

FIVE LETTERS FROM
JAMES CAMPBELL REDDIE
TO
HENRY SPENCER ASHBEE

Edited and with Notes by
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SCISSORS & PASTE BIBLIOGRAPHIES
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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The following letters – four complete and one fragmentary – are a complete mystery. I believe they are genuine, but assuming the information I have about them is correct, they have no verifiable existence before the 1950s.

They were sent to me in mid-2007, from London by a man named Tom Starling. He appears to have no interest in erotic literature himself, but thought the letters sufficiently interesting to show his friends, one of whom, who had visited my website, suggested he contact me about them. After a short exchange of emails, Tom agreed to send me copies of the letters. I'll leave the relevant parts of Tom's emails to explain how he came to have them.

“I got the letters from my dad. In the 1950s he was a country solicitor who did a fairly good business with probate law. I'm sorry but I don't remember too well how he got them himself. I didn't pay very much attention when he told me. Basically, an old woman died in Iver and he had the job of sorting everything out. She lived in one of a couple of houses owned by a pub called I think The Swan, but whether she was his client, or the pub was, is where things get a bit messy. In the 50s the pub would probably have been owned itself by a local brewery, so they could have been his client too. Dad did a lot of work in and around Iver, but I never went there myself. We lived in Slough until dad died in 1983 and then mum and I moved to Muswell Hill to be near gran.

“Dad told me the letters were in a single envelope in a trunk or old suitcase in the woman’s attic, but I don’t think the original envelope survived because when I got the letters they were in three fairly standard Basildon Bond envelopes. They were the only interesting things in the trunk, the rest was just the usual bollocks, old rent and cheque books, Christmas and birthday cards from years before, odds and sods like that. He did hang onto a couple of ration books from the War though which I still have around here somewhere. They’d be useful these days as film props I imagine.”

Iver is a village in Buckinghamshire, just across the border from what used to be the County of Middlesex. There is a pub called The Swan Hotel, with a sort of mock-Tudor facade. Whether the houses owned by the pub are the two immediately adjacent to it on the left in the photos I don’t know, but it is possible. The full-size photograph of the High Street on the left shows that two of the four upper windows of the houses are bricked up. This is a vestige of the infamous ‘window tax,’ that was instituted in the 17th century. The idea behind this was to avoid a hated income tax and instead raise revenues based on the number of windows one had. This eventually led to a situation in which the extremely rich ostentatiously added windows to their property in order to differentiate themselves from the merely wealthy. Poor people, having more sense, simply bricked up as many windows as they could comfortably live without, thus reducing their taxes. Window taxation, which is popularly believed to have led to the expression ‘Daylight Robbery,’ was abolished in 1851, which means that houses in question are unlikely to have been built after that date.

James Campbell Reddie (November 26th 1807 - July 4th 1878) was born in Glasgow, Scotland, the son of James Reddie (1775-1852), an advocate, and Charlotte Marion Campbell. For some reason he took a dislike to his father, or at least his father’s

name, preferring to be called James Campbell. H. S. Ashbee provides the following account of Campbell's contribution to erotic bibliography and literature:

“James Campbell died at Crieff in Scotland, July 4, 1878, at a ripe age. Decline of health, and failing sight obliged him to abandon his literary pursuits, and to leave London. For a short time he resided at Bath, but quitted that city in October, 1877, for Crieff. Without the advantage of an university education, James Campbell's acquirements were considerable. He read with ease Latin, French and Italian, and although not familiar with German, few erotic books in that language were unknown to him. So thorough indeed was his knowledge of this particular branch, that hardly an obscene book in any language had escaped his attention. His industry was unflagging. Each book, or different edition, as he acquired it, was at once collated, confronted with every available authority upon it, and compared page by page, word by word, with any other procurable issue of the same work. Of very scarce books, which he might not be able to acquire, he frequently made copies with his own hand. By this it may be judged how exact and thorough he was, and how completely he had mastered his subject. James Campbell viewed erotic literature from a philosophic point of view—as illustrating more clearly than any other human nature and its attendant foibles. His collection of books was extensive—more extensive than choice, for while he by no means disdained a copy containing extra illustrations, or in an artistic binding, it was the book itself that he coveted, not the adornments, and, as he was not a rich man, he preferred more books and less embellishment. He never refused to lend a book, and although he was loth definitely to part with any one of his treasures, it frequently happened that a volume was not to be found

on account of some forgotten borrower having omitted to return it. With his knowledge he was equally liberal. Indeed, imparting information seemed to afford him special satisfaction, and he would spare neither time nor labour in his friendly and gratuitous researches. Probably all the English books which are to be found correctly noted in M. Gay's *Bibliographie* ... were communicated by J. Campbell, whose name figures in the preface to the third and last edition. Further, with a view probably of aiding M. Gay in a future edition, Campbell corrected many of his other notices by comparing them with books in his possession, and his own copy of the *Bibliographie* is now before me, of which almost every page of the six volumes is covered with marginal notes and corrections. His enthusiasm for the bibliography of erotic literature was so great that, had his funds been sufficient to warrant his incurring the risk which such an undertaking must always involve, he would probably have given to the world a compilation of his own, which could not have failed to be a masterpiece of exact and comprehensive research. Shortly before his death he presented me with the *Bibliographical Notes* which he had made with this intention, and I have found them of great service in preparing the present volume. Campbell knew William Dugdale, and furnished him with many of the original tales which he issued, besides the translations to be found in *The Exquisite* and other publications. He was an intimate friend of Edward Sellon, and of the authors of *Cythera's Hymnal* both of whom died a few months before him. My readers will not be displeased to have before them the likeness of one who took so much interest in the subject in hand, and I add his portrait, the reproduc-

tion of a photograph taken about ten years before his de-
cease. (*Catena Librorum Tacendorum*. London: Pri-
vately Printed, 1885, pp. xlvii-xlix.)

Additional information on Campbell is sparse, although
there is evidence to suggest he was a ‘joiner.’

On December 10th 1829, Campbell joined The Society of
Writers to His Majesty’s Signet. A publication on the history of
the Society, apparently printed at its own expense by the Uni-
versity of Edinburgh in 1890, gives his correct birth and death
dates (which means we are dealing with the right man), and
states that he was “apprenticed to David Cleghorn.” (See: *A
History of the Society of Writers to Her Majesty’s Signet: With
a List of the Members of the Society from 1594 to 1890 and an
Abstract of the Minutes*, by Frazer Tytler. Edinburgh: Printed
for the Society at the University Press by T. & A. Constable,
1890, p. 167.)

Who David Cleghorn might have been is uncertain. In vol.
4 of a publication called *The Scottish Jurist* (Edinburgh: Printed
by Michael Anderson, 1832) there are a number of references
to a “David Cleghorn, W.S., Crown Agent.” In view of Red-
die’s father having been an attorney, this may be our man, but
the word ‘apprentice’ is not one usually used in connection with
the Law.

Campbell was also a member of the Maitland, a Scottish his-
torical and literary club founded on March 31st 1828. His name
appears on the membership list included in Napier’s *De arte lo-
gistica Joannis Naperi Merchistonii baronis libri qui supersunt*
(Edinburgh, 1839), a rare work limited to just 101 copies. He
was still a member of the club at least four years later, when his
name appears, again in a membership list, in a club publication
by the Rev. Robert Wodrow called *Analecta: Or Materials for
a History of Remarkable Providences Mostly Relating to Scot-
tish Ministers and Christians* (1843).

So far as can be determined, Campbell appeared in only two Census returns, the first in 1841, when he was living in an Edinburgh lodging house owned by a David Hall and his wife Isabella. Aside from the Hall family, and a female servant named Margaret Bryce, the other lodgers included Douglas Mackenzie, an advocate, a clergyman named Alexander Henderson, a 'Doctor of Medicine' named James R. Pollexfen and Ronald Menzies, a fifteen-year-old with no stated function. Reddie's occupation is given as "Writer To The Signet."

The second was in 1871, when Reddie is living at 26 Brecknock Crescent, Camden Town. His name appears as 'James Campbell' with the profession of accountant. He is a lodger in the household of Adamo [or sometimes 'Adam'] Pedroletti, about whom some curious information will be found below. Pedroletti was born about 1830 in Italy, and married in 1861 an English woman named variously Elizabeth Comtesse or Elizabeth Sutton. They had two children, both girls : Louisa Maria Antonia (1863–1926) & Caroline Elizabeth Comtesse (1864–1921).

And a final trace. In a collection of papers preserved at Glasgow University Library pertaining to the Muirhead family, originally of Lauchop, is included a letter from James C. Reddie to J.P. Muirhead, dated 28 Dec. 1846, which acknowledges receipt of copies of James Watt's Correspondence. The shelf mark is: MS Gen 1354/165 in the Dept. of MS.

Henry Spencer Ashbee (21 April 1834 - 29 July 1900). Concerning Ashbee, much has already been written and the interested reader is referred to the following works for biographical information of varying degrees of completeness.

The Erotomaniac: The Secret Life of Henry Spencer Ashbee, by Ian Gibson, (London: Faber and Faber, 2001).

The Other Victorians, by Steven Marcus. (New York: Basic Books, 1966).

Forbidden Books of the Victorians. Henry Spencer Ashbee's Bibliographies of Erotica Abridged and Edited, with an Introduction and Notes by Peter Fryer (London: Odyssey Press, 1970).



James Campbell Reddie



Henry Spencer Ashbee



Iver, Buckinghamshire, about 1920. The Swan public house referred to in Tom Starling's letter can be seen at the bottom right corner of the photograph.

LETTER N^o. 1

Bath, January 15th 1877 [Monday]

My Dear Ashbee,

I thank you for your recent letter, and I trust you will forgive the tardiness of my reply. As you know, my sight has not been good for some while and coupled with generally poor health I felt that the cleaner air of Bath might renew some of my old vigour. There has also been the matter of a falling out with that damned dago who owned the house at Camden where I lived. I believe you met him on one of your visits to my rooms there. I will not weary you with the details; suffice it to say that my undoing may be laid to the credit of a weakness I conceived for the son of a Margate landlady at whose house I stayed for a few days last summer. Although an enthusiastic party to the proceedings himself, Pedroletti sought to extract money from me by threatening to inform the authorities.¹ When I protested, the blackguard locked me out of my rooms leaving me with the clothes I stood up in and a small valise in which was the manuscript of the catalogue of my collection and one or two other items of little interest to anyone but myself. I was obliged to abandon my books and papers, and doubtless they are by now with Lazenby who will already have a compositor at work on double shifts. I regret now ever having introduced the pair.² It was fortunate that I had a friend in Holloway who was able to help me out with a little money and some clothes.

In the event, your letter was mislaid in the course of my move but I do recall enough of its substance to be able to respond well enough to your questions.

You ask about Wm. Dugdale, and my dealings with him. It is true we saw much of each other for many years, but I am unable to say that I knew him well, or that he knew me any better. He seldom asked after my existence beyond the work I did for him, and likewise said little of himself except to boast frequently of a youthful complicity in the Cato Street affair, which I doubt to be the truth although it is possible I suppose that he may have had a hand in printing up some of their pamphlets.³ When first hearing him speak of this I ventured to search out Wilkinson's book on the matter but found no mention of him there.⁴ Nevertheless, D. did speak with great force of the execution of the conspirators at Newgate, which leads me to think that he may well have been a witness to the event. He seemed particularly to relish describing the fate of Thistlewood who was beheaded for his trouble.

D. did tell me that he came from Stockport and I seem to think he had a Quaker background, which is another reason I suspect his claims of complicity with Thistlewood.

I cannot recall when or under what circumstances I first met D. although it could not I think have been much before 1841 for the first work I did for him appeared in *The Exquisite* which began publication the following year. His appearance, early in our acquaintance, was of a slim, robust man who walked and talked at a rare pace difficult to match, all the while smoking a Dutch cheroot. He was clean-shaven and I never saw him with a hat, but he favoured bright floral waistcoats that I thought vulgar and for somebody in his profession questionably ostentatious. Towards the end of his life, he became overweight and slow, and the wit for which he was well known deserted him. Several times he seemed to have seizures, and would shriek and point at nothing in particular. Once on such an occasion he fell

into my arms and I noticed that his gums had a purplish tinge and his breath was most unpleasant and I suspected he was taking mercury for syphilis. Not long after this he was arrested in his shop. He made no effort to resist, and was taken away for the last time and died in November 1868 at Clerkenwell in the House of Correction.

D's publishing practices I found to be strange and aggravating, although in fairness to his memory I should wish to say that he paid up when he said he would, at least to me. I supplied him with any number of stories of my own and translations I made from the French and Italian, together with original tales by others of my acquaintance, but they seldom appeared under the names I or the other authors gave to them. Several times I picked up a book new to me from its title only to discover that it was something of my own composition, or that of a friend. D. seemed puzzled or perhaps amused by my annoyance and I saw that it was useless to protest and kept silent afterwards on the topic.

At his insistence, I even let him have a large manuscript of my own that I had written which was largely the story of my life, although with some embellishment I need hardly add, and was angered that he saw fit to publish it in parts with no clear indication of the connecting narrative of the original. Indeed, some parts were re-written or changed to conceal this fact. One of the books was called *Adventures of a Schoolboy* and another *The New Ladies Tickler* that I think you know. A third was planned that treated of my elder sister Mary, although I re-christened her Laura in the narrative, and I believe the type was already set up for it, but D's arrest and passing prevented its completion. Fortunately, I had secured many of my manuscripts from D. beforehand, but most I subsequently lost in Camden.

I should say that much of what D. published, particularly in the last ten years of his life, came from me originally in one form

or another, including some novels that Algy S[winburne] acquired from a visiting American admirer and passed on to me. Speaking of S. I have to confess to having probably got him excited a year or so ago when I mentioned to Solomon that a plan was afoot to bring out an Englished version of Sade's *Justine*.⁵(5) As you may know, Solomon is not noted for his appreciation of a joke and so I doubt an hour went by before he set pen to paper to let Algy hear of it.

Ever Yours
James Campbell

LETTER N^o. 2

Bath, January 19th 1877 [Friday]

My Dear Ashbee,

Knowing that your book is ready for the press, if not already in Gaball's hands, I thought I should send you further details of Dugdale and related matters in the event you will find them of use.

Some while ago I wrote, at your request, an account of how *Don Leon* came to be published. I have nothing to add to what I have already told you of the poem itself, except to bemoan that the copy Dugdale allowed me to make of it, in which I had corrected many of the blunders of the original, was lost in Camden. But I should say that my revelation to D. that it was a clever forgery and not from Byron's pen was the one time I ever saw him truly angered. I remember it well and it makes a good story, and I will relate it as it happened.

Early in 1860, perhaps in April, I was summoned to meet D. at the Café Riche by his boy who called on me at Islington where I was then living. The venue for the rendezvous was unusual since D. was more usually to be found frequenting the night houses and taverns in the Strand and on Fleet Street, and so I knew that whatever he had for me was something out of the ordinary.

At the appointed hour I arrived at the Café Riche. Since the Argyll hadn't turned out as yet, the place wasn't crowded and I saw D. at a corner table the moment I entered, sitting before a dozen oysters with a bottle of champagne to his left and on his

right a woman who certainly wasn't his wife. I recall that his waistcoat was even more ornate than usual.

No sooner had I sat down than he passed me a glass of champagne and slid across the table a card folder done up with ribbon which at his eager insistence I opened. Inside I found perhaps a couple of dozen sheets of thumbled and grubby notepaper on which was written the poem we are speaking of. On the top leaf was written simply Don Leon, and below this the stanza which D. added to the title of his edition. I didn't then recognize the poem, and since no author's name was affixed to it, I asked D. if he knew who had written it. As he was prone to do, he hesitated for effect and eventually said simply, "Byron" in a hushed voice and emptied his glass with a flourish.

I must have looked shocked or bewildered or a combination of the two for he laughed mightily, and winked at me. "Yes," said he. "A man came into the shop on Wednesday last and asked to see something spicy. He was a stranger to me, and suspecting he might be acting for the Society⁶, I sold him some songsters of no great indecency and seemingly pleased with them he went on his way. The day following he returned in the company of another man who I also didn't know. I sold them some more songsters, but the pair stayed in the shop, looking at the stock and making small talk, until at length the one who had come in alone the day before approached the counter and asked if I would be interested in purchasing the manuscript of a poem he described as being 'a great literary curiosity,' adding that with care I might make a good sum of money from its proper exploitation.

"I of course expressed interest, and asked to see the work in question whereupon he produced a single sheet of paper on which were several verses of a poem, and indicated that it was but a fragment of a much larger work written, as he put it, by 'a noble man of letters, deceased near forty years.' He made some further remarks that at length led me to understand that

he referred to the late Lord Byron, although he would not at first admit as much.

“At last he did mention the name, saying that the fellow who had accompanied him to the shop had in his youth held a clerical position in the offices of John Murray, Byron’s publisher, and had befriended Murray’s son who was of about the same age as himself, which is to say about sixteen years or thereabouts. The younger Murray had been present, together with Hobhouse, Moore and the others, at the burning of Byron’s memoirs, but had contrived to make a fair copy of a poetical work accompanying the memoirs in the days prior to that episode. “Some years later, the two still being friends, they re-copied the poem and added notes, and it was this manuscript that the stranger now offered to sell to me. I pointed out to him that as a publisher who knew my customers and their tastes, I was well aware that a poem, no matter how curious it might be or noble its author, would not sell well, and asked how I might usefully profit from its possession otherwise.

“The man became conspiratorial, leaning across the counter and lowering his voice. He suggested that I might approach Lady Byron with the manuscript and offer it to her, for an appropriate recompense. I thought about this for a moment and then asked why, if such a plan was as easy as he implied, they had not attempted it themselves. He agreed this to be true enough, but said that his friend was in an urgent need of ready money and could not afford the time to negotiate such an undertaking, and for this reason was ready to part with the manuscript for 50 guineas cash.

“Again I thought, and then said that on receipt of the whole manuscript I would pay him £45 and no more. He consulted with his friend, and at last returned to say that the deal was done and he would return the following day with the manuscript, which he duly did.”

Now Ashbee, I have to say that even without a close inspection of the manuscript I suspected that D. had been gulled by the pair, but decided against suggesting such a thing at the time, and instead asked if I could take it away with me for a day or so and examine it in circumstances where I might better get a measure of it. He hesitated, and I could tell that he was loathe to let it out of his hands, and yet he eventually agreed to it, and I left for Islington where I set about reading the poem.

A brisk first reading confirmed my suspicions of the piece at once. We had already established that even if the poem had been by Byron, it was not in his hand, but whoever had made the copy had little Greek or Latin for the quotations in the notes were full of mistakes, and the English was not of the highest order either. This in itself did not disqualify Byron as the author of the poem, but when I came to examine it, the rhymes 'soul' and 'prowl' in the first stanza and 'noose' and 'refuse' in the second quite took my breath away, and I additionally found references to events that I have reason to believe occurred after Byron's passing. I re-read the poem and notes again to be certain and as I found nothing to change my initial reservations decided to return the manuscript to D. in Holywell Street the next day.

D. was not at his shop when I arrived, but his boy directed me to a divan in Fleet Street where I was obliged to pay sixpence to break the news to him. I suspected, correctly as it transpired, that I would not be reimbursed, but I did get a passable cigar. I told D. as gently as I could of my findings, but no matter how I carefully I might have chosen my words he would have felt foolish and betrayed, and he dashed a heavy glass ashtray to the ground with a cry, and uttered a string of oaths which caused even the jaded customers at Grimes to look up in alarm. D. exited the divan and stalked up Fleet Street cutting the air furiously with his cane, with Grimes shouting after him to settle up for the ashtray. It was an ugly incident, which I found acutely embarrassing, but worse was to come.

Some days later, in his shop, he told me that if the poem was a fake it was unlikely that Lady Byron would be aware of it, and something could still be salvaged from the situation. I advised strongly against making any representations to her, even supposing it to be authentic, but D. was determined. For perhaps three weeks he did nothing but make draft after draft of the letter he proposed to send to her Ladyship, until about the middle of May when he was happy with what he'd written. But before he could put his plan into effect, disaster struck in the form of announcements in *The Times* and elsewhere that she had died on the 15th of the month. D. must have read it over dinner, for the incident at Grimes was repeated, this time at a night house in Newcastle Street from which he was ejected with some force and told never to return. I am glad that I was not present.

About four years later, as we know, D. eventually published the poem, and padded it together with another, *Leon to Annabella*, which had appeared first I believe about 1850 in *Peeping Tom*,⁷ one of his periodicals. He made no effort to correct the blunders in the notes, nor did he ask me to do so, as I had so many other times previously with other books, and I suspect he held me to blame in some way for his misfortune with this book. I think he charged 10/6d. for it, but I doubt he made all his money back.

Ever yours
James Campbell

LETTER N^o. 3

Bath, January 21st 1877 [Sunday]

My Dear Ashbee,

I thank you for your kind letter of the 17th which reached me just this morning. In response to your enquiry after my health, I am happy to say that in general I am feeling better since leaving London. The air here is much fresher, although it is abominably cold and I am obliged to keep a fire going in the grate in my room around the clock to keep from freezing, an expense I can well do without. However, as you may have deduced from my handwriting the problems I've been having with my eyes have not abated. I read these days with the greatest difficulty, but I am fortunate that my landlady here has a girl who for a few coppers will read to me for an hour or two in the evening, although I have of course to be careful what books I give to her for this purpose. It may surprise you to learn that I have taken a liking to the novels of Walter Scott.

Whilst on the subject of my handwriting, I have decided to pass over to you the catalogue of my books that I managed to rescue from Camden. I have sent it under separate cover, and I should hope that it would be with you by the end of the week. As with my letters, I addressed the package to your Gray's Inn Square chambers. I doubt now that I will ever add anything to it, and aside from some sentimental attachment it has little value to me anymore. You may be able to get it published, or use it for your own reference if not. I would not care to see it destroyed, as it represents close to thirty years work. I said above

that it was a 'catalogue of my books,' but this is only partly true. Many of the works listed are described from volumes in other people's collections, and I was always able to take down details of books that Dugdale acquired with a view to reprinting them.

The Camden business still chafes abominably, and I sometimes catch myself staring vacantly into space and pondering on what I'd like to do to that damned little Italian if I were younger. You cannot imagine, Ashbee, what I lost. As you know from your visits, I had many books among which were most of Dugdale's most incandescent volumes, but there were dozens of manuscripts, including Eddie Sellon's memoirs.

Towards the end poor Eddie was in desperate financial straits but I was able to help him a little by selling his memoirs to Dugdale. By this time D. himself had become unpredictable and I was unwilling to cross swords with him on anything lest he turn ugly, and I am sorry to say that he paid far less for the memoirs than for another of Eddie's manuscripts I sold him a few years before, a novel that true to his practice he printed up as two separate works, one stated to be a sequel to the other.

As Eddie wrote it, the MS of his memoirs was twice as long at least as the printed version, and all the real names were included. D. was really only interested in the spicy passages, and I had the unhappy task of reducing the MS down to its published length. Although much of the book is concerned with army life in India, the MS contained a good deal more which I had to excise. A pity, but D. had little time for Eddie's reflections on the society and religious practices of the Hindoos, curious though they might be to us Westerners. Worse, if possible, I was obliged to insert a few sentences of my own as a bridge, so to speak, to conceal the loss of his adventures whilst driving the Cambridge Mail, else there would have been huge unexplained gaps in his narrative. I hated to work like that on Eddie's book, and tried everything to get D. to do it complete in two volumes and save on the venture by leaving out the lithos, but he

wouldn't hear of it. Eventually I had to buckle because it was the only way I could scrape up the money to keep Eddie's suicide out of the news.

That was a dreadful event. The night before, which would have been sometime in April 1866 I think, Eddie wrote me a letter announcing his intentions, but by the time I received it the deed was done. I arrived at Webb's [Hotel] in Piccadilly and went straight to his room and found him lying on the floor beside the bed. For some reason the poor fellow had wrapped his pistol in a towel which presumably muffled the report and accounts I imagine for why nobody had found him before I got there. I don't believe you ever met him, Ashbee, but it was a terrible shock to me to see his once handsome features so brutally destroyed.

I managed to catch the attention of a 'boots' passing along the hallway outside and without explaining why asked if he would summon the duty manager to whom I had to give my last half-sovereign to keep him quiet and persuade him to send out for Albert Styles, D's medical examiner friend attached to the police. Once he was on the scene and had looked over both the corpse and Eddie's letter to me, he was amenable to assist in covering the event up, at least to the extent of keeping it out of the newspapers. But being one of D's kidney he of course wanted recompense for the favour, hence my unpaid editorial labours.

Eddie really was a most splendid fellow, and we were the greatest of friends for a number of years. Despite some slight elaboration his memoirs were for the most part a reasonably truthful account of a colourful life. I met his wife Sarah Ann on, I believe, two occasions, once at the Olympic where the two of them were taking in a show, and the second time at their house in Hampshire. She was pretty thing as women go although I am no judge on such matters, but it did seem to me that she concealed poorly an aggressive or difficult manner, as is most amply

evidenced from Eddie's account in his memoirs of the shinkicking he received from her.

Eddie was also an accomplished artist, although one would be hard pressed to think so from the infamous litho reproductions D. made from them. He did the plates for my *Adventures of a Schoolboy* and *The New Ladies Tickler*, but he was capable of excellent watercolour drawings of non-erotic subjects, and I saw several of these at his Hampshire house shewing scenes in India, one in particular being very fine, a waterfront view with vendors and sailors and dhows in the background.

In closing, let me send you with this a letter I received from Eddie about a month before he died which I have kept as a memento of our friendship. It is very typical of him.⁸

Ever yours

James Campbell

LETTER N^o. 4

Bath, January 21st 1877 [Sunday]

My Dear Ashbee,

This is by way of a short poscriptum to my missive of earlier today in which I neglected to mention that in addition to his books already known to you, Eddie Sellon wrote two other erotic works, but they were not published and little more than long short stories. One, called *The Confessions of a Single Man, as exemplified in the Erotic Adventures of a Gentleman*, Dugdale was to have included at the end of *The New Epicurean* and in fact its name appeared on the title page of that work as it was originally printed, but in the event a new title page, with no mention of the *Confessions*, was substituted for it. D. later advertised it as a separate work with 'Rich Engravings' and costing two guineas in a catalogue he added at the end of *Lucretia*, a bad novel of mine that he brought out in 1864. The other work was called *The Delights of Imagination*, and also has not been printed. I used to have the manuscript of that tale, or rather, a copy of it.

My memory is as faulty as my eyesight, and thinking back on the letter I recently sent you in which I mentioned Dugdale's apparent fascination with the executions of the Cato Street conspirators, I quite forgot to say that another of his favourite topics was the execution of John Lyons and the other Flowery Land pirates early in 1864.⁹ I'm certain you remember it because it was the talk of London, if not the whole country, for weeks. D. had a broadside describing the event pinned to the door of his

back room at the shop for months afterwards that was put out by Disley of High Street, St. Giles, who also happened to be one of his regular printers. The amusing thing about all this is that D. took to his bed for a week following the executions as much, I suspect, for the fact that his pocket was picked in the crowd as the cold he caught in the rain that day.

Yours

James [Campbell]

LETTER NO. 5

Bath January 26th 1877

My Dear Ashby.

I had a telegram this morning from Fred Pike announcing his intention of visiting me here in the next week or so. I am much concerned about him. To judge from his letters and also his appearance at our meetings before I left London, he is far from well, complaining constantly of chest pains and coughing fit to burst a blood vessel. He's as pale as a ghost and yet he works like a damned coolie at that practice of his, and is now about to endanger his health further by risking a trip to Bath in a draughty train. The weather here is quite dreadful, too. I've not been out myself for days for fear of falling on the ice and must rely on the landlady's daughter for any errands. Under normal conditions, I would undertake myself. I can't imagine what Fred is thinking of - If the letter arrives in time, perhaps you could speak to him, and try to dissuade him from leaving London at least until

Bath, January 26th 1877 [Friday]

My Dear Ashby [sic],

I had a telegram this morning from Fred Pike¹⁰ announcing his intention of visiting me here in the next week or so. I am much concerned about him. To judge from his letters, and also his appearance at our meetings before I left London, he is far from well, complaining constantly of chest pains and coughing fit to burst a blood vessel. He's as pale as a ghost and yet he works like a damned coolie at that practice of his, and is now about to endanger his health further by risking a trip to Bath in a draughty train. The weather here is quite dreadful, too. I've not been out myself for days for fear of falling on the ice, and

must rely on the landlady's daughter for errands that under normal conditions I would undertake myself. I can't imagine what Fred is thinking of. If this letter arrives in time, perhaps you could speak to him and try to dissuade him from leaving London, at least until the Spring when he'd be better off anyway in Eastbourne at that peculiar hotel he likes so much. In case you've lost his address, he can be found at 26 Old Burlington Street, otherwise at his chambers at 12 King's Bench Walk. I think he has a club, but I don't recall which it is.

I don't think I ever mentioned it to you, but Fred wrote a truly splendid piece of ribaldry together with George Sala and, to a lesser degree, Algy Swinburne, in the manner of the Christmas pantomimes. Despite Algy's hand in the proceedings, you'll be interested to learn that the work is remarkably free of references to the birch. Fred allowed me to make a copy his manuscript, which is called *Prince Cherrytop*¹¹ by the way, and I attempted to get Dugdale interested in it, and Hotten as well, but to no avail. It wasn't erotic enough for the former, and too obscene for the latter, and so remains unpublished. It is a little like Johnny Rochester's play *Sodom*, but better written I think and a good deal funnier.

Fred once told me a good story about Hotten, or rather one of his authors. So far as I can remember it, H. had published a book by an American named Bierce in 1873 and as was his usual practice in these matters neglected to pay him.¹² The author tried all manner of approaches to get his due, even resorting to a threatening letter, and at length received a cheque. You may imagine Bierce's rage when it was refused by the bank for lack of funds. Since he happened to be in London at the time, Bierce presented himself noisily at H's office fully intending to resolve the matter if necessary with violence. He was informed that H. was not on the premises and was directed to his home where he was confronted by a woman who blocked his entry. Waving his valueless cheque and roaring furiously, Bierce brushed her and

her protests aside and searched the house room by room until he came upon his quarry dead in his bed.

Pursuing the subject of Dugdale, I thought it might divert you to hear of a strange adventure he and I shared toward the end of the fifties, strange to me at all events, 'though I have every reason to think he was a seasoned hand at what happened. I have no precise recollection of when this took place, but it must have been in '59 or perhaps '60 because Wilton's had just recently replaced the Prince of Denmark off Wellclose Square. Since this is near where our escapade began you probably already have some intimation of what I'm to tell you about.

While I knew well enough of D's love of the *bas fonds*, I used to think that he seldom went further afield than the immediate neighbourhood of Holywell Street to savour them, with the notable exception of Leicester Square near where he had a room for a while, but one day he surprised me by asking if I was up for a jaunt to the Ratcliff Highway. As you may well imagine I was at first hesitant to accept, and enumerated my objections and concerns to him firmly enough, but he dismissed them all, saying that he had obtained the services of a constable who was familiar with the area and who knew how to look after himself. I eventually agreed and the week following, as planned, I was at the shop at six in the evening where he surprised me further by announcing that he'd engaged a fly for the trip, which arrived soon afterwards with his younger brother already seated inside.

This was I think the first time I'd met Jack Dugdale, who was in the same line of business as his brother, but in a smaller way. The two often used the same printer and frequently the same impresses on their books, which made telling them apart difficult. Jack was quite different to his brother I saw at once, not near as excitable and very sober in his manner of dress. Whereas William always looked as though he'd slept in his clothes, which he may well have done since he was always at

odds with his wife, John was very neatly turned out, and seemed so on my subsequent meetings with him. His one nod toward oddness of clothing was a weakness for the American stove-pipe hats which had just recently made their appearance in London. Dugdale senior made some sarcastic reference to Jack's fecklessness with money in respect to the one he was wearing and in truth it was tall as such things go for he was obliged to wear it at a perilously jaunty angle to avoid it catching the ceiling in the cab. I thought it enormously funny when Dugdale minor referred to his brother as 'Willie' in his riposte, but it failed to amuse Dugdale senior and he gave his brother such a glacial stare that the name wasn't repeated, at least in my hearing.

Despite this minor incident, the trip went well and almost before we'd passed through Temple Bar Jack and William were laughing together over a rehash of the latter's appearance a year or two earlier before Lord Campbell when he'd created a memorable spectacle by at first shouting his innocence, then pleading for leniency for the sake of his children, and finally brandishing a knife at his Lordship from the dock.

By the time we were within striking distance of Ratcliff Highway, it was dark and if memory serves there was a slight drizzle. We stopped at Lemn Street where we picked up a constable from the police station, and then proceeded on to the Highway.

The constable, who was not in uniform and presumably off his shift, was a burly, whiskered fellow whom William called Ned. The two spoke together for a few minutes, and I saw some coins change hands. Ned then cautioned us, and me in particular as a novice to this sort of thing, that I should stay close to him at all times, and take careful note of anything he said by way of instruction. At his words my misgivings of the week earlier came back at once to haunt me, but as we had at that moment passed Bluegate Fields and entered the western end of Ratcliff Highway I decided to stick it out rather than make a

damned fool of myself and stay with the driver of the fly who was to wait back at Leman Street until the appointed time came to return and collect us.

I cannot at this late date remember the names of the places we visited that night. The first, a public house, was nearby to Wellclose Square. I do remember, though, that to the left of the door we had entered was a wide flight of stairs leading up to the first floor where, so said a sign, there was a dancing saloon. We had a round of drinks and as the place was passably spick & span and quiet I began to think that my fears were groundless, but the night was young and our guide, at D's suggestion as he later told me, was deliberately starting at a tame establishment for my benefit.

From the snatches of conversation I heard from the few early revellers at nearby tables, I deduced that the place had a Dutch or German flavour to it, and catered to people of those nationalities. I mentioned this to Ned, and he agreed, saying that because of The Highway's close proximity to the docks and wharfs, many of the night houses and dram shops in the area did the same, as we would see, and it was true. As the night wore on and we entered further into Ratcliff Highway, the class of the places we visited grew ever more deplorable. It was a veritable Babel, with every language imaginable being spoken and shouted and sung by sailors drunk on beer or Hollands. In an alley alongside one public house we saw the start of a savage fight with knives between a Lascar and a Greek which interested William and Jack who dismayed me by seeming inclined to wait and see the outcome; but Ned urged them to move on, advice I was pleased they were eventually persuaded to take up.

Ned was a rare wonder. No matter how dissolute the establishment, he addressed the landlords by their first name and with the greatest familiarity, as though they were bosom companions of long standing. Indeed, more than once we had drinks

brought for us by these ruffians simply because we were in Ned's company.

The taverns and night houses were loathsome bear gardens, filled with drunkards of both sexes who danced to shrill, tuneless music scraped out on fiddles by musicians drunk as themselves. In one tavern there was a back room into which we were allowed and saw on a small stage some *tableaux vivants* of a sort unimagined I suspect by Madame Genlis.¹³ There were several tableaux, each more suggestive than its predecessor, with the participants dressed skin-tight in pale material so that they looked quite naked. Cards on which the subject of the displays were written told us that we were seeing 'The Sabine Women,' 'The Sins of Messalina' - spelled with two l's I recall - 'The Rape of Lucrece' and similar subjects.

Later there was a private show attended by just a few selected friends of the publican, Ned as always being one of these, and we were treated to the sight of a trollop frigging herself with a bottle to the accompaniment of the sounds of doubtless pretended pleasure, and another who squatted down and produced three hard-boiled eggs from her cunny, coloured successively red, white and blue which elicited patriotic cheers from a quartet of sailors in the audience.

As you know, Ashbee, I've never shielded my own preferences from my most intimate friends, amongst whom you are of course to be counted. You will understand it then when I tell you that aside from a slight academic interest these displays did nothing for me whatsoever. But after a few more of these little shows, I was more than a little interested in the appearance at the back of the room of a tall nigger wearing a black cloak that reached to the floor and with a hat on his head of such a height as to give Jack Dugdale's a run for its money. Indeed, the two looked at one another with such disdain that you might have thought them a pair of women at a party by coincidence wearing the same dress.

After a moment or two of this, the nigger moved to one side and allowed the woman with the bottle to return to the stage and then he doffed his hat, bowing to the small audience and pointedly avoiding Jack as he did so. He then placed the hat on a nearby table and allowed his cloak to drop to the floor. The old familiar stirring returned to my loins for the nigger was a magnificent sight, well proportioned, oiled and glistening in the light of the lanterns and with a pego on him that would almost put a donkey to shame.

There then occurred what Jack Dugdale afterwards referred to enthusiastically as an 'exhibition fuck.' The nigger fell on the woman and right there on the stage took her fore and aft and in between, and this time there is little doubt in my mind that her cries of pleasure were quite authentic, and I suspected that the two of them had some sort of relationship outside the backroom of that damned night house. After the nigger had done with the woman, or perhaps it was the reverse, there was some speculation that a brace of tribades would perform next with a godemichet, but if so we were denied the experience for Ned, on checking his watch, declared it was time to be returning to Leman Street else the fly would leave without us.

NOTES

¹ ‘Pedroletti.’ Adamo Pedroletti was Campbell’s landlord at 26 Brecknock Crescent, Camden Town. The first clues to this occur in a somewhat startling contribution to the November 1880 issue of *The Pearl*, a pornographic periodical published by William Lazenby. Titled “Memorandum from Mr. P—” it begins “Mr. Reddie used to call me Petro, as a short familiar name; but whilst he lodged with me in my house, Brecknock Crescent, Camden Town [...] I was continually afraid he would bring himself or both of us into trouble.”

Peter Mendes checked the Post Office Directories of the period, and found that Adamo Pedroletti was the owner-occupier of 26 Brecknock Crescent from 1873–1876. He further discovered an entry in Ashbee’s unpublished diaries indicating that Ashbee visited Campbell at Camden on June 26th 1875. The entry provides Campbell’s precise address, clinching the matter. See: Peter Mendes, *Clandestine Erotic Fiction in English 1800–1930*. (Aldershot, 1993. p. 202.)

Adamo Pedroletti died in the first quarter of 1881, aged about fifty-five, which is interesting in view of the fact that his ‘Memorandum’ was therefore published prior to his decease. The full text of the ‘Memorandum’ is as follows:

Mr. Reddie used to call me Petro, as a short familiar name; but whilst he lodged with me at my house, Brecknock Crescent, Camden Town (N.B.— This is where I first was introduced to Mr. Reddie), I was continually afraid he would bring himself or both of us into serious trouble.

Once, I remember, we went to Margate for a few weeks at the seaside, and the landlady of the house where we stopped had a very good-looking son, a youth not over fifteen, if quite so old. Mr. Reddie was in love at once, but how to win the boy over was the difficulty.

“Petro,” he would say, “I must fuck that boy or go out of my mind from friggng myself as I lie in bed and think of him. How can we manage it, old boy?”

I recommended patience, and an opportunity would be sure to turn up.

“Treat him well, and let’s take him out for a bathe or a walk with us whenever he will go,” I said.

My advice was taken. Young Frank was soon quite at home in our rooms and evidently pleased at being made such a favourite by the lodgers, who were always treating him to cakes, wine or fruit.

We took several promenades with him as companion, and in a few days he also regularly accompanied us and shared the same machine with us when we bathed.

How we joked him about his little doodle, asked him if it would stand stiff and about boys playing with each other’s cocks at school. This was of course done very carefully and gradually, and we began to think him discreet enough as he had often assured us that he told no tales out of school, when we gave him shillings or half-crowns.

His mother was a buxom woman of about eight and thirty, who had been left a widow for some years, her husband having been in the Civil Service, but died after they had been married about ten years.

Now Mrs. Glover was decidedly more to my taste than the boy. So I made assiduous courtship of her on my own account, for Mr. Reddie couldn’t even bear for a woman to touch him.

Her bedroom was next to mine, and I had a peephole so that I could watch all her movements as she dressed or undressed, and had often noticed how she sometimes looked at her cunt in the glass and seemed to sigh as if thinking of past joys. One night in particular, before sitting on the chamber-pot as usual before getting into bed, she seated herself on the bedside drawing up her night-chemise to her navel, whilst she at first gently frigged her clitoris with a couple of fingers. I could see the little piece of flesh stand out quite excitedly. Her fingers worked nervously for a moment or two, as her face began to flush, and her bosom to heave with emotion, when all of a sudden, she fell backwards on the bed in the act of spending, her legs wide open, allowing me to see clearly a few pearly drops glistening on her busy fingers.

Now was my chance. I had observed she never locked her door. My prick was rampant for such a glorious fuck, as I believed she would be, and having only my shirt and stockings on, I noiselessly opened my door as well as her own so quietly as to be quite unperceived by my luscious victim, as she lay gasping on the bed, from the effects of her copious emission. I had previously well-oiled the locks of both doors on the sly.

Stooping down, so that she would not see my approach and having neither boots nor slippers on my feet, I soon was kneeling between her open legs and gazing my fill at the delicious throbbing cunt of my landlady. She still lay with two fingers right in, but not frigging. The mark was fair and open, so, slowly rising, I brought the nose of my

impatient prick within an inch of the spot. It was then very gently touched. There was a kind of spasmodic twitch of sympathy, but she did not otherwise seem to notice it, and I could see her eyes were closed.

Mr. Peaslin went on gently to insinuate himself and fortunately for my game-cock, the spending had oiled her so that I gained an inch or two, and then with a sudden plunge as I clasped her round the hips, I was three-quarters entered in a moment.

What a start she gave, but seemed to have the presence of mind not to scream.

“Oh, Heavens, sir, what are you about? I’m ruined! Leave me, you wicked man, this instant!” she exclaimed, as I could see the tears start to her eyes, and the deep blush of shame overspread her face.

“Not yet, my darling Mrs. Glover! I had a peephole and the sight of you fingering yourself drove me quite mad with desire. Now, won’t you forgive me? I couldn’t help myself,” I replied, as I seized the opportunity to push on to victory, and felt myself buried to the hilt in her throbbing sheath.

I lay on her kissing and imploring for forgiveness, making my prick throb inside of her as I did so, and at last she faintly smiled my pardon. I need not tell you more, how we used to sleep together every night, and that our liaison quite blinded her to our intentions regarding Master Frank.

We soon proceeded to all sorts of indecencies with the youth. Mr. Reddie and myself would compare the immense difference in the size of our pricks before him in the bathing-machine (Reddie’s was a very small one, not five inches). We asked him to feel and judge for himself. The very touch of his delicate soft youthful hand made the seed shoot from me, which you may be sure immensely surprise the lad, and made him blush scarlet, so that we were afraid of having gone too far.

Another morning Mr. Reddie gamahuched him till he spent in his mouth and seemed to enjoy the sucking, after which we handled each other’s pricks and he amused himself with them, until we emitted our juice, mine spurting all over his belly as he stood in front of me. Then we went into the sea to refresh ourselves and afterwards made him a present of half a sovereign, which his innocent mother, I believe, thought was only a delicate way of pleasing herself.

A day or two after this, Mr. Reddie pretended to be obliged to return to town for two or three days and we easily persuaded Mrs. Glover to allow Frank to go with us, and I promised to show him all the sights, while Mr. Reddie was attending to his business; this she also took as another kindness to herself and we started on our journey.

We took apartments in town at the house of a Mrs. Anderson (an old friend of Mr. Reddie's where he was always safe to do as he pleased). They consisted of a sitting-room and bedroom adjoining, the latter with two beds in it so that Frank had to sleep with either one of us.

Then we showed him a fine collection of coloured plates of boys and girls, boys with boys or men, etc., some of the latter plainly showing they had got their cocks in their partners' bottoms.

"You'll let him do it to you, Petro, won't you?" appealed Mr. Reddie as he whispered in ecstasy: "I shall soon be landed now!"

There was no object on my part; his little cock couldn't hurt me. Besides, I had a great fancy for it at the moment, and told him he must put his arms around my waist and handle my cock and make it come.

Frank was quite pleased to try. His youthful affair was quite stiff and hard at the idea of having a man.

We threw off everything and I knelt down on all fours on the hearth-rug. Then, Mr. Reddie guided Frank's prick to my arse-hole and he soon wriggled it in whilst his hand clasped and friggd my big cock in front. It was so extraordinarily exciting to my ideas that I spent at once, and clasped one of my hands round each of his wrists to make him frig quicker; also to secure him in case he flinched from Reddie's assault.

My friend had already got a finger well-greased with cold cream up Frank's fundament which the boy seemed to enjoy rather than not, as I might judge by the increasing activity of his little prick in my arse.

"Now, Frank," said Mr. Reddie, "you will let me try to have you, won't you, you dear boy? It won't hurt."

I had previously taken a looking-glass from the dressing-table and placed it on the floor, so I could see every motion of both of my companions. With one hand Reddie was caressing the cock and balls of the boy, as he fucked my bottom, whilst his right hand presents his prick to the tight little pink arse-hole which kept bobbing towards him.

Frank winced a little at the attack; but Reddie being small, as I have said, had no difficulty in effectually getting into him. How his face flushed and his eyes sparkled with delight as he almost screamed out: "I'm in, oh, delicious! I'm landed at last, Petro, my dear fellow! I'm coming – I can't stop!"

This made me come again and I also felt Frank spend at the same moment. We kept our places and had another splendid bottom-fuck before separating.

My prick was too big to get into either of my companions but I loved to have the boy fuck me, and frig me whilst Reddie had him.

The very thought of that adventure makes my old pego stand at any moment.

The sentence “(N.B.– This is where I first was introduced to Mr. Reddie)” in the first paragraph of this Memorandum appears likely to have been an insertion by William Lazenby, editor of *The Pearl*. Whether this means that Lazenby knew Pedroletti and met Reddie when visiting him, or whether the two were introduced by a fourth party, is impossible to say.

² William Lazenby, a major publisher of pornography in late 19th century London who took over the reins of the trade from William Dugdale after his death in 1868. The reference to Reddie abandoning his collection is interesting, since he is supposed to have sold it to Ashbee in 1877. It is perhaps possible that the bulk of Reddie’s collection was kept elsewhere, and that it was this other stash that was purchased by Ashbee.

³ ‘Cato Street affair’. A plot in 1820 by radical disciples of Thomas Spence (1750–1814) to assassinate members of the British Cabinet whilst they were dining at Lord Harrowby’s house at 39 Grosvenor Square. Betrayed by double agents and police spies, the conspirators were cornered at an address in Cato Street (now Homer Street), off the Edgware Road, and in the affray that ensued a policeman was stabbed to death. Five of the conspirators, including Arthur Thistlewood who killed the policeman, were hanged and then decapitated at Newgate on May 1st 1820.

⁴ Presumably George Theodore Wilkinson, *An authentic History of the Cato-Street Conspiracy; with the trials at large of the conspirators for high treason and murder; a description of their weapons and combustible machines, and every particular connected with... the horrid plot. With portraits of all the conspirators... and other engravings* (London: Thomas Kelly, 1820).

⁵ ‘Solomon.’ Simeon Solomon (1840 – 1905), an English Pre-Raphaelite painter who, unusually for the time, lived an openly homosexual life-style. It has been suggested that Solomon may have acquired the manuscript of Jack Saul’s homosexual memoirs and given them on to Reddie, who was also gay. From Reddie the MS seems to have passed to William Lazenby, who published them in 1881 as *Sins of the Cities of the Plain*.

⁶ Undoubtedly a reference to the Society for the Suppression of Vice, founded by William Wilberforce, who is better known for his involvement in the abolition of the slave trade. The Society began with King George III’s Royal Proclamation of 1787, “For the Encouragement of Piety and Virtue, and for the Preventing and Punishing of Vice, Profaneness and Immorality,” made at Wilberforce’s suggestion. The Proclamation led to the formation of a

Proclamation Society, which became the Society for the Suppression of Vice in 1802. The Society was merged with the National Vigilance Association in August 1885.

⁷ *Peeping Tom. Wit, Fun and Facitia* (London: H. Smith, 37 Holywell Street, c.1850). It contains many adverts for Dugdale's hardcore publications and many fictional serial stories (semi-erotic) and poems, including 'Leon to Annabella', where it's alleged to come from an incomplete Byron manuscript.

⁸ This is presumably the letter (dated March 4th 1866) which is reprinted by Ashbee in *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* (London: Privately Printed, 1877), pp. 393-396, although why, if Campbell and Sellon were such good friends, the salutation is written as "My Dear Sir" I have no idea.

⁹ "Flowery Land Pirates." A reference to a case of piracy in which seven sailors were convicted of mutiny and of murdering the captain and his brother, and a number of other crew members of the British ship on which they served. They scuttled the ship and escaped, with some captives, in boats to Monte Video. Two of the captives, the second mate and one of the crew, managed to elude the mutineers and made their way to a settlement where they found somebody who spoke English. The authorities were alerted, and the mutineers captured and returned to London. If their defence is to be believed, the mutineers may well have had provocation for their actions, but all seven were sentenced to death anyway. Two had their sentences commuted, and the five others executed at Newgate on February 22nd 1864. It was the biggest public execution since that of the Cato Street conspirators in 1820.

¹⁰ Frederick Popham Pike (1841-1877), a Barrister who wrote or co-wrote a number of erotic works that were published by William Dugdale, and later by William Lazenby. The 'peculiar hotel in Eastbourne' is identified as the Morris Hotel in Peter Mendes, *Clandestine Erotic Fiction in English 1800-1930* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1993), p. 10. Why Campbell characterised the hotel as 'peculiar' is unclear, but it was at there that Pike died on September 15, 1877. Letters written by Pike to Richard Monckton Milnes, Lord Houghton, suggest that the cause of his death may have been tuberculosis.

¹¹ *Harlequin Prince Cherrytop and the Good Fairy Fairfuck, or the Frig, the Fuck and the Fairy*, to give its full title, was in fact published by William Lazenby in July 1879, although Reddie was unaware of the fact having died in the year preceding. In its first edition it is a very rare work, and the only copy known to exist in any major reference or academic library is in Trinity College, Oxford, and is part of the

Danson erotica collection. A reprint appeared in 1905, from Leonard Smithers. Advertising material for this latter edition gives the initials 'G.A.S.' as its author, which has led some to incorrectly believe that Gilbert and Sullivan wrote the work. In fact the initials are those of the journalist George Augustus Sala (1828–1895), no stranger to erotic fiction.

¹² This anecdote must refer to *The Fiend's Delight*, by 'Dod Grile' [Ambrose Bierce] which Hotten published in 1873, the year of his death. In general, Campbell's account of this incident is similar to that given by Frank Swinnerton in *The Bookman's London* (New York: Doubleday, 1952, p. 43), who mistakenly states that the book in question was Bierce's collection of short stories called *In the Midst of Life*. However, in *The Devil's Lexicographer* (Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1951, p. 104), Paul Fatout's splendid biography of Bierce, the events are re-counted quite differently. In this version, Hotten gave Bierce a post-dated cheque and promptly died. Fearing that the news might reach the bank before he did, Bierce rushed to cash the cheque but was met by Tom Hood, G. A. Sala and others who persuaded him to join them at a tavern for drinks. By the time he emerged, the bank had indeed learned of Hotten's death and the cheque rendered worthless.

¹³ *Tableaux vivants*, or 'living pictures,' are scenes without movement in which people in costume portray historical or classical subjects. They are a close relative of the more disreputable *poses plastiques*. Madame Genlis was the reputed inventor of the tableaux vivants whilst she had charge of the children of the Duc d'Orléans.