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More Hidden Assets

[Two years ago, John Bidwell wrote an article for the *Newsletter* on some lesser-known resources of the Clark. This seems a useful idea that could be extended in an occasional piece. The following brief essays—one by a Chaucer scholar, the other by the Clark Librarian—explore two collections peripheral to our main holdings. We hope to be able to highlight other dark corners in future issues of the *Newsletter*.]

I - Chaucer at the Clark

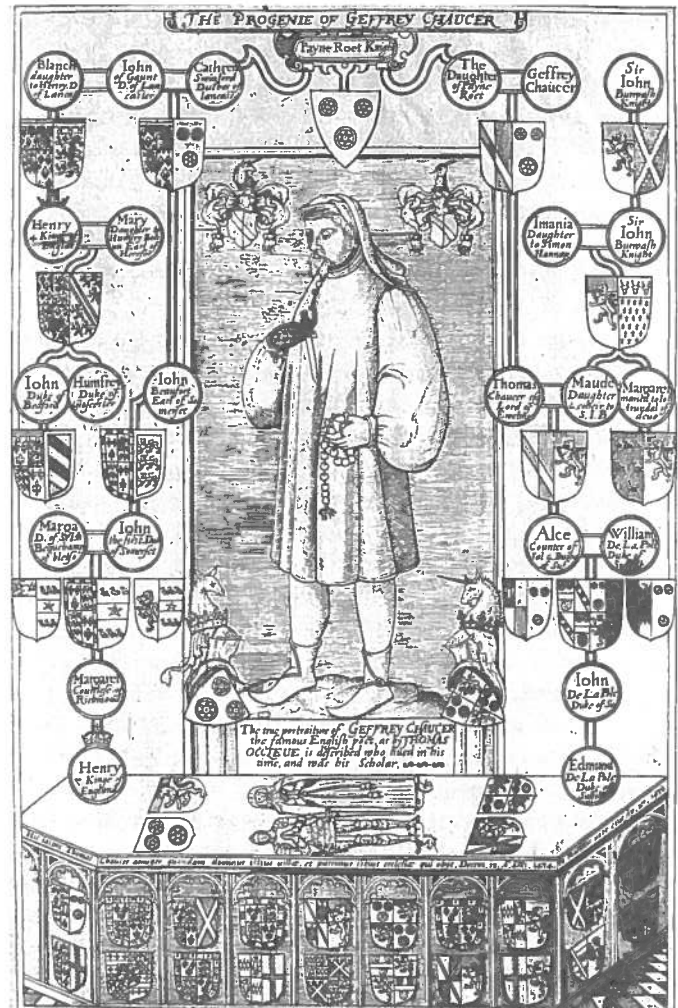
Most scholars who come to Los Angeles in search of Chauceriana follow the scent of the Ellesmere manuscript to the Huntington. Yet one of the major repositories of Chaucer materials is the Clark. The collection is a product of various forces in the development of the Library and not of a concerted effort to acquire Chaucer editions. In part because of the manner of acquisition, it constitutes what might be considered an “alternative” Chaucer—a Chaucer outside the narrow limits described in standard academic bibliographies.

The collection has several parts, corresponding to several phases in the history of the Library. The most familiar and traditional section consists of the series of sixteenth-century folios of Chaucer, beginning with the 1532 double-column complete edition by William Thynne. (Of the earlier editions by Caxton, de Worde, and Pynson, the Clark has only a single leaf of the Caxton 1478 *Canterbury Tales*.) The Clark holdings consist of a complete set of what STC defines as editions: 1532, 1542, 1550, 1561 (both issues), 1598, 1602 (both issues), 1687. Those issues and variants the Clark lacks are defined only by variations in the title page or colophon: STC lists two such variants for 1542, four for 1550, a rare variant of one of the 1561 issues, and a second issue for 1598. Most of these are available at the nearby Huntington.

These Chaucer editions were purchased by Clark himself; acquisition records show six of them purchased between 1918 and 1927. During this decade, Clark was building up a collection of representative works by English authors, while filling out the Dryden and Wilde collections. Included in these purchases were a number of Shakespeare quartos; the Clark’s holdings are generally listed as the fourth largest in the U.S. Although no one has ever taken the time to compare individual Chaucer holdings in American libraries, I think that the Clark’s ranking on these materials would be similar.

Much supplementary Chaucer material came into the Library through Clark’s interest in Dryden. Dryden himself

had initiated a new phase in Chaucer reception—that of the translator. The Clark holdings of such translations include the 1700 edition of Dryden’s *Fables* (because this includes the original Middle English texts of Chaucer as an appendix, it is one of the first Chaucers printed in roman type), the various editions of Pope’s translations, and the three-volume modernization by Ogle of 1741. Supplementing these are such works as Kynaston’s 1635 partial edition of *Troilus and Criseide* with facing Latin translation, and numerous peripheral works such as Gay’s *Wife of Bath* and the imitations of Chaucer by Matthew Prior. A few fairly rare editions are lacking, such as the 1737 edition of the General



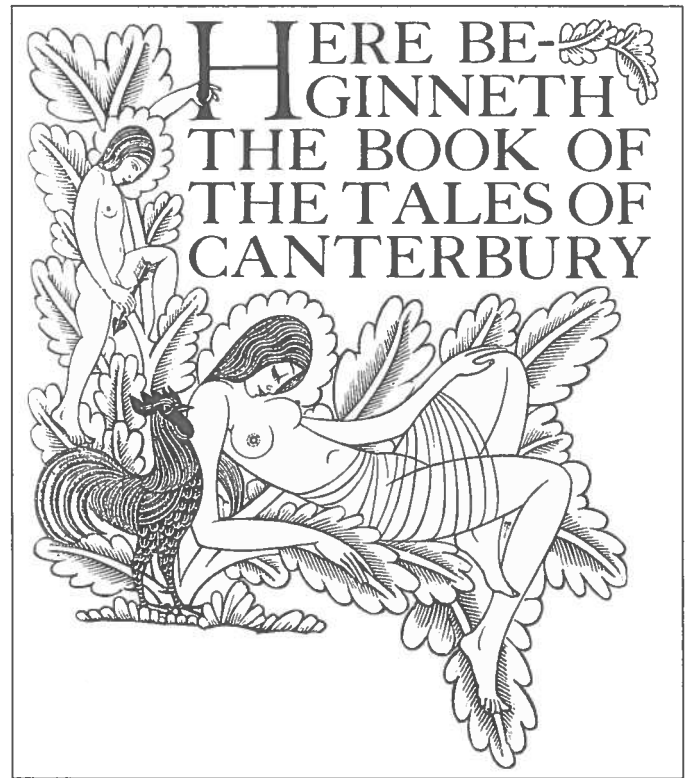
Progeny page from the 1598 edition of Chaucer’s works

Prologue and Knight's Tale by Thomas Morell, which can be found at the Huntington.

In 1926, the emphasis of the Library changed slightly in preparation for its eventual donation to UCLA and its transformation into a research library. Clark's 1927 purchases include much basic reference and bibliographical material: a complete set of *Notes & Queries* and, for incunable studies, the Hain-Copinger *Repertorium Bibliographicum* and the first volume of the *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke*. With few exceptions (a 1550 edition of Chaucer was purchased in 1927), no effort seems to have been made to expand the Chaucer holdings.

Nonetheless, further Chaucer materials came into the Library through the press collection. Clark's own interest was in the Kelmscott Press and Doves Press (a volume of the Clark catalogue printed by John Henry Nash in 1921 was devoted to these presses), and after Clark's death, a concerted effort was made to expand this collection while at the same time building up holdings in the early history of printing. First and foremost among these presses is the Kelmscott Press, and its most magnificent product was the Chaucer (1896; Clark's copy was purchased in 1921). The presses represented in the press collection occasionally paid tribute to Morris, either directly, by printing his works, or indirectly, by associating fine printing with the printing of medieval works: for example, the Elston Press editions of Morris's *Five Arthurian Poems* (1902) and *Aucassin and Nicolette* (1902, purchased in 1949); the two early bibliographical catalogues of the Golden Cockerel Press, entitled *Chanticleer* (1936) and *Pertelote* (1943). In the extensive press collection are some dozen Chaucers, including the Golden Cockerel Press editions of *Canterbury Tales* (1929–31) and *Troilus and Criseyde* (1927), both with illustrations by Eric Gill.

These last identify a Chaucer that academic Chaucerians have largely ignored. Such editions are rarely catalogued or included in standard Chaucer bibliographies, and Chaucerians instead describe a sequence of Chaucer "editors." Given credit for being the first modern editor is Thomas Tyrwhitt (whose 1774–78 edition was, until recently, on the Clark's open shelves). A number of academic and popular editions follow—all small in format, cheaply produced, and generally moderately priced. In addition to the reprints of Tyrwhitt are the editions of Thomas Wright, Richard Morris, W. W. Skeat, and in the twentieth century, the editions of F. N. Robinson and the multivolume critical edition of J. M. Manly and Edith Rickert. This tradition, in which neither Clark nor his librarians had much interest, is of course central to Chaucerians (all these editions can be found in the Los Angeles area by judicious browsing of the academic libraries of UCLA, USC, and various other public and private college libraries). Yet the Kelmscott illustrations and borders are much more widely known (even if only in reduced facsimiles), and the Gill drawings were themselves vulgarized in widely distributed reprints of George Krapp's translation of *Troilus and Criseyde*. The view of Chaucer and of medieval literature presented by this tradition is to an academic a bi-



From the Golden Cockerel Press edition (1929–31) of *Canterbury Tales*, engraved by Eric Gill

zarre and inaccurate one, a manifestation of what Burne-Jones described as "a beautiful romantic dream of something that never was, never will be, . . . a land no one can define or remember." Because of Morris, we have a fifteenth-century Italianate typeface (from Augsburg) as a standard dress for medieval English works. It is, from the point of view of the history of printing, a distinctly "humanistic Gothic"—one that divorces Chaucer not only from the medieval period but from the early English period of reception itself.

The uses to which this collection can be put are various. The series of Chaucers provides a convenient survey of English printing and editorial practices in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, while at the same time exposing the insularity of some of the notions embedded in this history, for example, the change from black-letter to roman type. A complete set of variants is located as near as San Marino; for the strong of heart, a Hinman collator is available at the Clark, and a McLeod collator can often be found at the Huntington. Most important, the Clark collection outlines a history of Chaucer reception different from the one familiar to most Chaucerians. The series of editions here is not one described by standard Chaucer bibliographies. To a Chaucerian, each new edition has primary reference to the one that precedes it; the importance of such an edition is entirely textual. For the fine press tradition, the way back to the medieval is through modern aesthetic theories and a particular history of typography that may itself result from those theories. To the Chaucerian, finding the medieval in the theories of

Burne-Jones might seem inappropriate. But to any historian of printing, finding one's way back to the medieval text through the equally strange textual-critical theories of the nineteenth century is no less twisted.

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II - Romantic and Victorian Poetry at the Clark

William Andrews Clark, Jr., concentrated on the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, as most readers know, and more recently we have been acquiring material for the period from 1750 to the early nineteenth century. But Clark's interests in literature extended far beyond the classic eighteenth-century writers to include at least some of the great poets and novelists of the following century, as well as some of the more obscure writers and works. The latter do not deserve much particular notice, perhaps, but I cannot refrain from mentioning two of my favorites, one from each end of the century. Thomas Frognall Dibdin is well known as the chronicler of that great age of English bibliophily whose high-water mark was the Duke of Roxburghe's sale in 1812. Dibdin began his publishing career, however, with a book of poems that was published in 1797; and although the edition was large enough at five hundred copies, Dibdin later came to despise the book and destroyed as many copies as he could. It is thus a quite uncommon book, and the Clark is fortunate (*pace* the author) to own a copy. At the other end of the century we have a copy, one of only a hundred printed, of Captain Sir Richard Francis Burton's poem *The Kasidah* (1880), which Burton pretended was a translation rather than his own work and issued under the pseudonym Haji Abdu el-Yezdi. There is a great resurgence of interest in Burton these days, and this is certainly one of his scarcest titles.

The great strength of our holdings as far as the canonical poets are concerned is in Byron, Shelley, the Brownings (especially Mrs. Browning), Keats, and Leigh Hunt. Of the other greats, we have only a little Arnold, some decent Tennyson, and little Blake or Wordsworth. Blake was expensive enough even in Clark's time, but Wordsworth was certainly cheap, and one can only conclude that Clark did not care for his work at all.

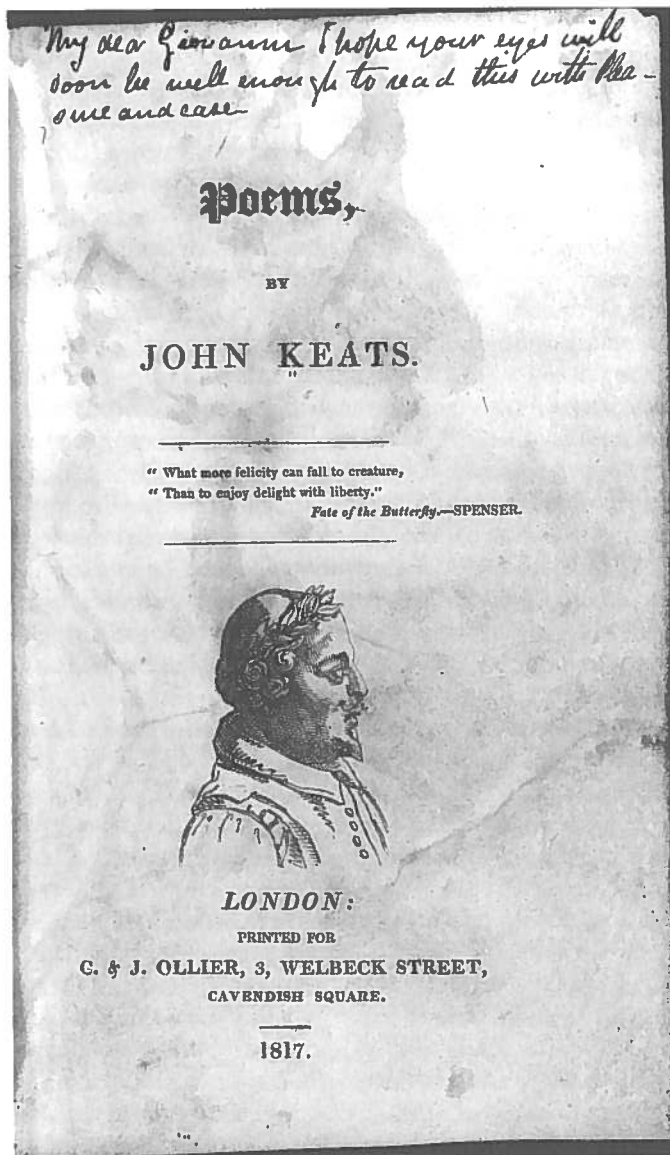
Shelley and Byron were evidently the two Romantic poets who most appealed to Clark, for he bought extensive runs of the first editions of both poets. Most of Shelley is here, from the two gothic romances which represent his first published books (*Zastrozzi* of 1810 and *St. Irvyne* of 1811) to the great *Adonais*, his elegy for Keats (1821), and *Epipsychidion* (1821), both fragile pamphlets printed in Italy, where Shelley was living at the time of his death in 1822. Perhaps most beautiful among the Shelley books which have been rebound is our copy of *The Cenci* (1819). It comes from the important collection of Frederick Locker-Lampson, one of the first bibliophiles to collect in the cabinet style, and it is in a lovely Rivière binding. The Clark also owns an early-nineteenth-

century edition of Plutarch in Greek that belonged to both Thomas Jefferson Hogg and Shelley. The Clark's collection of Byron is also extensive, stretching from a wonderful presentation copy of *Hours of Idleness* (1807), his third book but the first to bear his name, to a presentation copy of the last book to appear during his lifetime, *The Deformed Transformed; A Drama* (1824). Also present are a run of eleven editions of *The Bride of Abydos* (1813 et seq.), a copy of *Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice* (1821) with a letter to the publisher, John Murray, detailing changes in the text, and the very rare and pseudonymous *Waltz: An Apostrophic Hymn* (1813) among many others. There are a number of other letters in addition to the one to Murray in the manuscript collection.

All three of Keats's books are at the Clark, most spectacularly a presentation copy of his first book, *Poems* (1817), inscribed to his friend J. Byng Gattie ("My dear Giovanni I hope your eyes will | soon be well enough to read this with Plea | sure and ease"). A copy of De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (1822) inevitably reminds us of Coleridge, who is not well represented save for the early *Poems* which he published with Charles Lloyd and Charles Lamb (2d ed., 1797), a first edition of the important *Biographia Literaria* (1817), and one or two other books. Lamb himself is much better represented, and the Clark has several of his children's books (including the rare *King and Queen of Hearts* of 1805), *Blank Verse* (1798, another joint book with Lloyd), and a few others. Last among the Romantics, and charming if less significant, is Leigh Hunt. The Clark's holdings of Hunt's works begin with his *Juvenilia* (1801, issued when he was just seventeen years old) and include *Ultra-Crepidarius* (1821, with an autograph letter) and a stunning copy of his book of essays, *A Jar of Honey from Mount Hybla* (1848).

The earliest Victorian poet who is well represented at the Clark is Elizabeth Barrett Browning, though many of her earlier books were published long before Victoria came to the throne in 1837. H. Buxton Forman published a little book in 1896 entitled *Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Her Scarcer Books* (one of the thirty copies issued is at the Clark), and in it he described *The Battle of Marathon* (1820), the *Sonnets* of 1847, and *The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point* (1849) as "three of the *aves rarissimae* of the book-collector." The Clark owns all three, though one must add (as Buxton Forman for criminal reasons did not) that the latter two are forgeries. Also in the collection are two copies of *An Essay on Mind* (Mrs. Browning's first "real" book, given that it was her father who saw to the publication of *The Battle of Marathon* when she was only fourteen), and most of her later books. The holdings of her husband are less developed, but there is most notably a copy of the rare *Pauline* (1833, Browning's first book) and two presentation copies of later collections, not to forget the forged *Cleon* ("1855," in fact, some forty years later) to accompany the aforementioned *Sonnets*.

Tennyson is richly represented, beginning with a lovely copy of the rare *Poems by Two Brothers* (1827, his first book) and *Prolusiones Academicæ* (1829, his second) and extending



A presentation copy of Keats's first book, *Poems* (1817)

through most of his important books. There are two variant trial copies of *Idylls of the King* and a trial copy of *The Holy Grail*, as well as a copy of the pirated *Poems* of 1862 that was put together and published in Toronto without Tennyson's permission. The holdings of Swinburne are also worth noting. In addition to many of the standard works, they include also the Wise forgery of *Cleopatra* (1866, two copies), a presentation copy from Wise to William Michael Rossetti of the posthumous *Queen Yseult* (1918), and the rare *The Children of the Chapel* (1864) by Mary Gordon, Swinburne's cousin, to which he contributed a morality play, "The Pilgrimage of Pleasure," and verse interludes. One last Victorian book must round out this brief survey. Our copy of the second edition of Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market* (1865) is fringed with sentiment in the way a key Victorian poetry book should be: it belonged to Jane Lampson (the wife of Frederick Locker-Lampson, the collector mentioned above)

and still bears her bookplate. It also contains a tipped in letter from W. M. Rossetti to Frederick Locker-Lampson regarding his sister Christina's death. Before coming to the Clark, this copy belonged to the Clark's first librarian, Cora Sanders.

BRUCE WHITEMAN
Librarian

Fellows' Research

[The following articles were contributed by two of the Ahmanson-Getty fellows who participated in this year's program "New Directions in the Study of Early Modern Culture and Society."]

I - Poetically Figuring the Self

I am currently working on British didactic poetry of the eighteenth century, which will be the subject of my first book. I want to understand didacticism on its own terms, and, in particular, to understand its rhetorical demands and its implications for theories of individuality. While any text conveys information and opinions to the reader, I am exploring overtly didactic poetry, texts that make known their intent to instruct, especially those which come in sections, cantos, or nights and therefore cannot be read as one lyric moment. This book will explore how a representation of a speaker, who commonly focuses on internal processes such as feelings and reactions, emerges from the rhetoric of didactic, meditative verse, both secular and religious, particularly on the subjects of retirement and death. Through responses demanded of the reader, the reader's individuality is also posited within the relationship that must be established with the authoritative speaker. In fact, the ostensibly private, individuated voice that emerges in mid- to late-eighteenth-century British poetry is made possible in large measure by the evolving roles of authority defined in didactic verse. By investigating major canonical texts and their lesser-known contemporaries, the book will address the way rhetorical forms and devices can represent the speaker's and the reader's subjectivity in terms of the issues raised above: style as an index to the representation of subjectivity in an increasingly affective rhetoric, changing definitions of public and private selfhood, and the reception of a didactic poetics in both the eighteenth century and in modern criticism.

This project will, in fact, supply the information I need in order to discuss more accurately (in another book) mid- to late-eighteenth-century poetry and its constructions of subjectivity. When I began work at the Clark as an Ahmanson-Getty fellow, I had intended to focus on poetry of the later eighteenth century and its relationship to what we define as Romanticism. After beginning this project, I realized that the biggest impediment to reading this body of work was its didacticism expressed in many modes. Didactic texts in general and didactic poetry in particular have always posed special problems for criticism. In an evaluative climate that is

heavily indebted to Romanticism's pronouncements about spontaneity, overflowing feelings, and natural outgrowth of thoughts, to call a poem didactic is by implication to dismiss it as a failure, a loss of poetic nerve, or as a primitive cultural expression that kept naive readers occupied until the "truly" self-expressive, successful texts could be developed. Because the poetic landscape is thus dominated by the Romantic lyric, any didactic poem of the eighteenth century is criticized because it lacks a rhetoric of unmediated feeling, will not keep its temporality within the bounds of the lyric moment, and shamelessly argues from a position of authority. For these reasons and other related causes, most accounts of eighteenth-century poetry largely ignore didactic verse despite its central position in contemporary aesthetics.

Edward Young's *Night Thoughts*, published 1742–46, demonstrates many of the issues inherent in most didactic verse. This work presents a new formation of didactic authority and an attendant selfhood in an affective theological discourse. Even as the grief-tossed speaker lectures on Christian tenets concerning death, he is himself trying to come to terms with the *vanitas* tradition, which asserts that all earthly life is ultimately insubstantial and therefore meaningless. His authority and the authority of the poem, which is simultaneously abstract and intensely personal, are established by fusing the general precept with the compelling particularity of an example. How the speaker's self is perceived demonstrates the paradoxical power of didactic verse to construct a vital, emotional subjectivity that nevertheless is predicated on an evacuation of individuality. That this construction is entirely successful is proven ironically by the reception of Young as coterminous with the speaker. When Young is charged with worldly ambition, the issue of his right to lecture readers on the vanity of the world becomes the grounds first for charges of hypocrisy and, by extension, eventual rejection of the poem as a whole after many decades of widespread popularity.

To understand related didactic contexts in popular prose forms that are also concerned with death, in an article-length study I have been investigating the origins of the British obituary in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century periodicals. The first obituaries, dating from the 1660s, carry a strong didactic charge. Modeled upon the funeral sermon and the spiritual exercise book in the *ars bene moriendi*—the art of dying well—tradition, obituaries often present the deceased as an exemplum, a particular example of general principles. He is commemorated, not so much for his actions, but more for how these actions allow the survivors to recognize virtues they hold to be of the highest importance. In addition, the deceased provides a model for behavior. In learning of a death, readers expect also to be instructed or at least reminded of the deceased's identity and accomplishments. In addition, circumstances of the death itself—whether or not it was a "good" one—shape a report.

The 1663 death notice of David Jenkins printed in *The Intelligencer*, a newsbook printed briefly during the early Restoration period, may be the first obituary as we now de-

fine the term because it both reports the death and gives a short biographical sketch, one didactic in impact as well as informative. Cultural practice outstrips linguistic custom, however. I believe that consistent use of the term *obituary* dates only from around the early eighteenth century. Evidence for this guess can be found, among other sources, in the Clark copy of a five-volume collection of funerary inscriptions, the *Monumenta Anglicana*, collected by John Le Neve (1717–19). Le Neve justifies the organization of his work by referring to the custom of reporting deaths in newspapers; such a list Le Neve calls an obituary. If I am right about this, the earliest date of use must be pushed back several decades from 1738, as currently listed by the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

One rhetoric of exemplary death, involving negative images, is perhaps most vividly displayed in the *vanitas* tradition. Images of bodily decay to prove the body's insubstantiality are frequently used as sepulchral instruction. Josiah Woodward's *Fair Warnings to a Careless World, or The Serious Practice of Religion Recommended by the Admonitions of Dying Men* (first published in 1707 and reprinted many times) offers a series of essays that exhort the reader to awaken a



From Josiah Woodward's *Fair Warnings*, 5th ed. (1758)



*The Christian live to day as if he should nere See to morrow
Saiht Tertul .*

Frontispiece to Lady Frances Norton's *Memento Mori* (1705)

contempt for life. Supporting the textual admonitions are several stunning illustrations, including "The Mirrou which Flatters not." The worm-riddled skeleton is actually a *transi*, a representation of the dead body that is not yet completely decomposed and is therefore still food for worms. Carrying the trappings of power and with his bony foot upon a globe, the *transi* holds his mirror up to the reader's nature to demonstrate that all paths of glory lead but to one destination. The skull beneath all of our skins, therefore, becomes a leering reminder of how insubstantial at a general level any of our own individual desires really are.

One text in this tradition, Lady Norton's *Memento Mori; or, Meditations on Death* (1705), is an intriguing conflation of the general and the highly personal. Working from both the *ars bene moriendi* and *vanitas* traditions, Lady Norton juxtaposes a general denial of life's validity with the irrefutable importance of the death of one person, her daughter, Lady Gethin. While *Memento Mori* is highly derivative in its reliance on quotations from Christian and pagan authors, it demonstrates Norton's learning and indicates her status as a devotional writer. Lady Gethin's death, "a Fore-tast of Glory," presides over the entire book as the ideal death par excellence; in addition, Norton's grief—over a personal loss that cannot be subsumed into exemplarity—provokes the compilation of general meditations about the insubstantiality of life. This dual reading of the death's significance is

declared in the preface and shapes the design of the frontispiece. In a well-appointed bedchamber, two women, one weeping and one gesturing toward the deathbed, attend the dying Lady Gethin, who declares "All Joy Joy Joy all is Glory." The small coffin in the foreground, labeled "Transit Gloria mundi" in an admonition to the viewer, may indicate that Gethin died delivering a child that did not survive her. The lesson of the entire scene is inscribed below the frame: "The Christian live to day as if he should nere See to morrow Saiht Tertul[ian]." Gethin's death, then, is good: she dies fully aware, attended by those who love her, in acceptance of the spiritual change she will undergo. But because of the mourning that continues to motivate Norton to write, Gethin's exemplary status is contradictory: she is both a generalized particular and an embodied although absent individual who haunts the text.

The range of rhetoric available in didactic texts like these demands that we use binaries such as public/private or general/individual with caution. By exploring the rhetorics of didactic poetry and its prose contexts, I set out the dynamics of subjectivity as it evolves in the eighteenth century. Theories of personal identity, as shaped by and reflected in didactic verse, are one index to essential issues of the eighteenth century, which was committed both to historicizing the general and to envisioning the individual.

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II - Reading Mme Roland

On 19 November 1793, the *Moniteur Universel* issued a warning to the women of France: keep to your homes and mind your children or suffer the fate of Marie-Antoinette, Olympe de Gouge, and Mme Roland. All three faced the guillotine that fall. While the queen had certainly involved herself in questionable political activities, such treachery did not represent her most egregious failing according to the *Moniteur*. Marie-Antoinette had committed the unpardonable crime of "forgetting her sex." These three women had dared to leave the confines of domestic space and venture out into the world of politics. "Unnatural" ambition was their principal sin. Since when had "forgetting one's sex" become such a heinous act as to be punishable by death? The incommensurability of the crime, "forgetting one's sex," and the punishment, death by guillotine, demands explanation.

If Jürgen Habermas is right that what typified the men and women of the Enlightenment was their commitment to the creation of an autonomous public sphere that escaped the ever-watchful gaze of monarchical authority, then the revolutionaries' desire to bring all aspects of human activity within the purview of vigilant republicanism seems a radical departure from this Enlightenment tradition. Indeed how could an entire century which had developed ever more sophisticated notions of privacy culminate in the demand for complete political transparency? In my dissertation, entitled

"Politics, Pleasure, and Domesticity in the Writings of Mme Roland," I argued that newly emergent discourses about women were central in the fashioning of the public and private spheres that are seen today as the very foundation of our modern political and cultural world.

Within this general framework, I examined Mme Roland's *Mémoires* and letters. I was at once concerned with the formation of a distinctly modern female subject and the telling of a story about feminine virtue that served as a founding myth of bourgeois French culture. Monastic charters, plays, essays written for competitions sponsored by scientific academies, theological tracts, medical guides, the *Encyclopédie*, works on physiognomy, and paintings all told stories of domestic virtue. But novels brought these tales to life. As letters to Rousseau after the publication of his *Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse* attested, Mme Roland was far from the only reader who willfully confused real life and fiction. My study of Mme Roland's life and times explored the advent of a new cultural and social "reality" that domestic fiction labored to make true.

During my tenure as an Ahmanson-Getty fellow, I have investigated the historical reception of Mme Roland's memoirs. Louis-Augustin-Guillaume Bosc published the first edition of them in 1795. In the preface, written a little more than a year after her execution, he sought to justify the printing of her memoirs. A woman as committed to domestic virtue as Mme Roland was, he told the reader, would have never sought such "publicity." And yet here he was exposing her once again to the vicissitudes of public opinion. Aware of this contradiction, he defended her writing of the memoirs and his publication of them on the grounds that the historical record needed to be set straight. Five years later, Antoine-Luc Champagneux addressed the same concerns in his preface to the second edition of Mme Roland's memoirs. He too labored to establish her as a woman committed above all to domestic virtue and not the least bit interested in public renown. However, unlike Bosc, he lamented France's loss of a great writer. By insisting on Mme Roland's talents, Champagneux forcefully underscored the tension in her memoirs and raised a central issue in the interpretation of them. For both these editors, this autobiographical text should perhaps not have been brought into print or, at the very least, its existence qua published text required justification. Two hundred years later this problem of "status" still haunts the writings of Mme Roland even as feminist historians and literary critics unearth the work of so many women writers.

Feminist literary scholars and historians have rediscovered Mme Roland's prison notebooks. In keeping with the explosion of interest in female memorialists, letter writers, and novelists, Mme Roland's writings are considered a remarkable source for information about eighteenth-century life. However, her commitment to what is perceived as a Rousseau-inspired, conservative agenda of excluding women from politics makes an explicitly feminist recuperation of her work difficult. She is no Olympe de Gouge or Charlotte

Corday. Accordingly, in *The Body and the French Revolution*, Dorinda Outram stresses over and over again what she considers a central fault line in Mme Roland's oeuvre: the split between a virginal, almost stoic, bodily integrity and the loss of bodily control through domestic subjugation, which is to say motherhood. Outram suggests that in her memoirs Mme Roland attempted to reconcile these two halves but nevertheless failed: "She could not write in a trustworthy way because there was no means by which she could have achieved an undivided vision of herself. . . . The self-confidence necessary to such a task was lost in her perpetual conflicts between chastity and desire, intellect and body. . . ." Without disputing Outram's conclusions, I would suggest that she identifies a certain historical opacity in Mme Roland's writings. Outram's desire to diagnose Mme Roland's failings demonstrates how the memoirs have lost their power to move, touch, or convince this particular reader. In my view, her conclusions are not exactly "wrong" but rather lay bare the effects of a particular regime of reading. From the first publication of the memoirs, this manner of reading has inscribed the apparent split within them as a "sign" of failure. The failure that we perceive today resonates with the worries of her first editors. To be sure, the pendulum has reached the furthest end of its sweep but the two seemingly irreconcilable poles still obtain. Bosc and Champagneux feared that writing might compromise Mme Roland's virtue; and for us today it is precisely this virtue that corrupts her writing.

Is it possible to imagine a different outcome? What if we were to follow Champagneux's suggestion and consider the memoirs as a literary triumph, as an exemplary moment in French letters? Indeed, this is how the nineteenth century viewed them. I am not suggesting a return to romantic historiography but proposing a strategy of reading. How did this text manage to hold sway over the imaginations of so many generations of French readers? What were its powers to enthrall and fascinate? By imaginatively entering into the mysteries of a different epoch, I hope to expand feminist historiography and literary criticism to include those writers and artists whose visions are different and yet whose struggles are all too familiar.

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Hannah More (Act II)

Readers of the last *Newsletter* will recall that the Clark Library acquired last summer an extensive collection of books by and about Hannah More and several other late-eighteenth-century women writers. This rich book collection has been substantially expanded now by the acquisition of a large collection of More correspondence. Among some 250 or so letters (over a thousand pages) there are about 150 from Hannah More to several correspondents, including Ann Kennicott and Zachary Macaulay (the antislaver and father of the historian), and some 100 to Hannah More, the majority from Mrs. Kennicott. The letters cover the period from the 1770s almost to More's death in 1833, though predominantly they date from after the turn of the century. They originally belonged to Hannah More's literary executor, Margaret Roberts, and were used by Roberts's brother William for his 1834 biography of More, though somewhat unreliably. Clearly they were also made available to later biographers, though they were not used extensively and have been inaccessible to scholars since the early 1950s.

Reproduced below is the opening of a letter from More to Mrs. Henry Thornton, dated only 27 April, but probably from 1806. ("Indolence, a frittering away of time and a re-

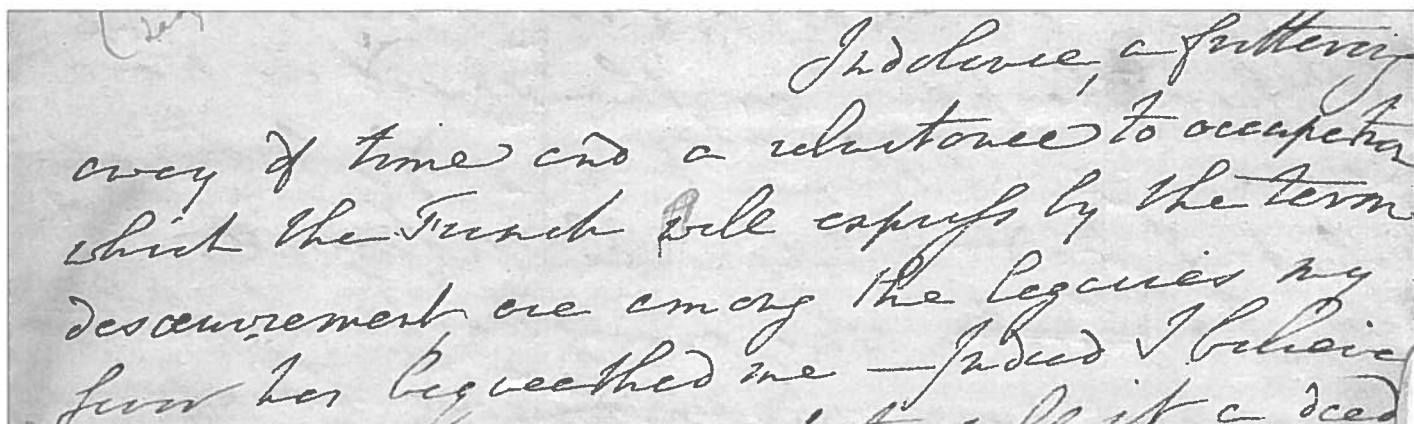
luctance to occupation which the French well express by the term *desoeuvrement* are among the legacies my fever has bequeathed me — Indeed I believe . . .")

With the acquisition of this sizable collection of More correspondence, the Clark is now able to provide a very valuable research collection of both books and manuscript material for the study of Hannah More and her circle.

BRUCE WHITEMAN
Librarian

Library to Close for Stack Extension

A grant from the Parsons Foundation has allowed us to go ahead with a project to install compact shelving in the first annex in the Clark basement. In order to do this, we will have to close the Library to readers during the months of November and December. The lighting must be redone; and all of the shelving, both in the reference and the rare book areas, will be removed and replaced with movable units. This will more than double our shelf space in the first annex. Readers should plan their visits to the Clark this fall with this period of closing in mind. We will reopen as usual after the New Year holiday.



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