Virginia Woolf's

READING

NOTEBOOKS

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INTRODUCTION: THE UNCOMMON READER

> Sometimes I think heaven must be one continuous unexhausted reading.

By her own account and by the testimony of her writing, Virginia Woolf was from her childhood far more than the "common reader" she later named herself. Born into a long line of professionals and writers, she expressed early in life a passion for reading and ideas that stimulated in turn her own creative energy. She read for pleasure, and she read for work. She read to ease her mind, and to fertilize it. "It was the Elizabethan prose writers I loved first & most wildly," she recalled in 1929, "stirred by Hakluyt, which father lugged home for me . . . & why I dont know, but I became enraptured. . . . I used to read it & dream of those obscure adventurers, & no doubt practised their style in my copy books."[1] Later, a recurring refrain in her letters and diaries became, I'm "replenishing my cistern at night with Swift," or whoever it was at the time (*D*, III, June 27, 1925). "Yet after all," she insisted, "thats the way to write [an essay on the Burneys]; . . . the truth of one's sensations is not in the fact, but in the reverberation. When I have read three lines, I remake them entirely, if they're prose, and not poetry; and it is this which is the truth."[2] But there is another side to Woolf's reading as well—what she called her "serious" reading for her critical essays and reviews: "reading with pen and notebook" and "with an end in view" (*D*, II, July 28, 1923). Both aspects are amply illustrated in the thousands of entries jumbled together in the sixty-seven volumes of her reading notes. As windows into Woolf's mind, these notes illuminate the responses of the woman and artist—a modernist with an abiding sense of the past and a belief that literature is "one brain, after all" (*L*, IV, 1980)—to the world around her, and trace the growth of the dreamy young reader into a major figure in the intellectual history of the twentieth century.

Today, more than the critical books she polished and published, the reading notes are a "rough, but vigorous statue testifying to the great fun & pleasure [the] habit of reading" gave Woolf (*D*, II, July 28, 1923). For one thing, their bulk is impressive (and the notes she left represent only a fraction of what she actually read). As a repository of facts and ideas for her articles and reviews, these volumes provide proof (if it is still needed) of her commitment as both literary

and social critic. Equally impressive is her breadth: Woolf ranged freely through genres, periods, and countries, glancing at some only once or twice and returning, fascinated, to others. Notes on fiction, poetry, and drama jostle each other on her pages, intermingling with notes on history, biography, journals, criticism, science, anthropology, and newspaper reports of contemporary events. Some of the earliest entries translate and comment on Greek and Latin literature, and she continued to read Greek, both in the original and in English and French translations, throughout her life. She read French literature and criticism in the original, Dante in a bilingual edition, Russian fiction in translation. English literature and history she read from beginning to end, constantly reaching for familiar works and excitedly discovering new ones.

At the end of her life, Woolf decided to translate her wide reading into her own history of English literature. Provisionally called *Reading at Random* or *Turning the Page*, her "Common History book" was going to capture those aspects of the creative act and its continuity ignored by traditional texts.[3] "Did I tell you I'm reading the whole of English literature through?" she wrote to Ethel Smyth on February 1, 1941, during the war and only two months before her death. "Thank God, as you would say, one's fathers left one a taste for reading! Instead of thinking, by May we shall be—whatever it may be: I think, only 3 months to read Ben Jonson, Milton, Donne, & all the rest!" (*L*, VI, 3685).[4]

In order to understand Woolf's complex response to her legacy, it is necessary to look first at the environment that nourished it. Unlike Kitty Malone, daughter of an Oxford don in *The Pargiters*, whose bookcase in 1880 contained only works read in childhood, a prayer book and a Bible, two copies of *Sesame and Lilies*, and three bound volumes on law and duty—and to whom most of English literature was forbidden because it was not "fit reading for a girl"—Woolf was allowed the freedom of her father's library, a freedom rare in those days, and she took advantage of it.[5] Both her early experiences of literature and her later critical writing attest to her strong sense of a literary tradition that, she felt, she made her own through the act of reading. In the essay called "Reading" (1919), she describes how a young reader sitting in the library of an English country house brings to life a long line of poets stretching from Keats back to "some uncouth poet scarcely able to syllable his words" (*CE*, II, 13). Later, in her essay on *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* (1932), Woolf, speaking now as a mature reader/critic, confidently adds her name and her perceptions of the book to "the long succession of readers" dating back to 1655 be-

fore sending the book, and her essay, into the future: "let us in our turn bring the insight and blindness of our generation to bear upon [the *Arcadia*], and so pass it on to our successors" (*CE*, I, 19).

Woolf's vision of herself as reader and inheritor, however, was from the beginning a dual one. If, on the one hand, she felt herself part of the long line of writers and readers whose minds had joined through the centuries to produce her cultural heritage, she recognized, on the other, the peripheral role women have played in the creation and transmission of that heritage. As she herself was well aware, she read her books not in the schoolrooms of Eton or Oxford or Cambridge, the training ground of the true inheritor, but in the library or the bedroom/study of a private house. Even while preparing her essay on the *Arcadia*, a work Sidney ostensibly wrote for his sister, a great patron of the arts, Woolf recorded in her reading notes how "The C^{ss} of Rutland [was] nothing inferior to her father Sir P.S. in poetry" (XI, B.7); how Lady Anne Clifford's mother, patron to the poet Daniel, "had no language but her own, but read all books of worth that were translated," while it was her "fathers will that [Anne] shd only know English," since a "'young lady [was] not . . . to learn any language'" (XLVIII, B.2); and how Donne, when his family-life threatened his writing, "left his wife and the steadily growing army of babies at Mitcham" and "had a 'lodging' or apartment in the Strand" (LVIII, B.6).[6] For Donne, the male, his art took precedence over his family duties; women, denied this option, became patrons.

The dual awareness of inheritance and exclusion is vividly portrayed by the twenty-one-year-old Woolf in a diary entry called "The Country in London" and subtitled "Getting ready for Salisbury, by which I mean laying in books." In the country, she writes:

> I read some history: it is suddenly all alive, branching forwards & backwards & connected with every kind of thing that seemed entirely remote before. I seem to feel Napoleons influence on our quiet evening in the garden for instance—I think I see for a moment how our minds are all threaded together—how any live mind today is ~~conne~~ of the very same stuff as Plato's & Euripides. It is only a continuation & development of the same thing—It is this common mind that binds the whole world together; & all the world is mind. . . . I feel as though I had grasped the central meaning of the world, & all these poets & historians & philosophers were only following out paths branching from that centre in which I stand.

When she reads in London, however, the "atmosphere is too hot—too fretful. I read—then I lay down the book—& say—what right have I, a woman to read all these things that men have done? They would laugh if they saw me."[7]

In spite of her divided consciousness and the sense of being an intruder, Woolf profited greatly both from her father's library and from Leslie Stephen himself. For one thing, she learned to place literature in its historical, biographical, and cultural contexts, and to recognize the crucial role that social as well as literary conventions play in determining what gets written and how it is received.[8] Stephen was clear on how one should read English literature—namely, "in conjunction with English history" and with some knowledge "of the philosophy and, still more, . . . of the social conditions of the time."[9] In a lecture to schoolboys on "The Study of English Literature," he insists that we can understand writers only by forming a picture of the society that shaped them and, by extension, their art: "You should, I say, understand the spirit of the age, and by that I do *not* mean that you should study what is called the philosophy of history. . . . What you require is not a clever analysis, but a vivid representation of the period. You should see it, not be full of formula about it."[10] The way to acquire this vision, he continues, is to read the documents of the period itself. In the case of Pope, his example, this means "reading some of the most delightful books in the language. . . . reading Addison and Swift, and Pope's own correspondence, and Lady Mary's letters, and 'Robinson Crusoe,' and 'Gulliver's Travels,' and Gay and Parnell, and a crowd of smaller writers."[11] Woolf, as if taking her father's words literally, fulfills them in her own reading. Her notes for her essay on "Addison" (1919), for example, begin with the list:

> Dict. Nat. Biog
> Johnson's Life
> Cato
> Tatler
> Macaulays Essay
> Spence's Anecdotes.
> Sir Roger de Coverley
> Spectator.
> Addison. by Courthope. (II, A.1)

The presence at the top of her list of the *Dictionary of National Biography*, which Stephen edited, as well as her habitual recourse to letters, memoirs, diaries, biographies, and histories in her own pur-

suit of a writer or a work, indicates the tremendous influence her father's teaching had on Woolf, even as she grew to recognize its limitations. In *Three Guineas*, for example, she "[regrets] that no lives of maids [servants] . . . are to be found in the *Dictionary of National Biography*"[12]—a comment on the tendency of biography, and history, to ignore those individuals and classes whose efforts lay outside the centers of intellectual and political power. In 1929, she recalled tapping at her father's study to ask for "the 6th or 7th volume of Gibbons complete works, or Speddings Bacon, or Cowpers letters" (*L*, IV, 2005), an image that conveys her access to those works which stimulated her own explorations of history even while anticipating her adoption in the thirties of the role of cultural outsider. This image reappears in *The Waves* (1931) in Louis's perception of himself as an outsider (here by virtue of his middle-class colonial background) knocking on the "grained oak door" of his tutor's study, determined to enter the world of poetry and culture within;[13] and, in 1931 and 1932, it provided Woolf with the original titles for her newly conceived history of women's exclusion: *The Open Door*, *Opening the Door*, *A Tap on the Door*, *A Knock on the Door*.[14]

Nevertheless, Woolf's forays into the library afforded her an understanding of social history, both recorded and unrecorded, that determined the bias of her reading and her work. In 1905, she began to teach literature and history at Morley College, and in August 1906, when she wrote a story about a woman historian's research into the land tenure system of medieval England, she included a fictional journal of a young woman in the fifteenth century. As the editors of "The Journal of Mistress Joan Martyn" point out: "Roughly half of the manuscript is devoted to [the narrator's] views on history and her search for old documents."[15] Within the story itself, the narrator defends her method of exploring the legal system of the time by creating scenes that depict the details of daily life: "I have not scrupled to devote several pages of large print to an attempt to show, vividly as in a picture, some scene from the life of the time; here I knock at the serfs door, & find him roasting rabbits he has poached; I show you the Lord of the Manor setting out on some journey, . . . In another room I show you Dame Elinor, at work with her needle."[16]

During this same period, 1905 to 1906, when Woolf was often reviewing several books a week, her reading notes include entries from *The Cambridge Modern History* and *A History of Modern Europe*, which provided her with the background she needed for her articles (XXXV). At the end of her life, when she began to write her own history of English literature, she repeatedly emphasized the need to

write as well the history of the society that produced and responded to the art. If the origin of literature could be traced to the singing of the birds in the forests of prehistoric Britain, "the tree had to be felled; and a hut made from its branches before the human voice sang too." "Keep a running commentary upon the External," she noted in an outline for the book; "I shd. therefore take a poem & build up round it the society wh. helps it" (*A & R*, 382, 376).

Nowhere, perhaps, does Woolf illustrate the interaction of art and society more clearly than in her reading of works by and about women—her reading of women as creators, subjects, and participants within an essentially male literary tradition and within what she came to call a patriarchal society. Even in her earliest notes she comments on the presentation of feminine psychology, records the details of women's lives and their attitudes toward their work, and analyzes the ways in which women writers have confronted the technical problems of their craft and what might constitute a woman's language. An entry from 1905 describes the legal status of women in the eighteenth century and the rise of women's education in the nineteenth (XXVII, B.2). In 1906, she appreciates that Edith Wharton's *House of Mirth* presents "American society: as exclusive as English: except that money apparently is the only necessity. A sketch of a girl brought up in such surroundings" (XXXV, B.24); she criticizes Mrs. Henry Graham's *House of Siloam* as "weak stuff—conventional girl, all the rest of it. becomes a woman after wedding service . . . hysterical melodramatic, unpleasant. 'dont flirt and dont slum'" (XXXV, B.23); and she emphasizes Elizabeth Barrett Browning's own recognition in her letters that her life before her meeting with Browning was "bad for her art: didnt know people," as well as noting that "her faults were apparently conscious & she didnt mind them" and that she was "good upon her artistic theories." "Not merely the early Victorian poetess," she adds; "sternness" (XXXV, B.51).

Later, Woolf began to explore as creative works in their own right what were for Stephen part of the social documents of an age—women's diaries and letters—recognizing that they filled the gaps left by women's absence from the bookshelves and from the standard literary and historical texts. The three sets of notes on Lady Anne Clifford's *Diary* are a good example of Woolf's developing sense not only of women's exclusion from culture but of their contributions and their history. In the early 1920s, Woolf read the *Diary* as background for an essay on the Elizabethans. "Nothing much here except a chronicle," she sums up at the end of her notes, "fine clothes, journeys, details" (XIX, B.3). Although neither the *Diary* nor Lady Anne ap-

peared in the finished essay, phrases from Vita Sackville-West's introduction to the work, including lists of goods brought home by Anne's father, George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland, contributed to her evocation of the richness of the age in "The Elizabethan Lumber Room." Ten years later, she turned again to the *Diary* and to a biography of Lady Anne, this time with the intention of making her an "Elizabethan character"; instead, these works provided Woolf with illustrations of the education given to noblewomen in the sixteenth century—an education that encouraged them to become patrons of poets such as Daniel and Donne but prevented them from writing poetry themselves. Her notes on Williamson's biography emphasize Lady Anne's lifelong love of reading and the fact that although she was not allowed to learn languages, her father permitted her "all other knowledge fit for her sex, since [she] was bred up to greater perfection than himself" (XLVIII, B.2). The glimpses into the life of the Elizabethan woman and patron offered by the *Diary* then became part of her picture of "Donne After Three Centuries" (XLVIII, Introduction). Not until 1941, however, did Lady Anne emerge as a figure in her own right—the prototype of the early reader—rather than as an accessory to another writer ("The Reader," *A & R*; see XVI and XXXVII).

Meanwhile, during the late twenties Dorothy Osborne's letters, the correspondence between Jane Carlyle and Geraldine Jewsbury, the diary of Fanny Burney, Dorothy Wordsworth's journals, Mary Wollstonecraft's letters, as well as her educational and political tracts, all became the subjects of individual essays, while simultaneously providing Woolf with the details of women's lives that she then wove together in *A Room of One's Own*.[17] Published in 1929, this work has not only introduced two generations of women readers to a literary heritage they might otherwise never have known existed but it also illustrates the importance of rereading literature with an awareness of the social and cultural constraints that have led to women's silences, as well as to their speech.

One key to Woolf's analysis of these silences lies in her perception, as both novelist and feminist, of the interconnection between social and literary conventions. An entry headed "Novels. Form. (Vicar of Wakefield) Goldsmith" (1921–1922) begins:

> The social machinery seems to have imposed a pretty sharp mould upon 18th Cent. fiction: Witness Vicar of Wakefield. . . . Here are the makeshifts of a middle class family: ~~to~~ who have lost their money. Goldsmith will break his "form" to bring in an argument about tyrants & democracy. How viv-

> idly they tell the stories of their loves!—adventures. How arch & sly & pointed the psychology is! The conventions for women's behaviour is very marked: love of dress: mothers' desire that their daughters shd. marry. A style low in tone & very ~~accurate~~ formal. (XXVI, B.1)

Thackeray also provided Woolf with examples of both types of convention. Her notes for her essay "Modern Novels" (1919) include an entry that reads, "Pendennis. Its a very queer convention that makes us believe that people talked or felt or lived as J.A. [Jane Austen] & Thack. & Dickens make them." This generalization is illustrated by a single example from the novel: "M^rs^ Shandon cares for nothing but tea when her husband is away. 325 Oh what varieties of pain do we not make our women suffer! & that leads to a charming apostrophe to the teapot—a kind of jolly abandonment of humour and life" (XXXI, B.5).[18] In the mid-thirties, while preparing *Three Guineas*, Woolf turned to *Pendennis* for her metaphor of the social conventions that denied women education and prevented them from full participation in the literary or the public world: Arthur's Education Fund, or A.E.F. By this time, however, she had moved beyond the sociological analysis of literature inherited from Stephen to a serious critique of the social and political institutions that threatened not only the survival of literature and criticism but life itself. "[I]n times of public crisis," she wrote in 1941, "the writer exclaims: 'I cannot write any more. I have no audience'."[19]

"I have no audience." Embedded in a draft of her last essay, "The Reader," these words speak eloquently to another aspect of Woolf's own reading: her lifelong insistence on the role of the audience in the creation and re-creation of a work of art. For Woolf, literature resides not just in the written word but in the presence of the living men and women who hear or see or read a work when it first appears, and who later keep it alive through the act of reading. Here again we discern the legacy of Leslie Stephen, who not only emphasized the interaction of audience and writer at every period in history but wrote of Pope: "His best poetry is the incarnation" of the conversation between the poet, his enemies, his patrons, and "the critical circles, who revered him."[20] Even more, however, Woolf's stance may be the result of one of her earliest experiences of literature—hearing her father read aloud; because of this, "many of the great English poems" seemed to her inseparable from his voice.[21] In fact, literature for Woolf was almost always "spoken," even when read by a lone reader sitting silently with her

book. The reader, she declared in 1941, "acts the play in the theatre of his own brain."[22] The importance of the speaking voice is apparent in a reading note on *The Bacchae* in which she laments: "The difficulty of reading Greek is not the words, but getting the fling of the sentence entire—as it leaves the mouth. I am always being knotted up" (XIX, B.47). Commenting on *Volpone*, she writes: "The prose is so good because it is spoken. not at all Elizabethan" (XIX, B.32).

Books in general, not just plays, were "alive" for Woolf; they had a voice and a body of their own that in turn gave voice and body to the people who wrote and read them. In the 1903 diary entry on reading in the country, "Napoleons influence on our quiet evening in the garden" brought the past to life and made the reader part of it. In "Reading," the young girl sitting by the library window experiences literature as a drama acted before her eyes. Twenty years later, in *Between the Acts*, literature has become a pageant enacted by the villagers for an audience composed of the entire community, although the words are often blown away.

Woolf's insistence on the active, participatory nature of reading manifests itself in every aspect of her own practice. The same passion for information and ideas that enabled the child in her father's library to acquire a nearly encyclopedic knowledge of English history, biography, and literature, the same instinct for individual styles that prompted her to imitate authors in her copybook, prevented her, finally, from remaining "a dreamy amateur" when she read. "I am surprised & a little disquieted," she commented in 1928, "by the remorseless severity of my mind: that it never stops reading & writing" (*D*, III, November 28). The act of reading, the pleasure and work of conversing with a book and identifying its distinctive voice, became as necessary to Woolf as her daily walks—or her own writing. In 1933, she described having "read, with close and powerful attention, some 12 or 15 books since I came here. What a joy—what a sense as of a Rolls Royce engine once more purring its 70 miles an hour in my brain." "That's the real point of my little brown book," she added in 1938, "that it makes me read—with a pen—following the scent" (*AWD*, January 5, 1933, and April 11, 1939).

Although the scent Woolf followed varied from book to book and from author to author, she consistently read as both critic and creator, like her father searching out the backgrounds of a work and as an artist, examining its texture. She was, moreover, a self-conscious reader, fascinated with the emotional and intellectual process of reading itself. "One of the amusing things," she writes in an entry headed "How to Read,"

is to track your author
down—To see what he goes for. description, or
dialogue. or what. To catch him out.
Directions—about liking the characters—
one shd. try to be independent of this—concentrate
on other characteristics. The excitement of a
story does not last—cannot be read again.
Really it is true I think that all criticism is
done when the book is read: one is too busy
disposing of impressions at the time
You can see people leaving out things on purpose.
The use of certain words.
117. "aboyaient" expressive.
You watch whether people tell things in detail or not
Then there comes a moment when "the author"
begins to split off from the story—but why? (XVIII, B.4)

Despite her disclaimer, this entry is in fact an example of how Woolf did "criticize"—or make discriminations—even as she read. The idea for "How to Read" can be traced to the notes on *Le Rouge et le noir* that immediately precede it in this volume: "82 the curious flatness of the character—plain, architectural, disillusioned. a cautious & prudent hypocrisy. 'It is not a bad thing at his age'. Like a picture in greys & browns. (One of the amusing things is to track your author down—to see where he lingers)" (XVIII, B.3).

The importance of discovering an author's individual perspective reappears in the beginning of "How Should One Read a Book?" the essay in which she outlines what is essentially her own method of reading. Unlike Stephen, who adopted a sociological stance in his lecture to schoolboys, Woolf speaks in her lecture/essay (presented originally to schoolgirls) primarily as a writer. Drawing upon her awareness of the tools and difficulties of the trade, she advises her audience to pursue a work's distinctive qualities and to ask how successfully it achieves its ends. How, she wants to know, does an author arrange his or her material to produce certain effects and evoke certain responses, and what is the emotion that remains when the reader has finished the book. To answer these questions, she tells her listeners to suspend their critical faculty while actually reading and to open themselves to the twists and turns of the writer's sentences. "Do not dictate to your author," she warns; "try to become him" (*CE*, II, 2). When we read a novel, for example, this means discovering the angle of vision that determines what stands in the forefront and the back-

ground of the created world. Each genre, she continues, makes its own demands on readers, but all ask them to exercise their creative powers in learning to share the novelist's perspective, to recognize what characterizes the subject of a biography, or to experience the emotional impact of a poem. Only when the reader has brought the individual work to life can he or she complete the process by comparing it to other works—preferably the best of its kind—thereby judging it. Having accomplished this, the reader is ready to move beyond judgments on particular books to an exploration of the qualities shared by various works of the same genre and to establish the topography and boundaries of his or her own literary world.

At the heart of Woolf's prescription, as well as her practice, is careful attention to those details of a text that reveal, whether consciously or unconsciously, an author's intention and skill. "To begin reading with a pen in my hand," she stated in 1929, "discovering, pouncing, thinking of theories, when the ground is new, remains one of my great excitements" (*D*, III, December 8). She pounced on individual words, such as "aboyaient" in *Le Rouge et le noir*, on patterns of imagery, on the qualities that differentiate, for example, Greek drama from Elizabethan, French, and modern, or distinguish novels from plays. A series of notes made around 1935, while she was writing *The Years*, illustrates her interest in color imagery and its effects on the reader.[23] "The difference between ~~go~~ rare gold coins & flecked with gold," she comments in an entry on *Antigone*: "'flecked' gives the horses ear shape" (XLV, B.2). In the same volume, general notes made while reading *The Faerie Queene* begin: "Perhaps all our first impressions of poetry are visual" (XLV, B.5); and an entry on the "Different layers of the mind in reading poetry" states: "I think it is true that in man the Colour Sense is first touched: roused. Thus in Murder in the Cathedral I am stirred—my senses quickened—first by the purple bullfinch . . . by the white sail on the grey sea" (XLV, B.14). In a separate notebook from a slightly earlier period, an entry headed "Colour in Poetry" analyzes images from Shakespeare and Herrick: "Herrick. The [?tinselled] stream—using [?tinselled] to express moonlight on water" (XXIII, B.4).

When Woolf turns to what characterizes an author's work as a whole, she bases her perceptions on an accumulation of individual phrases, descriptions, and scenes. Her notes for "The Novels of George Meredith" consist of fifteen pages of both specific and general observations on *The Ordeal of Richard Feveral*, *Beauchamp's Career* ("Given up at Vol 1. because of the intolerable long windedness"), *The Adventures of Harry Richmond*, *The Egoist*, and Mere-

dith's *Letters*; they include entries such as, "This is the real Meredith—the girl on her pony . . . ," or, "The extraordinary formality & distance of it all. Scene at Richmond with the whores. Here & there a lady wd. seize a buttonhole." On the sixteenth page of notes, she steps outside the texts to sum up: "That his optimism is wrong. That his optimism comes from his bristly egotism. He wdn't be so optimistic if he could listen instead of talking. The hammer of his phrases scaring all sorts of small things away. Did not let [. . .] filter in" (XLVI, B.5–10).

If close attention to the details of a text is the first step in her reading process, the second is comparison—of work to work, author to author, genre to genre. "We have only to compare," she blithely tells her audience in "How Should One Read a Book?" In her own reading, she continually hears echoes of other works and lifts her eyes from the page to examine similarities and differences.

Thus, her comment on Meredith's formality and distance continues: "This is contemporary with Turgenev. . . . These are Jonsonian humours rather than moderns. Yet they think—or M thinks—about sex for instance: nature: comedy."

Woolf's distinctive combination of textual analysis and comparison highlights the numerous entries on the novels she read over a three-year period for "Phases of Fiction," her deliberate exploration of different styles and perspectives in novels and the various needs they satisfy in the reader. "The relief of reading a book which is really composed," an entry on *Tristram Shandy* begins, "words have stuck to the magnet instead of lying strewn. . . . But why did T.S. blossom among the Richardsons & the Fieldings?" (XIV, B.16). Reading *The Master of Ballantrae* after *The Bride of Lammermoor* leads her to comment: "The feeling that where Scotts words have come pouring out, Stevenson's are picked out of note books" (XXV, B.28). Defoe's *Roxana* evokes an analysis of the "adventure" novel: "It is a fact that she has apparently no maternal feelings—no feelings of any sort indeed: either for her first master or her children. But this is in keeping. . . . Adventure must carry a slight burden of psychology. . . . You must keep moving if you are to have adventures. . . . Adventurers have to travel rather light as to feelings" (XXV, B.31). Defoe's mastery of the form is immediately contrasted to W. E. Norris's shallow interpretation in *The Triumphs of Sara*: "Sara is an adventuress. . . . These are ladies & gentlemen not adventurers. There is no background. . . . The question of N's approach. What Defoe [thought]: about truth & morality No body to Norris. They travel considerably lighter than Defoe. . . . There isn't eno' to believe in. . . . In Defoe the people are deep

eno' to imply their beliefs on other subjects—hence the roundness of the world" (XXV, B.32).

Notes from the same period on *What Maisie Knew* pinpoint what for Woolf characterizes Henry James's style: "All these minds are reflecting each other indirectly—not H.J. reflections. What people think—what they suspect—of something which we do not clearly see. HJ. doesnt give himself away—doesnt put the pressure on; so that we hesitate too. Even the fun, wh. is very good, is held at arms length. We never get a shock direct." She then contrasts this style to George Eliot's: "Extreme sophistication compared with GE. Curious sexual insinuations—'suggestiveness'—impropriety—hints—poor ~~Eli~~ GE's women abandoned in ditches astonishingly innocent compared with this" (XIV, B.12). In other notes from the "Phases of Fiction" series, Woolf theorizes about why reading one kind of novel leads to a desire for another: "The whole character [in Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*] is given in dialogue. It shrinks up the vapours amazingly. This however does make one wish for more psychology: therefore the ps: chapter should come next: then the stylists. Then the poets" (XIV, B.4).

An earlier use of comparison underlies her recommendation in "How Should One Read a Book?" that we read *King Lear* and *Agamemnon* side by side in order to "bring out [their] common quality" (*CE*, II, 10).[24] Her advice, as well as her choice of models, grows directly from her own experience while preparing essays on Greek and Elizabethan literature for *The Common Reader*. In fact, the numerous notes made during this period (1922 to 1925) clearly illustrate how the close reading of texts gave rise to comparisons, generalizations, and theories—about plays, playwrights, the two periods—until she found her themes. A diary entry from 1922, for example, records her desire to "read a little Ibsen to compare with Euripides—Racine with Sophocles—perhaps Marlowe with Aeschylus" (*D*, II, August 28); and reading notes on Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*, Racine's *Phèdre*, and Molière's *Misanthrope* occur side by side with her notes on Greek and Elizabethan plays, including Marlowe's. The entry on Molière begins, "Reading Misanthrope after Webster, the extreme simplicity of the plot impresses me. All the large emotions hang on very slight movements: In Webster there are too many trees" (XIX, B.21). Her reading of Ben Jonson's plays leads her to speculate: "It strikes me that this English humour is the difference between ~~us~~—the Elizs. & the Greeks. At once, there is a roar of laughter: a clapping, stamping horseplay. . . . Anyhow, I'm sure humour is the distinction to make, in reading 16th Cent. English after 4th Cent. Greek" (XIX, B.34). She immediately tests her hypothesis by reading Aristophanes' *Birds*: "It

seems to me that this is the thing thats missing to make Greek literature complete—laughter. But its very sharp, delicate laughter, after the English. At least in this play" (XIX, B.35).

Woolf's explanation in her essay "On Not Knowing Greek" of why the two forms of laughter differ—"To laugh instantly, it is almost necessary (though Aristophanes may supply us with an exception) to laugh in English. Humour, after all, is closely bound up with a sense of the body" (*CE*, I, 12)—returns us to the audience of flesh-and-blood human beings who, she believed, inevitably invest a work with their own selves when they read.[25] For Woolf, the self who continually introduced observations with "it strikes me" was simultaneously reader and writer (in particular, novelist), as the notes make clear. An entry on Dryden's *All for Love*, after exploring the difference between Elizabethan and eighteenth-century drama, asks, "Is this French, or fiction beginning, or what?" (XLVII, B.2). Coming from a novelist who saw the novel of the future as a reincarnation of the Elizabethan play, such questions give us pause. Previously, while reading *The White Devil*, Woolf had speculated: "The possibility is that the mind is always becoming more & more subtle; & this business of making people speak becomes too crude" (XXV, B.2). Even in her notes on works such as J. A. Symonds's *Shakspere's Predecessors* and George Saintsbury's *History of Elizabethan Literature*, read at this time to provide the factual background she needed for her evocation of the plays, her own bias surfaces. She telescopes Symonds's long description of *Euphues* and its importance to Elizabethan literature into the note, "Euphues, Lyly appeared 1579 a collection of Essays & Tales. a kind of novel," the last phrase being her own addition (XXV, B.15). The most significant aspect of her entry on Saintsbury's history is the seemingly unrelated comment: "strikes me that the influence of the public would be worth going into. What effects [. . .] has upon Wells & Bennett" (XIX, B.9). Here, the fusion of artist and reader/critic/historian is complete: an awareness of the relationship of writer and public in the past leads directly to a concern for its present manifestations, particularly as it affects the writer of novels.

At some point during her exploration of Elizabethan drama in the early twenties, Woolf perceived that she could organize her critical book, *The Common Reader*, "with a view to answering certain questions about ourselves" (*D*, II, September 5, 1923). In the completed essays, every work and every period receive the life that only an audience or reader can give them. In "The Elizabethan Lumber Room," modern readers find themselves "untying this packet here, sampling that heap over there" in the process of discovering the

riches buried in works such as Hakluyt's *Voyages* and the Verney *Memoirs*. "The Pastons and Chaucer" introduces us to a contemporary reader, John Paston, who withdraws from family life "to sit in his chair and learn the end of [Chaucer's] story." In 1923, while still trying to find a format for her critical work, originally called *Reading*, she had the idea of embodying her essays in "Otway conversation"—that is, having characters *talk* about the books as she had had them talk about Conrad in "Mr. Conrad: A Conversation" (*D*, II, August 17, 1923). The reading notes inform us that Woolf had also planned other ways in which to give a human voice to her essays and their subjects. An entry headed "Reading. Misc." declares: "Readers do determine the fate of books by going about talking, advising, recommending. They want [to] formulate their opinions in speech" (XLIX, B.26). And a draft of an introductory essay for *Reading*, called "Byron and Mr. Briggs," introduces us to Mr. Briggs (1775–1859), a spectacle-maker from Cornhill with a taste for literature, who becomes the prototype of the common reader. Old Mr. Briggs, we are told, drove up from Kensington to hear Coleridge, but Coleridge had forgotten the engagement; he heard Coleridge on *Measure for Measure* but preferred the play itself; and he asked questions such as, "What do you think of the Byron-Leigh controversy?"[26] An enigmatic entry in another of the reading notebooks from this period records: "Donne. This article should be . . . put into the mouth of Mary Bickley, an obscure woman 1845. her diary" (XLVII, B.31).

The emphasis on the voice speaking in and about books remained with Woolf throughout her life, offering her at the end a way to defeat the silence brought about by the crisis of World War II. In 1934, her notes for a projected critical work appear under the headings "Four Voices" and "A Discourse for 4 voices Realism Romance Psychology Poetry" (XLV, A.1, A.2). In 1940, she began her history of English literature with an evocation of the anonymous voices of the singer, the preacher, and the playwright, all of whom, in the early years of our civilization, were able to express the common fears and beliefs of their listeners: those "emotions always in being: felt by people always" (*A & R*, 374). "Even the King & Queen," she noted in an early draft of "Anon," "must have their song makers attached to them," "someone who could express, embody, give voice to the hidden instincts."[27] For Woolf, the universality of "the song making instinct" (*A & R*, 373)—the desire to sing as well as the desire to listen and respond—"must be the most deep rooted, the toughest of the human instincts comparable for persistency with the instinct of self preservation. It is indeed the instinct of self preservation. Only

when we put two and two together—two pencil strokes, two written words, two bricks do we overcome dissolution and set up some stake against oblivion." No matter how threatened "the song" may be in the modern world, she concludes, it "has the same power over the reader in the 20th century as over the hearer in the 11th" (*A & R*, 403), and will survive.

Reader and writer, audience and singer—Woolf was all of these, and if she used her notes to communicate privately with her sources, she used them in addition as a workshop in which to practice her art. Here the critic, the biographer, the feminist, and the novelist gathered together the details that allowed her to "look up from the page & arrange them . . . into one of those makings up which seem so much truer done thus" (*D*, III, August 8, 1928). Comments, quotations, and ideas recorded in the notes continually reappear, transformed, in her published work. Her notes on Dante's *Purgatorio* contain the quotation, both in Italian and English, that appears at the end of the 1911 section of *The Years*.[28] Her notes on G. M. Trevelyan's *History of England* open with the quotation about birdsong that not only introduces "Anon" and suggests to Woolf the origin of "the song" but occurs twice in *Between the Acts*: in the morning when Mrs. Swithin wakes to hear the birds singing and in the evening when she reads her history amid the encroaching darkness of the war.[29] An entry that begins "The brushed up Sunday appearance even of polar bears" reveals Woolf's "reading" of pictures at the Royal Academy exhibition (XLIV, B.13). "I get an immense deal of pleasure from working out the pictures," she wrote her sister, Vanessa Bell (*L*, II, 1068); and the details recorded in the reading notes are "interpreted" and brought to life in "The Royal Academy" (*CE*, IV, 206–211).

Although the list of such discoveries could be greatly extended, a few particularly striking examples stand out. One is the notebook headed "Modern Novels (Joyce)," which contains Woolf's original notes on *Ulysses*, entered while she was reading the first seven episodes in *The Little Review*; a sketch for her article on "Modern Novels" (1919); and an entry on May Sinclair's review of Dorothy Richardson's novels that illuminates one source of her well-known statements about "reality" and "life itself."

Woolf's notes on Sinclair's essay read:

> Reality is thick & deep. Novelist must confine himself
> to this knowledge at first hand. he must
> 'plunge in'.

> What we call the 'objective method' is a
> method of after-thought, of spectacular reflection
> By presenting what happens in the mind Miss R.
> seizes reality alive.
>
> The ordinary life richer than the extraordinary—
> the fabric of life—life itself. Rémy de
> Gourmont, Promenades Littéraires. (XXXI, B.2)

May Sinclair had written: "Reality is thick and deep, too thick and deep and at the same time too fluid to be cut with any convenient carving knife."[30] The two passages from Rémy de Gourmont quoted by Sinclair as a gloss on Richardson's art are even more to the point:

> Si la vie en soi est un bienfait, [et]
> il faut l'accepter comme telle [ou] la
> nier, le fait même de vivre le contient tout
> entier, et les grands mouvements de la
> sensibilité, loin de l'enrichir,
> l'appauvrissent au contraire, en concentrant
> sur quelques parties de nous-mêmes, envahies
> au hasard par la destinée[,] l'effort
> d'attention qui serait plus uniformement
> reparti sur l'ensemble de notre conscience
> vitale. De ce point de vue une vie ou il sem-
> blerait ne rien se passer que d'élémentaire
> et [de] quotidien serait mieux remplie qu'une
> autre vie riche en apparence d'incidents et
> d'aventures . . .
>
> Il y a peut-être un sentiment nouveau a
> créer, celui de l'amour de la vie pour la vie
> elle-même, abstraction faite des grandes
> joies qu'elle ne donne pas à tous, et qu'elle
> ne donne peut-être à personne . . . Notre
> paradis, c'est la journé qui passe, la
> minute qui s'envole, le moment qui n'est déjà
> plus.[31]

In the original version of "Modern Novels," Woolf describes the responsibility of the novelist to capture "life or spirit, truth or reality . . . the essential thing": "The mind, exposed to the ordinary course of life, receives upon its surface a myriad impressions, . . . composing in their sum what we might venture to call life itself." "Let us record

the atoms as they fall upon the mind in the order in which they fall, let us trace the pattern, however disconnected and incoherent in appearance, which each sight or incident scores upon the consciousness. Let us not take for granted that life exists more in what is commonly thought big than what is commonly thought small."[32]

If the reading notes housed the details that gave texture to Woolf's essays, they also provided a place for her to outline or sketch the "Frame of Article" that would order and focus her impressions and facts. As blueprints for works that often emerged as something quite new, these outlines record her original ideas and begin the complex process of compression and enrichment that accompanied every historical or biographical re-creation, every critical act. Her "Sketches of Article" for "Modern Novels," for example (XXXI, B.4), begins, "Nobody has any wish to abuse the ancients," and includes the recurring comparison of the novel and the Elizabethan play—"Its possible that the novel is to us . . . what the drama was to the E's"—that receives its fullest expression not in that essay but in "Poetry, Fiction and the Future" ("The Narrow Bridge of Art"). "Some Elizabethans," an outline for an essay on Elizabethan prose, begins, "That we cant attempt the E^{than} grandiloquence because we haven't their scurrility & plain speech to match it" (XI, B.10); the outline stands as an intermediate step between her reading notes on Gabriel Harvey, Dekker, Webbe, Puttenham, Fulke Greville, Jonson, Sidney, and *The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton*, and the two Elizabethan essays finally written for *The Common Reader: Second Series*.[33] This outline, moreover, already differs from her original idea for a new set of Elizabethan essays recorded in a reading note on Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie*: "Might be two articles, one Webbe & Harvey Puttenham &c. The second, Sidney & Penelope" (XII, B.4). An earlier outline, headed "Notes for Some Elizabethans and Montaigne" (XIX, B.22), illustrates Woolf's original unified conception of what later became "The Elizabethan Lumber Room" and "Notes on an Elizabethan Play" in the first *Common Reader*.

In fact, the evolution of *The Common Reader* into its final form is easily traced in these notebooks. At least six volumes contain entries, made over a period of seven years, for her first critical book. The earliest two contain notes and "Sayings and Quotations" about criticism, poetry, and the "Art of Writing" that range from Plato's *Symposium* through Dryden's *Essays*, Blake's marginalia, Coleridge's *Table Talk*, and Keats's *Letters*, to T. S. Eliot's *Sacred Wood* (XXX and XXXVIII). Included in this series is Dr. Johnson's dictum from "The Life of Gray," "I rejoice to concur with the common reader," which later

offered her the title and focus for the emerging book. A second set of quotations, this time from book reviews in the journals of 1923, is gathered in a later notebook (XIX) and provides a footnote to her vision of the lack of critical authority or standards in "How it Strikes a Contemporary."[34] The note on Donne and Mary Bickley—"an obscure woman 1845. her diary" (XLVII, B.31)—suggests Woolf's desire to emphasize the intimate connection between literature and its readers. (The essay on Donne, however, in spite of pages of reading notes, was not written at this time.)[35] Lists of essays for possible inclusion in her collection and a series of entries headed "Reading. Misc. Ideas" (XLIX) illustrate another stage of the work. When read in conjunction with her diary, the notes in these six volumes chart the eighty or so attempts Woolf claims to have made to fashion a work that would adequately convey her conception of criticism as direct communication between reader and work.

Similar glimpses into her creative process recur throughout the notebooks. A reading note on E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* headed "Novels" begins: "Question of perspective: Morgan uses two: his people become mystic. The old lady in P. to I. 266. This is somehow wrong. Question of reality—which reality? But can you mix them? If not, why not? Symbolism. I believe there is something in this" (XVIII, B.12). An entry in her diary, dated December 7, 1925, records: "I am reading the *Passage to India*. . . . I think I will find some theory about fiction. I shall read six novels, & start some hares. The one I have in view, is about *perspective*" (*D*, III, December 7, 1925). Her reading notes on *Robinson Crusoe*, made shortly after this, show her working out this theory: "Also the question of perspective. . . . [p.] 53 After the wreck 'I never saw them afterwards . . . . . except 3 of their hats, one cap, & two shoes that were not fellows' his particularity. That one believes this entirely: Every thing fitted in no looseness. This is one kind of reality" (IV, B.1). Her ideas about perspective were first voiced in the essay on *Robinson Crusoe* (February 1926), then expanded in "How Should One Read a Book?" (October 1926), and finally given full expression, after many modifications that are recorded in the reading notebooks, in "Phases of Fiction" (1929).

Perhaps the most significant contribution to our understanding of Woolf at work emerges from the vast amount of material she drew upon during the thirties as a background for what began as *The Pargiters* (1932) and later became *The Years* (1937) and *Three Guineas* (1938). In the "First Essay" of *The Pargiters*, Woolf introduces her fictional history of "a family called Pargiter" by asserting: "This . . . is not

a novel of vision, but a novel of fact. It is based upon some scores—I might boldly say thousands—of old memoirs. There is scarcely a statement in it that cannot be [*traced to some biography, or*] verified" (p. 9; bracketed phrase deleted by Woolf in the original). This assertion, as Woolf truthfully declares, is no "empty boast": twelve volumes of reading notes support her claim. In them we can follow her path as she planned her novel-essay in 1931 and 1932, watch her collecting material and sketching scenes for the book on women, war, and fascism that began to dominate her thoughts in 1935, and observe her, two years later, compiling the footnotes for *Three Guineas*.[36]

Described as a sequel to *A Room of One's Own*, *The Pargiters* originated in the talk known today as "Professions for Women," during which Woolf had told the story of her struggle as a young reviewer to kill the "Angel in the House" and had outlined the sexual conventions that still restricted her when she wrote.[37] In the new work, she planned to attach an historical preface to the talk—"to provide that perspective which is so important for the understanding of the present" (*Pargiters*, p. 9). In order to do this, she had to become a systematic reader of her culture. Sometime after January 1931, then, Woolf began to gather quotations and facts about women, men, law, sexuality, sports, religion, the Church, science, education, economics, politics, and social mores, taken from a wide variety of newspapers and periodicals, biographies, autobiographies, social and intellectual histories. By February 1932, she "had collected enough powder to blow up St. Paul's" (*AWD*), and in December 1932, having written over sixty thousand words, she found that the book released "such a torrent of fact as I did not know I had in me. I must have been observing and collecting these 20 years" (*AWD*). If her original idea had been to explore "the sexual life of women," by November 1932, while writing the first chapter of the book, she planned "to take in everything, sex, education, life etc: . . . from 1880 to here and now" (*AWD*).

Later, as the novel split off from the essay and the thirties moved steadily toward war, Woolf's notes began to include more and more facts about war, politics, and fascism and their influence on private lives. "It is to be hoped," she comments in *Three Guineas*, "that some methodical person has made a collection of the various manifestos and questionnaires issued broadcast during the years 1936–37" (p. 304), and Woolf herself did just that. These manifestoes, along with a selection of letters asking for her support in some cause, newspaper cuttings, a description of a service at St. Paul's, and a great number of quotations and notes from her reading during these years, are now preserved in three large notebooks described in the

Monk's House Papers Catalogue as "3 bound volumes containing Press Cuttings & extracts collected or copied by VW relative to *3 Gs*" (LVIII, LIX, LX).[38]

Although the full power of the "3 bound volumes" resides in the accumulation of facts to support her arguments, what strikes me most about the individual entries is Woolf's eye for the details that reveal the conscious and unconscious attitudes governing behavior: her reading of the messages encoded in diverse modes of public and private discourse. Both her training as a sociological critic and her ambiguous relationship to a cultural heritage that simultaneously supported and excluded her contributed in the thirties to her critical analysis of the institutions and attitudes that dominate the public sphere and control private lives. By this time, Woolf no longer cared if the men were laughing. Spurred by the events of the decade and her own growing certainty, she confronted head-on the destructiveness she had long ago attributed to English social structures and values and set out to document its pervasiveness and source. Every book, every newspaper article, became part of her larger vision, even if they were read for completely unrelated ends. A passage from Gosse's biography of Donne read for the second *Common Reader*, a quotation from Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Letters* read for *Flush*, a verse from her old friend G. Lowes Dickinson's translation of Goethe—all these found their way into the notebooks and into her works.

The same insight that influenced her choice of entries also led to their careful arrangement within the "3 bound volumes." The effect she achieves is that of a collage, the two or three cuttings on a single page often serving as an ironic commentary on each other, as well as setting up reverberations that extend throughout the whole.[39] A cutting in the first notebook, for example, records Judge MacCardie's comments on women's dress instinct, quoted later in *Three Guineas*: "Dress, after all, is one of the chief methods of women's self-expression. . . . In matters of dress women often remain children to the end" (Ch. II, n.16; the paragraph in the cutting is headed "Sex Allurement"). Other cuttings scattered throughout the notebooks report: "19LB CLOTHES AT CORONATION / WHAT SOME PEERS MUST WEAR / NEW COIFFURE FOR PEERESSES"; "POSTMEN WANT TO BE SMARTER / UNION'S DEMAND TO POSTMASTER-GENERAL / IMPROVEMENTS IN CUT SUGGESTED"; "NEW UNIFORMS FOR ARMY / SMARTER 'WALKING OUT' DRESS / EQUIPMENT TO BE LIGHTER." Photographs show "Count Ciano in flying kit," the dress of "The POPE on his throne in St. Peter's, Rome, during the service held in celebration of his

79th birthday," women dressed for the races, and the dress of "The Heralds proclaiming the date of the Coronation" of King Edward VIII in 1936. (The last two are from the same edition of the *Daily Telegraph*.) A further comment on the nature of male attire is provided by an entry referred to in the index of Volume LIX as "Huxley and the Mandrill. The advertising sex." The reference is to a cutting of an article by Julian Huxley on "The Colours of Animals" that includes two photographs. One shows how "The male mandrill advertises his fighting qualities by his face-décor, and so warns off rivals"; the other captures "The male Argus pheasant advertising his attractions to his mate" (LIX, B.29).

When read in their entirety, the "3 bound volumes" illustrate more than the care that Woolf took in preparing her books or the wealth of facts she amassed; they are an important contribution to the social history of the thirties. The newspaper cuttings and manifestoes document the changing attitudes—in Parliament, in the Church, and among ordinary women and men—toward domestic and foreign politics and toward the possibility of war. They present as well the economic and "scientific" arguments used for and against women's participation in the work force during an economic recession, arguments that are still heard today. Finally, they raise fundamental questions about the often contradictory relationship between our public and private lives. Woolf's recognition of the interaction of these two spheres is recorded explicitly in an entry headed "Dictators" (LIX, B.87). The quotations included in this entry are copied from two articles that appeared in the *Daily Herald*, August 1, 1936. The first reports how "Sir E.F. Fletcher urged the House of Commons to 'stand up to dictators'"; the second reports a woman's statement when applying for a maintenance order: "My husband insists that I call him 'Sir'.... I also have to clean his boots, fetch his razor when he shaves, and speak up promptly when he asks me questions." These two articles are cited in *Three Guineas* as "Evidence of the complex nature of satisfactions of dominance" that controls so much of our lives, a craving for power, Woolf implies, that we must understand in both its private and its public manifestations if we are to prevent war (Ch. II, n.32).

At the end of her essay on "How Should One Read a Book?" Woolf returns to her earlier insistence that we suspend our identity while reading; now, however, she qualifies it. We cannot, she admits, totally silence the internal demon who whispers "I hate, I love" when we read, nor would we want to: "We cannot suppress our idiosyn-

cracy without impoverishing it" (*CE*, II, 9–10). What emerges from Woolf's notes is a vivid portrait of an artist who read, with the eye of the novelist/biographer for the techniques of her craft and with the eye of the socially aware woman for the details that shape and explain our experience, the books that fed her own rich creative life. Ultimately, her movement in the thirties into the public sphere is inseparable from her needs and values as an individual and an artist, for the forces that cause wars not only destroy lives but foster attitudes inimical to the human instinct for self-expression necessary for the survival of singer and audience alike.

In a letter to Ethel Smyth written at Rodmell in July 1934, Woolf provides a vision of the role of the reader in undermining the forces of dominance and power, a vision that recalls her ability as a young girl to subvert, through the act of reading, the cultural restrictions imposed upon her because of her sex. ". . . today," she writes,

> like a butterfly whose wings have been crinkled up to a frazzle, . . . I begin to shake them out, and plane through the air. I've not read so many hours for how many months. Sometimes I think heaven must be one continuous unexhausted reading. Its a disembodied trance-like intense rapture that used to seize me as a girl, and comes back now and again down here, with a violence that lays me low. Did I say I was flying? How then can I be low? Because, my dear Ethel, the state of reading consists in the complete elimination of the *ego*; and its the ego that erects itself like another part of the body I dont dare to name. (*L*, V, 2915).

More than an issue of gender, this passage speaks as well to the creation of a community of minds in which individuals, reading "with great sympathy and yet with great severity" (*CE*, II, 11), unite their perceptions and their dreams in an act of mutuality that breaks through false boundaries and opens the way to true communion. As Woolf knew, however, the dream of "a unity that rubs out distinctions," a belief in "the capacity of the human spirit" to achieve freedom and peace, will remain a dream voiced by the poets as long as the sound of guns fills our ears (*Three Guineas*, 259–260).

In the years following the publication of *Three Guineas*, Woolf told an audience of working-class readers: "Literature is no one's private ground; literature is common ground" ("The Leaning Tower," *CE*, II, 181). She finished *Between the Acts*, in which an older woman reads literature and history while a younger woman reads in the newspaper of a girl raped by the horse guards, and both play the role of the

audience at the village play. Finally, she began "Anon," her portrait of the artist as an outsider capable of cutting through the layers of social convention in order to tap the reservoir of shared emotions hidden beneath. Although Woolf's history breaks off with the birth of the reader at the end of the Elizabethan period, from that moment, she tells us, "We are in a world where nothing is concluded" (*A & R*, 429). Today we have inherited the legacy of Woolf's love of reading, which the notes help us to make our own. Interspersed as they are with names, addresses, shopping lists, passages from her novels, even drawings, jotted on the backs of pages or interjected into other entries, they fulfill one of the expectations that Woolf brought to her own reading: they re-create the intellectual landscape that nourished one of the major artists of this century and "bring [us] into the presence of a human being unlike any other" (*CE*, II, 2).

NOTES

1. *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*, ed. Anne Olivier Bell, 3 vols. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1977–1980), III, December 29, 1929. Hereafter, references to the three published volumes of the *Diary* are cited as *D*, I, II, or III, followed by the date of the entry.

2. *The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, ed. Nigel Nicolson and Joanne Trautmann, 6 vols. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1975–1980), IV, letter numbered 1981, January 9, 1929. Hereafter, the six volumes of the *Letters* are cited as *L*, I, II, III, IV, V, or VI, followed by the letter number and, where applicable, the date.

3. For the history of this work and texts of the first two chapters, see "'Anon' and 'The Reader': Virginia Woolf's Last Essays," edited with an introduction by Brenda R. Silver, *Twentieth Century Literature* 25, no. 3/4 (Fall/Winter 1979): 356–441. Hereafter cited as *A & R*.

4. Part of what Woolf's father, Leslie Stephen, left her was his library, which is described and listed in the *Catalogue of Books from the Library of Leonard and Virginia Woolf* (Brighton: Holleyman & Treacher, 1975). "Here," the editors write, "we find in rows of dust-begrimed volumes the literary ancestry of Virginia Woolf—for these books she inherited from her father and among them are books which Leslie Stephen inherited from his father and grandfather, and one which probably belonged to his great-grandfather" (p. 5).

5. Virginia Woolf, *The Pargiters: The Novel-Essay Portion of "The Years,"* ed. Mitchell A. Leaska (New York: The New York Public

Library & Readex Books, 1977), p. 99. Hereafter cited as *Pargiters*. In her essay "Leslie Stephen" (1932), Woolf described both her father's encouragement to "Read what you like" and the only lesson he gave her in the art of reading: "To read what one liked because one liked it, never to pretend to admire what one did not" (*Collected Essays* [New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967], IV, 79–80; hereafter cited as *CE*). Both of these dictums are clearly illustrated in the reading notes. Twenty-six years earlier, however, Woolf had recalled that Stephen stopped reading *Vanity Fair* to his daughters as it was "too terrible." See Frederick William Maitland, *The Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen* (London: Duckworth, 1906), p. 475. At the end of her life, while soliciting contributions to the library founded by the London National Society for Women's Service, she declared: "I owe all the education I ever had to my father's library, and so perhaps endow libraries with more divinity than I should" (*L*, VI, 3394).

6. References to Woolf's reading notes are to the volume and entry number that identify them in my text: for example, Volume XI, entry B.7. As explained in the Notes on the Text (p. 39), I have reproduced Woolf's punctuation and spelling exactly as they appear in the original notebooks. Illegible words are indicated by [. . .]; editorial insertions as [word]; and uncertain readings as [?word].

7. [Diary] Holograph notebook. Unsigned. June 30–October 1, 1903. No. 2. Berg Collection. For an excellent study of Woolf's complicated feelings about her cultural inheritance and those "inheritors" who were also her brothers, see Sara Ruddick, "Private Brother, Public World," in Jane Marcus, ed., *New Feminist Essays on Virginia Woolf* (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1981). In her essay, Ruddick discusses the threefold recurrence of a universal mind in *Jacob's Room*, most notably in Woolf's statement that "There is in the British Museum an enormous mind" that fosters Jacob's sense of inheritance and mastery but discourages and excludes Julia Hedge. "Why," Julia cries, looking at the ring of male names circling the dome, "didn't they leave room for an Eliot or a Brontë?" (Uniform Edition [London: Hogarth Press, 1971], pp. 107, 105). Later, she imagines Jacob and his friends, the young men, laughing in the hall. In an essay entitled "Thinking Back through Our Mothers," Jane Marcus analyzes Woolf's vision of literature as a common mind in terms of Woolf's feminist attack on the individual ego and the "egotistical sublime." Instead, she writes, Woolf developed a "collective sublime" (*New Feminist Essays on Virginia Woolf*, pp. 9–10).

8. As Louise A. DeSalvo illustrates in her essay, "1897: Virginia Woolf at 15," Stephen actively encouraged and helped his daughter to

become a historian and a biographer (in Jane Marcus, ed., *New Feminist Essays on Virginia Woolf*, Vol. II; forthcoming). In 1893, for example, he wrote to Julia Stephen: "Yesterday I discussed George II with 'Ginia'. . . . She takes in a great deal and will really be an author in time, though I cannot make up my mind in what line. History will be a good thing for her to take up as I can give her some hints" (*Sir Leslie Stephen's Mausoleum Book*, with an introduction by Alan Bell [Oxford: Clarendon, 1977], p. xxviii). In her essay, DeSalvo provides a detailed analysis of the ways in which the fifteen-year-old Woolf used her extensive reading not only to educate herself but to relieve her anxiety when formal lessons were forbidden her (they were believed to contribute to her "nervousness"): "Reading, in effect, became Woolf's refuge, her solace in grief, her substitute for the friendships that she did not have, the way she carved out an identity for herself as a human being, the way she secured her privacy, the way she began to determine the life that she would choose for herself as a woman." See also Katherine C. Hill, "Virginia Woolf and Leslie Stephen: History and Literary Revolution," *PMLA* 96, no. 3 (May 1981): 351–362.

9. Leslie Stephen, "The Study of English Literature," *Cornhill Magazine*, n.s., vol. 8, no. 47 (May 1887): 494–495.

10. Ibid., p. 493. In this essay, Stephen also indicates other auxiliary studies to literature—philosophy, the technicalities of meter and form, the classics—only to dismiss them all. "If I were asked," he continues, "whether a young man would best fit himself for a literary career or for the study of literature by reading books about authors or by reading mathematics, . . . I should unhesitatingly advise mathematics" (p. 502). Katherine Hilbery, in Woolf's *Night and Day*, may well have heard him.

11. Ibid., p. 498.

12. *Three Guineas*, Uniform Edition (London: Hogarth Press, 1938), p. 296.

13. See Ruddick, "Private Brother, Public World," for an analysis of the significance of this image in *The Waves*.

14. *A Writer's Diary*, ed. Leonard Woolf (London: Hogarth Press, 1953), January 23 and 26, 1931; January 1 and February 11, 1932. Hereafter cited as *AWD*.

15. "The Journal of Mistress Joan Martyn," edited with an introduction by Susan M. Squier and Louise A. DeSalvo, *Twentieth Century Literature* 25, no. 3/4 (Fall/Winter 1979): 238.

16. Ibid., p. 241.

17. The reading notes on these works served Woolf well when she began to write her lectures on women and fiction in 1928, even if the

details found in *A Room of One's Own* did not contribute to the original essays. See Volumes IX, XIII, XX, XLVI, XLVIII, and LII.

18. Examples that focus on attitudes toward women are frequent in Woolf's exploration of style. A note on *Tristram Shandy* (1926), for example, reads: "The thing to analyze is the character of 'I' who does the talking—the very nicely shaded & calculated voice which is half-sneering at women, &c . . has all shades in it" (XIV, B.16).

19. [The Reader]. Folder 4, first sequence, p. 36. Berg Collection.

20. Stephen, "The Study of English Literature," p. 498.

21. In Maitland, *The Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen*, p. 476.

22. [The Reader]. Folder 3, second sequence, p. 29. Berg Collection.

23. For a study of Woolf's use of color in *The Years*, see Jane Marcus, "Pargeting 'The Pargiters'," *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* (Spring 1977): 417–419.

24. In this passage, as well as others in the essay, Woolf may be echoing Sainte-Beuve, who had written: "To know how to read a book and meanwhile to judge it without ceasing to enjoy it is almost the whole art of the critic. But the art consists also in comparing and in noting well the points of comparison: thus, besides *Atala* read *Paul et Virginie* and *Manon Lescaut*; besides *René* read *Oberman* and *Le Lépreux*; besides *Les Martyrs* read the *Odyssey*, *Télémaque* and Milton. Do this and let yourself go. The judgment will result quite naturally; it will form itself from your impression." See *Chateaubriand et son group littéraire*, in René Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism: 1750–1950. Vol. III: The Age of Transition* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1965), p. 48. Stephen thought Sainte-Beuve one of the two or three critics worth reading (Maitland, *The Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen*, p. 290); his annotated collection of Sainte-Beuve's works was inherited by Woolf (see *Catalogue of Books from the Library of Leonard and Virginia Woolf*, Monk's House Catalogue, sec. 1, p. 5).

25. One vivid example of this infusion occurs in a 1923 entry on D. H. Lawrence's *The Fox*:

> The possibility may be, it strikes me in reading Lawrence, that some people may get much further on these suggestions than others. To me they lead nowhere. But all writing is only a way of starting suggestions. Conrad's works for me—L's does not. I see though that it may have this power of suggestion for other people. L concentrates people back again in the body—thats why he's so monotonous—fixes them in with great energy. on theory. But its the triumph of the body. Also with a sex theory, wh. is the most restricting

of all—the most savage & binding. Very vivid—very physical—very unhumourless & stark—but not to me interesting. (XXV, B.11)

26. "Byron and Mr. Briggs," ed. Edward A. Hungerford, *Yale Review* 58, no. 3 (March 1979): 321–349. The typescript is in the Monk's House Papers, List B, 11d, the University of Sussex Library. The title "Introductory. Briggs & Byron" appears in a list of projected essays for *Reading* (XLIX, B.25).

27. [Articles, Essays, Fiction and Reviews] Vol. 8 [1938–1939], p. 64. Berg Collection.

28. "Che per quanti si dice piu li nostro,/tanto possiede piu di ben ciascuno": "For by so many more there are who say 'ours',/So much the more of good doth each possess" (LI, B.1). The phrase is from Canto XV of *The Purgatorio*, ed. Hermann Oelsner, trans. Thomas Okey, Temple Classics (London: Dent, nd). The quotation appears in *The Years*, Uniform Edition (London: Hogarth Press, 1937), p. 228. Earlier, in an entry on Book VII of Wordsworth's *Prelude*, made while she was writing *The Hours* (*Mrs. Dalloway*), Woolf copied the following lines:

The matter that detains us now may seem,
To many, neither dignified enough
Nor arduous, yet will not be scorned by them,
Who, looking inward, have observed the ties
That bind the perishable hours of life
Each to the other, & the curious props
By which the world of memory & thought
Exists & is sustained.

This is followed by the comment, "Good quotation for one of my books" (XLVII, B.33).

29. "For many centuries after B[ritain] became an island the untamed forest was king. Its moist & mossy floor was hidden fr. heavens eye by a close drawn curtain woven of innumerable tree tops, wh. shivered in the breezes of summer dawn & broke into wild music of millions upon millions of wakening birds" (XXXVII, B.6). The passage occurs in Trevelyan's *History of England* (London: Longman's, Green, 1926), p. 3, and is alluded to in *Between the Acts*, Uniform Edition (London: Hogarth Press, 1941), pp. 13–14, 254.

30. "The Novels of Dorothy Richardson," *The Little Review* 5, no. 12 (April 1918): 4.

31. Ibid., p. 11. "If life itself is a boon, and we must accept or reject it as it is, the very fact of living contains it in its entirety, and the grand movements of sensibility, far from enriching it, on the

contrary impoverish it, by concentrating on certain aspects of ourselves—haphazardly overwhelmed by destiny—the effort of attention which would otherwise be more uniformly distributed over the whole of our vital consciousness. From this point of view, a life where only the ordinary and daily happens would be better filled than another life apparently rich with events and adventures. . . ." "There is perhaps a new sentiment to be created, that of love of life for life itself, setting aside the great joys that it [life] does not give to all—and that it gives perhaps to no one. . . . Our paradise is the day that passes, the minute that takes flight, the moment that already is no more." (Translated by Lynn Anthony Higgins.) The passages are from "L'Originalité de Maeterlinck" and "La Leçon de Saint-Antoine," in *Promenades Littéraires*, series 5 and 3, respectively.

32. "Modern Novels," *TLS*, April 10, 1919, p. 189.

33. "The Strange Elizabethans" and "'The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia.'"

34. The original version, without the footnote, appeared in *TLS*, April 5, 1923, pp. 221–222; the revised version, including the quotations from October and November 1923, is in *The Common Reader* (1925).

35. A projected essay on Shakespeare was also abandoned: "The way to do the Sh[re] chapter is this: say that one walks up to Sh[re] quite openly. The Sh[re] critics seem to have gone away & written at a distance" (XLIX, B.35).

36. Volumes VII, X, XXIII, XXVI, XXXIII, and LV–LX. Volumes X, XXIII, and LVIII contain notes made in conjunction with *The Pargiters*; Volume VII consists of footnotes and lists of sources for *Three Guineas*.

37. "Professions for Women" appears in *CE*, II, 284–289; a transcription of the original "[Speech before the London/National Society for Women's Service, January 21, 1931]" appears in *The Pargiters*, pp. xxvii–xxxxiv.

38. The three volumes are listed in the Sussex catalogue as Monk's House Papers, List B, 16f. *Monk's House Papers Catalogue* is a typed reproduction of the catalogue entries.

39. In creating her collage, Virginia Woolf anticipated (in a way that I find uncanny) Doris Lessing's Anna Wulf, who, in *The Golden Notebook* filled her notebooks and lined her walls with similar contradictory newspaper cuttings.

NOTES ON THE TEXT

The Notebooks

Of the sixty-seven notebooks included in *Virginia Woolf's Reading Notebooks*, thirty-three are in the New York Public Library (Berg Collection), thirty-three are in the University of Sussex Library, and one is in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University. Each set of notes treated in this guide is referred to as a "notebook," even if it consists of unbound pages, or if, as in five cases, the reading notes are part of a notebook that Woolf also used for a diary or for drafts of a novel or essay. A complete list of the notebooks included appears as Appendix A.

Each notebook included, however short, has been listed as a separate volume, designated by a roman numeral followed by the title or number that identifies it in the Berg Collection, in the *Monk's House Papers Catalogue* (July 1972), University of Sussex Library, or in the Beinecke Library. The notebooks in the three libraries have been grouped separately. The guide begins with the twenty-six volumes of reading notes catalogued as "Holograph reading notes. Vols. 1–26" by the Berg Collection, followed by the other Berg notebooks arranged in chronological order. The order of the Sussex notebooks is that of their appearance and numbering in the *Monk's House Papers Catalogue*. In my citations of the Sussex notebooks, I have abbreviated the titles as "MH/A" and "MH/B": Monk's House Papers, List A—Biographical; and Monk's House Papers, List B—Literary. When referring to material included in the guide, I have used the volume and entry number that identifies it in my text.

Editorial Decisions

The determination of what constituted a "reading notebook" for the purpose of this guide rested on whether the entries consisted of notes that Woolf made while actually "reading with a pen and notebook" in hand. Notebooks, such as her early diaries, where she mentions having read or bought books, and notebooks that include outlines or drafts for essays that are based on her reading have not been included. For example, the notes Woolf made at the back of her diary for 1905 on E. A. Freeman's *History of the Norman Conquest* are included in the guide; but the main part of the diary, where she

mentions the books she was reading or reviewing, or had read or reviewed, is not.[1] Although the entries in this diary are a major source of information about what Woolf read and reviewed—in the same way that her later diaries are—they are not reading notes. In this particular case, the reading notes on several of the books mentioned in the 1905 diary are found in "MH/B.1a" (Sussex), which is Volume XXXV of the guide. Similarly, a manuscript catalogued as "[Holograph reading notes] Notes for Reading at Random" (Berg) has been omitted because it consists of ideas and outlines for what became "Anon" and "The Reader," but not reading notes. Instead, the books Woolf read as a background for her essays are found in "Holograph reading notes. Vol. 16" (Berg) and "MH/B.2c" (Sussex), included in the guide as Volumes XVI and XXXVII, respectively. Other material that is helpful in identifying or commenting on the reading notes is referred to in the introductions to the individual notebooks. No attempt has been made in this guide to record the occasional reading note scattered among Woolf's other manuscripts.

Although a chronological ordering of the notebooks would have been desirable, their history and the nature of their contents made this impossible. According to Quentin Bell, Woolf did not systematically collect or bind her reading notes; instead, she bound them whenever she had time, often combining notes from different periods and different essays. Later, she might remove notes from one volume, only to bind them again elsewhere. Moreover, when she sat down to read, she often took up whatever paper or notebook was at hand; as a result, reading notes from the same period, and often on the same book, may be divided among several different notebooks. Where such overlappings occur, and they are frequent, references to the other relevant volumes or entries appear either in the introduction to the notebook or in the description of the individual entry. For example, the introduction to Volume XVI (Berg), which includes reading notes for "Anon" and "The Reader," directs the user to Volume XXXVII (Sussex), which contains more notes from the same period. Similarly, the user interested in Woolf's reading of Greek literature for *The Common Reader* will find cross-references in Volumes XIX, XXV, XLVII, and XLIX. Multiple entries on a single work such as *The Antigone* that were made at different times in Woolf's career are not cross-referenced in the text of the guide; they are, however, listed in the Index. Finally, a chronological chart of the notebooks, which indicates both where notes from a particular year are found and the years covered by a single notebook, appears as Appendix B.

The notebooks themselves vary greatly in the amount of material they include and in their format: the numbers of authors or books included, how thoroughly Woolf has documented the notes, whether the pages have been numbered. For this reason, each volume has its own introduction, in which its particular interests and problems, as well as any variations in the way it has been described, are explained.

Organization

Dating

The major issue addressed in the introduction to each volume is the process of dating the notebooks, which usually consists of dating the individual entries. In turn, the dates of the entries can often be only approximate, based on when Woolf's reviews of the books noted were published or on the mention of the books in her letters or diaries.[2] Woolf's ink colors, moreover, often indicate different dates for entries. While most of the notebooks contain material dating from the same period, occasionally notes from different periods are bound together. Where such anomalies occur, probable dates are supplied. Where the books noted have been the basis of reviews or essays, I have indicated, either in the introduction to the notebook or within brackets in the individual entry, where and when these were originally published, giving, where available, B. J. Kirkpatrick's reference number in the *Bibliography of Virginia Woolf* (identified by "Kp.").[3]

Table of Contents

After the introduction, the treatment of each volume is divided into two sections: "A. TABLE OF CONTENTS," where one or more exists; and "B. ENTRIES." Section A consists of Woolf's lists of the works or authors included in the notebook; these usually appear on the cover or the first page. They have been reproduced exactly as they appear in the original. Some of the lists record Woolf's projected reading for a particular essay or period, some were made as she read the books, and others were made at the time that she bound the notes and refer to what is (or was) included in the notebook. Often, however, titles listed in the tables of contents fail to appear among the entries themselves; occasionally they turn up in another notebook, but more often they are not available.

Entries

Section B records the notes that actually appear in the notebook, listed in their original order. The separation of what is often a confused mass of notes into "entries" was done to facilitate locating the notes on a particular book or subject in the original notebook, as well as to facilitate identification of the sources. Woolf's haphazard method of collecting her notes, as well as the fact that she often read several books at the same time, make it impossible to assume that the order of the entries is the order in which she read the works. What can be seen, however, are the associations she made while reading. When one book or idea seems to have led her to another, the interconnected notes are either described as a single entry or the reader is referred in one entry to the other related entries. When Woolf was reading Gibbon's autobiography, for example, the phrase "bare footed fryars singing vespers" reminded her of Marlowe's line in *The Jew of Malta*: "and ducke as low as any bare-foot fryar." The two phrases appear one under the other on a page of assorted notes on Gibbon, and are listed as one entry (VI, B.3). In another place, where a line reading "Henry James. Pacific too beautiful to be beautiful when reproduced" appears between the two pages of notes on *South Sea Bubbles, By the Earl and the Doctor*, it is listed separately and the user is referred to the preceding entry (XLIV, B.4 and B.5; both entries follow notes on Melville's *Typee* and *Omoo*).

What constitutes an "entry" varies from volume to volume, and even within volumes, depending on the nature of the notes and the shape of the notebook as a whole. In notebooks essentially devoted to one or two authors, the notes on each work are listed as a separate entry. In notebooks that contain notes on a large number of works by different authors, books by the same author are often listed as subdivisions of a single entry. Subdivisions are also used when Woolf read two editions of a work simultaneously (as in the case of *The Paston Letters*), or when the two works that appear under a single heading are so intertwined as to be considered one entry.

Although Woolf's notes almost always jump from the text she is reading to her reactions to it, some entries include a larger proportion of general or speculative comments about the work, its author, or its implications than do others; when this is the case, information about the extent and nature of her comments is provided. In other places, Woolf completely steps outside of her text to draw her ideas together, to devise a theory, or to design a format for an essay. These notes usually appear as separate entries that include, where appli-

cable, references to the work or works that triggered them. "How to Read," for example, which follows her notes on Stendhal's *Le Rouge et le noir* and includes an unidentified page reference to that novel, has its own entry but refers the user back to the preceding notes on the novel (XVIII, B.3–4).

Woolf's notes often include references to works that can be traced to a footnote or textual reference in the book she is reading at the time. These references are recorded and identified in the description of the entry in which they appear, but they are not listed separately unless she has noted the work itself. Her entry on Edith Cuthell's *Wilhelmina, Morgravine of Baireuth*, for example, includes references to the *Memoires de la Morgravine de Baireuth*, to Sainte-Beuve's *Causeries de lundi*, and to Carlyle's *History of Freidrich II of Prussia, called Frederick the Great*. All three of these works are mentioned in Cuthell's introduction, and all three appear in the first paragraph of Woolf's review of the book. Only Carlyle's *History*, however, has its own set of notes, and therefore its own entry (XXXV, B.29–30). Notes that are not connected to her reading, on the other hand, such as addresses, passages from her novels, or random ideas, do have their own entries. When these entries appear, as they often do, on the reverse side of a page containing notes on a different subject, they are listed after the original entry, with instructions designating where they can be found in the notebook.

ENTRY HEADINGS. Each entry is introduced by a heading, enclosed in quotation marks. This heading is either the heading that Woolf herself placed at the beginning of her notes ("The Letters of L. Sterne," for example, or "How to Read"), or the first phrase or sentence of the notes themselves. Either way, the heading is transcribed exactly as it appears in the original text. In this way, the user can find specific notes in the actual notebook where page numbers are not available or where several entries appear on a single page.

NUMBER OF PAGES. The heading is followed by a brief description of the number of pages that comprise that entry and by other information relevant to the location of the notes in the original, to the identification of the source of the notes, or to the content of the notes themselves. In calculating the number of pages for an entry, every page that contains notes related to the entry has been included in the total, even if it is only one line. When a page contains only a line or two of an entry, or an entry itself is only a few lines, this information is also recorded. Occasionally, the description of an entry will read

"Heading only," indicating that no notes exist beyond the heading itself.

PAGINATION. The pagination within the notebooks varies greatly, ranging from pages with no numbers to pages with two or three sets of numbers. Woolf sometimes numbered the pages as she made her notes, using the same ink that she used for her notetaking; more often, she numbered the pages of a notebook when she bound it, using a blue pencil and numbering the pages more or less consecutively. Where two or more sets of Woolf's numbers exist, the consecutive numbers appear first. Woolf's numbering is identified by "VW." In several of the Berg notebooks, the pages have been numbered in pencil in the upper right corner by the librarians at the New York Public Library. This set of numbers is identified by "NYPL." In the notebooks where page numbers exist, the location of an entry is indicated by page number only. In the unpaginated notebooks, the location of those entries that do not begin on a separate page is given relative to the preceding entry.

OTHER INFORMATION. Almost all of the entries consist of handwritten notes; where the notes are typed, or the entry consists of a newspaper cutting (as in Volumes LVIII–LX), this information is indicated in the description of the entry. Where Woolf has provided documentation for an entry other than that found in the heading—such as dates, authors or titles for quotations, or marginal notes—these also appear in the description of the entry: "Entry dated 'June 1921'"; "Quotation, annotated 'Keats Letters. 77'"; "Marginal notation, 'Lowell./Chaucer./267/My Study Windows.'"

Sources

The specification of the book or poem or article that is the source of Woolf's notes has been indented beneath the descriptive matter that introduces the entry. Each source has been identified as fully as possible, including the edition of the work that corresponds to Woolf's notation of page references in her notes. The majority of identifications were made from books found in the British Library or in the London Library. When the specific edition has not been found, either because of insufficient information in Woolf's notes, or, as in the case of several of the novels, because of a profusion of editions, the date of the first edition appears in brackets. In these cases, the user is occasionally referred to those editions of the work listed in the

Catalogue of Books from the Library of Leonard and Virginia Woolf that Woolf might have read. This catalogue, published by Holleyman & Treacher (Brighton, 1975), records a large number of the books found in Monk's House and at 24 Victoria Square, Leonard Woolf's two residences at the time of his death.[4] When Woolf's page references correspond to several editions of the same work (for example, Jebb's edition of Sophocles' plays), or when a work was published in a series such as Bohn's "Standard Library" as well as in other Bohn series with the same page numbers, the first edition is given.

Only those works that can with certainty be identified as part of Woolf's reading have been cited as sources. Where there is some hesitation or speculation about the source of the notes or about whether Woolf actually read a work, the possibilities are included in the description of the entry. This is the case with several titles that Woolf noted, possibly with the intention of reading them, but that are not followed by notes. Moreover, when Woolf read a work that has more than one volume, I have indicated only those volumes that are noted in the particular entry: "Vol. I [of II]"; "Vol. III [of IV]." If both or all of the volumes are noted, the source reads, "2 vols." or "4 vols." Similarly, when Woolf read a work that appears in a collection, I have given only the volume number that includes her text: "*Journal to Stella*. . .In *The Prose Works*. Vol. II." Finally, when Woolf's text is part of a larger work, I have included that information as well, since it is often necessary to have the full title in order to find the specific edition in the library. Thus, the source for Dickens's *Bleak House* includes the information, "Vol. XI of *The Works of Charles Dickens*. Authentic Edition."

Where the source of a reading note has not been traced, the subject matter and any other relevant information appears after the heading. Unless otherwise noted, the place of publication for all works is London.

Symbols and Abbreviations

In transcribing from the notebooks I have used the following conventions:

/: line endings
[?word]: an uncertain reading
[word/word]: possible alternative readings
[word]: a word supplied by the editor
[. . .]: an illegible word or words.

Where Woolf's punctuation is ambiguous, I have used what made the most sense in context; I have also altered her occasional bracket to a parenthesis in order to avoid confusing it with editorial insertions. Otherwise, Woolf's punctuation, abbreviations and contractions, spelling, and typing errors have been reproduced exactly as they appear in the text, explained where necessary by the use of brackets. One of her habits, for example, was to abbreviate a word by omitting the middle letters and raising the final letter or letters: Sh^{re} for Shakespeare; auto^{y} for autobiography. The use of ellipses within the headings and the other quotations from the notes indicates that Woolf's sentence or the passage that she was copying continues beyond my transcription of it.

The following abbreviations have been used throughout the guide:

A & R: "'Anon' and 'The Reader': Virginia Woolf's Last Essays." Ed. Brenda R. Silver. *Twentieth Century Literature* 25, no. 3/4 (Fall/Winter 1979): 356–441.

AWD: Virginia Woolf. *A Writer's Diary*. Ed. Leonard Woolf. London: Hogarth Press, 1953.

CE: Virginia Woolf. *Collected Essays*. 4 vols. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967.

CR: Virginia Woolf. *The Common Reader*. London: Hogarth Press, 1925.

D, I, II, and III: *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*. Ed. Anne Olivier Bell. Vol. I: 1915–1920; Vol. II: 1921–1924; Vol. III: 1925–1930. London: Hogarth Press; New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1977–1980. (References are to the dates of the entries.)

[Diary] No. 3: [Diary] Holograph notebook. Unsigned. Christmas 1904–May 31, 1905. No. 3. Berg Collection.

DNB: *The Dictionary of National Biography*.

Holleyman & Treacher, M/H or V/s: *Catalogue of the Books from the Library of Leonard and Virginia Woolf*. Brighton: Holleyman & Treacher, 1975. M/H indicates the Monk's House catalogue; V/s the Victoria Square catalogue.

Kp.: B. J. Kirkpatrick. *A Bibliography of Virginia Woolf*. 2nd rev. ed. London: Hart-Davis, 1967.

L, I, II, III, IV, V, and VI: *The Letters of Virginia Woolf*. Ed. Nigel Nicolson and Joanne Trautmann. Vol. I: 1888–1912; Vol. II: 1912–1922; Vol. III: 1923–1928; Vol. IV: 1929–1931; Vol. V: 1932–1935; Vol. VI: 1936–1941. Lon-

don: Hogarth Press; New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1975–1980. (The numbers given in references to this work are letter numbers.)

MH/A or MH/B: Monk's House Papers, List A or List B. University of Sussex Library.

MHP Catalogue: *Monk's House Papers Catalogue* (1972). University of Sussex Library.

NYPL: New York Public Library.

Pargiters: Virginia Woolf. *The Pargiters. The Novel-Essay Portion of "The Years."* Ed. Mitchell A. Leaska. New York: The New York Public Library & Readex Books, 1977.

Roo: *A Room of One's Own*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1929; 1957.

3G: Virginia Woolf. *Three Guineas*. Uniform Edition. London: Hogarth Press, 1938.

TLS: *The Times Literary Supplement*.

VW: Virginia Woolf.

NOTES

1. [Diary] Holograph notebook. Unsigned. Christmas 1904–May 31, 1905. No. 3. Berg Collection. See Volume XXVII.

2. I have used for this purpose the six-volume edition of *The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, ed. Nigel Nicolson and Joanne Trautmann (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.; London: Hogarth Press, 1975–1980); *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*, ed. Anne Olivier Bell (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.; London: Hogarth Press, 1975–1980), Vol. I–III: 1915–1930; and *A Writer's Diary*, ed. Leonard Woolf (London: Hogarth Press, 1953). As the remaining volumes of the *Diary* appear, it will be possible to date the later reading notes more precisely.

3. B. J. Kirkpatrick, *A Bibliography of Virginia Woolf*, 2nd rev. ed. (London: Hart-Davis, 1967). Unfortunately, the third edition of Kirkpatrick's *Bibliography* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1981) appeared too late for inclusion in this guide.

4. These books as well as others from the Woolfs' library not listed in the *Catalogue* are housed in the Woolf Collection at Washington State University, Pullman. Another set of the Woolfs' books are at the University of Texas. I am grateful to Elizabeth Steele for sharing with me her unpublished list of the literary works at Pullman not found in the Holleyman & Treacher *Catalogue*.