PMLA



SPECIAL TOPIC
Theory of Literary History

Publications of the

Modern Language

Association

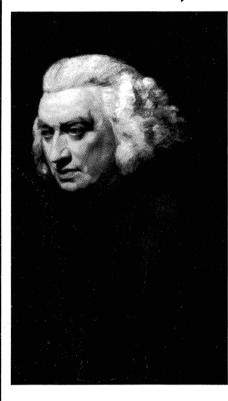
of America

1 9 9 2

JANUARY ·

VOLUME 107 ■ NUMBER 1

Princeton



The Letters of Samuel Johnson

Volume I: 1731–1772 Volume II: 1773–1776 Volume III: 1777–1781

Edited by Bruce Redford

With these three volumes Princeton University Press inaugurates the first scholarly edition of this remarkable material to appear in forty years—the planned five-volume series *The Letters of Samuel Johnson*. Known as the Hyde Edition, the project will be completed with the fourth volume, covering the years 1782 through 1784, and the fifth, containing the comprehensive index and appendices.

The Hyde Edition offers scores of texts transcribed for the first time from the original documents. The series as a whole will present fifty-two previously unknown letters or parts of letters that have come to light since the publication of R. W. Chapman's three-volume set in 1952. Such "new" letters, however, are scarcely more important than those for which only inferior printed texts or copies of varying reliability had previously been recovered.

Cloth: \$29.95 Each volume

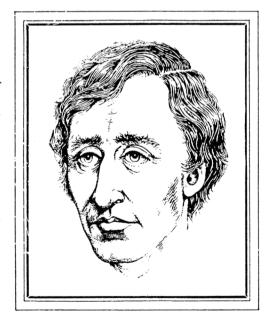
Not available from Princeton in the United Kingdom and Europe

The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau

Volume 4: 1851–1852 Edited by Leonard N. Neufeldt and Nancy Craig Simmons

From 1837 to 1861 Thoreau kept a journal that began as a conventional record of ideas, grew into a writer's notebook, and eventually became the principal imaginative work of his career. The source of much of his published writing, the journal is also a record of both his interior life and his monumental studies of the natural history of his native Concord, Massachusetts. In contrast to earlier editions, the Princeton Edition reproduces the journal in its original and complete form, in a reading text that is free of editorial interpolations but keyed to a comprehensive scholarly apparatus. This is the definitive edition of Thoreau's journal.

Committee on Scholarly Editions
The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau
Editor-in-Chief, Elizabeth Hall Witherell
General Editor for the Journal: Robert Sattelmeyer
Cloth: \$39.50 ISBN 0-691-06535-7



Princeton University Press

41 WILLIAM ST. • PRINCETON, NJ 08540 • (609) 258-4900 ORDERS: 800-PRS-ISBN (777-4726) • OR FROM YOUR LOCAL BOOKSTORE

PMLA

Publications of the Modern Language Association of America

Volume 107, Number 1

Published six times a year by the association

The Modern Language Association of America

Officers for the Year 1992 President: HOUSTON A. BAKER, JR., University of Pennsylvania

First Vice President: ELAINE MARKS, University of Wisconsin, Madison

Executive Director: PHYLLIS FRANKLIN

Executive Council

For the term ending 31 December 1992 ANDREW P. DEBICKI, University of Kansas

ELAINE SHOWALTER, Princeton University

DOMNA C. STANTON, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

SARA CASTRO-KLAREN, Johns Hopkins University For the term ending 31 December 1993

GERALD GRAFF, University of Chicago

CLAIRE KRAMSCH, University of California, Berkeley NELLIE Y. MCKAY, University of Wisconsin, Madison

For the term ending 31 December 1994 STEPHEN GREENBLATT, University of California, Berkeley

MICHAEL HOLQUIST, Yale University

JACK ZIPES, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis

Trustees of Invested Funds CAROLYN G. HEILBRUN, New York, New York

HUGH O'NEILL, New York, New York

MALCOLM B. SMITH (Managing Trustee), New York, New York

PMLA (ISSN 0030-8129) is published six times a year, in January, March, May, September, October, and November, by the Modern Language Association of America. Membership is open to those persons who are professionally interested in the modern languages and literatures. Annual dues, which include subscription to *PMLA*, are based on members' incomes and are graduated as follows: student members (four years maximum), \$10; new regular members (first year), \$25; regular members (income under \$12,000), \$10; regular members (income \$12,000–\$15,000), \$35; regular members (income \$15,000–\$20,000), \$45; regular members (income \$20,000–\$25,000), \$50; regular members (income \$25,000–\$30,000), \$55; regular members (income \$30,000-\$35,000), \$60; regular members (income \$35,000-\$40,000), \$65; regular members (income \$40,000-\$45,000), \$70; regular members (income \$45,000-\$50,000), \$75; regular members (income \$50,000-\$55,000), \$80; regular members (income \$55,000-\$50,000), \$85; regular members (income \$60,000-\$60,000), \$90; regular members (income \$65,000-\$70,000), \$95; regular members (income \$70,000-\$75,000), \$100; regular members (income \$75,000 and above), \$105; joint members (two individuals sharing the same household, who receive one subscription to PMLA but two copies of all other publications), add \$20 to dues category of higher-income member; foreign members, same as regular members (ascertain dues category based on American dollar equivalent). Membership applications are available on

The subscription price of *PMLA* for libraries and other institutions is \$96. A subscription including a bound volume at the end of the year is \$221, domestic and foreign. Agents deduct 4% as their fee. Single copies of the January, March, May, and October issues may be obtained for \$10 each; the November (Program) issue for \$30; the September (Directory) issue for \$45.

Issues for the current year are available from the MLA Member and Customer Services Office. Claims for undelivered issues will be honored

if they are received within one year of the publication date; thereafter the single-issue price will be charged.

For information about the availability of back issues, inquire of Kraus Reprint Co., Millwood, NY 10546; (914) 762-2200. Early and current volumes may be obtained on microfilm from University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Purchase of current volumes on film is restricted to subscribers of the journal.

OFFICE OF PUBLICATION AND EDITORIAL OFFICES 10 Astor Place, New York, NY 10003-6981

All communications including notices of changes of address should be sent to the Member and Customer Services Office of the Association. If a change of address also involves a change of institutional affiliation, that office should be informed of this fact at the same time. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing office.

© 1992 by The Modern Language Association of America.

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 12-32040. United States Postal Service Number 449-660.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to PMLA, Member and Customer Services Office, Modern Language Association of America, 10 Astor Place, New York, NY 10003-6981.

Publications of the Modern Language Association

Published six times a year

Indexes: Vols. 1-50, 1935; 51-60, 1945; 51-79, 1964

Editor: JOHN W. KRONIK, Cornell University

Managing Editor: JUDY GOULDING Editorial Director: CLAIRE COOK Assistant Editor: ERIC WIRTH Editorial Assistant: LOUIS A. MORRA

Editorial Board

HEATHER DUBROW, 1992, University of Wisconsin, Madison EMORY ELLIOTT, 1992, University of California, Riverside MARTHA NOEL EVANS, 1991, Mary Baldwin College SANDER GILMAN, 1993, Cornell University LINDA A. HUTCHEON, 1992, University of Toronto, Saint George Campus A. WALTON LITZ, 1993, Princeton University

Advisory Committee

JONATHAN ARAC, 1994, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh NINA BAYM, 1995, University of Illinois, Urbana R. HOWARD BLOCH, 1992, University of California, Berkeley DOUGLAS COLLINS, 1993, University of Washington RICHARD J. DELLAMORA, 1995, Champlain College, Trent University GAIL FINNEY, 1995, University of California, Davis SUZANNE FLEISCHMAN, 1995, University of California, Berkeley SUSAN STANFORD FRIEDMAN, 1994, University of Wisconsin, Madison ARTHUR F. GANZ, 1994, City College, City University of New York ANNE RUGGLES GERE, 1993, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor CHARLES B. HARRIS, 1994, Illinois State University ROBERTA JOHNSON, 1993, University of Kansas SETH LERER, 1994, Stanford University RONALD LEVAO, 1992. Rutgers University. New Brunswick WAHNEEMA H. LUBIANO, 1995, Princeton University GREGORY L. LUCENTE, 1995, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor LEAH MARCUS, 1993, University of Texas, Austin PAUL L. MARIANI, 1994, University of Massachusetts, Amherst SYLVIA MOLLOY, 1992, New York University LINDA ORR, 1992, Duke University RUTH PERRY, 1995, Massachusetts Institute of Technology TILOTTAMA RAJAN, 1994, University of Western Ontario ERIC RENTSCHLER, 1995, University of California, Irvine ANDREW T. ROSS, 1995, Princeton University MARGERY SABIN, 1994, Wellesley College STEPHANIE SANDLER, 1995, Amherst College JOSEPH T. SKERRETT, JR., 1993, University of Massachusetts, Amherst GARRETT STEWART, 1993, University of California, Santa Barbara C. JAN SWEARINGEN, 1993, University of Texas, Arlington FRANK TROMMLER, 1995, University of Pennsylvania

JAMES G. TURNER, 1994, University of California, Berkeley

A Statement of Editorial Policy

PMLA welcomes essays of interest to those concerned with the study of language and literature. As the publication of a large and heterogeneous association, the journal is receptive to a variety of topics, whether general or specific, and to all scholarly methods and theoretical perspectives. The ideal PMLA essay exemplifies the best of its kind, whatever the kind; addresses a significant problem; draws out clearly the implications of its findings; and engages the attention of its audience through a concise, readable presentation. Manuscripts in languages other than English are accepted for review but must be accompanied by a detailed summary in English (generally of 1,000–1,500 words) and must be translated into English if they are recommended to the Editorial Board. Articles of fewer than 2,500 words or more than 9,000 words are not considered for publication. The word count includes notes but excludes translations, which should accompany foreign language quotations. The MLA urges its contributors to be sensitive to the social implications of language and to seek wording free of discriminatory overtones.

Only members of the association may submit articles to *PMLA*. Each article submitted is sent to at least one consultant reader and one member of the Advisory Committee. Articles recommended by these readers are then sent to the members of the Editorial Board, who meet periodically with the editor to make final decisions. Until a final decision is reached, the author's name is not made known to consultant readers, to members of the Advisory Committee and the Editorial Board, or to the editor.

Submissions, prepared according to *The MLA Style Manual*, should be addressed to the Editor of *PMLA*, Modern Language Assn., 10 Astor Place, New York, NY 10003-6981. An author's name should not appear on the manuscript; instead, a cover sheet, with the author's name, address, and the title of the article, should accompany the article. Authors should not refer to themselves in the first person in the submitted text or notes if such references would identify them; any necessary references to the author's previous work, for example, should be in the third person.

Criticism in Translation

MLA members are invited to submit to the *PMLA* Editorial Board proposals for translations. Articles, as well as chapters or sections of books that can function as independent units, will be considered. The originals may be in any language. Two types of proposals are welcome: (1) significant scholarship from earlier periods that has not lost its forcefulness and whose retrieval in English in *PMLA* would be a noteworthy event for a broad body of readers or (2) contemporary work of sufficient weight and potential influence to merit the attention of the field as a whole.

A member who wishes to make a proposal should first ascertain that no previous English translation exists. The proposer should then provide the managing editor with the following materials: (1) a photocopy of the original essay, (2) an extended summary of the entire essay in English, (3) an introductory statement of approximately 1,000 words, prepared in accordance with MLA style, that will be published with the essay if the essay is accepted, (4) information on the copyright status of the original. In addition, if the proposer wishes to serve as translator of the essay or to designate a translator (who must also be an MLA member), a 1,000-word sample of the translation should be submitted; otherwise the Editorial Board will select a translator.

The translated essays should normally not exceed *PMLA*'s 9,000-word limit. The Editorial Board will approve or decline the proposals, evaluate the quality of the translations, and cooperate with the proposers and translators.

Contents

Special Topics	7
Forthcoming in <i>PMLA</i>	7
Editor's Column	9
Special Topic: Theory of Literary History	
Introduction. Contemplating the Theory of Literary History Marshall Brown	13
The Impossible Genre: Reading Comprehensive Literary History Robert Johnstone	26
Death and Vocation: Narrativizing Narrative Theory Bruce Robbins	38
Professionalism, Relativism, and Rationality James L. Battersby	51
Text: Origins and Reference Nicolae Babuts	65
Sacvan Bercovitch, Stanley Cavell, and the Romance Theory of American Fiction Emily Miller Budick	78
The Man with Two Brains: Gothic Novels, Popular Culture, Literary History Bradford K. Mudge	92
Festive Theater, Restive Narrative in Don Quixote, Part 1 Jay Farness	105
Virtue and Manners in Macpherson's Poems of Ossian Adam Potkay	120
Sound Symbolism as Drama in the Poetry of Robert Frost Marie Borroff	131
Forum	145
Forthcoming Meetings and Conferences of General Interest	154
Index of Advertisers	155

Cover illustration: Detail from Aristotle Contemplating the Bust of Homer, by Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn. The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Professional Not	es and Comment.	•	•	٠	٠	•	•	•	٠	٠	•	100
Announcement	s 168											
Journal Notes	170											
In Memoriam	174											
A hatma ata												