

Foreword

I never met Molly without enjoying it enormously. She had a warmth, an intellectual reach and sometimes a witty asperity which made her extremely good company.

I have always felt that her work, particularly on the Coleridge family, has been absurdly under-rated. As I told her, and as I wrote to her, her insight into Coleridge's marriage is second to none. Her perception of him as a man and a poet is intellectually formidable. She can be both critical and understanding on the same page. There is a full field of Coleridge scholars at the moment, but in my view Molly was in there first, and is still the outstanding one.

My only regret is that I did not see her more often. She certainly carved her place in the Newlands Valley as deeply as she wrote her name on the scroll of the great literary biographers.

Melvyn Bragg