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Richard Cary

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Edwin Arlington Robinson, as Stanley T. Williams observed, "wound his solitary horn before his dark tower." He saw the darkness in man, and as he moved such characters as Richard Cory, Miniver Cheevy and old Eben Flood across the pages of his poems, he sought to portray the bitter, the wormwood in life and to manifest it in irony. The "Annandale" trilogy fits well the Robinson pattern and must be reinterpreted in light of the knowledge that the poet drew upon Molière and the Bible for the characters Argan and Damaris, and, therefore, that there is not mercy but revenge in the killing of Annandale. Robinson’s poetry is too carefully contrived for these rare names to be mere chance selections by the poet; they did, in fact, help him to portray "the black and awful chaos of the night."

THE LIBRARY OF EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON: ADDENDA

By RICHARD CARY

In 1950 the Colby College Press published a trim sextodecimo volume entitled The Library of Edwin Arlington Robinson, compiled by James Humphry, III, then Librarian of the College. It contains a seven-page "Preface" and a thirty-six page "Descriptive Catalogue" of the 372 books in this category then housed in the Robinson Memorial Room of the Colby College Library.

Over the intervening years 173 additional books have accrued to that assemblage, mostly through the generosity of Mrs. Ruth Robinson Nivison, the poet’s niece and literary executrix, Miss Margaret Perry, Mrs. Chester A. Baker, Miss Mabel Daniels, Mr. H. B. Collamore, and the Colby Library Associates. Because of their importance as insignia of Robinson’s tastes and associations, they are presented herewith as a supplement to Humphry’s meticulous listing.

It must be remembered that the books in “Robinson’s Library” include those which accumulated in the Gardiner home and were accessible to him during his childhood and youth, as well as those he bought himself, received from or gave to his family and friends, and presentations from other authors (not,
However, presentation copies of his own titles which have found their way back to our basic collection of his works.

In striking parallel to the library of William Faulkner, many of the books were acquired by Robinson's parents, some by his brothers, and, in his years of repute, a good proportion came unsolicited from writers and publishers. Like Faulkner, Robinson never developed the practice of marking the text of his books. The exceptions are infinitesimal: a line in a margin, an underscored word or phrase. Since he persistently refused to review books, his reactions must be sought in letters, in his infrequent forewords, and in verbal comments reported by his biographers.

An inestimable number of the books that passed through his hands, and presumably through his mind, are yet ungarnered. Chard Powers Smith recalls Robinson keeping an "enormous wooden box where he piled his presentation copies" near the entrance to his rooms. These he would dispense to friends or to visitors whose company he had enjoyed. After leaving Gardiner for good, Robinson lived in a succession of boarding houses, hotels, friends' homes, borrowed studios, and at the MacDowell Colony, so that his material possessions were in a constant state of attrition. "I am not a collector and have really no place for books," he said to a young bibliomane.

From the books, noted below, may be construed valuable indices to Robinson's family relationships, to his personal and professional attachments, to his literary preferences, and to his philosophic concepts. For one, the assumptive view of his father as a forbidding Philistine must be at least partially revised. And, despite Robinson's explicit disengagement from home ties, his unflagging gifts of books to his three nieces demonstrates strong

1 Laura E. Richards, E. A. R. (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), 5-6. "His father was a man of substance and position, his mother a rare and lovely woman. Both had bookish tastes; in the pleasant house on Lincoln Street, where Mr. Robinson established his family, the library grew with the children. . . . At five [E. A. R.] was reading 'The Raven' to his mother as she sat sewing; at seven he discovered Shakespeare. . . . He and his father never tired of poring over Bryant's Library of Poetry and Song." Edward Robinson's copy of Bryant's anthology is listed in Humphry, p. 20, and his copy of Shakespeare's works, below. Herman Robinson's later issues of Poe are listed below; the volume Edwin read at five has not been recovered.


psychological need for a secure base to contravene his physical drifting. For another, here are clear leads to the degree of amicability Robinson could rise to and arouse: his adolescent attraction to Ed Moore's sister, his fondness for “M. W. D.” (Mabel Wheeler Daniels, the renowned composer of symphonies who dubbed him “P. V. M.” in honor of his zeal for Vergil), his affection for Willie Butler and George Burnham (lifelong friends he first met at Harvard), for Dr. Schumann his early mentor, for Josephine Peabody, Percy MacKaye, John Drinkwater, and Witter Bynner (writers he esteemed as people), for Hagedorn who arranged entry for him to the MacDowell Colony and became his first biographer, and for the Perrys and the Ledouxs, who gave him a second sense of family.

Besides the obvious Bible, Shakespeare, Aesop, Bunyan, Burns, and Milton, one finds a prominence of authors who indubitably affected Robinson's emergent style and content: Browning, Hardy, Hawthorne, Kipling, and Edward Young, not to mention Edson Clark's possible impress on the poet's fixation about "races." Robinson's gift of *The Moonstone* and his retention of *The Deadly Dowager* testify to his expansive appetite for mysteries and thrillers, which he absorbed at the rate of one a day, and whose melodramatic elements occasionally seeped into his poems.

And for insights into Robinson's dilating personality, here are two abortive stamp albums and several Harvard textbooks, upon one of which he inscribed his name in four places— an odd departure from his normal reticence in this regard.


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-------. The Pilgrim’s Progress. Intro. the Right Rev. Handley C.


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------. "Le Tristran d'Edwin Arlington Robinson," *Revue Anglo-Américaine*, V. (December 1927), [97]-110; (February 1928), [219]-228.


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DELLHORA, GUILLERMO. La Iglesia Catolica, ante la critica en el pensamiento y en el arte. Mexico: Dellhora, 1929. "To E. A. Robinson, as a token of my highest appreciation, the author Guillermo Dellhora, Mexico N F, 1 V 1930" on page [9].


HULLAH, JOHN, comp. *The Song Book*, Words and Tunes from
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The International Mark Twain Society, Its History and Members. Webster Groves, Mo.: International Mark Twain Society, 1933. “To Louis V. Ledoux with Cyril Clemens' homage, July 1935” on title page.

Jacques Visits the Colony, a Birthday Fantasy in One Act. N.p.: [1924]. “The scene is laid in a studio of the MacDowell Colony.”


------. Puck of Pook's Hill. New York: Doubleday, Page &
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“For E. A. Robinson with the most appreciative thanks from Christy MacKaye” on flyleaf.


------. *The King’s Own*. London: George Routledge & Sons, [1880].


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Palgrave, Francis T. The Golden Treasury. London, Macmil-
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Postage Stamp Album. Contains eleven pages of United States stamps collected by Robinson. (See Triflet, F., Postage Stamp Album for Young Collectors.)


Triflet, F., comp. *Postage Stamp Album for Young Collectors.* Contains 78 pages of United States and foreign stamps collected by Robinson, with four-page Index in his hand. "Edwin A. Robinson, Gardiner, Me., Apr. 25, 1878" on flyleaf. (See *Postage Stamp Album.*)


Vannah, Kate. *From Heart to Heart.* Boston: J. G. Cupples Co., [1893]. "A. T. S. From Kate Vannah, July 1895" on flyleaf.


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Vinal, 1927. "To E. A. Robinson from J. H. Wallis. February 12th, 1927" on flyleaf; also, in Robinson's hand, "See p. 15" where he has put a mark along ten lines of the poem "Directions For My Funeral."


WOLFE, HUMBERT. Humoresque. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1926. "For E. A. Robinson, with the profound admiration and friendship of Herbert S. Gorman, and Jean" on flyleaf; above Robinson's name is penciled "Given to Lilla Cabot Perry by".
