Subscribers to Coleridge's *Poems* (1796), or Duckings and Drubbings in Nottingham

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Coleridge's letter of May 31, 1796 to John Fellows of Nottingham is accompanied in Earl Griggs' edition by a note saying that "included with this letter is a list of persons who subscribed to Coleridge's *Poems* at a guinea each, to compensate the author 'for his disappointment in The Watchman.' " Ms. Katherine Reagan at the Carl A. Kroch Library at Cornell University kindly sent me a photocopy of the list, which contains twenty-one names. I circulated the list at the 1998 Coleridge Conference, commented on preliminary identifications, and asked the delegates for assistance in identifying others. After the Conference and more work at the British Library and the New York Public Library, I circulated a draft of this essay to those who expressed interest in the project. I received comments, corrections, and new information from Stuart Andrews, Reg Foakes, Heather Jackson, Kenneth Johnston, Hidemi Kobayashi, Susan Reilly, and Robin Whittaker.

The list could have been composed by either John Fellows, who most likely solicited the subscriptions, or John Sutton, a radical bookseller in Nottingham. Coleridge's letter to Fellows begins, "The Ladies, who have honored me by so delicate an act of liberality, will accept my sincerest acknowledgments. The Poems will be sent forthwith, directed to you & to be left at Mr. Sutton's." [1] Coleridge had informed Fellows on May 13 that "I have now dropped the Watchman--and could not drop it without expressing the warmest feelings of Gratitude to you, Sir ! & my other friends at Nottingham for the unexpected & friendly hospitality with which you received the *itinerant Patriot*, or the Zeal with which you must have promoted my interests since that time" (*CL* 1: 212). Thus Fellows had only from May 14 or 15 to May 27 or 28 to gather subscribers, perhaps two weeks at the most. As history shows, these were turbulent days in Nottingham.

Coleridge traveled to the Midlands from Jan. 9 to Feb. 13, 1796 with prospectuses and letters of introduction from his Bristol friends. He had been able to raise about four hundred subscribers in the Bristol area, but that was too few to begin.[2] He relates some anecdotes of the trip in the *Biographia*, but the best record is in his letters and in whatever confirmation is obtainable through historical records. He stopped first at Worcester, but was told that the aristocrats and clergy were so strong that no bookseller would risk publishing it. In the 1790's in the eyes of the law anyone who sold a book or caused it to be circulated was a publisher and could be prosecuted. From Worcester he went to Birmingham, where he delivered two sermons to about fourteen hundred persons, or so he reported to Josiah Wade, "*preciously peppered with Politics*" (*CL* 1: 176), and collected about one hundred subscribers. His next stop was Derby, where he met Erasmus Darwin and Jedediah Strutt, the successor to Sir Richard Arkwright, but did not find Dr. Peter Crompton there. Strutt provided him with an introduction to John Fellows in Nottingham.

Coleridge arrived in Nottingham at the time of "a public dinner in honour of Mr. Fox's birthday . . . It was a piece of famous good luck, and I seized it, waited on Mr. Fellowes, and was introduced to the company. On the right hand of the president whom did I see but an old College acquaintance? He hallooed out: *Coleridge, by God*! Mr. Wright, the president of the day, was his relation--a man of immense fortune" (*CL* 1: 178). Since 1788 in Nottingham there had been the custom of holding an annual charity sermon for the benefit of the Presbyterian High Pavement School.[3] Coleridge delivered the sermon during his visit; he wrote the Rev. John Edwards that "on Sunday I preach a Charity Sermon," because circumstances prevented the Nottingham sponsors from asking Edwards to deliver

it. Coleridge told Edwards, "I have got among the first families in Nottingham, and am marvellously caressed" (*CL* 1: 179). The names on the subscription list support Coleridge's claim; they represent the leading Whig families, who held many of the town offices and who controlled much of its wealth. From Nottingham he went to Sheffield where he called on the bookseller John Smith, who told him that he was currently editing James Montgomery's journal, the *Iris*, while Montgomery was in jail for libel against a local magistrate, and thus he would be reluctant to promote Coleridge's work. From Sheffield he traveled to Manchester and then Lichfield before he returned to Bristol, worried about his wife's health.

In the early 1790's Nottingham was a battleground between those who supported the war against France and those who opposed it. In l793 it was growing rapidly and held about 25,000 people,[4] most of whom worked in the manufacture of hosiery and cloth, still largely a domestic industry of frame work knitters employed by hosiers, who owned the frames, provided the raw materials, and sold the finished product.[5] In addition, the blockades and disruption of commerce during the war years caused great variation in the prices of export goods and corresponding variations in the wages earned by the frame work knitters. Finally uneven harvests caused shortages of bread when wages were falling. Political riots or food riots were common. Several people on the Coleridge's list were active politically or related to political activists: Miss Fellows, Mrs. Fellows, Robert Denison, I. or J. Wright, Dr. Crompton, George Coldham and Lady Cayley, the daughter of the Rev. George Walker of the High Pavement Chapel.

"The Duckings" were the political event of l794. *The Date-Book of Nottingham* explains the events from two perspectives: that of the Tory newspaper and that of a reformer, the Rev. George Walker. To the newspaper, bands of excessively exuberant loyalists, finding Jacobins drilling with mock guns outside the town, attacked them, hauling some to the river and some to the town pump to be ducked and forced to repent their Jacobin sympathies, to suffer "baptism by immersion" with the slogan "We'll pump upon them, till they sing, / Upon their knees, 'God save the King.' " The Rev. Walker reported that the people were gathered in the field to await the mail coach with news of the war and were assaulted by loyalists for no good reason. Both the loyalist paper and Rev. Walker agree that the democrats took refuge in Robert Denison's mill. During the siege of the mill, the loyalists tore down a wooden fence and started a fire which threatened the mill. The democrats fired upon the loyalists from the mill, injuring a few before the local militia restored order (*DBN* 193-99). *The Date-Book* described Denison's mill at Pennyfoot-stile as "one of the handsomest of its kind in the kingdom, and was fitted up in the most complete manner. It was seven stories high, employing about three hundred people" (*DBN* 241); it was burned down in l802, perhaps as a result of arson in reaction against Denison's radical politics.

At the end of May l796 when Fellows was collecting subscriptions for Coleridge, there was a violently contested election for parliament. The events are most vividly described in the diary of Abigail Gawthern, a life-long resident of Nottingham with Tory sympathies and a distant relationship to Thomas Seeker, who became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1758:

> Mr. John Wright made a harangue at the Malt Cross to a mob of Panites [Paineites] May 23; the next day he did the same, and proposed Dr.Crompton of Derby to be a candidate; a great disturbance in the Market Place; the 26th the polling began; the candidates were Mr Coke, Mr Robert Smith, and Dr Crompton; the White Lion and Blackmoor's Head [Tory headquarters] windows were broken, and also several windows belonging [to] private houses; the 27th the polling finished in favour of Mr Coke and Mr Smith; the soldiers came into the Market Place and cleared the mob away; they threatened to pull down Mr James' cotton mill but they were prevented by the soldiers; several people hurt on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday; on Friday they planted the Tree of Liberty and sang "Millions Be Free" in the Market Place; Mr Story was hurt by a stone being thrown at him.[6]

Dr. Crompton was nominated by Whigs who were dissatisfied with Robert Smith's alliance with Pitt and the war party. John Wright had been called upon to stand, but declined and nominated Dr. Crompton. The results of the polling were Robert Smith (Whig) 1210, Daniel Parker Coke 1069 (Tory) and Dr. Crompton (Radical) 561 (*DBN* 211). *The Date Book* supplies details of Dr. Crompton's exit from Nottingham after the election. The loyalist mob collected and promised to give him a "drubbing":

> The Democrats, to repel force by force, concealed upon their persons short truncheons, some of which were charged at the upper end with lead, and thus secretly armed, sallied forth, with the Doctor in their midst. The collision commenced in the narrow part of Chapel-bar, where the Loyalists, eager for the fray, rushed upon their opponents. One side being well provided with weapons, and the other indifferently so, the conflict in the Bar was short, and the Loyalists fled to the Three Horse Shoes tavern . . . . In a very few seconds the Democrats broke every pane on the premises, and as the tavern could not contain a twentieth part of those who rushed towards it, the engagement recommenced, and was continued with augmented numbers, till the Doctor was conveyed unhurt beyond the Sand Hills . . . . The rout of the Loyalists was complete, and the Democrats looked upon the day as one of the proudest in their lives (*DBN* 212).

The election reverberated throughout the year. On Dec. 1, 1796 at a meeting of the London Corresponding Society, "spy Powell" recorded the reading of a letter from Nottingham with "an account of a new Society formed at Nottinghan requested instructions how to proceed, the wishd to unite with other Sociesties [sic] , said the cause of reform proceeded rapidly there, 'for hard usage from fools to slaves did much. The late election proved how much that city was against the present system of corruption.' "[7] Unfortunately "spy Powell" did not record the names of those who sent the letter from Nottingham, so I do not know whether any of Coleridge's subscribers were involved.

Nottingham had been for years a Whig town. Dissenters greatly outnumbered communicants of the Church of England. *The Nottingham Directory* (1799)[8] listed three parishes of the Church of England, one Roman Catholic Chapel, and nine meeting houses: two Baptist ("particular" and "general"), two independent, two Methodist (New Connexion and Old), one Presbyterian, one Quaker, and one Sandemanian or Glasite, a radical sect professing the abolition of private property and social rank and the return to the church organization of primitive Christianity.[9] The High Pavement Chapel, nominally Presbyterian, but moving in the 1790's to liberate itself from traditional church organization and from a rigid theology to something approximating Unitarianism (*ON* 101), was most likely the venue for Coleridge's charity sermon. He described the audience as made up of "*all* sorts--Arians, Trinitarians, &c" (*CL* 1: 180). The *Dictionary of National Biography* describes the Rev. Walker's theology as "tempered Arianism." High Pavement was politically the most powerful congregation in Nottingham. From 1775 to 1800 twelve of the fifteen mayors worshipped at High Pavement Chapel (*ON* 103). Members of the High Pavement Chapel on Coleridge's subscription list include Robert Denison, Miss Fellows, Mrs. Fellows, and George Coldham.

The Rev. George Walker (1734-1807) became the minister of the High Pavement Chapel in 1774 and served there for twenty-five years. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society and, from 1804 until his death, the President of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, which numbered among its members Robert Owen, John Dalton, and Gilbert Wakefield, an ordained but non-practicing clergyman in the Church of England and a radical who spent two years in jail for his attack upon the Bishop of Llandaff in 1798. Ken Johnston has suggested that the Rev. Walker may be related to Thomas Walker of Manchester whose home was burned Dec. 13, 1792. The Rev. Walker was a mathematician, specializing in spherical trigonometry, and published *On the Doctrine of the Sphere . . . Containing the Solution*

of a Problem, for Ascertaining the Latitude and Longitude of a Place, Together with the Apparent Time and *Conic Sections*. Gilbert Wakefield described him as possessing "the greatest variety of knowledge, with the most masculine understanding of any man I ever knew." Wakefield explains the Rev. Walker's opposition to the Test and Corporation Acts: "His 'Appeal to the People of England' upon the subject of the Test Laws would not be much honoured by my testimony in its favour, as the best pamphlet published on that occasion, were not this judgment coincident with the decision of the honourable Charles James Fox, who declared to a friend of mine the same opinion of its excellence."[10]

The Rev. Walker campaigned tirelessly against slavery. He subscribed to the fifth edition of Olaudah Equiano's *Interesting Narrative* (1792), adding a prefatory letter, also signed by Francis Wakefield and John Wright, attesting to Equiano's character: "we take the liberty also to recommend the said Gustavus Vasa [Equiano] to the protection and assistance of the friends of humanity."[11] Equiano wrote to the Rev. Walker on Feb. 27, 1792 from the home of Thomas Hardy of the London Corresponding Society: "This with my Best of Respects to you & wife with many Prayers that you both may ever be Well in Souls & Bodys--& also your Little Lovely Daughter [m. Sir George Cayley in 1795]--I thank you for all kindnesses which you was please[d] to show me . . . Pray give my best Love To the Worthy Revd. Mr. Robinson, & his--also to my friends Coltman [George Coldham]--and Mr. & Mrs. Buxton . . ." (*IN* 345).

The Rev. Walker composed a petition for reform of parliament in February 1793 which argued that "the constitution of these Kingdoms has passed into the grossest abuses, so as to insult the common sense of the nation with a name when the reality is gone" and insisted on universal male suffrage. It was signed by 2,000 people in Nottingham and was presented to Parliament by Robert Smith, where Pitt and Burke rejected it as seditious.[12] The Rev. Walker was friends with Priestley, and he was a partner in Major John Cartwright's cotton mill at Retford and looked after Cartwright's business dealings in Nottingham (*ON* 102-103). Cartwright (1740-1824), known as the "Father of Reform," was a founder of the Society for Constitutional Information in 1780, which advocated universal male suffrage. Yet Malcolm Thomis argues that for all his political radicalism the Rev. Walker was socially conservative: "When praising the British Constitution for knowing no distinction of right, he had acknowledged the distinction of rank that it preserved. And his sermons on 'The Excellence and Blessedness of Charity' confirm this trend of thought. We should reconcile ourselves, he said, to the inequalities of human life, for these very inequalities seem to have been designed by God himself to give scope for human benevolence and to be a continual prompter to it" (*PSN* 133). Yet it must be added that the Rev. Walker, like many liberals in Nottingham in the 1790's, was tireless in promoting education for as many children as possible. It's interesting to speculate whether Coleridge's charity sermon echoed the Rev. Walker's social views as well as his political views, and one would like to know whether Coleridge's interest in education and his proposals to establish schools for the sons of the wealthy were influenced by the philanthropic efforts of these reformers.

The List

I have assumed that since Fellows had no more than ten days to two weeks during a stormy election to collect subscribers, all lived Nottingham. Almost all are listed in *The Nottingham Directory* (1799), which includes approximately twelve hundred names, addresses, and professions of the "principal inhabitants." Since there is no direct evidence other than the list itself that the individuals contributed the money, I have relied on circumstantial evidence for identifications. I have considered an identification positive if there is only one person with that name in *The Nottingham Directory* and if the person held liberal or radical political views; was associated by family, church, or chapel with those that held such views; or was mentioned in Coleridge's letters as one of his acquaintances. I have considered

an identification probable if only one name in *The Directory* corresponds to the name on the list. I have also assumed that a directory with approximately twelve hundred names in a town of twenty-five thousand would list only those wealthy enough to give a guinea to a young pup whom they may not have known. For some names there are more than one listed in *The Directory*. For example, "J. Wright" (or perhaps it is "I. Wright") appears on the list, and there were six John, Joseph, or James Wrights in *The Directory*. In such cases, possible identification must be made on other grounds such as information contained in Abigail Gawthern's diary supplemented by information contained in Robert Mellors, *Men and Women of Nottingham*.[13] Since there are only twenty-one names on the list, I present them in their order in the list.

1, 2. *Miss Buxton* and *Mrs. Ugnall*. Abigail Gawthern records on Jan. 17, 1807, "Mrs Ugnall died; she was related to Mr Buxton, late a grocer in Nottingham and lived with Miss B. in Stoney Street" (*AG* 127). I assume that "Miss B." is Miss Buxton. In 1790 Gawthern wrote that "Mr Buxton died at Thurland Hall, Apr 30, aged 34 . . . buried at St Mary's, May 3rd . . . left two children (*AG* 51). I'm unclear about the relationship of Miss Buxton and the Mr. and Mrs. Buxton to whom Equiano sent his regards in 1792, but Miss Buxton may be the sister of the Mr. Buxton Equiano thanked.

3. *T. Smith*. Either one of two listed in *ND*: Thomas Carpenter Smith, Hosier, High Pavement. Abigail Gawthern wrote in 1799, "Miss Howitt married a Mr Thomas Smith, Nov 5 . . . he is a son of Mr Carpenter Smith who is well known in London" (*AG* 80). The second is Thomas Smith and Co. Hosiers (Stamp-Office) Bromley House, who may be the Thomas Smith mentioned frequently by Abigail Gawthern and may have asked her to marry him some time after her husband's death in 1791. No positive identification yet.

4, 5. *Mrs. Fellows* and *Miss Fellows*. John Fellows, or Fellowes, (1757-1823) was Coleridge's correspondent in Nottingham, a member of the High Pavement Chapel, and a third generation silk merchant. He was the father of Sir Charles Fellows, an archeologist. *The Dictionary of National Biography* entry for his son describes his father as "a banker and gentleman of fortune." Coleridge's letter of introduction to Fellows from Jedediah Strutt (1726-97) suggests that Fellows was well connected in Derby. Mellors describes Fellows as "a silk throwster and merchant, whose works were in Broad March and residence No. 23 High Pavement (afterwards called The Judge's Lodgings). He, in 1808, established the bank of Fellows, Mellows & Hart & Co. . . . He had a high reputation for business capacity, integrity and usefulness. He let the Wesleyans have a part of his garden in which to build a chapel, called Halifax Place Chapel" (*MWN* 308-309).

Fellows was active politically. Abigail Gawthern records for Nov. 28, 1796 "A bustle in the town, choosing two senior council; Mr Samuel Green and Mr William Huthwaite the loyal candidates, Mr Fellowes and a Mr Wylde the Corporation candidates; the next day the Panites [Paineites] dropped it, and Mr Green and Mr Huthwaite were chose[n]; the bells rang and the butchers rang their cleavers" (*AG* 68). *The Date-Book* records that on April 10, 1797 "A public meeting called together by Mr. John Fellows of the High-Pavement . . . and attended by about four thousand persons, was held before the Malt Cross, in the Market-place, to petition the King for the removal of his Ministers, as a preliminary step to peace. Mr. Fellows was called upon to preside, and a resolution embodying the purport of the meeting was moved by Mr. F. Wakefield and Mr. Robt. Davison and unanimously adopted. The petition received five thousand signatures" (*DBN* 216-17). *The Date-Book* also records a public meeting in 1819 to protest the Manchester massacres in which the speakers were John Fellows and Robert Denison.

6. *Robert Denison*. Listed in *ND* as simply as "Hosier, Short-hill." Member of the High Pavement Chapel and owner of the mill that was a refuge for the democrats and was threatened by fire during the Duckings of l794. Denison kept his mill closed from l794-l802 and sent his son to America to escape the "bigotry and Licentiousness." His mill was destroyed by fire, probably by arson on Nov. 29, l802 (*PSN* 177) as described by Abigail Gawthern: "This morning at 3 o'c[lock] we were waked by the cry of *fire*; it was Mr Denison's cotton Mill, a dreadful conflagration though a grand sight; . . . it was entirely burned down; supposed to be done on purpose" (*AG* 98). One ponders the meaning of "grand" in her description.

Malcolm Thomis describes Denison, called the "Major Cartwright of Nottingham," as a "indefatigable organizer and speaker" (*PSN* 220). In l777 Abigail Gawthern gave new meaning to the phrase "Tory leanings": "my father had a dispute with Mr Robert Denison at the Exchange hall about giving 'General Washington' for a toast, Sep 29; my father got upon a table, crossed it, and leaned on Mr R. Denison's shoulder and crushed him down on the floor" (*AG* 33). Was this Robert Denison on Coleridge's list or his father or relative? *The Date-Book* mentions that in January of l8l7 there was an "immense public meeting . . . to petition for Parliamentary Reform." Denison was one of the speakers who "prayed for retrenchment and reform, universal suffrage, annual Parliaments, &c," which received six thousand signatures (*DBN* 310).

7. *F. Wakefield*. Listed in *ND* as "Hosier, Low-pavement" and as General Commissioner for the Income Tax in Nottingham. Francis Wakefield (d. 1820 aged 61) was the fourth son of the Rev. George Wakefield, rector of St. Nicholas' Church, Nottingham and the younger brother of the Rev. Gilbert Wakefield (1756-1801). Coleridge knew Gilbert Wakefield before he arrived in Nottingham. In l794 when he proposed publishing *Imitations from the Modern Latin Poets*, Gilbert Wakefield was on the tentative list of subscribers (*CL* 1: 101), and by late February 1795 Coleridge wrote to George Dyer, "To Gilbert Wakefield mention my name as of one who remembers him respectfully" (*CL* 1: 153). Francis Wakefield worked "in partnership with Messrs. J & M Hancock, his house being the mansion No. 12 Low Pavement. He in an extensive business acquired wealth which he dispensed with great liberality. He was connected with all the social agencies for the relief of distress, and the diffusion of knowledge. Unassuming and polished, he acquired learning and then imparted it to others. He was a Sunday School Superintendent for many years" (*MWN* 329). He frequently joined with John Fellows, Robert Denison, and the Rev. George Walker in public meetings. He and his brother Gilbert were subscribers to the Royal Literary Fund, founded in l790, which granted £10 on May 19, l796 to "the ingenious author of a volume of poems, and several pieces in prose, on his being represented to the Committee as in a very distressed state."[14] Grants were recorded anonymously, and Coleridge's name was kept out of the record.

8. *J. Wright* (or more probably "I. Wright"). A problem of identification. Almost certainly not Joseph Wright of Derby, although Coleridge mentions "Wright the painter" (*CL* 1: 177), but does not say that he actually met him. Wright of Derby died in l797, and *The Dictionary of National Biography* describes him in his last years as an "invalid and a dietarian."

Coleridge mentions a "Mr. Wright . . . a man of immense fortune" (*CL* 1: 178), who presided over Fox's birthday celebration, but gives no further identification but his relationship to a college friend. *ND* lists four Wrights named John, one James, and one Joseph. The wealthiest Wrights were John and Ichabod Wright, bankers of Low-Pavement. Ichabod (1767-1862) was the Captain Commandant of the Troop of Nottingham Yeoman Cavalry in 1794 "when the public safety seemed

to be in danger," but the soldiers did not act quickly enough to save the outbuildings at Denison's Mill. Mellors also mentions that "he and his family promoted, and were large donors to the building of Carrington Church and National Schools" (*MWN* 83). Our Coleridge Conference archivist, Robin Whittaker, reads the initial as "I." If the initial on the list is "I," Ichabod is the only one listed in *ND*. Ichabod's brother John (1774-1848) is described as taking "an active part in social and religious work, such as the establishment of the Mechanics Institution, the Ragged School in Newcastle Street, the building of Holy Trinity Church, etc., towards which he was a large donor" (*MWN* 83)

From the information in *ND* and *MWN* the brothers would seem unlikely to associate with radical causes, and Malcolm Thomis describes Ichabod Wright as from "a prominent loyalist county family from Mapperley" (*PSN* 188). Yet Abigail Gawthern refers frequently to a John Wright as though he were a personal friend, and when she writes about the election of May 1796, she does not distinguish the John Wright who harangued the crowd from her other references to John Wright. One April 1797 diary entry suggests that John Wright in her diary was the John Wright who harangued the crowd: "We went to the stand to see the supplementary cavalry . . . Mr. Sedley and I had some conversation relative to Mr John Wright and Mr Wakefield's behavior" (*AG* 69). If she means that she and Sedley rebuked both Wright and Wakefield (and that is not the only way to read the syntax of her entry), then the John Wright in her diary may have presided over Fox's birthday party and nominated Dr. Crompton in May 1796. It may also be then that John Wright is John Wright the banker, a man of "immense fortune." There are, however, too many questions here to be certain, not the least of which is that *ND* lists three other John Wrights in Nottingham at the time.

9. *Mrs. Sherbrooke*. No Sherbrooke in the list of Nottingham residents in *ND*, but in a list of towns and villages in Nottinghamshire "where the Nobility of the County Reside," two Sherbrooke families are listed. One is Oxton, the residence of William Sherbrooke (1768-1831), whom Mellors describes as a "magistrate and for many years Chairman of the Quarter Sessions" who "lived the true model of an English Country Gentleman" (*MWN* 199), unlikely to support liberal causes. Heather Jackson points out to me that this may be the Sherbrooke family Coleridge refers to in his notebook in 1796.[15] A possible clue comes from Abigail Gawthern, who noted in 1799, "Mrs Sherbrooke of Oxton died, Dec 21, aged 85; she was remarkably charitable . . . Mr Coape Sherbrooke will enjoy most of her fortune" (*AG* 80). There is only a slight possibility that this Mrs. Sherbrooke is on Coleridge's list. A second Sherbrooke family lived at Arnold, but *ND* gives no further information.

10. *S. Statham*. The only Statham in *ND* is "Samuel Statham, Hosier, Pilcher-gate." *ND* also lists him as a member of the Senior Council, one of three Commercial Commissioners, and a Colonel Commandant of the Nottingham Volunteer Infantry.

11. *Lady Cayley*. Not listed in *ND*, but *Burke's Peerage* mentions her as Sarah (d. 1854), the only daughter of the Rev. George Walker. She married Sir George Cayley (1773-1857), the sixth baronet July 9, 1795. I do not know whether she contributed herself or whether her father contributed in her name, and if he did contribute in her name, why he used her name. Nor do I know whether she was in Nottingham at the time. Sir George Cayley subscribed to *The Friend* through Coleridge's college friend Francis Wrangham.[16] Curiously enough Lady Cayley had a distant relative by marriage, Arthur Cayley (d. 1848), who was an occasional contributor to the *Anti-Jacobin Review*.

12. *Mrs. Heath*. *ND* lists three Heaths: John, a grocer; Joseph, a hosier; and another John, also a hosier. Abigail Gawthern provides another clue. In 1787 she wrote "Mr Heath died, Dec. 31; he was

formerly a bookseller in this town" who "attended methodist meeting" (*AG* 47). No identification possible yet.

13. *Mr. Stubbins. ND* list two John Stubbins, both hosiers. Abigail Gawthern wrote for Mar. 22, l798: "The assizes; Mr Stubbins of Holme Pierrepont High Sheriff; a great show, and besides the javelin men a number of Panites [Paineites] dressed all in a blue uniform followed the High Sheriff who was in the same dress" (*AG* 73). It is uncertain which of the two John Stubbins Mrs. Gawthern mentions, but most likely it's the Paineite Sheriff of Nottingham on Coleridge's list.

14. *Mr. Wildbon* (or Wildbore). No Wildbon mentioned in *ND*, but Abigail Gawthern mentions a Wildbore family, but gives no clue to their politics. No further information. Robin Whittaker suggests that "Wildbore" is the correct reading.

15. *Mr. Coldham. ND* mentions two Coldhams: Wright, a Hosier, Rose-yard, but it's almost certainly George Coldham of Coldham and Enfield, Attorneys. George was a member of the High Pavement Chapel and became Town Clerk in 1791 (*DBN* 179). He held the office for many years. Malcolm Thomis cites him as an example of shifting political allegiances through the decades: "Coldham had barely escaped the 'Jacobin' taint in the 1790s," yet in l811-l8l7, the time of Luddite violence, Coldham and Enfield "were apparently transformed into collaborators with their traditional foes as they communicated with the Home Office authorities and urged them to vigorous action" (*PSN* 96).

16. *Mr. Newham. ND* lists two Newhams. First, John, a baker of Smithy-row. The more likely identification is the Newham of Newham and Cartwright, Hosiers and Lace-manufacturers, Hen-cross, if the Cartwright is or is related to Major John Cartwright.

17 *Dr. Crompton.* The *DNB* entry for his son, Sir Charles Crompton, Justice of the Queen's Bench, provides his family's background: "The Cromptons came of a Yorkshire puritan stock, connected with the Cheshire family of the regicide Bradshaw." John Bradshaw (1602-59) was president of the parliamentary commission to try Charles I. "Dr. Peter Crompton succeeded to an elder brother's inheritance, and at an early age married his second cousin Mary, daughter of John Crompton of Chorley Hall, Lancashire." During Coleridge's 1796 trip Dr. Crompton lived in Derby, but he later moved to Eton House, near Liverpool. In 1796 he stood for parliament nominated by John Wright and collected the anti-war vote. He stood again in l807: "The Doctor put up and persevered in the contest contrary to the advice of his friends, and refusing to go to any expense, his success was impossible" (*DBN* 264). Finally in 1812 Robert Denison nominated him again, but he received few votes (*DBN* 287).

As far as I can determine Dr. Crompton is the only one on the list with whom Coleridge met after the failure of the *Watchman*. He and Sir George Cayley were the only two who subscribed to *The Friend,* along with James Montgomery, the editor of the Sheffield *Iris* and the five children of Jedediah Strutt of Derby, whom Coleridge met in l796. The "Jacob Wakefield" listed as a cotton manufacturer and possible subscriber to *The Friend* may be related to the Wakefield family of Nottingham (*Friend* 2: 447, 460-61, 463). Reg Foakes informs me that no one on the list subscribed to Coleridge's lectures on literature. In August l796 Dr. Crompton offered Coleridge £100 plus £20 per pupil to open a school in Derby, which Coleridge declined. He visited Dr. Crompton for eight or nine days in July 1800 and saw him in London in l808 and in Liverpool in l812. Coleridge always spoke of Dr. Crompton with the highest regard and affection.

18. *Richards.* *ND* lists seven Richards. I have no indication which one subscribed.

19. *Taft.* The only Taft in *ND* is Henry Taft, Surgeon. St. James' land.

20. *Dr. Smith.* The only Smith with the title of doctor in *ND* is Dr. Thomas Smith, M.D., High Pavement. In his letter of May 31, 1796 to John Fellows, Coleridge closes saying "Give my respectful remembrances to Mrs. F… and to Dr. Smith, Mr. Williams [see below], and Mr. Hancock" (*CL* 1: 220). Mr. Hancock is most likely the business partner of Francis Wakefield.

21 *Mr. Williams.* The only Williams in *ND* is Thomas, Hosier, Stoney St.

Other Subscriptions

Hidemi Kobayashi has provided me with information from the *Book Subscription List* [17] that shows that several individuals on the list also supported other poets, most of them women. I will list the author and publication with whatever information I have about them and then list the individuals who subscribed. Since in many subscription lists the only the last name is given with no first name or address, identification with individuals on the list must be conjectural. Information on the women poets can be found in Robin Jackson's *Romantic Poetry by Women: A Bibliography, 1770-1835* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993). I have searched through the standard on-line library catalogues for the locations of some of these volumes and have found them all very rare, but it is possible that Coleridge's *Poems* (1796) sat next to some of these volumes on Nottingham shelves.

Bentley, Elizabeth, *Genuine Poetical Compositions* (Norwich, 1791). Her volume was sponsored by the Rev. John Walker, of Norwich. Possible Nottingham subscribers were the Fellows family and Wright Coldham, perhaps a relative of George Coldham. Others subscribers listed without address are Buxton, Williams, Richards, and Wright.

Dimond, William, *Petrarchal Sonnets* (Bath 1800). Members of the Fellows family subscribed, although it's not certain that it's the Nottingham Fellows.

Cristall, Ann Batten, *Poetical Sketches* (London 1795). A short biographical sketch in Roger Lonsdale's *Eighteen-Century Women Poets* notes that her volume was published by Joseph Johnson, who published Coleridge's *Fears in Solitude* (1798) and many Unitarian works including a tract by Gilbert Wakefield that landed Johnson in prison for some months in 1799. An appreciation of Cristall's poetry concludes Jerome McGann's *The Poetics of Sensibility* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996). Subscribers include Gilbert Wakefield and Dr. Crompton.

Logan, Maria, *Poems on Several Occasions* (York 1793). Lonsdale includes a brief biographical sketch. Gilbert Wakefield and Lady Cayley subscribed along with a Buxton and a member of the Crompton family of York.

Spence, Sarah, *Poems and Miscellaneous Pieces* (Bury St. Edmunds, 1795). Spence's maiden name was Crompton. Subscribers included Gilbert Wakefield, a R. Denison, and members of the Crompton family, although not Dr. Crompton. Anne Batten Cristall also subscribed.

Williams, Helen Maria, *Poems* (London 1786). Biographical information is contained in Lonsdale and numerous other sources.

In addition to the poets two works on theology were subscribed by those on the list in the 1790s: W. Enfield, *Sermons on Practical Subjects*, published by Joseph Johnson in 1798 subscribed by T. Smith, Mrs. Ugnall, George Coldham, and Nathaniel Stubbins, who may be related to John Stubbins; and Robert Robinson, *Ecclesiastical Researches*, published in 1792 also by Johnson, subscribed by Francis Wakefield and Samuel Statham.

Conclusion

The names on this list confirm Coleridge's claims to have been well entertained and supported by the first Whig families of Nottingham. Although Nottingham did contain its Sandemanians and, for a time, a branch of the London Corresponding Society, whose members in London contributed a penny a week to attend meetings, Coleridge's search for subscribers led him to the society of wealthy hosiers, bankers, and lawyers, who occupied offices in local government. Their political aims were the repeal of the Test and Corporation acts, the reform of Parliament and universal male suffrage, an end to the slave trade, and opposition to the war with France. While Coleridge's opposition to the war may have been on religious, moral, and humanitarian grounds, the opposition to the war of the wealthy dissenters in Nottingham was also economic. Continuation of the war would, and in fact did, disrupt their markets. For a short time in the early 1790's, it was possible for wealthy dissenters and working people to share a political purpose and ideology. Abigail Gawthern labeled them all Paineites, and one must be cautious about accepting the terms of political rhetoric for historical fact, yet their symbolic actions of planting the liberty tree, wearing revolutionary caps, and singing revolutionary songs suggest that the leaders of the crowd… the Denisons, Fellows, Wakefields and Cromptons… were agitating in concert with the disenfranchised, those outside the public sphere. Such an alliance between the wealthy hosiers and bankers and the unrepresented multitude was possible only for a few years. Sentiment in favor of the war became dominant in Nottingham in the mid 1790's. In the later part of the decade, fears of invasion and government repression of dissent in London turned more people against radical dissent.

Later in the Luddite years, 1811-1816, the political alignments were very different. The old alliance between the wealthy hosiers and the frame work knitters was no longer possible as attacks on the knitting frames became frequent. Although I know of no attacks on the frames owned by those on Coleridge's list, the general temper of the times threatened the hosiers. George Coldham, an attorney and the town clerk, exemplifies the later political divisions. As Malcolm Thomis points out, Coldham was thought a Jacobin in the 1790's, but in the Luddite years he was supplying the government with information on the Luddites and calling for public order. E. P. Thompson has noticed the shift: the "Nottingham hosiers had been hoist with their own petard. Some had been reformers in the 1790s; were Dissenters; had petitioned for peace in 1801: had helped to displace a Tory Member in 1802 to the accompaniment of riots and *Ça Ira* . . . " In the Luddite years "the dragon's teeth which they had sown in the Nottingham market-place ten years before were springing up in arms all around them" (*MWC* 499). Thompson's description of the shift in allegiances is only partially true, for some on the list and those associated with them remain consistent in their reforming zeal and after the Luddite years continued to argue for reform: John Fellows, Robert Denison, and, of course, Major Cartwright.

Placed in this context, it would be tempting to argue that Coleridge's shift of his political, religious, and social views was caused by or determined by the shift of opinions of the class with which he associated in the mid 1790's. There is a parallel between Coleridge's shift and that of some of the Nottingham hosiers. A change of opinion may have many causes. One would have to ignore a good

deal of evidence to conclude that Coleridge's shift of opinions was determined solely by the shift of his patrons. It is important to realize that on some issues he recanted and yet on others he did not change. A history of Coleridge's economic and public life has yet to be written. There is a good deal of data and information on his relation to his audience and to his patrons that has yet to be collected and thoroughly analyzed. I hope that some of the information contained here may contribute to such a study.

Paul Magnuson, New York University

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[1] *Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. Earl Leslie Griggs (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, l956-71) 1: 219. Hereafter abbreviated *CL*.

[2] Cottle, Joseph, *Early Recollections; Chiefly Relating to the Late Samuel Taylor Coleridge* , 2 vols. (London, 1837) 1: 152-53. Cottle mentions that the subscription list for the *Watchman* reached one thousand (1: 155)

[3] Malcolm I. Thomis, *Old Nottingham* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, l968) 111-13. Thomis says erroneously that Coleridge preached the sermon in l797, but he does mention that the "charity sermons were always briefly reported in the local press, which would ususally supply a few relevant figures about the school's progress" (113). Perhaps records of Coleridge's sermon can be found in the local press. Heather Jackson tells me that nothing survives in Coleridge's miscellaneous prose that resembles a charity sermon.

[4] John Frost Sutton, *The Date-Book . . . Nottingham*, 1750-1879 (Nottingham, l880) 189. Hereafter abbreviated *DBN*.

[5] S. D. Chapman, "Industry and Trade 1750-1900," in *A Centenary History of Nottingham*, ed. John Beckett (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997) 318.

[6] *The Diary of Abigail Gawthern of Nottingham*, 1751-1810, ed. Adrian Henstock. Thoroton Society Series, vol. 33 (Nottingham: Derry & Sons, l980) 66-67. Hereafter abbreviated *AG*.

[7] *Selections from the Papers of the London Corresponding Society, 1792-99*, ed. Mary Thale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, l983) 376.

[8] E. Willoughby, *The Nottingham Directory, Containing the Name, Profession, and Residence of Every Principle Inhabitant* (Nottingham l799). Hereafter abbreviated *ND*. The directory was published by Charles Sutton.

[9] E. P. Thompson provides a brief description of Sandemanian political views in *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage, l966) 36. Hereafter abbreviated *MWC*.

[10] Gilbert Wakefield, *Memoirs of the Life of Gilbert Wakefield* 2 vols. (London, 1804) 1: 227-28. The full title of Walker's pamphlet is *The Dissenter's Plea; or the Appeal of the Dissenters to the Justice, Honour, and Religion of the Kingdom* (l790).

[11] Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative,* ed. Vincent Carretta (New York: Penguin, l995) 9. Hereafter abbreviated *IN*.

[12] Malcolm I. Thomis, *Politics and Society in Nottingham, 1785-1835* (New York: Augustus Kelley, l969) 218. Hereafter abbreviated *PSN*.

[13] Robert Mellors, *Men of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, being Biographical Notices of Five Hundred Men and Woman* (Nottingham; J & H Bell, l924). Hereafter abbreviated *MWN*.

[14] *The Royal Corporation of the Literary Fund* (London, l797) 25

[15] *The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge,* ed. Kathleen Coburn (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957) 1: 236 and note.
[16] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Friend*, ed. Barbara E. Rooke (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969) 2: 240. Hereafter abbreviated *Friend*.
[17] F.J.G.Robinson and P.J.Wallis, *The Book Subscription Lists: A Revised Guide* (Newcastle: Book Subscription List Project, 1975)

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