

**The Mediated Self: Nervous Sympathy in the
Familial Collaborations of the Wordsworth-
Lamb-Coleridge Circle, 1799-1852**

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This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English Literature.

I declare that this thesis was composed by myself, that the work contained herein is my own except where explicitly stated otherwise in the text, and that this work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

November 2018

This thesis is dedicated

with love to my grandmothers, Cynthia Ingle and Doreen France

& in loving memory of my grandfathers,

Thomas Ian Ingle, 1925-2014

&

Joseph Lees France, 1929-2017

There is a comfort in the strength of love;
'Twill make a thing endurable, which else
Would overset the brain, or break the heart.

Wordsworth, "Michael"

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*No separate path our lives shall know,
But where thou goest I will go.*

Wordsworth, "Septimi Gades"

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Abstract

The Mediated Self: Nervous Sympathy in the Familial Collaborations of the Wordsworth-Lamb-Coleridge Circle, 1799-1852

This thesis examines the interrelated roles of Mediation, Embodiment and Sympathy in the development of shared and relational identities by sibling and family writers in the Wordsworth-Lamb-Coleridge Circle. Responding to recent developments within Romantic Media Studies and The Spatial Turn within the Humanities, this thesis demonstrates that the concepts of mediation and sympathy were inherently linked to emerging understandings of embodiment in the overlapping fields of psychology, philosophy and neuroscience in the late Eighteenth Century. Across three case studies, this thesis applies this spatial, nervous and mediatory account of sympathy to these families in order to demonstrate that Dorothy and William Wordsworth, Charles and Mary Lamb, and Sara and Derwent Coleridge engaged in acts of mediation (through places, bodies and texts) to construct *textual*, *writerly* and *authorial* identities.

This thesis claims that mediation is a vital, if hitherto overlooked, part of the creative process for siblings writing together. It identifies new constructions and practices of shared identity—particularly for the Lambs—and articulates a tri-partite model of creative relationship. It uses this model to reassess current critical presentations of Romantic familial collaboration. The female family members of the *canonical* Romantic authors within this circle are often depicted as being overshadowed by their published brothers and fathers, which is seemingly reflected in their choice of more marginal literary activities and forms, such as life-writing, children's literature and posthumous editing. Instead, this thesis uses a tri-partite model of relationship to analyse how mediation (within articulations of shared identity

and within the models of meaning-making presented in their texts) enables these male-female siblings to bring each other's literary identities into being. It concludes that acts of mediation generate creative agency in particular for the female members of this familial and friendly network.

List of Abbreviations

- BL* Samuel Taylor Coleridge. *Biographia Literaria*. 2 vols. Edited by James Engell and W. Jackson Bate. Princeton UP, 1983. *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, vol. 7.
- CL* *The Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. 6 vols. Edited by Earl Leslie Griggs. Clarendon Press, 1956-1971.
- EY* *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: The Early Years 1787-1805*. Edited by E. de Selincourt, 2nd ed., revised by Chester L. Shaver. Clarendon Press, 1967.
- GAJ* Dorothy Wordsworth. *The Grasmere and Alfoxdon Journals*. Edited by Pamela Woof. OUP, 2002.
- Lucas *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*. 6 Vols. Edited by E.V. Lucas. Meuthen, 1912.
- LB* Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth. *Lyrical Ballads 1798 and 1800*. Edited by Michael Gamer and Dahlia Porter. Broadview, 2008.
- Marrs *The Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb*. 3 vols. Edited by E. W. Marrs, Jr. Cornell UP, 1975-1978.
- Memoirs* Sara Coleridge. *Memoirs and Letters of Sara Coleridge*. 2 vols. Edited by Edith Coleridge. 3rd ed. Henry S. King & Co., 1873.

- Poems 1852* *The Poems of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. Edited by Sara and Derwent Coleridge. London, Edward Moxon, 1852.
- Prelude* William Wordsworth. *The Prelude 1799, 1805, 1850*. Edited by Jonathan Wordsworth, M. H. Abrams and Stephen Gill. Norton, 1979.
- PW CC* *The Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. 3 vols. Edited by J. C. C. Mays. Princeton UP, 2001. *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, vol. 16.
- PW WW* *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*. 5 vols. Edited by E. de Selincourt and Helen Darbishire. Clarendon Press, 1952.
- RC* William Wordsworth. *The Ruined Cottage and The Pedlar*. Edited by James Butler. Cornell UP, 1979. *The Cornell Wordsworth*.
- SCT* *The Regions of Sara Coleridge's Thought: Selected Literary Criticism*. Edited by Peter Swaab. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- SL* Samuel Taylor Coleridge. *Sibylline Leaves: A Collection of Poems*. London, Rest & Fenner, 1817. Facsimile. Woodstock, 1990.
- Treatise* David Hume. *A Treatise of Human Nature*. Edited by David Fate Norton and Mary J. Norton. OUP, 2000. Reprinted 2004. *Oxford Philosophical Texts*.

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Note on the Text, Style and Naming Conventions

Unless otherwise stated, all references to *The Prelude* refer to the 1805 version.

This thesis follows the latest edition (8th) of the MLA Handbook. However, on the first mention of pertinent sources I additionally give dates in brackets for clarity.

Following the recent scholarship of Nicola Healey, Felicity James and Lucy Newlyn, I refer to family members which share the same surname by their forenames. For example, when discussing the Lamb siblings in relation to one another, I use “Charles” and “Mary”. However, when I discuss one author in relation to another, I revert to the convention of using surnames (e.g. “Lamb” and “Godwin”). The exception to this is Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Throughout this thesis, I follow the practice established by Coleridgean scholars, such as Peter Swaab, and adopt the poet’s preferred moniker “STC”. Finally, for purposes of clarity, I refer to STC’s wife, Sarah Coleridge, as Sarah Fricker-Coleridge.

The base map for **Figure 1** is David McCracken’s “Map of ‘Bainriggs and White Moss’” from his monograph, *Wordsworth and the Lake District* (204).

The images of Dorothy’s *Grasmere Journals* (*DCMS 19* and *DCMS 25*) in Chapter 2 (**Figures 2-5**) are reproduced with permission from The Wordsworth Trust.

Introduction: The Nervous and Embodied Medium of Sympathy within Familial Collaboration

The definitive feature of romanticism is mediation.

(John B. Lyon, *Crafting Flesh, Crafting the Self* 96)

[T]he predominant mediating network for Romantic collaboration was the family.

(Scott Krawczyk, *Romantic Literary Families* x)

All sympathy ... supposes feeling: and therefore must be owing to the nerves, which are the sole instruments of sensation.

(Robert Whytt, *Observations on the Nature, Causes, and Cure Of those Disorders which have been commonly called Nervous, Hypochondriac, or Hysterical* 501)

This thesis explores the integrated roles of mediation, embodiment and sympathy in the development of shared and relational identities by sibling authors within the Wordsworth-Lamb-Coleridge Circle. Recent studies in family authorship during the Romantic period have demonstrated the importance of kinship and household production as means of engendering intimate emotional ties which are imperative for familial literary endeavour. This thesis argues, instead, that the phenomenon of sympathy provides the basis for familial collaboration. Moreover, it draws on historical definitions of sympathy as an embodied and nervous medium of communication. The core argument of this thesis, then, is that sympathetic connections are mediated, and that mediation is a vital, if hitherto overlooked, part of

the creative process for siblings writing together. Across the course of three case studies, I argue that Dorothy and William Wordsworth, Charles and Mary Lamb, and Sara and Derwent Coleridge all engage in acts of mediation for constructing and articulating *textual*, *writerly* and *authorial* identities. In short, to rephrase Krawczyk (above), I argue that mediation is the predominant activity for family networks collaborating during the Romantic period.

This thesis adopts a historical definition of mediation that, in its most simple form, understands mediation as a process: a process that is inherently spatial and that in the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries is inherently linked to emerging understandings of embodiment in the contemporary overlapping fields of psychology, philosophy and neuroscience. This study provides an account of mediation, embodiment and sympathy as fully integrated concepts emerging out of, and informing, each other and the models and practices developed by the Wordsworth-Lamb-Coleridge Circle to cultivate emotional connections to one another and to others through *places*, *bodies* and *texts*. In doing so, this thesis not only explicates three different constructions of embodied and relational identity, but also advocates a new tri-partite model of creative relationship.

In order to think through these concepts in detail, this introductory chapter is divided into three parts. As the thesis predominantly focuses on the mediatory potential of sympathy (and the sympathetic potential of mediation), the first section fully elucidates the overlapping and interweaving concerns of embodiment, mediation and sympathy during the Long Eighteenth Century, with an emphasis on the nerves as the common factor between these three areas. The second section surveys recent criticism on Romantic familial collaboration in order to demonstrate that an application of a mediated and embodied understanding of sympathy is both timely and

productive for the analysis of male-female literary partnerships. The third and final section provides detailed chapter summaries.

* * *

“Mediation” and the associated words of “media”, “medium” and “mediator” are challenging to define as they have a plurality of contested meanings and are recognised in Romantic Media Studies, as “notoriously labile” (Celeste Langan and Maureen McLane, “The Medium of Romantic Poetry” 242). So, for example, drawing upon the *OED*, Langan and McLane list eleven current uses for “medium”:

a middle layer; a means; an intermediary; a transmitting conduit; an impeding conduit; a solution or solvent; a physico-technical apparatus; a route; a conductor; an instrument; a means of communication; a physical object for the storage of data. (242)

In modern usage, “medium”, “media”, and “mediation” are predominantly associated with the storing, communicating and sending of information via *technological* channels (and critiquing the limits of those technological media).¹

Looking back to the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries, Andrew Burkett, in his recently published monograph *Romantic Mediations* (2016), argues that “the Romantics possessed and explored in varied imaginative texts ideas of medium and mediation that were much more open-ended than our own” (4). Burkett continues:

¹ In “The Genesis of the Media Concept” John Guillory demonstrates that the modern notion of a medium as a technological channel for communication emerged in the Victorian period: “*medium* was rarely connected with matters [and technologies] of communication before the later nineteenth-century” and “emerged as a response to the proliferation of new technical media—such as the telegraph and phonograph” (321).

Discourses and phenomena as varied as Romantic copy-right law, print capitalism, commercial publishing, early celebrity culture, emerging medical practices, vitalism and the life sciences, as well as the sciences of electricity, electromagnetism, and electrochemistry ... opened up and dramatically expanded Romantic-age notions of what a *medium* could mean or even be. (3)

This thesis draws on several of these more open-ended eighteenth-century definitions. In the broadest sense of the terms, mediation and medium are essentially spatial constructs. Mediation is a *process* that brings two (or more) entities, parties, or objects into relation *through* an intervening phenomenon that is often depicted in terms of a mid-point or a middle ground, a medium, intermediary or mediator. This thesis is concerned with two contemporary processes of mediation in particular: first, the role of the nerves connecting the mind and body in developing understandings of embodiment; and second, the phenomenon of sympathy as a medium for the transfer of passions, energies and ideas.

Turning to a broader sense of the terms, Samuel Johnson, in *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1775), devotes nine entries to “mediation” and closely related words. He defines “mediation” as the “Interposition; intervention; agency between two parties, practised by a common friend” and “medium” as “any thing intervening” and as “The middle place or degree” (n.p). The spatial nature of Johnson’s definitions chimes with the *OED*’s definition of “to mediate” (4.a) as “To lie or occupy the space *between* (formerly also *betwixt*) two things, times, etc.; to be transitional” and is closely related to the *OED*’s definitions of “intermediate”:

(adj.) 1.a. in spatial position: Situated in the middle place, or between two things or places.

(n.) 1.a. Something intermediate or intervening (in position, time, succession, degree, or character); a middle term; a nexus between two things.

From this broader sense of the term, there is one other crucial characteristic of the mediating phenomenon (whether person, object, or discourse) for this thesis. Under his entry for “mediator”, Johnson quotes from Daniel Waterland’s tract *A Second Vindication of Christ’s Divinity* (1723):

A *mediator* is considered in two ways, by nature or by office, as the fathers distinguish. He is a *mediator* by nature, as partaking of both natures divine and human; and *mediator* by office, as transacting matters between God and man.

(62)

Waterland’s definition of mediator is a doubled one: a mediator as a state (noun), “by nature” and a mediator through the action it performs (verb), “by office”. The mediator “by nature” is essentially mediatory. It is not a discrete entity but is inherently ambivalent, combining seemingly-contradictory elements of the two parties it brings into relation. Here the mediator, Christ, is both actual and abstract, tangible and intangible, human and divine. Waterland’s definition bears out Colette Colligan and Margaret Linley’s explanation in their introduction to *Media, Technology and Literature in the Nineteenth-Century* (2011) that “Mediation [was] understood as embodied, enmeshed and immediate, but also as abstract, distant, and incorporeal” (6). The mediator, “by office”, occupies a liminal role, with Christ moving between and across (or “transacting matters between”) the absolutely separate categories of divinity and mortality.

Ambivalence, along with liminality, are key components of the mediating factor within each of the three case studies considered here: the type of topographical inscription practised by the Wordsworths occupies both linguistic and geographical

grounds; the construct of the *Vapours* (part nervous disease, part noxious fumes and part natural weather) used by the Lambs comes in fits and starts, and travels across the fleshy surface of the body, emanating from within and permeating from without; the construct of textual communion developed by Sara Coleridge envisages STC's audible and lively chatter springing out from his written words, be it printed books or handwritten marginalia. Although the mediating factors are associated with material markers of embodied experience—*place, body, texts*—they are deeply ambivalent. Moreover, each marker occupies multiple kinds of space—*real, represented, material*—for each family and for each sibling. The process of mediation is therefore also liminal because it often moves between and across the boundaries of different kinds of spaces. Furthermore, creative identity (whether that is *textual, writerly* or *authorial*) often emerges when individual writers negotiate these different spaces.

The second context for mediation emerges from a radical redefinition of the mind-body relationship during the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries. Colligan and Linley offer an excellent summary of this development and its consequences for literature and the arts:

With the collapse of the Cartesian separation of physiology from psychology and cognition, the mind as thinking substance could no longer be thought apart from physical location. The new biological sciences redefined thought at the product as an embodied brain, itself an assemblage of parts attached to a nervous system understood as a mediating apparatus integral to a knowledge of the world.... the neurological legacy of Romanticism had radically connected time and space to the deep interiors of the mind. Whether it be Luigi Galvani's theory of electrical nerve transmission, David Hartley's associationism and attendant vibration theory, or Erasmus Darwin's animating principle of matter,

thought was measured through the sensory mediations of motion through space, contributing to the development of a new spatial imagination. (5)

Colligan and Linley offer a helpful starting point for the specific scientific and historical context that informs my understanding of mediation for this project. In contrast to recent scholarship that has focused on technological developments within the Romantic period, such as Clifford Siskin's seminal essay collection *This is Enlightenment* (2010) and Burkett's more recent *Romantic Mediations* (2016), Colligan and Linley are part of a growing branch of critics within Romantic Media Studies to draw upon medical and scientific discourses and understand mediation as a deeply human (rather than predominately technological) process which allows the construction and practise of identity.² These critics understand identity as repeated "temporary affiliations or performances, dependent on the social as well as medial context, rather than stable and monolithic entities" and "mediation and identification as interactive social practices" (Isabel Karremann and Anja Müller, *Mediating Identities in Eighteenth-Century England* 15; see also Colligan and Linley 7). This thesis is committed to the exploration of the newly identified "spatial imagination" in the Long Eighteenth Century by examining its impact upon the construction of relational and shared literary identities by siblings. In so doing, it extends the work of Colligan and Linley, and Karremann and Müller by applying a biologically informed understanding of mediation to shared or relational identities (rather than singular or individual ones) and to the field of literary collaboration and more specifically, familial and sibling collaborations.

This thesis argues that it is the phenomenon of sympathy—more specifically, the mediated and embodied nature of sympathy—that enables siblings to construct ties to

² Siskin defines mediation "as shorthand for the work done by tools, by what we would now call 'media' of every kind—everything that intervenes, enables, supplements, or is simply in between" (5).

one another and form a shared relational identity. It draws upon recent advancements in understandings of Romantic Embodiment, Mediation and Sympathy from the respective research of Alan Richardson, Kevis Goodman and Mary Fairclough. While often treated separately, this thesis demonstrates that the intellectual terrain of these three major areas often overlap, feed into and inform one another: late eighteenth-century natural philosophers used mediation to articulate anti-dualistic formulations of the mind and body; prior to such developments, mediation was considered a necessary part of sensory perception; and sympathy was characterised as a medium itself, thought to emerge directly from the body, communicating energies, passions and ideas. *The Mediated Self* is the first thesis to bring all three areas together and to apply a spatial, material and mediatory account of sympathy, embodiment and mediation to sibling collaboration in Romanticism. In the summary that follows, nerves emerge as the connecting factor between these three areas, and each account emphasises the communicative, spatial, and mediatory nature of the nerves.

In *British Romanticism and the Science of the Mind* (2001) Alan Richardson laments that “a disembodied version of association” continues to inform current assessments of the Romantic mind and literary subjectivity (1). Richardson explains that during the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries there was “a fundamental redefinition of the brain as an assemblage of parts or ‘organs’ rather than an undifferential whole and [the emergence of] anti-dualistic psychological models founded on the mind’s embodiment” (2). A range of natural philosophers, medical doctors and “proto-psychologists” advocated a neurological form of materialism, replacing the mechanical and passive elements of the mind in earlier associationist psychologies (most notably the work of David Hartley), with an active, nervous, organic mind, which is part of, connected to, and shaped by, the brain, nerves and

body. Erasmus Darwin, for example, in *Zoonomia* (1794-1796), conceptualises the mind as a series of interconnected bodily aspects, a “*sensorium*” comprising:

not only the medullary part of the brain, spinal marrow, nerves, organs of sense, and of the muscles; but also at the same time that living principle, or spirit of animation, which resides throughout the body, without being cognizable to our senses, except by its effect. (1: 10)

Here, the brain does not passively receive sensory information via nervous vibrations, as represented in Hartley’s physiological model, but instead translates, organises, selects, arranges and transforms the “animal motions or configurations of our organs of sense” into ideas (1: 28). “All our ideas”, Darwin continues, “are excited in the brain, and not in the organs of sense” (1: 28). In *On the Relations Between the Physical and Moral Aspects of Man* (1798), Pierre Cabanis describes the operations of the mind in more detail:

... impressions arrive at the brain, through the nerves; they are then isolated and without coherence. The organ enters into actions: it acts on them, and soon it sends them back changed into ideas, which the language of physiognomy and gesture, or signs of speech and writing, manifest outwardly. (1: 117)

Again, Darwin’s sensorium and Cabanis’ brain act like a mediator, by “nature” and by “office” (Waterland 62). Both consist of substances—such as nerves and muscles, as well as a “principle or spirit” (understood as “matter of a finer kind”)—and enact a particular process (Darwin 1: 109). Consequently, as Richardson explains: “Mind develops in and through embodied experience, learning from the body’s innately driven behaviours and even the spirit is not so much housed in as realised through a

material body” (34).³ Ultimately, for Richardson, the implications of an embodied mind for literary analysis are far-reaching:

... no account of Romantic subjectivity can be complete without noting how contemporary understandings of psychology were either grounded in, deeply marked by, or tacitly (when not explicitly) opposed to the brain-based models of mind being developed concurrently in the medical sciences. (2)

The concept of an active embodied mind is significant for this thesis in a number of ways. William Wordsworth (and possibly Dorothy), and Sara Coleridge engage with the contemporary notion of an active embodied mind through the work of Erasmus Darwin. To borrow Wordsworth’s words, it is a mind responding to “an *active* universe” and a mind shaped, but not dominated, by the “eye, and ear, both what they half create, / And what perceive” in a particular time and at a particular place (*Prelude* 2. 266; “Tintern Abbey” *LB* 106-107). The Romantic active embodied mind is a defining feature throughout each case study and the *textual*, *writerly* and *authorial* identities constructed by each family are highly sensitive to the vagaries of the *everyday*: weather, seasons, changes in mood, or the physiological, emotional and cognitive symptoms of nervous disturbances. It might be the “rain” on a summer’s evening that forces William and Dorothy to shelter in a favourite wood, or an experience of the “Giddy” heights and “dull” lows that accompany a “vapour fit which comes often and clouds over” Charles and Mary (*GAJ* 109; *Marrs* 2: 199). Each case study is an example of the “spatial imagination” (noted by Colligan and Linley) at work. Furthermore, this neurological understanding of mediation necessarily

³ Richardson demonstrates that in addition to Darwin and Cabanis, F. J. Gall and Charles Bell conceptualised the “brain-mind” as an active embodied organ in their various publications during the 1790s and first decade of the nineteenth century. His opening chapter “Introduction: neural Romanticism” offers a detailed discussion of each of these thinkers and their relationship to the intellectual milieu of Wordsworth and Coleridge (1-38).

assumes a spatial (embodied) notion of *being*: a notion that has not yet been explored by scholars of familial collaboration in their examinations of relational identities.

Moving on to the subject of mediation, in *Georgic Modernity and the Mediation of History* (2004), Kevis Goodman illustrates that the concept of a medium first entered the English language in the early Seventeenth Century via translations of Aristotle's account of perception in *De Anima* (c.350BC) (17-18). The Greek *to metaxu*, meaning "the in-between" or "the intervening space", was eventually "translated into the Latin *medium*, which had a two-fold spatial reference – midpoint and intermediary agent" (Goodman 17; *De Anima* 28).⁴ In *De Anima* sense perception occurs when the relevant sensory organ(s) are moved by an outward motion: "Perception consists in being moved and affected ... for it is thought to be a kind of alteration" (20; II. 5. 416b32). Crucially, the object does not directly stimulate the sense organ, but instead stimulates *the space between* the object and sense organ and it is this *intervening space*, or medium, which moves the sense organ. Aristotle explains that when the eyes detect colour, "the colour sets in motion the transparent, e.g. air, and the sense-organ is moved in turn by this when it is continuous" (28; II. 7. 419a6). In its earliest forms in English, then, the terms 'medium' and "mediums" were understood in material terms as playing an active role in sensory perception (even as natural philosophers were developing technological "mediums" such as the microscope in order to see beyond the realms of ordinary sensory perception).⁵ Goodman notes, for example, the influence of Aristotle on Robert Burton's claim in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621)

⁴ There can be a discrepancy between translations. Goodman translates *to metaxu* as "literally 'the in-between'" whereas D. W. Hamlyn's translation of *De Anima* (which I cite from) terms it "the intervening space" (Goodman 17; Hamlyn 28).

⁵ In using the term "mediums" rather than "media", I follow Goodman and Langan and McLane. As Goodman observes the term "mediums" was the "more frequently employed contemporary plural" of "medium" (8; see also Langan and McLane 242). Furthermore, all three critics note that current usage of the term "media" is predominantly associated with the collective singular noun, "The Media" which risks subsuming the plurality of "media" into a "monolithic" and "homogenous category" (Langan and McLane 242; Goodman 148 n29).

that sense perception “required, the Object, the Organ, and the Medium” (qtd. in Goodman 17). Such a medium may or may not be perceptible to various sensory organs (air, for example, might be invisible to the eye, but could be felt by the flesh), and recalls the ambivalent nature of the medium or mediator described in Johnson’s *Dictionary*. Like Waterland’s earlier definitions of a mediator “by nature” and “by office”, Goodman also depicts a medium as both a state and a process stating that the “‘in-between’ is both an activity and a substance” (62; 17).

Goodman’s research is particularly valuable because it charts the changing nuances of medium and mediation across the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries which can be directly tied to the scientific movement away from a Cartesian dualism of body and soul towards explorations of an embodied brain-based neurology. For example, in “Reading Motion: Coleridge’s ‘Free Spirit’ and its Medical Background” (2015) Goodman turns to the work of neurophysiologists Robert Whytt and his collaborator and successor William Cullen. As Goodman explains: “the Edinburgh school promulgated a resolutely monist conception of the entire body and mind as a network whose parts communicated by what Cullen’s predecessor, Robert Whytt, called ‘the connecting medium’ of the brains and nerves” (Whytt qtd. in Goodman 350). Significantly, motion moved in *both* directions (from the nerves to the brain and vice versa) and the nerves registered movements throughout the different layers of the body: from the skin to the muscles to the brain (and vice versa). In a similar way to air stimulating flesh (the sensory organ for touch) in Aristotelean sensory perception, here, movements (internal or external) stimulate the nerves. However, there is a fundamental difference: while for Aristotle, the sensory faculties are stimulated *by* a medium (air etc) between an object and the sensory organ, for Whytt and Cullen the body itself (a nervous network of fibres) *is* the medium.

Furthermore, in registering motion from within and without the body, the nerves are not just a “connecting medium” between various parts within the body, but also between the body and the external world (Whytt, “Essay” 290). In Cullen’s words, nerves “form our connection with the rest of the universe – by which we act upon other bodies, and by which other bodies act upon us” (*Works* 1: 9). Goodman explains the wider implications for understanding of the body that is organic and dynamic upon an individual’s immediate experience:

These bodies need not be nearby to exert their impact: because custom, memory, imagination, and discourse were considered to act upon bodies just as effectively as present persons, objects, or events, apparently immediate experience was understood to be thoroughly shaped by events and actions at a distance, geographical or temporal. Past patterns of behaviour and response, both individual and collective, were archived, as it were, in the body’s present movements.... Edinburgh medicine thus established the body as a permeable, responsive, and active part of a larger social and historical environment. (350)

Edinburgh medicine offered the prospect of a continuity of self over time through repeated movement, which had the potential to elide the more threatening, ungovernable and random elements of Hume’s skeptical claim that man is nothing more than a “bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement” (*Treatise* 165; 1. 4. 6). Instead, Darwin proposed the self as the sum of an individual’s behaviour. Such behaviour, however, arises out of a repository of “acquired habits or catenated trains of ideas and muscular motions” that have been arranged and organised by a dynamic brain over time (1: 133). Moreover, such behaviour was always performed in relation to the behaviour of others and Edinburgh medicine

offered the prospect of a seamless transition between the self to others through the movements of the “permeable, responsive and active” body (Goodman 350).

Rephrasing Descartes, Cabanis aptly summarised: “From the moment at which we feel, we are” (*Relations* 1: 51).

As a means to exert influence upon, communicate with, and receive energies from others, Cullen and Whytt’s depiction of the operations of the nervous body, reflects the third and final area, that of sympathy. Sympathy, defined by Johnson in 1775 as “the quality of being affected by the affection of another”, has long been recognised as integral to the study of literary collaboration (whether friendly or familial) (*Dictionary* n.p). Critics such as Lucy Newlyn, Felicity James and Gurion Taussig have illuminated the way in which different forms of sympathy informed the “competitive / collaborative” nature of Wordsworth, STC and Lamb’s creative partnerships: such as Newlyn’s use of “elective affinities” to frame the fertile but oppositional relationship of Wordsworth and STC; James’ recognition that STC and Lamb’s preoccupation with “domestic affections” formed the basis of their friendship and literary collaboration; and Taussig’s concept of “mingling identities” to characterise STC’s productive partnerships with Thomas Poole, Lamb and Wordsworth throughout the 1790s (Newlyn, *Language of Allusion* xxii; James, *Reading Friendship* 39-43; Taussig 94).⁶ As we shall see, in the most recent scholarship on family authorship, however, sympathy is an implied context, rather than a central concern and is defined

⁶ Initially, “elective affinities” referred to the “attraction of opposites” in the natural sciences and then the displacement and amalgamation of different elements and properties when two substances were combined (Newlyn xxvi-xxvii). Eventually, it was used as an analogy to describe strong and intense friendship arising out of oppositional qualities or attitudes (xxix). James demonstrates that Lamb and Coleridge viewed the cultivation of “domestic affections” or “private Attachments” as the first step towards wider sympathy and philanthropy: a concept informed by Hartley’s theory of affections expanding into universal benevolence (39-40). Finally, Taussig argues that Coleridgean friendship is based on the imitation and absorption of characteristics from others, which draws directly from Hume’s claim that “no sooner any person approaches me, than he diffuses on me all his opinions, and draws along my judgement” (Taussig 247-249; *Treatise* 378; 3. 3. 2).

primarily as an emotional empathetic response, a moral virtue, a force for establishing social bonds or the imaginary identification with others.⁷ This thesis builds on the work of Newlyn, James and Taussig in acknowledging the central role sympathy plays in creative collaboration. However, it significantly differs from these critics by applying a particular understanding of sympathy, as a *nervous* and *mediatory* phenomenon, to familial rather than friendly collaboration.

Mary Fairclough's recent reassessment of sympathy in *The Romantic Crowd* (2013) is particularly useful because she highlights the emphasis on the *physiological* and *mediatory* connotations of sympathy throughout the long Eighteenth Century. Believed to originate in the nervous system and emerging from literal disturbances of one part of the body acting upon another, the likes of David Hume, Adam Smith and others understood sympathy as “not a passion, a feeling, or opinion in its own right but the medium for the transmission of energies, ideas and emotions within a collective” (3).⁸ Medical proponents, including Whytt, defined sympathy as an internal organising and communicative principle between organs, which was transmitted along the nerves. To the third edition of *Observations ... on Disorders Commonly Called Nervous, Hypochondriac, of Hysterical* (1768) Whytt prefixed an addendum entitled *Remarks on the Sympathy of the Nerves*. While the nervous origins of sympathy were often depicted in ambiguous and unclear terms, medical proponents, including Whytt, went further citing the brain (and the brain as the origin and convergence for all nerves) as the source of sympathy itself. For Whytt, “all

⁷ As Idiko Csengei (2012) highlights “The notion of sympathetic identification—associated mainly with the philosophy of Adam Smith and sometimes with the work of David Hume—is often prioritised mainly in literary scholarship” (9); Fairclough summarises that “Sympathy has most commonly been understood as a catalyst of the poetic imagination or the imaginative connection between writer and reader” (3).

⁸ See also Csengei's comment that sympathy could denote, among other things, “a mechanistic and magnetic attraction, a communication or transfusion of feeling” (9).

sympathy must be referred to the brain itself, and the spinal marrow, the source of all the nerves” *Observations* 510). Furthermore, Whytt explains:

The sympathy between every individual nerve and the whole system will be readily allowed to be owing to the *mediation of the brain*, and not to any connection or communication among the nerves proceeding to it. (513, my emphasis)

Fairclough usefully summarises the social implications of sympathy’s physiological basis: “[s]ympathy’s social function mirrors its physiological one. It can be claimed as a cohesive property but it also communicates disruptive energies ... [potentially leading to] riot and disorder” (22, 3).

Fairclough’s assertion that sympathy was understood as both a physiological occurrence and a medium for emotions and ideas is crucial for my central argument that siblings constructed creative identities through the practice and depiction of sympathetic connections, and that these connections were mediated by markers of embodied experience such as nervous bodies and objects within the landscape. Furthermore, in establishing links between people (based on the communication of feelings), sympathy shares elements with both embodiment and mediation. It recalls the conception of the body as a *network* of fibres and the body as “permeable, responsive and active”, which offers a seamless transition between self and other (Goodman 350). The workings of the body, and the process of sympathy create, or operate as part of, a *network of relations* between things. In their introduction to “Multi-Media Romanticisms” (2016), Andrew Burkett and James Brooke-Smith recognise that the study of mediation is also the study of “the relational qualities of networks, assemblages, or ecologies” (n.p). Two of the case studies in this thesis are not just concerned with cultivating relationship between two siblings *per se*, but

establishing relations between self, sibling and others: William and Dorothy's shared practice of naming intensifies bonds between close friends (the Hutchinsons and STC); Sara defines her position against a network of other family members editing STC.

Finally, Fairclough's highlighting of "sympathy's unruly qualities" is pertinent to the Lambs and Sara Coleridge (21). By explicitly drawing on the disorderly aspect of nervous disease to articulate shared familial identities, these two case studies are unusual among Romantic literary families because they exploit the disruptive unruly side of sympathy in ways that are conducive to literary production and identity formation. Moreover, they provide a *bodily* contrast to the kind of *imagined* sympathetic identification usually associated with High Romanticism, such as Coleridge (as poet-speaker) imagining the "gladness" of "gentle-hearted Charles" in "This Lime-Tree Bower, my prison" or Wordsworth (as poet-speaker) anticipating Dorothy's response after his death—"with what healing thoughts / Of tender joy wilt thou remember me"—in "Lines Written a few miles above Tintern Abbey" (*PW STC* 27-28; *LB* 145-146).

The intertwining areas of Romantic Embodiment, Mediation and Sympathy outlined above emphasise the role of mediation within embodied models of the brain-mind; the pre-text of sensory perception for earlier definitions of medium and mediation; and the physiological, and mediatory nature of sympathy. Within each account, notions of embodiment, mediation and sympathy overlap. They all share an emphasis on the (often embodied and physiological) mediatory connections and movements between an assemblage of parts and the creation of a network of relations that is essentially dynamic: the communication in both directions between brain and nerves; the movement between external and internal in active formulations of sensory

perception or the spreading of affections and ideas from individual to individual to form a collective.

While nerves are a common factor between these ideas, it is the *interrelation* of spatial, (inter)mediatory and connective possibilities of the nerves overlapping in these three accounts that open up exciting possibilities for the study of familial collaboration and the creation of *textual*, *writerly* and *authorial* identities out of a shared family milieu. First, it enables me to both uncover new identities constructed by each family—such as the Lambs’ creative model of the *Vapours* or Sara’s intergenerational model of inherited nervous disease—and place existing shared identities in a new historical context of spatiality. In bringing attention to the naming practices of both Wordsworths, I argue that their creation of home is established through shared and repeated spatial *practice* rather than an ecologically-informed notion of dwelling. Secondly, placing a spatial account of sympathy at the heart of creativity shifts the ground of debate away from questions of anxiety, influence and gender that has preoccupied scholarship on familial collaboration. My primary objective is to establish *how* these canonical families establish sympathetic connections to one another, and in identifying them as mediated and embodied, I posit a tri-partite model of creativity—sibling-mediator-sibling—that allows for the complex subtleties and nuances of family writing which are often overlooked or limited by the binary or hierarchical framings of sibling relationships in recent scholarship.

* * *

Over the past decade, scholarship has identified familial writing as a “distinctive and influential cultural formation of the Romantic period” (Levy 2). Both Michelle Levy’s *Family Authorship and Romantic Print Culture* (2008) and Scott Krawczyk’s *Romantic Literary Families* (2009) demonstrated that the changing socio-economic and cultural landscape of the mid Eighteenth Century—a growing print market; introduction of copy-right laws; a lively culture of different forms of sociability, exchange and correspondence—resulted in the emergence of “the *literary family*: a collaborative network of family and friends participating in a household model of literary production” (Krawczyk x).⁹ Krawczyk and Levy’s respective studies illuminated intergenerational and “mixed-gender” collaborations across a variety of literary forms, and in turn revealed the myriad of opportunities for and challenges facing family members writing both in private and publishing in the Romantic literary marketplace: the poetry, essays and life-writing of the Godwin-Wollstonecraft-Shelleys; the political pamphlets and children’s literature of the Aikin-Barbauld; the travel literature of family tours to the Continent; and the editorial endeavours undertaken by the family members of Shelley, Coleridge and Wordsworth.¹⁰ This thesis follows in Krawczyk and Levy’s footsteps by examining mixed-gender collaboration and covering a broad range of literary activity: life-writing, children’s literature and posthumous editing are placed alongside, the more traditional literary forms of poetry and the prose essay. While the first two case studies focus

⁹ Both Krawczyk and Levy base their definitions of the “family” on the work of Naomi Tadmor. In *Family and Friends in Eighteenth-Century England* (2001), Tadmor explains that by the late Eighteenth Century, family was no longer used to define a set of consanguineal relations: the term could refer a group of related and non-related persons residing together in one household, or the extension of the family unit through kinship, such as marriage or the enfolded of friends into the family unit. See Krawczyk x-xiii; Levy 15; and Tadmor 136-138, 272-275.

¹⁰ The term “mixed-gender” is used throughout this thesis to describe male-female collaborations and was first coined by Felicity James and Julian North in their co-authored introduction to “Writing Lives Together: Romantic and Victorian Auto/biography” (134). Other significant essay collections examining “mixed-gender” collaborations include Beth Lau’s *Fellow Romantics* (2009) and Marjorie Stone and Judith Thompson’s *Literary Couplings* (2007).

predominantly on male-female *siblings*, (the Wordsworths and the Lambs), the last case study on the Coleridges opens up to include other mixed-gender familial bonds: father-daughter; husband-wife.

However, the thesis departs significantly from Krawczyk and Levy's seminal studies in terms of approach. In both studies, the Wordsworth and Coleridge families serve negatively as examples of "limited" or "one-sided" family authorship when compared to the "*literary families*" of the Aikin-Barbaulds and the Godwin-Wollstonecraft-Shelleys (Levy 156).¹¹ This emerges partially from Krawczyk and Levy's concepts of the "*literary family*", and its emphasis on publication, and is also indicative of a broader question about gender difference and creative status within the families of canonical poets. The "*literary family*", for both critics, emerges specifically in the transitional and "paradoxical" moment when the "family enters the public marketplace through print" (Levy 13). The communal nature of composition in private is followed by the cultivation of a public identity as a family of authors in the literary marketplace. Levy identifies within this model "a struggle in Romantic self-identity between communities of feeling and individual genius" (2). However, when examining Wordsworth and Coleridge, this struggle is depicted along gendered lines with male poets assuming positions of individual genius while bolstered by a private community of female supporters who did not publish.

For example, Levy argues that Sara's attempts to edit her father's literary corpus "was a one-sided and limited form of family authorship" (156). Ultimately, for Levy, Sara's editing "prevented her not only from having an independent career but from

¹¹ Krawczyk compares Aikin and Barbauld's model of "shared authorship"—the siblings published prose collections under "J. and A. L. Aikin" and refused to assign individual authorship to the contributions—to the Wordsworths' relationship: Barbauld brings "a profoundly egalitarian ethos to [her writing] relationships, something Wordsworth does not do with Dorothy" (31, 89). See Levy's chapter "Literary Remains, Familial Editing and Romantic Genius" (*Family Authorship* 145-164). I will examine her comparison of Sara Coleridge's posthumous editing to Mary Shelley's posthumous collection and editing of Percy's verse in Chapter 5.

accomplishing the one thing to which she devoted her writing: promoting her father's reputation" (164). Similarly, Krawczyk only assesses the impact of the Wordsworths' habit of "walking backwards and forwards" together upon William's poetry and not upon Dorothy's journal writing (Krawczyk 53-95). Although this shared activity cultivates a "collaborative, bi-gendered" vision that informs a series of William's shorter lyrics in 1802, Dorothy is cast firmly in a "support[ive]" and "subordinate" role to her brother, leading Krawczyk to conclude that the Wordsworths' creative relationship may be "noncompetitive" but it is also "nonegalitarian" (89). In repeatedly privileging published forms of writing, Levy and Krawczyk place female family members in a hierarchical relationship to their male counterparts, in a way which echoes earlier feminist critique from the late 1980s and 1990s.¹² As a result, although these critics bring to light a wider range of texts by the Wordsworth-Coleridge circle (travel-writing, posthumous editing), such texts are framed within a larger critical narrative that privileges certain forms and types of literature (e.g. poetry and published) over others, and in turn diminishes the value of the unpublished private literary endeavours by female family members of canonical poets.

By contrast, this thesis examines how siblings actively articulated their creative relationships *in* and *through* their writings—private and published—and defined these collaborations specifically in terms of sympathetic connections arising from embodied experience (whether such connections fostered and carried more affable feelings of companionship and intimacy, or more unpleasant ones of disorder, confusion and pain). To that end, throughout the thesis I use the terms *textual*, *writerly* and *authorial*

¹² See Margaret Homans' assertion that "Dorothy's tendency to omit a central or prominent self in her journals becomes much more apparent when compared to William's habitual concentration on the self [in his poetry]" (73). Meena Alexander views Dorothy's reluctance to publish and the seemingly "emptying out of self" occurring in her prose as symptomatic of her creative and personal subservience to William and his craft (200).

to describe different kinds of identity developed across unpublished and published work. *Textual* refers to any subjectivity developed through writing that is assumed to reflect the voice of the writer; an identity that appears personal but is nevertheless still constructed, such as the speaker of Dorothy's unpublished *Grasmere Journals* or the poet-speakers of William and STC's lyrics. *Writerly* refers to a developing sense of self-as-writer in private or among friends and is frequently found in unpublished life-writing and correspondence: Charles Lamb's quip to William Godwin that he is "an author by fits" is an excellent example (Marrs 2: 128). Finally, *authorial* refers to a public identity crafted (by the writer in question or by others) for the literary marketplace, and often has one eye looking ahead to posterity and posthumous reputation: these include Coleridge's cultivation of the prophetic poet in the Preface to *Sibylline Leaves*, for example, or Wordsworth's famous definition of the poet in the "Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads* (1800) as spokesman for the rural statesman. Moreover, the boundaries between these three types of identities are not always so clear-cut: Sara Coleridge's styling of herself as the literary "inheritrix" of her "father's genius" occurs firstly in memoirs and letters before appearing in her essays, notes, prefaces and introductions to her editions of STC's work (*Letters of Hartley Coleridge* 275).

One of the core aims of the thesis is to place mixed-gender siblings alongside one another to analyse how they bring each other's literary identities (*textual*, *writerly* and *authorial*) into being and offer a more nuanced assessment of their collaborative relationships. In doing so, I follow the more recent research of Nicola Healey (*Hartley Coleridge and Dorothy Wordsworth: The Poetics of Relationship*, 2012) and Lucy Newlyn (*William and Dorothy Wordsworth: All in Each Other*, 2013). Newlyn calls for the recognition of "literary partnership" between William and Dorothy in the fullest sense of the word, and her work "establish[es] the equality and intrinsic value"

of that partnership and its effects on “both writers’ distinctive approaches to their chosen craft” (xi, xiii). “Literary partnership” is a term I extend to other siblings and familial pairings in this thesis: Charles and Mary Lamb; Sara and Derwent Coleridge; Sara and STC; Sara and her husband, Henry Nelson Coleridge.

Healey too, offers a more open model to accommodate the complexities of sibling creative relationship under her notion of “relational selfhood” or the “self-in-relation” (4). The “relational” self is based on the “Lockean sense of identity as grounded outside the ‘self’, affected by, and in relation to, environment and fellow kin, and also the recognition of different facets of variable identity within one selfhood” (4).¹³ However, I would amend and enlarge this concept to allow for *self-definition* and *variation* within a *shared identity*: for example, both Charles and Mary Lamb depict literary creation as the outcome of a “vapour fit”, and yet each sibling has a very different response to this disturbing yet highly creative force (Marrs 2: 199). Across the thesis, I identify varying degrees of ease or conflict within this process. Both the Wordsworths and the Lambs find ways to carve out niches for the self within the space of a shared literary identity. By contrast, the last case study, which focuses on Sara’s self-definition as *the* editor of STC among a throng of Coleridgean family editors (father, brothers and husband), brings to the fore tensions in the development of relational or familial identities. In this way, I also share with Newlyn and Healey (in contrast to Levy and Krawczyk) the conviction that it is the bonds of kinship, rather than gender difference, that establish, intensify and pressurise familial collaboration and the construction of shared identities within the Wordsworth-Lamb-Coleridge Circle:

¹³ While the notion of a “relational self” has been associated with a specifically feminine type of subjectivity (regardless of the sex of the author)—Anne Mellor first coined the term in *Romanticism and Gender* (1993)—recent critics, including Healey, no longer apply the gendered nuance to the term (see also James and North 134).

... authorial identity is not fundamentally predetermined by, and dependent on, gender, but is more significantly governed by the infinitely complex pressures of domestic environment, immediate kinship and familial readership. (Healey 233)

This study differs from Healey as I argue that the within constructions of shared literary identity, the binding agent between siblings and family members is depicted in terms of *embodied* and *mediated* forms of sympathy. Apart from Newlyn, none of the studies above extensively engages with, and assesses the role of sympathy within the representation of familial and sibling partnerships. While sympathy appears in these accounts, it is an implied pre-text rather than a central concern and is understood as a specific type of emotion—affection, companionship—or as a moral virtue, rather than as a medium for the transference and communication of all kinds of emotion. Newlyn, on the other hand, recognises that the Wordsworths’ literary partnership, in life and in their writings was based upon “the meshing of associationist theory and practice” and cites Hartley’s model of sympathy as the mechanism between the two (45-46). I significantly build upon and develop Newlyn’s work by placing sympathy within a historical and critical framework of *spatiality*. I understand sympathy specifically through contemporary and interrelated accounts of mediation and the active embodied mind and argue that sympathetic connections are mediated through material markers of embodied experience—spots of land; the body; texts—even when these markers are frequently characterised by both material and immaterial elements.

* * *

The Wordsworth-Lamb-Coleridge Circle provides an excellent testing ground for the application of an embodied understanding of sympathy as a nervous medium to

mixed-gender familial partnerships. This circle of literary friends and family are unique in the field of Romanticism as they comprise of three sets of mixed-gender siblings: William and Dorothy; Charles and Mary; Sara and Derwent. Moreover, the various constructions of sympathy not only connect sibling to sibling, but often have the potential to connect to other members of the circle. Subsequently, STC features throughout the thesis and is included in two case studies, even if he is not part of a sibling partnership. Furthermore, as a group, they substantially engage with associationist psychology, which enables an examination of differing constructions of, and responses to, sympathy.

The thesis comprises six chapters divided into three case studies. It is structured chronologically beginning with the Wordsworths settling into Grasmere between 1799 and 1803, moving into the Lambs' collaboration on short story collections for children between 1806 and 1810 and finally, concluding with Sara and Derwent Coleridge's editing of *The Poems of Samuel Taylor Coleridge 1852*. It also broadly follows the chronology of the writing process. The first case study focuses on the development of *textual* and *writerly* identities that are predominantly private and (in the case of William) explores the challenges of publishing (and making public) poetic material which is more personal and domestic in theme and tone. The second concentrates on published collections and the construction of *writerly* and *authorial* identities. The third and final case study turns to intergenerational and posthumous editing and the careful crafting of various *authorial* identities. Thematically, the thesis also moves from grounded to more abstract models of shared identities and sympathetic connections, moving across the three core notions of place, bodies and texts.

The first case study revolves around the most well-known understanding of sympathy as an affable emotion of "Fellow-feeling" that engenders connection

between people and tackles the most contentious and scrutinised mixed-gender sibling partnership of the period, William and Dorothy Wordsworth (Chambers, *Cyclopædia* 2: 161). It is well-recognised that creative identity for both siblings is tied to a very specific relationship to place, that of dwelling; to a particular region, Cumberland and Westmorland; and to a precise locality, Grasmere. However, critics, such as Jonathan Bate and Kenneth Cervelli, have treated the siblings in isolation and understand dwelling in an ecological sense of an identification with the natural world. Moreover, these critics identify the activity of place-naming as a means of achieving an ecologically informed notion of dwelling.

This case study draws on the spatial aspects of sympathy as a medium, to first, reassess ecologically informed notions of dwelling and, second, reassess criticism that places Dorothy in a subordinate role to her brother. It examines the Wordsworths' preoccupation with marking, inscribing and naming rural objects throughout their poetry and prose as a means to transfer "Fellow-feeling" between friends and across the (*real* and *represented*) landscape of Grasmere. It draws on contemporary accounts from Alison Archibald, David Hartley and David Hume about the propensity of material objects to act upon one another and transfer sympathetic affections. Furthermore, rural objects not only mediate sympathetic affections, but also act as touchstones for William and Dorothy to construct their respective narratives of "returning to", and "making", home in Grasmere. These narratives provide the basis of William's *writerly* and *authorial* identities in his poetry and Dorothy's *textual* identity in her *Grasmere Journals*. By re-framing place-naming within an associationist context, this case study advocates a relational, rather than ecological, definition of home, which provides the conditions for both siblings to construct their respective identities (*textual, writerly, authorial*) alongside one another.

Chapter One focuses on William's narrating and naming of the Lakeland landscape in his poetry. It draws on the associationism of Archibald Alison to examine the significance William places on the rural object, not only to generate domestic affections out of the landscape (and inspire feelings of belonging to Grasmere), but also to engender a specific kind of relationship between poet and reader. The chapter then distinguishes between the different roles played by the rural object within the narrative poem (which is more public) and the lyric poem (which is more private). Do rural objects within these two kinds of poetic forms enable William to perform his definition of a poet? Contrary to Bate, it argues that place-naming in William's group of lyrics, "Poems on the Naming of Places" is an anxious activity for the poet and is indicative of the wider challenges of establishing a narrative of "home-coming" through *represented* space.

While critics have identified one kind of poetic place-naming, there is in fact another kind of personal place-naming which is *practised* by both siblings and has received very little attention from scholars. These place-names appear in unpublished material such as correspondence and Dorothy's *Grasmere Journals*. Chapter Two fully conceptualises this kind of naming; an activity which initially emerges out of William's "Poems on the Naming of Places", but significantly extends and develops it into an embodied and private practice. This second chapter not only examines Dorothy's use of these place-names in the *Grasmere Journals*, but views this kind of place-naming as indicative of the spatiality and process of journal-writing. I draw on and adapt the spatial theory of Michel de Certeau to explore Dorothy's repeated acts of walking around, and writing about, Grasmere in order to argue that Dorothy *practises* the place of Grasmere as the *space* of home.

The second case study, on Mary and Charles Lamb, turns to a construction of a shared identity that mediates sympathy through the body. The most striking feature of this case study is an identification of a new collaborative model for the Lamb siblings in the form of the *Vapours* which is used throughout their correspondence to refer to creative endeavour and *writerly* identity during their most fertile period of collaboration from 1806 to 1809 on *Tales from Shakespear* and *Mrs Leicester's School*. Of the three case studies, the Lambs embark on collaboration in the fullest sense of the word: they engender a shared model which revolves around the transference of emotion and symptoms from one sibling to another and they both openly collaborate on collections of short stories for children and female adolescents. Chapter Three fully conceptualises the Lamb's *Vapourish* model which draws upon the symptoms of nervous disease and employs natural imagery of dense clouds to depict its befuddling and overwhelming effects. At the heart of this model lies contemporary concerns from philosophy and medicine about the physiological unruly operations of sympathy whose "movements" and "disorder" within the body and the nerves can spread from one individual to another (Hume, *Treatise* 386; 3. 3. 3; Chambers, *Cyclopædia* 2: 161). I then elucidate each sibling's response to a "vapour fit" to define their individual *writerly* identities within this shared model: Charles opens himself up to the overwhelming potential of the *Vapours*, whereas Mary imagines friendly and mediatory presences that talk her out of uncomfortable moments when she gives "way to despondency" (Marrs 2: 220).

Chapter Four tests the efficacy of the *Vapours* model by using it to reassess critical interpretation of *Tales from Shakespear* and *Mrs Leicester's School*. Both collections are adaptations, or mediations, of other people's words: the adaptation of Shakespeare's plays into prose stories suitable for children; and the adaptation of a set of schoolgirls'

oral tales into “proper” written narratives for publication (Lucas 3: 275-276). They also partake in contemporary debate about the gender politics of family reading and the controversial matter of allowing young females (child and adolescent) to read unsupervised. Both texts have divided critics: on the one hand, they are seen to subvert hegemonic reading practices; on the other, they represent the limits of female reading. Critics have tended to base their arguments on the representation of gender relations *within* the short stories themselves. Instead, I join recent critics, such as Felicity James and Susan Wolfson, by embracing the inherently “ambiguous” and “divided” nature of *Tales from Shakespear*, (and extending that description to *Mrs Leicester’s School*), and by interpreting the stories *through* the frameworks for reading established in the opening prefaces of each collection (James, “‘Wild Tales’ from Shakespeare” 153; Wolfson, “Explaining it to her Sisters” 16). In short, this chapter asks how might a creative model revolving around mediation open up new understandings of the narrative strategies at play within these two adapted, or we may say mediated, texts? I develop James’ and Wolfson’s scholarship by prioritising the notion of adaptation within my analysis, and by drawing on understandings of adaptation as forms of mediation and remediation. I consider the publication context of both collections alongside other prose adaptations within William and Mary Jane Godwin’s imprint the *Juvenile Library*. My textual examination of *Tales from Shakespear* and *Mrs Leicester’s School* centres on the intermediary space of the preface and the creation of mediatory authorial characters through paratext. I argue that by repeatedly drawing attention to themselves as adapted (and mediated) texts, the two collections explicitly expose female readers to the mediatory nature of interpretation itself.

The third case study opens up the parameters of the thesis substantially by concentrating on intergenerational collaboration with various family members working towards the construction of a singular *authorial* identity. It focuses on the Coleridge family's efforts to control and shape STC's posthumous reputation as a Victorian Sage through the collecting and editing of STC's entire oeuvre and their efforts to create a shared public reputation as a family that edits the work of its own members. While the first-generation of family editors includes Sara, Derwent and Henry Nelson (Sara's cousin and husband), it is Sara who lies at the heart of the next two chapters. This is the first study to examine Sara's collaboration with her brother Derwent on *Poems 1852* in detail and the first to reassess her editorial career by placing her within a *network* of family editors.¹⁴ I examine her self-positioning as the *principal* Coleridgean family editor in and through the family network and assess her role in shaping STC's posthumous reputation in relation to the editorial decisions made by other family editors. Over the two chapters I argue two points: first, Sara establishes *writerly* and *authorial* identities as STC's intellectual and literary heir and, thus, the legitimate editor, or mediator, of STC's texts to the reading public. Second, I argue that it is only through assessing Sara's actions *in relation to others* that the extent of her agency within the familial editorial project and the endurance of her own editorial legacy can be acknowledged and explored. In doing so, I counter the prevailing critical opinion that posthumous editing suppressed Sara's own writerly and authorial ambitions.

¹⁴ Two monographs dedicated to Sara Coleridge have been published very recently and differ from my research in terms of focus. Robin Schofield's *The Vocation of Sara Coleridge* (2018) reassesses Sara's reputation as a religious author. Beatrice Turner's *Romantic Childhood* (2017) focuses on the discourses of the Romantic child as inherited by, and engaged with, the children of Romantic-era authors. Although she is concerned with constructions of childhood, her study of literary inheritance places a larger emphasis on the role of biographical circumstance. By contrast, my main concern here is Sara as an editor mediating the textualized body of STC's work, rather than a consideration of their difficult and distanced relationship in real life. Significantly, for my purposes, neither critic considers Sara's role within a group of family editors and does not examine *Poems 1852*.

Chapter Five focuses on the construction and re-construction of *writerly* and *authorial* identities. First, it charts STC's development of the poet-as-prophet within the collection *Sibylline Leaves* (1817): a precursor for the family's attempts to secure STC's posthumous reputation as a Victorian Sage. Here, I am concerned with STC's definition of the poet as a mediatory figure and the creative potential for meaning-making attributed to the notion of disorder, which emerges as a key theme throughout the case study. The second half of the chapter turns to Sara and her construction and assertion of a *writerly* and *authorial* identity as the "inheritrix" of STC's nervous genius which enables her to mediate, or edit, his work (*Letters of Hartley Coleridge* 275).

In the first two case studies sympathy has been determined largely by close physical proximity such as co-habitation; the transference of emotion between two people in each other's presence; and shared embodied and represented experiences of landscape. In this final case study, the emphasis is on sympathy maintained *through* inherited nervous illness in order to negotiate temporal and intergenerational distance and ultimately manipulate *authorial* identity. Of the three models of embodied sympathy depicted throughout the thesis, this is the most intricate and abstract. It employs different kinds of bodies (physical, represented, material) and sharply throws into relief the ambiguous and embodied nature of mediation. Sara uses material disturbances within the body to inspire and intimate ongoing communion beyond the grave and she engenders a particular type of presence and immediacy to STC (the author) that is dependent upon the absolute absence of STC (the man) brought about by his death. Sara, I argue, develops a sympathy *sui-generis*, which enables her to develop an *authorial* identity as the genetic continuation of STC's *Esteesian* spirit. Her *Esteesian* sympathy conflates different manifestations of STC: man, textual persona,

author and the critical reception of STC from contemporary reviews. Sara draws on the nervous illness which ravages and paralyzes STC's own body; a persona of STC that is textualized, emerging out of his written and printed words; the contemporary critical reputation of STC as a careless and wasteful poet; and finally, a material body (or corpus) of texts that is repeatedly depicted as disordered and fragmented. In privileging consanguineal bonds over notions of kinship, Sara holds a unique status among familial posthumous editors and the chapter concludes with a brief comparison of Sara to the model of relationship constructed by another female family editor, Mary Shelley.

The final chapter focuses on the family's editing of STC's collected poems which appeared in four versions—three iterations of *Poetical Works* (1828, 1829, 1834) and the siblings' new edition of *Poems* in 1852—and involved numerous collaborative pairings: STC and Henry Nelson; Sara and Henry Nelson; Sara and Derwent. It is the only text within STC's entire oeuvre which is edited by *all* of the first-generation family editors and has received very little critical attention. This final chapter focuses on the contentious family debate about the principle for arranging the poems (thematic vs. chronological) and traces the subtly different reputations that Henry, Derwent and Sara envisage and promote for STC through the paratextual elements of the editions: notes, prefaces, titles, poetic arrangement. Simultaneously, each family editor manipulates their own *authorial* identity as they mediate STC's texts. I develop my argument that Sara places herself as the foremost family editor by demonstrating her increasing possession of the Editorship of STC. The final chapter is more experimental in nature and method, with an eye on recent developments within the Spatial Humanities, particularly the growth of digital literary mapping. As the primary sources cover a range of twenty years (from 1828 to 1852) and four multi-volume

collections of poetry, I engage with Franco Moretti's controversial method of "distant reading" to survey the four editions. The final and most experimental section of the thesis realises the concept of the Coleridge family as a *network* of editors by opening up into digital space and mapping out each individual's contribution to the entire editorial project across a series of network maps. I use literary mapping to test my main argument that Sara positions herself as the most dominant family editor with surprising results. This final section then also explores the place of literary mapping, a process I construe as a kind of mediated reading, within literary-critical interpretation.

Chapter 1. “The Gentle Agency of Natural Objects”: Naming and Narrating the Lakeland Landscape in William’s Poetry 1798-1803

Sympathy is also used with regard to inanimate Things intimating some Propension they have to unite, or act upon one another.

(Ephraim Chambers, *Cyclopædia: Or, an Universal Dictionary of the Arts and Sciences* 2: 161)

... the gentle agency

Of natural objects led me on to feel

For passions that were not my own.

(Wordsworth, “Michael”, *LB*, Lines 29-31)

At the heart of this first case study is an exploration of the relationship between landscape, creative identity and narrative: dwelling, naming, histories. While critics recognise that dwelling is fundamental to William and Dorothy’s development of creative identity, they have often treated the siblings separately and have understood home from an ecological perspective as a communion with the natural world. Instead, I argue that historical accounts of sympathy and recent accounts of *practising* place from spatial theory provide a more productive framework for examining the writing of self into place (writing *in* and *about* a specific landscape) and the writing of place as home. Across Chapters One and Two, this case study focuses on William and Dorothy Wordsworth’s preoccupation with “the gentle agency / Of natural objects” and place-names in their poetry and prose written in and about Grasmere between 1799 and 1803. Both chapters draw on contemporary accounts from Archibald Alison, David

Hume and David Hartley about the ability of objects to carry, direct and mediate the phenomenon of sympathy. I demonstrate that William and Dorothy—in different ways—employ natural objects to mediate “Fellow-feeling” across the real and represented contours of Grasmere (Chambers 2: 161). I argue that this sympathetic and relational basis of home informs the siblings respective narratives about rooting the self in Grasmere.

From the outset, I offer a broad distinction between the two siblings. William explores the challenges of “home-coming” and “returning home” throughout his lyric and narrative poetry, whether recovering a history of self in place in private poetry such as the “Poems on the Naming of Places” or the recovery of communal stories by the figure of the poet in the Grasmere narrative poems in the second volume of *Lyrical Ballads* (1800). Dorothy, on the other hand, forms a narrative of “making home” in a particular location through repeated practices of walking and writing in the *Grasmere Journals*. While both siblings depict interactions and encounters with rural objects in their writing, place-naming—which often involves the marking of objects—is a particularly charged activity and one that they each undertake in different ways.

Place-naming has also attracted a substantial amount of critical attention. For example, numerous scholars have analysed William’s series “Poems on the Naming of Places” in order to assess whether or not place-naming cultivates dwelling for the poet.¹⁵ However, less attention has been paid to another type of place-naming undertaken by William and Dorothy; an activity that was private, embodied and collective and involved immediate friends and their brother John. These private place-

¹⁵ These include Jonathan Bate’s chapter “The Naming of Places” in *Romantic Ecology* (85-115); James Butler’s article “Tourist or Native Son?: Wordsworth’s Homecomings” (1-15); Kenneth Cervelli’s discussion in *Dorothy Wordsworth’s Ecology* (56); Stephen Gill’s discussion in *Wordsworth: A Life* (179-180) and Michael Wiley’s chapter “Naming New Worlds” in *Romantic Geography* (79-121).

names were used by Dorothy in her correspondence and *Journals* and critics have not yet assessed their impact on her writing. Involving both siblings, naming (and the role objects play within naming), provides a rich shared ground for analysing their work and identities alongside one another. One of the aims of this case study is to place William's lyrical place-names *alongside* their private prosaic counterparts in order to illuminate the different ways William and Dorothy construct narratives of Grasmere as home through the forms of the poem and the journals.¹⁶

Place-names, like objects in this case study, are mediatory. In occupying both linguistic and geographical grounds, place-names overtly draw attention to the disparity and distance between signifier and signified and open up larger questions about the possibilities and challenges of making sense of self in and through landscape and creative composition. This is even more pronounced in the case of the Wordsworths when place-naming revolves around the marking of an object or feature in the landscape and incorporating that object or feature into larger narratives about "returning" to or "making" home. Within this two-part structure, the first action emphasises the textual nature of geographical place (the landscape, like language, becomes a series of signs which can be interpreted) and the second emphasises the spatial nature of narratives (narratives about geographical place often rely on a tension between *real* and *represented* spaces).

¹⁶ There are two literary-critical biographies which have been very useful for my own research on Wordsworthian naming and inscription. John Worthen's *The Gang* (2001) gives a full account of private communal naming (22-26, 181) and Newlyn's *William and Dorothy Wordsworth* (2013) records the Wordsworths' preoccupation with inscribing objects and re-visiting cherished spots in Grasmere (160-162). Significantly, neither study offers a distinction or comparison between William's poetic naming and private communal naming. Newlyn identifies a Hartleian basis for William's poetic-naming (121-131) and I build on this by reading poetic and private naming through the associationism of Archibald Alison and David Hume. However, our interpretations of the "Poems on the Naming of Places" differ markedly: I read the sequence as articulating a problematic, rather than emblematic, account of personal attachments to place.

There are then, two further intertwining themes which shape my examination of naming across the case study. First, a consideration of objects mediating feelings of affection and attachment across the landscape (whether that landscape is *real* or *represented*) also entails the broader question of making sense of the landscape: the activities of *reading* objects in the landscape to decipher meaning and *investing* located objects with meaning. Like the operations of the nerves (registering motion from the brain to muscles and vice versa), the relationship between *reading* and *investing* objects is essentially dynamic and has a precedent in historical accounts of sympathy, most notably in Alison's *Essays on Taste* (1790). The second theme concerns the spatiality of writing *in* landscape and *about* experiences of landscape, a process underpinned by the interrelation of *real* and *represented* spaces and an interrelation which can appear seamless, intermittent, or fraught with tension. How are the practices of *reading* and *investing* objects with meaning presented differently in the forms of the poem and the journal, forms which enjoy very different relationships to *real* and *represented* spaces of landscape? Finally, how might these practices of meaning-making and the different spatialities of literary forms affect the development of William and Dorothy's respective identities and narratives of place? In considering the second theme, the work of spatial theorist Michel de Certeau, and his assertion that "*space is a practiced place*", is particularly helpful (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 117; henceforth *PEL*). Both chapters draw (to different degrees) upon his conception of the relationship between space and place to chart the intertwining spatial and textual nature of the embodied practices that inform William and Dorothy's narratives of self. I engage fully with de Certeau in Chapter Two as Chapter One is more broadly informed by his work and Chapter Two explicitly draws upon and adapts his ideas of "pedestrian speech acts" and "walking rhetoric".

The case study is structured around William and Dorothy's responses to the ideas of *reading* and *investing* objects with meaning in the landscape. Chapter One then, focusing on William, consists of three parts. It opens by considering recent ecological approaches to the representation of geographical place within literary texts and articulates my alternative sympathetic approach. I draw on Alison and examples from William's poetry to consider the way in which "natural objects" mediate sympathy and play a larger role in the *reading* and *investing* of meaning in the landscape. The remainder of the chapter focuses on the activities of *reading* and *investing* rural objects with meaning as represented in different poetic forms and examines the implications for William's poetic model of "returning home" and "home-coming". The second part of the chapter considers in detail the *reading* of rural objects within the narrative poems, *The Ruined Cottage*, "Michael" and "The Brothers". *Reading* objects is associated with the dramatic voice and narrative form and the mobilisation of sympathetic affection. Conversely, this often revolves around the inability to return to or make home, which then inspires "Fellow-feeling" within the reader. The final part of Chapter One focuses on the *investing* of rural objects through the activities of naming and marking in the series "Poems on the Naming of Places". *Investing* meaning is far more personal and associated with the first-person lyric. As naming is undertaken by those who are already "residents in this country and attached to rural objects", this kind of *investing* in place as home ought to be celebratory and a positive act (*LB* p. 375). However, personal place-naming in the lyric emerges as a particularly vexed activity for the poet and this final section considers the wider challenges of establishing a narrative of "home-coming" through *represented* space.

Chapter Two, building on the distinctions between *reading* and *investing* in Chapter One, concentrates on the *investing* of objects with meaning in life-writing. It

fully elucidates the *embodied* practice of naming (and marking of local objects) undertaken by William, Dorothy and their close family and friends in order to establish a collective familial identity in Grasmere. It then turns to Dorothy, examining the way in which she uses these place-names in the journal. I understand her use of place-names as indicative of the spatiality and process of journal-writing and explore how this enables her to *practise* Grasmere as home, rather than *represent* it.

1. Approaching Place and Identity: Eco-criticism, Essence and Sympathy

The premise that William and Dorothy's creative identities stem from a sense of belonging to, or dwelling in, Grasmere (and vice versa, that writing poetry and prose cultivates feelings of rootedness and home) is well-established within Wordsworthian scholarship. James Butler, for example, states "Only in belonging to a place could he [William] write of it truly" and observes that "related questions about tourism, birthright, and home comprise the central features of the poems Wordsworth wrote in the months after settling at Grasmere, a time pivotal in developing his mature artistic temperament" ("Tourist or Native Son" 15, 2). Similarly, for Stephen Gill, writing poetry about Grasmere allowed William to "incorporate the region into his imagination, to claim it, and so make himself truly at home" (*Wordsworth: A Life* 180). Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, the Wordsworth siblings—preoccupied with settling and writing themselves into the rural landscape of Grasmere—became the ideal ground for testing the principles of the emerging school of eco-criticism: namely the recognition of the interactions between human and nonhuman entities in a rural context (encompassing flora, fauna and physical environment) and the exploration of

this relationship within literary texts.¹⁷ Jonathan Bate's seminal monograph *Romantic Ecology* (1991) turned to William's group of semi-autobiographical lyrics "Poems on the Naming of Places" and argued that the act of naming enabled the poet to move from the position of an alienated outsider into a dweller: the names, in Bate's view, "provide the bridge, the uniting of sentimental and naïve, of poet and nature" (105). Kenneth Cervelli in *Dorothy Wordsworth's Ecology* (2007) claimed "Dorothy writes Grasmere as [an] ecosystem", with each of her journal entries functioning as "totalities" and claims that Dorothy "walks, works and sometimes even experiences complete communion with nonhuman existence" (19, 9). Despite examining the siblings separately, both critics argue that dwelling for each sibling is tantamount to an "ecological holiness", a phrase first coined by Karl Kroeber.¹⁸ Both assessments are underpinned, to different degrees, by the Heideggerian notion of an authentic mode of Being (Bate 102-103; Cervelli 13-18).¹⁹ Bate's metaphor of naming-as-bridge, for example, draws directly from Heidegger's concept of the bridge in "Building Dwelling Thinking" as a means of gathering the "fourfold" of "earth, sky, mortals and divinities" into a harmonious "simple oneness" that enables man to dwell as authentically as possible: "to remain, to stay in a place" in such a way as to "spare, to preserve", to "cherish and protect, to preserve and care for" that "simple oneness"

¹⁷ Simon Estok provides a succinct definition of ecocriticism: "ecocriticism has distinguished itself, debates notwithstanding, firstly by the ethical stand it takes, its commitment to the natural world as an important thing rather than simply as an object of thematic study, and, secondly, by its commitment to making connections" ("A Report card on Eco-criticism" 220).

¹⁸ In 1974 Kroeber offered the first ecological reading of Wordsworth's poetry in "'Home at Grasmere': Ecological Holiness". He proposed that Nature for Wordsworth in *Home at Grasmere* is the equivalent to "what we now call an ecological unity" (132). Kroeber argues that the naturally "self-sufficient interdependent" unified whole of Grasmere vale is not only crucial to the type of human ideal held by Wordsworth in the poem but is also vital the poet's creativity (132, 133, 140). Cervelli adapts and applies Kroeber's definition of an ecosystem to the journal form in his chapter "Bringing It All Back Home: The Ecology of Dorothy Wordsworth's Grasmere Journals" (11-26).

¹⁹ For Heidegger's distinctions between authentic and inauthentic modes of *Dasein*, see Division 1 of *Being and Time*: "The self of everyday *Dasein* is the *they-self* [inauthentic] which we distinguish from the authentic self, that is the self which has explicitly grasped itself" (section 27; p. 125). See also sections 12 (p. 53) and 16 (p. 84).

(*Poetry, Language, Thought* 147-153).²⁰ In drawing upon Heidegger's notions of authentic and inauthentic modes of Being (which are disparate categories that are always mutually exclusive) eco-criticism often conceives the relationship to the landscape in sets of polarised terms: authentic is associated with dwelling, being inside the unified whole of Grasmere or writing from a centre; inauthentic is associated with alienation, and occupying or writing from the margins or from outside of the vale of Grasmere.²¹ Furthermore, as the quotes from Bate and Cervelli above demonstrate, eco-critics often privilege an authentic relationship to place over an inauthentic one.

While eco-criticism is useful for drawing attention to the connections between things, such readings are problematic for two reasons. First, in mapping modern notions of ecology and phenomenology directly onto eighteenth-century texts, Bate and Cervelli overlook the contemporary formulations of sympathy that were available to, and as I will argue, practised by, the Wordsworths in their constructions of narratives of self developing in and through Grasmere. Naming is a far more complex process than Bate and Cervelli recognise and, as it revolves around the naming and marking of rural objects, requires a broader examination of the role of the located rural object within the poetic forms of the narrative and the lyric. Second, within a binary model, there is little room to accommodate the challenges, possibilities and nuances of writing *in* and *about* geographical landscape: a process which is often underpinned by the overlapping and interrelation of *real* and *represented* spaces

²⁰ There are echoes of Heidegger in Bate's claim that Wordsworth's poetry "serves to sanctify [and preserve] a place" (*RE* 94, 87, 93). Friedrich Schiller's famous distinction between the "naïve" and "sentimental" in poetry also informs Bate's distinction between authentic and inauthentic. Responding to Bate (and indirectly to Schiller), Tony Pinkney remains sceptical as to whether "utopian bridges between language and the non-human, or the sentimental and the naïve" can ever be built ("Naming Places" 66).

²¹ A similar dichotomy (but one without the ecological implications above) between outside (margins, homelessness) and inside (centre, home) of Grasmere is also a feature of early spatial readings of Wordsworth from Literary Geography such as Wiley's *Romantic Geographies* (1998).

(physical geography or experience of physical landscape versus the representation of landscape or embodied experience in poetry or prose). The next two chapters chart the different ways this interrelation between spaces (which can appear seamless or exist as a tension) plays out through the forms of the poem and the journal: a difference which ultimately shapes the siblings' respective narratives of home and relationship to place.

The remainder of this first section considers the formulations of sympathy that were available to the Wordsworths and clarifies the overarching activities of *reading* and *investing* the landscape with meaning. It reads Wordsworth's poetry through and against the associationism of Archibald Alison because his aesthetics pays particular attention to the role of the material object in the production of the emotions of the sublime and the beautiful. Furthermore, as Cairns Craig highlights in *Associationism and the Literary Imagination* (2007), Alison, like Wordsworth, is "deeply concerned" with *both* the poesis and reception of the artwork itself (87-90). In fact, Craig cites Alison as "Wordsworth's most influential predecessor" because his theory of art encompasses both "the associative processes of the poet" and the "interactions" of the work of art with "the associations of its readers" (90). While I do not go as far as Craig,—I identify and examine points of difference between Wordsworth and Alison—his work is particularly useful for thinking about the role of the object at different levels (within and without) of the poem. In later sections of this chapter, the roles of *investing* the landscape with, and *reading* the landscape for, meaning are complicated by the creation and reception of the poem and the relationship it establishes between poet and reader.

While I offer two clear (and apparently opposite) examples of *investing* and *reading* located objects with meaning, it is crucial to recognise that such activities are dynamic and interlinked rather than operating on binary terms. Furthermore, there is

often a tension between the activities of *investing* and *reading* as they are linked to different degrees of internal focus on the self and external focus on others. This tension troubles Hume's optimistic assertion about the benign operations of sympathy: the emotions of friendship and love "are so contagious, that they pass with the greatest facility from one person to another, and produce correspondent movements in all human breasts" (*Treatise* 386; 3. 3. 3).²² On the one hand, contemporary critics such as William Hazlitt observed that objects in Wordsworth's poetry act as cyphers and catalysts for *only* the poet's feelings and his poetic process: "The object is nothing but as it furnishes food for internal meditation, for old associations" ("On Genius" 98). On the other hand, there are repeated assertions throughout Wordsworth's poetry and prose that "natural objects" cannot be considered "In disconnection dead and spiritless" with each other and the world, but instead act as a channel for human sympathy: "the gentle agency / Of natural objects led me on to feel / For passions not my own" (*RC* 68^v, 5-6, p. 374; "Michael" 29-31).

Craig notes that Alison proposed "the most radical associationist theory of art of the period" because his theory of taste "relied on no foundation except that of association" (90). *Essays on Taste* presents an account of aesthetics that combines a purely associative and psychological account of the experience of the sublime and beautiful inspired by natural forms with the Platonic conception that "nature, in all its aspects around us, ought only to be felt as signs of [God's] providence" (431).²³ Alison, like Hartley, understands associationism as the fundamental mental process underpinning all acts of perception and as providing a series of links between man and

²² While Hume emphasises the potential for sympathy to be a cohesive force within society, his use of the word "contagious" picks up on the unruly aspect of sympathy; an aspect which will be examined in more detail in Chapter Three on the Lambs.

²³ Alison openly acknowledges the influence of "the PLATONIC school", namely, "Lord Shaftesbury, Dr. Hutcheson, Dr. Akenside ... and Dr. Reid" (417-418).

his fellow men which ultimately progresses towards a union with God: “the universal language of these [Nature’s] signs [leads to] the throne of the DEITY” (431).

However, associationism is a far more active force within Alison’s expressive model. The concept that humans create signs for one another and that nature creates signs for humans avoids the more passive and mechanical elements within Hartley’s account, as well as the problematic issue of predeterminism which presupposes a lack of free will.

Alison presents aesthetic experience as a sequence of investing, expressing and reading arising directly from the process of association. First, objects and features of the landscape (whether physical or represented in art) stimulate “a variety of great or pleasing images passing with rapidity in [the] imagination” far beyond “what the [initial] scene of description ... can of themselves excite” (*Essays on Taste* 46). For Alison, the subsequent passing images:

... have but a very distant relation to the object that at first excited them and the object itself appears only to serve as a hint, to awaken the imagination, and to lead it through every analogous idea that has a place in the memory. It is then, in this powerless state of reverie, when we are carried on by our conceptions, not guiding them, that the deepest emotions of beauty and sublimity are felt. (46)

Objects trigger (to borrow Craig’s useful description) an “associational flow”, which then enables the mind to invest those objects with the associations, emotions and meanings they inspire (92). This leads to the recognition:

Our minds, instead of being governed by the character of external objects, are enabled to bestow upon them a character which does not belong to them;... the beauty and sublimity of such objects [natural features] are to be ascribed, not to the material qualities themselves, but to the qualities they signify; and, consequently, that the qualities of matter are not to be considered sublime or

beautiful in themselves, but as the SIGNS or EXPRESSIONS of such qualities as, by the constitution of our nature, are fitted to produce pleasing or interesting emotion. (*Essays on Taste* 417)

For Alison, “Taste” arises not from qualities inherent *within* the material object itself but emerges from an individual’s projections of those qualities *onto* the material object. The constant projection of meaning onto the material environment leads Alison to claim that the “material universe around us becomes a scene of moral discipline” (430). As Craig explains, Alison “attribute[s] to natural objects a moral influence, which is, in fact, the reflection of those moral meanings with which we have *invested* in them” (93, my emphasis). Craig’s use of “reflection” here implies a reductive role of the landscape with humans loading meaning onto its blank contours, in a similar way to Hazlitt’s critique of Wordsworth. However, Alison presents this process in far more (inter)active terms: material objects “express” (Alison’s term) the very associations which we invest within them and then read back from them. Furthermore, the landscape is a medium, rather than a mirror, making us aware of the “qualities of mind” which are apparent in the moment of perception and leads to self-awareness, allowing the mind to recognise its own operations of associationism:

As it is only, however, through the medium of matter, that in the present condition of our being, the qualities of mind are known to us, the qualities of matter become necessarily expressive to us of all the qualities of mind they signify. (*Essays on Taste* 418)²⁴

²⁴ Alison’s use of “express” follows the *OED*’s definition of the word as “To manifest or reveal by external tokens” (II. 7. a). Alison reiterates the notion of natural objects as a medium throughout the *Essays*: “From experience, when peculiar forms or appearances of matter are considered the *means* or *instruments* by which those feelings or affections of mind are produced with which we sympathize, or in which we are interested” (419).

Wordsworth appears to follow Alison in the third book of *The Prelude* (1805) when the poet-speaker seeks solitude from the “crowd, buildings, and groves” of Cambridge in search of the open and “level fields”:

To every natural form, rock, fruit or flower,
 Even the loose stones that cover the high-way,
 I gave a moral life—I saw them feel,
 Or linked them to some feeling. The great mass
 Lay bedded in a quickening soul, and all
 That I beheld respired with inward meaning. (3. 99, 124-129)²⁵

The intertwining nature of the sequence of investing, expressing and reading within Alison’s account is captured in the amended afterthought: “I saw them feel, / Or linked them to some feeling”. Wordsworth can attribute such powerful moral feelings to such small and ordinary natural forms because, in Alison’s words, the mind seeks “even with the rudest, or the commonest appearance of nature, to connect feelings of a nobler or a more interesting kind, than any that the mere influences of matter can every convey” (*Essays on Taste* 424). Ideally, for Alison, the “expressions” of natural objects (which are the result of the many associations that accrue around them), not only lead to a kind of self-awareness and “temporary pleasure” arising from the operations of associationism itself, but also produce the “sympathetic emotion of virtue”: “our bosoms glow with kindred sensibilities; and we return to life and to its duties, with minds either softened to a wider benevolence, or awakened to a higher tone of morality” (430).

²⁵ These lines first appear in MS. B of *The Ruined Cottage* and are used to describe the natural education and moral development of the Pedlar. They are then removed from the later MS. D version (1799) and set aside for the (envisaged) independent poem of “The Pedlar”. At some point between 1799 and 1804, they are added to Book Three of *The Prelude*. For my purposes, it is significant that the poet-speaker of *The Prelude*, unlike the Pedlar, cannot (yet) mobilise sympathy for others through the act of *investing* the environment with meaning.

When set in the wider context of *The Prelude*, the example quoted above however, raises questions about the potential of Alison's assumption that the expressions of material objects (which are themselves expressions of the qualities of mind at the moment of perception) engender sympathy for others. Wordsworth often equates the *investment* of natural objects with the over-exuberance and "god-like hours" of youthful immaturity (*Prelude* 3. 192). For example, in Cambridge, the poet-speaker's initial intellectual, spiritual and emotional isolation—he recalls "A feeling that I was not for that hour / Nor for that place"—gives way to an assertion of his distinctive "powers and habits" as a "chosen son" of Nature (80-81, 106, 82). However, such "powers" lead him to create a world entirely of his own:

Unknown, unthought of, yet I was most rich,
I had a world about me—'twas my own,
I made it; for it only lived to me,
And to the God who looked into my mind. (141-145)

Similarly, in Book Two, the poet draws on the compelling aspect of sympathy to depict his own blind projection of feelings onto nature in adolescence:

... from excess
Of the great social principle of life,
Coercing all things into sympathy,
To unorganic natures, I transferred
My own enjoyments. (2. 407-411)

Both examples recall earlier depictions in "Tintern Abbey" of the poet-speaker's relationship to nature in "thoughtless youth" as an "appetite" which inspired "aching joys ... [and] dizzy raptures" (*LB* 91, 81, 85, 86). Overall, they betray the poet's

wariness of *investing* objects with meaning about and for oneself and of regarding the landscape as a medium only for the feelings and qualities of the individual mind.

Elsewhere, Wordsworth presents a more positive response to natural objects as signs made by both God and other people. He often connects the *reading* of the “associational flow” surrounding these objects with emotional maturity and looking upon the landscape “hearing oftentimes / The sad, still music of humanity” (“Tintern Abbey” 91-92). In a draft addendum to earlier versions of *The Ruined Cottage*, Wordsworth attempts to mobilise the phenomenon of sympathy from experience in and of “lonesome nature” (RC 56^v, 21 p. 372).²⁶ In a dense passage exploring the moral development of Pedlar, the narrator, like Alison, views natural objects as speaking a “language” (albeit an “inarticulate” one):

These quiet sympathies with things that hold
 An inarticulate language for the man
 Once taught to love such objects as excite
 No morbid passions no disquietude
 No vengeance and hatred. (67^v, 2-6, p. 372)

In stirring a particular kind of emotion—the “pure principle of love”—natural objects predispose man to seek out similar objects and similar qualities in others:

... needs must feel
 The joy of that pure principle of love
 So deeply that unsatisfied with aught
 Less pure and exquisite he cannot chuse
 But seek for objects of a kindred love
 In fellow-natures and a kindred joy. (67^v, 6-11, p. 372)

²⁶ As there is no reading text for this draft passage, I am following James Butler’s transcription and line numbers.

The pervading influence of this more benign force—“he cannot chuse / But seek”—recalls the depiction of sympathy as “coercing” in the earlier example quoted from *The Prelude*. Here, however, the impetus is to seek for others outwardly rather than focus inwards.

Wordsworth further expands upon the Pedlar’s moral development and again insists that the power of natural forms (objects, flora and weather) resides in their ability to affect a certain mental process within the brain. It is only:

... by contemplating these forms

In the relations which they bear to man

We shall discover what a power is theirs

To stimulate our minds. (67^v, 24-27 p. 373; my emphasis)

Repeated contact with nature forms a “habit”, which Wordsworth shortly goes on to describe as “a vital essence and a saving power”, that enables the Pedlar to perceive natural objects anew:

Nor shall we meet an object but may read

Some sweet and tender lesson to our minds

Of human suffering or of human joy

All things shall speak of man and we shall read

Our duties in all forms. (68^r, 3, 5, 6-10, p. 373)

“Fellow-feeling” and morality expand outwardly, in a Hartleian fashion, from one object and one lesson to another until “All things shall speak of man and we shall *read* / Our duties in all forms” (my emphasis). The next section of the passage depicts the eventual imagined consequences of associationism (the formation a “chain” that “links us to our kind”) and depicts the mental process in embodied terms:

Our duties in all forms, and general laws

And local accidents shall tend alike
 To quicken and to rouze, and the will
 And power which by a [?] chain of good
 Shall link us to our kind. (68^r, 10-14)

Wordsworth reframes Alison's Platonic notion of a world of readable natural signs within the embodied accounts of association and sensory perception outlined in the Introduction to this thesis. First, Wordsworth's language—"stimulate", "quicken", "rouze"—points to motion within the brain during perception, and the phrase "vital essence" reframes Hartley's nervous vibrations within more biological accounts of the brain envisaged by Darwin and Cabanis.²⁷ By contrast, Alison does not account for the occurrence of emotion: throughout the *Essays*, emotion is "produced" (417, 419). Second, in emphasising the ability of objects to literally affect movement, Wordsworth recalls nerve-based accounts of sensory perception in which the nerves register the motion of the body's surrounding environment. Consequently, Wordsworth lends far more agency to the material universe and the influence of the changeable aspects of the everyday. In a discussion of the influence of natural forms such as hills and mountains upon the Pedlar, the narrator states:

... nor less
 The changeful language of their countenance [hills and mountains]
 Gave movement to his thoughts & multitude
 With order and relation. (57^r, 1-4, p. 372)

Wordsworth's language—the ordering of a multitude—echoes Cabanis' notion of the mind organising the "isolated" and incoherent "impressions" from the nerves into

²⁷ Duncan Wu gives suggested dates of Wordsworth reading Darwin's *Zoonomia* as April 1796-1797 and between the 10-13th March 1798 when he borrowed Joseph Cottle's copy (*Wordsworth Reading 1770-1799* 45).

ordered “ideas” (1: 117). The overall result—of a mind in motion and of rural objects inciting the motion of the mind and body—is a far more interactive relationship between human and rural object than proposed by Alison and one that is articulated directly in an 1802 addition to the “Preface” to *Lyrical Ballads*. The poet, Wordsworth claims:

... considers man and the objects that surround him as acting and re-acting upon each other, so as to produce an infinite complexity of pain and pleasure; ... he [the poet] considers him as looking upon this complex scene of ideas and sensations, and finding every where objects that immediately excite in him sympathies which, from the necessities of his nature, are accompanied by an overbalance of enjoyment. (*LB* p. 422)

Landscape is not a medium in so far as it draws the individual’s awareness to the qualities of mind apparent in the moment of perception as in Alison’s account. Rural objects are mediatory in that they stimulate a physiological emotional response, and for Wordsworth, a particular kind of sympathetic response. Furthermore, repeated experience of rural objects may mobilise the eventual progression of affection towards others (found in earlier associationist accounts, including Alison and Hartley) so that the individual can “read” his “duties in all forms”.

From the two examples above, it is clear that there is a tension between the roles of *investing* and *reading* objects with meaning. *Investing* meaning and making signs for oneself, as shown in the example of *The Prelude* may veer towards self-centredness and provide no guarantee of mobilising “Fellow-feeling”. The poet, however, offers a more positive response to the act of *reading* the landscape and understanding this act of *reading* as a more balanced and dynamic interaction between human and environment than earlier aesthetic accounts allow. The distinction between the two

activities of *investing* and *reading* is an important one because it strongly informs Wordsworth's poesis, his *authorial* identity and, finally, his definition of a poet as "a man speaking to men" (*LB* p. 420). Moreover, as the next section will explore, Wordsworth directly ties that identity to the Lakeland landscape and repeatedly questions whether *located* rural objects within that landscape enable him to perform his definition of a poet.

2. "And to that place a story appertains": Reading Mediatory Objects in the Narrative Poem

In *Wordsworth's Poetry* (1964), Geoffrey Hartman claimed that Wordsworth's poetic representation of Cumberland and Westmorland in *The Excursion* is "not an ideal landscape but a storied landscape" (299). Hartman's statement is open enough to accommodate two interpretations. It simultaneously refers to Wordsworth's propensity for filling his poetic landscapes with rural objects that carry a story and to the incorporation of the act of telling that tale to someone within the poem's formal structure: a story *about* and *of* place told *in* place. This section examines the *reading* and *relating* of unmarked and unnamed rural objects within Wordsworth's narrative poems—*The Ruined Cottage* and "Michael" (and to a lesser extent "The Brothers") in *Lyrical Ballads* (1800)—and examines these processes in relation to the operations of the narrative structures within the poem. I am interested in the way objects mediate between different narrative levels within the poems (drawing loosely on the terms *fabula* and *syuzhet*) and the ways in which the poet's anxieties about the ability to successfully return home are played out through such objects.

First coined by proponents of Russian Formalism, *fabula* (story) refers to the chronological order of events or “raw materials” of a storyline and *syuzhet* (plot) refers to the temporal sequence in which those events are imparted to the reader via different narrative devices (such as flashbacks, a recollected history, or the use of prolepsis).²⁸ I use these distinctions in a very loose sense as they are helpful for defining the object as a touchstone between the story at the heart of the poem (the associations surrounding and pertaining to the rural object) and the prompt for the initial relating of that story. Before examining the poems in more detail, there are a few general observations I’d like to make about, first, the role of the object, and second, the textual state of *The Ruined Cottage*. *The Ruined Cottage*, “Michael” and “The Brothers” all employ a doubled narrative structure and revolve around the concept of *reading* objects in the landscape. The history about a particular unmarked rural object (*fabula*) is recounted (*syuzhet*) by a liminal figure, such as the pedlar (“the venerable Armytage”), the figure of the poet, the character of the Priest, to an ordinary common-place listener, such as the poet-narrator, the reader or the character of Leonard (*RC* 38).²⁹ The poems open by drawing the reader’s attention to unmarked natural objects (either directly or indirectly via another character) which are also broken or unformed: the “straggling heap of unhewn stones” in “Michael” is an “object which you might pass by, / Might see and notice not”; just as Armytage states to the poet-narrator among the wild garden and dilapidated walls of Margaret’s cottage “I see around me here / Things which you cannot see” (*LB* 17, 15-16; *RC* 67-

²⁸ While the nuances of the terms differed between the various groups within the Formalist movement, Viktor Shklovsky provided the most well-known distinctions between *fabula* and *syuzhet* towards the end of his essay “The Novel as Parody”: “The concept of plot (*syuzhet*) is too often confused with a description of the events in the novel, with what I’d tentatively call the story line (*fabula*)” (*Theory of Prose* 170). My use of these terms to distinguish different elements within Wordsworth’s narrative poems does not presuppose Shklovsky’s privileging of *syuzhet* over *fabula*.

²⁹ Leonard’s role as a listener is far more emotionally loaded than others: in listening to a local history about the two orphan brothers he learns about the fate of his brother, James.

68). The unassuming nature of such objects allows the poet to shape the transmission of the unknown story about them (*fabula*) as a communicative sympathetic act within and without the space of the poem between Armytage and the poet-narrator, or the Priest and Leonard, and between poet and reader. Finally, at this stage, it is important to recognise that *The Ruined Cottage* exists in two versions based on the fair copies of MS. B (Spring 1798) and MS. D (Spring-Winter 1799). I follow the later text of MS. D because the conclusion is greatly expanded which has significant implications for the incorporation of the relation of the tale within the poem.

If the overlooked, broken and unformed objects at the opening of the poems provide the impetus for the main narrative act—in *The Ruined Cottage*, for example, the poet-narrator “begged” the Pedlar to reveal the story that accounts for the dilapidated state of the cottage; in “The Brothers”, Leonard questions the Priest in order to learn “If still his Brother liv’d” or if “this heap of turf” near “the particular spot / [where] His family were laid” is in fact his “brother’s grave”—then the fragmented state of those objects also prefigures the sense of loss at the heart of the associations and story (*fabula*) that surround, or “appertain” to them (*RC* 219; *LB* 81, 87, 79-80). In *The Ruined Cottage*, the neglected state of the spring—“Half-choked” with weeds, with a “slimy foot-stone” and containing “the useless fragment of a broken bowl”—arises from lack of use, which in turn foreshadows the death of Margaret, the “Last human tenant of these ruined walls” (63, 89-91, 492). The use and state of such objects are intricately bound up with the stories (*fabula*) about the collapse of home. Before Margaret’s demise into poverty and desperation, the Pedlar recalls that she offered “cool refreshment” from the spring to passing travellers: “when every day the touch of human hand / Disturbed their [the waters’] stillness, and they ministered / To human comfort” (100, 86-88). However, she no longer offered a

cheerful welcome to Armytage after her husband Robert leaves and fails to return from military service. He joins the military to provide for Margaret and their child, literally leaving behind “A purse of gold” on the window ledge (264). Every time the Pedlar subsequently visited, he noticed the increasing decay of “this reft house” until the death of the child and eventually Margaret herself (82).

This scenario is more acute in the Grasmere narratives, such as “Michael”, where rural objects are even more intimately bound up with a particular way of life working the Cumbrian landscape. The “stragglng heap of unhewn [literally meaning unfinished] stones” near Green-head Ghyll as pointed out by the narrator at the start of the poem becomes the sign of an unfinished “Sheep-fold” and testament to a broken covenant between father and son by the end (*LB* 17, 417). Unexpectedly burdened by another’s debt, Michael faces an agonising choice between sending his son, Luke, away to earn or selling “a portion of his patrimonial fields” (234). Having chosen the former, Michael begins to build a sheep-fold with Luke laying the first “corner-stone” (414). The building of the sheep-fold enacts a “covenant” between father and son (425). Michael envisages the sheep-fold as Luke’s “anchor and thy shield” protecting him from the (perceived) vices of urban life during his work: “amid all fear / And all temptation, let it be to thee / An emblem of the life thy Fathers liv’d” (418-420). On Michael’s part, he will build the sheep-fold—“When thou return’st, thou in this place wilt see / A work which is not here”—as part of a larger promise to preserve the land for Luke’s return: “I will begin again / With many tasks that were resign’d to thee” (423-424, 402-404). However, Luke does not return home—having fallen to “evil courses”, he must leave “the dissolute city” for foreign shores—and on receiving the

news Michael cannot bring himself to finish building the sheep-fold and fulfil his promise (53-54).³⁰

At the level of the *fabula* then, the neglected, unmarked or unfinished state of natural objects reflects the collapse of home within the story and this collapse arises because a family member must leave. On one side of the coin, Margaret and Michael cannot continue with the kind of dwelling they once enjoyed after the departure of Robert and Luke. In the case of “The Brothers”, this is even more acute as James develops a sleep-walking habit as a result of Leonard’s departure, and the Priest implies that it is the cause of his death when his body is found at the bottom of the local cliff, the Pillar. On the other side of the coin, those that leave, like Robert, Luke and Leonard (in order to provide financially for the family) do not return or, as in Leonard’s case, return only to find it changed irrevocably and cannot (re)settle there.

Within the dramatic or narrative form, natural objects are fundamentally ambivalent. On the one hand, they stand for something or someone that is now lost; they are the last testament or memorial to a person or way of life in a particular location. On the other hand, they literally generate the narrative out of that landscape, transformed by the associations pertaining to them and the relation of that narrative. The ambivalence of these objects allows them to act as a touchstone between the different narrative levels of the *fabula* and the *syuzhet*, and crucially enables the poet to shape the transmission of the *fabula* into a communicative act at the level of *syuzhet*. For example, at the beginning of *The Ruined Cottage*, the poet-narrator, standing in Margaret’s overgrown garden, simply regards the ruined house as a

³⁰ The object of the “Sheep-fold” has garnered substantial critical attention. Marjorie Levinson’s second chapter in *Wordsworth’s Great Period Poems* provides a seminal historicist and deconstructionist critique (58-80). James Chandler views the sheep-fold as evidence of Wordsworth’s traditionalism, in a Burkean sense (*Wordsworth’s Second Nature* 160-168). Finally, Sally Bushell examines the “Sheep-fold” as an ambivalent reference within Dorothy’s *Grasmere Journals* to different elements of compositional process (as poem, place and object) (“The Mapping of Meaning in Wordsworth’s ‘Michael’” 61-63).

“cheerless spot” (60). However, listening to the tale of Margaret *in situ* provokes a profoundly different response to the immediate environment from the poet-narrator (the subject of in the expanded conclusion to MS. D).³¹ Now, the poet-narrator “trace[s] with milder interest / That secret spirit of humanity” among the “calm oblivious tendencies/ Of nature, mid’ her plants, her weeds, and flowers” (502-505).

Furthermore, the relating of the tale is not only bound up with the transmission of sympathetic affections, that “Fellow-feeling” for Margaret, from the Pedlar to the poet-narrator, and from the poet to the reader, but also the cultivation of wider habits and practices of sympathy. Explicit throughout the Pedlar’s account is the question of the appropriate response to Margaret’s death. Sensing the poet-narrator’s sorrow, the Pedlar instead urges him (and the reader) to take consolation in the “peace [that] is here” in the “image of tranquillity / So calm and still” presented by the surrounding surviving plants: “those very plumes / Those weeds, and the high spear-grass on that very wall” (512-518). The Pedlar ultimately urges the poet-narrator (and the reader): “The purposes of wisdom ask no more; / Be wise and cheerful, and no longer read / The forms of things with an unworthy eye” (509-511). In transmitting the emotion of “Fellow-feeling” and the habit of *reading* “our duties in all forms”, *The Ruined Cottage* directly plays out on a larger scale the consequences envisaged for the Pedlar’s moral development in the draft material I explored in the previous section.

There is a triangulation within the poem between Pedlar, natural object and poet-narrator, in which the Pedlar mediates the story of the object to the poet-narrator, and another wider triangulation without the poem between poet, natural object and reader. Both triangulations are a direct result of Wordsworth’s associationist poetics that

³¹ MS. B finishes with the Pedlar concluding the tale of Margaret: “In sickness she remained and here she died / Last human tenant of these ruined walls” (526-527). MS. D, however, includes an extra 48 lines detailing the Pedlar and the poet-narrator’s responses to Margaret’s death.

envisages a *healthy channel* for the associations of the poet to meet, co-exist with and amend those of the reader. In the 1800 “Preface”, Wordsworth states:

... if we originally be possessed of much organic sensibility, such habits of mind will be produced that by obeying blindly and mechanically the impulses of those habits we shall describe objects and utter sentiments of such a nature and in such connection with each other, that the understanding of the being to whom we address ourselves, if he be *in a healthful state of association*, must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, his taste exalted, and his affections ameliorated. (*LB* 175, my emphasis)

When Wordsworth defines the figure of the poet as a “man speaking to men”, or as surveying, mingling with, and representing the complex mass of associations emerging from the scene of “man and the objects that surround him as acting and reacting upon each other”, he defines the poet as a man who will, to the best of his abilities, keep that channel of associations open for the reader. This does not necessarily point to the egotism of the poet. As Craig highlights, it instead emphasises the precariousness of an associationist poetics that is dependent upon:

... a chain, which links author and world, work and reader, in a fragile interconnection that is constantly threatened with breakdown between any of its various elements, because it is a chain anchored only in the contingencies and accidents of individual experience. (89)

This notion of a communicative mediated poetics is reiterated in the later *Essays upon Epitaphs* (1810) when Wordsworth reflects upon the openness of the Epitaph: “the Stranger is introduced through its mediation to the Company of a Friend” (*Prose Works* 2: 59). It is also a scenario which is directly played out in “Michael” and links Wordsworth’s *authorial* identity (his definition of a poet) to Grasmere. There are two

major developments between *The Ruined Cottage* and “Michael”: the first concerns changing the role of the poet-narrator from listener within the poem to the main speaker and narrator of the poem (effectively filling the shoes of the Pedlar). The second concerns the precise placing of the rural object and narrative within Grasmere.³² The triangulation in “Michael” then consists of the figure of the poet *directly* addressing and relating the tale about the “unhewn stones” to the reader. In doing so, the poet-narrator fulfils the role of the Epitaph: through the mediation of the story (via the poet-narrator), the reader moves from the role of stranger at the beginning of the poem (stranger to both Grasmere and the local history of Michael) to that of a sympathetic listener and sympathiser with Grasmere’s inhabitants by the end. The poem itself becomes the mediatory object *between* poet and reader, something which Wordsworth points to in his letter to Charles Fox: the poems of *Lyrical Ballads* “may in some small degree enlarge our feelings of reverence for our feelings of reverence for our species, and our knowledge of human nature” (*EY* 315).

Crucially, unlike the Epitaph, the rural object, in this case “the unhewn stones”, is not “open” to all and requires the poet-narrator to recover (and shape the transmission of) this lost local history. This is what Hartman describes in his well-known essay “Inscriptions and Romantic Nature Poetry”: “The poet reads the landscape as if it were a monument or a grave” (*The Unremarkable Wordsworth* 41). It allows the poet to perform his communicative and sympathetic poetics. In turn, it also establishes the poet-narrator as a local and last vestige of Grasmere’s communal unrecorded history: “for there are no few / Whose memories will bear witness to my tale” (*LB* 134-135). Addressing the reader directly, the poet-narrator not only recalls that he learned this

³² It is a great irony that *The Ruined Cottage* extolls the narrative significance of the tale about the located object told *in situ*, and yet doesn’t correspond to a geographical location. In his Introduction to *The Excursion*, Wordsworth observes that the location of Margaret’s tale was originally the “south-west of England” before it was moved with “seven-league boots” to “the heights of the Furness fells” (7).

tale as a child, but also explains how it affected his moral development (and in doing so gestures to the reader to respond in a similar fashion):

... It was the first,
 The earliest of those tales that spake to me
 Of Shepherds, dwellers in the vallies, men
 Whom I already lov'd, not verily
 For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills
 Where was their occupation and abode.
 And hence this Tale, while I was yet a boy
 Careless of books, yet having felt the power
 Of Nature, by the gentle agency
 Of natural objects lead me on to feel
 For passions that were not my own, and think
 At random and imperfectly indeed
 On man; the heart of man and human life. (121-133)

Finally, a similar (and less direct) scenario also arises in “The Brothers”. The Priest, who mediates the tale of James’ death to Leonard, is also the fount of local knowledge in Ennerdale. Explaining to Leonard the absence of any tombstones within the graveyard he states: “we have no need of names and epitaphs, / We talk about our dead by our fire-sides” (176-177). Within the narratives of *Lyrical Ballads*, it is only those who live in and know Grasmere and the Lakeland landscape who can “read” rural objects, and Wordsworth places the figure of the “poet-narrator” among them.

In the narrative poems, Wordsworth builds on the notion that *reading* meaning from the landscape mobilises both “Fellow-feeling” and the sympathetic habit of “read[ing] our duties in all forms” and enacts this process within the represented space

of the narrative poem. In all three instances, the telling of the tale (*syuzhet*) about unformed, unmarked or fragmented rural objects *in situ* recovers the story and meaning that was lost due to the collapse of home and family at the level of the *fabula*. Moreover, it enables the poet to shape the transmission of the tale as a communicative sympathetic act between poet and reader.³³ The inherently ambivalent status of the object is key to this process, and in “Michael” and to a lesser extent “The Brothers”, the unmarked rural object at the beginning of the poem also helps the poet to place himself in Grasmere and the wider Lakeland region, privy to communal and unrecorded knowledge of place. Yet, the ambivalence of the object and the doubled structure of the narrative also complicate the more positive and sympathetic elements of *reading* the landscape. Conversely, *reading* rural objects within the narrative poem also means confronting anxieties about the inability to return home or the collapse and loss of home and family which are at the heart of the stories. In this way, Wordsworth (indirectly) uses the poems to explore broader anxieties about “returning home” and the responsibilities this places upon him as a self-defined poet *of* place to generate feelings and poetry *out* of the Lakeland landscape.

3. “we have named from You”: Investing and Naming Objects in the First-Person

Lyric

In the North every Brook, every Crag, almost every Field has a name—a proof of greater Independence & a society more approaching in their Laws & Habits to Nature.

³³ In an essay entitled “Silence and Sympathy in *Lyrical Ballads*” for the forthcoming *Cambridge Companion to Lyrical Ballads*, Andrew Bennett demonstrates, that elsewhere in the poems to *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth explores the limits of sympathy. Interestingly for my purposes, neither “The Brothers”, nor “Michael” are included in Bennett’s analysis.

(Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge 1: No 569)

By persons resident in the country, and attached to rural objects, many places will be found ... where little Incidents have occurred.... From a wish to give some sort of record to such Incidents or renew the gratification of such Feelings, Names have been given to Places by the Author and some of his Friends, and the following Poems written in consequence.

(“Advertisement” to “Poems on the Naming of Places”, *LB* p. 375)

In the first quotation above, STC emphasises the notion that place-naming leads to the cultivation of the kind of “Law & Habits” which Wordsworth privileges in the “Preface” to *Lyrical Ballads*: “Low and rustic life was generally chosen because in that situation the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they attain maturity” (*LB* p. 174). Furthermore, in the “Preface”, Wordsworth directly links the prospect of a smoother transmission of sympathy to the affections nurtured by a particular kind of landscape: the passions of men “incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature” may be “more accurately contemplated” by men, by poet and by reader, and “more forcibly communicated” between men and between the poet and reader (*LB* 174). In the “Advertisement” to “Poems on the Naming of Places”, quoted above, Wordsworth also defines place-naming as an experiment that might engender sympathetic attachments through “the beautiful and permanent forms of nature”, but on a smaller and more personal scale. In highlighting the overlap between the poetic implications of Wordsworth’s “Preface” (that a particular kind of affection can be “more forcibly communicated”) and the more private aspirations of the “Advertisement”, I am not arguing that one conception directly informed the other, or

that Wordsworth attempted to recreate similar kinds of affections from the landscape of “low and rustic life” through “Poems on the Naming of Places”. Instead, I am drawing attention to Wordsworth’s implicit linking of naming to sympathy—the transmission of associations and affections (which will also inform the kind of collective naming that is the subject of Chapter Two)—and a preoccupation with generating certain kind of affections from a rural landscape. These occur on different scales and pertain to different levels of creative identity. The first is in relation Wordsworth’s larger poetics and his definition of the poet as communicating associations to the reader; an identity that is *authorial* and public. The second, is on a more personal scale in which Wordsworth attempts to generate particular affections (feelings of connection to others and belonging to place) out of poetic representations of Grasmere; an identity which is *textual* and more private.

This final section then examines Wordsworth’s assumption that naming rural objects engenders local attachments: attachments to people *through* place, name and poem. It focuses on the group of semi-autobiographical lyrics “Poems on the Naming of Places”, which were composed between December 1799 and October 1800 and coincided with the Wordsworths’ first year of living in Grasmere and with the composition of “The Brothers” and “Michael”.³⁴ While previous sections have demonstrated that *reading* the landscape is a more positive act, because it enables the transmission of sympathy between poet and reader, Wordsworth’s placing of self in Grasmere through the *investment* of meaning in the landscape is far more problematic. As well as questioning whether naming fosters sympathetic attachments within the poems (thus enabling the poet to place himself in Grasmere at a *textual* level), this

³⁴ Mark Reed orders the composition of the poems as follows: 1) “To M.H” (20-28th Dec. 1799); 2) “There is an Eminence” (c. Jan. 1800); 3) “It was an April Morning” (April-Oct.1800); 4) “A Narrow Girdle of Rough Stones and Crags” (July-Nov. 1800); 5) “To Joanna” (Aug. 1800) (*Chronology Early Years* 36; *Chronology Middle Years* 18-20, 82n; henceforth *CEY and CMY*).

section questions whether these poems engender an open healthy channel for the transmission of associations between poet and reader, enabling Wordsworth to perform his definition of the role of the poet. This final section tests and further expands upon the assumptions emerging from earlier parts of the chapter: *reading* the landscape leads to the transmission of sympathy between poet and reader, but conversely relies on the breakdown of home or the failure to return home; *investing*, on the other hand, is much more personal and has the potential to veer into self-centredness. However, what hasn't yet been explored is the relationship between *investing* and Wordsworth's overall poetic model of "home-coming": do acts of *investing* engender feelings of dwelling?³⁵

As a group, the poems depict different forms of naming-by-ascription: naming a place to record a particularly meaningful incident in place, or naming a place after associating certain qualities of the landscape with the personality traits of a particular person. Unlike the other poems, the longer poems, "To Joanna" and "A Narrow Girdle of Rough Stones and Craggs" (otherwise known as "Point-Rash Judgement"), use naming to record incidents in place and incorporate some elements of the *syuzhet* from the narrative poems which enabled the poet to present the transmission of the story (*fabula*) as a communicative act. Both naming poems are framed as recollections of incidents in place and create a space for the reader in poems which are otherwise concerned with the *investing* of personal meaning into rural objects.

The narrative shape for "To Joanna", for example, revolves around the poet-speaker's recollection of his conversation with the local Vicar; a conversation which

³⁵ *Home at Grasmere* is another well-known act of poetic "home-coming". Due to its length, the poem requires sustained analysis which is beyond the scope of this current chapter. Furthermore, within *Home at Grasmere* natural objects are not as central to Wordsworth's narrative of "returning home" as they are in the naming poems. "Home-coming" within *Home at Grasmere* is deeply ambivalent and reflects the poet's anxieties about his chosen vocation. For examinations of such anxieties see Butler, "Tourist or Native Son" (1-15) and Simpson, *Wordsworth, Commodification, and Social Concern* (57).

in turn recollects the incident that prompts the act of naming. Furthermore, the conversation is framed as a confrontation, with the Vicar demanding an explanation, which, by extension, also informs the reader. The Vicar confronts the poet over the carving of “Some uncouth name upon the native rock, / Above the Rotha, by the forest side” (30-31). The poet’s explanation to the Vicar, and by extension the reader, involves a recollection of the incident that motivated the naming: Joanna’s reaction to the poet’s “ravish[ing]” gaze upon the landscape from the rock, which leads to the climax of the poem (53). In a well-known, and much celebrated passage, Joanna’s consequent laughter is picked up, echoed and reverberated by the anthropomorphised voices of the local hills and mountains. The subsequent name not only records the occasion, but also marks the rock as mediating affections between the poet, the poet’s intimates and Joanna: “In memory of affections old and true, / I chissel’d out in those rude characters / Joanna’s name upon the living stone” (81-83). Other similarities to the narrative (and the *reading* of objects) include the attempt to change a viewpoint of one of the characters and gesture towards an appropriate response to the initial tale. There is a suggestion that the telling of the tale placates the Vicar’s initial disapproval of the act of carving. At first, the Vicar, “with grave looks” accuses the poet of “Reviving obsolete Idolatory” (27). However, the Vicar’s response to the description of Joanna’s laughter suggests a softening of his initial misgivings about inscription: “in the hey-day of astonishment / [He] Smil’d in my face” (67-68).

“Point Rash-Judgement” recalls a past event in place. The poem depicts, and the name emerges from, a series of misreadings of the landscape on various scales by three friends walking along the “eastern shore / Of Grasmere” (4-5). The climax of the poem concerns the mistaking of a “tall and upright figure of a Man / Attir’d in peasant’s garb” for an “idle man”; idle, the friends conclude, because he is fishing at

leisure and missing an “ample” opportunity to work during the harvest season (50-51, 57, 59). However, on a closer approach, the man is “worn down, / By sickness, gaunt and lean” and “Too weak to work in the harvest field, / The man was using his best skill to gain / A pittance from the dead unfeeling lake” (64-65, 69-71). With “self-reproach”, the trio give to that spot the name “POINT RASH-JUDGEMENT” (76, 86). The name itself is highly ambiguous. On the one hand, the name serves as a rebuke to the three friends for their initial misjudgement.³⁶ However, in framing the tale as narration of a past event, the poet is able to incorporate his reflections upon that misjudgement within the poem: “Nor did we fail to see within ourselves / What need there is to be reserv’d in speech, / And temper all our thoughts with charity” (77-79). Hence, (on the other hand) the name is also a prompt for behaviour that encourages sympathy (in the sense of “Fellow-feeling”) for others. The poem cannot undo the initial act of making an arrogant and ignorant judgement, but it serves as a cautionary and preventative reminder to the poet, “unwilling to forget that day”, of the habits he should curtail and those he should foster (80). Furthermore, like the Epitaph, this cautionary tale, is “concerning all, and for all” (*Prose Works* 2: 59). Wordsworth’s understanding of the epitaph, according to Frances Ferguson “always leav[es] room in their generality for the traveller-reader to include himself, whether or not they [epitaphs] issue a specific invitation ... to him” (*Language as Counter-Spirit* 34). Therefore, although the poem depicts a private (and shameful) experience in place, the generality of the poet’s transgression—mistaking someone for something else—and

³⁶ The socio-economic implications of the act of naming is a contested issue. David Simpson provides one of the most damning critiques of the motivations for naming in this poem: The trio’s “self-correction seems to perpetuate the initial failure of sympathy and charity” and “They learn humility but extend no active assistance” to the gaunt peasant (*Wordsworth, Commodification, and Social Concern* 97). On this point, I disagree with and differ from Simpson by considering the relationship the poem encourages between the poet and the reader.

the *bildungsroman* course of the poem opens up a space for the reader to sympathise with the poet's mistake and ensure they too do not make the same one.

However, although these two poems incorporate several communicative elements from the narrative poems (which are also associated with the notion of *reading* rural objects)—either through the incorporation of the telling of tale or by making space for the reader within their subject-matter—on another level, they simultaneously raise anxieties about the possibility of knowing and dwelling in Grasmere. The series of *misreadings* in “Point Rash-Judgement” arise from a lack of local knowledge.

Unaware of the harsh realities faced by the local inhabitants, the poet-speaker and his friends initially treat “the dead unfeeling lake” and the shore as “a playmate”: “we paus'd ... to point out, perchance / To pluck, some flower or water-weed” (71, 27-31).

Furthermore, the name itself, serves to underscore their recent arrival to place, and hence lack of knowledge. The name, the poet-speaker claims is “uncouth indeed / As e'er by a Mariner was given to Bay, / Or Foreland on a new-discover'd coast” (83-85).

Finally, the poet's brief allusion to STC's wandering mariner raises the disturbing question as to whether they can settle within this “new-discover'd” Vale (85). Overall, these two poems occupy an ambiguous position within the place-naming series and Wordsworth's Grasmere writing. They are examples of *investing* meaning, which take on aspects on the communicative aspects associated with *reading* meaning from the landscape. The structures of the poems communicate “more forcibly” associations and meaning to the reader and to some extent (but not to the same extent as the narrative poems) fulfil Wordsworth's definition of the poet. Yet, in terms of the poet *investing* personal meaning into the landscape (at a level of *textual* identity, or the *fabula*), these poems trouble the notion that naming fosters feelings of belonging.

The remainder of this section provides a contrast to “To Joanna” and “Point Rash-Judgement” by focusing on more overt acts of *investing* meaning in the landscape in the more private poems, “It was an April Morning”, “There was an Eminence”, and “To M. H”. In these poems, the poet, or a female figure (presumably Dorothy), name a particular site after a close friend because the qualities of that site remind them of (or reflect) similar qualities within that friend or family member. For example, in “It was an April Morning” the poet-speaker associates “this wild nook” and “this wild place” with Emma (Wordsworth’s poetic pseudonym for Dorothy) and names the spot “EMMA’S DELL” (38, 46). In “There was an Eminence”, Dorothy—“She who dwells with me”—names the “lonesome Peak”, which “restore[s] our hearts” with “Its own deep quiet” after the poet (14, 17, 8). In “To M. H.”, the group out walking name a “still nook” after “sweet MARY” (23). From an initial reading of the three poems, these acts of naming appear to be enacted in “The spirit of enjoyment and desire / And hopes and wishes”—a description the poet applies to the “budding groves” in “It was an April Morning”—and suggest that naming-by-ascription engenders feelings of belonging (6-7, 9). For Hartman, “naming is a joyfully spontaneous act that almost escapes its elegiac implications” (*The Unremarkable Wordsworth* p. 227, n31). Bate goes further, placing these poems in a central position in Wordsworth’s oeuvre because they enable the poet to articulate a personal narrative of “home-coming”: “It is through these poems, then, that Wordsworth expresses his sense of belonging in the Vale of Grasmere, of having come home” (*RE* 101).

However, the poems are problematic in several ways: first, there are apparent contradictions within the process of naming-by-ascription. For example, there is nothing within “It was an April morning” that links the qualities of the fictitious Emma to the dell that is named after her. Second, there is very little information about

the places which are named; the locations of “EMMA’s DELL”, Mary’s Nook and William’s Eminence are not revealed, and in the case of the latter two, the names are not given within the poems.

Turning to the first issue, naming-by-ascription within the poems operates on a basis that is remarkably similar to Alison’s understanding of Taste with the landscape acting as a medium for the qualities of the mind: “the qualities of matter are not to be considered sublime or beautiful in themselves, but as the SIGNS or EXPRESSIONS of such qualities” within the mind (417). Within the three poems, the names arise not from the function or use of rural objects in place but from qualities projected by the walkers onto the landscape: places are, to quote the last line of “To M.H”, “named from” rather than named “for” the person in question (24). This is further emphasised by the fact that neither “Emma” nor Mary are present within the poems which depict the act of naming a place after them. Furthermore, such qualities are often assigned along the conventional gendered categories of the sublime and the beautiful. The “lonesome Peak” named after the poet bears hallmarks of the sublime: it is “so high, / Above us, and so distant in its height” that it is the “loneliest place we have among the clouds” (17, 5-6, 13). The nook named after “Sweet MARY” draws on the maternal and nourishing qualities of a feminised Nature: “this calm recess” is “beautiful”; it is “made by Nature for herself”, complete with “soft green turf” and a “small bed of water” that restores “both flock and herd” (23, 3-17). Finally, the wildness of “EMMA’s DELL” corresponds to the picturesque pleasing wildness that can be domesticated for the dell becomes the poet-speaker’s “other home, / My dwelling, and my out-of-doors abode” (47, 40-41).

These names and the process of naming contrast strongly to the anonymous and local acts of naming represented elsewhere in Wordsworth’s poetry that emerge from

the working of the local landscape. The name, “The CLIPPING TREE” in “Michael”, for example, emerges from the Oak’s “enormous breath of shade” which provides “the Shearer[s] covert from the sun” as they shear sheep (179, 176-177). In a note, Wordsworth further emphasises the local source of the name by highlighting its linguistic roots in the “rustic dialect”: “Clipping is the word used in the North of England for shearing” (line 178, p. 391). By contrast, the poet’s *investing* the landscape with personal meanings reflects the broader concerns with *investing* and its associations with “thoughtless youth” that were explored in the first section of this chapter (“Tintern Abbey” 91). This is dramatised directly in “It was an April Morning” when the poet-speaker is not moving through the landscape listening for “the still, sad music of humanity” but is wandering, however joyfully, in an aimless state: “Up the brook / *I roam’d* in the *confusion* of my heart, / Alive to all things and *forgetting* all” (“Tintern Abbey” 92; “April Morning” 17-19, my emphasis).

The second issue, the lack of information about the names and places within the poems, is more complex and concerns the movement of poetry from a private and unpublished context into a published state and public arena. On the one hand, the lack of information available to the reader seems to support the notion that *investing* meaning into landscape, within a private and unpublished context, could be a personal and joyful affair (as Bate and Hartman testify). It reflects the small coterie these poems were written for: the Wordsworths’ younger brother, John and close friends including STC and the Hutchinson sisters, Mary and Sara. This group do not need such information: they already know the locations of these sites; they know Emma is a pseudonym for Dorothy and that the poet-speaker’s association of the wildness of the dell with Emma reflects an earlier association of Dorothy with wildness: the “the shooting lights / Of thy wild eyes” of his “dear, dear Sister” in “Tintern Abbey” (119-

120).³⁷ For this intimate group, these place-names may well fulfil the sympathetic outcome of naming that Wordsworth anticipates in the “Advertisement”; the place-names and the poems may “renew the gratification of ... Feelings” that originally occurred in the locations and prompted the initial act of naming (*LB* p. 375).³⁸

On the other hand, in a public and published context, the lack of information about places, name and people in these poems is conspicuous. It emphasises the very private nature of these poems and is an instance of what David Simpson has termed an “informed withdrawal” of meaning (*Irony and Authority in Romantic Poetry* 220 n23). Although Simpson applies the phrase to “It was an April Morning”, it can be applied to all five poems that make up the “Poems on the Naming of Places”. It marks a reluctance on the poet’s behalf to take the reader, directly to a site, (and a site that is unknown to many) as he had done in “Michael”: “If from the public way you turn your steps / Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Gill” (1-2). Such an “informed withdrawal” of meaning frames the entire group of poems in the opening clause of the “Advertisement”: “By Persons resident in *the country* ...” (*LB* p. 375, my emphasis). Here, the poet employs a deictic construction but does not give the additional context that would enable to reader to comprehend the statement in its fullest sense; the reader is left wondering the location and whereabouts of “the country”. Furthermore, there is an apologetic undercurrent throughout the “Advertisement”: “many places will be found *unnamed or of unknown* names, where *little Incidents* will have occurred, or

³⁷ In *The Fenwick Notes*, Wordsworth divulges missing information: “It was an April Morning” was “suggested on the banks of the brook that runs through Easedale”; the “pool alluded to” in “To M.H” “is in Rydal Upper Park” (18) and that the trio walking together in “A narrow girdle of rough stones and crags” were “Coleridge and my sister & the fact [the mistaken identity of the angler] occurred strictly as recorded” (19). Arguably, the content of *The Fenwick Notes* serves to establish Wordsworth as a poet of place and of the Lakeland region more than the poems themselves.

³⁸ I fully explicate the sympathetic model of naming Wordsworth details in the “Advertisement” in Chapter Two—demonstrating how naming directly draws upon aspects of sympathy defined by Hartley and Hume—during my discussion of naming as a spatial and embodied practice (rather than a poetic ascription).

feelings been experienced, which have given to such places a *private* and *peculiar* interest” (p. 375, my emphasis). The poet appears self-conscious that these names commemorate trifling events and that the group’s interests in these particular places are very distinctive to that small group: interests and associations with rural features which others may find strange or may not agree with. Finally, the poet stresses that the group are not (knowingly) intruding upon or trying to appropriate local dialect by choosing “unnamed” places or those with “unknown names”.³⁹

The lack of information within the poems, and the poet’s anxiety before the public have been recognised to varying degrees by several critics, including Pinkney, Simpson and Michael Baron.⁴⁰ However, in my opinion, both these issues are also symptomatic of a larger problem when the poems move from a private unpublished context to a published one: whether they do (or do not) operate *as* poems according to Wordsworth’s associationist poetics. By placing the group within a wider context of *reading* and *investing* objects through different forms of the narrative (third person) and the lyric (first person)—which Pinkney, Simpson and Baron do not—it is apparent that the poems do not mobilise sympathy on the same scale as the narrative form because of their private nature. The complex and key components of the narrative mode which were identified in the previous section—the incorporation of the telling of the tale to create two different narrative levels and the ambivalent *status* of the *located* rural object which mediates between them—are absent from the naming

³⁹ The politics of naming, an examination of which is beyond the scope of this thesis, is a contentious issue. Carol Bolton views place-naming as an aggressive activity in “Taking Possession: Romantic Naming in Wordsworth and Southey”. Wiley argues that the utopian possibilities of naming means Wordsworth “can actually re-territorialise and re-signify the land” in a way that subverts the imperialistic intentions of the institutions of the establishment (79-80). Nicola Hessel, in the most recent assessment of the politics of naming, argues that Wordsworthian poetic naming incorporates elements from both indigenous and colonising contemporary practices of naming (143-145).

⁴⁰ Baron, for example, observes: “It is because these poems are intensely private in subject matter—domestic and autobiographical—that Wordsworth’s anxiety before the public is acute” (57). See also Simpson, *Wordsworth, Commodification, and Social Concern*, 98-102.

lyrics. Furthermore, the vital triangulation between poet-poem-reader, with the poem acting as a mediatory object between the poet and the reader is not established in the personal lyric poems. As a result, the revelation of a story *about* place *told* in place cannot be transmitted as a communicative and sympathetic act within and without the poem. Although the reader may learn some of the significance of these names, sites and poems to the small coterie of friends, the reader is not included within the poem (either with direct address or by extension through the figure of the poet-narrator). The reader of “To M.H”, “It was an April Morning” and “There is an Eminence”, to borrow Wordsworth’s analogy from the *Essays on Epitaphs*, is kept in the position of “Stranger”, rather than transitioning from “Stranger” to “Friend” throughout the course of the poem(s) (*Prose Works 2*: 59).

In conclusion to this chapter, a consideration of the position of the reader within the “Poems on the Naming of Places” draws attention to the difficulties of generating creative identity (*textual* and *authorial*) out of poetic representations of a particular place. Wordsworth’s definition of a poet (*authorial* identity) privileges the affections arising from a rural landscape because they “may be more accurately contemplated and more forcibly communicated” to the reader (*LB* 174). As we have seen in section two, *reading* objects within the landscape in the narrative and the inherently ambivalent status of the rural object establishes a channel for the poet to relate the story about place to the reader as a sympathetic and communicative act. On the other hand, Wordsworth’s more personal aspirations for place-naming—as a means of *investing* meaning into the landscape in order to cultivate connections to close friends through place—in the “Advertisement” are not enacted within the poems themselves. The anxieties in the place-naming lyrics are not only linked to concerns that Wordsworth (on the level of *textual*, or personal identity) positions himself as a

newcomer to or an outsider from the Grasmere community, as noticed by Butler and Pinkney, but are also related to larger sympathetic capacity of the poems *as* poems. These poems do not allow him to perform his own definition of the poet (*authorial* identity) through them because their private subject matter means the rural object is not ambivalent and keeps the reader at a distance. *Reading* and *investing* rural objects are two sides of the same coin in relation to Wordsworth's poetic model of homecoming: *reading* objects relies on the collapse of home at the level of the *fabula*; Wordsworth's *investing* of objects with personal meaning are troubled assertions of "returning to home". As we shall see in the next chapter, *investing* and *reading* for Dorothy are of a very different order.

Chapter 2. Place-Naming and Place-Making: Walking and Writing in Dorothy's Grasmere Journals

I have at all times a deep sympathy with those who know what fraternal affection is. It has been the building up of my being, the light of my path!
(Dorothy Wordsworth to Lady Beaumont, 1805. *EY* 568)

We will find another place for your cypher, but you must come and fix upon the place yourself.

(William and Dorothy Wordsworth to Mary Hutchinson, 1801. *EY* 333)

In Dorothy's statement in the first epigraph above, path-making is a metaphor for the development of identity, and domestic affections provide the "building" blocks of Dorothy's path and her being. However, it is also quite literally a reflection of activities occurring in the early Grasmere years as the Wordsworth siblings discovered, inscribed and named rural objects together; formulated paths and routes around those objects; and repeatedly walked along those routes to named sites. Despite critical interest in Dorothy's walking and writing of place, little attention has been paid to the significance of such paths and named sites for the development of Dorothy's *textual identity* in the *Grasmere Journals*.⁴¹ This second chapter fully conceptualises private place-naming as an embodied practice for the cultivation and

⁴¹ Meena Alexander provides a feminist critique of Dorothy and William's walking in "Dorothy Wordsworth: The Grounds of Writing"; Anne Wallace analyses Dorothy and William's respective walking practice in light of the "peripatetic" tradition in "Inhabited Solitudes: Dorothy Wordsworth's Domesticating Walkers"; Kurt Heinzelman's essay, "The Cult of Domesticity" in Mellor's edited collection *Romanticism and Feminism*, offers a Marxist assessment of the siblings and interprets walking as a form of shared domestic labour which contributes to the poetic and prosaic production of the household.

transferral of “Fellow-feeling” between the Wordsworth siblings and their close friends, through the contours of the landscape and through narratives about that landscape in life-writing (correspondence and the journal). As with Chapter One, the activities of *reading* and *investing* the landscape for and with meaning are crucial; however, they operate very differently. *Reading* and *investing* within life-writing are activities that work together, repeatedly altering one another, in order to enhance sympathetic attachments to people through the landscape, rather than representing different kinds of attitudes (for William, *reading* was associated with sympathetic connection and *investment* had the potential for self-centredness).

The capacity of successive acts of *reading* and *investing*, and walking and writing to alter one another brings to the fore the theme of movement. Movement is a central concern in this chapter because it directs the development of Dorothy’s *textual* identity (the speaking subject) in the *Grasmere Journals*. As sister to one of the “Big Six” poets of Romanticism, Dorothy was one of the first female writers “recovered” by Feminist critics in the 1980s. As such, the kind of subjectivity represented within the journals has generated extensive critical debate, especially as it is very different to the highly self-conscious *textual* identity within William’s blank verse. It is the apparent lack of self-reflection within the *Grasmere Journals* which led earlier critics to conclude that the journals represented a “repudiation of origins ... [and] a consequent debasing of identity” or were defined by acts of “self-effacement” and “gestures of refusal” (Margaret Homans 43; Susan Levin 29).⁴² Frances Wilson, in a

⁴² Historical surveys of diary writing, however, make clear that the diary was not used as a vehicle for an exploration of an inner self until the Twentieth Century. In her survey of diary-writing from Lady Anne Clifford to Virginia Woolf, Harriet Blodgett observes “... even more ambitious diarists are inclined to be reticent and inhibited, neither self-reflexive nor self-revealing, except minimally and inadvertently. Freely speaking diarists are the exception, not the rule” (41). Similar assessments to those advanced by Homans and Levin include: Rachel Brownstein’s article, “The Private Life of Dorothy’s Journals”; Elizabeth Hardwicke’s monograph *Seduction and Betrayal*; Richard Fadem’s article “Dorothy Wordsworth: A View from ‘Tintern Abbey’”; and finally, James Holt McGavern’s book chapter, “Dorothy Wordsworth’s Journals—Putting Herself Down”.

more recent biography of Dorothy, *The Ballad of Dorothy Wordsworth* (2009), presents a similar view in her representation of movement and time within the *Journals*:

Her journal made motionless the world in which she lived, defending it from mutability and change. Daily life, in her hands, becomes elegy. (12)

Dorothy Wordsworth is *fossilised* for us in her Grasmere Journal, like the unravished bride of quietness on Keats' Grecian Urn. With her wild eyes, woodland dress and few remaining teeth, she is enshrined in these pages ... *fixed* in the *silence* and *slow time* of months between the summer of 1800 and the deep midwinter of 1803. (231, my emphasis)

Wilson, here, connects the stillness of the (*represented*) environment to the preserved and timeless subjectivity of the *Grasmere Journals*. In doing so, Wilson presents the *textual* identity of the journals as immutable and inert.

In sharp contrast to Wilson, I respond to the journals as manuscripts (rather than printed texts) in order to argue that Dorothy's *textual* identity is constantly emerging, developing and fluctuating. Thematically, the *Grasmere Journals* are full of movement, noise and colour; they respond to the variables of the everyday and display a keen sensitivity to the passing of time. Materially the four notebooks which make up the *Grasmere Journals*, are characterised by pace: hurried writing and long dashes, taking up more and more space, as well as pauses, stops and blots. In this chapter, I draw upon and adapt the spatial theory of de Certeau to argue that movement—through the landscape and on the manuscript page—directs the emergence of *textual* identity: self develops through Dorothy's practising of place. In doing so, my work builds upon recent historically-informed assessments of Dorothy's journal-writing.

Sara Crangle, for example, demonstrates the influence of associationism upon the developing subjectivity within the journals to argue that they are:

... a proto-stream of consciousness text: ... filled with rendered images, her own consciousness and subconscious, rapid fluctuations of multiple mental-emotional states, chaotic diversions, and a veneration of passing time (168).⁴³

Mary Ellen Bellanca, in her history of the Nature Diary, recognises that in the late Eighteenth Century, the nature journal combined the emphasis on “empirical enquiry” from the Natural Sciences with the use “of periodic writing for spiritual introspection that emerged with the Reformation and later dissenting movements” (23-24). Far from being an outlet for effacing or escaping the self, “the nature journal was a central site of encounter, knowledge seeking, and expression” (4). Hence, Bellanca views Dorothy’s *Grasmere Journals* as part a non-conformist tradition of nature-writing, which includes Sarah Trimmer, Anna Barbauld and Priscilla Wakefield (128).

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section of this chapter conceptualises private place-naming as an embodied and collective means of *investment*. In contrast to naming-by-ascription, which underpinned William’s “Poems on the Naming of Places”, it is naming-by-inscription that underpins Dorothy’s narrative of “making home” in the *Grasmere Journals*. This first section builds upon Archibald Alison’s associative model of *reading* and *investing* by conceptualising private place-naming in light of the spatial and temporal aspects of sympathy implicit within Hartley and Hume’s respective accounts.

The next two sections build on the first by examining the ways in which Dorothy uses these place names textually in her life-writing and her narratives of “making home”. Dorothy’s *investing* and *reading* of the Grasmere landscape encompasses

⁴³ Healey also observes similarities between the *Grasmere Journals* and later modernist presentations of “stream of consciousness” (163-164).

successive and intertwining acts of naming, walking and writing, which correspondingly interrelate *real*, *represented* and *material* spaces. In order to examine the textuality of landscape and the spatiality of narrative that arises from the successive interrelation of these spaces in the making of meaning, I turn to de Certeau's account of *practising* place. The second section concentrates entirely on de Certeau and adapts his notions of "pedestrian speech acts" and "walking rhetoric" to assert a "third" way of moving and making meaning in such a way as to practise home. This allows me to make the central argument of the chapter in the third and final section: Dorothy *practises* the *place* of Grasmere as the *space* of home, and home is defined, not in terms of an ecological sense of belonging, but as a series of sympathetic attachments between people repeatedly made through landscape and the narrative of the *Journals*. The latter involves an interaction between the recollection of past lived experience (within *real* space) and the present moment of writing up that experience in narrative (*represented* space) through the material space of the notebook page. Where the first section focuses on the creation of contiguity across geographical place through inscription, the final section explores the creation of contiguity over time through the journal. It explores the relationship between Dorothy's practice of place and the development of an emergent *textual* identity by closely reading one of the longer entries made in 1802 in the notebooks (*DCMS 25*).⁴⁴ Finally, in responding to the *Grasmere Journals* as open and unfinished manuscripts rather than a singular, printed (and fixed) text, I follow broader calls within the field for the recognition of women's life-writing as "an integral part of the culture and practice of eighteenth-

⁴⁴ For ease of reference, I cite Pamela Woof's text of the *Grasmere Journals* (henceforth *GAJ*) for thematic concerns (largely in section one) and then use the manuscripts for a full engagement with the notion of place-making and practising place through walking and writing (section three). My response to the manuscript object arises from a combination of handling the four physical notebooks in The Jerwood Centre and examining digitisations of the manuscript notebooks from the online database *Romanticism: Life, Literature and Landscape*. Adam Matthew Digital, 2011. DOI: 51102043260001221.

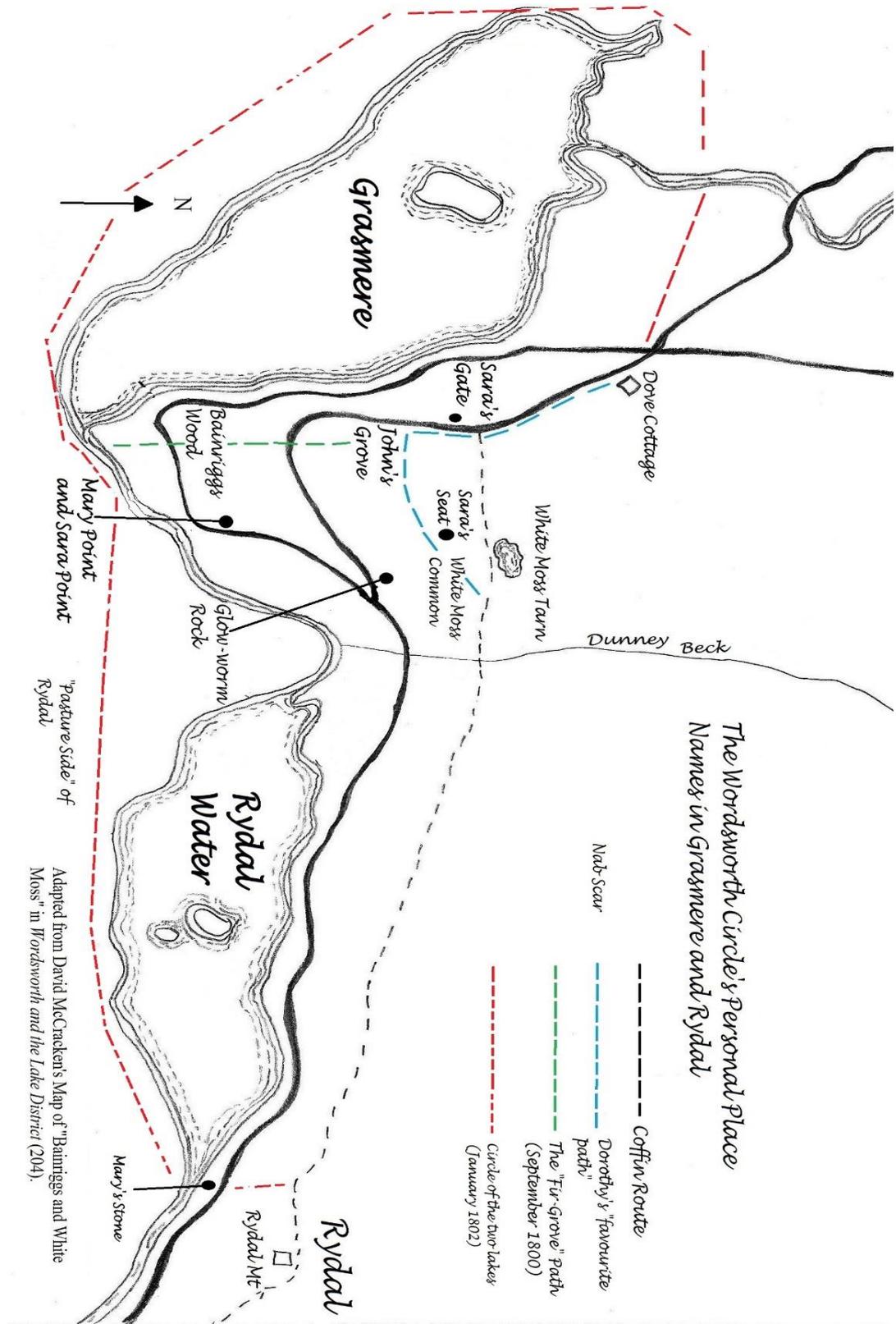
century and Romantic auto/biography” and one which repeatedly demonstrates “the relational and communal aspects of self-representation” (Daniel Cook and Amy Culley, *Women’s Life Writing 1*; Culley *British Women’s Life Writing 2*).

1. “*Finding another place for your cypher*”: *Mediating Affection through the Landscape*

This first section conceptualises private place-naming by the Wordsworth Circle in light of the spatial elements and connective potential of Hartley and Hume’s associationism. I understand the Wordsworth Circle as including William, Dorothy and their younger brother, John; the Hutchinson sisters, Sara and Mary; and finally, the poet STC. Over the course of a year, from August 1800 onwards, the group established a series of place-names: “Mary and Sara Point” (Bainriggs Wood); “Sara’s Rock” (half a mile from Wythburn Chapel towards Keswick); “Sara’s Seat” (White Moss Common); “Sara’s Gate” (How Top); “Mary’s Rock” (foot of Rydal Lake); and finally “John’s Grove” (Ladywood).⁴⁵ **Figure 1** below shows the approximate locations of these names. These private place-names emerge predominantly after the composition of the “Poems on the Naming of Places”. In a similar way to William’s public “Advertisement” which explains the process of place-naming within the “Poems on the Naming of Places”, William gives a private account of a different kind of naming within the space of a letter.

⁴⁵ “Mary Point” is the first name mentioned in Dorothy’s Journals (1st and 7th August 1800; *GAJ* 15,16, 177). In May 1802, Dorothy first mentions “S Point” (*GAJ* 101). However, there is no information about the namings of these sites. The sources for geographical locations of each site include the text of Dorothy’s *Journals* (for “Mary’s Stone” see *GAJ* 61); the Wordsworths’ letters (such as “Sara’s Gate” *EY* 332-333); or from the Notes provided by Pamela Woof, the editor of Dorothy’s *Grasmere and Alfoxden Journals*. Woof draws on evidence from the group’s letters, STC’s *Notebooks*, and STC’s marginalia (see *GAJ* for “John’s Grove” 181; “Sara’s Rock” 207-208; and finally, “Sara’s Seat” 198).

Figure 1: Map of the Wordsworth Circle's Personal Place Names in Grasmere and Rydal.



In a jointly-written letter from Dorothy and William to Mary Hutchinson written the 29th April 1801, William invites Mary to find and name a rural object:

... you will recollect that there is a gate just across the road, directly opposite the firgrove, this gate was always a favourite station of ours; we love it far more now on Saras [sic] account. You know that it commands a beautiful prospect; Sara carved her cypher upon one of its bars and we call it her gate. We will find another place for your cypher, but you must come and fix upon the place yourself. (*EY* 332-333)

It is the most detailed account of personal place-naming given by William in his prose, correspondence and poetry. The located rural object, the gate—which, as Pamela Woof highlights, was known locally as the “Wishing Gate”—is already valued as a “favourite” viewing “station” for the siblings from which they can enjoy the “beautiful prospect” over the lake of Grasmere (*GAJ* 200). In direct contrast to naming-by-ascription in William’s “Poems on the Naming of Places”, naming-by-inscription is a multi-layered activity which involves both individuals and the group collectively. First, the individual “must come and fix upon the place”: they must become emotionally attached to a geographical place before physically attaching their cypher. In the case of Sara, she too is already familiar with the Wishing Gate: Dorothy records the two of them walking past it “by moonlight” along “the upper road” as they walked over to Rydal Water on two occasions in late November and early December 1800 (*GAJ* 33-34). In March 1801, Sara subsequently claims it as her own by physically marking the gate, carving her cypher “upon one of the bars” (*GAJ* 33).⁴⁶ Once the object is marked, the other members of the group enact the naming. Dorothy and William first “call it her gate” and now that they have shared the anecdote with

⁴⁶ Both Pamela Woof, editor of Dorothy’s Journals and Mark Reed date Sara’s visit to Town-End in March 1801. Reed gives the more specific dates of possibly 2nd-24th March (*GAJ* 200; *CMY* 114).

Mary, it is assumed she will use the name too. In turn, the gate carries an even more powerful emotional charge for the siblings now that Sara has marked the site as her own.

At this point, it is worth emphasising that William's choice of the word "cypher" (rather than "signature") indicates the inherently ambivalent nature of place-names. First, a "cypher" is not necessarily a person's set of initials and the acts of toponymic inscription for several place-names involve a marking of the landscape in an anonymous way. For example, "John's Grove" (the "fir-grove" opposite the gate) is named after the wearing and creation of a path; "Sara's Seat" emerges from Sara placing the first stone of a seat, with STC building and finishing it at a later date. Second, and more importantly, the *OED* defines two senses for the term that were in use during the late Eighteenth Century: the etymological root of "cypher" means "to be empty" and in arithmetic is defined as a "symbol or character (0) of no value by itself, but which increases or decreases the value of other figures according to its position" (1. a). While this initially might detract from a highly personal response to landscape, a cypher opens a space for varying and successive layers of meaning to be placed upon it. It gains its meaning from its relational point to other entities and has the capacity to modify the values of those surrounding entities. These ambivalent characteristics, as we shall see in later sections of the chapter, have enormous potential for the *investing*, *reading* and *re-investing* of personal associations in and around a marked rural object and highlight the fundamentally relational nature of naming-by-inscription: these rural objects and names are understood to function as part of a series or group.

I want now to identify and examine the associative and sympathetic contexts underpinning the Wordsworth Circle's personal place-naming, which, like the

definition of the cypher, emphasise relationality. In *William & Dorothy Wordsworth: All in Each Other*, Newlyn identifies the acts of naming in William's "Poems on the Naming of Places" as emerging *directly* out of Hartley's associationist theory of Benevolence. Although, my assessment of William's naming poems differs markedly from Newlyn, (I read the poems as representative of struggles and anxieties about the poet's ability to "return to" or "make" home), her summary of Wordsworthian "local attachments" is a useful starting point for my consideration of private place-naming:

In exploring the way that communal bonds are strengthened by shared points of environmental contact, these poems offer an intimate formulation of the Wordsworthian philosophy of local attachments. They build on a profoundly optimistic reading of Hartleyan associationism affirming the belief that memories provide enduring foundations for community. (*All in Each Other* 122)

Newlyn, discussing the strengthening of bonds through "shared points of environmental contact", is referring to the connective potential within Hartley's account. In *Observations on Man* (1749), Hartley depicts the increasingly outward spread of Benevolence through a corresponding increase in domestic affections between individuals and among a group. The "transfer" of affections between "benevolent Persons" depends on:

... the Tendency that Acts of Benevolence, proceeding from *A* to *B*, have to excite correspondent ones reciprocally from *B* to *A*, and so on indefinitely. We may observe farther, that when Benevolence is arrived at a due Height, all our Desires and Fears, all our Sensibilities for ourselves, are more or less transferred upon others by our Love and Compassion for them. (285-286)

Domestic affections, and corresponding "Acts of Benevolence", expand outwardly until:

A consider[s] every Man as his Friend, his Son, his Neighbour, his Second Self, and loved him as himself.... Thus A, B, C, D &c. would all become, as it were, new Sets of Senses, and perceptive Powers, to each other, so as to increase each other's Happiness without Limits. (286-287)

There are two aspects of Hartley's account which are relevant for personal place-naming. First, the expansion of affections creates a new context for meaning to emerge as each affection modifies others. Moreover, these new contexts are always emerging *out of* and *in relation to* others: "A, B, C, D &c. would become ... *new Sets of Senses, and perceptive Powers to each other*" (my emphasis). Each time then Dorothy, William or their friends visit a named site or use that place-name in writing, a context emerges for new associations, or the developing and intensifying of older associations, with that site and name. Second, Hartley's emphasis on the creation of a "reciprocal" movement of affections between individuals, and across a group, underpins the entire Wordsworthian project of naming. It also connects to a similar idea within Hume's account of sympathy, despite the fundamentally different moral and religious outlooks of both thinkers.

Hume's account of sympathy is valuable (more so than Hartley's) for examining the embodied elements of naming, such as the role of a *physical* object in the transfer of sympathy and the *transitory* nature of sympathetic affections. In *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1738-1740), Hume defines the phenomenon of sympathy as "an evident conversion of an idea into an impression. This conversion arises from the relation of objects to ourself. Ourself is always intimately present to us" (208; 2. 1. 11). There are three key interrelated concerns here: spontaneity, contiguity and relationality. Turning to the first element, spontaneity, Hume explains the process of the "conversion" of an idea into an impression in more detail:

When any affection is infus'd by sympathy, it is first known only by its effects and by those external signs in the countenance and conversation, which convey an idea of it. This idea is presently converted into an impression, and acquires such a degree of force and vivacity, as to become the very passion itself, and produce an equal emotion, as any original affection. (206; 2. 1. 11)⁴⁷

The “production” of the original affection (first perceived in someone else) within the mind is spontaneous in the sense that it is depicted as a naturally-occurring process and the emotion itself is temporary.⁴⁸ As such, there is a compulsion for the Wordsworths to repeatedly return to named sites or to use place-names in order to renew that original emotion of “Fellow-feeling”. This idea is also explicit within William’s “Advertisement” to the place-naming lyrics: the “Names” and the “Poems” were created in order to “renew the gratification of ... Feelings” that had arisen from previous “little Incidents” in place (*LB* 375).

The second idea, the role of contiguity between objects, is crucial for the operations of sympathy within Hume, and by extension, Wordsworthian naming.⁴⁹ Repeatedly, Hume cites contiguity as opening (and keeping open) a channel between the mind and an object for the imagination to “transition” along that channel in a dynamic motion:

⁴⁷ There are similar parallels to Alison’s account of *reading* external signs in the landscape. Moreover, it is clear that Alison draws on Hume’s earlier account of the “production” of emotion. The two thinkers, however, differ in several fundamental ways: Hume’s signs here are not projections of our own qualities of mind but are the external manifestations of the emotion of others; following on from this, implicit within Hume’s account is a lack of control over the phenomenon of sympathy; and finally, Hume does not regard such external signs as indications of a divine or moral language.

⁴⁸ In “Wordsworth and Spontaneity”, Paul Magnuson clarifies a range of meanings for the term spontaneity available in the Eighteenth Century, which are implied within Hume’s account of the conversion of ideas into impressions. Spontaneity is not so much impulsive or unpremeditated action: “... in its philosophical context ‘spontaneous’ indicates freedom, and in its biological context it indicates ‘self-generation’” (103).

⁴⁹ Hume’s use of the word “object” is ambivalent throughout the *Treatise*: he uses it interchangeably to refer to both physical external objects that the mind perceives, and as a label for perceptions themselves, as in objects of thought. For a more detailed discussion of this issue, and the challenges it presents for interpretation, see Marjorie Grene’s article, “The Objects of Hume’s *Treatise*” (163-77).

In order to produce a perfect relation betwixt two objects, 'tis requisite, not only that the imagination be convey'd from one to the other by resemblance, contiguity or causation, but also that it return back from the second to the first with same ease and facility. (230; 2. 2 .4)

The stronger the relation is betwixt ourselves and any object, the more easily does the imagination make the transition, and convey to the related idea the vivacity of conception, with which we always form the idea of our own person. (207; 2. 1. 11)

The capacity of contiguity to keep a channel open for the imagination leads Hume to assert: "Contiguous objects must have an influence much superior to the distant and remote" (274; 2. 3. 7). For the Wordsworths then, the revisiting of nearby named sites strengthens the "relation between" the group and the named "rural object" (as both a physical object and an object of perception within the mind).

Moreover, if we look back to **Figure 1**, the *proximity* of these sites to one another is striking. In contrast to William's naming poems, these sites are not located in secluded nooks far from human eyes, but are located along, or close to, existing paths and routes. "Sara's Gate" and "John's Grove", for example, are located at How Top where the path from Town-End branches left up over the "coffin route" to Rydal Hall, and right over towards White Moss and White Moss Common. Together, this clustering of sites was passed on an almost daily basis between 1800 and 1802 and forms a part of two walking routes. (On **Figure 1**, these are labelled as "Dorothy's 'favourite path'" and "The 'Fir-grove' Path").⁵⁰ Other examples include the locations

⁵⁰ Throughout May and June 1802 Dorothy records a series of walks along "our favourite path" (*GAJ* 105, 108, 109, 11, 112). Woolf has identified this as the path that lying on "the fellside of the wall behind John's Grove" and goes "over White Moss Common" (*GAJ* 251). At a certain point, it meets the

of “Mary’s Stone” and “Sara’s Rock” along the main roads in and out of Grasmere. Mary chooses to “cut” her “cypher” on a stone at the foot of Rydal Lake close to the roadside. “Sara’s Rock”, which is not on the map, is located at the north of Grasmere, half a mile beyond Wythburn Chapel on Dunmail Raise. The proximity of these sites goes hand in hand with the Wordsworth Circle’s repeated movement through Grasmere: “Sara’s Rock”, which eventually becomes the “Rock of Names”, is a meeting-point for the friends because it is situated approximately half-way between STC’s household in Keswick and the Wordsworths’ household in Grasmere.

Returning to the *Treatise*, Hume expands upon the implications of the “reciprocal” movement for strengthening existing connections: “The double motion [back and forth] is a kind of double tie, and binds the objects together in the closest and most intimate manner” (230; 2. 2. 4). Furthermore, implicit within Hume’s account is the expansive potential of contiguity to form new connections. The development of new connections is depicted in triangulated terms:

For supposing the second object, beside its reciprocal relation to the first, to have also a strong relation to a third object; in that case the thought, passing from the first object to the second, returns not back with the same facility, tho’ the relation continues the same; but is readily carry’d on to the third object, by means of the new relation, which presents itself, and gives a new impulse to the imagination. (230; 2. 2. 4)⁵¹

“John’s Grove” provides a useful example of this expansion happening within Wordsworthian naming. During late August and early September 1800, Dorothy

“top road” over to Rydal known as the “coffin path” (*GAJ* 251). Woof uses Gordon Wordsworth, the poet’s grandson, as her source. Gordon, she claims, “knew which path D referred to” (*GAJ* 251).

⁵¹ Hume is highly sceptical of the expansion of relations to encompass multiple objects because it “weakens the [original] tie betwixt the first and second objects” (230). However, for my purposes, such expansion has great potential for acts of naming as creating a network of relations between people and rural objects.

repeatedly records going for walks with William and John to the “Fir-Grove” and leaving William there in order to “walk” and “compos[e]” (*GAJ* 17-20). It then becomes associated with John when William represents an act of naming the grove after his brother in the unpublished poem “When first I journeyed hither”.⁵² Within the poem, the poet-speaker finds the “fir-grove” restrictive because the trees are planted so closely together that he cannot find “a length of open space where [he] might walk / Backwards and forwards” (*The Major Works* 36-37). (The poet-speaker craves an open space for perambulatory composition, even if this is not made explicit within the poem). However, one day the speaker comes across “A hoary pathway” and recognises it as one of his brother’s “own deep paths!” (57, 70). In tribute to his brother, the speaker “call[s] the path-way by thy name / And love[s] the fir-grove with a perfect love” (93-94).

First associated with William, then with John, the grove becomes further associated with Dorothy as she repeatedly moves through it on walks (alone or shared with others) and stops within the grove to read letters and Shakespeare’s plays (*GAJ* 72, 102, 104, 114). One of the most significant moments within the *Journals*, in relation to Dorothy’s narrative of “making home” and settling in Grasmere as a family, occurs after Mary’s marriage to William in October 1802 and occurs within “John Grove”. In the largest entry of the four notebooks, which is written as one continuous entry between 26th July to the 8th October 1802, Dorothy records going to Calais to visit Annette and Carolyn, travelling to the Hutchinson’s family home at Sockburn for

⁵² Critics have often included “When first I journeyed hither” in William’s “Poems on the Naming of Places” because composition began in 1800 and the poem was added to the group in *Poems 1815*. However, the poem was not published in any edition of *Lyrical Ballads* and remained in manuscript until 1815. It was then revised and published under the title “When to the attractions of the busy world”. Reed outlines a complicated compositional history with revisions occurring between August 1800 and 6 March 1804 (*CMY* 82 n42). I quote from Gill’s edition of Wordsworth’s *Major Works* because it provides the 1804 text from MS. W, which is not given in *PW WW*.

William and Mary's marriage and the three of them returning back to Grasmere.⁵³

Dorothy finishes this long entry (which depicts a long physical and emotional journey) with a short but significant sentence: "On Friday 8th, we baked Bread & Mary & I walked, first upon the Hill side, & then in John's Grove, then in view of Rydale, the first walk that I had taken with my Sister" (*GAJ* 132). Each of the successive contexts, noted above, opens up a new relation. Moreover, "John's Grove" is the central object (as a physical rural object and an object of thought) *through* which each channel for "Fellow-feeling" flows backwards and forwards and connects William to John to Dorothy and to Mary. This series of triangulated relationships is emblematic of the kind of mediated relationship this thesis argues is vital to sympathetic constructions of family creativity and relational self within those shared constructions.

The examples above, "Sara's Gate" and "John's Grove" depict incidents in geographical place and establish sympathetic connections between two (or more) people when both of those people are in each's others presence. (For example, Dorothy and Mary are in each's other company when they visit "John's Grove"). I want to conclude this section with a brief examination of the Wordsworths' visiting of named sites and use of place-names as a means to establish and renew sympathetic attachments when close friends or family are *absent*. Hume's statement on the relationship between influence and proximity is helpful for exploring this context: "The sentiments of others have little influence, when far remov'd from us, and require the relation of contiguity, to make them communicate themselves entirely" (*Treatise* 207; 2. 1. 11). This occurs in relation to "John's Grove" and in Dorothy's *Journal* during a cold afternoon on 23rd February 1802.

⁵³ Dorothy usually starts each new entry with the date (e.g. "Saturday 19th") and signals the end of an entry by scoring a line underneath it. Here, however, she incorporates dates into her continuous prose.

Figure 2: Close up of journal entry for 23rd February 1802 (DCMS 19, 30r).

upwards district & large
the shores marked there by
a great sea-like sound
the trees above on the sea
walked backward & forward
some trees seen John's lake
then walked to look at the
Yorkshire when we reached home

After returning from a walk in Easedale with William, the two siblings pass by Dove Cottage and go up to “John’s Grove” for the sunset:

There was
 a sweet sea-like sound in
 the trees above our heads we
 walked backwards & forwards
 some time for dear John’s sake. (*DCMS 19 30^r*; my transcription)⁵⁴

I quote from the manuscript here because the layout of the transcription emphasises the action of “walk[ing] backwards & forwards”, which has an entire line to itself. (See **Figure 2** above). The significance of walking in this particular way, “for dear John’s sake”, is explained (and also imitates the same action) within William’s poem, “When first I journeyed hither”.

Within the poem, the poet-speaker, thinking on his brother away at sea, imagines John:

Art pacing to and fro’ the Vessel’s deck
 In some far region, here while o’er my head
 At every impulse of the moving breeze
 The fir-grove murmurs with a sea-like sound,
 Alone I tread this path, for aught I know
 Timing my steps to thine, and with a store
 Of indistinguishable sympathies ... (*The Major Works* 108-114)

Both incidents of walking, represented in the poem and the journal, use the meaningful site of “John’s Grove” to establish the contiguity that is necessary for the

⁵⁴ For the equivalent passage, see *GAJ* 72. Woof incorporates additional punctuation.

production of the emotion of “Fellow-feeling” in that moment. This is particularly prominent in William’s poem, when the imagining of John (potentially) performing the same action activates the “indistinguishable sympathies” between the two, despite their physical separation. The use of such sites in order to renew affections to and with other members of the Wordsworth Circle when they are absent, may explain why neither Dorothy nor William have a private place-name within Grasmere.⁵⁵ Finally, in the example above, there is also a *shared* language between the poem and journal, with both siblings using the image of a “sea-like sound”.⁵⁶ The image not only echoes John’s situation (now at sea) but creates another bond (through *represented* space) between William and Dorothy.

2. Practising Place as Home: Adapting Michel de Certeau’s Pedestrian Speech Acts

The art of ‘turning’ phrases finds an equivalent in an art of composing a path.

(Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 30)

While the first part of the chapter concentrated on the mediating of sympathetic affections through the landscape (via walking and naming-by-inscription), the next two sections concentrate on the mediating of sympathetic affections through the landscape and the journals, and the interrelation of *real*, *represented* and *material*

⁵⁵ Another example of this occurs in a jointly-written letter to Mary and Sara Hutchinson: Dorothy writes “in the evening we walked long our favourite path in the [eye?] of the whole vale; then in John’s Grove with the full moon in the dark trees. We thought of you, dear, dear Friends – before the next moon is full we shall have been close together” (*EY* 364).

⁵⁶ Often, Dorothy’s journal is interpreted as alluding to William’s poem because the journal is written in 1802. I used the term “shared language” here, however, as there is an uncertainty over the composition dates for the lines containing the image of the “sea-like sound”. As Reed notes, the later portion of the poem (after line 67) “may have been written in any time between now [aug 29 1800] and 6 Mar 1804 in the form of MS M” (*CMY* 82 n42). It is possible that the journal-entry is written prior to the poem and William is alluding to Dorothy instead.

spaces involved in this process. The spatial theory of de Certeau is useful for examining Dorothy's *walking* and *writing* of Grasmere for two main reasons. First, the activities of *reading* and *investing* are implicit within his account of moving through place in his well-known chapters "Walking the City" and "Spatial Stories" in *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Second, there is an inherent slippage within de Certeau's account of place and space, which is framed by the overarching metaphors of grammar, rhetoric and movement. The epigraph above is suggestive of this slippage as linguistic expression—the "turning" of a phrase—corresponds to the creation of a path through *geographical* space. Moreover, although the making of meaning here refers to spoken language, the composition of a path leaves a material trace on the ground, which in turn helps us to think of walking as a means of inscription. Blurring the *real* lived space of landscape and the *represented* space of language, through the activities of walking and writing, de Certeau's account is particularly fertile for the examination of activities which cross multiple kinds of space. Moreover, such a slippage allows me to identify a "third" type of movement implicit within de Certeau's account which is the practice (walking and writing) of home: a practice I call "place-making". Before I explore and adapt this slippage further, it is helpful to remind ourselves of de Certeau's formulation of "*space [as] a practiced place*" (PEL 117).

In *The Practice of Everyday Life*, de Certeau reverses the traditional distinction between place and space by arguing that place is a grid within which everyday practice occurs and space emerges out of everyday practice.⁵⁷ Instead of meaningful centres of human existence, place for de Certeau is location in the sense of the

⁵⁷ Traditional understandings of place from a phenomenological perspective, as exemplified by human geographers Yi-Fi Tuan and Edward Relph, understand place[s] as "profound centres of human existence" and "felt value[s]" (Relph 43). Space, by contrast, cannot generate highly personal meaning, even if it is associated with movement. Space is the vastness through which we move in order to get from one place or centre of "felt value" to another, (Tuan 6, 3-4).

configuration of situated stable positions in relation to each other, and corresponds to Merleau-Ponty's notion of a "geometrical" or objective space (*PEL* 117). De Certeau focuses on the city as a place because it is the closest physical manifestation of geometrical space (or to use de Certeau's terms "*espace proper*") in that it is explicitly structured and defined by city planners. Space, on the other hand, corresponds to Merleau-Ponty's notion of "lived space" ("*espace vécu*"). "Lived space" is not a particular type of space which the "body-subject"—Merleau-Ponty's term to designate an embodied mind and a thinking body—happens to occupy, but refers to the *ability* of the "body-subject" to construct its own spatial relations arising from perceptual (embodied) experience (*Phenomenology of Perception* 122). For de Certeau, space occurs as a result of human actions, movements, desires and dreams that are performed in place: "Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalise it" (*PEL* 117). While place, in this account, is essentially stable, space is therefore determined by the variables of movement: direction, time and velocity (*PEL* 117). When actions are performed in place, that place is transformed into space, which explains de Certeau's well-known claim that "*space is a practiced place*" (*PEL* 117).

De Certeau examines this key concept in more detail in his chapter "Walking in the City". Here, de Certeau draws an analogy between walking and enunciation in order to conceptualise movement as a "pedestrian speech act" and to posit a wider "rhetoric of walking" through place (*PEL* 100). We can break down walking within de Certeau's account into two further interrelated activities with which both of these two chapters have been concerned: *reading* and *investing*. The act of walking both interprets or *reads* official meanings assigned to certain streets, squares, buildings, and "speaks" or *invests* new personal meanings over those originally assigned meanings.

Each pedestrian's movement temporarily manipulates or displaces the "signifiers of the spatial 'language'" (99). The pedestrian can condemn certain places to "inertia or disappearance" through an "emptying-out and wearing away" of the "primary role[s]" of those places and create instead "liberated spaces that can be occupied" (*PEL* 99, 105). In doing so, the pedestrian can articulate "a second, poetic geography on top of the geography of the literal, forbidden or permitted meaning" (*PEL* 105). Crucially, such a rhetoric is fleeting, enacted only in the moment of walking or passing by. In that moment, transforming place into space through the practice of walking, pedestrians appropriate "the streets [which] they fill with the forests of their desires and goals" (*PEL* xxi). Space, then for de Certeau, is not just the individual's practice of physical movement through a landscape, but is created whenever an individual practises a particular place: the space produced by the act of reading the place of the book; or the space produced by writing upon the place of a blank page; or the space produced by the act of cultivating the place of a garden.

De Certeau's conception of space as practice, then, has enormous potential for examining the practice of place across different mediums and spaces (*real*, *represented* and *material*), and in particular, the interrelation of successive acts of walking and writing in Dorothy's *Grasmere Journals*. However, de Certeau's account is also fundamentally problematic because it is framed by a series of wider politicised dichotomies which explicitly prioritise certain types of movement and categories over others. For example, for de Certeau, pedestrian speech acts are always acts of resistance (which he terms "tactics") against the overarching meaning of the planned city-structure (which he terms "strategy").⁵⁸ This is suggested within his language in the quotations above with the pedestrian articulating another "geography" over "the

⁵⁸ In the Introduction, de Certeau insists that "The tactics of consumption, the ingenious ways in which the weak make use of the strong, thus lend a political dimension to everyday practices" (*PEL* xvii).

literal, forbidden or permitted meaning” of the *espace propre* of the city. De Certeau also polarises the ephemeral nature of spoken language, which corresponds to his definition of space, against the (perceived) permanence, stability and authority of the written word, which corresponds to his definition of place. This strict opposition has been subject to critique from Feminist geographers and literary critics.⁵⁹ Meaghan Morris, for example, points out that de Certeau’s seemingly blunt distinction between powerful strategists and weak tacticians underestimates the complex power relations within everyday practices and involves “a troubling reinscription of a theory / practice opposition” (13).

The majority of movement within everyday practice, and the exploration of the quotidian through literature, however, falls *between* de Certeau’s two poles of strategy and tactics. A pedestrian’s movement is not wholly determined by the strategies of the city-structure, nor does it always consciously attempt to tactically redetermine and rewrite that city-structure. I want to tease out a third kind of “walking rhetoric” then, that is implicit within de Certeau’s account and is helpful for examining Dorothy’s movement through Grasmere. A pedestrian’s movement depends on his (or her) familiarity with, and knowledge of, the city-structure *and* responds to the variabilities of the everyday such as weather, health and mood. For example, he (or she) may alter his (or her) walking route to pass a friend’s house; or decide to take a short-cut in the rain; or choose to walk, rather than taking the bus, to work on a sunny morning. Moreover, the response to the immediate variations of the everyday (weather) is determined by prior knowledge of the city-structure and is dependent upon (as well as creates) a sense of contiguity over time through repeated actions (something de

⁵⁹ Doreen Massey provides the most substantial critique of de Certeau in *For Space* 25-29 and 45-48. See also Meaghan Morris’ chapter in the edited collection, *Space and Sexuality* (10-14). Finally, see Claire Colebrook’s chapter “Michel de Certeau: Oppositional Practices and Heterologies” in her monograph *New Literary Histories* (112-127).

Certeau does not explore). This third type of “walking rhetoric”, which I term “place-making”, enables the pedestrian to articulate a highly personal response to and create highly personal meanings out of, the city-structure: it allows a walker to *practise* the *place* of the city *repeatedly* as the *space* of home and to respond to that personalised familiarity according to their mood during the particular moment of practice (whether a walker is jubilant, pensive, irritated or upset).

In *A Phenomenology of Landscape* (1994), Christopher Tilley removes de Certeau’s series of oppositions by framing pedestrian speech acts within *written* and *rural* contexts:

If writing solidifies or objectifies speech into a material medium, a text, which can be read and interpreted, an analogy can be drawn between a pedestrian speech act and its inscription or writing on the ground in the form of the path or track.... A strong path is inscribed through a forest or across a track of heathland through a multitude of pedestrian speech acts that keep it open; a strong text is also one that is kept open, read many times. Just as the writing of a text is dependent on previous texts (it has the characteristic of intertextuality), the creation or maintenance of a path is dependent on a previous networking of movements in particular, and *reiterated directions* through the landscape; it works in relation to a previous set of precedents. (30, my emphasis)

Tilley usefully creates an analogy between *repeated* acts of walking on or inscribing a path and repeated acts of writing and reading a text. Extending Tilley’s analogy, the continual repetition that keeps a “strong path” open finds its textual equivalent in the continuous and diurnal form of the journal. The journal, unlike the poem, does not exist in distinctive stages of completion (first composition; interim drafts; fair copy; printed proofsheet; published text). The journal remains open indefinitely for the

writer to use in a multitude of ways: each entry can be returned to, for reading or revision; journal writing may be a daily, weekly or monthly occurrence, and it can be resumed after a period of inactivity.

In light of the journal's continuous structure of successive acts of writing, the subject (*textual identity*), however much it is carefully crafted or heavily revised, emerges as a continually unfolding self. My understanding of an emergent self here does not signify a unified or stable self which necessarily progresses towards a certain moral state (as in Hartley and Alison's respective accounts of associationism). Instead, it is a self that is repeatedly practised (from moment to moment and across journal-entry to journal-entry) as a response to Hume and Locke's doubts about the possibility of sustaining identity over time.⁶⁰ This self emerges *through* the various kinds of writing (spontaneous, recollection, revisions) encompassed by the practice of journal-writing. In emphasising the importance of repeated practice there is then, a similarity between the structures governing both journal-writing and the kind of walking outlined in Tilley's engagement with de Certeau. The type of "place-making" defined earlier—the practising of a *place* as the *space* of home—not only occurs through the interrelation of spaces (*real, represented, material*) which emerge from interrelated and successive acts of walking, but also corresponds directly to the development of an emerging *textual identity* through successive acts of writing and reading the journal.

⁶⁰ See Hume's well-known claim that successive perceptions are made into an uninterrupted and continuous line, or train of thoughts, by the imagination to create "the fiction of continued existence" over time (*Treatise* 138; 1. 4. 2). Felicity Nussbaum offers a detailed discussion of the effect of Hume's scepticism upon the autobiographical writing subject (15-18).

3. *First Walks to Grasmere: Place-making in the “Grasmere Journals”*

Returning to Dorothy, this kind of “place-making” is already explicit within her repeated walking of familiar routes and the use of personal place-names within her journal, as we have seen in the first section. However, we can now turn to the manuscript of the *Grasmere Journals* and consider one longer entry in detail in order to examine the combination of acts of walking and writing that not only renew sympathetic affections to others but also opens up successive contexts for the development of existing associations with named sites. By successive contexts of meaning, I am interested in the multi-layered practice of place opened up by the continuous writing structure of the journal form. In contrast to de Certeau’s model, Dorothy not only practises the *space* of home through *walking* around Grasmere, but again, at a later moment, when she *writes* about that prior act of walking in the journal. This can occur repeatedly as she also practises the *space* of home through later acts of re-reading and revision. I focus on the entry of 31st January 1802 because, Dorothy creates a series of spatial and temporal contiguities between past and present selves in Grasmere which feed into her wider narrative of “making-home”. Furthermore, the manuscript pages contain different kinds of writing: acts of (apparent) free-writing and revisions. (The revisions materially evidence themselves as being of a later date because they are written in a darker ink).⁶¹

One of the most overt and jubilant acts of “place-making” in the journal pertains to the site of “Mary’s Stone”. On the 31st January 1802, William and Dorothy stroll

⁶¹ Pamela Woof’s chapter “Dorothy Wordsworth’s Grasmere Journals: Pressures and Patterns of Composition” provides a vital account of Dorothy’s compositional process within the *Grasmere Journals*. Her distinction between two kinds of writing up of the journal is useful. A succession of short entries suggests Dorothy is writing up a group of entries at a later point in time, a kind of catching up after missing or neglecting to write her journal. Dorothy writes longer entries when she is writing up the journal on the same day as the events themselves (Woof 169-190).

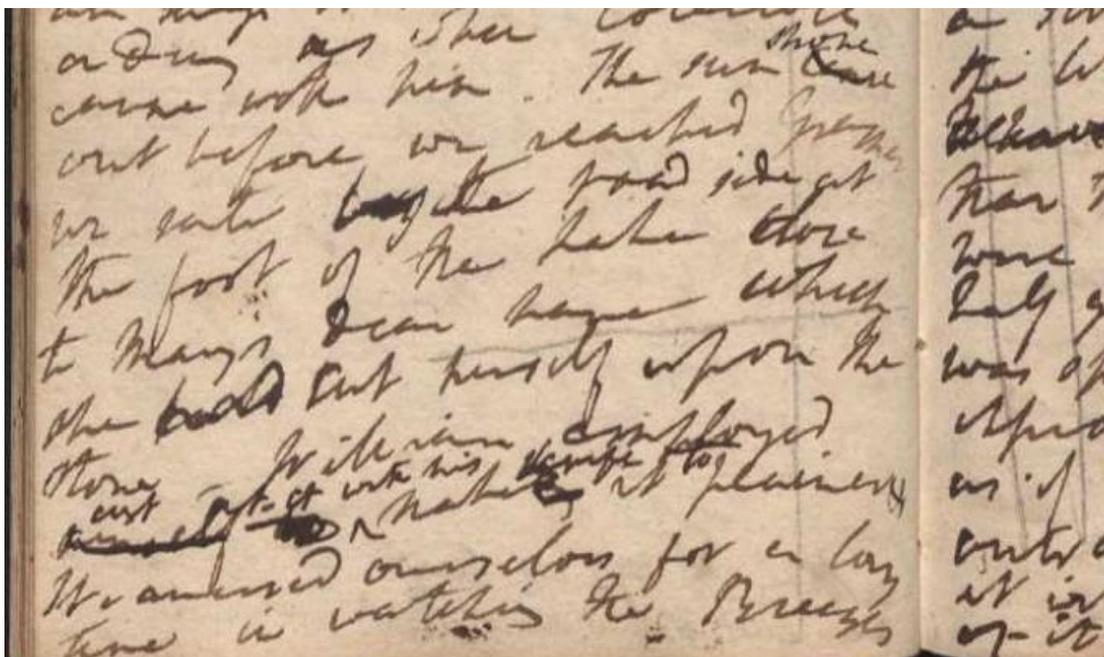
round Grasmere and Rydal Water. They walk around Rydal from “the pasture side” appreciating the “lofty” view of Nab Scar across the water (*DCMS* 25 58^r-58^v). As they make their way to the other side of the lake and walk along the roadside up to Town End, they sit at “Mary’s Stone” at the foot of Rydal. (The approximate course of this route is marked out on **Figure 1**). It is unknown when Mary marked the stone. In the journal entry, (written later after the event) Dorothy incorporates the Stone and its associations with Mary into a larger narrative about the Wordsworths settling and making home in Grasmere.

The entry opens with Dorothy explaining that she “always love[s]” this particular route because she “first came [to] Rydale & Grasmere” this way, “& because our dear Coleridge did also” (58^v). Dorothy is referring here to the trip made by herself and William from Kendal to Windy Brow in 1794. It was the first time the two had lived together for a prolonged period (six weeks) since childhood and for Dorothy the first time she had the freedom to take long walks unaccompanied around the countryside. The journal entry also refers to STC’s walking tour of the Lakes with William in 1799, during which William hatched the “mad” plan of moving to Grasmere (*EY* 272). Dorothy creates a contiguity between herself, William and STC by comparing the weather on each occasion that they first glimpse of Grasmere. In 1794, “6 ½ years ago ... There was a rich yellow light on the waters” (58^v). In 1802 however, Dorothy states:

Today it was grave & soft
but not perfectly calm. Willi-
am says it was much such
a day as when Coleridge
came with him. (58^v)

While the dullness of the weather links the shared walk of 1802 to William and STC's earlier walk in 1799, Dorothy makes an additional observation about the light which provides a link between the Wordsworths' first walk in 1794 (with the "rich yellow light" on the lake) and their latest walk in 1802. She mentions that the "sun came out before we reached Grasmere" (58^v). This is further emphasised by a later revision "the sun ~~came~~ *shone* out before we reached Grasmere" (58^v, my emphasis). Dorothy's account of multiple sets of first walking to Grasmere provides a stark contrast to William's depiction of "returning" to Grasmere in *Home at Grasmere* where the "naked trees" and "icy brooks ... appeared / To question us. 'Whence come ye? To what end'" (MS. B 229-231).

Figure 3: Close up of Dorothy's Revisions 31st January 1802 (DCMS 25 58^v)



This route, which is cherished by Dorothy, William and STC, passes by "Mary's Stone" and Dorothy's preoccupation with establishing continuity between the three separate walks prefigures the siblings' actions at the site of "Mary's Stone". William,

she recalls, traces over “Mary’s dear name which she had cut herself had upon the stone” with his pen-knife (58^v; See **Figure 3**). Initially, Dorothy writes: “William employed himself [?] making it plainer” (58^v). This is later revised to “William employed cut at it with his knife to make it plainer” (58^v). (Here, Dorothy does not score through the word “employed”). The revision to “cut” creates a textual echo between Mary’s first cutting of the stone and William’s later one; the latter conducted in the presence of Dorothy. During Mary’s absence from Grasmere, the two siblings thus *physically* and *textually* strengthen their emotional bond to Mary. The journal entry transforms the Wordsworths’ pedestrian speech acts (retracing memories of past routes when walking around the two lakes and physical re-inscription) into a written spatial story that deepens and extends the initial associations of Mary with the marked rural object. Moreover, both later acts of revision (“the sun shone” and William “cut”) further emphasise the aspects Dorothy uses to connect past and present moments of self developing through Grasmere. By incorporating Mary’s Stone into a larger narrative about the emotional significance of first walking to Grasmere, the entry anticipates and recognises Mary’s increasingly prominent role within the household in the months leading up to her and William’s marriage. At the same time, the initial walk past “Mary’s Stone” and Dorothy’s later reflection upon the walk when she writes up the journal provides the catalyst for Dorothy to create the wider communal history of the various “first walks” to Grasmere.

Dorothy also uses the literary technique of allusion to create a contiguity between past and present. From “Mary’s Stone”, the two siblings watch the “Breezes” dance on the lake (see **Figure 4** below). Below is my own transcription of the description from *DCMS 25* starting from the top of the page 59^r:

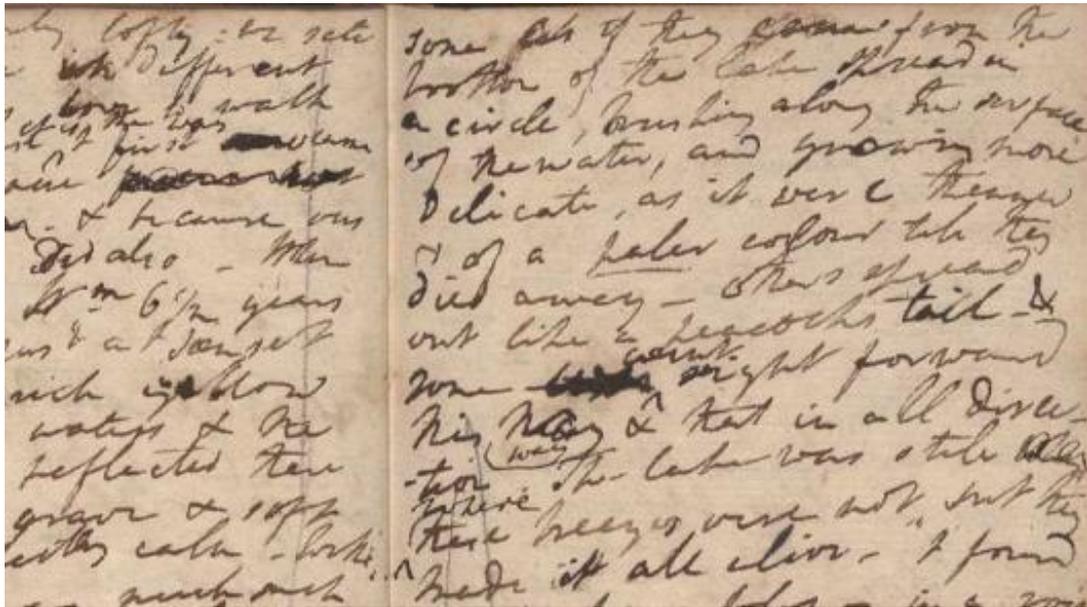
some as if they came from the

bottom of the lake spread in
 a circle, brushing along the surface
 of the water, and growing more
 Delicate, as it were thinner
 & of a paler colour till they
 died away—others spread
 out like a peacocks tail—&
 went
 some we[?] ^ right forward
 this way & that in all direc-
 tion. The lake was still [?]
 where
 ^these breezes were not but they
 made it all alive— (*DCMS 25 59^r*)

Dorothy's similes work metonymically here, linking one natural phenomenon to another—the circular shape of the lake and the breezes in the first one; and the colour and fanning movement of a peacock's tail in the second—in order to catch the changing movements of the breezes on that particular afternoon.⁶² The subsidiary clauses in both sentences appear to steadily build on one another, each one working to more accurately describe the movements, with the effect that the sentences themselves also appear to spread out and expand like those breezes. They give the impression of the mind in process, each subsidiary clause a written thought leading to the summary of the scene in the final sentence.

⁶² For detailed discussion of Dorothy's metonymic use of simile—relating things that are already alike—see Susan Levin's *Dorothy Wordsworth and Romanticism* (33-34); Mellor's *Romanticism and Gender* (159); and Newlyn's article, "Dorothy Wordsworth's Experimental Style" (338-41).

Figure 4: Close up of Dorothy's description of the Breezes DCMS 25 59^r



This idea of immediacy is emphasised by the fact that on the manuscript page, Dorothy *appears* to write very quickly and spontaneously. I say apparent “free-writing” here because it is very difficult to discern Dorothy’s process within the journal and her handwriting gives the impression that the drafting of the journal is spontaneous written composition. However, there are slippages within the manuscripts that raise questions about this notion and would be interesting to examine for future development. For example, Dorothy’s well-known claim, “It made me more than half a poet”, actually reads as “it made me more than half ~~I was tired~~ a poet” in the manuscript (DCMS 19 47^v).

On the page in **Figure 4**, her punctuation becomes looser as her writing becomes larger. She uses the comma to indicate subsidiary clauses at the top of the page and moves onto the dash after “died away”. Dorothy’s final sentence jumps out because it is partially written in iambic pentameter, particularly after her addition of the word “where” in an act of revision: “The lake was still where these breezes were not”. The

stresses falling on “lake”, “still”, “these”, and “not” emphasises the contrast between the stillness of the lake, and the movement, or action of the breezes upon the lake.

Moreover, within the sentence the word “breezes” stands out because it is a spondee. In this moment of (apparent) free-writing, Dorothy alludes to William’s description of the breeze on Grasmere in “Point-Rash Judgement”. At the beginning of the poem, William describes the dandelion seeds skimming “Close to the surface of the lake that lay / Asleep in dead calm, ran closely on / Along the dead calm lake, now here now there” (*LB* 21-23). The surface of the lake is unbroken by the invisible breeze and this description anticipates the later image of Grasmere as “dead unfeeling” (*LB* 71). In turn, these images anticipate the later rifts between person and place in the poem: the natural food source of the lake does not sustain the starving peasant; just as the Wordsworths’ initial rash judgement of the angler reinforces their position as newcomers to Grasmere. Dorothy’s lively and more immediate description of the breezes, which do “brush” and break the surface of the lake and her recognition that “the lake was still where these breezes were not, but they made it all alive” provide a direct contrast to the feelings of alienation from place and community associated with the deadness of Grasmere (lake) in William’s poem. Dorothy’s allusion highlights the difference between William’s poetic representation of the siblings as newcomers to Grasmere in 1800 and their position in 1802 as the friends’ acts of walking and Dorothy’s journal-writing create a layered landscape of shared affections.

In the examples above, Dorothy’s series of continuities between past and present selves in place (individually and collectively as a group) progress towards increased feelings of belonging in Grasmere and can be compared, briefly, to the kind of contiguities William establishes in his autobiographical poetry. The poet-speaker of

The Prelude (1805) returns to fixed “spots of time” in the past, which have a “distinct pre-eminence” over all other memories and a “renovating Virtue”, in order to “nouris[h] and invisibly repai[r]” a mind that has been “depressed” by (among other things) the “deadly weight” of “ordinary intercourse” (XI. 258-266). This central passage of *The Prelude* prioritises the regenerative effect of the process of return to unsettling and extraordinary incidents upon the mind. Dorothy, by contrast, draws on “the round / Of ordinary intercourse”—in the form of repeated walks around significant named objects in Grasmere and the sympathetic interconnections mediated through these sites—to establish a continuous emerging self.

Moreover, Dorothy’s use of (remembered) variations in weather—the light, colours and movement caused by sunshine, cloud or wind—as the elements which establish continuities over time in a particular location, (instead of William’s uncanny and disturbing childhood memories) follows Dissenting practices of journal-writing that promote empirical observation and a sensitivity to temporality. Ken Smith, in his monograph on Dorothy, has argued that Dorothy’s dedication to natural observation stems from Unitarian influences and corresponds with “the Dissenting view of science as the proper acknowledgement of God’s creation” (*Profession of Authorship* 51-52).⁶³ In her analysis of Dissenting life-writing, Laura Davies has noted a heightened attentiveness to different kinds of temporality, such as isolated moments in the past; the present “moment”; or a series of incidents creating succession and order (“Autobiographical Time” 104-105). Unlike the poet-speaker’s use of the “spots of time” in *The Prelude*, Dorothy returns to past memories or prior textual allusions in order to trace the emotional, spatial and temporal “path” which has led to the

⁶³ Smith identifies various Unitarian influences on Dorothy’s journal writing, ranging from the Unitarianism of her guardians at Halifax (Elizabeth Threlkeld and William Rawson), to her conversations with STC and her knowledge of a line of women’s dissenting authors such as Barbauld (*Profession of Authorship* 47-54).

particularly pronounced feelings of belonging she experiences in the present moment. As Davies notes, the “overwhelming attention to ‘every moment’” in life-writing creates “a constant desire for renewal” (116). In this entry, Dorothy not only celebrates the incrementally changing relationship to Grasmere as home over time, but also anticipates further opportunities to renew, develop and enlarge those feelings in the future with the arrival of Mary into the family.

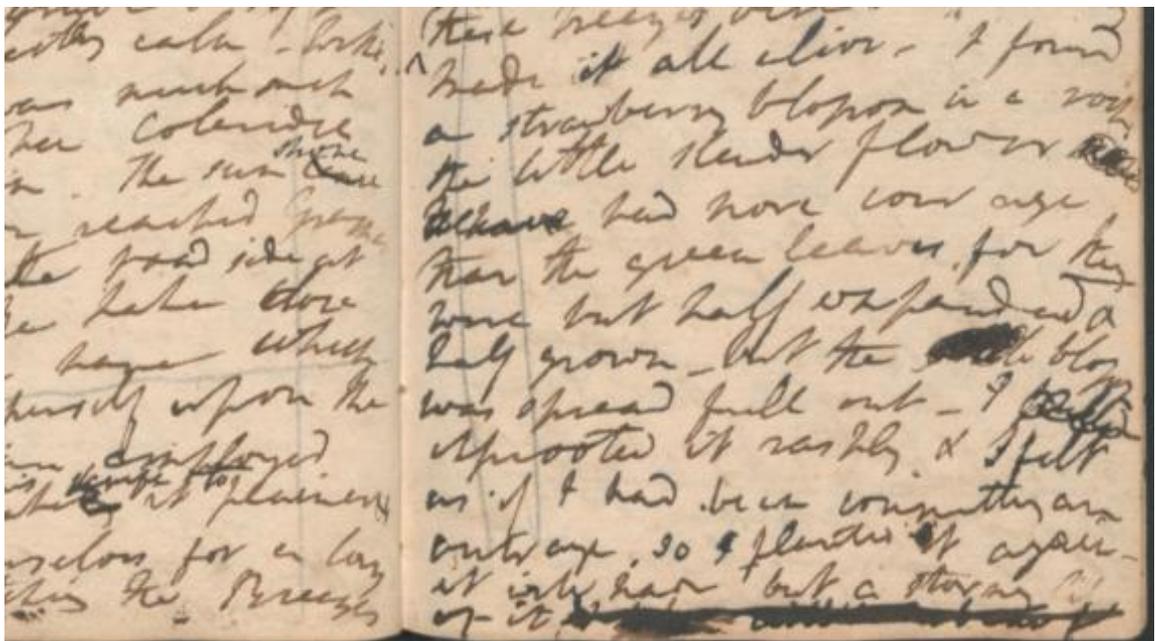
The incidents above reflect a joyful (but hard-won) practice of the *place* of Grasmere as the *space* of home through repeated acts of *investing* rural objects with meaning. However, I want to conclude this chapter by focusing on a more anxious moment and considering how it may affect our response to “place-making”. As already noted, the contrast between the “lively breezes” in the *Grasmere Journals* and the “dead calm” of the lake in Wordsworth’s poem highlights the difference between the siblings’ relationship to Grasmere in 1800 and 1802. However, Dorothy’s allusion to “Point-Rash Judgement” also anticipates the next incident in journal entry that complicates the sentiments established in the first half of the entry. After the description of the breezes, Dorothy writes:

I found
 a strawberry blossom in a rock
 the little slender flower [?]
 [?] had more courage
 than the green leaves, for they
 were but half expanded &
 half grown—but the [?] blossom
 was spread full out. I [?]
 uprooted it rashly & felt

as if I had been committing
 an outrage, so I planted it again—
 it will have but a stormy life
 of it, [?] [?] [?] [?] (DCMS 25 59^r)

Dorothy's confession of her "rash" act against nature is similar to the misjudgement made in Wordsworth's poem "Nutting" and the speaker's "merciless ravage" of the surrounding trees (*PW WW 2*: 43). Furthermore, like the speaker's address to an unknown listener in "Nutting" to "move along these shades / In gentleness of heart with gentle hand", in the journal, Dorothy's replanting of the blossom is accompanied by an added thought, (on the next page), phrased as a plea, "let it live if it can" ("Nutting" *PW WW 2*: 52-53; *DCMS 25 59^v*).

Figure 5: Close up of the description of the "Strawberry Blossom" DCMS 25 59^r



Dorothy's rash act here may be interpreted in two different ways. It might be construed as an incident which negates the sentiments of Dorothy's narrative about the

group's first walks to Grasmere. This is heightened by the fact that materially the last line of the page is so heavily scored out that the words underneath cannot be made out. (Moreover, Woolf, who makes suggestions for other crossings-out within the *Journals*, does not mention this material incident in her Notes). However, there is another interpretation that illuminates the ambivalent nature of place-making which is enabled by the diurnal form of journal writing. On the one hand, the sentiments of rashness, guilt and Dorothy's attempt to amend for her mistake contradict the more joyful assertions of belonging in the earlier part of the entry. On the other hand, Dorothy's documenting of her changing and fluctuating mood over the course of one afternoon at an emotionally-charged site contributes to her ongoing familiarity with Grasmere. Place-making, like the emerging self of the journal which develops over time through repeated practice, is also continuous and emerges from the accumulative associations (positive or negative) made in and through the landscape.

In conclusion to this case study, rural objects in Dorothy's writing share certain aspects with the rural objects in William's poetry. For both siblings, rural objects have a "gentle agency" for the transfer or renewal of "Fellow-feeling". Moreover, as mediatory touchstones for associations, these objects are part of triangulated relationships between poet-object-reader or between Dorothy-object-friend. However, these triangulations work in very different ways in the forms of the poem and the journal, and ultimately reveal very different relationships to the landscape (*real* and *represented*) of Grasmere. William prioritises the status of the rural object itself. He is concerned with whether the story pertaining to the object (about home or the loss of home) enables the poet to generate certain kinds of affections out of the landscape for his readers; and in doing so, whether the poem allows him to perform the sympathetic role he ascribes to the poet. Dorothy, meanwhile, prioritises the person within the

triangulation. Rural objects for Dorothy also work ambivalently. They are (physical and metaphorical) touchstones for intimacy and connection to others—Mary, John, Sara and STC—during their respective absences from Grasmere. As physical objects, these sites are rooted (or fixed) in geographical place; yet the associations and meanings with these sites, like the cypher, continually evolve over time. The ambivalent nature of these sites offers Dorothy the prospect of continual renewal and the validation of an emergent *textual* identity through repeated practice. As we have seen, this practice might be affirmative or anxious in nature. My analysis above has focused on the more affirmative aspects of “making home” within the landscape. However, there is another kind of repeated walking (which also uses specific routes) throughout the *Grasmere Journals*: Dorothy’s walks to Rydal or Ambleside for letters. This repeated walking is also characterised by fluctuations in mood and is often more anxious in nature. An examination of this other repeated kind of walking would provide an interesting counter-model to the more affirmative walking identified in this chapter, and would act as a suitable stepping-stone towards future explorations of the textuality of landscape and the spatiality of life-writing.

Chapter 3. “Vapourish and Vapouring Schemes”: Charles and Mary Lamb’s Nervous Sympathy

SYMPATHY, in Medicine, an Indisposition befalling one Part of the Body thro’ the Disorder or Faultiness of another; whether it be thro’ the Affluence of some Humour, or Vapour.

(Chambers, *Cyclopædia: Or, an Universal Dictionary of the Arts and Sciences* 2: 161)

Writing plays, novels, poems and all manner of such-like vapourish and vapouring schemes are floating in my head.

(Mary Lamb to Sarah Stoddart, 20th-22nd February 1806. MARRS 2: 210)

The above written in great precipitation so ca’nt [sic] answer for the style or grammar, just to be rid of a vapour fit which comes often & clouds over us....
Believe me dull or Giddy.

(Charles Lamb to William Hazlitt, 7th January 1806. MARRS 2: 199)

The second case study of this thesis (over Chapters Three and Four) moves away from considerations of external mediating factors (such as the rural object) towards the internal medium of the nerves. Moreover, the case study moves from an understanding of sympathy as relatively controlled “Fellow-feeling” to the unruly nature of sympathy as the uncontrollable transference of ideas, emotions, energies and symptoms through the agitation, overstimulation and disorder of the nerves. The most significant aspect of this case study (and the subject of Chapter Three) is the

identification and full elucidation of a new collaborative model for the Lamb siblings in the form of the *Vapours*.⁶⁴ As shown in the opening quotations above, in correspondence the Lambs increasingly depict themselves (individually and collectively) and their engagement in literary activity in terms of a response to the highly ambiguous and volatile nervous complaint. These depictions of shared *writerly* identity coincide with the most fertile period of collaboration for the siblings on *Tales from Shakespear* (1807) and *Mrs. Leicester's School* (1809). Over the course of the next two chapters, I argue that mediation plays a fundamental role for the Lambs' creative collaboration at a variety of levels. The concept of mediation runs through their (private) creative model to their (public) prose adaptations for children. At a private level, the creative model of the *Vapours* revolves around physiological definitions of the nerves as a medium. At a public level, the strategies for reading presented within the prefaces to *Tales from Shakespear* and *Mrs Leicester's School* revolve around contemporary literary definitions of adaptation. Finally, thematically, the two collections dramatise and explore the complex effects of adaptation upon the making and interpretation of meaning.

There are two well-established constructions of the Lambs' collaborative relationship: first, Elia's well-known claim that they "house together, old bachelor and maid, in a sort of double singleness" (Lucas 2: 86). The second is the Lambs' shared *writerly* identity based on the Shakespearian female heroines (and rivals) from a "Midsummer's Night Dream". In her letters, Mary describes the two siblings "writing on one table (but not on one cushion sitting) like Hermia & Helena ... I taking snuff &

⁶⁴ This chapter discusses several kinds of vapour and I use several terms to distinguish between them. As the creative model of the Lambs incorporates various definitions, I refer to it as the *Vapours* or the Lamb's *Vapourish* model. When referring to the nervous disease, I use the term "the Vapours". Finally, I use vapours (with no capitalisation and no quotation marks) to refer to air-borne substances which can be cloudy, dense or delicate.

he groaning all the while” (Marrs 2: 229). Jane Aaron, in her seminal monograph, *A Double Singleness*, has shown that both constructions are marked by the interchange within, and the reciprocity of, a shared relationship: whether that is a recognition of a “plurality of being” and the “dual, if not multiple aspects of the apparently single subject” implicit within the concept of “double singleness”; or the fluidity with which the siblings interchange gender roles with Mary indulging in the masculine habit of taking snuff and Charles groaning in his undertaking of literary labour (206). Building on Aaron, Alison Hickey observes that the Lambs build a palimpsest of literary and social tropes to represent relationship itself: the “general social paradigms such as marriage and warfare” that provide the basis of their depictions of familial creative relationship are “almost always” evoked through “allusions to literary models” (“Double Bonds” 748-749).

My identification and elucidation of a third construction of relational *writerly* identity by the Lambs, in the form of the *Vapours*, develops the themes of interchange, reciprocity and potential conflict which have been identified by Aaron and Hickey. However, it also goes much further than these two critics because the *Vapours* is not only a representation of relationship. The *Vapours* is a shared model of literary creation that is based on the unruly nervous medium of sympathy that transfers symptoms, affections, and ideas between the two siblings. Moreover, the model also partakes in the contemporary fascination with the sublime: this chapter demonstrates that Charles and Mary’s different responses to the *Vapours* are also different responses to the sublime power of the imagination.

The Lambs’ *Vapourish* model reflects numerous intertwining contexts and concerns from a range of contemporary areas: concerns over the ramifications of an embodied and nervous definition of sympathy; anxieties about the dense composition

of vapours and their effect upon the purity of the air; vapours as a general hazard of urban living and excess; as a nervous disease; and as a complaint of the digestive system from Galenic medicine. The first section of this chapter examines the way in which each of these contexts relates to the Lambs' model. It identifies the medical context of "the Vapours" as a nervous disease as particularly important for elucidating the Lambs' own model. Vapours, like the dynamic motion of the nerves, move backwards and forwards between a potentially purgative and restorative experience or an overwhelming one that threatens physical and emotional collapse: something that is encapsulated within Mary's description of them in her letter to Sarah Stoddart as *both* "vapouring and vapourish" (Marrs 2: 110).

With the potential for collapse and release, the *Vapours* model could be seen to parallel the two-part model of the sublime as a particularly painful experience followed by a subsequent release or greater self-awareness; a release in the case of Burke's notion of "delight", and recognition in the case of Kant's realisation of the "supersensible".⁶⁵ The link between vapours (in various forms) and the sublime has not yet been recognised by critics and the second section examines the literary and historical contexts that explicitly link vapours to creative endeavour and to the sublime and imaginative power. It considers the associations of "the Vapours" (as a nervous disease), with collapse, release and creative sensibility before examining the role dense naturally-occurring mountainous vapours play in accounts of the natural sublime. The argument develops around one of the canonical articulations of the sublime power and operations of the Imagination within Romantic-era writing which

⁶⁵ "Delight" for Burke specifically refers to the "agreeable" sensation which accompanies "the removal of pain" (*A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* 8-9). Kant defines the "supersensible" as the "capacity placed within us for judging nature without fear and thinking of our vocation as sublime in comparison with it" (*Critique of the Power of Judgement* 148).

is Book Six of Wordsworth's *Prelude*. My discussion centres around the poet's comparison of the Imagination to an "unfathered vapour" in the 1850 text (6. 595). In so doing, this section argues that the Lambs' *Vapourish* model presents a *medicalised* version of the sublime.

The third section of the chapter elucidates each sibling's response to the *Vapours*. Beginning with Charles, it analyses the creative consequences of his depiction of writing as a means to purge a "fit of the vapours". It then compares a shared (and potentially transferable) experience of the sublime to Wordsworth's canonical definition of the creative power of the imagination as sublime, which is represented as a singular and solitary experience. The argument finally turns to Mary to examine her creation of a mediatory presence to help her circumnavigate the more threatening and dangerous nature of the *Vapours*. In illuminating the ambivalent nature of mediation, its potential for agency and its effects upon the interpretation and making of meaning, this final section establishes the key tropes that inform my examination of the Lambs' prose adaptations for children in Chapter Four.

1. Authors "by fits": Defining the Vapours and Physiological Accounts of Sympathy

Throughout the Eighteenth Century, vapours were generally understood as harmful exhalations from a variety of natural and man-made sources, such as a noxious vapour emitted from industrial or chemical processes, or the expulsion of damaging substances from the internal organs in the form of "the breath, perspiration, sweat, and other discharges" (James Makittrick Adair *Essay or Regimen on the Preservation of Health* 97). Such bodily expulsions were seen to have restorative effects on general health. For example, in Lamb's essay "The Praise of Chimney Sweeps", Elia recalls

spying the “rake” on his early morning stroll “who wisheth to dissipate his o’ernight vapours in more grateful coffee” (Lucas 2: 126). However, although contemporary physicians emphasised the purgative and restorative effect of expelling odious bodily vapours, they simultaneously warned against the inhalation of other pollutant substances. William Buchan’s popular medical handbook, *Domestic Medicine*, lists the dangerous elements present within the air of the city:

The air is not only breathed repeatedly over, but is likewise loaded with sulphur, smoke and other exhalations, besides the vapours continually arising from innumerable putrid substances, as dunghills, slaughterhouses, &c. (93)

In all their forms, vapours, whether originating externally or internally, could permeate the skin, moving out of, or into, the body with restorative or adverse effects upon physical health. This oscillating movement with vapours in relation to health, is a significant factor within the case study as the Lambs define their experiences of them in highly ambivalent terms: at times, they might perform a purgative function, but there is always the potential for harm.

The second and more specific association of vapours with illness referred to the nervous disease, “the Vapours”, which could be a cause, symptom and form of melancholy. In his chapter, “Fashionable Melancholy”, Clark Lawlor cautions that the terms “melancholy” and “the Vapours” are “unstable” and “definitions varied between doctors and different periods” (28). For example, under the Galenic school of medicine, “the Vapours” referred to foggy emissions from the digestive humours which impaired the faculties of perception by literally “clouding the thoughts and images passing in the brain” (Lawlor 28). However, in the first half of the Eighteenth Century, “the Vapours” were reformulated as a nervous disease as medicine shifted

from a humoral to a *nervous* and *embodied* understanding of the body and brain.⁶⁶ The most significant result of this shift was that “theories of the nerves beg[a]n to explain emotional susceptibilities and disorders” (Alberti 12). As a nervous disease, agitated nerves, rather than literal vapours, now disordered the brain and its imaginative faculties. Described by the physician George Cheyne as “*various*, changeable [and] shifting from one Place to another”, “the Vapours” produced a range of emotional, physiological and cognitive symptoms that oscillated between the poles of mania and melancholy: fever; fits; swings between extreme emotions; and an impairment of the reasoning faculties (*The English Malady* 135).⁶⁷ As theories of the nerves explicitly linked bodily malfunction to psychological abnormality and emotional distress, the “Vapours” were now considered to be an *embodied* experience, and, as such, susceptible to the vagaries of the everyday; recalling Goodman’s observation that motion within the body was affected by “present people, events or objects” (which was discussed in the Introduction to the thesis) (“Reading Motion” 350). Weather, diet, movement, over-and-under stimulation from reading or thinking could all trigger or relieve “a vapour fit” (Marrs 2: 199).

The Lambs, throughout their correspondence, incorporate and intertwine various elements of these contexts in their allusions to the *Vapours*: vapours as external airy substances; the fogging effect of internal fumes; and the anxiety and fits that arise from the literal agitation of the nerves. Below, I quote a longer extract of Mary’s letter, which features as the opening epigraph to this chapter. It is written to Sarah

⁶⁶ The following medical historians document the shift from a humoral to a nervous understanding of the body and the implications for defining, diagnosing and understanding emotional and psychological disorders: Fay Bound Alberti’s *Medicine, Emotion and Disease 1700-1950*; Heather R. Beatty’s *Nervous Disease in Late Eighteenth-Century Britain: The Reality of a Fashionable Disorder*; and Roy Porter’s *Mind Forg’d Manacles: A History of Madness in England from the Restoration to the Regency*.

⁶⁷ I define, and discuss, these symptoms in more detail when examining the relationship between “the Vapours” as a nervous disease and the sublime.

Stoddart, shortly after Sarah departs the Lambs' residence in London after an extended stay:

Writing plays, novels, poems and all manner of such-like vapourish and vapouring schemes are floating in my head which at the same time aches with the thoughts of parting from you, and is perplexed with the idea of I cannot tell you what about the notion that I have not made you half so comfortable as I ought to have done, and a melancholy sense of the dull prospect you have before your return home. (Marrs 2: 210)

First, these vapours are portrayed as internal airy substances: “vapourish and vapouring schemes are *floating*” in Mary’s aching head (my emphasis). Second, the various pulls between agitation—Mary’s indecision over whether to write a play, novel or poem; her aching head; and an unnameable sense of (social) anxiety—and melancholy present Mary as vapourish.⁶⁸ By contrast, Charles, in his letter to Hazlitt, depicts a “vapour fit” in terms of an external dense and heavy gas or fog, “which comes often and clouds over us” (Marrs 2: 199).⁶⁹

The increasing associations of the *Vapours* with the Lambs’ representations of *writerly* identity occur between 1803 and 1806. For example, according to Charles, the writing of the *Tales* makes Mary “fain[t] often in the prosecution of her great work” (Marrs 2: 233). In a much earlier letter to William Godwin in November 1803, Charles, having failed to deliver a commissioned piece on time, directly defines his

⁶⁸ The adjective “vapourish” was also applied to those whose symptoms were disingenuous. Henry Fielding, for example, satirises the fashionable disease in his novel *Amelia* (1752): “A Man had better be plagued with all the curses of *Egypt* than with a vapourish wife” (*Amelia* 1. 137). The Lambs’ use of the term also plays with and incorporates this less empathetic response to the complaint.

⁶⁹ Continuing with the link between heavy vapours (internal or external) and the need to purge them, in another letter to Sarah in November 1805, Mary writes: “I have moreover taken two pinches of snuff extraordinary to *clear* my head which feels more *cloudy* than common this fine cheerful morning” (Marrs 2: 183, my emphasis),

writerly identity, and his productivity as a writer, in relation to the *Vapours*. This is encapsulated in his self-presentation as “an author by fits”:

You by your long habits of composition, & greater command gained over your own powers, cannot conceive of the desultory & uncertain way in which I (an author by fits) sometimes cannot put the thoughts of a common letter into sane prose. Any work which I take upon myself as an engagement, will act upon me to torment... I have fretted over them [work commitments], in perfect inability to do them, & have made my sister wretched with my wretchedness for a week together. (Marrs 2: 128)⁷⁰

Although the letter is playful, and borders on the melodramatic at points, (in some ways, reflecting Charles’ self-representation as an “author by fits”), the final clause is significant—“& have made my sister wretched with my wretchedness”—because it connects to wider concerns in the period about the contagious and uncontrollable spread of emotions via the medium of sympathy.

In *The Romantic Crowd*, Fairclough distinguishes several attitudes towards the communicative capacity of sympathy among eighteenth-century thinkers ranging from Hume to Galvani. Fairclough recognises that sympathy, for Hume, remains the foundation “of both individual consciousness and principled sociability”, in spite of the troubling undercurrents within his account (25). In communicating passions, rather than ideas, Hume’s definition of sympathy had the dangerous potential for the rapid spread emotions (cohesive or disorderly) across a collective (Fairclough 25). Hume’s conception of the communicative nature of sympathy, as Fairclough observes, was a

⁷⁰ See also Lamb’s earlier letter to Godwin on the 3rd November 1803 which depicts similar sentiments: “I can produce nothing but absolute flatness and nonsense. My health and spirits are so bad, and my nerves so irritable, that I am sure, if I persist, I shall tease myself into a fever.—You do not know how sore and weak a brain I have, or you would allow for many things in me, which you set down for whims” (Marrs 2: 126-127).

metaphoric one, “an emotional or imaginative principle” (39). As eighteenth-century medicine progressed towards an embodied conception of the body and mind, however, sympathy was located materially within the body, and *within* the nerves.

Subsequently, sympathy becomes “a material form of communication.... a physiological process capable of transmitting emotions, sensations and ideas, orderly or disorderly, between discrete individuals” (Fairclough 39).⁷¹ As Fairclough illuminates, Robert Whytt—“the most acclaimed theorist of physiological sympathy in mid-century Edinburgh”—is the chief proponent of this embodied and potentially “unruly” iteration of sympathy (39). Turning to the *Observations* itself, Whytt states:

... there is a remarkable sympathy, by means of the nerves, between various parts of the body; and now it appears that there is a still more wonderful sympathy between the nervous systems of different persons, where various motions and morbid symptoms are transferred from one to another without any corporeal contact or infection. (*Observations* 583)

For Fairclough, Whytt’s physiological account of sympathy, transmitting not only passions but ideas, has “unruly implications” because his conception of sympathy first, “upsets any notion of unitary, autonomous personal identity”, and second, can spread both ideas and emotions rapidly among a collective of people in close proximity (39).

Returning to the Lambs, Charles’ comment that he has made Mary “wretched with his wretchedness” is not necessarily a metaphorical and imaginative transfer of wretchedness in accordance with Hume’s model of sympathy (when the observation of the outward expressions of an emotion in another, prompts that very emotion to

⁷¹ For a full account of the development of sympathy from a metaphoric to a physiological form of communication, see Fairclough’s opening chapter, “Sympathy and the crowd: eighteenth-century contexts” (21-47).

occur within the body). Here, Charles also incorporates the rhetoric and tropes used in later physiological accounts of sympathy. Moreover, the notion of the material transfer of emotions is expressed elsewhere in the Lambs' correspondence. For example, in November 1805 when discussing their wellbeing more generally, Mary writes: "indeed it has been sad & heavy times with us lately, when I am pretty well his low spirits, throws me back again & when he begins to get a little cheerful then I do the same kind office for him" (Marrs 2: 183). Here, Mary draws upon the idea of sympathy affecting different parts of the body; a concept which is encapsulated in Chambers definition of "SYMPATHY" as the "Indisposition befalling one Part of the Body thro' the Disorder or Faultiness of another" (2: 161). Bound together as one body, or in "double singleness", Charles' low spirits prompts Mary's decline (Lucas 2: 86). However, the letter also draws on Whytt's notion of the "wonderful sympathy between the nervous systems of different persons" and the material transfer of "various motions and morbid symptoms" between people in close proximity. There are ongoing and reciprocal acts of transferring emotion as Mary absorbs Charles' low spirits, just as her low spirits replace his cheeriness.

In a final example, Charles combines the various contexts associated with the vapours which I have been detailing in this section to provide the strongest iteration of a material-based sympathy. When Thomas Manning leaves on a trip to China, Charles laments: "I will nurse the remembrance of your steadiness & quiet which used to infuse something like itself into our nervous minds. Mary called you our ventilator" (226). There is the sense of material transference between individuals from physiological accounts of sympathy: the infusion of Manning's "steadiness & quiet" (not quite the same as, but "something like" it) into the minds of *both* siblings which might ease their "nervous minds". The main difference in this example is that air,

rather than the nerves is the medium for sympathetic communication. In “Reading Motion”, Goodman highlights the influential work of Johann Georg Zimmermann and his *Treatise on Experience in Physic*, (1778). In the *Treatise*, Zimmermann claims “The air we breathe is not pure aether, but the atmospheric air, impregnated with a variety of bodies” (92). Goodman explains that the inhalation of atmospheric air, already containing various other “bodies”, lead to wider understandings of air as “a social medium” (“Reading Motion” 352). Charles acknowledges the association of air with friendly exchange in a much earlier comment to STC that “Friendship and acts of friendship, should be reciprocal, and free as the air” (Marrs 1: 106). In Charles’ letter above, this notion is developed into a familial and friendly exchange in the image of Manning as “ventilator”, shared by, and supporting, both siblings in their nervous discomfort.

Having fleshed out the interrelating contexts running throughout the Lambs’ associations of vapours (in various forms) with creative and literary pursuits, it is clear that the notion of a sympathetic transference of symptoms, emotions and ideas lies at the heart of their *Vapourish* model and their *writerly* identities. When Charles writes of a “vapour fit that comes & clouds over us often”, it is not only a cloud which covers both brother and sister, but also a cloud (as a social medium) that has the potential to transfer the shifting and various symptoms of the *Vapours* between the siblings. Furthermore, the association of transference with the disruption of “unitary and autonomous” identity (implicit within Whytt’s research) aptly reflects the Lambs’ own refusal to assume individual and discrete *writerly* identities, and instead “house together in a sort of double singleness” (Fairclough 39; Lucas 2: 86). Finally, the central idea of transference that I have identified in this section provides a context for analysis throughout the later sections. It has particular implications for assessing the

Lambs' shared creative partnership in light of the connections between the *Vapours* and the sublime, and the wider connections between the sublime and the solitary imagination established throughout Romantic-era poetry, which I turn to in the next section.

2. "*An Unfathered Vapour*": *The Sublime Contexts for the Vapours*

This section aims to illuminate the elements present within the Lambs' *Vapourish* model— the combining of symptoms from nervous disease with images of dense clouds or fogs— which link directly to representations of the creative process, such as associationism and the sublime. As with the first part of this chapter, this section provides a groundwork for my analysis of the Lambs' respective responses to the *Vapours* in the third and final section. Ultimately, I aim to demonstrate that the Lambs' *Vapourish* model is not only a definition of their shared relational identity as writers but is also a shared model for literary creativity: a shared model to which they respond very differently.

As a so-called "fashionable disease", "the Vapours" held a considerable creative caché because, as Lawlor summarises, the combination of introspection and a "disorderedly imagination" during a period of melancholy "could be highly productive for artists and writers" (37). In his chapter, "Fashionable Melancholy", Lawlor concentrates on introspection as an aid for literary productivity. However, there is a further connection that can be made between "the Vapours" and the creative potential of associationism. Cheyne's description of the effect of "the Vapours" upon the brain, leading to "*wandering and delusory Images*" and an "*Instability and Unsettledness in all the Intellectual operations*" recalls Locke's fears about the uncontrollable and deceptive nature of association that threatens to "set us awry in our Actions, as well

Moral as Natural, Passions, Reasonings and Notions” and STC’s later misgivings about “the streamy Nature of Association” (*The English Malady* 138; *Essay on Human Understanding* 2. 33. 396-397; *Notebooks* 1: 1770). Yet such an uncontrolled flow of associations was also vital for creating new connections between ideas for poets and authors. The nervous disease represents a different kind of creative associative process that is distinctly reliant on the physical and emotional health of the individual in question.

A closer examination of the rhetoric used to discuss “the Vapours” reveals similarities to the two-part model of the sublime as an initially painful experience followed by a release. In his popular account of melancholy, *The English Malady* (1733), Cheyne provided a long list of symptoms that fluctuated between the two poles of mania and melancholia:

... a deep and fixed *Melancholy*, *wandering* and *delusory Images* on the Brain, and *Instability* and *Unsettledness* in all the intellectual Operations, ... sometimes unaccountable *Fits of Laughing*, apparent *Joy*, *Leaping* and *dancing*; at other Times, of *Crying*, *Grief* and *Anguish*, and these generally terminate in *Hypochondriacal* or *Hysterical Fits* (I mean *Convulsive* ones) and *Faintings*, which leave a *Drowsiness*, *Lethargy* and *extream Lowness of Spirits* for some Time afterwards. (138)

Significantly, the range of symptoms “generally terminate” in “*Fits ... and Faintings*”, leaving the individual physically and emotionally overwhelmed with an “*extream Lowness of Spirits*” (138). These “*Fits ... Faintings ... and extrem Lowness of Spirits*” correspond to the painful part of the sublime, whether that is the overwhelming of the imaginative faculty to comprehend an object in Kant or “*fear*” in Burke “which robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning” (42).

However, “the “Vapours” were also understood to perform a purgative function.

Roy Porter explains, in the mid Eighteenth Century:

... unease, *ennui* and melancholy [were perceived] as symptoms of indecision and indirection, yet also as indulgent expressions of release. Georgian solipstic melancholy could thus form a condition perilous neither to society (it was not revolution) nor the self (it was not mania) both gratifying, yet also “punitive”.

(*Mind Forg'd Manacles* 93)

Both Cheyne’s account, in which the physical and emotional symptoms of the disease overwhelm the individual, and Porter’s account of the disease as producing a gratifying (but exhausting) kind of release share similarities with the sublime. Porter’s description of this release as a kind of pain that is “gratifying” or satisfying is a reversal of Burke’s notion of “delight”, that particular pleasure which accompanies the removal of pain. Moreover, the concept that melancholy did not necessarily disturb the wider structure of society, resembles, if not quite echoes, Burke’s model in which the sublime ultimately engenders submission to higher forms of authority (such as the divine, the Church, or the Monarchy).

In a recent anthology, *Cultures of the Sublime* (2011), Cian Duffy and Peter Howell argue that the sublime was not just “an isolated or abstract philosophical concept but rather ... embedded in the cultural practice of the late eighteenth century and romantic period” (4). Duffy and Howell identify several tropes which inspired sublime reactions from contemporary writers and audiences, such as the vastness of money, the spectacle of crowds and the fascination with the exotic in travel literature. In light of my discussion above, “the Vapours” can also be added to this cultural practice: “the Vapours” are a *medicalised* version of the sublime. In the case of the Lambs’ *Vapourish* model, the links to the sublime are strengthened because they also draw

upon the obscuring nature of airy substances (vapours, or clouds), which play a vital role in accounts of the natural sublime.

The final context, then, for defining vapours concerns naturally-occurring vapours in the form of mists or dense fogs in an experience of the natural sublime. There are two developments in the Eighteenth Century which characterise the discourse and understanding of the relationship between vapours and the natural sublime inherited by Romantic writers. The first concerns the presentation of the natural sublime within Alpine travel literature as enhancing man's mental and spiritual faculties; the second is Edmund Burke's influential presentation of the sublime arising from the idea of obscurity in *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757).

In their "Introduction", Duffy and Howell define the development of the natural sublime during the latter half of the Eighteenth Century as:

... the gradual transfer of the emotional responses previously evoked by the idea of God to those aspects of the natural world which seemed to reflect or partake in divine grandeur.... any natural phenomenon capable of suggesting the infinite. (*Cultures of the Sublime* 2)

Duffy and Howell cite Rousseau's *Julie, or the New Héloïse* (1761) as an example of an early text that displays the main feature of the natural sublime as the "correlation between physical, aesthetic and moral elevation" (16). In St. Preux's letter to Julie, the effect of "the purity of the air" at the mountain's summit upon the mind prompts the sublime experience:

Upon the tops of the mountains, the air being subtle and pure, we respire with greater freedom, our bodies are more active, our minds more serene, our pleasures less ardent, and our passions much more moderate. Our meditations

acquire a degree of sublimity from the grandeur of objects that surround us. It seems as if, being above all human society, we have left every low, terrestrial sentiment behind; and that as we approach the ethereal regions the soul imbibes something of their eternal purity. (68)

Here, the height and purity of the external surroundings directly affect the internal state, inspiring the elevated emotions of serenity and purity. In slightly later accounts, however, the sublime is triggered by the *contrast* between the heavy oppressiveness of dense vapours and the invigorating quality of the clear air. In *A Tour Through Sicily and Malta: In a Series of Letters to William Beckford* (1773), Patrick Brydone describes the sublime experience in terms of the emergence out of a dense cloud of vapours into fresh and clean air:

... on the tops of the highest mountains, where the air is so pure and refined; and where there is not that immense weight of gross vapours pressing upon the body; the mind acts with greater freedom, and all the functions both of body and soul are performed in a superior manner. (1: 201)

For both Rousseau and Brydone, the sublime provides a sense of mental clarity and freedom that occurs in the pure air found at elevated heights. Both accounts imply that the sublime increases the responsiveness of the soul which leads to a greater spiritual awareness of God.

In the *Enquiry* (1757), Burke developed an associationist and physiological formulation of the sublime that reversed the emphasis on mental clarity and liberation in Rousseau's and Brydone's accounts. Instead, Burke understood the sublime as a particular kind of response by the passions (stronger emotions) to the ideas of pain, terror and fear that produced a kind of delightful sense of release and ultimately

inspired submission.⁷² Burke lists “obscurity” as one of the conditions “necessary” to inspire terror because our apprehension increases as our ability to see and form a clear idea of an object is reduced (43, 141). An unclear idea demonstrates a lack of understanding, and it is, according to Burke “our ignorance of things that ... chiefly excites the passions” (48). Unclear ideas, with no perceptible boundary can also approach the infinite which overwhelms the imagination: as the eye is unable to perceive the bounds of an object, the object “seem[s] to be infinite” and the “imagination meets no check which may hinder its extending them [parts of an object] at pleasure” (53). Subsequently for Burke “in nature, dark, confused, uncertain images have a greater power on the fancy to form the grander passions” (49). In sharp contrast to earlier presentations of the natural sublime, the obscurity of mountain vapours inspire the sublime, for Burke, because they distort objects. Surprisingly, Burke does not connect mountain vapours to obscurity in the *Enquiry*.⁷³ However, it is a connection that is made later by Wordsworth in the apostrophe to the Imagination in *The Prelude*.

In Book Six of *The Prelude* (1850), Wordsworth links the density of mountain vapours to the Burkean sublime and connects the sublime to imaginative power. In particular, I am interested in Wordsworth’s comparison of the sublime power of the imagination to an “unfathered vapour”. This is prompted by the poet’s recollection of his earlier disappointment at crossing the Alps without achieving the much sought-after experience of the sublime. In the poem, the poet-speaker recounts the feelings of confusion and anxiety when, along with his travelling companion, he loses the main

⁷² The sublime, for Burke, incites varying degrees of submission: weaker forms inspire admiration, awe, respect and reverence (to external authorities such as institutions or monarchy), while in its most powerful manifestation the sublime inspires “astonishment” (130).

⁷³ Burke only refers to vapours once, in Section 21, entitled “Smell and Taste. Bitters and Stenches” to suggest occasions when descriptions of the smell of vapours may be considered sublime (69-72).

walking route. A “peasant”, whom they happen to meet by chance, shows them the “future course”, which leads “downwards” rather than upwards to higher ground (6. 579, 584-585). From the peasant, they also infer the devastating news “*that we had crossed the Alps*” (6. 591). The poem then breaks off from the historical narrative of the Alpine journey into an apostrophe addressed to the sublime power of the imagination.⁷⁴ While the peasant’s news leaves Wordsworth dumbfounded in 1790, it is only much later, through the recollection of that event that the poet is able to recognise the power of the imagination and its ability to recognise infinity.⁷⁵

Below is the full account of Wordsworth’s apostrophe to the Imagination from the 1850 version:

Imagination—here the Power so called
 Through sad incompetence of human speech,
 That awful Power rose from the mind’s abyss
 Like an unfathered vapour that enwraps
 At once some lonely traveller. I was lost;
 Halted without an effort to break through;
 But to my conscious soul I now can say—
 “I recognise thy glory”: in such strength

⁷⁴ The temporal difference between the breaking off from the main historical narrative (the crossing of Simplon Pass and through the Gondo Ravine) and the apostrophe to the Imagination within the 1805 and 1850 versions of *The Prelude* is contentious within critical debate and is beyond the scope of my current discussion. However, it is discussed in detail in W. J. B Owen’s article, “Crossing the Alps Again.” *The Wordsworth Circle*, vol. 25, no. 2, 1994, pp. 100-107; and David S. Miall’s “The Alps Deferred: Wordsworth at the Simplon Pass.” *European Romantic Review*, vol. 9, no. 1, 1998, pp. 87-102.

⁷⁵ My understanding of the Wordsworthian sublime largely follows that of Philip Shaw in his monograph *The Sublime* (101-103). Shaw recognises the parallels and even echoes in language between Kant’s notion of the “supersensible” and Wordsworth’s understanding of the “awful Power” of the imagination. However, Shaw argues that Wordsworth ultimately rejects the notion that the mind is superior to nature (the outcome of the Kantian sublime) and establishes instead “a powerful ‘humanizing’ *reconciliation*” with others, Nature and God (102, my emphasis). I differ from Shaw in that I recognise that there are also elements of the Burkean sublime that are *necessary* to Wordsworth’s account of the sublime at Simplon Pass.

Of usurpation, when the light of sense
 Goes out, but with a flash that has revealed
 The invisible world, doth greatness make abode,

 Our destiny, our being's heart and home,
 Is with infinitude ... (6. 593-605)⁷⁶

Wordsworth uses the comparison of the imagination to a naturally-occurring “vapour” (although the preceding adjective, “unfathered”, is quite ambiguous) in order to describe the usurping power of the imagination. He draws on the lexicon of the Burkean sublime to emphasise depth (“abyss”) and recalls Brydone’s earlier descriptions to emphasise the density and obfuscating power of the vapour: “That awful Power rose from the mind’s abyss / Like an unfathered vapour that enwraps, / At once, some lonely traveller” (1850 6. 594-596).⁷⁷ The usurping power of the imagination itself—here compared to the obscuring nature of a mountainous vapour—is comparable to “the Vapours” in that they both are presented as a dangerous force that threatens to overwhelm and paralyse the self. The comparison of the befuddling nature of the dense vapour also recalls the main historical narrative with Wordsworth and his travelling companion losing their way (although significantly, it is a singular “lonely traveller” here). However, after the terrifying moment has passed—“But to my conscious soul I now can say”—Wordsworth can reflect on that initially painful experience to recognise the “glory” of the faculty of the mind and its role in

⁷⁶ I follow the 1850 text because it incorporates Burkean rhetoric and tropes of the sublime, which are absent from the earlier 1805 version.

⁷⁷ Elsewhere in *The Prelude*, Wordsworth uses the obscuring nature of natural mountain vapours and depth as a prompt for the sublime experience. Atop Snowden, Wordsworth observes “a rift” in the “solid vapours” (1850 14. 56, 45). In looking down upon this “fixed, abysmal, gloomy, breathing-place”, Wordsworth recognises the “one voice” roaring through the “earth”, “sea” and “starry heavens” (1850 14. 58, 60-62). Interestingly, both of the poet-speaker’s two major accounts of the sublime are associated with looking downwards or following a descending path (Book Six), which is a contrast to St. Preux’s elevated experience of the sublime.

connecting man to a sense of the infinite: an infinite that is defined as God's divinity in Book Fourteen: "the sustaining thought / Of human Being, Eternity, and God" (204-205).⁷⁸ From this brief discussion, there are two points which are relevant for exploring the Lambs' (particularly Charles') reactions to the *Vapours*: first, Wordsworth uses Burkean elements of obscurity (that are usually applied to *external* objects or natural phenomenon) to represent an *internal* mental process; and second, the Wordsworthian sublime only occurs when the poet is alone and that it is the reflection upon, or remembrance of, an initial experience (the losing of the path) which prompts the sublime.

3. "*Dull or Giddy*": *Harnessing and Mediating the Sublime Power of the Vapours*

In a letter to Hazlitt in early January 1806, Lamb hurriedly pens a detailed and lengthy depiction of a feverish London anticipating the funeral of Nelson and encapsulates the twin pull between the "vapourish" and "vapouring" aspects which I have been detailing throughout this chapter. On the one hand, Lamb is entirely caught up in the feverish excitement of city; on the other hand, he presents the act of writing the spontaneous letter as a means to disperse the befuddling experience of those *Vapours*. The letter itself is fragmentary and quick paced, written in the present tense and in short active phrases—"Great Aquatic Bustle tomorrow. Body to come up from Greenwich"—which are interspersed with dashes and dialogue (Marrs 1: 197). The range of the letter too emphasises the disordered nature of the writing subject's mind. One minute the letter anticipates the crowd's behaviour on the day of the funeral

⁷⁸ The connection between humanity, God and infinity is clearer in the 1805 version: "the *one* thought / By which we live, infinity and God" (183-184, my emphasis). The recognition of this intertwined connection is not necessarily a submission to divine authority (which is the outcome of a Burkean model of the sublime), but is a greater awareness of God as the source of the creative power that runs through, connects and reconciles the mind to the mind of others and to nature.

“emptying out” from all over Whitehall, St Pauls, Pimlico and Pancras; the next it relays short snippets of overheard conversation or plans for the funeral (Marrs 2: 198). It captures the often overlooked, human details, transactions and commercial opportunities the funeral brings to the bustling city: the “virgers” [sic] of St Paul’s Cathedral charging people to view the tomb where Nelson will be buried; the stocking of “Fillets of Veal predestined to be demolished at The **Temple**”; the selling of seats in shops and residences, “Seats erecting, seats to be sold, lent &c—” (Marrs 2: 197-198). Here, Lamb focuses on the type of overlooked moments and depicts the self-conscious attitudes of the entrepreneurial and middle classes that would later feature in *The Essays of Elia*, such as the old bachelor clerks in South-Sea House and the old benchers of Inner Temple. The tone could also be interpreted as a precursor to Elia’s familiar style as Lamb mimics several voices within the letter. There is the curious resident, feigning disinterest in order to separate himself from the attitudes of the masses: “I, for my part am indifferent about it, only it looks foolish not to see it” (Marrs 2: 198). Likewise, there is the grandiose lady disdainful of the prying behaviour of residents, who declares that she has “no relish for spectacles” but notes that the young and delicate lady in her charge, will watch the procession. The young lady in question, however, “is afraid it will be too affecting.... She is sure she shall turn her head away from the window as **it goes by**. O the immortal **Man!**—” (Marrs 2: 198).

A repeated theme throughout the letter is the spread of the feverish atmosphere across the city, (and its adverse effect on Lamb’s own health):

The whole town as unsettled as a young Lady the day before being married.... If you with your refinements were here, ... you could neither eat, sit, read nor paint, till the corpse was fairly laid. The ghost of the funeral will walk till over

Sunday night I'm sure, & the streets be perturb'd. You ca'nt [sic] get along for
People going about staring to see where it will come by, or asking when it come
by, and Have you got a Seat? (Marrs 2: 198)

The above written in great precipitation so ca'nt answer for the style or
grammar, just to be rid of a vapour fit which comes often & clouds over us.
Shall be more cool when Lord Nelson is buried, & one can walk the streets with
less justling, & when the crowding & madness of the people is still. Believe me,
dull or Giddy. (Marrs 2: 199)

In both examples above—the “unsettled” town, the “perturb’d” streets and the
“crowding & madness of the people”—the infectious nature of the crowd recalls the
kind of “wonderful sympathy” noted by Whytt and the transference of “morbid”
symptoms, via the nerves themselves between people in a collective. It is also an
example of the unregulated and uncontrollable nature of physiological sympathy on a
wider scale which alarmed conservatives and inspired political and religious
Dissenters, and in this example, provokes a highly ambiguous response from Lamb.

There are several complex elements at work here. Lamb depicts his frenetic writing
as a consequence of “a vapour fit”, which is itself brought on by the highly-charged
emotional atmosphere of London. At the same time, the act of writing is depicted as a
means to purge “the vapours”. Lamb endures a kind of *inversion* of the
Wordsworthian sublime. While Wordsworth uses a natural vapour as a simile to
describe the “awful Power” of the imagination itself as the ultimate source of the
sublime, Lamb draws upon the oscillating nature of the *Vapours* and locates the
source of creativity outside of the imagination and (the controllable part of) the self.
The *Vapours*, then as a *medicalised* version of the sublime, can be harnessed for

creative purposes and therapeutic release. The threatening force of a fit of *Vapours* “clouds” Lamb’s senses in a similar way to Wordsworth’s enwrapped poet as he becomes entangled in the feverish behaviour of the city. However, there are two major differences: first, Lamb’s experience of the sublime does not lead to a self-conscious recognition of the power of the imagination, which Wordsworth goes onto define as the “clearest insight, amplitude of mind, / And Reason in her most exalted mood (*Prelude* 1850 14. 191-192). Lamb’s inverse experience of the sublime occurs when his mind is least able to reflect and gain clear insight. Second, while the obscuring “unfathered vapour” literally clouds and halts the working of Wordsworth’s mental faculties, the obscure nature of Lamb’s “fit of the vapours” sparks instead an outpouring of immediate disordered writing, which in turn illuminates the key ideas of control, spontaneity and sharing within creative process.

In the letter, Lamb’s necessary act of free-writing to purge the “fit of the vapours” involves a degree of a loss of control. In a similar fashion to Cheyne defining “the Vapours” as an “unaccountable” phenomenon, Lamb professes that he “ca’nt [sic] answer for the style or the grammar” (Cheyne 138; Marrs 2: 198). As well as recalling the free-flowing nature of associationism, the lack of control emphasises the immediate, (possibly) unfinished and unrefined nature of the writing itself: an emphasis which Lamb explicitly draws attention to elsewhere in his work. For example, in the dedication to the “Friendly and Judicious Reader” in *The Essays of Elia*, Elia begs his reader will allow “for the rashness and necessary incompleteness of first thoughts” (Lucas 2: 337-338). In turn, this prioritises the genesis of ideas, those “first thoughts” over developed opinions and brings his writing (and his readers) as close as possible to the intimacy and immediacy of familiar conversation.

Finally, in locating the source of creativity outside of the self and presenting the *Vapours* as an illness that “comes often & clouds over us”, Lamb presents this type of sublime experience as a state which may be transferred between the siblings, or as a state that both siblings can access. Lamb’s explicit presentation of the *Vapours* as a shared creative model is a sharp contrast to Wordsworth’s experience of the sublime and insight into the imagination as a solitary experience because it is located within the poet. However, as much as the Lamb siblings subscribe to the same model, they react very differently to it and, in contrast to Charles, Mary establishes different kinds of writing structures to assert a degree of control over her feelings and writing.

In one of her letters to her close friend and confidant, Sarah Stoddart, Mary reveals a particular technique she has developed in order to retain a degree of control over powerful vapourish feelings. In the weeks leading up to the composition of the *Tales*, Mary admits that when moments of despondency strike, she thinks of Sarah so strongly as to envisage her as an embodied presence:

I set you up in my fancy, as a kind of *thing* that takes an interest in my concerns, and I hear you talk[i]ng to me, and argueing the matter very learnedly when I give way to despondency. You shall hear a good account of me, and of the progress I make in altering my fretful temper to a calm & quiet one. (Marrs 2: 220)

Mary draws on Hume’s notion of the ability of sympathy to change an idea into an impression and acquire “such a degree of force and vivacity” as to “produce an equal emotion” to the “original” (*Treatise* 206; 2. 1. 11). Mary both “hear[s]” and listens to the “learned” arguments of Sarah-as-*thing* (Marrs 2: 220). The sympathetic associations with Sarah-as-*thing* are further increased in light of the broader eighteenth-century definitions of the word “*thing*” as an entity (animate or inanimate)

that connects to other people. Uncovering the rich etymological history of the word “thing”, Adam Potkay highlights, that the word in the Romantic period encompassed the senses of “creature, motive, discussion, council, meeting” (393-394). Sarah-as-*thing* performs a mediatory role, pulling Mary back from the kind of low spirits or despondency which Cheyne defined as part of “the Vapours” and which accompany her “fretful temper”.⁷⁹

However, the intermediary role, here depicted in the form of female friendship, self-consciously draws attention to the fact that it occupies a middle ground and acts as a go-between. It is unclear as to whether Mary will deliver her reports to Sarah-as-*thing* or to her actual friend, or possibly to both. This slippage plays upon the difference or gap that arises when one medium is transposed into another: Mary’s discussion of her fancy within the space of the letter transposes her and Sarah’s friendly exchange through reading and writing into a different (albeit imagined) context of exchange through speaking and listening. The ambiguity in Mary’s last line—“You shall have a good account of my progress”—ties into wider contemporary concerns about the effect of mediation upon the communication of meaning.

Recent criticism in Romantic Media Studies repeatedly emphasises the extent to which mediation was “a phenomenon that was apparent to the writers and readers caught up in its development” (Christina Lupton 9). The Editors of *Romantic Adaptations* go further arguing that “at its most apparently intimate moments, romantic-period writing involves a pervasive, self-conscious and often anxious culture of adaptation, of mediation and remediation” (1). This alertness to changes across and between different forms and media arose from wider apprehensions about the effect of

⁷⁹ There is an overlap between Mary’s depiction of herself as “fretful”, (which among other things means agitated, restless, a kind of self-torment) and Charles’ presentation of himself to Godwin as a “desultory” writer who “fret[s]” over his work, which “torment[s]” him (Marrs 2: 128).

mediation upon the conveying of meaning itself. In their “Introduction” to *This is Enlightenment*, Siskin and Warner identify a tension within contemporary attitudes towards the process of mediation:

... on the one hand ... the supposed purpose of communication (whether it be the use of rhetoric to persuade or the later ideal of transparent representation that overcomes the opacity of language) and, on the other, the diverse means by which information has been transmitted between sender and receiver by a medium, the media, or (most generally) mediations. (“Introduction” 24)

As an inherently ambivalent process, mediation draws attention to the matters of making, communicating (shaping and distorting) and interpreting meaning. It directs attention “to the material and formal qualities of different kinds of cultural expression” (John Guillory, “Genesis of the Media Concept” 343). Sarah-as-*thing* is not only a mediatory presence standing between Mary and her fretful temper, but also stands between the actual Mary and Sarah in their textual exchange: it draws attention to the potential for differences between the accounts Mary reports to Sarah-as-*thing* and to Sarah herself.

Mary’s creation of an imagined mediatory presence departs significantly from other contemporary representations of the relationship between nervous disease and creativity by female writers. Examining the correspondence and poetry of prominent female intellectuals and poets of the late Eighteenth Century, including Elizabeth Carter and Charlotte Smith, Heather Meek argues that these women “used the physical and mental debilities of hysteria as constructs through which to celebrate the female mind” (91). Although models varied between the different writers, they all connect pain to “feeling, thought, and vitality” (89).⁸⁰ According to Meek, pain “sometimes

⁸⁰ Meek identifies different presentations of the relationship between hysteria and creativity that range from Elizabeth Carter’s “disembodied, intellectual and hysteric woman”, to Anne Finch’s embodied

interrupted poetic production and at other times enriched it” (95). To a certain degree, these constructs also share similarities with Charles’ response to the *Vapours* in which the purging activity of writing also inspires a rich, imaginative and witty depiction of London’s preparations for the spectacle of Nelson’s funeral. In turn, and in conclusion to this chapter, it also raises the question of interpreting the respective positions of the siblings within their shared creative model. On the one hand, Charles apparently opens up to, and harnesses, the sublime potential of the *Vapours*; on the other hand, Mary carefully constructs presences that mediate and mitigate the more dangerous aspects of them.

In one interpretation of the model, Charles occupies a far stronger position than Mary, and experiences a much closer relationship to the sublime as a source of creative and imaginative power: a line of interpretation which is in keeping with the conventional gender roles for the period. However, like the ambiguous model of the *Vapours* itself, which pulls between vapouring and vapourish tendencies, there is another possible interpretation. Within his letter to Hazlitt, Charles adopts a more passive position, responding immediately and with little control over his writing “[j]ust to get the **Buzzing** out of [his] head” (Marrs 2: 198). Mary, on the other hand, “in setting [Sarah] up her fancy”, adopts a far more active position and establishes mediatory presences instead as constructs to navigate and control her experience of the kinds of feelings that threaten to overwhelm her brother (and other female authors). This is reflected in her choice to adapt Shakespeare’s plays. Like the gently guiding and learned hand of Sarah-as-*thing*, the text provides a guiding framework for Mary to work within. In another to letter Sarah, at the end of composition on the *Tales* and before the composition of *Mrs. Leicester’s School*, Mary depicts her own writerly

sufferer of the female spleen, to Charlotte Smith’s synthesis of both the emotional and embodied in her self-representation as the “gloomy pensive intellectual” (94-96).

process in these terms: “seriously will you [Sarah] draw me out a skeleton of a story either from memory or any thing that you have read or from your own invention and I will fill it up some way or other” (Marrs 2: 235). At the same time, as this final section has identified, mediation is inherently ambivalent and shines a spotlight on the process of making, communicating and interpreting meaning itself. The next chapter focuses on Mary and Charles’ acts of mediation as collaborators on prose adaptations for children to explore the very different kind of creative spaces the siblings’ acts of mediation create for themselves as authors and for their young readers.

Chapter 4. The Mediation of Meaning in *Tales from Shakespear* (1807) and *Mrs. Leicester's School* (1809)

These characters [such as Ariel and Caliban] may delight the mind whose studies are mature, and only such a mind is competent to judge concerning them. They are even best defended and explained by reference to ideas prevalent in the days of the author [Shakespeare]; but how should such information have reached the youthful mind? and without such information, of what advantage can stories relating to them be to the young?

(Anonymous Review, Nov. 1807. *The Literary Panorama* 294)

We have grown so very good of late, that none but devotional books or moral tales, as they are called are entrusted into the hands of our children.... Their morality and religion tend alike to give a child of good disposition a distaste for both; or, if he be a convert to render him an unforgiving hypocrite.

(Anonymous Review, May 1807. *The Critical Review* 98)

This chapter moves from physiological examples of mediation, with symptoms and sympathy transferred through the medium of the nerves, to literary understandings of mediation as a form of adaptation, with information and ideas imparted to child readers through the textual “medium” of the preface. The pull between the “vapouring and vapourish” that is explicit within the Lambs’ creative model is also mirrored across different levels in their adaptations for children. There is a distinctive ambivalence within the Lambs’ texts themselves, which is reflected within

contemporary reception of those texts in the Nineteenth Century, and within critical interpretation of those texts across the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries.

An example of one such ambivalence is illustrated by the opening epigraphs above. Both quotations represent different reviews of *Tales from Shakespear* and partake in contemporary debates about the degree to which children's literature ought to be instructive (of certain behaviour and moral outlooks) and the extent of the role of the imagination within this process.⁸¹ On the one hand, the *Literary Panorama* scolds the author(s) for daring to introduce Shakespeare's more magical characters (Ariel, Caliban and Sycorax) to young readers without sufficient context. Moreover, the reviewer is disappointed that "something like morals" have not "been deduced from such incidents as afford them" and suggests that "Mr L." either revise his work accordingly or let others "interweave the interesting beauties of the great Dramatic Poet with elucidations, and morals" (295). On the other hand, *The Critical Review* satirises the (seemingly) wider trend for a strict didacticism within children's literature and praises *Tales* for encouraging an imaginative engagement with the text:

We have compared it with many of the numerous systems which have been devised for riveting attention at an early age, and insinuating knowledge subtly and pleasantly into minds, by nature averse from it. The result of the comparison is not so much that it [*Tales*] rises high in the list, as that it claims the very first place, and stands unique, and without rival or competitor. (98)

⁸¹ Charles Lamb also encouraged this division by favouring imaginativeness over didacticism in his famous critique of the "cursed Barbauld Crew" who present "Knowledge insignificant & vapid" to the child in "the *shape of knowledge* ... instead of [cultivating] that beautiful Interest in wild tales" (Marrs 2: 81). However, recent critics, including Suzanne L. Barnett and Felicity James, acknowledge that such presentations do not reflect the much more complex and entangled relationship between the two poles: "Once seen as a veritable wasteland of didactic fiction against which Romantic poets rebelled with new imaginative literature, scholars now recognize the 1790s and 1800s as a dynamic era of experimentation in children's writing and education" (Barnett, "Introduction: The Radical Aesop" 8; see James, "Wild Tales From Shakespeare" 153-154, 165).

While their opinions on *Tales from Shakespear* differ, both reviewers, however, share preoccupations not only with *what* young children read, but also with *how* they read: “how should such information reach the youthful mind?” (*The Literary Panorama* 294). The question of *how* children read lies at the heart of this fourth chapter, and I am primarily concerned with the Lambs’ use of mediation within their adapted (or mediated) texts to guide, nudge and prompt younger readers towards a particular method of reading. Drawing on understandings of mediation from Romantic Media Studies and Translation and Adaptation Studies, I demonstrate the varying degrees to which the Lambs subtly alert their child readers to the mediatory nature of expression and language, to the way meaning may be made, and the ways it can be contested. In particular, I formulate the term “redirected mediation” to account for the very specific and unusual kind of adaptation practised by the Lambs in *Tales from Shakespear*: The Preface to *Tales* explicitly and repeatedly “redirects” the child reader to the source text, a source text which the child reader has yet to encounter.

Examining the question of *how* to read helps to reassess the socio-political ramifications of the material (the *what*) which is presented to children to read. As already noted, mediation directs “our attention first to the material and formal qualities of different kinds of cultural expression and only second to the object of representation” (Guillory, “Genesis of the Media Concept” 343). A consideration of the kind of reading position the Lambs create for their child readers allows me to argue that the texts of *Tales* and *Mrs. Leicester’s School* are more subversive than previously allowed by critics.

The contemporary debate over *how* to read has also been interpreted in relation to gender difference by twentieth-century criticism. In light of the statement (in Mary’s portion of the Preface) that *Tales* was written “chiefly ... for young ladies”, feminist

critics focused on the extent to which the morals (or lack of morals) within the stories challenged, amended or reinforced patriarchal understandings of female gender roles and female subjectivity (Lucas 3: 2). Additionally, they scrutinised whether the kind of reading the Lambs encouraged placed the young female reader in an active or passive position. For example, Jean I. Marsden (1989) argued that “the Tales were designed to instill [sic] lessons regarding proper female behaviour” through a “gentle, but pervasive, moral tone” and ultimately represent “the nineteenth-century ideal of what young ladies should learn from England’s greatest poet” (“Shakespeare for Girls” 51); more recently, Erica Hateley (2009) argued that the narratives “construct patriarchy-friendly models of gendered subjectivity” and the Lambs “inscribed a passive female reading position” (29, 28).⁸²

However, Susan Wolfson has recognised that the energy of *Tales* is “frequently divided” between “reform” and “conservative ideology” and the narratives range “from optimistic openness to a conservatism narrower than that of the Shakespearean original” (23). Significantly, in prioritising gender difference, the feminist critics above do not consider the subtle political inflections encoded within contemporary debates over different styles of reading. Felicity James, building upon and extending Wolfson, restores *Tales* to its original publication context as part of the Godwins’ *Juvenile Library* and takes into consideration the Lambs’ Dissenting background as Unitarians. For James, there is a “double movement” within *Tales*, between “imagination and inventiveness” and “the desire” to “control and direct” the child reader’s interpretation of the text (155). Hence, there are always both “radical and

⁸² This is also extended to *Mrs. Leicester’s School* with critics understanding the different representations of imaginative experience and reading by Charles and Mary as a result of gender difference. See Jean I. Marsden’s “Letters on a Tombstone: Mothers and Literacy in Mary Lamb’s *Mrs. Leicester’s School*”, *Children’s Literature*, vol. 23, 1995, pp. 31-44; and Meaghan H. Dobsen’s “(Re)considering Mary Lamb: Imagination and Memory in *Mrs. Leicester’s School*”, *The Charles Lamb Bulletin*, New Series vol. 93, 1996, pp. 12-21.

conservative possibilities latent in the same text” (160). I build upon James’ analysis by explicitly linking the Lambs’ use of mediation within their texts to the more subversive implications of their publication context: my examinations of *Tales* and *Mrs. Leicester’s School* consider the texts as part of a larger framework of adaptations published by Godwin for *The Juvenile Library*.

The chapter is divided into three parts. The first section provides the historical context for the chapter in two ways. First, it focuses on the writing of children’s literature as a specific form of familial collaboration and second, illuminates the key signifiers of themes in the wider debate over *what* and *how* children should read. It compares two very different models of family collaboration in the form of the Taylors and the Aikin-Barbaulds to illuminate the use of paratext as markers of socio-political allegiances. It then considers the Lambs’ unusual form of sibling collaboration by turning to the composition of *Tales*. While my primary concern throughout the chapter is the kind of relationship established between author and child reader, which is often found in the preface, I turn to the stories of *Tales* to examine more closely the simultaneous “radical and conservative possibilities” that James finds within these narratives. In doing so, I make the following broad distinction: the conservative elements of the texts pertain to female propriety during courtship and marriage. Comments on female learning and rational debate and female friendship, however, are informed by the more radical elements of a Dissenting education.

The second part of the chapter elucidates the concept of “redirected mediation” by drawing on, first, Gérard Genette’s account of paratext as a “threshold” between the world of the text and the “world’s discourse about the text” and, second, definitions of adaptation-as-mediation from Translation and Adaptation Studies (Genette 2). It recalls elements from my earlier discussion of Mary’s creation of mediatory

presences—the fertile gap opened up by the transposition of one medium into another—to interpret *Tales* as a self-proclaimed transitional text for the young female reader who is envisioned to encounter these short narratives before reading Shakespeare’s plays in full. I argue that the use of language—whether faithfully following the language of the source text or amending the text to suit nineteenth-century sensibilities—is vital to understanding the political orientation of the Lambs’ practice of “redirected mediation”.

The third and final part of the chapter focuses on *Mrs. Leicester’s School*, a collection of original stories by Charles and Mary which explore the pleasures and perils of highly imaginative engagements with the world. Although not an adaption of a classic text, *Mrs. Leicester’s School* is an adaptation of the “biographical conversations” of the various protagonists into a collection of written narratives (Lucas 3: 316). Here, I am concerned with the Lambs’ creation of the mediatory character “M. B” within the Preface, who explicitly alerts her child readers to the disruptive effects of adaptation upon the authority and authenticity of wider narratives and cultural codes. I explore the implications of the Preface upon the acts of reading and (mis)interpretation within this highly ambivalent and unsettling collection of personal histories.

1. The Family Politics of Writing and Reading Children’s Literature

Recent criticism, particularly Levy’s *Romantic Authorship* and Krawczyk’s *Romantic Literary Families*, has demonstrated that the writing of children’s literature during the Romantic period was synonymous with familial collaboration. It offered the prospect of financial gain for the whole family and lent respectability to unmarried female authors because their representations of domestic life and the family in children’s

literature were also written within the regulated and domestic space of the family home. This opening section briefly compares two very different public models of family authorship, in the form of the Taylor family and the Barbauld-Aikin clan. While both families were established Dissenters, the differences between their collections for children illuminate key issues within the politically-charged debates concerning the agency of the child in education and different forms of reading in the early Nineteenth Century. These provide the historical and literary context which inform the Lambs' use of mediation within their own prose adaptations. This context also helps to distinguish the Lambs' public presentation of their works from other more open family models.

The Taylors of Ongar, presided over by the Dissenting minister and engraver, Isaac Taylor Snr., subscribed to a household model of collaboration to produce *Original Poems for Infant Minds, By Several Young Persons* (1804-1806), *Rhymes for the Nursery* (1806) and *Original Hymns for Infant Minds* (1808).⁸³ Living under one roof, Taylor's daughters, Ann and Jane, predominantly wrote verse, while Taylor's son, Isaac Jnr. drew and engraved the accompanying illustrations. Despite the Taylors' religious nonconformity, their literary output, as Krawczyk highlights, was "conservative" in tone and the sisters were "scrupulous at following parental guidance" (107-108). In their discussion of the Taylor family, Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall link this conservatism to the rise of a "swelling canon of genteel femininity" that regarded female "professional literary work both inappropriate and precarious" (*Family Fortunes* 69, 68). Consequently, neither Ann nor Jane's name appeared on the title page of *Original Poems*, and their future collaborations were

⁸³ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall provide a detailed history of the Taylor family and their venture into children's literature (*Family Fortunes* 59-69). See also Donelle Ruwe's chapter in her monograph *British Children's Poetry in the Romantic-Era* which is dedicated entirely to an analysis of "Original Poems for Infant Minds" and the Taylors' other poetic collaborations (53-84).

published under variants on the phrase “By the Authors of Original Poems for Infant Minds”. Despite publishing anonymously, their publishers, Darton and Harvey, ensured that the collections were synonymous with the Taylor family name.

The more famous siblings John Aikin and Anna Laetitia Barbauld (née Aikin) provide a sharp contrast to the Taylor model of household production and its conservative overtones both in the form of their collaboration and the political orientation of their collections for children. The siblings were already established in the public sphere as part of a family of Dissenting authors and published political tracts prior to their venture into the children’s literary market. They shared the same radical publisher and bookseller, Joseph Johnson, who released their political pamphlets on the same day and displayed them side by side in his shop (Krawczyk 1-2).⁸⁴ The siblings collaborated openly on a six-volume collection of short stories for children, *Evenings at Home: The Juvenile Budget Opened* which listed “Dr. Aikin and Mrs. Barbauld” as authors (1792-1796).⁸⁵ The genesis of the collection, explained in the Preface, reflects the hallmarks of a Dissenting education and fosters curiosity, debate and inquiry within the shared and communal space of the family. Unlike the Taylors’ *Poems* which was written “for *Infant Minds*” (and does not have a preface), these stories, “fable[s] and dialogue[s]” were written by older children for their younger siblings and friends (2). Furthermore, once gathered together, the younger children pick out the stories from a communal box, or “budget”, for the older children to read aloud (2). As well as promoting a communal exchange of different acts of writing and reading, the Preface also encouraged the open discussion and debate of the

⁸⁴ Krawczyk’s opening chapter in *Romantic Literary Families* analyses the various ways in which the Aikin-Barbauld’s established themselves as a writing family through the marketing of their respective texts (1-28).

⁸⁵ Little is known about the circumstance of composition. However, Levy speculates that “Aikin probably edited and arranged his sister’s writing” (“The Radical Education of *Evenings at Home*” 124).

story itself: each story is given “sufficient consideration” before the next is selected (2).⁸⁶ The collection, according to Michelle Levy, repeatedly stresses the importance of “[v]ocal remonstrance ... [as] the moral and patriotic duty of citizens” and the “family itself as the institution capable of effecting profound national change” (“The Radical Education of *Evenings at Home*” 129, 128). The radical nature of the content is also reflected in the siblings’ refusal to designate the authorship of individual contributions. Instead, they took “joint responsibility for the work as a whole”, which Levy terms an “act of provocation” because it declared “a unified style and a shared set of ethical and political beliefs” (130).

From this brief comparison, it is possible to define two predominant kinds of reading promoted by children’s literature which inform my examination of *Tales* and *Mrs. Leicester’s School* in later sections. The Taylors, on the one hand, do not use a preface to set their poetic lessons within a wider context of reading and, as the poems are written “*for Infant Minds*”, it is implied that the events within their poems are also interpreted for infant minds. The Aikin-Barbauld family, on the other hand, in encouraging open discussion and exchange (of reading and writing) within a family setting, explicitly encourage child readers to question the content of the reading material in front of them and the wider world around them. Finally, unlike the Taylor and the Aikin-Barbauld families, the Lambs did not promote their collaboration as siblings publicly. *Tales from Shakespear* was published under Charles’ name and *Mrs. Leicester’s School* was published anonymously. After Mary fatally stabbed her mother and injured her father in September 1796, Mary’s name could not feature in the press

⁸⁶ Aileen Fyfe provides a useful exploration of varying reading practices between Dissenting writers. Sarah Trimmer, for example, endorses a stricter variation to the model presented above by the Aikin-Barbaulds: “While Trimmer advocated teaching by conversation, she believed that ... [it] should be controlled by the parent” (“Reading Children’s Books in Late Eighteenth-Century Dissenting Families” 469).

and Mary's literary endeavours were published either anonymously or under a pseudonym.⁸⁷ As a result, the Lambs could not partake in the openly familial environment of writing and publishing children's literature. In the same way, this also limits analysis of their collaborative relationship specifically *through* an assessment of the way in which they promoted their texts: the absence of Mary's name on the title page to the *Tales* is not necessarily an indication of one sibling's authority over another or an indication of the siblings' attitudes towards contemporary gender roles. Instead, a consideration of their creative partnership, as a collective endeavour and as individuals, must focus on their respective contributions to the texts, both in the form of their respective short stories and their respective portions of prefaces.

The remainder of this section now turns to the short stories (or retellings) within *Tales from Shakespear*, which were composed over the Spring and Summer of 1806 and were finished, by the latest, at the end of October (Marrs 2: 225, 243). The plays were divided broadly among the siblings, with Charles adapting the Tragedies and Mary writing the Comedies. The Lambs removed material that was sexual or vulgar: there is no brothel in *Pericles*; and the bed-trick is reformulated into a conversation in *Measure for Measure*. Furthermore, sub-plots, bawdy jokes, farce and slap-stick are removed along with secondary characters such as Trinculo and Stephano, and Fools such as Feste.

The most innovative element of the Lambs' adaptation is the restructuring of Shakespeare's plays into chronological tales that are told by an omniscient middle-class narrator. Furthermore, the critical divide over the presentation of female behaviour within the collection to child readers emerges primarily out of the narrator's framing and interpreting of the decisions of Shakespeare's female characters and the

⁸⁷ For example, Mary's later essay "On Needlework" (1815), is published in *The Lady's Magazine* under the guise of a letter to the editor from the Roman noblewoman "Sempronia" (Lucas 1: 210).

comedies provide excellent examples of the simultaneous “radical and conservative possibilities” within the text (James, “Wild Tales” 160).

The conservative elements of *Tales* often arise in the concluding marriage scenes, which are moderated to create a neatly resolved ending for the child reader. For example, in *The Taming of the Shrew* Katherine’s final speech is reported (as the words of “the reformed shrewish lady”) rather than directly quoted and the tale ends celebrating rather than questioning Katherine’s position as “the most obedient and dutiful wife in Padua” (Lucas 3: 135). Furthermore, the narrator often illuminates behaviour deemed inappropriate for middle class women according to nineteenth-century conventions, especially moments when female characters seek out or speak out of turn to their male counterparts. For example, in *Twelfth Night* the narrator points out that Olivia’s manipulation of a second meeting with Cesario abandons feminine politeness:

... the noble lady Olivia forgot the inequality between her fortunes and those of this seeming page, as well as the maidenly reserve which is the chief ornament of a lady’s character, that she resolved to court the love of young Cesario. (3: 166)

Similarly, in *Much Ado About Nothing*, the narrator highlights Benedick’s disapproval of Beatrice’s outspoken and unsolicited opinion: “he [Benedick] was not pleased at this free salutation: he thought it did not become a well-bred lady to be so flippant with her tongue” (3: 34). The impropriety of Beatrice’s behaviour is even more pronounced by the descriptions of her cousin as “The modest lady Hero”; the “silent” Hero, the narrator explains, is praised by Claudio for her “beauty” and “the exquisite graces of her fine figure” (3: 34).

However, while the interaction with male characters (and potential suitors) is carefully monitored and cautiously framed by the narrator, female characters are granted more opportunities in the areas of female friendship and education than in Shakespeare's original plays. Wolfson, in her analysis of *Tales*, concludes that "it is in the very plays that occupied Mary Lamb, the comedies, that female characters show greater freedom of action against the *social restrictions* of patriarchy" (23, my emphasis).⁸⁸ I want to build upon Wolfson's analysis by identifying two more examples when Mary deviates from Shakespeare's text to promote female learning and supportive female friendship.

In *Pericles*, Mary increases the extent of Mariana's education far beyond her learning in the original play. In Shakespeare's *Pericles* Gower describes Mariana's education as follows:

... by Cleon trained
 In music, letters; who hath gained
 Of education all the grace,
 Which makes her both the heart and place
 Of gen'ral wonder. (15. 7-11)

In *Tales*, by contrast, Mariana's education rivals that of male scholars: Cleon "gave her the most careful education, so that by the time Marina attained the age of fourteen years, the most deeply-learned men were not more studied in the learning of those times than was Marina" (Lucas 3: 231). Moreover, it is Marina's reputation for "learning and her great industry", rather than her virtuous chastity, which prompts

⁸⁸ Wolfson singles out Mary's versions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *All's Well that Ends Well* as instances of resistance to, and questioning of, conventional perceptions of femininity: the former "opens up a potential critique of patriarchy" and the later depicts female "resourcefulness, ambition and success" (23). While Wolfson identifies Mary's critique of "patriarchal tyranny" in her opening to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I illuminate Mary's emphasis on female debate and friendship in the conclusion (29).

Lysimachus to seek her out (3: 233). Mary strengthens the connection between diligence and learning by incorporating the notion of hard work into Lysimachus' parting words to Mariana. In Shakespeare, Lysimachus states "Persever still in that clear way thou goest" (19. 134); in *Tales*, Lysimachus' hopes Mariana will "persevere in her industrious and virtuous course" (Lucas 3: 233).

In a much more explicit example, Mary makes minor adjustments to the plot of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to lend the youthful lovers more agency than in the original and emphasises that such agency arises from female friendship. In Shakespeare, the lovers are found by the Royal hunting party which forces the group to reveal their story. The lovers, bemused by the enchantment placed upon them by Puck, cannot recount the events that have befallen them in the forest, and it is Theseus who sanctions the marriages between Hermia and Lysander and Demetrius and Helena. However, in Mary's version, the women decide that Demetrius ought to return to the palace to tell Egeus that he has given up pretensions to marry his daughter Hermia:

These night-wandering ladies, now no longer rivals, became once more true friends; all the unkind words which had past were forgiven, and they calmly consulted together what was best to be done in their present situation. (3: 22)

In this example, Mary makes explicit the connection between "true friend[ship]" and "calm" discussion which enables the two ladies to determine their own matrimonial fates. The combination of "Fellow-feeling" with rational pragmatic conversation is crucial to understanding the Dissenting values—sympathy and debate—which shape the type of reading the Lambs encourage in the Prefaces to both *Tales* and *Mrs. Leicester's School*.

2. “*Faint and Imperfect Images*”: *Redirected Mediation in the Preface to Tales from Shakspear*

[The reader’s] mind, stored with the images and words of our greatest poets, would turn with disgust from the sordid trash with which the minds of children are usually contaminated.

(Anonymous Review, May 1807. *The Critical Review* 98)

... we certainly object to the language of the preface, where girls are told, that there are parts in Shakspeare [sic] *improper* for them to read at one age, though they may be allowed to read them at another. This only serves as a stimulus to juvenile curiosity, which requires a *bridle* rather than a *spur*.

(Anonymous Review, 1807. *The Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine* 298)

This second section focuses entirely on the Preface to *Tales of Shakespear*, which was predominantly written by Mary, in order to examine the very specific form of adaptation undertaken by the Lambs, which I define as “redirected mediation”: the explicit directing of a reader back to the source text.⁸⁹ Furthermore, I call this kind of mediation “redirected”, rather than “returned”, because the Lambs’ young readers encounter the adaptation *prior* to the source text. I use the concept of “redirected mediation” to illuminate and examine the more subversive aspirations of *Tales*. The collection not only encourages female adolescents to read Shakespeare’s plays in full, but also encourages adolescents to read in a certain way which combines the

⁸⁹ According to the Lambs’ letters, Mary wrote two thirds of the Preface and Charles wrote the last third. Charles’ portion begins mid-sentence following the suggestion that older brothers may read Shakespeare directly to their sisters, after the phrase “one of those imperfect abridgements” (Marrs 2: 256).

Dissenting principles of shared and sympathetic reading with the more politically radical elements of Godwin's theories on education. Throughout this section, as illustrated by the two opening quotations, the use of language is closely intertwined with questions about *who* can read; *what* to read; and *how* to read. The Lambs' use of Shakespeare's language shapes their aims for *Tales* as a transitional text for child and female adolescent readers. Similarly, the Lambs' peculiar form of adaptation determines the way in which the siblings use Shakespeare's language within their short stories.

In *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, Genette proposes that the mediatory space of the preface is a "privileged place of a pragmatics and a strategy" which is directed "at the service of a better reception of the text and a more pertinent reading of it" (2). I want to think through, briefly, some of the ways a preface may direct the reading and reception of a text, using the example of Henrietta Bowdler's *The Family Shakespeare*, which appeared shortly after *Tales*. Published under the name of Henrietta's brother, Thomas, *The Family Shakespeare* reproduced an expurgated version of twenty of Shakespeare's plays in their original form. The Preface directly addressed parents and assured that the editor had removed all that might be "vulgar" and "indelicate" and "everything that could give just offence to the religious and virtuous mind" (*The Family Shakespeare* 1: vi-vii). This version of Shakespeare's plays could be "placed without danger in the hands of every person who is capable of understanding them" (1: vii). *The Family Shakespeare* does not signal to the child reader that it is an abridged text: unless the child reader inspected the Preface in Volume One, (which they are not encouraged to do), they would not know it was not the original text.

The Preface to the Lambs' *Tales*, by contrast, explicitly positions itself as a primer, rather than a replacement, for Shakespeare's plays and his language. Furthermore, contrary to Hateley's claim that the "both the Lambs and the Bowdlers address their textual apparatus to an adult mediator for the child", the addressees of the Preface to *Tales* are highly ambiguous (40). The opening of the Preface may be directed towards parents (but it also implicitly includes child readers): "The following Tales are meant to be submitted to the young reader as an introduction to the study of Shakespear" (Lucas 3: 1). However, it switches part way through to directly address various groups of child and adolescent readers: "young gentlemen" who may help and introduce their "sisters" to Shakespeare's plays; the "young ladies" for whom *Tales* is "chiefly" written; and a collective community of "you, my young readers" (3: 2). These two elements—the repeated drawing attention to the language of the source text combined with the direct appeals to various child readers within the Preface—are vital for understanding *Tales from Shakespear* as a form of "redirected mediation".

In addressing various child and adolescent readers, *Tales* is unique among children's adaptations, even among Godwin's own adaptations for *The Juvenile Library* which address parents. The main aim of *Tales* is to introduce young readers to the "beauty" of Shakespeare's language, even if the author has "transplant[ed]" the "wild poetic garden" of Shakespeare's verse from its "natural soil" into prose (3: 2). More recent definitions of adaptation as mediation are helpful to emphasise the self-reflexive nature of the Lambs' Preface. Julie Saunders' definition of adaptation as a "transpositional practice" echoes the very language of the Preface to *Tales* (Saunders 18). Meanwhile, Piotr Kuhiwczak explicitly defines adaptation in terms of mediation: "In a cultural and literary context, adaptation signals the change of medium through which meaning is communicated" (viii). Furthermore, as Guillory highlights, the

process of mediation “challenge[s]” the ideas of direct communication and the transparent representation of meaning “insofar as any medium can diffuse or darken what it is intended to transmit” (*This is Enlightenment* 37). In Mary’s portion, of the Preface, the authorial character repeatedly draws attention to the “difference” between the two mediums (plays and prose narratives) by discussing the limitations of adapting Shakespeare’s poetry into the form of prose.⁹⁰ The author apologises for quoting dialogue direct from Shakespeare’s Comedies as they were “scarcely ever able to turn his words into the narrative form therefore I fear I have used dialogue too frequently for young people not used to the dramatic form of writing” (Lucas 3: 1).

The defence, in the guise of an apology, explicitly introduces the reader to the notion of eventually reading the original plays in full:

... it was the only way I knew of, in which I could give them [the readers] a few hints and little foretaste of the great pleasure which awaits them in their elder years, when they come to the rich treasures from which these small and valueless coins are extracted: pretending no other merit than as faint and imperfect stamps of Shakespeare’s matchless image. (3: 1-2)⁹¹

The relationship between Shakespeare, his plays and the prose narratives is depicted in terms of part and whole. The prose narratives may be described as “small” and “valueless”, but only in relation to the richness of and the pleasure gained from reading Shakespeare’s plays. The second image strengthens this analogy: the “merit” of the tales arises from their status as impressions, however “faint” and “imperfect”,

⁹⁰ The Lambs’ Preface corresponds to Genette’s definition of the “authorial or autographic preface” (elsewhere termed “allographic”) which reflects the opinions of the “author (real or alleged)” (178). I use author in the singular (even if the Preface was co-written) to reflect the constructed nature of the author: the singular “authorial” subjectivity of the Preface reflects the publication of *Tales* under Charles’ name.

⁹¹ Similarly, the author draws attention to the difference in the richness of content as limited by summarising the plays: the young reader will discover in the original “many surprising events and turns of fortune, which for their infinite variety could not be contained in this little book” (Lucas 3: 3).

of the “image” of the source. Furthermore, the latter image recalls the rhetoric of *Genesis* 1. 27—“God created man in His own image”—and strengthens the notion that the adaptation is a continuance of, rather than a break from, the source text.

By styling their *Tales* as (lesser) parts of a whole and by repeatedly drawing attention to the mediatory nature of *Tales*, the Lambs redirect the child reader back to the source text. However, this case of “redirected mediation” is further complicated because the child reader has not yet encountered the source text. Linda Hutcheon, in *A Theory of Adaptation*, argues that adaptation is a “product” and a “process of creation”, but also a “process of reception” (8). Adaptations are “a form of intertextuality: we experience adaptations (as adaptations) as palimpsests through our memory of other works that resonate through repetition with variation” (8). The Lambs’ child and female readers do not experience “adaptations (as adaptations)” in the traditional sense of relying on a prior reading of the source text. Instead, the author, addressing the young reader directly hopes that these introductions will “make you wish yourselves a little older, that you may be allowed to read the Plays at full length” (Lucas 3: 2). There is simultaneously a backwards and forwards motion for the reader: the idea of redirecting the reader to an earlier source text, and the envisaging of a future when the young female reader can read the plays in full and uncensored.

For Hutcheon, adaptations as “deliberate, announced, and extended visitations of prior works” can “disrupt elements like priority and authority (e.g. if we experience the adapted text *after* the adaptation). But they can also destabilise both formal and cultural identity and thereby shift power relations” (xxi, 174). *Tales* does not disrupt the authority of the source-text, but instead “destabilise[s]” and disrupts conventional feminine reading practices by suggesting young women read the unaltered text of

Shakespeare: a concern highlighted by the disdain of the reviewer from *The Anti-Jacobin Review*. Mary's portion of the Preface, at this point addressed to "young gentlemen", suggests that they might "perhaps" read to their sisters "(carefully selecting what is proper for a young sister's ear) some passage which has pleased them in one of these stories, in the very words of the scene from which it is taken" (Lucas 3: 2). While feminist critics, such as Marsden and Hateley have interpreted this pessimistically, arguing that female readings of Shakespeare are bounded and controlled by masculine ones, I propose instead that this mediated act of reading has more subversive implications. Instead of parents reading to children, the Lambs present a sibling reading relationship, which recalls the Dissenting practice of older children reading to their younger siblings and friends that was depicted in the Preface to Aikin-Barbauld's *Evenings at Home*. Furthermore, the Preface to *Tales* envisages a subtle transition from the shared act of sibling reading to a singular one. Addressing the female reader directly, the author anticipates a point "when time and leave of your judicious friends shall put them [the full plays] into your hands" and the female reader is left holding Shakespeare's original text (3: 2). Finally, echoing the "calm" and measured nature of Hermia and Helena's discussion, the author reassures young female readers against any doubts about wanting to read the plays: a desire to "read the Plays at full length will be neither peevish nor irrational" (3: 2).

The preoccupation with Shakespeare's language within the Preface to *Tales* not only allows the Lambs to disrupt conventions about *who* can read, but also disrupts wider practices about *how* to read. The Lambs single out the richness of Shakespeare's language in order to encourage a very specific form of reading, one which is guided by the reader's natural curiosity and inquiry, rather than merely recalling information or lessons from moral tales. Although the Lambs followed contemporary practices in

adaptation (for the stage and for readers) by prioritising Shakespeare's language, the Lambs associated a specific kind of imaginative act with the reading of Shakespeare's language.⁹²

Mary's portion of the Preface presents the narratives within *Tales* as "Faint and imperfect images" of the source text and explains:

... the beauty of his [Shakespeare's] language is too frequently destroyed by the necessity of changing many of his excellent words into words far less expressive of their true sense, to make it read something like prose. (3: 2)

In urging their younger readers to read the source plays, the Lambs specifically connect the act of reading to appreciating the "beauty" of Shakespeare's language. The value that they place on this connection is explained in Charles' essay, "On The Tragedies of Shakespeare, Considered with Reference to their Fitness for Stage Representation" (1811), in which Charles advocates *reading* the plays over *watching* performances of them at the theatre. Shakespeare's Tragic characters, for Charles, are first and foremost "objects of meditation" and allow readers to explore "the ambition, the aspiring spirit, the intellectual activity, which prompts them to overleap those moral fences" (Lucas 1: 123). It is the specific act of reading which enables such reflection:

[Reading] presents to the fancy just so much of external appearances as to make us feel that we are among flesh and blood, while by far the greater and better part of our imagination is employed upon the thoughts and internal machinery of the character. (1: 129)

⁹² Marsden's *The Re-Imagined Text: Shakespeare, Adaptation & Eighteenth-Century Literary Theory* provides a detailed account of the different ways in which Shakespeare was adapted across the Seventeenth, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries. While playwrights and theatre managers took great liberties altering Shakespeare's plots and his verse in the early half of the Eighteenth Century, she argues "by the time of the Romantics, the concept of an inviolable text was taken for granted" (*The Re-Imagined Text* 150-152).

Charles privileges the *reading* of Shakespeare's verse, as opposed to watching and listening to it in performance, because in reading, the imagination must engage with language in order to create the visual cues that are only hinted at by scenery and costume in performance. The reader, according to Charles, is far more active in his response and engagement to Shakespeare's language than the spectator. Furthermore, in engaging the imagination through reading, the mind can amplify and respond to the "sublime images" within Shakespeare's poetry (in some ways corresponding to the "vapourish" element of the Lambs' creative model) which cannot be experienced through watching the feeble representation of those images in performance (1: 123).

In repeatedly drawing attention to the "native beauty" of Shakespeare's "wild poetic garden", the authorial character of the Preface encourages his young readers to actively engage the imagination in reading: both *Tales* and "the Plays of Shakespear" are depicted as "enrichers of the fancy" (3: 3). This specific form of imaginative engagement with language, however, is also imbued with elements from (more radical) forms of learning which promote intellectual curiosity and inquiry. In the last statement of the Preface, the author moves from connecting Shakespeare's language to the imagination to making a wider connection between Shakespeare's plays, the imagination and the development of a moral compass. The author hopes that these "Tales" in youth and the "Plays" themselves in maturity will prove:

... enrichers of the fancy, strengtheners of virtue, a withdrawing from all selfish and mercenary thoughts, a lesson of all sweet and honourable thoughts and actions, to teach you courtesy, benignity, generosity, humanity. (3: 3)

Although these lessons appear conventional, particularly the "withdrawing from all selfish and mercenary thoughts, and a lesson of all sweet and honourable thoughts", the aspects of generosity and benignity connect to the more radical notions of

universal benevolence and signal the *Tales*' publication context as part of *The Juvenile Library*.

Established in 1805 by William and Mary Jane Godwin, *The Juvenile Library* published textbooks ("Histories", "Lives", Grammars" and "Dictionaries") alongside poetry and collections of short-stories. One of the most notable features of the *Library* is the amount and variety of adaptations produced: fairy tales or fables such as Charles's own *Beauty and the Beast*; classical texts such as *Bible Stories*; or rewrites of popular contemporary novels, such as *The Family Robin Crusoe*. The Lambs' *Tales*, then, should be considered as part of a much larger project of educational mediation of texts—historical and modern—for children. Moreover, it is possible to identify shared formal strategies between Godwin's adaptations and the Lambs' *Tales*.

The full titles to the works Godwin published under various pseudonyms (Edwin Baldwin, William Scofield and Theophilus Marcliffe) demonstrate that his adaptations were defined as primers or introductions to classical source texts: *Bible Stories. Memorable Acts of the Ancient Patriarchs, Judges and Kings: Extracted from their Original Historian. For The Use of Children* (1802); *Fables, Ancient and Modern. Adapted for the Use of Children from Three to Eight Years of Age* (1805); *The Pantheon: or Ancient History of the Gods of Greece and Rome. Intended to Facilitate the Understanding of the Classical Authors of the Poets in General* (1806). In his adaptations, like the Lambs, Godwin insistently used the language of the source text as far as possible. Addressing parents in the Preface to *Bible Stories*, Godwin explains his decision to use the original language of the Bible: "There is no language in which stories can be told so simple, so dignified, so natural, and so impressive, as the language in which these stories are told" (*Educational Writings* 315). For my purposes, the key word here is "impressive" (recalling the stronger of Hume's

distinction between impressions and ideas). For Godwin, the original language inspires the imagination to produce strong images, which engenders strong emotions within the child reader. In “Of History and Romance”, Godwin makes a further connection between the workings of the imagination and its wider effects upon inquiry:

... if the energy of our minds should lead us to aspire to something more animated and noble than dull repetition, if we love the happiness of mankind enough to feel ourselves impelled to explore new and untrodden paths, we must not then rest contented with considering society in a mass, but must analyse the materials of which it is composed. (*Educational Writings* 293)

Literature and language that inspires the “mind” is intrinsically linked to sympathy, “the happiness of mankind”. Moreover, the force of sympathy, “impel[s]” intellectual curiosity and independent thinking. Such new-found “paths” lead towards an analysis of the layers and “materials” of society and its relation to the “mass”.

Both Pamela Clemit and Susan Manly subsequently view Godwin’s *Juvenile Library* as “a continuation of his radical programme of the 1790s” (Clemit 92).⁹³ Furthermore, Clemit specifically recognises that it is the development of a particular style of writing which is enabled by the mode of adaptation that generates Godwin’s political ambitions for education:

More significant than the subjects of Godwin’s books, however, was his fashioning of a mode of education writing that would encourage children to think for themselves, and thus prepare them for a future as autonomous moral agents. (98)

⁹³ In her recent article “William Godwin’s ‘School of Morality’” (2012), Susan Manly argues that “Godwin continued to mount a challenge to authority and orthodoxy and to pursue reform through his Juvenile Library work” (143).

The various techniques the Lambs use in their Preface to *Tales* lean towards Godwin's overall principle that *adaptations* encourage children "to think, to discriminate, to remember, and to enquire" ("The Enquirer", *Educational Writings* 85). In the Lambs' next collaboration, *Mrs. Leicester's School*, the differences opened up by the process of mediation are far more ambiguous and the collection corresponds to the more dangerous aspects of the *Vapours* model through its depictions of distorted acts of narrating, reading and interpretation.

3. "Endeavouring to make out their meaning": Mis-interpretation in *Mrs. Leicester's School*

This final section shifts focus from the Lambs' adaptations of classical texts to their creation of original short stories for *Mrs. Leicester's School*, which was published for *The Juvenile Library* in 1809. The collection is subtitled *The History of Several Young Ladies, Related by Themselves*, and on first reading, appears to follow the burgeoning trend for moral tales. In most of the narratives, the girls attempt to frame and reflect upon past mistakes, which revolve around distorted acts of reading and misinterpretations of the people and world around them. However, the contexts and consequences of such (mis)readings are highly unsettling and involve accounts of changelings, child kidnapping and extreme imaginative responses to obscure texts that lead to mistaken identities and religious fever. The girls' narratives are highly ambiguous and sustain multiple critical interpretations.

Despite growing critical interest in *Mrs. Leicester's School*, very little attention has been paid to the fact that the collection is presented as a prose adaptation of tales narrated by a group of young girls. My interest builds upon Susan Manly's recent

reassessment of the acts of storytelling within *Mrs. Leicester's School* as an extension of the educational aims of *The Juvenile Library* which are centred on the experiences of the individual child ("Mrs. Leicester's School" 121). In a similar overarching structure to *Evenings from Home*, the new pupils of *Mrs. Leicester's School* gather together on their first evening to "relate some little anecdote" about themselves in order to establish "their own customs" and create a new community of friends (Lucas 3: 318, 317). For Manly, the shared and reciprocal acts of storytelling and the emphasis on the "sympathetic and imaginative hearing to the thoughts and feelings of children" make the collection "consonant with a Godwinian 'new morality'" ("Mrs. Leicester's School" 121). I develop Manly's assessment by exploring the implications of the Lambs' use of mediation within the Preface and its wider effects upon reading the collection; how does mediation affect the presentation of the educational process of inquiry through imaginative engagement?

Cheryl Nixon's assessment of prefaces to educational texts by eighteenth-century female authors is particularly useful here. Furthermore, her analysis of Sarah Fielding's *The Governess, or Little Female Academy* (1749) is helpful as a conservative example of the kind of moral tales which provide the basis for the structure of *Mrs. Leicester's School*. In *The Governess*, a quarrel among the girls prompts the sharing of moral lessons learnt from past mistakes and poor behaviour. The resulting narratives are overseen and controlled by the figure of Mrs. Teachum: a narrative precursor (although a far stricter one) to the gently guiding narrator of the Lambs' *Tales*. Discussing the form of the preface, Nixon states this "marginal space encourages self-definition that blurs the distinction between author and character, fact and fiction, text and pre-text" (123). Nixon demonstrates that "The Author" of the Dedication and Preface to Fielding's text "becomes a governess, mimicking the

character types in her novel” (133). For example, within the Dedication, (addressed to an adult reader), this female authorial character explains that the “Design” of these tales was to demonstrate to the schoolgirls (and young female readers) the importance of “conquer[ing]” feelings of “Pride, Stubbornness, Malice, Envy” and cultivating “an early inclination to Benevolence, and a Love of Virtue” (*The Governess* vi, iii). Then, turning to “young readers” in the Preface, the authorial character offers a particularly didactic definition of reading: “the true Use of Books is to make you wiser and better”. She further intertwines the practice of reading with “instruction” by advising children to “attend [to reading] with a Desire for learning” (vii). This definition is echoed within the main narrative by Mrs. Teachum who understands her duty as “improv[ing]” the “Minds” of her female charges with “all useful knowledge” (1). For Nixon, the character of the Preface permeates throughout all the narrative levels of the text:

The formal strategies used to construct the character of the woman author within the preface are used to construct the female characters within the text, and it is implied, should be used by the reader to construct herself outside the text. (123)

In a similar way to the transference of sympathy between the Lambs within their *Vapourish* model, the values and strategies of the characters within the text are absorbed and performed by the reader outside the text. Nixon’s emphasis on the influence of the Preface upon the reception of the text is crucial to understanding the Lambs’ use of mediation within *Mrs. Leicester’s School*.

The sender of the Dedication to *Mrs. Leicester’s School* is a new teacher to Amwell, known only as “M. B”, and styles herself as a “true friend” to the new pupils (Lucas 3: 319). In contrast to *The Governess*, there is no paratextual material which addresses adult readers and the Preface instead takes the form of a letter to the “dear

young friends” whose stories M. B relates (3: 316). The Preface explicitly indicates that the narratives are an adaptation of conversations and echoes the apologetic tone of the Preface to *Tales*:

If in my report of her story, or in any which follow, I shall appear to make her or you speak an older language than it seems probable that you should use, speaking in your own words, it must be remembered, that what is very proper and becoming when spoken, requires to be arranged with some little difference before it can be set down in writing. ... My own way of thinking, I am sensible, will too often intrude itself. (3: 319)

M. B’s actions as a friendly “amanuensis” and “faithful historiographer” in amending the oral histories into prose narrative literally bring the text into being and enable the girls’ voices to be heard (3: 316, 319). However, M. B’s act of mediation draws attention to the “little difference” in meaning between the girls’ spoken versions and her written one. On the one hand, this may disrupt the authority of the claim in the subtitle that the histories are “related by [the girls] themselves” (3: 319, 316). On the other hand, it also alerts young readers to varying styles of narratives at different levels of representation and that such styles are determined by cultural codes: in this case, the taste which M. B considers “proper and becoming” in the mediation of spoken meaning into written meaning. Moreover, it introduces young readers to the concept that meaning is made through acts of interpretation and differentiation (3: 319).

I want to examine the ways in which the idea of recognising and questioning “little difference[s]” in meaning permeates the collection. While certain critics, such as Janet Bottoms, have emphasised the failure of girls within *Mrs. Leicester School* to shape their own narratives, I want to identify and examine two examples which engage with

the notion of “some little difference” in order to test the cultural codes they are expected to practise.⁹⁴ The narratives of Margaret Green and Susan Yates, written respectively by Mary and Charles, depict the girls’ transitions from “uninstructed solitude” into enlightened cultural codes, such as orthodox religion and middle-class expectations of appropriate interests and reading material for female adolescents (3: 384). However, both narratives depict ambivalent responses which also query the value of such transitions. In doing so, the narratives perform the questioning of the “little difference” which M. B alerts the girls (and the reader) to within the Preface.

Written by Charles, Susan Yate’s narrative “First Going to Church” recalls Susan’s entrance into society through orthodox religion. Susan depicts her entrance into religion as a movement from isolation and vivid imaginative flights into knowledge, self-awareness and self-reflection. Isolated on the moors, Susan and her family are unable to visit the village and church. Susan’s imagination is vivid. She believes that the sound of church bells was made by “birds up in the air, or that it was made by angels whom ... I had always considered to be a sort of bird” (3: 380). When she first steps foot in church she perceives the grotesque faces as “grinning and distorting their features with pain or with laughter” and believes them to be the literal “representation of wicked people” (3: 382). However, as Susan learns more about Christianity through listening to her parents reading the Bible and then later attending services at church, her imagination and fanciful associations are replaced with more conventional interpretations of the world around her. The sounds that had inspired her imagination, such as envisaging bells for singing bird-like angels, instead stir a desire to join society by going to church:

⁹⁴ Bottoms argues that through the creation of their personal histories the girls discover “that the narrative models at their disposal are inadequate for their purpose” and interprets the struggles and in some cases failure of the girls to shape their own narratives as a recognition of the limits of contemporary “literary and social discourses” (41, 43).

I have stood out in the air to catch the sounds which I almost devoured; and the tears have come in my eyes, when sometimes they [the bells] to speak to me almost in articulate sounds, to *come to church*" (3: 380).

Similarly, she now shares her father's interpretation of grotesque faces as "very improper ornaments" (3: 382).

Aaron has interpreted Charles' tale as "detailing the losses entailed by [Susan's] eventual acquisition of conventional knowledge" (163). However, it is not quite as straightforward a transition into maturity as Aaron assumes. Crucially, Susan's introduction into society also corresponds to Godwinian notions of thinking, interpreting and distinguishing for oneself. Susan recognises "I am old enough now to *distinguish* between what is what is *essential* in religion, and what is merely *formal* or *ornamental*" (Lucas 3: 383, my emphasis). However, that recognition does not necessarily preclude imaginative engagement with the world as Susan still values and cherishes her earlier experiences. Rather than rounding up her tale with a moral lesson, the concluding sentence instead validates her earlier imaginings: "I never can hear the sweet noise of bells, that I don't think of the angels singing, and what poor but pretty thoughts I had of angels in my uninstructed solitude" (3: 383-384).

Margaret Green's history, written by Mary, also turns on the distinction between fact and fiction and the "essential" or "formal" elements of narrative. Margaret shares with Susan a rich imagination. Naturally curious, Margaret's engagement with surrounding objects heavily involves her imagination in interpreting them. Wandering around a large house, she envisions playing with the children she sees in the paintings and visits a marble statue of a satyr every day to "feel how cold he was" (3: 355). Left alone, she is free to stare at Hogarth's prints "endeavouring to make out their meaning" (3: 355). The minor reference to Hogarth is significant. Although the titles

of the prints are not identified, and although Hogarth's critiques of society perform a moralising function, the subject matter of series such as *The Harlot's Progress* and *The Rake's Progress* would not be deemed appropriate for children according to nineteenth-century codes. Furthermore, the heart of the "Young Mahometan" revolves around Margaret's struggle to interpret another unsuitable artefact in the form of a "very improper" book, "Mahometism Explained", which she finds in the library and reads in secret (3: 357).

Although several pages are missing, Margaret is captivated by the stories within the book which she describes as "full of nothing but wonders from beginning to end" (3: 357-358). Eventually, Margaret convinces herself that she must be a Mahometan: the "book said, that those who believed all the wonderful stories that were related of Mahomet were called Mahometans... [and] I believed every word I read" (3: 358). However, one particular story greatly disturbs Margaret causing her to become ill. Having "read [herself] into a fever", a physician and his wife take Margaret away and she spends a month in the company of other adults and children (3: 359). Margaret eventually returns home "perfectly cured" and "ashamed of having believed so many absurdities" (3: 360).

"The Young Mahometan" presents Margaret's "error" as one of misinterpretation (3: 360). In believing "every word" she reads, Margaret fails to question the contents of the material that she is reading and fails to discriminate between fact and fiction (3: 358). However, like Susan's appreciation of the "pretty thoughts" of her youth, there is also a deep reluctance to give up the rich and lasting effects of a highly imaginative engagement with texts and objects. Even when Margaret has recognised her folly, she still refers to "Mahometan Explained" as her "favourite book" (3: 360). The emphasis on the "fabulous stories" which Margaret so enjoyed also provides a stark contrast to

the conventional aspects of the presentation of her reintegration into society which requires careful examination (3: 360).

Although Margaret's entrance into society—her visit to the fair, her budding friendships with other girls and a caring relationship with the maternal figure of the doctor's wife—is presented as joyful, sociable and healthy, on closer reading, it also endorses conventional attitudes towards forms of learning and activities deemed appropriate for girls. At the fair, the doctor's wife buys Margaret equipment specifically for needlework. The reference to embroidery is significant here because it is an activity Mary would go on to condemn in her essay "On Needlework" (1815), as robbing women of precious time for "positive leisure" and hindering the intellectual improvement of women from upper, middle and lower classes: "Needlework and intellectual improvement are naturally in a state of warfare" (Lucas 1: 176).⁹⁵ In the evening, Margaret and the physician's wife play the kind of "geographical game" that was devised as an entertaining means of improving children's geographical knowledge.⁹⁶ Although the geographical game may aid intellectual improvement, it also serves as an example of the didacticism Charles lambasts in his critique of Barbauld: presenting knowledge in "the *shape of knowledge*" rather than rousing or engaging a child's natural "Interest" (Marrs 2: 81). Significantly, neither of these two activities overtly engage Margaret's imagination in the same way as reading or her exploration of the old house. Overall, both narratives written by Charles and Mary

⁹⁵ See Aaron's recent article "Positive Leisure: Time and Play in Mary Lamb's Writings" for a reassessment of Mary's essay, which was printed in the *British Lady's Magazine and Monthly Miscellany*: "Needlework is the opium of the female masses, according to Mary Lamb.... Women of all classes have been taught to fill their time with the domestic cult of the needle, and consequently denied the opportunity to cultivate their minds" (80-81).

⁹⁶ Educational historians Paul Elliott and Stephen Daniels highlight the "commercial ... and cultural importance" of geography as a subject for eighteenth-century schooling in light of the rapid expansion of international trade during the period ("No study so agreeable to the youthful mind": geographical education in the Georgian grammar school", 20).

emphasise the combination of imaginative engagement with inquiry in the creation and interpretation of meaning and advocate the exploration of cultural codes.

However, Mary's narrative also opens a space for the critique of the overstimulating power of the imagination. In her account of Margaret's "improper" reading, Mary depicts the type of sublime imaginative engagement that Charles would associate with reading Shakespeare's language in his 1811 essay. The story which agitates Margaret concerns a ritual after death and draws upon sublime images of vastness:

... after we are dead, we are to pass over a narrow bridge, which crosses a bottomless gulf.... and [the book] said all who were not Mahometans would ... drop into the tremendous gulf that had no bottom. (3: 358)

The thought of crossing the bridge makes Margaret "perfectly giddy" and recalls the dizzying effects of the *Vapours* and Charles' own depiction of giddiness in his letter to Hazlitt. However, it is the thought that her mother and the "old lady" of the house may not "be able" to cross the bridge which brings on a "sudden terror" and Margaret's "fever" and "anxiety" (3: 358). While Charles celebrated the prospect that rich language excites such strong feelings in his essay, here Mary depicts the dangerous side-effects of such imaginative engagement. Moreover, Mary specifically connects this vivid and harmful act of misinterpretation to Margaret's isolation. Throughout the narrative, Margaret recalls that no-one, including her mother, spoke to her and that her reading of "Mahometan Explained" was conducted in secret (3: 357-358). It is a stark contrast to the models of exchange and environments of shared reading and discussion which inform the overall structures of both *Evenings at Home* and *Mrs. Leicester's School*. Margaret Green's narrative then, can also be interpreted as a cautionary tale against isolated and introspective acts of reading.

In some ways, “The Young Mahometan”, depicting both the perils and pleasures of *unsupported* reading, echoes Mary’s own attempt to circumnavigate the overwhelming effect of the *Vapours* through her creation of Sarah-as-*thing*. Such an observation neatly returns us to the opening questions of this chapter: whether a creative model which involves acts of mediation can open up further exploration and analysis of the Lambs’ adaptations for children? The oscillating movement between the “vapouring and vapourish” within the Lambs’ creative model is mirrored in the preoccupations with, and explorations of, the extent of the role of the imagination (whether it liberates or potentially harms inquiry) in acts of reading within the stories of *Tales* and *Mrs. Leicester’s School*. Similarly, the fertile space opened up by Sara-as-*thing*, which encourages reflection upon and the questioning of the slippages in the communication of meaning, is particularly helpful for highlighting the creative and subversive potential of adaptation as mediation. In repeatedly drawing attention to the self-reflexive and self-conscious mode of adaptation within their Prefaces, the Lambs’ explicitly introduce their young readers (child, adolescent and female) to questions about *how* to read and also offer them alternative models of reading. In turn, this lends more agency to their readers (young, female, adult) in their ongoing “endeavour[s] to make out [the] meaning” of the world and texts around them.

Chapter 5. Putting “the Esteesian House in order”: Inherited Sympathy and Sara’s Re-arrangement of STC’s Public Reputation 1817-1850

I think myself partially Editor of every work of my Father and this is as it should be.

(Sara Coleridge to Derwent Coleridge, 7th April 1852?)⁹⁷

I have been so long the housekeeper of the S.T.C literary house.

(Sara Coleridge qtd. in Griggs, *Coleridge Fille* 248)

Sympathy becomes the standard for material connection—emotional, physiological, or historical connection—but it also measures influence.

(Mary Favret, “Mary Shelley’s Sympathy”, *The Other Mary Shelley* 21)

This final case study opens up the parameters of the thesis substantially by examining intergenerational familial collaboration during posthumous editing. It concentrates on the first generation of Coleridge family editors, comprising STC himself, his children, Sara and Derwent, and his nephew and son-in-law Henry Nelson Coleridge.⁹⁸ It covers the initial period after STC’s death in 1834 until Sara’s death in 1852, beginning with Henry’s edition of *The Poetical Works of S. T. Coleridge* (1834) and culminating in Sara and Derwent’s collaboration on *The Poems of Samuel Taylor*

⁹⁷ The quotation in the title is taken from Sara’s letter to Derwent dated 28th September 1851. Both letters are unpublished and held in the archive at the Harry Ransom Centre, Texas. The two letters are quoted respectively in Katie Waldegrave’s *The Poets’ Daughters* (335) and Bradford Keyes Mudge’s *Sara Coleridge* (173).

⁹⁸ Although STC’s eldest son, Hartley, was initially involved in the editorship, he repeatedly failed to produce planned contributions such as an assessment of STC’s poetry and a rebuttal to Ferrier’s charges of plagiarism which would be added to *Biographia Literaria*. As Hartley does not write any paratextual material and does not edit any of STC’s works, he is not included in this final case study.

Coleridge (1852). It also broadens the thematic scope of the thesis. In the previous case studies, sympathy—whether through the material connections of rural objects with names, or via the disruptive energy of the *Vapours*—has been directed towards the transmission of “Fellow-feeling” between family writers. Sympathy, in this case study, however, is defined and cultivated in a very different way with the aim to exert (in Favret’s words) “influence” across various groups and audiences. On a broader level, the Coleridges, as a group of *family* editors, endeavour to shape STC’s posthumous reputation through their collection and publication of his oeuvre. On a smaller scale, Sara develops a particular kind of inherited sympathy in order to distinguish herself (privately and publicly) from the (male) members of the family editors.

Thematically, this final case study also brings to the fore two minor themes running throughout the thesis: those of agency and possession. The capacity of sympathy to influence others connects directly to Samuel Johnson’s definition of the process of mediation (cited in my Introduction) as the “*agency* between two parties” (my emphasis). Moreover, underlying the previous two case studies have been varying degrees of agency and possession: private Wordsworthian naming may reflect Dorothy’s wider freedom to *practise* place, but topographical inscription re-appropriates *local* meanings attributed to rural objects; for the Lambs, literary composition can be greatly augmented or suddenly halted by the *Vapours* which takes possession of their bodies, nerves and brains. This case study demonstrates that Sara’s agency increases as she takes increasing possession of, and influence over, the collection, preparation and publication of STC’s material corpus and the shaping of his authorial reputation.

In arguing that Sara's editorial endeavours enable her to develop an *authorial* (public) identity as an intellectual woman of letters, I follow numerous and recent calls for a reassessment of her critical reputation by Bradford Keyes Mudge (1989); Donelle Ruwe (2004); Alison Hickey (2007); and Alan Vardy (2010).⁹⁹ In light of Sara's own description of editing as a "filial *phenomenon*" and as "unseen unnoticed" work, early critics equated "filial" with a sense of obligation to parental and patriarchal duty (*SCT* 76, 40). For example, immediately after Sara's death and in response to the publication of *Poems 1852* in July 1852, Henry Reed presented her editing as "fit filial and conjugal work" which respected the memories of her father and her husband (and also the earliest named editor of *STC*) Henry Nelson Coleridge (Reed qtd. in Mudge 179). Similarly, in the earliest biography of Sara, Earl Leslie Griggs, also viewed her editing as simply an act of "filial devotion", characterised by "deep filial piety" (*Coleridge Fille* 166, 114). Much more recently in 2008, Michelle Levy (*Family Authorship*) proposed that Sara's filial editing and habit of appending of her own "fragmentary writing ... and digressions" to editions of *STC*'s texts "waste[d]" her own literary-critical talents and "prevented" her from having an "independent career of her own" (163-164). In this current chapter, I argue that Sara uses nervous disease to construct a sympathy *sui-generis*—in terms of the *OED*'s definition as "of one's own kind"—that enables her to assert her editorial authority as the legitimate heir to *STC*'s genius. In light of this, I understand "filial" to indicate not so much paternal duty, but the direct continuation of *STC*'s own *Esteesian* spirit. I regard Sara's editing not only as a kind of "deferred" collaboration with *STC*, but also

⁹⁹ For example, Mudge named Sara *STC*'s "unacknowledged collaborator ... a daughter who used her father's fragmentary remains as a *raison d'écrire*, as an opportunity for the expression of her considerable intellectual talent" (14). Ruwe argued that Sara actively constructed an image of "a father who provided a space for his daughter's authorial activities" ("Opium Addictions and Meta-Physicians" 230).

as the medium through which she can assert her own *writerly* and *authorial* identities.¹⁰⁰

My work further develops recent critical reassessments of Sara's contribution to shaping STC's posthumous authorial reputation by placing her in a broader context of a network of family editors (the subject of Chapter Six). Significantly, the majority of critics examine Sara's work only in relation to STC (and often through the biographical lens of their tricky relationship in real life) despite the fact that Sara was one of several members of the Coleridge family to edit the poet. Furthermore, those few critics (Hickey and Vardy) who do acknowledge Sara as operating within a familial editorial project, first, do not include Derwent and second, do not examine the ways in which Sara distinguishes herself from her husband, Henry. This critical trend is reflected in the lack of attention paid to *The Poems of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (1852) (henceforth *Poems 1852*); the only text which Sara would collaborate on with her brother, Derwent.¹⁰¹

Chapter Six focuses on STC's *Collected Poems*, in the forms of the three editions of *The Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (1828, 1829 and 1834) and the new edition of *Poems 1852*, because they are the only texts within STC's entire oeuvre that each family editor prepares. STC prepares the 1828 and 1829 editions; Henry prepares the 1834; finally, Sara and Derwent collaborate on a new edition, *Poems 1852*.¹⁰² As a group, the *Collected Poems* represent a textual site for multiple mediations and remediations of various family creative identities (*writerly* and

¹⁰⁰ The editors of *Literary Couplings*, Marjorie Stone and Judith Thompson, specifically define "posthumous editing as deferred collaboration" (28).

¹⁰¹ Although Vardy and Hickey examine Sara's editorial activities in relation to those of her husband, Henry Nelson, neither critic examines Sara's collaborations with Derwent and does not look at *Poems 1852*. In *Family Authorship* (2008), Levy mentions *Poems 1852* briefly, but does not take into account Derwent's contribution to the edition (163).

¹⁰² Throughout this final case study, I use the term *Collected Poems* to refer to the group of four editions edited by the Coleridge family between 1828 and 1852.

authorial). In *Editing Emily Dickinson*, Lena Christenson usefully defines the author as “an intertextual constellation of editorial and critical narratives” (2-3). In Chapter Six, I examine each editor’s editorial practices—prefaces, selection and arrangement of poems—in order to demonstrate the way in which each editor envisaged and created subtly different reputations of STC as the Victorian Sage and made their own reputations as legitimate editors as they refashioned STC. Overall, this final case study argues that it is only by examining Sara’s actions *in relation to others* that we can assess the influence of her own narrative about, and self-positioning as, the “housekeeper of the STC house” and assess her influence within the family editorship.

In doing so, I offer the first substantial critical assessment of *Poems 1852* and of Sara’s collaboration with Derwent. The lack of critical attention to this sibling collaboration, as well as to the *Poetical Works* during the (first-generation) family editorship (1828-1852), emerges directly out of the Coleridge family’s own editorial practices. In their respective monographs, both Mudge and Vardy demonstrate that the Coleridge family sought to “reinvent” STC as the “Victorian Sage, not as poet but as theologian and political philosopher” (Mudge x; see also Vardy 5, 8). For Vardy, the effects of this editorial decision are still felt in modern critical initiatives such as the priorities of *The Collected Coleridge*: “The appearance of J.C.C. Mays’ edition of the poems near the end of the process means that Coleridge the philosopher and theologian has been in the ascendancy for forty years” (2). Furthermore, the family’s decision to fashion STC as a respectable Victorian Sage first, responds to a popular editorial practice during the early-to-mid Nineteenth Century—a trend which is a key theme throughout the case study—and second, reflects the family’s attempts to rehabilitate STC’s posthumous reputation in light of damaging rumours about his

critical practice (accusations of plagiarism) and his personal life (accusations of family neglect).

From the early Nineteenth Century onwards, readers were encouraged to conflate the poet (as author) with the person (man) rather than separating a literary (and constructed) persona from the personal attributes of the author and biographical circumstance. For example, in her “Introduction” to *Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations and Fragments by Percy Bysshe Shelley by Shelley* (1840), Mary Shelley declares “the verse of the poet.... is not enough—we desire to know the man” (1: v). She continues, “we pore over each letter that we expect will testify that the melancholy and unbridled passion that darkens Byron’s verse, flowed from a soul devoured by a keen susceptibility to intensest [sic] love” (1: vi). Critics also blurred “the poet” with “the man” and encouraged semi-biographical readings: the poetry revealed character of the poet. STC abhorred this practice, (with good reason) and publicly deemed the contemporary interest in biography as the “mania of busying ourselves with the names of others” (*The Friend* 339). However, he was not immune to partaking in it and to critics judging his work by this standard (as will be shown in my discussion of the overwhelmingly negative reception to *Sibylline Leaves*). Significantly, this trend posed problems for the family members who engaged in posthumous editing because, as Levy observes, there was an imperative to establish a biographical narrative about an author which would “expunge” any personal “blot[s]” that had already tarnished their public reputation (*Family Authorship* 144). This was particularly challenging for the Coleridges because details of STC’s troubled domestic life had already emerged in the public sphere: his opium abuse; his strained relationship with the Wordsworths; long absences from his family and a turbulent relationship with his eldest son, Hartley. As a result, the Coleridges resolutely

attempted to promulgate the image of STC as the Victorian Sage *par excellence*, which, in turn, was based upon STC's own construction of the Sage of Highgate as a deeply spiritual and highly intellectual mentor who was also sublime and mysterious in character.¹⁰³ The family subsequently prioritised STC's prosework over his poetry; STC's verse was deemed by Sara too "*sensuous and impassioned*" to give to her own daughter, let alone to publish for Victorian audiences (Sara qtd. in Mudge 173).

The remainder of this chapter is divided into two halves and examines STC and Sara's uses of order and disorder in their respective constructions of the figure of the poet and as a means to elide and engage with the contemporary fashion for literary biography. The first half concentrates on STC's own construction of the poet-as-Sibyl in the collection *Sibylline Leaves* (1817). It also examines STC's poetic model—emerging from *Sibylline Leaves*—in which destabilisation, disorder and fragmentation are a necessary first step in order to make the reader active in the construction of meaning (a position which was overlooked by contemporary critics). The second half, charts Sara's development of a sympathy *sui-generis* by drawing on the "derangement" or disordering of the nerves which allows her to assert an *authorial* identity as the genetic descendent of STC's *Esteesian* intellect. Whereas STC destabilises his poems and textual corpus, Sara uses her position as the "inheritrix" of STC's nervous genius to re-organise and stabilise STC's disordered corpus.

1. Self-Mediation in Sibylline Leaves (1817): STC's construction of the Poet-as-Sibyl

STC cultivated the persona of the "Sage of Highgate" while living under the care of his physician James Gillman from 1816 until his death in 1834. Chris Murray (2013)

¹⁰³ For a detailed analysis of STC's cultivation of the Sage of Highgate as a means to dispel STC's earlier reputation as a radical Jacobin, see Vardy pp. 10-25.

observes that there is “a prevailing image from this period of Coleridge the invalid, dispensing wisdom from his sick-bed, attended upon by admiring disciples” (118). Murray argues that the “recognisable” Sage of Highgate emerges in the publications of *The Statesman’s Manual* (1816), *Biographia Literaria* (1817), *Sibylline Leaves* (1817), *Aids to Reflection* (1825) and *Table Talk* (1835) (Murray 9, 133-34). It is worth noting that *Table Talk* was posthumously edited and published by STC’s “Ultra-tory” nephew, Henry Nelson and Vardy highlights that the text presents the family’s more conservative version of STC, rather than reflecting STC’s own opinions. In light of this, Vardy goes as far as to question its inclusion within *The Collected Coleridge* (6). Commenting on *Table Talk*, Seamus Perry states “Coleridge emerges from these pages as hugely wide-ranging: gifted with an immense memory and the command of extraordinary fields of knowledge: *religiously respectable, broadly Tory*” (104, my emphasis). In this section, I argue that in *Sibylline Leaves*, STC presents an image of the poet as a visionary, which is related to the classical idea of the Sage but eschews the more conservative elements of the family’s definition, and is based on the unsettling, liminal and mediatory figure of the Sibyl of Cumae. While my argument is more generally informed by Chris Murray and Gary Dyer’s respective interpretations of the Coleridgean Sage as a political, moral and philosophical commenter who encourages others “to become active figure[s] within society rather than pointless critics of it”, I explicitly draw attention to, and am primarily interested in, the role of mediation within STC’s model of the poet-prophet (Murray 133; see Dyer 153-154).¹⁰⁴ Through the construction of the poet-as-Sibyl, STC establishes a

¹⁰⁴ While Murray recognises that STC himself helped to cultivate a more respectable persona of the Sage of Highgate, he uncovers another image of the Sage as a tragic embattled Tiresian Seer within STC’s proseworks. As both Murray and Dyer point out STC’s Sage is not necessarily radical but one who encourages political and moral awareness and is a continuation of the prophetic tradition (see Dyer 152).

very specific relationship between poet and reader, and one which is much more active than Sara supposes in her reconstruction and reinterpretation of STC.

The Preface to *Sibylline Leaves* is remarkably short (three pages) for an introductory statement to a collected edition of poems:

The following collection has been entitled SIBYLLINE LEAVES; in allusion to the fragmentary and widely scattered state in which they have long suffered to remain. It contains the whole of the author's poetical compositions, from 1793 to the present date, with the exception of a few works not yet finished. (SL i)

The title alludes to the Sibyl of Cumae in Virgil's *The Aeneid* and her method of transcribing her prophetic visions to oak leaves which she "puts in order, sealed in her cave" (*Aeneid* III. 25).¹⁰⁵ If disturbed within her cave, the leaves "scatter" and the meaning of the prophecy is assumed to be lost: "So many visitors depart, deprived of her advice, / and hate the Sibyl's haunts" (*Aeneid* III. 527, 530-531). The Sibyl is recognised by classical scholars as an "intermediary" between mortal and immortal worlds, and, like other mediums or mediatory figures this thesis has been following, inherently ambivalent herself: she is "notoriously enigmatic ... wise and deranged, clairvoyant but obscure" (Emily Gowers 177, 170).

At various levels, (within the structure of the text and over the course of the production process) *Sibylline Leaves* plays with the sense of fragmentation and disorder associated with this brief reading of the Sibyl. Within the collection itself, several poems and dramatic pieces are classed as fragments—for example, "The Foster-Mother's Tale", "The Three Graves" and "The Night-Scene"—and the climax

¹⁰⁵ While critics generally agree upon Virgil as the most direct literary influence upon STC, Dyer highlights that STC would have been familiar with the figure of Sibyl from various other sources, such as the Hebrew tradition, the Bible, the *Oracula Sibyllina* and the history of the Sibylline books (151). I follow recent criticism (Murray) in using Robert Fagles' translation of *The Aeneid* which translates the text into verse rather than prose.

of the collection, “The Destiny of Nations”, is an unfinished visionary piece. Portions of the poem featured within Southey’s epic poem *Joan of Arc* (1796) and other verses were published as a “fragment” in the *Morning Post* in 1797. The Preface explicitly reflects STC’s haphazard style of publication by referring to the “widely scattered state in which they [the poems] have suffered to remain” across manuscripts, “various obscure or perishable journals” and the poetic collections of others (ii). The production process was also disorderly with STC reporting several “blunder[s] at my printers” during its two years in the press (*CL* 4: 1029). Originally, the collection was planned as two volumes with a short introductory essay on poetry. However, it was compressed into one to make space for the ever-expanding *Biographia Literaria*. The 1817 edition testifies to this late editorial decision as “VOL. II” is printed in the bottom left hand corners at regular intervals.

Textual critics, such as Neil Fraistat, have established that a poet can “shape a public identity through the process of selection and arrangement” and that arranging a poetic collection is an act of “self-advertisement and, more importantly, self-creation” (*Poems in Their Place* 11). Furthermore, in his recent discussion of poetic re-collection, Michael Gamer states “poets who engage in re-collection customarily wish to reach new readers by rebranding themselves and, through that revision of the authorial self, raising the status and value of their writings” (8). However, STC’s revision of the authorial self as a (forgotten) prophet from antiquity, and one whose prophecies frequently obscured rather than imparted meaning, served to decrease rather than increase the aesthetic and commercial value of his works. One of the earliest reviews of the collection in July 1817 made exactly this point: “the prophecies of the Sibyl became incomprehensible if not instantly gathered; so does the sense of Mr Coleridge’s poetry” (*Literary Gazette* 50). Examining the poems, the *Edinburgh*

Magazine bemoaned a lack of clear arrangement and cohesion across the collection: There is “not a regular and didactic poem, nor even a series of poems, marked by one prevailing character ... but a great assemblage of unconnected pieces, which differ in subject, in character and in style” (246). Although portions of *Sibylline Leaves* are arranged according to the feelings which inspired the poems and the emotional tenor of the poems—“Poems Occasioned by Political Events or the Feelings Connected with Them”, “Love Poems”, “Meditative Poems in Blank Verse”—this reviewer insists that a successful self-collecting poet must present their poetic output as an interrelated organic body, organising their works as evolving or progressing towards an overall narrative, character or effect.¹⁰⁶

The *Monthly Review* highlighted STC’s lack of regard for his reputation as a professional publishing author. For example, one anonymous critic in January 1819 cried:

... he lets his friend bury his jewels in a heap of sand of his own; then he scatters his “Sibylline Leaves” over half a hundred perishable news-papers and magazines; then he suffers a manuscript poem to be handed about among his friends till all the bloom is brushed off; and how can such a poet, so managing his own concerns, hope to be popular? (25)

The *Monthly* presents a poet who may be naïve or hapless at times, but is careless and neglectful of his own literary affairs. The critic refers to Wordsworth’s moving or “burying” of “The Ancyent Marinere” from the opening poem of *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) to the end of the first volume in the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* (1800)

¹⁰⁶ On the other hand, too much direction from the author was frowned upon. Another reviewer implicitly praised the (mis)organisation of *Sibylline Leaves* at the expense of Wordsworth’s carefully ordered *Poems 1815*: STC “has not endeavoured to impose on incongruous poems,—poems that agree neither in subject nor in character,—*one general* and pompous appellation. He has never given us a series of trifles under the imposing and *uniform* superscription of ‘Poems of Fancy, Poems of Imagination’, &c.” (*Monthly Review* 25).

(the edition to which Wordsworth appended his name); and to STC's circulation of the long-awaited *Christabel* among friends. Moreover, the reviewer implies that in neglecting his poetic corpus, STC is tarnishing, wasting or even losing his poetry and his poetic talent. Finally, the same reviewer pointed to the lack of a central epic poem within STC's oeuvre—"he has never concentrated his scattered rays of intellect into one luminous body"—and implied that the collection only represented the "minor efforts of his genius" (*Monthly Review* 26). Like the *Edinburgh Review*, the *Monthly* undermines STC's choice of vocation as a poet because he cannot create relations between his poems and organise and unify them into an interdependent body.

By insinuating that STC is wasteful and careless, critics read the collection semi-biographically, conflating STC's *authorial identity* as a poet with the living man. Deficiencies within the poems and the collection as a whole were perceived as a reflection of the worst aspects of STC's personality. Hence, critics singled out "The Three Grave" and "The Ancient Mariner" as "caricature[s]" of the author's character, genius and "intellectual physiognomy" (*Edinburgh Magazine* 245). The unpleasing blend of "high" and "low" generic attributes within "The Three Graves" reflected the poet's propensity to sully his own brilliance: "In the telling of this story, we have all the characteristics of the author.... the union of fine poetical thought with the most trivial commonplace; feeling bound to vulgarity; dignity of language to the vilest doggerel [sic]" (*Literary Gazette* 50). The reviews marked the beginning of STC's damaged reputation which would trouble Henry, Hartley, Sara and Derwent. They also reveal that the artistic and commercial success of a poetic collection was largely, but not exclusively, dependent on the ordering of the collection as a network of relations, which ideally worked towards and as part of "one luminous body" and must not be a "great assemblage of unconnected pieces" (*Monthly Review* 26).

I want to move away now from the critical reception of *Sibylline Leaves* (as a disordered assemblage of poems) to focus on the model of meaning advanced within the Preface to the collection itself, which uses the notion of disorder in a very different way. The source of STC's allusion to the Sibyl is Virgil's *Aeneid*, and on closer inspection, Helenus' detailed description of the ritual undertaken by the Sibyl at Cumae reveals a two-part model of *order disordered* rather than a model of meaning lost:

... you will see the prophetess in her frenzy,
 chanting deep in her rocky cavern, charting the Fates
 committing her vision to words, to signs on leaves.
 Whatever verses the seer writes down on leaves
 she puts in order, sealed in her cave, left behind.
 There they stay, motionless, never slip from sequence.
 But the leaves are light—if the door turns on its hinge,
 the slightest breath of air will scatter them all about
 and she never cares to retrieve them, flitting through her cave,
 or restore them to order, join them as verses with a vision.
 So many visitors depart, deprived of her advice,
 and hate the Sibyl's haunts. (III. 520-531)

Initially, the Sibyl's important prophetic words are organised in "order" or "sequence" but natural forces (the wind) create a new unintended meaning for the whole which she is content to permit. The Sibyl's neglect to preserve the written translation of her vision—"she never cares to retrieve them" (line 28)—suggests a wilful disorder out of which unpredictable meaning can occur. It is a two-part model and each part helps to further explain STC's definitions of the relationship between poet and reader in the

creation and interpretation of meaning: Ordering meaning within the cave is related to the poet's act of creation; and permitting the disordering of that meaning from outside disturbances is related to the reader's interpretation of the poet's vision.

Turning to the role of the poet and the initial act of creation, the language in the description of the Sibyl's ritual in *The Aeneid* can be directly linked to the language STC uses to express his definition of the poet and poetry in his letters and prosework; a link that, to the best of my knowledge, is one that has not yet been identified by critics. In the passage quoted above, Virgil describes the making of meaning in a very particular way. The act of prophecy requires *both* remediation and arrangement. The Sibyl translates her vision—an experience that is both vocal and visual—into verbal “signs”, and in this case, the written word. The material process of recording the prophecy onto individual oak leaves breaks the vision down into fragments, which the Sibyl then arranges carefully into a coherent sequence that forms a narrative. The whole emerges from the careful arrangement of the many parts and relies upon the interdependence of the individual leaves in expressing an overall meaning.¹⁰⁷ The Sibyl's arrangement of individual oak leaves, in some ways, parallels STC's well-established conviction of an organicist aesthetics which celebrates “unity in multiteity” and “multiteity in unity” (“On Poesy or Art” *Literary Remains* 1: 229; “On Principles of Genial Criticism” *Shorter Works and Fragments* 1: 372). STC explains this further in his definition of Poetry as “a living body.... but a living Body [that] is of necessity an organised one—and what is organisation, the connection of Parts to a whole, so that each Part is at once End & Means!” (*Lectures* 1: 494).

¹⁰⁷ The interrelation of part to whole is further implied at an etymological level within the Sibyl model. The Ancient Greek word for The Fates, which the Sibyl consults, is *μοῖραι* (*moira*) and means “lot”, “share” or “portion” according to *The Online Etymological Dictionary*.

Furthermore, there is another parallel between the arrangement of fragments into a meaningful whole and STC's use of the *ouroboros* as a metaphor for the divine role of poetry that places the reader in a particularly active position during the act of interpretation. In a letter to Joseph Cottle in 1815, STC specifically draws on the recurring movement of the *ouroboros* to describe the transformation of parts into a whole:

The common end of all *narrative*, nay, of *all*, Poems is to convert a *series* into a *Whole*: to make those events, which in real or imagined History move on in a strait Line, assume to our Understandings a *circular* motion—the snake with its Tail in its Mouth.... Now what the Globe is in Geography, *miniaturing* in order to *manifest* the Truth, such is the Poem to that Image of God, which we were created into, and which still seeks that Unity, or Revelation of *One* in and by the *Many*. (CL 4: 545)

Both M. H. Abrams and H. B. De Groot explain that STC's understanding of the *ouroboros* derived from a Christianised neo-Platonic tradition, not only to describe "the unity of a successful piece of art" (De Groot 562), but also to describe the notion of Eternity as continuous recreation in the form of a circular motion, the continuous progression away from and return back to the source (Abrams 148).¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, Abrams argues that STC equates the circular movement of the *ouroboros* with the Christian notion of redemption as the return to, and reconciliation with, God: such movement is "the force that holds the universe together and manifests itself to human awareness as the yearning to return to an undivided state" (152). In his letter, STC articulates a divine programme for poetry. Poetry becomes a sign (an external

¹⁰⁸ Elsewhere, STC emphasises the return to the source in a marginal note to the revised ending of "Frost at Midnight": "The last six lines I omit here because they destroy the rondo, and return upon itself of the Poem. Poems of this kind of length ought to be coiled with its tail round its head" (PW CC 1: 456n).

manifestation) of God's truth that extends artistic unity (and the possibility of divine redemption) out to the reader: the *ideal* unified poem enables the reader to experience the poem as a revelation of meaning ("Revelation of *One* in and by the *Many*").

In order for the reader to experience the poem as a *revelation* of meaning, the conversion of "a *series* into a *Whole*" has to occur within the act of reading and as a particularly *difficult* act of interpretation. It is in the releasing of meaning to others—to the questing Aeneas or the questing reader—that the poet-as-Sibyl must relinquish authorial control and does so in a way that engenders a state of disorder. For classical scholars, the Sibyl's prophecies, once disturbed, are "teasing and evasive" and "are riddles that can be read in two directions and interpreted in at least two ways" (Herbert William Parke 83; Gower 170). At the same time, such disorder forces the reader to partake in active interpretation, (an attempt to re-order those disjointed leaves into a whole) so that the emergence of meaning (whatever meaning that may be) occurs as a *revelation*. This model feeds back into the narrative surrounding STC's allusion of the Sibyl. As classical scholar Helen Lovatt points out, in *The Epic Gaze: Vision, Gender and Narrative in Ancient Epic* (2013), there is a necessary contrast between the "authority, immediacy and vividness" of the prophet's vision and the later "problems and difficulties for mortals of turning vision into knowledge, and of understanding and interpreting both visions and words" (127).

STC employs several tactics that gesture towards the potential of the reader to recover seemingly lost or disordered meaning through the act of interpretation. First, STC destabilises the notion of a final, finished text, fit for publication and posterity. In the Preface to *Sibylline Leaves* STC frames the gathering of his "widely scattered" verse as a "whole", but it is a whole that might be incomplete: though the collection has "considerable additions and alterations", the poems are only "as perfect as the

author's judgement and powers could render them" (*SL* ii). Such reticence does not reflect STC's modesty, but as Jack Stillinger identifies, is emblematic of his wider authorial practices:

[STC] undermined the stability of his texts ... by repeatedly revising the works ... as if to make the poems and their meanings elusive on purpose ... the emphasis is on the amateur qualities of the performance, its rough and unfinished character. (*Coleridge & Textual Instability* 108-109).

In regathering (or recollecting) such poetic leaves at a later date, the poet can never recapture (and transcribe to the reader) the vision experienced in initial composition but can only gather the fragments into as complete a form as possible for the time being.

In making explicit the unfinished and disjointed nature of the collection, STC encourages the reader to partake in the specific type of interpretation associated with the form of the fragment (the second of STC's tactics). Michael Bradshaw highlights that the incompleteness of the fragment draws the reader's attention to the idea that there is "in some abstract space a completed text from which it has become detached" and the reader therefore "reinstat[e] an approval of wholeness" (*The Unfamiliar Shelley* 23). Going further, Marjorie Levinson, in *The Romantic Fragment Poem*, argues that readers not only view the poem as part of a greater whole but also create the whole through the act of reading: readers "fill in the blanks and credit the poem with the closure which their labour produces" (113). Like STC's image of the snake biting its tail, then the form of the fragment ensures that the reader must complete the whole or the circle for themselves and the progressive movement away from, and return to, the source brings new understanding. STC describes the effect of such imaginative effort in *Biographia Literaria*: the reader of a poem "should be carried

forward, not [...] by a restless desire to arrive at the final solution; but by the pleasurable activity of the mind excited by the attractions of the journey itself” (2: 14). Ideally, it is the responsibility of poetry and the poet to bring “the whole soul of man into activity” (*BL* 2: 15-16). However, this does not operate only at the level of the individual poem, but as Andrew Allport, highlights, also at the wider level of a poetic collection. Allport singles out the fragment form for its “dependency upon other fragments [poems or paratext] surrounding it, on an extensive back-story framing ... [it] not as a poem, but as part of a narrative” (404). By framing the collection within the larger narrative of the Sibyl’s disorderly and potentially incomplete and unfinished prophecies, *STC* encourages readers to establish their own connections between the poems—in Virgil’s words, “to join them as verses with a vision”—and unify them into a corpus of poetry; whether readers are able to do so, is an entirely different matter. As Bradshaw highlights, “it is the combined reward and frustration of a fragment poem both to invite and thwart analysis, to appeal for interpretation and simultaneously discredit it” (23).

STC’s assumption of a prophetic *authorial* identity then, is contradictory and involves a necessary fragmentation of authority to engender disorder, out of which unpredictable meaning can occur. This leaves the reader free to read the poems and the collection to completion. In sharp contrast to the kind of poet-reader relationship Wordsworth establishes, in which there is a burden on the poet to keep open a healthy channel of association for his readers, (which was explored in Chapter One), here *STC* keeps the poetic imagination aloof from his reader. Such distance is not necessarily disdain for, or ignorance of, his readership, but a recognition of the reader’s creative power in the act of interpretation and the poet’s responsibility to bring “the whole soul of man into activity” (*BL* 2: 15-16). While *STC* envisions the relationship between the

poet-as-Sibyl and reader as something of an implicit contract, we will see in the next section, that Sara, in marked contrast to her father, repeatedly insists that STC's work needs to be interpreted and that she is the only one who can interpret him fully.

2. *Nervous Remains: Sara's Construction of Bodily and Textual Inheritance from STC*

Sara is the inheritrix of his [STC's] mind and his genius. Neither Derwent nor I have much more than the family cleverness which with hardly an exception accompanies the name of Coleridge.

(Letters of Hartley Coleridge 275)

Much of it was not self-sacrifice, but self-realisation. She found her father, in those blurred pages, as she had not found him in the flesh; and she found that he was herself. She did not copy him, she insisted; she was him. Often she continued his thoughts as if they had been her own.

(Virginia Woolf on Sara Coleridge, The Death of the Moth 115)

The second half of this chapter shows how Sara uses the shared and inherited illness of "nervousness" to fashion her *writerly* and *authorial* identities as the continuation, (in the way Woolf touches upon in the quotation above) of STC's *Esteesian* genius and intellect. As we have seen in the previous section STC establishes his creative authority as a poet by means of the authority of the Sibyl. Sara, instead, locates her authority, as a family editor, within the body, but it is a body made ill by the *literal* derangement or disorder of its nerves. Furthermore, while STC's model of the poet-as-Sibyl involves a relinquishing of authority to the reader (and a disordering of meaning

in the process), Sara repeatedly uses images of disorder (across different entities of the body, within an individual text and across STC's corpus) to assert her filial authority, as STC's genetic heir, to interpret and organise her father's works. Throughout this second section, there is a blurring of biographical and textual bodies and personas. I examine the shared constructions of the ailing and nervous body Sara and STC used to define their (lack of) relationship; Sara's use of the inherited nervous body to justify her inheritance of STC's creative genius; her use of the literally disordered and deranged body to represent STC's poetic corpus, to account for his failings and to promote her own role of preserving "the body of my father's writings, which I have taken great pains to bring into one" (Sara Coleridge qtd. in Griggs, *Coleridge Fille* 163-164). Sara's model of *writerly* and *authorial* identity is inherently multifaceted: Sara uses nervousness not only to justify her filial editorial authority, but also to construct a very specific mode of textual communion with STC's textual persona and corpus after his death in 1834. Finally, in making a connection primarily based on genetic inheritance, rather than through domestic closeness, Sara was unusual for a female family editor and this chapter concludes with a brief comparison between Sara and another prominent female editor, Mary Shelley.

There is one aspect of Sara and STC's biographical relationship which provides a useful starting point for considering Sara's blurring of disordered texts and bodies in her constructions of *writerly* and *authorial* identities.¹⁰⁹ During their lifetime, Sara and STC's *personal* relationship was largely enacted through texts. There were occasional direct letters; otherwise they relied on news or reports of one another from others

¹⁰⁹ The difficult biographical relationship between Sara and STC is an undercurrent in secondary criticism on Sara's posthumous editing. This partially emerges from Woolf's assessment in the opening epigraph above and extends through to recent criticism including Hickey and Levy, with Hickey stating "Sara's labors on behalf of Coleridgean genius are inseparable from her vexed issue of her relation to her father" (125). While my primary interest is in textual constructions of identity by family writers, rather than biographically informed ones, in this instance, Sara's intertwining of texts and illness in her personal relationship with STC is relevant.

(Sara especially relied on STC and Henry's almost daily correspondence for reports of STC's health). They read each other's published texts. Sara read STC's work more generally; while STC read Sara's translation of Martin Dobrizhoffer's *Historia de Abiponibus* into English which was published in 1822. STC did not attend Sara's wedding day but gifted her a lavish presentation copy of William Sotheby's *Georgica Publii Virgilii Maronis Hexaglotta*. Their personal relationship, enacted through or mediated by texts, is partially the result of their shared illness, which was repeatedly cited as preventing them from seeing one another. My interest lies in the way in which Sara adapts illness from being a weakness that initially kept them separated in *real* life to one that celebrates their unique genetic connection after STC's death and engenders an intimate connection between them in *represented* textual space, providing the basis of her editorial authority.

Throughout their lives, both STC and Sara understood their physical, emotional and mental infirmities in terms of nervousness. In a similar manner to the *Vapours* experienced by Charles and Mary Lamb, nervousness brought on various and changeable symptoms and was thought to be caused by the overstimulation and literal disorder (or derangement) of the nerves. In her essay "On Nervousness", Sara explains that the condition arises when the emotional "sensuous part of the mind . . . partakes" of the physiological disturbances of the body:

Reason, Free Will, & consequently responsibility remain, while what may be called the more sensuous part of the mind, feeling emotion, partakes of the morbid conditions of the body: to consider, to determine, to act are still within our power, but whether we shall be gladsome or gloomy, buoyant with hope or trembling with apprehensiveness, all this depends on the state of the corporeal part. (qtd. in Mudge 203)

Sara's explanation, in which one part of the mind "partakes of the morbid conditions of the body" is informed by her understanding of the sensorium. She partially draws on Darwin's definition of the "*sensorium*" in *Zoonomia* as both a material organ and the finer substance of Life: "not only the medullary part of the brain ... but also at the same time that living principle, or spirit of animation, which resides throughout the body" (1: 10). In correspondence in 1836, Sara gives a detailed explanation:

The sensorium is what we feel by; if I have a blow on the back, it is not the back that feels, but that organ; if I am *informed* that I shall have a blow on the back, it is the sensorium that gives the feeling of apprehension. In the one case, the channel of communication is the body, in the other the mind; when the sensorium is affected through the body, it may affect the mind, when affected through the mind, it may affect the body; as this inn may convey news from Ilminster to Wincaunton, or news from Wincaunton to Ilminster. (*Memoirs* 1: 162-163)

The most striking aspect of Sara's definition is her emphasis on the *dynamic movement* of communication in both directions through the sensorium: from Ilminster to Wincaunton and vice versa. (It greatly informs her construction as the legitimate editor of STC, which will be examined shortly). In Sara's records and letters, she depicts her own experience of nervousness in terms of the effect of the body upon the mind. For example, in September 1832, she records in her diary: "Disordered bile accompanied with the derangement of the nervous system is my complaint. Stomach & bowels out of order great weakness—nervousness, shiverings & gloomys" ("Baby Diary" HRC qtd. in Low 121). Similarly, in a letter to Elizabeth Wardell in 1833, she writes: "I think my stomach is occasionally deranged it is completely & solely an

affection of the nervous system, & where that is out of order a thousand miserable symptoms appear” (qtd. in Low 122).

In her unfinished and unpublished *Autobiography*, Sara explicitly defines her relationship with STC in terms of their shared disposition towards “nervous sensitiveness and a morbid imaginativeness” (qtd. in Mudge 265-266). Nervousness, according to Sara, was “the great misfortune of both our lives” and prevented both father and daughter from facing “the ordinary demands of life even under favourable circumstances” (249). Here, Sara echoes contemporary medical opinion that nervousness was a genetic and inherited condition. Thomas Trotter’s influential treatise, *A View of The Nervous Temperament* (first published in 1807), observed that nervous disorders were “hereditary” and offered the explanation that the nervous system “inherit[ed] all the bad impressions of its progenitor, hoarded as it were in the structure of the nerves” (215). Crucially, in the opening pages of her *Autobiography*, Sara uses inherited illness first, to distinguish herself from her brothers, and by implication align herself closer to STC, and second, to rationalise her childhood separation from her father: “more than any of them [her brothers] I inherited that uneasy health of his, which kept us apart” (249).

Throughout both STC and Sara’s letters, nervousness is mentioned repeatedly as the reason for their ongoing separation. For example, when Sara stayed in Highgate for five weeks in 1823, STC managed to see her for one afternoon: “Grievously did I moan under the illness ... which during the whole of my dear Girl’s stay in town confined me to my chamber” (*CL* 5: 271). During STC’s final illness in the summer of 1834, nerves were cited frequently in letters for keeping father and daughter apart. In a long letter to Dora Wordsworth (16th-22nd July 1834), Sara reports that she is bedridden by her “little health concerns” and is attempting to reduce her reliance on

opiates (*DCMS WLMS A* / Coleridge, Sara / 33). During STC's final days, Henry was the only family member admitted to his bedside. Sara repeatedly accounted for her absence by emphasising the frailty of STC's nerves. In the letter to Dora she writes: "the sight of other friends agitates his nerves and disturbs his meditations... I know it is useless to go to Highgate—if there were the slightest chance of seeing him I would go ... I am anxiously waiting now for Henry's report" (*DCMS WLMS A*).¹¹⁰

In a series of statements in letters and essays, Sara claims that as a result of their separation (due to illness), she developed a textual relationship with STC which is still ongoing after his death. In a letter to Mary Calvert in January 1838, Sara describes the effect of STC's death:

I suffered much in parting with my beloved father, but unfortunately, I had been so little in his society during my life, being separated from him by illness during two or three years of our residence at Hampstead, that his departure did not make so great a difference to my heart as it would have done otherwise. And so accustomed had I been to commune with him in his books, more than face to face, that even now I never feel, while I peruse his sayings, chiefly on religious subjects, as if he were no more of this world. (*Memoirs* 1: 206)

As late as 1850, Sara states in a letter to Edward Quillinan:

... my father—in some respects so great a loss, yet in another way less felt than the rest, and more with me still. Indeed, he seems ever at my ear, in his books, more especially his marginalia—speaking not personally to me, and yet in a way so natural to my feelings that *finds* me so fully, and awakens such a strong echo

¹¹⁰ See also Sara's letter to Hartley, 5th Aug. 1834: "The agitation of nerves at the sight of those close to him disturbed his meditations on his Redeemer to whose bosom he was hastening ... we all agreed it would be useless for my mother and myself to go to Highgate or for Derwent or you to come up" (qtd. in Molly Lefebure, *Private Lives* 22).

in my mind and heart, that I seem more intimate with him now than I ever was in life. (*Memoirs* 2: 315)

In the first example, (in 1838) Sara's use of "commune" suggests connection on a spiritual and intellectual level that transcends the bodily ailments that had separated them in life, and continues to link them now after STC's death.¹¹¹ Both examples indicate that Sara understands familiarity as *shared opinion* instead of the shared domestic attachments which characterise the relationships of the Wordsworths and the Lambs: it is only when STC's voice "awakens such a strong echo in ... [Sara's] mind and heart" of her own feelings on a given topic that she feels close to her father.

In the second example, Sara's phrase, "awakens such a strong echo" is particularly ambivalent, as it is depicted in active terms as a "kindling" or "awakening" of feelings in the present moment. This active presentation of the echo does not necessarily denote a mere reflection or imitation of STC's opinions, but, like the dynamism of the sensorium, denotes an acknowledgement that STC's texts echo her own feelings and that her feelings echo the sentiment of his written words (an echo of him in her, and her in him). Moreover, if one understanding of an echo is the continued reverberation of a sound for a period *after* that initial sound has stopped, then Sara reverberates STC's opinions long after his death through this specific textual communion. She positions herself as the continuation of that first *Esteesian* chatter.¹¹²

In *Reading, Writing, and Romanticism* (2000), Newlyn highlights that echoing (along with conversing and listening) was recognised as a "traditionally feminine activity" (236). Yet, in her analysis of women's poetry, Newlyn finds that the echo

¹¹¹ The *OED* offers a definition of "commune" as "To communicate intimately (with someone), esp. at a deep level of mental or spiritual engagement".

¹¹² Sara applies a similar notion to her own children. In 1835, she writes: "I must not finish my letter without telling you a little about my secondary *selves*—my children—because they are *self* in a second edition" (*Memoirs* 1: 106).

“recurred frequently and ambiguously as a *site of encounter* between *rival* claims of writing and reading, speaking and listening” (248, my emphasis). This occurs in Sara’s presentation of her relationship with STC. Mediated through the pages of his written words, STC emerges as a lively speaking presence (hence STC’s opinions on religious subjects are presented as “sayings”). However, such a sympathetic encounter occurs only when Sara chooses to “awaken” or bring him into being through the act of reading his words on the page. In some ways, Sara’s construction of her father parallels STC’s metaphor of the *ouroborus* and the eventual return to an originary position, altered and changed by a process of circular motion. The overly-talkative STC of real life, with whom Sara had little direct and sustained contact, is displaced by a textualised STC. Out of the printed pages of his texts, STC is re-embodied as a friendly speaking presence: a presence with whom Sara can converse and commune, thus enabling her to feel “more intimate with him now than I ever was in life”. In letters, Sara recalls listening to the sweeping nature of her father’s reflections and compares herself (negatively) to Henry: “Henry could sometimes bring him down to narrower topics, but when alone with me he was almost always on the star-paved road, taking in the whole heavens in his circuit” (*Memoirs* 1: 123-124). However, now, STC’s expansive and potentially overwhelming contemplations are constrained by the parameters of the written page and are activated only when Sara chooses to read them. While such a re-imagining may be interpreted as a defensive tactic on the part of Sara—reconfiguring STC into a more constrained, less overwhelming and textualised figure—it also offers Sara the opportunity to control, channel and appropriate STC’s textual chatter to further her own intellectual ambitions.

In the space of private letters, the construction of a lively talkative STC enables Sara to claim a singularly intellectual connection to her father and thus assert her filial

connection to STC and vice versa. The first example occurs in 1838, when Henry is the official figurehead for the STC editorial project. In an earlier letter to Henry in 1837, Sara demonstrates her unique *Esteesian* tendencies when discussing her own habit of discursiveness, and again, draws on the notion of dynamic movement between STC and herself. She uses STC's "account of literary difficulties" to firstly characterise her own intellectual habits, and then, secondly, uses her own reflections upon moments of intellectual frustration to fully elucidate and account for STC's own haphazardous process and literary-critical output:

I feel the most complete sympathy with my father in his account of his literary difficulties. Whatever subject I commence I feel discontent unless I could pursue it in every direction to the farthest boundaries of thought, and then when some scheme is to be executed, my energies are paralyzed with the very notion of the indefinite vastness which I long to fill. This was the reason my father wrote by snatches. He could not bear to complete incompletely, which everybody else does. (*Memoirs* 1: 192-193)

By demonstrating their shared tendencies, and by interpreting STC through her own reflections, Sara acts as a mediator for STC and privately asserts her ability and right to interpret and speak for him. It is a technique she repeats often over the course of her editorship and, as we shall see in Chapter Six, determines her arrangement of *Poems* 1852.

In the "Introduction" to her edition of *Essays on His Own Times* (1850), Sara elucidates the fullest and most public articulation of her bodily-textual relationship to STC:

I have noticed some salient points of my Father's opinions on politics,—indeed to do this was alone my original intent; but once entered into the stream of such

thought I was carried forward almost involuntarily by the current. I went on to imagine what my Father's view would be of subjects which are even now engaging public attention. It has so deeply interested myself thus to bring him down into the present hour,—to fancy him speaking in detail as he would speak were he now alive; and by long dwelling on all that remains of him, his poems of sentiment and of satire, his prose works, his letters of various sorts, his sayings and the reports and remarks of others about him, I have come to feel so unified with him in mind, that I cannot help anticipating a ready pardon for my bold attempt; nay even a sympathy in it from genial readers, and such, or none at all, I think to have for the present publication. (1: lxxxiv)

Initially, Sara presents herself as a passive receptor of her father's political opinions:

“I was carried forward almost involuntarily by the current”. Her phrasing echoes

STC's description of the untrustworthy “streamy Nature of Association” in his *Notebooks* (1: 1770) and is reminiscent of Lamb's avowal of responsibility for the

letter to Hazlitt written under the influence of the *Vapours* in Chapter Three.

However, Sara uses the combination of imagining an animated STC—“to fancy him speaking in detail as he would speak were he now alive”—and “dwelling” upon, or

reading, his works to “come to feel so unified with him mind”. Here, Sara conflates body and text in her description of two types of intellectual engagement: one with the imagined embodied conversational STC (as brought about through her reading of his texts) and the other by “dwelling” on his textual body, “all that remains of him”, in the absence of the actual person.

This construction is a far bolder assertion of filial continuance than in previous letter as Sara presents herself as united with her father, which endows her with a singular authority and legitimacy to edit or mediate STC's work. Although the overall

tone of the statement is apologetic, such a union, brought about from this particular bodily textual relationship, enables Sara to justify her position as the “housekeeper of the literary house of S.T.C” (Sara qtd. in *Coleridge Fille* 248). Furthermore, in every example above, Sara applies this construct of communion, echoing and unification to the specific text or set of texts which she is editing. For example, when explaining to Mary Calvert that she communes with STC, “chiefly on religious subjects”, Sara was helping Henry to prepare the 1839 edition of *Aids to Reflection* (*Memoirs* 1: 206). Similarly, when stating to Quillinan in 1850 that she feels STC is “ever at my ear, in his books, more especially his marginalia”, Sara had been sourcing, transcribing and arranging material for another edition of *Literary Remains* since 1848 (*Memoirs* 2: 315).¹¹³ Finally, the extensive list in *Essays On His Own Times*—“his poems of sentiment and of satire, his prose works, his letters of various sorts, his sayings and the reports and remarks of others about him”—covers STC’s entire oeuvre and subsequently helps to cement her reputation as STC’s chief editor (1: lxxxiv).

I now want to briefly consider the way Sara conceptualises STC’s collection of work as a whole and her role as editor. Sara frequently uses images of pain and suffering to depict her father’s and her own work and in the process, blurs textual and actual bodies. She accounts for deficiencies in STC’s work in terms of STC’s own troubled body. Faced with the task of refuting charges of plagiarism against STC, Sara’s “Introduction” establishes *Biographia Literaria* (1847) as a text that is literally disordered due to her father’s “deranged” mind and body, which in turn, is the result of his disposition to nervousness:

¹¹³ See Sara’s journal entry for 28th September 1848—“I am at this time employed on that most tedious work—marking the adoptions of the Lit Remains from Schelling and Schlegel”—and her letter to Mrs Richard Townsend in October 1848: “I mentioned in my last that I was busy about my father’s minor writings. There is to be a new arrangement of the Literary Remains” (*SCT* 40-42).

The *Biographia Literaria* he composed at the period of his life when his health was the most deranged, and his mind most subjected to the influence of bodily disorder. It bears the marks of this throughout, for it is even less methodical in its arrangements than any of his other works. (1: xxi)

Furthermore, she presents the unusual workings of STC's thought processes as the result of attempting to escape the shackles of a weary and aching body:

The nerveless languor, which after early youth, became almost the habit of his body and *bodily mind*, which to a great degree paralysed his powers both of rest and action ... rendered all exercises difficult to him except of thought and imagination flowing outward freely and in self-made channels; for these brought with them their own warm atmosphere to thaw the chains of frost that bound his spirit. (1: xix) ¹¹⁴

Incidentally, Sara's use of "paralysed" echoes her earlier 1837 description of her own difficulties—"my energies are paralyzed"—building another intellectual tie between daughter and father (*Memoirs* 1: 193). Born out of chronic pain, STC's habits of thought are manifested in a peculiar manner: "He loved to go forward, expanding and ennobling the soul of his teaching, and hated the trouble of turning back to look after its body" (*BL 1847* 1: xix). There is a witty slippage between thinking and writing, and body and text as Sara simultaneously accounts for her father's numerous and wide-ranging interests that characterise the subject matter and digressive tone of the

¹¹⁴ See other moments in the "Introduction" when Sara attributes STC's failure to acknowledge or misquote the work of others to bodily weakness, in this case poor memory. She characterises this as a "special *intellectual* flaw.... this defect, which belonged not to the moral being of Coleridge but to the frame of his intellect ... often rendered him unconscious of incorrectness of statement" (*BL 1847* 1: xxxix-xli). As an aside, Sara's reference to the warmth of the imagination thawing the "chains of frost" binding STC's spirit alludes to the ending of the earliest published version of "Frost at Midnight" (1798): the icicles "which er to-morrow's warmth / Have capp'd their sharp keen points with pendulous drops" catch young Hartley's eye and make "thee shout / And stretch and flutter" (*Fears in Solitude*, p. 23). It is an interesting example of Sara incorporating (and appropriating) STC's own imagery into her construction of STC's peculiar genius.

Biographia, and his lack of care for its textual body, exemplified by the absence of references, acknowledgements and explanatory footnotes.

Finally, I want to briefly compare Sara to Mary Shelley's editing of her husband Percy in order to illustrate that Sara's positioning of herself as a *genetic* heir to genius was unusual for a female family editor. Like the Coleridge family, Mary edits Percy in order to shape his posthumous reputation and establish an official canon of poetry in the wake of a slew of unauthorised biographies and poetical editions that appeared after his death in 1822. In quick succession, Mary sees through the press, *The Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley* (1839) and *Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations and Fragments by Percy Bysshe Shelley* (1840). Like Sara, Mary aims to present a "perfect edition" of Percy's poetry, "with all the correctness possible" (*PWPS* 1: vii). As well as arranging the works from "so confused a mass" of Percy's manuscripts, Mary wrote copious notes and attached a fifty-page commentary on Percy's poetry and life to *The Poetical Works*.

In both editions Mary follows the nineteenth-century fashion for biographical readings of literature by encouraging the reader to view Percy's poetry and prosework as reflective and indicative of his character and temperament: "let the lovers of Shelley's poetry ... turn to these pages to gather proof of sincerity, and to become acquainted with the form that such gentle sympathies and lofty aspirations wore in private life" (*ELTF* 1: vi). Like Sara, Mary invokes nervousness to blur the disorders of Percy's body with his poetic corpus and blurs the poet's private internal life with his poetic creations. However, *unlike* Sara, Mary uses the poet's nervous and diseased body to *celebrate* Percy as a poet instead of using it to account for his failings. For example, Mary presents "Alastor" as the result of an emotional and intellectual crisis when Percy was mistakenly told he was "dying rapidly of a consumption" in the

spring of 1815 (*PWPS* 1: 140). “Alastor”, according to Mary, reflects “the broodings of a poet’s heart in solitude” and is “the outpouring of [Percy’s] own emotions, embodied in the purest form he could conceive, painted in the ideal hues which his brilliant imagination inspired, and softened by the recent anticipation of death” (*PWPS* 1: 141-142).

In the Preface and Notes throughout all four volumes, Mary repeatedly links Percy’s illness (whether pain, misdiagnosed consumption or nervousness) to poetic genius: it is responsible for his sensibility and his propensity for solitude. It shapes the tenor and range of his poetry; on the one hand, a melancholic brooding on his internal emotions; on the other, an escape into the “airiest flights of fancy, forgetting love and hate, and regret and lost hope” (*PWPS* 4: 53):

... constant pain wound his nerves to such a pitch of sensibility that rendered his views of life different from those of a man in the enjoyment of healthy sensations. (*PWPS* 1: xiv)

Physical suffering had also considerable influence in causing him to turn his eye inwards; inclining him rather to brood over the thoughts and emotions of his own soul, than to glance abroad. (*PWPS* 1: 140)

To escape ... he delivered up his soul to poetry, and felt happy when he sheltered himself from the influence of human sympathies, in the wildest regions of fancy. (*PWPS* 1: xii)

In encouraging a biographical reading of the poems, (a nervous biography that is constructed by Mary) Mary also justifies her role as the editor of his works. *Only* Mary can provide such private domestic details—including details about Percy’s

illnesses and compositional details of particular poems—and interpret his poetry in light of his emotional inner life because of their closeness as husband and wife. For example, in her Preface, Mary uses superlatives to imply that she is emotionally and intellectually closest and has the most forceful memories of him:

I have the *liveliest* recollection of *all* that was said and done during the period of my knowing him. Every impression is as clear as if stamped yesterday, and I have no apprehension of any mistake in my statements. (*PWPS* 1: xvi, my emphasis).

For Mary Favret, Mary's authority is amplified by the fact that her biography of the poet pertains to a very specific period: "Mary Shelley restricts Percy's existence to the writing of poems, and more specifically, to the writing of poems during his years with her" ("Mary Shelley's Sympathy", *The Other Mary Shelley* 22).

In the final chapter of *Family Authorship*, Levy's comparison of Mary Shelley and Sara Coleridge as family editors is based on their respective abilities to articulate a sympathetic relationship to their deceased literary relatives; this is reliant upon the strength of their domestic private affections. Mary is deemed a more successful family editor because she deftly presents Percy to the public as "a poet of unimpeachable domesticity" while also allowing for his "more eccentric or mysterious habits" as a "solitary genius" (151, 148). This portrait, according to Levy, is authorised by Mary's "status as widow and mother of his children", which in turn also validates Mary's position as Percy Shelley's first editor (145). As rumours of STC's domestic failings as a husband and father were in the public sphere, perpetuated by former friends such as De Quincey, Sara, on the other hand, "had no viable alternative but to argue for the impossibility of authorial genius arising within a congenial domestic scene" (159). Levy continues, "the conclusion that Coleridge's career was incompatible with his

family life had the unintended consequence of undermining his daughter's authority to represent him" (159). Here, Levy assumes that Sara's authority is solely reliant upon her "special knowledge of her father, as one who knew him 'early and well'" (Levy 159; Sara Coleridge, *BL 1847* 1: xlv). However, as I have shown throughout this chapter, Sara constructs an alternative mode of authority, arising not from domestic sympathy or "Fellow-feeling" experienced in real life, but from the sympathy within the body and from inherited nervous disease. Inherited nervousness enables Sara to assert a *writerly* and *authorial* identity as the "inheritrix" of STC's "mind" and "genius" and develop a sympathetic communion *sui-generis* with her father's textualised body (*Letters of Hartley Coleridge* 275). Ultimately, Sara uses inherited nervousness to position herself as the filial continuing echo of his *Esteesian* chatter, reverberating long after her father's death. In privileging consanguineal bonds *over* notions of domestic private affections, Sara not only occupies a peculiar position within this thesis, but also on a far wider level within scholarship on familial creativity in the Romantic period. The final chapter considers the challenges that a consanguineal definition of sympathy presents for the Coleridge family as they attempt to further the family reputation of STC as Victorian Sage through editing various iterations of STC's *Collected Poems*.

Chapter 6. Mediating *Esteesian* Authority in *Poems 1852* and across the Coleridge Family Network 1828–1852

These editorial labours, are in one sense well worth while; it is setting something in order—giving a correct statement—to last as long as my father's works are read—in another point of view it is a most ungrateful labour—unseen unnoticed—very time-consuming.

(Sara Coleridge, Journal Entry for 28th September 1848, *SCT* 40)

[Paratext is] always the conveyor of a commentary that is authorial or more or less legitimated by the author, [and] constitutes a zone between text and off-text, a zone not only of transition but also of transaction: a privileged place of pragmatics and a strategy, of an influence on the public, an influence that ... is at the service of a better reception for the text and a more pertinent reading of it.

(G rard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* 2)

This final chapter considers the operations of Sara's *Esteesian* authority within a wider network of family editors and focuses on the editing of *STC's Collected Poems*: a series of editions which involves the contributions of each family editor, *STC*, Henry, Derwent and Sara. Examining the group collectively enables an effective comparison of each family editor's vision for *STC's* reputation and an exploration of the extent to which Sara's agency shaped *STC's* legacy and the critical interpretation of the poet. In the opening quotation above, Sara, in part, alludes to the image of Virgil's Sibyl ("setting something in order") and positions herself as the ideal gatherer and interpreter of her father's scattered leaves. More importantly, her journal entry

encapsulates a paradox acute to acts of familial posthumous editing: the creation of an authoritative “correct statement” for posterity—“to last long as my father’s works are read”—is inextricably intertwined with the question of the (in)visibility of the editor undertaking the “unseen, unnoticed . . . and time-consuming” work to provide that statement.

The compulsion to provide a “correct statement” of a relative’s poetic corpus and establish the authority to do so on behalf of the deceased relative is central to this final chapter. The transitional and transactional zones of paratext emerge as sites which not only allow an editor to shape the reading and reception of a text and the reputation of a poet, but also (extending Genette’s claim in the other direction) allow an editor to shape, establish and maintain their own authority. In the area of posthumous editing, to amend Genette’s claim, the authorial commentary mediated by the paratext is not “more or less legitimated by the author” but legitimated by the one writing on *behalf* of the author (2). Furthermore, in addition to paratextual features, such as advertisements, prefaces, notes, decisions about the selection and arrangement of a poetic collection are key practices which enable editors to assert authority.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section provides a summary of the main features and changes across the four editions: three editions of *The Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (1828, 1829, 1834) and the new edition of *The Poems of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (1852). It then focuses on Henry, Derwent and Sara’s respective representations of STC. Overall, their respective representations of STC align with the family’s construction of STC as Victorian Sage. However, they each offer slight and subtle variations of this reputation, which is reflected in their respective editorial practices and choices. The second section focuses on the central theme of editorial authority. I use the concepts of “remediation”, “immediacy” and

“hypermediacy” from Media Studies to examine the varying degrees of visibility of the family editors through paratextual features in their respective editions. I am primarily concerned with Sara’s establishment of editorial authority—both a singular *Esteesian* authority and the creation of a joint shared authority with Derwent as legitimate sibling editors—in the Preface to *Poems 1852*, which is set up against the editorial authority of her husband, Henry, in his edition of *Poetical Works 1834*. Linking back to the themes of Chapter Five, this section explores the privileging of consanguineal bonds over conjugal ones within the wider family editorial network.

The last two sections of the chapter problematise the siblings’ and Sara’s claims for editorial legitimacy by assessing the involvement of each family editor in the production of the four editions of *Collected Poems* and more broadly across the twenty-year editorship, from STC’s later years (1828-1834) to Sara’s death in 1852. In order to survey the large amount of primary textual evidence and convey the findings succinctly to the reader, the second half of the chapter, in part, employs the notion of “Distant Reading” from the experimental area of Digital Literary Mapping, and reflects upon its usefulness for doctoral research. The third section examines the *Collected Poems*. It identifies and examines a specific paratextual example in *Poems 1852* where Sara and Derwent explicitly attempt to encourage a biographical interpretation of a poem in order to address (and potentially mitigate) rumours of STC’s domestic failings as a father. I reassess this biographical narrative in order to problematise Sara and Derwent’s claims for editorial authority. Broadening the scope of my examination significantly, I then use a series of graphs to undertake a detailed analysis of the changing size of the poetic corpus over the four editions of the *Collected Poems*. My aim is to determine which family editor—STC himself, Henry, Derwent or Sara—is responsible for making the most substantial and long-lasting

changes to the poetic corpus. Section four, the final and most experimental section of the chapter, visualises the Coleridge family editors as a network, and maps out the editorial actions and involvement of the Coleridge family in a series of network maps over the course of the twenty-year editorship. This experimental exercise (a form of critical mediated reading in itself) suggests that it was Henry, rather than Sara, who occupied a central position within the family network, and conversely indicates the persuasiveness and influence of Sara's own narratives about mediating STC.

1. A "Prodigal's Favourite": Henry, Sara and Derwent's Presentations of STC

Three editions of *Poetical Works* were published in quick succession during STC's final years in 1828, 1829 and 1834; each one contained changes to the text (minor and major revisions) and to the selection of poems.¹¹⁵ A brief summary of the main differences between the 1829 and 1834 editions prepares the ground for later sections and an examination of the ways Sara and Derwent position and legitimise themselves as STC's editors in their 1852 edition.¹¹⁶ Moreover, the key editorial concern of the siblings—the aim to provide a permanent poetic corpus and a text that possesses *Esteesian* authority (an authority arising from Sara's critical judgement which is undertaken in the spirit of STC's own genius)—emerges directly out of the complex textual history of *Poetical Works* and governs their choices of selection, arrangement and version of the poems in *Poems 1852*.

¹¹⁵ For a detailed description of the full contents and a complete textual history of *Poetical Works 1828, 1829 and 1834*, see George Whalley's essay "Coleridge's Poetical Canon: Selection and Arrangement" pp. 9-24 and Mays' "Annexe" on STC's poetic collections in *PW CC 1*: 1253-1273. Mays provides a table listing the poems within each edition which has been extremely valuable for my own comparisons between the three editions of *Poetical Works* and *Poems 1852*.

¹¹⁶ The largest differences across the editions occur between the 1829 and 1834 texts, hence I will not be examining the 1828 in detail. The 1829 is largely faithful to the 1828 text, with the addition of four poems.

The 1828, 1829 and 1834 editions are divided into three volumes (See **Figure 6** below). The collection gives the impression of chronological arrangement with a progression from the earlier Preface and “Juvenile Poems” (40 poems from *Poems on Various Subjects 1796 and 1797*) to *Sibylline Leaves* in Volume One. However, the prevailing motivation for arrangement across the three volumes is form: STC’s two complete poetic collections are followed by the two largest (and for STC, most prominent) poems of his oeuvre, “The Ancient Mariner” and “Christabel”. These are followed by the group “Miscellaneous Poems” and then drama.¹¹⁷ The 1828 and 1829 editions were overseen by STC, while the 1834 edition was spearheaded by STC’s nephew and Sara’s husband, Henry. Published just after STC’s death in 1834, Henry enlarged the corpus by 72 poems, adding twenty poems, to “Juvenile Poems” and a further 41 poems to “Miscellaneous Poems”.¹¹⁸

Figure 6: Arrangement of Poetical Works (1828, 1829, 1834).

Volume One	Volume Two	Volume Three
Preface to 1797 <i>Poems</i>	<i>The Ancient Mariner</i>	<i>The Tragedy of Wallenstein</i>
Juvenile Poems	<i>Christabel</i>	
<i>Sibylline Leaves</i>	Prose in Rhyme: Epigrams, Moralities and Things without a Name (Renamed “Miscellaneous Poems” in 1834)	
	<i>The Tragedy of Remorse</i>	
	<i>Zapola</i>	

¹¹⁷ STC’s longer subdivision is shortened to “Miscellaneous Poems” in the 1834 edition. For the sake of clarity, I will also use this title.

¹¹⁸ “Love, Hope and Patience” is a late addition that is placed at the end of the third volume which contains drama. I have included the poem in Henry’s additions to the corpus.

Figure 7: Arrangement of *Poems 1852*.

Table of Contents	Family Member Responsible
Advertisement	Derwent
Preface to the Present Edition	Sara
Preface	Reprint of STC's Preface to <i>Poems on Various Subjects</i> (1797).
Poems Written in Youth	Derwent and Sara
Poems Written in Early Manhood or Middle Life (includes <i>Sibylline Leaves</i> collection)	Derwent and Sara
Poems Written in Later Life (corresponds to "Miscellaneous Poems" in earlier editions)	Derwent and Sara
Notes	Predominately Sara, with several contributions by Derwent.

Figure 7 (above) shows the arrangement of the single volume *Poems 1852* and the family member responsible for each section. The most striking differences between *Poems 1852* and the earlier *Poetical Works* are the chronological arrangement and the addition of paratextual material (Preface, Notes) prepared by Sara and Derwent. Each sibling signals the extent of their involvement by appending their initials to their respective contributions. The Notes are an exception to this general rule: Sara does not sign her compositions; Derwent, however, signs his. Sara and Derwent are the only siblings within the thesis to mark their individual contributions to a collaborative text. The Lambs' texts, by contrast, are published either in Charles' name or anonymously. In doing so, the Coleridge siblings make it clear that Sara, (as Derwent also points out in his Advertisement), is considered *the* editor of *Poems 1852*: "The preface, and the greater part of the notes, are her composition: the selection and arrangement have been determined almost exclusively by her critical judgement" (v). The marking of material also enables me to tease out the siblings' different editorial practices through the kind of notes they append, the kind and amount of information they give to the reader about

a specific poem and whether they try to direct or guide the reader to a particular interpretation.

Through a comparison of the two editions, 1834 and 1852, it is possible to detect the different editorial practices of each family member and the narratives that each family member attempts to establish for STC and his reputation. Henry is primarily concerned with providing a full record of the poet's poetic output, regardless of how that may reflect upon the image of STC as the Victorian Sage. Derwent is concerned with presenting STC in as respectable light as possible and advocates the removal of any potentially offensive or overly sensual poems.¹¹⁹ Sara moves between these poles. She refuses to censor STC's poetry and also engages with the more damaging charges of plagiarism made against STC. However, she views the family as responsible for providing a definitive record of STC's genius: any poems that do not conform to Sara's critical judgement of STC's genius are excluded from her presentation of STC's corpus.

Examining Henry first, his decision to expand the corpus by 72 poems prioritises the desire for a *comprehensive* record of the poet's output. Henry's "cheaper edition", which introduced new poems into the corpus (some previously published and others previously unpublished), responded to the pressures of the competitive literary marketplace and attempted to sustain public interest in STC's *Poetical Works* (Letter of Sara Fricker-Coleridge, *Minnow* 168). Although Henry followed STC's three volume structure and subheadings of the 1829 edition, in "collecting everything he can add to the Vols" Henry brushed aside any notion of selectiveness and as a result changed and greatly expanded STC's own poetic selections (*Minnow* 168). Hence 20

¹¹⁹ See Sara's letter to John Taylor Coleridge (June 1843?): "There are some of my Father's Poems, which, though racy and energetic, are—not *drawing-roomy* ... the volume, as a present to young ladies, would be better without those *unreadables*. These however are but few" (*SCT* 33).

pieces of long-forgotten juvenilia, school-boy poems, (unfinished) metrical experiments and comic anecdotal verse from STC's correspondence found their way into the 1834 volume. Henry's edition anticipates modern scholarly editions in its bid for comprehensiveness. However, in attending to the contemporary fashion for literary biography, *Poetical Works 1834* gave readers glimpses into STC's private life-writing in verse. It exposed readers to STC's unfinished, less serious and more crude poetic productions which were hard to reconcile with the image of STC as a moral philosopher and shrewd literary critic. Sara and Derwent swiftly removed such additions on the grounds that STC had "rejected" them himself and (according to Sara's Preface) such verse showed "little prophetic note of genius" and was deemed only "of ephemeral interest" to readers (xi, xii).

Sara and Derwent shared the same overarching aim and selected poems that displayed "prophetic" genius in order to *canonise* STC's poetry. However, in practice, they disagreed over the best ways to present an authoritative collection and their different attitudes can be traced through their organisation of the volume and their respective use of Notes. The question of whether to organise the volume *thematically* or *chronologically* divided the siblings. Sara's letters in January 1852 reveal that Derwent favoured a thematic arrangement, using STC's own generic categories from *Sibylline Leaves* and following STC's ordering from *Poetical Works 1828*:

I cannot enter into your scruple about disturbing ... the 'Sib. Leaves' of 1828 because that is so obviously to me—*not designed by STC* on any principle—any internal principle—but dictated by the 3. Vol. form. (qtd. in Mudge 172-173)

Derwent's reluctance to re-arrange *Sibylline Leaves* may stem from an earlier letter he had received from STC which identified parts of the 1817 collection as the poet's most important work. In November 1818, STC declared:

... the Apologetic Preface to the Fire, Famine, and Slaughter in the Sibylline Leaves is my happiest performance in respect of *Style*, so in point of *value* the following pages from p67-265 outweigh all my other works, verse or prose. (*CL* 4: 885)

However, within his other poetic collections STC did not solely divide his poems on the basis of genre or theme, and the combination of preserving *both* STC's original ordering from *Poetical Works 1828* and grouping similar poems together would lead to chronological inconsistencies across the volume. Sara points to such contradictions when she rejects Derwent's suggestion to move "The Devil's Thoughts" into a separate section and place it "at the head of a humorous set" of poems:

Then you scruple to remove "the Devil's Thoughts" from the place where STC placed them—and from their natural point of time! ... I would rather just reprint the vols in the last arrangement than make such bold alterations in some points and refrain from others, which seem so plainly dictated by common sense. For surely the chronological arrangement is so dictated. (*SCT* 98-99)

Sara's insistence on a chronological arrangement and the ordering of poems according to their "natural point in time" reflected another literary trend, as identified by Gamer, of "tying the literary corpus to the literary life" (46). She continues:

Students of poetry are beginning more and more to approve the ordering of poems according to date of production. Now many lovers of Wordsworth are longing for a regular chronological arrangement of his poems. But W.W. suspected that his later poems were not so well liked as his earlier, by many, and hence was to force them down together—not to put the later ones all together, to be disregarded and deserted when the vigorous early ones were come to an end. (*SCT* 99)

Unlike STC's *Sibylline Leaves*, which seemed to ignore literary trends, Sara's *Poems 1852* catered to a burgeoning Victorian readership that increasingly organised poetic collections according to the stage of the poet's life when the poems were composed. In Sara's eyes, *Poems 1852* would rival Wordsworth's six volume *Poetical Works*, superior in its arrangement, readability and the quality of the poems themselves. STC's genius is presented as lasting far longer than Wordsworth's and STC's later poetry would not need to be hidden amongst his earlier more confident work.

Chronological arrangement also followed STC's own preference in later life for poetic arrangement (even if he never practised it within his own collections). In January 1834, Henry records the poet's opinion in *Table Talk* (and it follows Gamer's notion of the literary corpus reflecting the literary life):

After all you can say, I still think the chronological order the best for arranging a poet's works. All your divisions are in particular instances inadequate and they destroy the interest which arises from watching the progress, maturity, and even decay of genius. (1: 453)

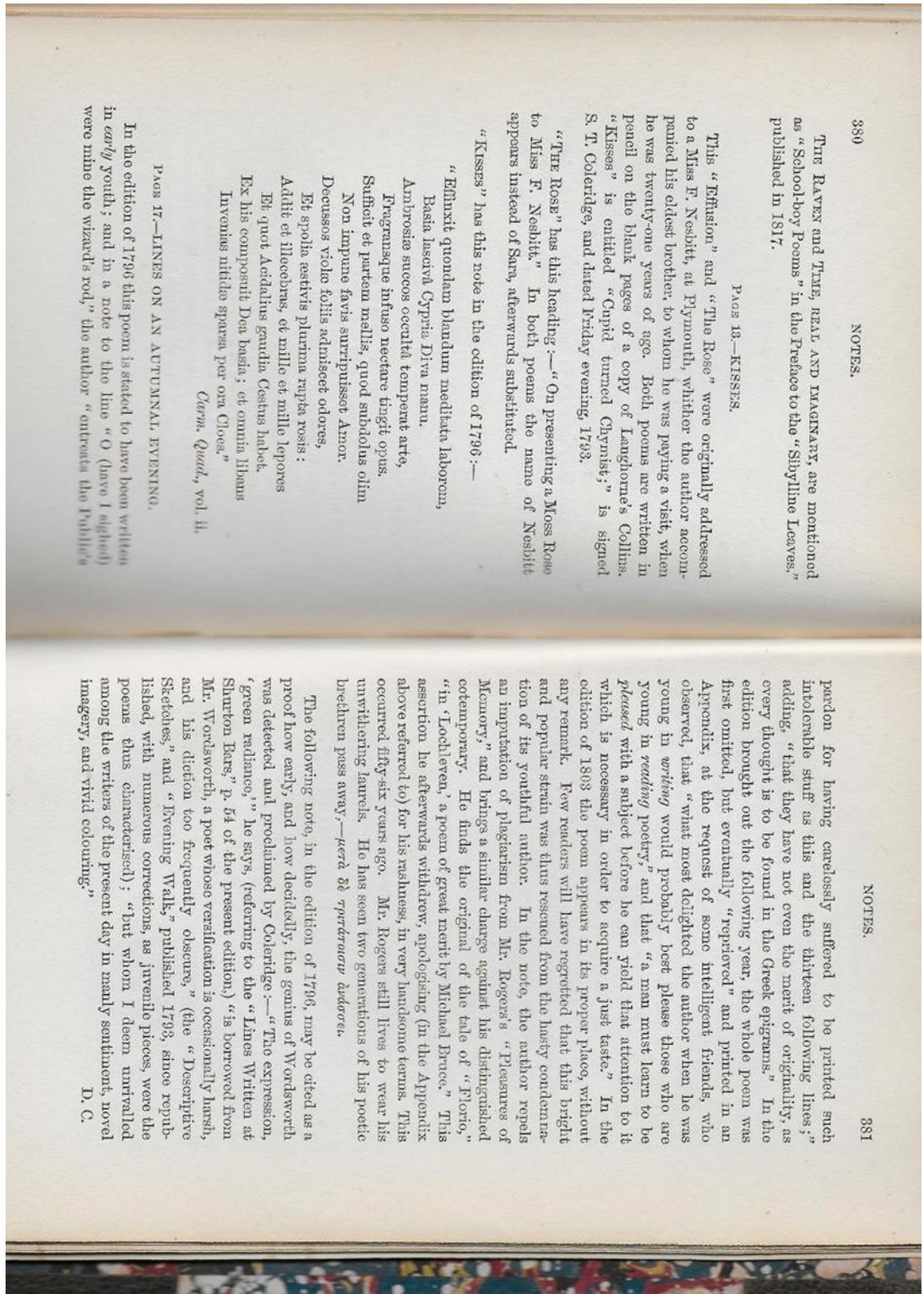
In the Preface to *Poems 1852*, Sara seizes on this notion and makes a special claim for STC's genius because he reached poetic maturity at a remarkably young age:

... his twenty-fifth year has been called his *annus mirabilis*. To be a 'Prodigal's Favourite—then, worse truth! a Miser's pensioner,' is the lot of Man. In respect of poetry, Coleridge was a 'Prodigal's favourite,' more, perhaps, than ever [a] Poet was before (viii).

Sara's allusion to the last stanza in Wordsworth's "The Small Celandine" neatly propagates two narratives about STC. Firstly, Sara puns on the two senses of "Prodigal". On the one hand, it recalls those earlier reviews of *Sibylline Leaves* that deemed STC reckless for wasting his poetic talents and for not paying professional

attention to his poetic productions. On the other hand, prodigal, as the *OED* states, also refers to “providing a lavish amount of a resource or quality”, which implies that STC has provided a glut of verse to his readers. This ties into the second narrative about the arc of STC’s poetic career: such a prodigal or prolific youth may be followed by an unwillingness to share poetry (“a Miser’s pensioner”) in later life. Sara echoes STC’s own claim in the Preface to *Sibylline Leaves* (1817) that he will turn away from poetry towards other pursuits (in STC’s case, literary criticism and philosophy): “Henceforth the author must be occupied by studies of a different kind” (iii). Sara’s allusion to “The Small Celandine”, then, works ambivalently. It ultimately serves to celebrate her father’s poetic genius, but it also creates a distance between the ebullient youthful poet and the image of the respectable Victorian Sage that the Coleridge family had been carefully crafting since 1834.

From this short summary, two different pictures emerge of the editorial practices of the Coleridge siblings, which go on to characterise the rest of the production process and the siblings’ respective notes. Derwent looks to preserve his father’s final intentions, such as leaving the arrangement of *Sibylline Leaves* undisturbed and censor material that could damage STC’s reputation as a moral respectable philosopher. Sara, on the other hand, engages with the many inconsistencies surrounding STC (such as charges of plagiarism and parental neglect) and the many contradictions within his own work. She identifies any potential allusions to the work of others and presents the source material to the reader (a conviction she had developed during her earlier editing of *Biographia Literaria*). Hence, she changes titles to reflect any borrowings STC may have made: “On a Cataract” becomes “Improved from Stolberg” and “Hexameter Metre Explained” becomes “Translated from Schiller”. Her notes to the respective poems also provide the original material from German sources.

Figure 8: Note to "Lines on an Autumnal Evening" in *Poems 1852*.

The note to “Lines on an Autumnal Evening”, a poem first published in the 1796 edition of *Poems on Various Subjects*, is the only example in which *both* siblings work on the *same* note and provides an excellent opportunity to examine the way their different representations of STC inform the text of *Poems 1852*. Furthermore, “Lines on an Autumnal Evening” may be one of the earliest occasions when STC is accused publicly of plagiarism; an incident that STC himself addresses in the 1803 edition of *Poems on Various Subjects*. The long note appended to the poem in *Poems 1852* is divided into two sections (see **Figure 8** above). The first section is left unsigned (characteristic of Sara’s practice) and Derwent appends his initials to the second section. Furthermore, each section refers to earlier notes that STC had added to “Lines on an Autumnal Evening” and another early poem “Lines Written at Shurton Bars” in the 1797 and 1803 editions of *Poems*, and then interprets those earlier notes for the reader.

The first section of the long note appended to “Lines on an Autumnal Evening” in *Poems 1852* explains STC’s reaction to the initial charge of plagiarism:

In the note, [to the 1803 edition] the author [STC] repels an imputation of plagiarism from Mr. Rogers ‘Pleasures of Memory’ and brings a similar charge against his distinguished contemporary ... This assertion he afterwards withdrew, apologising ... for his rashness, in very handsome terms. (381)

Drawing attention to an embarrassing rift seems entirely in keeping with Sara’s editorial practice and out of keeping with Derwent’s. The second section of the note, however, offers a counter to this defamatory behaviour by pointing to one of STC’s earliest and most public acknowledgments of allusion. STC’s “Lines Written at Shurton Bars” directly quotes one of Wordsworth’s expressions, “green radiance”, from “An Evening Walk” (1793). In earlier editions of *Poems on Various Subjects*

(1796 and 1803), STC appended a note to “Lines at Shurton Bars” explaining the origin of the phrase and declared Wordsworth “unrivalled among the writers of the present day in manly sentiment, novel imagery, and imagery” (*Poems* 1852 381). Derwent reprints this note as a means of emphasising STC’s own poetic genius for recognising Wordsworth’s talent and to remind readers of the pivotal influence STC exerted on the Cumbrian poet: The note “may be cited as a proof how early, and how decidedly, the genius of Wordsworth was detected and proclaimed by Coleridge” (*Poems* 1852 381). While it may be possible that Derwent is the sole author of the note, it seems more likely that Derwent appended the secondary complimentary section after Sara’s death. As a general observation, Sara is less likely to praise Wordsworth (especially in light of her letter quoted above critiquing his later poetry). Second, and more importantly, within the note itself, there is no logical connection made between Rogers and Wordsworth, and no connection made between the two poems (“Lines on An Autumnal Evening” and “Lines on Shurton Bars”) to which STC originally attached the notes.

In the example above, each sibling performs an act of what we might call paratextual remediation, reframing and reinterpreting STC’s own paratextual notes within their own paratextual notes in order to advance their respective representations of STC. Derwent’s presentation of STC’s prophetic recognition and promotion of Wordsworth’s poetic talent softens, and offers a distraction from, Sara’s representation of STC as a genius, but one that is flawed and “rash”.¹²⁰ While this section has examined the way each of the three family members create a slightly

¹²⁰ Derwent’s bid to strictly follow STC’s final authorial intentions and represent the poet in as positive light as possible is a contrast to his presentation of his brother Hartley as an emotionally fragile, frustrated and perpetual child-like figure in his posthumous collection of Hartley’s poetry: a comparison that is ideal for developing the concerns of this chapter in the future. Derwent collected and published 234 unpublished poems by Hartley in *Poems by Hartley Coleridge, With a Memoir of his Life by his Brother* (1851). Healey illuminates the long-standing influence of, and challenges, Derwent’s representation of Hartley (66-101).

different narrative about STC, in the next section I consider how Sara and Derwent publicly legitimise themselves as editors and place themselves in opposition to Henry and his comprehensive 1834 volume.

2. “*Our judgement versus H.N.C*”: *Poetic Authority and Editorial Mediation in Poems 1852*

By performing invisible labours on her father’s texts, she makes her father visible as a genius and consequently makes herself visible as his daughter.

(Alison Hickey, “‘The Body of My Father’s Writings’: Sara Coleridge’s Genial Labour” 127)

Discussing Sara’s editing of STC, Hickey, in the quotation above, implicitly links visibility to agency. This section extends Hickey’s work in two ways; first, it strengthens the connection between editorial visibility and editorial authority, and the editor’s authority to represent and implement (his or her perception of) authorial intentions. Second, it broadens the scope of Hickey’s work by examining Sara (and Derwent) in relation to Henry, rather than solely STC. One of the most distinctive aspects of *Poems 1852* is the privileging of *Poetical Works 1828* and the 1817 edition of *Sibylline Leaves* because (according to the siblings) they represent STC’s “last” authorial intentions:

... those of 1817 and 1828, ... represent the author’s matured judgement upon the larger and more important part of his poetical productions. [The Editors]

have reason, indeed, to believe, that the edition of 1828 was the last upon which he [STC] was able to bestow personal care and attention. (*Poems 1852* xi)¹²¹

Although Sara writes the Preface in its entirety, she presents the Preface as a *joint* editorial statement on behalf of both editors. Throughout this chapter, when I discuss the Preface as a statement which represents both siblings' positions, it is with an awareness that it is a shared textual construction by Sara. Sara (and Derwent)'s preoccupation with following (what they believe to be) the authority and intentions of STC emerges out of Henry's changes to the corpus in 1834 and determines the way in which they position themselves publicly as *family* editors in *Poems 1852*. This section applies the concepts of "immediacy" and hypermediacy" from Media Studies to both *Poetical Works 1834* and *Poems 1852* to compare the visibility of Henry's and Sara and Derwent's roles as editors within their respective editions. In doing so, I argue that Sara and Derwent carefully position themselves against Henry's selection and arrangement while pursuing their own agenda of upholding an authoritative poetic corpus which is arranged chronologically.

In *Unediting the Renaissance* (1996), Leah S. Marcus explains that every edited literary text is subject to mediation:

No single version of a literary work, whether Renaissance or modern, can offer us the fond dream of unmediated access to an author or to his or her era; the more aware we are of the processes of mediation to which a given subject has been subject, the less likely we are to be caught up in a strict hermeneutic knot

¹²¹ Sara (and Derwent)'s designation of the 1828 edition as representing the final authoritative text is a matter for debate among subsequent (family, professional and academic) editors. For example, E. H. Coleridge challenges the siblings' identification of the 1828 text as authoritative: "the editors maintain that the three-volume edition of 1828 (*a mistake for the 1829*) was the last upon which Coleridge was 'able to bestow personal care'" (*Poems 1912* v, my emphasis). Instead, he uses the 1834 edition as the base text for his edition. James Dyke Campbell in his 1898 collection uses the 1829 text (vi) and Richard Holmes, in a much more recent edition, uses the 1834 text.

by which the shaping hand of the editor is mistaken for the intent of the author, or for some lost, “perfect” version of the author’s creation. (3)

Furthermore, Marcus demonstrates that in preparing the author’s text for the reader, the actions of the editor-as-mediator may be visible or invisible. The invisible or visible presence or actions of the hand of the editor can be compared, in a very general way, to the ideas of “immediacy” and “hypermediacy” as defined by Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin in *Remediation* (2000).

In *Remediation*, Bolter and Grusin argue that media shape the experience of the user in two main ways. “Immediacy” refers to instances when media work to erase the process of mediation, so that the user “forgets the presence of the medium” (272): “the logic of immediacy dictates that the medium itself should disappear and leave us in the presence of the thing represented: sitting in a racing car or standing on a mountain top” (6). The editor’s “shaping hand” (to borrow Marcus’ term) is invisible and the reader appears to enjoy a direct and immediate relationship to the content of the medium: in our case, the author’s words and vision. “Hypermediacy”, on the other hand, makes explicit the process of mediation, drawing attention to the various apparatus used within that process. In doing so, hypermediacy “emphasizes process or performance rather than the finished art object” (William T. Mitchell qtd. in Bolter and Grusin 31). If we extend Marcus’ analogy, examples of editorial “hypermediacy” can include paratextual features, such as a preface or editorial notes, which interrupt or intervene (even in a helpful manner) during the act of reading.

More often than not, our experience of a medium oscillates between instances of “immediacy” and “hypermediacy”; for instance, the interruption of the experience of playing an immersive game on a games console by a reminder for a software update. Bolter and Grusin view the ongoing oscillation between “immediacy” and

“hypermediacy” as different sides of the same coin of “Remediation”, which they define as the process by which “new media refashion prior media forms” (273). They describe the process in more detail:

... the new medium can remediate by trying to absorb the older medium entirely, so that the discontinuities between the two are minimized. The very act of remediation, however, ensures that the older medium cannot be entirely effaced. The new medium remains dependent upon the older one, in acknowledged or unacknowledged ways. (47)

If we replace the word “medium” with the word “edition” in the quotation above, remediation becomes particularly useful for thinking about the evolution of STC’s poetic corpus: *Poetical Works 1828* feeds into the 1829 and 1834 editions and eventually into *Poems 1852*. The group is a series of remediations with each remediation or edition dependent upon the older one. I am interested in the ways the different family editors acknowledge or conceal their dependency on prior editions and in doing so, reveal the extent of their own editorial roles and authority.

Henry’s remediating of *Poetical Works* is a good example of editorial *immediacy*, or to borrow Sara’s words, of the “unseen unnoticed”. In the 1834 edition, Henry’s name is absent from the title page (unlike Sara and Derwent whose names appear on the title page of *Poems 1852*). In the 1834 edition, Henry does not explain the decision to expand the corpus in a Preface nor does he add any editorial notes. Instead, Henry reprints the Notes which STC added to the 1829 edition. In a letter to Derwent in January 1852, Sara is aware of the slippage between poet and editor within *Poetical Works 1834* and worries the public might mistake Henry’s decision to expand for STC’s decision. In particular, she is concerned by Henry’s addition of an extra 20 poems to the “Juvenile Poems” section. These included school-boy poems and

adolescent pieces, such as “The Nose”, which STC had seen fit to exclude from *Poems 1797* and all other collections. Furthermore, Sara is aware that such a slippage could raise serious questions about the siblings’ editorial authority and their decision to omit the 20 poems in question:

But the truth is, *it is our judgement versus H.N.C.*, not our judgement against S.T.C., either unbiased, or swayed by friend, which constitute our great exertion of editorial boldness. The fact must have been, that my Father never troubled his head about the edition of 1834—left it entirely to Henry. Had he [STC] given the matter a thought, he never *could* have sanctioned the publication of poems he scorned in 1796. But how to state this to the Public? He was *alive*—therefore it *looks* like his edition and that we are excluding a great deal of what he thought fit to publish. (*SCT* 45)¹²²

In the private space of the letter, Sara stakes out their shared position along the lines of direct genetic lineage: “*our judgement versus H.N.C.*, not our judgement against S.T.C.”. Furthermore, the slippage between the man and the text (with the text standing for the selection of the man) demonstrates the longevity of the literary fashion to read texts biographically and recalls the earlier exploration in Chapter Five of the negative reviews of *Sibylline Leaves* which viewed the poetry as standing for the worst characteristics of the man.

¹²² The siblings’ public dismissal of the 1834 edition sparked a wider critical debate over the extent of Henry and STC’s involvement in the preparation of *Poetical Works 1834*. A brief account of the debate is as follows: early editors of STC’s letters and poetry, such as E. L. Griggs and E. H. Coleridge argue that “Coleridge himself was responsible for the text of his *Poetical Works* of 1834” (*CL* 6: 981n; see also *Poems 1912* i). More recent critics, however, follow Sara and identify Henry, rather than STC, as responsible. J. C. C Mays presents the strongest case based on textual evidence for Henry’s involvement (*PW CC* 1: 1258). See also Iain A. Gordon, “The Case-History of Coleridge’s Monody on Chatterton”. p. 66, and George Whalley, “Coleridge’s Poetical Canon” p. 23. Finally, there are anecdotes from letters which indicate (but do not confirm) the extent of Henry’s involvement. Sarah-Fricker Coleridge writes to Thomas Poole in August 1832, STC “is so dilatory he will never do it without help” and “Henry is preparing his Uncle’s poems for the press” (*Minnow* 174, 168). STC, writing to Henry in December 1833, states “do not let my doings or no doings interfere with Progress of Pickering” (*CL* 6: 975).

Later, in the same letter, she reinforces her point that Henry's selection, as far as the "Public" were concerned, represented STC's final selection and ordering:

But we have exercised editorial authority in making such large alterations, both of distribution and selection, from the edit. of 1834, which must *pass* for my Father's.... All Editors must exercise considerable discretion in reproducing works, which have not been carefully revised and settled by the author. The Public, merely as such, cannot judge of this discretion, for the mere reading public does not take the trouble to investigate and must trust the Editors implicitly as to a good deal. (*SCT* 45)

The letter also brings up a contrast between Sara and STC's models of readerly interpretation. While STC, in his model of the poet-as-Sibyl, released disorderly and unsettled meaning to a reader, in Sara's model, the editor has the discretion to interpret any unsettled meaning for the "Public". In light of the slippage between Henry-as-editor and STC-as-poet within the 1834 edition, and in order to justify their decisions to reshape STC's poetic corpus, the siblings must publicly establish their authority as *family editors* of the poet by presenting themselves as representatives (or continuations) of the final authority of the poet himself.

In *Poems 1852*, there are two Prefaces: the first is the siblings' explanation of their editorial practice; the second is the Preface STC appended to *Poetical Works 1828, 1829* and which was reprinted in the 1834 edition. (This second Preface is itself a reprint of the Preface to the 1797 edition *Poems on Various Subjects*). In sharp contrast to Henry's silence, the siblings make their role as mediators visible via their Preface and the addition of editorial notes to the poems; tactics which perform "hypermediacy". For example, throughout their Preface, they speak of their actions in the third person, as the "present Editors", which implies the existence of other prior

editors and distinguishes the siblings from them (*Poems 1852* xi, xlii). The siblings also detail the compositional history of all STC's major poetic collections, which not only anticipates the tone and practice for scholarly editions, but also enables them to designate certain collections with authorial authority. As already observed, they vindicate the "arrangement" and selection of the 1817 and 1828 collection (*Poems 1852* xi). They deny the Edition of 1834 canonical status citing STC's dedication to philosophy in later life as preventing him from exercising judgement on the poems:

That of 1834, the last year of his earthly sojourning, a period when his thoughts were wholly engrossed, so far as the decays of his frail outward part left them free for intellectual pursuits and speculations, by a grand scheme of Christian Philosophy, to the enunciation of which in a long projected work his thought and aspirations had for many years been directed, was arranged mainly, if not entirely at the discretion of his earliest Editor, H. N. Coleridge. (*Poems 1852* xi)

The description also reinforces the image of STC as moral philosopher (which STC himself first propagated in the Preface to *Sibylline Leaves*) and the image of STC as Victorian Sage which the family had been cultivating for almost twenty years.

Furthermore, Sara and Derwent undermine Henry's bid to provide a comprehensive representation of STC's poetic work by criticising his inclusion of the juvenilia that STC had "rejected" throughout his career and had "never printed" in any of his collections (xli). Henry's poor editorial judgement serves as a warning to those that deviate from the author's own selection, and Sara (again) uses the image of an unhealthy body as a metaphor for the state of a poetic collection. The presence of "immature" verse that lacks "any such prophetic note of genius", according to the siblings, "injure[s] the general effect of a body of poetry" (xli). It has the effect of

“diluting and weakening, to the reader’s feelings, the general power of the collection” (xll).

On the one hand, the siblings present Henry’s editorial discretion as falling wide of STC’s own personal editorial style. On the other hand, the siblings cannot dismiss Henry altogether as his editorial authority is based upon sharing the Coleridge family name (and any criticism of a Coleridgean family editor would weaken Sara and Derwent’s own authority as direct relations of STC). While in private, Sara may have distinguished between the family members who were (and were not) direct descendants of STC, in public the siblings defended their editorial decisions by positioning themselves as family stewards of STC’s corpus:

Such alterations [selections, arrangement and revision] only have been made in this final arrangement of the Poetical and Dramatic Works of S.T. Coleridge, by those into whose charge they have devolved, as they feel assured, both the Author himself and his earliest Editor would at this time find to be necessary or desirable. (xl-xll)

Sara and Derwent can provide this “final” arrangement because they are the last continuation of the family name. They use the legal and figurative language of legitimate inheritance—“charge”, “devolved”—to emphasise their own consanguineal relations to the poet and “his earliest Editor” (in Sara’s case, it is a double bond with Henry that is consanguineal and conjugal). In this instance, the siblings position themselves as the continuing embodiment of both STC and Henry in order to make changes “both the Author and his earliest Editor *would at this time* find to be necessary or desirable” (my emphasis). They attempt, in Marcus’ words, to establish a “‘perfect’ version of the author’s creation”; a final “‘perfect’ version” which also caters to the tastes of a mid-nineteenth century readership (3; *Poems 1852* xll).

In making their roles visible as family editors, Sara and Derwent draw attention to the issue of authorial authority. In privileging (what they consider to be) STC's final authoritative text of *Poetical Works*, they also construct their own authority as family editors (and make their roles visible). STC's *Collected Poems* is very much a family text in the sense that the four editions (1828, 1829, 1834, 1852) are a series of remediations (or we might say, devolutions) of one another, and that each family member is involved in their overall production as a group. The compositional circumstances of the 1834 edition—with Henry's decisions standing for STC's—present a particular challenge to Sara as an editor who is part of a family network but repeatedly distinguishes herself apart from others within that network. Overall, although Sara presents herself and Derwent, at certain points in the Preface, as family editors (comprising of both consanguineal and conjugal relations), her public critique of the 1834 edition reinforces the singular kind of *Esteesian* authority (direct genetic inheritance) she had established in her earlier editions of STC's texts, such as *Biographia Literaria* (1847) and *Essays on his Own Time* (1850).

3. Textual Remediation and Poetical Works: Problematising Sara and Derwent's claims for Authority

Through their mediation and remediation of STC's *Collected Poems*, Sara and Derwent establish a unique kind of editorial authority that is based on their positions as direct descendants of STC's mind and body and as legitimate inheritors of his textual corpus. Over the course of the next two sections I problematise their claims for authority on a micro scale (within the series of *Collected Poems* itself) and on a macro scale (across STC's entire corpus published by the family). In this section, I firstly

focus on one textual example where the siblings use the Notes to encourage a biographical interpretation of a particular poem. Then, returning to the concept of *Poetical Works* as a series of remediations, I trace the development of the corpus across the four editions to scrutinise Sara and Derwent's selection of texts. By paying close attention to the changes across the corpus I offer the first direct textual comparison between *Poetical Works* and *Poems 1852*. In order to display a large amount of information about the evolution of the corpus, I use a series of graphs to indicate when the corpus grows or shrinks, which editors select the poems and which poems are moved to different sections. This approach allows me to problematise two established views about *Poems 1852*: first, the siblings' own claims that they follow the selection of the 1828 edition, the edition they designated as authoritative at the expense of Henry's 1834 selection; and second, the consensus among textual critics that Sara and Derwent follow their father's own editorial principles by being "selective". In doing so, I demonstrate the usefulness of remediation as a concept for close textual analysis to conclude that the corpus of *Poems 1852* relies as much, if not more, on Henry's 1834 selection rather than STC's selection of 1828.

One of the key themes across the case study has been the contemporary practice of reading poetry biographically. Throughout their editorial endeavours, Sara, Derwent and Henry largely avoid encouraging such readings in order to distance the text from the (perceived) failings of the man. Sara may draw on STC's ill and nervous body in an attempt to account for, or explain away, failings *within* STC's texts (such as a disordered structure, or the author's habit of forgetting to acknowledge the work of others), however she does not encourage a biographical interpretation of the content of these texts. Yet, there is one example when the siblings use the Notes to create a favourable narrative about STC as a father. It is the first and only time that Sara and

Derwent use STC's poetry to counter the damaging claims that STC had neglected his young family. One of the five new additions to *Poems 1852* is "The Day-Dream" (not to be confused with another short poem "A Day Dream"). As Sara and Derwent's note points out, "The Day-Dream" is first published in *The Morning Post* in 1802 and "seems to have been forgotten by its author, for this was the only occasion on which it saw light through him" (*Poems 1852* 384).

"The Day-Dream" is a short poem, carrying the subtitle, "From an Emigrant to his Absent Wife" and recalls the speaker's "sweet ... vision" of his wife at home with his child (*Poems 1852* 221). The speaker imagines his wife kissing their "babe" and in the child's face seeing "a floating presence of its darling father" (221). Parent and child, this time, the child and mother, seem to merge again in the next stanza when the speaker recalls:

Across my chest there lay a weight, so warm!
 As if some bird had taken shelter there;
 And lo! I seemed to see a woman's form—
 Thine, Sara, thine? O joy, if thine it were!
 I gazed with stifled breath, and feared to stir it,
 No deeper trance e'er wrapt a yearning spirit! (221)

The poem appears to be a straightforward celebration of marital and parental love from an absent father and husband who is so enrapt by the imagined presence of his wife that he is afraid to break the spell of the day-dream. It is particularly personal as STC's wife, Sarah Fricker-Coleridge, is named. As editors, Sara and Derwent encourage this biographical interpretation in their note: "The Editors think that it will plead against parental neglect in the minds of most readers" (334). Sara and Derwent further encourage this narrative by claiming that the poem was "doubtless composed

in Germany” (334)—a period when STC was abroad and Sarah was in England looking after Hartley and their younger son, Berkeley—and by placing the poem under “Love Poems” within the “Sibylline Leaves” portion of the volume.

Sara and Derwent’s decision to date the poem’s composition to 1798-1799 while STC was in Germany may have been prompted by a letter which STC wrote to his wife, Sarah in November 1798. Furthermore, The letter may have been the genesis for the day dream recounted in the poem, as well as many of the images, including the speaker’s tears; the reference to home as “our quiet room”; the merging of child and wife; and finally, the speaker’s imagining of Sara’s presence, “a woman’s form”. Within the letter itself, a home-sick STC muses that he might turn away from his studies and instead day-dream about his wife and son:

I should indeed dream of you for hours and hours; of you, and of beloved Poole, and of the Infant that sucks at your breast, and of my dear dear Hartley— You would be *present*, you would be with me in the Air that I breathe and I should cease to see you only when the tears rolled out of my eyes, and this naked undomestic Room became again visible—But oh with what leaping and exhilarated faculties should I return to the objects & realities of my mission. (*CL* 1: 261-262)

The day dream itself is presented as an exhilarating experience that reinvigorates and dispels the low spirits STC had described at the beginning of his letter.

A closer reading of the poem, however, troubles Sara and Derwent’s invitation to read the poem biographically. In the last stanza, the speaker is roused from his “deeper trance” of hearth and home:

And now, when I seemed sure they face to see,
Thy own dear self in our own quiet home;

There came an elfish laugh, and wakened me:
 'Twas Frederic, who behind my chair had clomb,
 And with his bright eyes at my face was peeping.

I blessed him, tried to laugh, and fell a weeping! (*Poems 1852 222*)

The interruption by Frederic and the speaker's disappointment that the vision is over overturns the main premise of the poem, that it is penned while the husband is away from his both his wife and child. If we are to read this poem biographically, (following Sara and Derwent's invitation) then the presence of a child raises the disturbing possibility that STC is not dreaming of his actual wife and child, Sarah Fricker-Coleridge and Hartley, but is imagining an altogether different scenario with a different Sara as his wife, namely Sara Hutchinson. This is supported by an earlier unpublished version of the poem, which Mays gives a composition date of July-August 1802. In a transcript copied out by Mary Hutchinson, the disruptive "Frederic" is named "Hartley" (*PW CC 1: 703*, line 28). The connection between the disruptive child in *Poems 1852* and Hartley is even more pronounced in the description of the child's "elfish laugh" as STC often depicted Hartley in his poetry as an otherworldly child.¹²³

The identification of Hartley as the disruptive child (within the earlier unpublished version and with the "Frederic" of the later published text) illuminates a contingency within the penultimate stanza of the poem and STC's imagining of the "form" Sara. The questioning "Thine, Sara, thine? O joy, if thine it were!" takes on the tentative and optimistic overtones that the imagined "form" of Sara is Sara Hutchinson rather than Sarah Fricker-Coleridge. Moreover, the speaker's longing is accentuated in the

¹²³ For example, in *Christabel*, the following lines are considered a poetic depiction of Hartley: "a little Child, a limber Elf / Singing, dancing to itself, / A Faery thing with red round cheeks" (*PW CC 1: 503*, lines 656-658).

earlier version of the poem: the lines in *Poems 1852*, “I gazed with stifled breath, and feared to stir it” were originally “I gazed with *anxious hope* and feared to stir it” (*Poems 1852* 221; *PW CC* 1: 22-23, my emphasis).

Several critics and editors also support the interpretation that the poem is about Sara Hutchinson. E. H. Coleridge gives a composition date of “1801-1802” (387). E. H. Coleridge’s dating is significant because the verse was first published in *The Morning Post* on the 19th October 1802 and more recently, Heidi Thomson has demonstrated that STC used the newspaper as a vehicle to publish verse of a private and intimate nature. For Thomson, the poem signalled “Coleridge’s frustration that Sara Hutchinson was not an integral part of Coleridge’s life” (176). Mays also examines the poem’s publication context and suggests that contemporary readers “were also meant to assume—if they wished to make an identification—that the Sara of line 22 was Mrs C, not SH” (*PW CC* 1: 704n). Finally, Richard Holmes, in his edition of STC’s poems, places “The Day-Dream” with other “Asra” poems (STC’s poetic pseudonym for Sara Hutchinson). In light of my own reading of the poem and the critical consensus that the “Sara” of the poem is more likely to be Sara Hutchinson, it may well be that STC did not merely “forget” this poem, but was reluctant to include it within his *Poetical Works* due to its sensitive private nature. The Coleridge siblings, however, impose a specific interpretation onto the poem in order to assert one biographical narrative about STC’s life over another: asserting an image of STC as a caring and attentive husband and father over the contemporary consensus that he neglected his family.

The remainder of this section turns from a close-reading of the text of *Poems 1852* to a close-reading of the poetic corpus within the *Collected Poems*. Here, I am concerned with testing the siblings’ own claims that they follow the selection of the

1828 edition, the edition they designated as authoritative at the expense of Henry's 1834 selection as well as the consensus among textual critics that Sara and Derwent follow their father's own editorial principles by being "selective". In their respective surveys of STC's poetic canon and collections, both editors of volumes within the *Collected Coleridge*, George Whalley and Mays, include *Poems 1852*. For Whalley, STC's selection of poems is governed by "the principal of exclusion" (citing *Sibylline Leaves* as an example) and the family editors in successive editions follow STC's footsteps: "If we suppose that Coleridge's own wishes are truly reflected in the work of Henry Nelson and Sara Coleridge, his aim was selection rather than accumulation; for the editions up to 1852 take away from the fringes of the corpus more than they add" ("Coleridge's Poetical Canon" 12). Whalley continues: "the 1852 edition omits almost twice as many poems as it includes afresh. Clearly, Sara and Derwent did not regard either the 1828-29 or the 1834 selection as having canonical status" (19). On the same subject, Mays echoes Whalley (almost *verbatim*): "This sense, that it was their [Derwent and Sara's] judgement against HNC, not their judgement against C's led SC and DC in their 1852 edition to deny that the collections of 1828, 1829 and 1834 had canonical status, and, to omit twice as many poems as they included afresh" (*PW CC* 1: 1259). Following suit, Levy, in her brief analyses of *Poems 1852* claims "Sara proposed a narrower canon" (*Family Authorship* 163).

Observations from these critics are misleading in several ways. First, Whalley's implication that the corpus shrinks overall obscures the fact that the corpus actually increases up until 1852 (See **Figures 9** and **10**).¹²⁴ Second, in arguing that the siblings deny canonical status to any of the editions, Mays and Whalley overlook the siblings' clear privileging of the 1828 edition within their Preface as "the last upon which he

¹²⁴ STC adds 3 poems to the 1829 edition; Henry enlarges the corpus by 72; Sara and Derwent remove a proportion of Henry's selection but add 21 poems.

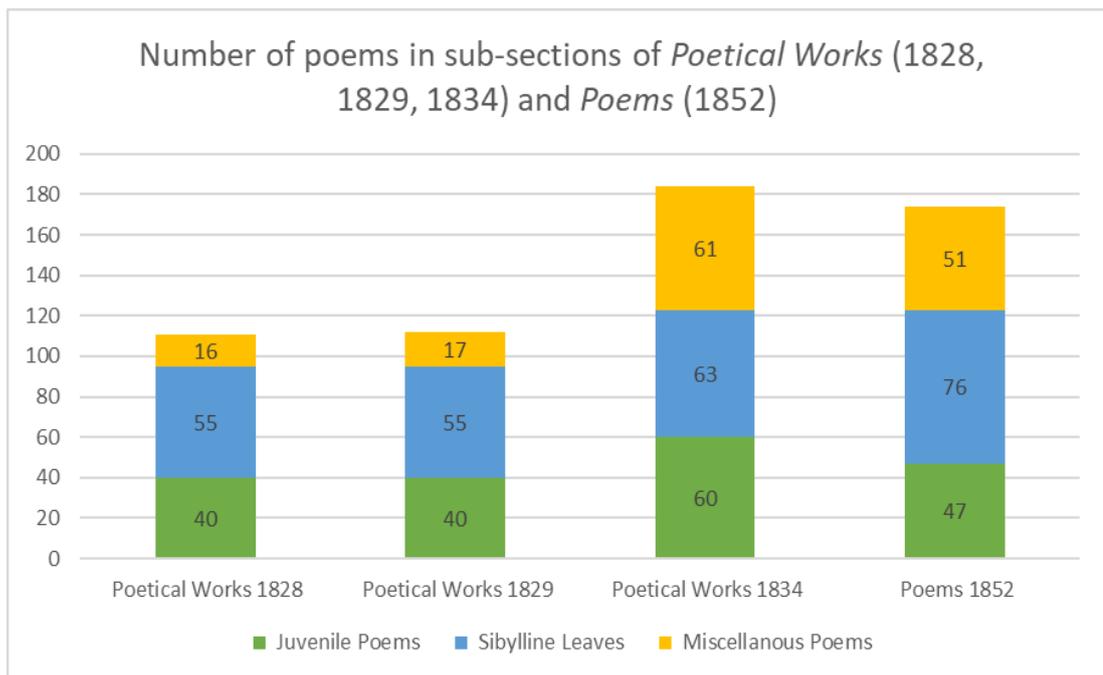
[STC] was able to bestow personal care and attention” (*Poems 1852* xi). Third, by focusing on the number of poems the siblings omit, these critics overlook the amount of Henry’s selection they keep and as a result, the way in which the 1852 corpus differs substantially from STC’s selection in the 1828 edition, the very edition the siblings deemed authoritative.

Figures 9 and 10 (below) show the growth of the corpus up until 1852 and the number of poems selected by each family member across the corpus. From the outset, there is a sharp increase in the total number of poems after 1834, which immediately suggests that the 1834 and 1852 edition have a close affinity to one another and that the 1852 corpus is closer to the 1834 selection than the two earlier selections overseen by STC. **Figure 10** demonstrates that Sara and Derwent keep over half of Henry’s additions to the corpus (43 of 72 poems) and add a further 22 poems. Considering that Sara and Derwent remove 20 of Henry’s additions to “Juvenile Poems”, they only remove 9 of Henry’s additions across the rest of the sub-sections. A simple breakdown of the corpus in this way already unsettles the general critical consensus that the siblings present a far narrower selection than Henry and the siblings’ own claim for editorial authority which is based on the privileging of STC’s 1828 edition over Henry’s 1834 edition.

The starkest difference between the 1828 edition and the 1852 edition can be seen in the increase of poems in both “Sibylline Leaves” and “Miscellaneous Poems” sections (from 55 to 77, and 16 to 51 respectively). Briefly examining the selection of poems in “Miscellaneous Poems” (**Figure 11** below), Sara and Derwent keep 30 of Henry’s 44 additions (almost double the amount STC added to the section) before adding a further 8 of their own. Already, it is possible to observe that the selection of the 1828 text is absorbed into the 1834 edition and the additions Henry adds to 1834

are absorbed into the siblings' 1852 edition. I explore the impact of this progressive remediation in more detail by focusing on the changes to "Sibylline Leaves", the collection that has been a thematic focus throughout this case study.

Figure 9: Total Number of Poems and Poems in Sub-sections of *Poetical Works* (1828, 1829, 1834) and *Poems 1852*.¹²⁵



¹²⁵ These selections do not include "The Ancient Mariner" or "Christabel" as these appear as distinct sections within all editions of *Poetical Works*. In the Table of Contents, there are 75 poems listed in the "Sibylline Leaves" section in Sara and Derwent's edition. However, I've also included "Kubla Khan" within my total (76) as this poem is incorporated into the "Sibylline Leaves" sections in all other editions. Sara and Derwent place the poem just prior to "Sibylline Leaves".

Figure 10: Percentage and Number of Poems selected by each Family Editor across each edition.¹²⁶

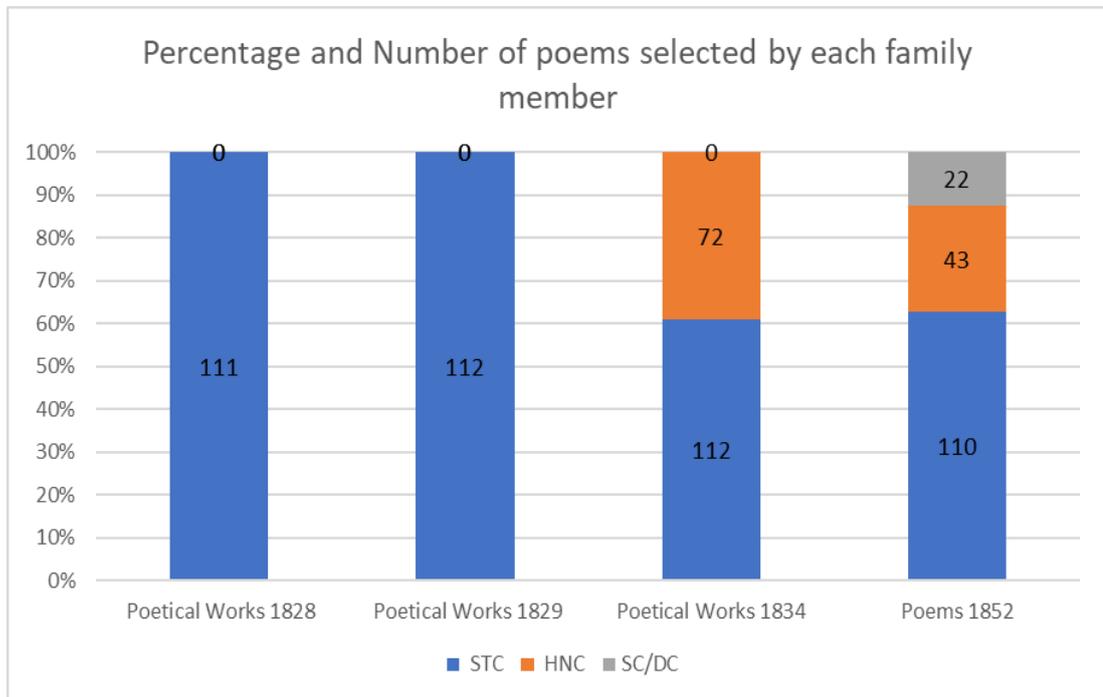
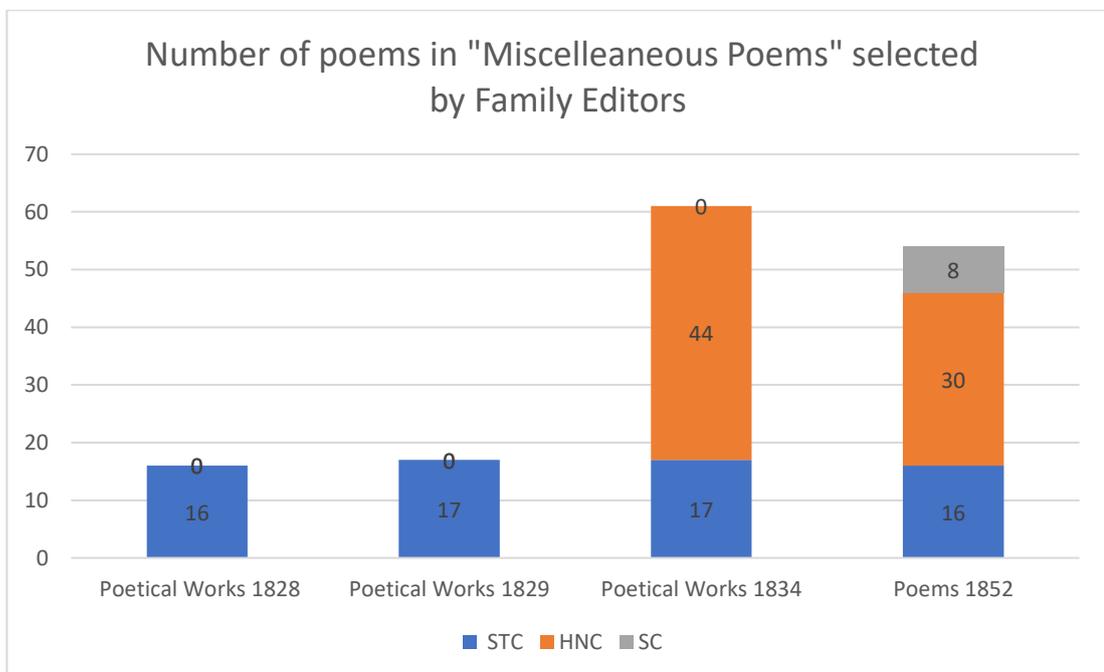


Figure 11: Number of Poems in “Miscellaneous Poems” selected by Family Editors.



¹²⁶Although it looks as if STC adds 1 poem to the 1829 edition, he adds 3 poems and omits 2. Sara and Derwent introduce 17 new poems to the corpus and reinstate 4 from earlier editions of *Sibylline Leaves* (1817) and *Poetical Works* (1828).

As **Figure 9** shows, the largest expansion of the “Sibylline Leaves” section across the four editions occurs between STC’s editions (of 1828 and 1829) and the siblings’ 1852 edition; jumping up from 55 poems in 1828, to 63 in 1834 and finally to 76 in 1852. **Figure 12** (below) shows that the siblings expand “Sibylline Leaves” even more than Henry, incorporating twelve of Henry’s selections and a further eight additions of their own. **Figure 13** (below) further breaks down the selection and reflects the tensions between the siblings over the arrangement of the collection: Derwent’s aim to keep STC’s influential generic categories and strictly follow STC’s “final” authorial arrangement; and Sara’s aim to exert an *Esteesian* style of editing, which would display the life-long progression and potential decay of poetic genius through a chronological arrangement. First, the siblings reinstate 3 poems from earlier collections which STC had seen fit to exclude in the 1828 and 1829 editions (“The Foster’s Mother Child”; “Ode to Rain”; “Composed in Sickness and in Absence”). Second, the siblings move 9 poems (2 of STC’s selection and 7 of HNC’s) from “Miscellaneous Poems” into “Sibylline Leaves” because these poems are written prior to 1817 (the year marking the end of STC’s “Early Manhood and Middle Life”). Eight of the poems in question, along with the 5 additions by Sara and Derwent are placed under “Poems of Varied Character” rather than other section headings in “Sibylline Leaves”. However, the siblings still reprint Henry’s changes to the earlier sections. For example, Henry adds “The Ballad of the Dark Ladie” and “A Child’s Evening Prayer” to the section “Love Poems”.

Using a series of graphs to examine in detail the changing state of the poetic corpus across the four editions demonstrates that Sara and Derwent relied upon and incorporated a substantial amount of Henry’s 1834 additions into their 1852 edition and counters current critical opinion that the siblings proposed a “narrower canon” of

STC's poetry than Henry. *Poetical Works 1834* emerges as the lynchpin between STC's 1828 and the siblings' 1852 editions. Conversely, this examination also highlights the persistence of Sara and Derwent's narratives and self-legitimation as Coleridgean editors, perpetuated in the Preface by their own thinly-veiled critique of Henry's editorial choices. While this section has focused on the text that connects STC and all the family editors to one another, the next and final section of the thesis examines their participation across the entire editorship from *Poetical Works 1828* to *Poems 1852*.

Figure 12: Number of Poems in "Sibylline Leaves" section selected by Family Editors.

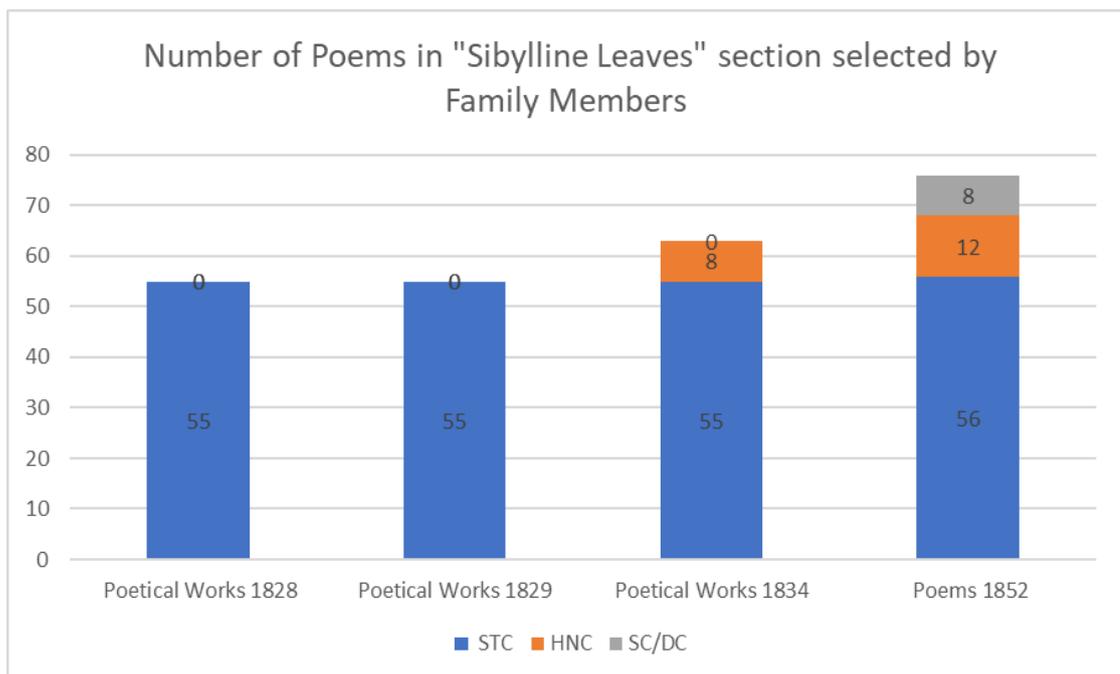
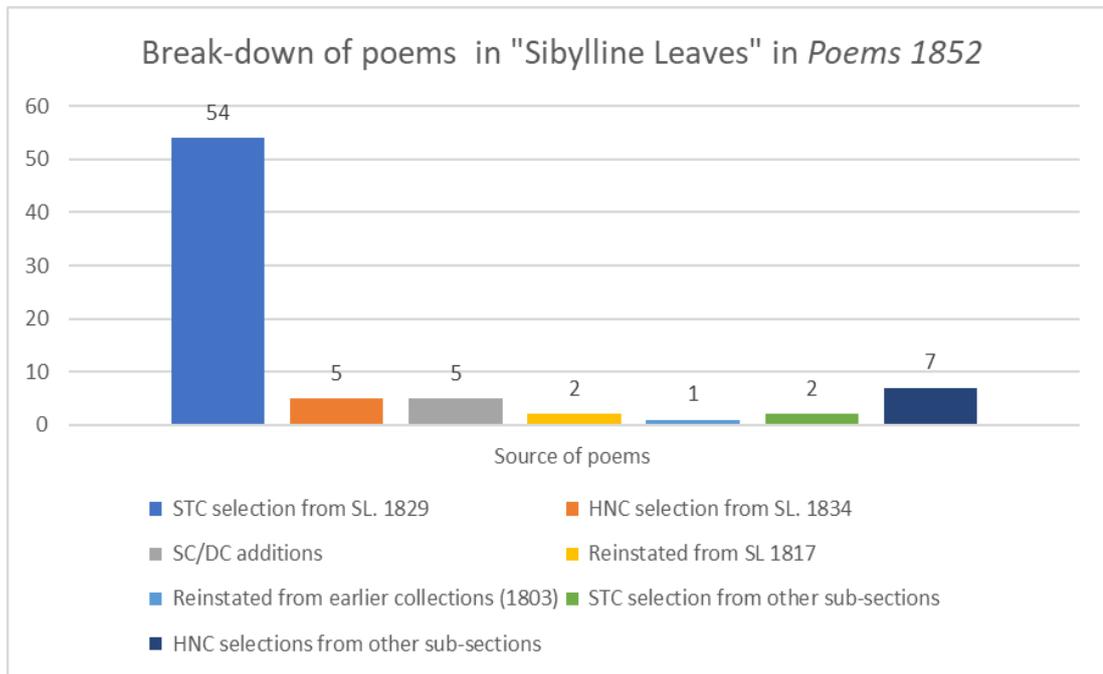


Figure 13: Break-down of Poems in “Sibylline Leaves” in *Poems 1852*.

4. Mediated Reading and Editorial Process: Mapping the Coleridge Family Network

Did I really need network theory to discuss Horatio and the State, or ‘symmetry’ in Dickens?

No, I didn’t need the theory, but I needed the networks.

(Franco Moretti, “Network Theory, Plot Analysis” *Distant Reading* 211;

Moretti’s italics)

The development of digital technologies over the past decade has opened up a plethora of possibilities for humanities scholars, particularly in terms of developing new critical methods for the literary analysis of information emerging from a large corpus of texts. One of the earliest, and most controversial, methods proposed for literary investigation and interpretation is Franco Moretti’s concept of “Distant Reading”: mapping out select features from a group of literary texts—place-names,

formal traits, stylistic characteristics, publication dates, sale figures—and then using that map as the basis for literary interpretation.¹²⁷ In one such experiment, the subject of the final chapter of *Distant Reading*, “Network Theory, Plot Analysis”, Moretti uses network theory to focus on individual texts and maps out the plots of *Hamlet* and *Our Mutual Friend*. Within the collection, Moretti introduces each essay with a reflective preface, a type of defence that playfully anticipates and tackles potential criticism. In the opening quotation above, Moretti comes tantalisingly close to undermining his own agenda of advocating the quantitative analysis of individual literary texts. Although Moretti stops short of a full critique—“*I didn’t need the theory, but I needed the networks*”—he anticipates far larger anxieties arising within the emerging field of Digital Literary Mapping: What elements of a text can be mapped? How does the abstraction of literary features, particularly formal traits such as language, enable critics to re-engage with the literary text in a meaningful way? To paraphrase Moretti, do we really need maps to discuss literary texts?

Aware of such anxieties, this concluding section of the chapter explores, in a very open-ended manner, the usefulness of literary mapping for doctoral research. I conceptualise the Coleridge family editors as a network and explore the potential of digital technologies to map out editorial process. The maps record the different actions—sourcing and transcribing material; correcting proofs; providing additional notes and prefaces—undertaken by STC, Henry, Derwent and Sara as they prepare STC’s texts for publication, beginning with STC’s own publication of *Poetical Works 1828* and ending with Sara and Derwent’s *Poems 1852*. As a small group involved in different elements of editing and holding varying degrees of responsibility over the

¹²⁷ An example of such practices informing research on Romanticism is Michelle Levy and Mark Perry’s article, “Distantly Reading the Romantic Canon: Quantifying Gender in Current Anthologies”.

course of the editorship, the family lends itself to network mapping, and visualising the multifarious connections between each family editor and published text.

However, I primarily use the maps, and the process of mapping, to test my wider argument that Sara's editing of STC is not a waste of her own considerable literary talent but allows her to cultivate a *writerly* and *authorial* identity as an intellectual figure and woman of letters. In earlier sections, we have seen how Sara's mediation of her father's texts and mediation of herself as editor through those texts enables her to assert herself as both the authoritative "inheritor" and interpreter of STC's considerable talents and literary remains. I have also problematised Sara and Derwent's claims for editorial authority as direct descendants of STC by indicating the extent to which Sara and Derwent keep Henry's selection of STC's corpus and by recognising the emergence of Henry as more central figure within the production of the *Collected Poems*. In this section, I am interested to explore whether this is reflected in the network maps of editorial process and what, if anything, they may reveal about the influence of Henry and Sara across the editorship. Ultimately, then, this final section of the thesis asks three questions: What might literary mapping reveal about shared and familial editorial process? Second, as well as demonstrating editing as a mediated activity, is Distant Reading itself a kind of mediated reading? Finally, whether literary mapping might be more useful for mapping the world *outside and around* the literary text (such as process or reception), rather than mapping feature *within* the literary text itself?

Before turning to the Coleridge family editorial network, I briefly consider the differences between mapping the world of the literary text and mapping editorial process and reflect upon its implications for Digital Literary Mapping. For Moretti, literary mapping is first and foremost a quantitative approach to the study of a literary

text and a large group of texts (which may or may not have a highly geospatial content).¹²⁸ In mapping out select features of literary texts, the “reality of the text undergoes a process of deliberate reduction and abstraction” to produce “[s]hapes, relations, structures. Forms. Models” (*Graphs, Maps, Trees* 1). Moretti uses the resultant maps as “analytical tools” by paying attention to the “visual construct” in the hope that the map will bring “to light relations that would have otherwise remain hidden” (*Atlas of the European Novel* 3, 13). “Distant Reading”, a term coined by Moretti in *Graphs, Maps, Trees* (2005), is the practice of interpreting such map-models in order to gain “a sharper sense of . . . overall interconnection” between the patterns and previously unseen connections within an individual text or across a corpus of texts that are now made visible by the map-model (1). However, Moretti admits that in practice this process can be rather experimental. Explaining his method in “Network Theory, Plot Analysis” he writes: “*I proceeded here, (mis-)using network theory to bring some order to literary evidence, but leaving my analysis free to follow any course that happened to suggest itself*” (*Distant Reading* 212; Moretti’s italics). Implicit within Moretti’s comment is a disjunction between the map and the act of literary interpretation because the map determines the course of literary analysis.

It is precisely this lack of integration between the interpretation of the text and the map within Moretti’s method that has generated substantial criticism. Rachel Hewitt, for example, argues that mapping cannot be “the first step in a mass hermeneutic process, but must come after an exploration of (textual, bibliographic, historical, biographical) evidence for a work’s engagement with spatial concerns” (“Mapping

¹²⁸ In *Atlas of European Novel*, Moretti was concerned with literature that has a highly geospatial content and practised literary mapping as a means to make “the connection between geography and literature” (3). His latest two monographs, *Graphs, Maps, Trees* (2005) and *Distant Reading* (2013), are less concerned with geospatial literary texts than with the application of literary mapping and Distant Reading as analytical tools for interpreting literary history and individual texts.

and Romanticism” 158). Responding to Hewitt, and in contrast to Moretti, the editors of a recent collection *Literary Mapping in the Digital Age* (2016) argue that literary mapping is, first and foremost, “a practice that *enriches* the reader’s appreciation of the literary work of art” (7, my emphasis). Within that collection, in “Mapping Literature”, Sally Bushell offers a method for such a practice by proposing a combination of “spatialised criticism (integrating maps / acts of mapping and text), and acts of close-reading (detailed interpretation of complex ideas and images)” which would allow critics to use literary mapping as a tool to fully respond to the richness of the literary work as a whole, instead of responding to selected and abstracted features (*Literary Mapping in the Digital Age* 143). For recent critics, acts of mapping must emerge out of prior sustained engagement with the text and the map must also feed back into the text to help alter and further critical interpretation. Bearing this in mind, my own acts of mapping out or, (as in the previous section) charting the Coleridge family’s editorial endeavours has occurred only after a sustained engagement with the primary texts themselves.

Critical interest in literary mapping is predominantly related to the mapping of literary texts with a highly geospatial content.¹²⁹ However, I am interested in spatialising creative process and in particular editorial process, which involves different stages and activities from those we associate with writerly process. Furthermore, how might we map editorial process with limited primary evidence from unpublished letters, journals, and manuscripts of the Coleridge family? Angharad Saunders is one of the few critics to explore the possibilities of mapping the “slippery

¹²⁹ Digital projects mapping a variety of UK-based corpora based at Lancaster University include *The Spatial Humanities*, *Geospatial Innovation in the Digital Humanities: A Deep Map of the English Lake District* and *Mapping the Lakes: A Literary GIS*. *Palimpsest* at the University of Edinburgh maps the textuality of the Scottish capital. *Walking Ulysses* (Boston College) charts the movement of characters around Dublin in James Joyce’s *Ulysses*.

and messy” world of creative process (prior to the text), using Arnold Bennett as a case study (*Literary Mapping in the Digital Age* 150). Saunders initially explores the potential of *GIS* (*Geographic Information Systems*) to map the “spatialities of creation: the gamut of geographical experiences, both real and imagined, that are part of a writer’s being-within-the world” (147). Over the course of her article, however, Saunders emphasises “spatial network[s] of correspondence” and conversation between friends *over* geospatial aspects (such as locatedness or the author’s situatedness within the world) for acts of literary creation. She concludes that the cartographic representation of geographical space available in *GIS* is not adequate to map out the social networks and spatialities immanent within creative *process*: “A GIS that maps without a map, revealing instead linkages, networks, and relationships over time and space is, perhaps, more productive in the world that comes before the text” (*Literary Mapping in the Digital Age* 158).

Saunders’ emphasis on finding a format to represent links, relationships and networks themselves prior to the text is particularly useful for considering the representation of the actions of a group or a network of people. To that end, I create a series of network maps that record editorial involvement across time in order to illuminate the kind of relationality that Saunders acknowledges as vital to literary creation and, in the specific case of editing *STC*, to indicate the degree of influence held by different family members over each text prior to publication. In using network maps, I follow larger digital projects that map out connections (real-life meetings or correspondence) between people (authors, artists and politicians) during a particular period in order to explore the influence of individuals or groups. These include *Mapping The Republic of Letters* (Stanford); *Six Degrees of Francis Bacon* (Carnegie Mellon); and *Digital Mitford* (Pittsburgh).

However, my mapping of process differs significantly from other types of literary mapping in two distinctive ways. The first concerns theme and the second scale. In mapping process, I am investigating the world prior to the finished published (or republished) text, rather than the world within the text itself or the world outside the text of readers, publishers and booksellers. As far as I am aware, it is the first time the mapping of editorial process has been undertaken. This project also differs radically from others because of its small size. While all of the mapping endeavours listed above operate on a macro scale, using a corpus consisting of hundreds of texts or thousands of historical figures, this project is minute by comparison, with seven family members and ten texts. The structure of the network map, therefore, changes to accommodate the smaller scale of my mapping. While other network maps chart a single type of connection between entities (such as correspondence sent between two people), I map multiple types of connections. Each connection represents different kinds of textual activity associated with editing (transcribing source material, correcting proofs, etc). Furthermore, I make a series of maps that are chronological which cover three distinct periods: STC's later years; STC's death and Henry's involvement; Henry's death and Sara's assumption of full editorial responsibility. This enables me to trace the changing involvement of members over time. It is the combination of mapping multiple actions and creating a series of maps over time that helps me to visualise and trace the complexity and richness of the family editorial network and makes the activity of literary mapping worthwhile as a research tool, regardless of the "patterns" the resultant maps may depict.

Turning to the mapping process itself, the network maps were made using *Maltego* because it is one of the few software programs that can integrate different kinds of data into one visualisation and map multiple kinds of connections (edges) between

different kinds of entities (nodes).¹³⁰ In my case, family members and STC's texts are nodes and each connection (edge) between nodes (family member and text) represents a different type of editorial action, listed in the key below. These actions can be broken down into varying degrees of editorial responsibility, from minor assistance to full editorial responsibility for the shape and structure of STC's texts. Breaking down the process into a hierarchy of editorial activities provides a clearer overview of who is involved at which point and what kind of activities they undertake. Further detail is recorded on the maps by using line thickness to indicate an individual's involvement in a particular activity. Finally, a broken, or dotted line, indicates instances when a family member plans to execute a certain job, but does not, and instances when there is uncertainty over the extent to which they performed a certain role.

Figure 14: List of Editorial Activities in Network Maps.

Job	Colour on Map	Responsibility
Selection of material	Green	Major
Organising structure of the text	Purple	Major
Writing Additional Material (Preface, Introduction, Notes etc)	Yellow	Major
Copy-Editing/Correcting Proofs	Red	Minor
Finding prose or poetry	Pink	Minor
Transcribing manuscript material	Dark Blue	Minor
Acts as Amanuensis	Orange	Minor

One of the main challenges of mapping (to borrow Saunders' phrase) the "slippery and messy" world of process is finding sufficient evidence from primary and secondary sources to determine the involvement of family editors and the roles they

¹³⁰ I am grateful to Alex Reinhold (History Department, Lancaster) for recommending the software programme *Maltego* and for making the resultant maps in this chapter.

perform within the preparation of each text (*Literary Mapping* 150).¹³¹ In light of this, the corpus is limited to texts that were significantly expanded (through the addition of paratextual material) or were restructured, or texts that involved a greater number of family editors. As a result, several texts which Sara edited alongside Henry are not included, such as *On the Constitution of Church and State* (1839); *Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit* (1839-1840); and *Lay Sermons* (1839). Similarly, a couple of editions which Sara prepared after Henry's death, such as *Notes and Lectures on Shakespeare* (1849) and *Essays on His Times* (1850), are also not included.

The network maps are broken down into three main time periods and are incremental, as shown in the following list.

- **Figure 15** ranges from 1828 to STC's death in 1834 and covers the publications of *Poetical Works 1828* (3 vols), *Poetical Works 1829* (3 vols), *Aids to Reflection* (1831) and *Poetical Works 1834* (3 vols).
- **Figure 16** incorporates the years of Henry's heading of the editorial project after STC's death in 1834 until his own death in 1843. It includes the additions of *The Literary Remains of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (1836-39), *The Friend* (1837) and another edition of *Aids to Reflection* (1843).
- **Figure 17** depicts the entire network from 1828 to 1852 and incorporates Sara's stewardship of the project from 1843 until her death in 1852. During this period, she publishes *Biographia Literaria* (2 vols) in 1847, an expanded edition of *Aids to Reflection* (2 vols) in 1848, and prepares for press, *Poems 1852*.

¹³¹ My summary of the accounts of preparing the texts, and the various roles undertaken by each family member, is indebted to the following sources: Griggs' *Coleridge Fille*; Mays' Annexe on *Poetical Works* in *PWCC*; Mudge's *Sara Coleridge*; and Vardy's *Constructing Coleridge*. Primary material includes Sarah Fricker-Coleridge's *Minnow Among Tritons*; STC's *Collected Letters (CL)*; and finally, the *Memoirs and Letters of Sara Coleridge (Memoirs)*.

Figure 15: Map of STC's later years 1828-1834.

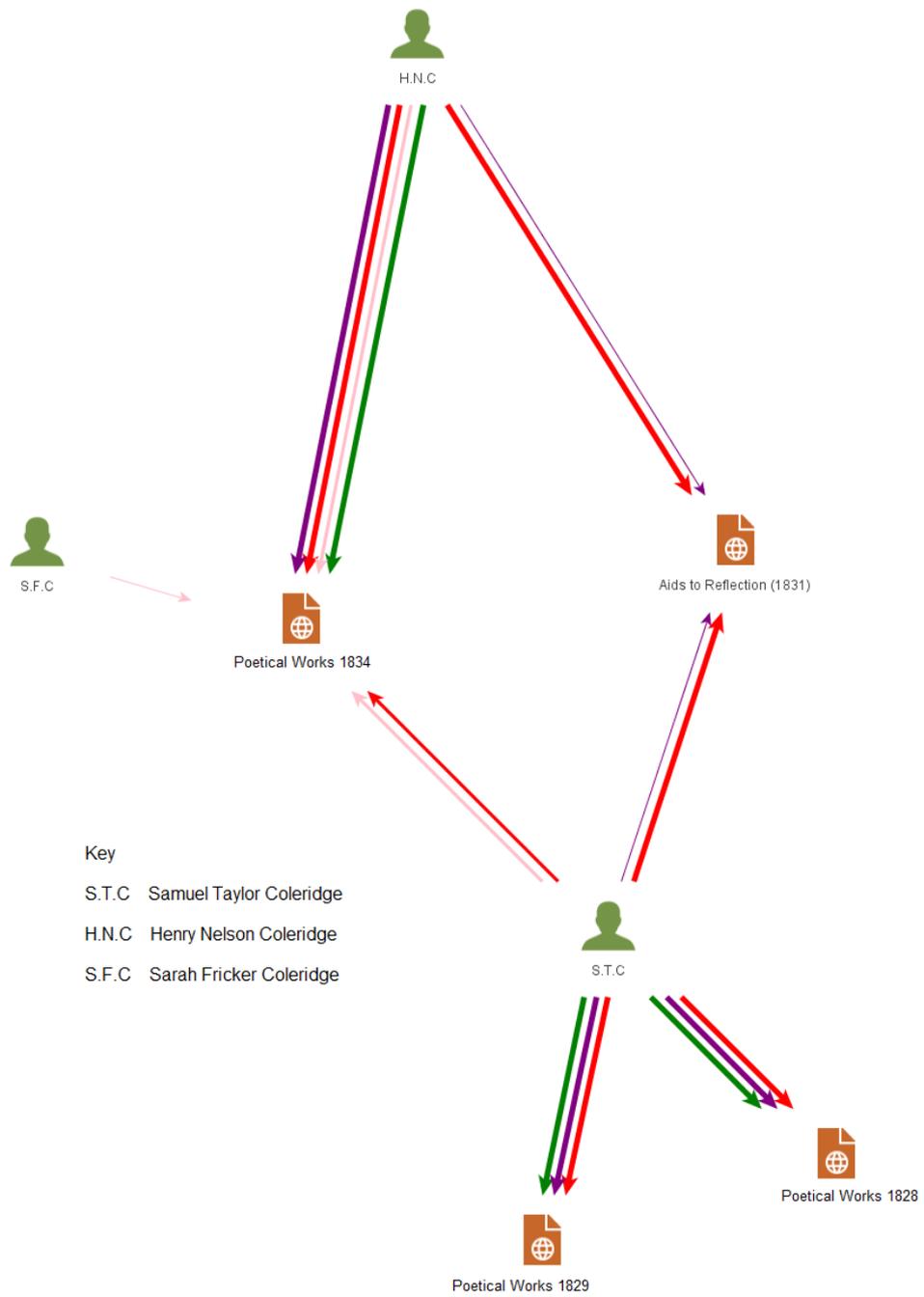


Figure 16: Map of the Editorship under Henry's lead (1834-1843).

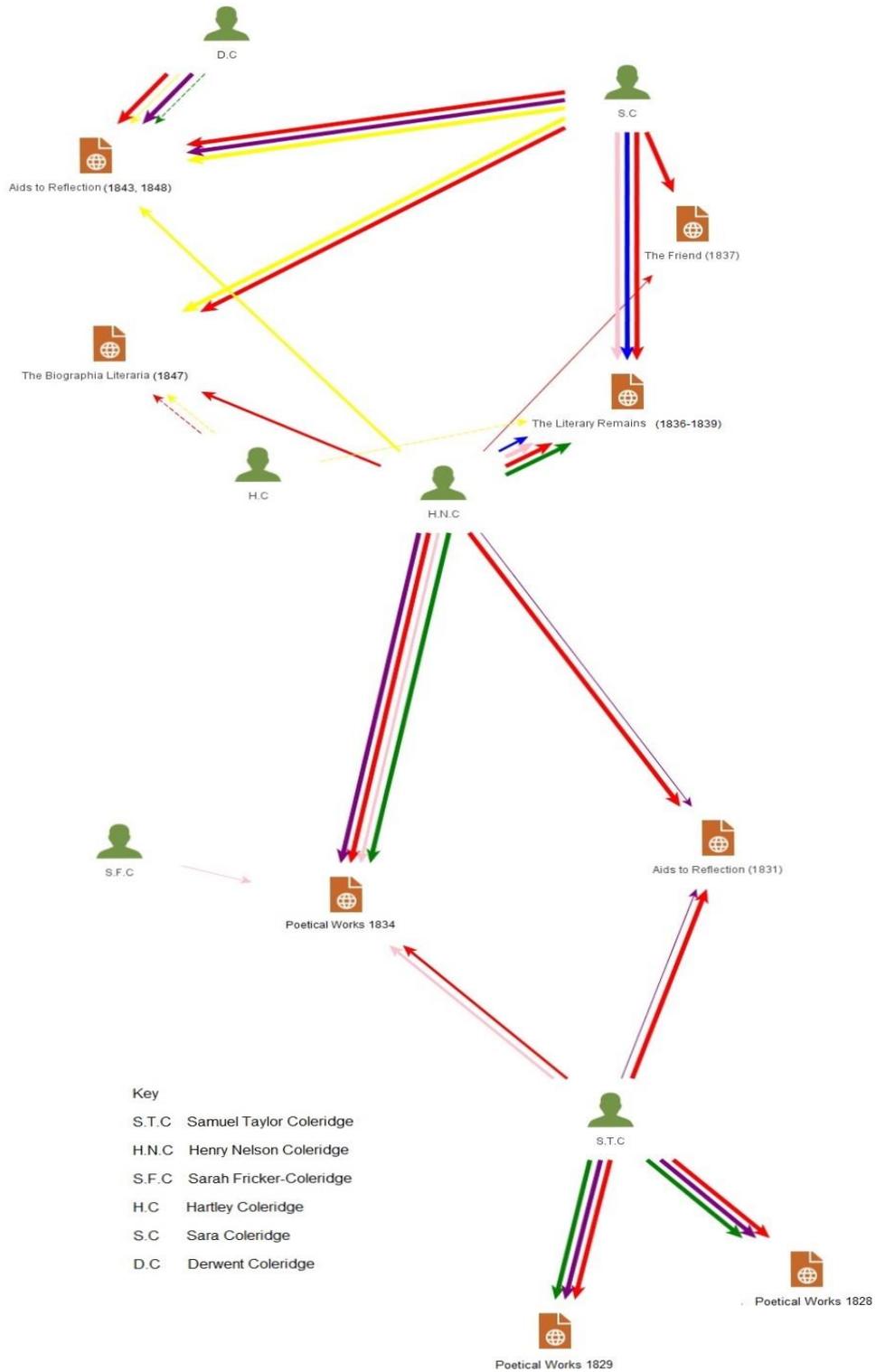


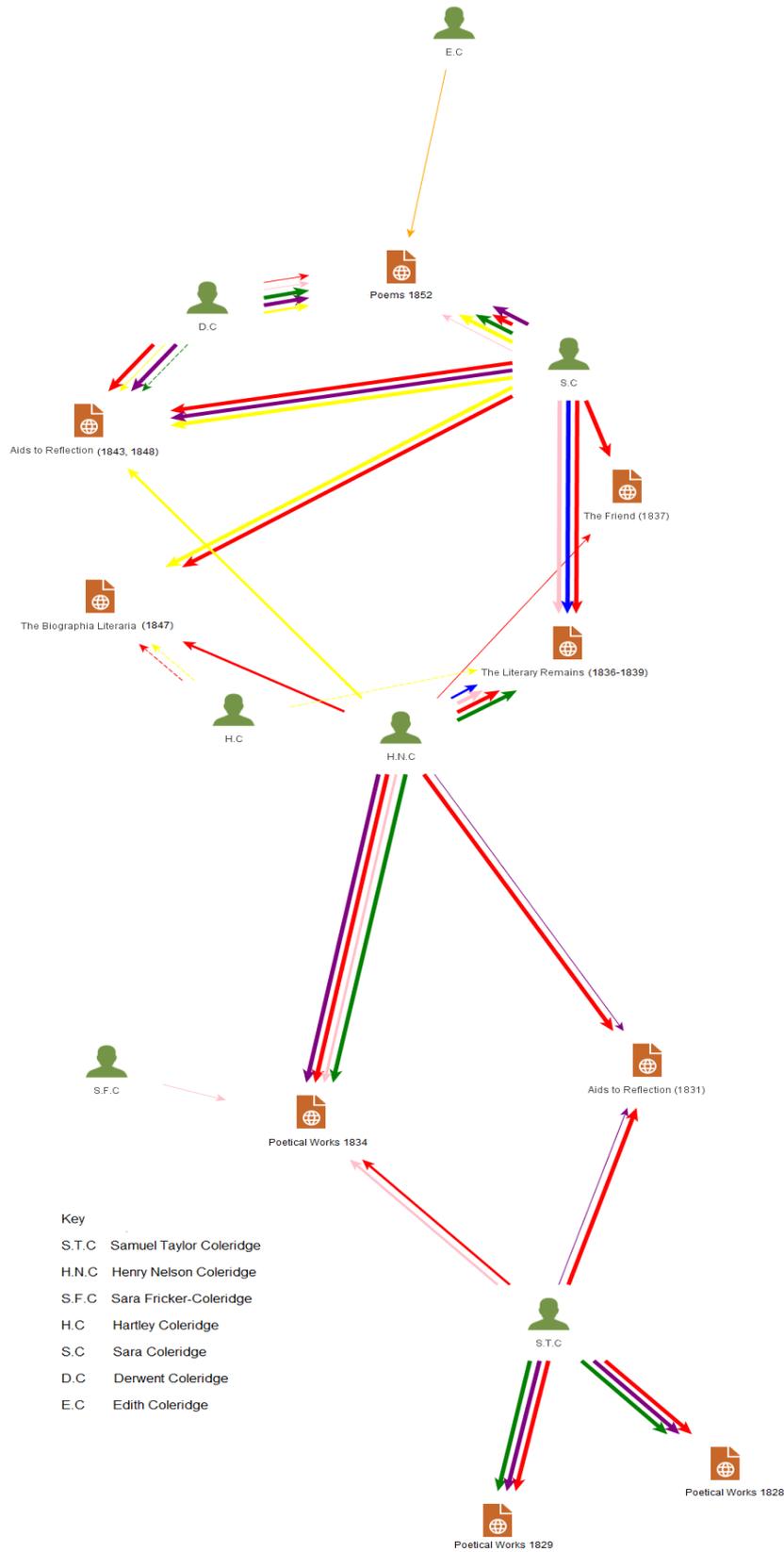
Figure 15 (see above), the smallest of the maps (in size and timespan) shows texts prepared during STC's later years, with Henry copy-editing *Aids to Reflection* (1831) and assuming overall editorial responsibility for *Poetical Works 1834*. STC, with the help of Sarah Fricker-Coleridge (labelled as S.F.C), performs more minor roles such as copy-editing and finding unpublished poetry contained in miscellaneous life-writing, such as notebooks, letters and papers. During STC's latter years, none of STC's offspring are present within the editorial network.

After the death of STC in 1834, the network opens up dramatically to include Sara and Hartley (see **Figure 16** above). The map shows Sara's involvement in four texts prepared with Henry. She assumes responsibility for more minor editorial jobs, such as finding source material, copy-editing and transcribing manuscripts for *The Friend* and *The Literary Remains* (STC's marginalia). **Figure 16** shows Sara occupying increasingly important roles for the editing of *Biographia Literaria* and *Aids to Reflection*, which are present in this map, even if it is more appropriate to include them under Sara's leadership of the Editorship. Although *Biographia Literaria* is published in 1847, it is included here as Henry is involved in preparing the text, which is based on STC's corrected copy of the 1817 edition. Hartley also planned to write the Preface as a rebuttal to the plagiarism charges made by Ferrier before Sara takes over this task. There are two editions of a new volume of *Aids to Reflection*; the first in 1843 and a reprint in 1848. The major differences between the 1831 edition (prepared by STC and Henry) and the 1843 and 1848 editions (prepared by Sara and Derwent) include the decision to split the text into two volumes; the addition of substantial new material in the form of Sara's essay "On Rationalism"; a re-organisation of the existing material; and finally, Derwent's expansion and revision of Henry's "Advertisement". Even though the volume falls under Henry's stewardship of

the overall editorship and is published under Henry's name, Henry himself is not greatly involved in the preparation (aside from writing an "Advertisement") due to illness. It is believed that Sara took responsibility for the text during Henry's final illness, and then after his death in January 1843, Derwent saw the volume through the press. The presence of both *Biographia Literaria* and *Aids to Reflection* on this map need careful interpretation and reflect both the limitations of *Maltego* (to separate aspects within entities, such as the two reprints of *Aids to Reflection*) and the murky world of creative and editorial process. Although it is technically correct that each text is present on the map, a more accurate reflection of the Editorship might include them only on **Figure 17** (below).

Figure 17 shows the entire network spanning from 1828-1852. Sara prepares a new edition of *Biographia Literaria* (1847) singlehandedly, building on Henry's notes to STC's corrected 1817 edition. The representation of the division of labour between the two siblings on *Poems 1852* again reflects the limitations of working with a data visualisation program and having to assign a quantifiable weight to each editorial action. While Sara undertook the majority of the work, as we have seen in earlier sections, Derwent was involved in making (and questioning) the decisions about the shape of the edition; in light of this, each sibling's respective contribution to the edition is represented as identical. Edith Coleridge (Sara's daughter, and eventual editor), a member of the next generation of Coleridge editors, appears on this final map as it is suggested by Griggs that Sara dictated the Notes to her daughter (*Coleridge Fille* 247).

Figure 17: Map of Sara's Stewardship of the Editorship 1843-1852.



Taken together the three maps show Sara's increasing involvement over time after her father's death. Of all the family members, she is the most active, with the most connections between texts (14 edges). I may not have needed to map out the family network to demonstrate Sara's eventual precedence over the editorship. However, the maps, particularly **Figure 17**, help to illuminate another key point which can be linked to the broader concerns of this case study.

Despite Sara's claims that she is closest to STC (through their inherited nervousness and her communion with him through his texts) she is placed at the other end of the network. She is second furthest away from STC after Derwent. The distance between Sara and STC emphasises the mediated nature of their relationship and helps to support my main arguments: Sara establishes her *writerly* and *authorial* identity through the mediation of STC's texts and her claims for authority are constructions that enable her to assert influence over the family network. The overall shape of the network helps to strengthen this interpretation. The diamond shape at the bottom of the network, which represents STC's own editorial involvement, demonstrates that, in practice, STC only interacted with Henry and none of his direct descendants (despite their claims, at various points, for an inherited brand of genetic closeness and authority). The circle (at the top of the map) represents the more open flow and collaborative nature of first-generation of family editors, which includes all of STC's direct progeny (and his grand-daughter).

Moreover, the overall shape of the network draws attention to the role of Henry. He is present within both the diamond and the circle shapes and throughout all three temporal layers. He is placed at the very centre of the entire network. Overall, Henry participates in the preparation of the most texts (6); Sara, though, has the most connections (14). However, the maps make abundantly clear that across the entire

network, Henry is the pivotal figure, or mediator, between the poet and the next generation of family editors; just as the bar charts in the previous section demonstrate that Henry's edition of *Poetical Works 1834* is the bridge between STC's earlier edition of 1828 and Sara and Derwent's *Poems 1852*.

At the beginning of this section, I asked whether Distant Reading could be a useful tool for literary analysis. Although acts of Distant, or Mediated, reading must be undertaken sceptically, with an awareness of the limitations of the resultant visualisations, in my case, they have highlighted hitherto unnoticed aspects about the Coleridges as a family of editors. Henry, for example, emerges as a pivotal figure within *both* of my examinations of the family network at a micro (the poetic corpus of the *Collected Poems*) and macro (the maps of the Editorship) scale. Of the two analyses, the exploration of the evolution of the poetic corpus of the *Collected Poems* has been the most useful. It has enabled me to reassess the critical consensus (established by Mays, Whalley and Levy) that *Poems 1852* proposed a "narrower" poetic canon than Henry's 1834 edition (Levy, *Family Authorship* 163). My detailed examination of the corpus, instead, demonstrates that *Poems 1852* absorbed more (rather than less) of Henry's additions to the corpus. Moreover, such an examination allows me to recognise that this earlier critical consensus emerges directly out of Sara and Derwent's own dismissal of the authority of Henry's selection.

This feeds into my third question: whether it is more useful to map the world *in and around* the literary text, rather than the world *within* the literary text. I think my mapping of process has been (unexpectedly) productive because it does not map the literary text itself (and reduce the richness and suggestiveness of language to abstraction). Instead, the kind of information I used to create the bar charts and maps (dates, number of poems in a section and actions such as transcribing and proof-

reading) already lends itself to quantitative, rather than qualitative, analysis. This raises questions about the potential of literary mapping in other areas pertaining to the literary text. For example, if we can map editorial process, is it possible to map (in the other direction) the reception of a text or a series of texts? What kind of information would be needed for such an undertaking? Finally, what might a map of reception look like?

The emergence of Henry as a pivotal figure within the family network, however, has a much wider impact. It throws into sharp relief the nature of Sara and Derwent's presentation of themselves as direct family editors *as* constructions of editorial authority and influence. In turn, this links back to the opening question of the case study, and the critical debate about Sara's editorial endeavours: whether Sara's editing of her father was a subservient filial activity that wasted her considerable literary talent, or whether editing provided a productive space for the creation and assertion of creative identity. Over the past two chapters, I have examined Sara's various constructions of an *Esteesian* sympathy and authority, which are filial in the sense that they are based on genetic forms of closeness such as inherited nervousness and intellect. Moreover, it is only by examining Sara's participation within the Coleridge family editorial network that we can recognise and explore the persistence and influence of those constructions. In light of these examinations, and in conclusion to this final case study, it is clear that Sara's unique filial brand of editing enabled her to distinguish herself as an intellectual woman of letters *as* STC's daughter and the "inheritrix" and continuing echo of his *Esteesian* genius.

Conclusion

The network maps in Chapter Six, which show family members connected to one another *through* their shared work on a literary text, serve as strong visual metaphors for the kind of triangulated relationship that this thesis has explored. Over the course of the three case studies, we have seen how various aspects of shared creative identity (*textual, writerly, authorial*) are mediated through rural objects, nervous bodies and the texts of others. The tri-partite and mediated relationships identified within this thesis have three main implications for both family literary partnerships within the Romantic period and critical approaches to familial collaboration.

First and foremost, this tri-partite relationship indicates the vital phenomenon of sympathy as an *embodied, nervous and communicative medium* for the basis of connections between family collaborators in their constructions of shared creative identities. These qualities of sympathy (which have been often overlooked in studies of familial collaboration) have led to two of the most innovative aspects of the thesis: first, the explication of Charles and Mary's *Vapourish* model as a *medicalised* version of sublime (and transferable) creativity; second, the recognition of the persistence and influence of Sara Coleridge's own cultivation of a filial brand of *Esteesian* sympathy. Moreover, the final case study has emphasised the peculiar position of Sara within Romantic familial writing: her privileging of consanguineal bonds represents a distinct departure from constructions of relationship based on domestic proximity.

At a broader theoretical level, this tri-partite relationship alters critical representations of the female family members of *canonical* Romantic poets and authors which have often been presented as overshadowed by the literary ambitions of their male counterparts. The inherent ambivalence of the mediatory factor between family members in this thesis (the cypher-like nature of the rural object; the

“vapouring” and “vapourish” symptoms of the *Vapours*; the literary remains which Sara uses to commune with, and echo, a textualised STC) plays a crucial role within this process. Over the six chapters, we have seen how siblings respond to a shared medium in very *different* ways. It is through their differing responses to the shared medium that siblings place themselves (as individuals) in relation to one another.

This leads to my second claim: Acts of mediation within shared relational identity tend to generate creative agency for the female members in particular. While Sara Coleridge offers an explicit example of this kind of agency, it is also present (to a lesser extent) in the Wordsworths and the Lambs. William’s *authorial* identity as a poet is heavily determined by whether he can generate sympathy out of a rural landscape for his reader. Dorothy, however, has far more freedom to generate her emergent *textual* identity out of her repeated practice of geographical place, which allows for a range of emotional responses to her walking and writing of Grasmere. With regard to the Lambs, although Charles opens himself up to the dangerous nature of the *Vapours*, the mediatory narrators within the siblings’ prose adaptations for children are more closely aligned with Mary’s response to the *Vapourish* model, and her creation of the intervening and “learned” presence of Sarah-as-*thing*.

In my third and final claim, the tri-partite nature of relationship opens up critical debate about Romantic Family Authorship by emphasising the potential of the literary forms used in creative relationship to make relational meaning. The ambivalent nature of the mediatory factor within each case study ties directly into, and brings to the fore, the models of making and communicating meaning established within the variety of unpublished, published and republished texts examined within this thesis. This shines a much-needed spotlight on forms and literary activities which have received less critical attention, such as journal-writing, children’s literature and posthumous editing.

Crucially, a mediated and spatial approach repeatedly emphasises the spatial and relational nature of meaning-making within those forms. My exploration of the *Grasmere Journals*, for example, elucidates the inherently spatial nature of life-writing. Similarly, in the case studies on the Lambs and Coleridges paratextual material and the mediatory space of the Preface emerge as central sites for establishing *authorial* identity and attempts to shape the reception of the text within prose collections for children and posthumous editions.

Overall, the spatial, relational and ambivalent elements of mediation have proved particularly fertile for the analysis of familial collaboration and articulation of shared relational identity. However, both the explication of the nervous medium of sympathy and the resultant tri-partite form of creative relationship offered here are very much starting points for future research, not least to test, strengthen and develop the three claims I have made in this conclusion.

A key area for future development is the wider application of these concepts to other forms and scales of collaboration in the Romantic period. There are two main questions which would direct future research. First, is this triangulated relationship specifically a familial phenomenon? The twin-emphasis on intergenerational connections and network within the final case study suggest that it could be applied to a friendship circle rather than a familial group. The friendly collaborative network of first-generation Romantic authors during the 1790s—STC, Lamb, Charles Lloyd, Robert Southey, Wordsworth, John Thelwall, William Godwin—springs immediately to mind. How might an embodied nervous understanding of sympathy further interpretation of the highly intertextual and allusive network between these friends? This leads into my second question: Can this triangulated model be applied only to those writers who engage extensively with sympathy? Future research would explore

the potential of extending this sympathy-based model to other collaborative mixed-gender groups, such as the wider Dissenting network surrounding the Aikin-Barbaulds, the Bluestockings and the Shelley-Byron circle.

Finally, a very brief consideration of directions for future development helps bring to the fore the key elements which have both shaped and emerged from the examinations of the preceding six chapters. The familial partnerships within these case studies all share a central focus (such as the rural object; the *Vapours*; or the corpus of STC) *through* which they form sympathetic connections to one another. For the Wordsworth-Lamb-Coleridge Circle, then, nervous and embodied sympathy (in its various forms) was the crucial binding agent between siblings in literary partnerships and the crucial agent that allowed these familial pairings to articulate *textual*, *writerly* and *authorial* identities in relation to and *alongside* one another.

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