

## XVI. Holograph Reading Notes. Vol. 16. (Berg)

The three tables of contents for this volume illustrate the continuing diversity of Woolf's reading in the last years of her life. Although the majority of the entries in the notebook pertain to her reading for the "Common History book" she conceived on September 12, 1940 (AWD), the three tables of contents also list authors and works associated with her continued reading about women and war after the publication of *Three Guineas* in 1938, as well as her reading for *Roger Fry: A Biography* (1940), "The Leaning Tower" (1940), and other essays written in 1940 and 1941. Woolf has cancelled the items in the tables of contents that are not actually included in this volume, and many of them appear elsewhere. The notebook as a whole should be read in conjunction with Volume XXXVII, which consists almost entirely of notes for her "Common History book" made at approximately the same time as those in this volume.

To begin with the missing entries: "Blackwell" and "Jex Blake" (A.1, A.2)—Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell and Sophia Jex-Blake—both reflect Woolf's involvement with women in the professions; notes on Blackwell appear in XXXVII, B.1; notes on Jex-Blake in VII, B.13, XXVI, B.4, and LX, B.57. "R.F. Reynolds" (A.1, A.2), "Reynold's Discourses" (A.3), and "Vision & Design—Life" (A.3) all pertain to her reading for *Roger Fry: A Biography*. Notes on Fry's edition of Reynold's *Discourses* and on the life of Sir Edward Fry—possibly the "Life" mentioned here—are included among the loose pages in Volume XXVI (B.31, B.17); a brief entry on *Vision and Design* appears in XXXIX, B.1. "Sidney Smith" (A.1, A.2, A.3) was in Woolf's mind on March 21, 1940, as a possible article. On March 31 she was commenting on his talk; on April 2, she was "reading Sydney Smith—his life—with only one wish in the world: that I'd married him" (L, VI, 3600); and on May 29, she "began Sidney Smith" (AWD). There appear to be no reading notes on Smith, however; nor are there notes from this period about "Walpole" (A.3), although Woolf records having sent off her article on him in the May 29 diary entry. This article is presumably her review of *Horace Walpole* by R. W. Ketton-Cremer, published as "The Humane Art," *New Statesman & Nation*, June 8, 1940 (Kp. C366). Earlier, however, during 1938 and 1939, she had read the Yale edition of *Walpole's Correspondence* and reviewed the *Letters . . . to the Rev. William Cole* (Kp. C358)—an "impertinence," she wrote the editor, "for I am a very casual and unlearned reader" (L, VI, 3472, 3510). "MacNeice," the last of the missing entries (A.3), is Louis MacNeice, whose long poem "Autumn Journal" is featured in "The Leaning Tower," the lecture delivered by Woolf in May 1940 and published in *Folios of New Writing*, Autumn 1940 (Kp. C372). Woolf includes MacNeice in her plans for her lecture, which are outlined in her diary on February 11, 1940.

The survivors from the first two lists of contents—"Thrale" and "Sévigné"—both belong to her reading at the end of 1940 and the beginning of 1941. "Mrs. Thrale," a review of the Clifford biography (B.9, 12), was published in the *New Statesman & Nation*, March 8, 1941 (Kp. C374); on February 1, 1941, Woolf wrote Ethel Smyth that she "must earn 10 guineas reading a vast fat book about Mrs. Thrale. I'm in the 16th century, and its a wrench to jerk to the 18th" (L, VI, 3685). Although Woolf's essay on "Madame de Sévigné" was written in May 1939, she was still reading Sévigné's *Lettres* (B.1) on September 14 and December 29, 1940 (AWD), and included the Frenchwoman in a list of possible articles for her history book (see "Notes for Reading at Random," A & R, 375). The essay was published in *The Death of the Moth and Other Essays* (1942).

The remaining notes in this volume chart the development of "Anon" and "The Reader," the first two essays in Woolf's unfinished history of English literature, called, provisionally, *Reading*

*at Random* and *Turning the Page*. (See *A & R*.) Woolf's original idea for her "Common History book" was "to read from one end of literature including biography; and range at will, consecutively" (*AWD*, September 12, 1940). On September 18, she began to outline a work that would begin with English literature before the Elizabethans and end with a chapter on the future ("Notes for Reading at Random," *A & R*). Her working notes end with an entry on Lady Anne Clifford's *Diary*, which is also noted in this volume (B.14). During the fall of 1940, Woolf was reading or planned to read other people's histories of English literature, as well as the literature of the medieval and Elizabethan periods (*AWD*, September 14, 17, October 12, 1940). On October 17, she was "filling [her] mind slowly with Elizabethans," and a month later, November 23, she was ready to begin "Anon" (*AWD*). The first draft of this essay is, in fact, dated "24th Nov. 1940" ("Anon." Folder 1. Berg). She continued working on "Anon" and "The Reader" until her death on March 28, 1941, noting on January 1, 1941, that she had brought down "a handful of Elizabethans for my book" (*AWD*) and asking Vita Sackville-West on February 4 to bring her a biography of Lady Anne Clifford "or any other Elizabethan" (*L*, VI, 3689). On February 26, her "'higher life' [was] almost entirely the Elizabethan play" (*AWD*).

The Elizabethans and pre-Elizabethans who populate this volume—Malory, Latimer, Marlowe, Henslowe, Burton, and Lady Anne Clifford—all reappear in Woolf's drafts for "Anon" and "The Reader"; the historical works by Chambers, Nicoll, and G. B. Harrison provided the details for her re-creation of the English literary past. Given the chronology of the drafts for "Anon" and "The Reader," the notes in this volume are perhaps the last that Woolf made before she died.

The first two tables of contents, A.1 and A.2, appear on labels pasted on the spine and the front cover of the notebook. The ink throughout is black.

## A. TABLE OF CONTENTS

### 1. Blackwell

~~Jex Blake~~

~~{...}~~

~~R.F. Reynolds~~

~~Seigné~~

~~Sydney Smith~~

Label, on spine.

### 2. Blackwell

~~Jex Blake~~

~~R.F. Reynolds~~

~~Seigné~~

~~Sydney Smith~~

~~Thrale~~

1 p., on cover.

### 3.

~~Reynolds Discourses~~

~~Séigné~~

~~Vision & Design—Life~~

~~MaeNeice~~  
~~Sydney Smith: Peter Ps letters~~  
~~Walpole~~  
 1–9–10. Medieval Stage—Chambers. A. Nichols. British Drama.  
 11–20 Latimers Sermons.  
 21–22 Malory  
 23–27. Elizabethan Plays & Players—Harrison  
 Penelope Rich—Rawson  
 1 p., numbered 1 by NYPL.

## B. ENTRIES

1. “Sevigné”: 2 pp., numbered 2–3 by NYPL. (P. 3, 2 lines only.) More notes on this work appear in XXXVII, B.12 and LIV, B.2.  
 [Sévigné, Madame de.] *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné, de sa famille et de ses amis*. Ed. M. Monmerqué. New ed. Vol. IV [of XIV]. Paris: Hachette, 1862.
2. “Med Stage EK Chambers”: 9 pp., numbered 4–12 by NYPL; numbered 1–9 by VW.  
 Chambers, E. K. *The Medieval Stage*. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903.
3. “Nicoll. Nicoll. B Drama”: 1 p., numbered 13 by NYPL; numbered 10 by VW. The entry begins with a question that recurs in Woolf’s drafts for “Anon” and “The Reader”: “When is the reader born? With Shakespeare?” More notes on this work appear below, B.7.  
 Nicoll, Allardyce. *British Drama. An Historical Survey from the Beginnings to the Present Time*. Harrap, 1925.
4. “Latimer.”: 10 pp., numbered 14–23 by NYPL; numbered 11–20 by VW.  
 Latimer, Hugh. *Fruitfull Sermons. Preached by the Right Rever- and Father, and Constant Martyr of Jesus X, Master Hugh Latimer*. Cotes, 1635.
5. “Malory”: 2 pp., numbered 24–25 by NYPL; numbered 21–22 by VW. The entry begins with notes on “Strachey./xxvi”—Sir Edward Strachey’s “Introduction” to the work.  
 Malory, Sir Thomas. *Le Morte D’Arthur*. With an Intro. by Sir Edward Strachey. Macmillan, 1868.
6. “Elizabethan Plays & Players./G.B. Harrison.”: 5 pp., numbered 26–30 by NYPL; numbered 23–27 by VW. More notes on this work appear below, B.8.  
 Harrison, G. B. *Elizabethan Plays and Players*. Routledge, 1940.
7. “Nicoll—British Drama”: 1 p., numbered 31 by NYPL; numbered 28 by VW. More notes on this work appear above, B.3.  
 Nicoll, Allardyce. *British Drama. An Historical Survey from the Beginnings to the Present Time*. Harrap, 1925.
8. “~~Rich Rawson~~/Harrison”: 1 p., numbered 32 by NYPL; numbered 29 by VW. More notes on this work appear above, B.6.  
 Harrison, G. B. *Elizabethan Plays and Players*. Routledge, 1940.
9. “98 attacks on J<sup>n</sup> immorality in Press”: 1 p., numbered 33 by NYPL. The reference is to Dr. Johnson. More notes on this work appear below, B.12.  
 Clifford, James L. *Hester Lynch Piozzi—Mrs. Thrale*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941.

10. "Tamberlaine": 1 p., numbered 34 by NYPL.  
Marlowe, Christopher. *Tamberlaine the Great. Part the First*. In *Elizabethan Tragedy: Six Representative Plays*. Ed. George Rylands. Bell, 1933.
11. "Henslowe": 4 pp., numbered 35–38 by NYPL. More notes on this work appear in XXXVII, B.10.  
Henslowe, Philip. *The Diary . . . from 1591–1609*. Ed. Walter W. Greg. 2 vols. Bullen, 1904–1908.
12. "Thrale": 14 pp., numbered 39–52 by NYPL. P. 39 is also numbered 30 by VW, which indicates that this entry originally followed B.8, above. The notes on this work found in B.9, above, belong between pp. 41 and 42 of this entry.  
Clifford, James L. *Hester Lynch Piozzi—Mrs. Thrale*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941.
13. "Anat. of Melan": 2 pp., numbered 53–54 by NYPL. More notes on this work appear below, B.16.  
Burton, Robert. *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. Ed. A. R. Shilleto. Vol. I [of III]. Bell, 1893.
14. "Clifford.": 2 pp., numbered 55–56 by NYPL.  
Clifford, Lady Anne. *Diary*. With an Intro. by V. Sackville-West. Heinemann, 1923.
15. "Clifford.": 1 p., numbered 57 by NYPL. More notes on this work appear in XXXVII, B.18.  
Williamson, George C. *Lady Anne Clifford. . . . Her Life, Letters and Work*. Kendal: Titus Wilson, 1922.
16. "Burton": 1 p., numbered 58 by NYPL. More notes on this work appear above, B.13.  
Burton, Robert. *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. Ed. A. R. Shilleto. Vol. I [of III]. Bell, 1893.