

Coleridge's Notebooks: Manuscript to Print to Database

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This paper is designed to serve three interlocking purposes. My first purpose is to provide a very quick overview of the genesis of the Bollingen Edition of Coleridge's *Notebooks*, and an assessment of what it has achieved and what it has not achieved—in other words, what the edition is, and what are its current limitations as a resource. One obvious limitation is certainly the absence (so far) of a unified index, and I have been informed that Princeton University Press has no resources to publish an index volume. This has motivated a group of scholars, of whom I'm one, to construct a searchable electronic version (and eventually an analytical subject index). So my second aim in this talk is to give a progress report not so much on my own research as on that of a research team currently engaged in building the electronic index. Thirdly, giving such a report seems like a good opportunity to raise questions about the interdependency, in the scholarly culture of the twenty-first century, of three media: (1) manuscript, (2) printed-and-bound volume, and (3) electronic database. I say 'interdependency' because, though in an obvious sense the printed volumes are derivative from the manuscript, and the electronic database from the printed volumes, in another sense the manuscripts have arguably had 'value added' to them by virtue of the existence of the printed volumes. Similarly, those who are working on the electronic index hope that the development of this research tool will sustain interest in the printed volumes, and indeed in the manuscripts themselves, well into the rest of this century.

Both the projects I'll be describing—the printed edition, begun in the 1930s and completed in the 1990s, and the electronic version—touch on some broader issues, not least the way in which scholarship regularly assumes the right to transgress any notional boundary that might exist between private and public, between the writer's diary as 'confidant' (a term which Coleridge used for his notebooks) and the category of texts made available for public use. I have always liked the moment in *The Importance of Being Earnest* Act II, the exchange between Algernon and Cecily when Algernon asks to look at Cecily's diary. 'Oh no,' she replies, 'You see, it is simply a very young girl's record of her own thoughts and impressions, and consequently meant for publication. When it appears in volume form I hope you will order a copy.'

I. Manuscript to Print

It was in 1927, with the publication of Lowes's *The Road to Xanadu*, that most scholars in the English-speaking world were first treated to a glimpse of the Coleridge notebooks. Lowes made some use of material from what he describes as 'a small manuscript volume of ninety leaves,' purchased for the

British Museum in 1868.¹ A transcript of this volume, the 'Gutch Memorandum Book,' had already been published by Alois Brandl in 1896 (in *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Litteraturen*) but was largely ignored in the English-speaking world until Lowes began his work. Then in 1930 a certain graduate of Victoria College, who was already (thanks to the lectures of Pelham Edgar) an enthusiast for Coleridge and who happened to be studying at Oxford for the degree of B.Litt., was introduced by an Oxford acquaintance to Lady Coleridge ('Jessie'), and invited to lunch at the Chanter's House, Ottery St Mary. There she met Geoffrey, third Baron Coleridge, and he—after much gruff banter and teasing of the 'little bookworm' from the colonies—gave Kathleen Coburn permission to browse among the Coleridge treasures: fifty-five manuscript notebooks, 200 annotated books, and many files of family letters—then housed in the Chanter's House library.² The story of how the notebooks were delivered to the care of the British Museum manuscript room, and how they along with several others which had found their way to the Huntington Library, the Berg Collection in New York, and elsewhere, eventually reached print in the Bollingen edition, is memorably told in Coburn's memoir, *In Pursuit of Coleridge*.

It has to be remembered that the Bollingen edition is no more than a rendering of the manuscripts, using print technology—albeit a highly elaborate and heavily annotated kind of print—to represent those manuscripts in a more readily accessible medium. The edition has imposed its own kind of unity on these inchoate materials, a unity imposed by editors that perhaps monumentalizes what Coburn called the 'chaos of notebook after notebook' (CN I, 'Introduction,' p. xxi). As I've argued recently, this poses 'a strong and understandable temptation for scholars to idealize the notebooks as containing, somewhere amid the clutter and chaos, Coleridge's final and definitive answers.'³ Possibly the project to create an electronic, searchable version will help to counteract this tendency to 'monumentalize' the Notebooks. For good reasons, scholars have recently paid increased attention to the public Coleridge, the Coleridge who gave lectures on politics and philosophy and who wrote for the *Morning Post* and the *Courier*. The Notebooks reveal a different kind of writer, one characterized by Kathleen Coburn as 'more lonely, more rebellious, more sceptical, much wider in range, and more deeply human.'⁴ Actually I would go further than Coburn does, and would resist the temptation to find in the Notebooks just *one* Coleridge, even a rebellious and sceptical one. I would rather see them as offering quite a fragmented, multiple, and conflicted figure.

As the first editor, Kathleen Coburn made a number of decisions which crucially affected the text that now exists in print. First, she decided not to

¹ John Livingston Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu: A Study in the Ways of the Imagination* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1927), 5, 451.

² Kathleen Coburn, *In Pursuit of Coleridge* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Co., 1977), 25-27; Richard Garnett, 'The Collected Coleridge: The Designer's Tale,' *Coleridge Bulletin* N.S. 20, Winter 2002, 1-13, p. 2.

³ Anthony John Harding, 'Coleridge's Notebooks and the Case for a Material Hermeneutics of Literature,' *Romanticism* 6.1 (Spring 2000):1-19, p. 10.

⁴ Kathleen Coburn, *Experience into Thought* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), p. 3.

print each notebook as a textual unit in its own right but rather to reconstruct as far as possible a chronological order, recognising that for many of the entries the 'date' of the entry would have to be hypothetical, not to say speculative. (The one exception to this rule was actually the Gutch Memorandum Book, because of its extremely fragmentary nature.) This editorial procedure involves the creation of a textual entity, the 'entry,' which often has a rather doubtful relationship to what's in the manuscript, though certainly making the editor's task more achievable. (As Coburn herself observes, 'The very delimitation of entries has its arbitrary component' [CN I, *Text*, 'Introduction,' p. xxvi].)

Second, while there would be no attempt at a 'type-facsimile' presentation (the approach used in the Cornell Wordsworth edition), and entries would be printed in a uniform font no matter what the relative size of the handwriting, the printed text would otherwise try to reproduce the quirks of Coleridge's manuscript. Thus deleted passages would be printed, but with printed strikeout to show they were deleted; there would be no regularising of Coleridge's spelling or punctuation; words, phrases and sentences added to the manuscript in revision would be shown within angle brackets; Coleridge's unconventional repertoire of symbols would be reproduced in type; and so on. Foliation of the original manuscript would be indicated in the margins of the printed page.

The resulting printed text in five volumes contains an astonishing range of thoughts, speculations, jottings, and miscellaneous memoranda. It is a text with its own peculiarities, resulting from a long list of editorial policies and decisions, each of which, I hasten to add, is perfectly reasonable and defensible, but which even Kathleen Coburn would have to agree resulted in the creation of a text very different from those fifty-five notebooks she first saw in 1930.

Literary theory tells us that it's misleading to imagine that a supposed point of textual origin—a manuscript notebook—contains some ingenerate, inviolable 'meaning' which is inevitably lost once the signs contained within the manuscript are converted into a different kind of text—a printed text. Nevertheless, print does 'lose' or fail to transmit some of the signifying properties of a manuscript. Here's a partial list of potentially significant features which a printed version of a notebook entry fails to represent:

Overall characteristics of the notebook (type of binding, number of gatherings, etc.). Appearance and quality of paper and ink. Size of manuscript page. Position and orientation of lines on the page. Size of handwriting. Clarity of handwriting. Closeness of lines to each other. Line breaks.

The edition tries to convey some of this information in the General Notes on each notebook and in the notes on each entry; but such descriptions are very brief, considering the amount of information that could be conveyed about

each notebook page. Above and beyond these details, too, I suspect that we absorb a printed page in a way quite different from that in which we read a page of manuscript. We all read so much print that we don't have time to notice the *look* of a page of print—unless we're professional book designers or bibliographers, or are teaching a 'History of the Book' course. Our attitude is utilitarian: a good font like Times New Roman is one that does not draw attention to itself. For this reason a remark like 'O Sara!... Let me write to her to day' (CN II 2144 *f* 14) has a different significance when it is set in Palatino or Garamond and when it is written in brownish ink on a leaf in a cheap military storekeeper's notebook watermarked '1804.'

II. *Why a Searchable Electronic Version?*

Each volume of the Bollingen edition contains three indexes (Persons, Selected Titles, and Place Names). There is no comprehensive index to all five volumes. The 'Foreword' to Volume I of the printed edition states: 'five volumes are projected... and a final volume [i.e. Vol. 6] containing a subject index, addenda, and corrigenda' (CN I, *Text*, 'Foreword,' p. xi). When Volume I appeared in 1957, Kathleen Coburn hoped that the entire project would be completed in another twenty years. Unfortunately by the time Volume 5 reached the press, in 2001, it had exhausted the considerable resources of the Bollingen Foundation dedicated to the two Coleridge editions. And Princeton University Press (which became, with Routledge, co-publisher of the edition in 1969) had no resources of its own to produce an index volume.⁵ Thus if a researcher wishes to find what Coleridge wrote in his notebooks about, say, Sir Isaac Newton or the *Edinburgh Review* or the town of Ross-on-Wye, he or she can collect references from the fifteen existing indexes (three per volume); but to search even one volume for (say) 'Astronomy,' 'Parliamentary reform,' or 'poetic meter' is impossible. The need for a subject index is therefore apparent to Coleridge specialists, but since the notebooks themselves are so compendious, spanning forty years during one of the most politically turbulent periods of British history, and one of the most productive in significant literature, they also offer a unique portal into the Romantic era. The project will certainly widen access to research materials.

The aim is therefore to build a facility that will enable the user to search for significant terms but also to offer more powerful searching tools for locating 'sets' of related terms or concepts. The first of these aims entails the construction of an electronic version of the *Notebooks*. This is not a new edition but a means of making the printed edition searchable, so the line-breaks and page-breaks of the printed edition will be followed, and as in the printed text, the foliation of the original manuscript will be indicated.

⁵ See Richard Garnett, 'The Collected Coleridge: the Designer's Tale', in *The Coleridge Bulletin* (New Series 20, Winter 2002) p.7.

However, since the facility is not intended to substitute for the printed text, the user will view not the whole page, but a five-line window, giving context for the search term along with the volume and entry number.

The second stage of the work, presenting a different kind of challenge, will be the construction of an analytical index, based on interlinked sets of terms. Key terms will be taken from the *Notebooks* themselves and from the *Collected Coleridge* indexes, so that the result will be as comprehensive a guide as possible to subjects covered in the *Notebooks*. This second stage, it now seems, will probably take several more years, so that the analytical index will be under construction for some time to come. The plan is to involve research assistants in the building of this analytical index as well as in encoding the text.

The creation of an electronic index will do more than simply make the existing text easier to use, important as this argument must be. If the index is formed so as to be not simply a word-list, but a structured analytical index, with search terms cross-referenced and placed in an ordered, specific set of relationships with each other (in other words, if concept-mapping is built in), then it will be doubly useful, first as a means of simply searching the text, but secondly as a guide to the multiple concepts, the intellectual architecture, of the *Notebooks*.

At present, volumes I, II and IV are ready to be posted on the Web in searchable form and we hope will be available for scholars' use early in 2005 (updated information is available at <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~stcnote>). It should be emphasized, however, that the database cannot substitute for the printed text: it is a means of locating search terms in the printed text, offering only a five-line window for each occurrence of the term. We have no plans at present to index the Notes volumes and the Notes will not be available online.

III. Reading Writers' Diaries and Notebooks

Thinking about the nature of the manuscripts on which the edition is based raises questions about the ways in which we read and interpret texts, and more specifically about the assumptions and conventions that govern our understanding of a particular kind of text, a writer's diaries, 'day-books,' or notebooks. As long as the derivation of the printed text from the manuscript journal or 'day-book' is kept in mind, anyway, the reader brings to the experience a set of expectations, what Gadamer calls a 'fore-understanding,' just as the reader of a poem or a novel does.⁶ I'm stressing here the importance and specific nature of the manuscript source, as well as the nature of the literary genre to which we consider notebooks and diaries to belong.⁷

⁶ See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, ed. and trans. by Garrett Barden and John Cumming (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), p. 262.

⁷ Peter Szondi's materialist hermeneutics, which might also be called a hermeneutics of the specific, may be a better framework for interpreting such texts than the hermeneutic theory of Hans-Georg Gadamer, which Szondi critiques. See *Introduction to Literary Hermeneutics*, trans. Martha Woodmansee (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

I'm also asking what happens when a heterogeneous collection of some sixty-five notebooks is homogenized into a uniform edition.

Writers' diaries and notebooks are now read not just for the circumstantial information they might contain, but as possessing a value as literature not necessarily inferior to, though different from, the genres modernism had privileged. There is a need, however, to consider what it is that the increasing accessibility of notebooks and diaries gives us access to. The motive for publishing and reading a writer's notebooks has traditionally included some element of obtaining a privileged glimpse into the 'mind' of the writer. This assumption certainly underwrites Coburn's discussion of the Notebooks in her 1972 Riddell Lectures (published as *The Self Conscious Imagination*), and her 1977 Alexander Lectures (published as *Experience into Thought*). But there are dangers in such an assumption. Though we tend to assume that a writer is most himself, or most herself, in the private space of a diary or notebook, that private space does itself have a cultural history, as do the kinds of discourse that culture assigns to the private space of the diary. So the question about the form of the notebook or diary is also a question about the kinds of discourse diary-writing sustains. The notion of a thought itself is shaped by the material object on which thought is recorded. The larger history of diary-writing, and its connection with the development of private space, also has a bearing on this discussion. There is a set of cultural assumptions governing the use and treatment of diaries and daybooks which at least since the seventeenth century has designated the notebook or diary as belonging to private space and therefore as appropriate for recording what should not be said in public.

The diary or day-book is one of those 'technologies of the self' referred to by Foucault,⁸ and the study of diary-keeping is intimately connected with the endeavour in literary theory to re-theorize the notion of the authorial subject. Paralleling this theoretical or ideological argument, critics have begun to open up historical perspectives on the notion of the author, showing to what extent it is a creation of copyright law, developments in the book trade, religious practices, and the development of a 'technology of the self,' including the writing of diaries and journals. The particular historical importance of the diary or daybook in this development is pointed out by Felicity Nussbaum: "The debate on [personal] identity parallels the historical moment of the proliferation of diary."⁹ The dissenting sects that flourished between 1640 and 1700 encouraged the writing (and publication) of spiritual journals and autobiographies. It was also in the 1600s and early 1700s—the era of Pepys, Locke, Shaftesbury, Butler, Clarke, and Collins—that diary-keeping for purely secular purposes became a characteristic activity of the literate man and woman. Following this line of investigation, Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse in *The Imaginary Puritan: Literature, Intellectual Labor, and the Origins of Personal Life* have opened up the explanatory possibilities of Foucault's theory

⁸ See Michel Foucault, "Technologies of the Self," in *Technologies of the Self: a seminar with Michel Foucault* ed. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick H. Hutton (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), pp.16-49.

⁹ Felicity Nussbaum, "Toward Conceptualizing Diary," *Studies in Autobiography* ed. James Olney (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 133.

that 'the most personal recesses of the subject' are 'precisely the territory that writing opened to social exploration and conquest.'¹⁰

If we look to the notebooks for evidence of the inwardness of a mind, we find it a fugitive and shifting quality. Thoreau's journals seem to me much more homogeneous and constant in tone than Coleridge's. Coleridge's notebooks, though occasionally used more as we expect diaries to be used—to record impressions of a journey, or a conversation or some other significant experience—more often function as repositories of memoranda: quite literally, thoughts to be remembered. If we scour Coleridge's notebooks purposefully looking for evidence of the writer's 'mind' or characteristic style of thought, we'll certainly find it. But if we look at these notebooks without such an agenda, they appear much more like scrap-books: they will perfectly exemplify Nussbaum's remark about different discourses intersecting to create a momentary self.¹¹ Both ways of reading seem anticipated in the notebooks themselves. With self-deprecating humour, Coleridge alluded to the impossibility of pinning down anything as elusive as a thought by calling his later notebooks 'Fly-catchers': the notebook pages function like fly-paper, trapping the living thoughts or 'winged words' and preserving them for all time, but at the cost of that very living quality which made them worth preserving. A variation on this title occurs in Notebook 56, which bears the title 'Volatilia or Day-book for bird-liming Small Thoughts, impounding Stray Thoughts, and holding for trial doubtful Thoughts' (CN V, *Notes*, 'General Notes on Each Notebook,' pp. xlix-l). These ironic titles warn the potential reader—and in later life Coleridge clearly did expect his notebooks to have readers—that unitary form is not to be looked for. The contents are scraps, disconnected jottings, their sequence purely arbitrary and coincidental. However, like Virginia Woolf a century later, Coleridge discovered that the material form of the notebook not only forces 'stray thoughts' into a particular shape, but acts as a stimulus to thinking in certain ways.¹² Coleridge's notebooks are a particularly rich and extreme instance of the varied possible uses of a writer's diaries or day-books, and the competing discourses that create and re-create the territory of the self as (in Nussbaum's terms) a place 'where discourses intersect.'¹³ Kristine Dugas points out that 'around October 1803... Coleridge begins journal-writing in earnest'; the jotting down of aphorisms, lists, quotations and so on more often gives way to 'longer entries... metaphysical and moral speculations... pleasures of the mind.'¹⁴ But

¹⁰ Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse, *The Imaginary Puritan: Literature, Intellectual Labor, and the Origins of Personal Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), p. 148. On the need for modern scholars to historicize the concept of authorship, see also Felicity A. Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject: Gender and Ideology in Eighteenth-Century England* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p. xi.

¹¹ Nussbaum writes: 'Individuals construct themselves as subjects through language, but the individual . . . can only adopt positions within the language available at a given moment' ('Toward,' pp. 131-2).

¹² See Virginia Woolf, *A Moment's Liberty: The Shorter Diary* ed. Anne Olivier Bell (New York: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1990), 90-91 (7 October 1919).

¹³ Nussbaum, 'Toward,' p. 132.

¹⁴ Kristine Dugas, 'Struggling with the contingent: self-conscious imagination in Coleridge's notebooks,' *Coleridge's Imagination: Essays in Memory of Pete Laver* ed. Richard Gravil, Lucy Newlyn, and Nicholas Roe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 53-68, p. 56.

it remains true that the entries run the gamut from the merest jottings to extensive drafts of essays, lectures, and reviews. As memorandum books they were meant to supply the deficiencies of memory, both in the sense that they contained 'To Do' lists and in the sense that noteworthy passages from Coleridge's reading were transcribed into them:

N.B. to read Chalmers' History of Scotland with a Mem: Book by me

This Book is devoted exclusively to a Book of Reference for the noticeable Pages of every Book, that I hence forward read.

To collate all the passages (vide Concordance) of the O. and N.T. in which Ἀγγελοι are introduced? -- Qy. the Hebrew Word?

(CN III 3323, 4327; IV 4627.)

A different kind of 'memorandum,' of which the notebooks contain many examples, is the admonition to himself to govern his private behaviour more strictly. This use of the notebooks links them with the journals of religious converts, though, in Coleridge's case, the memoranda are often more scandalous and may be semi-concealed in some sort of cipher: 'ΩΠΙΜ [opium] when not *absolutely* necessary always has disappointed... For [Asra's] sake *do* remember this!' (CN III 3468; for a similar entry, see CN III 3484). Experiences of betrayal and public attack by those he considered friends, as well as what he perceived as the uncomprehending hostility and envious superficiality of the periodical press, contributed to making Coleridge still more dependent on his notebooks as personal 'confidants.' The notebook, that is, became the material correlative of a never-to-be-revealed emotional state. As such it was to be carefully protected from disclosure. In June 1810, Coleridge resolved to lock up the memorandum book currently in use (Notebook 18) and to write in it only when alone, even reflecting on the 'pleasure' to be gained from keeping such secrets: 'Dear Book! now my only Confidant, my only faithful Friend. —What I lately began to do out of prudence, I now do with pleasure, as an act of affection & the sacred shame of a fond affection—lock it up carefully, and never write in it but when alone!' (CN III 3913 *f 61*). 'Ah! dear Book! Sole Confidant of a breaking Heart, whose social nature compels *some* Outlet' (CN III 3325). Coleridge's repeated resolution, during this troubled period, to burn his memorandum books when he felt himself to be dying ('*Burn you I certainly shall, when I feel myself dying?*' [CN III 3325; compare III 3881]) demonstrates the extreme reach of this sense that these notebooks are the material record of the most private moments of the self, and therefore should not survive the writer. Using a trope frequently adopted by diarists from the seventeenth century to the present, Coleridge referred to the paper on which he wrote as a 'white-faced Friend & comforting Pandect, negative Comforter by passive unuttering all-receptivity' (CN III 4244). A pandect is

normally a compendium, such as a compendium of law; but etymologically the word means 'all-receiver,' and Coleridge's use of the term seems to suggest that the notebooks counterfeited the role of the confessor, possessing a superhuman capacity for 'receptivity' and perhaps for forgiveness.

This association of the diary or notebook with the confessional, the secret, the never-to-be-revealed, corroborates the Foucauldian view that the diary was (and is) a 'technology of the self,' a culturally-legitimated means by which the cultivation and disciplining of the individual through the exercise of private self-examination came to replace more public forms of discipline. Yet, as I have suggested, Coleridge's notebooks also demonstrate how tenuous and elusive the boundary between private and public actually was. As Kathleen Coburn points out, in early August 1812 Coleridge proposed publishing an 'anthology of exotica from his notebooks' (CN III 4160n, 4167n). That is, he thought of turning the materials originally collected as stimulus to private reflection into a saleable anthology of extracts: 'EXOTICS NATURALIZED, i.e. impressive Sentiments, Reflections, Aphorisms, Anecdotes, Epigrams, short Tales and eminently beautiful Passages from German, Spanish, and Italian Works, of which no English Translations exist; the whole collected, translated, and arranged by S. T. Coleridge.'¹⁵ Though this proposed volume never materialized, it prefigures *Aids to Reflection*, which contains extensive selections from the works of Archbishop Leighton with commentary and notes by Coleridge. Even more telling is the fact that in (or soon after) December 1815, only a few months after the complaint that he has no 'Comforter' but his notebooks, Coleridge is proposing to write out in more legible form the 'story' of 'Men and Women, a Novel,' so that, he continues, 'if I die, my friend M. may make use of it—& incorporate the various remarks in my different Pocket books' (CN III 4272; 'M.' is probably his friend John Morgan). Some of the later notebooks were clearly circulated, with Coleridge's full knowledge and consent, among close friends (Anne Gillman, Charles Lamb, John Sterling) and collaborators (Joseph Henry Green, James Gillman). By the mid-1820s, it is apparent that Coleridge expects these hitherto private notebooks—at times considered so private that he would keep them under lock and key and write in them only when alone—to be perused by many readers, not just his close associates and his literary executors. Elaborate directions and explanations are given to help readers navigate the often complex and inconsistent pagination, paragraphing, and notebook numbering. Cross-references to a 'Mem.' or 'Remark' in a 'former Number' and explanations of uncommon signs and symbols are added, as if to assure a reader that there really is a unity of thought in the various notebooks, despite their chaotic appearance. The very existence of these devices, even if meant only for the author and his circle, suggests that the notebook entry has something that could reasonably be called a 'form,' and that this form is partly determined by the physical qualities of the notebook

¹⁵ CL III 417. See CN III 4160n.

itself.¹⁶

When the editor of a writer's journals or notebooks attempts to impose some sort of order on the haphazardness of the material record, new hermeneutic considerations are necessitated, in order to initiate such a project, and, in a different way, prompted and encouraged in readers of the printed edition. Even the most careful of editors cannot guard against the likelihood that the reception and interpretation of the text may be overdetermined by the mere process of transmission from nonsequential manuscript to sequential printed text. Not only a new text but (in a sense) a new authorial subject has been created. Critics may refer to 'Virginia Woolf in her diaries,' 'Samuel Taylor Coleridge in his notebooks.' Even the manuscripts themselves, though materially unaffected by the fact of having been transcribed, acquire a subtly different status, since they no longer contain 'stray thoughts,' but appear fragments of what has now been re-created and received as a whole.

IV. Conclusion

Coleridge's Notebooks constitute a vast and fecund but (by Kathleen Coburn's own admission) desperately chaotic resource for the study of an era, and the 'working papers' of one of its most prolific thinkers. A facility that makes this resource electronically searchable and provides an evolving conceptual structure, for those who wish to use it, as a way of mapping what is in the text, shows the advantages of bringing computing technology to bear on manuscript texts.

However, even if we decide that Coleridge's notebooks—like Cecily Cardew's diaries—were 'meant for publication,' that shouldn't stop us from reflecting on the further change in meaning of this text (these texts?) once posted on the Web, and liable to be googled by anyone with Internet access. The electronic version of the Notebooks may be a portal into the Romantic period. For those who don't accept the poststructuralist position that sees the 'self' merely as 'a position, a *locus* where discourses intersect,'¹⁷ it may be a portal into the mind of STC. Or, equally likely, this version will fragment the notebooks back into their original chaotic state. Even though we will emphasize that the index is to be used merely as a guide to the printed volumes, not as a substitute for them, no doubt many users won't have the time to consult the printed volume with its helpful annotations and will simply take the text from the Web. What was private will become public again, as the text is made available for transmission in a new technological mode with its own kinds of meaning.

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¹⁶ Numerous examples can be found: see for instance CN V 5530, *f*65; 5768, *f*2^c; 5824, *f*49; 6369, *f* 1; 6601, *f* 1. Notebook 51 contains (on *f* 13) an instruction to Coleridge's executors, Joseph Henry Green and Henry Nelson Coleridge, about how to treat the preceding group of entries if it should be thought worthy of publication (CN V 6703). The notebooks also contain a few references and 'postscripts' to marginalia: see for instance CN V 6483.

¹⁷ Nussbaum, 'Toward' p. 132.