

LANDMARKS  
OF  
ENGLISH LITERATURE

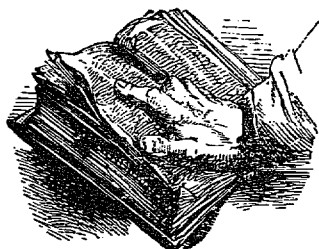
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LANDMARKS  
OF  
ENGLISH LITERATURE

*A N E X H I B I T I O N*



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November 1964–January 1965

HOURS: Monday–Saturday, 9 A.M.–6 P.M.

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## *Landmarks of English Literature*

THIS EXHIBITION offers a sampling of some of the masterpieces of English literature from the fifteenth to the early twentieth century. The aim has been not merely to assemble notable literary creations, but to present the physical appearance of these books as they looked to their earliest readers. The changing styles in bookmaking and type founding, in format and binding, are as much a part of the taste and spirit of each successive period as is the literature itself. The books are therefore shown in first editions, except in the few instances noted in the list below (where the spelling of the titles has in general been modernized).

The selection has been made by Mr. Robert H. Taylor, who has also written brief comments for the exhibition labels. Roughly two thirds of the titles have been generously lent by Mr. Taylor from his personal collection of English authors. The others are from the shelves of the Princeton University Library. The books forming Mr. Taylor's private library, located at his residence in Princeton, are now recorded in the University Library's central card catalogue, where they are designated by the special symbol "RHT." They are available to qualified scholars upon application to Mr. Taylor through the University Library's Department of Rare Books.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER. *The Canterbury Tales*. Manuscript copy made ca. 1425.

JOHN GOWER. *Confessio Amantis*. Manuscript copy made ca. 1450.

JOHN LYDGATE. *The Fall of Princes*. Manuscript copy made ca. 1450.

WILLIAM CAXTON. *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye*. ca. 1474. The first book printed in the English language. Two leaves are shown.

*The Book of Common Prayer*. March, 1549.

WILLIAM LANGLAND. *The Vision of Pierce Plowman*. 1550. First printed edition of this mediaeval allegory composed in the 14th century.

*A Mirror for Magistrates*. 1563. Second edition, including for the first time the contributions of Thomas Sackville.

JOHN SKELTON. *Why Come Ye Not to Court?* ca. 1565. The third extant edition.

RAPHAEL HOLINSHED. *The Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*. 1577.

JOHN LYLY. *Euphues*, bound with *Euphues and his England*, 1580.

*The Book of Songs and Sonnets*. 1585. The earliest anthology of English poetry (first issued in 1557). It contains the songs of Wyatt and Surrey.

RICHARD HAKLUYT. *Principal Navigations, Voyages, and Discoveries of the English Nation*. 1589.

EDMUND SPENSER. *The Faerie Queene*. 1590-1596.

GEORGE CHAPMAN. *Seaven Bookes of the Iliades of Homere*. 1598.

*The Holy Bible*. 1611. "Authorized," or "King James," version.

BEN JONSON. *The Alchemist*. 1612.

FRANCIS BACON. *Essays*. 1612. The first edition of Bacon's *Essays*

appeared in 1597. The augmented edition of 1612 included for the first time such essays as "Of Riches," "Nobility," "Ambition," and "Seeming Wise."

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE. *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*. 1620. The first edition (of which only one copy is extant) was published in 1604.

ROBERT BURTON. *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. 1621.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. *Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies*. 1623. The first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays and the first printing of many of them. This is generally referred to as the "First Folio."

JOHN WEBSTER. *The Dutchesse of Malty*. 1623.

PHILIP MASSINGER. *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*. 1633.

JOHN DONNE. *Poems*. 1633.

JOHN FORD. *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*. 1633.

GEORGE HERBERT. *The Temple*. 1633.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE. *Religio Medici*. 1642.

EDMUND WALLER. *Poems*. 1645.

FRANCIS BEAUMONT and JOHN FLETCHER. *Comedies and Tragedies*. 1647. First Collected edition; many of the plays here included had earlier been published separately.

ROBERT HERRICK. *Hesperides*. 1648.

JEREMY TAYLOR. *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Dying*. 1651.

IZAACK WALTON. *The Complete Angler*. 1653.

SAMUEL BUTLER. *Hudibras*. 1663.

JOHN MILTON. *Paradise Lost*. 1667.

JOHN DRYDEN. *Absalom and Achitophel*. 1681.

JOHN LOCKE. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. 1690.

WILLIAM CONGREVE. *The Way of the World*. 1700.

- EDWARD HYDE, EARL OF CLARENDON. *History of the Rebellion*. 1702.
- JOSEPH ADDISON and RICHARD STEELE. *The Tatler*. 1709-1711.
- JOSEPH ADDISON and RICHARD STEELE. *The Spectator*. 1711/12-1714.
- DANIEL DEFOE. *Robinson Crusoe*. 1719.
- JONATHAN SWIFT. *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World*. 1726. "Gulliver's Travels."
- ALEXANDER POPE. *An Essay on Man*. 1733-1734.
- JOSEPH BUTLER. *The Analogy of Religion*. 1736.
- WILLIAM COLLINS. *Odes*. 1747.
- SAMUEL RICHARDSON. *Clarissa*. 1748.
- HENRY FIELDING. *The History of Tom Jones*. 1749.
- THOMAS GRAY. *An Elegy Wrote in a Country Church Yard*. 1751.
- SAMUEL JOHNSON. *A Dictionary of the English Language*. 1755.
- THOMAS PERCY. *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. 1765.
- OLIVER GOLDSMITH. *The Vicar of Wakefield*. 1766.
- LAURENCE STERNE. *A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy*. 1768.
- TOBIAS SMOLLETT. *The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker*. 1771.
- EDWARD GIBBON. *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. 1776-1788.
- RICHARD SHERIDAN. *The School for Scandal*. 1780.
- WILLIAM COWPER. *The Task*. 1785.
- ROBERT BURNS. *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*. 1786.
- WILLIAM BLAKE. *Songs of Innocence*. 1789.
- GILBERT WHITE. *The Natural History of Selborne*. 1789.
- EDMUND BURKE. *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. 1790.

- JAMES BOSWELL. *The Life of Samuel Johnson*. 1791.
- SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE and WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. *Lyrical Ballads*. 1798. One of the four extant copies of the earliest issue.
- JANE AUSTEN. *Pride and Prejudice*. 1813.
- SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE. *Christabel*. 1816. Second edition, revised by the author for the third.
- JOHN KEATS. *Poems*. 1817. The copy shown was inscribed by Keats to Wordsworth.
- GEORGE CRABBE. *Tales of the Hall*. 1819.
- GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON. *Don Juan*. 1819-1824.
- SIR WALTER SCOTT. *Ivanhoe*. 1820.
- PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY. *Adonais*. 1821.
- CHARLES LAMB. *Essays of Elia*. 1823.
- SAMUEL PEPYS. *Memoirs . . . comprising his Diary*. 1825. The first publication of this famous 17th century diary.
- THOMAS CARLYLE. *Sartor Resartus*. 1834.
- CHARLES DICKENS. *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*. 1836-1837.
- CHARLOTTE BRONTE. *Jane Eyre*. 1847.
- WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY. *Vanity Fair*. 1847-1848.
- THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY. *The History of England*. 1849-1861.
- ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON. *In Memoriam*. 1850.
- JOHN RUSKIN. *The Stones of Venice*. 1851-1853.
- WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR. *The Last Fruit off an Old Tree*. 1853.
- ANTHONY TROLLOPE. *Barchester Towers*. 1857.
- CHARLES DARWIN. *On the Origin of Species*. 1859.
- EDWARD FITZGERALD. *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*. 1859.



- JOHN HENRY NEWMAN. *Apologia pro Vita Sua*. 1864.
- ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Poems and Ballads*. 1866.
- WILKIE COLLINS. *The Moonstone*. 1868.
- ROBERT BROWNING. *The Ring and the Book*. 1868-1869. This copy was inscribed by the author to Gabriel Dante Rossetti.
- GEORGE ELIOT. *Middlemarch*. 1871-1872.
- ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON. *Treasure Island*. 1883.
- MATTHEW ARNOLD. *Essays in Criticism, Second Series*. 1888.
- RUDYARD KIPLING. *Plain Tales from the Hills*, 1888.
- HERBERT GEORGE WELLS. *The Time Machine*. 1895.
- GEORGE BERNARD SHAW. *Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant*. 1898.
- OSCAR WILDE. *The Importance of Being Earnest*. 1899.
- JOSEPH CONRAD. *Youth*. 1902.
- EDWARD MORGAN FORSTER. *Where Angels Fear to Tread*. 1905.
- VIRGINIA WOOLF. *The Voyage Out*. 1915.
- GILES LYTTON STRACHEY. *Eminent Victorians*. 1918.
- THOMAS STEARNS ELIOT. *The Waste Land*. 1922.
- JAMES JOYCE. *Ulysses*. 1922.

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Check List of the Exhibition

Princeton University Library  
November 1964 - January 1965

(Books selected, and captions written by Robert H. Taylor)

Princeton University Library  
Princeton, New Jersey  
1965

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Geoffrey Chaucer (1340?-1400). THE CANTERBURY TALES.  
Manuscript copy made ca.1425. [PUL].

The CANTERBURY TALES--a collection of stories related by a party of pilgrims on their way to the Becket shrine at Canterbury--were written during the last years of the 1300's, before the invention of printing. Hence, until they were first printed in 1487, Chaucer's TALES were known to readers only through manuscript copies such as the one shown here.

This manuscript--opened to "The Monk's Tale"--is in two parts. One part, on vellum, was copied out about the year 1425, a quarter of a century or so after Chaucer's death. The other part, on paper was done around 1450 or 1460. The manuscript once belonged to the Tollemache family at Helmingham Hall in Suffolk, and is therefore known as the Tollemache, or Helmingham, Chaucer manuscript. It was recently presented to the Princeton University Library through the generosity of Robert H. Taylor and Christian Zabriskie, with assistance from Arthur A. Houghton, Jr., Kenneth H. Rockey, and Ernest C. Savage.

John Gower (1325?-1408). CONFESSIO AMANTIS. Manuscript on vellum ca.1450. [RHT].

Gower's only English poem, the CONFESSIO AMANTIS, contains many tales from Ovid and later sources strung together on a slight narrative framework. It was the first work in English to be translated contemporaneously into several European languages.

John Lydgate (1370?-1450?). THE FALL OF PRINCES. Manuscript on vellum ca.1450. [RHT].

Commissioned by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, this long--indeed almost interminable--poem was based on a French prose work that in turn derived from Boccaccio's DE CASIBUS VIRORUM ILLUSTRIUM. Its theme, the fickleness of fortune, was particularly dear to the mediaeval mind and continued to be popular for over a century more.

William Caxton (1422?-1491). RECUYELL OF THE HISTORIES OF TROYE. ca.1474. [RHT].

Caxton, the first English printer, translated this romance from the French and printed it at Bruges, possibly for the Duchesse of Burgundy, sister of Edward IV. It is the first book printed in the English language. Two leaves are shown here.

THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER. March, 1549. [RHT].

The BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER was composed during a period of bitter religious strife. Its purpose was to make the word of God more widely known; and its genius was Thomas Cranmer. When he presided over the reconstruction of the mediaeval liturgy, he produced, out of his great gifts for compromise and style, an order of service in English worthy to be the setting for the English Bible. This is the first edition, the earliest of several printed in 1549.

William Langland (1330?-1400?). THE VISION OF PIERCE PLOWMAN. 1550. [RHT].

One of the great mediaeval allegories, this poem, in its delineation of scenes and vivid character-drawing, bears comparison with the ROMAN DE LA ROSE or even the DIVINE COMEDY. Its distinguishing characteristics are social protest and forceful satire.

A MIRROR FOR MAGISTRATES. 1563. [RHT].

This work ("penned by the best clerks in such kind of matters") was originally intended as a sequel to Lydgate's FALL OF PRINCES, which kept its popularity under the Tudors. It was prohibited at first, and only in Elizabeth's reign was publication achieved. The second edition, shown here, contains for the first time the contributions of Thomas Sackville, "the best poetry written in the English language between Chaucer and Spenser."

John Skelton (1460?-1529). WHY COME YE NOT TO COURT? ca.1565. [RHT].

Considering how small the body of his work is, the eccentric poems of John Skelton display a bewildering variety of moods. When he was about sixty he attacked Cardinal Wolsey, then at the height of his power, in three satires, the last and most outspoken of which is WHY COME YE NOT TO COURT?

Shown here is the third extant edition.

Raphael Holinshed (d.1580?). THE CHRONICLES OF ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND. 1577. [PUL].

One of the great Tudor histories, this work became a sourcebook for Shakespeare and other dramatists.

John Lyly (1554-1606). EUPHUES, bound with EUPHUES AND HIS ENGLAND. 1580. [RHT].

The ornate and affected style of this work gave us our word "euphuism"; its verbal ingenuity, sententiousness, and learning made it phenomenally popular in its own day.

EUPHUES was first published in 1579.

THE BOOK OF SONGS AND SONNETS. 1585. [RHT].

This is the earliest anthology of courtly verse. It was first published in 1557, in which year three editions were issued. It was enormously popular, and copies of the early editions are among the rarest of sixteenth century books. The songs of Surrey and Wyatt are included.

Richard Hakluyt (1552?-1616). THE PRINCIPAL NAVIGATIONS, VOYAGES, AND DISCOVERIES OF THE ENGLISH NATION. 1589. [RHT].

This collection of long narratives is composed by many hands. The romance of action runs through them all, whether they recount naval exploits in wartime, or the daring of explorers. The book is a monument to the maritime enterprise of England.

Edmund Spenser (1552?-1599). THE FAERIE QUEENE. 1590-96. [RHT].

One of the greatest and most beautiful of long poems; its mastery of language has seldom been approached, and never surpassed.

George Chapman (1559-1634). SEAVEN BOOKES OF THE ILIADES OF HOMERE. 1598. [RHT].

The first translation of Homer in English. Chapman continued this translation at intervals in other volumes, culminating in THE WHOLE WORKS OF HOMERE (1616).

Ben Jonson (1572-1637). THE ALCHEMIST. 1612. [RHT].

This is perhaps Jonson's best play. In 1616 he collected his plays in a folio volume, entitled THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN JONSON. It was the first time this term had been used to indicate plays, and occasioned considerable jeering. A second and posthumous volume completed the collection in 1640.

## THE KING JAMES BIBLE. 1611. [PUL].

This, the Authorized Version, is the greatest of the English translations of the Scriptures. It maintains its ground after three hundred and fifty years. It is the book of fifty-four individuals, and perhaps no other piece of large collective scholarship was so successfully performed; but primary credit for its greatness must go to Tyndale and Coverdale, earlier translators, and to their successors, who during eighty previous years had striven at translating this work.

## Francis Bacon (1561-1626). ESSAYS. 1612. [RHT].

The term "essays" borrowed from Montaigne was new in English when Bacon used it. The volume grew in size as edition followed edition. The first, in 1597, contains only some 6,000 words; the last edition to appear (1625) in Bacon's lifetime, contains about 59,000 words.

The edition shown contains many essays which here appeared for the first time, including "Of Riches," "Nobility," "Ambition," and "Seeming Wise."

## Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593). THE TRAGICAL HISTORY OF DR. FAUSTUS. 1619. [PUL]. (On deposit, Johnson Garrett '35).

Marlowe was the first writer to infuse the Faust legend with poetry. Magnificent lines match the magnificent concept of the hero-outlaw allying himself to evil for the sake of superhuman knowledge.

The first edition was published in 1604, and only one copy (in the Bodleian Library) is extant.

## Robert Burton (1576-1640). THE ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY. 1621. [RHT].

Without any pretension of style or novelty of subject-matter, with no coherence of argument or narrative, the ANATOMY became one of the most popular works of its age and one of the world's great books. It deals with man's dissatisfaction with the world, and ways he has found of mitigating it. It delighted such different people as Sterne and Dr. Johnson. Ford found here the source for THE LOVER'S MELANCHOLY (1629) and Keats the inspiration for his LAMIA (1821).

William Shakespeare (1564-1616). COMEDIES, HISTORIES, AND TRAGEDIES. 1623. [PUL].

This volume, known as the First Folio (there were four folio editions published in the 17th century), gathers all of Shakespeare's plays for the first time. Some few had earlier found their way into print; but for the bulk of them this precious volume is the editio princeps.

John Webster (1580?-1638). THE DUTCHESS OF MALFY. 1623. [RHT].

This powerful and melodramatic tragedy was acted by Shakespeare's company about 1613. Webster works with terror and pity, undiluted; the mood in his best plays is that of Shakespeare's darkest plays.

Philip Massinger (1583-1640). A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS. 1633. [RHT].

Based on the activities of a notorious extortioner of Massinger's day, this play moves with enormous power. It became one of Kean's starring vehicles, and he acted so forcefully that during the fifth act "woman shrieked with terror and Lord Byron was seized with a convulsive fit. That experienced actress, Mrs. Glover, fainted on the stage. . . Munden, who played Marrall. . . had to be removed from the stage."

John Donne (1572-1631). POEMS. 1633. [PUL].

For a generation or more, Donne has been singled out as the most important writer of his time. His turbid brilliance and rugged style have appealed much more to the twentieth century than to the eighteenth or nineteenth.

John Ford (1586?-1655). 'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE. 1633. [RHT].

Where Webster's manner was unnaturally violent, Ford's as a rule is unnaturally quiet, though he did not reject melodramatic devices altogether. This story of incest, like Ford's other tragedies, shows the characters destroyed by emotional forces with which they are unable to cope.

This particular copy was at one time used as a promptbook.



George Herbert (1593-1633). THE TEMPLE. 1633. [RHT].

Herbert was one of the most accomplished versifiers, and yet this small volume, published after his death, contains all his English poetry. It is entirely religious, and combines intensity of feeling with unity and structural balance--virtues not common in this period.

Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682). RELIGIO MEDICI. 1642. [RHT].

Sir Thomas Browne, a physician, wrote this book (A DOCTOR'S RELIGION) as a private journal in which he attempts self-appraisal. Its sane outlook on life made it immediately popular in a time of turmoil, and its wonderfully sonorous sentences have kept it in the forefront of English prose.

There were two unauthorized editions in 1642; not till the following year did Browne publish his corrected text.

Edmund Waller (1606-1687). POEMS. 1645. [RHT].

Waller's moderate output of moderate verse secured him the regard of the eighteenth century. He polished his poems to such effect that Pope admitted his work was "smooth" and "regular"--two qualities more admired then than now.

Francis Beaumont (1584?-1616) and John Fletcher (1579-1625). COMEDIES AND TRAGEDIES. 1647. [PUL].

This famous literary collaboration began as early as 1610 and actually lasted only a few years. Many of their plays, whether of separate or joint authorship, had been published earlier; not till long after their deaths were the remainder gathered into this volume.

Robert Herrick (1591-1674). HESPERIDES. 1648. [RHT]

Herrick, the delight of the anthologist, is almost a creation of the 19th century. His book was, so to speak, lost in the turmoil of civil war; and a second edition did not appear until 1826. But the freshness and pleasure of his work remain undimmed.

Jeremy Taylor (1613-1667). THE RULE AND EXERCISES OF HOLY DYING. 1651. [RHT].

This, one of Taylor's two most famous books, is notable for its style, the sentences at times unrolling themselves into true baroque splendor. The intervening centuries over-praised him, calling him the "Shakespeare of divines," with the result that he has since been under-read.

Izaak Walton (1593-1683). THE COMPLETE ANGLER. 1653. [PUL].

The charm of Walton's style has preserved what is ostensibly a treatise on fishing for three hundred years. The book, written at a time of civil strife and the triumph of the Puritan cause, which Walton loathed, reflects his nostalgia for a better age which had passed away.

Samuel Butler (1612-1680). HUDIBRAS. 1663. [RHT].

This satirical attack on the Puritans was enormously popular at the time of its publication ("the most admired piece of drollery that ever came forth"); and though the action now seems less amusing, his burlesque and anti-heroic verse is still entertaining.

John Milton (1608-1674). PARADISE LOST. 1667. [PUL].

Milton's great epic, one of the outstanding achievements in all literature.

John Dryden (1631-1700). ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL. 1681. [RHT].

Political satire was rife during the Restoration, and Dryden's handling of it was unsurpassed. Vigorous satirical portraits are enlivened by political animus or personal pique.

John Locke (1632-1704). AN ESSAY CONCERNING HUMAN UNDERSTANDING. 1690. [RHT].

In this work Locke strove to define the true nature of ideas, to explain the relation of language to thought, and to define knowledge as coming only from sense experience and reflection upon that experience. The influence of Locke on the 18th century was enormous.

William Congreve (1670-1729). THE WAY OF THE WORLD. 1700.  
[RHT].

The comedy of manners flowered during the Restoration, and Congreve carried its verbal wit--together with some of its earthiness--to its apogee.

Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon (1609-1674). HISTORY OF THE REBELLION. 1702. [RHT].

Clarendon's HISTORY is the noblest example of formal historical writing in the Restoration. The composition was spread over thirty years, and was not designed for contemporary publication.

Joseph Addison (1672-1719) and Richard Steele (1672-1729). THE TATLER. 1709-11; THE SPECTATOR. 1711-12, 1714. [FUL].

The periodical essay, a form which was to be popular throughout the 18th century, reached its height in the two works shown here. Steele and Addison did their most agreeable writing in these papers; and between them did more to rehabilitate English manners after the Restoration than any other two men.

Daniel Defoe (1660-1731). ROBINSON CRUSOE. 1719. [RHT].

A story that still enjoys its phenomenal popularity. What is exhibited is not the first edition, but a serial publication that began some three months later in a news-sheet. This is the first serialization of English fiction, and only four copies have survived.

Jonathan Swift (1667-1745). TRAVELS INTO SEVERAL REMOTE NATIONS OF THE WORLD. 1726. [RHT].

Perhaps no other book has ever been enjoyed on so many levels as "Gulliver's Travels": it can be read by children as a story, by historians for its reflection of the political life of Swift's time, by those who regard it as a masterpiece of misanthropy, by those who admire its forceful prose, and by those who are fascinated by its thoughtful reflections on the abuses of human reason.

Alexander Pope (1688-1744). AN ESSAY ON MAN. 1733-1734. [PUL].

Published in four epistles, this philosophical poem became an integral part of the 18th century intellectual tradition. No idea in the work is new, but there are many crisp and brilliant meditations on ideas that many other writers had treated somewhat fumblingly.

Joseph Butler (1692-1752). THE ANALOGY OF RELIGION. 1736. [RHT].

This volume is one of the most impressive attempts to construct a rationalist demonstration of the existence of the deity. It undermined most of the positions taken by the deists of the period.

William Collins (1721-1759). ODES. 1747. [RHT].

Collins had a true poetic gift; his phrases are fused with delicate and individual imagination, setting him apart from the placid poets of his day.

Samuel Richardson (1689-1761). CLARISSA. 1748. [RHT].

Generally considered the best of Richardson's three novels, CLARISSA's emotional power is even today tremendous.

Henry Fielding (1707-1754). THE HISTORY OF TOM JONES. 1749. [RHT].

One of the best-plotted and most famous novels in English.

Thomas Gray (1716-1771). AN ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCH YARD. 1751. [RHT].

This greatest of Gray's poems is possibly the greatest of the century: both in its universal terms and harmony of diction it is a splendid realization of the poetic ideals of its day.

Samuel Johnson (1709-1784). A DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. 1755. [PUL].

With the aid of half-a-dozen amanuenses, Johnson composed this work which gained him the best part of his reputation in his own time. It was by far the best of the dictionaries that had appeared, nobly monumental in scope and effect.

Thomas Percy (1729-1811). RELIQUES OF ANCIENT ENGLISH  
POETRY. 1765. [RHT].

Percy's antiquarian interest led him to assemble three volumes of old ballads, and, though he was not the first editor of such material, he had more influence and success than his predecessors. The RELIQUES greatly stimulated the 18th century romantic view of the past.

Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774). THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD. 1766. [PUL].

Goldsmith's one novel has always has its detractors, beginning with Dr. Johnson; but his freshness of outlook and fluent, easy style have always earned him readers.

Laurence Sterne (1713-1768). A SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY THROUGH  
FRANCE AND ITALY. 1768. [RHT].

Sterne's forte lay in his sensitive perception of the comedy that goes on in the human mind; and he developed a nervous, vivid prose that was ideally suited to his material.

Tobias Smollett (1721-1771). THE EXPEDITION OF HUMPHREY CLINKER.  
1771. [RHT].

A rollicking narrative of a fictional tour through Britain, this novel is rich in comic invention and pictures of the life of the period.

Edward Gibbon (1737-1794). THE HISTORY OF THE DECLINE AND FALL  
OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE. 1776-1788. [PUL].

Gibbon's virtues as an historian were many. Even today with more sources than were available to him, the accuracy of much of his wealth of fact is not impugned; and his style, a diction of unvarying nobility, is beautifully suited to his subject. The vast amount of his material, moreover, is so dealt with as to produce a clear flow of narrative.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751-1816). THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL  
1780. [RHT].

First produced in 1777, this classic comedy of manners has been revived more often than any other non-Shakespearean play. Sheridan never revised it for publication, and the early editions, like the one exhibited (now generally considered to be the first), are all piracies.

William Cowper (1731-1800). THE TASK. 1785. [PUL].

With Cowper begins the tendency to use subjective material and to write of rural domesticity; he is a transitional figure between the Augustans and the Romantics.

Robert Burns (1759-1796). POEMS, CHIEFLY IN THE SCOTTISH DIALECT. 1786. [PUL].

Burns realized an eighteenth-century ideal, that of the "untaught genius." His songs and lyrics are astonishingly diverse in mood and method.

William Blake (1757-1827). SONGS OF INNOCENCE. 1789. [RHT].

Blake was, among other things, the unheeded voice of Romanticism. Some of his later poetry is difficult and obscure, but the joyous and lovely quality of the volume shown enriched the resources of English prosody.

Gilbert White (1720-1793). THE NATURAL HISTORY OF SELBORNE. 1789. [RHT].

This volume, a collection of letters to fellow observers of nature, embodies a world of curious fact about the weather, the soil, the animals and the birds of the secluded region in which White lived. He was an early example of the many Englishmen who have had an accurate, untiring, and affectionate curiosity for the wonders of nature.

Edmund Burke (1729-1797). REFLECTIONS ON THE REVOLUTION IN FRANCE. 1790. [PUL].

In its magnificence of rhetoric, Burke's REFLECTIONS surpasses all other attacks on the French Revolution, and in its argumentative force also. With his last works eighteenth-century prose disappears in a blaze of noble artifice.

James Boswell (1740-1795). THE LIFE OF SAMUEL JOHNSON. 1791. [PUL].

The most famous of biographies. Boswell was not only a conscientious preserver of detail; he was also an inspired artist.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) and William Wordsworth (1770-1850). LYRICAL BALLADS. 1798. [RHT].

It has been said that the nineteenth century began with the publication of this volume, the joint production of Wordsworth and Coleridge. Although little of it ranks among Wordsworth's best poems, his convictions and theories about poetry are already implicit in this work.

The earliest issue; one of four copies recorded containing LEWTI, which was later cancelled.

Jane Austen. (1775-1818). PRIDE AND PREJUDICE. 1813. [RHT].

"Three or four Families in a Country Village is the very thing to work upon," wrote Miss Austen, and to this theme she kept. But though the life she pictures is limited, it is based on so comprehensive a knowledge of human nature as to universalize it. Her men and women, true of their own period, are also true of all time.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834). CHRISTABEL. 1816. [RHT].

CHRISTABEL, published with KUBLA KHAN, remains a magical fragment, despite the author's assurances that he would one day complete it.

Displayed is the second edition, revised by the author for the third.

John Keats (1795-1821). POEMS. 1817. [RHT].

This, the first of Keats' three volumes of poetry, contains the famous ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER.

This copy was inscribed by Keats to Wordsworth.

George Crabbe (1754-1832). TALES OF THE HALL. 1819. [RHT].

Crabbe admired Pope, and was an intense anti-romantic all his life. He despised the pastoral idealization of rustic life, and, for the most part using rhymed couplets, workes with absolute realism in the sphere of the lowly and ignoble.

George Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824). DON JUAN. 1819-24.  
[PUL].

Byron, for all his deliberate romanticism, looked back to the eighteenth century; he admired Pope, for instance, which his own age did not. But in DON JUAN he successfully fused his two attitudes, and the result is a wonderful social satire, passing through many moods, and comprehending a vast deal of human experience.

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832). IVANHOE. 1820. [PUL].

For more than fifty years before IVANHOE was written, interest in the pictorial aspects of Gothic had been growing; and this novel of the Middle Ages found a large and enthusiastic audience. It may be called the first of a long and still continuing series of historical novels.

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822). ADONAIS. 1821. [RHT].

This lament for Keats is second only to LYCIDAS among English elegies.

Charles Lamb (1775-1834). ESSAYS OF ELIA. 1823. [PUL].

Lamb delighted in such authors as Burton, Jeremy Taylor, and Sir Thomas Browne; and though the popularity of these essays was largely due to their skillful mixture of humor and pathos, Lamb (and with him De Quincey) was instrumental in restoring to English style some of the harmonies of pre-Augustan prose.

Samuel Pepys (1633-1703). MEMOIRS. . . COMPRISING HIS DIARY. 1825. [PUL].

Pepys' famous diary in shorthand kept its secrets for one hundred and fifty years, before it was transcribed and published in this, its first edition.

Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881). SARTOR RESARTUS. 1834. [RHT].

This early work is the most eloquent statement of Carlyle's transcendental philosophy.



Charles Dickens (1812-1870). THE POSTHUMOUS PAPERS OF THE PICKWICK CLUB. 1836-37. [PUL].

This light-hearted book, loosely constructed as life itself, was Dickens' earliest novel, and was first published in monthly parts. Its panoramic view of the English life of its time, and its unfailing humor have kept it a favorite with generations of readers.

Charlotte Bronte (1816-1855). JANE EYRE. 1847. [PUL].

With all its faults of style, unsophistication, and melodrama, this novel's poetic and passionate intensity achieved for it an enormous success; and these qualities remain undimmed today.

William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-1863). VANITY FAIR. 1847-48. [PUL].

Issued in twenty serial numbers, VANITY FAIR soon made its way to the summit of contemporary fiction. A satire on worldliness, it deals with characters who, says the author, "have no reverence except for prosperity."

Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-1859). THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND. 1849-1861. [PUL].

Macaulay endeavored to give "to truth those attractions which have been usurped by fiction"; and the result was that he cared less for reliability of fact than for its usefulness in support of his argument. But for vividness and panoramic sweep nothing like his HISTORY had appeared since Gibbons.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892). IN MEMORIAM. 1850. [PUL].

For seventeen years Tennyson worked intermittently on this elegy; and although he never succeeded in welding all the disparate parts into a unified whole, it is still deeply moving because of its sustained beauty and feeling.

Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864). THE LAST FRUIT OFF AN OLD TREE. 1853. [RHT].

Amid the vast amount of prose and verse which Landor wrote in the course of his long and quarrelsome life, some of his short lyrics stand out with startling loveliness.

Anthony Trollope (1815-1882). BARCHESTER TOWERS. 1857. [PUL].

Of this work Trollope said simply "It was a novel which novel-readers were called upon to read." Trollope's ability to convey the flavor of his period, to convince the reader that thus and in no other way did people of that time behave, is unsurpassed.

John Ruskin (1819-1900). THE STONES OF VENICE. 1851-1853. [RHT].

The most orderly in design of Ruskin's major works. But Ruskin's theory -- that the Middle Ages were virtuous and the Renaissance sinful, and that therefore Renaissance art was inferior -- was difficult to adjust to historical fact. The chapter on THE NATURE OF GOTHIC contains the quintessence of his teaching.

Charles Darwin (1809-82). ON THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES. 1859. [PUL].

The first edition of this famous book was sold out on the day of publication, and though opposition was not immediate, clerical hostility developed and lasted for years.

Edward Fitzgerald (1809-1881). THE RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM. 1859. [PUL].

This beautiful translation from the Persian was not immediately popular; but by the end of the century it was immensely so, and helped to create the melancholy hedonism found in verse of the 'nineties.'

John Henry Newman (1801-1890). APOLOGIA PRO VITA SUA. 1864. [RHT].

Written as a reply to Kingsley's attack WHAT, THEN, DOES DR. NEWMAN MEAN?, this spiritual autobiography and account of its author's slow progress to Catholicism convinced all readers of his sincerity.

Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909). POEMS AND BALLADS. 1866. [RHT].

Publication of this volume resulted in violent attacks on Swinburne as the champion of lewdness and blasphemy.

Wilkie Collins (1824-1889). THE MOONSTONE. 1868. [PUL].

Collins depended for his effect on an intricate and sensational plot, fitting his characters to it as best he can. He was an ancestor of modern writers of detective stories.

Robert Browning (1812-1889). THE RING AND THE BOOK. 1868-69. [RHT].

After years of comparative neglect (Mrs. Browning's poetry was far more popular during her life than her husband's), this long poem of Browning's was received with almost universal acclaim. Henceforth he was popularly ranked with Tennyson.

This copy is inscribed by Browning to Gabriel Dante Rossetti.

George Eliot [Marian Evans] (1819-1880). MIDDLEMARCH. 1871-72. [PUL].

Nowhere else is George Eliot's power of indicating character development so fully depicted. An entire world, though a little one which she knew intimately, is here portrayed on a scale unexampled in Victorian fiction.

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894). TREASURE ISLAND. 1883. [PUL].

Even in a swashbuckling tale intended for a juvenile audience, Stevenson tried to give psychological depth to his characters.

Matthew Arnold (1822-1888). ESSAYS IN CRITICISM, SECOND SERIES. 1888. [RHT].

This last volume of Arnold's criticism is more intimate and warming than that of former books. His qualities of grace and clarity are here displayed at their most persuasive.

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936). PLAIN TALES FROM THE HILLS. 1888. [RHT].

These early stories of life in India have defects of journalism, but they are forceful and incomparably vivid, and made Kipling famous at the age of twenty-three.

Herbert George Wells (1886-1946). THE TIME MACHINE. 1895.  
[RHT].

This example of science-fiction is, like much of Wells' work in this genre, written with a clarity of design, and economy of means very different from the sprawling manner in which he composed most of his propaganda novels. The title has passed into the language.

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950). PLAYS PLEASANT AND UNPLEASANT. 1898. [RHT].

This collection of Shaw's early work (only WIDOWERS' HOUSES had been published earlier, in 1893) contains nearly all the elements that he used later in his more famous plays, as well as the wit and trenchant dialogue that distinguished him from more popular playwrights, such as Pinero.

Oscar Wilde (1856-1900). THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST. 1899. [RHT].

This perfect combination of theme and style, epigram and paradox, seems likely to preserve its freshness indefinitely. It was produced in 1895, but because the scandal broke soon, was not published until 1899, and even then without the author's name on the title page.

Joseph Conrad (1857-1923). YOUTH. 1902. [PUL].

Conrad, one of the very few eminent authors who wrote in a language not native to him, used in many of his works the device of a narrative related by a seaman. Conrad himself had heard such stories in fo'c'sle and master's cabin. In YOUTH his best-known narrator, Marlow, makes his first appearance.

Edward Morgan Forster (1879- ). WHERE ANGELS FEAR TO TREAD. 1905. [RHT].

There has been in recent years a revival of interest in the early work of the current dean of English letters. Though he has written only five novels, the earliest of which is exhibited, their great merits in style, characterization, and atmosphere have won them high regard.

Virginia Woolf (1882-1941). THE VOYAGE OUT. 1915. [RHT].

Virginia Woolf began her search for a method to express the quality of life with this rather conventional novel. Her sensitive and beautiful use of words enabled her to experiment with various patterns and methods.

Giles Lytton Strachey (1880-1932). EMINENT VICTORIANS. 1918. [RHT].

During the last and most disillusioned year of World War I, Strachey published this caustic study of four Victorian figures. The reaction against the previous century was in full swing; and Strachey, sympathetic by nature with eighteenth century ideals, used ironic wit and urbanity as his weapons. For a time this method influenced most biographical writing; but his imitators lacked his feline and forceful style.

Thomas Stearns Eliot (1889- ). THE WASTE LAND. 1922. [PUL].

The most famous and influential poem of the century, published five years before the author became a British subject.

James Joyce (1882-1941). ULYSSES. 1922. [PUL].

Issued in Paris because it could not be published either in England or the United States, ULYSSES had a succès de scandale which gained it immediate notoriety. This almost obscured the fact that it was an ambitious and learned experiment along new lines, destined to modify much of subsequent fiction.

Library Notes

LANDMARKS OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

An exhibition called "Landmarks of English Literature," held in the main gallery of the Library from November, 1964, through January, 1965, offered a sampling of some of the masterpieces of English literature from the fifteenth to the early twentieth century. The aim was not merely to assemble notable literary creations, but to present the physical appearance of these books as they looked to their earliest readers, the changing styles in bookmaking and type founding, in format and binding, being as much a part of the taste and spirit of each successive period as is the literature itself. The books were therefore shown, except in a few instances, in first editions.

The selection was made by Mr. Robert H. Taylor, who also wrote brief comments for the exhibition labels. Roughly two thirds of the titles were generously lent by Mr. Taylor from his personal collection of English authors. The others were from the shelves of the Princeton University Library. The books forming Mr. Taylor's private library, located at his residence in Princeton, are now recorded in the University Library's central card catalogue, where they are designated by the special symbol "RHT." They are available to qualified scholars upon application to Mr. Taylor through the University Library's Department of Rare Books. Another facet of Mr. Taylor's collection was evidenced in an earlier Library exhibition, held from May to September, 1960, entitled "Letters of English Authors." Reprints of the Catalogue of this exhibition (first published in the *Chronicle*, Vol. XXI, No. 4, Summer, 1960), describing more than a hundred autograph letters in the Taylor Collection, are available from the Princeton University Library upon request.

Although the recent "Landmarks" exhibition was planned with a general audience in mind, it included many items of particular appeal to the collector and bibliophile. Three notable manuscripts were assembled as an introduction to the sequence of printed books. The Helmingham or Tollemache manuscript of Chaucer's

*Canterbury Tales*, now owned by the Princeton Library (as noted in the Autumn, 1964, issue of the *Chronicle*), was on display, as were a manuscript of John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* and one of John Lydgate's *The Fall of Princes*, both written ca. 1450 and both from Mr. Taylor's collection. Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* was shown as it first appeared in *The Original London Post, or Heathcot's Intelligencer* for 1719; this was the first serialization of a work of English fiction, and Mr. Taylor's copy is one of four such sets extant. Among the Romantic poets were several stellar items from Mr. Taylor's collection: one of the four recorded copies of the earliest Bristol issue of Coleridge and Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* (1798); Coleridge's *Christabel* (1816), the second edition, revised by the author for the third, presented by him to Ludwig Tieck, and bound with *Remorse*, also presented to Tieck; Keats' *Poems* (1817), inscribed by Keats to Wordsworth; Shelley's *Adonais* (1821), containing at the end in Shelley's hand the lines "Swifter far than summer's flight." Other association copies of exceptional interest, displayed through Mr. Taylor's courtesy, were Robert Browning's *The Ring and the Book* (1868-1869), inscribed by the author to Dante Gabriel Rossetti; and Rudyard Kipling's *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888), inscribed by the author to W. C. Crofts ("King" of the Stalky stories), his former teacher at Westward Ho, and including with his signature his school number "264."—H.C.R., JR.