

XX. Holograph Reading Notes. Vol. 20. (Berg)

The majority of the notes in this volume are related to essays that appeared in *The Common Reader: Second Series* (1932). With the exception of “The Countess of Pembroke’s Arcadia” and “Donne After Three Centuries,” however, these essays had already been published previous to their appearance in Woolf’s book. It is possible that Woolf made the notes in this volume between February and July 1932 when she was reworking essays for inclusion in *The Common Reader*; but, given the fullness of the entries, it is more likely that these notes were made for the original essays and collected here. Almost all of the entries overlap with entries on the same subject in other volumes.

The notes on Hardy’s prefaces and poems (B.1–3, 5) are difficult to date because of their separation from the fuller set of notes on Hardy’s novels in Volume XLII. As noted in the introduction to that volume, Woolf started reading and talking about Hardy in 1919, although her article, “Thomas Hardy’s Novels,” was not published until January 19, 1928 (*TLS*; Kp. C294). Four and a half years later, on June 29, 1932, she had “just finished Hardy” (*AWD*) for inclusion in *The Common Reader*.

The notes on Beau Brummell (B.6–8) and Dorothy Wordsworth (B.9–11) clearly belong to Woolf’s original preparation for her articles on these figures: “Beau Brummell,” *Nation & Athenaeum*, September 28, 1929 (Kp. C315), and “Dorothy Wordsworth,” *Nation & Athenaeum*, October 12, 1929 (Kp. C317). Both of these were reprinted in October 1929 in the *New York Herald Tribune* as part of a series on four “figures” from the end of the eighteenth century. Woolf recorded reading “Beau Brummell’s life” in February 1929 (*L*, IV, 1997, 2002), and appears to have read Dorothy Wordsworth’s *Journals* in May 1929. This latter supposition is based on an aside in Woolf’s notes on the *Journals*: “This was written by a gold pen, which I don’t think quite as good as my old one” (B.11). On May 2, 1929, Woolf wrote to Clive Bell with “a new lizard-green pen, a slippery sort of pen, golden, laxative, loose-tongued” (*L*, IV, 2025), and on May 15, she began a diary entry in order to test, and complain of, a new gold pen (*D*, III). We do know, however, that she wrote the piece on Dorothy Wordsworth during the summer of 1929: “The last [article] was Dorothy Wordsworth, and if the written word could cure rheumatism, I think her’s might. . . . Have you ever read her diaries, the early ones, with the nightingale singing at Alfoxden [Somerset], and Coleridge coming in swollen eyed—to eat a mutton chop? . . . I like them very much; but I cant say I enjoy writing about them, nine pages close pressed. How can one get it all in?” (*L*, IV, 2057). All four articles were “finished” by August 19. More notes on Brummell are found in Volume IX, which also contains notes for “Cowper and Lady Austen” and “Mary Wollstonecraft”—the other two articles in this series.

The biographies of Donne (B.12) and Sidney (B.14–15) belong to the Elizabethan articles written “to front [her] new Common Reader” (*AWD*; November 16, 1931) and overlap with similar entries in Volume XI. Woolf had begun, with great excitement, to read Elizabethans at the end of 1929 (*D*, III, December 8, 10, 26), while “vaguely thinking of some studies of Elizabethan characters” (*L*, IV, 2117). In July 1931, her mind was “leading [her] away from contemporary life in the direction of the Elizabethans” (*L*, IV, 2399), and on August 10, she should have been reading “all Donne, all Sidney, all . . . Lord Brooke [Fulke Greville]” (*L*, IV, 2419). In early December 1931, she hoped to visit Penshurst, Sidney’s home—a desire not fulfilled until June 1940; by the end of the month, she was “going to write about Sidney, and cant get back into the mood” (*L*, IV, 2477, 2497). According to her diary, she was composing “two long Elizabethan articles”—presumably including “The Countess of Pembroke’s Arcadia”—in

November, 1931 (AWD, November 16), although she appears not to have finished them until the beginning of next year. “Donne After Three Centuries” was written in February 1932 (*L*, V, 2522, 2523; AWD, February 8, 16).

For the rest, the notes on Birrell’s *Et Cetera* (B.13) almost certainly belong with the entries on Birrell’s essays in Volume XIII, B.19, which were made in preparation for her essay on “Augustine Birrell,” *Yale Review*, June 1930 (Kp. 323; see *L*, IV, 2051; *D*, III, November 18, 1929). The biography of Montaigne noted in B.4 may be connected with her visit to his tower—the Chateau de Montaigne—in April 1931 (see, e.g., *L*, IV, 2360). Finally, the notes on “(Hazlitt),” listed in the table of contents (A.2) but missing from the actual entries, can be read in Volume XXII. Woolf was reading Hazlitt throughout 1930 for her essay, “Wm. Hazlitt the Man,” published in September 1930 (Kp. C325), and reprinted in *The Common Reader*.

The two tables of contents are written in black ink, “(Hazlitt)” only appearing in pencil. The entries are in various shades of Woolf’s purple ink—some more blue, some more black—with an occasional note in black ink.

A. TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Brummell

Dorothy Wordsworth
Life of Donne. Gosse
Philip Sidney. Addleshaw
Philip Sidney. Greville
1 p., on cover.

2. Life of Donne. (Hazlitt)

Life of Sir. P. Sidney. Addleshaw.
Greville’s Life of Sidney
1 p., numbered 1 by NYPL.

B. ENTRIES

1. “As some of these novels of Wessex Life . . .”: 1 p., numbered 2 by NYPL. Quotation, annotated “Preface to A Laodician.”

Hardy, Thomas. “Preface.” *A Laodician*. [1891].

2. “Let me repeat that a novel is an impression,/not an argument; & there the matter must rest; . . . /Preface to Tess”: 1 p., numbered 2 by NYPL. (Heading only.) More notes on the novel and the “Preface” appear in XLII, B.11.

Hardy, Thomas. “Preface.” *Tess of the D’Urbervilles*. [1892].

3. “Unadjusted impressions have their value . . .”: 1 p., numbered 2 by NYPL. The entry includes a quotation, annotated “Preface to Poems Past and Present. (75),” and notes on two poems, “Night in the Old Home” and “A Wet Night,” from *Time’s Laughingstocks and Other Verses*.

Hardy, Thomas. *Collected Poems*. Macmillan, 1919.

4. "At the age of 38 M. retired . . .": 2 pp., numbered 3–4 by NYPL; numbered 2–3 by VW. The entry is also headed "Life. Montaigne." More notes on this work appear in XXVI, B.23, on a page numbered 1 by VW.
Bonnefon, Paul. *Montaigne. L'Homme et l'oeuvre*. Bordeaux: Gounouilhou, 1893.
5. "Desparate Remedies. Hardy": 1 p., numbered 5 by NYPL. More notes on this novel appear in XLII, B.9 and B.12.
Hardy, Thomas. *Desparate Remedies*. New ed. Macmillan, 1903. Vol. VII of The Wessex Novels.
6. "Brummell.": 13 pp., numbered 6–18 by NYPL. The entry includes references to the "Memoir of Crabbe," "Moore's Life of Sheridan," and the "Life of Byron. Moore," all of which are mentioned in Jesse's book.
Jesse, Captain [William]. *The Life of George Brummell, Esq.* 2 vols. Nimmo, 1886.
7. "Harriette Wilson.": 1 p., numbered 18 by NYPL. The entry begins with a list of page references for Beau Brummell in Wilson's *Memoirs*.
Wilson, Harriet. *Memoirs of Herself and Others*. Ed. James Laver. Peter Davies, 1929.
8. "The fact then after his retirement no one brought out his peculiar qualities.": 1 p., numbered 19 by NYPL. General notes for Woolf's essay on Beau Brummell. See above, B.6–7.
9. "Dorothy Wordsworth": 7 pp., numbered 20–26 by NYPL. The entry ends with the comment, "M. Woll [Mary Wollstonecraft] branches out to reform the world D Wth here & now; the thing before one. Eno' to realise it." More notes on this work appear below, B.11.
Wordsworth, Dorothy. *Journals*. Ed. William Knight. 2 vols. Macmillan, 1897.
10. "Lee. D.Wth": 1 p., numbered 27 by NYPL. The notes are on De Quincey's description of Dorothy Wordsworth in his *Recollections of the Lakes and Lake Poets*.
Lee, Edmund. *Dorothy Wordsworth. The Story of a Sister's Love*. James Clarke, 1886.
11. "D. Wordsworth": 2 pp., numbered 28–29 by NYPL. More notes on the *Journals* appear above, B.9.
Wordsworth, Dorothy. *Journals*. Ed. William Knight. Vol. II [of II]. Macmillan, 1897.
12. "Life of Donne/Gosse": 3 pp., numbered 30–32 by NYPL. Other notes on this work appear in XI, B.4, and in LVIII, B.6.
Gosse, Edmund. *The Life and Letters of John Donne*. 2 vols. Heinemann, 1899.
13. "Birrell/Et Cetera": 1 p., numbered 33 by NYPL. More notes on this work appear in XIII, B.19.
Birrell, Augustine. *Et Cetera*. Chatto & Windus, 1930.
14. "Sir Philip Sidney/Life of by Addleshaw": 4 pp., numbered 34–37 by NYPL.
Addleshaw, Percy. *Sir Philip Sidney*. Methuen, 1909.
15. "Greville's Sidney": 3 pp., numbered 38–40 by NYPL. The entry includes several general observations about Elizabethan prose.
Greville, Sir Fulke. *Life of Sir Philip Sidney*. Ed. Nowell Smith. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907.