as already remarked, its author has a really unusual gift for setting down with complete freedom from retrospective touching-up, the thing as it seemed at the time.

### Self-Appointed Love-Child

(Continued from first page)

In this republic. The effects remain Still with us. Take Ring Lardner or Mark Twain,

George Ade or Mr. Dooley. They all speak The same tongue with a different technique.

And different also in their power and pace, They yet say something of and by the race,

Here feeble, transitory, insecure, And there eternal, destined to endure. I will not push too far that parallel.

You're young, and it's perhaps too soon to tell.

But anyhow I view with shameless glee This volume, and your other jeux d'esprit, Nor do I feel the sentiment is wrong. At any rate I thank you for your song. O self-appointed love-child, crash along!



# The BOWLING GREEN

## The Folder

MAGIC SQUARES

SIR:—Being especially interested in Magic Squares, I thoroughly enjoyed the novel manner in which the Old Mandarin (Bowling Green, Sept. 30) showed how by a simple reversal of the great diagonals of a 4 x 4 seriatim table, a perfect Magic Square is produced, which totals 34 in many ways. It is faulty in the middle groups of 2 x 2; but it has one count that even the super-perfect have not: the "diamond" count of 16-7-10-1 and 13-11-6-4. The Old Mandarin neglected to show you that the corners of every 3 x 3 group also total 34.

I used the term "super-perfect." It applies to the Old Mandarin's second Magic Square, which has perfect inner 2 x 2 groups of 2 x 2; but it has one count that "diamond" count. Let me show you a diagram of this second Magic Square, developed from the following letter values:

A	B	C	D
0	4	8	12
a	b	c	d
1	2	3	4

Aa	Dc	Cb	Bd
Cd	Bb	Ac	Da
Bc	Ca	Dd	Ab
Db	Ad	Ba	Cc

1	15	10	8
12	6	3	13
7	9	16	2
14	4	5	11

It is said that there are 880 different ways of arranging the 16 numbers into Magic Squares; but as the values of the capital letters may be arranged in 24 different ways, and the same may be said of the small or lower-case letters, it would seem that 576 of these arrangements might be had from this diagram alone. All will be "perfect," but not all will be "super-perfect."

CHARLES Q. DE FRANCE.

Lincoln, Nebraska.

### AN IRISHMAN SENDS US HIS FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF CHICAGO:

Chicago is an infinitely more interesting place than I had ever suspected. They tell no lie when they say it is big. The great American superlative is so rampant here that it is almost impossible to adjust the perspective. Viewed from the air, at the raw hour of 5 A.M., the city looked forbidding, with its pale lights vainly striving to pierce the winding-sheet of the departed night. I was secretly wishing that I might continue on under the warm wing of the United Air Line's hostess. But the searchlights from below found us; there was a moment of breathless expectancy as our pilot silenced the roaring motors and the big ship, purring like a contented kitten, circled majestically; then we were gliding gently down between two silver shafts.

You might not believe it, but Chicago has already forgotten all about the depression. A hotel manager in New York today will almost pay one to stay under his roof, but here the hotels all have more business than they can handle. I began to think that a little depression was not such a bad thing after all, when three hotels in succession refused to take me in, for love or money.

Efficiency is the thing most talked of here and least in evidence. For instance, Monday morning's paper goes on sale early on Sunday afternoon, so that anybody wanting to get Sunday's news has to wait for Monday's evening papers. That's where efficiency trips itself up. The whole atmosphere is perhaps typified by the manner in which the big town bends beneath the tyranny of a little river. A little tug-boat snorts imperiously on the

little river and, with consummate efficiency, the little bridges, forming links in the most important thoroughfares, are raised to permit the passage of the tug while the town stamps its feet and bites its nails. A community less efficiency-minded would build high bridges with long inclines.

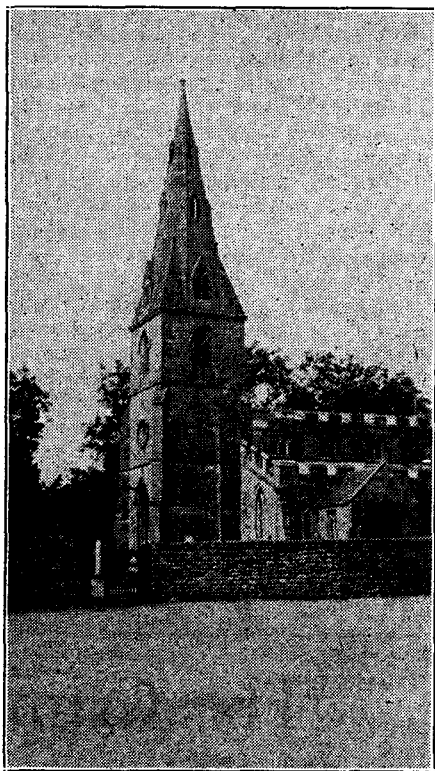
I notice, by the way, that the Stars and Stripes floats night and day over the building that houses the greatest newspaper on Michigan Avenue, which shows that Chicago has a far deeper sense of humor than New York. Do you remember how a mob besieged Tammany Hall on last Independence Day because the janitor forgot to haul down the flag at sundown?

Perhaps because of, rather than despite, its lack of sophistication, Chicago is a great place to enjoy life, and it's worth coming here to ride along the North Shore Drive on the open deck of a bus.

MICHAEL.

### ALDWINKLE

SIR:—The enclosed photographs were taken on a warm, sunny day last July at Aldwinkle, Northants. The Sabbath it was when people were in decent blacks and sported their white cotton gloves. Vesper bells militantly clanged from every belfry, and the bell ringers must have perspired freely in the midst of the unusually hot weather. Overtones from



ST. PETER'S, ALDWINKLE  
Church of Thomas Fuller's Father

nearby villages drifted over the fields, softened by the miles and sound-absorbing haystacks, as we drifted along the lanes at "wild-flowering speed."

This was a special day in my life, full of an awareness of the Lady of Fotheringay, John Dryden and Thomas Fuller—that genial and witty gentleman, beloved by you, Charles Lamb, Coleridge, and me—among others. One half of one per cent. of my debt to you for introducing me years ago to Thomas Fuller may now be crossed off, by sharing a section of this Belfry afternoon around Aldwinkle and Oundle.

You will remember that Fuller (born 1608) lived here as a boy until he was sent up to Cambridge at the age of 13. If you need a reminder, John Dryden was born in this Rectory, the home of his mother's father who was Rector of All Saints in 1631 and went up to Cambridge when he was 19 after a taste of the Oundle Grammar School and Westminster.

I also ate cherries from Kenneth Grahame's cherry orchard, bordering on the

"Wind in the Willows" stream (covered with Water Crowfoot blossoms), chased William and Dorothy Wordsworth, especially Dorothy, on their trip from the Lakes to Scotland and followed Johnson and Boswell part way on their tour to the Hebrides reading all three Journals at a leisurely pace.

Moored around Steventon, where the enormous key to Jane Austen's father's church hangs on the Yew tree, was shocked at the squalor of the Austen house at Chawton, had lunch with Hugh Walpole at Brackenburn on Derwentwater, and also lunched with the Nicolson at Sissinghurst Castle in Kent.

We took our car over and for three months motored very slowly through English lanes by Bartholomew's Contour Maps. There is nothing like them to insure leisurely country pace, is there?

MARION E. DODD.

Northampton, Mass.

### "IN THE PASHA'S GARDEN"

I wish there were space to use in full a letter from Professor Alan Strout, of Texas, in which he shows in the 53rd chapter of Stendhal's *De L'Amour* the origin of one of H. G. Dwight's fine stories—and points out how Mr. Dwight improved and enriched his source. "I wish," writes Professor Strout, "you could work this into the Bowling Green as an example of plot superiority over an original. Most of us pedants are so thoroughly convinced that the past is superior to the present, it's refreshing to me to find a contemporary going the past one better."

Professor Strout writes:—

SIR:—Mr. H. G. Dwight's *In the Pasha's Garden*, the last tale of *Stamboul Nights* (1916), has always seemed to me one of the finest of American short stories. In plot it is a variant of such narratives as Mrs. Wharton's *The Duchess at Prayer* (1900), Poe's *The Cask of Amontillado* (1846), and Balzac's *La Grande Bretèche* (1832), but though quieter in tone—its mood is that of Browning's *Andrea del Sarto*, where a common grayness silvers everything—it is no less powerful than any one of these.

In his introductory *Scribe to a Possible Reader* Mr. Dwight writes in *Stamboul Nights*:

No good fairy, alas, dropped the gift of invention into my cradle, and not one of these stories could really be called mine. Several of them I put on paper almost exactly as they were told me. More of them were pieced together out of odd bits of experience and gossip. The seed of one was contained in a paragraph of the *Matin* which I read one morning in Paris. And another may be found, in miniature, in Stendhal's "De L'Amour." . . .

Stendhal's sentimentally pleasing little narrative grows, under Mr. Dwight's hands, into a masterpiece. From the nullity Oualid he creates a brilliant characterization in his Pasha, showing, incidentally, how much more character than plot has to do with the effectiveness of a story. In its Eastern setting we might expect the fiendish revenge that we find in *La Grande Bretèche* or *The Duchess at Prayer*. But the Pasha is unvindictive, his revenge is unpremeditated: in burying the chest he acts neither as an avenger nor even as a judge, but as a lover. In the Arab original, as in Balzac's and Mrs. Wharton's stories, we sympathize with the young lovers. In *In the Pasha's Garden*, a much greater triumph on the author's part, we sympathize with the injured husband.

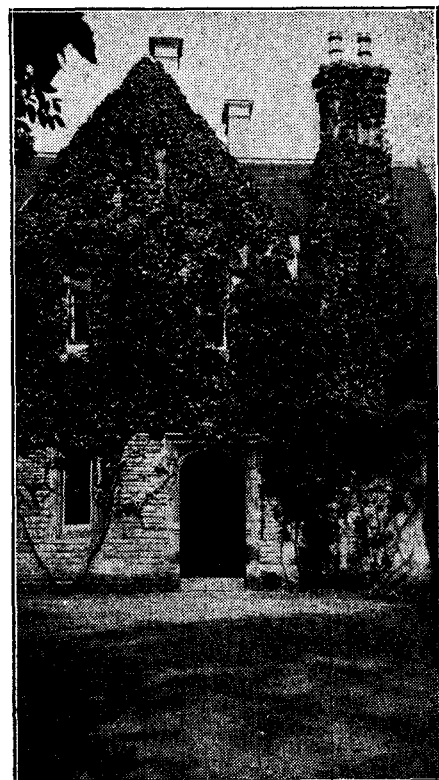
I cannot forbear quoting one further passage from the introduction to *Stamboul Nights*:

The teller of the stories has inherited enough Puritanism to believe in the uses of adversity, while reserving judgment on the sweetness thereof, and he raises no outcry against the discouragements through which his somewhat exotic fictions have slowly made their way into print.

Let Mr. Dwight be comforted. As Time gradually sifts three-fourths of our contemporary rubbish, *In the Pasha's Garden* will increasingly stand out as a delight for the discerning.

ALAN LANG STROUT.

Lubbock, Texas.



THOMAS FULLER'S BIRTHPLACE  
Rectory of St. Peter's, Aldwinkle.

### SOREL, QUEBEC

SIR:—Folks motoring up the St. Lawrence from Quebec to Montreal always go by the North Shore, so miss delightful Sorel, where the Richelieu flows up from New York. Facing a sleepy old "Place" with towering maples is a beautiful Anglican church of a hundred years ago, full of marble mementoes which tell the few worshippers left of the days when the barracks were full of redcoats and Sorel had a bustling English group. And right behind the church and its old rectory is the greenest and softest of lawns, where the bowls click every evening and French and English accents (so English) mix in congenial raillery at twilight. Only half a block away is the faded old traffic sign of perhaps 1910: *de 6 milles à l'hôtel de ville*.

Gary, Indiana

There has been much speculation about a saying attributed to President Roosevelt during the first anxious weeks of the present administration. As most frequently reported ("I'll either be the greatest President or the last") the remark did not sound to us in character. Now a correspondent of this Green, who has it from one said to be present on the actual occasion, reports that what was said was more like this. Some fatuous person remarked "You will go down in history as great as the first President." To which Mr. Roosevelt skilfully said, "I hope so—and that I won't be the last."

I do not guarantee this, but it seems a more likely version.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

## Newfoundland Songs

BALLADS AND SONGS OF NEWFOUNDLAND. Collected by Elizabeth Greenleaf Marshall and Grace Yarrow Mansfield. Harvard University Press. 1933. \$5.

IN Newfoundland ballad singing is still a means of entertaining a company. Mrs. Greenleaf began her quest of songs when she was teaching school there, under Wilfrid Grenfell, in his summer Mission. Later she returned, accompanied by Mrs. Mansfield to record the tunes, to resume her search. The two constituted the Vassar Folk-Lore expedition and had the backing of the Vassar College Trustees. Nearly two hundred texts were brought together, among them many imports from Ireland and an unusual number of sea songs.

Lay readers will prefer the Introduction to the display of texts and variants. Here Mrs. Greenleaf writes vivaciously and sympathetically of her experiences as a collector. She presents a record of folk-life, folk-speech, and folk-ways that is fresher reading for jaded balladists than her textual material.