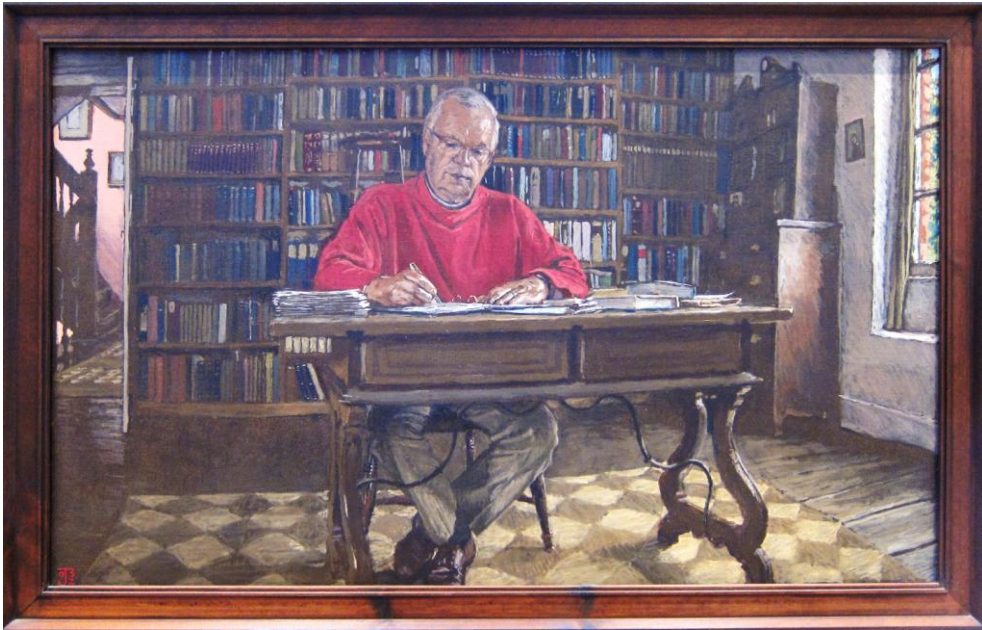


Richard Garnett
(1923–2013)



THE FRIENDS OF COLERIDGE are deeply indebted to Richard Garnett, who died on 26 May aged 90. When the collected edition was proclaimed in 1960, it was with hopes it would be completed by the 1972 bicentenary although, in the event, it took a further thirty years. The original publishers went out of business before the first title was published (in 1969) and at the same time the Bollingen Foundation folded its tents. Two decades or so later, the general editor (Kathleen Coburn) and the associate editor (Bart Winer) died and were not replaced; and, meantime, editors of individual titles came and went, and expectations about what was required altered. In particular, the arrangements for publishing and funding were fundamentally changed. Richard charted these developments in a lecture published in the *Bulletin* (Winter 2002) but he was characteristically modest about his contribution. He was the designer who established the unifying format of the thirty-four volumes that now sit on the shelves. He formulated the ground-rules that hold the complicated array of type in place and make the contents convenient to use. It is a considerable achievement, not least because it proved able to withstand the changes that occurred while the publication of the edition was delayed. Anything less well thought-out would not have survived.

Richard's background was literary and artistic. His great-grandfather was Keeper of Printed Books at the British Museum and his grandfather Edward was an influential critic and publishers' reader. His father David is remembered as the author of *Lady into Fox* (1922), and he and his family lived at Hilton Hall, a beautiful place filled with memories and memorabilia of the Bloomsbury Group and where Richard lived at the time I came to know him. There were even Coleridge associations: his great-grandfather Richard edited the Muses' Library edition of the poetry in 1898: the introduction was

published separately in 1904 and is well worth reading. Also, David Garnett's second wife Angelica was the daughter of Duncan Grant, who among other things produced the brightest, happiest illustrated version of the *Ancient Mariner* (1945). Following the Second World War and soon after coming down from Cambridge, Richard joined the recently established firm of Rupert Hart-Davis (1949) and quickly made his mark as director of production. The firm's commitment to publishing good books was uncompromising, but they lost money and were inevitably absorbed by larger conglomerates. Richard left the firm at this time (1963) to work at Macmillan, where he continued until he retired at the end of 1987. He saw through the publication of the new edition of *Grove's Dictionary of Music* (1980) and, among other things, wrote several books of fiction for children. In retirement, he wrote a well-received biography of his grandmother Constance Garnett, the first English translator of so many Russian novels (1991); he also wrote the definitive history of Rupert Hart-Davis Ltd. (2004). As far as the Collected Coleridge is concerned, the first four titles published between 1969-72 were printed in Cambridge and carry Richard's name as designer. *Church and State* (1976), the first title to be printed in Princeton, still carries his name, as do other titles up to and including *Logic* (1981). Thereafter it was dropped, with the exception of the *Marginalia* volumes up to and including the third (1992), the first two being printed at Cambridge long after production of all other titles had shifted to Princeton.

I hope the above clarifies Richard's own part in the story he told in his published lecture. When I first met Kathleen Coburn and George Whalley during the early 1960s, his name came up repeatedly and their sense of obligation was patent. Kathleen loved the design he had produced for them; and was delighted by his enthusiasm for the project, his skill and clear-headedness. George was particularly pleased with the two-colour solution to the text-and-textus relationship in the *Marginalia* volumes: so obvious and yet to this day still applauded by general readers and marginalia editors alike. But, I repeat, all this was settled before the first title (*The Friend*) appeared and, from about the same time, control over production was being transferred across the Atlantic. Richard's involvement also waned, although he intervened at crucial stages to preserve parts of the original design, but Kathleen Coburn persuaded Princeton to invite him back to advise on typographic problems in the *Poetical Works* volumes during the years 1984-89. He came up with a brilliant solution to the listing of sigla following line numbers, to enable the German manner of recording them to fit alongside the text on the narrower, Coleridge-edition page. It was again so simple and obvious that the German editors with whom I discussed the matter failed to see why it had never been employed before. Richard's contribution is to be measured in details like this and can be seen in the first two volumes of *Poetical Works* typeset by John Waś in Oxford (and contrast the third plays-volume, produced entirely at Princeton). Richard was a delight to work with, companionable and always interested, and we continued to discuss the whole project and how it worked out after our collaboration ended. Despite the later modification of his contribution, it remained vital—indeed, vitalizing and in touch with the spirit of the original enterprise—for which I, for one, am deeply grateful.

Jim Mays