

ENGLISH LITERATURE IV

ROMANTICISM

Resulting in part from the libertarian and egalitarian ideals of the French Revolution, the romantic movements had in common only a revolt against the prescribed rules of classicism a term that, when applied generally, means clearness, elegance, symmetry, and repose produced by attention to traditional forms. It is sometimes synonymous with excellence or artistic quality of high distinction. More precisely, the term refers to the admiration and imitation of Greek and Roman literature, art, and architecture. Because the principles of classicism were derived from the rules and practices of the ancients, the term came to mean the adherence to specific academic canons.

The basic aims of romanticism were various: a return to nature and to belief in the goodness of humanity; the rediscovery of the artist as a supremely individual creator; the development of nationalistic pride; and the exaltation of the senses and emotions over reason and intellect. In addition, romanticism was a philosophical revolt against rationalism. In philosophy, a theory that holds that reason alone, unaided by experience, can arrive at basic truth regarding the world. Associated with rationalism is the doctrine of innate ideas and the method of logically deducing truths about the world from "self-evident" premises. Rationalism is opposed to empiricism.

ROMANTIC POETS

They focused on the individual self, on the poet's personal reaction to life. This emphasis can also be found in such prose works as the essays of Charles Lamb and William Hazlitt and in Thomas De Quincey's autobiographical *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (1822). The interest of romantics in the medieval period as a time of mystery, adventure, and aspiration is evidenced in the Gothic romance and in the historical novels of Sir Walter Scott. William Blake was probably the most singular of the English romantics. His poems and paintings are radiant, imaginative, and heavily symbolic, indicating the spiritual reality underlying the physical reality

Wordsworth, William, 1770–1850

English poet, One of the great English poets, he was a leader of the romantic movement in England. The spirit of the French Revolution had strongly influenced Wordsworth, and he returned (1792) to England imbued with the principles of Rousseau and republicanism.

Lyrical Ballads (1798), they sought to use the language of ordinary people in poetry; it included Wordsworth's poem "Tintern Abbey." The work introduced romanticism into England and became a manifesto for romantic poets. Although in literature romantic elements were known much earlier, as in the Elizabethan dramas, many critics now date English literary romanticism from the publication of Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads* (1798). In the preface to the second edition of that influential work (1800), Wordsworth stated his belief that poetry results from "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," and pressed for the use of natural everyday diction in literary works. Coleridge emphasized the importance of the poet's imagination and discounted adherence to arbitrary literary rules.

A second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* (1800), which included a critical essay outlining Wordsworth's poetic principles, in particular his ideas about poetic diction and meter, was unmercifully attacked by critics. In 1802 *The Prelude*, his long autobiographical poem, was completed in 1805, though it was not published until after his death. His next collection, *Poems in Two Volumes* (1807), included the well-known "Ode to Duty," the "Ode: Intimations of Immortality," and a number of famous sonnets.

In 1842 Wordsworth was named poet laureate. His personality and poetry were deeply influenced by his love of nature. A profoundly earnest and sincere thinker, he displayed a high seriousness comparable, at times, to Milton's but tempered with tenderness and a love of simplicity.

Wordsworth's earlier work shows the poetic beauty of commonplace things and people. His use of the language of ordinary speech was heavily criticized, but it helped to rid English poetry of the more artificial conventions of 18th-century diction. "The Solitary Reaper".

Although Wordsworth was venerated in the 19th cent., by the early 20th cent. his reputation had declined. He was criticized for the unevenness of his poetry, for his rather marked capacity for bathos, and for his transformation from an open-minded liberal to a cramped conservative. In recent years, however, Wordsworth has again been recognized as a great English poet : a profound, original thinker who created a new poetic tradition.

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, 1772–1834

English poet and man of letters, one of the most brilliant, versatile, and influential figures in the English romantic movement. The son of a clergyman, Coleridge was a precocious, dreamy child. He attended Christ's Hospital school in London and was already formidably erudite upon entering Cambridge in 1791. His erratic university career was interrupted by his impulsive enlistment in the dragoons, from which his brothers managed to extricate him. In 1794 he met the poet Robert Southey, who shared his political and social idealism, and together they planned to establish a small utopian community, which they called a pantisocracy, on the banks of the Susquehanna River in the United States. The plan failed to materialize for practical reasons.

Although Coleridge had been busy and productive, publishing both poetry and much topical prose, it was not until his friendship with Wordsworth that he wrote his best poems. In 1798 Coleridge and Wordsworth jointly published the volume *Lyrical Ballads*, whose poems and preface made it a seminal work and manifesto of the romantic movement in English literature.

Coleridge's main contribution to the volume was the haunting, dreamlike ballad "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner." This long poem, as well as "Kubla Khan" and "Christabel," written during the same period, are Coleridge's best-known works. All three make use of exotic images and supernatural themes. "Dejection: An Ode," published in 1802, was the last of Coleridge's great poems. It shows the influence of (or affinity to) some poetic ideas of Wordsworth, notably the meditation upon self, nature, and the relationships among emotion, sense experience, and understanding. His *Confessions of an Enquiring Spirit* (ed. by his nephew H. N. Coleridge) was published posthumously in 1840.

While an undergraduate Coleridge had begun to take laudanum (an opium derivative then legal and widely used) for his ailments, and he was addicted by about 1800.

He continued his studies and writings on philosophy, religion, contemporary affairs, and literature.

Coleridge worked for many years on his *Biographia Literaria* (1817), containing accounts of his literary life and critical essays on philosophical and literary subjects. It presents Coleridge's theories of the creative imagination, but its debt to other writers, notably the German idealist philosophers, is often so heavy that the line between legitimate borrowing and plagiarism becomes blurred.

However, the originality and beauty of his best poetry and his enormous influence on the intellectual and aesthetic life of his time is unquestioned. He was reputedly a brilliant conversationalist, and his lectures on Shakespeare remain among the most important statements in literary criticism.

Blake, William, 1757–1827

English poet and artist. Although he exerted a great influence on English romanticism, Blake defies characterization by school, movement, or even period. At the same time no poet has been more sensitive or responsive to the realities of the human condition and of his time.

Blake's father, a prosperous hosier, encouraged young Blake's artistic tastes and sent him to drawing school. At 14 he was apprenticed to James Basire, an engraver, with whom he stayed until 1778. After attending the Royal Academy, where he rebelled against the school's stifling atmosphere, he set up as an engraver. In 1782 he married Catherine Boucher, whom he taught to read, write, and draw. She became his inseparable companion, assisting him in nearly all his work.

Blake's paintings and engravings, notably his illustrations of his own works, works by Milton, and of the Book of Job, are painstakingly realistic in their representation of human anatomy and other natural forms. They are also radiantly imaginative, often depicting fanciful creatures in exacting detail. Nearly unknown during his life, Blake was generally dismissed as an eccentric or worse long thereafter. His following has gradually increased, and today he is widely appreciated as a visual artist and as a poet.

In *Songs of Innocence* (1789) and *Songs of Experience* (1794) the world is seen from a child's point of view, directly and simply but without sentimentality. In the first group, which includes such poems as "The Lamb," "Infant Joy," and "Laughing Songs," both the beauty and the pain of life are captured. The latter group, which includes "The Tyger," "Infant Sorrow," "The Sick Rose," and "London," reveal a consciousness of cruelty and injustice in the world, for which people, not fate, are responsible. As parables of adult life the *Songs* are rich in meaning and implication.

Blake's Prophetic Books combine poetry, vision, prophecy, and exhortation. They include *The Book of Thel* (1789), *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (c. 1790), *The French Revolution* (1791), *America* (1793), *Europe* (1794), *The Book of Urizen* (1794), *The Book of Los* (1795), *Milton* (1804–8), and *Jerusalem* (1804–20). These comprise no less than a vision of the whole of human life, in which energy and imagination struggle with the forces of oppression both physical and mental. Blake exalted love and pure liberty, and abhorred the reductive, rationalist philosophy that served to justify the political and economic inequities attendant upon the Industrial Revolution.

The Prophetic Books are founded in the real world, as are Blake's passions and anger, but they appear abstruse because they are ordered by a mythology devised by the poet, which draw from Swedenborg, Jacob Boehme and other mystical sources. Despite this, and despite the fact that from childhood on Blake was a mystic who thought it quite natural to see and converse with angels and Old Testament prophets, he by no means forsook concrete reality for a mystical life of the spirit. On the contrary, reality, whose center was human life, was for Blake inseparable from imagination. The spiritual, indeed God himself, was an expression of the human.

Lord Byron 1788–1824.

His father died in 1791, and Byron, born with a clubfoot, was subjected alternately to the excessive tenderness and violent temper of his mother. In 1798, after years of poverty, Byron succeeded to the title and took up residence at the family seat, Newstead Abbey. He subsequently attended Dulwich school and Harrow (1801–5) and then matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge. Although the academic atmosphere did nothing to lessen Byron's sensitivity about his lameness, he made several close friends while at school.

His first volume, *Fugitive Pieces* (1806), was suppressed; revised and expanded, it appeared in 1807 as *Poems on Various Occasions*. This was followed by *Hours of Idleness* (1807), which provoked such severe criticism

from the *Edinburgh Review* that Byron replied with *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (1809), a satire in heroic couplets reminiscent of Pope, which brought him immediate fame.

Byron left England the same year for a grand tour through Spain, Portugal, Italy, and the Balkans. He returned in 1811 with Cantos I and II of *Childe Harold* (1812), a melancholy, philosophic poem in Spenserian stanzas, which made him the social lion of London. It was followed by the verse tales *The Giaour* (1813), *The Bride of Abydos* (1813), *The Corsair* (1814), *Lara* (1814), *The Siege of Corinth* (1816), and *Parisina* (1816).

Byron's name at this time was linked with those of several women, notably Viscount Melbourne's wife, Lady Caroline Lamb. In Jan., 1815, he married Anne Isabella Milbanke, a serious, rather cold, young woman with whom he had little in common. She gave birth to a daughter, Augusta Ada, the following December. In 1816 she secured a separation. Although her reasons for such an action remain obscure, evidence indicates that she discovered the existence of an incestuous relationship between Byron and his half-sister, Mrs. Augusta Leigh. Although his many attachments to women are notorious, Byron was actually ambivalent toward women. There is considerable evidence that he also had several homosexual relationships.

In Apr., 1816, by then a social outcast, Byron left England, never to return. He passed some time with Shelley in Switzerland, writing Canto III of *Childe Harold* (1816) and *The Prisoner of Chillon* (1816).

Settling in Venice (1817), Byron led for a time a life of dissipation, but produced Canto IV of *Childe Harold* (1818), *Beppo* (1818), and *Mazeppa* (1819) and began *Don Juan*. Byron was induced to interest himself in the cause of Greek independence from the Turks and sailed for Missolonghi, where he arrived in 1824. He worked unsparingly with Prince Alexander Mavrocordatos to unify the divergent Greek forces, but caught a fever and died the same year.

Shelley, Percy Bysshe

.He entered Oxford in 1810, where readings in philosophy led him toward a study of the empiricists and the modern skeptics, notably William Godwin. In 1811 he and his friend Thomas Jefferson Hogg published their pamphlet, *The Necessity of Atheism*, which resulted in their immediate expulsion from the university.

His masterpiece, *Prometheus Unbound* (1820). In this lyrical drama Shelley poured forth all his passions and beliefs, which were modeled after the ideas of Plato. *Epipsychidion* (1821) is a poem addressed to Emilia Viviani, a young woman whom Shelley met in Pisa and with whom he developed a brief but close friendship. His great elegy, *Adonais* (1821), written in memory of Keats, asserts the immortality of beauty. "Ode to the West Wind"

Most of Shelley's poetry reveals his philosophy, a combination of belief in the power of human love and reason, and faith in the perfectibility and ultimate progress of man. His lyric poems are superb in their beauty, grandeur, and mastery of language. Although Matthew Arnold labeled him an "ineffectual angel," 20th-century critics have taken Shelley seriously, recognizing his wit, his gifts as a satirist, and his influence as a social and political thinker.

Keats, John, 1795–1821

English poet. He is considered one of the greatest of English poets. Keats came to know Leigh Hunt and his literary circle, and in 1816 he gave up surgery to write poetry. Although faulty in structure, it is nevertheless full of rich imagery and color. The critical assaults of 1818 mark a turning point in Keats's life; he was forced to examine his work more carefully, and as a result the influence of Hunt was diminished. However, these attacks did not contribute to Keats's decline in health and his early death, as Shelley maintained in his elegy "Adonais."

Noble, generous, and sympathetic, he was capable not only of passionate love but also of warm, steadfast friendship. Keats is ranked, with Shelley and Byron, as one of the three great Romantic poets. Such poems as "Ode to a Nightingale," "Ode on a Grecian Urn," and "Ode on Melancholy" are unequalled for dignity, melody, and richness of sensuous imagery. All of his poetry is filled with a mysterious and elevating sense of beauty and joy.

Keats's posthumous pieces include "La Belle Dame sans Merci," in its way as great an evocation of romantic medievalism as "The Eve of St. Agnes." In recent years critical attention has focused on Keats's philosophy, which involves not abstract thought but rather absolute receptivity to experience. This attitude is indicated in his celebrated term "negative capability" "to let the mind be a thoroughfare for all thought."

Southey, Robert, 1774–1843,

Oxford he formed (1794) a friendship with Coleridge and joined with him in a plan for an American utopia. A prolific writer, he enjoyed great popularity and renown in his day and was made poet laureate in 1813. The epic *Vision of Judgment* (1821)

ROMANTIC ESSAYISTS

Lamb, Charles, 1775–1834

English essayist, his dramatic essays, *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets* (1808), established his reputation as a critic and did much in reviving the popularity of Elizabethan drama. From 1800 on he wrote intermittently for periodicals, the major contribution being the famous *Essays of Elia* (*London Magazine*, 1820–25), which were collected in 1823 and 1833. The essays cover a variety of subjects and maintain throughout an intimate and familiar tone. Lamb's style is peculiarly his own. His close-knit, subtle organization, his self-revealing observations on life, and his humor, fantasy, and pathos combine to make him one of the great masters of the English essay. Lamb was a gifted conversationalist and was friendly with most of the major literary figures of his time.

Hazlitt, William, 1778–1830

English essayist.. Hazlitt's penetrating literary criticism is collected in *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays* (1817), *Lectures on the English Poets* (1818), *Lectures on the English Comic Writers* (1819), *Table Talk* (1821–22), and *The Spirit of the Age* (1825), portraits of his contemporaries. His essays on Shakespeare and his *Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth* (1820) renewed enthusiasm for Elizabethan drama.

Hazlitt was one of the great masters of the miscellaneous essay, displaying a keen intellect, sensibility, and wide scope of interest and knowledge. His most notable single essays include "On Going a Journey," "My First Acquaintance with Poets," "On the Feeling of Immortality in Youth," and "Going to a Fight." His interest in the French Revolution and his strong beliefs in the principles of liberty and the rights of man inspired him to write a life of Napoleon (4 vol., 1828–30). See his letters (ed. by Herschel M. Sikes et al., 1978).

De Quincey, Thomas, 1785–1859

English essayist. he developed a deep interest in German literature and philosophy. By 1817 the opium habit, which he had begun while at Oxford, had reached its height. He achieved literary eminence with the publication of his *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* (1822), which first appeared in the *London Magazine* in 1821. It is an account of the progress of his drug habit, including descriptions of the bizarre and spectacular dreams he had while under the influence of opium. He became a prolific contributor to various journals.

ROMANTIC NOVEL

The Novel of Manners

Austen, Jane, 1775–1817,

English novelist. Her first novels, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, and *Northanger Abbey*, were written, although they were not published until much later.

Northanger Abbey, a satire on the Gothic romance was sold to a publisher for £10 in 1803, but as it was not published, was bought back by members of the family. Novels are comedies of manners that depict the self-contained world of provincial ladies and gentlemen. Most of her works revolve around the delicate business of providing husbands for marriageable daughters. She is particularly noted for her vivid delineations and lively interplay of character, her superb sense of comic irony, and her moral firmness. She ridicules the silly, the affected, and the stupid, ranging in her satire from light portraiture in her early works to more scornful exposures in her later novels. Her writing was subjected to the most careful polishing. She was quite aware of her special excellences and limitations, comparing herself to a miniaturist. Today she is regarded as one of the great masters of the English novel

The Gothic Novel

Type of novel that flourished in the late 18th and early 19th cent. in England. Gothic romances were mysteries, often involving the supernatural and heavily tinged with horror, and they were usually set against dark backgrounds of medieval ruins and haunted castles. The novel *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley. Jane Austen's novel *Northanger Abbey* satirizes Gothic romances. The influence of the genre can be found in some works of Coleridge and the Brontës. During the 1960s so-called Gothic novels became enormously popular in England and the United States.

Seemingly modeled on Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca*, these novels usually concern spirited young women, either governesses or new brides, who go to live in large gloomy mansions populated by peculiar servants and precocious children and presided over by darkly handsome men with mysterious pasts.

Shelley, Mary, Her most notable contribution to literature is her novel of terror, *Frankenstein*, published in 1818. It is the story of a German student who learns the secret of infusing life into inanimate matter and creates a monster that ultimately destroys him.

The Historical Novel

Scott, Sir Walter, 1771–1832,

Scottish novelist and poet.. He is considered the father of both the regional and the historical novel.

Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* was an impressive collection of old ballads with introductions and notes. *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, his first major poem, appeared in 1805 and *The Lady of the Lake* (1810).

His first novel, *Waverley* (1814), was an immediate success. There followed the "Waverley novels" romances of Scottish life that reveal Scott's great storytelling gift and his talent for vivid characterization. They include *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818), *The Bride of Lammermoor* (1819), and *The Legend of Montrose* (1819).

Ivanhoe (1820), Scott's first prose reconstruction of a time long past, is a complicated romance set in 12th-century England. His public acclaim grew, and in 1820 Scott was made a baronet. Most of his following

novels were of the *Ivanhoe* style of reconstructed history, *Quentin Durward* (1823). With *St. Ronan's Well* (1824), Scott abandoned the historical style and attempted a novel of manners, but in *Redgauntlet* (1824) he reverted to the background and treatment of his early novels..

Scott's narrative poems introduced a form of verse tale that won great popularity; his lyrics and ballads are masterly in feeling and technique. He was a very prolific and popular novelist. Although his fictional heroes now seem wooden and his plots mechanical, Scott excelled in recreating the spirit of great historical events and in painting realistic pictures of Scottish life.

The Victorian Age

Historical and Social Context

The Reform Bill of 1832 gave the middle class the political power it needed to consolidate : and to hold : the economic position it had already achieved. Industry and commerce burgeoned. While the affluence of the middle class increased, the lower classes, thrown off their land and into the cities to form the great urban working class, lived ever more wretchedly. The social changes were so swift and brutal that Godwinian utopianism rapidly gave way to attempts either to justify the new economic and urban conditions, or to change them. The intellectuals and artists of the age had to deal in some way with the upheavals in society, the obvious inequities of abundance for a few and squalor for many, and, emanating from the throne of Queen Victoria (1837–1901), an emphasis on public rectitude and moral propriety.

Victorian Age .Nonfictional Prose

Among the Victorian masters of nonfiction were the great Whig historian Thomas Macaulay and Thomas Carlyle, the historian, social critic, and prophet whose rhetoric thundered through the age. Influential thinkers included John Stuart Mill, the great liberal scholar and philosopher; Thomas Henry Huxley, a scientist and popularizer of Darwinian theory; and John Henry, Cardinal Newman, who wrote earnestly of religion, philosophy, and education. The founders of Communism, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, researched and wrote their books in the free environment of England. The great art historian and critic John Ruskin also concerned himself with social and economic problems. Matthew Arnold's theories of literature and culture laid the foundations for modern literary criticism, and his poetry is also notable.

Carlyle, Thomas, 1795–1881

He wrote *Sartor Resartus* (published 1833–34 in *Fraser's Magazine*), in which he told his spiritual autobiography. He saw the material world as mere clothing for the spiritual one. The God of his beliefs was an immanent and friendly ruler of an orderly universe.

In 1834 he projected *French Revolution*. Finally completed in 1837 (the first volume had been accidentally burned in 1835), the book was received with great acclaim. Although it vividly recreates scenes of the Revolution, it is not a factual account but a poetic rendering of an event in history. Carlyle extended his view of the divinity of man, particularly in his portraits of the great leaders of the Revolution.

In subsequent works Carlyle attacked laissez-faire theory and parliamentary government and affirmed his belief in the necessity for strong, paternalistic government. He was convinced that society does change, but that it must do so intelligently, directed by its best men, its "heroes." His lectures, published as *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and The Heroic in History* (1841), express his view that the great men of the past have intuitively shaped destiny and have been the spiritual leaders of the world.

One of the most important social critics of his day, Carlyle influenced many men of the younger generation, among them Matthew Arnold and John Ruskin. His style, one of the most tortuous yet effective in English

literature, was a compound of biblical phrases, colloquialisms, Teutonic twists, and his own coinings, arranged in unexpected sequences.

Matthew Arnold 1822–88

Arnold was appointed inspector of schools, a position he held until 1886, two years before his death. During his tenure he went on a number of missions to European schools. He was impressed with some educational systems on the Continent : most particularly the concept of state-regulated secondary education : and wrote several works about them.

Arnold's verse is characterized by restraint, directness, and symmetry. Though he believed that poetry should be objective, his verse exemplifies the romantic pessimism of the 19th cent., an age torn between science and religion. His feelings of spiritual isolation are reflected in such poems as "Dover Beach" and "Isolation: To Marguerite."

Matthew Arnold was also one of the most important literary critics of his age. From 1857 to 1867 he was Professor of Poetry at Oxford; during this time he wrote his first books of criticism, *Essays in Criticism* (1865; Ser. 2, 1888). Arnold was the apostle of a new culture, one that would pursue perfection through a knowledge and understanding of the best that has been thought and said in the world. He attacked the taste and manners of 19th-century English society, particularly as displayed by the "Philistines," the narrow and provincial middle class. Strongly believing that the welfare of a nation is contingent upon its intellectual life, he proclaimed that intellectual life is best served by an unrestricted, objective criticism that is free from personal, political, and practical considerations.

Ruskin, John, 1819–1900

English critic and social theorist. During the mid-19th cent. Ruskin was the virtual dictator of artistic opinion in England, but Ruskin's reputation declined after his death, and he has been treated harshly by 20th-century critics. Although it is undeniable that he was an extravagant and inconsistent thinker (a reflection of his lifelong mental and emotional instability), it is equally true that he revolutionized art criticism and wrote some of the most superb prose in the English language.

The first volume of Ruskin's *Modern Painters* appeared in 1843. This work started as a defense of the painter J. M. W. Turner and developed into a treatise elaborating the principles that art is based on national and individual integrity and morality and also that art is a "universal language." He finished the five volumes in 1860. *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) applied these same theories to architecture. In 1848,

From his position as the foremost English art critic, Ruskin in 1851 defended the work of the Pre-Raphaelite group. His third great volume of criticism, *The Stones of Venice* (1851–53), maintained that the Gothic architecture of Venice reflected national and domestic virtue, while Venetian Renaissance architecture mirrored corruption. About 1857, Ruskin's art criticism became more broadly social and political. He wrote *Unto This Last* (in *Cornhill Magazine*, 1860) and *Munera Pulveris* (in *Fraser's Magazine*, 1862–63). These works attacked bourgeois England and charged that modern art reflected the ugliness and waste of modern industry.

Victorian Poetry

The preeminent poet of the Victorian age was Alfred, Lord Tennyson. Although romantic in subject matter, his poetry was tempered by personal melancholy; in its mixture of social certitude and religious doubt it reflected the age. The poetry of Robert Browning and his wife, Elizabeth Barrett Browning was immensely popular, though Elizabeth's was more venerated during their lifetimes. Browning is best remembered for his superb dramatic monologues. Rudyard Kipling, the poet of the empire triumphant, captured the quality of the

life of the soldiers osion.

In the middle of the 19th cent. the so-called Pre-Raphaelites led by the painter-poet Dante Gabriel Rossetti ought to revive what they judged to be the simple, natural values and techniques of medieval life and art. Their quest for a rich symbolic art led them away, however, from the mainstream. William Morris : designer, inventor, printer, poet, and social philosopher : was the most versatile of the group, which included the poets Christina Rossetti and Coventry Patmore

Victorian figures who lived on into the 20th cent., share a pessimistic view in their poetry. The great innovator among the late Victorian poets was the Jesuit priest Gerard Manley Hopkins The concentration and originality of his imagery, as well as his jolting meter ("sprung rhythm"), had a profound effect on 20th-century poetry.

During the 1890s the most conspicuous figures on the English literary scene were the decadents. The principal figures in the group were Arthur Symonds, Ernest Dowson, and, first among them in both notoriety and talent, Oscar Wilde. The Decadents' disgust with bourgeois complacency led them to extremes of behavior and expression. However limited their accomplishments, they pointed out the hypocrisies in Victorian values and institutions. The sparkling, witty comedies of Oscar Wilde and the comic operettas of W. S. Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan were perhaps the brightest achievements of 19th-century British drama.

Tennyson, Alfred Tennyson 1809–92

English poet. The most famous poet of the Victorian age, he was a profound spokesman for the ideas and values of his times.

Upon the death of his father in 1831, Tennyson became responsible for the family and its precarious finances. His volume *Poems* (1832) included some of his most famous pieces, such as "The Lotus-Eaters," "A Dream of Fair Women," and "The Lady of Shalott." In 1833 he was overwhelmed by the sudden death of Hallam.

Tennyson's next published work, *Poems* (1842), expressed his philosophic doubts in a materialistic, increasingly scientific age and his longing for a sustaining faith. The new poems included "Locksley Hall," "Ulysses," "Morte d'Arthur," and "Break, Break, Break." With this book he was acclaimed a great poet, and in addition, he was granted an annual government pension of £200 in 1845.

The Princess (1847) was followed in 1850 by the masterful *In Memoriam*, an elegy sequence that records Tennyson's years of doubt and despair after Hallam's death and culminates in an affirmation of immortality. The same year saw his appointment as poet laureate. Occasional poems, such as the "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington" (1852) and "The Charge of the Light Brigade" (1855), were part of his duties as laureate.

The first group of *Idylls of the King* appeared in 1859; it was expanded in 1869 and 1872, and in 1885 Tennyson added the final poem. He arranged the 12 poems chronologically in 1888 to constitute a somber ethical epic of the glory and the downfall of King Arthur. In the Arthurian legend, Tennyson projected his vision of the hollowness of his own civilization.

Tennyson passed his last years in comfort. In 1883 he was created a peer and occupied a seat in the House of Lords. Throughout much of his life he was as popular as well as critical success and was venerated by the general public. Unappreciated early in the 20th cent., Tennyson has since been recognized as a great poet, notable for his mastery of technique, his superb use of sensuous language, and his profundity of thought.

Browning, Robert, 1812–89,

English poet. *Pauline*, his first poem, was published anonymously in 1833. *Men and Women* (1855). In 1861, after the death of his wife, he returned to England, where he wrote *Dramatis Personae* (1864). This was

followed by what is considered his masterpiece, the murder story *The Ring and the Book* (4 vol., 1868–69). Set in 17th-century Italy, the poem reveals, through a series of dramatic dialogues, how a single event : a murder : is perceived by different people. Browning gained recognition slowly, but after the publication of this work he was acclaimed a great poet. Societies were instituted for the study of his work in England and America. His later works include *Dramatic Idyls* (2 vol., 1879–80) and *Asolando* (1889). Browning's thought is persistently optimistic. He believed in commitment to life. His psychological portraits in verse, ironic and indirect in presentation, and his experiments in diction and rhythm have made him an important influence on 20th-century poetry.

Pre-Raphaelites.

Brotherhood of English painters and poets formed in 1848 in protest against the low standards of British art. The principal founders were D. G. Rossetti, W. Holman Hunt and John Millais. In poetry as well as painting, the Pre-Raphaelites turned away from the growing materialism of industrialized England. They sought refuge, through literary symbolism and imagery, in the beauty and comparative simplicity of the medieval world. In the works of the Italian painters prior to Raphael, they found a happy innocence of style that they tried to imitate.

Influenced by the Nazarenes, a similar group of German painters founded in Rome in 1810, the Pre-Raphaelites declared themselves devotees of nature and truth. In the early 1850s their works were violently criticized, first by Charles Dickens, as being vulgar and ugly. They were defended by John Ruskin and attracted numerous followers but the group disbanded after 1853 and the movement died out before the end of the century. The paintings of the Pre-Raphaelites are characteristically nostalgic in tone and bright in color. Despite their predilection for simplicity, they were highly meticulous in detail and mannered in style. Eventually their painting became as artificial as the historical painting they had organized to protest.

Rossetti, Christina Georgina 1830–94,

English poet; sister of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Publication of some of her poems in her brother William's magazine the *Germ* was her only contribution to Pre-Raphaelite activities. She was a devout Anglican and lived the last 15 years of her life as a recluse in her home. Many of her poems are religious, some melancholy and death-obsessed, e.g., "Uphill" and "When I Am Dead, My Dearest." Possessing a spontaneous lyrical gift, she had a firm command of traditional poetic forms. Much of her work shows a marked moral intelligence and independence of spirit, and she is recognized as an important Victorian-era poet. Her simple songs, especially in *Sing-Song* (1872), were favorites with children. Her volumes of poetry include *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (1862), probably her best work

Rossetti, Dante Gabriel 1828–82,

English poet and painter. He was one of the founders of the Pre-Raphaelites. In an effort to spread their ideas the group published in 1850 a short-lived magazine, the *Germ*, edited by Rossetti's brother William Michael Rossetti (1829–1919). In it was printed "The Blessed Damozel" by Dante Gabriel, written when he was 19 and considered by many to be his best poem. Rossetti, in a fit of guilt and grief, buried with her a manuscript containing a number of his poems. Some years later he permitted her body to be exhumed and the poems recovered. The first edition of his collected works appeared in 1870. The last years of his life were marked by an increasingly morbid state of mind (he became addicted to alcohol and chloral), and for a time he was considered insane. Although he began his career as a painter, Rossetti's lasting reputation rests upon his poetry. He never really mastered the technique of painting, and although his pictures are extremely sensuous, they are also somewhat two-dimensional. His best artistic efforts are his drawings, particularly the pen-and-ink portraits of his mother, his sister, and his wife. Almost inseparable in tone and feeling from his paintings, his poetry is noted for its pictorial effects and its atmosphere of luxurious beauty. Although there is always passion in his verse, there is also always thought. He was a master of the sonnet form

English poet, educated at Oxford. Upon becoming a Jesuit he burned much of his early verse and abandoned the writing of poetry. However, the sinking in 1875 of a German ship carrying five Franciscan nuns, exiles from Germany, inspired him to write one of his most impressive poems "The Wreck of the *Deutschland*." Since Hopkins never gave permission for the publication of his verse, his *Poems*, edited by his friend Robert Bridges, did not appear in print until 1918. His life was continually troubled by inner conflict, which arose, not from religious skepticism, but from an inability to give himself completely to his God. Both his poems and his letters often reflect an intense dissatisfaction with himself as a poet and as a servant of God. Though he produced a small body of work, he ranks high among English poets, and his work profoundly influenced 20th-century poetry. His verse is noted for its piercing intensity of language and its experiments in prosody. Of these experiments the most famous is "sprung rhythm," a meter in which Hopkins tried to approximate the rhythm of everyday speech.

The Victorian Novel

The Victorian era was the great age of the English novel : realistic, thickly plotted, crowded with characters, and long. It was the ideal form to describe contemporary life and to entertain the middle class. The novels of Charles Dickens, full to overflowing with drama, humor, and an endless variety of vivid characters and plot complications, nonetheless spare nothing in their portrayal of what urban life was like for all classes. William Thackeray is best known for *Vanity Fair* (1848), which wickedly satirizes hypocrisy and greed.

Passion and Intellectualism

The Brontes

Emily Bronte's single novel, *Wuthering Heights* (1847), is a unique masterpiece propelled by a vision of elemental passions but controlled by an uncompromisingly fine novels of Emily's sister Charlotte Bronte, especially *Jane Eyre* (1847) and *Villette* (1853), are more rooted in convention, but daring in their own ways.

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When Charlotte discovered Emily's poetry in 1845, Anne revealed hers, and the next year the collected poems of the three sisters, published at their own expense, appeared under the pseudonyms Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell. In 1847 Emily's novel *Wuthering Heights* and Anne's *Agnes Grey* were published as a set. Although the novel *The Professor* by Charlotte was rejected, her *Jane Eyre* (1847) was accepted and published with great success

Charlotte Bronte was the most professional of the sisters, consciously trying to achieve financial success from the family's literary efforts. Her novel *Jane Eyre*, the story of a governess and her passionate love for her Byronic employer, Mr. Rochester, is ranked among the great English novels. Strong, violently emotional, somewhat melodramatic, *Jane Eyre* brilliantly articulates the theme found in all Charlotte's work : the need of women for both love and independence.

The undisputed genius of the family was Emily Bronte. An unyielding and enigmatic personality, she produced only one novel and a few poems, yet she is ranked among the giants of English literature. Her masterpiece, *Wuthering Heights*, is the wild, passionate story of the intense, almost demonic, love between Catherine Earnshaw and the Gypsy foundling Heathcliff. The action of the story is chaotic and unremittingly violent; its characters are less people than forces. Indeed, the novel would be extraordinarily difficult to read were it not for the power of Emily Bronte's vision and the beauty and energy of her prose. In addition, some of her powerful lyrics are counted with the best of English poetry.

George Elliot ,Mary Ann Evans

The novels of George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans) appeared during the 1860s and 70s. A woman of great erudition and moral fervor, Eliot was concerned with ethical conflicts and social problems. One of the great English novelists, she was reared in a strict atmosphere of evangelical Protestantism but eventually rebelled and renounced organized religion totally.

In 1856, Mary Ann began *Scenes of Clerical Life*, a series of realistic sketches first appearing in *Blackwood's Magazine* under the pseudonym Lewes chose for her, George Eliot. Although not a popular success, the work was well received by literary critics, particularly Dickens and Thackeray. Three novels of provincial life followed : *Adam Bede* (1859), *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), and *Silas Marner* (1861).

Writing about life in small rural towns, George Eliot was primarily concerned with the responsibility that people assume for their lives and with the moral choices they must inevitably make. Although highly serious, her novels are marked by compassion and a subtle humor.

Hardy, Thomas, 1840–1928

Thomas Hardy's profoundly pessimistic novels are all set in the harsh, punishing midland county he called Wessex, one of the great English writers of the 19th cent.

The son of a stonemason, he derived a love of music from his father and a devotion to literature from his mother.

Hardy was writing continually during this period of his life. Hardy wrote many novels, including those he referred to as "romances and fantasies" : most of which were first serialized in popular magazines. His major works are *The Return of the Native* (1878), *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), and *Jude the Obscure* (1896), the latter two considered masterpieces.

Hardy's novels are all set against the bleak and forbidding Dorset landscape (referred to as Wessex in the novels), whose physical harshness echoes that of an indifferent, if not malevolent, universe. The author's characters, who are for the most part of the poorer rural classes, are sympathetically and often humorously portrayed. Their lives are ruled not only by nature but also by rigid Victorian social conventions. Hardy's style is accordingly roughhewn, sometimes awkward, but always commanding and intense.

Hardy had always written poetry and regarded the novel as an inferior genre. After *Jude the Obscure* was attacked on grounds of supposed immorality (it dealt sympathetically with open sexual relations between men and women), he abandoned fiction. However, the compelling reason was probably that his thought had become too abstract to be adequately expressed in novels. Beginning at the age of 58, Hardy published many volumes of poetry, including *Wessex Poems* (1898), *Satires of Circumstance* (1914), *Moments of Vision* (1917), and *Winter Words* (1928).

His poetry is spare, unadorned, and unromantic, and its pervasive theme is man's futile struggle against cosmic forces. Hardy's vision reflects a world in which Victorian complacencies were dying but its moralism was not, and in which science had eliminated the comforting certainties of religion.

The Social Question

Dickens, Charles, 1812–70,

English author, one of the world's most popular, prolific, and skilled novelists.

When he was 12 his father was imprisoned for debt, and Charles was compelled to work in a blacking warehouse. He never forgot this double humiliation. His sketches, mostly of London life (signed Boz), began appearing in periodicals in 1833, and the collection *Sketches by Boz* (1836) was a success.

Soon Dickens was commissioned to write burlesque sporting sketches; the result was *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* (1836–37), which promptly made Dickens and his characters, especially Sam Weller and Mr. Pickwick, famous. The early-won fame never deserted Dickens. His readers were eager and ever more numerous, and Dickens worked vigorously for them, producing novels that appeared first in monthly installments and then were made into books. *Oliver Twist* (in book form, 1838) was followed by *Nicholas Nickleby* (1839) and by two works originally intended to start a series called *Master Humphrey's Clock*: *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1841) and *Barnaby Rudge* (1841).

Dickens wrote rapidly, sometimes working on more than one novel at a time, and usually finished an installment just when it was due. Haste did not prevent his loosely strung and intricately plotted books from being the most popular novels of his day. When he visited America in 1842, he was received with ovations but awakened some displeasure by his remarks on copyright protection and his approval of the abolition of slavery. He replied with sharp criticism of America in *American Notes* (1842) and the novel *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843). The first of his Christmas books was the well-loved *A Christmas Carol* (1843).

David Copperfield (1850), his own favorite novel, which was partly autobiographical, *Hard Times* (1854) *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859); *Great Expectations* (1861).

Charles Dickens is one of the giants of English literature. He wrote from his own experience a great deal: the Marshalsea prison dominates *Little Dorrit*, and his father was at least partially the model for Mr. Micawber in *David Copperfield*. Although he was expert at journalistic reporting, he wrote nothing that was not transformed from actuality by his imagination. Sharp depiction of the eccentricities and characteristic traits of people was stretched into caricature, and for generations of readers the names of his characters. His enormous warmth of feeling sometimes spilled into sentimental pathos, sometimes flowed as pure tragedy. Dickens was particularly successful at evoking the sights, sounds, and smells of London, and the customs of his day. He attacked the injustices of the law and social hypocrisy and evils, but after many of the ills he pictured had been cured he gained still more readers. Some critics complain of his disorderliness in structure and of his sentimentality, but none has attempted to deny his genius at revealing the very pulse of life.

William Thackeray

Vanity Fair (1847–48), which dissects and satirizes London society.

The novel became the dominant form of Western literature in the 19th cent., which produced many works that are considered milestones in the development of the form.

The English Novel

In Britain, Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* (1814), about the 1745 Jacobite uprising in support of Charles Edward Stuart, inaugurated the his's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and *Emma* (1816), contemplating and satirizing life among a small group of country gentry in Regency England, initiated the highly structured and polished novel of manners. A variant with a wider scope is William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (1847–48), which dissects and satirizes London society.

The serialization of novels in various periodicals brought the form an ever-expanding audience. Particularly popular were the works of Charles Dickens, including *Oliver Twist* (1839) and *David Copperfield* (1850). Readers were drawn by Dickens's sympathetic, melodramatic, and humorous delineation of a world peopled with characters of all social classes, and by his condemnation of various social abuses. Further portraits of

English society appear in Anthony Trollope's Barsetshire novels, which scrutinize clerical life in a small, rural town, and George Eliot's *Silas Marner* (1861) and *Middlemarch* (1871–72), which treat the lives of ordinary people in provincial towns with humanity and a strong moral sense. George Meredith's *Ordeal of Richard Feverel* (1859) and *The Egoist* (1879) are analytical tragicomedies set in high social circles. The conflict between man and nature is stressed in Thomas Hardy's *Return of the Native* (1878) and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891).

Although the great English novels of the 19th cent. were predominantly realistic, novels of fantasy and romance formed a literary undercurrent. Early in the century Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) explores a tale of horror. Later, Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) and Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847) each present imaginative, passionate visions of human love. Robert Louis Stevenson revived the adventure tale and the horror story in *Treasure Island* (1883) and *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886). At the beginning of the 20th cent., horror and adventure were combined in the novels of Joseph Conrad, notably *Lord Jim* (1900) and *Heart of Darkness* (1902), both works achieving high levels of stylistic and psychological sophistication.

Decadents

In literature, name loosely applied to those 19th-century, fin-de-siècle European authors who sought inspiration, both in their lives and in their writings, in aestheticism and in all the more or less morbid and macabre expressions of human emotion. In reaction to the naturalism of the European realists, the decadents espoused that art should exist for its own sake, independent of moral and social concerns. The epithet was first applied in the 1880s to a group of self-conscious and flamboyant French poets, who in 1886 published the journal *Le Decadent*. The decadents venerated Baudelaire and the French symbolists the group with whom they are often mistakenly identified. In England the decadent movement was represented in the 1890s by Oscar Wilde, Walter Pater, Ernest Dowson, and Aubrey Beardsley and the writers of the *Yellow Book*. J. K. Huysmans's *A rebours* (1884) and Wilde's *Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891) present vivid fictionalized portraits of the 19th-century decadent : his restlessness, his spiritual confusion, and his moral inversion.

Wilde, Oscar 1854–1900,

Irish author and wit. He is most famous for his sophisticated, brilliantly witty plays, which were the first since the comedies of Sheridan and Goldsmith to have both dramatic and literary merit. He distinguished himself for his scholarship and wit, and also for his eccentricity in dress, tastes, and manners. Influenced by the aesthetic teachings of Walter Pater and John Ruskin, Wilde became the center of a group glorifying beauty for itself alone, and he was satirized with other exponents of "art for art's sake" in *Punch* and in Gilbert and Sullivan's operetta *Patience*. His first published work, *Poems* (1881), was well received. The next year he lectured to great acclaim in the United States, where his drama *Vera* (1883) was produced. In 1884 he married Constance Lloyd, and they had two sons, Cyril and Vyvyan.

In 1891 his novel *Picture of Dorian Gray* appeared. A tale of horror, it depicts the corruption of a beautiful young man pursuing an ideal of sensual indulgence and moral indifference; although he himself remains young and handsome, his portrait becomes ugly, reflecting his degeneration.

Wilde's stories and essays were well received, but his creative genius found its highest expression in his plays : *Lady Windermere's Fan* (1892), *A Woman of No Importance* (1893), *An Ideal Husband* (1895), and his masterpiece, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895), which were all extremely clever and filled with pithy epigrams and paradoxes. Wilde explained away their lack of depth by saying that he put his genius into his life and only his talent into his books. He also wrote two historical tragedies, *The Duchess of Padua* (1892) and *Salome* (1893).

In 1891, Wilde had become intimate with Lord Alfred Douglas, and the marquess of Queensberry, Douglas's

father, accused Wilde of homosexual practices. Foolishly, Wilde brought action for libel against the marquess and was himself charged with homosexual offenses under the Criminal Law Amendment, found guilty, and sentenced to prison for two years. His experiences in jail inspired his most famous poem, *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* (1898), and the apology published by his literary executor as *De Profundis* (1905). Released in 1897, he lived in France until his death, plagued by ill health and bankruptcy.

THE GEORGIANS POETRY OF 1 W W TRADITIONAL.

de la Mare, Walter 1873–1956,

English poet and novelist. For many years he worked in the accounting department of the Anglo-American Oil Company. Much of his verse and prose shows delight in imaginative excursions into the shadowed world between the real and the unreal. Included among his books of poetry are *Songs of Childhood* (1902), *The Listeners* (1912), *Peacock Pie* (1913), *Poems for Children* (1930), and *The Fleeting and Other Poems* (1933). His fiction includes *Henry Brocken* (1904), *The Return* (1910), *Memoirs of a Midget* (1921), and *On the Edge* (1930), a collection of somewhat macabre short stories.

D.H.Lawrence

He believed that industrialized Western culture was dehumanizing because it emphasized intellectual attributes to the exclusion of natural or physical instincts. He thought, however, that this culture was in decline and that humanity would soon evolve into a new awareness of itself as being a part of nature. One aspect of this "blood consciousness" would be an acceptance of the need for sexual fulfillment. His three great novels, *Sons and Lovers* (1913), *The Rainbow* (1915), and *Women in Love* (1921), concern the consequences of trying to deny humanity's union with nature.

After World War I, Lawrence began to believe that society needed to be reorganized under one superhuman leader. The novels containing this theme : *Aaron's Rod* (1922), *Kangaroo* (1923), and *The Plumed Serpent* (1926) : are all considered failures. Lawrence's most controversial novel is *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928), the story of an English noblewoman who finds love and sexual fulfillment with her husband's gamekeeper. Because their lovemaking is described in intimate detail (for the 1920s), the novel caused a sensation and was banned in England and the United States until 1959.

All of Lawrence's novels are written in a lyrical, sensuous, often rhapsodic prose style. He had an extraordinary ability to convey a sense of specific time and place, and his writings often reflected his complex personality. Lawrence's works include volumes of stories, poems, and essays. He also wrote a number of plays, travel books such as *Etruscan Places* (1932), and volumes of literary criticism, notably *Studies in Classic American Literature* (1916).

Brooke, Rupert 1887–1915

English poet. At the outbreak of World War I he joined the Royal Naval Division, served at Antwerp, and was in the Dardanelles expedition when he died of blood poisoning at the island of Skiros. Handsome and athletic, Brooke was also charming, intellectual, and witty, and was universally sought in society. His early fame and tragic death have made him an almost legendary figure. He wrote two small volumes of poetry, *Poems* (1911) and *1914 and Other Poems* (1915). His verse is exuberant and charming, the romantic patriotism of his war sonnets contrasting sharply with the bitter, disillusioned poetry of Owen and Sassoon.

ANTI MILITARISTS

Owen, Wilfred, 1893–1918,

English poet He served as a company commander in the Artist's Rifles during World War I and was killed in France on Nov. 4, 1918, one week before the armistice. Owen's poetic theme, the horror and pity of war, is set forth in strong verse that transfigured traditional meters and diction. Nine of these poems are the basis of the text of Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* (1962). Although Owen had worked on poems while living in France between 1913 and 1918, he never published. While on sick leave from the front in a Scottish hospital, he met the poet Siegfried Sassoon, who encouraged him to publish in magazines. He did, but these efforts were cut short by his return to the front. Two years after his death Sassoon arranged for the publication of 24 poems (1920).

Sassoon, Siegfried, 1886–1967,

English poet and novelist. An officer in World War I, he expressed his conviction of the brutality and waste of war in grim, forceful, realistic verse.

MODERNIST POETRY

Eliot, T. S., 1888–1965

American–British poet and critic. One of the most distinguished literary figures of the 20th cent., T. S. Eliot won the 1948 Nobel Prize in Literature.

Eliot's early poetical works : *Prufrock and Other Observations* (1917), *Poems* (1920), and *The Waste Land* (1922) : express the anguish and barrenness of modern life and the isolation of the individual, particularly as reflected in the failure of love. *The Waste Land*, whose published version reflects extraordinary editing by Eliot's friend Ezra Pound compelled immediate critical attention. His complex early poems, employing myths, religious symbolism, and literary allusion, signified a break with 19th-century poetic traditions. Their models were the metaphysical poets, Dante, the Jacobean dramatists, and French symbolists. Their meter ranged from the lyrical to the conversational. He accepted religious faith as a solution to the human dilemma and espoused Anglo-Catholicism in 1927.

Eliot was an extraordinarily influential critic, rejecting Romantic notions of unfettered originality and arguing for the impersonality of great art. His later criticism attempts to support Christian culture against what he saw as the empty and fragmented values of secularism.

Pound, Ezra Loomis, 1885–1972,

American poet, critic, and translator. An extremely important influence in the shaping of 20th-century poetry, he was one of the most famous and controversial literary figures of the century : praised as a subtle and complex modern poet, dismissed as a naive egotist and pedant, condemned as a traitor and reactionary.

In 1907, Pound left the United States to travel in Europe, eventually settling in England. There he published a series of small books of poetry : including *Personae* (1909), *Exultations* (1909), *Canzoni* (1911), and *Ripostes* (1912) : which attracted attention for their originality and erudition. In England he came to dominate the avant-garde movements of the time : first leading the imagists and later championing vorticism. Both these movements sought to free post-Victorian verse from its staleness and conventionality. Pound encouraged many young writers, notably T. S. Eliot and James Joyce. In the early 1920s he moved to Paris, where he became associated with Gertrude Stein and Ernest Hemingway.

By 1925 Pound was settled in Italy, where his literary ideas started to take a political and economic turn. Discouraged by the faults and failings of English and American democracy, he began to develop many of the theories that were to make him unpopular in Great Britain and the United States. During World War II he broadcast Fascist and anti-Semitic propaganda to the United States for the Italians and was indicted for

treason. He was brought to the United States for trial and from 1946 to 1958 was confined to a hospital in Washington after being ruled mentally unfit to answer the charges. On his release he returned to Italy, where he remained until his death at the age of 87.

Pound's major works are *Homage to Sextus Propertius* (1918), *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* (1920), and the *Cantos* (1925–60), a brilliant, though sometimes obscure, epic work. Weaving together such diversified threads as myth and legend (particularly the story of Odysseus), Chinese poetry, troubadour ballads, political and economic theory, and modern jargon, the *Cantos* attempt to reconstruct the history of civilization. Pound's translations, noted more for tone and feeling than for scholarly accuracy, include the Anglo-Saxon "Seafarer," poems from the Chinese, the Confucian books, Japanese No drama, Egyptian love poetry, and Sophocles' *Women of Trachis*.

After the war most English writers chose to focus on aesthetic or social rather than political problems. The poets tended to cultivate their own distinctive voices. Other novelists and playwrights of the 1950s, often called the angry young men expressed a deep dissatisfaction with British society, combined with despair that anything could be done about it.

While the postwar era was not a great period of English literature, it produced a variety of excellent critics. The period was also marked by a number of highly individual novelists, they continued to work in the expansive 19th-century tradition, producing a series of realistic novels chronicling life in England during the 20th cent.

William Butler Yeats 1865–1939

Irish poet and playwright, b. Dublin. The greatest lyric poet Ireland has produced and one of the major figures of 20th-century literature, Yeats was the acknowledged leader of the Irish literary renaissance.

Yeats's verse can be divided into two periods, the first lasting from 1886 to about 1900. The poetry of this period shows a debt to Spenser, Shelley, and the Pre-Raphaelites. It centers on Irish mythology and themes and is mystical, slow-paced, and lyrical. Among the best-known poems of the period are "Falling of Leaves," "When You Are Old," and "The Lake Isle of Innisfree." Yeats edited William Blake's works in 1893, and his own *Poems* were collected in 1895.

Yeats's efforts to foster Irish nationalism were inspired for years by Maud Gonne, an Irish patriot for whom he had a hopeless passion. In 1898 with Lady Augusta Gregory, George Moore, and Edward Martyn he founded the Irish Literary Theatre in Dublin; their first production (1899) was Yeats's *The Countess Cathleen* (written 1889–92). Yeats helped produce plays and collaborated with Lady Gregory on the comedy *The Pot of Broth* (1929) and other plays. The Irish Literary Theatre produced several of Yeats's plays including *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* (1902), and : after the Abbey Theatre was opened : *The Hour Glass* (1904), *The Land of Heart's Desire* (1904), and *Deirdre* (1907). Yeats's writing prose tales were collected in *The Celtic Twilight* (1893) and in the symbolic *Secret Rose* (1897).

Yeats's poetry deepened as he grew older. In the verse of his middle and late years he renounced his early transcendentalism; his poetry became stronger, more physical and realistic. A recurring theme is the polarity between extremes such as the physical and the spiritual, the real and the imagined. Memorable poems from this period include "The Second Coming," "The Tower," and "Sailing to Byzantium." Yeats initiated his second period in such volumes as *In the Seven Woods* (1903) and *The Green Helmet and Other Poems* (1910). In 1917 he married Georgie Hyde-Lees, and his occultism was encouraged by his wife's automatic writing. His prose work *A Vision* (1937; privately printed 1926) is the basis of much of his poetry in *The Wild Swans at Coole* (1917) and *Four Plays for Dancers* (1921).

Yeats ultimately became a respected public figure, a member (1922–28) of the Irish senate, and winner of the

1923 Nobel Prize in Literature. Some of his best work was his last, *The Tower* (1928) and *Last Poems* (1940). All of Yeats's work shows interesting and important revisions from earlier to later versions (see *The Variorum Edition* of his poems, ed. by Peter Allt and Russell R. Alspach, 1957).

The Traditional and Experimental Novel

Science Fiction literary genre in which a background of science or pseudoscience is an integral part of the story. Although science fiction is a form of fantastic literature, many of the events recounted are within the realm of future possibility, e.g., robots, space travel, interplanetary war, invasions from outer space.

Science fiction is generally considered to have had its beginnings in the late 19th cent. with the romances of Jules Verne and the novels of H. G. Wells. Science fiction has established itself as a legitimate branch of literature. The genre as an instrument of social criticism. Science-fiction literature anticipates and comments on political and social concerns, and a variety of science-fiction subgenres have emerged: feminist science fiction; disaster novels and novels treating the world emerging from a disaster's wake; stories postulating alternative worlds; fantastic voyages to "inner space"; and "cyberpunk" novels set in "cyberspace," a realm where computerized information possesses three dimensions in a "virtual reality."

Herbert George Wells, 1866–1946

English author. Although he is probably best remembered for his works of science fiction, he was also an imaginative social thinker, working assiduously to remove all vestiges of Victorian social, moral, and religious attitudes from 20th-century life. His early books, full of fantasy and fascinating pseudoscientific speculations, exemplify the political and social beliefs of his time. They include *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Wonderful Visit* (1895), *The Invisible Man* (1897), and *The War of the Worlds* (1898).

In the novels of his middle period Wells turned from the fantastic to the realistic, delineating with great energy and color the world he lived in. His later books are primarily novels of ideas in which he sets forth his view of the plans and concessions individuals must make in order to survive. Included among these final works, which became increasingly pessimistic as Wells.

The Realistic and Modernist Novel

Conrad, Joseph 1857–1924

English novelist orig .Born of Polish parents, he is considered one of the greatest novelists and prose stylists in English literature. In 1874, Conrad went to sea and later joined (1878) an English merchant ship, becoming (1884) a master mariner as well as a British citizen. Retiring from the merchant fleet in 1894, he began his career as a novelist, and all of his novels are written in English, an acquired language. *Heart of Darkness* (1902) and *Chance* (1913) are regarded by many as Conrad's greatest works. Marked by a distinctive, opulent prose style, Conrad's novels combine realism and high drama. Their settings include nautical backgrounds as well as high society, and international politics. Conrad was a skilled creator of atmosphere and character; the impact of various situations was augmented by his use of symbolism. He portrayed acutely the conflict between non-western cultures and modern civilization. His characters exhibit the possibilities for isolation and moral deterioration in modern life.

Woolf, Virginia (Stephen) 1882–1941

English novelist and essayist. A successful innovator in the form of the novel, she is considered a significant force in 20th-century fiction. She was educated at home from the resources of her father's huge library. In 1912 she married Leonard Woolf, a critic and writer on economics. Their home became a gathering place for a circle of artists, critics, and writers known as the Bloomsbury group. As a novelist Woolf's primary concern

was to represent the flow of ordinary experience. Her emphasis was not on plot or characterization but on a character's consciousness, his thoughts and feelings, which she brilliantly illuminated by the stream of consciousness technique. She did not limit herself to one consciousness, however, but slipped from mind to mind, particularly in *The Waves*, probably her most experimental novel. Her prose style is poetic, heavily symbolic, and filled with superb visual images. Woolf's early works, *The Voyage Out* (1915) and *Night and Day* (1919), were traditional in method, but she became increasingly innovative in *Jacob's Room* (1922), *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1927), and *The Waves* (1931). Other experimental novels are *Orlando* (1928), *The Years* (1937), and *Between the Acts* (1941). She was a master of the critical essay, and some of her finest pieces are included in *The Common Reader* (1925), *The Second Common Reader* (1933), *The Death of the Moth and Other Essays* (1942), and *The Moment and Other Essays* (1948). *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and *Three Guineas* (1938) are feminist tracts. Virginia Woolf suffered mental breakdowns in 1895 and 1915; she drowned herself in 1941 because she feared another breakdown from which she might not recover. Most of her posthumously published works were edited by her husband.

stream of consciousness, in literature, technique that records the multifarious thoughts and feelings of a character without regard to logical argument or narrative sequence. The writer attempts by the stream of consciousness to reflect all the forces, external and internal, influencing the psychology of a character at a single moment. The technique was first employed by Edouard Dujardin (1861–1949) in his novel *Les Lauriers sont coupés* (1888) and was subsequently used by such notable writers as James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and William Faulkner. The phrase "stream of consciousness" to indicate the flow of inner experience was first used by William James in *Principles of Psychology* (1890).

Joyce, James, 1882–1941,

Irish novelist. Perhaps the most influential and significant novelist of the 20th cent., Joyce was a master of the English language, exploiting all of its resources. His novel *Ulysses*, which is among the great works of world literature, utilizes many radical literary techniques and forms. Joyce returned to Ireland briefly in 1909 in a futile attempt to start a chain of motion picture theaters in Dublin, and again in 1912 in an unsuccessful attempt to arrange for the publication of the short story collection *Dubliners*, which had to be abandoned due to fears of prosecution for obscenity and libel. Although the plates were destroyed, *Dubliners* was finally published in England in 1914.

Ulysses, written between 1914 and 1921, was published in parts in *The Little Review* and *The Egoist*, but Joyce encountered the same opposition to publishing the novel in book form that he had confronted with *Dubliners*

From 1922 until 1939 Joyce worked on *Finnegans Wake* (1939), a complex novel that attempts to connect multiple cycles of Irish and human history into the framework of a single night's events in the family of a Dublin publican.

Joyce's career displays a consistent development. In each of his four major works there is an increase in the profundity of his vision and the complexity of his literary technique, particularly his experiments with language. *Dubliners* is a linked collection of 15 short stories treating the sometimes squalid, sometimes sentimental lives of various Dublin residents. The stories portray a city in moral and political paralysis, an insight that the reader is intended to achieve through a succession of revelatory moments, which Joyce called epiphanies. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is an autobiographical account of the adolescence and youth of Stephen Dedalus, who comes to realize that before he can be a true artist he must rid himself of the stultifying effects of the religion, politics, and essential bigotry of Ireland.

Ulysses recreates the events of one day in Dublin : June 16, 1904; widely known as "Bloomsday" : centering on the activities of a Jewish advertising-space salesman, Leopold Bloom, his wife Molly, and the aforementioned Stephen Dedalus, now a teacher. The fundamental design of *Ulysses* is based on Homer's

Odyssey; each chapter in the novel parallels one in the epic and is also associated with an hour of the day, color, symbol, and part of the body. Attempting to recreate the total life of his characters : the surface life and the inner life : Joyce mingles realistic descriptions with verbal representations of his characters' most intimate and random thoughts, using techniques of interior narration.

Interspersed throughout the work are historical, literary, religious, and geographical allusions, evocative patterns of words, word games, and many-sided puns, all of which imbue the ordinary events of the novel with the copious significance of those in an epic. Despite its complexities, *Ulysses* is an extraordinarily satisfying book, a celebration of life unparalleled in its humor, characterization, and tragic irony. A new edition of *Ulysses*, edited by H. Gabler, appeared in 1986, claiming to correct more than 5,000 errors that had been discovered in previous editions; it was itself flawed, and the publisher has subsequently reissued the 1961 edition in tandem with Gabler's.

Joyce's last work, *Finnegans Wake*, presents the dark counterpart of "Bloomsday" of *Ulysses*. Framed by the dream-induced experiences of a Dublin publican, the novel recapitulates the cycles of Irish history, and in its multiple allusions almost reveals a universal consciousness. In order to present this new reality Joyce manipulated and distorted language that pushed the work to the furthest limits of comprehensibility.

Because of its complexity *Finnegans Wake* is perhaps more talked about than read, and despite the publication of the manuscripts and drafts of the novel in 1978, probably will never be completely understood. Other posthumous publications include part of an early version of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* called *Stephen Hero* (1944). In June, 1962, a Joyce museum, containing pictures, papers, and first editions of Joyce's books, was opened in Dublin. Equally important was the novel *Ulysses*, also published in 1922, by the expatriate Irishman James Joyce. Although his books were controversial because of their freedom of language and content, Joyce's revolutions in narrative form, the treatment of time, and nearly all other techniques of the novel made him a master to be studied.